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Establishing and sustaining no-kill communities: best practices for animal services directors

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between humans and non-human animals in the United States has evolved from the capturing and impounding of stray livestock found in colonial times to the billion-dollar industry supporting companion animals that exists today (Irvine, 2002; Zawistowski & Morris, 2013). As people's perceptions and attitudes about the treatment of non-human animals have evolved over time, so have the expectations of the organizations that are in place to care for them. A current movement exists to end the killing of healthy and treatable pets within the United States. Known as the no-kill movement, shelter directors and community stakeholders around the country are working to ensure that their communities are supporting the lifesaving of their shelter pets. Using a qualitative methodology, this study aims to uncover the best practices of animal shelter directors that have successfully achieved no-kill in their communities. Based on the findings, an animal services leadership competency model is introduced.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

People's perception of non-human animals and caring for them has evolved over time and continues to evolve today. As attitudes about the treatment of non-human animals change, so do the expectations of public and private organizations that are in place to care for them. The following historical background will review the origins of the animal welfare movement in the United States, the emergence of the no-kill movement, its growth toward a collaborative approach to lifesaving, and the current environment for leaders in the field.

The Early Evolution of Animal Welfare

The tradition of the relationship between humans and non-human animals (hereafter, referred to as animals or pets) in the United States has evolved from the capturing and impounding of stray livestock found in colonial times to the billion-dollar industry supporting companion animals that exists today. Historically, "poundmasters" were responsible for the collection and holding of stray livestock and, occasionally, dogs. Poundmasters in the 17th century would sell or eat unclaimed livestock to supplement the compensation of their work, but unclaimed dogs would simply be killed. As towns turned into cities in the 18th century, people began keeping fewer livestock and soon, companion animals, primarily dogs, comprised the bulk of the poundmaster's catch. This is the origin of the common phrase, "dog pound" (Irvine, 2003; Zawistowski & Morris, 2013).

Many dogs at the pound went unclaimed and few people would willingly purchase the dogs as pets. This resulted in an overwhelming number of impounded dogs, which were eventually killed. So many dogs collected by dog catchers were being held in pounds by the 1870s that iron cages full of unwanted animals were submerged in the East River of New York

City, drowning all the animals inside. The drownings were a frequent occurrence in the city and viewing the event was even a casual pastime for some citizens (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013).

From the colonial times through the 1800s, the relationship between humans and animals in the United States was primarily one of utility. However, over time, this relationship shifted. In the same period that pounds in New York City were conducting mass drownings of unwanted animals, philanthropist and former diplomat Henry Bergh was initiating the country's original animal welfare movement. Inspired by a conversation with the President of England's Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Bergh founded the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) in 1866 in New York State. While much of the ASPCA's initial charter was the protection of working livestock, interventions were also carried out on behalf of dogs that were exploited for labor or fighting (Black, 2004; Hoy-Gerlach, Delgado, & Sloane, 2019; Zawistowski & Morris, 2013).

Until Bergh's death in 1888, the ASPCA enforced humane treatment of livestock and other animals throughout New York City with authority under the animal cruelty law, which was passed shortly after the founding of the ASPCA in 1866. However, the city continued operating the dog pound and rounding up and killing strays. Consequently, Bergh began prosecuting dog catchers for cruelty, which eventually led to better conditions for dogs impounded in the city. From New York City, the movement grew and local societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals (SPCA) were founded across the country to fight for humane treatment of animals by citizens and dog pounds (Winograd, 2007).

The Emergence of the No-kill Movement

After the passing of Henry Bergh, the ASPCA accepted a contract from the city of New York to maintain and operate the city's animal shelters, which was an offer that Bergh had

repeatedly refused. Additionally, a fee for dog licensing was introduced, which provided additional income. The additional income allowed the ASPCA to hire salaried staff, who were then able to impound and ultimately euthanize more stray pets. Throughout the country, more shelters were established. Both public animal shelters that were run by local governments and private, non-profit shelters became common. In fact, both public and private shelters could often be found operating within the boundaries of the same city or jurisdiction. (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013). However, millions of unwanted dogs and cats continued to perish in these shelters. It was in 1976 that the United States' approach to companion animals changed again, with the appointment of Richard Avanzino as head of the San Francisco SPCA.

Richard Avanzino is widely regarded as the father of the no-kill movement. No-kill is simply described as a commitment to not kill healthy or treatable dogs or cats. Avanzino challenged the conventional belief that there were simply more pets than individuals willing to adopt and he initiated a new approach to animal welfare. At first, he sought to increase the amount of pet purchases from shelters (now referred to as adoption) by making the process more desirable. Moreover, he aimed to reduce the number of pets entering shelters through the processes of spaying and neutering and responsible pet ownership. Further, he developed an animal foster care program where young or sick animals were placed in temporary care until they were well enough to be placed for adoption, in addition to other programs that made responsible pet ownership easier (Winograd, 2007).

The No-kill Equation

The no-kill concept propounded by Avanzino was furthered in 2007, when Nathan Winograd questioned, in his book, what he believed to be the myth of pet overpopulation. He did not believe that pets were dying in shelters because there were not enough homes for them.

Consequently, he advocated no-kill through a ten-step outline of necessary components for shelters to achieve no-kill status. The ten items in what Winograd deemed the no-kill equation are: a feral cat/trap-neuter-return program, the availability of high-volume and low-cost spay/neuter options (also called altering), rescue groups, foster care, comprehensive adoption programs, pet retention, medical and behavioral rehabilitation, public relations efforts and community involvement, volunteers, and a compassionate shelter director. In addition to the original ten components, pro-active redemption was eventually added as an eleventh step of the equation (Cushing, 2008; Patterson, 2007; Winograd, 2007).

Winograd's (2007) no-kill equation encompasses what he believed to be the essential components of no-kill shelters, with a strong emphasis on the programmatic elements. The first element is the feral cat or trap-neuter-return program. This addresses a significant shelter need for a live placement option of feral or free-roaming cats that are often unsuitable for adoption. Trap-neuter-return programs trap community or free-roaming cats, alter them, and return them to their original location. This process serves to both improve the number of shelter cats that leave the shelter alive and, resultantly, reduce the size of cat colonies (Levy, Gale, & Gale, 2003).

High-volume, low-cost spaying and neuter programs. High-volume, low-cost spay/neuter programming, the second element in Winograd's plan is ubiquitous in lifesaving initiatives. Increasing the number of altered pets in a community is believed to reduce the overall population of pets, reduce pet intake at shelters, and increase the number of shelter pets that leave the shelter alive. According to Scarlett and Johnston (2012), surprisingly little research exists to support or refute these claims. However, an initiative in Los Angeles, California, in the late 1970s provides some anecdotal evidence to support the efficacy of the programs. In the 1970s, Los Angeles provided public-funded spaying and neutering services to the pets of low-

income residents. Analysis demonstrated savings of 10 dollars on animal care and control costs for each dollar invested in the program. In addition, animal intake dropped dramatically in local shelters (Rowan & Kartal, 2018; Winograd, 2007).

Rescue groups, foster care, pro-active redemption and adoption programs. Several of the next elements of Winograd's plan—rescue groups, foster care, pro-active redemption, and adoption programs—all aim to reduce the number of pets within a shelter. Transferring a shelter pet to a rescue group frees up space in the shelter, while saving the expense associated with caring for the animal. The rescue groups, often comprised of volunteers who care for the pets within their homes, use their resources and networks to find a permanent placement for the pet. Foster care permits safe and comfortable temporary placements for pets that are not yet ready for adoption. Volunteers often agree to care for sick or injured pets, which still belong to the shelter, within their homes. In foster placement, puppies and kittens have time to grow and their physical wounds have time to heal without taking up shelter space or resources. Pro-active redemption programs seek to reunite lost pets with their original owners. Finally, adoption programs are a significant function of any shelter. Streamlining the process and making pet adoption easy and convenient can improve adoption rates and reduce the length of time that pets spend in shelters (No Kill Advocacy Center, 2019; Winograd, 2007).

Pet retention. The sixth element in Winograd's plan to reach no-kill is pet retention, which is a mechanism to reduce pet intake by assisting pet owners to find solutions for problems and avoid relinquishment to local shelters. The majority of pets that are relinquished to shelters are not puppies or kittens; they are adolescent or adult dogs and cats (Scarlett, Salman, New, & Kass, 2002). Free food or veterinary care at reduced costs for families facing financial hardships or behavioral training referrals for pets exhibiting undesirable behaviors are several options that

shelters may offer in order to maintain a pet's placement in their original home. Newer, more innovative programs have extended services to include both human and animal case management, education and housing resources (Hawes, Ikizler, Loughney, Tedeschi, & Morris, 2017).

Medical and behavioral treatment, public and community involvement, and volunteer programs. The next few elements of Winograd's plan are tangentially related, as they have a public-facing component. Medical and behavioral rehabilitation involves the treatment of pets in the shelter's care. Winograd (2007) advises targeting resources towards behavioral concerns, such as aggression or inappropriate urination or ailments that are most prevalent in an individual community. However, others have recommended establishing protocols for addressing quick and simple needs before advancing into behavioral rehabilitation (Winograd, 2007). Regardless of the choice of prioritization, sick and injured pets are the responsibility of shelters and they should be afforded lifesaving care (Hammond, 2018). Treating animals with kindness, which includes treating sick or abused pets, is a critical mechanism for building the public's trust (Adams, 2018). This is what Winograd (2007) means when he includes public relations and community involvement in his equation. The public relations initiative aims to transform the perception of the shelter from a "pound", which needlessly kills healthy and treatable pets, to a lifesaving agency (Shenefiel, 2018). Finally, a volunteer program creates what Winograd (2007) calls an "army of compassion" (p. 203). The volunteers provide hours of labor that most shelters cannot afford on their own and can serve as brand ambassadors in the community (Hammond, 2018).

Compassionate and hardworking shelter director. The final element of the no-kill equation, which Winograd (2007) claims to be the most important, is a compassionate and

hardworking shelter director. Winograd's ideal director challenges the *status quo* of killing

unwanted pets and does not rely on the historical conventions of animal welfare. He believes that

the wrong person in the director's position can thwart any or all of the other ten components of

the equation. In his book, Winograd (2007) claims that this element of the equation is the most

critical, but it is often the hardest to find (No Kill Advocacy Center, 2019). Despite this being

identified as the most critical component, Winograd provides sparse direction as to what is

required to be successful in the role of a shelter director, besides compassion and hard work.

The No-kill Controversy

With the development of the no-kill equation and his book release, Winograd turned the

spotlight on the no-kill movement, which also heightened the controversy surrounding it. The

movement has become a contentious issue within the animal welfare community (Hawes et al.,

2017). People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) continues to argue that no-kill

policies result in cruelty. They believe that no-kill shelters tend to warehouse pets, thereby filling

their shelters beyond physical capacity and overstraining the organization's capacity to provide

care. Otherwise, the lack of space causes shelters to turn away owners who wish to relinquish

their pets (PETA.org, 2019a). PETA believes that such circumstances result in abuse or

starvation if the pets are retained by the owners; in the alternative, they are afraid the pets will be

abandoned by owners who no longer wish to care for them, thereby leaving the pets to fend for

themselves. PETA has advocated that pets should be taken in by "well-run open admission

shelters" where potential adopters are thoroughly screened and the pets can find permanent

placements or be "painlessly euthanized in the arms of professionally trained, compassionate

people" (PETA.org, 2019a, para. 3).

PETA's preference of painless euthanization of unwanted pets highlights additional controversy in the movement. What PETA calls euthanasia is perceived as killing by those within the no-kill movement. The disagreement over terms contributes to a rift within the shelter community. Francis Battista, co-founder of Best Friends Animal Society, defines killing as: "when a dog or cat's life is ended to make space for incoming animals, or for some other consideration, such as treatable medical conditions, or age, or because it might be a special-needs adoption" (Battista, 2015, para. 6). Those in the no-kill movement define euthanasia as an act of mercy. Specifically, Battista defines it as an act "reserved for animals who are suffering an irremediable medical condition and a veterinarian determining that there is no chance of the animal recovering an acceptable quality of life," (Battista, 2015, para. 3). Winograd defines euthanasia as "the act or practice of killing or permitting the death of hopelessly sick or injured individuals in a relatively painless way for reasons of mercy," (Winograd, 2011, para. 4). As individual shelters turned no-kill, a dichotomy was created between those that killed and those that did not. The formal designation of "no-kill" shelters resulted in an opposing colloquial designation of "kill" shelters, thereby consequently demonizing those organizations and the staff that worked in them (Arluke, 2003).

Such a divide between shelters stemmed from differences in their operational practices as well. Some private shelters aiming to become no-kill chose to operate with a limited admission model. This meant that they would take in only a specific number or type of pets that they believed it was possible to find live placement for. Many public shelters, bound by regulation, practiced open admission and continued to accept any pet that came to their doors. Those at limited admission shelters believed that staff from open admission locations were complicit in killing, as the admission process made it easy for owners to relinquish pets (Arluke, 2003).

Conversely, those working in open admission facilities believed that their counterparts in limited admission shelters were shifting the burden of euthanasia. The limited admission shelters were rejecting harder-to-place pets because they assumed that another shelter would probably accept them. This was done despite knowing that admission to the other shelters could possibly result in the pet's death (Arluke, 1991).

The division between shelters of differing philosophies highlighted a problem that had evolved from the current strategy of implementing the no-kill philosophy and possibly contributed to some of the concerns of no-kill detractors (Arluke, 2003). It was unclear whether individual no-kill shelters were part of the solution for saving the lives of healthy and treatable pets in their community or whether they were simply transferring the responsibility to other local shelters or stakeholders. The purpose of the original no-kill movement was not to reach a prestigious operational status, but rather to ensure that pets were not needlessly dying in shelters (Foro, 2001).

The evolution of the no-kill movement. Since its inception, the no-kill movement has continued to gain momentum throughout the country; however, a philosophical shift is currently taking place to reframe the concept. Many individual shelters continue to work in order to independently achieve no-kill status; however, there is an emerging recognition that a sustainable solution to the problem of preventable death requires a collaborative approach. All the shelters or stakeholders within a community are working to solve the same problem. Therefore, they should all share the responsibility to ensure each and every healthy or treatable pet is being saved, not just the ones that pass through their organizations (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013). When shelters and other stakeholders within the same area collaborate and share data, including their intake, outcome, and save rate, a more accurate representation of the challenges facing the community is

visible (Weiss, Patronek, Slater, Garrison, & Medicus, 2013) and a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to finding solutions can be enacted (Gazley, 2010).

The leaders at Best Friends Animal Society (BFAS), a nationwide animal advocacy group that was founded in 1984 as a sanctuary for abandoned and abused animals, are among the most critical in driving the more comprehensive approach to lifesaving (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019b). Until this day, their most prominent effort has been to proclaim the goal of becoming a no-kill country by 2025. Through leadership, policy advocacy, funding, and other programmatic support, BFAS aims to support all shelters and communities throughout the United States to help them become no-kill by 2025. BFAS defines no-kill as a community in which all brick-and-mortar shelters aggregate a 90% or higher save rate (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). The 90% targeted save rate serves as a threshold, which allows for the number of irremediably suffering or dangerous animals that may require legitimate euthanasia in any shelter. However, this number is only a threshold and not a final goal. The ultimate goal of no-kill communities is to save every healthy and treatable pet (Battista, 2019). Although data within the animal sheltering community has not yet become consistent or readily available, BFAS uses various data sets to track the number of no-kill communities throughout the United States. Out of the 15,000 communities nationwide, 26% are currently no-kill, which results in 20% of the nation's population residing within a no-kill community (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a).

The shift in mindset to view no-kill as a collective responsibility has expanded the view of no-kill efforts beyond Winograd's (2007) eleven-step no-kill equation. The movement has expanded beyond the shelter in an effort to address larger, underlying causes of animal homelessness, neglect, and ill treatment. In order to be effective in reducing the number of healthy or treatable pets that are killed in shelters, the movement must consider the contributions

of certain factors to the issue, such as community or family dysfunction, poverty, and violence. The history of animal welfare is intertwined with social inequalities and the evolution of societies and the current state of animal welfare aligns income inequality with its impact on animals (Black, 2004; Hoy-Gerlach, Delgado, & Sloane, 2019; Unti & Rowan, 2001)

Even as no-kill efforts expand into the community, shelter directors throughout the United States maintain a pivotal role in the movement's success. The scope and responsibility of their work has expanded; consequently, the requisite skills to successfully lead an animal shelter have widened as well. Shelter directors must lead both within their organizations and within their communities.

Leading in the current environment. Austin, Texas, is one of the most well-known no-kill communities, partly owing to the city's no-kill resolution which continually instructs the city to save healthy and treatable pets. In order to achieve this change, Austin Animal Services, the municipal shelter, led a dramatic operational shift. The shift required deliberate and ongoing collaboration between the animal welfare stakeholders, city leadership, and the public (Hawes et al., 2017). Austin's evolution into a no-kill community underscores the essential role played by community shelters and their directors in the successful achievement of the goal of a no-kill community.

As the approach to saving healthy and treatable animals in shelters advances, so does the role of shelter directors. Currently, programs include human services to address the human crises that lead to homeless pets and require community collaboration within and outside the animal welfare community (Hawes et al., 2017; Hoy-Gerlach et al., 2019). Shelter directors are required to possess skills beyond that of managing day-do-day animal shelter operations. In order to address the dynamic environment in which shelters operate, they must be community leaders.

They need skills to inspire change and motivate necessary action to address a community problem with a community approach.

Statement of the Problem

Since Henry Bergh introduced the concept of animal welfare in the United States in the late 1800s, the country has been on a steady progression of improving its approach to the care of shelter pets and ensuring that more of them leave the shelter alive. The emergence of the no-kill movement created a more dynamic strategy than was previously seen, which resulted in both success and conflict. In order to successfully create and sustain a thriving no-kill community, shelter directors in private and public shelters are now responsible for leading within this dynamic environment.

The original no-kill equation called for a hardworking, compassionate shelter director; however, hard work and compassion are eclipsed by the skills necessary to successfully lead an initiative to achieve a community no-kill designation. Many shelter directors must lead a cultural change and shift the paradigm within their organization and their community to embrace a commitment to lifesaving. They require skills to lead and motivate that change. They also build collaborative relationships with animal welfare stakeholders, community stakeholders, and local government. It is necessary for them to maintain successful administration of a myriad of lifesaving programs and seek innovative solutions to challenges that are unique to their communities.

Best practices and playbooks exist for the successful implementation of lifesaving programs; however, these trainings do not address the leadership skills necessary for shelter directors to support the programs (Best Friends Animal Society, 2018). Communities throughout the United States have been designated as no-kill and shelter directors in those communities

may, in fact, possess the knowledge and experience to identify the best practices and challenges of the process (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). Uncovering these best practices and challenges is the purpose of this study.

Purpose Statement

This study aims to broaden the knowledge of the elements that are critical to successful shelter leadership in the advancement of the no-kill movement. Shelter directors may be hardworking and compassionate, but still unclear about how to successfully lead in the dynamic and fluid environment of community-based animal welfare. This study examines the best practices of successful leaders in the field by identifying successful leadership strategies, challenges encountered in the process, recommendations for shelter directors working towards no-kill, and a richer measurement of success for these leaders. Ultimately, this research will provide a model or playbook that shelter directors can emulate.

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQ) were addressed in this study:

- RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?

- RQ2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?

- RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?

- RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are intended to expand the knowledge of best practices and strategies of shelter directors in existing no-kill communities. Examining and identifying successful leadership strategies of shelter directors opens up the possibility of training or mentoring programs for leaders in animal welfare, in order to advance the live placement of shelter pets. These training or mentoring programs, possibly led by national advocacy groups or animal welfare foundations, can enhance the skills of existing shelter directors or build the skills of incoming directors.

In addition to expanding the skills of individual shelter directors, the study findings will enhance the overall approach to creating and sustaining no-kill communities. The best practices and challenges identified can shape the strategies of communities for improving their collective numbers of animals who leave the shelters alive. The findings could also be used to shape the approach of national organizations that advocate the creation of no-kill communities.

Finally, this study adds to the understanding of already established, programmatic, best practices in creating and sustaining no-kill communities. By expanding the understanding of best practices specific to the leadership strategies of successful shelter directors, a more robust picture of the elements that are necessary for successful community lifesaving is created. This knowledge can be put to practice, while also presenting opportunities for further investigation.

Assumptions of the Study

The following are the assumptions made in the design and completion of this study:

- Leadership strategies or lessons learned by shelter directors in no-kill communities differ from strategies or lessons learned by those shelter directors in other scenarios. Other scenarios would include shelter directors leading shelters operating below a save rate of

90% or shelters operating above a 90% save rate in a community that has not reached no-kill status.

- Shelter directors in no-kill communities desire or agree to view the live outcome of pets as a community responsibility.

- Shelter directors would be willing to adopt or implement best practices and aim to achieve a no-kill community if they were to be identified.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher acknowledges the following limitations in the study:

- While objectivity was maintained throughout the study, it is acknowledged that the researcher has had experience as a shelter director, which could influence the interviews and interpretation of the data.

- The study relies both on self-reported animal shelter data and data collected and analyzed by Best Friends Animal Society in compiling their designated list of no-kill communities. The researcher cannot independently verify the accuracy of the reported data or the community no-kill designation.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of clarity and to provide a conceptual framework for the topic, definitions of the key terms have been identified. Some of the identified terms have nuanced or varied definitions in the field of animal welfare and sheltering. For the purpose of this research, the following terms are defined for the reader's reference:

Animal welfare: The responsibility of affording all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, disease prevention, veterinary care, humane handling, and humane euthanasia when necessary (Animal Welfare Council, 2019).

Community: A city, town, village, borough, or any other area designated as a "place" by the U.S. Census Bureau (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019c).

Community save rate: The percentage of animals that enter a community shelter system and leave that system alive (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013).

Compassionate shelter director: A director who is not comfortable with the death of healthy, treatable pets in shelters. He/she is never satisfied with the results and always wants to do more and better (Michigan Pet Fund, 2019).

Euthanasia: Actuating or permitting the death of desperately sick or injured animals, with as little pain as possible, as an act of mercy (Winograd, 2007).

Kill: Pets put to death due to a lack of available shelter space or resources, in order to manage disease or for any reason other than untreatable medical issues or extreme behavioral ones. This differs from euthanasia, which is an act of mercy, as this is not done in the best interest of the pet (Alley Cat Allies, 2019).

Limited admission: A shelter which may set intake criteria, such as available space, age, breed, health, or behavior (Center, 2015). This term is sometimes used interchangeably with "no-kill shelter"; however, they are not synonymous and the author does not conflate these terms.

Managed intake: A shelter which requires appointments for animal intake in non-emergency situations (Best Friends Animal Society, 2017; Hammond, 2018). This applies to pets being surrendered for owners' convenience. Injured or endangered pets may be received immediately. The intake-by-appointment is done to align the flow of animals entering the facility to the availability of space and resources (Best Friends Animal Society, 2017).

Open admission: A shelter without any intake criteria that accepts any pet for admission (Center, 2015). This term is sometimes used interchangeably with "kill shelter"; however, they are not synonymous and the author does not conflate these terms.

No-kill community: All brick-and-mortar shelters located in the same jurisdiction, which aggregate a 90% save rate or higher (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a).

No-kill shelter: A shelter that does not kill healthy or treatable dogs or cats (Winograd, 2007), with a save rate of 90% or higher (Battista, 2019).

No-kill equation: The elements necessary to develop a no-kill shelter viz; feral cat trap–neuter–return program, availability of high-volume and low-cost spay/neuter options, rescue groups, foster care, comprehensive adoption programs, pet retention, medical and behavioral rehabilitation, public relations efforts and community involvement, volunteers, pro-active redemption, and a compassionate shelter director (No Kill Advocacy Center, 2019; Winograd, 2007).

Private shelter: Nonprofit organization without a government contract, with a physical facility that takes in and finds placement for animals (Best Friends Animal Society, 2017)

Public shelter: Local government-owned and operated shelters to provide animal sheltering and associated services (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013)

Save rate: The percentage of animals leaving the shelter alive, generally through adoption, return to owner, or transfer (Hawes et al., 2017). There are a variety of ways that shelters choose to calculate this number; some choose to exclude certain outcomes from the calculation (ASPCA PRO, 2011)

Shelter: An organization with a structural building where animals are surrendered or brought in either when their previous owners cannot care for them anymore or when they are found loose on the streets or confiscated due to human cruelty (Cyrenne, 2019).

Shelter director: The main person responsible for ensuring the humane treatment of animals in the custody of the shelter and for overseeing facility maintenance, financial responsibilities, daily operations, and staff supervision (Kramer, 2019). A shelter director may also be called the shelter manager or executive director.

