

# 4 Steps to an Effective Apology



Too often our apologies are a feeble attempt at reparation.

Studies have identified 4 steps to an effective apology. Skip any one of them, and you fail to build back trust and repair the damage of wrongdoing.

*Think of a wrongdoing for which you want to make amends:*

## **Step 1: Acknowledge the Offense**

Instead of a mechanical “sorry” – or worse yet “sorry if you were hurt”, acknowledge that you did something wrong which resulted in offending or hurting the other person.

*What will you say?*

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## **Step 2: Explain your Actions**

Here's your chance to explain your behavior, NOT justify your actions. Be sincere, show them that you did not mean harm, and convince them that the incident is unlikely to ever happen again.

*What will you say?*

## **Step 3: Express Remorse and Shame**

This is where you put yourself in the shoes of the other and show that you empathize with the pain, hurt or emotional upset that you've caused them. Again, be genuine.

*What will you say?*

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## Step 4: Offer Reparation

As humans, we're wired for reciprocity. When you offer something to make up for the offense, you make it easier for the other person to forgive you.

*What will you offer?*

**Effective apologies help build back trust in relationships and release both parties of the burden of negativity, vengeance and regret.**