

# Mindful Managers Training Programme

## Intellectual Output 2

### National Report United Kingdom Pilot 1

Prepared by Inova Consultancy  
2019



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## 1. Introduction

The Mindful Managers project was created in order to tackle stress and burnout amongst managers in the public sector. The project aims to develop skills and competences to proactively and positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work. The project utilises an e-learning tool, a training programme and Reflection Rounds in order to achieve these aims.

This report will assess the effectiveness of the first piloting of the Mindful Managers Training Programme in the UK.

### 1.1. Overview of the Mindful Managers Training Programme

The Mindful Managers Training Programme consists of five training modules:

1. Connect
2. Be active
3. Take notice
4. Keep learning
5. Give

The partners chose to adopt a format that was similar to the '5 a day' concept, which has been the foundation for many wellbeing habits.

The training programme was divided into four sessions (Connect, Take notice, Keep learning and Give); in addition, each session focused on an aspect of the Be active module. This plan enabled participants to develop a keen understanding of the five training modules and the methods of integrating activity into the workplace. Furthermore, the innovative training programme enables participants to explore stress management and mindfulness at work.

Every training session took place at Quaker Meeting House, Sheffield, as they could provide a suitable space and Inova has a strong professional relationship with them, strengthened by previous positive experiences.

The training was facilitated by two trainers at Inova. The first, third and fourth sessions were facilitated by Val Boulding, who is an International Project Manager at Inova. Val has extensive experience in Community Development, Sustainable Communities and Diversity Training. The second session was facilitated by Carolyn Usher, who is an International Project Manager at Inova. Carolyn has extensive experience as a trainer and a coach. In addition, she has experience working as a yoga instructor which was beneficial to the training programme.

### 1.2. Recruitment

Inova began recruitment for the first pilot of the training programme early in order to ensure that a sufficient number of participants were recruited. Inova utilised their extensive

networks of individuals and organisations within the public sector during the recruitment process. The following organisations were contacted alongside others: Sheffield City Council, the NHS, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, the police and the fire service. The majority of the public sector participants were from Sheffield City Council and the NHS.

Inova recruited in a variety of ways in order to ensure that they reached the required number. Inova's contacts and stakeholders were used in the recruitment process. Emails and word of mouth was utilised successfully throughout the recruitment stage as this has always been a strength of Inova's recruitment process. Due to previous positive experience, it was decided that Eventbrite would be the best platform to promote the training programme. An event was created on Eventbrite, and this was promoted through social media. Posters were created with QR codes so that those who were interested in the programme could use the QR code to be directed to the Eventbrite and find out more about the training. These posters were used at multiplier events and meetings in the run up to the training. Inspirational articles were posted on both the Mindful Managers' and Inova's Facebook page in order to generate excitement for, and awareness of, the training programme. In addition, a Facebook event page was created so that people could easily confirm if they would be attending the training or express their interest in the programme. The event was promoted on the Inova LinkedIn page to contacts of Inova. Furthermore, information about the training was posted on the Inova website.

Thanks to the extensive recruitment process, 34 participants registered for the training programme (as can be seen in the image below). However, only 19 attended the first pilot of the project.

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<b>DEC</b> <b>2</b>		<b>Be a Mindful Manager!</b> Quaker Meeting House Monday, 2 December 2019 at 09:30 GMT	34 / 45 <div style="width: 75%; height: 10px; background-color: #28a745; margin: 2px 0;"></div>	£0.00	● Sales Ended	⋮
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## Be a Mindful Manager!

