

insightful.vet |

Supporting New Veterinary Graduates Using the Whole Clinical Team



Dr. Kate Boatright, VMD
Kristin Moritz

How many of you are currently trying to hire another veterinarian for your practice?



**How many of you have hired
an early career veterinarian
(0-3 years experience) in
the past three years?**



**Do you feel prepared
to support an early
career veterinarian?**



Agenda

1

Value of Mentorship

2

Early Career
Veterinarian Mindset

3

Practical Mentorship

4

Role of the Team



Value of Mentorship

Defining Mentorship

“A **two-way relationship** and type of human development in which **one individual invests** personal knowledge, energy, and time in order to **help another individual grow** and develop and improve to become the best and most successful they can be.”

- 2023 AAHA Mentoring Guidelines (*Reinhard et al*)

Mentorship is More Than a Training Program

Mutually-beneficial **relationship** that promotes professional and personal growth

Support Skill
Development

Work Toward
Specific,
Individualized
Goals

Provide Timely
And Specific
Feedback

Support
Through
Personal &
Professional
Challenges

Create
Connection

Mentorship Takes Many Forms

Traditional
Mentorship

More experienced
individual supports
a less experienced
individual

Reverse
Mentorship

Less experienced
individual serves in
the "teaching" role

Peer Mentorship

Individuals of
equal experience
support each
other

Remote
Mentorship

Mentor and
mentee in
different locations

Mosaic Mentorship

The Value of Mentorship: Human Factor



Mentee

Ease transition into the clinic
Provide support network
Supports confidence building

