

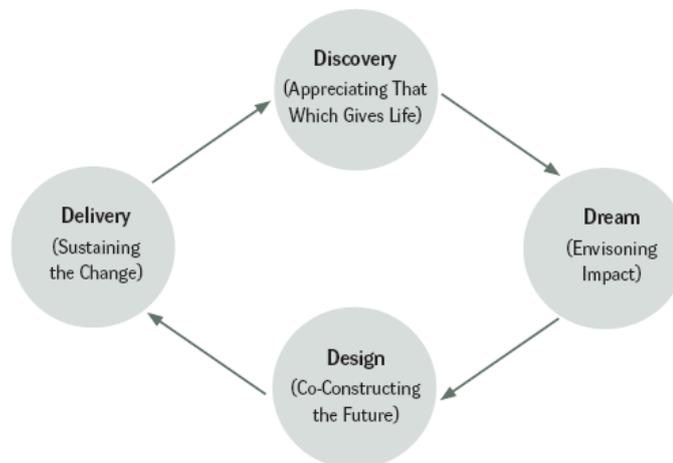
## Group and Organizational Learning Processes

### Appreciative Inquiry and the AI Summit

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) can be best described as a new paradigm in how we approach change in organizations and communities. It invites people to tell the stories they want to tell, and to jointly search for what gives life to organizations and communities. It is increasingly applied for both small and large change processes, ranging from small personal change to large group interventions which are designed to drive change in cities or regional communities and multi-national companies.

Traditional methodologies are often built around a problem-solving orientation where change is created by first describing the problem-situation, identifying the root causes and then designing a solution. When working with an Appreciative Inquiry or AI mindset, we focus on what 'gives life' or generates energy in the system where change is created by identifying what works and taking action and generating excitement around solutions that may already exist and a vision of a better future.

Although AI is not an organizational development intervention, it can be applied to organizational development such as strategic planning and reviews, creating vision and mission etc. It builds on the power and experience of the stakeholders, it values what people are ready to contribute and it changes both individual and shared mindsets by switching the focus of attention from problems and limitations to 'what works already' and 'what could be'. The recent development of AI is dominated by a desire to put the philosophy into a process. The classical approach developed by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva follows the 4D-Cycle (Discover-Dream-Design-Deliver).



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The AI Summit is more recently developed process and a powerful approach to whole-system change that is designed around the principles and practices of Appreciative Inquiry. AI Summits have been used to facilitate groups of 30 to 3000 people in strategic planning, corporate culture change, delivering exceptional customer service, vision and values clarification, global organizing, and reinventing complex social systems such as health care, government systems and communities.

For more information on this methodology get hold of one of these books; **Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination** by Jane Watkins and Bernard Mohr (Pfeiffer, 2001), **The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A Practical Guide to Positive Change** by Diana Whitney (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2003) or **The Appreciative Inquiry Summit: A Practitioner's Guide for Leading Large Group Change** by James Ludema, Diana Whitney, Bernard Mohr and Thomas Griffin (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2003) or go to the portal <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>.