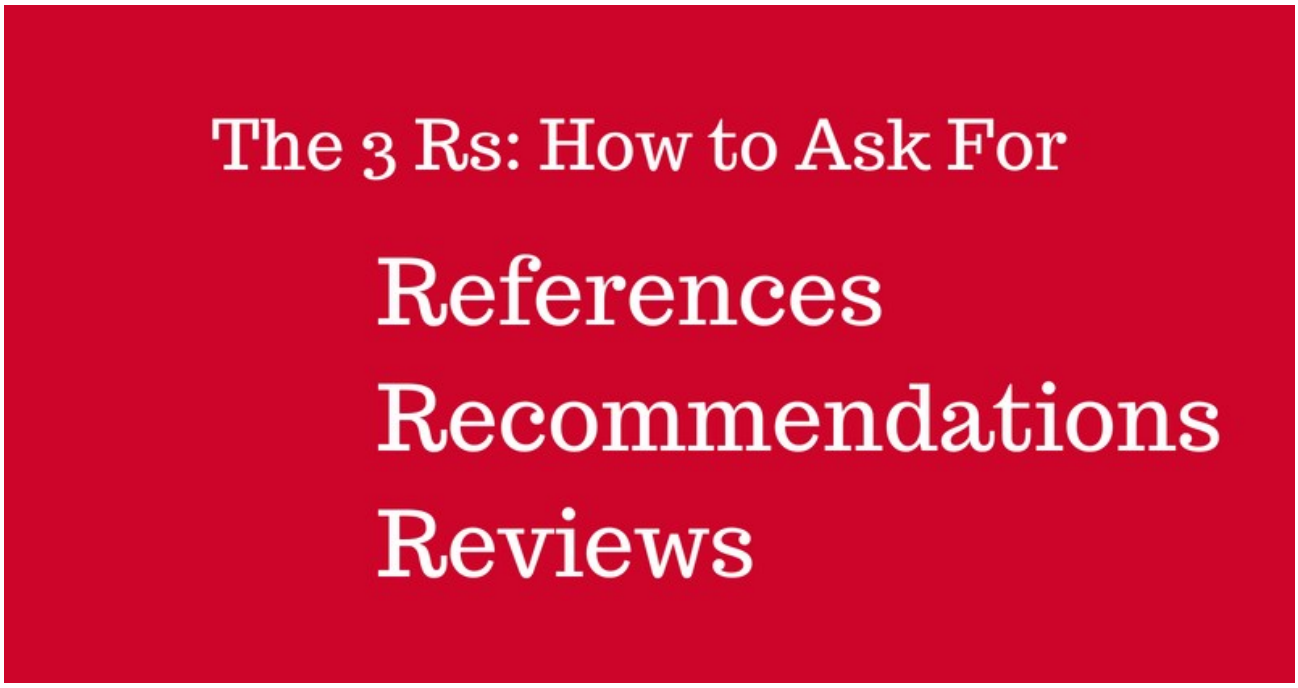
How to Ask for A Reference, Recommendation or Review

Do you need a reference to help your job search? Do you need a recommendation to boost your credibility and brand? Do you need online reviews for social proof and search rank? Sales professionals, small business owners and entrepreneurs often need references, recommendations and reviews to attest to their character, qualifications and ability to deliver their product or service.



Job Reference: Professional references are important to get new job opportunities and build your career.

- [ ] **Work References:** Ask a work supervisor or mentor or colleague - someone you have worked with directly - to vouch for your work style and abilities.
- [ ] **Ask Before You Share:** Before you use someone as a reference, ask them for permission to use their name, tell them why you need their reference and what type of opportunity you're looking.
- [ ] **Tell them How Their Reference Will Be Used:** If you request a written reference, tell the person how you'd like to use their reference and confirm they are comfortable with it. Someone may be very comfortable giving you a written reference for a job, but they may not want to see that same reference plastered on your website, LinkedIn and social media accounts.
- [ ] **Verify It's A Positive Reference:** Don't assume the person you're asking for a reference will automatically give you a good reference. Ask them if they are comfortable giving you a good reference. If they are not, thank them for their candor and move on.
- [ ] **Follow Up and Thank:** After the reference is used - and even if they are never contact for the reference - follow up and thank them for providing the reference, and tell them the results of your job search.

LinkedIn Recommendations: LinkedIn has a Recommendations feature to give and get personal and professional recommendations on your personal LinkedIn profile page from other LinkedIn members.

- [ ] **Give to Get:** Give professional recommendations to your LinkedIn contacts who you believe other LI members may want to contact. Your recommendation will show in their LI feed, as well as yours, and will stay on their profile with a link to your profile until they delete it.

- [ ] **Ask to Be Recommend:** LinkedIn has an option for you to ask a contact for a recommendation: Go to your contact's profile and select the “More...” button. You’ll see “Request a Recommendation" - click that and follow the prompts to request a personal recommendation. You'll have an opportunity to review it before it goes Live on your LI profile.

- [ ] **Think Before You Ask:** Don't just ask anyone for a recommendation, ask people who will give you a thoughtful, personal recommendation that is honest and intelligent.

- [ ] **Be Strategic:** Don't send out 15-20 recommendation requests hoping that 1 or 2 come in. 15, 10 or 3 even 5 recommendations showing up on your profile - and your feed - all at that same time looks like what it is: you're desperate to get a few good recommendations on your profile. Space them out: get 3 or 4 good recommendations over a few months.

- [ ] **Stay Current:** Once you have a few good LinkedIn recommendations, keep your Recommendation section current by asking for 1 - 2 new recommendations each year.

Online Reviews: Your website and review sites such as Facebook, Google or Yelp are important sources for people and search engines to find and rank your services before contacting you.

- [ ] **Ask for a Review:** Don't leave an online review to chance. When your customer makes a purchase or uses your service, ask them to complete an online review of your business. You can ask verbally or send an email requesting a review, with a link to the site you'd like the review posted.

- [ ] **Don't Incentivize:** Offering an incentive for a review - like a discount on their next purchase - is a commonly used strategy to get good online reviews. Both Google and Yelp have been known to penalize businesses who offer an incentive for a review. It is against Yelp's guidelines for a business to ask for a review.

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