

January 6, 2016

Dear Sir or Madam:

Your time is precious, and I won't waste it telling you things which you already know from my resume, or from circumstance. Instead, I will use my story to give you an idea of who I am and what drives me. This will, I believe, demonstrate my value to your organization.

When exposed to an early Apple computer and a tattered old Applesoft BASIC manual as a child, my fate was sealed. By third grade I had figured out how to use "high resolution" graphics and to write to disk (the manual only covered cassette tapes). Not satisfied there, I managed to dig up the hardware references to the computer and became somewhat expert on the Apple II. I even figured out how to change the speed of the disk drive motors to fit more data on a disk. I can remember sitting at school in the 6th grade, carefully writing down the machine code for a game in a notebook, and drawing the sprites out on graph paper. As soon as I was home, I would eagerly enter the game I had so carefully crafted. Then I would happily spend my evenings debugging and sometimes even playing my creations.

I also found I had quite an enjoyable time with math. Of course I didn't know it at the time, but all of this computer stuff was created by mathematicians initially. I found that as I progressed in school, I had already been taught all about algebra, fractions, vectors, trigonometry, and so on from my computer. Anyway, I could program my calculator to do all my math for me, and so much more. It wasn't long before I figured out how to build a cable that would allow me to hack on my calculator. When I was a senior in high school, I received an award from Intel for my work on the calculator.

After taking a few years off I went back to school for computer science. This turned out to be a mistake. There were some things to learn in the CS program. Unfortunately, given my background, those things seemed few and far between. I discovered that where I was really learning and having fun was in the calculus and linear algebra courses I was taking. So...I dropped out of the program.

For a while I was happy delivering pizzas and working on open source software, or taking random math courses at the local university in my free time. Fast forward a few years and I found myself with a family. The open source work that I had been doing, while challenging and interesting, doesn't pay the bills. So back to school once again, this time quickly obtaining a degree in Mathematics.

That is how we find ourselves in such fortuitous circumstances. You can provide me with a stable day job. I can provide you with an unmatched combination of unbridled passion, depth of experience, and impressive skill. Let us help one another.

Thank you,

Jon Allen