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Recruiting and retaining qualified staff at Statistics Finland

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Summary

Competence management at Statistics Finland aims to identify and anticipate changes in competence needs, ensure sufficient core competence and correctly direct competence to the core processes and their supporting activities. Recruitment and internal mobility partly safeguard the core competence. The needs for recruiting have grown in recent years due to retirement, reorganisation of tasks and other competence attrition. At Statistics Finland, the internal labour market is used to fulfil recruitment needs in the first place, but focusing only on the internal mobility of the personnel has not met the growing need for competence. Other forms of staff recruitment and competence building are needed.

One of the new tools is the centralised recruiting of experts - group recruiting, which was introduced in 2010. The objectives set for the group recruiting relate to the quality and efficiency of the recruitment process, and maintenance and creation of a good employer image. In group recruiting, several (5-12) junior experts are sought at the same time with one advertisement. The new experts will be placed in different statistics departments but the competence needs of the whole organisation are emphasised. The competence needs are especially linked with the stages of the production process of statistics (production and development of statistics or auxiliary activities to the process) rather than with a certain substance area. The posts applied for in the group recruiting are basic level expert positions, or junior positions, for which work experience in the area of statistics is not necessary.

Besides group recruiting, Statistics Finland has developed also another policy concerning competence management in recent years. The aim of career planning is to improve the opportunities of the personnel to broaden and deepen their expertise. During the career planning process the employee draws up his or her career plan and the supervisor supports him or her. The management defines the objectives for career planning, which are in accordance with operational and competence strategies and other policy outlines. The key issue in career planning is that the employee and the supervisor coordinate together the employee's and Statistics Finland's skills, needs and goals. For the employee, career planning is a way to develop his or her duties. For the supervisor it is a tool for competence management.

The target of the paper is to discuss the implementation of the new tools and analyse their impact on the competence development of the staff.

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1. Introduction

Statistics Finland is an expert organisation employing some 1,000 persons whose average age is 48.9 years and average length of working career 15.9 years. Altogether 64.8 per cent of the personnel hold at least lowest level tertiary educational qualifications. Statistics Finland recruits annually around 100 persons from outside, mobility on the internal labour market is some 130 persons per year. [1]

Competence management at Statistics Finland aims to identify and anticipate changes in competence needs, ensure sufficient core competence and correctly direct competence to the core processes and their supporting activities. Recruitment and internal mobility partly safeguard the core competence. The needs for recruiting and retaining competence have grown in recent years due to retirement, reorganisation of tasks and other competence attrition. Other forms of staff recruitment and competence building are needed - new tools for these are group recruiting and career planning.

In group recruiting, several junior experts are sought at the same time. The new experts will be placed in different statistics departments but the competence needs of the whole organisation are emphasised. The aim in career planning is to develop the employees' careers so that both the employee's own career hopes and the employer's needs meet. During the career planning process, the employee draws up his or her career plan and the supervisor supports him or her.

The article describes group recruiting and career planning as new tools for the development of competence at Statistics Finland, as well as examines the efficiency of these tools.

2. Group recruiting - centralised recruitment process for retaining and enhancing competence

2.1 What is group recruiting?

The needs for recruiting have grown in recent years due to retirement, reorganisation of tasks and other competence attrition. At Statistics Finland, the internal labour market is used to fulfil recruitment needs in the first place, but focusing only on the internal mobility of the personnel has not met the growing need for competence. Lacking competence has been acquired with recruitment from outside. The first centralised recruiting of experts, i.e. group recruiting, was carried out in 2010.

In group recruiting, several (5-12) junior experts are sought at the same time with one advertisement. The new experts will be placed in different statistics departments but the competence needs of the whole organisation are emphasised. The competence needs are especially linked with the stages of the production process of statistics (production and development of statistics or auxiliary activities to the process) rather than with a certain substance area. The group recruiting is mainly centralised into the personnel and legal services unit, and is performed in co-operation with the statistics departments.

The posts applied for in the group recruiting are basic level expert positions, or junior positions, for which work experience in the area of statistics is not necessary. The demands of the posts should be quite similar in order that experts for them can be sought by group recruiting. Group recruiting is not necessarily suitable for filling more demanding posts because these often require more specific competence than the generally needed skills.

Group recruiting suits situations in which the competence needs are congruent and the required levels of competence can be estimated to be similar. The tasks must also be sufficiently uniform in nature. In the case of Statistics Finland, the statistical production process - either the production and development of statistics or functions supporting the process (e.g. expertise in sampling) - is the uniting factor.

The target group for group recruiting are persons with suitable upper level tertiary qualifications, preferably some experience of statistical work or similar and good IT skills. Willingness to learn new things and develop along with tasks are also essential. Statistical work is done in an international environment, so good interactive and language skills are requisites for succeeding in the tasks. In general, curiosity and interest in social subjects are expected of the persons.

