

Appreciative Inquiry as a coaching process



Appreciative Inquiry links a person's past with their present. Who we have become is as a result, in part, of our past experience, behaviour and attitude. By extension, our future, who we will become, can be shaped by our approach, behaviour and attitude from the present. The five stages of Appreciative Inquiry are constructed to empower people to shape their future.

Define The topic for development and discussion in the coaching session firstly needs to be defined and expressed appreciatively.
e.g. Not: *To refuse to take on any more work.*
Instead: *To manage my workload assertively.*

Discovery The Discovery stage involves questions and discussion to reveal the coachee's past strengths and successes, special abilities and gifts; questions that tap deep into what brings them alive and energises them.
The coach facilitates the discussion so that the coachee rephrases any language that focuses on failings or problems into more positive vocabulary towards solutions. Similarly, the coach asks questions that enable the coachee to reframe situations and experiences, to acquire a different perspective where the coachee can recognise new opportunities and see ways of turning things around.
e.g. *negotiations with people in the past that worked out, when I stood up for my truth*

Dream The Dream stage is about the possible and compelling future ~ the coachee's vision without the constraints of doubt or low confidence, the vision that is powerful enough direct them and wow them into action. A description or picture of success, what things will look like, not what things won't look like.
e.g. *relaxed evenings switched off from work, energy to enjoy free time at weekends*

Design The Design stage takes what has been discovered from the past – the successes, the talents, and applies it to the goals that take the coachee, step by step, towards their vision. It increases the coachee's personal power and self belief to make the future happen by design. The focus is on what needs to happen to live the dream.
e.g. *transparent communication about the criteria for when I finish work*

Delivery (Destiny) The Delivery stage is the specific action, step by step, hurdle by hurdle, goal by goal, in the direction of the dream.
e.g. *home by 7.00pm every day next week, re-evaluate my workload with line manager,*

The process may take several sessions to complete, or with a clearly defined and straight forward goal, the process may be completed in one session.