

Selling Solutions to Customers

Segment 3 covered communicating with customers during the first critical communication “moment of truth” – when customers initially bring in their vehicle for service or repair. This segment will cover the second “moment of truth” – when the Service Advisor contacts the customer to report the results of the analysis, inspection and diagnostics, then sells additionally needed repairs.

Tip: To speed up the process of gaining authorization by telephone, issue customers a pager or cell phone that can only call one number. When you need to speak with them, you can either page them to call you or you can call them on the cell phone.

Once the Customer Communication Form system(s) analysis and safety inspection are completed, and the needed service work has been determined and estimated, you contact the customer to explain the:

- Results of the analysis and inspection.
- Specific service work needed – with the customer referring to their copy of the CCF(s).
- Necessity or benefit in having the work performed.
- Investment to complete the work.

Once the customer understands fully the work that needs to be done, you seek their approval to perform the work.

The following are recommended approaches for selling the customer on performing needed service work.

SELLING SOLUTIONS RELATED TO CUSTOMER REQUESTS

1. Selling Minor Services By Telephone

“Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, this is (your name) with (shop name). I’m calling to give you an update on the work we are performing on your vehicle. We have completed/are completing (select one) the work you authorized. As you know, we require your authorization for any additional work.

I wanted to let you know that our system analysis uncovered a problem with your _____. If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you when you were in, I’ll go over our findings with you. (Explain each applicable item of the analysis checklist.)

We recommend the following procedure for resolving this problem:

(Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON’T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

(Continued on next page.)

*The parts and labor will be \$ _____.
This would bring your total investment to \$ _____. We can still have your vehicle ready by the time scheduled. We do recommend getting this problem fixed while your vehicle is here. May we have your authorization to perform this work?"*

IF YES: "Great. Let me just confirm when you're planning to pick up your car. Thank you. We appreciate your business."

IF NO: "Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When you pick up your car, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."

2. Selling Major Services By Telephone

"Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, this is (your name) with (shop name). I'm calling to give you an update on the work we are performing on your vehicle. We have completed/are completing (select one) the work you authorized. As you know, we require your authorization for any additional work.

I wanted to let you know that our system analysis uncovered a problem with your _____. If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you when you were in, I'll go over our findings with you. (Explain each applicable item of the analysis checklist.)

Because of the nature of this problem, we recommend that it be taken care of as soon as possible. I'll explain.

(Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON'T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

The parts and labor will be \$ _____. This would bring your total investment to \$ _____. This will require us to keep your car until _____. How would this work out for you?"

IF OKAY: "May I have your authorization to perform this work?" (OR: Since this work requires us to reschedule, I'm calling to see if you would like to schedule this work now.)

IF YES: "Great. Let me just confirm when you're planning to bring your car in for further work. Thank you. We appreciate your business."

IF NO: "Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When you pick up your car, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."

3. Selling Services In Person

When the customer has been waiting in your waiting room for the results of your analysis, use the Customer Communication Form and their vehicle for selling the services needed.

"Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, we've completed the analysis and safety inspection on your vehicle. If you'll please come with me, I'll go over our findings with you. (Escort the customer to their vehicle.)

Our system analysis procedure uncovered a problem with your _____. If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you earlier, I'll show you where the problems are. (Explain each applicable item of the analysis checklist. When you reach an item that needs service, show the customer the trouble spot on their vehicle.)

We recommend this procedure for resolving the problem.

(Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON'T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

The parts and labor will be \$ _____. This would bring your total investment to \$ _____. We do recommend getting this problem fixed while your vehicle is here.

May we have your authorization to perform this work?"

IF YES: "Great. This additional service will take an extra ___ minutes/hours. Do you still want to wait, or do you want to come back later for your car? Thank you. We appreciate your business."

If the customer is going to leave and return later for their vehicle, ask if they need assistance in getting somewhere while their car is being serviced.

It will be later this afternoon before we will be able to complete this additional service. May we offer you a ride to some place that will be more convenient to wait?

IF NO: "Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When your car is ready, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."

SELLING NON-REQUESTED SOLUTIONS

In the course of your analysis, there will be times customers need services they did not initially request. There are three circumstances when non-requested service needs may be discovered:

1. While analyzing the system related to the requested service work.
2. While performing service work.
3. While performing the safety inspection.

When non-requested needed services are discovered, you need to sell the customer on having the additional work performed in addition to the work related to their initial request.

When making the first call to the customer, both the requested-related and non-requested additional work are discussed in the same contact with the customer. BE SURE TO DISCUSS ANY ADDITIONAL WORK RELATED TO THE REQUESTED SERVICE FIRST.

Once the analysis is complete and the needed service work has been determined and estimated, contact the customer to explain the:

- Results of the analysis.
- Specific service work needed.
- Necessity or benefit of having the work performed.
- Cost of completing the work.

Once the customer understands fully the work that needs to be done, seek their approval to perform the work.