**Start:** Monday 25 November 2019 09:30

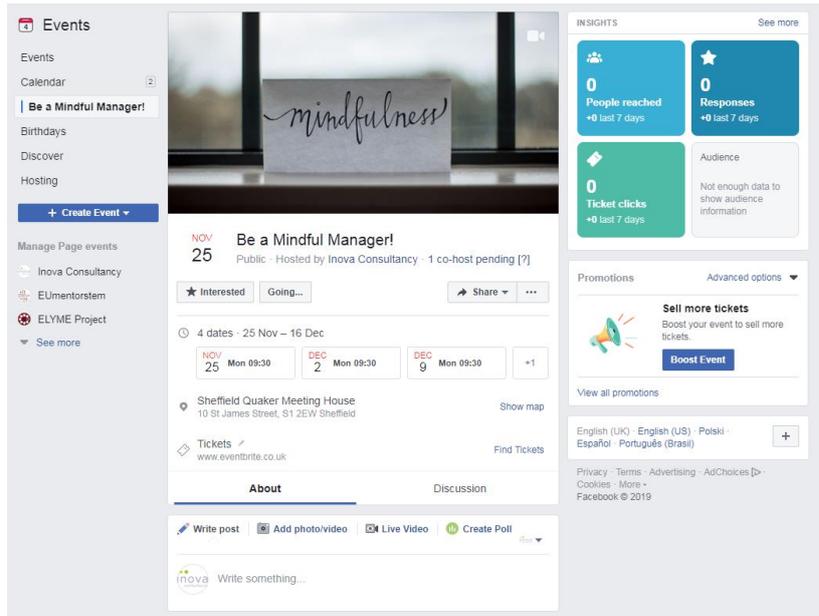
**End:** Monday 16 December 2019 12:30

**Location:** Quaker Meeting House 10 Saint James' Street Sheffield S1 2EW

Registration is now open for four FREE coaching sessions which focus on mindful management in the public sector workplace. You will be provided with a holistic and extensive training package. This mindful approach will help you develop new tools when managing a busy stressful workplace. You will learn about new habits to ensure a good work-life balance. You will cascade this learning to your team to enrich performance and productivity.

[Register >](#)

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## 2. Overview of Participants

A summary of background data from each participant can be seen in Table 1.

Participant	Background
1	A manager in a busy area of the NHS. She was eager to learn more about mindfulness in order to improve her management skills.
2	An employee of Sheffield City Council. She was eager to pass on this training to others in the council.
3	An employee of Sheffield City Council. She was eager to pass on this training to others in the council.
4	A former employee of Sheffield City Council. He has experienced stress and burnout whilst working in the public sector and he wants to prepare for future instances of this.
5	An employee of Sheffield City Council. He was eager to pass on this training to others in the council.
6	An employee of Sheffield City Council. He was eager to learn more about mindfulness in order to improve her management skills.
7	An employee of Sheffield City Council. She was eager to pass on this training to others in the council.
8	A former employee of Sheffield City Council. She is preparing for her return to work.
9	She is currently unemployed, but she is preparing to apply for jobs in the public sector and she wanted to acquire some training first.
10	She has established a social enterprise where she works closely with the council.
11	An employee of a social enterprise. She is eager to work in the public sector and expand her knowledge on mindfulness.
12	An employee of Sheffield City Council. She was eager to learn more about mindfulness in order to improve her management skills.
13	She is self-employed and she works closely with Sheffield City Council; therefore, she wanted to expand her understanding of this sector.

14	She is currently unemployed, but she is preparing to apply for jobs in the public sector and she wanted to acquire some training first.
15	He is a former Sheffield City Council employee and he is aware of the stress that staff in the public sector experience.
16	An employee of Sheffield City Council. He was eager to pass on this training to others in the council.
17	An employee of Sheffield City Council. He was eager to learn more about mindfulness in order to improve her management skills.
18	She is currently unemployed, but she is preparing to apply for jobs in the public sector and she wanted to acquire some training first.
19	A manager at The University of Sheffield. She was eager to use mindfulness in the workplace.

### 3. Pilot training in the UK

Table 2. Sessions overview

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
<b>Name of the session</b>	<b>CONNECT</b>	<b>TAKE NOTICE</b>	<b>KEEP LEARNING</b>	<b>GIVE</b>
<b>Date</b>	25/11/19	02/12/19	09/12/19	16/12/19
<b>Number of participants</b>	13	11	11	14
<b>Topics covered</b>	Trust activity, PERMA model	Strength inventory, mindmap	Learning styles, conflict resolution training	Mindfulness and NLP
<b>“Be active” element of the session</b>	Relaxation techniques and breathing exercise	Yoga and mindfulness	Belly breathing	Relaxation techniques and breathing exercise

It was decided that 4 half-day sessions, held from 09.30 – 12.30, were better than 2 full days because it suited the needs of the target group, many of these being working professionals. The first piloting of the Mindful Managers Training Programme was attended by 19 participants in the UK. The sessions involved PowerPoint presentations created by the facilitator alongside worksheets and activities related to the module. Interactive and engaging

training sessions were facilitated in order to ensure that the participants were comfortable discussing mindfulness in the workplace and sharing their own experiences on the topic.

