

Learning Uncut Episode 89
Contactless Induction with Visual Microlearning – Amanda
Appleby and David Broadhurst
Hosted by Michelle Ockers



Michelle Ockers:

We have two guests for this episode. The first is Amanda Appleby, Who was the group safety manager at city wide citywide are a maintenance services organisation who predominantly so the construction and local government sectors in Victoria, Australia. She's joined by David Broadhurst the CEO of code safe, who some listeners may remember as a guest in Episode 49 in March 2020 where we talked about harnessing tacit knowledge to make work safer.

Today's topic is a little bit different. We explore what happened when city wide won a government contract to provide sanitization and cleaning services, early in the COVID era for a range of public spaces amenities and buildings to execute their contract, they needed to onboard between 1500 and 3,000 staff in a very short space of time, and all of their induction was face to face. They had piloted the use of the Codesafe platform QIN and visual micro learning in another part of the business for a different purpose.

They were able to very quickly, engage with Codesafe to develop a visual mobile delivered induction programme which also covered COVID safety requirements within the space of one week. It's an interesting conversation, both because of the speed at which they're able to deliver an effective solution that met their needs, and the way that the use of this particular platform, a mobile enabled platform has evolved to the point where Amanda now talks about it as being like having a safety officer in the pocket of every individual member of their workforce. Enjoy today's episode.

Michelle Ockers:

Welcome to Learning Uncut. Amanda, it's nice to have you here.

Amanda Appleby:

Great to join you, Michelle.

Michelle Ockers:

And David, thanks for returning to share a little twist on some of the work we've previously explored in Learning Uncut.

David Broadhurst:

Yeah, thanks Michelle. It's a pleasure to be here.

Michelle Ockers:

So Amanda, let's talk about Citywide. Can you tell us a little bit about who Citywide is and what you do?

Amanda Appleby:

So Citywide, we are a maintenance organization I guess is our best description at the moment. We are an organization that is growing and changing. But primarily we offer maintenance and low-level construction work to industry, a lot of local government contracts, so we will look after anything from open space to building infrastructure, trees. We do waste management and collection, but we are expanding into the utilities sector, at the moment,

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having acquired a couple of small electrical concerns late last year and early this year.

Michelle Ockers:

Which areas of Australia do you operate in?

Amanda Appleby:

On the east coast of Australia, primarily. Most of our business operates in Victoria at the moment, probably 90% of our work is in Victoria, and we've got offices and depots in New South Wales, Canberra and Queensland.

Michelle Ockers:

We're going to talk today about a challenge you faced during the COVID era. So can you set the scene for us in terms of when our story starts and what the challenge was that you needed to address.

Amanda Appleby:

Sure can. So mid last year, just as COVID hit, the decision was taken to actually rewrite our induction as a business and the old system was shut down. About two weeks later, Working For Victoria came along and we were asked to put on about 3000 workers at a rapid pace. So, new workforce coming on, old induction program had been shut down thinking we could manage it face-to-face for the odd employees that would be in place as we developed a new one, but that didn't happen. I was safe, we had 3000 workers we needed to put on in a hurry. So we needed to come up with a quick solution for managing induction. Of the 3000 workers we put on, 1500 were labour hire. So again, we had to be able to reach out to our labour hire organizations and have people inducted before they hit the ground running.

So there was also a big need obviously to address the COVID-specific requirements as part of that induction. So we looked at what we had in place. Could we pull the old induction back and use it? It wasn't particularly user-friendly to send out to all of these people. So we were working with Codesafe on some micro learning stuff at the time, looked at the platform and thought we could use this to our advantage, and then met with the guys at Codesafe to sort of start collaborating on what we could do to get a rapid solution out there.

Michelle Ockers:

So that's 3000 workers in a hurry, so we're inducting 3000 people. Bringing 3000 people into your business in a short period of time is a big number for any business. How many workers did you have in the business at the time?

Amanda Appleby:

So we moved between sort of 900 and 1200 workers at that point in time. We presently sit with about 1200.

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Michelle Ockers:

So in terms of kind of the employment relationship with the workers, is there a lot of fluidity with that? Is it a contract staff or are they employees, how does that model work?

Amanda Appleby:

Predominantly employees. We do have a lot of labour hire support. So when we need to pick up our services in periods, we use a lot of labour hire, predominantly Citywide-employed workers.

Michelle Ockers:

So just for anyone who's not familiar with the term labour hire, do you want to just explain what that means? We have a lot of overseas guests as well. They may not use the same language there.

Amanda Appleby:

Okay. So labour hire; a employees is employed by another organization and their time is we buy their time for them to come in and supplement our services. So if we need extra truck drivers, mower operators, arborists, if we've got a peak of work, we can access that resource, but we don't engage them directly.

Michelle Ockers:

But obviously you're still responsible for the induction and onboarding.

Amanda Appleby:

Absolutely, absolutely. So they still need to come in and work under our systems and processes, so they need to know what to expect.

