



CERTIFIED VETERINARY PRACTICE MANAGER

STUDY GUIDE and
RECOMMENDED READING LIST

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PURPOSE OF THE STUDY GUIDE

This study guide is intended to help a candidate prepare for the examination.

Examination Composition, Scoring and Reporting

The guiding principle in constructing the CVPM examination is job relevance – the content of the test is linked through systematic means to a well-defined representation of the profession. A content validity approach to test construction is used. The first step in the process is the practice analysis, which defines the relevant performance dimensions of the occupation. The VHMA regularly conducts practice analysis studies to identify the specific responsibilities required of veterinary practice management professionals and the skills and knowledge needed to perform these responsibilities (the current CVPM Task Analysis Outline is included in this study guide). The test blueprint is developed from the practice analysis and forms the template for the examination (the current CVPM Test Blueprint is available for viewing on the Certification (CVPM) page of the VHMA Web site at: www.vhma.org). Next, item writers are selected and trained. Item writers produce items following the guidelines and content assignments specified by training and the test blueprint. The items are then submitted for review by the CVPM Board and a test development consultant. Items are approved, rejected or modified by the review committee. Accepted items are entered into the item database. Items are then selected for the examination by the test consultant according to the specifications of the test blueprint. The draft examination is reviewed by members of the CVPM Board and modifications made if necessary. The final, approved examination is then administered. Statistical analyses are conducted on each examination to determine the reliability and psychometric properties of the exam.

The written examination is composed of true-false and multiple-choice questions about relevant management knowledge in Human Resources, Law and Ethics, Marketing, Organization of the Practice and Finance. The majority of the questions are traditional knowledge-based multiple-choice questions; some will be scenario-based multiple-choice questions. For the scenario-based questions, the question stem will contain a scene or setting along with several possible behavioral responses to the situation.

The questions on the written examination, documented from various veterinary management books, surveys and applicable laws are listed on the Recommended Reading List (included in this study guide). They are specifically written to cover the wide range of knowledge necessary to successfully manage the complex businesses of today's veterinary practices.

Like veterinary practice, the examination changes and evolves as new laws and regulations, as well as, management theories are incorporated. Basic management knowledge which remains constant is also thoroughly tested.

The total number of questions on each examination administration may vary, but the maximum number of questions on any examination will be two hundred (200). Candidates are given three and one-half (3 1/2) hours to complete the written examination.

The passing standard is a predetermined standard of knowledge set by a criterion-referenced methodology. Using this methodology there is no curve and candidates do not compete against each other. There is no limit on the number of candidates who may pass or fail the test.

All candidates will be notified in writing of their examination results within sixty (60) days of taking the examination. Unsuccessful candidates will receive a summary report that lists their results in each of the test domains. Successful candidates receive notification of their passing status only. No examination results will be reported over the telephone.

Examination Content

The Certified Veterinary Practice Manager's (CVPM) examination recognizes those veterinary practice managers who through their education, practical experience and accountability to their employers and peers, have achieved a high level of competence in the field of veterinary practice management. The CVPM examination will measure some of the important duties you as a veterinary practice manager perform daily. The examination covers five major areas: (1) human resources, (2) law and ethics, (3) marketing, (4) organizational structure and (5) finance .

The best preparation for taking the examination is the experience you gain as an active practice manager. This is the reason the application requires you have undergone actual time as a practice manager prior to your application being accepted. If your management responsibilities in any one of these areas has been limited, that area should be thoroughly studied prior to taking the examination.

Human Resources

Create and maintain staff manuals. Design an employment manual to recruit, interview, hire, train, evaluate and discharge staff. Train staff to use the computer to its fullest capabilities. Plan and schedule regular staff meetings. Develop a practice Code of Ethics. Maintain staff records. Know applicable labor laws and regulations. Establish and maintain a safety manual in compliance with OSHA and EPA (U.S.) or WYMIS (Canada). Design staff benefit plans such as insurance, personal time, vacation time and retirement.

Law and Ethics

Act as a liaison between the practice and professionals such as accountants, insurance agents, architects, bankers, attorneys and consultants. Establish and maintain a community outreach program.

