

Appreciative Inquiry

A Positive Revolution in Change

Be the change you want to see in the world.

—Gandhi

Approaching Problems from the Other Side

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) begins an adventure. Even in the first steps, one senses an exciting new direction in our language and theories of change—an invitation, as some have declared, to “a positive revolution.” The words just quoted *are* strong and, unfortunately, they are not ours. But the more we replay the high-wire moments of our five years of work at GTE/Verizon,¹ the more we find ourselves asking the same kinds of questions the people of GTE asked their senior executives: “Are you ready for the momentum that is being generated? This is igniting a grassroots movement . . . it *is* creating an organization in full voice, a center stage for positive revolutionaries!”

Tom White, president of what was then called GTE Telops (with 80 percent of GTE’s 67,000 employees), replied with no hesitation: “Yes, and what I see in this meeting are zealots, people with a mission and passion for creating the new GTE. Count me in, I’m your number one zealot.” People cheered.

Fourteen months later—based on significant and measurable changes in stock prices, morale survey measures, quality/customer relations, and union-management relations—GTE’s whole system change initiative won the ASTD (American Society for Training and Development) award for best organization change program in the country. Appreciative inquiry was cited as the “backbone.”

To achieve this stunning shift in organization culture, the team of internal and external change agents asked, “How can we engage the positive potential of all employees toward trans-



forming the company?" We wanted whatever we did to recognize and invite the expression of frontline employee strengths, initiative, and capabilities. We set a goal of creating a narrative-rich culture with a ratio of five stories of positive performance and success to every negative one—to build a vibrant, high-performing, customer-focused culture.

This goal was approached by:

- Training more than 50 internal change agents in Appreciative Inquiry.
- Introducing 800 frontline employees to Appreciative Inquiry.
- Creating a "story center" for sharing "good news" stories.
- Embedding storytelling into existing processes. For example, the annual President's Leadership Award focused on storytelling about the winning employees, their teams, and customer service.
- Adding open-ended questions to the company employee survey and tracking the ratio of positive to negative comments.
- Creating an Appreciative Inquiry storybook as an employee teaching tool.
- Introducing a new partnership model for the unions and company management using Appreciative Inquiry.²

Tom White described AI in executive language:

Appreciative Inquiry can get you much better results than seeking out and solving problems. That's an interesting concept for me—and I imagine most of you—because telephone companies are among the best problem solvers in the world. We troubleshoot everything. We concentrate enormous resources on correcting problems that have relatively minor impact on our overall service and performance. . . . When used continually and over a long period of time, this approach can lead to a negative culture. If you combine a negative culture with the challenges we face today, it could be easy to convince ourselves that we have too many problems to overcome—to slip into a paralyzing sense of hopelessness. . . . Don't get me wrong. I'm not advocating mindless happy talk. Appreciative Inquiry is a complex science designed to make things better. We can't ignore problems—we just need to approach them from the other side.³



The Basics

WHAT IS APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY?

AI has been described in a myriad of ways: as a *radically affirmative approach to change* that completely lets go of problem-based management and in so doing vitally transforms strategic planning, survey methods, culture change, merger integration methods . . . measurement systems;⁴ as a *paradigm of conscious evolution* geared for the realities of the new century;⁵ as the most important advance in *action research* in the past decade;⁶ as offspring and "heir" to Maslow's

vision of a *positive social science*,⁷ and as a methodology that takes the idea of the *social construction* of reality to its positive extreme—with its emphasis on metaphor and narrative, relational ways of knowing, on language, and on its potential as a source of generative theory.⁸

While there are many ways to describe AI—as a philosophy and methodology for change leadership—here is a practice-oriented definition:

Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative, coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations and communities, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives “life” to an organization or community when it is most effective, and most capable in economic, ecological, and human terms.

AI assumes that every organization or community has many “untapped and rich accounts of the positive”—what people talk about as past, present, and future capacities—the positive core. AI links the knowledge and energy of this core directly to an organization or community’s change agenda, and changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized.

