



Don't Jaeger

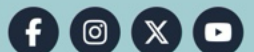
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**QUESTIONS
TO HELP YOU
DEVELOP YOUR
STORY BANK**

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While our time together has been about developing a single story to tell to a specific audience, the best storytellers have a bank of stories they can deposit in and withdraw from when the time is right.

Your ability to begin seeing the stories in your bank starts with these questions. Each one is intended to help you make a deposit, and the more completely you answer them, the better it will be as a starting point when applying the 10 habits we've taught you today.

As a result, you will be able to turn each question into a short or medium-length story.

I'm often asked how many stories you should have in your bank. The obvious answer is as many as possible. However, a great starting point is to learn at least five or six that you can tell so well that, no matter the setting, you are always ready and able to impress your audience.

NOTE: Questions are grouped by theme to aid navigation, but many questions apply across multiple areas of life. Participants are encouraged to interpret and answer questions in ways that resonate with their experience without being limited by category.

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and Resilience

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**Storytelling is
the currency of
kings and queens.**



SECTION #1

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCE

- 01.** Name a challenge you have overcome that you can share to help someone else navigate a similar challenge (a story that turns pain into purpose).

- 02.** Most of us have a decision in life that we regret. Many of us have learned a lesson from that moment. Tell us the story of that moment and what you learned.

- 03.** Share a favorite failure or mistake—public, private, or even in a hobby—and how it has taught you something important or turned into a blessing.



SECTION #1

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCE

- 04.** Have you ever had an idea you were certain was a blockbuster...but it failed? Tell us about the idea, the fail, and the lesson you learned.

- 05.** Is there a period in your life you don't want to repeat? How does that motivate you?

- 06.** Discuss a time you faced a paralyzing fear and what you learned.



SECTION #1

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCE

- 07.** Tell a story of persistence that paid off. What did you have to work through? What were the hurdles?

- 08.** Share a time you learned patience the hard way. Did it teach you the value of slowing down?

- 09.** Tell a story about admitting you were wrong.



- 10.** Share a story about a time you had to let go of something or someone to move forward.

- 11.** Tell a story of making a decision with incomplete information. What did you learn?

- 12.** Share a story of redefining success for yourself.



13. Share a small moment that taught you a big lesson.

14. Share a time you laughed at yourself, and it changed the situation.

15. Describe a time when you had to adapt quickly to an unexpected change. What did you learn about yourself?



16. Have you ever taken a phone call that changed your life? Tell us about it?

17. Many of us are challenged by loneliness. Have you ever felt alone professionally? Can you share the experience and how you grew from it?

18. Have you ever been dressed down by a boss or colleague in public? Can you share the experience and how you grew from it?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 01.** Many people quietly believe they have a “superpower.” It could be an uncanny gut instinct... the ability to “feel” things about others. For some, it is reading people or empathy. It could be a sense of timing that works for you. It could be a willingness to take risks that just seem to work out. What’s your superpower and how has leaning into it led to a big moment?

- 02.** The fact that you’re looking at these questions makes it clear you are constantly growing/progressing. What is the driver that keeps you from “settling” for a level of success that others would find “acceptable?”

- 03.** Many achievers talk about moving from success to significance. What would that look like for you? Are you things you’re doing today to help turn your success into significance?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 04.** Share a life-changing choice and what making it—or not making it—has taught you about yourself.

- 05.** Almost all “high performance experts” state that your mind has the capacity to go much further past a “pain point” than your body. Tell a story about a time your mind pushed you beyond your body’s limits.

- 06.** Some people believe in writing messages of affirmation to themselves...some even put those on their mirror for a morning pick me up. Do you have words to yourself written somewhere? Share their origin and impact.



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 07.** Can you name a moment in your life when you've had to stand against the "norm" that others around you had accepted? What prompted you to take a stand against the "norm"?

- 08.** Most successful people are driven by a keen sense of purpose - their WHY. What is your WHY (i.e., your sense of purpose) and how did you come to understand it? Was there a success - or a failure - that drove home your sense of purpose?

- 09.** What do you most want to accomplish that you haven't yet? What can that pursuit teach?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 10.** Sustaining success is tough for most people/organizations. You've experienced periods where your winning streak seemed unnatural. What did you learn during that period? What can you teach us?

- 11.** What living achiever in our society do you most admire? If you had the opportunity to meet that achiever, what would you ask? What would you want to learn from them?

