**Career Planning 101 – Reference Letters**

Reference letters are vital when applying for a job, a post-secondary program and scholarships. It is important to let the writer know exactly WHY you want the reference and WHY you believe you are a good candidate for their reference.

# How to ask for a Reference Letter

When you ask for reference, how you write your reference letter or email message request is important.

You will want to give the person you're asking an out, in case they aren't comfortable giving you a positive recommendation. It's important to make sure that the individual who is recommending you for employment can give you not just a reference, but a good reference.

In addition, do not give out anyone's name as a reference without their permission and without knowing what they are going to say about you. The individual who is giving you a reference needs to know ahead of time that they may be contacted regarding a reference for you.

**Important:**

1. Plan ahead – give the writer at least one to two weeks notice as a sign of courtesy.
2. Follow up – send your writer a simple reminder closer to your ‘pick-up’ date.

## Sample Email Reference Request Letter

**Subject:** <Your Name> Reference Request

Dear <teacher/employer/friend>,

I am writing to you to request that you provide a reference for me as I begin my <job search/scholarship application>. As you know, I will be completing my Dogwood Diploma this spring, and have found several exciting opportunities that I am exploring.

As my <teacher/employer>, I believe that a reference from you would provide a potential employer with information to recommend me as a <job position>.

If you need any additional information, please contact me via email or phone.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

<Your Name, cell #, email>