

## Kelly Krager

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**From:** Aidan, Positive Petzine [editor@positivepetzine.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 11, 2007 3:10 PM  
**To:** Kelly Krager  
**Subject:** [positivepetzine] Leadership qualities that dogs respect

Hi Kelly, what qualities do dogs look for in their leaders? Adopt these 3 simple qualities to turn Sophie's behavior around almost literally overnight!

It probably won't surprise you to learn that dogs look for the same leadership qualities that people look for - **consistent** leaders who **lead by example** and who **reward good behavior**.

1. Consistency: communication between different species is not an easy task, especially when one species can talk and the other can't! Inconsistency makes that task all the more difficult. By adopting consistent behaviors in yourself, setting consistent boundaries, and keeping some sort of consistent routine - your dog will have an easier job of figuring out what you expect.
2. Lead by example: dogs tend to mimic our actions. Don't rely on them interpreting our intentions correctly. If we yell at our dog for being aggressive, this can lead to more aggression from our dog. They don't necessarily understand that we are angry and upset with their actions, they just follow our lead. When we learn calm approaches to dealing with this sort of problem, our lead is followed with calmness in return.

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3. Reward good behaviour: behavior that is effectively rewarded tends to increase or continue. Therefore it makes sense to reward the behavior we want to see in our dogs. In the same way we get paid to work, our dogs expect to be paid too. Life in the pack works that way; food, security, shelter, play and social contact are the rewards dogs work for. Whilst our pet dogs get most of this stuff for free, it makes sense to ask them to do *something* to earn it, no matter how simple the task. Asking a dog to sit before letting it outside, or asking for a short 'stay' before being fed are two simple examples.

By adopting these 3 qualities and making them habits in your day to day interaction with Sophie, you will see positive changes in your relationship. Dogs do respect these qualities and respond in kind with faithful companionship.

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