Improve your Option Building and achieve a successful outcome in mediation.

✓ Commit to participating in GOOD FAITH.

✓ Understand what is important to you (YOUR INTERESTS) and what could satisfy your interests beyond what you think should happen (YOUR POSITIONS).

✓ Generate as many IDEAS as possible without prejudging or limiting your options.

Here is a checklist for preparing for the option-building stage of the mediation process.

☐ Create a list of Positions and Interests
  o Start by listing what is most important to you and the possible outcomes.
  o Create a list of what is important to the other party and the possible outcomes.

☐ Do a “what if,” exercise. Ask yourself, “What if I could agree to what the other party wants? What conditions would need to be met?”

☐ When brainstorming, stay open to ideas. Allow yourself to think creatively and stay focused on interests, not positions.

☐ Think about what might create barriers to participating in brainstorming such as:
  o Unrealistic ideas;
  o Concerns that the other person will not follow-through on what is important to you;
  o Limits to your negotiating authority; or
  o Offering an idea that will create expectations among other employees.

☐ Discuss with the mediator in advance any concerns you have about brainstorming and how to address them. You can raise what might be a risky idea with your mediator in a private session. The mediator can help you figure out how and when to raise it in a joint session.