The majority of basic level statistical expert vacancies were filled with group recruiting in 2010 and 2011. Twenty-one of the 37 persons Statistics Finland recruited with group recruiting were women. In total, 50 per cent of statistical experts were recruited by means of group recruiting in 2011.

2.2 Objectives of group recruiting

The objective in group recruiting is to efficiently secure Statistics Finland's core competence. The objectives set for group recruiting relate to the quality and efficiency of the recruitment process, and maintenance and creation of a good employer image.

Centralised recruiting emphasises competence needs at the level of the entire organisation. It also enables equal and wide comparison of the applicants. Thus, the recruited resources can also be widely exploited throughout the organisation.

The centralisation of the principal responsibility for recruiting to the personnel and legal services unit allows the statistics departments to focus on their core functions. The applicants also see the process as efficient and do not usually have time to become employed elsewhere during it.

The candidates only attend one interview instead of having to apply separately to each post, which contributes to the creation of a good employer image. The aim in the interview is to draw to the applicant a picture of Statistics Finland as an expert organisation that wants to develop its personnel and its well-being at work, and offers interesting tasks at a vantage point in the production of information about society. In group recruiting, the tasks are also marketed consistently. The aim is to create a convincingly professional recruiting process.

Statistics Finland is one of the 120 employer units recruiting employees within the state administration. The recruiting, including that of Statistics Finland, is implemented with a shared electronic recruitment system and the vacancies are applied to on shared web pages (www.valtiolle.fi). The centralised recruiting draws an image of the state administration as a versatile employer and the shared recruitment system makes the recruiting efficient.

2.3 Group recruiting in practice

The process of group recruiting can be divided into four stages: survey of needs, definition of selection criteria and the application process, interviews, and decision on the selection.

Task	Contents
Survey of needs	Inquiry among management: anticipation of exit to retirement and other staff turnover, acute staff changes and needs arising from them Tasks suited for group recruiting and related competence needs
Definition of selection criteria, compilation of job advertisement	Definition of desired competence and educational background based on survey of needs Open vacancies are not itemised in job advertisement, applicant does not apply for a certain post but the task of a statistical expert in general
Interviews	Same interviewers (two statistics directors, one recruitment specialist throughout the whole process) Around four interviews per one open post
Selection	Based on criteria defined in job advertisement Selected persons are placed in departments according to suitability

2.3.1 Survey of departments' recruitment needs

Statistics Finland's recruitment process aims to be systematic and anticipate future competence needs. For this reason the management services department has introduced a systematic survey for establishing future recruitment needs, which is sent to department directors around twice a year. The survey inquires about future recruitment needs suitable for group recruiting and other vacancies that are due to become open.

In respect of group recruiting, the survey asks the departments whether they have vacancies in statistics production or statistical information service that need filling in the near future and are suitable for ap-

plying to through centralised recruiting. The statistics departments are asked to assess whether the vacancies would entail project work, development tasks, or training and consulting.

The survey of needs establishes the kinds of skills that the experts sought through group recruiting should possess in addition to general working life skills. What kinds of IT skills (e.g. SAS, E Language, Stata) and statistical methodological skills does the performance of each task require? In addition, the departments are asked about the suitable educational background for the open vacancy. (Appendix 1: Survey of needs questionnaire)

Management services produce a summary of the results of the survey, which is then discussed by the agency's management. The number of vacancies to be filled through group recruiting is agreed by anticipating possible changes during the recruitment process and some vacancies are also usually identified as the process progresses.

2.3.2 Definition of selection criteria and compilation of job advertisement

Based on the survey of needs, general selection criteria (i.e. desired competencies) are decided for the open vacancies. The most commonly desired competences are:

- Suitable university degree preferably comprising studies in economics or social sciences and statistics
- Versatile IT skills, such as knowledge of SAS software or other corresponding statistical data processing program
- Willingness to learn new things and develop along with tasks
- Fluent oral and written skills
- Good interactive skills
- Knowledge of the field of statistics and statistics
- Fluent English language skills

Applicants must have excellent written and oral Finnish language skills and satisfactory Swedish language skills.

Based on the survey of needs and the defined selection criteria a job advertisement (Appendix 2: an example of job advertisement for group recruiting) is compiled bearing in mind the sought target group. Open vacancies are not itemised in the job advertisement, the applicant does not apply for a certain post but the task of a statistical expert in general. The advertisement refers to the topics in general terms by giving the area of statistics where the vacancies are located (e.g. economic statistics, business statistics, energy statistics).

The advertisement describes the tasks at a general level: "The tasks entail compilation of statistics and analysing of results, process planning and steering, project work and development of statistics." The tasks are described as dynamic: "The field and contents of the tasks may vary according to your skills and interests."

An example of job description in the job advertisement:

We are looking for competent people with university degree for interesting and diversified tasks in the production and development of statistics. The tasks entail compilation of statistics and analysing of results, process planning and steering, project work and development of statistics.

As an expert in our organisation, you will be working in the area of economic, business or population statistics. The field and contents of the tasks may vary according to your skills and interests.

