

# Better than a Mission Statement

## Our Strategic Vision

Almost every business has a mission statement. Unfortunately, once those mission statements are created and shared, they are almost always forgotten, and have little if anything to do with everyone's day-to-day work.

Thankfully, this isn't a "mission statement." It's a strategic vision – meaning it can actually be followed into the future. The main difference is that we can all relate to it and act on it with our daily work.

It's designed to let us all know how we fit into the Gold Country Pet Resort story in meaningful ways. It will be used on a regular basis – by everyone – as a guide for who we serve best, how we serve them best, and why it is truly worthwhile to work here.

It is important that we all clearly understand not just our work, but exactly how that impacts our customer's lives. We have to know how our actions will improve the happiness and quality of life of our customers and their dogs. Not only do we need to know it, we need to communicate it with our actions.

We're excited about this vision and we hope you will be too. Thanks for taking the time to read it, and we hope you find your place in it.

## **Who We Should Serve Best**

The type of customer that we should serve best is just like Bob and Gina. They live about 9 miles from our facility and dearly loves their dogs Oscar and BeBe. In fact, they love them so much that they consider them part of their family! And because Bob and Gina are conscientious owners, they are willing to be picky regarding who helps take care of them.

Our best customers, like Bob and Gina, are willing to be educated, and really want two main things from us: 1) Peace of Mind and 2) Outstanding Service.

## **Peace of Mind**

When we say "peace of mind" that means something very specific. Peace of mind means the ability to relax - to really relax. Our customers want to know that their dog is in the best hands, getting the best treatment, and having a blast. They want to know that as a dog owner they are doing the best they can for their dog and it matters. It means knowing they can trust us.

In building that trust, we really get to know our customers and their pets. We know what they do and what they like. We congratulate them on personal and professional victories, and we care about their setbacks.

In getting to know customers like Bob and Gina on this level, we can better anticipate their needs and be ready to serve those needs...even before they ask. We can also recommend care and services for Bob and Gina that they might not be aware of. This keeps their pets in peak health and happiness.

The other aspect of peace of mind is that we listen - carefully. And we answer questions with professionalism and courtesy. We take our customers concerns to heart, and want to let them know that we are interested in understanding and solving those concerns more than looking good. If something can be made better, we're on it!

Outstanding service can sound like a marketing term but at Gold Country Pet Resort & Training Center, we really mean it. The Bob and Gina's of the world have a certain expectation - thoughts about how things should go, and the results they really want to see. And it's our job to deliver consistently and professionally.

### **How We Serve Them Best**

Now let's talk service. This means that our customer's dog is happy. They think to themselves, "My dog is having as good a time or better than I am" while they are here. Our goal is to have everything our customers need. But it doesn't end there. Having options available is good, but it only becomes excellent when the way those services are provided and priced, exceeds expectations.

In doing that, we have to have excellent service, products, and professionals. But we also have to have a culture that inspires everyone to think ahead, and to consider what might be important to any particular client. Perhaps it's just a reassuring phone call or an unexpected gift at checkout...whatever it is, it's found by paying attention to our customers' needs and acting in meaningful ways.

### **Bob and Gina's Caribbean Vacation**

It wasn't too long ago that Bob and Gina and several of their friends decided to go on a vacation to the Caribbean. Bob had been there as a college student but always wanted to go back. But the busyness of life had always gotten in the way. Now, he and his wife Gina decided it was finally time. Ciao!

As they were happily planning her dream vacation, 3 weeks in the Caribbean, choosing the right hotels, organizing the activities, deciding which restaurants, they was suddenly struck with an overwhelming feeling of guilt.

Why? She was supposed to be excited and happy - but suddenly that all seemed to disappear. It was the thought of her dogs. Would they have as good a time as Bob and Gina? Would they be happy and well cared for? Would they be safe. They had just

adopted a new dog that was having some adjustment issues. What kind of owner's would they be if they left this to chance?

At this point they had not yet come to be a customer at Gold Country Pet Resort and Training Center and just tried to make do with what she could find in the way of dog care. She was not very happy. And with this trip in the planning stages, she promised herself that this time would be different - very different.

