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Job Hunt Rhetoric: The Conversation behind the Successful Search

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The job placement process in music librarianship has several important components. Whether securing a position or securing a person to fill a position, the process in any field essentially involves these elements:

- the job posting
- the job description
- the application letter
- the résumé
- the job interview
- the job offer

How well any one of these steps is executed can have a significant impact on how effectively a position is or is not filled. In a successful search process, the importance of well-chosen language cannot be overestimated. This chapter analyzes several job postings. In addition, it presents several groups of questions that help to clarify candidates' and employers' intentions during the interview process. The combination of informative written materials and informed conversation can contribute to a positive outcome for all concerned. While these underlying principles

are based on the authors' experiences in academic libraries, they are easily applicable or adaptable to public libraries as well.

Ideally, the job posting and the more detailed job description, coupled with information provided in the job application materials and the interview process, provide a means for both the library seeking an employee and the prospective applicants to make informed and appropriate decisions. To determine whether or not a particular candidate is suited to a given position (and vice versa), each party attempts to gain as much useful information about the other as possible. For the employer, the goal is to determine whether or not a candidate has the necessary abilities, experience, work ethic, and communication and interpersonal skills to be successful in the position. For the candidate, the goal is to find out whether the position offers the type of work that the candidate is seeking and, if so, whether the candidate indeed possesses the necessary expertise and experience to be successful in the job under consideration. With that in mind, the second half of this chapter will concern itself with what information should be found in well-written job postings and descriptions and with how one should appropriately (and, hopefully, successfully) respond to them.

The Job Posting

The job posting is the initial expression in a process of communication between the hiring library and the librarian candidate for a position. Job postings for academic libraries vary quite a bit, depending on the type and level of the position, the culture of the institution, and the nature of the selection process. They can be succinct and fairly basic or highly informative. Postings formally announce the position and provide the initial filtering of the candidate pool. The perusal of any two or three months' worth of postings on the Music Library Association's website job list[1] will quickly illustrate these points.

Job postings, whether extensive or brief, describe the title, basic responsibilities, and at least some of the qualifications for the position. This is the minimum that the library is seeking. Some more detailed postings may include a description of the library or parent institution and the community in which it is situated and a statement about salary and benefits. Starting date, length of appointment, an affirmative action

policy statement, application procedures, and deadlines should be present as well.

Many job postings will list both "required" and "preferred" qualifications for a position. At many if not most institutions, the distinction is important. Generally speaking, no candidate who lacks any of the required qualifications for a position can (or should) be hired for a position if another candidate has all of the requirements. The more "preferred" qualifications that are listed in a posting, the more flexibility the library will have in selecting from a pool of qualified candidates the person who will fit best into the structure and culture of the organization. For instance, an organization that places a job posting listing all of the qualifications as "preferred," with the exception of a master's in library or information studies, clearly is opting for as much flexibility as possible in selection. A Syracuse University posting had a rather elegant way of handling preferred qualifications by including them as required in a paragraph that states "AND the best combination of the following."[2] Consider the following posting from the University of South Carolina for an assistant music librarian:

The **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA,** Columbia. South Carolina, is looking for an Assistant Music Librarian.

Description: The USC Music Library is a branch library located in the School of Music, which has an enrollment of approximately 500 music majors. Reporting to the Head of the Music Library, the Assistant Music Librarian oversees the Music Library's special collections, including the processing of collections of manuscripts, personal papers, and other archival materials. Prepares and maintains electronic finding aids. Makes all housing and treatment decisions. Provides in-person, telephone, and e-mail reference assistance relating to the special collections. Coordinates rotating exhibits. Manages gifts-in-kind program, including decision making about appropriateness to collection, production of acknowledgments, and internal appraising. Serves as liaison with the Preservation Services department. Will train and supervise Music Library staff in basic archival procedures and oversees students working on related projects. Performs other duties as assigned. Active participation in professional activities and departmental or university initiatives. This is a full-time position (37.5 hours per week). Further information may be found at: www.sc.edu/library/music/music.html.

