

LEARNING UNCUT EPISODE 32

SUPPORTING WORK WITH HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN – SHAWNA MURRAY

- Karen Moloney: Welcome to another episode of Learning Uncut. I'm Karen Moloney.
- Michelle Ockers: I'm Michelle Ockers.
- Karen Moloney: Today we're talking to Shawna Murray, who's the organisational development and learning manager for transformation and strategy at Coal Services. Welcome Shawna.
- Shawna Murray: Thank you for having me, ladies.
- Karen Moloney: You're welcome, thanks for coming. This episode is focused on human-centred design, but that's actually not where this story started, so I'll hand it over to you, Michelle and Shawna, to give our listeners some background first out.
- Michelle Ockers: Thanks Karen. Shawna, Coal Services is an organisation that few of our listeners are probably familiar with, so let's start there. If you can give us an introduction to who Coal Services is, what you do, and who your customers are.
- Shawna Murray: Coal Services has been around for almost 100 years in various formats. It is a specialized health and safety scheme protecting the New South Wales coal mining industry, but what that means in practice is around 400 people who come here each day, and that's across New South Wales, to collectively support our customers, and they in turn support about 20,000 people in the industry.
- Shawna Murray: To give you a sense of the types of roles of people here, we have medical practitioners who work directly with workers, we've got a registered training organisation, mines rescue service and a virtual reality team that partners with the industry around education and responsiveness. We also have an insurance arm and technical Services who monitor sites to uphold the health and safety of the customers.
- Shawna Murray: Essentially we work together in what I would call a collaborative model and it really is unlike anything in the world, and if you ever talk to any of the people who have been here for quite some time they will very passionately talk about how this is very different to any industries that they've come across, and very much the community is part of the charm of working here. Probably because it's deeply embedded in some of the regional areas where we are based.
- Shawna Murray: Our common purpose is to protect and ensure people go to work each day and come home safely.
- Michelle Ockers: It sounds like a fairly comprehensive range of services built around that purpose.
- Shawna Murray: Yes. It is. It's that full cycle of any touchpoints within the industry.

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- Michelle Ockers: Yeah, so where do you and your team fit into this, Shawna? What is it that your team does?
- Shawna Murray: Looking after organisational development learning. We're a medium-sized business, so we essentially have a team that operates with that function. We have a team that is consisting of between four and seven people. We've probably embraced the gig economy a little bit here based on what we need to deliver, so around any of our business needs and our projects as well.
- Shawna Murray: I really enjoy that because it brings good value, even having people come in on a temporary basis really brings fresh ideas in and helps us to deliver on what we need to. For us, who works in the wider part of transformation and strategy, that's essential to do what we need to do. Probably uniquely to what we started a couple of years ago is that we don't sit with HR. We work very closely with them, we partner with them, however, we very much are focused on what we do in transformation and strategy around our project management office, our marketing team, our change team, and we'll work alongside to get what we need to do, essentially our 2020 strategy.
- Michelle Ockers: Okay, and are you the only learning team or OD people in the business?
- Shawna Murray: Yes, we are. We support across the areas of New South Wales. All of us travel to all of our different areas and support all the different arms of the business when it comes to our internal customers who are essentially other people who make up that 400-something employees.
- Michelle Ockers: Okay, and the work you do, and your team does, are you focused just working with the 400 people right inside the organisation, or does your services extend to the 20,000 in the industry?
- Shawna Murray: Yeah, so what we do is internally and we have services within our business who would support those 20,000, particularly around the likes of our RTO, the mines rescue team, would be centred around the education side.
- Michelle Ockers: Got it, so you're the internal OD and learning team.
- Shawna Murray: Very much so.
- Michelle Ockers: All right, so in the introduction, Karen said that while the focus for this episode is human-centred design, it's not quite where the story started and I think we've talked about starting the story around about two years ago, and I understand there's a link between the HCD work we're going to talk about and organisational culture. How would you describe the culture that existed in Coal Services two years ago?

