Learning and Living
A Culture of Appreciative Inquiry
One Story at a Time

January 9-10, 2014

with

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General Agenda

To maximize our time together, please self-manage breaks as needed

**Day 1**

*This day focuses on learning about AI and understanding the practice of AI. In the process, participants will experience interviews and small group discussions aimed at surfacing what it means to work in a culture defined by the AI Principles and practices. AI will be seen in the light of the need for new ways of working that enable agility, collaboration, innovation and adaptability—all important in our present environment. Salient features: the importance of story, framing, inquiry, optimizing human performance and creativity. What sets an AI approach to action apart is taking the time to step back, inquire, research, disrupt before driving to action.*

Welcome, Opening and Overview
Introducing AI
Paired Interviews—Creating Conditions for an AI Culture
Small Group Process—Discovering Our Strengths and Positive Core for an AI Culture
Intentional Culture Transformation: Human Nature, Creativity and High Performance
Lunch
Small Group Process—Imagining Our Desired Culture
Key AI Practices
Putting Those Practices into Action
Close: Sharing, Questions, Review, Prep for tomorrow—select your strategy on the way out

**Day Two**

*This day focuses on using AI as a method to generate initial action plans for the strategic plan. Participants will learn about Core Team responsibilities, stakeholder engagement, and choose the strategy they are most interested in to develop an initial research plan and/or set of projects to prototype. Outcomes from today will be completed electronic action plans for initial action on all strategies that inspire participants.*

Welcome back, Check-in, Overview of the Day, Preparing to Plan
Putting AI to Work on the Strategic Plan
Lunch
Rapid Stress-Testing
Core Team, Stakeholder Identification, and Strategies for Engaging Stakeholders
Creating the Timeline and Initial Action Plan
Review, Questions, A Very Special Closing
# Easy Reference

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Overview and Agenda

What we will do
--Engage with theory and practice for Appreciative Inquiry, collaboration and strategic planning
--Play, work, build relationships

Where it will get you
--Become a stronger team
--Enhance your ability to practice Appreciative Inquiry and work together to invent your future
--Increase your agility and creativity

What will you be able to do as a result
--Participate in creating and implementing the strategic plan
--Build durable and resilient relationships among diverse groups
--Foster collaboration and innovation in your departments and at SCC
Strategic Planning Goals 2014-20

Five primary goals and 5 sub-goals emerged from the Strategic Planning Retreat. The five sub-goals directly support the success of the primary goals and will be integrated in ways that align to support the rapid achievement of the primary goals.
Strategies for Achieving Goals

A. **AI CULTURE GOAL**: SCC practices appreciative and disruptive inquiry growing a positive culture of collaboration and innovation.
   **STRATEGIES:**
   1. AI is embedded in our philosophy in principle and practice [policy, procedures, and structures such as HR evaluation, hiring, etc.].
   2. AI is practiced and we are fostering and enhancing relationships that inspire equality and inclusivity for all stakeholders.
   3. AI is practiced and is inspiring an inclusive climate of scholarship and service.
   4. AI and Disruptive Inquiry are practiced for continuous quality improvement and excellence in delivering our mission [AI, DI, prototyping, agile action and perpetual evolution].

B. **HOLISTIC LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES GOAL**: SCC provides a comprehensive education approach that develops the whole learner--body, mind and spirit--supporting life long success, enhancing academic and skills competency with personal and professional leadership and teamwork competency.
   **STRATEGIES:**
   5. Innovative solutions address the diverse needs of learners and support genuine inclusion.
   6. Our advising model involves faculty, staff and students in the design and implementation of an individualized success plan for learners that ensure academic, technology, personal and professional success.
   7. We offer collaborative and innovative programs and strategies that meet the non-academic/technical skills needs of learners, with special emphasis on personal and career counseling and professional development.

C. **QUALITY EDUCATION GOAL**: SCC delivers excellence in academic programming that is relevant, accessible, and responsive and effectively prepares learners for living and learning in a global marketplace.
   **STRATEGIES:**
   8. Faculty excels in the assessment of student learning and development.
   9. We provide educational options that prepare learners for entry into the workforce, career advancement, and academic transfer opportunities.
   10. Expedite curriculum development
   11. SCC leads the state in new, innovative and quality online and blended learning

D. **PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION GOAL**: SCC collaborates with business and community members, building partnerships to meet diverse learner and industry needs throughout the region.
   **STRATEGIES** (There were many, these are the top two):
   12. Collaborative partnerships with K12 are fostering learner preparedness, enrollment in SCC programs and life-long success.
   13. Partnerships and collaboration with business and industry support quality education, facilities, learner success and employer satisfaction.

E. **MARKETING AND BRANDING GOAL**: Consistent, coherent and well-planned marketing and branding results in broad recognition at the local and state level, reinforcing partnerships and generating increased enrollment, completion and placement.
   **STRATEGIES:**
   14. A comprehensive marketing and communication plan, driven by key distinctives, results in a strong, positive brand.

F. **SUBGOALS THAT CROSS ALL PRIMARY GOALS**:
   15. Faculty and staff develop a comprehensive employee personal/professional plan that supports individual success while building collaborative capacity to achieve our shared goals.
   16. Technology is embedded in the fabric of SCC in order to support the strategic goals.
   17. Education and professional development leads to cultural competence for all employees and learners.
   18. Facilities are optimized, supporting the strategic goals
   19. Existing expertise and infrastructure creates innovative opportunities that generate revenue while supporting the strategic goals.
What is Appreciative Inquiry?

What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)?
“Appreciative Inquiry is a theory and practice for approaching change from a holistic framework. Based on the belief that human systems are made and imagined by those who live and work within them, AI leads systems to move toward the generative and creative images that reside in their most positive core – their values, visions, achievements, and best practices.”
“AI is both a world view and a practical process. In theory, AI is a perspective, a set of principles and beliefs about how human systems function, a departure from the past metaphor of human systems as machines. Appreciative Inquiry has an attendant set of core processes, practices, and even ‘models’ that have emerged. In practice, AI can be used to co-create the transformative processes and practices appropriate to the culture of a particular organization.”
“Grounded in the theory of ‘social constructionism,’ AI recognizes that human systems are constructions of the imagination and are, therefore, capable of change at the speed of imagination. Once organization members shift their perspective, they can begin to invent their most desired future.”


“Appreciative Inquiry deliberately seeks to discover people’s exceptionality – their unique gifts, strengths, and qualities. It actively searches and recognizes people for their specialties – their essential contributions and achievements. And it is based on principles of equality of voice – everyone is asked to speak about their vision of the true, the good, and the possible. Appreciative Inquiry builds momentum and success because it believes in people. It really is an invitation to a positive revolution. Its goal is to discover in all human beings the exceptional and the essential. Its goal is to create organizations that are in full voice!”


“AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the “unconditional positive question, often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people. ...AI deliberately, in everything it does, seeks to work from accounts of the “positive change core” – and it assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive. Link the energy of this core directly to any change agenda and changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized.”

Image is Compelling

Positive Image → Positive Action

- **The Placebo Effect** *If you believe something, your whole being strives to come into alignment with that belief.*

- **The Pygmalion Effect** *If someone else believes something about you, your whole being strives to come into alignment with that belief.*

- **Positive Affect/Effect** *Our whole being aligns around the words and questions spoken to us.*

- **Rise and Fall of Cultures** *Communities of people align around images of what’s possible. When there are no positive images of the future or conversations of hope, the culture decays.*

- **Affirmative Capability** *Our whole being aligns around the images we carry; we are compelled to move towards them.*

[Note: Research citations are in the reference section pages 35-36.]

Basic AI Concepts

- **What you seek, you find more of** – The more positive and inspiring your questions, the more likely you are to generate positive possibilities for action.

- **People commit to what they help to create** – The more participative your conversations, planning and decision-making, the more committed people are to collaborating on success. Engaging the whole generates organizational flourishing.

- **Bold, evocative stories compel us to action**— We are compelled to move in the direction of the images we hold. Story has the unique capacity to elicit images and inform action with the fullness of context and character.
Key AI Leadership Concepts

- **Intentionally Create an Environment for Collaboration**—When people feel safe, included, valued and respected they are free to engage fully and contribute their strengths.

- **Outcomes-Focused** – Where are we going, what are we striving to achieving together, what do we want to co-create? Instead of “getting it right”, focus on learning and excellence, which foster growth and perpetual evolution in response to a changing environment.

- **Inquiry-Based** – Adopt an **attitude of inquiry**; recall the awe and curiosity of childhood. Intentionally seek opportunity through appreciative and disruptive inquiry.

- **Wholeness** – Invite everyone and engage people in meaningful ways. Strengthen relationships and connection by deliberately building trust.

