

# WHEN COLLEAGUES ARE DIFFERENT

Inspiration for dialogue and curiosity

# TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	3
RECEIVING NEW COLLEAGUES	4
• New colleagues drop down from the moon	6
• The new world champions?!!	8
• When a new colleague is 'something completely new'	10
• When Danish is the language	12
COOPERATION IN EVERYDAY WORK	14
• Cross disciplinary cooperation can be more 'cross' than 'cooperative'	16
• When a colleague is different	18
• Others are not mind readers	20
• Talking together across differences	22
WHAT IS MY RIGHT, AND WHAT IS MY DUTY?	24

# INTRODUCTION

Differences between colleagues can be difficult in that they can cause misunderstandings and disagreements. However, differences are the key to **development**, because creative thinking occurs exactly when different perspectives and experiences meet. This is why it is crucial that there be a diversity of qualifications and **perspectives** in the Danish workplaces. This booklet hopes to inspire colleagues to work together across all kinds of differences that might exist in a workplace.

Why is The Danish Institute for Human Rights publishing a booklet calling for more **curiosity** and cooperation across all kinds of differences in workplaces – even differences regarding education, personality and job duties?

The reason is that people are **different** in myriad ways. When colleagues succeed in cooperating across differences in a workplace we are less likely to reduce one another to stereotypes, and instead we see each other as **unique individuals** with many different personal traits and competences.

Human rights are for every individual, but more often than not, when we speak of human rights, we think of minorities at risk of being treated differently because of their age, gender, ethnic origin, religion, handicap or sexual orientation.

Cooperation in a workplace despite differences is about creating **solidarity**, in which every colleague is free to be him- or herself, and participate as the unique individuals that we all are. This will create workplaces with good working environments – for every kind of colleague.

RECEIVING **NEW**  
**COLLEAGUES**

# NEW COLLEAGUES DROP DOWN FROM THE MOON

Your new colleague comes from a place with different systems, rules and a different code language. It does not matter if your new colleague is newly qualified, retrained, comes from a comparable company or comes from another country. The new colleague lands in your staff group where you all know each other and have established certain customs and ways of working together.

Your new colleague experiences the culture in your workplace as a game, in which **the rules are invisible**, because at first nobody is to know how comments and body language should be interpreted.

When introducing the new colleague it is essential that the person feels welcome. Any newcomer will want to stand out as a good and professional co-worker. Therefore new colleagues should be given quickly the opportunity to assert themselves and show their qualities.

Everyone can contribute when receiving new colleagues and help make them a part of the collective “we”. This is also the case, even if an introduction programme has been arranged and a mentor has been appointed.

Some appointees are quick to ask for help, while others are hesitant so as not to appear stupid or be a nuisance to colleagues. Therefore, it is a good idea to be concrete when explaining things to your new colleague, and it is also important that you frequently follow up on what you have agreed between you.

“It is hard to do things right in the beginning. It is almost like starting over.”

“It is incredible how big a difference there can be between two bank branches.”

## UNWRITTEN RULES AT THE WORKPLACE

Many misunderstandings occur because we take things about each other for granted. This is why it is important to inform the new colleague about the unwritten rules at your workplace. Usually, the following areas tend to be important:

- **TIME:** “The meeting starts at 9” mean that we meet at around 9, or does it mean 9 o’clock sharp? Should you meet a deadline or is it negotiable? Do we stay at work until we have finished?
- **EMPLOYEE/MANAGER RELATIONS:** Should one always ask the manager? Or is it expected that the employee takes initiatives?
- **DISPUTES:** What do I do, if I disagree with a colleague on a work-related matter? Do I say something right away or at a meeting – and how do I best convey my message?
- **THE LINE BETWEEN WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE:** Is it expected that we also discuss work during breaks? How much do we tell about our life outside of work? Are there social gatherings where everyone is expected to take part, and some that are optional?
- **PROFESSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT:** How do we work together with other groups and functions? How sharp or fluid are the professional boundaries?

