

Quote:

"How different our lives are when we really know what is deeply important to us, and keeping that picture in mind, we manage ourselves each day to be and to do what really matters most."

- Stephen R Covey

Interesting Website:

<http://www.inspiring-results.com/index.html>

Feature Article:

Achieve Better Results by Building on Your Strengths

Nancy Ogilvie from above website

Do you wish you could achieve better results at work... in less time... with less effort... and experience more joy in your work to boot? Here's a provocative suggestion: stop solving problems, and start building on your strengths instead. Let me elaborate with an example.

Suppose you want to enhance customer or client service in your organization. Using a problem-solving approach, you analyze customer complaints to determine what's going wrong, and then develop ways to improve. Using a strengths-based approach, you analyze success stories to identify "best practices," then develop ways to spread them throughout your organization.

Which approach seems more energizing and empowering? Which do you expect would generate better results? It seems intuitively clear that focusing on problems can be demoralizing and leave

people defensive. When you build on strengths, people are more likely to contribute their best gifts and collaborate in creating exciting new possibilities.

Extensive research and 20 years' experience using strengths-based approaches confirm that focusing on strengths consistently generates better results - and dramatically increases employee satisfaction along the way. The primary strengths-based approach to change in organizations is called Appreciative Inquiry (AI).

Want to try a brief experiment with using AI to create better results right now? Take a moment to choose a goal you as an individual want to achieve, either personal or professional. Phrase it as a positive outcome you want to accomplish. Then work through the following four steps:

- 1.1. **Discover - appreciating the best of what is.** Reflect on times in your life when you've felt most successful, energized, and inspired. What strengths are revealed? How can you build on them to move toward your goal?
2. **2. Dream - imagining what could be.** Imagine that you have already achieved your goal in ways that exceed your highest expectations. What are the results? How are yours and others' lives better? What are all the positive fruits of achieving your goal?
3. **3. Design -- determining what should be.** Design your ideal "blueprint" for your goal when it's accomplished. Which possibilities from the dream step are ideal for you? How will you combine them? What systems, structures, and

relationships will you need to create in order to move toward your goal?

4. **4. Destiny - creating what will be.** Decide how to organize the work of achieving your goal. How will you balance the need to make progress with the need to improvise and stay open to new information?

So what was that experiment like for you, doing it as an individual? Do you have more confidence and passion for achieving your goal? Are you excited and inspired about the possibilities? Do you have new, creative options for how you'll go about it?

If you generated new energy doing this process alone, imagine what it would be like to engage others in it! What would it be like to use it with colleagues... clients/customers... your Board of Directors... your family? What inspiring, energizing conversations could you have with key constituents and stakeholders? What breakthrough ideas and options might emerge?

Using Appreciative Inquiry as a strengths-based approach, you truly can achieve better results in life... in less time... with less effort... and experience much more joy to boot!

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"Innovation is the successful implementation of a creative idea." Kings Innovation Council