### **How They Found Us**

Bob and Gina found us through our state of the art customer care system. We pride ourselves with being in communication with our customers. And it turns out that a twice per month communication is just what our customers want. Our automated system helps keep them up on events and specials, in addition to the facts of their dog's most recent visits and other account information they want to know.

In our system, we will occasionally send out a request for referrals where we offer a great discount on the services our customers most use and value. In fact, we send them an email perfectly designed so that they can just forward it to a few friends while they are thinking about it. We found that if a referral system is not easy and convenient, it will likely not work. And since referrals are the #1 way we grow, we had to get this right.

Our customers' friends get a great looking email, and if the friend uses the offer, then the referring customer gets a discount as well. Customers with the most referrals get special end of year rewards and accolades. We call it the "Top Dog Contest" where our top 10 referring clients of the year get priority booking and discounts off services. Yes, they love it!

That's how we first met Bob and Gina. Her neighbor had been a long time customer of ours and upon getting the email, she forwarded it to them.

That email took Bob and Gina to a special, private web page that told the story, our story, a short version of this strategic vision, of how we do what we do. As Bob and Gina read the page and saw the heartwarming images, she thought to herself, "This is exactly what I need for our dogs...now how do I get started?"

The page, anticipating her desire, ended with a specific call to action and a complimentary article of interest to Bob and Gina regarding safe dog play.

She was so excited about the expertise and professionalism that she used the page to register for a free tour. And shortly thereafter she got a call from us to confirm and to gather a few more details - making sure she knew what the visit would be like and how to find us easily.

### **Lifelong Relationships**

As you can see, we want to start the relationship on the right footing, so that long term trust can be established. Our best customers become a part of our family, and we become a part of theirs. We're not just another stop on the to-do list. We care and we know them and their dogs, and they value us for that. We want them to continue being customers through generations of family dogs – customers for life (their life) is our goal.

Because Bob and Gina's travel plans were coming up soon, they needed to take the tour soon. On the day of her appointment, she pulled up in the parking lot, and we were ready.

### **The Tour**

Bob and Gina arrived anxiously, but soon was put at ease by the peacefulness around her. There was no barking. Everything was quiet...everyone just seemed...content. While the road was a little scary, the views around them had been incredible. As they tentatively opened the office door, Bob and Gina were greeted like family by a staff member. They were welcomed with a smile and a gentle touch, and offered a refreshing beverage while she waited for the tour to begin. She even thought to herself about how great the place smelled due to our simmer pot that creates a uniquely clean, fresh smell that doesn't smell like animals. In fact she said, "Oh wow! It doesn't smell like animals are here!"

The tour guide arrived right on time, and spent a few minutes getting to know Bob and Gina and hearing about her dogs. They began with a quick stop on the outside of the main run yards, so Bob and Gina, could hear the history of Gold Country Pet Resort & Training Center and why we do what we do. We then commented to ensure the customer noticed how extremely quiet and peaceful it was. We want our customer to notice that we are different because we don't have a building full of barking dogs. We then proceed to Marco's Mansion for the short tour of a kennel building. We explain to the customer that we won't stay in there and talk as it is not fair to our boarding guests. We strive to keep things stress free, so that is why we limit tours to pick up and drop off times so that they understand that the reason for limited hours is to ensure the calm atmosphere that exists here during the day. Marco's Mansion looks like the entry to a hallway of a hotel that people would stay at! Bob and Gina marvel at not seeing kennels but seeing normal walls and a hallway with doors, just like at home. The look and smell of everything is extremely clean, and our buildings are in excellent shape. As soon as Bob and Gina were in there though, some dogs started barking. This only served to reinforce what they had been told about why they only allow pickup and drop-offs twice a day...everytime a stranger was present in the kennel, be it new dog or human, the dogs reacted to it and the noise erupted. By limiting that time, while slightly inconvenient for them, they realized their dogs would have a much more peaceful stay. Bob and Gina can tell by the condition of the buildings and the play areas that her dogs will be safe and secure.

