

and we'll talk for a minute and then he'll say "Doc, is there anything going around?" I treat cattle for pink eye for example, but I don't define myself as a treater of pink eye. So I say, "Yea George, in fact there's an outbreak." His eyes brighten, his ears come up, and I'll say, "There's been an outbreak of 20,000 pound herd averages in the southwest part of the county."

I think how we see ourselves is critical. Yet frequently, this deep down confidence is hard to find. We're talking about change. We're talking about new directions and, therefore, new processes. That implies that we are going to be doing new things for our clients, and we are going to be doing new things by ourselves. Frequently, I may be doing a milk machine check for the first time, something like that, and my client looks at me. He has seen me doing something that he has never seen me do before, and the line always comes up: "You do a lot of this kind of work, Doc?" I could get defensive if I needed to, but there's a line that works much better. I say, "Nope, first time. I saw my uncle do this once." Its a great confidence builder in your client. It works because he thinks you are joking.

I think it is important that we know something. Maybe the best bit of information I ever received in college came from a practitioner in Minnesota, who is a small animal practitioner now. He had served my family's farm when I was a child and then he'd moved away to a more lucrative area. I met him at the state veterinary convention my senior year. Dr. Carl Osborne told me that he had made a practice of establishing a topic a year for continuing education programs. He'd pick a topic like canine ophthalmology, and that topic would begin by a call to the university and talk to a

professor of ophthalmology who'd recommend the basic textbook, some basic diagnostic equipment and such. Then Dr. Osborne would look closely at every eye of every animal that came through his door, and somewhere in the middle of the year he'd find a conference on canine ophthalmology and he'd attend it. By the end of a year he would have accumulated some very uncommon skills. What it did for Dr. Osborne was it gave his continuing education efforts some focus and some direction. No longer would he choose a meeting at random and hope to pick something up. He was in charge of what he was searching for. So my first year in practice, I set a topic. The topic was to head out to the country every day and be able to find my way back to town. Next year was some microbiology labs, some milk machine analysis third year, fourth year nutrition—that took a couple of years, embryo transfer and so on. This past year the topic has been to learn how to say "No"—the power of positive thinking.

The last thing I want to say is that in terms of communicating with clients, I believe strongly in ceremony and ritual. Little ceremonies, like certificates or sheets that we are beginning a program and here are our goals. I believe strongly in ritual, little frequent dots on a piece of paper, little notes to establish a ritual that we are looking and moving toward a goal. I think that without ceremony our client is unsure that we've begun a program. Without ritual, we never know when he quit. So without ritual, I end my portion of the program.

Transcribed from a tape recording of Dr. Nordlund's presentation.

Communication with and Motivation of Producers

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The most important thing in working with the producers we serve is understanding that all producers are not alike and that all "canned formulas" for working with those producers work only to the extent that they connect our personalities with those of the producers. What works with one producer may not work well with another and what works for one veterinarian may not work well for another. We all have clients that we have a tremendous rapport with and other clients that we have just never been able to connect with.

I would refer you to a paper given at last year's AABP entitled "Connecting With People" in which an evaluation of people and their personalities was discussed. A basic review could be in order. There are basically four personality types:

- Those that are very responsive to the people they work with and in the environment they work in and those that

are not;

- There are people that are very assertive with the people they work with and their environment and those that are not. We defined those last year. For example, those people who were very assertive in their environment, yet were not very responsive.
- Expressive people are not only assertive but are also very responsive.
- We have people who are neither responsive nor assertive that we called "analyticals" and those people were not particularly assertive yet were very responsive and we called "amiables."

These four basic personality types were reviewed last year.

In working with people, communicating and motivating, we must recognize first the personality type that we possess.

For it is understanding our personality that one enables us to understand what qualities we bring to another person and let us understand how that other person may perceive our value to the situation. We also need to understand those same things about the people we work with. For instance, if a person that we are working with is very low key, tending to be very cautious about all the facts and figures about a given situation, if our personality type dictates that the facts and figures, while important to us, may not be as important to us as just getting the job done. The person we are working with may perceive us as being uninterested in the important things that influence his life, that being the detail of the facts, figures, or the information that influences his decision. Therefore, those two personality types may not connect well. Many more examples can be given, but the relevance is obvious. It is important for us to understand what another person wants in order to effectively communicate and subsequently motivate that person. We have to communicate and motivate all people on their terms.

Veterinarians don't think much about selling, but a good sales course would do us all good for salesmen are trained to understand the need to communicate benefits to his prospective customer on the customer's terms. For instance, if you were buying a new car that would run really fast, work really good driving around town and your need was not speed but dependability and a salesman presented the benefits other than those that matched your needs, he would probably not get your business. Assuming that all veterinarians have the same needs could be devastating to his business for we don't; some of us drive different kinds of vehicles for different reasons. The primary aim of communication is to find out how the other person sees his needs. Effective communication becomes truly listening—asking questions and listening

for the response, understanding those responses and understanding then how we can interface with that person to supply the needs in his world, as he sees it.

Motivation is really no different, for you see all of us are motivated by different things. For example, money and success are not equally important to everyone. What we view as success is not the same for each of us nor each of our clients. Motivation would imply a goal oriented background. We must understand the goals of our clients. Frequently, our clients have only short-term goals, perhaps to keep this set of cattle healthy. But, there are many other goals that interface with their decisions that do not involve us. Understanding all of the needs are important in order to help with his herd health program. Having healthy cattle is one thing but there are many aspects of his and our life—personal life, family life, professional life, community life, and spiritual life. These are details we must understand in order to effectively motivate the people to attain the goals that they see as important to them. Reality to each and everyone of us is the world as we see it. It is the world as we understand it and is the world as it affects us.

To review, communications and motivation starts with understanding ourselves, our personality, and understanding the personality of the people we interface with. The number one aim in communication is to acquire information about the other person's needs—we do that through asking questions and through listening. The aim is not to get across our ideas, for only after we understand their situation through listening and asking questions, can we interface our information to their situation. Motivation becomes much easier when we understand their world, their goals and can become a team member in their life. In doing so, we not only provide their success but for our success as well.

How I Motivate and Communicate with Clients in My Practice

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Motivating yourself and your client to improve their operation is something that I try and work with on a daily basis.

The thing that I think is important is that we need to think of the client's needs first, not ours, but what is our client's need and our client's want to be successful. The dairymen's needs have changed treatment to production medicine and the question that I have is: Do we fit those needs? I guess I've had trouble thinking that we've done a poor job fitting those needs and we'd have to change. Listen to what the dairymen want and then we must provide it. Let's not provide what we want, but let's provide what those dairymen need. Let's listen to his needs and figure out what he has and what he wants to

be successful. If we don't offer them what they want somebody else will. You know we always talk about how tough it is to make a living, but there's more business there than we know what to do with. The thing is if we don't provide it, somebody else will. So we need to do a better job and listen to that dairyman's need. The more we provide, the less they'll need from others. We're the single biggest, most important, central source of information that dairyman has. He needs to come to us.

Veterinarians can be the limiting factor to a farm's success. As I travel around the country speaking at meetings, producers come up and ask me, "How do I get my veterinarian involved?" That's just like saying, "I want to