



Victoria Stilwell Academy

Dog Trainer Course Online Lesson Descriptions

Course Modules:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positively Philosophy 2. Canine History & Ethology 3. Canine Cognition 4. Canine Communication & Body Language 5. Canine Enrichment 6. Learning Theory & Functional Assessments 7. Managing Behavior 8. Positive Training Tools & Methods 9. Reinforcement & Training Applications 10. Teaching Basic Behaviors | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Solving Common Behavior Problems 12. Teaching Private Lessons 13. Teaching Group Classes 14. Working with Humans 15. Canine Health & Science 16. Dog Sports & Working Dogs 17. Advanced Training & Behavior 18. Animal Advocacy 19. Business Management 20. Marketing & Branding |
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Lesson Descriptions

Orientation	
Introduction to VSA Online	
Getting Started	Victoria Stilwell
Begin your learning journey with this first orientation lesson. Here you'll get an overview of what you'll need to successfully complete the Online Dog Trainer Course as well as tutorials on how to navigate the SLC and online lessons.	
Online DTC Course Overview	Victoria Stilwell
This lesson goes into detail about how the course is structured, including descriptions of modules, chapters, lessons and more. Course assessments such as quizzes, tests, exams and DIY activities are explained, and you'll find out what's needed to graduate from the course.	
Faculty Introductions	Victoria Stilwell
Get to know your instructors! You'll hear from each of the faculty members for the course, including their background, overviews of what they teach within the course, and why they're excited to have the opportunity to be a part of your learning experience with VSA.	
Resources & Information	
Faculty Advisor Guide	Victoria Stilwell
Everything you need to know about working with your Faculty Advisor. This unique component of the Online Dog Trainer Course matches you with a dedicated personal coach to help guide you through the course and provide feedback on your assessments. Learn how the Faculty Advisor Program works in this lesson.	
Resources & Support	Victoria Stilwell
One last quick lesson before you get into the fun stuff. This short lesson provides a quick snapshot of the	

various resources available to you and discusses ways VSA is here to support you as you progress through the course.	
Positively Philosophy	
Overview of Positive Training	
What is Positive Dog Training?	Victoria Stilwell
Explore the world of positive reinforcement based training by learning the importance of building a bond and working in a way that is compatible with the dog's cognitive style. Understand the Four Pillars of Positive Training and how to help owners set their dogs up for success.	
Positive vs. Traditional Training	Victoria Stilwell
Understand what goals positive trainers should set, how to achieve them, and the importance of terminology in the industry.	
The Fallout of Aversive Methods	
The Negatives of Aversive Training	Victoria Stilwell
What does "aversive" mean and what different aversive methods & tools are still used by trainers today? Find out why these methods and tools are harmful and how to identify "learned helplessness". Discover why people use punishment and clarify the effectiveness of punishment.	
Dominance, Pack Theory, & Other Misunderstandings	
The Truth About Dominance & Pack Theory	Victoria Stilwell
What is dominance and how does it apply to pet dogs? Do dogs form packs and should training be based on the pack mentality? Uncover the truth about dominance in dogs and whether pack theory has a place in modern dog training.	
Common Myths & Misunderstandings	Victoria Stilwell
Does positive training work for all dogs? Are dogs that misbehave being dominant or just stubborn? Explore several common dog training myths and how to dispel them.	
The Positive Philosophy in Practice	
Applying the Positively Philosophy	Alynn Lecznar
Understand how to apply the four pillars of positive training in your training. Become acquainted with the VSA Training Toolkit & Roadmap and how they can help you throughout this course.	
Canine History & Ethology	
History of Dog Training	
Where We Started	Victoria Stilwell
Take a journey through the origins of dog training and meet notable early contributors in the field. Learn how practical and scientific discoveries simultaneously contributed to our understanding of how dogs learn.	
Where We Are Now	Victoria Stilwell
Understand how training styles have changed since the early contributions and the history of modern-day dog training.	
Canine Ethology	
Canine Domestication	Victoria Stilwell
What is canine ethology? Explore the origin of canines, how dogs evolved, and how they became domesticated.	
Breed Types	Victoria Stilwell
Become familiar with the domestic dog breed types and their respective traits. Understand how much traits can impact behavior and whether breed defines the dog.	

