



What is the most difficult interview question you've been asked, or what question do you wish you had asked in your interview?

*The following responses are available on AALLNET only. For the responses published in the April 2008 issue of *AALL Spectrum*, please click [here](#).

“I recently changed to a nonpartisan position working for our state legislature. During the interview process, they queried me about my previous political activity, advocacy work, etc. They were obviously rather uncomfortable asking the questions, although I didn't mind answering them. I decided afterward that a shorthand way of getting around the discomfort would have been, ‘What bumper stickers do you have on your car?’ That would have given them a lot of information in a nutshell about most people.”

- *John R. Barden, director of the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library in Augusta*

“In a situation that could be categorized as a pre-rookie mistake, or as a question that I wish I would have asked, I really should have explored the concept of ‘asbestos abatement’ with an earlier employer. In the new library employee tour of the storage area in the upper bowels of the building, I would conclude the tour with, ‘Be sure to use your ID badge to log out of the asbestos abatement zone or HR will track you down.’ The inevitable coughing fit that resulted would usually take the place of the ‘Any questions?’ responses.”

- *David Rogers, public services librarian at Sidley Austin LLP in Chicago*

“Many years ago, I was asked this interview question: ‘Do you consider yourself more of an Indian or a chief?’ I thought this question was highly unusual, and I must admit I was not asked this question for a job in the library profession. During the interview, I got the impression that the woman interviewing me had read a book on interviewing tips and had stumbled across this quirky question. She probably believed the question was thought provoking and would be difficult to answer. I answered the way any good politician might by stating, ‘I believe I can play both roles if necessary. I think I possess the understanding of knowing when to be a leader, when to be a follower, and when to be a combination of both roles.’ I got the job, but it was a miserable place to work.”

- *Tricia Thomas, reference librarian at Alston & Bird in Atlanta*