



Press release
from FöreningsSparbanken
(Swedbank)

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FöreningsSparbanken named Sweden's Best Workplace 2003

FöreningsSparbanken (Swedbank) has been named Sweden's Best Workplace 2003 in a competition arranged by the occupational Pension Company Alecta. The bank shared first place this year with television network Kanal 5.

"We are very pleased and proud of this award and see it as proof that we are moving in the right direction in our efforts to contribute to our employees' health, prevent psychosocial disabilities and at the same time increase motivation and profitability," says FöreningsSparbanken President and CEO Birgitta Johansson-Hedberg.

The award recognized FöreningsSparbanken, "an organization of around 800 workplaces, for developing and implementing tools and programs that create a working environment where soft values are a cornerstone in the efforts to raise profitability."

FöreningsSparbanken was also cited for its codetermination agreement, IDA, which invites and encourages employees to take part in the bank's operations through a focus on insight, involvement and responsibility.

Before selecting its winners, Alecta had qualified examiners conduct interviews and visit FöreningsSparbanken's branches. The determining criteria in the competition were committed leadership, long-term thinking, committed and active employees, cooperation, preventive measures and profitability.

Page 2 of this press release provides a brief description of FöreningsSparbanken's activities to promote the wellness and well being of its employees.

For further information, please contact:

Birgitta Johansson-Hedberg, President and CEO,
phone +46 8 585 910 88

Henrik Kolga, Executive Vice President and Head of Communications,
phone +46 708 11 13 15



Examples of FöreningsSparbanken's wellness and working environment activities

- We have started a Group-wide project called “Health Offensive” to reduce sick leave absences.
- For many years we have frequently measured our human capital (employees) and market capital (customers) in relation to profitability. Actions are consistently taken based on the results.
- We have analyzed sick leave by unit, age, gender and length of absence and set a goal to reduce sick leave from 4.8 to 3.8 percent. We have also defined long-term wellness (maximum of 5 sick days per 12-month period) and measured it consistently, including by gender. Our goal is to increase long-term wellness from 71 to 80 percent.
- We have conducted a cost analysis to measure the economic impact of ill health.
- We are identifying risks and preventing psychosocial disabilities through a Wellness Index that is frequently measured and followed up with actions.
- We have established a Wellness and Working Environment Organization responsible for planning and budgets in this area for every part of the Group.
- We provide guidance and personal support to employees through round-the-clock telephone access to an outside counselor via the company Visavi.
- We have expanded our IDA codetermination agreement (Insight, Involvement, Responsibility) to clearly include every single employee.
- We have introduced an IT-based competence system that encourages employees' participation and stresses the ties between competence development and operating objectives.
- We offer leadership development programs that help ensure compliance with our values and implementation of our strategies.
- One fourth of our personnel are age 55 or older. To stimulate and retain these skilled employees, the bank has developed 55+, a program consisting of individualized competence development, annual health screenings, the offer of an hour of exercise a week on the job, and the opportunity after age 58 to cut back to an 80-percent work schedule with a 90-percent salary.