

Positive Leadership

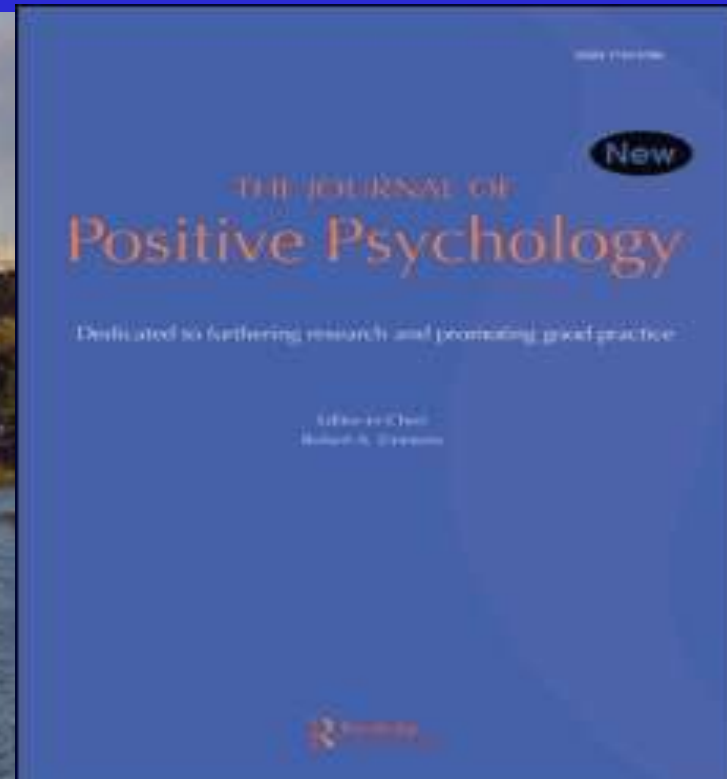


“We must continually remind ourselves that our lives and our partners’ and followers’ lives are not problems to be solved. They are callings to be answered, mysteries to be lived.”

Richard Leider, *Leader to Leader*

Bridging Ivory Tower and Main Street

The objective of positive psychology is to unite the rigor of academic research with the accessibility of the self-help movement.



Focusing On What Works

“The aim of Positive Psychology is to catalyze a change in psychology from a preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building the best qualities in life.”

Martin Seligman

Reframing Questions: The Case of At-Risk Population

- Traditional psychology (Post-WWII)
 - “Why do these individuals fail?”
- Positive psychology (1980s-)
 - “What makes some individuals succeed despite unfavorable circumstances?”

Learning From What Works

- Successful children
 - Resilience
 - Superkids?
 - Ordinary characteristics, extraordinary results



Circle

Diamond

Pentagon

Rectangle

Oval

Square

Triangle

Octagon

pictures under pieces

"Jumbo Knob Puzzle"

© Lights, Camera, Interaction!

