Schlegel's Results Speak to Power of Harnessing AI Approach

Axiom News writer witness to LTC provider's changing landscape

Axiom News team member Kristian Partington says the positive results he's seeing long-term care provider Schlegel Villages achieve by embracing the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach to organizational development is a testament to its power.

One of the most noteworthy results Partington says he's seen through his engagement with Schlegel Villages is the increased satisfaction level amongst stakeholders — and how this increased satisfaction can help change the landscape long-term care delivery in the process.

In September 2009, Schlegel Villages residents, family members and staff were asked to rate their homes — today called "villages" — on a scale from one to 10, in nine areas of resident-centred care.

Upon the completion of this process, called the World Café survey, the results showed an average score of 4.7.

In autumn 2010, Schlegel Villages team members attended an AI summit that introduced people to the process of enhancing organizational development by mining for people's key strengths and asking meaningful, strength-based questions. Team members were encouraged to bring AI processes back to their homes.

When scores from a second exercise were tallied 20 months later, the average score was 6.7 — a full two points closer to the ideal social model of living.

By interviewing Schlegel Villages residents and team members, Partington says he has seen first-hand the difference AI is making.

"I've spoken with team members and residents who feel a sense of empowerment and excitement to be leading a culture change in the long-term care sector," he says.

"One resident simply told me how good it felt to know that people actually cared about her opinions."

Like Schlegel Villages, Axiom News uses the AI approach as part of its organizational culture. When interviewing stakeholders, Axiom News team members use the AI process.

Partington says the work Axiom News is doing with AI can be directly connected to the work Schlegel Villages is doing with the approach.

"We need to … always remember that if we ask solid, powerful questions that prompt people to pay homage to their strength and envision how that strength can be leveraged, then we can help other people move towards being the best representation of themselves possible," he says.

"As a writer, that's a cool position to be in, and we need to honour that with each story we write."

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