

Mediating

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Advanced

NUMBER
EN_BE_3610X

LANGUAGE
English





Goals

- Can recognise and recall advanced structures for mediating a disagreement or a conflict.
- Can confidently handle a disagreement using these more advanced structures.





When two people disagree with one another, either in social situations or at work, it can be difficult to manage the situation. In this lesson you will learn about the skill of **mediation**.

When you **mediate**, you act as a neutral third party and help conflicting parties to resolve their differences.

This lesson will teach you some important vocabulary and phrases for **mediation**, and will give you the chance to practise your skills!





Conflict in our daily lives



We negotiate different kinds of conflict on a regular basis.

What different kinds of conflicts do you think might arise at work?

Brainstorm as many examples as possible.



Arguments and negotiations

Think of the last argument or disagreement you had at work. Did you do any of the things on the cards below? Which things do you think are helpful when trying to resolve a conflict, and which are not so helpful? Explain your answers.



keeping calm

making your
opinion
understood

raising your
voice

refusing to
listen

apologising

not saying what
you think

taking a break

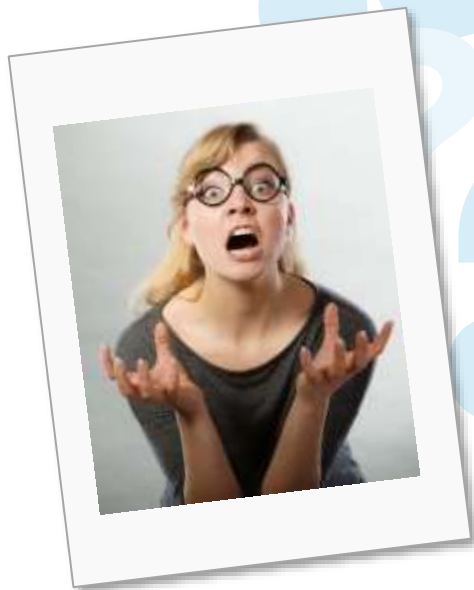
avoiding
personal insults

taking turns to
talk and listen



What about you?

**Have you ever
been in the
position where
you had to step
in when two
people were
arguing?**



mediation

to mediate

Mediation is when a neutral third party assists two other conflicting parties in resolving their dispute.



Mediation can be used to resolve disputes between friends or at work, but it can also be used in larger and more complicated conflicts such as global politics.

mediator

A **mediator** is a **neutral third party** who helps two conflicting parties to reach an agreement.



A **mediator** does not offer advice or **take sides** in a dispute. Instead, they help the two opposing parties to communicate effectively in order to reach an agreement.



New words and phrases

How about we
agree to
disagree on this?

I think we should move on, everyone is entitled to their opinion. **How about we agree to disagree on this?**



to place/put the
blame on
someone or
something

He **placed all the blame** for the sales results on another team and took no responsibility himself.



to take sides

If you want to remain neutral in a debate then you cannot **take sides**.



to take
something
personally

Please don't **take this personally** but I think your proposal needs some work.





About mediation

- The **mediator's** main role is to **promote positive communication** and **dialogue** between the **two conflicting parties** or sides.
- It's important to remember that an effective mediator should **remain neutral** at all times. Even if you agree with one person more than the other, don't take sides!

- Think of yourself as an **ambassador for peace**. You want to help the two sides in conflict to **reach an agreement** and this can only be done by avoiding entering the conflict yourself.





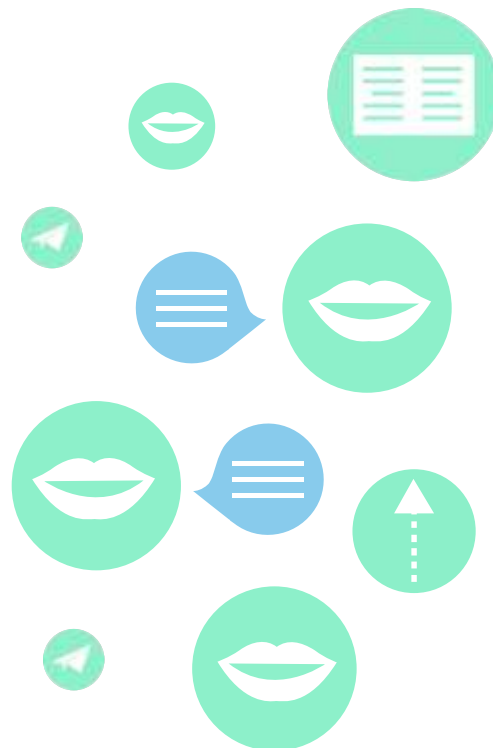
A disagreement between colleagues

You are at a colleague's party. Carl, the host, is a really good cook and has made lots of delicious food. He gets very stressed at big social events. Another colleague, Mark, is there too. Mark arrived late because he had to work overtime.

