PLAYBOOKS

YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS WITH A NEW TECH

Most of what keeps a good tech gets decided in the first three months.

BEFORE DAY ONE

- Have the truck, tools, uniform, logins and paperwork ready.
- Assign one person responsible for this hire's first 90 days.
- Check license, certification and driving records the way your state and insurer require.

FIRST 30 DAYS: WATCH AND LEARN

- Ride with your best tech, across different job types.
- Learn the app, the standard visit and how to document.
- Check in at the end of week 1 and every week after.

DAYS 31 TO 60: DO WITH HELP

- Run simpler calls, with a ride-along partner or quick phone backup.
- Do one scored ride-along.
- Practice presenting options and pricing.

DAYS 61 TO 90: DO ALONE

- Run a full route, with a second ride-along for review.
- Use the skills matrix to choose what they learn next.
- Hold a 90-day talk: what's working, what isn't, where they want to go.

KEEP THEM

- Write down a visible career path: what it takes to move up, and what it pays.
- Ask regularly what would make them leave and what keeps them here.
- Fix the small things they complain about, like tools, parts and routes.
- Recognize good work where the team can see it.

THE FIRST DAY SETS THE TONE

Picture what the first day feels like for a new hire. Too often, they show up to a shop where nobody knows they're starting, they get handed a stack of forms and then they're told to ride along with whoever's available.

Do it differently. Have someone greet them. Give them a clean uniform and working logins. Introduce them to the team. Take them to lunch. Have the owner spend ten minutes telling them why the company exists and what good work looks like here. It costs almost nothing, and they'll tell their family about it that night.

ASSIGN A REAL MENTOR

A mentor isn't simply whoever has room in their truck. Choose someone patient, skilled and willing. Pay them a little extra for it. Give them a checklist, so that the new hire learns the same things regardless of who's teaching. Meet with the mentor weekly to ask how the new hire is doing.

TEACH THE COMPANY, NOT JUST THE TRADE

Experienced techs often arrive with bad habits from other shops, and they can be reluctant to change. Teach your way of doing things, even to veterans:

- How to arrive at a home
- How your paperwork and app work
- How you present options and prices
- What your warranty and callback rules are
- Who to call when something goes wrong

Explain why you do it that way. Experienced people follow reasons more readily than rules.

CHECK IN ON PURPOSE

Use the same questions at week 1, week 2, day 30, day 60 and day 90:

- Is this job what we said it would be?
- Who's been helpful, and who hasn't?
- What don't you have that you need?
- What's confusing?
- Is there anything that makes you doubt this was the right move?

The last question matters most. Doubts you hear about in week three can be solved. Doubts you hear about when they quit can't.

SET CLEAR MILESTONES

Tell the new hire exactly what they need to show at each stage, and what changes when they do. That might be running solo calls, taking on on-call shifts, or a pay increase. A clear target gives them something to reach for.

WATCH FOR EARLY WARNING SIGNS

Late arrivals, missing paperwork, avoiding the mentor, or going quiet in the truck can each be early signs of trouble. Address them that week. If someone isn't working out, be honest and decide early. Dragging it out is unfair to everyone.

LEARN FROM EVERY HIRE

Track how each new hire came to you, how long they stayed and how they performed. After a year or two, you'll know which sources bring in people who last, and you can spend your recruiting time accordingly. Read how to keep good technicians for what happens after day 90.

Sources: Service ProCall program guidance.

Published by Service ProCall. Last reviewed November 2026. General information, not legal advice.

BEST PRACTICES: HIRING AND KEEPING GOOD TECHS

MAKE IT A HABIT

What good looks like

> You know your turnover rate and why people leave.

> Every new tech has a 90-day plan and a mentor.

> Pay, growth and recognition are clear and written down.

The habits

1. Hire for attitude and teach the trade, with a clear path from helper to lead.
2. Plan the first 90 days: ride-alongs, checklists and weekly check-ins.
3. Hold stay interviews with your best people before they think about leaving.
4. Make pay plans simple enough to explain on one page.
5. Use a fair scorecard, and coach before you correct.
6. Remove the frustrations that make techs quit, such as bad routes, missing parts and chaotic days.

Signs it's time to get help

- You lose more than one in five techs a year.
- New hires quit in the first few months.
- Techs complain about routes, callbacks or the office.

How one shop did it: Barron Heating AC Electrical & Plumbing (Ferndale, Washington). Built its own 15-week technician school with classroom, lab and field time, and takes six students per class. Nearly 40 graduates, retention above 90%, every graduate passing the NATE and EPA exams, and warranty callbacks reportedly cut in half. Contracting Business, July 15, 2026

Where we fit: We don't place techs. ProCall Field helps with what makes them stay: organized days, fair scorecards and training.

More on hiring and keeping good techs