



Using the “What Are Your Weaknesses?” Question to Advantage

In assessing our professional and personal lives for areas to improve, we might discover some places need modest tweaking and refining, while others require major overhauls. Yet regardless of how much we may want or need to change, the place to start is recognizing where there is work to be done. Naming the areas to address can help in this effort.

Whether you’d respond with job performance abilities, character traits, moral virtues, or something else, complete the segments below to use the “What are your weaknesses?” question to your advantage.

Areas for Development and Improvement...

In the space below, identify professional or personal characteristics you would like to develop or improve—the glasses you would like to fill. For assistance, consider how you might respond to “What are your weaknesses?”

Drill Down

From the items you listed above, select and rank the top 3–4 areas you would like to develop:

1

2

3

4

Goal Setting

Focusing on the **first item on your list**, identify the goal you have regarding this area *and* the outcomes or the signs indicating you have achieved this goal.

[illegible]

Plan of Action

Based on the goal you named, explain what you would need to do to achieve this goal in your professional and personal life. For instance, what actions, responses, or other behaviors could you incorporate, modify, or eliminate? Be as concrete as possible, and record your ideas below.

Check In

At the end of each day, think about the interactions and exchanges you had throughout the day and the extent to which you were successful in improving the trait you are working to address. Then consider ways you could improve upon these efforts in subsequent interactions. Because each interaction may reveal new ways of incorporating, testing, and honing this characteristic, you might consider keeping a journal to record your progress.

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Once you've reached your goal regarding this area, select the second item you listed in the "Drill Down" section of this worksheet and complete the subsequent segments for that element. Continue with all of the items in the Drill Down section list, adding to the list as you find more areas you'd like to develop.

Like Benjamin Franklin, these exercises may reveal we can never fully master the characteristics we aspire to have, yet by continually working to fill the half-empty glasses in our lives, we can be proactive in becoming better versions of ourselves and, in turn, move closer to greatness.