



Jimmy Samuelsson
2nd Officer and Safety Officer on Silja Symphony.

ANDERS FAHLMAN

Valve that gave effect

Development A unique HR program has welded together TallinkSiljas onboard and land organizations.

When the management within TallinkSilja discovered that there was a gap in contacts between the land and onboard organizations, the company started an extensive HR-program which included all operational officers and management.

Senior Captain Ola Bengtsson, had in his annual performance appraisal with the officers, discovered that something was missing in relation to the contacts between the shipping company's onboard and land organizations.

Internally on board there seemed to be a lack of enthusiasm among the staff, and similar observations had been made by colleagues at Silja Symphony and Galaxy, which together form the Swedish Tallink Silja AB.

"Employee surveys also pointed to the need of staff to "be seen" in a clearer manner by the company says Ola Bengtsson.

Björn Ådén, HR Director in Tallink Silja AB, and others in the company management took the problems seriously and started in the autumn an HR venture that could be unique among Swedish shipping companies.

"Yes, we realized that if we took this opportunity, it was important that we included all the operational officers; from the 2nd Officer to the Captain and from the 2nd Engineer to Chief Engineer. I have not heard of any other shipping company having made an equally comprehensive HR measure in the past, says Björn Ådén.

After having researched the market, Tallink Silja AB chose consultant Annika Ylander's concept, which included, among other things, individual workshops for each of the 61 operating officers working on the two cruise ferries. The workshops were held during working hours and comprised four intensive

16 "Whatever your job, you must be at ease both at home and at work"

ANNIKA YLANDER, Consultant.

hours during which individual officers worked on their own professional and private life situations, facilitated by Annika Ylander's confidential guidance.

– Work and private life are strongly linked. Whatever your job, you must be at ease both at home and at work, otherwise you are not at ease anywhere, she says.

Within the framework of the individual workshops, the participants also started action plans and personal projects that prepared them for their annual performance appraisals. There was also the opportunity to provide anonymous comments that, together with Annika's personal reflections, then formed the basis for a thorough evaluation workshop for Management, Masters and Chiefs.

More open company climate

Björn Ådén believes that the HR-program has meant that cooperation and communication have improved and that the climate in the company today is more open and productive. In addition, management is now working on a joint action plan for the areas of improvement that have emerged during the talks with the officers.

Jimmy Samuelsson, 2nd Officer and Safety Officer at Silja Symphony, thinks the HR program has been positive.

– Yes, it has affected me on a personal level and this I can then benefit from in my profession. I think that all of us working onboard have felt good as a result of having access to the external valve that Annika has been. The workshops also provided the opportunity of making anonymous comments, because even a trifle can grow into a big problem if it is not taken care of. I believe that all organisations, not just in the shipping industry, would gain from efforts of this kind, says Jimmy Samuelsson.

ANDERS FAHLMAN