

# **Veterinary Pathologist Job Interview Questions And Answers**



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# Veterinary Pathologist Interview Questions And Answers Guide.

## Question - 1:

Tell me what is most rewarding about being a veterinarian?

### Ans:

When you save an animal's life. When you save an animal's life or some little old lady comes in here and gives you a hug because you have saved her animal's life. That's what it's all about. Some people don't think it is. Some people think it's money. The most rewarding thing to me is what I do for the animal.

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## Question - 2:

Explain me about your comfort level with our clients, the pet owners?

### Ans:

Even if you love animals, success in veterinary medicine depends on how much we love the two-legged creature at the OTHER end of the leash! You want to avoid people who work with animals because they do not like people. They may not say this outright, so again be on the lookout for nonverbal communication.

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## Question - 3:

What do you dislike as Veterinary Pathologist?

### Ans:

Probably the biggest thing I dislike about it is having to put up with the general public. I don't mind the hours working. Some people do, not me. But, people griping, complaining about a bill or, you know, it just kind of you can be having a great day, and somebody come in and complain about their bill, and it just ruins your whole day. That's the thing that I hate about it. I really do.

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## Question - 4:

Tell me are you a designated Approved Veterinary Assistant (AVA) through NAVTA?

### Ans:

You may already know the answer to this from their interview paperwork, but it is still good to ask. Many people probably still do not know that NAVTA has the AVA designation and there are formal programs, both online and in person, available to train an AVA.

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## Question - 5:

Tell me is there anything you find exciting about this career?

### Ans:

When I was doing large animal; obstetrics, delivering calves, doing that was the most exciting part of the practice. Because every one was different. The exciting part of what I enjoy doing more than anything in this practice is surgery, whether it's general surgery or whether it's emergency. I enjoy it because it's just me and the dog in there, and one other person. I think it's probably the most rewarding part of this thing is the surgery that you do: the saving the lives, the making lives better. I just enjoy the hell out of surgery.

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## Question - 6:

What do you like about what you do?

### Ans:

I like the challenge of diagnostics. I like the satisfaction of saving an animal's life. I like the things that we do to make animals live longer, live more productive lives, spaying and neutering, and all healthcare. Now our cats are living to seventeen or eighteen years of age, and our dogs are fifteen and sixteen, and when I started practice, if you had a fourteen-year old cat, it was old. And then once in a while, it's rewarding when somebody comes up and thanks you for what you've done for



(Fifi) or (Foofoo). If money was in it, I wouldn't have done large animal. Because large animal[care] was rewarding; delivering calves and treating sick animals, and the fire engine calls were lots of fun, but there was no money in it. There never is any money.

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### Question - 7:

Please tell me what is a common misconception people have about what you do?

#### Ans:

That we make lots of money. That is the most common misconception. We are probably the lowest paid of all the professionals. If you talk about lawyers and dentists and even chiropractors. You could even put chiropractors in there. You know, we're probably one of the lowest paid professional group that there is. That's the biggest misconception. That we are filthy rich, and we ain't. We just are just about like anybody that has a business. Just making it!

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### Question - 8:

Tell me how did you get started as veterinarian?

#### Ans:

I grew up on a farm and I enjoyed working with the animals there. And we had an old time veterinarian there that was pretty rough around the edges. I worked farm animals, I worked for people, I did routine healthcare for sheep and cattle and things, and I just kind of migrated that way.

At some point I finally decided that was what I wanted to do for my life's work. I knew it when I was fourteen or fifteen years old, but it's something that takes many people a while to figure out. There's some place along the way that the light finally comes on and says, This is what I want to do. It doesn't always work out that way, but that's what most people in veterinary medicine do.

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### Question - 9:

Why did you decide to become a Veterinary Pathologist?

#### Ans:

Not only do you want to know why they chose to come into the profession of veterinary medicine, you also want to know why they chose to be an assistant versus a front office person or veterinary technician. In other words, are they only interested in the veterinary assistant position because that is the only opening you have right now? Ideally you want someone who enjoys and chooses to be a veterinary assistant for his or her own personal and professional reasons.