Chapter Summary

The current movement to create no-kill communities and, ultimately, a no-kill country necessitates a variety of essential components in order to succeed. These components include lifesaving shelter-based programs such as comprehensive adoptions, foster and rescue, community collaboration, and a skilled, compassionate shelter director. Shelters are the center of the animal welfare system in any community (Adams, 2018). Shelters now drive much of the animal welfare programming and also influence local policy. As the leaders of these influential organizations, the shelter directors function as a pivotal component in a community's lifesaving efforts.

Shelter directors have access to toolkits and playbooks for guidance in the implementation of programs, but this alone is not enough to be successful. No one organization has the requisite power to harness a community's collective energy and solve a community-based problem (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009). Consequently, shelter directors, who often pursue the occupation based on a desire to care for animals rather than a desire to lead, become *de facto* leaders of a social movement (Irvine, 2002; Rogelberg et al., 2007).

Shelter directors must have a comprehensive leadership skill-set to perform and do justice to their prominent role in the movement. They must be equipped to lead in a way that inspires change in the face of opposition to the movement, align organizational policies with the no-kill vision, change public policy to support action, and mobilize a community into collective action. This research aims to contribute to the knowledge of the best practices for leaders in no-kill communities and aid in the development of these necessary skills in shelter directors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The no-kill movement was created with the aim of eliminating the killing of healthy or treatable pets in animal shelters. This chapter examines both the merits and concerns surrounding the movement. The rise of the no-kill movement is further explored, in addition to the current state of shelter lifesaving in the United States. Further, the push to save the lives of shelter pets is examined as a social change movement. A demonstrated parallel exists between the advance of animal welfare, including the no-kill movement, and other social change movements. This parallel allows strategies and skills to be identified for advancing the idea of no-kill shelters and no-kill communities. Shelter directors are identified as critical change agents and leaders of the movement and the identified strategies and skills for leading the social change are aligned with the components of transformational leadership.

Why Strive for a No-kill Approach to Animal Welfare?

Presently, nearly one million healthy or treatable pets are being killed in shelters each year in the United States (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). These pets are physically and behaviorally healthy or are living with ailments that can easily be addressed through veterinary care or simple behavioral training. The healthy and treatable pets that are dying in shelters are often being killed to make space for incoming pets or because they have been deemed undesirable or unadoptable (Brown, 2015; Hettinger, 2012). The no-kill movement aims to end such unnecessary killing.

Often misunderstood to mean that euthanasia should never take place in a shelter, the no-kill movement specifically aims to end the killing of healthy and treatable pets (Battista, 2019). It allows for the euthanasia of pets that are suffering from untreatable medical conditions with an

irreversible, significant decline of quality of life or behavioral conditions that are unsuitable for rehabilitation. The difference between the terms "euthanasia" and "killing" are highlighted here.

Euthanasia and killing are not interchangeable terms within animal welfare. Euthanasia takes place when the death is a merciful act that is carried out as painlessly as possible to relieve a pet from suffering (Winograd, 2007). Killing is the ending of a pet's life for reasons of human benefit, including making space in a shelter for incoming pets.

Aiming to end unnecessary killing in shelters and saving the lives of healthy and treatable pets appears a noble effort on the surface. However, the no-kill movement has been a contentious issue within the field of animal welfare (Arluke, 2003). Discord has emerged not only from advocates on opposite sides of the issue but also among advocates with similar goals, but differing practical approaches.

While the concept of no-kill is gaining wider acceptance, it is not the only accepted philosophy within the sheltering community. Questions about the humane treatment of animals within the no-kill movement still persist. Vocal critics such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals have taken a stand against the practice (PETA.org, 2019a).

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an animal rights organization that is known for their public advocacy. PETA leadership has led successful media campaigns, such as their "I'd rather go naked than wear fur" campaign, which garnered wide celebrity support. They have been successful in drawing attention to the inhumane treatment of animals on corporate farms and have called to question the morality of animal research, which led to changes in the animal research protocols implemented by the National Institutes of Health (Martin, 2009; Scudder & Mills, 2009; Tannenbaum & Rowan, 1985).

PETA is also a vocal opponent of the no-kill movement and questions the notion of anything other than short-term animal sheltering (PETA.org, 2019a). PETA leadership and other opponents of the no-kill movement question whether the implementation of no-kill practices benefit companion animals or cause more harm and suffering. Concerns raised around the no-kill movement include long-term confinement, animal hoarding or warehousing, outcome of pets turned away from no-kill shelters, and the moral considerations of quality of life versus right to life.

Long-term confinement is a chief concern in the implementation of no-kill philosophy and practices. Long-term confinement results from the extended captivity of pets that previously would have been euthanized. With a commitment to the no-kill philosophy, healthy pets, that may have been previously killed to make space in shelters, may now wait in shelters for weeks, months, or years (Brown, 2015; Protopopova, 2016).

The length of time that a pet stays in a shelter is known in animal welfare as the length of stay. There is no accurate record of the length of stay for shelter pets in the United States, but Protopopova (2016) indicates that the length of stay may have increased as much 360% with the implementation of no-kill practices. Time spent in a shelter is widely considered to be stressful for pets, which possibly results in changes in behavior and an increased risk for disease or illness.

Stress resulting from confinement in an animal shelter is a common concern in animal welfare. Dogs that enter shelters are shown to experience a spike in cortisol levels and cats are likely to lose weight and develop upper respiratory infections, all of which are possible indicators of stress (Protopopova, 2016; Tanaka, Wagner, Kass, & Hurley, 2012). It could be argued that chronic stress brought on by an increased length of stay becomes even more

detrimental to a pet over time (Beerda, Schlider, Van Hoof, De Vries, & Mol, 1999). This is often cited as a complaint against the no-kill movement. The extended periods of confinement that result from no-kill practices jeopardize the pets' health and behavior and a reduced quality of life ensues.

However, Protopopova (2016) maintains that research does not support the claim that long-term confinement is detrimental to the pet. Cortisol levels, while increased after initial intake, are not sustained throughout confinement. Evidence does not clearly indicate immunosuppression in dogs. Stereotypies—which are repetitive behaviors—may be the most significant example of reduced welfare of dogs in long-term confinement. However, those behaviors cannot be conclusively linked to the confinement. The inconclusive evidence does not assuage concerns of the degradation of mental and physical health as the result of long-term confinement or its impact on a pet's ability to find permanent placement.

Long-term confinement is not the only concern of those who are opposed to the no-kill movement. Overcrowding, hoarding, or "warehousing" are also frequently mentioned as a concerning result of no-kill practices. These types of conditions have led to the association of some no-kill shelters with animal hoarders and claims that the environment in some no-kill shelters could be considered criminal (Hoy-Gerlach, Delgado, & Sloane, 2019; PETA.org, 2019b; Turner, Berry, & Macdonald, 2012; Verne, 2008).

By deciding against the killing of healthy or treatable pets, it is possible for shelters to maintain a higher census, or number of pets on-hand, in spaces built for fewer pets. Overcrowding compromises animal health and welfare in order to maximize the number of pets kept on-site (Turner et al., 2012). Reduced welfare results from confining multiple pets together

in a housing unit that is designed for only one, housing predator and prey species in close proximity, and reduced time for staff or volunteers to care for the pets.

The no-kill movement has also opened the door for animal hoarders—who hoard animals for their own psychological benefit or needs—to be able to hide behind the excuse of animal rescue and justify their criminal acts (Verne, 2008). However, most people who are truly involved in animal rescue act in the interest of the pets, in a way that sharply contrasts with the horrific conditions associated with hoarding cases. While some shelters may be operating over the building's capacity, true no-kill shelters, which act to defend all pets' lives, do not maintain conditions with dead or decaying pets strewn throughout or other atrocities found in hoarding cases. Therefore, the distinction should be made between hoarders who are masquerading as animal rescue to satisfy their own needs, and no-kill shelters or animal rescuers, who are acting in good faith on behalf of the animals (Verne, 2008).

In opposing the practices that result in overcrowding, opponents of no-kill practices also show concern about the outcome of pets that are turned away by shelters. Some shelters choose to turn pets away if they are no longer killing for space and holding pets for extended lengths of stay, but are unwilling to exceed their capacity for care. Limited admission is a variation of shelter intake whereby the shelter does not accept any pet that is brought to the facility (Center, 2015). The shelter may choose to accept only those pets that they determine to have a high likelihood of adoption, such as young puppies, kittens, or rare breeds. The shelter may also choose to turn away pets that they deem difficult to place, such as senior pets, large dogs, or breeds like Pitbull Terriers that are banned in some areas. They may also turn away pets that require extensive resources, such as those that are sick or injured (Figure 1).

Another form of intake called managed intake does not turn away pets based on their perceived adoptability, but require intake-by-appointment (Holt, 2012). This practice does not allow for people to relinquish owned pets on the spot. The pet owner will need to set an appointment for a future date and retain the pet they wish to relinquish until their appointment. This allows a shelter to control the influx of pets and its overall census. Regardless of the process of intake—whether limited admission or managed intake—critics have exhibited concern for the outcome of those pets that are turned away by any shelter that is not fully open-admission (PETA.org, 2019a).
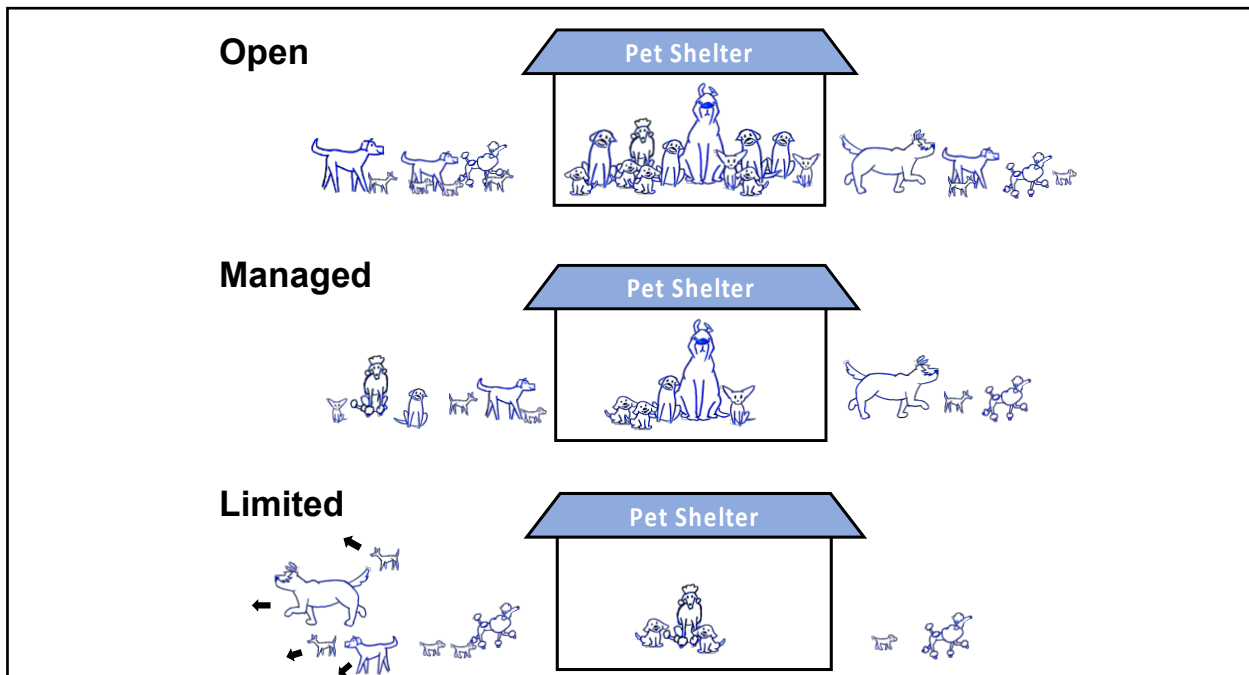
Figure 1. Intake Models. This figure illustrates the flow of pets through shelters using three different intake models: open, managed and limited admission. Pets are shown moving from intake, to shelter, and finally into adoption or other live placement.

PETA has expressed concerns about the outcome of pets that are turned away from shelters (PETA.org, 2019a). In its documents, PETA claims that pets turned away from shelters

are often set free and suffer while they fend for themselves or are killed by wild animals or hit by cars. On the other hand, PETA contends that if those pets are not set free they may face abuse or neglect by the people who no longer wish to keep them, but are unable to relinquish them to a shelter. PETA regularly tracks incidents of pet deaths or suffering that they claim to be the result of limited admission or no-kill practices.

Finally, in addition to concerns about limited-admission practices, stress from lengthy confinement, or the possibility of overcrowding and hoarding, some opponents of the no-kill movement also question the moral obligation of humans to pets. Activists like Phyllis Wright and those associated with PETA believe that killing homeless pets is an act of kindness, compassionately removing them from a world that does not want them (Sloan, 2016). PETA materials claim that euthanasia is a heartbreaking necessity and it is better for pets to die in the arms of compassionate people than to be placed in a no-kill shelter or remain with people that don't want them (PETA.org, 2019a). Along the lines of providing a compassionate end to life, Wright coined the expression "putting to sleep" out of a firm belief that death for homeless pets was a gentle act of mercy (Sloan, 2016). This demonstrates a very definitive difference in perspective between opponents and proponents of the no-kill movement.

Opponents of the movement believe that confining or keeping a pet within a shelter is cruel and death is a better outcome for that pet (Sloan, 2016; PETA.org, 2019a). Proponents of the no-kill movement believe that the human obligation to animals is to provide them with the opportunity for life. No-kill advocates acknowledge that the problem of an abundance of companion animals in shelters is created by humans and, therefore, requires humans to offer a solution that supports any healthy, treatable animal's right to live (Frank, 2004).

Despite some lingering opposition, animal welfare and sheltering appears to be heading in the direction of the obligation to provide opportunity for healthy, treatable animals to be saved. This is evidenced by many of the large, nationwide organizations promoting and funding lifesaving programs that align with no-kill strategies (Avanzino, 2015). However, industry leaders are also coming to recognize the validity of concerns raised by opponents of the movement. The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) is an international organization that strives to improve the lives of shelter animals, with a focus on shelter medicine. ASV produced a guidebook that outlines proper protocols to ensure the safety and welfare of sheltered pets (Newberry et al., 2010).

The guidebook acknowledges the importance of the five freedoms: freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; freedom from pain, injury or disease; freedom to express normal behavior; and freedom from fear and distress (Newberry et al., 2010). In order to ensure the freedoms, guidance is provided on issues such as capacity for care. Capacity for care includes factors such as staffing and housing units that dictate the number of animals a shelter can adequately care for, sanitation, facility design, medical and physical well-being, group housing, and animal handling. Housing units are improving to allow for the natural expression of behaviors. Cats are housed communally with opportunities for vertical climbing, scratching, and hiding. Dogs are given a chance to play or interact within their housing units. The move toward providing opportunities for pets to live is developing strategies to improve the shelter experience for companion animals.

What is the Difference Between a No-kill shelter and a No-kill Community?

As shelters seek to adopt the no-kill approach to lifesaving, a new challenge for the advancement of the movement is the adoption of a collaborative, community approach to saving

healthy and treatable pets. National leaders in animal welfare, including Best Friends Animal Society, Maddie's Fund, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, have all written in support of the shift (ASPCA, 2019; Avanzino, 2015; Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). This is a significant adjustment in the implementation of the no-kill philosophy and it addresses challenges that were inadvertently created as the initial no-kill movement spread throughout the country.

As animal advocates throughout the United States began embracing the no-kill philosophy, pressure increased on both private and public shelters to save healthy and treatable animals. On its surface, this yielded a positive result, as individual shelters were becoming no-kill and adopting progressive lifesaving programming as part of their efforts. However, the movement's focus on individual shelters was an oversimplified approach to a complex problem and such a singular focus obscured advocates' and animal welfare professionals' view of the larger, systemic problem that communities were facing (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Senge, 1990).

As animal advocates and professionals focused their attention on their respective organizations' income and outcome numbers, they were failing to examine the outcome numbers of all the pets in the community, which includes other shelters and rescue groups in a close geographical area. Therefore, this practice represents a very small part of the lifesaving picture. Solely examining organizational data encourages the leadership of individual organizations to focus only on their organization's immediate actions without understanding how those actions might impact the lives of companion animals outside of their facilities (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

This myopic focus on individual shelters obfuscates the very intent of the no-kill movement by aligning the success of lifesaving initiatives with organizational lifesaving, rather than overall lifesaving. An example of this is a shelter that severely limits intake in order to increase its organizational lifesaving. This means that the shelter is very selective of the pets it accepts and turns many pets away. By taking in fewer pets, more resources are available for each pet, there are fewer pets to find placement for, and the number of pets leaving the shelter alive improves.

This hypothetical shelter now exceeds a 90% save rate, which is the widely accepted rate at which a shelter becomes no-kill (Battista, 2019), thereby allowing the shelter to promote itself as no-kill, improve its reputation in the community, and use the no-kill status as a fundraising tool. However, the number of homeless pets within the community does not decrease because the shelter chose to become no-kill by limiting its intake. The needs of the community do not decrease; they are simply absorbed by other shelters or rescue groups or go unserved (Arluke, 2003; Turner, Berry, & Macdonald, 2010).

The emphasis on individual no-kill shelters creates a counterproductive environment for lifesaving. It clouds the ability to determine community-level outcomes, creates a strain on systems, which often results in dogs and cats having an increased risk of death in the communities' shelters, and encourages an adversarial relationship between animal service organizations (Arluke, 2003). Staff and volunteers at various shelters become entrenched in their shelter's philosophy and practices while believing that staff and volunteers at other locations lack proper understanding of their position. Conversations are adversarial, defensive, and emotional, rather than collaborative and productive. As the no-kill movement progressed, it became evident

that the competition among shelters was a barrier to lifesaving and efforts needed to be made to address this divide.

An effort to bridge the divide was initiated in 2004 with the Asilomar Accords. The Asilomar Accords, named after the city in California where the meeting was held, was the animal welfare community's variation of "peace talks" (American Humane, 2004; Shelter Animals Count, 2004). The Society of Animal Welfare Administrators brought together leaders in animal sheltering with an intent to abolish the counter-productive distinctions between sheltering approaches that served to divide the community and to begin working together in order to save the lives of healthy, treatable pets. Participants represented national organizations, such as The Humane Society of the United States, Maddie's Fund, Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and even local organizations, such as Fort Wayne Animal Care and Control, Humane Society of Boulder Valley, Southeast Area Animal Control Authority, and Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA.

The Asilomar Accords created an agreed-upon language, including words like healthy, treatable, unhealthy, and untreatable (Shelter Animals Count, 2004). The participants also agreed to foster an environment of mutual respect. This included discontinuing the use of language that denigrates other people or organizations within the animal welfare community.

The Asilomar Accords encouraged the use of data and outlined a process for consistent data collection and reporting. An animal statistics table was created as a mechanism to report data, including the beginning shelter count, intake, adoptions, outgoing transfers, return to owner, dogs and cats that were euthanized, died, or lost in shelter, total outcomes, and ending shelter count (Shelter Animals Count, 2004).

Finally, a formula was created to calculate a shelter's live release rate. The formula was given by the number of adoptions, outgoing transfers, and pets returned to owner divided by total outcomes, excluding owner-requested euthanasia of unhealthy and untreatable pets and dogs and cats that died or were lost in the shelter (Shelter Animals Count, 2004).

The Asilomar Accords was a first step toward unifying the animal welfare community and it created consistency in terminology and data reporting. It is unclear how many organizations adopted the data collection protocol (Weiss, Patronek, Slater, Garrison, & Medicus, 2013) and some believe that the level of subjectivity in determining what constitutes healthy, treatable, unhealthy, and untreatable remains too significant to ensure consistency and integrity in reporting (Young, 2016).

Moreover, the call for unity was not fully effective, as some contention still persists within the community (Winograd, 2010, 2012). Opponents of the Asilomar Accords saw the effort as an attempt by "architects of the status quo" to "take back their hegemony over the sheltering discourse" (Winograd, 2010, para. 9). The contention between the differing sheltering philosophies continued and skepticism of the intention of the various factions persisted.

Recently, in recognition of the problems caused by focusing solely on individual shelter outcomes, a greater emphasis has been placed on creating no-kill communities. The community approach to lifesaving redirects focus from individual shelter outcomes to community outcomes. This shift acknowledges that outcomes for all pets entering the shelter system of a specific geographical area should be accounted for. By reframing the metrics for success to include all shelter outcomes in a community, shelter leadership must acknowledge the role that their organization plays in the community system and this changes how shelter leaders approach the goal of lifesaving and define organizational goals. Within a no-kill community, it is not sufficient

to protect organizational interests, but attention must be paid to the organization's contributions to the larger effort of lifesaving (Cabrera, Colosi, & Lobdell, 2008; Senge, Hamilton, & Kania, 2015).

Austin as an Exemplar No-kill Community

Austin, Texas, has become a prominent example of a successful community approach to lifesaving and the use of community-level metrics. The shelter system in Austin comprises three shelters: Austin Animal Center, Austin Pets Alive!, and the Austin Humane Society. Together with additional rescue partners, they serve approximately 31,000 companion animals each year (Hawes, Ikizler, Loughney, Tedeschi, & Morris, 2017). The Austin Animal Center is the community's only public shelter, which has historically had an extremely low save rate of approximately only 15% prior to the changes made. It was in 1997 that the Austin City Council passed the No-Kill Millennium resolution, which called for community collaboration with the aim of reducing the killing of sheltered companion animals. The efforts resulted in an increased save rate. Following this success, an updated resolution was passed in 2009, which required the city to reach a collective 90% save rate.

Austin's progress toward becoming a no-kill community revealed practical challenges that can be common to efforts of any community that aims to become no-kill. The rapid change resulted in concerns from stakeholders, particularly regarding increased length of stay and cost for each pet, inadequate housing units and staffing, and extended response times to animal protection calls (Hawes et al., 2017). These challenges mirror the often-cited concerns of opponents of the no-kill movement (Turner et al., 2012). Instead of disregarding the criticism, the City of Austin and shelter leadership chose to make operational and funding changes to address these concerns. The challenges experienced by the city of Austin's rapid transition to

community lifesaving underscores the need for planning and capacity-building prior to such a significant philosophical and practical change. It also reinforces the lifesaving benefits of community collaboration and collective responsibility (Hawes et al., 2017).

A lesson from Austin's success in becoming a no-kill community is the benefit of political and legislative support (Hawes et al., 2017). Following this high-level community commitment, much of the success was owed to the collaboration of the leadership at the public and private shelters. Austin's community leveraged these partnerships to provide support for at-risk pets and implement innovative programs. The partnership between the Austin Animal Center and Austin Pets Alive! demonstrates how the project of lifesaving is substantially improved when organizations can focus on individual areas of impact within a concerted effort to achieve a shared goal. Acknowledging that each agency has a responsibility to the larger cause, leaders are allowed to collaborate and solve problems at the level of the system. The various agencies are able to share both the responsibility and the success. This is a model that has been replicated in other communities to varying levels of success.

Austin may be one of the most recognized no-kill communities in the United States, but it is not the only one. Small and large communities around the country have expressed interest in the collaborative approach to lifesaving. The extent of the interest and the levels of success remain difficult to confirm, partially due to historical resistance to collaboration and inconsistent data collection and sharing practices (Arluke, 2003; Rowan & Kartal, 2018).

Current State of No-kill Communities

While the momentum to develop communities is growing, unclear and inconsistent data continue to hamper the no-kill movement. Scientific study of animal sheltering has increased over the last 50 years. However, little research has been conducted to identify local or national

sheltering trends (Rowan & Kartal, 2018). Available data often suffers issues of reliability. Most of the data on owned pets is collected by for-profit groups with a focus on market trends (Patronek & Zawistowski, 2002). Shelter data on animal intake and outcomes is self-reported. Efforts to standardize data are yet to result in practical levels of consistency that is desired. Additionally, the reactive nature of animal sheltering often results in poor record keeping. Detailed record keeping strains finite resources. Consequently, resources that could be used for record keeping are directed to efforts that are deemed more critical. Finally, the animal sheltering field has a history of failing to place adequate importance on the use of data as a tool for improving lifesaving efforts (Rowan & Kartal, 2018; Spellmen, 2008; Weiss et al., 2013).

In addition to inconsistent data collection, there is often a certain reluctance to release accurate information on shelter intake and outcomes (Clancy & Rowan, 2003). Some leaders fear that the data that is released could be used to critique or criticize their work. This is especially true in a climate that supports no-kill shelters and stigmatizes others as "kill" shelters. Even if accurate data is collected and shared transparently outside the individual agencies, it is perceived to hinder community-wide lifesaving efforts. However, transparent and consistent sharing of intake and outcome data is one of the most effective ways to improve lifesaving (Weiss et al., 2013).