After visiting Marco's mansion, Bob and Gina were very impressed with the cleanliness and professionalism we showed. It was explained to them that dogs receiving training from the trainers stayed in Marco's mansion, while the dogs that were just boarding

stayed down at Hexe's Hideaway. They then were taken back into the office and shown the camera's that monitored the expansion area (Hexe's Hideaway) and they could see exactly where their dog would be staying. They were disappointed that they couldn't go right down there, but understood the need to keep strangers away from the dogs. They were thrilled to know that everything was monitored by camera at all times. They were thrilled to see the dogs playing in the yards associated with that area. It was explained to them that keeping smaller groups of dogs together, they were able to keep the dogs calmer. They were so impressed that every detail that they saw was designed for the dogs' peace of mind. And they were both thinking in the back of their mind, "This is THE place!". They were also thinking about their newest addition to their house and the training issues they were having. They thought this might be a place that could help them solve those issues as well. They booked their reservation.

The day before the dogs' first day stay, she automatically received an email that gave her a breakdown of what to expect on that first day, service explanations, costs, and policies. These are written in plain language so that everyone can easily understand them. Bob and Gina really liked this upfront, clear information about costs and services. And the bond of trust took another step forward.

#### **FIRST STAY:**

All their documentation and contracts were done ahead of their first stay so that when they check in we can be extremely efficient when we check the dogs in and deal with any separation anxiety that the owner may be experiencing. Bob and Gina are relaxed when checking in their dogs because they know that they have already provided all documentation requested and that their only focus is on ensuring a smooth transition for their dogs. They are excited to be going on vacation but understandably nervous (even though they are confident in their choice of us, leaving their beloved pet is not easy, and we know that). They have three dogs. Two are best friends and good with other social dogs. The third dog is a new dog they just rescued thinking it would be a great fit. Unfortunately they have had some fights and had to keep the dogs separated while they work through things. They are really nervous that a staff member might forget which dogs can be together and in social time. They know it will be a fight if their third dog is placed with the other two and expect that would happen if they put that dog with any other boarding dogs. They considered putting her at a different kennel altogether, but there wasn't another one that they liked as much as ours. Their nerves are causing them to be worried about their decision.

They are pleased to be reassured that their pets are in good hands and that the policies in place would prevent the third dog from getting near the other two. They are reassured once again, how seriously we take safety and how much we recognize that not all dogs get along. They leave for their trip confident about the care their pets will receive. While they are away, they get to see photos of their pets enjoying their daily

activities which are always photo documented to assure the pets parents that we do what we say we will do. Bob and Gina can go to facebook (or other social media) to see their pets photos updates at least 2-3 days a week. They see their dogs happy in the photos and enjoying all the activities that they signed up for. They relax even more and start really enjoying their vacation because they are assured that their pets are enjoying their vacation. They can see that their really friendly pets are enjoying the social interaction with the other dogs. They also see that their newest pet that is not so friendly is never with those dogs. They are much more confident about their safety knowing that each pets special needs are being met.

Because the clients had indicated in their first meeting that they had concerns about the road that they drove in on (they had transplanted from the bay area and were not as used to our country roads as the locals) they had signed up for drop off service, in addition to having baths prior to going home. When the van pulled up at their house they were so excited to see their dogs. As excited as they were they were impressed with the drivers knowledge of their particular needs and instead of immediately getting them their dogs, they were asked which dog they would like first to see; so that they could see one (or two) first and then secure them before seeing the one that didn't get along with the others. This made for a very safe transition home and they were so happy to realize that every staff member knew of their dogs safety concerns and were tending to them.

### **TRAINING (first visit):**

Sometime after returning from their vacation and getting settled back in, Bob and Gina finally make it in for training. As happy as they were with the boarding facilities when they were here, they hadn't mentioned that they had seen a previous trainer who recommended considering some pretty harsh methods with their newest dog with potentially euthanasia as a possibility because he was so "dominant". The dog had actually bitten that trainer. Apparently the trainer let this dog near another dog and then corrected him for being aggressive to that dog. The dog turned and bit the trainer. Because we hadn't let him around other dogs, we had not seen that level of dog aggression in him...we saw some aggression which we identified as likely an underlying fear based/uncertainty. Bob and Gina had fallen in love with the dog despite the issues and weren't willing to put him down, and were wary that they might hear such negative assessments again. Unfortunately, the owners accidentally let this dog through the wrong door and he got into a fight with one of their other dogs. They were terrified for both of their dogs who had some minor injuries but would heal. They knew that now they must seek some professional help but they were terrified that the only answer was to put down the dog...they had never dealt with dog aggression before.

