

The introduction can make or break a letter of recommendation. It's like the first impression when meeting someone, it sets the tone for the rest of the letter and it can make or break the recommendation. A great introduction can show the person being recommended in a positive light, establishing their credibility and trustworthiness. But if it's weak, it can harm their chances.

A good introduction should clearly convey the writer's relationship to the person they're recommending and highlight their accomplishments and qualifications. This helps to establish the person as a strong candidate and makes them more likely to be selected. But if the start of the recommendation is lacking in these details, it can make the reader question the writer's judgement and ultimately lead to the letter being overlooked.

Key Elements to Include

When you're writing the beginning of a letter of recommendation, there are a few things that are very important to include. First and foremost, make sure to clearly say how you know the person you're recommending. This is crucial because it gives the reader some background and shows that you're credible as someone who knows the person well. Be specific about how you know them, like how long you've known them and in what capacity.

Next, it's important to highlight the person's specific skills or qualities that make them a great fit for the opportunity they're going for. Include examples to back it up. These can be things like technical skills, leadership experience, teamwork skills, or any other qualities that are relevant. Also, make sure to mention that the person you're recommending has been successful in their field and has the potential to excel in the opportunity they're applying for.

Additionally, it's good to mention what the letter is for, for instance: what job or opportunity the person is applying for. If possible, say how you got the letter of recommendation. The reader should be able to understand the purpose of the letter and why you think the person you're recommending is a great fit.

Crafting an Engaging Opening

When crafting the introduction to a letter of recommendation, it is imperative to consider the techniques that are most effective in capturing the reader's attention and creating a good first impression for the person being recommended. One such technique is to begin with a memorable quote or personal anecdote that serves as a hook, immediately grabbing the reader's attention and providing insight into the person being recommended. For instance, if the person being recommended has a unique hobby or has achieved something outstanding, the writer can use that as the quote or anecdote to start the letter, thereby making the person stand out and creating interest in the reader.

Another technique for crafting an engaging opening is to begin with a sentence that makes a statement, rather than a generalization. This can be achieved by making a bold or assertive statement about the person's qualifications or skills. For example, instead of starting with a general statement such as "Jill is a hardworking and dedicated employee," consider starting with a statement like "Jill's exceptional work ethic and unwavering dedication have made her a valuable asset to our team." This statement immediately communicates the person's strengths, without overgeneralizing.

Another way to make the start more engaging is to use active verbs and strong nouns. It helps the reader understand the person's qualifications and achievements, it sound more

persuasive than starting with passive sentences. For example, instead of saying “the person was responsible for project management” say “the person successfully managed multiple projects.”

In short, you can use memorable quotes or anecdotes, make statements, and use active verbs and strong nouns to make the start more engaging and persuasive. This can help to capture the reader’s attention and make a strong first impression for the person being recommended.

What to Include in the Start

When you’re writing the start of a letter of recommendation, it’s crucial to include some key information to make it effective. First and foremost, make sure to include your contact information like your name, address, phone number, and email, at the top of the letter. This is important so the recipient knows who is writing the letter.

It’s also important to include the context of the letter, like what job or opportunity the person is applying for. If appropriate, also explain how exactly you know the person you are recommending. The reader of the letter should be able to understand the purpose and why you think the person you’re recommending is a great fit.

Establish Credibility and Trustworthiness in the Intro

The beginning of a recommendation letter plays a crucial role in establishing credibility and trustworthiness for the person being recommended.

One way to do that is by including specific examples of the

person's qualifications and accomplishments. If they have a degree or relevant work experience, mention that in the introduction. By giving specific examples, you're showing the reader that the person you're recommending is qualified and can handle the opportunity they're applying for.

Another tip is to keep the language professional, avoid using overly emotional or overly familiar language. This makes the letter more formal and shows that you're being objective. It also makes the person you're recommending look credible and trustworthy.

Templates for the Start of a Letter of Recommendation

You can use the below templates to get a start on writing your letter of recommendation. There are examples for: a job, a friend, an employee, a teacher, a scholarship, grad school, and for general use with an example quote and an example anecdote.

Keep in mind that these introduction samples are just a starting point. It's important to customize the intro to the specific person and opportunity they're applying for. It will make the recommendation even more credible and personal.

