



SCA Focuses on Leadership and Creates Innovations Simultaneously

SCA Hygiene Products recently completed its second PUMA (Programme for Young Employees), a development programme focusing both on individual leadership and on innovation. The programme includes a Venture Cup – a contest whose challenge is to produce a business concept that stimulates questioning and new ideas and provides further insights about group processes and about the company.

One participant was Viktoria Stridh, Regional Business Logistics Manager Nordic.

“The Venture Cup had us going full out! Blood, sweat and tears for many weeks on end! I learned a lot about group dynamics, SCA, idea generation and brand strategies.”

Viktoria feels that she has experienced great development in the programme, which ran during ten residential modules and app. 20 project days throughout a full year. For her, it has meant understanding change better, working on her personal development and burrowing more deeply into both her own and her company’s values. But she also adds:

“Having Ulf Johansson along was a great asset. He opened my eyes to many new ways of business environment scanning and thinking about strategy – like when we worked with the Blue Ocean Strategy for a day.”

Viktoria Stridh is one of the PUMA participants. She was a member of the team whose idea for the Libero area won the Venture Cup. She thinks the programme has added enormously to her development.



Innovation is an Important Part of SCA’s Strategy

Lena Bexell, responsible for competence development SCA Hygiene Nordic and Anna Sävinger Åslund, responsible for Human Resources R&D, ran the programme, in conjunction with Ulf Johansson, Professor of Business Administration, and Anita Beijer, former Personnel Director, Volvo Cars, both of whom are associated with the MiL Institute.

“Just now our company is focusing on innovation. Since it is part of our strategy, it was natural for it to permeate our development programme,” says Lena Bexell.

Now that 40 people have had this orientation in two PUMA programmes, the company’s emphasis on innovation is all the more evident.

Lena also underscores the holistic view, the network and the shared language resulting from the programme – the fact that participants from R&D, Sales & Marketing and Product Categories gain insight into each other’s working conditions as well as an overview of working with a product all the way from idea to customer. Along the way they become familiar with each other’s priorities and ways of reasoning, or “language”.

The Value of Personal Development

In addition to innovation and the Venture Cup competition to produce a business concept, PUMA promotes personal development. And that is what Viktoria Stridh believes will be most enduring. Among other things she was influenced by the seminars on work-life balance, and by working with personal preferences.

"I have gained an understanding of how my personality influences other people. And that has incited me to rein in my impatience and my compulsion to finish things off. Now I often allow groups to go through something one more time, because I can see how that enriches both the groups and their results," she continues.

SCA – an Open and Generous Company

Participants are recruited from among promising newcomers and are nominated by their managers. They all come from academia, and most of them are around 30. They are asked to come up with innovation projects in groups that are as heterogeneous as possible and not directly connected to the field in which they are to be creative.

"We have enjoyed incredible support from different parts of our organisation. There has been great desire to help out, with both ideas and information. A great experience!" says Viktoria Stridh.

These innovation projects have generated many good ideas and a couple of really persuasive suggestions for new products that the company is currently processing. Viktoria is a member of the team that won the Venture Cup in the most recent programme. Among other things, that included preparing a complete business plan for a new business concept, including everything from business environment analysis to marketing plan and risk assessment. The project teams have outdone one



Photo: Helena Dovier, Personal & Ledarskap

Lena Bexell, responsible for competence development SCA Hygiene Nordic, thinks that the prime priority of the programme is to offer younger and less experienced employees an opportunity for personal development.

another in making advertising films, display cases for stores or product brochures. Their efforts have been judged by a jury comprised of the heads of the different categories — Global Category Vice President, R&D Manager, Regional Director for Health Care Nordic and SCA's Director of Innovation, Bengt Järrehult.

Voting in the Venture Cup Finale

The big auditorium in SCA's head office in Gothenburg was packed for the programme's final seminar. All the participants were there, and each of them was entitled to three guests; others present included their managers and some of their colleagues, as well as the jury and the programme managers. Everyone listened to a 20-minute presentation by each of the four teams, followed by questions and comments. After that, the audience voted for their favorite proposal, which then accoun-

ted for 25% of the jury's final judgment. After a one-hour deliberation, during which such things as credibility, the reliability of calculations and product capacity were weighed in, the jury announced its verdict.

"Just creating a business idea was a whole new experience for many of the participants," says Lena Bexell.

Viktoria Stridh also points to the strong network she acquired in SCA. The participants have grown closer to each other, and she knows that will have great importance for her as she continues working in the company.

Experienced Colleagues Focus on Refining and Mediating Innovation

Collaborating with the MiL Institute, SCA has also had a programme for experienced employees in the organisation. This programme has primarily focused on refining existing ideas. The participants have been seasoned SCA employees in R&D who needed to better pass on their product ideas to other parts of the organisation and, as in PUMA, increase their business acumen. Here, too, the foundation of the programme has emphasized personal development. It has included three residential modules as well as project work. Both this and the PUMA programmes have been appreciated and received very high evaluations.