

“We live in the world our questions create”

- AI focuses on leveraging an organisation's core strengths, rather than seeking to overcome or minimise its weaknesses.
- AI makes a conscious choice to study the best of an organisation, its positive core.
- Organisations move in the direction of what they study.
- AI is not a “top down” or “bottom up” change process; rather a “whole system” approach.



Exercise: Finding Energy



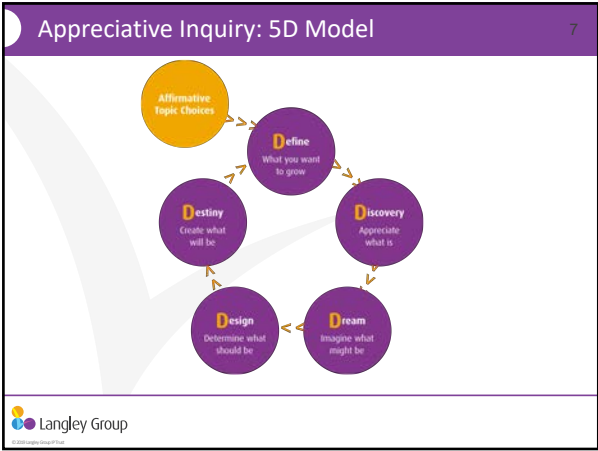
Key Features of Appreciative Inquiry

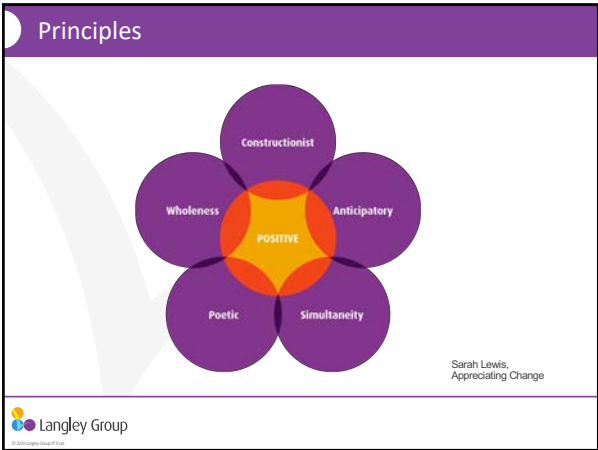
- Inquiry (questions)
- Appreciation (positivity)
- Strengths (what we can do)
- Generativity (innovation)

“Appreciative Inquiry generates a collective agreement about what people want to do together and enough structure and energy to mobilise action in the service of those agreements. When that happens, many ‘problems’ get solved.”

Bushe 2007








Questioning

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The Flip

- Every problem is the expression of a frustrated dream
- Turning the talk from the problem to the dream is 'doing the flip'
- Eg 'As I understand it this is the situation - what you don't want - what you fear.'
- Now, tell me something about how the situation could be if this problem didn't exist – how would things be? What do you want? What do you hope for?




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Creating Good AI Questions

Effective AI questions:

- Direct towards the **positive**
- Unleash new accounts – **generative** stories
- Focus attention on what you want more of – what is working
- Bring different aspects of organisational life into focus
- Identify **strengths**
- Identify the **positive core** of the organisation
- Are **context specific**, resonating with language meaningful to the organisation




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Exercise: The Flip and Appreciative Questions

Groups of 3
One person presents a situation framed in 'problem talk'.

Colleagues – the core question is "If that is what you want less of, what is it you want more of?"

Use questioning to create the flip and focus on the positive.




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1. Define: what you want the change to be?

- Traditional, deficit-based mind sets, lead us to first identify an important gap, issue, or problem (what we want **less** of) instead of reframing it into "what do we want **more** of."


Example:
"What can we do minimize client anger and complaints?"
To
"When are customers most pleased with our service?"




1. Define: focus on...




- High level objectives
- Be outcome focussed – even though it may be vaguely defined
- Use positively oriented language
- Involve stakeholders – who needs to be at the table?



2. Discovery – what is working well for us now?



- Find out what is working well
- When are we functioning at our best?
- Positive stories- build on what is already working.
- Ask positive questions - this will determine the direction and the results of the inquiry (negative or positive).




3. Dreaming – imagining the future



- People's dreams of the future – what might be possible?
- Recognition of past success to inform future potential
- Amplifies the positive core of the organisation
- Choose creative and expressive ways in which to do this

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4. Design – innovation



- What will bring out the best in people?
- What relationships do we need to work on?
- What conversations?
- What formal design elements will influence the accomplishment?
e.g. job descriptions, policies, strategy, compensation and reward system, decision-making processes, strategies for attracting and retaining talent, management practice, measurement systems
- What actions need to be taken?

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5. Destiny – focus on...



- Reconnect with and review the design phase
- Generate action plans – small working groups to generate specific actions
- Inspired actions – groups committing to act and cooperate
- Task groups – detailed responsibility to achieve outcome
- (story, story board, action plan, provocative propositions)
- (communication, relationship, working parties, meetings)

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Resources for Success
Strengths



Strengths


“A strength is a pre-existing capacity for a particular way of behaving, thinking or feeling that is authentic and energising to the user, and enables optimal functioning, development and performance.”

(Linley, 2008)




Strengths

Strengths use is a core predictor of workplace engagement which, in turn predict a range of business outcomes



Also, higher profits, greater productivity and customer loyalty.

(Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2002)



Strengths – Personal benefits

People who use their strengths more:

1. Are happier
2. Are more confident
3. Have higher levels of self esteem
4. Have higher levels of energy and vitality
5. Experience less stress
6. Are more resilient
7. Are more likely to achieve their goals
8. Perform better at work
9. Are more engaged at work
10. Are more effective at developing themselves and growing as individuals

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Benefits to Organisations

- Engagement**
 - Profit
 - Performance
 - Customer satisfaction
- Reduced Stress**
 - Lower staff turnover
 - Lower absenteeism
 - Staff loyalty
- Resilience**
 - Supporting beyond job specification
 - Facilitates positive change

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Thank you

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