

Is a lifelong commitment in your future? Engaging women in leadership

Heartland Veterinary Conference

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2007 is the Year of the Woman DVM



Dr. Dorothy Segal was one of only about 55 female veterinarians practicing in the United States in 1944, the year after she received her DVM degree.

"The dean at the time did not want women. He said, 'Go back to the kitchen.' He literally said that. The first speech he gave was, 'What are you doing here?' and he was not joking."

— DR. DOROTHY SEGAL,
A 1943 GRADUATE OF
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE



The veterinary class of 2018 is over 75% female

No other profession has seen such a rapid gender shift as veterinary medicine.

Women make up the majority of the profession

Women are underrepresented among practice owners, corporate board members, and leadership in many professional organizations

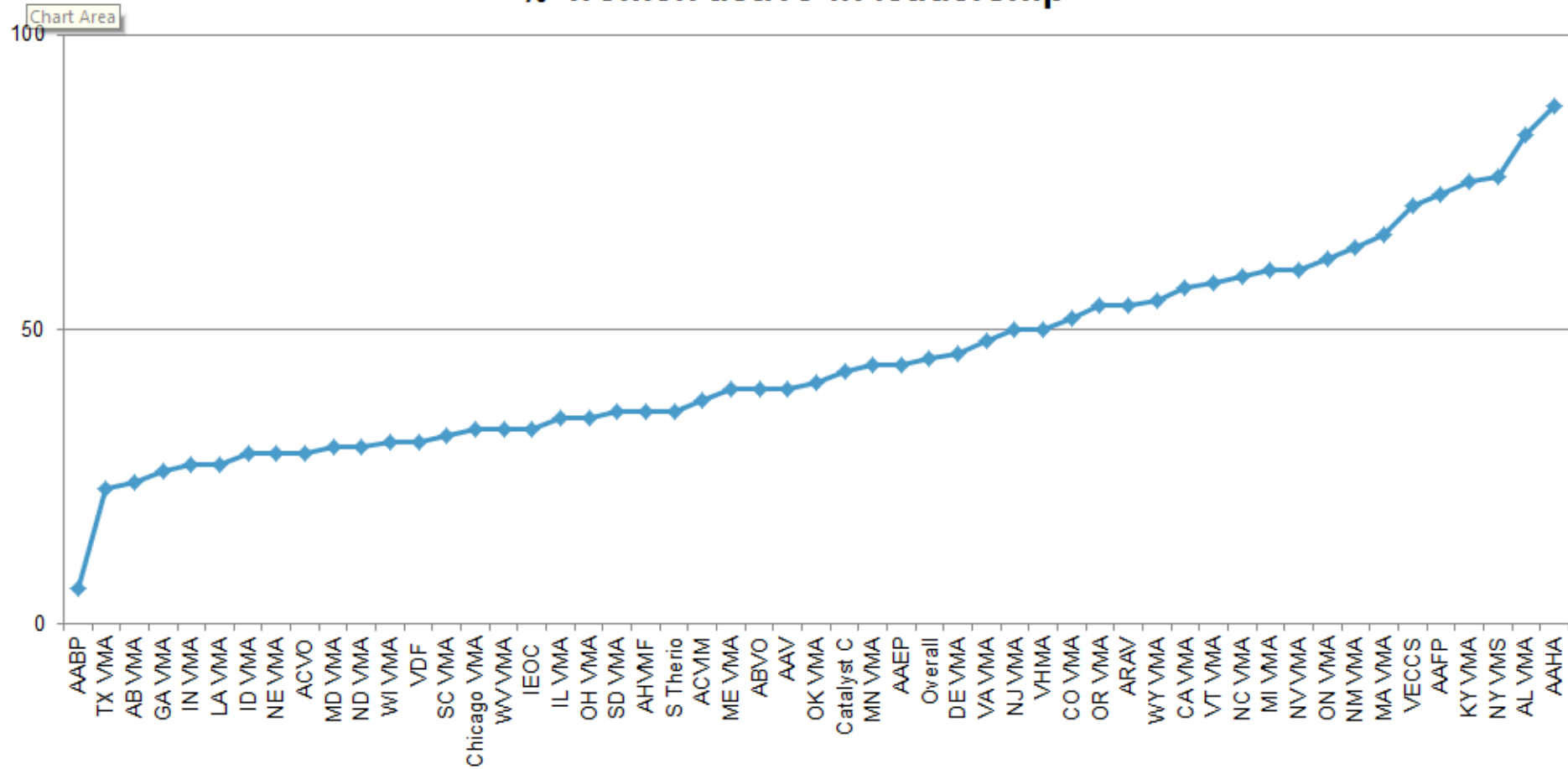
Research shows when at least 30% of a group is made up of women, then the discourse, values, profitability, and working style of the entire organization changes for the better

