



July 20, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great pleasure to provide a letter of recommendation for Mary Virtue of Cornerstone Consulting. Over the past five years, Mary has consulted for Eurasia Foundation on strategic planning and improving organizational learning practices at a critical strategic juncture in the organization's development. Mary and I have worked particularly closely over the past four years as I launched the Foundation's campaign to create indigenous 'legacy' institutions in the South Caucasus.

Mary has been an invaluable partner to me in strategic planning, in developing and maintaining positive staff dynamics during a difficult period of organizational transition, and in building effective communications and learning systems in South Caucasus offices of Eurasia Foundation. She has designed and co-led three annual staff retreats, which helped me transform five disparate program units (spread across three countries in a conflict zone) from a disaggregated set of branch-offices into a strongly motivated international team pursuing a clear shared vision and concrete shared goals.

Mary became deeply familiar with the systems and practices of Eurasia Foundation, which made all her interventions extremely effective, and she always brought to her work a deep desire to enable smooth change and improve the workings of a complex organizational system. With her diplomacy, intuitive abilities and professionalism, she won the respect of literally all of my 80+ staff members in the process. She is an extraordinary meeting facilitator, and brings a sense of clarity, enthusiasm and renewed purpose to all participants in events she manages. Her skills include outstanding abilities as an executive coach, as well.

One of Mary's greatest skills is an innate diplomacy, and an ability to understand and work effectively in a variety of cultural contexts. She is extremely sensitive to (and skilled at) adapting her management and planning assistance to the needs of her clients; even in a multi-national and multi-cultural context like the South Caucasus, she easily engaged and incorporated all participants and made their perspectives more easily heard, valued, and respected.

A consummate professional, Mary has been a delight to work with. I would highly recommend her to any organization in search of strategic planning, marketing, organizational change and learning, performance management or other institutional development needs.

Sincerely yours,

Andrea Dee Harris
South Caucasus Regional Vice President
Eurasia Foundation