



## AZA Animal Training Guiding Principles

The guiding principles outlines the philosophical approach to Animal Training within AZA and puts some guide rails on how AZA Professional Development Courses teach this topic.

- » Animal training is taught based on the foundation of behavioral science and evidence- based practices.
- » Terminology used is based on the AZA Behavior SAG terms list. While member organizations or other groups often develop or utilize other terms or may apply terms differently, AZA courses rely on this terms list and their definitions for consistency and clarity in the context of the course.
- » Courses acknowledge that animal learning is happening all the time through both classical and operant conditioning.
- » AZA facilities should be focused on utilizing positive reinforcement, one aspect of operant conditioning, as the primary method of training. It is important to understand the other aspects of operant conditioning and their use in regards to animal welfare and safety considerations.
- » Animal training is one aspect of a broader animal welfare and behavioral husbandry program.
- » There is an AZA framework that is used for designing and maintaining training programs to set goals and maintain consistent processes. This framework tool consists of goal setting, planning, implementation, documentation, evaluation and readjustment.