You make your new colleague feel more comfortable by being open and clear about these topics in your everyday work.

## WHEN YOU ARE NEW YOURSELF

Do you find yourself in a foreign culture, where you do not know the unwritten rules? If you have not been assigned a mentor, who introduces you, then find a colleague you feel confident with, and ask if the person can help you settle in at the workplace. You can use the list of important areas as a checklist of the things you would like to have further explained.

# THE NEW ARE WORLD CHAMPIONS?!

In every workplace there are certain ways of doing things and a perception of what is right and wrong. You have a code language with abbreviations and names, and you have habitual practices for how to dress, the division of work, and communication. Your culture is a result of the history of your workplace. It has been formed by the management and the employees through the successes and challenges that your workplace has experienced.

As an employee you are probably not aware of many everyday habits and codes.

It is not until someone breaks the **unwritten rules** that you become aware of your culture. No matter how thoroughly your new colleagues are introduced, once in a while they are bound to break with the culture of the workplace. It can be irritating; however, it can also be innovative.

Nonetheless new employees are world champions when it comes to being new and not knowing all the systems and practices.

HEARD FROM NEW EMPLOYEES:

Couldn't one just...?

Why do you do it like that?

I cannot understand why you...

I am puzzled that...

How come...? I have noticed that...

I have seen that one can...

Would it be an idea if...?

## REVERSED MENTORSHIP

A reversed mentorship turns the traditional mentorship up side down and lets the experienced employee learn from the new entrant. The purpose is that new entrant takes advantage of his or her fresh eyes and 'stupid questions' to give the workplace an insight into new perspectives and ideas. The experienced employees will have their "we-usually-do-culture" questioned by getting a new entrant as a 'reversed' mentor.

Maybe it is an idea for you to get a 'reversed' mentor? Use the opportunity to get some free supplementary training by getting **new perspectives** on everyday practices. Get inspiration from other companies or countries. You might even learn something that you did not even know you needed.

A reversed mentorship should take place while the new entrant still has 'fresh eyes' and before he or she has gotten used routines and code language at the workplace.

### FRAMEWORK FOR THE REVERSED MENTORSHIP:

- It should be based on mutual trust and interest in one another
- Regular conversations should take place, so the two of you can get to know each other
- Decide on a trial period and subsequently a number of conversations
- Start by defining the purpose of the reversed mentorship
- Decide on the ground rules for your conversations – What are the topics? Are the conversations confidential? How can you apply the good ideas that develop along the way?

### QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK YOUR MENTOR:

- Is there anything you find illogical?
- Is there anything you find we could do more efficiently?
- Is there anything that we (or I) do not do that you find puzzling?
- Do you know of other solutions or working practices than the ones we use?

### ARE YOU A NEW EMPLOYEE?

Maybe you have ideas or suggestions on how to make the work more efficient?

The easiest thing perhaps, would be to discuss it with the person introducing you to the workplace. You might even suggest trying 'reversed mentoring'.

# WHEN THE NEW COLLEAGUE IS 'SOMETHING COMPLETELY NEW'

New colleagues stand out merely by being new. If the new colleague at the same time looks different from the majority he or she might appear very conspicuous.

In some workplaces it does not take much to be considered different. In other workplaces, however, it takes more to stand out as such. Furthermore, it varies from person to person what is considered 'foreign' and also how one reacts to this.

When you meet a new person, who seems very different from yourself, it is common to stop in your tracks. Some of your reactions take place on a subconscious level while others are conscious reflections. From the first surprise the interaction can follow five stages of gradual development, as one becomes more conscious and gets to know the other person.

