

## *Exciting News:*

### **Innovation Workshop: Leadership Using Appreciative Intelligence**

April 25, 26, 27, 2007

Ledgehill Corporate Learning Centre Inc., 7608 Hwy 201, Lawrencetown  
Cost \$695.00 plus HST (Includes workshop, all meals, and accommodations.)

**Limited number of spaces available so register early!**

To register or obtain a detailed workshop description, please click on the following link:

<http://www.uponline.com/cgi-bin/viewmessage?s=1524.4547>

or contact Charles Bower ([cbower@ledgehill.com](mailto:cbower@ledgehill.com)) or phone 1-800-676-3393

The first step in developing your Appreciative Intelligence is to develop the ability to see the 'mighty oak in the acorn'. Once you do, you have the power to make a significant difference in your life or any organization; profit, nonprofit, or local government. The second step is to engage in action that is purposeful, that can transform your current situation, so that you can take the positive outcomes you see and act on them.

Join Dr. Thatchenkery co-author of Appreciative Intelligence to explore the various tenets of Appreciative Intelligence and learn how to develop them for more positive outcomes in your life or business. This essential workshop is uniquely designed for leaders like you who spend most of your time engaged in continuous problem-solving and crisis management. Over a period of time, that firefighting mindset inhibits whatever Appreciative Intelligence you may have had in the beginning and traps you in a pattern of single-trajectory problem-solving. By consciously developing your Appreciative Intelligence, you can enhance your capacity for innovative thinking and build better organizations. This workshop will open your mind so that you make powerful new connections between ideas, people and situations that ensure recurring issues stay firmly in the past.

About the author:

Tojo Thatchenkery, PhD, is a professor of organizational learning at the School of Public Policy, George Mason University. He is the author of several books and articles on change management and has consulted with many international organizations, including IBM, Lucent Technologies, the American Red Cross, British Petroleum, and the International Monetary Fund. His latest book, "Appreciative Intelligence Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn" has been chosen by Harvard Business Review as one of its recommended readings for 2006. The book has been received enthusiastically in both business and nonprofit organizations

## ***Events:***

### **Innovation Café**

**February 20, 8-9 am, Just Us Coffee, Grand Pre**

**Speaker: Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie**

**February 27, 8-9 am, Union Street Café, Berwick**

**Speaker: Dr. Willy Kalt**

The Innovation Café will provide an excellent opportunity for people interested in innovation to come together to hear an enlightening speaker (15-20 minutes) followed by informal group discussion. Monthly sessions will occur in Grand Pre on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday and in Berwick on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 8:00am-9:00am. Registration not required. Please note the following upcoming dates...

Tuesday, March 20,

Location: Just Us Coffee Grand Pre

Speaker: Jeff & Debra Moore

Tuesday, March 27

Union Street Café, Berwick

Speaker: John Bragg

Tuesday, April 17

Location: Just Us Coffee Grand Pre

Speaker: TBD

Tuesday, April 24

Union Street Café, Berwick

Speaker: TBD

### **Innovation Book Club**

**FIRST SESSION February 22, 2007**

Due to the weather the first session was postponed and will now take place Thursday, February 22. This extends the deadline for registration to Feb. 22.

Book: "One" by Lance Secretan

## Quote:

"It could be argued that true leadership is appreciative leadership. It's the capacity to see the best in the world around us, in our colleagues, and in the groups we are trying to lead. It's the capacity to see the most creative and improbable opportunities in the marketplace. It's the capacity to see with an appreciative eye the true and the good, the better and the possible."

David L Cooperrider

## Interesting Website:

[www.appreciativeintelligence.com](http://www.appreciativeintelligence.com)

## Feature Article:

**From above website** This is an excerpt from *Appreciative Intelligence: Seeing the Mighty Oak in the Acorn*, by Tojo Thatchenkery and Carol Metzker (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2006).

### **Appreciative intelligence allows us to see what's possible and make it happen**

When the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched the Hubble Space Telescope in 1990, the general public and scientists in the aerospace field both held high hopes. The world waited expectantly for answers to riddles of the universe that would be revealed by the telescope's views of space.

But blurry images caused by a flawed mirror sent those hopes crashing to Earth. The U.S. Congress demanded an explanation for the failure. The project and its creators became the butt of jokes on late-night television. Stress and health problems afflicted many NASA engineers.

"It was traumatic," says the former director of NASA's astrophysics division, Charles Pellerin, who oversaw the launch of the Hubble. Nobody could see how to fix the problem.

