



Appreciating Church

Guidance for people undertaking appreciative conversation protocols

At the beginning explain what you are doing and why. Establish ground rules for confidentiality, and how information will be recorded and used. Inform people that the conversation should take between 20 to 40 minutes, and emphasise the importance of their views, ideas and thoughts. Do not hand out the questions in advance, as their freshness aids conversation.

Helpful hints:

- The language and the words we use are important. Answering the questions might be a challenge for some people. Support them and be patient.
- Remember, appreciative conversations are different from traditional interviews in that the questions concentrate on 'what works'. The conversation invites people to look at problems and issues from a different perspective, focusing on the generative and creative.
- Information from the interviews is confidential - only the key themes, quotable stories and quotes are recorded. Seek permission to record and share.
- Although it is a structured conversation with questions, try and keep it informal. Give people time to reflect and answer.
- Use your own judgment and feel free to alter the questions if the language needs to change. As long as you stay in the affirmative and keep the meaning. For example: if people are struggling with the 'one thing to do', just leave it.
- Don't forget, when interviewing someone, it's not your story, and try not to go off at tangents.
- Some people will not wish to take part, which is fine.
- Enjoy the conversation; they can be great fun and powerful learning experiences.
- Sometimes you might need to miss questions or go on and then return to the one you have missed - that is fine.
- Do not forget to thank the person being interviewed, and fill in the feedback sheet.