



Appreciative Inquiry Facilitation Training Certification Report

Anthea van der Merwe
College of the North Atlantic – Qatar
September 2012

1. Name and Contact Information:

Co-facilitator Anindita Sen under supervision of Rolene Pryor:

Anthea van der Merwe

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

The College of the North Atlantic–Qatar (CNA-Q) was established in September 2002 through an agreement between the State of Qatar and College of the North Atlantic (CNA), in Canada. CNA-Q is one of the largest post-secondary institutions in the State of Qatar, with approximately 650 staff and 4500 full and part-time students.

CNA-Q combines a Canadian curriculum and industry expertise in a number of program areas, such as Business Studies, Engineering Technology, Health Sciences, Industrial Trades, Security, and Information Technology.

The individuals involved in this Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process included new arrivals that has completed the on-boarding process, employees who have been at CNA-Q for a couple of years, volunteers that assisted in the on-boarding and orientation process and a spouse of one of the employees. These individuals were selected to obtain a wide range of different viewpoints to the on-boarding experiences.

The term “On-boarding” refers to all the activities and processes involved in getting new staff from Canada onboard at CNA-Q and helping them settle into a new environment. This would range from the time of signing the final contract until the completion of Orientation.

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.

Rolene Pryor - Manager Quality Assurance

On-boarding/Orientation Survey Fall 2012

Employees from different categories to obtain different perspectives: Current employees, new arrivals, spouse of new employees, direct hires, instructors and support staff

Rolene Pryor

Anindita Sen

Anthea van der Merwe



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Shamine Menezes
Ulla Brenton
Margaret Barron
James Kelly
Sabrina Young
Pauline Hickey
Kevin Jepson
Regina Hawco
Gregg Taffe
Chris Cooper

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

The positive topic focused on new employee's "peak experience" as part of the onboarding and orientation process. They were asked to talk about their biggest / most memorable success in the CNA-Q communications department.

- When did it happen?
- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What did others do to make this a memorable moment for you?
- How did you contribute to this success?
- What do you think made it an exceptionally positive experience?

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

See **Appendix A** for modified interview guide used.

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

The interview session involved face-to-face paired interviews, lasting 30 minutes. 15 minutes was allotted for each partner. Some chose to take 15 minutes each while other preferred to interview each other simultaneously.

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

A list of the High Energy Themes was created as identified by participants:

- Cohesion
- Community



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- Clear & Cohesive process
- Immediate positive reinforcement
- Continual concern expressed
- Support offered and provided
- Community involvement
- Social activities/invites offered
- Everything was done on our behalf
- Administration work efficient
- Clear processes established
- Experience highly positive
- People were knowledgeable and helpful
- Sincerity & genuineness of all people
- Clarity

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

The following are the provocative propositions, a.k.a. “preferred statements of the future”, that were created from our session:

- “Everything in my apartment works and is clean”
- “I have the knowledge to solve all problems and tackle all conflicts.”
- “I am socially aware enough to adapt to this culture because of the panel discussions and website information.”
- “My mentor was so sincere and helped me through the on-boarding process that I am not feeling home sick.”
- “I’ve been here one day and I already have my relocation allowance.”
- “The time between arriving and beginning work is perfect.”
- “I am so glad we had a 3rd night in the hotel because it helped me to move into a clean apartment.”
- “I am so happy that I had help from someone living in my building to do my apartment inspection. This helped me to move into a functional apartment.”
- “Communication between facilities and me is functional and clear.”

8. 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).

The Strategic Intentions were to gather information for future planning and to celebrate past successes.

Offers

- Assisting in the mentoring program (Host program)
- Assisting to develop an interactive question and answer forum for all new employees



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- Assistance in Social activities offered
- Assisting in developing positive relations with other new arrivals

Commitments

- To volunteer in future when other new employees arrive and assist in the settling in process

Requests

- A mentor program whereby new employees have a friend/employee that they can call for help and advice
- Interactive IT help sessions in classrooms/labs with projector and computers
- More structure and activities for the children's program
- Orientation to the accommodation with information about the operation of equipment and other resources in their location
- More time and assistance for shopping
- "Who-to-call" Information regarding housing, transportation
- More time to settle into the accommodation before attending work
- To have a departmental on-boarding process and information about getting a substitute in addition to the current College on-boarding program
- Internet access at accommodation
- Orientation for direct hires
- Emergency preparedness to be incorporated into the orientation
- Three nights at the hotel instead of two
- Moving the accommodation orientation until after accommodation were viewed
- Canadian Payroll Clerk available on ground for payroll related questions
- Adequate information regarding the payment of the relocation allowance
- More emphasis on the Social committee's "Host program"
- Sessions on health and safety and how to handle emergencies in the classroom
- Follow up sessions
- Information session regarding medical and insurance plans

9. 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 stories of success can you share?

