PRBB Intervals Course Proposal

Course Title
Confident body-language in science

Proposed date(s)
March 2nd, 2027

Course Language
English

Course Leader(s) and very brief summary of relevant qualifications and experience (no more than 2 lines for each trainer)
Monica Ixchel Castillo Salgado is a Political Scientist, Educator, Actress and Dancer from Mexico. As part of the Performing Ideas team, she's co-delivered sessions on improvisation for leaders and scientists as well as body language and non-verbal communication workshops for the past 6 years. Monica also facilitates courses on the topics of moonshot thinking and communication to high performing teams, in the corporate world. She has degrees in Political Science, Theatre and Corporeal Mime.

Rationale for course (why is this course of interest for the PRBB staff?)
Most people have natural body language with friends and family. Problems arise in stressful situations such as public speaking, negotiations and interviews.

Scientists and research support staff regularly face these situations: conference talks, lab meetings, grant and panel presentations, job interviews and presenting "up" to demanding audiences such as committees and boards. Looking and feeling confident in these moments, face-to-face and online, helps them make a stronger first impression and get their ideas heard.

Course aim – general
To help participants look and feel more confident in a variety of professional contexts by improving their non verbal communication.

Specific learning outcomes - What new i) knowledge, ii) skills & iii) attitudes will participants take away from the course?
i) Knowledge:
- Understand how body language changes under stress.
- Understand which body language suits different situations (presenting, negotiating, interviews) and the specific challenges of body language over video calls.

ii) Skills:
- Use voice, body language and eye contact to look confident in front of an audience.
- Manage nervousness and make better first impressions.
- Give useful feedback to others on their body language.

iii) Attitudes:
- Greater confidence when speaking, and a more open and generous approach to giving and receiving feedback.

Course contents (outline of topics to be covered)

- Foundations: biomechanics and neuropsychology of non-verbal communication
- Techniques used by leaders, public speakers and actors: voice, posture, movement and eye contact
- Body language under stress and how to manage nervousness
- Body language for different situations: presenting, negotiating, interviews
- Body language over telepresence (video calls)
- First impressions
- Giving feedback to others on their body language
- Personal body language analysis on camera

Training methods

- Interactive, highly physical, face-to-face workshop led by a body language expert
- Exercises and discussion where participants share experiences and give feedback to colleagues
- Personal body language analysis: each participant receives an analysis of their own body language on camera

Target group in PRBB (Senior scientists, postdocs, predocs, management/admin staff, all residents)

All PRBB staff who regularly present or perform in high-stakes situations.

Number of participants (maximum)

8

Total course hours (Please specify: direct training with instructor present and required self-study)

Note: only the direct training hours will be included in the post-course certificate.

Number of hours of class time: 4
Number of hours of self-study: 0
Total number of course hours: 4

Distribution of course (hours/days)

One half-day session of 4 hours 9:30 to 13:30

Pre-course preparation and self-study expected between sessions (what preparation should participants do before the course and/or in between sessions – reading, online study, prepare ideas etc?)

Participants complete a short self-assessment before the course.

Material participants need to bring (laptops, etc…)

No laptops needed. Comfortable clothing and shoes, as the session is physical.

Relevant background reading/ audiovisual/websites or other materials

Performing Ideas online course: All participants would receive free access to "Positive Body Language for Leaders" (video lessons, handouts and templates) following the workshop.