



# How to Hire During a Nationwide Shortage

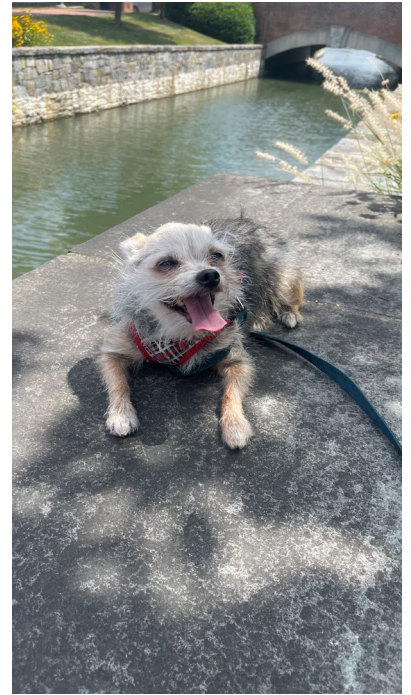
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Vice President of People & Culture





About me



Why anesthesia & I-O?



## Summary of content

- Part I - Recruitment



- Part II- Retention





But first!

Statistics on hiring



## How did we get here?

- Increased demand
- High burnout
- Education and training barriers
- Work life balance challenged
- Poor staffing ripple effects
- Competition
- Turnover



## Speaking of Turnover

- Inside vet med- 70+%
- Outside of vet med, BLS notes turnover at 15-20%



## Turnover Calculation

- 1)  $\frac{\text{\# of employees at the beginning of a time period} + \text{\# of employees at the end}}{2}$
- 2)  $\frac{\text{\# of employees who left}}{\text{average \# of employees}}$
- 3) Number from step 2 \* 100 = turnover %

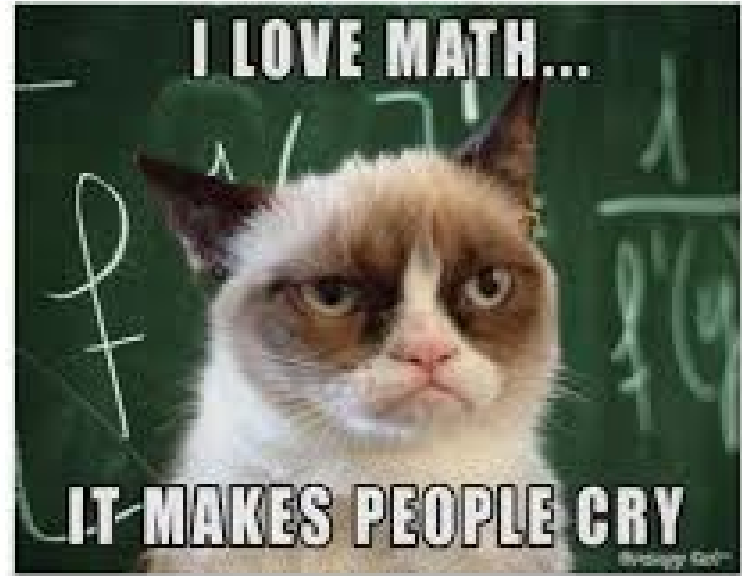
## Turnover percentage in a DC area practice

13 employees in January + 6  
employees in December/2= 9.5  
(average)

