**Email Subject Line:** Letter of Recommendation Request: <Student Name>

Dear <Formal title and Last Name for instance Professor Lightning or Advisor Wise>-

Would you write me a letter of recommendation, please? I am applying to <graduate school, aerospace engineering jobs, scholarships>.

I am asking you because <I was your TA for MAE 123 in Summer 2020, I was a team lead of a winning project in MAE 123 in Summer 2020, you were my mentor in the Summer 2020, you encouraged me to stay in school when I was struggling with junior level courses, etc.>. <Insert memorable facts that help them write the letter>. I have attached a photo to help you recall who I am.

<Insert ideas on what could be focused upon based on the job, like specific technical and software skills (CAD, NDT, PSpice) >.

I have attached a copy of my resume, unofficial transcripts, <a representative job description of what I am apply to, an overview of the scholarship, etc.>.

The deadline is <xxx>. The directions for submitting the recommendation are <xxx>.

If I may answer any questions, please contact me at <email> or <phone number>.

Respectfully,

Signature

Name

Degree, major, graduation date

Student ID number

Email address and phone number including area code

**Tips on Requesting Letters of Recommendations/Letters of Reference**

**What is the difference between a reference list and letters of recommendation?**

A **reference list** is a list of 3-5 carefully selected names, titles, and their preferred contact information of those who know you well and have agreed to speak about your qualifications if contacted. If a list is requested, it is a separate document that has the same font as and complementary style to your resume. Typically, the reference who is most relevant to the role you are seeking is listed first. A family member is generally not an appropriate reference.

|  |
| --- |
| First and Last NameCompany Name, Job TitleRelationship (ex: Former Supervisor for 3 Years)Number and Street AddressCity, State, Country, Zip CodeTheir Preferred Email AddressTheir Preferred Phone Number |

**A letter of recommendation** is a formal written letter from your references.

**Both require that you request their consent in advance**.

**What are letters of recommendation?**

During your academic career, as well as after you graduate, you will need letters of recommendation from people who know you well. Prospective employers, graduate institutions, and scholarship foundations will usually ask for 2-4 letters to support your application. It is of utmost importance to establish relationships with those qualified to comment on your academic accomplishments, work habits, personality, and likelihood of succeeding at the endeavor you are proposing. Depending on the application’s purpose, your recommenders may be professors and staff at your school or supervisors and mentors at your part-time job, internship, or community service activity. If your recommenders are contacted by the company, your recommenders will always be asked to comment on the capacity in which they know you and how long they have known you. Their recommendations will be taken more seriously if they can show that they know you well.

**When should you ask for a letter of recommendation?**

Even if you are not planning to apply for anything just yet, keep watch for suitable recommenders. You may want to ask a supervisor at the end of a successful internship, or a professor in whose class you did well, whether they would be willing to write a letter on your behalf. A recommender may agree to support you for a future application or may write a general letter of recommendation.

Give your recommender fair notice when asking for letters of support. It is good manners. It will also allow the recommender to compose a thoughtful letter that can effectively support your application. Asking early will also allow you to find another recommender if your first choice is busy, absent, or reluctant to recommend you.

* Give at least four, preferably five or more, weeks’ notice for any request. Even if you know that the recommender has a letter already on file, do not assume that it can be changed and quickly printed. Letters may need significant revision to fit a particular purpose.
* Include a written statement of the due date and whether it is a postmark or a receipt date.
* Never assume that a letter can be faxed or e-mailed at the last minute. This puts unacceptable constraints on the person writing on your behalf.

**How should you ask for letters of recommendation from professors?**

Many faculty write close to 200 letters every year for students and former students. Faculty members take considerable time to write in detail and make every effort to present a candidate in the best possible light.

*If a faculty member has not seen you in class for more than two years and you have not kept in touch do not expect the faculty to write a letter of recommendation.*

If you are on campus, schedule an appointment to make the request in person. That will allow the professor to ask you about your goals and plans. It will give you a chance to gauge the professor’s willingness to write a positive letter. If you are off campus, make the request by phone or in writing. It may be a good idea, especially if it has been a few years since the professor has seen you, to include your ASU ID number and attach a passport-size photograph of yourself to your request.

Always ask your recommender if he or she would be willing to write a good (i.e., strong, supportive) letter on your behalf. Some people will agree to write letters only for students they know very well, or for students who did well in their classes. Some will not agree to write letters unless they have several weeks’ notice, especially at busy times of the year. Most professors consider the writing of recommendations a part of their job, and not an undue imposition. Most understand the importance of supporting their students and will do their best to help you.

**How important is confidentiality?**

It is generally a good idea to waive your rights to read letters written on your behalf. Recipients place more credence on confidential letters, and some programs require them. If you have doubts about the kind of letter the recommender plans to write, ask!

**Provide material and context**

* Provide an unofficial copy of your transcript and your resume (or for PhDs a curriculum vitae).
* Provide a copy of the job description if for a specific job or job family.
* Provide a written description of the purpose of the letter and/or a copy of instructions intended for the person writing. If there are multiple letters for different purposes, provide a description for each (e.g., graduate school, law school, professional job).
* Complete any forms as thoroughly as you can. Do not expect the person writing for you to fill out any information that you yourself know.
* Make certain to complete any waiver request, either yes or no. This is easily missed.
* Provide copies of class papers and of any other papers directly relevant, with instructor's original comments if possible.
* For graduate school, including a written statement or a draft of your proposed program, project, or statement of purpose.
* When e-mailing requests for letters of recommendations include all attachments. Ask if they would prefer that you print everything and send all materials to them. Do not expect the person writing for you to print out your work or to visit a web site (unless strictly required by the party receiving the letter).
* If the letter of recommendation materials are to be sent to the company or university by mail, include fully addressed envelopes for each letter. Affix sufficient postage, even if it is going elsewhere in the university (letters are often mailed from home or from other locations). Do not make someone else pay for postage.

**Follow-up**

* Always check in with your recommender several days before the letter is due. Sometimes even the most organized and conscientious recommendation writer will appreciate a reminder.
* A thank you note is always expected when someone writes a letter on your behalf. Gifts are usually considered inappropriate.
* Should you decide not to follow through with your application, let your recommender know well in advance.
* Inform the recommender about the outcome of your application.