



FY19 – 1st Quarter

Encouraging Communication Through Mutual Respect

About the OADPR

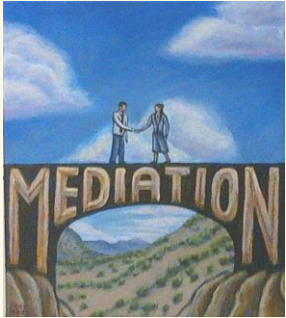
ADR also means “A Dialogue Resource”

The 2007 Governmental Dispute Prevention & Resolution Act (GDPRA) created the Office of Alternative Dispute Prevention and Resolution (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. Today, the Office operates and is known as the **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Bureau** of the Risk Management Division (RMD) of the NM General Services Department (GSD).



“The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size.”

~ Albert Einstein



Is CONFLICT getting in the way with your colleague, your supervisor, or your employee? The ADR Bureau is here to help. Try us.

Visit our website at:
<http://adr.gsd.state.nm.us>

Contact us at:
adr.bureau@state.nm.us

Mary Jo Lujan
ADR Bureau Chief
(505) 827-0444
maryjo.lujan@state.nm.us

Stefanie Ortega
ADR Management Analyst
(505) 827-0576
stefanie.ortega2@state.nm.us



NEW MEXICO
GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ADR TRAINING COMING SOON:

ADR Coordinator Training

1-day training in Santa Fe: September 20, 2018 [Click here to register](#)

This training is highly recommended for designated ADR Coordinators ([click on link to learn more](#)) representing state agencies or other state entities. We welcome new ADR Coordinators, as well as those who would like a refresher course. Come and learn about the ADR Process in State Government.

2018 ADR Symposium

2-day training in Albuquerque: October 18 & 19, 2018 [Click here to register](#)

This FREE annual event is filled with presentations, workshops and professional development opportunities in ADR and communication-based training.

40-hour Beginning Mediation Certification ([click on link to learn more](#))

5-day training in Santa Fe: November 5-9, 2018: Graduates of this class will serve as volunteer mediators in our program. Interested in this or a future class? Complete the following form to get on the wait list: [Participant Commitment/Organizational Approval Form - 40-hr Beg. Mediation Training](#) ([click on link to learn more](#)) and e-mail to adr.bureau@state.nm.us

Classes above are FREE to state employees and space is limited.

If you would like to be considered for any of these classes or need more information, please e-mail us at adr.bureau@state.nm.us with your contact information and class preference.

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) Recorded Webinar Series (FREE)

[\(click on link to learn more\)](#)



To Get More Comfortable with Conflict, Stop Making It Personal
by Amy Gallo

Conflict is a normal, healthy part of working with other people. And yet many of us avoid it at all costs — often because it feels personal. To get more comfortable with disagreements, and to reap the benefits of productive conflict, let go of the idea that it’s all about you. If you model that you’re comfortable with productive conflict, you’ll show your team that it’s OK to disagree, encouraging people to raise their ideas. To move a work conflict away from the personal, think about the bigger picture and the business’s needs. Disagreements often arise over objectives and processes, for example. When you and a colleague have different views about something, ask yourself: Why is this difference of opinion an important debate to have? How will it help the organization or the project you’re working on? The more you can keep a conflict focused on the business, the better chance you have of resolving it in a way that benefits everyone.

To be fair, agreeing is usually easier than confronting someone, at least in the short run. And it feels good when someone nods at something we say, or admits, “I see it the exact same way.” That’s what I wanted Marguerite to do. And rather than accepting that she saw things differently from me, I labeled her “difficult.” This was a mistake — and not just because I ended up embarrassing myself. By thinking that way, I lost out on a potentially productive working relationship. Imagine how much better the project could’ve gone had I openly and respectfully disagreed with Marguerite.

Disagreements are an inevitable, normal, and healthy part of relating to other people. There is no such thing as a conflict-free work environment. You might dream of working in a peaceful utopia, but it wouldn’t be good for your company, your work, or you. In fact, disagreements — when managed well — have lots of positive outcomes. Here are a few.

Better work outcomes. When you and your coworkers push one another to continually ask if there’s a better approach, that creative friction is likely to lead to new solutions. “Conflict allows the team to come to terms with difficult situations, to synthesize diverse perspectives, and to make sure solutions are well thought-out,” says Liane Davey, cofounder of 3COze Inc. and author of [*You First: Inspire Your Team to Grow Up, Get Along, and Get Stuff Done*](#). “Conflict is uncomfortable, but it is the source of true innovation, and also a critical process in identifying and mitigating risks.” And there’s rarely a fixed amount of value to be gained in a disagreement. If you and your colleague are arguing about the best way to roll out a new initiative — he wants to launch in a single market first and you want to enter several at one time — you’ll be forced to explore the pros and cons of each approach and ideally find the best solutions.



NM ADR NEWS

Opportunities to learn and grow. As uncomfortable as it may feel when someone challenges your ideas, it's an opportunity to learn. By listening and incorporating feedback, you gain experience, try new things, and evolve as a manager. When a peer chews you out after an important presentation because you didn't give her team credit for their work, the words may sting, but you're more likely to think through everyone's perspectives before preparing your next talk.

Improved relationships. By working through conflict together, you'll feel closer to the people around you and gain a better understanding of what matters to them and how they prefer to work. You'll also set an important precedent: that it's possible to have "good" fights and then move on. My 10-year-old daughter knows this intuitively. She once came back from a sleepover with her close friend, and when I asked her how it went, she said, "Great. We fought the whole time." I pressed her about how it could've been fun when they were arguing. She said, "Because we got over it and now we're BFFs."

Higher job satisfaction. When you're not afraid to constructively disagree about issues at work, you're likely to be happier to go to the office, be satisfied with what you accomplish, and enjoy interactions with your colleagues. Instead of feeling as if you have to walk on eggshells, you can focus on getting your work done. Research supports this: [A study of American and Chinese employees](#) in China showed a correlation between the use of certain approaches to conflict management — ones in which employees pursue a win-win situation, care for others, and focus on common interests — and an employee's happiness at work.

A more inclusive work environment. If you want to have diversity and inclusion in your organization, you have to be prepared to disagree. Anesa Parker, Carmen Medina, and Elizabeth Schill wrote in their Rotman Management article, "[Diversity's New Frontier: Diversity of Thought](#)," that "While homogenous groups are more confident in their performance, diverse groups are often more successful in completing tasks." They went on to explain that managers and employees need to get over an "instinctual urge to avoid conflict" and abandon "the idea that consensus is an end in and of itself. In a well-run diverse team, substantive disagreements do not need to become personal: Ideas either have merit and posits of connection or they do not."

I couldn't agree more, especially on another point they make: that managers have an obligation to design conflicts that allow their teams to be creative and productive. Put simply, we have to learn how to disagree more, and managers need to take responsibility for making it comfortable and OK for people to dissent, debate, and express their true opinions.

If you're a [conflict-averse person](#), I realize that reading this might leave you squirming in your chair. The good news is that it's entirely possible to get more comfortable with conflict. Here are some ways to start.





Let go of needing to be liked. Most people want people to like them. That’s normal. Joel Garfinkle, an executive coach and author of *Difficult Conversations*, recently wrote, “While it’s natural to want to be liked, that’s not always the most important thing.” He goes on to say that instead of trying to increase your likability, focus on respect — both giving it and earning it. “Even when the subject matter is difficult, conversations can remain mutually supportive. Respect the other person’s point of view, and expect them to respect yours,” he says. If you model that you’re comfortable and that respect is more important than likability, you’ll model for your team that it’s OK to disagree, making it safer for people to raise their ideas. (I admit that this can be tricky advice to follow, particularly for women, as [research suggests](#).)

Focus on the big picture. Disagreements are hard when you think of them as personal jabs, but [conflicts at work usually start as differences over objectives or process](#). Amy Jen Su, managing partner of [Paravis Partners](#) and coauthor of *Own the Room*, suggests focusing on something other than the potential damage a disagreement can do to your relationship. Instead, she says, [think about the business needs](#): Why is your difference of opinion an important debate to have? How will it help the organization, your team, or the project you’re working on? Wanting to be liked is about *you*; wanting what’s best for the business or the team is far less selfish.



Don’t equate disagreement with unkindness. When I talk with people who are afraid of conflict, and I ask why they are hesitant to disagree, I most often hear, “I don’t want to hurt her feelings” or “I don’t want to be a jerk.” Yes, there are some people who genuinely don’t want to be disagreed with ([insecure managers](#), for example), but most people are open to hearing a different perspective if you share it thoughtfully and respectfully. Ask yourself: Is there really a risk that you will hurt your coworker’s feelings or that they’ll think you’re a jerk? Or are you projecting your own discomfort?

Find a role model and emulate them. Chances are there’s someone in your life — a colleague, a relative, or a friend — who does a pretty good job of being direct and honest about their thoughts and opinions without ruffling feathers. Watch that person. See what they do. And then try to emulate them. One of my colleagues recently told me that when she’s in a tense situation, she pretends that she’s an actor who is skilled at dealing with discomfort. She says that lets her observe her behavior from a distance rather than being mired in the rawness of her emotions at the moment. This is in the [“fake it until you make it”](#) vein that London Business School’s [Herminia Ibarra](#) recommends using. If you’re not good at dealing with tense conversations, try on the persona of someone who is. Whichever tactic you decide to try, practice in small doses. Be direct in a low-stakes conversation and see what happens. Chances are it will go better than you expect. And if it doesn’t, you can learn from the situation and try again.

Adapted from [“Why We Should Be Disagreeing More at Work”](#) by Amy Gallo, Harvard Business Review, JANUARY 03, 2018