The **5** stages of development when you meet someone, who seems very different from you:

- 1. ANXIETY** – when you are unsure of yourself and have no idea of what to expect from the other person. This is why you avoid approaching the other person.
- 2. CAUTIOUS** – when you know it is irrational to be afraid of the other person. But you are unsure of how the other person would react if you were honest and act as you normally would. You are afraid of offending or hurting the other person and therefore keep conversations superficial.
- 3. TOLERANCE** – when you agree to cooperate with the other person, but still have a feeling of being superior. You can tolerate that the other person is different, but you do not attempt to understand situations from the other persons' perspective.
- 4. ACCEPT** – when you feel equal to the other person and you appreciate that people are different. You consider their perspectives and intentions as legitimate and sensible. You cooperate equally with the other person.
- 5. APPRECIATION** – when you consider what is different as a way of exploring new perspectives and ideas. You consider differences as a means to change and inventive thinking. You wish to learn from the other person.

Consider which of the above stages you are at when you meet your new colleague. If you want to develop yourself, try to overcome your insecurity and use your curiosity instead.

## CURIOSITY IS THE WAY FORWARD

Everyone can contribute in including a new colleague in the staff group as quickly as possible. When you want to develop your relationship to someone who seems different from you then you can ask yourself these questions.

- What might I have in common with this colleague? It might be education, family situation, music taste, humour, leisure activities, or something completely different. The point is to shift your focus from the areas that pull you apart, to areas where you have something in common. Here you will find topics to talk about and experiences to exchange.
- What is the best way to cooperate with the new employee? How do I act obliging and assist the new colleague to get settled in at work??
- What can I learn from the new employee? The person probably has some experiences and competences that you do not know of and which might be inspiring to you. Show your interest and ask if he/she has any ideas.

### ARE YOU NEW YOURSELF, AND DO YOU EXPERIENCE THAT YOUR COLLEAGUES PERCEIVE YOU AS DIFFERENT?

Do you experience that they do not completely accept or appreciate you? You can do something yourself, but you can also get help.

Talk about everyday things that you have in common with your colleagues; this way they will experience your different qualities. You might also bring up subjects, which they might be afraid to ask you about. Perhaps there are some myths you would like to dispel.

If you think that you are being considered as the "different one" at your workplace then talk to a good colleague or your manager. Show them this booklet and describe how you would like to be accepted and appreciated. Agree on how they can help you and what you can do yourself.

**"I feel like I'm on here on exceptional basis. They look at me, and I am not really involved in the conversations."**



# WHEN DANISH IS THE LANGUAGE

It can be a challenge if your new colleague has language problems. It is challenging when you do not understand each another clearly. But also new colleagues who speak Danish well, but with an accent, can experience difficulties .

When one expresses oneself in a language that one does not master 100 per cent it can result in a feeling of inferiority. It is frustrating not to know all the words and to be insecure about the grammar and not to be able to express oneself as eloquently as in one's mother tongue. The feeling of inferiority can be a result of something within oneself, but it can also result in you feeling that others doubt your qualifications.

Research shows that people who speak with a heavy accent are valued as less intelligent, less articulate and less educated than those speaking without an accent. This devaluation happens on a subconscious level, until one has gotten to know the person and discovered that he or she is just as intelligent and competent as oneself.

Danish is considered one of the most difficult languages to learn, if one has not grown up with it. There is a great difference between how the words are written and pronounced, and there are many different ways to pronounce the vowels.

Try and listen to the different pronunciation of the 'u' in the Danish words "rug" and "runge". Words like "bede", "bade", "både" and "bide" sound almost alike to foreigners.

"I think I have become quite good at speaking Danish, but sometimes customers or colleagues look at me in wonder. Some talk to me as if I was a child. I think they question my skills because I speak with an accent."

