

## Välkommen – Welcome

A warm welcome to our group meeting on the theme of Networking and LinkedIn! It's great to see you all, today we will be focusing on an important part of professional life: networking.

Belong collaborates with the EU's Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), in implementing this round of the program.

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## Agenda

Here is tonight's agenda!

- We will start the evening by sharing some tips on networking. You will also practice networking in groups through an elevator pitch exercise designed to improve your skills.
  - After that, we'll talk about how to use LinkedIn to strengthen your network, followed by a LinkedIn workshop in groups.
  - Before we wrap up, you'll receive some final information and complete a short evaluation.
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## Nätverkande – Networking

Now we're going to dive into tonight's theme. At the start of the evening, we gave you an exercise where you were asked to talk to at least one person and ask each other some questions.

Networking is exactly that – creating connections with people you often don't know. When we talk about networking, the focus is often on professional life, meaning building connections with people who might work in areas similar to those you are interested in.

When looking for jobs in Sweden, having contacts is important. This is because many jobs are shared or offered through connections. Companies often find new employees through recommendations from friends or current employees. It's sometimes said that 7 out of 10 jobs are employed through connections. While it's hard to verify the exact figure, it's an indication of how significant networking can be. Contacts are essential to learn about job openings and to get a chance to introduce yourself.

Of course, the importance of contacts varies between industries. In some fields, contacts might not be very critical, while in others, they can be decisive. One thing is clear, though – knowing someone who can speak well of you is rarely a disadvantage when applying for a job.

For people coming from countries outside of Sweden, having contacts is especially important. This is because they may not have had a job in Sweden and therefore lack local references from previous managers or colleagues. Additionally, it can sometimes be harder for an employer to understand a person's education or previous work experience if it's from another country.

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## **Tips för nätverkande – Tips for networking**

But where can you network, and how do you do it most effectively?

Networking doesn't only happen at work-related events but also in everyday situations. You can make new connections at a friend's dinner party, in a club or association, or through hobbies like sports or other activities. These are often places where you meet people who share your interests and can be valuable to know. Additionally, there are conferences, seminars, and industry-specific events that can serve as excellent networking opportunities. Before attending an event, it's a good idea to think about who you'd like to meet and talk to – it's often better to build a few deeper connections rather than having many brief conversations. After the event, you can connect with the person on LinkedIn, ideally with a personal message.

To network effectively, it's important to be curious, genuine, and to actively listen to the person you're speaking with. Try approaching one person instead of a whole group, and avoid talking too much about yourself. Asking questions and showing interest helps make the conversation feel more natural and engaging. It's also helpful to prepare a few questions in advance to keep the conversation flowing. Networking is all about building relationships, so be open and authentic in your approach.

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## **Berätta om dig själv – Introduce yourself**

There are different ways to introduce yourself, and one effective tool is to master delivering an elevator pitch.

But what exactly is an elevator pitch? Imagine stepping into an elevator and finding yourself next to a recruiter from your dream company—what would you say? An elevator pitch is a short, compelling way to present yourself, spark interest, and open the door to further conversation—all within 30–60 seconds.

Here's what an elevator pitch should include:

- Who are you? Start with a brief introduction of yourself.
- What do you do? Highlight your key skills, strengths, and relevant experiences.
- What do you want? Share your goal or ambition.

Tips for a good pitch:

**Be clear:** Use simple, concrete language.

**Stand out:** Spark curiosity but keep it concise.

**Tailor it:** Adapt your pitch for different audiences or contexts.

**Finish strong:** Suggest a next step, like a meeting or exchanging contact details.

Where can you use your elevator pitch? In various networking scenarios, like today's event, job interviews, on your CV, or on LinkedIn.

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## Exempel på hisspitch – Example on elevator pitch

Here are two examples of elevator pitches:

*"Hi, my name is Sonja. Nice to meet you! I previously worked as a PR Manager with a particular focus on product launches. In addition to my seven years of professional experience, I recently earned my MBA from ABC University, specializing in consumer trust. I find the work your PR team does both innovative and inspiring, and I'd love to use my expertise to contribute to your company. Would it be possible to schedule a short meeting next week to discuss potential opportunities within your team?"*

**Why this pitch works:** Mira's pitch is clear and engaging. It highlights her goals, experience, and passion while creating an opportunity for dialogue and collaboration.

*"Hi, my name is Alok. I recently graduated with a degree in marketing and I'm now looking for an internship to gain more practical experience. During my studies, I worked quite a bit with market research, content creation, and social media, and I find it exciting to see how companies can grow through these tools. I'd love to hear more about what you do, and if you see any opportunities where I could contribute."*

**Why this pitch works:** Alok communicates more casually in a physical networking setting. He emphasizes his skills from his studies and his goals. By ending with a direct question about internship opportunities, he naturally opens the door for further conversation.

