



Personal profile IKEA of Sweden

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Emelie Knoester, Range Development Manager at IKEA of Sweden

MY BACKGROUND

I was born in 1976 in Kyrkhult, Sweden. I grew up in a small-town family business, learning a few basic business tricks from my father already at the age of 9! I've worked in the textile/fashion area with H&M and, started at IKEA from 2009. Now I have a lot of large company experience to add to what I learned earlier in life.

WHAT I DO AT IKEA

Leading and co-operating to come up with creative solutions and methods for developing our range. I work alongside a range development team and other range managers in home furnishing business areas. Together, we create direction (colour, look), tools and methods, as well as develop product and range development processes.

WHAT INSPIRES ME

I'm curious about people, culture and trends – what's happening in the world and why. I'm inspired when we find ways to do things differently, and when those challenges become a benefit for so many people by raising their standard of living. I'm passionate about improving the situation of women. I went to India and experienced the development of the "Made by People" rug project. We developed new, innovative machines adapted to women could operate them. This was a pivotal moment for their whole community – a lifetime's inspiration for me.

MY THOUGHTS ON DEMOCRATIC DESIGN

Democratic Design* is our unique way of developing products. It guides us in coming closer to our commitment of developing products that are truly better. When we've failed to deliver on all five dimensions of Democratic Design, the result is that customers don't like the product (form), it doesn't live up to our quality standards (quality), it's too expensive (price), customers don't trust that it's produced responsibly (sustainability), or it doesn't work as intended (function).

WHY I LOVE WORKING AT IKEA

Our vision, "to create a better everyday life for the many people", is meaningful and not just about another product to market. Everything we do should be better and contribute to a better everyday life for many people. The ability we have to make the world better through better material choices, better products and better solutions is special to me.

A FAVOURITE IKEA PROJECT

We're working now on a new way to plan and communicate our range. It tells the world what we are doing and why, so we don't just launch products, but also the ideas, knowledge, materials and techniques behind them. We're changing the starting point for range development from very style driven to more customer need- and story-driven. We've come together in our range development and become stronger.

HOW IKEA CAN STAY INNOVATIVE

Continue being curious, brave and humble. Curious in really trying to understand new needs in the changing world, about how people live and their expectations from IKEA. Brave and humble in understanding, learning and partnering with interesting people.

* Democratic Design is the IKEA approach of always considering form, function, quality, sustainability, and low price in order to make better everyday products for more people.