

mindfulmediation

where psychology meets the law for conflict resolution

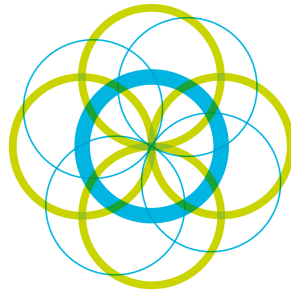
11 BASIC WORKPLACE MEDIATION STEPS

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. MEET INDIVIDUALLY WITH THOSE INVOLVED | Get a clear understanding of the issues before you try to intervene. People often have very different perceptions of events. Understanding their individual perceptions will help you to focus on what is important to each person, and to find common ground. Where possible speak to managers or others that may be able to assist you to understand the issues (and keep the conversation confidential). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. DIAGNOSE THE ISSUES | The main diagnosis you need to make at this stage is the level of complexity of the issues. Simple issues can be resolved in-house, more complex issues are best resolved using professional mediators (See page 3). This protects the organisation and the people involved. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. PLAN THE INTERVENTION | Get to know the people involved as much as possible, and choose dispute resolution processes that will work best for them. Some forms of intervention can exacerbate the conflict when not carefully planned. Decide whether to include support people and a number of strategies to try as things do not always work out as planned. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. ARRANGE A MEETING WITH ALL OF THOSE INVOLVED | Based on your individual meetings you will now have a clearer picture of the key issues, what each person considers important and the common ground. These are the key ingredients to a successful mediation - satisfying each person's needs (and much as possible) and bringing the people together, based on common ground. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. ASK EACH PERSON TO STATE THEIR VIEW OF THE ISSUES - | Encourage each person to summarise their view, uninterrupted. This stage of the process is essential as often people involved in conflict do not feel heard. Sometimes resolving workplace conflict is as easy as providing a forum for people to express their views. Let the people involved know before you begin this stage that it is important that each of them hear how the other sees the situation, uninterrupted. |

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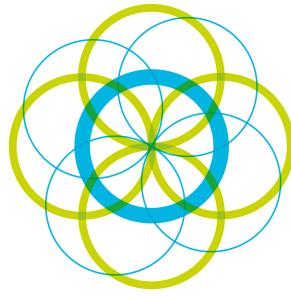
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. SUMMARISE THE MAIN ISSUES | Summarise the key issues once you have heard from all the people concerned. Ensure that you pay close and equal attention to everyone's needs and what they consider important. Failing to do so may lead to others feeling that you are biased towards one person or another. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. EXPLORING THE MAIN ISSUES | Allow time to discuss each person's perspective of the situation and clear up any misunderstandings and perspectives. Discussing residual emotions or feelings is often an essential step in resolving workplace conflict. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. OPTIONS FOR RESOLUTION | Encourage a future-focused attitude. While the past cannot be changed they can impact the future. Always try to get more than three options on the table for each issue so you don't just have their positions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. REALITY TEST THE OPTIONS | Use "What if..." questions to help ensure that the proposed solutions are practical and will work back on the job. Be creative in your risk analysis of each of the proposed solutions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. NEGOTIATION | If people start freely negotiating, do not interrupt them. This is your chance to sit back and listen. If they get stuck at any stage try summarising what they have achieved so far and remind them of any agreements they have reached. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. CHECK THAT EVERYONE IS SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOMES | Check in with each person that they feel heard and have had their needs met to some extent. Explaining to people at the outset that resolution is often about meeting their most important needs, not all their needs, helps with setting up realistic expectations. |

****PLEASE NOTE THAT EVEN WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS SOME INTERVENTIONS ATTEMPTED BY UNTRAINED PROFESSIONALS CAN EXACERBATE CONFLICT. ONLY INTERVENE IF YOU ARE SKILLED IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION, THE ISSUES ARE SIMPLE, AND YOU KNOW THE PEOPLE INVOLVED RELATIVELY WELL SO YOU KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT****

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WHEN TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL MEDIATOR

Many workplace issues can be (and are) resolved in-house. There are some issues, however, that require the assistance of a professional mediator.

If the conflict involves one or more of the following we recommend you call in a professional mediator:

1. More than two people are involved
2. The issues are complex
3. There are suspected mental health issues
4. A formal grievance has been lodged
5. A workers' compensation or bullying claim has been lodged (in some circumstances mediation can be effective in resolving many of the issues surrounding these types of claims)

Call 1300 646 338 for confidential advice on how to resolve your workplace conflict.

Caryn Cridland is the Director of Mindful Mediation, a specialist workplace mediation, facilitation, coaching, and training organisation that provides services to leading organisations around Australia.

Caryn is a Registered Psychologist, Lawyer, Nationally Accredited Mediator, and Leadership Consultant. She has successfully resolved hundreds of workplace mediations at all levels of an organisations in many different industries.



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