

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY INTO FACTORS INSPIRING
STRATEGIC SHARED VISION AMONG LEADERSHIP AT
THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

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MASTER in COMMERCE**

Leadership Centre, Faculty of Management Studies

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2012

Declaration

I Devendren Vengatas Reddy declare that

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation is, except where otherwise indicated, my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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Date: 13 February 2013

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Acronyms

Appreciative Inquiry	(AI)
Durban University of Technology	(DUT)
Economic Base Theory	(EBT)
Small Enterprise Development Agency	(Seda)
Seda Technology Programme	(Stp)
Technology Business Incubators	(TBI)

Abstract

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) like many other higher education institutions exists in an environment of chaos and complexity. In order for the community at DUT to better the way in which it meets the changing demands of society, the organisation and its subsidiaries need to acquire a better understanding of the process of strategic shared visioning and to develop a culture of preparing and developing stakeholders for the process of strategic shared visioning.

This dissertation takes a **positive** approach to developing strategic shared visioning. **The study looked to establish factors that inspire strategic shared vision and the effectiveness of Appreciative Inquiry as an intervention to develop strategic visioning.** The Appreciative Inquiry Methodology is proposed as part of the programme intervention to develop factors that promote strategic shared vision. The foundation upon which to developing strategic shared visioning is to get the collective to better understand, the self, other individuals and group dynamics. The Appreciative Inquiry methodology uses the 4D – Cycle and creates a positive environment to facilitate progress by looking at future possibilities in a positive and affirmative way. This process is liberal and open but allows for constructive and structured engagement. The four phases of the cycle allows for visioning to be synthesised into a clear design and converted into detailed and methodical action plans.

Invo Tech the Innovation Technology Business Incubator is the sector within the Durban University of Technology that is the main focus of the study. The incubator was chosen as the focus of the study as this area is currently one of the priority areas to drive economic development in South Africa. The business is a young organisation that is developing its strategic position within the University and within the incubator community.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

This narrative research was conducted at Invo Tech an Innovation Technology Business Incubator based at the Durban University of Technology. The Durban University of Technology (DUT) being the first merged higher education institution in South Africa with five campuses, six faculties and more than twenty thousand students is a large complex organization. The researcher chose Invo Tech as a site in which to conduct this study, as it is an institution operating within the DUT and was undergoing the process of strategic visioning. This is an initial research and therefore the parameters are limited to a sector within the Durban University of Technology. This chapter introduces the concept of shared vision and extends the explanation to include strategic shared vision, an important organisational competency. The chapter describes how shared vision is born out of personal vision, from which human engagement evolves to create strategic shared vision, a powerful force responsible for establishing communities, institutions and a culture amongst people. The researcher then looks at Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a framework intervention to create positive change in organizational development to enable strategic shared visioning. An explanation is then offered as to why this topic was chosen and what spurred the researcher on to follow this approach in the study. The chapter then highlights some of the important definitions that form the building blocks of the study. The key concepts of Strategic Shared Vision, Personal Vision and Mental Models are defined. The conclusion of the chapter alludes to how strategic shared vision is created and maintained.

1.2 Strategic Shared Vision: The Wind in the Sail

It is the researcher's view that strategic shared vision is like the wind in the sails of a boat which gives it momentum and propels it forward through turbulent waters. The analogy also applies to organisations that require leaders to create momentum to manage the course of progress in an unpredictable business environment. It is the researcher's view that strategic shared vision is the

Compelling force in business that not only creates inertia, if it is absent but also spurs on momentum when it is a reality within an organization. Patel (2005, p.225) explains that strategists need to move from pattern recognition to seeing potential for new patterns and for new possibilities to evolve. He states that it is the adaptation to survive, invent and improve which allows humans to remain relevant. Human capital is the greatest asset to any organization; it is people that create intellectual property, innovation and artefacts. The leadership and management of people is what drives the evolution of organisations and transforms societies. Metcalfe and Metcalfe (2006, p.301) define strategic shared vision as adopting a clear vision and strategic direction, engaging internal and external stakeholders to build teams beyond the organization and inspiring the group to remain as a formation to achieve the goal. Rowley and Gibbs (2008, p.366) explain shared vision within organizational development, as a process and culture that empower, engage and encourage people to align ethical models and personal mastery for the greater good of the organization and society. Ughetto (2007, p.14) strengthens this argument by stating that foresight or shared vision, is an orderly building process of gathering intelligence in medium-to-long term which involves collective participation based on current decisions, to mobilise actions for future benefit that would create awareness of long-term objectives.

1.3 Strategic Shared Vision is Integral

If one considers how simple it is to travel around the globe, conduct international transactions and communicate using virtual technology, then it is easy to realise how strategic shared vision transforms our world. Senge (1990, p.212) draws on an analogy of a hologram to explain how personal vision combined creates shared vision. Personal vision, expanded into strategic shared vision drives human intent and extends the boundaries of what can be achieved. Gerzon (2006, p.65) states that integral vision takes into account divergent worldviews and does not allow for limitation. It is inclusive and transcends different viewpoints, with diversity being central to the thinking and feeling as part of the whole which is partial and incomplete. Strategic shared vision is one of the most powerful forces navigating any organization. Aligning and unifying strategic shared vision across an organisation, translates into goal-orientated effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore developing and strengthening strategic shared vision is paramount to the success of government agencies, industry, communities, societies and any other organization which is driven by a group of people that are responsible for its success.

1.4 Practitioner Research allows one to be in the eye of the storm

This dissertation takes a practitioner approach, in identifying how strategic shared vision can be developed at Invo Tech. The research study also looks at how Appreciative Inquiry is used as a process to develop strategic shared vision among stakeholders to develop key factors that build strategic shared vision. Practitioner research is a phenomenological reflection that was used with the researcher obtaining first hand data in the course of his career and during the data collection phase. This particular methodology relies on the practitioner recording information as close to reality as possible. According to Costley et al (2010, p.116), the term practitioner research was developed as a quasi-professional concept, suggesting a mode of working that is thoughtful and reflective, that produces a rich source of data. Fox et al. (2007, p. 48) support this and state that practitioner research, focuses on real problems faced by individuals and promotes research that has brought together the fragmented academic approach to knowledge. Reason and Bradbury (2008, p.124) argue that the technical term ‘practice’ has become so widespread, that it clouds the full understanding of the profession. They go on to highlight the tension in the use of the terms ‘practice’ and ‘praxis’, with practice being the external (objective) aspect and praxis being the internal (subjective) aspect. **The practitioner approach forms part of the action research paradigm. A practitioner researcher is someone who is involved in the sector or takes an interest to conduct research within the discipline.** The practitioner researcher is seen as bringing expertise into the research methodology through real-life experience and by framing the study within a theoretical perspective. During the practitioner **researcher** intervention, expertise is shared with participants as part of the collaborative process. Practitioner research involves a process, whereby the researcher and research participants discover new ground together. This is **also** known as **a form of** action research, a method which employs practical tools to find solutions and more efficient methods to **address** human complexities. In recent times, with the emphasis on accountability, evidence-based practice and evaluation, practitioners are becoming more involved in research to contribute to the body of knowledge. Fox et al. (2007, p.48), support practitioner research as a form of action research that empowers **the researcher and participants to share information and experiences to help reconstruct a better future.** The researcher **is able to use the relative set of power relationships** contained in the process to facilitate change.

1.5 Practitioner Identity

I am an academic in the social sciences and has lectured for ten years and worked in the project management environment for another ten years. The researcher has considerable experience in terms of observation, facilitation, narration, working with diverse groups and developing programme interventions. In this study the researcher used his strengths to conduct research into the development of strategic shared vision and proposed a programme intervention to build strategic shared vision for organizational change management. In June 2009, the researcher was appointed by the management of the Durban University of Technology and the Invo Tech Board of Directors to set up and operationalize Invo Tech, an Innovation Technology Business Incubator. The researcher conducted research into business incubation models both locally and internationally, visited and engaged with other business incubators, government stakeholders, funders and clients to better understand the requirements of establishing an effective incubator model. During the early stages of establishing Invo Tech, the researcher realized the importance of strategic shared vision as a critical success factor in organisational development. This motivated the researcher to use the appreciative inquiry methodology to develop a process to help managers and leaders to build strategic shared vision.

In setting up Invo Tech the researcher realized that in all his project management experience, strategic shared vision was the key to the success of any project or business venture. The researcher then decided to pay more attention to this process in the set-up of Invo Tech by being more purposeful in discovering and recording; observations, solutions and some unanswered questions. The researcher documented information by keeping a journal, an appointment diary and an electronic archive containing, desktop research, documents, minutes of meetings, business and implementation plans, project plans, and journal articles quality systems and process flows. All this information was recorded chronologically and contributed to the insights emerging from the study the study. The research study follows the interactions, communication and engagement with different stakeholders and identifies critical mile stones that were achieved in the establishment of Invo Tech. The research also takes on a narrative approach that focuses on what the researcher identified as key factors that promote strategic shared vision.

1.6 Problem Statement

Incubation is a relatively new approach to creating jobs and it is paramount that this sector be strengthened. Incubators are established by different stakeholder groups coming together to establish a **model for creating businesses**, in most cases they are public-private partnerships or driven by government agencies. Establishing and maintaining a strategic shared vision is a challenge, as each stakeholder serves a somewhat different purpose and each group reports to a different organization. Stakeholders do not come into a partnership with the same strategic shared vision. Stakeholder groupings have complexities which are further compounded by individuals being intrinsically different in terms of value systems. Attaining strategic shared vision is a process that requires a specific ‘group-think’ that allows for a team to work towards a common purpose. The key research question became: Can strategic shared vision be developed using **Appreciative Inquiry (AI)**? It is important to emphasise that this question is viewed as exploratory.

It is the researcher’s intention to explore how AI can build strategic shared vision in a system of a learning organization. The research study intends to isolate, investigate and communicate what factors promote strategic shared vision and how these factors can be inculcated and developed among stakeholders.

1.7 Secondary Research Questions

1.7.1 **What are the factors that promote strategic shared vision?**

1.7.2 **Can strategic shared vision be developed in a turbulent environment?**

1.7.3 Is Appreciative Inquiry an effective tool in developing strategic shared vision?

1.8 Aim of the Research

The aim of this research was to determine how strategic shared vision **could** be developed at Invo Tech using a programme intervention. The purpose was to further test the relevance and validity of factors in promoting strategic shared vision. The research explores AI as an intervention to increase the rate at which a group can be developed and work **cohesively with the one strategic vision**. The intervention also looked to develop strategic shared vision among the beneficiaries and

to ensure translation into targeted deliverables. The research was also intended to test if this intervention can be applied to other groups within the Durban University of Technology.

In this dissertation the researcher establishes key factors that promote strategic shared visioning and also advises on the process to establish factors that promote strategic shared vision. The research shows that it is not so much the number of factors that promote strategic shared vision that is important but rather the quality of the AI intervention that ensures the success of the intervention. The researcher goes on to explain how and why these observations are important to strategic shared vision. It is important to understand how each of the factors identified to promote strategic shared vision contribute towards a positive mind set and creative development of a business unit. Identifying the factors that would most impact on the AI intervention would improve the quality and rate of change that would take place during the intervention. The right set of factors and how these factors mesh at a cognitive level to create collective thinking is important to the success of the intervention. In understanding what some of the key factors are, the programme was developed to improve these traits within stakeholder groupings that come together to establish new incubators across the country and within the Durban University of Technology.

1.9 Understanding Strategic Shared Vision

Strategic shared vision is what drives and propels organizations, communities and societies to evolve and attain new heights. It is people that generate strategic vision which involves the formulation of ideas, the generation of intellectual property and the promotion of innovation. Strategic shared vision, aligned to the management of people in attaining specific goals, creates new ways to apply human effort in transforming our environment. Maxwell (1998. p.553) states that in order to have direction and achieve well, every team needs a compelling vision. Hock (1999. p. 72) supports this and states that a vision brings about extraordinary capabilities and a sense of community among people, which allows them to be passionately committed. Senge (1990 p.212) feels that, when people share a vision, they believe that their goal is achievable and realistic. Hock, D (1999.p.8) takes a philosophical approach and describes purpose as adding meaning to life when the collective share in the understanding and expression. Senge (1990. p.9) states that a genuine vision motivates people to learn and excel because they want to.

1.10 Personal vision, the spur in strategic shared vision

Personal vision, expanded into strategic shared vision drives human intent and extends the boundaries of what can be achieved. Carucci (2002, p.138) claims that when people know that they are working for the common good and mutual benefit, they begin to create a sense of purpose and powerful energy. This dissertation explores the power of strategic shared vision and shows how an organization can derive clear direction and achieve desired expectations. Senge (1990, p. 211) states that when individuals do not have their own vision they subscribe to another person's vision and this results in compliance. **This means that when a person is not a visionary or an independent thinker they are comfortable to subscribe to a vision proposed by some else and continue with the process of change as a follower.** This dissertation explored how strategic shared vision can be developed at Invo Tech and converted into personal shared vision by applying the appreciative inquiry methodology. This supports Senge's argument that an individual must believe in a vision and share in the idea of others so that personal effort can be combined to achieve the strategic objectives.

1.11 Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

The AI 4D cycle takes participants through the four stages of discovery, dream, design and destiny asking positive questions to reconstruct a better future. Watkins and Moore (2001, p.14) define AI as a system that looks **collectively** to improve energy present in a system to perform optimally in organizational terms. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003; p.1) support this argument and see AI as an exploration of what inspires human systems to get them to operate at the highest possible level. **In this research an** Appreciative Inquiry methodology is adopted to test five proposed factors believed to promote strategic shared vision amongst leaders. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003; p.6) explain that the 4D cycle is used to drive the process of positive organisational change. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p.17) confirm that AI topics become an organisation's agenda for learning, knowledge sharing and action. The questions in the 4D cycle become the basis of the discovery interviews and serve as triggers in the dream phase and allow for the conceptualising of design propositions. Invo Tech is an evolving organisation and this dissertation employs the researcher's observations to look into methods that can be used to develop strategic shared vision amongst leaders. This dissertation is limited to identifying and building supportive arguments for five factors that promote strategic shared vision, namely **presence, personal mastery, diversity, emotional intelligence and organisational communication.** The factors are used within the 4-D cycle of appreciative inquiry to conduct research into strategic shared vision.

1.12 Strategic shared vision: created and maintained

In order to conduct an analysis of stakeholder management it is important to outline the different phases it took to establish Invo Tech. Establishing a relationship with the funder was key and this needed to be conducted in a professional and trusting environment. At this early stage it was important to prove to the funder that the organization had capacity, resources and commitment to be involved in the Incubator sector. All expectations needed to be communicated from both sides of the process; design and end result needed to be identified and agreed upon. This formed the foundation for engagement and advancement. The next phase involved a feasibility study and research to be undertaken using current best practice in the incubator sector. Here the engagement with a number of stakeholders was conducted both at a national and international level. At this level both written and verbal communication was vital and the tone and requests needed to be non-threatening. It was important for the researcher to listen, document and not attempt to formulate solutions after each interview but rather to collate information objectively and learn both through documents and observation. Once the information was collated it was important to establish a project steering committee made up of individuals from both the funder and the university. It was important at that point to have a series of meetings to present opportunities and findings. The visioning of the organization gradually emerged. Once the broad vision was crafted, the research became more focused and the outcome was construction of the business plan. It was important to ensure that this business plan had sufficient substance not only to guide the process but also to instil sufficient confidence in the initial funder and attract other potential funders. The next important phase in the establishment of the incubator was to secure physical space and to obtain resources such as human capital and equipment. Once the infrastructure was established and all resources put in place it was important to celebrate the coming together. The next phase involved bringing in other funders and partners.

1.13 Chapter Summaries

1.13.1 Chapter Two

This is a narrative chapter in which the researcher reflects on the importance of strategic shared vision and takes account of this within the context of Invo Tech an Innovation Technology Business Incubator based at the Durban University of Technology. This chapter involves a personal account

and it explains why the research has been conducted from a practitioner's perspective. The assessment was chronological as it looked at strategic shared vision from the linear process of establishing a technology incubator. The chapter also looked at some international bench marks into the purpose, establishment and effectiveness of Technology Business Incubators (TBI). An understanding of business incubation in South Africa and within the current economic and socio-economic backdrop as the point of departure. The chapter looks at how business incubation could impact on the stimulation of the economy and on job creation. The partner organisations at Invo Tech are then explained as enablers and drivers of business incubation support.