THE APPRECIATIVE INTERVIEW

At the heart of AI is the *appreciative interview*, a one-on-one dialogue among organization or community members and stakeholders using questions on high-point experiences, valuing, and what gives life to the organization or community at its best, such as:

1. Describe a time in your organization/community that you consider a high-point experience, a time when you were most engaged and felt alive and vibrant.
2. Without being modest, what do you most value about yourself, your work, and your organization/community?
3. What are the core factors that give life to your organization/community when it is at its best?
4. Imagine your organization/community ten years from now, when everything is just as you always wished it could be. What is different? How have you contributed to this “dream organization/community”?

Answers to questions like these and the stories they generate are shared throughout the group resulting in new, more compelling images of the organization or community and its future.

THE POSITIVE CORE

The *positive core* of organizational or community *life* is one of the greatest and largely unrecognized resources in the field of change management today. We are clearly in our infancy when it comes to tools for working with it, talking about it, and designing our systems in alignment with it. One thing is evident, however, as we reflect on what we have learned with AI: Human systems grow in the direction of what they persistently ask questions about. This propensity is strongest and most sustainable when the means and ends of inquiry are positively correlated. The single most important action a group can take to liberate the human

spirit and consciously construct a better future is to make the positive core the common and explicit property of all.

By inquiring into its positive core, an organization or community enhances its collective wisdom, builds energy and resiliency for change, and extends its capacity to achieve extraordinary results.

A Working Definition of Positive Change

AI deliberately works from accounts of the positive core. This shift from problem analysis to positive core analysis is at the heart of positive change.

We do not dismiss accounts of conflict, problems, or stress. We simply do not use them as the basis of analysis or action. We listen when they arise, validate them as lived experience, and seek to reframe them. For example, the problem of low management credibility becomes an inquiry into moments of inspired leadership.⁹

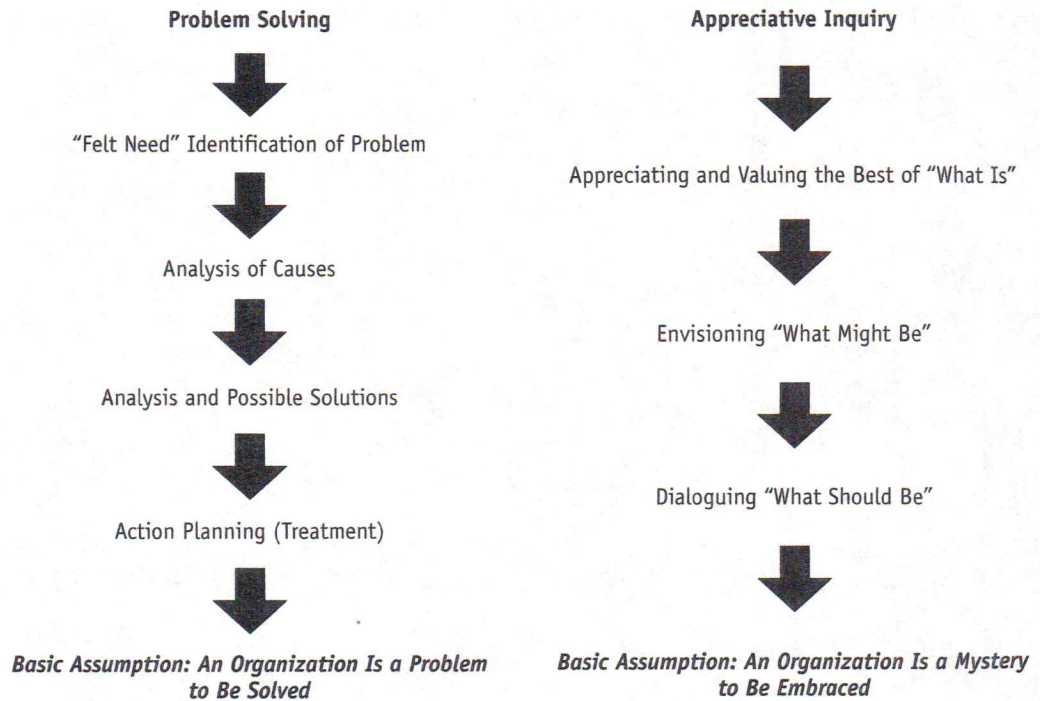


Figure 1. From Problem Solving to Appreciative Inquiry

With AI, change begins with a rigorous, organization- or community-wide discovery and analysis of the positive core—a "root cause of success analysis." We define positive change as:

Any form of organization change, redesign, or planning that begins with comprehensive inquiry, analysis, and dialogue of an organization's "positive core," involving multiple stakeholders, and then links this knowledge to the organization's strategic change agenda and priorities (figure 1).