Michelle Ockers:

Can you tell us a little bit more about the people, the kind of workforce that you're talking about? Are there any interesting or distinguishing characteristics that you need to take into account when you plan something like induction and onboarding?

Amanda Appleby:

Absolutely. Our workforce, our age groups range from 16 years to 77 years. So certainly when we were looking at doing the induction program and an online one at that, we had to consider people's literacy skills when it came to computer literacy, being able to understand how to download apps, access apps, listen to apps, what to do if they glitched, what to do if their phone cut out or they lost charge. We don't have a huge issue with non-English speaking backgrounds at Citywide. So we're probably lucky, to a degree, there. But there are certainly a small pocket that we needed to support for the language side of things. Education level can be anywhere from they've left school at year 10 to they're tertiary qualified and postgraduate degrees. So real diverse range of people that we're working with.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. You mentioned you were working with Codesafe, David, this is where you come in. Can you tell us a little bit more about Codesafe? And of course, we can't assume that everyone who's listening to this episode has listened to your previous episode, David, which I'll put in the show notes, and people can go back and have a listen to another piece of work that Codesafe was involved in which we've featured on the podcast. But tell us who

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Codesafe is and what you do.

David Broadhurst:

Thanks, Michelle. We're probably classed as a solutions architect, specializing in mobile visual micro learning, and helping organizations get better engagement and know-how transfer across their work groups, using a concept which is now termed as learning in the flow of work. So rather than having a learning experience that's siloed from an operational process, what we're looking to do with Codesafe is provide a platform that's configurable enough that the person at any point in time can go back and get a visual refresher on what's the process I'm about to step into so that we can execute in a way that's a lot more beneficial to themselves and the organization that they work for.

Michelle Ockers:

So in the learning and development jargon, we're talking about performance support, basically, David?

David Broadhurst:

Absolutely. Yeah. Looking at breaking it down into, well, what's the task that the individual's been asked to perform and how can we provide resources that can help that individual make a really good choice around how they perform that task in a way that's following process and there's little chance of anybody getting injured or any sort of challenge around people not being able to follow a process that meets compliance.

Michelle Ockers:

Okay. And just for context, what Amanda mentioned, you're already doing some work with Citywide. What was the work you were already you doing?

David Broadhurst:

What we initially got engaged to do was look at some of the critical risks and the tasks that were deemed critical risks for the business. And we were engaged to start translating the written procedures in the short video. And so, that's what we initially started doing. We were going to go on that journey looking at, well, what are the high-level risks, and then maybe slowly work through their policies, procedures, and processes. And during that time, this situation arose which centres up on a slightly different direction.

Michelle Ockers:

Okay. Had you gotten to the point where you'd actually rolled out any solutions for Citywide, or not yet at that point?

David Broadhurst:

Yeah. We'd already rolled out some. I think it provided a really great sort of test kit, if you like, as far as how this type of in would be received by the workforce. I think, from what we did, even though it was only fairly early days in our relationship together, what we had put together as a little bit of a pilot project seemed to be well received by the people that we invited to let us know what they thought.

Michelle Ockers:

So Amanda, maybe if we can pick up the story with you. So you were approached by, was it a government agency, asking you to take on these 3000 workers? Or was this something...

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How did that come about?

Amanda Appleby:

Yeah. So it came through the Working For Victoria program, which was established by state government. And I believe that we would've gone and tendered that I couldn't tell you a hundred percent honestly, but I think, yep, we would've chased that bit of work. Certainly, Citywide is owned by the city of Melbourne, so there's a lot of links into government there and City of Melbourne was one of our big clients. A lot councils also were concerned obviously about people who were out and about, and what we knew about COVID at the time was, high-touch surfaces were a risk to other people. So government looked to put people out in the field, sanitizing and cleaning in particular, all the touch points in local parks, walkways, trams. We did the work on trams for a bit. But those high sort of profile areas. So we, being a maintenance organization, it fit with what we do, being able to put people on to do that, and we tendered for the work or expression of interest for the work.

Michelle Ockers:

So it sounds like the 3000 workers were required for sanitization and cleaning work for public spaces, public facilities, to keep people safe during COVID. Is that right, Amanda?

Amanda Appleby:

That's correct. That's what we did. So we started with a workforce of about 1500 workers doing that. And then in the second wave in Victoria, there was the door knocking program. If people who were in Victoria, I guess, particularly remember, the state government wanted people going around providing information, particularly in the southeast of Victoria where we've got a lot of non-English speaking people. So we did target non-English speaking workers that could communicate with families at home, encouraging people who get out and about, get tested for COVID and try and address the spread that was going on at the time there. So we were approached by Department of Human Services in that light, on the back of the sanitizing work we'd already started.

Michelle Ockers:

Okay. So you're sitting there and you've just won this work and you've got thousands of workers you need to induct in a short period of time. What's going through your head at that point?

