



Vision and strategies for the Swedish Association of Occupational Therapists



Vision and strategies for the Swedish Association of Occupational Therapists, 2015. Revised 2016.

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INTRODUCTION

PROCESS

This comprehensive document covers strategies that point the way forward for the Swedish Association of Occupational therapists (the Association) in both the short and long term.

Lead by an analysis group and two consultants from Kairos Future, the Board of the Association has developed this policy document. The process has also involved dialogue with the chairpersons of branches who met on two occasions for in-depth discussions of the various parts of the policy proposed. The document has been subjected to due process and thereafter approved by the Association's Council in 2015.

APPROACH AND PREMISES

The analysis of the world around us that provides the basis for the new vision and strategies shows that a great deal points towards occupational therapists' professional practice being changed in the future. Digitization, e-health, increased differences in living standards between people, an increased proportion of older people and the facts that, nowadays, more and more occupational therapists are employed in sectors outside health care and that an increasing number of our employers are not in the public sector are examples of such changes. This opens up both new opportunities to promote the competence of occupational therapists, but, at the same time, some changes mean significant challenges that we must manage to meet.

In times of rapid change it is important to focus on long-term goals as well as day-to-day actions rather than on detailed multi-annual plans.

Hence we believe it is important to have a

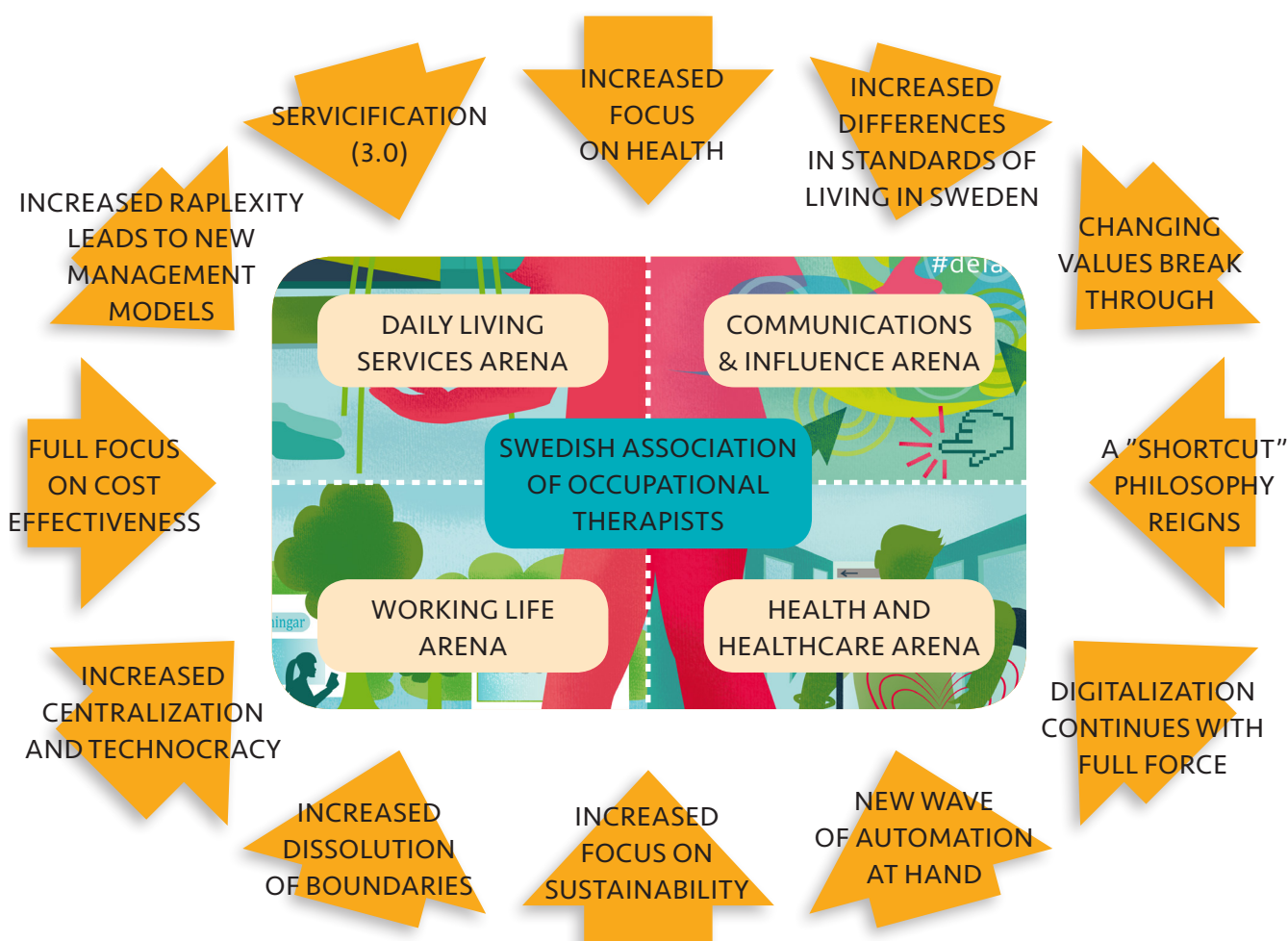
comprehensive guiding light that can help the Association through the probably turbulent period ahead in the world around us. Thus, the starting point is that the vision, together with a handful of strategies, are to act as a beacon in both day-to-day and more long-term decisions. The strategies are divided into two key strategies and three catalytic ones.

