

The Editor's Desk

In this issue, the first article relates to the mental models of professional mediators. The next two articles address the outcomes of mediation, providing scales for assessing those outcomes. The fourth and final article uses case analysis to explore linked negotiations.

The issue's first article explores mental models of mediation practice. Kressel and Gadlin gets "inside the head" of professional mediators. In "A Mental Model of Expert Mediation Practice," these authors used a reflective case study method to explore the mental models of expert mediators from the National Institutes of Health. The authors identified four different scripts used by the mediators.

In our second article, "Preferences for Third-Party Help in Workplace Conflict: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Chinese and Dutch Employees," Giebels and Yang also explored issues related to third-party dispute resolution. They developed scales to measure the type of help provided by third parties and found distinctly different preferences for Chinese and Dutch workers for either relational or emotional assistance in resolving their disputes.

The third of these articles, "Quantifying the Quality of Mediation Agreements," by Poitras and Le Tareau, focuses on how, or if, agreements made in mediation mirror the quality of mediation. Rather than defining success as agreement rates in mediation, these authors present a more complex view, addressing five dimensions, including the disputants' perceptions of the mediator's usefulness, procedural justice, satisfaction with agreement, confidence in agreement, and reconciliation between parties, in the context of a governmental mediation. Three agreement outcomes were identified, including disappointment, satisfaction, and perceptions of value added through the mediation. By providing measures for an initial multidimensional assessment for mediation outcomes, the article will help move the field forward.

These articles provide a number of different perspectives and methods, identifying measures and underlying processes through which real-world negotiations take place. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did.



Judi McLean Parks
Editor