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Several years ago, my practice would have been considered successful by many standards and I was grateful for that. But I have to admit that running the office had become wearisome and I wanted to find a way to make it easier to help our patients and clients and provide a more stable work environment for our team.

About that time, I was contacted by Silkin, a nationally recognized practice management company in Portland, Oregon. I took them up on their offer for a free practice evaluation because our growth had stalled out. We weren't shrinking (yet) but we just couldn't grow past a certain point and I wanted figure out what kept us stuck at that level. Silkin's evaluation showed me that certain parts of the operation of the practice were limiting our efficiency and growth. Until we addressed those systems, we were never going to expand, and that just didn't sit right with me. I (somewhat skeptically) moved forward with a Silkin program aimed at optimizing the practice and now I consider it to be one of the best things I ever did for my practice.

Right away it became clear that we needed to get organized. Up to that point, I thought we did a good job of doing whatever it took to care for the patient and client in front of us. And while that is the most important part of providing care, we had developed a culture of chaos, where everyone was doing everything and I was responsible for overseeing too many things for the work to be effective. It's not that I didn't realize it had happened, but up until we got training from Silkin, we never had a method for truly changing things.

Before long, we each had clearly defined roles and protocols for each situation that could arise in the office. My office manager was trained to oversee operations so I could get back to performing and overseeing clinical duties. That changed everything! I got back to what I love to do and the management was delegated to those who had the time and training to do it right. For the first time we could implement improvements and follow through in such a way that a true transformation occurred.

Now we benefit from more productive relationships amongst ourselves and with our clients. And we have confidence that if changes are needed, we know it! And we know what to do and how to make it stick. There is just no substitute for the assurance that comes from knowing you really are doing everything you can to care for patients and clients. As a result, we've broken through that production ceiling and even though the economy has left many struggling here, we continue to grow.

My days of babysitting staff and feeling exhausted at the end of the day and being frustrated about practice problems are over. I strongly suggest that all veterinarians find out more about how they can accomplish the same more easily than they might think. Consider the Silkin free practice evaluation. It's a helpful process that can show you how to make it happen ... and you deserve it!

Sincerely,

Jean Hollenstein, D.V.M.