THE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY 4-D CYCLE

The AI Cycle can be as rapid and informal as a conversation with a friend or colleague, or as formal as an organization- or community-wide process involving every stakeholder group. While there is no formula for AI, most change efforts flow through the 4-D Cycle (figure 2). Each AI process is home grown—designed to meet the unique challenges of the community, organization, or industry involved.

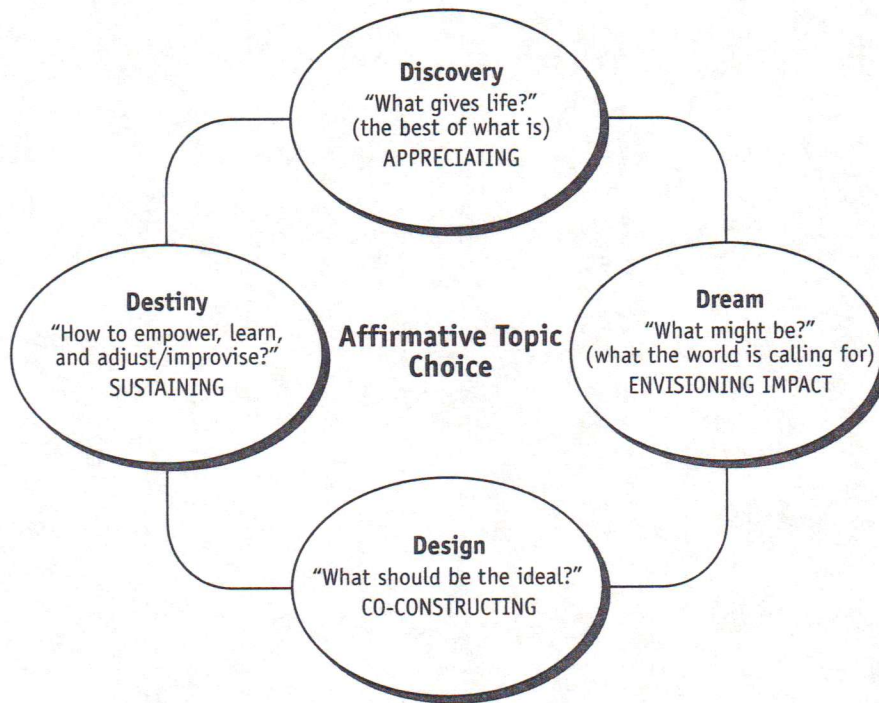


Figure 2. Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle

The four key phases of an AI process are:

- *Discovery*—mobilizing a whole system, multiple stakeholder inquiry into the positive core;
- *Dream*—creating a results-oriented vision based in discovered potential and questions of higher purpose, that is, “What is the world calling for us to become?”

- *Design*—creating possibility propositions of the ideal organization or community, articulating a design capable of drawing upon and magnifying the positive core to realize the newly expressed dream; and
- *Destiny*—strengthening the affirmative capability of the whole system enabling it to build hope and sustain momentum for ongoing positive change and high performance.

At the center of the cycle is Affirmative Topic Choice, the starting point and most strategic aspect of any AI process. AI topics become an agenda for learning, knowledge sharing, and action. They get written into questions for Discovery interviews, serve as seeds for Dreams, as arenas for crafting Design propositions, and for taking action in the Destiny phase.

APPLICATIONS OF APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Many different approaches to applying the 4-D Cycle are emerging: mass mobilizing interviews across an entire city; small groups of people interviewing colleagues within their company, then benchmarking best-practices companies; face-to-face interfaith dialogue among hundreds of religious leaders from around the world. Each application liberates the power of inquiry, builds relationships, and unleashes learning. In *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry*, Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom outline multiple “Forms of Engagement” that have been used by consultants around the globe for applying Appreciative Inquiry.¹⁰ Two of the most often used and successful ways to apply AI are Whole-System Inquiry¹¹ and the AI Summit.¹² The British Airways story that follows is an example of Whole-System Inquiry. A brief overview and an illustrative story of the AI Summit can be found in chapter 14.



