



THE VETLEAD PLAYBOOK

Hiring Exceptional Talent

A complete, veterinary-specific system for attracting, evaluating, and selecting the people who will grow your practice.

BY

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vetlead.com

How to Use This Playbook

This is a working system, not a book to read once and shelve. It's designed to be used — in your practice, on a real hire, this month.

You can read it cover to cover. Most owners shouldn't.

If you have an open position right now, jump to the [Quick-Start Sprint](#) on the next page. It walks you through your first 30 days using this playbook on an actual hire. Read the rest as you need it.

If you're building a process for the long term

Work through the parts in order. **Part One** sets the foundation — why hiring decides everything in a veterinary practice. **Parts Two and Three** teach you to define who you're hiring and write an ad that attracts them. **Parts Four through Six** (in the second half of this playbook) walk you through the interview process, the question bank, and the scoring forms.

The templates are meant to be used

You'll find fillable templates inside Parts Two and Three (Success Profile, Job Ad), and printable scoring forms in Part Six. Two ways to use them:

- **Print the template page** and write directly on it.
- **Save a copy of this PDF** and type into the form fields, then save your filled version with a name like Success-Profile_FrontDesk_2026.pdf.

RH

A NOTE FROM RANDY

If you've ever hired someone you regretted — and every practice owner I've worked with has — you already know the cost. The point of this playbook isn't to make hiring harder. It's to make the next hire one you don't regret. Use it on a real open position. That's where it earns its keep.

Get the most out of it

- **Involve your team.** Hiring is a team activity. The playbook is built to be shared.

- **Don't skip the Success Profile.** Everything downstream — the ad, the screening questions, the interview scoring — connects to it. Skip it and the rest gets thin.
- **Practice before you need it.** The interview chapter explains how to run a mock interview with your team. The first time you do a real one shouldn't be the first time you've ever done one.

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Quick-Start Sprint

Your first hire in 30 days, using this playbook

If you have an open position right now, follow this sprint. Each step points to the page in this playbook where you'll find the detail.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING

Do not skip the Success Profile. Every other step in this sprint connects back to it. If the profile is vague, the ad attracts the wrong people, the interview questions miss the point, and the scoring becomes a guess. Twenty minutes on the profile saves twenty hours on a bad hire.

DAYS 1–3

Define who you're hiring

Open the Success Profile template (p. 24). Pick the worked example closest to your role (pp. 17–23) and use it as a starting point. Don't try to make it perfect — make it specific. What does this person need to know, do, and embody to succeed in your practice?

Output: One completed Success Profile, printed or saved as a PDF.

DAYS 4–6

Write the ad

Open the Job Ad template (p. 36). Use the worked examples (pp. 30–33) as your model. Study the annotated weak example (p. 34) so you don't repeat its mistakes. Keep the focus on what's good about your practice and what success looks like — not what's hard about the job.

Output: A finished job ad, ready to post.

DAYS 7–8

Set up screening questions

Add 2–3 screening questions to your application form or response email. Use the examples in Part One. Give yourself a 5-point scoring scale and decide your minimum acceptable score before the first application arrives.

Output: Screening process live before the ad goes up.

DAY 9

Post the ad

Post on the channels where your ideal candidate actually looks. Share on your website. Send to your team and ask them to share. Don't pay for promotion in the first 7 days — you want to see the response your ad earns on its own.

DAYS 10–17

Screen, then phone-screen

Score every applicant against your screening questions. Anyone who clears the bar gets a 15–20 minute phone or virtual interview using the structure in Part Four (next half of this playbook). Be willing to stop the call early if it's not a fit — both of you have better uses of the next 12 minutes.

DAYS 18–24

In-person behavioral interviews

Invite your top 3–5 in for a structured behavioral interview. Use questions from the Question Bank (Part Five, next half). Have at least two people on your team interview each candidate. Score independently. Debrief together. Use the rating forms (Part Six).

DAYS 25–28

Working interviews

Bring your top 1–2 candidates in for a working interview. Watch them with your team, your clients, your workflow. Score them on the working interview rubric. Talk to the team members who worked alongside them.

DAYS 29–30

Decide and offer

Bring your team together. Review the scores. Make the call. Reach out to your chosen candidate within 24 hours. Communicate with the candidates you didn't select — clearly and respectfully. Begin onboarding with intention.



PART ONE

The Foundation

Why hiring decides everything in a veterinary practice — and what it costs you when it goes wrong.

The Importance of Exceptional Talent

Every hiring decision shapes the future of your practice. Exceptional team members bring more than technical skills — they elevate client experiences, strengthen team dynamics, and foster a thriving workplace culture. Hiring with intention and a consistently successful process is an investment in your practice's long-term success.

The Challenges of Hiring

Veterinary practices face common hiring challenges:

- **Turnover costs.** High turnover rates (up to 25% annually) lead to significant recruitment, training, and productivity losses.
- **Mismatch issues.** The wrong hire can disrupt workflows, strain team dynamics, and increase turnover.
- **Time pressures.** Rushed hiring decisions feel necessary but often result in costly mistakes.

THE REAL COST

The most expensive hire isn't the one you make slowly. It's the one you make in a panic — and have to make again six months later, after the damage is done.

Why Exceptional Talent Matters

Hiring the right people transforms your practice:

- **Quality care.** Skilled team members deliver consistent, high-quality patient care.
- **Stronger relationships.** Talented staff build trust and loyalty with clients.
- **Team cohesion.** Exceptional hires energize teams and enhance collaboration.
- **Practice growth.** High performers innovate and take ownership, driving success.
- **Culture.** Every new person you bring into your team affects the morale, the engagement, and the environment at work — and the future of the business.

The Costs of Poor Hiring Decisions

A bad hire impacts more than finances:

What it costs	What it looks like
Financial strain	Recruitment and training costs can reach thousands per hire.
Cultural disruption	Poor hires can lower morale and destabilize workplace harmony.
Client trust	Underperformance risks client satisfaction and the practice's reputation.
Time mismanagement	Managers' time is spent addressing poor performance instead of growing a highly engaged team.

Setting the Stage

Exceptional talent is the cornerstone of a thriving practice. This playbook provides tools to:

- Attract candidates who align with your vision and values.
- Build a cohesive, motivated team that delivers exceptional care and drives long-term success.
- Avoid costly hiring mistakes.
- Hire using a process that helps create a fully engaged, happier team.

