

Letters of Recommendation to Medical School

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Office of Career Services
Harvard College

Letters of Recommendation to Medical School

Why?

- Outside the numbers
- Weaving threads of application
- Drawing attention to strengths, interests, and qualities
- Saying what you can't
- i.e. "mojo"

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Who?

- Knows you and likes you ☺
- Few strict rules
- Different contexts and balance
- TF?
- Threshold for asking:
personal, personal, personal!

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How?

- Proactive communication
- Reminding them of you; stories
- Be selective—“strong letter?”
- Thank-you note to follow up
- MD/PhD-specific: faculty/research

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Letters as part of full package

- Logistics
- Timing
- Waving rights for credibility
- Must choose own letters
- Included w/ House committee letter

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Typical students concerns

- Number of letters
- Balance of recs' perspectives
- Balance of science/non-science
- Substance vs. reputation
- Recent vs. older letters
- Gauging strength of rec
