



THE PULS PROGRAMME AIMS TO SUPPORT AND DEVELOP THE NAV OFFICES AND UNITS THROUGH LEADERSHIP TRAINING OF TEAM LEADERS.

PROMISING PES PRACTICE¹ Organisational and leadership development programme (PULS)

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NORWAY

The Norwegian PES has turned from a strongly benefits-orientated organisation to one which is primarily concerned with enabling people to help themselves in finding (new) employment. Moreover, under national administrative/municipality reform, including a shift from 19 counties to 12 regions, there was a need to enhance capacity of the regional/local offices to accept accountability and responsibility for their activities, and disclose results.

PULS is an extensive, two-year leadership development programme for the 1 600 leaders in the Norwegian PES (NAV). This programme aims to enable leaders to steer NAV in the right direction, meaning towards 'More people in work', and at the same time build corporate culture. Cooperation and communication between leaders are key elements of the programme.

The PULS focus areas are the following:

- "One NAV": internal cooperation, case flow, one comprehensive system;
- The bounds of leadership: enabling leaders to explore and use the full scope of possibilities inherent in their role;
- Sharing knowledge: building an innovative and knowledge-based organisation;
- Effective teams of leaders: awareness of what makes an effective team/leader, and training in leadership and effective meetings.

Name of the PES

Norwegian PES (NAV - Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration)

Scope of measure

National

When was the practice implemented?

2016 - on-going

What was the driver for introducing the practice? Was it internal or external?

The Norwegian PES carried out an extensive employee survey ('organisational health index') in 2014. The key findings included that the Norwegian PES has potential for improvement when it comes to leadership change and innovation and environmental orientation. Furthermore, a government-appointed expert group defined leadership as crucial to ensure the introduction of necessary changes to the Norwegian PES in years to come.

The PULS programme- initiated by the Director General of the Norwegian PES- confirmed the internal institutional need to strengthen the team spirit of PES personnel after a merger of state labour and municipal welfare services- to allow the development of staff initiative and creativity and to focus on the most effective and efficient work approaches.

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

Head office- regional and local offices of the Norwegian PES

Which groups were targeted by the practice?

Norwegian PES leaders - senior and middle managers.

What were the practice's main objectives?

The main objectives of the PULS programme are:
► to improve organisational cohesion, the idea of "one NAV";
► to be more of a leader than an administrator (less steering, more leading); and
► working on 'what works'.

¹ Practices referring to promising changes/reforms/approaches.

What activities were carried out?

PULS started with a broad involvement of 1 600 leaders through seven regional workshops. The Director General of the Norwegian PES, who was new at this point, used this as an arena to convey the Norwegian PES's ambition, challenges and expectations to the leaders. Leaders were put together in groups across the organisation. They described the challenges and needs that were subsequently systematised and evaluated by senior management. This formed the basis for the goals of PULS and the theme of the programme.

All leaders have participated in a programme for developing effective leader groups. The training curriculum was designed based on the recommendations/approach proposed by Henning Bang from the University of Oslo.

The programme was completed over a period of 18 months. The methodology was based on general managerial development and built around five phases. In addition, the specific Norwegian PES context was central; "A NAV for the benefit of the users", "More management and less management" and "Knowledge sharing". The methodology is built around a proposed approach, but it can be adapted to the needs of the different parts of the organisation and the individual management team.

This general programme is now followed up by courses on selected themes. All programmes are conducted by own process facilitators in the Norwegian PES and with contributions from internal and external lecturers.

The introduction programme for new managers, New leader in NAV, is a joint introduction programme for all newly appointed managers.

The purpose of the programme is to ensure that newly employed managers engage, master the job as quickly as possible, and deliver on the community assignment. This entails giving newly appointed managers the necessary overview they need to direct their employees, and help employees to utilise their skills as well as possible. The goal is that leaders in the Norwegian PES strengthen their strategic skills by working with their own implementation ability and performance orientation.

The introductory programme contains topics that are useful to all newly appointed managers regardless of position and organisational affiliation.

Practical change management is an initiative that will provide the individual leader with expertise and support to carry out change work in their own unit. The starting point for the programme is therefore a concrete change mission.

The course in strategic communication is especially aimed at leaders who will communicate changes. Throughout the course, participants are acquainted with, and trained in, good tools for communicating with employees and collaborators.

