



# Amy Lieberman

By Paula Hubbs Cohen

**T**ruth is, it helps to love what you do – to feel you make a difference, that you have a positive impact on people and that you're successful in achieving the results your clients expect.

In all those respects, Amy Lieberman hits it out of the proverbial ballpark.

### Overcoming Conflicts

A highly accomplished attorney, arbitrator and mediator, Lieberman obtained her law degree, summa cum laude, from the University of Arizona in 1984. She also holds a B.A. in psychology, summa cum laude, from the University of Denver. The first mediator in Arizona to be selected as a Fellow of the American College of Civil Trial Mediators, Lieberman worked in private and municipal practice for a number of years, including five



**Amy Lieberman in the process of exploring conflict**

years as a law partner of Attorney General Tom Horne and nearly a decade as an assistant city attorney for the City of Scottsdale.

During that time, she became heavily involved with employment law and found that she had a strong ability to both connect with people and to negotiate. “But it was a struggle to juggle a successful professional life with raising young children and helping to care for an ailing parent,” she recalls. “So in 2001, I decided to establish a mediation practice and see if I could balance things out a little better.”

And balance better she did, thanks to her comprehensive blend of educational and professional attributes. Her training and experience in the art and science of the law combined with her understanding and appreciation of the intellectual intricacies of psychology provided her with an exceptional ability to deftly and expertly help parties overcome communication barriers and tensions. Indeed, her skills, work ethic and stellar reputation have allowed her to build a successful business and mediate close to 1,000 cases, ranging from EEOC charges and court cases to workplace and executive conflict.

In addition to serving as a mediator and arbitrator, Lieberman is a nationally recognized speaker and author on the topics of employment law and workplace conflict and resolution. She also serves as a Hearing Officer for a number of Personnel Boards, including the Maricopa County Merit Commission, the Judicial Branch of the Maricopa County Superior Court, the State of Arizona and the City of Phoenix. She is past-Chair of the American Arbitration Association's Employment Advisory Board in Arizona, past-Chair of the Arizona State Bar's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) section and an active member of the Labor and Employment section.

### High Praise in High Places

Along with being retained by those who wish to resolve conflict through ADR techniques, Lieberman is extremely accomplished at advising and training managers, human resource professionals







**Insight Mediation: Donna Williams, Amy Lieberman, and Toby Lehrman (staff)**

and senior level executives on employment issues and the resolution of workplace conflict.

As a result, many well-placed attorneys and other professionals have paid tribute to Lieberman's prolific skills. In fact, the Senior Corporate Counsel for a Fortune 100 company said that while he has participated in innumerable mediations, he has never seen anyone else do such a fine job handling a very difficult, complex and protracted matter. He added that virtually every other mediator he has worked with would have given up on a multi-faceted case that he had hired Lieberman to mediate. "Both parties gave her every opportunity in the world to do the easy thing and walk away, leaving it unresolved," he said. "But Amy continued to drive the matter towards an outcome that was ideal for both parties long after the parties themselves lost hope."

Michael Pruitt, an attorney with Jackson White, agrees, noting that Lieberman has the background, experience and gravitas to influence a general counsel or corporate decision-maker. "She can then pivot and provide genuine comfort, empathy and understanding to an emotional former employee," he says. "She is an expert communicator with an uncanny ability to help litigants see the wisdom of resolution."

### Hallmarks of Success

Respect and validation are hallmarks of Lieberman's success. She is able to get to the root causes of disagreement and has a knack for drawing out the best in people, enabling parties to "get it out, get it over and get back to business."<sup>TM</sup>



## At a Glance

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### A Sampling of Amy Lieberman's Honors, Designations and Affiliations

- Best Lawyers in America
- Southwest Super Lawyers
- Arizona's Finest Lawyers
- Top Lawyers in Phoenix, Phoenix Magazine
- Top 50 Women in Business, Phoenix Business Journal
- Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR), Advanced Practitioner
- IMI Certified Mediator, EEOC Mediator, FINRA Mediator and Arbitrator
- American Arbitration Association Mediator and Arbitrator
- Arizona Association of REALTORS®, Mediator and Arbitrator
- Fellow, American College of Civil Trial Mediators
- National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals
- CPR Panel of Distinguished Neutrals
- State Bar of Arizona, Past-Chair, ADR Section
- Maricopa County Bar Association, ADR, Corporate Counsel Sections
- American Bar Association, Labor and Employment, ADR sections
- Women President's Organization

"It's very stressful for most people to deal with the strong emotions involved in conflict resolution. I believe that one of the primary reasons is that people are deluding themselves when they say 'it's not personal, it's just business.' The reality is that it's always personal," she says, with an emphasis on 'always.' "When you're exploring conflict, people want to be heard, to be understood, to be respected and to have their concerns validated."

Lieberman adds that she's very empathetic to people's individual situations and gains a great deal of satisfaction from helping them resolve their conflicts. "It provides validation to them and they usually become much happier in the process," she says. "That's very rewarding from a personal standpoint."