

A grayscale photograph of a man with light-colored hair, wearing a white dress shirt, a patterned tie, and a dark suit jacket. He is standing behind a bar, looking slightly to his left with a faint smile. The bar counter in front of him holds several bottles and glasses. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some horizontal lines that could be part of a ceiling or wall.

# INTERNATIONAL CHAIRING SKILLS

CHAIRING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS INTERNATIONALLY

Presented by John Holmes  
at Frontline Training Solutions

# Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this practical and empowering chairing skills seminar developed and refined during the delivery of our work with the ESM and EBA. On the following pages you will find a detailed account of what to expect from the seminar, our flexible programme scheme and fees.

The seminar covers your personal performance while chairing or moderating international and stakeholder meetings and includes:

- Chair's introduction exercise - for enabling the chair to set the scene, set the rules and take control from the outset
- Language and techniques for intervening, steering and maintaining control
- Language and structure for taking control, linking and re-focusing the meeting
- Use of questions for maintaining control and handling questions and answers
- Designing, timing and structuring your meetings and ensuring all essential aspects have been addressed
- Assessment of one's personal style, emphasis and preferences
- Supporting the chair when you are a only participant at a meeting
- Chairing Chit Chat - gaining foreknowledge of the mood of the forthcoming meeting
- Handling common and specific challenges
- Facilitation skills
- Personal feedback and development plan

The seminar will be held in Frankfurt at the Ostend InnSide Hotel. The seminar is an open seminar.

We do hope you will both benefit from and enjoy this seminar. Following receipt of your registration form and your formal acceptance onto the seminar we will send you a Welcome Pack with all preparatory information.

## Value-added

In addition to the seminar itself each participant receives:

- A pre and post seminar online coaching interview
- An extensive manual covering all aspects in the seminar in greater theoretical detail with extra notes on building and utilising an international network and increasing skill in this area and gaining influence with the chair of the meeting.
- Personal SDHC card of your work on the seminar as an *aide memoire* and for use in future coaching
- Personal feedback report on request and telephone follow-up
- Highly interactive low participant to trainer ratio – not exceeding six participants to one trainer, thus providing personal attention and the opportunity for each participant to try out and receive feedback on each tool
- Personalised work, exercises, simulations on Day 4 (particularly useful for particular or forthcoming negotiations)

# Summary of Modules

**Chair's introductory speech exercise** – A structure for managing the all-important introduction and scene setting, including who you are, why we are here and the expected outcome, how you want to run the meeting, how you expect the attendees to conduct themselves, and so on. Each participant practises their opening speech and adapts the tone, formality and language according to the nature and composition of the meeting.

*Outcome – Participants learn the importance of stating expectations and setting boundaries as a way of achieving on-going control of the meeting. They also come to terms with their own needs and expectations and how clearly they assert those needs. They learn to take responsibility and plan for the outcomes they seek as chair.*

## **Language and techniques for intervening, steering and maintaining control**

– Participants practise a structure and use language that helps produce a positive emotional atmosphere at the meeting that encourages a sense of trust and valuing of contributions. The structure also helps offer an alternative view that adds to rather than replaces the comments that have gone before.

*Outcome – the participants will develop greater confidence in politely taking back control from attendees who take a long time to say their piece or are emotionally attached to their views. This structure also encourages greater participation at the meeting, as it avoids negative judgement of others' comment while at the same time setting out clear benefits in supporting an alternative course. Participants learn how to quickly build alliances, resolve differences and build bridges towards consensus.*

**Language and structure for taking control, linking and re-focusing the meeting** – Participants practise a powerful structure that focuses on priorities through a hierarchy of needs. The structure enables the chair to make their point quickly and precisely and suggest clear action to be taken.

*Outcome – Participants uncover the true message they wish to put across and adapt that message for the best effect with the people before them. They will also be quicker, clearer and more influential. The structured approach will give the participants greater confidence and credibility and help avoid confusion or unnecessary speech.*

**Culture exercise** – We explore intercultural communication in the context of managing dissent during an open discussion and examine the impact of cultural traits for handling differing positions on the desired outcomes of discussions. We will refer to the book *The Cultural Map* and focus on the dimensions of *Confrontational language v. Avoids Confrontation* and the dimension of *Emotionally Expressive v Emotionally Inexpressive*.