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### Question - 10:

Please tell me what is most challenging about what you do?

#### Ans:

Diagnostics. The animal has very little ability to tell you where it hurts; whether they're feeling better or whether you're doing the right thing. You have to rely on the owner, you have to rely on the sixth sense. Diagnosing sick animals is the most challenging part of it all! Diagnosing and being able to have a working relationship with that animal to know whether it is doing better, and taking history from the fifteen to twenty minutes you spend with a person in there! I can't have somebody come in with a sick dog, and drop it off and say, Here, fix it. Because I've got to have a whole lot more information than that. Diagnosing sick animals is probably the most difficult and challenging of all the things that we do.

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### Question - 11:

Explain me have you ever experienced the death of a close pet?

#### Ans:

This is a question we often fail to ask, or even consider. Yet our receptionists will absolutely be involved with clients who suffer the loss of their beloved pet. Will they understand the grief associated with this loss, and how the particular circumstances - such as a tragic accident, an attended euthanasia, a death while in the hospital - might affect the client's grief? There are many different colors of grief, and the candidate you pick should understand that and be able to empathize while still doing their tasks. Remember that many situations are similar among different types of businesses, with the exception of the addition of death and euthanasia in the veterinary practice. Spend time on that topic in particular.

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### Question - 12:

Tell us what advice would you offer someone considering this career?

#### Ans:

Be damn sure this is what you want to do. It's a long ways through veterinary school. The first year is probably the most grueling part of the whole thing. The gross anatomy where you've got all these species of animals to learn about. You have to have dedication, and have patience, and you need to have a work ethic. It ain't an 8-5 job, there are many times you have to put in longer hours. I'd say that most veterinary students come away from school with about \$150,000 in debt, and that takes a lot out of your income to start with. It's a difficult road the first five years out of school. You just don't come out of veterinary school and say, Here I am. I'm a veterinarian, you know, and you're going to get this big salary, and life is going to be great. It's not. The person needs to have patience, and want, and have a desire. There has to be that desire to be a veterinarian. Just because it looks like it might be monetarily rewarding, it won't be for a while.

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### Question - 13:

Tell us what tools and technology are you familiar with?

#### Ans:

Many organizations use the same equipment and technology used in the veterinary practice. What type of office machines have they used, such as fax/copier, multi-line phone or computer? Who serviced these machines? For example, did they learn how to clear jams on the copier? This is usually done by the receptionist in



the heat of the moment, and it always happens when it's busy up front!

How well do they type? Are they familiar with using email, texting, and other forms of communication you use with your teammates and your clients? Chances are, even if they have previous experience in veterinary medicine, they may not know your basic software, so ask them when is the last time they had to LEARN a new software program. Ask them how that went, if it was it easy for them or if they struggled quite a bit?

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### Question - 14:

Tell me are there any perks to this career?

#### Ans:

I enjoy most of the animals and I enjoy a certain part of my clientele. It's something to come in here and be able to know that you've got a group of people that think a lot of you and you think a lot of them, and the friendships that you make over the years. A lot of my large animals clients, I still have a great friendship with.

But I think probably the biggest perk is the true friendships that you develop with the people because what you've done for their animals or have done for them. That is probably the biggest thing that I think I can, right off the top of my head. You know, compared with all this other stuff the money is nothing. Hopefully, a few of them will show up at my funeral. That's the goal. And also the respect. Most of the time, people respect you.

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### Question - 15:

Suppose a client comes out of an exam room where they just euthanized their pet. They are crying and standing at the front desk. What do you do?

#### Ans:

Even if the candidate does not know the protocol in your specific practice, you would still want to hear them say that they would offer words of comfort or perhaps lead them to a less busy area of the front desk for privacy. Ask them specifically to describe the body language they would be using: A soft tone of voice, leaning in toward the client so they can discuss things softly, offering a tissue if appropriate. See how well they can visualize the scenario and their part in it.

