

Writing Recommendation Letters

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Types of Recommendation Letters

- Graduate school application
- Postdoc job application
- Faculty position application
- Faculty promotion/reappointment
- Nomination for prizes

Tips for Recommendees

Choosing recommenders (*at least 3*):

- *Higher ranks*
- *Close collaborators (co-authors)*
- *Think highly of you*

Can you write a GOOD recommendation for me?

Making requests:

- *A week to a month before deadline*
- *Reminder a few days before deadline*

Provide the following:

- *CV with publication list*
- *Research statement*
- *Transcript (students)*

How to Write a Recommendation?

1. Relationship with the recommendee

- how long have you known her?
- in what capacity?
- how familiar with her research field?

2. Recommendee's achievements

- research topic in broad scientific context
- summary of what he has done
- the scientific impact of his work
- what makes him stand out

How to Write a Recommendation?

3. Recommendee's research potential

- how important is her proposed work?
- can she make an impact?

4. Recommendee's readiness for the position

- academic stature
- teaching experience
- service work, outreach, etc.
- maturity in personality

How to Write a Recommendation?

5. How does she compare with others?

- compare with cohort
- ranking among students

6. How you recommend him?

- strongly? with reservation? not at all?
- what can he bring to the position?

Miscellaneous Tips for Writers

- **Be honest**
 - **inflate a little bit, don't exaggerate**
- **Cite fact/examples to corroborate**
- **Citation counts and h-index can't be the main focus**
- **0.75 to 2 pages long**