**Mediation**

Disputes happen within and between organisations, can be very costly in terms of time and money, and often damage relationships beyond repair.

We know that people can easily become entrenched in their positions, emotions run high and that deadlock occurs. Many disputes end up in court, while others remain unresolved.

Positive Conclusions aims to help parties in dispute reach a resolution that they are happy with through a process that focuses on needs and interests NOT rights and power. We strive for an environment where disputes are swiftly resolved at an early stage, without recourse to damaging and lengthy litigation.

Mediation is a voluntary, informal dispute resolution process, facilitated by a trained third party, aimed at bringing two or more parties together to clear up misunderstandings, explore concerns, and reach an amicable resolution in a co-operative and confidential setting.

Our accredited mediators are skilled at:

- Helping the parties understand what mediation is and seeking their commitment to the process
- Allowing the participants to identify what their real concerns are and to voice these in a non-threatening way
- Helping the parties to actively listen to each other and reach mutual understanding
- Reaching clear, documented undertakings on how all parties will move forward
- Follow up meetings to check on progress

In our mediations, most issues are resolved within a day or two, privately and cost effectively.

Positive Conclusions will discuss initially with parties or their professional advisers, without commitment or cost:

- whether a particular matter is suitable for mediation
- how mediation will work
- how to make best use of the mediation process
- how to prepare effectively
Discipline and Grievance

Handling disciplinary cases and grievances can be very stressful, costly and time-consuming, and many organisations do not have the in-house resources to handle these matters effectively and efficiently.

Positive Conclusions can support and guide you at all stages. For example, we can advise and guide you throughout your internal processes, come into your organisation to do an independent disciplinary investigation or investigate a complaint that an employee has made under the grievance procedure. We also investigate allegations of bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Whatever the situation, we can work with you to bring matters to a suitable resolution, offering help at every stage of the process:

- Advise you whether you should make a disciplinary suspension
- Write on your behalf to staff that are suspended from work
- Conduct disciplinary or grievance investigations for you
- Attend disciplinary, grievance and appeal hearings to advise on appropriate action
- Assist with drafting disciplinary and grievance letters and outcomes
- Manage appeals
Dispute Resolution and Workplace Mediation

We all have differences; it’s how we resolve them that matters.

We recognise that on occasion there are no alternatives to formal procedures. But we always believe that it’s worth encouraging parties that mediation is in their best interests.

Positive Conclusions helps parties in dispute reach a resolution that they are happy with through a process that focuses on their needs and interests. We strive for an environment where disputes are swiftly resolved at an early stage.

Mediation is a voluntary, informal dispute resolution process, facilitated by a trained third party, aimed at bringing two or more parties together to clear up misunderstandings, explore concerns, and reach an amicable resolution in a co-operative and confidential setting.

In our mediations, most issues are resolved within a day or two, privately and cost effectively.

Our accredited mediators offer services across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors throughout South Africa. We offer a speedy and informal solution to conflict, by providing participants with a safe and confidential space to find their own answers.

Our accredited mediators are skilled at:

- Helping the parties understand what mediation is and seeking their commitment to the process
- Allowing the participants to identify what their real concerns are and to voice these in a non-threatening way
- Helping the parties to actively listen to each other and reach mutual understanding
- Reaching clear, documented undertakings on how all parties will move forward
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- how to make best use of the mediation process
- how to prepare effectively
Managing Attendance

Are you concerned that your organisation is experiencing high levels of sickness absence? Is your average sickness absence level more than 4 days per employee per year? If so, you are losing money that we can help you to save.

You may have high levels of short-term, intermittent absences and/or some of your most valued employees may suffer from long-term sickness. You will want to handle things in a fair and sensitive way, while balancing this with your organisation’s interests. We can help you do this, and reduce your sickness absence levels and the costs of sickness absence.

Positive Conclusions can work with you to:

1. Identify the problems that you are having with excessive sickness absence and analyse the reasons
2. Develop a plan to tackle the issues from a number of different angles – including positive ways of boosting attendance and what to do to bring people back to work if they are frequently absent
3. Draw up effective policies and procedures for managing all aspects of sickness absence, disability adjustments and stress management
4. Train your managers to manage sickness absence early and effectively
5. Proactively but sensitively support people with long-term health issues to return to work sooner rather than later
6. Where it is not possible to facilitate a return or reduce persistent sickness absence, managing the process of redeployment or ill health dismissal
7. Deal smartly with situations where employees go sick during disciplinary and grievance procedures
Performance Management

Are your employees clear about what you expect from them?

Do you have the tools to help you frame those expectations and objectively measure whether your employees are meeting them? If you do, this makes it far easier to manage poor performance. But, are your managers dealing with poor performance effectively?

We can help you develop an approach that will work in your particular culture and context. We help you identify key elements of how your staff work, not just what they do, to achieve their goals and develop these into an easy-to-use competency performance management system.

Positive Conclusions has experience of helping organisations achieve higher performance through their staff. Some of this is about appraisal and supervision, but our approach goes well beyond that. The results are seen in well-motivated staff with a ‘can do’ attitude.

The support we offer includes:

- Tailor-made or off the shelf competency frameworks - these make a huge difference both in managing performance and recruiting better staff
- Appraisal systems that work for you
- Staff supervision and feedback frameworks
- Ways to build a culture of high performance and continuous improvement
- Managing poor performance - policy and procedures, guidance and support to do this well
- Managing probationary periods, probationary extensions and dismissals
- Developing your managers to manage performance effectively
- Helping you identify the best and most cost effective ways of training and developing your staff
I’ve seen so many damaged relationships, money and time wasted, that could so easily have been avoided with timely and effective mediation or intervention. I created Positive Conclusions to offer an alternative way.

John Paterson has over 25 years experience as an Employee Relations and HR professional within unionised environments in the UK and South Africa.

A CEDR accredited commercial mediator, he is a firm believer in the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques.

John has a BA (Economics and Psychology), and an MSc (HR Management). He is a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (UK) and a Master HR Practitioner (Generalist) with the South African Board of People Practices.

He has previously held senior roles in private, public and not for profit sector organizations, leading strategic, operational and culture change, working with senior managers and directors to effectively resolve disputes; and supporting and guiding line managers to deal with complex individual cases.

An innovative, current professional, John has developed his expertise by combining forward thinking theory with practical, pragmatic application to develop sustainable solutions.

John’s particular areas of expertise include:

- Coaching and Development
- Conflict Resolution and Mediation
- Discipline and Grievance
- Employee Engagement
- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Managing Attendance
- Performance Management
- Work-Life Conflict