

How To: Write a Letter of Recommendation

Students seeking employment or acceptance into graduate schools and internships often ask for letters of recommendation from their advisors, professors and mentors. There are several guidelines you should follow if asked to write one.

Be sure to identify the student and the capacity in which you came to know him or her. Ideally, you want to provide as much evidence as possible of the student's increased knowledge, skills, maturity, understanding of material or other aspects of development during the period that you knew him or her.

Future employers and graduate schools will be evaluating candidates on the basis of the following factors, among others:

- Communication skills (written and oral)
- Level of motivation
- Planning and organizational skills
- Technical or professional knowledge or skills

- Flexibility/adaptability
- Interpersonal skills
- Willingness to accept responsibility
- Leadership and initiative
- Analytical/problem-solving ability
- Group interaction and team-working skills

Ask the student to provide you with a copy of his or her resume and a description of the job position or graduate school they are applying to. Any information you can give to support the student's candidacy with reference to these attributes would be helpful. However, be sure to avoid potentially discriminatory references (race, religion, national origin, marital status, age, etc.). If you feel that you truly cannot give a positive recommendation, it is best to let the student know. For more information – or to see a sample letter – visit <http://pages.ohiou.edu/careers/faculty/refer.cfm>.

Career Services for Faculty & Staff...

FACULTY ASSISTANCE

We devote an entire section of our Web site to OU faculty and staff. Here, you can find helpful samples and tips on writing letters of reference (see above article), the Faculty Guide to Ethical and Legal Standards (provided by the National Association of Colleges and Employers), an extensive list of Fortune 500 companies that recruit at Ohio University, and the Faculty Advising and Referral Manual.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Do you have an event that requires you miss class? An Office staff member will come to present and speak to your students on one of the following

professional topics: resume/cover letter writing, basic and advanced interviewing, career planning and search strategies, business and dining etiquette, or planning for the corporate world and/or graduate school. Interested? Give us a call or send us an e-mail to schedule and outreach program. Presentations last approximately 50 minutes, should be scheduled at least two week prior, and are available to OU Regional Campuses through video communication.

RESOURCES AND HANDOUTS

The Office of Career Services provides ample career assistance and professional development to all Ohio University students and alumni, as well as offering

programs and services to assist faculty and employers with their human resource and college relations needs. Please encourage your students to take advantage of the professional services offered early and frequently during their college career. Invite your students to visit our Web site at ohio.edu/careers, where they can find useful information, including: career handouts, professional seminar sign-ups, self-assessment quizzes, and career exploration and development resources.

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To utilize these programs and for more information regarding the services offered to Ohio University faculty and staff, visit our Web site: <http://ohio.edu/careers/faculty>.

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Thanks to *you* (kidding),

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we college students have an overabundance of reading to

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do; even the math majors have bulky, wordy books. Remember reading for

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pleasure? Yes, it's fun! To help your students maintain that knowledge intake (and give them

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something to do while they're lounging poolside), I've created a list of fun and educational books

for students. They'll thank us later!

READING

"Life after School. Explained." by Cap & Compass

Cap & Compass presents the definitive reference guide for recent and soon-to-be college graduates. This book will benefit anyone who eats, spends money, works or pays taxes. Full of humor and good advice, Cap & Compass tackles all those things you wish you'd learned in school, including: investments, 401k's, leasing an apartment, student loans, dinner etiquette, wine selections and more. Purchase your copy today from the Office of Career Services in Baker 503.

"Getting from College to Career: 90 Things to Do Before You Join the Real World" by Lindsey Pollak

Author Lindsey Pollak provides an informative read that young people can (and should) act upon immediately to ease their transition into the working-world. This thorough, lively book is more like an easy-to-follow guide, since it is broken down into suggestive sections rather than chapters. It provides information on cleaning up your "online record" of social networking profiles, sample resumes, advice on negotiating salary, networking tips and conversation-starters to use when attending job and internship fairs.

"Basic Black: The Essential Guide for Getting Ahead at Work (and in Life)" by Cathie Black

In her book *Basic Black*, author Cathie Black, president of Hearst Magazines, places emphasis on long-term life and career goals through thought-provoking questions and examples. The book is packed with tips about getting the job you want, writing effective resumes, the importance of cover letters and doing well in the job you hold. I consider myself somewhat of an expert in a few of these areas, but I still found myself taking notes! By opening up her own life to examination, Black subtly mentors readers by encouraging them to find their own abilities and to follow gut instincts on their own unique paths to success. Her writing style is both inspiring and highly readable. This book is a must-have for those ambitious, go-getter girls – no matter where they stand on their career paths.

Meet the Staff & Students:

DEBBY LAX

Hometown: Nelsonville, Ohio

Office position: Career Services Referral Coordinator

Position description: I coordinate and search the Office's database for employer requested resumes, register students for eRecruiting, and assist employers and students in troubleshooting system errors. In addition, I work with one of the PACE students (Bobby) to maintain and update the Career Services Web site.

Outside the office: My greatest love is spending time with my daughter and three grandsons - they're six, three and 15-months-old. I also enjoy spending time with friends, traveling and being by water - especially the ocean.

Favorite quote: Don't be afraid!

Something unique about Debby: I am a certified trainer and someday would like to have my own consulting business.

BOBBY KOSMATKA

Status: Senior

Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

Office position: PACE Web Developer

Position description: I update Web content on a daily basis and design graphics for the Office. I also created the picture slideshow on the homepage!

Major: Interactive multimedia with a minor in telecommunications

Career goals: I want to wake up and look forward to going to work everyday.

Plans after graduating: I have a job in downtown Cleveland. I will be working for Ohio Online doing Web design, development and programming.

Outside of the Office: I like to sleep, play computer and video games, and spend time with my friends.

Something unique about Bobby: I deleted my Facebook account - I never used it!

What he'll miss most about Athens: I'm going to miss sleeping in until 1 p.m. and, of course, spending all of my hard-earned Career Services money on Court Street!

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