

Recruiting Tips: Marketing Your Veterinary Associate Position to Purdue Seniors

The current high demand for associate veterinarians continues to frustrate practice owners who struggle with recruiting efforts. Review this article for tips on improving your chances for success.

Predominant student criteria for selecting their first job as a practicing veterinarian include:

- Species focus: usually consistent with their 4th year track selection
- Geographic location: often related to hometown origins
- How are emergencies handled? Local emergency clinic OR rotation within colleague group that requires only 1 night a week and/or one weekend per month of on-call responsibility.
- Salary: New graduates look forward to raising their standard of living from that of a student to that of a young professional AND to retire educational debt. Servicing of the current average educational debt of new graduates requires \$7,200/yr. after taxes to retire the debt in ten years.
- Benefits: most benefit packages are equal to 7-10 percent of base salary

While other criteria may be important for some, this list encompasses the common thread among many graduating veterinary students. These criteria are essential ingredients to include in your job advertisement.

What can you do to increase your recruiting success?

1. Complete the DVM Employment Opportunity Form (DVMEOF) provided by the Office of Student Services and Admissions (765-494-7609/ fax 765-496-2891) or via the web page: <www.vet.purdue.edu/vad/ossaform/htm>.
2. State salary being offered. "Salary commensurate with experience" or "negotiable" falls short of the mark. *Of 283 jobs listed during the last year, only 25% listed salary and benefits.* Students have great difficulty carving out time from their clinical duties to pursue employment opportunities. If the basic information listed above and requested on the DVMEOF is not complete, the tendency is for the student to go to the next opportunity. If your position remains unfilled after 6 months, advise the Student Services office so that they will maintain and not purge your listing.

3. Register as a host practice for externships.

Many positive extern experiences result in a long-term employment relationship after the student graduates. There is some comfort in taking a position where some of the “unknowns” related to a new job have been eliminated. The Student Services office also handles extern host registration. To electronically submit use this web address:
<www.vet.purdue.edu/vad/externform.html>

The SVM provides direct support of the recruiting/job-seeking effort by 1) maintaining a Job Book in paper form in the Student Services Office, 2) by maintaining current job lists both in posted hard copy and electronically, and 3) by providing customized reports to students that match their tracking and geographic interests with job opportunities on file. It is anticipated that a list of senior students seeking positions in Indiana will be published in the Hoosier Veterinarian.

To review, always list your practice’s species focus, geographic location, salary (minimum or range) and benefits offered, and emergency duty requirements. Additional information may also be useful and desirable, but these big five are a must if a response or further inquiry is to occur. Build relationships with prospective associates by hosting externships or by recruiting to familiar and desired geographic location.

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Salary factoid:

Survey of published salary offers indicates:

20% of offers in the \$30K’s

50% of offers in the \$40K’s

30% of offers in the \$50K’s

Benefits add approximately 10% to “package” value