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Veterinarians Upbeat About Their Future Despite Some Business, Management Concerns

A new research report indicates veterinary practitioners are optimistic about their practices' futures and somewhat critical of their own management and business skills.

The study, "Profile of the U.S. Small Animal Veterinarian" by Datazone Research & Consulting Inc., examined practices' financial parameters as well as the veterinarians' value systems and personalities, including a Myers-Briggs personality assessment.

Results were based on surveys completed by 444 veterinarians. An upcoming report will examine the impact of women on the small animal veterinary industry.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents described themselves as optimistic about the future of their practices and 3 percent were pessimistic. Five percent of respondents described themselves as burned out.

Yet veterinarians reported aver-

age business skills on a 7-point scale, with 21 percent reporting sophisticated business skills and 18 percent reporting only rudimentary business skills.

Among the report's other findings were that 41 percent of veterinarians rated themselves as comfortable managing employees, 11 percent rated themselves uncomfortable and 48 percent rated themselves between the two extremes.

"The Myers-Briggs portion of the

profile study has revealed some interesting reasons for the apparent discomfort so many veterinarians have in managing their staffs," said Robin Wedewer, president of Datazone. "It became quite apparent that people who became veterinarians have preferences for one type of thinking and communication while most of the staff people appear to have another. This can have important implications on the efficiency and even the happiness

in the workplace. In addition, the consequences of staff turnover and misunderstandings can have a negative impact on the client experience in the clinic and ultimately the bottom line."

The company is selling the study to companies interested in marketing to veterinarians and recruiting veterinarians and staff members for ongoing research projects. For more information, visit www.datazoneresearch.com.