*Outcome – The exercise acts as a mirror to differing cultural approaches to achieving positive outcomes from meetings. Participants acknowledge their own preferred style, particularly when under stress and look for ways to embrace the differences while keeping a firm idea of their overall objective and needs. They learn that culturally instinctive and culturally valued behaviour, that feels natural, clear and safe, can have a style that when working inter-culturally produces negative or undesired outcomes.*

## **Use of questions for maintaining control and handling questions and answers**

– Competent handling of questions and answers is a great opportunity for increasing influence and persuasion but Q&As also hold many risks that can diminish the chair's credibility. This session helps participants field challenging questions and provide inspiring answers.

*Outcome – Greater confidence in facing questions in a controlled and positive way; helping the chair avoid a negative spiral of questioning that can de-rail a meeting; reduced risk of tripping oneself up in attempting to answer a complicated question; avoids appearing unsure, defensive or attempting to hide something; helps cope with the shock when asked what appears to be an aggressive question; how to ask a question that has value for the whole meeting.*

## **Designing, timing and structuring your meetings and ensuring all essential aspects have been addressed**

– Using our CLAD model participants learn about four essential ingredients that make up a well-balanced and rigorous meeting. Participants consider the order these ingredients should be introduced to the meeting and how this will affect the setting and structure of the agenda. In this session participants have to apply timings to each of the sections of the meeting and consider how they will manage overrun on a particular topic or agenda item. They also have to consider how they will end satisfactorily the discussion and move on to the next point, this ensuring there is time for the meeting to be properly concluded. This requires a realistic expectation of what can be achieved in the time available.

*Outcome – Participants come away with knowledge of their own unconscious default approach and emphasis they use when chairing. They develop a realistic appreciation of the relationship between desire and achievement and how to avoid the pitfall of hoping for too much in the time allowed, thus losing the goodwill of the attendees.*

## **Assessment of one's personal style, emphasis and preferences**

– Applying our own SWAG personality model, we use colours to provide a simple yet very effective way of seeing where you place your emphasis and what others think about you. Are there gaps in how you see yourself and how others see you and what might be the implications of these gaps? Participants create badges for themselves and each other to identify gaps between how we see ourselves and how others see us.

*Outcome - This fascinating study allows you to proceed to designing an influencing strategy and adapting yourself for greater impact in your role as chair. It also gives the insight into how you are seen perhaps by others and what you might need to start doing in order to change others' perceptions of you.*

## **Supporting the chair when you are only a participant at a meeting**

– It is important to know how you can support a meeting and the chair when you yourself are not chairing. Such occasions might occur generally but more specifically when there is an inexperienced chair or what might be considered to be a 'weak' chair. How can you be a positive member of the meeting by demonstrating a more productive approach in your own behaviour and treatment of others? How can you help to rescue a negative and antagonistic meeting? How can you try to ensure that there is time to reach a clear outcome? How can you do all these things without undermining the chair's confidence and authority?

*Outcome – You will be sensitive to mood and needs and develop a discretion that will allow you to make effective interventions and contributions without appearing to take over from the chair. You will also come away with the confidence to engage personally with the chair and ascertain her/his needs and gaps in competency. You will also be able to assess critically their behaviour at the meeting and predict likely shortfalls in planning and control.*

## **Chairing Chit Chat - gaining foreknowledge of the mood of the forthcoming meeting**

Planning and control of a meeting can be done from a distance but it is much better to find ways of engaging beforehand with members attending the meeting, firstly to ease dialogue and stiffness at the start of the meeting but more importantly still to uncover values, rocks and hot-spots that can de-rail or accelerate the meeting towards greater efficiency and productiveness. This is a delicate operation and there are certain golden rules that need to be followed if you are to get the knowledge that can steer you and sustain trust and credibility during the 'chat'.

