

Weatherhead School of Management  
Executive Education

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY:  
*A Positive Revolution in Change*

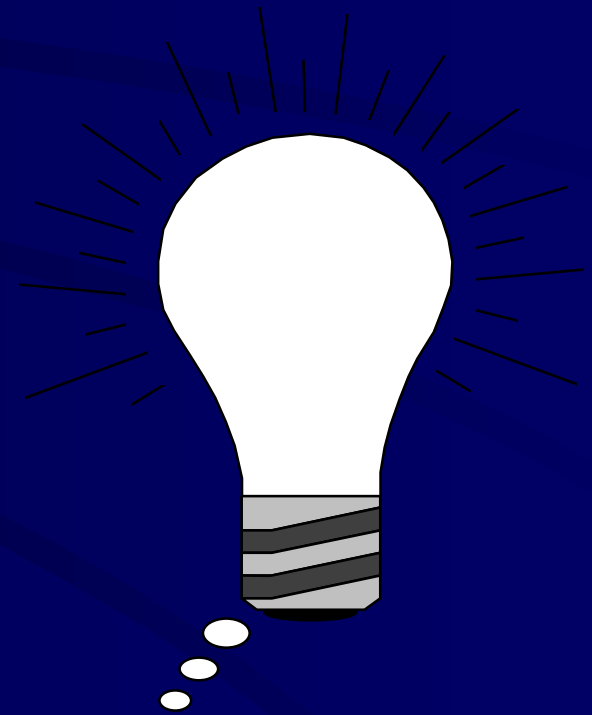
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# A Time For Re-thinking...

## Human Organization And Change

- ◆ **Global Context of Democratization**
- ◆ **End of Apartheid**
- ◆ **No Limits To Cooperation...  
E-Commerce & Org.**
- ◆ **Shuttle into Space...&  
the Global Experience**
- ◆ **“Whole System” Change**
  - Large Group Methods... Speed
  - A “Positive Revolution”



# It is a Time for Re-thinking Human Organization & Change

*“We are at the very point in time when a 400-year old age is dying and another is struggling to be born, a shifting of culture, science, society, and institutions enormously greater than the world has ever experienced. Ahead, the possibility of the regeneration of relationships, liberty, community, and ethics such as the world has never known, and a harmony with nature, with one another, and with the divine intelligence such as the world has never dreamed.”*

*--Dee Hock, Founder & CEO--Visa*

# Exciting Stories and Results

- Hunter Douglas
  - Culture Change
  - Strategic Planning
  - Total Quality
- Results
  - Employee Engagement
  - Leadership “Bench Strength”
  - Strategic Vision & Alignment

# Exciting Stories and Results

- Nutritional Foods
  - Whole System Visioning & Strategic Planning
  - Annual Whole System Summits
- Results
  - 200% Increase Profits
  - 300% Decrease Absenteeism

# Exciting Stories and Results

- United Religions Initiative
  - Annual Global Summits
  - Organization Design
- Results
  - June 2000 Charter Signing
  - The Birth of a Global “Chaordic” Organization
  - Centers on Every Continent
  - Over a Million Pledges of Support

# Exciting Stories and Results

- GTE
  - Positive Change Network
  - Culture Change
  - Union Management Partnership
  - Call Center Excellence
- Results
  - 1997 ASTD Award
  - Employee Surveys
  - Contract Negotiations

# Five Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

- **Constructionist Principle:** The way we know is fateful.
- **Principle of Simultaneity:** Change begins at the moment you ask the question.
- **Poetic Principle:** Organizations are an open book.
- **Anticipatory Principle:** Deep change= change in active images of the future.
- **Positive Principle:** The more positive the question, the greater and longer-lasting the change.



# #1. A High Point Story of Change.....?

# #2. Valuing: Self ....& Work/Purpose

# #3. Human Organization: Images of the future: Wake Up 2005?

#4. Images and vision of a better world....wake up 2010?

