

## **The Human Resources Perspective on the [Academic Library] Job-Hunt**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The human resources perspective of recruiting and hiring academic librarians may prove different from both those in the profession, and the general population. This referential guide attempts to distinguish the essential components of the job-hunt from those of lesser importance, as well as provide a general overview of what to expect and how best to be prepared.

## II. THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

The American Library Association<sup>1</sup> has identified *recruitment, education, and retention* of librarians as the number one concern for academic libraries. The need to find and retain quality leadership for libraries is a core issue for the future. As retirements seem to increase, fewer librarians are entering the profession as a whole, and fewer librarians are entering the academic library field in particular. Ensuring education of new librarians and reeducating existing librarians with skills and knowledge to support new roles in a digital information age, especially roles involving teaching and library promotion, is a challenge for the profession.

The academic library's role is to support the goals of its respective higher education institution; be that a community college, a liberal arts college, or a major research university. Contemporary academic libraries provide access to information and services to support teaching, learning, scholarship and creative endeavors at a time when exponential increases in the volume and complexity of information products and technologies are occurring.

Academic librarians play key roles as intermediaries between information and information seekers in the campus community using increasingly sophisticated technological tools. The academic librarian makes unique contributions to the academic community, such as developing collections, providing bibliographic access to all library materials and interpreting these materials to members of the college and university community. Academic librarians add value to information products through understanding users' needs and applying the latest tools for information organization and access.

The twenty-first century academic librarian is expected to demonstrate excellence in leadership, service, research, and education in a technology-driven environment. Academic Librarians should demonstrate a sustained research and publication record in pursuit of tenure. In addition, they should possess the following sociological qualities:<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ Curiosity
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ Tolerance
- ✓ Flexibility

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<sup>1</sup> Hisle, Lee. *Top Issues Facing Academic Libraries: A report of the Focus on the Future Task Force*. C&RL News, November 2002 Vol. 63 No. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Bridges, Karl. *Expectations of Librarians in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The Greenwood Library Management Collection: 2003.

- ✓ Energy/Endurance
- ✓ Humor

Academic librarians are governed in a similar in manner and structure to other faculty on the campus. Librarians should be promoted in rank based on their academic proficiency and professional effectiveness (performance, service, and scholarship) consistent with stated campus standards. A candidate should look for this articulated in a potential library employer's faculty bylaws or governing documents. Make sure you familiarize yourself with this information for the organization to which you are applying before you submit your application materials.

### III. RESUMES

The job-hunt begins with the presentation of your education, experience, and skills. It is important to present these items in a straight-forward, concise manner. Please read *all* of the resume tips below for insight into how a personnel assistant interprets resumes.

#### RESUME TIPS

##### **Formatting and Grammar are Crucial**

- Do not use more than one font - if you want to break up text, either italicize, bold, or underline.
- Pay attention to tabs, indents, and alignment and make sure they are consistent throughout your application materials.
- Make sure your belly button information is formatted the same on all documents.
- Spelling and grammar are crucial. Don't make mistakes in your resume or cover letter. After writing your documents, give them a day or two to sit before rereading them and sending them off. Don't work on them in a hurry. Spelling and grammatical errors can be a knock out factor – your resume won't even be considered after the employer finds the first error.
- Do not use "Courier" as the font for your resume or curriculum vitae, "Arial" or another font is more contemporary and appealing to the eye.

##### **Content is King**

- Do not list hobbies, personal statistics (i.e. birthday, marital/military status), and interests or include a picture of yourself - this is all irrelevant.
- Do not write "resume" or "curriculum vitae" on your resume- *this is self-evident!*
- Do not simply list names and phone numbers on your reference list; it offers the reader helpful context when you list a complete address, title, organization, email address, phone number, and your relationship to the reference provider.
- Give yourself some credit! Describe your accomplishments and duties honestly and assertively.
- Never write 'references available upon request!' *Of course they are available upon request!* This is intuitive!
- Do not write an objective unless you really have one- it is annoying to look at the same generic objective sentence. Sometimes it is better to address personal goals (i.e. objectives in the cover letter).

- Give your resume to someone, *anyone*, to read before you send it to a potential employer. A second pair of eyes can find errors you can't see and identify places in which you weren't clear in describing your background and experience. Better yet, give your resume to someone who knows your work prior to sending it to a potential employer. Someone who knows your work will help you remember some of the great accomplishments you've had and some of your unique and marketable characteristics.

