

How to Apologize and Explain?

Worksheet

An effective apology uses phrases like 'I'm sorry' or 'I apologize', acknowledges the impact, explains without excusing, and commits to change.

Questions

1. Which opening is best for an apology?
 - A) You overreacted
 - B) I apologize for my mistake
 - C) It's not that bad
 - D) You should have known
2. Which phrase weakens an apology?
 - A) I take full responsibility
 - B) I'm sorry, and I understand
 - C) I'm sorry, but you also...
 - D) I will do better
3. What should you avoid in an apology?
 - A) Specific details
 - B) Admitting responsibility
 - C) Offering solutions
 - D) Making excuses that negate the apology
4. How should you end an apology?
 - A) Say 'I'm sorry' again
 - B) Describe how they failed
 - C) Commit to concrete change
 - D) Ask them to forgive immediately
5. Write an apology email for missing a deadline.
6. Create an apology for forgetting a friend's birthday.
7. Apologize to a customer for poor service.
8. Define: What does a genuine apology include?
9. Define: Is 'but' a good word in an apology?
10. Define: What's the difference between reason and excuse?

Answer Key

1. B) I apologize for my mistake — Starting with 'I apologize' takes responsibility immediately and sets a sincere tone.
2. C) I'm sorry, but you also... — 'But' shifts blame. Acknowledge the full apology first, then explain separately.
3. D) Making excuses that negate the apology — Excuses that deny or minimize your fault weaken the apology's sincerity.
4. C) Commit to concrete change — End with a clear commitment: 'I will...' or 'Next time I will...' to show genuine intent.
5. I apologize for missing the project deadline on Friday. I understand that this delay affected the team's schedule and caused inconvenience. The reason was an unexpected family emergency that required my immediate attention. However, I should have communicated this earlier. Moving forward, I will provide progress updates in advance and plan better to meet deadlines.
6. I'm really sorry for forgetting your birthday yesterday. I feel terrible about it. I realize how important birthdays are and that my thoughtlessness hurt your feelings. I was caught up with work stress, but that doesn't excuse missing such a special day for you. I promise to mark important dates in my calendar and show up better for you in the future. Can we celebrate this weekend?
7. I sincerely apologize for the poor service you experienced at our store. I understand your frustration, and you had every right to expect better treatment from us. Our staff was overwhelmed that day, but this doesn't justify the lack of attention you received. I am personally ensuring that additional training is provided to our team. We value your business and hope to serve you better next time.
8. Acknowledgment, an apology, recognition of impact, explanation (not excuse), and commitment to change.
9. No—'but' often negates the apology. Use 'and' or 'however' to explain without excusing.
10. A reason explains; an excuse minimizes responsibility. In apologies, offer reason, not excuse.

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