

# Motivating and Developing Your Team

Charlotte Lacroix, DVM, JD reviews the principles of performance management programs (PMPs) and provides tips for using them to maximize your team's performance.

## Speaker Bio:

Dr. Charlotte Lacroix owns and manages Veterinary Business Advisors, Inc., a consulting firm which advises veterinarians and attorneys nationwide on veterinary business and legal issues, with a focus on veterinary business transactions. Dr. Lacroix received her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine in 1988 from the University of California at Davis. After completing a large animal internship at the University of Guelph (Ontario, Canada), she worked for several years at an equine medical and surgical referral practice serving northern New Jersey's large equine community. In pursuit of her goal to make greater contributions to the veterinary profession, Dr. Lacroix attended law school and received her Juris Doctor from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. She is licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Dr. Lacroix is a skilled negotiator and business strategist. She assists her clients in determining the relevant and important business aspects of a diverse array of transactions. Her legal and consulting activities include: legal document preparation and negotiation; advising on all aspects of veterinary partnerships, including associate buy-ins, specialty and general practice governance and management, and partner retirement and withdrawals; succession planning; negotiating and facilitating the purchase and sale of practices of all types, as well as, entity selection and start-ups; consulting on issues unique to specialty practices; assisting with all employment related and human resource issues; and advising on malpractice cases, animal law and welfare, drugs and biologics, medical records/informed consents, veterinary ethics and other legal and business problems. Dr. Lacroix lectures extensively on all these topics nationwide and overseas, and is a frequent speaker at AVMA, NAVC, WVC, VSIPP and other veterinary association and industry meetings and seminars. She is also an enthusiastic adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Lacroix is a regular contributor to the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, NAVC's Today's Veterinary Business and Veterinary Practice News, Impromed, American Animal Hospital Association, Veterinary Clinics of North America and Veterinary Economics-DVM360 publications. She has written numerous other articles, contributed to several books, and appeared on radio and television. Dr. Lacroix also volunteers her time and expertise to veterinary and other organizations, including AVMA, AAHA, AAEP, NJVMA, and PVMA. She was the 2014-2015 President of the NAVC and is currently Board member of the Veterinary Innovation Council and Veterinary Virtual Care Association. Dr. Lacroix was recognized and awarded by Lawyer Monthly "2016 Women in Law". She was awarded "Top 25 Leading Women Entrepreneurs" in 2018 among approximately 1000 other nominations.



## Motivating and Developing Your Team

*Charlotte Lacroix, DVM, JD  
Veterinary Business Advisors, Inc.*

Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us tonight.

If you have any questions during the presentation, go ahead and type those in the Q&A section. Or if it's something emergent that you'd like answered immediately, you can actually pop that in the chat. We will try to have 5 to 10 minutes for questions towards the end for our speaker tonight, who is Dr. Charlotte Lavoie. She is the owner of Veterinary Business Advisors. She is both a veterinarian and a lawyer. And her firm consults with veterinarians and lawyers in anything veterinary business-related.

She's a fantastic resource. She has a ton of experience, and she's going to give us a good lecture on motivating and developing your team tonight, which I know we all struggle with in business. So with that, I will hand it off to Dr. Lavoie.

Well, thank you very much Katie and Vetcetera for their gracious sponsorship and innovation in bringing this topic. And I'm really, really pleased to speak to everyone tonight on this particular topic. We certainly invite you to chat to us along the way. I'll do my best to multitask, but I'm thankful that Katie is there to help me along as well to bring up some of your questions. And again, we'll have questions at the end of the session. And I really want to emphasize that this is for you tonight. So we're really focusing on what's important to you. So if you've got questions, try to stay on topic. But if you have questions that are tangential to this, I'm more than happy to certainly entertain them.



VETERINARY BUSINESS ADVISORS, INC.

***VBA's Mission Statement***

**Veterinary Business Advisor's supports members of the veterinary industry as they navigate the complex web of risk management, business strategy, and the growth and development of their organization. As highly qualified professionals with a broad spectrum of experience, we provide the highest level of comprehensive business and legal advice in the profession.**

I am a veterinarian first. I graduated in 1988 from UC Davis, and then went to law school at the University of Pennsylvania and have been working with veterinarians over 20 years as a lawyer but focus solely on veterinary issues. And we do a lot of HR out of our office, and we do a lot of succession planning, partnerships, negotiation contracts. I'm not a litigator like a lawyer that typically goes to court. I'm more one that likes to negotiate, makes deal, help to resolve challenges between people, whether it's employees, employers, or partners, or whoever, whatever arises when people are engaging in some kind of business situation.

And so we really like to empower our clients to really also educate them, so that they can help themselves and make them better from the business perspective or the managing risk perspective. So I'm really pleased tonight to really focus on HR and motivating employees. And we're all very much aware of the shortage of veterinarians, paraprofessional staff, the tremendous amount of stress and burden that everybody's gone through, and it's taxing. It's taxing on employees, it's taxing on employers, it pushes people to their limits, and we're all human, it pushes clients to their limits as well. But overall, I think that the veterinary profession, we're doing well economically generally. But I also think we're a pretty darn tough crowd, and we focus on what's in the best interests of the patients, we deal with clients that are not always appreciative.

But thank goodness, there's clients, and there are more clients that just love us to death, very grateful for what we do, and we have those puppies, and the kittens, and the foals, and little calves that keep us engaged and put a smile on our face.

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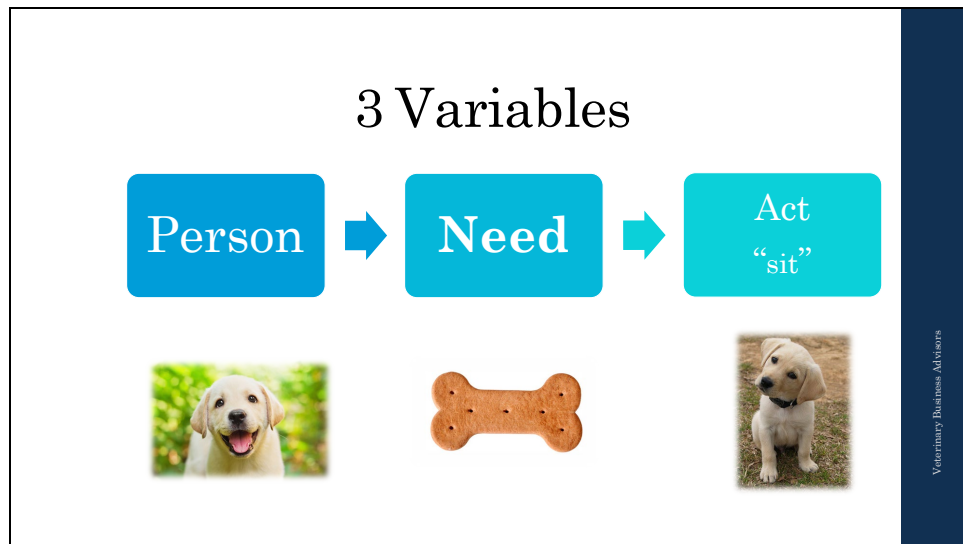
So our business is veterinary business advisors. We are located nationwide. We do have a newsletter. If anyone's interested, you can opt in and opt out. There's no pressure, no payments, no anything. I'm a big believer in continuing education. And I think the more well-informed we are, the better we are in making decisions, and I am a true veterinary advocate for the profession.



So I thought I'd start on what are the components of motivation. So there's really three components of motivation. And when you're dealing with people, you need to figure out what those components are. And so for example, you have the person that you are trying to motivate, and we've got a little puppy lab here, and if you give the puppy a bone, you're going to get the puppy to be happy and do whatever it is that you want them to do. So that's what you really need to keep in mind, because maybe Labradors like water, like biscuits, and we can say, well, people generally like compensation, like benefits, they like free time. But you really have to ask that individual as well, what is it really important to them. And maybe during parts of their career, money is more important, maybe other times, free time is more important, or maybe health insurance.

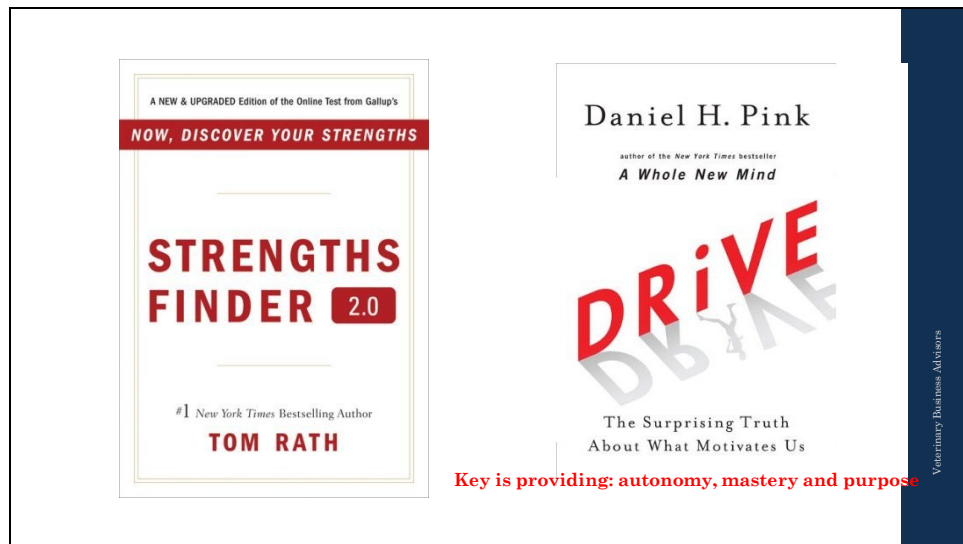
So it's not a plug and play. Yes, there's general rules. But it's important that when you're the employer or management looking to motivate people, that you don't just brush with-- you think that-- or you think what motivates you is going to certainly motivate them. There is individuality to that, and you have to take the time to ask people why they're working with you, why do they want to continue working, and what motivates them. So similarly, if you take a baby and give the baby a little dog bone, you're not going to have a very happy baby, because you didn't get the right motivator for that child.

