mindful managers

Setting the Future of Mindful Management

A Guide for Policy Makers in the Public Sector

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Chapter 1: What will you find in this guide?

Is mindfulness a hype? The books, workshops, online platforms, ... about mindfulness continue to grow exponentially. Cooking, raising children, working, sports: every aspect of life seems to be linked to mindfulness nowadays.

In the Erasmus+ project 'Mindful Managers' we spent more than 3 years developing training, reflective practice (Reflective Rounds) and an online game to support managers in the public sector in strengthening their own mental resilience to be cascaded to strengthen the mental resilience of their employees and team and to work more ethically and productively using a mindful approach within their organisation.

Our findings and results of this project can be found in this guide. You will also find inspiring stories from managers who are convinced of the added value of mindfulness and who are feeling the benefits of using this approach. Finally, in this guide you will find a detailed step-by-step plan of what you, as a decision maker in a public organisation, can do to get started with this theme.

Before explaining the above topics, we want to show that mindfulness is not a hype, but that it is important that you as an organisation put this topic on the agenda. You will reap the rewards in the long term. When implementing 'Mindful Management' and furthermore: the mindful management training programme and game, it is useful to follow a practical framework. We chose the practical framework of Kotter. In this introduction we will give a short explanation about this model.

1.1 How does the brain react to stress

Fight – Flight- Freeze

The fight-flight-freeze response [1] is your body's natural reaction to danger. It is a type of stress response that helps you react to perceived threats, like an oncoming car or growling dog.

The response instantly causes hormonal and physiological changes. These changes allow you to act quickly so you can protect yourself. It's a survival instinct that our ancient ancestors developed many years ago.

Specifically, fight-or-flight is an active defence response where you fight or flee. Your heart rate gets faster, which increases oxygen flow to your major muscles. Your pain perception drops, and your hearing sharpens. These changes help you act appropriately and rapidly.

Freezing is fight-or-flight on hold, where you further prepare to protect yourself. It's also called reactive immobility or attentive immobility. It involves similar physiological changes, but instead, you stay completely still and get ready for the next move.

Fight-flight-freeze is not a conscious decision. It is an automatic reaction, so you cannot control it.

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[1] Stress Management for Health Course. "The Fight Flight Response".

Stress

Stress is a very natural reaction of your body to tension. It does not have to be unhealthy. Short-term stress can be positive and motivating. It helps you to focus if you want to achieve a sports performance. It makes you think about your exams in a concentrated way or look forward to your wedding. You live to one moment and then have the opportunity to relax again. Some people perform better when they experience slight stress. This even feels positive for them.

Stress is negative if it blocks you and makes you perform less well. Stress also becomes unhealthy when it lasts too long. The body can recover quite easily from many small stress moments. However, sometimes the tension builds up for a long time. There is then no more room or time for relaxation and recovery. Your body gets out of balance.

Sometimes a stressful situation persists. If your stress level is exceeded too often or for too long, you become less resilient to stress. Your body gives you various stress signals and your symptoms do not go away: you cannot function properly anymore, you cannot cope with your work, you have trouble running your family, you feel tired and tense, you worry more ... The balance between carrying capacity and load is out of balance. You are overworked.

When you are overworked, the stress has lasted for weeks and months. You don't recover anymore and you run out of energy. You start to notice that the stress is demolishing you. Anyone who intervenes in this phase with sufficient rest and structural changes can be prevented from falling into burn-out.

Employees have their own responsibility, but there is certainly also a role for the organisation to take steps in this aspect and in particular, recognition of the important role managers play in ensuring wellbeing in the workplace is addressed.

1.2. Mindfulness – Positive impact on your organisation

If you, as a public sector organisation, are concerned about the wellbeing of your employees, both on a strategic/policy level and on an operational level, and therefore also have a focus on mindfulness, this will have the following advantages:[2]

· more motivated employees
· enhanced efficiency
· higher resilience to change
· greater openness to differences
· more respectful cooperation
· an increased sense of general well-being
· lower risk of absenteeism due to illness
· less presentism
· happier business culture

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[2] Vroom, V. H. (1964). Work and motivation. New York: Wiley.

1.3. Short introduction to Kotter

Major change initiatives generate only lukewarm results. Many fail miserably. When implementing 'Mindful Management' and furthermore: the mindful management training programme and game, it is useful to follow an evidence based framework.

For the purpose of this policy makers guide, we have chosen the theoretical framework of the 8 step plan of Kotter: summarised in the article 'Leading Change[3]'. He developed an 8 step plan to implement a programme (planned change) in your organisation. In that way you can have a long term impact. Mindful management is not just a training programme: it is a vision, a culture that you should create in your organisation, in order to see positive results in the behaviour of employees. Other theories and recommendations are available as part of the Mindful Managers Training Programme.

Kotter maintains in his article that many policy makers do not realise transformation is a process, not an event. It advances through stages that build on each other and it can take years. Pressured to accelerate the process, policy makers skip stages, when actually short-cuts never work.

Even highly capable policy makers make fundamental mistakes, such as declaring victory too soon. The result of this is loss of momentum, reversal of hard-won gains, and devastation of the entire transformation effort. By understanding the stages of change and the pitfalls unique to each stage, you boost your chances of a successful transformation. The payoff is that your organisation flexes with tectonic shifts in competitors, markets, and technologies, leaving rivals far behind.

To give your transformation effort the best chance of succeeding, take the right actions at each stage, and avoid common pitfalls.

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[3] *Harvard Business Review, Leading Change, Why Transformation Efforts Fail, John P. Kotter*.

Stage	Actions Needed	Pitfalls
Establish a sense of urgency	• Examine market and competitive realities for potential crises and untapped opportunities. • Convince at least 75% of your managers that the status quo is more dangerous than the unknown.	• Underestimating the difficulty of driving people from their comfort zones • Becoming paralyzed by risks
Form a powerful guiding coalition	• Assemble a group with shared commitment and enough power to lead the change effort. • Encourage them to work as a team outside the normal hierarchy.	• No prior experience in teamwork at the top • Relegating team leadership to an HR, quality, or strategic-planning executive rather than a senior line manager
Create a vision	• Create a vision to direct the change effort. • Develop strategies for realizing that vision.	• Presenting a vision that's too complicated or vague to be communicated in five minutes
Communicate the vision	• Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies for achieving it. • Teach new behaviors by the example of the guiding coalition.	• Undercommunicating the vision • Behaving in ways antithetical to the vision
Empower others to act on the vision	• Remove or alter systems or structures undermining the vision. • Encourage risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions.	• Failing to remove powerful individuals who resist the change effort
Plan for and create short-term wins	• Define and engineer visible performance improvements. • Recognize and reward employees contributing to those improvements.	• Leaving short-term successes up to chance • Failing to score successes early enough (12-24 months into the change effort)
Consolidate improvements and produce more change	• Use increased credibility from early wins to change systems, structures, and policies undermining the vision. • Hire, promote, and develop employees who can implement the vision. • Reinvigorate the change process with new projects and change agents.	• Declaring victory too soon—with the first performance improvement • Allowing resistors to convince "troops" that the war has been won
Institutionalize new approaches	• Articulate connections between new behaviors and corporate success. • Create leadership development and succession plans consistent with the new approach.	• Not creating new social norms and shared values consistent with changes • Promoting people into leadership positions who don't personify the new approach

Chapter 2: The value of mindful management

2.1 Context of the Mindful Managers project

Mindful Managers is an Erasmus+ project funded by the European Union. The project has been created in partnership with four European organisations:

· **Inova Consultancy in the UK:** Inova provides coaching and training for underrepresented and disadvantaged individuals. Participants include, but are not restricted to, those experiencing unemployment, migrants and new mothers. In addition Inova has extensive experience working with entrepreneurs and managers in various sectors.