Dogs versus Wolves	Victoria Stilwell
How do dogs differ from wolves? What is pack theory and how does dominance affect the human animal bond? Discover the differences and similarities between our beloved family members and the wild wolf.	
Canine Developmental Periods	Victoria Stilwell
Become familiar with the developmental periods of dogs and how to identify each by certain behaviors. Understand the unique needs of dogs in each life stage.	
Socialization	Victoria Stilwell
Identify what socialization is and is not. Understand the difference between socialization and positive proactive socialization. Learn how to implement a socialization plan and identify dogs that lack socialization.	
Sensory Organs	Victoria Stilwell
Explore the five canine senses and how they use them. How do canine senses differ from humans? Understand why exploring the senses is important for training.	
Canine Cognition	
Introduction to Canine Cognition	
Canine Cognitive Science	Victoria Stilwell
Become familiar with the world of canine cognition and understand how dogs view the world. Delve deeper into the dog's mind and find out how cognitive scientists and their research can make learning easier for dogs.	
Measuring Cognitive Intelligence	Victoria Stilwell
Learn about the different types of intelligence and how different species utilize their individual skills. How does dog cognition compare to human cognition? Learn how to identify different types of intelligence.	
Canine Cognitive Abilities	Victoria Stilwell
Meet Chaser, the "smartest dog in the world", and learn about what we can infer for her case study. Find out what we currently know about the cognitive abilities of dogs.	
Five Cognitive Dimensions	
Introduction	Victoria Stilwell
Familiarize yourself with the five cognitive dimensions and why these dimensions help us understand dog behavior.	
Empathy	Victoria Stilwell
Do dogs display empathetic behaviors? Dive deeper into empathy in dogs and discover if and how we can measure this cognitive dimension.	
Communication	Victoria Stilwell
Explore how dogs evolved to communicate with humans. What methods do dogs employ to read human intent? How do they determine cooperative partners? Which human social cues are dogs able to read? Answer these questions and more in this lesson.	
Memory	Victoria Stilwell
How keen is a dog's memory? Can the environment affect memory? Explore the different types of memory, dog's strengths and weaknesses, and why memory is important to dogs and dog trainers.	
Reasoning	Victoria Stilwell
Discover how dogs use reasoning to solve problems. Learn about the different types of reasoning that dog may employ, and how environment and training can affect reasoning.	
Cunning	Victoria Stilwell

What is cunning and adaptive intelligence? Learn how dogs have used their cunning to survive thousands of years and how dogs use cunning in everyday situations.	
Dognition	Victoria Stilwell
What is Dognition and how can it be helpful for dog training? Explore the fun, interactive games that make up Dognition and what they can tell you about your dog.	
Activities to Explore Cognition	
Communication Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's communication and cue preference during these fun games. Understand which cue grabs your dog's attention and use this information during training.	
Attentional States Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's sensitivity to your attentional state. Learn how your dog's sensitivity differs with varying stimuli and how this could impact training.	
Reasoning Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's reasoning skills. Identify your dog's reasoning methods and remember these problem solving skills during training.	
Empathy Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's empathy and discover how attentive he/she is to your emotional state.	
Memory Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's memory. Identify if your dog has keen short term and long term memory.	
Cunning Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's deception skills and determine his/her cunning abilities.	
Imitation Games	Victoria Stilwell
Test your dog's social learning skills through imitation. Learn a fun way to teach your dog new behaviors.	
Word Learning Games	Victoria Stilwell
Play the word learning game with your dog and teach your dog new words!	
Canine Emotion & Behavior	
Human Emotion & Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Learn about the difference between emotions and feelings and what role emotional states play in changing behavior. Understand how human emotion can affect dogs and the importance of controlling your emotions when handling dogs.	
Happiness	Victoria Stilwell
Learn how to identify signs of happiness in dogs, and whether dogs experience positive emotions. Explore the latest studies diving into the science of happiness in dogs.	
Love	Victoria Stilwell
Discern whether dogs display attachment behaviors and understand how scientists test for "love". Consider what conclusions we can draw from such studies and if dogs truly love us or not.	
Jealousy	Victoria Stilwell
Can dogs be jealous? Learn how to identify behavior related to jealousy in dogs and what jealousy can mean for inter/intra-species interactions.	
Guilt	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs have that "guilty" face? What does the research reveal about guilt in dogs? Explore these and other questions in this lesson.	
Sadness/Depression	Victoria Stilwell

What is the difference between sadness and depression? Can dogs be sad, what about depressed? Learn if these emotions are possible and if so, how to identify signs of sadness in dogs.	
Fear	Victoria Stilwell
What is fear? Is fear a normal, healthy emotion? Learn how dogs display fear and why they may become fearful.	
Phobias & Problem Behavior	Victoria Stilwell
What is the difference between fear and phobia? Understand how phobia manifest in dogs and which problem behaviors are related to fear and phobia.	
Medical Issues & Behavior	Victoria Stilwell
How to identify medical issues and how they may impact behavior. Can you tell if your dog is in pain? Learn how in this lesson (and when to refer to a veterinarian!).	
The Human-Animal Bond	
Emotional Attachment	Victoria Stilwell
What can science tell us about emotional attachment? Immerse yourself in the human animal bond: find out how bonding can be mutually beneficial and what happens when the bond is damaged.	
Relationship Building	Victoria Stilwell
Why study relationship building in dog training? Positive training is based on building a solid relationship. Learn how to cultivate a relationship with a being from another species and see a dog as an individual.	
Canine Communication & Body Language	
Canine Communication	
How Do Dogs Communicate?	Victoria Stilwell
Explore how dogs communicate with one another. Become familiar with the different types of signals that dogs use to communicate their inner state.	
Canine Body Language	
What is Dog Body Language?	Victoria Stilwell
What is your dog telling you? Learn to listen with your eyes and consider the "whole picture" of what you see when you observe a dog. This lesson will introduce you to the secrets behind unlocking the language of dogs.	
Appeasement/Deference/Displacement/Stress Signals	Victoria Stilwell
Learn to identify appeasement, deference, displacement, and stress signals in dogs. Hone your observational skills to accurately read your dog. This lesson will help you determine if a dog is experiencing stress and when to intervene.	
Fear Signals	Victoria Stilwell
Learn to identify fear signals in dogs. Hone your observational skills to accurately read your dog. This lesson will help you determine if a dog is experiencing fear and when to intervene.	
Early Warning Signals	Victoria Stilwell
Learn to identify early warning signals in dogs. Hone your observational skills to accurately read your dog. This lesson will help you determine your dog's early warning signals and how to avoid further conflict.	
Play Signals	Victoria Stilwell
Learn to identify play signals in dogs. Hone your observational skills to accurately read your dog. This lesson will help you determine if your dog is enjoying play and ensure safe interactions between dogs.	
Canine Behavior Observation	
Observing & Drawing Conclusions	Victoria Stilwell

