

Unit 3

Personal Letters



A letter is a written message containing information from one party to another. Letters guarantee the preservation of communication between both parties. They bring friends or relatives closer together, enrich personal relationships and provide a satisfying means of self-expression. Knowing how to write a letter is a fundamental skill you'll use in your future job. Here's a basic guide on how to put your thoughts to paper in the correct format.



Useful Words and Expressions

applicant	<i>n.</i> 应聘者
authorized	<i>adj.</i> 委任的
curriculum	<i>n.</i> 课程
execute	<i>vt.</i> 实行, 实施
intern	<i>n.</i> 实习生
mastered	<i>adj.</i> 精通的
punctual	<i>adj.</i> 守时的
qualification	<i>n.</i> 资格
recipient	<i>n.</i> 收信人
secretary-general	<i>n.</i> 秘书长
well-trained	<i>adj.</i> 训练有素的
bachelor degree (BA/BS)	学士学位 (文学学士/理学学士)
chief examiner	主考官
date of availability	到职时间
employment history	工作经历
expected salary	期望得到的薪水
job vacancy	职位空缺
keep up with the progress	跟上进度
master degree (MA/MS)	硕士学位(文学硕士/理学硕士)
on track	步入正轨的
position desired	希望职位
personal leave	事假
sleep through	睡过头
sick leave	病假
standing director	常务理事

Section A Job Hunting



Lead-in

Application letters are an essential document for applying to any institute, job, bank, visa, etc.. It must be constructed proficiently yet with a professional approach so that it becomes successful in grabbing the reader's attention.

Text A

Strategies and Techniques for Job Search Success

It's important to spend time writing your application letter, but first let's take a look at some of the techniques for planning on how you are going to organize and manage your job search.

Manage your job search. Take the time to organize your job search and the entire process will be easier. Use the free tools that are available to help you plan and manage your job search. They will help you start your job search on the right foot and keep it on track.

Write a resume that works. Your resume needs to be professional and polished, because if you don't have a professional resume, your application materials probably won't get a second glance from a hiring manager.

Update your **LinkedIn**¹ profile. One of the most important parts of LinkedIn is your profile. That's what you use to connect with people in your network and your profile is how you get found on LinkedIn by potential employers.

Update your Profile so that it's current and compelling. If you're unemployed, use your LinkedIn profile to let employers know you are job searching.

Use your network. Once you have taken the time to build a network, use it. It's one of the most important job search resources you have.

When you apply for jobs, check to see who you know at the company. Your contacts may be able to assist you with getting an interview and give you inside information on the job and the





company.

Use a job search engine. Use a job search engine to find job listings from a variety of sources. Take a step further and use the advanced search options to further refine your job search. Set up alerts so you're notified when new positions that meet your *criteria*² are posted.

Get found by employers. When you're conducting a job search, you need to make it easy for employers to find you online. Employers, who can be *inundated*³ with resumes when they post jobs, often seek passive, qualified candidates who aren't necessarily looking for work, but who may be interested if the right job comes along.

Anyone who doesn't want to pass up what could be an excellent opportunity should make their professional *credentials*⁴ readily accessible online.

Ace the job interview. Despite having the best credentials for the job, if you blow the interview, you're not going to get a job offer. Those top interview tips mentioned in the previous unit will help you cover everything you need to know to successfully ace a job interview.

Follow up after an interview. It's always important to say thank you after a job interview and after a second interview as well. Employers think more highly of candidates who take the time to follow up. It's also important to thank everyone you interviewed with and everyone who assisted with your job search.

Sample of Application Letter

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my interest in the open assistant manager position within the Department of External Communications. I am currently an administrative assistant within the department and feel that I am ready to make the jump to the next level.

I have served as an administrative assistant within the Department of External Communications for five years. During this time, I have received outstanding job evaluations on a yearly basis. In 2014, I won Employee of the Year honors. In this new position, I would not only be able to continue my high quality of work but also train others to help improve our company.

I have attached my resume and references. I can be reached with any questions at my e-mail dsmith@hotmail.com or by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. Thank you for this opportunity, and I hope to speak with you soon.

Sincerely,

David Smith

(660 words)

摘自: <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/findajob/tp/jobsearchtechniques.htm>



Notes

1. LinkedIn 领英（商务化人际关系网）
2. criteria 标准
3. inundate 洪水般扑来
4. credential 证书

Text B

How to Write an Application Letter

Although some jobs only require the applicants to fill in a form, important positions often need a submission of a job application letter. Knowing how to write a job application letter is an art that not only all students of business, commerce, banking, and finance need to learn, but anyone who one day hopes to apply for the position they have always dreamed of.

A successful job application letter addresses all the points stated in the job advertisement. The manner in which a person responds to a commercial announcement alerts *recruiters*¹ and employers of their capacity, their level of education, personality, and professionalism.