A Step-by-Step Playbook You Can Follow

This playbook is designed to help you create a hiring process that attracts, evaluates, and selects exceptional talent. Follow these actionable steps to build a process tailored to your veterinary practice and team:

1. **Define your ideal candidate** and build a Success Profile.
2. **Create an effective job ad.**
3. **Screen candidates** before reviewing resumes.
4. **Follow a structured interview process** — phone, in-person, working.
5. **Involve your team and practice** the interview process before going live.
6. **Execute the hiring process** with discipline.

PRO TIP

Don't read this entire playbook before you start. Use the Quick-Start Sprint (p. 7) and pull each chapter in as you get to it. The system is built to be used, not memorized.

PART TWO

Define Who You're Hiring

Build a Success Profile that drives every downstream decision — the ad, the questions, the scoring.

Build a Success Profile

Hiring exceptional talent begins with a clear understanding of who you're looking for. Go beyond a basic job description to define the skills, attributes, and values that will help your practice thrive. A strong Success Profile lays the foundation for attracting, evaluating, and selecting the best candidates.

A Success Profile outlines what a candidate needs to succeed — not just what they need to do. Use the categories below as a guide when creating a Success Profile tailored to your practice.

Key Job Skills

- Providing high-quality support to team members and clients with accuracy and attention to detail.
- Managing assigned tasks and responsibilities independently, ensuring timely and reliable completion.
- Maintaining organized and accurate records, processes, or workflows to enhance practice efficiency.

Accountability Traits

- **Ownership.** Takes responsibility for tasks, outcomes, and mistakes, demonstrating a commitment to improving.
- **Proactivity.** Anticipates potential challenges and takes initiative to resolve them without waiting for direction.
- **Reliability.** Consistently meets deadlines, follows through on commitments, and can be trusted to deliver.
- **Resilience.** Maintains focus and a positive attitude under pressure, finding solutions rather than blaming others.
- **Adaptability.** Responds constructively to feedback, showing a willingness to adjust and grow in the role.

Behavioral Indicators of Success

Behavioral questions are critical for identifying patterns that reflect accountability — and for detecting "victim thinking." Look for examples where candidates:

Accepted Responsibility

"Tell me about a time you made a mistake at work. How did you handle it, and what did you learn?"

Positive indicator: A clear acknowledgment of their role in the mistake and steps taken to correct it, as well as the creation of successful habits that evolved from it.

Problem-Solved Independently

"Describe a situation where you noticed a potential issue before it became a problem. What did you do?"

Positive indicator: A proactive approach that shows initiative and a collaborative problem-solving approach.

Showed Resilience Through Challenges

"Share an example of when you faced a difficult situation at work. How did you respond?"

Positive indicator: A solution-oriented response rather than deflecting blame or avoiding accountability — showing the ability to bounce back and move forward.

Practical Steps to Define Your Ideal Candidate

- 1. Identify behaviors.** Which behaviors displayed by your top performers would you like to see in new hires?
- 2. Review your practice's needs.** Identify gaps in workflows, team dynamics, and client feedback to determine the qualities your ideal candidate should have. How could this person help you achieve greater success?
- 3. Draft a Success Profile.** Use a structured approach to outline the key job skills, leadership skills, and leadership qualities needed for the role.
- 4. Engage your team.** Gather input to ensure alignment on behaviors and performance.
- 5. Refine for scalability.** Ensure the role can evolve as your practice grows.

Worked Example

Front Desk Associate

Use this example as a starting point. Edit the language to reflect your practice — but keep the structure (responsibilities, cultural fit, success orientation).

FRONT DESK ASSOCIATE

Success Profile

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Greet clients and their pets warmly and professionally, ensuring a positive and seamless experience throughout their visit.
2. Manage appointment scheduling, phone inquiries, and follow-ups to maintain efficient client flow and minimize wait times.
3. Maintain accurate and up-to-date client records, including payments, medical updates, and necessary documentation.
4. Process invoices and handle payments with attention to detail, ensuring accurate financial record-keeping.
5. Serve as the communication hub for the veterinary team, coordinating updates and ensuring smooth information flow.
6. Identify and resolve client concerns effectively, escalating issues as needed to maintain client satisfaction.
7. Educate clients about practice services, policies, and care recommendations, acting as a knowledgeable resource for their inquiries.
8. Ensure the reception area is clean, organized, and reflects the professional standards of the practice.
9. Monitor office supplies and assist with administrative tasks to support front desk efficiency.
10. Actively contribute to a collaborative, supportive, and efficient team environment.

CULTURAL FIT

1. **Effective communication.** Clearly and confidently conveys information to clients, team members, and the veterinary team to ensure alignment and understanding.
2. **Problem-solving.** Anticipates challenges in scheduling, client interactions, or workflows and proposes practical, client-focused solutions.
3. **Time management.** Efficiently prioritizes tasks in a fast-paced environment, balancing client needs with administrative responsibilities.
4. **Adaptability.** Demonstrates flexibility and resourcefulness in handling changes or unexpected situations with composure.
5. **Collaboration and teamwork.** Actively supports the veterinary and administrative teams, promoting a cohesive and efficient work environment.
6. **Attention to detail.** Maintains a high level of accuracy in scheduling, record-keeping, and financial processes to support trust and reliability.

SUCCESS ORIENTATION

1. **Ownership.** Takes full responsibility for tasks and outcomes, demonstrating reliability and a commitment to excellence in client service.
2. **Proactive.** Anticipates needs, identifies opportunities for improvement, and takes initiative to act without waiting for direction.
3. **Resilient.** Maintains a calm and professional demeanor during busy or challenging periods, ensuring clients and teammates feel supported.
4. **Client-focused.** Places client needs at the forefront, fostering trust and loyalty through empathetic, solution-oriented interactions.
5. **Supportive.** Creates a welcoming and positive environment for both clients and staff, ensuring everyone feels valued and respected.
6. **Consistent.** Demonstrates dependability in following through on commitments and maintaining high standards of service and professionalism.

Worked Example

Veterinary Technician

VETERINARY TECHNICIAN

Success Profile

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Assist veterinarians during examinations, surgeries, and medical procedures to ensure high-quality patient care.
2. Administer medications, monitor anesthesia, and perform diagnostic tests to support effective treatments and accurate diagnoses.
3. Collect and process laboratory samples (e.g., blood, urine, and tissue) with precision, adhering to best practices for accuracy and safety.
4. Educate clients on treatment plans, preventive care, and post-operative instructions, empowering them to actively participate in their pet's care.
5. Maintain detailed and accurate patient medical records, documenting treatments, progress, and client communications.
6. Ensure a clean, safe, and organized environment for patients, clients, and staff by adhering to sanitation protocols and practice standards.
7. Manage inventory and supplies to ensure availability of equipment and medications necessary for procedures.
8. Collaborate with the veterinary team to ensure seamless communication and operational efficiency in patient care.
9. Stay informed on veterinary advancements, maintaining certifications and participating in continuing education opportunities.
10. Proactively identify and resolve challenges in workflows, patient care, or resources to maintain smooth operations and client satisfaction.

