Supporting the Working Life Skills of Asylum Seekers and Residence Permit Holders project

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Our journey together

2015

Start with a common idea

Declare your ambition Ideation Workshop

See through the eyes of the customer

Communicate and train to enable the change

Communicate and train To embed the change

Engage with new partners

Test, fail fast, adapt

Let loose and give opportunity to grow and evolve

Design the Future Operating Model

Achieve the North Star

Turn Toward Sustainability

Turn Toward scale

2016

2017-18

2019→

…and move on!

+10 year partnership to build on
The Finnish Red Cross is one of the largest civic organisations in Finland

• The Finnish Red Cross is an association under public law, the activities are based on the Act and Decree on the Finnish Red Cross
• Founded in 1877
• 90 000 members
• 45 000 active volunteers
• 150 000 blood donors
• 60 000 regular contributors
• Nationwide organisation
• 36 asylum seekers center
Early integration of asylum seekers

FRC supports authorities in the early integration of asylum seekers into Finland. Actual integration takes place after receiving the decision on granting asylum.
Asylum seekers have skills, know-how, education, capabilities and willingness to be employed in Finland

Employment is a central tool for improving asylum seeker integration to the society – their know-how should be utilized more efficiently!

**Challenge**
- A large crowd is awaiting for the asylum decision while being **short of meaningful things to do**
- There is distinct demand to **speed up the integration** and employment process
- Asylum seekers have **know-how** that is not sufficiently quickly utilized, if at all

**Opportunity**
- Embracing the **rising demand for new workforce** now and in the future
- Supporting development of a **positive attitude atmosphere** towards immigration
- Having access to **work-life contacts and meaningful things to do** supports societal inclusion

Year 2015 around 32 000 asylum seekers arrived to Finland

Finnish Red Cross is the biggest reception center operator in Finland
Steps from skills survey to the on-the-job learning experience

1. Interview with Red Cross worker. Documenting your skills and experiences to the electronic form

2. When there are on-the-job learning places available, Red Cross worker asks if you are interested to go. Red Cross worker then explains the details, e.g. time and place

3. Starting the on the job learning. On first day fill in the on-the-job learning contract together with the partner and Finnish Red Cross

4. During the on-the-job learning period you can ask any support from partner or Red Cross worker

5. When finishing remember to ask a certificate from the on-the-job learning place

6. Red Cross worker sends feedback survey link to you. Kindly respond and tell us about your experience

Participants
- Red Cross worker
- Asylum seeker
- Partner
Since 2016 the program has facilitated 750 on the job learning periods with ~14% conversion to employment.

- **1800** Individual Skills Profiles
- **750** On the Job Learning Periods
- **+ 120** People Employed

Finnish Ministry of Employment and Economy awarded the program with the "Best practice of integration 2016" – diploma.
What did we learn?

• Start small and fast, but design for scale and sustainability.
  • **Find the right partners with complementing capabilities.**
  • Embed core activities into existing processes
  • Invest in the change journey

• Be patient to crawl through the norms and regulations to find the hard ground to operate

• **Impact** - Even a short authentic experience on working in a X-cultural setting is often enough to change attitudes and remove prejudices.
What’s coming

- 2017-2019 new voluntary activity to FRC
- “Mentors” who will guide target people to Finnish working life – integration face.
- Open Badges to recognise, validate and demonstrate learning that happens anywhere.
- **Open Badges are digital credentials**
- **Finnish Migration Service** > official skill survey
Questions

• What are the right approaches to attract companies? What support they need to take the leap of faith to invite refugee “interns”?

• How to best support the next step, when refugees leave the centers and live on their own?

• Resourcing
Thank you!

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