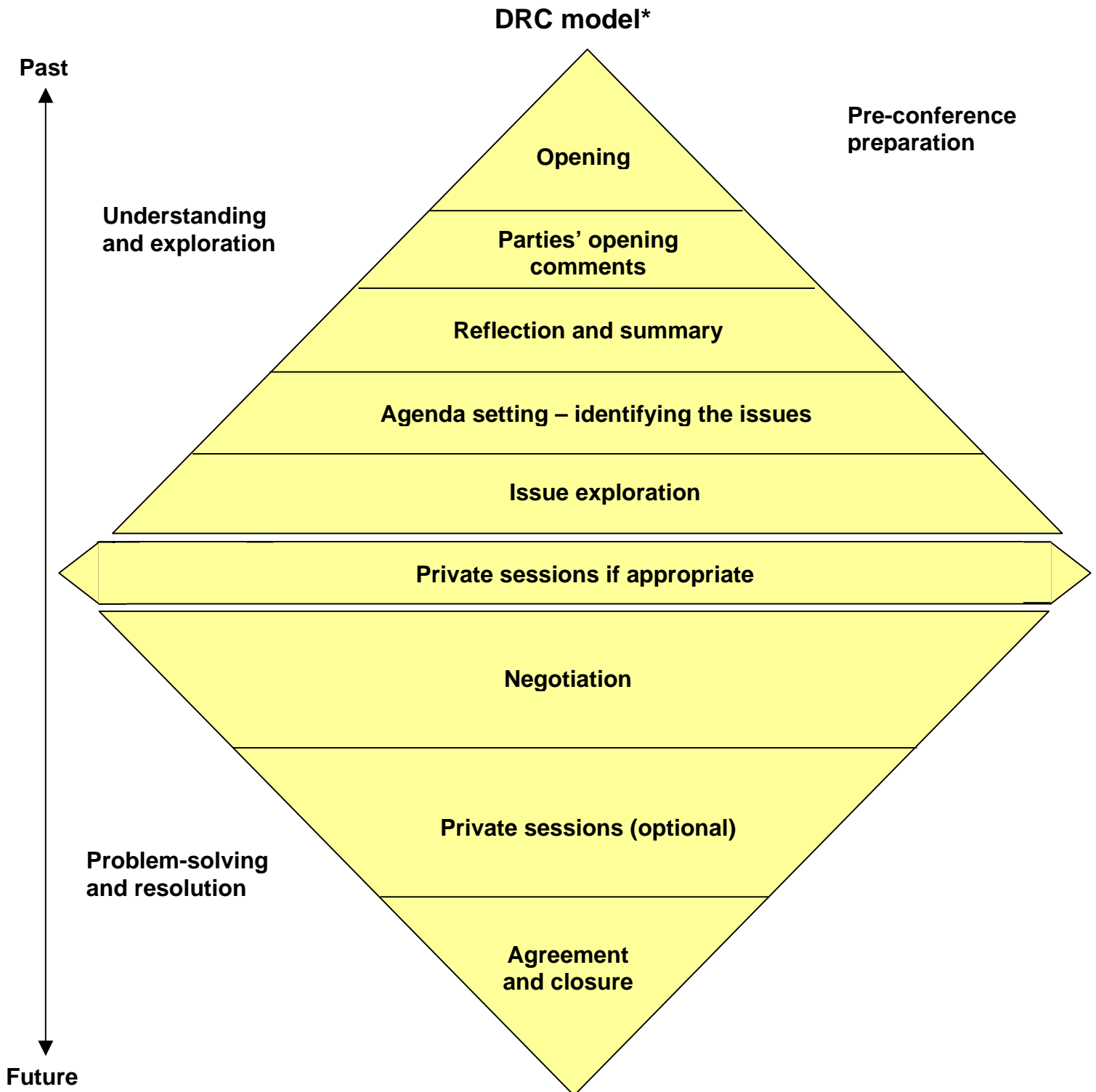


GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A DISPUTE RESOLUTION CONFERENCE (DRC)



*Based on the LEADR Model of Mediation

Pre-conference preparation

- Read through material filed in matter to date
- Children's Registrar to contact parties (or their legal representative) one week prior
- Establish attendance at DRC
- Consider any issues affecting how the DRC will be conducted

Opening – by Children's Registrar

- Introductions
- Purpose of the DRC
- Central consideration of the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child
- Process of the DRC
- Roles of
 - Children's Registrar
 - parties
 - legal representatives
- Differences between the DRC and a Court hearing
- Confidentiality
- Guidelines for the conduct of the DRC

Parties' opening comments

- Children's Registrar to summarise his/her understanding of the application
- Each party to express their views on the current situation and their goal at the DRC
- Encourage parties to speak for themselves

Reflection and summary

- After all the parties have spoken:
 - Summarise the main interests and concerns of the parties
 - Identify the key issues in dispute, and those not in dispute

Agenda setting – identifying the issues

- Develop a written agenda that is both neutral and mutual

Issue exploration

- Work through each of the issues identified in the agenda
- Ask open questions that provide parties with the opportunity to fully explore each issue
- Facilitate exploration of positions, interests, feelings and opinions

Private sessions

- Consider needs of each party
- Confirm confidentiality
- Discuss whether all issues have been covered
- Consider options
- Reality testing

Negotiation

- Discuss the options that have been considered so far
- Generate more options as needed
- Reality testing

Private sessions (optional)

- Hold additional private sessions if necessary

Agreement and closure

- Clarify the agreement(s) reached
- Discuss relevant elements of implementation
- Ensure acceptance by parties
- Where agreement reached, commence directions
- Where no agreement reached, identify issues in agreement and those still in dispute