

# References & Letters of Recommendation

**Positive references and letters of recommendation are essential to a successful job search or acceptance into graduate school.**

- Your references should be individuals who can make specific comments on your performance in the workplace or in the classroom.
- Their comments should relate to the position and job description.
- Character references, such as family and friends, should be provided only at the request of an employer.

## Potential References

- Former or current employers
- Faculty and staff
- People who have supervised you
- Volunteer, practicum or internship advisors
- People you have supervised
- Co-workers

## Selecting References

- **Create a master list of diverse list of references.**
  - Select your references so that all of your skills and abilities will be mentioned.
- **Select three to five responsible people who will say positive and specific things about you and your work.**
- **It is CRITICAL to get permission from your references before using their name.**
  - Ask them, “Are you comfortable being a positive reference for me?”
- **Obtain accurate contact information from your references.**
  - Name, Title, Organization, Phone Number(s), Mailing Address and Email Address
  - Ask if listing their home, work, and/or cell phone number(s) is acceptable.
- **Give your references a “heads up.”**
  - Send them copies of the job description and your resume to help them relate you to the job.
  - You may ask them to comment upon them.

## Preparing References

- **Keep your references up to date on your job search efforts.**
  - Give them a reminder if you are at the stage when an employer might call them.
  - Provide them with a copy of the job description(s) and your resume, so they can be familiar with your experience and goals.
- **Suggest skills and experiences you would like them to discuss or include in a letter** if there are some highlights you would like to comment upon.

## Supplying References to Employers

- Prepare your reference list in an easy to read format.
- UAF Career Services recommends that you not use “References upon request.”
- If an employer requests them, add them to your resume as a second page under the heading. References. Include your contact information in the same format as on your resume.

## Letters of Recommendation

Letters of Recommendation may be requested for admission to a graduate program, scholarships, and employment. When asking someone to write a letter of recommendation, follow the same guidelines as for references.

- **Interfolio Credential Service**

- A state-of-the-art online credentials service that securely streamlines, simplifies, and speeds up the credentials and portfolio process for everyone. UAF recommends using this service.
- Visit the Interfolio web site at [www.interfolio.com](http://www.interfolio.com).

**Thank You Letters** have become standard practice and should be sent within a day of the interview. Hand delivering it is preferred, but email format is also acceptable.

**A Thank You Letter is an opportunity to:**

- Emphasize your interest in the position and the organization
- Restate your major qualifications
- Add an afterthought or something that you may have forgotten to mention in the interview

## Thank You Letter

Leah Kennedy  
300 Gillette Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709  
(907) 474-3127  
E-mail: l.kennedy@uaf.edu  
[www.ais693.uaf.edu/ais693/kennedy](http://www.ais693.uaf.edu/ais693/kennedy)

December 10, 2010

Mr. Skip Moss  
Recruitment Coordinator  
Manpower Temporary Services  
PO Box 1700  
Houston, TX 77001

Dear Mr. Moss,

I appreciated the opportunity to interview with you for the Administrative Assistant position. Before you make your final decision, I want you to know I am extremely interested in this position and in Manpower Temporary Services.

You made it clear that you are looking for someone who can prioritize, handle numerous tasks and work well under pressure. When you combine my accomplishments in the business setting with my computer and office background, you will find that I fit your profile perfectly.

Thank you for the interview and opportunity to gain some insight into your organization. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Leah Kennedy*

Leah Kennedy

**Sample: Cover Letter accompanying functional resume**

**Emma Murphy**

PO Box 75000, Fairbanks, AK 99775 (303) 871-4687 [emmamurphy@gmail.com](mailto:emmamurphy@gmail.com)

April 4, 2010

Ms. Amy Lang  
Program Administrator  
Idaho National Lab  
US Department of Energy  
PO Box 536501  
Washington, DC 20053

Dear Ms. Lang:

This letter is part of my application for the Communications/Information Technology Intern position at Idaho National Lab with the Department of Energy, posted on UAFCareerConnect. The opportunity to gain experience in my chosen career, while applying the skills I have developed from my experience and education, is an exciting one.

