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WBO provides support and networking for women who own and operate their own business, giving them tools to help them manage and grow their businesses.

Mediation, A Better Way of Doing Business

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Do you have a thorny contract dispute with a vendor? Are you concerned that one of your employees may charge you with employment discrimination? Does the threat of a lawsuit distract you and keep you from running your business? Does one member of your team bring down the morale and productivity of the entire office?

When disputes arise, early resolution is critical so you can focus on your primary job—running your business. Instead of a lawsuit or employee termination or poor employee performance disputes can be resolved through mediation.

Mediation is a process whereby a third party neutral helps the parties resolve their own dispute. It has been used successfully in small, medium and large companies to resolve a wide variety of disputes at very little cost. A mediator helps the parties recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their respective claims, understand each other's perceptions and consider the personal and financial impact of resolving a dispute through other means.

Mediation is often confused with arbitration, another dispute resolution process, where the neutral third party functions like a judge and makes a decision on the dispute. A mediator does not evaluate the merits of a case. Confidentiality is a hallmark of mediation. What is said in the mediation conference stays in the room. This allows the participants to fashion a solution that meets everyone's needs.

When people have a long term relationship and will continue to work together or do business with each other mediation is often the best process to use because it allows people to air their differences, rebuild trust and reduce misunderstanding.

So before you call your lawyer think about early resolution.

Alternative Resolutions helps organizations and individuals find common ground. It provides mediation and facilitation services, conflict management training and consulting. For more information email Ellen at ekandell@erols.com or call 301/588-5390.

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