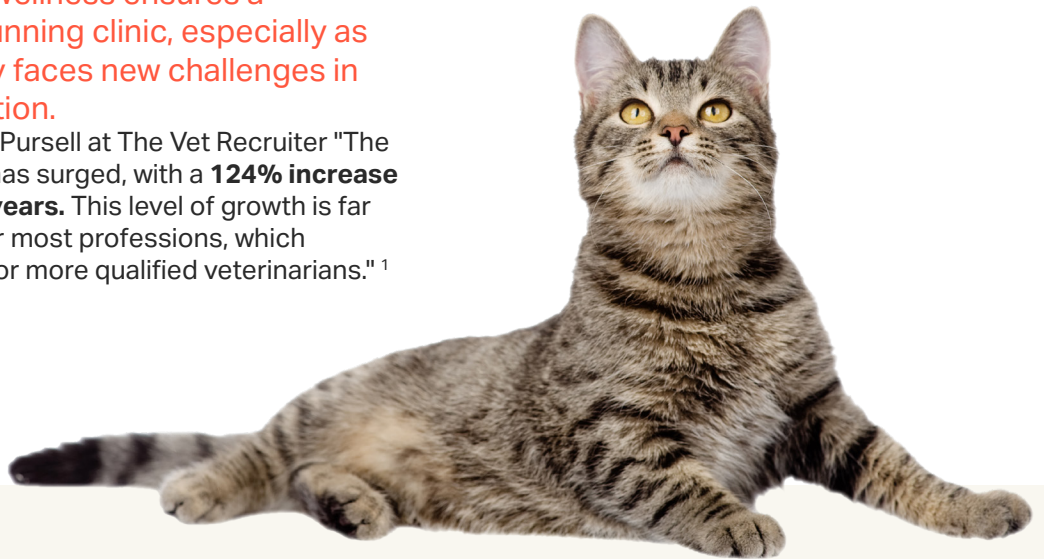


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

to Recruiting and Retaining Employees at Your Clinic

Prioritizing employee wellness ensures a successful, smooth-running clinic, especially as the veterinary industry faces new challenges in recruitment and retention.

In fact, according to Stacy Pursell at The Vet Recruiter "The demand for veterinarians has surged, with a **124% increase in job listings over three years**. This level of growth is far higher than the average for most professions, which suggests an urgent need for more qualified veterinarians."¹



Recruiting and Retaining Vet Staff

Recruitment is no longer just about filling open positions—it's about attracting and retaining top talent who want to stay and grow with your clinic. Understanding the evolving needs of veterinary professionals, especially as new graduates enter the workforce, is crucial.

Stephanie Goss, Founder of VetMedLife, states, "For me, it starts with who we are, but also what we are offering the candidate. It's not just about us putting ourselves out there," she said. "We have to be transparent about what we are offering them, because the reality is it's an employee's world right now from a hiring perspective and from a talent development perspective."

¹ <https://thevetrecruiter.com/why-veterinarian-is-the-top-job-of-2025-and-what-to-do-about-it/>



RECRUITING VETS

Key Considerations for Your Clinic

Attracting the right veterinary professionals requires an understanding of their evolving needs. By addressing these needs effectively, clinics can recruit top talent and build a loyal team.

1. Address Employee Needs

Today's veterinary professionals seek workplaces that meet a variety of needs:

- **Supportive Work Environment**
A collaborative, empathetic culture is essential. Clinics should foster a team-oriented atmosphere where staff feel valued and respected.
Action: Encourage open communication and provide leadership that supports staff both personally and professionally.
- **Competitive Benefits Packages**
Comprehensive benefits, including health insurance, paid time off, and additional perks like pet care discounts, are key to attracting and retaining talent.
Action: Regularly review and enhance benefits packages to stay competitive.
- **Continuing Education & Career Development**
Offering growth opportunities through ongoing education and training is vital to keep staff engaged.
Action: Provide financial support for courses and conferences, and create opportunities for staff to specialize or move into leadership roles.
- **Flexibility**
Flexibility in scheduling, especially for non-clinical tasks, is increasingly important to work-life balance.
Action: Offer flexible work hours or remote options where possible to support personal and professional needs.

