Recruiting and Retaining an Automotive Service Technician
Introduction and Contents

A Successful Service Department = A Successful Dealership

An Automotive Service Technician is an important part of a dealership. Technicians interface directly with your customers, who return for service based on their positive experience and interactions with the service department. There are direct benefits of intentionally building and investing in your future workforce. It’s the most cost-effective way to build your dealership. Remember, your workforce defines your success.

The more you are involved, the more you can affect how you recruit, hire and mentor technicians to ensure success. By offering internship and paid co-operative work placement opportunities, you can “test drive” your prospective new employees. Consider partnering an experienced technician with your new hire to polish their skills. Remember, prospective employees are assessing you as an employer as well.

Your involvement is essential to ensure successful service department staffing.

How Do I Attract Technicians?

By offering benefits and growth opportunities, you will attract higher potential candidates.

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Where Do I look for Technicians?

Choose methods and places to look for high potential technicians.

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How Do I Retain Technicians?

You have the power to build a strong relationship that will go a long way towards assuring employee loyalty.

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How Do I Attract Technicians?

**Competitive Wages / Benefits**

What is the current rate for minimum wage? What are competitive dealership and fleet shops paying? What are retail establishments like a local hardware store or fast food restaurant paying?

Consider that graduates of automotive technician programs have invested 1-2 years and a significant amount of money, so the starting salary they expect to receive should be well above minimum wage. Minimum wage could be appropriate pay for co-op students or interns who are working for you while attending school.

In addition to a competitive salary, prospective employees are looking for a comprehensive benefits package. This includes a healthcare plan, vacation time, retirement benefits, life and disability insurance, regular appraisals and pay raises. Offering competitive pay and benefits will not only help you attract the best technicians, it will also help you retain them.

**Tuition Reimbursement**

Paying for school is one of the biggest challenges faced by students, so they appreciate and truly value an employer who is willing to help fund their education. They’re also more likely to be loyal and highly engaged in your business if tuition assistance is provided.

You can go about this in several ways. Here are some suggestions:

- Contribute to monthly student loans for a specified amount of time during their employment with you
- Reimburse student loan payment on a yearly basis
- Reward a tuition reimbursement flat amount based on performance reviews
  - It is wise to develop an agreement form to establish amount and timeline
  - Cut as a separate check or pay the school directly

**Tool Starter Kit or Reimbursement**

An appropriate set of tools requires a large investment. This can be a daunting task. Consider offering some form of financial assistance to help new technicians entering the field.

There are numerous ways to offer assistance:

- Offer a set of tools as a sign-on incentive or after a specified amount of time that they are employed with you
- Provide a starter set of tools and deduct a specified amount from their paycheck until it is paid off

Many suppliers provide tools at a discount while the student is still in school.
Relocation and Housing Assistance

Moving away from home is a big step—both emotionally and financially. Expenses add up quickly. Offering to help pay for some of these costs is a great way to attract the top talent.

Examples of costs to reimburse are:
- A specified portion or all of the moving expenses
- House-hunting trips for employee and spouse
- Temporary housing at new location

Local Attractions

If your community offers attractions such as watersports, hunting, or other activities, consider highlighting these types of things, as it would aid in attracting potential candidates.

Signing Bonus

Signing bonuses are one-time payments given when an employee begins a new job. Signing bonuses are commonly used in fields where the demand is strong. There is a lot of competition for technicians in today's environment, so this is an option worth considering.

UTI Hiring Incentive Team

Our partner, Universal Technical Institute (UTI), would like to help you gain the edge in recruiting, hiring and retaining the top talent graduating from the Ford FACT program. The Ford dedicated employment team at UTI's Home Office can help you to establish a dealer specific program.

They will:
- Provide individualized assistance in developing a comprehensive hiring package to attract top talent
- Actively market your dealership at their nationwide network of campuses
- Provide access to local campuses for you to conduct interviews

Attract the best by contacting UTI's Hiring Incentive Team at 855 750-9308 or at HiringIncentiveTeam@uti.edu
Search for Candidates Online

First and foremost, you can use this private network to find profiles of current and future graduates in your area: NewFordTech.com. Click on Technician Locator.

Post Job Openings using Technician Talent Network

Post a job opening that can be accessed by our network of over 1,000 trained students across the country: NewFordTech.com. Click on , then click Post Job Opening.