**Read the dialogue below. Do both parties have a right to be annoyed?
Evaluate the situation.**

“ Phew, I'm exhausted! I had to work much longer than expected. There's enough food to feed an army here though. You must think you have a lot of friends, eh Carl? It all looks delicious, but I already ate at the office and I have to watch my weight. Lots of rich food won't help my waistline! Sadly, the doctor said I have to be really careful now. ”

“ That's really not on, Mark. Not only do you turn up late, but you insult me by claiming I think I'm Mr Popular! You haven't even taken a bite of all this food that I spent ages preparing. Are you saying my food is unhealthy and that I should have served salads? ”





What happens next

**Think about Carl's
reply. What do you
think Mark's reaction
is going to be?**



But it was just a joke!



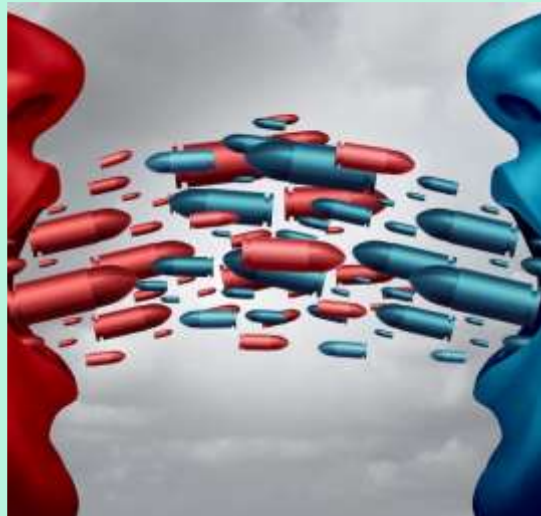
Sometimes arguments can get heated when something is misunderstood or when someone makes a joke that is taken the wrong way.

If you tell a joke that is not appreciated and someone is offended, how can you best resolve the situation? Have you ever been in this situation?



Acting as mediator for friends

What factors do you think might have influenced the conflict between Carl and Mark? Think about how they might have been feeling both before and at the party. How would you mediate this conflict? What might be important to clarify for both parties? What should you remember to do as mediator?



feelings, emotions
and stress

misunderstandings
and jokes

neutrality and
keeping the peace

focusing on the
positives



Acting as a mediator

Imagine you are stepping in
before anyone gets too angry.
What will you say to Mark and
Carl?

