

The Library's Voice

A GUIDE TO USER-DRIVEN INNOVATION

The Library's Voice

Author & Publisher:
Strong Bright Hearts &
The Municipality of Aarhus
Citizens' Service and Libraries
The Main Library

www.strongbrighthearts.com
www.aakb.dk

Aarhus, 2008

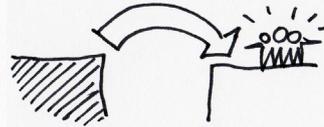
Published with support from:
Danish Agency for Libraries and Media
(the Library Agency's Development Pool
for Public and School Libraries)
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Access to Learning

Contact:
Charlotte Stoltenberg: cst@aarhus.dk
Jannik Mulvad: jmu@aarhus.dk

PREFACE 5

INTRODUCTION 7

PART 1: THE BIG PICTURE 10

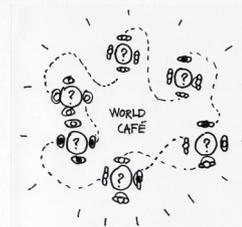


PART 2: THE LIBRARY'S VOICE 14



PART 3: METHODS 18

- 19 World Café
- 22 Appreciative Inquiry
- 26 Village Square



PART 4: PRACTICAL GUIDE 30

- 30 1: Identify the Need and find the Team
- 30 2: Create a common ground
- 31 3: Exploration
- 32 4: Design the Workshop
- 33 5: Hold the Workshop
- 35 6: Review the Results: From Workshop to user-driven innovation
- 35 7: Evaluate focusing on the future



CLOSING 37

LINKS & BIBLIOGRAPHY 39



PREFACE

User participation, how?

User participation is an issue that many parties have an interest in, and just as many have an opinion about. The project Unleash the Library Users chose to enter into an intensive competence and development process with Strong Bright Hearts (SBH), who were given the assignment of introducing certain methods to the project group; to teach and carry out supervision of the group's execution of these methods through actual courses of user participation.

User participation - here we go!

Cooperating with SBH has shown us three methods through which library and users/citizens can meet and become wiser. This guide contains three methods that library employees have tested and in various contexts have found not only useable but also easy to grasp. User participation might be a science, but it is not as difficult as it sounds!

Aarhus Main Library has, with support from the Danish Agency for Libraries and Media (the Library Agency's Development Pool for Public and School Libraries), formed a project entitled "Unleash the Library Users" with the purpose of exploring users' creative and innovative potential on the one hand and describing different ways of user participation on the other hand. 'The Library's Voice - a Guide to User-Driven Innovation' is the first publication of the project's work.

The cooperation with SBH has been a part of a longer process (March 2007 to March 2009), which, at its conclusion, has been working with anthropological examinations and delved further into the work with methods for involving users. A complete report will be published in March 2009.

Sincerely
Jannik Mulvad
Project Manager



INTRODUCTION

Presently you are looking at a guide on how to get started with user-driven innovation at your library. The guide is based on five months of practical work on involving employees and citizens in the development of Aarhus Main Library.

In the guide you will find a description of the instruments we have worked with. The purpose of the guide is to help you, as a library employee, carry out co-creational activities in cooperation with citizens and employees. We have aimed at making the guide as usable for smaller branch libraries as for the biggest main libraries.

In the first part of the guide, we offer a perspective on libraries in relation to society and user-driven innovation. In the second part, we briefly describe the initiative The Library's Voice.

In the third part of the guide, the main emphasis is on describing the instruments and methods we have used and which we know are effective. We will also deal with their possibilities and limitations.

The fourth part is the practical part. This part of the guide describes the hands-on approach to creating a workshop based on user-driven innovation.

Our intentions are to present the instruments in a way that will enable you to begin your work. We provide a bibliography and links so that you can explore the subject further on your own.

It is our personal wish that this guide will help as many librarians as possible to create the best results together with citizens and colleagues in a way that will increase your job satisfaction.

Sincerely

Carl Damm, Maja Rottbøll and Thomas Hessellund Nielsen
Strong Bright Hearts

Strong Bright Hearts is a network of citizens in Aarhus, which works to create a healthy development of the city. Today, the network has 240 members, and during the three years, in which the network has existed, the core group behind Strong Bright Hearts has worked professionally with user-driven innovation.

PART 1: THE BIG PICTURE





PART 1: THE BIG PICTURE

Where are the Libraries headed?

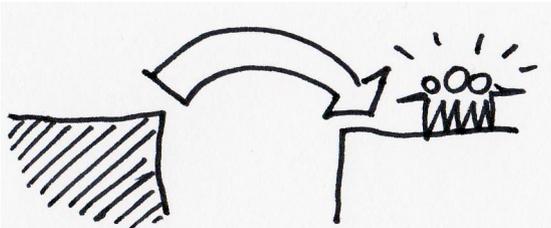
It is in the big picture that the importance of our work can be found. This is also where we see the urgency to act now. We need to see the meaning of our work in the context we are part of. Therefore, we will start by putting into perspective the development of society and its relevance for libraries.

Libraries in the Middle of a Societal Transformation

Today, we live in a time of transitions, where we must adapt from one societal reality to another: a so-called paradigm shift. There are many names for these paradigms, e.g. industrial society, information society and innovation society. The names, however, are not the most important issue. Most important is the fact that we as a society are in the middle of a process of transformation.

With this shift in society we see that there is a need for new ways of thinking.

Many are shifting from seeing the world as a machine, a metaphor that Newton introduced, to seeing the world as being alive and in constant change.



From a mechanical world view:

- Focus on components
- Focus on problems and things that do not work
- Thinking either/or
- Focus is on the individual
- Discussion
- Short-term actions

To a lively and variable world view:

- Focus on wholeness and connections between components
- Focus on possibilities, potential, and what works
- Thinking both/and
- Focus is on community
- Mutual dialogue
- Long-term actions

Shift in Society

As a part of society, the libraries find themselves in the same process of transformation. If libraries wish to move into the paradigm that has an animated and changeable world view, it would, among other things, include:

- Libraries will act more as part of the city
- Opening up for more cooperation partners and dialogue on which roles libraries could play in society
- Libraries must attend to their core tasks as well as developing new services.
- Libraries must make room for communities of interests to use the library as a meeting place.
- Libraries will enter into dialogue with users about their wishes and needs.
- Libraries will focus on long-term action strategies and sustainable initiatives creating lasting value, which can be built upon over time.

This is what we worked on realising in cooperation with the Main Library of Aarhus.

A new understanding of Self

There is an ongoing development in the world of libraries that touches the very understanding of what it means to be a library and a librarian.

Libraries face the task of finding their role in the present age. The yield of that work should be a clear overview of what should be retained as well as new services and new functions, which the libraries provide.

