

MOST EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER: PARAGRAPH STYLE

Robert Wood

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Red Hat Inc.
2323 Yonge St.
Toronto, ON M5S 1A8

Re: Software Developer Intern

Robert begins his cover letter by expressing his interest in the employer, and then by identifying the key qualifications the employer is seeking.

Please accept this application for the position of Software Developer, advertised on the University of Toronto Career Centre website. Red Hat's leadership in the Open Source community has prompted my interest in applying to this position. I believe my Computer Science education, my design and programming experience as a Software Developer and Web Designer, along with a shared interest in supporting Open Source software make me an excellent candidate for this position.

I have gained programming experience while completing projects as a Software Developer at Financial Models Company Inc. Applying the C++ and Object Oriented Programming skills I developed through my course in Fundamental Data Structures and Techniques, I successfully developed a multi-threaded ISAPI extension for Windows servers. Further, my work as a User Acceptance Tester refined my program testing and debugging skills.

PARAGRAPH-STYLE:
In the body of his letter, Robert describes his experiences and skills (Software Developer, relevant courses, object-oriented programming skills, teamwork skills, etc.) that qualify him for the position.

I am a strong team player, having worked at Financial Models on both the Software Development and Web Design teams. Specifically, this past summer I worked with various team members to develop a testing module and coordinate implementation for an online, 'context-sensitive help' software project. This experience brought home the time and quality demands of project work. I also experienced the powerful impact of team spirit on performance while playing intramural soccer and winning two intramural championships.

As a Linux home user, I have had the pleasure of being exposed to the Open Source community and feel that the future of software development lies in the Open Source movement. To have the opportunity to work within Red Hat, a recognized leader in Open Source technology, would allow me to contribute to an organization and technology that is "changing the world".

Thank you for considering me for the position of Software Developer. I am excited about the opportunity to be part of the Red Hat team and am looking forward to the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications at your convenience.

In the closing paragraph, Robert re-expresses his interest in the position, and is proactive by suggesting a meeting with the employer.

Sincerely,
Robert Wood

Robert clearly demonstrated his interest and experience in Open Source software - something that is important to both the position and Red Hat as an organization. He uses specific examples of the projects and experiences where he demonstrated his skills to create a strong, relevant cover letter. He concludes with confidence that he has the skills which Red Hat is seeking in a Software Developer.