

The Acceptance Difference Maker for MBAs-The Letter of Recommendation

Looking at top-tier MBA schools, there are many which have less than a 15% acceptance rate. One way for you to stand out is the letter of recommendation. When you are looking to apply at schools, most applicants will have similar grades, GMAT scores, and accomplishments so your letters of recommendation could be the difference maker for you. This article will give you seven steps to follow to ensure that you have high quality letters of recommendation. The first step is to approach the right people to write recommendations for you. At least one letter of recommendation should come from a current supervisor. You could also have letters of recommendation written by good clients, past supervisors, or indirect supervisors. What you are looking for is someone who can give good and honest feedback of your strengths and is able to talk specifically about your skills and accomplishments. The person who you ask to write your letter of recommendation should have good writing skills as a poorly written letter will shine negatively on your application. A letter can take a bit of time to write so be sure that the person is willing to invest the time to help you with this situation. The second step is to give the people who are writing you recommendations enough time to write a good letter. A minimum amount of time needed probably is a month. With how busy life can be and the fact that a good letter does take a good amount of time, you want to put more time on your side for a good letter than less. The third step is to make your needs known. If you are applying to several different schools and have different deadlines for each, whoever is writing your letters should be aware of these deadlines. Many schools will have specific forms to fill out with you need to your recommender. The fourth step in the process is to create a list of your accomplishments achieved while working for each individual who is writing a letter for you and how these accomplishments positively affected the business. Each of these accomplishments can also promote particular traits you exhibit such as leadership, initiative, and innovation. This helps you in providing specific examples and it can cut down the amount of time needed for the recommender to write the letter. The fifth step is to provide a framework upon which your recommender should write a letter for you. You are working to send a consistent message through all materials so giving copies of these materials to your recommender can help so that the letter of recommendation can follow in the same vein. Let your recommenders know that the letter should reference specific examples of what you have done and that they do what they can to present you in the best possible light. Strengths should be mentioned but opportunities should not be. The sixth step is to encourage your recommenders to write their own letters. Some recommenders will often ask you to write the letter if it is close to the deadline. Encourage them to write their own but if they cannot, ask a friend to write this potentially because you do not want to be writing your own letters of recommendation. The recommender should still be given time to read the letter over before signing so that he or she knows what is being said. The final step is to follow up with your recommender. You may give the minimum of one month but time moves quickly. Following up can make it easier for your recommender to get this done quickly and for you to know where in the process everything is. Letters of recommendation can be time-consuming but you need to work for your particular advantages. Letters of recommendation can be a way for you to secure an advantage throughout this process.

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