

Business Basic

Lesson 02: Apologizing

Practice 1 | Formal and Informal Expressions

Directions: Listen and repeat.

There are certain phrases used in business conversations.

Check them with your teacher.

Formal	Informal
We are very sorry to hear that...	Oh, I'm sorry.
Let us know if we can do anything for you.	Do you need help?
Thank you for letting us serve you.	Thanks for choosing our services.
We are sorry for the inconvenience.	Sorry, it will never happen again.
Should you have any questions please call this number...	Call us if you have a question.

Practice 2 | Reading Sentences

Directions: Read the sentences aloud with your teacher.

Here is an example of a business apology letter. Read it with your teacher.

An apology letter for a defective magazine

Dear valued customer,

We are very sorry to hear that the magazine you received last month lacked a few pages. It is the first time we have made such an error. We pride ourselves on producing error-free copies and we are terribly sorry for the inconvenience.

We have packed another copy of the magazine and sent it by post after receiving your complaint. If you do not receive it within three days from getting this letter, feel free to call us at 575 - 757.

Thank you for letting us serve you.

Yours faithfully,

Financial Times

Practice: Answer the questions about the letter.

1. What is the Financial Times apologizing for?
2. What did they say in an attempt to regain the trust of the customer?
3. What kind of compensation did they offer for making the mistake?
4. What is the structure of this apology letter?

Practice 3 | Studying the Manual

Directions: Study the manual with your teacher.

To make a good business apology you need to know what to include in it. Study these points with your teacher.

A good business apology should have:

- Correct timing. It is best to apologize as fast as you can, but no need to be impulsive. You need to prepare what to say.
- Wisely chosen means of communication. There are many ways to apologize: you can apologize in person, over the phone or write an apology letter. Having eye contact is a good thing since apologies are personal; however, if a person was deeply hurt, a letter might be a better way.
- Explanation without excuses. After apologizing you can shortly explain why this happened, but be careful not to start making excuses. This would be impolite.
- “The customer is always right” principle. Whenever you need to apologize to the customer or business partner, you need to think about this principle. Most of the time it is better to accept all the blame.
- A quick explanation of what you will do not to let this happen again.

Practice: Answer these questions related to the points studied in the manual.

1. Is it easier for you to apologize in person or via other means of communication?
2. Do you tend to give many excuses to explain your actions or the situation?
3. There is a saying that goes “The more excuses you give, the guiltier you seem”. Do you think it’s true? Why or why not?
4. If a customer or a business partner said that he has lost his trust in your company, what would you do or say?

Practice 4 | Situation Questions

Directions: Answer these situation questions.

1. Your company sent the customer goods that he purchased but he never got them. What do you do?
2. You were supposed to have a meeting with your business partner but you lost track of time and came one hour late – the partner wasn't there anymore. What do you do?