

20 CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL MEDIATORS

1. Ability to reflect on one's own biases and act against them.
2. Courage to tell people things they don't want to hear in a way they can hear it.
3. Ability to help people shift their point of view by asking powerful reality-testing questions.
4. Empathy.
5. Commitment to withholding judgment while at the same time helping the parties evaluate their positions, their perceived interests, and the means by which they hope to satisfy those interests.
6. Highly developed critical thinking and problem solving skills.
7. Ability to instill trust in a very short amount of time (see, empathy).
8. Willingness to be transparent and vulnerable, i.e., to let the parties know you have run out of ideas and could use their help in moving them toward their goal.
9. Ability to establish and maintain an atmosphere of hope and safety, particularly at a time when everyone is feeling too frustrated to persevere.
10. Ability to call people to their higher angels.
11. Willingness to let things spiral out of YOUR control, particularly when the parties insist over and over again that they need to say or hear something you do not believe will be helpful (this comes under the general rubric of remembering you do not have all the answers).
12. Study, study, study, study what the masters know.
13. Learn and be able to skillfully use both hard competitive and soft interest-based negotiation strategies and tactics.
14. Have a firm belief that there's a little bad in the best of us and a little good in the worst of us coupled with the ability to draw out the good and not judge the bad.
15. Patience, persistence, practice.
16. NEVER EVER being satisfied with your performance.

17. Realize the point is not settling the case but creating a forum in which the parties have the greatest chance of resolving their conflict on their terms without giving up that which is most important to them.
18. Understand that NOTHING is EVER about money but rather is about what money represents or how it can be successfully deployed (at the least expense to both parties) to resolve the dispute.
19. Respect the parties' voice (never say "that's irrelevant") and choice (never tell them they can't do what they want to do).
20. Put your whole heart and your whole mind into the endeavor and practice your trade with the deepest humility and gratitude for the privilege of helping people resolve one of the most important problems in their lives.

AUTHORED BY: Vicki Pynchon, Posted at ADRhub.com May 14, 2011.