

THE REPAIR APPROVAL PLAYBOOK

Make the findings clear. Make the value real.
Earn the decision.



**"That is more than I expected."
Now make the value clear.**

FOR SERVICE ADVISORS, MANAGERS AND SHOP OWNERS

Make the decision easier

An estimate tells the customer what the work costs. Your conversation helps them understand what was found, why the recommendation fits and what they are being asked to approve.

1 Reconnect to their concern

Start with the reason they came in and what matters to them: reliability, timing, cost or understanding what the vehicle needs.

2 Show the finding

Explain the relevant evidence in plain language. Use a photo or test result when it helps the customer understand the issue.

3 Connect the repair to the result

Describe what the recommended work addresses and what it does not. Explain supported urgency without turning every item into an emergency.

4 Present the whole decision

State the scope, total price and realistic timing. Clarify any additional decisions, then ask for authorization and give them room to answer.

YOUR JOB IS TO GUIDE

Confidence comes from knowing the findings and making a clear recommendation. The customer should be able to explain what they approved and why.

These are teaching examples, not required scripts. Adapt them to actual findings, pricing, warranty terms and your shop's authorization process.

Before you make the call

Understand the recommendation.

- What complaint did the technician investigate?
- What evidence supports the conclusion?
- How does the proposed work address it?
- What remains uncertain or outside the scope?
- What is the complete customer price?
- Are parts and timing confirmed or still estimated?

Resolve gaps with the team.

A parts list is not an explanation. If you cannot connect the finding to the recommendation, ask the technician before presenting it.

Reconnect with the customer.

TRY SAYING

"When you dropped it off, you said getting to work reliably was the big concern. Is that still the main priority as we go through the findings?"

TRY SAYING

"Is now a good time to review what we found and the recommendation?"

Use the answer.

If they are rushed, arrange a useful time. If they need the vehicle tomorrow, check the actual schedule. If they are worried about the whole vehicle, explain what was inspected and what was not.

PREPARE A RECOMMENDATION, NOT A MONOLOGUE

Know the facts well enough to explain them briefly. Leave space for questions instead of reading every line of the estimate aloud.

Explain it in four moves

Make the recommendation make sense

FINDING

What did the inspection establish?

REPAIR

How does the work address it?

DECISION

Scope, total price, timing, approval.

1

"Here is what we found."

Name the issue and connect it to the original concern. Point to the specific evidence that supports the finding.

2

"Here is what we recommend."

Explain the work in terms the customer can follow. Connect it to the problem it addresses rather than listing parts without context.

3

"Here is what that means for you."

State the complete customer price and timing. Explain relevant warranty coverage, limitations and any supported consequence of delaying.

4

"Would you like us to proceed?"

Ask for a specific decision on that scope at that amount. Pause. A question, silence or a vague acknowledgment is not the same as authorization.

WHEN YOU SEND A PHOTO

Tell them what to look at: "The wet area at this seam is where the leak showed up during testing." Sending ten pictures without an explanation leaves them to diagnose the vehicle themselves.

When the cause has not been established, explain the next testing decision instead of presenting an unconfirmed repair as the answer.

Hear the whole conversation

ILLUSTRATIVE SCENARIO

The customer reported coolant loss. Testing confirmed a radiator leak. The shop has a defined repair and verification plan. All prices, timing and findings below are examples.

TRY SAYING

"You brought it in because the coolant level kept dropping. During testing, we confirmed a leak at the radiator seam. I sent a photo showing the leak location."

TRY SAYING

"We recommend replacing the radiator, refilling the cooling system and checking it again for leaks. That work is \$1,180 total, including the taxes and fees in this example. That is additional to the \$195 testing you already approved."

TRY SAYING

"Your combined total would be \$1,375. Based on the parts and schedule we have confirmed for this example, we expect it ready tomorrow afternoon. Would you like us to proceed with that repair at \$1,180?"

CUSTOMER

"That is more than I expected."

TRY SAYING

"I understand. Is the main concern fitting it into your budget, or does the recommendation need more explanation?"