But if you give the baby a little ice cream, you're going to have a happy baby. So here's just to-- wanted to show you that the importance of getting basically



-- looking at the person, what is the need for that person and what is the act that you actually want them to do? And so there's three components in this motivation equation that I really want you to think about. And also, if you're the one who wants to be motivated, if you're the employee, what is it that motivates you? And it's your responsibility to communicate those things to your employer, because your employer is like really busy. They got a lot of things on their minds, and they're not always paying specific attention to your specific needs.

And so if you want something to change in your workplace, it's important for you to be engaged and take on the responsibility of approaching your employer or approaching your supervisor and say, you know what, I'm not really motivated, or these are the things that I need that would really motivate me or engage. And maybe those things are coming through in your performance review as well. But look at the employer employee relationship truly as a partnership. You both have to be engaged parties. And your employers are not mind readers, and they don't know what you want. And it's up to you to bring it up to your employer and say, look, this is what's important to me.



I'm also a big advocate of reading books out there. There's so many really good management books out there, and I am the big proponent of having a book club in your hospital. And maybe it's a couple of books a year that you read as a group. And because if you ask me when I was 28 years old, Charlotte, what motivates you? And I'm like I don't know. I never really thought about it, just let me get back to work. I really hadn't thought about what's important to me or motivates me or just thinking of all those intangibles, because those things aren't really taught in veterinary school.

And I think it requires self-reflection, and it evolves over time as you mature. And so a great book is Daniel Pink's book called Drive. And it talks about the basics of motivations. But really what truly motivates people are the three principles of autonomy, mastery, and purpose. Autonomy, meaning you have independence in doing whatever it is that you're doing because is that-- you don't want to be micromanaged, and you want to have some independence.

Mastery is you want to be really good at something, and you want people to recognize you for how good you are or whatever it is. Maybe you are like awesome at putting in catheters and with dehydrated cat that comes in, you get to put the catheter in there. And so that makes you feel good, it improves your self-esteem and your confidence. And then the other thing is your purpose. Why do you go to a veterinarian-- why do you go to veterinary practice? Why don't you go work at manufacturing or go work at UPS or be management in a restaurant. What is it that draws you? What is your purpose in veterinary practices?

And those are things that you have to think about, so that you could communicate them to your employers and say, look, I want to get my CVPM, or I want to become a registered veterinary technician, or I want to get better at what I-- or I want to get a certification in rehab because I want that mastery or acupuncture, certainly, whatever it is that draws you from a professional perspective. And hopefully, you have an employer that's really supportive of that.

StrengthFinders is really fun book. You can take a test online and find basically what your strengths, and it helps with communication styles, because we all have a little bit different communication styles. And we

have to be aware of other people's communication styles. And then also, how our communication styles certainly impacts and is received by others.





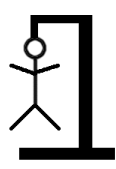
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## Setting expectations

JOB DESCRIPTIONS,  
GOALS, AND MANUALS

So part of this motivation equation also is embedded in setting those expectations. So from the employer's perspective, what is the act? What is it that I want you to do? What is it that I am expecting of you? And that has to be communicated too. So I not only have to give you what it is that's going to motivate you to do that, but I need to set expectations for you. So that I'm more likely to get you to do what I'm hoping that you are going to do for the work.

Behavior is shaped by its  
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And so I want to start with a little quiz first or a little riddle, if you will. How is it that I'm going to modify your behavior? So can anybody fill in this little puzzle here? Behavior is shaped by it, and maybe you can go ahead and chat there. Just give me your answers. What do you think? No answers? I know there's some of you-- ah, here we go. Yeah. All right, Sue. I got one correct answer. The first answer is the correct answer, but correct. It's consequences, whether it's positive or negative reinforcement.

Our behavior is influenced by consequences. Maybe it's a signing bonus, maybe it's more pain, maybe it's more time off maybe, it's my employer investing in my professional development. And so it's important to recognize that people are like dogs. We respond to positive and negative reinforcement. And we are trainable to certainly figure out what works for your individual employees. And again, from the employees perspective, what works for you? What is it that you want and working with your employer to communicate that so you can get it?



## Creating Expectations

The need for **clear** definitions...

- What are expected duties of the job?
- Why is it a bad idea to be texting during work?
- Why is it bad for an employee to use computer stations for personal use?

So it's really important to create clear expectations, and that's because there is a huge range of interpretation or what people think that they're hearing is expected of their employers. And this is really embedded in having clear expectations. So each one of you that are employees hopefully have duties and a job description that actually is reviewed annually with you to ensure that it is contemporaneous and current with where you are in the organization. So for example, if you've been in your practice for eight years and you were given a job description in year one, it's probably not the same job description that now you are in. You've probably doing other things or the focus of your job like maybe you're more of an assistant in surgery where then-- when maybe you started.

And so because your job duties do evolve to a certain degree, your job description should be reviewed on an annual basis. And things also as to what is less desirable in certain behaviors. And this is something employers are always struggling. They're struggling with their employees that maybe texting during hours, or showing up late, or just not doing what they should be doing. They're sitting in the wait room or the break room, and they're sitting around doing things rather than out and asking their employers. OK, well, I've got nothing to do. What are the things that I can do? Could I restock shelves? Whatever it is that needs to be done.

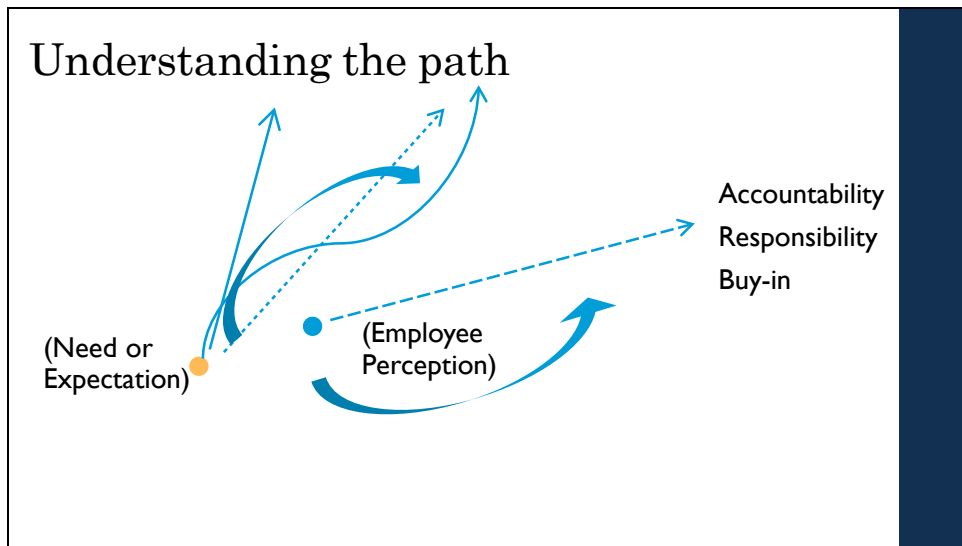
But the thing to keep in mind from the employer's perspective and especially, the younger generation of employees. So I'm a baby boomer, and I remember the generation is you tell me what to do, I do it. I don't ask why, I don't ask questions. I just do it. I just figure out a way to do it. The younger generation, the smarter younger-- the smarter generation is that you tell them what to do, and they go, why? There's the whole why concept. They got to know why is it connected to the operations of the business. And particularly, if it's something they don't really want to do. Everybody has a job, and there's some things you really like to do, and there's some things that maybe you don't like to do so much.

And we, as employers, now, have that responsibility to not say like just do it and jump, is look, this advances the business, this is why it's important to the business, this is why we need you to do these things. And by the same token, we don't want you doing these other things because it hurts the operations

of the business. We need you to be on your game. If you're on your phone texting or looking at internet or whatever and not paying attention and you're walking by cages and you didn't notice that this dog's IV line is no longer connected because you've got yourself glued to your phone, patients are going to have potential complications.

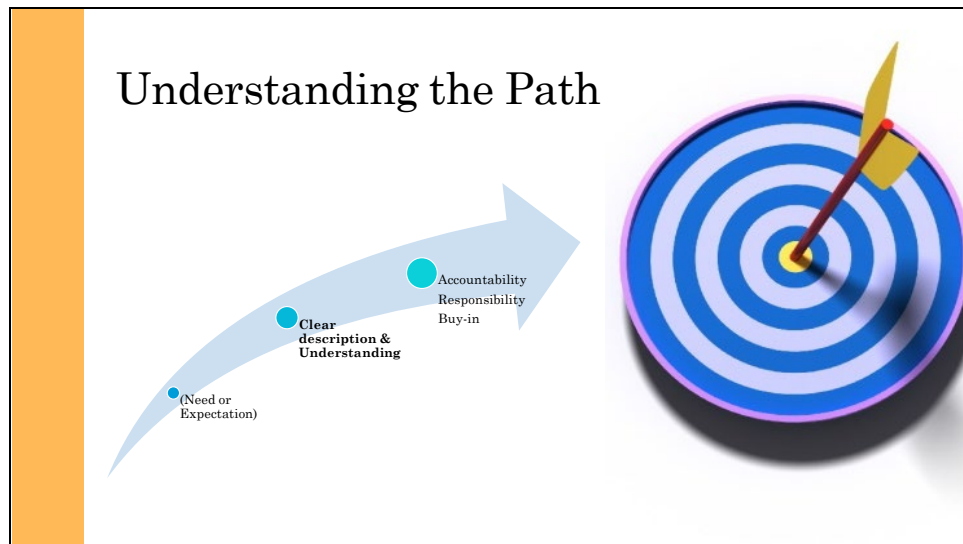
We're in the patient business and things happen. Certainly, things happen. So you have to explain to people why you don't want them certainly doing things, or how it's distracting, and why it's potentially problematic. Because if they don't understand, they're probably not going to comply. And same thing with employees using computer stations, for example, for their personal use. Why? So maybe I'm going to ask this of you if some of you want to come in and jump in. Why do you think it's a bad idea to-- and we're having less and less of course, because people have their own personal devices. But sometimes, personal devices have to be put in your lockers depending what practice you are, and then so you're left with maybe using the practice computers for personal reasons. Why is that a bad idea? Anybody want to jump in and tell me their thoughts?

