



# Mindful Managers Reflection Rounds

## Facilitators' Guide

### Intellectual Output 4

Prepared by Inova Consultancy

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CARDET

obelisk



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## 1. REFLECTION ROUNDS

Mindful Managers is an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Union. The project has four partners: Inova Consultancy (UK), VAMK (Finland), Obelisk (Belgium) and CARDET (Cyprus). The target group is managers in the public sector, and additionally team colleagues. All of the partners in this project recognise the stress which staff and managers experience in the workplace. It has been found that 53% of workers believe that stress is the main health and safety risk they face in the workplace and 27% of workers reported experiencing 'stress, depression, anxiety' caused or worsened by work during the last 12 months (EU-OSHA, 2016). The Mindful Managers project aims to train managers to recognise mental health issues and talk openly about these issues at work. The project promotes work-based learning and uses mentoring and coaching at work for training purposes. As part of the project, a programme was developed; Reflection Rounds. The programme is led by skilled facilitators from across the EU with expertise in action learning or by facilitators who have been trained in the methodology by Inova Consultancy, the UK partner.

The Reflection Rounds element of the Mindful Managers project aims to enhance public sector managers' skills to enable them to positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work, supporting staff effectively.

### 1.1. Inova Consultancy's Methodology – Background

In 2001, Inova Consultancy developed the Mentoring Circles™ methodology, and this is the foundation which the Reflection Rounds programme has been built on. In the Mindful Mentoring programme, Circles™ has been adapted to Reflection Rounds. This guide has been produced to equip facilitators with the necessary knowledge and information regarding Inova Consultancy's approach to Reflection Rounds and to outline our recommended process for working with groups of public sector managers. In order to support public sector managers, Inova has developed a unique group mentoring process, which brings together skilled facilitation using action learning techniques, coaching and mentoring. The programme aims to develop public sector managers' skills and competences, positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work. Partners will be trained on this methodology so that they can also transfer to their contexts.

### Reflection Rounds – Purpose

- Mindful Managers gives managers tools and resources to actively support positive wellbeing at work for themselves and their teams.
- The programme aims to model the use of tools and techniques which participants may further use and disseminate in their organisations such as effective questioning, coaching questions, reframing and a solutions-focused question model evidenced by positive psychological approaches.
- Reflection Rounds enables an individual to share their problems, issues, opportunities and challenges with others gaining experience of action learning.
- The sessions provide a safe yet challenging environment where ideas can be explored and tested.



- Possible options for action can be generated and discussed.
- The programme aims to de-stigmatise the discussion around mental health at work.

## 1.2. Reflection Rounds – Underpinning Philosophy and Methodology

Reflection Rounds sessions are learner led and learner focused; therefore, the programme has been built on the process of learning as a journey. This method requires that the individual can be helped to reveal what they need to know, that some knowledge is already within them and needs to be brought forward and that shared knowledge and learning from others can be valuable. Group discussions, exercises and guided questioning from other participants are utilised to reveal individual insights. The programme enables participants to take turns to outline their problems and the other group members can ask questions regarding their issues in order to guide them. The focus is on questioning rather than advice giving as the process is about discovery and trying to understand more fully any underlying issues which it would be fruitful to explore further. Similarly, when completing exercises regarding self-development or self-reflection, participants are encouraged to question their responses and to support other group members in questioning why they responded to an exercise in a certain way. This process strengthens the development of self-reflection.

Reflection Rounds build on the scientific evidence resulting from the Mental Capital and Wellbeing research project (UK Government) which identifies 5 actions that people can take to boost their mental health and wellbeing (at work or in personal life):

1. **Connect** with the people around you.
2. **Be active.**
3. **Take notice** and reflect on your experiences to ensure you appreciate what matters to you.
4. **Keep learning.**
5. **Give** to a friend, a stranger or your community.<sup>1</sup>

This research was used to develop the Mindful Managers training programme, which complements the Reflection Rounds. Participants are encouraged to build on any pre-existing knowledge of the 5 domains: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning, give. Furthermore, according to the CIPD, the UK professional body for managers working in HR, a number of domains contribute to health and wellbeing. The domains reflect personal attributes and behaviours linked to the world of work. The self-assessment evaluations build on this knowledge: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/factsheet>

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<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/292453/mental-capital-wellbeing-summary.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/292453/mental-capital-wellbeing-summary.pdf) p. 23.



These domains are:

- **Connect** with the people around you, make new connections.
- **Be active** - move your body, push yourself, exercise, use the outdoors to re-energise
- **Take notice** and reflect on your experiences to ensure you appreciate what matters to you.
- **Keep learning** - hobbies, gain new information, use your thinking skills, keep your brain active.
- **Give** to a friend, a stranger or your community, give your time.
- **Health** - develop good habits: healthy eating, exercise, mental health and wellbeing, managing stress, physical safety
- **Good work** - seek purposeful work, use your talents, seek satisfaction, autonomy and opportunities and work-life balance.
- **Values/principles** - develop a life in alignment with your principles, spiritual beliefs, sources of nurturing, inclusion and dignity.
- **Collective/social** - seek and use support, be with others, reduce isolation, reenergise yourself through social activity, acknowledge belonging to different groups, involvement in decision-making, use your voice, build healthy relationships in all areas of life.



- **Personal growth** - identify your growth opportunities, pursue them, value yourself, career development, emotional resilience.
- **Good lifestyle choices** - make choices that support a healthy lifestyle: food, diet, activity, relaxation, hobbies, nurturing talents
- **Financial wellbeing** - fair pay and benefits, financial planning, obtaining reliable advice if required.

Adapted from CIPD, (2019)

The target group could include those who have attended the modules which were run in IO3, but also new participants. Therefore, the domains have been extended in order to provide a richer training programme. The session should be learner-led; therefore, facilitators can support learners exploring the previous five domains or build upon them by exploring domains relating to the twelve provided.

### **How positive psychology and solutions-focused questioning underpins reflection rounds.**

The approach suggested by Inova also includes modelling of a solutions focused coaching approach which is potentially beneficial in behaviour change. Talking approaches which explore the past are more likely to leave an individual stuck in their sense of poor self-efficacy, engender feelings of guilt and shame, whereas solutions focused questioning enables an individual to tap into their own resourcefulness, connect with good habits already being formed and promote competence (Szabo and Berg, 2005). Solutions-focused approaches focus on strengths, emergent skill and talent, rather than deficits and problems. It is an approach which values individual competence and an ability to find one's own solutions.

### **1.3. Reflection Rounds – how they run.**

Each round will have 5 participants meeting for 3-4 sessions (each lasting up to four hours). The sessions have broad themes and the premise is that discussion of personal and managerial agendas on the 12-factor wellbeing model potentially underpins all activities.

Each session includes a self-assessment element, demonstration and application of tools/ techniques which could be personally beneficial, but which could also be used with staff and colleagues in workplaces.

The reflection round element of each session allows each member to have dedicated time to discuss their issues. They will be encouraged to define actions and take ideas forward, identifying solutions to problems, developing more agency and also recognising the limits of action.

**Session 1:** self-assessment, self-understanding, demonstration of a tool/ technique e.g. reflection models with a reflection round and individual exclusive time slots, identification of goals and actions and a plenary discussion to examine applicability to workplace learning.

**Session 2/3:** mid sessions-demonstration of tools /techniques or activities provided as part of



the session and in the guide and reflection for each participant, allowing them an exclusive time slot to air their issues.

