

# Ensuring the “welfare” in animal welfare

Miranda Luck spends her days keeping the organisations that are at the forefront of animal welfare in check. Surrounding herself with livestock and pets from a young age, Miranda has always wanted to provide the very best for those that cannot speak for themselves. As an animal welfare consultant, she does just that on a daily basis.



## What is your occupation and how long have you been doing it?

I set up my own business in 2007, called Miranda Luck and Associates, as an independent animal welfare consultant. I provide advice, training and services to those working in this sector, including charities and businesses, and specialise in unwanted domestic animal populations, rescue and rehoming. To help obtain information specifically on this topic, I run a website called Rescue Review - [rescuereview.co.uk](http://rescuereview.co.uk). The site allows people to write about their animal adoption experiences, which I can then feed back to the rescues to identify areas where they excel or need to improve.

## What does your job involve from day-to-day?

I currently have six clients so I may be employed in their offices, working from home or travelling abroad. I've worked in a number of exciting and interesting countries, including Costa Rica, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates. Working from home can be fun too – I love talking to the rescue centres about their reviews. Positive reviews are really appreciated by rescue



Miranda speaking in Japan



Visiting an animal shelter in South Korea

workers who otherwise rarely receive any feedback on their valuable work.

**When did you first become interested in working with animals?**

I was born in Canada and brought up on a very remote cattle ranch. As a baby I apparently had an instant love of all of our dogs and one in particular – a wolf hybrid! I was taught how to respect animals from a very early age. As I grew older, I realised I wanted to work with animals and to improve their welfare.

**What qualifications/training do you need to work in your role?**

Qualifying as a vet nurse certainly put me in good stead as a number of my tasks require veterinary understanding. I worked as a vet nurse for a number of

years with the RSPCA, which provided me with excellent training as I worked my way up the ranks. Independently, I undertook further studies in nutrition, animal behaviour, teaching, kennel management and market research. More recently, I have gained a Certificate in Professional Management – a course which I found hugely valuable. The animal welfare sector is constantly changing and continuing personal development in this field is essential.

**What is the best way to gain experience in this area of work?**

I spent my school holidays and any other spare time working in kennels, grooming and showing dogs. As we lived on a farm, there was always an opportunity to take part activities, such as lambing, shearing and milking goats.

This initial contact with animals really increased my animal handling skills and understanding of different species and their needs. I would recommend anyone interested in working in animal welfare to get as much experience as possible with a variety of species. Sweeping the floors in a grooming parlour, dog walking or feeding the neighbours' cat all add up – and never say no to volunteering.

**Do you work with any other types of animal?**

Yes! I work on a project that promotes the use of black and white male dairy calves. Almost half a million male dairy calves are born in the UK each year as cows must be put through pregnancy and birth to ensure milk production. Once the calf is born, it can be surplus to requirement and sadly a huge number are killed at

birth or transported on long journeys to continental veal farms. The project I manage asks for a solution that will end this practice.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Within the same week I could be presenting a seminar, attending a meeting in Westminster, visiting an animal shelter and training vet nurses. The variety is great! I also get a lot of satisfaction when I know that information gained from Rescue Review has improved the way a rescue works. I know I have had a direct impact on improving animals lives. ●

*Do you work with animals or know someone that does? Then we want to hear from you! Turn to page 15 for our contact details.*