Posting Online- What NOT To Do

The above example is clearly vague and non-descriptive. It is important to include a salary range and describe the benefits of working at your dealership. Sharing information about local attractions will also draw a larger range of graduates and potential candidates who might be looking to relocate.

Position details should include examples of expected job duties and requirements.

See the next page (5) for an example of a thorough and well-written job posting.
General Service Technician

**About the Dealership**
Want to earn a competitive wage, yet live in a small town with world-class fishing, hunting, and outdoor opportunities? We are a fast growing Ford dealership looking for Automotive Service Technicians.

We have multiple employees with 15+ years at our dealership ready to help you excel and grow in a team oriented environment. We will even help fund your ongoing training.

**Position Details**
- Diagnose, inspect and test vehicle systems including engine, transmission, electrical, steering, suspension, brakes, shock and strut replacements, air conditioning, etc.
- Perform work specified on maintenance and repair orders with efficiency and in accordance with dealership standards
- Provide labor and time estimates for additional automotive repairs; complete necessary paperwork and documentation
- Explain mechanical diagnosis and required repairs in non-technical manner to service advisors and customers
- Inspect and test new vehicles and record findings so that necessary repairs can be made
- Perform safety inspections and perform light maintenance such as lube, oil change and filter service
- Perform fluid exchanges including brake, coolant, power steering and transmission
- Maintain inventory of required hand tools
- Continue ongoing company and manufacturing training to stay current with changing technology and new vehicle models

**Benefits**
- 401K, Paid Vacation, Medical, and Dental
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Tool Starter Kit and Reimbursement
- Relocation and Housing Assistance
- Signing Bonus

**Requirements for Position**
- Experienced and aware of latest automotive technologies
- Working knowledge of shop equipment such as wheel and tire, alignment, A/C and diagnostic equipment
- Problem solver, team oriented, flexible, high energy
- Skilled in customer service
- Valid driver’s license
- Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification a plus
- Ford certified credentialing a plus

**How to Apply**
- Email resume to John Smith at john.smith@xyzford.com
Where Do I Look for Technicians?

Reach Out to High Schools and Colleges

Build a relationship with local high schools and colleges that offer automotive technology classes. We recommend NATEF certified schools: [www.natef.org](http://www.natef.org)

- Contact these schools to find out if they have Career Day events
  - Send a representative from your dealership to talk about the benefits of becoming an Automotive Service Technician
- Offer summer work, co-op, internship, or apprenticeship programs
- Become a member of a school’s Automotive Advisory Board
- Donate vehicles or components to schools to help build the relationship
- Connect with automotive technology instructors to promote benefits of working for a Ford/Lincoln dealership
  - Offer to host a student technician career information day at your dealership
  - Distribute brochures and flyers - see samples below

Attract students to YOUR dealership

Our preferred vendor will customize these templates by inserting your contact information and a photo of your dealership.


Prepare for a Career Fair Event

Not sure what to expect from a career fair event?
Unclear about how to prepare and what to bring to the event?
Choose our Ford Technical Career Entry Program (TCEP) Graduates

Ford Motor Company is doing its part by training future technicians through one of our Technical Career Entry Programs.

Schools within the Ford Technical Career Entry Program deliver the Service Technician Specialty Training (STST) credentials that Ford and Lincoln dealerships require.

The extensive training and certifications earned prepare students for the complex systems and vehicle functions they will encounter in the workforce.

How long does it take them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>They spend 1 year gaining general automotive knowledge followed by a 15 week capstone course focusing on Ford curriculum.</th>
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What do they learn?

| | • Gasoline Engine Repair and Performance  
• Steering & Suspension  
• Electrical Systems  
• Climate Control  
• Manual Transmission  
• Automatic Transmission  
• Brake Systems  
• Diesel Engine Repair and Performance  
• New Model Training |
| --- | --- |

| | • Gasoline Engine Repair and Performance  
• Steering & Suspension  
• Electrical Systems  
• Climate Control  
• Brake Systems  
• Diesel Engine Repair and Performance  
• New Model Training |
| --- | --- |

| | • Steering & Suspension  
• Electrical Systems  
• Climate Control  
• Brake Systems |
| --- | --- |

What do they earn?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>An Associate's Degree in Automotive Technology and up to 100% of Ford's Service Technician Specialty Training.</th>
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<tr>
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<th>An Auto Tech Certificate and up to 70% of Ford’s Service Technician Specialty Training.</th>
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How Do I Prepare for an Interview?

Be Prepared with Questions

Asking the right questions at a recruiting event or during the interview process will help you find the best candidates.