Qualifications: *Required:* An ALA-accredited M.L.S.; a bachelor's degree in music or equivalent; formal training in archival theory and practice or equivalent experience; a thorough familiarity

with print and online music reference resources; and, excellent oral
and written communication skills. *Preferred*: Graduate degree in music.
Familiarity with AACR2, MARC, OCLC, and the NOTIS automated
system. Strong leadership and supervisory skills. Knowledge of digital
technologies. Working knowledge of at least one European language.[3]

This posting also includes a small number of required qualifications,
including general statements concerning familiarity with reference
resources and excellent communications skills. Almost every job posting
is going to express a requirement for communication skills, which is of
increasing importance as librarians are expected take on more and more
cross-departmental and campuswide responsibilities. Of course, the
candidate's ability to communicate will be assessed by how well the
letter of application is constructed and how the candidate conducts himself
or herself during the interview process.

Careful examination of the South Carolina posting strongly suggests
qualified candidates for the position will have all of the required
qualifications listed. Given the job responsibilities set forth, the
"preferred" qualifications will play a large role in the ranking of the
candidates. For example, an academic library posting a position in the
current environment that includes responsibilities for special collections
materials, including the creation and maintenance of electronic finding
aids, will definitely be looking for someone with at least some knowledge
of digital technology and its standards, even though this qualification is
listed as "preferred." Possibly the requirement for "formal training in
archival theory or practice or equivalent experience" also would
encompass some degree of technological ability.

The phrase "or equivalent experience" brings up another point.
Academic library postings vary in their requirements for graduate degrees
in music. Some years ago, when there was a surplus of people applying
for music library positions, job postings often required at least a second
master's degree in music. While this is sometimes still the case, as with
a recent Baylor University posting for a management-level music and
fine arts librarian, in order to open up the pool of candidates many
institutions now either only prefer a second graduate degree or require
graduate work or the equivalent in the discipline. Still, generally speaking,
for public service and collection development librarians in particular,
most music library positions are definitely looking for strong academic
music credentials along with all the other qualifications. Such credentials
offer an objective standard by which the employer can initially gauge

the candidate's knowledge of the discipline. Moreover, in academic institutions they help to establish credibility with faculty, which will be important in opening avenues of communication and collaboration. Most successful candidates will possess a graduate degree (or degrees) in music or significant previous academic music library experience.

On the other hand, postings for cataloging positions tend to focus more on technical and standards-based knowledge and experience and, while requiring strong knowledge of the discipline, generally do not require graduate experience. This is illustrated in the following posting for a Kent State music and media cataloging position:

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY Kent, Ohio, is looking for a Music and Media Cataloger.

Description: Kent State University Libraries and Media Services invite applications for the position of MUSIC AND MEDIA CATALOGER. The Libraries have a collection of more than 2 million volumes and hold membership in the Association of Research Libraries and the Center for Research Libraries. Kent State is a founding member of OCLC and of OhioLINK (www.library.kent.edu), Ohio's statewide information system. Innovative Interfaces is used for the integrated library system.

Responsibilities: The successful candidate will perform original and copy cataloging of music and media, including scores and sound recordings, software, audiovisual materials, and books in all subject areas. Original cataloging copy will be contributed to OCLC. Materials to be cataloged may be housed in the Main Library collection, the Hugh A. Glauser Music Library, or any of the seven regional campus libraries. The Music and Media Cataloger will provide expertise on national and international cataloging standards, address and resolve access issues and cataloging practices for integrating electronic resources into the collection, and supervise graduate students on a variety of cataloging projects. The librarian in this position will also work closely with regional campus librarians to facilitate original and copy cataloging across an eight-campus system.

