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Tactic #26 - Forgive me,
for I Have Sinned

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Tactic #26 - Forgive Me, for I Have Sinned

Summary: Apologizing for making a mistake or failing to meet all agreements.

The ability to say, "I am sorry," or, "I made a mistake," is a strength, not a weakness. When you are humble, your counterpart finds it easier to like you and work with you to create a win-win outcome.

Example

A printing sales representative receives a large order from a client. The client's order is supposed to be completed by a specific date, but something happens at the printing plant and the delivery is late. The client is disappointed and is not planning to use the same printing company in the future. But the sales representative makes a special trip to the client's company to personally apologize for the tardiness of the delivery. The sales representative's obviously sincere apology convinces the client to continue to utilize the printing company's services.

Counter

In this situation, the damage has been done. It would be appropriate for the client to accept the sales representative's apology and then put a [Safeguard](#) in place to guide the future relationship. For example, "If you are ever late on one of my jobs again, I will not accept delivery." Safeguards are negotiated so that remedies are in place in case the problem ever recurs in the relationship. The client could also negotiate an add-on, or something extra, for the inconvenience.

Do you have any negotiation questions? If so, then send them to us by hitting the "reply" button. We'll do our best to address them in upcoming issues.

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This tactic is one of 101 strategies and tactics featured in [The Only Negotiating Guide You'll Ever Need](#), by Peter Stark and Jane Flaherty.

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