Table of Uses

| Brief Description | Project Length, Number of Participants | Results |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Office of Finance, City and County of Denver</i> Discover and disseminate financial best practices and revenue-generating opportunities across the city</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass-mobilized inquiry (2 months) • 200 people trained to conduct 600 face-to-face interviews with city employees, local businesses, and community members • AI Summit (1 day), 100 people • Action teams formed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saved \$70M |

| Brief Description | Project Length, Number of Participants | Results |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Hunter Douglas</i> Organization-wide cultural transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-System inquiry (3 months) • 900 employees interviewed, 100 customers and community members • Broad sharing of best-practice stories • Small group meaning-making meetings • AI Summit to Dream and Design (3 days), 180 people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced employee retention and positive morale • Significant financial savings • Creation of an Appreciative Organization Culture |
| <i>United Religions Initiative</i> Creation of a global interfaith network dedicated to peace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual 200-person global AI Summits • Regional Summits • Ongoing worldwide Internet dialogue (5 years of inquiry, dialogue, and design) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter signed in 2000 • Current organization of 300 cooperation circles worldwide |
| <i>Nutrimental Foods</i> Whole-system strategic planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI Summit (4 days), annual summits since, 1,000 people, (all employees, customers, vendors, and community members) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 percent increase in profits, 75 percent decrease in absenteeism |

Getting Started With AI

A CASE STUDY AT BRITISH AIRWAYS—A PASSION FOR SERVICE

After two years of significant organizational changes, David Erich, British Airways North America vice president, customer service, realized his job had just begun. It was time to engage employees in improving their lagging survey scores and revitalizing the “Passion for Service” culture. They began a whole system change process using Appreciative Inquiry.

A lot was done well across the 22 customer service stations in North America, yet the best practices were not identified, shared, or replicated. The organization’s collective wisdom was like an underground well, full of life-giving potential waiting to be drawn upon and put to good use.

The decision to use Appreciative Inquiry involved a one-day briefing of line managers and organization development professionals and a two-day “core team” meeting. Forty people from all levels, locations, and functions attended this two-day “core team” meeting to decide whether to proceed and set the foundation for the whole system inquiry. The two days included: an



overview of Appreciative Inquiry, the selection of affirmative topics, drafting of interview questions, practice interviews, and sharing of best practice stories.

Selecting Affirmative Topics for Inquiry

As the group selected topics, one participant commented, "I see how Appreciative Inquiry can make a difference with people-related issues, but can it be used for technical issues?" Sensing she had a specific issue in mind, we asked her to share it. She said succinctly, "Baggage." Everyone in the room sighed with relief. The paramount issue to the business's well-being was now in the conversation. They explained that when customers' baggage does not arrive on the same flight as the customer, it costs money, time, and goodwill. They shared stories of the wedding dress that didn't make it to the wedding, replaced at British Airways' expense; camping gear that didn't get to the Grand Canyon until the vacation was over; and the daily disturbances of luggage not transferred in time for connecting flights.

We offered the Appreciative Inquiry principle that leads to powerful, strategic affirmative topics, "Given that organizations move toward what they study, what do you want more of?" The response was quick and unanimous—a habitual response: "Better service recovery." We said, "Do we have this right, its okay to lose a customer's baggage as long as you recover it promptly?" The group got the point.

Again we asked, "What do you want more of?" Small groups talked for about 20 minutes. The chosen idea: "Exceptional Arrival Experience." Along with Happiness at Work, Continuous People Development, and Harmony Among Work Groups, the topics for an organization-wide inquiry were defined.

Deciding to Go Forward

Toward the end of the meeting, we posed two questions: "Should this work proceed?" and "What will it take to ensure success?" The first answer was a unanimous yes. The group agreed upon two essential factors for success—"management commitment" and "involvement of the entire workforce." The core team agreed to shepherd the process and signed up for roles that included: conducting interviews, naming and branding the initiative, speaking to groups about AI, writing articles or being interviewed for in-house communications, and serving as their station AI coordinator. A seven-person Steering Team was formed to design, champion, and support the process.

