

Date: 09/24/2026

Letter of Recommendation for **Alex Bender**.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend my former leader, who served as an Associate Director of Software Engineering. As a direct report, I saw firsthand the rare combination of technical judgment, personal integrity, and genuine care they brought to leadership. They made the people around them better, and I would welcome the opportunity to work with them again.

What distinguished them most was their commitment to mentorship. They invested time in understanding each engineer's strengths, ambitions, and development needs, then offered thoughtful coaching and candid feedback that helped people grow. Their guidance was never about prescribing every answer; it was about helping us strengthen our own judgment, build confidence, and take on greater responsibility.

They also led with unusual transparency. They shared the context behind decisions, spoke plainly about tradeoffs, and gave straight answers even when the news was difficult. That honesty-built trust across the team and created an environment where people could raise concerns early, ask hard questions, and stay focused on solving the right problems.

Their belief in team empowerment was equally tangible. They gave engineers meaningful ownership, trusted us to make decisions, and created room for people to lead rather than simply execute. At the same time, they remained available with guidance and support when needed. This balance of autonomy and accountability helped the team move with confidence while giving individuals real opportunities to stretch and grow.

At the Associate Director level, they connected day-to-day engineering work with broader organizational goals while never losing sight of the people doing that work. Their mentorship, transparency, and trust strengthened both the team and the quality of its decisions. Their position was recently eliminated as part of an organizational change, but that circumstance does not diminish the leadership or positive impact they brought to the organization.

I recommend them with confidence for senior engineering leadership roles. Any organization would benefit from a leader who communicates honestly, develops people intentionally, and empowers teams to do their best work. Please feel free to contact me if additional information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Bhavin Patel

Lead Software Engineer | Enterprise Quality Engineering

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