1. Selling Repairs for Other Problems Expressed By the Customer By Telephone.

FIRST SEEK THE CUSTOMER'S AUTHORIZATION FOR ANY SERVICES RELATED TO THE CUSTOMER'S ORIGINAL REQUEST.

Then:

"Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, we also analyzed the name problem you also brought up when you came in. I wanted to let you know that our system analysis uncovered a problem with your _____.

If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you when you were in, I'll go over our findings with you. (Explain each applicable item of the analysis checklist.)

We recommend this procedure for resolving the problem. (Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON'T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

The parts and labor will be \$_____. This amount plus the \$_____ for the work you've already authorized would bring your total investment to \$_____. May we have your authorization to perform this work also?"

(OR: "Since this work requires us to reschedule, I'm calling to see if you would like to schedule this work now.")

IF YES: "Great. Let me just confirm when you're planning to pick up your car (or bring your car in for further work). Thank you. We appreciate your business."

IF NO: "Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When you pick up your car, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."

2. Selling Safety Inspection Repairs By Telephone

FIRST SEEK THE CUSTOMER'S AUTHORIZATION FOR ANY SERVICES RELATED TO THE CUSTOMER'S ORIGINAL REQUEST.

Then:

"Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, I also wanted to let you know that during our safety inspection we uncovered a problem with your _____.

If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you when you were in, I'll go over our findings with you.

(Explain each item of the safety inspection.)

We recommend this procedure for resolving the problem.

When the customer asks you to look into a problem with a system other than the system of the originally requested work, be sure to give the customer BOTH CCFs and explain the analysis you will perform on both systems.

If a problem with a new system is discovered, fax the customer a new CCF.

(Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON'T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

The parts and labor will be \$_____. This amount plus the \$_____ for the work you've already authorized would bring your total investment to \$_____. May we have your authorization to perform this work also?" (OR: "Since this work requires us to reschedule, I'm calling to see if you would like to schedule this work now.")

IF YES: *"Great. Let me just confirm when you're planning to pick up your car (or bring your car in for further work). Thank you. We appreciate your business."*

IF NO: *"Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When you pick up your car, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."*

3. Selling Repairs for Other Problems In Person

When the customer has been waiting in your waiting room for the results of your analysis, use the Customer Communication Form and their vehicle for selling the services needed.

"Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____, we've completed the analysis and safety inspection on your vehicle. If you'll please come with me, I'll go over our findings with you."

(Escort the customer to their vehicle.)

FIRST SEEK THE CUSTOMER'S AUTHORIZATION FOR ANY SERVICES RELATED TO THE CUSTOMER'S ORIGINAL REQUEST. Then:

"Our system analysis also uncovered a problem with your _____. If you will look on the (name of system) Customer Communication Form I gave you, I'll show you where some additional problems are."

(Explain each applicable item of the analysis checklist. When you reach an item that needs service, show the customer the trouble spot on their vehicle.)

We recommend this procedure for resolving the problem.

(Explain procedure and reason why, and ask if the customer has any questions. DON'T GO INTO INVESTMENT UNTIL YOU KNOW THE CUSTOMER UNDERSTANDS.)

The parts and labor will be \$_____. This, along with the work you just approved, would bring your total investment to \$_____. We do recommend getting this problem fixed while your vehicle is here. May we have your authorization to perform this work?"

IF YES: *"Great. This additional service will take an extra ___ minutes/hours. Do you still want to wait, or do you want to come back later for your car? Thank you. We appreciate your business."*

If the customer is going to leave and return later for their vehicle, ask if they need assistance in getting somewhere while their car is being serviced.

"It will be later this afternoon before we will be able to complete this additional service. May we offer you a ride to some place that will be more convenient to wait?"

IF NO: *"Fine, Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____. When your car is ready, we'll include our evaluation of your car's current condition. Okay? Thank you. We appreciate your business."*

When your inspection reveals needed services that your shop does not perform, refer the customer to a reputable shop (or volunteer to contact the other shop on your customer's behalf).

Selling When Customers Bring In Their Own Parts

Occasionally, someone will come into your shop and ask you to install a part that they brought in. They typically do this because they can buy the part for less than you will charge them.

Some shops have a policy to never perform this type of work. Other shops do it in order to earn the labor revenue (many charge 1½ times their normal labor rate). The problem with this first approach is that it portrays a negative attitude and can turn away a potential good customer (if converted). The problem with the second approach is that all kinds of problems arise if there is a comeback. The following is a solution to both approaches:

Mrs. Jones declined having her water pump replaced when the Service Advisor called. Then, the next day, she comes into the shop with a water pump and says,

CUSTOMER: "I was here yesterday and you said I needed a water pump. I bought one from the parts store up the street and I'd like you to fix the water pump for me."

The Service Advisor takes a work order, opens a drawer, pulls out a rubber stamp that is 3 inches wide and 2 inches high with large red capital letters that says **NO WARRANTY** – and stamps the work order with a bang.

CUSTOMER: "Wait a minute. Don't you guarantee your work?"