A one-day meeting followed for managers on the Appreciative Inquiry program, branded as "The Power of Two." Core team members shared their enthusiasm for AI and its potential. By the meeting's end, AI was off and flying.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Relationships

Successful change requires commitment from large numbers of people. Our experience suggests that the more positive the focus, the stronger the attraction to participate; and the more likely people are to get involved and stay involved. As table 1 shows, everyone has a role in creating positive change.



| | Before | During | After |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Leadership Sponsors and Advisory Team</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to a positive approach to change • Become knowledgeable in AI • Clarify the change agenda • Provide resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champion AI in the organization • Participate—as an equal, essential voice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask: How might we take an AI approach to this? • Lead by discovering and aligning strengths |
| <i>Core Team</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become knowledgeable in AI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select affirmative topics • Create the interview guide • Determine the interview strategy • Communicate “best” stories | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use AI as a daily practice |
| <i>Participants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become knowledgeable in AI • Conduct interviews and be interviewed • Review interview stories and share best practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in discovery and dialogue • Dare to dream • Design the ideal organization/community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate AI into existing processes and practices • Create new systems and structures using AI • Practice AI on a daily basis |
| <i>Consultants</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce AI to the organization • Focus on the “business case” for AI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train groups in AI • Support the core team • Facilitate the process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the organization to integrate AI into daily practices |

Table 1. AI Roles and Responsibilities



Conditions For Success

THE LIBERATION OF POWER

For nearly two decades, organizations and communities around the globe have experienced extraordinary transformations using Appreciative Inquiry. Having tracked this success in Nutritional Foods, GTE, Hunter Douglas Window Fashions Division, and others, Appreciative Inquiry consultants and authors Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom began wondering what created the conditions for AI's success. Why do people get so excited and want to participate with Appreciative Inquiry? Why does participation lead to positive results such as innovation, productivity, employee satisfaction, and profitability? What creates the space for people to be their best at work and for personal transformation? And, what conditions foster cooperation throughout a system of highly diverse groups of people?

They conducted an inquiry into *why Appreciative Inquiry works*, creating questions, holding focus groups, and conducting interviews in several organizations.

Their key finding is that Appreciative Inquiry works by generating six essential conditions that together liberate personal and organizational power. Experiencing the effect on their lives and the world around them, people are permanently transformed. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom named these conditions that unleash human potential the "Six Freedoms."

Freedom to Be Known in Relationship

Human identity forms and evolves in relationship; yet all too often in work settings people relate to another's role rather than to him or her as a human being. Appreciative Inquiry interrupts the cycle of depersonalization that masks people's sense of being and belonging. It offers people the chance to know one another—as unique individuals, and as a part of the web of relationships.

Freedom to Be Heard

A person can listen without hearing or getting to know the other. Being heard is relational, requiring sincere curiosity, empathy, and compassion. It requires an openness to know another's story. Through one-on-one appreciative interviews people come forward with information, ideas, and innovations that are put into action, creating a feeling of being heard, recognized, and valued.

Freedom to Dream in Community

Visionary leadership means unleashing the dreams of people. It means creating organizations and communities as safe places where large, diverse groups of people share their dreams in dialogue with one another.

Freedom to Choose to Contribute

Work can separate us from what matters most or provide a forum for realizing our deepest calling. Freedom of choice liberates power. It also leads to commitment and a hunger for learning.

When people choose to do a project and commit to others, they get creative and determined. They do whatever it takes and learn whatever is needed to do the job.

Freedom to Act With Support

This quintessential act of positive interdependence enables profound contributions and surprising lessons. People know that others care about their work and are anxious to cooperate. They feel safe to experiment, innovate, and learn. In other words, whole system support stimulates people to take on challenges, and draws people into acts of cooperation, bringing forth their best.

Freedom to Be Positive

Today, it is simply not the norm to have fun, be happy, or be positive. Despite the pain, people are swept away in collective currents of negativity. Over and over again, people tell us that Appreciative Inquiry works, in part, because it gives them permission to feel positive and be proud of their experiences.

Appreciative Inquiry works because it unleashes all Six Freedoms during one 4-D Cycle. It creates a surge of energy that, once liberated, won't be recontained. A Hunter Douglas supervisor said, "As people got results, they gained confidence, leading to five times more input, and greater involvement." Appreciative Inquiry creates a self-perpetuating momentum for positive change—a positive revolution.

