

PREPARATION FOR AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEDIATION

Our ability to be helpful to you in only one meeting depends on your doing part of the work of the mediation in advance. Please prepare your notes, and *call me* before the session if you have questions, need help, want to introduce yourself.

1. CONTRACT:

Make a list of what you would like to accomplish during this mediation. Include things you want for yourself personally, as well as for the group. Common examples of contracts are:

- "I'd like to see communication improved."
- "I'd like to give criticism I have been afraid to give without a third person present."
- "I want to clear up some hurtful things that have happened."
- "I want to decide whether we can go on working together, and if so how to improve our relationship."

2. HELD FEELINGS:

Write down the things that people have done that have irritated you, hurt your feelings, or evoked a negative response from you that is interfering with your ability to work cooperatively with that person. Be as specific as you can, using examples and following this form:

When you did _____, I felt _____.
(specific behavior) (feelings)

Some examples are:

- "When you didn't comment on the report I gave you at the end of last week, I felt hurt and angry."
- "When you came late to the staff meeting last Wednesday, I felt irritated."
- "When you don't greet me in the morning (for example at the beginning of this meeting), I feel hurt and scared."

PLEASE be careful that the words you use to describe feelings are simple and nonjudgmental. It would not be permissible to say, for example, "When you came late to the staff meeting last Wednesday, I felt you were irresponsible and incompetent." **Irresponsible** and **incompetent** are not words that describe feelings. They are opinions, and judgmental ones at that. Interestingly, words in English for feelings, devoid of judgments, are scarce. **Angry, sad, hurt, and scared**, and some variations on those themes, are the safest.

Write down all the "held feelings" you can remember without concern for which event is more important than another. Write down things you have already said only if you still have strong feelings about them, and, or don't really feel understood. If you like, after your list of held feelings is complete, mark the ones that are the most important to you and that you want to be sure to get out on the table.

3. CHANGES:

Make a list of things you ideally need to be happy working with this organization or colleague. Be as specific as you can. If there are any nonnegotiable demands, be sure to note them.

4. **STROKES:**

Think about positive things you feel for individuals in the group -- what you like about them, things you appreciate or are grateful for, ways in which you respect them. The mediation will end with time to say the sweet things you feel for each other.



This homework is a work sheet for your use only. Please prepare it on your own, without consulting each other. It is important that each person come to the mediation with her independent thoughts in order that clear agreements, reflecting all view-points, can be negotiated. Be sure to bring your homework with you to the mediation.

Please call me if you have any questions.

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