Can Appreciative Inquiry Reawaken the Spirit of Action Research?

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Agenda

• Motivation

• Appreciative Inquiry

• Case Study

• Findings and Future work
Motivation

- **Demographics**
  - World will soon have over one hundred million individuals over the age of 65

- **Gerontology is now an important research area**
  - social, psychological and biological aspects of aging

- **Independent Living**

- **Irish Health Care Sector Stud**
  - Outsourcing of Care Services
Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

• Copperrider *et al.* (2008)
  – a “conceptual reconfiguration of action research”

• Generation of Theory and Development of Organisations

• Cooperative Search for the Best in People, their Organizations and the World

• Art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system’s capacity to heighten positive potential

• Crafting an “unconditional positive question’ often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people.”

• Appreciative Inquiry is *not* problem solving
AI Cycle

Discovery
“What gives life?” (the best of what is)
Appreciating

Destiny
“What will be?” (How to empower, learn and adjust.)
Sustaining

Design
“How can it be?” (Determining the ideal)
Co-constructing

Dream
“What might be?” (Imagine what the world is calling for)
Envisioning
Case Study

- **Worldwide network of 900 franchise offices**
  - non-medical home care

- **Irish Healthcare Operator: Home Instead Senior Care**
  - Established 2005, 18 offices in Ireland, employs over 1500
  - Range of home care services to over 3,000 seniors since 2005

- **Case Study at Preliminary Stage**

- **Tentative RQ:**
  - how does the approach of appreciative inquiry translate into an Irish health sector context?

- **AI Interviews with management and administrative staff**
Findings and Future Work

- High Level of Motivation
- Open and Supportive Leadership style
- Strong Relationship with Clients
- Development of Theory: management/staff/client triad
Thanks

• Ideas Welcome

• Questions?