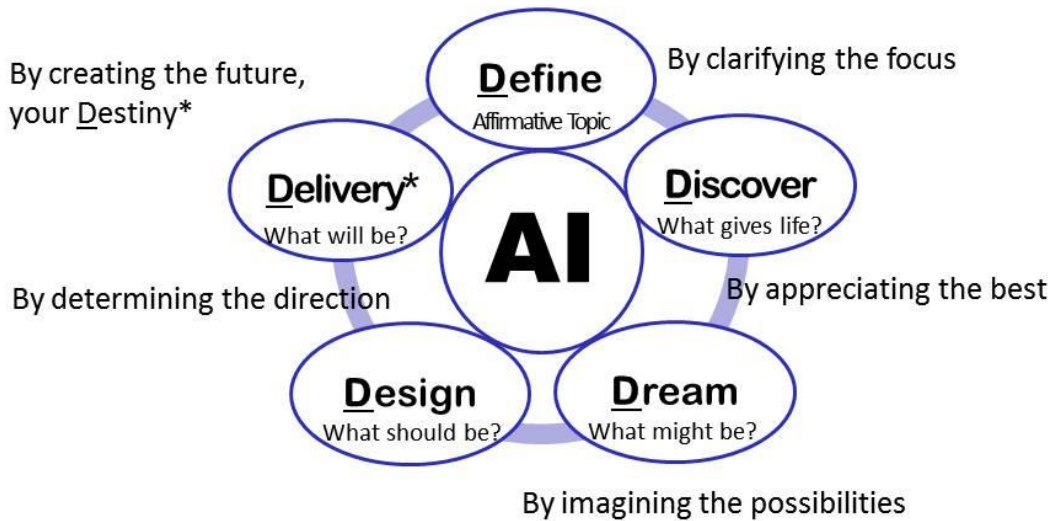


APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY



Appreciative Inquiry (sometimes shortened to "AI") is an evaluation method which focuses on increasing what an organization does well rather than on what it does badly.

SOAR Definition: A strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results (SOAR) analysis 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.

What are our greatest S trengths?	What are our best possible future O pportunities? *Flip challenges
A spirations? If there were no limits what would we dare to do?	What measurable R esults will we be known for when we actualize our vision?

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

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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/employers 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 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:

- 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:

- 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?