

# UNIFYING ATTRIBUTES

What's it like to work within Volvo Car Group? Based on the company's collective experiences HR has selected four characteristics that will be used to market the company as an employer and help build an internal identity.

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**T**hese four characteristics or attributes all come from the employees themselves. Everyone who responded to the Global People Survey or participated in the Organisational Health Survey provided input that is being used to shape the image of Volvo Cars as an employer.

**IN ORDER TO GAIN** an outside perspective, focus groups were held with students and professionals. Additional input came from responses to surveys conducted by Universum, the company behind the list of the world's most attractive employers.

"We also had focus groups of employees to ensure that the attributes really do reflect reality," says Sara Axling, HR, who is responsible for Employer Branding.

The attributes address the question of what distinguishes Volvo Cars as an employer, and they will be used to position the company on the job market.

"In order to reach our long-term goals we need to retain the employees already working here, but we also need to bring on board even greater numbers of talented people to help create the next generation of intelligent and sustainable luxury cars."

**THE ATTRIBUTES WILL** be conveyed both internally and externally, not least at job fairs, in the social media and on the company's careers website.

"The message goes hand in hand with the brand. It's exciting that we have a clear description of what makes us unique as an employer. Now it's up to us to pass on the message to the rest of the world," says Sara Axling. ●



**Three voices on working at Volvo >>**

## **1. DYNAMIC AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT**

Working at Volvo Cars means being part of a team of fantastic people. Many employees say that their colleagues and the atmosphere at work are the main reasons why they want to work and continue working at Volvo Cars.

## **2. INNOVATIVE AND ATTRACTIVE PRODUCTS**

Being involved in creating the next generation of intelligent and sustainable luxury cars and having a passion for our cars unites many employees and attracts people from outside.

## **3. INTERNATIONAL**

Working at Volvo Cars means working for a global employer in an international setting. Swedish roots, Chinese owner, an international board and management team and employees from all over the world contribute to a dynamic atmosphere.

## **4. DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER**

The possibility of training and development is something that employees highlight as an advantage of working at Volvo Cars. Here it is possible to learn and develop at work, through various development programmes and by branching out into new specialist areas and roles. The sheer width of career opportunities available at Volvo Cars is something that many employees underscore.

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Right now this is the perfect job for me

*Freddy Strobbe*

*Freddy Strobbe has two beauties at home, an XC60 and an 850, but he cycles every day to work at the plant – a distance of about 45 kilometres each way.*



## Freddy likes the variation

The motivation comes from his colleagues, the job and, not least, the products.

“I’m really proud of our cars, I always have been.”

**F**reddy Strobbe has worked at Volvo Car Ghent for 30 years. “When I started the cars were solid, robust and safe. Now they have good design, great driveability and are still safe.”

He works with improving processes and working methods in Trim & Final. Previously he had several different jobs in the plant’s quality organisation, from analysis to inspection. He has also worked as team leader and assistant to the production supervisor.

“Right now this is the perfect job for me. This is how I maintain my level of motivation, it’s more fun if you don’t work too long at the same task.”

Freddy Strobbe emphasises the strength of teamwork. Working together, it is possible to solve most problems.

“**YOU HAVE TO USE** the skills of the operators. In order to come up with a good solution you have to be prepared to listen, to discuss. That’s how you learn new things and grow, both as an individual and as a team.”

When Freddy Strobbe started working at the Ghent plant in 1982, assembling doors to the 240 among his other tasks, he thought he would stay at the company for a few months. Now he would not consider working for any other company.

“**THE JOB’S REALLY INTERESTING**, every day’s a new day that brings with it new challenges. One thing leads to another. I’ve also worked a whole lot in Gothenburg, I was involved in the production launch of the S40, V50, C30 and XC60.” ●



# Jimmy enjoys his work

Jimmy Sjöo started as an 18-year old, fitting front wings to the Volvo Amazon in the Torslanda plant.

Now he is 67 years old and works as an SQM, Supplier Quality Manager, with a strong focus on China.

**JIMMY SJÖÖ HAS** just returned home when Agenda Magazine meets him at Purchasing in Gothenburg. And he will be returning to China the following week to visit suppliers.

"I'm fine with travelling as part of the job now. It's worse having to do it when you're old," he says with a laugh.

Jimmy Sjöo looks back on a long and varied working life with the company. Among much else, he has worked as department manager at the prototype workshop and as pre-production engineer at Manufacturing Engineering. Now he has been asked to stay on as SQM for another year.

"I accepted without hesitation. I've always liked my job. One of my tasks is to coach new SQMs or

# Jing is part of a team

"I enjoy every single day."

Jing Fu, chassis engineer, has worked at Volvo Car China in Shanghai for 18 months.

**THIS IS HER** first job after graduating from university in Shanghai. From the very beginning her aim was to work for an international company with a strong brand image – and Volvo Cars fitted the bill perfectly.

"The environment here is dynamic and supportive. Many people here work really hard, and at the same time it's really cool the way the leadership shares responsibility and the benefit of its experience," says Jing Fu.

**IT'S A BIT** like a large family, one that also includes colleagues from Sweden. Everyone works together toward a common goal.

Jing Fu's specialist area is brakes in the field of active safety and chassis. She is part of a small team totalling three people. They work closely together and learn a lot from one another.



*Jimmy Sjöo started working at Volvo in 1964. Back then the Torslanda plant built the Amazon (Volvo 121), P1800 and Duett.*

purchasing engineers in China. It's fun to pass on one's knowhow," he says.

He is an excellent example of the way know-how is passed on and fine-honed in the company. From in-house training courses to further education during work-hours.

"I've always felt it's enjoyable to learn new things, to take on new challenges. Volvo has always been good in that respect. There have been opportunities and I've taken them."

**JIMMY SJÖÖ PARTICULARLY** emphasises teamwork, working together toward a shared goal, as a source of inspiration and enjoyment.

"You cannot succeed on your own, you have to work together. That's what delivers success – that the members of a good team both complement and support one another." ●



*R&D in Shanghai is a fast-growing organisation. That boosts the dynamics and makes work more enjoyable, says Jing Fu.*

Last autumn she visited Volvo Cars in Gothenburg to learn more about the job and about the company in general. It has also been very educational to work in the fast-growing China organisation.

"I've learned a whole lot on the job, I've gained a lot of new knowledge and learned how to be a professional in an organisation."

**WORKING WITH CARS** is enjoyable, and it's great fun to work for a well-known car maker. Having said that, she does feel the brand's image in China would benefit from being somewhat sharper.

"There are things to improve. In my father's generation Volvo is well-known as a luxury brand, but people of my generation often choose among the competition." ●

## GOT A SUCCESS STORY?

When was the last time you were part of a really good team effort? Why did it go so well? When are you proudest of our cars? What is it that makes it so exciting to work in the global environment that characterises Volvo Car Group? What did your Volvo journey look like? Send in your story to Agenda Magazine and Sara Axling, head of Employer Branding, agenda1@volvocars.com