Personal Branding and Creating the Right Perception

Ørsted’s goals are future oriented, mainly they are concerned about climate change and increasing the market share of green energy. As well as this Ørsted is also progressive when it comes to their employees. From recruiting talent to keeping motivation up with existing employees to reach their future goals.

Christian Jørgensen, Head of Recruitment at Ørsted, in his welcome address introduced Ørsted’s five guiding principles.

Ørsted’s core values

Integrity – We’re open and trustworthy

Passion – We’re passionate about what we do and proud of what we achieve

Team – We value diversity and collaborate in a non-hierarchical, respectful and trusting way

Results – We set the bar high, take ownership and the right things done

Safety – We never compromise on health and safety standards
What behaviors drive professional success? “You only get one chance to make a first impression” – we have all heard this phrase about how appearance shapes perception. At the event, it became quite clear how important it is to think about how we want to be perceived when we are looking for our dream job in Denmark.

Wanda Rossi, Senior Innovation Manager at Ørsted, gave us an inspiring task – to think about our own personal brand. That doesn’t mean that you have to become the next Kim Kardashian and work on how many followers you have on Instagram. The take home message of her workshop was to seek the help of others to find out how to best describe yourself and how your brand is perceived.

The 10 rules of personal branding according to Forbes:
1. Have a focus – Decide what your key message is and stick to it
2. Be genuine – Be yourself to build a credible personal brand over time
3. Tell a story – Create a true story around your brand that people can engage in
4. Be consistent – Ensure that your personal brand promise stays consistent, both online and offline
5. Be ready to fail – The very best brands always come from repeated trial and error, mistakes and failures, not from instant perfection
6. Create a positive impact – Always keep in mind the impact you leave on others and remember all we have is our own reputation and that’s our brand, so be awesome to each other!
7. Follow a successful example – Observe the personal branding strategy of influential people you look up to
8. Live your brand – Your personal brand needs to be an authentic manifestation of who you are and amplify what you believe in
9. Let other people tell your story – Personal branding is the story people tell about you when you’re not in the room
10. Leave a legacy – What are the keywords and actions that you want to be known for?
Personal branding is about creating your public persona, about telling your story in an engaging way. How do you want to be perceived by a particular group?

How to use personal branding at job interviews

More and more companies use cases in recruiting. The goal is to test how potential candidates solve job related problems. Emma Bitz and Simon Gundersen, Co-founders of Casefair, shared their insight in and experience with this new way of recruiting.

Case interviews are not only about showing your experience and professional skills. Don’t get too technical, but also take the companies values into consideration. This is where we have to come back to the 5 guiding principles of Ørsted: integrity, passion, team, results, and safety.

If the company has formulated core values (check their website!), take these into consideration when you are applying for a job. Think about what these values mean for you. Which do feel strongly about? Which do you want to know more about? Ask your friend or partner for their opinions, how do they perceive you in regard to these values?

For example, the case that was presented at the event aimed at weighing passion, team work and results. Ask yourself while preparing for the interview:

How can your passion impact the people you work with?
How can you explore news ways in a team that brings together different perspectives?
How can you balance your passion and the needs of your team to reach your goals?

Rida Arif took part in the mock interview and has shared her experience. You can find the interview with her here.
Tips for case interviews:
Use a **structured** and logical approach.

1. Find out what the **core problems** of the case are. If possible, ask questions to help you get a better understanding of the case and to get to your solution

2. **Communication is key:** Prepare your solution or approach in a structured manner. Prepare an introduction, your arguments, and a final conclusion. You can win a lot of points by structuring your thoughts.

3. Find out if you should prepare a PowerPoint **presentation** or you should take part in a group discussion.

4. While preparing make sure that others can follow your **train of thoughts**. Ask yourself: Why did you go with this strategy and not with another one? What are the pros and cons. Involve the interviewers in your thought process

5. Keep in mind: **Process and reflections** sometimes matter more than results.

Finally, cases can help you to better understand the job you are applying for and the challenges it entails. They can create the opportunity for you to proof your skills and to show the company how you would solve actual job-related tasks. The best way to approach your solution when asked to solve a case for an interview is to show that you are up to speed in your field of work, but also take into consideration that the company wants to know how you think and the way you came to your solution.
**Wanda Rossi** facilitated an inspiring workshop on turning challenges into opportunities during IDCN's February event: "Personal Innovation: How to Step Up with New Moves into Job Market". She works as a Senior Innovation Manager at Ørsted. Her areas of interest focus on agile frameworks, product innovation and organisational coaching. Having undergone professional transformation herself, she embraces change with an eagerness to learn new things.

You've got rich international experience: You are German, you have studied in Russia and now you are living in Denmark. What motivated you to move to Denmark? What are the differences you've encountered and what do you like the most about working in Denmark?

I enjoy the non-hierarchical collaboration between colleagues at Ørsted. I’ve experienced a great deal of upfront trust in my skills and enough space to be who I want to be, also in a professional environment.

**After moving to Denmark you've shifted toward agile methodology. How would you explain to our readers what agile is and what convinced you to go in that direction?**

Being agile means to adopt a flexible way of thinking and acting. We value speed, creativity, pragmatism and solution-focus over hierarchies, governance and individual gain. As a big-picture person who is adjusted to constant change, the agile philosophy resonates strongly with me.

**What advice can you give IDCN partner members, who are currently in the process of redefining themselves to adapt their skills to the requirements of the Danish job market?**

First of all, don’t wait until somebody does something for you. Think about what you are passionate about and start something yourself, even today. Register a company and offer what you have to give, start a meet-up group related to a topic you burn for, do anybody who expresses a need a favour, not by asking what you could do for them, but by listening to what they say, and then offer specific support.