1.13.2 Chapter Three

In this chapter the researcher **reports on** the literature review which **covers topics critical to underpinning** the understanding and arguments addressed in the dissertation. The concepts of chaos and complexity were analysed from a theoretical perspective as these topics weave through the tapestry of the turbulent environment **in** which Invo Tech and the incubator environment is immersed in. The researcher also provides an understanding of systems thinking and **the concept of the** learning organization which is imperative to developing strategic shared vision. The methodology of Appreciative Inquiry is covered in detail in terms of the principles, the model and the implementation of the methodology as an intervention to create change. The researcher then looks at the human element and some of the factors to develop strategic shared vision and the following are covered: Presence, Diversity, Emotional Intelligence, Personal Mastery and Communication.

1.13.3 Chapter Four

This chapter opens with a consideration of why **a** qualitative research methodology was chosen and its relevance to the soft systems research project. The researcher then **explains** the practitioner research approach and why this type of action research **is** effective in understanding, collecting and interpreting data for this study. The researcher looked at the focus group and survey methods for data collection and the reason for and effectiveness of these two methods of collaborative enquiry. The research sought to understand how strategic shared vision was established and what the enablers **were** that contributed to the development of strategic shared vision. The Appreciative Inquiry framework and process used to create structure for the research study is explained as a

methodology to underpin the research. The data analysis process is explained as a logical process that organizes and arranges data into relevant information for the report. The last part of the chapter looked at the validity, authenticity and ethical consideration of this study.

1.13.4 Chapter Five

This chapter **reports on** the findings from the survey and focus group interventions. It also **explains** at challenges that were experienced in collecting and interpreting data and provides some suggestions on how the collection of data could be improved during the proposed follow-up study. The chapter **covers the** findings were determined during the research phase and how these impacted on making changes to the proposed intervention programme. The chapter also **looks at** how implementing AI as an intervention to develop strategic shared vision can become more successful.

1.13.5 Chapter Six

The concluding chapter explains the success of using the Appreciative **Inquiry** method to conduct the intervention **and** develop the factors that promote strategic shared vision. The Chapter also **explores** how critical the five factors are in improving strategic shared vision. The chapter concludes by justifying why this intervention should be conducted in the early phase of the establishment of business incubators.

1.14 Definitions

1.14.1 Vision: Stacey (2003, p.67) defines a vision as a desirable future image of an organisation that is realistic.

1.14.2 Strategic Vision: Lussier and Achua (2007, p. 398) define strategic vision as an ambitious perception of the organisation which everyone associated with it sees as achievable.

1.14.3 System: Waring (2005, p. 21) defines a system as a complex whole which **consists of** integral parts that are connected.

- 1.14.4 Systems Thinking: Gharajedaghi (2006, p. 16) defines systems thinking as the study of how parts within a system are connected, related and functional.
- 1.14.5 Complex Adaptive System: Stacey (2003, p.67) defines a complex adaptive system as a number of agents with their own set of rules working towards some order.
- 1.14.6 Chaos Theory: Gharajedaghi (2006, p. 50) defines chaos theory as an approach based on nonlinear relationships in a system that are not predictable which is related to behaviour in a social system.
- 1.14.7 Learning Organisation: Senge (1999 p.14) defines a learning organisation as one that is continuously growing and evolving through the exchange of information to create a better future.
- 1.14.8 Appreciative Inquiry: Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2005, p. 3) define appreciative inquiry as an intervention that looks to find solutions by being positive and only asking affirming positive questions.

1.15 Conclusion

The focus of this study was to establish factors that inspire strategic shared vision and to identify an intervention that could be used to develop strategic shared vision in business incubators such as the incubator at the Durban University of Technology and at other similar institutions. This is a pilot study and only attempted testing five factors that inspire strategic shared visioning but the researcher has gained experience, in the process, of how to test participant's **responding** to these factors and will now look to investigate this in a more comprehensive study. During this study the researcher also gained insight into the importance of strategic shared visioning and will now look to contribute academic papers on this topic.

Chapter 2: The Invo Tech Narrative

2.1 Definition of narrative approach and why this was adopted?

This research study adopts a narrative research approach, whereby the researcher explains his observations and experiences in the form of a story and validates his experience by drawing upon literature to support arguments and strengthen reasoning. Boje (2008, p.7) defines narration as full explication of a retrospective reflection, that is quite detailed and articulated chronologically. Whilst it is set in the past the narration is enhanced by the capacity to comment from the vantage point of the present and it also has the capacity to conjure up visions of a possible future. Druckman (2005, p. 277) supports this definition and explains narrative analysis as a method that delves deeper into causes, explanations and the spoken word and has the following features:

1. It addresses nuances and innuendos;
2. It focuses on what, why and what effect;
3. It assembles data that are expansive;
4. Narrators are experts;
5. Analysis can be as fine-tuned as required for the purpose;
6. Emotion and nonverbal communication is included; and
7. It allows for broad or thematic understandings and meaning.

Boje (2008, p.1) states that the narrative and the story constitute the **self-organising** forces of storytelling. Boje goes on to explain that a narrative has become the central force of order and control and aspires to abstraction and generality. Druckman (2005, p. 283) states that narratives contain elements of both truth and fiction and are stories that people tell about themselves and their world. This characteristic is pertinent to this study because **in this narration** the researcher establishes how strategic shared vision can be developed and improved. The intention is to look at the present from an appreciative perspective and establish how the positives from the past and present can contribute to the future. Druckman (2005, p. 283) supports the research method employed when extracting experience from the real world, and states that narratives apply to the study of conflicts in storytelling as they include

prolepses (flash forwards) and analepses (flash backs). This aligns to the focus group research method employed and also to the appreciative inquiry process of the 4 D cycle.

2.2 Business Incubation

2.2.1 Business Incubation as an economic intervention

The section starts by looking at what business incubation is and how this impacts on economic and social development and the relevance of business incubation to the modern economy. The chapter goes into a detailed analysis of business incubation, incubation in South Africa and the contribution of Technology Business Incubators (TBI's) in developing countries and also takes into account best practice from international incubator models. Business incubation is an intervention developed to create an enabling environment to support and accelerate the growth of start-up companies by assisting them with shared services at a low cost, mentorship and access to networks. Bajmocy (2007, p.57) defines business incubation as a process of providing support to **start-ups** in the early phases to ensure a good foundation for the later growth phase. Allen and Rahman (1985, p. 12) describe business incubation as a specialised environment to support businesses in their foundation phase, providing them with facilities and business mentorship. Business incubation is normally funded by government, the business sector, international governments and agencies or a combination of these organisations. Allen & Rahman (1985, p.13) see business incubators as public-private partnerships which provide enabling resources for start-up businesses. The objective of business incubation is to establish successful companies that will leave the incubator when they are financially viable and self-sufficient. According to Patton et al (2009, p.622) incubation has gained the support of the British government, due to the high incidence of market failures in the high-tech industries and they see incubators as being capable of converting UK's science capacity into commercial success. Business Incubation is viewed by many governments as a dynamic tool to promote the creation of new companies which contribute to macroeconomic objectives, job creation and increased capacity which impacts positively on the country's gross domestic product and promotes export markets. According to Patton et al (2009, p. 623) policy makers see incubators as mechanisms to improve global competitiveness and to increase **innovative** potential through technology transfer. Therefore small businesses are viewed as catalysts and engines of growth and governments allocate a considerable amount of resources to develop these programmes. Models of business incubation evolve in sophistication, complexity, structure, and sector bias as they gain ubiquity and are highly sensitive to local markets in many dynamic economic conditions, both in

the developed and developing world. Chandra and Fealey (2009, p.72) claim that the availability capital, structure of financial markets and institutional structures all create an enabling environment. Smith (2010 ,p.14) draws attention to the impact of the external environment on business incubation by explaining that economic base theory (EBT) has exogenous and endogenous growth theories that are used in economic development practice. Endogenous policies promote growth from within the community and exogenous policies promote growth from outside the communities. It is evident that business incubators are part of the general economy and are viewed as economic role players which are impacted on by the dynamic macro and micro economic forces influenced by chaos and complexity.

2.2.2 Business Incubation in South Africa

Business Incubation is a model developed to support start-up businesses to accelerate and grow. The incubation model is based on a programme that has a combination of training, mentorship, and individual technical and business support plans. Business Incubation has been identified as one **policy to drive** economic development and job creation in South Africa. The South African government has prioritized this strategy with a targeted establishment of 250 business incubators over the next 5 years. Currently the Department of Trade and Industry supports 31 incubators. Our President the Honourable Jacob Zuma stated in his State of the Nation Address, that R10 billion has been set aside for the IDC to support small business incubation to drive economic growth. (Online). Supporting this argument was an article carried in the **Business Day Online on the 15th February 2012, (www.bdlive.co.za) iterating** that the global market has created an opportunity for emerging markets, driven by investment in innovation, R&D and technology with a strong entrepreneurial drive, to be competitive. (Ughetto, p 14. 2007) recommended the Georgia State University model, where the university-based innovation model is used to spur economic growth by supporting a technology-driven economy, through public-private partnerships between the ‘triple helix’ of universities, government and business. The current model of business incubation sees the majority of these incubators dependent on a combination of partners or funders to ensure the success and sustainability of individual incubators. The establishments of socially beneficial organisations are often infused by a vibrant injection of stakeholder views, opinions, experiences and extrapolation of timeline series followed by similar organisations. This dissertation looks at the management of stakeholder vision that is understood, merged and applied to form the context of the strategic shared vision for Invo Tech.

2.3 Invo Tech - The Innovation Technology Business Incubator

Invo Tech is a Section 21 company that has been established in partnership between the Durban University of Technology and Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda). Invo Tech has emanated from a proposal submitted by the Enterprise Development Unit (EDU) of the Durban University of Technology (DUT) to the funder Seda. Fealey (2009, p.68) confirms that this model of stimulating economic development is prevalent in other parts of the developing world, in the United States, Brazil, and China. Invo Tech is a business incubator focusing on converting innovations into commercialised product for new sustainable markets. It has become clear that the community of innovative thinkers and technologically savvy entrepreneurs has grown exponentially in the recent past. Bajmocy (2007, p.57) acknowledges the growing trend in the modern economy for universities to work with government and claim intertwining innovation and enterprise-policy which supports university technology incubators as catalysts which are referred to as technology business incubators (TBI's). Bajmocy (2007, p.57) describes TBI's as enterprises that are focused on innovation, technology orientation or have some type of knowledge service working closely with the academic sphere, in a learning-based economy, to develop and improve the incubation process which ultimately benefits the regions spatial economic processes.

Patton et al [Online], available at (www.springlink.com/index.) Access Date (12/07/201) reinforces this argument and affirms that it is imperative for HEI's to get involved in the development of innovation and in the United Kingdom; they have created the Higher Education Innovation Fund which is used as a driver of innovation and technologies. Funds are used to support technology transfer and to create spinoff companies and also used to create incubation facilities to accelerate the growth and development of new firms. According to Collier and Gray (2010, p.18) there is a wide-spread belief that in many countries universities play a vital role as innovation partners. Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2001) describe the triple helix of university industry-government relations which are responsible for creating the knowledge economy. The author refers to Gunasekara (2005, p.526), who explains that the knowledge economy concept about "... to initiate and drive agglomeration through knowledge capitalisation projects, often with government and industry support". As change is considered to be evolutionary Invo Tech provides technical and business mentorship support to grow innovative businesses. The community of inventors and technocratic entrepreneurs has mushroomed, spurred by globalisation and an insurgence of the information age.

The Vice Chancellor and Principal of the Durban University of Technology Professor A.C Bawa, expressed this point eloquently in his speech at the Invo Tech launch, I quote: “In crafting this speech two concepts jumped out at me and I feel that I need to share this with you to set the tone for the rest of my speech. The first concept is ‘Rethinking the Future’ and the Second is ‘what's coming next.’ We have immersed ourselves in a technocratic world and there is no **escape from advancing technology.**” Invo Tech has strategic relations with government agencies, funders and international partners. Professor F.A.O Otieno Chairman, of the Invo Tech Board acknowledges and lauds the working of government together with Universities to support Invo Tech. I quote: “Elsewhere in the industrialized countries where new knowledge is rapidly transformed into commercialisable products and services, it is known that this is as a result of the close partnerships existing between universities and the private sector organizations. This partnership is testament that our government cares and understands how to maximize the best interest and leverage the most from our institutions. Such collaborations harness financial and material resources as well as skills that are abundant in a university setting.”

2.4 Set up Process of Invo Tech

The vision of the institution is an important point of departure, to identify what is sought and how critical shared vision can be aligned at Invo Tech in attaining the desired strategic shared vision. Senge (1990 p.356) states that in creating vision, leaders in learning organisations help share and conceptualize their crucial insights to become public knowledge that can be challenged and improved. **Since the inception of the incubator project the researcher identified chaotic periods, which could have been eliminated or reduced had there been a strong strategic shared vision and foresight.** It is the researchers experience that dis-equilibrium is most likely to happen in the business planning phase This includes the physical establishment of the incubator, communication and recruitment of clients, drafting of year plan, merging of calendars ,and time series activities within a quarter. If the business planning phase is unmistakably built on input that evolves out of strategic shared vision, then the focus on the incubator priority area is clear, the purpose is clearly defined and what resources are required to deliver the milestones of the incubator be agreed upon and released according to the project plan. The second critical phase of the incubator is its physical establishment which focuses on the location, how the space would be utilised, what would be the corporate feel and image, branding, infrastructure and what capacity the incubator would need in order to function well. Strategic shared vision would convert this entire process into a story board with details sketched in to create an architectural plan and virtual image.

The third factor to impact on the incubator environment is marketing, communication, client recruitment and client management. Strategic shared vision would define the target market, what effective medium of communication is required, what the client process is in terms of recruitment and how this is incorporated into a process flow. If an incubator can predict future trends and develop capacity and resources in servicing markets chaotic situations **will** occur less frequently and the **spikes** in disordered activity will have lower curves. Bajmocy (2007, 61) states that TBI's result in the **creation of innovative businesses** and they provide favourable and special support which promotes a cumulative learning environment in emerging industries. They also fosterer the intensification of localized economies. This started the conceptual journey for the researcher, and he began to create mental images of different incubator environments. The business plan was then crafted taking into account the models experiences and models from established incubators. The model had to be both **feasible and practical** with the medium to long-term objective being self-sustainability. This required Invo Tech leadership to convince the University executives of the benefits of establishing an incubator at DUT. In respect of the funder, the business plan had to be sound to secure approval of the project. The point also had to be made that the incubator would be well-positioned to support start-up businesses, to promote black enterprises, to create an enabling environment to develop a high percentage of women-owned firms and to contribute to job creation.

2.5 Experiences in Preparing the Participants at Invo Tech

The researcher, through his own experience at Invo Tech, has identified that in the process of developing strategic shared vision, it is important to create a culture in the organisation that is dynamic and receptive to change. The researcher has realised that openness, transparency and constant communication are important to create a culture that is informed and receptive to change. Communication needs to take place at different levels and may take the form of formal board meetings, structured management meetings, weekly staff meetings, informal team discussions and use of electronic communication. It is also important to ensure that all participants are aware of the rules of engagement and that leadership and management reserve the right to hold discussions in private in navigating the organisation and developing the strategic shared vision, but it is also important that information is cascaded on a regular basis to keep all parties abreast of developments, progress and announcement. It has been the researcher's observation that if honest and clear communications are disseminated on a regular basis, this removes suspicion and creates

an open environment for communication between all members of the organisation. It is also important to ensure that protocols and channels of communication are clearly indicated as this facilitates discussion and understanding.

2.6 The importance of building networks and of listening

The researcher has identified that it is important to get the team involved, not only **in** understanding the strategic shared vision but also in constructive building the strategic shared vision. This is achieved by delegating substantial responsibility to get tasks done that would contribute to tangible progress in the organisation. The researcher achieved this in the early stages and continues to do so by involving staff in strategic meetings. The researcher can cite an example which has developed the Invo Tech team to take ownership of the brand. The team was involved in meetings with the consultant, which **required** concept generation for the brand, choice of name for the organisation, colours for the organisation, and design and infrastructure development of the facility. This **allowed** the team to be part of the evolution of the organisation and they grew together with the history and the legacy of the organisation.

