

Reflection Rounds

Intellectual Output 4

National Report

Finland

Pilot 2

Prepared by VAMK
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1. Introduction

In 2001, Inova Consultancy developed the Mentoring Circles™ method. In Mindful Managers, the Circles methodology has been modified to Reflection Rounds. The aim of the Reflection Rounds element of the Mindful Managers project is to improve the ability of public sector managers to take positive care of the mental well-being of employees, developing perseverance in the workplace, effectively supporting staff.

The Reflection Rounds focus on the learning process as a journey and are learner-led and learner-centred. It provides learners with an opportunity to share their problems, opportunities, and challenges with others and gain experience in Action Learning. Ideas can be explored and tested through the safe but challenging environment that the sessions provide. Discussions can happen to develop possible policy options. The debate on mental health in the workplace and the stigma is combated by the program.

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 2 in Vaasa participants were recruited during the Mindful Managers Training Program Pilot 1 and 2. Three members of Mindful Managers Training Program Pilot 2 were interested in participating in Reflection Rounds pilot 2. One member of Mindful Managers Training Program Pilot 1 was interested also in participating in Reflection Rounds pilot 2.



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	youth work manager
2	elderly service unit manager
3	Deacon work supervisor
4	day care home manager

3. The Format and Process of Reflection Rounds in Finland

The second Pilot of Reflection Rounds delivery in Finland was attended by 4 participants. The sessions were planned 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/>). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, not all sessions could take place face to face, and some had to be organised online via Zoom.



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

For Reflection Rounds Pilot 2 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	17.2.20	20.5.20	26.5.20
Number of participants	3	3	2

3.1. First Session

To begin, participants conducted the self-evaluation and the contract. The self-evaluation was initially kept to themselves. Next, the learners introduced themselves and their expectations for the training. After that, the facilitator explained in a little more detail the content of the reflection rounds. In the session, the participants carried out exercises 1–4. The participants were excited to discuss throughout them and were mutually supportive. The first session was conducted in 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. Diary writing was voluntary and was not collected back at the end of the training. Finally, we agreed that everyone would return the evaluations by email.

3.2. Second Session

Because of the Covid-19 raging in the world second session had to moved ahead and was implement in Zoom. In 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 also a Zoom. In this session, the participants were satisfied and experienced a lot from the discussions. They have a connecting factor in coping with Covid situation. They discussed leadership this spring and found surprisingly many similarities to their experiences. In addition, the change in work into digital was discussed. Finally, we agreed that everyone would return the evaluations by email.

Also Babet from Inova attended the meeting.

3.3. Third Session

Due to the Covid-19 the last session had to be moved ahead. Two participants announced that they were unable to attend due to overlapping events due to Covid-19. 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 the pandemic on the work. Finally, we agreed that everyone would return the evaluations by email.



Picture 3. Zoom meeting at the third session.

4. Impact of Reflection Rounds

4.1. Soft Skills Development

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

In the first session, the participants were positive. They felt that they had been given the means to develop their own well-being at work so their expectations came true. Furthermore, their capacity to learn in new ways was strengthened by the meeting. Sharing ideas and developing well-being and peer support were found useful by them. In addition, reflecting on their own strengths and looking for areas of improvement were found to be beneficial to the participants.

The second time, the conversation took place in Zoom and it went well. The participants had the same expectations as the first time. They hoped and wished good ideas for working life and good discussions. Expectations were felt to be met by them. Exchanging ideas and new perspectives worked well for the participants.

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

4.2. Participants' testimonials

“Good discussion and tools for your managerial work.”

“The rehearsals were interesting.”

“Insights should be recorded immediately, they will not be remembered after a while, or at least after a few days/weeks.”

" presence in tasks and reflection is challenging through Zoom connections.”

“Time for yourself”

“Finding different ways to solve things”

“I have received guidance support”

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Participants completed the final outcomes evaluation form at the end of the final session. Only two participants completed the evaluation form at this stage. This is clearly a challenge from Zoom. If the meeting had taken place face to face, would all have returned the evaluation form. Also, the participant lists could not be filled in this way. The Facilitator has e-mail messages from participants. These suggest that the participants were involved in the sessions.

Questions about actions taken after and as a result of attending the Reflection Rounds and the development of soft skills during the programmes were included in the final evaluation form.

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

5.1. Facilitator's Comments

The group was very open and they listen to each other. Situations were told very directly to each other and gave good instructions to each other. Different tasks were exciting to them and they wondered how to utilize them in their own work. I think that the learners got a lot out of these three sessions.

Reflection rounds gave the participant the opportunity to reflect on their own well-being and coping in their own work. In addition, it broadened participants' ideas about what their own role in the work community is.

The challenge in this kind of activities is to get participants to discuss and engage in joint reflection. For that in central role is the role of the facilitator; to give space for discussion and direct on the edge of the right questions. In Finland, there is a similar activity in work supervision.

There should be more time to spend on the presentation of background theories and maybe some tasks in advance in order to prepare for the next time.

Reflection Rounds is a laborious method for the facilitator. Leading this form of discussion binds the facilitator's resources and requires deep focus as well as motivation to understand and steer the situation into the right direction. It is also important to consider group dynamics and support all participants.

At the end of the Reflection Rounds, there was a quick switch to a virtual session regarding the last group session. That caused some distraction with the formalities for the project. Some of the forms were forgotten and the group members had to send them afterwards. However, the attendants were quite satisfied with the communication via technical devices.

If these meetings are held in Zoom in the future, it is also a good idea to have electronic participation and evaluation forms.

6. Annexes

In separate documents:

Annex 1. all E-mails

Annex 2. Reflection Rounds Agreements Pilot 2

Annex 3. Reflection Rounds final evaluations

Annex 4. Reflection Rounds Evaluation P2 meeting 2.

Annex 5. Reflection Rounds Evaluation P2 meeting 3.

Annex 6. Reflection rounds Self evaluations