Reg. no. SU

814-0915-12

Stockholm University Management Policy
Approved by the Vice-Chancellor 2013-02-14

Background

The Human Resources Office was commissioned by the Director of Administration to develop a management policy. The reason was that both the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Administration felt that there was a need for a management policy that explains and clarifies what limits, expectations and values should characterise managers at Stockholm University (SU).

The general aim of the management policy is to help realise the vision that the research and teaching at most of the University's departments and units should be nationally leading and internationally prominent.

A further aim is to increase transparency and security when it comes to the role of manager and employer, by defining the associated responsibilities, expectations and demands.

Finally, the management policy will specify the expected approach of a manager in order to create a common understanding of the values that characterise the managerial position.

The management policy has several goals:

- It should be used to attract, recruit, retain and develop managers;
- It should support and encourage a well-developed leadership;
- It should be the basis for continuous coordination between managers and their superiors;
- It should act as a recurring checklist for one's own leadership; and
- It should ensure a safe working environment for staff and students.

How was the management policy developed?

In order to create involvement in developing the policy and increase the legitimacy of the policy within the organisation, a process-oriented method was used. Interviews were conducted with managers in the organisation, material was used from more than 150 managers who have or are undergoing the management programme "Att vara chef" ("Being a manager"), and opinions, suggestions and input from managers, staff, union representatives and students were received and processed in various workshops.

Three different groups were created for the project: a project group, a reference group and an involvement group. The project group comprised two people: a unit manager and a management consultant from the Human Resources Office. The role of the project group was to lead the project, call and lead meetings with the other groups, draft proposals for the management policy as well as for the final policy.

The project group asked the faculty deans and disciplinary domain offices to suggest people to include in the reference and involvement groups. Upon receiving the suggestions, the project group contacted each person, and a reference group of 19 people and an involvement group of 35 people took shape.

The reference group comprised a cross-section of the organisation's managers and union representatives. The student union declined the opportunity to be part of this group. The group discussed and identified the necessary factors for successful leadership at SU and agreed upon proposals to the policy's content. The reference group met four times in the form of an inspirational lecture, workshops and talks.

The involvement group comprised a cross-section of the organisation's employees, managers and student representatives. More than 70 people were invited to the project and a total of 35 people participated. They took part in an inspirational seminar and a workshop where they identified the characteristics and behaviour needed for successful leadership at SU. The group met twice.

The project group also reviewed the University's policy documents relating to management and leadership in order to ensure consistency and connection between the policy documents and the management policy. Finally, an inventory was conducted of other Swedish and foreign universities' principles of leadership development and management policies.

Introduction

The education and research at most of our departments and units will be nationally leading and internationally prominent by 2015. This vision is the starting point for our work and requires professional management and leadership. The management policy defines the University's demands and expectations of our managers in order to ensure good management and leadership on every level.

The policy is aimed at everyone holding a formal managerial position at Stockholm University. The purpose of the policy is for everyone – both employees and managers at the University – to know what is expected of our managers. It specifies how managers are expected to act in their role as manager and leader, and how they should work together with their staff and other managers.

How should the management policy be used?

The policy specifies the framework and conditions that apply to the managerial position, and, most importantly, the abilities that all managers should strive to master. The policy should be seen as a basis for development as a manager and as personal inspiration in carrying out the managerial tasks.

In addition, it should serve as a basis for the recruitment of managers, and for continuous coordination between managers and their superiors.

It could also be used as a checklist for one's own leadership.

Important guiding principles for management

Stockholm University is a government authority and is subject to a complex framework of regulations[1]. The framework specifies the rules and guidelines that regulate how the University's managers should act towards their employer, their staff and their representatives, and the students.

The University's location in the capital makes it attractive to both staff and students, but a major city with many opportunities also means higher competition. Professional management and leadership will increase the University's appeal and may secure the acquisition of competence and an influx of students.

---

[1] The Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance, the Public Service Agreement and special assignments, the Administrative Procedure Act and the Government Agencies Ordinance, the Regulation of Internal Management and Control, labour laws, the Discrimination Act, the Work Environment Act, internal regulations and guidelines, rules of procedure, decision-making and delegation policy, strategic plan and plan of operations.

The University is a decentralised organisation in which the principle is that decisions should be made as close to the relevant manager as possible. There are a number of tasks and challenges that are common to all managers, regardless of their placement within the organisation.

All managers work for the government and are thus subject to political decision-making bodies. The most important task of any manager is to utilise and develop the University's operations and staff in order to achieve results related to the goals defined in the long-term plan and the yearly plan of operations. In other words, all managers should manage operations, the staff, and themselves.

Constant change and multifaceted tasks are also important aspects of a manager's regular work. An organisation that is constantly changing, with requirements for follow-ups, reports and high efficiency, places great demands on today's managers. Research projects are becoming larger, the number of financiers is growing, and the share of public funding is decreasing. Academic managers face the same demands as managers in other agencies, while they are also required to uphold the tradition of collegial decision-making.

Two lines of management under the same roof
There are two somewhat different parallel lines of management at the University. One line is the academic management within disciplinary domains, faculties, departments and centres. The other line is the administrative management in the University Administration and at the departments and centres.

Academic management positions within a disciplinary domain, faculty or department have a limited duration, where deputy vice-chancellors, deans and heads of department are in charge of their colleagues for a certain period of time. The deputy vice-chancellor, dean or head is then expected to return to being a colleague at the end of the term. It is usually a part-time position, which could mean that research and teaching are sacrificed for a managerial position that is rarely the driving force of an academic career. This makes these management positions different from management in other agencies.