· **VAMK in Finland:** VAMK is a University of Applied Sciences which provides high level theoretical and practical oriented education in three fields: technology, business and socials services and health care in Finnish and in English. The university focuses on energy technology and international business competence.

· **CARDET in Cyprus:** CARDET is one of the leading research and development centres in the Mediterranean region with global expertise in project design and implementation, capacity building, and e-learning. CARDET is independently affiliated with universities and institutions from around the world.

· **Obelisk in Belgium:** Obelisk is a training and coaching company. They advise organisations, employees and job seekers throughout their process of change and development. Together with their clients, Obelisk constructed a long-term perspective.

Stress in the workplace has increased depression and anxiety amongst staff and managers[4]. In the public sector, funding cuts have meant that staff are stretched and are not always offered support for their mental wellbeing. Therefore, it is necessary for managers in the public sector to be provided with support to deal with stress and mental wellbeing of their staff and their employees. It is this gap which the Mindful Managers project is aiming to fill.

The Mindful Managers project aims to develop public sector managers' skills and competences and positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work using face-to-face training and a gamified e-learning tool. Mindful Managers promotes work based learning (WBL) and uses mentoring and coaching at work for training purposes. The project aims to achieve the following goals:

· De-stigmatise the discussion around mental health at work
· Give managers tools and resources to actively support positive wellbeing at work for themselves and their teams

In order to achieve these goals, the partnership have developed a training programme based on the 5 wellbeing[5] habits:

1. **Connect:** With the people around you. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
2. **Be active:** Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good.
3. **Take notice:** Be curious. This includes the idea of Mindfulness.

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[4] Stress in the Workplace: A General Overview of the Causes, the Effects, and the Solutions
Melanie Bickford Canadian Mental Health Association Newfoundland and Labrador Division August 2005
[5] A Review of Workplace Interventions that Promote Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Graveling RA, Crawford JO , Cowie , Amati, Vohra, Institute of Occupational Medicine, Edinburgh, The Keil Centre, Edinburgh

4. **<u>Keep learning</u>:** Try something new.
5. **<u>Give</u>:** Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger.

These 5 wellbeing habits will be encouraged amongst the public sector workplace with the objective of strengthening workers' mental capacity and wellbeing and therefore reducing the impact of mental illness economically and socially across Europe.

2.2 Results of the desk research

The overall aim of the Needs Analysis was to establish the current situation of the target group in partner countries. The aims were to find out the **current situation** of public sector managers´ wellbeing, the **current state of training methods** of mental wellbeing among public sector managers, **education** among public sector managers, the **training needs** of public sector managers concerning their wellbeing and to share **knowledge and understanding** among partner countries regarding the current situation and challenges of public sector managers wellbeing. The data was collected by desk research, focus group interviews and in-depth interviews. The Comparative Needs Analysis report can be found on the project website: https://mindfulmanager.eu/en/.

In each partner country, sickness absences or absence from workplaces are common, but managers are less likely to be away from work than employees. The findings show that the costs of mental health problems are considerable and the number of people suffering from mental health problems in partner countries was significant. All the partner countries had national level strategies concerning wellbeing at work. The strategies were based on government programmes and were mainly carried out through ministries. Some of the strategies and programmes were targeted especially to the mental health of managers working in the Public Sector. However the target group was mainly all employees rather than only managers.

The traditional training methods in mental and work related wellbeing were training programmes containing lectures, group activities and individual training. Training was mainly focused to all employees; managers were not necessarily pointed out. Partner countries had various e-learning materials or programmes for wellbeing at work available for free use or for purchase. There were web-based programmes, webinars, self-assessment tools, surveys, measurement tools, etc.

The similar straining factors in partner countries were budget pressures and saving especially in middle management, which did not always allow delivering high quality. The managers' work was seen hard and the workload increasing. They suffered from constant interruptions. They had the feeling of public accountability, bureaucracy, and constant change. There was increasing workload and responsibilities, difficulties or lack of communication, and time pressures with tight deadlines. In practice, mental stress can contribute to burnout, absence, low productivity, poor communication. Stress also manifests itself in the body physically by having migraines, back pain, being run down and getting colds.

The suggested training subjects concerned mindfulness and its techniques, time management, skills to meet people, self-knowledge and coping at work. There was also a need for training in communication skills, team building, group dynamics and soft skills. The conclusion was that there are still a lot of unutilised virtual possibilities for managers in the public sector to promote mental wellbeing at work.

2.3 Training programme and Reflection Rounds

Mindful Managers Training Programme

The Mindful Managers Training Programme is a multi-disciplinary training programme that was developed to support public sector managers and workers who aim to explore new ways to manage stress at the workplace and reflect on their and their teams' wellbeing.

The partnership co-developed 5 training modules that are based on the themes of the UK Government project 'Mental Capital and Wellbeing' (2008). The modules follow the '5 a Day' habits for wellbeing structure and each module addresses two topics. These topics were identified based on partners' existing knowledge and research outcomes collected in the first phase of the Mindful Managers project.

Methodology

The theoretical framework of the Mindful Managers Training Programme is based on David Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1975). The Learning Cycle consists of 4 phases:

- Concrete experience
- Reflective observation
- Abstract conceptualisation
- Active experimentation

Co-funded by the
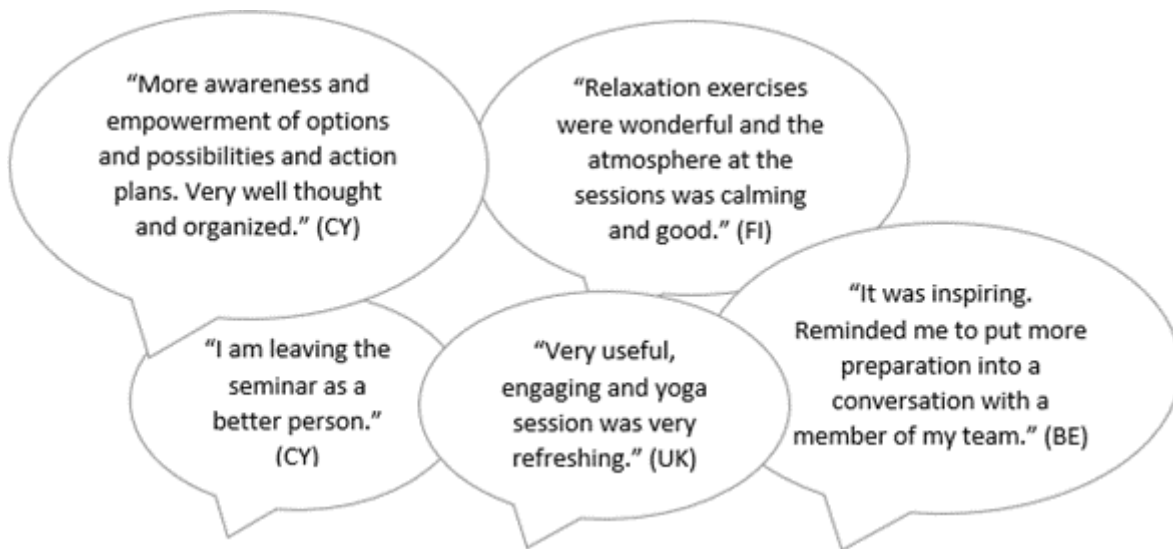Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Each of the 5 training modules consists of several activities that cover each phase of the Kolb Learning Cycle. Based on the theory, participants need to go through these phases of learning in order to achieve effective learning.