[Note: In the reference section, see Engagement information, pages 48-54 and the Leadership Excellence Model, pages 55-56.]
AI Principles

Constructionist Principle
- We jointly construct our social realities through our shared conversations (verbal and body) and relationships.
- When we change the way we talk together, the questions we ask, etc., we change the present reality.
- *Words create worlds.*

Principle of Simultaneity
- Change happens the moment we ask the question, the moment we act.
- *Inquiry is intervention.*

Poetic Principle
- There are many perspectives, multiple ways of knowing and understanding.
- How we understand a situation or a person and what story we tell about it impacts everything.

Anticipatory Principle
- We move in the direction of our thoughts and the images that we hold.
- We see what we expect to see; what we look for, we find.
- What we focus on expands.
- *Whether you think you can or you can’t, you’re right!*

The Positive Principle (or Principle of Generativity)
- The questions we ask and what we inquire into are generative.
- The more potent and positive the questions, the more positive and generative the outcome.

[Note: In the Reference Section, see ways to put Principles into action, page 37.]
Interview Protocol

As an interviewer, your role is to guide the person you interview through a series of questions that will generate their best thinking on our theme and topics.

As the interviewer, actively listen, engage with the story and the storyteller, draw out specific details and examples, and be genuinely curious about the experiences that are shared with you.

Enjoy the interview process. It is an opportunity to honor the other by offering your best listening skills and asking clarifying questions. Appreciate the very best of who the person is with whom you are speaking and the fact that each person’s answers form part of the fabric of our future. This may be a memorable and impactful time for both of you.

Listen and Clarify
As an interviewer, your goal is to encourage a vivid and complete description of events and ideas. Encourage the person you are interviewing, your partner, to tell a very descriptive and detailed story/vision/idea. Encourage expansion of the story’s richness by asking clarifying questions such as:

- Tell me a little more about the part when. . .
- Who was involved?
- What was important to you?
- How did that affect you?
- What was your contribution?
- What do you think was really making it work?
- What did you contribute?
- What were you thinking or feeling?

It is best if you actually read the questions aloud. It is important to stay on topic and resist the urge to “dialogue.”

Offer your very best listening skills. Keep the spotlight on your interview partner.

Allow for silence and for the flow to move as your partner wants it. If somebody does not want to, or can’t, answer an interview question, that’s OK. Let it go or come back later to that question.

Seek personal experiences and details instead of generalities. Let your partner tell his or her story. Avoid giving your opinion about the experiences—this is an interview and information gathering, not a discussion.

Listen for great quotes and take good notes of the themes and quotes that emerge. Star or highlight those quotes or details that stand out.
Interview Instructions

Purpose: To discover stories that reflect you and your colleagues working together at your best with an eye towards your desired culture.

INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose a partner. Look for someone you do not know or would like to get to know better.

Interview each other. Using the questions on the following page, you have a total of 45 minutes to interview each other (20 minutes each). Manage your time so that each of you has an equal amount of time to complete your interview. It’s generally best to cover all questions with one partner then switch roles.

Take notes in the spaces provided. You are responsible for your partner’s answers. Please take careful notes, and use your skills as an interviewer as you listen and go deeper into your partner’s experiences, visions, and stories, capturing any key themes and “quotable quotes” that emerge. If you hear a story that should be shared broadly, mark it with an asterisk.

Listen and clarify. Offer your best listening skills so that you can hear subtle but important details. Listen with friendly curiosity. Ask clarifying questions if you want more information from your partner to bring back. Help them supply more detail, if necessary, with these kinds of questions:

--Tell me more.
--Why was that important to you?
--How did that affect you?
--How did that come about?

Remember that this is an interview, not a conversation. Resist the urge to dialogue. Bring out the best in your partner.

Manage your time. It will take about 20 minutes for each interview.

Sit with your partner in a circle with three other pairs (circles of eight).
Interview Guide

1. When did you first begin working at SCC and what was it about the college that inspired you to join the SCC community?

2. Reflect on your experiences working with your colleagues at SCC. There may be highs and lows; for now, choose a highpoint story. A time when you and your colleagues were at your best working on a shared goal or project that had a significantly positive impact on students and other faculty and/or staff. Share that story.

3. What key characteristics describe the way you worked together making this a highpoint story?

   a. What strengths and best practices were you able to contribute?

   b. What did you value about others?

   c. In what ways did SCC help to make this experience possible?
4. Imagine that you go home tonight, fall into a deep sleep and when you wake up – one year later – your work environment has become the workplace of your dreams. All around you, you see people who are appreciated for the work that they do, who are encouraged to be innovative and given the tools to do so, and where effective, rapid collaboration on opportunities big and small is the norm. Tell me what you’re seeing, hearing, and feeling.

a. What is similar to your current work experiences?

b. What’s different?

c. What was the one smallest step that was taken in January 2014 that had the greatest impact on culture transformation?
Small Group Discussion

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time, using the guidelines below for self-managing this work.

| DISCUSSION LEADER | Manages the circle task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available. |
| TIMEKEEPER | Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking. |
| RECORDER/REPORTER (2) | Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its using speaker’s words and contact info on post cards. Helps post and reports out when appropriate. |

**Purpose:** To discover our strengths and current best practices that will support our developing an AI culture.

**Goals:**
1. **At Our Best.** Go around the circle. Introduce your partner and briefly (1 minute) share the highlights of their story from question #2; be sure to share the core images of their story and what stood out for you about this highpoint story. Capture what stands out that makes this a highpoint story. **10 minutes**

2. **Identify Your Positive Core.** Go around the circle a second time, this time share your partner’s responses to Question #3. Capture the workplace practices, characteristics, strengths and values on flipchart paper. **10 minutes**

3. **Identify Key Elements of Your Positive Core.** Review all the data and information you have shared. As a group, reflect on the themes that emerged as well as any individual ideas that really stand out as relevant. Choose 2-3 key workplace practices, characteristics, strengths or values that you would like to see defining our future culture. **10 minutes**

   a. Write key concepts on 6 x 8 post-its, one concept per page. Use marker and write boldly so people can see it from a distance of 5-10 feet.
   b. On a postcard, write down the name, email and phone number of people who shared stories that should be captured and shared with the broader community.
   c. Choose one of your high point stories that reflects your key concepts.

4. **Post and Share.** Turn to a group next to you and shared your chosen story. Then you’re your key concepts to the appropriate space on the wall. Affinitize (group together with like concepts) as you post. **10 minutes**

   “*Return to the Conference Center if you are not already there*”
Our Story Is Fateful

First we experience, and then we make meaning. The story we make up about our experience becomes our truth, and then it becomes The Truth, which we teach to our children. Subsequently, all experiences are filtered through these stories.

Changing our story often requires a significant emotional experience that creates dissonance, disrupting our story enough that we seek another story.

[See Making Stuff Up, pages 42-43 and the Ladder of Inference, pages 44-45.]
The New Science

Technology is impacting everything we do in the world, including how we understand who we are as human beings. Medical technology has opened the doors for research into neurophysiology and human potential, shedding new light on our nature. The data suggests we can intentionally create environments that foster creativity, collaboration, engagement and excellence.

Positive Psychology, Neurophysiology and High Performance
People are at their best and able to perform well under specific conditions:

Barbara Fredrickson’s Positivity Ratio (ratio of positive to negative emotions)

- 3:1

David Rock’s SCARF (what each of us needs to maximize our higher order thinking and willingness to contribute)

- Status
- Certainty
- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Fairness

Mirror Neurons (important for community, connection, and relationships)

- We are wired for empathy
- We are wired to reflect what is around us

[Note: Research citations are in the reference section, pages 38-39.]
Small Group Discussion

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time.

- **DISCUSSION LEADER** – Manages the circle task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available.

- **TIMEKEEPER** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking.

- **RECORDER/REPORTER (2)** – Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its using speaker’s words and contact info on post cards. Helps post and reports out when appropriate.

**Purpose:** To create images of our desired culture and a road map for guiding us into that future.

**Goals:**

1. **Images of Our Desired Culture.** Each person should have a piece of paper to work with. Go around the circle and briefly share your visions from Interview Question #4 [page 14] for the way we work and teach one year from now. As you hear people’s vision, allow images, symbols or metaphors to come to mind. Sketch images and concepts that stand out on your piece of paper. *10 minutes*

2. **One Small Step.** Go around the circle and share the one small step that we could take NOW that would have the greatest impact on our future. Capture on flipchart paper. *5 minutes*

3. **Create a Shared Image of the Future.** Share and discuss your collective images and ideas and develop a shared vision for the future. Draw a sketch, metaphor or symbol on flipchart paper representing your shared image for “the way we work around here.” *10 minutes*

4. **Identify Key Roadways, Signposts and Mile Markers.** Reflect on your small steps and any concepts that have emerged. *5 minutes*
   a. Select and write the top 2-3 small steps that your group believes will create the greatest impact in moving you toward your desired culture on 6 x 8 post-its, one step per post-it in bold lettering.