7 employees left/9.5 (the average)=  
0.74

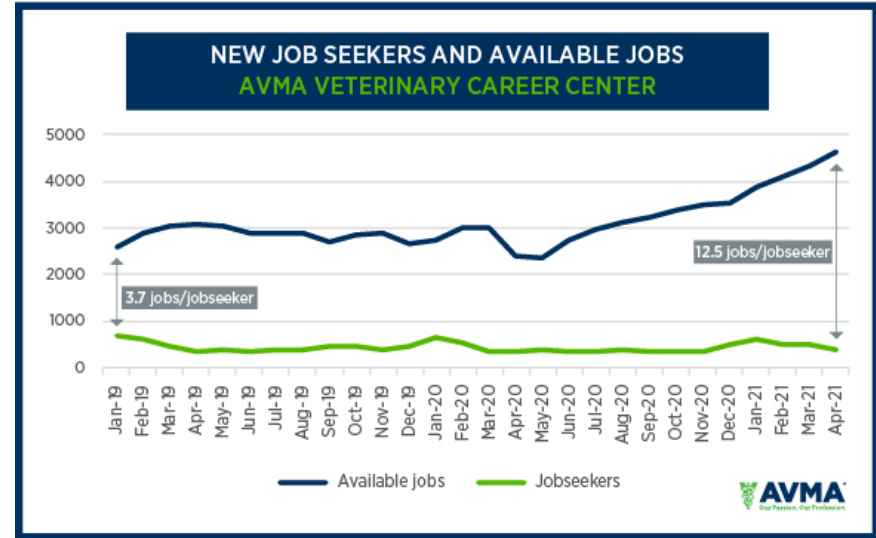
$0.74 \times 100 = 74\%$  turnover

Imagine trying to recruit with this  
number!



## Data from the AVMA

- Consistently more jobs than active jobseekers in all categories
- Veterinarians: 18.5 jobs/jobseeker
- Technicians and assistants: 5.9 jobs/jobseeker
- Other: 12.0 jobs/jobseeker



# The Cost of Hiring

- Per SHRM average cost for each new hire is ~\$5,000
  - 1-1.2 times the annual salary for each role (easily \$50-60K)
  - 30-40% are hard costs
  - Remaining 60% are soft costs
- Soft costs= intangible day-to-day impact such as lost productivity, training costs, and even the impact on morale
  - Hard costs= the fees for job postings, time dedicated for interviews, and any software needed to track and manage candidates



# Turnover is Contagious

- A large-scale study - when one team member resigns, other team members are **10% more likely** to resign within ~135 days
- “Contagious” because coworkers imitate the withdraw behaviors they perceive in others
- Turnover begets turnover

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## Turnover contagion:

How coworkers' job embeddedness and coworkers' job search behaviors influence quitting





## Part I

Recruitment- where do you start?



# What makes your practice different?



- We offer:
  - Bring your pet to work
  - Title protection for technicians
  - VTS packages
  - Clear growth paths
  - Peer-reviewed training plans
  - Objective and transparent wage review
  - LVT founded and run by women



## Step 1- Job Analysis

- Perform prior to posting a job
  - Perform by multiple roles
    - Peer, manager, DVM
  - How we learned we needed a triage coordinator and not an ER LVT
- What is it?
  - How do you do it?
    - Confirm/communicate objectives
    - Obtain data
    - Survey, observations, or interviews with team members
    - Analyze the gaps



## Job Analysis- questions

- What KSAs are needed for this role
  - What does success look like for this role
  - What qualifications and equipment are needed
  - What are the daily tasks
  - What physical conditions are needed
  - Who does this person report to
- What is the overall purpose of this job
  - What would not be accomplished if this job did not exist
  - What are the main duties and responsibilities of this position
  - What problem(s) are we trying to solve
  - What data/information do we already have?



# Case report- how to learned we needed a triage coordinator & not an ER tech

- What problem(s) are we trying to solve

- The communication around triages
- Delay in updating CSCs, owners, and DVMs, PcDVMs
- Tracking and management of triages

What if we hired an ER LVT?



- What data do we have

- Negative reviews about our communication around triage
- Our patient care was great
- Our DVM and tech communication after patients were admitted was great

- What KSAs are needed for this role

- Thorough knowledge of ER workflows
- Excellent communication skills
- Empathy and patience



## Case report- How we learned we needed a triage coordinator

- What qualifications are needed
  - ER experience
  - Does not need to be an RVT
- What are the daily tasks
  - Confirm incoming board in Instinct
  - Confirm current wait times in ER
  - Communicate with each owner, their DVM, and CSCs



# Job ad for the Triage Coordinator

Two-week onboarding period to rest and relax with a week off after your initial 90 days.

