

# Mindful Managers Training Programme

## Intellectual Output 2

### National Report

### United Kingdom

### Pilot 2

Prepared by Inova Consultancy

2020



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Erasmus+ Programme  
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## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	3
1.1. Overview of the Mindful Managers Training Programme	3
1.2. Recruitment	4
<b>2. Overview of Participants</b>	5
<b>3. Pilot training in the UK</b>	7
3.1. First Session	8
3.2. Second Session	8
3.3. Third Session	9
3.4. Fourth Session	9
3.5. Photographs of Training	10
<b>4. Impact of the Training Programme</b>	11
4.1. Evaluation	11
4.2. Participants' testimonials	14
<b>5. Summary and recommendations</b>	15
5.1. Facilitator's Comments	15
<b>6. Annexes</b>	15

## 1. Introduction

This report will assess the effectiveness of the second piloting of the Mindful Managers Training Programme in the UK. The Mindful Managers project has been created to support public sector managers. This project aims to develop skills and competences which will tackle stress and burnout in the workplace. Through the innovative combination of an e-learning tool, a training programme and Reflection Rounds, participants will develop proactive and positive tools for managing mental wellbeing and building resilience at work. The project was created by four European organisations: Inova Consultancy in the UK, CARDET in Cyprus, VAMK in Finland and Obelisk in Belgium.

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

The Mindful Managers Training Programme consists of five training modules. When they were establishing the Mindful Managers project, the partners chose to adopt a format that was similar to the '5 a day' concept, as this has been the foundation for many wellbeing habits. Therefore, the consortium felt that this format would be relevant to the Mindful Managers training programme as it attempts to foster beneficial habits. The modules which the partnership outlined for the programme were:

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

These modules established a diverse and innovative training programme which was relevant to the target audience. The training programme was divided into four sessions (Connect, Take notice, Keep learning and Give); in addition, each session included an activity or exercise which focused on the Be active module. Therefore, the participants were provided with an in-depth understanding of the five training modules and the methods of integrating activity and exercise into the workplace. Through this programme, participants have been able to explore stress management and mindfulness in the workplace.

In the UK, the four sessions took place in February and March 2020. Each session lasted for approximately 3 hours and they were held on Monday mornings, as this suited the participants. Every training session took place at Quaker Meeting House, Sheffield, which is easy to access as it is located in the city centre.

The first, second and fourth sessions were facilitated by Val Boulding, who is an International Project Manager and Trainer at Inova. Val has extensive experience in Community Development, Sustainable Communities and Diversity Training. Due to her experience working as a yoga instructor, Carolyn Usher facilitated the third session and she led a mini yoga session. Carolyn is an International Project Manager and Trainer at Inova and she has extensive experience as a trainer and a coach.

## 1.2. Recruitment

Inova recruited for the Mindful Managers training in a variety of ways. Due to previous positive experience, an Eventbrite event was used to promote the training programme. An event was created on Eventbrite, and this was promoted through social media. The team posted articles on the Mindful Managers and Inova Facebook page in order to generate excitement for, and awareness of, the project. 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 and conversations were started on the event page. The team promoted the event on the Inova LinkedIn page to contacts of Inova. Information about the training was posted on the Inova website and other local websites. Stakeholders and personal contacts were informed of the programme and they disseminated the information accordingly. In addition, the participants from pilot one were contacted and they promoted the training amongst their networks. As with the first pilot, the majority of the public sector participants were from Sheffield City Council and the NHS.

There were a total of 28 registrants on the Eventbrite; however, 17 attended the second pilot of the project. Below is some evidence of the recruitment techniques in the UK.



**FEB 17** **Be a Mindful Manager!**  
 Quaker Meeting House, Room 4  
 Monday, 17 February 2020 at 09:30 GMT

28 / 45    £0.00    • Sales Ended



**Be a Mindful Manager! - Workshop/Course**

**On: 17/02/2020**  
**On: 24/02/2020**  
**On: 02/03/2020**  
**On: 09/03/2020**

Do you work in the public sector? Do you struggle to focus at work? Explore mindfulness in this innovative FREE training programme.