#### IV. APPLICATION

It is very important to follow the specific directions of each institution when applying for a job. After you have prepared your resume, check to see if it is tailored to the position for which you are applying (See **Appendices A** and **B**).

### APPLICATION TIPS

#### **Follow the instructions in the job posting – they were included for a reason**

- If the employer asks for the contact information of references, give them the contact information. Do not send an actual written letter of reference.
- If the employer asks for contact information for 3 references, don't send information for 8. Follow the directions!
- Address each requirement listed in the vacancy announcement point-by-point in the cover letter and/or resume so that there is no doubt in the reader's mind that you meet the minimum qualifications.

#### **A few other tips...**

- If you are submitting these documents online, only attach MS Word or Adobe Acrobat files; these are the most commonly used programs, and it is frustrating when the candidate uses either out-dated or super high-tech software programs
- Don't call or email people associated with the search "for an update" or to see if you can "provide more information". It just makes more work for the people administering the search and puts people in an uncomfortable position.

#### V. INTERVIEWING

Interviewing allows the employer to get to know you interpersonally, and is a two-way process. At the interview stage, your verbal and nonverbal characteristics are more important than your credentials. Everyone who makes it to the interviewing stage is minimally qualified, now it becomes a matter of best fit between a candidate and the organization.

The search committee's overall impression is influenced by both subjective and objective observations throughout the interview. Keep in mind that the entire time you are with a representative of the library, you are on an interview. Even informal interactions provide a wealth of information to the discerning search committee member. These opportunities to observe a candidate begin with the emails and/or telephone calls to set up the interview and continue throughout the site visit, including an informal library tour,

a coffee break or a ride to and from the airport. See **Appendix E** for an example of the departments/employees you may be in contact with.

## INTERVIEW TIPS

- ✓ Treat everyone you meet as if they are the person making the hiring decision. Sometimes hallway conversations or seemingly inconsequential meetings with staff can have a large impact on how you are perceived as a potential fellow employee.
- ✓ Demonstrate stamina throughout your interview. Keep your energy level up all day.
- ✓ Be a low maintenance guest. Go with the flow and limit your requests for nonessential accommodations throughout the day.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Be prepared. For example, if you are required to give a presentation, don't expect someone at the host institution to make photocopies of your presentation materials for the audience. If your presentation materials are electronic, email them to the main contact person ahead of time and bring the information in multiple formats (CD, floppy, zip) so that you can adapt to whatever technology you are provided with during the interview.
- ✓ Past behavior is one of the best predictors of future behavior. Although not all institutions use them, *behaviorally based interview questions* (See **Appendix C**) allow the candidate tell the story of how they have handled specific situations in the past. Even if you are not presented with these types of questions, we recommend that you are prepared to provide specific examples of situations you have handled in the past:
  - solving a specific problem;
  - undertaking a creative endeavor;
  - being a team player;
  - a situation where you didn't meet your goals.
- ✓ It is also important for you to be aware of inappropriate questions a potential employer could ask (See **Appendix D**); know your rights!
- ✓ The more thank you cards you can send after interviewing the better. Send one to everyone whose name you can remember and specifically address what that person did to make your interview productive and comfortable.

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<sup>3</sup> This does not include making valid requests for ADA accommodations. See Americans with Disabilities Act homepage: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>

## VI. REFERENCES

There is a strong possibility that your references will be checked prior to getting an offer. To be prepared, compile and update a list of at least five references throughout your career. If possible, you should include a past (or even better, your current) supervisor in your list of references. It may help to secure your last supervisor as a reference *before* you leave a position. At that time you should prepare a summary of information about you that your supervisor can refer to in the future if (s)he is contacted as a reference. Include things like what dates you were there, your duties and your main accomplishments.

### Choosing References

When asking a person to be a reference you may want to use one of the following statements:

- ✓ "Do you feel you know my work well enough to write me a good recommendation letter?"
- ✓ "Do you feel you could give me a good reference?"

These questions give your reference provider an easy out if they are not comfortable positively referring you. It is also important to get your references' permission to list them as a contact and to keep them informed of progress or the likelihood that they will be contacted as a reference for a specific position.

Prospective employers should get your permission before contacting your references, but you can encourage them to do so by highlighting the need to contact you first with a statement on your reference list that says: "Please contact me for permission before contacting my references".