## What does your day look like at Partner?

The Triage Coordinator will perform initial assessments for incoming patients by obtaining vital signs, a brief history, and level of urgency. This position will communicate with both the client and medical team to facilitate the intake process.

The Triage Coordinator will act as a liaison by maintaining client communication with patient updates. Due to the nature of a busy emergency department, the Triage Coordinator will need to balance multiple cases at a time, regularly assessing patient and hospital status. Ongoing and fluid communication is critical to success in this role.

## Why this was an easy to recruit for

- Bespoke to our exact needs
  - Provided a more specialized role for a veterinary assistant with a different growth path
    - PCC
  - Eliminated the common pit-fall of “everyone does everything”
- Emotional labor- minimal physical labor



## Step 2- Creating a job ad

### Do

- Define/elaborate on broad terms such as “strong communication skills” or “solid communication”
- Instill actionable and empowering language
- Input from possible coworkers

### Do not

- Use weasel words
- Have someone who does not know the job write the ad
- For example!



## Speaking of job ads- what do we think of these?

- Excellent client-side manner and communication skills are essential, along with exemplary professionalism and proficiency in animal restraint, blood draws, catheters, dentistry, radiographic positioning, surgical preparation and monitoring. Technicians are expected to show initiative, and efficiently and accurately complete doctor orders in a fast-paced environment
- A veterinary technician is responsible for assisting the doctors, laboratory procedures, radiology, medical procedures, pharmacy, operation and maintenance of instruments and equipment, inventory, daily treatment of hospitalized patients, placing IV catheters, blood collection, lab procedures, anesthetic monitoring, assisting in the operating room etc.



## What I see in those job ads

- 1<sup>st</sup> one

- Maybe written by a doctor or manager- not people who do that job
- WHO is the ideal person for that job?!

- 2<sup>nd</sup> one

- Easily 3 jobs
- Why do I feel like I'm in trouble just reading each of those ads

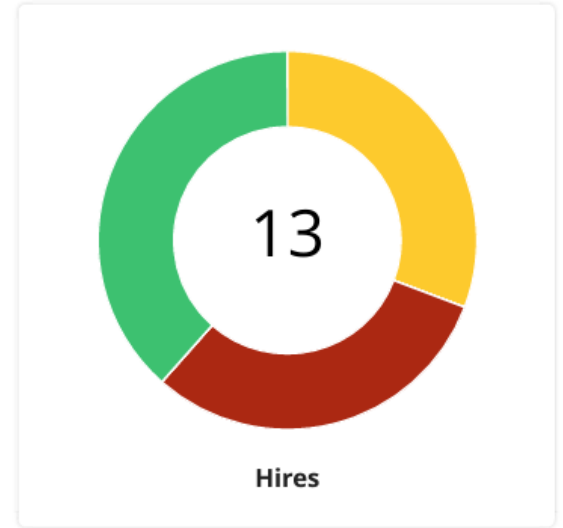
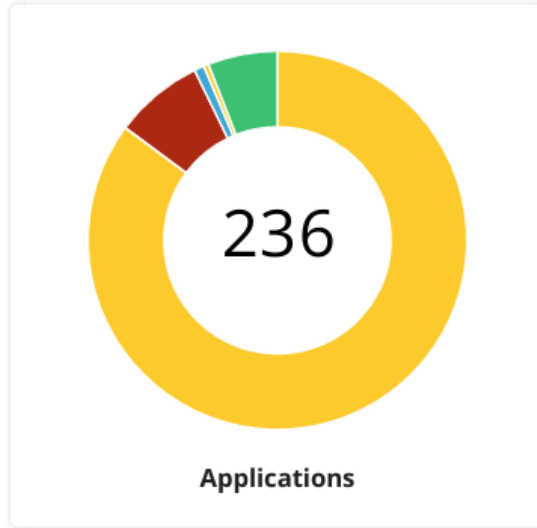
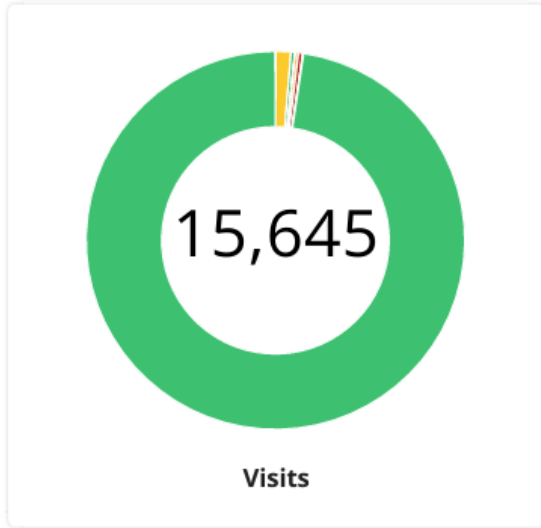


