



Toolbox for the activation of citizen engagement



Compiled by the PARITÄTISCHE Landesverband
Schleswig-Holstein e.V. in the 'Best Agers' project



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Introduction

The institution

The Paritätische Welfare Organisation is an umbrella organisation of more than 500 non-profit organisations, associations and support groups for the self-determination of people in the need of social assistance.

The objective

Paritätische Schleswig-Holstein is one of 19 Partner organisations, which have set themselves the task of finding and developing ways of preserving the knowledge and experiences of people over 55 and making these accessible to society.

The pilot initiatives of the partner organisations of the Best Agers project are trying to make the potentials of older people accessible to the economy. With its sub-project, Paritätische is expanding this line of action to the community overall. In this, the economy is regarded as just part of a whole scene, which the potential of older people should be made accessible to. Essentially, the project is aimed at increasing the willingness of society to engage by making use of the potentials of people over 55 years.

The project

In Germany there are a large number of single people, groups, projects or initiatives, which want to assume responsibility and give their time and energy free-of-charge for a meaningful cause. The intention often fails due to a lack of knowledge about how to plan and implement projects, form networks, establish associations, attract financing or overcome crises. This requires a support structure, which supports, advises and accompanies the citizens committed to their respective intention.

It therefore needs people, who have the potential and the time to voluntarily support committed citizens to realise a particular interest or solve a problem.

Most men and women of advanced years, who have left working life, whether due to unemployment or retirement, are looking for an alternative and meaningful occupation. Above all, those who held responsible positions in their professional life are now increasingly looking to engage in opportunities in the social sector, where they will have a large degree of individual responsibility and freedom of scope.

PARITÄTISCHE Schleswig-Holstein is, with its 'citizen coach' line of action offering these people an interesting and varied field of engagement. Citi-

zen coaches support committed citizens, associations and social organisations to realise an interest or solve a problem.

Activation of volunteers

Politics has discovered the civil society. Nearly every speech made, refers to it. Politics wants, with its drumbeat for honorary office, "to strengthen the willingness to engage, nationally and internationally, and to develop the abilities of those engaged", the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth established in a benchmark paper in 2009.

It maintains that the potential of people to engage voluntarily is unlimited. It is just a matter of finding the knack of how to motivate them.

The only problem is that this knack doesn't exist. People must want to engage, they won't be forced to engage. Today especially people combine with their engagement the desire to do something responsible for the community and also for themselves. It is only when the engagement conditions and operational areas meet these requirements that we can successfully win more people for an engagement.

In the following, PARITÄTISCHE presents some selected methods for the activation of volunteers, some of which were applied and checked for their effectiveness as part of the project.

Activation toolbox

Objective:

The objective of this toolbox is to collect methods in order to stimulate players who support civil society (individual people and organisations) to form networks, cooperate and carry out joint campaigns and projects, which will improve the quality of life in the community.

Basic principles:

- ▶ Cooperation as the most important resource
- ▶ Networks are formed through joint campaigns
- ▶ A common burning topic of interest
- ▶ Voluntary participation
- ▶ Equal participation of all players
- ▶ Bringing together players from different social spheres of activity

Possible methods

- ▶ Market place methods
- ▶ Target planning methods
- ▶ Activating project development
- ▶ Eco-mapping
- ▶ Public Spirit Workshop
- ▶ Community Organising
- ▶ Future Workshop
- ▶ Appreciative Inquiry

The market place method

What

The Bertelsmann Foundation has transferred this general idea of market places to the civic community:

The special vision of a market place brings companies and charitable organisations together. Just as in a market, the players negotiate cooperation projects, in which supply and demand determine the exchange. The companies can, depending on their capabilities, each offer support with personal commitment, with their business skills or with logistical assistance for charitable organisations. Welfare organisations offer participation in their projects and with this, unusual insights into other environments. In this way, the partners of the caring sectors get to know each other better. They build up mutual trust and develop social cohesion in joint projects. In this way, companies discharge their social responsibility and welfare organisations can achieve their objectives with additional resources.

How

Companies and local charitable organisation come together for two hours in an informal atmosphere in order to exchange cooperative offers with each other and, if there is interest, to make mutual engagement agreements, either as one-off support or long-term co-operation.

And: money is taboo!

Forms of support depend on the scope of the partners:

- ▶ Unpaid deployment of members of staff
- ▶ Making knowledge and expertise available
- ▶ Making resources and logistics available (rooms, vehicles, tools, materials etc.)
- ▶ Making contacts and networks available

Who

Every company, whether a one-man business or a local branch of an international group of companies, and every charitable organisation or association from the social, cultural, sporting and economic area can take part in the market place. What is important is the willingness to take innovative routes in order to form unfamiliar co-operations, which are outside their usual sphere.