- 12.** Some people have completed an exercise where they have written their own obituary. It is usually an effort at imagining what you would want the world to say about you after you've passed. Have you ever done the exercise? Was there something you learned from the experience?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 13.** Many of us have set out to achieve a “goal” that, once achieved, we realized was unfulfilling? That effort often teaches lessons. Have you had that experience? What have you learned?

- 14.** There’s an old saying that “you should never meet your heroes because they’ll always let you down.” It’s point is that most of our heroes aren’t as magical or amazing as we thought/hoped. Have you ever had that experience? Tell us the story and what you might have learned from it.

- 15.** Have you ever changed careers? Tell us the story of making that choice and the greatest obstacle you had to overcome. What can others learn from what you went through?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 16.** Was there a time when you realized you were in the wrong place in your life and had to change direction? This could be either professional or personal.

- 17.** Have you ever had a moment when you realized you were capable of more than you had imagined? What happened next?

- 18.** Tell us about a window when you realized you had grown past an old version of yourself?



SECTION #2

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

- 19.** Share a time you stood up to a “bully” (maybe even one at work) What prompted you, and what did you learn?

- 20.** Share a time you found meaning in something ordinary.

- 21.** Share a moment when you realized a belief you had held was false. How did that shift your perspective?



SECTION #3

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE

- 01.** Many high performers have a chip on their shoulder—a moment or place in which they were doubted, dismissed, overlooked or not given an opportunity. Share your chip and how it has shaped you.

- 02.** Have you ever randomly sat beside someone and ended up in a conversation that was game-changing? Give us the setup and the conversation? Tell us how it turned out. What did you do? What did you learn?

- 03.** Have you ever had a nickname? Tell the story behind it.



SECTION #3

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE

- 04.** Tell me about a mentor who had great impact on your life. It could be someone who taught you a lesson with their actions - positively or negatively - or someone who took you under their wing.

- 05.** Tell me about a time you served as a mentor to someone and had a great impact on their life. It could be someone to whom you taught a lesson or took under your wing.

- 06.** Many Leaders say loyalty is harder to find in these times than it was in earlier periods. Tell me a story about the most loyal person you've experienced and a moment when their loyalty most stood out to you.



SECTION #3

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE

- 07.** Many people understand the importance of who they surround themselves with. Has there ever been a moment when you grew to KNOW that someone in your inner circle was not someone you should have there? What did that moment teach you?

- 08.** Share a time you had to earn someone's trust. Was it a struggle? How did you do it?

- 09.** Who is the most unlikely ally you've had, and how did that relationship form?



10. Tell a story of reconciliation after conflict.

11. When did you stand up for someone else?

12. Share a time you delivered feedback that changed someone's trajectory.



13. Who taught you a lesson you didn't appreciate until years later?

14. Tell a story of generosity that left a mark on you.

15. When did you realize your work mattered to someone else?



16. Share a story of helping someone achieve their dream.

17. When did you realize you were part of something bigger than yourself?

18. When did you realize your story could inspire others?



19. Share a story of creating opportunity for someone else.

20. Share a story of helping turn someone else's pain into purpose.

21. When did you realize your story wasn't only about you?



22. Share a story of seeing your influence carry forward into the next generation.

23. Tell us about a moment when you were betrayed by someone and how you responded.

24. Have you ever struggled to forgive someone for something? What is the story and what can I learn from your decision to forgive?



SECTION #3

RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE

25. Tell us about a moment when someone's expression of gratitude to you impacted you.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 01.** Have you ever invented anything or come up with a solution for a problem you know frustrates people. Tell me about the problem and tell me a story of how your solution changed things?

- 02.** Tell me about the journey to your current job. It could come from childhood, where a moment may have shaped your thoughts on business or money. It could be an event during college when a class or a professor opened your mind. Be detailed.

- 03.** If you can, share a story of when you've had to make a decision to stay or go at your current employer. Clearly you chose to stay, so tell me the story of why.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 04.** Most of us have skillsets we have struggled to improve upon. It could, in fact, be storytelling! Tell me a story about a skill you have wanted to be better at for some time and what your work to improve has taught you.

- 05.** Most of us have gotten the chance to deliver great news to someone in our professional life (a new hire, a promotion). Others of us have had to deliver tough news (a layoff or a decision that's been made that has implications for others like the sale of a company). This is a two-part question: Can you share the story of a "Great News!" moment and a "Tough News" conversation and how you handled each?

