



Creating the future...together
2010-2015

Appreciative Inquiry Facilitation Training Certification Report

Sandra Livingstone

College of the North Atlantic Qatar

December, 2011

1. Name and Contact Information:

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2. Brief description of the organization, group, or community you worked with.

Opened in September 2002 through an agreement between the State of Qatar and College of the North Atlantic (in Canada), CNA-Q is Qatar's premier comprehensive technical college. With approximately 750 staff and 4500 full and part-time students, CNA-Q is one of Qatar's largest post-secondary institutions.

CNA-Q combines a Canadian curriculum and industry expertise in four program areas, including Business Studies, Engineering Technology, Health Sciences and Information Technology. CNA-Q's Corporate Services and Continuing Education division offers specialized courses for corporate clients as well as evening and weekend courses for individuals.

3. List the names and/or category of stakeholders you included in the Core Group, the cross-section of people that helped you identify the topic and modify the Interview Guide.

I met with the planning coordinator in Human Resources who is responsible for all professional development for the Support Staff. In previous workshops, staff had identified areas in which they would like more professional development, and communication was one of those areas. We reviewed the Interview Guide to ensure that it would meet the needs for the varied group of support staff who might be interested in participating in the workshop. I also met with Rolene Pryor, the Manager of Quality Assurance who has led many of the AI workshops for our college. She also reviewed the Interview Guide and provided her input.

4. What was the positive topic that the Core Group identified for inquiry? What method did you use to help them identify the topic?

We identified "Exceptional Communication" as the topic for the workshop as it was also in keeping with one of the six strategic directions identified by CNA-Q as an area for development in the next few years.

5. Attach or include the modified Interview Guide they used, i.e., the Generic Interview Guide slightly modified for the positive topic of the inquiry.

Interview guide is attached.



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6. What method of interviews did people use to inquire into exceptionally positive moments, face to face paired interviews, or some other way?

We had face-to-face paired interviews lasting about 15 minutes each

7. Attach or include a list of the Life-Giving Forces (what they MOST wanted to create MORE of) that the group identified in the stories they shared.

Effective Communication Protocols - timely manner, chain, modes

Hardworking, dedicated, follow through on tasks, honesty - actions taken

Transparency

Collaboration

Inter-departmental communication

Consistent application

Leverage existing technology

8. Attach or include the Provocative Proposition(s) the group or organization created from the LGFs.

The following are the provocative propositions, a.k.a. "statements of the preferred future", that were created from our workshop. Because of the timing of the workshop, a few people weren't able to attend, so the group was divided into two teams for the remaining activities after the interviews were completed. One group prepared two preferred statements, so I've listed them separately below.

"I love working at CNAQ because of the effective and timely communication between employees and management!

"I love it!! I know exactly where to find the information, who to take it to and how it was acted upon!"

"I can help you with that!" "I feel empowered. I have all the information I need to do my job!"

9. Attach or include the organization, group or community's Strategic Intentions and the individual Commitments, Offers, and Requests that were created to realize the Provocative Proposition(s).

Offer	I will use and provide my expertise in social networking to promote the library and the college.
	I need more time for developing content. Dealing with other problems caused by chronic understaffing makes it difficult to think of the needs of
Request	others in advance.
Offer	I will help at any time or try to find the information you need.
Request	I want every employee treated equally and/or policies and procedures
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Offer	I will offer my assistance to improve the overall feel to how we at CNA-Q communicate!
Request	Clear instructions and communication from the proper person within CNAQ.
Offer	I will continue to gather information about all departments to better inform our clients/students.
Request	Better accessibility to the Corporate Training / Continuing Education Departments by our outside participants
Offer	I will be transparent with office policies and procedures to all stakeholders.
Request	The support to do my job efficiently.
Offer	I will always keep others informed about what I am doing (with respect to my work) to ensure no communication gaps.
Request	Information at all times to do my job more efficiently.
Offer	I will help to find information.
Request	Unity and team work to fly high.
Offer	I will get back to you with the correct information.
Request	Please ask another question before you send them away.
Offer	I will make the HR policies and procedures easier to read and access.
Request	I want more training on using existing technology to the greatest potential of the software.
Offer	I will keep myself updated with information relevant to me and offer it to others.
Request	That all others who have the information in their areas would help others looking for it and not keep passing it to others.

10. Impact or Results: What organizational, group or community attitude, process or structure changes have people already made as they move toward realizing the Provocative Proposition(s)? What progress have people made toward their Strategic Intentions or Initiatives or Pilot Projects? What stories of success can you share?

As the workshop happened just this week, I haven't received any success stories yet, but the immediate feedback after the workshop was very positive. One participant emailed to let me know that the workshop was "stimulating and much appreciated." I have asked participants to share success stories with me in the future.

11. What will you do to ensure that people continue to move toward realizing the Provocative Proposition(s)? How will you help them gather stories of success? How will you help them celebrate? How will you, as the AI Facilitator, support their ongoing success?

I have emailed the participants with the information compiled at the workshop and asked each of them to be conscious of excellent communication when it is taking place around them and emailing



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me to share the experiences with me. I've also promised to email them again after the Christmas holidays to remind them of their "offers" so that it will be a reminder to each of them of how they have promised to help move our organization forward in communicating in an excellent way! When I see excellent communication happening (or hear about it from others), I will email the group and share that information with them also. I think having people from a variety of departments at the college coming together to communicate was, in itself, a step in the right direction. Many of them wouldn't have the opportunity to spend time together communicating, and I purposely divided them into teams so that they would be spending time at the workshop communicating with someone from a different department.

12. What did you wish for in the inquiry? What did you learn from the inquiry about yourself and your facilitation? What was your "personal best" experience related to facilitating the Inquiry?

What did you wish for in the inquiry?

My personal goal was to gather people from various departments who could spend time communicating with each other. Since the workshop was about communication, it gave them a chance to share positive experiences about communication so that I could encourage staff to be more positive about working at CNA-Q and the good things that we enjoy at our workplace. I was hoping that people wouldn't come with negative attitudes and end up making comments that would lower the success of what we could accomplish in a few hours. In the end, even though there were some long-term employees who have seen a lot of negatives in their experience, they were able to reframe their statements into positive ones. The more people get in the habit of reframing into what they want "more of" rather than what has always happened, my goal of seeing us move into more of a positive work place will be realized.



What did you learn from the inquiry about yourself and your facilitation?



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I believe in the power of positive thinking and when I was trained as an AI facilitator and saw how it could be used as a forum to encourage people to be more positive, I wanted to be more involved with using this format to deliver workshops. I have used it in my classrooms since I was trained, and I've seen how important it is to (and the positive results that can happen if we) state things in a positive way. I tend to phrase things positively anyway, and it is so energizing to be in a room full of people who are all doing the same thing. I love the energy generated from being positive. I was a bit nervous about leading a workshop that I wasn't actually in control of throughout the session. I worried that it could really get off track if someone came with a "personal agenda," but the workshop stayed positive and everyone participated really well.

What was your "personal best" experience related to facilitating the Inquiry?

I loved watching the energy when the teams got together to prepared their visual of the high energy theme (their life-giving force). There was so much energy, creativity and laughter as they prepared their visuals. I was very happy that HR had allowed me to facilitate the workshop for staff and also that so many staff from various departments took time out of their day to attend and participate in the workshop.





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13. Have you received permission from the "client" or "clients" to tell us their story? In other words, does Company of Experts.net have permission to share this story with others? If not, who would COE.net need to contact to receive permission?

Company of Experts is welcome to share anything that is included in this document.

Attached: Lesson Plan, Interview Guide, PowerPoint Presentation