Second, invest in true friendship. I don’t mean polite networking events, but a sincere interest in whoever you meet. Anybody could be a next best friend if you open your heart and engage in vulnerability. Building close genuine networks will not only improve your emotional health, but might also be a way into the job market. Keep in mind, people want to help and give from the heart.

**The application process in Denmark is different than in other countries, i.e. it is obligatory to send a cover letter. What are the tips you can give to jobseekers on how to write an outstanding cover letter?**

First, focus on how you can help them and be as precise as possible. Ideally, you attend an event or talk to somebody who works at the organisation prior to your application.

Second, be personal. Tell interesting stories from your life that prove, you have the skills / attitude / experience they need. Write in a graphic and descriptive way that inspires your readers.

**Ørsted is rapidly growing, multinational company. What are the advantages and challenges of working in an international environment?**

Cultural differences do lead—on occasion—to misunderstandings. It is crucial to create a compassionate environment where individuals are curious about behaviours of others. Instead of labelling each other, there is a great opportunity to put yourself into somebody else’s shoes. To build an empathic workplace we need to listen without judgement and stay curious. One way to express curiosity is to ask good-willed open-ended questions.
Arturo has moved from his home country Spain, to Copenhagen in October 2017. As a former IDCN Copenhagen Management Team volunteer he tells us about the journey he took to land his dream job in Denmark.

**Arturo Mora-Rioja**  
*Assistant Professor, KEA – Copenhagen School of Design and Technology*

**What is your academic background/working experience before arriving to Denmark?**

I am a Computer Science Engineer and I also have a BA and MA in English Literature and Culture. I worked for 9 years as a software engineer and for 13 years as a Higher Education IT Teacher.

**How did volunteering for IDCN contribute to your job searching process and landing a job in Copenhagen?**

Volunteering for IDCN Copenhagen helped me to expand my network and to keep my skills alive. I had the chance to work closely with other spouses that had different professional backgrounds, to meet representatives from top Danish companies, and to feel useful by using my professional abilities. Thanks to IDCN, I had been able to meet corporate representatives, even from higher education institutions. When I faced my interview at KEA I was already familiar with the physical environment and the personal interactions.

**What was the biggest challenge you faced in the process of finding a job?**

There were many challenges, but the biggest one by far was the need to call company representatives. I come from a culture where calls during working hours are deemed as intrusive, but in Denmark this is a mandatory first step if you want your application to be taken into consideration.

**What would you say is the biggest challenge as a foreigner seeking a job in Denmark?**

To learn, internalise, and execute the rules of Danish working culture. This country is very specific in the way professional interactions are handled, and you must not only be aware of this, but also perform accordingly.

**What does it take for foreigners to understand the customs of the application process?**

It is not enough to read about it. You need to have it explained by people who have lived through it or, if possible, by a recruiter or coach, and then experience it yourself a few times.
Can you give some insights into what you would consider as good strategies for professional networking here in Denmark?

Attend as many professional networking and job searching events as possible and interact with the speakers and attendants. Most jobs in Denmark are unlisted and you will only access them through networking. Be specific about your desired job and target only a filtered selection of possible companies: Quality should reign over quantity. Research the companies and positions you are interested in, prepare questions and, before applying—I repeat, before applying—, call someone from the company on the phone. (Many job ads include a contact person.)

How has the process of job-seeking contributed to your personal innovation?

I come from a country where people are usually unhappy with their jobs, which in many cases is only a way to provide an income.

One of the unwritten rules of the Danish working culture is that you should work in an area and position that makes you happy, and companies should thrive on happy employees. I think I have internalized this idea to a very high degree.

What kept you motivated the most during the process of job seeking?

As soon as I arrived in Denmark, I noticed that this country could be a wonderful place to live in, even if it would be challenging to settle in.

The prospect of living the life I had always dreamed of, the beautiful experiences I was already enjoying along the way, and the amazing support of my wife helped me stay focused.

Can you give us some insights into how does it feel to work in Denmark and what does it take to get used to the working culture?

KEA is the third company for which I have worked in Denmark so far. The other two were software start-ups. In all three cases, I have noticed an enormous sense of pragmatism that is based on trust and flat power structures. Hierarchy is very low, and everyone assumes that everyone is responsible enough for his/her own work. These overall ideas allow each member of the team to focus on the big picture instead of on their individual scope, and lead to concepts that reduce stress and improve efficiency, like flexible working hours or the possibility of working from home.

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY:

Found a job?
Started an internship?
Relocated?

Please let us know by email to:
membership.copenhagen@idcn.info
Birgitte Høj Ranch
Senior HR Consultant in Global Mobility at Ørsted

Birgitte has a lot of experience in helping international employees and their spouses, in particular from her work as a Senior Global Mobility Consultant at NNE. She has also lived and worked overseas herself. Birgitte moved back to Denmark from the USA together with her husband, so she knows well about the challenges international families meet in Denmark.

In this IDCN podcast, Birgitte shares her thoughts on the following topics:

- How to cope with stress after moving to a new country, and to survive as a couple in new challenging circumstances?
- Should you take a job, for which you are definitely overqualified, or would it be bad for your future career?
- And ... what about Danes living abroad? How do they feel, and what is the most difficult thing for them to adjust?

Listen also to the interview with Mikkel Hougaard Orlovski, Leadership Development Consultant & Intercultural Trainer, DTU.

PART 1 What to talk about: Football or the Royal Family?

PART 2 Why don’t they invite their colleagues home?
Upcoming IDCN EVENTS:

Come by our IDCN Kaffemik!  
March 21, 13-15h  
Informal monthly meet-up for all IDCN members. No registration necessary. Kids are welcome.

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Remember to join our LinkedIn Group!

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