Amanda Appleby:

I don't know if I can say that on this podcast. No, look, I think it was definitely, oh god, how do we get there? As I said, we'd shut down our old system not long before this all happened. I'm thinking yep, we've got time. We've got time to build it and we'll handle the one or two that we're employing monthly, as we go through. But we had started working on writing the induction, so we were lucky we were ahead in that way. We had the content, so it was a phone call to the guys at Codesafe to say, "How can we do this? We've got one week. What do we do to go forward and move to a direction where we've got something that we can put up, and as an induction scenario," I guess.

We did look at just doing PowerPoints and loading them onto the QIN app, which we could do. Not very engaging for workers, and I don't think we would've had the understanding that we wanted from workers out of that. So there was a lot of late-night conversations with Codesafe and lots of collaboration. What have we got? What have we built? What can we tap into already? What video have we got? Because obviously we wanted to put a lot of content in about our own stuff. We didn't want to put people that don't relate to our business

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up in lights. So what went through my head was, yeah, this is this interesting.

Michelle Ockers:

And we've got to move quick and you're fortunate you already had a partner that you knew to be part of the solution. So, walk us through, I guess, perhaps what... Let's work backwards at this point. Let's get a walkthrough of what the solution actually looked like, and then we can go back to how did that get put together? So I don't know which one of you is best positioned to do this. Maybe David, if you can talk to us about what the solution looked like, and then Amanda, you can talk to us about what was the user experience. What did it look and feel like to one of your people? So if we start, David, with you just giving as an overview of what the solution looked like.

David Broadhurst:

Our main focus was how do we cluster meaningful information together in a quick and easy access point on QIN?

Michelle Ockers:

Before you go on, what is QIN?

David Broadhurst:

Sorry. So, QIN's our digital communication platform that powers Codesafe solutions. Because we were sort of revolutionizing a little bit on how we could bring that learning in the flow of working to organizations, we had to build our own digital platform that wasn't just seen as a siloed learning experience. It was probably built more from an operational background and then reverse-engineered to bring the learning experience into the operational process, which is a little bit different to traditional ways of how we induct and onboard people. But I think what our key, and Amanda mentioned it there, where it's looking at, well, what resources do we already have available to us? What gaps can we identify and how can we help close the gaps with as much visual content as possible based on what we knew would work better to transfer know-how to those work groups that obviously were going into an environment where people were trying to stay away from the environment, whereas they were thrown right into the environment to make sure that everything was cleaned down appropriately. So for us, we talk about clustering of critical information. So I think it was, how do we cluster the right information for the people that they can quickly and easily access, not just through the induction process, but have access to ongoing, should they need a reminder of, well, this is how I use this chemical or this is how I go about this task, that's complimentary to the induction. So it's an ongoing mechanism, not a set and forget mechanism.

Michelle Ockers:

So it sounds like there's two streams, almost, of how someone, Amanda, might come into and utilize the material that's available. One is as part of an induction process. And we can talk about how structured is that. But you've got legal requirements, you've got obligations around health and safety, particularly during the COVID era, that obviously you need to know that people have gone through and completed things. You need to track what they've done. So there's sort of that one stream, but then in terms of the use case, there's also, as David points out, people being able to access materials when and as they need, do you want to talk to us about... Maybe take us through, from the perspective of someone just starting in one of these new roles, what was the induction and onboarding process for them

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and where did the visual microlearning fit in?

Amanda Appleby:

Certainly, and we have evolved the induction we built for the 3000 workers since. So I'll start with what we did there. We looked at what is Citywide, welcome to Citywide, what's the best way to break this down. Obviously our core induction at Citywide talks about cutting trees down and mowing grass and fixing roads, not relevant to this work group. So we broke it down and pulled out the legal requirements. So what are our obligations, what are your obligations to us, and created a module around that sort of high-level safety information that you need to give all employees when they start with an organization. We then looked at risks that apply. So we do have, as David mentioned earlier, we have critical risks at Citywide, and we started working on that sort of area for our learning when we started with the Codesafe team.

But some of those risks applied. So working alongside traffic, working with members of the public, being fit for work. But those sorts of critical risks certainly did apply to these new workers that came on board. So we built a second module on that. So we looked at the critical risk. Then the third module we built really started to look at the task that they were being engaged to do. So we built it as three modules. They had three learning modules for health and safety, and they also had a learning module for people and culture type things. So code of conduct, equal employment opportunity, those types of things as well. The induction was said to all of our workers that were engaged directly by us, through our recruitment team, what was shared with the labour hire organizations and they would forward the induction link to the workers that they brought in.

They did it before they even came to our site. We are talking in an environment which is a little bit hard. I think, looking back at the time you would line people up and get them all to stand there while you took their temperature, it was probably quite an intimidating time, actually. But I think the fact that the guys had been able to see and feel Citywide before we did line them up on the pavement and take temperatures before we'd even let them through the door to do the face-to-face part of the induction, gave them a level of comfort. So certainly I was there on site. My safety team were on site when we were doing the face-to-face component, and they had seen us. So they'd already seen us before they got to the workplace through the induction module and I think that that was a very positive experience for them.