### **3.1. First Session**

The first session was facilitated by Val Boulding. Val introduced the Mindful Managers project and the training programme. The facilitator took notes on a flipchart for the Group Agreement to ensure that learners felt safe and secure with issues such as confidentiality. She then conducted an icebreaker to ensure that all participants could engage and introduce themselves, their background and reasons for attending etc. A positive working environment was fostered where all members felt comfortable discussing their experiences of mindfulness in the workplace or their lack of experience. Participants in attendance were from very diverse roles and with varying levels of experience in management. A PowerPoint presentation ensured that participants had a visual reference to the discussion topics and this was also made available to them electronically.

This first session focused on the Connect module, and therefore the participants were encouraged to make connections with each other and with themselves to improve their own individual understanding of how these techniques can be utilised in their working lives and personal lives. In addition, Val focused on relaxation techniques such as breathing techniques for the Be Active section of the session, as the Be Active runs through the whole programme. The exercises were all well received by the participants. Planning time prior to the session did highlight the abundance of resources that had been developed for this project. Some were deemed unsuitable due to the time available and the length of specific activities and some were unsuitable due to the layout of the training room. However, the learning outcomes were respected along with the idea of using Kolb as a framework within the mindful approach. After each exercise, the learners were asked to reflect and to feedback any thoughts.

At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 5).

### **3.2. Second Session**

The second session was facilitated by Carolyn Usher. This session focused on the Take Notice module. Carolyn utilised the materials created by the Mindful Managers consortium and focused on a strength inventory which enabled participants to develop a deeper understanding of their own strengths and the strengths of those they work with. In addition, she used the mind map exercise to further explore personal issues relating to the topic.

Carolyn introduced the concept of mindfulness and outlined its applicability within the Mindful Managers training programme. The Group Agreement from the first session was utilised and the learners were encouraged to add to it if they felt it was appropriate. Carolyn then conducted an icebreaker to ensure that all participants could engage and introduce themselves, their background and reasons for attending etc. A positive working environment

was fostered where all members felt comfortable discussing their experiences of mindfulness in the workplace or their lack of experience. The PowerPoint presentation provided the participants with a visual reference to the discussion topics and this was also made available to them electronically after the session.

Due to her experience as a yoga instructor, Carolyn facilitated a mini yoga session during the Be Active section of the class. This yoga session was well received by all the participants and some were eager to experience a longer yoga class.

At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 6).

### **3.3. Third Session**

The third session was facilitated by Val Boulding. Val revisited the Group Agreement to ensure that learners felt safe and secure with issues such as confidentiality and encouraged the learners to add to it if appropriate. As this was the third session, there was already a positive working environment, which was beneficial for discussions of the subject matter. A PowerPoint presentation ensured that participants had a visual reference to the discussion topics and this was also made available to them electronically.

This session focused on the Keep Learning module. Kolb's experiential learning style theory formed the foundation for this session. Val introduced the theory to the participants at the beginning of the session and they built on it over the course of the morning. The session was split into two sections: Management of work and Lifelong learning, concepts which are relevant to public sector managers. In addition, Val focused on relaxation techniques such as breathing techniques for the Be Active section of the session, these exercises were well received as they can be easily used during daily, professional life. Val delved into the theories which support relaxation techniques and mindfulness in order to highlight the importance of practicing these activities.

At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 7).

