

Health Care Success Story

Dr. Robert M. Radasch

*Dallas Veterinary Surgical Center at
Veterinary Referral Center of North Texas*

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PHOTO

JASON JANIK/Special to DMN

Dr. Robert M. Radasch wants employees who are self-directed but also compassionate.

Age: 44

Position: Staff surgeon

Years in current position: 16

Education: Bachelor's degree, University of Illinois; doctorate in veterinary medicine, University of Illinois; master's degree in surgical science, Iowa State University; Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons

How did you get your foot in the door? "While working as a 'kennel boy' during high school at a general practice in the suburbs of Chicago, I learned about the concept of veterinary specialization. The department head of surgery at the University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine, visited the clinic once per month to perform referral surgery. He often needed assistance in surgery, such as holding an animal's leg while he repaired a broken bone.

"At Iowa State, I worked very closely with Dr. Bob Barstad, another veterinary surgical resident. We found we had very similar ideals, work ethics and philosophies regarding surgery. When Bob came to Dallas in 1986, he opened a referral small animal orthopedic, soft tissue and neurosurgical practice. The practice flourished and, by 1988, when I finished my residency, Bob invited me to come to Dallas to help."

What is your toughest professional challenge? "Having to place a price tag on medical/surgical procedures. ... There are times when a client just can't justify the cost for treatment and has to look at other alternatives, including euthanasia."

What are the characteristics of an indispensable employee? "I look for individuals who have the basic characteristics of being a self-starter, motivated and reliable. That is just to get their foot in the door. Other attributes are also mandatory.

"Because clients entrust the care of their beloved dog or cat to us, I also want individuals who are compassionate to the needs of the pet, as well as the client. I look for individuals who take pride in their work and always strive to do the very best that they can do."

What are the hiring trends in your industry? What positions? "I believe pet owners are becoming more and more interested and willing to pursue referral to a veterinary specialist. Pets are becoming more important in the family structure, and clients want the best for their dog or cat.

"I also predict we will see larger veterinary referral centers being developed throughout the country as we have seen here in Dallas. This will also increase the need for animal caretakers, receptionists, secretaries, medical office managers, etc."

-Sarah Godinez