

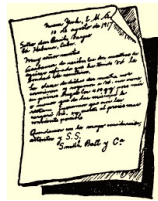
Findings from Research on Gender Bias in Letters of Recommendation

OVERVIEW:

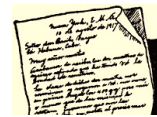
Things to think about when reading and writing letters of recommendation: letters of recommendation for men and women contain **different language** and **focus on different professional characteristics**. These differences persist **regardless of the gender of the letter writer**.

SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES:

Length



Letters for men tend to be **longer**



Letters for women tend to be **shorter**

Language

Letters for men are more likely to include

Standout adjectives like:

Outstanding
Excellent

Agentic adjectives like:

Assertive
Confident
Ambitious

Letters for women are more likely to include

Grindstone adjectives like:

Conscientious
Meticulous

Communal adjectives like:

Helpful
Kind
Sympathetic

Focus

Letters for men tend to focus on their **research, ability and career** and are more likely to characterize the subject as **leader in his field**.



Letters for women tend to focus on their **teaching, training and how they help others** and are more likely to include **references to her personal life**.

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