*this applies to politics, industry and corporate boards—and to some organized veterinary medical associations



Organizational leadership in veterinary medicine

% women active in leadership



We still think of
a powerful man
as a born leader and a
powerful woman as an
anomaly.

Margaret Atwood

Leadership trends have not kept up!

While there are now more women in the profession than men, it is vitally important that all future veterinarians are equipped to be leaders, communicators, trendsetters, and innovators.

Mind the Gap!

The leadership gap, that is.

- Women lack practical access to roles currently held by men
- Women, and younger veterinarians of either gender, face barriers to leadership positions
- Women may serve in non-traditional leadership roles that can be less visible to members
- Develop female leaders in veterinary organizations
- Educate MALE and FEMALE veterinarians on the value of females in leadership positions
- Address the structural barriers keeping women from becoming leaders

What is Leadership?

Leadership is the ability to influence and direct the behavior of others

Leadership is conferred formally or informally

Leadership consists of motivating, inspiring, persuading and empowering

Leadership enables a group of people to achieve shared goals



Different Styles of Leadership

Authoritative

- Assertive
- Autonomous
- Self-promoting
- Dominant
- Tough

Communal

- Connecting
- Cooperative
- Sensitive
- Empathetic
- Nurturing

Gender Differences in Leadership



Some differences:

- Men are given more latitude in how they behave in leadership positions
- Men are given a pass when they make a rookie mistake
- Men are allowed to self-promote
- Women must demonstrate competence
- Women are under more scrutiny
- Women may be disliked for demonstrating authoritative behaviors —a classic "double bind"

Microaggression and Second-generation Bias

*“What the human being is best at doing is
interpreting all new information
so that their prior conclusions remain intact.”*
— Warren Buffett

Microaggression:

a subtle but offensive comment or action directed at a minority or other nondominant group that is often unintentional or unconsciously reinforces a stereotype.

Gender Microaggressions:

- An **assertive** female manager is labeled as a "**bitch**," while her male counterpart is described as "a forceful leader." (Hidden message: Women should be passive and allow men to be the decision makers.)
- A **female physician** wearing a stethoscope is mistaken as a nurse. (Hidden message: Women should occupy nurturing and not decision-making roles. Women are less capable than men).
- **Whistles** or **catcalls** are heard from men as a woman walks down the street. (Hidden message: Your body/appearance is for the enjoyment of men. You are a sex object.)