Supplementing this, there are seven clear approaches concerning our everyday lives and an idea of what should permeate our organization so that we can meet both external and internal requirements whilst, at the same time, realizing our vision by means of the strategies.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORLD

The work leading to the vision and strategies has been characterized by thorough analysis and extensive discussions of where the world around us is heading. The insight which has emerged is that we see that many of the contexts in which occupational therapists act seem likely to face dramatic changes in the coming years, greatly affecting conditions for us as a union.

We have chosen to summarize developments around us below. These consist of twelve general societal trends that affect not only our own circumstances but also the entire future of Society. In addition, changes are taking place in four different "arenas" in which we currently play an active role.



VISION, STRATEGIES AND APPROACH

VISION

The vision is based on three distinct objectives: an occupational therapy perspective; development of the occupational therapy profession and working conditions and being a pro-active union.

- Knowledge-based occupational therapy is to be a recognized pathway towards an equitable and sustainable society. The world around is to see that occupational therapists, regardless of where they carry out their work, enable people's everyday lives to function.
- Occupational therapists are to have sustainable working lives with sound competence and positive salary developments.
- The Swedish Association of Occupational Therapists is powered by dedicated members and is the natural home for everyone who has an Occupational Therapy qualification and all Occupational Therapy students.

KEY STRATEGIES

Strategies are about showing the way. They are based on short descriptions of WHAT we have to do to succeed in realizing our vision. Two broad strategies are keys in this work – two key strategies:

- Show the value of occupational therapy in established and new arenas
 - For occupational therapists and occupational therapy to be given the recognition deserved, we must ensure that others understand, and value, our input in a different manner than at present. This is by no means a new insight, but it is even more important nowadays when we need to

create conditions for occupational therapists and occupational therapy to have an effect in new arenas and with new roles. We must all – always and in all contexts – show the value of occupational therapists' input in our surroundings. It is we who must take the responsibility for describing and conveying a positive image. No one else can do so! We must come out favorably from salary negotiations. And our expertise needs to be requested in the various arenas in which we can make great differences. Knowing what we can do is insufficient. We have to get others to understand and affirm it.

- Work towards zero tolerance of unhealthy working lives.
 - Currently, many of our members work in situations that are untenable in the long term. Increasing tempos, coupled with declining resources, often with leaders who do not see the benefits of occupational therapy, poses challenges for us. As a union it is a key issue that our members work in health-supporting contexts, with working conditions and salaries that are sustainable in the long term.

Vision, strategies and a day-to-day approach is summed up in the illustration in the centre spread.

Vision page 5

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Vision, strategies and day-to-day approach in a sharp and flexible organization

CATALYZING STRATEGIES page 8

TAKE COMMAND

INITIATE SOUND COLLABORATIONS AND INTERACTIONS

INCREASE CO-CREATION AMONG MEMBERS



Show value
of occupational
therapy in
established and
new arenas

KEY STRATEGIES
page 5

Work towards
zero tolerance
of unhealthy
working life

**APPROACH IN
DAY-TO-DAY LIFE** pages
8-9

GUIDE AND
COACH

DARE
TO EXPERIMENT

CLARITY
IN EVERYTHING
WE DO

SPUR EACH
OTHER

BE EDUCATORS

BE CURIOUS
AND RESPONSIVE

ACTIVE ADAPTED
COMMUNICATION

CATALYZING STRATEGIES

Catalyzing strategies are strategies which, in turn, boost other things, not least implementation of the two key strategies of the Association. In the Association we are to focus on three catalyzing strategies in the coming years:

Take command

It is crucial to our ability to succeed that our Association is permeated by a spirit of taking command in situations, large or small. We are to take command and highlight what is important to us: in coffee-break discussions, TV debates as well as in discussions with major policymakers. Wherever and whenever the opportunity arises, we are to highlight our competencies and, using creativity and innovative models, show the way towards tomorrow's solutions utilizing knowledge-based occupational therapy.

