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SPEAKER KIT 2024

CAT WALKER

**Managing Director, Cat Walker
Mediation & Consulting Services**

Cat Walker is a highly engaging speaker with a wealth of experience in the veterinary and health sectors. With a past life in performing arts, Cat's skills as a speaker shine through with her interactive, engaging, yet extremely professional style. Delegates benefit from the pragmatic nature of Cat's talks in which her goal is for individuals to walk away with clear strategies that they can apply to their working lives.

- Lawyer
- Mediator
- Registered Veterinary Nurse
- Veterinary Business Consultant
- Conflict Coach
- Podcast Host
- Mum



Professional Background

Cat Walker is a Registered Veterinary Nurse, Lawyer, Mediator, and self-confessed nerd with a wealth of experience in the veterinary and health sectors. She has a background in veterinary business ownership and management in general practice and emergency hospitals.

Cat empowers veterinary teams to maximise patient outcomes by navigating common lines of tension and conflict using evidence-based strategies grounded in conflict theory and neuroscience. She currently holds an advisory role on the Australian Veterinary Palliative Care Advisory Council with a particular interest in helping teams develop the skills and resilience necessary to walk patients and clients through the end of life experience with compassion.

With a past life in performing arts, Cat's skills as a speaker shine through with her interactive, engaging, yet extremely professional style. Delegates benefit from the pragmatic nature of Cat's talks in which her goal is for individuals to walk away with clear strategies that they can apply to their working lives. Cat is the voice and mind behind the Radio Vet Nurse podcast with over 70,000 downloads.



Reach:  2.6K  2.2K  70K+ podcast downloads

Let's connect:  cat@catwalkermediation.com

Speaker Topics



Conflict is a Dish Best Served Cold

Most people associate conflict with stress, anger and anxiety, when it is actually a normal process that is neither good nor bad. Productive conflict is a teachable skill when understood through the neuroscience of stress which suggests that conflict is “a dish best served cold”. In this lecture, actionable strategies will be considered with reference to three broad categories of veterinary industry conflict: team conflict, inner conflict, and client conflict.

When I Was Your Age....

In her 2023 book *Generations*, Dr Jean Twenge analyses a dataset of 39 million people to show how attitudes and behaviour change over generations. In this lecture the key theories and findings of *Generations* are outlined and applied directly to veterinary teams starting with an overview of the generations and the effect of intergenerational differences on the veterinary industry, and concluding with actionable strategies to help teams tolerate, and even celebrate, generational differences.

Navigating Difficult Client Interactions

Difficult client interactions are the number one cause of poor mental health in veterinary team members who frequently encounter verbal abuse, poor treatment and disrespect, complex interactions with distressed and grieving clients, unrealistic demands, guilt, manipulation, and the perception that we are in it for the money. In this lecture learn how to navigate difficult client interactions using conflict theory and the neuroscience of stress.

Outsource Difficult Client Interactions: Retain Clients and Protect Teams

Despite the best efforts of veterinary teams, client complaints and difficult interactions happen. Managing complaints and concerns effectively not only increases the likelihood of retaining clients, it also reduces the risk of secondary grievances such as bad Google reviews. Cat shares insights into her innovation of a novel, external veterinary complaints handling service, and how it can protect both teams and patients while also retaining clients.

Howdy Partner! Navigating Veterinary Business Ownership and Partnerships

By 2030 all Boomers will be 65 or older and veterinary business owners will be retiring in quick succession. Now is the time to think about exit and succession strategies, and for a new generation to consider if they want to become veterinary business owners. Join lawyers Sarah Stoddart (founder and director of Vitality Law Australia) and Cat Walker (founder and director of Cat Walker Mediation & Veterinary Consulting) with a combined 30 years experience in healthcare law, veterinary business ownership and management, conflict, and risk mitigation. They will explain why the partnership structure is a good entry into ownership BUT that there is a need to know what you're getting yourself into. Learn about the pros and pitfalls of the partnership structure, the importance of partnership agreements, and actionable strategies for managing partnership relationships and conflict so that veterinary businesses can thrive.

Radio Vet Nurse Interrupted - A Cautionary Tale

When Cat's veterinarian (then) husband developed a severe and nearly fatal substance use disorder in their clinic, life took a horrific turn. This cautionary tale about mental health and substance use disorder is also a story of resilience and the quest for systemic workplace shifts towards healthy and sustainable workloads.

The Cat Walker Hour

An interactive talk show style session in which Cat interviews one or more of the keynote speakers in front of a live audience. Cat's informal yet professional interview style quickly disarms guests, allowing delegates to get to know their speakers a little better.



Testimonials

“Wow just wow thank you so much for speaking up about this, currently feeling some of these emotions myself in the industry. One very strong lady, you should be so proud. The industry is so desperate to change I really hope we start to see the cogs turning!”

“Amazing. You are amazing! Thank you for sharing your recent experiences, we will make changes collectively and we can make a big change. Thank you for all you do.”

“Thank you, so much of what you said in particular on self care really resonated with me. I find it so hard to have down time without being productive too. Gave me quite a bit to think about.”

“Amazing conversations Cat! Thank you for bringing these issues to light - I've had many similar thoughts and conversations with colleagues over the years. I really believe for the first time we are on the cusp of great change. Thank you for your contribution and all the very best to you. I hope this isn't the last we hear from you!”