All right. So I don't have any responses. So I'm not sure. Ah, here we go. Yes, excellent. Thank you. So computer viruses, distraction-- yeah. The big one is computer viruses or certainly a liability. Yeah, security issue. Cybersecurity, perfect. Yes, absolutely. So really not to mention-- unless it's on your free time, but not to mention again, if it's not on your free time, you're now doing things personally that you should be doing at work.



So I like to show this diagram, because there's the need for the expectation, which you have to explain. There's the employees' perception, and it's all over the place. And you can't expect to have accountability buy-in and responsibility unless-- oh, stealing. That's another good one. Unless-- you can't have accountability responsibility buy-in unless, you explain to the employee how it is that whatever it is that you're expecting is really tied to the business, tied to business performance, improving patient care, improving the experience for clients, improving collaboration amongst your employees.

So if I'm in the front desk and I have a client that's asking questions about a patient and I'm-- and maybe you're in a practice that uses your phones and I'm here texting one of the technicians, and I can't get responses, or I'm working with a technician that never responds to my text, I can't provide great service to the client. Because the technician says, well I didn't have time. I can't be bothered. If you want to know how the patient is doing, why don't you just go get-- find out yourself and go read the medical records. That's not helpful, that's not cooperative, that's not a collaborative environment.




So once we're able to articulate and explain why this is necessary or why we don't want you to do something, then you can help ensure accountability, responsibility and buy-in. And keep in mind, the reason that you ask for someone to do something or not do something should be always tied to the business purpose, so that there is some legitimate business-related reason. Because if it's not, then people are going to say, well, it's a pet peeve. It doesn't make any sense or sometimes people are treated in the same way, there's favorites. And employees recognize all of that, and it starts creating a work environment that is just not a team collaborative approach.



So where can expectations be found? So again, this is another question to the audience. Where do you think those expectations are? What are some of the documents that hospitals typically have where some of these expectations can be found? What do you think? Yes, employee manual. Great. Where else? Mission statement, manual, yeah. Anyone else? Yeah, staff meeting. That's a good one. Job descriptions. Excellent, Alexis. Team meetings.

And I think one other one here is standard operating procedures. Now, not many practices have standard operating procedures. But to the extent that they do, it outlines what is expected. So for example, if you're a receptionist and part of the standard operating is when we answer the telephone, this is how we greet clients, and we try to answer the telephones within three rings, don't put them on hold longer than X, these kinds. So that would be in your standard operating procedures. You wouldn't really find that in the manual or job description, because it's really a process issue. But yeah, these are all exactly the great answers.



**Develop a Job Description For . . .**

- Applicants to review at time of application
- Effective training and management
- Evaluating progress after hiring
- Defensible termination

So let's start with the job description answer. And job descriptions are really, really, really, really, really important. And they're important because they serve many purposes, and I am a big advocate of developing job descriptions. So when you hire someone, you should have a job description. And then you use that job description document as a living, breathing document that follows the employee through their tenure-- through the years with your practice then it gets adjusted and modified. And I also recommend that the job description be signed once a year, so that there's acknowledgment by both parties, the employer and the employee, that this is what certainly my job is.

I think too often, practices-- well, they either don't have a job description, but sometimes they'll have just a generic job description they get from the internet or they get from some kind of management book. And they say, here, this is your job description as a technician, technician nurse. And they just leave it at that, and it never evolves certainly over time. But it's a great document to go over during the annual review to say, look, do you think this really reflects your position? And then you can also allocate maybe 80% is your surgical tech and then 20%, you're in the treatment area, or whatever that is. So that there is an understanding and expectations as to really what your duties are.

So job descriptions are important for the applicants to review at the time of employment or when they're applying for a job. So that there's the expectation to say, look, are these things that you can do? Because the other thing is resumes, they find that only about 30% of the information in your resume is actually accurate. There's a lot of exaggerations. And in fact, there's some lies in resumes. So the job description is more of that document where it's a little bit more accountability and say, look, you'll be doing-- we need a technician to be in the surgery suite. We have surgeries pretty much every morning of the week, except Fridays, and that's really where we need you.

So that's going to be a lot of your job, and so we want to make sure that how to monitor anesthesia, we want to make sure that you can put catheters in pretty much any animal, whether they're dehydrated, or whether they're 16 years old, or whatever that is. And you really use the job description as that discussion document, so that you can get a sense as to whether the individual truly is qualified. Or they might say,



you know what, I'm not really great at catheters, but I'd love to get to learn of it. I just think if that's a skill set, it makes me nervous, and I'd like to get better.

Well, that's great. Because now, that gives the employer an opportunity to say, OK, this is something we're going to work on together, and we're going to build that skill certainly for you. So it's really a nice discussion document to help exchange expectations. Clearly, it's effective training and management, just as I just gave an example here with training catheter and evaluating progress after hiring. So how are you doing certainly of some of these things? Or if somebody wants to do different things, they work in your hospital for two years, and they say, you know what, I really like to do a little bit more of this [INAUDIBLE]. I love dentistry, so I really want to do a lot more dentistry. Or I hate dentistry I'm not going to do them. You can find somebody else to do them. Or I'll do them, of course, but I would really like to limit my time there.

When you have these engaging conversations, that's what motivates people, because they're part of it, you're invested in their career, they feel somebody invested in their career. And you know what, they're invested in their career. You've provided a platform to really have those discussions and people to grow professionally. And of course, then there are also serve as a defensible termination. So that when somebody says-- when there starts to be a gap that widens and widens as to what is expected of somebody, and they're not doing it, and the relationship's kind of falling apart, and management has decided look they're going to succession this person out of the practice, a lot of it is based on look, this is what we hired you to do. This is what we're training you to do, and you're just not doing these things anymore.

And in spite of numerous conversations, it's not happening. And maybe it's time for you to succession out of this practice, maybe it's no longer a good fit. And so it does serve as a great accountability document.



**Job Description Should Include:**


- Position Title
- Supervisors
- General purpose of job
- Duties and responsibilities
- Work schedule
- Min requirements: education; experience, skills, personal characteristics

So job descriptions typically include what do they look like. They include your position title, supervisors, the general purpose of the job, duties and responsibilities, but like over generality. It doesn't micromanage everything, but it's an overview, because you've probably-- your duties include, but are not limited to. And but not limited to is that legal phrase where you say that just because you're a technician, it doesn't mean that you might not have to answer the telephone, because the CSR stepped out went, to the post office or something.

We're still a team. You don't say, well, answering the telephone isn't my job description, so I don't do that. So again, it's the majority of the things that you're expecting of individuals, but it's not going to list every little text. Work schedule, minimum requirements, education experience, and personal characteristics.

Job Description Example

- Technician/Nurse
  - clean, stock truck for ambulatory calls, prep animals for procedures, help Dr. treat and assist in surgical & medical procedures; lift over 50 lbs; perform clinical laboratory procedures, take and process x-rays; answer clients' questions, follow-up calls, maintain and stock inventory, abreast of OTCs
  - Available 24/7; 365 days a year
  - Min 3 yrs experience



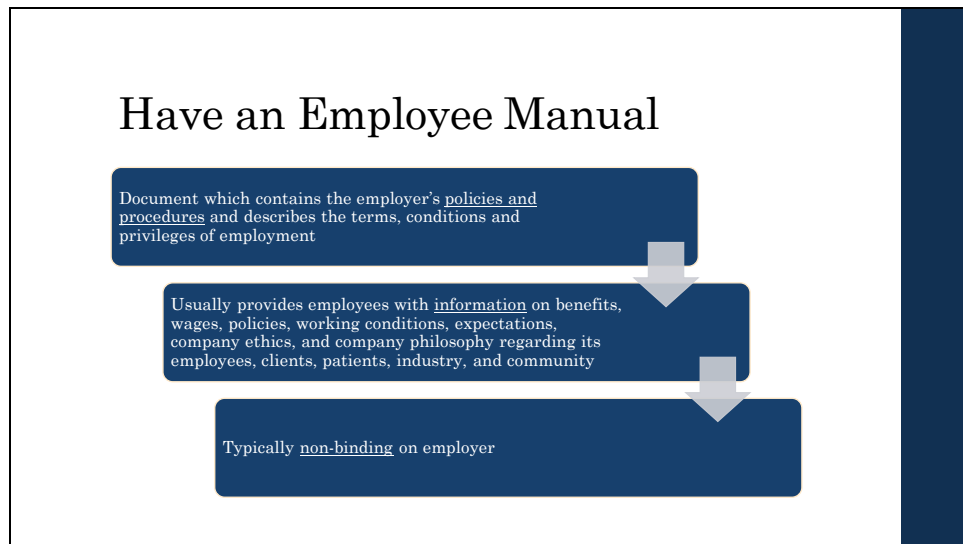
So here's an example of a technician work. Nurse-- a kind of an abbreviated one. But I want to give you an example of what something could look like. Clean stock truck for ambulatory calls, so this could be a mobile-- has a mobile component or a large animal practice, prepping animals, help the doctors treat, some assistant surgical and medical procedures like over, 50 pounds before clinical lab procedures.

