

# WHY YOUR NEW HIRES ARE FAILING (AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT)



By Stacy Pursell, CPC, CERS | The VET Recruiter®

It's tough enough to find qualified job candidates in the Veterinary profession. Then it's tough enough to effectively engage them and hire them. The last thing you want is for your new hire to not work out—for whatever reason. Retention is a critical part of the hiring process and is an integral component in organizations for personnel growth and development. Losing employees in this tight market is just as bad as not being able to hire them in the first place. What is going wrong . . . and what can you do about it?

## The Rising Importance of Soft Skills With New Hires

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Leadership IQ, a leadership training research firm, conducts one of the world's largest

leadership training and employee engagement studies. The firm recently updated its "[Why New Hires Fail](#)" study with new and revealing information. Below are some of the key findings:

- » **46% of newly hired employees will fail within 18 months.**
- » **Only 19% of newly hired employees will achieve unequivocal success.**
- » **Attitudes drive 89% of hiring failures, while technical skills account for only 11% of hiring failures.**
- » **82% of hiring managers saw signs that their new hire would fail.**

- » **Only 15% of companies have defined the attitudes that make their high performers so special.**
- » **56% of HR Executives said that half or less of their current employees have the right attitudes.**
- » **Only 39% of companies say their recruiting process represents their employment brand.**
- » **Only 26% of companies are frequently gathering feedback from new hires about their recruiting process.**

The area of this study that I want to address more in-depth are the specific reasons why new hires fail.



As mentioned in the statistics above, technical skills account for just 11% of hiring failures. (For the purposes of this study, technical skills are defined as “the functional or technical skills required to do the job.”) That means, of course, that in 89% of the cases, those skills were not a factor in the employee not working out after being hired.

So, what were the factors in those cases? According to the study, they were as follows:

- » **Coachability (26%)** – The ability to accept and implement feedback from bosses, colleagues, customers, and others.
- » **Emotional Intelligence (23%)** – The ability to understand and manage one’s own emotions, and accurately assess others’ emotions.
- » **Motivation (17%)** – Sufficient drive to achieve one’s full potential and excel in the job.
- » **Temperament (15%)** – Attitude and personality suited to the particular job and work environment.

As you can see, over one-quarter of the new hires that failed were attributed to the fact that those hires were not coachable.

What does it mean to be coachable? According to HuffPost.com, it means “you’re open to listening to feedback, able to receive constructive criticism without taking it personally, and

## **WILLING TO TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR OWN PERFORMANCE IN ORDER TO IMPROVE IT.”**

I’ve spoken with scores of hiring managers over the last few years who have told me that coachability is one of the top characteristics that they’re looking for in a new employee.

Another one is active listening, which according to the HuffPost.com and Wikipedia definitions, is fully concentrating and acknowledging what the speaker is saying, which is actually part of being coachable. There’s a reason this skill is so much in demand: it’s apparently very scarce!

You’ll notice that all the reasons listed above that don’t deal with technical skills are what are known as soft skills. These are skills that determine how well a person interacts with other people. Even if you aren’t necessarily hiring for a leadership role, you must hire people who have a good soft skill set.

After all, in the Veterinary profession, employees not only interact with their co-workers, but they also interact with the public.

If your new hires are not able to interact well with pet owners, then it’s unlikely that they’re going to perform well as an employee and it’s less likely that they will turn out to be a successful hire.

Soft skills are becoming increasingly important in the employment marketplace, including in the Veterinary profession.

Unfortunately, it’s difficult to decipher from a resume or a job application the extent to which a candidate has an excellent soft skill set.

You can screen a candidate for their technical skill set using those tools, but soft skills require more.

They require, in fact, the soft skills of a hiring manager or practice owner who can put their own skill set to work in terms of assessing and evaluating candidates.



## Enlist the Help of a Recruiter With New Hires

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As you probably already know, hiring in this current environment is not easy. As you can see by the numbers listed above, keeping those hires and helping them to be successful is also not easy. There are several reasons why a new hire could fail, and according to the results of the Leadership IQ study, attitude is paramount among those reasons.

The difficulty in both hiring top candidates and helping those new hires become successful and contribute in a significant

way to the organization underscores why it can be a good idea to enlist the help of a Veterinary recruiter.

An experienced recruiter who has a history of placing the candidates you want to hire can help you hire for everything on the spectrum, from technical skills all the way down to attitude.

The bottom line is that you want to hire the best people possible, and that means the best people representing the “complete package.” That’s how you hire for success and that’s how your new hires experience success once they join your organization.

## About the Author

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**Stacy Pursell, CPC, CERS** is the founder and CEO of “The VET Recruiter”, an internationally respected Executive Recruiter and Search Consultancy specializing in the Animal Health, Veterinary and Pet Products Industries. Stacy is in the top 1% of Executive Search Consultants and recruiters in the United States. She is one of an elite group of search professionals who holds both the Certified Personnel Consultant and Certified Employee Retention Specialist designations. These certifications allow Stacy to help her clients find, recruit, and retain the best professionals in the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession. She currently serves on the Advisory Board for the Professional Science Master's programs (PSM) at Kansas State University-Olathe. She

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