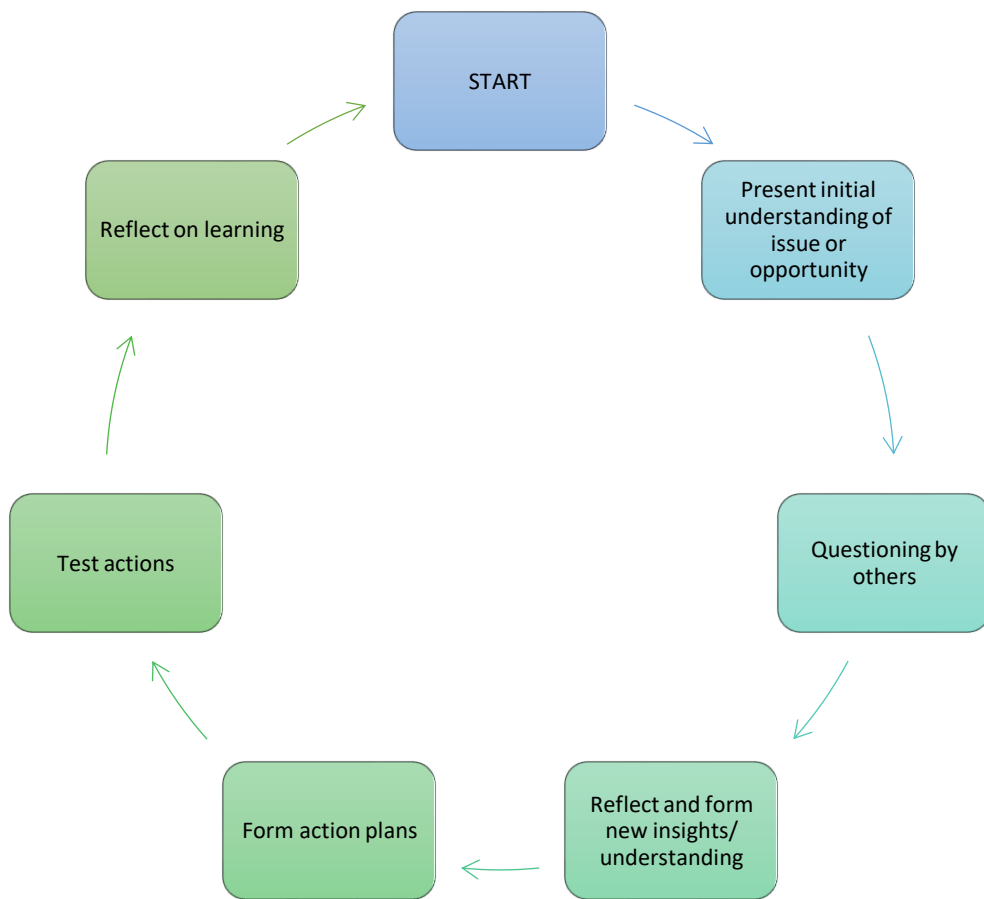
**Final session:** final self-assessment, demonstration of tools and techniques and reflection with individual exclusive time slots. Discussion and feeding forward actions into the future. Session evaluation.

### 1.4. Overview of the Reflection Round Methodology

The approach of the Reflection Rounds Methodology is an iterative action learning cycle which can be used multiple times by participants (developing fresh issues or deepening development of complex issues) (see Figure 1). Participants and managers can explore mindful skill development which is then complemented by practising these skills in the real world and coming back to further reflect in the Reflection Rounds.

#### Iterative Learning Cycle in the Reflection Round Training Programme

The Reflection Rounds process is based on the principles of action learning: Think - Act - Reflect supporting mentoring principles and embedding coaching principles of doing and taking purposeful action in pursuit of goals which can underpin real change.



**Figure 1: Iterative Learning Cycle in the Reflection Round Training Programme**





## 1.5. Reflection Rounds – Facilitation Aims

Reflection Rounds sessions are generally facilitated in a non-directive manner; however, each facilitator has their own style. It may be necessary to use a more directive approach when appropriate e.g. when an individual might be about to undertake risky or damaging actions which can be foreseen. The size of group dictates the level of direction required, as larger groups are often led in a more directive fashion than smaller ones.

We would expect the learning process to feature some of the following:

- Exploration of what may cause particular conditions or consequences, reviewing decisions or actions and revealing how this has led to the current situation. Could problems have been avoided? What are the implications if a similar situation occurs in the future? What have they learnt from this situation?
- Examining their own thinking that led them to believe something or act in a certain way. Is a decision built on fair assumptions? Have assumptions been tested?
- The facilitation should also be future and solution focused. This is useful to assist members in predicting possible outcomes. Have they taken everything into account? What is the back up or contingency plan? Have they considered all the options in a situation?
- The facilitation should also involve awareness of group dynamics and group process. This may occasionally require the facilitator to intervene to protect someone's time, to keep issues on track when challenges may be causing distress, when someone is perhaps using power inappropriately or behaving in a way that frustrates or blocks the group's learning. For further information about this topic you can watch this video [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR\\_86.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_86.htm)
- Participants might wish to experiment with behaviours in the programme (with the agreement and support of their colleagues) and obtain feedback. For further information about this topic you can watch this video:
- [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM\\_98.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_98.htm)
- Encourage group members to be creative, to work outside comfort zones and to maximise opportunities. "The comfort zone is a behavioural state within which a person operates in an anxiety-neutral condition, using a limited set of behaviours to deliver a steady level of performance, usually without a sense of risk."<sup>2</sup> For further information you can watch this video <https://lifehacker.com/the-science-of-breaking-out-of-your-comfort-zone-and-w-656426705>.
- Contracting: defining an agreement with the Mindful Managers members about roles and responsibilities. This ensures that you facilitate to the best of your ability and they get the most out of the process in a climate which is conducive to learning. Agreements need to be revisited frequently and rules of operation need restating at the start of each session. More information follows on the content of contracting discussions.

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<sup>2</sup> White, A. From comfort zone to performance management. *White & MacLean Publishing*, 2009, p. 2.





## 2. OUTLINE OF SESSION CONTENT

Participants develop several skills and competencies throughout the journey. Participants also assess their own skills at the beginning and at the end of the programme in order to track any personal progression. This section provides the facilitator with an outline for the sessions. There are suggested tools and exercises for each meeting, but it is up to the discretion of the facilitator which tools to utilise.


This section provides an overview of how the three sessions will run with detailed content of the Reflection Round process specific to this target group of public sector managers. There is an emphasis through questioning on projective agency to achieve wellbeing. There is no great need to focus on past activity and obstacles, although these will inevitably arise in discussion. The solutions focused-frame invites individuals to think about what it would take to get to the next stage on their personal journey, rather than being stuck in any past difficulties. The reflections are based on the 12 domain model as a fundamental tool in each session. Discussions are likely to be emergent. It is best not to be too prescriptive at this stage. Here a defined **process of work** is offered, but the **content** should be populated by individual needs, concerns and person-centred preferences for discussion of pertinent health and wellbeing themes.





Journaling (Pennebaker, 1986) is encouraged. Invite people to note down ideas and to keep logs on their progress, writing about success, their approach to improving health and reflections on how exercises could be adapted for use in the workplace, either for personal benefit or for supporting staff. Encourage individuals to keep a journal of their attempts to develop healthy habits in the broadest sense. Keep the focus positive; what's working? What's changing? The journal can also contain their tools to track goals. A learner's journal template is available in Annex.






Below is an overview of what broadly needs to take place in each meeting. Timings have not been offered as this may depend on the number of participants. Ensure each participant has a meaningful amount of time dedicated to airing their issues- a minimum of 20 minutes is suggested per participant.

| SESSION NUMBER                          | PURPOSE OF SESSION-ORDER   | POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES - APPROACH AND ACTIVITIES   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>SESSION 1 - introductory session</b> | <p>Introduce purpose of project.<br/>MEETING 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary contracting.</li> <li>• Personal introductions – your introduction and Reflection Rounds member introductions.</li> <li>• Introduction to Action Learning.</li> <li>• Administration and materials signatures on attendance record, check contracts are signed, show and explain learning's journal and introductory material.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss ground rules and how reflection rounds work.</p> <p>Hand out and ask participants to complete pre-Reflection Rounds self-assessment evaluation form</p> | <p>Session 1 theme: How can I build on strengths to develop my sense of wellness and wellbeing in the broadest sense reflecting on the twelve factor model?</p> <p>Facilitator writes up ground rules<br/>Stress confidentiality when sharing personal stories.</p>       |
|   | <p>Session 1 Main Introductory activity self-analysis 12 health domains - what are my strengths and constructive habits?</p> <p>Hand out Exercise 1</p> <p>Presenting self-analysis exercise and to establish strengths from which to work.</p>  | <p>Exercise- reflection on 12 wellness domains - handout and analysis time- private journaling.</p> <p>What are my strengths and constructive habits around the 12 health domains?</p> <p>Sharing of ideas in pairs. Share in plenary if participants agree to do so.</p> |
|   |  <p>Reflection round individual exclusive time slots: Mindful managers</p>  | <p>Transition into reflection round. Each person has 20 minutes to discuss a strength they want to amplify from 12 domains.</p> <p>Facilitator offers each participant the same amount of</p>   |



