

AkzoNobel Professional Consulting Services Coaches Terry Cullen Chevrolet to Achieve KPI Success

AkzoNobel

by **Autobody News Staff**

Just like a sports coach can make all the difference in leading his team to victory, **Terry Cullen** of *Terry Cullen Chevrolet* in Jonesboro, GA, sees his relationship with AkzoNobel like that of a coach. The sports metaphor is an easy one for Cullen to embrace.

Cullen's dad and his two uncles played hockey professionally in their native Canada. After their professional sports careers, the brothers became owners of Chevrolet dealerships. As a result, Cullen grew up in the business, working for his dad during his high school and college years.

After graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in business, he sold cars in Windsor, Canada, and Detroit and worked his way up to become a sales manager for a Pontiac and Buick dealership in Lapeer, MI.

His career evolved to focus on the finance side of dealerships, and Cullen credits his "persistence removes resistance" drive for landing him an opportunity to own a dealership with a move to the Atlanta suburbs in 1990.

Terry Cullen Chevrolet began in Morrow, GA, but in seven short years—fueled by the climate of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics—grew to its current Jonesboro location. The dealership offers new and used car sales, along with service, parts and a body shop.

With Cullen's strong business and finance side, he was a skilled entrepreneur. But his knowledge of body shop operations was where he needed the most support.

Enter AkzoNobel. Just as a sports coach guides, mentors and helps achieve goals never thought possible, AkzoNobel became Cullen's personal coach.

Cullen relied on AkzoNobel and its professional consulting services to make a key difference in the life of his body shop.

"Several years ago, we were moving on from a competitive waterborne refinish system. We interviewed many paint companies and Sikkens was the clear winner. But the product is just the beginning. What continues to blow our minds is the business and technician support AkzoNobel provides to its Sikkens customers," Cullen said.

The timing couldn't have been better. Cullen had recently promoted a team member, **Bart Benedetti**, into the body shop manager role. With a strong work



AkzoNobel's professional consulting services helped **Terry Cullen**, left, and his body shop manager, **Bart Benedetti**, right, increase their net profit goals within the first year of working with the AkzoNobel team.

ethic, Benedetti quickly rose through the ranks at Terry Cullen Chevrolet but didn't have a lot of body shop experience.

AkzoNobel's team met with Cullen, his son, **Drew Cullen**, and his new body shop manager weekly to set goals and develop a growth plan, not to mention train Benedetti on all of the Sikkens products.

"They helped us develop blueprints for success for our entire body shop, and just as importantly, they held us accountable for keeping timelines we commit to," said Cullen of his experience. "They're almost like a board of directors for us. The level of professional consulting that we received from AkzoNobel took us from zero to hero in one year, and it cost us nothing. We're profitable, we're growing and we're smiling."

The AkzoNobel "dream team" was made up of **Ryan Ross**, **Joey Pape** and **Drew Holdren**. They helped to establish 17 key performance indicators for Benedetti to improve, and in working with AkzoNobel, they increased average sales per employee from \$14,500 to \$17,600.

"They held Bart's hand through 'business school,'" said Cullen of AkzoNobel's professional consulting services.

Cullen had experience in working with 20 Groups, but he said AkzoNobel's body shop knowledge and experience was key because it was an area he wanted to focus on growing.

During their meetings, the AkzoNobel team taught Benedetti how to read financial statements, and they even helped the Terry Cullen Chevrolet body shop team lay out a mutual action plan. The

plan outlined training, SWOT analysis and action items for meeting clearly defined goals for keeping their eyes on the "puck" while building accountability.

They drilled down to specifics by first analyzing the company's current gross profit, along with determining what would be an achievable net profit goal. By laying a path, they built a model to achieve it. They also broke down sales and costs for labor, parts, materials and sublets.

From AkzoNobel's perspective, it looks forward to providing support to an existing body shop's team and cultivating strong employees and leaders, such as Benedetti.

"Thank you for your time today and allowing AkzoNobel to become a part of helping Bart in his new role," read one email from Pape to Cullen. "I appreciate your trust in AkzoNobel to be a part of his training."

Along with relying on AkzoNobel's professional consulting services, Terry Cullen Chevrolet uses all Sikkens paint and clear products and has full confidence in its line of products and high customer satisfaction.

Just like a sports team looks forward to a winning season, Cullen is grateful for his winning season: improving his body shop's KPIs and building the leadership confidence of his body shop manager.

"Their consulting services were a distinguishing factor," said Cullen of his decision to choose AkzoNobel over other refinishing companies, and credited it as a clear competitive advantage. Score one for the AkzoNobel dream team.

Terry Cullen Southlake Chevrolet

Location: Jonesboro, GA

(770) 968-4444

www.terrycullen.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair

Facility Employees: 75

In Business Since: 1990

Number of Locations: One

Production Space:

10,700 square feet



Bart Benedetti said the quality of the Sikkens ColorScala Pro is the "best color matching capability" he's ever seen.



Terry Cullen Chevrolet's comebacks are next to zero, thanks to Sikkens' exceptional paint quality.

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