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### Question - 16:

Explain me what do you see as your future path, or where do you see yourself in 1 year, 5 years, 10 years?

#### Ans:

With this more specific line of questioning, you want to get a feel for whether this person plans on an extended career in veterinary medicine, or if this is just a stop along the way to another career altogether. Again, either way may be fine, but it is good to know this ahead of time to aid you in future staffing decisions. For many young people, this question will catch them off-guard, which is another good reason to ask it.

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### Question - 17:

Basic Top Veterinary Pathologist Job Interview Questions:

#### Ans:

- \* Patient care requires a strong amount of compassion. Do you consider yourself a compassionate person?
- \* At Gribbles Veterinary Pathology we seek to hire individuals who display a keen interest in the healthcare arena. Would you consider yourself dedicated to a career in healthcare services?
- \* In the healthcare services industry there are many emotions in a day. Have your emotions ever been in the way of your productivity?
- \* Tell me about your healthcare related education and training.
- \* At Gribbles Veterinary Pathology we take pride in our great relationships with clients, vendors, coworkers, and patients. Do you consider yourself to be a strong relationship builder?
- \* What is your patient care philosophy?
- \* In order to work for Gribbles Veterinary Pathology, you must be able to pass a full criminal background check. Do you consent to a full background check?
- \* Healthcare service companies require strong organizational skills and attention to detail. How do you ensure that your work is properly organized, and highly accurate?
- \* If you could expand your knowledge and expertise in any area of healthcare services, which would you choose?
- \* It is often said that a career in healthcare is a 'thankless job'. How can we keep you motivated and engaged, even on the days when you feel your work goes unnoticed?
- \* Have you ever been involved in ordering medical supplies, maintaining inventory, or other types of health care related administrative duties?
- \* At Gribbles Veterinary Pathology we seek to hire individuals who have ambitions of growing their career. Where do you see yourself in 3-5 years?
- \* Gribbles Veterinary Pathology seeks to hire those with strong problem solving skills. When were you able to successfully resolve a problem in the workplace?
- \* When have you shown a willingness to learn a new method or new approach to solving a problem?
- \* How would you describe your personality?
- \* Gribbles Veterinary Pathology has a diverse workforce. When have you worked amongst a diverse group of people?
- \* Do you prefer to work in a team based position or individually?
- \* Gribbles Veterinary Pathology supports a healthy work/life balance for all employees. How do you balance life and work?
- \* Tell me about yourself.
- \* What part of your healthcare career brings you the most stress?
- \* If you could expand your knowledge and expertise in any healthcare service area, which would you choose?
- \* If Gribbles Veterinary Pathology hired you today, what would you accomplish first?
- \* Think about a difficult boss, professor or coworker. What made him or her difficult? How did you successfully interact with this person?
- \* With the ongoing changes in the healthcare services industry, how do you keep your knowledge current?
- \* What type of work environment do you dislike working in?
- \* In your opinion, what makes you a great problem solver?
- \* Rate your problem solving skills from 1-10. How do you justify your rating?
- \* What is your greatest weakness?
- \* Why do you think you will be successful in this role with Gribbles Veterinary Pathology?
- \* Do you think it is possible to be a good team member, yet disagree with the leader?
- \* Gribbles Veterinary Pathology was initially looking for someone with 5 years' experience in a similar role. Considering you have just 2 years' experience, would you be willing to accept this position at a lower salary?

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### **Question - 18:**

Strengths and Weaknesses based Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* How do you see your job relating to the overall goals?
- \* Your greatest weakness in school or at work?
- \* What do you believe are your key strengths?
- \* Who else have you applied to/got interviews with?
- \* When was the last time you were in a crises?

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### **Question - 19:**

Situational Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What would make you happy in a job?
- \* How do you think you can make a contribution to this company?
- \* What is the difference between a good position and an excellent one?
- \* What have you been doing since your last job?
- \* What attracted you to this company?