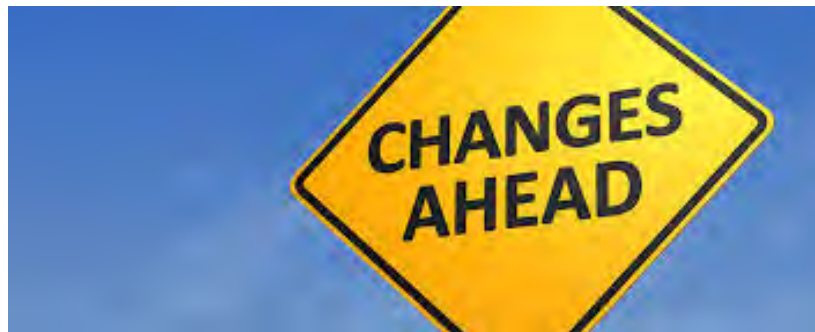
2nd generation bias



- Research has moved away from a focus on the deliberate exclusion of women and toward investigating “second-generation” forms of gender bias as the primary cause of women’s persistent underrepresentation in leadership roles.
- This bias erects powerful but subtle and often invisible barriers for women that arise from cultural assumptions and organizational structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently benefit men while putting women at a disadvantage.
- The resulting underrepresentation of women in top positions reinforces entrenched beliefs, prompts and supports men’s bids for leadership, and thus maintains the status quo.

BARRIERS

- **Motivational:** many organizations believe that they face a demographic problem that will solve itself.
 - Pervasive in veterinary medicine
 - AVMA membership >52%
 - SAVMA membership ~80%
 - Change is hard and not without cost
 - Attracting new people is disruptive to the established order and current leadership
 - Successful people attribute their success to personal qualities, which is important, but...
 - May obscure barriers that others face
 - Need to be addressed to facilitate diversity



BARRIERS

Cultural and Structural:

- Culture may make it difficult for one person to be a positive disrupter
- Communication styles and acceptance of technology create barriers
- How power and information flow through the hierarchy can inadvertently alienate a group of members
- Time: will this be a useful investment of my time or is there too much historic baggage?
- Money: how much will volunteering cost me (in expenditures and time away from work)?
- Commitment: how long before I can accomplish something useful?
- Advancement: what are the opportunities?

- **Paucity of role models for women:** aspiring leaders need role models whose styles and behaviors they can experiment with
- **Women's lack of access to networks and sponsors:** informal networks are precious to would-be leaders, but the proclivity to interact with others of the same gender (*men and women are both guilty of this*) leaves women with less access to influential colleagues
- **Double-binds:** self-confident or assertive behavior in men may appear as arrogant or abrasive in women. But women in positions of authority who have a conventionally feminine style are liked, but not respected, and considered too soft to make tough decisions or be strong leaders

BARRIERS

Pew Report: Women & Leadership

It's also **not all about work-life balance**. While economic research and previous survey findings have shown that career interruptions related to motherhood may make it harder for women to advance in their careers... relatively few adults in the new Pew Research survey point to this as a key barrier for women seeking leadership roles.

The **culture** of any organization is shaped by the worst behavior leadership is willing to tolerate.



Change the Culture



If you intend to introduce a change (i.e., inclusion of women in leadership) that is incompatible with the organization's culture, you have 3 choices:

- Modify the change to be more in line with the existing culture
- Alter the culture to be more in line with the proposed change
- Prepare to fail

~David Salisbury and Daryl Conner, 1994

Denial

Denial is hard to break through because we can always deny that we are denying.

Some Common Forms of Denial:

- **Bury your head:** refuse to recognize a problem even in the face of unconfutable evidence
- **“I don’t discriminate”:** since I don’t personally discriminate, my organization must also be free of biases
- **“We didn’t have a problem until you brought it up.”** Blame the messenger
- **“What am I supposed to do, feel guilty?”** This is manipulative and an attempt to gain tactical advantage

More Forms of Denial...

- “I have a friend who was...”: Denial by evidence of an exception. Of course, the exception therefore proves the rule
- “Tell us what you want, but don’t let us disagree”: Patronizing; operating under the guise of listening and doing something about the problem while protecting an advantage
- “That’s not discrimination, it’s a personality conflict”: Problem is reframed and leads to greater obstacles and denies the other member the right to be heard on her terms
- “You’re paranoid”: Discredit the source. Variant of blame the messenger

More Forms of Denial...

