



The
**Resolution
Framework™**

Endorsed by

pea The People &
Culture Association

The Resolution Framework™

A multi award-winning system for managing concerns, complaints, conflicts, and conduct at work.

Fully updated 2025 edition

TCM
GROUP

Putting
People First™

The TCM Group
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ResolutionFramework.com

The Resolution Policy™ was created by David Liddle in 2013. It was updated in 2018 to become The Resolution Framework™. The Resolution Policy™ was published in David's bestselling book 'Managing Conflict: A Practical Guide to Resolution in the Workplace' (Kogan Page: 2017). The Resolution Framework™ featured in the 2nd edition of 'Managing Conflict' (Kogan Page: 2023) and in David's highly acclaimed follow-up text, 'Transformational Culture' (Kogan Page: 2021)

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"Our Resolution Framework is based on **The Resolution Framework™** created by David Liddle, of The TCM Group.

Please visit www.ResolutionFramework.com or email info@thetcmgroup.com.

The Resolution Policy™, Resolution Framework™, Resolution Index® and all associated materials and guidance documents are the intellectual property of David Liddle and The TCM Group.

If you have a question about the Resolution Framework™, please contact us at info@thetcmgroup.com. Call our resolution helpline on 0800 059 0595 or pop in to see us at The TCM Group HQ Business Design Centre, Islington, LONDON, N1 0QH.

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Preface from David Liddle, author of The Resolution Framework™

Congratulations on taking a bold and visionary step towards cultivating a transformational culture in your organisation. The Resolution Framework offers a profound commitment to reshape the way your organisation thinks, feels, and acts when faced with conflict, concerns complaints and challenges

A transformational culture is one that is fair, just, inclusive, sustainable, and high performing. It is a culture where your organisation's purpose pulses through every conversation, where your values are not written on the walls but lived in the corridors, and where your people - your greatest asset - are enabled to prosper. In such a culture, colleagues thrive, teams flourish, and performance soars.

The Resolution Framework™ delivers better outcomes from workplace disputes and concerns - swiftly and humanely. It is designed to replace, or seamlessly integrate with, traditional policies on grievance, bullying, harassment, discipline, and performance. Importantly, while UK organisations must adhere to the minimum standards of the ACAS Code of Practice, there is no legal requirement to retain outdated policies named "disciplinary" or "grievance". There is, however, every opportunity to innovate and to do better.

For over three decades, I have worked at the intersection of conflict resolution, restorative justice, leadership development, and culture change. In that time, I have seen far too many lives and relationships damaged by archaic, retributive systems. Grievance and disciplinary procedures - designed in an industrial age for hierarchical structures - rarely, if ever, yield positive or sustainable outcomes in the modern, diverse workplace of today. In fact, they often exacerbate harm and they light the touch paper of division.

These systems are as ineffective as they are expensive. ACAS estimates that conflict at work costs the UK economy £28 billion a year. The CPP Global Human Capital Report placed the US figure at over \$359 billion. But behind these statistics lie human stories – of stress, trauma, broken trust, and missed potential.

In 2013, I launched the original Resolution Policy™ at the UK's Law Society as a legally compliant and person-centric alternative to grievance procedures. In 2018, this evolved into The Resolution Framework™ which encompassed both grievance and disciplinary procedures. In other words it became a fully integrated people policy (IPP). It is now being used by hundreds of organisations – from blue-chip corporations to public bodies, charities, and SMEs – as the foundation of a healthier, more constructive approach to managing concerns, complaints, and conflict.

Progressive organisations are no longer asking whether they should change, but how. The Resolution Framework™ is the 'how'. It is adaptable across all sectors, sizes, and regions.

The TCM team and I offer extensive support for embedding the Resolution Framework™ into your organisation. This includes diagnostics, stakeholder engagement, consultancy, mediation, training, leadership development, and strategic coaching. We are with you every step of the way.

On behalf of everyone at TCM, I welcome you to the **Resolution Revolution**. I wish you every success in integrating your Resolution Framework™. We are proud to be your partner on this journey – and I can assure; you will never look back.

David Liddle

CEO and Founder – The TCM Group

Email: david.liddle@thetcmgroup.com | Tel: 0800 059 0595

The purpose and benefits of the Resolution Framework™:

The Resolution Framework™ is a groundbreaking alternative to traditional grievance, disciplinary and performance management procedures. Designed to be fair, just, inclusive, person-centred and values-based, it provides organisations with a clear, structured, and legally compliant pathway for resolving complex people issues through objective decision making, early resolution, dialogue, coaching, and mediation.

Unlike outdated HR processes that often exacerbate conflicts and damage relationships, the Resolution Framework™ fosters a culture of empathy, trust and accountability. It empowers colleagues and managers to respond to concerns with compassion and clarity – promoting a psychologically safe working environment where people feel heard, valued and supported.

By adopting the Resolution Framework™, organisations benefit from:

Transforming Culture and Relationships

- Embedding a culture of resolution, dialogue and restorative practice
- Enhancing employee engagement, trust and psychological safety
- Enabling leaders and managers to role-model compassionate, values-led behaviours

Increasing Organisational Efficiency

- Reducing time, cost and disruption associated with formal procedures
- Minimising stress, anxiety and sickness absence linked to unresolved issues
- Improving productivity, collaboration and team cohesion

Strengthening Legal and Regulatory Compliance

- Ensuring a consistent, fair and legally sound approach to resolving complaints
- Demonstrating alignment with the principles of natural justice and ACAS guidance
- Reducing legal risk and protecting organisational reputation

Enhancing Employee Experience

- Placing people, not process, at the heart of resolution
- Offering choice, voice and agency in how concerns are addressed
- Ensuring swift, informal, and compassionate interventions where possible

TCM was invited to integrate our Resolution Framework within the BBC. As Heather Palmer, senior HR Business Partner at the BBC puts it:

“TCM’s Resolution Framework provides a mechanism where people can access different routes to resolution through dialogue, coaching and mediation. It’s absolutely the right thing to do: it’s person-centred, and evidence-based, and that’s key.”