The position as academic manager carries obligations to promote research and education of high quality, to protect the best interests of the disciplinary domain, faculty or department, while promoting more publications, a greater flow of students and higher international rankings. Another obligation is the increased market adaptation of the operations with financial reports, goal definitions and quality assessments, which means that the administrative responsibilities of academic managers have increased.

Academic managers are to manage an intellectual environment of independent researchers and teachers, who, by means of their research and teaching, are used to managing themselves. Innovative research and teaching can sometimes be difficult to manage by objectives. In a system managed by objectives and results, it is necessary to prioritise and set up strategic

goals. Therefore, academic managers should be capable of balancing freedom and management by objectives, allowing chaos and creating order. The conflict between freedom and management by objectives may be perceived as challenging, but this conflict is also the foundation of how the University develops and renews itself and its surroundings.

Another important aspect which academic managers must relate to is tradition and the expectation that decisions will have the support of various decision-making bodies within a disciplinary domain, faculty or department, where the staff have influence on the decision-making process, while the academic manager has sole operational responsibility.

The other line is administrative management at the University and its departments. Here, management positions are full-time and characterised by a long-term and permanent commitment to develop and maintain the best possible conditions for education and research by, for example, making the work easier for academic managers and staff.

The position as manager in the University Administration or as head of administration at a department carries obligations to eliminate obstacles, simplify and propose solutions, give support and advice, and make sure that the University meets the expectations placed on a government authority. Another obligation is to ensure legal certainty, transparency and efficient use of resources, and to create uniformity and coordination in the administrative work on all levels at the University.

Increased autonomy and new means of control for the University have led to administrative managers leading activities with a somewhat different focus than before. Less time and resources are spent on registering data and reporting information, in favour of more operational work and decision support in the form of analytical skills and advanced inquiries.

An important task for administrative managers is to provide the Senior Management Team with information about the quality and development of the University's operations. This enables the Senior Management Team to make the right strategic decisions for the best use of resources. Administrative managers need to be able to develop and lead working methods that focus on creative support of the academic processes and active managerial support, both for the University as a whole and for each department.

Managerial tasks
All managers at Stockholm University have three general tasks:

1. To manage and lead operations, the staff and themselves;
2. To represent and develop operations and the staff; and
3. To implement laws, agreements, policies and decisions.

Five abilities expected of a manager

A wide range of abilities is required to carry out the managerial tasks. The following five abilities have been identified as the most essential for managers at Stockholm University: Managers should see the big picture, be strategic, be brave, be responsive and create involvement.

Our managers are expected to strive to master these abilities, which should be seen as a basis for development, and as personal inspiration in carrying out the managerial tasks. How much of each individual ability a manager needs to master depends on the position and placement within the organisation. Furthermore, the actual conditions are rarely beneficial to developing and mastering the abilities. The abilities should be seen as an ideal to strive for, regardless of position, organisational placement or current conditions.

Fem förmågor

Att vara strategisk

Att vara modig

Att ha helhetssyn

Att vara lyhörd

Att skapa engagemang
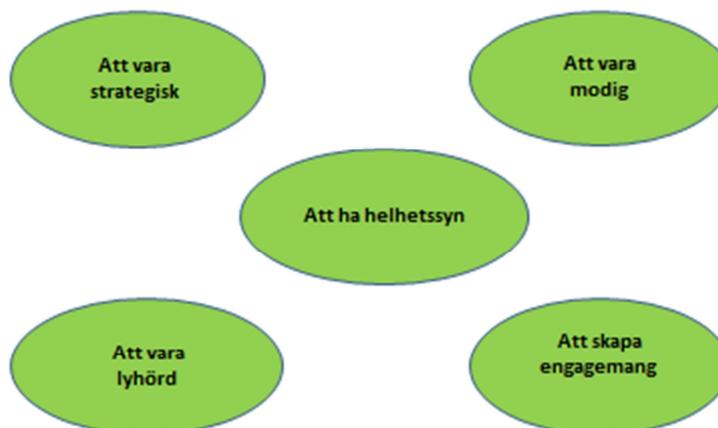
To see the big picture means that the manager:

- Communicates and manages operations in line with the University's vision and goals
- Looks after the organisation's best interests
- Strives to make internal processes and methods effective while assuring their quality
- Implements policy documents and policies
- Ensures that decisions are characterised by legal certainty
- Ensures the operations' financial management
- Ensures a good and equal working environment

To be strategic means that the manager:

- Has a long-term operational perspective
- Is focused on results
- Attracts, develops and retains expertise
- Is able to challenge and think outside the box
- Exercises competitive intelligence

To be brave means that the manager:

- Acts swiftly and respectfully to resolve conflicts
- Is able to make uncomfortable decisions
- Gives and takes (uncomfortable) feedback
- Delegates tasks and mandates, as well as the authority to carry them out
- Creates transparency and clearly defined roles

To be responsive means that the manager:

- Listens to and understands other people
- Is present and available
- Actively seeks out other people's ideas and points of view
- Is familiar with all staff, their expertise and their differences
- Is able to reflect upon his/her own role and needs

To create involvement means that the manager:

- Is involved with both the task and the staff
- Respects, supports and acknowledges the staff
- Creates conditions for cohesion among the staff
- Sees the staff's potential and helps create conditions beneficial to their development

- Creates a positive, open-minded work climate
- Finds forms of individual involvement and development