20 SELF-QUESTIONS

The following questions are designed to get you thinking about what type of work environment is suited to your personal values and professional objectives. It's a good idea to take a few minutes and write out your responses. Once you get to know what you're looking for, you can ask questions of your potential employer that truly get at the heart of your interests.

ABOUT YOU

- What types of organizations have I worked for in the past--inside or outside of the museum field--and what were the pros and cons of each?
- What are the specific work experiences that I definitely do not want to repeat? What was the source of my dissatisfaction?
- In what specific discipline(s) do I have skills, and what areas would I like to develop?
- Who do I already know in the field who can help me in my job search?
- What are my preconceptions about various institutions, and what are they based on?

ABOUT THE JOB

- Do I want a specific area of responsibility that is clearly within one discipline, or do I prefer to have a wide range of responsibilities that may straddle traditional departmental roles?
- Do I like to work on several projects at once, or do I prefer to see a project through to completion before starting something new?
- Is it important to me that I have the opportunity to work with staff from other departments on a regular basis (e.g., on an exhibition development team)?

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

- Am I interested in working with a large staff of specialized individuals, or am I interested in a smaller institution in which I'd work with almost everyone on a daily basis?
- Am I most content when there are time-tested standard operating procedures in place?
- Is it important to me that the institution be flexible and able to adapt quickly to change?
- Do I want to have access to a wide variety of specialists in house, or would I like to work with outside consultants and advisors?
- Am I looking for the opportunity to work my way up through a department, or do I want to be part of a more horizontal structure?
- Is it important to me that the senior management staff are available to share ideas?
- Do I see myself working at an institution with a broad geographic--even international--audience, or am I inclined to work for a community-based institution?

ABOUT SPECIFICS

- Am I seeking a full-time job and benefits package?
- Do I want to work at an accredited institution?
- Do I prefer to live and work in a major city?
- Is it important to me to work at a well-known institution?
- Is there a particular institution or mentor in the field with whom I would like to work?

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