



## WUTCHIETT TUMBLIN AND ASSOCIATES

3200 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43221-1725

Phone: 614/486-9700 Fax: 614-486-9779 Email: wta@wellmp.com

Better Management is Better Medicine®

### **Hiring, Compensation, and Benefits – 2010**

Wouldn't you like happy, productive staff who stick around because they belong? Don't you think your staff wants that too? The key to happy, long-term staff is to create an environment where people are the top priority and staff retention is an integral part of the culture. To improve staff retention you'll want to enhance your hiring process. So if your practice is experiencing low morale, high turnover, and difficulties hiring qualified replacements, read on! Soon you'll be able to identify the proactive steps you need to take to get back on track.

When a practice experiences difficulties in hiring and keeping qualified staff, often doctors and staff members get frustrated and don't treat each other with respect. No one is happy so everyone dreads coming to work, and the vicious cycle continues. To proactively combat staffing difficulties practice owners and managers can implement a thorough screening process when hiring. This enhanced hiring process will take time and effort, but eventually you'll have a team who enjoys coming to work.

Nobel Laureate Bertrand Russell said, "The good life, as I conceive it, is a happy life. I do not mean that if you are good you will be happy; I mean that if you are happy you will be good." You'll find if your staff members enjoy their work they will do it well, and this year's Study results substantiate this claim. When asked what had the highest priority in terms of personal job satisfaction, staff members' and associates' top responses were associated with the atmosphere and character of the practice: appreciation of work done, jobs security, interesting work, and good working conditions or a pleasant work environment.

Follow this six step plan when interviewing.

1. Screen resumes
2. Conduct phone interviews – Get details about whether the applicant possesses your desired skills. Create a standard list of questions you'll use for each interview.
3. Conduct in-person interviews – Cover the position description, the hospital's medical philosophy, code of conduct, and culture.
4. Check references, education, and credentials – Don't skip this step! An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
5. Ask finalists back for a working interview – Gives you, your staff, and the applicant a chance to see how you all work together.
6. Get staff feedback – Your team will be working with the applicant too, so get their input.

To begin the hiring process, consider the population to which you're advertising. Increasingly job seekers are turning away from newspapers and magazines and toward the internet, so consider a combination of strategies. Advertise in the print and the online version of your local newspaper. Consider your personal contacts. If you were impressed with a receptionist or sales-person at a local



## WUTCHIETT TUMBLIN AND ASSOCIATES

3200 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43221-1725

Phone: 614/486-9700 Fax: 614-486-9779 Email: wta@wellmp.com

Better Management is Better Medicine®

restaurant, ask if he or she is interested in working in the veterinary field. Advertise on websites such as [veterinarycareer.com](http://veterinarycareer.com), [dvm360.com](http://dvm360.com), [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com), [jobs.avma.org](http://jobs.avma.org), or [monster.com](http://monster.com).

To improve your hiring success rate, know your “must have” skills and personality traits. These can vary by position, but they are characteristics you want the employee to bring to the table. For credentialed technicians, for instance, you want an individual with high level technical and diagnostic skills as well as good client communication skills. You’ll need to decide the skills you’re willing, and able, to teach. Develop position descriptions and then hire based on them. Determine the skills necessary for each position, including the qualities you’d like to see in a candidate and the responsibilities he or she will shoulder if hired. A position description allows you to evaluate candidates’ previous experience so you can place them at the appropriate skill level.

After reviewing the resumes you’ve received in response to your advertisement, decide which candidates to contact and schedule a phone interview with. This preliminary conversation will cover technical training, prior job experience, and professional goals. It can also save you time by helping to cull out the candidates who have great resumes but whose goals don’t fit with the practice’s. If you were impressed by any of the candidates after the phone interview, invite them for an interview at the practice. Discuss the duties the individual would be expected to perform, and use a standard list of questions to interview each applicant. You’ll be better able to compare applicants this way, and you’ll less frequently forget important steps in the process.

You’ll want to be sure the standard questions you ask each candidate will predict if he or she will be a good fit in the position, as well as if he or she will fit into the practice culture. Consider using the selected qualities and interview questions from *Benchmarks 2010 Study of Well-Managed Practices* as your guide. The Benchmarks tool provides a list of standard questions meant to gauge, among other things, work ethic, interpersonal relationship skills, ability to adapt, technical skills, and desire to learn.

