



Sustainable Job Creation



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Introduction

Sustainable Job Creation is the comprehensive term for an employer oriented method to create permanent jobs for people with disabilities whose chances on competitive employment are quite low.

Based on the questions of an employer, the method implies the re-designing of work processes and the splitting of tasks, allowing highly qualified staff to be more available for work for which they are trained. And in the same time, the simple tasks for which they are too high educated, will be combined into functions that are suitable for people with disabilities who are now outside the labour market: regular and lasting functions that will be part of the company.

The purpose of job creation for companies is to support companies to fulfil their tasks on social responsibilities and/or national incentives and regulations to employ persons with a large distance to the labour market and in the same time to use staff more efficiently. Where possible, for less costs without compromising in production or leading to higher returns: the added value needs to be clear for the company.

The rationale

In recent years, functions in companies have become increasingly complex. Employers benefited of organising a workplace where the same person could perform as many tasks as possible. This increased the flexibility and deployability of personnel. Workers also benefited; they asked for more responsibility, more variety, more contact with others and more challenging work.

Functions were therefore increasingly organized on the basis of this complexity and job requirements developed along with this. This led to a situation where workers needed increasingly higher education requirements in order to be capable of fulfilling a certain position.

The complexity of the functions also leads to a situation where employers have to deal with a lot of expensive personnel. And also, they constantly have to find employees who meet these high education requirements. That is not always easy, especially in the process industry, healthcare and metal we see skill shortages arise.

Another effect of this development is that there is a growing number of persons who are not able to perform these more complex jobs and therefore they can't find suitable employment on the regular labour market. These persons have therefore a large distance to the labour market often caused by a disability. They are designated on jobs with low responsibility, low degree of flexibility, no work pressure, etc. Therefore they do not meet the performance demands.

It is the growing group of employees that previously could work in companies in more simple, repetitive jobs, but no longer can keep up and has gone outside the labour force; staff that nowadays usually only can function in sheltered environments.

Methodology

Companies are not waiting for employees who cannot keep up, since it leads to a decreased production and that will have an impact on the profit and loss account of the company.

We now know that these workers can keep up as long as they perform work that suits them. And that work has usually become part of the complex functions of qualified staff. Job Creation anticipates this. In job creation, the more complex tasks can be distinguished from the less complex tasks. Therefore, the processes and tasks are examined. One thing is important: whatever changes, the processes that take place in the company, need to retain the level of before or increase the level of productivity where possible. These new jobs for persons with disabilities exist of regular work activities and therefore these new created jobs are sustainable.

Simple tasks carried out by different personnel are combined into one or more new positions and re-incorporated into the work and the work processes. Characteristics of these new jobs are that they can be learned in practice, with low responsibility, very structured and clear, less work pressure and autonomy. The characteristics of these jobs fit with the possibilities of workers who cannot cope with the current work processes and the current work force demands. Think of people with intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and employees of sheltered workshops.

The skilled workers can then concentrate on the more complex tasks of their position. The latter are happy, so has learned the experience. They now come to the work for which they are trained and do not have to bother anymore for "all those incidentals" in their position.

The paradigm shift

In implementing these new jobs and employing persons with a large distance to the labour market the employer has to recognize that there could be some resistance in the organization in relation to this new social policy. Within the method of Sustainable Job Creation, techniques are used to involve the employees to reduce the possible resistance.

This way of looking at the work requires a different perspective of the employer. On the one hand it needs an open view of the employer to people who are outside the regular labour market and create the possibility for them to be part of. On the other hand it needs an open view of the employer to look at a different way to organize their own work and work processes.

Though, if they indeed create a different way of working by using job creation, they can:

- realize a greater return with constant costs
- continue to do the same work with fewer skilled workers and lower costs
- comply with national incentives/regulations on the employment of persons with disability

And employers can fulfil their corporate social responsibility: an increasing important indicator for contracting parties.

Some examples

Company A produces computer chips; a process industry with a high-tech character. The tasks of the operators of the machines that make the chips are analysed and broken down. The logistical tasks, meaning the retrieval and removal of materials are separately organized, on the basis of this analysis. These tasks are now performed by a number of employees with a sheltered workshop background. Less highly educated process operators are needed.

Company B has a capacity problem within a team of secretaries. There is an application for an extra secretary. Though by separately grouping all strong interfering tasks, and combine them to a new job a person with a disability, there is a business case for the employer, and a sustainable job created for a person with a disability who is now outside of the labour market.

Hospital C has an X-ray department where qualified radiographers carry out all work. By analysing the work on the X-ray department and redesign the work processes, it was possible to perform the work by one qualified radiographer instead of two radiographers. An unqualified worker with a disability can perform the preparatory work and finishing work. When staff turnover happens, this will be implemented: a positive business case.