Accurate data collection and transparency allows for a systemic approach to saving lives (Spellmen, 2008). It is only when each shelter or rescue group in a community openly shares all of its unaltered intake and outcome data that the community understands its holistic lifesaving challenges and successes. The transition to no-kill communities requires the collection of consistent and reliable data that is regularly and publicly shared.

The Asilomar Accords were an attempt to drive animal sheltering forward in the direction of consistent data collection and sharing. It is not known how many organizations have complied with the Asilomar Accords' data collection and analysis protocol (Weiss et al., 2013). However, the field of animal welfare has progressed in its efforts to improve lifesaving and the Asilomar Accords have grown to have diminished relevance. This diminished relevance has rendered the Asilomar method of calculating a shelter's save rate as outdated and somewhat controversial (Hamilton, 2010).

The initial Asilomar method of determining a shelter's live release rate, or the percentage of pets that leave a shelter alive, allowed for shelters to exclude the number of unhealthy and untreatable pets that were euthanized at the owner's request before calculating their live release rate (Shelter Animals Count, 2004). This sanctioned exemption allowed for the subjective assessment of healthy, treatable, unhealthy, and untreatable (ASPCA, 2019; Young, 2016). Such variation in data collection within communities and across the United States makes the available data unfit for epidemiological study.

As the movement continues to advocate for the lives of all healthy and treatable pets, its demand for accurate, objective, and consistent data grows. While some shelters continue to calculate a save rate using the standards identified in the Asilomar Accords, others are moving to a more progressive method of data analysis, which removes subjectivity from the calculation of save rates. This formula is simply given by the total live outcomes divided by intake (ASPCA, 2019).

Recognizing the critical nature of data in advancing animal welfare studies and practices, a collection of nationwide organizations has launched a renewed effort to streamline and encourage the reporting of shelter data through an initiative called Shelter Animals Count

(Rowan & Kartal, 2018). Shelter Animals Count was founded through a partnership between Best Friends Animal Society, Maddie's Fund, PetSmart Charities, Humane Society of the United States, and American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The initiative was developed from a shared desire to collect and maintain consistent shelter data nationwide and to use that data to improve individual and collective lifesaving efforts (Shelter Animals Count, 2019a).

Shelter Animals Count uses the basic data matrix developed by the National Federation of Humane Societies, which identifies the minimum amount of data points that each shelter should gather and report (Shelter Animals Count, 2019b). It also provides standard definitions for all related terms. The data matrix was informed by recommendations from a variety of sources, including the Asilomar Accords, Maddie's Fund, the Humane Society of the United States, PetSmart Charities, and American Humane.

Shelter Animals Count is merely a data clearing house (Shelter Animals Count, 2019b). Its purpose is to provide consistency in data collection so that those numbers can be reliably analyzed locally, regionally, or nationwide and serve to improve the accuracy and value of epidemiological studies. Shelter Animals Count does not provide recommendations on how individual shelters should calculate their save rates or present their data. However, it provides for consistency in the raw data collection.

In 2016, Shelter Animals Count published its first annual report, which reported on numbers from 2,255 shelters. By 2018, that number had grown to 5,411 and over 50% of the counties in the United States were represented (Shelter Animals Count, 2018). There is still progress to be made in securing participation from individual shelters, but Shelter Animals Count remains a promising initiative.

Best Friends Animal Society (BFAS) was a founding member of Shelter Animals Count and continues to sponsor the initiative. BFAS is a national organization that was founded in 1984 as an animal sanctuary in Kanab, Utah (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019b). With an underlying belief that all living things have an intrinsic value, the founders aimed to create a space where they could care for and find homes for unwanted pets, while also supporting the no-kill movement at large.

Since it was founded, BFAS has grown beyond its own sanctuary. Now, it is a nationally recognized non-profit organization that funds lifesaving programs throughout the United States. It is also a driving force in the movement to develop no-kill communities. In 2016, Best Friends Animal Society's Chief Executive Officer, Julie Castle, declared that BFAS would lead the country in ending the unnecessary death of pets by helping it become a no-kill nation by 2025 (Castle, 2019).

As a part of reaching the 2025 goal, BFAS provides a community lifesaving dashboard that reports the progress in lifesaving efforts from communities nationwide (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). The dashboard is compiled by using data that is obtained through various sources, including Shelter Animals Count, public websites, government-provided data, and voluntarily self-reported data. This dashboard is the most extensive resource for identifying no-kill communities and communities that could be targeted for initiating a movement to achieve no-kill.

For the purpose of reporting in the dashboard, communities are those areas that are identified as a "place" by the US Census Bureau data (Best Friends Animal Society, 2017). Communities are considered no-kill if Best Friends Animal Society has access to the data for all known shelters within that community and all of the shelters have reached a 90% or higher save

rate. While all shelters must have a save rate of 90% or higher, it does not negate the necessity of a collaborative approach to lifesaving. Contrarily, the interconnectedness of the shelters and the animal welfare system of a given community most likely necessitate a collaborative approach (Hawes et al., 2017; Weiss et al., 2013).

According to the dashboard released in July, 2019, the United States has 4,300 no-kill communities, with an overall national save rate of 76.6%. This demonstrates the ability of communities to become no-kill; however, many are yet to accomplish that goal. Only one state in the United States, Delaware, is considered no-kill (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). In 2018, 125,000 dogs and cats were killed only in California and Texas and 733,000 were killed in shelters across the country (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). Individual shelter and community leaders need to address the problem of unnecessary deaths in their shelters and develop necessary strategies to meet the goal of creating no-kill communities and, ultimately, a no-kill nation.

Strategies for Advancing the No-kill Movement

The challenges surrounding transitions to no-kill communities are most often centered on the need for strong, effective leadership; however, a gap remains between the science and practice of animal welfare (Spellmen, 2008). In order to develop leadership that is capable of increasing the number of no-kill communities, practitioners may need to draw from research in parallel or complimentary fields to determine successful strategies. Spellmen (2008) argued that sustained improvements in animal welfare are achieved through the implementation of proven strategies used in complimentary disciplines.

Historically, the animal welfare movement has been associated with social justice movements in the United States, including civil, women's, and labor rights (Fischer, 2004;

Friedman, 2018; Hoy-Gerlach et al., 2019; Unti & Rowan, 2001). Additionally, the animal right's movement has been identified as a social justice issue in its own right. Consequently, strategies of social justice and social change could be examined to better understand strategies that are used in advancing animal welfare.

The term social justice is currently used to represent many issues, which extends beyond civil, women's, and labor rights. Accordingly, a variety of definitions of the term exist as well (Otteson, 2019; Whaples, 2019). However, certain similarities can be identified among the various definitions. The concepts that are pervasive to the social justice movement include the impact of collective action, elimination of oppression, a just distribution of power, and arrangements that allow for the dignity and basic rights of individuals (Friedman, 2018; Haeffele & Storr, 2019; Otteson, 2019; Stoner, 2019; Whaples, 2019). Social justice could be considered as the ability for all to live their desired lives equitably and without unreasonable restrictions enforced by others. This definition can include non-human animals as well.

Historically, humans have seen non-human animals as inferior in the hierarchy of species (Cooke, 2017; Sayers, 2014). This is a form of human exceptionalism, where humans perceive their additional capabilities to provide them with privilege and rights that are not afforded to other species (Paquet & Darimont, 2010). The self-perception of humans as the superior species allows humans to use animals for personal gains and inflict pain and harm on other creatures without any moral regard for the welfare of the animals.

Resultantly, dogs and horses are often raced for entertainment (McGeevy, Corken, Salvin, & Black, 2012); pigs, cats, and chickens are bred in substandard conditions and sold for human consumption (Shields, Shapiro, & Rowan, 2017); even household pets are considered as property (Friedman, 2018). Opportunities for the abuse of animals are inherently present within

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the power division between humans and non-human animals. Humans exist in a position of power and through this power, they are able to exert dominance over other species. Since social justice relates to the imbalance of power used to oppress others, it can be argued that all animals live in a state of oppression. The circumstances around animal and human oppression remain rooted in similar, if not identical, economic, political, and social factors (Sayers, 2014).

The parallels between human and animal oppression are so significant that civil rights leader Dick Gregory and labor rights leader Caesar Chavez incorporated veganism into their movements (Friedman, 2018). They recognized that harming any living creature is immoral. Gregory is quoted as saying, "Because I am a civil rights activist, I am also an animal rights activist" (as cited in Friedman, 2018, para. 1). The numerous and various social justice movements that exist aim to encourage humans to recognize their moral obligation to other living beings and improve their treatment of the latter. The way in which humans interact with animals is often mirrored in the way in which humans treat one another; therefore, fighting for animal rights is also a fight for human rights (Sayers, 2014).

To address a social issue and change the way that humans perceive their actions involves a complex process (Heifetz, Kania, & Kramer, 2004). However, identifying animal rights and animal welfare as social issues has led to some improvement over time. The treatment of animals in the United States has improved because of shifts that have been made in the public's attitudes and beliefs regarding the treatment of animals (Sayers, 2014; Spellmen, 2008). It was the work of early advocates that transformed the issue of homeless pets into a pressing topic of social concern and responsibility (Irvine, 2003). It will be the work of contemporary animal advocates to continue advancing the treatment of animals and improving the outcomes of shelter pets by implementing strategies that are used to create social change.

Some of the most significant contemporary animal advocates are shelter directors. 5.3 million companion animals enter shelters in the United States each year. From those 5.3 million pets, according to the most recent statistics, 733,000 healthy and treatable pets die needlessly (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). These companion animals are denied their opportunity for life at the hands of humans and a culture that still accepts the unnecessary death of healthy companion animals. Shelter directors are actively positioned at the source of the problem and, as Winograd (2009) argues, are key to its solution. Shelter directors carry tremendous responsibly for the outcomes of pets in their care and are uniquely placed to lead social change within their communities.

Haeffele (2019) argued that the concept of social justice, or pursuing social change, is difficult in practice, but other scholars, including Ganz (2009), Crosby (2010), Heifetz, Kania and Kramer (2004), Irvine (2003), Komives and Wagner (2017), Kezar (2010), and Iachini, Cross, and Freedman (2015) have identified some practical approaches to advancing a social movement. These include: holistic and strategic thinking; community partnership, collaboration and mobilization; igniting common purpose and controversy with civility.

Established leadership models can offer comparisons to a model that may be developed to create and improve no-kill communities. The Social Change Model of Leadership was developed to prepare young leaders for advancing social change and further indicated that strategies of social change are practical and actionable (Haber & Komives, 2009). The Social Change Model of Leadership is a values-based, collaborative approach to improving the lives of individuals and the greater community by advancing social change. This is accomplished through developing a standard set of leadership skills, abilities, and approaches.

Learning from the Social Change Model of Leadership, the success of other social change movements, and those scholars who have identified practical approaches to advancing social change (Crosby, 2010; Ganz, 2009; Haber & Komives, 2009; Heifetz et al., 2004; Iachini, Cross, & Freedman, 2015; Irvine, 2003; Kezar, 2010; Komives & Wagner, 2017), it is possible to identify common strategies or competencies necessary in a shelter director and leader of an animal welfare movement. These competencies include strategic and holistic thinking, collaboration and common purpose, and controversy with civility.

The strategies noted earlier align with the transformational style of leadership, which is often used to create change in individuals as well as in social systems (Kendrick, 2011). Transformational leadership occurs when the leader creates awareness of the purpose of the group, guides participants or followers to transcend personal interest and invest in a shared goal, and supports an environment where leaders and followers work collaboratively to achieve exceptional levels of performance (Bass, 1999; Burns, 1978; Folta, Seguin, Ackerman, & Nelson, 2012; Paolucci, Dimas, Zappala, Lourenco, & Rebelo, 2018; Prendergrast, 2017). Transformational leadership was built on the work of James Downton, who introduced charismatic leadership in 1973 (Hater & Bass, 1988). The concept was further expanded by James MacGregor Burns (1978) in his examination of transformational leadership in comparison to transactional leadership. He explored leadership as not simply a transaction between parties, but rather something more—a relationship. He explained that leadership is more than power. Leadership is power governed by principle and used as a means to elevate others to extreme heights and accomplishments.

Bernard Bass (1985) further built on Downton's and Burns' work with his exploration of transformational leadership. Bass (1991) identified the power of transformational leadership to

create change by broadening employee interests and skills and coalescing around a common purpose. This is accomplished through the implementation of four components or strategies. The four main components that construct transformational leadership are: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Alatawi, 2017; Bass, 1985, 1999; Kendrick, 2011).

There is notable alignment of the social change strategies—trust, collaboration, shared purpose, and controversy with civility—with the four components of transformational leadership. The combination of the social change strategies and the components of Transformational leadership provides a comprehensive framework for the dynamic role of a shelter director who leads change in animal welfare. All of the strategies and components are further explored below.

Strategic and Holistic Thinking

The world is a dynamic and interconnected system; however, leaders are not always aware of the role they or their organization play within that system (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Laszlo, 2012; Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Senge, 1990). When the complexities of the problem are overlooked, these oversights can turn efforts to change into failures (Karp & Helgo, 2009). Shelter directors, as leaders in animal welfare, must think holistically and recognize how all the various elements of the system contribute to the problem of healthy and treatable pets unnecessarily dying in shelters.

Within a community, a variety of people and organizations share the responsibility for the outcomes of shelter pets (Crosby, 2010). There are the obvious stakeholders, including shelters and rescue groups. Additionally, anyone breeding dogs or cats or choosing to relinquish a pet plays a significant part (Burger, 2014). The community's socioeconomic conditions and the education system are also contributing factors (Hoy-Gerlach et al., 2019). While all of these

elements contribute to the animal welfare system within a community, exactly how the elements are interconnected is sometimes unclear. This is especially true for those who operating within the system (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

For those operating within the system, such as shelter directors, it may be easy to recognize the problem (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Healthy and treatable pets continue to die in animal shelters in the United States (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). However, it may be more difficult to determine the cause of the problem or the role that the director and their shelter is playing in creating or exacerbating that problem (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

For example, managed-intake or limited-admission shelters may control their pet intake in order to maintain the number of pets in their care to a humane level. This may serve the immediate needs of the shelter. However, if the pets that are turned away by one shelter are simply relinquished to a different shelter, the choice to limit admission may cause a strain on other parts the system (Arluke, 2003).

Open admission shelters may create an environment where people are free to relinquish pets on a whim (Arluke, 2003). By not placing restrictions on relinquishment, people who may have ultimately chosen to keep their pet or found some other solution on their own would have the opportunity to add yet another pet to the shelter system (Holt, 2012). This potentially places an avoidable burden on the system.

What may seem like an obvious interconnection to an outsider is often obscured to those within the system, who remain focused on the immediate conditions that directly affect the decision-maker (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). The internal focus is exacerbated in animal welfare, which is often a very reactive environment (Spellmen, 2008). A shelter may have an emergency intake of pets related to a cruelty case or natural disaster, in addition to its normal daily

operation. Such an emergent issue can divert the focus and resources from the ongoing, daily goals and activities of the shelter.

The immediate cause and effect of a singular decision by a partner organization may be easily identified. Consider an example of two shelters, Shelter A and Shelter B. Shelter A temporarily ceased pet intake due to a disease outbreak. The obvious and immediate result would be an increased demand for intake at the neighboring shelter, Shelter B. Without reflecting on the interconnection of the actions of all stakeholders, it is understandable to assume that actions taken at shelter A were responsible for the increased intake demand at Shelter B. However, if the spread of disease at Shelter A was exacerbated by overcrowding, further examination of the system would be required to determine a root cause.

In this hypothetical animal welfare system, Shelter B discontinued foster programs, due to liability concerns. They were no longer sending young or sick pets into foster care. Resultantly, their census remained higher and comprised a considerable percentage of high-needs pets. Therefore, Shelter B, which operated a managed intake system, reduced its rate of intake. As Shelter B reduced its intake, Shelter A began increasing its intake to account for the unmet demand in its community. As Shelter A took in more pets, overcrowding gave rise to other issues and exacerbated the spread of disease that ultimately lead to the decision to cease all intake. This demanded Shelter B to step in to meet the unmet community need.

In this example, the cause and effect were identified based on the most immediate action. Shelter A closed intake; therefore, the demand for intake at Shelter B increased. However, if those involved would examine the larger picture, they might note Shelter B's involvement in the conditions that led to the disease outbreak. Shelter B's seemingly unrelated decision to

discontinue the foster program was actually a contributor to the intake demand problem faced by the system as a whole.

Determining the systemic connections within the animal welfare system is certainly a challenge, but it becomes increasingly more difficult when the relationships are less apparent. Animal shelters and rescue groups could be categorized as the same industry and within that lies the assumption that their work is directly or peripherally related. However, it may not be assumed that shelters are related to law enforcement, elected officials, or social services. The work of animal welfare is not isolated from the social and political conditions of its surrounding community. In fact, it is deeply ingrained in the conditions of the surrounding community (Falconer, 2011b).

A relationship does exist between human social issues and the number of homeless or unwanted pets in a community (Hoy-Gerlach et al., 2019). For example, the community resources available for domestic violence survivors to find temporary shelter with their animal companions is a potential contributing factor to pet homelessness in that area. Economic factors such as the crash of the United States housing market in 2008 contributed to pet homelessness in many communities across the country (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2011).

Social issues are complex and dynamic (Heifetz et al., 2004). If all of the contributing factors are not included in the decision-making process, it is difficult to determine a viable solution. Real change takes place when leaders think holistically, as they are able to determine root causes of problems, develop effective solutions, and predict systemic outcomes of proposed actions (Senge et al., 2015). Changing the thinking process changes the perception of the problem and, consequently, changes the solutions that are developed (Cabrera et al., 2008).

It is the responsibility of leaders to understand the various factors that are at play and their connection to the system (Karp & Helgo, 2009). This understanding helps leaders to transition from myopic thinking and isolated observations and creates a broadminded approach to determining effective interventions (Karp & Helgo, 2009; Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Holistic and strategic thinking are critical in creating no-kill communities and is also the foundation for successful collaboration.

Building Collaboration Through Trust and Common Purpose

Collaboration builds strength in a movement by uniting organizations in a shared purpose and strategically using resources for the greatest impact (Ganz, 2009; Gazley, 2010). By working independently, no organization has the means necessary to bring about social change; however, working together presents the opportunity for the impact to improve significantly (Hamilton, 2010). Community collaboration is an important strategy for accomplishing any social change (Gazley, 2010; Hamilton, 2010; Zawistowski & Morris, 2013).

Collaboration is a key element in the social movement of animal welfare and in the goal of creating no-kill communities (Hamilton, 2010). The shift in focus from individual no-kill shelters to no-kill communities necessitates a collaborative, inter-organizational approach, as individual shelter outcomes alone are no longer the sole metric for success. Inter-organizational collaboration requires participation from multiple stakeholders that are working toward a shared,

long-term goal (Heath & Frey, 2004). The collaborative group aims to uncover innovative ideas

together and hold each other mutually accountable.
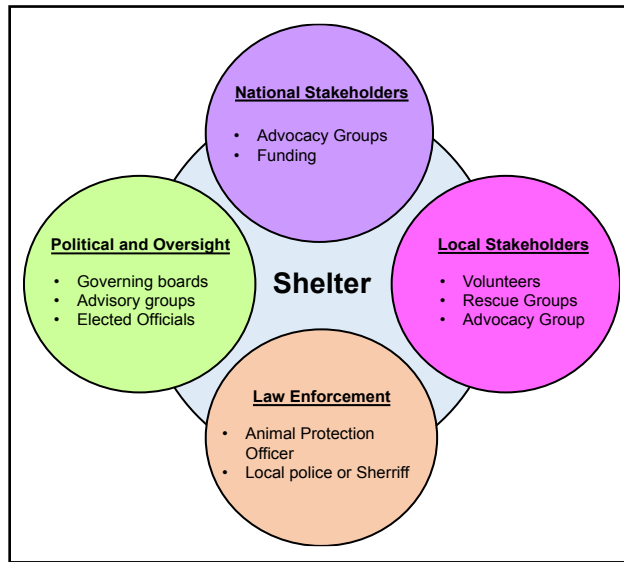
Figure 2. Shelter Stakeholders. This figure

illustrates the various categories of stakeholders

associated with community animal shelters.

An animal shelter does not operate on its own (Figure 2). The work done within the

shelter interfaces with a variety of additional stakeholders on a regular basis and shelter directors

are responsible for fostering relationships with all of them, either directly or indirectly through

organization staff. The stakeholders include funding agencies, donors, rescue groups, volunteers,

other local shelters, law enforcement agencies, governing boards or advisory groups, and

community or political leaders (Allan, 2012; Falconer, 2011a; Hawes et al., 2017; Thrift, 1984).

In order to develop and implement lifesaving programs, such as community spay and

neuter, trap-neuter-return, or foster programs, a shelter may need to seek additional financial

resources (Rowan, 2008). These funds can be acquired through charitable donations or grant

awards. This forges ongoing relationships with private donors or grantors. Shelter directors and

staff give tours or host events to court potential donors. Shelter employees maintain communication with grantors as they execute grant deliverables and in the hope of obtaining funds through new grant opportunities after grants have expired.

Lifesaving programs that foster, rescue, and transfer and are run out of shelters require relationships with a variety of stakeholders (Hager, 2011). Foster care demands volunteers who are willing to care for young or sick pets until they are healthy enough for adoption. Rescue programs necessitate working relationships with rescue groups who take custody of pets from a shelter and assume responsibility for finding permanent placement for those pets through adoption handled by the rescue agency (Allan, 2012). Transfer programs allow for the movement of pets between shelters (Caulfield & Gazzola, 2010; Hawes et al., 2017). This happens when one shelter has more available kennels than another or may be better equipped to provide the veterinary or behavioral care than the shelter where the pet is currently housed. These types of programs require a collaborative working relationship between shelter personnel.

Law enforcement can be a frequent stakeholder in animal shelters and they may interact with shelter staff in several different ways. Shelters may support local law enforcement agencies in their enforcement of laws against animal abuse and cruelty. Law enforcement often take custody of animals that are involved in cases and bring them to the shelter, where the shelter provides veterinary care or maintains custody of the pet until the case has been adjudicated (Falconer, 2011a).

Law enforcement may also take custody of animals in situations that are not related to cruelty cases. This happens when a human is apprehended for any crime, thereby leaving their pets without care. Law enforcement officers transfer the custody of that pet over to shelters that can care for the animal in the short term or place it for adoption (Liss, 2017).

There are shelters that bear the responsibility of the enforcement within their community and serve as an arm of law enforcement (California Animal Welfare Association, 2019). These are usually municipal shelters or private shelters that maintain contracts with local jurisdictions. This kind of law enforcement personnel are often referred to as animal protection officers. These officers enforce local pet-related ordinances, write tickets, apprehend animals, and testify in legal cases. In many communities, they are also responsible for public education, in addition to their law enforcement responsibilities.

Non-profit shelters often retain a board of directors that serves as the governing body of the organization (Thrift, 1984). In most situations, a non-profit shelter's executive director reports to the board. Municipal or government-run shelters report to the governing body of the municipality within which it operates. This could include a county board of supervisors or a city council. Additionally, the community may also retain advisory committees that are specific to animal services. These committees serve exclusively in an advisory role and provide guidance to the shelter or the local government officials. The relationships with governing or oversight bodies require a specific type of exchange, which often involves the act of negotiating the politics of governing boards along with the organizational goals and objectives.

Finally, relationships with community or political leaders can be pivotal in ensuring success for animal services. Local laws directly influence the ways in which animal shelters conduct business. This is evidenced by the success of Austin, Texas, where local lawmakers drove the community's success in becoming a no-kill community (Hawes et al., 2017). Community members or activists may lobby lawmakers to support lifesaving initiatives. Alternatively, local lawmakers may recognize the economic benefits of creating a humane city and initiate changes in laws and ordinances on their own. Regardless of how the changes in laws

originate, it is important for a change leader in animal welfare to foster relationships with those who are responsible for creating legislation that supports or hinders lifesaving issues.

The shelters within a community are the de facto hubs or pioneers of that community's animal welfare system (Falconer, 2010). The live outcome rate of the shelters ultimately defines the community's no-kill status and all of the various stakeholders interact with the shelters in some capacity. This makes the shelter and shelter directors local leaders in their community's no-kill movement.

