

Abstract

Göteborg University
School of Economics and Commercial Law
Department of Business Administration
P.O. Box 610
S-405 30 Göteborg
Sweden

Author: Carina Löfström
Language: Swedish with
summary in English
ISBN 91-628-5605-7
241 pages
Doctoral Thesis, 2003

When Sweden Post became a business enterprise About reforms and translation of ideas

This thesis deals with reforms of Sweden Post with a focus on the latest one: the transition of Sweden Post from a public utility to a business enterprise. This reform can be seen as one of many examples of the constant attempts at change on a national level, as well as within county and local authorities, during recent years. In Sweden the reformers have, since the end of the '70's, time and again, initiated new ways of organising and managing the public sector. The main purpose being to create a more productive, effective and creative organisation where ideas concerning the market and commercial companies have been the prime example.

Through studying the development within Sweden Post as translation between different places new aspects of reform processes are described. There appeared to be yet another answer as to why management time-and-again initiates reforms. In the case of Sweden Post it seemed that this depended on two things. First, it had developed into a habit. Reforms had become the "natural way" to organise activities. Secondly, management seemed to have a difficulty in seeing what "really" happened and therefore initiated new activities. The problem for the management, as in other places within Sweden Post, was that habits were taken for granted.

In comparison with previous research within the Scandinavian public sector, the study to a greater extent treat how ideas are translated over time within the organisation and between different places. The study shows that translation of ideas takes place in various ways in different places, depending on the habits that have been established and which conditions are understood.

Key words: reform, idea, place, translation, change, habit, institution, commercialisation, public sector