5. **Share and Post.** Share your image and 2-3 small steps with a different group that is near you. Post your Image of the Future on the Roadmap Wall at the end of the journey. Post your small steps along the Roadmap. If there are other ideas that are similar, post them together (affinitize as you go). *5 minutes*
Increasing Your Return on Collaboration

The following guiding principles help generate a culture where collaboration and innovation are natural outcomes of the way you work.

Create an Environment for Collaboration and Innovation
- Create a safe and generative space that enables ideation, experimentation and eventually the creation of something the world has never seen before.
- Support self-organizing around shared outcomes in order to spark individual creativity and strategic collaboration.
- Live by values that generate mutual respect and community because the journey into the future, the unknown, requires high levels of social bonding and good will.
- Integrate deliberate practices, processes and systems that generate safety and trust, which are the foundation for collaboration and innovation.

Intentionally Seek Opportunity
- Look into what already works well and look for what is emerging.
- Don’t stop at trying to fix what you don’t want. Reframe questions and goals in terms of what you truly want.
- Gather a wide range of perspectives to generate viable possibilities.
- Invite disruptive inquiry to challenge assumptions and ordinary ways of thinking to make way for unseen possibilities.

Strengthen Relationships and Connection
- Be deliberate about building positive, trust-filled relationships.
- Communicate in ways that enhance engagement and build the capacity for co-creation.
- Use social technology that makes it easy to collaborate and connect.

Invite Everyone to Engage
- Engage people in meaningful ways in work that affects them.
- Use high engagement strategies to gather people and tap collective wisdom.
- Support people to take responsibility for their passion and self-organize with others to take action on behalf of the whole.

Experiment and Learn
- Use simple, rapid testing processes to support learning and innovation.
- Reward risk-taking - encourage ideation and experimentation.
- Integrate practices that make learning from failure and celebrating success the norm.
Framing for Outcomes

Framing/Reframing is all about stepping back before stepping forward:
1. Pause!
2. What’s the context and the greater “system” good I/we want to impact?
3. What’s the desired outcome of (this conversation) (this change effort) (this plan)?

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<td>External pressures</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Don’t Want”</td>
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<td>“Not working”</td>
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**Discovery Questions**
- Identify related core strengths
- Discover positive deviance
- Evoke highpoint stories/examples of this topic/outcome
- Challenge assumptions and ordinary patterns of thinking
- Stimulate creativity and innovation
- Discover best practices and innovation in the external field (related and unrelated)
Framing and Reframing Topics and Questions

If you are not used to thinking from an unconditionally positive or generative frame, it can be a challenge to figure out appreciative questions. Follow the steps for framing/reframing and add one additional step:

1. Pause!
2. What’s the context and the greater “system” good I/we want to impact?
3. What’s the desired outcome of (this conversation) (this change effort) (this plan)—the affirmative/generative topic
4. Think Discovery (Research): What questions can I ask that will surface data, information, stories and knowledge relevant for our desired outcome?

Mastery takes 10,000 hours of Practice: this is a new skill, requiring new neural pathways!
- Follow steps 1-4 and stress test your questions.
- Write down one of the questions you think you’d like to ask so you can stress test it.
- Answer the question yourself; reflect on the kind of answer you will get when you ask others. Will it provide you with positive information about the topic or help you move toward your desired outcome?
- If yes, great! If not, reframe the question so you can answer yes to #3. The odds are you are going after important information; continue to question how can you ask it in a way that surfaces constructive information.

A very simple example:
Issue: One person on my staff is always late for meetings. He’s a positive contributor so I want his input but it’s not fair to everyone else to always start late when they are on time.
1. STOP
2. Context and greater good: We want everyone to feel respected, we want to build trust in one another and we want everyone to be able to fully contribute at meetings.
3. Desired outcome: The staff member understands the impact of his actions and freely decides to be to meetings on time.
4. First attempt: Do you realize the impact you have on others when you are late to meetings?
5. Reflect: I will put him on the defensive and he’s likely to just give me excuses rather than really reflect on the impact.
6. Reframe: I’m going to do an Appreciative Inquiry in our next meeting and invite everyone to participate and at the end commit. Frame: I want to make sure that we are reinforcing our commitment to mutual respect and trust in our meetings. To do that, I’d like everyone to help define how we can do that. Let’s begin by interviewing one another. Question: I’m sure you’ve participated in meetings where you felt that everyone trusted and respected one another. Meetings where that respect shows up in a variety of ways, from start to finish of the meetings. Please think back over meetings you’ve attended and tell me about a highpoint meeting. What behaviors and actions affirmed mutual respect and trust?
Practice Reframing

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time, using the guidelines below for self-managing this work.

- **DISCUSSION LEADER** – Manages the circle task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available.
- **TIMEKEEPER** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking.
- **RECORER/REPORTER** – Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its, using speaker’s words. Delivers report to larger group in allotted time.

**Purpose:** To practice reframing problems or concerns into opportunities or generative topics.

**Goals:**

1. **Identify Obstacles.** Take a few minutes to identify a number of challenges or obstacles that might get in the way of living your desired culture. These can be personal, relational, or organizational. 5 minutes

2. **Select and Reframe.** Choose one of these and reframe it. Write the obstacle at the top of a flipchart paper and reframe as an opportunity or generative topic. Hint, think:
   a. What is it we would like to have happen instead of the obstacle?
   b. What would need to be in place for this obstacle to not show up?
   c. How might this obstacle actually help us to intentionally work in new ways?
   15 minutes

3. **Rapid Stress Test.** Stress test your reframes with the circle next to you. Ask for quick comments: What do you like about our reframes? What suggestions do you have? 10 minutes
Crafting an Appreciative Inquiry

Crafting bold, provocative, positive questions is at the heart of Appreciative Inquiry. Crafting intriguing disruptive questions is at the heart of innovation. The power of engaging others lies in the unconditional positive or generative question, which invites people to discover strengths and best practices, to challenge assumptions and habits and engage in collaborative thinking.

There are no neutral questions; every question moves people. Your questions will be used to interview people, search for literature, videos and games, review and engage in on-line dialogue and to inspire conversation and discussion. This helps expand what’s possible before you begin to move towards solutions and outcomes.

Carefully craft questions so that you:

- **Gather stories and not just bullet points.** Stories convey so much more than a list of words. They inform, engage our imaginations, tap our emotions and passions, and deepen our understanding of what’s possible.
- **Gather data about the strengths** of your current system related to your topic. You want to be sure to carry forward and build on those strengths.
- **Gather data and information that broadens** your understanding of other perspectives, missing information, and assumptions that narrow your focus. You don’t know what you don’t know; be curious about what you might be making up and what you’re missing.
- **Gather stories and data from “the field”—**explore trends, discover what others (even from unrelated sectors) are doing related to the topic, what opportunities there are, and what aspirations and results people want for the future.
- **Disrupt ordinary ways of thinking, challenge assumptions and question the status quo** in order to make room for innovative ideas. Look from diverse perspectives: what does nature have to offer (Biomimicry), what would a child say, are there TED talks on related topics (TED.com hosts exceptional 18-minute presentations that typically disrupt ordinary ways of thinking and doing).
- **Imagine possibilities** in living color and surround sound.

**Standard Appreciative Inquiry**

1. **Elicits a Highpoint Story.** *Tell me a story about a time when you were at your best and felt most alive in contributing to ….*
2. **Surfaces strengths, values or key success factors.** *What was it about the situation that contributed to your being at your best? What did you value about yourself? Others? The organization?*
3. **Elicits images of the future.** *Imagine you wake up and it’s a year from now …*
   - If you had three wishes …
   - If you could wave a magic wand …
Disruptive Inquiry (DI)

Disruptive Inquiry is simply asking questions that challenge your ordinary patterns of thinking and doing. A disruptive question invites you to think again, to pause and wonder, to ask if something else might be possible. Is there something we’re missing, not seeing, visible if only we asked the right question?

**DI does not have an agenda; it has positive intent.** DI intentionally seeks to broaden possibilities. A disruptive question challenges the status quo; it surfaces hidden assumptions in order to stimulate awareness and curiosity. This can be as simple as, “How have others achieved this?” or “What are we missing, what are we assuming that may not be true?” It can be as random as, “What can we learn from frogs that might help us out?” (Lateral Thinking)

**Embrace Ambiguity and Enter the Unknown**

- Challenge ordinary thinking through curiosity, wonder, and *squirrely* attention
- View limited resources as a catalyst for innovation
- Look with new eyes to expose the invisible
- Connect the same things in new ways: mix things up, turn them upside down and backwards
- Change your position to change perspective
- Think laterally
- Question assumptions, perspective, and limits
- Clarify the desired outcomes and then start over from scratch

*Disruptive inquiry absolutely has to be a collaborative process. The truly breakthrough ideas require systemic change, where an organization has to change the core of what it is and how it operates to accommodate a completely new way of doing.*

Examples of Disruptive Questions

- What underlying assumptions are we holding? What can be challenged? What if those assumptions are not true?

