



Friederike Fabritius

AUTHOR · SCIENTIST

Most organisations select leaders for their ability to sustain pressure – and then build cultures that only those leaders can endure. When the personality profiles that rise to the top systematically recreate the conditions that suited their own brain chemistry, the result is not bad management intent but a structural bias baked into hiring, promotion, and performance systems. DEI programmes address demographics; they rarely reach the neurological layer that determines whether talented people actually stay.

Friederike Fabritius is a neuroscientist and Wall Street Journal bestselling author who helps organisations identify the structural conditions – not just the management behaviours – that cause talented people to disengage and leave.

Friederike Fabritius's 2026 Biography

- Her “neurosignature diversity” framework, developed in *The Brain-Friendly Workplace*, gives leadership teams a precise, science-based explanation for why talent attrition persists after conventional DEI investment – and a specific mechanism to address it.
- She names the “neurogap” – the structural drift toward dopamine- and testosterone-dominant personality profiles at the top of organisations – and provides a testable diagnostic for closing it, rather than a general aspiration toward inclusion.
- Her background spans neuroscience research at the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research and management consulting at McKinsey and Company – a combination that gives her credibility in two domains that most neuroleadership speakers claim from only one.
- Audiences leave with four mapped neurosignatures linked to specific workplace behaviours, stress responses, and collaboration styles – a concrete tool, not a mindset shift.
- Her frameworks are published and peer-accessible: a Harvard Business Review article and a Wall Street Journal bestselling book reduce the internal scepticism that evidence-oriented leadership teams typically bring to behavioural science.

Biography highlights

- Neuroscientist trained at the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research; alumna of McKinsey and Company
- Lead author of *The Leading Brain: Neuroscience Hacks to Work Smarter, Better, Happier* (Random House) – named a Best Management Book by strategy+business
- Author of *The Brain-Friendly Workplace: Why Talented People Quit and How to Get Them to Stay* – Wall Street Journal bestseller

AVAILABLE FOR

- Speaking

FRIEDERIKE'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Corporate Culture
- Employee Engagement
- Future of Work
- Neurodiversity
- Talent Retention Strategies

LANGUAGES: English

- Harvard Business Review contributor; work featured in the Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Newsweek, and CNBC
- Member of the socio-political council of acatech, The German Academy for Technology, advising the German government on technology, digitalisation, and AI
- Advisory board member, NeuroColor; LinkedIn Top Voice

Biography

At the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research, Friederike Fabritius studied what actually happens inside the brain under pressure. At McKinsey and Company, she saw what organisations actually do – and how rarely those two things match. The gap between them is the problem her work is built to close.

Her central argument, developed across two books and field-tested with organisations including EY, BCG, and Google, is specific: most leadership teams over-represent dopamine- and testosterone-dominant personality types, selecting for stress tolerance in ways that systematically exclude other cognitive profiles. She calls this the neurogap. It explains why talented people leave not because of poor managers but because of poorly calibrated environments – and why retention problems persist despite sustained DEI investment.

In *The Brain-Friendly Workplace* – a Wall Street Journal bestseller – Fabritius maps four neurosignatures tied to distinct workplace behaviours, stress responses, and communication preferences. The framework gives HR and leadership teams a diagnostic built on brain chemistry rather than demographic proxies. Her Harvard Business Review article on neurosignature diversity brought the argument to a practitioner audience; her earlier book, *The Leading Brain* (named a Best Management Book by strategy+business), established the scientific credibility underpinning it.

She serves on the socio-political council of acatech, The German Academy for Technology, which advises the German government on digitalisation and AI – a role that reflects the applied, policy-facing dimension of her science. For boards and senior teams wrestling with sustained performance, retention, and culture, she offers something distinctive: a testable causal model, not a call for behavioural change without a structural explanation.

