



A Guide to Teaching

**REFERENCES &
LETTERS OF
RECOMMENDATION**



south carolina
STATE LIBRARY

REFERENCES & LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

OBJECTIVE: Patrons will have an understanding of how to obtain two to three letters of recommendation and request professional references.

(Note: Most employers prefer to contact references directly rather than just read basic letters of reference. However, this exercise is still useful for individuals who have probably never gone through the process of soliciting references or never considered what others may say about their own skills and abilities.)

NECESSARY SUPPLIES:

- Copies of *People to be considered as a reference and/or request a letter of recommendation*
- *Sample letter of Recommendation*
- *Sample Reference Sheet*

TIME REQUIRED:

60 minutes

LESSON PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the class to the concept of letters of recommendation. Ask the class about potential uses for a letter of recommendation (college, jobs, scholarships, internships, etc.).
2. Assist the class in their brainstorming process of who to ask. This will be a difficult step for some individuals, especially for those who have recently relocated or consider themselves hard to employ based on having unique barriers. Provide the class with copies of *People to be considered as a reference and/or request a letter of recommendation* this will give them more ideas about who to ask. Discuss each reference as needed.
3. Provide copies of a *Sample letter of Recommendation*. Provide a distinction between the two items that are requested. Having references allows an employer to ask about your character, integrity, and capacity for employment with them. A letter of recommendation is written by one person who is familiar with you and is usually a teacher, employer, or person of similar authority, evaluating and often describing your work ethic, values, and accomplishments to the other person for a position.
4. Discuss with patrons that it is important to ask more than 3 persons to be references. Some individuals may provide better insight into their qualifications than others.
5. Discuss with patrons to try and obtain between one to three letters of recommendation to present to an employer.
6. Every letter of recommendation should be signed and dated.

Tips for getting effective references:

- ✓ Choose people who know your strengths and abilities and who will say positive things about you.
- ✓ Always make sure you ask permission before you list someone as a reference for any position.
- ✓ Provide your references with a copy of your resume and your career objectives.
- ✓ Make sure you keep a record of the full name, title, organization name, and contact information of each reference.
- ✓ Be prepared for a no, if a person does not feel qualified!

People to be considered as a reference and/or request a letter of recommendation

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Bosses | • Coaches |
| • Supervisors | • Instructors of special courses (CPR, Karate, etc.) |
| • Co-Workers | • Guidance counselors |
| • People you have supervised | • Principals |
| • People you have trained | • Club advisors |
| • Customers | • Personal: long time acquaintances who are not related to you |
| • Politicians | |
| • Clergy | |
| • Doctors | |
| • Scout leaders | |
| • Business owners/managers | |
| • Teachers | |

Sample Letter of Recommendation

Friday, December 31, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is my personal recommendation for Mr. Sam Jones. Until just recently, I have been Sam's immediate supervisor for several years. I found him to be consistently pleasant, tackling all assignments with dedication and a smile.

Besides being a joy to work with, Sam is a take-charge person who is able to present creative ideas and communicate the benefits. He successfully developed several marketing plans for our company that resulted in increased revenue. During his tenure, we saw an increase in profits that exceeded one million dollars. The new revenue was a direct result of the plans implemented by Sam.

Though he was an asset to our marketing efforts, Sam was also extraordinarily helpful in other areas of the company. In addition to writing effective training modules for sales representatives, Sam assumed a leadership role in sales meetings, inspiring and motivating other employees.

I highly recommend Sam for employment. He is a team player and would make a great asset to any organization.

Sincerely,

John Litte
Executive Manager of TELL Marketing Productions, Inc.

SAMPLE REFERENCE SHEET

PLACE YOUR NAME HERE

Place Your Any Street
Place Your City, State, Zip Code
Place Your Telephone Number
Place Your e-mail address

REFERENCES

Professor Jeffrey Rachlinski
Cornell Law School
Myron Taylor Hall
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