So it doesn't necessarily say chemistry, CBC, urinalysis, these kind of things. It's just general all these things. But when you discuss this with the candidates, you're going to explain to them, these are all the things-- are you comfortable doing them? Take in process X-rays, answer client questions, follow up calls, maintain stock inventory, and then be abreast of some over the counters. Now, some of you might have noticed available 24/7, 365 days a year and something like, gosh, Dr. Lavoie why you're a nutso. I'm not working 365 days a year. Why do you think I have that in there? Why do you think I say that you need to be available 24/7, 365 days a year? What do you think that means? Anybody want to give a shot at explaining why you think I have that in there? Anybody responds?

To cover if another team member has gone. Excellent, yes. So can you at least text them-- can you at least text them for info? Oh, yeah. And text-- so that they're available. So Michelle, that was a great point. Can you text them? But you've got to be careful there, because hourly employees and technicians and CSRs are all hourly employees. Even though they might be salaried, they're all subject to overtime. Having people work outside because of them not being paid, but the reality is because we're in the animal health business, this happens. So a technician might have said say, hey, did you give the medicine right before you left? Because I don't see it in the chart here, but I thought you had done that.

So as somebody said, the reason is because I might hire you to work Monday through Thursday and every fourth Saturday, and maybe we're open on Sundays as well. But it means that this practice is open 365 days a year, including holidays. And that's saying that you have to potentially work every holiday. And the reason why I don't want to say you have to work Christmas and this is because it could go to religion, and it can be an indirect inquiry to religion. But if I just say you have to work 365 days a year or be available to

those, that means that you're going to have to rotate holidays or whatever that case may be. Now, that's assuming that's that type of practice. And in this case, I did that intentionally.



All right. So the other document that's really helpful that many of you picked up on was the employee manual. And the employee manual is really the guide as to employment-related issues between the employer and the employee. Not really SOPs, not really like how you do things or how you execute your duties. That's really medical SOPs, standard operating procedures. But the employee manual is really about the relationship between the employer and the employee. And it helps set policies and procedures.

So if I want to take a day off, what is it I have to do? How are holidays rotated? Under what circumstances am I eligible for benefits? Do I have to work at least 30 hours? Do I get health insurance? And it will have some policies like confidentiality, which by the way, you should have your employee sign every year, a confidentiality statement also as part of the review. Maybe how the practice feels about you doing locums or many times, there are technicians will go have a side business, and they'll do house sitting or pet sitting, and these kind of things, or they'll help-- they'll treat pets that need to be medicated at home on their own gig. So there's some exclusivity things going on.

Working conditions. What do we do if there's a fire or lots of different areas that you need to know certainly as an employee? And, of course, we encourage employees to sign an acknowledgment form. But from the employer's perspective, you know that those employees don't sign them. So I am a big proponent that when you hire employees, you sit with them as part of their orientation and you go through the manual with them. You don't read it, but you say this section addresses, this section addresses this. And if there's any pet peeves that the employer has, you would certainly focus on this, because you want people to know the rules before they break the rules. Because if they break the rules because they didn't know the rules, you're going to be forgiving them anyway.

And so you want people to know the rules before they go ahead and break them. And we're also a big fan of on an annual basis, having a quiz about certain things in the employee manual. That kind of forces people to review the manual, and you tell them we're going to have a quiz. So you're expected to review the manual, because I want you to know the rules before they get broken. And do you have to pay people

to read the employee manual at home? No, you don't, because it's part of them knowing their job. So you do not have to pay them.

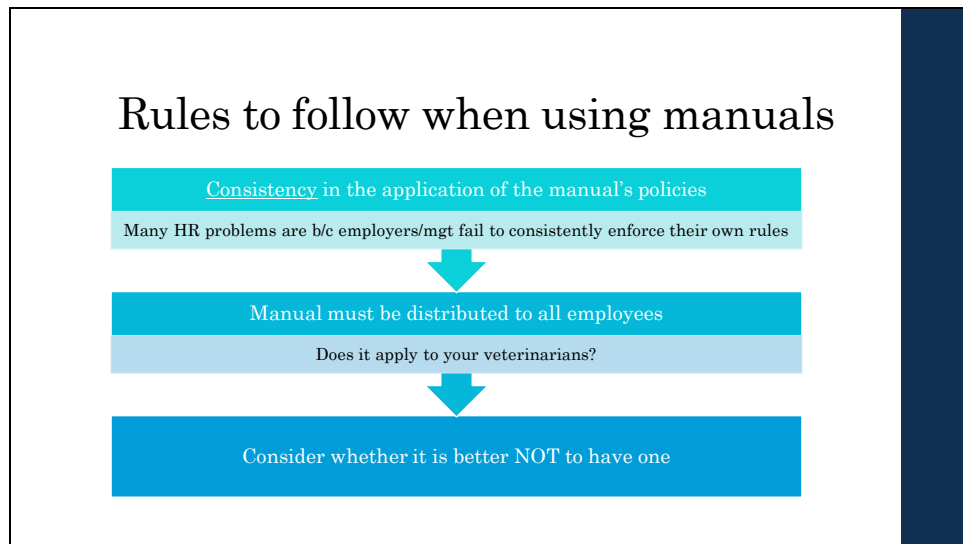
As to that book club idea, if you force them to read the book, you do have to pay them. But my suggestion is you say, look, you don't have to read the book. I'll buy the book, we're going to have dinner together and everybody come to the dinner meeting with just one question, and we'll talk about the book. Employee manuals, again, are typically non-binding. So that's really important because the employer needs flexibility to change policies depending if the practice expands, and they expand their hours, or COVID happens and things certainly have to change.

## Manual Objectives

Provide	Provide employees with an overview of what they can expect from the practice and what the practice will expect from the employee
Achieve	Achieve <u>equitable</u> , <u>consistent</u> and <u>predictable</u> personnel decisions
Enhance	Enhance employee moral
Set	Set the tone of the employer-employee relations

So there are several objectives of a manual and that they provide a general overview of the rules, the policies of the practice and what the employee can expect. And what's really important, and this is what employees are asked for, the only thing that employees ask for is that they're treated equitably, consistently, and in a predictable manner. And employee manuals give predictability assuming that the rules are applied evenly amongst everyone. Now, equitable doesn't mean even, equal. Equitable means fairly. It doesn't mean you have to treat your employees the same. You do not have to treat your employees the same.

There's people that have seniority, there's people that have different job descriptions so they get potentially different, certainly different privileges. And you do not have to treat your people, your employees equally, what matters is equitably. Now, of course, if you're going to offer health insurance or retirement plan, those are driven by plan documents and people have to be treated-- that you pay the benefits equally and certainly those kind of things. And certainly, it enhances employee morale when they find that they are treated all consistently, predictably, and equitably. And it sets the tone really between the employee and employee relations.



So things to keep in mind when you're management and you're using an employee manual, so as the employer, you should be extremely familiar with your own manual, and you should apply the rules of your own manual. So we do have employers that call us, and they don't even follow their own manual. Because they don't even know what's in their own manual. So that's hard to defend or to get the employer out of a pickle if they went ahead and misapplied a manual that-- applied a policy that their manual doesn't even say.

It should be distributed to all employees. Now, there's some practices, and I don't know why they do this, and I do not recommend that they do this. If they have a manual for their veterinarians and then they have a manual for their paraprofessionals, and you don't need to have two separate manuals. You have one manual and it also applies to your veterinarians, but some veterinarians or veterinary practices have the veterinarians under contract, where the terms of the contract may be different from the manual. Well, that's perfectly OK, because a contract will always supersede what's in a manual. So you don't-- and if you want section specifically on your veterinarians and you just put-- if you were a veterinarian, A, B, whatever it is that policy is about.

Because I assure you, it is way too complicated, and it's just leads to error by trying to have two different manuals. So that if you're changing one manual, you have to change the other manual to the extent that you have common policies. It's overly complicated and just riddled with potential error. Now, you may have heard or somebody say, well, you know what, I'd just rather not have a manual. Is it better not to have one? Well, then it's all over the place and people don't know what to expect.


And I will tell you, suggest to you that the bigger the practice, the more employees you have, the more likely you're going to need a manual. Because you can't keep track of what your medical leave is. You can't give-- or pregnant or maternity leave. If you're a small-- if you're under 50 employees, you don't have to give people maternity leave, because there's no Family Medical Leave Act. And that's 50 or more employees.



But if somebody was pregnant in your office and you gave them two months leave and then three years later, somebody else is pregnant and you give that person three months leave, and then somebody and then-- you can't have it all over the place, because people are going to get mad when different rules are applied differently. Or the pet care cost, so somebody, I give 50% discount, another person, 20% discount, or whatever it is. So that's the consistency perspective. And so that's why, as a general rule, I think a manual was a really good idea, not only because you have consistent policies, but it forces the employer to think about what policies they want before they're set.

Because I have people just say, oh, well, we don't have sick leave. I go, really? You don't have sick leave? So then when the employer is sick-- I'm sorry. When the employee is sick, you fire them. Oh no, no, we don't fire them. We just don't pay them. I said, well, then you do have a sick leave policy. It's just an unpaid policy. Yeah. And then I said, well, how many days do they get off? Well, we'll give them off as much as they want. All right. So if somebody is sick for 90 days, you'll just give them the whole time off.

