

# 5 ways

to put

# 5 free minutes

# to great use



Even the busiest of veterinarians get a break every now and then. Here are some tips for filling that coveted downtime—and doing a little something good while you're at it.

## 1. Help clients

> **Call a client.** Chances are, you've got a few dogs with chronic health conditions or a cat that recently started a new medication. Give the owners a call to see how their pet is doing. Clients will always appreciate a call from the doctor.

> **Write a sympathy letter.** Occasionally you'll lose a pet whose owners you especially admired for the love and care they gave their pet. Share your appreciation with the clients and let them know you're thinking of them.

## 2. Help pets

> **Make the rounds.** Walk through the boarding area and check that water dishes are full, kennels are clean and pets are resting comfortably. If everything's in good shape, hang out with a pet for a bit.

> **Walk a dog.** It's likely that both you *and* that dog in a kennel could use some fresh air. So grab a leash and head outside. It's relaxing and

you'll both feel refreshed (and the dog probably relieved) when you come back inside.

## 3. Help the practice

> **Tidy the grounds.** Walk the perimeter of the hospital and the parking lot and pick up any trash. Make a mental note of anything that needs repair or attention.

> **Promote the practice.** Write up an interesting case or find a cool pet-related tidbit to post on your practice's website. Take pictures of the staff and hospital for your Facebook page or write up a few blurbs for Twitter. Engage with clients on these social media channels by answering questions that have been posted.

## 4. Help the team

> **Pitch in.** Grab a mop and tackle a messy floor or wipe down a treatment table. Helping out not only makes the practice shine, but your staff's morale will soar, too.

> **Get chatty.** Don't let the only

interaction with your staff be discussions about patients. Grab a cup of coffee, walk through the hospital and check in on your team.

## 5. Help yourself

> **Expand your knowledge.** Read a journal article or review the medical histories of patients coming in later. Or if you want to brush up on your skills in ultrasound, grab a healthy boarded pet and practice.

> **Make over your office.** Clear your desk and bulletin board of unwanted clutter. Organize your textbooks and neatly stack journals you still want to read—recycle the ones you don't.

> **And finally—relax.** Go ahead—you deserve it! Read something that's not a veterinary journal—a novel, a magazine, whatever. Color in a coloring book (they're not just for the kids who come in the practice). Eat a snack, call a friend or visit Facebook. You'll be refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of your day.