
Chapter 18

Recruiter Perceptions of Veterinary Employment Decisions Survey

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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to assess factors that influence selection of employment by food supply graduates from the perspective of recruiters. Human resource personnel in industry, government, practice and academia were surveyed that employ food animal veterinary graduates. This information will be useful for the development of strategies that can be implemented to improve the recruitment and retention of food animal veterinarians in current employment and to assist their entry into the workforce. Data from this study are used to identify the key factors influencing employment selection of an occupational area in veterinary medicine and how hiring organizations, professional associations, and Colleges of Veterinary Medicine can facilitate recruitment and preparation of job candidates.

Sample Design

The email lists of members from multiple veterinary professional associations were compiled and duplicate emails were eliminated. The survey was administered in April 2005. Pretested questionnaires were sent out in three waves separated by one week increments to 16,013 unique email addresses. Potential respondents were asked if they recruited food animal veterinarians. This generated 1,044 valid respondents. Assuming there are 6,400* separate recruiters with job openings annually for food animal veterinarians, this resulted in a 16% response rate. The questionnaire was approved by the AAVMC and the FSVMC prior to administration.

*** This assumes 100 graduates from 32 colleges of veterinary medicine with 2 jobs for each graduate.**

Methodology

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association sent the questionnaire directly to its members with email addresses in three waves.

The following organizations provided us with member email lists:

- **American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)**
- **American Association of Bovine Practitioners (AABP),**
- **American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC),**
- **American Association of Food Hygiene Veterinarians (AAFHV),**
- **American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP)**
- **National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV)**
- **American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners (AASRP),**
- **American Association of Swine Veterinarians USA/Canada (AASV)**
- **American Association of Public Health Veterinarians (AAPHV),**
- **Academy of Rural Veterinarians (ARV)**
- **United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)**
- **National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV)**
- **Academy of Veterinary Consultants (AVC)**
- **Kansas Veterinary Medical Association (KVMA)**

Contact and Measurements

Cover letter / Survey / Constructs

Subjects were sent an email message from the research team that explained the purpose of the research, identified the sponsoring organizations, and invited them to participate in the study. A web URL was included in the email message that linked to the online survey. A variety of constructs were measured in this research instrument. Items asked about challenges in recruiting and retaining food animal veterinarians in the organization, employment conditions in the organization, how to make it easier to fill open positions, and improvements that needed to be made within Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to better prepare individuals to be successful in the workplace.

Survey items were developed based on insights from an extensive review of the veterinary career literature and general human resource/career selection literature as well as discussions with dozens of veterinarians.

Non-response Bias

Statistical analyses were carried out for non-response bias. A wave analysis with the Student's t-test was used to look for differences between early and late returns. This provides some information about whether the data from completed questionnaires are biased by the likelihood of non-response. The wave analysis method assumes that subjects who respond less rapidly are more like non-respondents. Using the t-test for two sample proportions and a 95 per cent level of confidence, it was found that there were no significant differences between early and late returns for items in the questionnaire at the 0.05 level. Since the study did not involve sensitive issues, it was concluded that there was no compelling reason to believe that the response group systematically possessed different response tendencies from non-responders.

Overall Findings

- **Overall, recruiters hire people to work in organizations with an average number of 34 veterinarians and a median of three and a mode of two DVM employees. The veterinary jobs were mainly in towns of 15,000 to 19,999 with the median population size of 25,000 to 50,000. Most of the jobs required direct contact with customers and had an average starting salary of \$50,000 to \$59,999.**
- **The majority of recruiters for food animal job openings believe there is a shortage of food supply veterinarians (74%) and report that they would like to see more applications for these positions. Turnover and retention of DVMs is *not* a major problem at the organizations. In general, human resource personnel paint a very positive picture of veterinary related work in their organizations.**

Overall Findings (continued)

- **Time management and lifestyle issues are *not* seen as major problems by recruiters when describing employment conditions for DVMs. The spouses of employees could find work near the organization. As members of the profession age, many assume family responsibilities and have to take care of elderly parents. Recruiters state their organizations allow time off for parental/family responsibilities, flexible work times, and vacations.**
- **DVM employees generally have realistic expectations about the job and enjoy good relationships with supervisors. Employees also experience a lot contact with animals.**
- **Successful veterinarians are described as having a wide skill set that includes strong written and oral communication skills. They are also proficient at leadership and analytical skills and work well in teams.**

Overall Findings (continued)

- **In terms of career area decision factors, recruiters were asked a series of open ended questions to identify factors that were important to job applicants and strategies that institutions in the profession could engage in to facilitate job placement of DVM applicants.**
- **Recruiters state that offering a high salary and good retirement and health care benefits is the most important factor affecting a DVM's decision to select a particular job. This was followed by the job candidate's desire for a supportive work environment and a high level of satisfaction from work.**
- **Recruiters had many ideas for Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to enact in the hiring process for organizations to fill the positions and better prepare people for the job.**
- **Recruiters thought more courses in food animal medicine should be added to the curriculum, better business training incorporated into the education process, and establishment of student externships to ensure that students receive practical training prior to their first full time job.**
- **Professional associations could facilitate the hiring process by providing more attractive job websites that listed openings, described the positive aspects of the job, and offered mentoring services for prospective applicants.**

Overall Findings (continued)

- **A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted followed by multiple comparison tests to test for statistically significant differences between food animal veterinary positions and jobs that focused on other occupational areas such as companion animal medicine and working in industry.**
- **Recruiters state that there is a greater shortage of DVM applicants with a food animal focus than other occupational areas and that food animal veterinary positions were less likely to be sought after than companion animal and industrial veterinary jobs.**
- **Recruiters believe that food animal veterinary jobs allowed for greater managerial responsibility, had more opportunities for advancement and community leadership when compared to companion animal jobs.**
- **There were no statistically significant differences between any of the occupational areas in veterinary medicine in terms of balancing work and family life, getting time off for vacations, dealing with parental and family responsibilities, and relationship quality with supervisors.**
- **Food animal veterinary work was seen as more physically demanding when compared to other occupational areas in veterinary medicine.**

Overall Findings (continued)

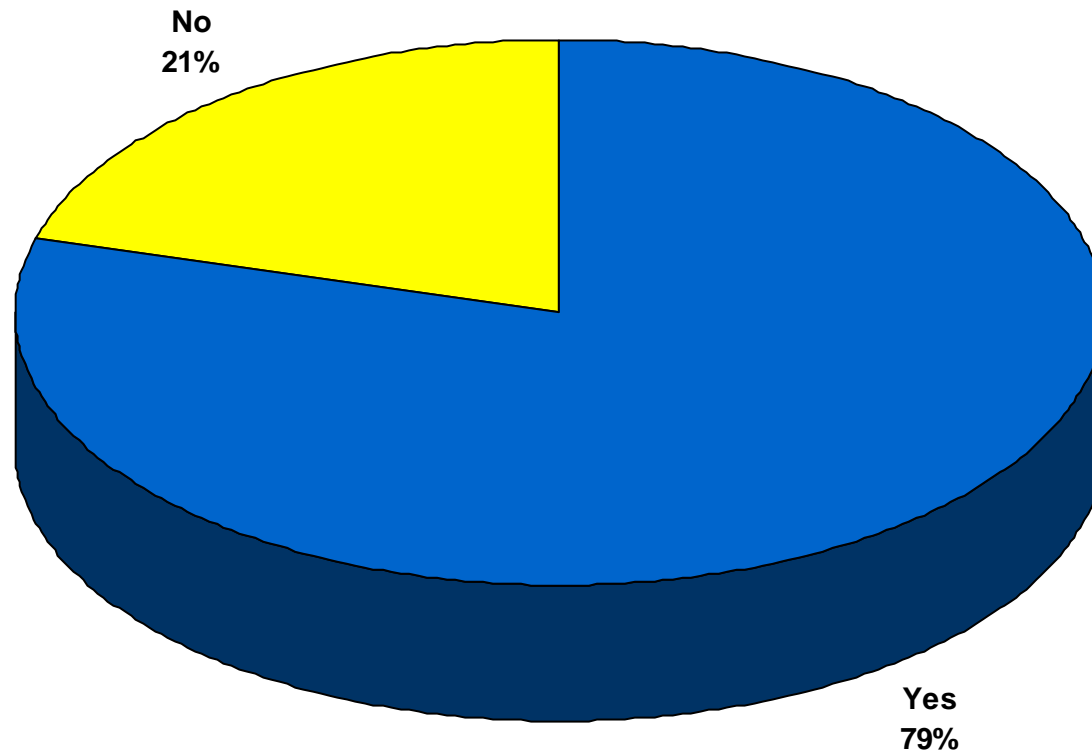
A principal components analysis was performed upon the group of employment condition questions. Five factors emerged that were subsequently used in two separate stepwise regression equations to predict employee turnover and which jobs were highly sought after by DVM applicants. Although turnover and retention were *not* seen as problematic, this analysis found that veterinarians that were most likely to leave an organization (1) have fewer opportunities in the workplace and for community leadership, (2) find it more difficult to balance work and family, (3) are more likely to experience limited activities in terms of restaurants, shopping and cultural activities, (4) have more unrealistic job expectations, and (5) experience work that is more physically demanding and dirty. Positions that are highly sought after by applicants are associated with (1) job training, advancement, managerial responsibility, and community leadership, (2) work and family balance, (3) close proximity to restaurants, shopping and cultural activities, (4) realistic job expectations, and (5) work that is less physically demanding and dirty.

Respondent Demographic Profile

- The average number of employees working for the responding organizations was 2,160. The median, however, was 15 and the modal number of employees was five suggesting that a few large organizations pulled the mean in an extreme direction.
- The average number of veterinarians employed by the responding organizations was 34. The median was three, and the mode was two veterinarians.
- The positions for which the veterinarians were most often employed were in large cities and large suburban areas.
- Seventy-nine percent of the respondents felt they were very knowledgeable about the recruitment of veterinarians at their organization.
- Ninety-three percent of the positions require direct contact with customers and the most common starting salary falling in the \$50,000 to \$59,999 range.

Knowledge of Veterinary Recruitment

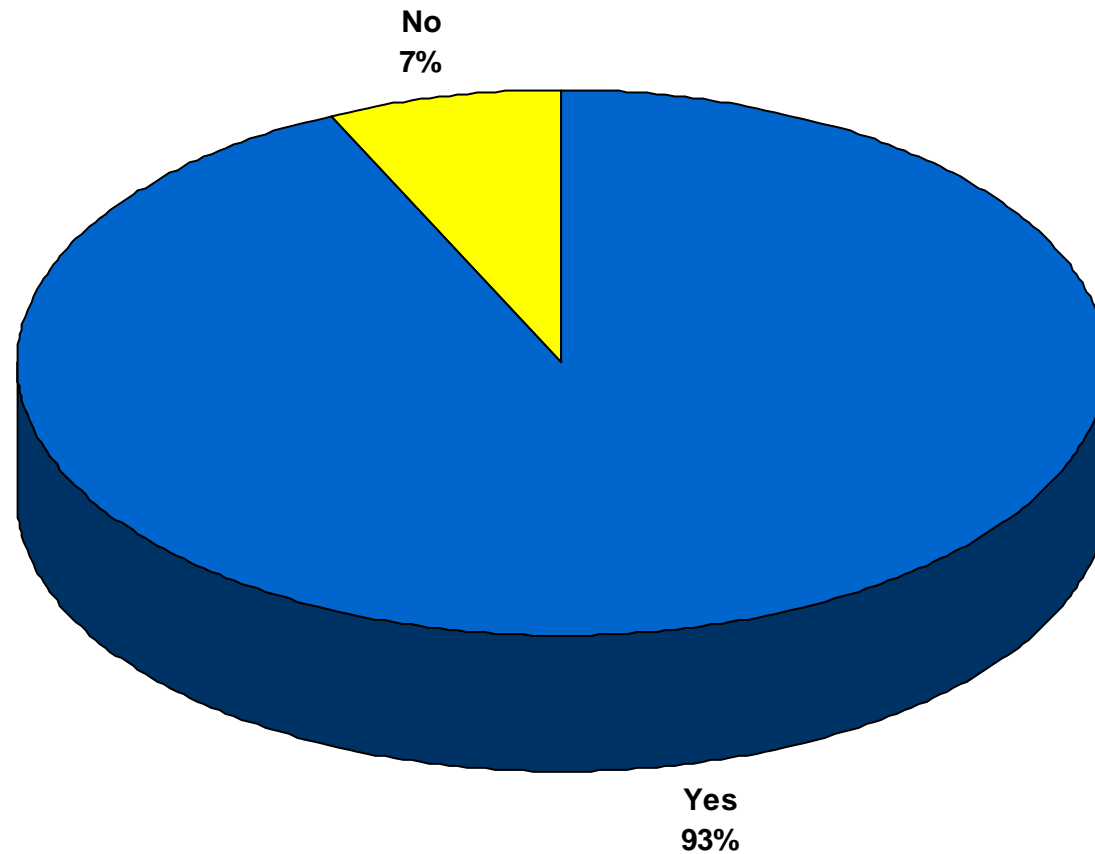
Among Recruiters



Q2: I am very knowledgeable about the recruitment of veterinarians at this organization

