



## CASE STUDY

# Reaching Breakthrough Results With Whole Brain Leadership

## AT A GLANCE

### OPPORTUNITY

- communication was a key opportunity area that leaders could improve upon with the right knowledge and skills

### BENEFITS

- 78% of the leaders responding indicated that they would be able to use the information and skills they learned in the program back on the job
- participants said they gained an enhanced understanding of their own and others' preferred thinking styles, which resulted in improved communication, working relationships and creativity within their teams

With 10,000 employees, Christiana Care is one of the **largest not-for-profit teaching health systems** in the country. While already ranked among the elite of America's hospitals, landing on such lists as **U.S. News and World Report's "America's Best Hospitals"** and **Thomson Reuters "100 Top Hospitals,"** the institution recently embarked on a journey of **"transformational change"** to reach new levels of clinical and workplace excellence.

### OPPORTUNITY

Through assessments of the existing leadership development program offerings and review of patient satisfaction surveys, the System Learning Department (SLD) was able to identify several interrelated gaps in the formalized development and growth of its leaders.

Patient satisfaction surveys revealed that **communication was a key opportunity area leaders could improve upon with the right knowledge and skills.** Effective communication is vital not just in direct interactions with patients, but in ensuring team members interact with each other in the most productive

way to reach better decisions and better outcomes.

However, the current development offerings required attention in order to equip leaders with the necessary background and competencies they would need to address this critical issue.

Research has shown that individuals can enhance their communication, productivity, problem-solving, creativity and other interpersonal development by understanding their own and others' thinking preferences.



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*“I would start sessions by saying ‘I know you’re going to wonder why I’m talking about the brain,’ but as soon as they see their HBDI® data, they start to see the value. They appreciate the insights it gives them into relationships and the practical ways the Whole Brain® model helps them communicate more effectively.”*

- VP OF SYSTEM LEARNING

## SOLUTION

The SLD moved forward with implementing the HBDI® Whole Brain® model solution throughout the ranks of the organization’s leaders, using Herrmann’s four-stage model of transformation as a planning tool.

### STAGE 1

The [HBDI assessment](#) and one-hour overview was delivered to 601 managers and supervisors, comprising all leaders who had not participated in the Leadership Meeting.

### STAGE 2

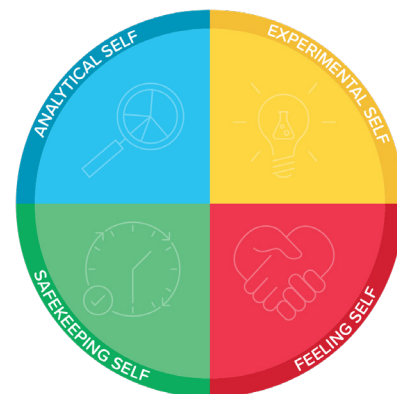
SLD team members consulted with department leaders to create customized programs aimed at meeting the individual learning needs of each participating department. From these discussions, the team developed educational sessions drawing on [Whole Brain® Thinking](#) concepts to enhance team engagement, communication, effectiveness and creativity throughout the institution.

### STAGE 3

A Creativity and Innovation Forum was held to explore how Whole Brain® Thinking could be used to promote system-wide creativity and innovation. In addition, an educational program aimed at strengthening communication and relationships between “blue/green” (representative of many physician profiles) and “red/yellow” (representative of many nurse profiles) thinkers was conducted.

### STAGE 4

To ensure the ongoing application of the Whole Brain® model as a tool for transformational change, the institution found a number ways to embed the language and approach of Whole Brain® Thinking into the culture.



## RESULTS

Based on the results of a customer satisfaction survey, **78% of the leaders responding indicated that they would be able to use the information and skills they learned in the program back on the job.** In overall feedback about the program, **participants say they have gained an enhanced understanding of their own and others’ preferred thinking styles, which has resulted in improved communication, working relationships and creativity within their teams.**

With improvements in patient satisfaction levels a constant priority, **the institution is finding that Whole Brain® Thinking provides the necessary framework to help people communicate more effectively to better meet the needs of patients.** According to the Director of Respiratory Care, “Whole Brain Thinking® has helped us improve communication because now we understand how each other needs to receive information. This knowledge helps us to rearrange how we communicate to be more effective.”



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