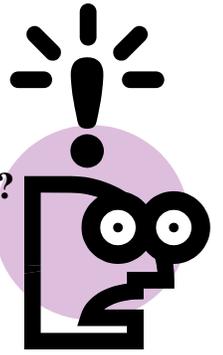


Tricky interview questions



► **H**ow would you react if I told you that your interview, so far, was terrible?

Stop for a moment and really think how would you react if your interviewer said that to you. Would you get angry and annoyed and maybe insult the interviewer back?

If so, you would have fallen for the trap.

Strategy:

*Listen to the question again and this time pay close attention to the most important word in the question - 'If'. The interviewer is not saying that your interview is terrible, he is asking: "How would you react **IF** I said your interview was terrible."*

In other words, he is trying to find out how you **react to criticism**. In the daily grind of the real business world people lose their tempers and shout and criticize each other. The interviewer wants to judge how you might react to such situations in the work place. So listen carefully to the question and don't fall for the bait. Let the interviewer see you calmly considering the question and then begin your respond:

Strategy:

Well, I'd be quite surprised and rather sad. I have put a lot of work into preparing for this interview and getting this job is very important to me. May I ask you, what parts of my presentation did you consider were not up to an acceptable standard? If you could pinpoint these areas to me, maybe I could go over them again and clear up any misunderstandings that might exist. I'm sure that's where the problem lies"

Try to respond to this question along the above diplomatic lines. In fact, what you say in response to this question is not nearly as important as your original emotional response. You have not got angry, emotional, upset, depressed or defeatist. You have not thrown in the towel despite the interviewer's apparent criticism of your performance - but you have come out fighting. Unknown to yourself you have already passed the interviewer's real test.

► **W**hat is the worst thing you have heard about our company?

This is known as a 'shock' question. It is designed to throw you off balance - to make you uncomfortable and then to see how you will react. Although, at first glance it may seem a difficult question it is quite simple to answer if you don't fall in to the trap of trying to answer it objectively.

It is a trick question injected into the interview to test you. The interviewer is an old pro. He knows the questions that can unnerve interviewees. He is carefully watching for your reaction.

Strategy:

You have done your homework, too, and instead of getting hot and bothered you smile and simply say: *"The worse thing I have heard about your company is how hard it is to get a job there and how tough, detailed and rigorous their job interviews are.!"*

A simple but effective answer. Now watch your interviewer respond to that!

► **What was the last book you read or the last movie you saw and how did it affect you?**

Are you surprised by this question? Most interviewers think it is quite original and that they are the only ones to use it but it is now a common question now so be prepared for it or a variation of it and select your book or film beforehand.

Strategy:

There is no need to tell them about the very latest film you have seen or book you have read. Select a book or film that you really like and genuinely know about. Of course the smart interviewer will use this question as another golden opportunity to illustrate to the employer that he has the exact skills and talents the company is looking for. For example, our chef being interviewed by the restaurant might say:

"Oh, that's an unusual question...I love reading biographies and the last book that I read was the autobiography of the famous French Chef, Jean X. The book was fascinating as it detailed his rise from nowhere to the top of his profession and it gave incredible details of the long hours he worked and the incredible pressure he put himself through and that no matter how difficult it got he always maintained the highest standards. He put the same effort and care into his very last meal of the day, even if it was meal 580 as he did into the first meal of the day. They, too are the standards I would like to aspire to and I believe I have the capability of reaching the same standard"

► **I'm still not really sure if you are suitable for this job. What do you think?**

Don't take this question at face-value. Although the tone of the question may sound critical and uncertain the interviewer is really asking you to finally convince him once and for all that you are the right person for the job.

The question is asked in this format to see if you are easily intimidated and defeated by blatant negative criticism. The interviewer wants to see how determined you are - to really discover how much you will fight to get this job.

Strategy:

Tackle the question head-on. Don't let the way it is phrased knock your confidence or poise. Begin your response with a question of your own: *"May I ask why you believe that?"*

This simple question will force the interviewer to reveal why he may think you are unsuitable. Usually he will refer to a lack of some skill or other or a lack of experience. In fact he will, probably, be quite deliberately vague as his question is really a request for you to finally convince him that you are right for the job.

Strategy:

Nevertheless, use what he says as an opportunity to emphasize again all the main reasons why you believe you can do the job.

By now you should have these reasons off by heart. This question, if you use it rightly is simply another opportunity to press these reasons home. When you do that, the interviewer will be impressed not only by your answer but also by the way you turned an apparently negative question around and skilfully used it in such a positive way.