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- Shawna Murray: Well, if we look from my point of view, I came in and we were looking at the learning culture, so that's a facet of the wider culture. Within that, there was very traditional ways of learning offerings that were across the business, and also when you look at the way that teams would have operated, it was very much in the hierarchy that exists in a lot of workplaces where managers make decisions and they come up with the ideas and very much, then, the ideas are then executed by the people within their team.
- Shawna Murray: That was probably one facet of it. The other one was around more traditional training methods that I mentioned there before, and when we're referring to those, it wasn't a wrong way of working. It was just "Is there another way to do what we're currently doing?" That probably gives a bit of a sense. I know from talking to other people, it's something that a lot of people have experienced in one role or another.
- Shawna Murray: However, it's more around looking at "It wasn't wrong, but is there a different way of working than the way we are currently?"
- Michelle Ockers: Yeah, and I like that link you make. You talked about the way teams operate and the way decisions get made. Sometimes when people in learning roles talk about learning culture, they're really talking about learning activities rather than looking at working activities as well, and the fact that we learn in the context of work. Things like how well decision making is distributed across the organisation, the level of empowerment and engagement, all affects people's capacity or willingness to learn more broadly in the flow of work.
- Shawna Murray: Absolutely, and decision making is probably another facet, so this sits within human-centred design, but it's one that we really are trying to look at as a business and whereabouts decisions are made, and really looking down to sharing the decision-making and that really is something that is invaluable because it allows you to empower people as you rightfully said, but it also gets people to critically think about what it is that they do in their daily role.
- Shawna Murray: Nobody knows better what they do in their role than somebody who experiences it every day and listening to those people, we're really able to get the best from our people but also to come up with what's the best for our customers externally as well.
- Michelle Ockers: Yeah. You've said there was nothing specifically wrong with the culture, it wasn't a broken culture. You were looking for a different way of working and you've spoken a little bit about that. What changes did Coal Services want to make in the culture and why?
- Shawna Murray: Like a lot of people, we were dictated by a strategy which is a great way to have a shared vision about what we need to do, and part of that was to have a high-performing culture. The key areas that we would have been looking after would

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have been in relationship, creating a learning culture, which we saw as an ecosystem, really putting in some of the fundamentals of what we needed to have here. That starts from when people are recruited through to the onboarding, but then also what are the other ways that we keep developing our people?

Shawna Murray: There's very much a perception around the investment on learning and I'd like to think that that's changing a little bit at this current point in time as we look towards the future, that humans are always going to have a role to play, so the changes were really about keeping currency and also enhancing what people were already doing. I feel that that's a really strong point from a change point of view, was that it's about enhancing what people do and I feel people appreciate that more as well, as opposed to being told to do something differently because it's not right.

Michelle Ockers: Yeah, and you use the word "high-performing culture" and the fact that learning contributes to a high-performing culture. Was there any specifics around what a high-performing culture needed to look like for Coal Services?

Shawna Murray: Absolutely. We looked at that a lot because I think ... It was somebody that worked in HR that I was working with and we said, "Really, everybody needs to be performing before you can take this step up to the high performing," and that's not unique to our organisation, but it's about being able to ensure that that performance level is, first of all, attained, and then how do we develop people further into that high-performing area?

Shawna Murray: There's definitely evidence of it everywhere, but at the same time we know that engagement is something that is not a constant; you have to nurture it and you have to ensure that people that you're working with feel that as part of their roles and want to do those discretionary efforts as part of what they do. How can we set people up to do that, how can we set them up for success was very much part of when we were defining what high-performing culture is.

Shawna Murray: It's what does it mean to people who are experiencing it, and what does it mean? If the two don't align between what we think and what people think, then we're already going to miss the mark. Having a look what that meant. Obviously, the likes of any conversations that managers are having, there needs to be a bit more rigor around them than just using the buzz or high-performing culture, or high performing teams, or whatever that looks like.