What for

Market places are good for local communal life. They are the meeting points of trade and for get-togethers. They enable exchange and communication, which are important for the business and social climate. The slogan "Good business dealings" should make it clear that participation in a market place is associated with a benefit for all those concerned.

Testing of market place methods: Kiel market place 2011

After a one-year planning and organisation phase the first Kiel market place was opened with a sound of the gong on 17.03.2011 at 5 pm in the Science centre in Kiel. About 30 charitable organisations and 30 companies from Kiel met in an informal atmosphere in order to negotiate "Good business dealings" in 90 minutes. Anything could be exchanged, but money was taboo on this day! Anyone who was particularly creative in their offers also had good chances of forming a good barter trade with tough negotiation partners. For example, the German Red Cross exchanged child care at a conference for 10 entry cards to the wellness area in Hotel Birke; Leptien Holzbau from Kronshagen offered the Kiel Fenster company support with building counters and, in exchange, it can use their seminar rooms, including coffee; the workshop and care centre in Ottendorf secured themselves a taster day for wheelchair users in the Fördesparkasse and in exchange tested this for its accessibility, the Brunnen chemist's on Blücherplatz received a relaxation seminar for its members of staff from the Association of Grieving Children and, in exchange, put first-aid boxes in all the child care rooms.

A total of 45 agreements were made and tested and stamped by the voluntary "Market place lawyers" for their correctness.

Assessment & Evaluation

The market place of good business dealings is an imaginative and unusual method for the strengthening of regional cohesion and for increasing the willingness to engage, especially of companies. In addition to the enormous fun factor, which this event has given all participants, people made contacts with people, who in their normal everyday life they would only have little or nothing at all to do with. This method can be totally recommended but at the same time it is also very labour-intensive and does not have a budget. The successful planning and implementation of a market place stands and falls with the formation of a project group. Anyone who would like to plan a market place is well advised to get information in advance from the general Internet sites for market places in Germany. There are many good tips and suggestions here about planning a market place and what you have to take into account for this.

Further links

<http://www.gute-geschaefte.org>

Target planning method

What

The tool presented here is a very simple and very quick procedure for target planning. This target planning can be used as a preparatory tool for the event, but a group for a topic can also use it as a method if it is a matter of goal definition during an event.

How

The success of an event stands and falls with its preparation. The more precise the preparation, the better the event can be planned and the easier it is to moderate it. The target planning method consists in the answering of this question:

Target planning: the event/ project was successful if (as precisely as possible, the quantity or percentages are also possible!)

Example for a workshop on the topic of Inclusion:

If the day has gone successfully, the following has happened:

1. A representative was present from every project
2. The participants (all female) left the event optimistically and are looking forward to the joint cooperation with the information centre.
3. The structures of the cooperation meet the requests of the participants and can be provided by the information centre.
4. Connecting factors, with regards to content, between the projects are identified
5. The network structures and work structures between the projects are agreed
6. The project objectives and contents of the individual projects are clear to everyone
7. A basic consensus about Inclusion is reached

Only now does the moderator draft his event plan, decides who is invited, chooses the necessary time and methods!

Who

The target planning method can be used alone e.g. by the moderator for his event planning, or jointly with a group for project planning.

What for

The target planning method is used to develop an exact presentation about the particular scheme. The more detailed the presentation, the more precisely and easily can a scheme be planned and also evaluated. Whether the ways and methods, which are used to reach the target achievement are sensible, depends crucially on the target planning.

Assessment & Evaluation

We use the target planning method for the preparation of all events and workshops. It is an established tool in our work and can be totally recommended, not least because it so easy and quick to manage.

Further links:

[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_\(Projektmanagement\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_(Projektmanagement))

Activating Project Development

What

The activating project development is a method of development and change planning on a selected range of topics. It is always sensible to apply activating project development if a need has been established, but there is still no idea of how to implement it, for example, of how to increasing the willingness to engage, in the region. The aim is, with several people, to develop one or several binding projects, where the first steps for implementation were agreed.

How

The activating project development is conceived as a workshop. Depending on the topic the time framework should be a half-day, not exceeding the maximum of a whole day. The workshop design has not been decided on. It is recommended, however, to carry out brief target planning in advance for the workshop (see target planning method). It is important not to provide ideas, but to promote the ideas potential of the participants.