CULTURAL FIT

1. **Effective communication.** Clearly conveys information to veterinarians, team members, and clients to ensure mutual understanding and effective care.
2. **Empathy and compassion.** Demonstrates genuine care for animal patients and their owners, building trust and positive relationships.
3. **Adaptability.** Thrives in a fast-paced, high-pressure environment by efficiently managing priorities and maintaining focus under stress.
4. **Team collaboration.** Works cohesively with the veterinary team, fostering a supportive and efficient work environment.
5. **Problem-solving.** Proactively identifies issues in workflows or patient care and implements effective solutions.
6. **Attention to detail.** Maintains accuracy in record-keeping, diagnostics, and medication administration, ensuring optimal outcomes and client confidence.

SUCCESS ORIENTATION

1. **Accountable.** Takes full ownership of responsibilities, consistently delivering reliable and high-quality results.
2. **Proactive.** Anticipates patient and team needs, acting independently to address challenges and prevent issues before they arise.
3. **Patient-centered.** Places the health and well-being of animal patients as the highest priority, going above and beyond to ensure exceptional care.
4. **Resilient.** Maintains composure and professionalism in high-stress or emergency situations, setting a positive example for others.
5. **Client-focused.** Builds strong relationships with pet owners by providing clear, empathetic communication and empowering them to make informed decisions.
6. **Supportive.** Contributes to a welcoming and reassuring environment for clients, pets, and colleagues, enhancing the overall experience for everyone involved.

Worked Example

Associate Veterinarian

ASSOCIATE VETERINARIAN

Success Profile

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide high-quality medical care to patients through thorough physical examinations, accurate diagnostics, and effective treatment plans.
- Perform surgical and dental procedures with a focus on patient safety and comfort.
- Educate clients on preventive healthcare, nutrition, and wellness to promote long-term patient health.
- Maintain comprehensive and accurate patient records, ensuring timely updates and adherence to legal standards.
- Collaborate with the veterinary team to ensure seamless patient care and a cohesive work environment.
- Participate in continuing education to stay current with advancements in veterinary medicine.

CULTURAL FIT

- **Compassionate communication.** Demonstrates empathy and effectively communicates with clients, ensuring they understand their pets' health conditions and treatment options.
- **Team collaboration.** Works harmoniously with all team members, valuing diverse perspectives and contributing to a supportive workplace culture.
- **Adaptability.** Remains flexible and composed in a fast-paced environment, adjusting to varying caseloads and patient needs.
- **Problem-solving.** Employs critical thinking to diagnose and develop appropriate treatment plans, considering both patient well-being and client circumstances.
- **Integrity.** Upholds ethical standards and maintains confidentiality, fostering trust with clients and team members.

SUCCESS ORIENTATION

- **Client trust builder.** Establishes and nurtures strong relationships with clients, enhancing client retention and promoting the practice's reputation.
- **Patient advocate.** Prioritizes patient welfare, ensuring that all medical decisions and actions serve the best interest of the patient.
- **Continuous learner.** Commits to ongoing professional development, bringing innovative ideas and practices to the team.
- **Community engager.** Participates in community outreach programs, representing the practice positively and contributing to public education on animal health.

Worked Example

Veterinary Manager or Supervisor

MANAGER OR SUPERVISOR

Success Profile

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Build, support, and coach a fully engaged team of high-performing individuals who collaborate to deliver excellent patient care and client service.
2. Ensure the team is fully staffed by developing and implementing a consistent strategy for effective interviewing and candidate evaluation.
3. Lead new hire onboarding to help team members feel welcomed, supported, and set up for success in their roles.
4. Organize and manage workflows, including scheduling, to maintain an efficient and effective operation.
5. Conduct regular performance discussions focused on clarity, accountability, and continuous improvement.
6. Facilitate open, clear, and complete communication across the team to support alignment around goals and tasks.
7. Oversee consistent, well-structured training and development processes to help team members grow their skills and improve their performance.
8. Provide individual coaching that supports development, encourages learning, and helps team members achieve personal and professional goals.
9. Collaborate with other hospital leaders to ensure alignment across teams and to support overall hospital growth and improvement.
10. Address performance challenges quickly and constructively, helping struggling team members improve or transition when needed.
11. Model the desired team culture by consistently showing up as a focused, growth-minded, and dependable leader.
12. Proactively plan for increased team effectiveness and efficiency through goal-setting and process improvement.

CULTURAL FIT

1. **Collaborative.** Actively listens to team input and includes others in solving problems and addressing opportunities.
2. **Supportive.** Creates an environment where team members feel safe, valued, and able to do their best work.
3. **Development-focused.** Emphasizes growth by helping team members focus on future actions, not just past mistakes.
4. **Accountable.** Fully owns team performance and development, setting clear expectations and following through.
5. **Emotionally intelligent.** Manages personal frustration or stress in a way that supports the team and maintains professionalism.

6. Communicative. Shares information clearly, thoroughly, and in a timely manner, building trust and alignment.

SUCCESS ORIENTATION

- 1. Leadership by example.** Models the behavior, effort, and attitude expected from the team.
- 2. Growth-oriented.** Actively pursues opportunities to help the team and hospital reach their full potential.
- 3. Resilient.** Understands that leadership is demanding and maintains habits that allow them to lead effectively over time.
- 4. Strategic.** Anticipates challenges and plans accordingly to ensure continued team progress.
- 5. Change leadership.** Helps the team adapt to and embrace new processes, tools, and expectations.
- 6. Culture builder.** Strengthens accountability and collaboration, creating a workplace where people enjoy showing up and doing their best.

Create Your Success Profile

Think of a role within your organization that needs to be filled now, or will need to be filled in the future. Consider the experience, fit, and impact that your ideal candidate will embody.

Print this page (and the next two) or save a copy of this PDF and type into the fields. Save your filled version as Success-Profile_[Role]_[Date].pdf.

Role Being Defined

Position title

Experience (or capability)

What does your ideal candidate know and understand?

What do they excel at?

What have they mastered over time? What have they been focused on for a while?

Experience (continued)

What do they have a track record of doing well?

How do they solve problems?

Fit

How do they make decisions? What's their decision-making process?

How do they communicate? How do they share information? What is their communication style?

What is most important to them about their work?

Fit (continued)

How do they take ownership of their work? What steps do they take to ensure tasks are completed accurately and on time?

