

# IN PLACE OF STRIFE

## The Mediation Chambers



### Feedback Digest for Mark Jackson-Stops

#### Mediation Style and Approach

Mark Jackson-Stops is known for his ability to build relationships of trust speedily and he can adapt his approach to the needs of different parties. His style is responsive and flexible and ranges from the lightest of touch to a firm and directive approach when required. Both styles can be seamlessly employed in different rooms at different times on the same day.

Mark spent over 20 years practising as a Chartered Surveyor and managing a surveying practice. In 1994 he turned his negotiating skills towards acting as a neutral in assisting others to settle disputes early, speedily and cost-effectively. His chosen profession could easily have been in the law, as he revels in the cut and thrust of legal argument that is a necessary part of helping parties to analyse risk and find solutions that meet their interests. He is more than capable of challenging appropriately where legal argument appears not to stand up to careful scrutiny.

Mark founded In Place of Strife in 1995 as a mediation service provider and was one of the first mediators in the UK to become full time in the profession.

#### Legal 500

Mark Jackson-Stops is recognised in Legal 500, where his entry in the 2010 edition reads as follows:

'Exceptionally capable and learned', Mark Jackson-Stops of In Place of Strife rises to the top tier this year, having won the confidence of the legal profession who normally prefer their own. In doing so he has consistently demonstrated 'the ability to get on top of a large amount of complicated paper-work' and to 'grasp the legal and commercial issues underlying disputes'. He has 'no difficulty in imposing his authority and personality on a large group of senior people, and he has a very informal and inclusive style of dealing with different groups'; 'inventive and persistent in devising strategies', he continues to impress.

In the 2011 edition, his entry reads as follows:

Mark Jackson-Stops is a prolific and experienced mediator whom clients admire for his 'commercial nous', and 'flair for seeing the deal early'. He is described as 'sharp', 'astute', 'imaginative', and possessed of a 'great manner'. While 'courteous' and 'polite', he 'bears his teeth from time to time'.

In the 2012 edition, his entry reads as follows:

Mark Jackson-Stops, founder of In Place of Strife, is highly recommended, and for many '*a starting point when looking to appoint or recommend a mediator*'. As one satisfied client reports: '*Without exception, he*

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*has quickly got to grips with the issues and gained the trust and respect of all the parties to the dispute, enabling him to calmly but forcefully challenge their often entrenched views and to achieve settlement on terms which each party can live with, but which often exceed their expectations at the start of a mediation'. He is also praised for 'always following up with the parties, to ensure that where settlement is possible, it is achieved'.*

### Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession

He has regularly appeared as a Leader amongst Mediators in Chambers Guide to the Legal Profession. In the 2010 edition, he appeared in Band 1 with the following researcher commentary:

Jackson-Stops is "one of the few non-lawyers that has genuinely risen to the top in terms of excellence." Although his practice is a mix of commercial disputes, his background as a chartered surveyor means that his expertise in property development and related professional negligence is particularly sought after. Many clients favour his facilitative style, with others noting his "remarkable inventiveness in finding different ways to approach settlement between disparate parties." Peers also have no hesitation in recommending him: "He is an absolute standout mediator."

In the 2012 edition, Chambers had this to say:

Jackson-Stops *"brings an incredible amount of energy and enthusiasm to mediations."* Formerly a chartered surveyor, he sets himself apart with his strong commercial outlook and *"quick grasp of both legal and factual points, particularly in property disputes."* Other areas of expertise include commercial contracts and professional negligence. Sources say: *"He understands the dynamics and looks not only at the moving parts between those involved, but also at a structured way forward."*

### Feedback

After a recent multi-party case of great complexity, one of the solicitors wrote:

"Mark reminded me why it is that I, and several colleagues, regard him as the best mediator in the country. Great empathy with the clients, great shuttle diplomat. Sensitive to and focussed on the key issues."

Another wrote:

"All parties are in your debt. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to work with a professional of your calibre."

Yet another wrote:

"Mark is, without doubt, the most effective mediator I have ever used. He is, when available, my first choice mediator"

### Themes emerging from the feedback

#### **Well prepared, quick to understand, business-like, patient**

"...very good – very alive to the issues between the parties and astute."

"Handled the emotions of the day very well."

"Got to the nub of each party's case and mindset very quickly."

"First class business-like approach."

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“Tried to get a feel for our approach without trying to brow-beat.”

“Kept everyone hanging in and was patient and meticulous.”

“Patient, well-informed, tactful and fully ‘up-to-speed’. He resolved a case I was sure was insoluble.”  
“His patience during the mediation was of great benefit.”

“Understood the complex issues at the heart of the dispute and was able to debate issues with parties and comment where appropriate.”

“Helpful, discreet, sensible and well prepared. Said the right things at the right times.”

### **Motivating and focused**

“Personable, flexible and effective at focusing parties on issues likely to crack the mediation.”

“Obvious ability to really focus minds on the key aspects/core of the dispute.”

“Able to push people when needed.”

“...was able to tailor the process to our specific needs. This was essential and worked perfectly.”

“Calm, reassuring approachable and trusted”

“My clients were very impressed and greatly appreciated your calm and reassuring approach.”

“Very experienced, measured and even-handed. Gained parties’ trust.”

“Excellent approach as he did not bring his own ego to the process.”

“I found Mark very easy to talk to and he maintained an unbiased view throughout the day. I thought he was to the point and very effective at bringing about a satisfactory resolution in a fair amount of time.”

“Very approachable [and] understanding.”

“Very good. Got to the concerns of the client very well.”

“Tactful, discrete, gentlemanly, read the claimant and the claim correctly.”

### **Tenacious**

“As ever, Mark worked his magic for us again. Tireless in his efforts to resolve the claim when others would have given up.”