

MIKE SHAD FORD AWARDED FLORIDA'S TOP QUALITY AWARD

April 15, 1996
Jacksonville, Florida

Mike Shad Ford, the largest new vehicle retailer in North Florida has just been awarded the Florida Governor's Sterling Award for Performance Excellence. Mike Shad Ford is one of only twenty-eight Ford dealerships in the United States ever to win Ford's highest award for customer satisfaction – The Chairman's Award – four times.



In 1995 the Florida-based consulting firm, Competitive Technologies, Inc. (CTi), led by Bob Seemer, conducted a Malcolm Baldrige and Florida Sterling based assessment and developed an action plan to significantly improve corporate performance as measured by the Key Performance Indicators of the President's Leadership Scorecard. Elements of the CTi Success Plan included:

1. A Strategic Plan to position Mike Shad Ford to be the largest Ford dealership in the Southeast. The CTi Golden Thread process was used to connect every employee to strategic goals.
2. Process management to define and systematically improve all key processes.
3. Six sigma training to include the use of statistical tools and CTi's Quality Improvement and Control (QIC) Storyboard methodology.
4. Human Resource Planning (HRP) to integrate the needs of the business with workforce capacity.
5. Quality Function Deployment (QFD) to solidify the linkage between external customers and internal processes.
6. Systematic management reviews, based on CTi's "One-Page QIC Story" to evaluate progress and recognize success.

Following is a summary of the Mike Shad Ford management system.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

In essence, our mission statements declares that the energies and resources of the entire Mike Shad Ford organization be consistently dedicated to building the kind of caring, trusting, lifelong relationships that prove mutually satisfying to both the company and its customers.

This mission statement is the guiding force that sparked the company to become the first and only automotive dealership in Florida to receive the Governor's Sterling Award for excellence in total quality management and customer service.

GROWING ACCORDING TO PLAN

Recently renovated and significantly expanded to better serve our growing numbers of customers, Mike Shad Ford's twenty-acre facility at 770 Blanding Boulevard features 65,000 square feet of modern sales and service facilities where Jacksonville's largest inventory of new and used cars, trucks and vans are on display. In addition, we offer vehicle leasing and provide fleet sales to commercial enterprises, as well as offering vehicle maintenance, collision repair and auto painting services. The number of

employees has nearly doubled – from 103 to 192 – since the dealership was acquired by Mike Shad in 1984.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS

Mike Shad is personally active on several committees charged with the responsibility of developing innovative new marketing techniques and customer service practices and policies for all Ford Motor Company franchise dealers and currently serves as Florida Director to the National Automobile Dealers Association. He also served as chairman of Ford's National Dealer Council.

OUR NEW FORD AUTOCARE CENTER – GROWING NEW BUSINESS THROUGH OUR POSITIVE BRAND IDENTITY

Due to the innovative leadership demonstrated in its successful quality initiative program, Mike Shad Ford was chosen to be the first Ford dealership in Florida to be awarded a Ford AutoCare franchise by the Ford Motor Company.

The new Mike Shad Ford AutoCare Center is located at 670 Blanding Boulevard, five miles south of the Mike Shad Ford dealership, and features 12 service bays to provide warranty, light maintenance and service repairs for our customers in a “friendly neighborhood garage-type atmosphere.”

A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

With the creation of a new Customer Relations Department in 1986, Mike Shad Ford formulated a comprehensive plan to build a long term business success on time-honored values such as integrity and reliability combined with a total commitment to enduring customer satisfaction. This plan calls for:

- A full-time Director of Customer Relations.
- “Quality Teams” charged with developing and improving processes designed to maximize customer satisfaction.
- Solid two-way communications with customers that provide feedback not only on how we can correct problem areas, but also on how we can initiate positive new processes and programs that build greater customer satisfaction.
- In this regard, it should be noted that the directives provided by the Governor's Sterling Award complement our own mission statement and help us to focus on practical methods of achieving never-ending quality improvement for our customers.

OUR CUSTOMERS ARE THE KEY

We employ 13 standards developed by Ford Motor Company and the National Ford Dealer Council as our guideline for consistently excelling in customer relations management. Monitoring customer concerns through our computerized customer handling system helps us to resolve issues and prevent recurrence.

We also use market research and customer satisfaction surveys to identify the reasons people purchase specific automobiles and the elements required to satisfy those customers. Our focus on quality, training and customer care is generating the loyal owner base we have been striving to develop, as evidenced by the fact that 38% of the new vehicles purchased from us are through customers who had previous positive experiences with our dealership.

WORKING FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

We consider it part of our responsibility as a good corporate citizen to continually assess environmental issues that may require a change in the way we do business or involve a need to improve a specific area of performance. These may include public health and safety issues, environmental protection, waste management, disposal of hazardous materials, and such. We comply with all local, state and federal guidelines associated with the use of hazardous materials.

Our employees are encouraged to participate in a variety of community activities and boards. Dues to professional and community organizations are paid for by the company. Some of the many organizations we support locally are Rotary International, The Cummer Art Museum, Chamber of Commerce, Children's Home Society, Florida-Georgia Blood Alliance, Jacksonville American Red Cross, Jacksonville Food Bank, Leadership Jacksonville, Wolfson Children's Hospital, as well as sponsoring community youth athletic teams and marathons.

STRIVING FOR CONSISTENTLY HIGHER LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE

We have grown in our organizational and communications skills as well as increasing our customer satisfaction index. The results of our assessment and feedback from the Sterling Council are taking our company to its next level of quality performance: capability development.

We are beginning to manage change involving multiple processes for quantum leaps in performance. Our strategic management process is simple: Goals and objectives are established annually by our quality leadership team based on our mission, core values and guiding principles, then communicated via departmental meetings soliciting employee feedback.

A CARING COMMITMENT TO EVERYONE IN OUR COMPANY, TOO

Low employee turnover is a key in building enduring relationships with our customers. That's why we make a considerable investment in the training and career progress of all our employees.

A cross-functional human resources team develops our training curriculum for each employee group as well as designing our new employee orientation. This helps ensure that resources invested in employee training are properly focused. Over half of our employees have been trained to serve on quality improvement teams.

Because of our reputation for fairness, equitable compensation, excellent training programs, a certified drug-free workplace, and an atmosphere that promotes teamwork, we have regular inquires from successful employees at other dealerships who want to work with us.

THE FUTURE

As we look to the future for our company and our customers, we will continue to build caring, trusting, lifelong relationships, recognize customers' needs, and strive to exceed their expectations.

For more information, please contact
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