



## Personal profile IKEA of Sweden

# “The most inspiring thing about Democratic Design is how we take on the challenge of making the impossible possible.”

Henrik Gunnerling, Purchasing Development Manager at IKEA of Sweden

### MY BACKGROUND

I was born near Jönköping, Sweden, in 1977 and was surrounded by entrepreneurs from the start through my early involvement in my father and uncle's family business. In school I studied industrial engineering and management, and have since then focused on driving improvements in different business contexts – from commercial and market strategies to operations. During the last few years, I've been focusing a lot on purchasing, manufacturing, supplier development and product development.

### WHAT I DO AT IKEA

I'm responsible for the purchasing of our home furnishing products across different materials and categories: from solid wood and flatline to metal, plastics, textiles, sofas and mattresses. Together with my team we develop sourcing plans for all these categories and execute those plans in co-operation with our suppliers.

### WHAT INSPIRES ME

I always strive to find ways to make things work better. I'm also very curious about people...getting to know new people, learning things from others and seeing things from a different angle. I'm inspired by contributing to a larger goal, like the IKEA vision of creating a better everyday life for the many people. I also get inspiration through learning how others have succeeded in making great improvements.

### MY THOUGHTS ON DEMOCRATIC DESIGN

To me, the most inspiring thing about Democratic Design\* is how we take on the challenge of making the impossible possible. It's about how we create beautiful, functional, high quality and sustainable products at a fantastic price. Just the mind-set of not compromising on any of these five dimensions! I think the STUVA loft bed is a great example of Democratic Design, created by using the competence throughout the supply chain.

### WHY I LOVE WORKING AT IKEA

I love the possibility of making a difference! At IKEA, I'm given room for my entrepreneurship and for trying out new things, as well as being in a culture where we want to do something good (e.g., when it comes to sustainability). Our size gives us the possibility to influence and make a positive contribution to the planet.

### A FAVOURITE IKEA PROJECT

Working for better purchasing! In order to gear ourselves up for the future and capture business development opportunities while at the same time improving speed/responsiveness, bureaucracy and simplicity, we have changed how we work, lead, and organise within IKEA Purchasing. The intention is to bring our suppliers closer to our customers and to mobilise the full supply chain in making IKEA better. I fundamentally believe that this gives us better preconditions to make the IKEA vision reality!

### HOW IKEA CAN STAY INNOVATIVE

By daring to try out new things, and by learning from the mistakes that will (surely) happen.

### MY BIGGEST MISTAKE

There are many...most probably those cases where I/we have been too introverted and failed to listen, learn, try or execute ideas that had great potential.

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