

Building The Will

Pro Tips for Strategic CaseMakers™



With 3 Simple Questions, Get People to See Their Stake in Your Work

Q:

In our school district, we're advocating for new policies and funding approaches that we know will help every student succeed—and repair the legacy of generations of inequitable policies.

But vocal people here are invested in the status quo. They don't see how the changes we're pushing for matter for them or their families. What do we do?

A:

We think the challenge you're facing is this: People just don't see their stake in your work—and they need to do that before they will support your solutions.

It's time to stop trying to prove you're right! As CaseMakers, we can change the energy of the conversation by using a leadership skill called **appreciative inquiry**.

Visit our [website](#) to join the wider community of Strategic CaseMakers and help lead the charge for justice.

What's Appreciative Inquiry?

Appreciative inquiry is the art of asking **unconditional, positive questions** to strengthen people's capacity to anticipate and look forward to solving hard challenges—which is ultimately what we want them to do.



Why Does It Work?

We often start our conversations about the future by conducting postmortems on all the things we've done wrong in the past—an approach that motivates exactly no one.

Appreciative inquiry, on the other hand, **identifies what is working well and figures out how to do more of it.** When we have the skill of appreciative inquiry, we're able to help groups recognize and build on the strengths they already have as they work toward an even brighter future.



How Appreciative Inquiry Is Different



It allows us and others to conceive of positive and constructive outcomes together.



It gives people the opening to be the hero of our story—and that helps people see the value in joining our call to action.

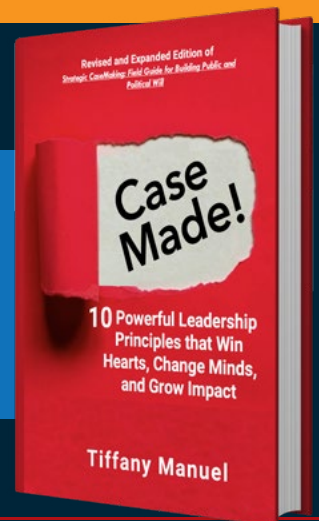


It nudges people to reconsider their prior beliefs—not because they were wrong, but because we have the opportunity to create something really great together!

Three Questions to Start With

- 1** What are we doing right?
- 2** What should we double down on?
- 3** When you think about the future of our _____ [schools, town, children, etc.], what are you most optimistic about?

For a longer list of appreciative inquiry questions, turn to **Case Made!: 10 Powerful Leadership Principles that Win Hearts, Change Minds, and Grow Impact**, pages 90–92.



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