With these services and functions, the libraries have a clear opportunity to play a greater part in society and the ongoing transformation. There are many people, who need help to avoid being left behind by the rapid development in society, and there are many who wish to contribute more actively to the library's own development.

How does User-Driven Innovation Fit into this Picture?

The libraries have a need to find apt answers to questions such as:

- As a library, what is our role in society today?
- What is our contribution to society? – What do the citizens need NOW?
- Who are we as librarians, and what is our role?
- What services should we provide?
- How do we develop these services, and how do we communicate them?

This is where user-driven innovation plays its part. Not as an answer to the questions above, but as a way to find the answers.

User-Driven Innovation

What exactly is user-driven innovation? Let us start by establishing that there are many different approaches to user-driven innovation. On one hand is the observing approach, where you study the behaviour of users and plan services or projects according to the results. This approach will not be touched upon in this guide.

On the other hand we have the co-creational approach to user-driven innovation, which involves creative activities in cooperation with users, where close dialogue enables the development of services and projects or other measures. This approach is based on a high degree of interaction and exchange of ideas, opinions, needs and wishes for the library.

What is User-Driven Innovation about?

What is User-Driven Innovation about?

Instead of giving a definition of the concept, we will start by describing what user-driven innovation is about in this context.

- **The human factor:** First and foremost it is about humans getting together to create new solutions to current and future challenges for the library. Development is not driven by users, but by people that we call users. If we succeed in meeting each other on a basic human level in the cooperation, we are off to a good start.

- **High degree of involvement:** Humans are at the centre of things. If people are to contribute their time and help “drive” a healthy development in society, it is important for their commitment, that the overall relevance and urgency of the work is visible.
- **New collaborations:** User-driven innovation is often created through partnerships that have not existed before. For many employees the act of involving the citizens to this extent is a new concept, and many do not know how it is done. Most citizens are unaccustomed to being invited to provide ideas, views and opinions and maybe even participate in project teams in the libraries.
- **Show confidence:** It requires the creation of a good relationship between citizen and library, with the basic assumption that we can trust each other and aim towards the best result for both parties. This can for instance be achieved by virtue of inviting citizens to take part in work that is usually done internally - such as the staff’s work in projects.
- **Needs at the centre:** Every party’s needs are put at the centre of the development of new services and other measures. By involving the citizens, we ensure that what is developed will have great relevancy for the people it is created for.
- **Learning process:** The learning process is an important part of the work, because it is about learning new ways of cooperating and co-creating.

User-driven innovation occurs when we, to a greater or lesser extent, involve users in the development of the library in order to create solutions to common challenges, even in constellations we have not worked in before.

Methods and tools exist that can facilitate this process, but they are of no value without the people who need to create new solutions together.

User-driven innovation is therefore mainly about relations. It could even be said that user-driven innovation is about libraries entering into new and meaningful relationships with the citizens.

Some citizens and employees are ready for this, while others are not. It is necessary to start with the ones who would like to participate and let it spread over time, propelled by good results and through the safety that is found in having witnessed others go first.

Relevancy for Libraries

Why work with user-driven innovation in the first place? Because the way we have done things up till now no longer has the same effect. The number of visitors is decreasing. Google and the Internet have gained a strong foothold practically everywhere. People have more money to buy their own media.

We need new thinking. We no longer have solutions to our challenges. We need to solve some of them in new ways; through joint cooperation, through dialogue.

What can libraries use user-driven innovation for? There are many opportunities for the libraries. Naturally, what makes sense for the libraries varies depending on the size of the library, the number of employees and the time they can allocate to the task.

User-driven innovation can for instance help to:

- Develop new services
- Identify the needs in society which are the most important for libraries to work with
- Facilitate and enter into dialogue with citizens
- Get inspiration to what the library might also be
- Gain insight into citizens' actual wants and needs in connection with the library
- Create networks for citizens
- Act as a strategy for development

Value in the daily Work

Anyone can work with user-driven innovation. It is merely a question of being open to learn to work in new ways and with more groups of people. If the challenge is accepted, it can help to increase the job satisfaction internally and the quality of work externally.





PART 2: THE LIBRARY'S VOICE

Short Description of The Library's Voice

The cooperation between Strong Bright Hearts and Unleash the Library Users was entitled The Library's Voice. It lasted from December 2007 to April 2008 and in this period, Strong Bright Hearts worked closely together with the project team on a daily basis. In addition to project manager Jannik Mulvad, the team consisted of Pauline Kerrn-Jespersen (administrative employee), Margit Fischer (librarian) and Sidsel Bech-Petersen (project consultant). During the last month, David Gråbæk (intern) joined us.



The purpose of The Library's Voice was to teach the project team behind Unleash the Library Users to develop, design and facilitate the type of workshops which Strong Bright Hearts have held. The goal was to hold a series of workshops in collaboration with citizens, who shared a common purpose of unfolding the potential of the library.

In the workshops, a lively debate among citizens and employees arose. Participants were between the ages of 20 and 83 and everyone took part in the dialogue on the same level.

A generally positive response to the approach of higher involvement was expressed and the majority of participants found this approach inspiring.

The Process

We conducted five internal and external workshops with different groups of participants. These ranged from in-house project meetings to user-driven innovation workshops on the development of specific services. The following is an overview of our process, including which questions other libraries may find useful to ask themselves, as well as the results we gained.

January 21: Project review

We set up a Village Square for project employees at the Main Library and invited users, who contributed by sparring on the library's own projects:

How can the citizens become part of our in-house meetings?

-> By securing that we are on the right track with our projects through sparring and development with the users.

January 30: Workshop based on Appreciative Inquiry

This workshop involved the transformation of the library's project room. The workshop was for employees who are engaged in projects and therefore use the project rooms:

How can we benefit from involving our employees in our work?

-> By creating a workplace that lives up to our own wishes.

What came out of it? Project rooms that fit the needs of the various project teams and consequently are both inspiring and flexible, have good facilities for storage and hanging and encourage people to think big and to be creative.

February 28: Village Square

This was a square where everyone with ideas or projects could receive sparring and help to proceed with the project:

How can the library create a setting for the unfolding of the ideas and projects of the citizens? How can the library gain insight into what occupies the citizens and what needs they have?

-> It is necessary to understand what occupies the citizens and to provide the opportunity to enter into



cooperation with interesting initiatives. What came out of it? The village square became a forum for the city where social innovators and fiery souls turned up and participated. This could be one of the future roles for libraries in society.

March 27: "Qualifications Centre" – workshop, part 1

What is the role of libraries in society? How can citizens and library employees develop new services in collaboration?

-> Services should be based on citizens' needs
 What came out of it? It became clear what role the participants would like the library to play in the future, and based on that we were able to design part 2 of the workshop.

April 16: "Qualifications Centre" – workshop, part 2

What capabilities can citizens and employees benefit from helping each other obtain? What qualifications

are needed in society? What is characteristic of a place ideally suited to support the interaction that is needed?

