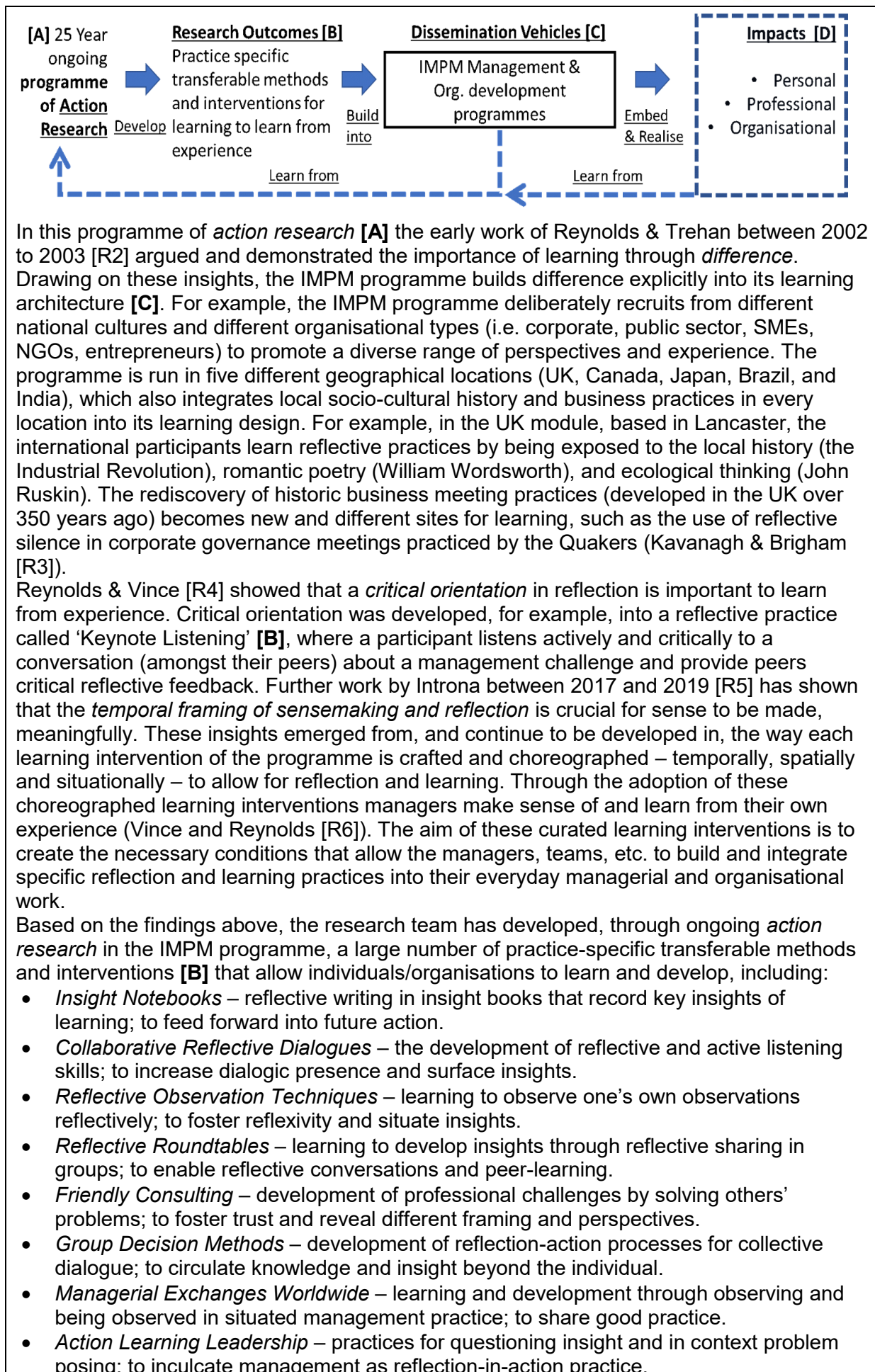


<b>Institution:</b> Lancaster University		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 17, Business and Management Studies		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Personal, Professional, and Organisational Transformation through Action Learning and Reflective Practice Interventions		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2000 - 2019		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Mike Reynolds	Professor Emeritus	1997 – present
Lucas Introna	Professor	2000 – present
Martin Brigham	Senior Lecturer	2000 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014 - 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>A key shortcoming of the early work on learning through reflective practice was a lack of specific detail on embedding reflective practices in the daily lives of managers, teams and organisations. Over the last 25 years, researchers at Lancaster University Management School (LUMS) researched and developed a range of practical interventions that enable individuals and organisations to learn from reflection-in-practice. These action research-led practice interventions and methodologies were incorporated into the design and delivery of management and organisational development programmes, such as the International Masters Programme for Managers (IMPM). Through these programmes hundreds of managers from around the world have adopted action learning and reflective practices for personal, professional, and organisational development. Feedback from these programmes shows that adopting these practices leads to personal and professional transformation that are deeply significant and enduring, with additional benefits for their organisations. The transformational impacts of the IMPM extends much further than the direct participants, with several alumni setting up practice-based versions of the programme within their own organisations. This includes large corporations such as the <i>Brazilian National Bank for Economic and Social Development</i>, third sector organisations such as the <i>Alliance for Public Health in Ukraine</i>, as well as private enterprises such as <i>CoachingOurselves</i>, supporting the organisational learning and development of 300 companies globally, benefitting 125,000 individual managers and their organisations.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The idea of learning from everyday management and organisational practices by reflecting critically on them has been developed and popularised by the work of, for example, Argyris, Kolb and Schön. One of the main shortcomings of the early work of Argyris, Kolb and Schön was a lack of specific detail of how the concept of action learning through reflective practice can become embedded in the daily organising practices of managers, teams and organisations. This early research identified the principles but did not develop the specific learning practices/interventions of how this can be embedded in situated management learning and activity. A sustained and programmatic stream of action research at LUMS over the last 25 years (e.g., Blackler, Burgoyne, Easterby-Smith, Fox, Gosling, Hodgson, Marshall, Reynolds, Trehan, Introna, Brigham) has developed a suite of research-based practice focused interventions and methodologies that enable individuals and organisations to learn through the adoption of action learning and reflective practices [R1]. The research outcomes from this ongoing research stream of management learning and action at LUMS [B] has become incorporated into the design and delivery of management and organisational development programmes, notably the IMPM, which functions simultaneously as ongoing action-research sites [A] and as dissemination vehicles [C] for embedding the research into organisational settings for personal, professional, and organisational impact [D] (see Figure 1, below).</p>		



In summary, the IMPM and associated programmes function both as dissemination vehicles and ongoing action research laboratories [C] for the development of new ways to embed action learning through reflective practice into the lives of managers, teams, and organisations, leading to profound personal, professional, and organisational impact [D].

### 3. References to the research

- [R1] **Reynolds, M.** (2011). Reflective Practice: Origins and Interpretations. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 8(1), 5-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767333.2011.549321> (138 citations on Google Scholar (GS))
- [R2]. **Reynolds, M.** & Trehan, K. (2003). Learning from Difference? *Management Learning*, 34(2), 163-80. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507603034002001> (79 citations on GS)
- [R3] Kavanagh, D. & **Brigham, M.** (2018). The Quakers: Forgotten Pioneers. In T. Peltonon, H. Gaggioti, & P. Case (Eds.), *Origins of Organizing* (pp. 147-175). Edward Elgar. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781785368752>
- [R4] **Reynolds, M.** & Vince, R. (2004). Critical Management Education and Action-Based Learning: Synergies and Contradictions. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 3(4), 442-456. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2004.15112552> (230 citations on GS)
- [R5] **Introna, L. D.** (2019). On the Making of Sense in Sensemaking: Decentred Sensemaking in the Meshwork of Life. *Organization Studies*, 40(5) 20, 745-764. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840618765579> (23 citations on GS)
- [R6] Vince, R. & **Reynolds, M.** (2009). Reflection, Reflective Practice and Organizing Reflection. In S. J. Armstrong & C. V. Fukami (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Management Learning, Education and Development* (pp. 89-103). Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857021038>

### 4. Details of the impact

The impact of the practice-specific tools and interventions that allow organisations to learn through action learning and reflective practices - developed through action research projects and disseminated through management development programmes such as the IMPM - can be demonstrated by impactful transformations at the (1) Personal, (2) Professional, and (3) Organisational levels.

