

## 4 Steps for Answering Off-the-Wall Interview Questions

Seemingly out of nowhere, strange interview questions like, “If you were an animal, which one would you want to be?” or “Tell me about your most awkward moment,” have become surprisingly popular with hiring managers. As if the interview process wasn’t stressful enough.

So, what can you do when an interviewer wants to hear about your most creative Halloween costume? Here’s a four-step plan to help you avoid that deer in the headlights look.

### 1. Smile!

About that whole avoiding the deer in headlights look thing—smiling helps a lot. For most of these weird questions, the point is to create an opportunity for the interviewer to observe the way you handle the unexpected, think on your feet, and react or respond. Your reaction, ideally, should show how unfazed you are.

For Neil Blumenthal, Co-CEO of Warby Parker, questions like this are a way of checking for cultural fit with the company. Take yourself too seriously and you may risk coming across as a poor fit. So, smile—it lets your interviewer know that you’re ready and willing to take on this unusual challenge.

### 2. Buy Time if Necessary

Of course, just because you’re ready and willing, doesn’t mean you actually have a response right this second. If you need to buy time, questions like this absolutely warrant time-buying comments like:

*“That’s a great question! Let me think about that.”*

*“Wow. I’ve never been asked that before! You’ll have to give me a second.”*

*“Huh, and I thought I’d be ready for anything. Let’s see...”*

### 3. Answer Enthusiastically

Since these questions almost never have a “right” answer, the key to responding well is mostly about answering enthusiastically and coherently—not what the content of your answer is. If being funny comes naturally to you, this is a great outlet to use some SFW humor. (If it doesn’t, now’s probably not a good time to start working on it.) Once you’ve shown that you’re game and excited to tackle new problems, you’ve won half the battle.

Then, just don’t dismantle the impression you’ve been working on in the rest of the interview. Hopefully, you’ll have had a moment to think. Don’t get too wrapped up trying to think of something particularly insightful or inspired. Respond carefully, smile, and move on.

### 4. Ask a Follow Up Question

Finally, have a conversation about it! A great way to wrap up your response is to ask your interviewer how others or even the interviewer answered this question or what are the best responses he or she has ever heard. It’s an entertaining way to demonstrate your interest in the company culture.

Rather than treating unexpected questions like, “Tell me a joke,” as some annoyance, consider them an excellent opportunity to show off your quick wit and have fun. Your interviewer clearly is.

Credit: <https://www.themuse.com>