[More details](#)

### Be a Mindful Manager!

**Start:** Monday 17 February 2020 09:30

**End:** Monday 9 March 2020 00:30

**Location:** Quaker Meeting House, Room 4 10 Saint James' Street Sheffield S1 2EW

Do you work in the public sector? Do you struggle to focus at work? Explore mindfulness in this innovative FREE training programme.

[Register >](#)

The training will be facilitated by skilled trainers and the four different sessions will focus on the following:

1. **Connect.** Connect with the people around you. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day. **Monday 17th February, 09:30 – 12:30**
2. **Take notice.** Be curious. This includes the idea of Mindfulness. **Monday 24th February, 09:30 – 12:30**
3. **Keep learning.** Try something new. **Monday 2nd March, 09:30- 12:30**
4. **Give.** Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. **Monday 9th March, 09:30 – 12:30**

This training is open to anyone who manages people in the public sector who is looking to build resilience and learn about stress management.

By registering to this event, you sign up to all four sessions. There are limited spaces available for the training, so please register as soon as possible to secure your place.

Come and join us for this exciting training programme!

For more questions about the training or if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Sinead via email - [sinead@inovaconsult.com](mailto:sinead@inovaconsult.com) or ring her at the office on 0114 279 90 91.

The Mindful Managers project has been funded by the Erasmus+ programme and has been developed by 4 European partners.



Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



## 2. Overview of Participants

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

Participant	Background
1	She is a manager of a team at Sheffield City Council. She is interested in mindfulness and its applicability to her workplace.

2	She is a manager of a team at Sheffield City Council. She is eager to use mindfulness and other techniques in her management in order to achieve the best for herself and her team.
3	She is a manager of a team at Sheffield City Council. She is interested in mindfulness and would like to use these techniques to better her management skills.
4	She is currently unemployed, but she has a background in nutrition. She is interested in working in the public sector as a nutritionist and she wanted to gain some training before applying for jobs.
5	She is currently taking a break from teaching as she has recently moved to the UK. However, she is eager to return to education and would like to use mindful management techniques in order to prepare herself for the public sector.
6	She is a manager at the University of Sheffield. She believes that mindfulness would be beneficial to herself and her team.
7	She is a manager of a team at Sheffield City Council. She is eager to use mindfulness and other techniques in her management in order to achieve the best for herself and her team.
8	She is a manager of a large team at Sheffield City Council. She is attempting to adapt her management style to the modern environment and is eager to use mindfulness in her daily work.
9	She is a manager of a large team which is spread across several sites of Sheffield City Council.
10	He is a manager of a small, diverse group at Sheffield City Council. He believes that managing in a more mindful manner would be helpful to him, his team and their clients.
11	He is a recent graduate and he is eager to work in the public sector; therefore, he wanted to learn more about management within that environment as he applies for jobs.
12	She has experience working and studying at the University of Sheffield. She wanted to use mindfulness more in her everyday working life.
13	She is a former engineer, but she has taken a break from working in order to raise her kids. She is preparing to return to work and is eager to work in the public sector; therefore, she is participating in numerous training courses.

<b>14</b>	She is a former journalist and she is currently searching for work in the public sector. She is eager to prepare herself for her future career, and therefore she registered for the training programme.
<b>15</b>	She is currently unemployed; however, she is eager to gain employment in the public sector. She is participating in several training programmes in order to develop robust skills.
<b>16</b>	He is the manager of a small community support centre which works closely with Sheffield City Council. He believes that mindfulness would be beneficial to his team and his clients.
<b>17</b>	She is a former journalist and she is currently searching for work in the public sector. She is eager to prepare herself for her future career, and therefore she registered for the training programme.

