



Newsletter Article

Investing in Your Service Team

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Investing in Your Service Team

If you had a choice---to invest in your service advisors or advertise---which would you do?

While visiting my clients this past year, one of the concerns I heard frequently from several of the dealers wasn't necessarily what I expected. I thought they would have concerns on how they could increase sales, lower expenses and increase profits, but along with those, a big concern was---how could they motivate the service staff to increase their performance?

When attempting to motivate a group of people there are several considerations. After all, we know that what might motivate one person may not motivate another. Motivation is the internal reason for people to do what they do. It may be based on a reward, personal satisfaction, or fear of loss of privileges or monetary value.

Motivating means helping people find the meaning in their role in the quality improvement process. In the automotive world, sometimes service advisors are not properly equipped with the tools to become the best at what they are doing or they have simply been placed on the service drive and left to survive. I was one of those advisors. I was placed on the service drive with a clip board, assigned a work area and was told "Let me know if you have any questions". I can tell you from experience, if you want the best advisor, proper training is essential.

It comes down to investing in a process that will provide a way for your service staff to sustain business after your best advertising campaign has run its course. ATcon has created that process---the "Ultimate Service Experience" or USE--- a service advisor training process that focuses on "Selling the Effort" rather than "selling the service".

One aspect of the USE training is the DiSC behavioral profile. The DISC profile is a nonjudgmental tool for understanding behavioral types and personality styles. It helps service advisors explore behavior across four primary dimensions and then using these dimensions to develop their own personal strategy which in turn helps them understand what it takes to become great service advisors and great sales people!

The DiSC profile identifies four behavioral tendencies:

- **Dominance:** These people are to the point, decisive and bottom-line oriented. They tend to be independent and results-driven. They are strong-willed people who enjoy challenges, taking action, and immediate results.
- **Influence:** These people are optimistic and outgoing. They tend to be highly social and outgoing. They prefer participating on teams, sharing thoughts, and entertaining and energizing others.
- **Steadiness:** These people are empathetic and cooperative. These people tend to be team players and are supportive and helpful to others. They prefer being behind the scene, working in consistent and predictable ways. They are often good listeners and avoid change and conflict.
- **Conscientiousness:** These people are concerned, cautious and correct. These people are often focused on details and quality. They plan ahead; constantly check for accuracy, and want to know "how" and "why".

Sometimes we focus so hard on gaining additional business, we lose focus on what is actually going on in the service drive. The USE process helps encourage, motivate and provide the necessary tools to the service staff.

Here are some common mistakes made by service advisors:

1. Focusing too much on hours per repair order instead of what is best for the customer;
2. Concentrating on your needs instead of the needs of the customer;
3. Basing your success on whether you get the sale TODAY, right on the spot; and
4. Recommending additional services without checking the history of services rendered.

Is your service staff guilty of at least one of these at one time or another?

If so, ATcon can provide you with an in-dealership performance enhancement for your service team. This process starts with reviewing your current situation---production, sales, service financial situation, write up process and individual interviews with the service staff to determine each person's hot buttons. Understanding what makes them

click or what makes them do the things they do and why and then building on their unique behavioral type to create an environment where they are motivated to obtain your desired results.

Motivation is not always focused on money. Many people are in their careers because they love doing what they do and the money is just an added bonus. Wouldn't it be great if all your service staff felt this way?

ATcon is a management consulting and performance training firm. We have a single focus, which is to improve operational and financial performance in dealership service departments, parts departments, and body shops without sacrificing customer image.

It is our goal at ATcon to serve you, our customer, in the best manner possible. We understand that we must offer unconventional ways, outstanding service, an increase in profits and customer retention to earn and keep your business.

We treat your dealership as a unique situation, first taking time to understand the factors at work in your department and then using our considerable experience to develop and apply custom solutions that create measurable results. Our methods are proven, and we regularly partner with both manufacturers and dealerships nationwide that are interested in achieving the next level in fixed operations. If you believe your service team could use an overhaul, or even minor adjustments, contact ATcon at 800-692-2719.

ATcon ahora ofrece servicio de consultoria para el area de post-venta en espanol. Consultoria y capacitacion a servicio, refacciones y taller de carroceria e incluye capacitacion de asesores y gerentes, seminarios y desarrollo de procesos e implementacion dentro de la distribuidora.