

Navigating the Shark Pool.

Power games and micropolitical competence in academia

Interactive lecture / workshop online

Are you navigating the „shark pool“ or just trying to survive?

Researchers are embedded in specific hierarchical constellations – in Germany and elsewhere. Regardless of their position at the upper, middle or lower levels of their organization, they are confronted by irritating and even incomprehensible behavior and results: formal regulations may be bypassed, in a decision-making process expertise and institutionally defined responsibility may prove to be unimportant, rival camps may impair cooperation, ...

Some situations or processes involving power games are perceived as very unproductive, frustrating or annoying. However, experience may also tell us that difficult situations can be mastered by analyzing the dynamics of key situations and of the players' interests involved, by skillful communication and, generally, by a power-conscious approach.

The theoretical approach of *micropolitics* and its conceptual enhancement provide a framework to systematically grasp manifestations of the everyday uses of power in organizations. However, micropolitics is not just about the communication of persons in leadership positions or about power-abuse. In fact, self-interests - which can be ethically motivated - are pursued at all organizational levels. Individual or collective strategies are used to exert informal influence or to avoid control by others. Of central interest is the question of *power resources*, also from a diversity perspective.

The subject matter can enrich tea kitchen talks with an important shadow topic in your own organization. Above all, however, the opportunity is offered to reflect on power processes in one's own environment as well as one's own roles in micropolitical games - as "victims" or "actors" - on the basis of a theoretical approach. The workshop, in addition, provides opportunities to identify resources and strategies in order to enhance one's own micropolitical competence

Topics:

- science system and organization (in Germany)
- micropolitics, power games, power resources
- typical 'arenas'
- roles / game positions
- room for manoeuvre and micropolitical tools (workshop).

The two events can be booked individually or in combination (building on each other).

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Participants / target groups

- Doctoral candidates and postdocs who are aiming for a career in the science sector or who would like to learn about micropolitics in general in preparation for professional engagement elsewhere
- young professors
- executives and people in coordinating or advisory functions in science management.

Maximum participants: 40 persons in the lecture, 10 persons in the workshop.

Methods

The events offered are experience-based and participatory. Both the lecture (*two hours*) and the workshop (*one or 1,5 days*, as requested) are designed to be modular; the choice of topics is based on the working environment of the respective target group.

The following methods are used:

- brief introductions to concepts and models
- practice-oriented inputs
- individual reflections and small group work (breakout rooms)
- working on one's own cases or on case studies (in the workshop).

Various video conference systems (ZOOM / Cisco Webex / BigBlueButton) can be used. Interactive virtual whiteboards and GoogleDocs can be used for group work.

Before the lecture or workshop, the participants will receive some documents for preparation. Lecture notes will be shared with participants. Workshop participants will receive a comprehensive script about the content of the workshop including references to further exercises to ensure a lasting effect of the event.

About the trainer

Veronika Fuest is a certified consultant (systemic transactional analysis) and trainer. Multidisciplinary academic qualifications, engagements in collaborative research projects at various scientific institutions, academic teaching of political anthropology, and various assignments in science management (consultancy, management of ombudsman affairs, internal process moderation). Actor and institutional analyses in the field of science.

