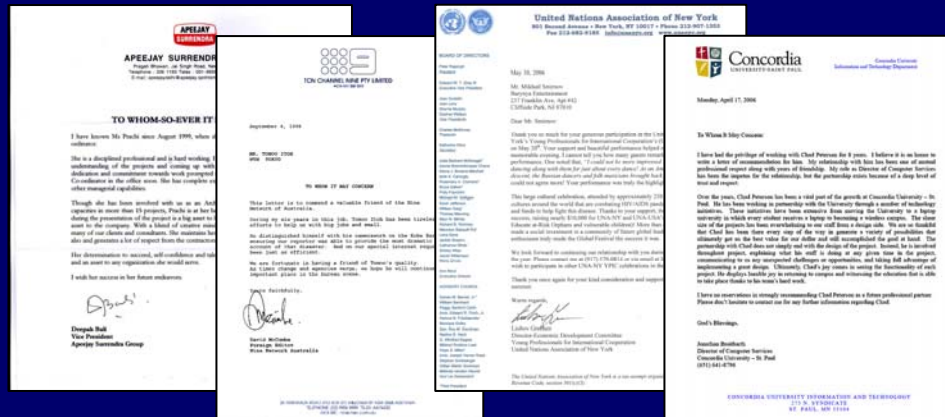


“Requesting Recommendation Letters: A Few Do’s & Don’ts”



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Whom to Ask:

1) Academic professors

- “Technical” fields
(science/engineering/medicine)



*Recognition by
admissions
committee*

2) Work supervisors

- Co-ops/internships



*Highest level
possible*



Whom Not to Ask:

1) Professor who taught large class

- Unless they really “know” you

2) Department chair / Dean

- Unless you have a **genuine** connection

3) Professor in non-major related course

- Humanities, non-technical electives

4) Sponsors of extracurricular activities

- Dean of Students, coaches, advisors

5) Anyone who knows your family

- Godparents, neighbors, relatives



Common Mistakes

- Asking a professor who can't write a good letter
- Not including professors from your major
- Not asking person from significant experience
Research advisor, work supervisor
- Letter filled with non-recommendation content
Program descriptions, course content
- Rec letters from graduate students



How to Earn a Good Rec Letter

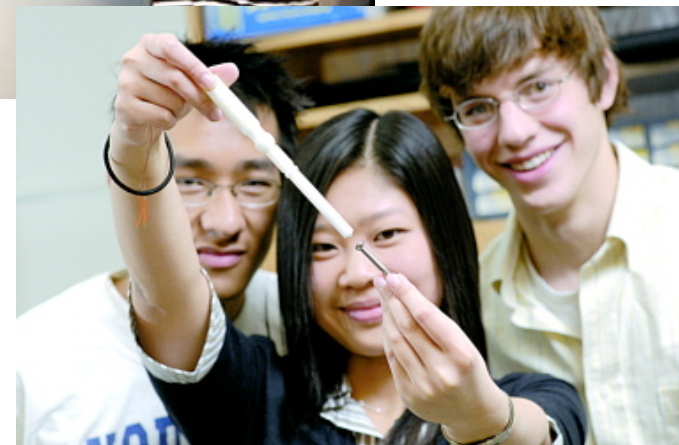
1) Research experiences



**2) Teaching assistant/
grader for course**



3) Senior design projects



How to Request a Rec Letter

- **ASK** for a recommendation letter
Give the option to say “No”
- Allow sufficient time (several **weeks-month**)
- Provide all necessary materials at once:
 - Forms, envelopes, stamps
 - Contact & address information
 - Background information (web site link)
- Agree to confidential submission of letter
- Provide suggested content/focus of letter

Make Suggestions & Follow Up

- Highlight **key points** of your application

Provide a bullet point list

- Explain **rationale** for asking recommender

Explicit motivation for letter

- Relate **experience** to application goals

Cohesive agreement in themes

- Send “thankful” reminders



How Rec Letters are Interpreted

- **Sincere, genuine, personal** descriptive language
- Duration of relationship & familiarity
- Positive attributes clearly highlighted
- Lack of “red flags”