### 3. Pilot training in the UK

Table 2. Sessions overview

	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>
<b>Name of the session</b>	CONNECT	KEEP LEARNING	TAKE NOTICE	GIVE
<b>Date</b>	17/02/20	24/02/20	02/03/20	09/03/20
<b>Number of participants</b>	12	13	13	12
<b>Topics covered</b>	Trust activity, PERMA model	Learning styles, conflict resolution training	Strength inventory, mindmap	Mindfulness and NLP
<b>“Be active” element of the session</b>	Relaxation techniques and breathing exercise	Laughter yoga	Yoga and mindfulness	Relaxation techniques and breathing exercise

In order to suit the needs of the participants, four half-day sessions were held from 09.30 – 12.30. The materials, which were created by the Mindful Managers consortium, were useful for the facilitation of the training programme. In addition, the facilitators used PowerPoint presentations alongside worksheets and activities related to the core module. Thanks to the skilful facilitation, the participants were comfortable sharing their own experiences on mindfulness in the workplace and developing beneficial skills for dealing with these issues.

Following on from the first pilot, the consortium worked hard to incorporate the feedback from both the participants and the facilitators. As the first pilots were successful across the partnership, there were only a few amendments to be made. The facilitators aimed to include a more in depth introduction to mindfulness which would help the learners to understand the applicability of the project. In addition, the consortium made some minor amendments to the module materials in order to make them easier for the facilitators to navigate and plan their training sessions. In addition, in the UK, the facilitators felt that the course would run more smoothly if the Keep Learning module was held before Take Notice. The amendments ensured that the second pilot was a success.

### **3.1. First Session**

Val Boulding facilitated the first session of the Mindful Managers training programme. All of the administrative tasks were completed before the session commenced (Annex 1). Then, Val introduced the Mindful Managers project and the training programme. Following on from the introduction, the group created a Group Agreement to ensure that the learners were comfortable sharing sensitive information. This agreement was used throughout the course and the participants were given the opportunity to make amendments to it as and when necessary. As a means of introduction, Val conducted an icebreaker where all participants introduced themselves, their background and reasons for attending etc. In order to ensure that the training programme was a success, it was integral to create a positive working environment, where all members felt comfortable discussing their experiences of mindfulness in the workplace or their lack of experience.

The Connect module was the focus of the first session; therefore the participants were encouraged to make connections with each other. Moreover, they were encouraged to connect with themselves in order to improve their own individual understanding of how these techniques can be utilised in their professional and personal lives. A PowerPoint presentation ensured that participants had a visual reference to the discussion topics and this was also made available to them electronically. Val utilised the PERMA model and the Trust activity. For the Be Active section of the session, Val introduced some relaxation techniques and the group practiced breathing as a form of gaining control and composure. The exercises were all well received by the participants. At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 5).

During the first pilot, Val felt that there were too many resources to choose from. Whilst the resources had not decreased, Val felt more accustomed to the programme in pilot 2.

### **3.2. Second Session**

The second session was facilitated by Val Boulding. Val started the session by completing all administrative tasks (Annex 2). This session focused on the Keep Learning module. The module schedule was slightly modified from the first pilot, as the facilitators felt that it would be more



beneficial to focus on the Keep Learning module before Take Notice. They agreed that the new format ran smoothly with the participants.

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. In addition, the various learning styles were outlined and participants were able to identify their own learning style. The session also focused on effective methods of conflict resolution. In addition, Val introduced laughter yoga for the Be Active section of the session and this activity had a positive impact on the participants. At the end of the session, all participants completed a session evaluation form (Annex 6).

### **3.3. Third Session**

Carolyn Usher facilitated the third session, which focused on the Take Notice module. This module encourages learners to accept struggles and negative aspects of work and build on these through awareness.

Carolyn utilised the materials created by the Mindful Managers consortium and used a PowerPoint presentation, which was also made available to them electronically after the session. Carolyn then conducted an icebreaker to create a positive working environment. Carolyn introduced the concept of a strength inventory; through this activity, participants developed a deeper understanding of their own strengths and the strengths of those they work with. In addition, mind mapping was used to further explore personal issues relating to the topic. Carolyn has extensive experience as a yoga instructor; therefore, she facilitated a mini yoga session during the Be Active section of the class. The yoga session focused on exercises that one could practice in an office and were, therefore, beneficial to the group.

