A Balancing Act

Decision-Making Process in Animal Sheltering and Shelter Medicine

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Key Factors Influencing Decisions
Basis for Decision Making

**Veterinarian**
- The Patient
- Veterinary Medicine is a Discipline
- Veterinary Practice Standards
- Veterinary Code of Ethics

**Manager**
- The Problem
- Management is a Science & an Art
- Federal, State, & Local Law
- County Policy
Focus
Focus

The Shelter Veterinarian
- Mission
  - Animal Health
  - Animal Welfare
- The Patient
  - Individual vs Herd
- Shelter Medicine
- One Health Initiative

The Shelter Manager
- Mission
  - Animal Care
  - Public Safety
- The Problem
- The Organization
  - The Shelter
  - The County System
- The Community
Conflicts?
“You cannot solve a problem from the same consciousness that created it. You must learn to see the world anew”

-- Albert Einstein
DACC Solution

shared leadership
Shared Leadership

Maximizing all of the human resources in an organization by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise.
How to Share Leadership

Create a Culture
1) Give power away
2) Define limits
3) Cultivate initiative
4) Allow autonomy

Support Your Leaders
- Don’t second guess decisions
- Be a resource
- Follow-up
- Hold self and others accountable

Walk the Talk
- When do I speak?
- When do I listen?
- How do we reach resolutions together?
Create a Culture

Shared Leadership
Create a Culture...

- Give power away to the most qualified individuals to strengthen their capabilities.

1. **Give Power Away**

   Give power away to the most qualified individuals to strengthen their capabilities.
2. Define Limits

Define the limits of decision-making power.

Are you the most qualified person available to make this decision?

Does the decision need to be made now?

The “Just Do It” Card

Ask these questions:

- Is it legal and ethical?
- Is it good for my customer?
- Am I willing to be held accountable for it?
- Is it consistent with our shared vision?

If the answer to the 4 questions above is “yes,” don’t ask for permission—you already have it!

Just do it!
Create a Culture...

3. Cultivate Initiative

Cultivate a climate in which people feel free to take initiative on assignments.

Climate is the way it feels to work in a group, “the way we do things here.”

The most critical influencer of workplace climate is the work unit leader – the direct supervisor.

Critical Message for Work Unit Leaders

- Know your staff & establish a good working relationship with them.
- Know yourself, what you value, how you behave under stress
- Provide challenge, clarity & support to your staff.
Create a Culture...

4. Allow discretion and autonomy

Give qualified people discretion and autonomy over their tasks and resources and encourage them to use these tools.
Support Your Leaders

Shared Leadership
Support Your Leaders

- Don’t second guess the decisions of those you have empowered to make decisions.
- Consider yourself a resource rather than the manager.
- Set appropriate follow-up meetings to review progress and take corrective action if necessary.
shared leadership

Walk the Talk

Shared Leadership
Walk the Talk

- When do I speak?
- When do I listen?
- How do we reach resolutions together?
How did we apply Shared Leadership?

County of Los Angeles, Department of Animal Care and Control
Implementation

How we prepared our leaders
Visioning Session
Communication Workshop
Shared Leadership Workshops
Monthly Meetings

How we supported our leaders
Gave Power Away
Defined Limits
Redirection Toward Solutions
Supported Decisions
Provided Resources
Integration → Inclusion

• Partnership between operations and technical leaders.

• Result?
  • Improved Communication
  • Collaborative Efforts
  • Improved Climate
Moving Forward at DACC

Shared Leadership
shared leadership @ LAC DACC
Beyond the Veterinarians and Managers

Expanding Shared Leadership to all Staff

The Harmony Project

• Purpose:
  • To create a happy, harmonious working environment
  • Where employees are able to express their dedication to and love for their work.
  • To create a destination people want to come to for assistance, education, adoption and care.
  • Where employees remain proud of the wonderful work they do.
Key Take-Aways

- Operational and Technical Decision-makers
- Conflicts may arise
- Communicate to share, communicate to understand
- Share the leadership, share the goals
- Leadership is not in the position being held
- Feedback is important
Resources


Photos


• Slide 3: Amanda Jones, Pug Head, obtained March 9, 2017 from https://www.pinterest.com/aboutpug/the-pug-head-tilt/


• Slide 5: Obtained March 9, 2017 from shutterstock.com

• Slide 7: Foreigncurrencydirect, Obtained March 9, 2017 from http://www.currencies.co.uk/articles/market-reports/sterling-crashes-gdp/your-way-my-way-jll/

• Slide 9: Obtained March 9, 2017 from http://www.spinnerpr.com

• Slide 14: Obtained March 9, 2017 from https://mzsunflower.blog/author/mzsunflower/page/52/

• Slide 18: From Dilbert.com, DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com
Questions?

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