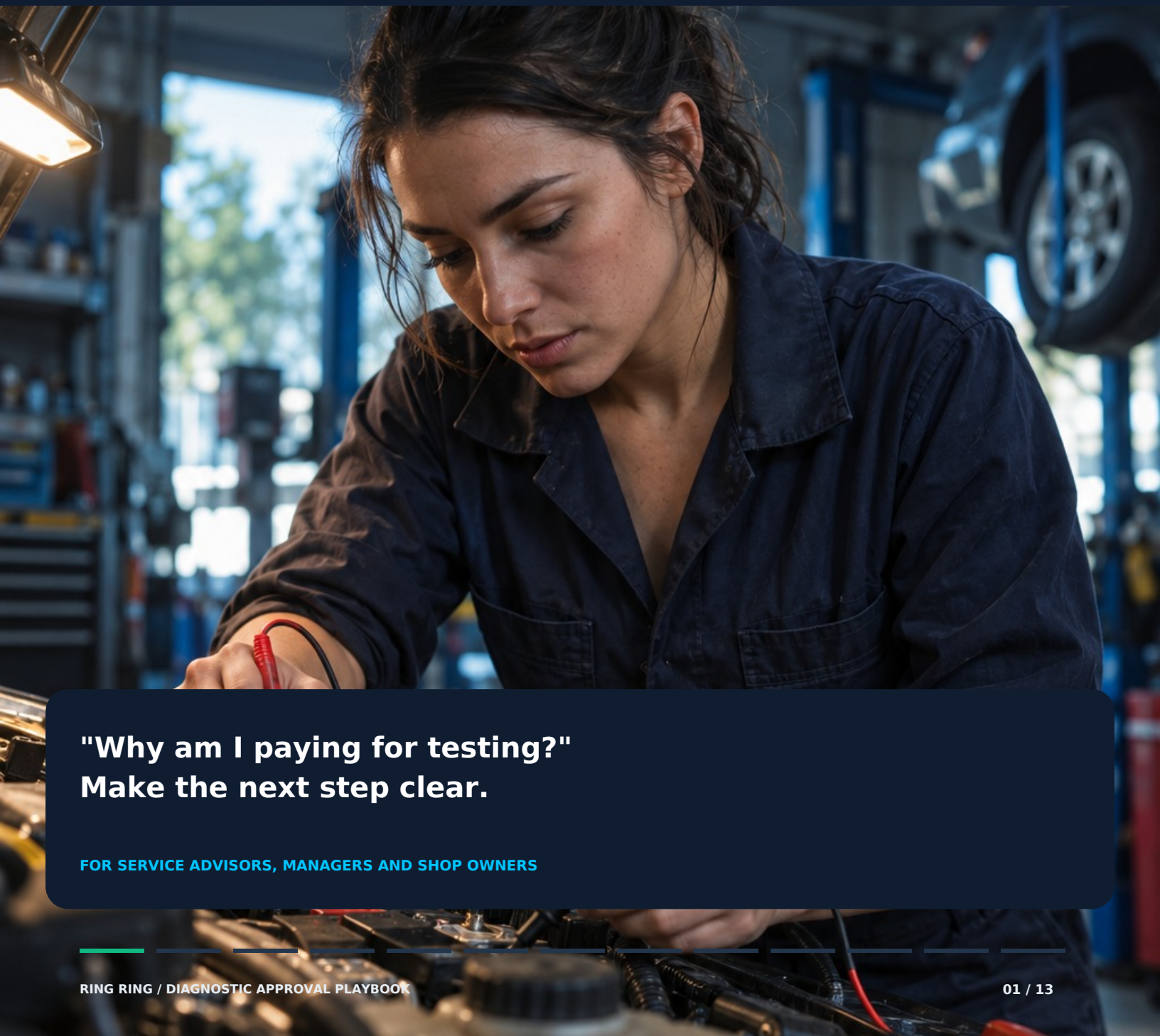


THE DIAGNOSTIC APPROVAL PLAYBOOK

Explain testing. Handle objections. Earn authorization.