As leaders of the movement who are responsible for creating social change on a local level, shelter directors are in a prime position to assemble and foster collaborative relationships with the numerous stakeholders. As previously discussed, each stakeholder operates within the larger system and, ultimately, each one impacts the community's lifesaving in some way (Crosby, 2010). In order to begin problem solving holistically, partners need to collaborate through conversation, information sharing, and solution finding. Each partner must realize their role in the lifesaving objective before any progress can be made toward shared solutions and mutual responsibility. The key strategies in developing collaborative relationships are trust and shared purpose.

Trust. Building trust and relationships to establish collaboration is essential in the advancement of social progress (Amey, 2010; Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2017; Heifetz et al., 2004). However, building trust in a community collaboration setting is challenging (Amey, 2010; Crosby, 2010). This challenge is exemplified in animal welfare communities where trust is historically lacking (Arluke, 2003; Clancy & Rowan, 2003).

Competition is a source of conflict in the process of building and developing trust and collaboration among various independent organizations (Amey, 2010; Crosby, 2010). Each

organization has its own charter, vision, objectives, and funding sources, which may or may not align with others in the collaboration (Turner et al., 2012). Collaborating is seen as a potential threat to an organization and the niche that they have created for themselves, particularly if it is seen as encroaching on funding opportunities that are necessary for continued operations or operational territories (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009).

An instance of a perceived potential threat in an animal welfare collaboration could actually rise from the goal of becoming a no-kill community, particularly for shelters which have already achieved that goal independently. Being a no-kill shelter comes with a certain level of prestige. Operating as a no-kill shelter generates positive public perception, which is beneficial for fundraising (Maddiesfund.org, 2000). People want to contribute to or align themselves with an organization that they perceive as doing good work. Many would prefer their money go to a shelter that is known to be committed to saving healthy and treatable pets, even if donations to other shelters are also used to improve lifesaving in their community.

A community shelter that operates as the only no-kill shelter in the area may be fearful of losing the associated prestige. More importantly, it may fear the diversion of charitable giving to other local shelters as they begin to improve their save rate (Turner et al., 2012). This is a practical fear, as many municipal shelters rely on charitable giving to fund some of their operations and non-profit shelters use charitable giving to fund most or all of their work. If there is more than one feel-good option for charitable giving in one community, the philanthropic efforts are likely to be divided between them. This is dangerous for shelters that rely heavily on being the only desirable pet charity in the local market.

Furthermore, collaboration also creates a struggle for power (Crosby, 2010). Inter-organizational collaboration may result in a redefining of individual organizational goals or the

sharing of human and financial resources (Zawistowski & Morris, 2013). Collaborations such as these can benefit a community effort by providing a more comprehensive strategy and streamlining the use of finite resources; on the other hand, it may also blur the lines of authority (Gazley, 2010). If participants fear that the collaboration somehow endangers their individual organization, they may be less likely to cede decision making or control to any other agency, even on seemingly benign topics. The unwillingness to relinquish individual interests or power to the greater good is a barrier to the success of collaborative efforts.

Each collaborating organization also enters the collaboration with its own mental model or a subjective perception of the problem and its role in it (Senge et al., 2015). All of the various stakeholders may acknowledge the problem of healthy and treatable pets being killed in shelters, but each organization sees the problem from its unique perspective and brings its own set of beliefs and assumptions to the conversation.

For example, a municipal shelter bears the responsibility of balancing lifesaving with public health and safety. Volunteers and kennel staff develop relationships with individual dogs and cats. Elected officials answer to a broad constituency and balance their varied interests. The unique perspectives can be of benefit in solving a problem, as they provide insight into the various components of the larger system. However, the differing perspectives might serve to challenge a collaboration if participants are unable to see things from perspectives that differ from their own (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009; Senge et al., 2015).

The challenges to collaboration can be addressed by developing trust among the various stakeholders (Amey, 2010; Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2017). Those who are responsible for leading the collaborative effort should be mindful of the challenges and implement strategies that are specifically aimed to create an environment where trust can grow. Trust can be built by

diffusing conflict through behaviors that demonstrate trust in others, introducing generative conversations, expanding mental models to broaden perspectives and see beyond individual interests, outlining opportunities for mutual gains, and clarifying the things that matter the most.

Demonstrating trust in others. Acting with trust is the first step to encourage the practice of trusting others (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000; Komives & Wagner, 2017; Slater, 2008). By modeling trusting behavior, leaders can encourage the trust that they wish to see amongst the potential collaborators. This may be a leap of faith in an environment with historic mistrust; however, it is an important first step to move past the differences. Extending trust to others creates an environment where others feel comfortable extending trust in return.

An example of a shelter director modeling trusting behavior would be to begin sharing intake and outcome data that had not been previously reported. Even if there is fear of potential criticism against the organization's success with lifesaving (Clancy & Rowan, 2003), the director would be demonstrating a willingness to trust their colleagues from other organizations. This act, which may be perceived as courageous, may encourage others to do the same.

Trust is also the foundation of the idealized influence component of transformational leadership (Kendrick, 2011). Modelling and developing trust are the work of the transformational leader. Each leader must demonstrate moral and purposeful standards in their actions. Aligning actions with espoused values and goals creates an environment where the followers clearly understand and trust the convictions of the leader and the direction of the organization.

A shelter director who leads a change initiative to become a no-kill community would need to demonstrate their commitment to a collaborative approach toward lifesaving and show confidence and determination toward that aim (Bass, 1991). Trust must be demonstrated with other stakeholders in all interactions. Behaviors and actions should align with the no-kill

philosophy and the leader must remain committed to the community goal over any other goals for his or her own organization.

Consistent, purposeful action develops trust and commitment from followers (Paolucci et al., 2018). Bonds between the leader and followers or community collaborators are created and relationships are improved (Ghasabeh, Reaiche, & Soosay, 2015; Kendrick, 2011). This bond allows the leader to drive followers to achieve higher, as the leader sets high standards and they work together to achieve them (Bass, 1991).

Introducing generative conversations. Demonstrating consistent commitment to the end goal and ongoing trust in all collaborators is not a simple task for the leader. Conversations among animal welfare stakeholders can sometimes become caustic, critical, or cathartic, which is an obstacle for building trust, finding solutions, and maintaining collaboration (Arluke, 2003). A leader who is focused on building and demonstrating trust can navigate this by guiding the conversation in a more productive, collegial manner.

One way to guide the conversation is by asking generative questions, or questions that generate new ideas and creative thinking. For example, in a collaborative environment where animal welfare stakeholders are debating different intake processes, a participant could change the tone of the conversation with a generative line of questioning. Questions such as, "what practice works the best for you in your intake process?" or "how do you see your intake process evolving it the future?" help participants to move away from critiquing one another. Instead, they can talk about the elements of their program that they are proud of.

Generative questions support an environment of conversation and shared learning (Sandars & Murdoch-Eaton, 2017; Senge et al., 2015). As the leader guides the conversation away from accusatory statements and toward thought-provoking, idea-generating lines of

inquiry, previously harmful, trust-breaking conversations transform into trust-building opportunities. Generative conversations also encourage involved collaborators to begin seeing new perspectives, which expands their mental models.

Expanding mental models. Expanding mental models, or the perceptions of the collaborators, is fundamental for increasing trust (Senge et al., 2015). Encouraging conversation that allows individuals to reflect on their assumptions and compare them to others' perspectives in a non-threatening way allows people to expand their thinking. Setting ground rules about how the conversation will progress, what types of exchanges will not be allowed, and asking generative questions are several techniques that support an environment that is conducive to reflective conversation. Reflecting together in a collaborative, supportive environment encourages people with different experiences and perceptions to listen to each other and explore the possibility of experiences and perspectives that vary from their own. This technique can build trust or repair trust in circumstances where the relationships were already damaged.

Opportunities for mutual gains. Trust is also built when mutually beneficial opportunities are discovered. Overlapping interests can be a challenge to collaboration if they are viewed as competition or a threat to organizational success (Amey, 2010). However, those same overlapping interests can create opportunity for mutual gains. Trust is built by involving participants in the decision-making process and, thus, opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration can be identified (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000; Komives & Wagner, 2017; Slater, 2008).

One instance of mutual gains in animal welfare is seen in the case of shelters that enter into a transfer agreement. A transfer is an agreement for pets to change custody from one shelter to another. This can happen within a community or between shelters in different communities or

states. In the most extreme examples of transfer, where dogs or cats are driven or flown hundreds of miles to a new shelter, the mutual benefit can be identified quite clearly.

In some communities, there is an abundance of pets and the shelter system struggles to save the lives of healthy and treatable companion animals (Caulfield & Gazzola, 2010). In other communities, some shelters do not have enough dogs and cats to meet the adoption demand. In such cases, a transfer of pets between these shelters offers a scenario for mutual benefit. The shelter that is struggling to save lives is able to transfer some of its pets to another shelter and improve its ability to save the lives of the pets that remain in its care. Subsequently, the receiving shelter is able to offer a lifesaving opportunity to those transferred pets, while also providing the people in its community with the opportunity to adopt an animal companion.

Clarify things that matter the most. Finally, trust can be established by helping participants clarify those things that matter the most to them, either as an individual or an organization (Heifetz et al., 2004). Focusing on one guiding purpose eliminates the possibility of smaller, less important issues causing distraction or fostering discord. Even greater trust is built when the leader can harness the collective energy into one shared, common purpose.

Shared Purpose

Developing a shared purpose is a key component of successful collaboration and it has the power to ensure long-term social change (Heath & Frey, 2004). This is exemplified in the collaboration that was created in Austin, Texas. Animal welfare stakeholders united with the common purpose of reaching a 90% save rate across the community. The purpose of the collaboration in Austin was defined by law makers. However, a common purpose can be defined by the participants as well, with a skilled leader guiding the process.

The idealized influence component of transformational leadership also emphasizes the leader's goal of creating a shared purpose (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). If leadership is power governed by principle, then the principle or the moral foundation that underlines the change initiative must be defined. The leader defines the principle and purpose through consistently aligning action and language to that principle and purpose (Farrell, 2019; Paolucci et al., 2018).

Even as the shelter director develops the base for a shared purpose, bringing together groups with varied missions, objectives, and process to adopt the common purpose is a challenging task (Crosby, 2010; Senge et al., 2015). In a community collaboration, many different perspectives may be represented. For example, one meeting may contain an advocate for puppy mill ordinances which seek to end the sale of companion animals from large-scale commercial breeders. The same meeting may also be attended by the owner of the local pet shop, which sells commercially bred puppies and kittens. The leader convening the meeting needs the appropriate skills in order to successfully mediate (Crosby, 2010; Senge et al., 2015). The leader must be mindful of concerns that different organizations may have while entering into a collaborative effort and must take care to acknowledge them.

While the differences among the collaborating organizations can be seen as a threat, the leader's duty is to help the participants identify even small areas of commonality (Karp & Helgo, 2009). In the example outlined above, the advocate for puppy mill ordinances and the pet shop owner may uncover shared opinions about something as small as the age that puppies and kittens should ween from their mothers. Participants must be encouraged to share and explore their possible similarities. The leader can facilitate and nurture this process (Folta et al., 2012). When participants begin to see themselves reflected in the whole, they are further encouraged to engage

in the process and relate to others that they may have previously seen as a threat (Karp & Helgo, 2009).

As participants begin to engage more freely in conversation, it allows additional common ground to be identified and explored. The exercise of identifying commonalities also creates an environment where participants are willing to explore differing experiences and perceptions, which is not a simple exercise for passionate advocates who are often strongly entrenched in their beliefs (Senge et al., 2015). However, until participants are willing to see beyond themselves and their deeply held beliefs, meaningful collaborative change cannot occur (Axelsson & Axelsson, 2009).

To continue the example, if the advocate and the shop owner see beyond their positions, they may find a compromise. The local shelter may provide pets to the pet shop, which can then be sold to the public. Alternatively, the owner may agree to purchase pets from only reputable, small-scale breeders.

When participants broaden their perspectives to include the viewpoints of other collaborators, differences can be overlooked and shared values can be identified, which is a building block for developing a shared purpose (Arluke, 2003). Participants shift from competitive, self-centered thinking that is initially brought to a collaboration and open themselves up to identify a common goal (Sandmann & Vandenberg, 1995). It is when these common values, goals, and purpose are identified that meaningful collaboration can begin.

Meaningful collaboration is critical for achieving a no-kill community (Hawes et al., 2017). Stakeholders across the animal welfare system bear responsibility for lifesaving initiatives in their community, but none have the financial, political, or human resources to create change

alone (Crosby, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2004). However, when you identify a shared purpose, you also identify shared solutions like those that were seen in Austin, Texas (Crosby, 2010).

In Austin, Texas, the local shelters found a common purpose in meeting the 90% benchmark for community-wide lifesaving. Together with the shared purpose, the shelter leadership found a shared solution that made strategic use of resources. Austin Pets Alive! willingly accepted pets with challenging behavioral issues or long-term needs (Hawes et al., 2017). Austin Pets Alive! could provide focused care for those pets with specific needs. In turn, Austin Animal Center was able to use its limited resources to guarantee live outcomes for the large volume of pets in its care. Collaborators can strategically deploy financial or human resources and streamline their service delivery in support of the shared purpose (Ganz, 2009; Gazley, 2010).

A shared purpose is the foundational factor for collaborations to succeed (Amey, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2004; Komives & Wagner, 2017). For animal welfare stakeholders, a shared purpose is inherent in the work they do, as lifesaving is the goal of most shelters, rescues, volunteers, and advocates (Parcelle, 2012). The key for successfully uniting stakeholders can only be found by overlooking the historic distrust and differences in practice and seeing the shared values, goals, and purpose.

Controversy with Civility

The rise and evolution of the no-kill movement has created a contentious environment for those working in animal welfare. Opponents of the movement are critical of shelter workers in no-kill shelters. They have equated no-kill shelters to hoarding environments, where dogs and cats are stockpiled and kept in deplorable conditions (PETA.org, 2019b; Verne, 2008).

Opponents of the no-kill movement have also equated shelter workers with animal hoarders, thereby calling into question their treatment of the pets in their care.

It is not only no-kill antagonists who question shelter workers. Pressure and discord come from within the movement as well. No-kill advocates, such as Nathan Winograd, have called shelter leadership lazy, immoral, and uncaring, for failing to achieve no-kill (Winograd, 2012). He claims these tactics have been more effective in advancing the no-kill movement than collaboration and "soft-selling" the message.

In a complex system of animal welfare stakeholders, it is not uncommon for multiple philosophies and approaches toward lifesaving to exist in one community. Opponents and proponents of the no-kill philosophy can exist within one community or even one organization. Differences in ethical perspectives do exist and it is because of these differences in these deeply held ideologies and beliefs that conflict can arise (Arluke, 2003).

Beyond the difference of those that believe in implementing a no-kill philosophy and those that don't, other ethical differences manifest in the operational practices of shelters. A predominant difference in the ethics of shelter operation results from the opposing deontological and utilitarian ethical philosophies.

The deontological ethical perspective refers to the underlying morality of a singular act (Bartels & Pizarro, 2011). It is the consideration of the individual act without paying attention to extenuating circumstances. In the case of an animal shelter, this is realized in the question of morality regarding taking the life of a healthy, treatable animal. A deontological perspective supports the deductive reasoning that uncovers whether or not reasonable people would believe the behavior as right or just (Bowen, 2005; Schmeider-Ramirez & Mallette, 2007). The

consideration solely reveals whether it is morally or ethically appropriate to end the life of a healthy or treatable animal.

The utilitarian ethical perspective seeks to determine morality according to the consequence of the act (Bowen, 2005). This perspective takes a bigger picture into account within the decision-making process. The morality of the act is determined by whether the act results in the greatest good for the most people or animals (Bartels & Pizarro, 2011; Bowen, 2005; Schmeider-Ramirez & Mallette, 2007). Just as the deontological perspective appears in end-of-life decision making, so does the utilitarian perspective. The utilitarian viewpoint considers the act itself, in addition to the potential repercussions of the act for people or other pets.

Given the same set of circumstances, the differing ethical perspectives can result in different decision-making processes and different end-of-life outcomes. For example, in a hypothetical case of a pet with extensive but ultimately treatable injuries, those that maintain a deontological perspective believe that the end-of-life decision should be made independent of any extenuating circumstances. Their ethical perspective states that any decision is based on whether the individual action is morally appropriate, regardless of the cost of the pet's treatment or rehabilitation (Bartels & Pizarro, 2011; Bowen, 2005). In this scenario, someone holding this ethical perspective would most likely find it morally objectionable to take the life of a pet with treatable injuries.

In contrast, others that maintain a utilitarian ethical perspective would consider additional factors in making the end-of-life decision. Their ethical decision-making is framed by the outcome and they seek the choice with the best possible results for the most possible pets (Bartels & Pizarro, 2011; Bowen, 2005). If an individual pet is treatable, but requires extensive

and costly veterinary care, an individual with a utilitarian perspective would rethink that. For a shelter with limited financial resources, this ethical perspective supports the act of directing resources toward caring for only one pet, in order to save the lives of multiple pets, thereby choosing the greatest good for the largest number. In this scenario, the utilitarian perspective would most likely support the decision to end the pet's life for the greater good.

In the forenamed hypothetical situation, all parties approached the end-of-life decision based on firm ethical beliefs. Both possible outcomes could be passionately defended and are grounded in ethical and moral decision-making frameworks. However; it may be challenging for those with differing philosophies to appreciate the other perspective and this can lead to contention among otherwise like-minded individuals (Senge et al., 2015).

The Asilomar Accords attempted to reconcile the rift between the various approaches to lifesaving in shelters (American Humane, 2004). However, the differences in opinion persisted and so did some of the discord. It is possible to make meaningful progress in a contentious environment, especially if leaders are willing to accept the disagreements. The Accords sought harmony through shared language and the de-escalation of harmful rhetoric. Representatives from twenty organizations agreed on the Accords, but the signed agreement did not necessarily change the beliefs or opinions of the grass root no-kill activists or the animal shelter employees (No Kill Advocacy Center, 2005). Shelter directors as community leaders are critical in addressing the discord at a local level.

One approach to navigating a contentious environment is to purposefully support controversy instead of conflict. Conflict results when opposing viewpoints are debated from the perspective of winners and losers. Individuals argue to defend their position and people are forced to take sides (Komives & Wagner, 2017). This is evidenced in United States politics,

which have become increasingly more partisan over the last thirty years (Luttig, 2018). Alignment with a political party has become a part of some individuals' social identities. Political discourse goes beyond policy disagreement and extends to conflict over the defense of one's identity.

Controversy differs from conflict. Although it originates from opposing viewpoints like conflicts do, discussion around the disagreement is encouraged in the case of controversy. The intent of the conversation is to explain the positions and understand the opposing views, rather than to persuade or convince the other party. A resolution may be reached, but the exercise of explaining and negotiating the differing beliefs constructs shared knowledge, which can ultimately improve relationships and performance outcomes (Komives & Wagner, 2017; Lee, Huh, & Reigeluth, 2015).

Lee et al. (2015) advised that appropriate social skills should be demonstrated by leaders to encourage thoughtful discussions of differences of opinion. Leaders should encourage controversy to be discussed with civility. Civility relates to the care and regard given to managing encounters that involve the self and others (Davenport-Sypher, 2004). Leaders can encourage civility through the confluence of other social change strategies, such as building trust, asking generative questions, and clarifying the things that the matter most. When disagreements are handled with civility, individuals feel more comfortable to share their opinions. This is critical in bringing together the various stakeholders in animal welfare.

We have learned from parallel social change movements that in order to successfully create a no-kill community, controversy should not be avoided. Change fails to occur when differences are covered up in an effort to find harmony and avoiding differences is counterproductive while one is seeking to advance social change (Ford, Ford, & D'Amelio,

2008; McClellan, 2011). Therefore, differences in viewpoints are advantageous (Yom-Tov, Dumais, & Guo, 2014), and openly discussing the differences, with an emphasis on teaching and understanding, rather than winning or losing, is how new ideas and knowledge are created and shared understandings emerge (McClellan, 2011).

The intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership encourages engaging conversations that challenge stubborn assumptions (Kendrick, 2011). A transformational leader acknowledges the benefit of setting the vision, but allowing followers and collaborators to conceive original and creative ideas to actualize the vision. Independent and innovative thinking are encouraged and collaborators actively seek new solutions to old problems (Bass, 1991; Paolucci et al., 2018).

Independent and innovative thinking is critical in solving dynamic and complex problems, such as those found in animal sheltering. Winograd (2007) recognized the necessity of a shelter director who challenges the status quo because they recognize the creativity and willingness to innovate that is necessary in advancing social change. Shelter directors who lead a community to achieve no-kill status need to foster cultures where controversy is courted and creative solutions are uncovered.

Successful transformational movements create cultures where ideas are openly shared and people feel comfortable to speak up (Jones & Harris, 2014; Morrison & Milliken, 2000). The individualized consideration component of transformational leadership speaks to this notion. A transformational leader acknowledges and supports each follower or collaborator as a distinctive and valuable contributor (Kendrick, 2011). The leader recognizes the individuality of each follower and encourages them to engage in the process of creating change. The act of

acknowledging the individual benefits the whole by creating a culture of learning and growth (Ghasabeh et al., 2015).

Unless open discussions about the varying ethical, philosophical, and operational practices take place, discord will continue within the no-kill movement. With collaboration as a key strategy in the project of achieving no-kill communities (Hamilton, 2010), leaders in the movement must learn how to turn conflict into controversy and encourage civil discourse among stakeholders in order to generate change.

Creating Change

People working in animal welfare often begin their career out of a desire to care for animals, rather than a desire to lead (Irvine, 2002). Once placed in the role, shelter directors may be surprised by the level of community involvement and myriad stakeholders with an interest in their work (Falconer, 2010). However, even those who have no experience in community engagement and social change can become successful leaders in the no-kill movement.

The act of leading social change is grounded in service, as is caring for animals (Wyatt, 2014). The transition from shelter director to social movement leader is not monumental. Recognizing the need for change in the community is the first step. As the shelter director, they are already in a position of influence. Therefore, they must recognize and accept their place as a leader and hone their leadership skills (Komives & Wagner, 2017).

The inspirational motivation component of transformational leadership is realized here. The transformational leader sees future goals clearly and inspires others to act to fulfill that vision (Kendrick, 2011; Paolucci et al., 2018). This is key for a shelter director who leads a change movement for creating for a no-kill community. The shelter director as leader builds capacity by inspiring human assets to take action toward the accomplishment of the desired

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future state of collaborative lifesaving that has been clearly articulated (Bass, 1999; Ghasabeh et al., 2015).

With a resolve to lead change and create a no-kill community, the director can begin by creating change at a local level (Swing, 2009). As an active part of the community, the director is well positioned to understand the local stakeholders, what they believe in, and how supportive the environment may be to change (Komives & Wagner, 2017). With this information, the leader can develop the most successful plan for intervention and inspire action among others.

For successful change, the way in which the change is implemented is often more important than what the change is (Warrick, 2017). By learning from other social change movements, the shelter director can apply those lessons to the desired change in animal welfare. Thinking strategically and holistically, creating collaboration and shared purpose, and courting civil controversy are common strategies that have demonstrated success in social change. These strategies align with the components of the transformational leadership theory. Combining the theoretical constructs of transformational leadership with the tangible strategies of social change creates a framework for action for leaders who are in the process of creating no-kill communities.

Sustaining Change

Initial action or momentum for change is not sufficient to ensure an ongoing commitment to a community approach to lifesaving. Shelter directors must be strategic in their efforts to implement change in order to support transformation over time. Sustaining change in animal welfare can manifest in two ways.

Sustainability in the early stages of the shift toward community lifesaving could be measured through the steady trajectory of improved lifesaving (Buchanan et al., 2005).

Sometimes, change efforts experience an initial burst of effort and subsequent improvement, but then undergo "initiative decay." After a short while, lifesaving programs or initiatives are given less attention or discarded entirely and progress is lost. Therefore, the sustainability of lifesaving efforts is demonstrated through continued improvement in the implementation of lifesaving practices and subsequent improvement of the community save rate.

Communities that have successfully achieved a community save rate of 90% or above would measure sustainability through the consistent achievement of its collaborative lifesaving goals (Buchanan et al., 2005). Incremental improvements may be made over time, but progress is often limited. The measure of sustainability in this case would be the consistent ability to save all healthy and treatable pets in the community.

Change in a complex system defies facile resolutions (Reisner, 2001). Scholars of change, including Lewin (1951), Cooperrider (1996), and Kotter (1996) identify the processual nature of sustainable change. The process of change in the various models do not entirely align, but all of them indicate the need for a purposeful, strategic, and long-term approach with overlapping elements or phases of change. The common phases are: identifying a need for change; operational transition; new policies, procedures, and practices (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Dawson, 1996).

