

# Apologies

It's hard to say "I'm sorry". But in business, an apology is often necessary. Whether it's you or someone in your company who made the mistake, let the customer know that you are sorry, and then you do the best you can to help.

- ❖ Oh, yes, you're right. That charge really shouldn't have been on your bill. **I'm sorry. I'll have it taken off straight away.**
- ❖ **I'm dreadfully sorry** you've been kept waiting so long. I hope you have not been inconvenienced too much. Can I offer you something to drink?
- ❖ You're understandably upset. It's very unpleasant to be passed on from one person to the other, and **I do apologize.** I'll see who can help you with your enquiry, and then call you back immediately.
- ❖ **I'm sorry. I don't know how that could have happened.** I will look into it straight away.
- ❖ **Please excuse us for this oversight.** We'll make sure we put your name back on our subscriber list right away.
- ❖ **I'm so sorry about forgetting** your order. Can I offer you a dessert at no charge?
- ❖ **I'm so sorry you had to wait so long** for your order. Can I offer you a drink on the house?

## TIP

Customers don't really care who made the mistake; they just want it fixed. An apology from you (as a representative of your company) will not be interpreted as an admission that it was your fault. Blaming someone else for what has gone wrong will not earn you any respect.

## Apologies to a group of people

When you have to apologize for your firm to a group of people – such as passengers who have been kept waiting – it is customary use "we" rather than "I", or use the name of your company:

- ❖ We would like to apologize for the long delay in boarding this (aero)plane. We are sorry about any inconvenience caused.
- ❖ (Airline X) again wishes to apologize for the flight delay, and we do hope you'll fly with us again soon.

## TIP

If something has gone seriously wrong, it is often advisable to write a letter of apology. This will leave a better impression, especially if the letter contains an offer, such as an upgrade, a free item, or a voucher for services.