



PROOFING & GENERALIZATION

SUCCESS RELIES ON 3 THINGS ...

- **1/3 TRAINING:** Teaching the command
- **1/3 PROOFING:** Working through and practicing around distractions
- **1/3 GENERALIZATION:** Working in different environments and teaching context.

TRAINING

Training is the process of teaching the dog how to properly execute a command, skill, or behavior. There are a variety of training principles which can be utilized to teach the dog. Training is about function and association between command and behavior.

PROOFING

You're dog just learned how to "stay!", that's great! However, your dog has not truly mastered the command unless they can do it regardless of the distractions around them. Adding distractions, and working your dog through the difficulties of them, is called "proofing". This process brings resilience to your dog's skills!

Each command needs to be taught - and initially we are just focusing on going through the motions. Once the dog can consistently respond to the command, we slowly add and increase the distraction level. In order to successfully incorporate more distractions, you will have to set the dog up to learn. Plan your training accordingly by working through lower distractions first, building to higher challenges.

GENERALIZATION

Dogs do not easily take training concepts and apply them in a variety of settings. Dogs actually think in quite a singular fashion and take information at face value. You have to teach your dog, and re-teach them in a variety of settings and environments in order for them to truly understand a command.

New environments can be over-stimulating, intimidating, or overwhelming for some dogs. Work on simple and well rehearsed skills first when in a new environment, before advancing to more complex behaviors. Your dog needs to practice their skills in at least 5 different environments before they can adapt their skills to different context.

⚠ Training "on the go" is one of the more common mistakes. Make sure to take the time to teach and re-teach commands in a variety of environments with different distractions!

⚠ **Training or behavior?** Make sure to reward your dog not just for responding, but for doing so while calm and/or confident! Try shaping the behavior by only rewarding BETTER responses!