

Reference List vs Letter of Recommendation

General Guidelines:

Companies ask for references or letters of recommendation to verify the information included on your resume and get insight into your character. What is the difference?

References:

For references, you need only to provide the employer information on how to contact your references. The employer will contact your reference either by email or by phone and ask them specific questions about your qualifications as they relate to the job you are applying for.

Below please find tips of how to prepare your references.

- Keep your reference list consistent with your resume. That is, use the same paper, typeface and heading format.
- Ask for permission before you list someone as a reference, and ask them for the phone number and email address they prefer to be contacted at.
- Ask if they have any reservations about providing a reference for you. If so, you may want to ask someone else.
- List three references in the order in which you want them to be contacted. Begin with including the professional and/or academic references that correspond to the experiences listed on your resume. Use personal references as a last resort.
- Prepare your reference before they are contacted.
 - Give them a copy of your resume and keep them apprised of your progress.
 - Let them know when to expect a reference call and who may be calling.
 - Describe the position that you are applying for and ask your reference to highlight the experiences that are most relevant to the position you are seeking.
 - Remember that they are probably providing references for many students, so help them help you.
- Let your references know the outcome of your job search. Be sure to send a thank you note acknowledging them for their assistance.
- Bring extra copies of your reference list to an interview (along with extra copies of your resume.)
- Only provide the references when the employer requests them.

Letters of Recommendation:

For letters of recommendation, you may be asked to provide the employer either:

- Information on how to contact your references. The employer will contact your reference either by email or by phone and ask them to submit a letter of recommendation highlighting your qualifications you have as they relate to the job you are applying for OR
- The actual letters of recommendation.

How to request a letter of recommendation:

1. Ask for permission before you list someone as a reference. In your request include:
 - Your Name
 - Your Major/Minor
 - What class you took with them and what semester and year (if applicable)
 - Your Contact Information (email and phone)
 - A picture of yourself if you have one (LinkedIn Profile)
 - The description of what you are applying for
 - The due date of the letter of the recommendation. ***Please try to provide two- three weeks lead time for your references.*** Faculty are very busy and need to plan ahead to write letters of recommendation, as they are often asked by multiple students. This will also allow you time to find alternate references if your faculty is too busy to write a letter for you.

2. Wait for your reference to agree before you provide their name to a prospective employer.

If they agree to be a reference please provide them:

- How to submit the letter of recommendation (this will be provided to you by the prospective employer)
- The criteria of the award/opportunity (usually provided on the application)
- Your Transfer and/or career goals (as it relates to the position you are applying for)
- Other academic, professional, extracurricular or personal connection you participated in
- A copy of your letter(s), essay(s), or personal statement(s) you are using for the application
- A copy of your resume/CV
- A list of all your accomplishments, awards, recognitions, scholarships (school, extracurricular, personal, professional, etc.)
- A list of any special challenges you have had to overcome (only include those you are willing to have included in the letter)
- A signed copy of the FERPA release form (attached).

Sample Reference List:

First Last Name

310.555.1212 | Los Angeles, CA | firstlastname@gmail.com

LIST OF REFERENCES

Dr. Susan Brown
Professor
Department of Communications
Santa Monica College
(310) 434-8002
Brown_susan@smc.edu

Dr. Margaret Jones
Associate Professor
Department of Computer Science
Santa Monica College
(310) 434-8062
Jones_margaret@smc.edu

Victoria Mason
Store Manager
Macy's Department Store
(424) 608-1923
Mason_victoria@macy's.com



**Reference Request
FERPA Release**

Name _____
Last First Middle

Student ID number: _____

I authorize _____ to serve as a reference for me for
Please print
the purposes of _____.

I authorize the above-named person to release information about me and provide an honest evaluation from his or her knowledge of my qualifications. This evaluation could be based upon my involvement in activities or organizations outside the classroom or my performance in his or her class(es).

This information may be released to: (Use additional forms if permissions differ for recipients)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If this person has access to my education record, I authorize him/her to provide any academic information, including but not limited to, my grades, GPA, class rank, scholarships, honors, awards, and comments from other instructors and lab assistants.

I waive / do not waive my right to review a copy of the letter at any time in the future.
(Circle one)

Student signature _____ Today's date _____

The writer of the letter needs to retain this form in their files for three years.