### **3.4. Fourth Session**

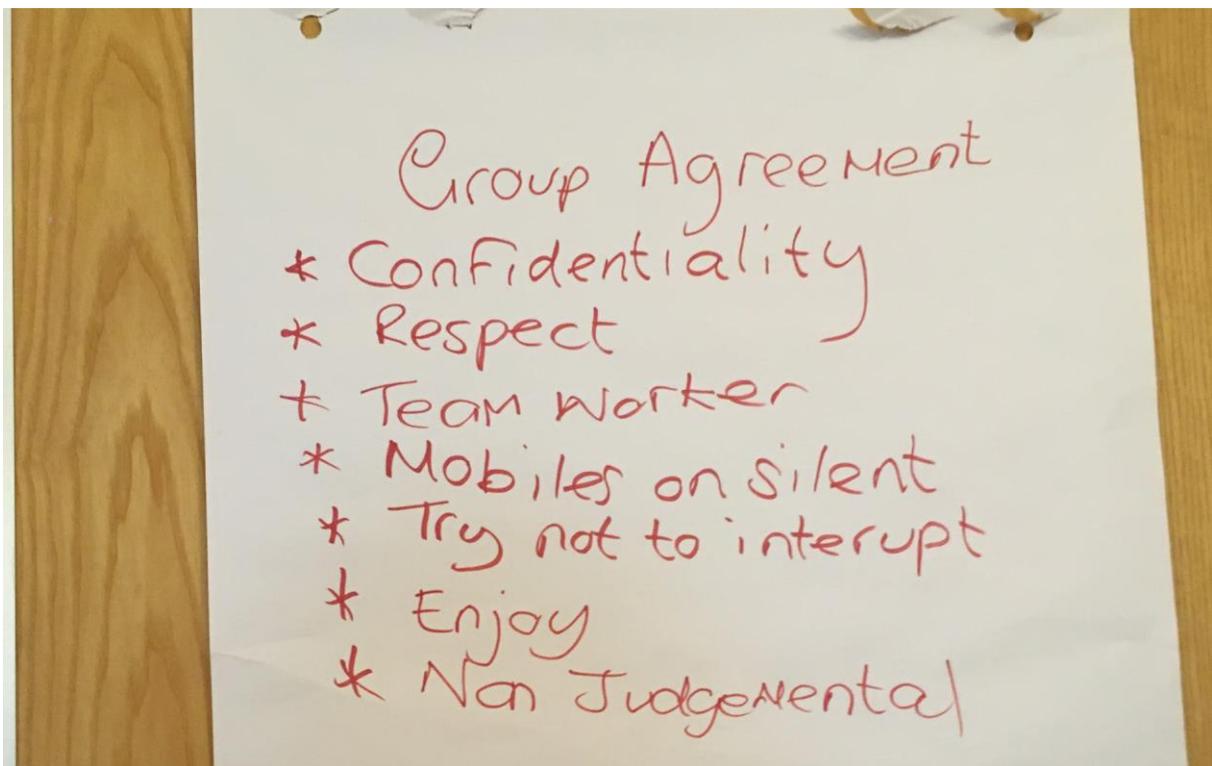
The fourth session was facilitated by Val Boulding. This session focused on the Give module, which is the final module of the Mindful Managers training programme. The Give module outlines the importance of doing something nice for a friend, colleague, family member or a stranger. This concept is useful for managers when they are giving feedback to their team.

The Group Agreement was revisited at the start of the session. An icebreaker was used to ensure that all participants were comfortable and engaged. Val introduced the GROW model, which is an effective tool for providing feedback and is, therefore, useful for the participants. In addition, the group explored the theory of nonviolent communication, as established by

Marshall Rosenberg. After each exercise, the learners were asked to reflect and to feedback any thoughts. A PowerPoint presentation ensured that participants had a visual reference to the discussion topics and this was also made available to them electronically.

At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 8). As this was the final training session, all participants completed an additional evaluation form at the end to assess the effectiveness of the training programme as a whole (annex 9). The evaluations were positive, as can be seen below.

### 3.5. Photographs from training sessions





## 4. Impact of the Training Programme

In order to assess the training programme, session evaluation forms were completed by all participants at the end of each session. These forms enabled the facilitators to analyse the participants' opinions about the training and ensure that future sessions met their needs. Participants were asked how worthwhile the training was, what they would change and to evaluate the content of the session. These forms will provide the basis for the analysis of the impact of the training programme below. An additional final session evaluation was completed after the last session (Annex 9).

### 4.1. Evaluation

In the following charts you can see the participants' evaluation of the first pilot training.

