



Simon R. Platt, BVM&S, MRCVS, DACVIM (Neurology), DECVN
University of Georgia

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Challenges of “Youth”

“Youth gets together with their materials to build a bridge to the moon or maybe a palace on earth; then in middle age they decide to build a woodshed with them instead.”

— Henry David Thoreau

In our profession, there are certainly many challenges that we often face on our own. I have shared before about our collective responsibility to help each other through the darkest days that we may face. And as much as it falls upon us all to look out for those who may be feeling the pressures experienced on the job, we also have a responsibility to look after those who will carry this profession into the future. It is incumbent upon the more seasoned professionals to give graduates a voice in the development of our profession as soon as possible.

The pressures of the job, which may be more prevalent at the start of our careers, coupled with a lack of voice could easily be a combination for an early departure for the profession and our collective loss. VetPrep polled graduates, asking whether they would attend veterinary school again and 42% of respondents said they would not!¹ We can all hypothesize about why this number would be so high, but it's obviously a disturbing issue for the future of the veterinary profession.

Long hours, financial burdens post-medical school, and heavy workloads can place enormous stress on veterinarians early on in their careers. I would imagine many ‘young doctors’ no doubt face these demands, and some may do so without the necessary support from those of us who have ‘been there.’

There is a dynamic in the relationship between the generations. Recent graduates are often on the frontline of patient care; they understand the challenges this profession poses and are, therefore, a valuable source of intelligence. They are capable of providing real insights into both medical and administrative advancements. Senior members of our profession and our practice management teams have an important role in providing a safe, learning environment as recent graduates find their feet in this profession. We should be accessible and receptive to concerns, queries, and new ideas. We should share the belief that newer veterinarians should not just be seen as the clinical leaders of tomorrow, but the clinical leaders of today.

We must harness their enthusiasm and support them to become valuable and respected team members, giving them what they need to grow professionally before they lose their passion and enthusiasm. Such a collaboration between the generations could be the start of a brighter future. **TVP**

¹VetPrep.com, Vet School, Would You Do It Again? <https://blog.vetprep.com/vet-school-would-you-do-it-again-why-so-many-are-saying-no>, (accessed April 5, 2018).