



Standard Operating Procedures

Objective: Take a dive into your existing Standard Operating Procedures or...dip your toe into the process of creating them!

Content: Creating Standardized Operating Procedures (SOP's) for your business is an essential element to ensuring the financial and operational success of your business. Ensuring a consistent pet and customer experience is the primary means to building trust and loyalty, which leads to customer growth and retention.

The value of having well written SOP's provides a way to communicate and apply consistent standards and practices within your organization. By putting all procedures in writing you provide a reference document for what's to be done, why it's important and in some detail how it is to be accomplished.

This Lunch and Learn can take a few different directions depending on the status of your SOP manual. It is designed to help encourage the team to use and update your existing SOP's. If you do not have SOP's, use this as an opportunity to get started!

Prior to Lunch & Learn Session:

- Review the content of this activity to ensure you are comfortable presenting the material.
- Prepare your thoughts to share with the team on the importance of this topic.
- Print a copy of the "Top Ten" in the resources section below for the leader to utilize during the activity.
- Evaluate the status of your SOP Manual. Determine the path you want to take with this activity.
 - Complete and actively used
 - Complete and not actively used
 - Incomplete or not started
- Have a printed copy of your SOP Manual (if available).
 - Need help getting started on your manual? Check out The Dog Gurus Standard Operating Procedures Template on our website!

During Lunch & Learn Session:

- Open with your thoughts on why you chose this topic for today.
- Continue with one of the directions below:
 - If complete and actively followed: Do a quick review of the "Top Ten" to remind the team of the SOP's importance. Discuss any improvements/updates that need to be made and delegate those tasks to the team with due dates.
 - If complete but not actively used: Spend time on the "Top Ten" to help the team understand the importance of the document. Have a discussion on the objections/hurdles they have to using the SOP manual.

- Incomplete or not started: Define SOP's for the team. Review the "Top Ten" to help them know why they are important. Creating SOP's is a project the entire team can help get started. Delegate sections/tasks for each team members to write the first draft. Management can use these initial drafts to get started on the final product.
- Close by encouraging team members to reach out to their manager if they need additional guidance.

Pro Tip: New hires make ideal testing grounds for the effectiveness of SOPs. If the documented steps enable the new employee to complete the task, the procedures are sound. If any steps are unclear, confusing or no longer in use, the SOP should be updated.

Resources:

The Dog Gurus Top 10 Reasons Why You Should Follow Standard Operating Procedures:

1. To support our quality goals: Producing high quality results for our customers is vital to our success. Using our SOPs ensures that each member of the team has a clear understanding of the expected outcome of each task and service in our business.
2. Ensure consistent quality results: A consistent pet and customer experience is the primary means to building trust and loyalty, which leads to customer growth and retention. We need this to be successful!
3. Enables us to delegate work: When a standard operating procedure is working well, we can delegate the work a broader range of team members when needed.
4. Ensures efficiency: We want to work smarter, not harder.
5. Save time and reduce mistakes: Not all errors can be avoided. We are human, but following procedures significantly reduces the likelihood of making a mistake and that saves us all time.
6. A staff training tool: New team members will get trained faster and more effectively than just verbal instruction. Doesn't that sound great!?!?
7. Allow for cross training of staff: Use the SOP's to learn new skills or teach others new skills. Cross training allows us to be more flexible with delegating tasks when needed.
8. Eliminate staff drama over who and how it's to be done: Nuff said!
9. As Employee Performance Review standards of measure: It puts everyone on a level playing field when it comes to review time because we are measuring from one standard.
10. Create a safer work environment for the pets and human at our business!

Need help getting started on your Standard Operating Procedures Manual? Check out our template at thedoggurus.com