

Mediator Preparation

As pre-mediation will not be a part of these role-plays, use the case notes (role-plays) to develop hypotheses and how you would prepare for the mediation based on the information provided. At the same time, it is imperative that you do not “script” the mediation and are open to new and different pieces of information provided by your role-players.

Each mediator will have begun to develop their own way they prefer to prepare for a mediation. Using the case notes provided, prepare for this role-play as you would a real mediation.

Sample Mediator Preparation Questions

What will I do to set the stage for the mediation?

What elements do I need to cover in Phase 1 of this role-play?

Welcome, process, mediator role, knowledge & authority, confidentiality, guidelines, logistics, caucus, agreement to mediate, commitment, etc.

How might culture, gender, class, power, personal traits, expectations, and perceptions be operating in this conflict?

It can also be helpful to focus on a particular skill that you wish to improve on in the role-play. Let your coach know what skill you would like them to watch for and provide feedback on.

Role-Player Preparation Guidelines

- Please only read your part (your side of the role-play). Please do not read the role of the other party.
- The role player should be prepared and fully in role, knowing the facts, having developed interests and back-stories to disclose about their role.
- The role-player should come in feeling quite strongly about their position and begin to move away from that position only if/ when the mediator demonstrates the skills to help them do that.
- When you tell your opening story, speak in terms of positions, not interests.
- Be realistic and not over-the-top in your acting.
- During the role play, try to display emotions, resistance, or anger at least once to give the student an opportunity to deal with it.
- Strive to maintain balance between being too compliant and too resistant. Being unreasonably stubborn or positional is not helpful to the learning of the mediator, nor is handing over your interests and stories on a silver platter. Do not do the work for the mediator. It is important not to disclose information that they haven't worked for and not to feel compelled to break silences or to provide suggestions to move the role play along. If the student asks a vague or confused question, react in a confused and puzzled way. If things are not working for you (the role-player), it is appropriate to express (in role) your concerns of the moment.
- The coach will let you know if your role-playing needs to be amped up or toned down (e.g., thumbs up or down).
- Be prepared, in role, to reflect back on the role play. Provide timely, authentic and helpful feedback – from the heart. Allow the coach to reflect on the skills.

Role-Player Preparation Questions

It is important that role-players come prepared with a sufficient backstory to the conflict being mediated, as such we are asking you to ensure your role is fully prepared. Please consider the following

1. What is your position? (Remember, you feel strongly about your position. Ensure this comes across in the role-play)
2. What are your interests? (list at least 5 deep interests)
3. How did your interests come to be (backstory)? NB: there should be a complementary backstory for each interest.
4. What do I want the other person to know (but don't want to disclose)?
5. What are my role's thoughts on confidentiality?
6. What emotions are you bringing to the role-play (e.g., shame, "righteous" indignation, fear, injustice, anger, resentment, contempt, etc.)? And, why? (bring these feelings to your role-play)