How the Heck Do You Get A Good Letter of Rec?

- **Identify potential recommenders**
  - Identify recommenders early, consider asking towards the end of your rotation instead of waiting until you’ve been off that rotation for a few months, this way the recommender will be thinking about it while examples are fresh in their mind
  - Ask if they are willing to write a strong, POSITIVE recommendation for you
  - If there are programs that you may apply to that a preceptor has connections with, utilize them
  - Ensure you will be able to meet different residency program requests (i.e., programs may specify 2 clinical and 1 non-clinical reference writer, etc.)

- **Organize your plans**
  - Once you’ve identified which residency programs you will apply to, create a document to keep track of which letter writers will give a recommendation to which programs
  - Keep in mind various due dates for programs

- **Create a tool to help your recommenders personalize your recommendation**
  - Consider using an Excel spreadsheet to list out each program your recommender will be creating a letter for
  - Add information about why you are applying to each program and why you feel you are a good match
  - Provide examples of your strengths and weaknesses
  - List any specific requirements the program has for the PhORCAS recommendation form
  - Keep track of clinical interventions throughout your time on rotation to provide examples to strengthen your application
  - Provide any specific information or examples the recommender may be able to include in your reference in regards to work you’ve done (e.g., send them a copy of your CV/resume, provide specific examples of times you demonstrated qualities in the table listed below that they have witnessed)
  - Consider sharing this [Letter of Recommendation Writing Toolkit](#) with your letter writer

- **Don’t forget these important tips**
  - Recommenders will be asked to comment on the following qualities:
    | Professionalism | Written and oral communication skills | Leadership/mentoring skills | Assertiveness |
    |-----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
    | Ability to organize/manage time | Ability to work with peers and communicate effectively | Clinical problem-solving skills | Effective patient interactions |
    | Dependability | Independence and resourcefulness | Willingness to accept constructive criticism | Emotional stability and maturity |

- Additionally, you may view the full recommendation form here: [Residency Recommendation Form](#)
- Notify your recommenders that they will be receiving a link from noreply@phorcas.org to submit their recommendation (check spam or junk folders)
- Send a thank-you e-mail/letter after receiving notification your recommendation has been submitted