

In business, letters represent an official contract. Often, when clients and vendors make arrangements for the purchase of services or products, they must write a *letter of confirmation*. This confirmation letter verifies the details of the agreement.

For example, as head of corporate training, suppose you met with a consulting firm to discuss services they could provide your company. After the meeting, you might write a letter to summarize the outcome of the discussion, confirming payment, dates, and training content.

Maybe you are an accountant. A client has contracted with you to prepare documents for a complex divorce case. This will include reports of joint property, taxes paid, and cash and investments on hand. When you return to the office, you will write a letter confirming your responsibilities, fees, and turnaround time.

Introduction In your confirmation letter's introduction, state the context of the letter so that the reader can relate to the discussion.

Discussion The letter's body clarifies the details of the agreement. Since this constitutes a legally binding document, you must specify anything agreed upon. Using highlighting techniques to make your content accessible, consider including any of the following items.

Dates	Makes/models/serial numbers	Locations	Retainer fees
Times	Personnel and certification requirements	Audiovisual equipment	Length of agreement
Costs	Menus and decorations	Parking	Room setup

Conclusion The conclusion of a confirmation letter tells the reader what to do next. You might include a request for signature, payment due dates, or method of payment.

See Figure 10.15 for a sample confirmation letter.

Recommendation Letter

You might write a letter of recommendation for many reasons:

- An employee deserves a promotion.
- An ex-employee asks for a reference for a new job.
- A colleague is nominated for an award.
- An acquaintance is applying for an education scholarship.
- A governmental agency is checking references.
- A consultant requests a reference for a new client.

When someone asks you to write a letter of recommendation, consider the *Do's* and *Don'ts* in Table 10.2.

Introduction In the introduction, include any of the following:

- Your position (or title)
- Your relationship with the person
- The length of your relationship
- The applicant's name
- The position, scholarship, or award