# JOSH SCHENKEIN

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Dear Hiring Manager,

After receiving my Masters from the University of Chicago, I was fortunate enough to pursue my dreams by working for US Government in Washington D.C. and working at the United Nations in New York. Yet in the spring of 2016, through my experiences at the United Nations, I developed a new dream-one of applying data analytics and of daily quantification, to the historically qualitative field of International Relations-and have pursued this dream ever since.

The premise was simple; however, the execution was complex. International relations, and specifically bilateral relations (the diplomatic relationship between any two countries) has been the exclusive purview of qualitative assessments, evidenced by the myriad of news/scholarly articles of America's diplomatic relationships around the world, where bilateral relationships are couched in language like "special," "strong," "rocky," or "hostile." While quantitative precision has been applied to vast array of domains, international relations-in the bilateral sphere-has had to rely on broad and vague characterizations that may shift according to the predilections of whomever is providing analysis. The lack of metrics, analytics, and data has been a glaring deficiency within the field, that since last year, I have sought to correct.

In order to execute my vision of quantifying IR, I determined that I needed a capacity for web scraping, data analytics, data storage, cloud development, user interaction, graphing capability, web design, data driven updating, and automatic updating. I had no experience with any of this, and knew no one who did either; so I taught myself everything from scratch. I taught myself Python from the ground up; learning Redis and Requests so I could autonomously scrape my data points from the web, SQLAlchemy so I could build my database in PostgreSql and store/access my data, Pandas/Numpy/Sci-Kit Learn/Matplotlib so I could manipulate and analyze my data, and Django so I could serve my data in the cloud. After I completed the design and construction of my platform's backend architecture, I set out on building an enjoyable-and easy to use-user experience that communicated my results and analytics in a clear and enjoyable manner; consequently, I taught myself JavaScript, HTML, CSS, and Heroku deployment from the ground up. I learned D3.js so I could build choropleth maps to represent my data, AngularJS and jQuery to alter the DOM, and HTML/CSS so I could offer an appealing aesthetic. At the beginning of May/2017 I finished construction on the platform v1.0.

The past year of learning computer programming and full-stack development has been incredibly rewarding and extremely enjoyable. However, it has been solitary and has not yet been remunerative. It should therefore come as no surprise that you are reading my cover letter and are (hopefully) considering my application to join your team. I highly doubt I'll be the most qualified, or the candidate with "the best fit." But I am certain, however, that any task or role required of me I'll fulfill to the highest standard; that whatever I don't know, I am more than capable of learning-be it on my own or through instruction; and that any opportunity to burn the midnight oil will be consistently relished. I'm not looking for just a job, but a rather a career, wherein I'll be part of team, which seeks to achieve beneficial advancements in a fast-paced environment, with a history of utilizing the best tech out there.

Thank you for the consideration of my application.

Sincerely, Josh Schenkein