Dear Hiring Manager,

I graduated from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a bachelor's degree in Computer Science. My first job in the technical domain was as an IT service desk technician in the Energy sector at a company called CAISO (or California ISO) which manages the flow/transmission of electricity on the electric grid as well as operating the wholesale electricity market. I worked at Caiso for just under a year and gained a tremendous amount of experience that I have found useful in my current role and I'm sure will be relevant throughout my entire career. I left Caiso for my current position as a software engineer/batch developer at a company called Gainwell Technologies which is in the healthcare industry and is my first position as a software developer. I have been here at Gainwell for almost 3 years, and have grown in my abilities steadily as I continue to take on more responsibilities.

      At Caiso, the service desk is an integral part of the operation and is the first (and often last) point of contact for both internal and external issues. This means we handled a large call, email, and ticket volume with a very wide range of issues which allowed me to become very skilled at multitasking and prioritizing as efficiently as possible. Another important skill I was able to hone in this role was my ability to work under pressure when stakes are very high. Certain issues had little room for error and were extremely time sensitive since the company has such a direct impact on the energy grid for a large portion of the Western US. The service desk operated 24/7, so after only 3 months I had earned my supervisors trust and was asked to work the night shift with two of the nights being solo shifts. This increased responsibility, while very stressful at times, helped me to become more confident, self-reliant, and resourceful when resolving new issues that don't have set procedures and no one else readily available to assist.

      I eventually left Caiso when I received an opportunity to work in the role I really wanted as a software engineer at Gainwell Technologies. I am still currently working at Gainwell with responsibilities that are consistently growing as I gain expertise in my role. My position primarily has me writing code in C and SQL, which I was not very experienced in before I started here. So I got to experience first hand what it is like to learn a new programming language on the job and become proficient as quickly as possible. I consider this ability and willingness to adapt to be crucial to having a long successful career in this field where technology is constantly and rapidly evolving. The first project I worked on was to help one of the subsystem teams fix defects in their programs, which gave me experience in debugging complex code written by multiple different authors, testing the fixes to make sure they don't change any functionality, creating documentation, and participating in code reviews. These are some of the core tasks performed by SE's and so gave me a very solid foundation to build upon. After this project I was selected out of the three who started with me to stay on that subsystem team permanently, and now as a member of that team I perform a lot of data updates which has helped me to become skilled in using SQL to validate, update, and analyze data as well as closely working with the client directly. After I had been working on my subsystem team for a while I was also chosen to join another team as well to refactor and maintain our code base in a new OS, since we will be transitioning in the future. Being on this new team has given me the opportunity to learn more about the environment set up and debugging compiler, linker, and other issues relating to the environment's relation to the programs and jobs. As we get closer to the transition and this team has grown, I have also been able to gain experience in teaching/training others as well as coming up with procedures and documentation, for processes that don't yet exist. Another benefit to joining this second team is it has allowed me to practice juggling competing priorities from two separate projects simultaneously.

      To conclude, I have had the privilege of working in two very different positions in the field and was able to learn a tremendous amount from both. My IT position helped me to gain confidence and soft skills that make me a valuable asset in any position, especially those in the technical industry. My Software developer position has given me experience specific to the type of role I desire in the future and allowed me to develop skills that make me a valuable asset to any team.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Nethaniel Sanchez