

Using Appreciative Inquiry in Evaluation Practice

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Offered:

- Monday, June 11, 9:25 – 12:45
- Tuesday, June 12, 9:25 – 12:45

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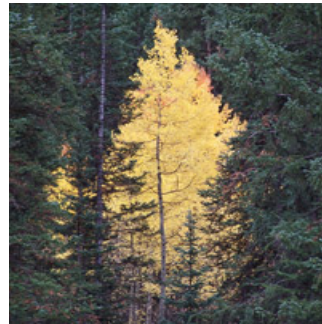
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Presented at the AEA-CDC 2007

Summer Evaluation Institute

June 11-12, 2007, Atlanta, GA



Objectives

- *By end of this workshop, participants will:*
 - ✓ Understand the basic principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI).
 - ✓ Have experienced the first phase of AI.
 - ✓ Understand how to reframe common issues and questions using affirmative language.
 - ✓ Understand the ways in which AI can be applied within an evaluation context.



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Problem Solving Approach

- Identify the issue or problem
 - Determine root causes
 - Brainstorm solutions and analyze
 - Develop action plans
- ✓ There is some ideal way for things to be.
 - ✓ If a situation is not as we would like it to be, it is a “problem” to be solved.
 - ✓ The way to solve a problem is to break it into parts and analyze it.
 - ✓ If we find a broken part and fix it, the whole will be fixed.

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Unintended Consequences of Problem-Based Inquiry

- Fragmented responses =
- Focus on yesterday's causes =
- Few positive images of future; single loop learning =
- Reinforces and produces negative vocabulary =
- Reinforces culture of blaming =
- Lack of holistic view
- Slower change, less momentum
- Lack of creativity, innovation; no double loop learning
- Lethargy, apathy; low energy, hopelessness
- Lack of trust, less risk-taking, fewer relationships

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The Half-Full Assumption

- 78% of Americans who say they see the glass as half-full, or are optimistic.
- 17% who say the glass is half-empty, or are pessimistic.



Survey conducted by Opinion Research Center, Summer, 2003

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Experiencing Appreciative Inquiry

- You are an internal evaluator within an organization.
- You want to evaluate your department's services and performance – you are hearing rumors that some clients are “dissatisfied.”
- You decide to use Appreciative Inquiry to conduct the evaluation.

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Focusing the Evaluation - *Inquire*

- Choose a partner at your table.
- Take turns interviewing each other - 6 min. each.
- As the interviewer, listen carefully with great interest and curiosity; listen for a memorable quote. *You may ask probing questions.*
- Take notes - they will help you tell his or her story.

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Appreciative Interview Questions

- Best evaluator/consultant-client relationship experience ?
- Value most about yourself and your relationships with clients?
- Three wishes?



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Task for Small Groups

- Tell your partner's story, values, and wishes at table (2 minutes per story).
- Listen for and note themes as you hear each other's stories.

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Task for Small Groups

- Discuss themes from stories, values, wishes.
- Write up to 5 themes on flipchart.
- Choose a reporter.

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Break – 20 min.



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Appreciative Inquiry...

“is the study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best. This approach to personal change and organization change is based on the assumption that questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams are themselves transformational. Appreciative Inquiry suggests that human organizing and change, at its best, is a relational process of inquiry, grounded in affirmation and appreciation.”

Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 1)

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The Appreciative Philosophy

- What we focus on becomes our reality
- In every society, organization, or group, something works.
- Reality is created in the moment; there are multiple realities.
- The act of asking questions is an intervention.
- People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future when they carry forward parts of the past.
- It is important to value differences.
- The language we use creates our reality.
- People are motivated to act when they have a choice in what they will do.

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The Questions Change

- *From:* “What problems are you having?”
- *To:* “What’s working well around here?”
- *And:* “How can we do more of it?”