## LISTEN FOR THE MESSAGE – NOT THE ACCENT

### HOW CAN YOU HELP A COLLEAGUE WITH LANGUAGE PROBLEMS?

- Do not perceive your colleagues accent or language problems as an expression of the person's lack of qualifications. Consider how you would feel if you had to communicate something important and complicated in your second or third language.
- Pay attention to what your colleague says – not the accent. If your colleague finds it difficult to express him- or herself then remember that your colleague probably has a valuable, professional message and give him or her time to let this message come forward. Pay attention to the content which perhaps it is communicated in a different way from how you communicate. Ask clarifying questions and listen. Make sure that you have understood the message by repeating in your own words, how you have understood what your colleague is saying.
- Take different opportunities to refer to what your colleague has said to make your colleague's professional message heard by more people. Create space and occasions, in which your colleague's professional competencies can shine, in order to make sure that these competencies, which are sometimes overshadowed by the language problems, are not questioned.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTIES EXPRESSING YOURSELF?

Your colleagues might not always consider how difficult it can be to express oneself in your second or third language. Therefore you would have to remind them about this and for instance say: "I find it difficult to explain this in Danish, so be patient because I would like you to understand what I mean."

COOPERATION IN EVERYDAY  
WORK



# CROSS DISCIPLINARY COOPERATION CAN BE MORE 'CROSS' THAN 'COOPERATIVE'

More and more tasks require that we work interdisciplinary. In a workplace, people with many different educational backgrounds and competencies often work together. Moreover, many people work together with colleagues based in different companies or branches. Therefore you are often not placed next to your cross disciplinary colleague but communicate with him or her via phone or by email in a hectic work day, where resources are always too few, compared to what one thinks the job requires.

All professional groups have their particular procedures, code language, viewpoints and tasks. Communicating with people from one's own group is always the easiest and fastest. "Finally, one who understands exactly what I mean". These different systems and languages clash in the cross disciplinary cooperation and may result in misunderstandings and friction.

Despite everyone's effort to do a good job, misunderstandings as well as small and big mistakes do happen. So in a working day the cross disciplinary cooperation might be more 'cross' than disciplinary.

How much of your workday do you spend solving misunderstandings that occurred across educational background and work responsibilities?

How much of your workday do you spend solving problems that should not have happened in the first place?

Customer service  
Planner **Homecare**  
Marketing Production  
Technical support Design  
Teacher Bioanalyst  
Technician Doctor  
Production development  
Social and health worker  
Psychologist **Police officer**  
Librarian Secretary  
Innovator Salesman  
Kitchen assistant Receptionist  
**Hospital porter** Physiotherapist  
Office messenger  
Service assistant

## LET'S PLAY HANDBALL!

Consider yourself part of a handball team with players carrying different professional capabilities. The team consists of you and your colleagues, and together you fight to create excellent work results. The opponents that you are trying to defeat are comprised of all the things that challenge the interdisciplinary cooperation e.g. structures, systems and lack of resources.

As a handball player it is about bringing yourself into play and being present on the court to enable the others to pass the ball to you.

Often you will have to stretch and make an effort to catch the ball when the pass is not perfect. Perhaps the colleague's pass was off, but it doesn't help to stay on your spot and say "I couldn't catch your lousy pass". You have to make the most of your colleagues' play.

When you have the ball it is about making good passes to the others so they can catch the ball and continue the game.

All players have to react quickly and well in sudden, and sometimes chaotic, situations. Maybe you have to play in a new way or take a different position to solve the new problem. Maybe you will have to rise above your own tasks and look at what is needed for a **joint resolution of the problem**.

It is no use to avoid one's responsibility. It is about bringing the best out in each other. What is the best way to solve a joint task across all kinds of challenges?

### HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELF A BETTER TEAM PLAYER IN THE CROSS DISCIPLINARY COOPERATION?

How can you concretely:

- Bring yourself into play?
- Stretch yourself and catch?
- Make good passes?
- Play in a new way?
- Bring the best out in others?

