

Uniting Care Australia



THE CHALLENGE

With its twin aims of social inclusivity and standing for justice, Uniting Care Australia is the services arm of the Uniting Church.

It caters for clients ranging from birth to old age and operates in a dynamic social services environment that is undergoing significant external changes.

The organisation's biggest business disruptions have been wrought by Australia's recently introduced National Disability Insurance Scheme.

This has driven a move to consumer-directed care and sharply increased competition between service providers.

This more market-based environment has fundamentally changed the way the organisation works.

Having operated as a not-for-profit charitable organisation for many decades, it now finds itself concerned with new KPIs: market share, revenue, profits and share-of-wallet.

Yet it still wants to balance these new expectations with its continuing core value of being a purpose-led organisation.

THE APPROACH

Uniting's Director, Customer, People and Systems, Jill Reich, was initially shocked by her Leadership Circle Profile™ results.

Soon she realised the team insights the profile delivered gave her the motivation to re-evaluate her internal, reactive outlook and harsh self-assessment.

"The sleepless nights, the negative thoughts, the rumination ... I thought that just impacted me. When I realised the impact on my team and its performance, I was motivated to change my behaviour."

Going through the process, Jill says, engendered a lot more compassion for herself and for those around her.

Having been through several 360 feedback programs previously, Jill found distinct differences in the Leadership Circle Profile™ process and its outcomes. She decided the whole team would benefit from being accredited.

"Over three days we easily went very deep, in a very safe environment, because the framework links to mindsets and attitudes, what's sitting underneath, thought patterns and behaviours."

"It took away the feeling something's wrong with you, that you're 'broken'. Instead, you had the opportunity to explore human foibles and connect in the humanity that unites us all."

THE IMPACT

Jill and the Uniting team found that, by rolling out the Leadership Circle Profile™, previous operational silos have been broken down within the organisation.

“Historically, we had an organisation that focused on young people and children and another focusing on ageing clients.

“You can imagine the cultures and ways of working in those two organisations were quite different. We’ve now brought that together into one Uniting.

“The Leadership Circle Profile™ has really given us a common language and a way of talking and understanding ourselves, to help people let go of the cultures that they had previously and to, instead, work together to create a one Uniting culture.”

Today the Uniting team has constructive, robust conversations about issues without damaging relationships or mutual respect.

“We have started to tackle some of the sacred cows and the really difficult issues that we needed to address.”

Jill says the organisation’s ability to deliver results for its clients has also improved, with a sharp improvement noted in its attrition rates.

This was most notable, Jill says, in one part of the Uniting business where it had been tracking well over the standard industry benchmark.

“After going through the Leadership Circle Profile™ exercise, that part of Uniting is now tracking more like the industry standard.”