Mentoring New Faculty: An Appreciative Approach

Peter C. Mather[1], Dianne M. Gut-Zippert[1], Dwan Robinson[1], Beth J. VanDerveer[1] and Oumarou Abdoulaye Balarabe[1]

Abstract

During this period of dramatic social and institutional change in higher education, positive induction and ongoing support for early-career and faculty members new to the campus community is essential. Disparities remain in the recruitment, development, retention, and promotion of diverse faculty, in large part because of the lack of mentoring. The purpose of this article is to enhance approaches for supporting early-career and otherwise new faculty members. Based upon the principles and processes of Appreciative Inquiry, the Appreciative Mentoring Model is presented. Each of the Appreciative Inquiry "D-phases" is described in detail together with research-based best practices that can be employed in mentoring. Prompts, questions, and specific examples designed to support the growing need for a more collaborative, fluid, dynamic, and transformative approach to mentoring are provided.

Keywords

At the time of this writing, there is wide agreement that higher education is in the midst of disruption and inevitable transformation (Christensen & Eyring, 2011; Davidson, 2017). Particularly during this period of dramatic social and institutional change, entry into new faculty roles can be daunting (Austin et al., 2007). Due to a variety of reasons, including a lack of sufficient support for new faculty, attrition from instructional roles, both tenure- and instructional-track, have a deleterious impact on institutions of higher education (Bland et al., 2009). Challenges are particularly evident among faculty of color and women, who are at a higher risk of leaving their positions than their White male counterparts (Smith, 2020). Attrition is not the only measure of engagement and success among faculty members. McClure and Fryar (2022) reported that dissatisfaction is a concern that is not fully reflected in departure. In the current climate, many faculty members who choose not to leave their positions experience low morale and increasingly disengage from their institutions. Whether through departure or disengagement, there is a cost to institutions of higher education and to the individuals who enter the academy with hopes of a productive career.

At this time of change and challenge in society and in higher education, positive induction and ongoing institutional support of new faculty are particularly important. In recent decades, formal mentoring programs have received considerable attention in research and practice (Bean et al., 2011; Ehrich et al., 2004; Ewing et al., 2008; Fountain & Newcomer, 2016; Sands et al., 1991). This article presents the Appreciative Mentoring model as an approach to enrich the experiences of early career faculty and to enhance their success.

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[1] Ohio University, Ohio, United States of America
Corresponding Author: Peter C. Mather, Email: matherp@ohio.edu

Benefits of Faculty Mentoring

There is considerable research evidencing the benefits of formal mentoring programs. Ehrich et al. (2004) defined formal mentoring programs as "planned, structured, and coordinated interventions within an organization's human resource policies" (p. 521), in which "organizational support and commitment are evident" (p. 521). Similarly, Fountain and Newcomer (2016) indicated that high-level, centralized institutional support is important to programmatic success.

Attention both to personal concerns such as work-life balance and professional matters such as research productivity and career advancement are valuable for early career mentees (Bean et al., 2011; Ehrich et al., 2004; Ewing et al., 2008; Fountain & Newcomer, 2016; Kram, 1985; Morton & Gil, 2019). A meta-analysis conducted by Ehrich et al. (2004) highlighted accrued benefits from mentoring programs such as support, empathy, encouragement, counseling, and friendship. Additional positive outcomes included help with teaching, strategies, subject knowledge, resources, advice, feedback, positive reinforcement, and constructive criticism.

Eby et al. (2008) conducted an in-depth meta-analysis of both mentored and non-mentored individuals and found "mentoring is more strongly related to protege attitudes than to behavior, health, and career outcomes" (p. 263). The authors posited mentee attitudes may be more malleable than more stable outcomes such as career success which may be impacted by factors outside mentees' control (e.g., gender, race, cognitive ability).

