

**Professional Learning through Reflection Promoted by Feedback and Coaching
(PROFLEC):
The Participants' Views on the Piloting of the PROFLEC Model (Survey Data)**

Stephan Gerhard HUBER, Marius SCHWANDER & Guri SKEDSMO

PROFLEC is an EU-project within the Lifelong Learning Programme, Multilateral Projects, Key Activity 1. The project is coordinated by the IBB, University of Teacher Education Zug, and involves seven European countries, whose participation is co-financed by the EU: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Norway, Spain, and Switzerland, and the USA as a third country partner. In addition, Sweden and Australia (Queensland) have joined the project self-financed.

This project explores the potential of integrating an ICT-based self-assessment instrument and group coaching as part of personnel development (PD) programmes for (aspiring) school leaders in the participating countries. It seeks to develop, adapt and pilot an inventory on educational leadership that can be integrated into current training programmes, which enables learning by promoting self-reflection. Participants are encouraged to reflect on the ways in which context and personal characteristics influence the application of knowledge and skills in the workplace.

Completion of the inventory generates a personalised feedback report for each participant. This feedback is structured around key leadership competencies. It supports the participants in identifying their individual strengths and development needs in comparison to other (aspiring) school leaders. Further, it suggests areas for improvement. During a follow-up workshop the participants gain a deeper understanding of the feedback report and identify relevant personal topic/themes, which they will explore in the following group coaching activities. The feedback is also expected to promote further reflection and personal leadership development directly related to the participants' current needs and to the situations and challenges they are confronted with in their current roles as school leaders.

After the workshop, some groups of school leaders had the opportunity to experience group coaching activities. These activities aim to facilitate reflections on leadership behaviours, linked to individual work roles and contexts. The participants are encouraged to experiment with leadership behaviours while engaged in the coaching sessions and to report back on their experiences to the coaching group. It is anticipated that this will increase awareness of leadership behaviours and effects, and influence strategic choices in certain contexts and situations. This will support the participants' daily work as school leaders, and may improve their leadership performance. Ideally this in turn will impact the school leaders' self-confidence, work motivation and job satisfaction. We also anticipate a change in the school leaders' further professional development planning and their overall career in general.



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Implementing a quantitative evaluation approach using a questionnaire to all participants of the pilot of the PROFLEC model, the aim was to answer assumptions and hypotheses about what kind of impact the inventory, the workshop, and the coaching had.

Firstly, we were interested in what were the consequences for the own understanding through reflecting on challenges and strengths of the inventory, workshop or the coaching. Secondly, we explored whether the inventory acted as a catalyst, motivating school leaders to take on further training activities. Thirdly, we wanted to see what kind of consequences it had on the participants' personal growth. Fourthly, we also asked about changes in their behaviour as well as fifthly changes in their organizations (as to structures, processes and relations). Alternatively, sixthly, in some countries we had participants who are not already established principals, but teachers aspiring school leadership roles, we were interested to see if the program had impact on their own career planning.

206 individuals who took part in the evaluation (named as participants in the following) had attended a workshop and 127 had attended the workshop as well as a coaching programme. Most of the latter group (33.1%) had three coaching sessions, 29.9% had only one coaching session and 19.7% had two sessions, 10.2% had five sessions, 5.5% had four sessions and 1.6% had six coaching sessions. The majority of participants had six colleagues in their coaching group (35.7%), followed by five (23.0%) and three (11.9%) colleagues. The remaining participants reported up to ten people in their coaching group.

The general feedback of the participants to the inventory is very good: 95.2% of the participants reported a good understanding of the questions in the inventory (59.3% to a great deal, 35.9 moderately). 92.7% of the participants reported a good understanding of the feedback report descriptions (52.6% to a great deal, 40.1% moderately).

Of the participants who worked on the inventory only, without attending a workshop or coaching, 59.1% (n = 149) would encourage colleagues to take the inventory with feedback report alone. An additional 11.4% would recommend the inventory with modifications. Looking at the group who attended a workshop, 50.6% (n = 79) would not recommend the inventory without a workshop but 69.5% would recommend it when accompanied by a workshop. When participants who would recommend the inventory with modifications are included, the approval rating is 84.1% (n = 82). A similar pattern is shown for the participants who received coaching. 80.7% would recommend the inventory if accompanied by coaching; when participants who would recommend it with modifications are included, the approval rating is 97.4% (n = 114).

Our assumption is that the more the participants did (completing the inventory, reading and reflection on the feedback report, participating in the workshop and the coaching), the better use they could make of the inventory. From personal reflection over continuous professional development, personal growth, and changes in organizational structures, processes and relations we see the same positive effect. So the more the different kinds of learning opportunities came together, the higher the participants rated the positive influence of these tools.

We conclude that the inventory with a feedback report is an accepted feedback tool which should best be accompanied by at least a workshop whenever possible. Additional coaching increases the percentage of recommendations as well as the effectiveness of the PROFLEC model on all impact levels. As participants stated, the combination of inventory, feedback, workshop, and coaching provide the best opportunity to compare personal results with colleagues and to critically reflect on one's own results and expectations.