

## Tips on Finding A Trainer

- Ask your vet, groomer, pet stores, for whom they would recommend
- Have a list of your questions ready to ask when you call them--they should be able to answer every question without hesitation
- **Obvious questions:** cost, package options, availability, qualifications (what do they do in order to keep up on their skills), what type of methods do they use? what type of after support do they give after all the lessons have been completed? What vaccines do they require you to have if you are in a group setting? They should be the same as what I require here at the kennels.
- **Other questions:** Can you sit in on a class and observe before committing? I think this is really important whether or not you do a group class or private sessions. You will see how the trainer deals with the people and their dogs and get a good idea of their methods. A confident trainer should not be bothered by this but may set rules of your participation in the class so that you are not taking up paying clients class time
- **Things to look for:** did the trainer explain and demonstrate the exercise clearly? Did they give any one on one in the group setting? Did the other owners and their dogs seem to really enjoy them selves during the class? Was there structure? Was it organized or chaotic? Did they provide handouts on the training done in that session? Do they know more than one way to teach a command? For example I remember I had a rescue dog here once that I had to try several different ways to get him to stop jumping up on people as the most common methods ways did not work.
- **Things to think about:** Is this trainer approachable and willing to work within your goals that you set out or are they running their own agenda?
- **What a trainer should never do to you or your dog:** be verbally abusive to you or your dog, use harsh physical punishment on your dog, should never "guarantee" that his or her teachings will 100% work. There are way too many different breed characteristics and variables involved to make any sort of guarantee. They should never take on something that they are not comfortable with. If they don't know the answer they should be honest with you and will find out or will refer you to another trainer if what your goals are, are beyond their skill set
- **How do you know if you have found a good trainer?** A good trainer will make you feel at ease and you will be comfortable with their methods and how they are teaching you and your dog. If you are not comfortable with the methods of the trainer you should seek elsewhere. Go with your gut!