Additionally, Eby et al. (2008) found mentoring met mentees' needs for affiliation and acceptance of others. In terms of meeting commonly identified mentee' needs, the authors summarized:

Attitudes (e.g., work satisfaction, attitudes toward school, career expectations), interpersonal relations, and motivation/involvement may be the most easily influenced by mentoring, whereas health-related (e.g., substance use, psychological stress & strain) and career outcomes (e.g., promotions, salary) may be less influenced by mentoring. (p. 265)

Based on their own experiences, Nunamaker (2007) described mentorship as a "knowledge discovery process" and peer or collegial mentorship as providing opportunities to "seek diverse perspectives on their research questions" (p. 18). They suggested colleagues are "sources of valuable insight" and peer mentoring in higher education "requires faculty to actively seek the value in other approaches and recognize the limitations of their own work" (p. 18).

Mentor Leader Program Catalyst and Context

A college-wide professional development session focused on the topic of collegiality at the Patton College of Education at Ohio University served as the catalyst for envisioning a mentor leader program. Consequently, the Patton College of Education (PCOE) Mentor Leader Program (MLP) was developed for mid/advanced career faculty to enhance mentoring efficacy.

Based on faculty recommendations, a steering committee was tasked with developing the PCOE MLP to provide systematic and relevant learning opportunities for current and potential mentors. After careful and extensive research and internal data collection, the committee was able to outline demonstrable outcomes for adopting this program.

Of vital importance was administrative support for the PCOE MLP to help develop a culture of mentoring. To accomplish this outcome, the PCOE dean was invited to share the importance of the MLP experience with participants at the beginning of each semester cohort. The steering committee also acknowledged department chairs' critical role in supporting faculty and revised the college's formal mentoring memorandums of understanding (MOU) to enable department chairs to work with early career faculty to identify an internal mentor.

The conceptualization and subsequent components of the PCOE MLP were created in response to the survey data and based upon the guiding principles that underpin the PCOE Values and Beliefs (https://www.ohio.edu/education/about/mission-vision), international/national mentoring programs, research and scholarship, best practices, and steering committee expertise (i.e., appreciative mentoring, organizational culture, social identity).

During the first semester, four mid/advanced career faculty were trained. Over the course of the three semesters of the program, 16 additional mid/advanced career faculty were trained. Beginning AY2022 - 2023, the PCOE MLP has been adopted University-wide in the form of the Mentor Leaders Faculty Learning Community (MLFLC). The authors adopted Appreciative Inquiry as a philosophical and practical framework to guide the mentor in the training.

An Appreciative Orientation

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) grew out of the recognition that organizational and individual change processes are more viable when they build upon existing strengths (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Since the inception of this model, AI approaches have been used in a variety of contexts, including business, military, and educational settings. They have also been adapted to individual improvement initiatives, including professional coaching and academic advising. Regarding its use in both individual and institutional settings, Gergen et al. (2004) described Appreciative Inquiry as "generative and transformational" (p. 3).

In the case of the Mentor-Leader program, those of us developing the program recognized the potential the Appreciative Inquiry framework possesses in leveraging the considerable strengths and skills of early career faculty as they seek success in a new organizational context and often in new professional roles. By deliberately connecting mentees' past successes to their futures as faculty members, they are more likely to have a sense of agency and promise in their pursuits (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005).

Recognizing that new faculty members possess excitement in their new roles, but also considerable anxiety (Sorcinelli, 1994), the AI orientation leverages the former. Key elements of Appreciative Inquiry include building on past successes and identified strengths, generating visions of a successful future, and designing pathways for success.

Appreciative Coaching

Orem et al. (2007) created a personal coaching model using the foundational principles and structures of Appreciative Inquiry. The authors noted that appreciative coaching is a personal and organizational development approach based on a social constructionist orientation to the world. Appreciative Inquiry considers the individualistic ways humans make meaning in a complex and dynamic milieu, and that visions of success are constructed uniquely by each person (i.e., the mentee), with the support of an experienced faculty member. Particularly given the complex and ever-changing nature of higher

education, we found the constructivist approach to be most effective in supporting new faculty members.