Key speaking topics

- Neurosignature diversity and talent retention
- Brain-based leadership and decision-making
- Peak performance and the neuroscience of flow
- Cognitive diversity and inclusion
- Neuroscience of change, uncertainty, and resilience
- Trust, collaboration, and the social brain
- Learning, neuroplasticity, and habit formation at work

Ideal for

- CHROs and people leaders responsible for talent strategy and retention outcomes
- Senior leadership and executive teams seeking evidence-based frameworks for culture design
- Learning and development leaders building performance or cognitive diversity programmes

- Boards and transformation leads navigating hybrid work, workforce change, and sustained engagement

Audience outcomes

- A named framework – neurosignature diversity – for diagnosing why current culture drives attrition, with specific, actionable steps to address the neurogap
- Practical understanding of how brain chemistry shapes performance, stress tolerance, collaboration style, and communication preference across a team
- Clearer grasp of how to design environments that support cognitive diversity beyond demographic targets
- Concrete approaches to managing hybrid and distributed teams in line with how different brain types actually work best under pressure
- Evidence-based perspective on why DEI initiatives stall at the neurological layer – and how to move past aspiration to structural change

Friederike Fabritius's 2026 talks & topics

Embracing Change and Uncertainty with Emotional Resilience

Explores how leaders can guide teams through change and uncertainty using social cognitive neuroscience, with practical tools for brain-friendly communication and emotional resilience under pressure.

Key takeaways:

- How the brain processes change and why individuals respond differently
- Why distinct neurosignatures shape tolerance for uncertainty and disruption
- Practical communication strategies for leading effectively when conditions are unstable

The Neuroscience of Diversity and Inclusion

Examines diversity and inclusion through the lens of neuroscience, showing how differences in neurosignatures influence team performance, collaboration, and the conditions that either generate or suppress innovation.

Key takeaways:

- Why cognitive diversity in teams reduces groupthink and improves decision quality
 - How neurosignature differences drive inclusion or exclusion below the level of visible behaviour
 - How leaders can actively work with different thinking styles rather than around them
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Fun, Fear, and Focus

Explains how the interaction of fun, fear, and focus in the brain creates or prevents flow states – and what leaders can do to build performance cultures that sustain peak output without burning people out.

Key takeaways:

- The neuroscience of flow and why optimal stress levels vary by individual
 - How team environments can either enable or block individual and collective peak performance
 - Practical design choices that shift a culture from fear-driven to performance-driven
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The Creative Mind: Exploring the Neuroscience of Innovation

Shows how brain states and emotional environments shape creative insight and problem-solving – and what organisations can do to build the conditions for original thinking at scale.

Key takeaways:

- What happens neurologically during moments of creative breakthrough
 - How emotions and brain activity interact to enable or block innovative thinking
 - Actionable approaches to fostering creativity in teams and under commercial pressure
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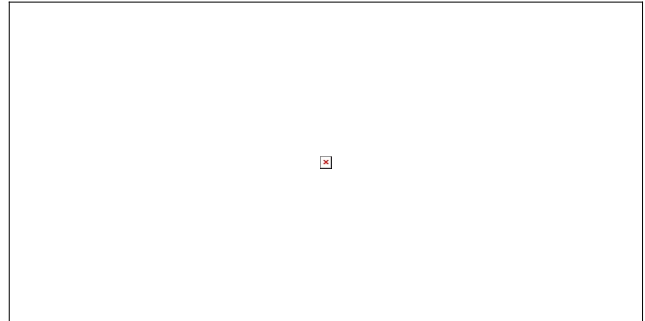
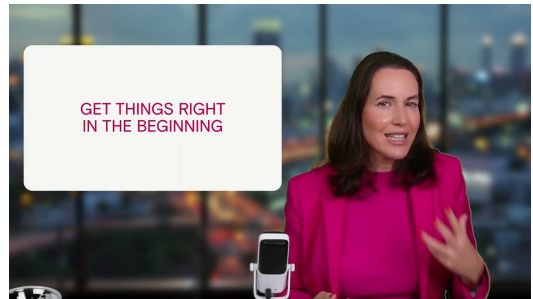
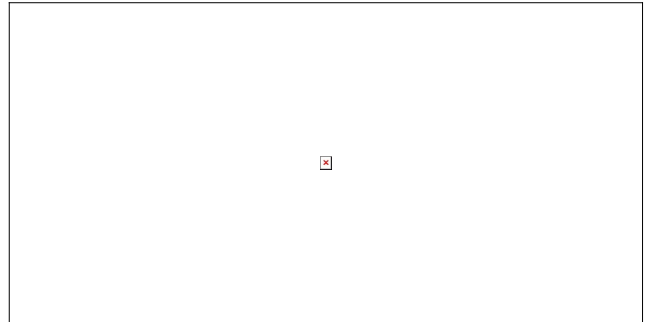
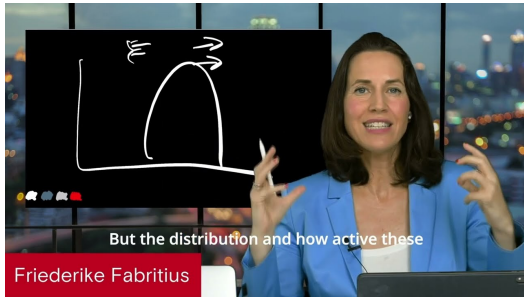
The Social Brain: The Ten Commandments of Great Relationships

Explores the neuroscience of trust, empathy, and collaboration, with a focus on psychological safety and how leaders can build the social conditions for effective teamwork in hybrid environments.