Require Direct Customer Contact

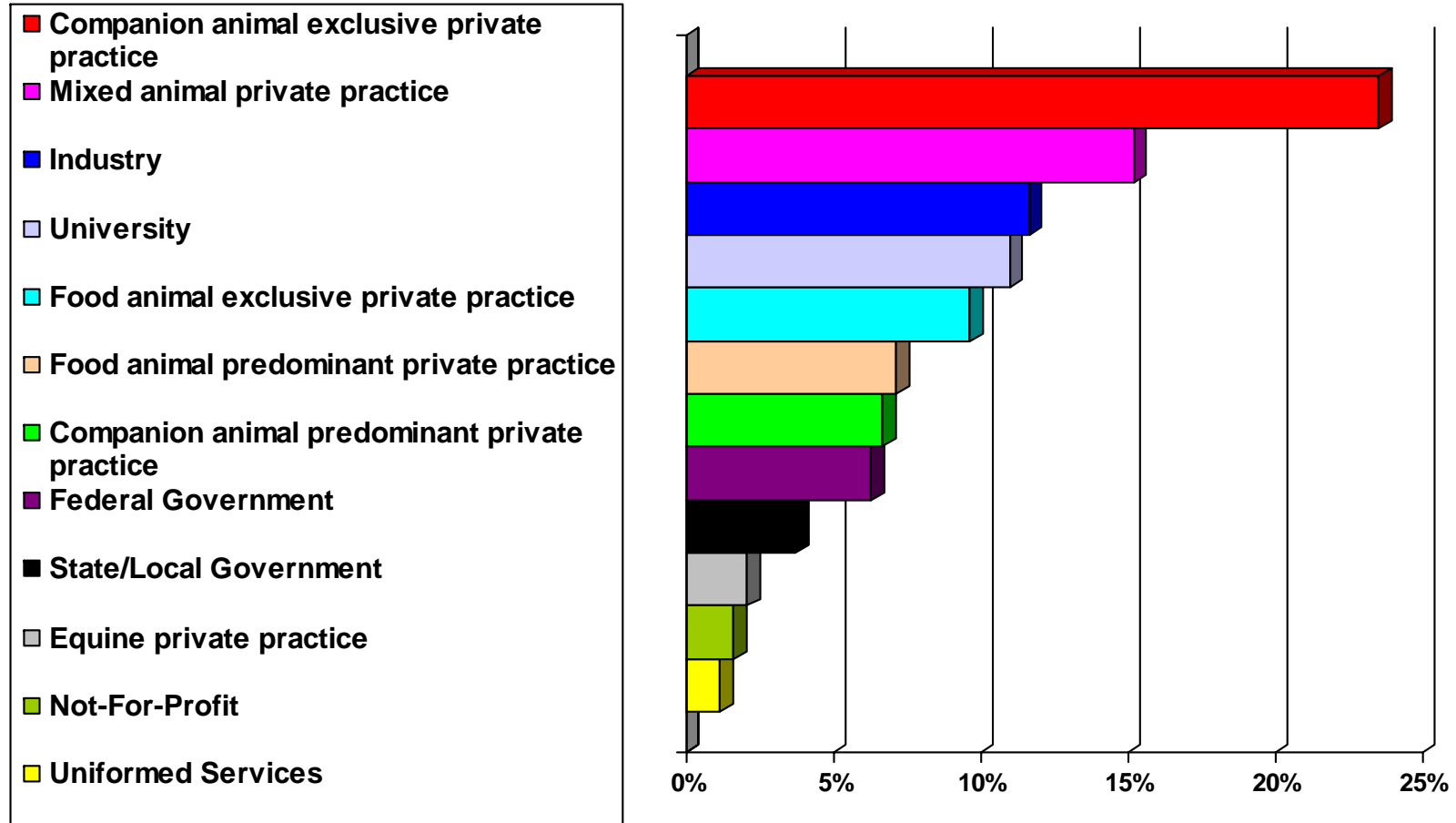
Among Recruiters



Q9: Does the specific veterinary job you listed in the first question require direct customer contact?

Job Occupational Area

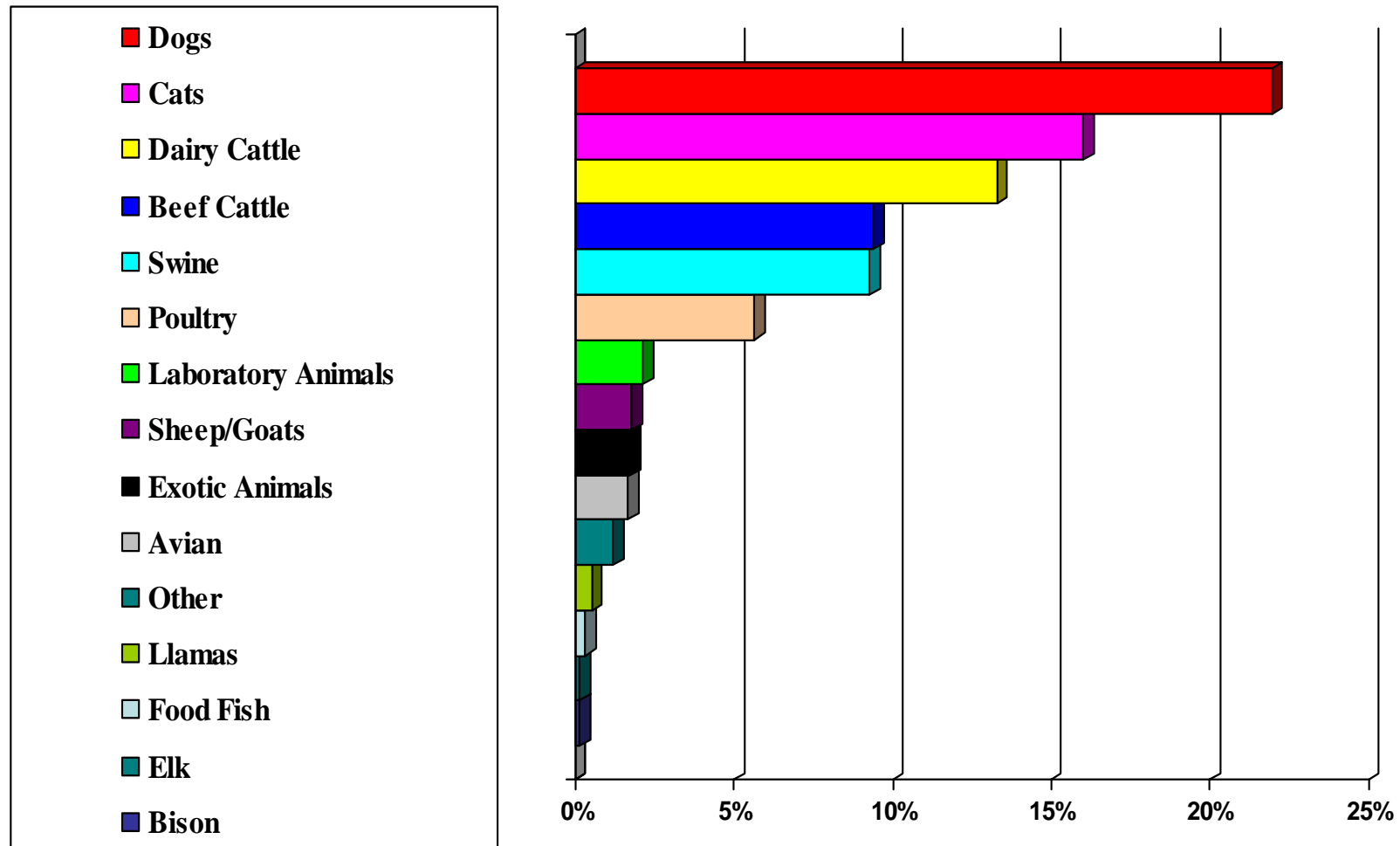
Among Recruiters



Q1: What is the occupational area of the veterinarian position you are thinking about for this survey?

Percent of Time Working with a Particular Species

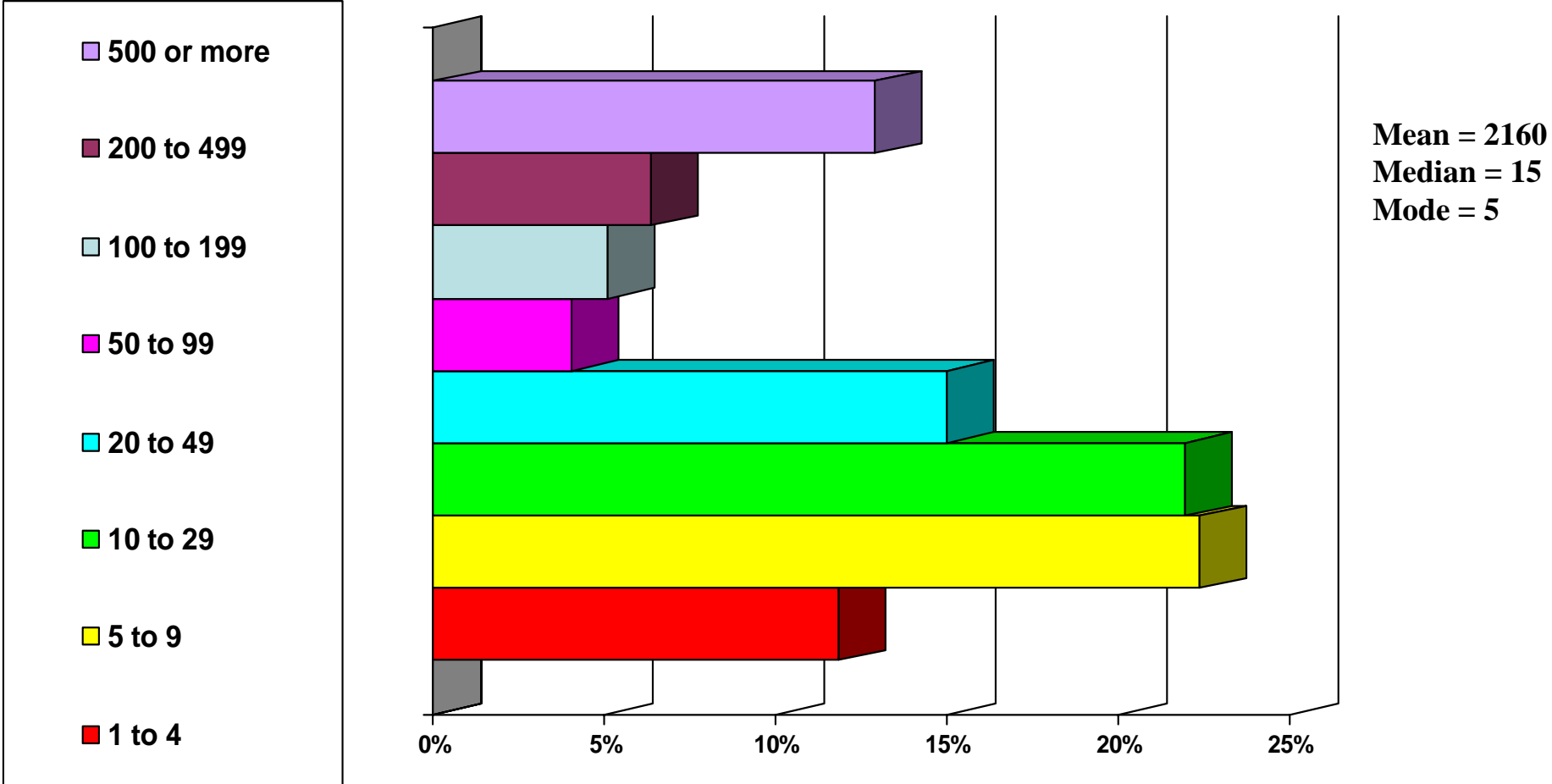
Among Recruiters



Q58: Please identify the percent of time the holder of this job will work with the following species.

