

JUNE 2 - 4th, 2024

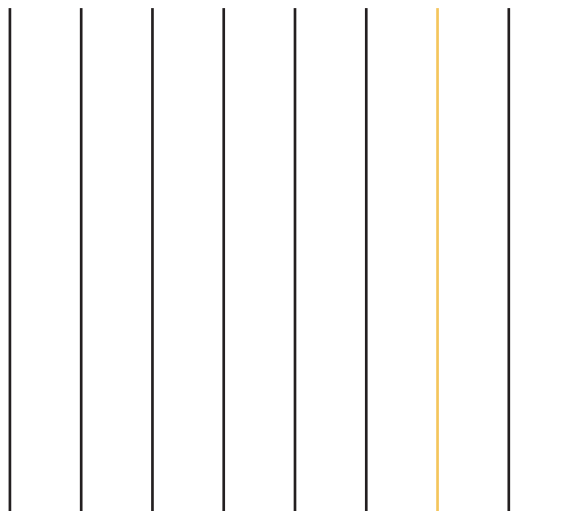


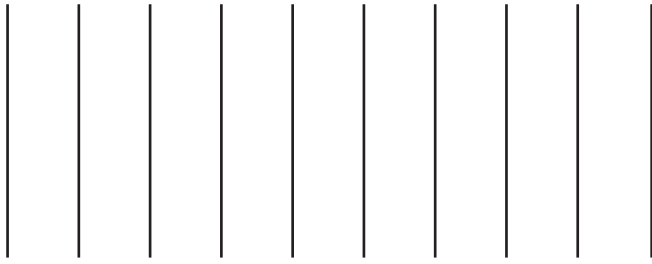
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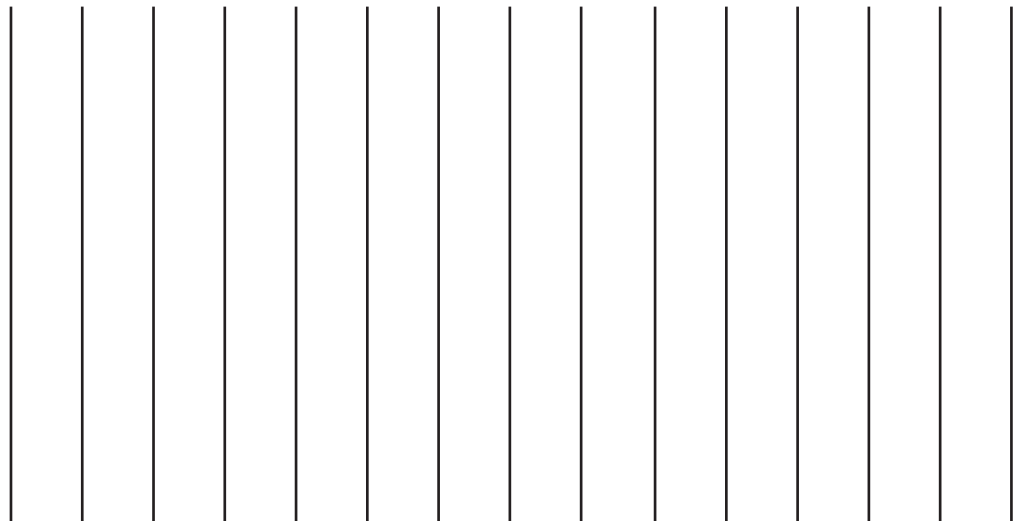
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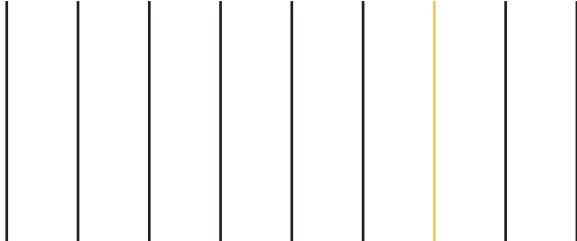
CONFERENCE EVALUATION



Thank you for joining us!

