

# Optimising the use of Joint Sessions in Mediation

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Much has been said and written about the demise of the joint meeting in mediation. In my experience, such a view is premature and, I fear, is potentially wasteful of the power that mediation brings for creative problem-solving. I am also aware of how much the clients and others appreciate a creative approach to the structure of meetings in mediation.

I illustrate my point with this (somewhat abbreviated) example of a series of meetings in a recent two-party construction-related mediation with independent experts involved. This is not an unusual example in my practice and I am sure others find this too. And this is not a prescriptive template. Much of what is described here is improvised on the day.

Anna Howard and I have tried to exemplify the length of time for each meeting and the numbers involved in each by using boxes. But we have not been able to achieve that! However, this gives a flavour. Imagine a line down the middle to denote when a meeting involved participants from both parties.  
(\* denotes occasions when the mediator would pop into private rooms to discuss progress)