The researcher has identified that strong leadership is a major contributor to developing and enhancing strategic shared vision. Invo Tech has successfully navigated through the start-up phase and has developed an impressive and modern office **incubator** environment. Invo Tech has accumulated 93 clients over the past 18 months with a large portion of these clients having developed innovative products. Over the past six months, five Invo Tech clients have registered patents. Of 18 clients interviewed by the Industrial Development Cooperation, 16 clients were accepted to submit funding applications to enter the second phase of the PDP funding programme. Invo Tech has positioned itself as a leading Innovation and Technology Incubator in Durban. The Incubator has been inundated with client applications in the recent past and going into the third year of operation the incubator **will** have to better screen applicants for innovations. This **will** ensure that Invo Tech builds on innovations and works within specific sectors to better organise resources and support for clients.

2.7 Conclusion

This dissertation has used a narrative approach so that the researcher can share his first hand experiences on the factors that develop strategic shared visioning. This method would also allow the researcher to more clearly explain the process, engagement and outcomes of the appreciative inquiry process adopted in developing Invo Tech and this research. The data and experience from the AI process conducted in this research will also contribute to informing the board and management on strategic positioning of the incubator.

It is evident from this chapter that business incubation is an important intervention to address market failures in establishing new high technology businesses. The leadership of the country, academics and government officials have all realised the importance of establishing business incubators within the university context to ensure good governance, continuation and that expertise are brought into the model to ensure innovation, technology transfer and the efficient use of resources. The triple helix model of universities, government and the private sector are critical to the development of successful incubator models. This model further validates the importance of using the Appreciative Inquiry Model in developing the business incubator as this model allows thinking from different quarters to work collectively to drive strategic shared visioning.

Invo Tech in its second year of the first cycle of funding has already accomplished most of what it set out to do in the **log frame** of the original business plan. One of the strengths of the incubator is that it was able to position Invo Tech within the Innovation community at a National, Provincial and Local level with government agencies and the Private Sector. This is one of the strategies that Invo Tech has relentlessly been working on to develop strong networks and to attract influential stakeholders. The ethos of the organisation is simple: to be honest, serve the constituency with the international best practice models and work closely with Seda, other incubators and organisations geared to developing a sustainable culture of entrepreneurship in South Africa.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

The incubator sector is part of the larger economy and hence also subject to the chaos and complexity of the business world. This literature review looks at the theory of impact on chaos and complexity on a business incubation environment and how this influences strategic shared vision and at the same time builds a case for the importance of strategic shared vision in business incubation. The learning organisation is then introduced and analysed in relation to how organisational intelligence has been created at Invo Tech and how this culture is fostered and promoted. The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Model is unpacked and a case built for using the model as a framework to develop a programme based intervention to improve the development of strategic shared vision. The chapter then analyses five factors that the researcher identified as important to developing strategic shared vision. The five factors being personal mastery, communication, diversity, presence and emotional intelligence.

3.2 Creating the environment for Strategic Shared Vision

In preparing an organisation for strategic visioning, it is important to create an environment and culture for change, and to build this ethos into the fibre of its organisational intelligence. Anderson & Anderson (2001 p. 77) state that it is essential to create an environment that enables change across the organisation to address political realities, as this builds commitment and alignment to the larger outcomes for transformation and collective visioning. Patel (2005, p.61) affirms that at the heart of strategy is personal and the impersonal interaction formulated and developed to influence some external reality which becomes perception. Auster et al (2005, p. 87) state that it is important to take some time decisively to identify the drivers of change and clearly communicate these to participants in the organisation to create readiness. Anderson and Anderson (2001 p. 77) support this argument and state that a powerful influencing strategy is to create a 'critical mass of support' within the organisation to mobilise the advocacy of the new vision or direction as this will result in change taking on a life of its own. Strategic visioning is an on-going process and this renewable capability would require

continuous thinking, continuous change and continuous being. Therefore leaders and visionaries need constantly to be growing and developing their teams.

3.3 The impact of Chaos Theory on the Business Incubator Environment

According to Stacey (1993, p233) “Chaos Theory is an extension of systems dynamics. It demonstrates that the kind of equations used by systems dynamics modellers have: different possible stationary states; different possible cyclical states; chaotic motions of various kinds.” Chaos Theory, described by mathematical models are iterative non - linear interactions between entities that form a system. Gharajedaghi (2006, p. 51) describes chaos theory as the behavioural characteristics of purpose systems which provide the tools and concepts to understand choice and in doing so explain why social systems do what they do. Stacey (2003, p.301) confirms Chaos Theory looks at behavioural patterns that are in an iterative, non-linear and deterministic mathematical relationship, where the output of one iteration becomes the input of the next iteration. Understanding this theory is important to business incubation as most incubator models follow a stage gate approach with clearly defined processes. In moving incubators through the different stages, one needs to be aware of chaos as external forces like the economy and financial markets may enter a trajectory that will directly impact on the business that is being supported.

The relationship modelled by chaos theory is self-referential, meaning the current state is determined by a non -linear algorithm to its own previous state. This is explained in Stacey (1993, 233) “For different parameter values there are different basins of attraction. However, the system model can only follow trajectories from one basin to another. However, the system model can only follow trajectories within the basin of the initial conditions and cannot of its own accord jump from one basin to another.” Gharajedaghi (2006, p.51) further explains that iteration is at the centre of design methodology. This iterative behaviour is evident in economic systems that integrate Technology Business Incubators (TBI’s). Bajmocy (2007, p.60) states that Technology Business Incubators are catalysts to industrial change and promote the development of new innovative industries that develop the regional economy, TBIs result in structural changes and it becomes harder to intervene to alter the trajectory. Stacy (1993, p233) states that “that the model does not display self-organisation. There is no place for intrinsic novelty.”

Brosnan (2007, p. 25) introduces the concept of bifurcation and explains this as a fork in the road, when the system reaches a tipping point, it is forced to take a new direction with its own challenges with the system displaying chaotic behaviour.

Therefore chaos theory can be applied to human behaviour by applying analogies. We can infer relationships in one situation by taking cognisance of the attributes in the other. Chaologists hypothesise that chaotic systems develop strategies and techniques to make sense of this chaotic information. Stacey (2003, p.302) states that relationships in chaos theory are abstract relationships and attributes are patterns called 'strange attractors'. However we can still apply chaos theory to human behaviour by taking the attributes from one domain to another and this can give us some kind of poetic insight into patterns of human behaviour.

3.4 Understanding how chaos theory could impact on Invo Tech

Brosnan (2007, p. 29) defines feedback loops as mechanisms that facilitate the flow of information that the system both reports on and responds to. Positive feedback loops heighten feedback and negative feedback loops **cancel out** what is reported. This means that negative feedback triggers a new process in the social system and positive feedback loops work in a cumulative way to increase what has gone on before. Waring (1996 ,p. 268) defines feedback as a process by which a **component** within a system establishes values for stimulus and monitors the outputs for discrepancies from the desired levels and this gives rise to a closed loop or adaptive control. Understanding this process **was** important to developing strategic shared visioning at Invo Tech. It is vital that the management of Invo Tech constantly monitor and document events so that strategic decisions can be taken when similar situations arise in the future **which will** conserve the energy of the system. **It can also be deduced that Invo Tech should look at developing computer software to manage the client incubation process and organisational management process.** Gleick (1998, p.260) makes a very important observation to add great credence to the observations made by Stacy when he states that, when chaos occurs within a system its due to the unpredictability, constantly generates a flow of new information moving the system to a higher **order or disorder** and contributes to the learning **challenges**. Therefore it is important to regularly document incremental change constantly as a part of developing the evolving organisation.

3.5 Interconnectedness of the parts to the whole

Hock (2005, p. 6) vividly describes the interconnectedness of the world and states that inseparability and wholeness are everywhere. They define each other and Hock goes on to state that in change management processes organisations need to learn, adapt and improve. Gharajedaghi (2006, p.16) states that systems thinking involves understanding the interactions of the parts to function as a whole. Whole systems are separated from others by boundaries and they interact with each other to **form** a supra-whole. In systems thinking humans are thought of as rational, autonomous individuals. Gerzon (2006, p. 83) sees systems thinking as a critical tool that challenges all positions of conflict. Systems thinking creates a shift in perspective and allows for open mind-sets and it creates the opportunity for collaboration and innovation. Waddock (2007,p. 543) makes a fundamental point when he says that businesses are part of society, creatures of society and need to be subject to the interests of society and not be seen as dominant agencies of creating society. Therefore it is important for Invo Tech to take stock of its position and to understand clearly the role and purpose it serves and in doing this the strategic shared vision needs to be aligned to the interconnected expectations of society. This principle of systems thinking allows for strategic shared vision to move the organisation consistently to a higher level with more predictability. The incubator process must be based on a foundation of clear strategic shared vision which enshrines all strategic and systems planning activities. The researcher has identified that all activities and functioning of the business incubator can be mapped to time-line series planning. Waddock (2007, p.553) emphasises the importance of collaboration and states that more collaboration allows for new creative insights, identification of new innovations, entrepreneurial possibilities and the evolution of new business thinking which would deal more effectively with the worlds social and ecological problems.

3.6 Understanding how complexity theory could impact on Invo Tech

Hock (2005,p.10) explains that the **theory of complexity was developed by** from a group of scientists from different disciplines and believed that the world cannot be explained only by mechanisms operating in terms of precise linear laws of cause and effect. This allows for spontaneous order to arise and at times characteristics emerge that cannot be explained by knowledge of the parts. Lane (1999, p.37) describes complexity as having different facets based on both rational and emotional factors. Learning takes place within complexity theory and over time the rules can change allowing free will and determinism to work together. Therefore for our purpose

it **was** more important that we further analyse complexity theory to help establish solutions to develop strategic shared vision at Invo Tech because participants have choice and can learn over time. It is evident that Invo Tech is part of a bigger business incubation network in a regional, national and international context. Therefore Invo Tech can learn from other incubators and can develop the strategic shared vision from lessons learnt and experiences of incubators that have similar environments and challenges. The other important deduction in complexity theory is that it considers the human element of the system. In this case it is the stakeholders, leadership, management, staff and clients which can evolve by learning. Therefore the more capacity each grouping in the incubator environment receives; the closer will be the alignment to a common goal and the strategic vision of the incubator. Incubator management must constantly, develop training interventions and share knowledge. At the same time the incubator management must monitor and evaluate training interventions and knowledge dissemination.

Stacey (2003, p. 253) states that complexity theory delves into the workings of self-organising systems. Many different autonomous agents work together in relation to their own principles and rules. Stacey observes that at low levels of information transfer and having few agents the system attains stability and the system achieves a predictable pattern of behaviour. Therefore it can be deduced that the complex system amplifies any deviation instead of suppressing it and this allows for new forms to emerge. This can be approached in two ways; the first is to ensure that the incubator has sufficient resources to support the strategic shared vision. The second way is when the incubator builds capacity in terms of technology but does not have the environment and facilities to build businesses using this technology, and then the system would have failed. Therefore it is important to align strategic vision to resources, people and goals. Palus (2003, p.26) describes 'complex' as the appearance or manifestation of the challenge, Heifetz (1994) used 'adaptive' to describe the most desirable response to a challenge. Hence agents co-evolve and in the process impact on the systems that they are part of. This implies that we are not able to see the long-term outcome of our choices. The important lesson is that Invo Tech needs to build networks and relationships, with government agencies, incubator networks, industry and international associations. This would increase the rate of learning and with Invo Tech becoming an agent in an array of different systems; it can adopt best practice in terms of business mentorship, management, capacity building and technology transfer.

3.7 Relationship between Chaos Theory and Complex Adaptive Systems

The word chaordic is created by the marriage between chaos and order, which is a state that can be considered as a field of energy on the edge of the chaordic boundary that has order which is on the outer boundary of the side of control. In this state creativity and innovation can be enlisted to develop creative solutions. This is a state that the leadership of Invo Tech needs to foster in order to create strategic shared vision where collective intelligence can prevail. The suggestion here is that some small trigger can cause a major calamity, if leadership within Invo Tech does not have the shared focus to work collectively to bring about order during some periods of imbalance. Strategic shared vision converted into a vision, mission and objectives can create the framework to guide systems to the point of order.

Bai-Lin (1990, p. 6) defines chaos as a series of events over a period of time that have a kind of order without any form of periodicity. Over a chaotic period, patterns of order emerge, punctuated by smaller and smaller scales of chaos provided that a force is used as an intervention. This chaotic period can be viewed as a system influenced by cause and effect which stimulates development and evolution. This definition is supported by Hock (2005.p.10) who explains the chaos phenomenon and adds a slightly different dimension by **suggesting that as the** nature of complex connectivity allows spontaneous order to arise, leading to a context emerging that is difficult to be explained by the knowledge or makeup of the system. Another phenomenon emerges in which the system cannot be explained by any linear laws of cause and effect. Hock goes on to state that all complex, adaptive systems exist on the boundary of chaos having sufficient self-organization impetus to develop a cognitive pattern we label as order.

3.8 The Learning Organisation

According to Senge (1990, p. 3) the learning organization is an institution where people continually learn to see better ways of doing things and understand the organisation as a whole and in the process they grow and create new realities to take the organisation to a new **and** better position. In order to learn we need to change our understanding of **how** the world **as we know** as created of unconnected forces and we need to see the system as a whole. Carnall (1997, p.20) sees personal mastery as the bedrock of personal vision that feeds into the shared vision of the organisation and the individuals must be able to see the big picture. Senge (2003, p. 4) explains that at some time every person is part of a group that works collectively for a common goal and this institution is a

learning organisation. People are central to organisations and should be the core focus of managers and leaders. Individuals make up the organisation and are essential to the creation of learning organisations. Tapping into the potential of people is imperative to business success. Tapping into the deeper levels of human energy does pay off. Therefore there should be commitment by management to the wellbeing of its people and to the growth of its workforce. Personal mastery is the essence of individual learning and is primarily responsible for the creation of learning organisations. It is the people who deliver work according to quality standards and on time that help achieve business objectives. **People with a focus on lifelong learning contribute their own development by making a concerted effort to learn.**

3.9 Appreciative Inquiry

3.9.1 Developing a clear understanding of Appreciative inquiry (AI)

Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p, 8) describe AI as a systematic discovery process that brings out the best in people and their organisations. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p 1) support this definition. **AI is when organisational change is developed in inquiry and affirms a positive in building better organisations.** Cooperrider et al (2005, p.3) provide a practitioner definition and extend the explanation to include a process of positive questioning that aims to build capacity within an organisation by using the imagination of people. Appreciative Inquiry is a positive inquiry into a situation and it follows a process. Avital (2005, p.291) defines appreciative inquiry as follows: “It is part of a larger paradigm that explicitly defines itself as theoretically counter to the problem-solving approach and has focused on a positive way of knowing.” Locander and Luechauer (2007, p.46) enhance the definition of appreciative inquiry by declaring that AI creates new exciting and generative images of the organisation by affirming an intuitively better understanding of the past and present.

3.9.2 Process and application of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is the process of using positive questions to create sustained change and move the group or organisation to a better position. The change must bring about a happier more productive and better position in the group or organisation. Locander and Luechauer (2007, p.46) explain AI as a mental metabolism in the process of a collective journey which takes an

organisation, group or community beyond the problem analytic or deficit-based theories of change. It is a cyclical process which engages all members of a community or organisation and involves the participants in deep dialogue **on being positive in respect of** resources, capabilities and strengths. The process of AI moves participants in an organised way to see bold new possibilities for the future. It then helps the participants to engage by articulating their views and provides ideas to shape the future together. The process then requires participants to form teams and to achieve the dream and design of the future. This process is called the Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle. The AI 4- D cycle can be conducted as an informal conversation or it can be detailed by having every stakeholder group involved in the process all engaged in a formal and structured process. The advantage of the AI process is that each intervention takes on a new character and has its own unique set of affirming questions. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p8) explain that the most strategic part of AI is the choice of topics and the sequence in which they would be conducted. These topics form the structure for knowledge sharing, learning and action and are written into questions that allow for discovery during the dialogue. These questions form the triggers in the dream phase and form parameters for the design stage and allude to specific action in the destiny phase. (AI PRC pp. 16/17) Locander and Luechauer (2007, p.49) caution practitioners about the misuse of AI, and they remind us that the system can become corrupt if we brand any positive social intervention as AI. It is important to remember that AI is a process built on the 4D cycle. Locander & Luechauer (2007, p.49) also note that indiscriminate focusing on appreciation, without any theoretical methodology might result in short term improvements that lose steam once a challenge to the system arises and this must not be taken as constructive dialogue and sincere change. Finally, pretentious engagements must not be falsely classified as appreciative inquiry. The group must be willing to remove any animosities and must be committed to the process of organisational development.