The first phase of creating sustainable change is identifying the need (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Dawson, 1996). This is presented in Lewin (1951) and Kotter (1996) as upsetting the status quo and creating a sense of urgency. Cooperrider (1996) engages in the process of identifying change by defining what currently is and dreaming about what could be.

The second stage is the operational transition (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Dawson, 1996). This stage includes creating a vision, communicating the vision, removing obstacles,

encouraging fresh ideas, and uncovering new solutions (Cooperrider, 1996; Kotter, 1996; Kritsonis, 2005; Lewin, 1951). During this stage, leaders establish a purpose for the change, develop a base to support the effort, and empower individuals to act (Geyer & Altman, 2016; Kotter, 2014).

The final stage is the incorporation of new policies, procedures, and practices (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Dawson, 1996). It is during this stage that the change takes place. Participants put the new vision into action and success is realized by the achievement of short-term goals (Cooperrider, 1996; Ganz, 2009; Kotter, 1996). Over time, the new behaviors and ideas become woven into the cultural values and norms (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1951). Change becomes sustainable only the alterations become part of the fabric of the values and norms that (Kotter, 1996).

Incorporating the stages of change is important for an animal welfare leader in creating sustainable no-kill communities where collaborative lifesaving remains a priority. Leaders need to identify the reason for change and create a compelling case for various stakeholders to become invested in the process (Kendrick, 2011). Various stakeholders should be convened to develop a strong coalition of support for advancing the effort (Kotter, 1996). New ideas should be generated together and stakeholders should be empowered to make lifesaving decisions (Paolucci et al., 2018). Finally, the communities must continue collaborative lifesaving activities until the vision of saving all healthy and treatable animals becomes ingrained in the communities' norms and values (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1951).

Chapter Summary

The no-kill movement aims to eliminate the killing of healthy and treatable pets in animal shelters. Despite some opposition to the practices, the movement has become widely accepted in

animal welfare as a vital goal. While it began as a refusal to allow healthy animals to die in shelters, the no-kill movement has progressed from individual shelters aiming to achieve a 90% or higher save rate to communities working together to collectively save 90% or more of their homeless pets.

Currently, 4,351 no-kill communities exist in the United States and this accounts for only 28% of all communities that are served by one or more shelters (Best Friends Animal Society, 2019a). Over 700,000 healthy and treatable pets are still being killed each year in shelters across the country. In order to close that gap and ensure that all pets have the opportunity to live, communities must begin working together on a collaborative approach to lifesaving.

Much of the leadership that is required for advancing this goal is the responsibility of shelter directors in the various communities. As the center of all activity that takes place in support of homeless pets, shelter directors have the opportunity to engage with the full range of stakeholders, including local and national advocates, law enforcement, law-makers, rescue groups, volunteers, and other shelters (Falconer, 2010). Shelter directors play a significant role in engaging their communities in collaborative lifesaving.

Engaging communities to save the lives of shelter pets includes supporting a shift in the way humans view animals (Sayers, 2014; Spellmen, 2008). Advocating for pets' opportunity to live without unreasonable restrictions, including death for the convenience of humans, is characterized as a social change movement (Friedman, 2018). There are several successful strategies for advancing social change movements that can be applied to the cause of saving shelter animals.

Social change includes a focus on trust, collaboration, shared purpose, and controversy with civility (Crosby, 2010; Ganz, 2009; Heifetz et al., 2004; Iachini et al., 2015; Kezar, 2010;

Komives & Wagner, 2017). Shelter directors who also act as community change leaders must dedicate great effort into building trust with stakeholders, principally due to the mistrust that often exists within animal welfare (Arluke, 2003; Clancy & Rowan, 2003). Stakeholders' trust is critical in the successful collaboration and concerted efforts toward actualizing the shared purpose of saving healthy and treatable pets. Finally, the partners need to engage in conversation that supports civil discourse. The expression of divergent viewpoints with the intent to understand supports the creation of innovative lifesaving ideas (McClellan, 2011; Yom-Tov et al., 2014).

The strategies included in successful social change movements align with transformational leadership, which is a leadership strategy that is conducive to advancing change in individual people as well as in broader systems (Kendrick, 2011). Transformational leadership comprises four main components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Alatawi, 2017; Bass, 1999; Kendrick, 2011).

The framework of transformational leadership places the leader in a key position to inspire and realize transformational change (Bass, 1991; Ghasabeh et al., 2015; Kendrick, 2011; Paolucci et al., 2018). The leader communicates a strong vision and comports with consistent alignment with that vision. This behavior serves as a model to others and inspires them to adjust their own behavior to match the leader's example. Individuals are regarded as unique contributors to the effort and encouraged by the leader to seek new information and generate creative solutions to advance the work. Together, this leads to the highest levels of achievement (Prendergrast, 2017).

With the strategies of social change and components of transformational leadership, shelter directors can inspire and bring change within their communities. With a focus on the

three-phase process of building sustainable change—identifying a need for change; operational transition; new policies, procedures, and practices—they can build communities that embrace collaborative lifesaving as a cultural value (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Dawson, 1996).

The advancement of communities to collaboratively achieve no-kill status is a high-stake enterprise. Shelter directors are required to develop and put into practice a myriad of versatile leadership skills in order to adapt and lead in a potentially volatile environment (Ganz, 2009; Irvine, 2002). Shelter directors need to be trained and developed to execute the requisite interpersonal skills for building trust, relationships, and collaborations, motivate and inspire change, and implement complex, holistic strategies (Ganz, 2009).

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This study employs a qualitative approach to identifying the best practices of animal shelter directors, specifically those who are working within a no-kill community. The following chapter will outline the research design and methodology, interview protocol, data collection, and protection of human subjects. It will further explore the researcher's bias, bracketing, and epoche. Finally, the data analysis protocol will be delineated.

Re-Statement of Research Questions

This chapter describes the research methods that were applied to achieve the objectives of this study, which is to primarily answer these four research questions:

- RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?

- RQ2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?

- RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?

- RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?

Nature of the Study

This descriptive study will employ a qualitative approach in order to address the research questions. A qualitative approach to research is a method of examining the lived experience of individuals and is born of an interest in the complexity of society and interpersonal interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). This approach is a worthy manner of inquiry, particularly for the social and applied sciences (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Methodology

There are numerous viable ways to conduct qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A phenomenological design was used in this study. Phenomenology examines the lived experience of individuals with the aim of uncovering and explaining the participants' experience relative to the phenomenon being studied (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Neergaard, Olesen, Andersen, & Sondergaard, 2009). The meaning that individuals ascribe to the shared experience is revealed and defined (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

An inductive process is undertaken to arrive at the universal meaning of the shared experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Neergaard et al., 2009; Petty et al., 2012). Data is collected from individual participants, often through interviews, which is then organized into categories and themes. Through this process, patterns start to emerge. The researcher uses the building blocks from the particular data to identify the patterns, uncover the universal themes, and ultimately make meaning through an interpretation of the findings.

Structured process of phenomenology. Transcendental phenomenology is a process of exploring phenomena without presupposition, in order to see through the eyes of others (Creswell, 1998; Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; Sheehan, 2014). A systemic process of data collection and analysis allows the researcher to develop an objective notion of the aggregate experiences of various informants (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Intentional and conscious actions taken by the researcher warrant the degree of openness that is necessary to see in an unbound manner (Moustakas, 1994). This process leads to an acquisition of knowledge and the explication of human and social phenomena. Further discussion on the specific actions taken for this study is discussed in a subsequent section.

Appropriateness of phenomenology methodology. Creswell (1998) states that "objective understanding is mediated by subjective experience, and that human experience is an inherent structural property of the experience itself, not constructed by an outside observer," (p. 86). The meaning of human experience exists within those who live through unique phenomena and that meaning should be identified prior to an external observer or researcher placing theoretical frameworks or assumptions onto such phenomena (Creswell, 1998). This is what makes a phenomenological research approach appropriate for the study of leadership practices in no-kill communities. Using a phenomenological approach with a meticulous research design and protocol allows the study participants to present the meaning of their experience and collectively elucidate the essence of the shared experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It is from this experience that lessons can be learned and applied to advance the practice.

Research Design

The research design process determines the boundaries of the research by establishing protocol for sampling, recruitment, and data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participant selection is critical for qualitative research, because of the focus on lived experience. Determining the proper analysis unit, population and sample size, and the recruitment protocol ensures the selection of appropriate participants to provide information on the research questions.

Analysis unit. This research study seeks to identify the best practices of animal shelter directors in no-kill communities. The unit of analysis for this study is one animal shelter director operating a brick-and-mortar shelter within a no-kill community located in the United States as identified by the Best Friends Animal Society Lifesaving Dashboard.

Population. The population is comprised of animal shelter directors who are operating a brick-and-mortar shelter within a no-kill community located in the United States, as identified by

the Best Friends Animal Society Lifesaving Dashboard. "The study did not employ significance testing. Any generalizations to other populations should be done with caution" (F. Majidi, personal communication, December 7, 2019).

Sample size. From the population of all animal shelter directors operating within a no-kill community in the United States, a sample of participants were invited to participate in the study. The literature is inconclusive on the precise sample size that is appropriate for phenomenological research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012). Creswell (1998) suggests five to 25 participants. Thomas and Pollio (2002) recommend six to 12. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggest three to 10. The notable consistency is in the call for a much smaller sample size than that of a quantitative study (Gubrium et al., 2012). The intent is to examine fewer participants in an effort to achieve greater depth in the examination. For this study, a sample size of 15 was selected, which is optimal for ensuring saturation for data analysis.

Purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling, which is often used in qualitative research. It originates from the need to create a sample that will yield the data necessary to understand the phenomenon of study (Horsburgh, 2003). The researcher may use the study population's information to identify participants that are ideal sources for the data that is being collected (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The decisions are based specifically on the purpose of the research and the research questions (Salkind, 2010). Patten and Newhart (2018) provide the example of research on predicting issues before an academic senate. Instead of randomly selecting participants, the researcher may observe the senate and select only those who are consistently voting on the winning side of issues as the research participants. The selection is

done purposively to ensure that participants have the knowledge that is relevant to the research at hand.

Participation selection. A three-step process was used to determine the list of participants. Firstly, the researcher identified a sampling frame, which is considered to be the master list. Secondly, the researcher developed inclusion and exclusion criteria as a means to isolate eligible participants. Finally, a process of maximum variation was developed to be employed after inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied and a sample of greater than 20 remained.

Sampling frame. The participant selection process began with the creation of the sampling frame, or master list. To compile the list for this study, the Best Friends Animal Society Community Lifesaving Dashboard was used. This public domain website was the source of the data that was used to compile the sampling frame.

In total, there were 4,351 no-kill communities, of which 43 were identified as comprising two or more brick-and-mortar shelters with an annual intake of 4,000 or more pets. The resultant 43 shelter directors were then identified via Google and LinkedIn searches to confirm conformity to the inclusion criteria. The names of the no-kill communities and associated animal shelters are available in the public domain. Therefore, site permission was not required to access the necessary information. The information was compiled and stored in an Excel spreadsheet. The researcher connected with the animal shelter directors by using publicly available contact information and introducing the study using the recruitment script (Appendix C).

Criteria of inclusion. The criteria for inclusion in this study were: (a) be a male, female or gender non-conforming individual; (b) possesses a minimum of two years' experience working in the animal services field; (c) serves as a shelter director (could also be referred to as

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executive director, manager, or chief animal services officer) in a no-kill community comprised of a minimum of two brick-and-mortar shelters; (d) serves as a shelter director operating in a community with a combined annual intake of 4,000 or more pets; (e) lives within the United States; (e) interested in participating in the study.

Criteria for exclusion. The criteria for exclusion in this study were (a) availability during the time of the study; (b) not willing to allow recording of the interview; (c) less than 7 years' experience.

Criteria for maximum variation. Maximum variation sampling is a strategy of purposive sampling. Protocol for maximum variation sampling is used to ensure that the sample that is selected represents a wide and diverse representation of the all the aspects involved in the phenomenon under study (Morse, Swanson, & Kuzel, 2001; Patten & Newhart, 2018; Salkind, 2010). The protocol for maximum variation was developed for use in a scenario where 20 or more participants remained after the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. The protocol required the remaining participant pool to be examined to ensure (a) representation of animal shelter directors from both public and private shelters; (b) representation of shelter directors from low and high-volume shelters; and (c) representation from shelters operating different intake models.

Protection of Human Subjects

Research that involves human subjects requires specific protocol to protect the participants. Institutional Review Boards are responsible for monitoring and assuring human subject protection. Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) is responsible for the protection of human subjects participating in research in the college's School of Public Policy, Graziadio Business School, School of Law,

and Graduate School of Education and Psychology. In accordance with the University's requirements, approval from the GPS IRB was received in advance before contact with any potential human subjects. Data collection, handling, and storage was conducted in compliance with the approved GPS IRB protocol.

Data Collection

The data collection began with the recruitment of study participants. The researcher contacted participants from the identified pool by phone, email, or a combination of both, based on available contact information. Recruitment scripts were used for phone and email contact (Appendix C). The purpose of the script was to ensure standardized communication, to share details of the purpose of the research, and determine potential participants' interest in the study.

After an agreement was reached to participate in the one-hour interview, the researcher sent a confirmation email with the date and time of the interview, meeting logistics—including the telephone number or the link to a virtual meeting room when applicable, reiteration of the purpose of the study, interview questions (Appendix E), and informed consent (Appendix B). The informed consent outlined details of the participation in the study, which included: the study is voluntary; the participant is able to withdraw at any time without repercussions; the interview is recorded, but the recording can be stopped or paused at any time at request of the participant. The researcher asked for the informed consent to be reviewed and agreed to prior to the scheduled interview.

Interview Techniques

Interviewing is a complex activity that requires a conscientious and thoughtful approach (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Before the interview begins, the interviewer has the opportunity to set

the stage for a successful interview process. A time and place that is appropriate and comfortable for the interviewee should be chosen (Gubrium et al., 2012).

An interview is a social interaction (Gubrium et al., 2012). Accordingly, to commence the interview, the interviewer should offer a pleasant greeting, conduct introductions, express gratitude for participation, and engage in simple ice-breaker conversation (Salkind, 2010). This assists in building rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, which is important in eliciting valuable response from the participants (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

Further, the interviewer should provide a brief background on the purpose of the study, explain how participants were identified, give an estimated time for the interview, and review the participants' rights (Salkind, 2010). It is important for the protection of human subjects that all participants understand that they may stop the interview at any time or refuse to answer any question without any repercussions. Additionally, the interviewer should also secure permission prior to recording the interview.

Recording the interview is an important technique to maintain the rapport that is necessary for eliciting meaningful response (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The use of the recorder allows the interviewer's presence in the conversation. Instead of continued notetaking, the interviewer may engage in active listening. Notes should be taken to record anything of interest that might not be captured on an audio recording, such as notable body language or distractions. However, with a recorded interview, maximum attention can be paid directly to the interviewee.

As the interview proceeds, the interviewee must make all possible attempts to maintain neutral affect and choose words carefully (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Interaction should be kept to a minimum (Gubrium et al., 2012). While some interaction maintains the necessary rapport, the intent of the interview is to uncover the participant's lived experience. Consequently, the

interviewer should allow the interviewee to talk, listen carefully, and interject with clarifying questions when appropriate, in order to elicit clear and meaningful responses.

The aforementioned techniques were intentionally included in the researcher's practice. The participants were active in the determination of the time for the interview according to their convenience. The researcher began each interview with an explanation of the study, expressing the expectations for the interview process, an expression of gratitude for participation, and a brief ice-breaking conversation centered around the individuals' career or current job. The participants' rights were outlined and permission to record was secured. The interviewer practiced active listening and was careful not to interject beyond that which was necessary to elicit adequate responses. Each interview ended with an additional expression of gratitude and the request for permission to make further contact if clarification was needed on the data that was collected.

Interview Protocol

Qualitative interviews may be conducted as structured, unstructured, or semi-structured (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patten & Newhart, 2018; Salkind, 2010). Structured interviews ensure absolute consistency and each pre-determined question is asked in the same manner and order. Unstructured interviews generally do not rely on any pre-determined questions and are free-form. Finally, semi-structured interviews rely on pre-determined questions, but the interview allows for additional clarification and follow-up questions. This interview technique is very popular in qualitative research (Patten & Newhart, 2018).

The semi-structured interview includes open-ended questions that are generally limited in number (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The semi-structured technique allows the researcher to give adequate thought and preparation to an interview and its questions (Patten & Newhart,

2018). Interview questions are examined against research questions to ensure that they elicit the desired information. They can be reviewed for bias, comprehensiveness, and clarity. However, the possibility for the research to deviate from the pre-determined questions provides opportunity for thorough and robust data collection. Clarifying questions can be asked to determine or understand meaning or elucidate participant responses. A semi-structured interview protocol was used in this study.

Relationship between research and interview questions. This study consists of four research questions, from which the interview questions were developed. The researcher developed a total of 11 open-ended interview questions. These questions were driven by both the research questions and the literature review. Research questions are broad in nature and the pre-determined interview questions deconstruct the research questions into conversational questions that the interviewee can easily answer (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Each research question has between two and four corresponding interview questions (Table 1).

Table 1.

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions.

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?	IQ 3: What techniques do you use to inspire change? IQ 7: What techniques do you use while developing collaborative partnerships? IQ 5: (follow-up to IQ 4) What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles? IQ 10: What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?
Research Questions	**Corresponding Interview Questions**
RQ 2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?	IQ 2: What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration? IQ 6: How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative that you are attempting to implement? IQ 4: What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?
RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?	IQ 1: Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community? (Continued)
RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those communities that are aspiring to become no-kill?	IQ 8: What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors who are working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid? IQ 9: Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give to other shelter directors? IQ 11: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions. Interview questions were reviewed by a panel of two peer reviewers and expert reviewers.

Validity of the study. Qualitative validity refers to the processes or procedures conducted to ensure the truthfulness and accuracy of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research implemented a three-step approach to validity: prima-facie and content validity, peer-review validity, and expert review validity.

Prima-facie and content validity. After the interview questions were written, the first step was to examine the questions for clarity and adequate representation of all relevant research themes and questions (Youngson, Considine, & Currey, 2015). A table was developed, which outlined each research question and corresponding interview question (Table 1). The researcher reviewed the table to determine whether the questions appeared to address all of the research topics with clarity on first impression, or prima facie.

Peer-review validity. The second step in the validation process was a peer review, which relies on an outside review panel to provide feedback that is relative to the quality of the interview tool (Gubrium et al., 2012). A panel of three peer reviewers was assembled for this step. The reviewers are doctoral students from Pepperdine University who are conducting their dissertation research by employing a similar research methodology. All of the peer reviewers have completed several doctoral-level courses in both quantitative and qualitative research methods and data analysis. The panel was given a packet for review, which included a summary of the research topic and a form including the research questions and corresponding interview questions (Appendix D). The form also included instructions for reviewing each interview question and providing feedback on the relevance and clarity of each question. The questions were subsequently edited based on the peer reviews' feedback and the interview questions proceeded to the third stage of validation.

Expert review validity. The research questions and corresponding interview questions were submitted to an expert panel for review. The expert panel was comprised of the researcher's dissertation committee. The panel made recommendations for edits. In the case of disagreement, the committee chair made the ultimate decision. The final approved questions are represented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions (Revised).

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?	IQ 1: What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration? IQ 2: What techniques do you use to inspire change to support lifesaving within your community? IQ 3: What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles? IQ 4: What techniques do you use while developing collaborative partnerships? IQ 5: What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?
RQ 2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?	IQ 6: What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community? IQ 7: How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?
RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?	IQ 8: Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you track and measure the success of a no-kill community?

(Continued)

RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those communities that are aspiring to become no-kill?	IQ 9: What mistakes have you made that you would caution other shelter directors to avoid or be mindful of? IQ 10: From your experience with creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give other shelter directors? IQ 11: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from peer reviewers and an expert reviewer. Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Statement of Personal Bias

Creswell and Creswell (2018) contended that the bias that a researcher brings to the research should be outlined and clarified. A responsible researcher acknowledges personal biases and states them openly. As such, the researcher brought the following personal biases to the study:

- The researcher has had experience as an animal shelter director in a large, open-admission municipal animal shelter.

- The researcher has had volunteer experience in advocating the advancement of leadership practices in animal welfare through conference presentations and consultation on an executive leadership certification.

- The researcher has her own opinion on the best practices for leadership in animal welfare, based on her knowledge and experience.

Bracketing and epoche. Epoche is a Greek term meaning to stay away from, abstain, or refrain from judgment (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological research requires the researcher to identify personal biases and set them aside in a process called bracketing (Petty et al., 2012). This process requires a sustained intentionality to remain present

in the process of acknowledging personal bias and its potential impact on the research (Moustakas, 1994). A crucial step in the process is to identify all potential biases that may influence the interpretation of the data. For this study, the researcher noted all biases and potential biases associated with animal shelter leadership that are relative to no-kill communities in a journal. The journal was maintained throughout the data analysis process and any biases that arose during the process were recorded in the journal, and reported as appropriate. Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) contended that acknowledging, labeling, and writing biases is an important part of the epoche process. Creswell and Creswell (2018) noted the importance of sharing these biases openly, so that readers are aware of them while reading or interpreting the results of the study.

Data Analysis

According to Giorgi (1997), qualitative research is comprised of five basic steps: (1) collection of verbal data, (2) reading of the data, (3) breaking of the data into some kind of parts, (4) organization and expression of the data from a disciplinary perspective, and (5) synthesis or summary of the data for purposes of communication to the scholarly community.

For this study, verbal data was collected through an interview process. The interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed by the researcher. The transcripts were then used for the coding process. This process is the bridge between data collection and the discovery of meaning for the lived experience and is a key element of qualitative analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). After the data was collected, the researcher reviewed the transcripts and noted her impressions in the margins. These impressions were used to identify a list of possible codes, which were used to describe participants' answers to the interview questions. These codes were

then reviewed to identify themes, or overarching categories. This study did not use any predetermined codes; all codes were identified as a result of the interview responses.

Interrater reliability and validity. Validation occurs throughout the research process and to maintain the study's rigor, the coding and analysis protocol underwent an interrater reliability and validity procedure. Creswell and Creswell (2018) contended that qualitative reliability is realized when the approach to the research remains consistent across various researchers and research projects. It is with that aim that the interrater reliability and validity process was conducted. The process entailed the following steps:

1. The initial three interviews were transcribed, read, and coded.

2. The transcripts and codiing records were shared with two peer reviewers. The reviewers independently assessed the coding and discussed the findings with the researcher and made suggestions for modifications where appropriate.

3. After consensus was reached on a coding schema, the researcher completed transcribing and coding the remaining 12 interviews.

4. Once all data was coded, the researcher again shared with the peer review panel for review and final consensus.

If at any point in the process the researcher and peer reviewer were unable to reach consensus, expert reviewers provided input and made final decisions. Major themes were identified through this process and will be reported in Chapter 4.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the research design and methodology for the study. The phenomenological research methodology was explored and the merit of the approach for this study was outlined. Furthermore, detailed descriptions of the unit of analysis,

population, and sample were provided. The establishment of the participant selection protocol, including the inclusion and exclusion criteria and a process of ensuring maximum variation, was discussed. The chapter continued with the researcher's commitment to the protection of human subjects. The process for developing the interview protocol was examined in detail, including the inter-rater reliability and validity process that was employed in the creation of the interview questions. Data collection, including interview techniques, was discussed. Finally, the data analysis protocol was examined, including the coding process and the associated interrater reliability and validity process.

Chapter 4: Findings

The emergence of the no-kill movement has resulted in a more dynamic strategy for lifesaving than previously seen. Consequently, to successfully create and sustain communities with a commitment to lifesaving, shelter directors are responsible for leading in a very complex environment. This study aims to expand the knowledge of those elements critical to successful animal services leadership relative to the advancement of the no-kill movement. To accomplish this task, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?

- RQ2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?

- RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?

- RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?

To assist in answering these questions, an interview protocol comprised of eleven open-ended questions was developed. An inter-rater reliability process was applied, and the following eleven questions were employed:

- Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community?

- What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration?

- What techniques do you use to inspire change?

- What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?

- What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles?

- How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?

- What techniques do you use when establishing community partnerships?

- What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors who are working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid?

- Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give to other shelter directors?

- What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

Participants were asked to provide responses to the eleven open-ended questions. The information collected from the interview contributed to the understanding of best practices of animal services directors in developing and sustaining no-kill communities. This chapter contains information about the interview process, inter-rater review, and findings from the data collected.

Participant

For the study, a total of 15 was identified as the ideal number of participants. Once the interview process began, and the data was coded, the results indicated data saturation. This was evidenced by a decrease in novel themes identified by the participants. Resultantly, the committee agreed that 14 participants were sufficient, ending the participant at 14. The population of 14 comprised of 10, or 71%, who were female and 4, or 29%, who were male. Additionally, they consisted of animal services directors from throughout the United Sates.

