



Master Samurai Tech
LEADING APPLIANCE EXPERTS

HOW TO BUILD AN APPLIANCE REPAIR TECHNICIAN

GROWING YOUR TEAM WITH MASTER SAMURAI TECH

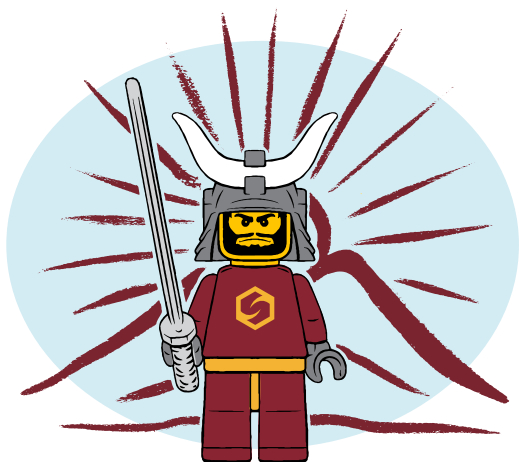
Nearly every appliance repair business owner we talk with these days is swamped with service calls. While it's great to be busy, if you lack the workforce to get through jobs quickly, you'll soon be scheduling service calls further and further out. Customers value a quick turn-around when their appliances are broken, so it doesn't take much of a delay for them to start shopping around for someone who can help sooner.

The solution is obvious: hire more techs. Yet, as you already know, that's no easy task. Experienced techs are few and far between, and even if you find one looking for work, you can't be sure they'll be the right fit for your company.

- Many have habits or practices that won't be to your liking, and their technical abilities may not be as sharp as advertised. Ultimately, you're hiring the end result of someone else's training (if the tech was trained at all—many techs have experience but no real repair skills or technical knowledge, or worse yet their customer service and interpersonal communication abilities might be lacking).
- Techs with experience may also be resistant to taking additional training, since they believe themselves to be experts already.
- And you will have to pay them a higher salary right off the bat, before you know how skilled they are or whether they're a good fit.

We're not surprised then to have seen a steady increase in appliance repair companies opting to hire inexperienced applicants with potential—good personal skills, some mechanical aptitude, and the right attitude—and then training them in-house. With this approach, many companies have grown a team with consistent skills, practices and values, and for less money than it takes to find and hire more experienced techs.

Training new techs doesn't have to take up much of your time or money either. **You can *cost-effectively* outsource most of your training to Master Samurai Tech.**



Since 2014, we've been the training partner for hundreds of appliance businesses around the globe, training thousands of techs. We've learned how to train people with good potential so that they can independently run service calls on their own in as little as 3 months.

This guide will help you develop an internal system for building techs from scratch. The practices outlined here have proven successful for other companies, but we encourage you to experiment to find the best approach for your own.

