

Be
A
Part
Of...



*The Automotive
Industry*



Career Opportunities in the Automotive Industry

If you are looking for a rewarding career, the automotive industry represents an exciting opportunity. It is a dynamic industry that is constantly changing to meet the needs of a high-tech society. The automotive industry offers a wide variety of challenging, well-paying jobs for qualified, motivated people.

The modern dealership is a total transportation center, often with six or more separate operations under one roof: new-vehicle sales, used-vehicle sales, leasing and rentals, finance and insurance, service, body repairs and parts and accessories. The current trend in growth is toward multi-franchise dealerships.

Each department employs people with a wide variety of skills who work together as a team to make the dealership successful. The work is seldom dull. Every day is different in a dealership, and there is a great deal of pride and satisfaction in knowing you have done your job well as part of a successful team.

There are many entry-level jobs in an auto or truck dealership, but no one gets “stuck” in these jobs. Regardless of where you start, your willingness to work and your skills, experience, education and training are rewarded with better jobs and higher pay.

“The automotive industry suits my aptitude. Growing up, my dad worked on cars and I helped him. After I graduated from high school, I worked in the racing industry in North Carolina.”

*—Thaddeus Mitchell
Midlands Technical
College Graduate*

How far you go and how much you earn are up to you.

Administrative

Automobile dealers employ a variety of administrative staff necessary to support and coordinate operations. Competitive pay and opportunity for advancement are available to office managers, comptrollers, controllers, secretaries, accounting managers, cashiers, telephone operators, bookkeepers and clerks. Computers are used extensively in auto dealerships to assist in record keeping and accounting, new and used car sales, finance and insurance sales, parts inventory management and repair order scheduling.

Business Manager/Controller/Comptroller

The business manager is responsible for organizing, supervising and coordinating administrative operations, which include payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable, inventory control, benefits management and human resources.

Average Salary Range: \$41,500-\$74,500

General Manager – The top administrative post is general manager, who is often the dealership owner as well. He or she is responsible for the successful operation of the entire dealership. The position requires excellent business management skills and experience in all dealership departments.

Average Salary Range: \$95,000-\$205,000

Dealership Owner/President – The ultimate responsibility for the success of the dealership rests with the dealership owner/president. Franchises are awarded only to individuals who demonstrate that they will be good representatives of the manufacturers in their local communities. This takes proven automobile experience, management skills, personal integrity and financial backing.

Average Salary Range: Unlimited potential

“This industry offers a lot of opportunity for advancement and growth. Income level is as high or higher than in other professional industries.”

– Keith Hudson
Jim Hudson Automotive Group



Service

Service is one of the most important departments in a dealership. It is a key profit center with more people, facilities and equipment than any other department. It is also the key to success of a dealership. If customers do not receive courteous, prompt and reliable service, it is unlikely that they will come back.

Service Technician – Today's service technician job is more skilled and challenging than ever before. New cars and trucks are far more complex than they used to be, and a modern service bay is beginning to look like a science lab, with lots of expensive, sophisticated diagnostic and repair equipment, including computers.

Apprentice Technician – Under the close guidance of a qualified technician, the shop foreman and the service manager, the apprentice must learn the trade thoroughly in order to advance to the job of full technician.

Service Specialist – Because it is more difficult today for the service technician to make all necessary repairs on cars and trucks, many large dealerships employ service specialists who concentrate their skills in a single area, such as tune-up and diagnosis, electrical systems, front end and steering, automatic transmissions, air conditioning, brakes, radiators, diesel engines and light or heavy truck repairs.

Shop Manager/Foreman – The shop manager or foreman is usually the best service technician. He or she supervises and trains other technicians and makes sure that their finished work is done properly and promptly. Large service organizations may also have a service dispatcher who assigns the work to mechanics and directs the flow of cars through the shop.

Average Salary Range: \$28,000-\$49,300

Service Advisors – Service advisors meet the customer, write the repair order, estimate the cost and time needed to do the job, handle customer complaints and help bring new business into the service department. In addition to having a sound knowledge of automotive technology, service advisors must also be able to work with both the public and the shop technicians in a courteous, professional manner.

