



Planning through appreciative inquiry

AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH TO TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

Appreciative inquiry (AI) is different from traditional problem-solving methods. Instead of asking “What are the problems?” it focuses on strengths, and asks “What are we good at, and how can we build on it?”

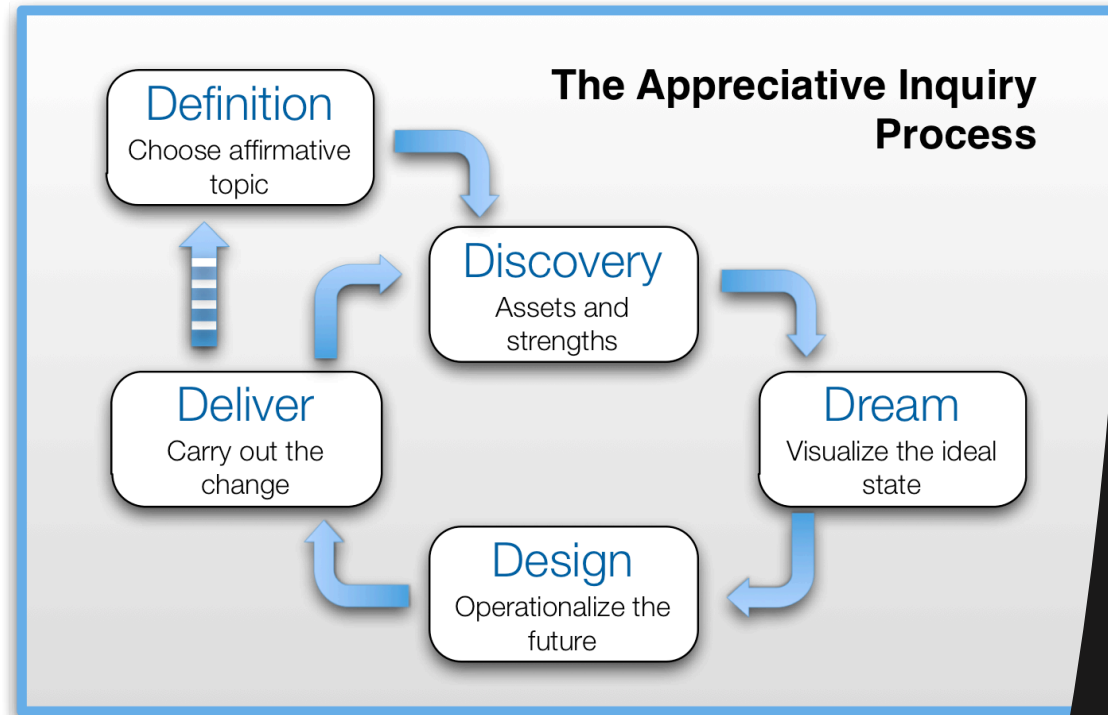
AI is grounded in theories of positive psychology, which suggests that focusing on weaknesses can actually make them worse. AI assumes that if

people can be motivated to understand and appreciate their strengths, they will find it easier to adapt to changing circumstances. It also varies from conventional planning processes in that there is generally no formal action plan. Instead, everyone is empowered to take whatever actions they believe will help achieve the vision. The leadership role is to monitor and motivate, promoting those innovations they want to nurture and maintaining the momentum of the process.

HOW DOES THE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY PROCESS WORK?

- The method begins with a collective discovery process to identify assets and strengths.
- The next step involves developing a shared vision and the underlying logic of an ideal state.
- The third step is to develop concrete proposals that will help achieve the vision.
- In the Delivery phase, participants make personal commitments to assume some of the proposals for change. There is rarely a formal implementation plan.

Appreciative Inquiry is a tool for positive change



WHEN TO USE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Designing new work processes

Team building

Increasing operational effectiveness

Improving organizational culture

Change management

Continuous improvement