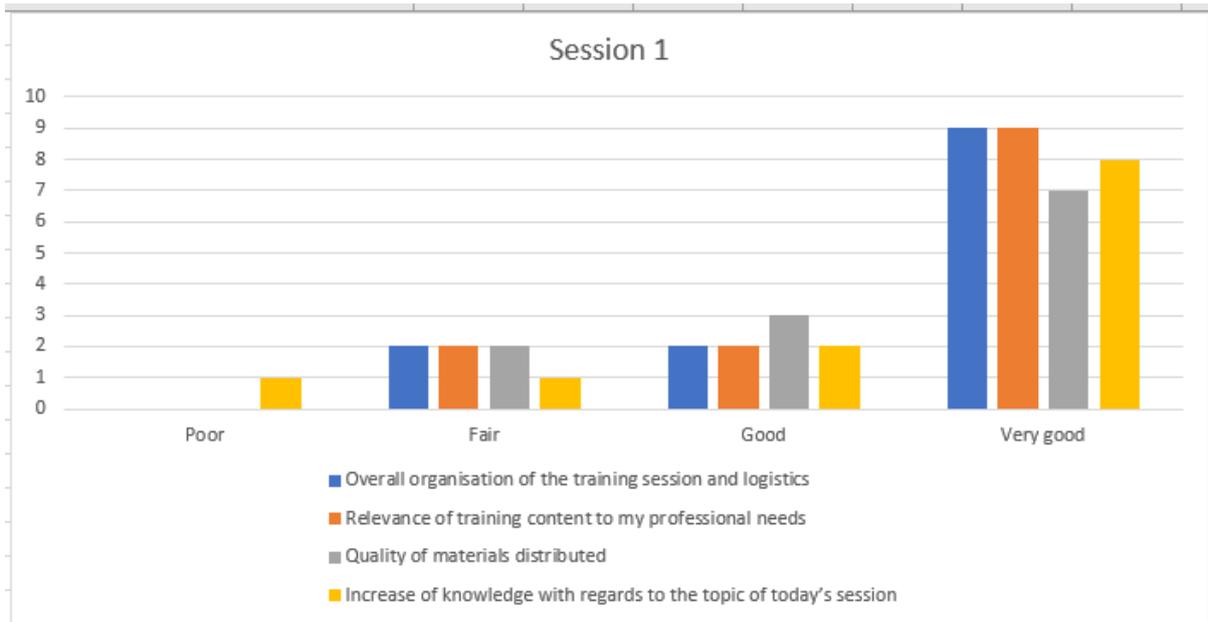


Figure 1: data from the evaluation forms of the first session (Annex 5).