They made it on to the training field and were immediately at peace when awed by the tremendous 360 degree views. They felt calmer, more peaceful. Their dog was happy to see the trainer who he recognized from his stay (because of his status, he was on a “trainer only” handling). The dog greeted the trainer happily and this was reassuring to his parents. They carefully went over the history at which point the owners reluctantly confessed to the earlier omitted bite. They were reassured that they were not going to be judged. A careful assessment was made (without any other dogs around) and a training program was put into place after careful discussion about safety issues around the house. The owners queried about how they could be placed on this program when the trainer hadn’t seen them with another dog...they wanted the trainer to see the full picture. They were assured that that was going to happen. That in this trainers viewpoint, it is OUR responsibility as humans to TEACH our dogs what to be and to set them up for success, not failure. Bringing another dog out in that session just to “see” what would happen would be unkind on all fronts. We needed to put some tools in place prior to putting the dog in an uncomfortable situation when we knew that he would fail in it. We discussed that it was our job to not just “correct” the symptom (the dog lunging at other dogs) but to understand WHY the dog was lunging and to solve the underlying issue not just the symptom. The people were very relieved and promised to do their homework. They were a bit overwhelmed with all the information but delighted to find out that they could view video’s of their new skills that they learned today online and that they could download their handout from their also. They appreciated the approach and were so relieved to have met someone with understanding and who loved their dog despite his “flaws” and who could help him work through those problems without being mean to him. They so appreciated that they were helped to understand certain characteristics of this particular breed and WHY he was acting the way he was and how to thoughtfully solve the problems.

They were concerned however, about their ability to adequately communicate to the dog all the new things that the trainer was telling them. They were encouraged to give it a week or so and see how they felt about it. They were relieved to find out that if they felt that they were in over their heads, they could have the dog stay at the facility and go through the program with a trainer. They had heard that, but now they were confident that they could do it and the dog would not be beaten into submission, but rather a calm, thoughtful approach would be taken. They also learned that they could do all the basics themselves and if along the way there needed more intensive training we would be able to adjust to handle that. They were thrilled and relieved.

### **Fun Training Opportunities for All Dogs**

Bob and Gina worked very hard and made much progress but this dog had a lot of energy...they wanted to know how they could utilize this energy to calm the dog down when he couldn't yet play with other dogs. The trainer offered any number of programs that the dog could participate in...the facility is replete with options for all of their dogs in terms of fun activities; dock diving, noseworks, agility for fun, trick classes...even there dog that was so reactive could easily participate in some of the activities so he could learn to be successful and burn some additional energy.

### **Taxi Driver/Housekeeping Impact**

The parents worked very hard and accomplished a lot, but had another trip planned. They spoke with the trainer about doing some advanced training while he was being boarded. Arrangements were made and the van arrived promptly. This time the driver of the van (who was the same one who dropped off) smiled when he saw that all three dogs were in the yard. Although the same instructions applied about not mixing the newest dog with the older two, he could see that they were at least able to be on leash in sight of each other without the lunging that had previously been happening. He smiled because he knew they were training clients. He also had had a bad experience with that other trainer and was proud the trainers at his facility were able to help this dog through this situation. "Lucky Dog" he exclaimed to the dog as he loaded the dog into the van...he finished loading the other two and bid good bye to the very cheerful parents who were beaming with pride that they had been able to show off their new skill and the progress they had made. The dogs were carefully unloaded at the facility making sure not to mix the dogs up as there were strong warnings about unintentional contact. While sometimes it seemed like it was a burden, our van driver knew, how important it was for just this type of situation that all these policies were in place for. When he unloaded the dogs and secured them in the kennel he carefully double latched the gates. He smiled, because he knew that he was working to meet his goals of no unlatched gates and that by doing so, he would increase his pay...He finished cleaning and disinfecting the kennels knowing how picky they were about keeping disease out of the kennels. He went up to the main break room to check in on his next tasks. At the main break room, he ran into the trainer who was working with the dogs...he excitedly told him how the pickup went...he couldn't wait to share how the dogs were all calmly waiting on leash and not lunging at each other...they still had to have a distance between them but they were not lunging. The trainer was thrilled to hear that they were working hard on their program and seeing good results. The trainer still knew there was more advanced work to do that really could only be done by the trainer. The trainer had previously put in the instructions for the special training equipment that he wanted on the dogs each day so that it would just be considered "normal to the dogs".