The Talent management programme is a programme for executives who have the potential for further internal careers and stimulate mobility across the lines. Participants can increase and apply their own expertise in social work, political frameworks, organisational changes and the digital transformation in the Norwegian PES.

They can also experience sharing with other managers in the Norwegian PES and network with other executives. In addition, they can work with their own career plan and gain more awareness of their own strengths and development potential.

The Interaction and leadership programme gives leaders training in understanding the complex interaction between people in an organisation. They gain a holistic understanding of psychology as a subject and how it affects the business from the inside.

Interaction skills are a key skill in today's performance-oriented work life and knowledge companies, a competence that all organisations need. The aim of the programme is to convey a comprehensive understanding of the forces in the human interaction that underpin prosperity, productivity and renewal. The programme offers scientifically documented knowledge of interaction and management derived from group psychology, personality and organisational psychology.

Through theory, task solving, and experience, leaders are personally challenged to learn about the human aspects of the organisation and how it affects leadership, decisions and work performance.

What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?

The project was organised by the Norwegian PES' Head office, integrating all organisational and territorial levels.

In order for the Norwegian PES to be able to launch a comprehensive management development programme, there was a need for management support in the form of local process facilitators (coaches) and that they should primarily be in the line organisation.

What were the source(s) of funding?

The PULS project at the Norwegian PES' head office covers competence development for process facilitators, development of the programmes and the units themselves cover their own running costs.

What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?

Eighty coaches were trained during the period. They had 12 days of knowledge and training in facilitating management teams and sharing experience along the way. Of these 80, the Norwegian PES has a good core team of process facilitators that can be used in all of their managerial programmes. Many are now also key advisors in the extensive change process in the Norwegian PES.

The PES has built and delivered a broad portfolio of management programmes covering on-boarding new leaders, various development programmes, and a follow-up programme for leaders who will lead management teams (talent).

The Norwegian PES' PULS preparation method 'On the Pulse' (a questionnaire, noted below) can be reused for new needs.

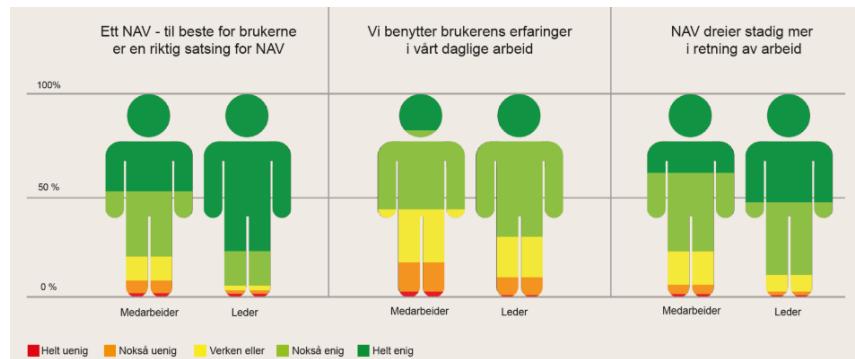
What outcomes have been identified?

The Norwegian PES' 'On the Pulse' is a questionnaire to a selection of employees, about how the work with PULS is perceived. It is conducted every three months and is a direct channel between employees and senior management in the Norwegian PES. Open feedback and views are retrieved, and management responds to these. Furthermore, this provides the PES with a basis for adjusting communication measures in the PULS programme.

The results from the latest survey include:

Large and stable connections to the three main questions

1. The PULS programme is for the benefit of users and it is a real investment for the Norwegian PES;
2. The PES use user experiences in their daily work;
3. The Norwegian PES is turning increasingly towards work.



64 % of respondents fully or partially agreed in the claim that there is good management at all levels in the Norwegian PES . For the immediate leader, the numbers were even better. More than 78 % of respondents agreed that their experience with their closest manager is good.

What are the lessons learnt and success factors?

In the areas of the Norwegian PES where PULS has strong leadership anchorage, the implementation of management team development has been successful.

It has been challenging to communicate that management team development was something everyone should do while at the same time being flexible and adaptable to local needs.

The launch of PULS with the involvement of all 1 600 leaders as defined challenges and needs has been crucial for the programme's legitimacy.

Clear communication from the Norwegian PES' top management on the importance of good leadership and the importance of PULS was important.

A key success factor was the service-oriented design in the development of the programmes, action learning, solving real challenges, colleague guidance and reflection on own leadership. A lesson has been to limit the number and length of theory lectures.



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