

CHESAPEAKE GENERAL HOSPITAL

May 23, 2006

First Annual Leadership Effectiveness Institute Conference

As director of education at a 310 bed, community hospital, I was on the planning committee for our very first annual leadership conference. I was also a member of the 3-person sub-committee that was charged with choosing “national” speakers to present keynote addresses and facilitate break out sessions. We researched extensively to find just the right people to inspire, motivate and entertain our 140 hospital leaders. I wish I could take credit for finding Steve Gilliland. I’m not even sure how we DID find him! Perhaps it was divine intervention but we certainly were fortunate to have landed at his website. He looked good on paper, we liked the video clips on the internet and his office even sent us a VHS preview so that we could sample his style and get a taste of his superb wit and delivery style!

Steve opened our conference with the first keynote address—“ENJOY THE RIDE”—and DID WE EVER!!! We were laughing and crying, nodding in agreement and sometimes shaking our heads in complete empathy! Although he doesn’t specialize in hospital issues or healthcare organizations, he pulled in just the right anecdotes about his recent hospital stay and hit us right where we LIVE. He picked up on our CEO’s opening remarks and it almost sounded as if they’d rehearsed the handoff, although they had barely been introduced before the program began. I must tell you that I was SO PROUD to have been a part of the group that brought him in. I didn’t deserve the credit but his light shone on all of us that day. His breakout session “Leading with Heart” was equally enjoyable but had a little more “instructional” quality—fun and informative. Wow! What a combination!

The evaluation remarks mirrored my own feelings about Steve’s presentations.

“Steve related Leadership skills to everyday life.”

“Gilliland is a wonderful/inspirational speaker.”

“Mr. Gilliland was great (inspirational) giving me more insight into working with staff.”

“I have wanted inspiration/heart and found it in today’s program.”

“This was a wonderful, informative, and encouraging, yet reality-based workshop.”

“Steve was inspiring on learning to lead and importance of making changes.”

“I learned_ “how to celebrate on a daily basis and how to stay focused. The breakout session with Steve (was the part I liked best).”

“Every minute was meaningful, useful, entertaining, and clear.”

I would like to paraphrase a comment by a newly promoted nursing Unit Director. She said that she had just had a weekend that made her want to just give up and Steve’s presentation gave her new hope and enthusiasm. I join her in saying
THANKS, STEVE!!!