The advertisement also describes the sought for competence (looking for diversified IT skills, knowledge of statistical data processing programs, fluent communication skills, good interactive skills, good

English language skills) and the suitable educational background (e.g. applicable university degree comprising studies in economics and statistical science).

The advertising channels are chosen keeping the target groups in mind. Apart from newspapers and postings on the web, the used channels have included the social media and diverse networks.

Preliminary selection from the applications is made by management services basing on the selection criteria, and the applicants who best meet the criteria are invited to an interview. The applications are studied daily as the application period advances. Efforts are made already at this state to evaluate the applicants as a whole and take into consideration their potentiality as statistical experts. The applications of the interview candidates are studied jointly with the managers participating in the recruiting.

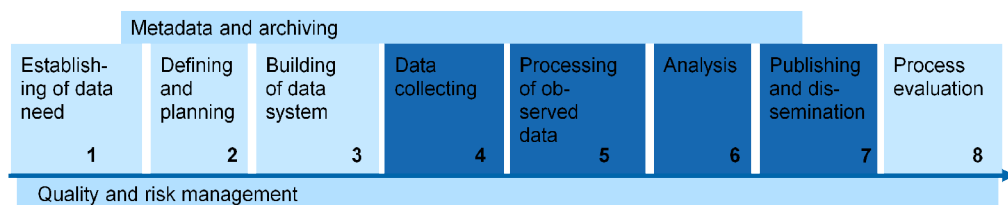
2.3.3 The interviews

Efforts are made to arrange the interviews as soon as possible after the end of the application period. About four-fold number relative to the number of open vacancies are invited to the interviews (e.g. 40 interviews were conducted for 12 open vacancies). Two recruiting directors and a recruiting expert from management services are usually at the interviews. To make the comparing and selecting easier the aim is that the same persons conduct all interviews.

During the interview, the applicant is given a description of Statistics Finland as a producer of information and as an organisation. Apart from the presentation of key figures on the personnel, the operating environment, stakeholders and the organisational structure, the interviewee is told about Statistics Finland’s values comprising strong statistical ethics and reliability.

The tasks are described with the help of the statistical production process. The applicant is told that the tasks may locate in one or more stages of the statistical production process.

Figure: Statistical production process



The operating environment of a statistical expert is described to the applicant in general terms

- An expert is responsible for the routine production of statistics and the maintenance of the related data system
- He/she operates as member of a group comprised of other experts and statisticians, which is supported by a supervisor.

The competence of the sought for experts is described as a combination of knowledge about the phenomenon on which the statistics are compiled, statistical science and management of a data system.

The interviews are conducted according to a frame tailored for group recruiting. The applicant’s view of the open vacancy and of Statistics Finland as an organisation is established during the interview. Questions concerning the applicant’s view of the open vacancy, motivation, education, work experience and personality each form a separate module of the interview. Around 90 minutes are reserved for each interview. The interviewers evaluate the applicants according to the selection criteria immediately after the interview and then again as the interviewing process progresses.

The interviews take into consideration the applicants’ development potential. The applicants do not need to be statistical experts yet, but basing on their backgrounds and on facts having emerged during

the interviews, the interviews endeavour to evaluate the applicants' readiness for development and motivation to develop into a statistical expert. For instance, a potential expert does not yet necessarily master SAS programs, but the interview and background information serve as a basis for assessing his/her capacity to quickly learn these programs. The aim of the interview is also to make sure that the person is suited to the work community by observing his/her interactive and teamwork skills.

2.3.4 The selection

The interviewers evaluate the interviewees and make a centralised proposal about the selection of new experts. The selected persons are placed according to their suitability to the different departments according to the needs the departments have expressed and the tasks they have described in the survey of needs. A few persons are additionally proposed as reserves. Management services compile one appointment memorandum of the appointments in which all the interviewed applicants are evaluated in a comparison table. The Director General approves the overall appointment proposal. The departments and the unit supervisors agree about the starting dates and the remuneration.

Case:

Third round of group recruiting was carried out in autumn 2011. It covered 12 open vacancies for junior experts in different statistics departments and in the statistical methods unit. The vacancies were located in the production and development of statistics and in diverse projects. Additionally, there were two vacancies in support functions to statistics production.

There were 218 applicants of whom 40 were interviewed. The interviews were attended by two statistics directors and a recruitment expert from management services. The interviews paid wide attention to the present competence background of the applicants, and to their potential and motivation to develop into an expert. Based on the interviews, selection proposals were made for the recruitment of 12 new experts. The recruitment process lasted about two months in all, of which the interviews took three weeks.

2.4 Experiences from group recruiting

Group recruiting has now been carried out four times. It has proven to be an efficient process: several experts can be recruited for similar tasks in the course of about two months. The number of applications per vacancy has varied between 18 and 44. The standard of the applicants has been high in each round.