Oh, no. Well, not 90 days. Well then what is it? So the thing is you force people to really think about policies, which is important. So that you can maintain that consistency.



DO YOU NEED ONE?

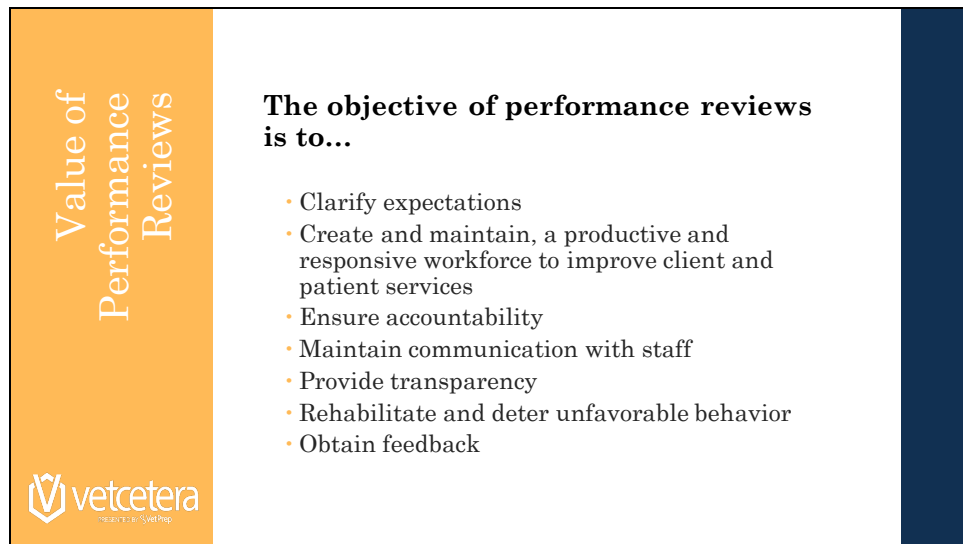
- If you decide to have one...
- Don't take your colleague's and change the cover page
- Get a template, revise from within and have reviewed by local employment law attorney +/- veterinary mgt consultant

And it's important to review these manuals every two to three years and have a professional review them, because these laws are changing fast. Sick leave is actually a really great example. There's more and more states that are mandating that employers provide paid sick leave, and that's governed by respective states. And you need to know what those rules are when you are certainly an employer.

So here's the other thing is where do you get this employee manual? So while manuals-- 80% of the manuals probably pretty much the same from practice to practice, 20% of it is different. You have different policies and protocols on how you want to deal with maybe holiday, or vacation, or somebody's eligibility, or whatever that is. And I do not recommend you take your colleague's manual and you adopt it in your hospital, because it may not even apply to you. So I've had circumstances where our clients have come to me and say, oh, I got the great manual, Charlotte. It's a really, really good manual. I go, great. Where did you get it from?

Oh, well, my partner works in a corporation, and I just took theirs and changed the logo. And I said to them, OK. So a corporation, which has lots of laws that apply to the corporation, because they have more than 50 employees, and you only have eight employees. You have now voluntarily submitted yourself to all those laws that don't otherwise apply to you, because they're in your manual. And if you want to follow the Family Medical Leave Act, you have every prerogative to do that. But why would you impose those kind of rules and laws that reduce your flexibility when you're a small business and you only have eight employees? Why would you do that?


And it's just because you just try to plug and play. We just want to make it easy, but that's really not a good practice. The manual has to be tailored to your specific practice.



Value of  
Performance  
Reviews

**The objective of performance reviews is to...**

- Clarify expectations
- Create and maintain, a productive and responsive workforce to improve client and patient services
- Ensure accountability
- Maintain communication with staff
- Provide transparency
- Rehabilitate and deter unfavorable behavior
- Obtain feedback

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All right. So let's move on to the next item here, which is how do we-- how do we work with our employees to get them to improve and to get them to grow? And so performance reviews are really the ongoing tool that employment practices use or should use to help coach our employees, to make sure that they're doing what we want them to do, and to help them grow, and it helps clarify expectations.

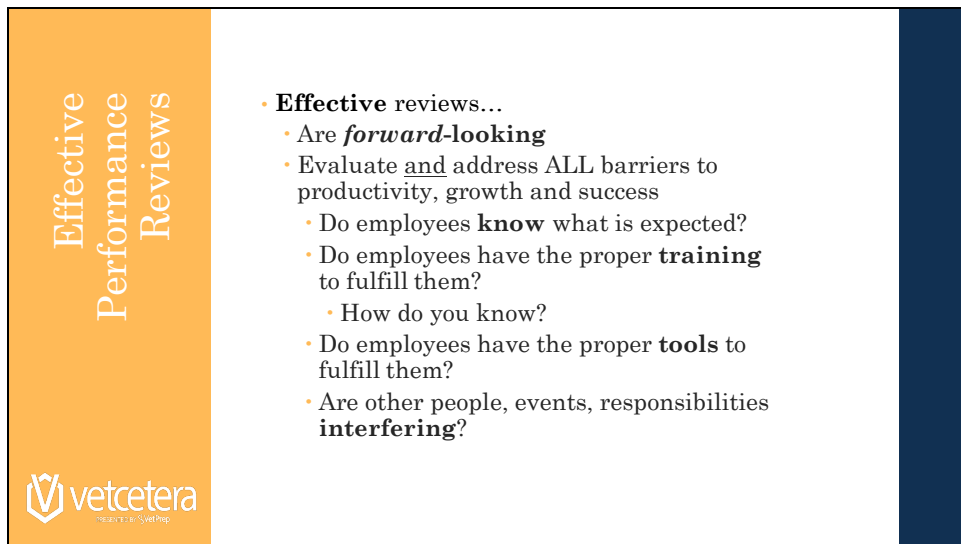
Certainly, when you start working for some place, you might think what's expected of you. But then when you've been there a couple of months, you're like oh, I didn't really understand that, or I guess that's not what I thought. And so it allows an opportunity to have these discussions between the employers and the employees, and maybe coworkers. Maybe a coworker really annoyed with how you're doing something. Well, you're not going to know unless somebody tells you. So it helps create, maintain productive, responsive workforce, ensures accountability, maintain communication within the staff, provide transparency, and then also rehabilitate employees, and deter unfavorable behavior, and allows to obtain feedback.

## Performance Management vs. Performance Evaluation

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Year-round process	Year- <b>end</b> process
Guides and builds performance	Reports and documents results
Mutual responsibility	Primarily a supervisor's responsibility
Focus on future and building capability	Focus on past and what has been achieved


I also want to bring about the difference between performance management and performance evaluations. So historically, employees were reviewed once a year. Everybody hated it, it was like the one time. And employers hated it, employees hated it, everybody got anxious about it. And employment practices have gone away from that. You still need it at the end of the year to regroup and plan for next year, and maybe set some goals, and maybe talk about changes in your compensation, your work schedule, or whatever that may be.

But you really want to check in with your employees on a fairly routine basis maybe quarterly, and it's informal. It's like, hey, how's it going? Are you happy here? What can we do to make your experience better? Can we do things to improve your training? Here's a little bit of feedback that we've gotten from people that you might want to try to work on. It's just more like a conversation and the first time, I said, well, I really like support in this area and to help improve that employee-employer relationship.

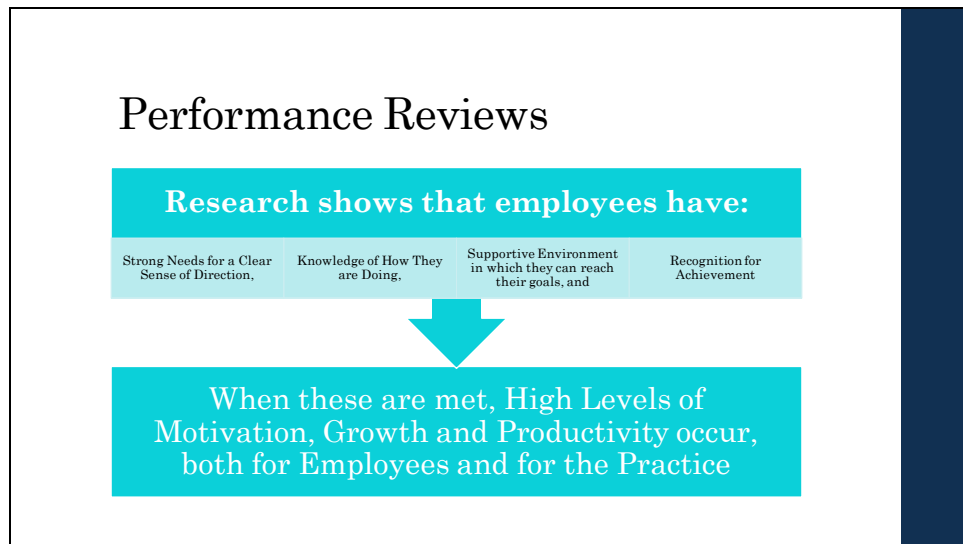


Effective  
Performance  
Reviews

- **Effective** reviews...
- Are **forward-looking**
- Evaluate and address ALL barriers to productivity, growth and success
  - Do employees **know** what is expected?
  - Do employees have the proper **training** to fulfill them?
    - How do you know?
  - Do employees have the proper **tools** to fulfill them?
  - Are other people, events, responsibilities **interfering**?