### Preparation

When it comes time for a prospective employer to contact your reference, offer to provide your reference the following items:

- ✓ An updated copy of your resume
- ✓ A description of the position for which you are applying (see **Appendix A**)
- ✓ Any forms or specific instructions or questions requested of the reference by the institution
- ✓ If you are asking for a letter of reference, provide a stamped, pre-addressed envelope for the reference to send in their letter
- ✓ If the items can be provided electronically, that is even better – just provide an email address or website where the reference can submit the information

Refer to **Appendix F** for a listing of questions your potential employer may ask your references. Let your references know when you hear about your application and whether or not you got the position.

## VII. NEGOTIATION AND APPOINTMENT

The key to successful salary negotiation is research and information. Use your research skills to get a sense of what people at the institution to which you are applying make. Know what an average librarian with your years of experience in the part of the country you are applying makes (See **Appendix G**). Know the salary you want before you interview with an organization.

There are at least two good ways to learn what to expect as a competitive salary:

- ✓ Use your network! Ask other people how much they make or how much they made in their first job
- ✓ Check the Internet for salary-survey information
  - Salary.com
  - JobStar: Profession-Specific Salary Surveys
  - SalaryExpert.com
  - MonsterMoving.com Salary Comparison Calculator
  - The Department of Labor's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*

When the offer is made, be sure to evaluate the *entire* compensation package -- not just salary. Benefits can add up to 30 percent to your total compensation! Here are some commonly offered benefits:

- Medical insurance
- Dental insurance
- Optical/eye care insurance
- Life insurance
- Accidental death insurance
- Disability insurance
- Vacation Days
- Paid Holidays
- Sick/personal days
- Retirement savings plans
- Pension plans
- Tuition reimbursement
- Health clubs
- Dependent care
- Employee Assistance Program
- Travel support for professional development
- Parking
- Relocation Expenses which may include:
  - House-hunting trip expenses
  - Lodging fees
  - Moving expenses
  - Mortgage/Closing cost fees
  - Brokerage fees
  - Temporary housing expenses
  - Spouse re-employment expenses

When considering your different offers, consider more than just salary and health insurance. Identify what it will take to make an unacceptable offer acceptable, and what items are negotiable.

### TIPS FOR NEGOTIATING

- ✓ Be sure and thank the employer for the job offer, regardless of acceptance/declination.
- ✓ Never negotiate at the time of the original offer. Ask for time to consider the entire compensation package.
- ✓ Just do it! Most employers are willing to negotiate at least one or more elements of a compensation package.
- ✓ Negotiate with the proper attitude and demeanor. Never make demands. Always say you are hoping for more instead of expecting more.
- ✓ Never lose sight of the fact that you are negotiating to obtain a satisfactory job in the *short-term*, and to advance your career in the *long run*.
- ✓ BE SURE TO GET FINAL COMMITMENT IN WRITING!

### VIII. SUMMARY

For some, the job-hunt may be quite stressful, but prepared candidates can rest easy knowing they are equipped to handle the process. A professional position in an academic library can be a fulfilling career decision in the culturally and intellectually rich environment of higher education. Academic librarianship is a dynamic, evolving profession offering you many exciting challenges and meaningful rewards while you make a difference in this age of information.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Association of College and Research Libraries. "Academic Librarianship" brochure. <http://www.ala.org/ACRLTemplate.cfm>

## IX. RESOURCES

**America's Job Bank.** <http://www.ajb.org/>

Visit this site and see how it can help you find the job that's right for you; thousands of new jobs are posted daily.

**Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL).** *Career Opportunities.*  
[www.ala.org/acrl/advert3.html](http://www.ala.org/acrl/advert3.html)

This is a complete list of all job advertisements from the C&RL News classified ads, as well as many jobs that can only be found online. Ads posted in the last 90 days are organized by posting date.

**Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE).** *Job Placement.* <http://www.alise.org/jobplacement/index.html>

**Association of Research Libraries (ARL).** *Career Resources Online Service.*  
<http://db.arl.org/careers/index.html>

The Career Resources Online Service was established in 1996 to provide job hunters with an easy-to-use resource for finding positions in ARL libraries. This service assists member institutions in attracting a qualified, talented, and diverse applicant pool. The Career Resources Online Service began accepting announcements from non-member libraries in 1997. Free to ARL members, the fee collected from non-members helps to sustain the service.

**American Library Association (ALA).** *Human Resources Development and Recruitment.* [www.ala.org/hrdr/education](http://www.ala.org/hrdr/education)

**Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE).** *Career Network.* [www.chronicle.com/jobs](http://www.chronicle.com/jobs)

**Lisjobs.com.** *Jobs for Library and Information Professionals.* [www.lisjobs.com](http://www.lisjobs.com)

Lisjobs.com is a comprehensive guide to online job resources for librarians and information professionals.