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### **Question - 20:**

Sample Veterinary Pathologist Job Interview Questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* How do you feel about being asked to perform duties that aren't listed in your job description during hectic times?
- \* Are you okay with cleaning up after animals?
- \* What was the most helpful performance feedback you received during your training?
- \* What kinds of animals are you experienced handling/caring for?
- \* What is your opinion about mandatory spay/neuter laws?
- \* What would you say to a client who came in to request her healthy pet be euthanized because she was unable to afford to take care of it?
- \* If the office was understaffed and we asked you to come in on your day off, would you come in?
- \* How do you relieve stress?
- \* What is the biggest mistake you have made? What did you learn from it?
- \* What kind of pets do you own/have you owned?
- \* Are you interested in a particular specialty?
- \* What do you imagine will be the most difficult part of this job if we hire you?
- \* How did you become interested in veterinary medicine?
- \* Tell us about a time you had to help an unhappy customer.
- \* What would you do if a client was unable to afford to pay for services?
- \* What would you do if you saw a fellow technologist make a mistake?
- \* What appeals to you most about being a vet tech?
- \* What would you do if you felt an animal you were treating had been abused?
- \* What is the difference between animal rights and animal welfare?

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### **Question - 21:**

Behavioral Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What do you like and dislike about the job we are discussing?
- \* Describe a situation where you had to plan or organise something.
- \* What kind of events cause you stress on the job?
- \* Has anything ever irritated you about people you've worked with?
- \* Give an example of a time you successfully worked on a team.

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### **Question - 22:**

Competency Based Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What were your annual goals at your most current employer?
- \* If you were hiring a person for this job, what would you look for?
- \* Did you feel you progressed satisfactorily in your last job?
- \* What are your expectations regarding promotions and salary increases?
- \* What was the most stressful situation you have faced?

Discuss any attributes that may set you apart from other job candidates.

Just try to stay focused on the job you're interviewing for.

Make sure to tell the interviewer about the positive results your actions produced.

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### **Question - 23:**

Ethical Veterinary Pathologist Job Interview Questions:

#### **Ans:**



- \* What makes you a good veterinarian?
- \* What do you think a veterinarian's role is in the community?
- \* What made you decide to be a veterinarian?
- \* How do you feel about euthanasia? Why?
- \* What would you do if there are obvious signs that an animal you are treating has been abused?
- \* What would you do if a client comes in with an injured animal that will surely die without medical attention, but they only have a few dollars and the cost for animal care, and extended care, will be much higher than what they are able to pay?
- \* If a client brings in a perfectly healthy animal and wants to euthanize it because they no longer want the dog, what do you do?
- \* If you make a mistake and cause the death of an animal, what would you do?
- \* What is the most difficult situation you've been faced with since you got in veterinary medicine? How did you handle it?
- \* Describe any previous experience. What did you like and dislike about it?
- \* How do you do stay up to date in the field of veterinary medicine?
- \* What do you do in your free time? Any hobbies?
- \* What was the last book you read?
- \* Do you have any volunteer experience?
- \* Do you have any questions for us?

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### **Question - 24:**

Introductory Veterinary Pathologist Job Interview Questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* Please tell us a little bit about yourself and why you want to become a vet?
- \* What made you apply for this post?
- \* What other veterinary schools have you applied to?
- \* What other practices have you applied to?
- \* Why are you leaving your current veterinary post?
- \* Why do you want to work as a locum vet?
- \* Tell us about your veterinary degree course at XXX - what aspects of your training did you enjoy / not enjoy?
- \* How would you describe yourself as a vet - what special qualities do you bring to the profession?
- \* If you were to ask your friends to describe you, what would they say?
- \* What are your hobbies, and what have you learned from participating in them?

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### **Question - 25:**

Phone based Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What are you expecting from this firm in the future?
- \* What are your long-term goals or career plans?
- \* What is your greatest achievement outside of work?
- \* Can you describe a time when your work was criticized?
- \* Who was your favorite manager and why?

