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ACQUIREMENT OF DOGS WITH PREVIOUS BITING INCIDENTS FOR POLICE DOG WORK

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History

- In the last 7 years we have housed 24 dogs
 - Belgian Malinois (22)
 - Dutch Shepherd (1)
 - German Shepherd (1)
- The owner wanted to re-home there dog for following reason:
 - Aggressive behaviour towards the family
 - Aggressive behaviour towards strangers
 - Temperament



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IT'S NOT THE SIZE OF THE DOG IN THE FIGHT, IT'S THE SIZE OF THE FIGHT IN THE DOG
(Tivani 2004)

History

- Regardless of other factors being related to the biting incidents, all dog had two possible training ways in common in the past
 1. Triggering high level of arousal and then using positive punishment to keep the dog under control
 2. A poorly structured impulse control training inducing a high degree of frustration and conflict and therefore redirected aggression

History



Personality

- S. Gosling and co-workers have found that some dimensions of personality are common across a wide range of species
 - E = Extraversion vs. Introversion
 - N = Neuroticism vs. Emotional Stability
 - A = Agreeableness vs. Antagonism

Personality

- E = Extraversion vs. Introversion
 - Sociability, Assertiveness, Activity, Positive Emotion
- N = Neuroticism vs. Emotional Stability
 - Anxiety, Depression, Vulnerability to Stress, Moodiness
- A lot of Malinois are high in:
 - Activity, Assertiveness, Anxiety, Vulnerability to Stress

C. Kiff et al. 2011

- In their paper Kiff et al. point out the relation between temperament and education on one hand and behaviour problems on the other hand
- Beside other findings, one was very important for us:
 - “These results indicate that for children low in effortful control, greater guidance by mothers predicted better adjustment.”

Training

- Our training program is mostly based on 6 main points:
 1. Evaluation of the training level and the underlying emotion of every single signal
 - Check out for frustration and fear
 2. Management
 - Kennel housing and muzzle training



Training

3. Controlling every resource the dog would like to have – teaching the dog to earn every resource during training
 - Check out for subjective resource value (Bradshaw 2009)
4. Avoiding positive punishment in the training.
 - Not just for animal welfare reason
 - The dog already knows to avoid punishment

Training

5. A highly structured training program based on positive reinforcement
 - Very seldom using shaping as a training method
 - Due to their history the dogs hardly offer behaviour→ Low rate of reinforcement leads to:
 - Frustration → Aggression
 - Loss of the dogs attention → Loss of control

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Training

6. Most important: train the dog to act with an "external reward"
- Learn to cope with a competing motivation
 - Cooperation is the easiest/only way to get resource of high value



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Thank you for your attention!



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