

[PROFESSOR]

[TITLE]

[DEPARTMENT]

[ADRESS]

[ADRESS]

[PHONE]

Fax: 216-368-5162

jason.mears@case.edu

*date*

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing with enthusiasm to recommend [name] … *Intro paragraph. Should name the candidate and can address the specific program to which they’re applying. But it should end with a statement of some recommendation (and hopefully, people would decline writing a letter instead of providing anything negative).*

[name] came to our lab… *This is the opportunity to provide background and the nature of the interaction. Qualifications can be listed and a general assessment of the applicant’s capabilities.*

My lab … *This is an opportunity to talk about my group in which the candidate has been immersed. Let’s talk about our science. Some faculty expound too much on their own credentials, but it is a good chance to highlight why I can offer a strong letter and attest to the applicants capabilities. It should transition to their specific role in the lab and can get into specific methods and experiments to demonstrate their level of training.* *May need multiple paragraphs.*

[name] has accomplished… *Now I get into what they did. What did they contribute to the lab, department, environment? Specifically, what have you seen anecdotally that demonstrates why they’ll be successful. This is more personalized and should provide specific examples. This can be multiple paragraphs or more focused.*

[name] was thoughtful, considerate, etc… *This is a chance to highlight the emotional intelligence of the candidate. Are they mature? Did they fit in with the group? Quiet and respectful or outgoing and dynamic? How will they fit into a program and contribute to the culture in that environment?*

To summarize or conclude, [name] is a rock star… *This is a critical culmination of the recommendation. And the wording is key. Do your recommend? Or* ***strongly*** *recommend? If you compare them to other trainees at the same stage of training, where would they rank? Are they functioning at an advanced level? Would you consider letting them to stay in your group? For a strong recommendation, this is where the WOW comes in. Strong words and descriptive words are essential to frame the qualities off the applicant. And offer to be contacted as a follow up if there are concerns. Will you go to bat for this candidate?*

Sincerely,

[Letter writer]

And all titles that highlight your level of experience.