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0:00:04.1 Katie Berlin: Hi, welcome back to Central Line. I'm your host, Katie Berlin, and I have two guests... Well, three, technically, because there's a canine guest here who does not live with me. But I have Jessica Vogelsang and Danielle Lambert and Archer Lambert here with us on the podcast. Thank you all for joining us.

0:00:22.1 Danielle Lambert: Thanks for having us.

0:00:25.1 Katie Berlin: Archer looks...

0:00:25.4 Jessica Vogelsang: Good to see you again.

0:00:25.9 Katie Berlin: Supremely excited to be here. [chuckle]

0:00:30.6 Danielle Lambert: He just has resting gruff face, he can't help it. [laughter] [0:00:32.8] _____ look.

0:00:33.6 Katie Berlin: If you're not watching... Yeah, you just need to find Danielle on social media, you'll meet Archer. But...

0:00:38.2 Jessica Vogelsang: She has a Lorax, it's kind of amazing.

0:00:41.9 Katie Berlin: Yeah, he is a Dr. Seuss character.

0:00:43.7 Danielle Lambert: Literally anything but a dog, and you guys are professionals, so you can weigh in on that. It's just... It's not a dog. [chuckle]

0:00:49.6 Katie Berlin: Yeah, no, but I love him so much. I still have a picture of Archer on my phone with a bowtie on. [chuckle] Somewhere in there.

0:00:57.0 Danielle Lambert: There are a lot of people that have content of Archer and... Yeah.

[chuckle]

0:01:01.2 Katie Berlin: You know you're with vet people when...

[chuckle]

0:01:03.4 Danielle Lambert: Exactly. It's true.

0:01:06.8 Katie Berlin: Well, thank you both so much. Jessica has graced us on the podcast before, because she is one of my esteemed co-workers, and in fact, my boss at AAHA.

0:01:17.2 Jessica Vogelsang: I'm not making this a condition of your employment. [chuckle] I just want everybody to know that. [chuckle]

0:01:22.7 Katie Berlin: It is super exciting to have you back, Jessica, and would you give us your

volume two bio for people who may have missed you the first time?

0:01:32.8 Jessica Vogelsang: Sure. Chief Medical Officer here at AAHA. I've been at the organization for two years, before that, working in branding, telehealth and in clinical practice in the San Diego area. So, that's the super short version, but great to be back.

0:01:48.1 Katie Berlin: And if Jessica disappears, it's because there's a giant truck tearing up her backyard, and so she may have to disappear, but [chuckle] we know what happened.

0:01:58.1 Jessica Vogelsang: So we have been waiting... We actually were trying to get this work done since before COVID, and they finally said last night, like, "Hey, we can come in and tear up your yard." And been waiting two years, so of course you say yes, but then I looked at my calendar and realized... Come on. I've recorded one podcast in the last six months, and it's the same day.

0:02:15.7 Danielle Lambert: This is the day. Yeah, that makes sense.

0:02:18.5 Jessica Vogelsang: I don't normally...

0:02:19.5 Danielle Lambert: That's how things work.

0:02:19.5 Jessica Vogelsang: Live in a place that sounds like a high density construction zone, but...

0:02:22.1 Danielle Lambert: Construction zone?

0:02:25.6 Katie Berlin: Well, thank you for being here, and hopefully they will stay quiet 'cause they know what's really important in life. [chuckle]

0:02:31.8 Jessica Vogelsang: Do you know...

0:02:32.4 Katie Berlin: Danielle...

0:02:34.1 Danielle Lambert: [chuckle] Yes.

0:02:34.1 Katie Berlin: Danielle, would you mind introducing yourself to the audience? I know a lot of people are probably familiar with you, and you have some... Just a little bit of experience in this space. So, whatever you think is important for people to know about you, please share.

0:02:48.3 Jessica Vogelsang: Sure, so I am the CEO at the Snout Group, which is the agency that is behind snoutschool.com. We really work to teach people to create really unique brands and also brands that can sustain tough tests and the test of time as well. Really brands that are going to be something special and bring new change to the industry, so we do that through different online courses or high-end brand strategy and design at the Snout Group. So yeah, I love talking about marketing and branding, but I also really love talking about things in veterinary medicine that people don't wanna talk about. It's just my addiction.

0:03:35.6 Katie Berlin: You are good at telling it like it is.

0:03:39.5 Jessica Vogelsang: [chuckle] Exactly.

0:03:39.6 Katie Berlin: The things that everybody's thinking and no one wants to say out loud, you say out loud, and I appreciate that.

0:03:43.1 Danielle Lambert: Yeah, I have no filter, I'm working on it.

0:03:46.8 Katie Berlin: But are you though? Do you really need a filter? [chuckle]

0:03:49.6 Danielle Lambert: I mean, I have little to behave...

0:03:49.7 Jessica Vogelsang: I believe that's when you texted me. [chuckle]

0:03:50.8 Danielle Lambert: Exactly, that's my filter, actually, quite literally my anger translator, if you remember from Key and Peele, the Obama Anger Translator skit, I always say that Jessica Vogelsang is my anger translator. And so yeah, I can definitely say she has taught me how to somewhat behave over the years, but you know... Compliance.

[chuckle]

0:04:12.1 Katie Berlin: Jessica plays that role in other places too...

0:04:14.6 Danielle Lambert: She's very good at that.

0:04:18.2 Katie Berlin: Well, and so that's one of the things that we actually were gonna talk about today because branding, marketing and branding for sure, that's your jam and you produce so much great content about that, and I would love to talk to you about that too, but that's not what we're gonna talk about today...

0:04:34.2 Jessica Vogelsang: Totally.

0:04:35.8 Katie Berlin: At least not in large part. But before we get into what we are gonna talk about, we have a hashtag now that's on... So if you've been to a conference and you picked up one of our stickers or you've seen our mascots online, you'll see they always come with a little hashtag that says, "What guides you?" And I was just wondering if I could ask the two of you, in life or in Vet Med, what guides you?

0:05:01.0 Danielle Lambert: Oh, that's a good question, that's a question that I would ask on a brand strategy call, so I love that.

0:05:05.5 Katie Berlin: Oh, excellent, excellent.

0:05:08.2 Danielle Lambert: I really think I'll actually use one of my core values as a brand, both for myself and for Snout School, one of our values is to make the path easier for those behind us. So, whatever I'm trying to do each day, I am trying to think of how I can make things better for those who are, behind me or at a different place than me in their career.

