

The Muzzle Up! Project Veterinary Partners Program Syllabus and Curriculum Guide

Overview

The Muzzle Up! Project is excited to announce its newest branch of services for veterinary clinics across the world: The Veterinary Partners Program.

The goals of the program are:

- Increasing successful muzzle training outcomes
- Reducing fear and stress during veterinary visits
- Providing clinics resources to further support clients, improving quality of care and value of services
- Improving client compliance for training follow-through

The Veterinary Partners Program will consist of webinars created and narrated by the project's director, Maureen Backman, MS CTC PCT-A, and will focus on four core competency areas related to muzzle training and husbandry:

- Why dogs wear muzzles
- Building and executing muzzle training plans; troubleshooting common training problems
- Equipment, modifications and safety
- Evidence-based counseling techniques to increase successful outcomes

Clinics that complete the program will be eligible for in-person seminars and staff trainings, and will receive a quarterly newsletter containing staff and client training tips, updates on best practices, and interviews with clinicians.

The Muzzle Up! Project has established itself as comprehensive, evidence-based resource on muzzle training and husbandry for dog guardians, dog behavior professionals, and veterinarians. Maureen, its director, has produced two training DVDs for Tawzer Dog, and presented on The Muzzle Up! Project at the Pet Professional Guild's inaugural educational summit in 2015. In 2017, she will be representing the project at Woof!2017, listed as one of the world's top dog training conferences by The Modern Dog Trainer.

Format:

- 4-week program
- 1 90-minute live webinar session per week, for 4 sessions total
- Webinar software: GoToMeeting for live Q&A and messaging during webinar
- Sessions consist of live webinar on weekly topic plus Q&A session afterward

Curriculum and Learning Objectives

Program Objectives: Educate and increase competency in the following areas:

- Muzzle training and muzzle safety basics
- Different types of muzzles, how to choose equipment
- Importance of the muzzle in various scenarios (veterinary office, etc)
- Muzzle Enrichment
- How to counsel owners on muzzle training and increase client compliance
- Community outreach to combat muzzle stigma
- Case studies each week corresponding to learning objectives

Week 1: Foundations of animal learning and muzzle basics

- Week 1 learning objectives:
 - How dogs learn (operant and classical conditioning)
 - How to apply operant and classical conditioning to muzzle training
 - Types of muzzles and how to find best fit for various dogs
 - Muzzle safety
 - Muzzle modifications for comfort and best fit
- Week 1 training skills focus:
 - Introducing muzzle to dog via classical conditioning
 - Identifying when and how to use operant and classical conditioning
 - Equipment overview
- Week 1 associated reading material
 - *Donaldson, Jean. 2006. "The Culture Clash."*
 - *Reid, Pamela. 1996. "Excel-erated Learning: Explaining how dogs learn and how best to teach them."*

- O’Heare, James. 2007. “Aggressive Behavior in Dogs.”
- Pryor, K. (1999). *Don’t shoot the dog! The new art of teaching and training*. New York: Bantam Books.

Week 2: Troubleshooting muzzle training problems and client counseling

- Week 2 learning objectives:
 - Troubleshooting training plans
 - Addressing frustration and duration during training
 - How to increase client compliance through counseling techniques like motivational interviewing
- Week 2 training skills focus:
 - Learn how to incorporate splits into a training plan
 - How to read dogs’ body language and learn when to push ahead in training and when to drop to an easier step
 - Using motivational interviewing to increase client compliance
- Week 2 associated reading material:
 - Lindsay, S. R. (2000). *Handbook of applied dog behavior and training: Adaptation and learning, vol 1*. Ames, IO: Iowa State Press.
 - Miller, William R., Rollnick, Stephen (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change*. New York: The Guilford Press.
 - Case Western Reserve University Center for Evidence-Based Practices Motivational Interviewing website: [.centerforebp.case.edu/resources/tools/motivational-interviewing-web-site](http://centerforebp.case.edu/resources/tools/motivational-interviewing-web-site)
 - MINT Excellence in Motivational Interviewing website: <http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org>

Week 3: Training for veterinary procedures and handling

- Week 3 learning objectives
 - Review proofing and how to do it
 - Techniques to promote calm while wearing muzzle
 - How to build a training plan incorporating handling and muzzle training
 - How to create positive muzzle and vet procedure experience
- Week 3 training skills focus:
 - Building training plans and proofing for vet procedures
 - Desensitization and counterconditioning for fearful and stressed dogs
- Week 3 associated reading material:
 - Martin, Steve. (2007). *Does Your Bird Have a Trust Account*. *World Parrot Trust PsittaScene Magazine*. Vol. 19.1 (No. 70), p 6-8.
 - Friedman, Susan & Steve Martin (2013). “The Power of Trust.” Presented at the IAATE Conference.

- Overall, Karen. (2014). *Your complete guide to reducing fear in veterinary patients*. DVM360 Magazine. <http://veterinarynews.dvm360.com/your-complete-guide-reducing-fear-veterinary-patients>
- Overall, Karen. (2013). *Facing fear head-on: Tips for veterinarians to create a more behavior-centered practice*. DVM360 Magazine. <http://veterinarynews.dvm360.com/your-complete-guide-reducing-fear-veterinary-patients>

Week 4: Management and antecedents for fear-free muzzled visits

- Week 4 learning objectives:
 - How to incorporate management and antecedents into veterinary visit for less stress and fear
 - How to use food to effectively countercondition dogs before and during vet visits
 - Prepping clients for their visit with a muzzled dogs
- Week 4 training skills focus:
 - Establishing protocols for fear-free muzzled visits
 - Using antecedent interventions to reduce stress
 - Coaching clients on preparing for visits
- Week 4 associated reading material
 - Donaldson, Jean. 2006. "The Culture Clash."
 - Van Kerkhove, W. (2005). *Antecedent events — looking past the cue*. "The APDT Chronicle of the Dog," XIII (Mar/Apr), 1, 5-6, 8-9.
 - Berger, Jeannine. (2016). "Pavlov - ring a bell? A little learning theory for your exam room." *Veterinary Medicine*. <http://veterinarymedicine.dvm360.com/pavlov-ring-bell-little-learning-theory-your-exam-room>
 - Ramirez, K. (1999). *Animal Training: Successful Animal Management Through Positive Reinforcement*. Shedd Aquarium Press.