

## Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a positive, strengths-based approach to change and innovation. It creates space for possibilities and inspired, positive change in individuals, teams and organizations. It is a process which:

- Focuses organizations on their positive qualities
- Leverages those qualities to enhance the organization

### Ap-pre'ci-ate, v.,

1. Valuing; to value or admire highly; to judge with heightened understanding; to recognize with gratitude; to increase in value

Synonyms: VALUING, PRIZING, ESTEEMING, and HONORING

### In-quire' (kwir), v.,

1. The act of exploration and discovery.  
2. To seek for information by questioning.

Synonyms: DISCOVERY, SEARCH, SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION, STUDY..

## Appreciative Inquiry strives to Amplify Success

### A Paradigm Shift

#### Traditional Change Approach

- Search for problems
- What is not not working
- Where does the blame lie
- Fix the problems
- Directed

#### AI Change Approach

- What is working or has worked in the past?
- How can we make what works well happen more often?
- Who should get involved?
- Positive, strengths based
- Facilitated/Coordinated

For example, "Fix Employee Retention Problem" now becomes: "Create a Magnetic Work Environment"

### Assumptions Of Appreciative Inquiry

- In every organization, something works.
- Looking for what works well is more motivating/effective than looking for what does not work.
- What we focus on becomes our reality.
- The act of asking questions begins the change.
- Organizations move toward what they ask about or focus on.
- We have more confidence to journey to the future when we bring forward parts of the past.
- If we bring parts of the past forward, they should be what is best.
- The words we use to anticipate and describe reality create it.

## AI seeks what organizations do well, and what they should do more of.

### Appreciative Inquiry Always Works

AI has been used effectively in large organizations such as the U.S. Navy, Hunter Douglass Windows, the United Nations, in Healthcare, Education, Manufacturing, small to medium-sized businesses, not-for-profit agencies and even with small teams within an organization.

#### Appreciative Inquiry Outcomes Have Included:

- Increased team cohesion and engagement
- Employee retention increases
- Revenue growth
- Strategic planning and focus
- Increased understanding of individuals and their strengths
- Discovery and use of new, innovative approaches and ideas
- Identification and development of untapped opportunities
- Customer and employee satisfaction increases
- Improved communication
- Increases in employee autonomy scores

## The Appreciative 4D Model

There are 4 phases in the Appreciative Inquiry approach. The first step is to identify the positive focus of the engagement.



An Appreciative Inquiry engagement leads to actionable outcomes and specific steps for change and growth. The learning and results come as soon as the engagement begins — positive results take root right away.

## In Practice

There are many ways that AI can be used to benefit teams and the organization. The approaches and processes are configurable. A systematic approach will be used, leading to defined outcomes and metrics.

### Why AI is Effective

- Builds relationships within the system
- Gives people an opportunity to dream and share dreams
- Empowers all participants to fully contribute
- Amplifies success
- Creates opportunity to be heard
- Encourages and enables others to be positive
- Gives direction and energy to take action

### Online resources for information and news about AI:

- A repository of information and work on AI is located at “AI Commons.”  
<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>
- Top book about AI:  
Appreciative Inquiry Handbook, D. Cooperrider

### For more information, contact:

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