

# Odd But Effective Interview Questions



Most candidates are prepared for the cliché questions.

*What are your strengths and weaknesses?*

*What do you enjoy most about your job?*

If you stick to predictable interview questions, it can be hard to find the right person for the job. Asking strange, and what might seem irrelevant questions, can show interviewers how candidates react to pressure, especially when there is no “right” answer.

Using effective interview questions can help you weed out the fakes and find candidates with not just the skill set but personality that you need to get the job done. As a specialized [Quality and Regulatory Recruiter](#), I have developed critical thinking questions that are appropriate for most businesses. Please use the comment box below to let me know other critical thinking questions that work well for your interviews.

## Tell me about a risk that you took outside of work?

This question is especially useful if you are looking for someone with an entrepreneurial mindset. For example, a manager or team leader.

Investor, Steven Cohen, made money on risks and people. He asked candidates

about risks they took during interviews. Doing so, helped Steven decipher if candidates could take a risk in a controlled way.

## **What didn't make it on your resume?**

Some of our best life accomplishments are not on our resumes. Candidates might answer in a variety of ways, include educational, personal, or volunteer accomplishments. This helps you understand what is important to your candidate outside of work.

## **How would your colleagues describe you?**

Great team members are self-aware. The skill improves communication and creates a higher sense of empathy. Asking how colleagues describe themselves is a great way to determine self-perception. Compare their thoughts to references.

## **Name as many uses for a brick in one minute.**

Almost every job requires you to think on your feet. If you use the cliché interview questions, it will be impossible to capture spontaneous, creative thinking. Naming the uses for a brick is similar to the “sell me a pen” technique.

## **Tell me a joke**

We all know at least one joke, right? Even if it's a knock, knock joke. This question is not to see how funny candidates are – unless you are hiring a comedian! Jokes help us determine if the candidate will fit into company culture. If the candidate tells a racist or sexist joke, politely smile and move onto the next candidate. Asking to tell a joke also shows how a candidate acts under pressure and problem solves.

## **What type of animal are you?**

If you are uncomfortable with having them tell a joke, or if they just can't come up

with one, another option would be to ask them what type of animal most closely resembles their personality and why. You can get some pretty good insights as to their personality and if they might fit in with your group if they describe a very passive animal, a very aggressive animal, or a more “middle of the road” animal.

Finding the right employee requires interviewers to not ask traditional questions. Most candidates will be rehearsed for the typical interview questions. Instead, be creative and ask questions that show their personality. If you need help through the hiring process, contact me, Jeff King at [jeff@rqfocus.com](mailto:jeff@rqfocus.com) or (541) 639-350. I serve job seekers and employers in the [biotech, pharmaceutical, and medical device industries](#).