Point in time	Number of applications	Number of open vacancies	Applications/vacancy
Autumn 2010	354	12	30
Spring 2011	252	8	31
Autumn 2011	217	12	18
Spring 2012	219	5	44

The thorough interviews help to form a picture of the competence of the interviewees, which facilitates its wide utilisation in different tasks. Knowledge about the competence of the recruits also makes it possible to assess staff training needs. Group recruiting is an excellent way to form a picture of the supply of competence and competence potential on the labour market as well as of the competence that is difficult to find outside the organisation (e.g. SAS software skills).

According to Statistics Finland's policy outlines of personnel strategy, both specialists and multi-skilled persons are needed in versatile and changing statistical work. Group recruiting highlights the development potential of the applicants because the open vacancies are junior expert tasks. The focus in Statis-

tics Finland's other recruiting from outside has been on the professional competence of the applicants, for instance in the recruitment of an expert on a certain phenomenon, or an IT professional.

A limited number of posts are open in group recruiting and good applicants are often left unselected. A so-called pool of disposable competence has been formed of these applicants, which can be resorted to in acute staff change situations to fill fixed-term post, such as deputies. This way the applicants gain work experience that may be useful in becoming recruited to permanent posts.

Centralised recruiting releases resources from the statistics departments for their core activities but, on the other hand, ties up HR resources. Recruitment needs should be anticipated better so that sufficient HR resources could be guaranteed.

A need may arise in future to recruit personnel simultaneously, much like in group recruiting, for different posts but for different competence requirement levels. Besides challenges arising from legislation, this would also challenge the marketing of vacancies, reaching of the right target group and the comparing of applicants. The competence required for high competence requirement levels is often difficult to find even from outside the organisation. There are also plans to apply the group recruiting model to the recruitment of undergraduate trainees. So far, group recruiting has only been used in the recruiting of persons for permanent civil service posts.

Several hundreds of applications are received all at once in group recruiting. Reaching the right target group in the job advertising would make the initial selection of candidates easier. The advertising channels should be carefully chosen so that it will reach exactly the right target group. The process could also be made lighter by making the initial selection of interview candidates by means of a video interview.

Getting the recruited persons committed to Statistics Finland is one challenge. Supervisors and the management are encouraged to draw up a career plan for the recruits together with them. The idea has been that the persons would change tasks in around three year's time. By changing tasks, the experts would not only learn new things themselves but would also bring their competence and a fresh perspective to different statistics. In group recruiting the career development of the recruited persons (changing of tasks, level of competence required in tasks, development of pay) will be tracked systematically at intervals of a couple of years.

3. Career planning of experts as a tool for developing statistical competence

The purpose of career planning is to develop the employees' careers based on prior experience and existing competences, striving to match both the employee's career ambitions and the employer's needs.

An employee's career is an accumulation of all the various tasks that he or she has performed during his or her active working life. Traditionally, a career was seen as a "privilege" of the supervisors, while today all employees are considered to have a career. The career is examined as a cyclical development that sometimes levels out and sometimes has more active phases. Career changes are characterised by looking for new tasks or challenges and succeeding in them.

For supervisors, career planning and management is part of managing employees and competences. Active career management of employees also develops labour force competences and creates flexibility in terms of internal mobility for the employees.

In the career planning efforts of Statistics Finland, an employee works on his/her personal career plan, while the supervisor supports and guides him/her in line with the strategic goals. At Statistics Finland, employees can draw up their career plans either while taking part in coaching or independently aided by online instructions and material. The employee collects in the career plan practical measures that

help to achieve the targets. A career plan is drawn up to cover several years and revised in annual personal appraisal discussions or as required.

In a nutshell, career planning at Statistics Finland is about looking at the development of competences and tasks over an extended time span, increasing competence and expertise, matching tasks and employees, work motivation and working together.

3.1 Career planning is a tool for competence management

Career planning is a tool for competence management that indirectly also supports the achievement of the organisation's strategic [2] goals. Career planning is an attempt to improve the quality and development of the organisation's competence capital, smooth functioning of processes and projects, and employee well-being and productivity.

Objectives	Projected impacts of career planning
Promoting HR planning. In particular, qualitative or competence related long-term planning	Career planning builds bridges between the individual and organisational level competence targets. For supervisors and managers, career planning is one tool for systematically examining the overall competences of a unit/department.
Promoting process management and process-like operation	Increased engagement in career planning supports examining competences across the boundaries of departments. Drawing up a career plan helps an employee to consider his/her personal development at the level of the entire organisation. Career planning creates channels for internal mobility and networking.
Project resource allocation	Career plans make the employees' competences and their development targets visible to the supervisor and further to the director, making it possible to draw on them when allocating resources to projects (talent management perspective).
Retaining and developing competent staff	Career planning makes competence development more systematic at the individual level, gives employees an outlook to the future and thus supports long-term commitment.
Evolving as a learning organisation	Career plans and career planning coaching support peer learning and the sharing of learning at the individual level.
Support for staff well-being and professional and interactive management	A career plan is likely to facilitate the matching of tasks and competences, to improve motivation and, consequently, to promote well-being at work. Career training supports the supervisor's HR and competence management skills.
Increasing productivity	A working career planning system supports a correct allocation of competences and appropriate use of resources. The fact that well-being at work improves productivity has been incontestably proven by research. A working career system is a means for increasing staff mobility.