Average Salary Range: \$30,000-\$42,000

Service Manager – The overall responsibility for the reputation, efficiency and profitability of the service department rests with the service manager. He or she is responsible for controlling costs, building a loyal clientele, maintaining good employee relations, setting and obtaining sales and profit objectives and maintaining service records. This is a demanding management position that may lead to fixed operations director (in charge of service, parts and body shop departments), general manager or even dealership owner.

Average Salary Range: \$43,000-\$72,700

Salaries are a compilation of state and local averages. For more information, contact your local dealership as salaries will vary per dealership.



“I've seen many technological advances in our industry in the 20 years I've been a Dealer and I think the most exciting are yet to come. It will be a great time to be a part of the automotive industry.”

– South Carolina Automobile
Dealers Association Officer
David Herndon
Herndon Chevrolet in Lexington (above)

“There are a lot of incentives to work in the automotive industry — travel, good income, getting involved in community activities and getting to constantly meet new people.”

– Bruce Dyer, General Manager
Dick Dyer Toyota (below right)

“Due to the rapid changes in technology, we have to be innovative and look to the future.”

– Jim Bunt, General Sales Manager
Dick Dyer Toyota (below left)



Parts

A well-run, efficient parts department is essential to a successful dealership. Not only does it support service and sales operations, but many large parts departments aggressively sell parts and accessories to the public and to other dealers and independent repair shops.

Pick-up and Delivery Person/Parts Helper or Shipping/Receiving Clerk

A sound technical background, an ability to work with people, a keen sense of organization and attention to detail are the key qualities of good parts employees. You can enter this field by becoming a pick-up and delivery person, parts helper or shipping and receiving clerk. Often the best experience is acquired in the service department, where knowledge is gained in the frequency of repair and parts replacement of the cars and trucks sold by the dealership.

Average Salary Range: \$15,000-\$29,500

Counter Salespeople – Knowledge is important for counter salespeople who must not only be able to work with the service and body shop managers and technicians, but also act as troubleshooters for customers doing their own repairs. They must be able to suggest complimentary products and ensure that the customer is exposed to the full product line. They keep track of inventory, replenish stock when necessary, provide price quotes and keep up to date on new products.

Average Salary Range: \$18,000-\$50,000

Parts Manager – The overall responsibility for the parts department falls to the parts manager. He or she hires, trains, and supervises all department personnel. Controlling inventory, security, merchandising, displaying and advertising are responsibilities of the parts manager, as well as interfacing with commercial customers. Like all management positions in a dealership, it is a demanding, well-paying job that can lead to the position of general manager or dealer.

Average Salary Range: \$38,600-\$61,000

Sales

To keep the sales staff up to date on the latest product development and sales techniques, dealers and manufacturers conduct regular training sessions and encourage salespeople to take advantage of a wide variety of outside sales and business courses.

Automobile Sales People – Automotive sales people are front-line professionals representing the dealership, as well as the manufacturer of the products he or she sells. They must have an understanding of the products they sell, finance, insurance, state and federal laws, warranties and the automobile industry in general. Sales people are organized self-starters who can stick to a tough daily routine and prospect for new customers by telephone, mail and personal contacts. Most importantly, the sales staff should be excellent communicators who truly enjoy working with people.

Average Salary Range
\$23,800 to \$72,600

Qualifications

Must relate well with people, good communication skills, good math skills and can use computers.

Sales Managers – New-car and used-car sales managers plan, organize and coordinate the activities of their respective staff under the direction of a general sales manager, who ensures that the dealership meets sales quotas.

Average Salary Range: \$43,000 to \$97,500

Finance and Insurance Manager/Marketing Manager – The finance and insurance manager establishes relationships with financing and insurance companies and sells those products to vehicle purchasers. There may also be full-time customer relations and marketing managers to support the sales staff, in addition to a showroom receptionist or greeter.

Average Salary Range: \$51,000 to \$91,500


Qualifications

2-3 years in sales, computer skills, math skills, reading, writing, communication skills, and works well with people.



“Automobile dealerships offer numerous career paths including sales, mechanical and electronic technologies, management, human resources, accounting, clerical, marketing and customer relations. It is a challenging and rewarding business.”