Orem et al. (2007) built the coaching model around the 4 D-phases of the original Appreciative Inquiry, with the goal being to help coaching clients move toward positive goals. Although coaching and mentoring relationships differ, the appreciative goals of assisting clients and mentees in identifying and productively moving toward high aspirational targets are shared. The AI approach of surfacing strengths, values, and high point experiences (Discover); turning those attributes and experiences into inspirational visions (Dream); establishing pathways to realizing those visions (Design); and enacting the designed pathway (Destiny) is useful for supporting early career faculty in realizing their best selves in their work.

Bloom's 6 D's of Appreciative Education

Bloom et al. (2008) expanded the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) 4 D model in an application for college student academic advising. The Appreciative Advising approach (Bloom et al., 2013) employs the orientation and principles of Appreciative Inquiry (i.e., constructivist, positive, poetic, and anticipatory; Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). The principles and their applications are described later in this article. The Appreciative Advising model added two D's to Cooperrider's original 4 D scheme and renamed the Destiny phase to Deliver (Bloom et al., 2008). In the Appreciative Mentoring model, we used Bloom's 6 D's (Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle). In addition, the Appreciative Advising model represents an application of Appreciative Inquiry (originally developed for organizational uses) to individuals. In summary, we drew extensively from both Appreciative Coaching (Orem et al., 2007) and Appreciative Advising (Bloom et al., 2008) in the development and practice of Appreciative Mentoring.

Appreciative Mentoring Model

The Appreciative Mentoring model is based on the foundational idea that individual mentees come to their work with strengths and experiences upon which to build thriving careers. The 6 D model is used as a structured approach to actualize this foundational idea for new faculty members.

A cornerstone of Appreciative Mentoring is the questions that inform each of the D processes. This emphasis on the importance of questions grows out of Appreciative Inquiry's Simultaneity Principle, based on the idea that questions and change occur simultaneously (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). That is, questions are not simply methods for collecting information; rather, they are catalysts for change. In the following description of each D-phase, we describe how carefully crafted questions can contribute to mentoring.

Disarm

The primary goal of the Disarm phase in Appreciative Advising is to establish rapport and comfort within the dyadic relationship (Bloom et al., 2008). Rapport is developed by ensuring the mentee feels valued and heard. A powerful welcome into the specific higher education community can be communicated both verbally and nonverbally. The visual context includes inclusive symbols in one's office or on virtual platforms–especially when they are the setting for mentoring meetings. In the mentor training, we spent considerable time working with mentors to consider the role of social identity in their connection with the mentee.

An important goal of the Disarm phase is to ensure faculty mentees understand their presence and potential for success are validated and affirmed by the continuing faculty and

staff. The mentor can foster this mindset by, first, demonstrating authentic interest in the mentee and their experience. As in all phases, the Disarm process is built on a foundation of generative questions. In the words of Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), "It is not so much, 'Is my question leading to the right answers?' but rather, 'What effect is my question having on our lives together. . . Is it strengthening our relationship?'" (p. 50). A strong relationship between mentor and mentee is essential to the success of the mentoring process.

One way to productively Disarm the mentee using the appreciative model, is to greet them with a positive question, such as, "Hi, Simone. What has been the best part of your day so far?" Or, "What is the best thing that has happened to you this week?" Although "How are you?" is generally considered rhetorical, or simply a greeting, the appreciative questions illustrated above invite deeper interpersonal engagement, highlight the focus on what is affirming, and can serve as a way to learn about the mentee.

In addition to disarming with positive questions, one of the keys to the Disarm phase is for mentors to present themselves as co-learners. When the mentor acknowledges that mentees have knowledge and experience that are novel to the mentor, it can provide a sense of agency and confidence for the mentee. This approach is not to dismiss the value of experience the mentor possesses, but to validate the mentee's characteristics and prior experiences, and indicates that both members of the dyad have reciprocal contributions to make to the institution and to the relationship. So, the mentor should approach the entire relationship, and most certainly the initial meetings, with curiosity and openness to the mentee's experiences, knowledge, and goals.

