

**EPP Conference 2009**  
**Session: Development of Mid-level Practitioners**  
**June 12, 2009**

***Session Summary***

The “Development of Mid-level ADR Practitioners” session on June 12, 2009 at the Annual ACR Environment and Public Policy (EPP) Section Conference in Denver, CO offered a chance for mid-level practitioners and senior practitioners to share lessons learned about pursuing one's own professional development in our field. Discussion among session participants generated the following set of practical ideas and strategies that mid-level ADR practitioners can apply to further their growth and development in the EPP arena. The group also brainstormed ways to sustain networking and create future opportunities for shared learning among mid-level practitioners.

**Take responsibility for your own professional development**

- Develop professional development goals and share/track with supervisors
- Take/show initiative and be intentional
- Create, ask for, and/or take advantage of opportunities for professional development and growth - make yourself available when they arise
- Take risks and push/empower yourself to go beyond your professional “comfort zone”
- Find opportunities to partner with peers within your organization and/or other organizations
- Debrief when you don't win a project to understand why others got it and improve your approach in the future
- Work to get on the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution roster
- Have confidence in what you know and do as a mid-level practitioner
- Develop substantive expertise (courses, etc.)
- Get broader experience (international)
- Highlight cultural competencies as an asset
- Utilize self-help resources to develop personal advancement strategies
- Be direct about your work/life balance needs

**Identify ways to build knowledge, skills, project experience and overall credentials in partnership with senior practitioners**

- Develop honest relationships with senior practitioners and peers - ask for candid feedback /constructive criticism
- Look for opportunities to take lead on project work with a senior practitioner serving an advisor role
- Participate in project development or launch meetings - demonstrate the multi-level capacity of your organization
- Seniors introduce mid-level co-workers as “colleague”

Thanks go to the following EPP members for organizing and serving as panelists for the session: Jennifer Peyser, RESOLVE; Suzanne Orenstein, Independent Practitioner; Robert Williams, Meridian Institute; Morgan Poncelet, Kearns & West; Frank Dukes, UVA Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution; and Kathleen Docherty, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.