

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Cornhusker Economics

Agricultural Economics Department

6-25-2008

Using Appreciative Inquiry in Community Development

Alan Baquet

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Connie Hancock

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Charlotte Narjes

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/agecon_cornhusker



Part of the [Agricultural and Resource Economics Commons](#)

Baquet, Alan; Hancock, Connie; and Narjes, Charlotte, "Using Appreciative Inquiry in Community Development" (2008). *Cornhusker Economics*. 384.

https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/agecon_cornhusker/384

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Agricultural Economics Department at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cornhusker Economics by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

CORNHUSKER ECONOMICS

June 25, 2008

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources
Department of Agricultural Economics
<http://www.agecon.unl.edu/Cornhuskereconomics.html>

Using Appreciative Inquiry in Community Development

Market Report	Yr Ago	4 Wks Ago	6/20/08
<u>Livestock and Products,</u>			
<u>Weekly Average</u>			
Nebraska Slaughter Steers, 35-65% Choice, Live Weight.....	\$86.05	\$94.00	\$94.59
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame, 550-600 lb.....	*	118.11	123.09
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame 750-800 lb.....	*	111.26	112.25
Choice Boxed Beef, 600-750 lb. Carcass.....	142.70	156.32	158.20
Western Corn Belt Base Hog Price Carcass, Negotiated.....	75.98	75.72	74.86
Feeder Pigs, National Direct 50 lbs, FOB.....	56.00	41.53	34.30
Pork Carcass Cutout, 185 lb. Carcass, 51-52% Lean.....	78.20	80.90	79.24
Slaughter Lambs, Ch. & Pr., Heavy, Woolled, South Dakota, Direct.....	103.25	102.50	117.00
National Carcass Lamb Cutout, FOB.....	256.96	255.46	272.32
<u>Crops,</u>			
<u>Daily Spot Prices</u>			
Wheat, No. 1, H.W. Imperial, bu.....	5.21	7.45	8.29
Corn, No. 2, Yellow Omaha, bu.....	3.54	5.61	6.75
Soybeans, No. 1, Yellow Omaha, bu.....	7.32	12.87	14.18
Grain Sorghum, No. 2, Yellow Dorchester, cwt.....	5.86	9.52	11.39
Oats, No. 2, Heavy Minneapolis, MN, bu.....	2.70	3.96	4.09
<u>Hay</u>			
Alfalfa, Large Square Bales, Good to Premium, RFV 160-185 Northeast Nebraska, ton.....	135.00	*	195.00
Alfalfa, Large Rounds, Good Platte Valley, ton.....	92.50	77.50	77.50
Grass Hay, Large Rounds, Premium Nebraska, ton.....	*	*	*
* No market.			

The Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI), an outreach effort of the Department of Agricultural Economics, is committed to being relevant and responsive to the needs of Nebraskans. Under the leadership of Dr. Alan Baquet, a trained facilitator in Appreciative Inquiry, CARI and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension are working with communities using an appreciative inquiry approach.

Communities have primarily used community development methods that look directly at the needs or problems, rather than on what is working well. This often leads to a focus on a certain project or program. Technical resources may be brought in to address a particular issue or situation; a conflict may develop that activates community members to change, or; communities may create a collective vision addressing needs. Appreciative Inquiry builds on strengths and looks at what is going well. Through an inquiry process a community can find out what it wants to be, based on the high moments of where they have been.

Appreciative inquiry is an approach to human organizing and change grounded in the belief that the most effective way to create positive action is through a relational process of inquiry, grounded in affirmation and appreciation. The method used to implement the appreciative inquiry approach is often referred to as the 4-D cycle.

Discover – explore the best of the past and identify present strengths.

Dream – Imagine “what might be.”

Design – Create the future.

Deliver – Make it happen – “what will be.”

First, the community must define the focus. This focus, the Affirmative Topic Choice, establishes the purpose around which the inquiry process operates. Looking at the positive allows communities to see the possibilities. During this inquiry process, communities have the opportunity to discover what people value and begin a process of positive change. Using an



appreciative inquiry approach does not mean that problems will be denied or that they will not exist. Instead, problems are listened to and acknowledged, then the issues are re-framed in a positive light, with a goal to move beyond the situations that existed.

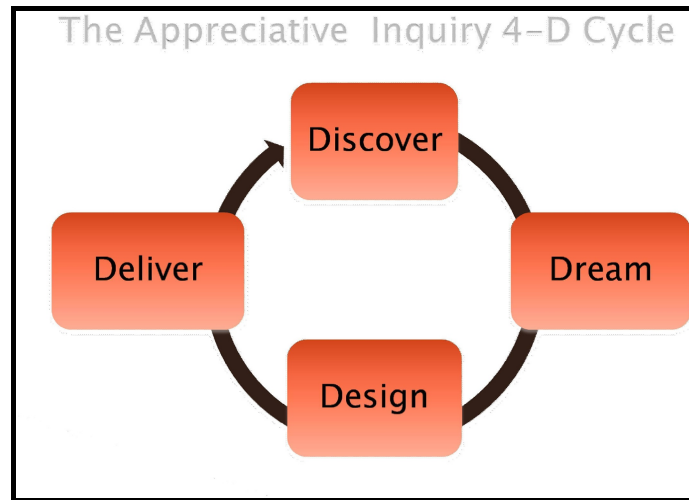
During the design phase, it is important to develop a plan of action that will:

- Establish a timeline
- Assign roles and responsibilities
- Establish benchmarks
- Create a communication system (check-in)
- Maintain accountability
- Manage challenges immediately
- Celebrate successes

Currently, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is working with Cheyenne County to create a county-wide vision. Connie Hancock, Cheyenne County Extension Educator, began working with a key group of individuals focused on the future of the county in 2007. Upon her recommendation, this key group looked at the appreciative inquiry approach and in January 2008, Alan Baquet led a discussion with a steering committee of forty individuals representing various communities and groups in the county. During this inquiry process, individuals listened to each other as they talked about what they appreciate in the county. Through this process we learned that people are involved and connected with the community, and that is what keeps people there. Many of the respondents indicated the importance of maintaining the connectedness and small town environment into the future. The common elements in the stories from this initial process were identified to create the questions to ask county residents.

During March 2008, the county residents were asked nine open-ended questions through one-on-one conversations and an on-line survey. While appreciative inquiry is generally designed for one-on-one conversations, creating the opportunity to answer appreciative type questions through an on-line process allowed 511 people to participate in the discovery process. All communities were represented in the responses. (See Table 1 on next page for a breakdown of responses by gender, age and location).

Individuals shared their opinions related to well-being, youth commitment, involvement, attitude and attributes. One of the final questions asked people to think about the county in the year 2020, and it is everything you want it to be, and more. Respondents shared many ideas for the future, and a number of the participants also indicated that they are willing to volunteer and help the community succeed. The common



elements under each question were identified, and the results were recently shared with the initial key group and then the county-wide steering committee.

The next step is to begin sharing the discovery/dream results with the county residents and move into the design stage of the process. The future of Cheyenne County is with the people that live in the county. Key to the success will be individuals willing to carry forward the vision. The Uni-

versity will continue to be responsive in assisting with the process as the county determines its future.

UNL extension team members include: Alan Baquet, UNL Department of Agricultural Economics, Connie Hancock, UNL Extension, Charlotte Narjes and Linda Tesch, UNL Center for Applied Rural Innovation.

Alan Baquet, (402) 472-3401
Department Head, Department of Agricultural Economics
Director, Center for Applied Rural Innovation
abaquet@unl.edu

Connie Hancock – (308) 254-4455
UNL Extension – Cheyenne County
chancok1@unl.edu

Charlotte Narjes, (402) 472-1724
UNL Center for Applied Rural Innovation
cnarjes@unl.edu

References:

- Baquet, A. and B. Rinker, (2007). *We Need to Keep Meeting Like This*. Presentation at 2007 Nebraska Rural Institute, <http://cari.unl.edu/nri/>.
- Flora, C. and J. Flora, (2008). *Rural Communities Legacy and Change*. Third Edition, Westview Press.
- Hammond, S. (1996). *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*. Thin Book Publishing Co., Bend, Oregon
- Whitney, C. and A. Trosten-Bloom, (2003). *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry- A Practical Guide to Positive Change*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco

Table 1. Demographics

Gender:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	43.6%	223
Female	56.4%	288
Answered Question		511
Skipped Question		0
Age Range:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18 and Younger	10.4%	53
19-29	20.0%	102
30-39	24.3%	124
40-49	18.4%	94
50-59	19.0%	97
60-69	6.1%	31
70 and Older	2.0%	10
Answered Question		511
Skipped Question		0
Where Do You Live?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Dalton	5.5%	28
Gurley	3.9%	20
Lodgepole	3.3%	17
Potter	4.9%	25
Sidney	63.8%	326
Sunol	0.8%	4
On a Farm or Ranch	9.0%	46
Rural Area, but not on a Farm or Ranch	4.9%	25
Other (please specify)	3.9%	20
Answered Question		511
Skipped Question		0

Subscription Renewal Time!!!

It is time to renew your *Cornhusker Economics* for the coming year July 2008 - June 2009. Attached is a renewal form to fill out and return with your check. Please make the check payable to the **University of Nebraska**. If you have any questions, call Nancy Pritchett at (402) 472-1789.

Cornhusker Economics
Subscription Rates Prorated by Month
(Subscriptions run from July 1 – June 30)
2008 - 2009

Full Subscription Fee (July 1 - June 30)	\$20.00
Subscription as of July 1	20.00
Subscription as of August 1	18.40
Subscription as of September 1	16.80
Subscription as of October 1	15.20
Subscription as of November 1	13.60
Subscription as of December 1	12.00
Subscription as of January 1	10.40
Subscription as of February 1	8.80
Subscription as of March 1	7.20
Subscription as of April 1	5.60
Subscription as of May 1	4.00
Subscription as of June 1	2.40

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ made payable to the **University of Nebraska**. Please begin my subscription to *Cornhusker Economics* for _____ months through June 30, 2009.

Name _____

Address _____

Mail with your payment to:
Nancy Pritchett, 307 Filley Hall, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68583-0922.
Phone: (402) 472-1789