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Appreciative Inquiry's 4-D and 4-I Models

4-D Model

- Discover
- Dream
- Design
- Destiny

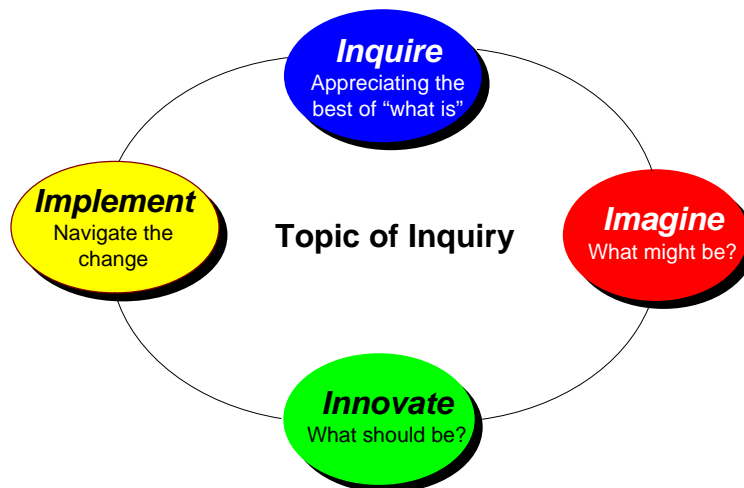
4-I Model

- Inquire
- Imagine
- Innovate
- Implement

Developed by Encompass, LLC

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The "4-I" Model



Preskill & Catsambas, 2006

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Implementing Appreciative Inquiry

Phase 1: *Inquire* – Identifying the “best of what is”

- Paired interviews
- Core questions:
 - Best or peak experience
 - Values
 - Wishes
- Share stories in groups of 6-8
- Identify themes

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Implementing Appreciative Inquiry

Phase 2: *Imagine* – Identifying images of a desirable future

- Small groups envision a possible future state
- What will the program/organization look like 3, 5, 10 years from now?
- Visions shared in words and/or visual images
- Groups share their visions and images
- Discussion of themes

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Implementing Appreciative Inquiry

Phase 3: *Innovate* – Translating the vision into actionable statements

- Develop provocative propositions for themes from stories and visions
- Stretch the imagination, go beyond the obvious
- Represent the organization's social architecture (culture, leadership, policies, business processes, communication systems, strategy, relationships, structure)
- Are stated in the affirmative and present tense

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Implementing Appreciative Inquiry

Phase 4: *Implement* – Making the provocative propositions become reality

- Participants select those propositions they wish to work on
- Monitor, evaluate, and celebrate progress
- Keep the conversation going

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Underlying Theories and Research

- ✓ **The Placebo Effect** - people experience what they expect to experience
- ✓ **The Pygmalion Effect** (Self-fulfilling prophecy) - what we expect to happen will happen when we project certain expectations on another
- ✓ **Neuroscience** - Neuroplasticity (brain can be rewired); intentional work on feeling optimistic strengthens neural connections creating “muscles of optimism”
- ✓ **Neuroscience** - Memory and future thought are highly interrelated; Our memories are essential in helping see ourselves in the future
- ✓ **Psychoneuroimmunology** - How stressors, and the negative emotions they generate, are translated into physical changes
- ✓ **Sports and Visual Imagery** – The mind cannot negate a negative image

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Reframing Deficits into Assets

Deficits

- Incompetent Leaders
- Lack of collaboration
- Lack of trust
- Unused human potential
- Lack of motivation
- Corporate arrogance

Assets/Strengths Based

- Inspirational leadership
- Exceptional partnership
- Integrity in action
- Strategic opportunities
- Fun at work
- Visions of a better world

From: Whitney, Cooperrider, Trosten-Bloom, and Kaplin (2002)

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Back to the Evaluation

- Your first instinct is to call this evaluation, “*A Study of Client Dissatisfaction.*”
- Your next instinct, however, is to reframe it using assets-based and affirmative language.
- **In your groups, develop a title (or topic) for this evaluation.** (Step 1)

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Developing the Evaluation Purpose and Key Questions