So when they did come on site, we did do a face-to-face induction, as I said, and that was around getting payroll information, things that you had to do face-to-face, and we issued PPE and all of the things they needed to get going. They could show us, so they could bring up their app on their phone and they could actually just show you that they'd done one, two, three, four. So you could go, yep. You've done that. You've done that. So it was a really easy process, in that regard, or we could obviously download the induction records from the platform in the background as well and check people had done it before they turned up. I think that was probably the biggest thing is that they had a good feel for Citywide before they even walked through the door.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, that's really nice. Sometimes I talk to people who are in organizations where, because of enterprise bargaining agreements, they can't actually ask people to do any induction or anything that sets them up to start on the front foot at the business before they actually arrive. So it was fantastic that you're able to, particularly in a period of uncertainty, as you

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say, give people some sort of feel for the organization and help them to build some sort of connection. The actual experience of doing those induction modules is actually they do them on a mobile phone. Is that right, Amanda?

Amanda Appleby:

Correct. They did it on the mobile phone or a tablet, so a portable device. We did have some challenges which, again, we worked pretty closely with the guys at Codesafe to address, because some people didn't have a mobile phone, so they wanted to do it on a computer. So that was a bit of a learning... Because we were all set to be mobile and agile and we just needed to go back and work with Codesafe and get the appropriate links, send them through via email. So, easily overcome. And again, when we knew that happened, we could download their records from the back end of the file and make sure they were inducted to start. But predominantly, all of them were on mobile phones. There were very little issues.

What was good about this process is we had, as we mentioned, we'd started working with the guys at Codesafe to do some micro-learning. We're a bit challenged with our own organization about getting people to actually engage and use the app. The induction process that we put through for the Working For Victoria experience, certainly gave us a lot of highlights and just said, if you just tell people to do it, they will, amazingly enough. Whereas, when we had asked, they wouldn't. So subsequent to Working For Victoria, we stepped back. Still had our own induction that we were reviewing as an organization, which was very much focused around our critical risk framework and the critical risks at Citywide.

So once we had got through the Working For Vic project, we actually went back and we rebuilt the induction on the QIN app, which we rolled out. We made everybody in our organization go through re-induction again. They became engaged through the induction that we had built on QIN, and we use QIN for all sorts of things now. So we do micro-learning, we do induction, we do contractor management, we use it for messaging. We're consulting a COVID vaccination policy at the moment, that's all gone out through QIN. So it's really a... I think we described it as a safety officer in your pocket.

Michelle Ockers:

That's interesting. I want to come back to a comment you just made there when I thought, well, that's really fascinating. Let's dig into that. The comment was about asking versus telling that you'd previously had challenges with getting people to engage through the app and to use it, to review content, maybe to use it for performance support. But when you told them to do it, they did it.

Amanda Appleby:

They did, they did.

Michelle Ockers:

Why do you think people weren't using it previously?

Amanda Appleby:

And look, I don't know whether that's a Citywide thing or it's a wider experience. I've worked with probably more educated people in the past. But whether it was the challenges of the fact, we don't give everybody a digital platform at Citywide. A lot of people were on their own phones or tablets so there was concern about data and how much of their data is that going to eat up. But when we went out and actually said to them, limited data, you don't all have it

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one device each, the same device with different logins. So telling them was really about giving them more information. And look, we are in an organization where they like instruction. It doesn't sit so comfortably coming from our end, but they do like instruction and direction. And if you give that to them and it's clear and it's easy to follow, we've found that we have a lot more success.

Michelle Ockers:

That's interesting. David, have you seen that in other organizations around tactics to encourage and get people to actually engage with mobile-delivered content?

David Broadhurst:

I think Amanda's nailed it, Michelle. Because where we see resistance is where the change is possibly not well-communicated. Historically, that's where we've seen a lot of organizations. They get people on the back foot because... And obviously different cultures, different organizations. But I think when people understand the benefits of creating their own digital worker passport, which has got nothing to do with any organization, that's their own personal app where it's like a digital CV that they can create, but it makes them going about doing their jobs a lot easier should if they choose to use that mechanism. So I think very much it's about communication. That's where we collaborate a lot with our clients is, well, how can we help you communicate the benefits of this model of learning?

Because I think most people want to feel confident and competent as they step into a task. If they can see that what the organization's prepared to invest in is actually going to help them feel better about how they do their job, then the whole culture thing starts to... It takes on a different life. Because it's working, it's not working, what's not working for you? What do we need to make this easier for you? And then what Amanda and the team did, they were really good at putting resources together that helped with that ease of adoption. Again I just often get reminded of the quote, and people say, oh, our people don't like change. And I say, "Well, can I suggest that most people don't like badly communicated change?"