An example for a workshop for activating project development on the topic of Poverty:

Workshop: "inclusive ways for participation in social life"

Agenda

1 pm	Welcome and Presentation
1.15 pm	Introductory report
1.30 pm	Brainstorming project ideas
2 pm	Selecting and establishment of project ideas (group work)
	Individual group breaks
3. 30 pm	Presentation of the projects in the plenary session
4 pm	Agreements for further course of action
4.30 pm	End

Presentation round

Question:

Who or what has influenced you in your life to concern yourself with the topic of poverty?

Brainstorming

Question:

What must we change in Neustadt, so that poor people can take a greater part in social life.

Method:

Individual work on cards (5-10 minutes). Each person puts his/her cards just in front of us, pinned to the wall.

Cards are sorted in the plenary session according to topics. 1, to a max. of 3, projects are selected, if necessary, by the allocation of points.

Project establishment

Group work, depending on the number of projects. Participants receive precise work instructions and we assist them in their work. Each group appoints a moderator and a note-taker.

Work assignment for group work on project establishment.

Work on the following three topic areas:

1. Target planning

The project was successful if:

Example:

The project was successful if:

- ▶ Workshops have taken place in five selected regions
- ▶ There has been an exchange of ideas between specialised staff and private individuals
(50%/50% per region)
- ▶ Precise agreements were made for further course of action
- ▶ Five campaign ideas were developed for each region
- ▶ Three campaigns per region were implemented
- ▶ A "new" network partner was integrated into the planning team
- ▶ A political/public discussion took place (events / PR work)
- ▶ The "quality of life" and participation opportunities for those involved have increased. (it must be better than before)
An activation of those involved has taken place
(100 participants in SH. 50% are still involved after a year)
It has been fun.
- ▶ All participants had added value

2. Alliance partner

- ▶ Which alliance partners are important for the success of the project?
- ▶ Which alliance partners must be involved in the planning and implementation for the success of the project (participants of the project group)

3. Milestones

- ▶ What are the most important milestones in the project?
WHAT must have happened by **WHEN** at the latest?

You have 60 minutes of time. Have fun!

Who

Depending on the topic all those will be invited who have an interest in the topic, who have the capacity to actively take part in the implementation and/or have a certain influence to promote the topic with regards to content and strategically.

What for

There are many good project ideas, but only a fraction of them are also put into practice. Sometimes, the players lack the know-how about successful project development or about access to important partners and networks. The activating project development method generates new ideas or takes up existing ones and puts them into practice. At the end of the workshop a group of people got together to implement a precise project idea. The first implementation steps are already planned at this workshop.

Assessment & Evaluation

We use the target planning method in the preparation at all events and workshops. It is an established tool in our work and can be totally recommended, not least because it is easy and quick to manage.

Eco-mapping

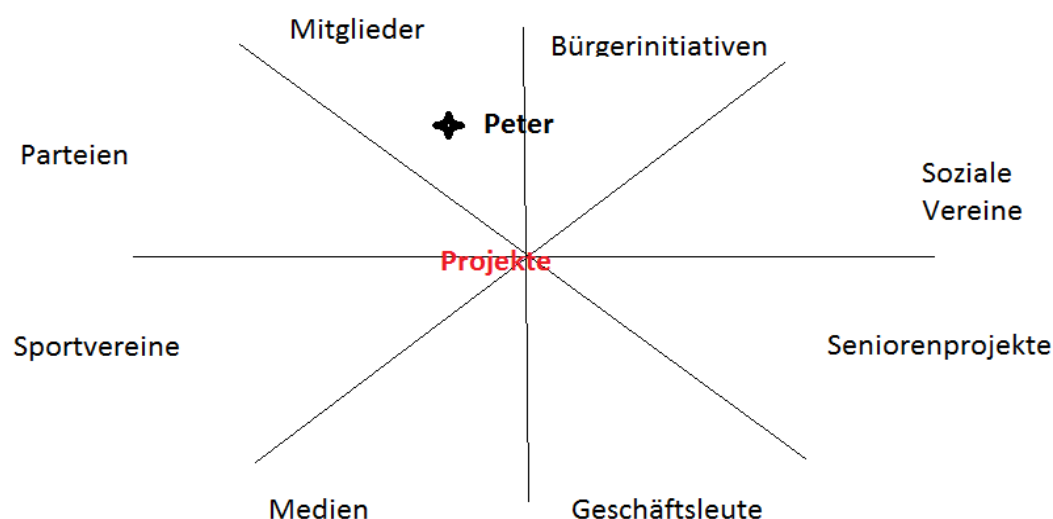
What

Many activation processes depend on finding volunteers, co-workers or supporters for a project or a campaign. Often, players feel helpless in the face of this task. They either resign or they hope to find committed people either via a flyer or via a press article.

