

Table 1. Problem-solving positioning ♦

Positioning the mediator to define the problem	
Strategies:	Moves:
Orienting the parties to “a problem”	Asking parties to describe “the problem” Stating that the parties have “a problem”
Orienting the parties toward the mediator	Using the first person Asking questions Offering reformulations Stating closed process directives
Containing the parties’ verbal conflict	
Preemptive containment	Circumscribing topic in advance Indicating preference for brevity Asserting authority to interrupt the parties
Reactive containment	Initiating turn shifts Initiating topical / content shifts
Managing problem formulation	Formulating a problem definition Reformulating a problem definition Rejecting a party’s problem definition Supporting “fault-free” definitions
Positioning the parties for problem-solving	
Orienting the parties to proposal development	Re-orienting to fault-free definition of the problem as needed Reformulating to emphasize proposals Soliciting proposals Reframing objections as proposals Focusing on the future
Orienting the parties to particular outcomes	Engaging in selective facilitation Arguing “do-ability” of favored options Questioning do-ability of disfavored options (“reality-testing”) Deferring consideration of disfavored options Promoting an exchange Enhancing a party’s offer Promoting instrumental empathy

* From Della Noce, D. J. (in press). Ideologically Based Patterns in the Discourse of Mediators: A Comparison of Problem Solving and Transformative Practice. Chapter 2. Doctoral Dissertation, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, May 2002. Dissertation Abstracts International.

Table 2. Conversational positioning ♦

Positioning the parties for constructive conversation	
Strategies:	Moves:
Orienting the parties to constructive conversation	Evoking the conversation metaphor Identifying inherent constructive possibilities for the conversation: Talking over differences, increasing clarity and understanding, seeing choices, making decisions Marking party ownership of the conversation
Orienting the parties to their own agency	Using the second person subject, singular and plural Using second person possessive adjectives Using parties' names in the subject position Downgrading mediator agency
Orienting the parties to each other	Conversation metaphor Using the second person, especially plural subject Explicit references to "the other" Allowing parties to speak of and for each other Marking opportunities for non-speaking party to speak Allowing significant segments of uninterrupted party-to-party talk Using open reformulations and questions that "stay with" party-to-party content
Opening the parties' verbal conflict	Using minimal encouragers Using key word encouragers Using open reformulations Second person in subject position Marking disagreement Marking narrative choices: What to discuss / How to discuss it Following conflict storylines Allowing multiple storylines to develop Resisting being positioned to terminate verbal conflict Formulating inclusive, collaborative summaries
Orienting the parties to the decision-making process	Identifying mediation as an ongoing process of decision-making Highlighting available decisions Offering decisions to the parties Downgrading mediator agency

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