

# Letters of Recommendation

It is likely that, at some point, you will need a letter of recommendation for a future opportunity. As part of his role as PI, you can expect that Vivek will write you an honest and constructive letter if desired, or will let you know (only for short-term relationships) that he does not feel that he can evaluate your work and performance honestly. If you would Vivek to write you a letter, following these steps will help make the process go more smoothly.

1. Give Vivek at least two weeks notice before the recommendation is due. If you ask him for a letter with less notice than this (and he hasn't already written you a letter for a similar position), he may say no due to time constraints. Letters take a lot of time to write well!
2. Provide the following information **in an email** (especially if it has been a while since you had Vivek as your PI or professor).
  - a. Relevant deadlines;
  - b. Details on the position (this helps Vivek frame the letter and content to be as relevant as possible): what will you do, what are you interested in gaining/why are you interested in the position, and what skills do you think are most important for Vivek to speak to;
  - c. How and when did you first interact with Vivek (particularly if your interactions were several years ago)?
  - d. Any materials you have submitted or drafted as part of your application (this helps Vivek maintain or speak to common themes);
  - e. What do you hope Vivek will say? What do you think are your relevant strong points? What are your points, opportunities, and hopes for growth?
  - f. Clear instructions for how to submit the letter.

[Matt Might](#) has a good guide for how to get a strong letter of recommendation that is worth reading.