The main learning outcomes of the training programme are given and by the completion of the programmes user should be able to:

Modules	Learning outcomes
CONNECT	Have a deeper connection with themselves.
	Make contact with different kinds of personalities on a professional level in order to improve team results.
	Make connections with a whole team with different personality types. They know their needs, way of life and their standards and values.
	Show understanding towards other colleagues with a different role.
BE ACTIVE	Eliminate stress through physical exercises.
	Promote collaboration, productivity, team spirit and mindfulness.
	Boost confidence and improve the levels of self-respect.
TAKE NOTICE	Take notice of their own strengths as managers and build on these skills.
	Take notice of the strengths of their co-workers and build on these skills.
	Use the tools of the module with their team in order to address potential challenges in the team.
KEEP LEARNING	Look at the skills and needs at the workplace from different perspectives.
	Identify learning needs and pick up the best ideas for own work and the work community.
	Use the new information in the work community.
GIVE	Experience the power of cooperation.
	Create human connections that allow compassionate giving and receiving.
	Being aware of their own impact on themselves and others.
	Increase positive impact using mindful techniques.

As part of the Mindful Managers project, partners in Belgium, Cyprus, Finland and the United Kingdom piloted the programme twice with public sector managers in 4 sessions. In total over 100 participants tested the programme. Each session lasted approximately half a day and the Be active module was incorporated in all 4 sessions.
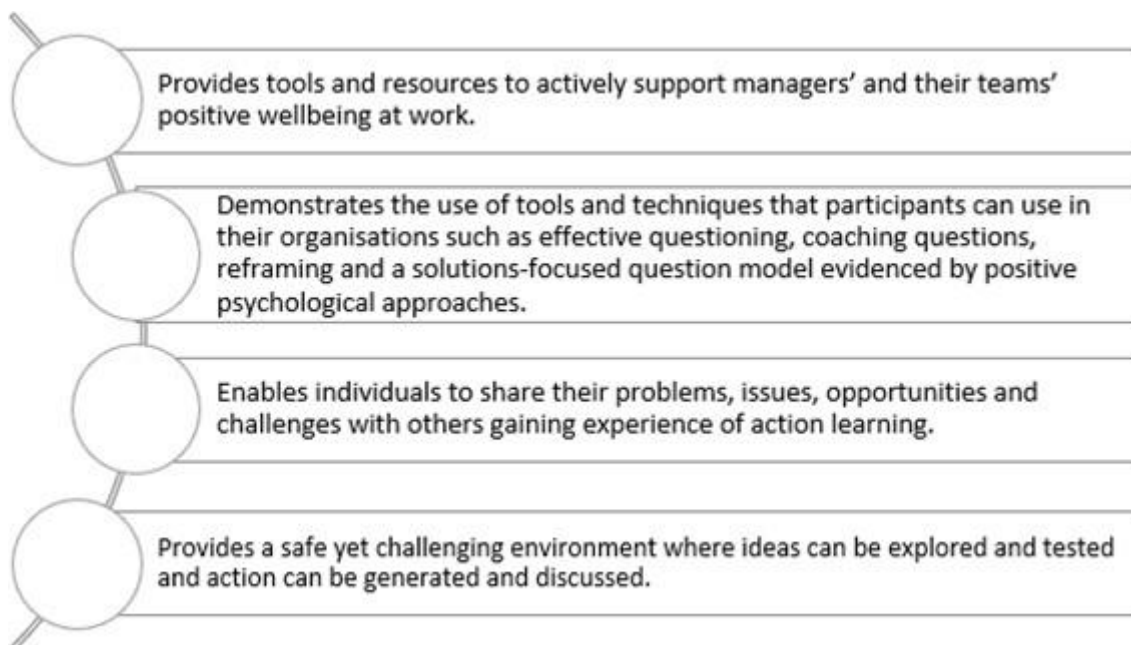
Testimonials from training participants

"More awareness and empowerment of options and possibilities and action plans. Very well thought and organized." (CY)

"Relaxation exercises were wonderful and the atmosphere at the sessions was calming and good." (FI)

"I am leaving the seminar as a better person." (CY)

"Very useful, engaging and yoga session was very refreshing." (UK)

"It was inspiring. Reminded me to put more preparation into a conversation with a member of my team." (BE)

Reflection Rounds

As part of the Mindful Managers project, an innovative peer mentoring group was created based on Inova Consultancy's Mentoring Circles™ methodology that was developed in 2001. In the Mindful Managers project, Circles have been adapted to the needs of public sector managers and these are the Reflection Rounds. The programme aims to support public sector managers to participate in a unique group mentoring process, which brings together skilled facilitation using action learning techniques, coaching and mentoring. Reflection Rounds aim to develop public sector managers' skills and competences, positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work. The programme aims to de-stigmatise the discussion around mental health at work. The programme further explored the 5 topics of the Mindful Managers Training Programme in order to offer managers an opportunity to reflect on the knowledge they acquired during the sessions. Furthermore, Reflection Rounds offer further topics that can be explored with managers regarding health and wellbeing. These topics have been identified based on research by the CIPD (https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/factsheet), the UK professional body for managers working in HR. The Mindful Managers partnership created the chart below to summarise all topics covered and explored by the Reflection Rounds Programme.
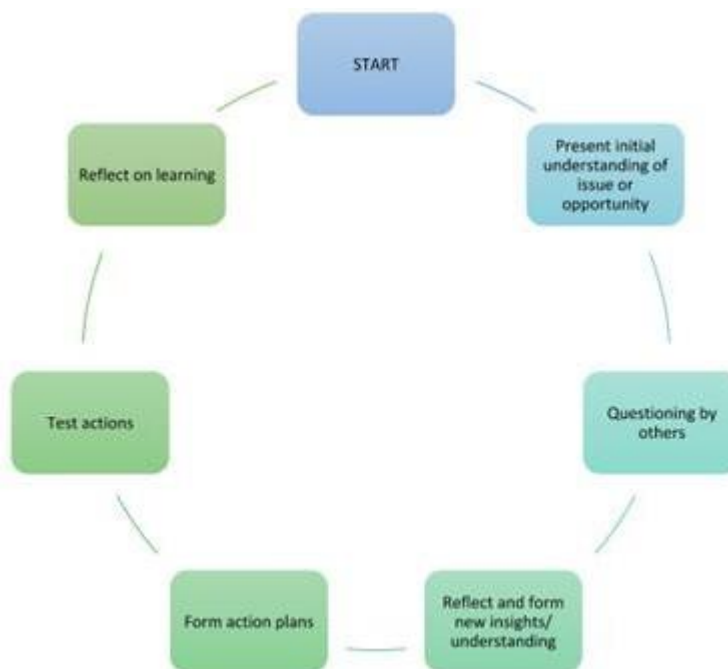
mindful managers

12 STEPS TO ACHIEVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1. CONNECT
WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU, MAKE NEW CONNECTIONS.