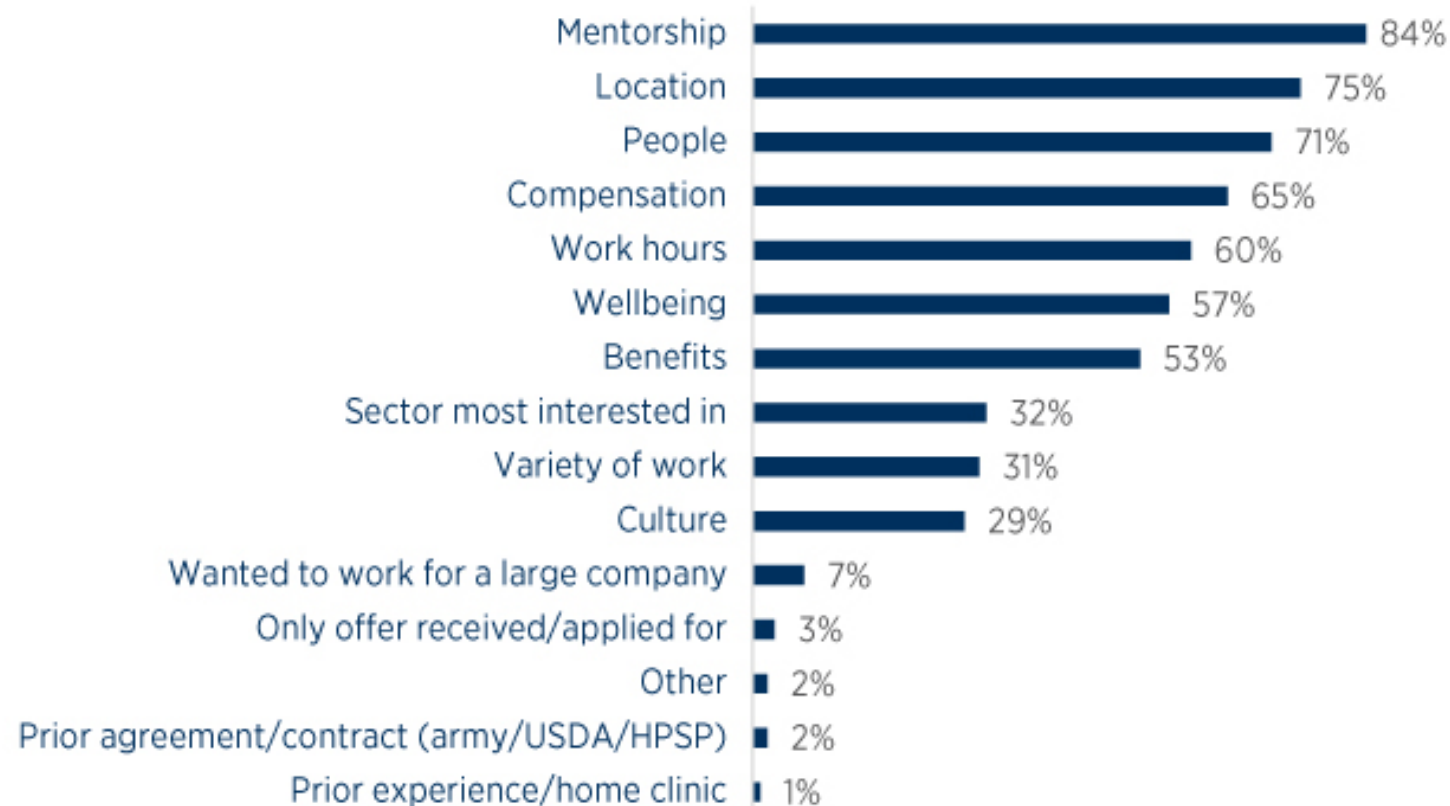


Mentor

Enhance professional satisfaction
Personally rewarding
Potential for two-way learning

The Value of Mentorship: Improve Recruitment

Reasons for accepting job offer 2022



Source: 2022 AVMA Graduating Senior Survey

The Value of Mentorship: Improve Retention

Up to 45%
New Grads

- Leave their first job within the first 1.4 years

Top 2
Reasons

- Toxic Environment
- Lack of Mentorship

Risk Factors for Turnover

Toxic Practice Culture

Lack of Mentorship/
Support

Working > 55 hours
per week

*(compared with working
<45 hours per week)*

Being put into
situations that they
could not handle

Having employers
that did not
regularly check on
mental and physical
well-being

The Value of Mentorship: Costs of Turnover

Financial Losses

- \$104,000 median cost of turnover for veterinarian in 2020
- 50-75% annual salary to replace

Decreased

- Revenue
- Productivity
- Efficiency
- Appointment availability

Increased

- Stress for remaining team
- Client frustration

MATTHEW J. RYAN
VETERINARY HOSPITAL OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



Setting Expectations

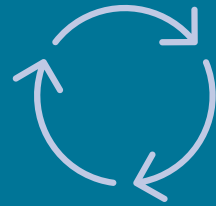
Understanding the early
career veterinarian
mindset

Challenges of Starting a New Job

Experienced Staff Members



Computer
System



Workflow



Inventory



Team
Dynamics



Clientele &
Patients

Challenges of Starting a New Job

Early Career Challenges



Financial
Pressure



Practical
Knowledge
Gap



Transition to
Leadership
Role



Imposter
Syndrome



Higher Risk
of Mental
Health
Challenges



Confidence
Building

**A lack of confidence should
NOT be equated with a lack
of knowledge.**



Are They Ready? Trials, Tribulations, and Professional Skills Vital for New Veterinary Graduate Success

Addie R. Reinhard^{1}, Kristina D. Hains¹, Bryan J. Hains¹ and Elizabeth B. Strand²*

¹ College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, United States, ² College of Veterinary Medicine and College of Social Work, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Knoxville, TN, United States

Client
Communication

Conflict
Management

Self-Care

Early Career Mental Health

Compared to older colleagues

- Higher levels of psychological distress
- Lower levels of wellbeing
- Lower levels of job satisfaction

Veterinarians have better wellbeing and mental health than team members

- Team member mental health, job satisfaction, and burnout levels vary by position





SMALL ANIMAL

VETERINARY MENTORSHIP MANUAL

This workbook is designed to take you step-by-step through the process of setting up a mentorship program for early career veterinarians in your practice.

