

Overview of the workshop programme

Conflict management in academia

From squabbles to a culture of conflict

Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

Collaborative Research Center/Transregio "Development, Function and Potential of Myeloid Cells in the Central Nervous System [NeuroMac]", Integrated Research Training Group "NeuroMac School"

23 May 2025 [9.00 – 17.00]

Format: In-person workshop

Target group: Postdocs and PhD candidates

Trainer: Robert Pfeiffer, GOLIN WISSENSCHAFTSMANAGEMENT, Berlin

Conflicts are unavoidable in the normal course of the working life, in academia as well as outside. Whether it is about subject specific differences, competition amongst colleagues or disagreements with the supervisor or boss – there are plenty of potentially explosive situations. But it does not have to come to a detonation which damages the atmosphere in the long run!

It is not difficult to deal with conflicts in a constructive manner and to solve them before they grow into a substantial problem. If conflict is neither ignored nor allowed to escalate into a personal power struggle and the own as well as the others' motives are reflected upon, one can act consciously instead of only reacting emotionally. This way there is a chance of finding a solution with which all parties are satisfied.

This workshop conveys fundamental knowledge about dealing with conflict and trains the powers of observations as well as negotiation skills. The participants learn to better judge the impact of their behaviour and to develop strategies for solving conflicts. The workshop focus is:

- >> Basics of conflict management:
Subject and interpersonal levels in conflict situations
- >> Give way and stop signs:
Offering leeway, setting boundaries
- >> Bad weather warning:
Recognising conflict causes and signals in time
- >> An eye for an eye until the bitter end?
Win-win solutions as an alternative
- >> Role-play:
Methods of de-escalation
- >> Looking in from the outside:
Mediation as a tool for solving conflicts
- >> Conflict management:
My next steps

Robert Pfeiffer, Berlin, lawyer and mediator, offers workshops on conflict management, debating and effective presentation. He completed his legal studies in Heidelberg, Madrid and Potsdam with accolades as a public speaker. Previously, he had volunteered with an American NGO, teaching a social-emotional learning curriculum at New York City public schools. He received his mediation training at the Heidelberg Institute for Mediation, attended the Munich Business Mediation program and was trained in negotiation at the Program on Negotiation [PON] at Harvard Law School. Following legal apprenticeships in the realm of international peace mediation [German Foreign Office, Berghof Foundation], he worked as a research and teaching fellow at the interdisciplinary Master's Programme on Mediation and Conflict Management at Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt [Oder].