0:05:27.1 Katie Berlin: I love that.

0:05:30.5 Jessica Vogelsang: For me, it's so simple, it's just a golden rule, do the right thing. That has guided me from day one, being out in practice up until this moment. And as you all know, doing the right thing is often times not the fun thing, not the easy thing and not the thing that's gonna make you friends, but I have no regrets, really, from... You'll never regret doing the right thing, there's not a whole lot of moral quandary involved when I go to bed at night.

0:06:02.7 Jessica Vogelsang: It'll make you the right friends too, I would argue.

0:06:04.4 Katie Berlin: Yeah.

0:06:06.5 Jessica Vogelsang: Well, that is very true. You would... It's shocking to me... Well, not always shocking, but when you live that life, you do, you find people who will gravitate towards you and people who will find they want nothing to do with you. [chuckle] And you may not always predict... Sometimes, it surprises you who doesn't want anything to do with that.

0:06:25.0 Danielle Lambert: That's the power of it. I love it.

0:06:27.9 Katie Berlin: Yeah. And definitely something that in Vet Med, I feel like if you asked anybody in Vet Med, they'd be like, "Yeah, I wanna do what's right for my patients. I wanna do what's right for my clients, I wanna give them the best care." And yet, as an industry, as a population, sometimes I do feel like... Feel like I could say this in this room, [chuckle] that we don't always want to commit to doing that right thing if we know it's gonna make people unhappy, even if it's people we don't care that much about because we are pleasers and fixers and we're people who have been told our whole lives that we're good at things, and we're caring and empathetic, and it feels sometimes like you're breaking with that people pleaser identity to do the right thing if it's not also the popular thing. Which does kind of lead into what we're talking about today. [chuckle]

0:07:23.1 Danielle Lambert: Absolutely.

0:07:25.6 Jessica Vogelsang: Well, it doesn't. You may believe very strongly about doing the right thing and somebody else may feel just as passionately, but have a different conclusion. So it sounds very easy, but it's not. I believe that this is the right thing. And somebody else is like, "Well, I disagree strongly." [chuckle] And then...

0:07:42.7 Katie Berlin: Yeah, and it's not always black and white, who's deluding themselves, because sometimes there could be more than one right thing depending on the situation. But this is a field also that is overwhelmingly female, like we... Or at least I'm saying this, this is gonna be an episode where we use the words "female" and "women" a lot, and feminism. And I just wanna just say at the outset, when we say "female" in this episode, we say "women," we're talking about people who identify as female, people who identify as women and put themselves in that group. And so, I don't mean to exclude anybody who is trans or non-gender conforming, and we have... There's so much data about women versus men, and there's not a ton of data about people who don't conform to one of those two very clear-cut genders. So that is another discussion for another day, probably. But in the meantime, I wanna make sure that we are including everybody who identifies as female in today's discussion, so just put that out there. But in a field that is so female-dominated, it's like, what? 80% female vet school graduates now? Or something like that. Why do we still see, for instance, a gender wage gap? Why do we still have to talk about feminism in a field where

women should hold all the power?

0:09:06.9 Danielle Lambert: Such a question. [chuckle]

0:09:08.0 Jessica Vogelsang: Well, I mean, just because...

0:09:09.5 Katie Berlin: Yeah, just answer that now, then we'll get going.

0:09:11.2 Danielle Lambert: Big question, big question.

0:09:11.5 Jessica Vogelsang: I will, of course, right? Yeah, so...

0:09:12.6 Danielle Lambert: I'll let Jessica go first. [chuckle]

0:09:14.1 Jessica Vogelsang: Let's go get a PhD and then come back...

0:09:14.9 Danielle Lambert: Really.

0:09:16.4 Jessica Vogelsang: [0:09:16.5] ____ back [0:09:16.5] ____ in four years. I think the short short version is, just because you represent the majority by numbers doesn't mean you represent the decision-making. It doesn't mean you're set up to succeed in the structures that are in place. And so I think that there's so much conversation to be had around the history of Veterinary medicine and what we define as success. I know for me, when I graduated... So we were renowned, our class, for being the slacker class. And the reason that we were called the slacker class is 'cause we had five women who had children. And I would argue that there's probably the hardest-working class that ever existed because they were running around in the large animal barn, with a newborn strapped to their chest, trying to get in. But somehow, that was considered a bad thing because they weren't committed to 100% all the time, being in the clinics. Like, how dare they make these other choices? And so it's really just about redefining that narrative, and that is where I... That's the short answer, I think, why we haven't made the progress that we want to, 'cause we are not correctly identifying the goals that we want.

0:10:36.6 Danielle Lambert: I think that's a really good way of looking at it, and I think the hurdles that you just brought up, they got... Archer was very supportive of that comment...

0:10:46.5 Jessica Vogelsang: He agrees.

0:10:46.6 Katie Berlin: Very indifferent there.

0:10:46.8 Jessica Vogelsang: I appreciate his allyship.

0:10:47.5 Danielle Lambert: Yes, yes, he supports it all. He's definitely a good ally. But I think it is so systemic. I think of vet school being a great example. I'm the only... I'm not a veterinarian, so I'm the non-vet here. But from an outside perspective, what I see in veterinary school is not inherently conducive to also maybe being a mom. [chuckle] I shared a post the other day about a group of students that shared that they lost 15 pounds during their externship rotations and stuff like that, because they were so busy. So I think veterinary medicine just really systemically has a lot of things going on in it that don't allow women to maybe get the same opportunities and rise to the

same positions and be at that C-Suite level that a lot of men are able to get to. And it can even be just practice ownership, I think, is a huge divide in terms of wage gap. We have disproportionately more men in practice ownership still. Yeah, there's so much we could unpack on this one, honestly.

0:11:58.1 Katie Berlin: Yeah, there's a ton. This is a very complex question, but I think it's something that would maybe surprise some people, particularly men, I think, if you said, "I belong to a field where 80% of my graduating class is female, and I still don't feel like women and men are treated equally in this field." And I feel like there are some people who would say, "Well, that can't possibly be true, because women run the show, there's so many of us." But if you look back at... You know when you get JAVMA in the mail and it's got the picture of all the board of directors on the front of it like once a year, and even just up to a few years ago, I feel like it was a lot of men, and there have just been historically a lot of men in leadership in Vet Med, even when the graduates and so many technicians and support team members were becoming more and more female dominated. And so that definitely plays a role in our attitudes towards things like maternity leave and having kids in vet school, and whether you wanna go part-time or have flex hours, which are so important for so many moms.

