Service Advisor Hiring Kit

50 Interview Questions, Job Description Template, Scorecard, KPIs and 30-Day Onboarding Plan

Built for auto repair shop owners, managers and operators hiring service advisors.

How to use this kit

- Use the job description template to define the role before posting it.
- Pick 10 to 12 interview questions from the question bank. Do not ask all 50 in one interview.
- Score each candidate using the scorecard, not gut feeling only.
- Use the KPI checklist to define what success looks like in the first 90 days.
- Use the onboarding plan to help the new advisor learn workflow, customer communication and shop systems.

Service Advisor Job Description Template

Role summary

We are looking for a service advisor to manage customer communication, bookings, repair orders, estimates, approvals, follow-ups and daily workflow between customers, technicians and the front desk.

Core responsibilities

- Greet customers and understand their vehicle concerns.
- Create accurate repair orders and collect the right customer and vehicle details.
- Coordinate bookings, technician schedules and daily job flow.
- Explain estimates, timelines and recommended repairs clearly.
- Get customer approvals before work begins.
- Keep customers updated during the repair process.
- Prepare invoices and support payment handoff.
- Follow up after service and help increase repeat bookings.

Useful skills

- Clear communication and strong customer handling.
- Basic understanding of repair shop workflow.
- Comfort using shop software, CRM tools or scheduling systems.
- Organized, calm under pressure and able to prioritize.
- Commercial awareness without being pushy.

50 Service Advisor Interview Questions

Pick the questions that match your shop. A first interview usually needs 8 to 10 questions. A second interview can focus on scenarios, software use and KPIs.

Customer communication

1. How would you explain an unexpected repair cost to a customer?
2. How do you handle a customer who is angry about a delay?
3. How would you explain a technical repair to someone with no automotive knowledge?
4. Tell me about a time you turned an unhappy customer into a satisfied one.
5. How do you build trust with a first-time customer?
6. What would you do if a customer says another shop quoted less?
7. How do you keep customers updated during a long repair?
8. How would you handle a customer who feels they are being upsold?

Repair order and workflow

9. What information should be included in a repair order?
10. How do you make sure technician notes are clear enough for the customer?

11. How would you prioritize jobs when technicians are fully booked?
12. What would you check before handing a job to a technician?
13. How do you avoid missed approvals or unclear repair instructions?
14. How would you manage a job that needs parts before work can continue?
15. What would you do if a technician finds extra work after the job has started?

Estimates, approvals and sales

16. How would you present a high-value repair estimate to a customer?
17. How do you balance customer trust with selling recommended work?
18. What is your approach when a customer declines an important repair?
19. How would you explain urgent repairs versus future maintenance?
20. How do you ask for approval without sounding pushy?
21. What would you do if the final invoice is higher than the first estimate?
22. How would you increase average repair order value in an ethical way?

Scheduling and daily operations

23. How do you manage a day when too many customers arrive at once?
24. How would you handle a customer who arrives late for an appointment?
25. How do you decide which jobs should be booked first?
26. What would you do if a promised completion time cannot be met?
27. How do you keep the front desk and workshop aligned throughout the day?
28. How would you reduce missed appointments or no-shows?

Software, CRM and follow-ups

29. What shop software, CRM or scheduling tools have you used before?
30. How do you keep customer and vehicle records accurate?
31. How would you use reminders to bring customers back for future service?
32. What information should be recorded after every customer interaction?
33. How would you use software to track open jobs, approvals and follow-ups?

Conflict and pressure handling

34. Tell me about a time you had to deal with an upset customer.
35. How do you stay calm when the phone, front desk and technicians all need you at once?
36. What would you do if a customer accuses the shop of damaging their vehicle?
37. How would you handle a technician who disagrees with how you explained a repair?
38. What would you do if a customer refuses to pay for approved work?
39. How do you recover when you make a mistake with a customer?

KPIs and performance

40. What KPIs would you track to measure your own performance?
41. How would you improve quote-to-repair-order conversion?
42. How would you increase repeat bookings without annoying customers?
43. How would you help improve customer reviews?
44. What does a successful day look like for a service advisor?

Culture and fit

45. Why do you want to work in an auto repair shop environment?
46. How do you like to receive feedback?
47. What kind of manager helps you perform best?
48. How do you work with technicians who are under pressure?
49. What would previous coworkers say you are best at?
50. What would you need to learn in your first 30 days to be successful here?

Candidate Scorecard

Score each area from 1 to 5. Add notes immediately after the interview while the conversation is fresh.

Area	What to look for	Score 1 to 5	Notes
Customer communication	Clear, calm, trustworthy and practical		
Repair order discipline	Collects details, documents clearly and avoids confusion		
Estimate explanation	Can explain cost, urgency and value without pressure		
Scheduling judgement	Can prioritize jobs and manage customer expectations		
Software comfort	Can use CRM, booking or shop management tools		
Follow-up mindset	Understands reminders, reviews and repeat bookings		
Pressure handling	Stays organized when the shop is busy		
Team fit	Works well with technicians, managers and front desk		

Service Advisor KPI Checklist

Use these KPIs to define the role clearly. Pick the ones that matter most to your shop.

KPI	What it measures	Target / notes
Quote-to-repair-order conversion	How often estimates become approved jobs	
Average repair order value	Revenue per completed job	
Hours sold per repair order	How well labor is presented and approved	
Customer update response time	How quickly customers get clear updates	
Approval turnaround time	How fast approvals are requested and recorded	
Exit scheduling rate	How often customers book their next visit before leaving	
Review request rate	How often happy customers are asked for reviews	
Comeback or complaint rate	Whether communication and expectations are clear	

First 30-Day Onboarding Plan

Period	Focus	Checklist
Week 1	Shop workflow and systems	Learn services, customer intake, booking flow, job cards, estimates, invoices and customer records.
Week 2	Customer communication	Practice estimate explanations, updates, approval calls, declined work and handoff to technicians.
Week 3	Daily operations	Manage live bookings, open jobs, follow-ups, parts delays, customer updates and technician handoffs.
Week 4	Performance and improvement	Review KPIs, customer feedback, quote conversion, follow-up process and training gaps.

AutoGMS Workflow Setup Checklist

- Create service advisor user access.
- Add booking categories and appointment slots.

- Set up job card templates for common services.
- Create estimate and invoice templates.
- Add customer follow-up reminders.
- Track open jobs, approvals and completed invoices.
- Monitor advisor KPIs such as follow-up completion, quote conversion and repeat bookings.

Final hiring notes

A strong service advisor is not just a front desk person. They protect customer trust, keep jobs moving and help the shop turn estimates into approved work. Use this kit to hire for communication, organization and operational discipline.