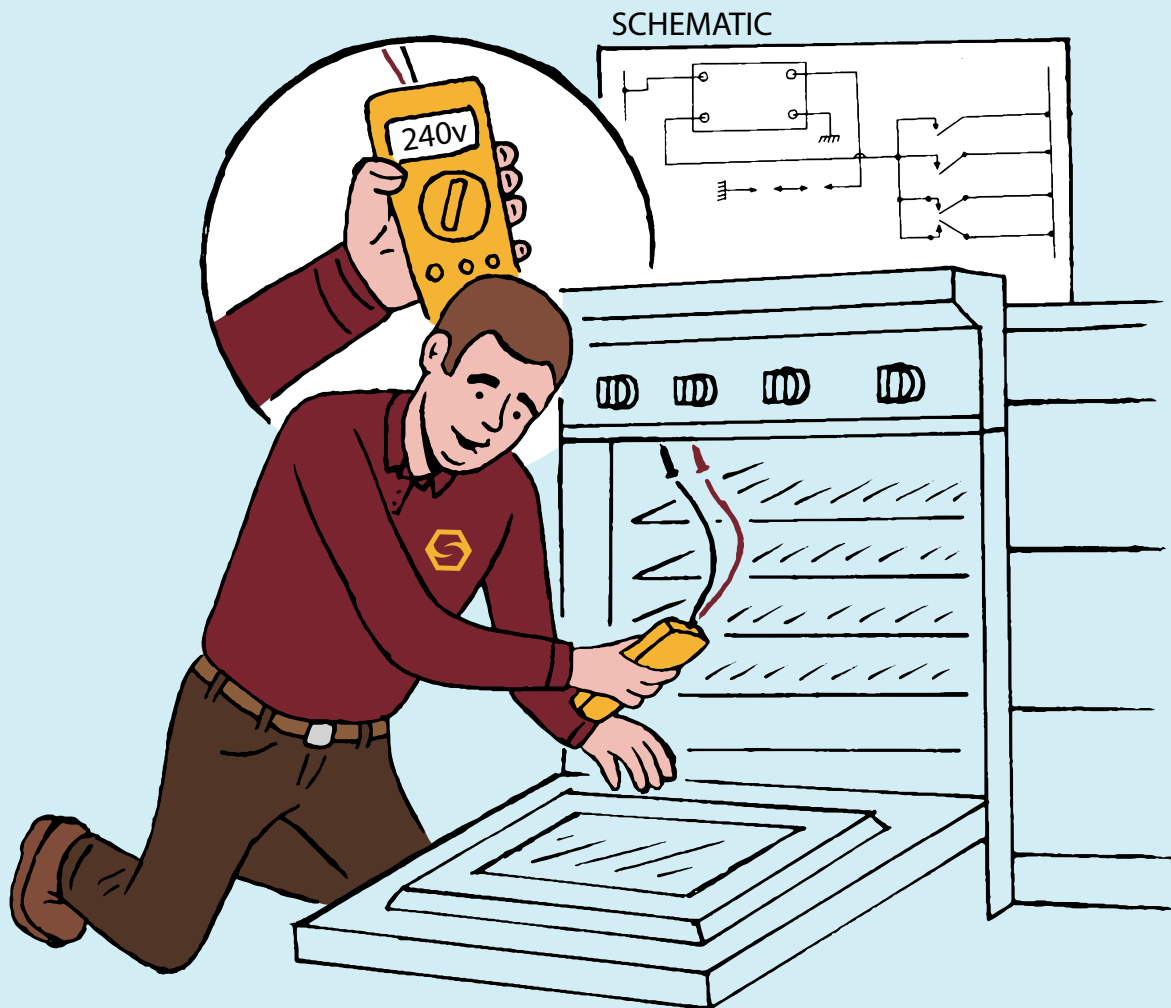
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Part 1: Hiring

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Master Samurai Tech has been a great partner to us by helping our franchisees hire the people they want.

Doug Rogers, Executive VP, Neighborly General Manager
(formerly President of Mr. Appliance LLC)

1 WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN HIRING.

You probably already know what you are looking for in terms of character: good work ethic, friendly, honest, presentable, etc. And over time, you've likely developed a second sense for reading people in interviews and knowing both how professional they'll be and how well they'll handle the customer service side of the job. But what about technical aptitude? Here's what we would look for in a good prospect:

Education and Grades

Applicants should possess a high school diploma or GED (at a minimum) with decent math and science grades. Decent grades can indicate both their interest in similar subject matter as well as their willingness to put in the work to learn. We recognize that there are many bright folks out there with good potential who didn't find success in an academic setting. So poor grades isn't an automatic "no."

That said, being able to do basic math is a good proxy for being able to learn electrical troubleshooting, a must for any technician. We've seen time and again that students who aren't comfortable with arithmetic and extremely easy algebra, such as being able to solve the formula $P = I^2 \times R$ when given the values of I and R, are limited in their troubleshooting ability. If a candidate had poor grades, you'll want to probe a little further for evidence of mathematical proficiency or other technical aptitude, *including* their willingness to ask for help during training.

Evidence of Technical Curiosity & Mechanical Proficiency

Most really successful techs have a similar background. Growing up, they liked taking things apart to "see how they work," then figuring out how to put them back together. They played with electronics kits and built things like models or rockets. As they got older, they started doing their own maintenance and repairs around the home, and they would challenge themselves by learning how to do new renovation projects for their home or car.

