

The Law Librarian Job Search Process: An Annotated Bibliography

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This annotated bibliography is intended to provide a selection of articles that are available to help you navigate the law librarian job search process. Prepared by members of the AALL Placement committee, these articles are a quick way for a job seeker to review the basic fundamentals when preparing for the job hunt and also gives some perspective on what employers may be seeking.

1. Carla J. DeVelder, [*Mind Your Mannerisms: It's Not Just What You Say But How You Say It*](#), 41 STUDENT LAWYER 14 (March 2013).

This piece, written by a former law school associate dean, reminds us that substance isn't everything. Controlling the content of the message we wish to convey can be the easy part. The real challenge lies in limiting the unintentional mannerisms, gestures, and tone that might get in the way of our intended message.

2. Gloria Jean Glasbrenner, [*Members Briefing: Preparing for Your Next Career Move*](#), 14.3 AALL SPECTRUM 1 (December 2009).

Written by a director of a law firm library, this brief article reviews the basics: crafting your resume and cover letter, making a good first impression, and the importance of following up. Much of the advice is generalizable, but some of the suggestions offered are particularly applicable to the aspiring law firm librarian.

3. Penny Hazelton, [*Practical Tips for Academic Employers: How to Make a Great Impression and Hire the Best Librarian for the Job*](#), 16.2 AALL SPECTRUM 12 (November 2011).

Why does the job application process for academic law libraries seem to take so long? Should you have heard something about the status of your application? Is it appropriate to draw conclusions about a library from what might otherwise seem to be a disorganized process? Although intended to assist search committees, the collateral takeaway of Penny Hazelton's article for job applicants is the insight she provides into the work of search committees.

4. Frank G. Houdek, *Career Development in Law Librarianship: Thoughts on the Occasion of Becoming a Law Library Director*, 6 LEGAL REFERENCE SERVICES QUARTERLY 81 (1986).

Although published over 25 years ago, Houdek's reflections on his career as a law librarian from intern to law library director offer many lessons that still apply today. Houdek draws on his diverse work experience in a large public law library, a law firm library, and two academic law libraries to provide valuable advice on selecting the "right" first job, developing skills that

will help you further your career, and knowing when to move on to a position with greater responsibility. The article concludes with a set of principles to follow when interviewing for your "ultimate" job, but as he states, most of them are equally applicable to interviews at other steps along the career path.

5. Mary Jane Kelsey, [*How to Help Your Job Hunt \[and Make Life Easier for the Search Committee at the Same Time\]*](#), 15.6 AALL SPECTRUM 26 (April 2011).

Mary Jane Kelsey participated in her fair share of Search Committees while at Yale and likely witnessed the opposite of every useful suggestion she proposes to job hunters. Of the 22 "bits of advice" she offers in her article, the reminder that an interview might be "the first and only date before committing to a long-term relationship" informs many of her other tips. The advice she gives as a representative of academic library search committees is terrific. Intentionally or not, Kelsey concurrently provides dating advice: "schedule travel thoughtfully," "prepare some filler remarks," but "be your charming, honest self", etc.

6. Jennifer Murray, [*The Zen of Law Librarian Job Interviews: How to Interview for a Job and How to Interview the Job*](#), 96 LAW LIBR. J. 295 (2004).

Despite its title, Murray's article goes far beyond strategies for successful interviewing. Murray covers interview etiquette and discusses some interviewing challenges that are unique to law librarianship. But her advice spans the application process -- from deciding whether to apply, to dealing with an offer or rejection. In addition to Murray's excellent advice -- based in part on interviews with directors of academic, court, and law firm libraries -- Murray also includes an appendix of over 60 sample questions to help applicants prepare for the interview. This is a wide-ranging article, packed with useful advice. Just don't read it expecting any further mention of Zen Buddhism.

7. Katherine Marsh and Nathan Preuss, [*Answering "Now What?: How to Find and Interview for Your First Law Library Job*](#), 12.6 AALL SPECTRUM 18 (April 2008).

This summary of the job search process is written from the perspective of two recently hired law librarians at the University of Tennessee College of Law. It breaks the job search down into several distinct steps, such as "Determine which job(s) would be best for you," and "Keep up with the profession and current issues," and then provides specific tips and strategies for success in each step. The bulk of the article is dedicated to information about what to expect and how to prepare for an in person interview. Job searchers are given examples of specific questions to ask during the interview and are encouraged to be advocates for the library profession when speaking with library administrators. While the article primarily documents job searches in academic law libraries, much of the advice will be useful to anyone engaged in a job search.

8. Nathan Aaron Rosen, [*Lessons Learned, Lessons Relearned, and Lessons: Wisdom for the Unemployed Librarian*](#), 14.5 AALL SPECTRUM 18 (March 2010).

Rosen focuses on searching for a job after being laid off from a private law library. He gives strategies for dealing with the lay off and provides helpful advice on finding a new job. He specifically recommends becoming more involved in professional organizations and managing your online presence by creating a personal website and developing a vibrant LinkedIn profile. Also included is a list of useful online resources and books related to the job search process.

9. Beau Steenken, [*How to Be Uncommon*](#), 15.8 AALL SPECTRUM 17 (June 2011).

Steenken draws on his experience as both a recent library school graduate hired by an academic law library and the chair of a law librarian search committee to share insights he has gained on the job search process. He specifically includes advice on crafting correspondence with a potential employer, navigating professional conferences, fine tuning your CV, and choosing an appropriate presentation topic.

10. Ronald E. Wheeler, Nancy P. Johnson, and Terrance K. Manion, [*Choosing the Top Candidate: Best Practices in Academic Law Library Hiring*](#), 100 LAW LIBR. J. 117 (2008).

Written from the perspective of the hiring library, three academic law librarians detail the hiring process from vacancy to offer. The authors provide job seekers with an overview of what qualities potential employers are (and are not) seeking in applicants. Other insights include the fact that employers may contact previous employers or co-workers outside of those formally listed as references; factors that employers may consider "red flags"; a typical schedule for an academic law library interview; and the sort of questions to expect during the interview.

11. Am. Library Ass'n., [*NEW MEMBERS ROUND TABLE JOB HUNTING BIBLIOGRAPHY*](#), available at <http://www.ala.org/nmrt/oversightgroups/comm/resreview/bib>.

This bibliography, a product of the ALA's New Member Round Table, includes sixteen journal articles (most of which were published within the last year), books and websites. Although not geared toward law librarians, the bibliography collects timely guidance for job hunters, covering tips on everything from networking and revising your resume to interview strategies.