Requirements: MLS from accredited ALA program; 2 years experience in original and complex cataloging of scores and sound recordings; experience performing original cataloging of audiovisual materials, computer files, and books; knowledge of cataloging standards, including AACR2, LC classification, LCSH, MARC21, MCD, and LCRI; academic degree in the music field.

Preferred Qualifications: Bibliographic knowledge of one or more foreign languages; knowledge of standards for cataloging remote electronic resources.[4]

The language of the job posting also says a lot about the type of institution and the type of person it is seeking. An excellent example of this can be found in the following posting from the University of Arizona:

The **UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**, Tucson, Arizona, is looking for an Assistant/Associate Librarian (Music Emphasis).

Position Summary: The incumbent will work to satisfy the needs relating to instruction, research and the creative endeavors of the team's customers, particularly those in the fine arts, by matching users with appropriate resources and services. The successful candidate will contribute to the profession and the professional literature to fulfill the responsibilities of a library faculty member through service (e.g., active participation in library-related associations and organizations) and scholarship (e.g., presentations at local and national conferences and meetings, publication of original research). As member of a library profession, the Library Faculty Assembly, and the general faculty of the University, the incumbent will resist censorship of library materials and eliminate barriers to access to information, commit to intellectual freedom in the pursuit of truth and knowledge for customers and staff, commit to honesty and respect for customers and staff, commit to the professional Code of Ethics for librarianship, be involved in the governance of the Library and the University through service in the Library Faculty Assembly and on appropriate University committees, and play a leadership role on campus in ensuring that the development of information literacy is a key component of the educational experience.

Duties and Responsibilities: Fulfill primary assignment in fine arts, principally to the School of Music and Dance and related disciplines. Work in other subject areas as needed by our customers and as knowledge and ability permit. Connection Development: Establish and maintain connections with assigned group of faculty, students, researchers, and staff. May include developing programs, exhibits, and other outreach activities. Information Resources Development/Preservation: Identify, evaluate, and select information for purchase or access. Expend and manage information access funds in assigned subject areas within Information Resources Council guidelines and established allocations. Education: Develop and provide library education, course-related instruction and other specialized educational sessions to assigned customers and other groups. Develop and prepare appropriate instructional and educational aids. In-depth reference/research consultation: Develop and maintain in-depth subject knowledge of information resources and provide in-depth reference and consultations in assigned area of subject expertise. Needs Assessment: Assess and evaluate information and service needs of the

teams and other customers, through application of appropriate needs assessment tools and methodologies. Undergraduate Services: Participate in and provide support for Undergraduate Services activities. These may include reference desk service, e-mail reference, instruction in general library education classes, and the training of staff and students who provide reference service. Training and Supervision: Develop and provide training sessions in areas of expertise to other team members, staff from other teams, and students in any of the above areas of responsibilities which include working closely with the Materials Access Team staff responsible for circulation, basic reference service, and physical maintenance of the Music Collection. Supervise student(s) in support activities as needed. Library-wide Responsibilities: Participate in library strategic projects teams, cross-functional teams and other teams as needed to complete the goals of the library.

Minimum Qualifications: Master's degree in Library/ Information Science from an ALA-accredited institution.

Preferred Qualifications: Graduate level course work in Music. At least four years of experience as a Music Librarian in an academic library. Experience in music cataloging. Reading knowledge of German, French, Italian, or Spanish. Ability and desire to work in a team-based environment. Evidence or knowledge of collection development and preservation, instruction, knowledge management, advanced mediated services, and needs assessment in the fine arts. Strong commitment to information access in alternative and traditional formats. Demonstrated proficiency with related electronic technology. Ability to teach in a classroom, computer lab, in a collaborative setting, or one-on-one situations. Ability to communicate and to work effectively with faculty, customers and colleagues. Demonstrated commitment to continuous learning and professional development. Demonstrated contribution to the profession through scholarship and service activities. Commitment to diversity in the academic environment. Ability to set and achieve performance goals. Knowledge of instructional techniques and methods. Knowledge of digital imaging and electronic applications in the fine arts.[5]

This description includes terms such as "team" and "leadership role," attended by language describing shared processes and administration. The expression clearly suggests that the library is looking for someone who is willing and capable of taking personal responsibility in a highly collaborative team environment; someone who is likely to be a self-starter, nonhierarchical, and with good interpersonal skills; someone who is

interested in working in an administrative and organizational structure that is different from that of the traditional academic library.