Safety of the dogs is everyone's responsibility. Customers appreciate that each staff member realizes how important their role in safety is and how seriously they take it.

### **Guest Services Impact**

Meanwhile, down in the dog's room, they were being tended to and greeted by their guest services specialist. Typically, we always tried to keep the dogs in the same wing and keep consistency in the employees who handled them as much as possible. Because this dog had been in a "trainer handled only" situation, the guest services had not been working much with him during his first stay, though she worked with Bob and Gina's other stable dogs. Because he was a bit newer to her she was taking some extra time as she knew the importance of slowly introducing herself. She knew the trainer had very specific needs regarding the equipment and that consistency and fairness to the dog was paramount to a good training program. She knew that her role in that was to ensure that the correct training equipment was placed on the dog first thing in the morning and taken off last thing at night so that it was always on, and it was not associated with the trainer. It had been explained to her that helped the dog understand that rules applied all the time, not just when the trainer was present. She was very careful to ensure that she met this as she knew it was critical to good training sessions and that she could help this dog by fulfilling this responsibility. After she finished doing that she went on to feed the other two dogs that had just arrived...she noticed that there was some medication that was new that needed to be administered... she very carefully did that and noted it in the file.

Ensuring proper medication administration helps to ensure our guests remain healthy while in our care.

She smiled as she continued on her rounds...after she fed everyone it was time to start moving everyone and then time for her favorite part of the day. She finished feeding and moved dogs into the run yards. She had just been promoted to this position and was determined to make the most of it...she was really hoping to move into the daycare positions and then the training positions. She appreciated that there were opportunities for advancement in this company. Now that she had securely latched all yards gates and dogs were running in them...she went to one of the guests room and started her walks for the day. She had several different individual services...she still couldn't believe she was getting paid to play fetch with dogs during the day (yes, there was other stuff too, but for goodness sakes, she got to walk dogs and play fetch with HER clients) ...she felt an ownership for their care and comfort...that's why she was always watchful of the new Housekeepers (typically the entry level position) to ensure that they took great care to double latch all the gates and was the first to let them know if they forgot to

double secure it. She didn't want her clients to push open a gate and get out lost on the 111 acres...she had a dog who could open gates, so she understood why the owners were so manic about security...she had heard people tell them that "most dogs don't get out" but she knew that we were secure for ALL dogs, not most, and hers fit into the category that could potentially do it if the staff were lax. This was the only place she could ever leave her dog, and she wanted to make sure that all policies were enforced all the time or she wouldn't feel safe.

Every policy is put in place for the comfort of the dogs, whether we realize it or not. Following every detail of the policy ensures that dogs stay safe and happy.

### **Company Culture**

She appreciated that management rewarded those that went above and beyond in safety aspects and quickly terminated anyone who showed an indifference towards it. The message was clear that safety was paramount. She really liked that we were concerned about the care and comfort of the individual dogs. Yes, sometimes it was a bit overwhelming when she was learning because there was no much multi-tasking but she has it figured out now how the flow works best. Keeping track of ensuring that all dogs are rotated out of their kennels; who goes to social time who CANNOT go to social time; who gets walks, swim times, fetch time, cuddle times was all so confusing in the beginning but now, it's like breathing...its no problem to understand the daily priorities. She loves that there is an open line of communication to make suggestions... sometimes she had been frustrated that they weren't followed, but then she found that all suggestions would be discussed openly in staff meetings so that if it wasn't taken she would understand why...when she understood the reasoning behind things, she could buy into it better. She loved to work here and loved the opportunity to advance. She also appreciated that the owners looked for that and even though they hired some high school kids that they knew wouldn't stay with them, they did everything they could to assist them in their own personal growth. She liked being able to have generous discounts in exchange for good work. She loved being able to earn additional rewards beyond pay like pool use, etc...She also liked that she could go to the group training free of charge...she appreciate that her employers recognized that the better she became in understanding dogs, the better an employee she would become. She hoped to move into the puppy program/trainer program.