Organization Size

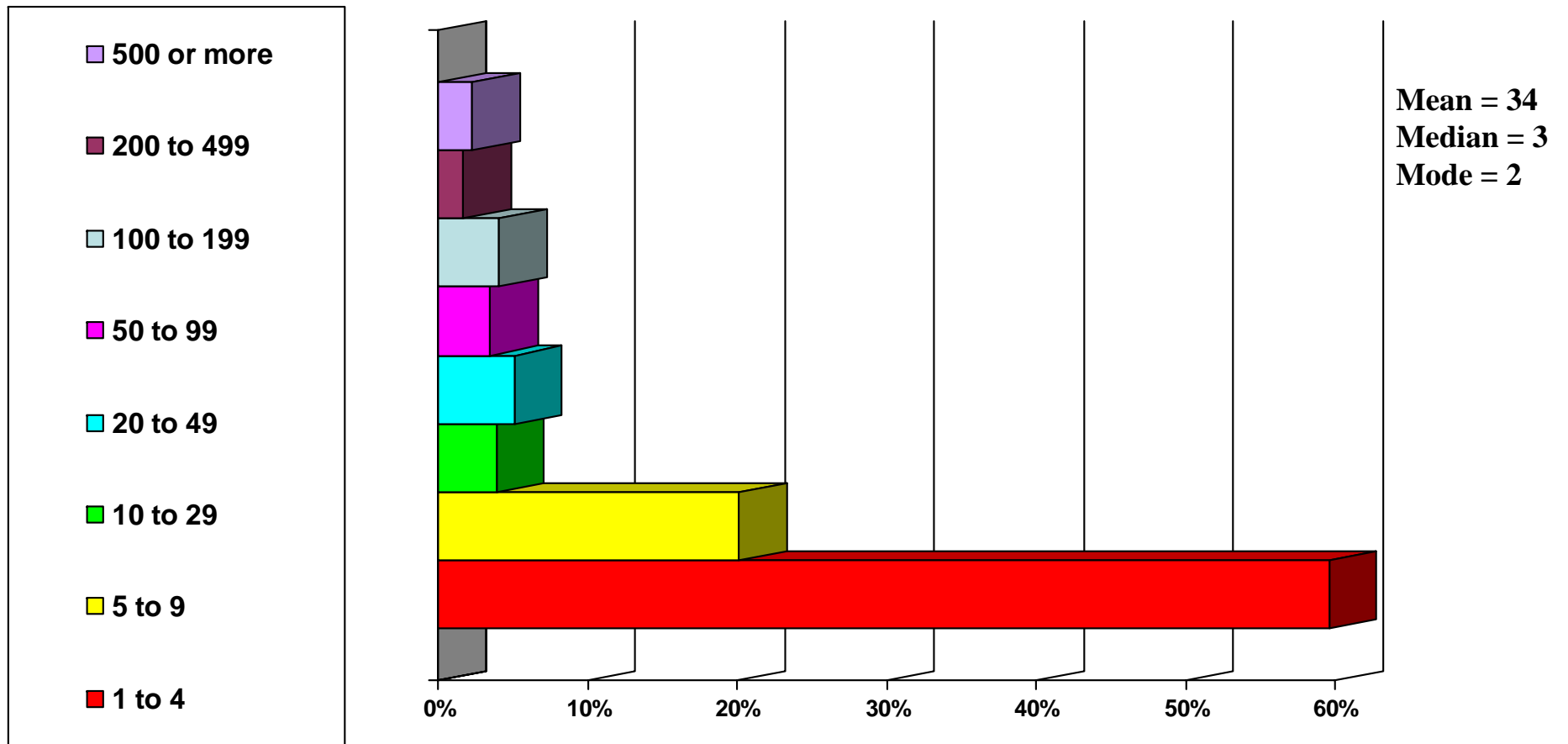
Among Recruiters



Q60: How many total employees work for your organization?

Veterinarians Employed by Organization

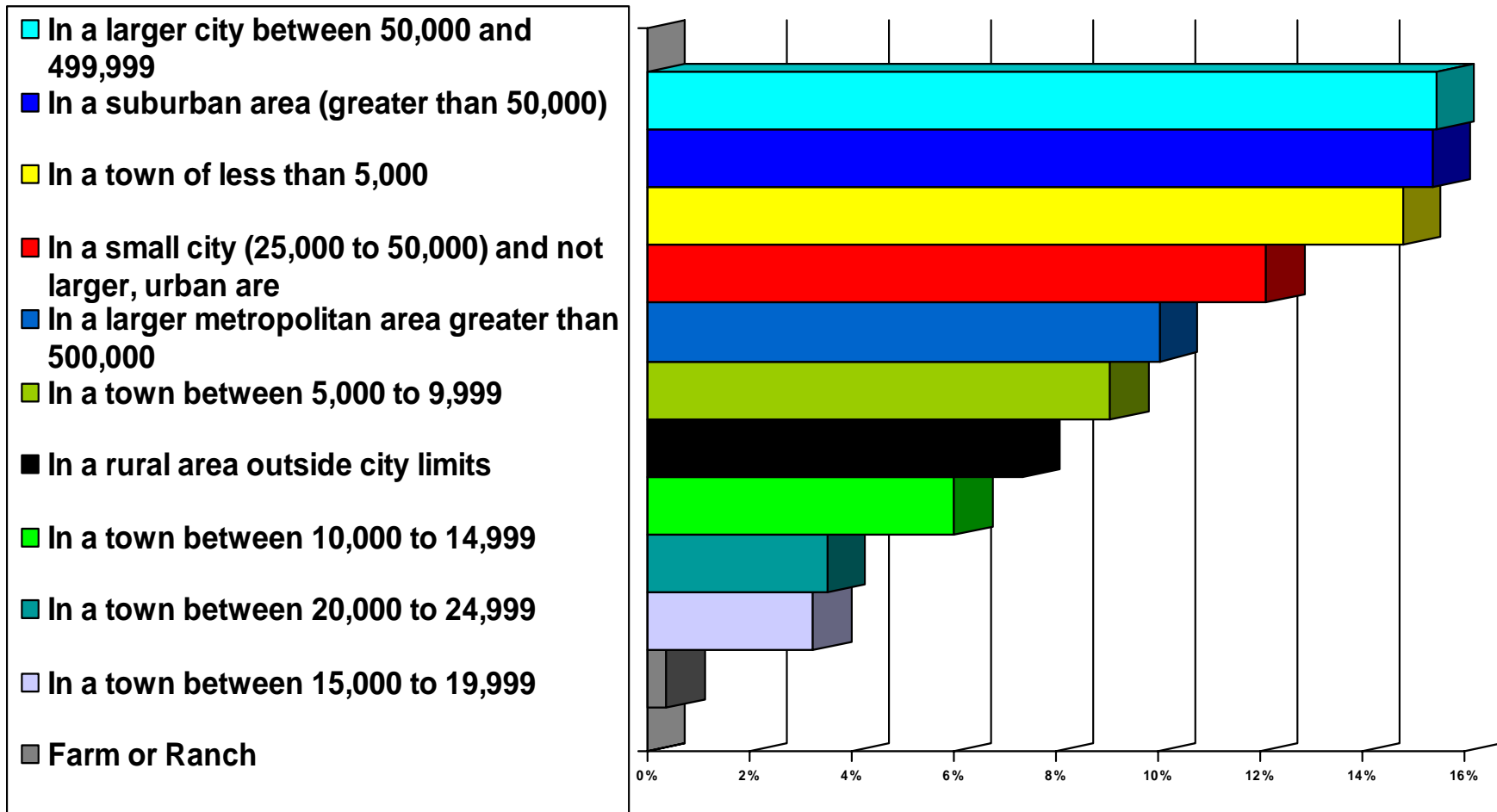
Among Recruiters



Q60: How many total veterinarians work for your organization?

Job Community Size

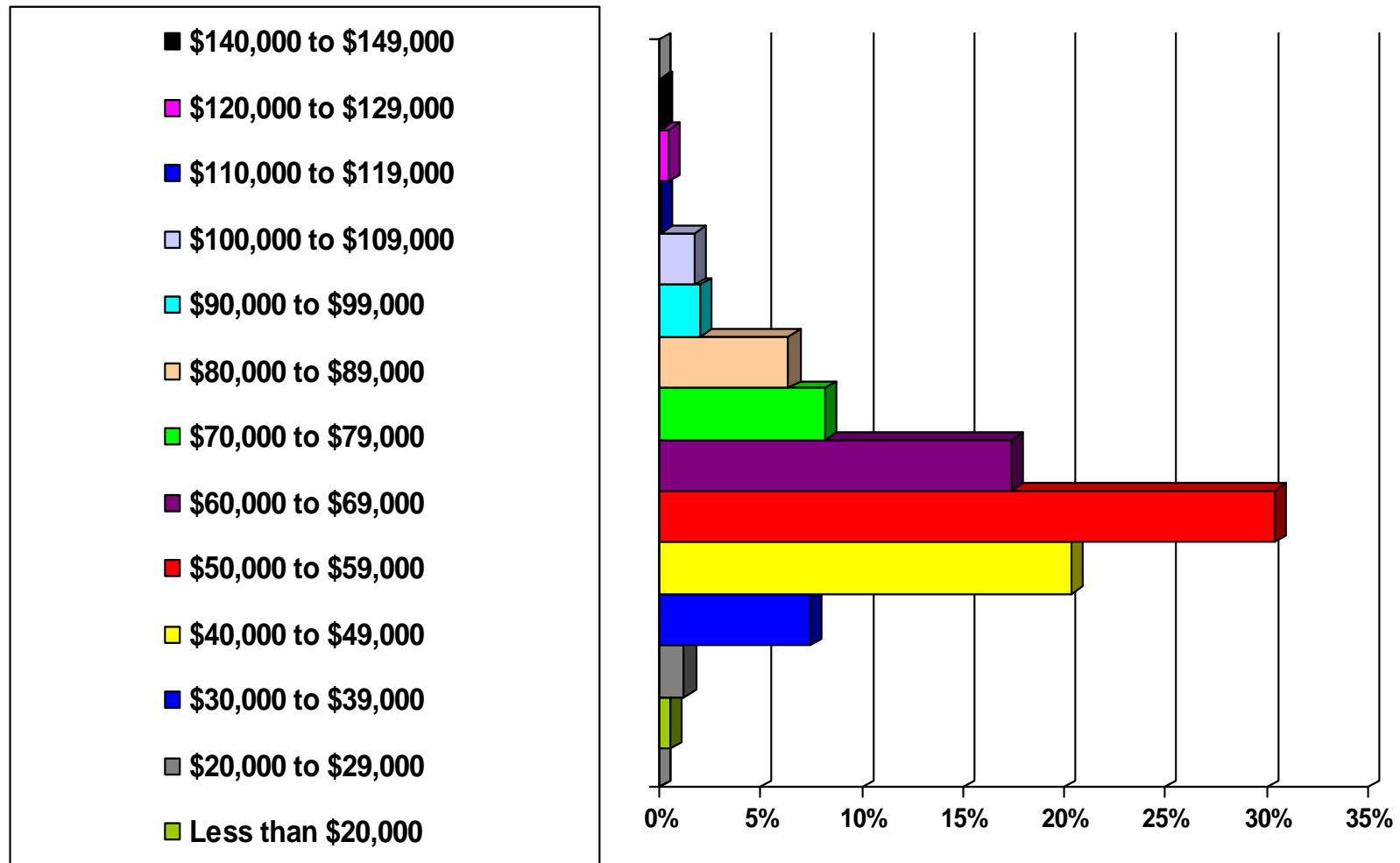
Among Recruiters



Q59: The job you listed at the beginning of this survey would most likely be employed in what size town?

Starting Salary

Among Recruiters



Q62: What is the typical starting salary for this position?