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|  | <p>- discuss initial ideas.<br/>         Action learning element individual exclusive time slots: turn taking idea<br/>         Facilitator questions to each individual.</p> <p>The purpose is to share best practice on healthy habits.</p> | <p>individual exclusive time slots to discuss their wellbeing<br/>         -questions to start their round could include:<br/>         Solutions focused questions<br/>         What strength do you want to enhance/amplify?<br/>         What have you done about it so far?</p> <p>Scaling on a scale of 1-10 place yourself on the scale where you are now-what would it take to get to the next number up-what action can you take? Facilitator demonstrates scaling exercise and encourages all in round to use this as a means of identifying incremental goals. Scaling Exercise-healthy habits.</p> <p>Individuals state their action points and any personal insights.<br/>         Facilitator asks at end “What strengths have you noticed in others today?”</p>   |
|  | <p> <b>Health Hacks</b><br/>         Exercise-learning from others. This topic then links again to individual action points.</p>                             | <p>If there is time remaining at the end of session one after turn-taking with exclusive individual talk time, this exercise is optional. It could also be used to kick off session 2. Health Hacks Exercise.<br/>         Facilitator places up sheet with 12 domains listed on flipchart pinned on the wall. Each person has 5 ticks to distribute- top 5 will be discussed as health hack topics.<br/>         Quick round: health hacks, flipchart stations round the room: e.g. diet, exercise, mental wellbeing plus 2 more (whichever topics most popular),<br/>         Questions to all on 5 top subjects: what’s working for you around the 12 habits domain? What hacks can you offer others? Individuals offer what’s working for them.<br/>         If time is available ask people to move round the room adding notes to topics until ideas are exhausted. If time is short this can be conducted verbally. This provides</p> |

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|  |   | <p>an opportunity to learn from one another and to spark thinking that individuals have not encountered before. This is relatively open at this stage as relationships are being established. Invite people to ask for more information and questions. Invite people to take photos of health hacks written up on flip charts if this approach was adopted. Ask if individuals have learned anything and will experiment with new behaviours?</p> <p>End on questions to self: what questions have been used that participants would like to apply to themselves? Invite them to note them down and journal around topics.</p> <p>At session two you could invite individuals to present what they have been reflecting on.<br/>         Pledging commitment- action points.<br/>         Individuals summarise their action points.</p> <p>Individuals offer feedback to others in the group...I have noticed....</p> |
| <p><b>SESSION 2 - middle session</b></p> <p><b>Exploring wellbeing more deeply with regard to effective techniques</b></p> | <p>Completion of the session evaluation form</p> <p>The purpose of this session is to give participants reflection round individual exclusive time slots using an action learning focus, but to also present content about wellbeing as resources and to support them. A reflective theory and associated technique will be presented, and individuals will be invited to apply it and try out a technique (OSKAR coaching model and/or ladder of inference.</p> <p></p> <p>Solutions-Focused Coaching</p> | <p>Session 2 theme: thinking skills for mental wellbeing. Quick review round from last session. Facilitator kicks off with question to individuals: What's better? Individuals comment and may log their progress and insights.</p> <p>Case study exercise-Jenny and Atif. Facilitator presents case study and issues are discussed in group about two characters' stories. Then participants choose one character and using the OSKAR model generate solutions-focused questions as if they were managers discussing issues with these staff.</p> <p>Hand out OSKAR solutions focused coaching model</p>  |

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|  |  <p>Ladder of inference exercise</p>  | <p>exercise with ladder of inference-Jenny (use ladder of inference) and Atif (OSKAR model). Then for part two of this exercise it is suggested individuals share personal experiences in pairs when their thinking skills were needed to help them remain resilient in a work situation. Pairs practise OSKAR questioning model, taking it in turns, using the situations shared.</p>  |
|  |  <p>Reflection round individual exclusive time slots: Review of action points from last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have they noticed about themselves?</li> <li>• What actions have they taken?</li> <li>• What worked well?</li> <li>• What issues have they overcome?</li> <li>• What's still to do?</li> </ul> | <p>Transition into reflection round element. Each person has 20 minutes to discuss a strength they want to amplify from 12 domains. They could choose to work on one already identified or a new one. Facilitator offers each participant the same amount of individual exclusive time slots to discuss their wellbeing -questions to start their round could include:<br/> Solutions-focused questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strength do you want to enhance/amplify?</li> <li>• What have you done about it so far?</li> </ul> |
|  |  <p>Scaling on a scale of 1-10 place yourself on the scale where you are now-what would it take to get to the next number up-what action can you take?</p>  | <p>Use scaling:<br/> Scaling on a scale of 1-10 place yourself on the scale where you are now-what would it take to get to the next number up-what action can you take? Facilitator demonstrates scaling exercise and encourages all in round to use this as a means of identifying incremental goals. Scaling Exercise-healthy habits.</p> <p>Pledging commitment- action points<br/> Individuals summarise their action points.</p> <p>Discussion applicability of technique in workplace</p>   |

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|   |   | <p>setting.</p> <p>Facilitator writes up conclusions.<br/>         Feedback in plenary: how useful are these tools, type of questioning and reflection? How useful could they be with staff?<br/>         Closing activities:<br/>         Following this activity- quick fire round any ideas, insights and intentions? Share actions with group.<br/>         Revisit journaling idea. Solutions focused progress logging.<br/>         If time participants can work up ideas or take it home to develop ideas further and bring into the next session.</p> <p>Facilitator asks at end what skills have you noticed in others today?</p> <p>Quick round: I have noticed....<br/>         Individuals offer feedback to others in the group...I have noticed....</p> |
|   | <p>Completion of the session evaluation form</p>  |  |
| <p><b>SESSION 3 - final session</b></p> <p><b>Exploring ideas for growth and action planning beyond the end of the project.</b></p> | <p>Facilitator introduces concept of <b>circle of influence</b>.<br/>         My circle of influence: what can I control, what's beyond my control?<br/>         The purpose is for individuals to have a pragmatic understanding of what factors they can influence in personal lives and at work and what issues they cannot influence.</p> <p>🔍 Give out Disorienting dilemmas exercise.</p> | <p>Theme: Influence and control. Mental wellbeing is predicated on being able to clarify what influence an individual has, an ability to gain control and an ability to identify issues which cannot be influenced. Agency is also important to enable individuals to feel in control of circumstances and to avoid victimhood.</p> <p>🔍 Disorienting Dilemmas Exercise. (Mezirow, 1990)<br/>         Facilitator introduces concept of circle of influence exercise.<br/>         Exercise My circle of influence: what can I control, what's beyond my control.<br/>         and identifying any further issues for exploration in last</p>  |



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|  |  | session and beyond the Reflection Rounds.  |
|  |  <p>Reflection round using action learning approach element:<br/>         Action learning individual exclusive time slots: Review of action points from last meeting and individuals present any goals developed. Exploration of ideas, obstacles, issues, opportunities.</p> | <p>Transition into reflection round element. Each person has 20 minutes to discuss a strength they want to amplify from 12 domains. They could choose to work on one already identified or a new one. Review progress as part of each individual's turn.<br/>         Facilitator offers each participant the same amount of individual exclusive time slots to discuss their wellbeing</p> <p>End on insights, ideas, intentions.</p>   |
|  | <p>Facilitator invites each participant at end of individual exclusive time slots to express next action points, sources of support.</p> <p>Feedback to Reflection Rounds members on emerging skills, strengths<br/>         Facilitator asks at end what skills have you noticed in others today?</p>   | <p>What have they noticed about themselves?<br/>         What actions have they taken?<br/>         What worked well?<br/>         What issues have they overcome?<br/>         What's still to do?</p> <p>Pledging commitment- action points<br/>         Individuals summarise their action points</p>  <p>Circle of influence exercise.<br/>         Control- you have power to make direct changes and exert influence<br/>         Influence- you have some influence and some power, though your actions may be limited.<br/>         Concern- little power or control, though you may be worried about such things.</p> <p>Personal reflection and sharing.</p> |

