

Introduction

The research is published in the May 2016 issue of the journal *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*. Lewicki's co-authors were Robert Lount, associate professor of management and human resources at Ohio State, and Beth Polin of Eastern Kentucky University.

There are six components to an apology – and the more of them you include when you say you're sorry, the more effective your apology will be, according to new research.

But if you're pressed for time or space, there are two elements that are the most critical to having your apology accepted.

Source: <https://news.osu.edu/the-6-elements-of-an-effective-apology-according-to-science/>

Element of a Meaningful Apology

Element	Importance
1. Expression of regret	Medium
2. Explanation of what went wrong	Medium
3. Acknowledge responsibility	Critical
4. Declaration of repentance	Medium
5. Offer of repair	Critical
6. Request for forgiveness	Optional

Critical Elements (3 & 5)

While the best apologies contained all six elements, not all of these components are equal, the study found.

"Our findings showed that the **most important component is an acknowledgment of responsibility**. Say it is your fault, that you made a mistake," Lewicki said.

The second most important element was an offer of repair

"One concern about apologies is that talk is cheap. But by saying, 'I'll fix what is wrong,' you're committing to take action to undo the damage," he said.

How to Deliver an Apology



Second & Third Effective Levels

The next three elements were essentially tied for **third in effectiveness: expression of regret, explanation of what went wrong and declaration of repentance**.

The least effective element of an apology is a request for forgiveness. "That's the one you can leave out if you have to"

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