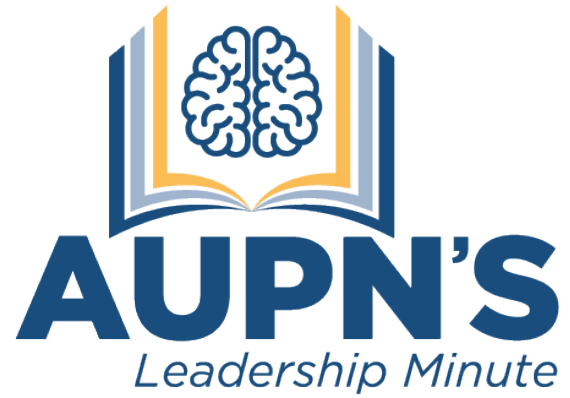




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University of Mississippi  
Medical Center



How to Write a Trainee  
Recommendation Letter



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# Writing compelling and succinct letters of recommendation for trainees

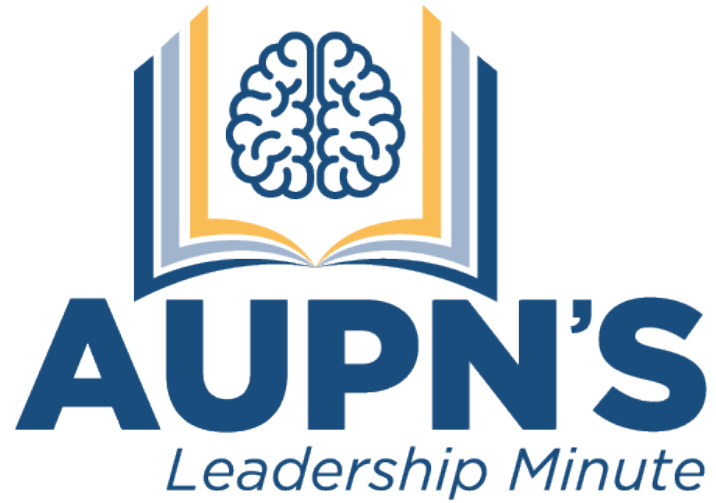
- Get to know your candidate better: meet them, they may be able to suggest important encounters or specific events for the letter, obtain CV and Statement of Purpose
- The letter should have three parts
- The first part of paragraph should introduce yourself and describe concrete traits about the candidate (examples: honest, clinical reasoning, ethical skills, etc.)
- The second paragraph should compare the applicant to others you have evaluated in numerical terms, define performance variables (example honors) and provide a global assessment of the candidate

# Writing compelling and succinct letters of recommendation for trainees

- The third paragraph should contain a statement either recommending highly without reservation, recommend without reservation, recommend with reservation or do not recommend
- If you would like to see the applicant in your program SAY SO!
- We do not suggest that you write a letter that does NOT recommend the applicant
- If you feel you cannot write a letter to support an applicant, consider whether you can write on other ACGME competencies
- If not, refuse to write a letter

# References

- Prager JD, Myer CM 3rd, Pensak ML. Improving the letter of recommendation. Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg 2010;143(3):327-330.
- Naples R, et al. Best Practices in Letters of Recommendation for General Surgery Residency: Results of Expert Stakeholder Focus Groups. J Surg Edu 2020Jul 7;S1931-7204(20)30229-4.doi: 10.1016/j.jsurg.2020.06.036.
- <https://hbr.org/2013/12/three-ways-to-say-no-to-a-reference-request>



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