0:13:10.0 Jessica Vogelsang: Yeah, and I think there's a few different things there. So obviously, not all women are moms, and so there's other things in play, so I kinda wanna clarify that there's sub-issues upon sub-issues here and some impact women disproportionately, some impact moms or caregivers. So there's a lot there, and I also just wanna set the stage when we have this discussion as well, that when we talk about, "Men might not see this," we're not saying that there's intentional desire. This is not like, "How dare you not see these things?" I think just that they're blind spots, and it's easy not to see the blind spots because they're your blind spots, or it just may not occur to you. So I just wanna preclude anyone who might be listening, thinking like, "How dare you do better?" And because we know that there are a lot of people that really want to, and you just... The very first thing you have to do in order to do better is to just listen and see what the situation is, and hear people's perspectives.

0:14:11.0 Jessica Vogelsang: And I hope that this is the first conversation of many where we start talking about these things. At Connexity last year, I was talking with Karen Shenoy, who is the Chief Veterinary Officer for Hill's US, and we were chatting, and I realized that this was the first year that AAHA CMO, the Hill's CEO, as well as the President of the AVMA, they were all working moms. And that was the first time that was ever the case. We've had female presidents of AVMA, but non-working moms. And it's like, what... [chuckle] It's 2023! It was 2022 at the time. And that was yet the first time that that had ever happened. And I'm quite sure this was not the first time there was a bunch of working Dads, [chuckle] so there's... It was just such a in-your-face moment to realize, "Wow, are we just now hitting that milestone?" Great, but also...

0:15:07.4 Danielle Lambert: Right, just hitting that part.

0:15:09.7 Jessica Vogelsang: Yeah, but it took so long.

0:15:09.8 Danielle Lambert: Oh my gosh, so much work to do still. Think of how long it will be before those three women are women of color? It's... Yeah, [chuckle] it really is... There's so much to unpack here and there's such a lack of true diversity, I think, in our space. And I think to Jessica's point about, this isn't just to say, like, "Shame on men" kind of conversation, it's just saying it's important to recognize these realities and like I was saying, think about how you can make the path

easier for others behind you, because not everybody has the same experience and the same circumstances as you. So, thinking about how you can make the workplace more accommodating to working moms, if that's a case, or what have you. I think that those things are so important for us to unpack in order to address things like the wage gap.

0:16:01.7 Katie Berlin: Yeah, and we have an article coming out in March. We're recording this right at the end of February, and I think the article will be out in a few days, so you'll see it, but it's in Trends Magazine, and it actually talks about the gender wage gap in Vet Med specifically, because there's some good research going on there, and there is still a gender wage gap in Vet Med. For anybody that's wondering, spoiler alert, there is one.

0:16:27.0 Jessica Vogelsang: I don't know if you remember this, Katie. Danielle, you probably do. This is on a different website that we're working on together, but somebody had submitted an opinion piece about the pay gap, and they basically said it's because women don't negotiate. And I read it and I didn't agree, but I thought, "Well, let's put it out there and see what [0:16:53.1] _____ the response was. I felt bad. [chuckle]"

0:17:00.3 Katie Berlin: The internet does not let you down. [chuckle]

0:17:02.7 Jessica Vogelsang: Maybe I should have warned this author, like, you know that other people might disagree with this struggle, right?

0:17:06.7 Katie Berlin: This is not going to go well.

0:17:09.7 Danielle Lambert: Well, I think that that's such an important thing to unpack though, because it's one thing to say that women don't negotiate, but I think it's also another thing to realize how differently that can be received when women do try to negotiate. I can think of times... And this is why I will say actually, I think one of the most important things when it comes to closing the wage gap is to talk with people about what you're making, to be transparent. I think I come from more of a consultant background and experience at this point in my career. I've been pretty much working on my own for almost 10 years, which is crazy, 'cause I'm like 12 years old. [chuckle] But...

0:17:44.8 Katie Berlin: It's amazing you've done all this by age 22.

0:17:45.9 Danielle Lambert: It's weird, yes. But I come from that perspective of like, it's really ambiguous when you are coming in as a consultant, or maybe if you are going to work as a relief vet or something, anything where you're setting your own rates and you don't even know what everybody else's rates are, I have just personally seen situations like in the speaker world, there's a great example 'cause it's very vague, like, "What is everybody getting paid?" And I've seen situations where people are real happy to pay a charismatic white man to fly on in and speak, but when a highly educated woman wants to speak at that same conference and be paid to do so, she's criticized for asking for money, or to just be compensated for her flight to get there. So I think we do have a lot of work to do in terms of, this is exactly perfect example of like, what... If men are listening and they're like, "What can I do?" Think about times that maybe you're like, "Oh yeah, sure, I'll pay my buddy whatever he wants," but like, "Oh, she's gonna ask for money?" You have to kind of think about times that you've had that own unconscious bias in you, to try to help close that gap for sure. So, I really think transparency is so critical here. I love seeing jobs that are listing what

they pay. In California, I think that's law now, right? In California.

0:19:13.0 Katie Berlin: Colorado too.

0:19:13.5 Jessica Vogelsang: Colorado, yep.

0:19:14.4 Danielle Lambert: That's awesome. But I think really sharing what you are going to pay, because otherwise, somebody's walking in blind, they don't even know how to negotiate or to get a fair wage, and they shouldn't have to negotiate with you to get a living wage out of you. You should be presenting a living wage up front.

0:19:32.6 Jessica Vogelsang: Yeah. There's been some really fantastic work. I'm gonna give a shout out to WVLDI, the Women's Veterinary Leadership Development Initiative, and Dr. Sam Morello in particular who's done some great work in this area. That's a big issue. And I think just sort of understanding and again, acknowledging that the rules are different for different people. You tend to give advice and judge outcomes based on the rules that you play by. And it's not true. [chuckle] The world treats and judges everybody differently on sort of this sliding scale. And conversely, I know with men, they have... Talking to my husband about fatherhood and how he feels like he's judged so very differently. "I don't need your help taking the kid to school." [chuckle] This is just... So it goes both ways, right? And I think sort of framing that in context people can understand, it is very difficult to make a set list of, well, these are the rules and this is what you need to do in order to succeed. Because I have taken the advice of people in a different position playing by a different playbook, and had it blow up in my face.

