



2017 Blue Buffalo Presentation Highlights

Sharpen Your Soft Skills to Stand Out in the Crowd, Boost Compliance, and Increase Practice Satisfaction

Dr. Wooten presented content to help veterinarians understand the difference between perspective-taking and empathy, how to recognize and defuse client reactivity in difficult client scenarios, and how to best communicate with your client to get compliance and adherence without pulling out their hair.

Her interactive approach provided veterinarians with opportunities to share their experiences and point of view. Dr. Wooten included tools for personal development and staff training. She emphasized the importance of keeping it simple in exam room discussions with clients, starting with basic explanations.

Dr. Wooten's tips on sharpening soft skills in veterinary medicine focus on using clear, simple language and a slow pace to allow clients the time to absorb information. She provided examples from her practice that demonstrate how medical terminology can present a barrier to some clients. Dr. Wooten's solution in many cases is to use lay speak and, when in doubt, simplify.

QUOTES from Dr. Wooten

"In 15 years of private practice, I have found that there is a cavernous divide between what pet owners think is appropriate health care for their pet, and what veterinarians think. This communication gap leaves more pets living in pain and suffering from disease that is treatable or preventable, it makes veterinarians miserable, and it erodes the trust between vet and pet parent."

"To help pet owners think differently about veterinary care, we need to first understand and respect their perspective, their core values, because here is the deal—when veterinarians get this right, everything shifts. When it comes to vet-client communication, I believe it's time for a new way of thinking and a new way of life."

About Dr. Sarah Wooten

Dr. Wooten graduated from the University of California (UC) Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 2002. She is a member of the American Society of Veterinary Journalists. Dr. Wooten divides her professional time between private veterinary practice at AAHA certified West Ridge Animal Hospital in Greeley, Colorado and public speaking on associate issues, leadership, client communication, and writing articles for pet and animal-related media outlets. She is the co-creator of the wildly popular Vets Against Insanity card game, a mom, owns a tea tavern, has a Golden Doodle, plus she enjoys camping, skiing, SCUBA and triathlons. She is also a member of the BLUE Veterinary Advisory Board.

