

Reflection Rounds

Intellectual Output 4

National Report

Finland

Pilot 1

Prepared by VAMK
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1. Introduction

The Reflection Rounds element of the Mindful Managers project aims to improve the ability of public sector managers to take positive care of the mental well-being of employees and develop perseverance in the workplace, effectively supporting staff. In 2001, Inova Consultancy developed the Mentoring Circles™ method, and the Reflection Rounds program has also been built on it. In Mindful Managers, Circles™ has been modified to Reflection Rounds.

Reflection Rounds are learner-led and learner-centred; the program is built on the learning process as a journey. Reflection Rounds provide an individual with an opportunity to share their problems, opportunities, and challenges with others and gain experience in Action Learning. Sessions provide a safe but challenging environment where ideas can be explored and tested. Possible policy options can be developed and discussed in discussions. The program seeks to combat the stigma caused by the debate on mental health in the workplace.

1.1. Overview of Reflection Rounds Purpose and Methodology

Overview of the purpose and methodology of the Reflection Rounds:

- Reflection Rounds were inspired by the Mentoring Circles™ methodology developed by Inova Consultancy.
- Reflection Rounds enable public sector managers to reflect on their problems, issues, opportunities and challenges with others going through similar experiences and supporting them to reflect on wellbeing at work.
- Reflection Rounds provide a safe yet challenging environment where ideas for managing stress at the workplace can be discussed and explored.
- Possible options for action can be generated and discussed.
- Encouraging development of self-reflection and self-belief.
- The individual is helped to find the next steps forward in focusing on their mental wellbeing.

For a full description of Reflection Rounds methodology, please see the Reflection Rounds Facilitator's Guide.

1.2. Recruitment

For the Reflection Rounds pilot 1 in Vaasa participants were recruited during the Mindful Managers Training Program Pilot 1. Unfortunately, two of the registered persons announced just before the start of the training, that they would not be able to attend. Remaining three participants formed a close-knit group, and therefore it did not make sense to list additional members to the group.



Picture 1. Power Point presentation for Reflection Rounds

2. Overview of Participants

A summary of background data from each participant can be seen below:

Participant	Background
1	Communications Manager, City of Vaasa
2	Team leader Museums, City of Vaasa
3	Team leader Sports Services, City of Vaasa

3. The Format and Process of Reflection Rounds in Finland

The first Pilot of Reflection Rounds delivery in Finland was attended by 3 participants. The sessions took place in Alere (See Picture 2), which is the separate building, where both VAMK's and Novia's

(the Swedish University of Applied Sciences) social and health care students study. (<http://www.puv.fi/en/about/alere/>).

“Renovated for the demands of modern teaching, Alere offers the students, besides cosy premises, also shared courses and teacher exchange between Finnish and Swedish education. The cooperation significantly strengthens the students’ competitiveness in the bilingual working environment of the Vaasa region.” (VAMK 2020.)



Picture 2. Alere, Wolffintie 27–31, Vaasa (VAMK 2020)

The meeting room A351 (See Picture 3) is on the third floor of the building. It is a bright and modern meeting room with two screens. The location was chosen for the Reflection Rounds, because it is a small private place to reflect, and there is also enough place to carry out the trainings.



Picture 3. Meeting room A351 in Alere on the 3rd floor.

For Reflection Rounds Pilot 1 there was one facilitator, who is a senior lecturer at the Health Care Unit. Her education and work experience are following:

Sanna Saikkonen, Senior Lecturer, Team Manager VAMK

Education:

- Occupational Health Care Nurse
- Public Health Nurse
- Specialized Nurse in Surgery and Internal Diseases
- Master of Health Sciences

Work experience:

- Occupational health care
- Team Leader in Social Services and Health Care Unit at VAMK
- Lecturer in Nursing, Health Care and Social Services

Sessions overview

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
Name of the session	Reflection Round 1	Reflection Round 2	Reflection Round 3
Date	8.1.2020	3.3.2020	7.4.2020
Number of participants	3	3	3

3.1. First Session

In the beginning, participants completed the contract and conducted the self-evaluation. After that, they told about themselves and their expectations for the training. Then the facilitator explained in a little more detail what the reflection rounds will contain. During the session the participants carried out exercises 1–4. These exercises were mutually supportive, and participants were excited to discuss throughout them. The time reserved for the first session was 1.5 hours, but it could have continued at least 3 hours.

