

Apologising Well

Communications & Media

The difference between an apology and regret that people were upset.

A real apology

- Names what was done
- Accepts responsibility without hedging
- Says who was harmed and how
- States the remedy and the date
- Comes from someone accountable

A non-apology

- Regret that people felt offended
- Passive voice: mistakes were made
- Blames a process or a contractor
- Pivots to the good work elsewhere
- Signed by nobody in particular

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

If a reader cannot say what you are apologising for after reading it, you have not apologised.

Educational reference. Some jurisdictions limit the use of apologies as evidence of liability; others do not. Take local advice.