0:20:50.3 Katie Berlin: Same.

0:20:51.2 Jessica Vogelsang: And nobody could figure out why.

0:20:51.3 Danielle Lambert: Yep. I think that's a really, really important point to underscore. If I could just walk into every room with the blind confidence of a boomer man, trust me, I would. I have some amazing mentors that are boomer men, but like, the world just receives them differently. You know what I mean? Like, there is a different set of rules that I think it's extremely important to acknowledge that.

0:21:20.0 Katie Berlin: It's also hard now too. I know as the child of a boomer man who is also an employment lawyer and has gone over my contracts in the past, there have been times where he's been like, "You can't sign this." And then he returns me the contract and it's like, red pen everywhere. And I mean, he changed the entire thing. And I'm like, "I can't go back to my boss with this."

0:21:42.2 Danielle Lambert: Go back.

0:21:43.5 Katie Berlin: I'd be like, "That's not how things are done in Vet Med, dad." And he'd be like, "This is how things are done in the real world, Katie." And I'd be like, "Yes, like I said." [chuckle] Because Vet Med for so long has felt like you're negotiating with like James Herriot. You go in and it's a small practice and everybody's like, "This is my work family." And we won't get off on that tangent now, but it's...

0:22:09.2 Jessica Vogelsang: James Herriot... To drop in my PSA, I'll always drop in that James Herriot wrote works of fiction.

[laughter]

0:22:14.9 Katie Berlin: Yes, he did. Yes. And look who his boss was. Like, can you imagine trying to negotiate with Siegfried? But I feel like that's how it's felt, is in small practices that have been privately owned, it's very difficult to negotiate because you feel like you're negotiating with somebody who could be your relative or your friend, or was your... Your equal as far as they were an associate vet five minutes ago. And it just feels like you're trying to milk them for money. That's my apologetic woman, well-trained woman self feels that way.

0:22:50.2 Jessica Vogelsang: That's such an interesting point, because I would be curious to ask a group from different demographics and see, because so often, I feel like the advice is, be dispassionate. And when you try to be dispassionate, you still, like you said, get that, well, this makes me feel like you're trying to take advantage or don't you feel badly asking for these things? And there's that emotional element to negotiation when even you're not... Even when you're not trying to bring it in sometimes, gets presented to you. And it's always very jarring at least to me, like, "This is not personal." But for some people, it is. And you have no idea what the person on the other side is gonna throw at you. I think we've all had that experience where you walk in and you're kind of dubious and you say, "Well, I'm just gonna ask for what I need," 'cause what else can you do? And when you're so used to being rejected or having someone make you feel bad for asking for what you want, or just flat out refusing to negotiate with you at all, it's very bizarre when you go to somebody else with the exact same pitch you've always had, and they say, "Okay" Like, when somebody actually accepts you for who and what you're worth, then you realize like, it's not about me. It's never been about me.

0:24:03.2 Danielle Lambert: Oh my gosh, that's such a good point. [chuckle] Truly, truly.

0:24:09.2 Jessica Vogelsang: It's that parable about the guy who's like a famous concert violinist or something playing in the subway, and he got like 10 cents. Everybody was ignoring him. And then he played that night in Carnegie Hall for hundreds of millions of dollars. It's not you. You show up the same way everywhere. It's about how the universe is reacting to you. And so how do you change that? You can't do that by yourself. You could try, but when you're trying to change a system and how we treat large swells of people, this is everybody banding together, and one, acknowledging the system that's in place. And two, saying, "Well, what changes do we wanna make, and in what order?" 'Cause you certainly can't do it overnight. Do better yourself and then grow from there.

0:24:56.1 Danielle Lambert: Yeah. I think that's the major component. Again, what we're asking people to do here really is to be able to look at themselves. And so I really think of... I hire people to work for me in different... Especially with our design work, we'll hire illustrators for example, right? And I really notice most of them are women and they'll be like, "Oh, sorry, could you maybe pay me for this?" They're very apologetic that I'm even going to pay them for their work. And so I've really started to kind of take the lead and say, like, "Hey, I wanna pay you upfront. This is my budget." You know what I mean? Like, I'm very open and transparent with them and people are so grateful. And I think that that's kind of a thing that you need to put out there in the world. 'Cause that way, that person knows that you're coming to this open to paying them and supporting them.

And that's major.

0:25:52.5 Katie Berlin: I mean, that's great that you do that. And actually, Jessica, you did that when we were talking about this job. You were like, "This is how much money I have to pay you." And I was like, "Oh, okay." And it was not that I didn't feel like I could negotiate with you, it was that I didn't feel like I had to, because I felt like you were being upfront with me, sort of woman to woman. You knew that this was gonna be a hard thing, and let's just make that conversation easier. It's like how... Remember Saturn used to like... Weren't they the ones that were like, "You don't have to bargain. The sticker price is the price." Of course, look what happened to them. [chuckle]

0:26:29.6 Danielle Lambert: Oh, that was always... It makes you feel... I don't know. The work is worth what it's worth, and to go in and try and play hardball and like, "Let me see if I can come in 30, 40 grand under where I wanna be, and see how much I can twist outta someone," I don't wanna start my working relationship like that.

0:26:51.5 Katie Berlin: Yeah. And I've never seen a group more apologetic at having to make money than veterinary professionals. I've never seen a group that apologize so much for having to get paid for the work they do, especially considering the amount of education that a lot of them have. And we carry this into that negotiation with us, it's not just with clients. We go in and we're looking at the practice manager or the practice owner sitting across the table and we're like, "Oh my God, they're gonna think I'm a money-grubbing loser." And yet, that's what we hate feeling like people think about us. And we have to eat and be comfortable... We have the right to be comfortable and do this work. And I'm just wondering, now that so many practices are becoming corporate owned, if the negotiation, the feelings around negotiation change, because I now would find it much easier to negotiate with a big corporation than I would with a small town practice owner who's trying to put his kids through college. And I don't know if that's right or not, but I feel like they expect you to come to the table and negotiate. Doesn't mean they're gonna treat you well if you do it. That's individual. But I feel like it's more expected in a corporate situation. Would you agree with that?

