



# TEACHING & TESTING CAN BE




Veterinary medicine is constantly changing as new procedures, equipment, medications, techniques, and communication methods make their way into the profession. Constant change means constant learning for your team.

The good news is that learning new concepts and skills can increase your team's job satisfaction; "using skills/learning new ones" is included in the top 5 job satisfiers that help prevent compassion fatigue in practices.<sup>1</sup> However, being held accountable for learning the material is not always so satisfying. So, when you teach and test your team members, use your imagination to bring fun to learning *and* accountability.

Individuals learn best in different ways, so a variety of training methods in multiple formats (eg, books, videos, webinars) can help ensure success.

Likewise, games and puzzles (eg, crossword puzzles, word searches, charades; see **Make Serious Learning Fun & Games** and **Learning Outside the Practice**) can be used to test the team on subjects that have been covered. Group learning and testing can be enjoyable and satisfying, especially when team members understand how

each position is different and important.

Regular training and testing are important components of managing a practice, but they do not have to be boring, stressful, or unstimulating. Gaining new knowledge is serious business, but turning the learning process into fun and games will likely secure a high score for your team and practice. 

**See Aids & Resources, back page, for references & suggested reading.**

## Learning Outside the Practice

Off-site continuing education (CE) events allow team members to leave the practice and learn new information in a super-charged educational forum. Remember these 2 important goals:

- **Strategize beforehand:** Consider carefully which CE event is best for each individual based on his or her specific interests and role, as well as the strategic goals of the practice. If the team member will be attending a conference rather than a single seminar, also plan ahead to determine which lectures he or she would like to attend and which lectures management would like him or her to attend. Encourage downtime and some recreation as well (eg, visiting exhibit halls, attending social events).
- **Ensure accountability afterward:** When the team member returns, make sure he or she shares the lessons learned (eg, a presentation to the team, a written assignment for management).



## Make Serious Learning Fun & Games

Here are some fun ways to evaluate what your team has learned:

- **Vocabulary:** Word searches and crossword puzzles that use medical terminology, internal acronyms, and names of practice forms and policies
- **Spelling:** Word searches, especially with medical terminology
- **Mathematics:** Number scrambles that test dosages and money handling
- **Procedures & Protocols:** Fill-in-the-blank tests
- **Laboratory Procedures:** Pictionary (ie, a game where team members draw the type of machine and supplies needed)
- **Equipment Operation or Office Procedures:** Charades (ie, teams act out a physical examination, client and patient check-in, or using a piece of equipment such as an x-ray machine)
- **Miscellaneous:** Heads Up!; “verbal charades” (ie, one team member describes a term and another guesses); Jeopardy (ie, your own board and word cards using medical terminology, canine breeds, and/or parasite names).

(See **Word Search**, next page, for an example of a fun team learning tool. Also, visit [DiscoveryEducation.com](http://DiscoveryEducation.com) for games [some free, some for a fee] that can be downloaded.)