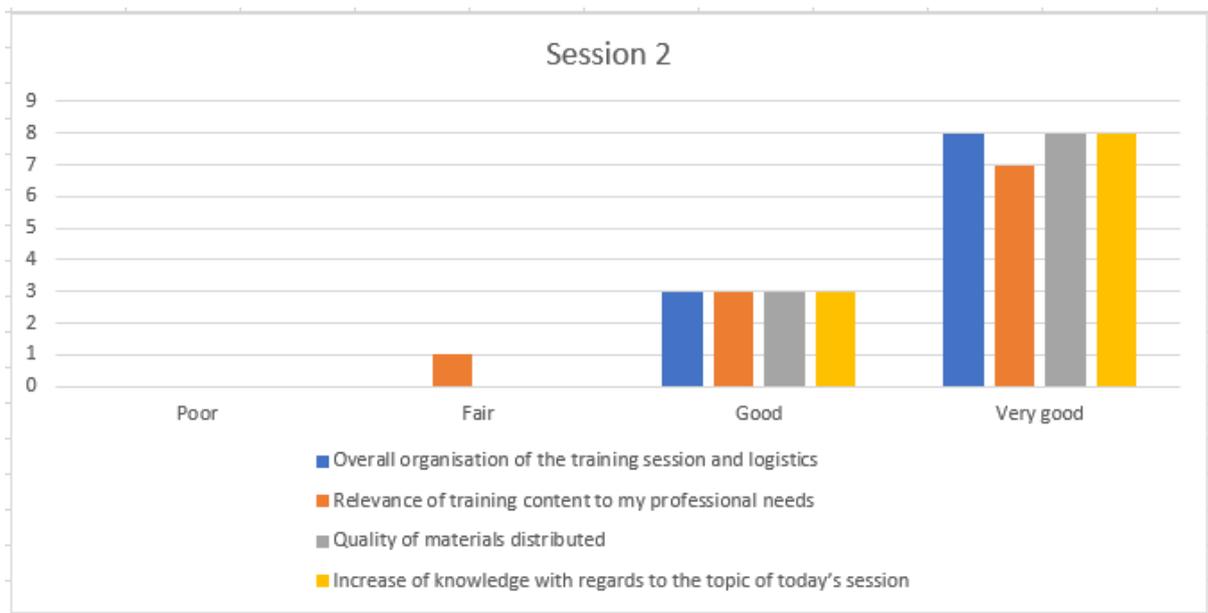


Figure 2: data from the evaluation forms of the second session (Annex 6).

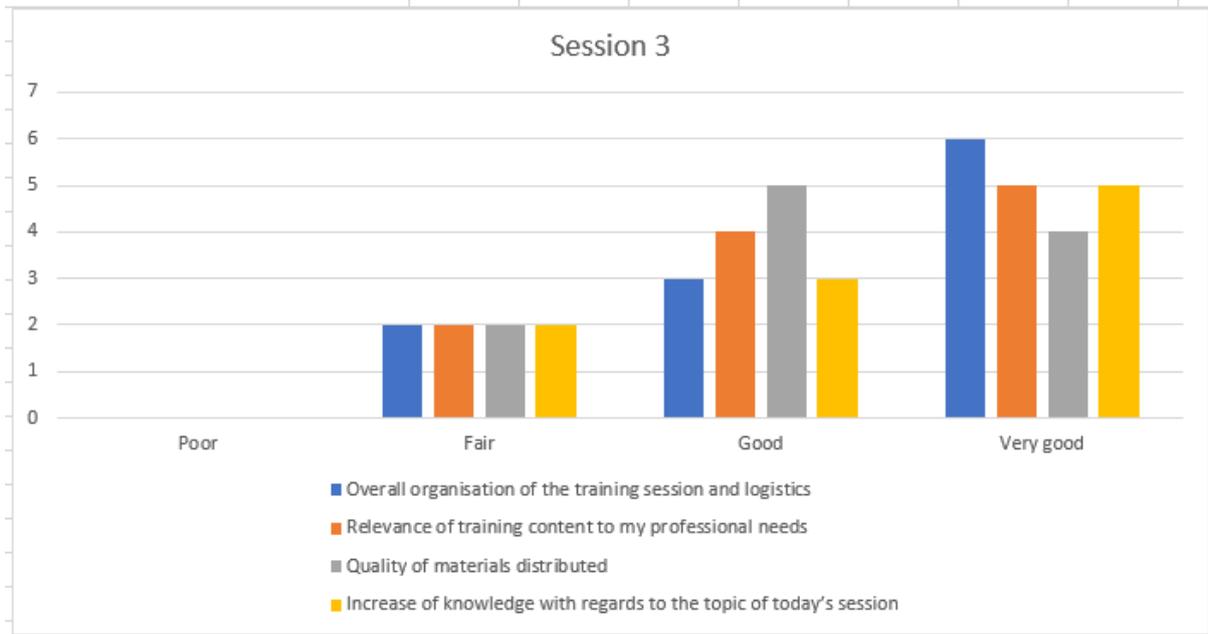


Figure 3: data from the evaluation forms of the third session (Annex 7).