2. BE ACTIVE
MOVE YOUR BODY, PUSH YOURSELF, EXERCISE, USE THE OUTDOORS TO RE-ENERGISE.

3. TAKE NOTICE
AND REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCES TO ENSURE YOU APPRECIATE WHAT MATTERS TO YOU.

4. KEEP LEARNING
HOBBIES, GAIN NEW INFORMATION, USE YOUR THINKING SKILLS, KEEP YOUR BRAIN ACTIVE.

5. GIVE
TO A FRIEND, A STRANGER OR YOUR COMMUNITY, GIVE YOUR TIME.

6. HEALTH
DEVELOP GOOD HABITS: HEALTHY EATING, EXERCISE, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING, MANAGING STRESS, PHYSICAL SAFETY.

7. GOOD WORK
SEEK PURPOSEFUL WORK, USE YOUR TALENTS, SEEK SATISFACTION, AUTONOMY, OPPORTUNITIES AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE.

8. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES
DEVELOP A LIFE IN ALIGNMENT WITH YOUR PRINCIPLES, SPIRITUAL BELIEFS, SOURCES OF NURTURING, INCLUSION AND DIGNITY.

9. 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.

10. PERSONAL GROWTH
IDENTIFY YOUR GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES, PURSUE THEM, VALUE YOURSELF, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE.

11. GOOD LIFESTYLE CHOICES
MAKE CHOICES THAT SUPPORT A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE: FOOD, DIET, ACTIVITY, RELAXATION, HOBBIES, NURTURING TALENTS.

12. FINANCIAL WELLBEING
FAIR PAY AND BENEFITS, FINANCIAL PLANNING, OBTAINING RELIABLE ADVICE IF REQUIRED.

Purpose of the Reflection Rounds

Provides tools and resources to actively support managers' and their teams' positive wellbeing at work.

Demonstrates the use of tools and techniques that participants can use in their organisations such as effective questioning, coaching questions, reframing and a solutions-focused question model evidenced by positive psychological approaches.

Enables individuals to share their problems, issues, opportunities and challenges with others gaining experience of action learning.

Provides a safe yet challenging environment where ideas can be explored and tested and action can be generated and discussed.

Methodology and testing

The methodology of the Reflection Rounds is based on an iterative action learning cycle that can be used multiple times by participants (developing fresh issues or deepening development of complex issues) (see Figure). Managers reflect on their skills and explore skill development which is then complemented by practicing these skills in the real world with their teams and coming back to further reflect in the Reflection Rounds.

This 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.

As part of the Mindful Managers project all partners tested the Reflection Rounds programme in total with more than 30 participants. Group members met 3 times for 3-4 hours to talk about their goals and challenges. Facilitators ensured that participants felt confident that the personal issues they shared stayed within the group as they were encouraged to share issues related to managerial challenges. Each participant was given 20-30 minutes to discuss with the team their goals and set action plans to put their ideas in place. The methodology focuses on asking questions rather than giving advice, therefore participants come up with their own action plans and feel more committed to follow it. Each session participants reported back to the group about their progress and were encouraged in a supportive environment to continue working on their goals after the end of the training.

2.4 Mindful Management Game

The Mindful Managers Game is designed to provide players with the opportunity to improve their managerial skills. The game consists of 10 levels which cover 5 main themes (Connect, Take notice, Keep learning, Be active, and Give).

First, the player chooses from a plethora of statements that imply to him/her so the game is better suited for his/her needs. These statements cover work/life balance, performance at work, the hierarchy at work, interpersonal relationships, the atmosphere at work. Based on the responses, the scenarios that will follow in the 10 levels are appropriated – highlighted for their convenience.

Players gradually proceed through the levels and provide solutions to the different scenarios they encounter. Upon successful completion of each scenario, players are awarded with stars, which reflect points and are shown on their interface.

The game is designed as a collection of mini-stories in which the player participates as a manager. In particular stories, he/she gets familiar with the situations and then is provided with options regarding the solution of each situation. The player is asked to choose one solution which he/she finds as the optimal management of the situation. After the choice, the player sees the evaluation of his/her pick.

Which one do you think is the optimal solution for this case?

1. I consider students and the management dumb, I feel that they do not understand the content of the topic.

2. I take the feedback and start to think what I could do differently.

3. I ask students for more detailed feedback on unclear shares.

SUGGEST THIS SOLUTION

Then, the player is asked to give his/her recommendations on how to approach the situation through true/false questions or other tasks that further develop the managerial knowledge regarding the particular situation. After successful completion of these two steps (correct solution pick and true/false questions), the player is rewarded with the "quest star" and can proceed to another mini-story. If there is a need for revision, the player is asked to repeat the mini-story so he/she can get the star.

Quest completed

⭐

Great work!
You earned the quest star!

Besides traditional questions, the game also offers offline practical tasks in the frames of the Be Active theme. These practical tasks can be focused on managing per se – such as planning an activity for colleagues and their families, or on activities that are supportive to good management – relaxation techniques which

improve focus, performance at work, life-work balance etc. These tasks also encourage players to apply knowledge and skills in real-life situations and gain more knowledge and experience in managing situations.

Through stories that are relatable to real life, players can improve their managerial skills since they are asked to provide a solution which is perceived as the optimal one in their eyes. They become a key character in the story and immediately after a choice is made, they see if they have chosen the correct answer or if they could solve the issue in a more positive way.

The game can be perfectly combined with the training and support the skills development and reflections throughout a training course.

Chapter 3: Inspirational stories

3.1 Story of Katrien from Teitu in Belgium

The training mindful managers was for me a very valuable and enriching 2 days, where I got many new insights about myself, about dealing with colleagues, as well as the necessary tools to get started. The different themes were elaborated in a very varied way and the assignments provided a good balance between gaining concrete experience and reflection afterwards. The training ensured that I can deal with challenges with my employees on the work floor in a different way.

By starting with the 'connect with yourself and the other' component, the key was creating trust within the group, so that work could continue within a safe framework. We gained insight into personal social styles and what we can do to successfully connect with colleagues. The various exercises challenged us to self-reflection with sometimes confrontational moments. By being able to practice sufficiently during the training, I learned to be able to steer conversations that are more difficult with colleagues in the direction in which I want to go.

The assignments in the 'be active' part were nicely interwoven throughout the 2 days. The movement moments created a strong bond with the team and because of this, our concentration remained high throughout the day.

During the movement exercises we also paid attention to self-reflection and the role you play within a group.

The 'take notice' part ensured that we became aware of our own and our employees' limits by means of very experiential exercises through a very effective role play. We became more aware of our language, our attitude and what can be adjusted.

In the 'give' section we were presented with a very handy and at the same time simple coaching model, which can easily be applied in conversations with employees. We were made aware of our own manager style, whether we take on an expert role or coaching role in relation to our employees. Instead of having a guiding conversation, we learned to make our employees more aware of solutions to tackle a problem, through a different form of questioning.

