

## Letters of recommendation structure

Letter head, USCIS address and date

1. **Presentation:** states who is writing the letter and who is he/she supporting with it.
2. **Basis of Expertise:** First and foremost, the letter must establish the writer's expertise or authority. The writer must be someone who is an expert in your field. If you are a musician, your reference may be a fellow musician, a music critic, a record producer, a band manager, an agent, or someone else who could reasonably be considered an expert on music. Thus, in the letter, he should establish the basis of his expertise. He can do this by describing the extent of his professional experience in the field.
3. **Relationship:** The writer should establish how he has come to know you and came to be familiar with your work.
4. **Talent and Ability:** At least one sentence, but preferably a paragraph or more, should be dedicated to your talent. The examiners look for buzzwords like "talent", "ability", "aptitude", and "skill", in combination with adjectives such as "extraordinary", "superb", "gifted", "unique", or "genius" - basically, all of the things that are extremely flattering, if somewhat embarrassing to ask of someone. The writer should be specific in regard to what about your work makes you so talented. Is it your vocal range? Your charisma? Your ability to evoke the perfect comedic tone from a script?
5. **Recognition and Accomplishments:** The examiners are interested in what you have done with your professional career that sets you apart from others. It could be that you were in a show that was extremely popular and successful, or that you had a lead role and helped make an otherwise small production into something special. Either way, the writer should specify these accomplishments and any recognition you received.
6. **Miscellaneous:** Any other relevant information that the writer might think would sway the examiners' opinions should be mentioned. This could include awards you've won, popular artists/performers with whom you've worked, or any other fact that might help to establish the extent to which you have extraordinary ability in your field.
7. **Conclusion:** closing paragraph that serves as a reinforcement of your extraordinary value for the American cultural scene.
8. **Polite closing phrase.**

SIGNATURE

Name and position in the institution.