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And so they're effective or reviews are effective, because they help evaluate and address barriers to productivity. Why can't I get my job done? Maybe I need new equipment, maybe I'm not really working well with my coworkers. And it helps the employee better understand what's expected of them, if they need training, and do they have the tools of what they need to basically perform their duties as well as maybe gripe about other employees that aren't really supportive of them.



So research shows that employees that have strong needs for-- they have strong needs for a clear sense of direction, they need to know how they're doing, and they need positive feedback. And again, especially, the newer-- the younger generations, they need a lot of-- they need to be-- they need that positive feedback.

The older generation is like, well, I guess I'm doing a good job unless somebody tells me I'm not. It was very negative reinforcement based. Look, if you're not going a good job, I'll let you know, Charlotte. But I'm not going to be told, oh, you're doing a spectacular job. And so I think the older generation really doesn't expect necessarily that feedback. You welcome it, of course. But the younger generations do. They need that positive feedback. You can't just criticize them or give them negative feedback. It's not constructive. And they need recognition for their achievements. And when these are met, we get high levels of motivation, high levels of productivity, and just general collaboration and cohesiveness.

## Performance Management Program

### Recipe for business success is to:

- Define the Practice's Mission and Values,
- Weave Values into the Culture, and
- Translate the Mission into Productive Reality

### Performance Management Program:

- Measures success by creating a system of accountability
- is based on the premise that Clear and Frequent Communication about performance is the key to Maximizing Productivity, Employee Satisfaction and Employee Development

So if you want to set up a performance management program and you will get these slides, of course, you need to-- it's important that the practice defines its mission and its values. Why are we here? What's important to us? Excellence in client care, communication. You want to weave in your values into that culture, so that you're really-- vision statements, these are words, but how do you actually execute them in practice? And the importance of a performance management is that it helps measure the success and create accountability, and it's based on the premise that there's clear and frequent communications that are going on. So you're constantly adjusting. And employers learn also from them like maybe what is it that they can do better to support their employees?



**Benefits of PMP**

**Employees**

- Understand what is expected
- Have documented plans for achieving results
- Given an opportunity for ongoing dialogue and feedback from their supervisor
- Become aware of strengths and challenge areas

So it's important because employees are able to understand what's expected of them, they have documented plans and results and achievement, they can set up goals, and they're given an opportunity for dialogue, and they can become aware of some of their strengths and challenges. So you might have heard of a SWOT analysis. So this is another good thing for you to keep in mind, S-W-O-T. SWOT analysis historically have been looked at in evaluating how an overall business is performing, but we use them now for employees.


So in a SWOT analysis is what are the strengths of the employees, what are the weaknesses or I like to use challenges, what are the opportunities, and what are the threats. So these are individual SWOTs. And you can go ahead and Google this concept, but it's a great self-awareness tool for employees to do their own SWOT analysis. So we encourage employees to do their own SWOT analysis before they have a performance review. So that they can look at what their strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats are.



Benefits of PMP

**For Supervisors**

- Provides documentation of what is expected of each employee
- Is a process for monitoring results and providing employee feedback
- Helps define employee job assignments and new responsibilities
- Drives employee development plans

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PMPs are important for supervisors certainly because it provides a paper trail and documentations of the progress of the individual. It's an opportunity to monitor how they're doing and help define job assignments, maybe adjust their job description and responsibilities, and it helps drive employee development plans. So that employees can work on a career at your practice rather than just coming in and doing the same thing, not that there's not a lot of that. You come in, you were hired for a job, you go in, you do what you're doing day in and day out. But for people that want a little bit more, and not everybody, some people like they've got a busy personal life, they have just a lot of things going on. And they just want to come in, they're really good at their job, but they don't want to grow at their job or do anything. They're fine. They're exactly fine where they are, and they're good at it.

Well, that's fine. But there's other people that maybe they appeared in their life, look, they want to grow, they want to do something else. And as an employer, you want to be there and grab on to that opportunity and help that person go where-- because if we don't grow that individual, they're going to grow someplace else, especially in today's market. They're going to get poached and develop their career, because we weren't able to provide that to them.



## Developing a PMP

- **Who Should Evaluate**
  - Vertical (Supervisor/Subordinate)
  - Horizontal (Peers)
  - 360° (Supervisor/Peers/Subordinates)
  - Self
- **How does the Program Measure Objective and Subjective Criteria**
  - Objective-results are clearly measurable
  - Subjective-based on defined expectations
- **How it reflects the practice's culture**
- **How it links to compensation**

So you might have heard of different-- who should evaluate? So before the manager meets with the employee, where are they going to get that information, where are they going to get that evidence to help coach that employee?

Well, there's various types of evaluations that you can have done. So one is a vertical, where it's basically supervisor and the subordinate. So it's just that one-on-one basically, or just you're getting very limited information. Just basically coming from the supervisor. Horizontal as you're surveying the peers. So you might be interviewing-- or you might be doing a performance review for a CSR, and you're asking the other CSRs and also maybe technician nurses who may be working with this individual to get feedback on how are they to work with, what are they like.

And so the supervisor who's going to do this PMP then has that information. Three-sixties are really like 360s, but you're gathering a lot of information. It's basically you're gathering information from your peers, the subordinates, as well as the supervisors. But it's really comprehensive and holistic. It's just a little bit more tedious. And you're looking for both objective and subjective feedback on your house. In other words, you've got people that are really good at doing their job mechanically or technically, but they're not necessarily very pleasant to work with. And so that's more of the subjective components.

These performance plans eventually-- it's linked to practice culture, but also to your compensation and benefits. So if you've got-- if you're doing-- someone is doing really well and contributing to the practice, and growing the practice, and engage, clearly, they're going to get better compensation as they should, because they're your A players. And every practice has A players, B players, C players, and D players. And the D players, you should probably succession them out. Unless, you can find something to put them in that you can basically live with. And we know that right now, there's a shortage of staff, but every organization successions out of their place of employment. People that are just really not contributing or maybe even be parasitizing or just bad influences and just bringing everybody down.

## 360 Reviews - Sample

- One of the simplest 360 survey formats you can use is by Karen Gavzner: Red-Yellow-Green Light. You ask 3 questions:
  - 
  - 1. What should this person **STOP** doing to be more effective in his/her role?
  - 2. What should this person **KEEP ON DOING** that helps make them effective in his/her role?
  - 3. What should this person **START doing** to be more effective on their role?

So I love this sample of reviews of assessing, because it's very simple. It comes from Karen Gavzner who's - she's pretty much retired, but she's one very good practice management consultant in her time. And these are three questions you ask of the peers, or these are the questions you ask of everybody else. So if I'm getting a review, if I'm being reviewed, everybody is going to ask my coworkers what are the things that I should stop doing? What really drives people crazy? What should I keep doing? And what is it I should start doing that I may not be actually doing?

So this is other people answering those questions. So it's good, because it doesn't place a really big burden on the people that you are surveying about me. Because nobody wants to spend a lot of time doing it either. And, of course, the more feedback you get, you can see patterns as well. And that's really important to get patterns, because maybe there are some who just really doesn't like me and their review really isn't fair. They just don't like me, so they're going to say everything nasty. But that one's an outlier and everybody else has pretty good things to say about me, but there is one thing that seems to pop up and that's a commonality.

So that's really helpful. So that one where it looks like they have an axe to grind, you might disregard that review. But you wouldn't know that if there's only two-- if you're only surveying two of my co-workers. So this is a really fun tool that I might encourage you to use in your practice that's easy.

## Developing a PMP

Who Will Train Evaluators?

How Often Should Reviews be Performed?

Who Will Manage the PMP?

What Will Be Done With Results?

How Will You Measure Success?

So when you develop this PMP, you got to keep in mind who's going to be doing these evaluations? Who's going to be gathering all this information? Now, if you're a small practice, that's a tall order, because you may have a hospital manager or you might have a part time hospital manager, who's also maybe a nurse or a CSR. And you're going to do the best that you can.


Now, of course, if you're a large hospital and there's 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 100 employees, then you're going to have people in place that are doing these things. If you're a really small practice, it might just be you, the employer, and there's just so much time you can invest in this. So you know what, you just do the best you can as you grow the practice. So that eventually, you can maybe hire somebody to help you do these performance review. But at a minimum, you can just check in with your employees. You can have coffee, see how's everything going.

And manage the paperwork. Every employee needs to have their own employee personnel file, and you've got to document things in there. You've got to document meetings you have with them.

Ratings Definitions

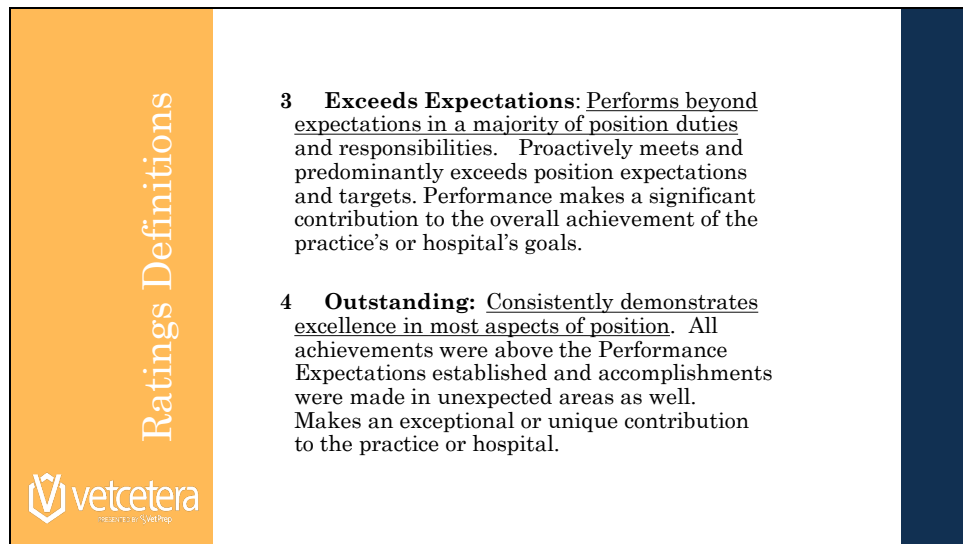
**1 Needs Improvement:** Performance falls below Performance Expectations in one or more areas. Requires improvement in areas noted. Performance Improvement Plan must be developed, implemented and monitored to ensure that performance meets established targets within agreed upon timeframes. Further disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may be initiated.

