

## Do's and Don'ts for Hiring a New Director

*By Rick Krumwiede, Director, Outagamie Waupaca Library System  
and Mark Arend, Assistant Director, Winnefox Library System*

Choosing a new director is one of the most important jobs a library board may have, and every year about 10% of Wisconsin libraries hire a new director. As we've worked with library boards we've gathered a list of do's and don'ts for hiring a new director.



### **Do:**

- Decide who will be involved in the hiring process (e.g., entire library board, committee of the board, municipal human resources person, library staff, system staff, etc.) and how they will be involved (e.g., placing ads, screening applicants, scheduling, interviewing, etc.).
- Familiarize yourself with anti-discrimination employment laws.
- Make sure that the director's job description and any relevant personnel policies are up-to-date.
- Think through what you want in a new director. What are the library's goals for the next few years and what skills will the director need to lead you there?
- Include all relevant information in the job announcement, including hiring timetable, salary range, benefits, residency requirements, how to apply, and who to contact with questions.
- Meet ahead of time to plan the interview schedule, process, and questions.
- Do unsuccessful candidates the courtesy of informing them as soon as possible that they are not your choice.
- Extend a conditional offer of employment, in writing, that summarizes compensation and conditions of employment. Make the offer conditional on completing a criminal background check.

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## The Elevator Speech Revisited

by Mark Arend, Assistant Director, Winnefox Library System

What's an "Elevator Speech"? It's a short, 30 to 60 second talk that you use to make an impression. Ideally it should be short enough to use in a short elevator ride. Back in 2009 I wrote about it in *Giving the Elevator Spiel* (you can read it and other back issues at – <http://www.winnefox.org/trusteetale/welcome.html>)

I recently read some great advice on developing an elevator speech that puts it into one short sentence: "Talk about why you care".

The library must be important to you because you put your time, your energy, and often your money into supporting it. Think about why you do what you do and then think about how to communicate this to someone else. Once you've done that you'll always have your elevator speech with you because it's not in your mind, it's in your heart.

You can read more about this method on Gail Perry's website – <http://tinyurl.com/3fnc8au>

(the original URL is – <http://www.gailperry.com/2011/07/powerful-elevator-speech-exercise-for-your-board-members/>) but that's the essence.



## Happy Retirement, Rick

For the past 8 years I've been privileged to have OWLS director Rick Krumwiede as my collaborator for *Trustee Tale*. After more than 36 years as director of the Outagamie Waupaca Library System Rick is retiring in September. Throughout this time I have valued his insight, judgment, and editorial skills. Thanks for all your help and best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

Mark Arend

# FAQ

***What's the difference between policy and bylaws?***

Every library should have two different documents. The library board's bylaws spell out how the board operates. They specify officers and committees, meeting schedules, and similar matters. The library's policies direct how the library operates and guides the director and staff in making decisions.

Common policies are Circulation (loan periods and fines), Selection (how are decisions made on adding materials to and removing them from the library's collection), Behavior or Conduct (expectations for users' behavior and under what circumstances users may be asked to leave), and Personnel (staff).

***Have questions?***  
Contact us and we'll try to help.

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**Play, Create, Innovate!** at the 2013 Wisconsin Library Association Conference.



This year's WLA conference will be 22 – 25 October at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay. As always, there will be plenty of sessions of interest to trustees and this is a great opportunity to network with trustees from around the state.

Get more information at <http://wla.wisconsinlibraries.org/events-conferences/annual-conference/wla-conference-home>

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