REDDAL

Corporate culture and learnings from Nordic companies

Reddal Insights — 4 February 2021
Per Stenius, Naeun Park, Kati Raassina

In this interview with Forbes Korea, Reddal Senior Client Director Dr. Per Stenius, shares four key enablers of cultivating a work culture based on Nordic values, drawing implications for Korean businesses and government organizations.

This article originally appeared in Forbes Korea magazine, print issue 2/2021, and is also available online (https://jmagazine.joins.com/forbes/view/332775).

More and more companies are realizing the increasing importance of building a healthy work culture for sustainable future success. In many ways, Nordic countries are to some extent front runners in how to institutionalize good habits into their daily work. In this interview we highlight such characteristics—that include collaboration, flat organization, participation, and gender equality—and show how these are driving forces behind the formation of a mutually beneficial business environment.

As a case in point, the culture of “talkoot” (Finnish word for working together for the common good) promotes collaboration and sense of community. Finland has overcome the fall of Nokia through collaboration, not competition. Finland’s transformation into a global startup hub was supported by Nokia itself—which offered a part of its tech portfolio to startups. But Nokia was not alone—a whole ecosystem and community grew up around startups. Consider also the importance of participation, especially during the pandemic. As an example of this, Reddal has put much effort into building a psychological safety net to promote its employees to speak out and voice their opinions. The employees can point out existing problems without being worried about negative consequences of bringing such topics into the light. Likewise, flat organization and gender equality have positive effects on the workers and the work culture, laying the foundation of organizational performance.

The Nordic culture provides several features that Korean businesses and government

organizations should consider implementing in their work culture. As demonstrated by cases from Sweden, Finland, and other Nordic countries, the characteristics discussed in this article can pave the road towards better economic growth and well-being.