

Cause for the Workshop and Target Group

The workshop is offered to postdoctoral researchers at DESY. DESY's Career Center COAST supports their career aspirations for both academic and non-academic career paths. The workshop is targeted at researchers interested in both types of career paths, helping them develop personally suitable career visions.

Continuing permanently in academic science is the ambition of many who continue research after their PhD. Others are undecided and would like to know what their opportunities are. Only few will ultimately succeed in an academic career track: about 80% will leave academia. Early career researchers stand to benefit from deciding early on whether they want to follow an academic career path or would prefer to continue outside academic research. Knowing their preferred path will help them plan strategically, allowing them to focus their energy on meeting their career goals.

The workshop is designed to be part of a series fostering career planning. The workshop's target group are postdoctoral researchers employed at DESY, with a background in physics, engineering, or other natural sciences. A significant portion of the participants are non-German in origin and/or have spent part of their academic life outside of Germany. Participation in the workshop is voluntary. Participants might participate in the two further workshops on finding non-academic jobs and on application training. This is not mandatory.

The target group seeks to learn how to choose a career path that matches their personal interests and skills. They want to learn about their individual chances of continuing in the academic system but are also interested in discovering what other employers might expect of them. The workshop will provide the participants with tools for finding out which career would match their competencies and values.



Goals of the Workshop

The workshop serves to encourage early career researchers to actively develop their career. It supports them in reflecting their own wishes, interests, and skills, making it easier for them to decide what career path they want to pursue. The participants will come to acknowledge that while a career cannot be fully pre-determined, it does not "just happen" to researchers, but benefits from reflection and initiative. The postdocs will learn to name their skills and determine their career values. They develop an integrated vision for their personal and professional life. They learn how to approach the question of finding suitable non-academic careers.

Methods

The workshop includes work in the plenary, group work mostly in the form of peer coaching as well as individual work. Essential inputs are usually delivered as a response by the trainer to questions raised in plenary discussions or as an addition to the results of group work. The workshop is action-oriented, giving the participants ample room for self-analysis and group discussion. Successful career development requires individual engagement with self-concept through reflection and change of perspectives as well as active networking. The workshop's methods are aimed at developing these skills in the participants. They help them find the right questions but might not provide all answers.

Learning about career perspectives, determining one's status quo, and even planning might have little impact if it is not put into action after the workshop. To enhance transfer, the participants will learn how to include work towards long-term goals in their weekly or monthly schedules, they will commit to tangible next steps and they are encouraged to support each other beyond the workshop.

Work in the workshop is supported by handouts guiding participants through the exercises and by an after-workshop photo summary that includes all material from the workshop as well as annotations.

Contents & Overview of the Workshop

A pre-workshop survey made available through Microsoft Forms will be sent out to all participants a week before the workshop. It serves to make the participants reflect their expectations of the workshop, and helps the instructor get a feel for the needs of the participants ahead of the live session.

The workshop will be conducted in two 90-minute sessions, with a 30-minute break. I suggest 9:00 to 10:30 and 11:00 to 12:30 or 13:30 to 15:00 and 15:30 to 17:00.

The following overview is indicative; it might be adapted to the needs of the participants.

Module	Content
Welcome & Introduction 25 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Introduction of the trainer+ Getting to know each other, expectations+ Agenda & Goals+ Seminar rules
Skills & Competences 70 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Competences – Talents – Strengths – Skills (terminology)+ Defining one's own competences – how to, exercises (group work, individual reflection)+ Info: Career Paths and expectations of employers
Break 30 min	
Career Concept & Values 20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Career: Definition & Determinants+ Values: What does a successful career mean to me? (exercise)
Integrated Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Exercise: Vision for professional and personal life

35 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Integrates values + Results in preliminary goals
Next Steps 15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Strategies to integrate important but not urgent actions into your every-day work + Definition of next steps: individual work and team up with a partner to enhance transfer
Wrap-Up & Farewell 15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Feedback + Further Resources + Good-Bye

Material for Marketing the Workshop

Brief Summary

What career do you want to pursue? Which skills do you have that you would like to bring to the world?

We tend to avoid these big questions. Through self-reflection as well as through a change of perspectives by interacting with your peers, you will address these big questions and learn how to navigate them to enjoy a smooth career transition towards your next job(s). You will analyze your profile to develop a clearer and communicable view of your skill set and your career-related values. We will take personal and professional life into account and check career goals against your vision of a satisfying life. This is the right workshop for you no matter whether you are more interested in an academic, a non-academic career, or undecided.

Workshop duration: 2 x 90 minutes

Instructor

Dr. Christiane Kasack works as a coach and workshop facilitator. As a certified business coach and career counsellor, she supports personal development in time- and self-management as well as career planning.

In 2011, Christiane earned a PhD in the social sciences from the FU in Berlin. After two years of post-doc work, she turned to managing the Hertie School's PhD programs and later career development programs for postdocs at the Head Office of the Helmholtz Association.



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