

The most important personal qualities a mediator needs

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What disputants need from conflict resolvers is more than process: they need understanding, engagement, creativity, strength, wisdom, strategic thinking, confrontation, patience, encouragement, humour, courage, and a host of other qualities that are not only about process or substance.

(Mayer 2004, p. 146)

Synopsis

Much of the mediation literature focuses on the development of the mediator's technical skills, methodologies and models, while scant attention has been paid to the personal qualities a mediator needs to bring to a mediation.

The publication of Bowling and Hoffman's (2003) *Bringing peace into the room: how the personal qualities of the mediator impact the mediation process of conflict resolution* has opened the way for these qualities to be discussed and reviewed.

This essay has identified and scored various personal qualities (albeit in a somewhat subjective and arbitrary fashion) to develop a top 10 of qualities most often mentioned in the literature.

It has also attempted to explain why these qualities are essential and significant weapons in a mediator's armoury.

1. Introduction

Over the last 40 years, mediation has come to be viewed as a viable and important alternative to litigation because it is seen as cheaper, faster, and because it allows parties to have more control of the dispute process.

Much of the literature devoted to mediation concentrates on the skills mediators should have (active listening, reframing, reading nonverbal communication, identifying issues), or the models they should use (facilitative, evaluative, transformative, narrative). There are discussions about negotiation, opening statements, ethics, standards, confidentiality, shuttle negotiation and breaking deadlocks.

However, little had been written about how a mediator's personal qualities influence the mediation process. Bowling and Hoffman's (2003) *Bringing peace into the room: how the personal qualities of the mediator impact the mediation process of conflict resolution* therefore sheds some valuable light on this previously largely unexplored terrain.

In an attempt to build on Bowling and Hoffmann's work, this essay will identify the personal qualities most often mentioned in the mediation literature, and will describe why these are essential and significant weapons in a mediator's armoury.

2. Research methodology

The research methodology employed was very simple and involved reading material and then giving the qualities a score based on how many separate articles/books mentioned them. In some cases, the word for the quality may not have been mentioned as such, but it seemed clear from the writing that the author was discussing that quality. For example, Cobb (2003) does not mention the quality of transformation but she talks of 'evolution of the conflict' (p. 227), which the author has taken to mean much the same thing.

At times, authors listed a quality (for example, emotional intelligence) and then later listed a different quality (for example, impulse control) that is related to the previous quality. In these cases, the qualities were listed and scored separately but have been aggregated under an umbrella category.

This aggregation of qualities under an umbrella category was done in a way that made sense to the author but is perhaps debateable. For example, acknowledgement of parties' pain is grouped with empathy, while valuing what the parties bring to the mediation is seen as a separate category. In this instance, 'valuing' seemed of a different order to 'acknowledging'; however, the author accepts that the aggregation is highly subjective and perhaps others would have aggregated the qualities quite differently.

The author also acknowledges that the results of the top 10 are somewhat arbitrary; after all, reading one more article could change the order. Therefore, it is more useful to emphasise the qualities themselves rather than concentrating too much on a quality's actual position.

3. The top 10

Empathy (1)

Empathy refers to one's ability to step into the shoes of another and see things from the other's perspective.

(Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003, p.159)

One of the hallmarks of mediation is that mediators can understand and empathise with the parties, even if in other circumstances they would not. A mediation demands that the mediator listen to and acknowledge not only the parties' positions, but also their emotions (which may be pain, grief, anger, guilt or regret).

Therefore it is not surprising that empathy and its related qualities top the list. Empathy was directly mentioned on seven separate occasions (Bowling & Hoffmann 2000; Cloke 2003; Benjamin 2003; Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003; Gold 2003; Reitman 2003, Mayer 2004). Its close links to *connection* (4) (Benjamin 2003; Le Baron 2003; Gold 2003, Saposnek 2003), *acknowledgement of parties' pain and need to be heard* (4) (Benjamin 2003; Gold 2003; Reitman 2003; Schreier 2002), engagement (2) (Cobb 2003; Mayer 2004), *compassion* (2) (Gold 2003; Saposnek 2003), and *understanding* (2) (Mayer 2004; McCorkle & Reese 2005)) gave empathy a final score of 21.