Several major results have come from the workshops: A transformed project room that people queue up to use, new ideas for cultural services, a new cooperation between the Front Runners (Frontløberne) and the Mindspot project at Aarhus Main Library as well as a project group which can work with the methods described in this publication. And much more. People, who have never been to the library before, stopped by. Aarhus Main Library has gained specific input so they can shape their new qualifications centre according to the users' and the librarians' dreams and needs.

These workshops were all based on tools for dialogue used by NGOs, businesses and institutions the world over.

These tools will be described more thoroughly in the following part of the guide.

PART 3: METHODS





PART 3: METHODS

In this part of the guide we will present the methods used in The Library's Voice. Initially, we go through the basic characteristics of the methods, and afterwards we will explore each of them in detail.

Basic Characteristics of the Methods

We worked with World Café, Appreciative Inquiry and Village Square, all of which are dialogue-promoting methods based on the view of human nature that all people are resourceful, unique and have something valuable on their minds and hearts. The basic principle is co-creation, which means that you as a participant create the results in cooperation with others.

A workshop based on these methods typically lasts a couple of hours. Participants, organized in smaller groups, enter into constructive dialogue on the basis of burning questions or topics, which are relevant to the underlying challenge or need which initiated the workshop.

Useful Knowledge about the Methods

The 4D-model of Appreciative Inquiry as well as The World Café are well suited for workshops, where the library sets the agenda for the day. The citizens concentrate on helping the library in ways that also benefit themselves.

Village Square is a way of meeting, where citizens have the opportunity to create their own agenda. This is a good way for the library to open up to the city and let citizens define the content.



The great advantage of these methods is that they are user-driven, i.e. the results are made because the participants are enthusiastic about the topics and see the opportunity of contributing to a positive development together. It is therefore of utmost importance that the complex theme, which you wish to explore, is relevant and important to the people you invite, and that they feel welcome and comfortable in the settings created.

As an organizer of such workshops you obtain relevant knowledge about the given subject. Knowledge that would have been otherwise unattainable without the diversity of people and perspectives that are present at the workshop, attended by people with an interest in the subject.

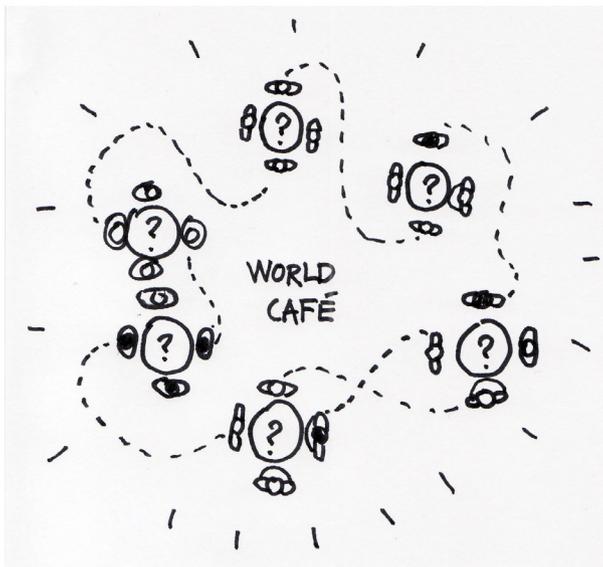
As a participant in such workshops you will gain influence, inspiration, new angles on subjects, an opportunity to contribute to a good development and to share enthusiastic thoughts, and meet others with the same interests. There are no knowledge requirements for participants; only a wish to be part of creating something that works even better.

Basic Assumptions

- Everyone has something valuable on their minds and hearts, something they are enthusiastic about.
- Innovation only happens if we are explorative, and allow ourselves and each other to be uninformed - not knowing the results in advance.
- We meet as humans, not as titles or roles (you are not user or librarian - you are a human being).
- All people are creative, resourceful, unique and courageous.
- Through co-creation, we can jointly create the future that we want.
- By focusing on the things that work, we will in the course of nature have more of this.

World Café

We held two World Cafés at the Main Library in Aarhus during our cooperation. In the first café, we focused on exploring the role of libraries in society (now and in the future). Through the knowledge gained at the first café, the second café could focus on creating the foundation of a “competence centre”, which uses the present as its starting point, but can potentially support society in the best possible manner in future development.



The Method

The World Café method was created by Juanita Brown and David Isaacs. They saw an enormous advantage and potential yield in talking about important subjects and burning questions in the informal, safe, and friendly settings offered by a café.

When is the method beneficial? It is especially beneficial when we through dialogue wish to explore, concentrate upon, learn, and understand more about the complex challenges and burning questions that engross us. The method is an opportunity to let the system “view itself”, i.e. the individual is given insight into what occupies participants as a whole.

How many people can participate and how long does it take? Depending on the desired result, anything from 12 to several hundred people can be invited. A café can last from a few hours to several days depending on the number of questions and the desired degree of concentration.

Preconditions

Everyone contributes on equal terms, and the approach is that the insight and wisdom which is needed exists between us. In this context The Library’s Voice can be expressed through diversity by virtue of the individual participant contributing their view on what is important for the library right now. Those who take part feel dedicated to the task and must therefore be considered the right people to handle the task. The will to carry on a good dialogue must be present. Here are some examples of what constitutes good dialogue:

Good Dialogue

- Is aimed at finding common ground and understanding
- Provides an opportunity to examine own attitudes
- Is built on each others’ ideas and statements

Bad Discussion

- There are opposing views and the lowest common denominator is found through conflict.
- The goal is to win.
- Focus on other people’s flaws to strengthen one’s own arguments.

To facilitate the good dialogue, a World Café etiquette has been created. It consists of 7 points that can be presented at a café, possibly with contributions from the host or the participants. The 7 points are aimed at helping each individual to support the good dialogue:

World Café Etiquette

(From the publication "Café to Go")

- Focus on what matters (what is the objective for today, what is viable?)
- Contribute your thinking (do not hold back)
- Speak your mind and heart (what is on your mind?)
- Listen to understand (not to find the others' weaknesses, but rather their qualities)
- Link and connect ideas (from different tables and the people you meet)
- Listen together for insights and deeper questions (that is where the gold is buried)
- Play, doodle, writing on the paper cloths is encouraged (some people are better at expressing themselves visually)

A good and productive conversation will only arise if the subject or question to be examined is sufficiently relevant and urgent for today's society. Only then can it attract citizens as they can see the value for themselves and others.



The Role of the Host

As host you focus on creating the safe and friendly setting in which participants feel welcome. In this way, respect is shown for the time that participants contribute to the process.

