



# Empowering You

BTAA - Women+ in Technology  
Self-Recommendation Letter Workshop  
February 21, 2024

**BIG**<sup>®</sup>  
ACADEMIC ALLIANCE

# Welcome!

Ice Breaker

Please add your University to your name

In the chat tell us...

If you could choose any real or fictional person from history to be your imaginary friend, who would it be?



# Empowering You Agenda

**01****Welcome**

9:00am – 9:10am CST | 10:00am – 10:10am EST  
Laura Gordon

**02****Key Note**

9:10am – 9:25am CST | 10:10am – 10:25am EST  
Sara Tate-Pederson

**03****Self-Recommendation Letter Guides**

9:25am – 9:40am CST | 10:25am – 10:40am EST  
Jane Farago & Mehrnaz Ahmadi Joobaneh

**04****Self-  
Recommendation Letter Workshop**

9:40am – 10:30am CST | 10:40am – 11:30am EST  
All Participants

**05****Closing & Group Discussion**

10:30am – 11:00am CST | 11:30m – 12:00 EST  
All Participants

## This event has been coordinated by the BTAA – WIT Group

- The WIT peer group was created in 2018 and sponsored by BTAA CIOs to strengthen recruitment, retention, and advancement of Women+ in IT across the Big Ten.
- This diverse group has been created to expand connections to one another, and provide a place for respectful dialogue, timely questions, and broad sharing of best practices and insights.
- This group is open to staff, researchers, faculty, and administrators at [Big Ten universities](https://bigten.org/).

<https://btaa.org/technology/big-ten-academic-alliance-women-in-technology-group>

### Conference Subcommittee Members:

Jane Farago  
Laura Gordon  
Betsy Hillery  
Lauren Kuza  
Mehrnaz Ahmadi Joobaneh  
Nargas Oskui  
Winona Snapp-Childs  
Stacey Zysk



## 2. Key Note Speakers - STP



**Sara Tate-Pederson (STP)**

*Pronouns: She/Her/Hers*

Technical Compliance Manager  
UW-Madison College of Engineering



Dynamic and seasoned IT leader and professional with 25+ years of experience, Sara currently serves in the role of Technical Compliance Manager for the College of Engineering at UW-Madison. In addition to this role, Sara serves on the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Committee for Women in the University (CWU) and the College of Engineering's Committee for Academic Staff Interests (CASI).

Throughout Sara's entire career she have been an active participant and facilitator on a wide variety of strategic initiatives that promote inclusion, equity, diversity, and belonging in the workplace.

Outside of her service to the UW-Madison University Sara enjoys opportunities to hike in our National Parks, indulge in hobby geology, and build with LEGO.

## 2. Key Note Speaker

### MANTRA FROM SARA...

Be **bold**. Take **risks**. Live life **freely**. Lead **by example**.  
**Trust** your gut. **Say** what you **feel**. **Mean** what **you say**.  
Express **gratitude**. **Believe** in your **power**. **Exceed** your  
expectations. ***Dance the night away***. **Skip** down the  
street. **Don't take no** for an answer. Be **your best self**.  
**Don't look back**.

**Sara Tate-Pederson**

*Pronouns: She/Her/Hers*  
Technical Compliance Manager  
UW-Madison College of Engineering



# 3. GUIDE TO Self- Recommendation Letter

Jane Farago and  
Mehrnaz Ahmadi Joobaneh



## Guides



**Jane Farago** is a Senior Manager of Customer Experience in the Office of Technology and Digital Innovation at The Ohio State University. She is responsible for managing desktop support technicians across campus, including the Office of the President. She has 18 years of experience in IT support services.



**Mehrnaz Ahmadi Joobaneh** is a Senior BI Developer in the Data, Academic Planning & Institutional Research (DAPIR) at the UW-Madison campus. Her main responsibility is supporting the Technology and developers' community across campus. She has 10+ years of experience in IT.





"Everything you ever wanted is learning how to draw it out of yourself because you are that powerful." - *Lumalia*