- **“We can’t find anyone qualified”**: This form of denial holds out the ideal of equal opportunity while actually blaming the victim
- **“We need to care about each other and to learn about each other”**: Education will solve the problem (*favorite of officials, college-educated, trainers, liberals*). Protects and defends the status quo. It addresses the problem, but not through a means that would change the system’s balance of power.
- **“It doesn’t exist in my organization”**: Denial by relocating away from the problem and attitudes associated with the problem. The member may choose a position in the organization that minimizes contact with the problem.

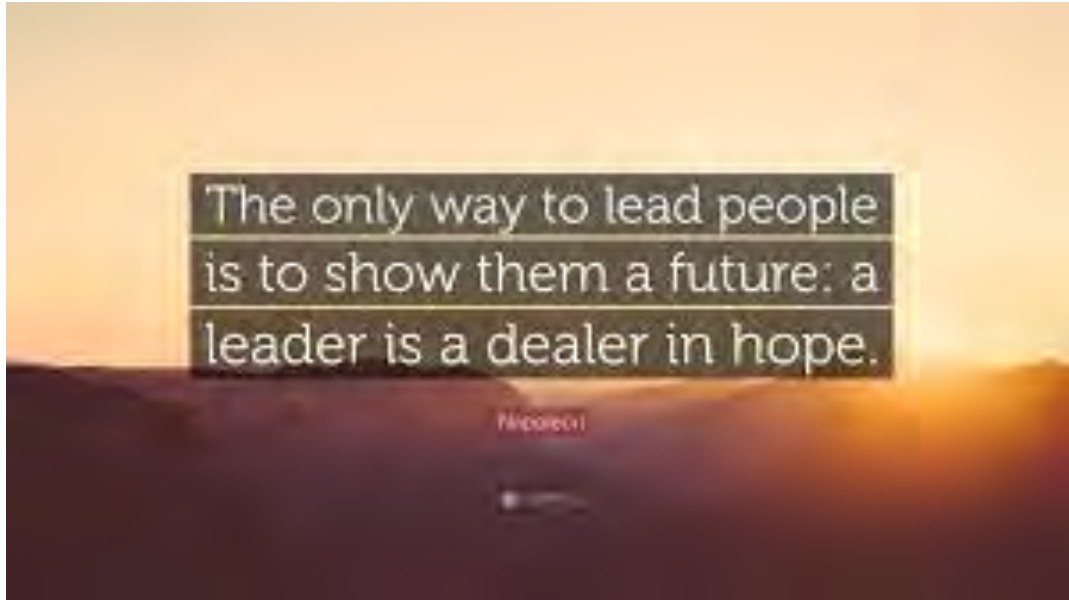
Project Implicit

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatouchtest.html>

The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report. The IAT may be especially interesting if it shows that you have an implicit attitude that you did not know about. For example, you may believe that women and men should be equally associated with science, but your automatic associations could show that you (like many others) associate men with science more than you associate women with science.

The 5 P's to becoming more responsive and engaging others:

- Perspectives
- Policies
- Programs
- Personnel
- Practices



Perspectives: refer to the vision or the ability to see what lies ahead as well as the various impediments to arrival at the place you want to be in the future.

Policies: once you have a sense of the vision and mission, you can develop appropriate policies that make known your organization's intents.

Programs: arise from the policies and put into action what diversity is all about.

Personnel: for effective programming to take place, you have to have the right personnel in place, including staff and volunteer leadership.

Practices: the conduct of the organization, its staff, and its leadership.