**"Why am I paying for testing?"
Make the next step clear.**

FOR SERVICE ADVISORS, MANAGERS AND SHOP OWNERS

Sell a clear next step

A customer does not need to become a technician to authorize testing. They need to understand what you are trying to learn, what the next step costs, and what happens before any additional work.

Four questions your explanation should answer



01

What are we investigating? Name the concern in the customer's words.



02

What will the shop do first? Describe a defined testing step in plain language.



03

What am I authorizing? State the scope and price together.



04

What happens next? Explain the update, spending boundary and next decision.

SCRIPTS ARE TRAINING WHEELS

Borrow the example wording until the structure feels natural. Then use your own voice. The goal is a clear, useful conversation, not a perfect recitation.

Use this guide with your actual shop policy

Examples use a fictional \$195 initial testing charge. Substitute your real price and scope. Fees, credits, testing stages and timelines vary by shop. Initial testing may identify the cause or show which additional testing is needed; it does not guarantee a completed diagnosis or repair.

Aim for informed authorization. Never invent urgency, promise a repair before testing, or imply that a customer has approved spending they have not agreed to.

Understand the concern first

Before explaining a fee, find out what the driver is experiencing and what they need from the visit. A short, relevant question often does more than a long defense of your shop.

Ask questions that change the next step

-  "What is the vehicle doing that brought this to your attention?"
-  "When does it happen, and how often have you noticed it?"
-  "Has anyone tested or repaired anything for this concern already?"
-  "What is your biggest concern about getting this checked?"

Ask a follow-up when it helps. If time is the concern, learn when they need the vehicle. If cost is the concern, learn whether the obstacle is today's testing charge, an unknown repair bill, or uncertainty about the process.

Before you explain the fee

- 01 The symptom**
What is it doing?
- 02 The timing**
When does it happen?
- 03 The history**
What was already tried?

EXAMPLE: A WARNING LIGHT

CUSTOMER

"My check-engine light is on, but the car feels fine."

ADVISOR

"When did it come on? Has anyone checked it yet?"

CUSTOMER

"Yesterday. I just don't want to get talked into a bunch of work."

ADVISOR

"You want to understand what it needs before committing to repairs. Let me explain how we separate testing from that repair decision."

Repeat the actual concern back before you move on. Avoid diagnosing the cause or assuring the customer that the vehicle is safe based only on a brief phone description.

Make the authorization clear

1

Reflect the concern

"You're hearing a noise when you turn, and you want to know what is causing it before deciding on a repair."

2

Explain the next testing step

"We'll start by checking that concern and performing the initial tests that help us determine what needs attention."

3

State the scope, amount and boundary

"That initial testing step is \$195. It covers investigating this concern. If we need more testing or find a repair to recommend, we'll explain the findings and price before asking you to approve anything additional."

4

Ask for the decision, then pause

"Would you like us to proceed with that initial testing for \$195?"

THE CLOSE IS A QUESTION

After asking for authorization, give the customer room to answer. If they hesitate, find the unresolved question instead of repeating the entire explanation more loudly or at greater length.

On an inbound call, agree on the appointment and explain testing expectations. Obtain and document authorization through your shop's actual process; an appointment alone is not approval for unspecified work.

When they already have an answer

A code is the beginning of the investigation

CODE READING

A clue about a system or condition.

VEHICLE TESTING

Check what is happening on this vehicle.

REPAIR DECISION

Recommend work supported by findings.

"The parts store checks it for free."

TRY SAYING

"That code reading is useful information. A code can point us toward a system or condition, but it does not by itself prove which part or repair will solve your concern. Our testing is the work of checking what is happening on your vehicle before recommending a repair."

Then return to the decision: "Would you like us to start with the initial testing for \$195?" Explain what the shop actually does. You do not need to criticize the store or overwhelm the driver with a list of tools.

"I already know it needs an alternator."

TRY SAYING

"What led you to the alternator - a test result, a symptom, or a recommendation? If you have a report, we'd like to see it. Before we recommend that repair, we need to verify that it addresses the concern you're bringing us."

