

# Workshop: How to identify which support measures are really needed by your (future) co-workers?

Notes Emmy-Noether Jahrestreffen 2026

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## **Part 1: Measures that have worked in the past (either for me or someone I know)**

- Positive feedback & (honest) appreciation
- A grant office that really knows what they are doing and who read the applications
- Peer coaching (might be a good substitute for mentoring)
- Standing desks (treadmills, sitting balls, ...)
- Annual career discussions & networking
- Great supervisors, mentors & supporters
- Part-time postdoc (for oneself)
- Childcare at conferences
- SHKs (student researchers) as replacements/addons for coworkers who can't go to the lab for a period
- Lab retreats
- Mentoring by senior W3/W2
- Money for bringing partner & child along to conferences
- Flexibility & trust: no week ever works according to default plan (kita closed, kid sick), but on average over a month, one gets their work done
- When someone else (e.g. the boss) raises the question whether the plan also works for parents and it's not always the parents only who have to complain about meetings after 4 pm.
- Role models (in Germany it's not so common to find moms who work full-time, but it's completely natural in the US): inviting female group leaders with kids/family/other obligations for seminars and Q&A sessions
- Deutschlandticket offered/supported by university
- Home office/remote work
- MARUM (UHB) proposal writing course for natural scientists: worked well because it was long (4 meetings over 3 months), required participants to bring an abstract for their own proposal, and shared successful proposals that participants then had to "review"
- Leadership workshop
- Structured 1:1 coaching

## **Part 1a: Measures that have NOT worked in the past**

- Co-aligning your lab with a larger group
- Randomly placing desks across institutes

## **Part 2: Strategies/Measures that would help me now**

- Tailored leadership workshops for EN- and other young investigator group leaders:
  - Online (9-5 does not agree with family obligations and is too long, who has an entire free day?)
  - On demand and bite-sized: self-learning material that I can go to when it suits me and that doesn't require a full day of commitment
  - University offers often address a wide range of people (e.g., one leadership course for postdocs and group leaders together, this wastes time by not being tailored to specific EN group leader needs)
  - Some certificate at the end that I can mention in my CV when applying for professorships
- Sabbatical vs. reality: In theory, we can take a sabbatical, but in practice this is hindered by organizational challenges (who takes over teaching?) - support with this would help
- Personal assistant or technician (wishful thinking, we know)
- Structured mentoring gives me the permission to ask for guidance and mentoring does help a lot
- Call center or chat bot: I have this question, whom do I contact to help me fix this problem? (Something for both the institutional level as well as the DFG website possibly)

## **Part 3: Strategies that others need (before and after hiring them)**

- Build up trust
  - Don't assume, ask and listen actively
  - Be vulnerable
  - Be open and share your own experiences
  - Position yourself as the person to go to when there are questions (repeat willingness to help, provide information without being asked for it)
- Onboarding
  - Video calls between interview and first day of work
  - Welcome presents, joint lunch, ... sth small and still special for the first day
  - Interviews and later: invite people to talk with others (not leader) in the team
  - Buddy "program": match newbie with someone who knows the place (or postdocs mentoring PhDs, can be structured nicely for example in bigger programs like CRCs)
  - Collection of useful links/people to go to for what/information about the institute and the city
- Expectation management: online template for PhD - supervisor conversation at the beginning: what will I give to you, what do I expect, what can you expect?
- Intercultural training: e.g., does "yes" mean "yes"?
- Emmy-Noether ambassadors: a group of around 5 current Emmies from different disciplines who are willing to answer questions that people who are interested in the program might have. Highlight this on the DFG website so the information is available to everyone interested in the program and easy to find) as a community-based, low-level source of support. We all are doing this already, of course, but not equally, it depends on who knows about us, and there's an information gap right at the start for people from abroad who might not know anyone in their network to talk to. EN ambassadors could also help out DFG during their information meetings, if possible, and could "serve" for a year or two and then we look for substitutes at the next annual meeting.
- Talk to students, PhDs, postdocs proactively (today's students are tomorrow's doctoral students)
- Training of mentors