

## **Tone and body language: what is the mediator really saying?**

As Mediators, we are used to pay much more attention to the parties than to ourselves, during the pre-mediation and the mediation meetings.

How many times during a mediation process we observe the parties and think this way:

Where did this come from?

Their reaction was so unexpected!

Things were looking good and suddenly there was a shift in their emotions.

How do I get it back on track?

Basically we may be causing those unexpected reactions and not even realising that. We can be talking to them in a “language” that the clients speak a little bit of, but it is not their mother tongue. We can also be talking in a language that is very clear to one of the parties and not to the other(s). These situations can affect Rapport.

People operate in all of their Representational System, but they tend to process and rely mostly on one of them. Learning about the Representational Systems and how to communicate to the clients using the words that make sense to them, is one way to improve our mediation skills.

The basic Representational Systems are:

Visual

Auditory/Auditory Digital

Kinesthetic

At the joint sessions the parties are in the same room with us, we should improve our skills and build Rapport with all the parties, and also “speak a kind of Esperanto” with them (the language that was created to be the Universal language, an international auxiliary language), meaning we should learn how to use the representational systems in a way that our clients will feel, know, see, listen, that we understand them.

People are also motivated by different questions, explanations:

Why/why not questions

What questions

How questions

What if questions

Learning more on how to ask the correct questions and how to reflect back to the clients can improve the results, and most important than that, it can improve the clients' satisfaction and trust in the Mediation process.

Our clients are observing us the same way we are observing them. We want to find out a way to help them and they mainly want to feel that we are impartial and neutral. We have to present ourselves in a way they understand and feel safe.

Exercises on finding out representational systems and learning styles, and the effects of the Mediator's tone and body language will be done.

***Eduarda P Abissamra***

Ph: +64 9 363 3383

Fax: +64 9 363 3389

Mob: +64 21 0238 2015

[www.b2bmediation.co.nz](http://www.b2bmediation.co.nz)

