



This is a regular look at recent news in the world of mediation, focusing in particular on the workplace and throwing in some of my own views for good measure. In this edition there is an excellent example of how workplace mediation is being used in the British Army, as well as several articles looking at how poor management is negatively affecting employees health. I also mention my latest contribution as an author, a chapter on how conflict may impact the workplaces of the future.

**Marc Reid**

### How the army manages conflict, without fighting



It is always encouraging to see examples of organisations embracing the benefits of workplace mediation. Conflict is nothing new for the British Army but it is good to see they take a positive approach to employee conflict. This People Management article (click [here](#)) reports how the emphasis on using mediation to resolve issues between colleagues has been refreshed after it's introduction 7 years ago. There is increasing take up of the opportunity to use mediation to resolve disputes and the popularity is reflected in the demand to join the pool of 85 internal mediators. The article highlights some of the key learnings on how to run internal mediation schemes, but one point in particular struck me as very valuable. When suggesting mediation the emphasis is not on 'selling' the idea of mediation but instead the focus is on having a conversation. This avoids the natural scepticism or negative preconceptions participants may have about 'mediation'.

ish Army but it is good to see they take a positive approach to employee conflict. This People Management article (click [here](#)) reports how the emphasis on using mediation to resolve issues between colleagues has been refreshed after it's introduction 7 years ago. There is increasing take up of the opportunity to use mediation to resolve disputes and the popularity is reflected in the demand to join the pool of 85 internal mediators. The article highlights some of the key learnings on how to run internal mediation schemes, but one point in particular struck me as very valuable. When suggesting mediation the emphasis is not on 'selling' the idea of mediation but instead the focus is on having a conversation. This avoids the natural scepticism or negative preconceptions participants may have about 'mediation'.

### Top tips when faced with difficult people

I usually steer clear of the '3/5/7 etc Top Tips to...' type articles as they are normally fairly lightweight. This one however caught my eye (click [here](#)). It is from the Ariana Huffington Thrive Global website and takes the approach of asking 10 members of their community to give their views on specific strategies to adopt when faced with difficult people or challenging behaviour. All the suggestions given are positive, worthwhile ideas. Interestingly the focus is very much on how you manage yourself rather than trying to address the other person. This is a good reminder that whilst we may not be able to change the behaviour of the other person we can definitely control how we respond to it. Perhaps the best advice is in the introduction which suggests addressing aggression with curiosity rather than defensiveness.

Want to share a thought or make an enquiry? We'll be glad to hear from you:

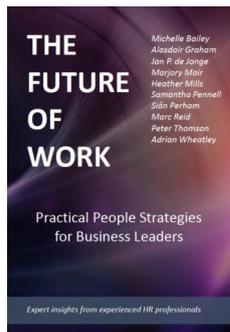
**Tel: 07870 444444**

**Email: [enquiry@mediation4.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@mediation4.co.uk)**

## Risks of poor management

Several articles have drawn on the results of the CIPD and Simplyhealth 2019 'Health and Wellbeing at Work' report. A key message from this is how poor management is negatively impacting employee health. This People Management article (click [here](#)) highlights the increase in stress related absence with a significant rise in the percentage putting management style as a key cause. Another People Management article (click [here](#)) cites many different organisations and how they are addressing the need for managers to develop their people management skills. This is something I know well. Workplace conflict is often caused or exacerbated by poor management, either by avoiding an issue or by trying to resolve it without the necessary competence.

## Conflict in the future workplace



How will the changing nature of the workplace affect the potential for relationship conflict between work colleagues? This is the question I explore in my chapter of a co-authored book which has just been published on 'The Future of Work'. (click [here](#)). I look at key societal trends and how they are reflected in the workplace (for instance growth of technology meaning increasing use of remote working, 'always on' mentality etc.) and how this could impact conflict. I also suggest some practical tools and techniques to prevent and control conflict. If you'd just like to read my chapter then drop me a line and I'll happily send you a pdf copy.

**Our latest book '8 Stages of Workplace Conflict— and how best to resolve each stage' is still available to download for free from our website. Just go to [www.mediation4.co.uk](http://www.mediation4.co.uk) and click on the download link.**

## Mediation success without an agreement?



In my latest blog (click [here](#)) I pose the question 'Can a mediation can be successful if it doesn't result in a written agreement?'. The

obvious answer would be no, but in the blog I argue that this is not necessarily the case. Success depends on how you perceive the objective of the mediation. That is not to say that a written agreement is unimportant. On the contrary there are several good reasons why it is valuable to have something that the people involved have agreed and signed and in the blog I give several reasons why this is the case. You'll just have to read it to find out what they are!

## The little things that affect working relationships

The Harvard Business Review features a very interesting article (click [here](#)) which draws on recent academic research showing that our relationships with our co-workers are built up (and broken down) by 'micromoves'. We naturally tend to see our relationships as relatively fixed, either good or bad. But the article suggests there is more flexibility, that these micromoves can move the relationship in a positive or negative direction. It goes on to suggest 5 ways you can make use of these micromoves to positively impact your relationships. The concept aligns with my own experience where relationships can sour not through one big altercation but slowly over time through many relatively minor incidents.

Website: [www.mediation4.co.uk](http://www.mediation4.co.uk)