If the driver requests a specific repair without testing, explain your shop's policy and the limits of what that requested work would establish. Do not present an unverified repair as a confirmed diagnosis.

WHAT TO PRACTICE

Respect information the customer brings. Ask how the conclusion was reached. Explain the purpose of verification. Ask for a specific next step.

When the question is price



SCOPE

What we will test



PRICE

What it costs



DECISION

What you approve

"Just tell me how much to fix it."

TRY SAYING

"I can give you the price of the next step. I don't yet have enough information to give you a reliable repair price. The initial testing is \$195. Once we know what it needs - or whether more testing is necessary - we'll explain that and the price before you decide."

For a clearly defined service your shop can accurately price without diagnostic testing, use the actual service-pricing policy. The point is to avoid a speculative repair quote, not to withhold a price you can responsibly provide.

"Does that fee go toward the repair?"

Answer directly with your real policy. Do not invent a credit to win the appointment.

TRY SAYING

If separate: "The testing charge pays for the testing work. Any recommended repair would be priced separately, and you would decide whether to approve it."

TRY SAYING

If credited: "Our policy applies the testing charge toward an eligible repair under these conditions: [state the actual conditions]. I'll show you how it appears on the estimate."

A clear answer builds more confidence than "we'll work something out." Confirm the customer understands the total authorized amount and any conditions on a credit.

When money or trust is the obstacle



MONEY: FIND THE OBSTACLE

"I can't afford a big repair right now."

TRY SAYING

"Is the main concern the \$195 for testing today, or what the repair might cost afterward?"

If the testing charge is the obstacle, discuss only options your shop actually offers. If the unknown repair is the obstacle, explain the spending boundary.

TRY SAYING

"Approving this step does not commit you to a repair. We'll explain what we learn and any next recommendation so you can make that decision with the information in front of you."



TRUST: HEAR THE HISTORY

"Last time I paid a shop, and they still didn't fix it."

TRY SAYING

"What happened after their testing?"

Listen before responding. Reflect the specific concern: paying for repeated guesses, unexpected charges, no explanation, or an unresolved symptom.

TRY SAYING

"You want a clear explanation of what was tested and what the result means. Here is the initial work we're asking you to authorize, and here is how we'll update you before any additional spending."

EARN TRUST WITH A PROCESS

Explain what you can commit to: the authorized scope, clear findings, communication and a separate decision on additional work. Do not guarantee that one testing step will solve every concern.

When they need time or another person



"I need to talk to my spouse."

TRY SAYING

"Of course. What information would help the two of you make the decision? I can send a short summary of the concern, the initial testing charge and what we would ask you to approve next if more work is needed."

Ask permission for a follow-up: "Would it help if I checked back tomorrow morning, or would you prefer to contact us?" Use the contact method and time the customer agrees to. Do not manufacture a deadline.



"Can this wait?"

TRY SAYING

"We haven't evaluated the vehicle yet, so I can't responsibly tell you what is causing it or how long it can wait. What I can do is explain the next step for getting that information."

Once the shop has findings, discuss urgency using those findings. Separate an identified safety concern, a reliability concern and work that can be planned. Do not turn every recommendation into an emergency.



If they choose not to authorize

TRY SAYING

"Understood. We won't proceed with that testing. I'll note your decision. Is there anything about the scope or price that I can clarify before we wrap up?"

A respectful no leaves the relationship intact. Record the actual decision and any agreed next step; silence or indecision is not authorization.

Close the loop before work starts

Once the customer agrees, make the authorization easy for the technician, advisor and customer to understand. A confident conversation loses its value if the work order is vague.

Confirm these five items

AUTHORIZATION CHECK

- ☐ The vehicle and the exact concern being investigated.
- ☐ The initial testing scope and authorized price, including applicable charges disclosed by the shop.
- ☐ What is outside this authorization and requires another decision.
- ☐ Who can authorize additional work and the best way to reach them.
- ☐ When the customer should expect an update, using a commitment the team can meet.