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|  |   | Individuals summarise their action points.<br>Closing activity.   |
|  | <p>Complete post self-assessment evaluation form and session evaluation form and any administration pertaining to participants<br/>Closing activity.</p> <p>Discuss sustainability- will people continue to meet, gain support from one another? Share contact info if agreed.</p> <p>Complete all end of session administration including session evaluation and final session evaluation.</p> | <p>Quick round: I have noticed about my organisation....<br/>Individuals offer feedback to others in the group...I have noticed....</p> <p>Ending sessions. Close with ideas, insights, intentions.</p> |

## 3. REFLECTION ROUNDS PROGRAMMES

The methodology which Reflection Rounds has been built on is Mentoring Circles™. This method of mentoring is typically held in a series of three or four meetings, the sessions are usually spaced at least three weeks apart. The programme requires a project administrator who liaises closely with facilitators and group members on times and dates and will handle all preliminary emails to the group members and reminders about meetings. Facilitators are encouraged to communicate with participants in between meetings, so it will be useful for you to set up a defined group containing your Reflection Rounds members' email addresses. The working process is iterative and invites individuals to work on issues of concern to them.

### 3.1. Preliminary Contracting Overview (Session 1)

Contracting is a crucial role of the facilitator and ensures that expectations are clarified from both sides: the programme and the learners.

Block (1981) suggests that a contract with a client is a social contract and is developed to enable the consultant or facilitator to have equal power with the client. It forms an explicit agreement about expectations of the respective parties and develops detail about how they are going to work together.

The facilitator needs to develop an informal contract and a technique for working with the participants. The concept of action learning and Reflection Rounds needs to be explained. Each new session will begin with a contracting element which will be described in detail here. A structured contracting session to start off the first meeting would include:

1. Your personal introduction.
2. Engaging members introducing themselves to one another.
3. An introduction concerning Mindful Managers project, Reflection Rounds, how they work, why this methodology has been chosen, relevant statistics and background information about the project and background of methodology developed by Inova.
4. Establish the meeting process; give a model for how each meeting will work.
5. Communicate expectations about evaluation.
6. Communicate needs regarding administration procedures: initial contract signing, attendance register, evaluation materials, end of project testimonials.
7. Elicit any expectations the group members have of you as facilitator.
8. Exchange any expectations you have of them in terms of contribution or behaviour or the way meetings run.
9. Develop ground rules.
10. Introduction to the method and ways of working, trying out the method.

#### 3.1.1. Your personal introduction

This will probably include:

- Your name.
- Your role in the project.



- Personal history, how you got to where you are in life, how you developed your career, any career break information, motivations and drivers.
- Length of time in your role, fields you have worked in, career trajectory.
- Professional qualifications if relevant, credibility to be able to facilitate.
- How you like to work, anything in particular that you value e.g. openness, honesty, sharing.
- Explain your role- process expert rather than technical expert.
- Finally give out any relevant materials, learning logs, handouts, and files. Ensure all attending have signed the attendance sheet and agreements have been signed.

### **3.1.2. Engaging Reflection Rounds members introducing themselves to one another**

This needs only be brief at this initial stage. It can help to give people a framework to contain their introduction and a set time e.g. two minutes. Write headings on flipchart paper and ask them to sum up their intro around the following:

- Name.
- Background (only what they are comfortable sharing – perhaps previous jobs, interests etc.).
- Three key challenges they face now about being manager in the public sector.
- What they want to get out of attending the Reflection Rounds sessions.

You might also find it useful to check any prior exposure to action learning or coaching and mentoring.

### **3.1.3. An introduction concerning Reflection Rounds**

It is important to explain how Reflection Rounds work to all participants. Reflection Rounds provide a facilitated space where individuals have a dedicated time slot each to present their issues, problems and opportunities. Through questioning, the group members are helped to gain more insight into their situation; the aim is to help them find ways forward in taking purposeful action.

The method works because it places the learner at the centre of the situation; it works in real time on live issues of importance to the individual. It integrates any theoretical learning with real experience; it's about action and implementation.

The benefits of this action learning approach are:

- It enables learners to generate more insight into the situation they are facing, perhaps helping them to generate more options and solutions.
- It tests assumptions on which plans are built.
- It enables learners to reality check plans, ideas and solutions. Questioning whether they are appropriate, comprehensive and appropriate to the context.
- By bringing more brain power to look at issues, learners have more opportunity to spot issues which they haven't already thought of; it can help expose blind spots. Reflection



Rounds colleagues may help learners look at potential consequences or outcomes; they may help learners to generate more innovative and creative ideas or find new ways to approach situations.

- It offers a way of constructively challenging ideas, in order to help learners further develop them to maximise chances of success.

#### **3.1.4. Establish the meeting process; give a model for how each meeting will work**

The general process of what happens in Reflection Rounds is as follows:

Reflection Rounds have a trained facilitator who helps shape the sessions. The sessions will last for 3-4 hours. Each person has an allocated time to explore an issue they are facing. The facilitator helps participants to develop action plans to go forward and test out new ideas or implement solutions; participants then bring issues back to the next meeting. Reflection Rounds colleagues can help hold participants to account, giving them confidence to push themselves out of their comfort zone. Learning is about being resilient in the face of difficulty. Participants may not achieve everything that they set out to achieve; however, they will be encouraged to review difficulties and learn from them and find new paths for action.

You may wish to refer them to the diagram of the action learning model or draw one of your own on a flip chart to explain this process.

Explain that the rounds also have an explicit use of a model/exercise in each session that aids reflection. This could be personally beneficial and may be of use to managers working with their staff. This is a safe space for experimentation and for public sector managers to evaluate the usefulness of such tools that aid reflection.

#### **3.1.5. Communicate expectations about evaluation**

It is a requirement of participating in each programme that Reflection Rounds members agree to take part in evaluation. There are many materials provided to enable this to happen.

At the end of each Reflection Rounds, session evaluation forms must be completed. The response rate is not as good if you allow people to take the form home, so try to ensure they are completed at the end of the session. Allow ten minutes at the end of the session for them to be completed. Materials are contained in Annex.

#### **3.1.6. Communicate needs regarding administration procedures: initial contract signing, attendance register, evaluation materials**

During the first meeting, the facilitator must provide each participant with two copies of the Reflection Rounds agreement (see Annex for example). Ask them to read through the agreements and sign and date both. The participant retains one for their records and the facilitator collects the second copy and keeps for the project records.

At the start of each meeting participants are asked to sign in on the attendance register. This is an important record for the project and provides evidence to funders that the event has



taken place, so please retain it.

Explain that participants may be contacted at the end of the programme for feedback outlining any learning and achievements. It is helpful if participants can log their progress; you could encourage them to keep a learner's journal or private diary on their thoughts, goals and progress reviews. Give examples of what might be considered outcomes, where possible quantitative measures. Softer qualitative measures can also be reported: e.g. less stressed, sleeping better, better atmosphere in the workplace etc.

It is the main job of the facilitator to ensure the learners identify goals and see progress on action planning.

### **3.1.7. Elicit any expectations the group members have of you as facilitator**

This will vary according to your facilitation style and experience, but you might check the following:

- What level of challenge are people comfortable with?
- What experience do they have of self-regulating in a group and therefore how much do they expect you to intervene? This is especially important with regards to managing individual's timeslots.
- What would be a useful role for you regarding time keeping, enabling time to be shared?
- Do they require group or individual feedback from what you observe of behaviour in the group?
- Do individuals have any particular requirements or sensitivities?

### **3.1.8. Exchange any expectations you have of them in terms of contribution or behaviour or the way meetings run**

- What are your expectations about confidentiality?
- What do you expect about openness and honesty?
- What level of awareness do you expect people to aspire to?
- What are your expectations about people being responsible for what they find useful and unhelpful in the group and asking for help?
- Attendance; explain any expectations you have regarding attendance, informing you of non-attendance, timekeeping, communicating with you or others if there are problems, getting messages to one another in emergencies.
- Explain your expectations about doing work between meetings whether that is logging progress, reflecting, preparing for next sessions.