My experience includes a variety of communication tasks. I contacted and interviewed over 25 individuals from the Fairbanks community for various newspaper and class articles. In the Disability Services Office at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I edited electronic textbook files. I also took notes, translated, and scribed for UAF students with disabilities in several of their classes. These experiences required strong listening and written communication skills required for the Idaho National Lab Intern position.

Ever since I decided to pursue a career in scientific writing, the Department of Energy has been high on my list of prospective employers. The focus on nuclear energy research is of great interest to me. Contributing to the team responsible for informing the public about interesting and valuable research happening at the Idaho National Lab is an opportunity I would like to participate in. I believe that the background I am gaining in my dual BA degrees in Physics and Journalism prepares me well to perform communications and public relations tasks.

I look forward to further discussing this position with you. My resume, unofficial transcripts, and references are enclosed for your review. If you have questions or would like to schedule an interview, please contact me by phone at (303) 871-4687 or email me at: [emmamurphy@gmail.com](mailto:emmamurphy@gmail.com).

Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

Emma Murphy

Enclosures

**Cover Letter: Response to advertised position**

Katie Kounsel

1261 Any Street, Chico, CA 95928

Tel: (530) 555-01212

Email: kkouns@server.net

March 22, 2010

Aaron Smith

County of Yolo

Human Resources

625 Court St., Room 101

Woodland, CA 95695

Dear Mr. Smith:

In response to your county's advertisement regarding the Social Work Practitioner position, I am enclosing a resume for your review. In May of this year I will have completed my Masters degree in Social Work (MSW). Upon graduation, I would enjoy returning to Yolo County to work with your team. I spent many of my childhood years in Woodland and feel connected to the area and the population.

My studies have focused on human development, and I have experience working with children and families. I have worked collaboratively with primary caregivers, school professionals, health care professionals, and other counselors to create service plans, increase family communication, and promote safety for children.

Currently I am interning at Butte County Behavioral Health (Chico Community Counseling Center). This county position has provided a clinical setting to perform individual, family, and group counseling. I am confident my knowledge of family systems, the DSM-IV mental health diagnoses, and my understanding of state and local laws and regulations would make me an excellent addition to your team.

I look forward to an opportunity to further discuss how the skills I developed through my education and experience can contribute to this position.

Thank you for considering my application.

Sincerely,

**Katie Kounsel**

Katie Kounsel

Enclosure: resume

## **Cover Letter: Unsolicited application for employment**

SAMANTHA SELLERS

1231 University Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99700

Tel: (907) 123-4567 Email: student@sample.net

February 19, 2010

Rick Reviewer

Manager, Recruiting and Training

A&D Seafood Company

2222 Oceanside Road

Anchorage, Alaska 99500

Dear Mr. Reviewer:

I am graduating in May 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies including an option of Organizational Communication from University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). I am interested in a sales position with your company because A&D Seafood Company has established a worldwide reputation in the seafood industry and remains family-owned.

Growing up in a commercial fishing community has taught me the different challenges a person faces when working in the industry. In addition, as a senior at UAF, I learned to deal with a variety of management and sales challenges through courses in human resource management, speech communication, interpersonal communication, and negotiation. Along with my education, my experience as a sales coordinator for ABC Farms has confirmed my interest and success in a sales career.

From your web site, I understand A&D is dedicated to turning challenges into opportunities and change into growth. This growth has resulted in a reputation for high quality and strong customer relationships. This is the type of organization where I am confident my skills and knowledge would be best suited. Some of my skills and knowledge include:

Proven sales experience

Ability to work effectively as part of a team

Experience in the agricultural industry

Interpersonal communication skills

Strong public speaking skills

Although my resume provides a summary of my background and experiences, I would like to meet with you in person to discuss any available opportunities with A&D Seafood Company. I can be reached at (907) 123-4567 or student@sample.net.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Samantha Sellers