To learn more about how the Resolution Framework™ can help your organisation build a more just, inclusive and high-performing culture, please visit:

www.ResolutionFramework.com or access your FREE Resolution Hub™ by [clicking here](#)

Your Guide for Integrating The Resolution Framework™.

The following pages provide your Resolution Framework which you are free to adopt and use within your own organisation (subject to the license condition set out on page 2)

Don't forget that you have full access to TCM's innovative **Resolution Hub™** which is available to support your resolution journey. From building your business case to supporting the implementation, the Resolution Hub™ is available by [clicking here](#)

You can also access support directly from TCM. Please call us on **0800 059 0595** or email us at info@thetcmgroup.com. We are here to help!

Good Luck!

Introduction

This section should include an introduction to your Resolution Framework from your CPO and/or CEO.

As a guide, the introduction should cover:

- That your Resolution Framework is based on the TCM Resolution Framework. See statement on page #2 for guidance
- Why have you established a Resolution Framework in your organisation?
- What was the business case for doing so (refer to the data from The Resolution Review or other data gathering exercises)
- Who did you consult and what impact has that had?
- How does the Resolution Framework align to the workplace culture you are trying to create?
- What are some of the core benefits of the Resolution Framework that you expect to achieve?
- If you have set up a Resolution Centre, how will it provide the necessary checks and balances in terms of governance, compliance, and quality assurance?
- How will you monitor and evaluate the Resolution Framework including gathering feedback from users, reviews of cases and ongoing evaluation of outcomes to ensure they are fair and just.

Overview

[Insert name of organisation] believes that a positive working environment and good working relationships have a substantial impact on our well-being and engagement, performance, employee experience and customer experience. In addition, they reduce stress, anxiety and trauma for our people plus, they reduce the costs associated with managing issues at work.

Our Resolution Framework reflects our combined efforts to create a purpose-driven, values-based, and person-centred workplace. The framework is aligned to the core values of our organisation, and it is just one way that we are using our values as a basis for the development of a transformational culture within our organisation.

Our values are:

- Insert details of your values here.

The Resolution Framework offers a timely, supportive, and proactive approach for resolving workplace issues. Colleagues must continue to act in accordance with the values and behaviours of the organisation, workplace policies and, where applicable external regulatory bodies. It has been designed to secure constructive and lasting outcomes in all cases. The process is fully legally compliant, it meets and exceeds the requirements of the Acas Code on Discipline and Grievance, and it meets and exceeds all equality legislation currently in place in the UK.

Objectives

Concerns, complaints, or conflicts at work are a natural and inevitable factor for any organisation. Focusing on resolving workplace issues constructively will help us to create and sustain a positive working environment where we can all thrive. A resolution that is secured by the people involved, is more likely to be mutually acceptable and to endure over the longer term than one which is imposed by a third party. Our objectives are:

- Insert the objectives for introducing a Resolution Framework™ here.

Scope

Our Resolution Framework replaces our previous grievance, bullying, harassment, and disciplinary procedures. It applies to all colleagues and [add other stakeholders here such as contractors and agency staff].

The Resolution Framework can be used to manage and resolve various types of issues including:

- Disagreements between colleagues or between groups of colleagues.
- Disagreements between managers and members of their team.
- Complaints about the behaviour of a colleague, a manager, or another member of the organisation.
- Concerns about the conduct or performance of a colleague or a group of colleagues.
- Allegations of bullying, harassment, or discrimination made by a colleague, a group of colleagues or a colleague's representative.
- Allegations of misconduct including allegations of gross misconduct.

Inclusivity, fairness and psychological safety

We are committed to ensuring that all colleagues are treated with civility, dignity, and respect. We are working to create a culture of inclusivity where all staff are engaged, but this cannot be achieved if anyone feels excluded. We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity, and protecting human rights. We are committed to eliminating discrimination against any individual on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, relationship status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation, as well as to promoting positive practice and valuing the diversity of all individuals and communities. The Resolution Framework provides an accessible process and level of support to underpin our commitment to equality and inclusion and to enable everyone to constructively resolve any issues that they have through an appropriate psychologically safe process.

Governance, quality assurance, monitoring, and evaluation.

We have established a multi-disciplinary Resolution Centre comprising highly skilled and trained resolution specialists drawn from [insert details of the makeup of your Resolution Centre]. Our Resolution Centre provides oversight, governance, and accountability of the Resolution Framework. They undertake regular case reviews, and they actively seek feedback from the users of our Resolution Framework. They also engage in continuous monitoring and evaluation of The Resolution Framework in terms of its usage, the outcomes it achieves, the benefits it delivers and the satisfaction of the parties who use it.

Guiding principles of our Resolution Framework

1. Our Resolution Framework is designed for securing constructive and lasting solutions to workplace conflicts, concerns about conduct and complaints. It incorporates both early resolution and formal resolution processes and it is designed to help resolve issues as close to the source as possible. This is known as ‘nipping an issue in the bud.’ As such, significant emphasis is given to a wide range of remedies through what we refer to as “local” and “early” resolution.
2. Most issues can be resolved through dialogue, and we encourage all parties to engage with the informal resolution methods first, and we will support you to do so. We are also committed to using supported resolution processes such as facilitated conversations, coaching and mediation.
3. Formal resolution may be recommended where the informal processes do not resolve matters or in more serious cases. The organisation has retained the ability to suspend a colleague and to investigate matters prior to holding a formal resolution meeting. Throughout formal resolution, the colleague has the right to be accompanied. The colleague’s right to appeal the 2nd and 3rd level reminders and any decision to terminate employment is fully protected within our Resolution Framework.
4. Working together we aim to ensure good working relationships and to settle issues promptly, fairly, and as close as possible to the point of origin. We encourage managers and colleagues to seek an early resolution to issues quickly and effectively.