Volunteering

Sense of belonging

- There are no differences between men and women in motives, interest, time, frequency, or level of commitment
- Men will take on more “risk” when volunteering
- Men tend to volunteer in organizations where they find positions of authority
- Women tend to volunteer in “people-centered” organizations where they can make a difference
- Women tend to stay involved longer when they have a sense of belonging

Sense of purpose

- Volunteering for an organization should provide a sense of purpose
- Allows members to direct goals toward who they want to be and what they need to learn to achieve those goals
- More likely to network if understand it leads to their overall purpose and reaching their goals
- Can become comfortable engaging with others if can be shown how they have a shared sense of purpose
- Members with shared interests can reach out to others who share their passion and ease the transition into bigger roles

Sense of importance



- Leadership is INFLUENCE
- Getting involved allows access to the “circle of influence”
- Allows your voice and perspective to be heard
- Increases ability to initiate and implement change
- Plants the seeds for action
- Personal growth and confidence
- Earning recognition and respect
- Improves organization and outcomes

Before you are a leader,
success is all about
growing yourself.

When you become a leader,
success is all about
growing others.

Jack Welch

Growing Leaders

What can you do to help develop leaders in your organization?

Helping women became leaders:

- Develop a women's network
- Provide opportunities for mentoring
- Endorse the authority of female leaders
- Send women to leadership development programs
- Balance gender on committees, task forces, working groups
- Be cognizant of gender bias, including the second-generation biases

Leadership development

- Dedicate resources to diversity
- Communicate the commitment to diversity and meet expectations
- Provide external coaching to women with high potential
- Allow for greater flexibility in roles—reevaluate criteria needed for various positions
- Utilize social media
- Have open elections—forget taking turns
- **Ask!!!**

Build a Sense of Community

Research about communities:

- Strong sense of community increases persistence in accomplishing the organization's goals, increases the flow of information amongst all members, and increases satisfaction with group's efforts
- Members experience a greater sense of well-being by having an agreeable set of individuals to call on for support when needed
- A higher sense of community leads to lower feelings of burnout
- Members of the community continually reflect upon the work of the group while always respecting the differences individual members bring to the group
- Essential elements of community: mutual interdependence among members, sense of belonging, connectedness, spirit, trust, interactivity, common expectations, shared values and goals, and overlapping histories among members.

A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it. Such a community is not quickly formed. It almost always has a history and so is also a community of memory, defined in part by its past and its memory of the past.

~from Habits of the Heart

Identify passions:

- Animal welfare issues
- Practice management
 - Associate
 - Owner
- Technician and staff oversight
- Advocacy initiatives
- Peer assistance
- Financial management
 - Personal
 - Business
- Charitable work
- Disaster preparedness
- Public education
- Public health

4 components to community

Spirit: denotes recognition of membership in a community and the feelings of friendship, cohesion, and bonding that develop among learners as they enjoy one another and look forward to time spent together

Trust: feeling that community members can be trusted and represents a willingness to rely on other members of the community in whom one has confidence

Interaction: is an essential element of, but not the full solution to the development of community

Common goals: give members of the community a shared purpose and deepen the bond to the group and lead to increased feelings of satisfaction.

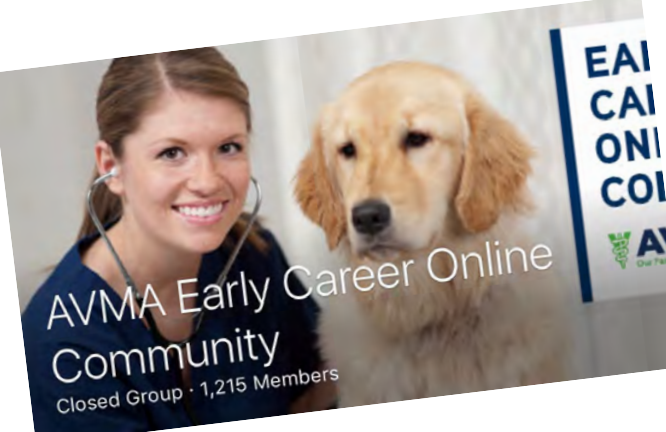
Making connections to build communities

Friendlier and stickier points of connection from street to seat

Using social media:



