



THE DANISH JOB INTERVIEW

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW - HOW TO PREPARE

Since Danish recruiters will ask about your personal competences, results, career ambitions, personality and motivation, it is your primary preparation to go through your CV and application and relate it to the job you are interviewed for.

In your application, you have also matched the company's wishes - be make sure to go through it again in order to have your s job interview pitch perfected.

Here is a guide for the optimal preparation:

PREPARE YOUR ANSWERS TO THE TOP 5 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What is your greatest strength?
3. What is your greatest challenges?
4. Why should we hire you?
5. Describe a difficult work situation / project and how you overcame it.

In Denmark you do not have to worry when telling about a challenge which did not go well – as long as you elaborate on what you learned from this experience. Reflections and self-acknowledgement will make you more trustworthy.

Practice the stories out loud or together with fellow students, family etc. as you will become more self-confident when practicing - and you will also realize which examples/stories you need to practice more.

PREPARE DESCRIPTIONS AND EXAMPLES OF YOUR COMPETENCES

Make sure to give examples of where have you demonstrated competences, e.g.:

- people skills (working as a receptionist)
- being structured (semester projects with focus on the tight timeline)
- goal oriented (volunteer at AIESEC, in charge of company sponsors).

Find inspiration at careers.aau.dk.

THINK OF EXAMPLES THAT ARE RELEVANT

Think of the employer's view. For example, how does this story/skill benefit the company? Do you demonstrate that you are able to improve a process?

Find tools to help you in this process at careers.aau.dk.

AT THE JOB INTERVIEW – WHAT TO THINK OF

PUNCTUALITY

Danes love punctuality, so do everything you can to be on time for your interview, because it will leave a bad impression if you are late. A good advice is to go to the company address the day before to make sure that you know how to get there. It is better to be 15 minutes early and kill some time in the reception than be racing through the door 10 minutes late, sweating and swearing. To arrive 5 minutes before the meeting is optimal.

THE UNSPOKEN RULES OF MAKING A GOOD ATMOSPHERE

- When you meet the hiring manager and others at the interview, shake their hands (even if you have to awkwardly reach across a table to do so) and make direct eye contact and say your name clearly. The Danes see eye contact as a mark of trustworthiness and confidence. It is normal to have several people present at the job interview – especially at public organizations – and the hiring committee can easily consist of 4-5 people.
- The hiring manager will probably offer some tea or coffee. Accept this as a sign of politeness – even if you do not really feel the urge for it.
- You can expect some small talk while all this is going on, so if you're not the naturally chatty type it can be useful to come pre-equipped with some comments about the weather, the difference between Danish weather and your home country's weather, compliments on the building/facilities or similarly non-controversial topics.
- Once you sit down, your job interviewer may try to warm up the conversation with few questions about your personal life, mostly to get you relaxed and get a sense of you as an individual or gauge how committed you are to staying in Denmark. You can stick to brief generalities here; there is no need to disclose any information that makes you uncomfortable.
- Once seated, also have the job ad, application, CV, your prepared questions, paper and pen ready.

DISAGREEMENT IS OKAY

One of the most difficult things, if you come from a hierarchical culture with greater power distance than in Denmark, is to learn that it is perfectly okay to disagree with your Danish boss, assuming you do so respectfully and have facts to back up your point of view.

In fact, your manager will probably be frustrated if you act like a yes-man and fail to point out obvious flaws in their arguments that might lead to a bad decision.

Your problembased learning skills from AAU (such as discussion, compromise, investigating/ researching for a solution, and very importantly identifying the core of the problem) come very handy when you think of how you should state your points at a job interview. Danish companies expect you to stand up for yourself, not being too humble.



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AFTER THE JOB INTERVIEW – WHAT IS NEXT?

SHOULD YOU FOLLOW UP AFTER THE INTERVIEW?

Sending a brief email the next day is a nice touch. Saying 'Tak for sidst' and adding a couple of short bullet points about why you're right for the job is a way of showing a sincere interest. This is also a good time to supply any additional information the interviewer asked for during your meeting.

Then – leave it alone. If they're interested, you will hear from them within a couple of weeks, certainly less than a month.

And if they do get in touch, you may just be at the beginning of a long hiring process that could include more interviews, more tests, and frustrating delays.

MORE SESSIONS OF INTERVIEWS FOR THE JOB

If you are lucky that you continue in the interviewing face, you might be called in for an more interviews, tests or an assessment day.

Learn more about these things at careers.aau.dk.

IF YOU DO GET AN OFFER FOR A JOB IN DENMARK

Your future employer will probably send you a contract to sign. Keep in mind that if you are a member of a union, you can have the union's legal team review the contract to make sure it is fair to you. It is not mandatory to be organized in a union i Denmark. Your employer won't be surprised or offended by this. It's standard practice, and it's a particularly good idea if you're handed a contract that's all in Danish.

Read about unions at careers.aau.dk.

WORKING AND LIVING IN DENMARK

We recommend you to visit different websites with lots of articles, videos and blogs about living in Denmark, understanding Danes, the working culture etc.

For example:

- lifeindenmark.dk
- workindenmark.dk
- howtoliveindenmark.com

Learn more regarding a career in Denmark at careers.aau.dk.