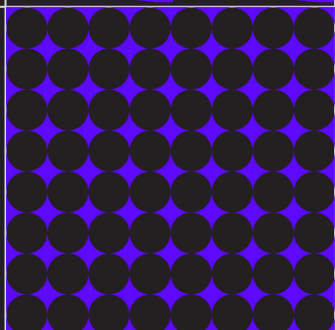
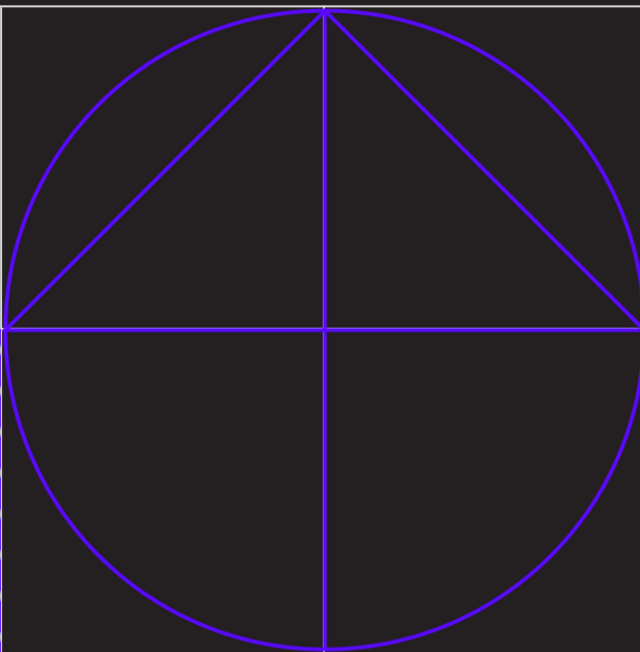
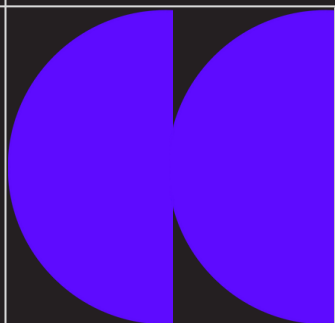


INNOVATION NORTH



Session 15 Key INsights:

ENABLING ACTION FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE



INsights On Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a process where leaders leverage the strengths of the collective and activate the positive core of the organizational system to facilitate positive change in the organization. Appreciative inquiry is not about ignoring the weaknesses of the system, rather it is about focusing on the strengths so the weaknesses become less relevant. Research has found that positive change occurs when members of a team express 4 positive inputs to every 1 negative input. This imbalance in positivity creates elevates individuals and boosts the willingness and capability of teams to achieve desired goals.

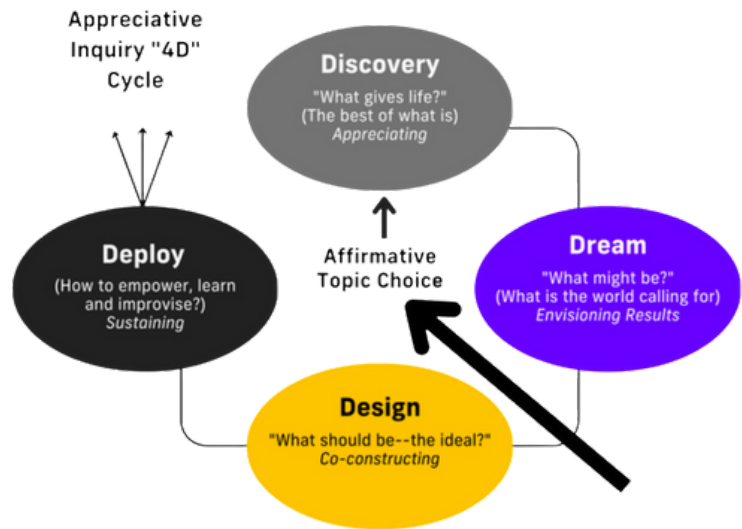
Appreciative Inquiry Takes Place In A 4-Stage Cycle

1. Discovery: In this stage, the innovation team discusses their strengths. This increases the awareness of the strengths of the team as a collective and provides a sense of appreciation for the resources available within the team.

2. Dream: In this stage, the innovation team reaches a consensus on the desired future. By looking to the future, each person aligns with the team aspirations and feels motivated to reach those goals.

3. Design: In this stage, the innovation team co-creates the pathway and ideas to achieve their collective dream. As “words make worlds”, Ron Fry suggests the use of affirmative questions to design the desired future. The focus should be on inquiring and creating, rather than fixing and solving.

4. Deploy: In this stage, the innovation team engages in experimentation by piloting the ideas developed in the previous stage. The results provide feedback for the team to continue their progress towards systemic change.



The Secret Sauce

There are 4 core action-rules an innovation team must keep in mind while implementing Appreciative Inquiry. These rules can propel the innovation process from ideas to actions:

1. Get the right people in the room: Leaders should include as many stakeholders as possible to generate a sense of ownership for the innovation goals. By including many stakeholders, the ownership for achieving the innovation goals is not simply with a small team but the entire system.

2. Connect to shared strengths: Direct the attention of the innovation team and the stakeholders to their strengths as a collective. Each member can enhance or complement the strengths of their fellow members, making the collective strength greater than the sum of the strengths of its members.

3. Connect through stories: People remember stories more than concepts and numbers. Stories not only form an effective tool to communicate values and vision but also act as a mechanism to instill hope towards a desirable future and create action. By connecting through stories, information is more likely to stay with the stakeholders. Listening to a strengths-based story can also fuel collaboration because of shared positive emotions.

4. Connect for higher purpose: Encourage stakeholders to stay connected to their North Star through the innovation process. A higher purpose creates a generative connection that not only facilitates new ideas in the team members and moving towards the higher purpose, but also activates their will, desire, and energy to translate those idea into reality.

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