

Business professionals Malin Ringdahl Stein, Conor Foley and Kent Blom (left to right) take a break between lessons.

Samir Soudah



## MBA Executive Format: The perfect mix

EVERY FIVE WEEKS, the 40 men and women in the new two-year SSE MBA Executive Format spend five intensive days together in the Ruben room on Saltmätargatan. The part-time program is designed to enable managers and professionals to combine work and studies.

The setup is ideal for Kent Blom, a production manager at Atlas Copco with a master's degree in engineering. "With 16 weeks spread out over two years, the program suits me very well in my current professional situation," he says. "As a manager in operations you always battle daily issues and strategic targets in a hectic mix. In addition to the training provided, the SSE MBA offers a good opportunity to get away from the rush to reflect and discuss work issues with people who see things with different eyes."

A cornerstone of the program is MBA Live™, a concept in which real-life cases and actual problems from the participants' companies are analyzed and solved in class.

Karin Wiström, director SSE MBA, explains that SSE MBA Executive Format combines the best of the former full-time MBA and Executive MBAs in a single post-experience program with a general management focus. "It's a challenging and exclusive program, small enough to encourage personal networking on an international scale."

The premier group consists of ten nationalities. Thirty-two percent are women and 15 percent hold PhD degrees. The average age is 38 and the average amount of professional experience is 12 years. Participants work for companies such as Skanska, Ericsson, SEB and Samsung.

Malin Ringdahl Stein has a PhD in geochemis-

try and works as a sales manager at Raw Materials Group. She finds the program different from other university courses. "The global perspective is exactly what I've been looking for and so far, the courses are highly relevant for my work," she says. "The group has an interesting mix of people from all types of industries, which makes the discussions in class span a variety of issues."

Her fellow participant, Conor Foley, agrees. "So far the program is meeting my expectations for demanding, thought-provoking content at a high level," he says.

A native of Ireland, Foley works in Sweden as a business development manager at Tricorona Climate Partner. Given that his field of work relates to environmental issues, he is pleased with the attention given to sustainability issues in the program. This year, the program puts Corporate Responsibility and Sustainable Management issues at the top of the agenda in the first module. "I was impressed by the vision that this represents, showing students that sustainability issues are a core part of the fabric of doing business in today's world," says Foley.

JONAS REHNBERG

**THE SSE MBA EXECUTIVE FORMAT** is a General Management program taught exclusively in English. Up to 40 individuals are admitted once a year. The admission procedure includes interviews and standardized tests like GMAT and TOEFL. The commitment of a sponsor, such as the participant's employer, is required and the fee is 395,000 kronor before VAT. It is the only MBA program in Sweden that is officially ranked.

## Database provides clues to the financial past

**NASDAQ OMX HAS DONATED** its Findata database to SSE. Findata is the premier database covering Nordic stock markets and it includes stock prices, corporate actions and accounting data. Moreover, the database covers bonds, currencies, interest rates, derivatives and raw materials.

The database, which contains information from between 1979 and 2007, will be a valuable research tool as it covers relevant information on all the companies noted on the Stockholm Stock Exchange. Clas Bergström, who is in charge of the Department of Financial Economics at SSE, says the donation comes at a perfect time. "We will be using it for financial research purposes, but it has wider significance for us because we are about to build up a new national center for financial research," he says.

According to Paolo Sodini, associate professor of finance at SSE, there is a good reason why such historical data is of particular value in Sweden.

"Contrary to other countries like the US, Sweden has had no historical information about asset prices which is reliable and consistent over time. Some parameters, such as risk and profitability, can only be calculated with historical information," he says. "Internationally well-established facts and theories can now be tested in Sweden as well."

Sodini also points out that the Nasdaq OMX data will not only provide the means to study theories, but it will also provide policy guidance.

Getting the database free of charge is an additional bonus, because this kind of information usually costs a great deal to acquire. Work will now begin on what promises to be a mammoth task of extracting the actual data.

GEOFF MORTIMORE

*For more on the new national center for financial market research, see page 15.*