**Reference and User Services Association (RUSA).** *Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Services Professionals.*  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotocols/referenceguide/guidelinesbehavioral.htm>

**U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).** *Occupational Outlook Handbook.*  
<http://stats.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is a nationally recognized source of career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. Revised every two years, the *Handbook* describes what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, earnings, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations.

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## **A. SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**Position Title:** Science/Engineering Librarian

**Incumbent:** Vacant

**Reports to:** Head, Research and Information

### **Purpose and scope:**

Provides collection development, reference and instruction services to students, faculty, and staff in the subject areas of physics, mathematics and engineering. In addition, the incumbent serves as a member of the Research and Information service pool, providing general reference assistance at both service desks, and participating in the evening and weekend rotations.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

Serve as the Subject Librarian for physics, mathematics and engineering. Evaluate the print and electronic collections, both serial and monographic, in this area, and purchase or make recommendations to purchase resources relevant to the curriculum in the subject areas of listed above. Act as the library liaison for these departments.

Provide general reference assistance on the Research and Information service desks, including evening and weekend hours as scheduled.

Participate in the activities of the Research and Information Department.

Provide specialized reference assistance in physics, mathematics and engineering.

Participate fully in the libraries' instruction program.

Participate in faculty governance activities, including attending faculty meetings, voting for bylaws changes, voting in other faculty elections, and serving on committees when elected or appointed.

Establish and sustain an ongoing service and scholarship record, in accordance with UNLV Library Faculty Bylaws and university tenure and promotion procedures.

Keep current with trends and developments in assigned areas of responsibility and the field of librarianship.

Review this position description annually and, in conjunction with the Head, Research & Information II, make whatever changes or adjustments are necessary to accurately reflect the scope, duties and responsibilities of this position.

Assume other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

## **B. SAMPLE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Position:** Remote Services Librarian  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries invite applications for a new tenure-track Remote Services Librarian position. The UNLV Libraries seek an energetic and creative librarian to offer general assistance and technical expertise to provide and enhance services such as electronic reserves, virtual reference, on-line tutorials, and other points of contact with remote users, both distance education students and local students accessing the Libraries' services from home. The UNLV Libraries bring people and information together in innovative ways, combining the best of traditional academic library features with the newest technology and services.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Reporting to the Director of Public Services at the Lied Library, the Remote Services Librarian will collaborate with department heads to expand and enhance the Libraries' web-based services. The Remote Services Librarian will investigate and recommend technologies and policies for web-based services and will work directly with patrons to assess problems associated with remote access and services. The successful applicant will manage selected web forms and pages; administer the Libraries' virtual reference service; serve as a member of the Web Development Team; provide staff training in remote services; and collaborate with staff in the Libraries and on campus. The incumbent will also assist patrons at the Research and Information desk including periodic weekend and evening assignments; and contribute significantly to the Libraries' instruction program by conducting general and subject-oriented instruction to foster the development of information literacy skills. In addition, the incumbent will be expected to keep current with trends and developments in assigned areas of responsibility; engage in scholarly pursuits; and provide service to the university, the community, and the profession in accordance with Libraries and University standards for promotion and tenure.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Required:**

Completed Master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited program by start date. Demonstrated commitment to user-focused services. Basic understanding of authentication protocols and solutions such as EZproxy. Experience with remote computer access technologies and services commonly used to access electronic resources from home. Demonstrated ability to design and author web pages. Basic understanding of database-driven websites. Experience with commonly used web tools such as browsers, FTP, courseware, and plug-ins. Familiarity with a wide variety of on-line research tools such as indexes, reference sources, e-reserves, etc. Excellent oral and written communication skills. Demonstrated ability to prioritize workload assignments. Creativity, initiative and self direction. Evidence of ability to meet UNLV requirements for promotion and tenure.

**Desired:**

Academic library experience with library instruction and reference, including virtual reference. Experience with on-line course environments, particularly WebCT courseware. Experience with web development software and scripting languages. Evidence of strong project management and organizational skills. Experience in grant writing and managing funded projects. Demonstrated involvement in professional activities.

**SALARY**

This is a tenure-track, twelve-month academic faculty position at Rank II. Position is contingent upon funding. Salary is commensurate with labor market. For more information, see the UNLV World Wide Web site at: <http://www.unlv.edu>.