How do they handle mistakes or setbacks? Do they take responsibility and find solutions, or do they shift blame?

How do they contribute to a positive and accountable team environment? What role do they play in maintaining a strong team culture?

Impact

How are they described by people around them today?

Impact (continued)

How do they learn and develop?

What is their process for tackling challenges?

What example do they set for others?

How will they make my team better? How will they influence my team in ways that cause them to be more successful?

How do they plan and prepare for success? How do they respond to setbacks or challenges?

WHEN YOU'RE DONE

Bring this completed profile into your next team meeting. Get one or two trusted teammates to react to it. The profile gets sharper every time someone reads it and asks "what do you really mean by that?"

PART THREE

Attract the Right People

Write a job ad that earns the attention of the people you actually want — and filters out the ones you don't.

Write a Winning Job Ad

To attract exceptional team members, you need a compelling job ad and a strong employer brand. The right candidates aren't just looking for a job — they're seeking a workplace where they can grow, contribute, and thrive.

A job ad isn't just a list of duties. It's your opportunity to showcase why candidates should choose your practice. Use these tips to make your ad stand out:

- **Focus on benefits.** Highlight what makes your practice a great place to work — flexible schedules, CE opportunities, a supportive team culture. It's okay if you aren't where you want to be yet. Focus on where you want to be and where you are going.
- **Emphasize growth opportunities.** Mention mentorship programs, training, or leadership paths to attract candidates who value professional development.
- **Showcase your culture.** Use engaging language to convey your practice's values and personality. For example, instead of "must be hard-working," try "join a team that supports each other while providing outstanding care."

Key Elements of an Effective Job Ad

1. **Engaging heading.** Create an inviting headline like "Grow Your Career in a Thriving Veterinary Practice."
2. **Who we are.** Briefly describe your team's strengths and culture in 1–2 sentences. Even if you are still building the culture you want, highlight where you are headed.
3. **What you'll do.** List the top 3–5 responsibilities for the role.
4. **Who we want.** Highlight the essential traits and skills for success in this position.
5. **Why work for us.** Mention perks like paid time off, CE support, or wellness benefits.

THE RULE

Write about who they'll become in this role, not what they'll grind through. The first paragraph decides whether the right candidate keeps reading.

Effective Job Ad

Front Desk Associate

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE · FRONT DESK ASSOCIATE

BE THE SMILE THAT GREETES EVERY VISIT!

Do you thrive in a fast-paced environment and enjoy making every interaction a positive one? Are you someone who takes ownership of their responsibilities and contributes to a team's success? If you're looking to join a team where your organizational skills and warm personality can truly make a difference, we'd love to meet you!

Who We Are

We are a growing veterinary hospital with a supportive team dedicated to providing exceptional care to pets and their owners. Our focus is on creating a welcoming environment for everyone who walks through our doors, and we're looking for someone who can help us continue to deliver on this promise.

What You'll Do

As a Front Desk Associate, you will:

- Greet clients with a smile and ensure their visits are smooth and enjoyable.
- Answer phone calls, schedule appointments, and provide accurate information to clients.
- Keep records organized and up-to-date, handling payments and documentation efficiently.
- Proactively identify and resolve client concerns to maintain satisfaction and trust.
- Work closely with the veterinary team to ensure seamless communication and exceptional service.
- Maintain a clean, organized, and professional front desk area, reflecting the high standards of our practice.

Who We Want

We are seeking someone who:

- Has a friendly, professional demeanor and a passion for client service.
- Takes ownership of their responsibilities and consistently follows through on tasks.
- Can juggle multiple priorities while remaining calm and organized.
- Communicates clearly and effectively with clients and teammates alike.
- Experience in customer service or reception is a plus, but what matters most is your attitude, reliability, and willingness to learn!

Why Work For Us

Our business works every day to create a culture that allows us to thrive, do our best work, and build a strong, cohesive team. We are fully committed to the growth and development of each of our employees, offering competitive pay and benefits to support their success.

If you want to be part of something special, do meaningful work every day, connect with an amazing, high-performing team, and help us empower all of our team members to reach even higher, then we want to hear from you.

- A positive and supportive team culture that values accountability, collaboration, and your unique contributions.
- Opportunities for professional growth and learning to help you reach your full potential.
- Competitive pay and comprehensive benefits designed to support your well-being and success.

How To Apply

To apply, please submit your resume to [email@example.com]. Once your resume is submitted, you will receive an email confirmation within 48 hours outlining the next steps in the application process.

Effective Job Ad

Veterinary Technician

EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE · VETERINARY TECHNICIAN

JOIN OUR DEDICATED TEAM AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PETS' LIVES!

Are you a compassionate and skilled Veterinary Technician eager to contribute to a team that values exceptional animal care, client service, and accountability? If you're passionate about making a positive impact in the lives of pets and their owners, we'd love to hear from you!

Who We Are

We are a growing veterinary hospital with caring, supportive team members who go above and beyond to provide exceptional animal care and phenomenal service to our clients.

Do you want to be a part of an energetic, fun, and dedicated veterinary team? Do you love treating animals and making their lives better? Are you looking for a healthy work-life balance? We are looking for a full-time Veterinary Technician to join our small animal practice.

What You'll Do

As a Veterinary Technician, you will:

- **Assist veterinarians.** Support our veterinarians during examinations, surgeries, and medical procedures, ensuring the highest standard of care.
- **Patient care.** Perform tasks such as collecting samples, conducting laboratory tests, administering medications, and monitoring anesthesia to maintain optimal patient health.
- **Client communication.** Educate and guide pet owners on treatment plans, preventive care, and post-operative instructions to promote informed and effective pet care.
- **Maintain medical records.** Accurately document patient histories, treatments, and progress to ensure comprehensive and up-to-date records.
- **Ensure a safe environment.** Uphold strict sanitation and safety protocols to maintain a clean and secure facility for both patients and staff.
- **Take ownership.** Proactively identify and address patient needs and contribute to a smooth workflow within the practice.

Who We Want

We are seeking an individual who:

- **Is compassionate and empathetic.** Demonstrates genuine care for animals and their well-being.

- **Takes accountability.** Shows a strong sense of responsibility for ensuring tasks are completed with accuracy and diligence.
- **Is detail-oriented.** Maintains precision in all aspects of patient care, record-keeping, and workflow.
- **Communicates effectively.** Builds trust and collaboration through clear, compassionate communication with clients and team members.
- **Is a team player.** Works seamlessly with the veterinary team to deliver cohesive and comprehensive care.
- **Holds relevant qualifications.** Possesses a degree in Veterinary Technology and is licensed or eligible for licensure as a Veterinary Technician.

