

SCENARIO: THE »LERNSPUR« PLATFORM

Shared briefing for everyone taking part

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Read this briefing together, all of you. It describes the starting situation that everyone knows. *Who you are in the meeting* is in the shared role overview; *what you secretly want* is on your personal card – which only you get to see.

What this is really about. The »LernSpur« project is only the backdrop. What matters is the dynamic at the table: How do you lead a team without being the boss? How do you deal with pressure, vague requests, and conflicting goals? In the end it doesn't matter whether the "perfect" platform comes out of it, but *how you negotiate with one another* – and that's what we talk about in the debrief.

WHAT THIS IS ABOUT (IN BRIEF)

You work at the Chair of Empirical Education Research. The chair studies how a maths-learning app affects the way pupils learn. To that end, a study is running at 14 partner schools.

Two kinds of data matter for today:

- App usage data – who practises what, for how long, with how many mistakes
- Questionnaires from pupils and teachers

On top of that – legally more delicate – there are some video recordings from lessons. Today the data is scattered (Excel spreadsheets, an old database, export files from the app company). Several doctoral theses depend on it.

The chair has received three years of funding to turn all of this into a sustainable, FAIR-compliant *research data platform*, »LernSpur«.

The conference. In 8 weeks the chair will present the project at the annual conference on empirical education research. And already in 2 weeks a short contribution (abstract) is due for it – ideally with *first results* from the data. That's the deadline hanging over everything.

YOUR STARTING SITUATION

- The project has already started, and the broad goals have been communicated.
- You know each other from previous meetings – you're all on a first-name basis, and the mood is friendly.
- Three months ago, Robin was hired as a Research Software Engineer (RSE) to coordinate the software development.
- Important: Robin has *no* authority to give orders. Robin is nobody's boss – and only makes progress by convincing the others, not instructing them.

TODAY'S MEETING (YOUR TASK)

Today is the requirements kickoff. In it, Robin is to:

1. briefly present the goal of the software and set the frame,
2. together with everyone, gather and prioritise the requirements,
3. assign tasks and clarify expectations,
4. develop a realistic plan for the first few weeks.

Everyone else brings their own interests, knowledge, and concerns into the room – and sometimes doesn't make it all that easy for Robin.

Watch out – typical friction points. The domain researchers say things like:

“We want to be able to compare similar classes with one another.”

For Robin, the question arises immediately: what does *similar* mean? Same grade level? Same amount of app usage? Same starting performance? Only the education researchers can say what's scientifically meaningful – only Robin knows what's technically decidable. This is exactly where you have to hammer it out together: neither side can decide it alone.

RULES OF PLAY

- Stay in your role. Argue from the goals and concerns on your role card.
- What you may say – and what you may not. Your confidential card has a box marked *“You may say this openly”* and *“Keep this to yourself for now.”* You may bring your public concern into the room at any time; your hidden goal, your red line, and your trump card you do not reveal on your own – let the others tease those out in conversation. Don’t invent anything that contradicts your role.
- Don’t block completely. You may make things hard for Robin (probing, going off on tangents, insisting on deadlines) – but the game has to keep moving.
- There is no “right” solution. Different groups reach different, equally defensible results (see possible outcomes).
- The facilitator throws in new information during play (see events & timeline). React to it in the meeting.

WRAPPING UP / CAPTURING RESULTS

At the end of the meeting, capture the following on a flipchart / Miro board:

- What will be built – and what deliberately (not yet)? (scope & prioritisation)
- Who does what by when? (tasks, owners, rough schedule)
- What expectations and commitments were voiced?
- What open question are you taking into the next meeting?