0:28:12.1 Danielle Lambert: I think I would, I think it's a very different tone when you work... Having consulted for different groups, there's an extremely different tone when you work with a big corporate group, versus a one-off independent startup kind of practice. It's a very different kind of conversation and you're working with people that are business people. They aren't veterinarians. I think this idea that, "Oh, I don't feel comfortable negotiating with them 'cause it's like they feel very James Herriot-ty." It's like this idea that these practices... Veterinarians are not the best business people, and I think there is such a personal connection to it that, to try to negotiate with them, it becomes this personal attack, which is like... We can unpack a whole, we can bring in a therapist and unpack that one. But I definitely think that when you go to negotiate with a big corporation, One, I think you should get Katie's dad and his red pen looking at that contract and you should go back with it completely marked up. But also, I think there is going to be less of that personal feelings, connection to it, which I personally feel it's way easier to negotiate with that person if they're representing a big corporation.

0:29:25.2 Jessica Vogelsang: Well, and it's interesting, because I agree with you, Danielle. This business side, that's how it is in many other industries. It's more dispassionate, but we still bring ourselves and our expectations that there's this emotional part. And so, you're showing up with somebody who's expecting you to bargain hard and ask for what you want. We don't. So then, I

think that's when you end up with these people who find themselves in these situations where, like, "I didn't realize I could ask for different things." I didn't realize what I was signing myself up for with these restrictions or all these things." And so if there's any sort of thing that would be helpful, I think, for a profession moving forward, is to understand what that means to read a contract and to be critical and to know what you want and know what you're asking for. So it's not just salary. It's all the other things around it. It's the culture. I hear that a lot from independent practice owners, or, "I can't compete with the money that's out there in these big practices." And that's very likely that you can't, but what else can you compete with? Because there's probably a whole lot that you're bringing that you don't even realize you're leaving on the table, because you're not sharing and communicating with people, the value of that.

0:30:44.1 Danielle Lambert: One hundred and fifty percent. A hundred and fifty per... That's literally the bread and butter of my work, day to day, is about helping people unpack what those special things are. And I think that that's an important piece of all of this conversation about negotiation in general too, is to remember like, it's not just gonna be financial. There's other things that you can ask for and really demand in your [chuckle] interview process and make sure that something is going to be a good fit for you. And I think circling back to some of the points in terms of what we were talking about, like, is this a workplace that's going to accommodate the fact that I have to go pick my kid up from daycare? Or whatever, you know what I mean? Things like that, I think become really, really important to have those kinds of conversations upfront. So, the negotiation isn't always just a financial contract, like big to-do. I think it is so much of like... I think it's so important to show up as your full self and to be honest about what you need, and to have a real conversation with whoever you're trying to work for. It's why I love personal branding so much 'cause it's like you could share exactly who you are so people know exactly who they're getting when you go to show up, and what you're gonna expect of them.

0:32:04.7 Danielle Lambert: And I think that that is such a critical step to also opening some people's eyes to the unique needs that you have, whether it is something like childcare needs or something, if you have like a disability that needs to be accommodated, et cetera. I think bringing those things up is so critical.

0:32:24.9 Jessica Vogelsang: Yeah, yeah, the last thing you want in life is to sign up for something that you don't really want to show up with, that's gonna be a disappointment for everyone.

0:32:35.8 Danielle Lambert: Hundred and fifty percent.

0:32:36.4 Katie Berlin: And that's kind of a disconnect too with the corporate practice, because a lot of times, the person you're negotiating with or the person you're at the table with when you're signing your contract isn't the person you're gonna be working with every day. And I didn't realize that when I was...

0:32:48.1 Danielle Lambert: Sure.

0:32:48.8 Katie Berlin: A year out of school and signing on to work at a corporate practice, was that we could have a rapport at that signing table and that would not in any way reflect my day-to-day experience. And that's not to say that that's always bad, it's just that you have to be prepared for that and make sure that if you're interviewing for a practice where you're not negotiating with the person you're gonna be working directly with, that you spend a lot of time in that practice and get

an idea. Because corporate or no, every practice is really different and every dynamic is really different, and on both sides of that table, knowing what you can ask for. So, maybe you're a practice that can't offer a hundred thousand dollar signing bonus, but you can offer a flexible schedule or a work-from-home day with telehealth service or something like that.

0:33:36.6 Danielle Lambert: Exactly.

0:33:37.8 Katie Berlin: That's super cool. And a lot of people would give up a lot of income...

0:33:41.5 Jessica Vogelsang: A lot of money.

0:33:42.2 Katie Berlin: In order to be able to do that, yeah.

0:33:42.7 Danielle Lambert: To have that flexibility. A hundred percent.

0:33:44.5 Katie Berlin: And so you could have that in your back pocket when you're going into the room to discuss with the possible associate or technician, but also the person interviewing can come in with that idea that maybe as a negotiating tactic, they could say like, "Well, I know this is the compensation, but maybe we could talk about a little bit of scheduling flexibility and start there." That's important. It could be on both sides.

0:34:14.4 Danielle Lambert: Definitely.

0:34:14.8 Jessica Vogelsang: My most successful experiences and stories I hear from others are when people view this negotiation not as a win-lose. 'Cause you always hear that sort of the old school business approach, "Somebody's won and somebody's lost." But when you look at it as a give and take where you're both happy with the outcome, that is possible." But it's a very different intent and a very different sort of outcome that you're looking for. The first thing of which being, first and foremost, there is a possibility that the person who shows up is not the right person for this job. And that happens a lot and that's okay too. Again, when you look at it as like a win-lose thing, there is no greater win than not being offered a job that would've been horrible for you.

[laughter]

0:35:02.7 Katie Berlin: [0:35:02.8] ____.

0:35:03.9 Jessica Vogelsang: [chuckle] We all know.

0:35:04.0 Danielle Lambert: Been there. [chuckle]

0:35:06.3 Jessica Vogelsang: Yeah. Taking the job is like the worst possible outcome for you.