Both trainers had a great deal of expertise in the matter, which meant that they learned in many areas. I can recommend this training to every manager who is striving for a better functioning within his team and at the same time is open to self-reflection.

3.2 Story from the UK - Anonymous

The participant is an experienced manager in the Public Sector working for the Sheffield City Council. Feedback and discussions with the learner, highlighted the need for such training to be rolled out to a bigger audience and the benefits of doing so were shared. The learner participated in both the training and the Reflection Rounds and commented on how being able to discuss issues with other managers supported decision making and often different ways of approaching key issues. It helped the learner to look for new solutions whilst also recognising her own needs with regards to wellbeing and work life balance. She commented on how important it was to hear other people's thoughts and to think about broader topics and that she would use some of the materials/resources in her own team meetings.

The learner commented that the training allowed her to explore some of her own work and that the Reflection Rounds not only fulfilled her expectations but also allowed her to support others, explore problem solving and to recognise that work issues do not define who she is and not to dwell on them or allow them to impact negatively on previous successes.

The learner chose to remain anonymous.

3.3 Story from VAMK in Finland

The first time people get together it's important to form a group. Participants may become stressed by the new situation with strange people, but with different games they can get unobtrusive interaction with each other. In our first pilot training we used *finding own qualities and searching pairs* as an ice breaker.

On the first day of the meeting we had glued a window full of different personality features. We asked the participants to pick out some of their typical personality features and write them down on a piece of paper around their own name. The next task was to talk about their choices with another participant. After a while, the pair was exchanged and their features were introduced to a newcomer. The participants talked lively about what they felt and what the characterisation meant to them. After that, the atmosphere was liberated.

Through different exercises it is possible to learn to understand different people's ways of working and find new solutions. The Quadrants task was used to reflect on the different core characteristics of humans. Positive qualities can lead to pitfalls, and we can also learn from those who annoy us. One of the participants said that she had set a PowerPoint text on the wall of their coffee room at the workplace: "We can learn the most from those who cause us allergies."

3.4 Story of Mr. Kyprianos Nicolaides from the Mediterranean Institute of Management in Cyprus

Mr. Kyprianos Nicolaides was one of the participants that attended all sessions of the programme implementation. He actively participated in discussions and contributed to teamwork. Mr. Nicolaides is the Director of the Institute and works with a large team of colleagues, who he coordinates. Some topics he reported and discussed are:

1. **Change management:** There is usually resistance when a new routine or process is introduced in an organisation.

2. **Support of colleagues:** People need to be supported at all times when something new is introduced.

3. **Conflict management:** When a disagreement occurs, it is important for a manager to be neutral and provide opportunities to people to express their perspectives so that a viable solution is found.

4. **Wellbeing and productivity:** When employees' wellbeing is secured, they are more productive.

Mr Nicolaides stated that the Mindful Managers programme is very well designed. One of the programmes strongest points is that it is practical and all participants have the opportunity to apply the content of all seminars in their own contexts. He expressed that wellbeing at work is of high importance. Only when we have established that there is wellbeing at work can we say that our employees are productive. Therefore, as he says, "there needs to be the right working conditions and an overall support framework for the employees so that they can perform to the best of their abilities and skills".
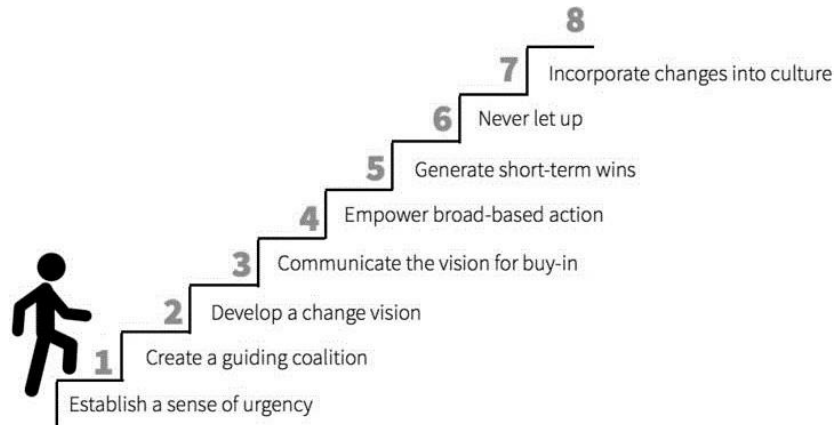
3.5 Video case studies

The table below lists some video case studies from participants and facilitators who attended the Mindful Managers project activities. All videos are available on the project's YouTube channel.

Participants' Testimonials from Finland	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dSAPf1V3gw&t=1s
Participant's Testimonial from Cyprus 1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPCEJP9Eo0E
Participant's Testimonial from Cyprus 2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDKgDG1S1Ak
Participant's Testimonial from Cyprus 3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6r94bNiy_U
Facilitator's Testimonial from Belgium	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMv7yIpcu_o
Facilitator's Testimonial from the UK	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9brspKH6QA
Taster - Training session in the UK	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOTkEAT0NhQ

Chapter 4: Recommendations for policy makers

We now proceed to the implementation of a mindful management culture in your organisation. We do that by giving some advice, linked to the 8 step plan of Kotter.

4.1 Establish a sense of urgency

Conversations should be generated about the issues within an organisation and there should be an open dialogue about the steps that can be taken in order to improve upon these issues and achieve the goals of the organisation. This step creates a need for change within a system or an organisation, and once this need has been established, the team can begin to plan the steps to establishing change. If all team members are not aware of a need for change within the organisation, they will not be motivated to implement change and will be unaware of the sense of urgency; therefore, clear and effective lines of communication are essential.

In John Kotter's article 'Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail' (2007), he outlines the following actions which are needed for this step:

- · 'Examine market and competitive realities for potential crises and untapped opportunities.
- · Convince at least 75% of your managers that the status quo is more dangerous than the unknown.' (Kotter, 2007, p. 1)

In addition, Kotter defines the pitfalls of establishing a sense of urgency:

- · 'Underestimating the difficulty of driving people from their comfort zones.
- · Becoming paralysed by risks.' (Kotter, 2007, p. 1)

Therefore, it is integral that management ensure that a sense of urgency is established and the team are committed to the need for change.

In the case of mindful management, it can be useful to establish a sense of urgency by:

- · Questioning employees on their stress levels
- · Divide a questionnaire to measure the mindfulness in your team or organisation
- · Show statistics about health outcomes in your organisation
- · Show statistics about health outcomes in other, similar organisations
- · Show the risk of not investing in mindful management

4.2 Create a guiding coalition

The purpose of this step is to ensure that there is a powerful coalition across the whole organisation when it comes to implementing change. This association should be formed of individuals who have a range of skills

and experience and are situated in various areas of the organisation in order to maximise effectiveness. A broad coalition will be better equipped to delegate tasks and support change across the organisation as a whole. It is essential that this coalition is capable of working well as a team. In addition, in order to ensure that major change is possible, the head of an organisation must be on board with the planned changes. If a sense of urgency has already been established, creating a guiding coalition should be the natural next step.

