

### **Tips for a Successful Mediation**

Mediation is voluntary, confidential, and relatively informal. It is a unique and truly valuable opportunity for parties to genuinely listen to one another as they explain what has occurred – how it has affected them – and then move forward with exploring mutually acceptable solutions to their conflict in a safe and non-adversarial environment.

Constructive communication is key; please use the following guidelines:

- Speak only for yourself – using “I” statements
- Use language that does not blame or find fault with others
- Do not interrupt while another person is speaking (jot down notes)
- Refrain from using inflammatory words
- If stating a complaint, raise it as your concern and follow it with a constructive suggestion about how it might be resolved
- Attack the problems and concerns at hand; do not attack the other person
- Be respectful of others
- Listen to understand what each person is saying without being judgmental about that person or the message
- Keep discussions present and future oriented – don’t dwell and get stuck on past circumstances

Prior to the mediation think about the following:

- What are the key issues in the conflict
- How do you feel in response to the circumstances of the dispute, and...
- What unmet needs of yours are associated with those feelings
- What do you really need in order to resolve the issues and move forward
- What you want to get out of the mediation session
- What you are willing to do
- Possible alternatives of solving the problem(s)
- Be prepared for a little give and take – mutual agreement is the goal
- Put anger aside and deal with the issues in a fair manner
- What common interests do you share with the other party
- Reverse roles – look at the issues from the other party’s perspective
- What will your life be like if you do not resolve this conflict in a peaceful and biblical manner
- What can your life be like if you do resolve this conflict in a peaceful and biblical manner

*Lastly, pray that your thoughts, words, and actions are pleasing to the Lord.*

*“When we understand the other fellow’s viewpoint, and he understands ours, then we can sit down and work out our differences” ~ Harry S. Truman*