Postings like Arizona's, which contain terms such as "customers," "information literacy," and "needs assessment," also suggest a significant organizational emphasis on direct and proactive user service, with an emphasis on library instruction that goes well beyond the individual discipline. In such positions, one can expect involvement in developing and implementing usability studies, focus groups, surveys, and other such approaches to customer service. The phrases "play a leadership role on campus" with regard to information literacy and "work in other subject areas as needed by our customers" suggest, as do other parts of this posting, that the incumbent in this position will be expected to have a scope of activity and responsibility that goes beyond the discipline of music.

The Job Description

Although the candidate will apply for a given position in response to a job posting only, additional details of the job should be included in the position's full job description. Often an applicant will receive a copy of the full job description if and when he or she is invited for an interview. If not, certainly it is permissible to request one at that point. Sometimes the job description is presented at the interview itself. A well-written job description will contain the following information:

- the position title (as it appears in the organizational chart, personnel records, and employment advertising), the name of the library and/or institution, a brief (often one sentence) statement of the basic job function, the position's minimum qualifications (education and skill requirements as well as personal qualifications);
- the position's supervisor, the names of the positions to whom the position gives supervision, the names of other departments that interact with the position;
- a list of the major responsibilities of the position including a description of the position's authority (e.g., decision-making limitations, budgetary limitations, etc.); and

- a statement of standards of performance against which the person holding the position will be evaluated.

Though the job description should contain information about each of these areas, by necessity such information will be brief. Most job descriptions are no more than one to three pages in length. Therefore, the main points of the job description should serve as an outline on which the candidate may base additional questions during the course of the interview.

The Application Letter

Once a candidate's interest in a position has been piqued by a particular posting, he or she will probably want to browse the website of the library/institution that posted the job to get some idea of its culture and structure. If the candidate still finds the position attractive, he or she should put together and promptly send the appropriate application materials. Just as there is much information that a candidate will want to ascertain about a position before applying for it, there are specific things that most employers look for in a candidate's application before making a decision to extend an invitation to an interview. The first impression an employer receives about a candidate comes through the candidate's application letter and résumé . At the very least, the letter should be neat and legible and should be free of grammatical and/or spelling errors. When it comes to reviewing these letters, attention to such detail often can make or break a candidate's chances of being asked for an interview.

The letter should state as specifically as possible what attracted the candidate to the position. It should address most if not all points relating to qualifications and experience in the job posting and attempt to document possession of the required skills. This tells the employer why a particular candidate is worthy of serious consideration for the position. Simply saying that one is applying for "x" position in response to the ad seen in "x" publication and enclosing a résumé is most definitely not enough! Many times a search committee must review dozens of applications for a position. It's a tedious process. Many applicants may have résumés that indicate all the required qualifications. In reading a cover letter, the supervisor or search committee member wants to know

what makes a particular applicant more worthy of serious consideration for the job than the others.

The successful applicant will clearly and succinctly articulate this information in the letter of application. Generally, the only applicants most employers are willing to consider for an interview are those who respond directly and effectively to the posting. To effectively respond to the requirements of a position, one does not necessarily need to show the exact previous job experience or qualifications described in the posting. An applicant may well have other personal and work experience that bears on the job qualifications. For example, digital recording experience gained from work on personal projects may translate to potential in support of library digital audio service; retail experience may support a strong public or "customer" service orientation; or substantial experience with national standards in one area may exemplify one's ability to learn and implement standards in a different area. What matters is that the applicant demonstrates how his or her experiences and education pertain to the job as described and that the applicant respond in some manner to as many of the job requirements listed as possible. It is helpful, too, for the candidate to give some indication of what aspect or aspects of the position specifically motivated him or her to apply for it.