Michelle Ockers:

I like that twist, David. I like that twist.

David Broadhurst:

Yeah, I know.

Michelle Ockers:

Because I know we'll have people listening who will want to know the answer to this question, I'm going to ask it, how long were your modules and did the module assist in more than one piece of microlearning content? There's this big debate around what's micro, what does it really mean? So perhaps, David, if you just talk to us about how long each of the pieces was to consume.

David Broadhurst:

We always recommend to our clients that if you're looking to engage people on a mobile device, you probably don't want to be running your modules any longer than about three to three and a half minutes. Now, you can have multiple modules because they can be broken up into little bites where people can engage with a module, answer some questions, engage with another module, answer some questions. I think what we were lucky enough to do early on in our journey as a business, we were evaluated by RMIT and they helped us understand

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cognitive load, and the fact that these are the things from a behavioural psychology and a psychology of engagement perspective, these are the things that you might want to be aware of as you go out and help organizations adopt your solution.

And so, that's where, whenever possible, we always try and help organizations to break the modules down into those three to three and a half minute bites. Sometimes it needs to go to four, maybe four and a half minutes. But we always recommend the shorter, the better, and then sort of leapfrogging from one module to the next with some question set in between. So that's the sort length of visual learning sort of bite we recommend.

Michelle Ockers:

Okay. So if there were four modules in the Citywide induction program, they may have consisted of several chunks of content. Can you recall roughly how much, like total, what the kind of video content came to, in terms of viewing time?

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Amanda Appleby:

I think from memory, it was about a 15 minute, so we probably did break the golden rule, I think, in the middle module and went a little bit too long, but there was just so much information. We did play with breaking it down into two modules, and then I think the decision was taken that it wouldn't make sense, it wouldn't flow. But certainly module one, three and four were smack bang in that three, three and a half to four minutes. And a long one, I think did go to five, which is not ideal, but it got the message across. So we addressed that by breaking it down, so while it went five minutes, we stopped and ask questions, to have some natural breaks through that.

So yeah, it was about a 20-minute experience all up. The fourth module was a PowerPoint that was loaded up. We didn't actually build a video for that. It was an interesting exercise too, because it certainly showed when you talked to people about their experience, they remembered the videos. They didn't remember the PowerPoint they had to read through as well. So it was a good learning activity for us as well, when we did sort of go on to build the current induction program that we do have.

Michelle Ockers:

So you favour the video content over the PowerPoint content?

Amanda Appleby:

100%. And certainly for our cohort. They'll sit and they will engage and they'll listen and they'll watch. A lot of our cohort, if you ask them to read something, they won't.

Michelle Ockers:

So it can actually take more effort rather than less effort to create short. You have to work harder to figure out what's really relevant and to fine tune it. So you had a week, I think, to put this together. So we'll start with you, David, talk to us about how you developed these modules within the space of a week.

David Broadhurst:

I think Amanda mentioned it earlier on, some long nights. But can't beat good collaboration with organizations, like what Amanda's got. Because really we're not the subject matter experts in the content. We can provide a delivery mechanism and we can provide an evaluated framework on how to create and cluster content. But I think it's very much looking at, well... And whenever we do the process with our clients, it's looking at, all right, what's critical. What can we take out? What's critical, what can we take out, and just constantly asking that question. Because like you say, to make a one-minute video on something, you've got to know a lot more about the topic than if you've got 15 minutes or however long you've got to do a documentary on something. But I think it's finding that sweet spot. We're looking that we've got a platform that's so configurable that, well, it needs to be a bit longer video, we need a PowerPoint, we need a guidance note. So we can bring all that information together that's in all these different mediums that can help people make good choices around how they perform a task.

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Michelle Ockers:

So, in terms of process, did you sort of go through a story boarding process or did Amanda just get her team to grab whatever they had and give it to you? Or did you start with doing a high-level design? Just talk us through the steps from, "Hey, David, can we do induction," through to, "Here's a set of modules, ready to go," in a week.

David Broadhurst:

Yeah, well, it's very much the story boarding and that high-level instructional design point. It's a matter of bringing it all together. But I might flick it across to Amanda to... Because I know she was right in the middle of this, whereas I was probably one step removed from that whole process. But that's our framework is that story boarding and working collaboratively with our client to work out well, what message do we want to land and what's the best way for us to do it.

Michelle Ockers:

Okay. Amanda, did you want to talk us through the process, then?

Amanda Appleby:

Yes. So we definitely used the storyboard approach. Times that feed by 300%, potentially. So we had a script, as I said, we had started some work on what we wanted to include, so that really did help us. We put that into a storyboard and do some workshops with the guys at Codesafe, and my safety team in particular were able to workshop through some of that and thankfully in a desktop teams environment, in the early part where we couldn't get in a room together. So yeah, there was lots of red pens to bring it down. The writers at Codesafe are very experienced and very helpful. So we want...

