

Professional Business Solutions

To: DVM Practice Owners

Practice Tips and Ideas Fax Letter

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HIRING...

... and the 2006 veterinary "white-water" employment scene

I hear it all the time: it is getting more and more difficult to find, hire and keep good quality veterinary staff. I wouldn't say this is a new thing but there are certainly some different forces at play today than there were, say, 20 years ago. For example, one practice owner recently complained that a large specialty practice opened up and scooped his technical and reception staff. This was occurred with associate practices as well. After many years of having the same staff, he is now scrabbling for new staff in an already short staffed market. Why did this happen? His staff left for a mere \$1.00 and hour increase in pay. The fact of the matter is that within the veterinary profession we are experiencing what is being referred to as a "white-water" employment scene.

Here are some basic tips to handle a PR crisis.

1. More communication, despite your initial reflex, is always better than less. **Put forth positive communication** in such a way that clients have a clear understanding of what is happening and you do not leave *anything* to their imaginations. Nature (and people) abhor a vacuum (mystery) and will make up all kinds of falsehoods to "fill in the mystery" of what they don't know (bad PR!). Also, do so in such a way that you are seen as caring and doing things in the best interest of pet care - not begging for forgiveness i.e. by giving away extra services for free etc...
2. **Make firm policy** to detect and thereafter prevent the problem from re-occurring and issue to all staff involved.
3. Finally, move on. You're a professional. **Make sure your community knows about the great things you are doing** on a regular basis. This will lay the foundation for a solid PR image.

Dr. Joel Parker, President

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