

## **GSGS Induction Part C – Co-operation and Self-Management**

27 November 2020, 10:00-13:00 (CET), via Zoom

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Welcome to the workshop!

Our schedule today:

10:00 – start

11:00-11:15 – first break

11:50-12:05 – second break

13:00 End

Zoom etiquette: use at least your first name (and better your full name) - video on, sound off, raising hands

Confidentiality, respect, strict time management

Get in touch if you need help. About 90 members - I cannot ask everyone each month how you are.

### **Personal Development Fields**

There still is a bug in the questionnaire I sent you. To fix it

- 1) Open the file and go to the "Evaluation" tab;
- 2) Copy `"=RANK(B11;B$11:B$20;0)"` (for English version) or `"=RANG(B11;B$11:B$20;0)"` (for German version) into cell C11 (uppermost cell in the green column) and copy (autofill) all other cells in the green column.

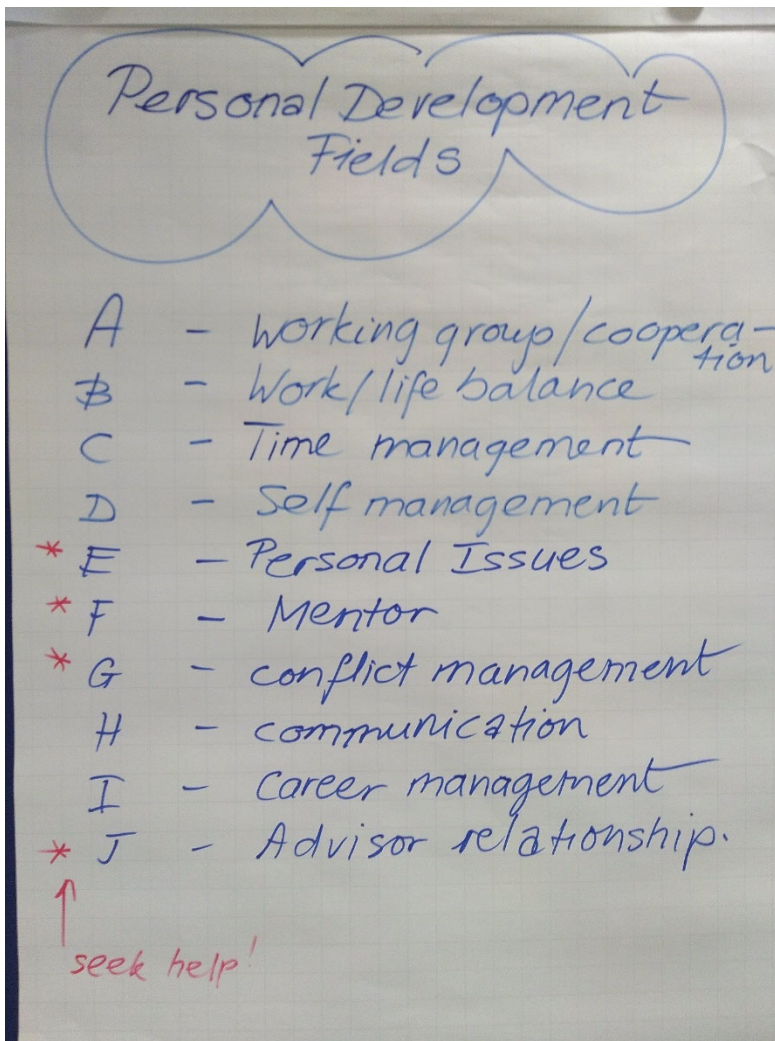
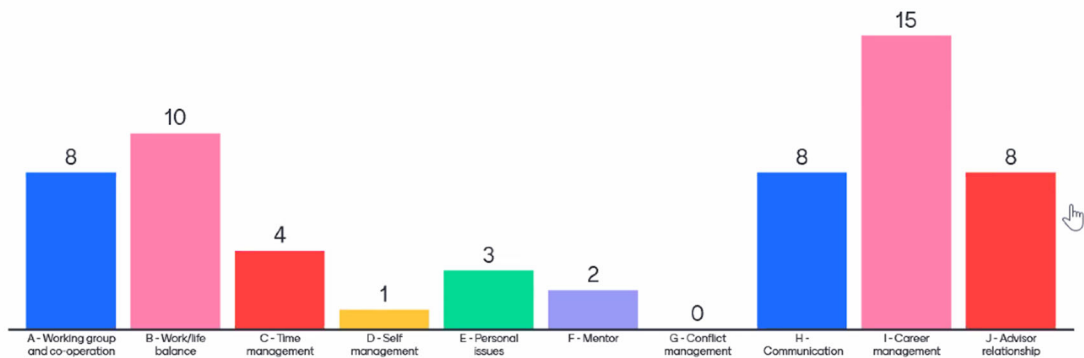
This probably changes the ranking of your personal development fields.