Shawna Murray: I think defining that initially was a really helpful step, and even just within our own team; we didn't have to preach it to everyone else, but what does that look like and what does it look like in practical terms?

Michelle Ockers: Can you share maybe just one aspect or indicator you were looking for that would tell you whether you were moving towards a high-performance culture?

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Shawna Murray: Yeah, engagement. We'd done an engagement survey and the results from one year compared to the next there was an increase, was what we were looking for and that was what we found, and that was specifically in the development area. Giving people different opportunities. I feel that when I refer back to some of the more traditional ways, that learning took place and probably the word that sometimes comes up and probably has been, maybe, given a bit of a bad reputation around training because it wasn't, maybe, centred around what people were doing. It was pushed out to people associated with compliance, and I think for some people what they feel is that that is the only way. This whole idea of coming up with a high-performing team and a high-performing culture as a whole meant re-looking at the way that we thought that learning should be taking place.

Michelle Ockers: Yeah, okay.

Shawna Murray: It can't be done overnight, so it takes time to be able to do that, and some people are quite for and some people are quite against different ways of learning, so it's about getting that input from other people so you can come up with something that really fits with the people that you're going to be working alongside with.

Michelle Ockers: Yep. Let's introduce human-centred design to the conversation now, and what I find really interesting about the approach you take with human-centred design is it's about human-centred design as a way of working across the organisation, not just as a way of designing learning programs. I think that nuance is quite important to lay out up front. What does human-centred design mean to you?

Shawna Murray: Well, it's not a new concept, as probably many people know, but it is a tested concept. For me, it's something to try out. It's a creative way of problem solving and whatever the problem is, it doesn't matter what it is, and it's not unique to any particular industry. You see people using it in retail, you see people using it in hospitality, you see people using it in finance and construction even, so there's a really broad amount of people.

Shawna Murray: I think that's probably one thing around human-centred design, it's something that everybody can be utilising to solve problems. Essentially, it's designing for people, and that's why it's around that way of working, so there's plenty of research, there's plenty of articles, there's plenty online that you can find on it, but if you were to break it down, it's the solving of problems and very much around designing for the people.

Michelle Ockers: Yeah, I like that, designing for people. We'll include some of those resources with the show notes for people to dig into a little bit as well and we'll get some recommendations from you-

Shawna Murray: Very happy to share any of them.

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- Michelle Ockers: Thank you. It's about designing for people. Lots of people can use it in all sorts of different roles. What were you seeing as the linkage between introducing human-centred design as a way of working, and creating a high-performance culture? What contribution did you expect it to make?
- Shawna Murray: Essentially, we want people to be participating in this type of working when we're not around and because there's only a small amount of us, as we've mentioned there before, yet there's all these people and we've got distributed teams across the state, which, again, presents its own challenges. If we're all in one building, we could stop work and all get together and do something but that's not the case, and with more of a push towards people either working from home or working in different sorts of locations, we had to assume that this was going to be the way going forward.
- Shawna Murray: Being able to think about how those people who were going to be in these different areas were going to be able to be able to learn themselves. People talk about the idea of learning agility and learning to learn, but this is more around work agility where they're actually working and coming up with these own ways of working as well.
- Michelle Ockers: I like that phrase, "work agility" and responsiveness to change. Being able to move quickly is important, and I think it leaks back into the comment you made before about instead of managers making all the decisions, helping people to gain confidence and ways of making decisions and exploring problems, which I think is what I'm hearing in terms of how you want to apply human-centred design in the organisation.
- Shawna Murray: Yeah, and with the idea of other people coming up with the ideas, there's so many benefits to that. I like to think about people's well-being, sense of worth, bringing their full sense of self to work because they feel that they're adding value, and probably one of the aspects of human-centred design is that it's something that everybody can contribute to, and probably more so it's good to get those really divergent ideas from people who might not otherwise speak to you about it, because those people can add different dimension, a different layer of thinking, to what is probably the norm of what might always be done.
- Michelle Ockers: Yeah, so an inclusive work practice as well. How did you learn about human-centred design and would you recommend the approach you use to other people?
- Shawna Murray: Well, I'm here, so I'm definitely going to recommend it, but what I would say is that I was exposed to it. Actually, I think it was at a conference where there was a workshop, Arun Pradhan, which I know you're familiar with, Michelle, ran this workshop as part of the conference and people could sign up for it. I remember initially signing up for it and there was only a couple of people's names on there; it was on design thinking.