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## Gruppövning – Group exercise

It's time for some practice! You'll get the chance to practice presenting yourselves with your own elevator pitch. You'll work in small groups and have 35 minutes for the exercise. The groups will gather just outside.

We've done our best to divide you into groups with others in the same or similar industries. You received preparation instructions via email last week, but you can use the following structure for the exercise:

Introduction: Your name and role/background/education/dream job.

Skills: What are you good at?

Experience: A brief summary of your background.

Value: How can you contribute?

Strong ending: Suggest a follow-up, like exchanging contact details.

Take turns presenting yourselves to everyone in the group. Mentors are encouraged to also introduce themselves with an elevator pitch and provide feedback on the mentees' elevator pitches.

You'll receive a handout with the instructions from my colleague, Malin. When I call your name, please go to Malin, and she will guide you to your group and location.

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## Share your experiences from the group

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## LinkedIn

Welcome back! Now I thought we'd talk a bit more about LinkedIn. Most of you are probably familiar with LinkedIn, a digital platform for networking within the professional world.

With LinkedIn, you can:

- Create and maintain connections with people in your field.
- As a job seeker, find contacts at a company.
- Get job recommendations that match your skills.
- As an employer, find skilled individuals recommended by someone you know.

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## Skapa en profil – Create a profile

We won't go into too much detail tonight about how to create a profile or what to consider when doing so. If you'd like tips on that, you can check out our guides for the mentorship program, where we've included a link to something called "The Blue Envelope."

The Blue Envelope is information directly from LinkedIn with tips on how to create a strong profile.

However, I do want to share **two tips** for building your profile.

**First, make it clear that you're looking for a job.** You can do this by going to your profile, clicking "Open to" and then selecting "Finding a new job." Here, you can choose who can see that you're job-seeking. If you select "All LinkedIn members," you'll get the green ring with the text "Open to work" around your photo. We recommend using the green ring if you're currently unemployed. This allows both recruiters and others in your network to see that you're job hunting.

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## Skapa en profil (nyckelord) – Create a profile (keywords)

**Second, think about keywords to increase your visibility in search results.**

One tip is to analyze job postings and identify common titles and skills relevant to you. Adapt these keywords to your field and the job you're seeking, and be sure to include synonyms employers might use—such as both "project management" and "project coordination." Update regularly and add new keywords as you develop your skills.

**Place these keywords strategically on your profile.** Your headline is a key area—rather than writing "Looking for a new job," use something that describes your role and experience, such as: "HR Generalist with experience in recruitment, payroll, and managerial support seeking new opportunities." Integrate these keywords into your summary, experience descriptions, and skills section to help you become even more visible to employers and recruiters.

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## Skapa kontakt – Establish contact

The idea behind LinkedIn, as mentioned, is to network with others digitally. So, it's not enough to just create a profile and make a few connections. The next step is to interact with others, meaning you should be active and engage with people on LinkedIn. The more you use LinkedIn, the better and more rewarding it becomes. Here are three specific examples of how you can engage with others:

You can think of them as steps on a ladder, starting with the easiest and gradually trying the next step. We'll briefly present them here and then dive deeper into the last two of them.

### **Step 1: Interact with other people's posts**

- Like and comment. Most people appreciate reactions to their posts.
- Engaging with others' posts also makes you more visible in their LinkedIn feeds.
- Always stay positive and professional—what you write is visible to many others, including potential employers or future colleagues.

### **Step 2: Create your own posts**

- For example, share updates about something special you've done, like meeting someone, visiting a workplace, or completing a course.
- You can also write posts about your thoughts on topics related to your industry or the profession you work in or want to work in.

### **Step 3: Make personal connections with people you'd like to talk to**

- Send connection requests and personalized messages.

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## **Skriv egna inlägg 1 – Create your own posts 1**

Here are some tips to help make your posts more engaging and interesting for others:

- First and foremost, think about what value your post offers to those who read it.
- For example, if you're writing a post about meeting your mentor, don't just write, "Yesterday, I met with my mentor, and we had interesting conversations."