In addition to validating the mentee's prior experiences and strengths, a key question a mentor may ask is, "What are you seeing here that has surprised you?" Or, "What are you noticing that you have questions about?" In asking such questions, the mentor is opening the conversation to help support the mentees and is demonstrating an interest in seeing the culture of the institution with a new set of eyes. Schein (2004) noted that inhabitants of a culture become so immersed in the practices and underlying assumptions that they tend not to notice the realities that may be anachronistic or non-adaptive in the present. The new entrant's eyes, questions, and perceptions can help promote consideration of valuable adaptations for ever-changing social realities. A trusting relationship with a mentor can be a uniquely safe place to voice and process questions about the culture.

In order for a mentee to feel comfortable asking questions about the culture, mentors must make clear that their questions and observations about the environment will be held in confidence and only expressed with others when there is the certainty that the mentee's interests will be honored and that the mentee has provided consent. An exception to the practice of confidentiality is the necessity of following through on legal obligations to report Title IX violations to the appropriate agent of the university or college and other matters related to safety and security. The commitment to honoring the mentees' confidence should be made explicit when the relationship is initiated, and conditions under which there is an obligation for reporting should also be made clear by the mentor.

Discover

A foundational assertion of appreciative educators is that growth and success are more likely to emerge from a practice of identifying and leveraging one's strengths than in focusing on weaknesses and problems. According to Block (2009), focusing on the remediation of problems "may actually limit any chance of the future being different from the past" (p. 33). Accordingly, the Discover phase is about helping the mentee identify their strengths and values and, in the language of Appreciative Inquiry, their "most life-giving

experiences" (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p. 35). The D-phases are not necessarily discrete nor do they signal linearity. For instance, the Disarm process includes aspects of Discover, and rapport between mentor and mentee is continually reinforced through all dimensions of the Appreciative Mentoring process.

Whether the new faculty member is entering the faculty position as a young professional, coming out of a doctoral program or post-doc position, or if they are an experienced professional in a field of practice, it is appropriate to assume the new faculty hire is facing new challenges in their novel employment environment. Although there is a recognition the new entrant will be on a learning curve, one of the primary goals of Appreciative Mentoring is to help the mentee understand they bring unique experiences and skills to a position in which they have the potential to be successful.

Identifying strengths and positive experiences–both personal and professional–focus the new faculty member on the attributes upon which they can build success. Transitions such as beginning a new job can lead people to feel disoriented and unsure of themselves (Schlossberg, 1981). Although it is often advisable for individuals newly entering a culture to observe and listen to experienced members of the environment, it is equally important they recognize and value the characteristics that have led to their prior success and can serve as building blocks for a successful future in the new context.

Accordingly, the Discover phase is focused on engaging the new faculty member in an assessment of their past personal and professional successes and the unique constellation of strengths and values that may inform and contribute to their future success as a faculty member. The following questions can serve as helpful catalysts for fostering the mentee's discovery process.

- Tell me about a time when you were at your best, professionally. What do you think led to that success?

- What do you value most about yourself and your work?

- What inspired you to become a faculty member?

- What accomplishments are you most proud of? What did you do in order to achieve these? Who were your supporters?

- Describe two or three life events that helped form you into the person you are today.

Many of the example questions provided are best worked on individually, prior to the mentor-mentee meeting. For example, in the case of the major accomplishments and the key life events, it is useful for the mentee to process these questions and come to the meeting with responses. In the meeting, with these and other reflective questions, some useful prompts from the mentor could include:

- Tell me about how you approached this question? Did you find it difficult or easy to come up with your top [accomplishments or life events]? What were other [accomplishments or events] you considered including? What was it like to remember these events?

Appreciative Discover questions can serve two important purposes: (1) Help the mentee process and think more deeply about their strengths and values, and (2) Enrich the relationship between the mentor and mentee.

In addition to Discover questions, there are a number of tools that can be helpful aids in surfacing the mentees' strengths and values. Formal assessments such as CliftonStrengths (Gallup, n.d.) and VIA Character Strengths Survey (VIA Institute on Character, n.d.) can be helpful in identifying characteristics to support the mentee's success. Mentors can foster discussions to assist mentees in applying these strengths, including questions such as:

- Tell me about a time when you have used this strength in meeting your goals.