**(1) Personal impact/transformation:** Most managers involved in the development programmes report very significant personal transformation following the adoption of the action learning and reflective practices. The profundity of the impact at the individual level has been of huge significance for a large proportion of the alumni whose programme feedback was gathered in 2019, with nearly a third of survey respondents stating that the programme changed them as individuals enough such that it represented a personal transformation or, as some respondents reported, was 'life-changing'. The change was also a lasting one, with personal transformation reported by graduates from cohort 2 to 22 [S1]. Other feedback attesting to the deep transformation experienced by participants includes how the programme has enabled people to become more authentic, mature, empathetic, and in some cases more ethically responsible [S1]. The Director of Programmes & Policy at the India HIV/AIDS Alliance describes the programme as "a breakthrough experience which transformed my sense of self as a leader" [S2]. The COO of Ameco, (China) states that he has, "participated in various management development programs during [his] professional career, but none of them created a fundamental personal transition that connected business change and strategic development [in the way the IMPM did]" [S3(a)]. The Senior Principal of Hatch Advisory, (Canada) describes the programme as "an intense, immersive and life-changing experience" [S3(b)]. The Manager of Medical Imaging at McGill University Health Centre (Canada) said, "The impact of the IMPM has been, and still is, profound. It has generated in me personal change and has transformed my vision from an organisation centric person focused on operations, to a growth mindset person motivated by sustainability, improvement and growth. This has allowed me to lead an organisation that delivers high quality and sustainable medical imaging services" [S3(c)]. In reference to personal transformation that has provided community benefit, the Managing Director and CEO of Fairway Offshore Ltd (Nigeria) said, "Elections in Nigeria are often accompanied by

violence and in the recent federal elections, I deployed IMPM techniques for engagement and communityship to become an asset of peace in my community. For example, I visited various communities and youth groups at centres and in homes, to talk to them and listen to their concerns. For me, the impact of IMPM in me is [not] so much in the offices in Fairway. It is in my church, and in my family, and the community I come from. I did not expect the programme to have such a comprehensive and significant impact and for this I am grateful" [S3(d)].

**(2) Professional impact/transformation:** For many, personal transformation is linked to professional transformation. Survey feedback suggests that 70% of participants found the programme to have 'totally transformed' or had a 'significant impact on' their managerial practice [S1]. The authenticity of this feedback is exemplified in numerous accounts of professional and organisational transformation. The Vice President Maintenance at Eurowings and Managing Director at Eurowings (Germany), says that through the interventions of the programme *"the collaboration and understanding for each other has changed in a positive way"*, leading to a more efficient management team [S1]. The Chief Sales Officer for Moneris, (Canada) says that that the *"IMPM defined me as a person, as a manager, as a leader. The program brought out in me the confidence to embrace and develop my leadership style and to take risks, both in my professional and personal lives...The IMPM was completely life changing for me"* [S1]. The HR Director of Adverum Technologies, USA, cites the transformational nature of the development programme and says that, *"The IMPM taught me the importance of creating time for reflection, to pause, reflect, and consider the consequences of my actions in order to learn and develop as an executive. The emphasis on reflection over reaction is a unique feature of the IMPM and will lead to better leadership and decision making"* [S4(a)]. The Head of Supply Chain and Logistics Diageo (India) comments that, *"The IMPM helped me to understand and respect different cultures"* [S1]. Likewise, the CEO & Director at Sumicot Ltd (India) reflects that the lasting influences of the IMPM encourage managers, *"not only to learn from the programme, but from your colleagues as they are from a variety of Industries and countries. It has completely changed the way I think about work now"* [S1]. The Commercial Director of CAF P&A, (Spain), summarises the impact of the IMPM by saying *"the IMPM has transformed, and is continuing to transform me personally and professionally in ways that may be hard to articulate"* [S4(b)].

(3) Organisational impact/transformation: These action learning and reflective practices developed by LUMS also had significant organisational impacts. The Founder, CEO & President of KNOCK Inc (USA) says that since completing the programme her company has more than doubled in growth and employees and that this is *"clearly a testament to the IMPM's philosophy and learning methodology"* [S5(a)]. The General Corporate Services Deputy Secretary from the Kenya Red Cross says that, *"The organisation has transformed greatly since we started the IMPM programme. It has grown in leaps and bounds and looking more outwards (wordly) than inward focussed"* [S1]. As evidence of the organisational transformation made possible through these practices, below 3 additional case examples, CoachingOurselves, the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), and the Alliance for Public Health, are outlined.

