

Definition

A mediator is a person who acts to communicate information from one person to another in a conflict. Mediators may have other primary roles within the community (such as an elder, a respected business person, a religious leader, or a wise neighbour). Conciliation is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process whereby the parties to a dispute use a conciliator, who meets with the parties separately in an attempt to resolve their differences. They do this by lowering tensions, improving communications, interpreting issues, providing technical assistance, exploring potential solutions and bringing about a negotiated settlement. Conciliation differs from mediation in that the main goal is to conciliate, most of the time by seeking concessions. In mediation, the mediator tries to guide the discussion in a way that optimizes parties' needs, takes feelings into account and reframes representations. In conciliation the parties seldom, if ever, actually face each other across the table in the presence of the conciliator.