PROGRAM DESIGN

How AVTE drew 60 new faculty to a program built for 25

A new front door for new faculty

Association of Veterinary Technician Educators (AVTE)

Vet Tech New Faculty Academy · Eight weeks online · October to December 2026

60	Under 5 months	7	$100
registered for the first cohort, against a goal of 25	from first planning call to first live session	institutions represented among the hand-picked faculty	registration, so cost is never the barrier for a new hire

The challenge

Veterinary technicians are the nurses of animal health care. The people who teach them usually come straight from clinical practice. They're excellent clinicians, and most were never taught how to teach. Some are hired two weeks before classes start.

New faculty told us they felt thrown in. Program directors told us they didn't have the time or tools to onboard new hires well. And almost nothing in the field was built for an educator's first semester.

Why it had to be now

When a field leaves a gap open, new entrants gain traction, and the first credible program to fill it sets the standard. Other associations were already moving into professional development.

If someone else claimed new faculty first, AVTE's members could start their careers somewhere else. So we launched in the same year. The academy filled a gap in AVTE's calendar, expanded its impact and made it harder for a new entrant to claim that space. Its early success already has program directors talking about how to adapt it and what comes next.

> “I've spent my career training the people who teach, and I know what it costs a new instructor to figure it out alone. This academy gives new vet tech faculty what most of us never had: a cohort, a mentor and real teaching skills in their very first semester.”
>
> **Rebecca Newman** · Co-Director, Vet Tech New Faculty Academy · Appalachian State University

WHAT TVDA DID

An eight-week online cohort built to the standard of a college course.

01 Found the gap

We listened to new faculty and program directors, read the calendar and named the need nobody in the field owned.

02 Made the case

We wrote the brief, tied it to AVTE's areas of focus and recruited two co-directors with industry credibility and teaching experience.

03 Hand-picked the faculty

Not an open call for speakers. We went looking for practitioners who could teach each topic, across seven institutions, and built a group that would grow together as the program grew.

04 Built it like a college course

Learning objectives, weekly prep, live discussion and an apply-it follow-up, with every session recorded and summarized the next day.

05 Taught in it

Todd co-leads the New Student Experience session, bringing a business school view to the cohort.

06 Opened a second front door

Every participant registers through AVTE, joins a mentor group and stays in member discussion rooms through next year's conference.

RESULTS

	Before	After
Support	Almost nothing for new faculty in the fall, field-wide	**An eight-week cohort in their first semester**
Reach	One front door: the annual conference	**A second door, online, reaching new educators across the country**
Demand	Goal of 25 participants	**60 registered for the first cohort**
Pipeline	Onboarding left to each individual program	**A shared cohort, plus a path to mentor and board roles**

> "Every association has a season when its newest members need it most and nobody is there. For vet tech educators, that's their first fall. We didn't just fill that gap. We built it like a real college course, with faculty who've done the work, and we got there first."
>
> **Todd Von Deak, DBA, CAE** · Co-Owner and President, TVD Associates

WHAT TVDA CAN DO FOR YOU

Spot the quiet season

We find the moment your newest members need you most and nobody is there.

Recruit the right people

We bring in co-directors and faculty with real credibility, not whoever answers a call for speakers.

Build it to a professional standard

Programs built with the rigor of a university course, not a rotating selection of speakers, so they earn trust and keep members coming back.

Is your calendar quiet when your newest members need you most? Let's talk.

Book 20 minutes with Todd at calendly.com/toddvondeak, or send us a note at tvdassociates.com.