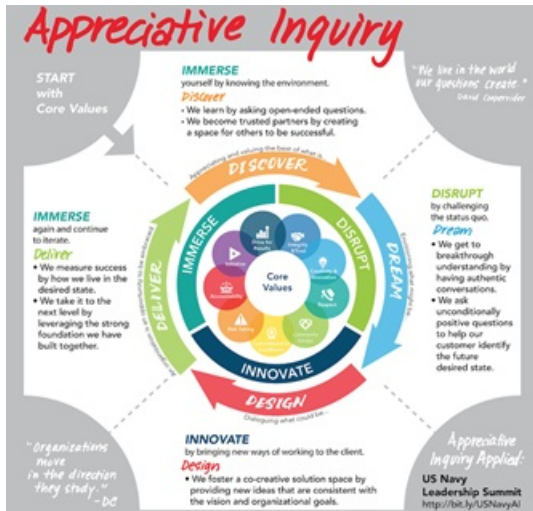


Appreciative Inquiry

<p>Field of application</p>	<p>The appreciative approach can be used as a complete analytical framework involving a variety of interviews. The latter can span over a longer period of time with intensive field work. This description focuses on a workshop format that can be used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reflect and guide students on the improvement of learning networks between faculty and students and between students • To improve a university course with faculty • To develop strategies for recultivating a region or a location with its stakeholders • To include stakeholders like employees in decision-making processes regarding strategic development of an organisation
<p>Resume / Brief description</p>	<p>The Appreciative Inquiry has been developed and used as an alternative to a problem-based approach of process analysis, intervention design and vision building. It is strongly based on appreciation of what is already there and on what can be strengthened ("What gives life"). It starts with an understanding of the organisation's or individual's potential strengths by looking at its experience and its potential. From there an envisioning process starts on how a possible future could look like ("What might be") and how this future can be co-constructed, and its process maintained as a dynamic and sustainable process.</p> 
<p>Target group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • University departments • Organisations • Businesses
<p>Objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase the buy-in of stakeholders in strategy process • To build on what is there already (e.g. experience, structures, motivation, past efforts) • To overcome a problem-solving strategy approach and focus on opportunities • To create a strategy that is implementable and co-constructed in the team (e.g. students, management and employees, organisation, location) • To assure a process which takes key motivational aspects of stakeholders serious and use its energy



<p>Requirements</p>	<p>Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop format can be used when the main relevant stakeholders are present in the room. The workshop format is suitable for up to 20 participants. <p>Material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 pin boards • Markers • Tables <p>Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The time depends on the intensity of the workshop. It can range from 3 hours until up to a day.
<p>Implementation - Overview</p>	<p>The activity is realised in four main phases.</p>  <p>The Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle Process. (Cooperrider et al., 2008)</p>
	<p>1. Discovery: What gives life (Appreciating)</p> <p>“What is the development and change focus we want to take in this workshop?” is the question that needs to be clarified in the beginning. The group of participants has to define the topic. Is the reflection related to future cooperation between students and faculty, the improvement of cooperation between the university department, an organisation or a territory?</p> <p>Then, the group is asked: “Please share your best and most encouraging and “life-giving” experiences on the change topic of the workshop?”</p> <p>Personal and organisational high points, as well as the participants' values, hopes and wishes related to the enhancement of their organisation's social, economic and environmental vitality are discovered.</p> <p>The experiences are documented on cards on the first pin board by the facilitator. They are clustered in the two areas “experiences” and “values”.</p> <p>There are two alternatives to speed up the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The participants write cards on “experiences” and “values” in two rounds of exercises. • The participants leave the room in pairs of two for 30 minutes to come back with cards on the main positive experiences and positive values they experienced. <p>2. Dream: What might be (Envisioning)</p> <p>The facilitator asks the participants (using the second pin board): “What can you envision as a possible motivational ideal status when things would work at their best?”</p>



Implementation - Guidelines

There are two alternatives on how to start:

- In small groups of three, the participants visualise their main answers on a flip chart, expressing their main aspects.
- In groups of three or four, the participants write down their aspects when it "works at its best" on cards and present them in the plenary afterwards.
- The cards with findings are clustered in the plenary according to similar "dreams".

3. Design: How it can be (Co-constructing)

The focus at this stage of the workshop is to look at the clusters of dreams expressed in the earlier step.

