

Welton's Wisdom

QUICK TIPS FROM DEATHCARE MARKETING
GURU WELTON HONG



It's OK to Respond Firmly to a Bad Review

One of the things my firm does for clients is to help them generate more positive reviews and to monitor the reviews they receive on various platforms. That's not a plug, I promise: It's just some context to explain our approaches when a client gets a negative review and isn't sure how to respond.

Here's what might surprise you: When a funeral home client receives a one-star review, we don't always recommend posting an outright apology in response to the critical review. It actually depends on the particular circumstances and context!

Of course, if your firm genuinely erred in the services you provided, and the reviewer is fairly calling you out for that, there's only one thing to do. You sincerely apologize, ask whether there's anything you can do to make it up to the reviewer, and explain how you'll ensure something like this will never happen again.

On the other hand, let's say you did everything well—or at least quite satisfactorily. But you still got a one-star reviewer. Maybe they're blaming you for something entirely out of your control. Maybe the actual problem was something they were supposed to handle. Or maybe they're just upset with something other family members decided (as you know, this happens a lot) and are taking it out on you.

In these cases, it's actually OK to stand up for yourself. Obviously, you never want to be outright critical of a grieving family, but don't let that stop you from clearly explaining the circumstances (without revealing personal information, of course). When prospective clientele read your response, they should understand that the one-star review wasn't valid and that you stand behind the services you provide.

Again, you never want to start a "flame war" with the reviewer or get personal in your response. But you *can* craft a calm, professional reply that clarifies the situation and your dedication to thoughtful service.

Welton's Bio

*Welton Hong, founder of [Ring Ring Marketing](#)®, is a leading expert in helping funeral homes convert leads from online directly to the phone line. He's the author of the book *Making Your Phone Ring with Internet Marketing for Funeral Homes* and a regular contributor to *American Funeral Director* magazine and several other publications.*