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Never:

Give a command that you can't enforce.

- If you can't enforce it, your dog thinks he doesn't have to obey.

Become upset with your dog or yourself when training

- Training should always be done in a Calm, Clear mindset. Reprimanding your dog for failing an exercise is never beneficial. Corrections in training are never harsh except in very rare circumstances, not in routine training.

Blame your dog

- The blame rests on you. But do not focus on the blame. Just acknowledge it, determine who to fix the problem and move on.

Expect your dog to behave elsewhere as he does at home

- Dogs are situational and will always react, in part, based on their environment. This is why it's important to train your dog in various settings.

Be afraid of failure

- Failure is a Necessary and Beneficial part of training. Failure is our best opportunity to learn and move forward.

React to your dog in anger, or even frustration

- Blow it off. Nothing will be gained and much can be lost with negative emotions.

Settle for mediocre performance.

- There is Always room for improvement, and the best you get will often fade in time. So always aim higher than what you truly want with your dog.

Instructors hear one phrase from students more than any other. "He does this at home...he never does this at home." If I had a dollar for ever time I've heard it I'd be retired and on the beach in Italy today. To be fair, I said it when I was a student so I know the feeling. Don't think that you need to justify your dog's performance to your instructor. Believe me, I probably have a better idea than you of why your dog behaves the way he does and I don't assign blame because that is not productive. I'm here to help, not to judge.

There are four reasons that your dog doesn't follow a command:

1. He's sick
2. He's frightened
3. He's distracted
4. He chooses not to

The first two reasons do not get a correction, instead we address the problem.

The last two ALWAYS get a correction (if you want to be successful in training). With distraction, it is our responsibility as trainers to have our dog's attention when we give the command. It is also our responsibility to teach our dog that he does not have a choice when we give a command. The two choices your dog has are: Fail or Succeed. To teach that, we *always* correct when our dog fails to perform. To not correct is not being fair with your dog. We can't expect him to understand unless we make it clear what his options are.

You may at some point encounter "shut down", when your dog just stops responding. The question is always "why"? Very important because that determines what you do. You can try to "pump up" your dog by getting him excited, lifting his spirits or if he's overwhelmed you transition to something else, like taking him for a walk or letting him relax. Before the entire episode is concluded though it's important to give him something else, something easy to do for which he can be praised. Don't ever end training on a negative note.

RARELY:

Give a command Twice. IF your dog knows the command (Sit, Down, Stand, Heel, Come, etc.) the only reason to give it more than once is if he didn't hear you.

Now, with corrections being explained, we are all human and we will make mistakes. Don't fret about mistakes, just learn from them and move on.

UNDERSTAND:

Dogs can understand words, actions, voice tone and emotions. They can not understand language. You can talk with your dog as much as you want but all he truly

understands is your tone of voice and gestures, your emotional status, and the few commands he knows.

We LOVE our dogs. Our dogs don't love us. Now, wait a minute, just listen. Dogs have their own innate ways of communicating and viewing the world. Our dogs do have affection for us in that they have PACK Drive, and that determines how they interact. Foremost, dogs *need* a pack leader. They respect and are devoted to the pack leader. They may be friendly with some or all pack members and even others outside the pack, but most dogs are only bonded to other pack members. When we get what we perceive as love from our dogs, it is actually their respect and devotion to their leader. When your dog doesn't respect you, then you get behavior that you don't find pleasing and may even be obviously disrespectful.

Owners have the DUTY to be the pack leader. It is essential for training and for having a happy home with your dog. The saddest example of poor leadership is when dogs are surrendered to animal control or rescues because the owner wasn't able to assert the dominant role as leader.

ALWAYS

- Try to understand what your dog is thinking and feeling. This is "reading behavior" We study body language and watch the eyes as well as the tail, headset and posture.
- Anticipate your dogs behavior and be prepared.
- Put yourself in your dog's place.
- Treat your dog with the kindness and respect he deserves. Leaders are Fair and Consistent.
- Make training a positive, happy endeavor, not just a chore.
- Follow correction with positive reinforcement.
- Mark behavior, Praise behavior and Reward behavior. Correct behavior and then praise.
- Keep training sessions to the proper length and frequency. It's far better to train 20 minutes a day than an hour twice a week. Don't wear your dog down.
- Between exercises, take the pressure off your dog. Release, pet, play, etc.
- End training with a success and lots of praise, play and happiness.

WHEN

You're having trouble with an issue and after 10 minutes at the most, if you're not making process, switch to another exercise or activity. Come back to the trouble issue later