

TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR VETERINARIANS, HOSPITAL TEAMS, AND STUDENTS

“Action learning” is a process of using instruction that is quickly and directly applied to specific, real-work situations. When people attend a “lecture,” they are learning on only the most basic level of “acquiring knowledge.” Listening, repeating, and memorizing are examples of this level of learning. Although many people feel that they are “learning a lot” when they attend a lecture packed with information, that knowledge won’t be retained or applied unless it is followed by action learning.

Dr. Smith offers intensive, interactive training that you can immediately apply when you return to your team (or, for students, to your transition from school). Workshops are customized for your specific needs and your situation.

Workshops may be focused on students, doctors, managers, technicians, the client services team, or the whole-hospital team. Choose the topics that you want, or ask us to modify or create specific skills practice for you.

Each topic typically takes 1 to 3 hours. Let us know where you want emphasis and we will devote more time and/or practice to those areas. A full-day workshop can include up to 4 topics. We can create half-day, full-day and two-day sessions. Each workshop includes:

- Background information in a brief lecture format
- Open questions and discussion
- Skills practice using real-case scenarios in pairs or small groups
- The opportunity to address your own workplace concerns
- Debriefing and discussion
- Your creation of an action plan to implement what you learned

Pre-Meeting Consultation

Prior to any engagement, we will discuss your needs with you and help you determine what modules will be the best fit for your group.

We also offer a formal in-depth assessment and consultation that includes structured interviews with key members of your group or team to identify specific topics for your training.

Our Most Popular Workshop Topics

Choose the topics that you want, or ask us to modify or create specific skills practice for your group. Topics for hospital teams are listed first, followed by topics for veterinary students.

FOR DOCTORS, MANAGERS, AND HOSPITAL TEAMS

Measuring and improving client numbers

Practice growth begins with measuring your current status, evaluating what you want to change, and then making a plan for improvement. This workshop begins with an outline of items you can measure, and how to do so: active clients, client retention (new vs existing clients), average client transaction, income by area, income by doctor, client compliance, and more. Changing begins with evaluation of the factors that influence those numbers. Attendees will learn ways they can discern cause and effect, making sure that efforts to improve ‘a number’ yield the desired and expected results. The connection between staff behavior and outcomes will be addressed in depth.

Transition to Leadership

When a team member becomes a team leader, when an associate becomes an owner, or any other time a team member changes their position, everyone has to make adjustments. This module explores the ways that everyone can prepare for the transition to leadership. If you're the practice owner, you will develop a plan to help your team member learn leadership skills. The person who is selected for leadership will determine the necessary steps to retain good relations with co-workers. And all team members can take steps to reduce conflict and help each other succeed during the time of change.

Creating Your Code

"How are we 'going to behave' at work?" Many hospital teams have not openly discussed this question. In this module, participants create their own code of conduct (for both individual and team interactions) as well as a conflict resolution policy.

Mediation Skills For Owners, Managers, And Team Leaders

Sometimes people can't or won't solve their own conflicts. Whether it's a long-standing "irritation" or an "acute" disagreement, sometimes the supervisor needs to step in to help others solve the problem. This module teaches a specific approach to help others talk in a "neutral" setting.

Coaching Skills For Owners, Managers, And Team Leaders

You want to change a behavior that has a negative effect at work. Whether it's a chronically late team member or someone with a "bad attitude," you can learn specific techniques to help the team member take responsibility for discovering their own solution to solving the problem. This module includes specific skills practice in coaching a team member.

Adjusting Attitude

How often have you heard, "Hire for attitude, train for skills?" You also may have heard, "I have an employee with a bad attitude." In this workshop, we discuss "attitude," define what it means, and clarify the methods you can use to "get a good attitude" out of your team. Specific practice in articulating specific behaviors is included.

How To Talk About Money To Clients (For The Entire Team).

Becoming more comfortable talking about money requires that you first examine your own feelings about money with an interactive exercise exploring "what is a lot of money?"

Next, we help everyone "feel in their gut" the real cost of the work that you do at your hospital (through another interactive exercise!). Finally, you practice new responses to a client's reaction about the cost of services.

Power, Relationships, and Work

Power can be increased by many factors, including job title, education, verbal ability, and access to information (often through friendships or family relationships). Whether it's you or another team member, whether it's best friends or family, the entire team is affected when two or more people share a closer bond than do the rest. How can you minimize the potential problems of friendships and family at work? This seminar focuses on how power affects relationships and

how relationships affect power in the workplace. Working in small groups, you will explore sources of power and realize the power that each person has, no matter what their position. The “unspoken rules” will be spoken about (e.g., “don’t say anything bad about the owner’s spouse!”), and ways to minimize conflict will be explored.

Convincing Others to Make a Change (or to agree to your great idea)

Whether you’re the boss, or not, you can’t always do what you want. Often you must get others to agree with you in order to get their full participation. In this workshop we talk about different ways people are motivated, discover your own and others’ “motivators,” and go through a step-by-step plan for creating a persuasive presentation about your idea. Each attendee practices their presentation with a partner.

Changing Behavior: Feedback, Teachable Moments, and Performance Reviews

“Performance management” is the process you use to improve performance of individuals and the team. This module discusses four approaches to changing behavior. Attendees will discern when each is best used and will apply each approach to their own situations. Specific words and phrases for effective feedback will be discussed and practiced. This module is appropriate for any team leader, manager, or practice owner.

Team Facilitation Skills for Owners, Managers, and Team Leaders

Getting a group together to talk can sometimes lead to chaos. This module focuses on specific techniques and frameworks that are used for specific processes. Attendees will form “hospital teams” that must hold team meetings, define roles, and create their Code of Conduct. Then the group will work in pairs so that each will have a chance to practice coaching another person to improve their behavior. Real-life scenarios are used.