The question the facilitator asks: "What activities can we realise that contribute to our envisioned change? Please reflect about activities that create enthusiasm with you and to which you want to contribute."

Participants then reflect on concrete activities necessary to reach these specific dreams.

The card exercise should be done in groups of 4 or 5 to encourage joint reflection. Cards are written by the groups.

Groups present their findings and cards on the third pin board. Duplicated cards are taken out, similar ones are clustered.

The participants then prioritise activities through reflection and voting.

4. Destiny: What will be (Sustaining)

The destiny phase is focusing on the concrete planning of the activities and to "embrace the solutions". The assurance that these activities are also really implemented and monitored is understood as a deep interest of the organisation itself.

The logic is that the outcomes of the Appreciative Inquiry are building on the strengths of the individuals in the organisation, on internal resources, relationships, past positive experiences and the extension of these positive experiences.

The workshop can be concluded with an action plan. As an alternative, a first draft of an action plan is developed by a group of participants and will be presented to the other participants.

The workshop closes with an appreciation of the success.

Description of the context

The Appreciative Inquiry method was used in a workshop from the consultancy company Mesopartner with a German district development agency to reflect about future steps of action. At the same time, the workshop was an organisational development workshop. The objectives were threefold:

- To involve the team of employees stronger in the further strategy planning process and to motivate them
- To define key areas for the next three years
- To reflect on and improve things and network relations in an appreciative way.



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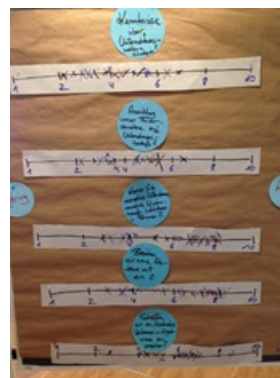
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Starting point

The workshop started with a joint rating on different circumstances:

- Relations with colleagues in the team
- Relations with clients (businesses in the district)
- Relations with other partner organisations in the district to get a common understanding of the status quo.



"Discovery" and "Dream" process

The team of the agency started to share their positive experiences along the differentiation of experiences and values. Some examples of relevant outcomes included:

- Close contact with businesses improves my motivation and also the relationship with them.
- Being involved in some leading projects provides a much better overview for me and makes me feel being part of relevant activities.
- Working in tandem in projects with persons from different departments provides much better knowledge sharing and integration of different perspectives.

In regards to values the following aspects were mentioned:

- Feeling integrated
- Close Networking
- Being close to client.



In the "Dream" process relevant aspects included:

- We have regular contact with businesses and learn from them about new opportunities for support projects

Example of application:



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	<p>about new opportunities for support projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We always work in changing teams and are informed on each other's tasks. • We promote projects that are really focused on business demands. <p>"Design" and "Destiny" process</p> <p>In the "Design" and "Destiny" process some of the outcomes were mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everybody has a discovery meeting with an entrepreneur on future cooperation opportunities in the district every two weeks. • Impressions from interviews will be in the team meeting every second week. • The leading team participates in some leading project activities. • An idea wall in the centre of the agency will be the space to collect ideas from everybody for further activities that emerge out of daily practice and work. <p>Support requirements</p> <p>The workshop took place from 9 to 12 am (3 hours). The pin boards were prepared in advance and the role of the facilitator was mainly to guide the group through the process and to provide a space where team members were able to express their emotions and motivations.</p>
Templates, graphics for download	<p>Visualisations for Appreciate Inquiry Workshops are available at: https://www.centerforappreciativeinquiry.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/AI_CaseStudyExamples_HeatherMartinez_20170212.pdf</p>
Additional format/ references	<p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The founder of the method, David L. Cooperrider, introduces the innovative philosophy of Appreciative Inquiry: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JDfr6KGV-k • An introduction video to Appreciative Inquiry and its difference to problem solving approaches is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzW22wwh1J4 • The Appreciate Inquiry method in a nutshell is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IX3nIMVWJ9o <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The David L. Cooperrider Center provides information about how to get connected with Appreciative Inquiry experts: https://www.champlain.edu/appreciativeinquiry • An introduction to the Appreciative Inquiry method is available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276093904_Introduction_to_Appreciative_Inquiry

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