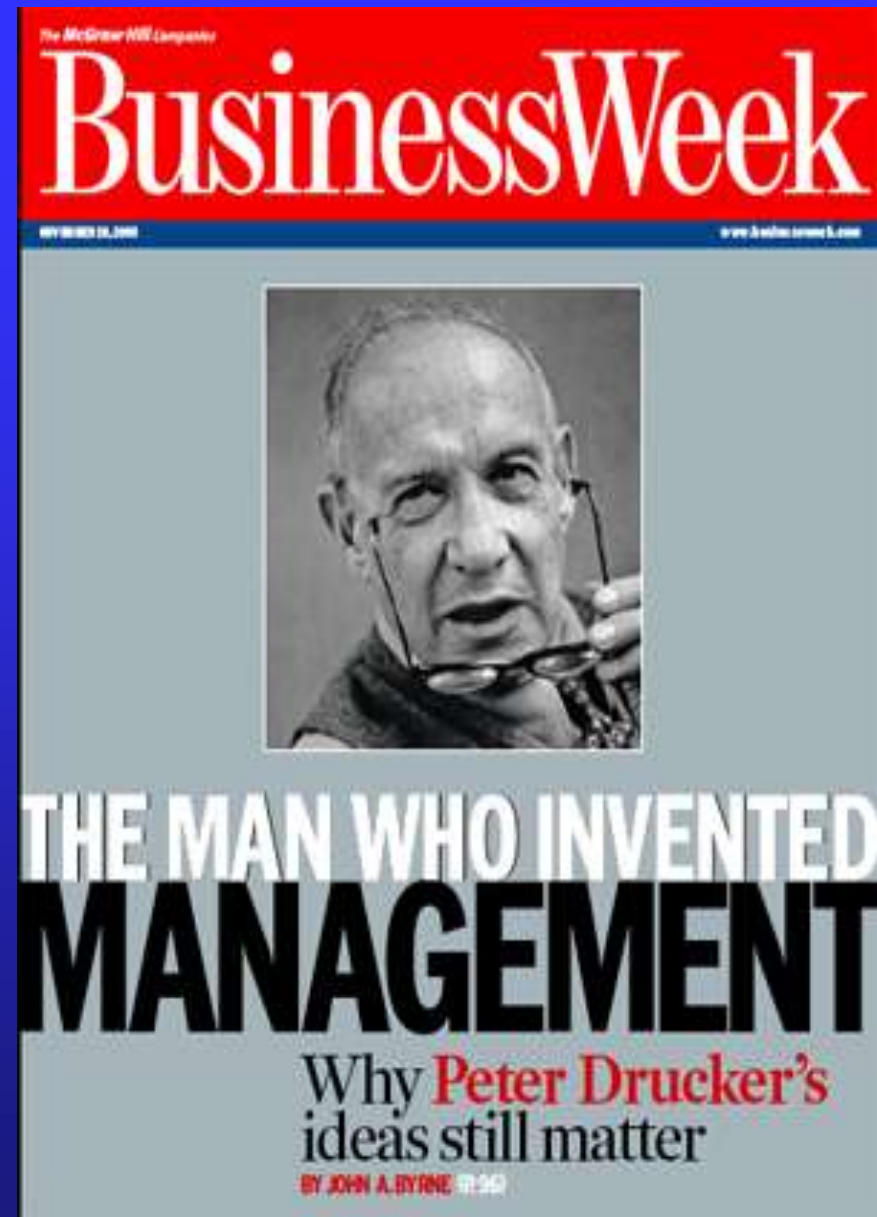
“We see what we look for and we miss much of what we are not looking for even though it is there... Our experience of the world is heavily influenced by where we place our attention.”

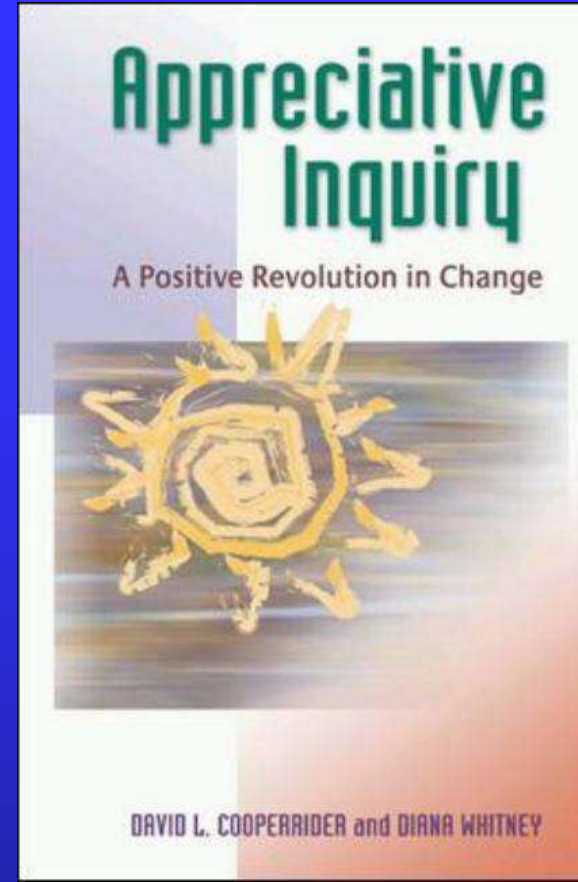
Stavros and Torres



“The most common source of mistakes in management decisions is the emphasis on finding the right answer rather than the right question.”

“The most serious mistakes are not being made as a result of wrong answers. The truly dangerous thing is asking the wrong question.”





APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry
draws on
the best of the *past*
to inspire the *present*
and create a better *future*

Increased Retention Improved Efficiency



Increased Profits



Enhanced Creativity



Employee Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction

Defining AI

Ap-pre'ci-ate v., 1. Valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us, affirming past and present strengths and potentials; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems. 2. To increase in value, e.g., the economy has appreciated in value.

In-quire', v., 1. The act of exploration and discovery. 2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities.

“Traditional approaches to problem solving are, by definition, a way of seeing the world as a glass half empty. Appreciative Inquiry is an alternative process to bring about organizational change by looking at the glass as half full. Essentially, Appreciative Inquiry varies from other approaches to organizational change in that it builds on what works well.”

Gail Johnson & William Leavitt

Exercise: Focusing On What Works

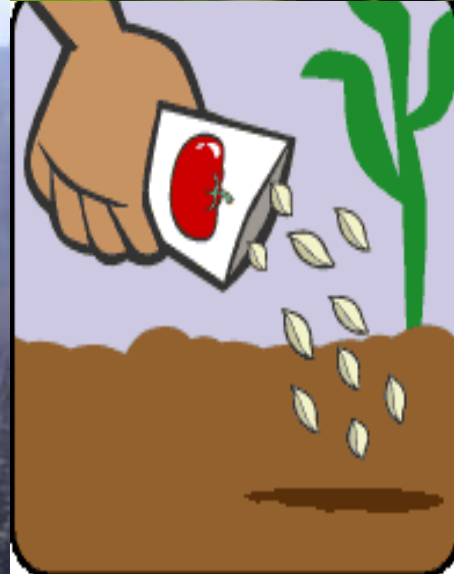
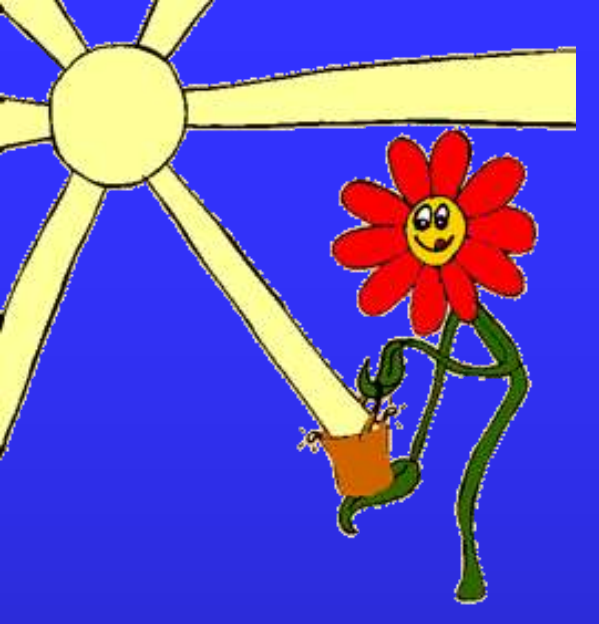
1. In the world...
2. In the US...
3. In your home...
4. At Harvard...
5. In you as a leader....

Creating a Spiral of Growth

- Grounded positivity

“Because the statements are grounded in real experience and history, people know how to repeat their success.”

Sue Annis Hammond



High Expectations

- Seeing the potential
- The Pygmalion Effect

“What managers expect of subordinates and the way they treat them largely determine their performance and career progress.”

Sterling Livingston

100 Years of Leadership Development

A Meta Analysis (Avolio & Luthans, 2006)

“The largest developmental impact was raising the positive beliefs of followers, instilling in them the conviction that they were better at a performance task than they thought.”

- High expectations
- Grounded positivity
- Blame to responsibility
- Tough and respectful
- Strengths focused