Following all the policies makes an employee an extremely valuable asset to this company.

### **Puppy/Trained Dog Program**

One of the coolest parts of the job was when there are puppies. These are not just any puppies, these puppies were special. From the very beginning (well, when the puppies are three days old) they begin the superdog program. The puppies were given very special handling each day and exposed to different types of experience every day of their life. At first, it seemed a bit odd to see one of the trainers who worked in the puppy program pinching their toes...until she read about it. She didn't realize all the studies about early neuro-stimulation and how it increases a young dogs ability to learn to cope with stress as an adult. These puppies were being raised to be working dogs. Through careful evaluation, each puppy would be selected for its future. Some puppies would stay here at the Ranch or go to a foster home to be raised for police work, search and rescue work, or other types of service dogs work. Some other puppies would go to their homes immediately and some might stay to be raised and then placed in perfect pet homes for those people who didn't feel they could devote the time that a puppy needs. It was soooo much fun, but also soooo much work. Everything had to be pretty precise with the puppies. The trainers were the most experienced ones that worked with the young puppies but as they got older the entry level trainers could work with them. Everyone had to handle them, but they had to go through pretty strict protocols to do that. But to watch that puppy grow up and then go on to do serve the community in some sort was amazing to be a part of. This is one of the best parts of the Company.

## **History Behind the Vision**

This vision for this facility was born over 10 years ago, when Mike and Cherie began looking for a place to board their young search and rescue dog prospect, Rio. They had to go on searches and couldn't really take her thus necessitating the finding of a good kennel for her...unfortunately all that existed was "old school" chain link kennels in their area. They knew that they couldn't do that...not that she couldn't be in a chain link kennel, because she was during the day...but that was in the quiet. In their backyard where there was serenity for her. Being stimulated by dozens of other dogs would quite possibly driver Rio mad...she would easily be susceptible to dog aggression because of her extremely powerful personality, but it was that powerful personality that made her such a good prospect for saving peoples lives...it was clear she would do anything to achieve her goal...but she needed constant management to ensure that her goals were, ahem, aligned with our human goals. Around that time, the concept of European boarding was just beginning...places where all the dogs played together. This was great...all kinds of stimulation for the dogs, but wait, Rio couldn't be trusted to play with other dogs and they knew she would never pass an evaluation. Why weren't there places for such a strong young powerful dog to be that didn't involve either overstimulation from lots of dogs; cramped quarters or being resigned to not being able

to be in a “decent” kennel because she wasn’t friendly with other dogs. For goodness sakes this dog was being trained to save lives, and she couldn’t get a decent room...

Whether a dog is trained to save lives professionally or is an amazing family companion, every dog deserves a place to be able to stay where they are not subjected to the constant unhealthy stimulation from a traditional kennel and they can get their individual needs met whether they are good with other dogs or not.

