

# Appreciative Inquiry

**Or Why curiosity didn't kill the cat  
(or the HR Manager!)**

*Helen Spector*

# Appreciative Inquiry: The First Question

## The First Question is *FATEFUL*:

Energy follows attention

→ We get more of what we invest with energy.

We usually focus on problems to solve

→ We get more problems to solve.

*But, we **can choose** to focus on what is working →  
????*

Asking a question is a powerful way of directing attention!

We can inquire into our best experience

→ *We get more of our best experience!*

# Appreciative Inquiry: Finding the FIRST Question

## We find our FATEFUL First Question *IN THE FUTURE!*

- Where do you want to be? What do you want the future to hold?
- *What do you already know* about what supports that reality?
- What do you wish for, that would get you moving in that direction, *based on what you know about what works to support that reality?*

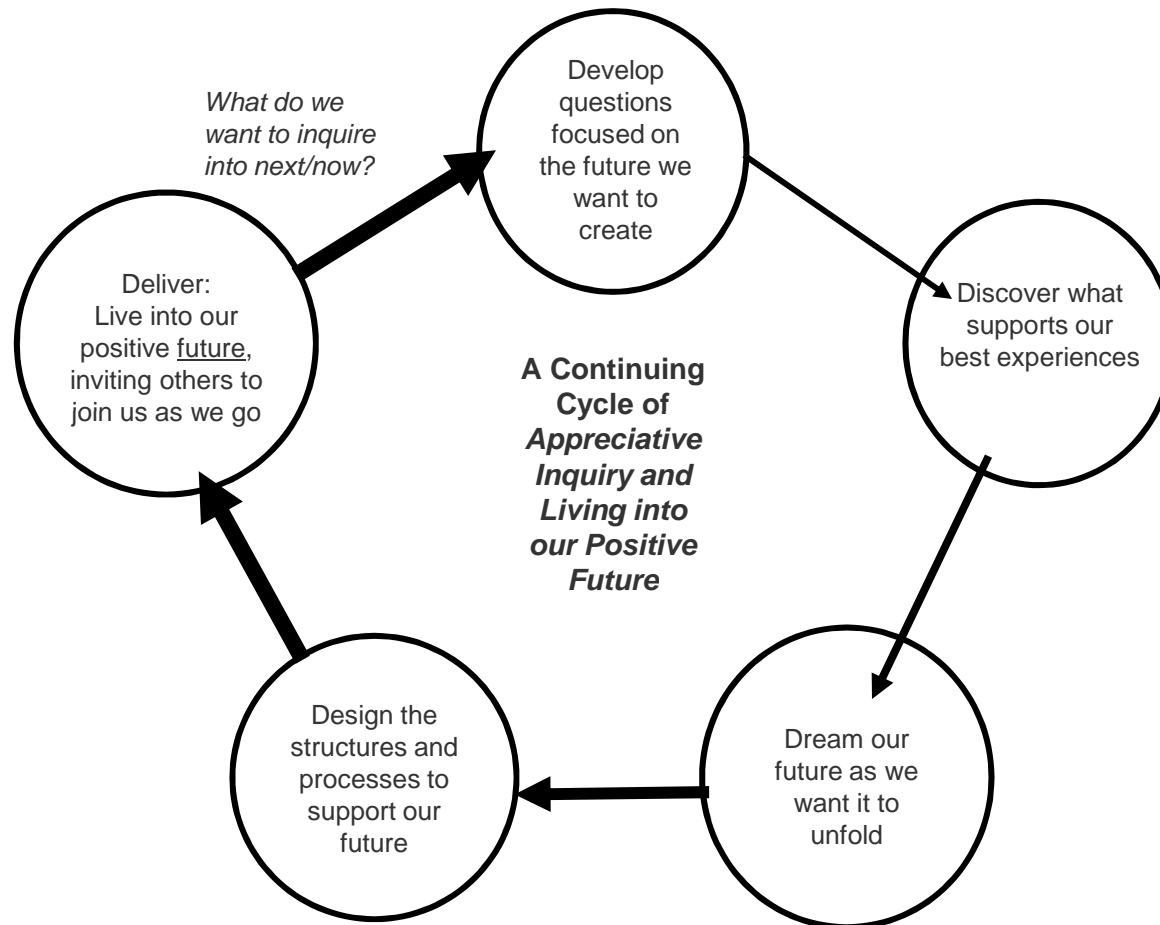
## ***ASK ABOUT THAT!***

# Appreciative Inquiry: Underlying Assumptions

1. In every society, organization or group, something is working.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
4. The act of asking questions of an organization, group or individual influences the group in some way.
5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey into the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality.

*The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*

# Appreciative Inquiry: A Continuing Cycle



# Appreciative Inquiry: Resources to Come

## Materials you will receive in electronic form:

- Slides from the presentation
- Examples of actual Discovery Interview Guides
- AI Resources Bibliography—books, articles, websites...
- A Blueprint for Successful Meetings for planning meetings that work—focused on desired outcomes and the first questions to address...

# Appreciative Inquiry: Your Challenge

## Framing the first-next step for your Challenge:

- Return to your interview partner and review your challenge and wishes from #3 in the interview.
- Imagine the positive desired outcome you want for your challenge.
- Frame an appreciative question that would help you find the powerful experiences that could help you get to that outcome.

*HINT: look for clues in your wishes*

- Check out your question with your partner.
- **Write your challenge, your question and your contact information on a large Post-it with a colored marker**