



THE DRIVEWAY INSPECTION





The Learning Outcomes of this Module Are:

1. Understanding the importance of the Driveway Inspection
2. Why you need to systemise the driveway inspection
3. How to gamify the process to get your whole team on board

Welcome back!

In the last module we improved your confidence to ask for permission from the customer to do extra work, which is carefully disguised as selling!

Now it's time to increase your likelihood of having additional items to sell, by introducing you to "The Driveway Inspection".

A long time favourite in dealerships, especially in the USA, the driveway inspection can become the single most powerful tool you have for gaining Early consent for extra work, and for improving your bottom line.

1. It gives you the opportunity to quickly reacquaint yourself with the returning customer, or introduce yourself and begin to build rapport with your first time customer. As the driveway inspection occurs after the initial meet and greet at the front counter, you are adding an extra layer to your customer service delivery.
2. It gives you the opportunity to quickly identify additional work needed with the customer present as you walk around the vehicle with them...You can gain consent here and order the parts required so that the job can begin as soon as possible. No waiting til the car is inside the workshop and up on a hoist (all though you may discover further additional items once you get to that). Where a customer can see for themselves that their tyres are worn to the wire, or that their wiper blades are past their use by date, they are more likely to agree with your recommendations for replacement.
3. Because you can get consent on the spot, your processes become more efficient. With a few additional procedures put in place, you will find work is done quicker, without any decline in quality.

So how do you implement driveway inspections into your auto repair business without adding just another job to your workload, making you feel even more overwhelmed?

The answer is first to identify who is best to take on this vital responsibility...if you are a solo operator, of course it has to be you. Please do not just assume that you don't have time to do it. Would you like to tell the customer that you don't have time to properly check over their car and ensure that it is as safe on the road as possible?

I'm pretty sure if you did that you would notice a gradual decline in your turnover, as your customers go off to find someone that does have the time.

It's important to remember here that you can actually increase your profit with driveway inspections alone, and without attracting a single new customer to your business.

Maximise the results on the vehicles that are already coming to you first, and see what a difference it makes.

If you have a team of talent onboard, you can delegate the driveway inspection responsibility to your second in charge, person in a "service advisor" type role, or to another mechanic who you believe has excellent attention to detail, and is confident to talk to customers.

How can you quickly implement the process?

The great news is, you can start today, right now in fact....all you need to do is follow the simple procedure below (I recommend using this procedure as your own and adding it to your operations manual, modifying where necessary for your particular business..

We also need your Driveway Inspection Checklist...you will find that as an attachment with the module. It is a guide only, and can be modified to suit your auto repair business in any way you like.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE – THE DRIVEWAY INSPECTION (WALK-AROUND)

01

PURPOSE

To easily and efficiently identify the need for additional work on a customers' vehicle while they customer is still at the workshop.

This standard operating procedure (SOP) provides advice on how to deliver a driveway inspection and gain consent for any additional work.

02

SCOPE

The driveway inspection applies to all inbound vehicles booked in for service or repairs. This standard operating procedure applies to...

The mechanic in charge/service advisor
Decision Maker: Your Name
Action Taker: Bob Smith
Procedure

THE “WALK AROUND” PROCESS

Customer is greeted at reception. After customer identification, the driveway inspector picks up the job card or repair order (RO) along with the driveway inspection checklist, and confirms what they are coming in for, or the “Prime Item”.

Next, we ask if there was anything else they might have noticed on their way into the workshop today that they may want us to look at. The next step is to ask the customer how many kilometres are on the vehicle to get the customer “engaged” with the process.

We do not want to start recording the vehicle identification number, or ask the customer to “Pop the Hood” before creating the relationship which is crucial to the “Meet and Greet” Process.

The next step is to perform a light check with the customer by advising them to step on the brake, turn the key to the on position, turn their lights on and put the car in reverse. This sets up the “Walk Around” starting at the left front door. Then, we make our way to the rear looking for any body or wheel damage, engaging the customer in casual conversation as we proceed.

Once we are at the rear of the vehicle, look for any signage, bumper stickers, roof racks, or a tow ball so we can find some commonality to talk about with the customer. Next, we record our findings, such as inoperative bulbs, most common are number plate or brake lamp bulbs.

I strongly recommend not to advise a customer you’re walking around the vehicle to inspect for damage. If you find some damage let them know at that time in a positive manner of awareness. A nicer way to refer to damage might be “bruises and bumps”. If no damage is noticed, no further words need to be said.

Then proceed to the front of the vehicle again looking for damage. Once there, ask the customer to turn on the high beams and quite honestly, many times you will find that the customer doesn’t even know how to turn them on. This is a great time to start some conversation and continue to build a strong relationship.