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- Shawna Murray: I'd heard a little bit about it, probably seen something on LinkedIn, read an article or two about it, but didn't really know what it looked like in practice. As the day progressed, I saw this board getting filled up with people's names, and by the time the session took place the room was jam-packed full of people and in his stride, he took everybody on and tried to take them through the journey.
- Shawna Murray: At the very least, it was probably chaotic as we went through the process, and we tried to do a very quick process, which really was to solve a problem and a lot of people were able to give their ideas and really be part of a hands-on approach to this design thinking. As that took place, I remember thinking, "Oh, wouldn't it be great if you could use these as a way of working?" and not too long after that we started with the transformation and strategy team here.
- Shawna Murray: One of the first initiatives that our general manager took on with our marketing department was to do some customer journey mapping, and that was externally. I was involved more in the ideation process of that and being involved in that gave me another taste of how this could then be replicated to work with our employees and let's have a look at the employee experience. I feel that having a focus on the people that were in our business and using those people to be able to come up with ideas was probably a really ambitious idea based on our current way of working.
- Shawna Murray: When I saw the value and the insights that had come out of it when it was done with external customers, I thought, "Well, during this with internal people, we can try to mimic that," so there were probably two involvements that we had, and then at our leadership forum last year, we partnered with the strategy group who were able to come in and with the leaders within our business, across all of New South Wales, we all came together and people from all different facets of the business were together and they were able to be involved in what I would call a scenario where they got to experience it and have a really good sense of how this empathetic and listening to what people were thinking was able to come up with some really tangible ideas that could be executed.
- Shawna Murray: That, for me, was probably something that I found the personal value in, but then also to get people within the business to have an idea about it and sometimes it sounds good coming from someone external as opposed to someone internal, and that's not to say that it can't work if somebody starts it internally, but sometimes to have an external input and somebody who's an expert in the area to come and work alongside the team was invaluable.
- Shawna Murray: It allowed them to ask lots of questions, and also to listen to ways that have worked in other organisations and the possibilities that it aroused when that took place.

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- Karen Moloney: I understand that people didn't just take that and run with it and then all start implementing HCD everywhere in the organisation, so how did that actually happen?
- Shawna Murray: We all lived happily ever after. You are correct. Look, within working alongside anybody who's in the learning space, retention, exposure, influencing, convincing, all of those really come into any new way of working so the importance of having an understanding from our leaders at that session and doing it in a very jovial way as well, so I think that that was important, and to almost move it away from a problem that needed to be solved within the business, for example.
- Shawna Murray: It was really looking just at something that could be solved using almost a fictitious way, but still getting the fundamentals in there. Really, that goes back to the way around ... Looking at what information people could gather and what evidence they could get and how they could listen to what was going on around them and, then, how you could then take that information and not go straight into "I know what the answer is. I know what the solution is," which is a natural way of thinking, particularly where there's a lot of people who work in roles - this goes back to what I talked about initially - who are used to being the decision makers and used to making all of the choices for what needs to take place. Again, it's not a wrong way, it's just a different way of working, so that was more of, probably, the second pass at having the involvement of that and then the insight that came out of that as well as the ones from the initial external look meant that people were starting to see not that it had legs so much but there was no merit in what was taking place.
- Shawna Murray: Because they'd experienced it and they weren't just hearing about it or just reading about it. They'd be involved in it. For some people, I truly believe it was probably not knowing exactly what it was. I've heard about that design or I've heard about that human-centred, and for some people who are quite black and white in their thinking, or if they work in a very technical space, sometimes the idea of humans having an idea or being at the centre of what's being decided is it may be a little bit uncomfortable for people as well.
- Karen Moloney: Yeah, and thinking about what people are having to do to take this on board as well, because you're not just introducing a new process. You're actually introducing a new process and a mindset shift at the same time around moving from that "I must deliver the solution" to "I must listen to what other people might think about that solution."
- Shawna Murray: Yes.
- Karen Moloney: Where the problem is.