- How does Mother Nature handle this challenge?

- What are the unshakable industry beliefs about what students want? What if the opposite was true?

- What expectations are we holding, what beliefs about the people involved? What if we’re wrong?

- If our clients/customers were describing the outcome from their own perspective (the impact on them), what would they say?

- What if this result was just the natural outcome of the “way we live in community together?” What could we do that would just naturally generate the outcomes we want—as a byproduct of our activity?

- If you could only work on one project for a year to transform our efforts, what would it be and why?

- What is the shortest path to the customer? How could we get there in 6 months?

- What suffers more breakdowns: our products, our processes, or our people? How could we fix this?

- It’s 2025 and we’re the best college to work for in the world: What two things did we do to earn this award?

- Which parts of your job would you like to eliminate?

- What would our dream testimonial from a customer say?

- What can we offer for free that no one else does?

- How can our services be turned into physical products? How can our products be turned into a service?
• If we had unlimited resources (or none), how might we achieve this?

• How would a group of 5 year olds suggest we achieve this--or how would we design solutions if we were working with 5 year olds?

• What could we learn from unrelated industries or businesses who are achieving the results we want?

• Open a book or newspaper to a random page and point to a random word. Use this word to stimulate creativity and new ideas. What ideas does this word bring to mind and how are those ideas related to the topic? Free associate, brainstorm.

• What strange bedfellows could we partner with to innovate solutions or achieve our goals?

• What’s our ultimate purpose? If we were designing a new and unique system to achieve that, what would it be?

• What if play was the answer?

• What are all community colleges assuming that needs to be challenged? What policies are in our way?

• What could we do if we were completely free to do it?
Practicing Crafting Questions

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time, using the guidelines below for self-managing this work.

- **DISCUSSION LEADER** – Manages the circle task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available.
- **TIMEKEEPER** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking.
- **RECORDER/REPORTER** – Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its, using speaker’s words. Delivers report to larger group in allotted time.

**Purpose:** To practice reframing problems or concerns into opportunities or generative topics.

**Goals:**
1. **Identify Structures, Procedures or Policies.** Create a list of organizational policies, procedures or structures that impact culture and therefore should be reviewed and revised for you to achieve your desired culture. 5 minutes

2. **Choose One and Craft Questions.** 15 minutes
   a. Craft three appreciate questions that will help you discover the best aspects of the current policy, procedure or structure that you identified, what you want to bring forward and imagine what could be (use the standard questions as a guide, page 23).
   b. Craft two disruptive questions that could help you think differently about your identified policy, procedure or structure, that challenge your current thinking or assumptions.

3. **Stress Test.** Turn to a different circles and stress test. Share your topic and five questions. Ask for quick comments: what do you like? What else would you suggest? 10 minutes
Practical Application on Strategic Goals

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time.

- **DISCUSSION LEADER** – Manages the group task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available.
- **TIMEKEEPER** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking.
- **RECORDER/REPORTER** – Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its, using speaker’s words. Delivers report to larger group in allotted time.

**Purpose:** To inquire into your strategy in ways that will expand possibilities, opportunities for how to best implement your strategy in ways that move toward the goal. Think leverage—small actions with big impact, low hanging fruit and quick wins.

**Goals:**

1. **Discussions and Online Research.** Break into groups of 4-6 and briefly discuss the following questions. Review the questions generated yesterday afternoon to see if any of them are relevant for your strategy (handout). As you discuss, capture concepts that you think might be important on flipchart paper.
   a. What are the current strengths and best practices that we can build upon going forward? Who at the college has expertise, knowledge of or practices a model we can learn from?
   b. How have other esteemed colleges or organizations achieved the outcome we want?
   c. What if our students took a leadership role?
   d. What assumptions are we making? Are they accurate?
   e. Imagine it’s 2020 and we have achieved the outcome and if wasn’t a burden to get here; in fact it was enlivening. What is the result for our students? Faculty? Staff? How did we get here? What made it easy and natural for us?

2. **Generate Possibilities.** Post your flipchart papers to the wall. In your small groups
   a. Do a gallery walk to see what others have been discussing and then take 5 minutes individually to reflect and sketch out possibilities for implementing this strategy.
   b. Go around your circle and share your sketches, looking for how they merge, integrate, and blend.
   c. Together identify the most potent possibilities—the ones you believe will make this strategy a success.
   d. Put each possibility on a 6x8 post-it.

3. **Share and Merge.** Everyone working on the strategy come together. Each small group reports out, posting their possibilities to the wall. Affinitize, merge, and mesh possibilities. Shine the light of alignment through your timeline and select the most potent projects and actions and low hanging fruit. Sequence as a timeline.
Core Teams and Stakeholder Engagement

What is a Core Team?
Sometimes referred to as Champions, a core team is a subset of the larger set of stakeholders for any given topic. The Core Team is responsible for developing the affirmative topic, crafting the research questions and designing the engagement process that invites all stakeholders to engage.

Why Is It a Subset of All Stakeholders?
It’s important that all stakeholders are represented from the outset because it is the starting point and will influence everything that follows. This not only reflects an inclusive and collaborative culture, it also saves time and money down the road.

What are the Responsibilities of the Core Team?
- Frame or reframe the topic if it is not already a generative topic
- Develop appreciative and disruptive questions to guide research and discovery
- Identify stakeholders
- Determine an engagement process and include relevant stakeholders in planning
- Analyze any data from research and engagement
- Develop plans
- Implement, champion and celebrate

Identifying Stakeholders: The Five I’s
- Impact (think implementation)
- Information (necessary for success)
- Influence (resources, network, connections)
- Investment (financial or emotional)
- Interest in the topic, task and outcomes
Creating a Plan to Move Forward

Each group will manage its own dialogue and time.

- **DISCUSSION LEADER** – Manages the group task. Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available.
- **TIMEKEEPER** – Keeps group aware of time left. Monitors report-outs and signals time remaining to person talking.
- **RECORDER/REPORTER** – Writes group’s output on flip charts/post-its, using speaker’s words. Delivers report to larger group in allotted time.

**Purpose:** To develop your initial action plan for your strategy.

**Goals:**

*Using the e-Planning Template:*

1. **Identify Stakeholders.** Identify stakeholders who should be invited to participate in expanding the action plan. There may be different stakeholder for different actions. Use the 5 I’s (page 47) to guide your thinking.

2. **Identify the Ideal Core Team.** Which stakeholders would be ideal for the Core Team—the group that will coordinate this effort, lead further research or engagement efforts, and become Champions for this strategy—creating celebrations for mile markers, ensuring alignment between projects and action plans.

3. **Choose a Coordinator.** Choose a coordinator, someone willing to follow up after this workshop to coordinate action until the Strategy Team is in place. Select a date for your first official Core Team Meeting to share information with them.

4. **Develop an Initial Action Plan.** Create a draft action:
   a. First Core Team Meeting
   b. Additional Inquiry through internal engagement or external research, if relevant
   c. Possible Actions or Projects
   d. Stakeholders for each action item

5. **Complete the e-planning template.** Save the template as a word file and give it a file name that makes it easy to recognize which goal and strategy this file is for. For example: *A4 AI Culture-Continuous Improvement.doc*. Email the file to *dena.colemer@southcentral.edu* and save the file to one of the thumb drives and turn it in to one of the facilitators.

   ~ Return to the Conference Center if you are not already there. ~
Resources and References
Definitions for Miscellaneous Terms

A number of the terms we use are from the Innovation Partners International model for Increasing your Return on Collaboration (ROC). Listed here are all of the terms along with their definitions.

**Radical Appreciation** A mindset that continuously seeks opportunity and possibility. Regardless of the circumstances—positive or negative, problem or success—it embraces what is and looks for what gives life. It invites diversity and inclusion. Itcelebrates conflict by bridging polarities: inviting curiosity and sparking exploration. It looks for the best of what is, wherever it can find it. It replicates and enhances success.

**Disruptive Inquiry** A mindset that delights in uncertainty and allows ambiguity in order to make room for creativity and innovation. It fosters and expands the ability to ask great questions. It celebrates the questions that challenge assumptions and ordinary patterns of thinking and doing. It rewards curiosity, difference of opinion and wonder. It holds system structures lightly, making room for them to evolve.

