

This story, from the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Assessment centre Study Group Conference, held in Stellenbosch 12 – 14 March, is free for your use. For more information or pictures please contact [lynne@ofcourse.co.za](mailto:lynne@ofcourse.co.za) or phone Lynne Smit at 083 299 7383

---

Eva Bergvall took Assessment Centre and Development into the heart of her city when she started an Assessment and Development Centre for Gothenburg in 2003.

Bergvall has a degree in psychology from the University of Lund in Sweden, and is in South Africa for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Assessment Centre Study Group annual conference in Stellenbosch.

In her position as the head of the administration division for human resources and economy for the municipality of Gothenburg she undertook the challenge of building up an Assessment and Development Centre.

“You have to bear in mind that 10% of the population of Gothenburg are employed by the municipality, this includes teachers, health workers, architects, people from all types of professions, so it was clear that we had a chance to make a real contribution to the way in which the city is run, and to shine the spotlight on what we could achieve as a city with the Assessment and Development Centre, as well as to offer development and assessment to individuals.”

Bergvall sees the benefits of the Assessment and Development Centre as offering young people incentives to work for the city and to help in succession planning. Through the development angle they are able to grow leaders for the community, and to use the process in order to recruit the right people for the right job.

The process has been hugely successful with an approval rating by those who take part in the workshops of 4.02%, which is high considering that “some people are just resistant to being assessed”.

Bergvall explains that the political motivation to set up the centre was made because there was no systematic leadership development plan for the whole city, each organisation had its own programmes, selection criteria differed depending on which consultants were used, and the quality levels in the recruitment and development process were uneven.

Bergvall is impressed with what she has seen in the field of Assessment Centre methodology in South Africa, “there are so many people involved (in fact the Assessment Centre Study Group in South Africa is the second largest in the world), and by the high standard of professionalism, there is, Bergvall says, no assessment study group in Sweden.

Because of her experience in using this development and recruiting process in the government sphere Bergvall has visited Port Elizabeth which is twinned with Gothenburg to see if there are ways that Swedish support might be harnessed for setting up Assessment Centres in the Eastern Cape, her thinking on the possibilities is at an embryonic stage, but she thinks it is worth examining whether foreign support could be given to local municipalities in South Africa and whether Sweden could play a role in helping roll this out. Watch this space for developments.