



The Stora Enso Business Case for Health

With 46,000 employees in 40 countries, paper, packaging and forest products company Stora Enso provides a classic case study of the benefits that a healthy corporate culture can bring to a business.

Following the formation of *Stora Enso* when two large forest products companies – the *Enso Group* and *Stora Kopparberg* – merged in 1999, considerable work went into developing a culture based on five core values – Customer Focus, Performance, Responsibility (including corporate social commitment), Emphasis on People and Focus on the Future. The company regards these as fundamental to its success.

Monitoring mechanisms enable it to assess how well these values are embedded. These include regular value and attitude surveys among senior staff – which help to identify gaps between individual values and perceived organisational values. Comprehensive satisfaction surveys are carried out among employees to assess working atmosphere, management practices and culture. Promotion of the corporate values is included in training programmes, especially those that prepare managers for senior positions.

Stora Enso believes that, in the changing world of work, emphasis on people and promotion of employee well-being is the best possible avenue to the longer-term sustainability and enhanced shareholder value of a company. Its satisfaction surveys, when correlated with business performance, have convinced the company of the link between a healthy corporate culture, employee performance and financial success. Further research is planned to clarify the connection.

The health of an organisation has traditionally been measured by its profitability. The health of employees is assessed by a variety of factors, including staff turnover, accident and sickness rates etc. *Stora Enso* is in no doubt that investment in the latter has a direct impact on the former, the “hard” financial data.

The attitude and satisfaction surveys help monitor staff well-being, with the identification of trends considered to be more important than point-in-time data. The surveys contribute to the setting of targets for reductions in sickness absence and accidents. The company is also establishing concrete, measurable and achievable targets in performance culture, competence development and attracting and retaining talent.

Stora Enso believes that whatever is happening in the market place, valuing and motivating staff remains at the core of its business, including the attraction and retention of key employees. A positive corporate culture which places emphasis on open and trusting relationships and which values and seeks to enhance human performance, creates an environment in which difficult challenges can be faced with confidence, enabling all employees, staff and managers, to embrace change and move forward together. Investment in people is clearly therefore an investment in the business.