The handoff must be clear

- 01 **Concern**
- 02 **Authorization**
- 03 **Update**

EXAMPLE CONFIRMATION

"We have your authorization for \$195 in initial testing for the warning-light concern we discussed. That does not authorize repairs or additional testing. We'll contact you with what we learn and any next recommendation. Is this still the best number to reach you?"

Record the authorization through your shop's established system. Include the concern, approved work and amount, customer decision, date/time, and agreed communication plan. Give the technician the customer's description and prior test/repair information.

This is an operating checklist, not a substitute for your shop's required authorization documents or process.

When the first testing step is not enough

An inconclusive first step is where trust can break down. Explain what was done, what it established and what remains unknown. A list of hours without findings is not a useful update.

1

Explain the evidence
Describe the tests actually performed and what they showed. If the symptom did not occur, say so plainly. Do not describe a condition as ruled out unless the evidence supports that conclusion.

2

Define the unanswered question
Connect the next test to what you still need to determine. Explain the additional scope and price, including teardown or reassembly implications when relevant.

3

Get a separate decision
State the new cumulative authorized amount and ask for additional approval before proceeding.

INITIAL TESTING

ADDITIONAL STEP

NEW TOTAL

\$195

+

\$150

=

\$345

ILLUSTRATIVE UPDATE

"The first testing step did not identify the cause. Here is what we checked and what the results showed: [actual findings]. The next step is [specific testing], which adds \$150. That would bring the authorized testing total to \$345. Would you like us to proceed with that additional step?"

For intermittent concerns, agree on a plan if the symptom cannot be reproduced: what was observed, what information the driver can collect, and what the shop proposes next. Follow your actual policy for completed testing charges and any future visit.

The \$150 and \$345 amounts are examples. Additional testing is a new authorization, not an automatic extension of the first one.

Build confidence through repetitions

Ten minutes. One behavior to improve.

1 min	3 min	2 min	4 min
CHOOSE	PRACTICE	REVIEW	REPEAT
One objection	Run the call	Specific feedback	One change

Read an example once, then put it away. Practice preserving the structure while changing the words to fit the person in front of you.

01 MIN

Choose one objection - 1 minute

Use a real objection your team hears. Give the customer a concern, one primary hesitation and one follow-up question.

03 MIN

Run the conversation - 3 minutes

The advisor asks useful questions, explains scope and price, sets the boundary, and asks for the next decision. The partner responds like a customer, not a cooperative script reader.

02 MIN

Give specific feedback - 2 minutes

Name the exact sentence that worked and the moment the explanation became unclear. Use the scorecard on the next page to focus the discussion.

04 MIN

Repeat with one change - 4 minutes

Run it again with a different follow-up question. Improve one behavior; keep the language natural.

Your next rep starts here



0 = missing | 1 = partial | 2 = clear

Practice scorecard

01 Understood and reflected the customer's concern.

0

1

2

02 Explained the purpose and scope of testing.

0

1

2

03 Stated the fee and additional-spending boundary.

0

1

2

04 Addressed the actual hesitation respectfully.

0

1

2

05 Asked for and confirmed a specific next step.

0

1

2

This 10-point practice checklist is a teaching aid, not Ring Ring's production grading rubric or a validated predictor of sales results.

Keep this at the counter

THE CONVERSATION IN FIVE MOVES

01 Understand the concern.

02 Explain the testing step.

03 State the scope and price.

04 Set the boundary for additional work.

05 Ask for a specific decision.

Make the language yours

Our initial testing step includes

Our price and any credit conditions

How we obtain additional authorization

Our customer-update commitment

Turn the guide into a skill

Use Ring Ring to practice customer conversations, receive feedback, and work on the areas that need attention. Keep the structure. Find your own voice. Repeat until you can explain the next step with confidence.

Explore Ring Ring

Advisor Intelligence & Performance Platform

ringringapp.com

For service advisors, managers and shop owners. A Ring Ring field guide, part of the Vigoris family of brands.