

SURFACE TO SOUL

Live Well | Lead Well | Coach Well

Using Appreciative Inquiry With Leaders

Appreciative Inquiry suggests that we look for what works in an organization and find ways to appreciate it. It often leads to identifying new possibilities for the organization to consider based on high moments of where they've been. The process helps people to create new realities based on past experiences. The emphasis is to build on our strengths and what works, rather than focus on what's not working. Appreciative Inquiry assumes:

- In every society or organization, something works.
- What we focus on, and the language we use, becomes our reality.
- The act of asking questions of an organization or group changes the group in some way.
- People have more confidence and comfort to journey into the future when they carry forward parts of the past.

Use the questions below to learn more about your ministry setting and discern God's intentions. Use these questions to learn and discern, individually and collectively.

QUESTIONS FOR APPRECIATING "WHAT IS"

- As a group, what do we do well related to (worship, our meetings, extending hospitality, etc.)?
- What do we do as a congregation that makes you proud?
- What do you value most about being a member of this team/group/church?
- What drew you to this group/organization/church? What do you hope never changes?
- What would cause you to leave if it no longer existed?
- Where do you see God at work in the midst of our activities? When do we share these "God sightings?"

QUESTIONS FOR ENVISIONING "WHAT MIGHT BE"

- Who could you see us partnering with more intentionally in the future?
- What needs do you see in people's lives, and in our community, that our church could address?
- How might we enhance this ministry/experience to impact and reach more people?
- Are there some ways that you could see yourself contributing to this project/ministry/experiment?
- Who do you know that may be passionate about this project? Have unique perspectives/wisdom to share?
- Where might God be leading us? What is God calling us to invest in? Who is God entrusting to our care?

QUESTIONS FOR DIALOGUING "WHAT SHOULD BE"

- At this chapter in our ministry, what do we need to invest more time, attention and resources in?
- Should we spend more time inviting people to our church or going to where people live and work?
- How would this ministry/project need to be shaped to engage the people you know?
- Are there approaches to emerging opportunity that we may have overlooked? Need to explore?
- How is God speaking to us at this time? How might we align our intentions with God's dreams?

QUESTIONS FOR IMAGINING "WHAT WILL BE"

- What would you suggest that our church do to (connect more deeply with your community, nurture faith)?
- How could we begin acting upon the things we've been dreaming of? What actions might we take?
- Who could you see yourself inviting to be part of this initiative? What would they need to know to say "yes?"
- If we were to move forward, what concerns would people have and how might we address them?
- How might we invite people to pray individually and communally to discern God's intentions?



jladoux@vibrantfaith.org



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