

## Reference Assistant Interview Questions

1. Share an example of a time you had to gather information from multiple sources. How did you determine which information was relevant?

2. What is the key to success when communicating with the public.

3. What kind of experience do you have operating small branch libraries, under the direction of off-site librarian supervisors?

4. What have you found to be the best way to instruct patrons on how to use reference sources, card catalogs, and automated information systems?

5. Name a time when you answered routine inquiries, and referred patrons in need of professional assistance to librarians.

6. Share an experience you had in dealing with a difficult person and how you handled the situation.

7. Share an effective approach to working with a large amount of information/data. How has your approach affected your company?

8. Tell me how you organize, plan, and prioritize your work.

9. How do you balance cooperation with others and independent thinking? Share an example. (Try to determine if the candidate has a cooperative attitude or is otherwise good-natured.)

10. Share an experience in which your attention to detail and thoroughness had an impact on your last company.

11. Describe methods you have found helpful to manage reserve materials by placing items on reserve for library patrons, checking items in and out of library, and removing out-dated items.

12. Share an example of when you went above and beyond the "call of duty". (Look for answers that show the candidate is dependable.)

13. What is the most challenging part of locating library materials for patrons, including books, periodicals,

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tape cassettes, Braille volumes, and pictures?

14. Describe an experience when you reserved, and collected books, periodicals, videotapes, and other materials at circulation desks and process materials for inter-library loans.

15. Tell me about a time when you developed your own way of doing things or were self-motivated to finish an important task.

16. Provide a time when you worked in a rapidly evolving workplace. How did you deal with the change? (Make sure the candidate is flexible.)

17. Provide an experience in which your ability to actively find ways to help people improved your company or your own work ethic.

18. How often do you have to send out notices and accept fine payments for lost or overdue books?

19. Walk me through how you would perform clerical activities, such as answering phones, sorting mail, filing, typing, word processing, and photocopying and mailing out material.

20. Provide a time when you dealt calmly and effectively with a high-stress situation.

21. Name a time when your patience was tested. How did you keep your emotions in check?

22. What kind of experience do you have performing accounting and bookkeeping activities such as, invoicing, maintaining financial records, budgeting, and handling cash?

23. Provide an example when your ethics were tested.

24. Provide an example of a time when you were able to demonstrate excellent listening skills. What was the situation and outcome?

25. Describe an experience when you provided assistance to librarians in the maintenance of collections of books, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, and audiovisual and other materials.

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26. How do you deal with disruptive or problem patrons? Share an example.

27. Share a time when you willingly took on additional responsibilities or challenges. How did you successfully meet all of the demands of these responsibilities? (Make sure the candidate is a self-starter and can demonstrate some initiative.)

28. Describe an effective system to sort books, publications, and other items according to established procedure and return them to shelves, files, or other designated storage areas.

29. Please share an experience in which you presented to a group. What was the situation and how did it go?

30. Share an effective approach to classify and catalog items according to content and purpose.

31. What is the secret to repair books using mending tape, paste, and brushes, or prepare books to be sent to a bindery for repair?

32. Provide an example of a time when you successfully organized a diverse group of people to accomplish a task.

33. Provide an example of when you were persistent in the face of obstacles.

34. Name a time when you reviewed records, such as microfilm and issue cards, to identify titles of overdue materials and delinquent borrowers.

35. Walk me through how you would schedule, supervise, and train clerical workers, volunteers, student assistants, and other library employees.

36. What factors do you consider when acquiring books, pamphlets, periodicals, audiovisual materials, and other library supplies by checking prices, figuring costs, and preparing appropriate order forms and facilitating the ordering process by providing such information to others?

37. Give me an example of when you thought outside of the box. How did it help your employer?

38. How often do you prepare library statistics reports? Share an example.

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39. Name a time when your creativity or alternative thinking solved a problem in your workplace.

40. Would you consider analyzing data or information a strength? How so?

41. Provide an example when you were able to prevent a problem because you foresaw the reaction of another person.

42. Name a time when you planned or participated in library events and programs, such as story time with children. Share an example.

43. Please share an experience in which you successfully taught a difficult principle or concept. How were you able to be successful?

44. In your experience, what is the key to developing a good team? (Look for how they build mutual trust, respect, and cooperation.)

45. Describe a time when you successfully provided personal assistance to a coworker or patron.