

Training Blueprint

Dog: _____ Date: _____

- 1. Take Inventory of where you and your dog are now.**
- 2. Describe your ideal dog's dog behavior.**
- 3. What reward does your dog value?**
- 4. How are you transferring value from the reward to the desired behavior?**
- 5. How are you reframing your challenges to focus on a positive outcome?**

How to Create a Training Blueprint

1. Take inventory of where you are right now. Evaluate your dog's behavior. Describe in great detail their responses you are currently getting from a behavior you want to change. What's great? What do you want to change?
2. Describe your ideal dog. Visualize the behaviors you'd love to see from your dog. Pick one specific area and describe it with as much detail as possible. What does the dog do? How fast does he do it? How joyful is your dog? Where are you located? Are you close by or far away? Identify what you want to train. Define what you have and what you want. What is "in-between" is the training? That's the gap, the bridge you need to cross.
3. What reward does your dog value? What specific type of food? What kind of toy? Is it something else? Sheep, tug, playing with other dogs?
4. Transfer the value of what your dog wants into a game leading to the outcome you are looking for from your dog. Just remember to withhold the reward until your dog can perform the activity correctly. Do not show your dog the reward until after the dog performs the desired action correctly. You want your dog to keep trying so you don't want to give them a reward every time. You want to reward them randomly, like a Las Vegas slot machine.
5. Reframing your challenge to focus on a positive outcome. Your dog doesn't understand "don't" so we want to focus on rewarding your dog for what they can do. To make sure it is a positive training session, ask yourself the following three questions:
 - a. Is it fun for both you and your dog?

- b. Are there criteria or rules that the dog needs to follow? (Guidelines that tell the dog what will allow them to be successful).
- c. Are there failures or challenges? You need some failure to keep your dog engaged in the activity.

A well-trained dog is a pleasure to be around and can go anywhere. Remember in your training you only want to change one variable at a time. The three variables are duration, distance, and distractions.

- Duration - increase gradually
- Distant - increase gradually
- Distraction - increase distractions gradually.
 - For example, kneel down, then stand up.

So, if you are going to increase the time you want your dog to hold a response, don't back up and increase the distance from your dog.

Build on each of these separately to grow your dog's confidence. What you want to do is build up your dog's confidence then test it. Then if necessary, back up and start over. If your dog chooses poorly, it is generally because you allowed them to make choices without the confidence to do what we want them to do.