



The Way to Good Service

by Steve Butz, NAPA AUTO PARTS/NAPA Auto Supply — Rochelle, Rochelle, Illinois

Meet Steve Butz, owner of NAPA AUTO PARTS/NAPA Auto Supply — Rochelle in Rochelle, Illinois (served by NAPA Chicago). Butz, who worked within the NAPA system for seven years prior to purchasing the Rochelle store, is a firm believer in providing his customers with good service. Below is his method for assuring his traditional and retail customers they are getting the best service NAPA can give.

My wife Jean and I have been the owners and managers of our NAPA AUTO PARTS store since July of 1983. And if there's one thing which sets our store apart from our competition it's service. It's important to both our traditional and our retail trade. But to be able to provide the right kind of service you have to have the right kind of information. Or knowledge, if you will. Knowledge about the products we sell, knowledge about our market and selling to it and knowledge about the various automotive systems. Having that information and being able to share it with our customers is an important service in itself.

That's why when we first found out about the NAPA Professional Program at an Owner's Conference in September of 1985, we signed up for the program that very same afternoon. You see, our customers not only come to us to purchase parts, they come to us for advice as well. They ask for our help in solving their repair problems. And, the reason they ask us is because they know that we do our best to be able to offer such advice. But we know that the only way to be able to offer it is to have the know-how — the knowledge I mentioned earlier.

To gain knowledge, you have to keep up with what is going on in the after-market industry. You have to be trained. That's where the NAPA Professional Program comes in. One section of the program focuses on different automotive systems — brakes, cooling systems, engines, electrical and ignition, chassis and suspension and power train — and that section is constantly being updated so that the latest repair and maintenance technology is included and available for NAPA personnel. For instance,



“...To be able to provide the right kind of service you have to have the right kind of information.”

an addition to the program has just been made recently. It's the Paint and Refinishing section which is now a part of the “Understanding Automotive Systems” portion of the program.

There's more to the NAPA Professional Program than just the “Understanding Automotive Systems” section, however. There's also the “Inside Selling Skills” section which provides five sections of information on proven selling techniques — Selecting the Right Part, Practicing Customer Courtesy, Increasing Sales, Handling Problems and Handling Resistance. Together,

these two sections work to make our customer service something which makes us stand out.

Things you might have never realized were important are and those are the things taught in the program. How quickly the phone is answered for example. And the tone of voice used when answering. When the phone is picked up on the first or second ring and the voice is enthusiastic, it makes a difference. Just as being able to locate the correct part and to do so quickly makes a difference in how customers regard the extras you can provide and, in the end, regard your store.

Now, the combination of the two sections or the whole program has made a noticeable difference in the way our employees are handling our customers. There's been a big improvement in our countermen's ability to handle customer questions and to give good advice. More importantly, my customers are noticing the difference and letting us know they