

## How everything started and what it is about

In summer 2003 the Spokesperson of the International Research School of the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen asked me to develop a Soft Skills Programme that supplements their excellent inter-disciplinary scientific education: “There is more to becoming a great scientist than science itself. There is a second level that has to do with personal and social skills. We need to make this explicit to our students and offer them a structured approach to that topic.”

Professors, coordinators, other faculty members, and of course the PhD students themselves, specified what they expected from non-scientific seminars. The goal of the courses being: to improve their studies at the MPI and to qualify them for leading jobs in science or industry. Thus, 4 Modules were created:

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| Module 1 “Communication and Teams”   | focuses on your ability to express yourself and your interests in a cooperative way and on typical dynamics in peer groups and the success factors in teams. |
| Module 2 “Presentation Skills”       | emphasizes your rhetoric qualities such as structuring talks, usage of media and personal performance to enhance your credibility scientists.                |
| Module 3 “Self- and Time Management” | asks about your goals, motivations, energy flows, daily efficiency and introduces the topics of short, long-term and project planning.                       |
| Module 4 “Leadership Skills”         | deals with functions and responsibilities that come with “leading” others such as undergraduate or PhD students or research teams.                           |

During the years through feedback and evaluations by Students and Post-docs of various scientific areas and Graduate Schools, the courses became even more accurate and appropriate for the needs of the participants. Further Courses were developed:

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| Module 1C “Conflict Management”            | helps you to constructively engage with conflicts rather than avoid or escalate them unnecessarily and provides tools to handle this difficult arena more effectively. |
| Module 5 “Gender and Diversity Competence” | creates awareness of various forms of discrimination and empowers you to use diversity for respectful and creative workplaces.   |

Depending on the target group, topics can be emphasized, combined differently or new ones can be added. In this way I ensure that the trainings are tailor-made units for your Research Institute, Graduate School or University.

Please [contact](#) me for more information on content, conditions and references!