

Reference Letter Template for Employment By [Alison Doyle](#), About.com Guide

This reference letter template shows the format of a typical reference letter. A reference letter should provide information on who you are, your connection with the person you are recommending, why they are qualified and the specific skills they have. In addition, contact information for follow-up should be provided. The following reference letter format is appropriate for an employment reference, as well as a reference for graduate school.

Use this reference letter template as a guide for writing your own reference letters ([review samples](#)), making sure all relevant information is included.

Reference Letter Template

Salutation

If you are writing a personal letter of reference, include a salutation (Dear Mr. Marina, Dear Ms. Templeton, etc.). If you are writing a general letter, say "To Whom it May Concern" or simply don't include a salutation.

Paragraph 1

The first paragraph of the reference letter explains your connection to the person you are recommending, including how you know them, and why you are qualified to write a reference letter to recommend employment or graduate school.

Paragraph 2

The second paragraph of the reference letter contains specific information on the person you are writing about, including why they are qualified, what they can contribute, and why you are providing a reference letter. If necessary, use more than one paragraph to provide details.

Paragraph 3

When writing a specific letter referring a candidate for a particular job opening, the reference letter template will include information on how the person's skills match the position they are applying for. Ask for a copy of the job posting and a copy of the person's resume so you can target your reference letter accordingly. (**Here you can use some examples taken from the COOP evaluation form**).

Summary

This section of the reference letter contains a brief summary of why are you are recommending the person. State that you "highly recommend" the person or you "recommend without reservation" or something similar.

Conclusion

The concluding paragraph of the reference letter contains an offer to provide more information. Include a phone number within the paragraph, include the phone number and email address in the return address section of your letter, or in your signature.

Sincerely,

Writer Name

Title

=====

[Reference Letter Samples](#)

It is helpful to review reference letter samples to see how reference writers have incorporated their recommendations into the reference letter template.

Please Note: This sample is provided for guidance only. The provided information, including samples and examples, is not guaranteed for accuracy or legality. Letters and other correspondence should be edited to fit your personal situation.

Sample Reference Letters

- [Sample Reference Letter Employment](#)
- [Sample Character Reference](#)
- [More Sample References](#)

From: <http://www.brighthub.com/multimedia/publishing/articles/15372.aspx>

One of the best sites for free recommendation letter templates, in my opinion, is located at <http://technicaljobsearch.com/letters/sample-recommendation-letters.htm>. It's a busy website page but scroll down to the bottom where you will see **Sample Recommendation Letters**. Choose the one that best describes the individual you're writing for. You are then taken to the letter itself and below that there is the option to download it. From there you just personalize it with the specific details about yourself, your company, and your aspirant.

Read more:

<http://www.brighthub.com/multimedia/publishing/articles/15372.aspx#ixzz0p95tM0xc>

Microsoft Office Online has a decent supply of reference letters but not many LORs. But all you would have to do to convert a reference letter a LOR is cater it more specifically toward the position your individual wants. Their collection is at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/results.aspx?qu=recommendation+letters&av=TPL000> and they have specific categories which you may find convenient.

With these free templates, the job of writing a LOR will be a breeze. If you happened to stumble upon this article before reading the first part of this series, which gives a [tutorial](#) on how to write a good LOR, it may be a good idea to take a quick gander at that one first. Good luck and remember that it's a privilege and an honor when someone asks you for your written testimony so do the best you can.

Read more:

<http://www.brighthub.com/multimedia/publishing/articles/15372.aspx#ixzz0p95yBE5s>

A tutorial can be found here:

<http://www.brighthub.com/multimedia/publishing/articles/15371.aspx>

From:

<http://www.writeexpress.com/reference.htm?source=adwords+reference+letters&gclid=COT3o7N8qECFYd-5QodWzsfog>

Reference Letters

A thoughtful, sincere reference letter written on another's behalf may pave the way for that person's acceptance. With WriteExpress software you get proven reference letters that are guaranteed to help you find the perfect words to say.

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Just what is a reference letter?

