

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **28 January 2009**

**Promoting  
Responsible  
Dog  
Ownership**



### **Take a dog to work and boost morale**

#### **- Dogs decrease stress and negative thinking -**

The emotional slump felt by Australians returning to work after the festive season may be cured by encouraging dogs and other pets into the workplace. **Dogs NSW** suggests employers should cater for employee's dogs in the workplace to revitalise workers and create a more positive and productive environment. It is obvious that in some workplaces it would be impractical to have a dog present but in many work environments it would be an easy thing to do.

"The presences of a dog is scientifically proven to improve mood and mental wellbeing, in fact, dogs can even help the immune system. It makes a lot of sense to channel these effects to creating productive workplaces, especially after coming back from holidays. Dogs create a more positive environment; reducing stress, and boosting productivity. Employees are also more likely to do overtime when their pet can join them at work.", says veterinarian and **Dogs NSW** spokesperson **Dr Peter Higgins**.

Workplaces are reluctant to bring pets into the office, focusing on the mess and distractions that untrained dogs may cause. Properly trained dogs, however, have an overall positive effect on the workplace, improving employee's mood and mental wellbeing.

To avoid workplace arguments, **Dogs NSW** suggests considering the following before bringing your dog in:

- Make sure all of your colleagues are comfortable with the idea
- Only bring well socialised dogs into the workplace
- Use a leash to keep your dog from wondering.
- Create a 'dogs-only' space, with a mat or bed, toys, water, and food.

"It has been proven for many years that simply patting a pet can have many physical benefits such as reducing blood pressure, and also psychological benefits like improving mental wellbeing. Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) has been used to help people for a long time; the Human Animal Bond is a powerful driving force. At work, this would lead to greater productivity. Bringing a pet to work should be a priority for all employers because many physical ailments are actually brought on through stress and negative thinking.", advises **Dr Higgins**.

"This might not suit all circumstances, and going against the wishes of your colleagues may cause more harm than good in the office. Negotiating dog-free zones with co-workers can be a good way of reaching a compromise so we can all better enjoy our time at work. If done properly it would be a great way to boost morale.", suggests **Dr Higgins**.

\*\*\* ENDS \*\*\*

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