It isn't hard to find out if an applicant fits this profile. If it excites them to work with their hands and they take pride in their work, you just need to start them talking about their past technical and mechanical experience and their pride and enthusiasm will soon shine through. People can't help themselves when talking about their passions.

Relevant Training or Job Experience

If, during or after high school, the applicant worked and was successful in a similar trade, this is a good indicator that they can make it in appliance repair. Some of their skills may even be directly translatable. HVAC is obviously a very close fit, though experience in auto repair, manufacturing, construction, and other home services can also be useful.

Training of any kind, if undertaken voluntarily by the applicant, is also a good indicator, as this demonstrates a willingness to put in the work to learn. If that training happens to be technical or mechanical in nature—anything from IT to welding—all the better.

2 SETTING EXPECTATIONS IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION.

It is critical at the outset to let your prospective hires know that, once they're hired, they will be expected to complete training courses within a prescribed period of time. The details of this training period should be clear to the prospective hire and be put down in writing for all parties to consult later. The best way to do this is to specify your requirements in the job offer itself.

Business Case Study

One of our clients, a self-servicing dealer with over two dozen techs, stipulates in the job description that new hires will earn their certification in all courses included in our "Technician's Bundle" within 90 days of their hiring, and failure to do so is grounds for termination. The job description also stipulates that, during this probationary training period, the tech will be paid a lower salary than they'll receive once they are running service calls.

Before training begins, our client also sits down with every trainee to ensure they understand the time commitment involved in completing the courses in our "Technician's Bundle." Trainees know they will be given 2-3 mornings a week at the office to work on the courses, and if they need more time for training, they know there is an expectation that they will continue the courses outside work. All of this is set down in their hiring contract, thus protecting our client if anyone cries foul at a later time.

By setting expectations early, our client ensures only serious applicants make it through the hiring process. They also ensure that the training period will be completed in a timely manner, while quickly weeding out any techs who won't make the grade. This saves them a lot of time, money and headaches. *Note: If the trainee is slow to learn but otherwise shows promise, the employer can still choose **not** to fire them.*

