

# Careful and Methodical *ADR Services, Inc. neutral Mitchell Tarighati says helping to resolve disputes is in his DNA.*

By Shane Nelson  
Daily Journal Staff Writer

Mediator Mitchell M. Tarighati prefers to approach his work like a diplomat.

"I don't take strong positions in mediations," he explained. "I'm not a kick the door down kind of a person, just going into the situation and claiming absolute control and dominion over the process. On the contrary, it's the parties' mediation. On the contrary, it's the lawyers' show. ... It's their day. I'm merely there to help."

Tarighati said part of that diplomatic method also involves doing his best not to insert too much of himself into negotiations.

"I think you can be diplomatic and facilitative when you need to be. I think you can be diplomatic and evaluative when the right instance arises," he explained. "What I try very hard not to do is to interpose a third problematic position or evaluation. Reconciling the differences is really what I try to focus on."

Tarighati has been resolving disputes as a mediator since 2012, but he decided to commit his career to fulltime work as an ADR Services, Inc. neutral last year, and he's been handling primarily personal injury cases since along with some employment disputes and real estate matters.

"I decided early on I was only going to mediate cases I have a degree of comfort and competence in," Tarighati said. "So I've kept it within the boundaries of the cases that I've been involved in as a lawyer."



Daily Journal file photo

Born in Iran, Tarighati moved with his family to London when he was 8. He later relocated to California in 1995, where he finished his undergraduate degree at CSU Northridge before heading to New York and graduating from Albany Law School in 2004. After passing the California Bar in 2005, Tarighati said he spent much of his career as an attorney handling insurance defense. But he worked alongside a partner who handled primarily personal injury cases at Sepassi & Tarighati, LLP for nearly a decade.

"I had an insurance defense book of business; he had a plain-

tiffs' personal injury book of business," Tarighati said. "Needless to say, making a lot of conflict-of-interest disclosures and really making sure that everything was on the up and up, so we could represent all of our clients to the best of our abilities was very important for us in those years. ... But I really believe that has helped me in my work as a mediator - having that exposure to both sides."

Los Angeles plaintiffs' attorney Brian L. Poulter said he's used Tarighati to successfully resolve as many as 15 personal injury disputes over the last three years.

## Mitchell M. Tarighati

ADR Services, Inc.  
Los Angeles

### Areas of Specialty:

Personal Injury  
Employment  
Real Estate

“Mitch is one of the first mediators I’ve used in a really long time that almost unequivocally the defense always agrees to,” Poulter said. “And there’s just something about his affect and demeanor that’s always put me at ease, my clients at ease and also defense attorneys and insurance adjusters at ease.”

Prior to a mediation, Tarighati said he likes to receive briefs, and he will speak over the phone with attorneys if he sees a need or it’s requested. On the day of mediation, the ADR Services, Inc. neutral described his approach as careful and methodical.

“I do apologize for being verbose more often than not,” Tarighati said. “But I’d rather be complete in my thought process and in my communication than to be the source of any misunderstanding, vagueness or inaccuracies. I see that as a very important part of my work.”

Joint sessions aren’t typical, but mediator’s proposals are a tool Tarighati said he turns to frequently.

“My approach is to talk about it a little bit, vet it and make sure everyone is interested at the very least in what I’m putting out there,” he explained. “The threshold that I ask for is, ‘Is this a mediator’s proposal that you and your clients could consider seriously? I don’t need a commitment, but just will you seriously look at this?’ As long as everyone says yes, then I commit to sending out a proposal.”

San Diego defense attorney Peter J. Burfening, Jr. said he’s used Tarighati to resolve more than a dozen personal injury disputes in the last three years, and he described the private neutral as a terrific communicator.

“He’s willing to push both sides,” Burfening added. “And he has a firm grasp of the issues, a firm

grasp of case valuation in this day and age. And he’s not afraid to come in and be very honest and up front with either side on the facts of the case.”

Los Angeles defense attorney Daniel A. Eisenberg said Tarighati is one of his go-to mediators for high-exposure personal injury matters, and he agreed that the neutral’s ability to genuinely connect with all of the parties in a dispute really distinguishes him.

“Mitch’s communication skills are extremely empathetic toward both the plaintiff and the defense,” Eisenberg said. “Mitch really excels at building a rapport with people and understanding their circumstances and therefore building a bond, so he can then deliver the bad news without being offensive.”

Although his run as a fulltime private neutral hasn’t been extraordinarily long, Tarighati said

much of his legal career helped steer him toward dispute resolution, a journey that landed him squarely in the middle of work he finds wonderfully fulfilling today.

“I feel really fortunate to have identified that being a peacemaker is in my DNA,” he said. “It’s much more in harmony with my personality, my approach to things, the way I communicate. I’m just tremendously grateful that all roads have led to this profession for me as a mediator.”

*Here are some attorneys who have used Tarighati’s services:* Peter J. Burfening, Wood Smith Henning & Berman LLP; Brian L. Poulter, Stalwart Law Group; Daniel A. Eisenberg, Reisz Siderman Eisenberg, APC; John F. Ramey, Ramey Law, PC; Ninos P. Saroukhaniouff, [shane\\_nelson@dailyjournal.com](mailto:shane_nelson@dailyjournal.com)