The next step is optional, based on how the inspector “reads” the customer and how they are responding to the “Walk Around” Process to this point. Ask them to “Pop the Hood” and join you while you perform the “Vital Fluids” Evaluation.

It’s also very important not to say negative things during this fluid evaluation that contain the words “burnt, dirty, poor smell” and so on. Approaching this fluid evaluation with negative words may lead to a negative outcome.

HAVING NOTED ALL ITEMS WHICH MAY REQUIRE ATTENTION, DISCUSS NOW WITH THE CUSTOMER

When the “Walk Around” is complete, have the customer join you back at your write up area. This is the time to review the prime item(s), maintenance needs based on time or kilometres reviewing each item with a one “Package Price”. Lastly, confirm all operations and completion time and don’t make the mistake of pricing out each item individually as it will confuse the customer and kill the sale.

Have the customer review the job card or RO to make sure all contact information is correct. The number one thing a customer is waiting to hear is when the vehicle will be completed. If you forget to update the customer throughout the day, they WILL call to ask “What’s up with my car?” At this point, the customer trust factor is in trouble.

The best way to have a customer say “Yes” to the additional work is to build a relationship through trust, without fancy closing scripts.

At this point, all you need to do is ask for the sale. “Mr./Ms. Customer, the total price is \$369.95 .I can have it done by 3:00 PM. All I need is your “OK” (Sign) to get started”.

Nothing else needs to be said until the customer has responded. The more you speak at this time, the less chance you will have to complete the sale.

If you have provided enough value in your presentation, the customer will purchase. If the customer decides not to buy, then ask why because they will tell you. Once they tell you, you can now provide “new” information to close the sale.

Now that you have had the opportunity to read of the process a few times, and potentially have shared it with a key team member, it's time to think about how you can engage either yourself, and/or your team in this process long term.

I guarantee that your number one stumbling block with this process becoming ingrained in your business will be you thinking you don't have time to follow it when you get busy.

So just stop right there and think about that....Really? You don't have time to fully inspect a vehicle to

1. Ensure the customer is aware of all potential hazards
2. Earn more money?

Having no time is a symptom of production and efficiency problems which can easily be solved with proper systemization, which we cover that in my 8-week online program "Auto Superstars Academy" and my 12 month program "The Engine Room". If you need help with that, please reach out.

For now, let's get back to how to get your team onboard. I recommend implementing a program called "The Upsellathon"

The rules are simple, and of course you can modify them to suit your business. Here are the general guidelines, assuming that the person doing the driveway inspection is also working on the tools.

1. Team members accrue points for each item they sell above what the vehicle was booked in for (the Prime Item).
2. The points tally can be kept by the person on your team who does the invoices. An example tally sheet follows this list.
3. Team members can earn bonus points for items you would like to focus on for the week/month/quarter. Eg: EGR Service, Cabin Filter, Wheel Alignment. You might assign 2 points to those instead of 1.
4. The driveway inspector earns a point for each item he sells, but so does the technician who will work on that vehicle (to keep it fair). Anything additional the technician then finds and sells are his points only.
5. The team member with the most points at the end of the designated period (week/month/quarter), wins the choice of 3 prize envelopes. To get you started I recommend 1-2 weeks of a weekly competition, then transition to monthly. The envelopes can contain prizes to a value of anything you like, however, do put some thought into it....the weekly prizes might include \$100 cash, a voucher for a night away, a giftcard for a Gold Class movie experience, etc.
6. The prizes should remain a surprise until the winning team member opens the envelope. For monthly prizes you could up the ante a little.
7. The idea is not to have your team think you are now paying them extra just to do their job, it is to encourage the spirit of competition.

8. When having your prize ceremony (I recommend a Friday afternoon after the last customer has picked up their vehicle), put some music on, offer some refreshments, and make a little party of it. Really acknowledge everyone's effort's, particularly the prize winner.

Day/Tech	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Jack						
James						
Michael						
Amanda						
Fred						
Mark						

So there you have it.....

You now have everything you need to launch your new sales strategy straight into your everyday operations in your auto repair business.

If there are any doubts in your mind as to how successful this will be, let me put those at ease.

This is not a strategy that will only work in certain auto repair businesses. It will work in all of them. Even if you are an Auto Electrician, you can still do a walk around inspection and point out the relevant items to your customer.

If you are a solo operator, you can also still implement the inspection. I'm sure you'll soon wish to hire an extra hand to cope with the additional work though!

The difference implementing this strategy has made to my workshop is nothing short of remarkable. You will straight away notice just how much quicker you build a rapport with your customer, and by pointing out the need for additional items, by how much your average sale improves.

If you think that asking the customer questions about the car while they are checking in at the front counter is enough, you are WRONG. The driveway inspection is ESSENTIAL

Your team will amaze you with the spirit of competition, should you decide to run The Upsellathon.

Don't be afraid, jump straight in there!