Safety professionals like to say a lot and like to give you lots of reasons for things. Whereas they could look at it and go, but if you write it like that, it's so much more simple. And the message wasn't lost. So yeah, storyboard, collaborate, work out the video shots that we had. We had taken quite a bit of video for the work we'd done beforehand. What video shots did we need? So I had people running around all over the place getting video within this week as well, where we're writing it. And we just kept going backwards and forwards each day, until we got the program to a point where we were comfortable, that it met its objectives.

Michelle Ockers:

Did you feel you had to make compromises because you only had a week and, if so, what were those compromises? Maybe, by looking back at what have you gone on and changed about the solution since, that might help figure out where you felt you had to make potentially some compromises or shortcuts?

Amanda Appleby:

Again, as I say, safety people like to hear themselves talk, I think. So we think it's all important. But really, at the end of the day, it's probably making too much noise to actually get the message across that you're wanting to do. So, no, I don't think that we had to make compromises. Certainly it wasn't the hundred percent polished project that we have now because of the time that it was done in. But it was good. It was a good program. It let people know what the expectations were, how we would look after them. I think it gave them a level of assurance that their safety was paramount, especially in a COVID situation that was new and people didn't understand COVID and what the effects were and were we putting them at risk out and about the community as part of the role. So no, I don't feel we made compromises. We certainly had learnings and we polished things up

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as we went forward. But it was a good process.

Michelle Ockers:

Did you want to add anything to that, David?

David Broadhurst:

I might just add that, within reason, we find that we get really good outcomes when we are limited from a time perspective. Because sometimes when people have got too long to think about it... It's amazing now, oh, we have to have that wording or we have to have that sentencing and we have to have that shot in. And I think really, it's breaking down it to, well, if people, when they engage in something, if they've only got the cognitive capacity to remember three to five things from that encounter, what do we want to make sure that those three to five things are? Because there's other information. Whether we like it or not, a lot of learning comes from situational learning where you might put people through a training program, but ultimately if people aren't sure if we don't make information readily available to them in a medium that they work with, they'll just watch someone else next to them and they'll just follow what they do.

David Broadhurst:

I think what we want to do is, well, how do we make sure we've done the best thing possible, that wherever they go to look to how to do a task, they're looking at something that they can relate to and they can adopt. But yeah, we've worked with some organizations and it's taken them six months to sign off on a story board, all because it just got too bureaucratic. Because they had time. Where sometimes, within reason, if you've got a limited amount of time, it's like, well, who are the operational people who really know this task? What's their type of knowledge and how do we capture that and transfer it through a medium that actually works well for everybody, that we don't overcook things as we look to educate people around what they get up to across the business.

Michelle Ockers:

So it sounds like the sense of urgency was one of the key factors and getting to the right people, and getting really focused around who are the right people. You touched on something, I think, David, which is a very common issue across all kinds of domains for learning and development professionals. And Amanda, I think you too, you talked about the safety professionals like to talk. Well, it's not just safety professionals. I think anyone who has expertise thinks that much of it is very important and wants the opportunity to share it. So there's a constant challenge that many learning and development professional space around working effectively with subject matter experts and that friction around getting to the critical knowledge versus the expert wanting more to be put into the content. So David, what have you found in terms of practical techniques that people learning and development people can use to really work effectively with subject matter experts? What advice can we give them on that?

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David Broadhurst:

Without being too brutal... And I think it goes for all of us, right? Because I've been around industry for 35 years, so I go in there already thinking I know the answer. And having a collaborative conversation, it's coming from a place of humility. Because it's amazing what people who have spent a lifetime doing a task or working in an operational environment. There's so much knowledge that they have that we don't even tap into because we're not prepared to just sit and listen. What I got, even before we started Codesafe when I was running crews of pipeline workers around the place, I'd just say to certain guys, "If you were bringing your child to work tomorrow, who's just turned 18, first day on the job, what would be the three to five key things you would remind them of before they step in and do that task that you're going to ask them to do?" And they'd just be instinctively, "I'd say, don't do this, don't stand there, this is how you do this and turn left instead of right."

Michelle Ockers:

That's a really powerful question.

David Broadhurst:

So whenever we often get stuck in a place, and we did with Amanda and the team, but whenever we're going to environments, I'll say, "Imagine you're bringing your kid to work tomorrow and they were going to help you on the job, what would you make sure that they remembered?" And it gets rid of all the white noise of that documentation, or... As important as those things are in certain environments, but it's really helping organizations break down what's critical, what can we get rid of, and possibly remind people of, at a later date, as they might want to increase their qualifications, or maybe get a license around certain things that... Again, it's reverse engineering the whole educational process that we look at the performance support first. Does that need to lead into a competency framework or does it need to lead into a qualification rather than doing it from the other way around?

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. So to start with the small immediate need and then build from there, if necessary. Which is a different philosophy.