3.9.3 Appreciative Inquiry: The Positive Journey

Cooperrider et al. (2005, p.30) claim that the positive centeredness of an organisation is the most powerful tool in organisational development, but it does not attract sufficient attention in change management. **Appreciative Inquiry is an intervention that can be used with any groups as it involves communication and allows participants to be open and honest. AI also allows the group to listen to other points of view and moves the group as a collective to a future better situation.** Whitney and

Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 2) agree that communities, organisations and businesses can benefit from positive inquiry as people have the inner desire to work from their strengths, value systems and greatest passions. Watkins and Mohr (2001, p. 53) suggest that change is initiated by some external force which requires the organisation to make some systematic and deliberate change that will move the organisation into a positive trajectory. Identifying the factors that promote strategic shared vision in leadership has promoted the positive change being initiated at Invo Tech. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p.1) explains appreciative process as something that breeds positive energy in a system to ensure that it is able to function optimally and to be most effective and most capable. Cooperrider et al (2005, p. 30) state that AI consciously frames the future by developing a design based on the positive. The positive core lies at the epicentre of the AI processes and forms the beginning and end of the positive inquiry. The positive core allows the organisation to review its history and find novel and unconventional methods of providing positive possibilities. Solutions are found by magnifying the positive core and this radiates solutions throughout the organisation. According to Mullen and Lick (1999, p. 36) synergy occurs when a group benefits the most from available resources and experiences which are the fruits of mutual respect and understanding in a problem-solving solution. It is therefore possible to conclude that when an environment of openness is created that a trusting, non-judgemental, constructive, receptive and positive transformation will not only take place within the situation but also within the participants of the process.

3.10 The 4-D Cycle

Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 6) confirm the 4D Cycle is the process to conduct the appreciative inquiry intervention. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2005, p.83) explain that AI is best learned and understood through the use of the 4D cycle and go on to explain, as noted above, that the process can be formal and conducted across an organisation or it can be an informal conversation between two people. Below are the four phases of the AI cycle.



AI Diagram obtained from Introduction to AI – Website

[www.new-paradigm.co.uk/introduction_to_ai.htm]

3.10.1 Discovery Phase

The discovery phase looks at what gives life to systems. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p.147) claim that AI interviews are a key success factor, as they create the opportunity for people to speak, generate curiosity, enlist a culture of learning and in so doing enhance organisational learning. This is the part of discovery that creates positive possibilities for the future. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p. 16) describe this phase as activating the system by exposing role players to best practice and to what gives life to the system.

3.10.2 Dream Phase

The dream phase looks at the possibility of what the future could look like and what we want it to be. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p.16) describe the dream phase as developing a concise goal-oriented vision which projects new potential and which envisages what a better system would be like. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 147) explain this phase as a collaborative process to envision the future of the organisation, by imagining an inspired and positive organisation. In this process the group shares elaborate dreams which contribute to collective dreams that create new possibilities.

3.10.3 Design Phase

The design phase allows us to contemplate the ideal and gives us the opportunity to construct the future and how we would want the future to unfold. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005, p.16) explains the design phase as identifying a range of propositions of the perfect organisation and communicates these as organisational constructs that the participants feel would be worthy and would take the organisation to the next level of progression. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003, p. 147) see this phase as the extended process of expansion. This process gets the group involved in sorting, sifting and engaging in a serious choice about the future. This process involves a step-by-step implementation of a variety of organisational design procedures.

3.10.4 Destiny Phase

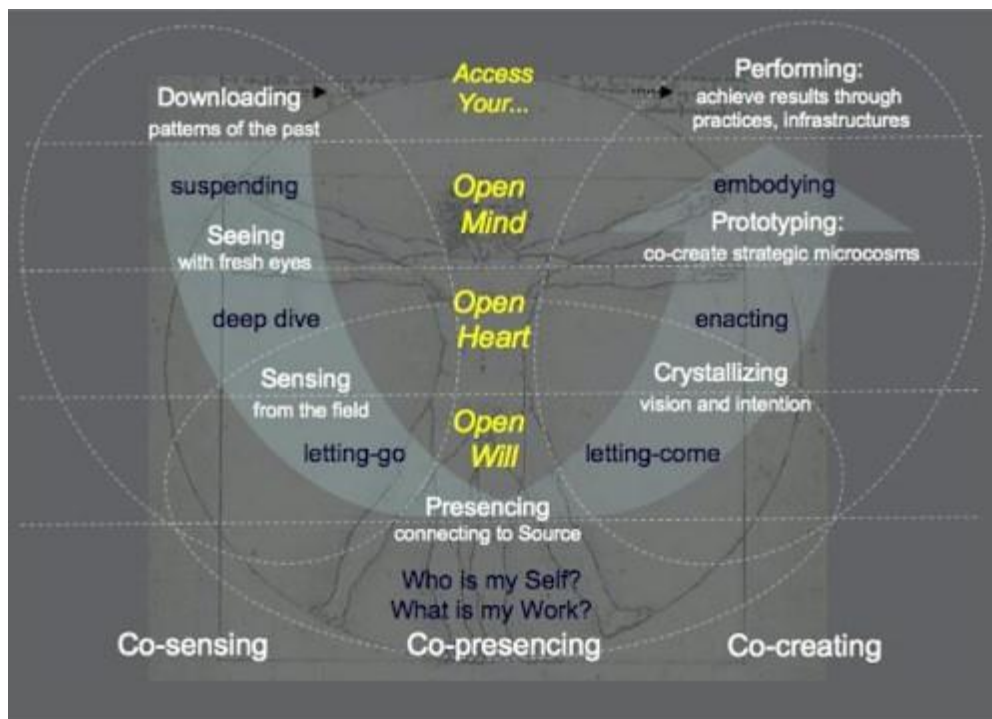
The destiny phase allows us to think about how we can learn and improve our position and situation and what adjustment and changes are required to achieve the desired state. According to Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003 ,p.147) the final phase of AI 4D Cycle is three dimensional, the first dimension deals with recognition and celebration of what has been learned, the second dimension is cross-functional within the learning team which triggers a range of goal-driven and goal-oriented changes. The third level involves the universal application of Appreciative Inquiry to programmes, processes and systems throughout the organisation. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005,p.16) see the destiny phase as increasing the potential of the identified capability of the entire system and allowing it to construct and maintain momentum for continuous levels of high performance.

3.11. Theory U

3.11.1 Discovering Theory U

Scharmer (2007, p. 13) explains Theory U as a tool that looks at leading from the highest future possibility. The theory suggests that we access a layer of consciousness when we engage with a group as distinct from discovering something independently, which is referred to as the field structure of attention. The theory states that similar actions and thoughts can cause very different outcomes depending on the intensity of engagement. This is the hidden dimension of our common social process. Theory U helps us to understand how all social action comes about. Scharmer (2007, p. 103) explains that as we evolve and move down the left side of U, the environment is seen as being apart from us and as we use our perception to start seeing reality we start

to see what underlies reality. On the left of U we see the real world and on the right side we see it as it emerges or as we perceive the future. As we move down the left side of U the individual is the observer of reality and we see the past. As the observer moves up the right side the observer begins to see the future. The bottom of the U is the point of presence. Scharmer (2007, p. 88) explains that the three basic aspects of the U movement are mirrored in what happens in the learning process. Theory U **names** at the three stages as sensing, presencing and realizing. **The** first part of U requires us to slow down, and see reality. The state of the bottom of the U is presencing where one sees from the deepest inner space. At this point **an** individual **can** suspend and redirects attention and perceives from within the living process of the whole. In the process of presencing the individual moves to the highest possibility that connects the self and the whole. We download our mental models, reflecting past experiences. We then suspend and see our own connection to what exists and become one with the situation this is sensing. The state of the bottom of the U is **called** presencing, where we see from our deepest source and become a vehicle of our **soul**. When we are presencing we see from the highest future possibility and connect ourselves to the whole.



[Source: Otto Scharmer and the Presencing Institute] –
intersect.org.nz/group/socialprocess/forum

3.11.2 Theory U, a tool for dealing with human complexity

Gerzon (2006, p. 100) reminds us of the increased pressure from the turbulent times that we live in, especially in the business world with complex organisations. The pressure from complexity spawns a deeper interest in the power of presence because without it the level of stress becomes unmanageable and we lose our footing. This has great relevance to leadership and management. If leaders cannot manage their own complexities how can they effectively manage others?

3.12 Presence

Sharma (2004, p. 13) describe presence as deep listening, being open beyond individual preconceptions and historical way of making sense. This is when an individual is completely in touch with their consciousness and fully receptive to the present moment. Presence allows one consciously to participate in the larger field of change and these result in realizing the emerging future. Gerzon (2006, p 97) defines presence as creating a mental concept which is supported by our spiritual and emotional resources to see the situation that we are involved in and are now a part of. Gerzon goes on to say being “awake” is an excellent down to earth way of describing the quality of presence. Presence is qualitative and is not described as a tool but rather a quality of the individual. Sharma (2004, 14) refer to this as the “blind spot” and explains that presence is an experience which depends on how we feel and the kind of space that the observer is experiencing which is the source and quality of our attention. Sharma (2004, p 12) define presencing as the state each of us experience not by just opening our minds but our hearts, will and our impetus to act, in order to deal with what is emerging all around us as new realities.

Gerzon (2006, p. 100) states that if we are awake we are more receptive to our environment and we can actually sharpen our diagnosis of problems and we can respond more effectively. Scharmer (2004, p.142) agree and they state that awakening is a personal experience as we subscribe to being a part of the whole and that this requires a shift in consciousness. Huges (2005, p. 45) state that self-awareness enables one to connect to their personal beliefs, assumptions and value system which is a motivator. This becomes the key to keeping an eye on the ball and staying aligned to true motivation which supports strategic thinking and promotes informed decision-making. Scharmer (2007, p. 29) state that in ‘presencing’ the individual must be able to suspend immediate judgement; this is the process where an individual takes stock of thoughts and mental

models as workings of the mind. This process allows the individual to become aware of thoughts and at this time there is self-reflection. Critical suspension creates intuitive awareness. Scharmer (2007, p. 31) explain that suspension requires willingness and a preconceived framework or mental model that selects what to see and how to see it and this allows one to create conclusions and add meaning and interpretation to observation. This process helps to connect the dots and puts together unrelated information to create fresh new ways of seeing a situation.

3.13 Personal Mastery

3.13.1 Personal Mastery Defined

Senge (1990, p.7) defines personal mastery as the continuity of seeking clarity and gaining a deeper understanding of one's personal vision by learning to focus and to develop patience in seeing reality objectively. This definition is corroborated and expanded upon by Dhiman (2007, p. 25) who defines personal mastery as a search to find authenticity, meaning and fulfilment in one's life both personally and professionally. It harnesses creative energies that lie dormant within us. Personal mastery refers to personal growth and learning. In simple terms mastering something refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which an individual works and lives. This implies having the ability to select the best option from a set of alternatives, and to make the best choices and possess the correct knowledge, skills and attributes. Senge (1990, p.141) supports this definition and claims that people with higher levels of personal mastery, increase their ability to push the boundaries of progress and development. Personal mastery is defined as searching and looking for feedback, defining goals, starting constructive development, tracking one's own progress and identifying the most desirable behaviours to develop personal growth through learning and commitment. Personal vision, current reality and creative tensions are then explored. Self-awareness leads one to approach one's life as a creative work. Self-awareness within personal mastery means the person is in control of the area of which is expertise. Maxwell, J.C (1998, p. 393) states that a leader cannot take people any further than they have travelled themselves. Therefore a leader needs to have a personal vision.

3.14 Diversity

Boninelli & Meyer (2004, p. 134) explain diversity as a very broad concept that goes beyond the concepts of race, gender, age, ethnicity and physical ability. The term must also encompass intangibles and differences such as personality, social and economic status, work ethic, communication style, education, religion and geographical origin. Diversity is also influenced by backgrounds, socialisation, affiliations, experiences and historical events. Organisational diversity is the extent to which an organization values and tolerates differences, recognizes and rewards different viewpoints which in turn can contribute to a pool of ideas drawn from experiences and knowledge. Although diversity is a catalyst for creativity, it is important that leaders manage diversity to ensure that the maximum benefit can be drawn from the differences that exist amongst employees. A shared vision ensures that everyone works towards the achievement of a common goal. A shared vision channels diversity into the achievement of a common opportunity that everyone can identify with. Unless diversity is integrated into the implementation of the organizations goals, it may impair the effectiveness of cohesion and collaboration. Edward, E, H (2004, p.8) defines diversity in organisational development as the collective mixture of differences and similarities of individuals working together in pursuit of the same set of organisational goals. This definition is supported by Taylor, C, Jr. (2001, p.3) who **extends the definition to involve** differences among homogenous groups existing within the same ecosystem and having common goals. This definition places emphasis on the personal affiliations which have a major impact on people's life experiences. **These are** the difference in race, heritage, religion, age, culture, language and sexual orientation. Carr-Ruffino, N. (1999, p. 60) challenges this thinking and states that diversity is not a given and that people need to move beyond stereotyping and prejudices and learn how to embrace diversity. This study has established that it is important to see diversity as a way of life by embracing the new and exciting opportunity and possibilities that diversity contributes to making our life richer.

Prashotam (1996, p.365) view the key strategic advantage of diversity as the value of differences which can result in individual organisations using diversity to develop unique organisational strengths. The authors also state that diversity must be a strategic intention and that organizations should incorporate diversity management into all functional areas and activities throughout the organisation. Meyer & Boninelli (2004, p. 135) endorse this argument and explain that valuing diversity encompasses the similarities and differences between people and this process should reward achievements without

favour and accolades should be based on performance, which is conducive to the expression of the individual's commitment, motivation and productivity. Valuing diversity requires education, awareness sensitivity, respect and appreciation for the dimensions of human identity. Valuing diversity calls for creating an inclusive environment which promotes respect for differences where people are encouraged to work within the collective and to build sustainable relationships. Edward, E, H (2004, p. 16) reinforces the notion of value that diverse teams bring by reminding us that they possess the capacity to achieve better levels than homogenous teams. This argument is supported by Edward (2004, p.20) and states this thinking and states that in order for an organisation to benefit from the diversity mixture, it has to subscribe to the level of diversity required to meet the critical organisational challenges. This is realised in an organisation that encourages a climate that values diversity and maximises the engagement of people.

3.15 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence seems to be an easy concept, involving emotion and intelligence. This implies that the concept is based on how one acquires and uses the knowledge factor to solve problems based on innate emotions which have been acquired through socialisation. Lynn, A.B (2005,p.1) defines emotional intelligence as being based on individuals living up to their own greatness, displaying wisdom, warmth, depth, charm and **doing things beyond their capabilities**. Emotional Intelligence is also about using knowledge to manage the self and relationships in terms of our desired intentions. Cooper and Sawaf (1997, p. xii) explain emotional intelligence as intelligence stemming from the heart. It is emotional intelligence that drives us to pursue our potential and purpose based on our inner value system transforming the way we think and behave. Luthans, F (2002,p. 67) provides a modern definition and states that emotional intelligence is at the intersection of emotion and cognition which is the ability to interpret and enact emotion to mirror emotion in thought, to comprehend and reason which regulates emotion in all individuals.

3.15.1 Emotions, what are they?

Cooper & Sawaf (1997, p.39) describe emotions as a signal system, which provide information and which directs us to questions or openings, actions or changes at any given moment. Wilks, F (1998, p. 4) feels that if we confront our emotions it releases us from being stuck in them. As we learn to work with our emotions and self-knowledge, a space is opened to feel a wider range of emotions which can facilitate greater depth of understanding. We can also reflect on our emotional patterns

and have the choice to avoid repeating negative patterns of behaviour. Lynn, A.B (2005, p. 29) views emotions as being made up of different components. Perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and expectations make up the cognitive component of emotions which stem from our rational brain. Then there is the physiological component, which is controlled by the limbic system, which protects us from and is responsible for controlling our actions, during times of attack, defence or retreat and is often called the “fight or flight” response. The third is the behavioural component that, in most instances, refers to non-verbal behaviours which include gesture, facial expressions and other forms of non-verbal communication.

