

Experience Summary

- I have twenty years of experience in business, including lots of negotiation and dispute resolution work.
- I have built two businesses from start-up to sale
- I have leadership and negotiation experience in many different environments (tech / property maintenance / education)
- Academically capable: Oxford science degree; top 1% UK Civil Service numerical / verbal reasoning tests
- Accredited with the ADR Group as a Civil and Commercial Mediator in 2020
- Member of the Society of Mediators
- Member of the Ministry of Justice Housing Mediation Panel

Testimonials

“You went beyond any other mediator I have come across in 11 years to enable the parties to reach a resolution of what proved to be a very contentious and awkward case.” - Mark Edmonds, Griffin Law

“Bruce, we were very impressed with your work on this mediation. We often have similar cases where your approach and experience would be very effective so we certainly hope to use you again on future cases.”
- Rohit Sanghvi, R R Sanghvi & Co Solicitors

Examples of disputes which I have helped to resolve:

Release of escrow retention (£50k):

I acted as mediator in this dispute between a business buyer and seller over the timely release of money held in escrow after the sale of the business. The dispute had been rumbling along for several years, but settled by lunchtime on the day of mediation.

Contract dispute (£15k):

I mediated this contract dispute which had become very acrimonious, with one side accusing the other of criminal conduct and refusing to pay the contract sum. The matter settled at mediation, saving both sides considerable legal costs compared to going to trial.

Partnership dispute (£35k)

I mediated this case where a business partnership had broken down, with each side claiming that they were owed money by the other partner. After three sets of partnership accounts, and several court hearings, the dispute settled at mediation.

Shareholder dispute involving an option to purchase more shares (£1.5m)

40% shareholder wanted to exercise an option to acquire the remaining 60%. Selling shareholders (including me) felt that the option terms undervalued the business and were reluctant to cooperate. I reached an agreement with the option holder to let their option lapse, maintaining good relations among the shareholders, leading to a successful trade sale twelve months later.

Shareholder dispute regarding ongoing funding (£200k)

A majority shareholder was asked to inject further funds into a company where I was a minority shareholder. They demurred, because other shareholders were not contributing pro-rata. I helped all shareholders agree

on a structure which allowed the business to continue, and for the majority shareholder's contribution to be appropriately recognised.

Share purchase/asset purchase agreements (£500k- £1.5m)

I have negotiated several share purchase and asset purchase agreements. I understand the delicate tensions that can arise in these types of negotiation.

Employment matter, unfair dismissal (£20k)

The CEO and Chairman had dismissed one of the founding team without due process. The employee-founder was asking to be reinstated or compensated for unfair dismissal. As an angel investor and board member I negotiated a settlement agreement to everyone's satisfaction.

Employment matter, absence due to stress (£50k)

I assisted an education employer to resolve a dispute with a key member of their leadership team. The leader was absent due to stress, and had raised possible grievances with the employer. The situation was itself adding to the leader's stress, and there was a risk that they would go on long term sickness absence due to stress. I negotiated a settlement allowing both sides to bring the situation to a swift conclusion.

Sport: Discrimination claim

I mediated this acrimonious dispute involving a claim of discrimination against a sporting organisation. The case settled at mediation.

Education: Funding Dispute (£50k)

As a school governor, I persuaded the local authority that their decision to withhold certain funding from the school was not consistent with their funding policy. The local authority agreed to honour my interpretation of the policy, and to rewrite it so that it was clear for future schools in future years.

Neighbour disputes:

I have dealt with several pro-bono cases for the Winchester Mediation Service, involving noise and nuisance complaints between neighbours.

Disputes where I have been involved in the mediation as an accredited observer:

Aborted property purchase, £200k; Householder / builder dispute, £200k; Telecom contract termination dispute, £400k; Director Insolvency, unlawful dividend, £200k; Right of way / boundary dispute, £50k

Work history

Independent Mediator (September 2020 - present)

Co-Founder, Fixington (Jan 2015 - Aug 2019)

Founder & CEO, KeepMeBooked (Aug 2009 - Dec 2013)

Chief Operating Officer, ViaPost (Oct 2008 - Jul 2009)

Founder & CEO, 0800handyman (Jun 2001 - Dec 2007)

Finance & Operations Director, Ifyoutravel Ltd (Sep 1999 - May 2001)

Voluntary work / Education / Awards

School governor, Twyford St Mary's Primary School: 2011 - 2021

Magistrate: 2019 - 2020

Education: University of Oxford, Experimental Psychology

Awards: Middle Temple Diplock Scholarship

Sports: Flying trapeze, windsurfing, running, cycling

I am married with three children and live near Winchester (~1hr from London)