

The Middle Voice

The Middle Voice

Mediating Conflict Successfully

Joseph B. Stulberg

and

Lela P. Love

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For my wife, Midge, and my children, Jonathan, Michael, Gita, Charles and Heather, who have been unwavering in their support of my interest and activities in conflict resolution—and much beyond. My life has been wonderful because they are central to it. JBS

For my family, Peter and Nicole, who have provided a nucleus of intense energy, inspiration and love. Their presence and support have kept this—and every other—endeavor vital. LPL

Contents

Map of <i>The Middle Voice</i>	ix
Acknowledgments	xvii
Part 1 Responses to Conflict	
Chapter 1 The Middle Voice	3
Chapter 2 Intervener Models	5
Chapter 3 Patterns in Conflict: Perceptions, Parties, Problems, Processes, Principles and Practicalities	9
Chapter 4 The Mediator's Job	23
Chapter 5 Assessing Entry	33
Part 2 BADGER: Mediator Skills and Strategies	
Chapter 6 Begin the Discussions	49
Chapter 7 Accumulate Information	59
Chapter 8 Develop the Discussion Strategy	73
Chapter 9 Generate Movement	87
Chapter 10 ELECT Separate Sessions	99
Chapter 11 Reach Closure	113
Part 3 The Lessons of Experience	
Chapter 12 Practical Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas	127
Chapter 13 Conclusion	149
Recommended for Further Reading	151
Appendix Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators	153
About the Authors	161

Map of *The Middle Voice*

Part 1 Responses to Conflict

Chapter 1 The Middle Voice	3
Chapter 2 Intervener Models	5
The Compliance Officer	5
The Coach	6
Chapter 3 Patterns in Conflict	9
Perceptions	9
Parties	11
Problems	11
Processes	11
Principles	13
Publicity	13
Precedent	13
Efficiency	13
Outcome	13
Participation	13
Relationships	13
Compliance and Durability	13
Fairness	14
Practicalities	17
Power	18
Self-interest	18
Psychological Distortions and Strategic Posturing	19
Self-Protection	20
Chapter 4 The Mediator's Job	23
Job Description of a Mediator	23
Chairperson	23
Communicator	24
Educator	25

Resource Expander	25
Agent of Reality	25
Guardian of Durable Solutions	26
Scapegoat	27
Protector of the Process	27
Job Qualifications of a Mediator	28
Neutral	29
Impartial	29
Objective	29
Intelligent	29
Flexible	29
Articulate	29
Forceful and Persuasive	29
Empathetic	29
Effective Listener	30
Imaginative	30
Respected	30
Skeptical	30
Able to gain access to resources	30
Honest	30
Reliable	30
Non-defensive	30
Sense of Humor	31
Patient	31
Persevering	32
Optimistic	32
Chapter 5 Assessing Entry	33
PRIOR-TO Mediating: Anatomy of a Conflict	33
Parties (and Other Participants)	34
Resources	36
Issues	37
Options for Process	37
Rules Governing Behavior	38
Time Constraints for Resolution	38
Outcomes	39
The Decision to COMMIT	41
Commitment	42
Organizational Resources	42
Mediation's Appropriateness	43

Matters in Dispute	43
Incentives to Settle the Dispute	43
Talents of the Mediator	43
Reasons Disputants Use Mediation	43
Framework for Mediation: BADGER	45
Part 2 BADGER: Mediator Skills and Strategies	
Chapter 6 Begin the Discussions	49
Set the Procedural Framework	49
Date of the meeting	49
Time and length of the meeting	49
Place of the meeting	49
Number and identity of participants	49
Information exchange or material provided to the mediator ahead of time (in some cases)	50
Role of observers or interested groups	50
Room arrangement	50
Refreshments and meals	50
Rules of protocol (order of speaking, formality of discussions, record keeping, status of outcomes)	50
Get Started	54
Informal	54
Formal	55
Do's and Don'ts	57
Chapter 7 Accumulate Information	59
Listen Carefully	60
Record Notes Selectively	60
Ask Helpful Questions	62
Start-Up Questions	62
Open-Ended Questions	63
Open-Ended but Focused Questions	63
Justification Questions	63
Leading Questions	64
Support Conversation	65
Nonverbal Communication	65
Verbal Reinforcement and Clarification	66
Mine the Conversation for "Gold"	68
Interests	69
Issues	70

Proposals	70
Feelings	70
Principles, Values and Rules	70
Chapter 8 Develop the Discussion Strategy	73
Find Common Interests	73
Identify and Frame the Issues	74
Develop a Bargaining Agenda	79
Highlight Common Interests	80
Easy Issues First	80
The Relationship of the Parties to the Issue	80
The Nature of Remedies	81
Mutuality of Exchange	81
Degree of Burden of Compliance	81
Logical Categories and Sequence	81
Priority for Pressing Deadlines	82
Stability and Balance	83
Chapter 9 Generate Movement	87
Common Interests and Ideals	87
Highlight interdependence	87
Identify joint or shared interests	88
Appeal to commonly held principles	88
Call for a vision of the ideal	88
Emphasize trust-building dimensions of conduct	88
Agree on a process for resolving the dispute	89
Information	89
Facts persuade, so develop them	89
Use the absence of facts to create doubts about what has happened or what can happen	90
Use inconsistent statements to narrow the problem	90
Examine past practices	90
Challenge assumptions	90
Explore feelings	90
Perspective	91
Allow for choice	91
Stroke 'em	91
Cite examples with which people can identify	91
Use humor	91
Try role reversal	91
Exploit peer pressure	92

