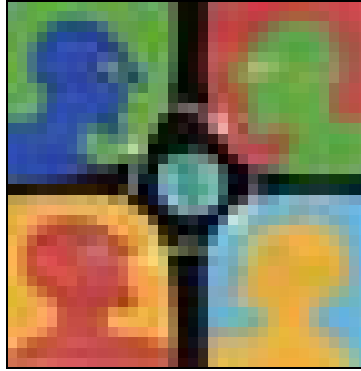


Words Create Worlds, March 2006



Company of Experts.net has now certified 100 AI Facilitators (and trained more than 900 people)!

"...this is not 'fluff'—it is a solid path to a better and more successful FWC!"

Congratulations to **Steve Chambers** <steve.chambers@us.army.mil> and **Jack Tomkovich** <Jack.Tomkovich@SMD-C-ARMY.MIL>, AIFT Port St. Lucie. **Steve** and **Jack** co-facilitated an inquiry for the Future Warfare Center (FWC), U.S. Army. The mission of FWC is to "bring Space and Missile Defense innovations to the firefighter."

They inquired into the topic of FWC as "The best place to work!" The inquiry group identified four life-giving forces: (1) value creation for customers; (2) open communications within the organization; (3) well-defined mission; and (4) ability to work "outside the box". The Provocative Proposition they created was: "The FWC will be the force moving the Army to the cutting edge of space and missile defense capabilities!" The leadership team developed two major strategic intentions: (1) hold a three-day AI Summit with all members of the organization (this inquiry was with senior leadership); and (2) grow a culture of innovation.

Early Impact: The chain of command, in agreement with all senior leadership, decided that any monetary prizes coming to the organization from its quality awards program will be spent on an Appreciative Inquiry involving the entire organization.

"Having seen the results at the Navy [NOTE: through a video at the AIFT©] (and others in the training session), and having viewed

tangible successes within the FWC, we can look any person in the eye and explain to them that this is not 'fluff'—it is a solid path to a better and more successful FWC!"

Steve and **Jack** had concerns when they found out that the organization's "resident cynic" was to be part of the inquiry. "Our fear was that we would have to cope with the task of (being) inexperienced facilitators facing a determined heckler. We prepped his inquiry partner, and did what we could to prevent him from trying to spread any negativity or pessimism to the group. To our great relief and surprised, he jumped right into the positive questions, essentially leaving his negativity at the door. His partner was absolutely shocked! To us, this really speaks volumes to the power of AI; turning a chronic complainer into someone who shared a veritable plethora of positive sentiments!"

If anyone knows of other uses of Appreciative Inquiry in the U.S. Army, please let me know.

Charles and I just came back from Paramaribo, Suriname, where we trained 60 people to facilitate AI! We're now heading out to Cape Town, South Africa to do another AIFT©. It's exciting work.

I've just developed a new 45-minute intro to AI (powerpoint) that you can use to introduce AI into organizations, groups, and communities. If you'd like me to send it to you, let me know.

For my most recent publication on Appreciative Inquiry, "Creating Appreciative Learning Cultures: From Problems to Possibilities," go to <http://www.league.org/publication/leadership/issue.cfm?id=1004>

To view short video clips of the plenary session DVDs from the 2004 International Conference on Appreciative Inquiry, go to <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/intro/conference.cfm>. These are fabulous DVDs that can be used in a variety of ways to move your AI practice forward.

Also, please help spread the word to colleagues about these upcoming AIFTs. And remember that you can repeat an AIFT for only \$300 USD. <http://CenterforAppreciativeInquiry.net>

- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Training, May 15 - 18, 2006
- Toledo, Ohio Training, June 12 - 15, 2006
- Corning, New York Training, June 26 - 29, 2006

- Longview, Washington Training, September 5 - 8, 2006

If you're interested in hosting an AIFT in the U.S. or Canada, contact Kathy@COE.net; if you're interested in hosting an AIFT out of the country, contact me at nancy@sonic.net.

Also, there is an Advanced AI Workshop in Portland this summer, June 14-16, for people who have been through an AIFT© or other foundations course. The workshop is being offered through Executive Forum and facilitated by Bernard Mohr and Jen Hetzel Silbert of Innovation Partners International. As you know, Bernard is the author of several AI books and co-author with Jane Magruder Watkins of "The Essentials of Appreciative Inquiry," "Appreciative Inquiry: Change at the Speed of Imagination" and co-author of "The Appreciative Inquiry Summit: A Practitioner's Guide for Leading Large-Group Change."

Finally, if you are a member of a regional AI network/learning community that is meeting somewhat regularly, please let me know and I'll pass the word on to others in the next edition of Words Create Worlds. (We have a very strong group that meets in Northern California; if you want to join, let me know).

Best wishes,



[Nancy Stetson](#)

Editor, Words Create Worlds
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