CUSTOMER

"Mostly the budget. I need to know what I'm getting for that."

TRY SAYING

"Let's walk through the scope and price together. This includes the radiator replacement, coolant service and verification we discussed. We found an active leak, so I also want to explain the technician's findings about using the vehicle while it is unresolved."

Explain the actual driving guidance and available options. If the customer decides to proceed, record the exact authorization and confirm the next update.

Separate the decisions

Give every recommendation a reason and a priority. A customer who understands the difference between the original concern and other findings can make a more useful decision.

THE ORIGINAL CONCERN

Connect the repair to why they came in.

Explain the confirmed finding and the work recommended to address it.

OTHER IDENTIFIED ISSUES

Give each issue its own evidence.

Explain the condition, consequence and supported urgency. A separate finding is a separate decision.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE

Give the customer a planning horizon.

Explain the service basis and timing. Do not present routine maintenance as a newly discovered failure.

TRY SAYING

"The first recommendation addresses the concern you brought us. We also found [separate issue], and I'll explain its priority. The maintenance item can be discussed as its own plan."

IF THE WORK MUST BE STAGED

Have the technician confirm a workable sequence. Explain dependencies and the limits of a partial repair. Do not describe a compromised repair as an equivalent lower-cost option.

When price stops the call

"That is too expensive."

TRY SAYING

"Is the concern the amount you can spend right now, or whether this work is worth that amount?"

Budget and value require different conversations. Let the customer explain before offering a solution.

If it is the budget

Review legitimate options your shop actually offers. That may mean a technician-approved sequence, different available options with clear tradeoffs or payment arrangements with fully explained terms.

TRY SAYING

"Let's see what options actually fit this repair. I don't want to promise a smaller scope that won't address the issue."

"Another shop quoted less."

TRY SAYING

"Let's compare what each estimate includes so you can make a fair decision. Do you have their written scope available?"

Compare the recommended work, parts, labor, testing, verification, warranty and total charges. Explain real differences without criticizing a shop you have not evaluated.

If it is the value

TRY SAYING

"Which part would be most useful to walk through: what failed, why we recommend this repair or what the price includes?"

Answer the actual question with evidence and scope. A longer speech is not automatically a stronger explanation.

DO NOT DISCOUNT BEFORE YOU UNDERSTAND

An immediate discount can leave the original question unanswered. First establish what is preventing a decision, then discuss a real option you are authorized to offer.

When trust is the obstacle

"It was driving fine."

TRY SAYING

"Some conditions are not obvious from the driver's seat. Let me show you the specific finding and explain why the technician recommends addressing it."

Use only evidence that supports the recommendation. Do not imply every hidden condition needs immediate repair.

"How do I know it needs that?"

TRY SAYING

"Here is the result we are basing it on, what it tells us and how the proposed work addresses it. What part would you like me to explain further?"

"Will this fix everything?"

TRY SAYING

"This work addresses [confirmed issue]. Here is what we have established and what remains outside this scope. I don't want to promise that it resolves concerns we haven't verified."

"The last shop said that too."

TRY SAYING

"What happened after that repair? I want to understand your concern before we go further."

Hear the history. Explain the basis for your recommendation, how the repair will be checked and how the shop handles a concern afterward. Make only promises your team can keep.

DO NOT SELL CERTAINTY YOU DO NOT HAVE

A clear limit can strengthen an honest recommendation. Explain what is known, what remains uncertain and which next step resolves that uncertainty.

When they need time

"I need to talk to my spouse."

TRY SAYING

"Of course. I can send the findings, recommended work, total price and expected timing so you can review it together. What else would help?"

Offer a joint call if useful. Do not treat another decision-maker as an objection to defeat.

"Let me think about it."

TRY SAYING

"Absolutely. Before we pause, is there a question I haven't answered, or do you mainly need time to decide?"

Answer any open question, then agree on whether and when to reconnect. Explain real estimate or parts-availability limits without inventing a deadline.

"Can I wait on it?"

TRY SAYING

"Let me explain what the technician found and what that means for delaying. I want to separate what we know from what we cannot predict."

