

September 29, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I consider it a personal privilege to be writing this letter of recommendation for Bruce Gust. Over the past six years, it was my pleasure to hire Bruce - twice, in fact - first as our Customer Service Trainer and a few years later as an E-Channel Development Specialist in our new Channel Management function.

Bruce is incredibly gifted and talented. His flair for creativity was very evident in the training programs and tools he designed for Customer Service employees. He made learning about new resources fun and exciting for everyone. Bruce far exceeded expectations for what a trainer should know about resources in order to teach others. He used many of our resources in his own life, so that when he taught or spoke about them, he did far more than impart product features and benefits. He was able to speak passionately about what our resources meant to him and how they had impacted his own life. That personal touch "raised the bar" and encouraged other employees to also strive for having their own personal testimony to use as they spoke to customers about our resources. His excellent training programs contributed to the success of our Customer Service department, where we had measurable improvements year over year in service levels, staff retention, and customer satisfaction.

In 2001, Bruce had an opportunity for a promotion in another part of our organization, where he leveraged his internet skills to educate employees and customers about our resources. During the launch of LifeWay Canada in 2002, Bruce put these skills to work on an incredibly tight timeframe and trained our new Canadian sales reps on a core set of LifeWay resources. This foundational training, coupled with creative technology-based training tools to educate them on new product releases, contributed to the 96% increase in sales through our Canadian affiliate. Shortly after that project, I hired Bruce once again to serve in a key position in our new Channel Management function. In that capacity, Bruce developed and launched a new release platform that has been used to educate our internal and external channel partners about upcoming resources.

Throughout these past six years, Bruce has consistently demonstrated persistence, creativity, resourcefulness, and a can-do attitude. As with any new venture, there have been periods of time when our work was very challenging... resource needs exceeding availability, frustration with driving change in a well-established organization, etc. Throughout it all, Bruce has maintained a tremendously positive attitude.

Were it not for business reasons to discontinue our channel management work at this time, Bruce would have continued to serve as our E-Channel Development Specialist. LifeWay is better for having Bruce a part of our team. Given the opportunity, I will hire Bruce again.

Sincerely,

Steve Blount  
Director, Customer Interaction Strategy  
LifeWay Church Resources