Position Recruitment Issues by Organizations

Among All Recruiters

- **The majority of recruiters for veterinary job openings believe there is a shortage of food supply veterinarians (74%).**
- **The majority of recruiters do not receive a large number of applications for openings (78%) and do not think the position in their organization is highly sought after by DVM job candidates (66%).**
- **Most recruiters report that their organization does not have a problem with retaining DVMs in the position (67%) and state that turnover in the position is not a major problem (69%).**

Percentage Distribution of Position Recruitment Issues for Veterinary Jobs

Variables	Percent Agree	Percent Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
There is a shortage of qualified food supply veterinarians	74	26	5.45	1.54
It is very difficult for our organization to attract DVMs for this position	57	43	4.43	1.81
We receive a large number of qualified applicants when we advertise for this type of position	22	78	3.15	1.57
This position in our organization is highly sought after by DVM applicants	34	66	3.59	1.64
It is difficult for our organization to retain DVMs in this position	33	67	3.52	1.75
It is common for individuals in this position to leave our organization within three years of being hired	34	66	3.50	1.85
Turnover in this position is a major problem for our organization	31	69	3.37	1.86

Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Client Relations and Job Benefits

Among All Recruiters

- **When describing employment conditions for veterinary jobs, the majority of recruiters believe that customers are very demanding (81%), that it is easy to forge lasting business relationships with clients (85%), and that clients see the veterinary job as high status (88%).**
- **The majority of recruiters state the organization invests in training to boost employee skills (76%), the position allows greater managerial responsibility over time (67%), and offers a lot of job security (69%).**

Percentage Distribution of Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Client Relations and Job Benefits

Variables	Percent Agree	Percent Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Employees with our organization seldom experience gender-discrimination issues with customers	64	36	4.82	1.68
Our customers are very demanding	81	19	5.29	1.32
It is very difficult to forge lasting business relationships with customers in this job	15	85	2.68	1.46
Customers often perceive this position as being of low status	12	88	2.33	1.41
The salary we are able to offer veterinarians is low compared to other employment opportunities	43	57	3.86	1.80
My organization offers new employees very affordable health care benefits	69	31	4.89	1.84
My organization offers new employees very attractive retirement benefits	53	47	4.22	2.00
New employees are assigned a mentor for professional development	47	53	3.97	1.83
This organization invest in training to boost employee skills	76	24	5.06	1.68
This position allows greater managerial responsibility over time	67	33	4.69	1.59
There are many opportunities to advance in the position	45	55	3.99	1.67
There are opportunities to reach career goals by starting in this position	75	25	5.08	1.43
There are good opportunities for community leadership and involvement with the position	71	29	5.01	1.47
This job offers a lot of security	69	31	4.90	1.49
This organization has an on-site child care center	7	93	1.83	1.43

Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Lifestyle and Time Management Issues

Among All Recruiters

- **When describing employment conditions for veterinary jobs, the majority of recruiters state there are many recreational and cultural activities (84%) as well as restaurants and shopping (82%) near the workplace.**
- **The majority of recruiters state there are adequate career opportunities for spouses near the workplace (69%), that time off can be arranged for parental/family responsibilities (68%), and that it is easy to get time off from work for vacations (70%).**
- **Most recruiters report that in their organization the times that employees work during the day are very flexible (67%).**

Percentage Distribution of Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Lifestyle and Time Management Issues

Variables	Percent Agree	Percent Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
There are very limited recreational and cultural activities in the area near our workplace	16	84	2.44	1.56
Housing is very expensive	33	67	3.46	1.90
There are a lack of retail stores and restaurants in the area near our workplace	18	82	2.53	1.67
There are inadequate career opportunities for employee spouses near our workplace	31	69	3.33	1.76
It is difficult to arrange time off from work for parental/family responsibilities in this job	32	68	3.39	1.76
It is hard to balance life between work and family in this job	48	52	3.96	1.80
It is difficult to get time off from work for vacations in this job	30	70	3.23	1.79
This job requires working a lot of evenings or weekends	57	43	4.37	1.82
This job requires a great deal of travel	36	64	3.34	1.98
The times that employees work during the day are very flexible	33	67	3.40	1.67
Many on-call hours are expected with the position	41	59	3.67	1.93

Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Unrealistic Expectations and Supervisor Relations

Among All Recruiters

- **When describing employment conditions for veterinary jobs, the majority of recruiters state potential employees do not have unrealistically high expectations about rapid promotions in the organization (65%).**
- **The majority of recruiters state the position requires a strong desire for work that is personally meaningful (85%) and employees have good relationships with supervisors in the organization (83%).**
- **Most recruiters report that in their organizations employees have a lot of contact with animals in the job (87%).**

Percentage Distribution of Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Unrealistic Expectations and Supervisor Relations

Variables	Percent Agree	Percent Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Potential Employees have unrealistic job expectations about the work hours required for success	49	51	4.37	1.57
Potential Employees have unrealistically high starting salary expectations	51	49	4.34	1.54
Potential Employees have unrealistically high expectations about rapid promotions in the organization	35	65	3.96	1.35
This position requires a strong desire for work that is personally meaningful	85	15	5.41	1.15
Employees have poor relationships with supervisors in this organization	17	83	2.81	1.57
This job is very physically demanding	53	47	4.30	1.75
The type of work is inherently dirty	53	47	4.15	1.90
Employees have very little contact with animals in this job	13	87	2.05	1.64

MANOVA of Position Recruitment and Employment Conditions by Occupational Area

Among Recruiters

- **A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to see if there were significant differences between position recruitment variables, client relationships, job benefits, lifestyle issues, time management, job expectations, supervisor relations and physical demands based upon the occupational area of focus.**
- **The models were significant at ($p < 0.0001$) based on Hotelling's Trace criterion.**
- **The multivariate analysis of variance was followed by Schffee multiple comparison tests to identify specific significant differences between the variables by occupational area of focus ($p < .05$).**

Multiple Comparison Tests of Position Recruitment by Occupational Area

Among Recruiters

- **Schffee multiple comparison tests were used to identify specific significant differences between the position recruitment variables by occupational area of focus. Attention is focused on food animal positions in comparison to other veterinary occupational areas.**
- **Recruiters report that when comparing food animal positions with other veterinarians:**
 - **There is a greater shortage of qualified food animal veterinarians and it is much more difficult for the organization to attract them.**
 - **Food animal veterinary positions are less likely to be sought after than companion animal and industry positions.**
 - **Although retention and turnover are not problems, it is more difficult to retain food animal veterinarians than those in industry and turnover is higher.**

Differences in Position Recruitment Among Recruiters by Occupational Area Focus

Variables	Occupation Area of Position			
	Food Animal	Mixed	Companion Animal	Industry
There is a shortage of qualified food supply veterinarians	5.82 ^a	5.77 ^{ab}	5.06 ^c	5.19 ^{bc}
It is very difficult for our organization to attract DVMs for this position	4.86 ^a	5.28 ^a	3.95 ^b	3.50 ^b
We receive a large number of qualified applicants when we advertise for this type of position	2.64 ^b	2.62 ^b	3.44 ^b	3.94 ^b
This position in our organization is highly sought after by DVM applicants	3.32 ^a	2.86 ^a	3.88 ^b	4.59 ^c
It is difficult for our organization to retain DVMs in this position	3.53 ^{ab}	4.14 ^a	3.35 ^b	2.67 ^c
It is common for individuals in this position to leave our organization within three years of being hired	3.53 ^a	4.20 ^b	3.59 ^a	2.51 ^c
Turnover in this position is a major problem for our organization	3.40 ^a	4.19 ^b	3.27 ^a	2.57 ^c

Within a row, means with the *same* superscript are not significantly ($p < .05$) different from each other.

Multiple Comparison Tests of Client Relations and Job Benefits by Occupational Area

Among Recruiters

- **Schffee multiple comparison tests were used to identify specific significant differences between the client relationship and job benefit variables by occupational area of focus. Attention is focused on food animal positions in comparison to other veterinary occupational areas.**
- **Recruiters report that when comparing food animal positions with other veterinarians:**
 - **Industrial veterinarian customers are more demanding and salaries, retirement and health care benefits are somewhat higher for those working in industry.**
 - **Compared to companion animal positions, food animal veterinary positions are more likely to allow for greater managerial responsibility over time, have more opportunities for advancement, and provide good opportunities for community leadership when compared to companion animal positions.**

Differences in Employment Conditions Among Recruiters by Occupational Area Focus: Client Relations and Job Benefits

Variables	Occupation Area of Position			
	Food Animal	Mixed	Companion Animal	Industry
Employees with our organization seldom experience gender-discrimination issues with customers	4.34 ^a	4.55 ^{ab}	5.15 ^c	5.17 ^{bc}
Our customers are very demanding	5.36 ^{ab}	4.90 ^a	5.22 ^{ab}	5.69 ^b
It is very difficult to forge lasting business relationships with customers in this job	2.43 ^a	2.35 ^a	2.57 ^a	2.54 ^a
Customers often perceive this position as being of low status	2.21 ^a	2.28 ^a	2.08 ^a	2.17 ^a
The salary we are able to offer veterinarians is low compared to other employment opportunities	3.71 ^a	3.85 ^a	3.61 ^a	2.88 ^b
My organization offers new employees very affordable health care benefits	4.72 ^a	4.27 ^a	4.33 ^a	5.83 ^b
My organization offers new employees very attractive retirement benefits	4.11 ^a	3.77 ^a	3.15 ^b	5.34 ^c
New employees are assigned a mentor for professional development	4.24 ^a	4.16 ^a	3.76 ^a	3.92 ^a
This organization invests in training to boost employee skills	5.35 ^a	5.26 ^a	5.01 ^a	5.29 ^a
This position allows greater managerial responsibility over time	4.82 ^a	4.83 ^{ab}	4.24 ^b	5.25 ^a
There are many opportunities to advance in the position	4.20 ^a	4.37 ^a	3.61 ^b	4.28 ^a
There are opportunities to reach career goals by starting in this position	5.34 ^a	5.23 ^a	4.92 ^a	5.02 ^a
There are good opportunities for community leadership and involvement with the position	5.38 ^a	5.53 ^a	4.87 ^b	4.66 ^b
This job offers a lot of security	4.93 ^a	4.90 ^a	4.86 ^a	4.64 ^a
This organization has an on-site child care center	1.45 ^a	1.70 ^{ab}	1.49 ^a	2.27 ^b

Within a row, means with the *same* superscript are not significantly ($p < .05$) different from each other.

Multiple Comparison Tests of Lifestyle and Time Management Issues by Occupational Area

Among Recruiters

- **Schffee multiple comparison tests were used to identify specific significant differences between the lifestyle and time management variables by occupational area of focus. Attention is focused on food animal positions in comparison to other veterinary occupational areas.**
- **Recruiters report that when comparing food animal positions with other veterinarians:**
 - **There were no significant differences between the groups on getting time off for vacations, balancing life between work and family, or arranging time off for parental/family responsibilities.**
 - **Housing was less expensive for food animal veterinary positions but there was more travel with the job and on-call hours were required when compared to companion animal positions.**

Differences in Employment Conditions Among Recruiters by Occupational Area Focus: Lifestyle and Time Management Issues

Variables	Occupation Area of Position			
	Food Animal	Mixed	Companion Animal	Industry
There are very limited recreational and cultural activities in the area near our workplace	2.62 ^a	2.69 ^a	2.28 ^a	2.53 ^a
Housing is very expensive	2.87 ^{ab}	2.56 ^a	3.69 ^c	3.64 ^{bc}
There are a lack of retail stores and restaurants in the area near our workplace	2.86 ^{ab}	3.25 ^a	2.24 ^c	2.46 ^{bc}
There are inadequate career opportunities for employee spouses near our workplace	3.71 ^a	3.79 ^a	2.86 ^b	3.26 ^{ab}
It is difficult to arrange time off from work for parental/family responsibilities in this job	3.51 ^a	3.58 ^a	3.45 ^a	3.20 ^a
It is hard to balance life between work and family in this job	3.88 ^a	4.23 ^a	3.96 ^a	3.99 ^a
It is difficult to get time off from work for vacations in this job	3.29 ^a	3.22 ^a	3.44 ^a	2.99 ^a
This job requires working a lot of evenings or weekends	4.63 ^{ab}	5.13 ^a	4.15 ^b	4.00 ^b
This job requires a great deal of travel	4.14 ^a	3.40 ^b	1.62 ^c	5.10 ^d
The times that employees work during the day are very flexible	3.42 ^a	3.04 ^a	3.07 ^a	4.39 ^b
Many on-call hours are expected with the position	4.45 ^a	5.09 ^a	3.02 ^b	3.05 ^b

Within a row, means with the *same* superscript are not significantly ($p < .05$) different from each other.