- 06.** Life is filled with tough moral decisions and many of those choices are defining moments. Tell me about a challenging moral dilemma that you navigated.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 07.** Is there someone you should say thanks to for a key moment in your life that has passed away? If so, imagine how that conversation would go and tell us the story of what you imagine.

- 08.** Tell us about a season when you had to reinvent yourself. What told you it was necessary? What did you do?

- 09.** When did you learn vulnerability could be a strength?



10. When did you realize you had influenced someone else's path?

11. What was your first leadership role, and what did you learn?

12. When did you realize you had influence beyond your title?



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

13. Tell a story of a risk you took at work that paid off.

14. Share a time you led without authority.

15. Have you ever worked for a company or boss who declared a set of values they didn't actually live to? What did you do?



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

16. When did you have to pivot quickly in your career?

17. Share a time you had to advocate for yourself.

18. Discuss a time you had to choose between speed and quality.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

19. Tell a story of inspiring a team under pressure.

20. What is the most important “yes” you’ve ever said?

21. Share a story of a crossroads where you had to choose one path over another.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 22.** Have you ever gone backwards in your career to go forward? Share a story of walking away from something good to pursue something great.

- 23.** Discuss a time you had to start over from scratch.

- 24.** Share a story of betting on yourself.



25. Tell me about the best boss you ever had. What made them so?

26. On the flipside, tell me about your worst boss? What trait did you swear you'd never exhibit because of the experience?

27. All of us have felt “imposter syndrome” at some point. Tell me about a time you felt that and how you navigated the period.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 28.** Have you ever worked with someone who was not coachable? How did you handle them/ the situation?

- 29.** What's your favorite quote? Why? When did you learn it?

- 30.** What charity that your company is involved in most inspires you? Tell me a story from that charity.



SECTION #4

CAREER AND LEADERSHIP

- 31.** If you volunteered for military service, what prompted you to do so? Was there a world event or a person who inspired you? What did you learn in service?

- 32.** What did you want to be when you grew up? Why?

- 33.** One truism of success and business is: Bad habits are often developed in good times. Can you think of a time when you saw that happen in your business?



SECTION #5

LIFE LESSONS AND LEGACY

01. Imagine a conversation with someone important who is deceased. What would you ask?

02. What success are you most proud of to date and why?

03. (If you have children) Many people have a favorite story of a lesson learned from their children - the importance of listening, or of being present. Tell us a story you learned from your child.



04. What's the worst advice you've ever gotten?

05. If you are a high-energy person, do you ever have an off day and have to work a little harder on your self-motivation? If so, how do you do it and do you have tips for the rest of us? Walk us through one of those days.

06. Do you have any rituals to get a productive day started? What are they? Tell us the story of how you developed those rituals.



- 07.** How do you balance work and family? Is there a story of a moment/period where that imbalance taught you a lesson?

- 08.** Travel is often a place for unique learning opportunities. Where have you traveled that taught you most? Tell us a story of the educational experience.

- 09.** What is the most important boundary you've set?



10. What is a story you want people to remember you by?

11. Tell a story of leaving something better than you found it.

12. When did you realize your values guided your choices?



13. Tell a story of contributing to a cause greater than yourself.

14. When did you realize your legacy was already being written?

15. Share a story of seeing the ripple effect of an action you've taken.



16. When did you realize you were living the story you once dreamed of?

17. What advice would you give your younger self based on what you know now?

18. How important is goal-setting to you? What techniques or processes do you use? When/how do you review them? How do you keep yourself on track?



- 19.** What do you most want to accomplish that you have not yet? What can your pursuit of that success teach you, and through this story, the listener?

- 20.** If you played sports at some stage, tell me about a loss that changed your way of thinking.

- 21.** Have you ever suffered an illness or injury that changed your way of thinking or the direction of your life?



22. Have you ever served as caregiver to someone? What did doing so teach you?

23. Have you taken a vacation or a trip that changed your view on the world? Tell us the story.

24. Have you ever made a life-changing choice - weight loss, for example- that taught you something about yourself?



25. Tell us a story of a time when you were brave.

26. Many of us have a fear (snakes is mine) that can be paralyzing. Sometimes coming face-to-face with that fear results in a powerful lesson or story. Do you have one?

27. What's the scariest thing you've ever done?