

The strangest interview questions

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"If you were shrunk to the size of a pencil and put in a blender, how would you get out?"

That's one of the more unusual interview questions facing job candidates. Job seekers in a fiercely competitive market should beware a curve ball — an odd, even bizarre, question from out of the blue during the job interview.

Glassdoor.com, a Sausalito, Calif.-based website devoted to helping people make career decisions, chooses from among 1.5 million vetted user surveys to post the most oddball questions to show job seekers the kinds of companies and career fields where they may get asked, "How else could you market ping-pong balls if ping pong itself became obsolete?" or "Explain quantum electrodynamics in two minutes."

Career experts say the questions are not intended to elicit correct answers, but to see how the job candidate handles himself when thrown for a loop.

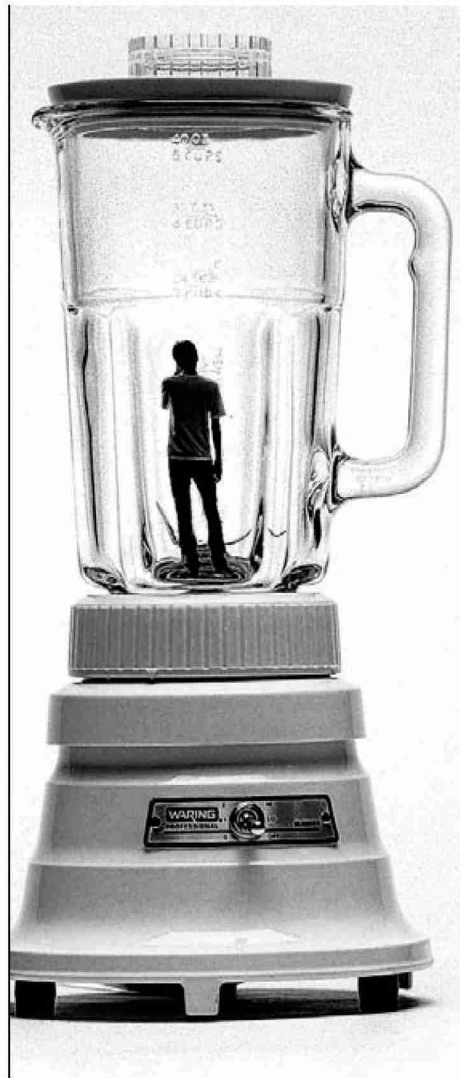
"The key is to show that you have a sense of humor; an interest in learning, an interest in team-manship and that you are up to the challenge intellectually of addressing such a comment," said John M. McKee, principal of BusinessSuccessCoach.net and author of *The Plan*, a new book on personal balance and financial strength.

"The interviewer is looking for someone who can think creatively and who can stand out but still be part of a team," McKee said. "These skills — poise, balance, a sense of humor and good interpersonal skills — are so important today because they cannot be re-

produced online or by a computer."

Rusty Rueff, Glassdoor.com's career and workplace expert, said it is OK to smile and "try to be jovial and answer," rather than consider such questions a hazing.

"The interviewer is trying to ascertain how quickly you think on your feet and how you stand up to stress or pressure," he said.



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10 WEIRD QUERIES

These are 10 of the 25 most oddball questions collected and ranked by Glassdoor.com

- “What is the philosophy of Martial Arts?” —Aflac.
- “Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 how weird you are.” —Capital One.
- “How many basketballs can you fit in this room” —Google.
- “If you could be any superhero, who would it be?” — AT&T
- “If you had 5,623 participants in a tournament, how many games would need to be played to determine the winner?” —Amazon.
- “How do you weigh an elephant without using a weigh machine?” —IBM
- “How many bottles of beer are drunk in the city over the week?” —The Nielsen Company.
- “What’s the square root of 2,000?” —UBS
- “A train leaves San Antonio for Houston at 60 mph. Another train leaves Houston for San Antonio at 80 mph. Houston and San Antonio are 300 miles apart. If a bird leaves San Antonio at 100 mph, and turns around and flies back once it reaches the Houston train, and continues to fly between the two, how far will it have flown when they collide.” —USAA
- “What would you do if you just inherited a pizzeria from your uncle?” —Volkswagen.