Principles for a Positive Revolution

AI embodies a philosophy and a methodology that shifts our understanding of human systems and change based upon the following principles:

THE CONSTRUCTIONIST PRINCIPLE

Human knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven. We are constantly involved in making sense of the world around us—doing strategic planning analysis, environmental scans, audits, surveys, performance appraisals, and so on. To be effective, we must understand organizations as living social constructions. Meaning is made in relationship using words, language, and questions as primary tools of creation.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SIMULTANEITY

Inquiry and change are simultaneous. Inquiry is intervention. The seeds of change—the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that inform dialogue and inspire images of the future—are implicit in the first questions asked. These questions set the stage for what we "find," and what we "discover" (the data) becomes the linguistic material, the stories for conceiving and constructing the future.



If inquiry and change are simultaneous, it is not, “Is my question leading to right or wrong answers?” but rather, “What is the impact of my question on our lives . . . is it generating conversations about the good, the better, the possible . . . is it strengthening our relationships?”

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE

Human organizations are more like an open book than, say, a machine. An organization’s story is constantly being coauthored. Pasts, presents, and futures are endless sources of learning, inspiration, and interpretation—like the endless interpretive possibilities in good poetry. We can study virtually any topic related to human experience, inquiring into the nature of alienation or joy, enthusiasm or low morale, excellence or excess. What we chose to study makes a difference.

THE ANTICIPATORY PRINCIPLE

Our positive images of the future lead our positive actions—this is the increasingly energizing basis and presupposition of Appreciative Inquiry. The infinite human resource we have for generating constructive organizational change is our collective imagination and discourse about the future.

The image of the future guides the current behavior of any organization or community. Inquiring in ways that redefine anticipatory reality¹³—creating positive images together—may be the most important aspect of any change process.

THE POSITIVE PRINCIPLE

Building and sustaining momentum for change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding—things like hope, excitement, inspiration, caring, camaraderie, sense of purpose, and joy in creating something meaningful together. The more positive the question we ask, the more long lasting and successful the change effort. The major thing a change agent can do is craft and ask unconditionally positive questions.

In the past five years, the practice of AI has led to articulating additional principles. In *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry*, consultants Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom add three principles they believe essential to successful large-scale positive change: Wholeness, Enactment, and Free Choice. Professors Frank Barrett and Ron Fry in *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Approach to Building Cooperative Capacity* add the Narrative Principle as central.

Our experience shows that affirmative language is an extremely healthy and effective approach to change management. A theory of the affirmative basis of human action and organizing is emerging from many quarters—social constructionism, image theory, conscious evolution, athletics, and health care. Taken together, we believe, it is making traditional change management obsolete.

Sustaining the Results

Results generated through Appreciative Inquiry are immediate, often surprisingly dramatic and broad in scope, touching personal transformation, whole-system transformation, and enhancing performance, productivity, and profitability.

We have found that sustained high participation, enthusiasm, and morale, inspired action, agility, and innovation are natural results of becoming an Appreciative Inquiry Organization (AIO). Sustainability depends on consciously and strategically reconstructing the organization's core processes—human resources, management, planning, and measurement in alignment with the AI principles and methodologies.

As AI's principles and methodologies are embedded in daily practices, the capacity to sustain high levels of participation and enthusiasm increases. At one AIO, all meetings begin with an inquiry into "magic moments"—times of extraordinary success among members. Other organizational enactments of AI include annual strategic planning summits, appreciative interviewing as an employee orientation process, appreciative feedback, and affirmatively focused measurement systems.

ROADWAY EXPRESS: MOVING FROM GOOD TO GREAT

For 75 years, Roadway Express has been a leading transporter of industrial, commercial, and retail goods. With services to more than 100 countries, over 300 terminals throughout the United States, and 27,000 people, Roadway is one of the largest less-than-truckload carriers in the nation. Four years ago, Roadway Express launched a bold initiative to drive costs out and to rapidly grow the business by creating an organization with *leadership at every level*—where dockworkers, truck drivers, stackers, and professionals joined with senior management to do annual strategic planning, to learn about the economics and financials of the business, and to create new levels of partnership between the unions and the company.

Roadway held AI Summits throughout its North American operations. When work began, Roadway stock was around \$14 per share, rising to more than \$40 per share in two years. Beyond stock prices, other measures have steadily improved, including operating ratios, morale, trust, clarity in focus and priority, vision, commitment, and confidence in the future. Much change occurred during an economic downturn, traced to the new culture of engagement fostered by more than 20 Appreciative Inquiry Summits.