KATE BOATRIGHT, VMD

1

The American Animal Hospital Association

Mentoring Guidelines

Practical Mentorship

Setting a framework for
early career mentorship

Mentorship Agreement

Define the Length of
the Formal
Mentorship Program

Set General
Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and
Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include
Feedback Plan

Terminating the
Agreement



Mentorship Agreement

Define the Length of
the Formal
Mentorship Program

Set General
Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and
Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include
Feedback Plan

Terminating the
Agreement



Mentorship Agreement

Define the Length of the Formal Mentorship Program

Set General Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include Feedback Plan

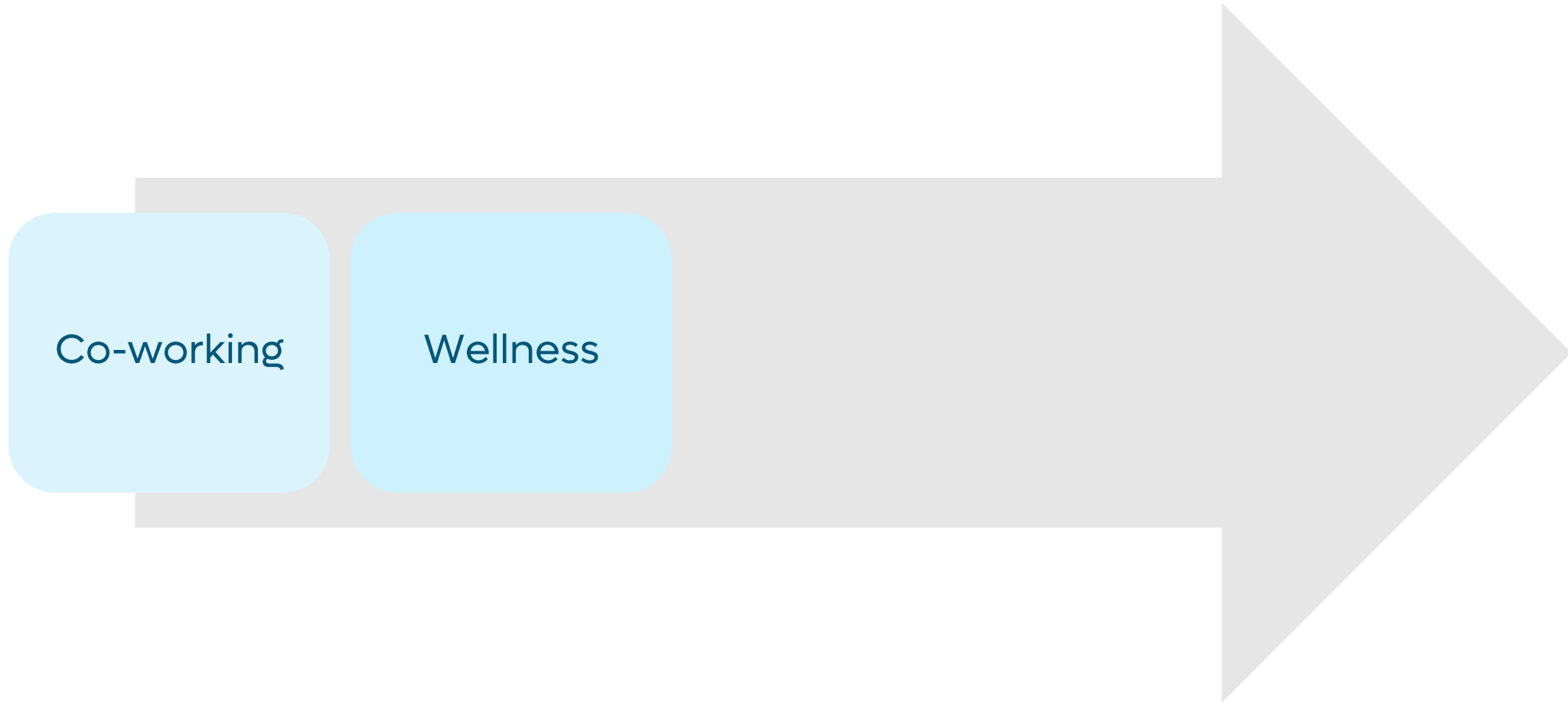
Terminating the Agreement



Mentorship Framework / Schedule



Mentorship Framework / Schedule



Mentorship Framework / Schedule



Mentorship Framework / Schedule



Mentorship Framework / Schedule



Timeline Considerations: Mentor Meetings

Regular mentor meetings allow dedicated time for

- Non-urgent Case Review
- Discussion of “soft” skill development
- Wellbeing check-ins and support
- Goal setting and check-in on progress

Time should be protected

- Consider going off-site
- Consider off-hours options
- If scheduling during the day, book first thing in morning or right after lunch