### **3.1.9. Developing ground rules**

This guide for Reflection Rounds members suggests that they give thought to:

- Confidentiality.
- Attendance and commitment.



- Use of time.
- Questioning and levels of challenge.
- Giving feedback (E.g., Participant A says to participant B “you should do something about this” Facilitator could say to Participant A “could you rephrase your question please using more neutral language?”).
- Respect.
- Communication style.
- Different types of ‘helping’ in the group- what people would prefer. What helps? What hinders?

You may have different approaches to developing ground rules. Feel free to use your own ideas. Here are two examples of methods develop ground rules:

| METHOD 1   | METHOD 2  |
|--|---|
| <b>Write up a list of bullet points/questions on the flip chart headed <i>Ground Rules</i>:</b>  | <b>Write up the question on the flip chart headed <i>Ground Rules</i>:</b>  |
| Invite a brief discussion around each theme and. Invite people to articulate their thoughts around topics. Write them up, checking all the time that everyone feels able to sign up to what has been agreed. Probe to check that issues resonate with all. Pick up on anybody language or discomfort that might suggest there is covert disagreement. Summarise the consent. | Invite a brief discussion around the question. Invite people to articulate their thoughts around topics. Identify themes and agreement. Write up notes, checking all the time that everyone feels able to sign up to what has been agreed. Probe to check that issues resonate with all. Summarise the consent. Check your list in the guidance to see all angles have been covered. Introduce new ideas if anything has been missed. |

Developing ground rules for a group is a crucial way of ensuring that the group starts off working in a way that fits with the methodology. Potential issues to discuss as part of developing ground rules could include:

- Confidentiality and respect-respecting others’ ideas and keeping ideas within the Reflection Rounds, especially issues of a very personal nature- stress, workplace problems. Not communicating what is spoken in the group externally is an important principle in building trust.
- Attendance and commitment-expectations of one another as Reflection Rounds members
- Use of time-propose individual exclusive time slots ( a defined amount of time to present their ideas/ issues and ask themselves questions, reflect on questions offered) per person and explain process, any particular issues anyone had that could impact on use of time, need to leave early one week etc.
- Questioning and levels of challenge-explain process of questioning as tool to help others to find solutions, rather than offering advice. Ask to what extent people are prepared to be constructively challenged about their ideas.
- Giving feedback-test ground rule that before giving feedback to people, person receiving feedback should have sought it.





- Communication style-any issues, comprehension, speaking slowly etc.
- Different types of 'helping' in the group- what people would prefer. What helps? What hinders?
- Check willingness to do homework/ further research outside the Reflection Rounds in ground rules.

Follow this discussion by writing ground rules up and indicate that they can be re-negotiated at any time as issues emerge.

#### **GROUND RULES EXAMPLE**

- We are prepared for any questions and value being challenged and pushed.
- Be open and honest with one another, face the reality in career management, what's happening now, don't gloss over problems.
- Be open if we are not comfortable with level of challenge.
- We will take individual ownership and take action in between sessions.
- We will be open to new ideas, criticisms, and will articulate what is working and not working.
- We will develop trust to combine and offer creative ideas to one another.
- Respect one another's ideas and don't take them, seek permission if developing ideas- partnerships are possible.
- Protect reputations and promote one another.
- Be ourselves, be authentic.
- If not able to attend because of illness we will phone and get a message through to the facilitator/ group as early as possible.

At the end of session one, type up the flip chart rules agreed and email them around to each member of the group and send a copy to the project administrator marking the email confidential. Print off a copy and keep it in your file to refer to. You may need to re-contract ground rules if issues arise during the programme. Check whether participants give consent to sharing their email addresses and emailing each other. This is not usually a problem at all.

#### **3.1.10. Introduction to the method and ways of working, trying out the method**

In your first session you need to give people experience of trying out the method and draw attention to:

- The role of the presenter and conventions e.g. asking for input.
- The focus on questioning rather than giving advice; an exercise or examples may be needed to communicate how to question and how to avoid advice giving.

During your first session you will need to outline not only the general process of working, but the behavioural elements of your role and the roles of participants.

Explain that the Reflection Rounds method is learner led, and therefore presenter led. The 'presenter' is the person speaking explaining their issues in their time slot. The presenter is



encouraged to state what they need and to regulate contributions from others if they are too directive or unhelpful.

If input is required the presenter is expected to initiate it, asking for input from others when required. Ensure that people understand your definition of 'advice giving', in its unhelpful sense of directing the presenter towards a particular way of thinking or course of action. Look for sentences starting with:

'Have you thought about...?'

'Have you tried...?'

'You could try...'

Also explain how statements may be focused on a questioner's experience when the focus should be on the presenter.

'When I managed a restaurant, we used to....'

'When I was a manager, I always found ...'

Give people an opportunity to practise turning statements into questions.

## 4. DETAILED OVERVIEW OF REFLECTION ROUNDS PROCESS

Your first meeting is dominated by more preliminary contracting; subsequent meetings generally follow a similar process but may differ in the type of exercises you choose to work on with the group depending on individual and group needs.

### 4.1. Check in

During the introduction you find out how people are, what they have been working on, what challenges they have been facing, what progress they have made and their review of any changes. The check in process helps to structure a format for the session. You might wish to write the following on the flip chart to help structure the individual presentations:

- How are you feeling?
- What's been happening?
- What actions did you take?
- What progress have you made?

### 4.2. Describe current issue(s)

At this point the individuals have separate time slots for airing their issues. Allocate equal time for each person leaving enough time for a summary and evaluation at the end. In this section the 'presenter' (the person airing the issue) talks about the issue they wish to discuss. The



'presenter' gives enough information to give the Reflection Rounds members an understanding about what they are facing. Writing down '*My problem or issue I want to talk about is...*' and allowing individual thinking time prior to starting this stage can help individuals to clarify key issues for each session.

Next, the Reflection Rounds members question the presenter. Initially, the questions will probably be information questions to provide an understanding of the context of the issue. It can be time consuming to do two rounds (the first for a check in and the second to air the issue) so decide if it's best to combine the check in with the airing of the issue. This will depend on numbers, talkativeness of the members, time restraints and complexity of issues. You could add questions on the flip chart in order to enable the presenter to articulate and describe their issue at this stage. Additional questions could be:

- What's your key priority/challenge?
- What do you need help with today?

It can sometimes be difficult for participants to prioritise which issue needs to be worked on. Some questions that may help include:

- What's the issue?
- What makes it an issue now?
- Who owns this issue/problem?
- How important is it on a 1-10 scale?
- How much energy do you have for a solution on a 1-10 scale?
- Are you concerned with a number of issues, if so, which issue should be tackled first?

Some problems are so complex that sequential goals are needed to get to a solution; therefore, be flexible and keep them on track. Also, be aware when a participant is flitting from one issue to another that it might be symptomatic of other issues which may need tackling. For example: confidence, poor self-organisation, fear of failure, or procrastination in avoidance of committing to one decision. The facilitator will judge when it is appropriate to probe an issue in order to maximise learning.

By now the participants should have a grasp of the situation and be able to question, probe and explore. Questions are used to create more options, to elucidate, to probe more deeply and to ask discovery questions which might lead to insights or new ways of seeing things or more alternatives for action.

Judge whether or not you need to offer some input on how to question here, particularly in the early stages. It may be necessary to explore closed and open questions, hypothetical questions, discovery questions and leading questions. Discovery questions help uncover the hidden assumptions and beliefs that may be preventing the individual from taking useful action.

### **4.3. Develop solutions, options, alternatives for action**

The process then moves on to resolving issues. Issues may only be resolved slightly;



sometimes opportunities may have been explored so there may be further actions identified rather than solutions. This stage is characterised by people moving from 'not knowing' to 'knowing what to do next'.

#### 4.4. Summarise action and learning

At this stage ask the individual members to summarise their actions and verbally commit to goals or actions. There are a number of tools in the guide for people to use:

- Goal and task worksheets.
- Personal development plan (breaks goals down into phases and provides update areas for logging progress).

In session 1 you may also need to pay some attention to Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time specific (S.M.A.R.T.) goal setting which will help the participants to undertake credible actions which can be measured.