To support this ethos of early resolution and dialogue we:

- Provide support and resources to support managers and colleagues to resolve issues informally.
- Promote a high level of trust through mindful use of language and respectful and learning oriented conversations.
- Use a Request for Resolution (RFR) form which is designed to be needs based, person centred and future focussed.
- Apply a triage process using a set of objective criteria to assess the most effective route to resolution in each case.
- Use reminders, first level, second level, and third level which is the final reminder. We will encourage all colleagues to be open and honest when a mistake is made and for managers to take that into account when reaching a decision about next steps. The “reminder” is just that, to help us achieve the expected standards.
- Encourage managers and colleagues to seek opportunities for a restorative outcome in disciplinary cases wherever possible.
- Ensure that all workplace issues are treated fairly and consistently.
- Enhance the roles of facilitated conversations, coaching and mediation and promote these approaches in all suitable situations.
- Encourage positive colleague relations and help resolve conflicts, concerns and complaints constructively and effectively.
- Encourage open communication between colleagues, their colleagues, and managers so that questions and problems can be aired and, where possible, resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

To assist with the above, we provide the following support to help resolve issues:

- Access to peer support through our network of Resolution Champions.
- Access to one or more of our suites of early resolution approaches:
 - Facilitated conversations.
 - Coaching and mentoring support.
 - Mediation.
 - Team facilitation, team building or team mediation in cases involving multiple parties.
- A fair and thorough investigation by a trained investigator in cases that require it.
- A formal resolution meeting to agree the best way forward and/or to reach a determination.
- The right to be accompanied throughout the formal stages of the Resolution Framework.
- The right to appeal the 2nd level reminder, the right to appeal the 3rd level (final) reminder and the right to appeal any sanction applied by the formal resolution meeting including and up to dismissal. The appeal offers a chance to have the case reviewed by an objective third party(s).
- A user satisfaction process to help us to monitor and evaluate the impact of our Resolution Framework from a colleague perspective.

This guidance takes account of employment legislation, statutory obligations, and relevant codes of practice.

Roles and responsibilities

To support the development of a culture of constructive resolution in our organisation, leaders, managers, unions, colleagues, and HR are expected to:

- Try to resolve issues informally and as close to source (i.e. as early as possible) wherever possible.
- Show respect for others and ensure that you align your behaviours to our core values.
- Work together to resolve the issue(s).
- Feel confident that by raising an issue it will not impact negatively on themselves or their career when the issue is raised in good faith. Anyone who does victimise another colleague for raising an issue or concern may be subject to a formal resolution which may include suspension, a formal investigation and a formal resolution meeting.
- Always maintain confidentiality - including once the process has been concluded.

Colleague Responsibilities

Issues should be raised at the earliest possible opportunity so that positions do not become entrenched, and situations do not escalate. We expect colleagues to engage in direct dialogue to resolve any differences you encounter in the workplace and to raise with your manager any concerns that you are not able to directly resolve yourself.

Line Manager Responsibilities

The role of the manager is central in resolving conflicts, concerns and complaints and handling performance issues in the workplace, both at informal and formal stages. We expect our managers to create and sustain a positive working environment where colleagues feel able to come to them directly with their concerns and where issues can be resolved quickly, cooperatively, and amicably – we call this Early Resolution. As such, we expect all managers to:

- Encourage and engage in respectful dialogue.
- Set out clearly what their expectations are.
- Actively seek out opportunities to resolve problems before they escalate.
- Provide reminders for their colleagues rather than warnings and actively promote a culture of learning and insight rather than blame and retribution. Reminders explain clearly what is required and what support is available to realign colleagues' behaviours with our core values.
- Engage actively and fully in resolution meetings, facilitated conversations and mediation processes.

Our managers need the confidence to have difficult conversations, and the Resolution Centre is available to coach and support managers to help them to achieve positive and lasting outcomes from a wide variety of concerns, complaints, and conflicts.

The Resolution Centre

The Resolution Centre is a cross functional team, representative of the organisation. The Resolution Centre manages the Resolution Framework and all associated processes. The Centre includes HR, trade union representatives and senior managers. They are experts in resolution and will meet regularly for reflective practice, to review case management and policy effectiveness.

The Resolution Centre comprises two groups of colleagues that perform separate functions in order to achieve the complete objectives of the Centre:

1. **Operational performance:** performs day-to-day operations to run the Resolution Framework.
2. **Strategic oversight:** evaluates and reviews the Framework for continuous improvement.

Please view the Resolution Centre's Terms of Reference for more information.

Resolution Champions

Our Resolution Champions are a multidisciplinary staff group, separate to the Resolution Centre, and are available at any stage of resolution to provide peer support and impartial advice and guidance for all parties where it is required. Often it can be helpful to discuss an issue with someone not directly involved, as it can help gain a different perspective on the issue and help you decide on the best course of action. Resolution Champions do not give legal advice or undertake analysis of the merits of the case. They will be able to answer your questions about the Resolution Framework and procedure, signpost you to additional sources of support and maintain contact throughout the resolution process and for a period after the process has concluded (typically 6-12 months). The aim of providing this level of aftercare is to assist the parties to embed the agreed solution. They can also act as a support in instances where further issues come to light.

You can contact a Resolution Champion at any time. Once a request for resolution is submitted, a Resolution Champion will be assigned to all parties. [Insert how to contact the Resolution Centre to speak to a Resolution Champion.](#)

How it Works – a practical guide to Resolution in the workplace.

