

The New Grad Power Plan - Mentorship 2.0

Lindsay Gallagher, VMD, ACVB Resident

A new graduate veterinarian is a powerful energy source with immense potential to affect your clinic. They are bursting with enthusiasm and optimism. Their brains are jam-packed with knowledge, the most up to date information available and lessons from board-certified specialists in every area of medicine. They are not jaded, they are not disheartened, they are not discouraged (yet). They are aware of the things that weigh heavy on the people out in practice, but those weights have not attached, or at least, they have not yet worn them down. A new grad vet is loaded with rocket fuel, and ready for launch.

All that energy and power does come with some risk. It is up to you to help direct that power, and use it as a force for good, rather than letting it careen out of control, leaving damage in its wake. If you harness all that energy and point it in the right direction, it can invigorate your practice, and take you very far in the direction you want to go. A new grad will work hard for you (because they are used to working hard), they will soak up every bit of knowledge you give them (because they are eager to learn), and they can help you raise your own level of medical practice (because they have the latest info to share, and they still tend to practice like their grade depends on it). But as I bet you already guessed, it's not always that simple or easy. The new grad can also burn out incredibly quickly, especially if they lack guidance and expend energy on a backward or chaotic path. They have a plethora of knowledge but lack the experience in applying it. For the most part, they are used to working alone or in a group of their choosing, and in an environment that suits them best (often a quiet library, or locked in their room), so knowing how to leverage the team and get work done in a more chaotic environment can be challenging.

During this workshop, we will be developing your plan for bringing a new grad vet into the practice or supporting the one you already have. This plan will help you harness the energy of the new grad, so that they find direction without burnout or chaos, and you both benefit from the power of youth. At the same time, you will be growing a dedicated, loyal, team member, who will hopefully stay with your practice for some time. As a 2016 graduate myself, I can share what I have learned from my personal experiences, including the things I would have changed, the things I struggled with most and the things that worked well. I have also collected stories and advice from other new grads, some with similar experiences and preferences as mine, and some drastically different.

Your New Grad Power Plan will start by preparing the clinic. That includes identifying what resources you have available to the new grad at your hospital, and knowing what resources you should acquire or set up for them prior to their arrival. We will identify the key players in your practice to team up with your new grad. We will build hype at the clinic, and get buy-in from staff and clients. We will discuss scheduling your new grad's time in and out of appointments.

Another key to promoting new grad success is knowing the common pitfalls and struggles to watch out for. If you can identify a problem early, you can address it before it has a chance to grow or burnout your new grad. Once you have detected a problem, you will need to mentor your new grad back in the right direction. As I am sure you know, there are great mentors, OK mentors, bad mentors and even "mentors" who do way more harm than good. We will develop some ways you can supercharge your mentorship skills, including ways to better identify problems or pearls to polish, provide feedback, and develop useful, actionable, solutions and tools to help your new grad improve and grow. When any employee feels supported, they are likely to have a greater positive impact on your clinic. By supporting your new grad through the resources, techniques, and plan we will develop in the workshop, you can harness that new grad power, to energize the clinic and fuel practice growth.

The New Grad Power Plan - Mentorship 2.0 Worksheet

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OBJECTIVES

We are going to create a plan to help you support a recent graduate veterinarian working in your practice. We will set your new grad up for success, know the common new grad struggles and how to spot them early, and supercharge your mentorship skills so your new grad will learn faster, work smarter and love you for it!

TOOL KIT

RESOURCE LIBRARY

- *Blackwell's 5 Minute Veterinary Consult, Clinical Veterinary Advisor* (Cote)
- *Diagnostic Radiology and Ultrasound of the Dog and Cat* (Kealy)
- *Veterinary Internal Medicine* (Ettinger)
- *Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Manual* (Mathews)
- *Small Animal Medical Differential Diagnosis* (Thompson)
- Clinician's Brief, DVM360, eClinPath

Don't forget Plumbs!

BONUS: TyperTask - Not a medical reference, but a must-have tool!

VALUABLE LESSONS

- All your best spiels for explaining things to owners
- How to do medicine when funds are limited
- Phrases to get yourself out of a room, off the phone or out of other sticky situations
- See something, say something! - Don't let your patient with a CCL tear, hepatomegaly, cataracts, etc., walk out the door without letting your new grad get a feel or look.
- Efficiency - what's your secret?

COMMON PITFALLS

- #1 Medical records!
- Physical skills (e.g., venipuncture, cystocentesis, surgery)
- Underutilize technicians and other team members
- Under or over-communicate
- Under or over-confident

KEY POINTS

- Your new graduate vet is a powerful energy source for your practice! Use it wisely, and everyone will go far.
- Provide reliable, easily accessible resources (books, websites, people).
- Watch out for common pitfalls and struggles many new grads face.
- In times of struggle, seek first to understand, then develop tools and actionable solutions together.

MY NEW GRAD POWER PLAN TO DO LIST

This is where you can write down the details of your specific plan for the new grad in your clinic. Here are just some of the questions to consider and answer.

What resources do you already have, and what resources do you want to acquire?

If they are relocating, what should they know about the area?

Who are the key players on your team, and what roles will they play?

What were/are your personal vet med struggles?

What scheduling changes will you need to make, and/or how will you schedule time to mentor your new grad on a regular basis?

What are your vet med superpowers that you can teach?

How will you get to know your new grad, and how will you maintain that relationship moving forward? What are the best spiels that you know and use often?

What do you love about having a new grad vet at the practice (general, or specific to the person)?

Any tables, charts, protocol guides, etc., that might help them acclimate to your particular practice (e.g. dewormers, preventative, puppy/kitten protocols, etc.)?

My first 3 action steps when I get back:
