

There are benefits of using mediation to resolve workplace disputes. Early intervention will avoid the views of the parties becoming entrenched over time and reduce the likelihood of others being brought into the conflict. Early use of mediation can help to reach an outcome that is better for business.

The parties to a dispute are often tempted to take advantage of mediation at the first sign of a disagreement. They should be encouraged to resolve their differences by talking directly to each other in the first instance. Only when this fails should the parties resort to mediation.

Using mediation to resolve a dispute before an employee pursues a formal grievance process can prevent the discomfort that can be experienced when parties work together but are involved in formal processes. There are a number of issues and contexts where mediation may be unsuitable such as bullying, or harassment so seek HR advice.

Engaging key stakeholders is vital for the success of a mediation initiative. As an employer you need to explore the possibility of addressing workplace conflict through mediation and address any scepticism from your employees about using mediation to resolve disputes.

Introducing a mediation initiative into any organisation can generate significant business benefits, but its success will hinge on a number of factors. An employer that wishes to introduce mediation as a dispute resolution method will need to brief key stakeholders about the benefits of mediation so there is a strategic and collaborative approach.

In the business case for mediation list the business benefits such as the effective and positive way of addressing workplace conflict, a focus on resolution, the impact on customer and stakeholders' relationships and the greater confidence in the management of the organisation. As well as the direct costs in defending an employment tribunal claim versus upskilling the organisation's HR team or using external mediators.

Other costs that can be incurred as a result of workplace conflict include an increase in staff turnover together with recruitment costs for replacing members of staff, and sickness and stress-related absenteeism and wasted management and workforce time and resources taken up with the conflict.

When used effectively, mediation can reduce the emotional energy, time and resources that are absorbed by workplace conflict. The value of mediation and the role it can play in improving relationships and enhancing employee engagement is vast. Unresolved conflict is problematic and damaging to employee relationships and ultimately your business.

If you're unsure about how to implement any of these strategies or need HR advice and support reach out to natalie@hr2goconsultancy.co.uk 07779 508972 01279 771098