

Hired Any Lazy Idiots Lately?

Ok Then, That Makes You Normal

By Ed Kovalchick

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I find simply observing processes to be quite constructive. Sometimes just stepping back and carefully viewing how methodology is being carried out, yields the discovery needed to solve agonizing evils – can be more effective than all the paper analysis four moderate-sized trees can create.

Take This Observation – Please

A rumpled and under-dressed customer service manager (advisor to most of you), is slumped in his crumbly brown seat behind a four-foot long, tattered service counter littered with various repair order components, mini notes, loose keys, bitten pens, and used nose hairs.

Behind this meager desk are two partially gray, bent up repair order racks hanging precariously loose by four metal screws barely grasping an ancient dry-wall – it was obvious that a least two had been yanked out of their hold previously, as demonstrated by the bowed corners representing the bottoms. Papers of sorts hung from slots, some inside some not, creating the look a Christmas decoration gone bad and a few had managed to escape to the dirty floor below, where they lavished with imprinted boot footprints.

The immediate walls contained a non-working electric clock with the plug wire hanging down, oddly swinging like a pendulum in the slight breeze. The classic “Don’t Enter Here Or You Will Be Shot” sign gave the customers plenty of warning about what might be going on in the dark and dirty cave inside the doorway where their cars were shuffled out of sight. A slight odor of burned coffee mixed with parts washing fluid was clearly evident, probably emanating from the T-shirted, hat backwards, tattooed, and chin haired technician waiting for another slam dunk customer job.

Stop Already

Would you hire these employees? Absolutely not you say. Well, someone did and I have witnessed this and other wretched scenes which, frankly, saved me from growing a unibrow. These losers sure don’t belong near customer service and frankly they represent the antithesis of the description. Unfortunately, hiring is complicated and time-consuming task for which few dealership manager have the time to do correctly.

And it must be said that little, if any, training is provided / available to help guide a department manager in assuring a proper hire, although almost any employee can be responsible for driving dozens and even hundreds of customers to or from the business. Many hires are done on the “I like you” or “I don’t like you” basis, along with the famous manager’s prayer “*Please God let this one work out.*”

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An Inexpensive Solution

I recently discovered a jewel of a booklet titled “Finders Keepers”, a straight forward guide for finding and keeping dealership employees. Included are dealership stories outlining some “don’t do this” techniques (you will recognize them right away – I did), and more importantly “to do” guides along with forms, word tracks, and thorough, yet simple, instructions.

There are multiple sections, including how to assess current employee perceptions, complete with a tactful Employee Opinion Survey, and an interesting and informative chapter demonstrating techniques for attracting viable job candidates, which I found to contain an excellent list of “dos” and “don’ts”, and again I recognized more in the dang “don’t” category.

Where Am I?

A needed chapter outlines in exact terms what is needed for employee orientation. I guess pointing and saying “*You work there. If you need something, see someone else*” isn’t enough these days. Life can be so complicated.

One portion features poignant guidance for on-going management of employee performance, and throughout there are easy-to-use lists and forms keeping all these important tasks simple. The entire workbook is only 85 pages and an easy read as well as an invaluable resource.

Ms Wendi Venable, a long-time automotive professional, is the author / master of this needed information and she told me this meaty gem is available for only \$35 from her company HireRite – phone 1877 -579 – 4473 toll free. I don’t endorse much, but when the right thing comes along for my peeps, gotta share it. One of the few things worth more than it costs these days.

Ed Kovalchick is the CEO and founder of Net Profit Inc., Alabaster, AL, an international fixed operation consulting and training firm located in Alabaster AL. Mr. Kovalchick and his firm have assisted hundreds of dealers and manufacturers, and conducted workshops for thousands of students since 1979. He has written columns for Dealer Magazine since its inception. Reach him at ekovalchick@dealer-magazine.com.

Call Out:

“Please God let this one work out.”