Empathy is crucial because the 'mediator must be able to see events from the view of each party in the dispute' (Benjamin 2003, p. 111). The mediator should 'synchronise with each party's construction of reality in a manner that does not appear to invalidate any other party to the dispute' (Benjamin 2003, p. 111). However, the mediator must also 'choose when and with which party to be strategically empathic' (Benjamin 2003, p. 112).

In terms of *emotional intelligence*, empathy is seen as fundamental in its own right and as a foundation for a number of other competencies. Goleman (1995) believes gaining empathy involves mastering the skills of listening, active listening, reading nonverbal clues, being open to diversity, seeing others' perspectives and understanding others.

Closely related to empathy is the need for the mediator to connect with the parties:

The mediator must connect or get in sync with each party. The mediator must be able to identify with the perspective of each party sufficiently so that the party feels joined and accommodated. The identification works to establish the bond and credibility necessary for trust to develop between the mediator and each party.

(Benjamin 2003, p. 111)

Another crucial quality linked to empathy was acknowledging parties' pain and their need to be heard. For Reitman (2003, p. 237), when:

The mediator can find a way to deeply value what each party brings to the table (sometimes despite the mediator's initial reactions of irritation) and can express that appreciation to the party, the party feels truly heard and valued.

Gold (2003, p. 194) expresses the same view:

When you enter another's world, acknowledge an experience that they may not have been able to communicate to others, and make it more understandable and real to them, something transformational occurs. A profound feeling of trust and intimacy is created at having been understood at the deepest level.

Other qualities linked to empathy included *engagement*, *compassion* and *understanding*. It seems, from the literature, that a mediator's most important quality is being able to build a relationship with the parties. Parties must feel that they have been 'heard' and understood at a deep level before they can move forward through the mediation.

Multivalent thinking (2)

Most complex disputes require risk assessment and management. There are seldom clear choices and certainly no guarantees. Mediators, by definition, work in this terrain of ambiguity, which requires a multivalent thinking frame.

(Benjamin 2003, p. 94)

Anyone who has conducted a mediation knows that it involves thinking very quickly on your feet, and on a number of levels at once. Therefore, again, it is probably no surprise that second on the list is the quality of multivalent thinking. It received six separate mentions (Benjamin 2003; Hoffmann 2003; Gold 2003; Reitman 2003; Saposnek 2003; McCorkle & Reese 2005). However, it is connected to *being able to shift between roles* (3) (Benjamin 2003; LeBaron 2003; McCorkle & Reese 2005), *transformation* (4) (Clove 2003; Benjamin 2003; LeBaron 2003; Cobb 2003), *being able to tolerate ambiguity* (2) (Benjamin 2003; Saposnek 2003), *lateral thinking* (1) (Reitman 2003) and *managing complexity* (1) (Hoffmann 2002) so multivalent thinking gets a total of 17.

The mediator needs to be adept at:

Multi-tasking – simultaneously keeping an eye on the process, emotion, content, individuals, flow of information, power issues, verbal and nonverbal messages and much more.

(McCorkle & Reese 2005, pp. 33ñ34)

The mediation process is highly complex, so the mediator must be able to *manage* the:

breathtakingly intricate matrix of psychological issues, negotiation dynamics, communication problems, subtleties of inflection and body language, barriers of gender, culture, race and class, and disagreements about legal issues and the

facts that gave rise to the dispute.

(Hoffmann 2002)

A mediator must also be able to *hold a number of fields simultaneously*:

It is about focusing on the dispute and listening for the essential person; dealing with the level of crisis and possibility; working on the transactional level and being informed by the transcendent.

(Gold 2003, p. 198)

In addition, the mediator should see a problem *from multiple perspectives*: 'holistically, systematically, creatively and from numerous angles ... [so] ... the parts are seen in relationship to each other' (Reitman 2003, p. 245).

The mediator also has many roles to play. They 'must juggle all of the roles simultaneously' (McCorkle & Reese 2005, p. 33) and be able to *shift between roles fluently*. Benjamin (2003, p. 100) mentions the roles of 'director, set designer, script editor, narrator and sometimes a character actor' while LeBaron (2003, p. 143) suggests 'listener, educator, coach, salve and catalyst. We are reminder, referee, respectful observer, champion of the process'.

