

# Five Steps to a Better Adoption Experience

Follow these steps to create a customer-friendly adoption application process!

## Step 1

- Gather your people, including as many as reasonably possible who are stakeholders in the adoption process.
- Discuss your objectives and come to an agreement on what you would like to achieve, such as:
  - » Creating a customer-friendly adoption application
  - » Asking better questions
  - » Changing your question style to elicit open discussions and spark conversation
  - » Becoming a resource for your adopters
  - » Other objectives for your organization
- Gather your paperwork, including your adoption application and any other documents relating to the process.

## Step 2

- Perform a language check. Is your application:
  - » Friendly?
  - » Supportive?
  - » Grateful?
- Watch for and be wary of demanding words and strict language such as “must” or “required”



## Step 3

- Starting at the very top of the application, take each and every item on the application and answer the following questions:
  - » Why do we ask this question?
  - » Is it important to know?
  - » Is it something we can control?
  - » Is there a better way to get or give information that can address this issue?

**Tip:** You can't control what a new pet parent will do after they adopt, and the minute you deny someone for something you have no control over, you've lost an opportunity to inform with kindness. Asking “Will you allow your cat outdoors?” and denying everyone who says “yes” is only teaching people to answer “no” the next time they apply for a pet or simply head to the pet store instead.

## Step 4

- Based on the information gathered in Steps 1, 2 and 3, assign to each and every item its importance in achieving your goals:
  - » Very important: Edit to empower and inspire as needed.
  - » Somewhat important/can't control: Edit as needed or consider removing and handling with a conversational adoption counseling experience.
  - » Not important/can't control: Consider deleting from your application

**Tip:** Don't be afraid to delete a question! Do a test period for your new application of 90 days. After that, gather your team together and review the data to determine whether the removal of that question had any impact on your adoption process or the success of your adoptions.

## Step 5

- Prioritize! Assemble each item on your application in priority order with what is most important at the top.
- Finalize format and create your new form.
- Agree to meet six months to a year down the line to review progress and process.