### *Outcome*

*You will learn how to engage quickly and effectively with different types of people (age, gender, culture, personality, etc) and gain key knowledge that will help you design your meeting, whom to invite to speak, and assign the timings appropriately. You will learn how to use this knowledge to apply a greater realism over what can be achieved and what else needs to be talked about in the corridors before the meeting starts.*

## **Handling common and specific challenges**

– In this session we look at a number of common challenges that face chairs and their possible solutions. Participants are invited to share their own ideas on how to resolve these challenges and practise the suggested solutions. Connected with this session is a live issue session that takes a case study from your own working life. It is developed with your personal trainer before and/or during the seminar and you identify an objective and your desired outcome. You play out the scene with your trainer in a small sub-group and apply the SWAG influencing model in order to achieve your objective and outcome. You receive feedback from your colleagues and have the opportunity to make repeated attempts to revise your approach. You take responsibility for choosing your approach and selecting which tools from the seminar to use to help you.

*Outcome – Participants are empowered to use the learning from the seminar in their working lives and to learn from each other's Live Issue. They also learn to give and receive constructive feedback and to apply it to improve their own performance.*

**Facilitation Skills** – Sometimes, either in the role as chair or a role that has been given to you, you need to simply draw out, consolidate and codify the views of those present. This is a sort of chairing but there are other skills that need to be applied and practised and pitfalls to avoid.

*Outcome – You will develop the confidence to think on your feet and engage informally with people in a less structured and more dynamic and fast-paced environment.*

# Programme

We have set out a four-day programme below. Days usually run from 09.00am to 4.30pm with an hour for lunch and mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks. This can be altered in length to meet the needs of the group and the numbers participating.

## **Day 1**

### *Key tools*

- Chairing structure and practise
- Chair's introduction exercise and video playback
- Language and techniques for intervening, steering and maintaining control

## **Day 2**

### *Influencing*

- Language and structure for taking control, linking & re-focusing the meeting
- Use of questions for maintaining control and handling questions and answers
- Assessment of one's personal style, emphasis and preferences
- Chairing Chit Chat for gaining foreknowledge of the mood of the forthcoming meeting

## **Day 3**

### *Structuring & adapting*

- Designing, timing and structuring your meetings and ensuring all essential aspects have been addressed
- Supporting the chair when you are only a participant at a meeting
- Cultural adaptation and other diversity issues

## **Day 4**

- Common and specific issues and personal feedback*
- Handling common and specific challenges
  - Facilitation skills
  - Personal feedback and development plan

## Location

The training will take place at the InnSide Hotel, Hanauer Landstrasse 81 Frankfurt, just off Sonnemann Straße. This venue has excellent public transport links and is on the No.11 tramline and close to the Ostend Metro. Our training room will be the 50m<sup>2</sup> InnSpace.

## Dates in 2023

The course will be split into two modules for the convenience of the participants and thereby reducing the disruption to work from a continuous four-day seminar. The dates are set at:

**29-30 November & 11-12 December 2023**

## Pricing

Fees are inclusive of all training costs for trainers, training room, equipment, manuals, etc. but exclusive of VAT, travel, food and accommodation for participants.

**€4.250**

## Cancellation Policy

If no replacement found to fill the cancellation, then the following cancellation fees apply:

- Cancel 30 to 14 days prior to the training - **25% of the participant fee**
- Cancel 13 to 7 days prior to the workshop - **50% of the participant fee**
- Cancel 6 days or less prior to the workshop - **75% of the participant fee**



### **About John Holmes and the Frontline Training Solutions Group**

John is founder and director of Frontline Training Solutions Ltd (GB) and its Czech subsidiary, Frontline Training Solutions s.r.o. (CZ).

For over twenty years the group has been offering leadership, meetings and communication skills training to national and international public sector bodies, specialising in the financial public sector.

**Frontline Training Solutions Ltd (GB)**  
**Frontline Training Solutions s.r.o. (CZ)**

[www.frontlinetrainingsolutions.com](http://www.frontlinetrainingsolutions.com)

[john@frontlinetrainingsolutions.com](mailto:john@frontlinetrainingsolutions.com)

**Office:** +44 1376 570 982

**Mobile:** +44 7905 121 848



# Registration Form

## International Chairing Skills Training

Please complete this registration form and send by e-mail to John Holmes at [john@frontlinetrainingsolutions.com](mailto:john@frontlinetrainingsolutions.com)

ICS: 29-30 November & 11-12 December 2023

☐

My organisation/directorate/division agrees to the cancellation policy below

☐

Signed .....

Date.....

Name.....

Job title.....

Organisation & Division .....

E-mail address .....

Telephone number office.....

Telephone number mobile.....

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