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Appreciative Inquiry – An Overview
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What is it?

An organizational development intervention created by Dr. David Cooperrider and his colleagues at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western University. Find out more at Appreciative Inquiry Commons, <http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu/>.

The core beliefs are:

1. Something works – whatever we want more of already exists within our organizations, communities, and selves.
2. Self-fulfilling prophecy – we get what we look for. If we look only for problems we will get only problems. Instead we should search for and amplify what works.
3. The act of asking questions (inquiry) influences the group in some way. The language we use (appreciative) creates our reality. The right question, appreciatively framed, can help us uncover and focus on the reality we want.
4. Can also use AI to reframe and draw out the positive from even difficult experiences.
5. Envisioning the future is more clear and possible when it is grounded in the reality of the past. If we carry forward parts of the past, they should be what is best about the past.
6. It is important to value differences and to recognize that reality is created in the moment and that there are multiple realities.

The core question is:

What is working well around here?

Sample AI Question:

Think back to a work or community project or activity that you have been involved with in the last year. Think about a specific time when you felt most alive, most connected with your values, or perhaps had a heightened sense of vitality and excitement at your task. Describe that time. What was it about that time that made it so special and memorable? What are the one or two reasons you felt most engaged?

Appreciative Inquiry	Traditional Problem Solving
Discover the Best of “What Is”	Identification of Problem
Dream “What Might Be”	Analysis of Causes
Dialogue and Design “What Should Be”	Analysis of Possible Solutions
Create a Destiny based on “What Will Be”	Action Planning
Basic Assumption: Organization is a miracle to be embraced.	Basic Assumption: Organization is a problem to be solved.
Creative	Reactive
Make it the way we want it	Survive it