

NM ADR NEWS

Encouraging communication through mutual respect

April – June 2012

About the OADPR

The 2007 Governmental Dispute Prevention & Resolution Act (GDPR) created the OADPR to promote early dispute resolution and positive collaboration among state employees and agencies through the development and support of effective and efficient programs and policies. The Office operates as a Bureau of the Risk Management Division (RMD) of the General Services Department (GSD).

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State of New Mexico
General Services Department

ADR CURRENT EVENTS AND TRAINING

2012 ADR SYMPOSIUM: The 2nd Annual State ADR Symposium is coming in October! For more information, please contact us at ADR.Bureau@state.nm.us.

MEDIATION TRAINING AT UNM LAW SCHOOL: Fall 2012: Oct. 19 – 21, & Nov. 2 – 4 (must attend both weekends). Trainer: David Levin, with Laura Bassein & Philip Crump. For more information, please contact Margaret Harrington via e-mail at harrington@law.unm.edu or call (505) 277-7296.

MEDIATION TRAINING AT UNM / ANDERSON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT: Fridays & Saturdays, Sept. 14 – Oct. 6. Instructor: Anne Lightsey. For more information, go to <http://mgcert.mgt.unm.edu/programs/medation/asp> or contact Anne Lightsey at (505) 453-1174 or arlightsey@gmail.com.

MEDIATION TRAINING AT SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE: A 40-hour Conflict Resolution and Mediation Skills training (HUDV 153-01) will be offered Tuesdays & Thursdays, Fall Semester 2012, Aug. 20 – Dec 8, from 4:00 – 5:15 pm. For more information, contact the instructor: Anne deLain W. Clark @ 819-9580.



SOME SIMPLE (*BUT NOT EASY*) PRINCIPLES OF DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR AT WORK . . .

Use Conflict as a Natural Resource. People who work together have different perceptions, and it would be unnatural if they did not disagree from time to time. The conflict generated can be a first step on the road to improving communication, solving a problem, and even building trust and cooperation. Avoidance or hiding conflict can be much more damaging in the workplace than facing it and dealing with it appropriately. You may even find that proverbial silver lining in a dark cloud.

Don't React. Take time to cool off and gather your emotions. The most natural thing to do when faced with a difficult person or situation is to react. Give yourself time to think and remain focused on identifying the real needs and interests of the other person and yourself. Deep breathing and counting to ten is very helpful.

Deal with Feelings. Helping the other person identify or acknowledge their feelings tends to reduce the intensity of those feelings and allows the person to focus on the underlying issues. By encouraging and permitting the expression of negative feelings without fear of reprisal or punishment, you have increased the probability that your similar emotional expressions will be better accepted.

Attack the Problem, Not the Person. Keep an objective eye on the problem and detach any feelings about the person presenting it. Try to understand what the actual problem is and generate possibilities for settling it. Don't attack the other person and try to see the situation from their point of view. If you make assumptions about their behavior, verify by asking or repeat what you thought you heard. Show respect, try not to interrupt, and avoid using hostile words that inflame.

Practice Direct Communication. Speak directly to the other party. Use "I" statements and be clear about points of agreement, about purpose, and about needs. Use body language to show support and attention. Ask questions to clarify and paraphrase what the other person is attempting to communicate to you. Ask problem solving

questions. Other people can provide you with some very important information about yourself, positive and negative, and you can provide equally important information helpful to them. Words alone do not convey this information, so be aware of your body language and tone of voice.

Look Past Positions to the Underlying Interests. A position is someone's limited view of what solution is necessary to meet a particular need. Until the needs and interests of each of you are ascertained, it is not possible to generate options that will be mutually beneficial and agreeable. Try to identify the other person's physical or psychological needs, along with your common interests. You can bring these interests to the surface or you can leave them submerged only to emerge in unmanageable ways later.

Focus on the Future. Proving or disproving past allegations may not be of value to a continuing relationship at work. Give the other person ownership in the resolution. Don't sell your ideas but engage in a joint problem solving discussion. Ask what's important and be sure agreement is reached in dignity and respect for each of you. Any ongoing relationship you have with someone is longitudinal and can be altered to be constructive and improved. What just happened may be important or it may be trivial depending on how you want to make it appear just now. Remember, in a marathon you must pace yourself and believe that things will improve if only you give it the chance.

Holding onto the resentment of people you have to work with punishes you as much as it does them. You don't change relationships by trying to control people's behavior but by changing yourself in relation to them. Listening to and showing respect for the people we work with doesn't have to be the same as becoming friends. When deeply felt but unexpressed feelings take shape in the words that we share and come back clarified, the result is a reassuring sense of being understood and a grateful feeling of humanness with the one who understands. If listening fortifies our relationships by cementing a better connection with another, it also fortifies our sense of self. In the presence of a receptive listener we are able to clarify what we think and discover what we feel.

Excerpt from : "How To Handle Difficult Behavior In The Workplace," by Tony Belak
<http://www.mediate.com/articles/belak4.cfm>

**Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still,
to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.**

- Benjamin Franklin