0:35:09.2 Danielle Lambert: I think sometimes... And I know the book, Feminist Fight Club, inspired us having this chat. And I love the concept in there of like, owning your skillset and you're not lucky for just having opportunities. You've worked and you've put something in there that has gotten you to that place. Of course, there could always be an element of privilege of that luck, but you're not lucky, you've put work in. And I think that in veterinary medicine sometimes, it's like almost people are too thirsty. It's like you don't have to say yes to a job just 'cause they offered you

this job. You could swipe left and move on, look at some other options, it's okay. And I think that that is a big piece of this too, 'cause it should feel like a win-win in the end, right? If you're having to negotiate so hard, and that \$100,000 sign-on bonus might sound good, but might come with a lot of golden handcuffs that you do not want. So, I think you really want to come at it from that collaborative approach. And I think that is what women do so well, is the more collaborative approach when it comes to how they approach business interactions, which I love seeing more women get into leadership because then you do see things like Jessica coming to you and being like, "Katie, I have this job. This is my budget," and is such a more collaborative discussion. And that's something that I hope we can foster and see more of in our space.

0:36:39.7 Katie Berlin: Yeah, Jessica definitely gets practice picking her battles as Chief Medical Officer too. [chuckle] We have a very collaborative team and you can't fix everything all at once, on one day. And I think that is something that women also tend to do well, at least in my experience, better than a lot of men who just are like, "No, this is what I want and I want it now." And again, generalization, but [chuckle] it is very easy, I think, when you're technically, I'm using quotes, the most powerful person in the room, to say like, "Nope, this is the way we're gonna do it." And I think a lot of women are not used to that.

0:37:18.4 Jessica Vogelsang: That's certainly the easy approach to things. [chuckle] But it rarely actually gets you...

0:37:26.9 Danielle Lambert: What you want.

0:37:27.6 Jessica Vogelsang: The long-term outcomes that you want.

0:37:27.6 Katie Berlin: Yeah, yeah. Well, Danielle, I'm glad you mentioned. So, Feminist Fight Club, this is a fantastic book. And actually, so the author is Jessica Bennett and I'll put the link in the show notes. If you're listening and not watching, I'm holding it up. It's even a fun book, it's got this graffiti cover. But I actually think of you when I think of this book, because I'm pretty sure that I was in the room when you and Cindy Courtney who's also been on this podcast were talking about it and she was like, "You have to read this book." And I went out and read it 'cause I always read things that Cindy Courtney tells me to read. And...

0:37:58.7 Danielle Lambert: She's amazing.

0:38:00.9 Jessica Vogelsang: You would read a lot.

0:38:01.4 Katie Berlin: Amazing. She has a book...

0:38:02.5 Danielle Lambert: She recommends a lot of books, yeah.

0:38:02.6 Katie Berlin: She has a book for every situation...

0:38:03.0 Danielle Lambert: Literally.

0:38:04.3 Katie Berlin: That's why I have a to-be-read pile. It's like three shelves big, but that's all right. But this book is... I haven't read it cover to cover in a long time. I'm sure there's some stuff in it that might be a little bit dated. It's been out a little bit now. But it's very, very good at getting to

the heart of the things that women do because we're taught that way, and how we can try to work through them without denying who we are, and also what men can do in situations where they see this behavior happening, such as when women are getting mansplained to, or when women are afraid to speak up for themselves and then don't get credit for ideas that are theirs.

0:38:44.0 Katie Berlin: There's no reason why can't help each other out, no matter what gender we identify as, to say like, "Hey, that was actually Beth's idea," or, "Hey, actually Molly was the one who originally thought about that," and be alert for those situations for each other because as women, it's important that we help each other out.

0:39:06.2 Jessica Vogelsang: I think, Danielle, you're the one who recommended that book to me. And there are so many great little nuggets in that. And to your point, Katie, just about sort of how you walk in the world and what you bring to the table. I was talking to a friend of mine who comes from the tech space. She's a woman, and again, sort of like the inverse of the veterinary space, 90% men. And she was a manager there and she had a lot of things that she'd put up with, and she saw at the levels of leadership, women didn't support each other. Like they're more critical of one another. And again, it wasn't intentional, it's just the subliminal, I think expectation over time. Like there are so few spaces for women. There's only a space for me. And if I see you trying to come up, clearly, it's to knock me off, so I gotta fight for this as hard as I can, and the reality is the opposite. And so it's hard to overcome that programming to say, "I'm going to reach down and lift this person up even though it feels like this is a threat to me, that I'm giving something up."

0:40:13.0 Jessica Vogelsang: You can't help feeling that way, like you feel what you feel, but you can control how you react to it, and say, "I'm gonna do it anyway and let the world prove me wrong." And it has brought me nothing but blessings over and over again to do that. And to any human being. Like help the people around you, but I think in particular, when you're looking to lift other women, it can feel threatening. I don't know how many conversations I've had with women in the vet space over 10 years where there was sort of this undercurrent, like 10 years ago, I wouldn't have liked you. [laughter]

0:40:52.6 Danielle Lambert: It's absolutely a thing, and it's like I'm trying to find... I have notes from that book 'cause that's how I kind of remember whatever the heck I read, and it's funny, I was looking through my notes and I found another book that's super on topic, which is called *The Myth of the Nice Girl*, is another book that really kind of gets into why women who are in leadership roles should actually own the idea of being nice. But I really like with that... Kind of to piggyback on what Jessica was saying there, I think that, yes, women can be very collaborative in a good culture situation, but also, yes, women can be extremely scarcity mindset and cutthroat when they feel like somebody is coming after them for opportunities. And I think it's so important... It's something I know I've personally struggled with as a consultant, like there's other consultants that might do something vaguely similar to what I do, and you're like, "Oh, I don't know if I wanna help her," and you get that little pang of jealousy or something like that, and I think over time, I've really learned to be more supportive of everybody around me because everybody really does have their own kind of little niche that they serve, and you can really build out a good little network of people instead of like operating in that scarcity mindset kind of place.

0:42:17.0 Danielle Lambert: I find that, especially... Again, I hate to generalize, but I'm just gonna be honest here. In terms of my experience, it's boomer women that have probably had to really fight to get to where they are in a very male-dominated world at the time that they were coming up

professionally, I think because it was like they were probably... Even a White woman was probably the diversity hire in like 1985, so like she has fought to be there and she's not always going to be the most supportive. And I think kind of coming into things with the awareness of what somebody's experience, again, might have been and why they're like that and having a level of empathy for it, but also being aware that just because they're modeling that behavior, that that's not how you need to act to succeed. You can be extremely supportive of other people and still be extremely successful.

