Family Mediation

8 Tips for Success

Family Mediation is a type of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) that can be used to resolve issues and reach agreements when you're going through a separation or divorce. You can discuss topics such as parenting, child support, spousal support and the division of assets and debts. People work together in mediation to make decisions with the assistance of a neutral mediator. The mediator can help with communication, resolving conflict, and guiding you through the process. Your ability to reach agreements in mediation will be impacted by how you prepare, engage, and conduct yourself. In this article, I will go through **8 Tips I recommend to help you have a successful mediation:**

1) Make sure decision makers participate in the mediation.

People who will be entering into an agreement will need to participate in mediation whether their agreement is made legally binding or not. The mediation process consists of a pre-mediation, mediation sessions and making agreements. In a separation, those who need to take part in the mediation are usually the parents, or the two people who are separating or divorcing.

2) Prepare your financial documents.

Financial documents regarding incomes, and asset and debts will be needed for mediation. This will help you and the other person make decisions based on factual information when you are dealing with matters such as child support or dividing investments.

3) Treat the other person with respect.

Any agreement reached in mediation will be based on each person providing their consent. If someone has been insulted, blamed, or feels disrespected, they will likely be distracted and unable to focus on the matters that need to be resolved.

4) Explain your opinion and be willing to listen.

Often each person believes their perspective is the right one. It is important to explain your views to the other person and to also listen to their opinions. The mediator will help each of you to be heard, as both points of view will need to be taken into consideration to reach an agreement.

5) Offer solutions in a collaborative way.

Use a calm and inviting tone when offering solutions. Detail these options in a way that shows they can genuinely benefit both you and the other person.

6) Be patient.

At the beginning of mediation, each person will most likely have their own ideas about what an agreement should look like or what they think is fair. Be patient, as it takes time to work through the issues, process information and come up with options.

7) Deal with emotions.

People often describe going through a separation or divorce as an emotional roller coaster. A mediator can assist you with identifying and working through emotions, as well as reducing conflict. Keep in mind that taking a break during the mediation can sometimes be a wise choice when you are feeling overwhelmed or emotional. Making good decisions requires reasoning and when people get swept up in their emotions, their ability to think logically is impaired.

8) Prepare yourself physically, emotionally, and logistically.

Try to get a good rest the night before your mediation. Allow yourself some time before your session to only focus on the mediation, your preparations and getting into the right mind set. It is natural to be nervous about mediation and to be uneasy about having a conversation with your ex-partner.

The mediator can put guidelines in place to help you feel more comfortable. Generally, children are not present in mediation as these are adult conversations. Make plans for child-care in advance. If your mediation is taking place virtually or by phone, make sure you have a private and quiet place to talk where you can give your undivided attention.

Making sure you are properly prepared for mediation, explaining your ideas, and listening to the other person are important for your success in mediation. Being respectful and patient through the process will help you resolve issues more quickly and efficiently. A Family Mediator can assist you through this collaborative process so you can reach agreements about your separation and divorce that are satisfying to both of you.

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If you would like to talk to us about how you can resolve your separation and divorce matters through mediation, we offer a 20-minute free phone consultation that remains confidential. A professionally trained and certified Family Mediator can answer your questions and provide you with support.

Contact Michelle

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