

SEVEN BENEFITS OF
MEDIATION
IN THE WORKPLACE



WELCOME



Conflict is all around us and it is part of everyday life; we can't escape it. Can you recall ever watching a TV show or movie—including cartoons—where there were no disagreements, no conflicts, or no differences of opinion between the actors? Have you ever read a newspaper article or watched a news broadcast where conflict wasn't in some way part of the background?

In spite of the fact that all of us are familiar with conflict, having the means to effectively and objectively resolve conflict in a respectful manner is oftentimes a different matter. And that is where people in conflict benefit from the services of a qualified neutral mediator.

When people come to me seeking mediation, my goal is to guide them through creating mutually agreed upon Points of Agreement which will guide their interactions in the future. We explore how each party views the conflict from their unique perspective. Oftentimes, the parties view the conflict very differently. Neither view is wrong, just different. Once they share and acknowledge the issues, I facilitate a conversation around the issues each sees as contributing to the conflict. This allows each person to see the situation from the other person's perspective and helps clear up misunderstandings, challenges assumptions, and helps them arrive at workable solutions. Since the Points of Agreement are created by the parties to the conflict, they learn to hold themselves accountable to the agreement and are able to avoid future conflicts.

My background in working with companies and organizations across a wide array of industries has proved highly beneficial in assisting people resolve their conflict through mediation. If you are experiencing conflict that is stealing your ability to enjoy life and work, or you are a supervisor or manager of employees in conflict and wish to regain a sense of teamwork, cooperation and productivity in the workplace, it's time to give me a call.

Thank you and best wishes for a less stressful life!



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Mediation is an effective tool for resolving a variety of issues, but it can be especially helpful in the workplace. Disputes related to business and employment feature a variety of nuances and many traditional methods of resolution can actually cause more problems in the long-run. If you are involved in a workplace dispute or you are responsible for helping employees solve disputes within a business, there are several things you should know about mediation.



1

Mediation avoids conflicts of interest by using an outside Qualified Neutral.

Mediation utilizes a neutral third party to resolve conflict. The mediator facilitates discussion and encourages those involved to see the benefits of various solutions. In litigation, a judge has the final say; and similar situations exist in other forms of alternative dispute resolution. In mediation, the qualified neutral acts as a guide, but does not dictate the final outcome. Not only does the neutral keep the process on track, he or she also ensures the disputing parties take responsibility for the resolution.



2

Mediation ensures objectivity is maintained in the process.

By bringing in a qualified neutral, workplace disputes are resolved with objectivity and fairness. The neutral has no stake in the outcome and only wants to help disputing parties reach a resolution that is mutually satisfactory. Nobody involved in the dispute will feel manipulated or as if they are being “ganged up on.” This neutrality and objectivity is often enough to encourage people to be more open to solutions.



3

Mediation is much less expensive than litigation.

In mediation, the disputing parties are responsible for gathering information and bringing it to the sessions. This cuts down on the time it takes in the discovery process that would be a part of traditional litigation. And though it is possible for disputing parties to have individual legal representation, it is often not necessary. Mediation also takes less time than litigation, so even if disputing parties do have their own attorneys, the fees are much less. And finally, mediation allows disputing parties to avoid many of the fees that are associated with court proceedings.

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4 Mediation offers significantly higher level of compliance since the parties involved create the list of agreements.

The thing many people like about mediation is the control it gives them over the final outcome. In traditional litigation, a judge makes the final ruling, so both parties could walk away from the situation unhappy. In mediation, both sides play a role in creating the resolution. Mediation is only successful if everyone agrees to the resolution, increasing the likelihood everyone will abide by the details of the resolution over the long haul.

5 Mediation provides a process through which participants are able to find common understanding and reduced conflict.

The most important aspect of mediation is communication. A successful mediator is able to help disputing parties communicate about the problem, even if up until that point there has been nothing but contention. Effective communication makes it possible for opposing sides to gain understanding of alternate viewpoints. Even if they do not agree, they are able to see where the opposing side is coming from, which often makes it easier to reach mutually agreeable compromises to perplexing challenges and conflicts.

6 Mediation allows for the restoration and well-being of workplace relationships – there are clear emotional and physiological benefits to be gained.

Since mediation promotes problem solving through effective communication, the process increases the likelihood that relationships can continue once the problem is solved. Mediation avoids the hard feelings that often arise from traditional litigation. Not only are disputing parties working toward a solution that benefits both sides, they are gaining skills they can use later to avoid conflicts in the workplace. When employees know that disputes will be resolved through the mediation process, they are able to

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relax and approach every situation with the right frame of mind. The awareness that nobody will “get in trouble” or be run out of the business, should a dispute arise, puts everyone at ease and makes it easier for them to perform at their highest professional level. The result is less stress at work and healthier employees in the long run.

7

Successful mediation allows people to focus on their work; while not feeling like they have to be constantly looking over their shoulder.

A successful mediation session is one in which disputing parties are able to work through their issues together and eliminate conflict. The process promotes a feeling of teamwork and a successful mediator encourages those involved to experience a feeling of “we are all in this together.” Instead of one person winning and the other losing, as would be the case in litigation, mediation makes it possible for everyone to walk away from the situation feeling as if they have been victorious.

What this means for the future is that co-workers are able to trust one another. Because everyone was encouraged to be open and honest during mediation, nobody feels a sense of “back stabbing” that can arise during traditional litigation. Mediation truly allows people to resolve their problems in a manner that moves a business forward without resentment or feelings of betrayal.

Mediation offers benefits that are measurable for a business, but it also provides an opportunity to let a business grow. It can turn common workplace disputes into learning opportunities for everyone involved. If you would like more information about workplace mediation or you are in need of an experienced neutral to facilitate your mediation, contact John Trombley at 701.451.5030 or by email at mediation@thevillagefamily.org.



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