Mediators must also *be able to transform* the disputing parties' context of reality (Benjamin 20003, p. 83), the context of dispute so it is susceptible to resolution (Benjamin 2003, p. 112), themselves to enter the parties' construction of reality (Benjamin 2003, p. 109), and the identities of parties from 'victim to survivor, from wounded one to resilient leader' (LeBaron 2003, p. 140)).

In addition, the mediation process insists that mediators tolerate ambiguity rather than looking for black and white because, for the mediator:

there are no right and wrong perspectives, no good or bad people, only functional balances of multiple and conflicting realities.

(Saposnek 2003, p. 250)

The qualities outlined above suggest a mediator must be flexible enough to think and feel on many different levels simultaneously, while concurrently managing the mediation process. At any given moment, a mediator may be listening to a party's statements while monitoring their body language; paying attention to the subtext beneath what they are saying while noting the other party's response; playing the role that is most appropriate to that stage of the mediation (listener, confidante, coach) and slipping easily to another when necessary; and looking for ways to weave together the strands that have emerged in a way that will help the parties come to an agreement.

Therefore, mediators need multi-tasking abilities that allow them to operate, and feel comfortable, in an environment that is dynamic and ever changing, and where 'behaviours and events are confused mixtures of right and wrong' (Saposnek 2003, p. 250). They need a 'conceptual agility that allows rapid and responsive shifting of frameworks and meanings toward constructive interactions'

(Saposnek 2003, p. 252), and to be able to constantly process and hold information so they can use it to inform and guide the mediation.

Authenticity (3)

If we are centred or grounded in who we are, when we can get out of the way of ego and come from a place of authenticity, congruence and compassion, we have a different impact.

(Gold 2003, p. 190)

Although authenticity is an admirable quality, it is somewhat surprising that so many authors regarded it as so crucial. It was mentioned on seven occasions (Bowling & Hoffmann 2000; Bowling & Hoffmann 2003; Cloke 2003; Benjamin 2003; Gold 2003; Reitman 2003; Mayer 2004). Its related handmaidens of *honesty* (3) (Cloke 2003; Hoffmann 2003; Gole 2003) and *coming from centre* gets (2) (Cloke 2003; Gold 2003) mean authenticity gets a final score of 12.

For Cloke (2003, p. 52):

It is easier to assist conflict parties in being authentic and centred with one another if we are authentic and centred, than if we are off-balance, inauthentic, ego-driven, or locked in conflicts of our own.

Benjamin (2003, p. 109) believes that the mediator 'must project a sense of authenticity that can allow for trust to develop', while for Gold (2003, p. 198) it involves:

being who you are and not allowing your anxiety, pride or ego to be a mask. It is not having to be perfect and have all the answers.

As a mediator's behaviour can have great value in modelling appropriate behaviour for the parties, authenticity in a mediator is regarded as being particularly important because it encourages the parties to also 'come from centre':

If clients speak from their centre, without an agenda, and simply describe what is true for them without blaming or casting aspersions on each other, if they are able to express the heart of their experience, their words have tremendous impact.

(Gold 2003, p. 207)

Bowling and Hoffmann (2000) go further by suggesting:

the effectiveness of our interventions often arises not from their forcefulness but instead from their authenticity. When our actions as mediators – whether they are directed at mundane questions or questions that go to the heart of the matter – communicate a high degree of genuineness, presence, and integration, even the gentlest of interventions may produce dramatic results.

These authors stress the importance of mediators developing their knowledge of self by reflecting on their practice, and on their particular strengths, weaknesses and experiences. The greater this self-knowledge, the more authentic the

mediator:

In my experience, we are privileged observers, intrepid explorers, and in some cases skilful navigators, of the tides and currents, forces and fields, twists and turns that intersect, overflow, and silently meander through the conflicts we mediate. We are better able to hear and help others to navigate these tides and currents if we are able to hear and help ourselves.

(Cloke 2003, p. 51)

Emotional intelligence and impulse control (4)

An emotionally competent mediator is able to choose his or her response instead of reacting. An emotionally incompetent mediator is likely to lose control and react inappropriately.

(Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003, p. 158)

At number four on the list are the related areas of emotional intelligence (3) (Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003; Shearouse 2003; Schreier 2002), *impulse control* (4) (Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003; Saposnek 2003; Shearouse 2003; Schreier 2002), *being comfortable with conflict* (2) (Saposnek 2003, Schreier 2002) and *patience* (2) (Saposnek 2003; Mayer 2004) to give a total score of eleven for this quality.