The most successful strategy for people to win projects is by addressing them directly. Eco-mapping is a method used for searching for possible people, who would be prepared to get involved, in your own networks. It is essentially more effective than trying to win committed people via flyers, press articles or big campaigns.

How

As most of the networks are latent, it helps in an initial step to identify the different sections of the environment of a project, in which interested persons can be found. In order to focus the outlook for the search process the segments of the 8-field-card have proved to be of value. The segments define relevant areas from the environment of a project. When defining the segments it is important to also think of networks, which are unusual and not everyday, it is precisely those weak networks, which enable access to new co-workers.



We are looking for specific people in these fields, who would possibly be interested in working together on a project. A list can then be drawn up of people who it is worth talking to about cooperation in a project.

Who

The method is suitable for associations, which are looking for new members or volunteers and for projects and initiatives, which are looking for supporters.

What for

Eco-mapping leads to the best results if it is carried out in groups. Not only are then more possible people discovered, but the joint process enables a creative vision of one's own networks. After the people who might be interested are identified, it can be agreed in the team, who will lead the contact discussion with which person (one-to-ones).

Assessment & Evaluation

We have used this method in workshops, which are concerned with the firm establishment of social projects and gaining co-workers and supporters. The method is particularly suitable for projects, which do not have the know-how and the facilities for complicated project planning. It is simple and versatile to use in different phases of the project planning.

Public spirit workshop

What

The public spirit workshop is an internationally recognised framework of methods, developed and tested in a research and development project of the University of Munich in cooperation with the Bertelsmann Foundation. A support network of consultants, moderators, researchers and initiators of public spirit workshops developed the public spirit concept and in 2003 Netzwerk Gemeinninn e.V (the Public Spirit Network) was also established.

The public spirit workshop promotes voluntary engagement in burning issues and works with a combination of innovative consultation, project and large group processes. A tailor-made project design for self-organisation is developed during the course of the project, using a construction set system and methodical support. It is a matter of implementing planned campaigns within the public spirit workshop as a social, regional and temporal framework. The commitment of all those who, as a joint venture, want to responsibly form the process is crucial.

How



Activation:

At the start there must be a burning issue, which affects many people (1). An initiative circle would like to work on it with others, and substantiates objectives, a slogan, participants, sequence of the whole project and introduces the process (2). A project circle compiles the basic plan for the whole project course and supports the different project phases on an organisational-methodical level (3). An event circle develops by inviting other interested

people to a large event (activation forum), at which campaign circles form and can plan individual campaigns with one another (4).

Realisation:

The campaign circles are expanded in everyday life by interested people and, if necessary, receive support from the project circle. Relevant basic campaigns are already put in place in Phase 3, in order to promote the continuity of the campaigns- notice board or internet platform, regular meetings, training courses, consultation discussions, etc. (5).

Integration:

To conclude the project the results are presented at the integration forum (6) and at subsequent meetings of the project circle (7) and initiative circle (8), reflecting the course of the project, as well as celebrating what has been achieved! At the end, various solutions to the topic emerged, methodical findings were recorded and public spirit networks developed, which can also continue to function in the future (9).

Who

Active participation processes in the form of workshops assume that all participants have brought both questions as well as practical answers to the common issue. Experienced support workers (moderators) assist in clarification of the topic and in the organisational and methodical design of the process.

What for

Those who work in accordance with the public spirit workshop approach gain:

- ▶ **Voluntariness:** as the participation process pays attention to self-motivation, self-determination and meaningful orientation of the process
- ▶ **Practicality:** as public spirit workshops have been carried out with great success in various types of cooperation
- ▶ **Wide appeal:** as all sorts of people and institutions are invited to self-organised teamwork
- ▶ **Security:** as clear structures and obligatory agreements of individual project steps at different levels of responsibility give support and orientation
- ▶ **Cost efficiency:** as, due to inclusion of partners at the right time, available resources result in easing of the total budget
- ▶ **Sustainability:** although the responsibilities do finish at the end of a project, method knowledge and network structures can, however, continue to be used

Assessment & Evaluation

The public spirit workshop process is very costly. However, anyone who adheres to the very particularised script of the process will be able to carry out a typical public spirit workshop course. On the other hand, you are free to choose the methods within the process. An extensive toolkit of methods can be found on the website of the public spirit workshop. Inexperienced moderators should however not attempt this process. Anyone, however, who is seriously concerned about the topic of activation and engagement, is well advised to look into the method and theoretical construction of the public spirit workshop. There is also the opportunity to train as a moderator via the Netzwerk Gemeinsinn e.V.

