



5 Ways to Bring Change Management Into Your Veterinary Practice

Changing the way you manage your veterinary practice groups is vital to their success. Transformation can be disruptive and oftentimes threatening, particularly given challenges within the profession. A recent survey conducted by CM Research showed that **20% of veterinarians consider themselves "very stressed" and 38% are "stressed."**¹

So, how can you introduce new standard practices that help organize patient records, process payments, and communicate with clients while reducing employee stress?

The following change management practices can help you foster a culture based on values of excellent patient care, great client service, and straightforward communication while balancing the needs of your staff.

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1. **Explore Change Management Frameworks**

CEOs are 66% more likely to want an audacious change management strategy than their frontline employees.²

It can be up to regional managers to help close the gap between how the most senior leadership and frontline employees feel about change. There are many models you can use to ease this transition.

2. **Communicate Clearly**

Only 13% of U.S. employees strongly agree that their organization's leadership communicates effectively with the rest of the organization.³

It won't always be clear to clinics how a proposed change can help employees balance their workloads, free them to focus on higher-value tasks, and improve patient outcomes. Using clear communication—both in-person and via email—creates a clear path that can inform and ease employees' fears.

3. **Co-Create a Vision for Change**

Around 80% of firms manage change from the top down.⁴

People on the front lines may be responsible for implementing change, but they frequently aren't involved in the decision-making. Instead, engage deeply with employees to draw upon their insights and experiences.

4. **Foster Belonging**

The most effective change leaders (the top 12%) paid significant attention to belonging.⁵

The prospect of change can conjure a range of emotions. Regional operations leaders should invest time in demonstrating empathy and techniques for coaching practice leaders. Great leaders make employees feel important and valued during organizational change. It creates a culture of comfort and trust to let them know their input is valued.

5. **Recognize and Celebrate Signs of Progress**

Those who plan reinforcement activities are 20% more likely to achieve project objectives.⁶

Reinforcement is a critical step in the change management process. As changes are implemented, measure and share the results to demonstrate the momentum the group is beginning to achieve. Show gratitude to your "change champions" and encourage other clinics in the group to follow suit.

Change can be difficult but by following these steps, you can significantly reduce any bumps along the road.

IDEXX can offer data, technology, and insights to drive positive change and efficiency in veterinary practices.

[Learn more at IDEXX.com.](https://www.idexx.com)

1. Sarah Wooten, The Vetiverse, Stress Management Tips To Support Better Well-Being For Veterinarians. <https://www.thevetiverse.com/en/latest/stress-management-tips-to-support-better-well-being-for-veterinarians/>. Published April 20, 2022. // 2. Mark Murphy, Forbes, Why Change Management Really Fails: 4 Shocking Causes And How To Fix Them. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2022/10/26/why-change-management-really-fails-4-shocking-causes-and-how-to-fix-them/?sh=2170a96a58cc>. Published October 26, 2022. // 3. Rantajee, V. Successful organizational change needs a strong narrative. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349295/successful-organizational-change-needs-strong-narrative.aspx>. Published April 30, 2021. // 4. Gartner, Changing change management: Effectively preserve order during major changes, from M&As to culture changes. <https://www.gartner.com/en/human-resources/trends/changing-change-management>. Accessed October 19, 2022. // 5. Rowland, D., Brauckmann, N., and Thorley, M., How to get your team on board with a major change. <https://hbr.org/2022/08/how-to-get-your-team-on-board-with-a-major-change>. Published August 4, 2022. // 6. Prosci, Best practices in change management. <https://www.prosci.com/resources/articles/change-management-best-practices>. Accessed October 19, 2022. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2022/10/26/why-change-management-really-fails-4-shocking-causes-and-how-to-fix-them/?sh=2170a96a58cc>. Published October 26, 2022.