MARVA COLLINS' WAY

*Returning
— to —
Excellence
— in —
Education*

**Marva Collins and
Civia Tamarkin**

*Foreword by
Alex Haley*



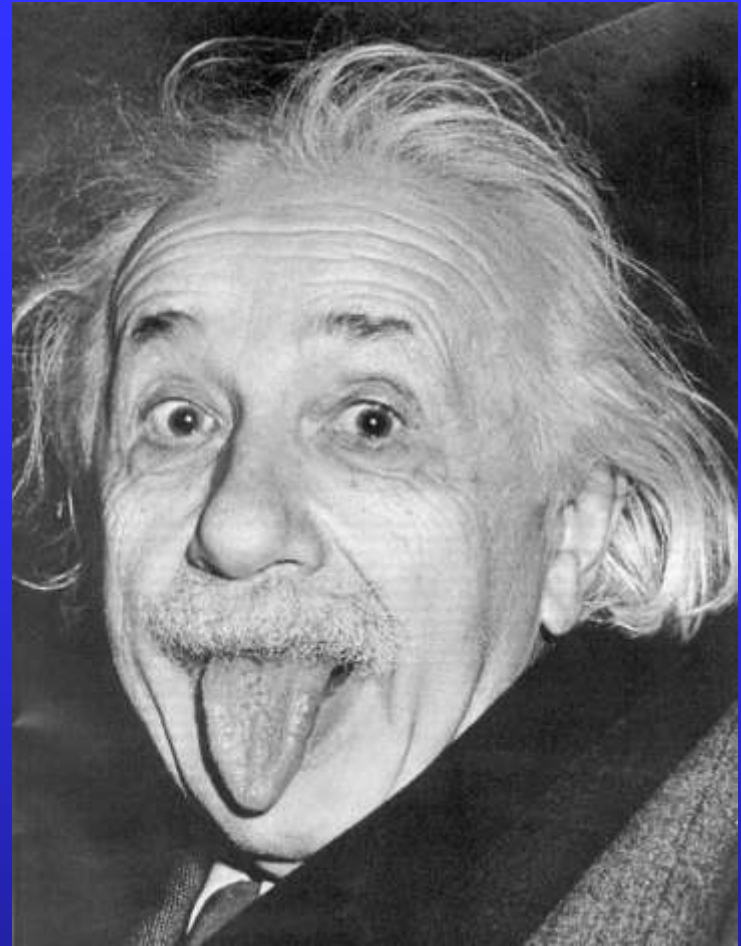
Reframing Questions: The Case of a Chicago School

- Traditional Way
 - “How can we keep students in school?”
- Marva Collins’ Way
 - “How can we cultivate the seed of greatness in our students?”
 - “How can we cultivate the seed of greatness in our employees, our partners, our children, and ourselves?”

Oh, The Questions You'll Ask...

“What would happen to our change practices if we begin all our work with the positive presumption that organizations, as centers of human relatedness, are alive with infinite constructive capacity?”

Cooperrider & Whitney



STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

“Only when you operate from strengths can you achieve true excellence... One cannot build performance on weaknesses.... It takes far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than to improve from first-rate performance to excellence.”

Peter Drucker

Questioning Strengths!

Question 1 (individuals):

“Which do you think will help you improve the most: knowing your strengths or knowing your weaknesses?”

Question 2 (organizations):

“At work do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?”

“The real tragedy of life is not that each of us doesn’t have enough strengths, it’s that we fail to use the ones we have.”

Buckingham & Clifton

Success Through Strengths

“Confidence is more than empty ‘pep talk.’ There was a movement in California to build self-esteem because somebody had decided schoolchildren did not have enough self-esteem. You don’t build self-esteem by patting people on the back and telling them they’re wonderful. Confidence is a much more complex phenomenon that comes from experiencing one’s strengths in action.”

Rosabeth Moss Kanter

“Presidents don’t do great things by dwelling on their limitations, but by focusing on their possibilities.”

Henry Kissinger

Exercise: My Best Leadership Experience

1. Describe your best leadership experience.
2. What strengths contributed to the success?
3. Share your best leadership experience and your strengths with one/two people?
4. Discuss how you can further apply these strengths.

Your best leadership experiences capture what you're capable of, not just once or twice, but everywhere and always.

These experiences capture your true leadership potential.



Exercise: Happy Experiences

1. Think back to a particularly happy period in your life (a month to a year).
2. What was unique about it? Why were you so happy?
3. What can you learn from your past experience and apply to the future?
4. Share with others

Exercise: Best Relationship Past

1. Think back to two or three particularly happy periods together
2. What can you learn from your past experiences and apply to the future?
3. Share with one another

Exercise: Positive Questions

1. Generate a list of positive questions (personal, interpersonal, professional...)
2. Share with the person next to you