# Starting Appreciative Interview (dialogue in pairs)

- **A-->B (15 min)**
- **B-->A (15 min)**
  
- Spirit of discovery
- Take brief notes
- At the end.. summary & thanks

# Opening Interview

- High point moment...  
story of positive change \_\_\_\_\_?
- Valuing: self, work, organization?
- Continuity ....?
- Positive Image of the Future:  
Wake Up 2005?



Where Do Positive Images  
and Stories Come From?

# Problem Solving

- Identify Problem
- Conduct Root Cause Analysis
- Brainstorm Solutions & Analyze
- Develop Action Plans

*Metaphor: Organizations are problems to be solved*

# Appreciative Inquiry

- Appreciate "What is" (What gives life?)
- Imagine "What Might Be"
- Determine "What Should Be"
- Create "What Will Be"

*Metaphor: Organizations are a solution/mystery to be embraced.*



# Deficit Based Change : *Unintended Consequences*

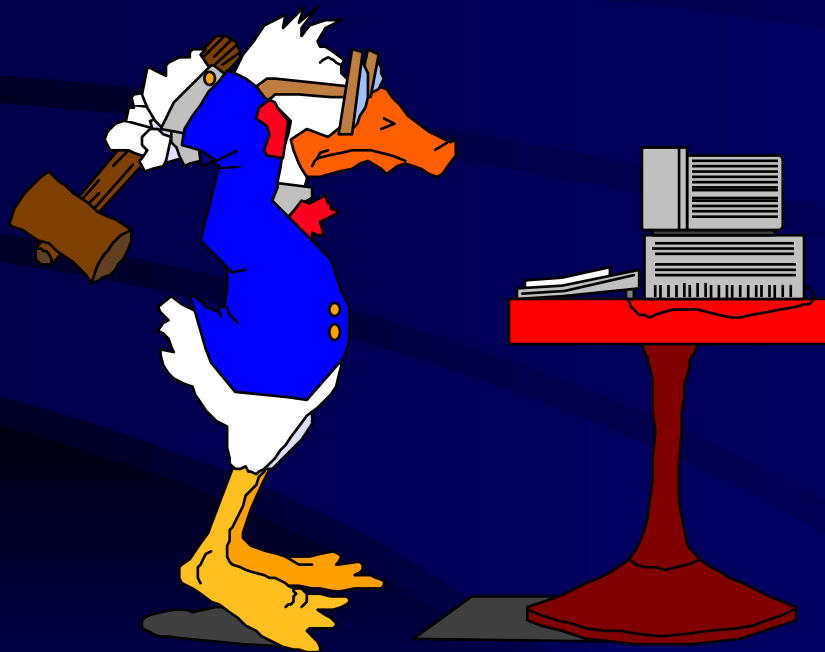
- ◆ **Much lamented fragmented responses**
- ◆ **Slow: Puts attention on yesterday's causes**
- ◆ **No *new* positive images of future**
- ◆ **Visionless voice... fatigue**
- ◆ **Spirals... “vocabularies of human deficit”**
- ◆ **Weakened fabric of relationships...clientized organizations**
- ◆ **out of sync in the embedded economy of partnerships, alliances, & e-commerce**

# Deficit Language at GTE



# Words Are Tools

To a hammer everything is a nail!



# *Ap-pre'ci-ate, v.,*

1. valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us; affirming past and present strengths, successes, and potentials; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems
  2. to increase in value, e.g. the economy has appreciated in value.
- Synonyms: VALUING, PRIZING, ESTEEMING, and HONORING.

## *In-quire'* (*kwir*), v.,

1. the act of exploration and discovery.
  2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities.
- Synonyms: DISCOVERY, SEARCH, and SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION, STUDY.