Goleman (1998, p. 317) defines emotional intelligence as:

The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions in ourselves and in our relationships.

(Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003, p. 152)

Further, Johnson, Levine & Richard (2003, p. 155) argue that only a mediator with a high degree of emotional intelligence will be able to allow emotions to emerge within the mediation. 'Other mediators simply fear their own emotions and, as a result, fear the emotions of others' (Johnson, Levine & Richard 2003, p. 155).

Saposnek (2003, p. 249) believes that 'the mediator must personally serve as the container for the couple's unpredictable emotions and actions' and that therefore 'the mediator must have the capacity to keep ... reactions in check and remain non-judgemental regarding such content'.

Schreier (2002, p. 104) also highlights the importance of being comfortable with the expression of emotion because it can influence a mediator's choice of strategy:

A mediator's comfort level with strong emotion and his competence in working with it often determines what level of emotion is allowed in mediation, sometimes irrespective of what the parties need to express. Once a mediator has recognised strong emotions in a party (including content and intensity), validated them, and diagnosed that the situation requires an intervention, he often chooses a strategy such as allowing venting in caucus or joint session to air the emotions.

Schreier (2002, p. 103) stresses the merit of being able to manage impulsive feelings and distressing emotions, while Shearouse (2003, p. 503) believes that is important that the mediator 'set appropriate boundaries – to keep from being caught up emotionally in the circumstances that people bring to mediation'.

Saposnek (2003, p. 251) feels a mediator needs to develop patience because, 'An effective mediator must have the ability to wait, and even to sit in silence, if the clients need to process the content slowly'.

These authors emphasise the importance of the mediator feeling comfortable with emotions (their own and others). They should be in full control of their emotions, and able to resist the impulse to hurry a party's slow progress, or give in to another's demands for quick results.

As Hoffmann (2002) puts it:

mediators cannot avoid having an emotional reaction to the parties, but must avoid letting such reactions create an appearance of partiality. The paradoxical element is that part of our job as mediators is to encourage the parties to vent their emotions while we must suppress our own.

Presence (5)

When one can be present to one's own anger, hurt, fear one can be present to another's deepest suffering. When one can be present during one's own conflicts, one can be present during another's conflicts.

(Bowling 2003, p. 270)

Closely allied to the quality of authenticity, presence is next on the list. The authors here valued the importance a mediator's individual and personal being has for the mediation. Presence scored seven (Bowling & Hoffman 2003; Cloke 2003; Benjamin 2003; Hoffmann 2002; Gold 2003; Bowling 2003; Schreier 2002), and *holding the form* (2) (Reitman 2003, Schreier 2002) and *integration* (1) (Bowling & Hoffmann 2000) gave the quality of presence a total score of ten.

For Bowling & Hoffman (2003, p. 6):

a mediator's 'presence' is more a function of who the mediator is than what he or she does; it has a profound impact on the mediation process.

They continue (p. 14):

Another term ... is 'integration', which we would define as a quality of being in which the individual feels fully in touch with, and able to marshal, his or her spiritual, psychic, and physical resources, in the context of his or her relationship with other people and with his or her surrounding environment. Others have used the term 'mindfulness' to describe this quality.

For Gold (2003), it is important that the mediator has:

The ability to be fully present, work from the heart, and connect with the highest in our clients ...

For Benjamin (2003, p. 101), mediators must be able to concentrate and focus all aspects of their being so they are:

totally involved with the dramatic environment – intellectually, physically, emotionally or intuitively.

Two writers (Reitman 2003; Schreier 2002) emphasise the importance of *holding the form* or *staying composed*. Reitman (2003, p. 238) sees holding the form as being 'the calmest person in the room, to use all my active listening and reflective skills'. He sees that modelling calm behaviour can quieten others in the room.

However, Hoffmann (2002) sees a paradox at the heart of the mediator's presence:

A mediator must be remarkably and uniquely present – a full participant. At the same time, and more fundamentally, the mediator must be present in a manner that embodies an understanding that she or he has no significance at all to the dispute and its resolution ... The mediator must function within a paradox: how to be central and matter not at all.