Multiple Comparison Tests of Unrealistic Job Expectations, Supervisor Relations, and Physical Demands by Occupational Area

Among Recruiters

- **Schffee multiple comparison tests were used to identify specific significant differences between the unrealistic job expectation, supervisor relationship, and physical demand variables by occupational area of focus. Attention is focused on food animal positions in comparison to other veterinary occupational areas.**
- **Recruiters report that when comparing food animal positions with other veterinarians:**
 - **There were no significant differences between the food animal and companion animal veterinary job positions for potential employees having unrealistic expectations about number of hours required for success, rapid promotions, high starting salaries and having poor relationships with supervisors.**
 - **Work associated with food animal veterinary positions was seen as more physically demanding and inherently more dirty when compared to companion animal and industry positions.**

Differences in Employment Conditions for Veterinary Jobs: Unrealistic Expectations, Supervisor Relations, and Physical Demands

Variables	Occupation Area of Position			
	Food Animal	Mixed	Companion Animal	Industry
Potential Employees have unrealistic job expectations about the work hours required for success	4.44 ^a	5.08 ^b	4.46 ^a	3.98 ^a
Potential Employees have unrealistically high starting salary expectations	4.36 ^{ab}	4.72 ^b	4.48 ^{ab}	4.00 ^a
Potential Employees have unrealistically high expectations about rapid promotions in the organization	4.01 ^a	4.04 ^a	3.85 ^a	4.25 ^a
This position requires a strong desire for work that is personally meaningful	5.43 ^a	5.53 ^a	5.53 ^a	5.13 ^a
Employees have poor relationships with supervisors in this organization	2.62 ^a	2.54 ^a	2.72 ^a	2.46 ^a
This job is very physically demanding	5.27 ^a	5.55 ^a	3.90 ^b	3.07 ^c
The type of work is inherently dirty	5.38 ^a	5.21 ^a	3.54 ^b	3.07 ^b
Employees have very little contact with animals in this job	1.52 ^a	1.29 ^a	1.27 ^a	3.39 ^b

Within a row, means with the *same* superscript are not significantly ($p < .05$) different from each other.

Skills for Success in Veterinary Jobs

Among All Recruiters

- **When describing successful veterinarians for jobs in their organization, the majority of recruiters identify a wide variety of skills that are needed.**
- **The majority of recruiters state the position requires strong skills in writing (83%) and oral communication (93%), and that successful veterinarians tend to have strong analytical skills (92%).**
- **Most recruiters report that in their organizations successful employees tend to have strong leadership skills (85%), tend to have strong team work skills (88%), and strong technical knowledge.**

Percentage Distribution of Skills for Success in Veterinary Jobs

Variables	Percent Agree	Percent Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong leadership skills	85	15	5.40	1.29
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong analytical skills	92	8	5.69	1.16
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong team work skills	88	12	5.66	1.32
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong oral communication skills	93	7	5.91	1.27
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong written communication skills	83	17	5.38	1.32
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong technical knowledge	92	8	5.70	1.19
Successful veterinarians tend to have strong business skills	53	47	4.38	1.58

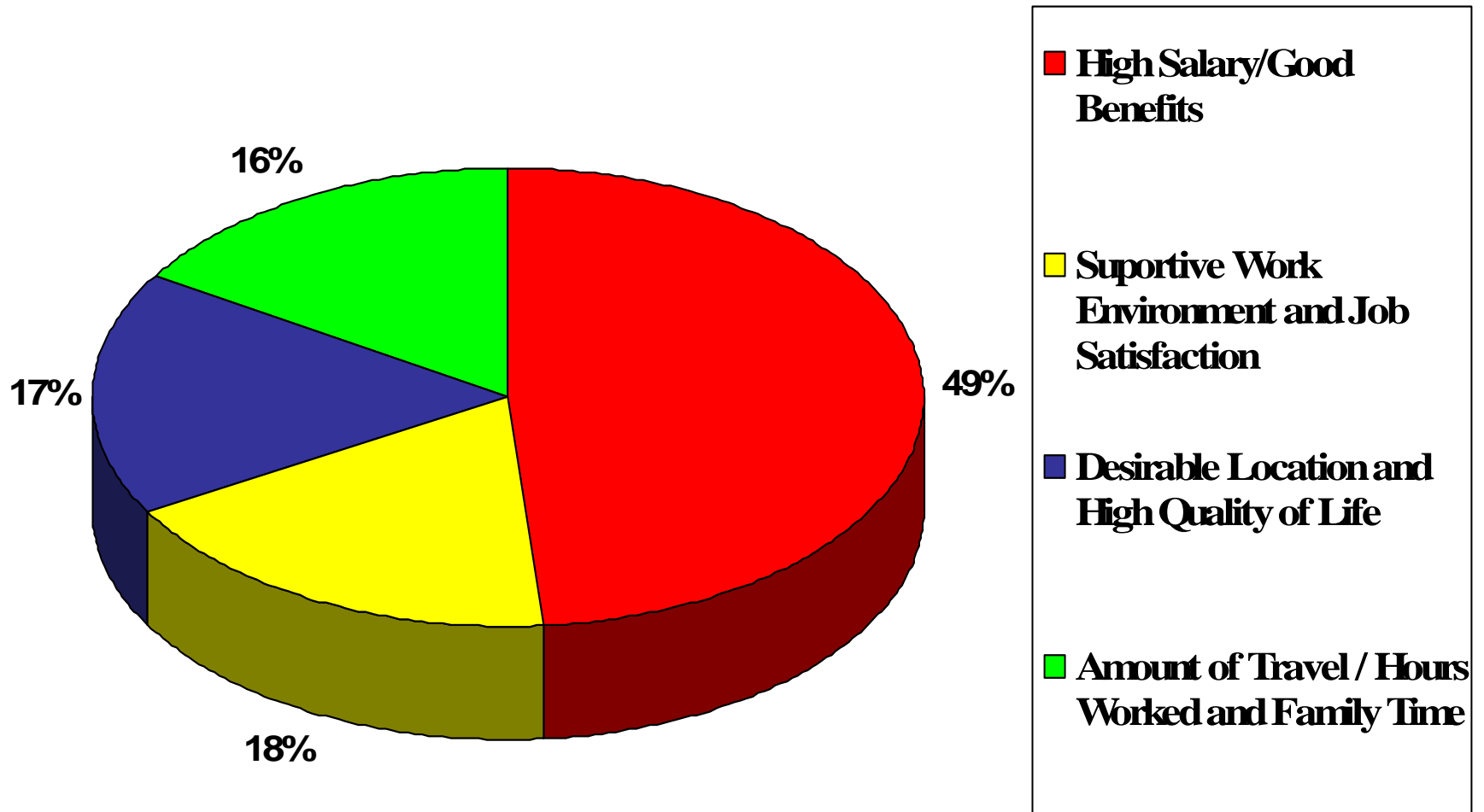
Employment Solutions

Among All Recruiters

- **Recruiters were asked a series of open-ended items to identify factors that were important to job applicants and strategies that their organization, veterinary professional associations, and Colleges of Veterinary Medicine could implement to facilitate job placement.**
- **The most important factor influencing DVM job applicants was a high salary and good job benefits. Recruiters encouraged their organization to increase salary and benefits.**
- **Recruiters would like Colleges of Veterinary Medicine to expand the food animal curriculum, provide better business training and realistic job descriptions, and arrange for student externships to provide practical experience.**
- **Professional associations were encouraged to offer attractive job websites, provide more advertising that stated the advantages of food animal veterinary jobs, and mentoring programs.**

Factors Influencing Potential Applicants

Among Recruiters



Q45: In your opinion, what are the two most important factors that DVM job applicants take into account when deciding whether or not to accept an offer with your organization?

Factors Influencing Potential Applicants: High Salary / Good Benefits (49%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Benefit Package – Salary, insurance, dues, moving expenses, etc.”

“Compensation – Salary and Benefits”

“Will the starting salary be enough to support their lifestyle and pay their debt?”

Q45: In your opinion, what are the two most important factors that DVM job applicants take into account when deciding whether or not to accept an offer with your organization?

Factors Influencing Potential Applicants: Support Work Environment / Job Satisfaction (18%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Group practice and a mentoring ability due to that structure.”

“Job satisfaction, job security, and is the practice a progressive practice?”

“Mentorship and practice dynamics.”

“Opportunity to grow professionally in the position with lots of support from other DVMs in the practice.”

Q45: In your opinion, what are the two most important factors that DVM job applicants take into account when deciding whether or not to accept an offer with your organization?

Factors Influencing Potential Applicants: Desirable Location / High Quality of Life (17%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Is the community a family-friendly environment?”

“Lifestyle in the region and location of employment.”

“Location of practice and distance to modern, urban communities.”

“Quality of life: desire to be in the country and work with farmers and farm animals.”

Q45: In your opinion, what are the two most important factors that DVM job applicants take into account when deciding whether or not to accept an offer with your organization?

Factors Influencing Potential Applicants: Amount of Travel / Hours Worked and Family Time (16%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Time off and total hours worked.”

“Travel / time away from home and time to spend with family.”

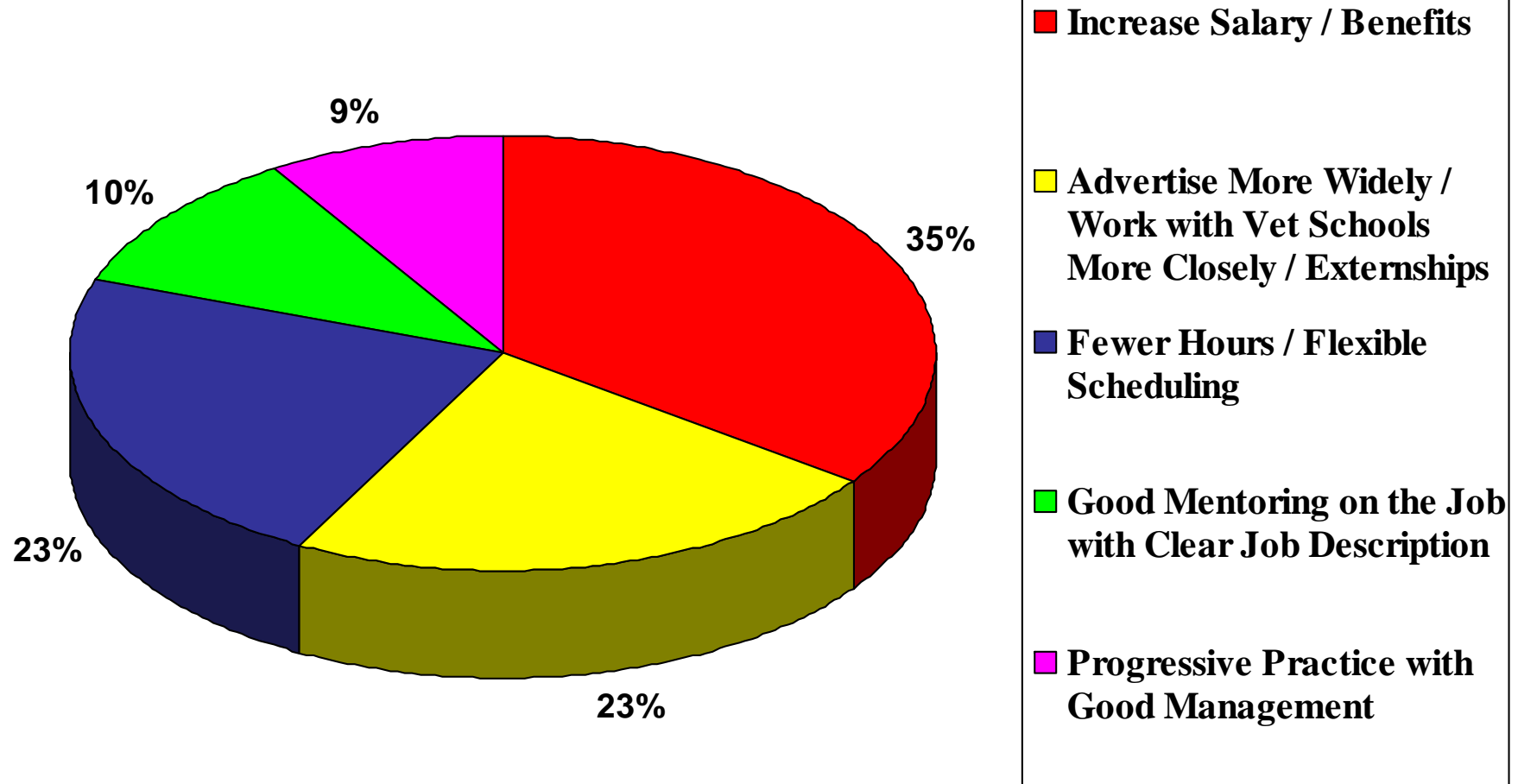
“Amount of travel, amount of time spent working.”

“Amount of time on-call and emergency work.”