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) using your phone or your computer and enter the code **61 74 86 8**

Enter your "personal development fields" for which you got the highest "score". In the ranking, it has/ they have number "1". Everyone can enter up to 4 fields.

Enter your "personal development field(s)" ranked "1" in the questionnaire (green column)

Mentimeter



We will briefly go through all “fields”. Make sure that you make notes wherever you think that an issue applies to you.

**E – Personal Issues** can include health issues, housing, financial difficulties, visa problems and “external” factors such as care duties or problems in family / circle of friends.

“External Stress Factors” - very few students face external stress factors. If you do:

- ➔ Take time out to look at your priorities and possibly hard decisions about your graduate career, and/or
- ➔ Seek help (talk to your advisor, your TAC / Doctoral Committee or a mentor or friend, or contact to Karin)

For the majority of candidates: stress is self-induced.

To reduce stress:

- Get your **time-management** right.
- **Eat** healthily and **drink** plenty of water
- **exercise** regularly
- **sleep** enough hours per day
- take time to **unwind**. Unwinding is a necessary part of graduate student life - find out what suits you best (running, sports, team games, dancing, reading, handicrafts, art, walking, you name it)
- **Social** bonding - relationships with your peers could last a lifetime

*Adapted from: Christopher, 2011.*

**B – Work/life balance**

**C – Time management**

**D – Self-management**

Look at your “I spent a lot of time on.pdf”

Have a look at your time-consuming activities. Are there any that do not serve any "goal" (=what is important to me, either professionally or personally)? These are your "time thieves".

Discuss (in Break-out groups of 3 or 4):

- Appoint 1 person to operate a stop watch
- Appoint 1 person who will type up your groups’ list of important "time thieves".
- 2 minutes per person to introduce yourselves to each-other and to present your major time thieves. one person per groups types the most common "time thieves"

Most common "time thieves" [Copied from chat]

Emails+Meetings,  
overthinking & procrastination,  
cooking+chores

Watching Series,  
Smart Phone Games,  
Teaching,  
Not Work-related Projects (Private),  
Getting Data,  
Chores in the House

Too many zoom meetings. => Less time for actual research (e.g. less time to focus on writing codes, ...)

Personal: Full time work (outside of PhD), TV, phone games, **chatting with family/friends**, commuting – our time thieves are also for stress relief and wellbeing, so difficult to decide whether they are actually time thieves or not.

During work: emails, doing the small unimportant things before the harder important things, reading literature (supervisor might think it's a time thief), working extra hours, corona limitations

- \*Extended\* coffee breaks with colleagues
- Losing focus because there are a lot of small things to do; where to start
- Work besides PhD for some
- social media

reading papers  
run simulation  
writing code, debugging  
online meetings  
socialising  
coffee break zoom - can't talk in person about issues  
**sleeping**  
zoning out - think about what to write  
teaching myself - the only PhD in the group  
supervising Master's, bachelor's students  
Tutorial for seminar