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

### **3.4. Fourth Session**

Val started the fourth and final session by completing all administrative tasks (Annex 4). This session focused on the Give module, which is the final module of the Mindful Managers training programme. Due to the theory which this module has been designed on, it was a positive session to end on.

The GROW model was introduced, this is an effective tool for providing feedback and is, therefore, useful for the participants. Val outlined the links between mindfulness and neuro linguistic programming. After each exercise, the learners were asked to reflect and to feedback any thoughts. 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.

All participants completed the session evaluation form (Annex 8) and an additional final session evaluation (Annex 9). This assessed the suitability of the training programme to the target audience.

### 3.5. Photographs of Training



## 4. Impact of the Training Programme

At the end of each session, participants completed evaluation forms (Annex 5 - 8, which analysed the effectiveness and suitability of the training programme for the target audience. An additional final session evaluation (Annex 9) was completed after the last session. In addition, these evaluations were an essential part of ensuring that the trainers were providing satisfactory training to the participants. These forms have provided the basis for the analysis of the impact of the training programme below.

### 4.1. Evaluation

The following charts outline the participants' evaluations of the second pilot training.

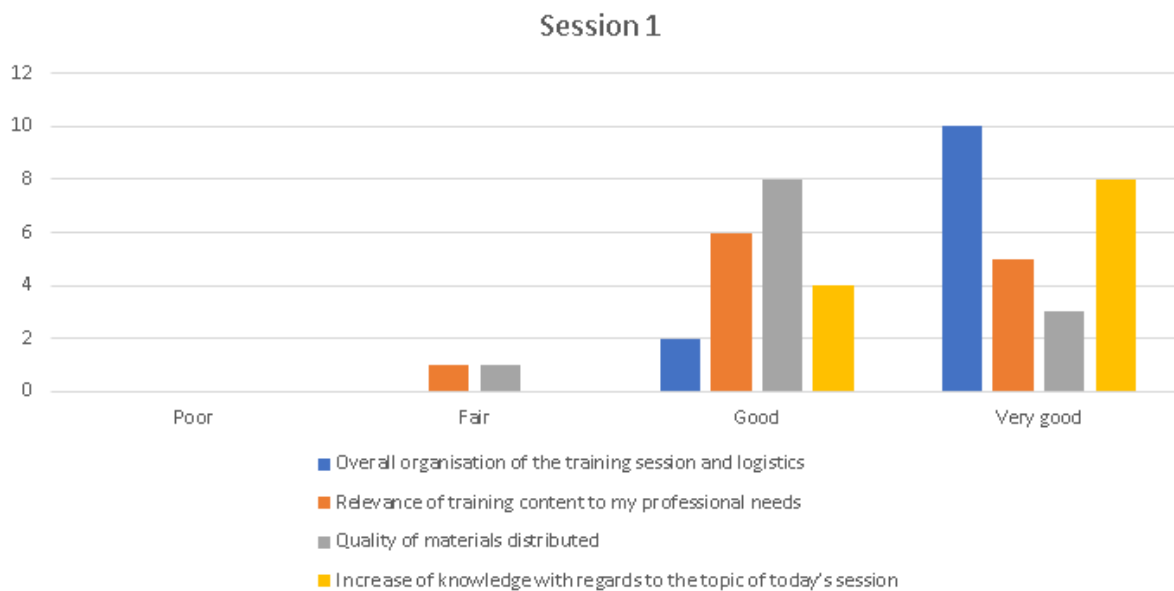


Figure 1: data from the evaluation forms of the first session (Annex 5).

