

From Science To Headlines (PHGS/JHS Retreat 2017)

Thursday 16 February 2017 - Saturday 18 February 2017

Timmendorfer Strand

Program

Keynote talk: Beer – from the first glass to a hangover [Prof. Roth, Freie Universität Berlin]

Beer brewed according to the German „Reinheitsgebot“ or purity law is regarded as the quintessence of an unadulterated food produced without any "chemistry". What an error! There is so much exciting chemistry involved all the way from barley to a glass of beer in front of us. The chemical climax is the conversion of some hop constituents into bittering substances via a breathtaking alpha-ketol- or Oktoberfest-rearrangement. This is just another proof that chemistry cannot only be exciting but can also taste good. But there is a dark side. After too much beer drinking there arises what is colloquially referred as a "hangover" with all its terrible symptoms. How can a tiny molecule like ethanol be at the root of so much human misery. Let's get to the bottom of the chemical consequences of a night of celebrating to excess. Well then: Bottoms up!

Seminar I: Improving your personal presence [Thomas Chemnitz, DIE GORILLAS]

Having a relaxed and confident personal presence is of great importance in your job in order to build an atmosphere of trust in your team, to radiate self-confidence and to be convincing as a leader. The focus of this workshop will be to sharpen the awareness of your body language and your voice, to be able to deal with the unexpected and to discover fun in presentation. By using simple but effective exercises, many of which come from improvisational theatre training, we aim at building a relaxed personal presence in each situation.

So the workshop might also be called "Improve your presence with improv".

Seminar II: Presentation! [Kristin Raabe, NaWik]

What's your core message? – Presenting research results in front of lay audiences or potential funders is becoming) more and more important for scientists everywhere. Often they have only a few minutes, to get their message across. Ted-Talk, Elevator-Pitch, Science Slam or Famelab are just some of the well-known presentation formats that only last a few minutes. To convince an audience in such a short amount of time one needs to be a master in the art of brevity. In order to succeed in such a situation, scientists need to let go of dull routines and leave their comfort zone. This workshop offers the unique opportunity to get feedback on one's own performance from an experienced science journalist and communication trainer in addition to the valuable comments from other group members. In a safe environment, participants can develop and test new ideas for their next science communication project. The participants will also experience how the use of different gestures and facial expressions can totally change, how the audience is perceiving their presentation. And last but not least, you will get to know a more than 2000 year-old strategy from the Aristotelian rhetoric., which is still very useful today to persuade audiences.

Seminar III: Effective Scientific Communication [Prof. Olaf Wolkenhauer, University of Rostock]

Science is not about facts but the communication of facts; Results do not speak for themselves but require an argument. Effective communication is therefore of crucial importance for a successful career and yet it is something we are usually not prepared for.

In this course you will learn to get your message across in scientific publications, conference posters, for grant proposals, on your web-page and through oral presentations. The technique taught in this course is simple and effective at the same time, exploiting a pattern that is commonly employed by successful communicators.

The course will help you to present your work to an international and interdisciplinary audience, efficiently and professionally. You will learn to analyse scientific publications for their composition, the structure of an argument, and the use of English. We will also pay attention to the specific challenges of participants that are non-native speakers of the English language.

The concept is not specific to a particular field and is well suited for researchers and students in the engineering, biomedical, biological, medical and physical sciences.

To produce a concrete outcome for the workshop, you should prepare an abstract. It does not matter whether this is the abstract to a publication, poster or the description of a project on your webpage. The text should be strictly limited to a maximum of 200 words (less than 1/2 page). The course will give you the opportunity to improve the text.

Seminar IV: Improvisation theatre for scientists [Elena Kaufmann, Creative Communications EK]

Workshop goals:

“To gain experience presenting scientific topics to a non-specialised audience.”

Each workshop of 3 hours will use improv games and roleplay exercises to: practice spontaneous presentation, think outside of the box, gain skills in speaking about your scientific field, and learn to use non-verbals to communicate.

Note: The workshop is practical meaning that each of us is not a witness but a participant.

Be prepared to move around, practice new games, and challenge shyness and fears.

Please wear comfortable clothing and be ready for some fun!

Journalist Talk: How does Science enter popular Media? [Kristin Raabe, NaWik]

Fake (or sensationalist) news are often attracting more attention than real, hard earned research results. The shifting media landscape makes it more and more difficult for the audience to differentiate between a well-researched article from an experienced science writer and an opinionated blog post from a not so well educated blogger. How can scientists address the risk to be misinterpreted by news media? One very effective approach can be to engage your target audiences directly and actively participate in science communication. But putting more effort into science communication also means that scientists need more than facts, figures and exciting research results. Passion for their cause and clear opinions help convincing audiences. The two things that make a scientific research result not trustworthy within the scientific community are

exactly what make the scientist trustworthy for the general public. Because the media landscape is more confusing and diverse than ever, scientists should get help from professionals and form alliances with well-established science journalists. And the good news is, that they can use multiple online platforms to spread their science story. Strategies and tools to get your research topic into the news media will be outlined in this talk.