

„Soft skills for academics and research assessment managers in the 21st century“

Program aim: The aim of the soft skills program is to academics and research assessment managers with the portfolio of highly effective communication tools. Upon successful completion of the program in English language, the attendees will be capable of more effective collaboration in international environment, managing their work time efficiently and of communicating with higher portion of assertiveness. They will also increase their capabilities in providing and receiving constructive feedback, solving problems and make decisions at a workplace and captivating their audience while presenting or applying design principles into daily communication routine.

Preliminary Program

1st July 2019 – Time Management

Central to the module is the sub-topic of priorities management, where the lecturer would focus on taking control and balancing multiple tasks even when they are all priorities with the aim of minimizing the impact of most common time wasters. Handling all of the unexpected demands and unplanned situations that destroy the most careful scheduling is also part the education outcome. Following topics will be covered during the training:

- Why do we want to manage our time better? What exactly do we want to change/get better at?
- My mission, areas of responsibility, priority goals, activities. What do my coworkers expect from me?
- What are the priorities I decide by during managing my time? How do I spend my time and what is really important (to me)?
- Planning, tools and methods (my roles and activities). What are the rules I need to comply with during planning my activities? What do I need to avoid?
- How to set my goals & rules I need to comply with, eliminating mistakes, rescheduling activities?
- How to fight time wasters (subjective and objective ones), how to identify them? Tools to eliminate them (or minimize them).

Suggested literature for further study (not a prerequisite):

Stephen R. Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

Dan S. Kennedy: No B.S. Time Management for Entrepreneurs

2nd + 3rd July 2019 – Problem Solving & Decision Making

Application of a problem-solving and decision-making model becomes vital due to repetition of problems occurring in the practical life with the same symptoms, which is very costly in terms of time, effort and money. This module will equip the attendees with useful aspects of problem-solving and decision making, including root cause analysis of problem, generating and evaluating alternative solutions, making appropriate decisions, and taking responsibility for the decisions. The attendees will be divided into teams of 3-4 people and will work in teams on 3rd July 2019 on the selected case study.

On top of a jointly solved case study, by the end of this module, the attendees will be able to:

- Understand key concepts in problem solving & decision making
- Identify the causes of poor problem solving & decision making
- Learn the process of problem solving & decision making
- Understand and practice different tools and techniques of problem solving and decision making
- Use various tools to address organizational problems

Suggested literature for further study (not a prerequisite):

Oliveri, Maria; Lawless, Rene; Molloy, Hillary - A Literature Review on Collaborative Problem Solving for College and Workforce Readiness

4th July 2019 – Communication Skills

People think that simple talking makes a good conversation. This block will deal with the issue why misunderstandings happen? Talking is simply not enough, for productive conversations much more is required than just ability to speak. Techniques and scenarios of productive conversations are also part of the module. Assertive communication will be presented as highly effective tool used to express our feelings and point of view without being aggressive or stepping on other people's toes. The trainer would acknowledge the attendees with answers for the following questions:

- How to make the other person sure we listen well?
- What and why to do it?
- In which situations and how to raise a proper question in order to get answers on what we're asking?
- How to be authentic and convey a message of a competent and reliable employee of the university?
- What are the effective strategies for dealing with others while taking into account the intended level of assertiveness and cooperation?

Suggested literature for further study (not a prerequisite):

Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler; McGraw-Hill: Crucial Confrontations - Tools for Resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior

Cheryl Hamilton: Communication for Results – A Guide for Business and the Professions

Trainer: Peter Rusiňák, PhD.

During his academic tenure, Peter co-founded the Center for North American Studies at the University of Economics in Bratislava and until 2016 served as the Center's manager. He has been a passionate supporter of the business-academic cooperation as he has been building bridges between universities and corporations since the beginning of his career. Currently, Peter serves as the policy officer in the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia and leads trainings on communication, soft skills, business etiquette and career advisory.