



Stephen Townley

LLM, Solicitor CIArb and TAS Mediator

Why?

I believe that all disputes are individual, undesirable and potentially solvable. They not only cause financial and relationship damage but they are extremely stressful - after all, life is too short. So much better to use me as the negotiator and middleman not taking sides, to keep the focus on moving the dispute, if not to immediate resolution, into a better place to ultimately get final resolution. In my sectors of sport and media, I know that the parties and the individuals involved will almost certainly need to work together again as it is a small world we live and work in. I believe that done well mediation, can help the parties not only resolve their current dispute but find a stronger way forward. Helping people in this way is the most fulfilling stage in my long career as a lawyer, businessman, arbitrator and dispute manager. Contrary to general mediation publicity, it is not just a process that one needs to follow, the prospects for mediation are only as good as the mediator himself.

How?

I am successful in helping parties to resolve their disputes because I like and get on well with people and I enjoy working with them to find solutions that cut away the points of conflict and re-establish lines of communications.

Using my 35 years of experience in the sport, commercial and media industries as both advisor and as principal, I can recognise the moments in the life of a dispute when it can be fast-tracked towards resolution. Through a no-nonsense, even-handed, confidential attitude to my work, I create the right conditions to capture these opportunities and to create momentum in the resolution process. I am a passionate mediator who is results focused. I don't like just going through the motions – so don't use me if mediation is just something you feel you have to be seen to have tried or for some other agenda.

I have managed cross jurisdictional disputes involving multidisciplinary teams of advisors spanning North and Central America, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Oceania and understand the differing cultural attitudes to disputes. My fees reflect my experience.

What?

Every dispute is unique and I treat it as such. I apply relevant parts of my mediation, arbitration and dispute management skill set and my approachable personality to get to understand each party's sensitivities in relation to the specific dispute. I look at the personalities of the team members and advisors to each party. I work to help everyone focus on dispute resolution not the history of the dispute. My role as a mediator is to help move things forward not to sit in judgement on what happened or who is right and wrong. I will always be realistic and frank about how far each step in the mediation is likely to go towards the ultimate goal. I endeavour to secure and reinforce progress made before moving to the next step. This approach builds a sustainable momentum towards resolution and builds everyone's confidence in the mediation process.