

# Owning up to your mistakes

**YOU'RE** the first person in my whole career that's ever told me that. An insurance assessor checking damage to my vehicle said this to me some years ago.

What did I say that was so radically new?

"It's my fault entirely, just bad driving."

His face was a picture.

"My car was the only moving object," I added, "the wall I scraped against was immobile and inanimate."

"It would be a bit hard to blame anything but my driving."

"They always find a way," he said to me, still shaking his head



## MABURY'S VIEW

and smiling.

I have never forgotten that conversation. The embarrassment of owning up to a costly error of judgment, and the amazement on his face helped fix it in my mind.

But I remember it mostly when I fail to do exactly the same thing in far more important contexts.

So often I want to end up being the victim, not the bad guy.

I want to be Little Red Riding Hood, not the Big Bad Wolf.

I want to blame it on anything or anyone I can find: "My mother didn't breastfeed me so it's her fault."

You know the sort of thing.

My background and my environment obviously have a huge effect on who I have become.

But more often than I care to admit, the bottom line is that I stuffed up.

Moreover I don't even begin on the road to resolving the issue until I can admit this, to

myself and to others.

What three words are the most important words you can utter? *I love you* certainly is right up there.

Here's a few more that I have learned in the school of life experience.

*I am sorry.*

*I was wrong.*

*Please forgive me.*

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