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- Shawna Murray: Yes, and it's designing with as opposed to designing for. That's probably a good way to put it in. Previously, that was the way of thinking, but now it's like, "We're going to design it, whether you say collaborative, or in partnership, together," all those sanctions coming together as in it's coming up with an idea as one, as opposed to just one person, which will take time.
- Shawna Murray: That's probably something that people would also automatically see, is that it does take time for that consultative process when I can just make the decision myself because I know what the right answer is as opposed to thinking, "Is there another way to do it, and if there is let's find out early on whether that is a viable way and maybe go out and ask some other people about it." It's quite telling for people too.
- Karen Moloney: Yep, and you walked the talk here as well, didn't you, in terms of helping people understand how to implement this day-to-day? Because I think there is a bit of that people understanding at a high level how this can work and seeing it work in workshops, but then if you want to ingrain this as part of a culture and you want this to be how people think about problem solving, how do you get from that point of, "Oh, here's a new thing and here's the mindset shift, but this is what we do on a day-to-day basis"? How did you get that one over the line?
- Shawna Murray: Well, there wasn't one silver bullet. It wasn't one instance that was able to achieve that, but I guess when I was looking at what we were trying to do and go back to thinking about how can we shift what's happening internally, the natural progression where we sit and, obviously, working closely with HR as well, was to have a look at our employee lifecycle. We used what we currently did, all the way from recruitment to onboarding to the first couple of months of probation into their essential journey while they're within the workplace to break that down as a group.
- Shawna Murray: We took representatives from HR from mighty, from IT, from our risk team, from our change team, from all people who had some input into that, and got them involved in the process, took time to look at what it was that we were trying to do, which very much, for them, was around getting them to listen to what it is that people were hearing in the business, listening to what people were feeling in the business, what they were seeing, all of those sorts of valuable bits of information were gathered.
- Shawna Murray: By gathering those and then bringing them together and sharing them as a collective was really really insightful. It meant that people who thought they knew what they knew maybe we were a little bit off the mark, and it was brought together in a non-threatening environment where we put up all of these notions, so it could have been what somebody had experienced on their first couple of days. It could have been around the way that they were initially treated during the recruitment process was wonderful, but then maybe they

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had another experience when they started working which wasn't as wonderful and so their expectation ...

Shawna Murray: All people who were there had some investment in that life cycle and it was all very telling, for all people there, to be able to see whether they had had an impact on someone that they didn't realise that they'd had in more ways than one, so not just in ways that were great but also ways that may have ultimately affected the experience of people, which is ... It can be hard to hear sometimes, but at the same time, the notion of getting together and doing this was to have a look at what we could do and how we could maybe do something a little bit different.

Shawna Murray: Probably, out of that, with all the ideas that did come out, is that we couldn't do all of the ideas that we had and we had to, as a group, prioritize what are the quick wins that we can do out of these and what ones can we then focus on, maybe, in the medium term as opposed to right now?

Karen Moloney: Something that we spoke about quite a bit when we were preparing for this podcast was around keeping that process that people following as simple as possible.

Shawna Murray: Yeah, when people feel ... It's a new processor, it's something new and it's too complex, it's really difficult to get buy-in from people, and one of the big values of the human-centred design process that I have found is that if people are involved throughout the process and the momentum's kept up and they can see where the value is sooner rather than later, then they become your advocates for it and they will hopefully try it out in their own environments.

