



Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change

David L. Cooperrider, Diana Whitney

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Written by the originators and leaders of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) movement itself, this short, practical guide offers an approach to organizational change based on the possibility of a more desirable future, experience with the whole system, and activities that signal "something different is happening this time." That difference systematically taps the potential of human beings to make themselves, their organizations, and their communities more adaptive and more effective. AI, a theory of collaborative change, erases the winner/loser paradigm in favor of coordinated actions and closer relationships that lead to solutions at once simpler and more effective.

Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change Details

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From Reader Review Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change for online ebook

Kit Brown-hoekstra says

I loved this book so much that I'm going to sign up for a class on facilitating this change management approach. I used the book as the basis for a session I did at the 2015 STC conference (you can view the slides on Slideshare). I've never seen a bunch of introverts that engaged and energized. It was awesome!

Appreciative Inquiry draws on the teachings of Marshall Rosenberg's "Nonviolent Communication", and Marcus Buckingham's Strengths focus and work, as well as other change management methodologies to provide a method that is positive, engaging, and inclusive.

I have used some of these techniques very successfully with a couple of clients. It really works! I'm a fan!

Suzanne Hazelton says

If you work as a (OD) consultant to organisations - this is a must read book.

There's a quote, something like "that which we question, grows".

If the organisation is focused on "fixing problems", and spends time focused on the problem the untapped potential and energy that comes from individuals is never released. This book provides an introduction to the topic of Appreciative Inquiry - not a how to guide - but if it's not a topic you've come across before then it could be a great introduction. I read it in a couple of hours sitting on a train.

McKenzie says

This is supposed to be a brief introduction to the tool of Appreciative Inquiry, whereby organizations can create "positive revolutions" by focusing on what they do well, instead of trying to find problems to fix through trouble shooting. While I understand the basic idea, I had a hard time believing that this process can work (perhaps because I'm innately cynical). The examples provided were not deep enough to really explain how organizations can function if they do not address what is not working. I considered my own organization, an institution of higher education. Funding is one of our biggest problems-- how would focusing on positives, such as student growth or increased enrollment, create a revolution in which we would no longer have to worry about decreased funding? I think I would need to attend a workshop and witness for myself how AI works in order to believe this process is more than an attempt to distract workers and shareholders from negative aspects of the organization.

Sueann says

Good insights to Appreciative Inquiry

A quick read of the positives as well as the principles of Appreciative Inquiry. It doesn't go much into how exactly it's done on a systemic scale, but that would be for another book.

dv says

This is a very short introduction to this methodology for organizational change which, at least in my case is quite far from providing a sufficient overview on the methodology. Luckily enough, I'll take a real-life course on this topic.

Charlene Doland says

Quick read. I was looking for applications to project-based learning, and there are some. More importantly, there are applications in school (and other) SYSTEMS. Instead of focusing on the problems, the methodology asks stakeholders to articulate strengths and use them to design and develop changes that continue to build on those strengths.

Kate Davis says

Some good information, but weighted down by too many examples and a salesperson tone. I don't need you to sell me the idea of Appreciative Inquiry when I've already started your book, and much less so when I'm halfway through it.

Mark says

While I understand the book is supposed to be an introduction, 65 of the 70 pages are merely an advertisement for their process/consultancy. You probably could learn just as much about Appreciative Inquiry by doing a Google search.

Layne says

Overall, this was good material, but I felt like it is repackaging some of the same concepts from other books. It felt like a bit of a sales pitch. There was not enough meat to go out and do much of anything except hire them as consultants. Given the price of the kindle version, I would recommend you look at other books on this subject if you are interested in Appreciative Inquiry.

SheriC (PM) says

In lieu of a formal review, I am offering an excerpt from the paper I wrote after being forced to read this book and attempt to apply the "principles of Appreciative Inquiry" to a real-world situation in a healthcare setting:

"I found Cooperrider and Whitney's (2005) text to be so dense with jargon as to be nearly incomprehensible and so sparse with instructions to operationalize their theory that I am not confident in my ability to apply the full theory of Appreciative Inquiry to a real-world situation. My primary conclusion on completing the reading was that the book serves more as a marketing tool for the authors' consulting services than it does as a primer on the theory."

My instructor scored my paper 4/5 points, making it the only assignment in this course that I did not make an A on. Clearly, my instructor has a much higher opinion of this steaming pile of poo than I do, but I could not bring myself to pretend to embrace it, even for the sake of sucking up for a good grade. If you're interested in a good organizational change theory, I recommend Kotter's Leading Change. I've personally used it with great success in several improvement projects, and it is written in a sensible, useful style for a grounded audience, rather than in the style of a carnival barker trying to sell the rubes on some snake oil.

James says

A short booklet on leading change through Appreciative Inquiry. The premise is that rather than looking at change as 'problem solving,' we ought to focus on what is the best of what is in our organization and focus on making it even better. Sort of like *Strengthfinders* writ large for a corporate context.

Cooperrider and Whitney outline a 4D cycle (or process) of Appreciative Inquiry: (1) Discovering what gives life (the best of what is); (2) Dreaming/Envisioning What Might Be (what is the world calling for?); (3) Design or Co-constructing (what should be the ideal?); (4) Destiny (How to empower, learn, adjust, improvise).

When done right, this seems like it would be a powerful tool for developing and strengthening an organization while staying on mission. I doubt this should be used to the exclusion of the 'problem-solving' model but it can helpfully augment it.

Petra says

Appreciative Inquiry - focussing on what is good & strong in a situation, not on the faults & weaknesses. Focus on where you'd like to be, then finding ways there, instead of focussing on what is stopping you from reaching your goal.

I enjoyed this little book and took away a few ideas to work forward with. Although Business-based, the concepts could be adapted to everyday life.

All the examples are Business-based and slant a little towards "hire us as consultants; we'll show you the way". But other than these two points, this is a positive booklet.

Sandeep Gautam says

A short read that introduces AI straight from the horse's mouth. With succinct examples, the theory comes to life and the rationale and basic structure of say an AI Summit becomes clear. The 4 D cycle no more remains theoretical- it is illustrated with real life example. However, AI approach and concepts are just touched upon and deep dives do not happen- for that you will have to read the other tomes on the subject!

Marilyn says

Interesting premise: creating a culture of positive change by involving everyone in continuous appreciation of strengths in our organization, which inspires us to more strengths. Instead of studying root causes to problems, examine root causes of our successes. Sounds great, will see it in action this week at a conference - hope it's contagious.

Lorraine says

Management of an organization, whether large or small, for-profit or not for-profit is a challenging enterprise, especially as the pace of change seems to increase every day. Weary of the whole problem-solving approach that promises so much and yet delivers so little, I am impressed by the positive approach these authors take, focusing on the organization at its best and fostering those attitudes and actions that create more productivity, creativity, employee & customer satisfaction. Good stuff and I want to read more.