**2 Meets Expectations:** Fulfills position requirements, consistently meeting established goals and expectations. Any minor areas where performance could have been better were counterbalanced by other accomplishments such that the overall performance makes the expected valuable contributions to the practice or hospital.



So here's a couple of things on how you would evaluate people. Because this is the other thing, is that we'll evaluate, and we'll give somebody a 3 or we'll give them a 2 out of a 4-scale. And what does that actually mean? Because you're 3 might be my 4 or my 2. It doesn't mean anything. So I think this is probably really helpful information for you to say, OK, a 1 is somebody who needs improvement. So they fall below their performance expectations in more than one area.


So again, you have to be able to have criteria like what are those areas. Like CSR, you want somebody to have pretty good communication skills, you want somebody to have pretty good phone skills and ability to work the computer, and software, and things like that. Two is that you meet the expectation that fulfilled the position requirements.



Ratings Definitions

**3 Exceeds Expectations:** Performs beyond expectations in a majority of position duties and responsibilities. Proactively meets and predominantly exceeds position expectations and targets. Performance makes a significant contribution to the overall achievement of the practice's or hospital's goals.

**4 Outstanding:** Consistently demonstrates excellence in most aspects of position. All achievements were above the Performance Expectations established and accomplishments were made in unexpected areas as well. Makes an exceptional or unique contribution to the practice or hospital.

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Three is that you exceed expectations, and 4, you're absolutely outstanding.

Under this scale, very few people are 4 in everything. Most people have 2's. They do their job, they do their job well, and they may exceed expectations in some areas of their job and maybe might have one 4 here and there, and might have maybe-- or have no 1's or maybe 1 or-- it's kind of a bell-shaped curve. You want most people to have 2's and maybe a couple of 3's. But if you're finding that you're reviewing people, and they're all 4's, you're exaggerating their performance.

Because if somebody does their job like they're supposed to, that's a 2. You're just meeting my expectations. You don't get a 3 unless you exceed my expectations. And how do you define what that exceed means? We want to be nice to people, and we do tend, as a general rule, to overrate people.

% of Bonus Pool	% of People	Rating	Individual Rating	% of Salary as Bonus Incentive ??
		Outstanding	4	
40%	20%	Exceeds Expectations	3.9 2.9	5-10%
60%	70%	Meets Expectations	2.8 2.0	2-5%
0%	10%	Needs Improvement	≤1.9	0%

## Bonus Incentive Grid

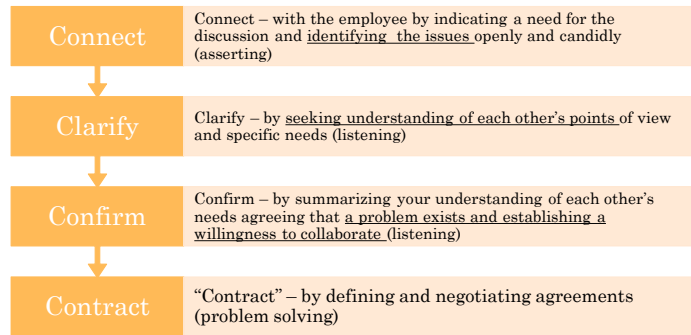
And so what happens is-- and this is if you want to incentivize people with the bonus, this is a schematic that basically when you look at your employees at the end of the year after having done a performance review in the scaling that I was just showing here, is that 70% of your employees basically meet their expectations, and 60% of the bonus goes there, 40% of the bonus goes to 20% of your employees, and then 10% of your employees get nothing. Again, this is some kind of a bell-shaped curve, where most of your people are going to be meeting their expectations in total.



So what do we do with those problem employees, the ones that are a little bit challenging? Well, the way that we learn and mammals learn and if you're training a puppy, it's the same thing. So through our experiences, we learn and then we get feedback, and then we reflect, and then we change our behavior after concluding on the behavior. And you cannot get people to change their behavior unless they are aware of it, they acknowledge it, and they understand what is it that they have to do in order to be better, in order to change the behavior, and why is it so darn important? How does it improve the practice experience or the operations of the practice?



The process of coaching and counseling involves a strategy for reaching agreement on performance problems and their resolution called the 4 C's:



And it really involves four Cs you want to connect with people by indicating and figuring out what are the issues and talking about them openly. Maybe it's how late they are, their tardiness or their communication style, or their sloppiness, or they're not cleaning up after themselves, or they're not paying attention to the dogs that need to be walked in the hospital, or whatever that is. And so you talk about the problem or the symptom basically. It's very much clinical, so it's like what is the symptoms that are causing problems in the workplace? And you seek to understand what's their problem, why can't they get it done, and why it is that it's important to you. And then you confirm. You say, look, OK, we're in agreement that this is important and that you're going to try to train your behavior. So that this and these are the expectations.

And maybe we'll meet up again in 30 days and see how you're doing and see if your other coworkers still continue to complain about you. And you're contracting on. OK, we're agreeing that we're going to make this improvement.

What is the MOST important part of accountability?

- Resolve
- Commitment to enforcement
- Leadership

A hand in a dark suit jacket points with a silver pen towards a pyramid of glowing blue hexagons. Each hexagon contains a white silhouette of a person. The background is dark with some bokeh light effects.

And what do you think is the most important part of accountability? So I'm going to turn this back to you on the little quiz. What's the most important part of accountability, you think? What's the most important part of accountability? Anybody? Show up. Yeah. That's great. Anything else? Having it regular.

All right. So when you are the supervisor, you have to have resolve and commitment to enforcing whatever that's accountability. So that if you continue not to do what you're supposed to be doing, what are the consequences? So what are typical consequences when somebody's just not doing their job and you feel like they're thumbing their nose at you? What are some of the things that are available to you as a tool from an employer to hold somebody accountable? Cutting pay, cutting hours. Can you really cut somebody's pay?

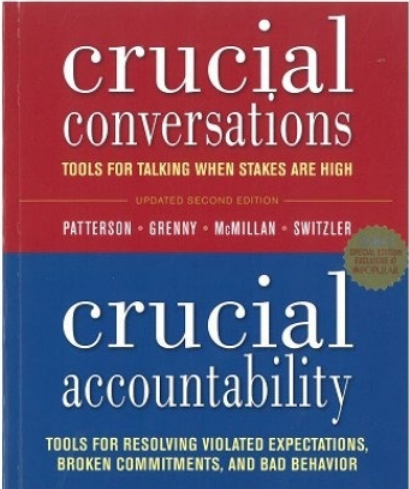
So let's say somebody paid \$15.50 an hour, can you say to them, look, if you're going to continue coming in late, if you come in late one more time within the next 30-day period, I'm going to cut your pay by \$0.25 an hour. Can you do that? You absolutely can. But what's the threshold? You can't reduce people's pay below-- what's the answer? Minimum wage. So you absolutely can, and it is very effective to reduce somebody's pay. But, of course, you want to tell them ahead of time. You want to tell them by how much it's going to be reduced, and you do want to clarify-- because they think that you can't just reduce their pay.

Now, in today's world, you may actually lose somebody, and they may already be poached and even from other industries, but you can certainly do that.

Crucial Skills for Accountability & Results

## Confronting Employees


- Bernardi, Lauren. (2003). Nine Steps to Effective Discipline. *The Canadian Manager*, (Winter 2003).
- Archer North. (2010). *Conflict and Confrontation*. Archer North & Associates.



crucial conversations  
TOOLS FOR TALKING WHEN STAKES ARE HIGH  
UPDATED SECOND EDITION  
PATTERSON • GRENNY • McMILLAN • SWITZLER

crucial accountability  
TOOLS FOR RESOLVING VIOLATED EXPECTATIONS, BROKEN COMMITMENTS, AND BAD BEHAVIOR

It's difficult to confront employees. Veterinarians are not confrontational. We don't like sometimes having those difficult conversations. We'd much rather deal with animals that don't talk back to us. They might bite us, but won't talk back to us. So there's lots of resources out there to help you have some of these difficult conversations.



