

Kite-mentoring training

Navigating Challenges: Effective Communication, Boundary Setting, and Emotional Management

Date: Thursday 04.12.2025 (9:00 – 17:00)

Location: Faculty of Engineering, Univ. Freiburg, Georges-Köhler-Allee, building 080 - seminar room

Invited trainer: Francesca Carlin (Berlin) - <https://www.francescacarlin.com/>

Registration: <https://terminplaner6.dfn.de/p/9e679b8ef620097861d84866f6f6fc8a-1100587>

1. Context

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields are still predominantly male-dominated, although there has been significant progress in recent years toward greater gender equality. Women in these environments still face unique communication challenges that can be difficult to navigate. This course is designed to empower women with the tools to thrive in these settings. Learn how to set and maintain boundaries, address toxic behaviors (including managing difficult bosses and handling mansplaining), assert yourself effectively, manage your emotions, and engage in tough conversations with clarity and control. Gain practical strategies to communicate with confidence, maintain your professional well-being, and create a more balanced and respectful work environment.

2. Workshop Description

2.1. Learning Outcomes

After the workshop, participants will:

- Be able to better set and enforce professional and personal boundaries with clarity and confidence.
- Gain skills on how to navigate and resolve challenging conversations, even in high-pressure situations.
- Recognize and address toxic behaviors, including mansplaining and difficult interpersonal dynamics, effectively and professionally.
- Develop strategies to manage their emotions during stressful interactions and maintain composure.
- Communicate assertively to ensure their ideas and needs are respected.
- Feel empowered to advocate for themselves in male-dominated environments

2.2 Approach

This One-day workshop is designed to reach the target aims through meaningful practice, individual and group activities, theater exercises, and other exercises informed by the latest research and best practices in communication.

2.3 Covered Topics:

Setting and Enforcing Professional and Personal Boundaries

- Defining boundaries in professional contexts.
- Techniques for clearly communicating limits.
- Recognizing when boundaries are being crossed and addressing it assertively.

Navigating and Resolving Challenging Conversations

- Frameworks for handling difficult discussions.
- Strategies for active listening and conflict de-escalation.
- Managing power dynamics in conversations.

Recognizing and Addressing Toxic Behaviors

- Identifying behaviors like mansplaining, gaslighting, and microaggressions.
- Tools to navigate interpersonal conflicts constructively.

Managing Emotions During Stressful Interactions

- Techniques for emotional regulation, such as mindfulness or grounding exercises.
- Building resilience to maintain composure under pressure.

Assertive Communication Skills

- Understanding the difference between passive, aggressive, and assertive communication.
- Practicing assertive language to express needs and ideas.
- Leveraging body language and tone for confident communication.

Self-Advocacy in Difficult Environments

- Overcoming barriers to speaking up and being heard.
- Strategies for networking and building alliances.