Maximizing the Time

- Have a standard agenda
- Pick specific discussion topics

Additional Timeline Considerations

- Length of appointments
- Blocks/Catch up Times
- Planned Progression and Flexibility
- Working Alone
- Frequency of Formal Feedback
- Staffing Levels
- Surgical/Dental Procedures



Mentorship Agreement

Define the Length of
the Formal
Mentorship Program

Set General
Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and
Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include
Feedback Plan

Terminating the
Agreement



Mentor Responsibilities

Provide support and guidance on clinical cases

Set schedule and ensure team sticks to it

Provide timely and specific feedback

Demonstrate communication, leadership, and other essential non-clinical skills

Support confidence building

Model healthy boundaries and other personal wellness skills

Mentee Responsibilities

Be aware of clinic protocols

Prepare for cases

Engage in self-directed learning

Ask for help when you need it

Be open to feedback and suggestions

Elicit feedback

Provide feedback to mentor

Share knowledge with your team

Practice self-care

Develop non-clinical skills

Ask for resources you need

Make respectful suggestions

Clinic Responsibilities

Provide materials to mentee (HR documents, protocols, SOPs)

Set schedule and protect it

Solicit feedback from clients and team members

Provide timely and specific feedback

Hold mentor and mentee accountable to agreement

Mentorship Agreement

Define the Length of
the Formal
Mentorship Program

Set General
Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and
Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include
Feedback Plan

Terminating the
Agreement



Mentors: Providing Feedback

Should be timely and specific

- Positive feedback can come in the moment
- Opportunities for improvement should come close to the specific time of concern
- “Clear is Kind”

Determine best environment

- Timing
- Location
- Individuals Present

Schedule a time for a “circle back”

- Gives mentee time to digest feedback
- Create a plan for responding

Mentees: Receiving Feedback

You have minimal control over where or how feedback is delivered

- You do have control over how you respond

In the Moment

- Keep an open mind
- Try not to take it personally
- Take a deep breath
- Be aware of your nonverbals
- Practice reflective listening

Schedule a time for a “circle back”

Mentees: Receiving Feedback

Seek support from others

Take time to reflect

- Do you need additional information?
- What is actionable?
- What actions do you need to take?

Follow-up plan

- Set goals and timelines for addressing concerns with mentor
- Discuss preferences in receiving feedback
- Keep asking for more feedback

Mentorship Agreement

Define the length of
the Formal
Mentorship Program

Set General
Mentorship Schedule

Define Roles and
Responsibilities

- Mentor
- Mentee
- Management

Include
Feedback Plan

Terminating the
Agreement





The Role of the Team

Setting Expectations

Hold a team meeting

- Allows time for discussion and questions
- Consider inviting mentee to a meeting for introductions prior to start date
- Discuss role of each team member

All team members should be aware of general plan

- Who is go-to for feedback?
- What is the planned schedule progression and how will changes be communicated?

Review expectations

- Share early career challenges
- Differences in efficiency and confidence



Roles and Responsibilities: Whole Team

The background of the slide features a blue-tinted image of several hands in business attire holding and fitting together white puzzle pieces. The puzzle pieces are arranged in a grid-like pattern, symbolizing teamwork and collaboration.