Data Collection

An initial step was taken to compile a master list of participants. This was done by identifying no-kill communities as identified by the Best Friends Animal Society Community Lifesaving Dashboard, a publicly available website which can be accessed at https://bestfriends.org/2025-goal. For each state, the website notes communities that are no-kill, nearly no-kill, not yet no-kill, or waiting on shelter data. Each community noted as no-kill was then examined to identify via the website the combined intake and the number of shelters within that community. This helped create the master list. Web searches were then used to identify the directors of each shelter, and those with a minimum of two years' experience in animal services were noted on a spreadsheet. A total of 43 potential participants were identified. The list was then sorted to include municipal and private organizations and various intake models.

Data collection began at the end of January, 2020, after approval from the Institutional Review Board was received on January 21, 2020. Between January 24, 2020 and February 17, 2020, all 43 potential participants were contacted via email. Of those 43, 14 agreed to participate, four declined, one agreed to participate but ultimately did not attend the interview, and the remaining 23 did not respond. Participants included animal services directors from shelters throughout the United States and comprised municipal and private organizations.

Those participants that agreed to participate were provided the informed consent form via email, and were provided with an opportunity to ask questions through email or at the beginning of the interview. Each interview was scheduled for 60 minutes; however, the average length of the interviews was 34 minutes. The longest interview took 51 minutes and the shortest was 23 minutes.

Data Analysis

This phenomenological research study used an inductive coding procedure. This procedure entailed an initial review of the verbal data collected through the interview process. This began the coding process which bridges data collection and uncovering the meaning of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher noted initial impressions in the margins of the transcripts. These notes were used to identify possible codes which described participants' responses. The codes were subsequently used to identify overarching categories known as themes.

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher practiced epoche, also known as bracketing, which is used to acknowledge personal bias and suspend judgement or presupposition to remove or minimize impact on the research (Moustakas, 1994; Petty et al., 2012). To accomplish this, the researcher maintained a journal prior to and throughout data analysis, where personal bias and beliefs were noted. Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) contend that acknowledging, labeling, and writing biases is an important part of the bracketing process. At two points during coding, the researcher engaged in the inter-rater review process.

Inter-rater Review Process

Two doctoral students enrolled in the Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program at Pepperdine University were selected to serve as reviewers to ensure inter-rater reliability. Both students have experience with the phenomenological methodology used in this research and have been trained in qualitative research methods and data analysis. After five interviews were conducted, the two reviewers were provided with a spreadsheet which contained the coded data, including responses, key phrases, and themes. Both reviewers analyzed the data and provided recommendations and comments which yielded four comments and four modifications. The remaining nine interviews were transcribed and coded, at which point, the

reviewers were again provided with a spreadsheet containing the coding for all of the interviews.

Again, the reviewers analyzed the data and provided recommendations. The second round of

review yielded two recommendations and two edits. The recommendations and edits may be

seen in Table 3.

Table 3.

Inter-rater comments and modifications.

Interview Question	Items	Inter-rater Recommendations	Modification Applied
1	Transparency, preparation, and communication theme	Make transparency a stand-alone theme	After consultation with committee, did not modify (Continued)
Interview Question	**Items**	**Inter-rater Recommendations**	**Modification Applied**
9	Don't force your message theme	Revise this theme to include more descriptive and/or inclusive language	Changed theme to pressure
9	Avoid negativity	This aligns with mindset or pressure	Moved to pressure theme
10	Don't be afraid to delegate	This is related to management	Moved to management skills and strategies
10	Can't lose sight of why you're doing what you're doing and the decision that you're making	This is related to management	Moved to management skills and strategies
11	Formalized process for budgeting	This is related to management	Moved to management skills and strategies

Note. The table identifies interview question that the comment refers to, the original item commented on, and the modification made.

Data Display

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The data for this study is organized according to each research question (RQ) and corresponding interview questions. During data analysis, the researcher identified that interview question (IQ)7 yielded results for research question (RQ)1, rather than RQ2, as originally intended. Consequently, responses for IQ7 are reported in RQ1. From each interview, common themes were identified based on key phrases or comments. Frequency charts were then created to summarize and visually represent the results. Additionally, brief descriptions of each theme have been provided in addition to participant quotes. To allow integrity of the data, excerpts have been transcribed verbatim which results in some incomplete sentences. To maintain anonymity, participants will be referenced in order of the interview, which can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4.

Dates of the Participant Interviews

Participant	Date
P1	February 3, 2020
P2	February 7, 2020
P3	February 13, 2020
P4	February 17, 2020
P5	February 17, 2020
P6	February 21, 2020
P7	February 21, 2020
P8	February 24, 2020
P9	February 27, 2020
P10	February 28, 2020
P11	March 2, 2020
P12	March 2, 2020
P13	March 9, 2020
P14	March 9, 2020

Research Question 1

The first research question asked, "What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?" A total of five interview questions were originally developed to correspond with this research question. The five interview questions originally related to research question 1 are:

- What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration?

- What techniques do you use to inspire change?

- What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles?

- What techniques do you use when establishing community partnerships?

- What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?

However, after data analysis, it was evident that an additional question (IQ7) provided data that corresponded with this question. That question is:

- How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?

Consequently, the responses for all six questions were analyzed for consistent themes, which together determine the answer to research question one, and are presented below.

Interview question 1: "What elements need to be in place for successful community collaboration?"

Responses to interview question 1 resulted in 49 elements which were grouped into three themes: (a) teamwork and compromise; (b) communication and transparency; and (c) trust, respect, and integrity (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Interview question 1 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the three themes that emerged from responses to interview question 1. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in eight (57%) responses and the theme includes taking the time to understand other organizations, sharing resources, finding mutually beneficial arrangements, and working together to provide all necessary services to the community. P1 states, "There's this perception in animal welfare that everybody has to get along and that everybody has to agree on the goal and that's how you get to this nirvana point and I totally disagree with that." P1 went on to say that, "Consensus didn't matter. It was more about filling gaps that existed and making sure those gaps were always filled." P13 stated, "It's not just about your municipal shelter being no-kill, it's about a community being no-kill." P3 explained that, "Sometimes, our goals are similar but not the same,

and we want to make sure that everybody's feeling like they're accomplishing what their mission is."

Communication and transparency. Communication and transparency resulted in eight (57%) responses and the theme includes preparing the community for upcoming action, transparent communication, and involving stakeholders. For example, P4 stated, "If the people know what you're doing is the right thing and that you're doing it for the right reasons, they are usually pretty quick to get on board." P7 explained, "It comes from a point of needing really great messaging, good education and consistent messaging." P6 expressed the need to "help elected officials, whoever it is, the stakeholders to help you attain your goals."

Trust, respect, and integrity. Trust and integrity resulted in five (36%) responses. The theme of trust, respect, and integrity includes acting with integrity, building trust, and withholding judgement. Arluke (2003) acknowledges that trust has historically lacked in animal services, and P5 stated, "If there's no trust between organizations then, there's not going to be communication between organizations." P9 explained that one of the first things they did after becoming a director was work to build trust.

Interview Question 2 "What techniques do you use to inspire change?"

Responses to interview question 2 resulted in 36 elements which were grouped into three themes: (a) communication and transparency; (b) teamwork and compromise; and (c) management skills and strategies (Figure 4).

Interview Question 2 - Coding Results
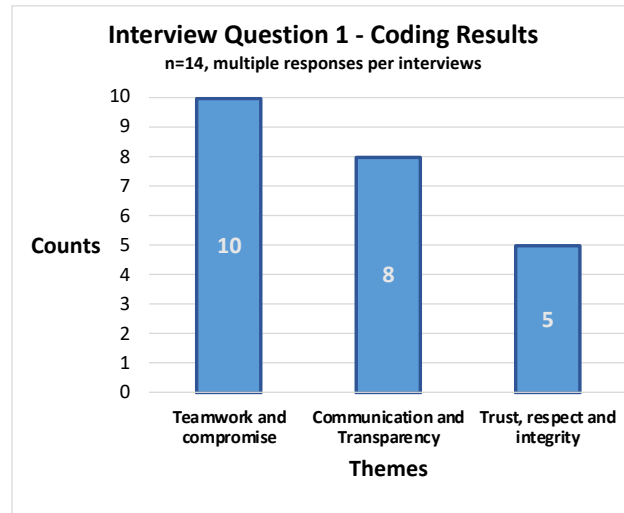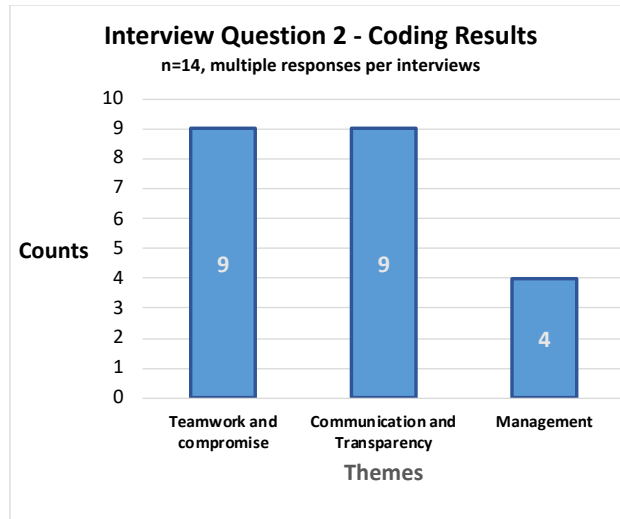n=14, multiple responses per interviews

Figure 4. Interview question 2 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the three themes that emerged from responses to interview question 2. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Communication and transparency. Communication and transparency resulted in nine (64%) responses and the theme includes using aspirational language, preparing staff and the community for change, education, and storytelling. P11 explained that, "outside the organization numbers are pretty meaningless. Most people want to hear our stories." P1 shared, "There still has to be this vision that has to be communicated that we want to get to a place that is so much better for our community. Where animals and pets are treated like family members. That kind of statement and continually beating the drum on that. Helping people to understand that we're not happy with where we are and we want to get better."

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in nine (64%) responses. The theme of involving others includes engaging staff, stakeholders, and individuals in the work. In animal services there are a variety of stakeholders that bear responsibility for the outcomes of shelter pets (Crosby, 2019). P6 stated, "Including your team, whoever that is, whether it's your stakeholders, whether it's your employees, your volunteers, or your partners to

be included in the big picture and how they impact that vision." P1 also noted that, "people want to be part of something bigger than themselves."

Management skills and strategies. Management skills and strategies resulted in four (29%) responses and the theme includes leading by example, being involved in the daily work of staff, and acknowledging progress. P1 noted that it is important "to show what the forward vision is and how we are making progress toward that vision." P2 shared, "I'm not afraid to go down to the kennels and scoop poop. I walk a dog every day that I'm here at work. So, leading by example, you aren't just sitting up in your office all day long not seeing the struggles that the staff go through and not understand." Kendrick (2011) contends that transformational leaders model desired behaviors that align with espoused values.
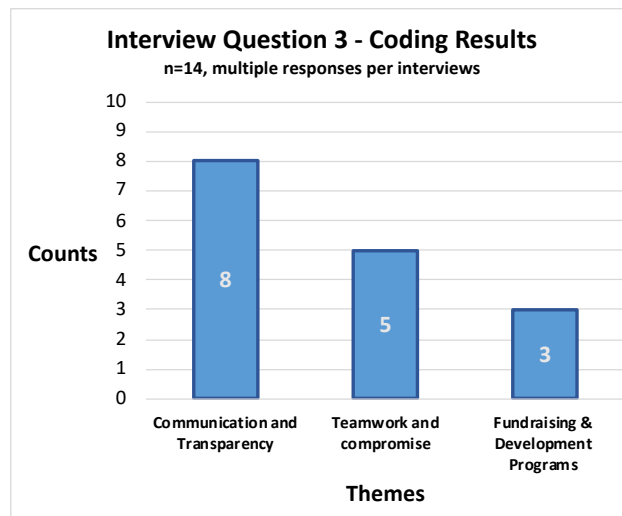

Figure 5. Interview question 3 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the three themes that emerged from responses to interview question 3. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Interview Question 3 "What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles?"

Responses to interview question 3 resulted in 36 elements which were grouped into five themes: (a) communication and transparency; (b) teamwork and compromise; (c) fundraising and development programs; (d) strategic thinking and implementation; and (e) metrics and data (Figure 5).

Communication and transparency. Communication and transparency resulted in eight (57%) responses and the theme includes public communication, education, and conversation. P7 stated, "What strategies would you use to overcome those obstacles? Internally, just a lot of education with my staff." P9 explains that when there are obstacles they "call people in" and "kind of get down to the bottom of why you think like that, and then see if there is a way we can work together." According to Komives and Wagner (2017), conversation around disagreements is healthy and productive, if the parties seek to understand one another. P6 stated, "When the stakeholders in our cities have questions about things that are going on within our department or within our programs, it is incumbent on me to help explain to them what is happening, why it is happening, and help them gain an understanding."

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in five (36%) responses and the theme includes working together to achieve lifesaving goals and learning to meet in the middle. For example, P3 stated, "We pulled people together, and when we had someone that was, I guess, an outlier and wants to do things, we tried to do the one on one. We try to compromise and see if there was a way that we can meet in the middle." P3 also stated, "At first we thought that was a failure if you weren't able to get everybody on board. And now we've proven that you can still be successful even if that doesn't happen. Make sure you put in the effort and do what you can, but don't let it hold you back." P12 explained one tactic when trying to overcome obstacles, "We rely upon other organizations who do have the expertise."

Fundraising and development programs. Fundraising and development programs resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes efforts to support the acquisition of grants and donations. In order to implement lifesaving programs, many shelters directors will need to seek additional financial resources (Rowan, 2008). P7 stated, "I'm really fortunate to have a really dynamic fundraising and development team. Really creative people so, we can get really creative using campaigns and telling stories and getting people motivated." P8 explained, "I guess the best answer for how we operate is really in fundraising in resources."

Strategic thinking and implementation. Strategic implementation resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes creating and executing a plan and innovation. For example, P13 explained about taking a new position, "For me, it was kind of going backwards and putting together, like: What's the real plan on how we can become no-kill?"

Metrics and data. Metrics and data resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes data tracking and sharing. P1 explained, "There's a huge lack of data in this field and lack of information, and so, almost anything that is an obstacle is because of the fear around the issue, not the data and metrics around the issue. So, as we've tried to navigate this, my compass has always been around: what does the data show us?"

Interview Question 4: "What techniques do you use when establishing community partnerships?"

Responses to interview question 4 resulted in 56 elements which were grouped into three themes: (a) teamwork and compromise; (b) communication and transparency; and (c) trust, respect, and integrity (Figure 6).

Interview Question 4 - Coding Results

n=14, multiple responses per interviews

Figure 6. Interview question 4 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the three themes that emerged from responses to interview question 4. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in ten (71%) responses and the theme includes learning about other organizations, working together to achieve lifesaving goals, and supplementing one another's work. P3 stated, "We'll give them a tour of our operations and then, we'll pick another day and they'll give us a tour of theirs." When discussing techniques for establishing community collaborations, P5 stated, "The first one is asking questions. It's all about asking questions." P5 also stated that it is important to "figure out who they are, what they do, how we can best help them, what they are good at." P12 expressed the need for formal and informal partnerships and collaborations stating that "there is high level and doing a full partnership with an MOU (memorandum of understanding) and just, you know,

building relationships." P14 stated, "It's a matter of looking at a common goal and how we can complement one another and build synergy."

Communication and transparency. Communication and transparency resulted in seven (50%) responses. The theme includes openness and accessibility. For example, P2 stated, "To establish any kind of partnership with the community or to be a liaison, you have to be willing to be out there. I, personally, am on all the lost-and-found Facebook pages and I respond to people. My name is very well known in the community." P8 answered, "I don't know that it's techniques as much as it is just being open and honest with people." P10 stated, "Open, honest, and transparent communication. It's as simple as that."

Trust, honesty, and integrity. Trust, honesty, and integrity resulted in seven (50%) responses and the theme includes being honest and up front to build trust. P8 stated, "That's how we've worked with other organizations. Just being really upfront. This is what we do." P12 shared, "If you have trust in a person, you know the person better and then you can, you know, then you both are more comfortable talking about more things and opening up and really seeing how you can connect with each other." Taking these steps to build trust is important, as demonstrating trust is the first step to encourage the practice of trusting others (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000; Komives & Wagner, 2017; Slater, 2008).

Interview Question 5: "What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?"

Responses to interview question 5 resulted in 42 elements which were grouped into five themes: (a) teamwork and compromise; (b) fundraising and development programs; (c) strategic thinking and implementation; (e) metrics and data; and (f) management skills and techniques (Figure 7).
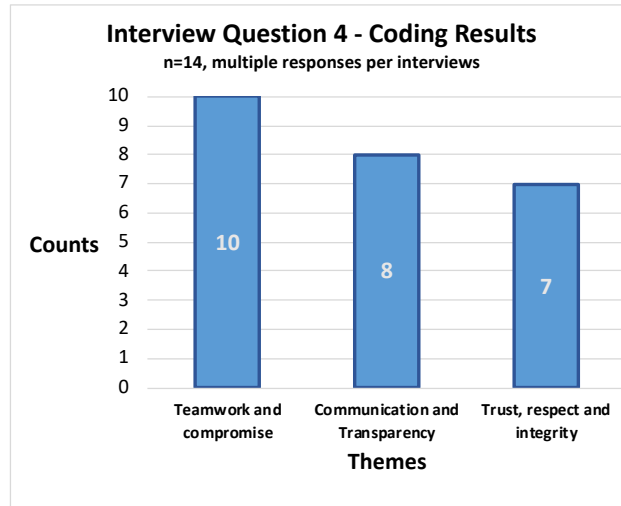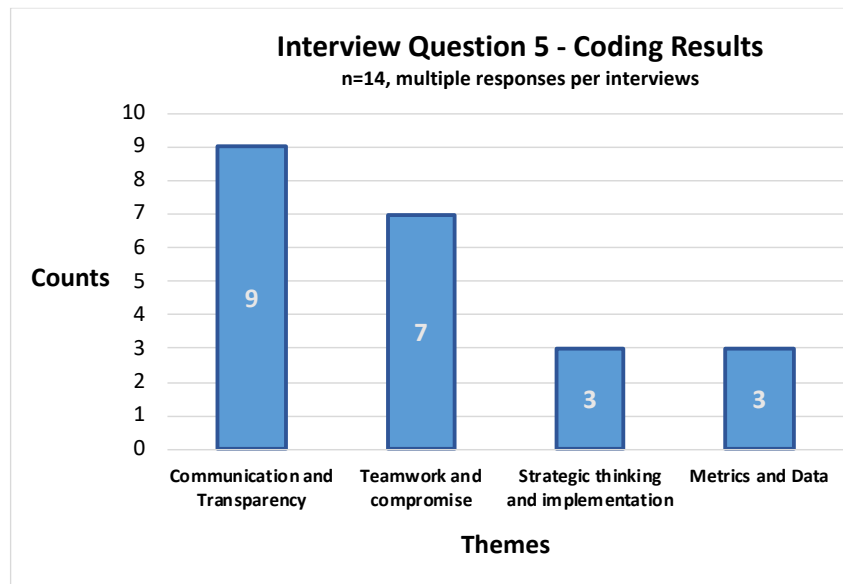
Figure 7. Interview question 5 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the four themes that emerged from responses to interview question 5. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Fundraising and development programs. Fundraising and development programs resulted in seven (50%) responses. The theme of fundraising and development programs includes planning for future programmatic costs and using fundraising to procure revenue. P3 shared, "You have to have a development team so that you can fund them. We have, sometimes, gotten ahead of ourselves and been ready to do things then, oops, we don't have what we need in the budget, so that's a problem. Just making sure you have all of those bases covered." P4 stated, "We are constantly fundraising." P9 explains, "We have been investing in fundraising. And that is just in order, obviously, like for a capital campaign and adding some of those new programs."

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in eight (57%) responses and the theme includes keeping the community and stakeholders engaged. For example, P2 stated, "Keep your community engaged, keep your supporters, your volunteers and

your donors engaged, and listen to their concerns when they have them." P3 shared, "Try to get more people engaged in your mission and in the different areas of your operations."

Strategic thinking and implementation. Strategic thinking and implementation resulted in seven (50%) responses. The theme of strategic thinking and implementation includes avoiding unintended consequences, filling service gaps in the community, understanding limitations, and innovation. According to Senge et al. (2015), it is incumbent upon leaders to think holistically. As such they are able to identify root causes of problems, develop effective solutions, and predict systemic outcomes of proposed actions. P1 explained that in any scenario it is important "to outline the risks. And then, develop a communication plan around what I want to do, what I'm worried about, how I am going to create operations to prevent those things from happening, and where I need the community's help." P7 noted, "I think just really fully understanding what your limitations are and really to work as much as you can to have success."

Metrics and data. Metrics and data resulted in four (29%) responses. The theme includes having metrics in place, and evaluating data to make programmatic decisions. P5 stated, "Data's my big thing. I love numbers, charts and graphs." P5 went on to say, "You have to make sure that you are actually sustaining it, not just assume you're sustaining it."

Management skills and techniques. Management skills and techniques resulted in four (29%) responses. The theme includes team selection and maintaining continuity. For example, P2 stated, "Hire people who believe in your philosophy and support it so you aren't constantly fighting your internal management to make things work." P5 stated, "You have to have the industry-specific knowledge and training in order to do well. We raise the bar for ourselves on what we do for all our staff, including entry-level staff." P3 recommended, "Make sure that you

have a continuity plan for the future and you can continue to be successful and help people and animals."

Interview Question 7: "How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?"

Responses to interview question 7 resulted in 40 elements which were grouped into four themes: (a) teamwork and compromise; (b) communication and transparency; (c) strategic thinking and implementation; and (d) metrics and data (Figure 8).
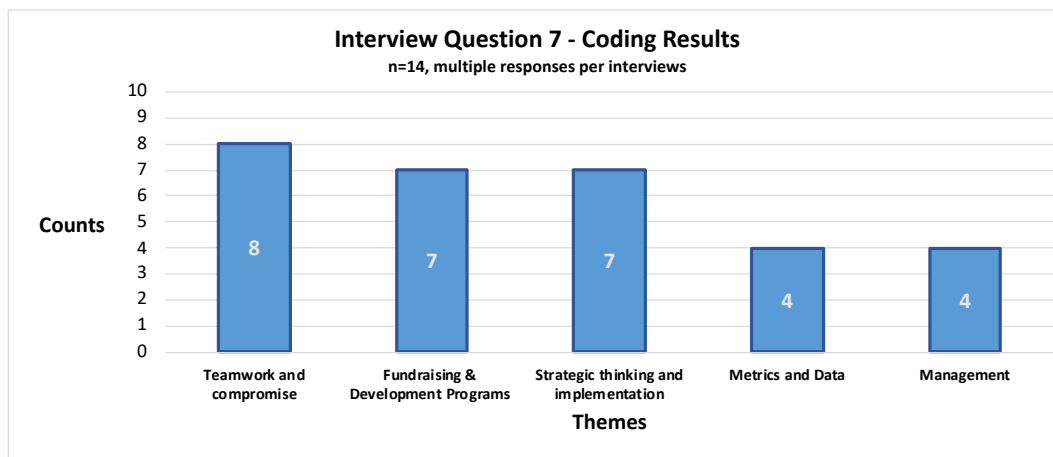
Figure 8. Interview question 7 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the five themes that emerged from responses to interview question 7. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Teamwork and compromise. Teamwork and compromise resulted in ten (71%) responses. The theme includes engaging individuals in conversation, inviting them into the process, and seeking understanding. For example, P11 stated, "Internally, other things that have really helped are inviting people to be part of the process." P2 shared, "I think talking about it, explaining the change, letting them voice their fears and concerns goes a long way." P13 explained the importance of working to reach understanding and stated, "I will talk to anybody and try to help them understand. And you know, at the end of the day, they might not agree, but

at least I've given them information." When leaders approach disagreement with civility, individuals feel more comfortable sharing their opinions and ideas (Davenport-Sypher, 2004).

Communication and transparency. Communication and transparency resulted in nine (64%) responses and the theme includes sharing the work and the story with the community. P10 stated, "I spend a lot of my time talking in front of civic groups, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts or rotary clubs, commerce, any car clubs, and group gathering that I can get in front of to show…I can stand and explain." Transformational leadership relies on conversation to challenge assumptions (Kendrick, 2011), and P8 explained, "It takes repeatedly going back and saying, 'Here's why we're doing this.'" P6 explained, "Use it as an opportunity to be a teaching moment and share the information, share the initiative, share the goals, but also, share the challenges."

