

# Job search

THE NETWORKING GUIDE



Pharmadanmark

# Your network is the path to your next job

We hear it again and again – in Denmark, many positions are filled through networking. But what does that actually mean? And how do you actively use your network in your job search?

In this guide, we help you understand how to use networking strategically, so you are well prepared to find your next job through your network.

## Why should you network when looking for a job?

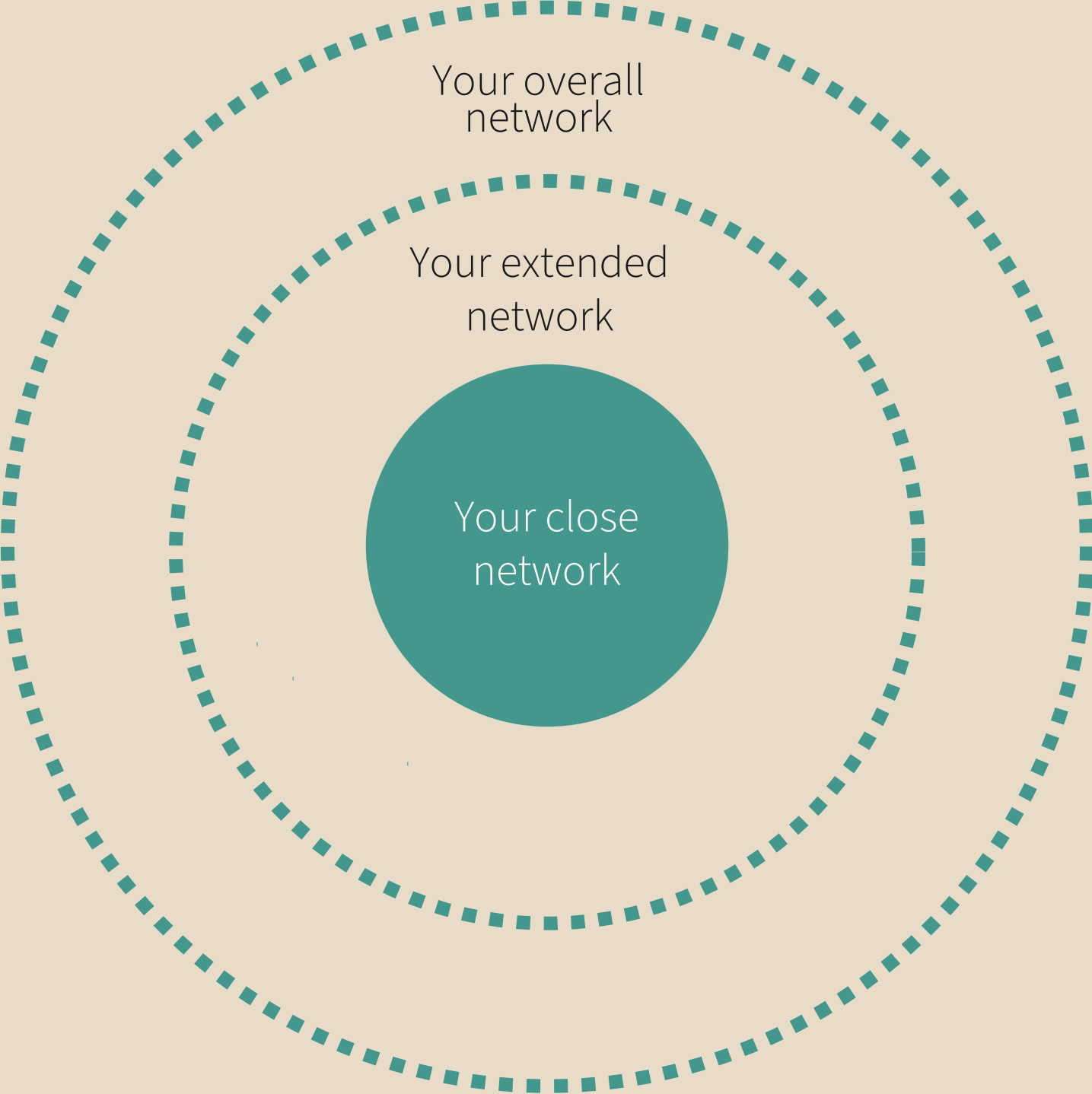
In more than half of all recruitments in Denmark, networking plays a role. This has been the case for many years, and the trend continues to grow.