## Step 3- Post job ads

- The Hound
  - Indeed
  - AVMA
  - AAHA
  - Zip recruiter
  - LinkedIn
  - Paying for sponsored ads
- HRIS systems
    - Paylocity
    - Paychex



## Candidate Source Detail



Source*	Visits	Applications	Hired
google.com	6	0	0
indeed.com - Indeed Apply	201	201	4
Internal	51	0	0
jobtarget.com	2	0	0

## Step 4- Connecting with talent

- Email hygiene
    - What language to use/avoid
    - “Hey!”
    - Subject lines
  - Know your audience- text vs. email
  - Follow up and follow through
- Make the experience special
    - Lunch or coffee
    - Swag
    - Do you have a closer?
  - Remember that they are interviewing you too!



## Step 4- Interview questions

- Structured interviews
  - Why?
  - What predicts behavior
  - Why your gut is wrong
  - Halo vs. horns
- Automatic emails that help the candidate prepare

### We Can Help...prepare you for the Partner interview!

At Partner, we aim to be transparent and informative so each candidate can be prepared and comfortable during the interview process. Prior to your interview, reflect on what your career goals with Partner will be. In addition, consider your responses to the following questions that may be asked during the meeting:



What does work/life balance mean to you?

What are your career aspirations? What would you like to accomplish at Partner?

Why are you interested in Partner?

What culture and environment do you thrive in? If you worked in that ideal culture, give examples of what made it great .



## Step 5- Offer letters

- Verbal offers
  - Allows for questions to be addressed
  - Conveys excitement and connection
- Written offers
  - Send for every role

We are excited to offer you a full-time position as a Licensed Veterinary Technician at Partner Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center, Richmond! We recognize the incredible accomplishment of obtaining a VTS, and we are dedicated to empowering you to leverage these advanced skills across both hospitals. The LVT is based in the PVESC Neurology department. To echo our mission of transforming the veterinary landscape, all Partner Veterinary team members may support other individuals and departments, as needed, under the direction of your Hospital Steward or Team Advocate.



## What can you use to negotiate

- Wage ranges that are tied to training
- Stipends!
- CE budgets
- CE PTO
- VTS support
- Shift differentials
- Tuition reimbursement
  - People need to set and achieve goals

# Step 6- Onboarding

- Same for each role
  - Why this is important
- Welcome emails
- Agendas for the first few weeks
  - Why this is important
- Contact person

- Safety training

You will clock in using the Deputy app. Note that the system does not allow for team members to clock in any earlier than 10 minutes prior to your shift. You can punch in and out anywhere within the parking lot and hospital area.

If you do not have your Partner branded scrubs, please arrive in clean and comfortable scrub top and scrub pants.

The address of your new hospital is \_\_\_\_\_ and please park \_\_\_\_\_. Enter the building through the front door and you will be greeted by \_\_\_\_\_, Client Service Coordinator.

He/She/They will page \_\_\_\_\_ and they will be your point of contact for the day.

Breaks and lunch are planned/organized through your department. Your breakfast/lunch/diner/snacks can be kept in the \_\_\_\_\_.

Your new teammates are:

Most importantly, your new hospital has \_\_\_\_\_ bathrooms. They are located \_\_\_\_\_.