- **CoachingOurselves** (CO) (Canada): Adopting the experiential action learning and reflective practice methodology of the programme, one of the alumni co-founded a company that supports private, public and plural sector organisations (e.g. Brother, Cirque du Soleil, Gildan, ING Bank, Nissan, SAP, Syngenta) through peer-to-peer learning and self-directed co-coaching. The company was established in 2007 with the ambition to scale the reach of the innovative IMPM approach of learning from experience in light of conceptual frameworks. In 2015, CO established a partnership with IMPM. The company uses the *Reflective Roundtables* practice developed in the IMPM to drive learning and collaboration within organisations. CO has created > 90 mini modules for use by managers, teams and organisations, currently reaching *"at least 25,000 participants worldwide annually"* [S5(b)]. Between 2014 and 2020, CO has supported (and continues to support) middle managers, teams and organisational development of companies in *"more than a dozen countries"* (e.g. Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Haiti, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, Turkey, US) [S5(b)]. CO

continues to extend its reach and impact internationally, drawing on the action learning and reflective practices developed by the IMPM. For example, at Fujitsu, CO found in 2015 that participation rates in IMPM were positively linked to profitability at departmental level [S6].

• **Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) (Brazil):** Drawing on the practice specific transferable methods and interventions of the IMPM programme, BNDES developed a culture transformation and engagement programme (CTEP), known as the 'Mini IMPM'. The intent of the Mini IMPM is to transform the bank (the second largest national development bank in the world) from a bureaucratic inward-looking institution to a more agile, collaborative and outward facing institution. The programme has comprised five cycles between 2017-2020 and has been followed by 190 including senior and middle managers [S5(c)]. The Mini IMPM has been a unique innovation at the bank and has had widespread executive and organisational support to enable in-person enrolment and knowledge sharing for collaboration, including on the bank's intranet. Both the lead organiser of the BNDES Mini IMPM as well as the board sponsor (BNDES Managing Director) state that the Mini IMPM has provided wide ranging and significant impact at the bank: creating a new language to think and collaborate with, breaking down hierarchies and increasing communication vertically and horizontally across functional silos, developing the confidence and engagement of employees, and providing the opportunity for managers and employees to deliberate the bank's strategy and policies during a period of disruption and change [S1, S5(c)]. The Mini IMPM specifically adopted IMPM's innovative action learning and reflective practices into its programme, such as: Insight Books, Keynote Listening, and Reflective Roundtables. This meant that *"the Mini IMPM is the only forum where people from different functions and hierarchical levels can meet to reflect on common and professional challenges. This innovation had a significant organisational impact creating internal cohesion and a shared vision of challenges and opportunities"* [S5(c) Economist and Former HR Director of BNDES].

• **Alliance for Public Health (Ukraine):** The [Harm Reduction Academy](#) programme was established in 2016 to emulate the IMPM structure and pedagogical architecture. The Executive Director of the Alliance for Public Health and IMPM alumni from 2008, deployed the architecture of learning and pedagogical practices from the programme in an internationally respected global learning, dialogue and skills building programme specifically aimed at developing and supporting staff that work with individuals with HIV. Between 2016 and 2020, 100 participants from >25 countries have completed the intensive six-month programme and report significant transformation of their practices and organisations, especially with respect to diversity and inter-disciplinary thinking, with participants gaining international exposure through programme modules delivered in Ukraine, Kenya and Malaysia. *"Like the IMPM the HRA is innovative in its diversity of participants, combining groups representing various countries and various sectors. This helps to create lasting impact and transformation: we normally have community members, health officials (national and local), international organizations, and police officers at the same table working on harm reduction themes."* [S5(d) Executive Director of the Alliance for Public Health].

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[S1] Data from 2019 impact survey on personal, professional and organisational impact reported by IMPM alumni.

[S2] HIV/AIDS Alliance independent impact report – Valuing Leadership, 2018, p. 8.

[S3] Testimonials – **Personal** Transformational Impact: a) Chief Operating Officer, Ameco, China, 2020, b) Senior Principal, Hatch Advisory, South Africa & Canada, 2109 and 2020, c) Manager of Medical Imaging at McGill University Health Centre, Canada, 2020 d) Managing Director and CEO of Fairway Offshore Ltd, Nigeria, 2020.

[S4] Testimonials – **Professional** Transformational Impact: a) HR Vice President, Adverum Technologies, USA, 2020. b) Commercial Director, CAF P&A, Spain, 2020.

[S5] Testimonials – **Organisational** Transformational Impact: a) CEO & President, KNOCK Inc., USA, 2020, b) Founder and Executive President, CoachingOurselves, Canada, 2020. c) Former HR Director, Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES), Brazil, 2020, d) Executive Director, Alliance for Public Health, Ukraine, 2020.

[S6] Choice, the magazine of professional coaching, 2018, p.47.