



Appreciative Inquiry - A Strategy for Being a Healthy Church

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Abstract

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a tool, which has been used in business as an alternative change-management strategy since the late 1990s. Its approach is based on a process of inquiring into that, which works in an organisation. It focuses on what is working, rather than what is broken. Since self-image is a major determinant in the actions and culture of an organisation, AI has potential to change self-image through the cultural change involved in asking generative questions. This paper applies the principles of AI to local churches, using its paradigm to explore ways of being church, rather than continuing with the struggle, many churches face of trying new programs and fixing problems doing church. Instead of asking what will we do, churches learn to ask the question, "Who has God called us to be?" AI helps the church recognise what God has already been doing among them and in the community around them. A key component of this strategy is the telling of life-giving stories. This strategy has also been successfully used as a means of church renewal.
