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## **How to identify and train future leaders in official statistics?**

### **Training programme for future leaders at Statistics Sweden (SCB)**

Most of today's managers at Statistics Sweden have participated in a one year-long training programme for future managers. Four such programmes have been carried out since 2003 with 63 participants. They were selected to be the future leaders of SCB in quite hard competition with many other applicants, all employees of SCB.

The programme is part of a strategy to form a management style with emphasis on the leadership role rather than on the administrative role. It is also an important way of establishing a common understanding of how to execute good leadership. The participants are important providers of new ideas for continuous improvement in management and leadership.

### **Leadership profile of Statistics Sweden**

Historically managers have been recruited from among the best experts in subject matters or statistical methodology. The problem with this approach is that there is no natural connection between good subject knowledge and good leadership skills. Managers must clearly understand the business they are appointed to lead, while it is not necessary for them to be the best expert in their field of business. To be a manager is a profession in itself. The ideal leader hardly exists but to be a good leader you need to have some basic individual capacities and skills. In order to clarify these characteristics, Statistics Sweden has developed a leadership profile that provides a guideline for recruitment and training of managers.

#### **As a manager you should be:**

- Business-oriented
- Customer and oriented
- Improvement-oriented
- Employees-oriented and
- Results-oriented.

**This means that you:**

- Are loyal to Statistics Sweden and the employer role
- Set the Statistics Sweden's objectives and activities before your own needs
- Can convey Statistics Sweden's vision and objectives in a clear and concrete way
- Have good knowledge of customers and users and are acting according to their needs
- Have good knowledge of how statistics is used in society
- Have an active intelligence
- Have an active network
- Show openness to new ideas and are actively working with renewal and improvement
- Can dare to examine and challenge your self-image by finding out how you are perceived by others
- Stimulate and encourage collaboration within Statistics Sweden
- Perform reliably and predictably
- Showing confidence in employees' ability
- Promote open communication through dialogue
- Encourage and provide constructive feedback
- Meet your employees with respect
- Allow employees to grow with new tasks and responsibilities
- Are enthusiastic and contributes to a good working group
- Have a strategic perspective
- Can translate visions and goals of your responsibility in a concrete way
- Clearly express what you expect from your staff
- Are clear about responsibilities and powers
- Follow up, support and correct if necessary
- Act in a consistent and stable manner even if you need to make unpopular decisions
- Adjust with the organisation to support its operational objectives, and
- Ensure that established tools and systems are introduced and used appropriately.

**Program for new managers and manager candidates**

**Purpose**

The aim is to give participants the opportunity to participate in a cohesive leadership development programme and to create career opportunities for employees with the ambition to become leaders in Statistics Sweden. The program is part of the efforts to develop operations and to make Statistics Sweden an attractive workplace.

### **Focus and scope**

The programme targets employees who are interested in becoming managers at Statistics Sweden. The programme aims to provide greater self-awareness and personal development and to create a support network. It will also enhance participants' knowledge of Statistics Sweden and government administration. In total the programme includes 20 days spread over one year.

The programme consists of two parts; one part related to leadership and one part related to SCB-knowledge and government administration. Throughout the programme theoretical sessions are combined with practical exercises, and case studies. Participants are expected to read the relevant course literature during the programme.

### **Main contents:**

- Personal development. Self-image and self-awareness
- Group Dynamics
- Leadership. Manager's role and mission
- Situational leadership and coaching
- Organisation culture and climate
- Communication
- Quality and improvement
- Finance
- Projects from a managerial perspective
- Competence Management
- SCB-knowledge, and
- Human Resources Management.

### **Nomination of participants**

All who meet the formal requirements can express their interest in participating in the programme. Directors then nominate the candidates from each department. The maximum number of participants is 16. Gender balance and a fair distribution between the two cities of Stockholm and Örebro will be sought, but the most important selection criterion will be the overall assessment of the applicant's potential to be a future leader. The candidates will be interviewed and tested against a skills profile in order to make the selection the best possible. The final list of participants is decided on by the Personnel Department.

### **The following requirements must be met by the applicants:**

- An academic degree
- Minimum of three years experience working at Statistics Sweden
- Experience of project management
- Interest of manager jobs at Statistics Sweden, and
- Experience in different jobs within or outside Statistics Sweden.

The programme gives participants a better negotiative position towards becoming managers and leaders, but is no guarantee of a managerial job.

### **Mentors**

Experience from previous programmes demonstrates that the value of mentors has been great. Each participant chooses a mentor from among the group of senior managers at SCB. The mentors will assist in the learning process during the program and in many cases mentors and mentees continues to meet for years after the training has been completed.

### **Costs**

Participation fee and the cost of boarding is centrally funded. Travel and subsistence allowances are paid by departments.

### **Experiences**

44 out of 63 participants have become managers or in a few cases directors. Only a small number of managers have been recruited directly from outside SCB. Some of the participants have left SCB and a few others have no longer the ambition of becoming a manager here. These figures are beyond our expectations and to that extent the project may be regarded as a success. There is currently a major generation shift of all staff, including managers so there has been and will be a continuous need for new managers.

Evaluations of the four programmes show that the participants are very satisfied with the training and its usefulness in daily work situations. Participants in past programs organise lunch meetings now and then and also annual reunions, where current management issues are discussed. In this way the collegial network is kept alive.