Further links:

<http://www.netzwerk-gemeinsinn.net>

Community Organising

What

Community Organising (CO) is organisational work in urban districts, towns and cities or regions. Citizens contribute to solving problems in their environment by constructing a culture of contacts and through joint action. Organizing is deeply committed to the principles of democracy and self-determination. Community Organising is not simply the American term for what is called Bürgerinitiative (citizens' initiative) in Germany. There are fundamental informative differences in the organisational approach.

- ▶ Citizens' initiatives in Germany often lose their momentum in a topic – in the defence of change, which is too frightening. Their driving force is a selectively necessary protest by inhabitants, by those concerned. They end with the success or the failure of a campaign.
- ▶ Community Organising is aimed at permanence. There are enough questions, which require public, value-based intervention. In CO it is not so much a matter of defence, but of positive changes and the ability to effect these. Your organisations know that the ability to implement requires a wide alliance of people from many different groups and organisations, such as church communities, trade unions, citizens' initiatives, local institutions and associations. CO doesn't start, therefore, with the allocation of a contentious issue, but with the construction of trustworthy contacts, which result in the ability to act.

How

Contact – campaign – more contact – more successful campaign...

A new organisation begins initially therefore with many individual conversations. This results in indications of grievances, of what is worthy of change, that can be tackled better jointly. A new organisation handles a small, straightforward conflict with its first campaign, which they will certainly win. That brings respect and new contacts. The thought pattern of this social-capital movement is that contact enables a successful campaign, which in turn promotes more and better contacts, which then allow more successful and bigger campaigns. Power then comes into the movement, in German: »Macht! (power)« Saul D. Alinskys, founder and first theorist of the CO and himself an extremely successful organiser, explains what is meant by this: »The only aim of an organisation is power, as power is the physical, spiritual and moral ability to act«.

In the USA the Community Organising mode of operation has been successful in many large cities for over half a century.

Who

The 4-eye-discussion, »the secret weapon of CO«

At the start of a new organising project a wealth of individual discussions must be held concerning the personal contact, and the personal perceptions of the participants and those involved. The own interests, motivation and view of the problem of the citizens involved are the focus of attention. »To organise is to actively dig up the history of a person, the joint examination of the meaning of the history and the opportunity to write a new conclusion for the personal and mutual history«, is how Larry McNeil expresses this aspect. The priority task and essential quality of this phase is the contact work, the locating of citizens who want to get involved and the further development of their abilities. These »key people« run the organisation and define their objectives. The organisation itself does not stipulate any programme with regard to content when it is founded. To a certain extent the organisation provides the framework for self-determined joint action. 30-60 minutes should be planned for an initial contact discussion, it preferably takes place under four eyes and at the end both participants should know from one another what is important, what moves them. The discussion ends with the question: »Which people should I have a similar discussion with?«

Part of the professional image of an »organiser« can be to hold 20 or 30 such discussions per week. As this is not only a matter of technique, but – this is emphasised – of a skill, in-depth training will be provided with the voluntary leader. People, who can bring in other people to join in and remain in it, have a higher reputation in the CO, and as such can speak well in public.

What for

A broad base enables tactical successes

A »Community« Organisation is formed by the participation of many people with varied backgrounds, who often come into the new alliance with organisations that already exist. People from all sorts of origins and with all sorts of interests are deliberately approached. Changes require a wide consensus. No individual member organisation should be able to dominate the work. As an organisation of the »third sector« they are independent and self-reliant towards market and state (the other two sectors). It acts and negotiates with imagination and creativity, but also with the ability to implement what emerges from the broad base.

A broad range of topics is the pre-condition for the ability to form an alliance

A »Community« Organisation is characterised by working on topics, which are changing and are determined by members in many individual discussions and group meetings. It is concerned with the specific part of a problem, which gives rise to the success of a promising campaign cohesion. The self-interest of the members remains the primary incentive of the cooperation. This can be completely reversed in this way: »Help us in this campaign, and we will also help you in a following one, which is important to you«.

Independence is the pre-condition for public regard

A »Community« Organisation is financed from several sources, not predominantly from the public purse. We consistently strive to meet our own campaign, organisation and personnel costs. At least 50 % are own resources from member organisations or contributions. They therefore remain independent of denomination and party affiliation and are capable of conflict in local politics. It is precisely not being dependent on a drop of local community sponsorship that is the pre-condition to be taken seriously by the administration and the business world as a negotiating partner.