Shawna Murray: When this took place it was important to have those known, so we really just wanted people to come together initially and to be able to have the information, then to be able to define what it is that we found out, come up with some ideas, and then let's just go out and try some of those ideas. Really simple steps to be able to get people to see how the value was coming on.

Karen Moloney: Just thinking about some of the outcomes, just as an example for people of one of the big wins that you head out of that process, there was something around compliance that you had implemented?

Shawna Murray: When I'm driving something or when our team is driving something, it's much easier to say, "Okay, this is what we're going to do," but for me, real value and shift in the way people are thinking or in wanting to try something new is when people come to us and they say, "Hey, do you think that we can ..." As we know, within this, probably, area of work often people come, "Can you make this an eLearn?"

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- Shawna Murray: Now, the eLearn is not the answer to everything. Yes, it has it ... When somebody came to me and said, "I was thinking we could do that human-centred design," and this person had been involved in the off-site with our leadership team, I think I tried to contain my excitement and said, "Yeah, absolutely. Let's have a look at what it is that you're trying to solve," so policies and procedures, yes, very dry but also very necessary.
- Shawna Murray: This person particularly was having a lot of trouble with a number of the policies and procedures from the way they were presented, people understanding where they were. Again, distributed teams being able to follow and understand what they were because they were left to direct themselves around them, so the issues that come up in a lot of places too. We have a lot of policies and procedures because it gives guidance to people, but we also have a whole lot of other pieces of work particularly when people are starting their journey.
- Shawna Murray: It did come out of the onboarding journey that we looked at, is when people come on the overwhelming amount of information that they have to absorb in addition to whatever they're doing in their own job roles, too. A representative from each of the business units who had some ownership on policies and procedures were brought together, and they very much were given a bit of a crash course in "How can we find out what the real root cause of the problem is when it comes to what our policies and procedures are?"
- Shawna Murray: They were able to conduct some empathetic interviews, which essentially means talking to people. It's a way of going and listening to what it is, and the idea was that I had briefed people, as in forget what you know if you can and just really listen, and for people who were in solutions-driven roles, that was really hard but at the same time the benefit was explained and, again, that was kept very simple too, and gave just a one-page guide on how people would do that. There was no right or wrong.
- Shawna Murray: We didn't want it to be too formal. It was really just about going and learning some anecdotal evidence. When we all came together, we brought those pieces of information, similar to what we'd done with the employee life cycle, and threw up all of the information that we'd found out and, again, there were some very telling moments about what people thought they knew that they didn't know.
- Shawna Murray: Yes, there were some pieces that people go, "Yeah, we already knew that there," but what we were able to do from that particular exercise was to really pinpoint what some of the problems were for people and then we'd go about solving how that would be, and essentially trying to make it easy for people to adhere, understand, and have exposure to what policies and procedures were to make their lives easier at work.

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- Shawna Murray: That was really what we wanted to do, and I think when people knew that as part of that process, and we had a different cohort of people involved as well, they felt as if they were making a difference not just to what they did in their area but also a difference to the people that were going to be essentially being the recipients of their ideas.
- Karen Moloney: I think probably understanding with this process that sometimes the things that come out of there are the most simple things. I think you said one of the changes that you made after that was around how people access policies and procedures, because where they were was buried somewhere, several pages down, on the intranet. Even if people were looking for guidance, they couldn't find it. Rehashing-
- Shawna Murray: Some of the simple solutions that came up, and I guess the core of a lot of this, one of our pieces of DNA is around innovation. It's a buzzword, I guess, in some places as well, but it's about improving and where you can add value. It's not necessarily about coming up with the next awesome app, but it is about looking at something that's done and is there a better way. For us with this, it was really fundamental; it's part of all organisations, essentially.
- Shawna Murray: It was around "How can we just make it easier?" Some of the ideas that came out from people that were talked to initially were just about "I only use X, Y and Z policy, so why do I have to go through all of these others?" It was really about the arrangement, so it wasn't massive changes, but it was going to make a big impact on people. What you probably can't measure so much, but you can almost guesstimate, is that when people are able to easily access information you save time.
- Shawna Murray: You can be more efficient, you can be more productive, and at the root of this is probably what that was. It really was around people want to be able to access the information. It's not that they don't want to necessarily follow something, they just want to make it easy to be able to do.
- Karen Moloney: Speaking about making things easy to do, what resources are on hand for people to help them? Because this is not just about "Let's go in a workshop and then we all implement HCD everywhere we go." What resources have you created and given people access to, to help them on that journey, to dip into and out of as they go through this process?
- Shawna Murray: As I mentioned earlier, there is a lot of information online around human-centred design and design thinking, and actually can be quite overwhelming. I saw our job as a function of OD now to curate that and to come up with some simple tools, so we did that for the initial sessions that we did around the employee life cycle and also around the policies and procedures, but what we did on a larger scale, which was led from our GM of transformation and strategy was to come up with an innovators tool kit.