EMPOWER YOUR WHOLE TEAM WITH PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

CHRISTINE STATEN
DVM, MBA



**PRACTICE
MANAGEMENT**

Empower Your Whole Team with Performance-based Compensation.

*Christine A. Staten, DVM MBA
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Most veterinarians are paid based on their performance, so why don't we pay our non-doctor team members based on their competence and skills? I find that most practice owners struggle with pay scales, starting wages, raises, and promotions. How do practice owners and managers choose which team member has more "value" than another? What happens when they compare paychecks, and you must answer to the discrepancies? I've been there. The solution is a performance-based compensation model with tier-based levels. We have used this model successfully in our practice for over a decade, attracting, retaining, and motivating high-performing team members.

Implementing a team member compensation program will be transformational to your practice because you will:

- Empower your team.
- Eliminate the stress of raises and promotions.
- Maintain internal consistency and high-level skills/knowledge.
- Attract, retain, and motivate high performing team members.
- Encourage cooperation and mentoring.
- Recognize and reward self-motivation and performance.

How it Works

Each position in your practice needs to be defined and the duties divided into multiple levels. Each level or tier should have soft skills, hard skills, and knowledge. Some of the skills, like drawing blood from ten cats, can be logged by the team member. Knowledge can be assessed with tests, like medical math or vaccine schedules. The first tier is usually all the stuff that you expect them to be proficient in at the end of their orientation. And then each additional tier level has higher level skills and knowledge.

A team member works to become proficient in all areas of the next tier and then requests a review. Their tests and logs along with feedback from their peers determine if they truly are proficient and ready to move up. If they are, they are moved into the next tier which has additional responsibilities and a higher hourly wage attached to it. If they are not yet proficient in some things, we work to help support them and provide them with the tools necessary to get to the next tier.

You can set whatever criteria you would like for moving from one tier to the other. The top tiers in each area have advanced skills and knowledge that not everyone in that position needs to have. They also have additional responsibilities that not everyone in that position wants. For example, we have 5 tiers for our small animal technicians and most of them are happy staying at tier 3 or 4.

The biggest benefit is that each team member is empowered and provided the tools to control their career path and their compensation. A benefit to the practice owner/manager is that there is no more confusion around hiring wages and raises. If you want to work alongside self-motivated team members who actively pursue improvement in hard skills, soft skills, and knowledge and help their peers do the same, performance-based compensation may be just the thing for you and your practice.

Questions

Team member compensation programs

- A. Empower your team.
- B. Increase the stress of raises and promotions.
- C. Maintain internal consistency and high-level skills/knowledge.
- D. Encourage cooperation and mentoring.

Each level or tier should require advancements in

- A. Soft Skills
- B. Hard Skills
- C. Knowledge
- D. All the above

Ways to assess competency are

- A. Logs
- B. Tests
- C. Gossip channels
- D. Peer reviews

All technicians should reach the highest tier in

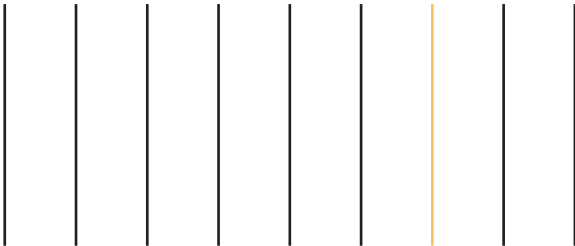
- A. 1 year
- B. 3 years
- C. 5 years
- D. Techs never need to reach the highest tier.

Performance-based compensation works well for all the following except

- A. Technicians
- B. Resort team members
- C. Receptionists
- D. It works for everyone.

WHAT THE HECK IS CULTURE & HOW DO I IMPROVE MINE?

CHRISTINE STATEN
DVM, MBA



**PRACTICE
MANAGEMENT**

What the Heck is Culture & How do I improve mine?