2. Transparency and Open Communication

Clear communication helps build trust and attract candidates who understand what to expect from their role.

- **Job Expectations & Compensation**
Be upfront about job responsibilities, work-life balance, and salary. Transparency helps avoid mismatched expectations.
Action: Clearly communicate role requirements, salary ranges, and any flexibility offered during the hiring process.
- **Work-Life Balance**
Veterinary staff are seeking jobs that offer flexibility and time off without compromising their career goals.
Action: Discuss scheduling expectations and policies on time off early in the process.



3. Fostering a Positive Clinic Culture

A positive, inclusive, and supportive clinic culture is critical in attracting top talent.

- **Collaboration & Teamwork**

A culture that encourages teamwork and mutual support makes the clinic more appealing to prospective hires.

Action: Foster teamwork through regular meetings and team-building activities.

- **Employee Recognition**

Acknowledging staff accomplishments—big and small—shows appreciation and strengthens loyalty.

Action: Implement recognition programs to celebrate employee milestones and contributions.

- **Burnout Prevention & Mental Health Support**

Providing resources for mental health and burnout prevention shows that the clinic cares about staff well-being.

Action: Offer wellness programs, flexible scheduling, and stress-management resources.

Key Questions:

- Is your clinic an environment where new hires will feel supported and succeed?
- Are you offering the resources needed to prevent burnout and support mental health?

PREPARING for New Graduates

As veterinary schools graduate new doctors and techs each year, clinics must be prepared to integrate these new professionals into their teams. This generation of graduates is looking for clinics that provide mentorship, growth opportunities, and a clear path forward in their careers.

1. **Mentorship and Continuing Education**

New grads are eager for learning opportunities. Offering mentorship programs and clear paths for continued education not only helps new staff transition into clinical roles but also ensures that your clinic stays on the cutting edge of veterinary care.

2. **Creating a Supportive Onboarding Process**

Effective onboarding is key to retaining new staff, particularly new graduates. In 2025, onboarding should not be a one-time event but an ongoing process that fosters inclusion and provides support as new employees grow within their roles.



RETAINING VETS

Ongoing Strategies for Your Clinic

Retention is just as important as recruitment when building a high-performing veterinary clinic. While attracting new talent is essential, ensuring that your current team feels valued, supported, and invested in their professional journey is crucial for long-term success. Veterinary professionals are increasingly seeking workplaces that align with their values and offer opportunities for personal and professional growth. Here are key strategies to ensure staff stay engaged and loyal to your clinic:

1. Show Genuine Care

Compassionate management is at the heart of retention. Veterinary professionals face intense emotional and physical demands, so demonstrating care for their well-being can have a significant impact on their commitment to your clinic. This goes beyond the basic benefits package and extends into creating a culture of empathy and support.



Key Actions:

- **Personalized Support**
In times of personal difficulty (such as illness, family issues, or loss), reach out to offer support in meaningful ways. Small gestures, like sending a thoughtful note or arranging help with tasks, can make a huge difference.
- **Wellness Programs**
Offer resources that support the mental and emotional well-being of your team, such as access to counseling, stress management workshops, or memberships to wellness programs. This is especially important in the veterinary industry, where burnout and compassion fatigue are prevalent.
- **Employee Recognition**
Regularly acknowledging achievements, both big and small, fosters a sense of belonging. Consider implementing recognition programs, like employee of the month or shout-outs during team meetings, to reinforce that their hard work is appreciated.

By consistently demonstrating that you care about your team's welfare, you create an environment where employees feel emotionally supported, which is a significant motivator for retention.