The process map below provides an overview of the procedure. It explains how the Resolution Framework™ works. It provides useful guidance on its application. It also explains the various roles and the terms used in the flowchart below.

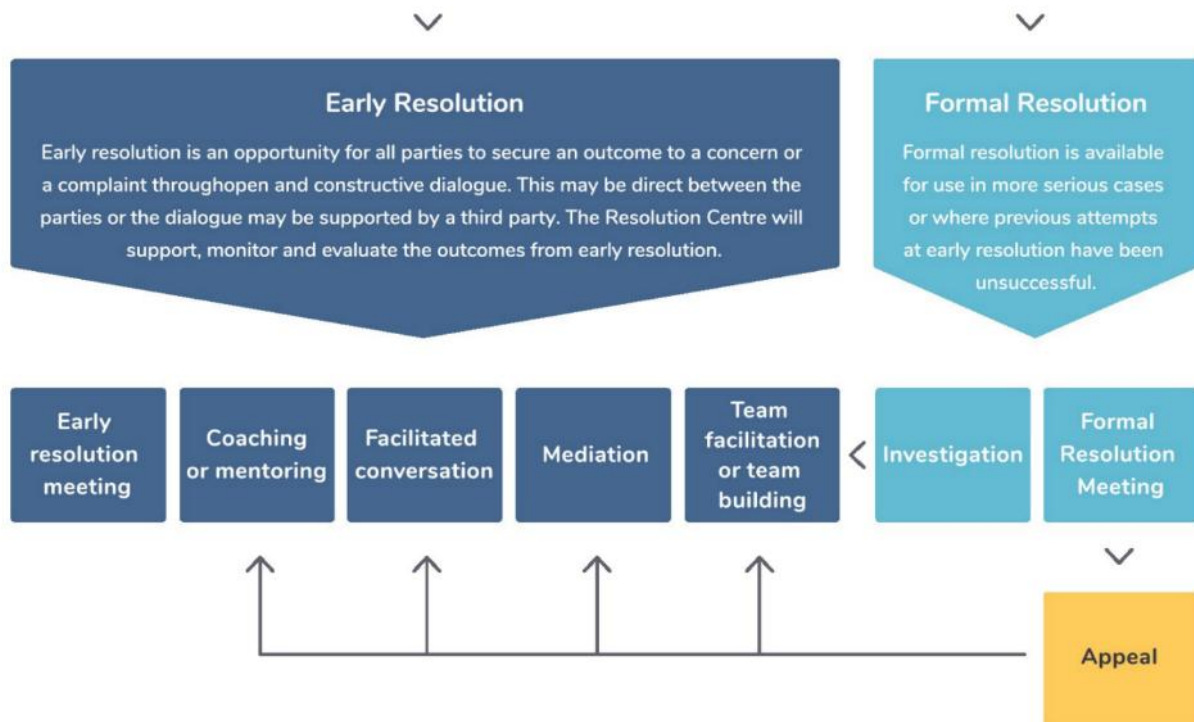
The Resolution Framework™

Local Resolution: attempts made to resolve issues as early and constructively as possible. Support and training is provided to encourage managers, union reps and colleagues to resolve issues as early as possible.

Request for Resolution (RFR) submitted to Resolution Centre.

Resolution champion allocated. Route to resolution identified using agreed triage process (Resolution Index™)

Triage assessment using the Resolution Index™ to identify the appropriate route to resolution.



Definitions of terms used within our Resolution Framework

Local Resolution

We believe that the first and most important step in resolving a concern, a complaint or a conflict at work is to have a prompt, informal conversation to try to find an outcome that is acceptable to both parties. Where you are unable to resolve concerns in this way, discuss this with your manager for advice or with your senior manager where appropriate.

You may need help in preparing for conversations and a Resolution Champion or trade union representative can provide advice.

The outcomes from local resolution may include:

- A verbal resolution/agreement.
- An agreed action plan between the parties which sets out the nature of the agreement and the agreed timescales.
- A first level reminder issued by the line manager.
- A second level reminder issued by the line manager. This reminder is also communicated to the Resolution Centre. In line with UK employment law, as it is viewed as a form of sanction, colleagues have the right to be accompanied to the meeting and to appeal the outcome of the 2nd reminder.

By focusing on local resolution, we aim to foster a culture and workplace where all parties engage with one another constructively. This will enable most issues to be resolved locally and without the need for further elements of the pathway.

Reminders

Reminders replace the term “warning”. There are three levels of reminder.

The **first level reminder and second level reminder** offer an opportunity for a manager and a colleague to agree an acceptable outcome to a concern about behaviour or performance. It is also a chance to draw out any learning and for the colleague and manager to seek to understand the causes and the impact of the concern. The reminder is used to set out the expectations of the manager and to discuss any needs that the colleague may have to help them to resolve the concerns and not repeat the behaviour. The reminder is also used to explain any consequences, should the issues arise again in the future. Wherever possible, the process of agreeing a reminder is a collaborative and supportive process between the manager and the colleague. The reminder, and any learning outcomes, should be agreed by both parties and the manager will provide a copy to the colleague in writing within 7 calendar days of the reminder being agreed.

The Resolution Centre is also notified about the second level reminder. They will seek to provide additional support and guidance.

The **third level (final) reminder** is a formal 12-month reminder, and it is a chance to state clearly the expectations of the employer and to set out the consequences of not achieving the expected standards of behaviour or conduct, which may include dismissal. Managers must always seek the support of the Resolution Centre before a final reminder can be issued.

Request for Resolution (RfR)

In the event that local resolution is not successful, a Request for Resolution (RfR) should be submitted to the Resolution Centre who will triage the case using an agreed Resolution Index. The Resolution Centre will then recommend one of the following courses of action.

