



VSA Online Dog Trainer Course – Module Descriptions

Orientation

In this module you'll learn how to get started as a student with VSA's Online Dog Trainer Course. From navigating the Student Learning Center and online lessons, to finding resources, discovering what's in the course, and meeting your VSA Faculty; explore what's in store and how to prepare for your learning journey.

Positively Philosophy

In this module you'll learn the power of positive training and about Victoria's Positively Philosophy. Understand what is positive training and how it differs from punishment based training. Explore the fallout of these aversive methods, the truth about dominance & pack theory, and various myths and misunderstandings. Applying the Positively Philosophy to your training will help you become the best trainer than you can be.

Canine History & Ethology

In this module you'll learn about the history of dogs and dog training. Before embarking on this training journey, it's important to remember where dogs came from and where training originated. Discover the similarities and differences between dogs and wolves. Should we domesticate them or raise them as our own? Explore the domestication of dogs, breed types, developmental periods, socialization, and more.

Canine Cognition

In this module you'll learn how a dog's mind interprets the world. Dive deep into the world of cognition and explore the latest research on canine cognitive abilities. Travel through each of the cognitive dimensions and discover your dog's abilities in the cognition games. Uncover the emotional lives of dogs and the importance of the human animal bond.

Canine Communication & Body Language

In this module you'll learn how to "speak dog" and observe canine body language. Understand how to consider the whole picture and how to put dog body language in context. Explore canine signals from play, appeasement, and displacement, to stress, fear, and early warning signals. Put your skills to the test with VSA's dynamic video commentary.

Canine Enrichment

In this module you'll learn the importance of meeting a dog's needs in order to change behavior. Explore the "ideal dog" and how to bridge the gap between owner and dog needs and wants. Learn about the different types of walks, enrichment tools, and how to create and implement an enrichment plan. Understand that enrichment is essential in creating lasting change and helping dog and owner live together harmoniously.

Learning Theory & Functional Assessments

In this module you'll learn what is learning and how do all organisms learn. Understand how you can influence dog behavior and uncover the fundamental tool of all trainers: the functional assessment. Explore the foundation of behavior and how you can determine the function of behavior using functional assessments.

Managing Behavior

In this module you'll learn how to prevent unwanted behaviors before they even occur. By implementing a management plan, you can help provide immediate solutions to any behavior problem. Explore the management options from different strategies to learning about the different tools of the trade.

Positive Training Tools & Methods

In this module you'll learn everything you need to know about getting a dog to perform a new, desirable behavior. Explore the three of the most powerful training methods: capturing, luring, and shaping, and how you can add them to your training toolkit. Learn about the different training tools and how you can strengthen your training and produce behaviors on cue that can be used anywhere and anytime.

Reinforcement & Training Applications

In this module you'll learn the power of positive reinforcement and how customizing the reinforcers to the dog can drive powerful behaviors. Understand how to apply this knowledge to your training and how you can use what you've learned about management and training into account to tackle any behavior problem.

Teaching Basic Behaviors

In this module you'll learn the 12 behaviors that VSA recommends for dogs and their people to master. With these behaviors, you can prevent, replace, and redirect almost every behavior problem in the book. Explore the definition of these behaviors, why we teach them, how you can teach them, and how you can apply them to any situation.

Solving Common Behavior Problems

In this module you'll learn how to identify different behavior problems, why they occur, how to provide immediate solutions using management, and how to provide long term solutions using a training plan. Help clients with problems such as : barking, chewing, digging, door dashing, pulling on leash, and many more.

Teaching Private Lessons

In this module you'll learn the ins and outs of taking private clients. Starting with that first phone call and the way through to booking another training package, let VSA take you on a journey including what to say in emails, what to teach in sessions, and how to arrive at the home. Leave no stone unturned with this information packed module.

Teaching Group Classes

In this module you'll learn how to be a group class guru. From class registration to unique offerings, learn how to diversify your classes and grow revenue. Start with what are group classes, why should you offer them, to where is the best place to host them. We will cover all this as well as what to actually teach in group classes, what to do if things do not go according to plan, and how to make classes fun for all.

Working with Humans

In this module you'll learn about the human side of training. How can we get clients to follow our plan? Learn how to keep clients engaged and how you can best teach these new skills to people. Discover what to do if things don't go according to plan: cancellations, referrals, safety/preparedness, and other challenging situations. Explore the world of human communication and behavior change with VSA's

clinical psychologist, where you will uncover the essential lessons of how to motivate people to make changes.

Canine Health & Science

In this module you'll learn about canine health from A to Z, vaccinations, nutrition, diets, fitness, spaying/ neutering, and you'll take a deep dive into the canine senses. Explore how dogs perceive the world and how to use their senses to take your training to the next level.

Dog Sports & Working Dogs

In this module you'll learn about the different types of jobs that dogs hold around the world. Explore different dog sports, assistance dogs, and other working dogs. Journey with Victoria as she discusses her time working with police dogs and how these different experiences helped grow her training knowledge.

Advanced Training & Behavior

In this module you'll dive deep into the world of advanced behavior problems. Become aware of the types of behavior problems that advanced trainers work with. From stress and fears to phobias, separation issues, reactivity, and aggression. Explore arousal and how it impacts dogs on a daily, weekly, and long term basis. Finish up with the ever important dog bite prevent lessons, and learn how to keep you and your clients safe.

Animal Advocacy

In this module you'll learn about different fields surrounding the dog training world. Explore the world of shelter dogs: why dogs are in shelters and the impact that shelters may have on them. Discover the ethics of training and why you should consider ethics as a dog trainer. Learn about positive training with different species and how animals are helping people learn all over the world.

Business Management

In this module you'll learn about the different career paths for dog trainers and about the different types of offerings that can grow your business. Explore how to start your business from corporate formation, protecting your brand, to taxes, accounting, and following the law in your area. Understand how to present yourself in a professional way, and how to use your unique assets to represent your brand.

Marketing & Branding

In this module you'll learn how to build a memorable brand and sell your services. Discover your why and how you can increase your revenue using marketing & brand expert, J. Nichole Smith's secrets of how to sell. Understand who you're selling to, define what you're selling, and design where you will sell. Learn about these strategies and how planning for marketing can be fun and easy.