

## **The big takeaway: Apologies are never about the apologizer... unless the other party asks.**

### *Apology goals:*

- Make it in person whenever possible.
- Make it at the right time for the recipient. In some cases, it is best to let the other person know of the issue first and explain that you will get back to the person with more information soon.

### *Includes as many as possible of the following, in the following order:*

- An acknowledgment of common expectations
- An acknowledgment of your failure to meet expectations
- An expression of ownership for the failure
- An assessment of impact on the other person (including how you believe it may have felt for the recipient)
- A desire to hear about the recipient's feelings, if the recipient is willing
- An unflinching judgment of yourself regarding the subject of the apology, although you must take care not to sound like a martyr
- A statement of regret
- An expression of apology
- An indication of future intent to avoid the failure
- A discussion of how you will prevent the failure, if the recipient is willing
- A request for forgiveness

### *What a good apology does NOT include:*

- The word "but..."
- An explanation of how the failure happened unless it is needed to explain how you will prevent future failures or the other person asks. This may seem counterintuitive and hard to do, but restraint is vital
- A comparison to other failures by ANYONE, including yourself unless requested
- A defense or justification unless requested