Initiate astute collaborations and interactions

The whole idea of trade unionism is based on the fundamental concept that we are strong together. We neither can, nor should, do everything on our own. But there is a risk that we, out of convenience choose old relationships without thinking about if there are others that can give greater benefits for us. By actively identifying which possible partners there are and deliberately choosing those we can ally ourselves with, we can ensure that $1 + 1 = 3$.

Increase co-creation among members

We are, and will continue to be, a member-based movement. Without committed members we lose energy and our fire fades. So it is extremely important to create real commitment among members. We must always understand that our Association is nothing other than ourselves and conduct dialogue about this. This will be achieved through involvement and co-creation.

APPROACH IN DAY-TO-DAY LIVES

Even though strategies are about what we should do, we also need something to adhere to on a daily basis, actions that create a common culture and reinforce our common mission towards significantly better conditions for occupational therapists and occupational therapy. Here, we call this our approach.

Dare to experiment

Sticking to the old solutions just does not work, neither in the role of occupational therapist nor as a professional organization. We must build an internal culture in which we see, and dare to capture, opportunities that occur in a changing world.

Clarity in everything we do

A joint mission requires that we, more or less, have a common view of what lies ahead. This requires us to be clear and succinct in whatever we do. It is also important that those around us understand what we want and what we put forward - no one ought to be able to doubt what the Swedish Association of Occupational Therapists is capable of and intends to accomplish.

Leadership and coaching

Showing the way, for others and each other, is natural in a member-based movement. This is also the case for us. We must continue to actively support and help one-another with common objectives and constantly have our strategies in mind.

Be educators

Just talking about things doesn't give rise to respect. A clear foundation, based on solid knowledge, provides a more resonant sounding board. So we are to make sure that we inform and educate those around us about matters related to the value of occupational therapy for individuals and Society.

Be curious and attentive

Being curious and attentive to where the world is heading will be critical to our ability to keep up with developments. This is often referred to as “business intelligence”. We must, therefore, all have an ear to the ground and tell each other what we notice.

Spur one-another

Challenge, inspire and encourage each other in everything we do. We are to continue to build a culture in which we pep one-another up and affirm one-another in daring to try new things.

Active, adapted communication

Involving and convincing others is crucial if we are to succeed. Communication is not about information – it’s about sharing between people. In our daily lives we have to train ourselves to interact, inwardly and outwardly, in smart and astute ways.

SHARP, FLEXIBLE ORGANISATION

To succeed with our strategies requires having an organization that provides stability whilst being sufficiently flexible to be easily able to adapt as and when necessary. As an organization, we also need to be really sharp to ensure that our resources are used in the best possible way.

ACTION 2016-2018

Detailed multi-annual plans will not work in the turbulent times we are living in. But that does not mean that we should not think through more concrete actions that need to be implemented if we are to succeed in achieving our vision.

We have, therefore, taken up five comprehensive areas we intend to focus on in the coming years.

COMPREHENSIVE FOCUS AREAS

In the coming years the Association needs to move its positions forward. Part of this concerns continuing to conduct and develop the fundamental activities we have today, so that they relate to our vision and strategies. The base of this is formed by major parts of the Association's activities. It includes the role of expert and investigator. It's also about conveying knowledge and information, opinion-forming, lobbying and marketing. Being the spider in the web: coordinating things and networking. At the base are representatives - for the members, the organization and the profession. Here too are the coaches and supporters as well as the administrators and those who keep things in order.

In addition, we are to work primarily with five focus areas:

- Developing a communications strategy
 - We should be perceived as a competent and sharp organization with a clear and positive brand image. In our communications, we are to embrace the approaches we have in our daily lives.
- Preparing basis for showing value
 - We are to produce facts and continue the development of national structures for doing so - facts that help all of us, from individual members to employees and elected representatives, to demonstrate the value of occupational therapy in a simple manner in various arenas and contexts in society. We should constantly consider any new context in which occupational therapy expertise can be used if we want to avoid the risk of stagnating and getting stuck in the "here and now".
- Develop a goal for how healthy workplaces ought to be
 - We must develop a clear goal of how we envisage healthy working lives for our members. We are to develop indicators that reflect health promoting workplaces and push forward work on making improvements at places of work.
- Create your own academy
 - We are to provide increased possibilities for learning and the development of competence. To this end we are to examine the prerequisites for creating your own academy for professional development as well as union-related matters, a "boot camp" in which we can effectively acquire new knowledge and develop competencies and skills.
- Develop and modernize the organizational structure
 - We are to ensure that our organization, centrally and locally, provides effective support in everything we do for members, elected or appointed representatives, and officials.



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