

Guidelines for
late-life career

Inspiration: Impact
of staying in the
labour market

Making it attractive for seniors to stay in the labour market

2024

How to attract
and retain
seniors

Matching of
expectations

Company
considerations for
late-life career



Foreningen af
Rådgivende Ingeniører
FRI

Inspiration for making it attractive for seniors to stay in the labour market

Many FRI member firms find that their senior employees leave at the age of 60, resulting in a significant loss of knowledge and experience that cannot be replaced by hiring new employees. This, coupled with the difficulty in recruiting new employees, makes it even more important to focus on how organisations can retain experienced employees longer – but also attract seniors when positing jobs.

Today, people over the age of 65 make up 20% of the population, but projections from Statistics Denmark show that by 2039, 25% of Danes will be over 65.

People do not age in the same way as our grandparents' generation. At age 65 or 75, many people do not feel like they are done with working life or old. In this way, age becomes a feeling created by our expectations of what particular identity is associated with a certain age.

[\(click to read more\)](#)

So even with a retirement age of 67 in Denmark, which is high compared to many other EU countries, a large proportion of the member firms' seniors have many good years left in the labour market.

The purpose of these guidelines is to make it attractive for employed seniors to continue working in FRI member firms, but also to attract seniors from outside to apply for employment in FRI member firms. Therefore, these guidelines can be used as motivation for both the employee and the applicant.

Considerations for how to get seniors to continue working

1. Does the company have a late-life career policy?
2. How can you attract – and retain – seniors in your organisation?
3. The company's late-life career considerations.
4. Matching of expectations with the senior employee and the senior applicant
5. Focus on the senior's financial situation by staying in the labour market

1. Company guidelines for late-life career

Many seniors do not share their late-life career considerations with their boss. There can be several reasons for this, for example:

- That seniors do not want to give themselves away by sharing thoughts of reduced work capacity or planned retirement for fear of losing their position in the organisation.
- That the boss does not invite this kind of clarification and dialogue, either because it is not a tradition or because it is forgotten in the rush of things.

Therefore, the company should consider:

- Does the company have guidelines setting out goals and frameworks for the area?
- If not, it should be considered whether there is a need, for example, to make late-life career a systematic part of the appraisal interview at a certain age, so that it is not characterised as something personal. Alternatively, special dialogues could be introduced for this target group.

2. How to attract and retain seniors

Companies need to consider what seniors want from the workplace

- Opportunity to work on interesting tasks.
- Opportunity to maintain the same level of responsibility.
- Opportunity to take on less responsibility.
- Opportunity to reduce working hours.
- Opportunity to work more flexible hours.

- Social initiatives that make it fun to be a senior employee in the organisation.
- Unchanged pay scale point.

3. The company's (your) considerations for the senior employee's late-life career

- What are your own perceptions of the relevant senior – and how are they expressed in your daily management communication?
- Do you meet the senior with the notion that age does not matter?
- How do you recognise the senior's skills?
(click to read more)
- What organisational dialogues do you have with the senior and to what effect?
- How do you work to create a development framework for the senior?
- What initiatives support senior retention?
 - Does the company offer social events for seniors similar to those offered to younger employees?
- What schemes do you have in place that allow for flexible transition arrangements?
- Which organisational forms support knowledge and experience sharing across generations?

4. Matching of expectations with the senior employee and the senior applicant

The nature of future employment dialogues differs depending on whether it is an already employed senior or a hiring situation.

For an existing senior employee, it may be relevant to discuss possible changes in roles, including responsibilities and development opportunities. If it is a job interview, the position can be better shaped to the applicant's needs, so in both situations it can be useful to focus on the expectations of the job.

