

# TECHNICIANS, TEAMWORK, AND TRUST

BY SCOTT O'NEILL



"Splendid. Did I mention *splendid!*?"

That's how my conversation recently ended with Amanda, for whom we just completed installation of a garage door. Amanda's story began as a simple call to have her garage door adjusted.

## Referrals Are Golden

Amanda first called us about a steel garage door problem that wouldn't go away. After different companies tried to fix it but failed, she found us via a referral.

When I heard that we had been referred, I immediately perked up. As we all know, a verbal referral can be of enormous value to us garage door folks. A referral generally elevates us to a more trusted position than we achieve with a mere advertising-led client.

## Diagnosing the Problem

I asked Amanda about the symptoms of her problem. She must have spent about 15 minutes offering mostly complaints about the companies that couldn't fix her door.

During her rant, I heard key symptoms that were red-flag indicators to me. Apparently the garage door would repeatedly "come off the tracks" and cause horrendous "scraping noises." After getting a sense of the mechanical factors, it seemed like the right call for my installer/service tech, Ted.

When I told Amanda of Ted's abilities and attentiveness, I could hear a tone of reassurance in her voice. She knew that Ted was being sent to fix her door *for good*.

## The Man With the Plan

I sent Ted for several reasons:

1. His truck is larger and has more parts/remedy items than some of our other trucks.
2. Ted has a special knack for working with steel garage doors.
3. Ted likes a little extra incentive.

Incentives aren't news to us in this trade. We've learned about unscrupulous companies that overcharge or sell parts to customers when they don't need them. Ted's incentives are different. He seeks a higher goal.

## Providing a Complete Remedy

We have learned that service calls are better accomplished with *completeness*. So, instead of rushing through a service call so you can finish more calls in the day, our technicians focus on the complete remedy of each call.

Our incentives for technicians include modest commissions for replacing garage door rollers. In Amanda's case, one roller was broken. A set of rollers would cost \$75 and take about 20 minutes. But the idea is to make the call more efficient for the client and provide a complete remedy so that callbacks aren't necessary.

Even though Ted would make a few bucks for selling a full set of rollers, he also knows that her problem could be completely solved with a new door and new hardware. Ted doesn't receive fiscal compensation for selling a new door, but he does get "attaboys" for providing superior services to clients. Attaboys can result in special favors, time off, even a six-pack of his favorite beverage.

## Teamwork Pays

For Ted, the goal isn't getting some "thing." He is motivated by the concept that we all win when we're all focusing on the goal of a completely satisfied customer. When you work with a team that is pulling together toward this goal, the concept is reinforced even further. We deploy these superior service goals with every technician in the field.

For example, we work with many property management companies that represent thousands of homes. When these property managers call us, we must be on the ball from the start with each call, even if they need just a remote. The idea is to always provide stellar service, thoroughly answered questions, and complete remedies, no matter what it takes.

The result is earning the customer's trust, which inevitably earns more business. In Amanda's case, we earned a new door installation. And in a recent case involving one of our property management companies, our good service resulted in a new contract for 14 garage doors.

The moral of this story is twofold. First, it's important for a company to be devoted to providing *complete* service. And second, it's critically important for salespeople and door technicians to work as a team to completely satisfy each customer. ■

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