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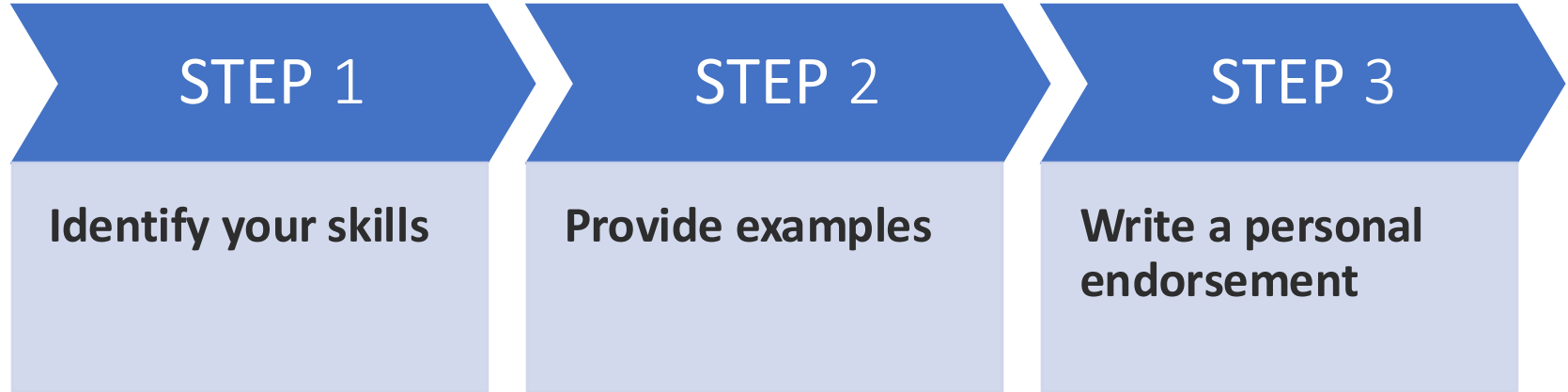


# What is a Self-Recommendation Letter?

Indeed.com definition is as follows:

“The purpose of a self-recommendation focuses on portraying your strongest skills and work ethic through self-reflection.”

# Steps you can take to write your self-recommendation letter



# What to include in a self-recommendation letter

- **Positive perspective:** When writing a self-recommendation letter, focus on your strengths and situations where you excelled.
- **Accomplishments:** Naming specific professional accomplishments can show the value and work ethic.
- **Examples:** Tell stories/anecdotes that are rich in detail and speak to your individual accomplishments, assets, and strengths.
- **Tip:** It might be helpful for you to pretend that you're writing a recommendation letter for someone else. You can even pick a fictional name and swap it back at the end.

# Recommendation Letter Template

Dear Me,

[The first paragraph establishes who you are.]

[The second paragraph describes your experience and skills. Describe areas you feel you excel in and areas that your recommender has observed.]

[The third paragraph includes a broader list of skills and knowledge that others would endorse. Include a mixture of hard and soft skills.]

[The last paragraph states a direct endorsement of yourself for the position. Use positive.]

Sincerely,

[Recommender signature]

# Recommendation Letter Example

Dear Me,

I am writing this letter to highly recommend Mehrnaz, who has been serving as a senior Business Intelligence Developer at UW-Madison's heart of Data. I have had the pleasure of working closely with Mehrnaz and have been consistently impressed by her exceptional skills, dedication, and contributions to the team.

Mehrnaz has proven herself as an invaluable member of our organization, demonstrating a profound level of problem solving. As the main Tableau site/server admin and support for multiple UW-Madison institutional servers as well as other solutions, Mehrnaz has showcased her technical prowess through bringing in new innovations, successfully supporting our users and developers' community across campus, and providing consultation on technology and best practices to different technical and non-technical units.

Mehrnaz's dedication extends beyond her technical and leadership roles. She has built trusting relationships with stakeholders, becoming a reliable liaison between departments and IT services. Her efforts in mentorship and community involvement, including training students and actively participating in IT communities across campus, underscore her commitment to fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment.

In summary, Mehrnaz is an outstanding professional who brings a wealth of expertise, leadership, and dedication to her role and beyond. I have no doubt that she will continue to excel in her future endeavors. I wholeheartedly recommend Mehrnaz for any position or project that demands a highly skilled and motivated individual.

Sincerely,

Me, Myself, and I



Let's Get  
Started!

# NEXT STEPS

- You will have 10 minutes for yourself to complete the template.
- During the 10 minutes, think about --
  - Your strengths
  - Situations where you excelled
  - Your honorable character.
  - Include any community engagement that has impacted you.





**04**

**Individual Work  
10 Minutes**

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Sincerely,

[Recommender signature]



# 04

**Group Work**

**Teams of 4-5**

**28 Minutes (2 minute  
count down)**

**Each person share for  
5 minutes, then  
discuss together  
thoughts.**



**05**

**Group Discussion**

## 5.Closing

**Give us your feedback:**

<https://forms.office.com/r/0qkExUQqtQ>



**Upcoming Events:**

March 20 @ 10:00 am - 10:30 am

BTAA – WIT | Wellness / Ice Breaker Coffee Catchup

**Our Website:**

[BTAA WIT Website](#)