

Interview with Crystal Welin

Crystal is one of our course participants in our 1-year program "Certified Sustainability Manager"



Hi Crystal!

Would you like to start by telling us a little bit about yourself?

Gladly! I moved to Sweden from the UK in 2005 (time flies!). I live just outside of Kivik, a village in the area of Österlen in the South East of Sweden together with my family. Weekends consist mostly of making the most of our time together with family and friends as well as lots of time outside in the beautiful area we live in. If I'm honest, there isn't much time over for hobbies! 😊 However, my interests are history, films in foreign languages, gardening, history and of course, sustainability on a personal level.

What does your work-background look like?

For the last two years I've been working as the Head of Sustainability (Hållbarhetsansvarig) at Sparbanken Syd, a small savings bank in Southern Sweden. I started my journey with Sparbanken Syd in 2008 as a cashier. The following seven years as a customer advisor (Privatrådgivare) and then as a Compliance Officer in 2017, which is where I would say that my interest in- and sustainability journey started. I wouldn't say that I intended to work with sustainability, it's been more of a journey and an area which has grown on me as I've become to understand the situation, challenges and possibilities associated with our ways of living and doing business.

Why did you choose to enroll in our Certified Sustainability Manager program?

I met Eva Vati (CEO & Founder of VATI of Sweden) purely by chance through another colleague of mine. I'd been after a course/program which is focused on learning by doing where I can apply my knowledge to a range of different branches. Furthermore, helping me gain new skills and perspectives in my current role. But also content which is focused on how to help companies, partners and stakeholders in the near future with and coming sustainability regulations, initiatives, standards and trends. For me personally, I want to gain an in-depth knowledge of how we achieve sustainability on every level within a business, which I think is hard to achieve on a course/program of one or two days. I also like the fact that Vati of Sweden is a leading example in what they do in so many ways.

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What do you think of the program this far?

Incredibly insightful! The learning platform is logical and built up on small blocks of learning, which for me works well and fits in my life. So far, the course has helped me access a wide range information out there which I had no idea existed. VATI of Sweden has an amazing ability to communicate and package sustainability knowledge and skills in a way which makes it easy to understand and apply out in the workplace.

What do you hope your gains and outcomes from the program will be?

Well, I'd like to think I will be somewhat wiser! Once completing the program, I hope to have gained a much better and in-depth understanding of the necessary transformation that companies of all types and sizes need to undertake to be viable for years to come.

There are several hundred different reporting standards and initiatives out there which I think create confusion and fear that integrating sustainability is hard to achieve. On the contrary, sustainability IS the future business strategi. I'm convinced that the program will provide me with all of the tools and knowledge I need to help make that transformation happen.

What are you looking forward to after you have finished the program?

Applying my knowledge and reflecting on what I learned and all the people I've met along the way. Celebrating a year well worth spent!

Which are your recommendations to others who are thinking about enrolling in the program?

If you're considering enrolling don't hesitate. The program suits people with all levels of experience, regardless if you work with sustainability today. Personally, I chose this program as an investment in me and my time because I'm really passionate about Sustainability. If you are ready to enroll I would suggest you start to think about the companies you would like to test your knowledge with. Bare in mind they also need to prepare and plan ahead. As with anything, it's all about planning, set aside the time you need.

Would you recommend the program to others?

Yes, don't hesitate. You won't regret it!

What are your dreams for the future?

On a personal level, life is generally quite hectic! So just to maintain a perspective and gratitude for everyone and everything around me to be honest. I'd love to see our three children become as enthusiastic and interested in solving the climate crises and social challenges we all face. On the other hand, would it be great if they didn't have to. Work wise, again, very much here and now. Looking forward to applying my knew knowledge on an ongoing basis and seeing which doors open and possibilities present themselves.

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