Marketing

Develop staff training for exceptional customer service which includes practice goals; the Mission Statement; and protocols for surveys, focus groups, services and the marketing plan for services. Design staff training for client communications which may include new client letters, referral thank yous, vaccine reminders, sympathy cards or protocols for communicating effectively with clients. Maintain a protocol and staff training for interaction with a grieving client. Create a hospital brochure and educational packets specific to your practice. Plan veterinary health education programs for clients. Establish a standard for cleanliness and facility maintenance which includes a written schedule for regular housekeeping.

Organization of the Practice

Oversee a legally defensible patient medical record system. Have a working knowledge of medical terminology for reviewing medical records. Establish and/or maintain logs for controlled drugs, anesthesia, surgery, radiology, laboratory and anesthesia/surgery mortality.

Finance

Compute hours or salaries and benefits for staff payroll. Maintain adequate bank balance for payroll, and make timely payments of required payroll taxes and insurance. Develop protocols for accounts receivable. Reconcile daily receipts to the daysheets or computer reports, make daily deposits and reconcile imprest petty cash account. Set and enforce credit policies. Verify accuracy of invoices, make timely payments of reconciled statements, pay all business taxes and licenses, reconcile monthly bank statements and maintain cash flow. Maintain diet, OTC products, hospital and office inventory at optimum levels. Maintain Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and General Ledger records. Produce monthly Balance Sheet, Income Statement (Profit and Loss) and Management Statement. Prepare a written budget, including projection for income and expense based on past financial reports. Plan major purchases of equipment by researching the product and proving financial and projected use data to make informed decisions. Determine appropriate fee schedule from data in practice financial reports.

CVPM TASK ANALYSIS OUTLINE

The VHMA regularly conducts practice analysis studies to identify the specific responsibilities required of veterinary practice management professionals and the skills and knowledge needed to perform these responsibilities. The current CVPM Task Analysis Outline below is the result of the most recent practice analysis study which serves as the basis for the test blueprint.

I. Human Resources

1. recruit, interview and hire
2. manage training and development (including safety training)
3. scheduling
4. manage daily work assignments
5. conduct staff meetings
6. conduct employee performance reviews
7. mediate internal disputes
8. discipline/discharge employees
9. manage employee benefit programs
10. maintaining confidential employee records
11. create/update job descriptions/manuals

II. Law and Ethics

- A. Regulatory Agencies
 1. OSHA/OSHA Right To Know
 2. DEA
 3. FDA
 4. familiarity with state, local agencies
 5. monitor hospital violations/dangerous situations
 6. familiarity of state safety regulations
 7. document/report accidents, file appropriate reports
- B. Ethics
 1. AVMA code of ethics
 2. CVPM code of ethics
- C. Contract Law
 1. associate / staff
 2. client
- D. Employment/Labor Law
 1. Fair Labor Standards Act
 2. Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - a. Sexual Harassment
 - b. Pregnancy Discrimination Act
 - c. Americans with Disabilities Act
 - d. Age Discrimination in Employment Act
 3. Family and Medical Leave
 4. Worker's Compensation
 5. Federal Unemployment Tax Act
 6. Employment Retirement Income Security Act
 7. Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act-(COBRA)
 8. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)
 9. Mental Health Parity Act
 10. Employee Polygraph Protection Act
 11. required Department of Labor posters
- E. Confidentiality
 1. staff
 2. client
 3. patient

III. Marketing

- A. Internal/External Marketing and Public Relations
 1. manage brochure production /distribution
 2. place ads in publications
 3. website management
- B. Client Services
 1. monitor client retention
 2. set up/ maintain new client program
 3. handle client complaints
 4. obtain/report client feedback on service
 5. respond to client questions
 6. manage vaccine/check up reminder routine
- C. Client Education

