



*Configura Sverige AB is an IT company and a leading provider of sales configuration software. The organisation employs 40 people (30 men, 10 women), with an average age of just under 30. A new member of staff is taken on every month. More than 95% have a university education. The company carries out in-house health promotion activities, but is not part of a supportive structure.*

### **About the company**

Using the unique Configura® system, the company helps businesses to increase revenue and profit margins by re-engineering their entire sales process. Since the company was set up in 1990, it has delivered the Configura software system to many market-leading companies throughout the world.

The company believes that a healthy, motivated workforce is vital to its success. The IT business is developing very rapidly and, in order to meet all the new challenges, it is extremely important that employees enjoy the best possible working environment. Employees are a valuable resource – without their expertise and commitment the company would not survive.

Configura promotes health and well-being by creating an open atmosphere where health issues can be discussed freely. Employees receive vocational training at the workplace and this helps them to develop their professional skills (good communication skills are particularly important).

The starting salary is lower here than in many other IT companies, but Configura's workers value a good working environment, security and friendship more than money. However, long-term employees at Configura are rewarded with a bonus system, paid according to length of service and the company's economic situation. A measure of the company's success in creating a good working environment is the fact that no one has left since it was set up ten years ago.

### **Involving employees in the planning and decision making process**

Owners and employees work together closely on day-to-day issues. Suggestions for improvement are welcomed and responded to quickly. Employees are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own work and to continuously update their skills. Emphasis is placed on good communication both within the company and with customers. Individual employees need to take an active interest in the business process in order to provide a high quality service to customers and to maintain the company's strong market position.



**Configura Sverige AB**  
Johan Lyreborn, Managing Director  
Södra Stångatan 1  
Box 306  
SE - 581 02 Linköping  
Phone: +46 13 25 07 50  
E-mail:  
johan.lyreborn@configura.com

### ***Balancing the demands of the job with employees' needs***

Work can be tailored according to an individual's family situation - this includes flexitime and working from home. Overtime has been abolished. However, IT is a fast-moving business and employees need to stay in close contact with the workplace to keep pace with developments and to update personal skills – even during parental leave.

### ***Providing a good working environment***

Promoting health at work, creating a good working environment, improving fitness and encouraging good eating habits are high on Configura's list of priorities. Configura is not an hierarchical organisation and the decision-making process is informal. Employees are also encouraged to report problems to management so that solutions can be found quickly. Company training activities are run every two weeks, providing an opportunity for sharing expertise and experiences and to help staff members to understand one another's work. Employees say that this process has reduced stress.

An open-plan office invites social interaction. Favourite music played through headphones makes concentrating on difficult tasks easier. The company closes twice a year

for planning and recreational purposes. The staff spend a great deal of their spare time together e.g. at the work film club. Staff often watch sporting events together and the company is one of the sponsors of a local ice-hockey team. Configura also organises parties for employees and their families to encourage social contact.

Three times a week management and staff start the day with an eastern learning programme called "Inner Power". Staff report being able to deal with the pressures of work better on the days when these sessions take place. They also report catching fewer colds now.

### ***Access to health and safety service providers***

The company offers a comprehensive insurance scheme for all its employees. In the event of illness, they and their families have access to a doctor round the clock.

### ***Health and lifestyle issues***

Health and lifestyle matters are discussed regularly at work. The management believes, for instance, that eating habits and health have a major effect on productivity and quality. Fresh fruit is always served at the workplace. Alcohol abuse has never been a problem.

### ***Specific welfare related activities***

There has never been a case of long-term sick leave within the company. Configura implements a preventive policy, trying to prevent ill health by promoting exercise and a healthy diet. Configura also looks after the future by providing staff with additional pension benefits that come into effect from the age of 25.

### ***Business results***

Configura does not have any statistics to prove that a good working environment and good health pay off in financial terms, but the managing director is convinced that these are an absolute necessity for creating a top-quality operation. He says that these factors promote profitability, productivity and result in more satisfied customers. Needless to say, sick leave and staff turnover are reduced.