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### **Question - 26:**

Video based Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What was the most difficult period in your life, and how did you deal with it?
- \* Situation in which you had to arrive at a compromise.
- \* Give some examples of teamwork.
- \* What were the responsibilities of your last position?
- \* How would you weigh a plane without scales?

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### **Question - 27:**

Communication skills based Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* What do you see yourself doing within the first days of this job?
- \* What have you done to support diversity in your unit?
- \* What's most important to you in a new position?
- \* What major challenges and problems did you face?
- \* What support training would you require to be able to do this job?

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### **Question - 28:**

Basic Veterinary Pathologist interview questions:

#### **Ans:**

- \* Example when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
- \* Have you done this kind of work before?
- \* Are you planning to continue your studies?
- \* How long would you stay with our company?
- \* What are you looking for in terms of career development?





Start with the present and tell why you are well qualified for the position.  
Answer Veterinary Pathologist interview questions pertaining to job qualifications and skill sets honestly.  
Discuss any attributes that may set you apart from other job candidates.

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### **Question - 29:**

Tell me if applicable, what tasks you have performed previously in a veterinary setting?

#### **Ans:**

As they recount the duties of his or her past employment in veterinary medicine, pay attention to any nonverbal communication to see if you can determine which tasks they enjoyed, and which they did not. Build questions off of their response with inquiries about specific tasks, and take some time describing the tasks they would perform in your practice as a veterinary assistant.

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### **Question - 30:**

Tell us what education or skills are needed to do be a veterinarian?

#### **Ans:**

Well, of course, you have to have four years of college. With the right classes, the right grade point average, having an advisor that gets you down the right path, being in a state that has a veterinary school has a lot of advantages. This state does not have a veterinary school, so they have to rely on contracts with other surrounding states to take so many veterinarians a year. Some people even if they don't get into a veterinary school on their first application, they have to continue on with maybe a masters in some field, or just continue on with some more education. And then there is four years of veterinary school. There is no internship unless you want to specialize in something, and go and have an internship with a qualified veterinarian that is a specialist in his field. And that's it on education. That's it. You know, really, if you get in and go out and practice, it takes eight years.

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### **Question - 31:**

What are your goals/dreams for the future?

#### **Ans:**

It's to be able to slow down in five years and to work part-time. I don't ever foresee completely retiring unless I am unable to perform. This has been my life work, so I'm not going to give it up that easily. I don't want to give it up that easily.

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### **Question - 32:**

Please tell me how do you make money/or how are you compensated?

#### **Ans:**

Disease prevention, vaccinations, routine healthcare is probably where most of the income is generated. Surgery can be a source of income. The sale of healthcare products: flea products, heartworm preventions, even prescription dog foods is another source of income. Probably the thing that you get least for your time is in diagnostic and treating sick animals, as far as your percentage of time you spend with an animal, compared to what you do with the routine things: the vaccinations and healthcare. But, those are your areas where you make money.

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### **Question - 33:**

Tell me what do they think are the most important "soft skills" for the job?

#### **Ans:**

You are hoping to hear things like compassion, friendliness, empathy, active listening, multitasking and others that hopefully are listed on your job description as well. What type of person fits best at the front desk, and do they have those qualities? There is perhaps no more critical a position to fill than one at the front desk. These team members are the first and lasting impression for every client that calls or comes in the door, so selection must be taken seriously. But also realize until you get them into the position and get a little training under their belt, it may be very difficult to know if they are a good fit. The front office is not for everyone, and you will likely know whether or not they will be successful within those first few weeks. Take that "introduction period" for all it is worth, and use that time to see if you've created a good fit. There is a saying that goes something like this, "hire slow, and fire fast." Take your time with your interview process, but when your gut tells you it is not going to work, make a change. These people are too important to the practice and the team to not ensure a good match of person-to-position!

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### **Question - 34:**

Tell me why do you want to work in an animal-care facility?

