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*Partnering with healthcare leaders
to forge quality & safety outcomes.*

Authentic Apologies: Regaining Your Customer's Trust

Albuquerque Quality Network

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Stories about telling the truth and apology

A Premise

- Business relationships =
A Promise
- Fulfilling the Promise =
Builds Trust
- Violating the Promise =
Violates Trust

A Premise

- If Violate Trust = Be Accountable
- Rebuilding Trust = Begins with Apology

When Things Go Wrong

- Oil spills
 - Financial disasters
 - Katrina
 - Auto recalls

 - Controllable and Not
 - Your reactions to comments
-

Dilemmas

- Accountability concerns
- Interest in blame
- Interest in scapegoating
- “Our lawyers won’t let us”
- Not learning
- Repeating failures

Stages of Decline

- Hubris Born of Success
- Undisciplined Pursuit of More
- Denial of Risk & Peril
- Grasping for Salvation
- Capitulation to Irrelevance or Death

» [How the Mighty Fall](#) J. Collins 2009

An Option

- Keep our promises
- Tell the truth
- Apologize when we do not keep our promises
- Improve our work so we can keep our promises



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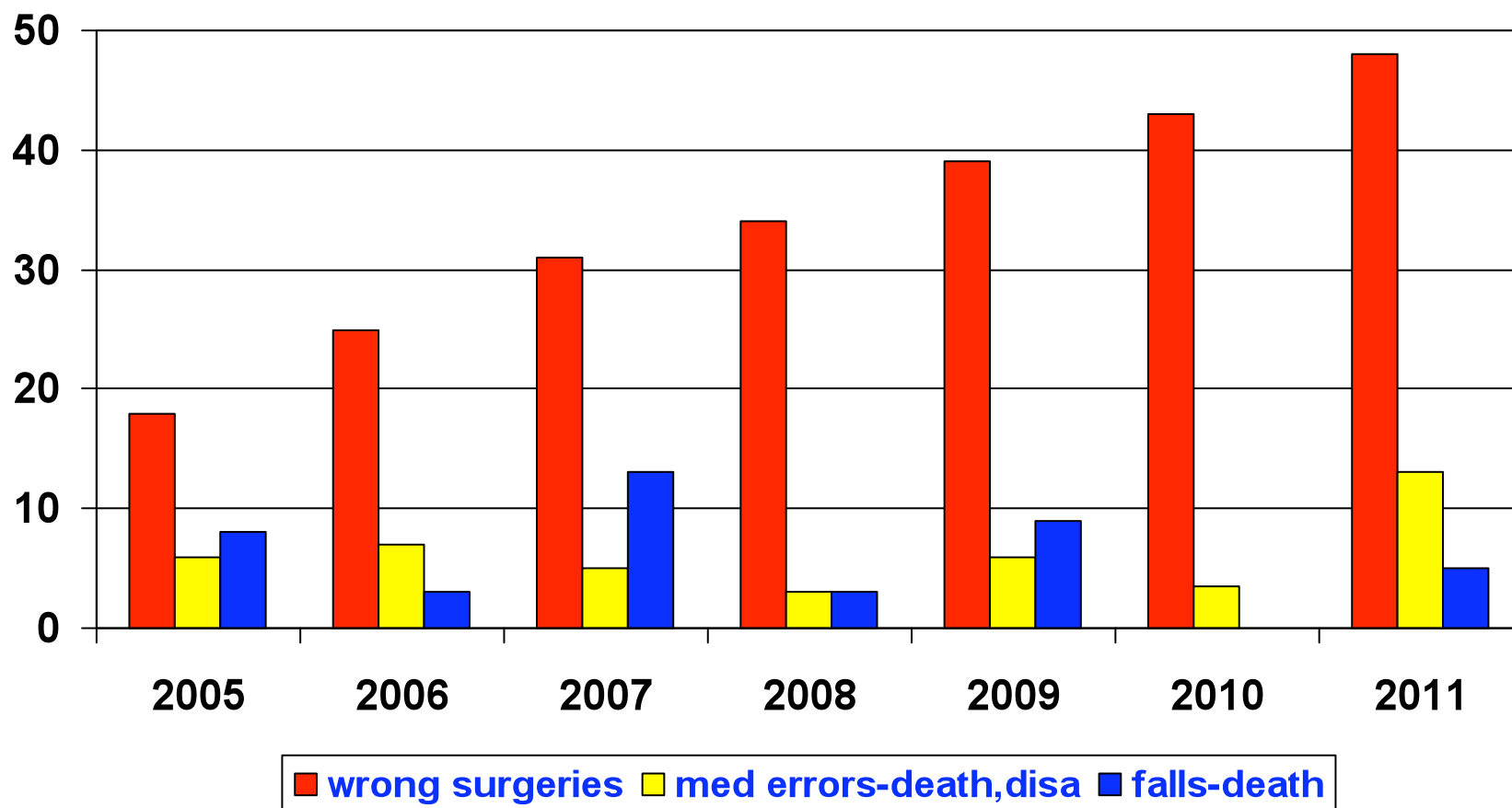
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Apologize **and** Improve



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Struggling to Reduce Mistakes in Hospitals



Source: MN Department of Health

Authentic Apologies

What people want

- Genuine apology
- Genuine remorse
- Appropriate reparations
 - Making changes in the future
- Requires
 - honesty, humility, courage, commitment

» On Apology A. Lazare 2004

How to Apologize

- Accountability
 - Do not shift the blame
- Details of problem behaviors
 - Do not gloss over or minimize
- Recognize impact on them
 - Do not question the impact
- Confirm it was a violation of the promise

» On Apology A. Lazare 2004

Bad Apologies

- “I apologize for whatever I did”
- “Mistakes may have been made”
- “If mistakes may have been made . . .” or “If anyone was hurt . . .”
- “We offer the best {fill in}”
- “I am sorry you had that perception”
- “I was preoccupied . . .”
- “The Script”
 - » On Apology A. Lazare 2004

Stories of Apology

- Big is in the eyes of the viewer
 - Funds not transferred & I lack access to money for 24 hours
 - Third trip to get something on my car fixed
- Reasonable is in the eyes of the viewer

Concerns

- “We’ll get sued”
- “We didn’t do anything wrong”
- “Customers are unreasonable”



Finally

- Practice
- Help your employees do this well