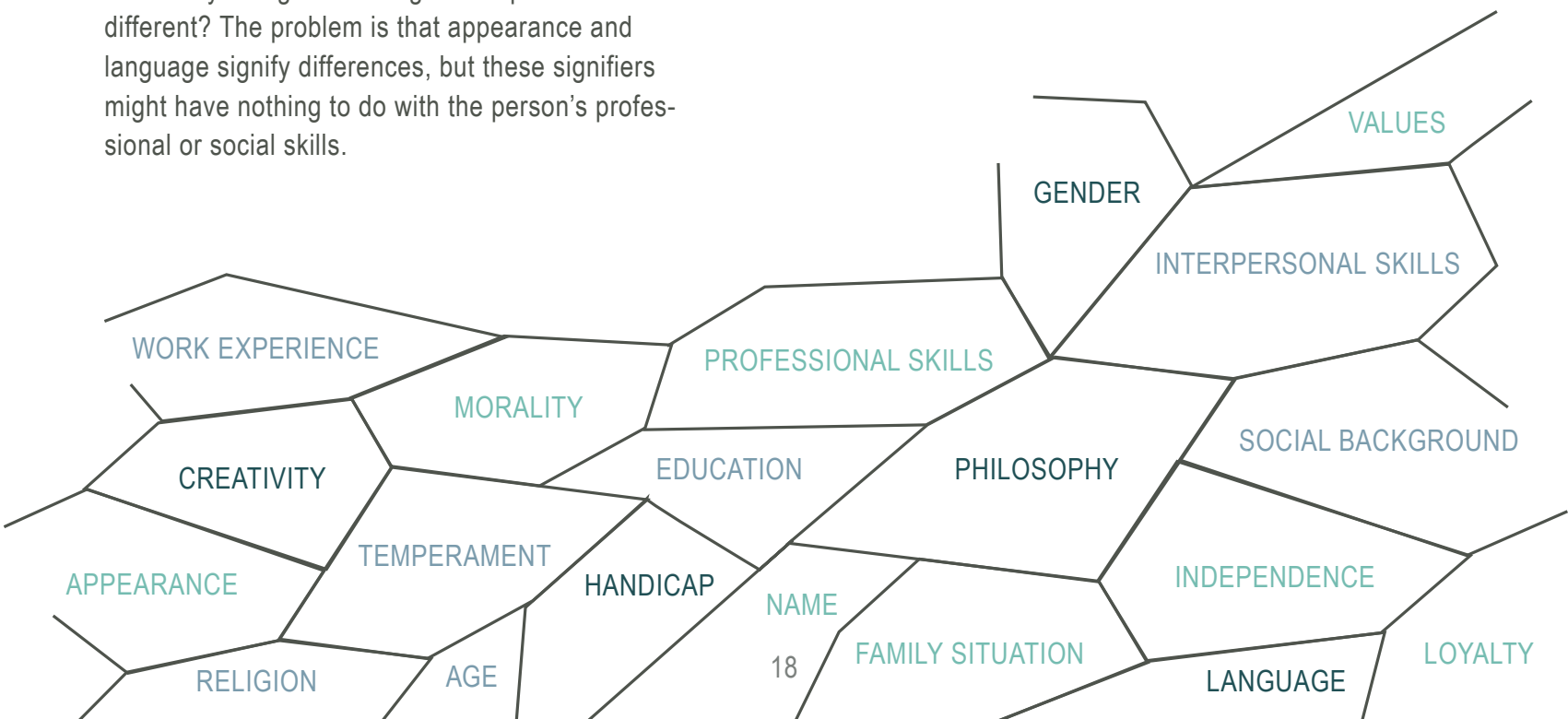
# WHEN A COLLEAGUE IS DIFFERENT

Some colleagues stand out from the majority either by being young or old, being of a different national or ethnic background, or the colleague might be the only man or the only person with a handicap.

In a different group this co-worker might be ordinary, but in this particular workplace the person is 'something special'. To be something special can mean being 'strange', but it can also mean to be 'something particularly valuable'. No matter what, the person will be more visible than the other colleagues, which often can be unpleasant.