- What are ways you see this strength playing out in your future work?

In addition to formal strengths assessments, discussion questions from the resource, *StrengthSpotting* (Linley, 2008), can help center mentees on their strengths rather than their limitations. As a person experienced in the work requirements of the faculty role, the mentor can also help identify ways in which the strengths that surface in the Discover phase may help succeed as a faculty member in their particular environment.

New faculty members come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Especially for people from marginalized and oppressed populations, it is important to recognize cultural and other aspects of stigmatized identities as potential strengths (Mather & Konkle, 2013). Mentors can validate mentees' experiences that emerge from their identity as potential assets. Accordingly, mentors may ask questions such as:

- Tell me how your personal qualities, cultural and family background, identity, and other aspects influence who you are, or aspects of yourself that you are proud of.

Drawing specific connections between identified identity, strengths, and values, with the mentee's future work is the primary aspect of the next phase: Dream.

Dream

The Dream phase is designed to encourage mentees to imagine their best possible selves as faculty members. According to Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), "the Dream phase amplifies the positive core and challenges the status quo by envisioning more valued and vital futures than those currently envisioned. . ." (p. 1279). As with other phases, the core of Dream is represented in the questions asked. Questions might include:

- Imagine yourself as a successful faculty member in 10 years. What will your most important successes look like? Describe in ideal terms.

- What inspired you to become a faculty member? How do you continue to be inspired in your work?

- How will your values and strengths show up in the vision of who you imagine yourself to be?

The third question demonstrates the connection between the Discover phase and the Dream phase, so the mentor should encourage the mentee to align the strengths and values from Discover to the images developed in the Dream phase. A distinguishing characteristic of Appreciative Inquiry is that "images of the future emerge out of grounded examples from. . . past strengths" (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p. 1283). The relationship between the Discover and Dream phases is symbiotic. In some cases, the Dream process will surface strengths and values not identified in the Discover phase, leading the mentee to realize tacit strengths and values. The absence of previously identified strengths and values in the mentee's visioning process can invite prompts from the mentor about how those attributes may be more explicitly included in the mentee's understanding of their future best self.

Appreciative Inquiry, in particular, encourages dreams that foster contributions to global concerns beyond achieving tenure, promotion, or other extrinsic measures of success. Appreciative Inquiry is grounded on the notion that individuals and organizations serve important social purposes. It is important to cultivate and encourage an ethos of local and global community value, so the new faculty member does not lose sight of the larger purposes of their role as an educator (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

In the Appreciative model, the Dream phase sometimes includes a creative process, encouraging participants to employ metaphors and artistic representations of their best possible futures (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Some approaches to Appreciative Inquiry include encouraging participants or, in this case, mentees, to create a picture that illustrates their dreams metaphorically or even a poem that represents their best and brightest future. We recognize not all mentees would be inclined to employ this kind of approach.

One useful "Dream" method is to ask the mentees to write a detailed description of a day in their life at a future time. Ask them to be very specific, and generate a story of a full day: What do they do when they wake up? What are their morning activities, and who is accompanying them? For this particular mentoring Dream activity, it is best to focus on a workday rather than a vacation or a weekend.

Ideal work culture. The Dream can also include an articulation of the environment or culture they imagine as ideal for their work. The mentor can help the mentee consider ways they can contribute to shaping the environment they hope for or finding niches that best represent the mentee's ideal situation. Questions might include:

- What characteristics and values matter to you in your work with others?

- When you complete (name milestone: e.g., tenure or promotion), what kind of community do you envision will have supported your work?

Ideal mentoring. The Dream phase also provides an opportunity for mentors to learn how they can be the most helpful to a mentee. A question might include: What is your image of an ideal mentor/mentee relationship? Describe what you see by answering the questions below:

- What is the nature of the relationship?

- What are the goals of the relationship?

- Who are you with/mentoring?

A common question emerging from the Dream phase is, "What if the mentee's vision is not realistic?", which is a real possibility. As the mentoring process moves into the next phase, Design, the mentor can help the new faculty member translate the future vision into a tangible plan.

