

VICREVI COMMUNICATION

*Speech to International Business Guests
by the Director of SSE Executive Education
at a Reception in the Wasa Museum, Stockholm*

Honoured Guests. It's a great pleasure to welcome you "on board" this evening.

Until this occasion I don't suppose you knew that here in Sweden we had our own version of the Titanic – long before the other one too!

They taught us in school that the Wasa was a disaster. But if, like me, you're a positive thinker, you won't see it that way.

After all it's three hundred and fifty years old and we're just starting to make money out of it!

Talk about long lead times.

I like to think that what you see before you tonight is a fine example of two things - the durability of

Swedish construction – and the adaptability of our business models.

There's so much you can learn from this ship. Personally I can't look at it without thinking of those stormy waters every startup business venture has to face.

Let's not forget, the Wasa was a learning experience.

It was also a great project management case study – reconciling executive demands with functional realities.

The ship sank because it was too tall in relation to its draught. Why did they do it that way? Didn't the builders know their job?

The answer is, yes they did. But that was the way the king wanted it. And the shipbuilders didn't feel like arguing.

As a project it had everything you could want.

Vision? To be the biggest and the best. Venture capital? No problem. Cash flow? Unlimited credit

facilities. Human resources? The finest on the labor market. Management? Now that's where vision got in the way.

Like the ship, management was top heavy.

The message of the *Wasa* is all about three things: balance, awareness and listening. Personally I'm glad we all learned that three hundred and fifty years ago.

The famous historian AJP Taylor once said "the lesson of history is that nobody learns from history".

Well, my answer is this – they didn't have Executive Education around that's why!

I'd like to round off with the immortal words of film mogul Samuel Goldwyn when he gave his opinion of a particular film script – "None of this is any good except the ending!"

Yes, as you may have heard the new Financial Times ranking of executive education services has

now moved SSE Executive Education up to ninth in Europe and nineteenth in the world.

We're still not where we want to be. But we're moving fast in the right direction and we'll be there soon.

Thank you everyone for being here tonight. Now let's have a great evening together in these wonderful and unique surroundings.