— South Carolina
Automobile Dealers
Association Officer
John Jones
Jones Chevrolet in Sumter



“Few other industries can claim to be so close to the front edge of change and offer so many different job opportunities.”

— Sims Floyd
Director of Government
Relations and Field
Services
South Carolina
Automobile Dealers
Association

Entry Level Technician

Entry-level Technicians perform most maintenance services, like oil & filter changes, brake jobs, minor tune-ups, and tire work, etc. No experience to two years.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, science and computer skills, mechanical ability.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Operation of shop tools and lifts.
Physically demanding work.

Education

Some High School
Some Post-Secondary School Training
Some Manufacturer Training

Tool Investment

\$500 to \$2,000

Average Salary Range

\$16,640 to \$25,000

Professional Technician

Professional Technicians can perform all maintenance work, plus 75% of all major engine, transmission, electrical, heat & air conditioning, and suspension work. Some specialize in one or more of these areas. Two years to four years experience.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, science and computer skills, mechanical ability.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Operation of shop tools and lifts.
Physically demanding work.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
Some Manufacturer Training
Passed some ASE* tests

Tool Investment

\$2,000 to \$5,000

Average Salary Range

\$25,000 to \$45,000

Master Technician

Master Technicians can perform all maintenance and repair work. They often use high-tech and mathematical analysis methods to solve difficult repairs. They give guidance and training to lower level technicians. Five years plus experience. Usually specializing with one manufacturer.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, science and computer skills, mechanical ability.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Operation of shop tools and lifts.
Physically demanding work.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
All Manufacturer Training
Pass all ASE* tests

Tool Investment

\$6,000 to \$20,000

Average Salary Range

\$45,000 to \$110,000

Service writer/ASM

Service writer/ASM greets the customer and writes up the repair information, then dispatches it out to the technicians. They process all the paperwork on the job and are responsible for customer communications. Description of position is similar for Body Shop writers and appraisers.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, science and computer skills.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Good communication skills. Good understanding of the inner workings of the automobiles.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
Some Manufacturer Training

Tool Investment

None

Average Salary Range

\$29,600 to \$72,700



Parts Counterperson

Parts Counterperson looks up automotive parts requested by technicians using electronic parts catalogs. They must locate, obtain, and deliver the parts to the technician in a timely manner. They often sell parts “over-the-counter” directly to customers. Responsible for inventory control.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, science and computer skills

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Good communication skills. Good understanding of the inner workings of the automobiles.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
Some Manufacturer Training

Tool Investment

None

Average Salary Range

\$18,000 to \$50,000

Entry Level Body Repair

Entry Level Body Repair technicians can repair and paint minor damage to automobiles.

No experience to five years.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, mechanical ability and computer skills.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Operation of body repair tools, frame machine and lifts. Physically demanding work.

Education

Some High School
Some Post-Secondary School Training
Some Manufacturer Training

Tool Investment

\$500 to \$5,000

Average Salary Range

\$25,000 to \$45,000

Professional Body Repair

Professional Body Repair technicians can repair and paint minor and major damage to automobiles. Most will either specialize in body and frame repair or paint. Five years plus experience.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, mechanical ability and computer skills.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Operation of body repair tools, frame machine and lifts. Physically demanding work.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
All Manufacturer Training
Pass some ASE* tests
Pass some I-CAR** tests

Tool Investment

\$6,000 to \$20,000

Average Salary Range

\$45,000 to \$100,000

Service or Body Shop Manager

Service or Body Shop Managers oversee the total operations of the department including employees and overall customer care. Five years experience as a writer or technician.

Primary Job Skills/Conditions

Math, English, mechanical ability and computer skills.

Secondary Job Skills/Conditions

Good communication skills. Good understanding of the inner workings of the automobiles.

Education

High School
Post-Secondary School Training
Manufacturer Training
Pass some ASE* tests
Pass some I-CAR** tests

Tool Investment

None

Average Salary Range

\$45,000 to \$110,000

“I like to work with my hands. Plus, there is a lot of technology involved with cars today and I like technology.”

