



Photo: Geoff Hansen

Meet

**Blakeley
Murrell-Liland**
Veterinarian

Age: 38

Current Hometown: Hartland, VT

Current Profession: small animal veterinarian

Other jobs held: veterinary assistant, teacher (ESL), travel agent, waitress, dishwasher, deli worker

Hobbies/Interests: family time, biking, hiking, snowshoeing, cooking and knitting

Strengths: listening skills, people skills, flexibility, attention to detail

How do you use your strengths in your job?

Since animals cannot speak, I need to listen carefully to what their owners tell me. I also need to look and listen to what the animal is “saying” in its own way. I need to be flexible because sometimes what I think is the best plan or treatment for an animal may not always be what the owner was thinking or what they can reasonably afford.

What was your biggest learning challenge in school?

I was a good student in school, but I had to work hard to succeed. There were always those students who breezed through and barely had to study to get good grades. That wasn't me. I always had to study hard. I think it was far easier for me to make the transition from school to work as a result. Doing your job well in the “real world” requires hard work, commitment and attention to detail, no matter what you do. Plus, it also makes me appreciate even more what I have accomplished, because I know how hard I had to work for it.

What motivates you to go to work?

I feel very lucky, because I love my job, and I know that not everyone can say that. Every day is different, and that is exciting. When I walk through the door in the morning, I never know what I will see or accomplish by the end of the day. Of course, I love to work with animals, but I also enjoy interacting with the people I meet every day, many of whom I have known since I was very young. Plus, encountering challenges keeps things fresh.

Every job has specific skills. What do you need in yours?

I need compassion, effective communication skills and most importantly, the ability to relate well to people. Most veterinarians have excellent technical skills; in some ways, that is the easy part. Without compassion and strong people skills, however, I couldn't be successful in my job in the long run.

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