What to do Specifically:

- Decorate the room like a café with candles, flowers, art and round tables; 4 participants are seated at each table.
- A host is chosen at each table. The host will stay at the same table through all the rounds. He or she is responsible for gathering and summing up the essence of the conversations.
- Plan 3-4 consecutive conversation rounds each lasting 20-30 minutes.
- At the beginning of each round a new question is posed and everyone except the host moves to a new table with participants they have not yet shared a table with.
- The host gathers up the essence of the conversations and shares them in plenum at the end of a round or passes them on at the beginning of a new round to facilitate synergy.
- In the last round you can let people go back to their original table to summarize their ideas, see how far they have come or sort and concretize the contents of the day.
- Let people share their insights in plenum after the last round. Participants can look for deeper patterns, meaning and maybe assignments after which they can break up into task groups.

Five Fantastic Tips to Creating a Good World Café:

1. An inspirational presentation can help everyone to elevate the perspective and provide them with basic qualifications to use in the workshop
2. Artists can make their contribution to the atmosphere with their works of art.
3. Musicians or music in the background can help people tune in and can create a cosy atmosphere.
4. Coffee, tea, water and fruit and vegetables are good "brain foods" and also shows that the host wants to give something back to the participants.
5. Let the entire setting reflect that the process is not about the host draining the participants for knowledge and insight, but rather about creating something together that is bigger than what we as individuals are capable of.

Questions

Defining good questions is truly an art. You can practice it your whole life and always find ways to become sharper and better at it. There are various categories of questions. We will not go through these categories here, but instead focus on what is relevant for World Café. Common to all questions is that they cannot be answered by a simple yes/no or either/or.

Good Questions:

- Inspire contributions
- Focus
- Challenge
- Give energy
- Open up for new thoughts
- Stimulate desire to take part in the conversation



In a World Café you often start with a question that opens up the conversation, where everyone at the table has an opportunity to share their opinions on the theme or e.g. a good story.

When the dialogue is under way, and the participants feel more comfortable with the hosts and each other, it is a good idea to move to generative questions, which generate new ideas, perspectives, and uncover needs and dreams, if that is the desired effect. Generative questions often start with "what" or "how". Examples of generative questions:

- How might the library contribute to society in the future through a new children's department?
- How do you see the library's role in today's society?

In the next phase it is a good idea to evaluate, sort, sum up and concretize the results of the generative phase, so the results are easier to use in the rest of the process. Examples of these questions:

- From the conversations we have had today: What is now important in order to create the best children's department in the world?
- Which three qualities are the most important, and why?

Finally, it is a good idea to round off the workshop with a finishing question that all participants have an opportunity to answer in plenum. Obviously, it is essential that the entire line of questions forms a natural whole in relation to the theme in order to include both opening, clarifying, and summarizing questions in the design.

The Story...

At the end of the first dialogue café, we asked the participants to answer the following question: "What, now, will you take home?" It brought many exiting and inspiring answers. One said "a fantastic experience". Another citizen answered "an entirely new image of the library, which seems to be one of the most exiting modern institutions to work in". This made a huge impression on several of the employees, which they in turn shared.

Appreciative Inquiry

We held a workshop at the Main Library in Aarhus with the goal to transform two internal project rooms based on the wishes, dreams and specific needs of the users of these rooms. The workshop was based on Appreciative Inquiry created by David Cooperrider and Diana Whitney.



The Method

Appreciative inquiry is actually two things: It is a philosophy of life that is basically about focusing on what works (the successes) and thus making them grow. Moreover, it is a specific method that can be used in connection with transformation processes in organisations. We used the method to design a workshop and carry out interviews, and in this section we will elaborate on the 4D-model, which formed the foundation of the work.

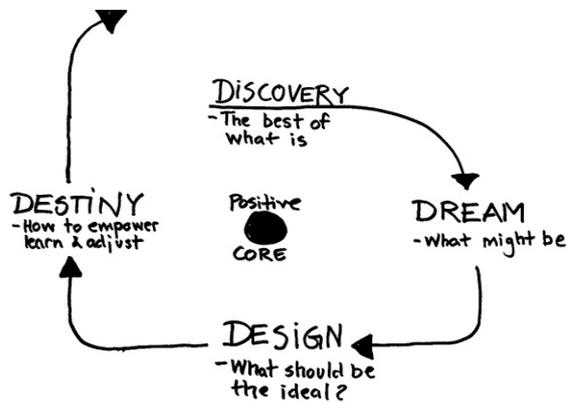
4D-Model

The workflow of the AI-process itself is built around the 4D-model. The four D's stem from the words: Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny, which indicate the four main phases in the AI-process.

Focus is on what creates value and opportunity for growth.

Based on this focus, the inquiry runs through the four

phases, thus building a bridge between the best of what already exist and the most attractive dream for the future.



Discovery Phase

The participants share their own experiences. This is an example of how it can be done:

- Talk about an experience in connection with your job, where cooperation worked really well.
- What did you do? Who did you work with?
- What made this particular cooperation something special?
- What did you yourself do differently?

What did we do? In the Discovery phase we had an interview part, where participants were divided into groups of two people. The two people in each group interviewed each other using an interview form consisting of 2 questions.

1. *Talk about a group work situation that you have experienced (at work or in your spare time), where you felt the most alive or engaged*
 - What made it possible?
 - Which colours, smells and sounds do you remember from the surroundings?
2. *Based on what you have shared, which three qualities are the most important to have present in the project rooms in order for them, in the best possible way, to support and add liveliness to the work at the Main Library?*

Dream Phase

The Dream phase is used to dream about the desired future. It is an invitation for all participants to elevate perspectives, use their imagination, and talk about what their organisation might look like if the inherent strengths and opportunities formed the foundation of further development.

What did we do? In the Dream phase we asked people to draw the project rooms the way each of them wanted the rooms to be, based on the three qualities they considered the most important to have available in the rooms (without considering finances, the dimensions of the rooms and other potential restraints). This phase provided us with drawings of people's dreams and hopes. The drawings were supplied with the three qualities, which the participants had used as their starting point.

Design Phase – the Bridge between Dream and Reality

The Design phase follows up on the Dream phase. In this phase, the dreams are converted into something constructive. It can be anything from challenging statements for the organisation to work with, to a specific plan of how an office should be fitted up.

What did we do? In the Design phase after the workshop, three of us met up – two from the workshop team and one participant from the workshop, who was enthusiastic about taking part in the further process. All three are daily users of the project room. We looked at the output of the workshop; the drawings and their qualities. The drawings were sorted based on recurring themes in them. It swiftly became clear that there were some basic qualities and facilities/furniture, which all users asked for, e.g. more cosy and informal conference facilities, a more playful and inspiring atmosphere and more room for storage. Based on this and a layout of the two rooms, we could design the final rooms with furniture and functional areas included.

Destiny – Realisation Phase:

This phase was formerly called Delivery, and was mainly focused on action plans and implementation

strategies. But it proved far more efficient when an inspired and engaged group of people, who took action on their own, was formed. The future destiny of the project depends on people feeling motivated and inspired to take destiny into their own hands and that the organisation is supportive and ensures that it is feasible.