*Christine A. Staten, DVM MBA
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If you don't get this right, nothing else matters. Everybody's talking about team culture in veterinary practices. People are attracted to "good" ones, and they are quick to leave "bad" ones. We all want a positive one, but what does that even mean? Purposeful, strategic decisions by the leaders in the practice create and maintain positive cultures. This presentation will discuss what culture is, why focusing on it is so important and the key elements necessary to create and maintain your own positive culture.

Everybody's talking about culture in the veterinary workspace. A positive culture is one of the top reasons that people join a practice, and a negative culture is one of the top reasons people leave a practice. In today's veterinary employment landscape, a positive culture is critical for recruitment and retention.

We know that a positive work culture increases team member engagement. Employee engagement leads to less absenteeism, less turnover, more productivity, less work-related accidents, less stress, less burn out, and healthier people, both mentally and physically. You can't afford not to focus on your culture.

We all know we want one but what does that look like and how do you get it? And just as important, how do you keep it?

It all starts with a strategic plan. You need to know your vision. Where do you want to go? And then figure out how you're going to get there, which is your mission. And then your core values define your behavior. They are the guiding beliefs of your practice. You've got to lock these in and make sure they're active in your practice. Everyone is motivated by something. What is it? Is it serving the public? Is it caring for animals? Is it preventing disease spread? Is it saving lives? Your team values are core to your clinic but within that clinic there are a lot of different motivators, and you need to be making sure that you are empowering people and making them feel like they're making a difference in the ways that matter most of them. Without purpose, it's hard to get people all moving in the same direction.

Next, you must set and enforce practice standards based upon your vision, mission, and values. Put these in writing in the form of a policy manual, an employee handbook, standard operating procedures, behavioral expectations, or other documents. You need to define what a positive culture looks like in your practice. But it's not enough to put it in writing and have them sign it. You need to talk about it. You need to live it. You need to recognize and reward it. And you need to enforce it. How do you do all this? Ask them to describe their perfect work environment. Use that to create policies and behavioral expectations. To get buy-in from the team, they must understand the benefits to the patients, the clients, the practice, and themselves.

Make sure that you are hiring the right people and keeping the wrong people out. This is the single most important thing you can do for positive culture. Once you've got your dream team, make sure you have clear and open communication channels. Everyone should be empowered and have a voice. Mutual respect, Collaboration, trust, and support between everyone is not only desired, but necessary and it must be fostered.

You must be vigilant about rewarding positive behavior and addressing negative behavior. Nothing will erode a culture faster than allowing one person to behave in a way that is contrary to the culture you've defined. Believe me, I know. That one tech that is so proficient in her skills and so great with clients, but always seems to be speaking negatively about team members when they're not there. She needs to be held to the same standards as everyone else or she needs to leave. To ignore it will destroy the trust relationship you have with your team. It will destroy your culture.

To help encourage positive behaviors, it is critically important to provide training in empathy, teamwork, personality types, and communication. Make sure team building and culture are on the agenda of every meeting. Once you equip your team with the guidelines and tools they need to contribute to a positive culture, they will constantly build and reinforce it. In a culture that people desire, they will work to keep it alive.

Questions

Which of the following is NOT a benefit of a positive work culture in a veterinary practice?

- A. Increased absenteeism
- B. Higher productivity
- C. Less stress
- D. Healthier employees

Which of the following behaviors can erode a positive culture the fastest?

- A. Addressing negative behavior promptly
- B. Allowing one person to speak negatively about team members
- C. Providing training in communication
- D. Having too many meetings

What is the purpose of defining core values in a veterinary practice?

- A. To set revenue targets
- B. To dictate employee schedules
- C. To guide behavior
- D. To determine equipment purchases

Which aspect of training is NOT mentioned as important for encouraging positive behaviors?

