Written by Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor
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Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor The key to performing a successful, professional job in any walk of life has long been attributed to three simple rules: preparation, quality work and clean-up. If you ever have had contractors perform work in your home, those most likely to receive your recommendation for future work typically would have followed these rules. But, if you were to rate the best of the best, the winner would probably be the one who showed the most favorable disposition—toward the job and the customer. As human beings, we simply tend to gravitate in the direction of people who are both competent and easy to get along with. Consider the following example.

Like most car owners, I have taken my vehicles to a variety of garages and dealerships for maintenance work over the years. Yet, none have ever surpassed a particular Chrysler dealership I frequented well before “customer satisfaction” became an abused mantra. There, I was fortunate to have my vehicle worked on by a mechanic named Ed, who proved to be highly competent at repairing all makes of vehicles. Ed never had a vehicle returned for poor workmanship.

What made Ed special above all else was his disposition—he cared and it showed.

For a simple oil change, Ed would clean the valve cover before filling with oil and always use a fender cover to ensure that the paint was kept clean during the process. To top the job off, he would fill up the windshield wash jar, dust the car’s dashboard, shake off dirt from the floor mats and empty the ashtrays—all on his own time and cost.

On his own volition, Ed also had negotiated a special rate with the local car wash. That helped him out with larger mechanical jobs—when he would run a car through the wash during his test

drive at the end of the work.

Little wonder Ed was loved by his customers, becoming the most requested mechanic at the dealership. Sadly, I lost Ed as my mechanic when I was fortunate enough to lure him away from the dealership and hire him as a lubrication system installation specialist. With training, Ed excelled and went on to become an exceptional and wellrespected lubrication program manager.

Whether we choose to believe it or not, all maintainers are in the customer service business—and good service does get recognized.

Simple acts like planning the job beforehand, having the right parts to do the work, ensuring cleanliness and safety at the job site, performing work carefully, cleaning up the mess and the equipment—including tools—at the end of the job and taking the time to complete the paperwork correctly are all hallmarks of caring and excellence! Doing it with a smile just adds icing to the cake.

Adopting good work habits, with a good disposition is simply taking care of business the right way. This approach, in turn, is good for the equipment, good for the environment, good for department moral and good for you in the long run.

Are you taking care of business the right way? Good Luck!

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