Champlain College

Week 5: Assignment: Appreciative Interviews

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The appreciative interview allowed me to engage with a classmate I would normally only talk to through our discussion forum. The goal is to better understand others, reflect on myself, and engage in meaningful dialog. This format allowed me the chance to become an interviewee and an interviewer. Preparing for this interview, we outlined more needed questions; it was a joy to talk to Jeremy. We found that using Champlain’s Google Meetings was the easiest way to track and talk to one another.

It was funny to me that while I was talking notes, Jeremy had to tell me to mute my mic as the keyboard was too loud. It is safe to say I don’t have many meetings from my home computer with its loud keyboard. We had a chance to get to know one another and the career areas we are at and intend to grow. I took away inspiration from talking with Jeremy as his experiences were incredible when accounting for the saved lives his product brought to firefighters.

Surprisingly, to me, the interview felt more like a conversation and flowed fairly easily. While my outline was a bit different from Jeremy's as I took some of the subsections out of my question sheet, I was able to track down where I needed to be without too much of a hassle. Jeremy, on the other hand, had everything together, and we easily switched back and forth from the position of interview. One takeaway was that it is hard to capture someone's life in a limited number of words. While making notes, it was clear we were quickly filling up our answer sheets/notes.

I didn’t have experience in interviews, so as we started, we read the question, later, if it was on the sheet, we read the question to ourselves. It is a learning curve, I think, to ask the right questions. “Generating new thinking requires asking more than simple open questions. It requires that the question is not laden with assumptions about the situation” (Bushe, 2015, p. 281). While we were talking, it inspired me to work harder to improve myself. As Jeremy discussed with me, it took time for one of his products to take off. It was the understanding of this product that improved its reception. In our class, we are learning to ask questions that can facilitate questions that will inspire and improve reception.

While the conversation was easy, I do not know if I had strong emotions other than the self-reflection type that urges you to improve yourself. Also, I admire someone who helps others. As software engineering is not held to one language or framework, it is hard to choose and easy to push yourself between many projects. While talking to Jeremy, I can see from his and my coworkers where we could all improve. These are the choices we make, whether to be happy with where we are in our roles and life or to strive for self-improvement.

I learned to appreciate what you have but to know and fight for better. Jeremy was placed in a leadership role and is excelling in his diligence to himself and his work ethic. The final thought that I took away from Jeremy was to ensure others learn around you. Do not push everything onto yourself or hold onto knowledge. One of your roles should be to help others expand and improve. You can provide what they could be missing if they are willing to learn.

References

Bushe, R. B., & Marshak, R. J. (2015). Introduction to the Dialogic Organization Development Mindset. In Bushe, G. R., & Marshak, R. J. (Eds.), Dialogic Organization Development: The Theory and Practice of Transformational Change. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.