- *In your groups...*
 - Review the themes from the stories, values, and wishes.
 - Develop a purpose statement that will describe why the evaluation is being conducted. (Step 2)
 - Develop 2 to 4 key evaluation questions that will guide the evaluation of your department’s services. (Step 3)

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Applications of AI to Evaluation: *To Focus an Evaluation*

- Using the *Inquire, Imagine, and Innovate* phases:
 - Develop a program logic model
 - Clarify the evaluation's purpose
 - Identify the evaluation's stakeholders
 - Determine the evaluation's key questions
 - Develop measures/indicators
 - Develop an evaluation plan

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Applications of AI to Evaluation: *To Develop Interview Guides & Surveys*

- Using the *Inquire and Imagine* phases:
 - Redesign an existing instrument
 - Add one or more AI questions to an existing instrument
 - Develop a fully appreciative instrument

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Example: Maui High Performance Computing Center (MHPCC) Appreciative Inquiry Organizational Survey

Peak Experiences: In your work here, you have probably experienced ups and downs, some high points and low points. Think about a time that stands out to you as a high point- a time when you felt most involved, most effective, most engaged. It might have been recently or some time ago.

- What was going on?
- Who were the significant people involved?
- What were the most important factors in the MHPCC that helped to make it a high-point experience? (e.g., leadership qualities, rewards, structure, relationships, skills, etc.)

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Example: Maui High Performance Computing Center (MHPCC) Appreciative Inquiry Organizational Survey

Values

- What aspect of your work do you value most?
- Describe one outstanding or successful achievement or contribution of which you are particularly proud.
- What unique skills or qualities did you draw on to achieve this result?
- What organizational factors helped you to create or support your achievement?

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Example: Maui High Performance Computing Center (MHPCC) Appreciative Inquiry Organizational Survey

Wishes

- What are three things we do best that you would like to see the MHPCC keep or continue doing – even as things change in the future?
- What three wishes would you make to heighten the vitality and health of the MHPCC?

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Applications of AI to Evaluation:
To Develop an Evaluation System

- Using the *Inquire, Imagine, Innovate* and *Implement* phases:
 - Add to existing evaluation system
 - Develop new evaluation system

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Evaluation System Components

- ✓ Evaluation Vision Statement
- ✓ Strategic Evaluation Plan
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Evaluation Culture
- ✓ Personnel and Financial Resources
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Evaluation Plans

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Example: Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio *Phase 1 – Inquire*

- *Peak Experience:* Think of a time when you knew that an evaluation process was working well. You were confident and excited that important and useful data were being collected and you felt energized about what you were learning. What was happening? Who did it involve? What made this evaluation process (or outcome) so successful? What was your role? What was the core factor that made this evaluation process so effective?
- *Values:* What do you value most about evaluation? What do you value most about yourself with regard to collecting and using information?
- *Wishes:* If you had 3 wishes for having more peak experiences with evaluation, like the one you just described, what would you wish for?

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Example: Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio *Phase 2 – Imagine*

- Imagine that you have been asleep for 3 years, and when you awake, you look around and see that the organization has developed a comprehensive, effective, and efficient evaluation system. This system provides timely and useful information for decision-making and action relative to the organization's programs and services. The evaluation system has been so successful that the *Arts Education Partnership* has decided to bestow on Young Audiences of Cleveland its first ever, *outstanding evaluation practice* award. After hearing about your award, *The Today Show* invited your team onto the show to discuss the organization's evaluation system.
- *Fast forward one month* – you are in New York and have just arrived at the NBC studios (driven by stretch limo from your hotel), and it's now time for lights, cameras, action! Ann Curry begins the interview by asking you to describe what the evaluation system does, how it works, the kinds of information it collects, who uses the information, and how the information is used. What do you tell her (and the millions of viewers across the globe)?

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Appreciative Inquiry Can Be Successfully Applied to Evaluation When...

