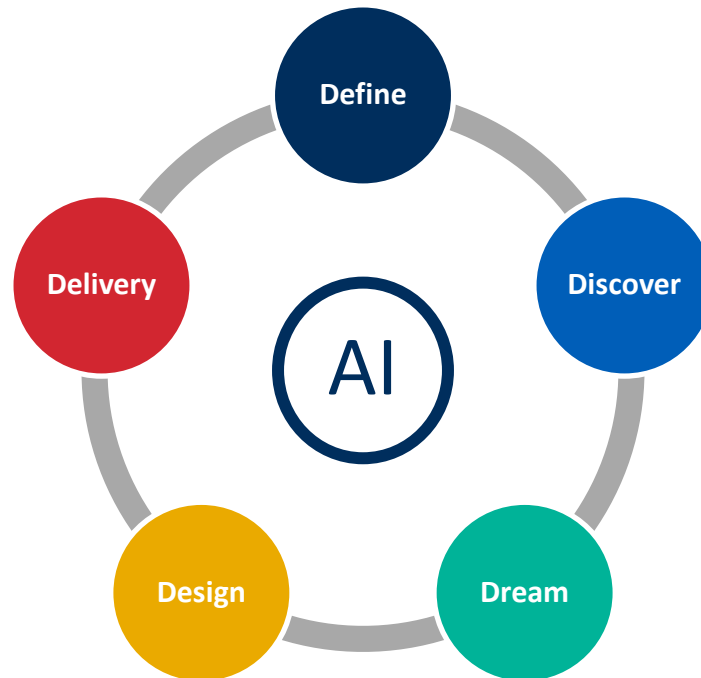


APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)¹ is an evaluation method which focuses on increasing what an organization does well, rather than on what it does badly.



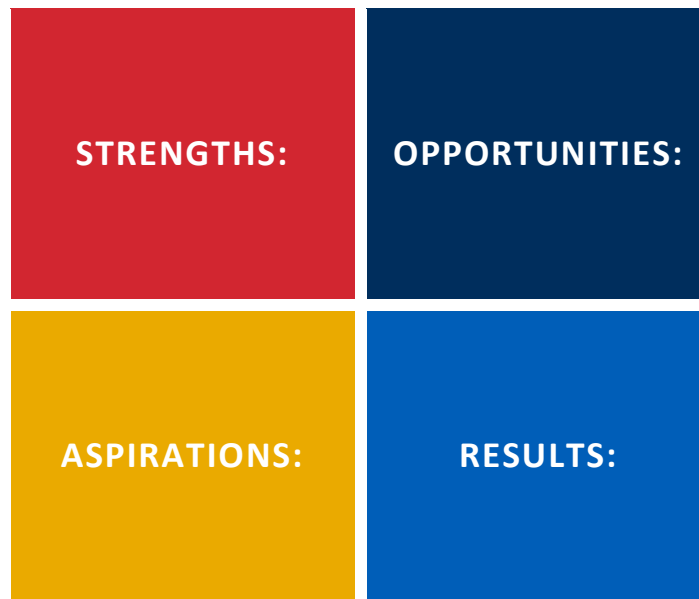
Define	Affirmative topic by clarifying the focus
Discover	What gives life by appreciating the best
Dream	What might be by imagining the possibilities
Design	What should be by determining the direction
Delivery	What will be by creating the future, your Destiny*

¹ This is a modified model based on the theory original published in Cooperrider, D. L., Srivastva, S. (1987). Appreciative inquiry in organizational life. In Pasmore, W., Woodman, R. (Eds.), Research in organization change and development (Vol. 1). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

SOAR

SOAR DEFINITION:

A strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results (SOAR) analysis² is a strategic planning tool that focuses an organization on its current strengths and vision of the future for developing its strategic goals.



This tool differs from the commonly used SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. SOAR engages all levels and functional areas of an organization, while SWOT is typically a top-down approach. With SOAR, the focus is on the organization and enhancing what is currently done well, rather than concentrating on perceived threats and/or weaknesses.

² References

- Stavros, Jacqueline M, Cooperrider, D L, & Kelley, D Lynn. (2003). Strategic inquiry appreciative intent: inspiration to SOAR, a new framework for strategic planning. *AI Practitioner*. November, 10-17.
- Stavros, Jacqueline M, & Hinrichs, Gina. (2011). *The Thin Book Of SOAR: Building Strengths-Based Strategy*. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing

SOAR: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

STRENGTHS

What are our greatest strengths?

- What are we doing well?
- What can we build on?
- What key achievements are we most proud of?
- What positive aspects of the program have students/faculty/employees or others commented on?
- What are we known for?
- What makes us unique?
- Why do customers choose our services?
- What key resources and areas of expertise give us an advantage?

OPPORTUNITIES

*What are our best possible future opportunities?
flip challenges

- What changes in demand do we expect to see over the next years?
- What are our best possible future opportunities?
- What external forces or trends may positively impact the program?
- What external opportunities exist for the business?
- What are key areas of untapped potential?
- What are students, employers and/or other community members asking for?
- How can we highlight our strengths and distinguish ourselves from competing organizations?
- How can we reframe perceived challenges to be seen as opportunities?

ASPIRATIONS

If there were no limits, what would we dare to do?

- What do we care deeply about?
- What vision are we passionate about?
- As a business, what difference do we hope to make? (e.g. to clients, employees, partners, the community)
- What value does our preferred future hold?
- If there were no limits what would we dare to accomplish?
- What does our richly imagined future look like/ sounds like/ feel like?
- What possibilities are just too good not to strive for?

RESULTS

What measurable results will we be known for when we actualize our vision?

- How will we know we are succeeding?
- Considering our strengths, opportunities, and aspirations, what meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track in achieving our goals?
- What measurable results do we want to see?
- What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives?
- What are the 3-5 key outcomes we would like to accomplish?
- What are the measurable results that will tell us we've achieved that vision of the future?
- What projects, programs or processes would support our aspirations?