

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

What is Appreciative Inquiry?

Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to organizational change that has been used successfully in small and large projects with hundreds of organizations worldwide. It is based on the idea that organizations move in the direction of what they ask questions about. For example, when groups study human problems and conflicts, they often find that both the number and severity of these problems grow. In the same way, when groups study high ideals and achievements, such as peak experiences and best practices, these phenomenon tend to flourish. Appreciative inquiry distinguishes itself from other change methodologies by deliberately asking POSITIVE QUESTIONS to ignite constructive dialogue and inspired action within organizations.

Adapted from Jim Ludema's ODNC Renewal Participant Workbook

What are the steps of a full appreciative inquiry process?

Appreciative inquiry principles are adapted and customized for each situation by experienced facilitators. Often, facilitators do not "name" the appreciative inquiry process when they are using it. The full process typically includes these steps.

1. Selecting a focus area or topic(s) of interest. (*We refined the topic through email*)
2. Conduct one-on-one interviews that are designed to discover strengths, passions, unique attributes (*today's interviews*). According to Kathleen Holt of the Madison Area Appreciative Inquiry Network, a complete interview includes these four types of questions:
 - Best experience
 - Values
 - Core Values
 - Wish/ Hope
3. Identifying patterns, themes, intriguing possibilities (*today's small group discussions*).
4. Creating bold statement of ideal possibilities, called "Provocative Propositions." Some call this a "what if" statement; for example, what if "the information we need to answer customer questions is available to us at the touch of a finger."
5. Co-determining "what should be" (through consensus on principles and priorities)
6. Taking and sustaining Action.

A note from the presenters:

For successful application, first identify people who can lead, catalyze, and drive integration of Provocative Propositions into the organization. Have these people plan and participate in the AI

Steps from an Appreciative Inquiry Overview compiled by Kenedy Rossi (kr2@msn.com) 1999