# What would *you* call it?

(all these things taken together)

- Achievements
- Strategic opportunities
- Product strengths
- Technical assets
- Innovations
- Elevated thoughts
- Best business practices
- Positive emotions
- Financial assets
- Organization wisdom
- Core competencies
- Visions of possibility
- Vital traditions, values
- Positive macrotrends
- Social capital
- Embedded knowledge
- Business ecosystem +s  
eg. suppliers, partners,  
competitors, customer

# The Positive Core

*“organization alive”*

# AI “4-D” Cycle

## *Typical Summit*





# The AI *Organization Summit Method*

Increasing positive capacity through  
large group methods

# 4 Common Approaches to Change

- Top Down Strategies
- Bottom Up Strategies
- Representative Cross-Section Strategies
- Pilot Strategies

# Typical Results

- Less Informed and Ultimately Less Effective Change Efforts
- A Few Try to Convince Many That Change is Needed
- Partial Responsibility Mindset
- Change Occurs Sequentially
- Change is Perceived as a Disruption of “Real Work”

# Typical Results (cont)

- Pace of Change is Too Slow
- Substantial Change in Part or Modest Change in an Entire Organization
- Breakdown at Implementation

# Dream & Design

## The AI “Organization Summit”:

- ◆ **“Whole System” in the Room**
- ◆ **Task is Clear...**
- ◆ **Future Focus--In Historical and Global Perspective**
- ◆ **Self-Management and Dialogue**
- ◆ **Common Ground**  
(not conflict management as the frame of reference)
- ◆ **3-Day event/100 to 1000 Participants**
- ◆ **Uncommon Action/Follow Through**

# AI “4-D” Cycle

## *Typical Summit*



# Nutritional Foods

- Why is this so easy?
- Experience of WHOLENESS...an amazing power....
- Why? How? Your Theory?

# Typical Results from Whole System Ai Summit

- More Informed and Ultimately More Effective Change Efforts
- A Critical Mass of People Making Changes that they All Believe Are Needed
- A Total Organization Mindset
- Simultaneous Change
- Change is Percieved as “Real Work”
- Fast...Entire Organization...Strong Implementation...Action...Unifying...Spirit



## Our Pluralistic World & The Birthing of a “Spiritual United Nations”

- A call from the UN: the UN 50th
- A Bishop’s vision
- Hans Kung... “there will be no peace among nations until there is peace among religions, no peace among religions until...”
- Huntington’s thesis...clash of civilizations
- Can we make a contribution?

# Insights on Success

- Holographic Beginning
- Polyphonic--Multiple Voices
- Dislodgement of Certainty...Appreciative
- From Negotiation to Narrative (Stories)
- From Common Ground to Higher Ground
- Retrospective Consensus...
- Inspired Action on Behalf of the Whole
- “Chaordic” Organizing

# What do we mean by “principles”?

- That shared body of beliefs--about our relationships and organizing-- that are necessary for realization of Purpose, and will be used to design and guide practices, structures, etc.
- The foundational body of belief as in-- “ We hold these truths to be self evident, that all people are created equal...”
- Not platitudes, not specific practices

# Example Principles

- Authority is vested in and decisions are made at the most local level possible, and includes all relevant and affected parties.
- Each partner organization has the right to maintain its autonomous identity and to organize in any manner, using any practices, which are consistent with the Purpose and Principles.

# Destiny: Creating a Positive Change Network

- GTE :How to Invite 67,000 people to create a new culture?
- Storytelling and hope
- Ai at the front line
- The “zealots are coming”
- Labor & management: an impasse
- The positive change network...ongoing!!

# What Matters Most?

- Being a **student** of “organization alive”
- Power of the **unconditional positive question**
- Relational basis of knowing: **communicamus ergo sum**
- Our **positive images of the future** lead our positive actions...words create worlds, “nothing so practical...”
- Yoga with the **positive change core**
- AI accelerates the **non-linear interaction of the positive--** a “convergence zone” for sudden dialogic repatterning
- The best in people...**wholeness heals**
- **Letting go** of deficit based change vocabularies
- AI is not a “thing”; in its **infancy (5 %)**; many questions...

# Applications Appreciative Inquiry

- Strategic change... "Org Summit"
- Core business redesign
- Quality...surveys...culture change
- Customer (patients) partnerships
- Labor-management relations
- Transformation of measurements
- Knowledge exchange: the "PCN"
- Business ecosystem analysis...

# We Are Born to Appreciate!



- Exceptionality
- Essentiality
- Equality/Voice