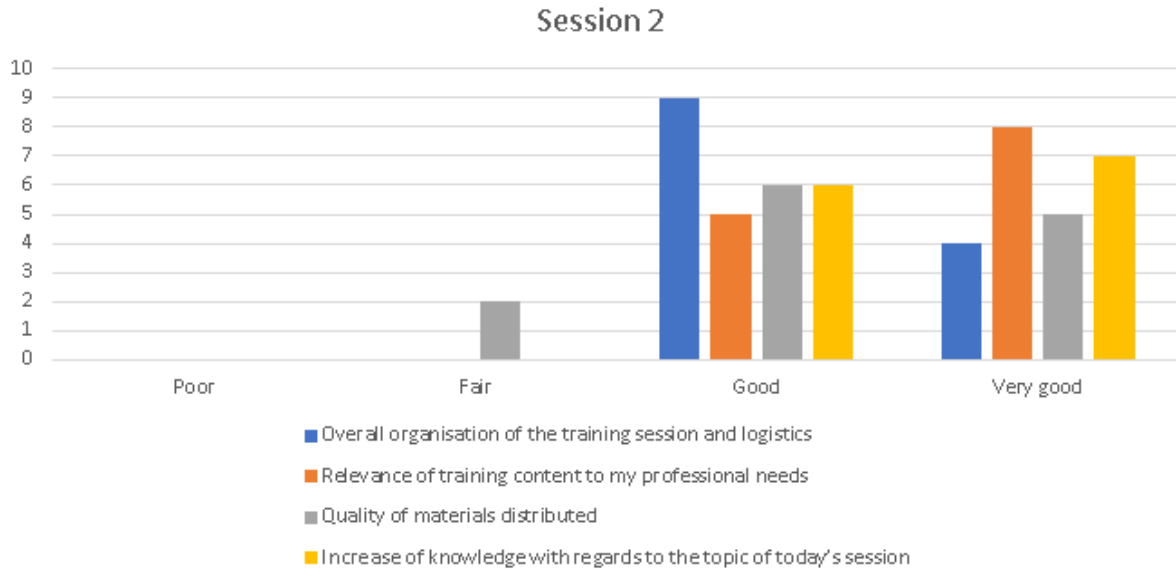


Figure 2: data from the evaluation forms of the second session (Annex 6).

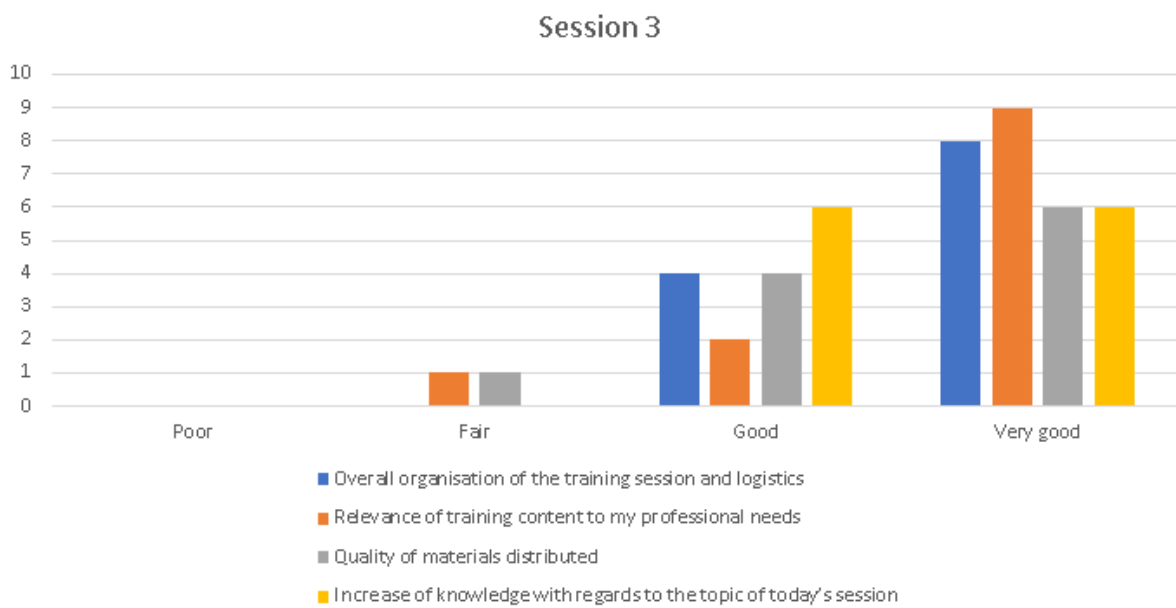


Figure 3: data from the evaluation forms of the third session (Annex 7).

