

# Emotional Training Academy

- an integrative and innovative approach to preparing students for working in challenging interpersonal situations –

November 26, 2009, 12:30-16:00 (including sandwich lunch)  
**Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education**  
**University of Surrey, Guildford**

**Purpose: Helping students prepare for the challenging and emotionally complex interpersonal situations they will encounter in the workplace is an important dimension of learning for a complex world. This Training Academy will be particularly relevant to educators and advisors interested in supporting students' personal and professional development and helping them prepare for the workplace.**

How can we help students to work effectively with others, so as to enhance their employability prospects, career success, and quality of life? In this workshop we will practice an integrative approach to training that uses brief cases of challenging interpersonal situations at work reported by former students to explore issues related to communication, conflict management, emotions and leadership. The approach we will follow is innovative in several ways. It can be used cost effectively with small or large groups of students. It includes an online questionnaire to stimulate reflection before the workshop. It relies on ambiguous situations and discussion among participants to enhance self-knowledge, perspective taking, and empathy. Finally, it trains participants to apply their intelligence to the analysis of complex social situations for which there is no single right answer.



The Academy will be led by Dr Paulo Lopes, a SCEPTRe Fellow, who has been developing this approach and testing it with students both with and without work experience. Paulo earned his B.A. in Economics and Ph.D. in Psychology from Yale University. He is Assistant Professor at the Catholic University of Portugal's School of Economics and Management, where he teaches on the Masters, MBA and Executive Education programs. His teaching focuses on managing people, emotional intelligence, and conflict management. He is a Visiting Fellow and was Senior Lecturer at the University of Surrey, in England, where he also taught social psychology focusing on emotions, interpersonal interaction, and conflict. His research focuses on the development of interpersonal and emotional skills in adulthood, and he has published more than 15 journal articles and book chapters on these topics. In his earlier career, he worked in business and journalism, and co-directed an award-winning documentary film.

**Date and time:** November 26, 2009, 12:30-16:00 (including sandwich lunch)

**Venue:** University of Surrey: Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education

**Cost:** SCEPTRe is covering the costs of the training opportunity

**Facilitator:** Dr Paulo N. Lopes

Email: [p.lopes@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:p.lopes@surrey.ac.uk) or [paulo.lopes@fcee.ucp.pt](mailto:paulo.lopes@fcee.ucp.pt)

Web page: <http://Lopes.socialpsychology.org/> <http://www.fcee.lisboa.ucp.pt/docentes/url/paulolopes/>

There are **20 places available** on a first come first served basis. **To reserve a place please email the following details to Susan Wood [S.Wood@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:S.Wood@surrey.ac.uk) as soon as possible.**

**Name**

**Institution**

**Department**

**Role / job title**

**Telephone**

**Email address**

**Reason for wanting to participate:**

## Workshop objectives

This workshop models the conduct of a training session aimed at helping participants to interact effectively with peers and supervisors at work. We will discuss how to manage challenging interpersonal situations at work as a means of:

- training ourselves to analyze complex and ambiguous social situations;
- broadening our repertoire of response strategies;
- enhancing our capacity to consider difficult situations from other people's perspectives;
- developing greater awareness of our response tendencies and of the biases that influence our interpretation of ambiguous situations;
- developing an appreciation of the role of emotions in social interaction

## Workshop description and methodology

In preparation for the workshop, **participants will be invited to go online to consider and respond to a set of vignettes depicting challenging interpersonal situations at work** reported by former students. They will receive individualized feedback about their response tendencies and will be encouraged to consider how and why the responses they gave differ from those provided by other participants.

We begin the workshop by discussing these brief cases. Participants will form small groups of four to six people to discuss the cases. Following the small-group discussion, the facilitator elicits and contrasts opinions from various groups, encouraging participants to consider different angles and possibilities, and involving the whole group in this reflection.

The goal is to train participants to analyze the pros and cons of different strategies for managing complex interpersonal situations. Participants are encouraged to anticipate others' reactions and to consider various factors that might influence the impact of different strategies, such as the social and organizational context, the history of the relationship, and others' motives and personalities. In other words, the instructor encourages participants to apply their intelligence to the analysis of complex and emotionally loaded social problems for which there is no single right or wrong answer.

This approach can help participants to broaden their repertoire of strategies for handling difficult interpersonal situations, to learn basic conflict management and communication strategies, and to develop perspective taking. Participants may also gain an enhanced awareness of their response tendencies and of the biases they bring to bear upon the interpretation of ambiguous social situations. Finally, this approach can show people how to reflect on and learn from their own experiences in life.

Participants will be encouraged to relate these cases to situations that they have encountered in life. Furthermore, depending on the size of the group, participants may be encouraged to discuss their own experiences of working with others.

**Filming:** We will film the event with a view ultimately of creating some film clips that will help other teachers appreciate the facilitation techniques that are being used. When we have produced the film clips we will invite you to look at them and if you don't want to be in the film we will remove you.