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## **New Course Helps Organizations Understand Public Apologies**

After piloting a new course across three EPA regions and with multiple private and public organizations, CBI Managing Director Patrick Field has something to say about public apologies.

“How an organization thinks about mistakes and regret has real—and often costly—consequences,” explains Field. “Examples abound—ranging from medial malpractice to abuse in parochial schools to failed space shuttle launches. How we apologize, and to whom, matters more than we realize.”

CBI has helped several large agencies and groups evaluate the impact of their current practices and look to possibilities for improvement.

Why consider public apologies? An apology can help resolve or prevent a dispute, and aid in managing ongoing relationships. Better understanding of the role of apology can help organizations that encounter, desire, or intend to issue one, and elements of an apology can be important tools, even without a “full” apology.

While ostensibly a simple concept, apologizing effectively has proven to be difficult for even the most sophisticated organizations. Mediator and co-trainer Lucy Moore attributes the difficulty to factors including the fear of litigation, the fear of looking incompetent, the complexity of cultural barriers, and concerns with vulnerability.

Training participants examine public apologies through case studies, lectures, media presentations, discussion groups, and role-play activities. In addition to exploring the components of apologies and associated theory, participants also dealt with specific applications, including in toxic waste cleanup.

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For more information, or to bring this course to your organization, contact [Patrick Field](#).