#### **Ans:**

A receptionist is well-suited to work at any type of front office, truthfully. The basic tasks - answering the phone, greeting clients, scheduling appointments, data entry - are all things that are done in many types of businesses. In fact, you should remain open to candidates that have front-office experience, just not in a veterinary practice. Find out what attracts them to a place where contact with animals is essential and expected. Nine times out of 10, they will simply reply, "I love animals," but dig a little deeper, and find out what significance animals have had in their life.

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### **Question - 35:**

Tell me is there another position in the practice that you feel capable of filling, or hope to train for in the future?

#### **Ans:**

You may have several different positions open in your practice, and you also never know when an opening might appear, so ask about other positions as well. You





may also learn that this person is just hoping to get their foot in the door, and they really want to work in a different area at some time in the future. This may be just fine with you, or it may be that you truly need someone who will happily stay put in an assistant's position for the foreseeable future.

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### **Question - 36:**

Tell me do you love animals?

#### **Ans:**

Although this may seem like a silly question, it really isn't. At this point, you do not know this person's motivation to become a veterinary assistant, or to seek out a job working with animals. You want to see their eyes light up when you ask this question, a smile come over their face as they remember the animals in their life, and hear them talk in a positive way about their own pets.

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### **Question - 37:**

Tell us how much time off do you get/take?

#### **Ans:**

Personally, all I take off is one week a year. And I'm not the normal. Most veterinarians today that go into a group practice, they will get probably a month off a year. I would say that's going to be pretty well normal. But not for somebody that's a single-man practice. You don't get to take off a week here, a week there, you know. People get tired of you not being around and go someplace else, because it's very easy for them to just go across the street or down the road. Here in this town we have seven or eight clinics.

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### **Question - 38:**

Tell me how much money do you make as a veterinarian?

#### **Ans:**

You know, in a single-man practice like mine that's established, grossing a half a million dollars, is probably going to take home \$100,000.....These multi-million dollar practices, multi-practice, some of them are making \$250,000. But that takes a long time to get that and you have a lot of people working for you.

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### **Question - 39:**

Please tell me how would you describe what you do?

#### **Ans:**

In veterinary medicine you've got to do two things: you treat the animal, and then you've got to use psychology on the owner. Everyday I put up with people like that. And I make the joke that one end of the leash is easy to deal with. The other end of the leash is very difficult to deal with. If a person can't deal with these individuals that are very demanding, that read the Internet too much, that think they know everything, if you can't look past those people, and, bite your tongue at times, you won't get very far.

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### **Question - 40:**

Tell us can you multitask?

#### **Ans:**

This is essential to any position in the veterinary practice, but up front it must also be done while "on stage" in full view of the lobby audience, so the receptionist has to do it with grace. Give them a typical scenario: You are on the phone scheduling an appointment, you have a doctor waiting for you to bring back a chart, another phone lines start to ring and a client walks through the front door and comes to a stop right in front of you. What do you do? How do you prioritize these tasks in the heat of the moment?

Know what answer you want to hear. Perhaps it's, "I make eye contact with the approaching client and either mouth the words 'I'll be right with you,' or hold up an index finger to indicate 'just one minute.' Then I put the second call on hold, finish the first, address the needs of the client in front of me, run the chart back to the doctor..." or however you would want them to handle the situation.

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### **Question - 41:**

Tell me if applicable, why did/are you leaving your previous/current position?

#### **Ans:**

This is a good question for any interviewee, so we certainly want to ask it during interviews for a veterinary assistant. Build more specific questions off of their answer to this inquiry.

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### **Question - 42:**

Tell me what type of animals have you had as pets, and/or worked with previously?

#### **Ans:**

We assume most people have experience with dogs and cats, but if your practice provides services to an assortment of "pocket pets," (animals like hamsters, sugar gliders, etc.), you want to know the answer to this question. If you do see other species, it may be a big advantage if an interviewee has experience with reptiles, birds, etc.

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