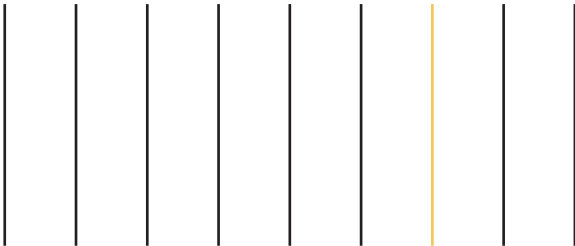
- A. Empathy
- B. Communication
- C. Teamwork
- D. Technical skills

In a culture where people desire to work, what are employees likely to do?

- A. Strive to undermine the culture
- B. Work to maintain and reinforce it
- C. Complain frequently about workplace conditions
- D. Avoid participating in team-building activities

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM: RECRUITING & RETAINING THE BEST

CHRISTINE STATEN
DVM, MBA



**PRACTICE
MANAGEMENT**

Building Your Dream Team – recruiting and retaining yours

Christine A. Staten, DVM MBA

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Close your eyes and imagine your dream team. What does it look like? How does it function? Now recognize that that can be your reality. This presentation will go over what you need in place before assembling your dream team. We will discuss how to attract the right people and identify the team members you really want (and those you don't) in the interview process. Effective onboarding and orientation are critical for establishing your new hire as a successful team member. And then, once you get them in the place, you need to be proactive about retention.

Preparing.

There are a few things you need to establish in your practice before you can effectively build your dream team. You must know and use your mission, your vision, and your core values. This is your purpose, and it defines your culture. You need to have a comprehensive policy manual that has been run by an attorney. This both defines how you want your practice to function, as well as offering you protection against frivolous complaints. In addition to the policy manual, I recommend a code of conduct that literally describes the behaviors you expect from your team members. In a perfect world, what positions would you like to have within your practice in the future? Don't assign people to them at this point, just identify the positions and then give them each a job description. If you have a small practice or you don't have any management structure in place, you may be the one doing everything in each of these job descriptions right now. The goal would be to outsource them strategically once you have them identified and described.

Recruiting.

Now that you have all the structure in place, how do you get that perfect team member to find you? You need to get the word out that you have a position available in multiple ways. Enlist your team members in the recruiting process. If they're a good fit at your practice, their friends may be too. They're also not going to refer someone to the practice that's not a hard worker because they recognize that would make their job harder. You should put a banner on your website, announce it on your social media platforms, and put a sign in front of your building. Reach out to schools in your area that educate veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and veterinary assistants. You can do paid advertisements on veterinary-specific and non-veterinary specific sites. I think of recruitment as an extension of marketing. Most people applying for a job will look at the social media and website accounts of that business. Make sure that your culture is reflected in those areas. You need a career page that is easy to find on your website and gives an applicant all the information they would need to know about being a team member in your practice. This allows you to keep any outgoing advertisements short into the point.

Interviewing.

Once you've got some applicants, enter the interview process. I recommend reviewing resumes and cover letters and then conducting quick 3-to-5-minute phone interviews. Candidates that move on from that stage move into a group or individual interview. Candidates that move through that phase then have a "skills assessment" at your practice. During this entire interview phase, you are looking for an individual that fits into your vision, mission, and core values. It doesn't matter how good their skill set is, if they are going to have a negative attitude and suck the energy out of your existing team, they will not be an asset to your practice. Once you're ready to make an offer to the perfect team member, discuss your detailed job description, policy manual and code of conduct. This is also where you would do any personality testing, drug screens, or background checks.

Onboarding, Orienting, and Retaining.

Congratulations, you found the right person and they've accepted your offer. Now the real work begins. You must have a structured and efficient onboarding and orientation process to establish that team member into the position swiftly. The trainee needs to understand the process and their role in it. They need a point of contact for check-ins and evaluations. Don't drop the ball in this phase. The last thing that you would want is for that perfect team member to leave your practice so regular check-ins or stay interviews are important for that person and everyone on your entire team. Team members want to be empowered and know their path to growth and wage increases so be transparent about those opportunities. Maintain your positive culture. This involves you holding everyone accountable for the code of conduct. Bottom line, work diligently and purposefully to retain your team.