Well, nobody except Pellerin. He not only had insight on how to solve the problem but found the funding and resources to repair the telescope, for which he received NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal. But his real reward came over the next decade when the telescope provided spectacular images and important discoveries about stars, galaxies and other cosmic phenomena.

What was the secret of Pellerin's success? Dozens of other people at NASA had high IQs and world-class technical knowledge—they were, after all, rocket scientists. They could perform the same analyses, use the same logic and master the same models and mathematical formulas. So what gave Pellerin the edge? What made him persist until the telescope was fixed when others felt overwhelmed by the challenge?

His mind perceived reality differently. He reframed the situation as an unfinished project, not a failed one. He never lost sight of the potential for a positive outcome—a space telescope that worked. He saw how that positive future could happen as the result of technical solutions—corrective optics-package repairs performed by a crew of astronauts—that were possible with a rearrangement of funding and resources that already existed within NASA. By reassessing the situation, recognizing the potential and envisioning the repaired telescope, he was able to help orchestrate the unfolding of events that changed the future.

While most of the NASA scientists are at the top of the charts in the intellect department, Pellerin possessed something more: appreciative intelligence.

Appreciative intelligence can be defined as the capability of perceiving the inherent generative potential within a situation at hand. Put simply, appreciative intelligence is the ability to see the mighty oak in the acorn. It is the capacity to see a strong trunk and countless leaves emerging from this small nut as time unfolds. It is a knack for seeing a breakthrough product, top talent or valuable solution for the future hidden in the present.

Appreciative intelligence is similar to what Viktor Frankl, survivor of a German concentration camp, wrote in his classic book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, about the power of looking horror in the face and finding something there

that allows you to survive. It is that capacity not to flinch but to learn from the things you fear. To quote Frankl, "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

Everyone has appreciative intelligence to a greater or lesser degree. The most recent research shows our intelligence can be enhanced and nurtured; it is not an innate, unchangeable ability. Happily, this means appreciative intelligence can be developed and improved. Recognizing and cultivating your own sense of appreciative intelligence can make a difference in your prosperity, health and success.

At least three different ways of changing your behaviours and thoughts enhance appreciative intelligence.

- First, you can change behaviours by working on them directly. For instance, you may be accustomed to going to work a particular way every day. If construction forces you to change routes, you may deliberately remind yourself to travel that new direction every morning until a new habit forms.

- Second, you can directly change your thought processes. One of the ideas for which 1972 Nobel laureate Gerald Edelman is well-known is called "neural Darwinism." He pointed out that our brains have some 30 billion neurons and a quadrillion synaptic connections. As we develop into adulthood, connections that are used most often are kept, while the least-used connections are destroyed or "pruned." According to Edelman, constant activation will influence neural growth and synapse formation. In other words, the more we use certain mental processes, the stronger they become. Therefore, if we intentionally work on feeling optimistic, those neural connections are strengthened. We can think of this as a mental workout—if we work the neural "muscles" of optimism, they get strengthened and we feel optimistic. If we decide to be happy, those "happy synapses" get strengthened. In other words, by choosing to have a certain mindset, we can end up getting it.

- Third, you can change your mindset by changing your actions. To grasp the significance of this, try the following quick exercise. Smile. Hold that smile for a few minutes. (It may feel like a long time.) Within a few minutes you will begin to feel happier than you were before you began to smile. After a while, your smile will feel natural, you may relax, and you may feel genuine happiness. Because our brains do not distinguish between a smile (or other action) brought about by a mental state or one caused by moving our physical muscles, we can change our mindset through physical changes.

The best way to enhance your appreciative intelligence is to determine what your abilities and qualities are and build on them. Stretch them, strengthen them and use them in new areas of your life. For many people, this approach will run contrary to what they have learned. Martin Seligman, leader of the positive psychology movement, points out that the trend in psychology for years has been to focus on deficits. In corporations and elsewhere, consultants and management look for what's broken and try to fix it. The problem is this often returns a situation to a minimal level of functioning—not an optimal state of productivity. Rarely does such an approach bring about a great future.

Enhancing your appreciative intelligence will not make you happy all the time or keep you from making mistakes. What appreciative intelligence can do is to help you learn how to reframe situations so you can solve problems in a creative way. You may begin to see innovative solutions. You might blame yourself and others less and get what you want more. You may find yourself bringing out the best in others; seeing connections you had never noticed; and finding happiness, appreciation or fulfillment in new places.

Have a great week...

*Marianne Gates*

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Kings Community Economic Development Agency

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