—Antwon Bryant
Midlands Technical College

*ASE = Automotive Service Excellence

**I-CAR = Inter-Industry Conference on Auto Collision Repair

Sources: NADA, Manufacturers Certification Programs, Salary information from Columbia and Lexington New Car Dealerships, Additional positions available, contact your local dealership for information.

Resources



526 Hampton Street, Columbia SC 29201
Phone: 803-252-0205 FAX: 803-252-5965

www.SCADA.org
(access local dealership websites here)



www.AYES.org



www.NADA.org



www.midlandstech.edu



Midlands Education & Business Alliance

www.mebasc.com

Midlands Education and Business Alliance does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in admission to or employment in its programs and activities.

Economic Contributions of South Carolina's New Vehicle Dealers

Dealers provide thousands of well-paying jobs in South Carolina

- + 326 - Current # of SC Franchised Dealerships
- 326 - Current # of SC Franchised Dealerships
- Representing 16.8% of 2007 total retail sales in SC
- \$9,149,000,000 Dealership retail sales in 2007
- 15,042 - Total number of people employed by SC Franchised Dealerships
- Representing 6.6% total retail employment
- 46 Average number of people employed per Dealership
- \$853 Average weekly earnings of a full-time Dealership employee in SC
- \$2,030,000 average annual payroll of a SC Dealership
- \$660,000,000 total all SC Dealerships Annual Payroll
- Representing 12.1% of total retail payroll in SC
- ◆ \$633 Average weekly wage for all workers in SC
- ✓ 65% of today's jobs require associate's degree or advanced training (technical skills); only 32% of today's 9th graders enter such programs
- ✓ 10% of today's 9th graders will lack skills needed for employment + 30% will drop out of the system before completing high school: i.e., 40% of today's students will vie for 15% of today's jobs which require minimum skills

Conclusion: Great careers with good pay are available in the retail automotive industry for high school/two-year college graduates.

Sources:

- + South Carolina Automobile Dealers Association
- National Automobile Dealers Association
- ◆ SC Employment Security Commission
- ✓ Pathways to Prosperity, Executive Summary
Updated: June 2008

"People will always need transportation, no matter what form, and we will always need technicians to repair them."

— Patrick Watson
Executive Vice President
South Carolina Automobile
Dealers Association



New Car Dealers Association of Columbia-Lexington

Bob Bennett Ford, Inc.
www.BobBennettFord.com
803.779.3673

Columbiana Chevrolet Hummer
www.columbianachevrolet.com
803.667.3867

Dick Dyer & Associates, Inc.
www.dickdyeronline.com
803.786.8888

Dick Dyer Toyota
www.DickDyerToyota.com
803.786.4111

Dick Smith Automotive Group
www.DickSmith.com
803.256.6600

Dick Smith Ford
www.dicksmithford.com
803.254.4000

Dodgeland of Columbia
www.DodgelandofColumbia.com
803.799.1900

Galeana Chrysler Jeep Kia
www.Galeanasc.com
803.779.7300

Hampton Automotive, Inc.
www.HamptonAutomotive.com
803.750.4800

Herndon Chevrolet, Inc.
www.HerndonChevy.com
803.359.2504

Honda Cars of Columbia
www.HondaCarsofColumbia.com
803.256.0156

Jim Hudson Pontiac—GMC
www.jimhudson.com
803.783.0110

Jim Hudson Hyundai
www.jimhudsonhyundai.com
803.799.1234

Jim Hudson Lexus/Saab
www.jimhudsonlexus.com
803.754.9500

Jim Hudson Toyota
www.jimhudsontoyota.com
803.407.5678

Love Chevrolet Company
www.love-chevy.com
803.794.9000

McDaniels Automotive Group
www.mcdanielsag.com
803.786.6400

Midlands Honda
www.midlandshonda.com
888.285.7642

Mike Addy Chrysler Jeep
www.addyauto.com
866.413.5358

Mike Addy Dodge
www.addyauto.com
803.359.4650

Saturn of Columbia
www.SaturnofColumbia.com
803.732.6500

Toyota Center
www.toyotacenter.com
803.796.6650

Wray Automotive
www.WrayAutomotive.com
803.799.6351



803.732.5258
www.mebasc.com