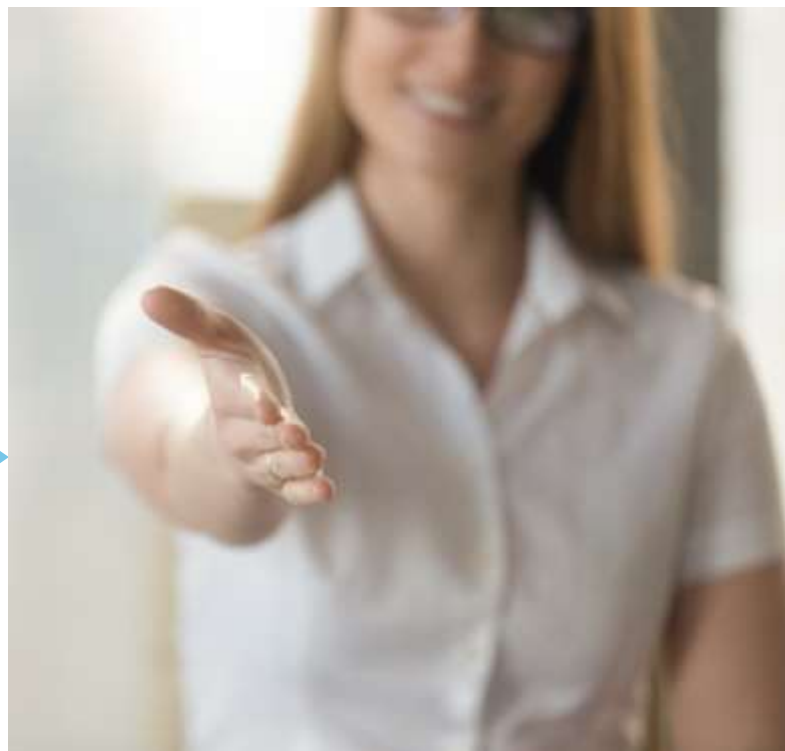




Key tips for mediation

- **Mediation** can be a difficult skill, but there are some things you can do to help make your role as mediator easier.

- Remember to **keep calm** yourself, and encourage the other parties to do the same.
- Do not raise your voice, and watch your body language. Keep it **open** and **neutral**. Keep your voice calm, but you can be **firm if necessary**.
- **Encourage respect** between the conflicting parties. It's okay if people do not completely agree with each other, but they need to respect and listen to one another.





Should we take a break?

- Sometimes, especially if the conflict is getting heated, it can be a good idea to suggest **taking a break** for a couple of minutes.
- There are several **benefits** to taking a break while mediating:

- It gives everyone a chance to **calm down** and **reflect** on the situation.
- It **relieves** a tense situation.
- It also gives you a chance to rest a moment and figure out the best way to go forward.





More new words and phrases

**from an
objective point
of view**

From an objective point of view I think it would be a good idea to calm down first before you talk.

**I think everyone
here has a valid
point.**

I think everyone here has a valid point. We just need to find a solution everyone is comfortable with.

**Let's all try to calm
down and step
back from this for
a moment.**

Things are getting a bit heated. **Let's all try to calm down and take a step back from this for a moment.**

**How about we
take a minute to
put things into
perspective.**

I think this issue might be getting a bit out of hand. **How about we take a minute to put things into perspective?**



Things to remember

- As a mediator you want to help the conflicting parties to **communicate** effectively and to find a way to resolve their conflict.



Check your body language and tone of voice, and encourage everyone to listen to one another.



Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps using the new phrases you have learnt.

How about we take a minute to put this issue into perspective?

from an objective point of view

I think everyone has a valid point.

Let's all try to calm down and take a step back from this for a moment.

1. If we are going to make progress we need to listen to each other. There are lots of different opinions here. _____
2. This is getting very heated. _____
3. I understand that today this seems like a big problem, but remember we have three months to work on this project. _____
4. _____, I think it would be best if you both listened to one another. You both have interesting opinions about the matter.





Listen to your teacher read the dialogue below



I just don't think this is the best way to approach the situation, Gina. Why won't you listen to me? I already told you, I tried calling them yesterday. They promised to call back and they never did. We have to be tough now – it's too late for messing around!

I completely disagree, Bill. Remember what happened last time you phoned a client to chase up a late payment? We lost the client! The business is already struggling and if we lose this one we will be in big trouble. It's not worth the risk.



Gina, I'm not an idiot. Do you think I want to lose my job? Of course not! You never take what I say seriously and you always bring up the same mistakes! You have made mistakes too, you know, but I don't remind you of them all the time. We need to be firm here!

Bill, you are driving me mad! It was my client first anyway. If Martin hadn't put us in a team together at the last minute I would have been able to sort this all out without having to listen to your stupid ideas. I just want to phone them and try to talk to them. Why is that such a bad idea?





Practise your mediation skills

Reflect on the dialogue you have just heard and answer the following questions.



1

How would you go about mediating the situation? Break it down into steps.



Practise your mediation skills

Reflect on the dialogue you have just heard and answer the following questions.



1

How would you go about mediating the situation? Break it down into steps.



2

What phrases would you use in each step?



Practise your mediation skills

Reflect on the dialogue you have just heard and answer the following questions.



1

How would you go about mediating the situation? Break it down into steps.



2

What phrases would you use in each step?



3

With you as the mediator and your teacher playing Gina and Bill, role play the dialogue with you stepping in to help them resolve their conflict.



Reflect on this lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!