The Résumé

The design and content of a résumé also can significantly affect an applicant's chances for securing an interview. Once again, the document should be neat, legible, typed, and free of grammatical and spelling errors. It should state clearly somewhere near the top of the first page the candidate's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address (if applicable). A succinct statement of one's career objective is appropriate as well. The career objective should be neither too narrow nor too broad and should be tied in some way to the specific job for which the candidate is applying. The résumé should include the applicant's educational history in chronological order (preferably with dates) and include the full name and location of the educational institutions attended, the names of degrees and dates degrees were conferred, the academic major (for nonlibrary degrees), and other areas of concentration. It is perfectly permissible (and often highly advisable) to include grade point averages, honors, and awards. The résumé also should include a work history in reverse

chronological order with dates and a brief description of the work performed. (If the applicant prefers not to give specific dates, she or he should indicate the number of months or years worked in each job.) It is generally best not to include personal information, such as age, ethnic group, health, hobbies, marital status, religion, or sex.[6]

Apart from the specific discipline-related and professional requirements of a position, most employers seek candidates with certain personal qualities and skills. These qualities and skills (or lack thereof) frequently are observable through the manner in which a candidate conducts himself or herself throughout the course of the interview process. For more definite confirmation and additional information, most prospective employers will want to contact references for the candidates about which they are the most serious. The candidate can facilitate this by appending the names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers of at least three references to the end of his or her résumé. If possible, it is best to include the name of one's current supervisor as one of the references. Special circumstances may prompt some candidates to request that their current supervisor not be contacted. Candidates should be aware that such a request can raise a red flag in the minds of those reviewing the application. Therefore, it is advisable to provide some explanation for such a request in the application materials or during the course of the interview. Whether the candidate chooses to include a letter of recommendation in the application materials or is asked to solicit a letter to be sent directly to the hiring institution, such a letter will be most valuable if it addresses the following:

- the writer's relationship to the applicant
- how long and in what capacity the writer has known the applicant
- the applicant's special strengths, skills, and areas that may need development
- an assessment of the applicant's interpersonal skills
- a recommendation about the types of jobs for which the candidate is best suited[7]

To be useful to the prospective employer, a letter of recommendation should offer a balanced assessment of the candidate's abilities, not simply a list of his or her best qualities.

The Interview

Once a candidate has been called for an interview, he or she should research the library and its parent institution and/or the community in which it is situated. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, the simplest of which may be to visit the library's website. Most library websites contain plenty of information about the structure and culture of the hiring institution and often include the position titles of the library's professional and support staff members, a breakdown of administrative teams (if such teams exist), and mission and vision statements. If desired, additional information can be obtained by requesting information from the library's personnel office, and/or by contacting colleagues. One should come to the interview with sufficient relevant background information to indicate to those conducting the interview that one indeed is serious about the position. During the interview, the candidate should seek to obtain additional information that will be useful in making a decision about whether or not to accept the position if it is offered. This can be accomplished by simply asking tactful questions. Of course, there may always be some information that is not available or that will require conjecture on the part of the applicant.

Another area the candidate might want to explore during the course of the interview is the organizational structure of the library and the unit or branch:

- How layered is the hierarchy, and who reports to whom?
- Where does the position's supervisor stand in the structure, and to whom does she or he report?
- How many levels separate the position's supervisor from the head of the library? This could be indicative of the potential effectiveness of the supervisor as an advocate.
- What positions in the library would be considered peer positions?
- To what extent would the successful candidate be expected or encouraged to participate in library functions outside of the position's designated unit?