Key takeaways:

- How the brain is wired for social connection and why trust is neurologically costly to rebuild
- The neuroscience of psychological safety and what undermines it in distributed teams
- How to manage bias, empathy, and credibility in hybrid and cross-cultural settings

Friederike Fabritius's Videos



What Friederike Fabritius's clients say

It's clear that the modern workplace isn't working for many people and that changes are imperative. Fabritius outlines some practical science-based steps to get us from here to there to cultivate a world that works well for all of us.

Riaz Shah

Global Learning Leader, EY

Friederike Fabritius is one of those rare speakers who has a natural ability to deliver complex ideas and science in a way that her audience can easily digest, understand and use for their own development. She's concise, incisive and supremely focused. If you want to become better acquainted with your own brain and how to use it for peak performance there is no better guide. At London Business Forum we call her Friederike 'Fabulous' Fabritius.

Brendan Barns

Founder and CEO, London Business Forum

Friederike has the rare talent to convey a complex, scientific topic with child's ease and engage and inspire her audience. It is always a pleasure to hear her present her theories and how these can be brought to life in the business world to drive our brains to top performance. It was an honour to have her give a keynote at our GSA Partner Meeting.

Julie Linn Teigland

EMEA Area Manager, EY (Ernst & Young)

Mrs. Fabritius was invited as a keynote speaker to our annual management conference. She focused on creativity, our innovative capacity, and on the power of the organization. For the participants, it was a real eye-opener to examine these corporate subjects from the perspective of behavioral research, neuroscience and psychology. I was impressed by how Mrs. Fabritius was able to take her many years of experience in the field of behavioural research and psychology and apply them so well to a business context.

Felix Schwabe

Innovation Management Production, Audi

Friederike is a passionate leadership expert and a great storyteller! She delivered an impressive and engaging talk, which was both captivating and insightful! The talk has proven to be very useful in our ways of understanding team dynamics and increasing the productivity of project groups at trivago.

Anitta Krishan

Organizational Development, Trivago

It was such a pleasure collaborating with Friederike on several workshops devoted to the neuroscience of leadership. She has a remarkable knack for identifying and communicating key findings and principles that can help leaders optimize their effectiveness.

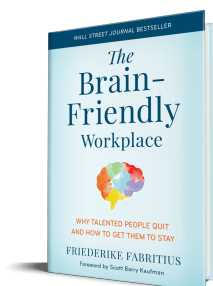
Jonathan Schooler

Neuroscientist and Professor, UC Santa Barbara

Friederike has the power of a small tornado without blowing the audience over. It was precisely her combination of strength, humor and warmth that brought such a positive energy to the - digital - audience. And the way she uses her iPad to illustrate her ideas was an additional bonus for this important meeting. By sharing practical tools with us about how you can still be productive & interactive in a virtual working world, Friederike helped us to accomplish our mission for this kick-off meeting. If you are looking for a guest speaker to give your organization some fresh, science-backed and practical insights into how to deal with productivity and interaction during or after COVID-19, look no further, Friederike is your woman!

Senior Director EMEA, Delta Electronics

FRIEDERIKE'S LATEST BOOKS



**The Brain-Friendly Workplace:
Why Talented People Quit and
How to Get Them to Stay**

Friederike Fabritius's 2026 speaking fees

Specific fees fall within the ranges shown. These are presented as a guide only and are subject to change without notice.

| | EUR | GBP | USD |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Home Country | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |

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|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Asia Pacific | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| Europe | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| Middle East & Africa | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| South America | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| United Kingdom | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| US East Coast | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| US West Coast | €12000 to €40000 | £10,001 - £35,000 | \$15000 - \$50000 |
| Virtual | Under €12000 | Under £10,000 | Under \$15000 |