*UNLV is an Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity employer committed to excellence through diversity.*

## C. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS<sup>5</sup>

### 1. General/ Introductory/ Rapport-building

1. Why did you become a librarian?
2. What made you apply for this position?
3. Briefly, would you summarize your work history & education?
4. What special aspects of your work experience have prepared you for this job?
5. Describe your most rewarding experience at a previous job.
6. What do you consider your greatest achievement in your career? Why?
7. Can you describe for me one or two of your most important accomplishments?
8. What do you consider your greatest disappointment or challenge in your career? Why? How did you handle the situation?
9. Describe the important factors that attracted you to becoming a candidate for this position.
10. What are your areas of interest in scholarship?
11. Why are you leaving your present job?
12. What is important to you in an employer? What things do you look for in an organization?

### 2. Career Goals

1. What is your long-term employment or career objective?
2. What kind of job do you see yourself holding five years from now? What do you feel you need to develop in terms of skill & knowledge in order to be ready for that opportunity?
3. How does this job fit into your over-all career goals?

### 3. Analytical Skills/ Problem Solving/ Decision Making

1. Have you ever had to review proposals submitted by a vendor or by another committee? Tell me about one of those situations.
2. Tell me about a time when you had to analyze or interpret numerical or financial information.
3. Walk me through a situation in which you had to get information by asking many questions of many people. How did you know what to ask?
4. Give me an example of a time you weren't sure what an internal/external customer wanted. How did you handle the situation?
5. Think of a good decision you made and a recent decision that wasn't as good. What did you do differently in making those decisions?
6. Describe a time when you weighed the pros and cons of a situation and decided not to take action, even though you were under pressure to do so.
7. Your change from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ was a major career change. What factors influenced your decision to change jobs?
8. Describe how you have increased accessibility to library collections in the past.

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<sup>5</sup> Adopted from University of Nebraska, Lincoln University Libraries and Indiana University, Bloomington Libraries.

### **For New Graduates**

- a. What types of information have you used for your career search?
- b. Walk me through a situation in which you had to do research and analyze the results. (For school, buying a new car, etc.)
- c. What was the toughest academic decision you had to make? How did you go about making the decision? What alternatives did you consider?
- d. What made you attend \_\_\_\_\_? (College, library school, training, etc.)

### **4. Communication Skills**

1. In the past, how have you kept internal/external customers informed?
2. Tell me about a recent major directive of management that you had to communicate and implement. How did you go about doing this?
3. Describe a time you had to ask questions and listen carefully to clarify the exact nature of an internal/external customer's problem.

### **5. Creativity/ Innovation**

1. In your current position, what have you done differently you're your predecessors? Tell me about a creative idea you had to improve library service.
2. In your work experience, what have you done that you consider truly creative?
3. Can you think of a problem you have encountered when the old solutions didn't work & when you came up with new solutions?
4. Tell me about a unique approach you took to solve a problem.
5. Tell me about a way in which you worked with other staff to develop new and creative ideas to solve a problem.
6. What kind of problems have people recently called upon you to solve? Tell me what solutions you suggested.

### **6. Expertise and Technical Knowledge**

1. What technical training have you received? How did you apply this training?
2. Describe a project, situation, or assignment that challenged your skills as a \_\_\_\_\_. What did you do to manage the situation effectively?
3. Sometimes complex projects require additional expertise. Describe a situation in which you had to request help.
4. Have you ever had to orient a new employee on a technical task or area? How did you do it?
5. Describe a time you solved a technical problem.
6. What equipment have you trained to operate? How proficient are you?
7. What word processing packages can you use? How proficient are you?
8. Give me an example of a project that demonstrates your technical expertise in \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Describe how you've gone about learning a new technical task.
10. How much experience have you had operating \_\_\_\_\_ (mouse, keyboard, typewriter, word processor, etc.)
11. Describe the most challenging work you've ever done.