For addressing a concern raised by a colleague(s)

- An early resolution meeting, which means attempting local resolution again (i.e. engaging in direct dialogue without the need for a third party).
- A facilitated conversation chaired by a member of the Resolution Centre or a trained facilitator.
- Mediation delivered by a fully trained and accredited mediator.
- Coaching.
- Team facilitation, team building or team mediation.
- A formal resolution meeting to allow all the issues to be aired and to offer determination of the case in the event the above steps are unsuitable or unsuccessful.
- Right to appeal following formal resolution meeting outcome.

For addressing a concern raised by a manager(s) about the conduct or behaviour of a colleague

- Encouragement to engage in an Early Resolution Meeting (direct face-to-face talks) between the parties. This may result in an agreed action plan and/or a reminder about acceptable behaviour. The reminder replaces the old verbal warning.
- In cases where the behaviour continues or worsens, a second level reminder will be issued, this time in writing. This replaces the written warning. The second level reminder should state clearly what the expected behaviour is, the support available and the consequences of not achieving the desired standard.
- In cases where the behaviour continues or worsens, a third level (final) reminder may be issued. This replaces the final written warning.
- In more serious cases or cases of misconduct, the manager may wish to suspend the colleague and/or undertake a full investigation prior to a formal resolution meeting. In these cases, the manager should seek guidance from the Resolution Centre who will be available to assist.

If you would like to pursue a resolution, please submit a request for resolution to the Resolution Centre. [Insert details of where to find the RfR and how to contact the Resolution Centre here.](#)

The Resolution Triage

On receipt of the Request for Resolution, a member of the Resolution Centre will triage the case and identify the most appropriate route of resolution. The triage processes use a scoring system to assess each of the six areas listed below. These are taken from TCM's innovative **Resolution Index**® which we have adopted:

1. Duration/frequency of the concerns being raised.
2. Severity of the concerns being raised.

3. Previous attempts to resolve the concerns raised.
4. Impact of the concerns raised.
5. The needs of the parties.
6. Potential risk the situation presents to the organisation and the colleague(s).

During the triage process, the Resolution Centre may contact the parties involved to gain additional information to assist them to identify the most suitable route to resolution. Following the triage assessment, a member of the Resolution Centre will contact all parties and suggest the most appropriate route to resolution. Emphasis will be placed on informal resolution which could be early resolution, facilitation, mediation, or coaching.

Whilst facilitation and mediation remain voluntary, they are proven to be highly effective. We expect all colleagues to give these processes serious consideration and not to rule them out without good reason.

The Resolution Centre will recommend a route to resolution based on the triage assessment. The Resolution Framework offers both early resolution and formal resolution options. These are outlined in the sections below.

Formal Resolution

In serious cases, the Resolution Centre will set up a formal resolution process to attempt to resolve the situation. The resolution centre will appoint a suitably senior and trained manager to chair the formal stages of the process. The chair will be at an appropriate management level to the parties involved in the issue and from outside the team or unit concerned. In conjunction with the Resolution Centre, they will advise on the appropriate steps of Formal Resolution which may involve one or more of the following:

- Investigation/fact finding.
- A referral back to mediation.
- Formal Resolution meeting with the right to appeal the outcome.
- Referral to an alternative policy/procedure.

The chair will oversee the formal resolution process and decide the outcome of that process in terms of a formal recommendation for resolution including the decision to dismiss.

How does early resolution work?

Our Resolution Framework offers a range of early resolution options. These routes to resolution have one thing in common: they prioritise resolution through dialogue. These include:

- Early Resolution Meetings
- Facilitated Conversations
- Mediation
- Coaching
- Team facilitation (and/or team building)

Early Resolution Meeting

Many workplace issues can be resolved at the Early Resolution Meeting stage. It provides an opportunity for managers and colleagues to discuss issues in a supportive and constructive forum. If you have not already tried to informally resolve your issue at the local level, you may be encouraged to have a direct conversation with the other party to try to secure a resolution to the situation. If the involvement of a third party is required, this would necessitate one of the other stages below.

Facilitated Conversation

The Facilitated Conversation is a confidential discussion between all parties which draws on the same principles as mediation. However, it is shorter and less structured than mediation and brings parties together at an earlier stage of the dispute. It provides a safe, confidential, environment for you to discuss your concerns in a supportive, constructive way. It will be led by one of the members of the Resolution Centre or a senior manager who are trained facilitators.

The facilitator – usually just one, but there may be two - will create the opportunity for dialogue between yourself and the party you have an issue with, in order to reach a mutually acceptable outcome. The facilitation process may include:

- A separate private meeting with the facilitator(s).
- A facilitated face to face meeting.
- Reaching agreement and closing the meeting.

Most facilitated conversations are completed in half a day. The facilitation process is confidential, and the facilitators are trained to a high standard. They will remain neutral and non-judgmental throughout the process.

Mediation

Mediation is a more in-depth resolution process which is proven to be highly effective at resolving workplace disputes, disagreements, complaints, or concerns. If all parties agree to take part in mediation, your issue will be referred to one of our external, accredited mediators. The mediator will contact both parties by phone and explain the principles and processes of mediation. The mediation process includes:

- A phone call with the mediator(s).

- Two separate private meetings with the mediators(s).
- A facilitated face to face meeting.
- Reaching agreement and closing the meeting.

Most mediations are completed in one full day, it may take longer if more than two people are involved. Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process.

The mediator will help the parties have an open and honest dialogue with the aim of identifying a mutually acceptable outcome. If this is the case, the mediator will encourage parties to draw up an agreement.

After mediation has finished you may agree that, if appropriate, others can receive a copy of this final written agreement. However, we will not receive any other feedback from the mediator about issues raised and discussed or any other factors raised during the mediation process.