What did we do? In the realisation phase, the same group of three, who were enthusiastic about changing the project rooms, worked together. We bought and ordered furniture, found wallpaper, made an overview of everything practical to be done and set aside two days, where the transformation itself was to take place. We engaged some more people to help with decorating, assembling of furniture and other practical tasks and had two cosy and creative days together.

How was the Method Used?

We chose only to involve users in the first two phases and subsequently continued working with the Design and Realisation phases in a small task group. We did it this way because it was the most efficient in relation to time and resources.

When Should the Method not be Used?

If, for instance, a decision has already been made on the result of a project, then there is no real susceptibility to the ideas and input that will emerge, and it will NOT be user-driven innovation. In other words: There must be a real need!

How Many can be Involved and How Long does it Take?

In principle, you can be from 2 to several hundred participants. At the Main Library we were around 15. It is noteworthy that having fewer participants makes it easier for everyone to hear the good stories of other participants and to share experiences during the process, which can be beneficial.

A workshop can last from two hours to several days depending on the complexity of the theme and the number of participants. Usually, you would set aside 4-6 hours.

Basic Approach When Working with the 4D-Model

Often, energy is focused on solving problems. AI does not wish to “forget the problems”, but rather “remember” that the strengths, good stories, and exiting challenges are what people commit themselves to and what motivate and lead to good atmosphere among the participants/employees. In the table below, you can see the difference between the traditional approach and the approach used, when working with the 4D-model.

Traditional Problem Solving

Basic approach: That an organisation is/has a problem that needs solving

- Identify problems
- Analyse causes
- Analyse possible solutions
- Set up action plan

Appreciative Inquiry

Basic approach: An organisation is an exiting challenge

- Appreciate the best experiences/ what already works
- Visions: Imagine what could be
- Create a common mage of the future and initiate pro cesses to realise it

What to do Specifically:

The timeestimates given in this recommendation are calculated on the basis of the workshop we held with approximately 15 participants. In case of more participants, more time must be set aside for people to share their experiences.

- 1. Decorate the room**, so it is nice to stay in. Make sure there are refreshments and that you have all the materials needed to facilitate the workshop
- 2. Welcome people** and tell them about the purpose of their participation as well as the context and what is going to happen during the workshop
- 3. Start with the Discovery phase.** A good way to do this is to let people interview each other about the best experience they have had in relation to the theme of the workshop. Split people up into groups of 2 and give them approximately 15-20 minutes for each interview, approximately 40 minutes in total. Make sure that you have made interview forms beforehand, so they have something to write on. After 40 minutes everyone will meet up again, where there will be an opportunity for the participants to share their good experiences with each other. Earmark 20 minutes for this.
- 4. It can be a good idea to ask** the participants to reflect on the experiences and find a couple of qualities/principles/values based on the experience, which they were interviewed about immediately before. A way to do it is to ask people to find the qualities present in the experience they talked about in the interview. Let them write it down on paper (one quality per sheet of paper) and ask them to hang the papers on a wall for everyone to see.
- 5. The Dream phase:** In this phase, it is often good to draw or build using, for instance, Lego bricks. It makes people dream, and at the same time it makes them much more specific than when they speak. At the same time, the process supplies you with drawings or little Lego-models that are very easy to use in the following two phases. Give people for instance 10 minutes (drawing) or 15 minutes (Lego), in which they can sit by them-

selves and create the dream based on the most important qualities that emerged in the exercise immediately before (they are more than welcome to choose the qualities that others came up with). Subsequently, the drawing/Lego should be displayed and described verbally.

- 6. Rounding off:** End with everyone having their turn to speak, explaining what it has been like to partake and what they, for instance, have learned that day.

4 Fantastic Tips for Creating a Good 4D-Workshop

1. Decide from the beginning if you want to involve the users in all four phases or just in some of them, e.g. Discovery and Dream as we did.
2. Remember to set aside time in the workshop for participants to share dreams and good experiences with each other before the next exercise begins! Merely sharing these dreams and good experiences is inspiring and helps to create a sense of togetherness in the cooperation.
3. Notice during the workshop if people need a little more or less time for the exercises. It is your responsibility to adjust time, if it does not fit the realities.
4. If the participants are going to interview each other, it is a good idea to encourage them to form a group with the person they know the least in the room. Thereby, relations are built, plus it will be easier for the individual to step outside their everyday role.



Village Square

During the course of The Library's Voice, we used Village Squares twice at the Main Library. Once in the evening as a forum for the city, where citizens and library employees could receive help for the projects they had brought along. And once it was used as an instrument for the library's internal development project meetings, where citizens contributed to the development of the library's internal projects. Village Square is based on Open Space Technology, which was invented by Harrison Owen in the 1980's.



The Method

During a series of good conferences, Harrison Owen noticed that all the real highlights often came about during breaks. In breaks, people had the opportunity to speak "outside" the agenda and could talk about the issues they were really enthused by. On that basis and over a number of years, Owen developed Open Space, a new way to meet and organise based on the synergy and enthusiasm of a good coffee break combined with the activity level and result orientation of a good meeting.

What is it?

Village Square is a square or a forum for the city, where anyone with ideas or projects can find sparring

and assistance to develop their work. Village Square is traditionally held every other month in Aarhus. It is about sharing knowledge and helping each other.

When is the Method Beneficial?

People can go to Village Square if they have an idea or a project and want assistance in the form of sparring, concept development or practical help. And people, who want to make a difference in the city, but might lack the know-how to do so, have an opportunity to contribute to other people's projects.

How Many can be Involved and How Long does it Take?

You can invite between 5 and several hundred people. It is often an open event. A Village Square takes about three hours. A single work session generally lasts 45 minutes.

Preconditions for Open Space to Work:

- Focus must be on a matter that has real importance for the people involved. Otherwise it will not work.
- Participation must be voluntary. Otherwise there will be no enthusiasm or shouldering of responsibility.
- If good results are to be gained, each participant must take responsibility for what happens.
- No results can be taken for granted beforehand.



It is a fundamental theory of Open Space that those, who join the process, are those best suited for handling the task, as they are enthusiastic about the issue.

The Four Principles and the Law

Four fundamental principles and a law exist for Village Square (and Open Space processes in general). These form the setting of self-organisation and help to break down the traditional meeting culture.

The Four Principles:

1. Whoever comes is the right people
2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have
3. Whenever it starts is the right time
4. When it's over it's over

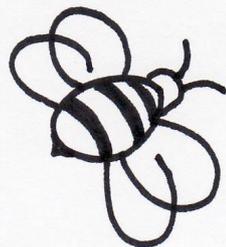
A Law: The Law of Two Feet

1. The law encourages people to take responsibility for their own learning, peace of mind and contributions. If a participant feels unable to contribute or learn, the Law of Two Feet encourages the participant to move on to another group or another place.



