ASK ELLEN – whether to include non-library-related job on resume

10/27/11

Three different people asked me this question this week, so I thought it would be a good one to start with.

Q: On a resume, is it better to include a recent job that is not library-related, or leave it off?

A: If leaving the recent job off the resume would result in a gap in your work history, then I would include it. Library hiring managers or recruiters are, of course, less interested in jobs that are not directly related to library work, but any work is better than having a gap. Think about skills you’ve acquired and used in the ‘non-library’ job that could be applied to library work (transferable skills) and emphasize those; for example: customer service, research, tech skills, writing/editing, meeting tight deadlines, supervising staff, etc.

If the job was concurrent with or overlapped with library work, and leaving it off the resume would not leave a significant gap, then it is probably fine to remove it.

Volunteering is another great way to bridge what would otherwise be a gap in work history. I am a big proponent of volunteering; it has many career benefits, which I will be talking more about in the future.

Site: Ask A Manager http://www.askamanager.org/ I recently found this site and it has excellent no-nonsense advice re: job hunting and all kinds of difficult workplace situations. It is not specifically for librarians and info-pros but I recommend it highly nonetheless.

COMING UP: RESUME AND COVER LETTER CLASS
All Palmer Students are welcome!
When: Tuesday Nov. 22, 2011, 5pm
Where: Avery Room, Bobst Library, Manhattan Campus, New York University
(Please note, if you can’t make it to this class, other classes will be offered soon at the other two campuses!)

Please e-mail me your job-hunt and career-related questions ellen.mehling@liu.edu . I will answer as many as I can.

Thank you,

Ellen Mehling, Director, Westchester Program and Internships