#### 4.5. Goal setting tips

If you write your goals down you have more chance of achieving them. Visualising goals also helps to make them come alive. Before you start writing goals, think about the following questions:

- What time do you have available?
- What's your energy and appetite for achieving this goal?
- What level of knowledge does it require?
- Will you need any new knowledge?
- How are you going to achieve that?
- Can you estimate the effort required in relation to the value of the likely outcome valence?
- Is it a very large goal that needs to be split into sub goals?
- What's the timescale?
- Are there any quick wins?
- Do you need to gain support to achieve your goals? Who from? (i.e. colleagues, your partner, staff). How will you do this? Can you organise goals into a framework? (i.e. short, medium and long term).
- Do you know other people who have achieved goals like this, and can you learn from them and model your behaviour on their success? Are you able to write your goals using the S.M.A.R.T. format? Use SMART goals if appropriate.

|          |                   |   |
|----------|-------------------|---|
| <b>S</b> | <b>Specific</b>   | Defines exactly what your focus is.                             |
| <b>M</b> | <b>Measurable</b> | Is capable of being measured and has a clear outcome described. |
| <b>A</b> | <b>Attainable</b> | Is achievable.  |



|          |                            |   |
|----------|----------------------------|---|
| <b>R</b> | <b>Realistic</b>           | Expresses a goal which is achievable, but which may have some element of stretch and challenge. |
| <b>T</b> | <b>Timed/time specific</b> | Specifies an end date or a date by which the objective will be achieved.                        |

## 5. EXERCISE BANK

### Exercise 1



#### **Introductory activity - self-analysis 12 health domains-what are my strengths and constructive habits?**

What are my strengths and constructive habits around the 12 health domains?

Consider the wheel of twelve health domains and think about yourself. What healthy habits do you already practise? Which of the twelve health domains would you consider strengths? What domains do you feel less confident about? Which would you like to get more involved in?

Make a list of your strengths and constructive habits and be prepared to share them with others.



## Exercise 2



### Healthy habits scaling exercise

Incremental goals can provide a sense of achievement. Using a 10-point scale where 1 is low and 10 high, identify a healthy habit you wish to work on and identify your starting point number. On a scale of 1-10, place yourself on the scale: where you are now?

Ask yourself: what would it take to get to the next number up? What action could you take? Log your ideas in your journal.

This scaling can be used in many situations where you are working on making changes and improvements. It is also useful when having conversations with staff. The focus on small change can make implementing changes more manageable.





### Exercise 3



#### Health Hacks Exercise

Facilitator puts the 12 domains listed on a flipchart or somewhere visible. Each person has 5 ticks to distribute – the top 5 most popular headings on the flip chart with most ticks allocated will be discussed as health hack topics.

Quick round: health hacks, flipchart stations round the room e.g. diet, exercise, mental wellbeing plus 2 more (whichever topics most popular).

Questions to all on 5 top subjects: what's working for you around the 12 habits domain? What hacks can you offer others? Individuals offer what's working for them. If time is available ask people to move round the room adding notes to topics until ideas are exhausted. If time is short this can be conducted verbally. This provides an opportunity to learn from one another and to spark thinking that individuals have not encountered before. This is relatively open at this stage as relationships are being established. Invite people to ask for more information and questions. Invite people to take photos of health hacks written up on flip charts if this approach was adopted. Ask if individuals have learnt anything and will experiment with new behaviours.

### Exercise 4



#### Scaling Exercise-Healthy Habits as part of the reflection round

This simple technique from solutions-focused coaching can be used before any discussion of an individual's goal.

Ask a question to kick off the discussion.

Choose from:

What's your goal?

What do you want to work on?

What's your aim in working on this today?

The individual makes a goal statement.

e.g. I want to improve my diet and eat healthily.

Use the scale. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being low, 10 high, how would you rate your position today?

The individual chooses a number. The facilitator asks: what would it take to get to the next number?

#### **FACILITATION NOTES:**

*The individual is then invited to state actions and express an incremental change. The solutions-focused philosophy leaves the actions to the individual, trusting that they are resourceful. Although some sessions use the SMART goals, this could be too forceful. They are provided in the guide, but use is optional. Judge the mood of the session as the facilitator and trust individuals.*

### Exercise 5



#### Ideas, insights, intentions





|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Ideas</b>      | What ideas come to mind?<br>Are ideas fully formed?<br>Do you need to do more thinking?<br>Do you need to do more research?   |
| <b>Insights</b>   | Do you have any new understanding about yourself or situations?<br>Eureka moment perhaps?<br>Has something new come into awareness?<br>Do you have any hunches you want to explore further? |
| <b>Intentions</b> | What will you do?<br>Do you have actions?<br>What's your plan?  |

**Make notes or share your suggestions verbally with others.**

**FACILITATION NOTES:**

*This exercise can be used to end a session or close an exercise. It's quick and individuals can be invited to contribute verbally or can write notes down following the prompt questions in the table below.*

**Exercise 6**



**SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED CASE STUDY SCENARIOS**

**EXPERIMENT USING THE OSKAR QUESTIONING MODEL OR LADDER OF INFERENCE TECHNIQUE.**

Here are two case study scenarios. Read them both as a group, then choose one to work on. This is an opportunity to imagine you are working with the member of staff who is affected by the situation. The purpose is to generate useful questions you could ask faced with this scenario. Imagine you are working directly with Jenny or Atif. Form the questions as if you want to ask them of someone sitting opposite you.

The **OSKAR model** can be used to help generate useful questions and to move someone forward when addressing an issue, defining goals, noticing what's working and keeping them on a positive track. This model would work well in conversation with Atif.

The **ladder of inference** technique is useful when we want to test our assumptions and understanding of a situation. It helps identify any biases in our thinking and ensures we are not missing information or privileging some information above others. This model would work well in conversation with Jenny.

**Jenny**

Jenny is a junior manager in an engineering company. She has had a female manager (Ruth) for two years who has been very supportive and seemed to rate her and provided her with many opportunities.

Following a restructuring Jenny now has another new manager (Joanne) and Jenny has become less happy at work. This new manager seems to change her mind a lot, delegates a lot of her workload and is very unclear when delegating work. After a couple of mix ups, the manager even seemed to change the story of events which placed Jenny in a negative light



and she felt quite alienated by these events.

Jenny perceived the manager also has favourites and treats people unequally across the team. One person is allowed to work from home a lot. Another person has been offered a lot of development at conferences and travel abroad for a Masters.

Jenny worked in HR earlier in her career and she knows about the concept of the psychological contract. She feels there's little safety for her at work anymore and the lack of trust is causing her stress. Jenny cannot see that the situation at work will improve; therefore, she wants to find a new job with improved prospects and a less toxic culture.

Use the ladder of inference to explore Jenny's understanding and to help her develop action points. In summary, Jenny says the outcome she wants is to find a better job.

### Atif

Atif is a 44-year-old middle manager in the health service. He has been caring for his wife, who was recently diagnosed with a chronic condition, and has tried to undertake household tasks whilst looking after two young children. He has not had time off work and generally he copes well mentally. He used to go to the gym, but he has lapsed recently. He is most concerned about his diet. He cooks from scratch for the children, but resorts to takeaways and fried food for himself. He has put on nearly two stone in six months. He feels his weight is impacting his work; he feels tired, listless and has not felt as resilient.

Changes at work are likely; there's another restructuring and he may be at risk. He has noticed his mood has dipped and sometimes he has felt down. He wants to ensure he continues to come up with good ideas in the IT department in order to position himself for a promotion in the next two years.

You are coaching Atif, using a solutions-focused approach. Solutions focused coaching does not focus on problems, the past, causes, unpicking and deconstructing events, it is future-facing and tries to support the client notice good habits happening now, as evidence of projective agency for the future. Using the OSKAR model, suggest questions in your group that you would use to question him about his desired outcome and what he is doing about it? Generate a list of questions you would ask. Remember, questions, not advice giving.

In summary, Atif says the outcome he wants is to lose weight.

