

# Departmental Action Plan

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Academy Week (Var II): 5

## Improving Appointment Shown and Sold for Outbound Calls:

When I returned from NADA School, I immediately made it mandatory for all Sales Managers to listen to all outbound sales calls for the month of November. I also had them listen to Jennifer Suzuki's Selling Through Conversation videos to help them understand what we would be training on over the next two weeks with our sales staff going forward. My challenge to our team, is to improve our salesmans confidence and verbiage on outbound sales calls. By the end of our training, we will get a higher percentage of customers showing up to their appointments by using the Jennifer Suzuki experience. From January 1, 2019 through November 19, 2019 we averaged 51% appointments shown from outbound calls with a 10% close rate using our current Applied Concepts phone training.

## Overall Objective and Specific Desired Results

On November 20, 2019 I had my Sales Managers separate our thirteen-floor salesman and five internet salesman into three teams. I had my Sales Managers train our sales staff for two weeks on how Jennifer Suzuki builds value over the phone while meeting the customer expectations with professional service. Our goal is to increase our outbound call show rate by 6% to 57% and our close rate by 5% to increase to 15% by December 31, 2019.

To accomplish these results, we will teach our salesman to:

1. Actively manage calls from the very beginning
2. Avoid price and availability questions
3. Emphasize time savings
4. Invite the customer to a pre-set meeting for their appointment (offer two dates and two times when trying to schedule the appointment for a specific time)
5. If the customer doesn't commit to an appointment because they have to check with a spouse. Confirm their email and send them an email in one hour letting them know you will follow up to set up a tentative time
6. Make sure the customer knows how to get to our location
7. Salesman offers their phone number before asking for the customers cell number

8. Ask customer if it is ok to text them. If customer is ok with text. Send them your information by text
9. Remind the customer before hanging up with them about all of the actions you promised
  - a. Car prepared in advance
  - b. Appraiser scheduled (if needed)
  - c. Teammate Greeter (if needed)
  - d. Walk through online credit application if necessary
  - e. Explain to our customers that their paperwork will be ready and waiting
10. Request that the customer call us when they are on the way to the scheduled appointment (creates a warm and fuzzy feeling knowing customers are on their way \$\$\$)
11. Let the customer know we will meet them at car. The vehicle will be cozy, gassed and ready to go

## Describe your action plan in detail (be specific and include before and after measurements)

My action plan started with listening to outbound sales calls with all my sales managers. I had to get them to understand that there is a better way of handling outbound phone calls than what we were currently using with our current company called Applied Concepts. We've had really good success with applied concepts training. However, our current Applied Concepts training didn't control the conversation as well as Jennifer Suzuki's "Selling through Conversation" training. The feedback and the expressions on my managers face while listening to calls is all I needed to see to get them to buy into this new training I wanted to start.

The first action plan was to have our salespeople write down issues they were having when trying to set appointments while making outbound calls. Majority of the issues our salesman wrote down was customers only wanting price and availability before

committing to an appointment. My sales managers noticed after listening to calls with salesman is that the customer had too much control.

Our second action plan was to work on our outbound call scripts. Instead of making the salesman stick to one main script. We had our salespeople comfortably add to Jennifer Suzuki's wording and work one on one with a dedicated manager to make some great additions. After tweaking their scripts. Now it was time to work on their tone over the phone. We wanted our salesman to not be easy going but not be pushy also. We also reminded our salesman the importance of listening and adapting to the customers hot buttons based on the lead source.

Next we trained on the five elements to incorporate in our outbound phone call introductions.

1. Confirm who you are speaking with
2. Identify who you are
3. Why we are calling
4. Confirm vehicle of interest
5. Transition with one answer response questions

Now that our salesman were comfortable with scripts and introductions. We trained on explaining the time saving benefits and delivering on our promise. We wanted our salesman to really set our store apart with making sure the customer knew that the car they interested in would be prepared and ready. If there is a trade involved, we will have an appraiser scheduled and ready. If the customer brings up that they have negative credit. We will walk them through an online credit application. If we have a sophisticated customer that is ready to buy, explain that the car will be detailed, paperwork will be ready, financing will be prepared, and we promise to get you delivered in your new car in sixty minutes or less.

Next we wanted to train on how to handle objections. Sometimes our salespeople get flustered, frustrated, and tend to struggle. Our fix for handling objections, was to role-play every day until we were comfortable with our scripts and benefits to our potential customers. We mainly focused on not putting customers on hold, transitioning phrases, and not having dead silence throughout the call. Transitioning phrases, such as I'm writing this down and then getting right back into the script. We also worked on trying not to sound like a salesperson on calls. We trained on our salesman being a customer service representative and to keep the conversation going until we set the appointment. Once the appointment was set, we trained on how to make sure the customer had no doubt in who they would work with once they arrived. We also wanted to make sure our customer knew how to get to our location. To do this, we trained on asking the customer if we could email and text them our information. If the customer was ok with this, we immediately respond with a text and email with directions to our location along with our

personal information. In the text and email we trained our salesman to also include the exact time and vehicle of interest we agreed upon.

Our final training that would truly increase our show and close rate, was to work on getting the customer to call or text us before showing up to their appointment.

Timeline: November 20, 2019 - December 31, 2019

## Results:

After two weeks of training and almost a month of monitoring this new process. We have improved our appointment show rate from 51% to 58% and our appointment close rate from 10% to 17%! Great job by our staff we hit our goal before the New Year!

### **Meeting with Stake holders (dealership personnel)**

- a. Who: Sales Managers with all Sales staff**
- b. What: Improve our outbound calls**
- c. By When: December 31, 2019**
- d. How: Train on the Jennifer Suzuki “Selling through Conversation”**

**My Sponsor is excited about the percentage increases for our teams outbound calls using the Suzuki training. It wasn't necessary for him to sign my before or after-action plan improvements.**