How to Write Pet Profiles for Ads *To Find Good Homes*

Beata Liebetruth – Nevada Humane Society Animal Help Desk Manager

1. **Facts are uninspiring.** The fact that Joey is two years old, black and brown, 46 pounds, a mix of German shepherd and pit bull, and has digestion problems will not inspire anyone to adopt him. People may be curious to learn these things, and they should be included. But none of it will get him adopted, and this should never be the focus of the ad.

2. **Tell it from the animal's perspective.** It usually works best to write the description from the animal's point of view. You don't want to sugar coat any behavior issues but at the same time you do not want to make it sound like the pet is a little petzilla.

Example: *"Hi, My name's Lucky and I am currently interviewing for a great new forever home. I'm not what you call a social butterfly and I'd rather be with my person but with your guidance I will happily accept new friends".*

3. **Make the reader a hero.** Tell the reader how lucky the animal would be to have them, how grateful the animal would feel toward the wonderful human being who would bless this animal with a home. This is reverse salesmanship: Don't tell them that this is the animal everyone wants – imply that it's the animal only special people want. That is what they want to hear. And it keeps them from thinking, "Well … someone else will surely adopt him. He doesn't need me."

4. **Be gentle with restrictions.** Whenever possible, soften a restriction with your wording. Restrictions, while often necessary, are always strikes against the pet.

Bad example: "Must go to a home with no children." Folks will wonder what's wrong with the animal!

Better wording: *"Jo-Jo's such a goofy bundle of energy; he needs a big person to keep up with him."*

Bad example: "Must go to a home with older cats only"

Better wording: *"Matilda would make an excellent companion for another slow, older cat who understands that lazing about on a window sill is enough excitement for one day."*

5. **There's someone for everyone.**
    *   Avoid general statements about breeds. Not even this: "*While some people may think Rottweilers are mean, this girl is a complete sweetheart!*"
    *   Use your imagination. Imagine you are the kind of person who would love this animal the best – and then write the ad from this imaginary person's point of view.

Instead of, "*He has a lot of energy, which some people might find overwhelming.*"

Try, "*He's the kind of dog who feels like a real companion when you go out for a walk. He keeps up with you – he wants to keep going – he keeps dancing in appreciation.*"

The potential adopter might read the first sentence and think, "*Hmmm… too much energy? Doesn't sound good*." But the second blurb might cause this reaction: "*Yes! That's what I want*."