3.15.2 Intelligence, what is it?

According to Hughes (2005, p.11) initially intelligence was defined according to the IQ (intelligence quotient) test and this was one dimensional. Later the concept of ‘multiple intelligences’ required the definition to be expanded and the concept of ‘emotional quotient’ was introduced which distinguished emotional competencies from intellectual ones.

Wilks, F. (1998, p. 11) quotes Daniel Goleman from his book *Emotional Intelligence*, as identifying five categories of emotional intelligence:

- **Knowing one’s emotions:** This is the ability to recognise that we are in an emotional state, even if the feeling is inconvenient;
- **Managing Emotions:** This is the inner ability to manage uncontrollable emotions and the capacity to learn how to balance our emotions when we are overwhelmed;
- **Motivating one’s self:** In order to be motivated in life one needs to develop emotional self-control, which may require delaying gratification or stifling impulsiveness;
- **Recognising emotions in others.** This is when you begin to experience and feel what the other person is experiencing. This would allow us to connect with and better understand others; and
- **Handling relationships:** Understanding relationships requires emotional intelligence. Understanding other people’s emotions gets us to identify better and to engage with others.

3.15.3 How emotional intelligence is developed?

According to Krishnamurti & Ganasen (2008,p.7) emotional intelligence can be developed by concentrating on the five dimensions of Emotional Intelligence –Self -awareness, Self-motivation, Self-monitoring, relating well and emotional mentoring. We have established earlier in this section that emotional intelligence is developed in the brain, which comes from the senses and that it is **linked to** the ‘fight or flight’ reaction **as is** reinforced **by** repetitive experience. It has also been established that memory has a strong link to emotional intelligence and this can be developed by using the emotional and rational part of the brain to develop choices in new situations. It is important to manage knowledge and to understand emotions to create positive emotions and to visualise prosperity and success. When emotional intelligence is developed, it is important to analyse core values, **beliefs and** motivations and to develop an authentic life with full connection to purpose and passion. This is the process of programming the brain for a fulfilling positive life. It is also **important to have conflicting values and beliefs**. Emotional intelligence can be developed by making the mind strong to repel thoughts of fear, frustration, negative **thoughts and beliefs**. It is important that one uncovers natural resources which create positive thoughts and emotions, freeing beliefs, thoughts, behaviour that creates opportunity for growth.

It is also important to expose the true being without ego as this is the most powerful state when balance is created by trust in the logical thinking mind. The true self is created by being independent and having personal purpose and passion contributing to a unique personality. This is having the ability to maintain a cognitive position that is grounded and authentic. One of the peak performance techniques is to get pumped up with authentic bursts of joy and there are simple ways of eliciting and creating natural euphoria in seconds. Self-connection is producing a state of mind where one is in tune with themselves. Emotional intelligence is created through experience that has been acquired in the natural state which has been created from the deepest sense of connectedness with an intuitive part that has remained constant. In order to activate Emotional intelligence, it is important to be happy within, and this requires creating an internal system that is simple and easy to learn and replicate so that the individual is connected to their internal compass. This process requires the individual to have full control and responsibility for thoughts and beliefs which impact on circumstances.

3.16 Organisational Communication

3.16.1 What is organisational communication?

According to Zaremba (2006, p. 15) “Organisational communication is the study of why and how organisations send and receive information in the complex systemic environment.” Rasberry ,R,W and Lemonie, L,F (1986,p.31) support this definition and state that organisational communication involves the sorting, forming and transmitting of symbols in an organisation to create meaning in another person’s mind. Communication is also dynamic, irreversible, proactive process and **connects or disconnects people** within a context. The purpose of organisational communication is to remove communication barriers through formal and informal communication, including job instructions, policies, meetings and social interactions amongst working colleagues. Organizational communication promotes group work and helps create better understanding amongst team members. Fielding, M (2006, p. 9) defines communication as a transaction that brings about meaning through the exchange of symbols, by working together according to a set of rules and sharing the same meaning **when using words, non-verbal symbols** and graphic symbols. Zaremba (2006, p. 14) **contextualises** the definition and **states** that organizational communication is pervasive, central to organizational success and it is multidimensional.

3.17 Conclusion

It is evident from the literature review that in developing strategic shared vision in a macro environment the work is both challenging but inspiring. Challenging, in that the roll out of the project plan is not a linear series of events but a cyclical process to establish the stage gate model where we move from one basin of delivery to the next. In this process we need to look at activities, implement resources and revisit strategic visioning at each stage of development. This would ensure that the strategic shared vision remains relevant and has appeal. Chaos and complexity are two factors that impact directly on the establishment of new businesses and also on the development of the incubator. In using the appreciative inquiry method to develop strategic shared vision it allows the participants to take stock of complex situations and develop strategies and tactics to adjust the development process to ensure that the vision will be realised. This process of strategic shared visioning is a continuous learning process and it is important to understand, the factors that inspire strategic shared vision. These factors allow us to better understand the process of our own strategic minds, allowing us to constantly assess what we want to achieve, learn in the process and allow us to move to the next stage with greater insight and deeper involvement.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This dissertation uses a qualitative research methodology; an action research approach known as practitioner research. This chapter explains why the qualitative research methodology was chosen for the purposes of this study. The chapter will show that the method allowed the researcher to collect rich data and that it defined a process to develop positive change in the development of strategic shared vision that can be employed at other incubators. This chapter first looks at why the qualitative research methodology was chosen and the strengths in this methodology to conduct research into the development of organizational behaviour, which is developing the framework to promote strategic shared vision. The concept of phenomenological research is introduced and an argument is created for the use of this method within the human social context. The chapter then goes on to outline what action research is and how this paradigm is effective in collecting and capturing critical and relevant data for the purpose of synthesizing valuable real-time information. Practitioner research as an **action research method** gains currency as a research technique. The **author then explains** practitioner research methodology that was so effective in allowing the researcher to collect, simulate, analyse and produce the recommended programme to develop strategic shared vision.

The researcher identified and evaluated factors that promote strategic shared vision to help build an effective intervention programme. Desktop research was used to **identify**, factors that promote strategic shared vision and this formed the basis for the programme. The Appreciative Inquiry how this method can be used to develop factors that promote strategic shared vision. It is the researcher's view that the resulting **programme can be used** to develop strategic shared vision among stakeholders at other business incubators and at the Durban University of Technology. The validity of the study was tested using two focus groups to determine the reliability of the study. This qualitative research study employs a practitioner intervention to determine what intrinsic human factors promote strategic shared vision. An appreciative inquiry methodology was used to design the proposed programme and will be used to conduct further research that will be employed for the doctoral study.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is **then explained along with how** the methodology forms part of the proposed programme. The AI model forms the framework for the programme that was

constructed to identify how effective the method is in developing strategic shared vision. The focus group formulation, sample of respondents chosen within the focus group and management of the focus group intervention is discussed with details on how **this activity allows for objective** and rich information to be captured. The rest of the chapter then looks at the data analysis, reliability, validity and ethics employed in conducting this study. The last section considers the ethical consideration that was undertaken in conducting this research. The conclusion looks at the benefits of using the appreciative inquiry methodology.

4.2 Qualitative Research

This is a qualitative research because I was searching for a process to improve stakeholder participation in Invo Tech, I chose a qualitative research strategy, which better enabled me to tell a story. In the early stage of the establishment of Invo Tech, the author identified the need for the development of strategic shared vision. The author realized that he would be central to this study as he was responsible for researching effective business incubation models, developing the business plan and advising the board of directors on the direction of the organization. Therefore it was appropriate that this research study adopted a soft systems methodology in the form of participatory action research. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000, p. 37) explain qualitative research as using language to record data from the world. This research method uses words, pictures, conversations and other methods to record and investigate social reality. Qualitative research is concerned with people and considers variables that may affect or influence human interaction or the behaviour of individuals. Silverman (2000, p.8) states that qualitative researchers provide deeper meaning to social phenomena. Cassell (1995, p.1) shares the view that qualitative research is more appropriate, when focusing on organizational processes and outcomes and when a researcher wants to understand individuals and group experiences of work. Hennink et al. (2011, p.9) supports this argument and states that qualitative research studies people in their natural environment, to understand their experiences and to explore how behaviour is shaped by their context, and they refer to this method as interpretive and naturalistic. Ferreira et al. (1988, p.1) describes how interpretative research looks at human behaviour as an understanding and interpretation of intentions that underlie everyday human actions. The qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to establish relevant information by being a participant and observer in the system. The researcher was able to identify how visioning is developed by individuals at Invo Tech. One of the observations the researcher made was that communication is vital to developing shared

vision. The researcher found that communication across the organization needs to be clear, decisive and **timely**. When information was communicated **well**, all members across the organization **feel** that they are part of the system and that in expressing their views and opinions **they make** a contribution. The other important observation was that when stakeholder groups saw material or tangible results from what was communicated, they showed greater motivation and took greater responsibility and ownership of the process. This was very evident during the launch of Invo Tech, in the development of the Incubator infrastructure.

Cassell and Symon (1995, p.20) explain that qualitative research is known as a phenomenological approach, which implies taking a different perspective on human behaviour as opposed to quantitative research which is known as a **positive approach**. **The positive** paradigm sees the world as being defined by a scientific method where the focus looks at measuring the relationship between variables systematically and statistically. This is the measurement of cause and effect. With regards to phenomenological and interpretive paradigms, the approach is based on being constructive in an environment where there is no clear objectivity or reality, the situation arises out of the creativity of individuals. Qualitative researchers are concerned with attempting accurately to describe, decode and interpret the meaning of persons or phenomena in the real context and are focused on complexity, authenticity, and context and shared subjectivity by attempting to remove illusion.

4.3 Action Research

Action research allows the researcher and research participants to explore existing social structures and formulate new ways to improve specific aspects of the social structure. This is done by investigating the current reality in order to determine a higher level of social structure. In the case of this study the idea was to develop the collective visioning of stakeholders to **engender** a strategic shared vision for the organization to ensure that the organization is constantly evolving, growing and that, at some point, it **can** become self-sustainable. The author identified the development of strategic shared vision as **a** catalyst to drive this process. The idea **was to** develop positive change in areas such as productivity, self -development, cohesiveness and other states of social order. Action research aims to improve the lives of people and to encourage positive change in their behaviour. Fox et al. (2007, p.48) state that action research embraces those research methodologies whose central feature is one of change. Tesch (1990, p.49) states that action research

is undertaken to improve the rationality and justice of the participants own practices and understanding in their own environment. Reason and Bradbury (2008,p.1) reinforce the notion of action research being a participatory, democratic process, **which explains** that action research primarily arises when people work together to improve organisations or communities by contributing positive change on a small scale and at times literally influence the lives of millions.

The researcher, having learnt the Appreciative Inquiry process inculcated this practice into his management style and constantly encourages staff, management, directors and stakeholders to indulge in positive reflection. The researcher communicates with staff on a daily basis and has one formal meeting per week, one management meeting per month and a Board Meeting every quarter. The researcher also develops reports on a monthly basis and shares these with management. The researcher has also adopted a very open approach to communication involving matters that are not of a sensitive nature. This communication is shared with all operational staff. The researcher also documents information in a diary, prepares detailed reports, maintains a journal, and has developed a detailed client management system that is constantly being upgraded. Therefore the researcher is constantly living his study and is consciously observing, documenting and learning.

Braud and Anderson (1998, p. 273) state that “action research is practical, political, participative, collaborative, egalitarian (In that the perspectives of the project participants have as much value as those of the researcher), emancipatory (in that the participants are themselves responsible for important aspects and changes in the programme being studied), and critical (in that the programme is carefully evaluated).” The research that was conducted at Invo Tech, exposed the group members to the current situation in the organisation and the process allowed participants to share their positive experiences. Therefore the process was practical and related to the contemporary situation at Invo Tech. The leaders were advised that they are part of the solution and that their collaborative efforts have synergistic value. Stringer, (1999, p. 38) promotes the idea of organisational ownership and states that Active participation would create a sense of belonging and could motivate people to give up time and energy to improve the quality of people’s lives. It is important that the participants be educated in the process of appreciative inquiry to see themselves as the catalysts and part of the change process.

This action research develops a process to observe the situation while being part of the process engages with individuals and groups of participants to investigate a topic within the group’s social system. The researcher engaged participants to draw positive experiences from the past and envision better futuristic situations. In this process the participants were self-reflecting and

contributing data to the current situation. Braud, and Anderson (1998, p.273) explains that in action research the “researcher has a role as an agent of social change.” The researcher assists the group to identify what needs to be changed and guides the group in finding ways to create sustainable positive change. In the case of establishing the factors that promote strategic shared vision, the researcher assisted the leadership at Invo Tech to develop ways of inculcating the culture within the organisation.

It is important at this stage to introduce the concept of participatory action research (PAR). Fox et al. (2007, p. 53) describe PAR, as a research process where the researcher changes roles from being an expert in the research to that of process facilitator. In this case the researcher is no longer deciding on how the research is to be conducted but instead the role is to help participants with the process of research. The purpose of the research is exploratory rather than experimental and the design of the research is socially constructed. Reason and Bradbury (2008, p.31) define PAR as a research method which involves participants collectively in researching their own situations and it is also self-reflective and works to secure participants commitment to social change. Coghlan and Brannick (2010, p. 44) define PAR, as a focus outside the organizational context that involves equal participation by a community to change some aspects of a situation or community. It also empowers people to construct and use their own knowledge. In the case of Invo Tech, the Board of Directors, management, staff and representative from stakeholder organisations were involved in the visioning process.

4.4 Practitioner Research

Practitioner research is phenomenological reflection and this was used in this research. The method relies on the practitioner to record information as close to reality as possible, without any form of bias. Braud and Anderson (1998, p.264) describe the phenomenological approach as a clear description and understanding of human experience at many different levels. This method uses a special detailed process of human communication skills and observation, to collect information as close to reality as possible. The information can be used to make suggestions to correct behaviour or extrapolate behavioural conditions with confidence. Tesch (1990, p. 6) explains that phenomenological research exists when “... the researcher does not rely heavily on data, i.e., the experiential accounts of others, but on his/her own contemplation”. The **rationale** to use this methodology is further strengthened when the Appreciative Inquiry framework is introduced to

conduct the focus group interviews. This methodology requires the participants, who, in this particular case, were critical stakeholders of Invo Tech, to use their inner capabilities to visualize and construct a future for the organization. It was evident when the researcher conducted the dream stage of the 4 D cycle with the staff and consultants at Invo Tech, **that** although this was the last part of the research intervention, the participants became excited, spoke freely and out of turn ideas were flowing which proved that the staff did think about their vision for Invo Tech.

According to Costley et al. (2010, p.116), the term practitioner research has developed as a quasi-professional concept, suggesting a mode of working that is thoughtful and reflective, that produces a rich source of data. Fox et al. (2007, p. 48) support this and explain that practitioner research, focuses on real problems faced by individuals and that it promote research that attempts to integrate the fragmented academic approach to knowledge. Reason and Bradbury (2008, p.124) argue that the technical term 'practice' has become so widespread, that it clouds the full understanding of the profession. They go on to highlight the tension they identify in the terms 'practice' and 'praxis'. As has been pointed out earlier in this dissertation, practice is the external (objective) and praxis is the internal (subjective). This research was conducted using the practitioner approach which is a **type** of action research. A practitioner researcher is employed as a professional and as part of **that** role conducts research. The practitioner researcher is seen as bringing expertise to the research methodology **and provide a** theoretical perspective. Within the same context expertise is shared with participants in the process as part of a collaborative process. Practitioner research involves a process, whereby the researcher and research participants discover new ground together. This is known as action research, a method which employs practical tools to find solutions and more efficient methods to dissolve human complexities. In recent times with the emphasis on accountability, evidence-based practice and evaluation; practitioners are becoming more involved in research to contribute to the body of knowledge. Fox et al. (2007, p.48), support practitioner research as a form of action research which empowers the research by giving the practitioner more validity than those of the people being researched. In this process the researcher uses the power contained in the process to facilitate change

4.5 Unstructured Interviews

Unstructured interviews were conducted with two of the three Invo Tech Board members. **I accord with Ferriera (1988) in Schurink (1988, p.136), the research used unstructured interviews to**

understand rather than attempt to explain **by using** naturalistic observation instead of applying a controlled subjective measurement. Bless and Higgins-Smith (1995, p.105) refer to unstructured interviews as non-scheduled interviews and explain this method as getting respondents to express their views by asking them to comment on broad issues. This method relies on the social interaction between the interviewer and respondent to understand complex behaviour, without influencing or imposing a limitation on the field of enquiry. In respect to using the unstructured interview, the logic of applying this method is that it does not limit the respondent. This method also allows for the interviewer to clarify information as well as to capture detailed information. Bless & Higgins Smith (1995, p.105) see the unstructured interview method as being very useful in exploratory research and they also go on to state that the method is an excellent technique when each respondent is seen as a case to adding to data and this also allows for more detailed information to be acquired. Bless & Higgins Smith (1995, p.105) support the use of this technique in this particular research as being useful for pilot surveys which aid the formulation of accurate precise questions for use in a more in-depth study.