Design

The role of Design is to clarify the image of the ideal, in particular, identify its parts, and articulate steps to realizing the image. The gist of this phase is what is referred to as "aspiration statements" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Aspiration statements are consistent with Appreciative Inquiry's Anticipatory principle, which is that "images of the future guide present-day actions and achievements" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003, p. 64).

Clearly articulated images, then, guide the Design phase. To enact positive change, the previously developed visions or dreams should be stated in concrete terms, or as specific aspirations. Guiding questions can be employed by the mentor to arrive at the mentee's

aspiration statements. A foundational question is, "What 3 - 5 aspects of your future vision most energize you?" Once the targeted items are chosen, statements of commitment or conviction are constructed that can guide a plan of action. Examples might be:

1. I will enact a dream of promoting *equity and inclusion* by creating powerful pedagogical and research models to promote social justice mindsets.

2. I will use my "Collaboration" strength to find talented and committed partners in my plans to develop and implement innovative teaching practices.

3. I will join an outdoor club that will support my physical and mental health and connect me with people outside of my work environment.

In addition to facilitating the articulation of goals such as these, the mentor can assist the mentee in scanning (or mapping) the environment for resources. According to a meta-analysis of studies on faculty mentoring, Fountain and Newcomer (2016) found that connecting mentees with individual and material resources to support their success is the most valuable mentoring act. For instance, in example Number 1 above, regarding equity and inclusion, the mentor can help in the following ways:

- The mentor knows other colleagues in the college and university who are interested in the same topic and could serve either as resources or partners in developing models and conducting research.

- The mentor connects the college grant officer to survey opportunities to financially support the mentee's research pursuits.

- The mentor knows the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) brings together learning communities of faculty with common interests. The mentor provides CTL staff contact information to explore possible learning opportunities.

As illustrated by these examples, ensuring the mentee is connected with other supportive parties is an important feature of the Design phase. This process will continue in the next phases: Deliver and Don't Settle. In addition to connecting early career faculty to useful networks, the Design phase also includes attention to strategies for ensuring the successful realization of dreams and accomplishment of goals. One research-supported approach is *Mental Contrasting* (Oettingen 2014), which is a research-informed approach to success.

Oettingen (2014) studied the conditions that helped individuals realize their dreams and goals. Ironically, she found that when individuals set goals for the future and were guided to imagine the fulfillment of those goals, they were less likely to attain them than if they had not done imaging exercises. She hypothesized that visioning exercises lull the individual into a false sense of fulfillment, undermining the work that is often required to successfully realize the work. Oettingen found, however, that if individuals visualize obstacles they are likely to encounter in the completion of these goals, and then develop strategies for overcoming those obstacles, they are more likely to reach their established dreams and goals. As mentees move forward to enact their strategies through employing design approaches such as mental contrasting and other goal-achievement strategies, they transition into the Deliver and Don't Settle phases.

Deliver and Don't Settle

One of the key roles of the mentor in the Deliver phase is to help the new faculty member recognize ways in which the previously constructed dream is being realized in the present (Orem et al., 2007). Recalling the reality of negativity bias, there is a tendency for

human beings to dwell on what is going wrong rather than what is working well. In light of the inevitable challenges of teaching new classes and carrying new responsibilities associated with research and service activities, a sense of frustration or failure is not uncommon. Therefore, it is the role of the mentor to highlight aspects of new faculty members' work that demonstrate growth and success. Accordingly, an appropriate Deliver question is, "What is working the best for you right now?" Once achievements are acknowledged, celebrations are common as dreams are realized (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). As well as celebrating successes, it is important to learn from those successes. One way of fostering this important reflection is by asking the mentee, "What are you doing now to make this dream a reality?"

