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## Criteria setting

Dog behaviour and the human end of the lead is an individual partnership unique to every dog and owner (especially if the dog is in a multi-human family)

Each human has a specific learning history with human to human (schooling and life experience, and well as human to dog (schooling and experience)

Criteria setting is like asking a child that is learning its 1 – 10 numbers to do a 10 to the power of 10 multiplication the criteria is too high. They have the basics at that moment with knowing the numbers but not the cognition or learning history to be able to even guess at the answer which is ... 😊 I'll let you find out.

So, let's take a hand touch

You follow the training plan

Dog does fab – getting it every time

You remove the food after the first rep set of 5

You do 5 reps without the food, but mark GOOD or Click, and she does it great!

We are now ready to go out and do this, you think!

You go out, there is wind and 'dancing leaves' or hay being cut, or lawn mowers or other distractions.

You give the cue Touch or the hand signal – and your dog ignores you.

What you have just asked for is 10 to the power of 10!

You have also potentially **poisoned** the cue – i.e. you have given your dog the chance to ignore you, so it has learned that Touch is a choice. **YOUR** criteria setting was too high for your dog!

So, criteria is as follows – difficulty, locations, positions, environments

Too high then lower it! Too low then raise it!

Go back a few steps – practice your training in all sorts of rooms in your house, also in all four corners in all rooms, then doing it sitting down on the chairs, then maybe sitting down on the floor, maybe putting your hand between your legs (for the yoga participants reading this, this would be easy) then it's your left hand, then it's a gloved hands – think winter! Then it's outside in the garden, in all four corners in all positions, with both hands (unless you have an octopus gene and have eight of course). Then take it out the front door just out the front door – using your front garden do the touch around cars, do it on your front garden, think all four corners all positions and both hands (if the neighbours are watching don't worry it's about you and your dog!)

The above can be applied to all training – think of a down behaviour – what would lower the criteria.

Any new place may need to have a treat in the hand first just to 'remind' the dog what you are doing