



Highland Park Veterinary Hospital

Some time ago, I realized that my veterinary practice was starting to grow and the old way of doing things just wasn't holding up to our new level of productivity. We were a bit disorganized and it became frustrating to have everyone doing their own thing and seeing some things left undone altogether. We wanted to find a way to designate responsibilities in the practice and become more efficient so we could reduce the stress we were experiencing at the time.

About that time I was contacted by Silkin Management Group, a nationally recognized practice management company in Portland, Oregon. They offered me a free evaluation of my practice and I thought it could be helpful in identifying our problem areas and getting us pointed in the right direction.

Truthfully, the analysis was more in depth than I expected. The consultant was very detailed in letting us know what he felt was contributing to our problems and what needed to be done to fix them. But taking on the cost and time commitment of a consulting program was a bit intimidating. My wife and I decided that we just weren't happy with how things were going and we knew it wasn't going to change on its own. From that point forward, it was such a relief because, although we knew that we'd have to work hard to make changes, we were already working hard for unsatisfactory results. We felt that this new approach would actually be productive for the practice.

Just identifying the key roles in the office and getting the right people in place made a huge difference. We started using an office manager who was able to devote attention to the running of the practice instead of me trying to do it while also seeing appointments or it not getting done at all. From there we were able to structure training for each position that would allow staff members to dedicate their efforts to what needed to be done, not just take up the next task in front of them and never make any forward progress.

The most noteworthy result came in the form of practice growth. We weren't looking for astronomical growth but have consistently risen from year to year and I know we wouldn't have been able to accomplish that beyond a certain point without some guidance along the way. Infrastructure adjustments, specific staff training and evaluations, hiring assistance and monitoring practice statistics were the key components that helped us progress forward consistently, not the "band-aid" fix of just adjusting fees.

What I can see clearly now is that most doctors don't have anything to compare their current situation with, and they often feel our profession is problematic by nature. Now I know that it really doesn't have to be that way. It's easier than you think to use simple techniques that someone else already determined will work for a practice and just apply them to your situation. That kind of help doesn't have a downside! And we found it to be enjoyable and rewarding to consistently make improvements that eventually mean more and better care for those in our community.

If you want to end the uncertainty about what to do to streamline your office and achieve your goals, contact Silkin Management Group and find out about the free practice evaluation they offer. They can help you find an approach that will be effective and can really make a difference in your practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Forret". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael Forret, D.V.M.