Writing Recommendations

Listed below are guidelines for writing letters of reference. Readers of reference letters look for the following:

- the relationship between the referee and the candidate
- specific knowledge of the candidate's subject matter background
- the candidate's duties in his/her current position
- how well the candidate performs(ed) his/her duties
- interpersonal relationship abilities
- the candidate's initiative
- specific instances of excellent performance documented
- concerns about the candidate's skills, abilities, knowledge or judgement
- positive remarks similar to those written by other referees for the candidate
- personality traits described
- student-professor or superior-subordinate relations

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