

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEW: TRICKY QUESTIONS



In addition to the standard questions which assess your suitability for the position, you may be asked one or two hypothetical questions which are designed to assess your personality, your logic and reasoning or your thought process.

These questions do not generally have a right or wrong answer. Your answer will reveal more about how you see yourself or how you tackle problems, which could help your employer in deciding if you will be a good fit for the company. These questions will generally have nothing to do with your area of expertise or the role that you are applying for, which is why they can be so tricky to answer!

Some of these questions are designed to gauge your values, but more often than not they are thrown in to see how you handle a situation you are not expecting and cannot really prepare for. The interviewer wants to see how you think on your feet when asking a “what if?” question.

Don't be afraid to ask for a moment to think through your response. It can also be a good idea to accept the challenge with a bit of mildly self-deprecating humour!

How would you respond to these tricky questions?

Where will you be standing at the Christmas party?

This question helps the interviewer envision where your personality might fit in the overall landscape of the work environment. Your approach to a holiday party lets your prospective employer determine which position you might take on a team. An introvert is likely to be at a dinner table, while the extrovert will be leading the dancing on the dance floor!

What is your dream job?

This question is tricky because an obvious response would be to name the job for which you are currently applying. Suggesting another position could suggest that you are not serious about the current opportunity. Choose a response that demonstrates your desire to grow within the company, whilst providing your prospective employer with some insights into your long-term career goals.

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You have a 3-litre jug and a 5-litre jug. How can you measure 4 litres?

This question obviously has a right and wrong answer, but you might find yourself stumped for a moment, particularly when you are facing the pressures of the interview process. If necessary, ask for a pencil and paper! Your response to this question helps the interviewer to assess both your mathematical and critical thinking skills under pressure.

If you could be an animal – what species would you be?

Your interviewer may ask a question such as this to get some unique insights into your personality and how you think. This question can also be framed as the flower, tree, or bird that you'd like to be. Provide a thoughtful response that reveals one of your personality strengths.

*I was asked "If you could be any animal what would you be?"
I panicked and rushed my answer!*

*I said "A snake" which I think is an awful answer - especially
when being interviewed for a sales role! I'm far from a snake!
I'm more like a friendly dog!*

Andrea – Business Development Manager

*I was asked this question during a personal review. I
answered an orca. My reasoning was I wanted to be at
the very top of the food chain so to speak! The answer
they were looking for was a chameleon!! This was due to
its ability to adapt and react to every situation it was put
under. Logically it's a brilliant analogy!!*

Gareth – Customer Liaison Officer

What is your personal theme song?

The way that you answer this question could give your employer an idea of how you approach your job. Whether you choose a high energy dance track or a calming, classical piece, your answer will give a key insight into your personality. Answer with a well-known song that includes lyrics you can relate to positively.