Coaching

A qualified coach will work on a 1:1 basis with you, to support you through challenges. This form of intervention places the person at the heart of the issue, creating a psychologically safe, impartial and non-judgemental space in which to explore what's happening, consider how to respond, express needs, and develop more constructive approaches to conflict resolution

Team Facilitation

A trained facilitator will work with a group of people to unpick an issue, concern or conflict and develop ways of working more effectively together. Creating a safe environment and guiding discussions allows teams to build trust, and recognise common purpose, and achieve their shared objectives.

How does formal resolution work?

A formal resolution process is available where it has not been possible to resolve matters informally, either due to the serious nature of the complaint, or there may be occasional issues where formal resolution is the only viable option. Formal resolution options are available when the case scores highly on the triage assessment using the Resolution Index.

Investigation/Fact Find

If the issue is particularly sensitive or complex, an investigation may be appropriate prior to the formal meeting. The purpose of the investigation is to discover all the relevant facts and information in a fair, reasonable and objective manner. Investigators will be trained, unbiased and neutral without personal or close professional links with the main parties or any other perceived conflict of interest with the case. They should also have the time available to reach a timely conclusion to the investigation.

The investigator will develop terms of reference for the investigation from the start, e.g. the incident(s), who was involved, the format of the final report, who they are reporting back to. The investigation will then be undertaken using the terms of reference.

Once the investigation is concluded, the evidence will be analysed objectively and with impartiality by the investigator and presented in an investigation report for use by the Resolution Centre and/or chair of the formal resolution meeting.

Gross misconduct

These are issues that may lead to a serious breach of trust and confidence and possible dismissal without notice. The areas of gross misconduct that are covered by the Resolution Framework include:

- Insert details here

Formal Resolution Meeting

In the event of serious misconduct or in cases where a third level reminder has not resolved the concerns, the Resolution Centre will convene a formal resolution meeting which will be chaired by a senior manager. The formal resolution meeting is a chance to discuss the concerns and to agree a suitable remedy. An investigation (aka fact find) may be undertaken prior to the formal resolution meeting. The colleague has the right to an appeal against the final reminder within 10 calendar days of being informed of the outcome of the formal resolution meeting.

In more serious cases or cases of gross misconduct, the manager may wish to consider suspending the colleague before undertaking a full investigation prior to a formal resolution meeting. In these cases, the manager should seek guidance from the Resolution Centre, who will be available to assist and confirm who should be appointed as an Investigator. There must be a discussion with a senior manager and HR prior to suspension.

The following provisions apply to all formal meetings at the investigation, formal resolution meeting or appeal stage:

- You will be invited in writing to the investigation and/or formal resolution meeting.
- The chair will make provision to meet you and the other party, either separately and/or together, without unreasonable delay. You will be able to talk about your concerns and explain how you would like them to be resolved.
- Either party may bring a trade union representative or colleague to the meeting.
- A note-taker may attend the meeting. Notes will be sent following the meeting and without unreasonable delay. If you have changes, we will attach them to the original.
- Where possible, meeting times will be agreed with all parties. You must make every effort to attend. If you or your representative can't attend, you can suggest another date within 5 working days of the original date. This may be extended by mutual agreement. If you do not attend, due to circumstances outside your control, the chair will re-arrange the meeting and may involve Occupational Health in case of illness. If you do not attend and do not have a good reason, the chair may make a decision based on the information they have available.
- The outcome of a formal resolution meeting or appeal will be confirmed in writing after the meeting and without unreasonable delay.
- Arrangements and timescales may be varied by the chair in consultation with the Resolution Centre to deal with any practicalities, sensitivities, or equality considerations. If timescales are varied, you will be informed of progress.

Deciding the Outcome

Following the formal resolution meeting, the chair will review the facts and decide the outcome and recommendations for resolution. Decisions will be communicated to you in writing, without unreasonable delay and, where appropriate, will set out what action we intend to take to resolve the issue which may include a recommendation for mediation. You will be informed that you can appeal the decision if you are not content with the action taken.

Right of Appeal

Colleagues have the right of appeal against the outcome of the second and the third level reminders and outcome of the formal resolution meeting. Appeals should be submitted to the Resolution Centre within 10 working days from the date you are notified of the outcome. You should write to the Resolution Centre and confirm which of the following grounds your appeal is based on:

- Procedural errors where there is evidence the process was incorrectly followed
- New evidence has come to light that may change the outcome of the original decision
- Fairness and reasonableness of the outcome

Your written appeal must:

- Make clear the grounds for the appeal and include all relevant new information or supporting evidence
- Outline which of your issues you feel haven't been properly considered and why
- Clearly state the desired outcome from the appeal

Your appeal will be heard without unreasonable delay, where possible, by a manager who is senior to the chair who made the original decision and from a different part of the organisation. The Resolution Centre will appoint an appeal manager.

The appeal will not re-hear your original issue/s unless they were not properly considered. At the appeal meeting, the appeal manager will clarify their understanding of the basis for your appeal and ask relevant questions. Through discussion, they will explore solutions with you and attempt to achieve resolution. The decision of the appeal manager will be conveyed to you in writing and will be the final stage of the process.

Collective Disputes

In circumstances where a complaint applies to more than one person, the details of the complaint must be set out in writing (following the agreed Request for Resolution format) and signed by all who are party to the complaint. Normally one person should be nominated to represent the group through the resolution process. Details of a collective request for resolution will only be considered at one formal resolution meeting and (if applicable) one appeal hearing. Where colleague complaints are not identical or where there is not a full voluntary agreement amongst the complainants, the issues will be dealt with on an individual basis, in line with this Framework.

Case and Record Management

Records will be kept detailing the nature of issues raised, managers' responses, the action taken and reason for the action. Records will be kept confidential and in accordance with the policy on retention of records and data protection legislation. The Resolution Centre will undertake routine assessment of cases to ensure that the Resolution Framework is being applied fairly and correctly and to draw out any key learning points that will assist with the development of a positive workplace culture.

