

Letters of Recommendation for Teacher Candidates

Whom should I ask to be a reference or write a letter of recommendation?

- A cooperating teacher (Important for new teachers)
- A site supervisor (Important for new teachers)
- A field experience teacher
- Principal(s) or superintendent(s)
- Teachers or administrators who observed you teaching
- Mentor teachers

If you cannot get three references from the above list, you may also consider:

- Department heads
- College faculty or advisor from your subject area
- A current or former employer from a related employment experience
- A current or former director/supervisor of volunteer experiences
- A leadership or community service affiliation

What do I need to do to ask someone to be a reference?

Always ask permission to use someone's name as a reference. Provide the references with a current resume. This will give them a broader view of your qualifications. Keep them informed about your job search. Copies of job listings in which you are interested will help them identify the most relevant aspects of your background to highlight with an employer. Be sure to send a thank you to each of your references after you have obtained employment.

What should a letter of recommendation look like?

Writers should limit their comments to one page, using their institution's letterhead. It is important that the writers date the letters and include their signature and contact information. Your references should come from those who can speak directly about your abilities in the classroom and/or experiences working with children. A letter of recommendation should be typed or computer generated, not handwritten.

University of St. Thomas Career Development Center Questions? Contact Us!

(651) 962-6761 career@stthomas.edu
www.stthomas.edu/careerdevelopment
123 Murray Herrick Campus Center
2115 Summit Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota

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How many references should I have?

It is suggested that you limit your references to no less than 3 and no more than 5. References should be selected in relation to the position for which you are applying.

How do I obtain letters of recommendation?

You may obtain letters of recommendation by requesting them directly from the writer.

Other Tips:

- For the writer's convenience, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.
- After you have received the letter of recommendation, it is appropriate to send a thank you letter to the writer.
- Reference writers may provide a letter of recommendation to the candidate on their organization's letterhead.
- Reference letters should be no more than 1 page in length.
- Candidates should always retain the original letter of recommendation and only send copies to the employer.
- It is important that you maintain current letters of recommendation.

Sources and Resources:

<http://www.studentteaching.org/id30.html>

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