



Onboarding Procedures

for New Sales Hires

National Automotive Training Academy®

Overview

It should come as no surprise to those in the retail auto industry that the work is hardly finished once a deal is closed. In order to foster long-term relationships with customers and to maintain a healthy, high-performing dealership, there is much to be done after the sale. The same holds true for hiring: you may find a great new candidate who is eager to join the team, but there is a lot that can go wrong — or right — between the time an offer is accepted and the time that candidate becomes a fully integrated contributor.

Onboarding vs. Orientation

It is an important distinction to understand, because the two are not the same. Employers have long known the value of getting new hires up-to-speed as quickly as possible. Many relied on orientation programs — one or two-day introductions — as a way to accomplish this goal. Orientation never fully addressed longer-term needs, like ensuring people were adequately trained for the variety of challenges they might face on the job. Onboarding fills this void, providing a series of steps over time — mentoring, training programs, structured schedules — to get new hires acclimated and set them up for long-term success.

Why Onboarding Matters

If new hires are unhappy or do not fit in at your company, you are back to square one. Consider all the time and money invested in recruiting those people — not to mention training costs. Even employee morale suffers when turnover is high. By giving adequate attention to integrating new hires effectively, you retain the people you worked hard to recruit.

39% Overall Dealership Employee Turnover (NADA)	72% Sales Consultant Turnover Rate (NADA)	69% More Likely to Stay 3+ Months with Structured Onboarding (Aberdeen Group)
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The cost per new hire at dealerships runs around **\$10,000** (Dealerstrong). Top-performing dealerships show turnover rates **17 percentage points lower** than poor-performing stores — driven by better training, onboarding, and interview processes (McKinsey). Millennial turnover at dealerships is at **54%**, making structured onboarding culture more critical than ever.



Introduction

The first step is perhaps the most obvious but also one of the most neglected. Just as we welcome a customer into our dealership in a timely fashion, we should do the same with new hires. Nothing makes a new hire feel like an outsider more than being told to "sit and wait." We sometimes neglect them because we are busy — and this sends exactly the wrong message. New hires must be treated as a priority from the moment they arrive.

When bringing in new salespeople, remember that this is often the very first time they are experiencing the dealership culture. The following procedures will help you make a great first impression and cultivate a happy, productive, long-term employee.

A dedicated time should be set aside for this process. Pick a day when full attention can be given to new hires — do not just "shove them in" when convenient. Make it a priority and it will be treated as one. Accountability is key: the **GSM should sign off after each task is completed.**

★ *Keep in mind — this is all BRAND NEW to these people!* ★

WEEK 1 — Welcome & Foundations

The proper onboarding procedure should take **2 weeks** to complete. While it can be modified to fit individual needs, deviating from the full 2-week plan is not recommended.

FIRST DAY

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome & Team Introduction

The following should be conducted in the conference room — NOT the showroom.

Begin with a formal welcome and complete team introduction:

- Welcome new hires and introduce the full sales team.
- Introduce: GM, GSM, Sales Managers, Finance Managers, BDC Manager, Office Manager, and CRM Administrator.
- GM provides company history and explains the full scope of the organization, including all other dealerships in the group.



- Each manager tells a brief personal story — reassure new hires that management was once in the exact same position.
- Each manager clearly explains their individual role and covers the chain of command.
- Distribute and review the Employee Handbook so every new hire fully understands company policies and procedures.
- Office Manager meets individually with each new hire to ensure all paperwork is completed properly.

Dealership Tour

A designated manager leads a complete facility tour. All department personnel should be introduced by name:

- Service Department
- Parts Department
- Detail
- Accounting Office
- Sales Tower
- BDC
- F&I;

- Each area should be explained as to its function and how it integrates with the sales team.
- Walk the entire lot — explain what is parked where and why: new car inventory, used car inventory, trade line, sold line, etc.
- Show new hires where employee parking is located.
- Explain break policies: where to eat and when breaks occur.
- Return to the conference room for a thorough explanation of the pay plan: training salary, draw, commission, bonuses, and benefits.
- Conduct a full Q&A; session on everything covered during the day.
- If anyone still needs to complete a drug test or provide additional documentation, direct them to do so before leaving.

DAY 2

Electronic Introduction

Day 2 is dedicated to introducing all computer systems and technical equipment, issuing credentials, and beginning Certification Training.



- Assign desks and computers. Salespeople need to feel at home — their own workspace accomplishes this.
- IT (if available) should lead or assist with all relevant systems training.
- Introduce all computer systems, phones, copiers, and other technical equipment.
- Issue all required passwords and login credentials.
- Review and explain company policies on computer use, internet, social media, texting, and emailing. Salespeople must sign off on these policies to ensure complete understanding and avoid future issues.
- The balance of Day 2 should be spent getting familiar with the dealership: walk the lot, review window stickers, get registered with the manufacturer, and begin certification training.
- Encourage salespeople to continue certification training at home.

DAYS 3, 4 & 5

BDC — Prospecting

The best way to motivate a new salesperson is to help them get a deal as soon as possible. Every new hire has an incredible resource of potential prospects at their fingertips — cell phone contacts, Facebook network, and their personal sphere of influence.

- BDC time should be spent working the new hire's social circle and sphere of influence — using scripts and BDC manager assistance to schedule appointments with people they already know.
- New hires should work alongside the BDC manager and learn how the CRM (Contact Management System) works — including handling sales calls and internet leads.
- Learning should include developing new business through social media and personal contacts.
- On Days 3 & 4: assist the BDC in scheduling sales appointments and continue working personal contacts. This gives new hires an intimate view of BDC operations and builds a pipeline for the following week.
- During this entire period — do NOT abandon new hires in the BDC. Keep them in the sales loop. Have them attend all sales meetings.
- Managers should spend time with new hires daily and help them feel like a valued part of the team.

WEEK 2 — Training, Systems & Sales Execution | Days 6–10

These days should be spent accomplishing the following items using whatever resources and personnel are necessary:



CRM Training	Deep-dive into the dealership CRM: entering, tracking, and following up on all customer contacts.
Daily Procedures & Work Plan	Teach the daily work plan — what a productive sales day looks like from open to close.
Desking Process & Procedures	Full desking process: presenting numbers, working deals with managers, and structuring offers.
Finance Department Procedures	F&I; process, dealership paperwork flow, and how salespeople hand off customers to finance.
Miscellaneous Paperwork	All required forms: what is needed, when it is needed, and how to complete it correctly.
Product Training	Salespeople should learn a new vehicle each day — including physically test-driving it.
Get Ready Procedures	How vehicles are prepped, inspected, and staged for delivery.
New Car Procedures & Web Training	New car process: ordering, receiving, stocking, and promoting inventory online.
Used Car Procedures & Web Training	Used car process: appraisals, reconditioning, pricing, and website listings.
Appointment Follow-Through	New salespeople should be actively assisted in working the appointments they set during Week 1.

And most importantly — Continuous Support and Training.
*Athletes do not stop training once they reach the professional level,
and neither should we. A training culture must be established
and monitored from the top down!*

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