Moms With A DVM - Life In The Trenches
Closed Group · 5,179 Members



AVMA Early Career Online Community
Closed Group · 1,215 Members



WE ARE O
BETTER
TOGETHER

JOIN OVMA OR RENEW
www.ohiovma.org/mem

 Ohio Veterinary Medical Association
@ohiovetmed



WE HAVE THEM,
BUT WHO WE HAVE IN
OUR LIFE THAT
MATTERS

Veterinary Clinic Owners
Closed Group · 355 Members

WVMA's Annual
LARGE ANIMAL MEETING
September 22, 2017 | Flatwoods Conference Center

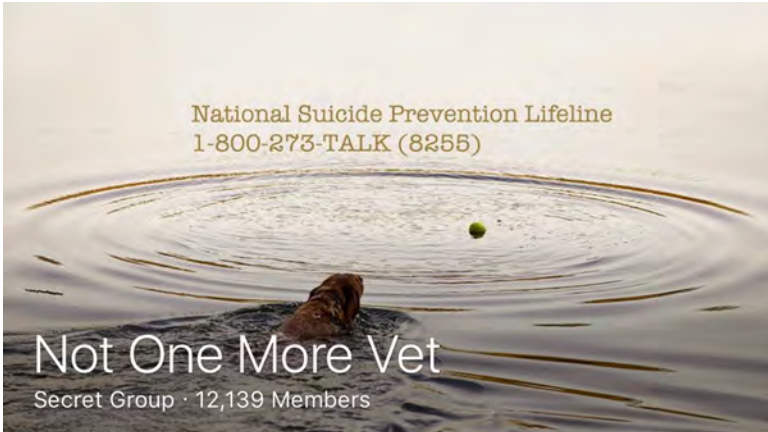
Featuring: *Dr. Jim A*

 WVMA, West Virginia Veterinary Medical Association
@WestVirginiaVMA



AVMA
Beyond Indigo Pets
MERIAL

Women's Veterinary Leadership Development Initiative
@WVLDI



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Not One More Vet
Secret Group · 12,139 Members

Play a game!





MEN!

- Men, get involved in recruiting women to leadership positions!
- There are so many men who are or have been excellent leaders and who can mentor and coach women to move up the ranks. Reach out!
- Men have to be a part of helping women move ahead.
- Men have to help other men help women move ahead.
- Coach women off the “sticky floor.”



MEN NEED TO SAY TO THEMSELVES:

“THIS ORGANIZATION WAS MADE FOR ME, SO I NEED TO PAY ATTENTION WHEN IT COMES TO THE PEOPLE FOR WHOM IT WASN'T MADE.”

WOMEN!

- Get involved! Raise your hand and volunteer!
- When asked to contribute, say, “YES!”
- Build relationships and get to know people with influence. Find a role model.
- Don’t worry about what others think (we’re not in 7th grade anymore).
- Speak up and speak out!
- Build your skills in leadership, finance, strategic planning...

**SHE'S GOT THAT
WHOLE PURPOSE
DRIVEN WARRIOR
PRINCESS SAVE
THE WORLD TYPE
OF VIBE**

Women can:

- Recognize their own inherent greatness by identifying their value-added leadership style
- Recognize their own perspectives are important in today's organizational "marketplace"
- Understand their own definition of success and what that looks like
- Bring to a conscious level their own negative assumptions and fears that keep them from moving on or up
- Show up! And show up with a leadership "presence"
- Leverage sponsorship for advancement

Formal veterinary leadership training opportunities:



Women's Veterinary
Leadership Development Initiative



- AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference
- AVMA Emerging Leaders
- AVMA Early Career Online Community
- AVMA Future Leaders Program