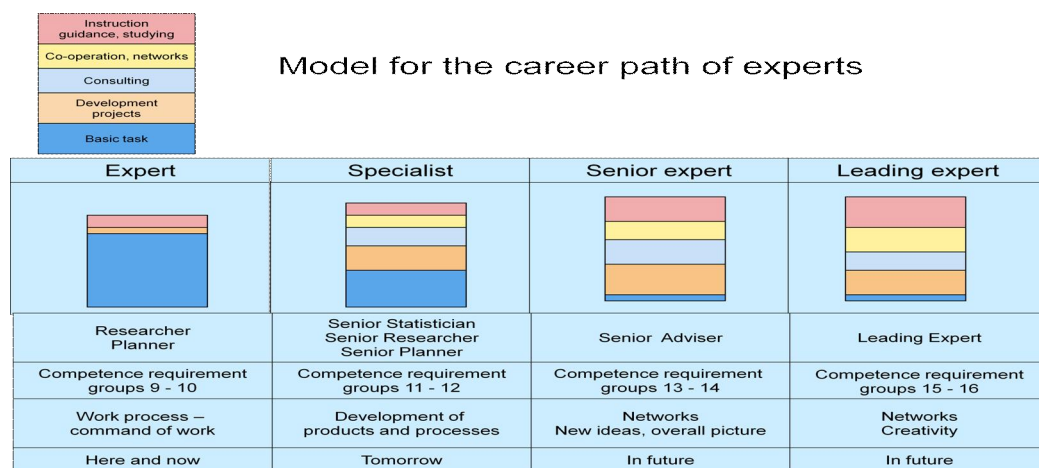
3.2 Career paths and expert careers at Statistics Finland

In 2007, a preliminary study related to career paths and planning was conducted by the HR unit of Statistics Finland. This was followed by three HR led projects to develop career thinking and tools for career planning as well as to plan career coaching. During the coaching, career plans were drawn up, new tools for career planning were developed and learning materials were produced.

In terms of career thinking, Statistics Finland can be seen as having three career paths, or a management career, an expert career and a professional career.

It is part of the principles of career thinking that the employees can freely move from one career to another, or between tasks. The tasks at Statistics Finland are categorised into statistical work, information services, information technology, administration and management tasks. Openness is a key value that directs the activities of Statistics Finland. For this reason, career planning focuses on various obstacles to career progress, their identification and their elimination.

An expert's career at Statistics Finland is described as having four steps. This model and frame of reference can be used for planning an expert career. The key idea of the model is that employees will progress in their careers as their expertise is deepened and broadened by developing their set of tasks. The set of tasks consists of basic tasks (for example, statistical work) and development, networking, teaching and studying tasks.



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The description of career steps has been translated into more concrete terms by associating the steps with examples of job titles, competence requirement levels, and the nature and orientation of an expert's work. In the contents and orientation of a leading expert's work, for example, networks, creativity and the future are stressed, while for an expert, the focus of the work is on statistical processes and mastering the basic tasks.

An expert career is an entity comprised of various tasks. Career ambitions find expression in a career plan. The career plan is goal-oriented and describes the tasks and competences through which the expert wishes to deepen and/or broaden his/her expertise in the future. Following the Policy Outlines of Personnel Strategy of Statistics Finland [3], tasks should be rotated every 3–5 years. This improves flexibility and supports preparedness for change both at the individual and the organisational level.

3.3 Practical implementation of career planning

Before putting career planning into practice, its processes and tools had to be formulated and its target group identified. In this work, the operating culture of the organisation and its management, planning and monitoring processes were taken into account.

3.3.1 Target group for career planning

The principles determining who should primarily be drawing up career plans were defined by Statistics Finland. Preparing a career plan takes up time and resources, both on the part of the employee and his/her supervisor.

The following should prepare a career plan:

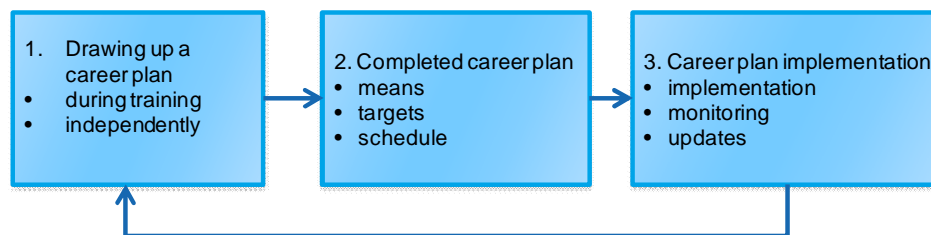
- Persons who, because of their critical competences and/or tasks , play such a key role in the activity of Statistics Finland that focusing on their retention by creating a career horizon for the future is particularly important (key tasks and employees performing them)
- Persons whose motivation to develop it is, for one reason or another, particularly vital to support
- Persons who are under pressure to share their competence, for example because of approaching retirement or to safeguard deputising arrangements
- Persons in whose tasks extensive changes and/or cutbacks are expected over the next few years and who need to find a new direction
- Persons who themselves are willing to systematically look at their development and to draw up a career plan.

