

Mr H.S. Bhurji

Effective Dispute Solutions
41 Hanover Road
Birmingham
B65 9EB

Tuesday 30th May 2017

Dear Mr Bhurji

Property, breach of contract, insurance dispute

I am a former employment lawyer of thirty years, and was also an employment judge. I have newly qualified as a mediator, and I am grateful for you allowing me to observe you mediate earlier this month.

It was a complicated dispute, concerning an alleged breach of contract between a company and one of their clients, following a house fire, insurance claim, cleaning and restoration work of several possessions, which was alleged to be defective / sub-standard. I was fascinated at how you magically led the parties to an agreement within five hours, especially as the dispute had been going on for nearly three years.

The parties were extremely difficult, highly emotive, one being a multimillionaire, whereby your tact of the litigation risk, wasted legal costs just would not work with him, as he had plenty of money. There was a history to the dispute alongside a great deal of ill feeling between the parties. With immense patience and a light touch of humour at exactly the right moments, you diluted the hostile atmosphere and kept the parties focused on the day itself. Gradually they let go of their anger and were able to reach an acceptable figure.

Personally, I thought that was remarkable, because the claimant had, had enough and had actually packed away to leave, as did the defendants at a later different stage.

I saw you display a myriad of exemplary mediation skills, which is simply why the dispute settled, it was obvious that you were deploying an incremental approach, and trying various different options, which you knew how and when to use based on your extensive mediation experience, until one worked. It was a pleasure to watch a true expert mediate, and I must say I learnt a great deal.

As a former employment judge, I was impressed by what you achieved. It went beyond what a court might hope to achieve. This mediation was a master class. Thank you again. I think I am very lucky to have had such a good experience as my first observation, it gave me something to aspire to.

Yours sincerely

Daphne Thomas Solicitor (non-practising) Former Employment Judge