Strategic thinking and implementation. Strategic implementation resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes careful and thoughtful program implementation as well as choosing the right moments to implement new things. For example, P2 shared, "Trying to implement things not in a drastic fashion, but more in the middle, then I think that helps too." P3 stated, "We break it down into different components and say, 'Well, let's, let's just on a trial basis.'" P6 noted, "One, it's a pick your battles, you know, maybe even if I think it is a priority, maybe it shouldn't be."

Metrics and data. Metrics and data resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes gathering data and statistics to communicate or demonstrate the work. P1 noted, "We try really had to just try and help inform through data." Additionally, P9 stated, "We really use data."

Summary of research question 1. Research question one sought to identify successful strategies used by animal services directors in creating and sustaining no-kill communities. A

total of 259 elements were identified in the responses to all six of the interview questions. The 259 elements were grouped into seven themes.

The seven themes identified from all interview questions supporting research question 1 were: (a) teamwork and compromise; (b) communication and transparency; (c) trust, respect, and integrity; (d) strategic thinking and implementation; (e) metrics and data; (f) fundraising and development programs; and (g) management skills and techniques.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked, "What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?" A total of two interview questions were originally developed in order to answer the research question. The two interview questions originally related to research question 2 are:

- What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?

- How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?

However, after data analysis, it was evident that IQ7 provided data that corresponded with RQ1, rather than RQ2 as originally intended. Consequently, the data for IQ7 was reported with the results for RQ1. Resultantly, the question related to research question 2 is:

- What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?

The responses for the interview question were analyzed for consistent themes, which together determine the answer to research question 2, and are presented below.

Interview Question 6: "What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?"

Responses to interview question 6 resulted in 33 elements which were grouped into four themes: (a) no-kill language and definitions; (b) community reputation or presence; (c) resources; and (d) conflicts within the animal services professions (Figure 9).

Interview Question 6 - Coding Results

n=14, multiple responses per interviews
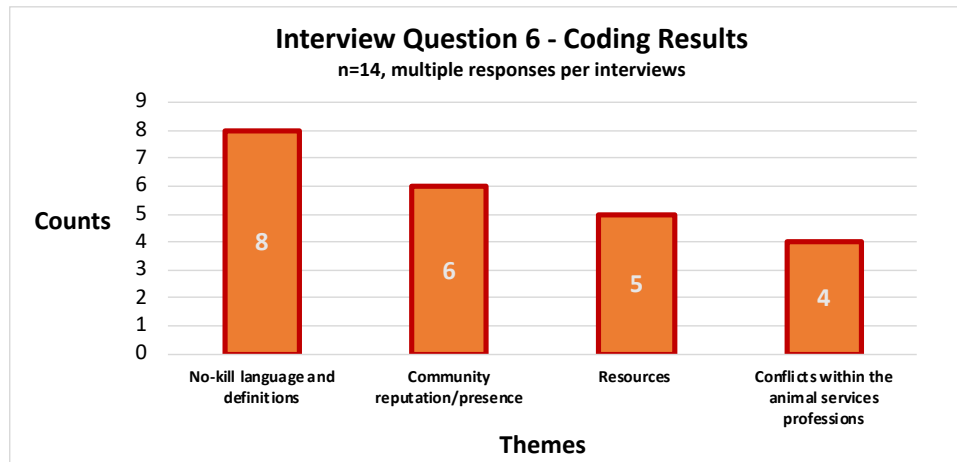
Figure 9. Interview question 6 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the four themes that emerged from responses to interview question 6. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

No-kill language and definitions. No-kill language and definitions resulted in eight (57%) responses. The theme of no-kill language and definitions includes confusion or division caused by the term "no-kill". P4 explained, "One of the things that we have to overcome in becoming a no-kill shelter is that "no-kill" doesn't mean that we're not euthanizing animals." Euthanasia, as an act of mercy for irremediably suffering pets, is an accepted tenet of the no-kill philosophy (Battista, 2015; Winograd, 20011). P5 noted, "The general community doesn't understand animal welfare and sheltering. The language gives them a visceral reaction. And if that motivates them to action, then, you know, great. That's wonderful. What I don't approve of is when it's on the negative side of these collaborations in using that language to weaponize." P9

shared, "We don't like the language so to speak, because we think it's a little divisive and too misleading."

Community reputation or presence. Community reputation and presence resulted in six (43%) responses. The theme of community reputation and presence includes community support, reputation within the community, and misunderstandings or negativity in the community. P2 explained, "People just didn't realize there was an animal shelter there. It just didn't dawn on them that they needed it or that people didn't think to go look at the animal shelter for their animals." P5 stated, "There is negativity within communities and differing opinions on how no-kill looks and works." P10 explained, "So, with elected officials…that is something that sometimes people don't totally buy into." P10 went on to say, "When collateral stuff like overcrowded shelters start, they're the first ones to get hit by the public and sometimes, they don't react well to that."

Resources. Resources resulted in five (36%) responses. The theme of resources includes financial, physical, and human resources. For example, P1 stated, "We started with no staff, we started with no building, we started with no money." P7 shared, "Our biggest challenges have been resources."

Conflicts within the animal services professions. Conflicts within the animal services professions resulted in four (29%) responses and the theme includes differences of opinion within related fields like veterinary medicine, pet trainers, and animal control or protection. For example, P1 stated, "In my mind, the conflict in most of this movement comes from the professional elements that are involved in it. So, you have veterinarians, you have trainers, animal control officers. And those are really the only professionals that exist in the sheltering world. I guess, when those things are applied in a lifesaving methodology in a shelter, there is a

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natural conflict between the ways that they do it." P2 shared when speaking about animal control, "I think that in a lot of places, their mindset is different than that of a shelter that is trying to become no-kill in a lot of respects. So, in many places, animal control is one of the biggest obstacles to get them to come on board and help you with the quest."

Summary of research question two. Research question 2 sought to identify the challenges animal services directors face when creating no-kill communities. A total of 33 elements were identified in the responses to the interview question. The 33 elements were grouped into four themes. The four themes identified from all interview questions supporting research question 1 were: (a) no-kill language and definitions; (b) community reputation or presence; (c) resources; and (d) conflicts within the animal services professions.

Research Question 3

The third research question asked, "How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?" One interview question was asked in order to answer the research question. The interview question related to research question 3 is:

- Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community?

The responses for the question was analyzed for consistent themes, which together determine the answer to research question 3.

Interview Question 8: "Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community?"

Responses to interview question 8 resulted in 55 elements which were grouped into five themes: (a) community impact; (b) shelter impact and metrics; (c) supporting all populations of

pets; (d) supporting other communities; and (e) 90% not a comprehensive benchmark (Figure 10).

Interview Question 8 - Coding Results
n=14, multiple responses per interviews
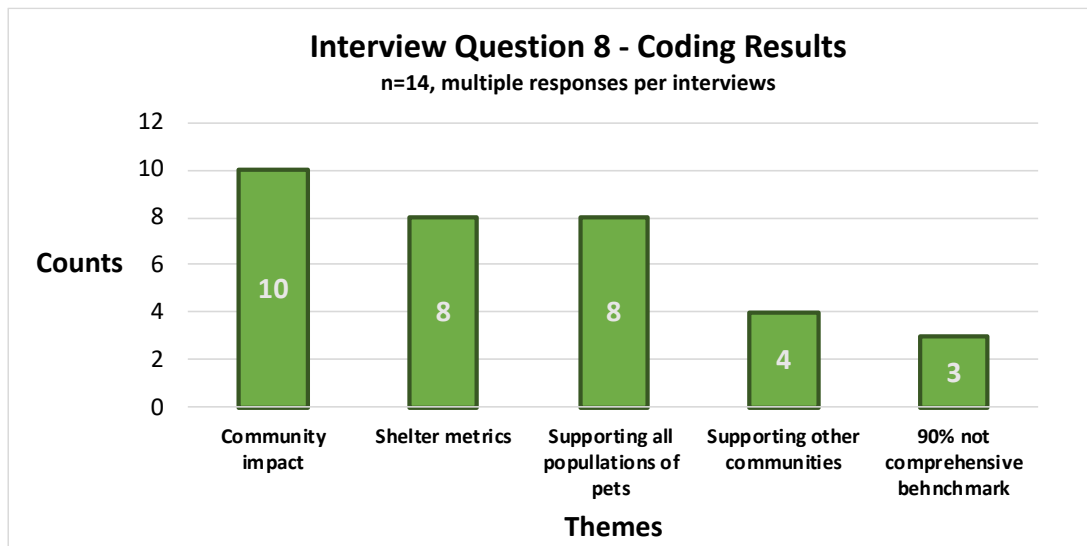
Figure 10. Interview question 8 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the five themes that emerged from responses to interview question 8. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Community impact. Community impact resulted in ten (71%) responses. The theme of community impact includes public safety, resources for people and the community, and the ways in which shelter decisions impact others. As an active member of the local community, a shelter director is positioned to understand community stakeholders and environment (Komives & Wagner, 2017). For example, P1 stated, "We use other statistics to make sure that the lifesaving percentage is not causing undue harm anywhere else. So, we look at the bites that are in the community. We look at the number of animals picked up dead on the side of the road. And we look into the intake at other shelters that are in the vicinity." P3 shared, "We've really transitioned to be seen as more of a resource." P12 noted, "Part of our success is keeping families together."

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Shelter impact and metrics. Shelter impact and metrics resulted in eight (57%) responses, and the theme includes shelter metrics like length of stay and return to owner rates, pets' quality of life while in the shelter, and organizational culture. For example, P7 explained the importance of monitoring culture, stating, "The culture of the shelter or the organization. I would say the overall culture and the attitude, and maybe the mission of the organization." P11 noted metrics to include "what our return rates are." P11 also stated, "Are these animals getting a chance to get out? So, in other words, are our animals in for an inordinate length of stay?" P9 shared, "We're really fortunate to have a high return-to-owner rate."

Supporting all populations of pets Supporting all populations of pets and people resulted in eight (57%) responses, and the theme includes providing support for all categories of pets and seeking the best possible outcomes. P2 noted, "I think that the measure of my success is that we do put every effort into each individual animal to give it the best chance that they have." P3 explained, "We work together and try and help all the animals with various needs and challenges and things like that." P8 stated, "We measure our success according to our mission. And our mission really is that we're going to provide every animal with every possible thing they need to be happy, healthy, and find a successful adopter." P1 shared, "The other ways to measure no-kill are around making sure there's infrastructure in place for every type of animal that needs support."

Supporting other communities. Supporting other communities resulted in four (29%) responses. The theme of supporting other communities includes transferring pets from other communities or creating partnerships in other areas. P3 stated, "I would say it depends on what kind of partnerships you have." P3 went on to add, "I think a turning point for us was when we started to be able to transfer animals beyond our community." P4 shared, "So, I would kind of

base it on the fact that we are able to go outside of our comfort zone and outside of our area to help other counties that aren't in as good shape as we are in."

90% not a comprehensive benchmark. 90% not a comprehensive benchmark resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes the inadequacy of the save-rate as the sole metric for determining no-kill. To explain this, P2 stated, "I think people pay too much attention to that and they get to the 90% and go, 'Hey, we made it! We don't have to do anything else.' When in fact, there are still animals that could be saved that are dying in the shelter." P5 shared, "I think the percent is meaningless. I mean, it's real. It's a real number. It's a real thing. It's a real thing to strive for, but ultimately, that doesn't tell me anything about the animals we're serving." While only three participants mentioned this theme, it is noteworthy as it highlights the limitations of relying solely on a numeric benchmark. After an initial burst of success, change initiative can suffer "initiative decay" (Buchanan, et al., 2005). Concentrating on a variety of benchmarks helps to combat that decay, keep teams focused on lifesaving, and provide a variety of ways to measure and acknowledge success.

Summary of research question 3. Research question 3 sought to identify how animal services directors measure their success in achieving a no-kill community. A total of 55 elements were identified in the responses to interview the question. The 55 elements were grouped into five themes (Figure 13). The five themes identified from all interview questions supporting research question 1 were: (a) community impact; (b) shelter metrics; (c) supporting all populations of pets; (d) supporting other communities; and (e) 90% not a comprehensive benchmark.

Research Question 4

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The final research question asked, "What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?" Three interview questions were asked in order to answer the research question. The three interview questions related to research question 4 are:

- What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid?

- Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give other shelter directors?

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

The responses for the questions were analyzed for consistent themes which together determine the answer to research question 4.

Interview Question 9: "What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid?"

Responses to interview question 9 resulted in 36 elements which were grouped into four themes: (a) pressure; (b) management skills and strategies; (c) communication and community engagement; and (d) staffing (Figure 11).

Interview Question 9 - Coding Results

n=14, multiple responses per interviews

Figure 11. Interview question 9 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the four themes that emerged from responses to interview question 9. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Pressure. Pressure resulted in seven (50%) responses and the theme includes not trying to please everyone or setting unattainable expectations or goals for yourself or others. P3 explained, "I think I would have not invested so much time and heart into trying to convince somebody to give something a try when they really just adamantly were not interested or opposed." P8 noted, "I think the first lesson I learned, or the first mistake that we hopefully avoided was in, like, I mentioned earlier, in trying to be all things to all people or animals."

Management skills and strategies. Management skills and strategies resulted in six (43%) responses and the theme includes being involved in daily activities, celebrating success, and on-the-job learning. For example, P2 stated, "I think that you need to be involved in everything, even if it makes you uncomfortable." Consistent, purposeful action that aligns with organizational goals and values build trust between leaders and followers (Kendrick, 2011;

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Paolucci et al., 2018). Demonstrating purposeful action, P3 shared, "I think it is really important when you make a mistake that you own it and then, you correct it."

Communication and community engagement. Communication and community engagement resulted in four (29%) responses and the theme includes developing partnerships, finding support in the community, and sharing the credit. For example, P14 stated, "Sharing the spotlight is important; and not taking all the credit, you know, there are rescue groups in every, all over the state that do great work every day to keep animals out of shelters." Hamilton (2010) contends that it is important to recognize that no singular organization has the resources or ability to achieve community change goals. P6 explained, "I've said it already, you can't do this alone. Your organization can't solve the world's problems. So, understand that you need the support of your community."

Staffing. Staffing resulted in three (21%) response and the theme includes staff selection and support. For example, P2 stated, "I think you need to be very careful when you hire the top management staff, so that they don't just blow smoke and say, 'I don't want to kill animals.'" P3 noted, "They should have the recognition. You're treating people with kindness and care and respect and acknowledging the things they do."

Interview Question 10: "Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give other shelter directors?"

Responses to interview question 10 resulted in 58 elements which were grouped into five themes: (a) management skills and strategies; (b) communication and community engagement; (c) mentoring or colleague support; (d) pressure; and (e) staffing (Figure 12).
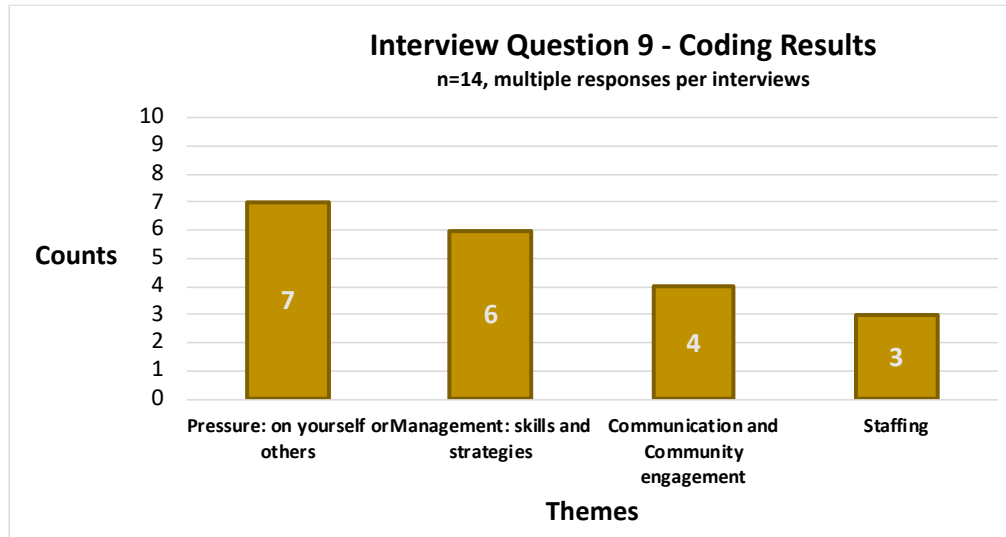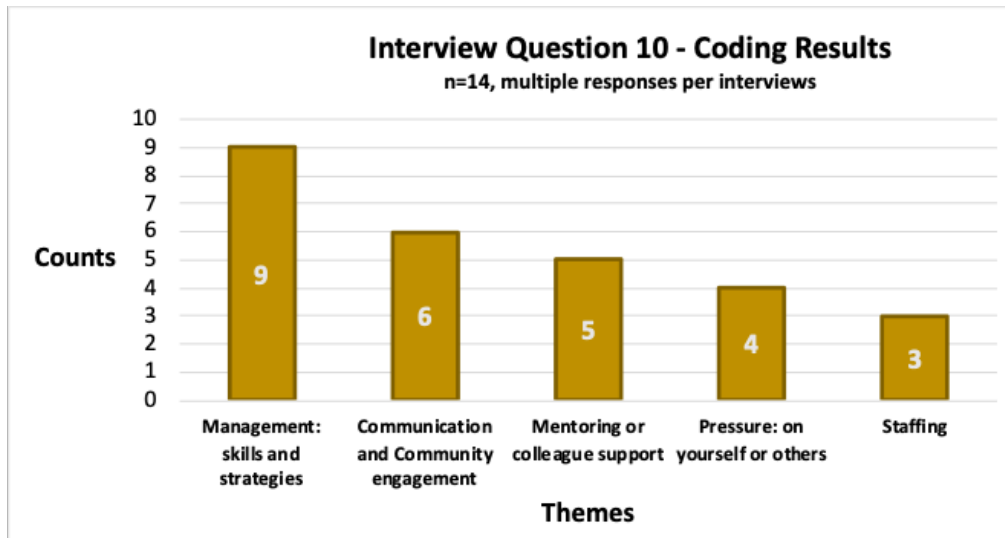
Figure 12. Interview question 10 Coding Results. This figure illustrates the five themes that emerged from responses to interview question 9. The data is presented in decreasing order of frequency.

Management skills and strategies. Management skills and strategies resulted in nine (64%) responses and the theme includes developing professional skills, continuing education, maintaining focus or vision, and making community-specific decisions. P13 stated, "I think it's always important to continue to learn. You know, you get to a point, I think, when you're the head of a shelter for a long time, you're like, 'Oh, I know what to do.' But you know what? Somebody else is probably doing something a little bit different and it might be better." P4 shared, "Sometimes, it's easy get bogged down by the crap but you just can't lose sight of why you're doing what you're doing and the decisions that you're making."

Communication and community engagement. Communication and community engagement resulted in six (43%) responses and the theme includes communicating your message and involving your community. Organizations and individual stakeholders across the animal welfare system bear responsibility for lifesaving initiatives in their community, but none

have adequate financial, political, or human resources to address the issues alone (Crosby, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2004). For example, P5 noted, "If you can't work with the others in your community, you're not going to get where you want to go as a community." P2 explained, "Learn how to engage your community because your community is what will save you." P14 stated, "Recognize that the animals in your community are everyone's responsibility."

Mentoring or colleague support. Mentoring or colleague support resulted in five (35%) responses. The theme of mentoring and colleague support includes learning from others. Veterinary medicine finds a demand for mentoring opportunities to support the learning and growth of newly graduated veterinarians (Burns, 2013). Participants echoed this in need in the animal services field. P5 shared, "I have gotten to work for some very smart and strong leaders in the field, and so, seeing them in action, and seeing what I liked about what they did, and seeing what I didn't like about what they did, or seeing how it impacted the staff and our ability to do things, helped me kind of create my own version of leadership."

Pressure. Pressure resulted in four (29%) responses and the theme includes a willingness to make mistakes and avoid being overwhelmed by the enormity of the tasks. For example, P9 shared, "Don't get overwhelmed by, maybe, all the things that need to be accomplished." P11 noted, "Be willing to be wrong. That's the whole point of this, is don't take yourself so seriously."

Staffing. Staffing resulted in three (21%) responses and the theme includes staff selection, and encouraging and empowering others. P3 shared, "Don't be afraid to delegate and let others shine and show up. Show them what they can do."

Interview Question 11: "Is there anything else you would like to add?"

Responses to interview question 11 resulted in 19 elements which were grouped into one theme: management skills and strategies.

Management skills and strategies. Management skills and strategies resulted in five (50%) responses and the theme includes ongoing learning, building formalized, industry-specific knowledge and skills, and making community-specific decisions. P5 noted, "You have to have industry-specific knowledge and training in order to do well in that role." P1 stated, "There's got to be more education for shelter directors and shelter staff because everyone is just winging it and that's how fear wins over." P10 explained, "I guess the important thing for people to understand when they're looking into this and reading sorties about no-kill initiatives is what works and what doesn't work."

Summary of research question 4. Research question 4 sought to identify recommendations for other animal services directors working to achieve a no-kill community. A total of 113 elements were identified in the responses to all three of the interview questions. The 113 elements were grouped into five themes. The five themes identified from all interview questions supporting research question 4 were: (a) management skills and strategies; (b) communication and community engagement; (c) pressure; and (d) mentoring or colleague support; (e) staffing.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify best practices of animal services directors in no-kill communities. To accomplish this task, 14 participants who serve as animal services directors in no-kill communities were invited to participate in the study. All 14 participants were asked 11 semi-structured interview questions designed to inform on the following four research questions:

- RQ1: What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?

- RQ2: What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?

- RQ3: How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?

- RQ4: What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?

Verbal data was collected from all 14 participants and coded by the researcher. Two Pepperdine University doctoral students also analyzed the data at two points during the analysis process to account for inter-rater reliability. Data analysis yielded a total of 21 themes. Chapter five presents a discussion of themes, implications, recommendations, and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Animal services leadership is a complex and dynamic profession. Additionally, many within the profession join the field to care or advocate for pets, not seeking leadership roles (Irvine, 2002). Consequently, they may move into positions that they were not trained or prepared for. This study aims to address this need for the training and development of animal services leadership by contributing to the literature and ultimately providing guidance for animal services leadership training. As a result of this research, a set of animal services leadership competencies were identified and organized to form seven domains. These competencies can serve as a guide in leadership curriculum and program development. This chapter begins with a summary of the study, a discussion of the findings, implications, recommendations for future research, and concludes with final thoughts.

Summary of the Study

The aim of this study was to identify best practices of animal services directors in no-kill communities. Guided by a literature review, four research questions and 11 open-ended interview questions were developed. The qualitative study was designed using a phenomenological approach. A phenomenological methodology allows participants to reveal the meaning of their collective experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Potential participants for this study were identified using the Best Friends Animal Society Community Lifesaving Dashboard. A sample of 14 participants completed interviews and represented both public and private organizations with various intake models throughout the United States. Interviews were conducted over the phone or video conferencing. The participants were asked 11 open-ended questions during interviews that were audio recorded. The data was transcribed and subsequently analyzed and coded to identify themes. After completion of the inter-rater reviews, the findings

were further analyzed to determine the frequency of themes. The results were then presented in Chapter 4 of this manuscript.

Discussion and Findings

The following section presents discussion of the themes identified through the coding process. Additionally, findings are presented in relation to the existing literature.

Results for Research Question 1 (RQ1)

RQ1 asked, "What successful strategies are used by animal shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?" RQ1 identified the following strategies that contribute to the success of a no-kill community:

- Working together with other organizations and community stakeholders

- Practicing open communication to support transparency

- Developing trust, respect, and integrity

- Strategic thinking and implementation

- Using metrics and data to guide decision-making

- Management skills and techniques

Discussion of RQ1. The findings of RQ1 indicate that for animal services directors, one of the most important elements for successful no-kill communities is the involvement of individuals and community stakeholders. Involving others in some way was mentioned by 13 (93%) participants. Within a community, many individuals, organizations, and stakeholders share the responsibility of lifesaving (Crosby, 2010). Individuals may engage as volunteers, taking on tasks such as animal care or enrichment, development support, adoption counseling, or fostering.