How are you a good colleague to a person who is different? The problem is that appearance and language signify differences, but these signifiers might have nothing to do with the person's professional or social skills.

Everyone would like to be viewed as a complete individual with multiple facets and qualities. Few wish to be seen as merely a member of a group – one of 'them' who are different from 'us'. A 'special' colleague can be a gift for you. Through this colleague you may discover new insights and perspectives on both life and work. You might also establish a so-called reversed traineeship as described earlier in this booklet. By using your curiosity you can provide yourself and your workplace with fresh insight and inspiration.



## A COMMUNITY WHERE WE CAN BE DIFFERENT

A sense of community in the workplace is priceless. Absence due to illness decreases, and work results improve, when we as co-workers feel that we are free to be ourselves and put our different qualities to use. Also, it is more fun to work in such a place. But it requires that everyone is included in the common 'we'.

Every co-worker contributes to the community and atmosphere in the workplace, but members of the majority at work have a certain responsibility to include the 'special' colleagues in the community. Because if you are a part of the majority, there will be many things that you take for granted and do not notice in your everyday work. Whether it be harmless banter, cafeteria food or social events, it is important that you make sure that no one is kept outside the community. Invite everyone to participate and remember that some may need more encouragement than others to feel completely welcome.

IN ORDER TO TREAT PEOPLE EQUALLY YOU MUST TREAT THEM EQUALLY DIFFERENTLY.  
HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT THIS?

- View all colleagues as unique, multi-faceted individuals. Everyone has a gender, an age, ethnic background, qualifications, a personality etc. Help the 'special' colleague to show more sides of him- or herself.
- Be careful showing the colleague too much extra consideration in advance, even if this is an attempt to be friendly and sympathetic. If you want to be accommodating to a 'special' colleague, ask the person, if there is anything he or she needs. This gives the colleague the chance to express his or her needs and wishes him- or herself.
- Help end stereotypic conceptions of groups. Imagine if you were the one judged by 'unfortunate elements' in your profession, nationality or age group.
- Be careful with humour, if you don't know each other very well. Witty remarks can be hurtful if they are misunderstood. Eliminate jokes about minorities, because they are already particularly visible and thus may feel exposed to contempt by the majority. No one likes to be laughed at but enjoys to laugh with others.

# THE OTHERS ARE NOT MIND READERS

Many tasks require communication with colleagues, customers or citizens, and the outcome of a single conversation can be decisive for the quality of the work results. Sometimes all you have is an exchange of a few remarks. Other times you might have long conversations about complicated matters that span over longer periods of time.

Luckily, most conversations with colleagues run smoothly, but suddenly you may find yourself in a situation where things did not go as you expected. The conversation gets off track. Your colleague and you have **different understandings** of a matter, and perhaps you are talking past each other. Such misunderstandings and disagreements can be more than just irritating; they can cost a lot of money and ruin co operations.

“Why did she get so upset ... all I meant was ...”

“... and all of a sudden one little feather grew into five hens ...”

“It is incredible, why he cannot just say what this is about, instead of having me guess what he wants.”

A short sentence you say to a colleague to be quick and efficient may be interpreted as an insulting and unreasonable demand or as a cry for help from a good colleague. It all depends on the mood of the recipient, and how well you know each other. We forget that others cannot hear our ‘internal calculations’. Unfortunately, they cannot read our minds or see our intentions.

It takes ‘very little’ for a misunderstanding to occur, but it takes a ‘lot of’ trust and understanding to be restored. Remember that one is better at being understanding towards oneself than towards others. You measure others behaviour on the effect that it has on you – but you measure your own behaviour on your intention with it.

## UP IN THE HELICOPTER

In order to improve communication with your colleagues, it is necessary to ‘get up in the helicopter’ – meaning to be more open about what is going on, and what you are thinking.

