

Austin Affordable Vet: Research Plan

Research Focus

We are conducting research into how an Austin-based vet care center (referred to in this document as Austin Affordable Vet) promotes affordable and accessible vet care through relationships with other animal welfare advocacies.

Goals

- 1.) To build empathy with our target audience, so we can better understand how Austin Affordable Vet develops relationships with other animal welfare organizations.
- 2.) To identify the way Austin Affordable Vet employees and volunteers think and feel about organizational operations, particularly focused on their new training program
- 3.) To observe current processes and strategies used by participants to engage with other organizations.

Research Methodology

This research leverages methods called *contextual inquiry* and *participatory design*. These are methods of design research that focus on behavior rather than opinions. We will plan research around these principles:

- Go to Austin Affordable Vet headquarters, clinics, and auxiliary locations, rather than bringing participants into an office
- Conduct contextual interviews by observing Austin Affordable Vet employees and volunteers directly as they work, also prompting participant responses with artifacts or probing questions, rather than simply following a question/answer script
- Develop a series of activities that participants can use to communicate their experience in a creative way instead of simply in a verbal manner

Participants

Research will be conducted with varying levels of Austin Affordable Vet leaders, employees, and volunteers at 6 Central Texas Austin Affordable Vet locations in an attempt to understand various roles across the organization.

Quantity	Role	Austin Affordable Vet Location
4	Leadership	Headquarters
2-3	Austin Affordable Vet New School Trainers/Educators	Headquarters and New School location
4	Branch Managers	Central Austin, East Austin, Pflugerville, Killeen clinics and Mobile Unit
3-4	Veterinarians or Vet Technicians	Central Austin, East Austin, Pflugerville, Killeen clinics and Mobile Unit
3-4	Volunteers	Central Austin, East Austin, Pflugerville, Killeen clinics and Mobile Unit
3	Customers	Central Austin, East Austin, Pflugerville, Killeen clinics, and Mobile Unit

Screener

The goal of our screener is to gauge participants' familiarity and/or participation in Austin Affordable Vet 's relationships with other animal welfare organizations.

1. Do you work for Austin Affordable Vet ?

If yes, go to 2.

If no, go to 1a.

1a. Do you volunteer for Austin Affordable Vet ?

If yes, go to 2.

If no, go to 1b.

1b. Do you receive services from Austin Affordable Vet ?

If yes, go to 2.

If no, go to 1c.

1c. Are you part of an organization that works with Austin Affordable Vet ?

If yes, go to 2.

If no, stop.

2. Are you aware of Austin Affordable Vet 's relationships with similar organizations?

If no, stop.

Script / Research Protocol

1. Introduction (15-25 minutes)

Thanks for taking the time to work with us today. This interview should take about 2 hours. Before we get started, I have a brief consent form that I would like you to review and sign. This describes that we will be audio recording the session for our own notes and recollection, and, with your permission, taking pictures. Your name, face, and any other identifying information will be removed so you will be completely anonymous. It also describes that you can quit the interview at any time.

[Participant reviews consent form and signs]

Let me explain how our session today will work. First, we're going to ask you some brief questions about yourself and your experience with Austin Affordable Vet . Next, we'll observe you going through your regular working routine, asking you to narrate the actions you're doing while you're doing them.

We may stop you as you work to explain how or why you chose to make a specific action.

We'll also work through an exercise about your experience with Austin Affordable Vet .

2. Introductory Questions

- a. What is your role or relationship with Austin Affordable Vet ?
- b. How long have you worked with or received services from Austin Affordable Vet ?
- c. What are your favorite things about Austin Affordable Vet ?
- d. Who do you spend most of your time with at Austin Affordable Vet ?

3. Walkthrough

When we scheduled this appointment, we said we would be shadowing what you do. Can you go about your primary daily activities while we observe? We may interrupt you to ask for clarification.

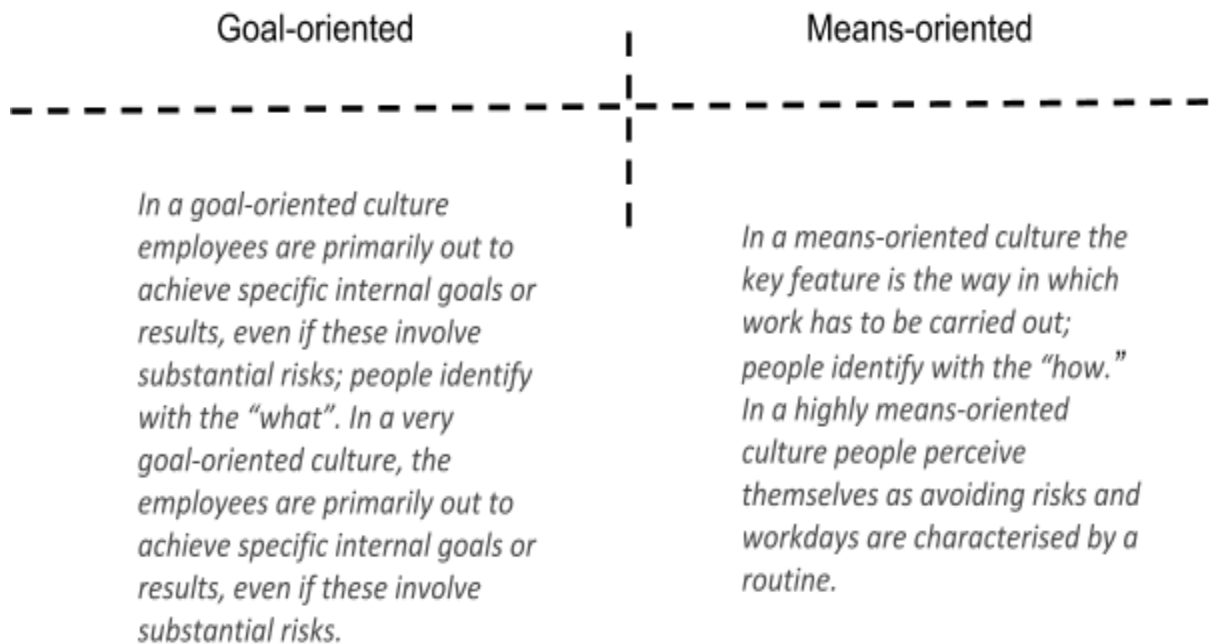
4. Exercise: Organizational Culture

Let's take a look at the culture of Austin Affordable Vet by looking at a simple, one-line axis. I will propose a question with two parameters, and you mark on the line where you feel Austin Affordable Vet fits on the line. These dimensions come from Hofstede Insights, a culture and management firm.

- a. Dimension 1: Means Oriented vs. Goal Oriented
- b. Dimension 2: Internally Driven vs. Externally Driven

- c. Dimension 3: Easygoing Work Discipline vs. Strict Work Discipline
- d. Dimension 4: Local vs. Professional
- e. Dimension 5: Open System vs. Closed System
- f. Dimension 6: Employee-Oriented vs. Work-Oriented

Dimension 1 Example:



5. Conclusion

Thank you for your participation today, we greatly appreciate your time and patience.

Materials (for each interview)

- 2 Laptops
- 2 phones (1 used as backup recorder)
- 2 clipboards
- Olympus Recorder
- 4 Pens
- Interview Notebook
- 3 copies of Exercise