A reference letter is a statement of the qualifications of a person seeking employment or appointment, given by someone familiar with the person (probably you).

Why write a letter of reference?

- A reference letter offers a favorable picture of your personal characteristics, job performance, and professional promise.
- Potential employers may accept a reference letter, instead of personally contacting your reference, who may be annoyed if he/she is contacted repeatedly.
- Reference letters may speed up the hiring process because it is quicker to read a letter than to communicate with people personally by mail or by phone.
- Reference letters eliminate such variables as a reference being too busy or unavailable when a potential employer tries to contact him/her personally.
- Many employers keep a record of what a reference has to say about a job candidate; a letter provides a ready-to-use record without any work.
- If you have been laid off, some employers will question why, while a reference letter proves that your job performance was not the reason.
- One of the great advantages of a reference letter is that you already know exactly what your recommender has to say about you.

When asked to write a reference letter...

- **Are you the right person to write a letter of reference?** If you are asked to write a reference letter, you need to discuss the subject candidly with the requester. A letter of reference is most effective when a person who knows the requester and his/her reputation writes it.
- **What is your company's policy regarding letters of reference.** Many policies have been established as protection against potential lawsuits. The common rule is write only positive, factual reference letters.
- **Do you qualify?** Another consideration is your integrity—can you honestly write positive things about the requester? If not, you need to bow out gracefully without hurting feelings. On the other hand, if you qualify, you should brainstorm with the requester to write what he or she wishes to be said. Be sensitive to deadlines.

How to write a reference letter:

- **Explain how you know the applicant.** How long have you known the person, and in what relationship or circumstance?
- **State your qualifications for writing the reference letter.** Why should the reader be interested in your reference? How many other people of the applicant's caliber have you known, and why does the applicant stand out?
- **List the applicant's exceptional qualities and skills,** especially those that are specific to the applicant's field of interest or job requirements. For example, competency in his/her field or prior experience, organizational and communication skills, academic or other achievements, interaction with others, sound judgment, reliability, analytical ability, etc.
- **Emphasize key points that you want the reader to note on the applicant's resume or job application.** Be sure to elaborate meaningfully; don't simply restate.
- **Give your judgment of the applicant, his/her qualifications and potential.** Why should he/she be considered over other people? How does he/she compare to other people you have known? Do not state weaknesses. If you can't write a positive letter of reference, you should [respectfully decline](#).
- **Give specific examples to back up what you have said about the person's qualifications and character.** Remember, generalized praise is a waste of space.
- **Unless it is absolutely relevant, do not state (directly or by implication) the applicant's race, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender or marital status.**
- **Don't be too brief.** One or two short paragraphs are death to a reference letter. On the other hand, be succinct. Make every word count. Here is a rule of thumb: a letter of reference for employment should be one page; a letter of reference for school should be one to two pages.
- **Make the ending statement strong without overdoing it.** Undue praise can be viewed as biased or insincere.
- **List your contact information** if you are willing to field follow-up correspondence.
- **Proofread!** The letter of reference represents both you and the applicant.
- Learn how our software can help you quickly compose **professional reference letters** for endorsing a person, product or service, requesting a letter of reference, or declining to write one...and many other situations.

Reference Letter Tips

- **Make sure you know the person and the person's capabilities.** If you are a relative, you are not a good choice.
- **Be sure to ask for enough time** if necessary (7-10 days, if possible) to write the reference letter.
- **Ask for their goals and advice on what you might write to help achieve those goals.** Be specific; general praise is a waste of space. Don't be shy. A reference letter is a sales letter to sell another. Now is the time to brag!
- **Ask for a review of your conversation.** Get suggestions for your reference letter. You may need ideas to help you write.
- **State your connection with the person you are recommending,** why he or she is qualified and the specific skills the person has.
- **Write only complimentary, yet factual, observations.** Avoid unflattering or derogatory remarks. If you cannot do this, you should [decline](#) to write the letter.
- **Remember that potential employers are good at 'reading between the lines,'** and any negative implication may destroy a person's chance at getting the new job.