

Introducing-the-PERColator

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SPEAKERS

Chris Casillas, Emily Martin, Matt Greer



Matt Greer 00:07

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the PERColator podcast, a forum where negotiation theories, ideas, and experiences bubble up to be discussed by a diverse group of labor relations professionals. The PERColator is a production of the negotiation project at the State of Washington Public Employment Relations Commission, the agency charged with administering Washington's public sector collective bargaining laws. My name is Matt Greer, and you'll soon meet the other co-hosts of the PERColator, Chris Casillas and Emily Martin. We work at PERC as neutrals, primarily serving as mediators, unfair labor practice hearing examiner's, and trainers. We are new to the world of podcasting, and certainly expect this will be a work in progress. After you've had a chance to listen to a few episodes, we'd love to hear your feedback, email us at negotiation@perc.wa.gov. Our first few episodes will focus on conversations between Emily, Chris and me. But we definitely plan to incorporate other voices very soon. In this first episode, we introduce the PERColator in more detail and how it fits in with PERC's negotiation project. We hope you enjoy it. Thanks again for joining us.



Emily Martin 01:18

Hi, Chris. Hi, Matt. How you doing today? Great. How are you Emily? I'm good. I'm good. So here we are. We're beginning the PERColator, our new podcast. Very exciting. Yay! So what is the PERColator? Why did we call it that? Who wants to start, what's PERC? Chris, tell us what PERC is.



Chris Casillas 01:42

Yeah, well, the PERColator series really kind of came out of a project that we launched last year called the negotiation project. And that was in and of itself, kind of born out of PERC's original mission, which, you know, really focuses on looking at the fact that the the legislature here has said, you know, collective bargaining is this really effective conflict resolution tool and mechanism for managing those labor management relationships. And as an agency, we're here to kind of help provide the tools and resources for the various parties in the public sector in

Washington State to carry that out and do that. And so thinking of that kind of base structure, we took that at the negotiation project and said, "How can we how can we kind of better deliver some of these services and provide more tools and, and resources for folks?" And we started to look at the fact that, you know, out in academic life, there's a ton of folks working on alternative dispute resolution type stuff. And there's all sorts of interesting research and studies out there, all kind of going on in that world. But in a lot of cases, that doesn't kind of trickle down or kind of merge into what's happening out in the world, for all of you who are actually doing negotiations, and mediations, and all sorts of things associated with that out on a day to day basis. And so I think the original idea with the negotiation project itself as a whole was to kind of bring those worlds together, create a space in which kind of both of those worlds can learn from one another. And we can work on enhancing our skills and kind of sharpen those tools, and ultimately, hopefully create, you know, stronger collective bargaining agreements and better relationships out there. And that was really, I think the genesis of the negotiation project and the PERColator podcast series is just another an important iteration of that. So yeah, that's our basic kind of goal. And, Matt, do you want to kind of go over some of the some of the different aspects of the project as a whole?

M

Matt Greer 03:57

Yeah, sure. Yeah. So what's kind of exciting about this is we put together a lot of different ways to interact with all of you out there listening. And us here at PERC and the negotiate negotiations project. So our goal is to kind of meet everyone where you are and create multiple pathways to interact and to learn from each other. And so we have some, three or four different ways we're going to do that. So one is, there are some pre-recorded videos that are already on the PERC website. So it's perc.wa.gov. If you haven't been there before, you can find those. There's one on expanding the bargaining pie in one on decision making at the bargaining table. So we've already kind of created those. And it was a good place to start off if you want to learn some the basics about the negotiation project and what it's about. So there's those there. We're going to do some more of those in the future. And we're also doing lunch sessions. And those have been really exciting. We've done quite a few over the summer and plan on continuing those, they're an hour long during the lunchtime, monthly and those are kind of a forum for everyone to get together and chat. We've had some guest speakers on the last last few of these and they've been great conversations where people have talked about their experiences and some lessons learned and how to create good bargaining relationships. So we're planning to continue that. So definitely tune in to those and join us and participate, they've been a great opportunity to have conversations and in different ways. So the lunch sessions, and then of course, now this is really exciting, the the PERColator podcast, we're very excited about that. So there's gonna be a regular series, we're going to try to do these podcast episodes and pretty bite sized chunks of, you know, 15 to 20 minutes each, we're going to feature different negotiation project members, me and Emily and Chris. And we're also hoping to invite clientele and folks out there in the field, to come in and talk about different scenarios and different topics, and kind of explore that deeper in a podcast kind of format. So we're excited about that as well. Also look for for the negotiation project topics, at conferences. So there's a the Northwest LERA Conference, which will be held in April, next year, we'll have a session or two there, to explore these concepts in more detail at those so keep an eye out for that, there's also going to be a multi-day comprehensive course. And so this is kind of one of things that was being put together before the pandemic and had to kind of retool it and think about it a little different way. But ultimately, we're hoping to have a three day comprehensive course going over the A to Z's of bargaining, we will incorporate lectures, small group

