**Mediator Information**

**Gained from Pre-Mediation Meetings**

Jim and Orna work in Bespoke Printing. Jim is the Office Manager & Accountant and Orna is part of the telesales team.

You were called by the MD of the company, Mr Hooks, asking for your assistance in ‘sorting this pair out and stopping the silliness’.

Jim has worked for the company for 3 years, while Orna has been there for 2 years. Initially Orna was hired as the receptionist and then Jim told her she was going to work in the sales team. She didn’t receive an increase for the new role.

Jim feels that her performance is not up to scratch and he has to constantly tell her to do things differently. And she would want to toughen up a bit if she was going to get anywhere in this world.

Orna is trying her best, without any training, and the other day when Jim gave out to her yet again for the way she handled a call she got very upset and then complained to Mr Hooks about the way Jim was treating her.

The MD felt he didn’t have the skills to deal with the situation and suggested that they attend mediation and both disputants have agreed.

**Disputant A Information – Jim, Office Manager & Accountant**

You have been working for Bespoke Printing for over 3 years and you’re pretty good at your job. Originally you were hired as the company accountant and later Mr Hooks, the managing director, also made you the Office manager with responsibility for the day to day running of the office, including keeping the sales team on track and motivating them to drive sales.

About nine months ago you told Orna, the receptionist, that she would be joining the sales team on a permanent basis. It seemed like a no-brainer to you. Orna is good with the customers, incoming calls can be dealt with by all the staff and, even better, you save the company money - not hiring another receptionist and not giving Orna any increase in wages. A win-win from your point of view. Well, your wife, Jean, has often told you that you’re a financial genius!

Orna didn’t seem delighted when she told you, but you did a good sales pitch saying it would be career development for her, she was great with the customers etc. She did ask for an increase in money, but you told her the company couldn’t afford it at the time and it would be reviewed in the future.

You thought things were going alright. Granted she doesn’t talk to you a lot, but she’s naturally quiet. You’ve had to tell Orna many times to speed up when she’s working and be more assertive with potential customers on the phone. After all, “without sales the company does not exist” – you think that’s a great motivator for the sales team.

But the other day, when you had to correct Orna’s way of dealing with a potential customer AGAIN, she suddenly got very upset and said she had to go home. As it was 4pm, you said ‘fine’. But there was going to be a ‘chat’ the next day.

However, Orna got in first to Mr Hook crying about the way she had been treated. Mr Hook suggested that you and Orna get this sorted with the help of a mediator. You agreed, but still think that the young lady is lucky to have any type of a job and she would want to toughen up.

***Note to Disputants:***

*Ensure that you are eventually reasonable, although angry and upset at first, and respond to the mediator’s skills.*

**Disputant B Information – Orna**

You have worked for Bespoke Printing for 2 years and for the 1st year and a bit, enjoyed your role. You were employed as the receptionist, together with other duties including maintaining the office and helping out generally as needed. You have a good relationship with customers, both on the phone and in person, and always followed up to ensure that customers were happy with their printed goods.

Things changed about 9 months ago. Jim is the Office Manager, but really he doesn’t manage anything and usually just refuses to take calls from suppliers wanting payment. Nine months ago Jim had this ‘great idea’ to take you off reception and include you in the telesales team and the team could then deal with all incoming calls as well. You’re not stupid, you are fully aware of the fact that the company is saving money by not employing another receptionist. But worse, he wasn’t even going to give you an increase! You did ask, but Jim said that he couldn’t at the moment, but he would review it with you in 6 months. But you like working there, the other people are nice and it’s close to home for you.

You’re not surprised that things haven’t worked out. You were expected to jump into the sales role without any previous experience or training. And Jim is constantly picking on you, telling you you’re taking too long to get tasks done. He also regularly listens when you’re on the phone and criticises the way you handled the calls and that you’re taking too long to make sales. “Without sales, this company doesn’t exist” is his key phrase.

Needless to say, the review never happened. The last time you asked, Jim said the company wasn’t in the position to increase any wages. Jim’s behaviour can be quite aggressive and you feel you can’t do anything right.

The other day was the straw that broke the camel’s back. After you finished a call Jim said “you’re still not getting it right, how long is it going take you to just deal with a sales call”. You got very upset and went home. The next day, first thing in the morning, you spoke to Mr Hook, the MD, and said you wanted to quit the sales position and go back to being the receptionist and complained about Jim’s behaviour towards you.

Mr Hook suggested mediation. You’re not hopeful about it, but have said yes.

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