

Cover Sheet Format

Candidate Autobiography

by

Jane Doe

Army Officer Candidate School
South Carolina Army National Guard
5411 Leesburg Road
Eastover, South Carolina

Acknowledgments:

Format and Instructions for Candidate Autobiography

1. Subject Area: Written Communications.

2. Assignment: Write a Candidate Autobiography of 3 to 5 pages (800 words maximum).

3. Assignment Information:

a. Substance: Generally speaking, a writer reflects upon and describes his life, or part of it, in an autobiography. In this assignment, we ask you to write a candidate autobiography; that is, we ask you to focus upon the part of your life which led you to consider becoming an officer in the South Carolina Army National Guard and the Reserve of the Army. Here are some suggestions for proceeding with this assignment:

- (1) Present vital statistics; date and place of birth, places of residence, schools you have attended, family background (especially with regard to military service).
- (2) Describe special events in your life; relate circumstances and happenings that make you different, that help to make you what you are, and that you expect your audience will find memorable.
- (3) Tell what you expect to gain from your experience at Palmetto Military Academy.
- (4) Tell what you expect to contribute to society through gaining a commission.
- (5) Describe details of courts-martial, arrests, and/or convictions (other than minor traffic violations) if applicable.

NOTE: One of your principal writing tasks will be to develop a fluent, readable narrative of your life, so do not merely 'list' responses to these suggestions. Instead, weave your responses into a narrative story of your life and of your expectations in life.

b. Format: Final text should be typewritten on 8 ½ x 11 paper. Double space, leave 1 in. margins all round, and type on one side of the page only. Number pages, except the first page, in the upper right hand corners. The front cover should be in the format provided in this appendix.

c. Evaluation: Two OCS staff members will evaluate your autobiography. You will be asked to revise and update it during the year before you attain senior status. Your peers will be the final audience for your

autobiography. Your autobiography will be judged on your criteria; content, organization, readability, and presentability. Evaluators will consider some of the following questions as they make their judgements.

(1) Substance: How much specific detail have you used? (Generally, the more detail, the better.) How appropriate is the detail? How well does the reader get to 'know' you on the basis of your autobiography?

(2) Organization: Does your paper develop smoothly? Does each part relate with the rest of the paper, especially with what comes immediately before and after it? Do you clearly relate your earlier life to your present situation? Do your expectations regarding the future emerge clearly from what you reveal of your past and present?

(3) Style: Have you effective transitions? Have you written directly? Have you chosen familiar, unpretentious vocabulary? Have you avoided long, cumbersome sentences? On the other hand, have you avoided extended series of very simply structured sentences? Has your punctuation assisted rather than hindered or confused your readers? Have you observed the conventions of standard written English?

(4) Correctness: Is your text carefully proofread, free of typographical errors? Have you used proper format? Is your text neat, free of smudges and wrinkles?

d. Acknowledgments: Most writers benefit from various kinds of assistance. Most texts are read in draft form by trusted readers who offer suggestions for improving the text. Also, many writers use proofreaders and typists. All writers have an ethical obligation to identify such forms of assistance and acknowledge it as indicated on the cover sheet:

_____ read an early draft of my autobiography and offered constructive suggestions.

_____ proofread my final draft and/or final text.

_____ typed my final text.

If you did not receive assistance, simply write 'non' below the acknowledgments entry on your cover sheet.