

QUICK TIPS FOR CHOOSING SOMEONE FOR A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION



Personal letters in an application give unique insight and perspective on the applicant. Choosing the right person to write that letter is an important decision.

A letter of recommendation is an important tool in the scholarship application process and finding the right person to write your reference letter can help you find success in your efforts. So, how do you know whom to ask?

In general, you should look for individuals who have special knowledge regarding one or more of these areas about you:

Unique Information

Your scholarship application will provide the scholarship committee with much information about you—so, it's important to select individuals who can provide new information not already found in the application. Important attributes such as work ethics and determination can only be evaluated by those who know you best and your letter of recommendation can provide this type of information.

Your Academic Ability

A strong letter of recommendation can provide other aspects of your academic ability, other than just your GPA. Your ability to overcome obstacles, or your willingness to take on more difficult challenges in the classroom are indicators of your academic ability. It is important not to simply select that instructor that gave you that "A+," but to choose those who have witnessed your resilience in the classroom.

Your Interpersonal Skills

How well do you get along with other people? Attributes such as leadership skills, ability to work well in group situations, and willingness to seek help from others are all indicators for success in college. Choose someone who can write about how well you work with others.

Work Ethic

Think of those times when you were faced with a daunting task and you jumped right in and finished the job without complaint. A strong work ethic is critical to success in college and an effective letter of recommendation will help the scholarship committee positively evaluate your willingness to work hard! Individuals who have personally witnessed your strong work ethic, such as professors, former supervisors, coworkers, or those for whom you have provided services such as baby-sitting or mowing the yard are good choices to ask for a letter of recommendation.

General Tips

- Choose those who have known you recently. Those who have not had a relationship with you in recent years may not have as much information about you as those whom you have spent time with in the last year or so.
- Choose those who really know you! Yes, your parents may know some important or famous person who would be willing to provide a letter of recommendation for you, but unless this famous person knows you personally, then his or her letter will be of little use to the scholarship committee.
- DON'T ASK: Family, friends, girlfriends/boyfriends.
- DO ASK
 - Former supervisor/employee
 - Coworkers
 - Religious leader, pastor, or minister
 - Teachers/professors
 - Organizations for whom you have volunteered

A recommendation letter provides knowledge about you that cannot be found in other places. Selecting the right person to write your recommendation letters is an important step in the scholarship application process.

Requesting a letter of recommendation for an NCTC Foundation scholarship is as easy as submitting an email address. Contact us to learn more about the scholarship application process.

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