

Connect

CRISP Phone Skills

Getting your calls connected is step one in turning callers into customers. And the numbers back up why this matters: **The average dealership connects with just 56% of incoming Sales calls and 59% of incoming Service calls.** That means roughly 4 out of every 10 callers never reach someone who can help them.

MAN THE PHONES

Improvement starts with proper staffing on your BDC or sales team, so somebody's always available to grab the phone. But staffing alone won't fix it, overlapping schedules or loose processes can still let calls fall through. Build in a rotation for lunches and breaks, so the front desk is never empty.

QUALITY OF CONVERSATION

Here's the thing to obsess over: making sure callers actually get to someone equipped to help them. Just because the phone was answered doesn't mean the call was "connected" — that only counts once the caller's needs are addressed by the right person.

WARM TRANSFER

When an agent gets a call outside their department, have them transfer it to a manager the right way. Something like: "I would love to transfer you to our manager who can properly address all of your questions. Give me one second and I'll make sure they are available." Then, once the agent comes back on the line: "Thanks for being so patient, Martha, our manager will be able to assist you from here. Have a great day!"

PHONE BRIDGE

A phone menu is another solid way to increase your connection rate, since it routes callers to the right department before anyone even picks up: "press 1 for sales, 2 for service, 3 for parts, or 0 for the operator." Right now, the average hold time across dealerships runs over **3 minutes**, and about **28% of unconnected callers give up and hang up while on hold** — a good phone bridge is what keeps people from getting stuck in that gap.

HOW TO GET STARTED TODAY:



Keep someone on the phones at all times, no exceptions.



Treat answering quickly as non-negotiable — don't let it ring past 3 times, and whatever you do, don't route callers to voicemail. Customers don't wait around once they hit voicemail.



Too slammed to talk? Still pick up and promise a callback ASAP.

Don't put obstacles between you and your prospects. Stay reachable, answer the phone, and make taking care of the caller as your top priority.