Why Work For Us

Our business works every day to create a culture that allows us to thrive, do our best work, and build a strong, cohesive team. We are fully committed to the growth and development of each of our employees as well as offering competitive pay and benefits.

- **A supportive work environment.** Join a team that values collaboration, professional growth, and mutual respect.
- **Opportunities for advancement.** Engage in continuous learning and development to enhance your skills and advance your career.
- **Competitive compensation.** Receive a comprehensive salary and benefits package, including health insurance, paid time off, and retirement plans.

How To Apply

To apply, please submit your resume and a cover letter to [email@example.com]. Once your application is received, you will receive an email confirmation within 48 hours outlining the next steps in the application process.

A Weak Ad, Annotated

Sometimes practices create ads that include all of the difficult or unpleasant parts of the job rather than highlighting the appealing and rewarding aspects of the position. These negative advertisements often deter all-star candidates from applying. Below is an example, with the things that quietly chase good candidates away.

INEFFECTIVE EXAMPLE · VETERINARY ASSISTANT

APPLY NOW!

▮ Generic, transactional headline. Doesn't speak to the candidate or the work.

We are seeking a full-time Veterinary Assistant to work in a **fast-paced, challenging environment**. This position requires an individual who is **hard-working, able to work evenings and weekends** and who has previous animal hospital experience.

▮ Opens with what's hard. No "who we are," no culture, no reason to choose this practice over any other.

Job Responsibilities:

- Ability to multitask and adjust to a changing environment
- Handle stress calmly
- Willing to learn new tasks and learn quickly
- Able to receive criticism and accept responsibility for actions
- Common sense
- Assisting with a variety of animal care tasks and treatments including, but not limited to: blood draws, urine sample collection, placing IV catheters, vaccine preparation and administration, x-rays, lab tests and test preparation, toe nail trims, ear cleanings and anal gland expressions
- Sterilization of surgical equipment
- Preparing exam rooms
- Record keeping
- Other cleaning and maintenance including, but not limited to: vacuuming, mopping, kennel cleaning, and restocking supplies

▮ Mixes traits ("common sense") with tasks ("vacuuming") in a single bullet list. Reads as a warning, not an invitation.

Requirements:

- High School Diploma or GED equivalent required. Associate's or Bachelor's degree preferred
- 2+ years of experience in a veterinary hospital
- Must be available to work hours between 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Sunday through Saturday
- Must be willing to work holidays as needed
- Ability to lift and restrain animals up to 50 pounds
- Can work efficiently under stressful situations with minimal supervision or direction

▮ All restrictions. Zero benefits, zero growth path, zero culture. The strongest candidates skip past this and never apply.

How To Apply:

Submit resumes to email@example.com. **No phone calls or drop-ins.**

▮ Closes with a "no." First impression: this practice doesn't want to talk to you.

THE LESSON

Everything this ad describes might be true. The problem isn't honesty — it's that this practice forgot to give anyone a reason to want the job. Strong candidates have options. Your ad has to compete for their attention before it tests their fit.

Create Your Job Ad

Fill in each section. Use the effective examples (pp. 30–33) as your guide. Avoid the patterns in the weak example (p. 34).

Print this page or save a copy of this PDF and type into the fields. Save your filled version as Job-Ad_[Role]_[Date].pdf.

Job Ad Title (engaging headline — write about who they'll become, not what they'll grind through)

Introduction (1–2 sentences — speak to the candidate; ask them a question; tell them what's possible)

Who We Are (your practice in 2–3 sentences — culture, values, where you're headed)

What You'll Do (top 3–5 responsibilities — written as outcomes, not chores)

Who We Want (essential traits and skills — borrow language from your Success Profile)

Why Work For Us (concrete benefits — pay range if you'll share it, PTO, CE, growth path, wellness)

How To Apply (clear instructions; what happens next and by when)

PART FOUR

Run a Better Interview Process

Six steps from first screen to final offer. Each one is built around your Success Profile and tied to a form you can score on.

A Process That Earns Confidence

A well-structured interview process helps you make confident, consistent hiring decisions. The six steps below align with your full hiring process and ensure every candidate is assessed fairly and thoroughly from first contact to final decision.

Step 1 · Use Screening Questions to Narrow the Applicant Pool

Start by identifying candidates who align with your values and culture, before reviewing resumes or conducting interviews.

- **What to ask.** Include open-ended questions that reveal personality, mindset, and approach to teamwork. Example: "Tell me about a time when you helped a team become happier or more productive."
- **Why it works.** This early step highlights alignment with your Success Profile and eliminates mismatched candidates.
- **How to score.** Use a 5-point scale to evaluate answers. Focus on responses that show initiative, accountability, and a growth mindset.

Step 2 · Use Phone or Virtual Interviews to Narrow Further

Once candidates pass the screening questions, use a short phone or Zoom interview to confirm essential qualifications and communication style.

- **What to focus on.** Confirm technical skills, availability, and interest in the role. Ask consistent, structured questions to assess professionalism and fit.
- **Keep it short.** 15–20 minutes.
- **Score as you go.** Use the behavioral rubric linked to your Success Profile. Take notes on tone, clarity, and how well the candidate understands your practice.

Score on the Behavioral Interview Rating Scale (Part Six, p. 59). The 1–5 scale is the same for phone, virtual, and in-person behavioral interviews. Use the Behavioral Interview Rating form (p. 60) for each question.

Step 3 · In-Person Behavioral Interviews

The in-person interview is your opportunity to evaluate the behaviors and values that matter most in your practice. When possible, involve multiple team members in the interview process. Having more than one perspective helps reduce bias, creates a more welcoming candidate experience, and ensures a well-rounded evaluation.

Use behavioral interviewing to predict success

Behavioral questions help reveal how a candidate has approached challenges and responsibilities in the past. This allows you to assess their accountability, mindset, and overall fit for your team.

Ask about specific scenarios. Avoid hypotheticals.

"Tell me about a time you made a mistake at work. How did you handle it, and what was the outcome?"

"Describe a situation where you noticed a problem before anyone else. What steps did you take to address it?"

Look for patterns of accountability

Strong candidates will:

- Acknowledge responsibility clearly.
- Take proactive steps to resolve issues.
- Apply lessons learned in future situations.

Identify victim thinking

Watch for red flags like:

- Blaming others or external circumstances.
- Avoiding responsibility for outcomes.
- Showing little effort to resolve or improve the situation.

Ask follow-up questions

Use targeted follow-ups to encourage deeper reflection:

- "What would you do differently if faced with a similar situation?"
- "How did you ensure the problem didn't happen again?"
- "What words did you use to have that conversation?"
- "How did that person respond?"

