

## The Personnel Deed of the Year award goes to TeliaSonera Competence Pool

The Ilmarinen prize for the Personnel Deed of the Year for 2008 was awarded to TeliaSonera Competence Pool. The Finnish Association for Human Resource Management – HENRY ry and Ilmarinen Mutual Pension Insurance Company awarded the Prize for the ninth time.

HRM Partners has implemented job search training at the Competence Pool in co-operation with TeliaSonera.

### Competence Pool provides security at times of internal transition

The Competence Pool model that has received excellent feedback was adopted by TeliaSonera at the beginning of 2006 as a new, gentler approach to personnel restructuring.

In large corporations, personnel restructuring and recruitment needs can exist side by side in different parts of the organisation. There can be many openings despite personnel restructuring, says **Pekka Nurmiranta**, Director of the Competence Pool.

The Competence Pool is intended to be a springboard to internal or external redeployment. Of the approximately 900 individuals who have transferred to the Competence Pool, 250 have been permanently or temporarily redeployed within the company, Nurmiranta says.

### The process of entering the Competence Pool

When there is a need for restructuring, the co-determination process prescribed by law is set into motion. The position of the unit in question is determined as part of negotiations. If a specific post will come to an end, redeployment will be discussed instead of redundancy at the end of the co-determination process.

At the end of the negotiation process, employees of the unit will be technically employed by the Competence Pool. The former employment will be terminated and the employees' new task is to find redeployment. Employees will also be assigned new superiors, possibly Nurmiranta or one of three others. The task of the superior is to provide support and encouragement and discuss options with the job seeker. The discussions are a combination of career guidance and development discussions, mentoring and coaching.

### Internal pool of competent employees

When an employee finds redeployment and leaves the Competence Pool within three months, he or she receives a full support package from the employer. If finding redeployment takes longer than three months, the support package will start to be reduced.

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When there is a need for recruitment, there are two possible courses of action: a unit can advertise openings in the Competence Pool or an internal recruitment process can be initiated both throughout the company and within the Competence Pool. Induction for employees recruited in the Resource Pool is efficient as they already know the organisation. For the business areas, this saves both time and money and the Competence Pool has thus become a natural recruitment channel.

### Job search training helps find redeployment

Job search training is an essential element of the Competence Pool and participation in training is recommended. Training is implemented together with HRM Partners.

Nurmiranta believes that training is highly significant for finding redeployment either within the company or externally. Employees who participate in training have better job-seeking skills, as they have a clearer picture of the employment they want. Training motivates people to activate their own networks and encourages them to be proactive in seeking employment. In addition, training provides participants with future-orientation and faith in finding new solutions. "A key issue in training is inspiring people to find hidden employment opportunities," Nurmiranta says.

### Good feedback motivates

Feedback on the activities of the Competence Pool is collected on an ongoing basis from participants and business units. Feedback has been excellent. 90% of participants rate the operating model as "Good" or "Excellent".

"We have refined the model and learned to do things better. When feedback is good, we carry on with the activity," Nurmiranta says. Business units have also been content and they are committed to supporting the activity next year as well. In addition, the model has the support of labour unions.

According to Nurmiranta, success is based on service thinking. The Competence Pool is an internal service unit that aims to satisfy both business units and employees transferred to the Competence Pool.

Provision of individual and flexible service is also key. Based on positive experiences, Nurmiranta and his colleague **Monika Snellman** encourage other businesses to develop similar systems. The model would also be suitable for use at times of major change and transition.

"The Competence Pool is an internal transition security unit to calm employee moods at times of uncertainty." Having a good team is essential for successful operations. "We want this model to have a good reputation and to provide a high standard of services both for our company and through co-operation with our partners," Nurmiranta and Snellman say. "The Change Model by John Kotter is valid here as well: achieving initial successes is important," they add.

- Author Kyllikki Eskelinen

The article was published in issue 3/2008 of the Finnish customer magazine Muutosviesti of HRM Partners Ltd. Further information on HRM Partners Ltd: [www.hrmpartners.fi](http://www.hrmpartners.fi) and on TeliaSonera: [www.teliasonera.com](http://www.teliasonera.com)



Pekka Nurmiranta and Monika Snellman