0:43:09.5 Katie Berlin: Yeah, and you are both evidence of that because you are definitely two people who make a concerted effort to reach out and help lift other people up who are coming up in the industry, and I really... Actually, you've both done that for me, [chuckle] 'cause Danielle was my first Twitter friend on Vet Med Twitter. [chuckle] I have since ditched Twitter because Twitter is terrifying. But in 2015, I screamed into the void and Danielle answered. [laughter] That was...

0:43:42.4 Danielle Lambert: Sounds about right.

0:43:44.2 Jessica Vogelsang: As she does.

0:43:44.3 Katie Berlin: Yeah.

0:43:44.5 Danielle Lambert: Sounds about right.

[laughter]

0:43:46.2 Katie Berlin: That was how I first learned that there was this whole other world of people in Vet Med who are not just going to work and seeing the patients and going home and doing that every day until they die. And you were my first window into that world and you were so willing to chat and you just... You both have put so much content out into the world that says who you are and that allows other people to come up and say like, "Maybe I could do something like this too," and it's done nothing but strengthen the industry as far as I can see, so I'm very grateful for that. And I totally feel that too now in the position I'm in where I'm like, "Oh gosh, it took... I'm turning 45 this year, and I just got here, and I really love being here, and I don't wanna not be here." And at the same time, one of the best things about this job is you get to meet so many amazing people, and it is extremely satisfying to make those connections and see people succeed. It's so much more satisfying than sitting up here and being like, "I'm finally doing what I wanna do. Screw all of you." [laughter] I think that would get old really fast."

[laughter]

0:44:55.9 Danielle Lambert: 100%. Right.

0:44:58.5 Jessica Vogelsang: One of the first things jumped out at me about Feminist Fight Club, and I think I immediately reached out before I get to Chapter Two to Danielle like, "Oh my God, this really resonates," is... It is very hard to teach your own horn, and I hear that all the time, like, "Why don't you talk yourself up more than I did?" I can't. I can't. I will never be that person. And I don't think that's like woman, that's just me, but it's really easy for me to talk about other people. It's not that I don't have the ability, I just don't like to use it on myself, but doing that for other women in particular, because there are so many other women, it's amazing to me. I just sort of make it part

of my habit as much as possible to acknowledge in the lift and to just off-handedly mention to someone else, "Oh, have you met this person? She's amazing at X, Y, Z," how many times people come back to me.

0:45:51.1 Jessica Vogelsang: I do it for men too, but they've come back, "Thank you so much. This opened this door, this opened that opportunity," and it always shocks me like, "Really?" I did not think that that would have any impact, I just wanted to do it, but you're planting these little seeds, and the further you get along in life, you just have no idea what you're leaving in your wake, and to me, this was an off-handed thing. It cost me nothing. It took me two seconds to say something to build someone up, but it can have this snowball effect. That's something everybody... Every single person, man, woman, whatever you identify with, whatever industry you work in, no matter how old or young you are, just start doing that. Like that's the easiest thing, and it grows from there.

0:46:35.8 Danielle Lambert: I can absolutely cosign that. I think that it is something that is so incredible. Like I said, again, like if you're scared about nominating anybody else for other opportunities and things like that because you're worried that it means you're not gonna get something, I really can assure you that if you pass opportunities along to other people, it will come back in good karma points, for sure. [chuckle]

0:47:00.6 Katie Berlin: Yeah, that's another good book, Give and Take by Adam Grant. That was a good book. We should just have book club on the podcast or something.

0:47:07.9 Danielle Lambert: Oh, I could totally do that. [chuckle] Hold me accountable, I have a really big pile of books I need to read too. I [0:47:14.9] ____.

0:47:15.0 Katie Berlin: Yeah, it just gets exponentially bigger. Like I think they clone at night, I'm pretty sure.

[chuckle]

0:47:19.2 Danielle Lambert: Yeah, yeah. You're like, "No, thanks."

0:47:20.4 Katie Berlin: Or Cindy Courtney comes in and clones my books. Like she's listening...

[laughter]

0:47:23.0 Danielle Lambert: She's just a little fairy that comes in. [chuckle]

0:47:25.1 Katie Berlin: I know. You're like, "Oh, I gotta add this to Katie's pile," and suddenly there's more, but I wouldn't even notice 'cause there's so many. So this book, Feminist Fight Club talks about a lot of other things. Negotiation was a big one I wanted to talk about today because I do feel like that is something that we could still use so much help with, and in fact, more and more, I think we owe it to our... People are still in school, people just entering the field to be transparent with how much is a reasonable amount to get paid for that job so that they go in prepared and don't find themselves in a situation where they're frantically emailing people to see if they can get a response before they have to come back with another number, and just being as open as we can about what we did and what we've seen and about any help we can give, but I hope that this is

something that educators are working into their curriculum. I don't know if it is. We had a contracts unit. It was like probably a couple of weeks long, and that was pretty much it. And everybody was getting paid pro sale then and we learned about pro sale, and that was it. And then it was like, "Well, I guess that's a good salary. I mean, I could help insure. It's fine."

[chuckle]

0:48:44.4 Danielle Lambert: Kind of a short, yeah.

0:48:45.6 Katie Berlin: Yeah.

0:48:45.7 Danielle Lambert: I've really... I don't find that I...

0:48:47.2 Jessica Vogelsang: Take what you get.

0:48:48.2 Danielle Lambert: The veterinary students I talk to, I still don't feel like are completely empowered and aware of what they should be asking for, and I think I see a lot of managers really struggle on like what the heck they should be paid. There's a Facebook group called VPMU that shares a lot of good feedback with... It's called Veterinary Practice Managers Unite, is what that stands for, and they share a lot of open conversations about what they're being paid and what that looks like, 'cause I think they kinda get forgotten sometimes, right? 'Cause it's like everybody's out here advocating for... Like I advocate for support staff all the time, but as a former practice manager, a lot of practice managers are out there, not getting paid very much either, and they are juggling a lot. So I think that... [chuckle] To say the least. So I think that, again, just like the transparency and being willing to share like, "Hey, this is what I made." It's like I literally... For all my consulting stuff, I put my prices out on my Instagram story for things because it's like I just want people to know what I make it, what I'm charging so that we have a valuable conversation at the end of the day.