Permanence requires professionalism

A »Community« Organisation is orientated to long-term and continuous change, to more democracy. This is achieved through continuous contact work, through organising and reorganising what – and this is also the experience from 50 years of CO – must be professionally supported in the interest of the matter. Therefore, the majority of own resources are spent on personnel and good organisers. The self-image of a good Community Organiser can be summarised in an »iron « professional rule, »Never do something for people, that they can do themselves.« It may be added, however, »Do everything to ensure, that the people in the organisation can do what they want to do.« The role of the organiser is not to be the manager, but to find managerial people, to support them, to train their skills and to support them in their personal growth. The people in the organisation do not »participate« in the decisions, but they determine their direction.

The main tactics: to call for personal responsibility

People engaged in American COs do not waste any time in abstractedly fighting »the state « or »the system«. The question is always asked, »What specific part of a problem results in campaign cohesion for an improvement in the living conditions of people?«

The person to be addressed for any grievance, the company or bank director, the mayor, the local police chief will be specifically located for this and reminded publicly of his/her responsibility. This person is the specific counterpart, the »opponent« or the »target « of the current campaign. As can be seen from the tactics described below, this person is in an extremely uncomfortable situation, so that they, not least out of self-interest, will try to contribute to a solution. If it succeeds, the CO will publicly recognise this contribution. There will deliberately not be lasting personal enmity.

Assessment & Evaluation

Core pieces from the CO (contact work, promotion of managerial people, power analysis and strategic procedure, the development of tactics with implementation and evaluation of campaigns) are applied with gain: in training and in the practice of activating social and community work, in tenant initiatives, independent citizen organisations and urban district development, in local Agenda 21 branches, and also in the self-organisation of neighbourhood networks.

A broadly based Organising Process in an urban district is, however, an expensive and long-term process, which usually does not succeed without a professional organiser. There are examples, however, from Berlin or Hamburg, which show that the method can also be applied successfully in Germany.

Community Organising is part of the success in activating groups of the population, which are not keen to participate. Empowerment strategies, which apply directly to the living environment of people, in their area, in their neighbourhood, can contribute to social participation not only being reduced to people with a middle-class background.

Further links:

<http://www.fo-co.info/>

www.dico.de

Future workshop

What

By future workshop we understand a method, which, by including moderators, promotes the self-organisation, perception ability, imagination and decision making skill of the participants and helps to develop opportunities for the realisation of joint ideas and gives advisorial support in implementing them.

Their field of application now extends far beyond the original intention and target group of Robert Jungk and Norbert R. Müllert, which wanted future workshops to promote a »Democratisation from below«. Taking the form of dialogue and participation, and being open-ended in discussion, the future workshops provide enabling spaces for search and negotiation processes of individuals and organisations. If, in the 70s and 80s, participants came primarily from groups of people affected by the matter, from citizens' initiatives and socio-politically engaged groups, future workshops are nowadays used in almost all areas of social and economic life.

How

Phases of a future workshop

The classic three-stage construction (core phases) with

- ▶ Review phase
- ▶ Imagination phase
- ▶ Realisation phase

has in the practical experience of many moderators developed further into a process model comprising seven work steps:

- ▶ Preparatory phase
Clarification of the objectives, questions and agreements
- ▶ Introductory and orientation phase
- ▶ Social, spatial and topical approach and acquaintance with the methods
- ▶ Perception phase
Appraisal: What is it and why is it so?
- ▶ Imagination phase
Development of visions: Where do we want to go, what is our common »reason« ?
- ▶ Implementation phase
Test and prepare implementation: What do we want to go about doing how and what helps or prevents us from doing so?
- ▶ Reflection
Reflection of balance sheet and perspectives

- ▶ Permanent workshop
Consultation and support: Project and organisation development

The funnel principle and rules of play

It is a basic principle to stimulate, with various methods and forms of working, such as in individual and small groups and in a plenary session, the variety of thoughts, assessments and requests of the participants and to record them visibly for all. This variety is to be narrowed down in all three core phases in a joint following work step, to be sorted and summarised in topic focal points (clusters). Before working in more detail on selected focal points, the participants decide, using different »evaluation methods«, what are the most important topics.

Some of the rules of play introduced by the moderation contribute to the success of future workshops.

The most important rules of play are:

- ▶ All contributions will be treated as of equal value, independent of hierarchies and roles.
- ▶ No verbal or non-verbal killer phrases will be used
- ▶ Each person helps everyone else and ideas of others may be taken up and developed further.
- ▶ As many comments as possible will be visualised (mostly on moderation cards with one thought per card and a few words in easily legible writing).
- ▶ Be specific, give examples.
- ▶ Everything is possible and allowed, there are no restrictions due to »compulsions « (especially in the imagination phase).
- ▶ Troubles have priority.

