



# The Brandon Trust



“Our managers say they can’t believe how far two people can come in just one day when things have been so bad between them for so long”.

The Brandon Trust is an award-winning charity working throughout the South West of England and London supporting people with learning disabilities and autism.

The Trust employs nearly 2,000 staff and has, in the past, used external mediation to resolve some disputes. In 2013 the Trust decided to establish an in-house mediation system with the aim of having a more responsive system which would also be more cost effective.

Julie Plant, Head of Learning and Development at the Trust says that when they met with different companies to select a partner to develop the scheme, TCM stood out:

“We were struck by how much David Liddle and his team understood the way we wanted to develop it. They really got how our business works.”

TCM helped the Trust interview prospective mediators from within the organisation and then ran the training course for those selected. Julie Plant was one of those who took the course:

“The mediator training was really good. The trainers were real experts in their field.”

The scheme was formally launched in May 2014. There have been a number of cases dealt with through the new system but Julie Plant has also noticed that several disputes have been resolved informally once the possibility of mediation was discussed.

For those that have gone through mediation, Julie Plant says the response has been very good:

“The feedback that we have had has included people telling us that it felt very safe. They say it was like

building a bridge between two people”.

And from leaders within the organisation the response has also been very positive, with several managers surprised at how quickly progress can be made in repairing relationships. Like most organisations, the Brandon Trust operates within tight budget and time constraints and setting aside a day for two people to go through mediation is a big commitment. But that commitment has been shown to be more than worth it.

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There had been several difficult relationships within the organisation which had seemed beyond repair but are now getting back on track. Julie Plant says she was struck by one case in particular:

“We had one example fairly early on in the new system where the two people who had been through mediation were really determined to take ownership of the agreement they had reached.

They were so keen to get their relationship back on track that they actually put in a request to work together.”

Overall, the experience has helped strengthened feelings of empathy and understanding amongst those who are experiencing difficulties at work by encouraging open an honest communication between all sides.

**If you would like more information on setting up a workplace mediation scheme, call today and speak to a member of the team.**