

REFERENCE LETTER TIPS

Almost everyone at some point in time will be asked to provide a **Reference Letter**, whether it's for employment, educational scholarships, or other opportunities that may further your success.

When asking an individual to provide you with reference letter, ask someone who knows you well and knows your potential to succeed in a particular career field or educational program. Possible reference sources may be your counselor, professor/teacher, supervisor, or colleagues. Family members are not viewed as an impartial reference source and should not be used. The CIRI Foundation keeps an applicant's reference letter on file for **three (3) years** from the date it was written and signed.

The following suggestions may be helpful when you find an individual to write a reference letter for you:

- Give the referrer a copy of your resume and or educational description and describe why you need the reference. Your resume should list a stated purpose, work experience, educational history, and other accomplishments. If you know the referrer well, this will help the person write a better letter. The more he/she understands your objective and qualifications, the better reference he/she will be able to provide on your behalf.
- Ask the referrer to start the letter by describing how long he/she has known you and in what capacity. Include dates of employment and details about how he/she has worked with or known you.
- If the referrer is a past supervisor or co-worker, he/she should include your skills and performance and what makes/made you a good employee.
- The referrer should end by summarizing why he/she is recommending you for educational funding or a particular job. **IMPORTANT:** The letter should be signed and dated, and include the mailing address and phone number of the referrer or on company letterhead. This will provide the potential employer or educational funding office the necessary contact information to follow up if there are questions.
- Ensure that the reference letter is sent directly to you or addressed to the educational funding office. When you send out your resume or educational funding application, you should include a copy of each of the letters(s) and carry them with you to job interviews or to the educational funding office.

Send a prompt thank you letter to each of your references when you have completed your job search or received educational funding. It is wise to keep in close contact with your references for two reasons:

- 1) References can be a great networking tool to track down job leads or places to apply for additional educational funding, and
- 2) You may need their help again down the road.

SAMPLE REFERENCE LETTER

Date

The CIRI Foundation
Scholarship and Grant Department
3600 San Jeronimo Drive, Suite 256
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-2870

RE: Reference Letter for (Applicant's Name)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter on (date). My name is (referrer's name) and I was asked by (applicant's name) to provide your organization with a reference letter so that he/she can complete his/her application to meet the requirements that he/she needs for educational funding.

- I have known (applicant) for _____ years.
- I am familiar with (applicant) as his/her (supervisor, co-worker, friend, etc.).
- I knew (applicant) to be a (talented, hard-working, loyal, etc.) employee.
- (Applicant) would be a (good, great, fabulous) candidate for the TCF Scholarship and Grant Program.

You may contact me at (referrer's contact information) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(Signature of Referrer)

Name
Address
City, State and Zip Code
Phone Number
Fax Number
Email Address