4.6 Focus Groups

A focus group organises a group of people who can add value to a research study because of their expertise, experience and involvement. During a focus group views, opinions, commentary and narrations are captured. This method **records** the insights into participants shared understanding of the reality that is being researched. In this process the researcher needs to be skilful in **separating** the individual participant's views from the collective view and therefore it is important to use an independent moderator in this process. An Important characteristic of a focus group is that the researcher needs to allow for discussion within the group and to record information accurately based on the specific topics **being researched.**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995, p. 110) state that the ideal size of a focus group is between four and eight respondents who are interviewed together in an unstructured or semi-structured way. It is a cluster of people **who** share a common interest, and come together as a group within the context of a less structured interview, but they exist more than just to collect data. It is a constructive group discussion with a moderator or facilitator to achieve a specific purpose. During this study the researcher used two focus groups and individual surveys **of** the Directors of Invo Tech. The first focus group was conducted at Invo Tech with 10 members from the staff and consultants.

The intervention went off well with participants getting involved in the process without much soliciting. It was established that some of the terms that the researcher used were difficult to understand. The researcher then explained each concept in detail and then asked the **question again**. Some of the **terms** that the researcher took for granted like communication and personal mastery were not easily understood. The researcher realized that he should not have taken this for granted. Participants only saw communication as verbal interaction and could not see electronic communication, non-verbal communication and social media as forms of communication. However this was a good revelation for the study and these methods will be incorporated when the researcher takes on the full study. **In the next study social medium platforms such as Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn will be used to conduct research and an expert human behaviourist moderator will be introduced to observe nonverbal communication during focus group interviews.**

4.7 Appreciative Inquiry

Braud and Anderson (1998, p. 273) state that the “researcher becomes actively involved as a facilitator and a monitor of the effectiveness of a programme that can have a community or political consequence”. Sewis et al. (2008, p.148) state “When initially introducing the idea of Appreciative Inquiry to an organization the first challenge is often to get enough connection with the organization to build rapport and trust.” Appreciative Inquiry is a process of dialogue and in order to encourage honest and constructive conversation, the facilitator needs to create a safe and trusting environment. In the case of Invo Tech, each participant had a particular contribution to lead and manage and hence the perspective created from a portfolio basis resulted in varying interpretations. During the appreciative inquiry process the researcher facilitated the process of getting stakeholders to develop an appreciation of the other perspectives.

Braud and Anderson (1998, p. 273) state that the approach can bring about positive change and at the same time allow for investigation of this change and of the factors that **Appreciative Inquiry** allows for exciting and innovative activities to engage the group and to observe findings. Frydman et al. (2000, p.145) claim that it is Senge’s view that people in organisations have aspirations and this is important for organisational change. Involving beneficiaries in the process of positive change **can create** shared vision and allows people to aspire to **a** new vision. When people collectively set their own vision, the process will gain momentum and this will strengthen the association because individuals drive the process. Individuals allowed to tap into their own thought processes can come up with exciting and innovative visions. Coetzee (2008, p. 79) states “There is a magnetic power in the presence of a person with a healthy self- worth...Therefore involving management and staff in a

visioning process not only creates a multivariate perspective but ensures greater buy in from a wider segment of the organisation. Hence the vision gains currency even in the forming or conceptual stage.”

4.8 The Programme

The purpose of the programme was to engage leadership at Invo Tech and to connect on the issue of strategic shared vision. Auster et al. (2005, p.6) state that change in the internal workings of an organisation leverages opportunities in the external environment. By considering multiple dimensions of the change process, change leaders become adept at understanding what would bring about evolution and positive change. The appreciative inquiry exercise conducted with stakeholders at Invo Tech, looked at how the internal strengths of the organisation can be mobilised to develop a strategic shared vision. In thinking about this all aspects of institutional development were considered and the exercise was all-encompassing. During the process of the exercise, it was the intention of the researcher to develop factors that promote strategic shared vision. At the end of the exercise participants commented on the effectiveness of the programme in enhancing the factors that promote strategic shared vision. The full programme has been developed and forms part of the Annexure and the final programme took into account all lessons learnt. The programme has been written in a generic format and can be adapted to develop strategic shared vision. The programme has been written up as a facilitator’s guide to the intervention and the full programme will be tested in a later study.

4.9 Data Analysis

Tesch (1990, p.92) notes that “the analysis of data is begun in phenomenological research as soon as the first data are collected. They may consist of no more than a single review.” Practitioner research, being a type of phenomenological research, collects data from the very first engagement with the participants of the study. The data analysis phase must be considered when the programme is being designed. The programme was created in a structured format with each phase of the 4D cycle being separated into themes guided by the characteristics of shared vision being developed. The method of appreciative inquiry includes conversations, self-assessment, presentations or role play. Therefore the researcher developed instruments to record the information to ensure analysis

can be simplified. An audio recording was used and preserved for review at a later stage. The researcher at times felt that the **device** was intimidating for the participants and he stopped using the audio recording device and relied on observation and handwritten records until subjects were comfortable with **the audio recorder** being used. In the case of presentations and creative work being done the physical artifact can be preserved and analysed after the event has been completed. The advantage of this method is that the researcher can devote more time during the exercise to ensuring that participants give of their best and can concentrate on the analysis at a later stage. Berg (2004, p.39) states that data analysis concurrently looks at how to reduce, improve, draw conclusions and verify data. Therefore during the appreciative experience the researcher observed synthesised information and drew conclusions, while the process was unfolding.

4.10 Validity, Reliability and Ethical Considerations

4.10.1 Validity

Validity is an **assessment of the truthfulness of** the interpretation of a research finding. Silverman (2000, p. 175) defines validity as truth and this must be related to contrary cases as evidence to strengthen the findings. The appreciative inquiry technique **depends** on participants to account for their reality and for the researcher to document, guide, facilitate and develop a positive programme that would best suit the situation. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000, p. 125) explain validity as the accurate observable measure in relation to another point of reference. The appreciative inquiry process is transparent and the process unfolds with the same group of participants, so the learning process is collective, simultaneous and open for deliberation and improvement. It is the participants in the group that approve and authenticate the findings. These participants are the best adjudicators because they have a history in the organisation and also have a current and future vested interest in the organisation.

4.10.2 Reliability

Hollaway and Jefferson (2000, p.79) explain the term reliability as the consistency, stability and repeatability of results. Silverman (2000, p. 188) explains reliability as the consistency with which instances are assessed in the same context but by different observers. Reliability refers to the

consistency in the findings or postulations. It looks at whether or not the findings will stand the test of time. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000, p.125) describe reliability as the accurate and stable measurement that represents that which was theoretically conducted in several different studies. This takes us back to the process of AI, the visioning may be different over time as the organization evolves but the factors that develop strategic shared vision will remain the same. The appreciative inquiry method is reliable as participants of the group account for events that other members of the group were a part of and they can also participate in providing recollections that are as close to reality as possible. In the dream stage the participants visualise the future of the organization and this lends to sharing a positive perspective for the future. This information would be reliable as the researcher is receiving first-hand information and can make an audio-visual record of the presentation or interview. The data collected can be reviewed a number of times for reliability. This information-gathering also allows for the same or similar thought patterns to be grouped and recorded and strong inferences can be drawn or reported on.

4.10.3 Ethics

In action research, the researcher and the participants engage in the research together and learn as the process unfolds. Therefore action research needs to be undertaken on an informed ethical basis that acknowledges co-responsibility for outcomes and actions. It is also clear that the process of the research is a dynamic social process. The researcher and the participants must understand that during the process people will change and no predetermined deductions or assumptions must be made. Appropriate ethical **considerations were given** to the Invo Tech Board. The researcher sent a letter to the Chairperson of the Board requesting permission to conduct the study exercise and the letter also explained the objectives of the process. The Board Chairperson was invited to have a look at the programme and to ask any further questions before permission to conduct the exercise was granted. Once permission was obtained to conduct the exercise, an invitation was sent out via the Board Chairperson for stakeholders to participate. The reason that this group of individuals were chosen for the study was because they have contributions to make from a stakeholder perspective that informed the visioning of the organization. When responses to the invitation were received the participants were orientated at a workshop to explain what appreciative inquiry involves, what the purpose of the study was and how the process would unfold, so that the respondents would have the opportunity to withdraw if they were not comfortable. The rationale was that the exercise was for

the benefit of the leaders and for the benefit of the institution. Once the research was completed, the participants were issued with a copy of the results.

During this process the researcher ensured that the environment and mood was always conducive to the granting of free and informed consent. It must also be taken into account that some participants may have been more nervous and inhibited than others. The researcher was aware of these visible tendencies and learned to adjust or to reframe the question or request. At all times respect, privacy and confidentiality of individuals was protected. Ethical considerations are very important to this form of research as it involves prominent leaders and the human aspect cannot be ignored as people have emotions and feelings which need to be respected and protected.

4.11 Conclusion

It is evident from this chapter that the action research methodology of the practitioner approach allowed the researcher to collect rich data that was current and provided valuable information to develop positive behavioural change. Appreciative inquiry, as a framework is an exciting prospect for the researcher. The researcher views this as an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the organisation that he serves in and would therefore remain objective and honest in the process. Action research allows the researcher and the participants to discover together and the researcher can contextualise the findings in a report which will allow the findings to be tested by other researchers. The benefits from the programme will also be shared with the incubator community in South Africa to help expedite the development of strategic shared vision in the community at the Durban University of Technology.

Chapter 5: Analysis of Data

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses information extracted from the focus group interviews and surveys that was conducted with the Invo Tech Board of Directors. Two focus group interviews were conducted, group one being the staff and consultants employed at Invo Tech and group two being the focus group conducted at the Seda CEO Contact session in Gauteng, made up of two Centre Managers and three Seda Managers who support incubators across the country. The researcher recorded the interviews with an audio recorder, transcribed the information and then arranged transcriptions into themes. This being an action research study the researcher had to rely on data gathered from conversations, non-verbal communication and personal experience with the groups. The researcher obtained rich information from these interventions which have allowed him to identify adjustments that need to be made to the intervention programme that is proposed at the end of this study.

The research set out to determine the following three questions:

Can strategic shared vision be developed in a turbulent environment?

What are the factors that promote strategic shared vision?

Is Appreciative Inquiry an effective tool for developing strategic shared vision?

Having been a researcher for ten years I was quite surprised at some of the data collected although I have done a considerable amount of reading and been in the project management environment. Prior to the research the researcher had taken certain factors as given, but the research has revealed that some of his perceptions were not the norm in systems environment and in the incubation space.

5.2 How effective were the Focus Groups and Survey Questions

The researcher found that both the focus group and the survey questions were very effective methods for collecting data in this action research study. During the interviews participants spoke freely, articulated their points of view clearly and expanded in great detail when the researcher looked for clarity. The researcher has observed that both the focus group intervention and the survey methods are legitimate and authentic methods of collecting research data. It is evident from this study that the formal research process was able to extract valuable information as opposed to that gathered in ordinary conversation. Participants were more thoughtful in their response, responses were substantiated and it was also evident that the issues at hand have impacted on the working life of participants. Participants were familiar with context and experienced, deliberated and thought about the topics in the normal course of their duties. It was also evident that the topic of strategic shared vision was relevant to all participants involved in the study because of their connectedness to Invo Tech, the incubation environment and dedication to the development of entrepreneurs in the country.

5.3 Participants' understanding of Strategic Shared Vision

The researcher observed that participants had to warm up to the topic of strategic shared vision. When participants were asked to explain their understanding of strategic shared vision, in most instances they explained shared vision and did not give much attention to the **concept of** strategic visioning required within organisations. Respondents also separated strategic and shared vision and dealt with both these concepts separately. The researcher then explained that in his study he was looking to develop strategic shared vision and gave an explanation of **strategic shared vision to be used to develop tactical vision of the organization to achieve specific objectives in a given period of time.**

Respondents were then able to understand strategic shared vision and immediately linked this to the mission and the vision of the organization and had very clear concepts of what a mission and vision are. An important observation was that leadership must not take for granted that all stakeholders understand what strategic shared vision means, including the purpose and relevance to the organization. It is therefore important to introduce this concept into the human resource induction programme. This strategic shared vision must also be communicated to all relevant stakeholders in a strategy document and presented to the group so that it allows for clarity and understanding.

However the researcher noticed that although participants were able to define and explain vision and mission, they were very mechanical about this and it was evident that these concepts were almost text book definitions and not concepts that were internalized. The finding is that in creating the strategic shared vision and developing the vision and mission of the organization, the intervention programme needs to look at how these concepts are internalized. People need to live the vision and mission, rather than subscribe to it.

Respondents also linked strategic shared vision to planning, timeframes, objectives goals and milestones. One of the directors interviewed explained with his experience of serving on the Board of a very large company in South Africa **indicates** that it is important to link strategic shared vision to some type of financial incentive programme. This statement was also supported by one of the Centre Managers **who** felt that mutual financial benefit is more relevant to achieving progress and targets than strategic shared vision. The respondent went on to say that if financial benefit is not linked along the value chain, for Directors, Staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries, then the process may take longer and there might not be sufficient commitment and subscription to the process. It is evident that in order for incubators to be successful, sustainable and to have a long-term vision these organisations need to have a commercial mindset and part of the strategic thinking is to establish how the incubator generates revenue and how this revenue can be used to incentivize the different stakeholder groups. One of the activities in the programme could focus on ideas for establishing a profit or benefit model for the incubator.

One of the centre managers also felt that developing a strategic shared vision and getting a group of people to focus and work together in achieving a specific set of objectives, may be limiting as people work together and subscribe to each other's opinion with no critical thought involved. The respondent felt that competition is good for a system and that this would challenge people in a group to compete to bring innovations into the environment and that it would create motivation and energy to achieve higher standards rather than just aiming for the bar. The question is, in trying to create strategic shared vision and wanting people to work together well, challenges and competition be counterproductive. The researcher realised that the system should look to incentivize targets and should develop a rewards system for innovative solutions. Strategic shared vision should be a living process that is flexible and it should allow for adjustments, adaptation and changes. This means that the system must be seen as a living system that is continually evolving. This takes us back to the feedback within a system and how systems function in complexity.

5.4 Who should develop the strategic shared vision?

In the focus group interview with the Invo Tech staff and consultants, the majority felt that Seda and DUT should be responsible for developing strategic shared vision. The senior staff referred to this as mapping out a direction and also as a process to monitor the progress at a senior and executive level. They also felt that strategic shared visioning must be realistic and felt that senior management in organisations come up with big targets or expectations but that they do not consider the environment, constraints, lack of resources and also the fact that the staff may not have the capacity or skill to achieve the strategic shared vision that is envisaged. Staff also felt that the process of developing a strategic shared vision must be both a bottom-up and a top-down approach. The staff felt that in ensuring that Invo Tech delivers what it was established for, all stakeholders and beneficiaries must be consulted before the strategic shared vision is developed. It was suggested that a survey should be carried out with the clients on their expectations and staff should have a brainstorming session with management and this information must be put into a report and sent to the Board of Directors. The staff also felt that staff must be represented at the strategic planning session and this must also include other stakeholders like Seda, the municipality, the university and any other stakeholders that are involved in delivering the core service at Invo Tech.

It was the Directors consensus that, as the Centre Manager spends most of his time working in this environment and is exposed to the beneficiaries and stakeholders, the Centre Manager that should be responsible for researching and creating a base-line document that must be shared with the Board of Directors for comment and contribution. Once the document has been developed it must be shared with the staff. It was also proposed from the senior level that strategic shared vision is developed by strong and charismatic leadership that understands the nature of the environment that the business operates in and that it is good leadership that is able to sow the seed of a strategic shared vision. Through their personality, leadership can help this strategic shared vision gain support and momentum. An example was drawn from the previous and current Vice-Chancellors of the Durban University of Technology, the former being Professor Roy du Pre and the latter being Professor Ahmed. C Bawa, two strong individuals who were able to craft a vision, mobilise the institution, get staff within the organization to share in the vision and through their personalities and integrity win support and compliance. An important observation was made that visionaries and good leaders are able to reach out to the broader constituency and that they not only use channels within an organization to communicate information. Another important

observation was that respondents felt that the warmth and personality of the leader is important in winning the group over and in getting them to trust in the vision and the process. Respondents expanded on this and also stated that the constituency also looks for the achievement of objectives within the strategic shared vision and this would get them to trust and believe in the leadership and the strategic shared visioning.