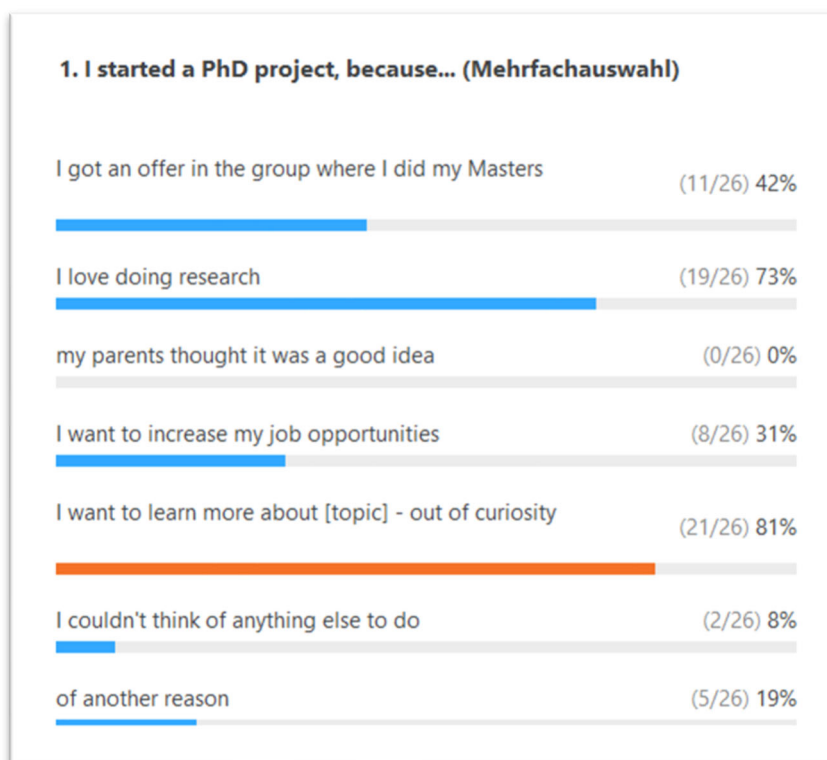
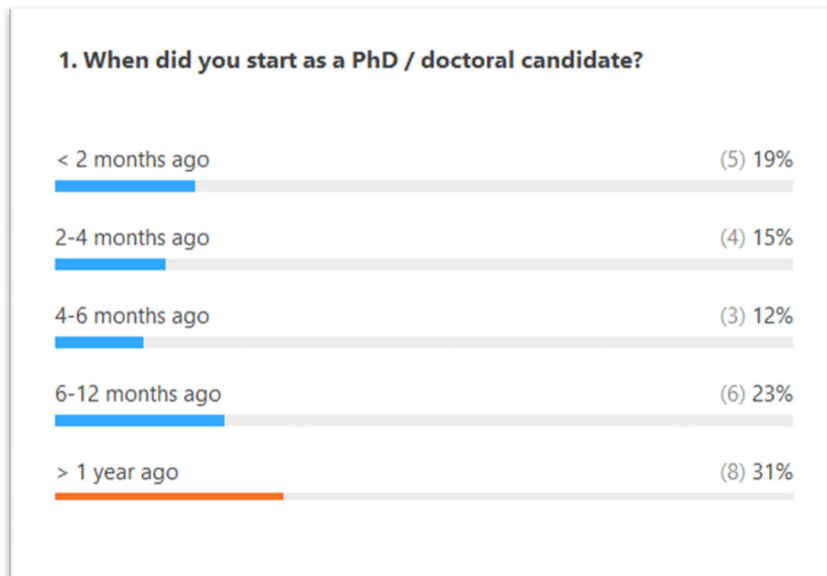
Work:

- getting lost while reading articles
- getting distracted while working on the internet
- coding bugs

non-work:

- series

- smartphone
- cooking



Is your reason a real motivation for you?