0:49:54.4 Katie Berlin: Yeah, that also... It's helpful when we see people like you do that because it may not be directly translated into what an associate vet should be getting paid for instance, but like I know when I... I've only known being a vet. I was an intern at a museum before I went to vet school, [chuckle] so we don't even talk about money as an intern. But when I got out of full-time practice and I was getting into these... Like I worked at Clinician's Brief, and when I went to work for them, I was like, "I have no idea how much I'm gonna get paid. I don't know what I should ask for, I don't know if I should negotiate. Forget whether I should negotiate, I don't even know where the starting ballpark is." The idea of how much other people get paid for jobs that can't be measured on production, as I always was, is completely foreign to me, and I just think that's not probably right. Like we should, as professionals in this industry, know what other people get paid in other industries, because we need to know what... I mean, maybe we don't even really know what a living wage is.

0:51:00.5 Danielle Lambert: Right. 150%. I think that... Especially when I think of like... That's why I think of managers, because I think of managers that are out there and they're being paid like \$20 an hour to run a \$3 million business, and they then find out what I'm earning as a consultant, and they're like, "Oh wait a minute." That's why I share it, because of like, "Hey, maybe if they're never gonna pay you anymore, you've got a skill set and you could maybe fight your way out to be getting paid." So I think that's why it's so, so important. I think Vet Med can be so insular like

that, because I think, especially if you're talking about veterinarians, they've worked so hard and so laser-focused on being a veterinarian and being through vet school that they have no concept of like what is life. It's like...

0:51:42.9 Katie Berlin: Yeah.

[laughter]

0:51:44.2 Danielle Lambert: You know?

0:51:45.2 Katie Berlin: Like I moved to Colorado, I look around, I see this housing prices, and I'm like, "What does everyone do for a living? [laughter] I can't find a house. Like I'm a doctor."

0:51:52.6 Jessica Vogelsang: Nothing.

[laughter]

0:51:55.9 Danielle Lambert: It's super true, right? And I think that's why I'm all here for it in terms of the transparency, just like if anybody listening is thinking about getting into consulting or speaking or anything like that, always feel comfortable messaging me. I will tell you what you should be charging. [laughter]

0:52:12.4 Katie Berlin: Love that. Sometimes you just need a friend who's gonna be like, "You are worth this much."

0:52:19.0 Danielle Lambert: Oh, 100%. And I'm way better at it for other people than myself, like I have to like... I still...

0:52:23.1 Katie Berlin: Oh yeah.

0:52:23.8 Danielle Lambert: Yeah, 100%. Like I still have to reach out to my friends, or even my husband is a consultant as well, so I'll be like, "Just a sec. Okay." [laughter] You know what I mean? So as confident as I sound talking about it here, it is tricky to nail, so it's fine to ask other people no matter what stage of your career you're at.

0:52:48.2 Katie Berlin: Okay. So one question for both of you to leave us with, I'll give you a choice, 'cause our time is money. I'll say, do you wanna tell us an embarrassing Vet Med story because doesn't everybody have one, or do you want to tell us what's one thing that you hope everybody listening who can relate to this stuff stops doing. Now, after hearing this podcast. [chuckle]

0:53:13.8 Danielle Lambert: Oh, I wanna do the stop doing one 'cause I'm bossy. [laughter]

0:53:19.0 Katie Berlin: Excellent.

0:53:20.6 Jessica Vogelsang: Wait. One thing we wish we would stop doing or we want other people stop doing?

0:53:24.0 Katie Berlin: That you hope other people listening would stop doing after hearing this conversation.

0:53:32.1 Jessica Vogelsang: I hope that everyone would stop assuming the worst of other people and be okay just reaching out and asking for advice or help.

0:53:45.2 Katie Berlin: Love that.

0:53:45.7 Jessica Vogelsang: They might say no, and that's okay, but most people say yes.

[chuckle]

0:53:51.4 Katie Berlin: Yeah, love it.

0:53:53.6 Danielle Lambert: I love that. I got all excited about my bossy response, and then I'm like, "Oh, what is it gonna be?" [laughter]

0:53:58.4 Jessica Vogelsang: Okay, I mean, Danielle, I may be your anger translator, but you're my assertiveness translator. Like it's a great... We've had a great friendship over the years for that reason. Just don't stop being bossy.

0:54:11.1 Danielle Lambert: Exactly, yeah. I think bossy is a good word too. I feel like it gets a negative connotation and people try to rebrand it, but I'm like, I like bossy, it sounds more fun. It's like... [laughter]

0:54:23.2 Katie Berlin: I mean, that's how stuff gets done, right?

0:54:25.0 Danielle Lambert: Exactly, yeah. Exactly, yeah. And so like on that note, I think if I was going to kind of tell one thing that you should stop doing after listening to this, I think it is really this assuming that you can't do more in your career, kind of like to both... You are both such good examples of this, and not to say that being a veterinarian isn't an extremely fulfilling career, but if you're listening to this and you're a practice manager or a veterinarian or support staff role, whatever it is, just know you can do whatever the heck you want with that experience, it doesn't need to be limited to the four walls of an exam room.

0:55:12.0 Katie Berlin: Absolutely. That's like one of my soapboxes. Don't devalue... That would be mine, is I wish people would not devalue their knowledge that they've built up over years and years of blood, sweat and tears in the vet clinic. It is worth just as much outside of the vet clinic if you find a situation where people are looking for that experience and knowledge, so don't devalue yourself because you have a lot to offer that people outside the industry just cannot... They can't make it up. You can't fake that stuff. [chuckle]

0:55:38.5 Danielle Lambert: 150%. We're seeing it with a lot of these business-minded people out there. They need help from the actual veterinarian history to run these veterinary businesses. [chuckle]

0:55:47.4 Katie Berlin: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Well, thank you both. This has been so fun. We could have talked about so many things like apologizing, why we don't apply for jobs, feedback,

women as managers. There's so many good topics in this book, so if you're interested in the subject or you feel like you need a little bit of a nudge yourself, then go to Feminist Fight Club, check it out, and we'll put the link in the show notes. Thank you both so much for your time. Love talking you.

0:56:17.9 Danielle Lambert: Thank you so much.

0:56:18.2 Jessica Vogelsang: Thank you.

0:56:19.9 Katie Berlin: And thank you all for listening. We'll catch you next time on Central Line.

[music]