

Members

Subscribe to our news letter service to keep current with the latest news and information.
[Click here to join.](#)

Site Navigation

- Home
- News
- Contractor Alliance
- Free Stuff
- Company Formation
- Bulletin Board
- First Timers
- Trading Structures
- Legal : IR35 / IR591
- Legal : S660
- Tax/Legal Q&A
- Jobs
- Contract Search
- Urgent Contracts
- Overseas Guides
- Market Stats
- Money
- Insurance
- Training
- Directory
- Agency Directory
- TechZone
- Contact Us

Search

Entire Site

[Advanced Search](#)

News for you

[RSS XML feed](#)
[News feed for your site](#)
[News feed information](#)

News article sponsored by...



Maximising Contractors' Returns

Safe, effective solutions for contractors
Call now on 08702 880055



Hirers try to test, not fool, IT contractors

Clients often don't know the answers to their own wacky test questions they ask at interview, yet that doesn't stop them wanting to hear your stab in the logical direction.

After all, if you – the IT contractor – was hiring a stranger for stressful mission critical work, you too might want to know that they won't just fall at the first hurdle.

As a result, contractors must be prepared to think beyond their technical realm, often laterally and, more often than not, about a scenario that seems alien to IT-business.

"I have to admit that I used to ask some fairly difficult technical questions when doing interviews," a former IT hirer wrote on CUK's Bulletin Board.

"But I was more interested in understanding how the candidate is going to work through the problem and whether or not he has a logical approach, than whether or not he got the answer correct.

"My principle was: I don't expect my engineers to know everything, but I do expect them to know where to look for the answer."

The chief executive of Nivid Technologies, Pushpendrasinh Jhala, is another hirer who checks IT candidates think logically and calmly before he sends them to the frontline.

"In the current market conditions it's no longer good enough to be a highly qualified IT technician, to deal effectively with the myriad of complexities which exist in today's business environment," Mr Jhala said yesterday.

"They have to be supported by a robust analytical mind that can rapidly assess processes, analyse situations and arrive at potential solutions with clarity of thought."

Some of the questions Nivid Technologies ask IT job applicants to assess their compatibility are:

1. You are walking through a pitch black tunnel, when suddenly a hand comes and slaps you in the face. What would be your immediate reaction?

If the person says:

a) I would try and find the person and hit them back. This insinuates that the person is prone to react in a stressful scenario aggressively and without hesitation. These hypothetically aggressive questions can also increase a person's tension there and then, which could mean that they are susceptible to stress and prone to make dramatic responses and reactions.

b) I would be frightened and hide or duck, fearing further assault. This generally indicates that the person cannot adequately deal with sudden events, resulting in an alarmed state of mind, freezing in a stressed scenario.

c) I would first try to figure out from which direction I was hit and then find the fastest way possible out of the tunnel. Analysing the immediate situation first, and then consider the options that would solve the event. This answer indicates that the person will take a calm and calculated approach to a possible problem situation. That all the possible scenarios should be considered before any direct action is taken.

Based on the answer to this question a series of questions, which deal with various stressful situations, would be asked which would provide a further insight into the persona and thinking of the candidate.

2. There are two stations Bromley and Victoria and there is one single track between these two stations. You have to devise a solution in such a way that the trains can originate from either side of the track, yet your solution should ensure that there is never a collision or delay on the track.

This answer will reveal a person's capability to assess and analyse a given predicament and form a pragmatic theory with a realistic solution which solves the dilemma at hand.

3. Imagine that you are walking along the street and the police suddenly begin chasing someone. They suddenly shout "hands up", what would your immediate reaction be?

Some typical answers:

a) I would put my hands up in the air and stand there. This might signify that the person would potentially freeze under sudden stress, unable to respond in a dignified or eloquent manner).

b) I would flee as fast as I can - disobeying the order, and quickly getting out of the situation. This could signify that the person reacts without much thought to a sudden pressure situation, and rather than confront the situation calmly, cannot deal with the situation or the possible consequences.

c) I would calmly assess what has occurred and the area around me. Coolly I would ask



the policemen whether it is me that has been shouted at, or a stranger, asking for guidance as to how I should act next. This would indicate that the person would calmly analyse the situation, however stressful the person's position may be, and being level-headed enough to request guidance in matters.

Another question, or 'stunt' depending on your opinion, gives insight into an individual's compatibility with the IT consultancy.

4. The candidates are purposefully made to wait together for approximately 30 to 45 minutes without any information given for the delay. This wait and their ignorance of the matter increase their frustration while building the tension within themselves and the group as a whole. Eventually they are addressed together, getting a vague explanation for the reason for the wait and are asked for their feedback regarding the explanation and the interview process in its entirety

Some typical responses:

a) The candidate exhibits a high level of irritation, which suggests that they probably become impatient very quickly. It is plausible that they cannot control their temper in times of unknown circumstances. There is also the possibility that they are even feeding off others irritation; signifying a lack of independent thinking.

b) Other candidates are completely distracted; they have lost interest in the situation and their prerogative. They are vague in their responses and possibly digress from their responses. This signifies that the person may lose focus quickly, especially when left to their own devices in a situation which is unexplained or spontaneous.

c) A third response is that people are calm and composed even with the disturbance and uncertainty of the chaos around them. The upheaval of the process, which differs from their expectation, is perceived in an interested manner, their concentration never diminishing, their condition unchanged. This signifies that they are: independent thinking individual's, that they are patient and alert, and are able to concentrate on the original motive for their presence, however much they have been side-stepped, and are ultimately able to complete the original task.

This final question reinforces the old but indispensable advice that when the interview appears to be over, it's probably not – in that the hirer still is assessing the candidate.

"Don't stop when the interview ends," says Computer People. "Try to leave the interview on a positive note. Thank the interviewer for his or her time and tell them how much you've enjoyed the experience."

Apr 17, 2008

[Email this article](#)
[Printer friendly page](#)
[Previous Page](#)