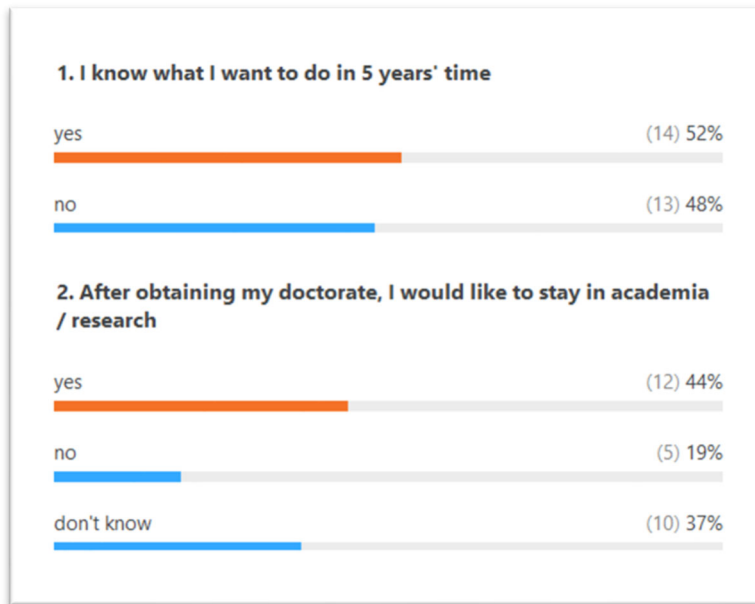
**Break (approx. 11:00-11:15) in breakout groups of 4 or 5. Feel free to “switch off” to reflect by yourself or chat with others.**

I will close all breakout rooms at 11:15, please be back in the main room by then.

## I – Career Management

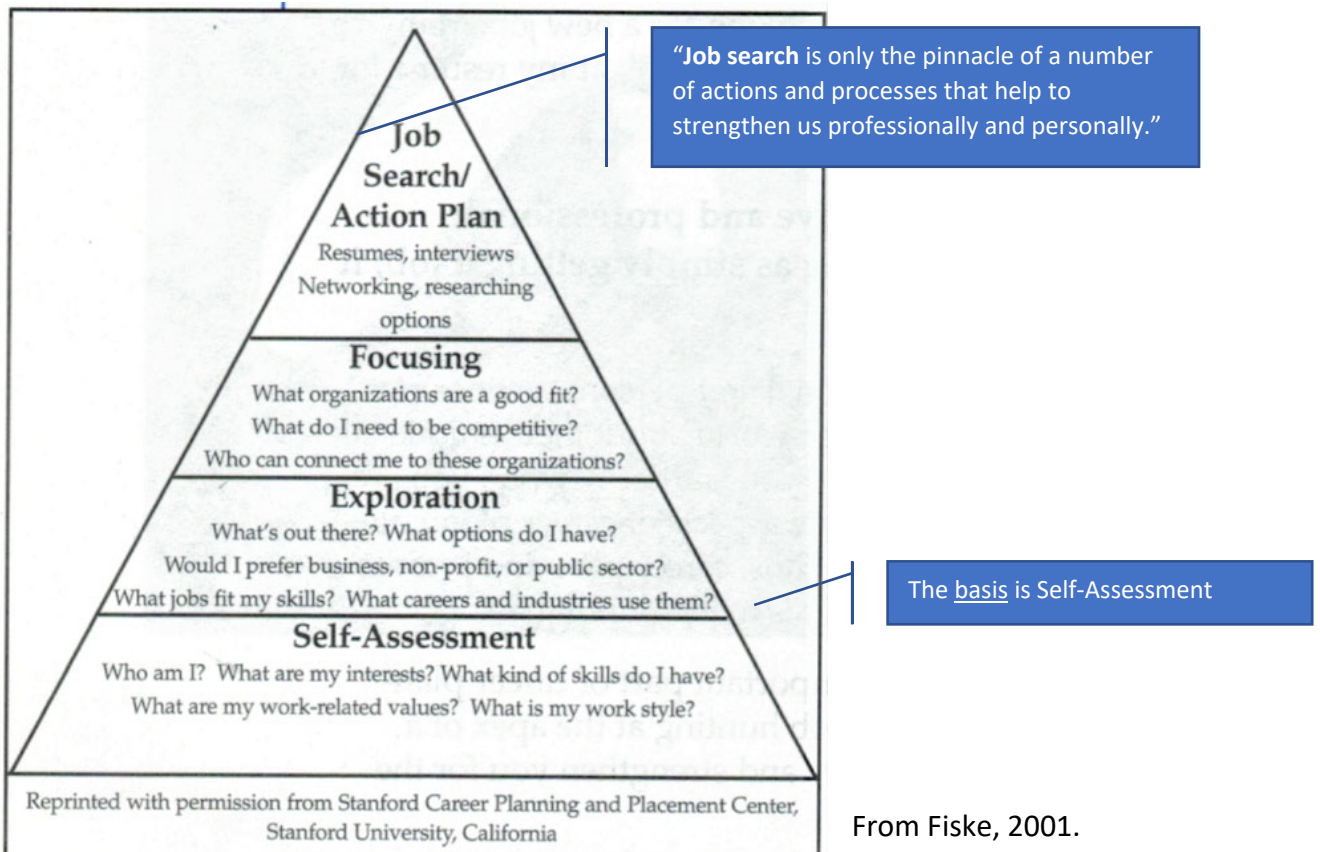
Q3 in zoom: I know what I would like to do in 5 years' time.

