



Photo: Fredrik Sandström

World unique export Foundation based in Lidköping

Several companies have been greatly increased exports

When the ITM Worldwide Foundation in Lidköping. was formed five years ago was the founder did not imagine that it would get so much international attention that it received.

- It feels really cool, says Hasse Karlsson, founder and president.

From a bright and spacious room in the "scrapers" on Rorstrand area sits ITM Worldwide Foundation project-management and from here there is the whole world as its field.

ITM Worldwide Foundation recruits on behalf of the company and provides training concept for primarily young professionals between the ages of 25-35 years.

The focus is on small countries and small companies, where the domestic market is so small that you need to export to survive.

The project will run for six months and each trainee has a total of 14 days of training interspersed with work experience in an export business in 27 different countries.

Twice a year there is international seminars in Lidköping.

We have a network of experts who teach in different parts of the world. Course administration and marketing is done online from Lidköping. ITM Worldwide serves as the link between universities and companies who need academic staff, says Hasse Karlsson.

Andrea Johansson is the projectmanager and it is she who fixes the international seminars and manages the contacts on the social media and Alumni LinkedIn.

-There you can exchange experiences and also keep in touch with those who have completed the training, she said.

Education concept is unique in the world, then there is nothing like it anywhere else.

- We are not a purely training, no headhunting firms or advisory and consulting firms. We are a mix of everything and therefore it is difficult to copy, says Hasse Karlsson, as an explanation of the operation has been successful.

In Sweden, the provincial government and the companies that subsidize ITM Worldwide's educational, but in Europe it is each country's trade councils or finance ministries financiers.

They in turn are sure to training gives results in the form of increased exports, which the Foundation also has been able to show

In Slovenia, for example, 70 companies participated and here exports increased by 44 per cent a year after graduation. And in Estonia, exports have grown by one million euros per participating company.

Last year, the Foundation has received attention in several different mediums worldwide. Most recently in the Danish magazine *Mondag* morning, where the title is *Miracle in Lidköping*, and where it reads about how ITM Worldwide Foundation in the "small village" has succeeded as one of Sweden's biggest export successes.

The five best results of the Foundation's five-year export business, according to Hasse Karlsson:

The fact that we reached out to 27 countries and trained nearly 500 export managers in these countries

That we have been able to demonstrate that training leads to increased exports

That we are based in Lidköping and can operate a global business from a small town.

That we have created an international professional identity for export sales.

That we not only have trained export managers and entrepreneurs, but also has trained a person, Neil Parson, who is now ambassador to the United States for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Background to ITM Worldwide Foundation

ITM Worldwide Foundation started in 2008. but training concept has a much longer history than that.

1994 Hasse Karlsson, living in Stockholm, in contact with former business manager in Lidköping, Leif Eriksson. business manager spoke on the problem of recruiting graduates to small businesses and to attract them back to the city and nearby towns after graduation.

A post was created in the export of the Council directing and Hasse Karlsson, who then worked at the Export Council received the service.

2008 decided Export Council to no longer engage in education, but instead work with advice and consultancy. But the need for this form of education remained and Lidköpings municipality, Thun Bolagen and Export Kompetense AB (Hasse Karlsson's business) founding ITM Worldwide Foundation that year.

Having previously only have been able to work with national companies export opened now able to work in other countries. Hasse Karlsson is also president of the International Association of export trainers. (IATTO)

Export Foundation has recruited and trained trainees to most of Lidköpings exporting business.

70 percent of the Foundation's activities conducted in other countries.

Source: Nya Lidköpings Tidningen 2013-08-14