Protecting Your Investment

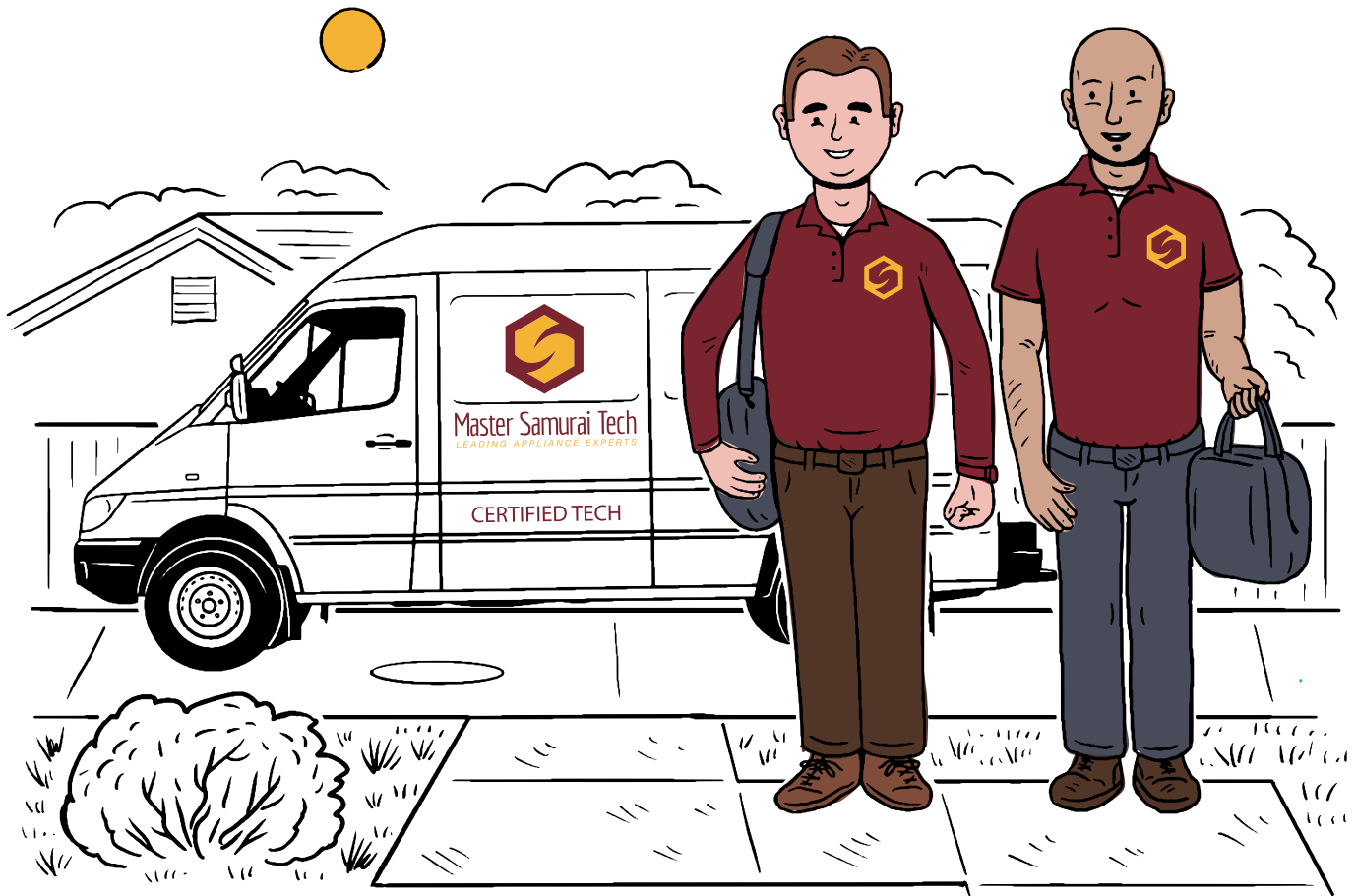
If a trainee is not working out and stops before taking the Midterm Exam of Core Appliance Repair Training, the course can be transferred to another tech for \$75. (If they take the Midterm Exam, we must look on the course as "used.") Thus, it is a good idea to have the tech pause before taking the Midterm exam to evaluate their efforts to-date and their likelihood of becoming a successful technician. That said, your trainees will still have a lot of room for improvement at this point before they become technicians, so look more for attitude or fit problems (an unwillingness to train, poor emotional control, unprofessional, disliked by team, etc.)