SERVICE ADVISOR: "Yes, Mrs. Jones, I do guarantee my work – just as I explained to you yesterday on the phone."

CUSTOMER: "Then what do you mean by the 'NO WARRANTY' you just stamped?"

SERVICE ADVISOR: "Mrs. Jones, let's say I pull your car in and use this water pump that you brought to me. Let's say I install it and, though no fault of mine, the water pump you brought in is defective. As you drive home, the defective water pump let's go, the pump blade goes through the radiator and the air conditioning condensor and stalls you on the interstate.

Unfortunately what would happen, Mrs. Jones, is that you would probably be very irate and call me. I would then have to get a tow truck and have you towed in. If you provide the part, you would have to pay for that tow truck.

Then I would have to pull that defective part off, which you would also have to pay for – as well as the cost of repairing the radiator and air conditioning condensor. On top of that, you would have to pay for the installation of another water pump. Then, Mrs. Jones, you would have to take the defective water pump back to the store and start to do battle with them to not only get back the money for the water pump, but also to get them to pay for all the expenses you incurred as a result of the water pump being defective (my labor, the tow, the damage repairs, and the replacement labor).

Mrs. Jones, even though you can buy the part a little cheaper from the parts store, when I provide the part, it's like you're buying an insurance policy because if that part does fail, and all the things I described earlier did happen, I would pay for all of it – the tow bill, all the repairs, and replacement of the defective water pump."

Demonstrate the added value of doing business with you and price will no longer be an issue.

Business Improvement Assignment

Conduct training sessions with your Service Advisor(s).

Give your Service Advisor(s) a copy of the material on pages 1-6 and have them prepare for at least two 30-60 minute training sessions with you over the next 30 days.

In the first session, emphasize that the purposes of selling all needed repairs are to:

- Help customers maintain sound, safe, reliable vehicles at all times.

Every customer deserves to have their vehicles checked out as thoroughly as the Service Advisor or technician would want a car checked out that was going to be turned over to their teenage daughter or to a mother who would be transporting young children.

- Keep customers' vehicles properly maintained so that more expensive repairs are not needed later. (*"You can pay me now, or pay me later."*)

While no one wants to spend their discretionary money on auto repairs, most customers will appreciate the fact that you are not only keeping their vehicle "road-worthy," but also sparing them from major expenditures later.

- Spare the customer the hassle and inconvenience of having to make arrangements to bring in their vehicles more times than necessary.

Many customers do not like having to impose on friends or workmates to "get a lift" to and from the shop. When you take care of additional items while the vehicle is in the shop, you spare them having to make extra arrangements. This is often the case even when their vehicle must remain at the shop an extra day.

- Maximize each work order honestly and ethically.

Would you rather make \$1,000 on five cars or two cars? The overall performance of the shop will increase when all feasible work is completed while the vehicle is in the shop. The more vehicles in and out, the higher the amount of lost time (unbilled hours). For Service Advisors and/or technicians on some form of commission or incentive, maximizing each work order ETHICALLY and HONESTLY will increase their income.

Select some actual cases from your shop and have your Service Advisor(s) role-play selling customers on additionally needed work using the Customer Communication Form for your low and high ticket systems.

In the second session, pose as a customer with a problem or request in either a low or high ticket system and have your Service Advisor(s) role-play when you first come in with your car, then sell you additionally needed repairs based upon problems that were discovered during the safety inspection.

Let your Service Advisor(s) know that the next segment will cover how to "merchandise" customers' vehicles back to them to ensure customer satisfaction.

Conduct a shop meeting to review Segment 3 issues and review any shop issues that have come up in previous shop meetings.

Keep discussing ways to improve the performance of your shop. If assignments have been made to staff members, get reports on results and next steps to take (and by whom).

Continually seek ideas and input for shop and customer satisfaction improvements from your entire staff.

Review Quiz

Answers to quiz at the bottom of this page.

Volume 1, Segment 4

Circle Your Answers

1. When reviewing the results of your analysis and safety inspection, have the customer look at the Customer Communication Form.
A) True
B) False
2. Once the system analysis is complete, you:
A) Fix everything that's needed.
B) Contact the customer to explain the results of the analysis and inspection.
C) Wait until the customer comes in to pick up their vehicle to explain other work that's needed.
3. When selling additionally needed work with the same system as the originally requested work, you should lump the additional needed work and the originally requested work together before seeking authorization to perform the work.
A) True
B) False
4. When additional work is need to correct problems that have nothing to do with the requested work:
A) Sell any additional work related to requested work before trying to sell work related to non-requested items.
B) Sell all needed work together as a single job.
C) Only discuss non-requested item problems when the customer picks up the vehicle.
D) None of the above
E) All the above.
5. When customers bring in their own part, the best solution is to tell them to take their business elsewhere.
A) True
B) False

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- Complete the above quiz by circling your answers.
- Completely fill out the information below:(Please print. Information must be legible to receive credit)

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