Who

The role of moderation and of the female participants

The female moderators promote the development process of the individual and of the group. They have developed a concept in advance, a »scenario« for the workshop. Their strength then lies in the change, according to the situation, of the concept. As keepers of time and rules they ensure a structured overall framework and process. The participants are jointly responsible for the input and success of the workshop.

What for

Future workshops in the development of the overall concept

Visions, objectives, strategies and key projects for a desirable, realisable development of community are worked out in overall concepts at a communal level and decided on by local parliaments. At the beginning of such processes, future workshops, which can be expanded by elements of the future conference, give incentive for longer term motivation towards taking part in topical work circles.

Future workshops in local Agenda 21 processes

The future workshop, which takes the form of dialogue, open-ended discussion and democracy, takes up the core concerns of Agenda 21 – the active participation of social groups in a search, solution and design process in the direction of a long-term development locally.

Future workshops with Best-Agers

Workshops with Best-Agers require a modification, according to the situation, of the future workshop method. It is precisely the transition from profession to retirement that triggers fears about the future in many Best-Agers, which can result in resignation. It sometimes makes sense to put forth positive experiences at the review phase, instead of pessimistic future perspectives. What is beneficial is a picture of a human, which sees the subject as the author of his/her life history and which has potentials he/she is aware of, and also potentials that he/she is not yet aware of, for the shaping of one's life.

Future workshops create beneficial framework conditions, in which »creative fields « within the meaning of Burows (1999) (can) arise. As enabling rooms they are characterised as:

- ▶ An easy- to- understand dialogue
- ▶ Structures, which allow strengths and weaknesses of each person and of the respective social contexts to be articulated openly
- ▶ Becoming acquainted with diverging points of view
- ▶ Initiation into the exchange of lines of vision (perspectives)

Assessment and Evaluation

Future workshops are also characterised by:

- ▶ A structure process with phases, time structures and role clarity building on one another
- ▶ Open-ended results with simultaneous orientation towards jointly developed problem solutions
- ▶ A participatory formulation of the objectives, topics and questions and partially self-controlled learning processes in small groups
- ▶ Inclusion of the skills, interests and requests of the participants
- ▶ Use of creative methods

- ▶ Toleration and promotion of different points of view and perspectives

There are weaknesses in:

- ▶ Cutting out real power and leadership relations
- ▶ The slight obligation of achieved results (self-commitments, no power of decision)
- ▶ The accepted motivation and willingness for compromise through open dialogue
- ▶ A (premature) agreement on common ground without precise regard to the relevance and range of the achieved results

An overestimation of the results due to not sufficiently dealing with personnel opportunities and the willingness to act, as well as to the structural framework conditions.

We have worked more frequently with this method in the citizen coaching project, as it helps in new projects, that all campaigners develop a joint vision and it will become clearer what concrete steps must be undertaken in order to come close to this vision.

Further links:

www.zwnetz.de

www.zukunftswerkstaetten-verein.de

www.jungk-bibliothek.at

www.vision-bonn.de

Appreciative Inquiry

What

Imagine that you have once again done well in your job – you were successful and felt good all round. You come home and start to say »Imagine what happened to me today, ...«. This story tells us an incredible amount about people and situations. It helps us to empathise and to understand. How can we use such pleasing results for a powerful change in people, teams, organisations or societies?

Outstanding experiences as the driving force for change.

Imagine a group of citizens of a town or city, which comes together to form their future. In the first few hours they exchange their most valuable experiences, which they associate with their town or city, in interviews of two. In appreciative interviews they ask each other questions, such as, »Please tell me about a personal experience, which connects you to a great extent with your town or city, so that you are happy to live or work here. What has this really enabled? What can we learn from it?« .

These carefully prepared questions help to reveal the personal »treasures « – as well as the special qualities which repose in this town or city. This brings about a fundamental change in the perception, right up to what is valuable. All participants thus gain a deeper understanding for their town or city. The citizens develop new ideas from these individual experiences and form a powerful, concrete vision. When it is put into practice they ask the question, »How do we actually implement our vision and how do we nourish our strength and motivation?« .

How

Group size 1 to...

Appreciative Inquiry can be used by either individual people or groups, or even a large group and in whole, social development processes. For AI consists essentially of posing appreciating questions, which coax out what is valuable. Therefore, the exchange of ideas in all sorts of group sizes is a question of how I generate, summarise and then, again divide, the relevant information or stories. In the case of large groups the methodical and logical elements of the large group process plays an essential role. Overall, however, it always depends on the objectives, which I pursue – these must be subordinate to the shaping of the process. Therefore, with AI there is always a very precise clarification of the task, the result of which is the topic for the AI process, which is supported by energy.

