Sample Questions

Questions Suggested by Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is a model of analysis, decision-making and creating change in organizations that was developed at Case Western Reserve. The questions can inspire reflection and new ideas for addressing issues in a group.

1. Think back to when you first joined the National Park Service. What attracted you to the agency? What were your first impressions of the organization when you joined? How have these impressions changed over time?

2. Please describe a time when you felt most excited, most engaged, most involved with your work, with your colleagues, with park visitors, or with a particular project. What was the situation? Who was involved who contributed to the sense of excitement and efficacy?

3. Describe a colleague whom you admire. What traits make her or him respected and effective in the agency?

4. Today, what do you value most about the organization? Why?

5. During your career, you certainly witnessed many changes and transitions in the Park Service. Think of a change that was particularly well handled. What was the specific change? What about it was well handled? Who was involved? What did they do that was particularly helpful? What part did you play in this change? What about the organization contributed to the change's success?

6. What do you consider your key contributions to the National Park Service during your years here and during retirement? Was it a particular policy or procedure? Was it a certain temperament that set a new tone?

7. What do you leave as a legacy at the National Park Service?

8. Nothing is perfect and nothing works as well as we might like all the time. In hindsight, is there a major disappointment or missed opportunity that you'd like to discuss? A time when the organization under-performed or did not take advantage of a good opportunity? What might be keeping the agency from being all that it could be? What happened (or didn't happen) in this particular incident? What was the result?

9. What three suggestions do you have for enhancing the organization's effectiveness? How would each suggestion help the agency in its work?

10. If the agency lived up to its promise, what would it look like and what would it be doing?