

HOW TO SUCCEED IN AN INTERVIEW

Yvonne Patch, Hamilton Public Library
Jim Brett, University of Guelph Library

OLA 2012 Super Conference Session 1307, Friday February 3rd, 2012

Convenor - Lauren Flattery, Teacher-Librarian, Cadarackque Public School

COMPETENCIES - WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

- × Communication skills
- × Customer service skills
- × Leadership potential
- × Sound judgement and decision making ability
- × Knowledgeable
- × Project management skills
- × Self-starter and results oriented

THINGS EVERYONE SHOULD DO

- ✘ Do a skills assessment / inventory
- ✘ Do a personality assessment
- ✘ Create a master resume listing all your experience and skills
- ✘ Learn about the job process for the specific library sector

BEFORE YOU APPLY

- ✘ Understand the job
- ✘ Think about all that you have to offer – note especially your transferable skills!
- ✘ Find out about the prospective employer
- ✘ References – who will you ask?

UNDERSTAND THE JOB AD

- ✘ Dissect the ad - look for the key pieces of information in the posting
- ✘ What's required? – these are the “must haves”
- ✘ What's preferred? – these are what the employer would like in a perfect applicant
- ✘ What clues are there about the job environment?

INTERVIEWERS LOOK FOR ...

- ✘ Preparation
- ✘ Professional demeanour and appearance
- ✘ Enthusiasm
- ✘ Energy
- ✘ Flexibility
- ✘ Critical thinking and analysis
- ✘ Someone who can succeed in their environment

WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN OFFERED AN INTERVIEW

- ✗ Rehearse it!
 - + What will they ask you?
 - + Is there a presentation?
 - + Arrange a mock interview
 - + Prepare questions for employer
- ✗ Think of the interview as a conversation

WHAT WILL YOU BE ASKED?

- ✘ Question will be based on the job posting
 - + Same questions for all the candidates
- ✘ Mix of questions
 - + Rarely will you get simple, closed questions
 - + Open ended, *behavioural based* questions are most common

BEHAVIOURAL BASED INTERVIEWING

- x Poses questions intended to elicit your behaviour in a given situation; your response should be a predictor of future job behaviour

- x You need to prepare:
 - + Examples of situations or experiences which you can use in the interview
 - + Your actions
 - + The outcome or result

OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- ✘ Know what questions can't be asked by the interviewers
- ✘ Think about what you shouldn't say ...
- ✘ Consider your body language
- ✘ Make eye contact
- ✘ Engage the interview committee – an interview is a one-sided conversation
- ✘ Don't fidget - if you are nervous think of ways to deal with it
- ✘ Know when to stop talking – read the committee

IS A PRESENTATION REQUIRED?

- ✘ Presentations are very common in public and academic libraries
- ✘ The topic will obviously relate to the position at hand but it could be very specific or very broad
- ✘ Think of the presentation as another opportunity for engagement
- ✘ Session 410– Public Speaking Without Freaking (Thurs. @ 10:40am)

WHEN YOU ARE OFFERED A POSITION -

- ✘ What support is available to you before taking the job?
- ✘ If you have the opportunity to negotiate salary where do you start?
- ✘ What else is “negotiable”, e.g., moving expenses, computer equipment?

DUBIOUS SEARCH TACTICS/QUESTIONABLE MOVES

- ✘ Ignoring the instructions in the job add
- ✘ Contacting the Chief librarian directly
- ✘ Having non-contextualized conversations with staff if you visit the library system/branch
- ✘ Name-dropping
- ✘ Cold calling someone once you have an interview

QUESTIONS??

Yvonne Patch, Hamilton Public
Library

YPatch@hpl.ca

Jim Brett, University of Guelph Library

jimbrett@uoguelph.ca