Q45: In your opinion, what are the two most important factors that DVM job applicants take into account when deciding whether or not to accept an offer with your organization?

Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions

Among Recruiters



Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions: Increase Salary / Benefits (35%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Agree to pay off up to \$5000 of school loans at the end of the first year if they stay.”

“Competitive salary with benefits – health insurance, 401K retirement, continuing ed, paid vacation.”

“Increase salary and benefit offerings. Offer a chance to work on a percentage of gross revenues generated.”

Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

**Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions: Advertise More Widely / Work with Vet Schools More Closely / Externships
(23%)**

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Work with veterinarians through their poultry residency / advanced degree programs so that they have a relationship and familiarity with our organization and product lines.”

“Broader interaction with veterinary colleges.”

“Promote/expose our clinic to veterinary students.”

“Advertise more widely to reach more new graduates and experienced veterinarians.”

Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions: Fewer Hours / Flexible Scheduling (23%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Compensation time off for emergency hours.”

“Flexible and undemanding work hours and vacation time.”

“Shared on-call hours.”

“Reduce on-call work load (i.e. no small animals).”

“Make the primarily night/weekend schedule more attractive with relatively more consecutive days off.”

Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions: Good Mentorship on the Job with Clear Job Descriptions (10%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Assign a mentor to newly hired persons.”

“Communication of what [the job] entails.”

“Discuss realistic expectations with students.”

“Strong mentoring program.”

“Specifically outline job description.”

Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

Organizational Strategies to Fill Positions: Progressive Practice with Good Management (9%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Work on employee retention rather than replacement.”

“Modern, up to date, computerized, paperless practice.”

“Make sure that employees are supported, trained, and backed up.”

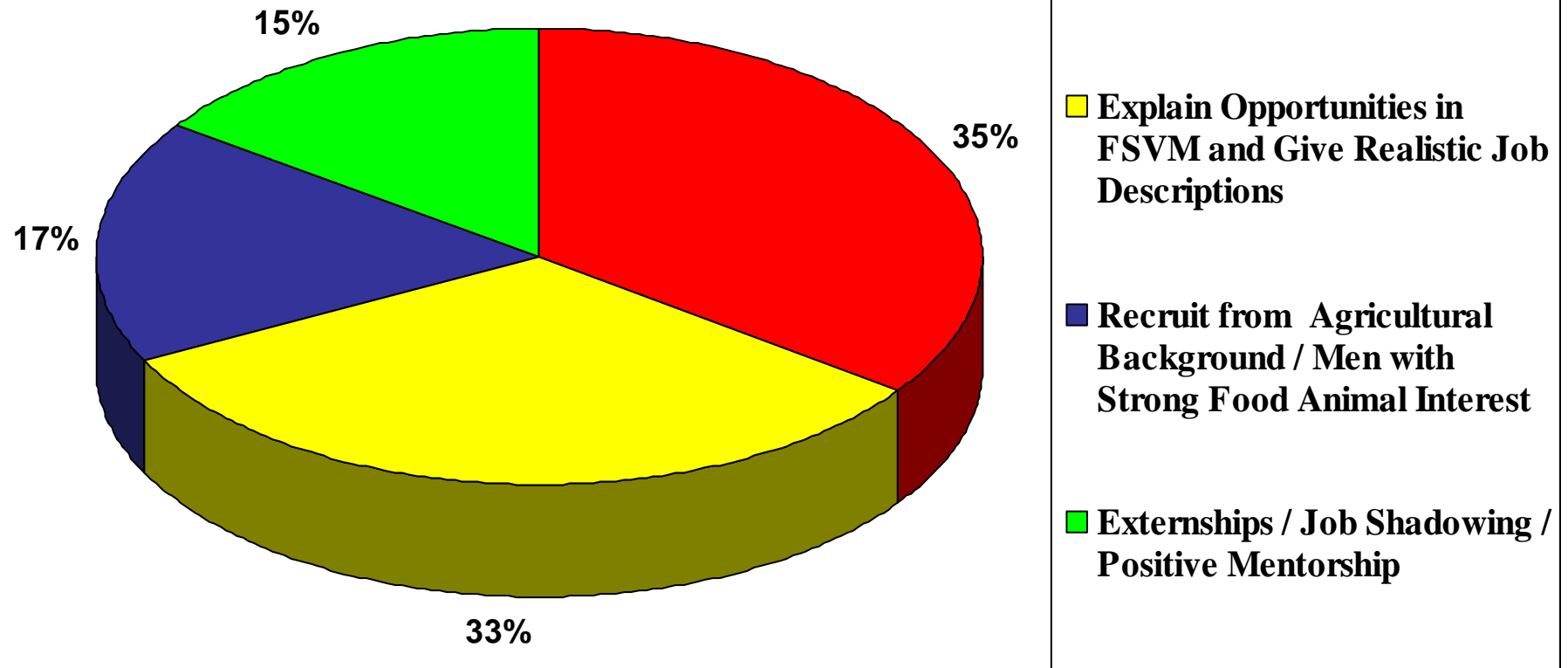
“Develop an actual business plan.”

“Be progressive in our clinic management and techniques.”

Q46: What are two strategies your organization can do to make it easier to fill these positions?

Veterinary College Strategies to Fill Positions

Among Recruiters



Q47: What are two strategies veterinary medical colleges can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Veterinary College Strategies to Fill Positions: Better Training in Food Animal Medicine / Business (35%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Better understanding of the business of farming.”

“Offer more classes in food animal medicine.”

“Less horse and more cow.”

“Training in epidemiology, public health, food protection.”

“Train students in communications, business, people management, time management, and marketing.”

Q47: What are two strategies veterinary medical colleges can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Veterinary College Strategies to Fill Positions: Explain Opportunities in FSVM and Give Realistic Job Descriptions (33%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Provide a realistic picture of food animal practice conditions and salary.”

“Provide realistic views of private practice.”

“Impress on the student the importance of food animal medicine, especially as it relates to bio-security and our nation’s safety.”

“Improved information about working hours and style of most veterinarians.”

Q47: What are two strategies veterinary medical colleges can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

**Veterinary College Strategies to Fill Positions: Recruit
from Agricultural Background / Men with Strong Food
Animal Interest
(17%)**

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Accept more men into veterinary college.”

“Pick applicants who show an initial interest in large animal medicine rather than looking at GPA as the sole criteria.”

“Admit applicants that have a rural, agricultural background. They are discriminated against by research or small-animal oriented administrators.”

“Recruit farm kids”

Q47: What are two strategies veterinary medical colleges can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Veterinary College Strategies to Fill Positions: Externships / Job Shadowing / Positive Mentorship (15%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Mandatory internships for large-animal.”

“Assign 3rd and 4th year students an industry mentor.”

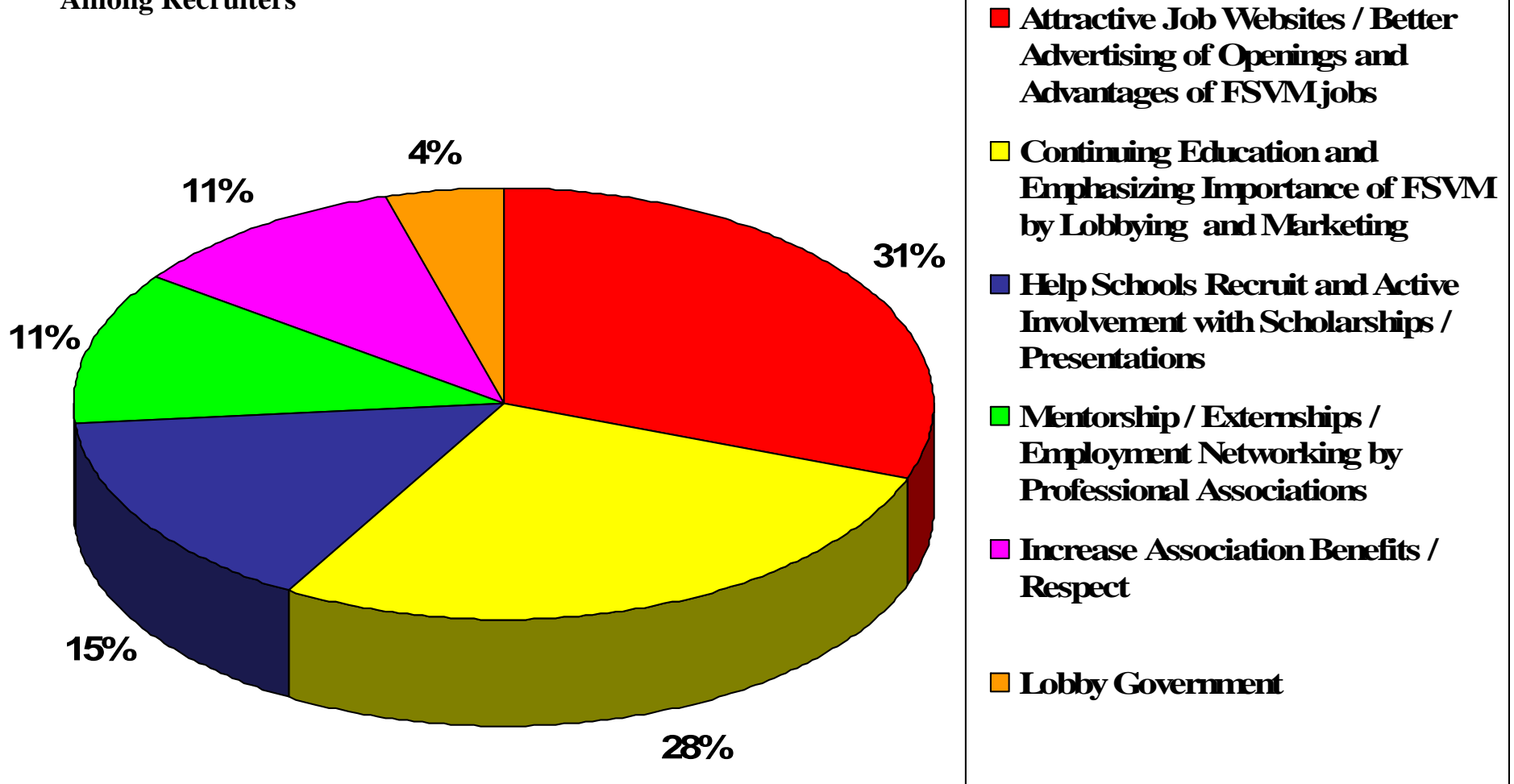
“Have more externships in rural settings.”

“Try to assist in matching the students to an appropriate mentor.”

Q47: What are two strategies veterinary medical colleges can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Professional Association Strategies to Fill Positions

Among Recruiters



Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

**Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions:
Attractive Job Websites / Better Advertising of Openings
and Advantages of FSVM Jobs
(31%)**

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“AVMA should offer free job posting via website that Vet schools could provide links to as students are searching.”

“Centralized listings of positions.”

“Encourage better, more realistic description in advertisements.”

“Promote the field in farm animal publications so that farm youth see it as a viable career.”

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

**Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions:
Continuing Education and Emphasizing Importance of
FSVM by Lobbying and Marketing
(28%)**

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Increase awareness of the government sector and the impact government DVMs have on private practitioners. Support the role of DVMS in government agencies.”

“Provide supportive continuing education opportunities for both employers and employees.”

“Public Relations to the general public as to how the broad scope of our profession contributes to society, not just as a dog and cat doctor.”

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions: Help Schools Recruit and Active Involvement with Scholarships / Presentations (15%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Target direct mailings to schools and counselors in rural agricultural oriented communities.”

“Work with veterinary schools to highlight the opportunities available to students within the food animal industry.”

“Get students involved early by offering scholarships, paid internships, etc.”

“Get involved with veterinary students early in their education and let them know of the opportunities available and what they need to do.

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

**Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions:
Mentorship / Externships / Employment Networking by
Professional Associations
(11%)**

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Encourage local DVMs to sponsor students and act as mentors so students will want to continue in food animal medicine during/after vet school.”

“Create mentor programs with colleges to communicate what the demands of private practice are for students.”

“Coordinate with veterinary schools for externships with private practitioners in their area/region.”

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions: Increase Association Benefits / Respect (11%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Free membership to students and first year grads to allow them to make contacts.”

“Continue to sponsor scholarships for externships to students who have interest in food animal medicine.”

“Encourage students to attend professional veterinary association meetings and offer summer internships with large clinics/companies so that students can gain more experience and be more valuable employees to future hiring organizations.”

