

HOA Dog Leash Policy

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to relate the way we were able to use communication to solve a group problem for our group project. Our goal was to select a problem, and then, together as a group, find a solution that is best suited for all the parties that would be affected by our solution. The task required the use of communications skills, which are described in detail in the Methods section of our report.

The problem that we chose to solve was establishing a policy for pet owners in an HOA complex where there was a commons area that is shared by both children and dogs. This is a very serious problem as it is the only place for dogs in the complex to exercise and the safety of the others could be at risk.

We used various methods of communication to establish what the actual problem was. We then brainstormed as many possible solutions to the problem as we could. After that we communicated the pros and cons of each solution and how it would affect the homeowners. The best fit solution for this problem that we were able to identify is that all dogs should be required to be on leashes in the commons area. This provides a necessary level of protection and safety to the other homeowners and children in the complex, but it also gives the dogs the ability to be out and exercising in the commons area as well.

Project Description

As a group, we chose to take on the challenge of solving a problem in which homeowners in an HOA shared a common area with a playground and grassy area. The problem is that some of the homeowners have dogs and the common area is the only place for them to run and exercise, but this area is also used by non-dog owners with small children who use the playground.

Our purpose is to create a solution that provides peace of mind and safety to non-dog owners and that also respects the rights of the dog owners. It is so important for us to solve this problem so that we can create a safe place for the homeowners to enjoy the common area.

Methods

We used the creative thinking process to arrive at our solution. The purpose of the creative thinking process is to brainstorm possible solutions for a problem. While using this process you may come up with ridiculous ideas, but the point is creativity. It is a good idea that you come up with many solutions so that you have everything that you can think of that could be the solution.

Most of the actual analyzing started in meeting two. Each person had studied a certain part of our problem. The different parts were: characteristics, stakeholders, history, and policies and politics. Basically what we got out of all of this were the things that people had tried to do in the past, who will be involved in the future and what rules need to be in place.

In the next meeting we began brainstorming for what we wanted the solution to be. The main six that we came up with were; leashes, fencing, invisible fencing, banning certain breeds, first come first serve in the common area. We then proceeded to organize our criteria and our ideas in our chart (which can be found in appendix 2). The idea that we decided the criteria applied to the best was to have the pet owners have leashes on their dogs at all times.

- **Part I: [P= Problem]**
 - How can parents and dog owners be reasonably accommodated by the condo association, so everyone is satisfied with usage privileges and safety in the commons area?
- **Part II: [A = Analyze the problem]**
 - Characteristics: the symptom of the problem is that parents fear that dogs will injure their children.

- Stakeholders: The stakeholders are pet owners, and non-pet owners. The pet owners want to be able to have their pets on the complex, the non-pet owners want to be able to use the common areas without having to fear for their children's safety.
- History: The main thing that history has taught us is that it is much harder to take dogs away from owners than it would have been to ban them altogether and that people have tender feelings for their pets. The courts system has lately sympathized more with the dog owners than the people who do not have dogs so getting rid of the dogs is not the solution.
- Policies and Politics: According to Utah law, individual municipalities, cities, complexes and even parks can determine whether or not a leash is required on dogs.
- **Part III: [C=Criteria]** List the criteria you'll use to evaluate your proposed solutions.
 - Our general goal was to create a solution that will satisfy both the pet owners and the parents concerned for their children.
 - The seven criteria were:
 - apply principles of effective communication that we are learning in the class.
 - be achievable within our four week time frame.
 - cost less than \$300 .
 - have a compromise that is fair to both pet owners and non-pet owners.
 - have the safety of both animals and home owners children as a priority.
 - abide by known laws pertaining to this subject
 - solve most of the problems that we have researched
- **Part IV: [B=Brainstorm]**
 - Our brainstorm ideas:
 - Leashes