Be Welcoming

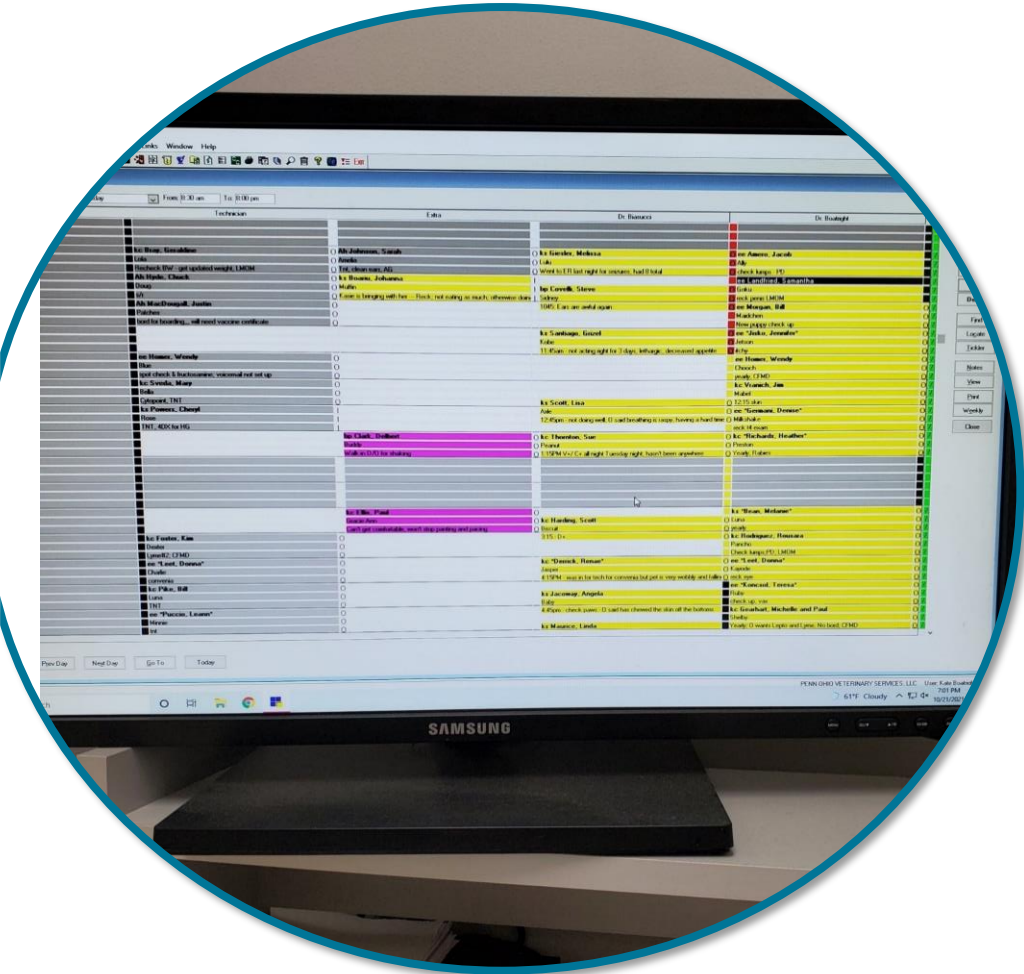
Client Intros

Contribute Feedback

Protect Schedule

Promote Confidence
Building

Roles and Responsibilities: CSR



Be familiar with scheduling for early career veterinarians

- Who to schedule
- When to schedule
- What to schedule
- Interests of mentee

Utilize your expertise of clients/patients

- Share background information and preferences
- Make introductions
- Elicit client feedback
- Make follow-up calls