Many positions are never advertised at all. Instead, they are filled entirely through networks and professional connections. That is why a strong network and good relationships are an important part of your job search.

Good networking can help you:

- Professional insight
- Valuable knowledge about companies' needs
- Recommendations
- A shortcut to a job interview
- Collaboration opportunities





Your overall  
network

Your extended  
network

Your close  
network

# Map the key relationships in your network

Your network is probably larger than you think, although naturally you are closer to some people than others.

You can think of your network as a series of circles. At the centre are the people who make up your close network. These are the five to 10 people you know you can always turn to when you need support, advice, or sparring.

The next level is slightly more peripheral. These are not close relationships, but they are people who would remember who you are if you called or emailed them. This group includes people you have – or have had – a meaningful connection with throughout your life, such as former classmates and previous colleagues.

The outer circle represents your overall network. Here, you will find the many people you may only have met a few times. They may not immediately remember you without a proper introduction, but perhaps you are connected on LinkedIn or mainly know each other through mutual contacts.

Start by mapping your close network:

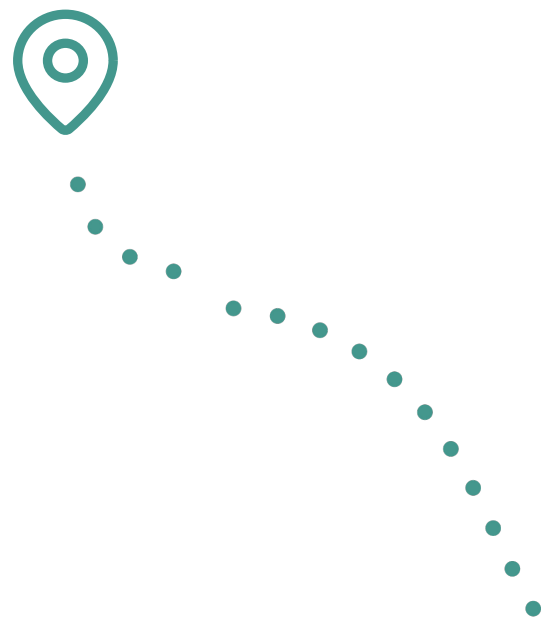
- Who speaks positively about you as a professional?
- Who has recommended you – or would recommend you – to others?

## Do you know someone who knows someone?

When applying for a specific job, it is also useful to get an overview of who you know within the part of the industry or company where you would like to work.

For example, if you want to apply for a position at a specific company but do not have a network there yourself, use LinkedIn to identify people you know who may know someone in the company.

Depending on your relationship, you can use that connection in different ways. If the person is part of your close network, they may be willing to put in a good word for you, which can be a shortcut to a job interview. If your relationship is less close, they may still be able to provide valuable insight into what is happening within the company or department. This can make it easier for you to write a relevant and targeted application.



° >1- @ B- &1 2 >  
E; A>: 1@C; >7

Your knowledge can  
make a difference to  
others.

fE: A C-: @@ . 1: 122: 9 E: A>: 1@C; >7 E: A-8; : 110 @ 5 B1?@5 5  
ž 1@C; >75 3 5 . ; @- . ; A@355 3-: 0 >1/155 3 % -?7E: A>712

- What difference have you made for the key people in your network?
- What can you do for them now?

There are many ways to create value, and you need to find the approaches that suit you best.

Some things you can do from behind your screen, for example on LinkedIn:

- **Acknowledge and say thank you:** If someone shares an interesting insight, like and acknowledge their knowledge and generosity. On LinkedIn, you can endorse a connection's skills, but only for skills you can genuinely vouch for.
- **Share your knowledge:** Your knowledge can make a difference to others if you share it. This could be through a status update where you share an interesting article or talk about an experience you have had. It could also be by responding to someone else's post.
- **Build bridges between people:** If you can see that two people in your network could benefit from meeting each other, you can make a real difference by connecting them.
- **Give a recommendation:** Recommending someone on LinkedIn or for a task or position can make a significant difference for the person you recommend.

Other things require a bit more effort:

- **A personal message:** A personal greeting, such as a Christmas card or a summer email, helps keep your connection active and open.
- **Offer support and dialogue:** If someone in your network needs help with an issue you are familiar with, offer your advice and sparring.
- **Make a phone call:** If you want to maintain a strong connection with someone in your network, written interaction is not always enough. Sometimes you need to call to nurture the relationship.
- **Meet for coffee:** A short and well-prepared coffee meeting, where you know what you want to gain from the meeting and what you can offer yourself, is a classic networking tool.
- **Invite them out:** A walk, a lunch, or a talk, for example through your union on a topic that interests you both, can help strengthen your relationship.

# Find your own style

Many people find networking difficult and end up feeling awkward at receptions and meetings, even though these situations offer great opportunities to strengthen their network.

People who are naturally introverted often describe themselves as poor networkers. But that is not necessarily true. A good networker is not just someone who talks a lot. A good networker is also someone who asks thoughtful questions, listens with genuine interest, and understands what the other person needs.

As with all human interaction, you bring your personality into networking. If you want to leave a good impression, it is important to come across as authentic. There is no point in trying to be someone you are not.

**If you are extroverted**, your strength may be that you feel comfortable networking and talking to new people. A development point for you may be to consider whether you are speaking to the right people and whether you are truly listening to what they are saying.

**If you are introverted**, your strength may be your ability to listen and think strategically. A development point for you may be to consider how you break the ice and contribute to conversations in a way that makes people remember you.



# Expand your network

Perhaps you do not yet have a large professional network. In that case, it may be worth expanding it so you have more people to draw on. Here are a few ideas for how you can grow your network:

- **Use your existing network:** It is often through your network's network that new opportunities arise. Ask people in your existing network whether they know someone who can help you in your job search, for example by introducing you and helping you get a foot in the door.
- **Use associations and communities:** In Denmark, there is an association for almost everything, and you are probably already a member of several – a union, an alumni association, a scientific society, or perhaps even a scout group or sports club. Take an active part in activities, stay curious, and show who you are and what you stand for.
- **Attend conferences, meetings, and events:** Many open events are held where you can meet people who share your professional interests. Look at the participant list and make sure to introduce yourself to people you do not already know.
- **Follow or connect with interesting people on LinkedIn:** On LinkedIn, you can follow people or connect with them directly if they have an interesting role you would like to learn more about. Write a personal message explaining why you would like to connect, and stay active.
- **Use LinkedIn groups:** On LinkedIn, you can join groups where people with similar professional interests discuss industry topics. Ask questions, comment, and respond to other people's posts. Once you have built a relationship, you can connect with them directly.

## Set aside time to maintain your network and plan your efforts

Most of us would like to maintain our network, but rarely get around to it. Everyday life tends to push networking down the priority list. But a network that is not maintained will not work effectively when you need it.

If maintaining your network does not come naturally to you, it can help to set goals and make a plan:

- How many – and which – of your existing contacts will you create value for this week?
- How many new contacts – and who – will you reach out to this week?
- How will you do it? Find inspiration above.
- When will you do what? Schedule networking activities in your calendar and add them to your to-do list.

# The networking conversation

When meeting new people, it is important that you are both interested and interesting:

## **Be interested: Stay curious and ask open questions**

Everyone likes it when other people take an interest in them. So be curious about the person you are talking to and ask open questions.

It is usually best not to begin with questions that are too personal or too deep. Start with something light and preferably based on a shared interest you are likely to have:

- Why are you here this evening?
- What did you think about the presentation?
- What are your thoughts on the new trends within ...?

Once the ice is broken, you can start asking more about what matters to the other person.

## **Be interesting: Be clear about how you create value**

When meeting new people, it is important that you can explain clearly and briefly what you stand for and how you can create value for the other person. In other words, you need to be able to pitch yourself.

Structure your pitch so that you both begin and end with the value you create.

- I can help you/your organisation with ... (the core value you create for the person or company, for example development, analysis, quality assurance, or optimisation)
- I can do that because ... (the specific skills, knowledge, and expertise that enable you to do it)  
In other words ... (a summary of the value you can bring and what it could mean for the person or company)

Also consider your body language and the signals it sends if you are sitting with your eyes fixed on your phone, constantly staying within a group of people you already know, avoiding eye contact, and so on.