Presence, then, refers to a mediator's ability to bring all aspects of themselves to the mediation: body, heart, mind and spirit. It involves modelling calm behaviour while marshalling every personal resource they have at their disposal. However, despite this effort to be authentically and genuinely present during the mediation, a mediator must also acknowledge that, on another level, this presence can also be seen as inconsequential.

Neutrality (6)

The reward of working as a mediator or arbitrator is to stand for fairness ñ in mediation, fairness of process, and in arbitration, fairness of both process and outcome.

(Hoffmann 1998)

At number six on the list comes the somewhat vexed notion of neutrality – also known as impartiality, balance and fairness. There is considerable debate in the literature about whether the mediator can be impartial or neutral; however, these terms are generally used to indicate the quality of being balanced or unbiased.

Neutrality scored a six (Benjamin 2003; LeBaron 2003; Schreier 2002; Shearouse 2003; Hoffmann 1999; Hoffmann 2002) and its connection to *trustworthiness* (2) (Saposnek 2003; Winslade & Monk 2001) and *fairness* (Hoffmann 1998) gave neutrality a total score of 9.

For Schreier (2002, p. 101), 'A mediator must maintain professional boundaries with the parties and impartiality on the issues', while Saposnek (2003, p. 250), believes it is important to:

rigorously maintain balance between parties – it is balance, rather than neutrality, that is the more accurate organising principle.

For Saposnek (2003, p. 251), trustworthiness involves being:

organised, responsible, responsive, following through on promises and commitments, being truthful and accurate in reporting information, and admitting ignorance when that is the truth.

Winslade and Monk (2001, p. 67) also stress the importance of trustworthiness:

The cornerstone to developing an effective working relationship with the disputing parties is the extent to which the mediator demonstrates respect, understanding, and trustworthiness in the mediation.

The above qualities relate to the mediator's professional disposition. They need to be, and be seen to be, even-handed, fair and trustworthy, and to be able to allocate resources (their time and attention) evenly. Parties expect and need to feel that they are being treated fairly, so it is essential that the mediator can be trusted to be unbiased and immune to the parties' blandishments, bribery, coercion or attempts to induce them to take sides.

Intuition (7)

the moment when you inner voice tells you to take a risk and do or say something unusual, or controversial, or out of character. To tell a joke or a story ... Or to just keep silent. If I listen to this inner voice, more often than not my action, inaction, or silence produces a positive turning point in the mediation.

(Reitman 2003, p. 242)

At number 7 on the list comes intuition. Its score of five (Cloke 2003; Benjamin 2003; Reitman 2003, Saposnek 2003; Lang & Taylor 2000) and (1) *feeling the rhythms in the drama* (Benjamin 2003) give this quality a total score of six.

For Benjamin (2003, p.91):

Although some protocols are initially helpful, they are no substitute for the need to sense and intuit how to move and manage the conflict.

For Saposnek (2003, p. 246), conducting a mediation means:

fundamental shifts [in thinking] occur across a number of dimensions. The basic shift from linear, logical, analytical, rational, task-oriented thinking to nonlinear, intuitive, holistic, emotional and metaphorical thinking.

Allied to the need for intuition is Benjamin's (2003, p. 101) *ability to feel the rhythms of the drama*. It is included here because, like intuition, it is related to sensing and feeling in a way that is deeply subjective and ultimately inexplicable. However, a mediator must develop this feel for the way a mediation is going if

they are to move from being a good mediator to a great one (Benjamin 2003, p.101).

These authors are emphasising the importance of abilities that are hard to put into words and so are probably near impossible to teach. Yet despite their intangibility, they are crucial weapons in a mediator's armoury. These are abilities that develop with experience and the trust one has in them.

Valuing what the parties bring (8)

At number nine, with a total score of five, comes *valuing what the parties' bring* (Gold 2003; Reitman 2003; Winslade & Monk 2001), which is linked with *respect* (2) (Gold 2003; Winslade & Monk 2001).

Gold (2003) believes that mediators should find and value the personal good that parties bring to the mediation. For Gold (2003, p. 189):

1. there exists a part of the psyche that has a preference for peace;
2. every person has a capacity for growth, change and good;
3. people prefer to bring their highest and best;
4. each participant has a higher self than is manifested in the dispute.