In Kotter's article, he outlines the following actions which are needed for this step:

- · 'Assemble a group with shared commitment and enough power to lead the change effort.
- · Encourage them to work as a team outside the normal hierarchy.' (Kotter, 2007, p. 1)

In addition, Kotter defines the pitfalls of creating a guiding coalition:

- · 'No prior experience in teamwork at the top.
- · Relegating team leadership to an HR, quality, or strategic-planning executive rather than a senior line manager.' (Kotter, 2007, p. 1)

Therefore, it is essential that management handpick members of the guiding coalition who, not only complement one another, but also have the ability to disperse this change across the organisation. Mindful Management is integral in understanding the skills and experiences of individuals in an organisation and how these could assist in implementing change. Managers must be aware of both the strengths and weaknesses of their team members in order to ensure that there are no oversights when it comes to creating a guiding coalition. Therefore, practicing Mindful Management will ensure that a powerful guiding coalition is created.

You can do this by:

- · Assigning employees of different levels and functions to participate in a work force concerning mindful management and stress reduction
- · Asking for help from an external or objective partner who is impartial and can support the wellbeing of your team

4.3 Develop a change of vision

When implementing a mindful management culture, it is important to develop a clear vision about stress management and prevention of burn-out. The mindful management training programme is just one tool to obtain that culture. The vision should be developed by different stakeholders in the organisation (see previous step). For example: people from different divisions, ranks and backgrounds. In that way, you organise something that is based on the needs of everyone in your organisation. Moreover, you will convince everyone more easily because of the buy-in you created.

Just as a change effort needs a strong guiding team, it must have a sensible vision. A vision directs, aligns, and inspires people to take action on a large scale. Without vision, every small decision related to a change process can turn into an interminable debate.

An effective vision has the following characteristics: 1) It describes the organisation or its key activity as it will be. 2) It articulates a set of possibilities that is in the best interests of everyone who has a stake in the organisation, such as customers, stakeholders, and employees. (Visions that help some groups of constituents but trample on others will not succeed.) 3) It is realistic. The vision should involve stretching resources and abilities, but it shouldn't seem impossible. It should reflect current trends and changes in the world. 4) It is focused enough to guide employees but simple enough to communicate easily to large numbers of people. 5) It is flexible. The guiding coalition must refine the vision according to feedback that is received so that it becomes a shared vision. 6) It appeals both to the head and to the heart, offering both analytical and inspirational components. Don't rush through the process of developing a vision. Having an ineffective vision is worse than having none at all. If an organisation cannot develop a great vision, it is not ready to

pursue change.

For example:

·   We believe that healthy employees are vital to our organisation
·   We want to work on personal wellbeing in our organisation
·   We will work on 3 levels: primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (see table below)

Primary Prevention	Secondary Prevention	Tertiary Prevention
Goal: stop disease from occurring before it happens **Focus**: education, knowledge, changing norms, providing preventive care, establishing access to resources to maintain healthy lifestyle **Examples**: vaccination, health ed, access to fruit/vegetable, annual physicals	**Goal**: treat disease early (after disease has occurred but before the person may know anything is wrong) **Focus**: routine screenings for disease, early detection tests, self-exams, access to regular care **Examples**: breast self-exams, colonoscopies, STI testing among young adults, access to Plan B emergency contraceptive	**Goal**: seeks to lessen the impact of disease on patient function, longevity, and quality of life **Focus**: medical services, medication, treatment plans, holistic care and support through illness **Examples**: emergency response time, chemotherapy, pain relieving drugs, support groups for drug addicts

[6]

The mindful management programme is situated in primary prevention, because we focus on development of mindful management skills. We want to educate and strengthen our managers in coping with stress. We will do this by a training programme, game and reflection rounds. In that way they can learn tools, or get the 5 vitamins, to adopt healthy mindful management behaviour and transfer this to the rest of their employees.

4.4 Communicate the vision for buy-in

Without consistent and repeated communication with employees, a vision will not capture their hearts and minds. It is thereby important to tell the employees you are currently working on a mindful management programme to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace.

There are different ways and platforms to communicate the change of vision mentioned before.

Communicating a vision takes consistency and repetition. Here are some suggestions:

·   Keep the vision simple, focused, and jargon-free.
·   Use metaphors, analogies, and examples to paint a verbal picture. For example, "Have a sense of vacation while working."
·   Use many different forums: large and small meetings, memos and newsletters, formal and informal interactions, and individual meetings with managers.
·   Explain any seeming inconsistencies in the company's actions.

Also, for a transformation to be successful, the people who created the vision must lead by example.

When a manager has followed the mindful managers training course, it is important that they act in a mindful way themselves. For example: when managers advise their team not to work late hours, you shouldn't be working a lot of nights yourself. Or when you expect your employees to have insights in themselves, you should be introspective yourself as well.

To communicate the vision, you can use a project communication plan as a practical tool (see example below).

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[6] https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/office-of-primary-prevention.html

Project Communication Plan

PROJECT MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN

Project Name: Website and Mobile App Development   **Project Manager:** William Mathew

Beginning Date: July 25, 2024   **Completion Date:** October 25, 2024

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:
Create a well-optimized website and mobile app for the client's business. Integrate all the necessary plugins on the website.
Optimize both website and mobile app, in regard to the latest SEO guidelines. Add effective call-to-action.
Make a user-friendly website so that potential leads can be converted to customers easily.

COMMUNICATION GOAL	COMMUNICATION TOOL	AUDIENCE	FREQUENCY
Review the website and mobile app development plan.	In-person meeting	Project Team Sponsors Project Managers	Weekly
Team standup	In-person meeting	Project Team Sponsors Project Managers	Daily
Project review	Email/call	Project Team Project Managers Stakeholders & Clients	Monthly
Project completion	In-person team meeting	Project Team Project Managers Stakeholders & Clients	Monthly

7

4.5 Empower broad-based action

It's a universal truth that people more often than not, have the tendency to resist change. However, for the business, leading change is absolutely essential when it comes to survival and maintaining a competitive profile. A very significant but often marginalised issue is that people might interpret and comprehend concepts of change in quite diverse ways which can be the root of any specimens of resistance (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2016; Strebel, 1996). In order to justify a broad vision and empower a shared vision among all

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7   https://ua.venngage.com/templates/plans/simple-project-management-communication-plan-8f14ff72-73f2-491e-8e49-7dac8c5d0929

employees in an attempt to achieve a cultural change, it is imperative to firstly make sure that all members of the team are fully aware of the suggested concepts and future collective actions. Especially when it comes to notions like "Mindfulness" which is a relatively new concept in business-related frameworks.

Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies

Clear Definition of "Mindfulness" and clarification of future implementations

Without motivation and the reasoning behind suggested actions, people won't follow and the effort goes nowhere without the contribution and participation of each and everyone in the team. It's essential to find time to talk to employees and thoroughly explain to them what exactly is "Mindfulness" and how you envisage bringing these concepts to the work environment, principles and/or policies and the benefits of doing so.

Mindfulness Definition:

Mindfulness is the concentrated observation of one's perceptions, thoughts and emotions in the present moment with the absence of judgement and an attitude of equanimity, curiosity, openness and acceptance (Bishop, 2004; Brown & Ryan, 2003).

