



# Would you like to have a *happier* practice?..

We recently exhibited at the North American Veterinary Conference in Orlando and spent a good portion of our time interviewing DVM practice owners as to what their *Ideal Scene* was. What's an Ideal Scene? **Your Ideal Scene is that picture you have of your practice of what would ideal, what would be the perfect practice.** This would include all the great things you want such as top notch equipment, 2 months vacation and a nice car but minus all the frustrating and annoying things that you would like to change.

So what did we find out? **A whopping 68% of practice owners interviewed responded that the No. 1 thing they wanted was *happy staff!*** For their staff to get along and work together as an organized team. Despite having the best equipment money could buy, they wanted something so intangible yet so important to daily practice life.

**So here's a couple of pointers on whipping together a happy staff:**

1. **Purpose means everything...** Very few staff work solely for money (good thing right?) but work for a strong sense of purpose. Get the purpose of your practice defined in writing and posted on the wall as a reference point for all team members to see.
2. **Define your rules of the game...** A team needs clear directions and rules to follow otherwise simple daily tasks becomes laborious decision points. Define your standard way of operation with a good Standard Policy & Procedures (SOP<sup>2</sup>) manual.
3. **Stack your deck...** Hire upbeat positive attitude people that are willing and care for what is going on. This attitude is hard to train. Hire them like this and they'll easily train up their technical skills without taxing your resources (and nerves!).
4. **Train people "off the job" into great team players...** Establish a training center off the busy production lines that actually trains using your SOP<sup>2</sup> manual as the reference points. No more "on the job" verbal training. It just doesn't work well!
5. **Correct with compassion...** No one ever corrected anyone with force. Have compassion and firmness and correct over a foundation of validation. People are valuable. Value them!

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