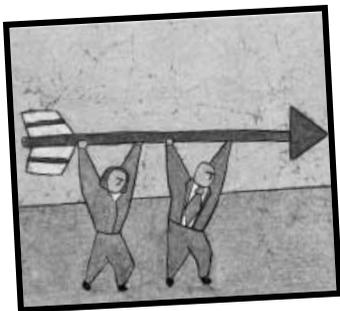


# Ready for a good laugh?

*Don't hold your breath: Economics just isn't a very funny profession. But as part of our selfless effort to put a human face on the dismal science, the worldwide staff of the Milken Institute Review (me) has spent countless hours (sure...) combing the Internet for side-splitters. Actually, many of the jokes about economists are just relabeled gags about the moral failings of lawyers or the charmlessness of accountants:*

- **A mathematician**, a statistician and an economist apply for the same job. The interviewer calls in the mathematician and asks, "What do two plus two equal?"



"Four," he replies.

The interviewer calls in the statistician and again asks, "What do two plus two equal?"

The statistician says "On average, four – give or take 10 percent."

Then the interviewer calls in the economist and poses the same question.

The economist locks the door, closes the shades and responds, "What do you want it to equal?"

- **A woman hears from her doctor** that she has only half a year to live. The doctor advises her to marry an economist and to live in South Dakota.

Woman: Will this cure my illness?

Doctor: No, but the half year will seem pretty long.

*Many others are meant strictly for insiders:*

- **Three econometricians go hunting**, and encounter a deer. The first econometrician fires, but misses by a foot to the right. The second econometrician fires, but misses by a foot to the left.

The third econometrician doesn't fire, but whoops in triumph, "We got it! We got it!"

- **Did you hear** of the economist who dove into his swimming pool and broke his neck? He forgot to seasonally adjust his pool.

*But once your standards begin to slide, a few do seem witty:*

- **How many** Chicago School economists does it take to change a light bulb?

None. If the light bulb needed changing, the market would have already done it.

- **An economist** is a trained professional paid to guess wrong about the economy. An econometrician is a trained professional paid to use computers to guess wrong about the economy.



*My own favorites, though, aren't about economists, but about economics – in particular, about the transition to capitalism:*

- **Reporter:** If you had two houses, would you give me one?

Communist: Of course, yes!

Reporter: If you had two cars, would you give me one?

Communist: Of course, yes!

Reporter: If you had two shirts, would you give me one?

Communist: Of course, no!

Reporter: Why "no" this time?

Communist: Because I have two shirts!

- **New Russian proverb:** Everything the Communists told us about communism was a complete and utter lie. Unfortunately, everything the Communists told us about capitalism turned out to be true.

*Think you can do better? E-mail me at: [ppassell@milkeninstitute.org](mailto:ppassell@milkeninstitute.org). – Peter Passell*