### Example #1

Question: “How do you feel when your coworkers complain and are negative about work?”

Response: “It annoys me and I usually try to change the direction of the conversation.”

Interpretation: Response is predictive of an individual who has an understanding of the importance of workplace attitudes and a desire to communicate tactfully with co-workers.

### Example #2

Question: “How do you feel if tasks are left unfinished at the end of the day?”

Response: “I avoid leaving work incomplete as much as possible. If I have too much on my plate I’ll ask my supervisor to help prioritize the tasks and I’ll work hard in the future to avoid leaving work undone.”



## WUTCHIETT TUMBLIN AND ASSOCIATES

3200 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43221-1725

Phone: 614/486-9700 Fax: 614-486-9779 Email: wta@wellmp.com

Better Management is Better Medicine®

Interpretation: Response is predictive of a strong work ethic, organized thinking and implementation, and a desire to expand technical knowledge as well as understanding of hospital processes.

Be sure to explain the hospital's medical philosophy, code of conduct, and the desire to train, invest in, and ultimately retain staff members long term. You'll want to have a comprehensive orientation plan in which the new hire will be guided by more experienced staff members and the practice handbook. Explain that once the orientation period ends education will continue through staff training, conference attendance, and regular meetings.

At the end of the interview process for an individual you'll want to know if he or she meets the technical requirements necessary for the position and if he or she has more responses predictive of success than other candidates. Invite those top applicants back for a working interview, and if the staff and doctors agree that the applicants would fit into the position and the hospital culture, make an offer to your top choice.

By understanding what your new hire needs in the way of experience and character traits, by advertising in the right venues, and by determining if candidates' interview responses are predictive of compatibility with your practice culture, you can hire right the first time. Just imagine your practice free of turnover. Your staff members will be enthusiastic about coming to work, and just imagine the attention and care clients and patients will receive! When you hire right, everyone wins.

### **Average associate starting salary (excludes benefits)**

Experience level	Median	75th Percentile
Less than 1 year	\$60,000	\$67,000
1 to 2.9 years	\$69,000	\$75,000
3 to 5.9 years	\$76,000	\$85,000
6 to 10.9 years	\$84,500	\$91,250
11 to 15.9 years	\$90,000	\$100,000
16 to 19.9 years	\$92,500	\$100,000
More than 20 years	\$90,000	\$100,000

### **Median associate salary by years with practice**

Less than 1 year	\$66,383
1 to 2.9 years	\$81,560
3 to 5.9 years	\$80,000
6 to 10.9 years	\$99,588
11 to 15.9 years	\$89,248
More than 16 years	\$96,532



**WUTCHIETT TUMBLIN AND ASSOCIATES**

3200 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43221-1725  
Phone: 614/486-9700 Fax: 614-486-9779 Email: [wta@wellmp.com](mailto:wta@wellmp.com)

Better Management is Better Medicine®

**Total dollar value per doctor of the benefits provided to associates (includes health insurance, liability insurance, continuing education, dues and licenses, retirement contributions, etc.)**

Median	\$8,500
75th Percentile	\$10,500

**Median Staff member hourly wage by years with practice**

	2.9 years or less	3 to 5.9 years	6 years or more
Hospital administrator	\$33.90	\$49.23	\$27.50
Practice manager	\$21.56	\$21.65	\$22.65
Office manager	\$18.00	\$19.25	\$19.65
Client care coordinator	\$13.25	\$15.75	\$16.88
Receptionist	\$11.00	\$12.50	\$14.50
Patient care coordinator	\$13.50	\$16.56	\$18.00
Credentialed technician	\$15.50	\$15.77	\$17.76
Veterinary assistant	\$11.00	\$12.13	\$13.30
Ward attendant	\$ 8.00	\$ 9.55	\$11.00

**Given the debt I incurred to obtain my education, my current salary makes it very difficult to make ends meet.**

	Associates	Staff members
Strongly agree	18%	17%
Somewhat agree	30%	21%
Somewhat disagree	34%	27%
Strongly disagree	19%	36%

**To obtain additional information:**

Wutchielt Tumblin and Associates  
3200 Riverside Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43221-1725  
Telephone: (614) 486-9700  
Fax: (614) 486-9779  
Email: [wta@wellmp.com](mailto:wta@wellmp.com)