If the document is set appropriately, the employer concentrates on the content and meaning. If your arrangement on the sheet of paper seems incorrect, unusual or non-traditional, the prospective employer will be distracted or dismissive.

☆ Make a list of all the information to go in the letter.

☆ Be brief, so that the letter can fit into a single page. Set out the text with wide margins.

Position your address, the employer's address in the correct spaces.

☆ The greeting starts, "Dear ..." Always address the employer by their formal name. It is "Dear Jones Firth," not "Dear Jones."

☆ The salutation must be formal, such as "Best regards," or "Thank you for your time and consideration."

☆ Type your full name in upper case below your legal signature, if necessary.

☆ Job application letters are customarily formatted in block style without *indents*² with all lines *aligned*³ left. Aligning all paragraphs to the left is more *legible*⁴ than full justification.

It is not wise to use slang, technical jargon, abbreviations, contractions, or unexplained acronyms in a job application letter.

A job application letter has its own appropriate tone and attitude: confident but unassuming. It is improper to write overly long sentences full of pretensions or self-satisfying phrases.

Personal subjects, such as family news or casual information, should be left out. Always state the reason for the application, the job in question, where you found the announcement, and why you think you are the person most suitable to take up the position.

Sample of Application Letter

Dear Mr. Antony Smith,

I am writing to apply for the Marketing Communication Specialist position in the Business Development Unit of ABC International. I learned of the opening through the *online job board Monster.com*. I read the requirements and responsibilities of the job posting carefully and I strongly believe I have the experience, skills, and creative abilities to be a positive asset to your company.

I am experienced in working for national and international companies. My past responsibilities include researching and authoring strategic intelligence reports for upper management to assist in new product development. I *envisioned*⁵ and wrote a new-hire training manual that cut employee orientation and training time by 60% for a national building supply manufacturer. To combat delays in collateral ordering, I developed an online system that allows customers to log in and download marketing materials for specific products as needed.

I possess strong people skills and I forge productive relationships with coworkers in my own department and those from other departments within the organization. I have excellent written and oral communication skills and I am well versed at presenting information in front of small and large groups and in creating written presentations for internal and external stakeholders. I have a Bachelor of Marketing Communications Degree and certifications in Strategic Management and Business Research Methods.

I am enclosing my resume for your consideration. I would appreciate an interview to discuss my qualifications for this opportunity with you in detail. Please feel free to call me at xxx-xxx-xxxx at your convenience or you may reach me by e-mail at ksmith@hotmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Respectfully,
Katherine Brown

(644 words)

摘自: <https://academichelp.net/business-writing-help/employment/write-job-application-letter.html>



Notes

1. recruiter 招聘人员
2. indent 首行缩排

3. align 对齐
4. legible 清晰易读的
5. envision 展望



Exercises

I. Retelling

Directions: Read Text A & Text B carefully, and try to retell the tips on job hunting.

II. Pair-work

Directions: Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

1. What benefits do you think would be most attractive to someone who has just finished his or her studies and is looking for a job?
2. What do you think a potential recruiter expects from an application letter?
3. What's the difference between application letter and resume?

Section B Recommendation



Lead-in

Recommendation letter praises the person being recommended through a written letter. Aspects discussed in a letter of recommendation include qualities of the individual, characteristics, and capabilities in performing a specific task or function. The most common recommendation letter is addressed to an employer or an educational institution.

Text A

How to Make a Recommendation Request

Whether you are applying to an academic program, you are a recent graduate seeking a job in your chosen field, or you are an experienced professional with a resume seeking a position in



academia or business, knowing who and how to ask for a recommendation letter can help you reach your goals.

At least six weeks in advance of your deadline for submitting the letters, contact your professors in person or by e-mail to ask them if they are willing to write a letter. Provide the professor with specific information to help them recall you and your accomplishments. List classes you have taken from this professor. Specify course numbers, titles, semester, year, brief descriptions of projects you developed, and final grade, how they might relate to your current application. List other kinds of work you may have done with this professor: thesis, *portfolio*¹, internship, independent study, etc..

You need to tell your professor when the letter of recommendation is due, why you need this letter, and what position you are applying for. Don't forget to include a copy of your vita or resume.

Remember that it is unlikely that your recommender will be able to address accomplishments that he or she was not involved in with you, work done for other professors, or work done outside of the program.

Do not assume that your professors will agree to write a letter for you. Ask politely for a response to your request. Allow one week for the response. If the answer is yes, write a brief thank-you note. If the answer is no, contact the next person on your list. If you do not receive a response, contact the professor again with a reminder.

Sample of Recommendation Request Letter

Dear Professor Du Hua,

My name is Li Ling, and I am a senior in the Journalism program. You taught me News Interview and Writing in fall 2014. You gave me an A, for which I am very appreciative, and I would be most grateful if you could recommend me for a columnist position at the *Shenyang Daily*.

