

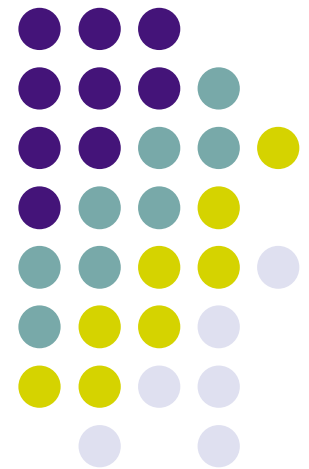
# Using Appreciative Inquiry to Envision a New Future

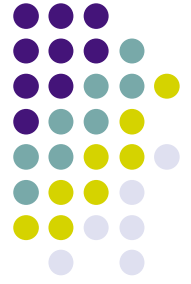
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Heather Morrison  
BCLA 2007

Beyond 20/20: Envisioning the  
Future

April 21, 2007

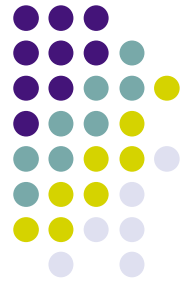




# Outline

- Theory - very basics
- Some resources
- The BC ELN AI exercise
  - How
  - Results:
    - Core Values & Principles
    - Stories of BC ELN's best - collection, quotes
- Thoughts & Conclusions

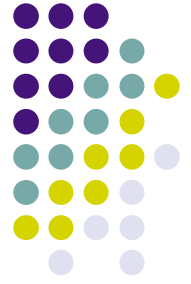
# What is Appreciative Inquiry?



...the cooperative, coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives life to an organization or a community when it is most effective and most capable in economic, ecological, and human terms.

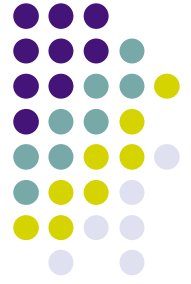
*From: Cooperrider, David L. and Diana Whitney. Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005.*

# What's different about AI?



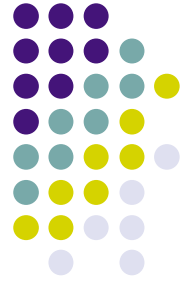
- Classic approach:
  - Focus on problems / what's wrong
- Appreciative Inquiry:
  - Focus on what we do best

# The BC Electronic Library Network Appreciative Inquiry Interview Exercise

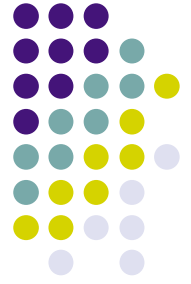


- February - March 2006
- Two purposes:
  - Inform Strategic Planning for 2006 - 2011
  - Communications, e.g. Stories of BC ELN's best for website

# BC ELN Appreciative Inquiry Interviews: the process

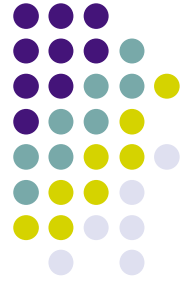


- Interview template: a flexible series of questions designed to elicit:
- Stories about BC ELN's best
- Perspectives on *why* these stories reflect well on BC ELN
- Example: Tell me a story about a moment of greatness for BC ELN. What was it about this story that made it a moment of greatness?



# The participants

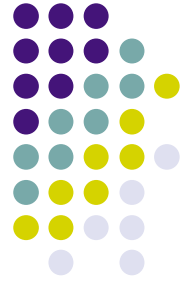
- Everyone invited to attend a large in-person strategic planning meeting March 20 - 22, 2006 (BC ELN Directors & other key stakeholders)
- Participants were asked to conduct at least one other interview (e.g., with staff)



# The process

- Each participant was assigned to:
  - Interview one other participant
  - Be interviewed by a different participant
- Interview results:
  - submitted in writing to BC ELN (not inherent to AI)
  - Shared verbally at in-person strategic planning meeting

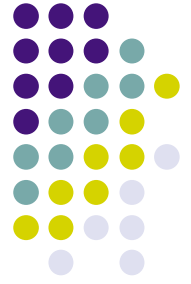




# The results

- Close to 50 interviews submitted
- A positive start to BC ELN strategic planning
- BC ELN's first "Core Values and Principles"
- A collection of stories about BC ELN from many different perspectives, and throughout its history
- Quotes for the BC ELN website