We wanted to be able to offer the specialized training that we acquired over the years... when I was 18, I had my first dog and I looooooooooovvvvvvveed my dog. A lot. I gave her EVERYTHING...absolutely everything she wanted. And in turn, she destroyed my house from separation anxiety, or would jump unsecured enclosures, or open them at whatever weak point she could find and take off. She always came back....and one day she got out and totally ignored me (again) because of another dog...she promptly hung out with him and started down our driveway...I called and called and called, but to no avail...she followed the other dog in the road and I watched in horror as my best friend was hit by a car...I was sure she was dead, but she wasn’t...I rushed her to a local vet (being a Sunday, I took a risk, as I wasn’t established anywhere) fortunately someone was there, and they tended to her...as soon as I was told she was going to live (after surgery) I breathed a sigh of relief, and then passed out. Cold. And obedience training began...old style (hey it was all we had back then in the late 80;s)...I did everything and she became a great dog, as long as she was on leash. I assisted the trainer with her classes and we were her prime demo dog, but we had a secret. No matter what the trainer did, once she was off leash she would take off and dictate her own terms. I managed it the best I could, and learned to secure enclosures, etc...and went off to grad school. Right after grad school, I was back on the training field...but this time it was different. My trainer had stopped treating the symptoms (with all the equipment and tricks we used previously) and we started analyzing WHY the dogs did things...why did she run off, what was causing it, how do we change relationships...how are dolphins trained without choke and prong collars, what if we better communicated our needs to her in a respectful way and held her accountable for things...expected her to do her “chores” instead of just giving her everything. Within four months under the new program we got to a place we had never been before...After 7 years of never being reliable off leash, in four months we were reliably off leash...and that was achieved through disciplined consistency on MY end, clearer communication regarding expectations, and taking the time to understand how my dog perceives the world and make decisions that were best for Her, not best for me (we humans tend to forget that we need to meet the dogs needs, and not have dogs so that they can meet our needs). It took a lot of looking in the mirror and changing MY habits, not punishing Her. Not surprisingly based on my success, my trainer had become the foremost trainer for problem behavior dogs in the Sacramento area and we dealt with hundreds of dogs.

My learning library became very extensive dealing with and rehabbing hundreds of aggressive dogs.

My training philosophies have certainly evolved with many additional years of schooling and experience, but at my core, Amanda guides my path...watching her get hit by that car and thinking I would never hold her again, is what fuels every gate enclosure policy in this business...I will never be responsible for putting myself or anyone else through that pain...And yet, we take on that responsibility every time we take in someone's dog and everytime I hire someone I am counting on them to ensure that our client's don't experience what I did that day. My clients know how seriously we take this and know that I will only have staff on board that share that sense of urgency about client safety. Safety is more than just physical safety but it is also the dogs emotional safety...the safety of truly understanding each dogs needs and making sure that we provide it, for dogs like Rio and Amanda, and yes of course, all the dogs that are much easier keepers than those 2...but if we train for those types, we can handle anything!

### **Our Team**

To serve our best customers in this way, our team has to be the best. Our staff is upbeat and happy, professionally dressed, and knows what's expected of them. We are all doing continuing education to keep our skill set fresh and up to date.

We all use the proper terminology for our services and are well versed in communicating them with prospects and customers alike. In fact every job function is documented and fully systemized. There's a special "way" we do everything. And we reward our employees for the great work they do. We all take ownership of our responsibilities and feel great about knowing that our efforts are rewarded.

### **Why We Do It**

We enjoy seeing pet owners feel good about taking care of their 4 legged family members. The services we provide for them goes far beyond just taking care of their animals. It involves developing a meaningful purpose filled relationship with each and every one of them, a relationship that will grow and prosper through many generations of pet ownership. It's so great to be able to educate pet owners and share the knowledge we have, in order for them to make better decisions for their pet(s) on a daily basis. We truly want their pet(s) to be healthier and live longer happier lives.

Nothing makes us happier than to hear a pet owner say; "When my dog is at Gold Country Pet Resort & Training Center, we know he's safe, secure and having a blast!" That to us is true success!!

### **We Are Their Companions**

We believe our customers' dogs are family members. No, not in a ridiculous way, but in a humane way - we should view them as deserving of respect and loving care.

At GCPR our goal is to improve the lives of dogs and their owners in all situations. Dogs are full of unconditional love. And it's our duty to give some of that back.

When you see in a customer's eyes the look they get when they really understand that we care about their dogs just the way they do - when they really know that it's true - well that's a feeling that's hard to describe. It's overwhelming, it's heartwarming. It's the combination of immense trust and honorable service that makes us so proud of what we do. And it drives us to constantly be looking for ways to improve.

And that's why we do it. This is our story and this is Gold Country Pet Resort & Training Center !