Appreciative Inquiry (AI) & Empowerment
Overview - Tip Sheet

Barriers to Evaluation

- Lack of expertise
- Time constraints
- Fear of negative results
- Irrelevant to organizational goals

AI Advantages

- Grounded in stakeholder meaning
- Directly tied to organizational goals
- Inclusive
- Easy to implement and familiar
- Results useful for multiple contexts (evaluation, planning, marketing)
- Depth in narrative data
- Positive organizational culture
- Transferrable to context
- Supports evaluation interest
- Institutionalizes evaluation

AI Steps

Instead of fixing problems - Dream Possibilities

Use a culture built on positive accounts of peak performance & demonstrated strengths. The culture provides “self-driving” & continuous evaluation stories AND builds organizational enthusiasm.

2 Questions:
- Discover (What works?)
- Dream (What’s Ideal?)

2 Results:
- Design (Action Steps)
- Destiny (Sustain Vision)

AI Adaptations

- Focused stakeholders
- Scaffolded to Abilities
- Familiar & Easy – No expertise
- Short Duration
- Continuous Evaluation

Next Steps

How could AI fit into your context?

Traditional AI Disadvantages

- Time Intensive (several days)
- Resource Intensive (ALL stakeholders)
- Expertise (consultants & trained groups)
- Not Inclusive for marginalized groups

Empowerment

- Inclusive, expands stakeholders
- Cooperative
- Provides continuous evaluation
- Includes positive vision
- Encourages evaluation interest

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