Questions so far?





## Part II

Retention



# Why nurses leave their jobs

- Meta-analysis of literature on why nurses quit:
  - Organizational leadership
  - Development of comprehensive career-development programs
  - Culture

Let's review each of these!

# Leadership Literacy

## Transformational

- Influence
- Inspirational motivation
- Intellectual stimulation
- Individualized considerations
- Focused on a shared vision

## Servant

- Serving” instead of “commanding”
- Potential for exploitation
- Time consuming
- Empathy?
- Burnout!

Who identifies with and/or practices servant leadership?



# Leadership Literacy

## Transformational

- Data indicates it reduces employee turnover after controlling for other turnover antecedents (i.e. job satisfaction and perceived external employability)

## Servant

- Data demonstrates it is connected to turnover

Original research

Association between servant leadership and nurses' turnover intention: evidence from Jordan

Main Naser Alolayyan ,<sup>1</sup> Farid T Nusairat,<sup>2</sup> Serien A Abualhuda,<sup>2</sup> Suad Azar <sup>2</sup>



## How does transformational leadership help with recruiting?

Inspire: Staff meetings that validates concerns and emphasizes a dedication to hiring the RIGHT people

Empower: Team collaborate on caseload improvements, workflow changes & culture initiatives

Support: Growth opportunities, mentorship, leadership development & regular stay interviews\*\*

Celebrate: Acknowledge progress toward retention goals and positive culture shifts

Transparency: Open communication about staffing data, improvement plans, and leverage of team to help with interviews



# Career Development

- Data has demonstrated :

- Goal setting and achievement leads to more self-driven teams that do good work
- It increases commitment an organization
- Big vs. small goals

- Meta-analysis

- Goals improve motivation and performance
- Goal Setting → Achievement → Satisfaction

What else does career development look like?

Leadership training

Operations training



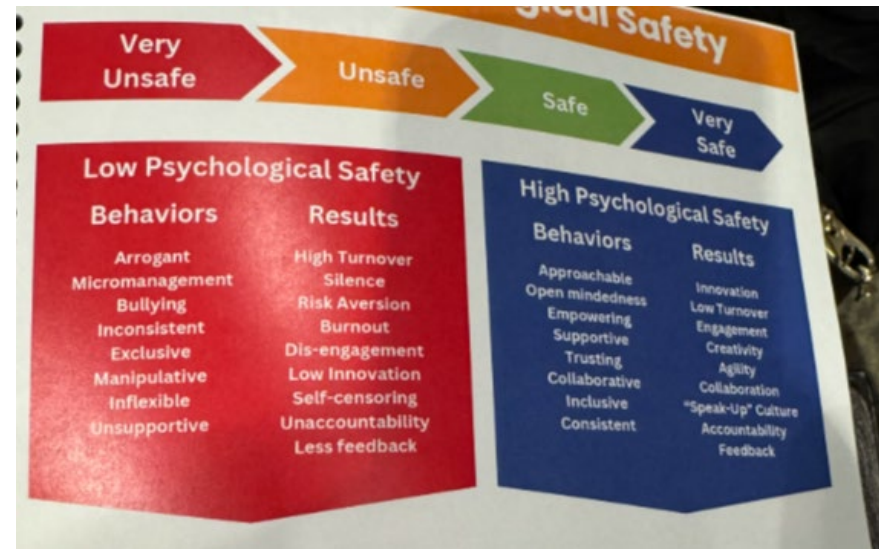
# Culture

- Shared beliefs and values
  - Influence on behavior
  - Social and psychological environment\*
  - Impact on performance
  - Dynamic
- What is leadership's role?
  - And what if your culture is negative? \*\*



# The Role of Psychological Safety

- The ability to comfortably ask questions, offer suggestions, and be vulnerable within a group without fear of humiliation or retribution
- Trust, mutual respect, and care and concern for their teammates
- Remember the turnover percentage from earlier? That was associated with a lack of psychological safety



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## What Is Psychological Safety and Why Do You Need It in Your Hospital?