According to the Law of Two Feet, a participant can become a "bumblebee" or a "butterfly"

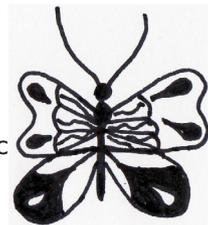
A bumblebee flies from one session to the next and cross-pollinates with ideas.



A butterfly may wish to do something different, which is not stated in the agenda, depending on what makes sense in the moment.

Sometimes two butterflies meet out of session, and a new, important topic for the agenda emerges from this conversation.

In this way, new topics emerge naturally, and topics without relevance fade away.

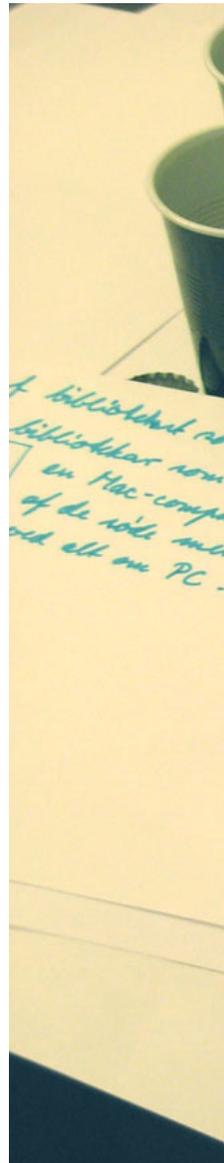


What to do Specifically:

- It begins with the participants gathering in a circle.
- At least one facilitator is required.
- The facilitator welcomes everyone and 'opens the space' by introducing the purpose of the Village Square that has brought the participants together.
- Participants are invited to bring forward their own projects or ideas, which they are willing to host/take responsibility for at a later stage of the Square.
- Before that happens, the facilitator explains the four principles and the Law of Two Feet.
- Everyone checks in, i.e. every participant very briefly shares, what has brought them here. One person speaks at a time while the rest listen.
- Following check-in, the projects and ideas are presented by the people behind them.
- During project presentation, the projects are noted on a big poster in order to create a good overview and to make participants aware of, where the individual project sessions reside.
- Then participants spread out into the sessions they are most enthused by and the work can begin. Each session will take place at a certain table or place, where the person behind a project or idea will also be.
- The person behind a project or idea is responsible for gathering and summing up the essences of the conversations on a large sheet, and the sharing of these in plenum is the last item on the agenda.
- At the end of the Square, there is a common check-out (where everyone for instance has an opportunity to share, what they have learned in the sessions).

Three Fantastic Tips to How You Create a Good Village Square:

1. Coffee, tea, water, fruit and vegetables are good "brain foods".
2. After explaining the four principles and the Law of Two Feet, it can be beneficial to have a check-in, where everyone is given the opportunity to share what brought them to today's Square, or quite simply what they wish to contribute with. This creates clarity.
3. For libraries, Village Square can be a good method to open up to the city and be a space for innovation for the city.





PART 4: PRACTICAL GUIDE

This part of the guide goes in depth with the practicalities on how you can create a workshop based on user-driven innovation in practice.

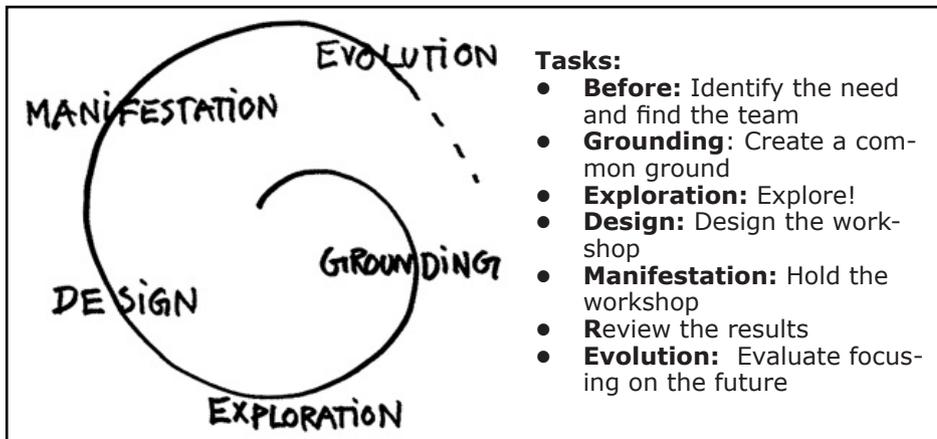
This is a recipe, which you can choose to follow, and as with every other recipe, we advise you to make it your own over time.

This guide can be used by all libraries, large and small, and there are no preconditions to venturing into this other than a desire to try something new.

The Model

When creating a workshop, a number of phases and some assignments belonging to each phase are necessary, independent of which subject the workshop deals with and which method has been chosen (read about methods and their usage in part 3 of this guide).

We have developed a model of the phases that shows the five fundamental phases:



1: Identify the need and find the team

Identify the Need

Before the grounding phase can commence, it is important to clearly identify the real need, challenge or question, to which the library wishes to find a solution.”

Examples:

- “The number of daily users at our library is continually declining. We wonder what it takes to make people use the libraries more”
- “We need a different layout of our children’s department. What do the users of the children’s department want most?”

Such a need forms the foundation for creating a workshop and inviting people to a dialogue.

Find the Team

It is possible for one person to carry out the entire process, but we recommend that a team of two or more colleagues is formed to design and hold the workshop. It is an advantage to be several people together in creating and holding a workshop, because both workshop design and facilitation will be stronger through the resources and differences of more than one person. It is important that people choose to be part of the team voluntarily based on enthusiasm for the work.

Important Questions

- *What is the need/challenge/burning question that forms the foundation of the workshop?*

- *Besides yourself, who else would be a fantastic teammember?*

2: Create a Common Ground (Grounding phase)

The purpose of this phase is to create a common ground for the internal work in the team. If the team has a common perspective and standpoint, you will avoid working towards different goals. Set aside two or three hours for this meeting.

Here are some important areas that will help you in creating a common ground:

Internal Clarification

It is good to have internal clarification in the team to enable the individual team members to really step into the context and purpose of the project. It is important that the whole group is assembled and that everyone has the opportunity to answer the questions without being interrupted. The person speaking, speaks, and everyone else listens until the turn is finished.

- What are your thoughts on the assignment?
- Which success stories would each person in the team like to be able to tell afterwards? Talk about it as if it already happened and remember to document the stories in order to enable you to evaluate later on whether the success stories came true.
- What will be your greatest challenge when working with this?
- What is your greatest strength in this work?

Find the Purpose:

It is important that you have a common understanding of purpose. It is a good idea to set aside one hour for you to have a good dialogue about purpose.