Roles and Responsibilities: Nursing Team

Maximize
Efficiency Of
Veterinarians

Share Experiences
And Observations

Discuss Utilization

Make Respectful
Suggestions

Support Technical
Skill Development

Provide Support In
Difficult Client
Communication



Roles and Responsibilities: Primary Mentor



Provide Medical and Surgical Case Support

Review Cases and Medical Records as Needed

Provide Feedback

Model Communication and Leadership Skills

Advocate with Leadership

Liaison Between Mentee and the Team

Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

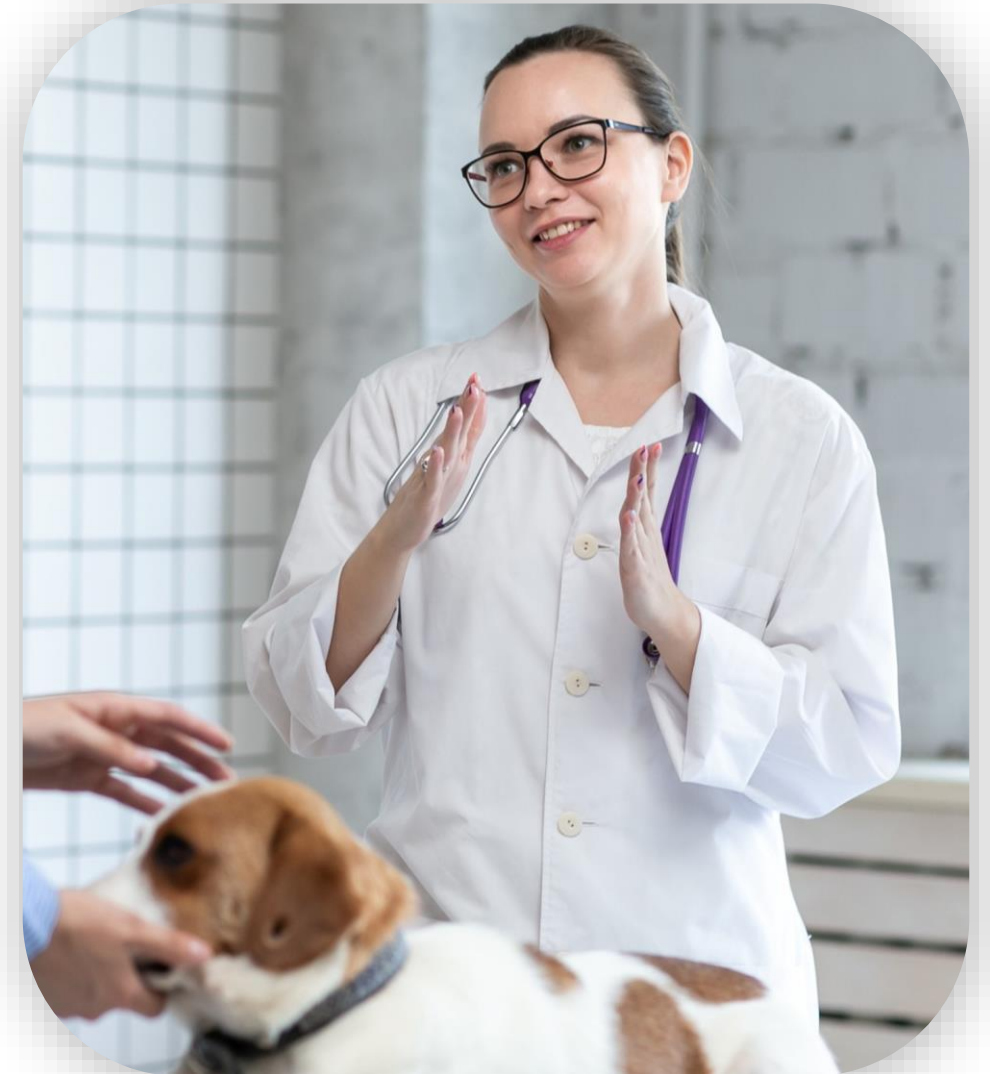
Roles and Responsibilities: Other Veterinarians

Case Support as Needed

Support during procedures

Mental Health Support

Model Communication and Leadership Skills



Roles and Responsibilities: Practice Management



Ensure that Mentorship Agreement is Upheld

Assist with Conflict Management

Collect and Deliver Feedback from Team and Clients

Evaluate Efficiency

Take Home Points

- Mentorship improves recruitment and retention for early career veterinarians.
- Early career veterinarians have unique needs that are supported through mentorship.
- Having a mentorship plan in place will help to execute exceptional mentorship.
- All team members have a vital role in supporting early career veterinarians.

Mentorship Resources

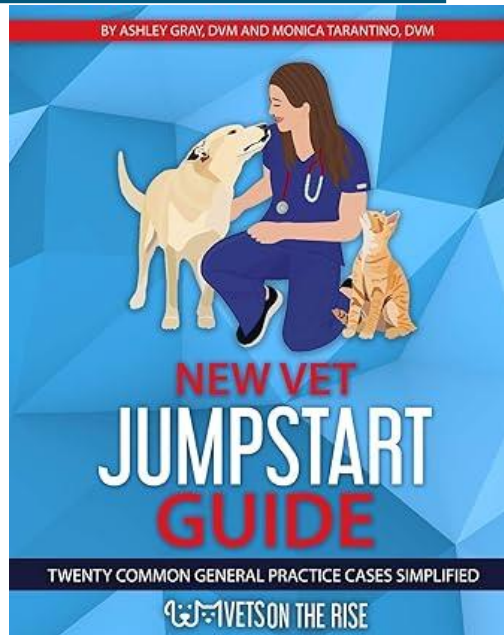


2023 AAHA Mentoring Guidelines



Pawsibilities

READYVETGO
VETERINARY MENTORSHIP, ELEVATED





insightful.vet |

Questions?

hello@writetheboat.com

www.writetheboat.com

IG: @WriteTheBoat