Test your observational skills and see if you can understand what dogs are saying and feeling.	
Dog-Dog Observation	Victoria Stilwell
Use your observation skills and knowledge about dog body language to accurately describe the interactions in these dog-dog photos and videos.	
Dog-Human Observation	Victoria Stilwell
Use your observation skills and knowledge about dog body language to accurately describe the interactions in these dog-human photos and videos.	
Observation of Dogs and Other Species	Victoria Stilwell
Observe dog body language in a new context by watching dogs interact with other species.	
Canine Enrichment	
Introduction to Enrichment	
What is Enrichment?	Victoria Stilwell
Immerse yourself in the world of enrichment. What is enrichment and why is it important? Explore your first step on the VSA Roadmap and discover how enrichment can help change dog behavior.	
The Ideal Dog	Alynn Lecznar
What do dog owners want? Why did they get a dog in the first place? Reflect on the expectations that many owners set out for their dogs and how dog trainers can help recreate this image of the ideal dog.	
Providing Enrichment	
Addressing Enrichment	Alynn Lecznar
Identify the biological needs and wants of dogs and how enrichment can factor in to these needs and wants. What should a dog's typical day look like? Learn how to make an enrichment plan to satisfy the needs/wants of both owner and dog and how an enrichment plan can impact behavior modification.	
Types of Walks	Alynn Lecznar
Learn about the different types of walks humans can take with their dogs. Understand why there should be different types of walks and how diversifying walks can help dogs.	
Play as Enrichment	Alynn Lecznar
Define play and introduce yourself to the different types of play. Discover what motivates dogs to play and dispel several play myths.	
Enrichment Tools	Alynn Lecznar
Explore how enrichment can help with training and what tools and games are best suited for enrichment. Learn how to enrich a dog's life and how to make it easier for clients as well.	
Learning Theory & Functional Assessments	
Learning Theory	
What is Learning?	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is learning and how do scientists define the term? Understand what drives behavior and the importance of learning in dog training.	
Classical Conditioning	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Discover the history of dog training by uncovering the origins of classical conditioning. Explore how stimuli can be paired and how associations are made.	
Applications of Classical Conditioning	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Learn how to use classical conditioning when modifying behavior in dogs. Identify the different types of conditioning, their applications, and which types are the most effective in modifying behavior.	
Operant Conditioning	Brad & Lisa Waggoner

Travel through time to the days of Thorndike and Skinner to learn about the history of behaviorism and operant conditioning. Identify the ABC's of training and introduce yourself to the four quadrants of operant conditioning.	
Application of Operant Conditioning	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Understand how operant conditioning and its consequences present in the real world. Can classical and operant conditioning occur simultaneously? Can you apply the four quadrants to real world situations? Answer these questions and hone your skill in this lesson.	
The ABC's of Training	
Introduction to Functional Assessments	Irith Bloom
Why do dogs display certain behaviors and what is their function? Solve these questions using the ABC's of training. In this lesson you will learn how to perform a functional assessment and use it to determine the function of behavior.	
Managing Behavior	
Management & Prevention	
Introduction to Management	Irith Bloom
What is management and can it solve dog behavior problems? Learn VSA's definition of management and why we think management is one of the most important tools in a positive trainer's toolkit.	
Management Strategies & Tools	Irith Bloom
Explore what options exist when managing behavior. Learn how to select the appropriate management strategy and which management tools to consider.	
Implementing Management	Irith Bloom
Learn how to create and implement a management plan to effectively manage a behavior problem. Consider ethics when using management and when to refer to another trainer, behaviorist, or veterinarian.	
Setting Up for Success	
Creating a Learning Environment	Irith Bloom
What is a learning environment? Learn how to set up a successful learning environment and how to use the environment to advance your training.	
Positive Training Tools & Methods	
Positive Training Tools	
Collars	Victoria Stilwell
Familiarize yourself with the different types of collars and their various uses. Understand which types of collars positive trainers recommend and how to use them.	
Leashes & Leash Handling	Victoria Stilwell
Familiarize yourself with the different types of leashes and their various uses. Understand which leashes are used regularly by positive trainers and how to properly hold a leash.	
Harnesses & Halters	Victoria Stilwell
Familiarize yourself with the different types of harnesses and halters and their uses. Understand which tools positive trainers prefer.	
Fundamentals & Training Plans	
Training Fundamentals	Alynn Lecznar
Introduce yourself to the three steps to training a new behavior. Understand how to influence each of these three steps and what tools and skills are needed for training.	
Developing a Training Plan	Alynn Lecznar

What is a training plan and why are they important? Determine goal behavior and create & develop a customized training plan to achieve the goal behavior. Learn how to incorporate your plan into the VSA Training Roadmap.	
Positive Training Methods	
Capturing	Alynn Lecznar
Discover this positive training method, when, and how to use it. Understand the benefits and pitfalls of capturing behavior, how to capture behavior, and how you can add this training method to your training toolkit.	
Luring	Alynn Lecznar
Discover this positive training method, when, and how to use it. Understand the benefits and pitfalls of luring behavior, how to lure behavior, and how you can add this training method to your training toolkit.	
Shaping	Alynn Lecznar
Discover this positive training method, when, and how to use it. Understand the benefits and pitfalls of shaping behavior, how to shape behavior, and how you can add this training method to your training toolkit.	
Choosing a Training Method	Alynn Lecznar
Which training method is best for teaching a sit? What other factors affect training methods? Learn how to choose the training method best suited to the dog-handler team.	
Cueing, Proofing, & Fluency	
Cueing	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is a cueing? Learn the definition of a cue about the different types of cues. When should you add the cue? Understand timing and how to switch cues.	
Proofing: Checking for Understanding	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is proofing? Learn how to check your dog's understanding of a cue and why checking for understanding is important. Understand how to verify your training in different contexts and what to do if you experience a lack of understanding.	
Fluency	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is fluency? Learn about this useful tool and how fluency can enhance behaviors. Discover the different aspects of fluency and how to achieve them.	
Reinforcement & Training Applications	
Reinforcement	
What is Reinforcement?	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is reinforcement? Understand what drives behavior and how does reinforcement affect behavior. Explore other words to describe reinforcement and their common uses in dog training.	
Types of Reinforcement	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Learn what types of reinforcers exist, what values dogs place on different reinforcers, and how distractions can impact them. Determine which reinforcers are best for the dog in front of you, the environment, and training plan.	
Reinforcement Schedules	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is a reinforcement schedule? Learn about the different types of reinforcement schedules and how they can affect behavior. Study how these theories work in the real world.	
The Power of Choice	Victoria Stilwell
What is choice and how does it apply to owned dogs? How does choice impact motivation and learning? Learn how trainers can provide choice and use it for training advantage.	

Training Applications	
Functional Assessments Revisited	Irith Bloom
Review the ABC's of training and understand where functional assessments fit into training. Learn how to use functional assessments to determine the function of behavior.	
Problem Solving Using Functional Assessments	Irith Bloom
Understand when and where to use functional assessments and how they fit into the VSA Training Roadmap. Determine "problem behaviors" and how to use functional assessments to evaluate and solve "problem behaviors".	
Functional Assessments & Clients	Irith Bloom
Rationalize the two different general types of clients and what they need. Understand how to teach these clients about functional assessments in an easily digestible way.	
Positive Training Applications	Alynn Lecznar
Learn how to use all of the positive training tools in your toolkit and apply them to a real world training situation. Use the VSA Training Objectives and fill in the gaps using your management and training plans.	
Teaching Basic Behaviors	
VSA Basic Manners Behaviors	
VSA Basic Manners Behaviors Overview	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is a "behavior" anyway and how is the term used in dog training sessions? Discover why we teach specific behaviors to dogs and which behavior we should teach. Begin to consider how to customize behaviors to solve problems.	
Attention	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is attention and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog's attention using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Sit	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is sit and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to sit using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Touch	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is touch and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to touch using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Down	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is down and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to lie down using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Recall	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is recall and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to come when called using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Leave it	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is leave it and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to increase his or her impulse control using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Wait	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is wait and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to wait using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Leash Walking	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is leash walking and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to loose leash walk using	

positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Go to Mat	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is go to mat and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to go to mat using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Stay	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is stay and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to stay using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Drop	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is drop and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to drop an item using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Stand	Victoria Stilwell/Alynn Lecznar
What is stand and why it is important? Learn how to get your dog to stand using positive training methods and how to use this behavior in the real world.	
Solving Common Behavior Problems	
Common Behavior Problems	
Introduction to Common Behavior Problems	Victoria Stilwell
Understand how to incorporate functional assessments to evaluate problem behaviors, to solve such problem behaviors using training objectives, and where management and training come into play.	
Puppy Problems	
Training with Puppies	Victoria Stilwell
Dive into lessons with puppies and learn which topics puppy owners frequently request. Understand how to structure basic lessons with puppies and address owner complaints.	
House Training for Puppies	Victoria Stilwell
Why do puppies eliminate in the house? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide puppy owners with short term and long term solutions for house training issues.	
Puppy Chewing/Mouthing	Victoria Stilwell
Why do puppies chew and mouth? Learn how to prevent these unwanted behaviors and provide puppy owners with short term and long term solutions for chewing and mouthing issues.	
Adult Dog Common Behavior Issues	
Training with Adult Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Dive into lessons with adult dogs and learn which topics adult dog owners frequently request. Understand how to structure basic lessons with adult dogs and address owner complaints.	
Chewing/Destruction	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs chew and destroy items? Learn how to prevent these unwanted behaviors and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for chewing and destruction issues.	
Digging	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs dig? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for digging issues.	
Jumping	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs jump? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for jumping issues.	
Barking	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs bark? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term	