PRO TIP

Candidates who consistently provide detailed examples of accountability, growth, and proactive behavior are more likely to be reliable team members. Responses that reflect victim thinking should be considered a red flag.

Ensure consistency with structured interviews

To reduce bias and ensure consistency across interviews:

- Align questions with your Success Profile.
- Pay special attention to follow-up questions and answers.
- Assign each interviewer a unique focus area (e.g., technical skills, cultural fit).
- Use a 5-point scoring scale for each answer.
- Avoid asking the same question twice across interviewers.

Pull questions from Part Five (p. 47). Score each one on the Behavioral Interview Rating form (Part Six, p. 60). Capture follow-ups and red-flag responses in the notes.

Steps 4 & 5 · Debrief and Working Interview

Step 4 · Debrief as a Team Before the Working Interview

Bring your team together to review scores, impressions, and red flags after the in-person interviews.

Why it matters

- Multiple perspectives reduce bias.
- Team discussion promotes collaboration and accountability.

How to do it

- Review each candidate's behavioral scores using the Behavioral Aggregate Score form (Part Six, p. 61).
- Discuss strengths, concerns, and fit with your culture.
- Align on who to invite for a working interview.

Step 5 · Conduct Working Interviews with High-Scorers

Invite your top 1–2 candidates to participate in a working interview to observe how they interact with clients, team members, and tasks.

Design the experience

- Assign relevant tasks (e.g., shadowing, client interaction, technical duties).
- If safety or legal concerns exist, have candidates simulate the task or explain how they'd perform it.

Evaluate carefully

- Use the working interview scoring rubric (Part Six, p. 59).
- Have team members record notes independently before sharing impressions.

- Look for adaptability, collaboration, and initiative.

BENEFITS OF WORKING INTERVIEWS

You see skills in action, not just in conversation. You gauge how the candidate fits with your team. And you increase confidence in your final decision before an offer.

Score on the Working Interview Rating Scale (Part Six, p. 59). Each observer uses a Working Interview Observation form (p. 62). Roll up the scores on the Working Aggregate Score form (p. 64).

Step 6 · Make Your Selection

Use your scores, team feedback, and working interview observations to select the candidate who best aligns with your Success Profile and practice culture.

Next steps

- Reach out to the selected candidate promptly.
- Communicate clearly with candidates who were not chosen.
- Begin onboarding with intention to set them up for success.

Practice the Process Before You Run It Live

Effective hiring is more than having the right tools. It requires a well-prepared team. Practicing the hiring process together builds alignment and confidence, and helps your team make better hiring decisions.

Run a mock interview

- **Assign roles.** Interviewer (practicing behavioral questioning), candidate (a team member role-playing from a pre-defined profile), observer (a neutral team member providing feedback).
- **Select questions.** Pull from the Question Bank in Part Five. Mix structured and open-ended.
- **Set the scene.** Mirror your actual interview setting. Take turns asking questions while observers take notes.
- **Provide feedback.** Discuss strengths, areas for improvement, and alternative approaches as a team.

RH

A NOTE FROM RANDY

The first time you run a structured behavioral interview shouldn't be on a real candidate. Run a mock with your team. The first 20 minutes will feel awkward. The next time you do it, with someone whose career is on the line, it won't.

PART FIVE

The Question Bank

Twenty-three behavioral questions, organized by competency. Each one comes with follow-ups and the red-flag patterns to watch for in the answer.

Behavioral Questions Reveal Patterns

Behavioral questions reveal how candidates have handled situations in the past, providing valuable insight into their future performance. Choose from the questions in this bank, or use them as a guide to create your own.

How to use this question bank

- 1. Tie questions to your Success Profile.** For each profile, pick 3–5 questions across the competencies that matter most for the role.
- 2. Ask the stem first. Wait for the answer.** Don't supply context, don't lead, don't add to the question. The pause does the work.
- 3. Use the follow-ups deliberately.** Follow-ups exist to get a real story instead of a rehearsed answer. They're listed beneath each question. Use the ones that fit the response you got.
- 4. Score on the Behavioral Interview Rating Scale** (Part Six, p. 59). Capture each scored answer on the Behavioral Interview Rating form (p. 60).

The Mental Model · Look for Patterns, Not Performances

A behavioral question isn't asking what the candidate thinks about a situation. It's asking what they did. The most useful answers contain a specific situation, a clear account of the candidate's role in it, the actions they took, and the outcome. Vague stories or hypothetical answers ("I would probably...") are a signal to follow up, not to score.

THE RED-FLAG PATTERN · VICTIM THINKING

The single most useful pattern to listen for across every competency is whether the candidate places themselves inside the story or outside it. Strong candidates own their part. Weak ones explain why the situation was someone else's fault. Each competency below names the specific red flags to watch for in that domain.

PRO TIP

You can't score the answer to a question that wasn't asked the same way every time. The same question, asked the same way, of every candidate. That's where consistency comes from, and where bias gets squeezed out.

COMPETENCY

Accountability

The candidate's relationship with their own outcomes. Do they own what happens around them, or do they explain it away?

RED-FLAG PATTERNS TO WATCH FOR

- Blames others, clients, equipment, or "the situation" for the outcome.
- Can't or won't name what they personally did or didn't do.
- No mention of what they learned or would do differently.
- Frames the difficult moment as something that "just happened."

"Tell me about a time when you have gone above and beyond your specific job duties to help the team improve, the business get better, or to get work done more effectively. What specifically did you do and what happened because you did it?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- What was the effect on the team?
- Did you need to check with anyone else before taking that action?
- How did others around you respond to your actions?

"Tell me about a time when you had an extremely challenging day at work. What caused it to be such a tough day? How did you handle it?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Have there been a lot of tough days on the job?
- How did you manage to recover from that?
- Were others having a tough day too?

Accountability (continued)

"Tell me about a time when someone asked you to do something you didn't think was appropriate. What was the most challenging part of this situation? How did you respond? What happened to the relationship?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Why was this situation challenging for you?
- Do you feel that you resolved this situation well?
- How was this situation resolved?

"Often in veterinary medicine we are faced with challenges of how to balance the best care for the pet with what we believe the pet owner can afford. How have you balanced that in the past and what guides your decision making in those situations? How have you handled situations where clients stated that they simply can't afford the care for their pet?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did pet care or cost guide your initial thinking?
- Were you able to maintain a positive relationship with the client when having this conversation?

"Tell me about a time when you have taken accountability for the outcome of a situation involving others. What was the situation and what did you do to help create a positive outcome?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- How did you engage others to improve performance?
- Did you involve others and solicit ideas and input?

