

“New approaches are needed to deal with mutual problems. Our mediators deliver training programs that help management and labor improve their relationships, develop problem-solving techniques, and cultivate collaborative approaches to bargaining.”

## What Is Relationship Development And Training?

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) mission is to provide assistance and training to help labor and management break down traditional barriers and build 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 and requires the willingness of front-line managers and union representatives to work together in applying the contract's terms equally and equitably. Improving the labor-management relationship at this core level allows for greater cooperation at higher levels. This training program addresses:
  - o Relationship-building
  - o Definition of leadership roles
  - o Interpersonal and communication skills
  - o Parties' responsibilities in contract administration
  - o Grievance procedures
  - o Disposition of unresolved grievances
  
- **Labor-Management Partnership Training:** We have custom-designed several training programs that assist labor and management in developing and enhancing committees and partnerships to collaborate on workplace problems and solutions. Here, too, the needs of the parties are assessed by a mediator before designing a training program. These programs include training modules that develop parties' interpersonal skills, including:
  - o Effective planning
  - o Group problem solving
  - o Brainstorming
  - o Effective communication with each other and constituents
  - o Understanding group dynamics
  - o Facilitation skills
  - o Building blocks for effective, useful, cooperative, and productive committees

### Why FMCS?

“With a history of more than a half century of providing mediation and facilitation services, FMCS has more collective experience in dispute resolution than any other agency of government.”

### What Training Programs Are Available?

➤ **Alternative Bargaining Processes:** Interest-based problem-solving is an alternative to traditional negotiations. In traditional negotiations, the parties stake out positions instead of revealing the sources of their concerns. Rather than negotiating from hard and fast positions on issues, 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. Interest-based problem-solving techniques are useful in negotiating collective bargaining agreements, in resolving grievances or other work-related disputes, and in labor-management committee meetings.

Interest-based problem-solving requires intensive training before the parties can effectively utilize this technique in their organizations. Training modules include:

- o Active listening
- o Interest-based communication
- o Brainstorming
- o Consensus decision-making

### How Do You Schedule A Training Program?

Because our training programs are designed to meet your specific needs, please contact your local FMCS office for more information, or log onto our Web site at [www.FMCS.gov](http://www.FMCS.gov).

# FMCS

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### mission

The primary responsibility of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service is to promote sound and stable labor relations through a variety of mediation and conflict resolution services. We mediate collective bargaining negotiations, provide other forms of alternative dispute resolution services outside of the collective bargaining context, provide training courses to improve the workplace relationship, and refer arbitrators for settlement of contract application disputes. FMCS mediators are widely dispersed throughout the country. For more information about the Service, its locations and its programs, please visit our Web site at [www.FMCS.gov](http://www.FMCS.gov)