5.5 Can strategic shared vision be developed as a collective in the incubator environment?

All participants agreed that strategic shared vision can be developed as a collective at Invo Tech and in the incubator environment. This can be achieved by open communication that is clear and timely, fostering respect for **each other** person's view-point and the organization's need to promote creative thinking and innovation. It was quite a popular opinion amongst respondents that the process of developing strategic shared vision should happen across the organization. All stakeholders and beneficiaries must make their contribution and must have representation at strategic planning **sessions**. An important point that was raised **was that leadership** needs to ensure that, in order to keep the group focused on constantly thinking about ways to implement the strategic shared vision, they would need to provide parameters so that the ball is kept in the game and on the field of play. Another suggestion that came from the group in Gauteng was that it is the responsibility of leadership to formulate action plans, project plans, detailed schedules and to coordinate resources to achieve each objective and at the same time to provide guidance and mentorship in achieving the strategic shared vision. They also felt that it is important to constantly monitor deviations and to develop corrective measures. Another important contribution was that they felt that management must provide small bits of strategic vision that is relevant to groups so that they do not become overwhelmed by the full strategy. They felt that this connects to capacity and to being realistic. It is evident from all of the above suggestions that in order to develop strategic shared vision as a collective, the leadership of the organization needs to create an enabling environment. Firstly creating a culture for open communication and for the sharing of ideas and the second important factor is that leadership needs to take the responsibility for creating the mechanism for flow of communication, and for developing systems that create operational efficiencies to ensure order and progress and to ensure that all management functions are being delivered at the highest level of effectiveness.

5.6 What are some of the ways strategic shared vision can be developed?

In order to develop strategic shared vision it is important to get the organization, teams and groups to work together within a system. Respondents felt that management must ensure that the different teams are given their part of the strategic shared vision with the necessary authority and resources. Respondents also felt that it is management's responsibility to ensure that activities are being monitored, kept on track and communicated throughout the system. What is evident from this is that strategic shared visioning is not a document that is encrypted and locked in a computer with a password or a document only to be shared with a privileged few. Strategic shared vision is a living process that has to be enacted, achieved in small parts in working towards the big picture. Strategic shared vision should be seen as a 3D view that allows the participants to have mental models that allow them to walk through the process and see what the expectations are so that activities can be delivered according to the best specifications. Software technology can contribute to incubators developing clearer visions, as they could use 3 D modeling and animation software to create images of what the incubator should look like and what projects could be established in the future. Businesses could be managed using software that would allow the mentor at any point in time to check on the status, progress, financials and achievements of the business.

It is evident from the research that an important aspect in developing the strategic shared vision is collecting information and making sure that all relevant stakeholders in the process are consulted. Some of the suggestions that were made to collate strategic information were to use surveys, minutes of meetings, reports and brainstorming sessions. It was interesting to note that participants thought of using social media platforms to communicate such as twitter, Facebook, blogs and electronic mail. Participants also felt that it is important to remove the strict protocols embedded in the stratification of management structures to allow communication to flow across the organization. They also proposed that this can be achieved by having regular team-building exercises; the organization should establish an intranet that constantly updates all employees concerning any shift in thinking or change of strategy that the organization is about to implement. They also felt that workshops and newsletters would be effective forms of keeping all stakeholders abreast of the strategic shared vision.

5.7 What factors promote strategic shared visioning?

The researcher through desktop research identified five factors that he considered would promote strategic shared vision. The intention was to test if these factors would contribute to the development of strategic shared vision and how they could be used during the programme to develop strategic shared vision. The researcher acknowledges that these are not the only factors that impact on the development of strategic shared vision and wanted to understand the workings of these factors in forming the building blocks of developing strategic shared vision. The researcher is satisfied that he has been able to establish that factors must first be tested for their perception and relevance before they are included in a programme intervention. This would involve another study which the researcher feels is relevant and would either be written up as an academic journal article or included in a doctoral study. During the research five factors were tested to determine what relevance they have to developing strategic shared visioning. The following are the factors and the findings on the impact and relevance to the proposed training intervention.

5.7.1 Presence

Some of the respondents felt that presence is a good motivational factor especially when you bring different stakeholders together. People are able to develop their self-esteem and improve the perception about themselves. Individuals feel that their contribution is valuable and when associating with higher authority they feel part of the group and they will be more willing to make a genuine contribution. They would also become more connected to the strategic shared vision and would take a personal interest in ensuring that the vision is achieved. It was also established that when the configuration of the group changes it is through presence that new ideas are formulated. An example would be if an engineer is in the group this group could get individuals to look at a solution from a very analytical perspective with the engineer being the trigger by his mere presence. However it was also established that people have different moods and it all depends which personality they bring to the programme intervention. This is important to the researcher as he would have to look at how best to orientate the group before the Appreciative Inquiry intervention to ensure that participants are in the right frame of mind and would be constructive in the exercise. Some of the respondents felt that participants must be trained to be consistent in all situations so

that they are able to bring up the same results all the time especially when one is working within a scientific environment. They felt that presence is not good to developing consistent people or people should be able to control themselves so as not to be influenced by presence. This was also good insight for the researcher as he established that when this concept is introduced in the AI intervention it must be explained together with the Theory U so that participants understand the workings of presence and use this to make a positive or progressive contribution to developing strategic shared vision. Participants must also be taught not to lose their value systems and beliefs, which relates to consistency but at the same time ensures that strategic shared vision is built on a good value system that would stand the test of time.

5.7.2 Organisational Communication

The researcher originally identified communication as one of the factors to develop strategic shared vision. During the study the researcher realized that the relevant factor is organisational communication which is different from ordinary communication. It is evident from the focus group and the survey that organisational communication is a critical factor in promoting strategic shared vision. Organisational communication needs to be honest, sincere and transparent in order to promote strategic shared vision. Two patterns of communication were identified and agreed upon by all levels within the organization. The first is that structured organizational communication must take place through meetings, reports, surveys, company bulletins, intranet and communication through the line and authority of the organization. It was also established that organisational communication needs to be two-way, meaning both top-down and bottom-up communication. The second form of organisational communication identified by respondents to communicate strategic shared vision was social media, informal conversations and discussions during events. This could take the form of communication through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, conversations during team building, and informal communication during social events. It is therefore important to devise a system to collate information on strategic shared vision from all informal activities. It was also established that strategic shared vision would have greater buy in, if it comes from a leader **with** a charismatic personality, is an expert and has an innovative and dynamic leadership style, thus fostering and encouraging discussions throughout the organization. Therefore it is paramount that the strategic vision be communicated by the Chair of the Board to all stakeholders and this individual must also allow for a process for stakeholders to communicate either through workshops,

electronic mail or informal discussion. Therefore the programme needs to create an environment of trust and leaders must not entertain gossip and counter-productive discussions.

5.7.3 Diversity

The majority of respondents saw diversity as an effective factor contributing to the development of strategic shared vision. Respondents felt that diversity in terms of culture and gender socialization brings in different experiences to solve problems. They felt that diversity contributes to finding innovative ways of crafting and holding a strategic vision. The researcher also identified that respondents assumed that through diversity there is synergistically a more positive and constructive contribution to develop strategic shared vision. Respondents did not consider that people's limited experiences could also be a stumbling block to identifying with the strategic shared vision. The researcher also observed that respondents did not consider that a more diverse group could create greater complexity. Larger, diverse groups would result in people having different value systems and attaching different meanings and understanding to symbols, objectives and success factors. One of the respondents expressed the view that in South Africa we have forced diversity or legislative diversity and organisations work towards meeting equity targets and getting the right mix, rather than focusing on the culture that will be most effective in achieving a strategic shared vision. These findings were very interesting to the researcher, as he sees the opportunity to develop diversity as a contributory factor in developing strategic shared vision. The programme needs to extract positive experiences from each person's context of diversity and use that to develop and hold the strategic shared vision together. In each individual's cultural, economic, political and social context are experiences that keep the individual true and real to themselves. The programme needs to bring this to the fore and to connect those experiences, values and beliefs to the desired strategic shared vision. One of the respondents used Ubuntu as an example and explained that this concept is limited to the Zulu culture and should be introduced into the ethos and fibre of organisations as a way of life. In a diverse group, the facilitator could extract other individual ideologies and link this to the strategic shared vision.

5.7.4 Emotional Intelligence

The researcher found that most respondents were sceptical about Emotional Intelligence as being a positive contributor to developing strategic shared vision. Firstly some respondents felt that the level of maturity would influence a person's emotional intelligence and the more exposed people are to situations the greater their experience and the more developed would be their emotional intelligence. **This may actually be a positive comment as an AI programme could look to develop an individual's emotional intelligence a series of activities.** Some of the respondents also felt that individuals could use emotional intelligence to exploit other members in the group by playing on emotions that are sensitive to their personal make up. This is important for the programme, as part of the AI programme must teach participants how to develop, inculcate and control emotions during the development of the strategic shared vision. This would enable incumbents to see the big picture and identify the institution as being bigger and more important than the individual. The **participants** must also be able to see the legacy that one could contribute to in developing the strategic shared vision. The programme can also teach individuals to link emotions to good values, such as working for the greater good of society, protecting the environment, ensuring that all citizens have basic needs satisfied. These values will create cohesion among the group and this must be linked to the strategic shared vision of the organization.

5.7.5 Personal Mastery

All respondents felt that personal mastery is important to developing strategic shared vision within the AI model. The respondents felt that personal mastery brings proven expert advice to the process and that the group is able to learn faster and that this produces reduce risk to the organisation. Some of the participants felt that more seasoned managers could become less risk averse and have foresight to take bold business decisions. It was also evident within Invo Tech and the incubator environment that a number of experienced business people serve on the Boards of Governance or advisory boards to guide the organisations strategic shared vision. In terms of personal mastery the leaders have walked the path before and they have the opportunity to share their expertise with the organisation. It was also suggested that the organisation must encourage personal mastery and support and motivate individuals to succeed. The greater the collective mastery within the organisation, the greater the talent and decision-making capabilities within the organisation.

5.8 Conducting the Appreciative Inquiry 4D Cycle as an intervention

The researcher intended conducting one phase of the 4D Cycle and attempted this with the first focus group at Invo Tech. Although the exercise went off well and participants were excited to conduct the dream phase and share their view of what an ideal incubator should look like, it is difficult to conduct the **AI process without going through all the chronological phases**. The researcher identified that it is difficult to break up the phases of the 4D Cycle and expect to create a change in behaviour. The exercise cannot be appreciated in context and yields little value. This was important for the researcher as he learned that he needs to be well prepared when conducting the Appreciative Inquiry 4D Cycle. The researcher identified that sufficient time must be set aside to conduct the full exercise, participants must have a clear idea of what is to be achieved, all participants need to be orientated and taken through the theory, process and benefits so that they could fully participate, understanding the process and the expected outcomes. The researcher also identified that he needs to create more detailed and clear instructions and have the necessary resources, charts, pens, audio visual equipment and a programme for the intervention.

5.8.1 Would the Appreciative Inquiry 4D Cycle work as a programme intervention to develop strategic shared vision

None of the research participants **had been** exposed to the Appreciative Inquiry 4D Cycle before, however all participants thought that this method was refreshing, interesting and they believed that it would work. They believed that the process would be fun and non-intimidating and they viewed all participants as being equal in the process. The respondents also felt that in organisations and the world at large there is too much negative commentary and that discussions normally revolve around how bad things are. They felt that the AI model will get people to view the world differently and be more positive and motivated to create new and better organisations. One of the respondents felt that the 4D cycle is no different from good management practice and this is the scientific process that managers use on a daily basis. They propose to start with a hypothesis, test it, implement action plans and revisit the hypothesis and so the cycle goes on. The difference here is that this is a collective process and participants share values, ideas and information. In the AI cycle the group works together for the common goal of the organisation. Another respondent felt that the 4D Cycle does not allow for people to vent frustrations and to express their point of view freely.

This was an important bit of information for the researcher and he has thought about creating a session where participants vent their frustrations and he also thought about having some physical activity that is fun participants use a punching bag or do some type of physical activity to reduce stress. It is becoming more evident to the researcher that the AI model is an activity that should take place over one and half to two days to really yield good results. It would also be important in this time to properly orientate the team to remove any stress so that they could gel together as a team and then to get them to focus on what is to be achieved.

5.9 Conclusion

The researcher found that the data collection method was effective and produced rich information for the study. It was identified that in the next study it would be important to have an independent moderator present to help record information and also advise the researcher if he was sharing too much information which could influence the group and the discussion. It was also established that the focus group should be at least two hours with a short break in between or with some energizer activity. The researcher also identified that this should not be a meeting kind of intervention and the next study should have a flip chart, colour pens, flash cards and participants should be allowed to document their thinking and these artefacts can also be used as documentation in the study. The researcher also established that one stage of the 4 D Cycle cannot be conducted in isolation but the entire appreciative inquiry process needs to be conducted as a full intervention. However the research methods were effective and the findings rich in information.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher looks at the findings and lessons learnt from the study and makes recommendations and concluding remarks. It also highlights the unexpected information that emerged during the data collection process. The last part of the chapter looks at how the researcher would like to continue with this study.

6.2 Findings of Study

The research demonstrated that strategic shared vision is a navigation system giving direction and ensuring the sustainability of business incubators. He has also shown that all stakeholders across the organisation want to be part of the process in constructing the strategic shared vision and each has a vested interest either as a beneficiary, employee, board member or external stakeholder. It is vital that Invo Tech builds and strengthens the organisations strategic shared vision and maintains the process to ensure the incubators success. It is also important that strategic shared vision be developed during the concept and inception phase of establishing new incubators, so that the necessary stakeholders can be brought on board to develop a strong foundation for the organisation. Strategic shared vision determines the culture and ethos of the organisation and this is an important tool in determining the profile of people that the organisation should employ. It is also evident that strategic shared vision is all-encompassing and must be developed in consultation with stakeholders. It is the will and passion within people that creates and drives strategic shared vision and therefore in order for the process to be successful stakeholders must be capacitated; they must understand the different factors that promote strategic shared vision and should understand how these factors influence their perceptions and judgment. The study has also shown that the AI approach would be an effective tool in developing strategic shared vision and at the same time the methodology would help develop the factors that inspire strategic shared vision. Therefore the AI process is a very exciting and non- intimidating method to develop people within the incubator environment. Most participants agreed that the AI process would be effective in developing and maintaining strategic shared vision. It was also established that this should not be a once off process

but a cyclical activity which ensures that the strategic shared vision is being achieved and that it evolves.

6.3 Lessons Learnt from the study

6.3.1 All incubators do not follow the same model of delivery and hence the strategic visioning of each incubator will be influenced by their particular model. **The triple helix model adopted at Invo Tech which brings together the university, government and the private sector as a strong partnership model to ensure that a socially beneficial institution is established.**

6.3.2 The incubator environment is influenced by both local and international market forces and strategic shared vision needs to be developed and assessed in respect of the particular incubators exposure to these markets. **Invo Tech is influenced by these markets as it attempts to secure international funding, engage in technology transfer, learn and adopt best practice models and open markets for clients at a national and international level.**

6.3.3 Strategic shared vision is not a document that is crafted by an executive team. Strategic shared vision should be an on-going process. **It is evident from the research findings that strategic shared visioning needs input from all levels including the beneficiaries of the process. It is also worth noting that this model is highly dependent on government funding and it is critical to ensure that these funds are applied correctly**

6.3.4 A situational analysis needs to be undertaken for each incubator as the factors that impact on these institutions vary depending on location, nature of business, incubation model and stakeholder involvement. **The AI model ensures that the local role players and institutions are included in the process to allow for robust and rich conversations take place in the AI context and that newand innovative strategies emerge from the inclusion of diverse representation in the AI process.**

6.3.5 Individuals within the incubator environment staff, clients or stakeholders see themselves as important contributors to the long-term vision of the organisation and should be consulted during the visioning process. **It is important to include all parties in the AI process. The AI method is good as it is a non intimidating process and it is important that the right facilitator is chosen to ensure that all voices are heard.**

- 6.3.6 In the process of developing strategic shared visioning it is important to see the incubator as made up of a number of parts but at the same time it is important to recognize the synergistic value of the parts which may also include beneficiaries and externals.
- 6.3.7 It is important to see incubators as a sector within the economy that can contribute to economic development of the people and businesses, and not just as a training intervention trying to teach people about business. **The Incubator model needs to be a commercially viable model to ensure that this initiative is sustained and with more revenue being generated it would allow for more clients to be serviced. It is also important that the model has a research component to do impact analysis and look at new models of creating entrepreneurial ventures.**
- 6.3.8 Incubators need to see themselves as businesses and work according to commercial principles in order to stay in business themselves and be sustainable.
- 6.3.9 Social media can be used as an effective tool in communicating with the different stakeholders and could be used to establish valuable information for the strategic visioning process.
- 6.3.10 There are a number of factors that influence strategic shared vision and it is important to understand stakeholder understanding and perception of these factors.

