

Gold Coast & Region Red Cross Conference

Professor Emeritus David Stevens
Unicorns & Rainbows Institute

Currumbin RSL Club

Thursday July 6th 2006
Final Draft

Introduction

Professor Emeritus David Stevens is America's leading exponent on Happiness and Well Being.

His organisation, "The Unicorns and Rainbows Institute" constantly measures and analyses the overall happiness levels in the USA and consults and reports to all branches of government and the community in general with suggestions and recommendations on how to improve the quality of life for the average American citizen.

He is in Australia so begin the process of expanding his organisation to include the Asia Pacific rim and we are fortunate that he has agreed to talk to us about Personal Lifestyle, Happiness and Well Being.

Please welcome Professor David Stevens.

The powerpoint file can be found [here](#)

[SLIDE] Firstly I want to thank y'all for having me at your conference here in Australia. This is the first time I have been down under and I am really excited to be here so I am going to act like a local and say geeday.

Yes, I am finally down under. I just love that term, down under. But I have to say that when I am back home in California I don't feel like I am up over. So since I am down under I am going to make the most of it by [SLIDE] meeting the crocodile hunter, throwing a shrimp on the barbie and drinking one of your wonderful fosters beers.

As Peter said in the introduction I am [SLIDE] Professor Emeritus David Stevens, founder, director, CEO, President and head honcho of the Unicorns and Rainbows Insitute which is located in California which as you probably know is on the West Coast of the United States of America.

The institute was born out about 15 years ago of my interest in well being and the general state of happiness of people around me. We get no government funding and most of the running costs come from my own pocket thanks to the success of my mother's business... [SLIDE] her name was Betty Crocker and she started the Betty Crocker Kitchens.

With my mother being a great cook I think that is where I learned how important it was **and** how easy it is to make people happy.

After asking whether or not I know how to cook, the first thing that people generally [SLIDE] ask is "What does 'Professor Emeritus' mean?".

Well, the word professor comes from the [SLIDE] Latin "one who claims publicly to be an expert".

I should also add that that the word expert comes from two words [SLIDE] Ex meaning has been and spurt being a drip under pressure.

The truth is that in most English-speaking countries, the term professor refers to a senior academic who holds a departmental chair, generally as head of the department. Of course in the United States we have dumbed it down and professor is simply a polite form of address for any teacher, or researcher, no matter what their rank.

So while I thank Peter for the lofty sounding title what it really means is that I have retired as a professor but I do still teach and I am an expert...in both senses of the term.

The second thing people ask is “What do you do at the Unicorn and Rainbow Institute?” That is an easy question to answer, we have fun. I am a firm believer in the saying [SLIDE] “You don’t stop playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing”.

[SLIDE] I want to tell you about the Unicorns and Rainbow Institute but since I have introduced myself but now I want you to get to know each other with a simple exercise. On the count of three...I assume that is that same here down under as it is in the States...on the count of three I want you all to turn to your right and say hello to that person and that person only. One...Two...Three.

OK, it’s a silly exercise but notice how the room has lightened up, people start smiling, are more relaxed and is a bit of fun in the middle of your day.

That is how we work at the Unicorn and Rainbow Institute, from a basis of what I call [SLIDE] serious fun. There is serious work to do but you can have fun doing it.

I decided that if a workplace is going to be exciting you have to start with the building.

[SLIDE] I don’t know where most of you work but I am almost certain that it looks something like one of these aaarrggghhh!

[SLIDE] Does this just inspire you to be creative, and do your job in a vibrant atmosphere? I don’t think so.

On the other hand with some clever design you could work in a building like this [SLIDE] or [SLIDE]. This is the Longaberger Office building in Ohio. Wouldn't you love to coming to work if this was where you were headed every morning?

Or what about the Unicorn and Rainbow Institute. [SLIDE] not only [SLIDE] is it fun to look [SLIDE] at, it is a also fun place to work. Our latest [SLIDE] addition is the animated Pied Piper clock this is actually life size as you can see by the workman putting the finishing touches. Such a simple thing will make so many people happy. [SLIDE]

I believe that serious buildings encourage [SLIDE] serious people. [SLIDE] What I call black hole serious. I believe there are too many of those people in the world and they are making too many of the decisions that affect our happiness. Sure there are serious decisions to be made about serious things but I know it can be done with a smile and a bit of lightness and a heart that does not exclude anyone based on a moral judgment.

[SLIDE] We all know that statistics never lie and the research we have done has determined conclusively that as happiness increases so does efficiency, and I am not only talking about in the workplace, I am talking about your lives people.

Of course there is a theoretical limit to happiness but as it tapers off we note that efficiency remains on the rise.

[SLIDE] Ok, this is all well and good, but what does it have to do with the Red Cross?

As you would all know, Red Cross [SLIDE] is the name of the organization that does great work. But that is only the name in what we call the Western World. In many parts of the world the organization is known as the [SLIDE] Red Crescent.

Although they are two parts of a whole, there is a lot of scare mongering about threats from the East these days and it is affecting the happiness level of the organization. That is where we come in. [SLIDE] We spent months interviewing, surveying and consulting within International Red Cross so that we could come up with this chart that shows the happiness levels of workers including volunteers. As you can see we have plotted it against expectations and

have come up with this dynamic representation of the issue. It can't be any more clear than that and the next step in the process is obvious..

[SLIDE] So we are working on a radical, but fun, plan with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent to unite the organizations as a symbol of the way the world can work together.

Obviously keeping either name would not be acceptable as it would appear as though one part is taking over the other part which would lead to obvious **[SLIDE]** unhappiness.

So we have a proposal for a new name that we are taking to conferences around the world and it is your turn to have your say today.

We propose combining the names to come up with a new name to represent the organization globally.

[SLIDE] If you take the Red Cross and the Red Crescent and combine them, what do you come up with?

[SLIDE] The Red Croissant. The new symbol for your organization.

Brilliant isn't it? So, let's take a vote. All those in favour? All those against?

Typical. I have had a rotten day, for a start I have had to put on this fake American accent.