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Professional Organization Strategies to Fill Positions: Lobby Government (4%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Assist state government in the development of alternate educational models for the development of veterinarians who are skilled in livestock and public health aspects of vet med.”

“Lobby Congress to subsidize food animal education.”

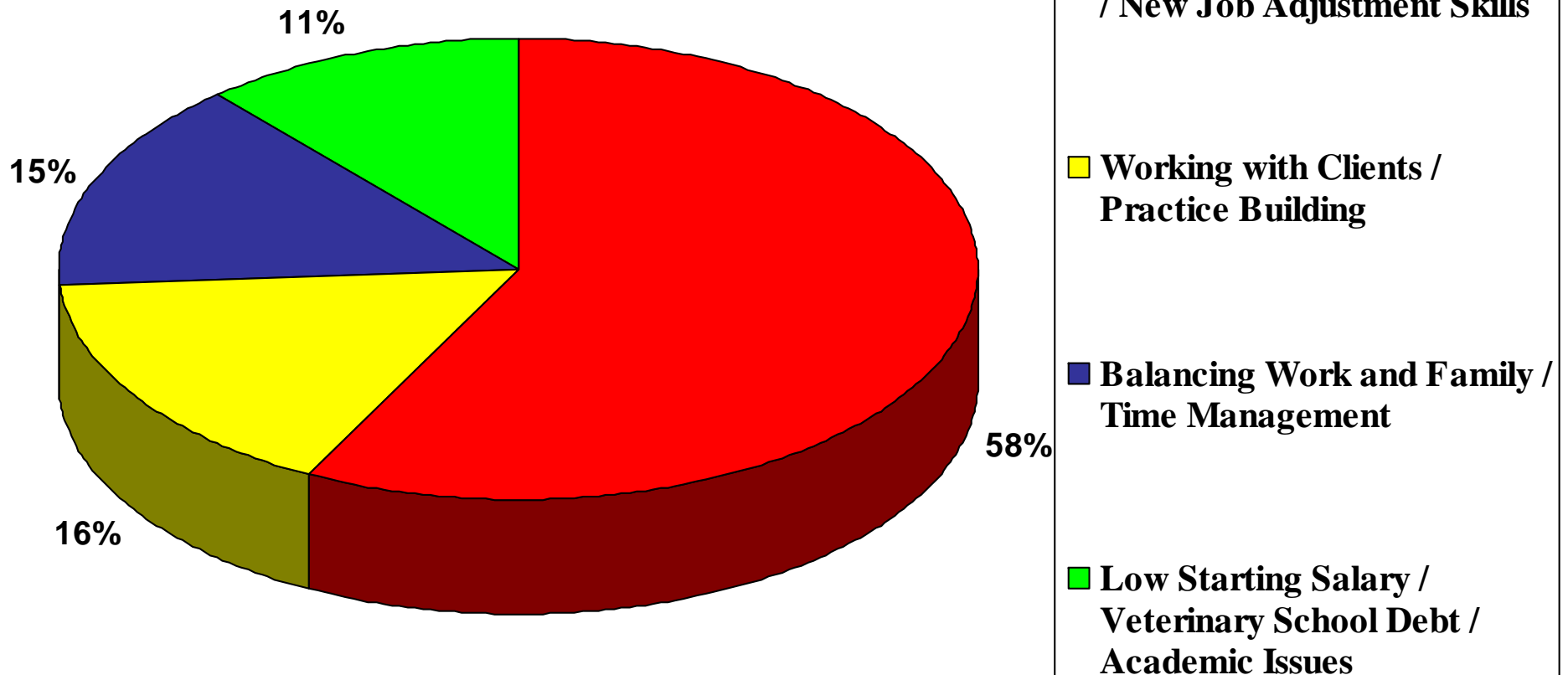
“Lobby for legal remedies, such as loan deferrals or waivers for those who work in our practices.”

“Lobby state legislatures to offer tuition waivers for contracts to work in underserved areas.”

Q48: What are two strategies professional associations can do to make it easier for organizations to fill these positions?

Challenges Faced by New Employees

Among Recruiters



Q49: What are two are two major challenges faced by new employees in these positions?

Challenges faced by New Employees: Lack of Ability or Confidence / New Job Adjustment Skills (58%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“A lack of preparedness to meet the challenges of the job, which is due to a lack of training in population health and public practice.”

They are so darned well trained with ‘book knowledge’ but the cases don’t read the books.”

“Filling the gap between what was learned in vet school and what they need to know for daily practice.”

“Justify their existence to the employer, the clients, and forget about how hard you worked to get through Vet School. You are starting over when you graduate and are no different than a manager trainee in a retail outlet.”

Q49: What are two are two major challenges faced by new employees in these positions?

Challenges faced by New Employees: Working with Clients / Practice Building (16%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Learning “People” skills! Effective client education is not stressed in veterinary school.”

“Understanding client differences / mindset”

“Develop a following with the clients in the practice and trying to encourage new clients to join the practice.”

“Demanding customers.”

“Building rapport and credibility with clients

Q49: What are two are two major challenges faced by new employees in these positions?

Challenges faced by New Employees: Balancing Work and Family / Time Management (15%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Asking for time off for family without being made to feel they are abandoning the clinic.”

“Balancing work with family. . . Not taking the work home with you.”

“Deciding which is more important, career interests or personal interests. Career dedication is no longer at the top of the list.”

“Dealing with travel and time away from family.”

Q49: What are two are two major challenges faced by new employees in these positions?

Challenges Faced by New Employees: Low Starting Salary / Veterinary School Debt / Academic Issues (11%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Achieving tenure – considerable pressure to conduct research and ignore outreach and teaching.”

“Making enough money for the standard of living they want.”

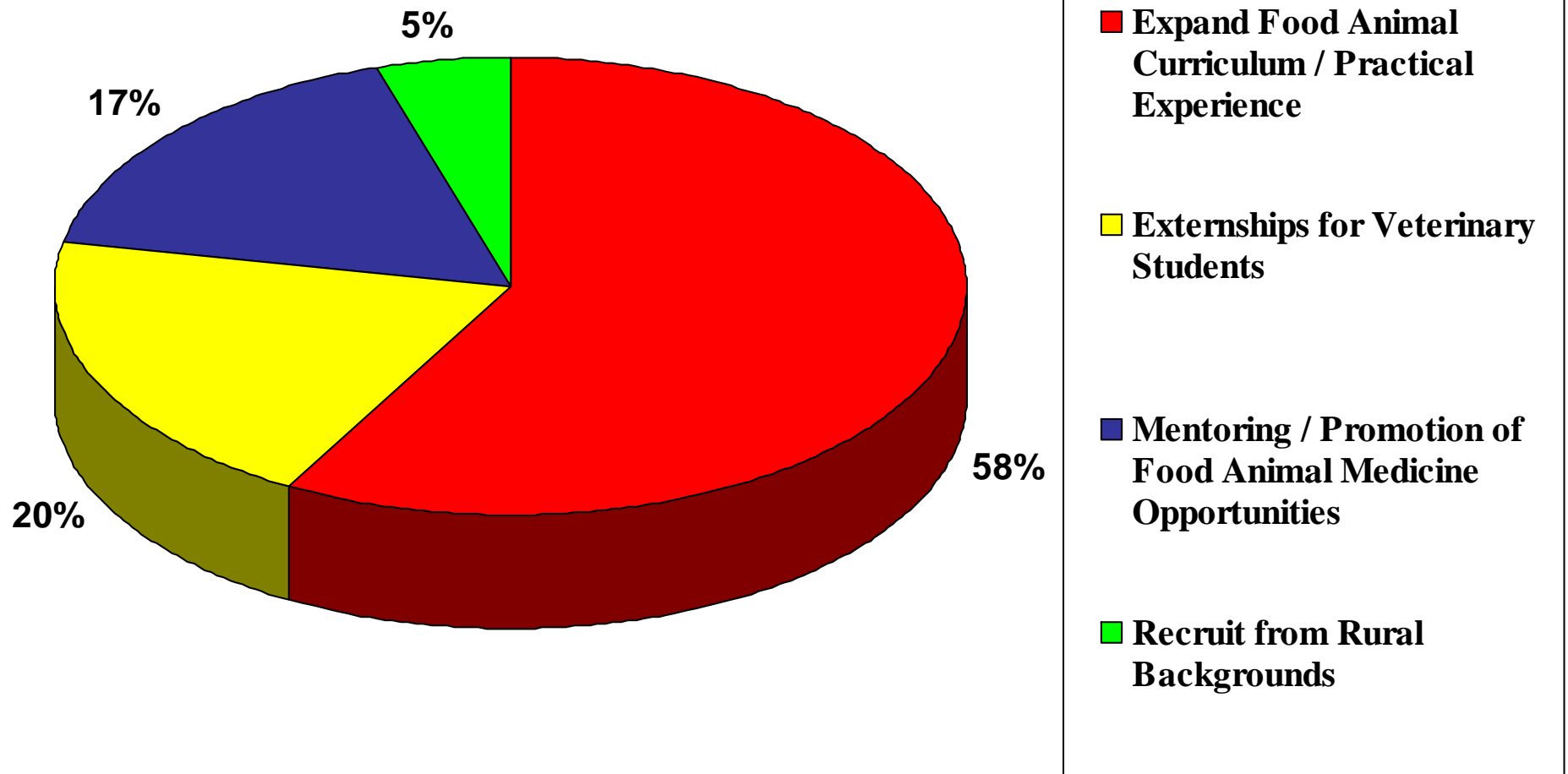
“Balancing demands of teaching, research, and clinical practice.”

“Making enough money to support family and pay off educational loans.”

Q49: What are two are two major challenges faced by new employees in these positions?

Veterinary College Strategies to Prepare Individuals for the Workplace

Among Recruiters



Q50: What one strategy could veterinary medical colleges use to better prepare individuals to meet these challenges in the workplace?

Veterinary College Strategies to Prepare Individuals for the Workplace: Expand Food Animal Curriculum / Practical Experience (58%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Classes on client and staff communication and educate the employers on what are reasonable expectations from new graduates. Get away from the “in my day” attitude.”

“Every student must take a course in food animal production – with emphasis on beef, pork, and poultry diseases and management.”

“More day to day experience – rectalling cattle, ultra sounding mares, semen checking bulls, etc.”

Q50: What one strategy could veterinary medical colleges use to better prepare individuals to meet these challenges in the workplace?

Veterinary College Strategies to Prepare Individuals for the Workplace: Externships for Veterinary Students (20%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Allow more externship time in private practice to establish skills and confidence.”

“Encourage several varied internship-type experiences before seeking first permanent position so they know more of what to expect and to get real-life experience.”

“Externships throughout schooling in private large/mixed practices during busy times of the year (calving, pregchecking)”

Q50: What one strategy could veterinary medical colleges use to better prepare individuals to meet these challenges in the workplace?

Veterinary College Strategies to Prepare Individuals for the Workplace: Mentoring / Promotion of Food Animal Medicine Opportunities (17%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Bring in groups like the Academy of Rural Veterinarians to talk. Start a V-Smart group like Iowa State University did to educate students to the benefits of rural practice.”

“Let veterinary students know there are a lot of different opportunities for the DVM and talk of the need, professional and personal fulfillment and financial rewards of food animal medicine.”

“Better exposure of students to industry as a potential career.”

Q50: What one strategy could veterinary medical colleges use to better prepare individuals to meet these challenges in the workplace?

Veterinary College Strategies to Prepare Individuals for the Workplace: Recruit from Rural Backgrounds (5%)

Verbatim quotations from Recruiters

“Accept more rural students and don’t preach that cats/dogs are the be-all-and-end-all of medicine.”

“Female veterinary graduates may start school in food animal but few continue in that type of practice. School admissions must realistically target food animal practice.”

“Admit more farmers’ sons.”

“Become more proactive in getting male candidates to become veterinarians.”

Q50: What one strategy could veterinary medical colleges use to better prepare individuals to meet these challenges in the workplace?

Factor Analysis of Position Recruitment Constructs

- Principal components analysis was performed on all food animal student position recruitment questions in order to reduce the large number of items into a smaller set of homogeneous factors.
- Two multi-item factors emerged from this analysis that illustrated adequate factor structure (e.g., high factor loadings and minimal cross-loadings), acceptable Cronbach alpha levels, and logical substantive meaning across items.
- Factors constructs are used to identify organizational experiences in recruiting food animal students by human resource personnel in industry, government, academia, and practice.
- Factors constructs are subsequently used as dependent variables in a stepwise multiple regression analysis to predict what recruiters think influences student employment decisions.

