

**Resource: List of Organizational Ombuds (OO) Functions  
for OOs who Want More Ideas for a Database or Friday Checklist  
To Show the Breadth and Significance of Ombuds Functions and Skills**

**2026 Rowe, Hedeem, Schneider, Escalante (IOA Survey)**

**Working to be seen as fair, safe, accessible, and credible**

Being alert to urgent issues and the possibility of an emergency  
Being alert to risks for visitors, other stakeholders, the organization  
Delivering respect while providing a chance "to be heard"  
Listening for information important for the visitor and the organization  
Providing and explaining relevant information (including policies)  
Reframing issues and developing increased awareness of others' perspectives  
Helping to develop and evaluate appropriate options  
Listening to bystanders, anonymous callers, alleged and self-described offenders  
Monitoring ombuds office "acknowledgment time"  
Monitoring ombuds office time between initial contact and closing the case

**Helping people to help themselves**

Helping visitors deal with risks they face  
Offering the option of referrals to other resources  
Helping visitors to collect, organize and understand information  
Helping individuals to use a direct approach (personal letters, coaching and role-playing)  
Coaching supervisors and leadership to deal with a conflict or a promising idea

**Informal intervention**

Helping leaders and managers to be seen as approachable and fair  
Offering shuttle diplomacy (facilitating communication without bringing parties together)  
Conducting mediation or facilitated conversations  
Exploring or "looking into" a problem informally  
Facilitating a generic approach to a problem or an improvement, to lead to a fair outcome/systems improvement, while protecting the identity of the source  
Assisting (as appropriate) with process issues in an appeals process  
"Following up" on a specific case with relevant stakeholders

**Working within the organization**

Providing alerts of a new, emerging, or urgent issues and good ideas  
Identifying and communicating about patterns of issues and their root causes  
Helping managers/leadership with complex issues  
Convening with relevant stakeholders to examine an issue

Meeting confidentially with individuals/groups for them to prepare a report/presentation  
Facilitating meetings for/with leaders  
Serving as a non-voting resource person for policy committees and work groups  
Recommending review/changes to policies, procedures, and structures  
Providing trainings, talking circles, specialty skills  
Working to support specific, mission-related, organizational initiatives  
Following up over time on informal system change recommendations  
Helping informally to support other resources in the conflict management system  
Providing occasional service, if appropriate, as informal check and balance/fail-safe/backup for management  
Supporting efforts to assess organizational culture/climate  
Keeping non-identifying notes and statistics

**Note:** This article draft is part of a [Resource Repository](#) designed to support identifying—and helping to quantify—the value of an Organizational Ombuds (OO). This Resource Repository is a **work in progress**. It is open to improvements, additions, deletions, critique, revision and random commentary. If any page in the repository is helpful, or needs revision, please let us know. Please contact [Mary Rowe](#) or other co-authors, if you can help to improve these pages or have another page to offer.