

Distr.
GENERAL

18 June 2012

ENGLISH ONLY

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE (UNECE)
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Work Session on the Communication of Statistics

(Geneva, Switzerland, 27-29 June 2012)

Session 4: External Communication

Internal communication at Statistics Sweden

Prepared by Cecilia Weststrom, Sweden

An internal survey three years ago showed that many employees were not satisfied with internal communication at Statistics Sweden. To start to handle the problem the Communication Department recruited a communicator with experience from internal communication. The first step was to do a qualitative survey to pinpoint the problem. It showed that internal communication varies substantially within the organisation. Most of the information is in written form and the heads of units are the most important sources of information. There was a request for better tools for internal communication, better structured and faster intranet and more structured information from top management.

The goals for improved internal communication we set up were to make the information from top management easy to understand and to access, to improve the intranet and to improve the leaders' communicative competence.

Improved information from top management

- More direct information on the intranet from top management meetings. All regular meetings in the top management group have the last point on the agenda: "what will be communicated on the intranet?"
- Interviews with the Director General on the intranet 7-8 times a year. Important to have different people as interviewers
- Director General meets all staff twice a year to inform and answer questions
- A written summary from the four yearly leaders' conferences are presented on the intranet shortly after the actual meetings.

Improved intranet

- Communication network with staff at other departments to improve their information on our intranet
- More personal and editorial information
 - o Interviews with random employees about their work

- Interviews with different persons following the production from data collection to publishing
- New start page where the news feed is central and downward rolling
- More illustrations and photos
- Faster download

Improve the leaders' communicative competence

- Communication system workshops for managers
- Education about other internal communication tools: feedback and dialogue.

The education in communication systems is run as a workshop to structure and improve the leader's individual communication system. The focus for each person of the workshop is:

- Who are the people/what is the group of people I communicate with?
- What channels do I use?
- What is the goal of the different communication activities?
- My evaluation?

The first workshop is followed up by two or three individual coaching sessions with our internal communication experts to develop a personal action plan for internal communication.

The Communication Department

We started with the education in communication systems at the Communication Department and that led to some actions. We are three units in the department and the heads and the director publish information on the intranet. We decided to coordinate the form and sometimes the content. It is important that the employees in the Communication Department know how development projects are going, since we are all ambassadors for the department. So the three units schedule monthly coffee meetings where important work of the units is presented for the whole department.

The director used to have meetings with the three units, but since the functions even within the units are so diversified we switched to having meetings with smaller function groups, discussing actual work and problems that arise. For the Communication Department at Statistics Sweden with 60 employees, this means some 15 groups. We also have short oral information meetings usually 2-3 times a year. To discuss things over the boundaries of units, we have department dialogue meetings where we discuss policies and approaches.

Forthcoming work

So far we have not done any quantitative evaluation of our work with internal communication. But we see positive results in the organisation. At a leader meeting some years ago we introduced the importance of working with communication plans and also set a template. Now we see that many employees see it as natural to have a communication plan for projects etc. Our help with communication plans is appreciated and requested. Hopefully we can soon do an evaluation on the internal communication.

Other things we want to put more effort into are:

- Stronger cooperation with the HR department when it comes to leader development. This is also important for individual leader evaluation, since the communication aspect is so crucial, according to the employees.
- The Communication Department have recently started a project to improve the support to subject matter departments in communication areas.
- A new structure and search function of the intranet and a function for sharing.
- More use of films for internal interviews.