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- Shawna Murray: The heart of our cultural DNA is around innovation, so it was about if we want people to have this as part of their roles, how do we create something for them that they can refer to? They came up with an innovation toolkit, so the Coal Service innovation toolkit which has everything in it. It's just a small little A5-size book and it's available for everybody. It's also on our intranet, but it's got everything that people can use within there to have a look at their way of working.
- Shawna Murray: People can use snippets of it. There's ideas, it's written in really plain speak, and the idea is that anybody can refer to it and use it, and that was used when we did the session last year with the strategy group, which took some facets out of that. We also have used it when we've done the sessions with our people, but it's just a really good way to refer back to what it is, the ideas behind why you'd want to practice and anything around design thinking or human-centred design.
- Shawna Murray: Also, different ways that we can map for what we're doing, the processes that can be involved, and really simple tools that can be used as part of that as well.
- Karen Moloney: Thinking about the benefits for the business, in adopting an approach like this human-centred design, because it does go, obviously, across the business, what do you think the biggest benefits have been that you've seen so far?
- Shawna Murray: The value that you get when people from different teams, for example, IT, HR, risk and audit, our mines rescue team, our health team, insurance, all coming together and being able to share their ideas genuinely creates conversation, it builds rapport between people, and it comes out with some of the ... Well, sometimes crazy ideas, but some of the best ideas that can then be used to be able to translate to people practice.
- Shawna Murray: For me, seeing that happen has been pretty awesome. It has happened previously in pockets of the business, but I guess this is really now giving permission for people to go, "Maybe there is other ways that we can work alongside our people." The other big piece is around our engagement score, around development opportunities, so that for us is definitely a benefit that was tangible data. People love to be able to see whereabouts the investment of time and resources has made an impact.
- Shawna Murray: That would be a really tangible piece of information that we gained from that, and the revamping of the employee experience at work in their day-to-day roles and having the opportunity to be part of something that's a little bit different. We have some people here who have worked here for quite some amount of years and offered great value, and as I mentioned at the start, part of the charm of working here is when I go traveling around New South Wales, particularly some of our regional areas, meeting some of the people who are super passionate about what they do and the way that they are now looking towards some of the ways that, maybe, they've learned about different ways of working.

