



**Elliot Shermet**  
Property Manager  
Harbour Concepts Inc.

# The Importance of Admitting Mistakes

As a relatively new condominium manager, I have been reading and anticipating the day I would write a piece for *CM Magazine*. Up until this point, I felt like a fraud even considering it. Then the request came for 'Managers Making Mistakes' and I decided this is it, this is my calling!

Mistakes are inevitable. While the crushing weight of personal errors can sink someone, it is the acknowledgement of such mistakes that buoys a drowning manager to redemption. There is a primal fear of inadequacy and ineffectiveness which runs rampant in our society. However, the first step to overcoming this fear is accepting responsibility for the actions

taken, mistakes made, and lessons learned. I have made mistakes, I will make more mistakes, and I will strive to learn from my mistakes. There are specific phrases and beliefs that will serve managers well to adopt in their career – this article intends to explain what they are and why they work.

### **Taking Responsibility**

*"I take responsibility for the error; it is my mistake."* Practice saying it. Understand the importance of the language. You are responsible for your actions, those people you supervise, and any issues arising from your decisions. If it is your mistake – you are human (presumably) – see the flaw in what occurred. Observe the omission.

Saying 'sorry' does not help anyone or save money. While you may be remorseful, it is not a valuable component of the discussion when deliberating how to address the issues.

Most board members are not accustomed to basic and honest admission. Managers strive to be right all the time to the extent that it is surprising and refreshing to hear one admit to an error. In fact, an incredible benefit to admitting mistakes is that other people remember that you are human. Most people have the capacity for compassion. Board members want you to do well for the corporation and see you succeed. Furthermore, others are more likely to sincerely trust you because



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you have proven you are not shying away from fault. You demonstrate integrity, and it pays dividends.

Use this language with directors; “I don’t know the answer, but I will find out immediately and get back to you.” Admit this to show you are human and honest. Prove that you can research and find

you manage but that you cannot possibly know everything.

### No Buts About It

Don’t cheapen the experience with an excuse or deflection. Blaming circumstances, other companies, contractors, co-workers or anyone else for a mistake

human under considerable pressure – self-care can be honesty and improvement. There is an incredible amount of responsibility, knowledge, resources and relationships that we must balance and constantly refresh. The expectations of managers are high, and it is petrifying to admit mistakes or lack of foresight and knowledge, yet we must acknowledge our flaws and areas of weakness. Once you have identified an error, invest the time in developing a fail-safe to prevent it from happening again.

Repeating the same mistake becomes negligence, but a mistake doesn’t stay a mistake when you learn from it. ■

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answers to tough questions that you did not already know. Follow up to demonstrate that you are as good as your word. This will give your career mileage and add depth to your value.

I suppose we can boil this lesson down to honesty: the healthiest, farm-to-table, nutrient-dense value a person can have. Be honest with boards, colleagues and supervisors. Demonstrate that you are striving for the betterment of everything

does not instill faith with those in charge. There is no redemption in deflection. A board may accept deflection for a certain amount of time, but soon enough, there will be no faith or trust left whatsoever.

The worst part about not owning an error is that you are ultimately lying to yourself. Self-deceit will not serve anyone well in the long-run. Self-delusion will fetter your professional progress. You are a busy, stressed

**Elliot Shermet** is a limited licensee property manager at Harbour Concepts Inc. Although relatively new to condo management, Elliot brings 16 years of experience in logistics, management and customer service in fast-paced, deadline-driven environments. He is currently enrolled in the ACMO courses required to acquire his General License as well as to become an RCM. [harbourconcepts.com](http://harbourconcepts.com)



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