and long term solutions for digging issues.	
Door Issues	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs bark and dash out of the door? Learn how to prevent these unwanted behaviors and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for door issues.	
Pulling	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs pull on leash? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for pulling issues.	
Humping	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs hump? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for humping issues.	
Coprophagia	Victoria Stilwell
Why do dogs eat poop? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide dog owners with short term and long term solutions for poo eating.	
House Training for Adult Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Why do adult dogs eliminate in the house? Learn how to prevent this unwanted behavior and provide adult dog owners with short term and long term solutions for house training issues.	
Teaching Private Lessons	
Preparing for Private Lessons	
Private Lesson Basics	Alynn Lecznar
What is a private lesson and why should you offer them? Where is the best place to give private lessons? Discover everything you need to know about private lessons from initial client contact to the end of your training sessions.	
Connecting with Clients	Alynn Lecznar
Learn how to make initial contact with clients and what information you need to obtain before training. Uncover the importance of taking a dog's history before the session, and learn how to stay safe when visiting private homes.	
Scheduling, Time Management, and Forms	Alynn Lecznar
Examine the different types of training sessions and consider which might be best for your business. Investigate the importance of using training forms, and their relationship to time management.	
Conducting a Consultation	Alynn Lecznar
Learn how to prepare for a successful consultation: gather tools and materials you will need, take a canine history, introduce the ABC's of training, discuss training objectives, discuss management and training, and sell a package.	
Teaching Private Lessons	
Teaching a Private Lesson	Alynn Lecznar
Devise a structure for your private lessons using VSA's easy to follow guide. Enhance your lesson structure by implementing our method for teaching new skills.	
Dealing with Family & Other Pets	Alynn Lecznar
Learn how to tackle a home with multiple family members and how to maintain compliance despite these potential drawbacks. Understand how to incorporate children into the lesson while keeping everyone safe. Dissect the multi-dog household and whether or not other pets detract or add to the session.	
Lesson Distractions	Alynn Lecznar
Examine the importance of managing distractions and determine what causes dogs to be distracted. Learn	

how to tackle these issues and help dogs focus.	
Emergency Situations	Alynn Lecznar
Understand how to protect yourself, your client, and their dog during private sessions. Learn what to do if the unthinkable happens and how to prevent these situations.	
Teaching Group Classes	
Preparing for Group Classes	
Group Class Basics	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What is a group class? Why should you hold group classes? Where should you hold group classes? Uncover the power of group classes by determining the importance of group classes to your business and your clients.	
Group Class Logistics	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Consider a potential group class: how will you register clients, what equipment you will need, and where will you hold group classes? Evaluate group class logistics and determine what guidelines you will put into place.	
Group Class Health & Safety	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Determine how to keep both dogs and humans safe in the group class environment. Discover method to inspire your clients to keep their dogs health and safe.	
Teaching Group Classes	
Teaching a Group Class	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Nervous about teaching group classes? Break down the process step by step: learn how to organize the curriculum, set up the room, and teach each class from week to week.	
Working with Humans	
Keeping Clients Engaged	
Principles of Teaching Humans	Irith Bloom
Discover how adult learning principles can help dog trainers keep clients engaged. Become familiar with strategies to help humans learn and focus on communicating with humans using positive reinforcement.	
Human Teaching Techniques	Irith Bloom
Explore a new technique to teach humans and learn how to break down skills into easily teachable steps.	
Working with Clients	
Cancellations & Referrals	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What do you do if you need to cancel a session? What if a client cancels at the last minute? Design cancellation policies and understand how to uphold them to avoid frustration.	
Safety Protocols & Preparedness	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
What do you do if there is an emergency during one of your training sessions? In this lesson, learn how to design an emergency preparedness plan by evaluating best practices for preventing injury to humans and dogs.	
Challenging Situations	Brad & Lisa Waggoner
Detect challenging situations such as distractions, learners with disabilities, and dogs that are uncomfortable during sessions. Understand how to identify and worked through these challenges.	
Human Interaction	
Human Communication	Paula Bloom
Discover the importance of establishing intention, trust and empathy in the relationship with the human client and explore the ways that humans learn (and how to increase understanding through each learning	

