

# **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION/ EVALUATIONS**

## **How many recommendation letters should I aim for?**

Students should aim to get a total of 2-3 letters of recommendation and/or evaluations. This is a case where more is not better.

## **Whom should I ask for letters of recommendation and/ or evaluations?**

Applicants may ask professors, supervisors, employers, community leaders, or other mentors for letters of recommendation. In general, unless the applicant has been out of school for an extended period of time, at least one letter should be from a professor. Asking a public official who does not know your work well or your capability for academic success is generally not a good idea.

## **Can I read my recommendation letters?**

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, students applying to law schools in the United States have the right to review letters of recommendation which are written for them. However, students would be well-advised to waive this right because law schools have indicated that these letters are more candid and therefore more effective.

## **What is the difference between letters of recommendation and evaluations?**

The evaluation service was recently introduced as a way for recommenders to more objectively and quantifiably assess the abilities of applicants. Once a student adds an evaluator to his list, the evaluator is contacted by LSAC and asked to electronically rate the applicant on a number of cognitive and non-cognitive skills that have been identified as necessary for success in law school. Space is also provided for evaluators to submit some comments about each applicant.

Applicants are free to use both evaluations and recommendations or one and not the other. However, careful attention should be given to the requirements of each school. There are some schools which require evaluations only and vice versa.

## **Is there an advantage to using evaluations over letters of recommendation?**

In general, no. It is a matter of personal preference on the part of the recommender/evaluator and on the part of the applicant. However, if a school prefers or requires evaluations, care must be taken to comply with this preference.

## **Are recommendations automatically sent to each school I apply to?**

No, the CAS service will show applicants which letters have been received and processed. After this time, applicants must assign letters or evaluations to the schools they apply to. **PAY ATTENTION TO THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY EACH SCHOOL!**

### **What materials should I give to my recommenders?**

Students should try to schedule in person meeting with each recommender and provide them with their transcript, resume, a paper they wrote for the class (if applicable) and their personal statement.

### **What are the qualities that should be highlighted in letters of recommendation?**

- The letter should make it clear that the recommender knows you well;
- That they've known you long enough to write with authority;
- That they are confident that they know the caliber of your work;
- They can describe your work positively;
- They have a high opinion of you;
- They know your educational and career goals;
- They should be able to favorably compare you with your peers;
- Letters should be on letterhead, signed, and dated

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