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To BDC or Not to BDC

The Brown Automotive Group

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15 Point Checklist for Service Depts.

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Execution

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I recently completed a Franklin Covey class (www.franklincovey.com) entitled – “The Four Disciplines of Execution.” My class work was timely preparation for this month’s article. According to Franklin Covey, well-known inventor and expert on time management and planning, less than 17 percent of employees know their company’s goals. I know you’re thinking this can’t be true, but take a minute to ask your employees what your dealership’s goals are. You will be shocked. Having been around dealerships my entire life, I know many employees don’t think much past next week’s paycheck. How can you

expect to achieve your short- and long-term goals if everyone in the organization is not on the same page?

I would like to share a few ideas to help you execute your retention plans for 2006. Let me start off with a few definitions:

Execution (n.) – The act of carrying out a task. The act of accomplishing some aim. The act of performing or doing something successful.

According to Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan, authors of the New York Times bestseller, “Execution – The Discipline of Getting Things Done,” execution is defined as a system of getting things done through questioning, analysis and follow-through. Bossidy and Charan write, “Lack of execution is the main reason companies fall short of their promises.”

In order to execute your retention plans you must have four things in place:

Focus on Wildly Important Goals (WIGS). WIGS are goals that will take three-six months to complete and require difficult choices on a daily basis. Making these choices means removing things on your daily task list that may seem important, but are getting in your way of making meaningful changes in your department. Achieving your WIG will require daily effort. Research has shown that we can only do a maximum of three things at maximum effort. Most of you know this from experience; remember this year’s list of resolutions. How many items on your list will get accomplished by the end of the year? Try putting your best energy toward accomplishing one goal at a time before taking on the next. Keep in mind it takes approximately 45 days to create a new habit. *Each goal must define who does what by when.*

Example of a dealership WIG: Increase owner loyalty by 25-35 percent by September 1, 2006.

Create compelling scoreboards. Imagine how much different the NBA finals would be if the NBA decided that, this year, they would not keep score. Human beings love to compete. You can take advantage of this by investing in a colorful, daily scoreboard for your entire

25-35 percent” on a piece of paper will not get the job done. Your goal is a big one and it will be more manageable if you break it down into bite size pieces. More importantly, you must gather input and instill buy-in from every member of your retention team. Too often leaders think we have all the answers. When you start asking for input from your co-workers, two things will happen:

You will get some really great ideas on new and better ways of doing things. You will get far better execution when it is a team decision

Hold each other accountable – . . .all the time. You need to have regular update meetings with your team to make sure everyone is on task. By talking with your co-workers on a regular basis you will learn of obstacles getting in the way of achieving the collective goals. In my office, I call these little distractions “minnows,” which get in the way of the “whales” we are trying to catch every day.

Here are a few more pointers that will help you achieve your goals in 2006:

- Set aside an uninterrupted hour each week to work **ON** the business rather than **IN** the business, which you end up doing for 60+ hours/week already. As you start seeing dramatic results from doing this, you will gradually begin dedicating more and more time each week to planning. Remember, planning and preparation prevents most crises from ever developing.

- Sit down one-on-one with each of your team members for five minutes per week. This will be a great time to not only review their scorecard, but to find out what else is happening in their life that may be affecting their work.

- Read more and/or sign-up for a class on time management or self-improvement. I recommend “Good to Great” by Jim Collins or you can visit his web site at www.jimcollins.com. And if you’re intrigued by the Franklin Covey methods, please visit www.franklincovey.com and click on the “Solutions for You” tab on their homepage.

Until next month, think retention! Happy Servicing. ≈ADM≈

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dealership to see. Think about scoreboards this way: That which gets measured gets done! Scorecards can be something as simple as a spreadsheet or a white board on the wall in your office. When you keep score, everyone will play harder to win. How are you going to measure owner loyalty from today forward?

Translate lofty goals into specific actions. While it’s a necessary place to start, writing down a WIG of “increase owner loyalty rates by