12. Give me an example of an assignment you've worked on that shows your expertise in \_\_\_\_\_.

## 7. Flexibility/ Adaptability

1. Tell me about two of you coworkers who are most different from one another. How have you worked with (or managed, or led) each one? Give me an example.
2. Working with people from diverse backgrounds or cultures can be a challenge. Can you tell me about a time you faced a challenge adapting to a person from a different background or culture? (What happened? What did you do? What was the result?)
3. Tell me about an important project/task/assignment you were working on in which the specifications changed. (What did you do? How did it affect you?)
4. Tell me about a time you had to meet a scheduled deadline while your work was being continually interrupted. What caused you to have the most difficulty and why?
5. Going from \_\_\_\_\_ (position) to \_\_\_\_\_ (position) must have been difficult. Tell me about a challenge that occurred when making the transition. (How did you handle it?)
6. Describe a time you had to significantly modify your work procedures to align with new strategic directives.
7. Tell me about the manager/supervisor who was most challenging to work for. How did you handle this challenging relationship?
8. I see that you have moved a number of times. What was the biggest challenge you faced in moving? How did you cope?
9. Going from (high school to college, college to graduate school, school to your first job) can be a dramatic change. Tell me about a particular challenge you had when you made this transition.
10. Tell us about a recent experience in which you had to adapt to change or help others to adapt?
11. Give an example of a time you had to work under pressure, deadlines, etc. How did you behave in this situation?
12. Because of the continuing growth of our library we are required to function in a constantly changing work environment, both regarding assignments and organizational structure. Could you give us an example of how you have responded to change in your past work experience?
13. Our library serves a very diverse clientele. Describe the challenges and opportunities that you have experienced in serving diverse clientele in your current and/or former positions.
14. Our library serves a very diverse clientele. Please describe any customer service activities or programs you have been involved with that have focused on serving diverse populations.
15. As a member of our library, you will be expected to serve on two very busy reference desks, serve on a variety of committees, and spend time on research activities. Give us an example of how you work under pressure and manage deadlines and commitments.
16. As a Reference service member, you will not only be dealing with reference questions, but also patrons' computer problems, copier problems, and microform usage. Tell us about the experiences you have had solving these or any other non-reference type of problem at your service desk.

## 8. Interpersonal/ Group Skills

1. Do you prefer working alone or in groups?
2. What kind of people do you find most difficult to work with? Why?
3. Tell me about a time you were able to convince someone to cooperate with you on an important project.
4. Tell me about an experience you've had working with a new employee. Give an example of your dealings with that person.
5. Sometimes it can be frustrating to try to get information from other people for planning purposes or to solve a problem. Please describe a situation you have had like this.
6. Our relationships with coworkers are not always perfect. Tell me the most challenging relationship you had with a coworker. Why was it challenging? What did you do to try to make it work?
7. Describe a time when you worked with a group or team to determine project responsibilities. What was your role?
8. Can you give me an example of a group decision you were involved in recently? What did you do to help the group reach the decision?
9. Tell me about a situation when a group member disagreed with your ideas or actions.
10. Tell me about one of the toughest groups you've had to work with. What made it difficult?
11. Give us an example of a time when you worked with a team to successfully complete a project?

## 9. Leadership

1. Sometimes important projects have tight deadlines. Tell me about a time when you had to take action quickly to correct a problem on an important project.
2. Tell me about a time you inspired someone to work hard and do a good job.
3. Describe a face-to-face meeting in which you had to lead or influence a very sensitive individual.
4. Tell me about a time when you were able to convince someone from outside (your department, etc.) to cooperate with you on an important project.
5. What strategies have you used to communicate a major change in employees? Which strategies have worked, and which have not?
6. Describe a situation in which you had to translate a broad or general plan into specific goals.

### *For Supervisory Positions*

- a. Can you give me an example of your ability to manage or supervise others?
- b. Tell me about a time when you included one of your staff in solving a problem.
- c. Sometimes there is only enough time to tell people what to do and how to do it. Tell me about a time you needed to be this way with your staff.
- d. Tell me how you established rapport with the newest members of your staff.
- e. Tell me about award structures or incentives you established to help accomplish a new directive. How did it work?
- f. As a supervisor, describe how you have handled a poor performer in the past.

- g. As a supervisor, describe how you have handled an excellent performer in the past.
- h. Describe a difficult decision you have had to make as a supervisor in the past.

### ***For New Graduates***

- a. Describe a situation in which you had to influence another student or peer to cooperate. What did you say?
- b. Tell me about a leadership role you had in an extracurricular activity. How did you lead?

## **10. Organizational Understanding and Group Thinking**

1. Describe a situation in which you chose to involve others to help solve an internal or external customer's problem. What was the problem? How did involving others help?
2. Describe an occasion when you decided to involve others from outside your department in making the decision.

## **11. Ownership/ Accountability/ Dependability**

1. Describe a time when you weighed the pros and cons of a situation and decided not to take action, even though you were under pressure to do so.
2. We all make decisions that turn out to be mistakes. Describe a work decision you made that you wish you could do over.
3. What are some things you would like to avoid in a job? Why?