"In the fast-paced world of veterinary medicine, it's easy to make mistakes. Tell me about a time when you made a mistake that had significant consequences. What mistake did you make? What were the results? What did you do to prevent similar mistakes in the future? What did you learn from the experience?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Do you feel that this mistake could have been prevented?
- What did you do to remedy this situation?
- Did your mistake affect others? Do you feel that others appreciated how you handled the situation?

COMPETENCY

Change Tolerance

How the candidate responds when the ground shifts. Practices are always changing: new tech, new protocols, new people. The candidate's relationship with change shows up fast.

RED-FLAG PATTERNS TO WATCH FOR

- Describes change as something that "happened to them," with no role of their own.
- The energy in their voice turns negative when describing the change.
- No evidence of adapting their approach as the change unfolded.
- Resistance becomes the whole story; the work itself fades from the answer.

"Tell me about a time when you have been part of a big change that happened in your job or at your workplace. What was the change, how did you contribute, and did the change go well?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did many people resist the change?
- What was your role in making the change happen?
- How did you feel about the change?

"A new job presents many challenges and opportunities, but integrating isn't always easy. Tell me about a time when you have joined a new team or organization. What were the challenges and how did you deal with the situation?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- What was the hardest part about integrating into an existing team?
- How did you build relationships with the other team members?

Change Tolerance (continued)

"Tell me about a time when you had to make a change at work. Why did you feel the change was needed? How did you make the change and what were the results? What did you learn from that experience?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Was this change mandated or did you make the change proactively?
- What did you learn from making this change?
- Do you feel that you have more ability to be adaptable because of this experience?

"Sometimes as you go through the day you can come up with ideas for improvements or ways to make things better or more effective. Tell me about a time when you have had an idea for improvement and how you approached getting that idea implemented."

FOLLOW-UPS

- How was your idea received?
- Did the idea get implemented?
- Did you come up with additional ideas after that?

"Have you ever worked on a pet care team that you believed needed to be more effective or more efficient? What did you do and what were the results?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Can you describe specific examples of how you contributed to the team's improvement?
- How did you approach the team to initiate a change?

RH

A NOTE FROM RANDY

Change tolerance is one of the most predictive things you can hire for in a veterinary practice. The work doesn't sit still. If the candidate's stories are all about how change went wrong because of other people, the next change in your practice is going to land the same way.

COMPETENCY

Conflict

Conflict is normal in a busy practice. How a candidate handles it, with peers, with managers, with underperformers, tells you whether they'll resolve issues or compound them.

RED-FLAG PATTERNS TO WATCH FOR

- Avoids addressing conflict directly ("I just stayed out of it").
- Frames the other person as fully at fault.
- The resolution involves someone else (a manager) handling it; the candidate has no role of their own.
- No evidence of changed behavior or improved relationship after.

"Often in a fast-paced veterinary hospital there are differences of opinion or even personalities that clash. Tell me about a time when you had a conflict with another person. What was the situation, how did you deal with it, and what was the outcome?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- How did the relationship change?
- What was the effect on the team?
- How did you feel about the situation afterwards?

"Sometimes team members don't always perform equally. Tell me about a time when you have been on a team when an individual wasn't performing well. What did you do to help and what was the outcome?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- What was the effect on the team?
- Did the performance improve and if so, how?

Conflict (continued)

"Almost all of us have to deal with supervisors and managers, and sometimes that can be a challenge. Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a manager or supervisor. What happened and how did you handle it? What was the outcome?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did you discuss the situation with the manager?
- How was it resolved?
- Did others feel the same way about the decision?

"Think of a time when there was a poor performer on your team. How did you handle the situation and what were the results?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did you address the performance issues quickly?
- Did the poor performance affect the performance of others, and how did you handle this?
- Did you provide coaching to help this person improve their performance?

COMPETENCY

Team Contribution

What this candidate brings to the people around them. The team is the unit of work in a veterinary practice, and the candidate's effect on it is rarely neutral.

RED-FLAG PATTERNS TO WATCH FOR

- The story is about what they did individually, not what they made possible for others.
- No mention of the team's reaction or how others were affected.
- They describe the team in terms of who was easy or hard to deal with, not what they brought to it.
- Their contribution is framed as "fixing" other people.

"Often in a workplace, an individual can show up with a bad attitude or in a bad mood, and it can affect those around them. Describe a situation where you have seen that happen and what did you do?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- What was the effect on the team?
- Were you able to help the person change their mood?
- What did the other team members do?

"What have you done to foster the growth of a team or an organization? What was your unique contribution? What was the result?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did your effort make a difference?
- Was your contribution recognized by others?

"What steps have you taken in the past to create a strong team culture and a high-performance environment? How did it affect team performance?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- How do you inspire a team?
- How would you describe your approach to leading a high-performing team?

COMPETENCY

Self-Leadership

The candidate's relationship with their own growth, their own goals, and their own vision for the work. Self-leaders don't need to be managed into improvement.

RED-FLAG PATTERNS TO WATCH FOR

- Goals were set by someone else; no personal ownership of direction.
- Vague on how progress was measured.
- Learning happens by accident, or only when forced.
- Their vision for the work is borrowed, not their own.

"Tell me about a time when you have set concrete work goals for yourself. What goals did you set, how did you measure progress, and did you achieve those goals?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Did you get any support with progress toward your goals?
- Did you set additional goals after you achieved them?
- How did you communicate your goals to your manager?

"It can be challenging in a fast-paced environment to make enough time for training and team improvement. Tell me about a time when you had to learn something informally in order to do your job better. What did you need to learn and how did you go about learning it?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- What challenges did you face as you were trying to learn?
- Did you teach anyone else afterwards? If so, who?

"Have you ever been singled out or rewarded for your achievements, accomplishments, or contributions at work? If so, tell me what the accomplishments were and how you were rewarded."

FOLLOW-UPS

- Have there been other times as well?
- Were others on the team rewarded for similar achievements?

Self-Leadership (continued)

"How would you articulate a vision for the ultimate veterinary hospital? Describe in your words what that hospital would be like."

FOLLOW-UPS

- Do you feel that this vision would inspire others and create engagement? Why?

"What is more important in veterinary medicine: being able to care for more pets, or devoting more time to each pet to ensure effective care? How do you balance the competing priorities of quality and speed when it comes to pet care?"

FOLLOW-UPS

- Why do you feel this way?
- How does your approach to pet care affect clients and the practice?