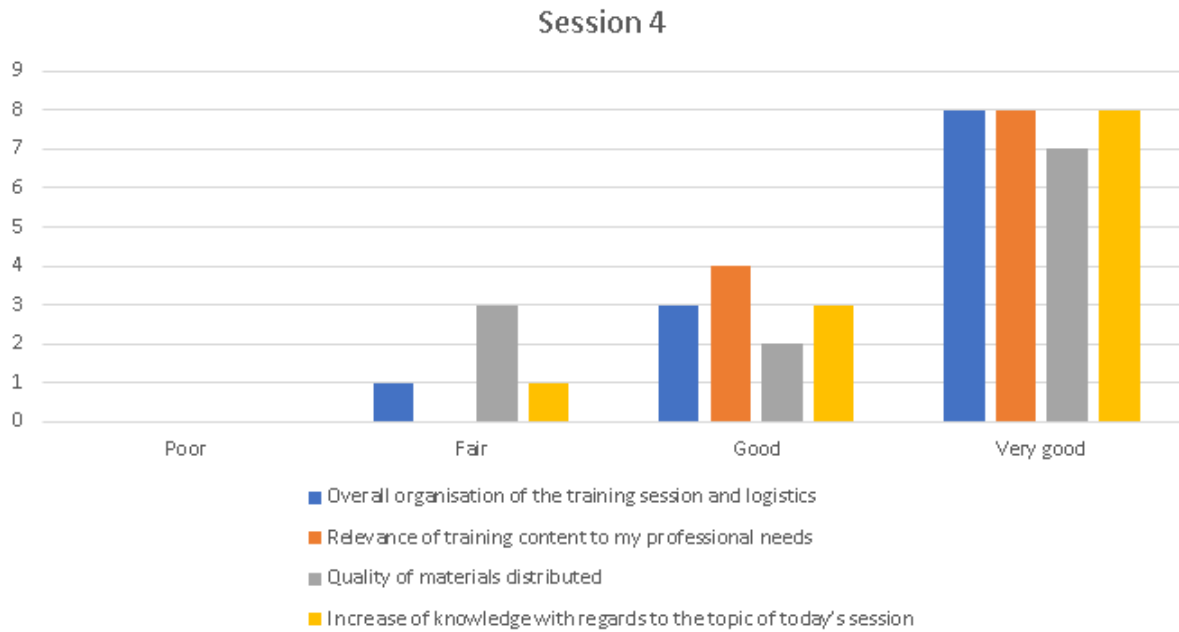


Figure 4: data from the evaluation forms of the fourth session (Annex 8).