Here are the models for use:

- 1) OSKAR solutions-focused coaching model
- 2) Ladder of inference

| OSKAR SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED COACHING QUESTIONING MODEL |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| STAGE IN MODEL                                     | PURPOSE  | EXAMPLE QUESTIONS/ACTIVITY                     |
| <b>OUTCOMES</b>                                    | Enables client to articulate result/ end point they wish to achieve                            | What makes this an issue today?                |
| <b>SCALING</b>                                     | Enables client to assess where they are on their journey, how much it matters to them, how far | On a scale of 1-10, one being low, 10 high...? |



|                          | they feel they need to do  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>KNOW-HOW</b>          | Enables client to be questioned on what they already know about moving towards a solution  | What have you already done?<br>What do you notice about yourself?<br>What do you already know?   |
| <b>AFFIRM AND ACTION</b> | Enables coachee/manager to identify what they are already doing/ how they are already moving to this goal, noticing good intentions and firming up actions | When you faced this type of situation in the past how did you resolve it?<br>What could you do now?<br>What qualities have you drawn on in the past? |
| <b>REVIEW</b>            | On the next meeting the coachee/manager can review and notice what is better.  | What's better?<br>What's working?  |

Adapted from: Jackson and McKergow (2006)  
<https://www.personal-coaching-information.com/oskar-coaching-model.html>

*Note: In Exercise 7 the ladder of inference model is presented to use on Jenny's scenario.*

## Exercise 7

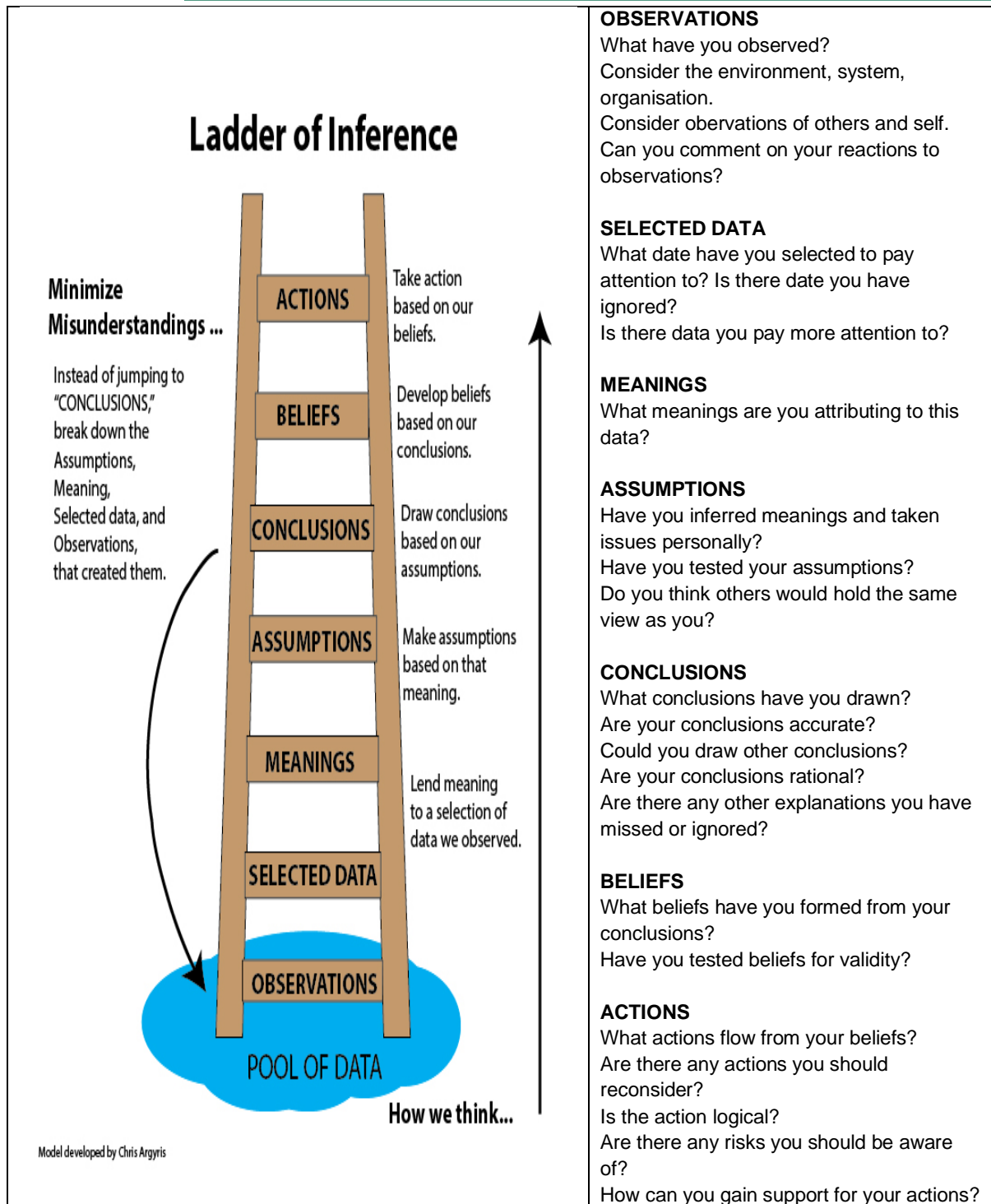


### Ladder of inference exercise.

Answer the questions in the right-hand column. Apply the questions to Jenny's scenario. Do you gain any new insights?



For the second part of this exercise share situations from your personal stories as managers/ employees at work. Practise using the OSKAR technique or ladder of inference technique to generate a deeper understanding of situations and contributory factors.



**Figure 2: The Ladder of Inference**

From Argyris, C., (1990). *Overcoming Organizational Defenses: Facilitating Organizational Learning*, 1st Edition, © 1990. Pearson Education, Inc., New Jersey.

## Exercise 8



### DISORIENTING DILEMMA EXERCISE-A REFLECTION TECHNIQUE

We can suffer from disorienting dilemmas either from externally imposed changes or from new understanding of our own circumstances; these dilemmas are often felt as a type of crisis. Such dilemmas challenge us and can cause discomfort and feelings of unease. Sometimes our values and beliefs can be challenged, we suffer doubts and question ourselves and others. Often, we are required to examine our assumptions and views, reconsider our understanding of the world and such dilemmas necessitate transformation of perspectives (Mezirow, 1990). In the world of work, we might feel torn by different conflicting demands, question the values of people who influence us, have some crisis of confidence and reconsider our fundamental beliefs about the purpose and value of work.

This exercise invites you to think about a disorienting dilemma you have experienced either from your personal life or work. Consider the following questions:

- What was the dilemma?
- How were you challenged?
- How did this situation rock your beliefs?
- More importantly, how did you deal with this situation?
- Make notes and share the situation in your group or pair.

#### **FACILITATION NOTES:**

*Consider whether to run this after thinking time as a whole group activity or in pairs. Be mindful that people may discuss quite personal issues and you may need to check consent for the discussion. Generate a list from the discussions from individual participants about ways they have found to navigate such dilemmas. As a facilitator, after people have spoken, comment on and identify themes and how they link to health, mindfulness and managing well.*

*Perhaps identify where people have taken purposeful action: how does the ability to learn and adaptability contribute to resilience and coping skills? Are there examples of testing, trying out and experimentation? How did participants integrate new perspectives into their world view? Encourage critical analysis. Critically analyse activities and create new understanding –invite participants to use a critical lens examining situations. They could ask of themselves: what did other factors contribute; what did I contribute to this situation? Support participants to reflect on strengths.*

## Exercise 9



### Circle of influence exercise (Covey, 1999, 2004)

Mental wellbeing is predicated on being able to clarify what influence an individual has, an ability to gain control and an ability to identify issues which cannot be influenced. Agency is also important to enable individuals to feel in control of circumstances and to avoid victimhood. Effective self-regulation, being outcome-focused, feeling nearer towards your ideal future self, contribute to a sense of wellbeing and happiness. If we are not aware of our ability to influence circumstances, we could use our energy in the wrong place, exert effort where positive

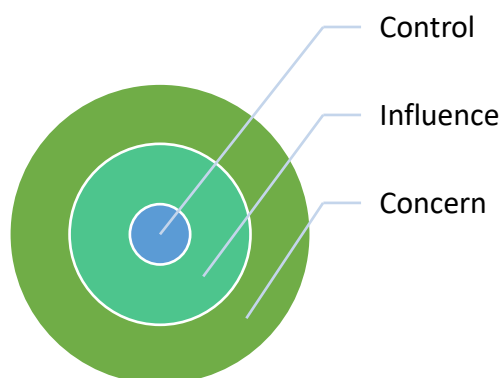
outcomes are unlikely and attribute causality inappropriately.

