



# FMCS

# FEDERAL MEDIATION & CONCILIATION SERVICE

## Relationship Development and Training

### Building Better Working Relationships

Are you prepared with the tools and techniques needed to achieve collective bargaining success in today's challenging environment?

#### What Is Relationship Development and Training

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) mission is to provide assistance and training to the labor and management communities in building better working relationships. Management and labor representatives recognize that new approaches are needed to deal cooperatively with mutual problems, and our mediators deliver training programs that help management and labor improve their relationships, develop problem-solving techniques, and cultivate collaborative approaches to bargaining.

#### What Training Programs Are Available?

FMCS provides many types of training programs, but our first step is to assess your needs. Mediators guide the parties through an assessment of the labor-management relationship and identify areas needing improvement. Once we determine your training needs, we custom design programs that suit those needs. Federal mediators serve as trainers and will work together with you to evaluate your requirements and develop a program most appropriate for you. Some of our typically requested training programs include contract administration, labor management partnerships, and alternative bargaining processes:

**Contract Administration Training:** Contract application requires transformation from contract language to practice. Improving the labor-management relationship at this core level allows for greater cooperation at higher levels. This training program addresses:

- ◆ Relationship-building
- ◆ Definition of leadership roles
- ◆ Interpersonal and communication skills
- ◆ Parties' responsibilities in contract administration
- ◆ Grievance procedures
- ◆ Disposition of unresolved grievances

**Joint Committees:** FMCS has a long history of assisting parties in the establishment and ongoing facilitation of joint labor-management groups. This includes permanent labor-management groups designed to cooperatively manage a wide range of workplace issues confronting employers and unions during the term of an agreement. The scope and range of committees assisted by FMCS include site, industry, and area-wide groups. Services under this topic also include issue-specific committees designed to cope with increasingly complex problems such as health insurance, health and safety, work redesign and controlling costs.



Services provided include training on committee effectiveness, problem identification, and collaborative problem-solving approaches.

**Labor-Management Partnership Training:** We have custom designed several training programs that assist labor and management in developing and enhancing committees that collaborate on workplace solutions. These programs include training modules that develop parties' interpersonal skills, including:

- ◆ Effective planning
- ◆ Group problem-solving
- ◆ Brainstorming or brainwriting
- ◆ Dynamic communication with each other and constituents
- ◆ Understanding group dynamics
- ◆ Facilitation skills
- ◆ Building blocks for useful, cooperative, and productive committees

**Alternative Bargaining Processes:** Interest-based problem-solving is an alternative to traditional negotiations. Interest-based problem-solving focuses on the interests that are the root cause of a particular problem. The process encourages the use of objective standards to find a solution. Participants learn how to replace their traditional bargaining style with collaborative approaches to problem-solving. Training modules include:

- ◆ Active listening
- ◆ Interest-based communication
- ◆ Brainstorming or brainwriting
- ◆ Consensus decision-making

## For More Information

Because our training programs are designed to meet your specific needs, please contact your local FMCS office, the FMCS Institute, or visit our website at [www.fmcs.gov](http://www.fmcs.gov). FMCS mediators are located in more than 60 field offices around the United States, and the address of the field office closest to you can be found on our website.

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