3.3.2 Career planning tools

Creating the following tools and making the personnel aware of them was a precondition for putting together the career planning process of Statistics Finland. Career planning tools include:

Tool	Purpose and use
Career planning process description	Describes the steps and tasks on which a career plan can be based.
Career planning template	Describes the contents and schedule of the plan.
Competence models	Help to determine what types of competence are required.
Appreciative listening method	Describes the principles and operating method of discussions between supervisors and subordinates. Focuses attention on genuine dialogue that is vital in careers management.
Coaching and other support material for career planning	Put career planning into practice under the guidance of the HR unit (coaching) or independently (material).

The career planning process consists of three steps: drawing up a career plan, the completed plan and its implementation. The career planning process can be described as follows:



Drawing up a career plan (1) is a process that proceeds through certain steps. The end result is a completed career plan (2), into which development targets and the means for reaching the targets according to an agreed schedule are collected. Implementation of the career plan (3) comprises completing the agreed steps, monitoring and elaboration, for example in connection with appraisal discussions.

The process of drawing up a career plan (1) has four steps. In step 1, the employee considers his/her current status, or his/her current career, competences and interests. In step 2, he/she thinks about the future, or the targets associated with the work/development, and their relation to the organisation's targets. In step 3, the employee looks at the options and means offered by the organisation for achieving the targets, and in step 4, he/she puts these ideas together into a concrete career plan. Drawing up a career plan takes a few months. The employee should work on the plan together with his/her supervisor.

Career plan template

The career plan template helps the employee put together the ideas he/she comes up with when drawing up the plan into a concrete career plan (contents, schedule, monitoring). The implementation of the career plan is monitored up, and the plan is elaborated on as necessary.

Competence models

The competence models of Statistics Finland concern statistical, information technology, information service, management and administration work. The models make visible the competences needed in various tasks. Competence models are used in career planning to think about the future and the competence challenges associated with various tasks and changes/transitions; for example, the competence challenges faced by an employee wishing to move from statistical work to information service work or a management career. Competence models are also used to identify the competence that is required. The competence model for statistical work, for example, helps to analyse and identify various elements of statistical competence.

Appreciative listening method

Drawing up a career plan is a process in which dialogue with oneself and others is crucial. During this process, the employee should regularly discuss the targets of the career plan and means of development with his/her supervisor. These discussions aim for a dialogical approach. In career discussions, the supervisor's role is that of a facilitator. His/her tasks include listening, considering possibilities and building visions of future. Key principles of appreciative listening include listening, a dialogical approach, appreciation and honesty. The supervisor's task is to support the subordinate in the various steps of completing a career plan, not to offer ready-made solutions to questions that come up.

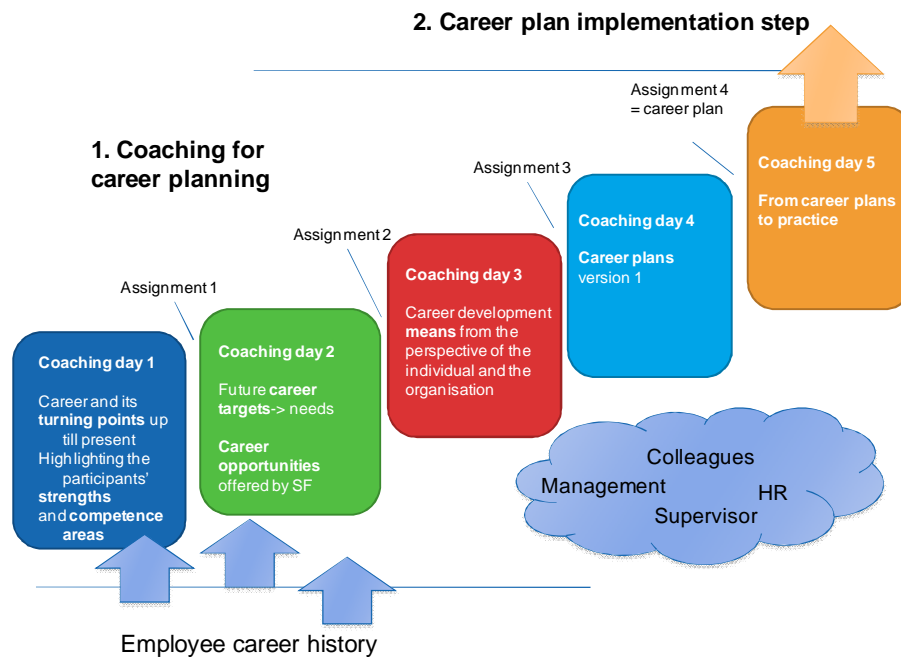
Coaching and material to support career planning

During the career coaching programme in 2009–2010, the HR unit produced practices and tools for career planning and drawing up career plans together with the participants. The participants in this coaching were experts and their supervisors. During the coaching, the experts completed career plans

for themselves. The training for supervisors focused on how the supervisors could support their subordinates' career planning.