**Provocative Possibilities** A mindset that fosters *open mind, open heart and open will* and invites generativity, emergence, paradoxical thinking, constructive controversy and playfulness. It understands that these practices increase engagement and provide fertile soil for innovative thinking and collaboration.

**Elegant Design** A mindset that sees simplicity as the ultimate sophistication. It seeks to simplify rules and maximize flexibility while clarifying concepts and outcomes. It delights in beautiful design that achieves outcomes with simple efficiency.

**Agile Action** A mindset that sees prototyping as a way of working—good enough is good to go. A prototype is a form or an instance of a product, service or process serves as a basis or a standard for later stages. This evolves into an original, full-scale working model for a product or service. This mindset fosters an iterative approach to any work. It identifies and aligns strengths to propel action, clarifies roles and responsibilities and pairs accountability with agency to inspire contribution, experimentation, learning and excellence.

**Perpetual Evolution** A mindset that understands growth and learning as integral to success. It articulates measurable results, makes time for reflection and learning, creates room for emergence and intentional delays and celebrates both success and failure. This mindset understands all products, services and processes as prototypes of one form or another that may always be improved upon.

The ROC Six Pack offers an underlying framework or paradigm for *the way things are done around here*. These six mindsets can also be used to create a methodological approach for innovation around a particular focus.
Appreciative Inquiry: Evidence-Based Research

The 21st century medical and human sciences technology that emerged in the 1990’s has enabled research into the human being that sheds light on human capacity and high performance. It provides evidence that creating conditions for individual strengths to align around possibility elevates human flourishing and that learning, performance, creativity, and resilience are enhanced in an atmosphere of openness, inquiry, and positive connection. The New Science (e.g., current neurophysiology, neuropsychology), positive psychology, positive organizational scholarship, and systems research underlie the effectiveness of such attention. The results are greater access to human potential, greater engagement and collaboration across an organization and greater commitment to the organization’s long-range goals.

What follows is a very brief recap of the salient features in current research coupled with links and references for further information.

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI), developed in the 1980’s by David Cooperrider, is grounded in two deceptively simple concepts:

1. **What you seek, you find more of** – The more positive and inspiring the strategy development process, the more innovative ideas that will be created and possibilities that can be explored.
2. **People commit to what they help to create** – The more participative the plan creation, the more committed people will be to implementation success.

The foundation of AI is the notion that we create our futures together through our conversations and in shared meaning-making. Years of research documents that what we pay attention to grows, and that we move in the direction of the questions that we ask and the images we hold. Therefore, it makes sense to ask questions about strengths, what is of value, what will add value, and what we want more of. When we ask questions about problems, we deepen our understanding of the problem; this does not necessarily give us any access into solutions. It also narrows our focus to seeking solutions that solve the specific problem when what is needed is a shift in frame or perspective.

In addition, we know that collective intelligence holds secrets a small group may never access and that people get excited about acting on plans they have created together. There is something magical about having the “whole” in the room developing a shared understanding, shared meaning about their future, and designing ways to bring it to life. The AI process enables large numbers to come together to do just that. There is a wealth of information on the AI Commons [http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu](http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu).

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A key element of Appreciative Inquiry is story or narrative. This stems from the idea that we create our culture and social reality in our conversations and the stories that help to frame our ways of seeing, thinking and understanding the world. As we share our stories, we uncover our shared beliefs and perceptions as well as our differences. Subsequent conversations and collective explorations help us to co-create organizational stories and narratives that help us move together towards our desired future. This is the goal of Engagement!

Notes:
Positive Image → Positive Action

Good relationships are core to achieving excellence in any human community endeavor. Over the last 30-40 years there has been a wealth of research in the area of human potential. Understanding how the words we use, the thoughts we have, the questions we ask, and the images we hold impact our emotions and our capacity to act—individually and collaboratively—is vital for leadership and educators. Below is a brief overview of key elements of some of the research that tells us that image is compelling—we move in the direction of the thoughts and images we hold. As a leader and/or educator, using your words intentionally to create bold, positive images supports positive outcomes in the future.

Positive Image → Positive Action Research
Cooperrider article: [http://www.stipes.com/aichap2.htm](http://www.stipes.com/aichap2.htm)

Placebo Effect
- If you believe the medicine will cure you, it is likely to trigger your own healing.
- Between 30 - 60% of patients with illnesses ranging from arthritis to depression report a substantial improvement in their symptoms after receiving a placebo.
- When treatment with placebo reduces symptoms, it also changes the function of the brain (Leuchter, *et al.*, UCLA, January 2002).
- **Insight from Research:** Our beliefs influence our thinking, feeling, perception and neurophysiology.

Pygmalion Effect
- *What the teacher (or manager) believes, so the student (employee) becomes.*
- Tim O’Shea (“teacher has greater effect than treatment in all cases”)
- Jane Elliot’s blue-eyed, brown-eyed (April 5, 1968) [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided)
- When the Placebo effect (patient) and Pygmalion effect (doctor) are in harmony, placebos are even more likely to bring about a cure.
- **Insight from Research:** Your beliefs about other people are communicated through subtle but powerful messages (body language, tone, word choice), influencing their belief in themselves.

Positive Affect/Effect and Imbalanced Inner Dialogue
- Language stimulates both thinking and feeling. Deficit-based questions and conversations generate negative thinking and feeling, which diminish human potential Open, outcomes-based questions and generative conversations stimulate positive thinking and feeling, which broaden and build human potential.
- **Broaden & Build Theory,** pro-social action, increased recall, increased creativity, improved problem solving and decision making, improved learning.
- Ratio of 1:2.9-11.6 generates best outcomes
- **Insight from Research:** Frame your conversations so that, on balance, you are asking and talking about what’s working and what’s possible at least three times more often than you are talking about what’s not working and what appears to be impossible. By all means, name problems or challenge and then turn the conversation towards solutions, disruptions (which inspire curiosity), and innovation.

**Rise and Fall of Cultures**
- Cultures that make it possible for people to engage in generative conversations, collaborate on creating desired futures and who integrate the arts into their lives are on the rise. Cultures that eliminate those opportunities and qualities fall. **Where there is no hope, the people perish.**
- Underlying cultural images impact the fate of a nation
- Fred Polak, 1973: positive image of the future -> cultural evolution
- Positive future, which can be influenced: valuing creative imagination, open questions, rich emotional life, freedom of speech
- When hope and positive images of future die, the culture dies (Becker, 1971)
- **Insight from Research:** Create opportunities for people to engage in meaningful conversations about the future and empower them to collaborate in bringing those futures into reality. Find ways to integrate the arts, creativity, and beauty into the culture.

**Affirmative Competence**
- Images are processed by the right brain. Abstract language concepts are processed by the left-brain. When we use the whole brain, we can understand complex sentences that include both; however, right brain images—whether real or imagined—dominate action, especially if it is a reaction. For example: “Don’t Smoke”. Right brain: sees a smoker; left-brain understands “don’t do that thing you are seeing”.
- Our own capacity to generate positive images that can compel our futures; the whole body responds just like the whole culture responds to a positive image
- Healing and imagery; virtual worlds
- Athletics and imagery, psychotherapy and imagery, imagery and healing, hypnosis and imagery, and others related to overall meta-cognitive capacity
- Bowling research, Kirschenbaum, 1984
- Sheikh, 1983; Malouff, et al, 2008; Plessinger 2013 ([http://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/psychology/health_psychology/mentalimagery.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/psychology/health_psychology/mentalimagery.html))
- **Insight from Research:** Carefully craft requests and questions to generate powerful positive images of what you want to happen, where you want to go.
Putting the Principles into Action

**Given the Constructionist Principle**
*How can we be intentional about ...*
- Generating our culture
- Bringing out the best in one another
- Running our meetings so we are all pleased
- Creating shared meaning
- Creating a world that works for all of us

**Given the Principle of Simultaneity**
*How can we be intentional about ...*
- Asking questions that move us towards an inclusive future we all want
- Asking questions that help us use challenges and problems as opportunities to thrive
- Asking questions that help turn conversations toward desired and shared outcomes
- Using language that brings about engagement and/or a generative response

**Given the Poetic Principle**
*How can we be intentional about ...*
- Reflecting on our experiences in ways that build capacity, identify strengths, and find moments of achievement that will inform the future we collectively desire
- Paying attention to what supports all of us
- Reframing our relationships and situations so that we are empowered to move forward and achieve our dreams together
- What we pay attention to (Am I focusing on what is working or on what is wrong?)