We have witnessed great enthusiasm towards the AI process from this group and have heard the participants from this department talking about it with other faculty members in other departments. They are selling the AI process because they found the experience to be worthwhile for orientation and settling in purposes. Other new arrivals that overheard conversations between those individuals who attended the session requested to be included in future sessions. There is a lot of excitement within the group and the on-boarding team.



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Developing and Implementing an Action Plan for future

September 23: Meet with Shawn Brace, VP Finance and Administration

During this meeting we will present the outcome of the meeting without our recommendation:

- Suggest to develop mentor programs with the assistance of our Teaching and Learning Centre and Human Resources Department
- Request our Facilities Department to develop orientation a presentation with respect to accommodations and transportations
- Discuss temporary internet connectivity options
- Discuss options for children orientation program development

September 29: Meet with the Social Committee to encourage Host Program initiatives and learn what role we can play to strengthen or encourage participation.

Provide feedback to participants on outcome of meetings. Develop children's program and games with assistance of the Recreation Department.

10. 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?

In my role, I am responsible for the relocation of new employees and their families, as well as my involvement in the on-boarding and orientation program, will make me a likely candidate to continue with the process, and help to facilitate the sessions in their plan for the future.

11. What did you wish for in the inquiry?

I wished that the CM team would find the process rewarding and be engaged. I wanted to learn what we can do better to provide new employees the best on-boarding process to ensure constant improvement that would lead to completely satisfied "customers" since this is some of the first impressions new arrivals have about Doha and CNA-Q.

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

With this inquiry experienced the appreciative inquiry process from the facilitator's perspective. The session was well planned and moved along smoothly. The participants were very engaged and extremely focused. Because of the size of the group, we kept to the time restrictions that we had allotted. Everyone in the group was positive and worked collaboratively. It was so it was a pleasure to work with this group. I have enjoyed co-facilitating this session with Anindita and learnt that it is important to be active as co-facilitator – even just by listening. This allowed us to intervene when we noticed our co-facilitator become hesitant.



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

I enjoyed the discussions and the engagement of everyone in the room. . I think it was interesting to learn about how individuals experienced each aspect of the on-boarding process – especially from the perspective of spouses and direct hires, since they were not included in the “Orientation surveys” in the past. I always find the creativity activity to be a highlight – everyone joins in within their respective groups and with lots of laughter puts together their masterpieces, expressing their wishes for the future visually. The personal best was a comment made by one of the new employees that did not attend the session: “I wish I could have been there. Next time you are doing something like this, please remember to invite me too.” It was absolutely great to have Anindita as co-facilitator. Working together was easy and almost came naturally. I think our personalities and experiences complimented each other and contributed to the success of this session. Rolene is an excellent mentor and her guidance was invaluable to the success of this event.





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12. 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.

Interview Guide

Celebrating the On-boarding Team's Successes





Interview: Instructions

Using the following questions, interview your partner.

Feel free to ask follow-up questions, particularly if your partner seems excited about a particular topic. Listen carefully; take some notes in the space provided. Try to recall the best *stories* from your interview. Listen for any “quotable quotes”.



Interview: Peak Experience

The term “On-boarding” refers to all the activities & processes involved in getting new staff from Canada on-board at CNA-Q and helping them settle into a new environment .This would range from the time of signing the final contract till the completion of Orientation.

Recalling your On-Boarding process at the college, tell me a story about your best and most positive experience during this process: when you felt most welcome, most involved and most supported.

- When did it happen?
- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What did the others do to make this a memorable moment for you?
- How did you contribute to this success?
- What do you think made it an exceptionally positive experience?





Interview: Values

Let's talk briefly about some things that you value deeply, specifically in the context of the On-boarding process at the college.

- What did you value most about the On-boarding process?
- How did you experience this/these values? Please give examples
- What other core value/s would you like the On-boarding process to embody?
- How can you add to this process or how can you help develop that core value?





Interview: Wishes for the future

The On-boarding/Orientation survey results of Fall 2012 shows great success, with particular reference to the great organisation of events, the warmth of the welcome extended to new staff and the friendliness and positive attitudes of all. The cultural awareness sessions were highly appreciated and provided a valuable insight into this culture.

This made new staff feel valued. Now, we would like to build on these successes as we move into the future.

What three **(3)** wishes do you have for the future on-boarding process? What would you like to see *more of* as on-boarding team moves forward?

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” **Henry Ford**