For Winslade and Monk (2001, pp. 132–33), respect involves:

a conscious effort not to see people as essentially anything, to refuse to sum people up. It implies a willingness to look for contradictions and to celebrate them as indicative of the range of possibilities that anyone has at their disposal ... It is respectful because it encourages mediators to see people as more than their actions in the conflict situation. Most people appreciate being seen from this enlarged viewpoint rather than being summed up and boxed in.

The respect we are talking about also means always speaking to a person as if they are agents in the construction of their world.

Gold (2003, p. 189) also echoes the importance of respect:

A process that is respectful of each person and encourages the expression of mutual respect heals the ravages of hateful and angry diatribes.

These authors stress the importance of the mediator actively engaging with the parties in a way that values and respects them. Here, parties are seen as more than problems to be solved; they are seen as having the abilities and skills to determine their own solutions.

Artistry (9)

there is something in the realm of mastery and excellence that happens at apex moments when strategy, impact, problem, solution, cause and effect, and intervention and results converge. Think of it as a moment of grace.

(Adler 2003, p. 72)

Artistry is not a personal quality as such, because it also depends upon the mastery of technical skills. However, it was mentioned on four occasions (Adler 2003; Gold 2003; Saposnek 2003; Lang & Taylor 2000) and fits neatly with the other qualities that have been mentioned.

For Lang and Taylor (2000, p. 5), artistry is:

characterised by wisdom, talent, and intuition and people can learn to apply these elements in their endeavours, with intention and diligence, so that artistry is not merely a fortuitous convergence of a number of personal talents and abilities but arises purposefully.

For Gold (2003, p. 191) it is when 'there is a congruence of mind and action', while Saposnek (2003, p. 245) acknowledges that mediation is both an art and a science. The *science* involves systematised knowledge, methodology, principles, study and experimentation, while the *art* is concerned with the 'intangible, spontaneous, flowing, unpredictable, intuitive ... the gaining of impressions based on emotions, and then conceptual integration'.

Artistry combines and integrates all the resources the mediator has at their disposal: their knowledge (objective and subjective), their personal qualities and abilities, and their technical skills and abilities. When artistry is being exercised, 'others notice the difference not only in the product but also in the process by which it is produced' (Lang & Taylor 2000, p. 4).

Curiosity (10)

One of the first tools mediators need to bring to this task, then, is an attitude of wonder and curiosity.

(Winslade & Monk 2001, p. 125)

Finally, with three mentions (Benjamin 2003; Reitman 2003; Winslade & Monk 2001), the last position on the top 10 belongs to curiosity.

Reitman (2003, p. 236) states:

I am genuinely curious about everything contained in the party's story ... I want to know not only what they did by why they did certain things.

It is the genuineness of the curiosity that is important here, 'as parties can tell if I am asking questions in a formulaic way' (p. 236). He continues, 'Perhaps genuine curiosity is something innate, which cannot be learned, but we know it when we experience it' (p. 236).

Winslade and Monk (2001, p. 126) also echo the need for the curiosity to be genuine:

The mediator needs to be genuinely interested in learning about what the client thinks rather than seeking to confirm hunches. The mediator's questions are more

likely to be focused on eliciting stories rather than facts.

They also emphasise (p. 69):

Conveying a message of curiosity about and interest in the participants' experiences is the first step in establishing ... a relationship.

Curiosity, then, helps to confirm the parties' belief that the mediator is genuinely interested in their situation, their feelings and their perceptions. It helps to forge the bond between mediator and party, and aids in the party feeling heard.

4. Conclusion

This essay has attempted to describe the results of a literature review that explored the importance of the personal qualities of the mediator. The qualities were identified and given a score, and then grouped under umbrella categories of related qualities so a final top 10 list could be developed. As the process of identification and scoring could be seen as subjective and somewhat arbitrary, it is more important to focus on the qualities themselves rather than their respective positions on the list.

The personal quality mentioned most often was empathy, which had a score of 21, and it was followed by multivalent thinking (17). The middle bunch included authenticity (12), emotional intelligence (11), presence (10) and neutrality (9). The final group incorporated intuition (6), valuing what the parties bring (5), artistry (4) and curiosity (3).

Although the final order of these qualities may be surprising in places, there is probably not much debate that all are significant and essential qualities that a mediator must possess.

Currently, the research material in this area is scant, yet it is crucial that more work is done if mediators are to become fully cognisant of the personal qualities, as well as the technical skills, that will make them better mediators.

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