**Given the Anticipatory Principle**
*How can we be intentional about ...*
- Envisioning the boldest and most positive future we can imagine together
- Looking for strengths and planning for collaboration and cooperation
- Expecting the best from one another
- Looking for the good, the true and the beautiful
- Learning and possibilities

**Given the Positive Principle**
*How can we be intentional about ...*
- Asking bold and positive questions
- Generating powerful conversations, looking for new knowledge, possibility, and innovation
- Asking questions that generate positive images for our collaborative actions and outcomes
The Positive Psychology Movement & New Science

David Rock, 2009 - Present
- The social nature of the high performance workplace and classroom
- The human need for SCARF (status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, fairness) and its relationship to high performance
- Managing with the Brain in Mind, 2009’ Your Brain at Work, 2009
- New Science of Leadership (NeuroLeadership)

Martin Seligman, 1998 - Present
- The scientific study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive; the scientific pursuit of optimal human functioning and the building of a field focusing on human strength and virtue.
- The Center for Positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania: http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu
- The APA website for Positive Psychology: http://www.apa.org/apags/profdev=pospsyc.html
- Ben Shahar, Harvard’s most popular class in history

Barbara Fredrickson, 1998 – Present
- Positivity Ratio: at least 3:1 ratio of positive to negative emotions helps optimize our capacity. http://www.positivityratio.com/
- Positive Emotions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7dFDHzV36g
- Positive Emotions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKggZhYwoys
- Research area: function of positive emotions
- Broaden & build theory of positive emotions
- Take the Positivity Test: http://www.positivityratio.com/single.php
- Positive emotions literally undo the effects of negative emotions
- Fredrickson’s website at the University of NC-Chapel Hill: http://www.unc.edu/peplab/barb_fredrickson_page.html

Institute of HeartMath, 1994 - Present
- Researching heart intelligence and stress and emotional management
- Findings: coherence in heart rate impacts coherence in neurology of the brain and hence brain functioning
- Positive emotions increase coherence, especially the emotions of appreciation, love, and gratitude.
- Coherence correlates with improved critical thinking and decision making, increased creativity, improved social interaction
- HeartMath website: http://www.heartmath.org
Positive Organizational Scholarship

- Research on optimal organizational states: the dynamics in organizations that lead to the development of human strength, foster resiliency in employees, make healing, restoration, and reconciliation possible, and cultivate extraordinary individual and organizational performance (Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn, 2003).
- The Center for POS Website at the University of Michigan:
  http://www.bus.umich.edu/Positive

Notes:
Strategic Planning SOAR Analysis

From SWOT

Strengths
Where can we outperform others?

Weaknesses
Where can others outperform us?

Opportunities
How might we exploit the market?

Threats
What/Who might take the market from us?

To SOAR

Strengths
What are our greatest assets?

Opportunities
What are the trends and market opportunities?

Aspirations
What is our preferred future?

Results
What are the measurable results we want?
For strategic planning, an organizational assessment is advisable. A SWOT Analysis has been used successfully for years. What the principles of AI suggest is that large-scale focus on weaknesses and threats has the potential to narrow available thought repertoire among members of an organization and thereby limit creativity and motivation.

A strengths-based approach to such an assessment is called a SOAR Analysis, a process developed by Jackie Stavros of Lawrence Technical University. In this practice you assess strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. Areas of weakness may surface in the assessment, but the focus is on actions to take or resources needed to achieve desired results. These are determined within the context of identified strengths already present.

This may sound like semantics. The important point to remember is how language impacts our physiology (especially our brains and nervous system), which in turn impacts our capacity for critical thinking, innovation, creativity, and motivation. Any action that increases our thought repertoire and openness to collaborate is an automatic win for an organization.

Weblink to the Stavros article: http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/practice/executiveDetail.cfm?coid=5331
Making Stuff Up: It’s What We Do

There is hidden Stuff within each of us that enhances success (. . . or not). By inviting transparency, focusing on shared, positive outcomes and using the art of reflective practice together we can surface that Stuff (our own and others) in ways that support connection and collaborative impact.

Telltale Signs that Stuff is Missing in the Conversation
- Unexpressed emotions (non-verbal language): fear, anger, hurt, defensiveness, confusion
- Edgy comments: judgment, (self) criticism, sarcasm, arguing
- Action: exclusion, withdrawal, avoidance
- Silence: when it’s time for questions

Where Does Stuff Come From?
- We’re all graduates of MSU: anticipation and expectation, habits of story-making
- Personal perspective and perception
- Fears
- Assumptions sneak in unless we practice
  - Specificity and clarity
  - Giving and receiving feedback
  - Inquiry

Take Action!
STOP and Take a Deep Breath of A-I-R
- Affirm Reality:
  - What are the facts?
  - What might I be making up?
- Inquire:
  - Are you saying ...
  - Could say that again, please; I’m not sure I understand what you mean.
  - How will that impact ....
  - You look upset. How did you understand what I said?
- Reflect:
  - What frame am I bringing to this and how is it influencing my perception?
  - What hasn’t been said that I need to ask about?
  - What information do they have that I need?
  - What did they actually mean to say or do?
Reflective Practice

First: Get in the habit of challenging yourself
Grow curious about your reactions and your own frame; wonder about your assumptions/story

Make it safe to ask ~ feedback and feedforward are truly valuable
- Make Mutual Respect and Trust (MRT) core principles and a core practice
- Invite questions and ask them yourself
- Encourage and reward those who inquire: “Thanks for asking that; there are others who are no doubt grateful for your courage!”
- Ask what the other understood you to say or what it means for them
- Be open; beware of defensiveness
- Model: ask someone to “say more” when what they say leaves a lot of room for MSU

Focus on the Outcome
- Identify the outcome: what are we aiming for; where are we trying to go together?
- Link your conversation to the outcome
- Focus on the outcome, not the personal
- Engage in reflective practice
  - Ask back, clarify, surface assumptions
  - Include everyone
  - Link perspectives to the outcome
  - Inquire

Common questions that support the practice of A-I-R
- “Say more about that.”
- “Why do say that?”
- “Why do you ask?”
- “I’m not sure I understand you; could you say more?”
- “Are you saying ...?”
- “How will that work?”
- “How does that connect with ...?”
- “I would like to clarify something...”

Use this practice whenever and wherever appropriate:
- Meetings, especially when focused on learning, innovating, exploring
- Planning
- Conflict, Tension
- General conversation where there’s the possibility for miscommunication
The Ladder of Inference

Quick Summary: *Ladder of Inference* (developed by Chris Argyris, Ph.D.)
This model offers a view of how our perceptions influence our actions and helps explain how we filter “all the data in the world” and in that process, come to action. Here’s what it looks like:

Reflexive Loop:
Our beliefs influence the data we select, the meaning we make of that data, our assumptions and conclusions. Without care, it is easy to experience what we believe we are going to experience because of the data we select, and how we make meaning of it.
To understand this model, start at the bottom: “All the data in the world”.

We have an overwhelming amount of data available to us at any given time, much more than we are actually aware of. Argyris suggests that there is “some personal process” by which we select only certain data and make meaning from it. That meaning-making process leads us to make assumptions, develop conclusions, create beliefs, and ultimately take action based on those beliefs. Our personal process is reinforced by the Reflexive Loop, which suggests that our beliefs influence what subsequent data we select.

The Ladder of Inference shows how quickly we can go from “All the data in the world” to action . . . sometimes in a tenth of a second. There is evidence in the research that also suggests that we tend to select data that reinforces our beliefs, thereby making our actions efficient. However, those actions are not always the most effective, especially in these times of exponential change and massive knowledge generation.

Inquiry and Reflective Practice help us slow down our ascent of the ladder. First helping us access more of the data and then allowing us to intentionally and carefully make meaning of the data in relationship to the outcomes we are aiming to achieve. This often requires unpacking our beliefs, conclusions, and assumptions. Reflective practice is designed to do just this.
Framing and Reframing

Whether you are looking to solve a problem, respond to environmental change or be the initiator of change it is important to frame the focus of your effort in a way that generates the highest possible value for all concerned. The benefit of taking the time to do this is two-fold: (1) you don’t waste time solving problems or making changes that don’t support your higher vision or mission and (2) people are more likely to get engaged in efforts that are increasing value for everyone, including themselves. Framing the focus or topic for your efforts on valued outcomes is the starting place for engaging others in:

- Discovering new information, diverse perspectives, and assumptions that influence understanding and possibility
- Discovering current existing strengths and trends
- Disrupting old patterns of thinking in order to develop innovative opportunities
- Co-creating possibilities for action

Framing the topic or focus can be one of the most challenging tasks and yet it is one of the most important things you can do related to effectiveness, efficiency, and engaging people. At first blush, the outcome may seem obvious—you have a problem, fix it; the business case for change points to what needs to change, so simply figure out how to make that change. That is the obvious and habitual step. An appreciative approach encourages you first to step back and make sure you are focusing on an outcome that is aligned with the bigger picture (organizational or strategic goals) and that you make room for innovation by challenging assumptions, questioning the status quo, and engaging in divergent thinking.