Jim Staley, Roadway's chief executive officer, says, "The Appreciative Inquiry approach unleashes tremendous power, tremendous enthusiasm, and gets people fully engaged in the right way in what we're trying to accomplish. It's not that we don't deal with the negative anymore, but the value of AI is that, in anything we do, there's a positive foundation of strength to build on in addressing those problems."

An example is the AI Summit at the Winston-Salem terminal with more than 300 truck drivers, dockworkers, senior executives, teamsters, managers, and customers. A *Forbes* business writer, Joanne Gordon, participated in the three-day event. Her article captured a vignette from the summit:



A team of short-haul drivers came up with 12 cost-cutting and revenue generating ideas. One of the most ambitious: Have each of the 32 drivers in Winston-Salem deliver just one more customer order each hour. Using management data, the drivers calculated that 288 additional daily shipments, at an average revenue of \$212 each and with a 6 percent margin, would generate just about \$1 million a year of operating costs.

The real story is the momentum's sustainability from AI Summits as a way of life, engaging all the stakeholders in one collaborative planning process (creating thousands of ambassadors and saving time that slower, small group meetings would require), and internalizing high-engagement planning, with in excess of 10,000 people participating in a summit.



Burning Question

BUT—WHAT ABOUT PROBLEMS?

We are not saying to ignore problems. Rather, if you want to transform a situation, a relationship, an organization, or community, focusing on strengths is much more effective. We often work in situations fraught with anxiety, tension, and stress—union-management relations, merger integration, and cross-cultural conflict. Frequently, when we turn people's attention from *what is wrong around here* to *who are we when we are at our best*, conflict turns to cooperation.



Conclusion

To be sure, Appreciative Inquiry begins an adventure. The urge and call to the positive revolution has been sounded by many people and organizations. It will take many more to explore the vast vistas appearing on the horizon.

We are infants in understanding appreciative processes of knowing and social construction. Yet, we are increasingly clear that the world is ready to leap beyond methodologies of deficit-based change and enter a life-centric domain. Relationships thrive where there is an appreciative eye—when people see the best in one another, when they share their dreams and concerns in affirming ways, and when they connect in full voice to create new and better worlds. The velocity and largely informal spread of the appreciative learnings underscore the desire to live and work in constructive, positive, life-affirming, even spiritual ways.

Albert Einstein's words clearly compel: "There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."



About the Authors

David L. Cooperrider, Ph.D. (David.Cooperrider@Case.edu), is professor and chairman of the Department of Organizational Behavior at the Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University. His founding work in Appreciative Inquiry is creating a positive revolution in the leadership of change; helping companies discover the power of strength-based approaches to multistakeholder cooperation. David was recognized in 2000 as among "the top ten visionaries" in the field by *Training Magazine* and, in 2004, received the American Society for

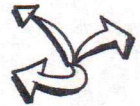
Training and Development's highest award, the "Distinguished Contribution to Workplace Learning and Performance Award."

Diana Whitney, Ph.D. (Diana@positivechange.org), is president of Corporation for Positive Change and a distinguished consulting faculty at Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center. She is a social innovator and pioneer in the emerging field of positive organization change. She is a highly recognized international consultant, a sought-after leadership advisor and a frequently called upon keynote speaker on subjects related to Appreciative Inquiry and Large-Scale Organization and Community Transformation, Appreciative Leadership Development, and Spiritual Cultivation. In 2004, Diana received the Organization Development Network's Larry Porter Award for excellence in writing.

Where to Go for More Information

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ORGANIZATIONS

AI Commons—<http://ai.cwru.edu>

Articles, Sample Materials, Case Studies about AI

Case Western Reserve University Weatherhead School of Management—www.cwru.edu

Graduate Studies, Research, and Executive Education

Corporation for Positive Change—www.positivechange.org

Change Management Consultation, AI Certificate Program, Appreciative Leadership Development Program, and Keynote Speeches

Taos Institute—www.taosinstitute.net

Conferences, Graduate Studies and Workshops

OTHER RESOURCE

AI Practitioner (international AI newsletter)—www.aipractitioner.com

1. In 1999, GTE and Bell Atlantic merged, forming Verizon.
2. R. Fry, F. Barrett, J. Seiling, and D. Whitney, eds., *Appreciative Inquiry and Organizational Transformation: Reports from the Field* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 2002).
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