



# The NewsUpFront

The Newsletter of UpFront Organization Development Consulting

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY— A POSITIVE APPROACH TO CHANGE EFFORTS

### Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a process designed by David Cooperrider that replaces a problem-solving approach (finding out what is wrong) with seeking what is right in an organization or group and building on it.

The focus is entirely positive—appreciating the best of past experiences, in order to see positive possibilities for the future and create ways to make that future happen.

Appreciative Inquiry's premise is:

If a vision for the future is grounded in great things that really happened at some time in your organization or group, it becomes easier to see what is possible.

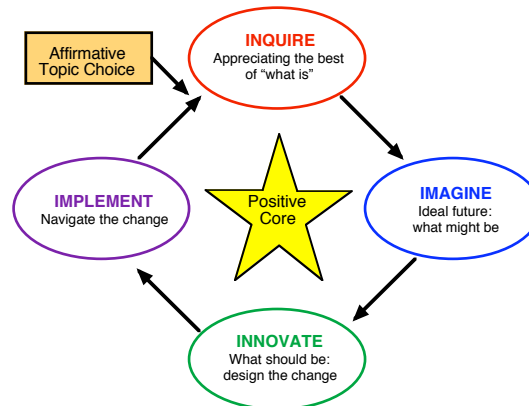
### Inquire— Identifying the best of what is

Positive change happens when we begin to inquire about positive experiences. So the process starts with participants interviewing each other in pairs, using an appreciative approach. Here is an example:

- ◇ Tell a story about a best experience you have had in your organization—a time when you felt most alive, most effective, most excited about your involvement at work.

- ◇ What do you value?
- ◇ What is a core value of your organization?
- ◇ What are three wishes for your organization?

Following the interviews, each person shares his or her interview partner's story while others listen for themes—high points, and ideas that give energy for future change.



Adapted from Encompass, LLC, Bethesda, Maryland

### Imagine— Envision what could be

In this step you first create a vision (depicted in a picture, poem, or in some other creative way) around the “best themes” from everyone's interviews.

Next, capture the energy and substance of your vision in a “Provocative

Proposition”—a possibility statement for the future of your organization.

### Innovate— Dialogue about what will be

This step in the process helps you explore important organization stakeholders, as well as key elements that will move your vision forward. Goal statements are written, and strategies are mapped out.

The key question is:

- ◇ “What am I willing to commit to, and what are we willing to do together, to make our dream come alive?”

### **Implement— Making the dream happen**

Don't hesitate—take steps toward your dream immediately to keep the momentum going!

And continue to add to the dream and the strategies:

- ◇ Communicate your ideas and excitement for the future to all employees and other stakeholders.
- ◇ Involve others in the appreciative interview process. And
- ◇ Ask new questions to gather more ideas and create energy for change.
- ◇ Learn to empower, create, adjust, improvise. And measure progress toward your dream.

### **About UpFront**

UpFront is an organization development consulting firm located in Saint Joseph, Minnesota. We provide organization development, program evaluation and research services. Our company is a partnership between owners Dianne Tuff and Murdoch Johnson—and UpFront's clients.

### **Our Mission**

To help and support teams, organizations and communities as they merge past experience, present strengths and future dreams to create positive change.

### **Our Vision**

UpFront works with progressive, socially-responsible organizations on projects that challenge us and build on our strengths. We strive for balance between the professional and personal—and we integrate our personal values into our professional lives.

### **Contact UpFront**

Dianne Tuff 320-255-9657

Murdoch Johnson 320-529-4071

Web site

[dianne@upfrontconsultingmn.com](mailto:dianne@upfrontconsultingmn.com)

[murdoch@upfrontconsultingmn.com](mailto:murdoch@upfrontconsultingmn.com)

[www.upfrontconsultingmn.com](http://www.upfrontconsultingmn.com)