

Non- Traditional careers for veterinary professionals

-Dr. Jill Lopez

Veterinary professionals are starting to look outside practice for careers that are a better fit. One reason is that practicing has become very stressful, from dealing with unhappy clients to dealing with the overwhelming need for veterinary care across the nation. Some vets also feel like they want to try something new because they have hit the proverbial ceiling at their practice. There is no where to go but lateral! And third, many of us want to focus on work life balance, we want more time to spend with our family and friends and less time in the clinic. Fortunately, just because you have always worked in a veterinary practice does not mean that that is your only career option. Being in the veterinary field, you have many amazing alternative career choices to consider. Here are a few of my favorite alternative careers in vet med:

Pharmacovigilance: Every veterinary pharmaceutical company will have a pharmacovigilance team. The job of the pharmacovigilance veterinarian or veterinary technician is to report adverse effects and lack of efficacy. The reports are then submitted to the appropriate regulatory agency and the company also monitors them to help make products safer. This type of job is performed in an office (pre-covid) or from home.

Work-Life Balance: This career is amazing for people who are looking for better quality of life. This type of job is typically 9-5pm, no weekends, and no holidays. Most pharmaceutical companies offer great benefits, competitive salaries, and the ability to move into other roles.

Professional services: Most pharmaceutical companies will have at least one, if not dozens of veterinary professionals that deal with sales support. The job of this veterinary professional is to provide technical support which means they attend the booths at veterinary conferences, and they also speak about products at events, like dinners or lunch and learns. In this career, you are on the road quite a bit, so it can be challenging for those with families.

Work-Life Balance: If you are looking for a job where you get to travel, this may be the ideal one for you. A typical professional services vet travels at least 50% of the time or more. That means lots of flights, meals out, and hotels. If you are someone who doesn't like to travel, this may not be the best career move for you.

Other pharma jobs: Animal Health companies are full of jobs that necessitate a background in veterinary medicine, from research, clinical studies, to marketing. There are companies that also have global divisions.

Military vets: Being a veterinary professional in the military is a great career to consider. As a veterinarian, you can serve in the Army Veterinary Corps or the Air Force as a Public Health Officer. As an Army Veterinarian Officer, you'll specialize in animal medicine,

veterinary public health, and research and development. You'll gain valuable experience leading Veterinary Corps units to treat Army animals, including K-9 units, ceremonial horses, and helping care for Soldiers' family pets. You'll also serve an important role in food safety for your fellow Soldiers and join humanitarian missions to help local communities with animal care. The biggest benefit of being in the military would be the ability for advancement and veteran benefits.