

"WHAT ANNOYS YOU MOST IN YOUR WORKPLACE?"

NARDINE COLLIER



Nardine Collier is the Director of Workplace Legal Solutions, a mediation service specifically for workplace disputes. She has been mediating these sorts of disputes for over 20 years and is a Nationally Accredited mediator. Nardine can assist small businesses in particular to ensure they have good policies and procedures in place to help prevent workplace disputes; and to investigate workplace disputes and offer solutions. In addition, Nardine is an accredited Specialist in Family Law, a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner, a Family Law Arbitrator, and panel mediator for various Australia wide organisations, courts and tribunals.

Last month I asked readers to tell me what annoyed them most about their workplace. I did receive some feedback that people were concerned they might be named and I am very sorry I didn't make it clear that any comments would be completely anonymous. As it turned out the most interesting response came from out of town, which means that the NOA prize is still available and will be given out via my Facebook page competition. Please enter!

So...what annoys you most in the workplace? It really can be behaviour that of itself is not serious, but if not addressed can blow up into a very serious dispute. For example, when a task falls into the "somebody" category. It might be as simple as filling up the photocopier with paper, or making sure there is enough milk. Simple things that are not allocated to any one person in particular, because surely somebody will do it? When nobody does it, and the same person ends up having to do the task,(whatever it may be) feeling that it is not "their job", people start to feel that others are not pulling their weight and team morale plummets. Once the team fabric starts to unravel, problems arise. I always think of the line from Rudyard Kipling's poem "the Law of the Jungle" - "For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack". In other words, it is how well everyone works together that is the strength of the workplace.

Workplace mediation can assist to re-build the team. I'm not talking about everyone going off to play laser tag (although that does sound like fun) but rather everyone having an opportunity to voice their concerns

and grievances in a confidential way, from which constructive solutions are developed.

The most interesting example of how something small can become monumental (coming from the top this time) was this scenario. In order to cut expenses, in November, this profitable company issued a directive that it would no longer pay for a Christmas party for its employees. The effect this had on the morale of its staff, who regularly worked through their lunch hours or stayed back late without being paid, was devastating. To them, the company message was that their hard work was not valued. They were not valued as employees. This action without doubt saved the company money, but by the New Year it had lost 3 of its staff and moral was at an all -time low.

Fortunately for the company, this came to light through their exit interviews and following mediation the company was able to make amends and keep its existing staff.

If you have a problem in the workplace, consider mediation as a means of resolving the dispute before the pack turns on each other! Finally, a thank you to Radio Cairns FM 89.1 who asked me to come and have a chat on air recently about my article "Do it for the Kids" and mediation in general. Rod and Peter made me very welcome. What a fantastic community radio station - run completely by volunteers. Tune in sometime!

M: 0428 526 568
P: (07) 4212 5666
E: nardine@collierlawyers.com.au
W: www.collierlawyers.com.au

CAIRNSMEDIATIONS
Don't Litigate | Mediate

Collier
Lawyers



DON'T LITIGATE | MEDIATE

- Affordable Rates
- Flexible Payment
- Fixed Price
- Family & Workplace Mediation
- Resolving Family & Workplace Disputes
- Investigations and Advice
- Workplace Policy Development

M: 0428 526 568 P: (07) 4212 5666
www.collierlawyers.com.au