



ONTARIO EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION

## Professional Development Program for School Board Trustees

Modules

# 4 Common Ground, Common Purpose. Relationships in School Boards

## Facilitators' Toolkit: Exercise 2 Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Interview Guide

**Appreciative Inquiry seeks to discover the root causes of success rather than the root causes of failure.**

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of

Interviewee

\_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_



**“The task of leadership is to create an alignment of strengths . . . making a system’s weaknesses irrelevant.” Peter Drucker**

Appreciative inquiry interviews are usually one-on-one interviews. The series of questions is set up to help you focus on the positive aspects and strengths of your team and not on the negative aspects or problems.

The interview involves active listening on the part of the interviewer; if necessary, the interviewer may “reframe” negative comments into positive ones which still address the underlying issues.

The interviewer takes brief but precise notes during the interview and prepares a post-interview summary identifying the strengths, the success factors and the aspirations of the interviewee.

The content of the interview remains anonymous. The data is compiled and analyzed in order to identify common themes and conditions that give rise to “peak experiences” and “best practices”.

Appreciative interviews vary in length, depending on the number of questions. In this case, the interview might last between 15-20 minutes plus an additional 10 minutes to complete the post-interview summary.



## Appreciative Inquiry: Exercise 2

1. Tell me what motivated you to become a trustee? What do you value most about being a member of this board and its larger mission?

2. Think back to your most significant leadership experience you have had in your career. A time when you felt really alive, engaged, and proud of yourself and your performance. Describe the experience.



What **strengths** surrounded you?

What **values** were at play?



How has this experience influenced you in your role today?

3. Think back to the best experience you have ever had being a member of an effective team. A moment or period where you felt you made a real difference because of the collaboration among the group. Describe that time.

- What are the one or two reasons you felt engaged?

- What contributed to this being a peak experience?

- What made the team effective?



- What do you think was your own most valuable contribution to the team?

- What could this board do to promote these types of experiences?

4. If you could make three wishes come through in order for your board to evolve to its full potential as a team, what would they be?

1.

2.

3.



5. What single small change could we make that would have the biggest impact in improving our work as a board team right now?

Please remember to thank the interviewee.  
Please prepare the attached post-interview summary immediately after the interview.  
Thank you.



Please fill in this summary report and return it to the facilitator at the end of the session. Thank you.

## **Post-interview Summary**

**Memorable quote or interesting statement from the interviewee:**

**1. What strengths revealed themselves from the stories and experiences of the interviewee?**





**2. What key success factors do you retain from the stories and experiences you have heard?**

**3. What are the three aspirations expressed by the interviewee?**

1.

  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  

2.

  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  

3.



**4. What single small change would have the biggest impact in improving your work as a board team right now ?**