Mindfulness in the Workplace:

In today's work environment, mindfulness is a personal and professional strategy which can elevate tremendously performance and productivity. Being fully aware of the "here and now" will enable employees to perform a task more efficiently, such as having a meeting, listening to a lecture, or even reading an email. Awareness also enables employees to be constantly aware of their thoughts and emotions, without necessarily reacting to them (Reb et al., 2015). Such mentality promotes the behaviour of "stepping back", which will help individuals to reduce the impact of potentially stressful situations such as conflicts, or taking a comment and/or suggestion as a personal insult instead of constructive criticism.

Mindfulness also inhibits higher levels of psychological resilience since individuals become more receptive to changes in their working environments, which allows them to respond more successfully to challenging situations (Dane,2011). Last but not least, a high performance is achieved when the individual pays close attention to here and now and mindfully puts plans into action in order to achieve the desired outcomes. All of the aforementioned outcomes benefit both the organisation and the individual since it improves levels of self-efficiency and prolongs sense of contentment.

Overall practicing mindfulness at work:
· Reduces employee absenteeism and turnover
· Improves cognitive functions (i.e., concentration, memory and learning capacities)
· Increases productivity and efficiency
· Enhances client relationships and improves relationships among co-workers
· Improves overall job and life satisfaction

Communicate your Intentions to the whole team and arrange individual meetings

Talk with your employees and learn how they actually feel and grasp the proposed changes and suggested notions. Identify potential obstacles to successful adaptations of the concept of "Mindfulness" in the workplace. It is essential to provide concrete reasons and benefits why it will help companies prosper and improve the work environment in general.

Start with communicating to a general announcement your intentions. Keep the announcement brief and make sure it is intellectually solid but also has an emotional appeal that can be understood and embraced by the broad range of people. Arrange if possible one-to-one meetings with each member of your team and in a brief 5-10 minute meeting discuss the notion of mindfulness and how they intend to put it to good use.

Teaching new behaviours by example of the guiding coalition

The successful leadership figure has emerged as a new role model. As well as being managers, leaders are expected to inspire motivation, develop a vision that can be shared and accompany the development of individuals (Eurofound, 2017). To achieve this it is important for all Team Leaders to cultivate their competencies of "leading by example" by exhibiting themselves new behaviours which will promote the general vision and changes they aspire to transfer to the whole team. Ensure that your executive leadership team endorses the proposed changes and sets an example for the rest of the company as well.

Some Practical Applications:
- Emphasise the benefits of "Active Listening". Encourage everyone to practice mindful listening when interacting with others or during meetings and seminars, by being fully present for whoever is speaking.
- Encourage Team Leaders to conduct a group mindfulness check-in point. Leaders can dedicate five minutes at the start of every meeting and ask each participant to ponder or even answer out loud (if the team climate allows it): "On a scale 1-10, how present are you right now?". This will help participants to reflect on where their attention is and prompt them to be fully in the present moment.
- Teach meeting leaders to always wrap the meeting up. Encourage them to take five minutes at the end of each meeting to intentionally repeat and clarify about their next steps.

4.6 Generate short-term wins

According to Kotter's (2006) steps for leading change "real transformation takes time, and a renewal effort risks losing momentum if there are no short-term goals to meet and celebrate". Hence without the implementation and the prospect of short-term wins, individuals might be discouraged or join those who are resisting and/or rejecting change.

When it comes to Mindfulness, the positive aspect is that with the conscious application of just one Mindfulness session the benefits are immediate and easily observed, such as a sense of stillness, lower stress levels, clear mind and a more positive mood and hopeful attitude. In order to empower people even more actively, managers should establish ways in order to obtain clear performance improvements, set goals in the yearly planning system, address the objectives and reward the people involved (Kotter, 2006).

Self-Evaluation Tools and Journaling

Since the culture and application of "Mindfulness" in the workplace is a process that begins from the inner self and expands to behaviours and interactions with others, one way to prompt the employees to acknowledge and even spike further their enthusiasm to embrace the concept of Mindfulness, is to provide them with tools for self-evaluation. In this way they can observe on their own with concrete evidence, the positive impact that practicing mindfulness has on their overall wellbeing. All of the individuals can keep a journal type of self-evaluations in their own personal folder, which they can reflect in different timespans, for example they can compare their levels of stress or emotion and behaviour of self-regulation after practicing systematically mindfulness applications after a month, or three months, a year and so on. This can be a topic that Team Leaders can discuss with their team members in individual meetings, or progress evaluation meetings.

Some other suggested solid applications for both Managers / Team Leaders and Employees:

1. Be Aware. Encourage employees to dedicate 15 minutes before they start working to just stay still and be aware of the sensations of their breath and body, when their mind wonders they should just gently focus their attention back to their breathing. Ask them to evaluate how they were feeling before and after doing the exercise.

2. Use the "STOP" sign technique when feeling stressed and/or overwhelmed with unwelcome emotions and sensations:

S – Stop what you are doing.

T – Take five conscious breaths.

O – Observe the sensations of your body and observe your thoughts.

P – Proceed. Acknowledge that emotions and thoughts are just like visitors they constantly come and go, nothing is permanent and you shouldn't cling on negative emotions and sensations.

3. Treasure Break time. If possible, advise employees to take a small break every 90-120 minutes to just stretch and practice being mindful. In addition, encourage employees to eat their lunches mindfully, savouring the sensations and experience of eating preferably away from their computers in a pleasant and clean environment. Encourage Team Leaders to visibly take breaks away from their desks and show by example the benefits of the shift in both mental and physical activity creates a space for rest and rejuvenation.

4. Note accomplishments. Encourage employees to make a mindful note of what they accomplished at the end of the day and another for the end of the week.

5. Don't be a micromanager. Stress is a major block to mindfulness; micromanagement is one of the biggest stressors within working grounds. Thus, informing Team Leaders that it is not necessary to hover, and doing so not only negatively affects trust between the team members, it drains free thinking and creativity. In contrast try to foster and cultivate a culture that embraces innovation, creativity and acceptance.

4.7 Never let up

Once the training is over, there is no time to let up. To sink the changes deeply into the company's culture can take five to ten years (Kotter 2007, 8). If you are satisfied too early, you will lose the changes you have achieved. It is the job of the leader to encourage and give thanks, but workers may interpret early thanks as there is no need for more changes and there is no need for effort. If change management is not continued, enthusiasm will cease and there will be doubts about the rationality of the whole change. (Kotter 1996, 115 – 116.)

Celebrate the short time changes but do not miss the final targets!

When management notices that change is gradually depleting, most of the power of change is lost. There is a need for short-term goals and joy in achieving them, but leading forward must not be forgotten. Those short-term wins can be used to solve even bigger problems (Kotter 2007, 8). If there is no leadership, people decide to rest and opponents have a great opportunity to strike. After this the return to the former will take place gradually and the changes will give up. (Kotter 1996, 116.)

Do not let the opponents take over!

Corporate culture and the interdependence of units help the progress of change. The more independent parts of a company are, the easier the change will be to implement. However usually the parts are dependent on each other because of competition and the emphasis on customer focus requires good cooperation. When the behaviour of one employee changes, it also affects the activities of others. If change is perceived as awkward, the perpetrators of the change may give up. (Kotter 1996, 117 – 118.)

Notice how the changes affect different workers and give your support to the change makers!
If you want your managers to internalise mindful managing, first find out if you want better performance. Instead of being commanded, it would make more sense to move away from the current satisfaction and understand the necessity of change. Pay attention to what kind of people are hired and how they are developed. They understand that it takes years to renew efforts. (Kotter 1996, 120.)