## **12. Planning and Organizational Skills**

1. Walk me through yesterday (or last week) and tell me how you planned the day's (or week's) activities.
2. What procedure have you used to keep track of items that need attention? Tell me about a time when you used that procedure.
3. What objectives did you set for this year? What steps have you taken to make sure that you're making progress on all of them?
4. Sometimes deadlines don't allow the luxury of carefully considering all options before making a decision. Please give an example of a time this happened to you. What was the result of your decision?
5. Tell me about a time you were faced with conflicting priorities. In scheduling your time, how did you determine what was a priority?
6. At our library, our subject librarians have multiple assignments. They provide general reference assistance, specialized reference assistance in their subject areas, participate in the library's bibliographic instruction program, serve as liaison with the relevant academic departments and select books, serials and electronic resources in their subject areas. How would you accommodate these competing assignments and give us an example of how you have dealt with a similar situation in the past?

### ***For Supervisory Positions***

- a. Tell me about either a short- or long-term plan you developed for your department.
- b. What strategies have you used to communicate a major new initiative to employees? Which strategies have worked and which have not?

### ***For New Graduates***

- a. Tell me about a time your course load was heaviest. How did you complete all your work?
- b. What did you consider when setting up your class schedule?
- c. How were you able to balance your work with extracurricular activities?

## **13. Resource Management**

1. Tell me about one of the reward structures or incentives you established to help accomplish a major new directive.
2. Describe how you have used assessment in the past. What tools have you used?
3. How would you go about assessing an electronic resource for possible acquisition by our library?
4. Describe a collection you have developed. How did you go about developing the collection?

## **14. Service Attitude/ User Satisfaction**

1. In your current job, how do you know if your internal/external customers are satisfied? Give a specific example.
2. Tell me about a time when you were able to respond to an internal/external customer's request in a shorter period of time than expected. Contrast that with a time you failed to meet an internal/external customer's expectations. What was the difference?
3. As a \_\_\_\_\_, how did you ensure that you were providing good service?
4. Sometimes it is necessary to work with a customer who has unusual requests. Please describe a time when you had to handle an unusual request that seemed unreasonable. What did you do?
5. Some days can be very busy with requests from customers and coworkers. Please describe a situation when you didn't have enough time to completely satisfy a particular customer. How did you handle the situation?
6. Tell us about an experience you have had with a difficult patron and how you handled it.
7. Give us an example of how your activities at a reference desk or in dealing with the public demonstrate your public service philosophy.
8. Give us an example of how your activities at a reference desk (or any other public services area) demonstrate your public services philosophy?
9. Describe any liaison activities you have been involved with related to (area of specialty).
10. In developing liaison or community activities with (area of specialty) what would be some of your first priorities?

## **15. Research**

1. As a member of our library, you will be expected to engage in scholarly activities such as publishing and presentations. What are your current research interests?
2. As a member of our library, you will be expected to engage in scholarly activities such as publishing and presentations. Please share with us your most recent scholarly accomplishment.

## **16. Exit Interview**

1. Having spent the day with us learning about our library and the job, are you still interested in the position?
2. If you were to be hired into this position, what would be some of the first steps you would take to establish yourself and your program within our library?
3. If you have any hesitation or anxiety about aspects of the position, could you share them with us now? This gives us an opportunity to clarify, explain or provide additional information that may overcome such barriers.
4. As an opportunity for you to summarize and reiterate your wonderful qualities, please tell us why we should hire you?
5. Do you have any questions for us?