6.4 Recommendations

- 6.4.1 An investigation needs to be conducted into the basket of factors that promote strategic shared vision and each of these factors needs to be analysed for the contribution that they make to developing and maintaining a strategic shared vision.
- 6.4.2 The AI process should be used in business incubators to develop team work and also to construct the strategic shared vision of the organisation.
- 6.4.3 Information is vital to developing effective strategic shared vision and incubators should invest in a software system that is able to capture store and interpret historical data to continuously develop their strategic shared vision.

6.4.4 Strategic shared visioning in business incubators should be an open process. This sector has been established to build and improve the **livelihoods** of people and the more open the process is the greater will be the understanding and collaboration from local, national and international organisations.

6.5 Unexpected Information that emerged during the study

Financial reward and personal benefit are seen as factors that would motivate a group of people to work towards a strategic shared vision. It was established that a vision is held when people see how they could be part of and be enriched by the system. This came across both in respondents suggesting that an incentive scheme must be developed and also that people look for position in the process. The respondents also felt that diversity, emotional intelligence and personal mastery were factors that could promote strategic shared vision or at times these could be seen as a weakness in the system. Therefore the study was valid in not assuming these factors are positive. The research process has allowed the researcher to understand that this should be an intervention within the AI process to first understand participants perceptions of factors and then to use the positives from the process in the AI intervention. It is also important to educate participants about the negative influences so that the facilitator can take the group to a more informed level of understanding.

6.6 Taking this research forward

It is the researcher's intention to take this study to a doctoral level. In the next study the researcher intends to test the programme that was developed using the Appreciative Inquiry 4 D Cycle. This study has provided the researcher with good insight into developing a hypothesis to test the programme. It was evident from the study that the AI model only asks positive questions and uses a positive approach to change management. The researcher would test the effectiveness of the AI model by having two groups; in the first group the researcher will administer only positive questions and with the second group the researcher will administer both positive and negative questions. The study will also use the same approach to the factors that promote strategic shared vision.

6.7 Conclusions

It is evident from this study that strategic shared vision should be a live on-going process and that the process should look to consult all relevant parties in the process and to share the strategic visioning so that the process becomes all-inclusive and generates support, commitment and loyalty. It is also evident from the study that strategic shared vision can be developed within an environment of chaos and complexity by getting communities to better understand that the concept of chaos and complexity should be the first part to any change management process. It is also evident from this study that the Appreciative Inquiry intervention is an effective tool in building strategic shared vision. The research has also proved that the intervention needs to be carefully crafted and it is suggested that the researcher's process and schedule in assessing factors that inspire strategic shared vision be declared prior to the process, In this way participants perceptions of factors that promote strategic shared vision could be understood. This would ensure that participants are informed, have a collective understanding of topics and this would hopefully produce engagement with more openness.

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Appendix 1: letter to Participants

Dear Participant,

This is a research study looking to contribute to the development of a programme using the Appreciative Inquiry (4 D Cycle) to develop competencies into strategic shared vision.

Definitions

Presence: This is the ability to be involved in a situation without carrying any opinion or bias from past experience and to engage in a situation with an open mind and an open heart to seek the highest future potential as an individual or group.

Communication: This is the exchange of words, symbols, gestures, use of body language or any means of action to engage with another person or a group with the intention of expressing meaning and to engage in a process of dialogue which shares meaning and experiences.

Diversity: Diversity involves recognizing the difference in people and acknowledging that the differences create a kaleidoscope of opportunity and possibilities which can lead to a number of potential outcomes that can contribute to new experiences and solutions. Diversity can be influenced and impacted by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

Emotional intelligence (EI) This is the innate ability of individuals to combine intelligence which can be influenced by genetics, learning and experience that is combined with an individual's emotional composition which informs and influences choices, decisions and processes and also determines how an individual engages with others within a social context.

Personal Mastery: Personal mastery is the discipline of continually making meaning of and better understanding our personal vision of ourselves, by putting effort to develop patience and see our world more objectively.

Appreciative Inquiry



AI Diagram obtained from Introduction to AI – Website
[www.new-paradigm.co.uk/introduction_to_ai.htm]

Questions for the Focus group in Appreciative Inquiry

The Researcher will give a background to his study and explain what he hopes to achieve with the programme designed. The researcher will take participants through the AI 4 D Cycle.

1. What do you understand by strategic shared vision in terms of your incubator/or incubator environment?
2. Do you believe that strategic shared vision can be developed as a collective in the incubator environment? If yes how/ If No why not?
3. What are some of the ways strategic shared vision can be developed?
4. Do you think that the following factors would promote the development of strategic shared vision? How?
 - 4.1 Presence
 - 4.2 Communication
 - 4.3 Diversity
 - 4.4 Emotional Intelligence
 - 4.5 Personal Mastery
5. The researcher will conduct the Dream Phase with the group to try and establish their vision for an ideal incubator.
6. What is your opinion with regards to the 4 D cycle in developing strategic shared vision as a group intervention?

Appendix 2: Proposed Appreciative Inquiry Programme: Developing strategic shared vision

OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS

1. Making the group comfortable.

Introduction

The purpose of this task is to allow participants to get to know each other. A creative way must be used for the introductions. For example, each participant might hum or sing a song that has their name in it or they could relate their name to a celebrity (if the participant's name is Andrew, he could relate to Prince Andrew and also describe the person using the positive traits of the celebrity).

Objectives and Agenda

The participants must be given an agenda and the outcomes of the workshop must be discussed. First the expected outcomes should be discussed and participants must be given an opportunity to add to the expected outcomes.

The following definition of Strategic Shared Vision would be shared with the participants and should remain visible throughout the workshop: *Strategic Shared Vision is the collective interpretation of a rich picture that is detailed, colourful, energised and fuelled by the desire of each individual that is part of the ideal.*

In implementing the Appreciative Inquiry methodology, there are generally no ground rules. For example, do not ask participants to switch off their cell phone but it should be placed on silent. Instead discuss shared responsibilities with the participants so that the workshop is successful.

Setting a participatory context

Participants must understand that their participation is important to the success of the implementation of the Appreciative Inquiry method. Ask participants to share one personal incredible learning experience and the factors that led to this experience with their group. The groups must find commonalities amongst the factors and report back.

Emphasize the following in terms of the participatory approach of the workshop:

- Experience and knowledge resides in the participants as they are the ones who currently are the operational team
- Each person's unique perspective to a situation or context must be respected
- Sharing of ideas and dialogue is valuable.
- Personal experiences are the best teachers
- Show respect when someone is talking
- This is a journey of discovery and understanding – there are no right or wrong answers.

Place the following themes on the flipchart and give participants an opportunity to share their opinions and experiences on the value of these themes in encouraging participation:

- a) Awakening the expert within
- b) Reaching breakthroughs
- c) Living powerfully beyond the comfort zone
- d) Miracles happen through conversation
- e) The social constructionist stance
- f) Inquiry is change
- g) Anticipatory thinking
- h) The power of positive thinking

THE APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH

Using a PowerPoint presentation, the Facilitator will briefly explain the Appreciative Inquiry methodology. The PowerPoint presentation will focus on the definition or meaning of the term and the 4D cycle with a brief description of each cycle.

Definition and Meaning of Appreciative Inquiry

The 4D Cycle

The 4D cycle focuses on 4 questions:

- What is or what has been?
- What might/could be?
- What should be?
- What will be?

Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

Place the following principles on a flipchart and get the participants to brainstorm the principles:

1. Social constructionist stance
2. Inquiry is change
3. Anticipatory thinking
4. Positive approach
5. Story telling

Write the word 'Behaviour' on a flipchart and ask participants the following questions: Why people behave differently to the same situation?

Participants' response will include: culture; religion, tradition, parents, community, peers, friends, education, etc.

PART 1: DISCOVERY

Discovery phase we value the best of what exists. In this phase the facilitator will focus discussion on 2 aspects: first participants will show an appreciation for the current context of the organisation and secondly they will introspect and look at their strengths.

The first aspect is done in a structured interview. Participants are paired and each one gets an opportunity to interview the other. The interviewee will use storytelling to identify some peak performances of the organisation. The interviewer will ask the following questions:

1. When have you experienced the organisation at its best; at its peak performance?
2. What factors do you think contributed to this?
3. What made it work so well?
4. What were some of the accomplishments of the organisation during this period?

Encourage the interviewee to be as descriptive as possible. The interview should last for about 30 minutes. The interviewer must take notes of the high points of the story. Once both participants in the pair has shared their stories, join 2 teams so that 4 participants can work together and develop themes that are common to all their stories.

The second aspect looks at personal strengths. The purpose of this activity is to work as a group and to identify the various positive strengths that contribute to the success of leaders. If there are 14 participants, 2 copies of each of the following must be placed in a container. Each participant must select two. Participants must be given about 5 minutes to think about a situation they will share with the group on how they have applied this in their work context. The Facilitator must act as the time keeper and give each participant a turn before the second round can commence. Once all participants have completed, the group must work together to create themes that describe the strengths of leaders of business incubators.

- Dealing with change and Diversity
- Being in control of your thoughts and your mind – Emotional Intelligence
- Personal balance - Presence
- Creativity
- Your value system
- Controlling your emotions
- Personal and Professional Mastery
- Communication

PART 2: DREAM

In the dream phase participants will look at visualising the perfect organisation and focus on what could be in a perfect world. Ask participants to lie on the floor and close their eyes. Read the Image Exercise to them allowing them to conger up images (this would be a piece describing the ideal Incubator or Organisation). The facilitator needs to pause at times to allow participants to create images. The Facilitator must be as descriptive as possible. Once the Facilitator has completed reading the Exercise, leave the participants in silence for about 2 minutes. Give them adequate time to concretise their visualisations. Then get participants to exchange their visual experiences with the group. The others in the group must listen intently but ask no questions at all, not even ones of clarity. However, the group must identify common themes that run through all their visualisations.

These themes and feedback must be grouped into the following headings:

Strengths: What gives you the greatest pride about the organisation? Does this patriotism get you to unleash your strengths? How is this done and what strengths come to the fore.

Opportunities: List three opportunities that the organisations can capitalise on. List five challenges that can be converted into opportunities?

Guided Image Exercise

The facilitator needs to take the group through the following exercise.

Participants must be relaxed and get comfortable. Get participants to imagine that it is five years ahead. Assume that you had a generous donor who provided all the financial resources to renovate your business incubator. The incubator is now state of the art and rated amongst the best in the world. Your incubator is fully occupied, your programmes are highly sought after and you have recruited the best mentors and coaches in the country.

Imagine that you have come back to work in the new year after all the changes have been made as you were on a long break. You are excited because you will find the perfect incubator that you have always dreamed of leading. You wander around the incubator and chat to excited incubates. What are the incubates doing differently? You call a staff meeting. The staffs are positive and energetic.

You must pay careful attention to all aspects of the incubator; the physical space, the new training programmes, the new models, the incubates, the shared services, the mentoring programme, and a host of other special features as you would have to describe this perfect incubator to the donor.

Build these elements into the guided image creation:

1. Personal mastery
2. Emotional Intelligence
3. Diversity
4. Communication
5. Presencing

PART 3: DESIGN

The Design phase will allow participants to translate their dream into reality by using the organisations infrastructure to bring the dream into being. In this phase the objective is to create strategic shared vision architecture.

In order to create and maintain strategic shared vision, the groups need to develop an image of strategic shared vision architecture and then design strategies and processes to sustain, nurture and create the elements. At this stage a brief overview of the factors that contribute to creating a strategic shared vision must be discussed. These factors must be displayed prominently in the venue. Allow the group's time to enter into dialogue on these factors by sharing experiences and opinions.

Creating the strategic shared vision involves thinking creatively about the following elements:

1. Personal mastery
2. Emotional Intelligence
3. Diversity
4. Communication
5. Presencing

Participants are asked to think about the parts of the dream for which they have the most passion, which they most want to bring to life. These elements are captured by the facilitator randomly on a flipchart. The groups then create their own rich pictures encompassing all aspects that contribute to achieving the vision created in the dream. This is a coming together of a number of individual dreams to be represented as a whole. The groups may design more than 1 rich picture. Each participant in the group must be given a different colour. Once the group has completed their rich picture, allow participants to view the work of other groups. Allow participants to return to their own rich picture and make any amendments/changes they desire.

PART 4: DELIVERY/DESTINY

In this Phase participants will take each aspect of their rich picture and design action plans that will ensure their implementation.

Ask each participant to choose a few aspects from the rich picture they feel most passionate about (it need not be the ones they developed). All participants must brainstorm five practical actions to turn this aspect into reality. The participants can then share their ideas and design a composite list of action plans for all aspects of the rich picture. Each action plan must be written on separate cards. Once the groups are ready they can present their action plans. As groups continue their

presentations, the Facilitator must cluster common ideas. Once all groups have presented, the actions must be prioritised and a priority list created by asking the following questions:

1. What are our priorities?
2. Which are the simplest to attain? Arrange in an ascending order of difficulty.
3. Which event will create the greatest excitement?
4. Which ones are linked to others?

CLOSING

As participants will be highly energised and focused on the workshop session, time must be taken to slow down the process and get the participants back to reality and the current context they find themselves in. In order to ensure that participants carry through the outcomes of the workshop, the following three aspects must be focused on in the closing activities:

Facing Change

One of the greatest challenges participants will have to implementing their plan of action is the possible resistance from fellow team members. A simple activity to ascertain how adaptable participants themselves are to change is as follows: ask participants to fold/cross their arms. Once they have done this (which will take a few seconds), ask them to cross their arms the other way; a reversal of what they have just performed. Most of the participants will struggle with this.

Discussion Questions

1. How did it feel when you were asked to cross your arms the other way?
2. Did it come naturally or did you have to stop and think about it?
3. What are some of the things that make you resist change?
4. How can you become more adaptable to change?

Creating a Circle of Promise

Give participants a few minutes to think about the one thing that has most impressed them at the workshop which they will definitely implement when they return to their organisations. Get

participants to stand in a circle and each must be given an opportunity to make their promise. Each participant will commence with “I promise to

Evaluating the Workshop

It is important to get the participants to evaluate the workshop. This could be done on an evaluation form or verbally.

Using Warm Ups and Energisers

Purpose:

1. For participants to relax
2. To create a safe environment
3. To demonstrate that ideas are valued
4. To re-energise a tired group

The Facilitator must create excitement around these activities so that participants look forward to doing them. The activities chosen must be interesting, enjoyable and must create excitement amongst participants. None of the activities must in any way be intimidating so they must be chosen carefully taking into consideration the personalities of all participants.

Explain to participants the purpose of doing a certain activity. Explain what will be achieved at the end of the activity.

The Facilitator must get Participants to agree/volunteer to do warm ups and to participate in energiser sessions. Participants must also be comfortable and know that if they do not want to engage in the activity, it is acceptable.

The warm-up activity must focus on making the participants feel comfortable, on getting to know each other and on starting the process of building trust and creating a positive environment.

Energisers must be used throughout the workshop with a primary focus on re-energising and re-enforcing certain key concepts like positive thinking, listening effectively, presencing, etc. These activities must create positive energies amongst the participants.

The close-out activity must be slow paced and have a calming effect. The focus is to maintain the relationships built and to introspect on all the positive outcomes of the workshop. The Facilitator must ease the participants back to their own personal reality.