



Dr Ivan Zakharenkov

“I was so fed-up with everything. I'm writing these stupid records at night and then staying five hours after the shift. You totally feel unappreciated, because it's not veterinary medicine. It's just typing. And then nobody reads that stuff, or maybe sometimes they do, and that ends up in court! It's just such pressure. You feel like it's a useless task, and you become cynical.”

Dr Ivan Zakharenkov, or Ivan Zak, as he's better known, is a veterinarian and an entrepreneur committed to creating products that empower healthcare teams to live their passion.

If you haven't heard of Ivan then there's a fair chance that you have heard of, or possibly use his brainchild on a daily basis in your hospital: Ivan was the founder of the now ubiquitous veterinary software Smartflow. It was Ivan's own personal journey from practicing veterinary medicine for 12 years that led to the development of Smartflow, and eventually to his current mission.

Early in his career Ivan experienced severe burnout, and it was that experience that has led him to explore the psychological triggers of burnout and business methodologies that veterinary organisations can apply to work against them. Researching this topic, Ivan obtained an MBA degree in International Healthcare Management and wrote a dissertation “Implementation of lean thinking to improve employee experience.” Today Ivan is leading Veterinary Integration Solutions, a technology company helping veterinary groups implement an operating framework for sustainable integration of practices with a special focus on burnout prevention.

Our conversation covers some of the highlights of the findings of the burnout study and his thinking about solutions to burnout. What I love about Ivan's thinking that has flowed from the study is that the focus is not on how we as individuals can get better at preventing burnout - instead it focuses on the causes of burnout at a management and leadership level, and on practical solutions.

Ivan talks openly about his experience with burnout and how to identify it, we discuss the 6 triggers of burnout and strategies to mitigate it, Ivan gives us an inside perspective on how corporate veterinary practice works that might surprise you, and we talk about money and it's role in job satisfaction and burnout, and much more.

THE 6 TRIGGERS FOR BURNOUT

- Lack of autonomy • Conflict of values • Insufficient reward • Work overload
- Unfairness
- Breakdown of community

Ivan's burnout study: <https://vetintegrations.com/insights/burnout2020/>

Veterinary Integration Solutions: <https://vetintegrations.com/>

Ivan's Podcasts:

Consolidate That!: <https://vetintegrations.com/consolidate-that-podcast/>

Veterinary Innovation Podcast: <https://veterinaryinnovationpodcast.com/>

Maslow's hierarchy of needs: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs

[Maslow%27s hierarchy of needs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs)

Catalyst: Lean Healthcare principles: <https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.18.0193>

Traction management: <https://www.eosworldwide.com/traction-book>

www.eosworldwide.com/traction-book

Rules of no rules, by Reed Hastings: <https://www.penguin.com.au/books/no-rules-rules-9780753553664>

Start with why, Simon Sinek: <https://simonsinek.com/product/start-with-why/>