**D. THINGS YOUR POTENTIAL EMPLOYER SHOULD NOT ASK YOU**

<b>Category</b>	<b>May Ask</b>	<b>Potentially Discriminating</b>
Gender and Family	If applicant has relative already employed by the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Number of children</li> <li>• Marital status</li> <li>• Spouses occupation</li> <li>• Child-care arrangements</li> <li>• Health-care coverage through spouse</li> <li>• Addresses of relative who can be contacted as a reference</li> <li>• Living arrangements (rent, own, live with someone)</li> </ul>
Race	No questions may be asked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant's race or color of skin</li> <li>• Photo to be affixed to application form</li> </ul>
National Origin or Ancestry	<p>Whether applicant has a legal right to be employed in the U.S. (proof of eligibility to work in the U.S. can only be required after employment)</p> <p>Ability to speak/ write English fluently (if job-related)</p> <p>Other languages spoken (if job related)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic association of surname</li> <li>• Birthplace of applicant or applicant's parents or other close relatives</li> <li>• Nationality, lineage, national origin</li> <li>• Nationality of applicant's spouse</li> <li>• Whether applicant is citizen of another country</li> <li>• Applicant's native tongue</li> <li>• Maiden name (of married woman)</li> <li>• Mother's maiden name</li> <li>• If applicant is a naturalized citizen / date of citizenship</li> <li>• Ask for a birth certificate or baptismal record</li> <li>• How the applicant acquired the ability to read, write or speak a foreign language</li> </ul>
Religion	No questions may be asked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious affiliation</li> <li>• Religious holidays observed</li> </ul>
Age	<p>If applicant is over age 18 (if job related)</p> <p>If applicant is over 21 (if job related)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of birth</li> <li>• Date of elementary or high-school attendance</li> <li>• Age</li> </ul>

Disability	Whether applicant can perform essential job-related functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If applicant has a disability</li> <li>• Nature or severity of disability</li> <li>• Whether applicant has ever filed workers' comp claim</li> <li>• Recent or past surgeries and dates</li> <li>• Past medical problems</li> <li>• If the applicant is in good health</li> <li>• Ever consulted a psychologist or psychiatrist</li> <li>• Injury or disease</li> <li>• Drug/drinking problem</li> </ul>
Residence	Place of residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the candidate owns or rents</li> <li>• "With whom do you reside?"</li> <li>• "Do you live with your parents?"</li> </ul>
Arrest Record	No questions may be asked (arrest is not an indication of guilt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If applicant has ever been arrested for any crime, when, where</li> </ul>
Military Discharge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of military discharge</li> <li>• Questions regarding service</li> </ul>

**E. SAMPLE ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

8:00 a.m.	Dean / Director welcome
8:15 a.m.	Search Committee interview
8:45 a.m.	Library tour
9:15 a.m.	Supervisor interview
9:45 a.m.	Interview with Reference department
10:15 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.	Presentation followed by question and answer session with staff
11:30 a.m.	Lunch with the search committee
1:00 p.m.	Interview with Technical Services department
1:30 p.m.	Interview with Collection Development department
2:00 p.m.	Break
2:15 p.m.	Interview with Public Services department
2:45 p.m.	Campus Tour
3:30 p.m.	Exit interview with Search Committee
4:15 p.m.	Exit interview with Dean or Director
5:00 p.m.	Dinner with the search committee

**F. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS YOUR REFERENCES MAY BE ASKED**

1. How long have you known the candidate and in what capacity?
2. Do you have first-hand knowledge of how the candidate behaves in stressful, sometimes uncomfortable situations? Can you give an example?
3. What do you consider to be the candidate's greatest work-related accomplishment?
4. What is your perception of the candidate's ability to work successfully and effectively with a variety of people (faculty, staff, peers, administrators)? Can you think of examples?
5. Collaboration and cooperation are critical to being effective in this position. How would you rate the candidate on his/her ability to be a team player?
6. Please describe your perception of the candidate's personal work ethic?
7. Is or was your organization better off by having employed this person? In what way(s)? What was the cumulative impact the candidate had on your organization?
8. Would you, if given the opportunity, hire this individual? Why, or why not?
9. Do you have any additional comments to add and/or issues to raise that we have not discussed?

## G. AVERAGE EARNINGS<sup>6</sup>

Salaries of librarians vary according to the individual's qualifications and the type, size, and location of the library. Librarians with primarily administrative duties often have greater earnings. The Department of Labor's current statistics are below.

### Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2003

#### 25-4021 Librarians

Administer libraries and perform related library services. Work in a variety of settings, including public libraries, schools, colleges and universities, museums, corporations, government agencies, law firms, non-profit organizations, and healthcare providers. Tasks may include selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library materials; and furnishing reference, bibliographical, and readers' advisory services. May perform in-depth, strategic research, and synthesize, analyze, edit, and filter information. May set up or work with databases and information systems to catalogue and access information.

Industry	Employment	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage
Elementary and secondary schools	62,590	\$22.81	\$47,450
Local government (OES designation)	43,550	\$19.62	\$40,810
<b>Colleges and universities</b>	<b>20,920</b>	<b>\$23.56</b>	<b>\$49,000</b>
Other information services	5,950	\$19.21	\$39,960
Junior colleges	3,870	\$23.94	\$49,800

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, 2003.

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