The career coaching consisted of five days, four of which were spent putting together the career plans, while on the final day the participants presented their plans to the others. In between the coaching days, the employees worked on their career plans through assignments and discussions with their supervisors. As necessary, the director of the department was also invited to take part in these discussions.

The career coaching consisted of the following contents:



The career coaching material was posted on the careers pages of the intranet. The pages were built to guide employees in independently drawing up their career plans using the template and materials provided. The pages naturally also play a role in communications.

The pages consist of a front page and the following sections:

- How to draw up a career plan: the steps in drawing up a career plan
- For the supervisor: the supervisor's role in supporting the drawing up of career plans
- Training: content descriptions of career coaching for supervisors and subordinates
- Material: a list of career planning materials and tools.

Materials and tools used for career planning include articles on career thinking, strategy documents of the organisation, tools for identifying, sharing, evaluating and developing competences including competence models, statistical work as information work, recognizing tacit knowledge and the CV. An employee's career was analysed based on his/her life course and the composition of his/her professional identity as well as through peer discussions and dialogue. The dialogical approach in discussions between supervisors and subordinates was rehearsed using the methods of appreciative listening and facilitating supervisory work.

3.4 Experiences gained from career planning

Based on feedback received on the coaching and discussions, we can say that at the individual level, the coaching succeeded in increasing the participants' awareness of their own competences, careers and future career opportunities. The participants also received support in planning their careers and finding

career options and means for development. At the level of the organisation, the project succeeded in increasing the supervisors' and the management's awareness of the means for career planning and development.

The results of the Personnel Survey [4] indicated that the coaching had significantly advanced career thinking at Statistics Finland. Those who had participated in the coaching played a key role in passing on the message. Statistics Finland's career planning monitoring model makes it possible to track the individual and organisational level impacts of career planning. In addition to developing competences, the model also includes monitoring of the impacts that career planning has on well-being at work. The model has not yet been systematically introduced.

The career planning process and materials were developed together with the experts and supervisors who took part in the coaching. This helped to introduce the elements of curiosity and creativity and a dialogical approach to the coaching.

3.5 New challenges to career planning

Statistics Finland will utilise career planning in the introduction of its new business information system in 2013–2014. This reform will directly concern some 100 people and two statistics departments. In the new information system, the entire statistical production process will be renewed from the collection of data to their editing and dissemination. At the same time, shared applications, methods and functions will be introduced. The objectives and operating mode of the information system are described as a vision that will come into a sharper focus as the project progresses.

The new process will also create a challenge for developing and partially reorganising activities surrounding it. Developing shared rules of process management and evaluating the impacts of the changes on future tasks and statistical competences play a key role.

Career planning is seen as a good tool for managing future competences, identifying training needs and planning training. Career planning is a tool for change management through which the objectives of the individual, the organisation and the activity can effectively be reconciled. Career planning will support the management of the introduction phase in a situation where the individual and the organisation are making the transition from the old procedure to the new one.

4. Group recruiting and career planning as new tools for competence management - summary

Group recruiting is a flexible way to direct competence acquired from outside to the core processes and the activities supporting them. The recruiting highlights the competence needs of Statistics Finland that are expressly connected with the different work stages of the statistical production process.

Career planning helps to identify and anticipate changes in competence needs. It enables the directing of Statistics Finland's existing competence to the core processes, and functions as a means of sharing competence. With career planning, the goals of the individual, the organisation and the activities can be efficiently reconciled. For the employee, career planning is a way to develop his or her duties. For the supervisor it is a tool for competence management.

Statistics Finland aims to retain its competitiveness on the labour market. The competition for competence will toughen in the coming years, which makes a positive employer image important. Group recruiting and career planning support the building of employer image. It is important to think of the employees, both fresh recruits and those with longer service records, as messengers: the image as employer is built by what is said about the organisation outside it. Meaningful job tasks, career planning

and internal mobility are examples of the characteristics of a good employer. It is important to convey a message about them to the outside world. The aim is to make career planning part of the job orientation of new recruits. Career planning and the transparency of the recruitment process also correlate with job satisfaction and motivation.

In Statistics Finland's work on the building of its image as an employer, career thinking is linked to the renewal of its website pages on recruitment. The web pages on recruitment, in turn, function as the marketing channel to the target group that is interested in Statistics Finland as an employer and possibly possess the right kind of competence. They convey a message about different career paths, career opportunities and systematic career development. Employer communication is being developed continuously at Statistics Finland together with other employers in the state administration.

