

**Mansfield University - Department of Psychology**  
**MEMO CONCERNING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

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**TO:** Mansfield Psychology Students

**FROM:** The Psychology Department Faculty

**RE:** Letters of Recommendation

For us to write the best possible letter in support of your application for graduate school or a job, you should provide us with the kind of information that is outlined below. It will help us to personalize our recommendation for you. When you prepare this material, please feel free to speak well of yourself--if you do not think you are deserving of whatever position you are applying for, others may not either!

- A. Please supply us with a copy of your resume and current Program Evaluation. Any other materials you have prepared for applications would also be helpful, for example, a biographical statement. If you want constructive criticism on any of this material, please attach a note indicating that you do and when it needs to be returned to you. For recommendations that must go off campus, please include a stamped envelope addressed to the appropriate person, program, or office. Be very specific about the addressee and where you would like any materials sent. Be clear on which letters are to be returned in a sealed and signed envelope to you and which are to be mailed directly to the school or employer. If you are applying to graduate school, include the title and degree of the program. Be sure to complete and sign any portions of forms that are for you to fill in, including any release about whether you choose to waive your right to see a completed recommendation.
- B. On a separate sheet of paper, please type the following information that is not already on your resume in an outline format.
1. Name and current address.
  2. Current date.
  3. A list of the schools/employers you are applying to, the deadline for each letter of recommendation, and the procedure for sending the letter or returning it to you.
  4. Indicate the type of application, for example for a specific school or job.
  5. Remind us of the basis of all of your contacts with the recommender. Include formal courses you have taken with the professor from whom you are requesting the letter (and the grade you received), internship experiences, advisory relationships, and any other contact we may have had. This will refresh our memory and allow us to prepare the most effective letter.
  6. Outline your academic achievements. Tell us about your grades (including your G.P.A.), strengths, weaknesses, how your academic preparation at Mansfield has prepared you for what you are being recommended for. Include anything extra or unique about your background. If you have any GRE or similar scores, let us know about them here.
  7. Tell us about your non-academic background. Include jobs, hobbies that may be relevant, community work, public service or social involvements, residence life assignments.
  8. Tell us what you would like to be doing with your life 5 years from now, 10 years from now.
  9. List your 5 major personal or social traits that would seem relevant to a position.
  10. List your 5 major academic or work traits that would seem relevant to a position.
  11. Provide your own assessment of your maturity and emotional stability.
  12. Discuss what you might do if you don't get the kinds of positions you are presently pursuing.
- C. Be sure to drop us a note to let us know the outcome of your graduate school or job applications. We want to hear from you and we always like to receive letters (and professional business cards!) from former graduates. You can email your information to Wanda LaBar at [wlabar@mansfield.edu](mailto:wlabar@mansfield.edu) or Psychology Mailbox at [psychology@mansfield.edu](mailto:psychology@mansfield.edu) so we can update the website.