Q4: I would like to stay in academia / research.



Career planning  $\neq$  job hunting!

The process of career planning will also help you to become a better scientist.



Self-assessment: Do-it-yourself > see Fiske, Chapter 5

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*Career planning ...*

*... is not a stop-and-start activity but a continual process of professional development.*

*... helps you identify your options and realize opportunities quicker.*

*Devote a few hours of your time per week to think strategically. Where do you want to go both personally and professionally? What are your goals for the next period?*

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- See Christopher, Chapter 2, for further tips

### Curriculum Vitae (CV) (“Lebenslauf”)

When do you need one? (please raise hand to respond).

- Funding applications, website, awards, job search

Where do you “suddenly” get all the information you need?

Ever thought of keeping a “extended” CV up-to-date at all times?

Since I got a permanent job three years ago, I admit I no longer bother. Before that, I kept one large document, my “extended CV”.

Whenever I did anything noteworthy I entered it:

- Conferences attended,
- courses,
- publications,
- professional memberships,
- Contracts with from-to dates
- voluntary positions and committee work
- etc.

It is not a lot of work to maintain, but saves a lot of time and stress, when you “suddenly” need an up-to-date CV. Then you can just pick and choose from it]

Let me know if we should do a short course on this.

## H – Communication

What do you think of when you hear the word “communication” in a scientific context?

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use the code 56 80 21 7

Everyone can enter three words.



- academic papers
  - phone/video calls
  - email / whatsapp
  - teaching
1. conference talks
  2. working group presentations
  3. chairing a meeting
  4. introducing yourself
  5. small talk
  6. saying goodbye (ending a conversation)
  7. raising a difficult issue
  8. giving feedback

Are you “fluent” in any of these communication aspects?

Where do you see potential for improvement for yourself? 2 minutes to reflect and write down.

**In 8 breakout groups (3-4 people) (10 minutes)**

a) briefly introduce yourselves to each-other and say which 1 or 2 aspect(s) of



communication give(s) you the shivers (2 minutes per person)

b) Look at the number of your breakout group and at the corresponding number in the above list. Think of ways that could help someone improve their skills in that particular aspect of communication.

c) One of your group copies the number and your suggestions into the chat.

**After that, we have a break until 12:05.** You can stay in your breakout group and chat, take a break by yourself, or move to another breakout room.