Example of a Purpose:

If the need which you discovered was to create a new children's department in the library, the purpose could be to obtain inspiration and input that can form the foundation for a new children's department.

3: Exploration

(Exploration phase)

After having created a common ground, it is time to explore so you will obtain an impression of the context, which the workshop is part of, as a whole. It is difficult to say how long this phase will last. If it is a small and simple assignment it may last between a half day and a whole day. If it is a major and complex assignment, it may last several days.

There are three main areas which are important to explore here:

1: The Close Context

Speak to the people who can help clarify the challenge. You can do this either by holding a clarifying meeting with everyone or by interviewing each of them (read about AI-interviews on page 22).

- *What knowledge is needed in order to create a good workshop?*

2: Inspirations (the distant Context)

It is important to let yourselves be inspired, e.g. by people who have gone through something similar to the challenge you face. For example, you could engage in a field trip to another library, shops or other places that would be exciting to experience, or you could have an interesting person who can contribute with new perspectives on your challenge come and talk to you.

To understand the greater context, it is also a good idea to search the Internet for relevant material on the challenge you face.

- *What/who would be inspirational to watch/read/experience in relation to your challenge?*

3: Get an Overview of the Methods You can Use

Here, we recommend you to read the part about the methods in the previous section of this guide. If you have time to go into the material in depth, you can read the books suggested in the bibliography.

If you are about to start a large-scale project, it may be a good idea to contact the people who work with and were trained in user-driven innovation at the Main Library in Aarhus in connection with the project The Library's Voice (see contact information on page 2)

- *Which methods and instruments do you need to learn more about, in order to be well prepared for the assignment?*

4: Design the Workshop

(Design phase)

In this phase, all of your wishes, ideas, perspectives, and your new as well as previous knowledge culminate in the design of a workshop.

You now have a clear and meaningful purpose of the workshop along with an understanding of the context. The next step is to become more specific. These are the assignments in this phase:

Make an Invitation

The invitation sets the atmosphere for the workshop itself, so it must reflect the atmosphere which you want to create during the workshop. The invitation contains the 'call' which is to gather people. It should reflect your good intentions and in this way attract exactly the right participants and fiery souls.

Important questions:

- *What is the 'call' of the invitation (why should people attend)?*
- *Whom should it be sent to (target the invitation at the target group)?*
- *What should it contain (facts and practical information)?*
- *When should it be sent out?*

Choose a Method for the Workshop

Now you can pick the method that best supports the purpose of the workshop, so if you haven't already acquainted yourselves with the three methods (see pages 18-28) and found out together what suits your workshop, now is the time to do so. Some methods are suited for examining burning questions, where others are more action oriented.

If you have chosen World Café, you must, among other things, spend a good deal of time on finding the good questions and inspiring speakers.

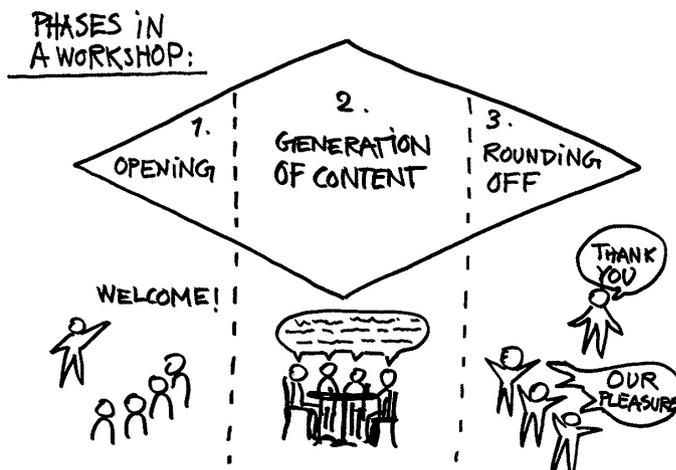
If you have chosen the Appreciative Inquiry 4D-model, you must among other things prepare an appreciative

interview questionnaire and decide how the participants should express their visions and dreams (should they draw or use Lego to give shape to their visions and dreams or mainly speak to each other?).

If you have chosen Village Square, you must among other things practise the 4 principles and the law.

Phases of the Workshop

To create a workshop design, you must incorporate the following three phases: Opening, Generation of Content, and Rounding off.



1: Opening

- One of the hosts will address a few words of welcome to the participants and outline what is about to happen during the workshop.
- An inspirational speaker will attend (if it makes sense).
- Each participant will have a chance to say something that really lets them enter the context. This is done best by carrying out a "check-in" procedure. Here, the host will ask a question, and then everyone will answer in turn. No one is allowed to interrupt the person speaking. (This check-in is obviously only possible, if the number of participants allows it).

Example of an opening question:

What makes you enthused enough to participate here today?

2: Generation of Content

This is where you use either World Café, Village Square or the Appreciative Inquiry 4D-model.

- Present the method and etiquette, the principles or laws that apply to the method which you will use.
- Start conversations about the topic, which the purpose of the workshop is concerned with.

3: Rounding off

- All participants will be allowed to round off. This is done best by making a “check-out” procedure. Here, as in the check-in procedure, the host asks a question, which everyone answers in turn and as with the check-in procedure no one is allowed to interrupt the person speaking.
- You should thank the participants for their contributions and explain what will happen to the input, you have gained from the workshop. If you could use even more committed people to carry out the project, you may ask the participants if any of them wish to be part of further developments.

Examples of questions for rounding off:

What have you learned from this?

What was the best experience of the day?

What have you gained from the day?

What was it like to partake today?

Make a Manuscript

When you have chosen the method and design for the Opening phase, the Generation of Content phase and the Rounding off phase, you must make the final manuscript. It is a table-like document, in which you write what is going to happen, the purpose of it, when, who and which materials you need. It may also be a good idea to “draw” the manuscript. It makes it easier to share with each other and can also make it more “lively”.

Organisation and Logistics

Quite a few practical things must be handled in the Design phase:

- **Communication:** Invitations must be sent out early. It could also be posted on the Internet, advertised in the daily press and so on.
- **Refreshments:** Order/buy beverages, snacks and, if necessary, food.
- **Location:** Book a room for the workshop and make sure there are enough tables and chairs available.
- **Equipment:** Projector, whiteboard, flipover and a music centre if needed.
- **Art and music:** Book artists and musicians if it makes sense in the context to include them.

A Good Tip

Frustrations often arise internally in the team during the Design phase. This is quite normal, when you start encircling and making the assignment more specific. Knowing that every team goes through frustrating moments in this phase may make it a little easier on you.

5: Hold the Workshop

(Manifestation phase)

The actual holding of the workshop can be split up into three parts: Before, during and after the workshop. Before you get to the big day, it is important that you have distributed the roles of the day so some people are responsible for the practical things and others can take on the role of hosts.

