

# Get to Know Lee Mendelson, Esq.



A seasoned insurance litigator turned full-time mediator, **Lee Mendelson, Esq.** brings more than two decades of legal experience and a pragmatic, down-to-earth approach to his work as a neutral with ADR Services, Inc. From building a thriving law firm from scratch to mentoring clients through complex disputes, Lee is known for lowering the temperature, finding common ground, and helping parties craft thoughtful, durable agreements. We sat down with him to learn more about his career path, mediation philosophy, and what drives his work today.

## **Q: What's your background in civil litigation?**

**Mendelson:** I practiced civil litigation for 27 years, focusing primarily on insurance and business matters. My cases spanned insurance coverage, subrogation, workers' comp, personal injury, products liability, employment and real estate disputes—you name it. I handled everything from the early discovery phase through trial. Having seen how these cases unfold in the real world, I now bring a practical, solution-focused mindset to mediation.

## **Q: What areas of law do you consider your subject matter strengths?**

**Mendelson:** I'm especially experienced in insurance litigation—coverage disputes, personal injury, subrogation—as well as debtor-creditor matters, employment and real estate. I've worked with insurers, insureds, and businesses across all sides of a dispute. That broad perspective helps me guide parties toward realistic, workable solutions.

## **Q: What are your core strengths as a mediator?**

**Mendelson:** I'm good at dialing down the conflict. My goal is to create a productive environment where parties can focus on their interests instead of their grievances. I like to keep things calm, clear, and constructive. I also bring strong subject matter expertise and negotiation skills to the table—but I don't try to dominate the process. I listen, I adapt, and I help parties find their own best outcome.

## **Q: What are you most proud of in your career?**

**Mendelson:** Starting my own firm with a laptop at a Starbucks and building it into a respected litigation practice with more than 20 lawyers, paralegals, and assistants. For years, we served a high-volume, high-quality caseload, particularly in insurance litigation. I take a lot of pride in what we built—and in the relationships we maintained along the way.

## **Q: What sparked your interest in dispute resolution?**

**Mendelson:** It actually started in law school at Northwestern. I took a Negotiation course taught

## Areas of Expertise:

- Commercial Contract / General Business
- Insurance Coverage / Bad Faith
- Employment
- Personal Injury
- Fee Disputes
- Products Liability
- Governmental Entities
- UIM / UM

by a professor who was also a mediator—and I was hooked. I became her teaching assistant the next semester. Throughout my litigation career, I often found myself actively helping the mediator move things along—suggesting solutions, reframing issues. I realized I didn’t just enjoy resolving disputes—I was good at it.

---

**Q: When parties reach an impasse, how do you help them get unstuck?**

**Mendelson:** I use mediator’s proposals, but often in a less formal way. I’ll float a potential solution to each side and ask for permission to bring it to the other party. I also use brackets to help move negotiations along incrementally. And sometimes it just comes down to timing—giving parties a little space, then re-engaging with fresh eyes.

---

**Q: What about your background outside of law—does that shape how you mediate?**

**Mendelson:** Absolutely. I’m a “girl dad” with three teenage daughters. Spending time with them—whether it’s at debate tournaments, volleyball practice, or the mall—has taught me a lot about patience, empathy, and how to really listen. Those skills translate directly into mediation. I understand how to read the room, adapt to different communication styles, and keep things moving in a positive direction.

---

**Q: What’s your mediation philosophy?**

**Mendelson:** My client is the settlement agreement. My job is to help the parties craft something strong, specific, and sustainable so they can move on. That means understanding the law, but also being creative, collaborative, and persistent. I take the problem seriously—but I don’t take myself too seriously. A little levity can go a long way.

---

**Q: What’s your approach to mediation preparation?**

**Mendelson:** I like to review briefs a few days ahead

so I can start thinking about strategy. Then I’ll make a pre-mediation call to each side to get a sense of the dynamics, the obstacles, and any settlement history. In my view, the mediation process really begins at that first touchpoint—not the day of the session.

---

**Q: And what about post-mediation?**

**Mendelson:** If the case doesn’t settle that day, I keep the lines of communication open. I check in, offer new ideas, and stay engaged until we either settle or exhaust every path forward.

---

**Q: How do attorneys describe your style?**

**Mendelson:** I think they’d say I’m kind, knowledgeable, and on-point with my recommendations. I don’t push too hard, but I don’t disappear into the background either. I try to strike the right balance between guiding the process and respecting each party’s autonomy.

---

**Q: What do you enjoy most about dispute resolution?**

**Mendelson:** Empowering the parties to reach their own solution. I don’t come in with a pre-set agenda. I provide insight where it’s helpful and create space for people to explore their options. Seeing people come to agreement on their own terms—that’s the best part of the job.

---

**Helping People Move Forward—One Mediation at a Time.**

**With decades of practical experience, a commitment to creative problem-solving, and a warm, grounded presence, Lee Mendelson brings the right mix of insight and empathy to every matter he handles. Whether navigating insurance coverage disputes or personal injury negotiations, he helps parties take control of the outcome—and walk away with a plan for moving on.**