Your tips for improving communication skills for:

1. conference talks -

Be prepared, present you talk to others beforehand (family, friends, relatives), try to explain your topic to laymen, know your audience, check all tools beforehand (laserpointer, monitor, sound, etc.), anticipate questions and prepare additional slides if necessary, get enough sleep before the talk, give a summary at the end and/or provide points for discussion, have your references and background information ready, get a buddy to sit in the audience to cheer you on

2. working group presentations - practice presentation, e.g. start with smaller audience or more private practice sessions

- speak calm and fluent

- gather feedback and try to convert it

- don't "waste" too much time to make it perfect - use it as a conversation starter with your group

3. chairing a meeting -

- organize everything around

- stick to the schedule

- ask questions if there are no

- redirect the conversation

- be into the topic

4. introducing yourself - start with formal stuff + necessary information: name, what do you work on, where, go into details, when have you started, which project are you involved in, which data is used

Think about which information people need about me;

Depends on the situation (personal vs. work related);

Overview of background of other people in the room;

Think about introducing yourself beforehand

Ask questions to the audience: who works in a similar field <-> audience raises hands (the one who introduced himself gets an idea what kind of audience he is facing, ...

what kind of background the audience has) <-> you can adapt your introduction to it

5. Small talk, networking, approaching people:

- Small talk not at a high and professional level necessary!

- everyone has their own way of talking and approaching, can all be successful
  - Identify informal situations (when is a good time for small talk)
  - reflect on gender and hierarchy/position, but don't let it intimidate you
  - Soft skills workshop from Studierendenwerk / AMC
  - women mentoring programs
6. saying goodbye (ending a conversation) -
    - excuse to leave: I Need some coffee/...
    - invite another Person into your Chat , makes it easier to then excuse yourself
  7. raising a difficult issue -
    - Talk with other people about it. (building confidence, roleplay)
    - Describe the problem.
    - Get to the core of the problem.
    - Give note in advance.
    - Take time to discuss the problem.
    - Say what would be a solution that could work for you.
  8. giving feedback -
    - constructive feedback
    - respectful communication and regard for the work the other has done
    - Honesty
    - Open-minded

**In my experience, communication difficulties lie at the basis of most conflicts.**

Has anyone heard about “non-violent communication” (*Gewaltfreie Kommunikation*)? > See Marshall B. Rosenberg.

In this context, I would like to suggest interested people to consider attending the workshop “Communication in Teams” [name changed on 30 November] by Sabine Lerch 19-21 January, 2021.

## **G – Conflict management**

(most conflicts have communication problems at their basis. Should you have a serious conflict you cannot get out of through communication, seek help!)

## **A – Working Group and co-operation**

The GSGS thinks that it is important for every PhD student to be part of a working group. Working group members can support each other in many aspects of academic life (and often beyond).

Think of your working group. Look at the working group related questions in the questionnaire you filled out.

### **Take 5 minutes to write down:**

What works well in your group?

Where does the group not “work” for you?

What makes communication and co-operation in your working group especially difficult during the current pandemic?

How could you improve how your working group or project works as a support structure for you?

### **J – Advisor relationship**

- take initiative > don't wait for them and present a plan of what to do next
- be proactive "only squeaky wheels get oil"
- Initiate meetings and know what you would like to discuss: bring a list and don't ramble on
- respond quickly to their e-mails /messages

Then again: Every advisor is different.

- Get to know your advisor’s work rhythm and know when best (not) to contact them
- Talk about expectations (yours and theirs)
- Realize that they are in an entirely different stage of their lives
- Your advisor is a human being too, with their strengths and their weaknesses. Try to get to know them and how the “tick”. It will help you in working with them.

Advisors guide students in research and academic affairs.

- Ask them if they have suggestions for your personal development

### **F – Mentor**

If you are looking for someone who is interested in your career and well-being, and who will give you high-quality “nurturing time”, you are looking for a mentor.

Some, but not all, advisors can be mentors. If your advisor does not have what it takes to be a mentor, or cannot mentor you for other reasons (e.g. time constraints), find someone who can take up this task. Either through your TAC, through a mentoring programme, or through a personal contact.

### **Support offered by the GSGS**

*GSGS Doctoral Council*

- Your representation (election on 14/01/2021 – consider standing for office)
- collecting ideas and suggestions for GSGS activities
- activities such as “After Work Hang-out” Zoom meetings (next on 09 December)

<https://wiki.uni-koeln.de/!qsgs/> (for an ever-increasing amount of useful information), soon also announcements & zoom links of thesis defences

*gsgs-uoc.slack.com*

YOUR own SLACK workspace to network with other PhD students from the GSGS. It is not used for official GSGS communication. Get active! The Doctoral Council can define new “channels”.