Position Recruitment Constructs

Factor analysis of 6 items that represent position recruitment experiences in organizations

Underlying constructs of position recruitment in organizations:

- **Turnover and retention of veterinarians in current positions are not seen as major problems by recruiters.**
- **Recruiters of veterinarians do not receive a large number of qualified applicants and advertised positions are not highly sought after.**

Factor Analysis of Position Recruitment Constructs

The two factors emerging from the PCA.



Turnover



Sought After

Factor Analysis of Recruiter Perceptions of Employment Areas

Survey items comprising Turnover factor



Turnover

- **Turnover in this position is a major problem for our organization**
- **It is common for individuals in this position to leave our organization within three years of being hired**
- **It is difficult for our organization to retain DVMs in this position**

Factor Analysis of Recruiter Perceptions of Employment Areas

Survey items comprising Sought After factor

Sought After

- **We receive a large number of qualified applicants when we advertise for this type of position**
- **This position in our organization is highly sought after by DVM applicants**

Principal Component Analysis of Position Recruitment for Veterinary Jobs

Scale Items	Turnover	Sought After
Turnover in this position is a major problem for our organization	0.942	
It is common for individuals in this position to leave our organization within three years of being hired	0.928	
It is difficult for our organization to retain DVMs in this position	0.879	
We receive a large number of qualified applicants when we advertise for this position		0.892
Consolidation among food animal producers will make it difficult to be a food animal veterinarian.		0.880
Variance accounted for (%)	50.99	32.30
Eigenvalues	2.55	1.61
Scale Mean Values	3.46	3.37
Cronbach's Alpha	0.915	0.748

Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

- **Principal components analysis was performed on all employment condition questions in order to reduce the large number of items into a smaller set of homogeneous factors.**
- **Five multi-item factors emerged from this analysis that illustrated adequate factor structure (e.g., high factor loadings and minimal cross-loadings), acceptable Cronbach alpha levels, and logical substantive meaning across items.**
- **Factors constructs are used to identify what recruiters think are descriptive employment conditions in their organizations for veterinary employees.**
- **Factors constructs are subsequently used as independent variables in a stepwise multiple regression analyses to predict what recruiters think influences student employment decisions.**

Employment Condition Constructs

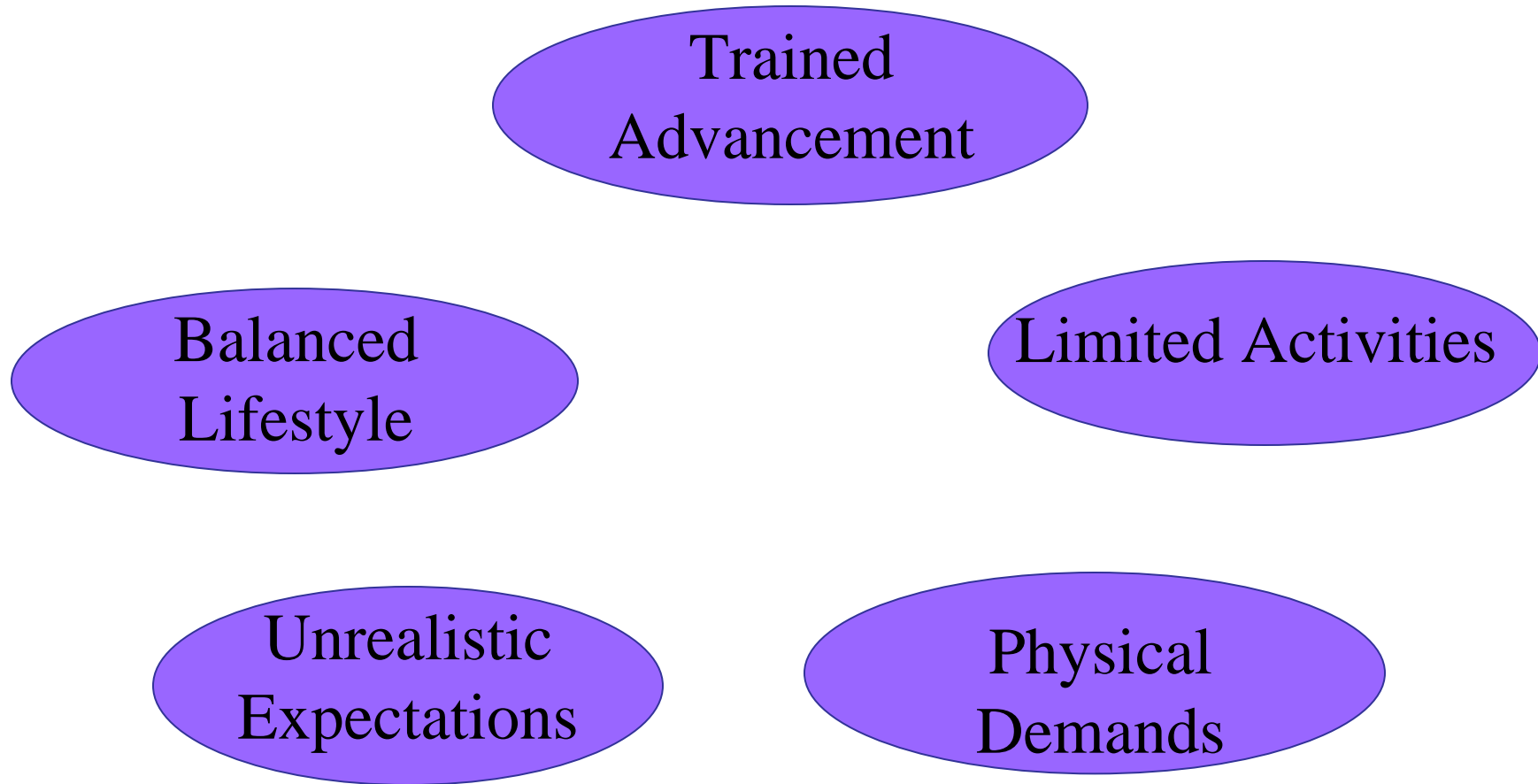
Factor analysis of 33 items that represent employment conditions at organizations

Underlying constructs of employment conditions:

- **Recruiters believe there are good opportunities for community leadership and to reach career goals as well as receive good training and greater managerial responsibility over time in the position in their organization.**
- **It is not difficult to get time off for vacations, balance work and family, or get time off for family/parental responsibilities in the position.**
- **Recruiters think there are good recreational and cultural activities, retail stores and restaurants near work.**
- **Unrealistic rapid promotion expectations, unrealistic high starting salaries, and hours required for success form a factor.**
- **The physical demands of the veterinary position form a factor.**

Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

The five factors emerging from the PCA.



Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

Survey items comprising Trained Advancement factor



Trained Advancement

- **There are opportunities to reach career goals by starting in this position**
- **There are many opportunities to advance in this position**
- **New employees are assigned a mentor for professional development**
- **This position allows greater managerial responsibility over time**
- **This organization invests in training to boost employee skills**
- **There are good opportunities for community leadership and involvement with the position**

Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

Survey items comprising Balanced Lifestyle factor



Balanced Lifestyle

- **It is difficult to arrange time off from work for parental/family responsibilities in this job**
- **It is hard to balance life between work and family in this job**
- **It is difficult to get time off from work for vacations in this job**

Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

Survey items comprising Limited Activities factor



Limited Activities

- **There are a lack of retail stores and restaurants in the area near our workplace**
- **There are very limited recreational and cultural activities in the area near our workplace**
- **There are inadequate career opportunities for employee spouses near our workplace**

Factor Analysis of Employment Condition Constructs

Survey items comprising Unrealistic Expectations factor

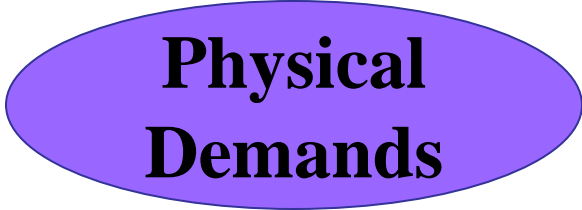


Unrealistic Expectations

- **Potential employees have unrealistically high starting salary expectations**
- **Potential employees have unrealistically high expectations about rapid promotions in the organization**
- **Potential employees have unrealistic job expectations about the work hours required for success**

Factor Analysis of Encouraging Food Animal Careers at Veterinary Medical Colleges

Survey items comprising Physical Demands factor



Physical Demands

- **This job is very physically demanding**
- **This type of work is inherently dirty**

Principal Component Analyses of Veterinary Employment Conditions

Scale Items	Trained Advancement	Balanced Lifestyle	Limited Activities	Unrealistic Expectations	Physical Demands
There are opportunities to reach career goals by starting in this position	0.785				
There are many opportunities to advance in the position	0.752				
New employees are assigned a mentor for professional development	0.703				
This position allows greater managerial responsibility over time	0.699				
This organization invests in training to boost employee skills	0.696				
There are good opportunities for community leadership and involvement with the position	0.685				
It is difficult to arrange time off from work for parental/family responsibilities in this job		0.866			
It is hard to balance life between work and family in this job		0.863			
It is difficult to get time off from work for vacations in this job		0.831			
There is a lack of retail stores and restaurants in the area near our workplace			0.828		
There are very limited recreational and cultural activities in the area near our workplace			0.812		
There are inadequate career opportunities for employee spouses near our workplace			0.797		
Potential employees have unrealistically high starting salary expectations				0.861	
Potential employees have unrealistically high expectations about rapid promotions in the organization				0.789	
Potential employees have unrealistic job expectations about the work hours required for success				0.741	
The job is very physically demanding					0.877
This type of work is inherently dirty					0.859
Variance accounted for (%)	19.05	14.19	12.43	11.75	9.92
Eigenvalues	3.23	2.41	2.11	1.99	1.68
Scale Mean Values	4.63	3.52	2.76	4.22	4.22
Cronbach's Alpha	0.820	0.880	0.772	0.740	0.806

Regression Analysis of Factors that Recruiters Think Influence Employment Selection

Independent variables

- **Regression models are tested using five of the factors identified in the principle components analysis as independent variables.**
- **The five independent factors included in the initial stepwise multiple regression equation were unrealistic expectations, physical demands, limited activities, trained advancement, and balanced lifestyle.**

Dependent variables

- **The dependent variables were the turnover in the organization construct and if the veterinary position in the organization was highly sought after by potential job applicants.**

Regression Analysis Predicting Organizational Turnover

Stepwise multiple regression model using the Turnover construct as a dependent variable

Recruiters report that those who are most likely to leave an organization for another veterinary job:

- **Are less likely to receive training, have fewer opportunities for advancement, lower managerial responsibility over time, and few opportunities for community leadership**
- **Find it more difficult to balance work and family**
- **Are more likely to experience limited activities in terms of restaurants, shopping and cultural activities.**
- **Have more unrealistic job expectations**
- **Experience work that is more physically demanding and dirty**

Stepwise Regression Analysis of Organizational Turnover

Factor Dimensions	Beta Weight	t-value	Significance Level
Trained Advancement	-0.121	-4.036	.000
Balanced Lifestyle	0.124	3.742	.000
Limited Activities	-0.081	-2.709	.007
Unrealistic Expectations	0.234	7.878	.000
Physical Demands	0.158	5.068	.000
Dependent Variable :Turnover in the organization			
R-Square	0.183		
Adjusted R-square	0.179		
F-Statistic	46.603		
Significance Level	.000		

Regression Analysis Predicting Positions Sought After

Stepwise multiple regression model using the Sought After construct as a dependent variable

Recruiters report that veterinary positions in their organizations that are highly sought after and that receive a large number of applicants:

- **Are associated with job training, opportunities for advancement and higher managerial responsibility over time and many opportunities for community leadership**
- **Are those jobs where it is difficult to balance work and family**
- **Are less likely to be near limited activities in terms of restaurants, shopping and cultural activities.**
- **Have job applicants with fewer unrealistic job expectations**
- **Experience work that is less physically demanding and dirty**

Stepwise Regression Analysis of Sought After Positions

Factor Dimensions	Beta Weight	t-value	Significance Level
Trained Advancement	0.131	4.112	.000
Balanced Lifestyle	0.160	4.533	.000
Limited Activities	-0.074	-2.313	.021
Unrealistic Expectations	-0.067	-2.11	.035
Physical Demands	-0.225	-6.67	.000
Dependent Variable :Turnover in the organization			
R-Square	0.071		
Adjusted R-square	0.066		
F-Statistic	15.826		
Significance Level	.000		