Finally, participants reflected on what they learned and got the learner's diaries with them.

3.2. Second Session

In the beginning of every session, we met in VAMK's café and on the second time the participants already chatted comfortably with each other when the facilitator arrived. On the second session we went through the theories of SMART and Ladder, and we carried out Exercise 5. We completed the assignments that time as a group interview, which surprisingly worked well. For the first two times, the participants were satisfied and experienced a lot from the discussions.

3.3. Third Session

Because of the Covid-19 raging in the world, the last session had to be moved ahead. The University of VAMK was closed on 18th March 2020 and the operations were changed into distance teaching and working from home. Finally, at the suggestion of the participants, the third meeting was held online with the Zoom Cloud Meeting tool.

This meeting worked well in Zoom, because the group was already familiar with each other. To spare the time, the small talk was left aside, and participants started the exercises directly and discussed about the topics.

The exercises were done with a Circle of Influence (Covey) and a solution to a confusing puzzle. Indeed, these tools helped the participants to discuss the topic and the impact of Korona on the work. Finally, we agreed that everyone would return the evaluations by email.

4. Impact of Reflection Rounds

4.1. Soft Skills Development

Participants came to the sessions with an open mind. They hoped for a relaxed atmosphere and an open discussion.

At the first session, participants felt that their expectations came true. They had been given the means to develop their own well-being at work. In addition, the meeting strengthened their capacity to learn in new ways. They found it useful to share opinions and others' ideas about developing well-being, as well as peer support. In addition, they felt they had benefited from reflecting on their own strengths and looking for areas for improvement.

The second time, the expectations were the same as the first time. In addition to their hopes, they wished good ideas for working life and good discussions. They felt their expectations were met. The second time, participants realized that there are things that cannot be influenced. They felt good about exchanging ideas and gaining new perspectives.

For the third time, the conversation took place in Zoom and it went well. Despite the situation, the debate was rich and even more intense than in the previous sessions. The discussion went immediately straight to the point. The experience of one participant was disrupted by poor connections, which meant having to focus heavily on listening. Participants will strengthen peer support meaningful at appointments.

4.2. Participants' testimonials

"There are things you can't influence no matter how you want to"

"It is not useful to assume things right away"

"Things can be done another way"

"Challenges must be approached calmly, everyone has challenges"

"In a distance meeting I focus in more detail and I am more present"

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The final outcomes evaluation form was completed by participants at the end of the final session. Three participants completed the evaluation form at this stage.

The final evaluation form included questions about actions taken as a result of attending the Reflection Rounds and the development of soft skills during the programme.

The responses from the first section of this form enable an analysis of the quantifiable impact of the Reflection Rounds on the participants.

5.1. Facilitator's Comments

The group was very conversational and open. They told their situation very directly to each other and gave good instructions to each other. They got excited to test different tasks and wondered how to utilize them in their own work. I think they got a lot out of these three discussions.

6. Annexes

In separate documents:

Annex 1. Reflection Rounds Attendance Lists Pilot 1

Annex 2. Reflection Rounds Agreements Pilot 1

Annex 3. Reflection Rounds Evaluation P1 Session 1.

Annex 4. Reflection Rounds Evaluation P1 Session 2.

Annex 5. Reflection Rounds Evaluation P1 Session 3.

Annex 6. Reflection Rounds Final Evaluation/Outcomes

Annex 7. Pre and Post Self-assessments (Soft Skills Profile)

Annex 8. Arrangement emails