You were the first person who came to mind for a recommendation because, really, no one knows me better on a professional and scholarly level. From my occasional late papers to my awkward reporting as a young, irresponsible sophomore, you were tough and strict and pushed me to be better in both writing and life. You refused to discount me as a slacker and, with your ever-present sense of humor, molded me into a real journalist and responsible person. You watched me grow, and I credit my success to your uncompromising standards and sky-high expectations. The position for which I'm *vying*² is a daily column on fashion, both past and present. I know that my concise, clear writing and the journalistic integrity you *instilled*³ in me combined with a fierce passion for color blocking will make for some entertaining and informative features.

The editor at the *Shenyang Daily*, Ma Tao, would like my application and recommendation letter on his desk no later than Feb. 6th, so, ideally, it should be completed by January 30th.

If this sounds agreeable to you, I'll stop by your office hours this Tuesday with the recommendation form and pick it up from you as soon as it is completed.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. I also wanted to say how much I enjoyed your course. I can't express how much I've taken away from your lectures, and I know I'll use the things I learned in your course and apply them to the rest of my work. Your mentoring truly had a positive impact in my life and I can never thank you enough.

Sincerely,
Li Ling

(628 words)

摘自: <http://www.wikihow.com/Ask-for-a-Recommendation-Letter>



Notes

1. portfolio 作品集
2. vie 竞争
3. instill 逐渐灌输

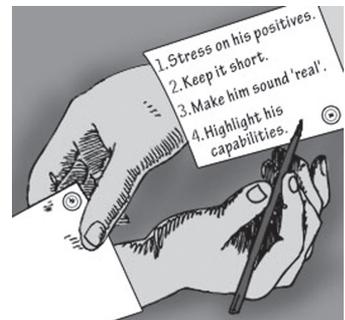
Text B

Recommendation for Employment

When asked to write a recommendation letter, the occasion is a formal business one: a boss, or a superior or colleague must list favorable aspects and attributes and put them in a letter intended to demonstrate the positive qualities of the bearer to a future employer.

When business students complete their studies and start to forge a career, one of the first letters of recommendation they need is from their course instructor, lecturer, or degree supervisor. Steps for writing a recommendation letter are as follows:

- ☆ Hold a meeting with the person for whom the letter will be recommended.
- ☆ Gather as much information about the person as you can.
- ☆ Ask the person to be recommended to bring along any certificates and other documents so that qualifications can be confirmed.
- ☆ Create a folder for notes, cuttings, photocopies, and other information that refer to the person.
- ☆ Consolidate your notes well to facilitate organization.
- ☆ Make a point list of all aspects to cover in the recommendation letter.



- ☆ Understand that there are some ethical issues related to this kind of writing.
- ☆ Draft brief paragraphs to highlight each of the candidate's qualities.
- ☆ Write the top paragraph which introduces you as an authority and the person to be recommended.
- ☆ Ensure you know how to format and layout a recommendation letter.

You also need to include the background information relating to the candidate's dealings with you, and why your recommendation carries weight. At the very end of the letter, thank the recipient for the time and the actions he may take.

Sample of Recommendation Letter

Dear Peter Marlow,

It is my pleasure to recommend David Smith for the position of Junior Website Editor at ABC Corp Ltd.. As Mr. Smith's degree supervisor, I have worked closely with him for the past 13 months. During my work with David on his dissertation, I have come to know him as a reliable and responsible person, an intelligent student and a great team-worker. David is a diligent and bright scholar, and working with him was a fascinating experience, as he is always full of new ideas, interesting suggestion and innovative approaches. At the same time, David values other people's opinions and advice, an excellent listener and a helpful friend. Looking back at my 22-year experience of working with students on their dissertations, I can say that David is one of my few favorite students.

There were a couple of times when he surprised me by *altruistically*¹ putting aside his own interests and helping others instead. Once, I found out that David spent the night before his proposal presentation helping his teammate prepare a presentation, while anyone else would probably have chosen to spend this precious time preparing for his own important presentation the next morning. David is tolerant and respectful; he is one of the most polite students I have ever worked with. But, what I find especially valuable and peculiar about David is his incredible attention to details and his desire to polish everything to perfection, no matter how much time and effort it requires. All along, while working on his dissertation, David demonstrated particular persistence in making sure that every word was a perfect fit, and that there was nothing at all at which to *cavil*². So it only stands to reason that David's dissertation earned the highest grade and everyone on the committee was genuinely impressed by his work.

If I had to describe Mr. Smith in just one word, I would call him a perfectionist, as to me he is the absolute embodiment of what this word means. So, when I found out that David was applying for a position as a Junior Website Editor at your firm, I was happy and had no doubt that he would get the spot. I can hardly imagine anyone more suited for this position. Whether it is team projects or individual assignments, David will brilliantly cope with every task and will show plenty of initiative to enrich every project in which he will be involved. I am immensely happy for David to have chosen your firm, as I believe your wonderful reputation and steady development will serve as the best environment for David to *nurture*³ his talents and skills as an