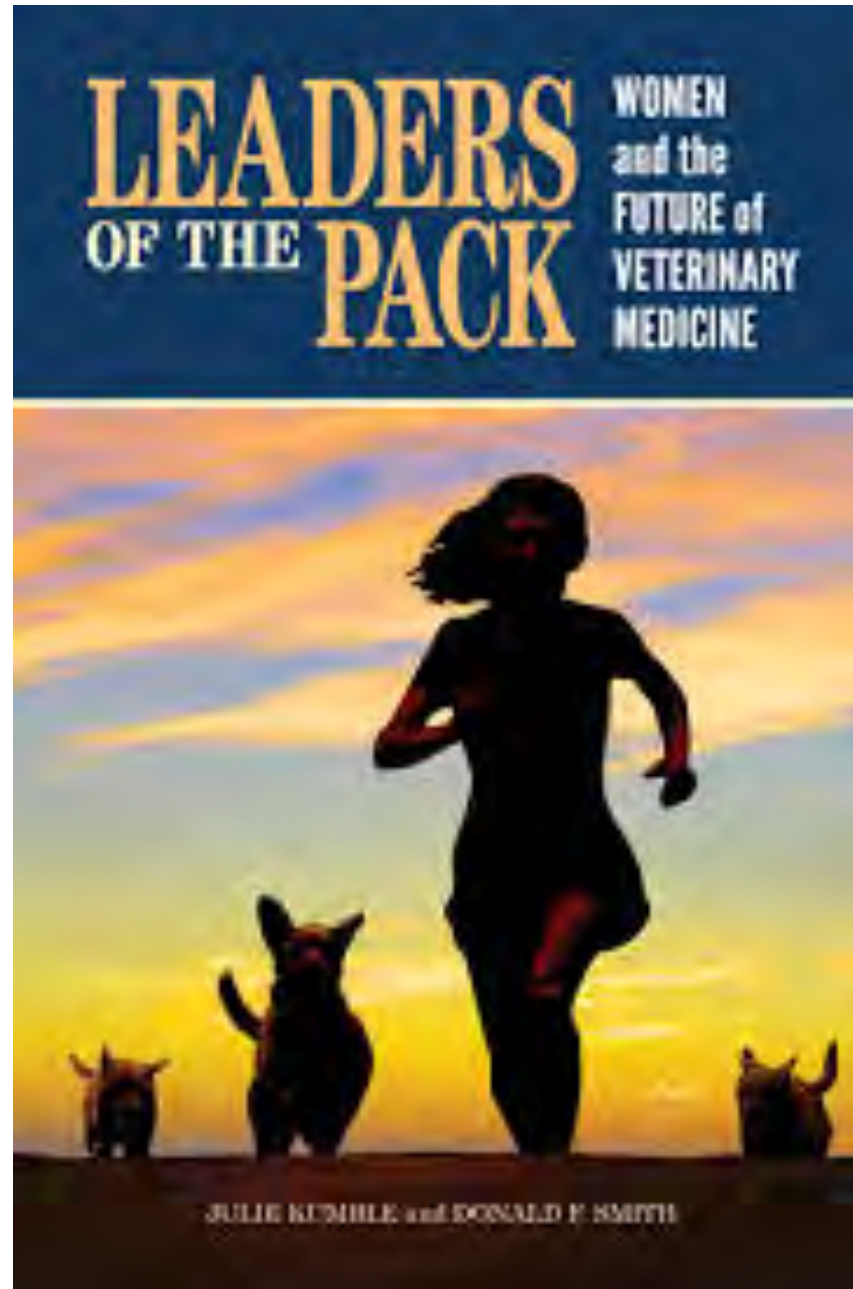
Organizations need to accelerate their efforts to include and advance women leaders before each gender gives in to weariness, and gives up the search for resolution. When it comes to female leadership issues, men can't check out, or merely check the box; and women cannot surrender.

**It's not enough to be great; you have to be
great together.**

~General Stanley McChrystal

A recommended read!

This is an excellent read about women and leadership in veterinary medicine written by the late Dr. Don Smith, former Dean at Cornell, and Ms. Julie Kumble, an expert on women's issues. You will recognize many, many of the names in this book.



Thank you!

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AVMA Board of Directors, District 8
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