David Broadhurst:

Yeah. And I think as well, Michelle, it's what industry's looking for now because, like Amanda said, we've got such a transient workforce. I was in a conversation only last week and the organization said, "So, who's responsible to train these people?" And I said, "Well, I think we all are."

Amanda Appleby:

It's an interesting observation. Because while we were starting this project we are doing in the safety space, what we call a Work As Done Project, and it's sort of new view safety theory, we're actually trying to talk to the workers about what is it that you do out in the workplace, and does it align with what we think that you do, our procedures and our policies. And we quickly worked out that what Codesafe were doing really was Work As Done. So we've involved our ongoing microlearning, so development as part of our whole Work As Done approach. And we do, we go out and we have those conversations with people. What is it that you need to do to stay safe in this job? And you're not just looking at safety, you're looking at innovation, you're looking at the best way to communicate and show the workers how to do it.

The on-flow effect of that is it's not only learning, it's engaging

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people. In the safety space, it's engaging people to actually stick to the rules. Where it's appropriate to do so. We talk about rules and the appropriateness of rules and safety and whether they are, and quite often they're not, but yeah, where there are processes and there's procedure and there's rules, the workers have been involved and engaged in it as they are when you're developing a microlearning module, sort of Codesafe's approach, the success factor, and you're so much better. We've seen it. We've seen reduced incidences in certain areas that we've done this with in our business. I wish I had hours and hours and lots more people to keep it going because the quicker we could do it, the better.

Michelle Ockers:

I would encourage listeners who are interested in that whole point about tapping into tacit knowledge and understanding work as it is actually being done, as opposed to how your SOPs say we think it should be done, to really go back and listen to our previous conversation with David, which you'll find in the show notes, was really dug into that, David, at the time. Amanda, there's another set of requirements that you probably had to meet in the midst of this. So it wasn't just around getting the workers ready to work, but you had legal and compliance requirements. So what do you need to do as a business? And I'm thinking, is there record-keeping, is there tracking, is there auditing? What do you need to do to demonstrate that your meeting compliance requirements, and how does QIN help you to do that?

Amanda Appleby:

So through the process last year, definitely we could extract records out of the Codesafe QIN app in the backend and keep our records of training so we could demonstrate that we had appropriately trained, instructed and informed our workforce, they understood our expectations and what we do to keep us safe. As we worked through to induction, we actually have done a lot of work with integrating Codesafe and our learning management system provided to automate the process. So if someone does an induction or a training module in QIN, our learning database is updated automatically so the records are kept and people can actually view them. So it's not only me going into the backend that can see if information's been done, any supervisor or manager can check that their teams have done the appropriate training that they need to do for their role.

Michelle Ockers:

Right, so the data is shared back into your learning system.

Amanda Appleby:

It is.

Michelle Ockers:

And your supervisor can access it immediately there, which is great. So you said something interesting a while back in the conversation, Amanda, when you started talking about going beyond the immediate case use need that we talked about, which was these 1500 to 3000 new workers coming on in a short period of time to be inducted. We went sort of beyond compliance, you talked about all of this, you used it for a number of other things and the platform is having a bigger impact and the use of this visual microlearning is having a bigger impact in your organization. Can you talk to us a little more about how you're now using the platform, what sort of use is its supports and how it's impacted the organisation?

Amanda Appleby:

So, definitely for the induction. We then moved it into our contract space because we really

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struggled to manage our contractors in one system. We had lots of systems, so training through to induction to record-keeping to audit was very challenging. So we actually set up our whole contractor management system through the QIN process, so they do their onboarding questionnaire, they do their onboarding induction, we audit them through this platform. So all nice and neat. We have what we call a calendar of events at Citywide, so there's certain inspections, audits that our supervisors need to do to ensure that we're doing the right thing. It's leading indicator type stuff, so they can go out and use the platform and the tools of the platform.

We've got some learning videos about how you use the tools on the platform and what you should be looking for when you're doing audit. We use it as a message board. As I say, anything that we want to get out to the workforce, we'll send out. So our COVID vaccination policy is a prime example that went out this morning, and I can pop a message into it to say, "Hey, guys, there's something new to read and review here," so they can go straight into their phone or their tablet and have a look at what news is there. So just everything we do is just really handy, and I think I said before, safety supervisor in your pocket type thing. We've got four safety supervisors per 1300 people, so having that resource that we can reach the workforce is really great.

Probably the best thing, and I think they said to us when we were talking about with Codesafe initially and how it could assist in business, was that people would start coming to us when they realized the power of the app. And that's what we find. We get phone calls from our different business SMEs every day saying, "Oh, we think we want to do this or we think we want to do that, and we think Codesafe is the solution." So they're building learning and they're building forms and all sorts of things that can be put up onto the application. And then we started with it as a safety program, but since then the injury management team have a page on the app. They share a lot of their knowledge, our applications manager has taken it under his wing and he shares a lot of information through the application as well.

