

# *IN SIGHT* for Oregon Lawyers and Judges

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

## THE RIGHT WAY TO SAY “I’M SORRY”

Want to apologize and really mean it? According to research, effectively saying “I’m sorry” includes six components:

1. Express regret.
2. Explain what went wrong, but don’t make it an excuse.
3. Take responsibility.
4. Declare that you won’t do it again.
5. Offer to fix the problem.
6. Ask for forgiveness.

The research found that although the best apologies contain all six elements, not all components are equal. The most important element of an apology is to take responsibility – to admit your mistake. The second most important element is to fix what is wrong.

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