style.) Develop and use effective observational and active listening skills while focusing on successful ways to motivate the client.	
Human Behavior Change	Paula Bloom
Learn about the “Stages of Change” and how the model of Motivational Interviewing can be employed by dog trainers to encourage collaboration between the client and the dog trainer as they work toward positive training approaches and a happier life.	
Self-Care & Burnout Prevention	Paula Bloom
Explore how stress affects us, what burnout is and how to prevent it, and the pitfalls of compassion fatigue while learning how to develop a personalized burnout prevention plan. Also covered: the connection of self-awareness and self-reflection and its application in dog training.	
Real-World Human Scenarios for Dog Trainers	Paula Bloom
Victoria and Paula join forces to compare notes about the most effective ways to handle specific human scenarios that dog trainers commonly find themselves in.	
Canine Health & Science	
Canine Senses	
What is Sensory Education?	Victoria Stilwell
What is sensory education? Uncover the reasons why understanding the canine senses is important to help dogs learn effectively.	
Smell	Victoria Stilwell
How keen is a dog’s sense of smell and why is scent so important for the dog? Dive deeper into the science behind smell and how we can use scent in training.	
Sight	Victoria Stilwell
How well can dogs see and how often do they rely on their sense of sight? Compare and contrast this ability in dogs and humans.	
Taste	Victoria Stilwell
How keen is a dog’s sense of taste? How does their physiology impact their sense of taste? Understand what considerations we should make in regard to our dogs’ sense of taste.	
Hearing	Victoria Stilwell
How keen is a dog’s sense of hearing? Discover how sound sensitivities and noise phobias can develop. Listen to Victoria describe her own journey when creating the Canine Noise Phobia CD series.	
Touch	Victoria Stilwell
Learn about a dog’s sense of touch, its development through puppyhood, and the impact of touch on bonding. Familiarize yourself with touch sensitivity, how to prevent it, and how to modify it.	
Canine Health	
Common Health Conditions & Issues	Duffy Jones
Learn about common canine health-related conditions from A-Z. Trainers might see dogs more often than veterinarians and while it is not our job to diagnose we can always be on the lookout.	
Vaccinations	Duffy Jones
Familiarize yourself with core and non-core vaccines. Understand how vaccines work and why they are important for dogs.	
Spay & Neuter	Duffy Jones
Learn about spaying and neutering and investigate the differing opinions of potential risks and benefits.	
Canine Fitness	Alynn Lecznar

Explore the world of canine fitness and how it can fit into a management and training plan. Determine the importance of canine fitness and discover the potential benefits to a behavior modification program that incorporate canine fitness.	
Canine Nutrition	
Canine Diets	Duffy Jones
Learn about the different types of canine diets and the importance of good nutrition for a dog's overall health.	
Nutrition & Behavior	Duffy Jones
Determine signs of health issues that could be related to diet. Discover the benefits of chewing and how to select safe chews and toys.	
Dogs Sports & Working Dogs	
Dog Sports	
Pet Dog Sports	Victoria Stilwell
Immerse yourself into the world of pet dog sports. Discover the different types of sports and how they can be beneficial.	
High Drive Working Dogs	
Positive Training with High-Drive Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Why are police dogs in the United States trained using aversives when in the United Kingdom they usually are not? Can you train high-drive dogs using positive reinforcement? Delve into the debate by learning about drive and how to use it during training.	
Types of Working Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Explore the different types of working jobs and the jobs that they perform. What types of dogs are used for these jobs and how are they best suited for their role? Learn about the typical training methods associated with these dog jobs.	
Police Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Have you ever wondered about how police dogs are trained? Where do these dogs come from? Learn about the various jobs these dogs and handlers tackle and what stressors and challenges they face every day.	
Assistance Dogs	
Service Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
What is a "service dog"? Learn about this distinction (using the United States as an example), where these dogs come from, and how they are trained. Explore how you can get involved with service dogs.	
Emotional Support Animals	Victoria Stilwell
What is an "emotional support animal?" Learn about this distinction (using the United States as an example), where these dogs come from, and how they are trained. Explore how you can get involved with emotional support animals.	
Therapy Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
What is a "therapy dog?" Learn about this distinction (using the United States as an example), where these dogs come from, and how they are trained. Explore how you can get involved with therapy dogs.	
Advanced Training & Behavior	
Behavior Modification	
Introduction to Advanced Training & Behavior	Victoria Stilwell
What is "behavior modification" and why should you use it? Differentiate between training and behavior modification and learn how to incorporate behavior modification into your training objectives.	