- **TELL IT LIKE IT IS**  
For instance: “I apologise for being short-tempered, but this is because ... so now I only have 5 minutes to ...” It is easier to understand a message and help each other, when you know the reason and can picture the situation yourself.
- **LISTEN FOR THE GOOD INTENTION**  
If you wish to steer a conversation in a more positive direction, consider what good intentions might lie behind your colleague’s unfortunate formulation. For instance, try to think, “Here is a colleague struggling to solve a problem – but who is not very good at expressing himself right now.”
- **CHECK THE UNDERSTANDING**  
Prevent misunderstandings by making sure that you have understood what your colleague is trying to say. You can check by asking, “I am not completely sure that I understand ... Do you mean ... ?”
- **LET EACH OTHER FINISH**  
A conversation is good when all participants feel seen, heard and understood. Therefore, it is important to let each other finish speaking and to listen properly, to what the others are saying – and not just think about what you are going to say, when given the chance to speak.

# TALKING TOGETHER ACROSS DIFFERENCES

It is important to have the courage to be curious and not be afraid of contact, when you meet someone new. Although it may be difficult to ask, and difficult to answer, questions about ‘why you do things like this?’, for most people will be better than being avoided or excluded from social events. Thoughtfulness and respect are always important, but a fear of contact with respect to differences is often the worst, so **talk with one another** – also when awkward situations arise.

In our workplace, we face each other and our differences everyday. It is important to accept that we are different, and that it is completely natural that once in a while, we misunderstand each other. Misunderstandings can be resolved by asking and learning from one another.

You reach out your hand to a new colleague – the person does not meet your hand, but instead greets you in a different way, than you are used to. You feel awkward and also slightly uncomfortable. Is there something wrong with you? You wonder...

*Say it out loud, if you think it is awkward, and ask your colleague how he or she prefers to greet. Try not to be afraid of contact. It is natural that we are different.*

It is your birthday, and you invite your colleagues for a glass of wine. You forgot that your colleague Ayse does not drink alcohol, and you did not buy any drinks without alcohol. You feel bad, but also think it is a little excessive that you also had to think of that. You were stressed enough just having to shop to begin with.

*Think about this next time. In fact, more people might have been pleased, had it been possible to drink something without alcohol – someone might be pregnant, but hadn't yet told anyone at work.*

You have a colleague, who always stands very close when he is talking to you. You can never tell him, because you don't want to seem impolite, so instead you avoid talking to him.

*Tell him, “I would prefer, if we stand a little further from each other when we talk”. We all have personal preferences, and it is okay to say it – preferably with a smile – as opposed to avoiding the person.*

You happen to refer to people age 50 as old. You immediately notice that your colleague Tove is hurt, even though she laughs and acts like nothing is wrong.

*We are different, and what it means to be old depends on how old you are yourself. What matters is that you are able to talk about it, when someone is hurt or offended.*

A new colleague has a different name that you have trouble remembering and pronouncing. You are about to address the person by his or her name, but you cannot bring yourself to say it, because you are afraid of pronouncing it wrong. Instead you happen to say “her” or “him” or the like.

*Instead of avoiding to call the person by name it is better to make an attempt to pronounce the name. Ask the person if it is pronounced correctly instead. If you constantly overhear colleagues pronounce the name incorrectly then make them aware of it. It might be difficult for the person to point it out because he or she might not want to draw attention to their different name.*

WHAT IS  
MY RIGHT  
AND WHAT IS MY DUTY?



# THE LAW PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATION

We have legislation in Denmark to secure all employees' equal opportunities regardless of gender, race, colour, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or faith, political orientation, social, national or ethnic origin. The two laws which are particularly relevant to know are in this regard are: 1. The Act on Discrimination on the Labour Market which prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, political opinion, sexual orientation or national, social or ethnic origin. 2. The Act on Equal Treatment of Men and Women as regards Access to Employment and Maternity leave etc. These laws prohibit discrimination both in the situation of appointment, during employment and in connection with dismissal.

