

Selected Resources

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A Few Words of Wisdom

“Avoid questions that show that you have done no homework whatsoever about the library or position. There are many others, but it can vary from person to person. So I would just say to avoid anything that will not put you in a good light. Put yourself in the place of the interviewer and think about the questions beforehand. Have some questions written down, but limit it to about five because otherwise it takes too much time and makes you look like you have too many questions.” Marsha Grove, Director, Champaign (IL) Public Library

“Managers can make those being interviewed more comfortable by realizing that the candidate may be nervous. The manager should not grill the candidate. Do not noticeably look at their clothing, hair, or jewelry as if you are inspecting the candidate.” Lisa Olsen, Senior Librarian, DE Division of Libraries.

“Something I have found critical is how a candidate reflects their personality during initial contacts and interactions. Someone with a professional and warm, friendly manner is always worth pursuing. If someone is professional but totally lacks warmth and a friendly personality that's a huge warning sign. In a profession where personality does count, as supervisors we need to be hiring warm and, yes, even outgoing people.” Kimberly Bolan Taney, Independent Library Consultant, Brownsburg, IN.

“Consider it an adventure; a friend of mine thinks of interviewing as a hobby. It helps him relax. Consider, also, that this probably won't be the last place you work. It doesn't have to be perfect, but it should be a pretty good match. You need to like and want to work for them as much as they like you and want you to be there. Don't be afraid to ask for what you want. If they interviewed you and offered you a position, they are interested enough to at least allow for the possibility of negotiation. Don't take the interview personally. It isn't about your worth as a human; it's about the person best fitting the job description and 'feel' of the place.” Cindy Welch, University of Illinois