Remind about the need for change and choose the right people to make it!

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4.8 Incorporate into culture

The 8th step in Kotter's (2007) model to implement change in an organisation is to make the new approach permanent, institutionalise it. There should be a clear connection between the new way of doing things and the benefits gained from it. All the actions to be taken should be consistent with the new approach.

"The implementation of interventions at the organisational level is considerably more complex and requires more extensive resources than interventions at the individual level." (Biron & Karanika-Murray 2014, 3)

The phases of institutionalising the new approach are (Ilmarinen 2020, 21):
1. Supporting the desired change,
2. Consolidating practices,
3. Assessing the situation
4. Taking corrective action where appropriate

In addition to consolidating and reinforcing, change is worth seeing as a learning experience. It is worth communicating about concrete results and achievements and lessons learned to the entire staff, because maybe all of the targets could not be reached, because the goals are thus refined and plans changed to meet real needs. (Ilmarinen 2020, 21.)

The leaders must understand that the process does not stop after change has been implemented into the systems of the organisation. organisations that stop at this stage (i.e. organisations that get employees to comply rather than insightfully accept changes) will find that changes are either short-lived, or that the associated changes usually would be more vulnerable when a leadership change occurs (Limba, Hutahayan, Fernandes & Fernandes 2019, 110). Confirmation means disseminating best practices, new policies and rules of the game adherence and, often, further training and continuous improvement of policy.

Suggestions

Competence Inventory

To consolidate the new approach the organisation needs competence, which is consistent with the new way of doing things. The main questions are:
· How to strengthen existing skills?
· How do you get the new skills you need?

That is why you need to start performance appraisals with teams and individual employees. In performance appraisals, you assess the present performance of the employee and define the new competences needed for the new course of action. Based on this, the employee's need for development is determined. New skills can be gained either by training existing employees or by hiring new employees with new thinking. In both cases, the focus is in leadership positions.

Constant evaluation

The process should be evaluated both during the process and at the end of it. The evaluation can be qualitative or quantitative or both, with simple interviews or questionnaires for all employees or only managers. Here are some examples of commonly used measurements in change processes:
· Satisfaction with change management
· Utilisation rate of new approach
· Job satisfaction
· Work efficiency indicators

· Sickness absence rate
· Outgoing turnover

The aim of the evaluation is to learn from the change process and to use the experience gained when planning the organisation's activities. The process evaluation should be made afterwards. You should examine the following aspects: What went well? What could have gone better? What material was created? Could it be used in the next change process? (FIOH 2020)

Learning culture

The questions "Where did we succeed" and "What would we do next time" are important as well for the consolidation of change and for new changes: In the closing phase, it is still possible to do refinements and improvements to new ways of working, and identify the benefits of change. Examining what has happened in terms of learning will also increase the company's ability to change and ensure that what is learned if the process of change is applied in the future. (Ilmarinen 2020, 21–22)

Table . A tool to evaluate what was learned from the change and how it could be used in the future (Ilmarinen 2020, 22).

TOOL	What was learned during the change process?
	The goal is to make learning visible. Work communities can discuss their learning by considering the following questions. The tool can also be used to support management discussion. • What did you learn from the change? • What is new and unique? • How do we face the following changes? • What skills do we need for continuous / future changes? • How can we better face changes as a group?

The characteristics of an innovative organisation are (Ilmarinen 2020, 23):
· Ability to stop and explore
· Ability to speak up and build interaction
· Ability to prioritise, give up and start again
· Ability to maintain function in incomplete state
· Confidence in one's know-how and its development

4.9 Checklists

These checklists should function as tools for achieving the recommendations above.

· Start by measuring wellbeing in the workplace
· Put together a working force about wellbeing in the workplace
· Look into the options of the mindful management programme
    - The training programme
    - The Reflection Rounds
    - The Mindful Managers online game
· Organise a pilot session of the mindful management programme and ask for feedback

· Measure wellbeing regularly and at least once a year formally with follow-up meetings with the work force

Chapter 5: Conclusion

At the beginning of this guide we asked "Is mindfulness a hype?"

So stress is a very natural reaction of your body to tension but it does not have to be unhealthy. Short-term stress can be positive and motivating. It helps you to focus if you want to achieve a sports performance. It makes you think about your exams in a concentrated way or look forward to your wedding. Stress is negative if it blocks you and makes you perform less well. Stress also becomes unhealthy when it lasts too long. The body can recover quite easily from many small stress moments. But sometimes the tension builds up for a long time. There is then no more room or time for relaxation and recovery. Your body gets out of balance. The Mindful Managers project addresses stress for Public Sector Managers with this unique training programme. This guide for policy makers has shared with you some of the theories used in the programme along with the initial research and also feedback from participants. It has also included additional theories based on the feedback and the research conducted.

The Mindful Managers project aims to develop public sector managers' skills and competences and positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work using face-to-face training and a gamified e-learning tool as well as the very successful Reflection Rounds.. Mindful Managers promotes work based learning (WBL) and uses mentoring and coaching at work for training purposes. The project also aims to achieve the following goals:

· De-stigmatise the discussion around mental health at work
· Give managers tools and resources to actively support positive wellbeing at work for themselves and their teams

In order to achieve these goals, the partnership have developed a training programme based on the 5 wellbeing[8] habits which were integrated successfully into the training. They are as follows:

1. **Connect:** With the people around you. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
2. **Be active:** Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good.
3. **Take notice:** Be curious. This includes the idea of Mindfulness.
4. **Keep learning:** Try something new.
5. **Give:** Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger.

The overall aim of the Needs Analysis was to establish the current situation of the target group in partner countries. The aims were to find out the **current situation** of public sector managers´ wellbeing, the **current state of training methods** of mental wellbeing among public sector managers, **education** among public sector managers, the **training needs** of public sector managers concerning their wellbeing and to share **knowledge and understanding** among partner countries regarding the current situation and challenges of public sector managers wellbeing. The data was collected by desk research, focus group interviews and in-depth interviews. The Comparative Needs Analysis report can be found on the project website: https://mindfulmanager.eu/en/.

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[8] A Review of Workplace Interventions that Promote Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Graveling RA, Crawford JO, Cowie, Amati, Vohra, Institute of Occupational Medicine, Edinburgh, The Keil Centre, Edinburgh

This was the basis of the mindful management programme:

- · Training (5 modules)
- · Reflection rounds
- · Game

Major change initiatives (like implementing a mindful management culture) generate only lukewarm results. Many fail miserably. When implementing 'Mindful Management' and furthermore: the mindful management training programme and game, it is useful to follow an evidence based framework. Mindful management is not just a programme: it is a vision, a culture that you should create in your organisation, in order to see results in behaviour of employees.

This guide has shared the benefits of working collectively to implement a mindful approach in the workplace and of course there will always be challenges. The current global situation with the COVID pandemic has led to many managers and their teams working from home, creating additional challenges for managers introducing a mindful approach. However at the same time, it highlights the need for training and interventions that can support people to stay healthy and to remain mindful.

Implementing the above steps and the earlier checklist, will allow you to reap the rewards of using a mindful approach in your organisation and we wish you luck with introducing a mindful management culture to your organisation.

Chapter 6: References

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