Implementing Successful Team Meetings

A “staff meeting,” when done correctly, is a time for your team to actually communicate. This module helps you define the important factors that must come together for team meetings to really work. Attendees will form “hospital teams” that plan and hold their own meetings, including assigning roles, determining their conduct, creating an agenda, and ensuring all items are concluded with an action plan.

Improving Communication and Conflict Resolution

You’re having trouble getting along with a co-worker. How can you initiate a difficult conversation? What can you do to prepare yourself and improve your chances of solving the issues? In this module you will learn new language, phrases and words that you can apply to difficult conversations. We go far beyond the simple “Use I messages,” and help you explore new ways to talk to others.

Client Satisfaction Pays

Some veterinarians think that they have to choose between making people happy, practicing good medicine, and making money. But you *can* have all of these at once! This workshop covers compliance, affordability issues, quality of care, client decision-making, and other factors that enter into the dilemma of cost and care.

Exit Strategies, Generation, and Gender

If you're 50 or older, now is the time to analyze your exit plan. Even if you never officially "retire," you need to create a succession plan. Sometimes, gender or generation get a lot of attention when the real attention needs to be inward: Get your ducks in a row. Make your practice a business with value, then learn about needs and desires of potential buyers. You may need to mentor associates to groom future owners. You will learn about the key factors that make your practice a "good buy" from the young veterinarian's view, and how you can make the transition easier for everyone. Then, you will gain a better understanding of women and work issues that includes data and research (not just 'my opinion').

Making Good Decisions

Team members are happiest when they trust the processes that are used to make decisions. Blockades to good decision-making include conflict avoidance, fear of making the wrong decision, desire to please everyone, or non-verbalized assumptions about others. Leaders (managers and owners) learn and practice a tiered approach to decision-making that begins with deciding how to decide. Decisions can be made by one or more people, via collaboration, compromise, discussion, or debate. Attendees will create a plan for implementing transparent and deliberate decision-making at their own practice.

MODULES FOR STUDENTS

Career Planning

Dr. Smith, as the author of *Career Choices for Veterinarians: Beyond Private Practice*, has a broad understanding of all the career choices available to veterinarians. This half-day interactive workshop is nothing like the usually-dull lecture about the "list of career paths you can choose" that many schools have presented. Instead, students first explore their assumptions and stereotypes about various career paths. Each then analyzes their life priorities. Finally, they work to coordinate their life priorities with the choices that best fit their needs.

Negotiation Skills For Finding The Right First Job

Finding a job is not "hoping they'll take me," nor is it "they'll be lucky to get me." Instead, job-hunting must focus on making the right match. In this interactive half-day workshop, students will examine and clarify their vision of their future job. Next, they'll learn about and practice specific negotiation skills, including creating a plan for dealing with nervousness or a fear of confrontation when asking for salary, benefits, or specific working hours.

Making Changes In Your First Job

Every student graduates with a head-full of great ideas to implement at their first job. Sometimes, the hospital isn't doing things quite the way you'd like, or you may have some great ideas for making changes, updating equipment or processes, or other items. Dr. Smith will help you avoid having your boss say "I've tried that, and it doesn't work" or "Don't bother me, I'm too busy," or "I've got more experience than you, so do it My Way." In this interactive workshop, each student will create a plan for how to ask their boss to make a change. In pairs or small groups, each student will practice their presentation.

Your Job, Your Life

Finding the “right job” means more than finding a hospital that practices medicine and surgery they way you like. You also have other life priorities. How can you ensure that you achieve the balance that you desire? In this workshop, geared toward both students and recent graduates, we take a blunt and realistic look at work-life balance, including an analysis of the ideal versus real working worlds. Family time, part-time work, gender issues, friendships at work, and power balances are all discussed.

ABOUT DR. SMITH

Dr. Carin Smith is a consultant, trainer, and speaker who works with veterinarians and their teams to increase personal and business success. She gained experience in both large and small animal practice before devoting her time to consulting. Dr. Smith is a nationally-recognized, award-winning author of hundreds of magazine and journal articles and many books, including *Client Satisfaction Pays: Quality Service for Practice Success*; *Team Satisfaction Pays: Organizational Development for Practice Success* and *FlexVet: How to be One, How to Hire One: The Comprehensive Practice Guide*. Her career guides include *Career Choices for Veterinarians: Beyond Private Practice* and *Career Choices for Veterinary Technicians: Opportunities for Animal Lovers*. Dr. Smith is a major speaker at veterinary meetings throughout the US, Canada, and in Europe.

Dr. Smith acts as a facilitator for groups and associations that wish to create policy, standards, or guidelines. She is able to help teams from project initiation through publication of their final results.

Dr. Smith is a Director and a Charter Member of the VetPartners (formerly the Association of Veterinary Practice Management Consultants and Advisors / AVPMCA,). She is also a member the Veterinary Hospital Managers Association, the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD), the Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). She is a current member and a former Director of the American Veterinary Medical Law Association (AVMLA).

Dr. Smith received her DVM degree from Oregon State and Washington State Universities in 1984. Her private practice experience includes large animal (dairy, beef, equine), small animal (feline, emergency, and general) and mixed practices. She is a Certified Mediator and a Certified English Language Instructor. She has a Certificate in Veterinary Practice Administration from Purdue University / the Veterinary Management Institute (VMI).

Dr. Smith lives on a small farm in the mountains of Washington state with her husband and pets, including several cats, Australian Cattle dogs, and Tennessee Walkers used for mountain trail riding.