An additional notable collaborative strategy identified in this study expands on commonly accepted strategies for successful collaboration. Shared purpose serves as a

foundation for successful collaboration (Amey, 2010; Ganz, 2009; Gazley, 2010; Heifitz et al.; Komives & Wagner, 2017). Turner et al. (2012) contend that organizational differences in charter and objective can stand as an obstacle to identifying that purpose and for subsequent collaboration. However, participants in this study identified the benefits of openly discussing their organization's unique strengths or missions and weaknesses to use that information to collaboratively address the community's needs. This finding indicates that successful animal services directors view the shared purpose as overall lifesaving, rather than organizational lifesaving. This also mirrors the collaborative approach adopted in the city of Austin. In Austin, organizations focused on individual areas of impact within a concerted effort to achieve the shared goal of a no-kill community with a 90% aggregate save rate (Hawes, et al., 2017).

An additional strategy identified by participants is a commitment to transparent communication. Transparency or communication was mentioned by 13 (93%) participants. This openness is seen as a mechanism to build trust, which has historically lacked in the animal services field (Arluke, 2003; Clancy & Rowan, 2003). Building trust is a critical element for collaboration and advancing change (Amey, 2010; Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2017; Heifetz et al., 2004). Transparent communication serves to educate stakeholders about the macro issues surrounding the field and the micro issues specific to a community. Communication also helps to prepare staff and stakeholders for upcoming changes. People often fear change as it is an upset to the status quo (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). However, information empowers people (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). The results of this study indicate that animal services leaders are using the transparent sharing of information to alleviate fear and build trust.

The integral nature of data and metrics to successful lifesaving was another notable strategy. Of the 14 participants, 7 (50%) mentioned data tracking and metrics. Accurate and

consistent data collection allows for epidemiological study and a systemic approach to saving

lives (Spellmen, 2008). These same metrics may also be used to aid in communicating strategy

or educating stakeholders. While historically, animal shelter leadership has been hesitant to

openly release intake and outcome data (Clancy & Rowan, 2003), Weiss et al. (2013) contend

that transparent and consistent data is an effective way to improve lifesaving. An effort to

standardize national shelter data is underway (Rowan & Kartal, 2018), and this study's findings

indicate that successful lifesaving communities embrace the use of data and metrics

An additional strategy is strategic and systems thinking, which eight (57%) participants

mentioned. Karp and Helgo (2009) contend that leaders must take the responsibility of

acknowledging the factors at play within their organization and how they connect to the system

at large. The need for careful planning was highlighted by participants when implementing either

individual programs or large-scale change. Senge et al. (2015) explain that leaders are

responsible for determining the root causes of issues, developing effective solutions, and

predicting the systemic outcomes of those decisions. Changing the manner in which problems

are perceived and considered alters the solutions and outcomes (Cabrera et al., 2008).

Participants, by noting how the decisions they make impact the surrounding community and its

various stakeholders, acknowledge the importance of strategic and systems thinking.

Finally, the importance of strong management and team development was also identified

as an important strategy for creating and sustaining no-kill communities. Management skills and

strategies, which includes team selection, was addressed by seven (50%) participants. Bringing

people on-board that share a similar passion for the work was identified as a key component. The

desire for strategic, thoughtful recruitment and selection to identify ideal candidates is prevalent

in many fields (Campion, Campion, & Campion, 2019). According to this research, the desire to

find appropriate staff is heightened in animal services, due to the emotional aspect of the work. Arluke (2003), acknowledges that the emotional aspect of animal services work has led to contentious relationships and interactions.

Results for Research Question 2 (RQ2)

RQ2 asked, "What challenges do animal shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?" RQ2 identified the following challenges shelter directors encounter while establishing and sustaining no-kill communities:

- Challenges resulting from no-kill language

- Community standing

- A lack of resources

- Conflicts among animal services professions

Discussion of RQ2. The findings of RQ2 indicate that for animal services directors, one of the biggest challenges in successfully creating no-kill communities is the use of no-kill language. Of the 14 participants, language was mentioned by eight (57 %). The no-kill movement has been a contentious issue within the animal welfare field (Arluke, 2003; Hawes et al., 2017). This was echoed even by those shelter directors within no-kill communities.

Some participants believed the language to be divisive, or that it could be weaponized to hurt shelters or shelter staff. For example, some refer to shelters that have not achieved the 90% save rate as "kill shelters." Divisiveness in the field led to the Asilomar Accords, which in 2004 brought together animal welfare leaders from across the nation (American Humane, 2004; Shelter Animals Count, 2004). A noteworthy intent of the meeting was to abolish counter-productive distinctions between sheltering approaches, develop agreed-upon language, and ultimately foster an environment of mutual respect. However, disagreement about language and

associated discord remain as many in the field questioned the validity of the decisions and did not adopt the language definitions or data collection protocols (Weis et al., 2013; Young, 2016).

Other participants believed no-kill language caused confusion in communities with individuals believing that no-kill meant that pets were never euthanized within a no-kill shelter. Winograd defines euthanasia as "the act or practice of killing or permitting the death of hopelessly sick or injured individuals in a relatively painless way for reasons of mercy" (Winograd, 2011, para. 4). It is well-accepted euthanasia is appropriate within no-kill shelters. However, participants noted that many in the public were unaware, and this caused communication challenges for them.

These findings indicate that while no-kill is the generally accepted term for the commitment to save healthy and treatable pets, and despite efforts to assuage the negative impacts of the term no-kill, language continues to be a challenge for many shelter directors. The term no-kill will likely continue to be widely used. Consequently, it would benefit the animal services field to consider messaging that better frames the intent of no-kill. Animal services directors could adopt this messaging when communicating with their communities.

Another notable challenge is that of the shelter's reputation or presence in the community. A total of six (43%) participants raised this concern. A community's shelter is firmly ingrained with the conditions of the surrounding community, thereby making community interaction or involvement an important aspect of lifesaving (Falconer, 2011b). Shelters running optimally will likely interface with law enforcement, elected officials, oversight committees, rescue groups, non-profit groups, and individual stakeholders (Allan, 2012; Hager, 2011; Hawes, Ikizler, Loughney, Tedeschi, & Morris, 2017; Liss, 2017). However, participants explained that in some communities, citizens are not aware of the community shelter. While others had a negative

reputation that they were attempting to improve. This finding suggests that relationship building

and community outreach are important aspects of animal services leadership.

Resources were an additional challenge, with five (36%) participants mentioning this. Lack

of funding was a common concern. In addition to funding, lack of staff, and physical facilities

were areas of concern. Many physically and behaviorally healthy pets are being killed in shelters

today to make space for incoming pets or because they are deemed unadoptable (Brown, 2015;

Hettinger, 2012). This issue could potentially improve with additional financial, human, or

physical resources. This supports findings within this study that indicate building fundraising or

development programs and fine-tuning employee recruitment and selection would support shelter

leadership.

Additionally, conflicts within the animal services professions were addressed as a challenge

to lifesaving success. Of the 14 participants, five (36%) believed this to be a challenge. Arluke

(2003) noted that conversations among animal welfare staff and volunteer staff might become

defensive and adversarial. A common area of conflict was with animal protection or enforcement

units. Directors explained that animal protection professionals, at times might see lifesaving

initiatives as contrary to their role in animal protection. This same concern of contrary

approaches within animal service professions was also applied to veterinarians and animal

trainers.

Differences in viewpoints can be advantageous (Yom-Tov, Dumais, & Guo, 2014). Leaders

should not seek to avoid differences in an effort to find harmony (Ford, Ford, & D'Amelio,

2008; McClellan, 2011). Discussing differences with intent to educate and understand, rather

than to win an argument, is a key element to the emergence of new ideas (McClellan, 2011). The

differences of opinion in animal services should not be ignored, and when possible, leveraged to create innovative approaches.

Results for Research Question 3 (RQ3)

RQ3 asked, "How do animal shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?" RQ3 identified the following means by which shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities:

- The impact on the surrounding community

- Shelter metrics including quality of life, return to owner, and length of stay

- The ability to support all populations of pets

- The ability to support other communities in their lifesaving efforts

Discussion of RQ3. The findings of RQ3 indicate that for animal services directors, one of the most notable metrics for success in no-kill communities is the impact on the surrounding area. A total of 10 (71%) participants mentioned this as a metric that they use. The use of community impact as a metric indicates that successful animal services directors are actively looking beyond the singular focus of their operation, and acknowledge their ability to play a role in the larger system, which Senge (1990) recognizes as an important element to successful systems-thinking. Additionally, the participants noted the ability to serve as a resource in their communities was an important metric of success, along with monitoring community factors such as reported bites. While animal welfare is often a reactive environment (Spellman, 2008), these metrics demonstrate a forward-thinking and holistic approach to evaluating lifesaving.

In addition to looking outward to the community, participants also noted internal operational metrics to evaluate success. Of the 14 participants, eight (57%) mentioned metrics such as length of stay and return-to-owner rates. With the adoption of no-kill philosophies, Protopopova (2016)

estimates an increase in pets' length of stay or time spent in the shelter before the final outcome. An increase in length of stay raises concerns for the pets' mental and physical health (Beerda et al., 1999; Tanaka et al., 2012). Consequently, participants monitor metrics such as length of stay to determine how their lifesaving approaches impact the pets in their care.

The ability to serve all populations of pets was also mentioned by eight (57%) participants. The participants emphasized the importance of providing support for all types of pets, mentioning community cats, dogs with behavioral challenges, and dogs and cats with severe medical issues. These metrics for success are not necessarily specific to the organization, but rather the community, seeing that various groups worked together to meet the needs of various pets. This finding relates to the successful collaboration techniques uncovered in research question 1. Specifically, it is similar to the city of Austin's approach of designating one animal shelter to focus on a specific type of pet and their special needs, while allowing other shelters and organizations to use their limited resources on other categories of pets (Hawes et al., 2017).

Four (29%) participants mentioned the ability to assist other communities in their lifesaving efforts as a metric of their organization's success. This approach is an expansion of the community focus. Shelter directors using this success metric are viewing their role as extending outside of their organizations, and outside of their immediate communities. This is supported in the literature, where it is noted that for successful community change, it is not sufficient to focus on internal interests, but attention must be paid to contributions to the larger efforts (Cabrera, Colosi, & Lobdell, 2008; Senge, Hamilton, & Kania, 2015). An example that participants provided of this metric was their organization's ability to develop transfer programs, which allow for the movement of pets between communities and shelters (Caulfield & Gazzola, 2010; Hawes

et al., 2017). These programs allow shelter directors to intake pets to their shelters from other areas where the pets were at-risk of death.

Finally, while not a specific metric of success, it is noteworthy that three (21%) of the participants shared their belief that the 90% save rate is not a comprehensive benchmark for determining no-kill. Reaching 90% does not indicate that a shelter has definitively achieved the goal of providing life for all healthy and treatable pets, nor does it ensure a high quality of life for pets in the shelter's care. Therefore, some participants believed, while an important target, the lifesaving benchmark was an incomplete goal. This indicates that expanding the metrics for success beyond the save rate would support improved lifesaving, in already successful communities. Additionally, it can ward off "initiative decay," which happens when attention and focus wane from previously successful efforts (Buchanan et al., 2005).

Results for Research Question 4 (RQ4)

RQ4 asked, "What recommendations would animal shelter directors provide to those who are aspiring to become a no-kill community?" RQ4 identified the following recommendations for those aspiring to become a no-kill community:

- Improve personal management and leadership skills

- Emphasize communication and community engagement

- Minimize the pressure on yourself, the organization and others, and maintain a positive mindset

- Identify mentors or colleagues for support and professional growth

- Develop a strong team of employees and support them

- Make community-specific decisions

Discussion of RQ4. Of the 14 participants, 11 (79%) mentioned the importance of building management and leadership skills. Considering many people working in animal welfare came to the work born of the desire to care for animals rather than a desire to lead, once placed in a leadership role, the individual can be surprised by its dynamic nature (Falconer, 2010; Irvine, 2002). This was evidenced by participants' extensive comments around training, including the need for budgeting, management, fundraising, and industry-specific knowledge, and skills. Mastery of such professional competencies can distinguish exceptional performance from mediocre, which is critical when exceptional performance results in lifesaving (Jie, Mansor, & Kelana, 2020).

Additionally, nine (64%) participants recommended placing emphasis on thoughtful communication to educate and engage the community. These recommendations by participants echo findings in research question one that support educating the public as an act of inclusion and empowerment (Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Additionally, directors discuss using communication as a mechanism to build trust, which is an ongoing concern in animal services (Arluke, 2003; Clancy & Rowan, 2003). Engaging the community is an extension of education and communication. Once people become involved with the shelter, they begin to see themselves as part of the organization, which encourages them to further engage in supportive ways (Karp & Helgo, 2009).

Another notable recommendation from nine (64%) participants is to minimize the pressure. Participants encouraged others to minimize the "noise," as explained by P2. Differences exist in animal welfare ideologies and philosophies from which conflict can arise (Arluke, 2003). Avoiding some of the negativity or criticism that exists, particularly on social media, was advised. Cyberbullying, or negative online interactions, are associated with

depression, anxiety, and compromised physical health (Ansary, 2020). Participants also recommended removing the pressure to accomplish all goals right away. They stated that because the work can have life or death implications, it could be difficult to reduce the burden one places on herself or others. However, they learned it is an important element to success. Stress or pressure to achieve can be a driving force, but it can also become burdensome, resulting in physical or emotional distress (Colligan & Higgins, 2005).

Six (43%) participants mentioned staffing related issues. They explained that hiring staff that believed in the mission made the work less stressful and produced better results. It was previously noted that recruiting and hiring appropriate people for the work is a relatively universal desire (Campion, Campion, & Campion, 2019). However, participants also spoke of supporting staff through the emotional and sometimes trying work that is unique to animal welfare (Arluke, 2003). Their desire to support their staff creates bonds that see them through difficult times and can serve to drive higher levels of achievement (Bass, 1991).

Finally, five (36%) of the participants recommended seeking the support of mentors or other colleagues. Mentorship was a topic that did not initially arise during the examination of the literature; however, participants stated that the act of commiserating with others provided a sense of belonging and support that helped them build skills and maintain a positive outlook. On further examination, it is evidenced that mentoring relationships are recognized as an important development and retention tool in the complimentary field of veterinary medicine (Britton, 2014; Keiser, 2015). Across a variety of fields, mentor-mentee relationships result in numerous benefits, including improved outcomes related to behavior, attitude, motivation, relationships, career progression, and job satisfaction (Rogers, Luksyte, & Spitzmueller, 2016). Mentoring has also been shown to build leadership readiness in mentees (Eliades, 2017).

Implications of the Study

The aim of this study was to identify the best practices of animal services directors in no-kill communities. As animal services directors work to improve lifesaving in their communities, the environment in which they operate becomes more dynamic. These leaders require the knowledge and skills to lead in this complex and dynamic community-lifesaving system.

Figure 13. Animal Services Leadership Competency Model. This figure illustrates the seven competency domains that make up the essential skill areas for animal services leadership.

Without competency in the associated skills, animal services directors may struggle to achieve their desired lifesaving success. As a result of this study, an animal services leadership competency model was developed (Figure 13). The model comprises a set of seven animal services leadership competency domains. The domains encompass groups of similar competencies and skills that support successful leadership in animal services, and serve as an organizing framework for curriculum development and assessment. The seven domains are

leadership, program planning, community focus, systems thinking, communication, coalition building, and analytics.

Leadership Domain. The leadership domain includes leadership and management skills. Skills within this domain should support directors' ability to build and foster trusting relationships; recruit, select, develop and support staff; develop vision, mission, and values; goal-setting; and financial management.

Program Planning Domain. The program planning domain includes program development and execution. Skills within this domain should support directors' ability to conceptualize new programs or interventions, seek and obtain funding, implement project management techniques, and conduct risk assessments.

Community Focus Domain. The community focus domain includes an understanding of the local community. Skills within this domain should support directors' ability to conduct environmental scans, access and interpret publicly available community data, and make decisions based on that information.

Systems Thinking Domain. The systems thinking domain includes an understanding of the interconnectedness of local, regional, and national animal services systems. Skills within this domain should support directors' ability to conduct root cause analysis, identify patterns, discover relationships, and make projections.

Coalition Building Domain. The coalition building domain includes effective conversation, listening, meeting facilitation, and consensus building. Skills within this domain should support directors' abilities to successfully navigate potentially contentious situations, build cross-sector cooperation, and motivate a variety of different stakeholders to action.

Analytics Domain. The analytics domain includes data and information to inform decisions. Skills within this domain should support directors' ability to consistently track operational data, analyze relevant data, and develop proper data visualization.

Applications of the Study

Learning objectives for numerous professional fields, including veterinary science, medicine, and public health are evolving from fact memorization to developing skills in broader competency domains (Bok et al., 2014; Das et al., 2019; Weston, Benlloch-Tinoco, Mossop, McCullough, & Foster, 2020). Broad competency domains have been adopted by regional accrediting organizations for institutes of learning, and professional associations for workplace training (Carraccio et al., 2017; Markenson, DiMaggio, & Redlener, 2005; Mulder, Cate, Daalder, & Berkvens, 2010; Tan, Frankel, Glen, & Luong, 2018). Core competency domains comprise the skills and knowledge learners should possess at the end of training (Das et al., 2019). They are the organizational framework for the development of curricula and measurable learning objectives and outcomes (Das et al., 2019; Mulder et al., 2010). The Animal Services Leadership Competency Model fills that role for the animal services field.

The Animal Services Leadership Competency Model may be used by organizations currently offering training curricula as an assessment of the training's content. Organizations developing new curricula may use the competencies as a guide for building learning objectives and outcomes. The model, built on the best practices uncovered in this research, provides for consistency in animal services' current and future training programs.

Additionally, the Animal Services Leadership Competency Model may be used by animal services directors to guide staff development. Directors wishing to develop employees' skills may seek training and development opportunities within any of the seven competency domains.

Training courses, seminars, and books exist that build skills within the domains. While many training opportunities are not specific to animal services, they would build critical skills. The model provides directors a framework for identifying those critical needs and identifying opportunities to build those skills.

Study Conclusion

The researcher began this study with the aim of broadening the understanding of the complexities involved in animal services leadership. To accomplish this, the researcher had to bracket her own perspectives as an animal services professional. Through data collection involving 14 interviews, the researcher was able to analyze the responses from 11 open-ended interview questions. As a result, 21 themes were identified. These themes were distilled into a competency model that identified seven competency domains. The seven domains are leadership, program planning, community focus, systems thinking, communication, coalition building, and analytics.

Recommendations for Future Research

The purpose of this study was to expand the understanding of the elements involved in creating and sustaining no-kill communities. The transition to creating a no-kill community often calls for strong leadership; however, a gap exists between the science and practice of animal welfare (Spellmen, 2008). The goal of this study was to contribute to this growing area of research. In the process of exploring the topic of creating and sustaining no-kill communities and in the development of the Animal Services Leadership Competency Model, additional questions arose that provide the opportunity for future research. Future researchers may benefit from examining the following:

- Further exploration of each of the seven domains. Each competency domain would benefit from a detailed analysis of related competencies. This further study would allow for a more robust application of the animal services leadership competency model to include performance assessment.

- An examination of the impacts of sheltering practices on the community-level animal welfare system. Study participants noted tracking their decisions and their impact on other shelters or organizations. Further knowledge of how common sheltering practices influence the animal welfare system would improve decision-making for animal services directors and aid in advancing a community approach to lifesaving.

- A study of the impact of no-kill language on the effort to advance lifesaving. Several participants noted the challenges in communicating the meaning or intention of "no-kill". An improved understanding of lay people's interpretation of the language may help in improved communication and messaging.

- While not statistically significant, participants discussed the political elements of animal services leadership, which is also apparent in the story of the city of Austin's community lifesaving success. An additional study that further examines the political aspects of animal services leadership could contribute to competency development.

Final Thoughts

The role of animal services directors is critical in the effort to end the needless death of healthy and treatable pets. Efforts should be made to develop animal services directors' skills so that they may be prepared to lead in their communities. It is the researchers' hope that the animal services leadership competency model will aid in further understanding the complexity of the work, and that it may be used to support successful leadership development programming.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval

PEPPERDINE

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: January 21, 2020

Protocol Investigator Name: Kristin Barney

Protocol #: 19-09-1151

Project Title: LEADERSHIP BEST PRACTICES USED BY ANIMAL SHELTER DIRECTORS IN ESTABLISHING AND SUSTAINING NO-KILL COMMUNITIES

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Kristin Barney:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Note: PLEASE USE SECOND PERSON, SINGLE-SIDED, SINGLE-SPACED. DELETE INSTRUCTIONS IN BOLD PRIOR TO SUBMITTING THIS DOCUMENT)

Best Practices of Animal Shelter Directors in No-kill Communities

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Kristin Barney and Farzin Majidi, Ed.D. at Pepperdine University, because you are a shelter or animal services director within a no-kill community. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

(All text in the parentheses are instructions for how to complete that section. Be sure to delete this text before submitting the final version.)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to identify the best practices of shelter directors as they build or sustain no-kill communities. Furthermore, this study aims to determine how shelter directors define success, and lessons learned from their experiences that can be offered to others in similar leadership positions.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

1. Review the interview questions that are provided by the principal researcher.
2. Review Pepperdine University's informed consent form.

3. Verbally respond in a face-to-face or video-conference interview to 11 qualitative interview questions.
4. Agree to the recording of the interview.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study include nothing more than is involved with an hour0-long conversation. Such risks include:

1. Potential breach of confidentiality.
2. Lack of interest of boredom.
3. Fatigue from sitting for a long period.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, there are several anticipated benefits to society which include:

1. Add to the limited body of work specific to leadership practices of animal shelter directors.
2. Add to the body of work specific to creating and sustaining no-kill communities.
3. Inform and inspire current and future shelter directors to create and sustain livesaving practices.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The electronic data will be stored on a drive, which will be stored in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. The data collected will be transcribed only by the principal investigator. Any information that might identify participants will be maintained and secured by the researcher to ensure confidentiality.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and

discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or completing only the items which you feel comfortable.

EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury

INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Kristin Barney at [ ] or Dr. Farzin Majidi at [   ] if I have any other questions or concerns about this research.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or gpsirb@pepperdine.edu.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Name of Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

I have explained the research to the participants and answered all of his/her questions. In my judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. They have the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. They also have been informed participation is voluntarily and that they may discontinue their participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

_____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

_____   _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Script

Dear [   ],

My name is Kristin Barney, and I am a doctoral student in the Organizational Leadership program at Pepperdine University.

I am conducting a research study examining the effective practices of animal shelter or animal services directors, specifically those who are participants in no-kill communities. I invite you to participate in the study. If you agree, you will be interviewed on your leadership practices and strategies relative to creating or sustaining no-kill in your community.

The interview is anticipated to take no more than 60 minutes to complete and I am requesting that you be willing to have the interview audio-recorded. Participation in this study is voluntary, and your identity as a participant will remain confidential during and after the study. To ensure confidentiality, your identity will be protected by use of a pseudonym. The location of your interview will be at your discretion and all documentation will remain within a locked storage container.

If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me at [   ].

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kristin Barney
Doctoral Student
Pepperdine University

APPENDIX D

Peer Review Form

Research Questions	Proposed Interview Questions Validity Survey
RQ1: What successful strategies are used by shelter directors to develop and sustain no-kill communities?	IQ 2: What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ _____ IQ 3: What techniques do you use to inspire change? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ _____ IQ 7: What techniques do you use when developing collaborative partnerships with stakeholders? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ _____ IQ 5: What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ _____ _____ IQ 10: What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving progress you have made? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ _____

RQ2: What challenges do shelter directors encounter when establishing and sustaining no-kill communities?	IQ 6: How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____ IQ 4: What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____
RQ3: How do shelter directors measure their success in no-kill communities?	IQ 1: Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. **Revise the question as suggested:** _____
RQ4: What recommendations would shelter directors provide to those aspiring to become a no-kill community?	IQ 8: What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. Revise the question as suggested: _____l Q 9: Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give other shelter directors? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. Revise the question as suggested: _____l Q 11: Is there anything else you would like to add? 1. **The question directly addresses the research question – Keep as is.** 2. **The question has little or no relevance to the research question – Delete** 3. Revise the question as suggested: _____

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions

Beyond the 90% lifesaving benchmark, how do you measure the success of a no-kill community?

What elements need to be in place for a successful community collaboration?

What techniques do you use to inspire change?

What obstacles have you faced in developing a no-kill community?

   Follow-up- IQ5: What strategies did you use to overcome those obstacles?

How do you respond when someone reacts negatively to a lifesaving initiative you are attempting to implement?

What techniques do you use when developing collaborative partnerships?

What mistakes have you made that you would warn other shelter directors working to achieve a no-kill community to avoid?

Knowing what you know about creating and sustaining a no-kill community, what advice would you give other shelter directors?

What strategies do you use to sustain the lifesaving programs?

Is there anything else you would like to add?