Be sure to have questions prepared to draw out skills required for the specific position, with questions for topics around:

- Customer service and relationship building
- Effective communication
- Problem resolution
- Teambuilding and working with others
- Ability to make quick decisions
- Motivation
- Self-improvement and desire for growth

Allow candidates to ask questions as well so they have the opportunity to assess the benefits of working at your dealership. Ensure you are prepared to answer questions about the dealership's benefits package and career advancement opportunities. It will help for both sides to understand expectations.
How Do I Retain Technicians?

Recognition Incentives

Recognizing the efforts of employees goes a long way. Listening to their ideas results in commitment, and a strong team.

Examples of methods to reward employees are:
- Give verbal recognition at team meetings
- Display technician’s name, title and level of certification in their work area
- Distribute certificates and awards
- Give them Ford/Lincoln promotional items
- Offer financial bonuses

Mentorship Programs

Having a mentor during the first few months will be critical to the success of a new technician.

Suggestions are:
- Choose a senior level technician to mentor and guide him/her
- Establish a training plan
- Treat each with appreciation and keep communication open to build a strong relationship
- Develop a plan to measure expected outcomes and success
- Have their mentor be an active listener
- Be dedicated to the success of both of them
- Let them step outside of their comfort zone
- Have their mentor evaluate progress daily or weekly

Incremental Raises and Promotions

Yearly raises are a rewarding way to retain technicians. Promotions to reward hard work feel incredible.

Offer a Solid Career Path

A technician is extremely valuable in a dealership. They have direct interaction with customers who rely on their advice for safe running vehicles.

Be sure to offer them growth opportunities, and a stable and lucrative career path they can work towards. For them, the potential to earn a six-figure salary is attainable and motivating.
Tuition Reimbursement Agreement

Employee Name: ___________________________ David DeAngelo
Department: _______________________________ Service
Title: ________________________________ General Service Technician
Title Code and Pay Grade: _______________ AGS2
Hiring manager’s Name: _______________ Terry Gallagher

XYZ Ford is pleased to reimburse student loan payments of $250 per month up to a total of $9,000 for tuition expenses incurred for Automotive Service Technician Training. These payments will be paid in a separate check and will begin after successfully completing a 90-day employment review period.

Tuition payments are taxable, and all regular payroll taxes will be withheld. In the event that you leave XYZ Ford within 39 months of your hire date, all future payments will cease.

_______________________________ ____________
David DeAngelo
Employee Signature Date

_______________________________ ____________
Terry Gallagher
Hiring Manager Date

XYZ Ford
555 86th Street
Brooklyn, NY  11228

877 808-0000
877 804-0000
www.xyzford.com
Tool Starter Kit Agreement

Employee Name: _____________________________ Sean Wriy
Department: ______________________________ Service
Title: _________________________________ General Service Technician
Title Code and Pay Grade: _______________ AGS2
Hiring manager’s Name: ________________ James Branson

XYZ Ford agrees to gift a complete set of tools to Sean Wriy upon his first day of new hire orientation. The complete set will remain the property of XYZ Ford until after you have completed 12 months of employment at our dealership. The tool box is valued at $1,200.

______________________________  ______________
Employee Signature             Date

______________________________  ______________
Terry Gallagher                Date

XYZ Ford
555 86th Street
Brooklyn, NY  11228

877 808-0000
877 804-0000
www.xyzford.com
Tool Reimbursement Agreement

Employee Name: Marty Johnson  
Department: Service  
Title: General Service Technician  
Title Code and Pay Grade: AGS2  
Hiring manager’s Name: Peter Smith

XYZ Ford agrees to reimburse Marty Johnson for tooling expenses incurred while working as an Automotive Service Technician at XYZ Ford. We agree to reimburse $100 per month for up to 12 months during employment with our dealership. These payments will be paid in a separate check and will begin after successfully completing a 90-day employment review period. Tool reimbursement payments are taxable, and all regular payroll taxes will be withheld.

Marty Johnson  
Employee Signature  
1/11/16  
Date

Peter Smith  
Hiring Manager  
1/11/16  
Date

XYZ Ford  
555 86th Street  
Brooklyn, NY  11228  
877 808-0000  
877 804-0000  
www.xyzford.com
Relocation Reimbursement Agreement

Employee Name: Chris Smith
Department: Service
Title: General Service Technician
Title Code and Pay Grade: AGS2
Hiring manager’s Name: Tony Anderson

XYZ Ford is pleased to offer relocation reimbursement of up to $3,000. Upon submission of receipts, the reimbursement will be paid in one lump sum in a separate check on the next regularly scheduled pay date. The relocation reimbursement is taxable, and all regular payroll taxes will be withheld.