- The organization is interested in using participatory and collaborative evaluation approaches.
- There is a desire to build evaluation capacity.
- The evaluation includes a wide range of stakeholders.
- There is limited time and resources for conducting the evaluation.
- The organization values innovation and creativity.
- The organization wants to use evaluation findings to guide its change efforts.

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In Closing...

“What ever you vividly imagine,
ardently desire, sincerely believe and
enthusiastically act upon must
inevitably come to pass.”

Paul J. Meyer

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Overview of EnCompass' 4-I Model¹

The Appreciative Inquiry process for organizational learning and transformation is based on the Four "I" Model -- Inquire, Imagine, Innovate, Implement. Each of these phases is described briefly below:

Inquire. Phase One is for the discovery and appreciation of the best of "what is" by focusing on peak moments of organizational excellence from the organization's history. In this phase organizations discover the unique factors (i.e., leadership, relationships, culture, structure, rewards, etc.) that made those moments possible. This builds the capacity for effective management of organizational continuity during times of change. Members become ready to let go of parts of the past, and become aware of what they want to take into the future.

Imagine. In this phase organizations challenge the *status quo* by envisioning more valued and vital futures. Images of the future emerge out of the stories and examples from the best of the past. They are compelling possibilities because they emerged from the extraordinary moments of the organization's history. Organizations have a tendency to move toward the shared, positive images of the future. Together, the organization creates a positive image of its most desired and preferred future. They take the best of "what is" to "what might be" by asking, "What is the world calling our organization to become?" The organization is enabled to go beyond what it thought was possible.

Innovate. The goal of the innovation phase is to envision how the organization should be designed to fully realize the shared dreams and ideals. Organizational elements, or the "social architecture" (values, leadership, culture, staff/people, structures, strategy, communications, processes, practices, results, etc.) are first identified. Then the organization creates "provocative propositions," or "possibility statements," about what the organization would look like if it were doing more of its "bests." In this phase the organization begins to set new strategic directions and creates alignment between its visions of the future and its systems and processes.

Implement. The task in this phase is to implement the innovation and to "set the organizational compass." It is a time of continuous learning, using monitoring and appreciative evaluation tools and processes, and improvising or making course corrections in pursuit of the shared vision. The momentum and potential for innovation, creativity, and productivity is high by this stage of the inquiry.

¹ This process is adapted from "Inquiry & Imagining in the Private Voluntary Sector," Global Social Innovations, Timothy B. Wilmot, Summer 1996; Appreciative Inquiry: A Constructive Approach to Organization Development, Inquiry Manual, NTL, Cooperrider, et al., 1997.

Appreciative Inquiry and Evaluation Case Activity

Background

You and the members of your table are part of an organization that provides internal evaluation consulting services.

Your internal evaluation unit has been in existence for about 5 years, and you believe that it is time to evaluate how well the unit is performing, and meeting its customers' expectations. You are particularly motivated at this time since you've increasingly heard rumors that some of your clients are dissatisfied with your department. However, you are not sure what their concerns are, so you've decided to conduct an evaluation to address this issue. You and your colleagues decide to conduct the evaluation using an Appreciative Inquiry approach.

Appreciative Interview Guide

Peak Experience: Think of a time when you were working on an evaluation where the relationship with your client was exciting, energizing, and successful. You are fairly certain that this relationship increased the overall effectiveness of the evaluation process and outcomes. You might even say that it was a highpoint of your evaluation career.

Where did this happen? Who was there? What was the situation? What did you do that made this relationship so successful? What did the client do to make you feel this way? *What was the core factor that made this relationship and work so successful?*

Values: What do you value most about:

- Yourself as an evaluator?
- The relationships you have developed with your clients?

Wishes: If you had three wishes that would ensure that every evaluator-client relationship that you are involved in would be as exceptional as the one you just described, what would they be?

Appreciative Interview Worksheet

This page is for taking notes on your partner's story – they will be helpful to you when presenting your partner's story and information to the group.