Instead, it's much better to write:

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## **Skriv egna inlägg 2 – Create your own posts 2**

*"Yesterday, I met with my mentor, and we talked about preparing for job interviews. We discussed how important it is to prepare and think through what I want the recruiter to know about me. How do you prepare for job interviews?"*

- The second example provides more detail about what you actually discussed, highlighting the importance of preparing for a job interview.
  - It also ends with a question, which is great because it invites others to comment on your post and share their tips. This increases your visibility and creates opportunities for dialogue with others.
  - Including a photo with your post often makes it more noticeable. It could be a picture of yourself or something you want to share. For instance, in this example, you could add a photo from your meeting with your mentor.
  - It's also a great idea to tag other people in your post. This makes it visible to their network and shows appreciation for the person you're tagging. For example, you can tag your mentor if you're posting about meeting them.
  - Finally, my last piece of advice is: "Dare to try!" Experiment and see what works well and what doesn't. That's how you learn.
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## Skapa personlig kontakt – Personal contact request

The third step is to create personal contact with people you want to talk to more. When you send a connection request to someone, you can also send a message. You can also write to contacts you already have in the chat. It's a good idea to do so, and you can keep the following in mind:

- **Personalize your connection requests.** Avoid requests that are too general. Mention common interests or something specific about the person's work. Example: *"Hi Johanna, I admire your work in 'sustainability' and would love to add you to my network."*
- The same applies if you are contacting an employer. **Do some research before sending messages.** Learn about the company first. Tailor your message to show your understanding. Example: *"Hi Alok, I am impressed by your company's work in sustainability". It would be interesting to hear more about how you work in this area."*
- **Be clear and concise.** Get to the point quickly and be clear about your purpose, e.g., that you want advice or want to explore opportunities. Request informational interviews. Instead of directly asking for a job, ask for a short call to learn more about the person's role or company.
- **Offer something of value.** Share relevant articles or insights to show your interest and give something back. Example: *"Hi Sonja, I read an article about sustainability in the finance sector that I think might be of interest to your company's work. What do you think of the article?"*
- **Be patient and polite.** Don't expect immediate responses. Follow up politely after a week if you haven't received a reply.
- Be brave and try! Test different ways to contact people, so you can find something you feel comfortable with.

Remember, in the best case, such contact can lead to a job opportunity, and perhaps to creating a connection with someone even outside of LinkedIn. If you have established contact with someone on LinkedIn, it really doesn't hurt to ask if they would like to have a coffee or lunch to talk more!

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## **Hitta kontakter – Finding contacts**

But it's not always entirely obvious where to find people who are interesting to connect with. However, there are a few common ways that we would like to mention.

- One option is to identify interesting posts in your feed. When someone you're connected with, for example, likes or comments on someone else's post, it will also appear in your feed. This way, you can find interesting people to connect with simply by reading your feed.
  - Another way is to join various groups.
    - There are many different groups, so look for groups within your industry or on topics that interest you. In the groups, you can participate in discussions and connect with people in your field. Examples of groups include:
      - Swedish IT Network
      - HR & Recruitment Sweden
  - A third way to find people to connect with is through companies you find interesting to work for.
    - Look up interesting companies and start following them. You'll get updates when they have job openings. If you click on the people tab on the company's page, you can see people who work there. You can also see your contacts who are interested in the company, as well as second-degree connections—people who work there and with whom you share mutual friends/contacts.
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## **Gruppövning slide 1 – Group exercise slide 1**

Now it's time for a new exercise! We will now have a LinkedIn profile review, where you, as mentees, will show your LinkedIn profiles and get feedback from mentors or other mentees. You will again be in the same groups as before and you will have about 25 minutes.

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## Gruppövning slide 2 – Group exercise slide 2

Review each other's profiles and give feedback on (for example):

- Profile picture and headline – Does it look professional?
- Summary and experience – Are they clear and relevant?
- First impression – What can be improved right away?
- What can you do to be more active on LinkedIn?

If you have time towards the end: Think about 2-3 topics you're passionate about or want to be visible in, that you can add to your profile or create posts about.

You will receive the questions in the slide from my colleague Malin, so when I call your name, go to her and you can sit in the same place as you did during the first exercise.

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## Avrundning

Welcome back! We encourage you to update your profiles right after the session if you received suggestions for improvement or came up with new topics for visibility! If you like, we can take a few minutes to share the most valuable tips you came up with in your group. Who would like to start?

We are nearing the end of our session today. We truly hope that you've gained something from today's session and that it has been enjoyable and informative to meet other participants.

Today, you primarily got to talk with people other than your mentor/mentee. Please take the lessons and tips from today and make use of it during your next mentorship meeting. Also, remember that if you want to work more on networking and LinkedIn, there are more tips in the mentee and mentor guides.

We also want to recommend the LinkedIn group for the mentoring program. In the group we share weekly tips, and you can also network and share job opportunities or places to network. The group is called "Yrkesmentorer," and you'll get a link from us to join. So, please feel free to join that group.

Also, remember that we are here for you, and we want you to reach out and let us know how it's going and to ask questions if there is anything you want to talk about.

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## **Evaluation survey**

Before we wrap up, we'd love for you to fill out an evaluation of today's session. Knowing what you thought of it helps us to improve and develop these meetings further.

By now you should have received a text with the link to the survey. Please take 3 minutes to fill out the evaluation. All you need to do is click on the link, and it will take you to the questions in the survey.