The level of autonomy of the music library or music collection might be an area for serious consideration and discussion during the interview as well:

- Would the person hired to fill the position be working in a full-service unit separated from the main library (i.e., a branch library or separate floor of the main library that provides for its own ordering and receiving, cataloging, reference, reserve, interlibrary loan, and circulation services)?
- Or would the person be working in a section of the main library with a specific service designation, such as "public services," "technical services," "special collections," etc.?
- Where are the various components of the music collection (such as books, scores, recordings, videos, etc.) housed?
- Under whose jurisdiction are the listening facilities and maintenance of media equipment?
- Who is responsible for course reserves in the music or performing arts area? Are the performing scores housed in the library or the music building (if they are separate physical entities)?
- Who has control of and where are the scores housed for the school's larger performing ensembles (i.e., the band, orchestra, and choral music collections)?
- What additional responsibilities might the candidate expect to have within the library or parent organization that are not specifically listed in the posting (e.g., covering the circulation desk as necessary, providing backup support for other library units)?

A candidate also might raise questions about the committee structure of the library:

- How many and what types of committees/teams exist to support governance of and planning for the library?
- Do they seem to be standing committees, ad hoc, or a mix? If the candidate can see a list of committee memberships, he or she should note the representation on the committees—are all of the library constituencies represented in some way?
- Are the same people on many committees, or is there a generous mix of different people serving on them?
- How might the successful candidate be involved in these committees, and to what extent might he or she be expected to be involved generally with library-wide planning and governance?

- Is committee participation a condition of merit increase or promotion?

The culture of the library as a whole is worthy of investigation. In the course of the interview day, does the candidate get a sense of collegiality and collaboration among all the staff or a sense of a more sectionalized, maybe even balkanized, situation? The involvement of staff in the interview process can be a good indicator. The candidate should also try to get a sense of how his or her own expectations and proclivities fit into the existing library culture. The quality and quantity of communication in a given work environment can play a significant role in determining whether or not that environment is desirable or acceptable. During the course of the interview, the candidate may wish to ask questions to determine the following:

- What is the relationship between the professional and support staff or between managers and nonmanagers within the library and the unit? The functional distinctions between librarians and nonlibrarians are not always as clearly defined as they used to be, and more significant distinctions are now often based on functional hierarchies.
- Is there a defined, vertically classed society within the unit the candidate is investigating, or does the unit have a flatter, more horizontal structure?
- Does the administration solicit input from the staff in the decision-making process?
- How and to what degree is information disseminated among the various units of the library?
- Does there seem to be a healthy flow of communication from the staff to the administration and vice versa?
- Strong, positive relationships with faculty constituencies are often crucial to the success of music and arts librarians. Therefore, it is important to determine during the course of the interview the nature of the relationship between the library and the departments it serves. A good indication of this is the presence (or absence) of faculty members in the interview process.
- Are there any faculty members on the search committee?

• Are faculty given some opportunity or, perhaps, a specific time to meet with the candidates as part of the interview?

Additional Considerations

Finally, the candidate will want to gain as much information as possible about the standards against which the performance of the person filling the position will be evaluated. Ironically, a "standards of performance" statement, while in many ways one of the most critical aspects of a job, is frequently absent from the job description. If the performance expectations of a position are not spelled out, the applicant should inquire about them during the interview. Hopefully, this can be accomplished when the candidate meets with the position's supervisor, unit head, or the library's human resources director. In fact, it might be advantageous to bring up questions about performance expectations in more than one meeting of the interview. If responses from the various constituencies don't match, it may signal an undesirable work situation. Questions that ask about frequency, degree of accuracy, and quantity in relation to specific responsibilities should help to establish in both the mind of the employer and the mind of the applicant what the standard performance levels are for a given position.

Beyond daily job performance, one of the trickiest areas to interpret relates to professional involvement and/or creativity and research expectations. Regarding professional matters, it is useful to know the status of librarians on the campus:

• Are they faculty, staff, academic?
• How they are reviewed for merit increase and/or promotion?
• Are the librarians unionized or otherwise professionally organized?
• What will be the expectations of the library and the supervisor in terms of participation in professional activities outside the position's direct job responsibilities?