That dream team that you're picturing is just around the corner. Focusing on creating a positive culture, attracting the right people, using the interview process to identify the team member you want, onboarding and orienting them effectively, and then giving them a reason to stay will make your dream a reality.

Questions

To help new techs onboard successfully into your practice, on day one

- A. Buy them gifts
- B. Assign them a point of contact**
- C. Have them take rooms by themselves
- D. Keep them away from your other team members

The following are "green flags" during the interview process

- A. They can follow directions
- B. They are upbeat
- C. They tell you all about their last horrible boss**
- D. They want to learn and grow

The process from receiving an application to an offer of employment should take

- A. Less than 2 weeks
- B. 2 or more weeks
- C. 4-6 weeks
- D. 3-4 months – Don't rush this stage.

Check-in meetings should be all except

- A. Spontaneous and unscheduled
- B. A time for goal-setting
- C. A two-way conversation
- D. A celebration of wins

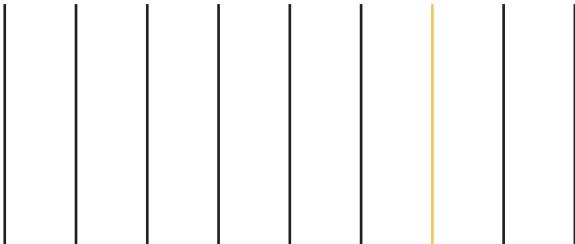
It is important to know and understand this before hiring someone

- A. Vision
- B. Core Values
- C. Purpose
- D. All of the above

DVM GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS FOR SALARIES & CONTRACTS

JAMES ROUSH

DVM, MS, DACVS, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SUCCESS



**PRACTICE
MANAGEMENT**

Student Expectations for Starting Contracts and Salaries

~Dr. James K. Roush, Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Success, Kansas State University

This seminar will present graduating student expectations regarding salary and other benefits based on the 2023 AVMA National and from our internal survey of 2024 Kansas State graduates. Actions taken by the K-State CVM has addressed student debt and the overall student debt:income ratio is now 1.77 to 1. The recent veterinary job market includes robust opportunities for new veterinary graduates with salary offers at an all-time high and contract offers that often include moving expenses, maternity leave (55% of jobs) retirement contributions (65% of employers match), full medical plans (74%) and signing bonuses (average \$9885), as well as training and mentoring data. Salary offers should be commensurate with the type of position and work expected and graduate starting salaries rose last year relative to national averages. Overall average reported salary ranges are often misinterpreted and misleading due to inclusion of training program and other salaries in the data. Kansas veterinary starting salaries average 4th lowest among states, and even adjusting for cost-of-living leaves the state well below national average salaries.

Dr. Roush will also discuss Kansas applicant numbers and admissions in light of national numbers. K-State ranks highest per capita (2007 class) in numbers of Kansas students admitted annually compared to all states with veterinary colleges, yet the CVM is funded at the 3rd lowest state and tuition level of all veterinary colleges. The least number of Kansas residents go to out-of-state veterinary colleges compared to residents from all states with a veterinary college.

2024 K-State student salary data (averages) compared with 2023 AVMA Survey National Data

Position type	2023 National Averages (AVMA)	2024 K-State Graduates	Jobs in Kansas	Jobs Out-of State
Private Practice	\$125464	\$110514	\$98577 (last \$88190)	\$113000 (last \$113424)
Companion Animal (predominant)	\$133876	\$120471 (1 students)		
Companion Animal exclusive	\$130610	\$122967 (30 students)		
Food Animal (predominant)	\$94078	\$92000 (5 students)		
Mixed Practice	\$104222	\$89211 (19 students)		
Not-for-profit	\$84019	\$100000 (1 students)		
Student Debt	\$161979	\$184863 [@]		

[@]Up substantially this year, but federal interest reinstated.