## Your feedback to today's workshop:

Please write a take-home message, open issues, course suggestions on as many cards as you like

For course suggestions, please be as specific as possible.

Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use the code **64 17 04**

## Please write a take-home message, open issues, course suggestions on as many cards as you like



Work life balance is important	Anonymous statistics were really helpful, as one sees, that several issues are common and not a personal "phenomena"	When talking about communications (conferences, working group presentations, chairing meetings...) it rather seemed like a list of what is important about the topics and not how to "improve" it.
If I need help I there is help	Was especially nice to just talk to other phd students again. The break out rooms were fruitful	You can affect others communication through modifying your own communication
Ask for help/advice early	Communicate with different people	Nice to have break out sessions :-)
Have a nice weekend	open issues: ways to improve communication of personal issues during corona (where we can't meet face to face)	take home messages: prioritize personal well-being, it is good to take time to unwind, no need to be a workaholic as it sometimes seems in science
Rethink the aspects of today's session at regular time intervals in the future!	be open, not shy, work on your own but don't be afraid to ask	Take home message: "Only squeaky wheels get oil"
Do it yourself. If you can't, get help (communicate, ask questions ect.).	Open issues: Gender dynamics in professional life, standing strong as a woman	feedback: I liked that the course was so interactive! Many polls and break out sessions which makes it easier to communicate!
take home message: career management is something to do continuously. Working on improving communication is essential, especially in Corona times	Nice to know about other PhD students. Menti results are very interesting. Would be much better in person :) would be interested in a mentoring programme.	If you need help, do not hesitate to ask for it
It would be great if a course on "R-programming for beginners" could be set up.	Take home messages: practice communication and non-violent, clear and honest communication	Communication is one of the most important aspects of your PhD
I liked that the workshop touched quite a few topics always with suggestions how to get a more detailed workshop	Good overview of potential issues during study	Take home message: Others have the same problems, it is normal and there are solutions!
course suggestions: just going through the group notes is very boring, maybe let group member present it shortly. Otherwise it is the same voice and presenting style the whole time, it is very boring	the course was very helpful for me. In the next days I will have a look what I could better	@ the person who wants to learn R: joined a webinar and try to learn it by my self
Take always you time to reflect on how you work. Do it more interactive in this zoom times (eg. there could be roles given in the break out rooms like chairholder, presenter, minutes-taker,...). Although I know this might be hard with 30 p. Thanks!	feedback: thank you Karin for giving us a good and open atmosphere, where it feels comfortable to discuss such personal topics	Course suggestion: a lot is not interesting for everyone, so there is the tendency to loose attention, maybe break out sessions rather on own interests and not on assigned things, not every topic in the whole group

Many thanks for your open attitude during the workshop under less-than-ideal circumstances. Thank you also for some very useful and honest feedback. Much appreciated!

My take-home message would be:

**You are in charge of your personal development.**

Thank you!

The next session of this induction module is on 8 December at 10:00.

By the way, the GSGS Steering Committee has just decided to split “Induction Part C: Cooperation, Data and Self-Management” into

**Induction Part C: Cooperation and Self-Management and**

**Induction Part D: Research Data Management**

Part D will be equivalent to the sessions on 8 and 15 December, so you will not have to do “Part D” in future.

References:

Electronic copies of both books are available through the USB – University Library.  
<https://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/>

*Christopher, Sundar A., 2011: Navigating Graduate School and beyond. Geopress.*  
*Fiske, Peter S., 2001: Put Your Science to Work: The Take-Charge Career Guide for Scientists. AGU.*

Further reading:

*Rosenberg, Marshall B.; Holler, Ingrid; Gandhi, Arun. Gewaltfreie Kommunikation: eine Sprache des Lebens. 11. Aufl. 2013. (EN: Nonviolent communication)*