Requesting Formal Resolution

In the case where you feel that your issue can not be resolved informally, despite all efforts to do so, you should email the Resolution Centre setting out your request for formal resolution. Your email should include:

- Confirmation that the formal stage of the Resolution Framework is being invoked.
- What informal steps have been taken to resolve the issue.
- A full statement of the reasons for the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, names of individuals involved and the documentation to be referred to.
- What outcome is sought.

Support available for integrating your Resolution Framework

The TCM team would be delighted to assist you on your resolution journey. The details of the support we can provide are included in the customer zone (web portal) that you used to access the Resolution Framework™. You can also read more via www.resolutionframework.com. You can also contact Eunice Oyedeji who provides project management support for implementing the Resolution Framework: eunice.oyedeji@thetcmgroup.com. The various elements of support are summarised below:

Shaping and integrating your Resolution Framework™

The implementation of your Resolution Framework™ comprises six tried and tested modules:

Undertaking your Resolution Review. The Resolution Review provides a powerful business case, a strategic narrative and baseline data for evaluation.

Shaping your Resolution Framework. Using our award-winning Resolution Framework template, we will work with you and your stakeholders to adapt it to meet your specific needs and requirements.

Establishing your Resolution Centre (or outsourcing it via UK Resolution). The Resolution Centre is a multi-disciplinary centre which will support the design, development, integration and evaluation of your Resolution Framework. The Resolution Centre plays a dual role – the first one is a strategic function with the second role being operational.

Developing your Triage Process using the innovative Resolution Index®. We will help you to develop, test and integrate this new approach. We can also provide specialist 1 day **Triage Training** to assist the users and administrators of the triage process.

Creating your Resolution Hub. (We provide all the templates and resources you will require). It is a digital platform which includes tried and tested templates, checklists, videos, and toolkits.

Establishing a network of Resolution Champions. Resolution Champions comprise a diverse team of people from within your organisation. Their role is to provide impartial support and guidance to all parties during the resolution process and for a full year after the resolution concludes.

In addition to the 6 modules for shaping your Resolution Framework, we offer additional support which is designed to help you to make the necessary cultural, behavioural and systemic changes as your organisation adapts to the new processes set out in the Resolution Framework.

Engaging your stakeholders. Your key stakeholders should be encouraged to play a key part in shaping and developing your Resolution Framework™. TCM is able to support the development of a wide array of stakeholder engagement activities.

Aligning values with behaviours. Your values and behaviours framework underpins the Resolution Framework™. TCM has pioneered the development of values and behaviours frameworks. Please contact us for more details or see David Liddle's book [Transformational Culture](#) which includes an example of a values and behaviour framework.

The legal, regulatory and compliance context for the Resolution Framework™. This module is designed for lawyers, compliance officers, policy makers and others with an interest in ESG, regulatory compliance and legal processes.

Creating and implementing your communications strategy. We can help you to develop and execute a high impact internal communications strategy to work alongside your Resolution Framework™.

Creating your Resolution Framework™ case management system. We recommend [Apaxio®](#) (a cutting-edge case management system.)

Managing the cultural change – from retribution to resolution. We apply theory of change and The Kotter Change Management Model in this module. This module aligns with TCM's exciting new transformational change programme called [Culture Catalysts™](#).

Ongoing evaluation and review. Using the baseline data gathered during the Resolution Review™ we will support you to continually monitor and evaluate your Resolution Framework™.

Our Resolution Framework™ integration support is available as a package or on a 'pick and mix' basis.

Capacity building and training

TCM delivers a suite of expert-led training courses, including **Routes to Resolution™**, which equips managers and HR professionals with the mindset, skills and confidence to handle workplace issues informally and constructively. Additional programmes include specialist training in **mediation, investigation, coaching, facilitation, and triage**, all designed to embed the Resolution Framework and build long-term internal capability.



Routes to Resolution™

This core programme provides a comprehensive introduction to the Resolution Framework, focusing on early resolution skills, person-centred practice, and conflict de-escalation. Delegates learn how to shift from adversarial to restorative responses in workplace disputes.

Accredited Mediation Skills (National Certificate in Workplace Mediation™)

A five-day accredited course equipping participants with the skills to mediate complex interpersonal and team conflicts. Ideal for building internal mediation schemes and enhancing dialogue-based resolution.

Facilitated Conversations (aka Restorative Conversations)

Equips managers and HR professionals to lead facilitated conversations that rebuild trust and resolve tension. Emphasis is placed on neutrality, active listening, and creating psychologically safe spaces.

Resolution Champions Training

Prepares selected staff to act as impartial, empathetic peer supporters throughout the resolution process. Champions are trained in listening skills, procedural knowledge, and post-resolution aftercare.

Resolution Centre Practitioner Programme

Designed for members of the Resolution Centre, this course builds skills in triage, governance, reflective practice, and strategic oversight of the Framework. Includes training in applying the Resolution Index®.

Investigation Skills Training

1, 2 or 3 days courses covering fair, objective, and trauma-informed workplace investigations. Participants learn how to gather, analyse, and present evidence within a resolution-centred framework.

Coaching Skills for HR and Leaders

Introduces key coaching techniques to help managers support behavioural change, emotional insight, and personal accountability during resolution processes. Suitable for both line managers and HR.

Triage Training (Resolution Index® Practitioner Course)

Develops skill in using the Resolution Index® to assess and categorise cases based on risk, impact, and needs. Empowers Resolution Centre teams to find route cases effectively and proportionately.

Team Facilitation and Team Mediation

This course enables facilitators to support groups experiencing conflict, misalignment or communication breakdowns. Focus is placed on building shared understanding and collaborative action plans.