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- Shawna Murray: Getting their knowledge, because that intelligence is something that you can't bottle up, so getting their perspectives and being able to bring that is really adding to the creative ideas that are being created by our people that can then have an impact on the rest of our customers.
- Karen Moloney: Yeah, that's pretty awesome. It'll be interesting, actually, to see maybe in a year or two years' time what other things have come out of that. There are probably more long-term benefits so we might talk to you again.
- Shawna Murray: Yeah, no, definitely.
- Michelle Ockers: What's really interesting as you've talked to us today is you've used the term "ways of working" a lot, and you've talked about ways of working rather than what you're doing being just about learning. There's a couple of things about your structure and where you sit in the organisation which I think are quite interesting and that, perhaps, I'm seeing more of but there are still learning and development teams that are just learning focused.
- Michelle Ockers: I wonder if the fact that you have OD as part of your role as well, and I am seeing a bit of a trend, OD teams and L&D teams coming together and one team having responsibility for OD and learning. Whether that may have impacted the ways you've been able to support shifts in working across the business versus just being a learning team, and also if you think you would have had to do something different if you'd been part of the HR team rather than part of transformation and strategy.
- Michelle Ockers: To what degree, then, is structural aspects of where your team sits impact what you've been able to do with influencing the way people work?
- Shawna Murray: When we reformed about two years ago and sat with transformation and strategy, the clear vision was that we had our 2020 strategy, which is where we chatted before about the high-performing culture.
- Shawna Murray: The idea is that we were to partner with the business, but to redefine what our goal was, so modernizing our function, getting the foundations right was part of that, but also more than just pushing out learning to people, what is going to enable people to help themselves and whether that's in our workplace or whether they move on to a different workplace. They're almost essential skills for people to have to be able to respond to the changing nature of what is in work, but also to be able to remain relevant.
- Shawna Murray: Probably at the forefront of that is the unlearning side, which essentially is about what people have always done, is something that's gotten them by, but also being open to the idea of other ways of working and talking about what they can do differently.

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- Shawna Murray: It helps to have somebody who is leading our team, who is very open to us being able to try out different ideas, take risks around those as well. I feel quite blessed with the people that I'm surrounded with, that we support each other in that.
- Michelle Ockers: Yeah. I love that you're an example of being at the forefront of that shift to supporting work teams and supporting learning and work being integrated. It's a really nice example of that, I think. Shawna, we like to be practical on the podcast and help people to try new things, so if anyone who's listening would like to do more with integrating human-centred design into working practices in their organisation, what would be some takeaway tips from you for them to get started?
- Shawna Murray: Don't be afraid to give it a go. Try it with a small group of people first, and something that we did was a picture problem, which really gave everyone an opportunity to ideate, so it really was taking a problem from different people within the business and we put them all up on flip charts and it was a really simple way and we did this in a group forum, so we had maybe 60 or 70 people in the room.
- Shawna Murray: We put up a problem from each of the business units, so we had something from HR, something from risk, something from finance, and it was just one problem that they had during their day or something that they'd experienced, or something that was niggling them. The whole notion was that they got a 30 seconds, pitch on what their problem was, and everybody in the audience had just little Post-It notes.
- Shawna Murray: The idea was that they were going to come up with ways to solve what their problem was, but they couldn't respond to the person that they worked within their team. If you worked in finance, you couldn't help to solve the finance problem. That, for me, was at a large-scale what we're trying to embed within people as well. Try it out, and that was done in a 20-minute exercise, so you don't need to necessarily take a long time.
- Shawna Murray: The tools as I mentioned, happy to share those, come up with what you want people to perhaps use and try, because that exposure and the retention and having something familiar, you take out the hard work for them, so curate something that works for your business.
- Shawna Murray: I used it as a development opportunity, so if you have people who are looking to develop in different areas, this different way of working, it's not just a skill for your workplace. It's a skill that can be translated into other workplaces as well, and it doesn't matter around what industry you work in or what sector you work in.

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Karen Moloney: We'll include a link to Shawna's profile if anybody wants to get in touch to find out more about the process we went through and human-centred design, and also to put some links to those great resources that you've offered to kindly share with our listeners. Thank you very much, Shawna, for coming on today and sharing your work with us. It's been really interesting.

Shawna Murray: Thank you, Karen. Thank you, Michelle.

Karen Moloney: If you're finding Learning Uncut valuable, we'd love if you'd please take a moment to rate the podcast and leave us a review comment. Amanda, Michelle, and I would really appreciate this because it helps get the podcast into the ears of more listeners and we want as many learning professionals as possible to have an opportunity to learn from the fabulous work of all of our guests. Thanks very much.