How to Set
GUIDING PRINCIPLES
for Your Veterinary Practice

Great veterinary leaders don't just react to problems. They work from a clear set of guiding principles. These are personal beliefs and priorities that help you make consistent, confident decisions for your practice and your team, even on the busiest days.

What Are Guiding Principles?

For Management: Guiding principles help you manage things like systems, schedules, and resources with clarity and intention.

Example: "I use our business dashboard each month to track growth and cash flow."

For Leadership: They shape how you work with people, set the tone for your culture, and create a foundation for engagement and growth.

Example: "I meet regularly with each team member to coach, develop, and help them achieve their goals."

How to Create Your Own Guiding Principles

Reflect on What Matters Most: What do you want your practice and team to be known for? What matters to you as a leader?

Write Down 2-3 Principles for Each Area: One set for management (things, systems, processes), one for leadership (people, culture, development).

Make Them Actionable: Frame each principle in a way that guides your daily decisions. Example: "I will hold monthly 1:1s with every team member."

Share and Practice: Communicate your principles with your team and use them to guide your actions, especially in tough moments.

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