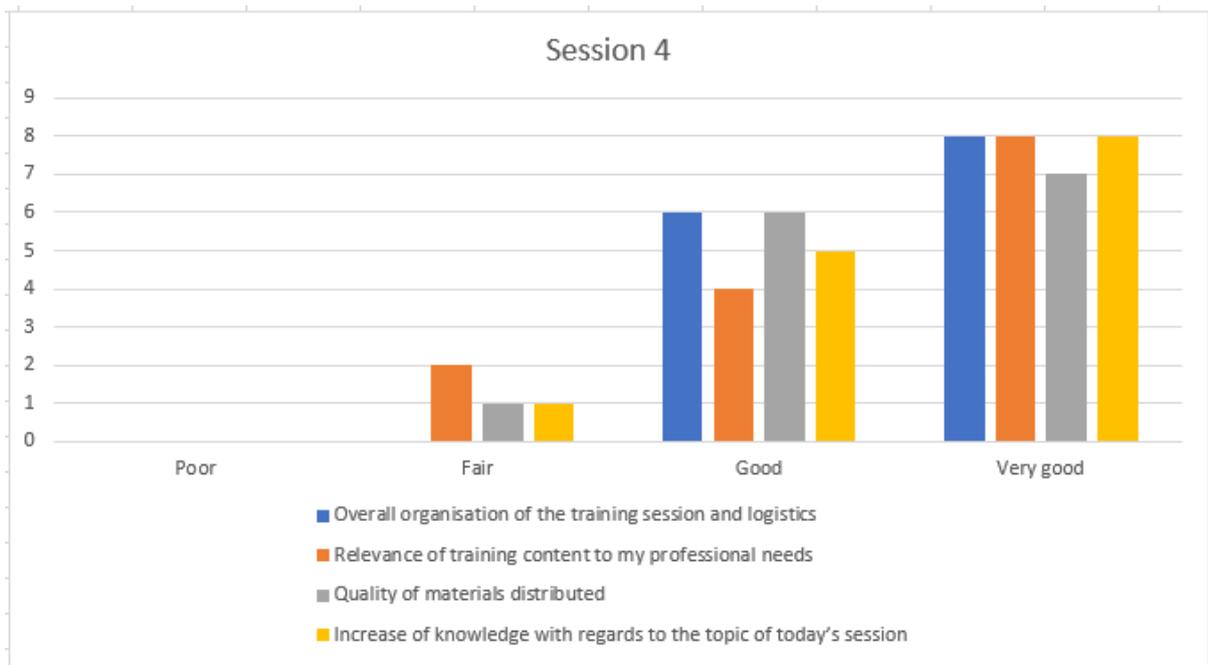


Figure 4: data from the evaluation forms of the fourth session (Annex 8).

