

Working for a telecom company turned out well despite my electrical sensitivities



Tommy Nordbrandt is an engineer who works for a large telecom firm in Sweden. When he became electrically sensitive (EHS) the bosses accommodated his disability so he could continue working.

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“When I became electrically sensitive in 1995 my boss was understanding and in 1999 they modified my office to lower the radiation”, says Tommy Nordbrandt who was able to continue working full time without ever having to go on disability.

Not all workplaces help out when a worker becomes electrically sensitive.

“But it has worked very well for me here,” he reports. “Sure there have been ups and downs. There have been times when the electrical modifications didn’t work, but eventually it turned out well.”

Tommy Nordbrandt is particularly sensitive to the radiation from DECT cordless phones. For a time he had trouble in his office without knowing why. It took a few months to solve the puzzle. It turned out the room on the floor above his office had a new tenant. When it was vacated by the previous tenant they removed the metal floor. It was of the kind used in data centers and had worked as EMF shielding without anyone knowing about it, but when it was gone radiation came down into Tommy’s office from above.

When they figured out what had happened, they were able to mitigate the problem so Tommy felt well in his office again.

Tommy Nordbrandt is a telecom engineer. He started his education at the Teleskolan in the city of Kalmar. He has worked for Telia ever since.

“I have been lucky with both bosses and colleagues. Regarding my electrical sensitivities I have been met with respect.”

He laughs when asked if he has ever been called a “tin foil hat.” “No, no, the colleagues have always been nice,” he replies.

Did he succeed raising awareness about the health risks from electromagnetic fields?

“Unfortunately, the interest has been poor,” he replies. “For a time the debate was more lively about the health risks and a lot of colleagues used hands free for their mobile phone. Unfortunately, the interest has waned and few are now concerned,” he explains.

He has not had any success informing the colleagues about the health risks from Telia’s own products.

“The colleagues seem to reason that if ‘nobody died’ then they can ignore the health warnings and use what is the most simple and convenient,” he says.

He explains that he didn’t see it practical to “propagandize” at the workplace. That would just label him as a crank and would not be productive for good relations.

At the same time it does not seem that the firm's leadership is concerned about any negative public image from employing an electrically sensitive engineer – a person who apparently is sickened by the company's tech products.

Tommy Nordbrandt points out that he works on landline telephone systems and not the wireless kind. At the same time he fully understands that the trend is towards more wireless.

“Landline phone service will be discontinued as there won't be enough customers left.”

“According to what I hear, then the last remnants of the landline system will be gone about 2021-2025. This includes the large cities.”

Telia's big seller was the AXE phone switch, which Tommy worked on from its very start with tests of new installations. He later worked as a telecom engineer supporting the landline switches and their networks. His job is to make sure these large systems work and troubleshoot problems (he doesn't support individual home customers).

To support intricate functions of phone systems means to be on call for emergencies, which this journalist experienced when setting up the interview. Interview by phone was not easy, as there were always something happening that Tommy had to leave to attend to, even late in the evening.

It is obvious that Tommy Nordbrandt is a faithful and appreciated specialist.

“The modification of my office allowed me to continue working. Fortunately my electrical sensitivities have also improved over the years,” he says.

He has also been a faithful supporter of the Swedish EHS patient organization. Right now he is the secretary for the central organization and president of both the local and county branches.

He lives in Umeå, where he and his wife Yvonne have an apartment on the 8th floor in Ålidhöjd in Umeå.

He has modified his home to be low radiation and sleeps under a shielding canopy.

One has to be mindful here when opening a window or the door to the balcony so none of the family members Kickan, Coco, Kirre or Chico fly out. They are four happy, singing small parrots, who are part of the family. They are often taken along to the family vacation home in the country.

But they can't come along when the couple travels abroad, even though the birds originally came from Latin America. Tommy and Yvonne's big interest is travel.



Travel is a major interest. Here Tommy Nordbrandt is in Lyon France.

“We travel to a far destination at least once a year, besides trips within Europe. We do about seven or eight trips a year,” reports Tommy. This year the couple went to Kap Verde, the year before it was Mozambique, and in 2015 they went to Australia.

Source

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