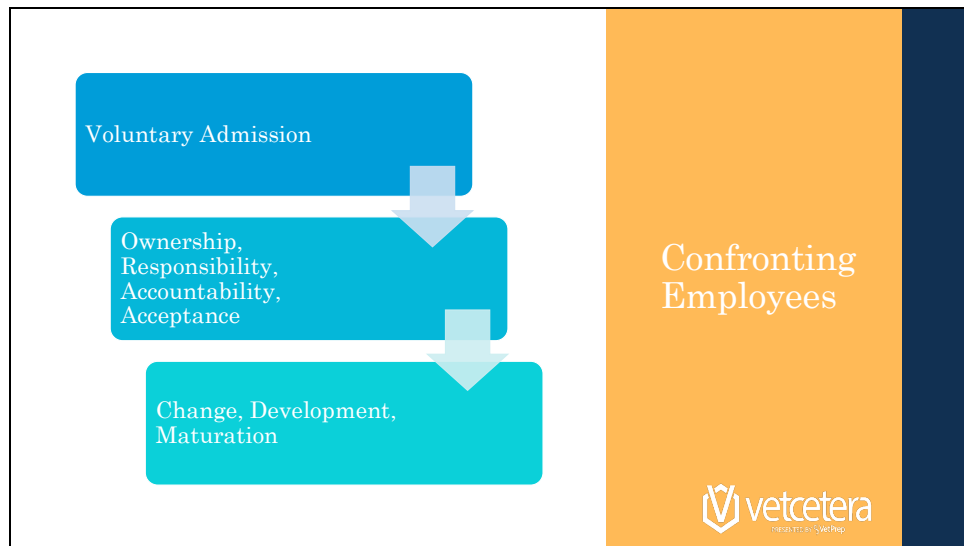
## Confronting Employees

- Owing It-Self Auditing
  - Avoid direct confrontation and criticism
  - Utilize open-ended questioning techniques
    - *“Your attendance record is unacceptable. You will have to improve.”*
    - Versus...
      - *“Your record shows you’ve had 7 days off in 6 months. What can you tell me about this?”*
  - Target: Voluntary admission

And the key to having constructive feedback with an employee is that they have to acknowledge their behavior is causing harm to the business. If they do not acknowledge it, if they're always the victim, if it's always somebody else's fault, it's a non-starter. And you know, you've had those employees, potentially, where it's like always somebody else's fault. And they have an excuse for everything, very difficult people to have a conversation with. And also, when you're explaining to somebody what the challenges are, you have to be specific. You can't just say, oh, your attendance record is bad. You have to improve. You have to say your record has shown that you've been late seven days out of the six months and tell me about this.

What is it that we-- why is this-- how can we help it? And maybe we do allow them to come in later, and then have them stay later or something. Maybe we can accommodate them. Maybe it's a period in their life that they happen to have young children, and it's just not going to happen. Whereas, once you have older children, and they're in high school or whatever, that's just going to be less of a problem. And that's something else to remember too is people have different challenges in different periods of their lives. And as an employer, we need to recognize it and maybe accommodate that as opposed to no, all my employees have to be in here by 8:30. I don't care what their life is like. Well, you know, I'm trying to say, look, you can come in at 9:30. You have accommodating circumstances, and we're going to ask you to stay later.

And if somebody says, well I want to get my Starbucks in the morning so I think I should get to come in a little bit later. Well, guess what, you get to choose what you're willing to accommodate or not, but you can't discriminate. You can't say, well, you're a woman, so I will not accommodate you. And you're a male, so I will accommodate you. That's different. That's a discriminatory reason to do that. But if you have legitimate business purposes and things that are more compelling reasons than others, you can go ahead and do that, but you have to explain yourself.



So in this a whole accountability, you want people to acknowledge voluntary, take ownership and responsibility, and then be willing to change, and have some kind of development plan. So what is it that you're expecting of that individual? You've got to be specific, and then you've got to check in with them, whether it's two weeks from now, a month, whatever that might be.

## Importance of Documentation

- Document the communication of expectations...
- Document coaching and corrective measures...
- Document times and dates...
- Document the failure to meet those expectations
- Evidence!
  - Courts are *unsympathetic* to employers without documentation of unmet expectations

And ultimately, it's really, really, really important to document. So when you have some of these difficult conversations with employees, you want to put a memo in the client-- in the employees file.


And in that memo, you want to have-- it's like a corporate memo. But it's really important, because if you have to fire them or if you have to submit this information to a lawyer, you want to make it easy for them to read. Because lawyers, they charge by the hour. So you want to make your paperwork really easy to go through not that they have to hunt for a needle in a haystack. So the memo should have the date, the time you met with the person from 1:30 to 2:00, because you want to know over time how long you spoke to this person about the particular situation. Who was at the meeting? The first and last name is in their title. And then the reason like we met with Charlotte to discuss about her constant tardiness.

And it's not like a transcript of the discussion. You basically SOAP the memo, just like in medical records. You put in the memo, what is it you talked about? What are the problems subjectively and objectively? What is your assessment? We agreed that you being late. So the subjective is that you're late and maybe why you're late. But the objective is you were late seven times in a six-month period, and how late you were. That's the objective there. And then you assess it to say, you being late, given your job-- you're a surgical tech. You've got to be there early, because we start surgeries early. That's not going to work for us.

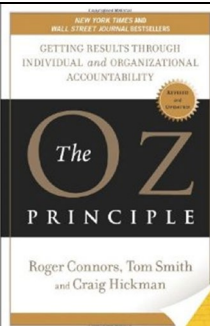
And then what's the plan? And maybe the plan is if you're late, we're just going to reduce your pay, or we're going to move you to another position if we can replace, so we're going to move you around. So it's got to be documented. So that you can have a paper, because really what you're trying to do is create a narrative, trying to create a story. So that if you want me to-- as a lawyer, say, you know, Shawn, I got this problem. I just got to get rid of her. I just have to get rid of her. Great. Give me all your paperwork. It'll make it easy for me to read the story, the narrative as to oh, this started here, got progressively worse, and that is. That's an error. It's got to get progressively worse.

So when you ultimately fire somebody, they're not surprised. If you're going to fire somebody in a firing meeting, and they're going to be surprised, that's more likely going to create the chance of you being sued,

because they've been surprised. But if you sue-- if you go to meet with somebody and like, I know I'm getting fired. That's it. I knew it. That was it, because none of this worked. Well, they're less likely to go ahead and sue you.

 **Holding Accountable**

- Recognize & confront unmet expectations
- Coaching Moment
  - Review expectation and barriers
  - Have a discussion
- Verbal & Written Warnings-consequences
  - May or may not be accompanied by consequences
  - Vary with frequency and seriousness of violation
  - Reduction in pay
- Final Written Warning
  - Generally *not* accompanied by consequences
    - Document potential for termination without improvement
    - Define! Expectation met 100% for X amount of time



All right. It's important to recognize, confront unmet expectations, coaching, having warnings, and then ultimately, a final warning. But you don't have to have a warning for everything. If somebody comes in and has such if-- if somebody throws a scalpel blade at somebody, you can fire them right on this spot. You don't want like all these level of warnings in your employee manual, by the way, because you don't want to be limited to your own prescription. So warnings are a possibility, but not in all circumstances.



## Would a Book Club Help?

- Good to Great by Jim Collins
- The OZ Principle
- The E Myth by Michael Gerber
- If Disney Ran Your Practice
- Traction by Wickman
- Winning by Jack Welch

A photograph showing four people (two women and two men) sitting around a table in a dining room. They are all holding and reading books. The table is set with a white tablecloth, a silver tray with a bowl of soup and some vegetables, and a vase of flowers. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a daytime setting.

We talked about the book club, and here's a list of books that are fun to read. If Disney Ran Your Practice, that's a really good one as well.



What is a goal?

- A goal is a written statement that clearly describes certain actions or tasks with a measurable end result.
- Goals can be tied to:
  - desired productivity
  - performance of stated tasks
  - achievement of targeted personal and professional development

And then finally, I just wanted to chat quickly about goal setting like setting goals. And these are important to do at annual meetings, whether somebody wants to improve on something or whether you want them to develop certain-- work on a certain area,

S\*M\*A\*R\*T  
GOALS -  
What are  
they? How  
do we apply  
them?

vetcetera  
veterinary software

Specific  
Measurable  
Attainable  
Realistic  
Time-bound

S\*M\*A\*R\*T GOALS

and goals for them to be effective. They've got to be smart goals. So this is another area that's important that goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound. I don't really have time to go through all that.

But I wanted to introduce the concept to you. You can look this up online as well. What do you mean by a specific goal? Because if they're not smart, again, the expectations are not clear enough that you're probably going to get a high success rate or somebody being able to achieve those goals.



All right. How do you feel? Questions?

Not seeing any questions at the moment, but we'll give it just a minute. If anybody has any questions, go ahead and type those either in the chat bar or the question and answer section. I know we're a little overtime, but we're still happy to answer them. And I'll go ahead and ask one, just pop to mind. Do you have any examples of commonly used measurable goals or benchmarks that work well for most employees in a vet practice?

Well, goals are really specifically developed for the actual individual, and so it's very specific. But for example, like a manager, you might have a manager where the goals are look, I need you to work with the nurse to reduce inventory or the cost of goods sold. So I want you to work together with that person to do that, or how do we reduce our accounts receivable, or maybe CSR as we say, OK, how do we-- so let's have--

And sometimes they're group goals. So we would like to bring in more dentistry. So how do we train-- let's train those front staff to have talking points on dentistry, or geriatric workups, or something. Or maybe an individual like they are a tech assistant, but they want to be a certified tech. So maybe the goals are OK, how are you going to get there? What are the things that you need to learn to do and maybe both academically? But it could be as well like, OK, how are we going to make sure that you're on time? Or how are we going to ensure that your scrubs are clean or whatever? That would be that individual certain goal. Sure. Thanks.

Thank you very much. It looks like we don't have any other questions. So we appreciate it. I definitely learned a lot, and I hope everybody else did as well. So have a good night, Dr. Lavoie.

Oh, well, thank you. And again, thank you for the opportunity. And if questions do come up afterwards because people just think, oh, I wish I had asked that, please feel free to email me. And I will be more than happy to answer it.

Looks like we do have one.

Oh.

Employee manual. Do you have a place to order one or a template?

All right. So AAHA actually has got a pretty good template. We do work with clients and our template has 80% comments, but we question our clients. So clients retain us. And we question them first on some things where there's differences. So that we can tailor the document to your specific needs.



Thank you.

Yeah. You're welcome. Thank you. Good night, everyone.



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Bye.

Bye.



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