

Vocabulary

Apology

A regretful acknowledgment of an offense or failure.

Excuse

An attempt to lessen the blame attaching to (a fault or offense); seek to defend or justify.

Forgive

To stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense, flaw, or mistake.

Offense

An annoyance or resentment brought about by a perceived insult to or disregard for oneself or one's standards or principles.

Refrain

To stop oneself from doing something.

Regret

To feel sad, repentant, or disappointed over something that has happened or been done.

Responsibility

The state or fact of being accountable or to blame for something.

Restitution

The restoration of something to its original state.

Solution

A means of solving a problem or dealing with a difficult situation.

Sorry

Feeling distress, especially through sympathy with someone else's misfortune.



Traverse Area
Community of Kinksters

How Do I Apologize?

Information obtained at:
taylorcounselinggroup.com/blog/five-elements-of-an-apology/ and
bellrock.ca/learn/im-sorry-the-dos-and-donts-of-a-good-apology/

Apology Steps

Many times we feel that we have fully apologized to another person about how we have offended or wronged them. But the offended person may want to hear more than just the two words "I'm sorry."

They may have heard that apology several times from the same person and been betrayed or disappointed again by the same actions or words. So the simple "I'm sorry" can seem empty and meaningless.

Use these five elements of a sincere apology and then put these elements into action to win a person's trust back.

1 - Expressing Regret

"I am sorry for....."

Say what you're sorry for specifically. Saying the words describing the offense you are apologizing for shows the listener that you have heard and understood what you did that was hurtful to him or her.

2 - Accepting Responsibility

"I was wrong to"

Explain what offensive or hurtful action or speech you are accepting as your bad. This lets the listener know that you are not only asking for forgiveness with an apology, but you are naming what you did and that you admit it was offensive to her or him.

This admission says that I am truly sorry for what I did or said not simply because I was called out on it.

Apology Steps (cont.)

3 - Making Restitution

"What can I do to help you start trusting me again?"

This tells the listener that you are not only willing to admit that you committed an offense but that you want to try to right the situation in some way and prove to them that you want their trust back.

This also allows the one offended to have a say in what would make your relationship right again.

4 - Genuinely Promising Change

"I am committed to doing everything I can to never do this again."

Tell the listener that you not only want to say you're sorry for the offense, but you want to make sure that the offense never happens again.

Tell them what you will do to stop yourself from committing the same offense.

5 - Requesting Forgiveness

"Will you please forgive me?"

At this point asking for forgiveness from the one you offended or hurt marks the apology as genuine.

Because you are sorry for what you did, admitted what you did, offered to make good on the hurt relationship and trust, and promised change in your behavior in the future, the listener is more likely to genuinely forgive you because of your genuine apology.

Do's and Do Not's

DO Make sure to be as specific as possible.

DO Express regret and admit wrongdoing.

DO Try to offer a solution to fix the mistake.

DO NOT Make excuses.

- Don't say things like "I really didn't mean it when I said..." or "I did x because Sally did y...". It lessens the effectiveness of the apology by making you sound insincere.

DO NOT Shift Blame.

- Avoid saying things like "I'm sorry you were offended" or "I'm sorry the group felt like I was out of line". Doing this shifts the blame onto others and can really backfire as most people pick up on this type of weak apology.

DO NOT Cast doubt on others' experience of the situation or questioning what transpired.

- For instance, don't say, "I'm sorry if that's what really happened yesterday." If the apology goes well, then the two parties can discuss how things went down, but not before.

DO NOT Use past behavior to justify current behavior.

- Sometimes you'll hear someone say, "I'm sorry, but it was okay when I was growing up." That might be the case. It might even be valuable to discuss it after the apology.
- However, during the apology, refrain from talking about how things used to be or others may question whether you really get it.

DO NOT Say "I'm Sorry, But..."

- When you add the word "but" you are invalidating everything you said before it.
- This is also called the Not-Pology.