The new faculty member may likely see areas of deficit or challenge as they move into their faculty roles. So, in addition to highlighting what is working, it is important to acknowledge the aspects of the work that might be experienced as challenging. The Appreciative approach is not about denying those realities, but addressing challenges by leveraging personal strengths and supportive networks and resources for adaptation and improvement (Cooperrider et al., 2008). This approach offers an opportunity to work with the mentee to develop a list of assets of institutional, community, and external professional resources. The assets list grew out of Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996), focused on the development of high-poverty communities. Although ABCD was developed in a very different context from new faculty development, its foundation on identifying and employing community and network assets fits well with our conception of supporting early career faculty.

Particularly when faculty are new to an organization and community, identifying key opportunities for building networks and accessing continued support can be instrumental to new faculty members' success. Potential assets can include both potential opportunities for growth (such as professional development workshops), as well as supportive individuals, organizations, and communities to enable the fulfillment of mentees' dreams. In the Appreciative Mentoring model, asset identification is accomplished to some degree in the Design phase. However, the Don't Settle phase rests on the idea that ongoing appraisal of self-awareness and potential avenues for growth are vital for realizing success. By the time the Deliver and Don't Settle phases are reached, mentees will have gained professional experiences to draw from in assessing their personal strengths and needs. Thus, re-engaging prior questions can be useful. Some questions to consider include:

- What opportunities and resources are available in the organization and in the profession to enhance my teaching and evolving research interests?

- What professional service opportunities exist that align with my emerging interests and passions?

- In what campus spaces do I feel the most alive and energized in my work?

As the mentee continues to gain experience and networks in their new setting, the mentoring relationship will likely evolve as well. In some contexts, the formal mentoring relationship has a finite period of time, enumerated in a contract. However, assuming a positive, reciprocal experience, in many cases it can be mutually beneficial for the mentee and mentor to maintain a relationship. Thus, reflecting on and sharing the benefits each has experienced in the relationships and hopes and expectations for future interactions can be valuable. Some questions to consider in this process include:

- What have each of us gained from this experience?

- What have I learned that can be helpful to me in relationships with colleagues and students?

- What are ways we can support each other as we move from this stage of our mentoring relationship?

- Who are other sources of support and learning you look forward to connecting with in the future?

Reflecting on the questions above will not only promote the healthy continuation of a mutually supportive relationship, but it also can promote the use of AI principles and practices across the institution. There is a hope that when parties *Don't Settle*, the entire organization will benefit from the process.

Conclusion

Our aim in this article is to promote flourishing and success among early-career faculty members. The principles and processes of Appreciative Inquiry provide a strong foundation for realizing this goal. The specific questions enumerated in this model are intended to provide examples of and guidance in implementing the Appreciative Inquiry model.

The D-phases are the most recognizable aspect of Appreciative Inquiry. However, the model involves more than following formulaic steps. Each mentor and mentee come into their role with unique strengths and experiences that will shape the manner in which the roles are practiced. Fundamentally, Appreciative approaches are based on a mindset. At a time of intense change in higher education and the increased pressure for efficiency, Appreciative Inquiry can be a particularly useful tool. According to Cooperrider et al. (2008) Appreciative Inquiry is a strategy that instills adaptation and innovation. The success of AI is supported by a considerable body of research on the efficacy of the model for organizational change (Miller et al., 2017; Verleysen et al., 2014). The Appreciative Mindset and the adaptive strategies it provides are vital for new members of the contemporary academy to succeed and thrive in their roles (Bloom et al., 2008).

Darwin and Palmer (2009) argued that one of the most important factors for the success of early career faculty was the overall culture of the organization. They proposed that mentoring programs based exclusively on dyadic relationships are not sufficient to promote individual faculty success. Faculty and staff members at all levels of the organization will benefit from connection to communities and institutions that live out the principles and policies of Appreciative Education. The adoption and deployment of appreciative initiatives in activities such as strategic planning, trans-disciplinary education, innovating partnerships, and community engagement activities will support the advancement of a developmental culture. Ultimately, healthy, adaptive organizations will be spaces where new and experienced faculty and staff and the students who learn alongside them will thrive. Appreciative Mentoring can be an important enactment of an institution-wide commitment to drawing on the best talents and commitments of the gifted people who come together to do the important work of higher education.

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