

AHLA

A. Critical Conversations: Strategies for Asks and Apologies

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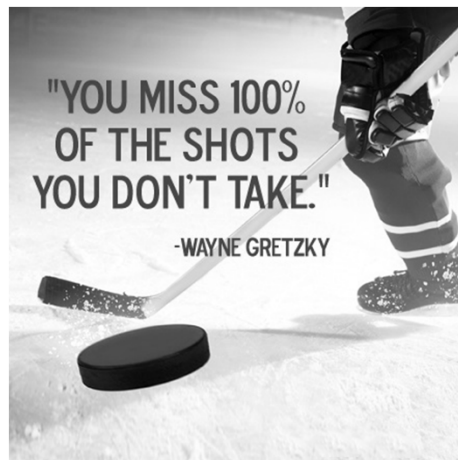
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2

Agenda

- Determine What You Want
 - Develop Specific, Tangible Objectives
 - Prepare For Your Ask - Understand the Circumstances
 - “No” Just Means No
- * * *
- Why Apologies Matter
 - How to Apologize Appropriately in the Business Setting
 - Identify Common Mistakes to Avoid
 - Realize How Apologies Can Strengthen a Leader

The Worst They Can Say is "No"



What is it that you want?

- Imagine your ideal situation
- Think about as many details as you can
- Prioritize

*If you don't know where you are going,
you'll end up someplace else. – Yogi Berra*

Develop Specific, Tangible Objectives

- Create “action items” based on priorities
- Map out time frames
- Allow for flexibility



Strategies for the “Ask”

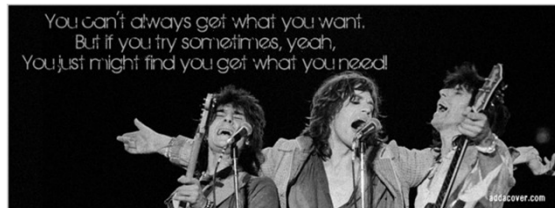
Who, What, Where, When, Why

- Who are the decision makers?
- What are you going to ask?
- Where will you make the ask?
- When should you ask?
- Why should they say yes?

Everything is negotiable. Whether or not the negotiation is easy is another thing. - Carrie Fisher

You Can't Always Get What You Want

- No ≠ Failure!
- Yes to the person, no to the task?
- What does it mean?
 - Related to where you want to go?
 - In the context of your priorities?
 - Are there alternatives?



Questions?

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Critical Conversations: Strategies for Asks and **Apologies**

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Consider your Professional Setting

- Write down the worst thing that you could do.
 - Is it to miss a filing deadline?
 - Lose a case?
 - Berate support staff?
 - Lose your temper with your managing partner?

Consider your Professional Setting

- The worst has happened. You did it.
- Given what you wrote down, to whom would you owe an apology?
- Write down the person's position, for example, co-worker, opposing counsel, client.

11

Consider your Professional Setting

- On a scale of 1 to 10 rate how comfortable you are making an apology.
- A 10 means it causes you no concern at and a 1 means you would be very anxious.

12

Now What?

Jazz great Miles Davis
said,



When you hit a
wrong note, it's the
next note that
makes it good or
bad.

13

apologies
are
powerful

DanielaLaPorta.com | TruthBomb

14

Apologies Matter

- An Apology Can Keep a Bad Situation from Getting Worse
- An Apology Can Repair a Relationship that Has Been Bruised

15

Apologies Matter

- You demonstrate authenticity.
- You exercise your social intelligence.
- You gain credibility for making an effort.
- Your honesty sets a tone for the workplace.

16

How Do I Apologize?

- What is worse than no apology at all?

- **HALF AN APOLOGY!**

17

Half an Apology is Worse than None

- A study by J.K. Robbennolt (University of IL) showed:
 - “Good” apologies were more likely to lead to settlement – 73%
 - 52% were willing to settle with no apology at all.
 - **Only 35% were willing to settle with a partial apology.**

18

Simple Apology

- There is No Such Thing as a SIMPLE APOLOGY.
- Acknowledging a wrong, seeking forgiveness and making things right is very complicated

19

Good Apologies

- Acknowledge the mistake or wrongdoing.
- Accept responsibility.
- Express regret.
- Promise that the offense will not be repeated.
- Are Timely and Genuine.

20

Good Apologies

- Step 1: Express Remorse.

“I am sorry that I blew up at you in the meeting. I am embarrassed by what I did.”

21

Good Apologies

- Step 2: Admit Responsibility.

“I am sorry that I blew up at you in the meeting. I am embarrassed by what I did. I am sure that I embarrassed you since it was in a meeting with others. I was wrong to treat you like that.”

22

Good Apologies

- Step 3: Make Amends.

“I am sorry that I blew up at you in the meeting. I am embarrassed by what I did. I am sure that I embarrassed you and I was wrong to treat you like that. I will let the others know that I was wrong, and that your quality of work is not in question.”

23

Good Apologies

- Step 4: Promise it won't happen again.
- Step 5: Don't Do It Again.
- Step 6: Don't Do It Again.

24

Be Careful!

- You will probably want to explain your actions.
- Don't let an explanation turn into an excuse for what you did.
- Don't shift blame somewhere else.

25

Be Careful!

- Do not expect instant forgiveness.
- Depending on what you did, it could take time and continued demonstration that you meant you wouldn't do it again.

26

Be Careful!

- Do not wait too long to apologize.
- The longer the issue festers, the greater the adverse impact.

27

Be Careful!

- Do not bring it up repeatedly.
- Follow the lead of the wronged party.

28

Language

- I apologize v. I'm sorry
- "I'm sorry, but..."
- "I'm sorry that you feel that way."
- "I'm sorry this happened."

29

Examples

- Hilary Clinton – "I take responsibility, but I was not making security decisions."
- Justin Timberlake – "What occurred was unintentional and completely regrettable, and I apologize if you guys were offended."

30

Examples

- Nixon spokesperson Ron Ziegler
“Mistakes were made.”

31

Good Apology

- David Letterman
- He “hurt his wife deeply”
- Had his work cut out to make it up to her
- Demeanor

32

Good Apology

- Gary Oldman
- “I am deeply remorseful that comments I recently made in the Playboy interview were offensive to many Jewish people...I see how insensitive they may be and how they may indeed contribute to the furtherance of a false stereotype.”

33

Leadership

- Apologies can be character-building.
- You will do something in your career that merits an apology.
- A leader is self-aware.
- A leader models the desired behavior.
- A leader “tells” others how to treat him/her by his/her own behavior.

34

Conclusion

- The ability to apologize appropriately is a skill that you will use throughout your career.
- Helping clients through an appropriate apology can be the difference between settling and not settling, and can determine the amount of the settlement.

35

Re-visit the Worst

- Look at your index card.
- Do you feel more capable should the “worst” happen? Rate yourself again on a scale of 1-10.
- My hope is that your number has increased with the information and approaches I discussed today.

36