



## **Workplace mediation personality clash dispute case study**

Workplace mediation between Simon and Nadia, who worked for an accounts department, Nadia was young and ambitious and Simon was near retirement age and had a lot of knowledge compared to Nadia, being his junior Nadia always felt that Simon could be more helpful in explaining issues to her which she did not have experience on.

Whenever she approached him about something she did not understand he would be quite dismissive and say leave it with me I'll attend to this, although he would, this left Nadia quite unsatisfied as it would be helpful if he could explain things to her, which would allow her to deal with issues herself.

Simon unknown to the rest of the office had recently gone through a divorce which was tough on him. Nadia asked Simon for his input as per usual but on this particular occasion he snapped at her saying can't you do it yourself, I can't always hold your hand and rectify your mistakes, Nadia blew up stating if you could be bothered to do your job properly and explain things to me then I would not have to keep bothering you.

This incident led to a number of other heated arguments in front of other staff members resulting in them both being sat down with their supervisor. The meeting was not productive and each of them felt like they had not been heard by their supervisor who simply said they must work together and be professional and put their personal issues to one side.

Mediation was arranged and both aired their list of complaints to the other and to the mediator, making references to other members of staff who felt exactly the same about the other as they did.

The mediator focussed them both on what the core issues were and what they wanted to and needed to achieve. Simon felt that there was no point in training Nadia up on certain aspects of their roles as by the time he explained certain procedures to her, he could have done it himself, the mediator highlighted to Simon although this may be the case, had he put himself in Nadia's shoes? She was very frustrated and wanted to share in his knowledge and make his life easier by not having to ask him all the time about certain issues.

Training was highlighted as a way forward, some of which could be done by Simon and internal and external sources, it was agreed that certain procedures Nadia really did not really know and she admitted at times due to her ambition she had been over zealous.

Simon told Nadia about his divorce to which she was very sympathetic and told him she never realised both parties apologised to the other and made a list of issues which they collectively needed to work on and a list of issues which were simply the responsibility of the other. The mediator suggested a review of the situation three months after the mediation, on follow up their supervisor advised the mediator that the mediation really assisted both Simon and Nadia and no further issues had come to light.

## **Facts & figures**

- **The mediation took 1 day compared to the 6 months this workplace dispute had already gone on.**
- **The mediation cost the employer £750.00 compared to the thousands they would have had to spend had they continued with an Employment Tribunal or Court action.**