Let silence ring	92
Focus on the future, not the past	92
Prohibit greed	92
Exploit vulnerabilities	92
Help save face	93
Negotiating Practices	93
Help parties establish priorities	93
Develop trade-offs	93
Compel parties to acknowledge constraints	93
Pursue compromises	94
Look for integrative solutions	94
Use brainstorming	94
Prohibit escalating demands	94
Help orchestrate the dance	95
Use the agenda	95
Develop time constraints	96
The Big Picture: The Costs of Not Settling	96
Quality-of-life costs	96
Process costs	97
Chapter 10 ELECT Separate Sessions	99
Why and When to Caucus	99
Expand the Information Base and Settlement Options	102
Lessen Intransigence	102
Encourage Evaluation	103
Confirm Movement	103
Take a “Time-Out”	103
How to Conduct a Caucus	104
The Initial Caucus Session	105
The Second Caucus Session	107
Protecting Offers of Movement	107
Protecting the Source	109
Displaying the Agreement	110
By the Parties	110
By the Mediator	111
Chapter 11 Reach Closure	113
Outcomes	113
Agreement	114
Issue independence or dependence	114
Priority of issue	115

No Agreement	115
Forms of Agreement	116
Written Agreements	116
Appealing	117
Names	117
Order of provisions	117
Balance	117
Format	117
General appearance	118
Admissions of wrongdoing	118
Tone	118
Omissions or additions	118
Clear	118
Parties' own words	118
Plain English	119
Pronouns	119
Abbreviations	119
Methods of performance	119
Timing of performance	119
Evaluative terms	119
Sample Agreement Provisions	120
Verbal Agreements	121
Closure to Session	122
Status of discussions	122
Mediator responsibility for less than full resolution	123
Acknowledgment of parties' negotiation skills	123
Recognition of the difficulty of the situation	123
Optimism for eventual resolution or the success of the agreement	123
Invitation to return	123
Part 3 The Lessons of Experience	
Chapter 12 Practical Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas	127
1. <i>Can mediation begin only after the negotiating parties have tried and failed to resolve their dispute?</i>	127
2. <i>Should a mediator agree to serve if the parties have unequal bargaining power?</i>	128
3. <i>Is the mediator responsible for the quality of the parties' agreement?</i>	130
4. <i>Can a mediator be neutral?</i>	131

5. <i>Should a mediator be active or passive?</i>	133
6. <i>Should a mediator identify “new” negotiating issues if the parties have not raised them themselves?</i>	133
7. <i>What if parties, during the mediated discussions, act in uncooperative or disruptive ways—interrupting, calling each other names, or threatening one another?</i>	134
8. <i>What if parties ask the mediator for her assessment of whether a particular offer of settlement is fair or reasonable?</i>	135
9. <i>Should a mediator ever make a formal “mediator’s proposal” for settlement?</i>	135
10. <i>What does a mediator do if the parties have reached impasse?</i>	137
11. <i>What should the mediator do if she learns, as a result of caucusing with the parties, that there is overlap in what the parties are willing to settle on?</i>	140
12. <i>How firm and detailed must mediated agreements be?</i>	141
13. <i>Should a mediator agree to assume a formal role in the implementation of the agreement if the parties so request?</i>	142
14. <i>Must all mediated discussions take place in private?</i>	143
15. <i>Should mediators be licensed?</i>	144
16. <i>When should co-mediation be considered?</i>	145
17. <i>If one or more participants do not speak the language in which the mediation is being conducted, should an interpreter be used?</i>	146
18. <i>Does a mediator have a duty to make certain that a party makes a decision based on complete information?</i>	147
19. <i>Should the mediator give legal (or other professional) advice she is qualified to give when the parties request that service?</i>	147
20. <i>Should a mediator let one party pay her entire mediator fee?</i>	148
Chapter 13 Conclusion	149
Recommended for Further Reading	151
Appendix Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators	153
About the Authors	161

Acknowledgments

In 1987, Josh Stulberg wrote *Taking Charge/Managing Conflict*. This book updates and expands it in several important ways.

For twenty years, we have used the framework outlined in *The Middle Voice* when conducting mediator training programs—at both the beginning and advanced levels—for lawyer/mediators in court-annexed mediation programs, public officials serving in governmental agencies, leaders and volunteers of community organizations, and students in universities throughout the United States and Western, Central and Eastern Europe. This book considerably enriches the first version as a result of wonderful, helpful feedback from students and training participants, as well as our own enhanced understanding both from teaching and from mediating.

The field of “dispute resolution” and, with it, the practice and challenges of mediating, have changed importantly in the past twenty years. “Mediating” is part of today’s normal vocabulary—people, as citizens, family members, or participants at the workplace often “participate” in mediation sessions. The most notable changes are institutional and civic. Institutionally, the use of mediation in the United States to resolve court-annexed civil litigation of all kinds has grown exponentially, and its use by private organizations and governmental agencies to address employer-employee, interagency, or agency-citizen conflicts has seen comparable expansion. At the civic level, the design, values and implementation of mediating processes in emerging democracies, from countries in Central and Eastern Europe to those in the Far East, has become a central component of democracy-building efforts. In our view, these exciting developments require both a sharpened understanding of the basic values and goals of the mediation process—and its impact on mediator strategies—and a searching examination of how the process can and should adapt to new settings. We hope this text meets those challenges.

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