

Turn evaluations into reference letters



RECOMMENDED

When you decide to make a career move, you should anticipate that application process will include a request for a portfolio, a collection of recommendation letters, and/or the district or a placement file.

One of the complications of making a career move is getting letters from current board members or others when you are not quite comfortable letting people know you are suddenly looking.

Some situations call for reference letters applicable to the specific position. In that case, you will have no choice but to personally contact each party for a tailored letter.

Many cases, however, allow for general letters of recommendation addressed “To whom it may concern”, and there is a smart way to be prepared for these circumstances.

You can incorporate the collecting reference/recommendation letters into your

annual routine. For example, if the practice of your board is to evaluate you every year in June, ask that the process include having the board president to write a letter for your file. An alternative is to request the annual letter be written by the board president each year at the end of his or her term. Explain that this is an approach recommended by one of your advisors to keep your file up-to-date. You might, instead, make the request of your board president at the end of his or her term.

Whatever timing you choose, the bottom line is that you'll have an up-to-date file with letters collected over time to substantiate your success. When the time comes to apply somewhere you'll be prepared. Stay in a district five years and you should have five letters validating your success over time by members of your board!