Mentor Onboarding Calendar   
for First 13 Weeks

This document is written for mentors, not managers or apprentices, to explain:

* What is expected of you at each stage of onboarding
* How to support the apprentice without burning yourself out
* When to coach, when to slow down, and when to escalate
* How to align your daily actions with the onboarding calendar

*This is not extra paperwork. It is a practical guide to protect you, the apprentice,   
and the program.*

## Core Mentor Principles During Onboarding

1. Safety overrides everything. No task is worth an injury or shortcut.
2. Learning comes before speed. Speed will come later.
3. Observed competence beats time served. Never sign off on what you haven’t seen.
4. Early escalation is success, not failure. Problems don’t fix themselves.
5. You are not alone. Leadership is responsible for backing you.

## Mentor Responsibilities During Onboarding

* Demonstrating and promoting safe behavior
* Providing daily supervision and guidance
* Modeling correct habits and professionalism
* Providing honest feedback
* Protecting the apprentice from being rushed
* Promoting taking notes, photos, and videos to reinforce learning
* Encouraging questioning
* Documenting apprentice progress and improvement opportunities

You are **not** responsible for:

* Fixing hiring mistakes
* Absorbing productivity losses silently
* Disciplining alone
* Deciding compensation

## Week-by-Week Mentor Guidance

### Weeks 1–2: Orientation, Safety, and Observation

**Your primary role:** Protector and model

**What to Do**

* Reinforce safety rules constantly, including why they exist
* Demonstrate correct PPE and tool use
* Introduce the apprentice to dealership structure and culture
* Walk the apprentice through shop layout and flow
* Encourage questions without judgment

**What NOT to Do**

* Allow hands-on work before safety gates clear
* Assume common sense equals safety
* Rush orientation because the shop is busy

**Watch For**

* Inattention during safety briefings
* Overconfidence or impatience
* Fear of asking questions
* Address and/or Escalate If
  + Safety rules are ignored
  + Attitude toward safety is dismissive

## Weeks 3–4: Entry-Level Task Exposure

**Your primary role:** Coach and gatekeeper

**What to Do**

* Encourage note-taking
* Demonstrate basic tasks slowly and correctly
* Use demonstrate → assist → perform (supervised) model
* Correct mistakes immediately and calmly
* Explain and reinforce torque, inspection, and cleanup standards

**What NOT to Do**

* Take over just to go faster
* Allow shortcuts “just this once”
* Overwhelm with too many new tasks

**Watch For**

* Sloppy habits forming
* Rushing or skipping steps
* Frustration when corrected
* Address and/or Escalate If
* Same mistakes repeat without improvement
* Resistance to feedback appears

## Weeks 5–8: Maintenance & Mechanical Foundations

**Your primary role:** Teacher and verifier

**What to Do**

* Explain how systems work, not just procedures
* Have apprentice teach back
* Require verification (visual inspections, torque checks, road tests)
* Increase repetition before adding complexity
* Introduce and review documentation together

**What NOT to Do**

* Assume understanding because work “looks done”
* Let advisors pressure you to rush

**Watch For**

* Gaps in understanding
* Quality drifting under pressure

**Address and/or Escalate If**

* Comebacks appear
* Apprentice becomes overwhelmed

## Weeks 9–13: Consolidation & Early Diagnostics

**Your primary role:** Developer and evaluator

**What to Do**

* Ask the apprentice to explain their thinking
* Walk through diagnostic logic together
* Encourage process thinking
* Begin stepping back slightly, but stay available and verify work

**What NOT to Do**

* Expect independent diagnostics yet
* Compare apprentice to other techs

**Watch For**

* Overconfidence without understanding
* Hesitation or loss of confidence
* Address and/or Escalate If
  + Diagnostic thinking does not improve
  + Confidence collapses after mistakes

## Using the 30/60/90-Day Reviews

**Your Input Matters**

* Come prepared with:
  + Specific examples (good and bad)
  + Skill areas completed vs. stalled
  + Safety and attitude observations
  + Your support needs

Avoid vague feedback like “doing fine.”

## How to Protect Yourself as a Mentor

* Ask for workload adjustments early
* Use the onboarding calendar to justify pacing
* Document concerns briefly and factually
* Request help before frustration builds

Burned-out mentors create burned-out apprentices.

## What Success Looks Like at 90 Days

By the end of onboarding, a strong apprentice:

* Works safely without reminders
* Accepts feedback without defensiveness
* Performs basic tasks consistently
* Understands expectations for Year 1

## Reminders

* You are shaping habits that will last decades.
* Going slower now prevents years of rework, comebacks, and frustration for you   
  and everyone else.
* If the onboarding calendar feels hard to follow, that’s a signal, not a failure.
* Ask for help. Hold the line. Teach the right way.

**Disclaimer:** *These materials have been prepared for informational purposes only. Nothing in the materials is intended to constitute legal advice. Consumers should contact their attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular legal matter. The presentation of this information is not intended to encourage concerted action among competitors or any other action on the part of dealers that would in any manner fix or stabilize the price or any element of the price of any good or service.*