



BY RICK MCCORMICK

# Bishops, Badges, and Blenders!

True servants with a heart to make people and the industry at large better are priceless and worthy to be honored.

**“People work for money but go the extra mile for praise, recognition, and rewards.” – Dale Carnegie**

Many dealerships have a variety of experience levels of individuals in the F&I office, which provides diversity of thought and perspectives. However, we often fail to recognize and reward those among us who have served us for decades and have contributed sacrificially and effectively.

Religious organizations give titles such as bishop that denotes honor for long-term service and thanks for enduring the many challenges of the years. The military provides additional badges, stripes, and other recognition that tells everyone they are a valued member of the team. Many companies provide token gifts such as blenders or a catalog of minimal gifts. This is a call to demonstrate intentional honor for the contributions of the long-term servants in your dealership. There are three common characteristics that are most seen among these servants. Let’s remind ourselves of their contributions.

## RESILIENT

They have been knocked down many times, and they just kept getting back up. If a manager has been in the car business for 20 years or more, they have endured multiple economic downturns and challenges. Those range from the events of 9/11, cash for clunkers, and the great recession of 2008. There were also many crises inside the dealership that would have caused others to quit and move on. And no matter how difficult the challenges and how many times they seemed to be down for the count, they always found a way to navigate to rise again and adjust to turn a negative into a positive. Their resilience was duplicated on others as they modeled how to stay in the game and learn from every challenge.

## RESOURCEFUL

Every dealership has tasks that are not in anyone’s specific job description and there is no monetary reward. Simply, the long-term servants in dealerships have consistently done what needed to be done: staying late to provide great service to the last customer of

the day or volunteering to work on their day off so someone else could make their son/daughter’s ball game or dance recital. Many times, they had the authority to have others do the things that were needed. However, they believe it is more important to model servanthood than to manager others to complete things that are not required, making the team better and the daily work experience more productive.

## ROLE MODEL

The most gracious act of someone that has reached a level of success is to help others that have come along behind them to reach their full potential as well. Every successful person has had positive influences in their life that gave them opportunities they may not have deserved, yet they were offered because someone saw potential in them. Many of the long-term servants in our industry have not forgotten that someone reached back to them and cleared a pathway to success that has provided them the opportunities to excel, and they want to pass that privilege on to others.

If you have those among you that have been in this industry for 20-plus years and are characterized by the traits listed, personally reach out to them and say thank you. We may not use titles such as bishop or some military style staircase of recognition, but it is imperative that we recognize the long-term contributions of those among us and the positive influence they have had on many, including ourselves. True servants with a heart to make people and the industry at large better are priceless and worthy to be honored. I have been privileged to have those around me that have selfishly forged a path for me to follow and I am forever grateful. How about you?

Join me on our journey to Peak Performance again next month. Keep climbing! ■

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rick McCormick is the national account development manager for Reahard & Associates, which provides customized F&I training for dealerships throughout the U.S. and Canada. He has more than 20 years of auto retail and finance experience.

