

Case study.

Building human-centred design capability with Red Cross.

Desired outcomes

- Build capability
- Employee experience
- Transformation

Tools used

- Designing for People book: People really valued its usefulness in adopting new tools in the workplace.
- Human-centred mindsets.

“...we are a very traditional, slow moving organisation and the transitions and shifts we have seen over the past 12-18 month relationship with Huddle have really shifted ways of working for some teams and paved the way for others to explore.”

—Sandy Sheridan,
Red Cross Culture & Leadership.

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Huddle was engaged to transition and equip Red Cross with a human-centred approach to working; across both leadership and project teams.

Brief/Challenge

As Red Cross introduced their teams to human-centred design, lean and agile ways of working they recognised the magnitude of the culture shift and the need to build capability. As part of this, they selected partners to help the capability uplift across teams. It was important for these partners to be aligned to Red Cross values and purpose.

The challenge—to create a tailored Australia-wide program that transformed Red Cross ways of working from what was described as a traditional, slow-moving organisation, into an organisation comprised of teams that took an agile, human-centred approach in their projects and ways of working.

Our approach

We took a human-centred approach to developing the programs with the Red Cross team. We sought to understand what Red Cross was trying to achieve from building human-centred design capability, and how these might fit into and complement other programs running in parallel with ours.

By first understanding Red Cross' context, the different variables and elements at play in their day-to-day work, and the language they currently use as well as what they aspire to, we were able to develop tailored programs that aimed to support their teams to manifest mindsets supportive of human-centred design.

As part of immersion and research we ran a session with the CEO and Executive Leadership Team, which uncovered what it means to be a mature human-centred designer in their context.

What emerged from immersion and development were two programs, ready to pilot and iterate before delivering these to Red Cross teams across Australia.

We then ran programs across every Australian State and Territory. These programs were Designing for People and Human-centred Leadership.

Outcome

Red Cross people saw connections between their existing experience in community work and the human-centred design approach.

Most notably, the team in Darwin experienced profound shifts. The confidence of the team to be creative in their approach to problem solving was acknowledged as a huge shift. Doing their own human-centred research led to a big “aha” moment.

We also uncovered mindsets that align with the fixed growth mindset from [Carol Dweck](#). Recognising this, and becoming aware of new ways of looking at challenges and problems helped people to believe they can learn and have a sense of achievement from experimenting and learning rather than a sense of failure.

The work continues with a new round of sessions with the leadership group to jointly develop and embody a mindset shift which will be critical to support this transformation.

