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Work organisation and time management during the doctoral process

While work towards a doctoral degree is to a large extent self-determined, it can be quite demanding because it requires that different types of tasks be carried out on various levels. For most doctoral candidates, it is the first time they have faced the task of independently structuring and implementing a project that will take several years. Additional obligations which are relevant for developing a solid profile such as teaching or managing administrative tasks can create considerable time pressure, giving the candidate the feeling of never being able to do enough.

With these challenges in mind, the workshop offers learning opportunities on three levels:

1. The aim at this level is to gain a clear overview of the doctoral project from a top-down perspective. Participants learn to structure their project sensibly and to formulate goals that are not only appropriate, but also concrete and achievable. The individual steps and tasks can then be deduced from these goals. These measures will provide a basis for realistically planning both long-term for the overall project and middle-term for the next 3-6 months.
2. Because even promising project plans can fail when implemented under everyday working conditions, this level of the workshop focuses on the bottom-up perspective, i.e. on the organisation and management of day-to-day jobs and tasks. Participants identify what type of worker they are and the conditions they work under best. Keeping the difference between effective and efficient work in mind, they will learn effective methods of setting priorities and guidelines for handling tasks effectively. Using practical exercises, these principles are applied to create realistic daily and weekly schedules.
3. This level takes a look at the framework conditions for academic work in terms of both personal and outside influences. With these factors in mind, a kind of survival kit will be assembled to help deal with the difficulties, stumbling blocks and challenges that may appear during the course of the doctoral process including loss of motivation, delays due to technical problems, and teamwork complications.

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