For materials we mainly use creative materials, which support a living learning. Use your previous tools and materials, which you are familiar with.

Those who are accompanying the process should from their personality already bring a very appreciative attitude with them. It is also very important, however, that those who support the process have already experienced an

AI process themselves and are familiar with an AI training and its special dynamics, having experienced it themselves.

What for

This is what an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process with its three phases of Understanding, Forming a Vision and Putting into Practice looks like. AI – Appreciative Development /Appreciative Learning was »discovered« at the end of the 80s by Dr. David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva as a powerful approach for change. The basic principle of AI is to always look for the valuable things and to see how we can increase these.

The change begins therefore also with the initial question, which we pose. When you therefore meet a citizen (mayor) of a city ask him/her the question, »What do you really think, citizen (mayor) this city is?«.

Appreciative Inquiry brings the »treasures« of people, teams, whole organisations, communities and societies to light and uses these for further development. In doing so, we work on the concrete setting of tasks, such as increasing the attractiveness of locations, strengthening the sense of community, we re-orientate strategy, form processes, increase quality, develop teams and motivate people. This can be used especially in the Local Agenda area for:

Sustainable developments, cooperation with the local economy, citizen surveys, generating a mood for break-up, increasing self-responsibility, finding and establishing cooperative solutions, help for *self-help*.

To summarise: Appreciative Inquiry can be used in almost all situations, if it is understood to be a philosophy or a stance and uses a tool-kit to form a development oriented exclusively to the resources. It is true that they will differ from the »Standard method« AI, but instead will develop an optimal solution for their situation.

Objectives

The objectives, which Appreciative Inquiry pursues, are:

- ▶ To generate and maintain energy
- ▶ To use available resources to the maximum
- ▶ To create understanding for the points of view of others
- ▶ To make people aware of and to appreciate community and differences
- ▶ To create community and assume responsibility
- ▶ To recognise the variety as being fruitful
- ▶ To bring this variety »under one roof « and to use it
- ▶ To make new learning quicker, for from successes, learning goes much more quickly and also gives a lot more pleasure
- ▶ Understand the effect mechanisms behind successes

- ▶ Recognise, how narrow the so-called » hard « and »soft« facts are connected to each other
- ▶ Give people a healthy feeling of self-worth
- ▶ »There is much more that is valuable available than we constantly think «
- ▶ To pose questions, to develop what is new and unanswered

Assessment and Evaluation

Appreciative Inquiry can be used almost everywhere, but I must of course have prepared the ground for it. Wrongly, AI is almost always synonymous with a positive point of view, as if AI would ignore the negative. This is, however, a false conclusion. First of all, I would rather speak of valuable instead of positive things, as there is a large difference to the so-called positive thinking. AI goes much deeper and applies to the effect mechanisms. Space is given to the negative things, but they are not constantly looked for.

When it is said that Appreciative Inquiry can be used for everything, that is indeed true, but it operates of course only for the right topic for this group of people. The topic must have energy, must even exude it. That is why clarification of the task at the beginning of an AI process is so crucial.

Use AI right with your first question, and not only after you have clarified »the facts «. Change begins with the first question, which we pose.

The AI topic can be the originally assumed topic or it can be a completely different one. If you go into an AI process with a completely wrong topic, it will always be more difficult and tougher, the further you advance in the process, and the more specific the work on the topic will become. If, however, you have found the right topic using a general AI process, then the energy of the group will continue to grow, the more specific it will become in the process.

There are also situations, when you cannot use AI. There are situations, where there is no possibility for a good clarification of the task with the participants or if a specific attitude of expectation has built up. If you do not fulfil this at that moment, then the whole process is over; if you do fulfil this, however, then it maybe that participative approaches also do not come into question in the long-term view.

AI can therefore be used everywhere, where you come across openness and support for the use of participative processes. If these freedoms to choose are restricted, then you must estimate very precisely what the extent of your framework is and you can use AI within this framework.

A weak point of Appreciative Inquiry is that it evidently needs more time for an AI process. The participants can hardly believe in the workshops when they are told that they now have a total of two hours for their two appreciative interviews. When they then come back, you almost always hear that the

time was much too tight and that one or another group has only just managed one interview.

In the Citizens' Coaches project we have often included the Appreciative Inquiry method as an element in a workshop design (e.g. activating project development, future workshop).

Further links:

www.appreciative-inquiry.de

www.iisd.org/ai/locating.htm