**APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY**

**What is it and how can it help me?**

Appreciative Inquiry is a structured interview to help influence organizational culture, create shared vision, and work towards positive problem solving.

**Appreciative Inquiry:**

* Defines a problem as a positive goal to work towards
* Discovers what has worked or is working well
* Dreams about what could be possible with innovation
* Designs systems, processes, and strategies based on practicalities
* Delivers by planning action steps to ensure that the Dream and Design elements are implemented

**How to use this tool?**

1. Consider what the main problem or goal is to work towards.
2. Make a list of the people whose involvement and buy-in is crucial in making progress on this goal and decide how many to interview. Interviewing can happen in a group setting or ideally, one-on-one.
3. Follow the list of questions provided in the handout and improvise as needed.

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| Step | Questions | Participants/Interviewee Response(s) | Notes/Questions/  Next Steps |
| Step 1:  DEFINE the goal  Identify a goal to work towards and frame it in a positive direction.  Examples: *1) Decrease staff resistance to change* BECOMES *Increase staff buy-in and motivation to drive change.* | 1. What is the original problem? 2. What is the problem defined in a positive goal (referred to as a “flipped problem)? |  |  |

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| Step 2:  DISCOVER what works  Discover what has worked well in the past and what is working well currently. Share positive stories related to that goal. | 1. When you think back to when you started working on this goal, what part of the work was most compelling to you? 2. Tell me a story related to the work on this goal that was very compelling to you. 3. What do you think is most important about having success around this goal? 4. Tell me about a time when you felt really proud about the work you have done related to this goal. 5. What approaches have you tried when working on this goal? 6. What approaches have had success (or aspects of approaches)? 7. What are examples? 8. How have/has you/your agency grown in your efforts to reach this goal? |  |  |

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| Step 3:  DREAM about what could be  Build on the positives in Step 2 to identify strength of your program.  Think of innovative ideas that could influence the goal. | 1. What ideas (creative, innovative, simple, bizarre, out-of-the-box) do you have that would help your team accomplish your goal? 2. What would represent a breakthrough achievement of your goal? 3. What could/would need to be done to get to that breakthrough achievement – at a high level? 4. Imagine your goal is achieved, what part do you see yourself/your agency playing in this scenario?   NOTE: these ideas may be obvious but it is important to state them as they may lead to other ideas that haven’t been identified yet. |  |  |

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| Step 4:  DESIGN around the practicalities?  To make dreams a reality, consider the systems, processes, and strategies that will help achieve the dream. | 1. What systems, processes, strategies will help achieve each of the dreams discussed? 2. What people or organizations would be needed to make this happen? |  |  |

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| Step | Questions | Participant/Interviewee Response(s) | Notes/Questions/Next Steps |
| Step 5:  DELIVER our DREAMS  Plan action steps to ensure that the dreams and designs are implemented. | 1. What must be considered to ensure ideas/plans are implemented? |  |  |