Byrne Wallace

87-88 Harcourt Street

Dublin2

Dublin, 23 October 2015

Re: Application Traineeship – Mira van Oortmerssen, 44 Temple Gardens, Santry, Dublin 9

**To Whom It May Concern:**

With a certain degree of excitement I am writing this letter, because I never thought I would apply for a traineeship at an Irish law firm. I was supposed to apply for traineeships at Dutch law firms, however, life is full of surprises and I learned that this is - in particular - true when one follows her heart.

I can imagine that the foregoing is a rather unusual start of a cover letter. In the following I will start with introducing myself. I will set out what my achievements and goals are and what I am looking for in a law firm. I end my letter with why I think that Byrne Wallace and myself would be the perfect fit.

**Who am I (now)**

I am a knowledge craving, friendly and adventurous young woman from the Netherlands. In January 2015 I moved from the Netherlands to Dublin to follow the love of my life and to start a new life abroad. I love it here!

During my life I always tried to follow my gut feeling and to do only what I love. So this is the reason why it could happen that several years ago, after working as an administrative assistant at several governmental organisations, banks, insurance companies and heck, I even worked a few years as a professional fashion model, I got the chance to work as a legal / notarial secretary at one of Holland’s biggest law firms (AKD N.V., Eindhoven office) where I got introduced to the legal practice. I felt that this was the only place where I really enjoyed working, because I found the work deeply interesting and exciting. I wanted to do what these lawyers did and thus a year later I went to university to study Netherlands law so I could become a lawyer one day myself.

At this point in time, I am a LL.M candidate Dutch Private Law at Tilburg University (Tilburg, the Netherlands) and currently busy with a research proposal for my master’s thesis. My master’s thesis is the only subject in my curriculum that I will need to finish before I can graduate and obtain my LL.M grade. I plan to graduate in January 2016. The central subject of my thesis will be law of security, in particular cross border security constructions. That having said, law of security is by far my favourite subject, but I also find financial law more than interesting.

At this very moment I also work as a legal secretary in the Corporate Law department at Mason Hayes & Curran. I have always worked as a legal secretary / paralegal (full time and sometimes part time) during my full time studies, because I strongly felt the need to be “in the fields” and I also felt very responsible for the work I was given, even the firm I worked for. The fact that I worked so much affected my grades a bit, but I never regret this, because I believe my work experience was also very rewarding. Obviously I can only speak for myself, but I do believe that being “in the fields” is extremely important to understand law. Law, in my opinion, can be a very abstract science but having it seen realised in practise, and having it practised myself, made it live and made me realise that this is what I want to do: solve problems. I just love it. It also made me realise that I have a curious mind, but also that I am a responsible person who does her work accurately and actually is also very loyal to her employer. If I love it someplace and I got a chance to grow (intellectually and in my role), I can stay for ages with that particular employer. I hope this employer will be Byrne Wallace in the future!

**My achievements and goals**

My biggest achievements besides some academic achievements such as publications in one of Holland’s biggest legal magazines about download bans (Actioma, 2012) and a contribution to a report requested by the Council of Europe in the context of sexual abuse of children and the Lanzarote Convention (2012), are the first court case I won as a first year student against an energy provider or rather its small army of experienced, qualified lawyers (2011) and my move to Dublin (2015). These reflect some of my best character traits: I am adventurous and optimistic, flexible and can adapt easily, I have faith in my capacities in order to tackle any challenge, but I also long for continuous intellectually and personal development.

One of my goals is to find a job where my character traits can blossom and I do believe that this is in the law practice. I closed my first deal – a management buyout – in 2014 after just two months of working as a corporate paralegal. My supervisor (Mr Rogier Dahmen) was enjoying his holiday whilst I was negotiating and amending the asset liability agreement. After the agreement was signed, I promptly took myself out for a drink and celebrated this achievement. I decided then that I wanted to learn more and wanted to be as good as my supervisor, hence a top lawyer who is practically omniscient. I want to be the best in Banking and Finance, because as said before, these deal with my favourite fields of law: financial law and law of security / property law.

My move to Ireland didn’t stop me to achieve my dream: earlier this month I sat four FE1 exams which were Company Law, EU Law, Criminal Law and Contract Law. I studied while working at Mason Hayes & Curran. I studied during lunch breaks, in the evenings and weekends. I am already studying for the next four ones in March 2016. You might note that I am more than determined to succeed. Working hard to achieve my goal doesn’t scare me.

**What am I looking for in a law firm**

I am looking for a law firm that can offer me the best training from the best people in the business. During my work and studies I discovered that I prefer a bigger sized, international corporate law firm, because of the size and the complexity of the cases it deals with. In fairness, I prefer not to work for smaller law firms because most of these firms often represent individual. Working with individuals is harder for me, because of the present emotions, whereas when I work for a company I don’t have to worry about these. However, I worked as a volunteer for an organisation that provides free legal advice to the weaker in society (Rechtswinkel Eindhoven). I actually enjoyed that, but it was quite hard sometimes, in particular where the situation involved children. After this experience my preference was clear: I am more interested in the “bigger picture” of (parts of) society and that is basically the context where (bigger) companies or institutions are more likely to act (for example in capital markets). I find the brand and reputation of a firm very important, because I am a proud person. I want to be proud of my employer and I believe that Byrne Wallace has this strong reputation and name.

I might be a bit spoiled because of the excellent guidance by my former supervisor, Rogier. During our work together, I learned how important it is to have a mentor who not only explains things but also who you can approach to discuss difficulties in a comfortable and constructive manner and who can function as an example. For me, Rogier is my example. I believe that at a firm as Byrne Wallace I could find people of the same calibre, thus people I can discuss things with, share thoughts with but also a good joke from time to time. I learned from friends who know other trainees in your firm that they are genuinely enjoying their work. The cases are complex and challenging, but there is time and space for guidance and explanation. This should make it a pleasant place to learn and develop oneself and thus a perfect place for a person like myself.

**The Fit**

I see Byrne Wallace as a modern corporate firm, but with a no-nonsense mentality. The latter is probably the most important and attractive aspect, because I also consider myself as no-nonsense. That might be because of my Dutch background. Holland’s national credo is “Act normal, then you’re acting crazy enough”. I simply want to be the very best lawyer I can be and I believe that an excellent firm as Byrne Wallace can help me to achieve that.

I hope that with the above I provided you sufficiently with a“ verbal portrait” of myself. If you have any further queries in relation to the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Mira van Oortmerssen