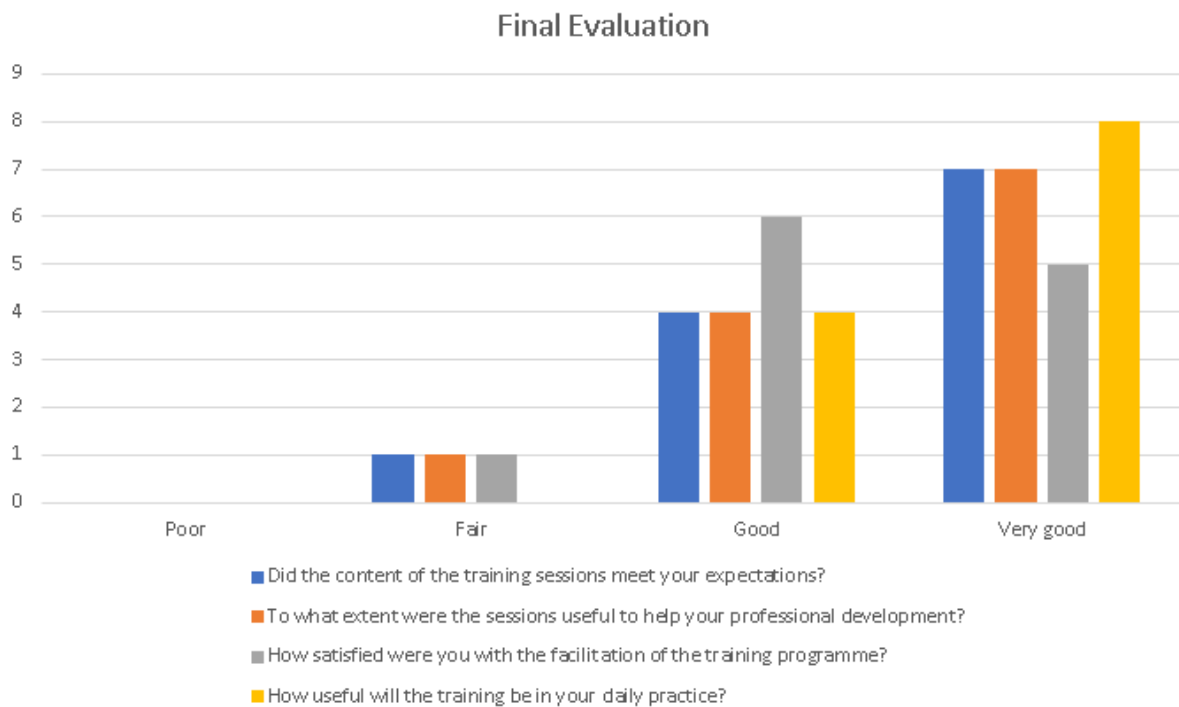


Figure 5: data from the evaluation forms of the final session (Annex 9).

Each session and aspect were consistently rated high throughout the training programme. The data proves that the participants were happy with the quality and content of the sessions and training programme as a whole. The majority of participants graded the programme as good or very good across the whole evaluation forms. In addition, the ratings were, on average, higher than during the first pilot which proves that there was an improvement in the quality

and content of the training programme. Therefore, the facilitators and the Inova team were satisfied with the outcome of pilot 2.

During the group discussions, which were an aspect of every session, the participants commented on the content and quality of the activities during the sessions. This was an effective way of gaining relevant feedback which the facilitators could then incorporate into the programme.

## **4.2. Participants' testimonials**

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

- "The knowledge and interactiveness acquired."
- "The importance of working like a team, being respectful and listening to all the opinions."
- "Be aware about the needs of the team and how to be helpful for them."
- "Time to reflect on a challenge I'm having and really enjoyed the yoga!"
- "Realising the strengths I have and taking time to recognise them."
- "Thinking about what's important for me compared to what's important for the team."

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

- "Clearer aims of the session - felt a bit disjointed, although I enjoyed the activities."
- "Chance to reflect and maybe note down my thoughts relating to work during the session."
- "Went very quickly, preferred the shorter breaks."
- "There doesn't seem to be enough time to explore - always moving on quickly."
- "More yoga and relaxation exercises."

**Any other comments?**

- "Very approachable trainers, friendly, comfortable space to share."
- "Keep promoting and advertising this training."
- "Really useful - thank you."
- "Enjoyable sessions. Gave me time to reflect."

On a whole, the participants were satisfied with the content and quality of the training programme, as can be seen from the testimonials. Their comments will be incorporated into the finalisation of the Mindful Managers Training Programme.

## 5. Summary and recommendations

Thanks to the hard work of the consortium, the Mindful Managers training programme was deemed a success, as can be seen from the participants' evaluations.

### 5.1. Facilitator's Comments

The facilitators felt that there had been an improvement in the content and quality of the training programme between the first and second pilot. In addition, as they were more accustomed to the training materials, they were better equipped to plan for the sessions and navigate the resources. Therefore, the facilitators felt that the second pilot of the programme was a success and was beneficial to the target group.

Due to the extensive amount of training materials, which have been created by the Mindful Managers consortium, it was felt that the course could be held for longer than four sessions. A longer course would enable the facilitators and participants to delve deeper into the theory and explore the materials which have been provided. This is something that could be considered for future similar projects. In addition, this could aid the sustainability of the project.

## 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