

Ticket Average Pit Falls

(Written by Quinn Woodard)

Who is Responsible for Ticket Average?

Answer: You the manager are the responsible party.

Who drives Ticket Average in a store?:

Answer: You the manager.

Who is responsible for training his/her CSAs

Answer: You the manager.

Who is responsible for motivating CSAs:

Answer: You the manager

Ticket Average Pitfalls:

1. The store runs without the adequate number of CSA's:

You see it all the time, a store will have 6 or 7 employees and only one CSA or they will have 10 or 11 employees and only two CSA's.

2. The incorrect people are performing the CSA position.

Some stores will let anybody do CSA just to fill the position. You have to make sure that the employee in the position has the personality and the aptitude for the position.

3. The ROC is incomplete:

It's amazing that when you ask a manager about TA problems the standard answer is an incomplete ROC. As Steve G. would say, "If we know what we know, why do we do what we do?"

4. The Team Leader is not functioning correctly:

If the team leader is in place, he should ensure that the ROC is complete. He should know where all the CAFs are and where to find the oddball PCVs and breathers. More importantly, he will also speed up the service increasing customer satisfaction, which should indirectly improve the TA.

5. CSAs are wholly responsible for all of the ancillaries.

Your CSAs care about the customers. They care that customers will have to wait to get greeted because they are performing an ancillary. You should never make them the only ancillary personnel. You will often see 3 UBTs still in the bay, while one of the only two CSAs is performing the ancillary.

- 6. The CSAs performance is not measured or commented upon:**
I have asked everyone to post boards tracking and measuring their CSAs. A few stores have done this and even fewer have kept them current. How do CSAs know how they're performing if there is nothing to measure themselves against? The adage is true that if you measure it, it will improve. This is so simple and yet probably more effective than anything else.
- 7. Managers and Assistants are not setting a good example.**
(Poor personal TA, incomplete ROC, short service reviews etc.):
More often than not when visiting a store I see the manager or the assistant do a service review in one minute or with an incomplete ROC. The worst part is not only do I see it, but your crews do as well. Remember by doing it you are giving them permission to do it as well.
- 8. Incomplete or abbreviated service reviews. (No movies etc.):**
This is often a result of number 7. If a CSA has an abbreviated service review, then you need to ask them why was the service review cut short; ask them every time. There may be a legitimate reason, but if there is not you will need to take the appropriate course of action.
- 9. Inadequate inventory or tools on hand:**
There is nothing more demoralizing to a CSA then making a sale and having to cancel it because we do not have the part or tool.
- 10. Manager not aware or competent in all available products and services or does not believe in the value of the service:**
This is the windshield repair clause. However insert any other service in here as well such as FICS.
- 11. Manager does not foster competition between other CSAs and other stores:**
Any store with a consistently high ticket has at least two CSA that compete against each other. When you only have one strong CSA it is easy for him to lose motivation.
- 12. Manager reluctant to pull the hook on a CSA in a slump:**
If a CSA is having a bad day, why do we leave him in the position? CSA is all about attitude and motivation. Don't wait for the CSA to break out of the slump, have a pinch hitter fill in.
- 13. The store is so slow that the customers don't want to wait for other services:**
If it takes too long to service a customer, why would they want to purchase any additional services from us that are only going to take more time? Or if it has already been sold, why would they want to wait for it. I have recently been at a store and had a customer cancel a sold ancillary because we were too slow processing the oil change.

Response:

Your assessment is completely accurate; it is the manager who drives the T.A. Your pitfalls are valid reasons why T.A. is low. They are exactly opposite of the success factors that managers identified in the 2004 and 2005 T.A. ideas exchanges. However, I think the real reason for the deficiencies may lie deeper.

There is no doubt that a store's T.A. success is primarily determined by the manager. The manager is, if you will, the root of the plant. The CSA's are the leaves. Though individual leaves may vary in their size and strength, the root is the ultimate factor determining the strength of all the leaves it supports. It is our managers' sales mentality that drives the T.A. as you commented and most of the pitfalls you mentioned are symptoms of the manager's mentality.

These symptoms can be categorized as (1) the manager doesn't have the skills or knowledge to maintain a high T.A. or (2) the manager doesn't have the internal drive to achieve a high T.A. The skills are the focus of a majority of our training. Teach them how to do it better...but, if (2) is missing, all the training in the world won't improve (1) or the store's T.A. For example, we can require a manager to keep a stats board and follow-up to see that he does, but it will only improve the T.A. if the manager's sales mentality is conducive to its benefit. The techniques are tools not solutions. The managers must use the tools to achieve their own desire to ethically reach a good T.A. regardless the cost.

We know that we will only have success with things that really matter to us. The biblical maxim, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" is absolutely true. It is no miracle when a particular manager has a high T.A.—his heart is just there at that time. We can see this because the same manager goes up and down in T.A. as his heart moves back and forth. One of our managers was very high in T.A. for months but is dropping now, why? His heart is shifting as are the hearts of his employees. Our focus of desire is always changing no matter who we are. This is not always bad. The musician and author, Mike Murdock, was right on when he said, "You will only have significant success with something that is an obsession." Perhaps obsession is not always

bad because to give significant attention to one area a manager need not significantly neglect another.

The problem now is that the employees' focus is inseparably connected to the manager's desire (and therefore his focus). The root's position will always determine where the leaves stand. So our employees will make their "obsession" whatever the manager has made his. If the manager's obsession includes sales, then stock-outs will be significantly reduced, tools will be available, training will be performed, his T.A. will serve as an example, and he will measure and follow-up on sales success or failure. It is inevitable, his obsession will drive his actions just as the lack thereof produces a lack of action. His crew will just fall into his wake and ride the wave of whatever the manager chooses as his focus.

I know our managers care about T.A., if for no other reason, then because they realize upper-management watches it like a hawk and measures them by it. I would go as far as to say that many of them dislike T.A. because they feel there are chronically deficient in it and don't know how to "fix it." The solution is not in the "techniques," however, it is in the habits that are a natural fruit of an authentic intrinsic drive to have a good store T.A. It is this desire that we must foster in our managers to achieve T.A. success—a commitment to have the good T.A. no matter what it takes.

(Response Written by Tyler Pickett)