Apologies

Now that’s the way to apologize! I have groused before about the wimpy apologies of various politicians and celebrities who are caught on camera making racist or sexist comments and then proceed to issue “apologies” by stating that they “apologize for anyone that they may have offended.” Such statements hint at victim blaming by putting the emphasis on those who may be offended, as opposed to the person who made the statement taking real responsibility for their actions.

In contrast, Levi Pettit, one of the leaders of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity in Oklahoma, who was caught on camera chanting racists slurs, showed the country this week how to issue a real apology. 

Levi, flanked by leaders in the African American community, labeled the chant “mean, hateful and racist”, asked for forgiveness and expressed that he was “deeply sorry.” He refused to blame anyone else or use the dreaded “anyone I’ve offended” language. He met with members of the black community before his press conference as well as African American leaders at the university to express his apologies in private and asked for forgiveness.

I don’t know a thing about him other than what I have seen in the media. However, someone who is willing to apologize, and learn and grow at that young age, will find a way to recover from this mistake and to succeed in life.

There is a Solution

If you need to apologize for some workplace offense where you have made a mistake, follow his courageous model. If you mess up: apologize. If you really mess up: grovel. And, if you’re on the other side: forgive. It is easy to make diversity and inclusion mistakes these days. In most situations, we need to cut each other some slack.
For additional information on this and many other workplace related topics go to

**Workplaces That Work website**

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