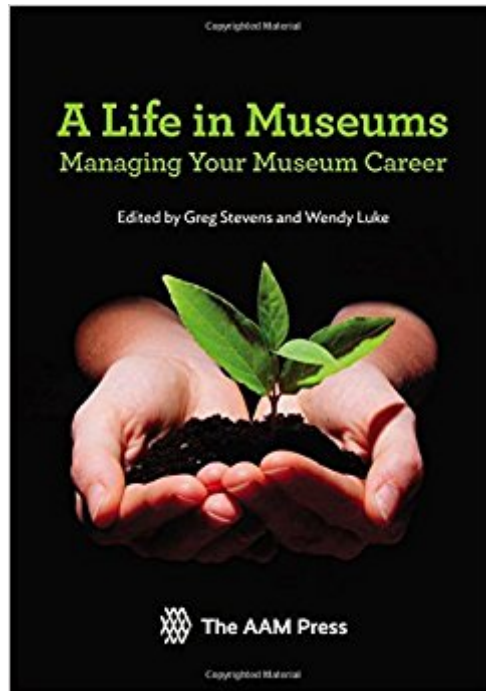




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# A Life In Museums: Managing Your Museum Career



## Synopsis

Whether you're an experienced leader, a mid-career professional hoping for a promotion, or a recent grad applying for your first internship, *A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career* is the guide you need—full of sound advice, practical tips, and illuminating personal stories that span the array of museum disciplines. Topics range from personal branding and resume writing to managing from the middle and leadership at all levels; from professional writing to keeping a career journal; from navigating within your institution to knowing when it's time to move on. This is a book you are sure to reference—and share—for years to come.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“A Life in Museums is destined to become the reference work of choice for museum professionals, from prospective to seasoned practitioners. This compendium of good counsel emphasizes how to recognize opportunities and handle challenges—an inspiring resource for firing up the initiative to take charge of your museum career.” (Carol B. Stapp, director of the Museum Education Program, The George Washington)

Greg Stevens has run the American Alliance of Museums's Professional Development program since 2007, addressing career, management and leadership development, professional skills-building, and mentoring for the museum field. Wendy Luke is the founder of The HR Sage and has twenty years experience working with museums solving their toughest people problems.

Imagine having dinner with over a dozen museum professionals willing to give you a thoughtful advise on how to advance your career and pursuit your goals and ambitions. Now imagine these same professionals will take you through every step of the way in an interactive and straightforward manner that range from finding sense out of working in museums to practical tips on how to be a successful leader within your institution. Well, the overall feeling you get when reading this book will surely resemble your thoughts as every chapter will satisfy your needs to know where to go and how to perform adequately in a field filled with uncertainty, at least for emerging professionals. As a recent graduate, I feel now more confident to take on new challenges after working on some basic tools such as a well-crafted resume and interviewing skills that most university programs won't even bother to teach you. Thank you Greg and Wendy for putting this book together for many of us out there in need of guidance and mentoring.

This book had some helpful advice for a newbie museum worker which is why I bought it, but be prepared to pop this on the shelf as a reference book if you're new to the industry like me as a considerable portion of the book will only be relevant to mid-career museum workers. If you're looking for guidance and just starting out in museum work you may want to consider an alternative that focusses on aspiring and emerging professional advice.

As a recently graduated Public History student, this book was exactly what I needed. The sections on cover letters and resumes have helped tremendously. Before using their advice, I wasn't getting any responses to my job applications. Now, I'm getting responses to jobs I thought I'd never have a chance at! Well done!

Great!

Editors and authors, Greg Stevens and Wendy Luke, have assembled both a very practical and entertaining "insiders view" of what goes on behind museums' "mysterious" walls for outsiders as well as insiders. The world of museums and those who work within these organizations need to know how to move into and also navigate their own careers once within. Here is a unique "go to guide" published by AAM Press of the American Association of Museums - the organization that is a leader in its field. Stevens and Luke, professionals themselves, share their knowledge generously throughout the book. They also call on over two dozen other museum professionals who in turn provide insights, specific knowledge, and at times reveal their own stories and unique situations,

thus, making this book more intriguing and personal than just a "textbook" on how to succeed in a museum career. Whether a museum lover, college student, docent or a museum professional there is something for everyone in this book to absorb and learn about in a field that is forever evolving and changing. One theme stands out loud and clear for this reader is that there is no one path with so many avenues to explore and circumvent as well. One can cherry pick or read from cover to cover. Knowing what it takes and learning from those who live it day today is priceless.

As a senior in college, I was unsure the direction I wanted to pursue for my career. Upon reading *A Life in Museums*, it was not only confirmed that I wanted to work in the museum field, it gave me countless inside tips that I would not have considered nor known about if I had not read this book. Not only would I recommend this book for those who are just beginning their journey into the magical world of museum work, but also for those professionals already involved in this type of work. The authors have included tips and reminders to those more senior professionals who might have just needed a reminder or two. While it is beneficial to read the whole book, it is not necessary. It is broken into sections so one can skip around and only read what is important to them without getting lost in some sort of ongoing narrative. It is well written, easy to follow, and I would highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in working in this field.

As an Emerging Museum Professional, I found this book to be an essential read as I began looking for employment. Of course there are hundreds, if not thousands, of books out there about how to format a resume, questions to ask in an interview, and styles for a cover letter. However, this book provides a very insightful look at the nuanced profession that is found in the museum world. Greg Stevens has amazing insight into what museum employers are looking for, having both worked in the field as well running the Professional Development Program at the American Alliance of Museums, which sets the standards of expectation for hundreds of prominent and renowned museums in the United States. Wendy Luke also has immense experience and knowledge, having assisted many established museums navigate precarious situations, as well as being the founder of the HR Sage, a consultancy firm started in 1990. If you are an emerging museum professional, or thinking about transitioning into the museum world, this is a must read and will provide you with all the information you need to make a good, and lasting impression; as well as navigate your career successfully.

As a museum professional at an international organization, I have found this book extremely

valuable in helping me take perspective on my own career path. While the book is comprehensive on a wide range of topics for anyone in the museum field or considering moving into the museum field, Greg Stevens - a recognized leader in career development in museums - helps to make this book entertaining, easy to digest, thoughtful, and very honest. I found the book not only practical, but it also helped me personally to evaluate my own situation and establish a better understanding of where I wanted to go professionally and tools with how to get there. I highly recommend this book.

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