



EDITOR'S NOTE

CAREER TRANSITIONS

Finding the Right Fit

This issue of *AALL Spectrum* is dedicated to career development. Whether you are just beginning your career and thinking about the future, are mid-career and considering advancement or a change in direction, or are starting to think about retirement and what you would like to accomplish before then—it's important to think about how to position yourself to do the things you want to do. Now might be the perfect time to engage in some self-reflection and develop a career plan.

I am very lucky. Law librarianship is my second career and I have found a wonderful fit. However, getting here was a little scary. I was working in a job that I thought was my dream job straight out of law school, and I was miserable. There were certainly good things about it, such as the wonderful people I worked with, but it was a bad fit for me. I knew that continuing in that career would be bad for both myself and for the organization, so I tendered my resignation. I wasn't so brave (or rash) that I quit on the spot. I gave myself and my boss six months to determine what to do next. What caused the most anxiety was that I had actually landed what I thought would be my perfect job, only to find out that it wasn't quite right. How could I be sure that I wouldn't make the wrong choice again?

I was fortunate that someone in my organization took an interest in helping me work through my choices. She spent a great deal of time talking to me about both what I perceived and what she perceived to be my strengths and weaknesses. She got me to focus on what I did

enjoy about my job that I would like to carry into a new career, and what I needed to leave behind. It was a long, sometimes painful process, but I now recognize that she was helping me formulate a career plan. It is a plan that has been revised and reworked over the years, but the process taught me how to think about my career path and goals.

Another very important piece of that process was that I found a valuable mentor who, thankfully, was one in a continuing line of people who have shared their wisdom and encouraged me throughout my career. Our colleagues have a wealth of wisdom and experience to share. I hope that you find something in this issue that speaks to where you are in your career path or inspires you to try something new.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina L. Niedringhaus".

Kristina L. Niedringhaus

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