If the initial framing of the issues focuses primarily on problems that need to be fixed, pause before you jump into problem solving. It may be valuable to reframe a problem (What we don’t want) to an affirmative topic (What we do want), which should include the perspective of the ultimate end-user (What they want, where they might be students, customers, a community, an industry, or any group).
Identifying Stakeholders

For real and meaningful engagement, you want to make sure to include all relevant stakeholders at appropriate times in your project or change management process. The greatest number of stakeholders should be included in Step 1. It is here that you have the opportunity to engage a multiplicity of perspectives, invite creativity and innovation, and gather important information about what is important for each stakeholder group, essential for them to be onboard with moving forward with the project or change. They will help design for success.

When you are considering stakeholders, think of “Five I’s.” It’s a simple, comprehensive, and easy to use framework that can be used in identifying relevant stakeholders.

1. **Interest** in the topic, task and potential outcomes. For example, community members or students may be very interested in having a say about course offerings that are included in your curriculum.

2. **Influence**, formal and informal, to provide resources to achieve the task or outcome. For example, policy makers who influence things at the state level or community businesses that may be in position to provide instructors, internships, financial resources, or support for policy changes.

3. **Information** or access to information needed for success. For example, students have essential information about their preferences for classes, products or services, employees who have front line information or faculty who may have external field knowledge that is relevant.

4. **Impact** or will be impacted by what happens in relationship to the tasks or outcome. For example, employees who have to implement a plan of action or students who will be served.

5. **Investment**, financial or emotional, related to the task and outcomes. For example, faculty or vendors who are instrumental to the implementation of the outcome.
Designing for Engagement

Engagement means thinking together and acting together, collaborating to envision the future, developing strategies to achieve that future and then working together to achieve strategic organizational goals. There are a variety of methodologies, processes and practices that can be used to maximize as well as optimize engagement. Below you will find a list of them, including a brief description. There is also a chart to help you assess selection. Some of these methods require skillful facilitation, which requires specific training in order to effectively facilitate the process or method.

Basically all methodologies, processes and practices that support engagement will require you to develop your ability to create safe and open environments, focus on outcomes, expand your inquiry skills, practice and facilitate dialogue, and model leadership/group behaviors that invite engagement. Engagement methods, processes and practices fall under six categories.

1. **Gathering data and information**: engaging stakeholders by asking them to share data and information that is relevant to change or a project.
2. **Processing data and information**: engaging stakeholders in the analysis, synthesis or sense-making process needed after the data and information have been gathered inviting them to validate the synthesis.
3. **Innovation**: engaging stakeholders by disrupting their patterns of thinking about how to achieve desired outcomes in order to make room for innovation and creativity.
4. **Visioning**: engaging stakeholders in creating images and scenarios about the future state.
5. **Designing and planning for the future state**: engaging stakeholders in the design of strategies to achieve the future state and in planning for implementation.
6. **Implementation and evolution**: engaging stakeholders in the implementation and ongoing evolution of the project or change.

The methods and processes are described below. Following the description is a chart, which will help you select the method or process that can best support your engagement efforts. Please note the following icons and what they represent:

- **One-on-One**
- **Small Group**
- **Large Group**
- **Technology**
One-on-One Interviews Formal interviews that can be one-way or two-way, depending upon whether someone is doing a lot of interviews to gather data or the interviews are completed during a larger group session where partners interview one another. Appreciative Inquiry interviews are a standard practice for gathering data and stories.

Self-Managing Groups Small groups that come together to work on a set of tasks, in this case associated with change or project management. The group manages itself and its own discussion and process. It is important to make sure the purpose is clear, the discussions are structured, the goals are articulated and the timeline pre-established in order to support accountability and success.

Focus Group A small group selected from a wider stakeholder population that engages in a discussion to share ideas, opinions about or responses to a particular subject or set of questions.

AI or ROC Summit A whole systems or large group change process that engages stakeholders in promoting positive change in an organization. This strength-based approach engages stakeholders, strengthens relationships and generates remarkable results. At a summit, people engage in 1-on-1 interviews, self-managing small group discussions, and whole system exploration as they move through a series of processes designed to deliver actionable results. For a Summit to be successful, be sure to use a skilled AI/ROC facilitator.

Open Space Technology An approach for hosting meetings, conferences, corporate-style retreats, symposiums, and community summit events, focused on a specific and important purpose or task—but beginning without any formal agenda, beyond the overall purpose or theme. The goal of an Open Space Technology meeting is to create time and space for people to engage deeply and creatively around issues of concern to them. For Open Space to be successful, be sure to use a skilled OST facilitator. OST is often used during a summit.

World Café The World Café is a creative process for facilitating collaborative dialogue and the sharing of knowledge and ideas to create a living network of conversation and action. In this process a café ambiance is created, in which participants discuss a question or issue in small groups around café tables. At regular intervals the participants move to a new table. One table host remains and summarizes the previous conversation to the new table guests. Thus the proceeding conversations are cross-fertilized with the ideas generated in former conversations with other participants. At the end of the process the main ideas are summarized in a plenary session and follow-up possibilities are discussed. World Café is sometimes used during a summit.
Note: Less engaging, but sometimes appropriate ways to engage people in the future of the organization:

The Survey A survey is used to ask stakeholders questions in order to collect data for the analysis of some aspect of a group or area. Surveys are typically done online. Though it invites people to share and provide input, it is not a highly engaging methodology and does little to build relationship. If you do survey stakeholders, be sure to follow up and to ground your future actions in the information that you gathered. If the input is not valued, people will stop completing surveys.
## Methods and Processes Chart