- Notes on your partner's story:

- Notes on values:

- Notes on wishes:

- Best quote that came out of the interview:

**Reframing Deficits into Assets
Evaluation Case Activity**

Reflecting back on the evaluation you will be conducting, you decide to call the evaluation, “*A Study of Client Dissatisfaction.*” However, you are reminded that taking an appreciative approach means reframing the focus of the inquiry to reflect a state of affairs that is desirable, positive, and strengths-based.

In your groups:

Step 1: Develop a new title for the topic of your evaluation – make sure it represents a vision of what you would like to see in your department’s relationships with its clients.

Topic (Title) of Evaluation:

Step 2: Now, consider and discuss the themes from the stories, values, and wishes. Develop a purpose statement that describes why the evaluation is being conducted.

The purpose of the evaluation is to...

Step 3: Next, develop 2-4 key evaluation questions that will guide the evaluation of your department’s services (try to use affirmative, appreciative, asset-based language).

Selected Appreciative Inquiry Resources

- Coghlan, A. T., Preskill, H., & Catsambas, T. T. (2003). An overview of appreciative inquiry in evaluation. In H. Preskill & A. Coghlan (Eds.), *Appreciative inquiry and evaluation. New Directions for Program Evaluation, 100*, 5-22. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cooperrider, D. (1990). Positive image; positive action: The affirmative basis of organization. In S. Srivastva & D. L. Cooperrider (Eds.), *Appreciative management and leadership*, 91-125. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Cooperrider, D. L., Sorensen, P. F., Whitney, D., & Yaeger, T. F. (Eds.) (2000). *Appreciative inquiry: Rethinking human organization toward a positive theory of change*. Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing.
- Cooperrider, D. L. & Whitney, D. (1999). *Appreciative inquiry*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler
- Cooperrider, D. L., Whitney, D., & Stavros, J. M. (2003). *Appreciative inquiry handbook*. Bedford Heights, OH: Lakeshore Publishers.
- Elliott, C. (1999). *Locating the energy for change: An introduction to appreciative inquiry*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: International Institute for Sustainable Development.
- Hammond, S. A. (1996). *The thin book of appreciative inquiry*. Plano, TX: CSS Publishing Co.
- Ludema, J. D., Whitney, D., Mohr, B. J., & Griffin, T. J. (2003). *The appreciative inquiry summit: A practitioner's guide for leading large-group change*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- OD Practitioner* (2000). The entire issue, Volume 32, (1) is devoted to Appreciative Inquiry. Single copies are available while supplies last. Contact: www.odnetwork.org.
- Preskill, H. & Catsambas, T. T. (2006). *Reframing evaluation through appreciative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
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- Watkins, J. M., & Cooperrider, D. (2000). *Appreciative inquiry: A transformative paradigm. OD Practitioner, 32* (1), 6-12.

Watkins, J. M. & Mohr, B. J. (2001). *Appreciative inquiry: Change at the speed of imagination*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Webb, L., Preskill, H., & Coghlan, A. (Eds.) (2005). Bridging Two Disciplines: Applying Appreciative Inquiry to Evaluation Practice. *AiPractitioner*. February.

Whitney, D., Cooperrider, D., Trosten-Bloom, A., & Kaplin, B. S. (2002). *Encyclopedia of positive questions*. Euclid, OH: Lakeshore Communications.

Whitney, D. and Trosten-Bloom, A. (2003). *The power of Appreciative Inquiry*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Appreciative Inquiry Commons - a worldwide portal devoted to the fullest sharing of academic resources and practical tools on Appreciative Inquiry and the rapidly growing *discipline of positive change*. <http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu/>

Allist-admin@mail.business.utah.edu (AI listserv) -- "A narrowly focused list of individuals interested in appreciative inquiry."

Appreciative Inquiry Practitioner - A resource for knowing about various AI workshops and related topics such as workshops on Dialogue. They also highlight various books and articles on AI. <http://www.aipractitioner.com>

The Taos Institute Newsletter - An invaluable resource for keeping up to date with the latest publications on AI as well as AI workshops around throughout the U.S. <http://www.taosinstitute.net>