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I often hear from business owners at their wit's end because two (or more) employees are locked in conflict over something or other. Often, the real reason for the conflict is something minor, but things escalate at such a pace that a resolution doesn't feel likely.

In cases like this - and many others - I recommend mediation as an effective way of finding a solution. But what is mediation, and can it really help you to smooth things over so that everyone is happy again?

Mediation is the process of resolving conflict between two or more individuals through a neutral third party. This person facilitates communication and negotiation between each party with the aim of reaching a solution that keeps everyone happy.

In the UK, mediation is often used in employment disputes to avoid litigation and reach a mutually acceptable solution.

Mediation can be effective at resolving conflicts for several reasons.

First, it allows the parties to discuss their concerns and interests in a non-confrontational environment. This can help to build understanding and trust between them without feeling like sides are being taken and any blame is being placed.



Second, the mediator is trained to facilitate communication and encourage productive dialogue. This can help the parties to identify common ground and find mutually acceptable solutions.

Third, the parties involved are in control of the outcome of the mediation and can work together to find a solution that meets their needs and interests, rather than relying on a judge or arbitrator to decide for them. This leaves them feeling that they have better control and autonomy over the situation.

Additionally, mediation is often quicker, less expensive, and less stressful than going to court or engaging in other formal dispute resolution processes. It can also help to preserve relationships between the parties, which can be particularly important in employment disputes where ongoing relationships are often necessary.

Under UK employment law, mediation is voluntary and cannot be forced on either party. However, it is often encouraged by employers, trade unions, and the courts as a way to resolve disputes quickly and efficiently.

It's something my team and I have a lot of experience with. We'd love to help you resolve conflict amongst your team if it becomes necessary - get in touch.

LATEST NEWS



Are you ready for a Gen Alpha workforce?

It may feel like a way off yet, but it won't be long till Gen Alpha enter the world of work... and many businesses may need to adapt the way they do things. Especially when it comes to gender diversity.

Studies have shown that Gen Alpha are far more likely to embrace gender-neutral pronouns. And Gen Z are leading the way, so it's a good idea to start planning ahead.

Open conversations about pronouns, review your policies and educate your managers and other employees on diversity and inclusion to make sure your business rolls with the times.

Could poor managers be bad for mental health?

According to a new report, yes.

The CIPD found a direct link between poor managers and negative mental health, job satisfaction, and performance amongst workers.

So how can you avoid this in your business? Training is your solution. Make sure all your managers have the skills they need to lead and support their teams in the right way.

The good news in this is just as a poor manager can have a negative impact, a great manager can have a really positive impact!

46% of UK workers find their work exhausting, with 40% feeling emotionally frustrated thanks to their job. Why? It's down to a poor work/life balance, resulting in burnout.

Samaritans' "Talk to Us" campaign to raise awareness of mental health

We all know of The Samaritans - a charity organisation focused on mental health. But did you know that on the 24th of July it's launching its annual campaign called "Talk to Us"?

The event aims to encourage people to reach out and seek help if they're struggling with their mental health. It's a great opportunity for you to raise awareness and support your staff with their mental health, too.

Mental health is a critical issue in the workplace, and it is essential to create an environment where your employees feel comfortable discussing any challenges they may be facing. According to a study conducted by the Mental Health Foundation, 1 in 6 employees in the UK experience common mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression.

Unfortunately, many people who are struggling with their mental health don't feel safe enough to seek help. That's why awareness events like the "Talk to Us" campaign can be effective in creating support opportunities and making people feel comfortable speaking up.

There are lots of simple ways you can look after the health and wellbeing of your staff. One of the most effective methods is to promote an open and supportive culture where employees feel comfortable discussing their concerns with managers or even colleagues.

Try sending an email to your team highlighting the importance of mental health and signposting the relevant resources. It is simple but can be a great first step.

Other ideas include offering flexible working arrangements, providing access to confidential counselling services, and promoting physical activity and healthy eating habits to your team. Your approach doesn't have to be ground-breaking, just supportive and positive.

Mental health is a vital aspect of our overall wellbeing, so it's essential to create a supportive environment in your workplace. By promoting the "Talk to Us" campaign and implementing measures to support mental health, you have the ability to make a significant difference to your employees' lives.

And, of course, if you need any advice or support, get in touch!

Q&A



Can I change someone's working hours?

You have the right to make reasonable changes to an employee's working hours, but it must be agreed with your employee before you act. Remember, a change like this can make a big impact on an employee's life and circumstances, so make sure you've made the right considerations.

We're short staffed. Do I have to let someone go on jury duty?

In short: yes. You must allow employees the necessary time off for jury duty without penalising them for doing so. They must inform you as soon as possible and provide a copy of their summons.

Do I have to accept a rescinded resignation letter?

No. It's your decision whether you accept it or not. If you've already made plans for a replacement employee for example, you may decline an employee's request to rescind their resignation.

Let's talk on the phone

Here are three questions for you:

- Do you currently have a HR consultant?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with them?
- If the answer isn't "I'm so delighted I could print 1,000 flyers to spread the word about them", let's jump on a video call

You know just how important it is to get proactive, responsive HR support. That's what we do. And we're taking on new clients.



Set up a 15 minute exploratory call at www.pshumanresources.co.uk



**YOUR HR EXPERT:
EMMA SHEPPARD**