



Your trainer

Dr Thomas Bruhn is a physicist leading the research group "transformative spaces and mindsets" (TranS-Mind) at RIFS Potsdam. As researcher and trained facilitator in various group leadership approaches he is an expert on collective learning and co-creativity in the science-policy interface. His work focuses on designing and leading transdisciplinary processes and communication among stakeholders for sustainability-related transformation. He has been leading co-creative processes for groups of decision-makers, e.g., at the UN climate conferences (UNFCCC COPs) and for various international organizations from science, politics and business such as the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the European Commission (EC), the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and many others.

His original background lies in research on self-organization in semiconductor nanomaterials. He is a member of the board of directors to the German Association to the Club of Rome and a member of the German Association of Scientists (VDW).



Transformative Leadership & Facilitation

or

*"Being the system
that I lead"*

A training on how to guide
highly diverse groups towards
greater cooperation and
connected creativity

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For whom?

This training might be ideal for you if

- you are responsible for issues that require the interaction and/or cooperation of diverse perspectives and people
- you like to integrate others and "play fair" but meet conflicts in hierarchical environments or with "α-leaders"
- you are frustrated about dysfunctional meetings
- you are ready to engage in a process of self-exploration
- you consider yourself sensitive and caring

This training is probably *not* ideal for you if

- you are mainly looking for a more effective way to "make others do what you want them to do"
- you cannot meet different perspectives with genuine curiosity and appreciation
- you are not willing to explore your own personality and emotions as part of your leadership role and practice

Persona I "Scientist"

Ann is heading a large interdisciplinary research group. While she sees the potential of integrating different disciplines, many of her researchers remain disconnected among each other. How can Ann enable effective interdisciplinary collaboration?

Persona II "Policy Advisor"

Ben is working in the political field and responsible for a complex topic. He experiences how people rather talk than take action. Responsibility is passed around like a hot potato. He is worried about ineffective decision-making and increasing social polarization. How can Ben deal with the conflicts and work constructively with them?

Persona III "Facilitator"

Liz is a management consultant, executive trainer and facilitator. Her work is a lot about transcending silos and hierarchies while the people she works with are often managers or leaders who are very attached and conditioned to clear hierarchical boundaries. How can Liz deal with the potential conflicts and work constructively with them?

Persona IV "Corporate"

John is a manager in a hierarchically structured organization. He is passionate about sustainability and has the mandate for organisational change. His work transcends the old organisational silos and several other managers see him as threat to their territories. How can he lead towards a cooperative working culture?

Content & idea

Complex challenges often require the interaction of people with diverse expertise and perspectives. Thus, participatory methods for group leadership are gaining popularity.

Often, however, they are applied in flexible contexts or "in-between spaces". In hierarchical settings with power imbalances they can be "alienating" and require a specific adaptation and contextualization. Interactive methods that pretends everyone could meet "on eye level" might be naive and counterproductive for the whole group. People with special capacities or roles need to be able to contribute without dominating or oppressing the people they work with.

You will discover how participatory work and facilitation can thrive and be transformative when dealing with in the presence of power structures and hierarchies consciously.

In this training you will explore the "middle path" of holding power and responsibility as a leader *and* leaving space for self-organization and co-creativity.

Facilitation practices



Personal development and mindset

Theory of transformation in complex systems

Based on the understanding of dynamics in complex systems you will explore the practice of facilitative leadership methods and how to design processes for specific groups and contexts.

A special focus of the course lies on your role and mindset as leader or facilitator. Informed by insights from psycho-dynamics we will help you understand how your own state of being is connected to the group you are leading (in both directions!) and how this awareness can become the most powerful resource for your leadership.

You will learn...

- to guide people to discover trust and joy in cooperating even when they are skeptical about it or stuck in dysfunctional relationships or communication
- to identify leadership style(s) and practice(s) that match your own personality and natural strengths
- to understand and manage your own feelings while leading a group and use these feelings a resource
- to adapt to challenging or unexpected group dynamics
- to guide spaces for self-organization without "losing control" or denying your responsibility
- to identify and hold healthy boundaries for yourself so that you can be effective and enjoy your leadership role
- to deepen your trust in the unknown

setup & schedule

The training is designed as a course for a cohort of 9-12 people and will include contributions from Prof. Thomas Kühn from IPU Berlin and Dr. Man Fang. Some details for the location and participation fee are still to be clarified, The course will take place in person in Berlin, probably at the International Psychoanalytic University (IPU) Berlin on the following dates:

I: June 6-8
II: July 24-27
III: Sept 19-21
in Berlin

contact & next steps

While we are figuring out the last details in terms of logistics (location and participation fee), please feel free to reach out (thomas.bruhn@rifs-potsdam.de) so we can keep you updated on the further developments.