### Gathering Data and Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/Process</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Survey**     |             | • Rapid feedback  
                • No time or way to bring all stakeholders together | • Fast  
                • Easy  
                • Virtual | • Low engagement  
                • Non-rich info  
                • No relationship  
                • Need to cycle back | • Crafting the questions  
                • Sharing outcomes |
| **Interviews** |             | • Identifying strengths, trends, opportunities  
                • Gathering stories, future state images & ideas | • Real engagement  
                • Rich info  
                • Story gathering  
                • Relationship  
                • Full voice | • Time  
                • Synthesizing the data  
                • Need to cycle back | • Crafting the focus and interview questions  
                • Using the data  
                • Sharing outcomes |
| **Focus Groups** |             | • Identifying strengths, trends, opportunities  
                • Identifying future state images & ideas | • Rich info  
                • Real Engagement  
                • Relationship  
                • Full Voice  
                • Faster than 1-on-1 | • Synthesizing data if there is more than one group  
                • Need to cycle back | • Crafting the focus and interview questions  
                • Strategy to capture conversation  
                • Using the data  
                • Sharing outcomes |
| **World Café** |             | • Identifying strengths, trends, opportunities  
                • Identifying future state images & ideas | • Cross pollination  
                • Engagement  
                • Relationship  
                • Voice | • Chaotic  
                • Synthesizing data  
                • Sense-making  
                • Need to cycle back | • Crafting the questions  
                • Organizing the chaos  
                • Gathering the data  
                • Sharing outcomes |
### Processing Data and Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/Process</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Managing Groups</td>
<td>• After interviews, groups of 6-8 synthesize their own data</td>
<td>• Fast</td>
<td>• Available time for group members</td>
<td>• Clearly structured dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Team</td>
<td>Cycles of action and reflection cycles of engaging stakeholders</td>
<td>• High engagement of a few</td>
<td>• Time</td>
<td>Sharing outcomes for verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Tools</td>
<td>• Surveys</td>
<td>• Fast</td>
<td>• No engagement</td>
<td>Share outcomes for verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualitative analysis if you enter stories</td>
<td></td>
<td>• No relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• At a Summit</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Need to cycle back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Innovation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/Process</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Managing Groups</td>
<td>Any time you want a group to be innovative around a topic</td>
<td>• Fast</td>
<td>Available time for group members</td>
<td>• Clearly structured dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High engagement</td>
<td>• Effective disruptive inquiry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationship</td>
<td>• Good facilitators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Taps collective intelligence</td>
<td>• Strategy to gather conversation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>You want input because you (and your colleagues) want to innovate</td>
<td>• Engagement</td>
<td>• Need to cycle back</td>
<td>• Effective disruptive inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationship</td>
<td>• Good facilitators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Taps collective intelligence</td>
<td>• Strategy to gather conversation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sharing outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External interviews and</td>
<td>Disrupt you own thinking by scanning externally</td>
<td>• Learn from best practices</td>
<td>• Carefully crafted questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cross pollination</td>
<td>• Sharing outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationship</td>
<td>• Available time for group members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Visioning Future States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/Process</th>
<th>When to Use</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interviews             | • Identifying strengths, trends, opportunities  
                        | • Gathering stories, future state images & ideas                          | • Real engagement  
                        | • Rich info  
                        | • Story gathering  
                        | • Relationship  
                        | • Full voice                          | • Time  
                        | • Synthesizing the data  
                        | • Need to cycle back                 | • Crafting the focus and interview questions  
                        | • Using the data  
                        | • Sharing outcomes                   |
| Self-Managing Groups   | Following interviews, they can co-create shared images of the future as well as scenarios | • Fast  
                        | • People commit to what they help create  
                        | • High engagement  
                        | • Relationship                          | Available time for group members                     | Clearly structured dialogue                                                      |
| Focus Groups           | You want input because you (and your colleagues) want to generate images of a future state | • Engagement  
                        | • Relationship  
                        | • Taps collective intelligence  
                        |                                      | • Time  
                        | • Need to cycle back                 | • Clearly structured dialogue  
                        | • Good facilitators  
                        | • Way to capture ideas  
                        | • Sharing outcomes for verification  |
| AI Summit              | You’d like to engage all stakeholders in a complete and full process at the same time | • Everyone is engaged in all steps at the same time  
                        | • Ultimately faster  
                        | • People commit to what they help create  
                        | • High engagement  
                        | • Relationship  
                        | • Full Voice                          | • Getting the time in one block  
                        | • Planning  
                        | • Cost, maybe  
                        | • Personal control                   | • AI facilitators  
                        | • Carefully crafted AI process: interviews, structured small group dialogue and activity  
                        | • Strategy to gather the output  
                        | • Using the results                   |
| Open Space Technology  | Strategic direction setting, envisioning the future, audience scenarios     | • High engagement  
                        | • Relationship  
                        | • Voice  
                        | • Passionate commitment by those in the groups  
                        | • Control  
                        | • Can feel chaotic  
                        | • Planning                          | • OST facilitators  
                        | • Convening topic clearly articulated  
                        | • A way to gather the output  
                        | • Sharing the outcomes  
                        | • Using results                       |
# Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Method/Process</strong></th>
<th><strong>When to Use</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th>** Challenges**</th>
<th><strong>Success Factors</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Self-Managing Groups** | Whenever stakeholders will be part of implementing the plan | • People commit to what they help create  
• High engagement  
• Relationship | • Time for group members  
• Personal control | • Clearly structured dialogue |
| **AI Summit** | You’d like to engage all stakeholders in the planning process at the same time | • Everyone is engaged in all steps at the same time  
• Ultimately faster  
• People commit to what they help create  
• High engagement  
• Relationship  
• Full Voice | • Getting the time in one block  
• Planning  
• Cost, maybe  
• Personal control | • AI facilitators  
• Carefully crafted AI process: interviews, structured small group dialogue and activity  
• Strategy to gather the output  
• Using the results |
| **Open Space** | You want to help plan a strategy to achieve the vision and you are willing to let people “run” with an idea | • High engagement  
• Relationship  
• Voice  
• Passionate commitment by those in the groups | • Control  
• Can feel chaotic  
• Planning | • OST facilitators  
• Convening topic clearly articulated  
• A way to gather the output  
• Sharing the outcomes  
• Using the results |

# Implementation & Evolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Method/Process</strong></th>
<th><strong>When to Use</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th>** Challenges**</th>
<th><strong>Success Factors</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Interviews** | A way of doing valuation and feedback/ feedforward | • Builds relationship  
• Ties effort into ongoing evolution of a project or change  
• Engagement | • If the interview goes both ways, it can require courage from a manager | • Carefully crafted questions  
• Sufficient time |
| **Self-Managing Groups** | Whenever stakeholders are accountable and/or impacted by an effort | • High engagement  
• Relationship  
• Continued co-creation/ evolution | • Time  
• Metrics/ measurable goals | • Clearly structured dialogue  
• Measureable goals and measures |
# The Excellence Paradigm: Evolving through Uncertainty, Ambiguity, and Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of success</th>
<th>Perfection</th>
<th>Excellence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No mistakes!</td>
<td>Continuous pursuit of quality and knowledge (including insights from mistakes).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant motivator</th>
<th>Fear of making mistakes, of being wrong.</th>
<th>Anticipation of acquiring new skills and insights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I should know all I need to (also, I may fear I can’t learn what I don’t know).</td>
<td>Knowledge evolves and learning is continuous. I will learn in the way most useful to me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is only one perfect answer and, by extension, there are limited possibilities and resources.</td>
<td>There are infinite possibilities and resources I have yet to uncover.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underlying assumption</th>
<th>Explorer’s mindset. A sense of wonder, awe, humility at life’s complexity. I seek to increase my capacity to understand and learn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The internal (pathological) critic. If I’m right, I’m brilliant; if I’m wrong, I’m flawed.</td>
<td>Feeling of failure, resulting in negative emotions/actions (e.g., defensiveness, blame attribution, contrition, anger, resentment).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basis for self-esteem</th>
<th>Realization that whatever happens is a result of people’s knowledge and awareness at the time. Hence, a deep interest in exploring ways to increase knowledge and awareness.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The internal (pathological) critic. If I’m right, I’m brilliant; if I’m wrong, I’m flawed.</td>
<td>Feeling of failure, resulting in negative emotions/actions (e.g., defensiveness, blame attribution, contrition, anger, resentment).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequences of mistakes</th>
<th>Interpersonal manifestations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of failure, resulting in negative emotions/actions (e.g., defensiveness, blame attribution, contrition, anger, resentment).</td>
<td>Advocate our opinions, seek to persuade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A need to judge others relative to ourselves. Eagerness to point out others’ mistakes; pleasure in others’ misfortunes (shadenfreude)</td>
<td>Inquire about others’ opinions, seek to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ourselves: self-esteem depends on whether we are right or wrong. We don’t seek others’ opinions/ideas. Little, if any, learning occurs.</td>
<td>Anticipation that I will learn something from everyone I interact with. An appreciation for the value of diverse perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others: Win/lose outcomes. Our actions breed resentment, our negativity infects others.</td>
<td>Ourselves: We learn and therefore maintain a healthy self-esteem. We seek out and appreciate the goodness, skills, and talents in others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others: Win/lose outcomes regardless of “success.” Our appreciative approach infects others. We help others achieve the 3 universal needs: to be heard, to feel essential, to be seen as unique and exceptional.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequence to ourselves and others</th>
<th>Organizational manifestations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear of failure and unwillingness to take on any risks.</td>
<td>Fascination with learning. Willingness to take on reasonable risks as learning opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which lead to...</th>
<th>Controls to prevent undesirable outcomes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informed spontaneity, co-creation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which creates a work environment that is...</th>
<th>Stressful, painful, hard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fun, exciting, dynamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>And which, in a rapidly changing world, results in</th>
<th>Untimely responses, isolation, irrelevance, and obsolescence (i.e., extinction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness, connectedness, and continuous evolution (i.e., adaptation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cheri B. Torres, Ph.D.  
torres@innovationpartners.com
## Manifestations of a Fear-Driven vs. Opportunity-Driven Mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear-Driven Thinking Behavior</th>
<th>Opportunity-Driven Thinking Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem-focused</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “What’s not working?”&lt;br&gt;- Seeks incremental advances.</td>
<td><strong>Improvement-focused</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “What’s working and how can we do it better?”&lt;br&gt;- Seeks evolutionary advances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past-Focused</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “What went wrong?”&lt;br&gt;- “Who’s to blame?”</td>
<td><strong>Future-Focused</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “What did we learn?”&lt;br&gt;- “How and when can we apply it?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Oriented</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “How do I become a recognized expert?”&lt;br&gt;- “How do I protect my reputation/advance my career?”</td>
<td><strong>Other-Oriented</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “How do I develop others’ expertise?”&lt;br&gt;- “How do I help others excel?” (Servant Leader)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fragile Self-Image</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Threatened by diverse views&lt;br&gt;- Advocates opinions forcefully&lt;br&gt;- Coerces others to advance at his/her pace</td>
<td><strong>Strong Self-Image</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Values diverse views&lt;br&gt;- Inquires to understand others&lt;br&gt;- Meets people where they are and stretches them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Avoids Conflict</strong> – fears pain and disruption</td>
<td><strong>Pursues Conflict to Closure</strong> - sees it as an opportunity for enhancing mutual understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk-Averse</strong> – fears failure</td>
<td><strong>Takes Calculated Risks</strong> – seeks empirical learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ignores/Denies Change</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Envisions losses&lt;br&gt;- Fosters fear and resistance</td>
<td><strong>Leads Change</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Envisions gains&lt;br&gt;- Helps others identify opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “Left-Column” Irony
Fear-driven behaviors often bring about the very outcomes the person is trying to avoid.