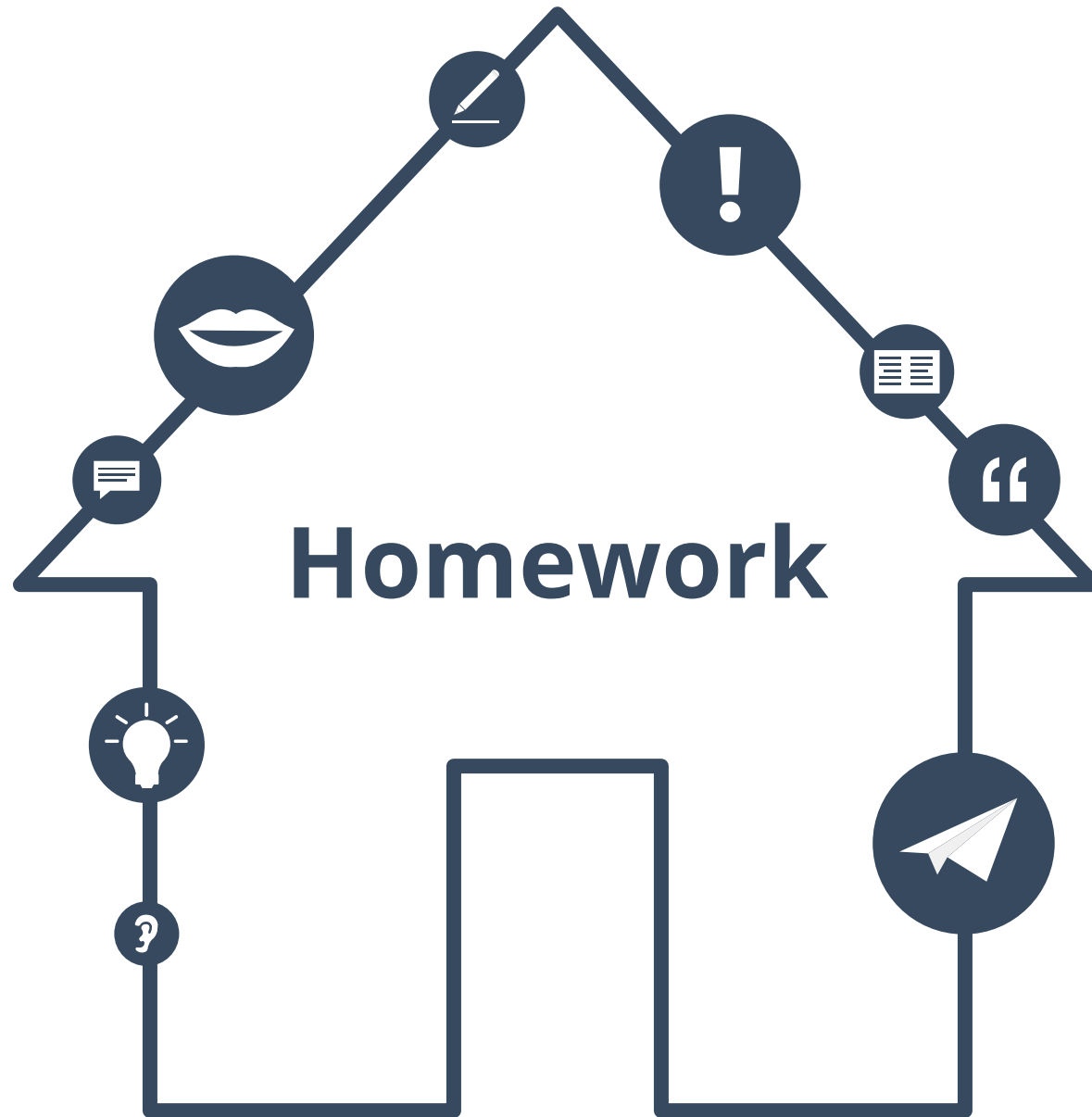




Answer key

Exercise p. 20

1. I think everyone here has a valid point, 2. Let's all try to calm down and take a step back from this for a moment, 3. How about we take a minute to put this issue into perspective? 4. From an objective point of view.





Homework writing activity

A friend knows nothing about mediating and is keen on learning more. Give them a basic introduction to mediating based on what you learnt in this class.

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Homework evaluation activity

How did you find this lesson? Which parts were most challenging? Which were easiest? Give your feedback here!

A vertical feedback form with a light gray background and a white border. It features a series of horizontal lines for writing feedback. The form is divided into two sections by a vertical line: the left section has a series of small circles (like a spiral binding) and the right section has a larger area for writing.

