

WHEN FIRING IS THE NEXT STEP

Navigating an Uncomfortable Reality in
Your Veterinary Practice



PLACES WE CAN GO WRONG WHEN LETTING PEOPLE GO

For a practice to grow, we need great talent on our team. Sometimes this means that you'll need to help someone find their best future outside of the hospital. You can handle this termination in the best light or in ways that could negatively impact the future of this employee and the practice.

Places we can go wrong when letting people go:

- **We don't fire because:**
 - **We compare employees to a vacancy**

We falsely believe that having a mediocre employee is better than being short-staffed.
 - **We confuse compliance with improvement**

Compliance is surface-level agreement with an idea, but improvement comes with ownership.
- **We make it a surprise**

If an employee is surprised when he or she is let go, we probably haven't done our part to coach them and have conversations about their goals and plans for improvement.
- **We don't coach well first**

Sometimes we think the solution is to get rid of under-performers and hire a bunch of superstars. Coaching matters and it's our job as leaders to help people grow, develop and create more insights because of the conversations we have with them.
- **We don't have a process**

Review your hiring process to see if there are any areas that can be improved in order to increase your chances of hiring a superstar and reduce your chances of bringing someone onboard who doesn't work out.

HOW FIRING SHOULD HAPPEN AT ITS BEST

Done well, firing may be the catalyst that helps them approach their next one differently. Make sure to be clear about the reasons why they were fired. This way, they can understand the changes they need to make to be successful in their next role. Great coaches even get thanked by the people who they have fired for helping them ultimately find where they fit.



It is a logical conclusion reached by both parties

If we have made a strong effort to coach and support a team member and they don't want to or are unable to make the changes needed to be successful, they will usually want to find a place where they can succeed.



We are on a path to improvement or exit

When an employee chooses to improve or we must fire them, we're able to move one step closer to creating a culture of success for the practice.



People are effectively coached along the way

Coaching our team members so they are clear about their goals helps them make the changes necessary to achieve them and also feel supported as they put forth the effort.



Employees make their best choices for their own future

When your employees are actively engaged in setting goals and working towards them, they will begin to make choices that are right for them and the team.

Firing an employee is rarely an easy process but doing it well will lead to greater success for you, your team, and your practice.

PROGRESSION **BEFORE** WE FIRE

DEVELOPMENTAL COACHING






PLAN A

PLAN B

THEIR CHOICE

OUR CHOICE

FACTORS THAT LEAD TO EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE EXITS

-  **They set goals for success during developmental coaching**
They have a clear picture of where they want to be in the future.
-  **They have a plan for their improvement**
They have a well-defined plan to make needed changes.
-  **They shift the plan if it's not working**
They are flexible and look for ways to improve even if the first plan falls short.
-  **They decide if this is the right place for them if they can't make progress**
They may choose a different future where progress is possible for them.
-  **We decide if they are right for our future if they choose not to make progress**
We must make the decision to do what is best for this person and the hospital.

Firing people is hard. But sometimes it's the right thing to do for the team and for the people who need to go find a place where they can succeed. If you make talent changes the right way, it creates a culture of success. Your all-stars will thrive, while the people who are no longer with you will get a fresh start.

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