

MODULE 6: BEYOND LETTERS — BUILDING YOUR PROFILE

Lesson Overview

Character reference letters help the Court see your humanity. But letters alone aren't enough. Judges want evidence that you've invested in real change. That's why we encourage every participant to **build a profile on Prison Professors**.

Your profile becomes a *living record* of your growth—something your attorney can reference, your supporters can validate, and, if appropriate, the Court can see as evidence that you are serious about accountability, rehabilitation, and preparation for a successful reentry.

Key Concepts

1. Why a Profile Matters
 - ◇ Judges look for sincerity. A profile filled with journals, book reports, and plans shows more than words—it shows action.
 - ◇ A well-developed profile gives your character reference writers proof points: they can point to your documented work and growth.
 - ◇ Counsel can use your profile to strengthen your sentencing memorandum.
2. The Components of a Profile
 - ◇ Biography: Your personal story—background, challenges, offense, and lessons learned.
 - ◇ Journals: Regular reflections that demonstrate self-awareness, remorse, and growth.
 - ◇ Book Reports: Evidence of self-directed education, showing you are learning new perspectives.
 - ◇ Release Plan: A roadmap for your time in custody and your reentry.
 - ◇ Testimonials: Support from family, friends, employers, and mentors who validate your efforts.



3. Profiles and the Point System
 - ◇ Every update you make to your profile earns individual points.
 - ◇ When others join because of your influence, you earn tribe points as well.
 - ◇ This gamified system makes your growth visible to counselors, mentors, and (if appropriate) the Court.
4. Integration with Character Letters
 - ◇ Letters can reference your profile: “I have seen his journals on Prison Professors and witnessed his consistent reflection on personal growth.”
 - ◇ This makes your letters and your documented work reinforce each other.

Steps to Build Your Profile

1. Open a Profile: Go to PrisonProfessors.org and click Profiles.
2. Write Your Biography: Start with 500—1,000 words that explain who you are, what you’ve learned, and where you’re going.
3. Add Journals: Post weekly reflections on progress, lessons, or insights.
4. Submit Book Reports: Choose books that strengthen your skills, character, or reentry preparation.
5. Draft a Release Plan: Share how you will use time in custody productively and how you’ll reenter society responsibly.
6. Invite Testimonials: Ask mentors, employers, or family to contribute statements validating your growth.

Reflection Journal Prompt

- » What would a judge, probation officer, or future employer see if they opened your profile today?
- » What steps can you take this week to make your profile reflect your true commitment to growth?



Worksheet: Profile Building Checklist

- » Biography posted (\geq 500 words)
- » 2 journal entries uploaded
- » 1 book report completed
- » Draft release plan uploaded
- » At least 1 testimonial requested

Key Takeaway

Your character reference campaign should not stand alone. By building and maintaining a **Prison Professors profile**, you create a credible, measurable body of work that strengthens your sentencing presentation. This profile not only helps at sentencing but also positions you for success during custody and beyond release.

