

Richard Hammett

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Yoder, D., M. (2005). Organizational climate and emotional intelligence: An appreciative inquiry into a “LEADERFUL” community college. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, (29), 46-62.

Article Critique of Organizational Climate and Emotional Intelligence: An Appreciative Inquiry into a “LEADERFUL” Community College

Summary

Yoder employs qualitative methodology to identify and explain how vitally important emotional intelligence is to individual, group, and organizational performance. The purpose of the study to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and the ‘leaderful’ organizational climate in a community college with a longstanding history of success. The specific qualitative method used was referred to as appreciative inquiry (AI). According to Yoder, “AI is action research that is a radically affirmative approach searching for the best in people and their organizations. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system life when it is most effective” (p. 45).

Central to Yoder’s AI methodology is a 4-D model of inquiry and learning. The AI 4-D cycle includes discovery, dream, design, and destiny. The researcher compares her 4-D model to other EI models including an ability-based model (MSCEIT), a performance-based model (Bar-On’s EQ-i), and the EQ Mapping theory of Goleman. Her first phase, discovery, corresponds to the first level of the three EI models. Likewise, the second, third, and fourth phases of the 4-D model correspond to similar phases of the EI models as well. Yoder concludes with her own taxonomy of being that she bases on her AI research and 4-D model. Her taxonomy of being

includes four domains (knowledge, awareness, understanding, and wisdom), eighteen characteristics, and thirteen personal requirements for achieving fulfillment in each domain.

Implication

The implications for education and leadership stem from Yoder's recommendations. First, people should be encouraged to communicate. There is positive and productive energy that comes from simple communication, even when nothing work-related is discussed. Second, a wholeness should be encouraged. A whole person, according to Yoder "...best leads, learns, teaches, and works" (p. 56). Yoder's guiding questions might provide a means to help people become more whole and encourage the kind of positive communication that results in better organizational climates.

Opinion

Yoder's taxonomy of being seems to fit well with Nelson and Low's emotional learning system. Table 1 shows how the main domains of the two models are similar.

Table 1 Comparison of the Emotional Learning System and Yoder's Taxonomy of Being

ELS Domain	Yoder's Taxonomy Domain
Explore	Knowledge
Identify	Awareness
Understand	Understanding
Learn	
Model & Apply	Wisdom

Other ideas from Yoder's article are shown in the following diagrams. I think there are likely connections for successfully managing life transition and change here as well. For

example, if we replace the words “Organizational Climate” with “Intrapersonal Climate” replace the words “Organizational Performance” with “Success in Dealing with Change”, and replace the words “EI Strengths of Leader” with “EI Skills”, then I think we would have a good model for excelling in the face of difficult life transitions and change. The ELS could be used to strengthen EI skills and as EI skills become stronger, so too should the EI Intrapersonal Climate of the individual. The combined result should be improved ability to deal with life transition and change.

“Studies suggest that emotionally intelligent leadership is key to creating a work climate that encourages employees to give their best” (Yoder, 2005, p. 48).