Networking and communities of practice

We established the Mediation, Investigation, Coaching and Resolution Organisers Network (MICRO) several years ago to bring together organisations which had established internal mediation schemes and/or had adopted our Resolution Framework™. MICRO now comprises over 300 organisations and individuals who meet regularly to share ideas and experiences.

We often have guest speakers and case studies from organisations who are using the Resolution Framework. As a registered user of the *Resolution Framework*, you are entitled to join the MICRO Network at no cost. For more details, please contact our head of people and transformation Louise Webb: louise.webb@thetcmgroup.com

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Implementing the Resolution Framework™ (2025 Edition)

1. What is the purpose of the Resolution Framework™?

The *Resolution Framework* is designed to offer a legally compliant, person-centred alternative to traditional grievance, disciplinary and performance management procedures. It promotes early, informal, and restorative resolution to concerns, complaints, conduct issues, and conflict in the workplace, fostering a fair, just, and high-performing organisational culture.

2. Is the Resolution Framework™ compliant with UK employment law and Acas codes?

Yes. The Resolution Framework™ not only complies with UK employment legislation and the Acas Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, but in many cases exceeds these standards. It is structured to ensure fairness, transparency, and psychological safety at every stage of the process.

3. Can this replace our existing HR policies like grievance and disciplinary procedures?

Absolutely. The Framework is designed to replace grievance, bullying, harassment, and disciplinary policies either in full or in part. It is flexible and can be tailored to meet your organisation's needs. Some organisations begin by replacing only one traditional policy, such as the grievance procedure, before moving toward full integration although an increasing number of organisations are going 'all in' and using *The Resolution Framework* as a fully integrated people policy or IPP.

4. How does the 'reminder' system work in practice?

The reminder system replaces punitive 'warnings' with developmental, values-led dialogue. There are three levels of reminder (first, second, and third level reminders), each offering clarity on expectations, opportunities for learning, and support for behavioural alignment. The third level (final) reminder may precede formal resolution or dismissal in serious cases.

5. What is the role of the Resolution Centre?

The Resolution Centre is a cross-functional governance body that manages the operation and oversight of the *Resolution Framework*. It conducts triage assessments, appoints facilitators, supports investigations, oversees formal resolution, and ensures continuous improvement through review, evaluation, and learning.

6. Who are the Resolution Champions and what do they do?

Resolution Champions are peer supporters, trained to offer impartial guidance, emotional support, and signposting throughout the resolution process. They do not adjudicate or offer legal advice but serve as trusted, empathetic mentors. Their presence helps build psychological safety and confidence in the process. They support the parties for a period after resolution concludes – typically 12 months.

7. How do we ensure managers are equipped to deliver Early Resolution?

TCM offers Routes to Resolution™ training alongside coaching, facilitation, and mediation skills programmes. Managers are supported to build the confidence and competence needed to have respectful, values-based conversations and to seek informal solutions early and effectively.

8. What happens if informal resolution fails or the issue is more serious?

In such cases, a Request for Resolution (RfR) is submitted. The Resolution Centre triages the issue using the Resolution Index®, and may recommend mediation, coaching, or formal resolution. The formal pathway includes investigation, resolution meetings, and a structured appeals process.

9. How can we measure whether the Resolution Framework™ is working?

Measurement is built into the Framework via:

- Feedback from users and stakeholders
 - Case reviews by the Resolution Centre
 - Monitoring outcomes and learning themes
 - Evaluation against baseline data from the Resolution Review
- This ensures accountability, insight, and continuous improvement.

10. What is transformative justice (TJ)?

Transformative justice is a progressive approach to justice that seeks to transform the underlying conditions that give rise to a concern or a conflict. It emphasises healing, accountability, learning, and restoring relationships rather than punishment and blame. This philosophy stands in contrast to traditional, retributive justice systems (eg grievance and disciplinary procedures) that focus on blame and sanctions.



11. What ongoing support is available from TCM?

TCM provides a full suite of support including:

- Access to the Resolution Hub™ -your AI companion to help you build and integrate your Resolution Framework™. Visit www.resolution.global to learn more.
- Diagnostics, Resolution Reviews, and stakeholder engagement.
- Reviews of your existing resolution provision and practices.
- Customised Resolution Framework integration consultancy.
- Extensive accredited training for mediators, investigators and coaches.
- Expert training for resolution champions, people professionals and managers.
- Access to the Mediation, Investigation, Coaching and Resolution Organisers Network. Conveniently abbreviated to the MICRO Network.
- Tools, templates, and digital resources.
- Strategic communication and change management support

If you have any questions or require additional support, please contact David Liddle at david.liddle@thetcmgroup.com

About The TCM Group.

TCM was established in 2001 by our CEO and founder David Liddle. David and the TCM team are passionate about helping organisations to adopt and integrate person centred and values-based approaches for resolving complex workplace issues. TCM are one of the world's leading mediation, investigation, leadership, HR, culture change and colleague relations consultancies and training providers. In 2020, TCM were recognised as **HR Consultancy of the Year** at the prestigious Personnel Today Awards. TCM delivers a wide array of services as set out in our ecosystem:



David is also the founding president of the People and Culture Association. The PCA is a global community of individuals and organisations who have an interest in the areas of transformational culture, HR & leadership; conflict management; restorative justice; organisational development; positive psychology; behavioural science; and systems thinking. www.peopleprofessionals.org. David is also author of bestseller 'MANAGING CONFLICT, a practical guide to resolution in the workplace' (Kogan Page/CIPD) <https://amzn.to/3oclwkl>. His second book, 'TRANSFORMATIONAL CULTURE: develop a person-centred organisation for improved performance', was shortlisted as business book of the year 022.



Contact David and TCM

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Notes

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