Give finding-based guidance. If the risk or timing is uncertain, say so and get the technician's input. Do not predict an exact failure date.

IF THE ANSWER IS NO

Respect the decision. Document what was declined, the information provided and the agreed next step. Ask permission before scheduling a follow-up. Leave the door open for a future conversation.

Turn yes into a clear handoff

Check the complete decision.

- ☐ The approved repair scope is specific.
- ☐ The amount is clear, including disclosed taxes and fees.
- ☐ Earlier authorized charges are distinguished from the new work and combined total.
- ☐ Excluded or declined work is recorded.
- ☐ Timing is described accurately, including any remaining uncertainty.
- ☐ The customer knows when the next update will come.
- ☐ The actual decision, date, time and authorizing person are recorded in the shop's process.

ILLUSTRATIVE CONFIRMATION

"You're authorizing the radiator repair we discussed at \$1,180 total. With the \$195 testing already approved, the combined amount is \$1,375. Any additional work will require another decision. I'll update you tomorrow by 11. Is that your approval?"

Do not let the handoff undo it.

The technician and parts team need the approved scope, not a guess based on the estimate. Preserve any promises and declined items in the work record.

If the plan changes

Explain the new finding, revised scope, additional price and timing implications. Get any required new authorization before proceeding.

Example amounts are illustrative. Follow your shop's established authorization and documentation process; this conversation checklist does not replace it.

Run the approval challenge

Change the pressure. Keep the facts.

1 min

3 min

2 min

4 min

PREPARE

Confirm the case

CALL

Earn the decision

REVIEW

Find the obstacle

RETRY

Change one response

Practice the decision, not just the presentation. Use actual shop knowledge or a clearly labeled training case with enough evidence to support the recommendation.

1**Prepare / 1 minute**

Coach gives the advisor a complaint, confirmed finding, repair scope, complete price and timing. Choose one customer priority and one objection.

2**Make the call / 3 minutes**

Advisor presents the recommendation and asks for a decision. Customer responds naturally and reveals the obstacle only when the conversation earns it.

3**Review / 2 minutes**

Use the next page. Identify the exact moment the customer understood the value or became more confused. Separate a weak explanation from missing technical information.

4**Retry / 4 minutes**

Replay the difficult moment with one change. Then change the customer's priority: budget, transportation or trust. Keep the facts of the repair consistent.

CHANGE THE PRESSURE, NOT THE TRUTH

The advisor can adapt wording and ask different questions. The finding, coverage and price do not change just because the customer pushes back.

Score the conversation

0 = missing | 1 = partial | 2 = clear

TEAM EXERCISE / NOT THE RING RING PRODUCT SCORE

01 Connected to the customer

Used the original concern and the customer's actual priority.

0

1

2

02 Explained the finding and value

Connected evidence, recommendation and intended result.

0

1

2

03 Made scope and price clear

Explained total charges, timing and important limits.

0

1

2

04 Understood the hesitation

Asked a useful question and addressed the actual obstacle.

0

1

2

05 Earned a clear next decision

Asked for authorization or agreed on a respectful next step.

0

1

2

TOTAL: ____ / 10 ONE MOMENT TO REPLAY:

What I said:

What I will try next:

Keep this at the counter

RECONNECT

"You brought it in because..."

SHOW

"Here is what we found..."

RECOMMEND

"Here is the work we recommend..."

EXPLAIN

"The total and timing are..."

ASK

"Would you like us to proceed?"

Before you ask for yes

- ☐ I understand the evidence behind the recommendation.
- ☐ I connected the repair to the customer's concern.
- ☐ I separated the original concern from other recommendations.
- ☐ I explained the scope, complete price and realistic timing.
- ☐ I left room for questions and a real decision.

WHEN THEY HESITATE

Find out what is unresolved: understanding, trust, budget, timing or another decision-maker. Answer that concern, then ask for the appropriate next step.

Now earn it in practice.

Use Ring Ring to practice the call, review coaching feedback and sharpen the next attempt.

ringringapp.com