# BC ELN Core Values and Principles



- Collaboration
- Trust
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Sustainability

BC ELN - Together



# Values-based accounting

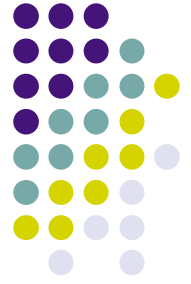
- Collaboration: *Together we are stronger. We work as a collegial community in a spirit of teamwork, participation, and inclusion. We look for opportunities to form new partnerships.*
- Highlights 2005/06
  - Electronic Brainstorm: Wild Ideas! Strategic planning blog
  - Annual Ranking Survey determines licensing priorities
  - Significant role in formation of the e-HLbc consortium

Quote...*"ELN is us. That is, ELN is really the partner libraries working with ELN staff to create a successful partnership that in turn makes us all better, or at least better able to provide services to students and faculty."*

- Kim Isaac, University College of the Fraser Valley

From: BC ELN Year in Review 2005/06  
<http://www.eln.bc.ca/view.php?id=1375>

# Stories of BC ELN's best



## Understanding

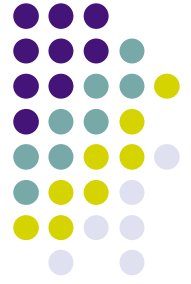
*BC ELN understands the challenges of various organizations, so, not a one size fits all approach, there is an astute awareness that not all consortial players have the same needs or abilities, BC ELN is still able to move us all forward.*

**Leonora Crema, Head, Borrower Services,  
University of British Columbia**

From: Appreciative Inquiry Interviews 2006

<http://www.eln.bc.ca/view.php?id=1420>

# Stories of BC ELN's best



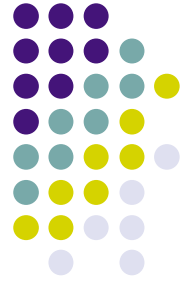
e-HLbc Magic

*Negotiating the e-HLbc deal was masterful, probably requiring a little magic!*

*BC ELN provided leadership and a shared vision, skillfully negotiating with a diverse group of players, many of whom were not experienced or comfortable in working together for the benefit of a consortium.*

Ken Cooley, University of Victoria

# Stories of BC ELN's Best



*What is best about BC ELN?*

*Voting for databases. Anyone can submit suggestions. One vote per institution. Reference librarians get to see what others are looking at...*

Maureen Witney,

Library Coordinator, Capilano College



<b>Databases</b>
<b>Resource Sharing</b>
<b>Trials &amp; Renewals</b>
<b>Partner Libraries</b>
<b>Forum</b>
<b>About ELN</b>
<b>Contact</b>
<b>What's New</b>
<b>Events</b>
<b>Projects &amp; Initiatives</b>
<b>Related Sites</b>
Admin

## Quotes for the BC ELN website...

....from Appreciative Inquiry

*An innovative product that I find very exciting and simple to use is the CUFTS Journal Database (CJDB). The support for this product is phenomenal, and the pricing very favorable compared with other products.*

Ella-Fay Zalezsak  
Coordinator, Library Technical  
Services, Vancouver Community  
College (2006)



<b>Databases</b>
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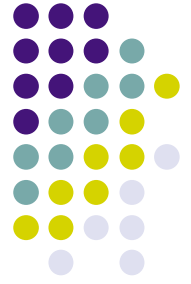
...and AskAway

*I found it helpful to have access to someone, when I am doing my research. I know that this requires someone on line somewhere, possibly for long periods of time, or a shift of people, but I do appreciate it. Thanks.*

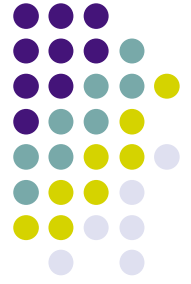
Learner  
askaway virtual reference service  
(2006)



# Reflections



- A worthwhile exercise - highly recommended!
- Having people interview / be interviewed by different people resulted in:
  - Domino effect; once started, kept going
  - Variety of perspectives and time frames (people wanted to talk about something different from what they had heard)



## Additional reading

- Hammond, Sue Annis. The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry. 2nd Edition. Thin Book Publishing, 1996.
- Appreciative Inquiry Commons  
<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>



# Contact info

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