

Practice Tips

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Catless Cat Carriers and the AABP

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In dairy practice it is quite common to do surgical procedures in barns. One minor but definite problem we deal with is getting all the needed drugs and equipment into the barn where the surgery is to be performed.

I have used various methods, ranging from carrying everything in my pockets and under my arms and around my neck, to making several trips to the truck, to using a large, cumbersome wooden case designed to carry everything possibly needed for any surgical complication.

One day when all of the large wooden cases were in use a member of our practice grabbed a cardboard cat carrier and used it as a surgical grip. He noted it was a lot lighter, and being of course brand new even looked better than the wooden cases. The cat carrier remained in use through

several operations, and when it began to deteriorate, it was discarded and replaced by a new one.

We now find that doctors prefer the cat carriers over the wooden cases, even though they don't hold quite as much. I have also used cardboard "banker's boxes" to carry the same equipment. These take up even less room in the truck, and carry everything I need as long as I lay the bottles of scrub and alcohol down.

The disadvantage of using cardboard is just what you would expect. It does not last a long time, especially if it gets wet. However, it is easily replaced. Some doctors may feel a cardboard cat carrier does not look very professional, but we find it looks better than a wooden case that has seen too many barns and too little clean up or maintenance.

Overturning Turnover. . .What Can Your Practice do to Attract and Retain Graduate Veterinarians?

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1) Be sensitive to their personal welfare. . .help to build self esteem.

- A) Share out of hours duties equally.
- B) Allow time off for family and personal needs.
- C) Don't exclude new veterinarians from your "good accounts" or restrict them to the "poor accounts".
- D) Publicize each veterinarians name:
 - Sign on front of clinic
 - Business cards
 - Published advertisements
 - Stationary letterhead
- E) Provide each veterinarian with some space of their own in the clinic.
- F) Refer to new veterinarian as an associate and not as a hired man.
- G) Introduce new veterinarian to visitors and clients.
- H) Strive to make employed veterinarians relationship with lay employees an active one.
- I) Don't reprimand them in front of others.
- J) Try to involve employed veterinarians in practice management decisions.
- K) Let new veterinarians know that you have faith in them. Stand behind them and defend them when

necessary.

2) Try to make your practice a role model.

Each practice has its own personality or practice philosophy.

Your practice philosophy is defined by the way you conduct your business on a day to day basis and not by what you might write in a manual.

All veterinarians need to find their niche in a group practice. . .they need to feel that they contribute and are needed.

If they do not find this niche, they are not likely to stay long.

New graduates need to find this niche on their own.

Owner veterinarians can not force an employed veterinarian into any specific role.

Owner veterinarians should provide an environment in which new graduates can develop the skills they have acquired into meaningful contributions to the practice goals. You should provide some guidance at times but don't hinder their freedom to develop their own role.

Group practice requires a team effort to be successful. Every member of the team will contribute if given the chance to express themselves.