Inspiration for a dialogue with the senior about matching of expectations:

- **Ask questions** that give you insight into and understanding of the senior's needs, experiences, resources and skills. ([click to read more](#))
- **Match expectations**, where you offer your perspective and how you see the senior's skills contributing to the company. ([click to read more](#))
- **Variation:** The opportunities offered by the job to utilise and develop different skills, especially those that reflect the senior's experience.
- **Task identity:** The ability to complete and finalise tasks from start to finish, not to mention the opportunity to see oneself in the result. Job feedback
- **Autonomy:** The opportunities offered by the job for self-determination. It is especially important to focus on how the senior can personally make a difference.
- **Job feedback:** The level of information and knowledge about own performance in the job. As some seniors tend to underestimate the importance of their own experience, it is important to focus on how new skills are connected to those already established. It is about respecting their experience.
- **Pay:** Has the senior reached a final pay that means that the senior should not follow the normal wage and salary trend by continuing to work? How do you deal with pensions in relation to reduced working hours etc.?

5. Focus on the senior's financial situation by staying in the labour market

There are many (unforeseen) practical obstacles that risk making it financially unattractive to continue working after retirement age. Here, the company can recommend that the employee seeks counselling from, for example, a trade union, the DaneAge Association or their own/the company's pension company, which often also offers pension checks.

Appendix:

In this way, age becomes a feeling created out of our expectations of what particular identity is associated with a certain age.

Depending on the specific context, it may be relevant to talk about people who are 50, 60, 65 or 70 years old. This means that we can talk about the age groups 50+, 60+, 65+ and 70+.

How do you recognise the senior's skills?

Many seniors leave the workplace because they feel they are not recognised or their skills are not valued. Recognition through feedback is about highlighting what is appreciated about the senior's work performance and clarifying the positive impact it has had on others. The key to successful motivation is realistically and fairly recognising the senior's skills and autonomy.

Ask questions that give you insight into and understanding of the senior's needs, experiences, resources and skills.

Be aware that seniors often tend to underestimate their own recent learning and see themselves as slow learners. Other people's negative perceptions of age often have a negative impact on a senior's self-perception.

Match expectations, where you offer your perspective and how you see the senior's skills contributing to the company.

Resourceful seniors retire early if their work is not sufficiently rewarding and meaningful, and if they feel their skills are not valued.

Therefore, make sure that the senior does not feel under-stimulated; point out the senior's opportunities to learn, e.g. through mentoring younger or new employees, as well as concrete tasks where the senior can use their insight and knowledge in new ways. But also focus on the senior's contribution in concrete projects.

Background material

Once you have retired, you cannot go back! If you want to continue working after reaching retirement age, all public authorities, such as ATP, must be informed that you want to continue working, otherwise you will lose money, e.g.:

- Apply for a deferral of your state pension – otherwise you will lose the supplements you save up by continuing to work.
<https://www.borger.dk/pension-og-efterloen/Folkepension-oversigt/udskudt-pension> (in Danish)
- If a pension is paid out, it will be taxed at the marginal rate.
- Frozen holiday pay cannot be deferred, i.e. will be taxed at the marginal rate.
- An annuity pension allows you to change the payout period along the way, e.g. choose to start with a low payout to supplement salary during part-time employment and then increase later, but there is no option to pause the payout if you subsequently choose full-time employment – resulting in marginal tax.
- Loss of earning capacity insurance ends on the day of retirement age.
- You get kicked out of your unemployment insurance fund.
- If you work part-time, your income is no longer offset 1:1 in your state pension. It was decided by the Danish Parliament to stop offsetting against own earned income on 1 June 2023 with retroactive effect from 1 January 2023.

The DaneAge Association has a theme page where you can read much more about seniors and late-life career. You can find it here:

<https://www.aeldresagen.dk/viden-og-raadgivning/penge-og-pension/arbejdsliv> (in Danish)

All pension providers offer advice on saving and transitioning to retirement.

Guidelines for late-life career

Financial impact of staying in the labour market

FRI, the Danish Association of Consulting Engineers, is the trade association for consulting and engineering firms. FRI works to improve the business conditions of its member firms and the framework conditions of the industry. We have done so since 1904.

FRI's member firms primarily provide consulting within: Building, urban planning and architecture, construction and infrastructure, energy and industry, climate and environment and international development.

- FRI is a platform for identity and pride
- FRI is a platform for networking
- FRI is a platform for influence
- FRI is a platform for services

FRI creates value for all member firms.

See more at www.frinet.dk

Matching of expectations

Company considerations for late-life



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