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Rockefeller habits



The business guru's century-old business strategies have surprising relevance for the running of a contemporary veterinary practice.

John D Rockefeller was, at one time, the richest person in the United States. A controversial figure, he was also a philanthropist who donated money to education, science and the arts. He's still referenced for his iconic 'Rockefeller habits' which are as pertinent today as they were a century ago.



1 The executive team is healthy and aligned.

Practice managers are united in their aims and values, respect each other's differences, and are up to date in their training. They meet regularly to consolidate, exchange ideas and resolve conflicts.

2 Everyone is aligned with the one thing that needs to be accomplished to move the company forward.

A measurable and achievable quarterly goal is identified and shared with everybody in the practice, so everyone can understand exactly how and why they can contribute.

3 Communication rhythm is established and information moves through the organisation quickly.

Regular meetings (e.g. daily catch-ups, weekly team meetings, monthly middle-management meetings and quarterly off-site senior-management meetings) take place and the resulting information is shared with others.

4 Every facet of the organisation has a person assigned with accountability for ensuring goals are met.

Team members know if, how and why they are responsible and to whom – and the impact of failing to meet their responsibilities.

5 Ongoing employee output is collected to identify obstacles and opportunities.

Managers assess and engage with team members regularly to understand positive or negative experiences that may be contributing to their performance. They then learn from, and act on, those findings.

6 Reporting and analysis of customer feedback data is as frequent and accurate as financial data.

Key team members regularly and proactively seek feedback from practice customers. Both positive and negative insights are shared with the team, acted upon, and followed-up with customers if necessary.

7 Core values and purpose are alive in the organisation.

The core values and purpose are known, shared and willingly upheld by the whole team, and form an active part of daily practice life.

8 Employees can articulate the key components of the company's strategy accurately.

The practice strategy clearly identifies what it does, its key team and ethos, its customer profile, its aims and priorities, its mission, and its promises to customers. It is prominently displayed and regularly reinforced.

9 All employees can answer quantitatively whether they have had a good day or week.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are established with each team member, detailing clear expectations and accountability. Managers provide regular evaluation, feedback, guidance and support based on these indicators.

10 The company's plans and performance are visible to everyone.

Practice performance and team members' KPI data are measurable and accessible, with overt and structured action taken for meaningful accountability and encouragement.

Are there other good habits you feel could be implemented in veterinary practice? Let us know – email vnj@bvna.co.uk