discussions, and some simulated negotiation exercises. So that's really exciting and be looking out for that as well. So looking forward to, to interacting with you in all these great ways. And, and thanks for participating.

E

Emily Martin 06:35

Thanks for giving that overview of the negotiation project and negotiation project, and it's the Public Employment Relation Commission's negotiation project of Washington State. So the three of us, Matt, Chris and I, we all work there, we're all the, the mediators, adjudicators, we are people who go out and work with folks around the state. So,so we also work on conflict prevention. And so we're all trainers, we do communication trainings, we do labor relations trainings, we do interest based bargaining trainings. And in some ways the negotiation project is the, the outgrowth of that. And it's a way of of taking, taking material on thinking about it in a new way. And I just, I wanted to give that context for what we're doing, and explain why I'm so excited. And we all have different backgrounds that brought us here, I've been at PERC for a really long time as part of the training team. Matt's been a PERC for a long time. But he was in Wisconsin before that. And Chris also has a long experience being an advocate. And he also has experience being a negotiations professor. So in some ways, what we're doing here is we're taking all of those experiences, we're putting them together, and we're using new tools, and new ways to reach out. So it's not necessarily like a bunch of people sitting in the room having a conversation because this is, this is 2021. And, and we're trying new ways of doing it. And one of those ways is this PERColator podcast. So it's a way for us to experiment and think about negotiation theory in a new way. So we're really excited to be here. And we're really hoping folks will join us on this journey. We're hoping we can talk about new ideas, approaches, or maybe just kind of break down different parts about negotiations and think about why we do the things we do when we're at the table. We're also taking the labels that you can learn if you take a negotiations class, and attaching it to the things that we're actually doing in real life so we can better understand what those ideas are. And we can be more strategic about what's happening at the table. Because a lot of us have lots of experience and we go with our gut. But we don't necessarily know what is the theory behind that. My favorite part of the negotiation projects is a way to create a community, a different kind of community, because we're we're all I mean, in the last year and a half, we've been finding new ways to connect with different people since since the whole world changed. And by by using new tools, we can find a way to gather and talk and learn from each other. So instead of only gathering at a conference once a year, we can do things like that lunchtime zoom, where we can get together and talk. And it just the whole point is to help us all be better at resolving conflicts, negotiating, resolving disputes, but have a better understanding of things like the different phases of negotiation and what strategies you might want to use for each stage to be as successful as you can be. And the big picture is we're here about trying to prove the collective bargaining relationships here in Washington State. So having more tools, having more theory, having more thought about what goes on at the bargaining table is going to help negotiations and help labor relations and conflict prevention is why we're here. So that's why we want everybody to participate. So I think I think that sets us up, PERColator! What do you guys think? Any final thoughts? Well, I would just look forward to everybody joining us on this journey. It really, as Emily said, it really is a process in which we hope doing, engage folks and learn from one another. I think that is a central kind of underlying premise to what we're doing. And so we hope to have as many people as possible join us in this journey and we look forward to seeing you along the road.





Matt Greer 10:26

Look forward to hearing from you all and learning from your experiences as well. I'm excited. Yay! Great job!



Emily Martin 10:32

It's gonna be great!



Chris Casillas 10:32

See you soon.