

THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF SAN FRANCISCO

The ADR Department of The Bar Association of San Francisco presents



Relational Workplace Mediation

Tracking Emotion to Build Durable Agreements - A Structured, Empathy-Centered Approach for Experienced Practitioners

April 22, 2026

MCLE Registration: 12:30 - 1:00 p.m.
In-Person Program: 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Trainer

John Ford

John Ford & Associates

Workplace disputes can move through a process yet leave the underlying conflict unresolved. When agreements collapse weeks later, the missing element is usually emotional: unaddressed hurt, unacknowledged impact, or needs that never made it into the room.

In this half-day training at BASF, John Ford introduces a structured relational workplace mediation model that treats emotions not as obstacles to resolution, but as signals to follow. Participants learn to track beneath positions and stories to the feelings and needs that drive conflict and to create the conditions where clarity, regulation, and constructive engagement become possible.

Drawing on workplace mediation practice, neuroscience, nonviolent communication, and tracking wisdom from indigenous traditions, this session reframes the mediator's role: not as someone who manages or suppresses emotion, but as someone who can follow it skillfully without reinforcing blame or losing neutrality.

This training is designed for mediators and conflict professionals who know the fundamentals and want more reliable ways to stay grounded and effective when emotions are high and the path forward is unclear.

Topics

- Apply a structured relational mediation framework that brings consistency and confidence to workplace cases
- Use opening sessions to orient parties and establish emotional ground rules that reduce escalation
- Deploy caucuses strategically and early to lower emotional temperature before joint sessions
- Distinguish genuine feelings from "faux feelings" (blame disguised as emotion) and track beneath story to underlying needs
- Practice systematic, speculative, and intuitive empathy to follow emotional cues without reinforcing victim narratives or taking sides
- Facilitate acknowledgment between parties in ways that restore clarity and reduce charge
- Maintain presence and neutrality amid ambiguity, high emotion, and narrative complexity

MCLE: 4 Hours

To receive MCLE credit, you must sign in during the designated MCLE registration period. This activity is approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education credit by the State Bar of California. BASF is a certified provider. Provider #103

Pre-registration is required.

Location

BASF Offices
50 Fremont Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA

Cost

\$240 BASF Member
\$300 All Others

**BASF MEMBERS:
BE SURE TO LOGIN TO GET
YOUR DISCOUNT!**

Special Requests:

People with disabilities should contact BASF regarding reasonable accommodations at adr@sfbar.org.

All are welcome, varying rates apply based on membership status.

Register online: www.sfbar.org/calendar

Event Code: ADR262053