8. Sample Character Reference Letter: Employer

Date

The Honorable (name of your judge)

United States District Court Judge

(Name of your judicial district)

(Address of your judicial district)

City of your judicial district, state, zip

Regarding: U.S.—v—Your name and case number

Dear Judge (last name):

My name is [Employer’s name] and XX was my employee for three years at XXXXXXX. He had a good reputation in the sleep-study provider community and I was lucky to hire him.

When XX told me that he had broken the law and was facing serious consequences for his conduct, I empathized with him. Rather than making excuses, he expressed a 100% commitment to making things right. I admired his sense of personal accountability in his time of hardship. Instead of dwelling on how his troubles would influence his life, he spoke about his responsibility to the victims that were hurt by his bad decisions.

Knowing him for more than the criminal misconduct he described, I’m grateful for this chance to write about the XX I know.

XX was in charge of my sales team and was a workhorse. Seven days a week, day or night, I could always reach him. He was passionate about his job and was a talented communicator. He treated everyone with warmth and respect. He greeted everyone with a smile. Compassion is the key value at my company. If a worker doesn’t care, I don’t need them. XX cared. He cared about people and he cared about getting the job done.

In addition to his people skills, he had a gift for organization. When I started large-scale services for the transportation industry, XX was my right-hand man in designing our new systems. Over the course of his employment, XX and I took multiple business trips to XXXXXX. We travelled by car and the journey took 4.5 hours each way. During those long drives, I got to know XX as a man. We talked about everything. I met his wife XXX and their lovely daughters. I know he has a good heart and an enthusiastic spirit. So, I am sad to see him in such trouble.

I saw him soon after his brother’s violent death. XX was a changed man. He wanted to do anything he could for his brother’s children but was pushed away. He suffered from the intense stigma and scrutiny from people in town. His entire family endured finger pointing and shunning. After facing a truly horrifying trauma, he felt alone. I can’t fathom experiencing a devastating loss like that.

I am very sorry that XX violated federal law. He made a serious mistake and he knows it. I am saddened by the thought that he might have harmed other people. Opioid addiction is a deadly epidemic and I know he understands that now. For longer than a year, he’s voluntarily attended treatment and expressed a commitment to resolving his addiction.

My hope for XX is that he finds peace and balance at the end of this legal process. In our conversations, he has expressed remorse. He has been honest about his mistakes and takes full responsibility for his actions. I have faith that he will survive and find good purpose in the long life ahead of him.

I especially admire XX for wanting to make restitution to the victims of his crime, and the savings he has been putting together for that purpose. Because I believe in his capacity to change, I am showing my support by making a $500 contribution to his restitution fund. When he is released from this sanction, he will have a job with my company.

Your Honor, I hope you will keep my words in mind as you determine XX’s punishment.

Sincerely,