A FINAL WORD ON THE QUESTION BANK

These questions are a starting set, not a script. The strongest interviewers learn to listen for what's missing in an answer as much as what's said, and to use the follow-ups to get there. The point isn't to ask all 23. The point is to use the right 3–5 for the role and get a real account from the candidate, every time.

PART SIX

The Scoring Forms

Print these on every interview. Each rating scale is defined; each form is built for consistent scoring across multiple interviewers and a clean rollup at the end.

The Two Rating Scales

Two scales cover every interview type. Use them consistently across every interviewer and every candidate.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW RATING SCALE · PHONE, VIRTUAL, AND IN-PERSON

1–2	3	4–5
Did not fully answer the question, was not able to articulate a response. Answered the question, but gave a response that clearly was not in alignment with our culture or practices.	Gave an adequate answer, had some level of detail, and was able to provide some specifics. The answer was on target with regard to what we are looking for and aligned with the role, profile, and our culture.	The answer was specific, thorough, and the candidate gave a complete and detailed account of the situation and the results. The candidate demonstrated that s/he would significantly contribute to helping the practice grow, the culture improve, and would be an overall asset to our business.

WORKING INTERVIEW RATING SCALE

1	2	3	4	5
Candidate was unable to demonstrate the assigned skill/task. Candidate lacks understanding of skill/task. Candidate needed full guidance to complete the skill/task.	Candidate was able to demonstrate some, but not all, steps of the assigned skill/task. Candidate understanding of skill/task is limited or incomplete. Candidate needed some guidance to complete the skill/task.	Candidate was able to successfully demonstrate all steps of the assigned skill/task. Candidate understanding of skill/task is proficient. Candidate asked limited questions and required no guidance to complete the skill/task.	Candidate was able to successfully demonstrate all steps of the assigned skill/task. Candidate shows a mastery of the skill/task. Candidate was confident during the demonstration of skill/task.	Candidate expertly demonstrated the assigned skill/task. Candidate utilized techniques, knowledge, or skills that could be innovative or useful to the practice. Candidate has the knowledge and ability to model or instruct others on this skill/task.

How to use these forms. Print Parts Six's forms or save a copy of this PDF and type into the fields. Save filled versions with a name like Behavioral-Rating_[Candidate]_[Interviewer]_[Date].pdf.

Behavioral Interview Rating

Use one of these forms per question, per interviewer. Refer to the Behavioral Interview Rating Scale (p. 59) when scoring.

Print this page or save a copy of this PDF and type into the fields.

Candidate Name

Interviewer Name

Date

Behavioral Interview Question

Follow-Up Question(s) Asked

Notes

Red-Flag Responses

RATING (1-5)

Behavioral Aggregate Score

Use this form after all behavioral interviews are complete. Roll up each interviewer's scores. The total becomes one of the inputs to your Step 4 debrief (p. 43).

One form per candidate.

Candidate Name

Date

Interviewer Scores

Interviewer 1

Score

Interviewer 2

Score

Interviewer 3

Score

Interviewer 4

Score

Interviewer 5

Score

TOTAL

Total

Proceed to working interview?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Working Interview Observation

Use one form per team member observing the candidate during the working interview. Refer to the Working Interview Rating Scale (p. 59) when scoring.

Up to three tasks per form. Add more sheets if your working interview covers additional skills.

Candidate Name	Team Member Name	Date
TASK 1 Skill or Task Observed Observations and Notes Rating (1–5)		

TASK 2

Skill or Task Observed

Observations and Notes

Rating (1–5)

TASK 3

Skill or Task Observed

Observations and Notes

Rating (1–5)

Working Aggregate Score

Use this form after the working interview is complete and every observing team member has submitted their scores. The total becomes the basis for your final hiring decision.

One form per candidate.

Candidate Name

Date

Observer Scores

Team Member 1

Score

Team Member 2

Score

Team Member 3

Score

Team Member 4

Score

Team Member 5

Score

TOTAL

Total

Recommend to hire?

☐

Yes

☐

No

The Hire Was the First Half

There's a moment, about two months after a strong hire starts, when you can tell which way things are going. They're either fully showing up, or they're quietly starting to pull back.

What you do in those weeks matters as much as what you did in the interview. Hiring well opens the door. The leadership work happens after they walk through it.

The culture they're showing up to. The clarity they have about what's expected. The conversations you have when something's going sideways, and the ones you have when something's going right. The way you treat the team members who've been with you for years while you're also bringing on someone new.

I've spent a lot of time with practice owners on those longer questions. How do you build a team that owns the work. How do you have the conversations that move people forward without breaking the relationship. How do you stop being the only person in your practice who can solve things.

That's what the VetLead Membership is built around. If you found this playbook useful, the Membership is where the rest of the work happens.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Learn more about the VetLead Membership at vetlead.com. A two-week free trial is available to every new member.

Randy Hall

Founder, VetLead

Randy Hall

Founder, VetLead

LEADERSHIP COACH & AUTHOR

About Randy

Randy Hall is the founder of VetLead. He has spent more than 20 years working with leaders in animal health and veterinary medicine on the day-to-day challenges of building strong, engaged teams.

His coaching focuses on what actually changes in a practice: how owners spend their time, how managers handle the conversations that matter, how culture gets built one decision at a time.

Randy created VetLead to make the kind of coaching and leadership development that's typical in larger industries accessible to the practice owners and managers who run the heart of the veterinary profession.

RH

A NOTE FROM RANDY

The leaders who shape the future of veterinary medicine aren't only at the top of large hospital groups. They're in independent practices around the country, doing the work every day. This playbook, and everything I build at VetLead, is for them.

About VetLead

VetLead helps veterinary practice owners and managers lead practices where people and performance thrive.

Our work supports the day-to-day decisions that shape a practice: how teams are hired and developed, how performance conversations happen, how leadership skills get built inside a busy hospital. We focus on four areas:

- **Self-leadership** for practice owners and managers. The habits and skills the leader needs first.
- **Cultivating a thriving culture** where the team wants to stay, grow, and contribute.
- **Aligning vision and leadership** so the team is moving in one direction.
- **Selecting and developing exceptional talent.** The work this playbook supports.

The VetLead Membership

The VetLead Membership is the central program. It gives practice leaders ongoing access to coaching, frameworks, a content library, and a community of peers who are working on the same questions you are.

TRY MEMBERSHIP

Every new member gets a 14-day free trial. Visit vetlead.com/membership to start.

Other Programs

VetLead also offers in-person workshops, the Veterinary Leadership Program (VLP), and direct consulting engagements for practice owners and ownership groups. Reach out at vetlead.com to learn more.



Hiring Exceptional Talent

The VetLead Playbook · First Edition · 2026

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