IV. Organization of Practice

- A. Inventory
 1. maintain appropriate inventory system including controlled substance ordering, tracking, security, destruction
 2. place and track purchase orders for drugs, uniforms, equipment
- B. Equipment and Maintenance
 1. assure insurance coverage of hospital and equipment
 2. contract for repair/maintenance of equipment, building, grounds
 3. protocols for daily facility maintenance
 4. other
- C. Medical Record Standards and Compliance
- D. Technology Systems and Policies
- E. Liaison to Professional Services
- F. Hospital policies/procedures/risk management

V. Financial

1. analyze practice and financial reports
2. manage payroll
3. A/R and A/P
4. budgeting and long-range planning
5. establish and enforce client credit policies
6. fee analysis
7. oversee daily and monthly banking procedures
8. maintain chart of accounts
9. maintain imprest petty cash account

[updated February 2005]

HINTS TO HELP YOU GET READY FOR THE EXAMINATION

Here are some general hints to help you get ready to take the examination:

- It is a good idea to do the sample questions to familiarize yourself with the types of questions that will be asked on the examination.
- Remember this is only a guide. Keep in mind the questions and instructions may differ somewhat between the study guide and the examination. Therefore, pay particular attention to the instructions on the examination.
- Be sure to get enough sleep the night before the test.
- Arrive at the test site early so you do not feel rushed right before the examination.
- You will be required to provide proof of your identification to participate in the examination process; please bring some form of official identification that includes a photo, such as a current driver's license, for that purpose.
- You may use a calculator. The proctor will provide an approved calculator to you. No other electronic device, books or other written materials are allowed in the examination room. Be sure to return the calculator to the proctor at the completion of your examination.
- You will be provided with scratch paper for notes. You must turn in any notes along with your answer sheet.
- A pencil will be provided to you. No other writing implement other than the pencil provide may be used for the examination. Make each answer as clear and as legible as you can on the answer sheet.
- No talking is allowed once you begin the examination.

TIPS FOR TAKING THE EXAMINATION

Some suggestions for taking the written examination:

- Answer all the questions; blanks are counted as wrong answers.
- With multiple choice questions, choose the BEST answer from a list of possible correct answers.
- If you cannot answer a question, skip it and come back to it later. Always insure your answer sheet corresponds to the written examination test question number.
- Always double check your answers and the entire exam before handing it in as complete.
- Think of what you would have to teach your replacement. What skills and knowledge are basic to management of any business and which are unique to the veterinary profession? The answer to this question will provide answers to the written examination questions.
- The written exam has a time limit imposed. Having a time limit reflects the nature of being a veteri-

CVPM RECOMMENDED READING LIST

The following publications are used in the development of the written examination. These are valuable resources for the veterinary practice manager. Their usefulness goes far beyond preparation for the test. Successful managers use these materials while performing their responsibilities. We will update this list as new management materials become available.

Blackwell's Five-Minute Veterinary Practice Management Consult

Authors: Lowell Ackerman

Publisher: Blackwell Publishing

The Complete Veterinary Practice Regulatory Compliance Manual

Author: Phil Seibert;

Publisher: Veterinary Practice Consultants

Contracts, Benefits, And Practice Management For The Veterinary Profession

Authors: James F. Wilson, DVM, JD; Jeffrey D. Nemoy, DVM; Alan J. Fishman, CLU, CFP;

Publisher: Priority Press

Law and Ethics of the Veterinary Profession

Author: James F. Wilson, DVM, JD;

Publisher: Priority Press

Practice made Perfect: A Guide to Veterinary Practice Management

Authors: Marsha L. Heinke, DVM, EA, CPA, CVPM and John B. McCarthy, DVM, MBA;

Publisher: American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)

Standards for AAHA Hospitals

Publisher: American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)

Standard Abbreviations for Veterinary Medical Records

Publisher: American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)

VHMA Code of Ethics

Publisher: Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA)

Principles of Veterinary Medicine and Ethics, AVMA

Publisher: American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

PUBLISHER CONTACT INFORMATION:

American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA): 800-252-2242 or www.aahanet.org

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA): 800-248-2862 ext. 228 or www.avma.org

(Under Scientific, Issues, Click on "more," then Ethics - Principles of Veterinary Medicine Ethics of the AVMA)