- Fencing
 - Invisible Fencing
 - Ban Certain Breeds
 - First come First Serve in the Common Area
- **Part V: [O = Organize]**
 - What we did was went down the list of the ideas we had and looked at how realistic they were and ended up with the five.
 - We basically used the chart that was given as an example. We started with each criterion and went down the list of ideas.
 - It excels over the other solutions because it applied to all the criteria.
 - We came up with five contingencies. The first was if the city has a pet law that takes precedence over the complex that they would abide by anyways. To solve this we will look at the rules that the state has for pet rules. The next was if the owner still loses control over their dog then it could still be dangerous. To solve this we will have to come up with a specific consequence, such as a \$50 fine. Another one was who will enforce the rule. We decided that Homeowners have the responsibility to report any violations and the committee will evaluate if it needs to have a consequence. The last one was that what will be the consequences for breaking the rule. We decided a fine would be the best way to solve this problem.
 - **Part VI: [Y = Yes we can!]**
 - We will post signs that state the fine, and also pass out letters that state that the members of the complex have the responsibility to report any violations. The board will then evaluate the complaints.

Conclusion

Our team of four in Comm1010 chose to require dog owners to keep their dogs on leashes at all times while in the commons areas in order to avoid any possible risk of dogs interfering with the play of the children. We think this is a common sense approach to solving the issue at hand.

Our recommendation is that the condominium association gets together and discusses how it can implement the regulation and assess fines to those who do not abide by this rule. We believe that this will allow for communication and discussion among all residents so that they can feel that their opinion is being addressed. We also feel that this will be the least expensive solution to the problem at hand.

Works Cited

<http://doglaw.hugpug.com>

<http://ccfj.net/HOACNNtastepolice.com>

http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/09/22/2010-09-

[22_no_paws_in_doggy_debate_board_meets_on_pupposterous_rules.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/09/22/2010-09-22_no_paws_in_doggy_debate_board_meets_on_pupposterous_rules.html)

<http://riverandpines.org/rules.htm>

Adler&Elmhorst.Communicating at Work (pp248-250)

Appendix 1: Team Contract

Task 1: Team Contract	
Develop Relational Norms (3 or more) (see Table 8-5)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We commit to putting group goals above personal goals, so we will each make the time to participate fully in each step of this project. 2. Maintain communication throughout the project 3. We commit to coming up with ideas BEFORE the next meeting.
Develop Task Norms (3 or more) (see Table 8-5)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If we have to miss a meeting, we will email our info to all members at least one day in advance. 2. Getting assignments done early. 3. Have group review assignments before submission
Assign Relational Roles (see Table 8-3) You may assign multiple roles to members.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation Encourager- Jordan Short 2. Empathetic Listener- Ashley Wagstaff 3. Seth Christensen- Scheduling 4. Praise Giver- Seth Christensen 5. Evaluator of emotional climate- Cydnee Savas 6. Tension Reliever- Seth Christensen 7. Harmonizer- Chris Bylund
Assign Task Roles (see Table 8-3) You may assign a leader [recommended] or you may rotate leadership.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information or opinion giver - Jordan Short 2. Completing Meeting Documents- Chris Bylund 3. Information or opinion seeker- Chris Bylund 4. Starter or energizer- Ashley Wagstaff 5. Summarizer- Chris bylund 6. Reality Tester- Seth Christensen 7. Gatekeeper- Jordan Short 8. Direction Giver- Jordan Short

Appendix 2: Comparison Chart

	Leashes	Fencing	Invisible Fencing	Ban Certain Breeds	First Come First Serve
Effective Comm.	0	0	0	1	1
Take 4 Weeks	5	3	2	1	4
Less Than \$300	5	4	3	5	5
Compromise	5	5	5	0	3
Safety	5	5	5	5	5
Totals:	20	17	15	12	18

Appendix 3: Participation Points

Members (Last name, First name)	Points	Justification for this allocation
Chris Bylund	11	Took eniciative to submit assignments
Seth Christensen	10	Did as expected.
Ashley Wagstaff	10	Did as expected.
Jordan Short	9	Missed a Meeting, but did complete her assignments.