Discrimination is what happens when you are being treated in an inferior way compared to a colleague in a comparable situation for instance because of your gender, age or ethnic origin.

**Discrimination is illegal** and this covers direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, instructions on discrimination as well as harassment.

**“How can you be lesbian when there are so many lovely men around you at the office?” “She’s a lesbian because she hasn’t met the right guy yet. That’s a problem I can fix”.**

The most wide-spread kind of discrimination among colleagues is harassment. Harassment is a kind of bullying of people on the basis of their affiliation to the groups mentioned in the laws above. Harassment is when one or more persons over a longer period of time repeatedly make the person subject to unwanted actions with the purpose of offending the person’s dignity and creating a threatening, hostile and uncomfortable climate for the person in question.

Whether it is yourself or one of your colleagues who is subject to discrimination it is important to say ‘no’. You are able to make a difference at your workplace and if many of you say ‘no’ you create a better work environment where one does not feel uncomfortable to be oneself.

## WHERE CAN YOU GET HELP?

If you are unsure about whether or not you have been subject to discrimination you can find more information about how to get help at Body of Equal Treatment’s website [www.ligebehandlingsnaevnet.dk](http://www.ligebehandlingsnaevnet.dk) and the Danish Institute for Human Rights’ website [www.humanrights.dk](http://www.humanrights.dk). If you want to make a complaint about your experience within the labour market then turn to your shop steward or directly to your union and see if they want take your case.

You can also turn to the Body of Equal Treatment who will then examine your case. You can apply to the Body of Equal Treatment by sending an email to [ast@ast.dk](mailto:ast@ast.dk) or by calling +45 33 41 12 00.

The Danish Institute for Human Rights provides counselling and legal advice to victims of discrimination. We advise on the right not to be discriminated against and where to carry out your case. If it is not possible to get the case tried sufficiently with the Body of Equal Treatment then The Danish Institute for Human Rights can assist people in pleading their case at the court.

If you want to know more about the possibilities for counselling and legal assistance at the Danish institute for Human Rights then contact the institute’s advisory on equal treatment by sending an email to [ligebehandling@humanrights.dk](mailto:ligebehandling@humanrights.dk) or call on +45 32 69 86 66. The telephone is open Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 3pm.

### IN SHORT:

- Say ‘no’ if you or another person experiences discrimination
- Talk with one another about what is and is not acceptable
- Find information about discrimination and help on [www.ligebehandlingsnaevnet.dk](http://www.ligebehandlingsnaevnet.dk) and [www.humanrights.dk](http://www.humanrights.dk)
- Talk to your shop steward or union
- Contact the Danish Institute for Human Rights to get counselling
- Make a complaint to the Body of Equal Treatment

### REFERENCES:

Clutterbuck, David & Ragins, Belle Rose (2002) *Mentoring and Diversity – An international perspective*. Butterworth-Heinemann  
The Danish Institute for Human Rights (2008) *The Wheel of Diversity – A diversity management tool box* (Danish only)  
The Danish Institute for Human Rights (2005) *Equal Treat Compliance Tool* (Danish only)

# WHEN COLLEAGUES ARE DIFFERENT – inspiration for dialogue and curiosity

## The Danish Institute for Human Rights 2011

EDITORS : Rannvá Arnadóttir and Susanne Nour (responsible), The Danish Institute for Human Rights. Elisabeth Plum, Plum & Co. ApS

TRANSLATION : Michael De Martino Jensen and Katrine Holm Johansen

GRAPHIC DESIGN : hans VISUELLE VERDEN

PRINT : Handy-Print A/S

© 2011 The Danish Institute for Human Rights

ISBN 978-87-91836-42-8



This publication is made of 100 % recycled paper and vegetable-based ink.

This publication is supported under the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS (2007-2013).  
For more information see : [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)  
The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.



 INSTITUTE FOR  
MENNESKERETTIGHEDER