

CASE STUDY

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Building a High-Performing Culture Beyond the Pitch!

*A Proud History.
A Shared Commitment
to Change.*

How one of Australia's oldest sporting institutions brought its people together, strengthened leadership and created a more collaborative, high-performing culture!

Background

For more than 155 years, the **South Australian Cricket Association (SACA)** has played a vital role in developing cricket, supporting 35,000 members and nurturing future Australian talent.

Despite its proud history and iconic Adelaide Oval home, Chief Executive Charlie Hodgson recognised that SACA wasn't reaching its full potential.

With financial pressures, internal challenges and inconsistent on-field results, SACA needed to build a culture capable of delivering sustainable high performance, both on and off the pitch.

The Challenge

When Charlie joined SACA, he inherited an organisation with capable people and goodwill, but one that had become comfortable rather than performance-focused.

Initial operational and structural improvements helped SACA recover from a \$6 million loss, partly attributable to COVID-19, and restore financial stability.

However, its people metrics revealed deeper challenges.

- **Employee engagement and turnover challenges.** Engagement fell from 74 to the low 60s, while staff turnover rose from the mid-teens to the mid-20s.
- **Inconsistent leadership alignment.** Leaders needed greater alignment, stronger collaboration and a shared commitment to performance.
- **Difficulty with Constructive feedback.** Giving and receiving feedback effectively remained a significant challenge.

Lisa Coderre's appointment as General Manager, People and Culture marked a turning point, introducing an evidence-based approach to leadership and culture transformation.

"Human Synergistics gives a clear diagnostic framework that's credible, data-driven and anchors the opportunity for a sense of 'why' in the change we were looking to make in our business".

Lisa Coderre,
General Manager, People & Culture

The Approach

Partnering with Human Synergistics in January 2025, SACA embarked on a culture transformation journey focused on strengthening leadership, reconnecting employees and embedding high performance.

Three priorities emerged:

- Strengthening connection across the organisation.
- Improving leadership consistency and accountability.
- Creating a collective focus on high performance.

Leaders Going First

SACA introduced a leadership development program for its Executive Leadership Team (ELT), supported by Human Synergistics consultant Dave Rundle.

Using the Life Styles Inventory™ (LSI), leaders explored their thinking and behavioural styles, their impact on others and opportunities for development.

For Charlie, whose natural tendencies were more Competitive and Perfectionistic, this required a personal shift. ELT meetings evolved beyond operational reporting to include strategy, culture and people development. Activities involving reflection, gratitude, strengths and play helped build trust, vulnerability and stronger relationships.

Cascading Change

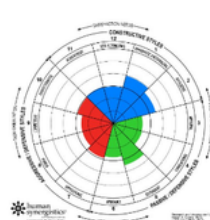
SACA extended leadership development to its next tier of leaders — the organisation's 'people influencers'.

Through coaching, Human Synergistics programs and quarterly leadership forums, these leaders strengthened collaboration and helped reshape organisational practices.

SACA also introduced the Organisational Culture Inventory® (OCI) and Organisational Effectiveness Inventory® (OEI), engaging employees in shaping their current and desired culture.

Initial results highlighted positive Humanistic-Encouraging behaviours, reflecting progress in employee connection and feeling valued.

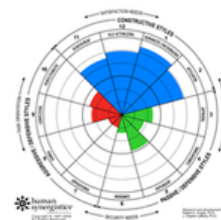
SACA received the HS Constructive Culture Award in 2026



OCI/OEI
Current - Oct 2025



ELT LSI 1
2026
9 Focal Individuals



ELT LSI 2
2026
89 respondents

"I've become much more people- orientated, particularly with the leadership team. And that's born through in our relationship as a group and what we've been able to showcase to the organisation."

Charlie Hodgson, CEO | SACA

Aligning Values and Performance

SACA reinforced leadership development through organisational strategy and systems, refreshing its values around 3 principles:

Be Kind. Be Brave. Do Great Things Together.

A siloed strategy was replaced with five shared priorities:
Growth | People | Customer | Performance | Community

A strengths-based performance framework helped embed culture into planning, collaboration and performance.

The Results:

Within approximately 18 months, SACA achieved significant improvements in engagement, leadership and performance.

- **Engagement:** Increased from 64 to 80 (+16 points).
- **Leadership effectiveness:** Stronger relationships, open feedback and ELT collaboration.
- **Behavioural change:** Follow-up LSI assessments showed greater openness to feedback, with improvements recognised by others.
- **Constructive culture:** OCI results highlighted positive Humanistic-Encouraging behaviours.
- **Beyond engagement:** the transformation has supported greater participation, stronger player pathways and sustained success, demonstrating the impact of aligned leadership, strategy and culture.

Going Forward

Culture transformation remains an ongoing commitment at SACA. Leadership coaching, stronger operating rhythms and Constructive behaviours continue to shape performance. Visible executive sponsorship remains critical, with Charlie actively leading rather than delegating responsibility for cultural change.