

## TIPS FOR REACHING AGREEMENT

It can work well if you choose three tips each because a new approach creates a new conversation.

1. Begin and proceed with agreement as your goal.  
*"I'm here to reach a workable, practical agreement."*
2. Speak from your head and from your heart.  
*"It makes sense to me that..."*  
*"It would feel better if we could..."*
3. Speak only for yourself; leave others the space to change their point of view.  
*"I would prefer..."*  
*"What are you thinking now that I've explained...?"*
4. Decide what is most important to you and explain it clearly.  
*"It's most important to me that... and although ... is also important, I'm open to hearing other ways of looking at the situation."*
5. Decide which is more important to you: maintaining your current point of view or reaching a workable agreement. Then work out creative ways of maintaining what is important to you about your current point of view and reaching a workable agreement.  
*"How about we consider doing it this way so that you will be able to ... and I will be able to ..."*
6. Think of yourself as right. Think of the others as right. Think of the mediation as an opportunity to reach a creative, practical agreement.  
*"I think I can see your point of view and mine. What part of yours do you think I'm not quite getting?"*
7. Listen as if you are listening for the first time. Listen as you would like to be heard.  
*"I'll have a go at letting you know what I heard you say. Then you'll know the parts that I need you to repeat."*
8. Show that you have listened by letting others know what you heard before you reply.  
*"It seems as if you are saying ... and that it is important to you."*
9. Ask questions...seek first to understand, then to be understood eg  
*"Why do you believe your proposal is the best way to proceed?"*  
*"What is it about our proposal that is difficult for you?"*  
*"How do you suggest dealing with those difficulties?"*  
*"If you were in our shoes, what are two options you'd consider?"*
10. Let people know what you have heard when you do not yet understand.  
*"I've heard you say that... I need to hear some more before I comment."*



11. Let people know what you have heard when you do not yet agree.  
*"I think I hear that you see it that... It looks very different to me."*
12. Explain how you agree and how you disagree with what's been suggested.  
*"Now that I hear where you are coming from, I think I can agree with ... I still need to think more about ..."*
13. Explain what would need to change for you to get closer to considering an agreement.  
*"If you could consider ... I could probably start to think of some ways forward."*
14. Expect differing points of view regarding past events and future preferences.  
*"We're different. We see it differently."*
15. Remain open to becoming better informed and therefore to changing your perception of past events and future possibilities.  
*"I'm keeping an open mind here."*
16. Make room for yourself and others to change your minds. You will have to change your mind as will the others if agreement is to be reached.  
*"I'm starting to see that there are other points to consider."  
"I'm keeping an open mind here."*
17. Make suggestions that are new to all.  
*"Here's a thought based on what we have each said so far..."*
18. Show that you can change your point of view.  
*"OK, I get it now. Although I'd have preferred ... I'm open to trying ..."*
19. Expect to walk away with the same beliefs you walked in with.  
*"It's still fundamental to me that ..."*
20. Expect to walk away saying *"I didn't get exactly what I would have liked, but it was fair and it will still seem fair in 5 years' time"*.
21. Call a break when you need one.  
*"I've been concentrating for a while. I'll need a break in about five minutes. Then I'll be back in 15 minutes. OK?"*
22. Be curious all the way through.  
*"Can you tell me about the importance of that to you?"*
23. Be generous at the end to bring it to an end.  
*"It's more important to finish this than to keep going over this last aspect. How about...?"*