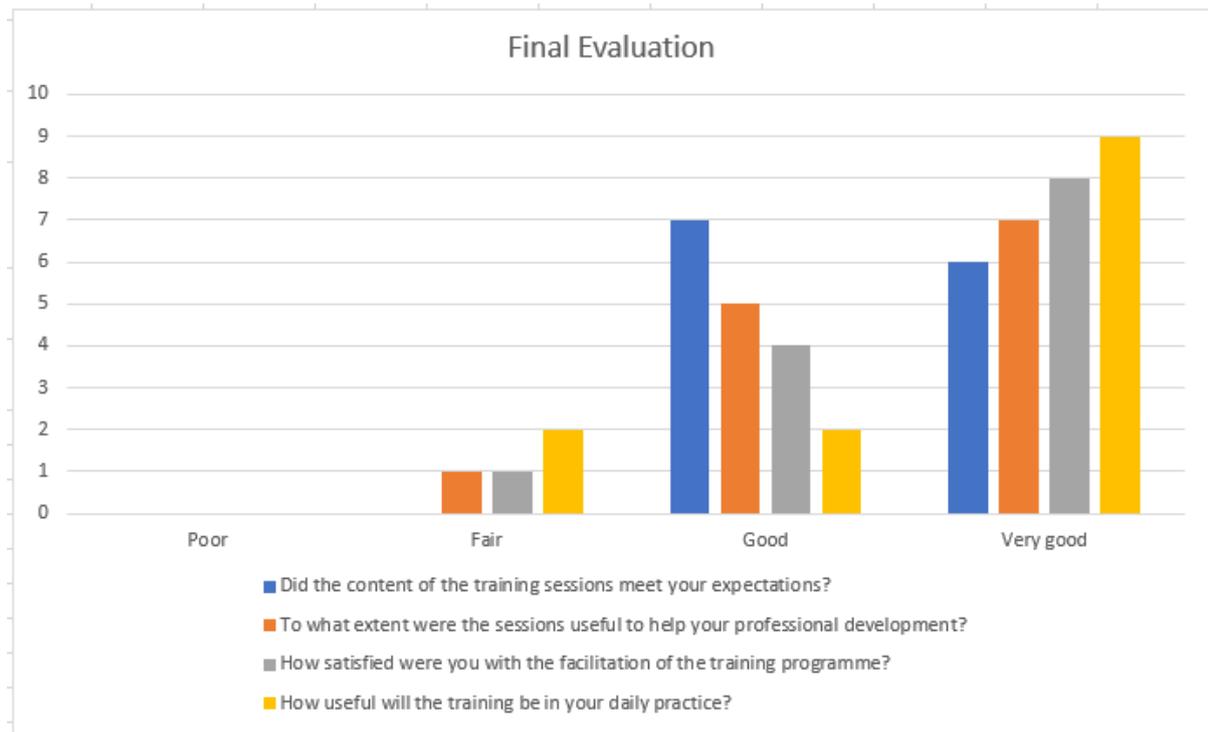


Figure 5: data from the evaluation forms of the final session (Annex 9).

As can be seen from the evaluation forms of the sessions, the participants were satisfied with the quality and content of the training programme. There was only one person who graded an aspect of the course as poor and that was for “Increase of knowledge with regards to the topic of today’s session” in session 1. However, the majority of participants graded the programme as very good across the whole evaluation forms; therefore, the first pilot of the Mindful Managers Training Programme can be deemed a success.

As well as providing feedback about the programme in the evaluation forms, the participants commented on the content and quality of the activities during the sessions. The facilitators deemed it necessary to provide time for group discussions where the participants were able to share their experiences in relation to the topic of mindfulness in the workplace. These discussions enabled the participants to establish a relationship where they were comfortable sharing their stories and providing feedback on the programme.

One of the main points of improvement which the participants commented on was that the programme could focus more on mindfulness. Some of the activities were deemed to lack this aspect; therefore, the facilitators aimed to ensure that they spent sufficient time exploring mindfulness in the workplace.

## 4.2. Participants' testimonials

What was the most worthwhile thing about the training session today?

- "Opportunities to reflect as well as listen to others."
- "Working with other to learn and give to examine own traits/habits/strengths etc."
- "Time to reflect on the uses of feedback."
- "The discussions."

Is there anything you would like to have changed about the session?

- "More examples of techniques to effect change."
- "Just a bit of standing and talking."
- "More interactive sessions would be great."
- "It could be good to see more links to mindfulness."

Any other comments?

- "Very interesting."
- "Enjoyed everything, thanks."
- "Thank you for the course. I have learnt what I did not know and learning does not end."
- "Very useful, engaging and yoga session was very refreshing."

As can be seen from the testimonials, the participants were generally satisfied with the content and quality of the training programme. Their comments will be taken into consideration for the second pilots.

## 5. Summary and recommendations

The Mindful Managers training programme was deemed a success, as can be seen from the participants' evaluations.

### 5.1. Facilitator's Comments

The facilitators commented that there was a lot of material to work through when it came to planning the sessions. Whilst having extensive material to work through can be beneficial to explore various activities and theories, this did make planning far longer than expected. In addition, it was much harder to find the resources which were most appropriate for the

participants. Therefore, they suggested that some of the materials be removed in order to reduce the time facilitators must spend planning and reading through the materials.

The final session had the highest number of participants, with 14 attending, and this group size was deemed to be suitable for the programme. The facilitators felt that with this group size all participants could benefit from the training. This number of participants meant that the facilitators were able to support the participants sufficiently and delve into their personal issues.

To conclude, whilst the first piloting was well received, it is important to take into consideration all constructive criticism from both participants and facilitators in order to develop a robust training programme which is appropriate for the target group.

## 6. Annexes

Annexes are available in separate documents:

1. Attendance list session 1
2. Attendance list session 2
3. Attendance list session 3
4. Attendance list session 4
5. Evaluation forms session 1
6. Evaluation forms session 2
7. Evaluation forms session 3
8. Evaluation forms session 4
9. Final evaluation forms