Research has demonstrated that a psychologically safe workplace positively influences work engagement, team learning, collaboration in efforts to improve patient care quality, and patient safety.

March 11, 2024 | Issue: [Spring 2024](#)

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 **VMX 2026**  
\$125



## How does negativity affect individuals?

- Reduced motivation and engagement
- Increased stress and burnout
- Turnover
- Lowered self-esteem
- Health issues



## Research has demonstrated that negativity:

“

Spreads from person to person in the same way happiness spreads

– Mood contagions

Can lead to job dissatisfaction and lack of motivation

Creates/causes emotional exhaustion and turnover





What also helps retention?



## Stay Interviews – 10/10 recommend

- A solution-based conversation that occurs when the employee is currently working in a practice
  - Demonstrated to be an effective approach to the retention and engagement of employees
  - NOT performance based
- Immediate benefit = the ability to be a position provide actual solutions
  - Decreased recruitment costs
  - A Gallup Survey observed that 52% of employees who gave notice explained that if their manager had spoken with them, they could have been persuaded to stay in their roles



## Stay Interview Questions

- How long have you worked here?
- What are the factors that keep you in your current role?
- Have you considered quitting? If so, what were the reasons? What changed?
- What areas of your job do you enjoy the most? What areas do you avoid?
- Do you have any ideas for areas where we can improve?



## How to make stay interviews successful

- Follow up and follow through
  - Perform 2-3 times a year at first
  - Structure to prevent it from being an hour-long venting session
- Very much tied to transformational leadership



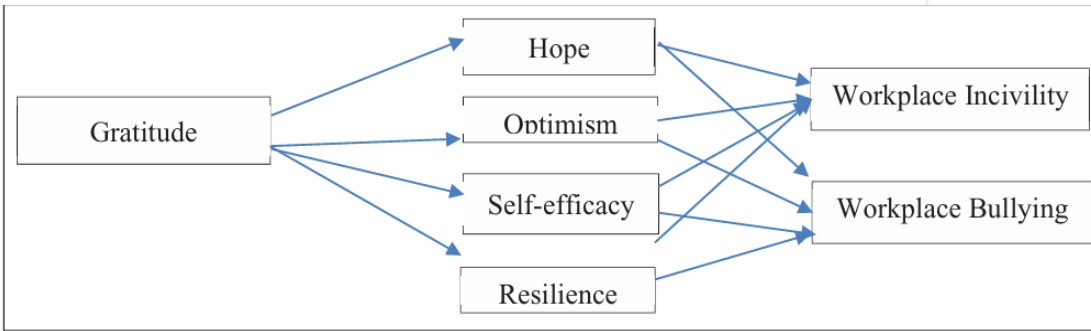


## Team recognition

- Shout outs
- How doctors can help



# The Role of Gratitude



- 2022 study on the role of gratitude to combat negativity in hospitals
- It was observed that gratitude is positively and statistically significantly correlated with all four dimensions





One more idea!



# Certified safe workplace

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## CLEAR Blueprint

CLEAR Blueprint, a practice certification program by NOMV is designed to foster mentally healthy work environments in the veterinary field. Developed by a diverse team of veterinary, mental health, legal, and business professionals, the program offers actionable resources to inspire positive change. It's scalable and adaptable for any veterinary workplace, promoting a culture of compassionate care and well-being.

Workplaces interested in becoming CLEAR Blueprint Certified can sign up on our web portal!

[Sign Up Now >](#)



🔍 Type here to search



2:25

## Key Takeaways and TL;DR

- Stay interviews are key to retention
  - Job analyses prior to posting a new job
    - WITH the input of peers!
  - Write a job ad people will want to apply for
    - Use “you” statements
  - Structured interviews
- Goal setting and achievement keeps people in their roles
  - Make the interview process special
  - Your culture can determine if people stay or leave



Thank you! Want more information? OR MY BOOK!!

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# Managing Healthy Veterinary Teams: An Evidence-Based Guide

Heather R. Carter, MPS, LVT, VTS  
(Anesthesia & Analgesia)