

***“Leading change is about aligning people’s strengths so that weaknesses become irrelevant”***

- Peter Drucker (Management Guru) ... *yes but how?*

## **Introducing Appreciative Inquiry**

Appreciative Inquiry is a process which turns traditional problem-solving on its head. Instead of finding the best ways to solve a pressing problem, it focuses on what already working within an organisation or team, and builds on this.

The traditional '*problem focus*' implies there is an ideal yet focuses on what's in the way – the problem. Appreciative Inquiry, on the other hand, accesses that ideal state directly. It assumes that the "answers" already lie within the team so solving the problem is a matter of discovery rather than "training" or expert help.

By building from inquiry into '*what's working?*' team and organisational health rises.

- Individual's talents and skills are recognised.
- Blame and defensiveness disappears.
- Discretionary effort rises.
- Team self-diagnosis occurs.
- Employee-sponsored initiatives grow the bottom line.
- Staff retention improves.
- Manager's is freed up to work on high value areas, such as strategic planning.

This energising and simple process is effective at addressing **any** business issue that involves people.

### **Who Would Benefit From Learning About Appreciative Inquiry?**

Business owners, CEOs, MDs, Managers or Project / Team Leaders – anyone responsible for achieving results through people.

Comments from three business leaders who have participated in an Appreciative Inquiry process

*I absolutely recommend it – it's good for every business but especially those going through any change process or improvement or wanting new ideas. It's a fresh approach to problems and problem solving that boosts the team spirit and taps into the collective mind of the team.*

– Fred Soar. MD. Soar Printing (Auckland)

*I highly recommend it. The key is the positive nature of the process – not focusing on problems. It shortened the process to define milestones and actions, and achieved near instant buy-in by all the participants – much faster than other processes I have experienced.*

– Jim Barger. Director. Edex Toys Ltd

*It gets everyone involved and encourages individual responsibility especially where one is trying to 'draw' the various attendees into the process and into the team. It encourages openness and the acceptance of common ideals / bonds.*  
 - John Ray. Managing Partner. Wadsworth Ray (Auckland, Legal)

### Small Sampling of Applications:

Organisation Design	Employee Satisfaction	Process Improvement	Learning & Development	Measurement	Customer Satisfaction	Planning
Communication Architecture	Employee Orientation	Work Process Redesign	Supervisory Development	Performance Management	Focus Groups & Surveys	Strategic
Joint Ventures	Staffing & Development	Continuous Quality Improvement	Leadership & Management Development	Metric Standards	Customer Feedback	Business
Strategic Alliances	Coaching	Benchmarking	Team Development	Reward & Recognition	Supplier Feedback Systems	Operations
Organisational Culture Change	Diversity Initiatives	Innovations	Training	Surveys	Public Relations	Marketing

### Features / Benefits of Appreciative Inquiry

Features	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly versatile, applicable:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1 or 1:group</li> <li>Across all departments within an organisation</li> <li>Across all sectors (commercial, not-for-profit, government)</li> <li>Across all industries</li> <li>Across all areas of life (i.e. both personal &amp; professional)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Unconditionally positive process – highly engaging, energising and progressive</li> <li>Easy to use and then apply, immediately</li> <li>Not Consultant-rich</li> <li>Proven, it works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost-effective: high impact change process which deals with culture, strategy and tactics, plus structure – <i>simultaneously</i></li> <li>Accesses the collective wisdom</li> <li>Automatically generates 'buy-in' and engagement of all team members</li> <li>Accountability for the fulfilment of initiatives is shared, no longer the sole responsibility of management</li> <li>Solutions designed by those directly experiencing the issue</li> <li>Future-proofs the organisation: Significantly enhances organisational learning and adaptive-ness</li> <li>Raises staff retention - keeping and growing key staff</li> <li>Enhances leadership EQ</li> </ul>

### Background

Since its inception in 1985, Appreciative Inquiry has spread around the world gaining recognition as *"today's most popular new approach to change"*. It has been used in hundreds of organizations world-wide, including the likes of: NASA, The US Navy, McDonalds, Freightway Express, British Airways, and Telecom NZ.