Competence development measures, such as career planning and group recruiting, are used to enhance the capacity of the personnel to cope with the challenges of work, which especially arise from the personnel's turnover, fast IT development, high quality requirements in the field of statistics and international activities. Group recruiting and career planning function as new competence development tools that support the personnel's flexibility and renewal capacity. Future challenges to the development of competence will arise from, for instance, the new personnel information system KIEKU, and competence audit.

References

- [1] Personnel Balance Sheet of Statistics Finland 2011
- [2] Operating Strategy of Statistics Finland for 2012– 2015
- [3] Policy Outlines of Personnel Strategy of Statistics Finland 2010–2015
- [4] Personnel Survey of Statistics Finland 2011

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Appendix 1. Recruiting needs survey

Inquiry among departments

This inquiry aims to ascertain your department's needs to give permanency to your fixed-term employees and for recruitment of new employees. In respect of new recruiting, the inquiry aims to identify the recruitment needs that are suitable for group recruiting, as well as your other known recruitment needs.

1. Your department's needs for conversion to permanency

Report here the fixed-term employees with an immediate need for permanency. To start the measures necessary for conversion to permanency, also justify the need for the conversion to permanency and provide other background information (open vacancy exists/need to establish a vacancy, possible reorganisation of vacancies, application procedure/possible direct appointment, planned timing). The prerequisite to conversion to permanency is that the department has the necessary appropriations for remuneration.

2. Group recruiting

Next group recruiting of statistical experts has been planned to start in spring 2012. In group recruiting, statistical experts are recruited with view to the needs of the whole of Statistics Finland for such tasks in which the new experts have the opportunity to improve their statistical competence and learn new things. The tasks in group recruiting locate in competence requirement group 10 of Statistics Finland's remuneration system. Describe the tasks for which your department would have recruitment needs in the next group recruiting.

a) What kinds of tasks related to statistics production do your recruitment needs concern?

b) What kinds of tasks related to statistical information service do your recruitment needs concern?

c) Do the tasks involve project working, development tasks, training or consulting tasks? What kinds?

d) Apart from general working life skills (e.g. language skills, interaction skills, willingness to learn and develop), other skills that are essential from the point of Statistics Finland are also expected of new experts. Which IT skills (e.g. SAS, R language, C language) and methodological statistical skills are essential from the viewpoint of your department in the group recruiting?

e) Which basic degrees (major subject, minor subject) are essential from the viewpoint of your department in the group recruiting?

3. Other recruitment needs of your department

In order to allocate resources for the recruitment services of Management Services, we also need information about your department's other known recruitment needs. What kinds of other, specific recruitment needs besides group recruiting does your department have towards the end of 2011 and in early 2012? When?

4. How many persons would you estimate your department's recruitment need to be?

Report separately needs for group recruiting and other, specific recruitment needs.

Appendix 2: An example of job advertisement for group recruiting

Statistics Finland produces diversified information on society and is an active member of the international statistical community. We employ over 900 experts in a variety of fields at our head office in Helsinki and in our regional services centres, and as interviewers throughout the country. To respond to changing tasks and challenges we need reinforcements to our group of experts.

Come and work as an expert with us! (300-183-12)

We are looking for competent people with university degree for interesting and diversified tasks in the production and development of statistics. The tasks entail compilation of statistics and analysing of results, process planning and steering, project work and development of statistics.

As an expert in our organisation you will be working in the areas of economic, business or population statistics. The field and contents of the tasks may vary according to your skills and interests.

We offer to you

- Work at a vantage point in the production of information on society
- An international operating environment
- Challenging and diversified tasks in a continuously developing, respected expert organisation
- Good career development opportunities
- Pleasant work community and co-workers

From you, we are looking for

- Suitable university degree preferably comprising studies in economics or social sciences and statistics
- Versatile IT skills, such as knowledge of SAS software or other corresponding statistical data processing program
- Willingness to learn new things and develop along with tasks
- Fluent oral and written communication skills
- Good interactive skills

Knowledge of the field of statistics and statistics would be an advantage. The management of the tasks involved requires excellent written and oral skills in the Finnish language and satisfactory skills in the Swedish language, as well as fluency in the English language.

The open posts are placed throughout Statistics Finland and their remuneration is determined by Statistics Finland's remuneration system. The gross starting salary will range from EUR xxxx to EUR yyyy per month depending on the competence and experience of the person selected to the post. You may also submit your own pay request.

Further information on the posts is available from Statistics Managers NN and MM and from HR Planning Officer SS, tel. +3598 9 17341

The application period closes at 3 pm on xx Month xxxx.

The posts can be applied to via the HELI electronic recruitment system at: www.valtiolle.fi.

Written applications should be addressed to Statistics Finland, Registrar's Office, FI-00022 Statistics Finland (street address: Työpajankatu 13, Helsinki) Applications should be marked with the name of the task and the job code. Applications will not be returned.

Annonser på svenska: www.stat.fi/arbetsplatser.