

## ALA NMRT Online Discussion Forum – April 2013

Summary by Emilyn Linden

The discussion topic for April was **job interview preparation**. There were some great suggestions for how to get ready for an interview and helpful resources for that process.

- Be sure to check the library's website and pay attention to the events calendar, e-resources offered, community partnerships and such things as staff, hours, etc.
- If unfamiliar with the area, look up the demographics to learn about possible patron needs.
- Find out who will be conducting the interview and search for information about them to learn about their career paths and professional interests.
- Arrive early to play “secret shopper” and get an idea of the library's traffic and walk around a little bit to help trigger some questions that are specific to the library.
- One resource mentioned was [Open Cover Letters](#) for getting ideas for wording of cover letters.
- Address each of the requirements listed in the job description in your cover letter.
- If you have something you really want to share during your interview, make sure you get to share it even if you have to twist a question a bit to make that happen.
- You are also deciding if this is the right job for you. Ask questions and make sure that the institution is a good fit for you.
- Educate yourself about all aspects of what the position entails - not only what they list on the job posting, but also what can be anticipated with a little research (i.e., opening a new facility, having multiple staff members leave, etc...).
- Be able to speak to each requirement listed on the job posting - even if it's one that you might not have previous experience with.
- Emily Weak from [Hiring Librarians](#) shared a spreadsheet of compiled interview questions <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/cc?key=0AuYsyqpmSJUHdFJOS0toVC1tTmNwTXVBM0xMdW5UR3c#gid=0>
- Arrive with some prepared questions to ask your interviewers. A place suggested to find some examples was [a blog post](#) on [Mr. Library Dude](#).
- A suggested resource for questions about hiring, interviews, cover letters, etc. is [Ask A Manager](#).
- Have a good attitude! Smile!
- If you don't get the job, do not take it personally.
- If you can, follow up to a rejection asking for feedback on what you could have done differently, or at least thank them for the interview.
- Create questions out of the job description details and have a friend or family member perform a mock interview.
- It is ok to take time to think out your answers and phrase them correctly.
- Bring a notebook and jot down questions as they're asked to make sure you address all parts in your answer.
- Be honest.
- Try to frame your nervousness as excitement.
- Review and write notes about an interview as soon as it's over.

- Organizing as you apply also helps to quickly prep. For every job make a folder on your computer, and save in it: The job posting, the resume submitted, list of references, and cover letter.
- 24 hours before the interview, stop studying for it.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat a hearty and nutritious breakfast.
- Be prepared to answer the question "How do you stay on top of the field?"
- If you're getting lots of nibbles/interviews and no offers, or wherever you are in the job searching process, visit a career center where you can participate in a practice interview session and receive constructive feedback that will help you discover any blind spots or areas where you could strengthen your responses.