

Professional Service Training: Luxury Or Necessity?

Written by David Brown
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Keeping your service team game ready and actively engaged in the competition is paramount to the survival and success of your dealerships service department. Too many dealerships, large and small, believe that past training and dealership experience alone are enough to give service consultants, service managers, and technicians the vital skills necessary to take care of your customers and grow your business.

Service consultants see more customers than anyone else in your dealership, yet typically they are the least-trained. Ongoing development helps your employees adapt to the changing business world and creates greater customer satisfaction and bottom line profits. It seems there is never a problem when it comes to investing in employee occupational health and safety training. Why? Most likely because the dealership will be fined if the workplace is not a safe environment and insurance premiums will rise! Yet without professionally trained service employees, a dealership cannot survive.

Instead of providing service team employees the vital skills, training, and coaching support they need to flourish and succeed we (often with the best intentions) mistakenly think our fixed operations woes will be solved by implementing more advertising and marketing, or giving the service team a RAH RAH motivational session.

Do your service consultants understand your customers needs and know how to sell needed service, or are they simply order takers? Do your employees sell your dealership and its products to the community, or do they just change their oil and say, see ya later?

Most employees do not engage in self-evaluation and continual education- they need prompting and assistance to find the right training and support. At the very least, it is important to have a regular series of mini, in-house sessions where employees can review and reflect on their actions and their causes and effects. Employee training does not always have to be in a formal classroom environment. The greatest percentage of training can and should occur in the service department, using the right type of coaching approach that teaches tangible skills and behaviors.

When employees are provided with professional training, apart from increased sales and customer satisfaction, most of your employees will have light bulb moments when they suddenly become aware of behaviors which empower them to take charge of the situation at hand.

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