Job postings provide varying amounts of information about this. If specific statements about involvement in professional activities such as those found in the Arizona and South Carolina postings are absent, the

candidate definitely will want to learn more about this. Probably the best way is to ask the human resources officer for the library, with whom the candidate should have an opportunity to meet at some point during the interview. When meeting with a unit head, the candidate should try to learn that individual's personal expectations for the position and vision for the unit. This meeting also provides an excellent opportunity to obtain some historical and situational context for the position, and it gives the candidate a chance to ask questions relating to professional goals and job-related concerns. Also, during the interview candidates for an academic library position should bear in mind the importance of demonstrating the self-assurance necessary to work assertively and actively with faculty, graduate students, and professional colleagues. In most cases, the candidate who possesses a strong knowledge of the profession and the subject discipline, along with a strong service orientation, will exude such self-assurance naturally. In any event, while a candidate should never attempt to inflate his or her abilities or experience, he or she should be careful not to downplay the skills and experience that he or she does possess.

In addition, academic library search committees will likely seek candidates who welcome involvement in library-wide (or university-wide) committee work and programs. Candidates for such positions should be desirous of such involvement and seek an opportunity to express that desire to the search committee members. Evidence of familiarity with applicable standards, initiatives, and formats relating to the particular responsibilities listed in the posting is also something that employers look for in applications and interviews. For example, in a candidate for a digital projects librarian, it would be reasonable to expect familiarity with Encoded Archival Description, Dublin Core, and the Open Archives Initiative. In fact, in the current environment, for any library-related position, one would generally expect candidates to display not only a strong comfort level with computers but also an attitude that favors the creative use of technology. Many libraries today enjoy a collaborative decision-making environment. This prompts prospective employers and search committee members to look for colleagues who will be willing and able to help reshape the vision of the library and plan strategically rather than simply perform tasks and responsibilities routinely and provide services as assigned. Candidates should bear this in mind when they are answering questions and/or given opportunities to ask questions during an interview. In preparing for an interview, candidates should thoughtfully consider not only the role of the particular position for which they are

applying and how it relates to the parent institution but also the current and future role of libraries in their particular community and in society as a whole. In general, the ability to mentally step outside the boundaries of one's small sphere of influence and see the "big picture" is highly valued.

The Job Offer

Perhaps the single and most important question that an employer must ask before offering a position to any candidate is, "What is the likelihood that this person will be successful in this position?" Job searches are costly to organizations. They involve a great investment of time and resources. A heavy turnover rate among their employees is expensive and undesirable. Therefore, employers want to select the candidate who is not only the most qualified for the position but also who exhibits the greatest interest in the position and the organization with which it is affiliated. They want to select someone who will be a good colleague, getting along with and cooperating with fellow workers, and, ideally, someone who will be happy with the work and, if applicable, the living environment.

The hunting and hiring process is a two-way communication. The employer must create a carefully constructed job posting and job description and conduct a responsible review of applications. The prospective employee must scrutinize the job posting and job description, present application materials that specifically address the requirements of the job, and select references that can and will give an overall positive but also honest and balanced view of the candidate's qualifications. During the interview, a candidate's informed, enthusiastic, and confident demeanor will make a positive impression on the prospective employer. In return, a prospective employer's thoughtful attention to the candidate's responses and miscellaneous questions will make a similar impression. Together, these factors can go a long way to ensure the success of both the candidate and the search.

Suggestions for Further Reading

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3. *MLA Job List,* October 2002, www.musiclibraryassoc.org/services/se_oct02.html (25 June 2003).

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6. Rita Broadway, "Job Descriptions Vis-à-Vis Job Applications: A Match Often Not Made in Heaven," Workshop report from the 1991 NASIG Conference. *The Serials Librarian* 21, nos. 2–3 (1991): 197–200.

7. Broadway, "Job Descriptions."