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for a Job

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Company/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

[Hiring Manager's Full Name]

[Hiring Manager's Title]

[Company/Organization Name]

[Company/Organization Address]

[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Hiring Manager's Full Name],

I am writing to recommend [Name] for the [Position] opportunity at [Company/Organization Name]. Having worked with [Name] for [length of time] in [Position held], I can confidently attest to [Name]'s exceptional qualifications and outstanding accomplishments. [Name] holds a [Degree], and has [number of years] of experience in [Industry/Field]. [Name] has consistently demonstrated an unwavering dedication to their work and an impressive ability to think critically and [Specific Ability].

...

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for a Friend

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State ZIP Code]

[Phone Number]

[Email Address]

[Recipient Name]

[Recipient Title]

[Recipient Company/Organization]

[Recipient Address]

[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Hello [Recipient Name],

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to recommend my friend [Name] for [Position/Opportunity]. I have known [Name] for [length of time], and I can confidently say that [Name] is one of the most dedicated, hardworking and skilled individuals I have had the privilege of knowing.

...

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for Employee

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Company/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Recipient Name]
[Recipient Title]
[Recipient Company/Organization]
[Recipient Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to recommend [Name], an employee under my supervision at [Your Company/Organization], for the [Position] opportunity at [Recipient's Company/Organization]. I have had the pleasure of working with [Name] for [length of time] and I can confidently attest to [Name]'s exceptional qualifications and outstanding accomplishments. [Name] has been a valuable

member of our team at [Your Company/Organization], and has consistently demonstrated an unwavering dedication to their work.

...

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for a Teacher

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your School/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Recipient Name]
[Recipient Title]
[Recipient School/Organization]
[Recipient Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to recommend [Name], a fellow teacher at [Your school/Organization], for the [Position] opportunity at [Recipient's School/Organization]. I have had the pleasure of working with [Name] for [length of time] and I can confidently attest to [Name]'s exceptional qualifications and outstanding accomplishments as an educator. [Name] holds a [Degree] in [field of study] and has [number of years] of teaching experience. [Name] is a highly skilled educator, who consistently demonstrates a deep understanding of [subjects taught].

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Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for a Scholarship

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your University/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Scholarship Committee Name]
[Scholarship Committee Title]
[Scholarship Committee Company/Organization]
[Scholarship Committee Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear Scholarship Committee,

I am writing to recommend [Name] for the [Scholarship Name] scholarship. As [Name]'s [position held by you] at [University/Company], I have had the pleasure of observing [Name]'s dedication and accomplishments in the field of [related field]. [Name] is currently a [student's current academic level] majoring in [field of study] at [University], and has consistently demonstrated exceptional academic performance and commitment to their studies.

...

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation for Grad School

[Your Name]

[Your Title]
[Your University/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Admissions Committee Name]
[Graduate School Name]
[University/Organization Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

[Graduate School Name] Admissions Committee,

I am writing to recommend [Name] for the [Graduate Program] at [University/Organization Name]. As [Name]'s [Position held by you] at [University/Company], I have had the pleasure of observing [Name]'s dedication and passion in the field of [related field]. [Name] is a [student's current academic level] majoring in [field of study] at [University/Organization] and has consistently demonstrated exceptional academic performance and commitment to their studies.

...

Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation with a Quote

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Company/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Recipient Name]
[Recipient Title]
[Recipient Company/Organization]
[Recipient Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to enthusiastically recommend [Name] for [Position/Opportunity]. I have had the pleasure of working with [Name] for [length of time] at [Your Company/Organization], and I can confidently say that [Name] is one of the most dedicated, hardworking and skilled individuals I have had the privilege of knowing.

"I have yet to meet a problem that [Name] couldn't solve with a positive attitude and an enthusiastic approach," a quote that describes [Name] perfectly. From day one, [Name] has been a pleasure to work with, always going above and beyond, and always striving to exceed expectations.

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Template: Start of a Letter of Recommendation with an Anecdote

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Company/Organization]
[Your Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

[Recipient Name]
[Recipient Title]
[Recipient Company/Organization]

[Recipient Address]
[City, State ZIP Code]

[Date]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to unconditionally recommend [Name] for [Position/Opportunity]. I have had the pleasure of working with [Name] for [length of time] at [Your Company/Organization], and I can confidently say that [Name] is one of the most dedicated, hardworking and skilled individuals I have had the privilege of knowing.

I remember one particular incident that perfectly sums up [Name]'s character, we had a huge project deadline approaching and one of our team members got sick. [Name] took the lead and single-handedly managed to complete the project on time and within budget. [Name]'s ability to remain calm under pressure and find creative solutions to difficult problems was nothing short of impressive.

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