Identifying & Addressing Stress	
Arousal	Alynn Lecznar
Have you heard dog trainers use the word, "arousal"? What does this word mean in the context of dog training? Identify arousal in dogs and understand how arousal affects performance.	
Identifying Signs of Stress	Victoria Stilwell
Review dog body language and put your knowledge to the best by identifying signs of stress in dogs. Remember, if we cannot identify stress we cannot begin to address stress using behavior modification.	
Stress vs. Excitement	Victoria Stilwell
How are stress and excitement related, and how are they different? Understand the relationship between stress and excitement.	
Determining Sources of Stress	Victoria Stilwell
Determine possible sources of stress and learn how to implement plans to reduce stress. Discover how reducing stress enables dogs to stay relaxed and optimize learning.	
Preventing and Reducing Stress	Victoria Stilwell
Learn how to prevent and reduce stress during training situations. Discover strategies to proactively reduce stress in real world situations.	
Identifying & Preventing Fears & Phobias	
What is Fear?	Victoria Stilwell
What is fear? Do dogs choose between fight and flight? Discover what happens biologically when a dog is faced with a fearful situation.	
Recognizing Fear in Dogs	Victoria Stilwell
Apply your knowledge of dog body language to see a fearful situation from the dog's point of view. Learn how to recognize signs of fear and stress in dogs and how to empower owner's to help their dogs.	
Being the Dog's Advocate	Victoria Stilwell
Understand how to proactively prevent fear and stress through socialization practices. Be your dog's advocate by preparing them for potentially stressful life events like veterinary visits and grooming appointments.	
Addressing Fear-Based Behavior	Victoria Stilwell
Revisit arousal and discover the importance of working "below threshold" with a fear-based behavior cases. Determine how behavior modification can help address fear-based behavior, which methods to use, and when to refer a fear-based behavior case.	
Complementary Therapies	Victoria Stilwell
Explore alternative tools and techniques for managing and addressing fear based behaviors. Familiarize yourself with the latest products available to progressive positive dog trainers.	
Separation Distress & Anxiety	
What is Separation Distress/Anxiety?	Victoria Stilwell
Evaluate the differences between boredom, separation distress, and separation anxiety. Explore the public perception of separation anxiety, dispel any misconceptions, and identify the varying degrees of separation issues.	
Managing Separation Issues	Victoria Stilwell
Deduce how to safely manage a dog with separation issue. Learn to prevent the reinforcement of these behaviors and explore different therapies that can help. Understand the ethical considerations before taking these cases and when to refer.	

Addressing Separation Issues	Victoria Stilwell
Examine different methods to address separation issues: how to “change the picture” for the dog and why changing human behavior can help.	
Reactivity	
What is Reactivity?	Irith Bloom
What is “reactivity” and how did this term come into use? Explore is the public’s perception of reactivity and the reality.	
Examples of Reactivity	Irith Bloom
Clarify the labels dog owners use when referring to reactive behaviors. Learn how to identify these behaviors and appropriately refer to a certain observed behavior.	
Managing Reactivity	Irith Bloom
Understand how to create and implement an effective management plan for reactivity cases. Determine which management strategies to consider.	
Addressing Reactivity	Irith Bloom
Become familiar with the basics of addressing and modifying reactive behavior. Determine which training tools and techniques are useful when changing the dog’s emotional response toward a triggering stimulus. Understand how to teach and reinforce alternative behaviors in place of reactive behaviors.	
Canine Aggression	
What is Aggression?	Victoria Stilwell
Clarify the term aggression and the relationship between aggression and dominance.	
Factors that Influence Aggressive Behaviors	Victoria Stilwell
Recognize why dogs aggress and what purpose aggressive behaviors serve. Explore the various factors that can influence aggressive behaviors from genetics to pain.	
How People Exacerbate Aggressive Behaviors	Victoria Stilwell
Can training methods cause aggression? Is socialization as important as everyone says? Explore how people can exacerbate aggressive behavior.	
Addressing Aggressive Behaviors	Victoria Stilwell
Consider different methods for addressing aggressive behavior in dogs. Become familiar with modifying aggressive behavior from resource guarding to human-directed aggression.	
Dog Bite Prevention	
Assessing Dog Bites	Victoria Stilwell
Classify dog bites according to the industry recognized Dunbar bite scale and learn how to assess future dog bite risk.	
Preventing Dog Bites	Victoria Stilwell
Can dogs bite “out of the blue”? Consider the latest dog bite statistics and what they can tell us about preventing dog bites. Understand how to manage and prevent dog bites before they occur.	
Animal Advocacy	
Shelters & Animal Law	
Dog in Shelters	Christina Waggoner
Dive into the world of dog shelters. How are shelters typically structured? What types of animals make up shelter populations? Explore these and common shelter practices.	
Overview of Animal Law	Claudine Wilkins
Dog Trainer Liability	Claudine Wilkins

Breed Specific Legislation	Victoria Stilwell
What is Breed Specific Legislation? Learn about BSL around the world and the effects of BSL using the United States as a case study.	
Ethics in Dog Training	
Considerations for Dogs	Christina Waggoner
Consider the needs and wants of dogs in training. Why should you care and how can you make a difference? Examine the impact your training may have on all dogs.	
Considerations for Humans	Christina Waggoner
Consider the needs and wants of your human learners in training. Why should you care and how can you make a difference? Examine the impact your training may have on all humans and their relationship with dogs.	
When to Refer	Christina Waggoner
Determine what types of cases to refer to another trainer, behaviorist, or veterinarian. What alternatives exist instead of referrals and what considerations will you make with your training practices?	
Evidence Based Training	
Scientific Research & Dog Training	Alynn Lecznar
Do you love science? Are you inspired by canine cognition experts and want to incorporate the latest studies into your training? Consider this lesson and learn how and when to effectively discuss research with others.	
Positive Training with Other Species	
Training Other Species	Alynn Lecznar
Explore how positive reinforcement is used to train husbandry behaviors and reduce stress in captive animals and pets.	
Helping Humans Learn	Alynn Lecznar
Discover how animals are helping others and helping humans learn.	
Business Management	
Career Paths for Dog Trainers	
Owning Your Own Business	Alynn Lecznar
Learn about the benefits and responsibilities of owning your own body training business. Discover what a typical week looks like for a dog trainer.	
Training for Another Company	Alynn Lecznar
Explore opportunities to work as a trainer for, or in conjunction with, another company. Consider different positions and how to prepare for the job application process.	
Other Dog-Related Industries	Alynn Lecznar
Discover other dog-related industries and how you can combine services to grow your business.	
Certifications & Associations	
Learn about what certification means in the dog training world and explore the various associations and entities available for dog trainers to join.	
Starting Your Business	
Corporate Formation, Accounting, & Law	Alynn Lecznar
Protecting your Brand & Identity	Alynn Lecznar
Taxes, Accounting, & Bookkeeping	Alynn Lecznar
Following the Law in Your Area	Alynn Lecznar

