



Accreditation: 2003
Panel Admission: 2004
CEDR Faculty/Lead Faculty: 2004/2013

Languages: English · Afrikaans
Location: United Kingdom

"Her manner creates trust and confidence in her ability."

Mediation Feedback

Felicity Steadman

Overview

Felicity Steadman has been a professional in the field of dispute resolution for over 20 years. After a distinguished career in South Africa as a mediator and arbitrator she was trained and accredited by CEDR in 2003 and is now an established member of the CEDR Mediator Panel and became a member of the Court of Appeal Panel of Mediators in 2013. She is also a lead member of the CEDR Training Faculty.

Professional Background

Working as a full-time mediator and facilitator Felicity mediates a wide variety of disputes from employment and workplace related matters, to breach of contract, to supply of goods and services. She has worked as a facilitator of many large multi-party relationship building and transformation processes. Felicity has acted as chair of numerous grievance hearings, disciplinary enquires and appeals, as an arbitrator in hundreds of employment matters.

Expertise

- Commercial Contracts
- Employment & Workplace
- Property
- Construction & Engineering
- Partnership & Shareholder
- Sale of Goods & Services

Dispute Experience

Commercial Contracts

- Commercial dispute between grouse, partridge and pheasant shooting estate and a farmer over shooting rights.

Construction & Engineering

- Commercial breach of contract dispute over unpaid fees between accountant and building company, which had gone into liquidation.
- Commercial breach of contract. County court referred mediation in fast track claims between builder and homeowner over unpaid invoices and unfinished building works.

Employment & Workplace

- Dispute between a manager and subordinate in the procurement department of a large company servicing the military. The employee had initiated a grievance against her manager. There had been an investigation and only some of her allegations had been upheld. One of the recommendations of the investigation was that the two parties participate in a mediation process to restore their working relationship. The mediation process took a day, following the typical workplace mediation format of private meetings and one extended joint meeting. A detailed action plan was agreed at the conclusion of the process, and the parties gave permission of this to be conveyed in full to their line manager and HR.
- Disability discrimination claim between in-house solicitor, represented by trade union, and large public sector organisation. Settled post issue and six weeks prior to ET.
- Age discrimination and unfair dismissal alleged by sales person against multinational. Post issue, a few weeks before ET.
- Bullying and harassment alleged by project manager against insurance company. Post investigation but pre-issue of claim.
- Managerial style. Clash of old guard manager and newly appointed CEO. Both valued employees who directors would prefer not to have leave the organisation.
- Return to work after sick leave of team members following relationship breakdown between managers and team. Twelve individual mediations take place after careful conflict analysis.

- Unfair dismissal and whistle blowing claim by senior scientist against multinational pharmaceutical company. Pre issue of proceedings.
- Dispute concerning alleged constructive dismissal of company director.
- Workplace mediation in a conflict between two colleagues in a Corporate services membership organisation. One had complained to the employer about the behaviour of the other. Her grievance and her appeal were unsuccessful and the organisation encouraged both parties to go to mediation.
- Employment dispute between two senior managers in an international agency. Complainant had filed an harassment complaint, but opted for mediation to settle the dispute informally. Investigation and adjudication would have had far reaching consequences for both parties' careers.
- Dispute for damaged working relationship between two senior managers in an international professional services company. Their relationship had broken down over the impact of the appointment of one of them into a more senior position than the other, aggravated by their very different working styles.

Partnership & Shareholder

- Managerial style. Two partners in a law firm can no longer work together and clash over how their departments interact and about how they deal with strategic decision making in the firm.
- Managerial style. Two academics in a highly respected university fall out over decision making style of more senior one of the two. Both need to be able to fundraise and work together.
- Relationship breakdown. Employment solicitor and a transaction solicitor can no longer work together because transaction solicitor keeps straying into employment law when giving advice in mergers and acquisitions.

Property

- Commercial breach of contract dispute between homeowner and builder over a dispute concerning loft conversion.

Sale of Goods & Services

- Commercial breach of contract dispute between large food packaging company and a recycling service over unpaid invoices.
- Commercial breach of contract dispute between a laundry service and a family owned hotel over unpaid invoices and unsatisfactory service.

Personal Style

Felicity describes her style as 'hands-on process but hands-off substance'. She is very comfortable taking full charge of the management of the mediation process, while respecting the parties' authority to determine the outcome of the dispute and find the agreement with which they are most comfortable. Employing interest-based and mutual gains negotiation strategies, Felicity is tenacious in helping the parties to achieve optimum win-win outcomes.

As a result of years of experience mediating in the context of on-going relationships, in particular workplace and employment disputes, Felicity is comfortable with high levels of emotion. She encourages parties to speak directly to one another and likes to work in joint session when the circumstances indicate that this would be constructive.

Feedback

- *"We were very impressed and thought Felicity was brilliant. She was just so clear on the whole process. She was very professional, but very approachable and it was obvious that she was concerned about our welfare."*
- *"She did a great job! She had a very difficult task ahead. Particularly dealing with the other side. The other side was very angry and they were very reluctant to pay any money. But With her calmness and many skills she managed to shift that and managed the parties to get a deal. She nailed it!"*
- *"We were very happy with Felicity. She spent a lot of time with us individually in private sessions to discuss the issues. That worked well."*
- *"Felicity was very professional, particularly in her preparation."*
- *"An agreement was reached by all parties and our client came away very happy with the result and proceedings."*
- *"Felicity Steadman was outstanding. I would go so far as to say that if she had not taken over at one point in the early afternoon, we would not have reached settlement. Her*

manner creates trust and confidence in her ability. Throughout, Felicity was helpful to me in the 'between sessions' periods and extremely constructive in her thoughts."

– Lead Mediator

Professional Background

1991 – PRESENT Felicity has worked as a freelance dispute resolution practitioner since 1991. In that time she has been a mediation and arbitration panellist of leading private and statutory dispute resolution agencies in the UK and South Africa. She has been a director of the training company Conflict Dynamics since 1996.

1991 – 1992. Project manager for the Community Dispute Resolution Trust at the Centre for Applied Legal Studies University of the Witwatersrand.

1989 - 1990. Assistant to the director and member of the mediation, arbitration, facilitation and training panels of the Independent Mediation Service of South Africa.

1986 - 1989. Group industrial relations advisor for the Premier Group of companies - 36 000 employees.

1982 – 1984. Senior professional officer for the Institute for Industrial Relations.

Mediation Training

Felicity currently *trains* extensively in conflict management and dispute resolution skills. Besides her training work for CEDR she trains for Conflict Dynamics on South Africa (commercial mediators) and in 2012 was awarded the CEDR ADR Trainer's Award for this work. Felicity also trains for the conciliators, mediators and representatives of Ministries of Labour, trade unions and companies in developing countries for the International Labour Organisation.

Other Skills and Training

Felicity has a Master's Degree in Industrial Relations from the University of Warwick (1985); and from the University of the Witwatersrand she has a BA Honours (1981), a Certificate Programme in Industrial Relations (1984) and a Higher Diploma in Labour Law (2003). She was top student in both the Certificate and Diploma courses and passed both with distinction.

Felicity co-authored *Commercial mediation : a user's guide to court referred and voluntary mediation in South Africa*, published in 2012. In 2007 Felicity authored the publication *Handbook on Alternative Labour Dispute Resolution* for the International Labour Organisation. She was a

contributor to the book *Dispute Resolution* published by Juta in 1993, and co-author of the book *Labour Dispute Resolution* published by Juta in 1997 and revised in 2008. She has contributed many journal articles to various publications.

Felicity is a member of the South African society for labour law, of which she a founding chairperson.