

**Tania Songini**

CEDR Panel Admission: 2020

Languages:English, Italian

**Overview**

I am a multi-lingual dynamic, culturally sensitive, experienced commercial mediator, communicator, and business executive, who listens effectively and hones in on underlying and common interests, helping individuals, groups and corporates operating in complex settings structure and analyse issues clearly, explore new options, turning differences into mutually beneficial opportunities. Fluent in: English, Italian, German, Spanish, French.

Tania is a CEDR Accredited Commercial Mediator and a Resolve-trained and practicing Community Mediator. She has attended courses in Peace Mediation and Corporate–Community Mediation in natural resource disputes at the Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peace Building (ICP), trained by UN and Mediateur mediators, and Oxford Process/CEDR’s course on International Conflict Mediation, Prevention, Peacemaking. Tania is interested in mediator/dialogue facilitations in disputes involving business, government and community interests.

She worked for 15 years as Finance and Commercial Director for the German engineering multinational, Siemens, in Germany and UK in their Logistics, Healthcare and Energy sectors, most recently as head of Siemens Energy NW Europe (EUR 3.6 billion p.a.), covering finance, strategy, M&A, operations, IT and IT transformation programmes, bids, project management and supply chain/procurement. She left the corporate sector 5 years ago and today she holds non-executive board director roles with renewable energy and infrastructure companies, development consultancies and NGOs, operating in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

She is an accomplished communicator, mediator and skilled negotiator fluent in 6 languages (English, Italian, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese), with the ability to build relationships and consensus with individuals at different levels in an organisation/community and in different cultural environments.

Tania also has a keen interest and deep knowledge of international current affairs and socio-political issues in developing countries, particularly the Middle East, Africa, Latin America. She grew up in Tanzania, Nigeria, Sudan and Italy and holds a Masters degree in Political Science (International Relations and Economics).

She has the ability to quickly analyse and understand complex materials and situations. In 2016 she spent time in The Gambia training young community leaders in conflict analysis, management and mediation, helping them work through issues such as disputes between youth and Village Chiefs, and illegal mining.

**Summary of Dispute resolution experience**

Tania has a solid understanding of commercial and contractual issues in the customer/supplier relationship, mergers & acquisition and wider business context that she developed working across the logistics, healthcare and energy business sectors at Siemens. Tania has over the years successfully negotiated a number of contracts and settled claims with a variety of customers/partners, assisted with the resolution of internal disagreements within Siemens, and settled disputes in social housing communities.

***Major Facilitation Case Examples:***Business partner to Trade Union representatives at International Rescue Committee UK
In Tania’s role as Director of Finance and Operations, she routinely met and negotiated with the Trade Union on key issues affecting staff e.g. pay increases, changes to key HR policies
Solving disagreement between Siemens headquarter and regional companies
As Finance Director responsible for the Energy business in NW Europe, Tania would often be called in by the Divisions to facilitate this process when differences were blocking final agreement. Tania encouraged the parties, by probing, to explore different ways to achieve business development objectives e.g. through own resources, local partnerships or allowing headquarter to assist. The regional company was stimulated to think creatively about alternative routes to market and headquarter accepted to listen and learn about concrete in country challenges. Through Tania’s assistance in engendering a dialogue the parties would generally agree to a hybrid, more innovative, solution that answered key concerns on both sides and enabled the setting of 3 year business development targets.

Facilitating agreement between the parties in a Joint Venture (JV) for the construction of the 2nd largest offshore wind farm in the world, Gwynt y Mor
This JV for the construction of an offshore wind farm in Wales comprised 3 parties with disparate interests (an energy generator 60%, a German utility 30% and an equipment provider 10%). Tania sat on the non-executive board of the JV representing Siemens’ (the equipment provider) 10% shareholding. The energy generator’s programme management team was required to get non-executive board approval for major decisions relating to the construction and operation of the project. Tania often found herself playing the role of ‘broker’, challenging the programme management team with pointed questions that helped the group narrow down the alternative solutions proposed. Tania’s experience in infrastructure projects and managing relationships with both British and German partners proved key in helping better structure and analyse the issues, facilitating consensus. The meetings became a forum for focused discussions and pondered decision making, addressing unexpected issues in a timely manner ensuring successful project completion.