Covey (1999, 2004) developed a way of considering our sphere of influence. This circle has three concentric rings:

1. **Control** - you have power to make direct changes and exert influence in this central circle.
2. **Influence** - you have some influence and some power, though your actions may be limited. Outcomes may be limited, but you have scope to exert some control.
3. **Concern** - little power or control, though you may be worried about such things. In the outer ring, the circle of concern, here is the place of worry where you have little scope to effect change. Effort here could be wasted.

Thinking about yourself and the circle consider what is taking effort and time.

- Can you identify if you are using your time and energy effectively? Where can you lever more influence?
- Are you wasting effort?
- Are there issues you would like more control over? Is that realistic?



**Figure 3: Covey's circle with concentric rings.**

Share your findings with your partner or group.

## 6. ENDING MEETINGS

Finally ascertain what people have learned in the session. What have they learned about themselves and about their problem or issue? Have they learned anything from others? What were the most useful questions? What impact did they have? Can they see ways to use models demonstrated in their organisation?

Both formative and summative evaluation is required. All the materials are contained within the evaluation section of each participant's file. During or before meeting one, please ask the individual to complete the self-rated Profile Evaluation form which gets them to rate



themselves across a range of competencies and skills (available in Annex).

The facilitator keeps this form from each participant securely and presents it to participants again at the end of session three to compare any changes in skill rating. Forms should also be completed at the end of each session. During the last session, ask individuals to complete their second summative self-rated Profile Evaluation (At the end of the journey) (available in Annex).

If the facilitator believes that the group dynamics are good, encourage participants to give feedback to each other about growth and competencies developed during the last session.

### **6.1. Closing the first meeting**

- Ask people to summarise their actions and comment on any learning for the session.
- Remind participants about the Learner's Journal as an option form to fill in after each session.
- Explain any arrangements for encouraging group members to hold one another to account. You may decide to ask people to allocate a 'chasing buddy' to their left around the table. This person chases them up, asks about progress and generally checks informally on their success in between meetings. This can also help to build relationships more strongly within the group and help to widen networks.
- Ensure everyone has the date of the next meeting in their diary and has venue information.
- Confirm any action you will take e.g. emailing the ground rules agreed.
- Close the session by asking people to complete the relevant evaluation form.

### **6.2. Closing the final meeting**


- Ask people to summarise their actions and comment on any learning for the session and to complete the final outcome form (see annex).
- Close the session by asking people to complete the relevant evaluation form for the final session and the final evaluation form.
- Ensure the post self-assessment questionnaire is complete.
- Remind participants that the project team may make contact to gain feedback/quotes regarding learning outcomes.
- Confirm any arrangements for continuance or informal networking outside of the group.





## 7. ANNEXES

### 7.1. Pre and Post Self-assessment Questionnaires

| MINDFUL MANAGERS REFLECTION ROUNDS                                    |  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|--|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Training public sector managers to develop tools to cope with stress. |  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| Name: .....   |  |  | Date:.....                |   |   |   |   |
| Please evaluate yourself at this present time                         |  |  | 1 = Poor<br>5 = Excellent |   |  |   |   |
| SKILLS and ATTRIBUTES   |  |  | 1                         | 2 | 3   | 4 | 5 |
| <b>SELF-ANALYSIS</b>  |  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 1   | Self-motivation to be healthy in mind and body         |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 2   | Health and wellbeing knowledge                         |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 3   | Confidence to implement change                         |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 4   | Tackle difficult situations-courage                    |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 5   | Take the initiative and action                         |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 6   | Resilience and adapting                                |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| <b>HEALTHY HABITS AND MENTAL WELLBEING</b>                            |  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 7   | Eat healthily  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 8   | Physically active                                      |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 9   | Set myself stretching goals and targets                |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 10  | Relaxation and self-calming skills                     |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 11  | Reflection skills                                      |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 12  | Notice if my health deteriorates/seek support          |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 13  | Take action to manage sources of stress                |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 14  | Ability to learn from peers and implement health hacks |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| <b>HEALTH APPLIED TO MY WORK SETTING</b>                              |  |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 15  | Seek autonomy and control                              |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 16  | Assertiveness and speaking out for self and others     |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 17  | Encourage talk about sources of stress                 |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 18  | Build supportive relationships and networks            |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 19  | Seek job satisfaction/ positive opportunities          |  |                           |   |   |   |   |
| 20  | Know own strengths and limitations                     |  |                           |   |   |   |   |

## 7.2. Reflection Rounds Programme Agreement

(Insert name of facilitator's organisation)

### **Our commitments**

#### ***We agree to:***

- ✓ Place you in a Reflection Rounds programme (provided that we have a suitable and available facilitator for the programme)
- ✓ Monitor your Reflection Rounds and ensure that you meet at least 3 times over a 4-month period
- ✓ Provide you with support during your involvement in the Reflection Rounds programme

### **Your commitments**

#### ***You agree to:***

- ✓ Attend all meetings with your Reflection Rounds (at least 3 meetings; more meetings can be agreed by the participants)
- ✓ Notify your facilitator if you are unable to attend a meeting (at least 2 days in advance)
- ✓ Complete all necessary paperwork, and return to us: attendance list and evaluation form
- ✓ Actively participate in the Reflection Rounds

### **Confidentiality:**

I agree that I will not disclose any confidential information that I may be privy to in the Reflection Rounds to any outside party, without the prior consent of the facilitator and group participants involved.

### **Copyright**

The Reflection Rounds programme is based on the Mentoring Circles™ methodology. Materials, images, and activities are the intellectual property of Inova Consultancy Ltd and are protected by UK and international copyright laws. Unauthorised reproduction is forbidden. All materials and activities cannot be reproduced, published or distributed without written permission of Inova Consultancy Ltd.

### **Other:**

.....  
.....

**Name**

**Signature:**

**Date:**



### 7.3. Session evaluation form

**Mindful Managers Reflection Rounds**  
**Session Evaluation Form**  
**Pilot [1/2] Session [x]**

**[INSERT DATE AND VENUE HERE]**

1. What were your expectations for today's session?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Has today fulfilled these expectations?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the three things you have learned about yourself today?
  
- >
  
- >
  
- >
  
4. What was the most worthwhile thing about your group session today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Is there anything you would like to have changed about the session or that you did not like?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Any other comments?

**Name (optional):** .....

**Date:** .....

**Thank you! Please return this to your facilitator.**

Your comments may be included in future promotional/marketing material for the Mindful Managers project. If you are **not** happy for your comments/quotes to be used for these purposes, please tick this box



### 7.4. Final session evaluation form

#### Mindful Managers IO4 Reflection Rounds

#### Final Evaluation Form

#### Pilot [1/2]

[INSERT DATE AND VENUE HERE]

1. Please rate the following aspects of the Reflection Rounds sessions you have attended (1 – poor, 2 – fair, 3 – good, 4 – very good).

|   | 1<br>Poor | 2<br>Fair | 3<br>Good | 4<br>Very good |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Were the Reflection Rounds useful?  |           |           |           |                |
| Would you recommend the Reflection Rounds programme to a friend or colleague? |           |           |           |                |
| Content of the Reflection Rounds  |           |           |           |                |
| Facilitation of the Reflection Rounds   |           |           |           |                |

2. How have the Reflection Rounds helped you to think about how to manage stress at the workplace?
  
3. Any further comments?

Name (optional): .....

Date: .....

**Thank you! Please return this to your facilitator.**

Your comments may be included in future promotional/marketing material for the Mindful Managers project. If you are **not** happy for your comments/quotes to be used for these purposes, please tick this box



### 7.5. Learner's Journal

| QUESTIONS   | REFLECTION |
|---|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What did I do?</li></ul>  |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do I think/feel about this?</li></ul>   |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What did I think about but not say (or what did I want to say but did not)?</li></ul> |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well (or badly) did it go?</li></ul>  |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What did I learn?</li></ul>   |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What have I achieved?</li></ul>   |            |



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