December 27, 2017

Dear Sir or Madam:

In this letter I hope to outline three things that separate me from your other candidates. Those things are: drive, experience, and adaptability. Of course all these traits are intertwined with one another, and strengthen each other. I'll do my best to address each thing separately.

Let's talk about my drive first. I've been active in the software development industry for more years that I care to admit. Yet still I have a burning passion for what I do. I *love* to learn. Development provides so many opportunities to learn, it is ridiculous. There are just not enough hours in the day to be honest. I'm not talking staying up all night cowboy coding because I just discovered a new syntax to express the same tired ideas. Nor switching a project to the hotness build tool trending in the node community. I'm talking about learning C++ and realizing that you need a whole different way of thinking to actually keep this fancy OOP business from turning to spaghetti when it scales. I'm talking about struggling with Haskell, trying to get a whole new way of thinking to *click*. And then when it does fitting your new tools into the world you know to solve actual problems. Or better yet, using every bit of new knowledge to make sure the problems never exist to begin with. Every system could have been better. We can always have fewer logic bugs out the gate, and more easily fix those bad assumptions. Our labor can always cost less in time and money and reputation. And this kind of *engineering* is fun.

Of course to be an effective engineer, one needs experience, and lots of it. I've been around for a while and my drive has given me an excess of experience. I've gone from subroutines, to functions, to objects, and back to functions. I've written video games in machine code on bare metal. I've designed multimillion dollar enterprise systems in PHP. I've worked to benefit open source communities, for my own personal satisfaction, and for money. I've seen the way things should be done, and what happens when you don't do things that way. Sometimes I've improved on the accepted patterns, and sometimes I've had to fix my mistakes. I know enough to follow the rules, and when to question the rules. I can recognize anti-patterns, and I have the skill and patience to fix them, and learn from them.

My experience and my drive temper one another and allow me to be extremely adaptable. These traits have given me a large enough knowledge base to be quickly useful. Yet that same knowledge makes me realize how little I actually know. This drives me to always look for new ideas, and to understand the things I haven't seen before. Should we become coworkers, you will find this adaptability will make me a valued member of the team.

Thank you,

Jon Allen