



Topics Covered in VSA's Dog Trainer Course

Dogs & Behavior

- History of training
- Canine ethology
- Canine cognition
- Socialization and fear periods
- Learning theory
- Canine behavior
- Canine body language and communication
- Common myths about training & behavior (and anecdotes)

Dog Training

- Trainer's role in preventing and addressing fear and stress in dogs
- Proactive prevention and planning
- Getting behaviors started with lure/reward, clicker/marker training, capturing/shaping/targeting
- Common behavior problems (management and training)
- Basic manners and life skills
- Reinforcement and reinforcers
- Behaviors, developing fluency and adding cues
- Living with dogs
- Training equipment
- What do you do when?
 - Proactive planning and preparation for everything from dealing with stressed and/or distracted dogs to handling a dog bite in class
- When to refer to a veterinarian and/or behavior expert
- Hands-on training in a shelter and at the Intensives

Teaching People

- Human communication and learning – keeping clients engaged and learning
- Identifying client's goals and their capabilities (e.g. time, motivation)
- Dealing with emotional and combative clients
- Positive training – what it is and what it isn't
- Promoting and defending positive training
- First-hand and/or hands-on teaching and training experience:
 - group classes
 - private lessons
 - phone consults
 - field trips with experts
 - shelter volunteer time

Business A-Z

- Start up and determining which services to offer
- Facilities/venues
- Lesson plans/curriculums
- Insurance and legalities including dog law
- Growing your business – expanding services and employees
- Professionalism
- Essential business writing
- Marketing, including social media sites and website
- Time management
- Veterinary relations and referrals