

How Should Corporations Apologise? A new Polis research report

blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2015/02/06/a-way-with-words-chasing-a-definition-for-corporate-public-apologies/

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In 2014, Polis and [StockWell Communications](#) launched a research prize open to LSE post-graduate students. Applicants were asked to submit original research proposals on the topic of 'Corporate Reputation, Media and Society'.

The winner was [Nina Chung](#) who worked with StockWell and interviewed a broad range of people on the topic of corporate apologies to produce the research paper '[A Way With Words: Chasing a Definition for Corporate Public Apologies.](#)'



A Way With Words

Chasing A Definition For
Corporate Public Apologies

A StockWell Communications Report by Nina M Chung
February 2015

Some of the conclusions are:

- An apology is just the start, what stakeholders want is to see what changes. Apologies are useful only in as much as they clarify what comes next;
- It is perceived that apologies go to the heart of whether companies are ethical or not. After the financial crisis, companies are held to a higher standard generally and particularly when it comes to asking for forgiveness;
- The public at large can have a wide variety of views on what is wrong or right, moral and ethical. It is therefore not straightforward for a company to decide whether an apology is warranted.
- Companies that do apologise well, are perceived as leaders so they get the double benefit of engendering good will from apologising, but also being seen to lead.

Nina is currently in New York City, assisting the communications of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

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