Presenting Yourself Professionally	
Communication Skills	Christina Waggoner
Understand the importance of effective verbal and written communication with clients. Learn how your non-verbal communication can impact your success and how actions can speak louder than words as a dog training professional.	
Your Appearance	Christina Waggoner
Determine your personal assets and use them to bolster your business. Consider why your professional appearance should not be overlooked, what attire to choose, and what to avoid.	
Your Representatives	Christina Waggoner
Identify your representatives and understand how they can impact your business. Review a few best practices of how you can bring representatives into the professional image fold.	
Putting it All Together	Christina Waggoner
Understand the parts that make up your professional image, how they impact your success, and the future of the dogs you encounter.	
Marketing & Branding	
Social Media Marketing	
Facebook for Business	Alex Sessa
Learn how to create and successfully manage a Facebook page for your business. Understand how to post articles, photos, create events, and utilize Facebook insights.	
Navigating Twitter & YouTube	Alex Sessa
Learn how to create and navigate Twitter and YouTube accounts. Understand the basics of tweeting, user analytics, and gather tips for "going viral".	
Growing Your Business Using Social Media	Alex Sessa
Learn how to create a recognizable brand and grow your business via social media without paid advertising. Use review to promote growth and get creative to increase your brand recognition.	
Introduction to Marketing & Branding	
Introduction to Marketing	J. Nichole Smith
Start the process of exploring how to approach the marketing of your business and the development of your brand with an overview of the elements of successful business marketing.	
Building a Brand	J. Nichole Smith
Learn to ask the right questions of yourself in order to set the stage for how to most effectively build a brand for your business.	
Brand Building Blocks	
The Importance of Finding Your Why	J. Nichole Smith
An in-depth discussion of why it's so important from a marketing perspective to understand why you're doing what you're doing, and why you're in the business and industry that you're in.	
Understanding Who You're Selling To	J. Nichole Smith
Explore the first step to building a successful brand by taking a closer look at who your target audience is and ways that you'll be able to reach them.	
Defining What You Sell	J. Nichole Smith
Determining what exactly it is that you're offering is an often-overlooked component to the brand-building process.	
Designing Where You'll Sell	J. Nichole Smith

You can't sell yourself, your products, your services and your business without first understanding the ways in which you'll meet your prospective customers where they are.	
The Secrets of How to Sell	J. Nichole Smith
Put all of the brand building blocks together in order to come up with a comprehensive strategy for effective conversions and high-value business marketing.	
Content Marketing Strategy	
Marketing Planning	J. Nichole Smith
A look at the history of traditional marketing plans and an examination of why using old marketing models may not always be the right choice for those in the pet industry. What exactly is a marketing plan and does it really have to be so scary to someone who just wants to help dogs via their pet industry business?	
The Six Stages of Marketing	J. Nichole Smith
Discover the six stages of marketing and explore how to harness a better understanding of these principles when developing and maintaining your marketing plan.	
Building Your Sales Funnel	J. Nichole Smith
An introduction to the concept of sales funnels, including step-by-step overviews of how to develop the pieces needed to make selling easier, faster, and more profitable.	
Filling Your Sales Funnel	J. Nichole Smith
How do you begin putting potential customers on the path towards becoming your brand evangelists and top customers? Converting customers by bringing them into your sales funnel is the next step.	
Creating Valuable Content	J. Nichole Smith
You can't sell to your target customers without providing them with viable reasons why they should choose you over your competition. Creating valuable content is a key step to ensuring that your business stands out in the field.	
Amplifying Your Content	J. Nichole Smith
Once you've created great content, you need to find as many (easy and preferably automated) ways of using it to draw customers to your sales funnel as possible. Amplifying your content by using various high-powered platforms can make all the difference.	
Creating Conversations	J. Nichole Smith
How do you get a client to choose you, click your button, agree to book you and 'make the sale'? There is a specific process that provides the biggest bang for the buck, and Nichole helps define how you can use the tools and processes in this course to your business' financial benefit.	
Measuring & Improving Your Marketing	J. Nichole Smith
You've made the sale, you have a happy customer base, and now you need to continue to grow. Measuring the marketing and impact you've had is a huge piece of the puzzle and one that's very often minimized by those failing to grow year after year. Utilize the knowledge, skills, and resources you've already developed so that they have longevity and lead to longer-term success.	