

Mediation at work

What mediation is and how it can help

Mediation is a way to mend relationships when there is a disagreement at work.

It is held by a 'mediator' (neutral person). The mediator is impartial. This means they do not take sides. They're there to help everyone involved find a solution they can all agree to.

Mediation is not about judging who was right or wrong in the past. It looks at how to agree on working together in the future.

Mediation is a quick way to resolve disagreement at work. It is also:

- less formal
- flexible
- voluntary
- confidential
- usually not legally binding

How mediation can help

Mediation helps to mend relationships at work by:

- finding solutions that everyone agrees to
- improving communication
- allowing everyone involved to have control of what's finally agreed

There are many benefits of mediation. For example, it can help to:

- reduce stress
- keep valuable employees
- avoid more formal processes, such as going to employment tribunal
- stop more grievances being raised
- avoid paying high costs, for example, employment tribunal claims

Mediation outcomes are decided by everyone involved and can be flexible. Outcomes might include:

- an acknowledgement of each party's views
- a commitment to change behaviour
- a commitment to regularly review the agreement reached
- an agreement to review policies and procedures
- an agreement to share work more fairly and provide more responsibility

A voluntary and confidential process

If you do not want to take part in mediation, you do not have to.

Mediation is voluntary and confidential. The mediator will agree with everyone involved what information can be shared outside the mediation and how. If you do not reach an agreement, anything that's been said during the mediation must be kept confidential and cannot be used in future procedures.

When mediation can be used

Mediation can be used to resolve disagreements around relationships at work.

For example, you can use mediation to resolve:

- bullying and harassment
- communication problems
- personality clashes
- relationship breakdowns

Generally, mediation is not used to resolve disputes such as pay or issues related to dismissal or conduct.

When to start mediation

It's a good idea to try and resolve the problem informally first, before thinking about using mediation.

[Find out how to raise a problem at work](#)

If the problem cannot be resolved informally, you can use mediation. Mediation can be used at any stage in a disagreement, but it's best to start it as soon as possible. The earlier the disagreement is dealt with, the less chance there is of things getting worse.

You could also use mediation to rebuild relationships after a disciplinary or grievance process.

Guidance for employers

[Read our mediation guidance for employers written with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development](#)