Blackwell Publishing: 800-862-6657 or www.BlackwellVet.com

Priority Press Ltd.: 215-321-9488

Veterinary Consulting International: www.drtoomcat.com (click publications available)

Veterinary Hospital Managers Association (VHMA): www.vhma.org (click About VHMA)

Veterinary Medicine Publishing Group (Advanstar) 800-255-6864 or www.vetmedpub.com

Veterinary Practice Consultants, Phil Seibert: 423-336-1925

The examination also covers applicable Federal Laws and Regulations. Basic accounting knowledge at a college level is also recommended. A suggested list of laws (U.S. and Canadian) that you should be familiar with are provided below. Two versions of the examination, U.S. and Canadian, are currently offered. You will be given the appropriate examination version based on your citizenship. You will not be tested on laws that are not applicable to you. You will be tested on FEDERAL laws and regulations only. Questions of law will NOT be specific to any one State or Province.

FEDERAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS YOU SHOULD BE FAMILAR WITH

U.S. Candidates:

You should be knowledgeable of tax and employment laws and federal regulations from agencies such as OSHA and DEA.

Federal labor laws you should be familiar with include:

Consumer Credit Protection Act;
Americans with Disabilities Act;
Federal Insurance Contributions Act of 1935;
Fair Labor Standards Act;
Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985;
Equal Pay Act; Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974;
Age Discrimination in Employment Act;
Family and Medical Leave Act;
Immigration Reform and Control Act;
National Labor Relations Act;
Occupational Safety and Health Act;
Title VII (a provision of the Civil Rights Act of 1964);
Sexual Harassment;
Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures;
Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act; and
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Canadian Candidates:

Canadian Employment Standards;
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
Canadian Human Rights Act;
Employment Equity Act;
Criminal Code of Canada;
Canada Labour Code;
Canada Business Corporations Act;
Immigration and Refugee Protection Act;
Privacy Act;
Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA;
Canadian Environmental Protection Act;
Competition Act;
Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act;
Hazardous Products Act (HPA);
Controlled Products Regulations (CPR);
WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System);
Old Age Security Act/ Canada Pension Plan Act;
Employment Insurance Act;
Canadian Food Inspection Agency or CFIA;
Health of Animals Act;
Federal Food and Drugs Act;
Health Canada Radiation Protection Bureau;
Controlled Drugs and Substances Act Schedule 1 – 4 Drugs – Federal Act; and
Occupational Health and Safety Act.
Canada Elections Act

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The sample questions in this study guide are designed to provide you with information concerning the format of questions on the examination, these are not actual test questions.

1. According to the Standards for AAHA Hospitals, the record of medical treatment must include identification of each medication and vaccine given. Which one is NOT required?
 - A. Dose administered
 - B. Manufacturer of drug or medication
 - C. Route of administration
 - D. Frequency of administration
 - E. Duration of treatment
2. A good management protocol for cash control would include all of the following EXCEPT:
 - A. Daily deposits
 - B. Receptionists responsible for cash
 - C. Cash payments under \$25.00 from cash drawer
 - D. Imprest petty cash account
 - E. Numbered client receipts
3. The computer indicates the price of one Acepromazine 25 mg tablet is \$.35 with the markup and rounding unit. The dispensing fee is \$5.00 and the minimum prescription fee is \$7.75. What is the charge to the client for two tablets?
 - A. \$5.70
 - B. \$7.75
 - C. \$8.45
 - D. \$13.45
 - E. None of the above.
4. Which of the following is NOT a protected class under Title VII?
 - A. Race
 - B. Age
 - C. National origin
 - D. Sex
5. According to Ross Cark, DVM, which of the following should be our marketing medium of choice?
 - A. Reminders
 - B. Radio advertising
 - C. Phone book ad
 - D. Local newspaper
6. True (T) or False (F); staff wages are an example of fixed assets.
7. True (T) or False (F); depreciation comes into play when assets are purchased which are of a reasonably high value and which have a useful life greater than one year.
8. True (T) or False (F); the weakness of the "participative management model" is that it tends to fail in communicating the practice's vision to the staff.