2. Effective Communication



Communication is the foundation of any positive workplace culture. Without regular, transparent communication, misunderstandings and resentment can easily build up, leading to disengagement and turnover. Employees need to feel that their voices are heard and that they are an active part of the decision-making process within the clinic.



Key Actions:

- **Regular Check-Ins**
Hold regular one-on-one meetings with your staff to discuss their current experiences, concerns, and career aspirations. These meetings should be a two-way conversation, where both feedback and concerns are actively sought and addressed.
- **Transparency in Decision Making**
Involve your team in decisions that impact their daily work and the clinic as a whole. This could include changes in scheduling, new policies, or updates on clinic performance. When employees understand the "why" behind decisions, they are more likely to feel connected to the clinic's mission.
- **Open-Door Policy**
Encourage an environment where staff can speak openly about any issues they may be facing. Whether it's a concern about workload, an interpersonal conflict, or ideas for improving clinic operations, having a clear and open channel for communication ensures issues are dealt with early, preventing frustration from building up.

By fostering an environment of open and honest communication, you build trust with your team, ensuring they feel supported and valued, which directly contributes to retention.



3. Growth Opportunities




Veterinarians, particularly those fresh out of vet school, are driven by opportunities for continuous learning and growth. If they don't see a path for development within your clinic, they may seek other opportunities that offer more room for advancement.



Key Actions:

- **Continuing Education**
Offer financial support for courses, conferences, or certifications that help employees grow their expertise. Vets and techs will appreciate clinics that encourage and support their professional development.
- **Leadership Programs**
Some veterinary professionals aspire to management or leadership roles. Develop a clear path for career progression that includes leadership training programs for those interested in taking on more responsibility. This could involve mentoring opportunities, job shadowing, or management training.
- **Specialization Support**
Veterinary staff may be interested in specializing in certain areas, such as surgery, dermatology, or oncology. Offering the chance to develop specialized skills or create niche expertise keeps employees engaged and helps your clinic provide high-quality care in specialized areas.

By offering opportunities to grow professionally, you show your staff that you are committed to their long-term success, not just their current roles.



4. Work-Life Balance

The importance of work-life balance cannot be overstated. In the wake of the pandemic, employees in all industries have placed a high value on balancing their personal and professional lives. For veterinarians, long hours, weekend shifts, and emotional strain can lead to burnout if there's no balance in place.



Key Actions:

- **Flexible Scheduling**
Implement flexible work arrangements where possible, such as job sharing, part-time hours, or the ability to swap shifts with colleagues. This flexibility allows employees to manage their work and personal life more effectively.
- **Time-Off Policies**
Make sure that employees feel comfortable taking time off when needed without fear of repercussions. Encourage your team to take their vacation time and mental health days, and ensure that they know it's okay to take breaks when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Supportive Environment for Families**
Many veterinary professionals juggle work with family responsibilities. Offering options like parental leave, childcare assistance, or flexible work hours for those with children can significantly improve staff retention.
- **Burnout Prevention**
Be proactive in preventing burnout by managing workloads to avoid excessive stress. Offering wellness initiatives, such as yoga classes, mental health resources, and stress management workshops, helps staff feel supported and valued in all aspects of their lives.

Clinics that actively support their staff in achieving a healthy work-life balance will find themselves with lower turnover and higher morale, which translates to better overall performance.

As the demand for veterinary services grows, recruiting and retaining talented veterinarians and technicians has never been more crucial. With platforms like Otto.vet, clinics can ensure they're ready to support both new graduates entering the workforce and existing staff, all while creating an environment that fosters retention and job satisfaction.

By adapting to the evolving needs of employees, prioritizing transparent communication, and supporting continuous growth, your clinic can build a loyal and highly skilled team for years to come.



ABOUT OTTO

Otto is how modern clinics deliver big wins. We offer a comprehensive client engagement platform that helps veterinary clinics streamline communications, improve practice profitability, and increase client satisfaction.



To learn more, schedule a demonstration