Michelle Ockers:

And I think so, but it sounds like because this is a tool that is squarely positioned for people to be using as they work and it's very accessible through the mobile device, you've just continued, feels like it's evolved a lot. It was march, 2020. March the 31st, 2020. So we may have even recorded that episode just on the cusp of everybody starting to go into that global lockdown. Has the use of the platform and the kind of work you're doing to support organizations, has it changed a lot in that period of time, it's about 18 months.

David Broadhurst:

I think it's accelerated us fulfilling the development that was on our roadmap. But obviously just recently we pushed out an update on the app that people can now provide evidence of their COVID vaccinations.

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Michelle Ockers:

Great.

David Broadhurst:

That wasn't even on our radar two years ago.

Michelle Ockers:

Of course not, of course not. It wasn't a need, right?

David Broadhurst:

No. That's right. And I think that's where we feel quite lucky that what we've built, because it's not a hard-coded platform, it means that once, and like Amanda mentioned, once people get to touch it and feel it, and we can empower and get the people within the business to understand that, hey, let us know what's not working for you so we can improve it. Because what we're providing you, it's not locked in stone. Even when it comes to content. People can look at content and say, oh, actually that's not quite right. Or there's an improvement opportunity there. We can just cut and splice it that it's a continual improvement opportunity for the business.

I watch what Amanda's done, because it's all about culture. Once you create a safe environment where people can speak up about something that they can see could be an improvement, and the organization responds accordingly and celebrates that, because they're not locked into something that they know they can't address the issue. The fact that we've been able to work together with Amanda and the team, another organization is well to say, go and ask your people what's not working for them, because you're not locked into something that you actually can't do something about what they're going to bring up next.

And I think that's where we often don't like to get feedback from the field because we sometimes know that we're locked into a solution that, well, there's nothing we can do about it, so you're just going to have to put up with it. Whereas, if we can say, well, look, not quite sure what we can do with that, but thanks for the idea and we'll get back to you. And quite often, you can actually harness that knowledge and celebrate that open feedback that really becomes beneficial to everybody, especially when that individual or a team gets to experience their solution that they know they're contributing to in a few weeks or a few months' time.

Michelle Ockers:

Generates a lot of buy-in. So in wrapping up, then, and I'll start with you, David, and then ask for your input on this question, Amanda, when you think back over the conversation we've just had and the body of work that Codesafe and Citywide have done together, what's been the key to doing this work successfully?

David Broadhurst:

Collaboration. Collaboration. And having a management team that weren't scared to go and ask their workforce what they felt they needed, that we could help them do it better.

Michelle Ockers:

And Amanda, from your perspective, what's been critical to success of the solution we've

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just talked about?

Amanda Appleby:

Absolutely collaboration, and I think our approach to our team is very open and engaging, and it's what they do. So Codesafe also, they're not the experts in our business, neither am I. I'm not an arborist or I don't fill in potholes for a living, so that open collaboration, touching the right people, being able to bring that information back has certainly been key to it. And look, I think having a provider that has been flexible enough to go, yep, that's okay. But also pull us in when they go, "No, you're going too far there." So definitely, definitely collaboration is the key.

Michelle Ockers:

That's a really nice example of many things. But one of the things that this episode is a really nice example of is what you can do by building a strong, trusted relationship as an organization with key providers, and for the providers to be working in a way that earns that trust and we're adding value to the business along the way to solidify that relationship. So thank you both for making the time to talk with us today. We'll include a link to your LinkedIn profiles if anyone would like to follow-up if they've got questions or would like to know a little bit more about the conversation we've had today. Thank you both so much. Thanks, David.

David Broadhurst:

No. Thanks very much, Michelle. Thanks for taking an interest in what we're doing and thanks, Amanda, for sharing your experience.

Michelle Ockers:

Nice. Thank you, Amanda.

Amanda Appleby:

No problem, thank you.

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About Learning Uncut

Learning Uncut are learning and development consultants that work with learning teams and/or business leaders to accelerate learning transformation. We specialise in supporting organisations to create or update their learning strategy, enhance their learning team's capabilities, align learning to business value, and implement modern learning approaches.

We are highly collaborative and pragmatic. We partner with organisations to align learning to their business needs, unleash continuous learning, and build capability to help them thrive.

Learn more about us [at our website](#).

About your host, Michelle Ockers



Michelle is the founder of Learning Uncut. She is an experience, pragmatic organisational learning strategist, L&D capability builder and modern workplace learning practitioner. She also delivers keynotes, workshops and webinars for learning and broader professional or workforce groups at both public and in-house events.

Michelle received the following prestigious industry awards in 2019:

- Australian Institute of Training and Development Dr Alastair Rylatt Award for L&D *Professional of the Year – for outstanding contribution to the practice of learning and development*
- *Internet Time Alliance Jay Cross Memorial Award – for outstanding contribution to the field of informal learning*



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