Mediation Process

In some instances a mediator is necessary to facilitate a discussion about a conflict. In this case, the mediator does not make the decision. He/she only facilitates discussion and asks clarifying questions. He/she may make suggestions, but only at a last resort. The facilitator should repeat, reiterate, and summarize throughout the process.

Clarify Relationships:
- Explain the process and get a commitment to work toward settlement.

Investigate Facts:
- Each side has the opportunity to share his/her story.

Identify Problem:
- What is the issue (specifically)?
- Both sides must agree that the problem exists.
- Decide where to start.

Generate Alternatives:
- Ask about wants.
- Ask about needs.
- Ask about solutions—how do we resolve these issues?
- Begin formulating ideas, solutions (brainstorming).

Settle on each issue:
- Make decisions on each issue that is agreeable to each party.
- Write an agreement.
- Negotiation may play a role to find a common agreement that satisfactory to both parties.

Follow-up:
- Determine a time to meet in the future.
- Make sure the agreement is working.

What to avoid in Conflict Resolution?
- Avoid taking sides by allowing all individuals in the conflict to share their thoughts.
- Avoid pointing fingers, being right, and being defensive
- Don’t ignore the other individuals’ opinions when they are given the opportunity to speak
- Avoid wanting to win the argument as everyone is entitled to their opinion