Moderating a discussion between the ViaNiños charity and local Ecuadorian partner organisations
17 years ago Tania co-founded a charity helping working children in Ecuador. Tania and a colleague visited a partner in Quito to decide what projects ViaNiños was going to support, and quickly understood a clash between the ‘ideological’ and the ‘business’ approach was at play. The management of the local partner organisation wanted to assist as many children as possible, putting the organisation at risk of spreading itself too thinly, whereas my colleague was focussed on maximum impact projects. In a week of workshops Tania found herself playing a double role, moderating the meetings, to allow both sides to explain their positions and discuss together strengths and weaknesses of project options. Tania’s questions helped the partner organization understand the need for sustainability in the long run, and helped her colleague accept that some less impactful projects should be supported, given their importance in our partner’s wider mission. She played a key role in building a relationship of mutual trust, helped by her knowledge of the language and cultural sensitivities. The collaboration endures with ViaNiños financing £60,000 of projects p.a.

***Selected Negotiation Achievements:****Integration of Diagnostic Healthcare acquisition (£230m, 3 companies) into Siemens Healthcare UK
Integration of the Energy Subsea acquisition (£100 mio) into Siemens Energy UK*
Tania has gained strong commercial experience of mergers, acquisitions and restructurings, and the
people and managerial issues which arise as a result.
Tania led the efforts, in a mixed team of members from the acquired companies and Siemens, to identify and decide upon the operating processes and IT platforms for the single organization going forward. She moderated the discussions in the group, allowing everyone a voice, yet focusing the group on the end task, creating a climate of trust and respect to jointly elaborate a single operating platform.

USD 5 million ‘Incentive’ contract with US supplier of Address Reading Software
Tania negotiated (together with the Product Line Manager) a ‘bonus-malus’ contract model (a first for Siemens), envisaging incentive/penalty payments tied to performance improvements and customer savings.
The challenge lay in convincing the supplier to abandon the traditional ‘cost plus profit’ model and to embark on a partnership with Siemens with potentially higher profits, but also risks. Tania spent time illustrating different, realistic scenarios of the profit/loss range, persuading the client of the likely benefit of the model

£18 million claim towards Royal Mail on a £112 million contract
A combination of ‘scope creep’ caused by additional customer requirements and contract ‘grey areas’ led to significant overspend on this contract. Tania meticulously researched the origins of the overspend in collaboration with her technical colleagues, presented the resulting claim to the Royal Mail and asserted £18 million out of a £28 million claim, by presenting solid evidence of why certain deliverables were out of contractual scope and needed to be covered by the customer

**Personal Mediation Style**

Tania succeeds in quickly establishing a relationship of trust with individuals/teams she interacts with, who then have the confidence that Tania’s energy and drive will help them work through their issues and find a solution. Tania is assisted in this challenge by her international background, cultural sensitivity, openness to listen and ‘understand between the lines’, honing in on common interests and an initial basis for agreement that can then be further developed with the parties. Her style is engaging and facilitative, and firm when necessary, challenging to assist the parties to have a realistic view of their position.

***Testimonials***

*“She is extremely capable intellectually with an ability to quickly analyse and understand new and complex challenges, on the basis of which she develops solid, sustainable strategies and solutions. She has a solid understanding of the business environment, is not afraid of getting into the detail of matters and thus being extremely well informed.*

*“Tania has an open, consultative style. She succeeds in motivating and fostering a high degree of cooperation. She is an inspiring and effective communicator able to build consensus and motivate across cultures at all levels, helped by having lived in a number of countries and fluently speaking six languages “*

*“Tania was able through her experience, diplomacy and ability to relate to the different members of the group to thoughtfully and sensitively manage the various stakeholders, thereby exercising influence greater than that of the party she represented. She was instrumental in building consensus. Throughout I was impressed by Tania’s drive and engaging and constructive manner.* “

**Background Information**Memberships and Other Activities
2012 - present Hawthorn Club Founding/Advisory Board Member – Professional women in Energy Network
2011 - present Member of the Institute of Directors
2011 - present Guest speaker at EADA MBA School, Spain : ‘‘’CFO in a Multinational’’