Before the Workshop: Preparation

Arrive 2-3 hours before the workshop starts to prepare the room and make it inviting for when the participants turn up.

- Arrange tables and chairs.
- Place candles, flowers, and, if necessary, markers and paper on the tables.
- Make coffee, tea and refreshments so it is ready

- for when the participants show up
- Make sure the technical instruments work (microphone, projector, music centre and so on) and that there is a whiteboard and a flipchart in case they are needed.
- This is also last chance for the hosts to go through the manuscript and prepare for their part
- Draw or write down the most important principles, procedures etc. on flipcharts.

During the Workshop

So far, the team has been working with internal issues. When the workshop starts, the team is transformed to a group of hosts. If you are a large team, it is a good idea to choose one or two persons to be hosts.

The manuscript, which you have made during the Design phase, will be your guide throughout the workshop. Most often, it has been split up into an Opening phase, a Generation of Content phase (often containing more rounds) and a Rounding off phase. In order to be good hosts, it is very important, like it is when you invite people to your home, to be fully present during all phases.

Role of the Host in General

The good host is characterised by making careful preparations for the workshop and creating a setting for people to feel welcome and motivated to contribute. This is partly done by facilitating the process itself.

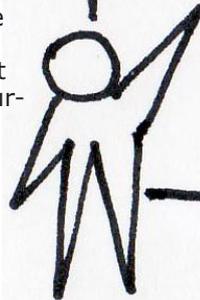
To facilitate means to “make easier” or even to simplify. It must be easy, simple and fascinating for people to contribute. They must be able to see how their contributions become part of the whole, and the host must be able to act if unexpected situations occur during the workshop.

After the Workshop

- Be open to people contributing with something extra that they either did not get a chance to say during the workshop or only thought of afterwards
- Clean up
- Gather all results from the workshop
- Share with each other internally what it has been like for you to hold the workshop and, if possible, celebrate!

Five Good Ways to Facilitate

- Always make sure to give participants a warm reception at the entrance, letting them know that they are welcome.
- Speak and express yourself in a clear manner. Be sincere – and let it shine through that you are grateful for the participants’ presence and contributions and that you do not take them for granted.
- Consider what you can bring into the process besides a nice, comfortable room and an inspiring workshop design.
- Be present at the workshop. You are responsible for the room - it is rude to write e-mails or speak loudly on your mobile phone about things that do not concern the workshop.
- Pay attention to what goes on in the room and be prepared to change the wording of a scheduled question or assignment if it turns out to be too difficult or if people have already answered the question. Incidents like that represent good and direct feedback, so be ready to act on it.



6: Review the Results: From Workshop to User-Driven Innovation

The results from the workshop (also called the harvest) help you with the future developments of the challenge in question. User-driven innovation is formed when the diversity of ideas and new perspectives that the participants of the workshop contributed with are used. Set aside 3-4 hours to review the harvest or more if it is an extensive harvest.

The first step is to find the overall patterns in the harvest – all the things that recur. Sort, group and find the best way of handling it based on the harvest. If people have written down ideas and thoughts, a Word document can be a good way to gather and group the information. If the harvest consists of drawings, using post-it notes may be a great way to gather the essences. You need to figure out which solution is better and easier for you.

When you have grouped and sorted the harvest, it is a good idea to name the different groups so that you end up with some general topics that have been important to the participants.

These general topics, covering a range of ideas and thoughts, can now be pursued in several ways:

- If the harvest contains the answers to the challenge/need, you can proceed directly to action and carry out the work that must be done.
- If the harvest does not contain the answers, or if it poses new, deeper questions, this indicates that you need more. If necessary, you can create a new in-depth workshop that specifies/explores the challenge/need even more.

7: Evaluate Focusing on the Future

(Evolution phase)

Conduct an evaluation with sights set on new tasks and on how to raise the work to an even higher level next time (hence the name Evolution). This evaluation will take approximately two-three hours. For instance, you can look at the individual phases based on the following questions.

Suggestions for evaluation questions in the group:

- *What can be preserved?*
- *What can be further developed?*
- *The questions "Is there anything that we should no longer do when we carry out workshops?" and "Is there anything that we should begin to do?" can be added, if it makes sense.*
- *How can we improve our work and raise it to a higher level?*

ER PÅ DET VÆSENTLIGE
OG MED DINE TANKER
TAL MED DIT  SÅVEL
SOM DIN HJERNE
LVT FOR AT FORSTÅ

CLOSING

The cooperation with the library has shown that users are eager to engage themselves more actively through workshops and Village Squares.

In some respects, it has been a revelation for the Main Library that citizens want to spend time on contributing to the development of the library and that involving them actually produces surprising insights and understandings.

It has been a success for us, because the employees at the Main Library have been willing to move into unknown territory with us and the users. Without their openness and cooperativeness, we would never have succeeded.

We hope that you, after reading this guide, feel equipped to take the first step to unfold the potential of your library in co-creation with employees and citizens. We also hope that you will experience how meaningful and giving it is to involve users more and partake in an equal dialogue.

First Step

It has to be said that there are people with 20 years of experience with these tools who are still learning. They were also beginners once and the first step is simply to begin the work.

If you and your team need a helping hand with the first step, we recommend that you contact the competent employees of the project Unleash the Library Users through Jannik Mulvad at jmu@aarhus.dk

A World to Explore

With this guide, we have given an insight into the three methods of World Café, Appreciative Inquiry and Village Square. Many people across the world use these methods. If you want to go exploring, there is a whole world to discover. International communities exist which are based on World Café, Open Space Technology and Appreciative Inquiry, and these are constantly growing.

If you want to be part of a community, a good place to start is to participate in an Art of Hosting course.

You can find more information about these communities in the links section.

We wish you all the best with your developmental work.

... May it bring us all the future we deserve.



LINKS

The Library's Voice, blog:
Website with results, photos etc.
www.biblioteketsstemme.blogspot.com

Strong Bright Hearts, website:
www.strongbrighthearts.com/

Unleash the Library Users!, blog:
www.aakb.dk/sw111384.asp

Video from Village Square:
www.youtube.com/transformationlab

Other links that have inspired us along in the process:

The World Café online
www.theworldcafe.com

Appreciative Inquiry Commons
<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>

Open Space World
www.openspaceworld.org

Art of Hosting
www.artofhosting.org

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The World Café
Juanita Brown & David Isaacs, 2005

Appreciative Inquiry – A Positive Revolution in Change
D. L. Cooperrider & D. Whitney, 2005

The Encyclopedia of Positive Questions
Cooperrider, Whitney, Kaplin, Trosten-Bloom, 2001

Open Space Technology: A User's Guide
Harrison Owen, 1997

Special thanks to:
Jakob Rauff Baungaard for his assistance with designing the logo, and Stine Arensbach for her assistance with graphic facilitation as well as all of the other fiery souls that have contributed with their time and participation.