Chris Smith 1/11/16
Employee Signature Date

Tony Anderson 1/11/16
Hiring Manager Date

XYZ Ford
555 86th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11228

877 808-0000
877 804-0000
www.xyzford.com
XYZ Ford is pleased to offer you a signing bonus of $1,000. This bonus will be paid in one lump sum in a separate check on the next regularly scheduled pay date after you start employment at XYZ Ford. The signing bonus is taxable, and all regular payroll taxes will be withheld. In the event that you leave XYZ Ford within 12 months of your hire date, you will be responsible for reimbursing the company for the entire signing bonus.

By signing this agreement, you authorize the company to withhold this amount ($1,000) from any final pay you receive upon early termination of employment.

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**Diego Smith**

Employee Signature

1/11/16

**James Bellingham**

Hiring Manager

1/11/16

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XYZ Ford
555 86th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11228

877 808-0000
877 804-0000
www.xyzford.com
“We value our Technicians”
XYZ Ford was founded by Bob Smith in 1967 to provide quality Ford vehicles to the area. Mr. Smith started his career in the car business fixing cars, and our technicians and service staff have been a main pillar of our business ever since.

The Company
Established in 1967
#1 volume dealer in the Springfield area
Air-conditioned shop featuring 35 service bays and state-of-the-art equipment

The Package
Tuition Reimbursement: $500/month for 6 months, beginning after 90 days of employment

Tool Voucher: $1,000 tool voucher after 90 days. Additional $1,000 vouchers available based on completion of Ford certifications.

Relocation: Up to $2,000 in relocation assistance available based on need. For candidates not requiring tuition reimbursement, XYZ Ford offers $1,000 retention bonuses for the first 4 years.

The Conditions
Completion of the UTI Automotive, Diesel or Auto/Diesel program and in good standing with UTI completion of the Ford FACT Advanced Training.

Attendance requirement: 95%
Professionalism requirement: 97%

Incentive programs and employee eligibility are at the discretion of the employer and available at select locations. Special conditions may apply. For specific incentive package details, please direct your questions to the employer. XYZ Ford cannot guarantee employment or salary.

XYZ Ford 877 808-0000
555 86th Street 877 804-0000
Brooklyn, NY 11228 www.xyzford.com
Asking the right questions at a recruiting event or during the interview process will help you find the best candidates.

**Basic**

- What attracted you to this dealership?
- Why did you choose this field?
- What were the responsibilities of your last position?
- Give examples of ideas you've had or implemented.
- What techniques and tools do you use to keep yourself organized?
- Tell me about your proudest achievement.
- Give an example of an important goal that you set in the past.
  - Talk about your success in reaching it.
- What are three positive things your last boss or co-worker would say about you?
- Give an example of something that you’ve been told you could improve upon.
- What's the most important thing you learned in school?
- If you were interviewing someone for this position, what traits would you look for?
- Where would you like to be in your career five years from now?

**Behavioral**

- Give me an example of how you led a team.
- Give me an example of a time that you felt you went above and beyond the call of duty at work.
- Have you ever been on a team where someone was not pulling their own weight? How did you handle it?
- How do you handle working with people who annoy you?
- If I were your supervisor and asked you to do something that you disagreed with, what would you do?
- What assignment was too difficult for you, and how did you resolve the issue?
- Describe how you would handle a situation if you were required to finish multiple tasks by the end of the day, and there was no conceivable way that you could finish them.
Customer interaction

• Give a specific example of a time when you had to address an unsatisfied customer.
  - What was the problem and what was the outcome?
  - How would you assess your role in defusing the situation?
  - What if anything would you have done differently?

Communication

• Tell me about a time you had to explain a complex technical problem to a person who did not understand technical jargon?
• Alternative: Give the interviewee a specific technical problem and ask him/her to explain it to you.
• Keeping others informed of your assignments helps them feel comfortable. Describe your methods for keeping your supervisor advised of the status on assignments.

Technical

• Tell me about a time you had a complex technical problem to diagnose.
  - How did you go about it?
  - What resources did you use?
Remember ... the millennial generation comes with unique skills - a combination of technical, computing, and automotive knowledge.