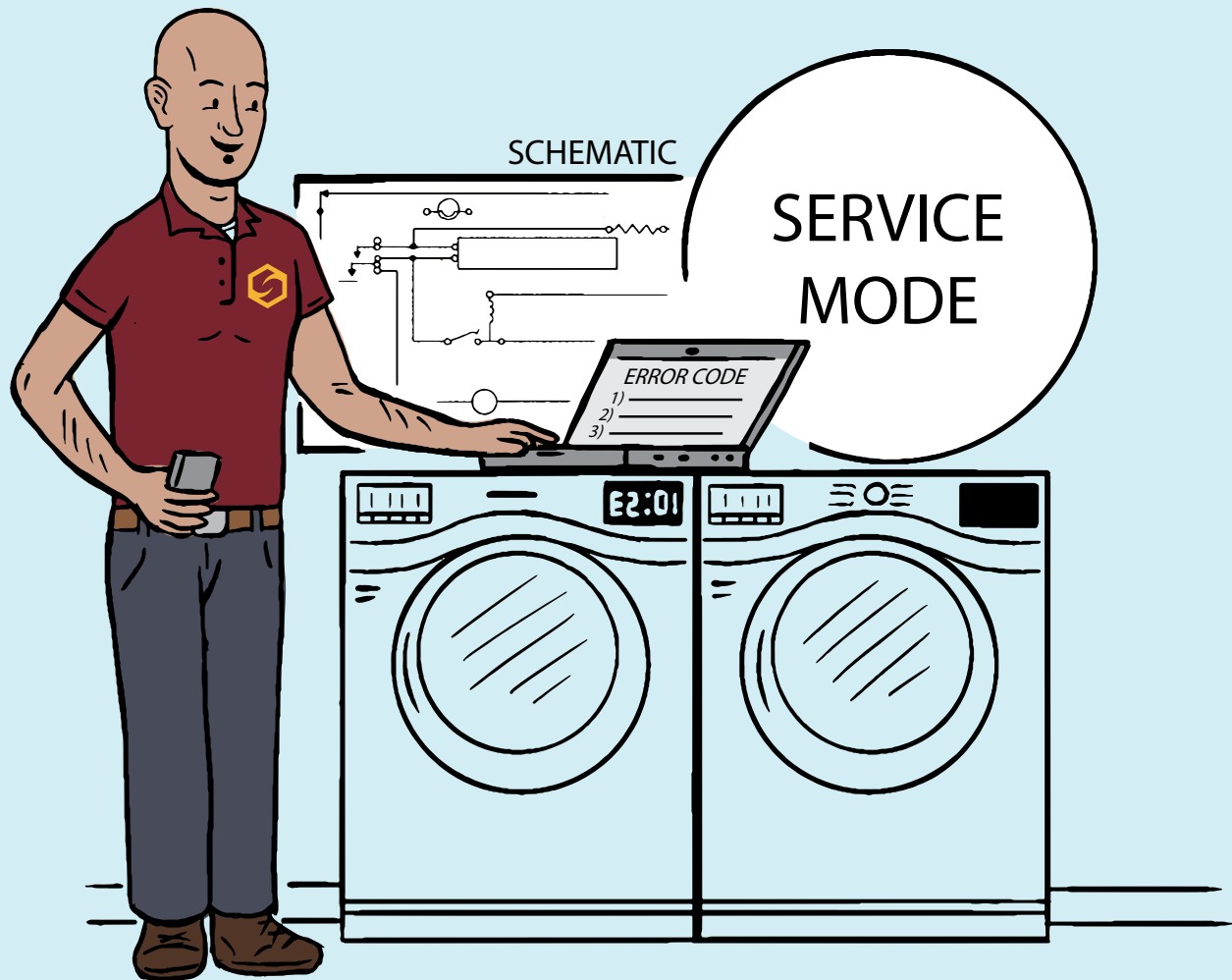
You may also consider stipulating that, if a tech quits within a certain time period (say, the first year of employment), the cost of the training courses will be deducted from their final paycheck. Be aware that your state labor laws may influence exactly how you handle the above, so speak to a managing attorney before taking this step.

These examples are just to give you an idea of how you can structure and communicate your training expectations. The exact details are up to you, but the most important thing is to **set the expectations at the outset** and have them **in writing**, either as part of the hiring contract or as a separate training plan / agreement.

3 PRO-TIP #1: RIDE-ALONGS BEFORE YOU TRAIN.

Before you invest in training a new hire, have them do some ride-alongs with an experienced tech. This can be just for a few days or a week, long enough to give your new hire a first-hand view of the job. You want to make sure, before you pay for their training, that they feel appliance repair is still a good fit and that they're still excited to learn the trade. This also buys you some time to verify their professionalism and their comfort level around customers before committing to them. In a way, you aren't even delaying training, as they will be learning some of the basics from the experienced tech they're shadowing.





Part 2: Training



Master Samurai Tech saves us a minimum of 1-2 months per person between training and ready to earn.

Brandon Tidwell, Owner, All Better Appliance

4 THE PHASES OF TRAINING.

Okay, you've hired a tech who has great people skills and promising technical aptitude, and they've accepted your requirement to become Master Samurai Tech Certified. What comes next?

It helps to think of the four phases of training your new hires will go through.

TRAINEE

(FIRST 3 MONTHS)

Do online courses, ride-alongs, and hands-on practice in the shop as an apprentice paired with an experienced tech.

TRANSITION

(MONTHS 3 - 6)

Begin taking service calls independently, while completing the courses and continuing ride-alongs and shop work.

ROOKIE

(MONTHS 6 - 9)

Run calls independently 5 days a week, albeit with lots of supervision. Calls/day should gradually increase to a full schedule.

INDEPENDENT TECH

Supervision can gradually shift to the amount you give to all of your techs. Continuing education is critical for all your techs.

We recognize that not every appliance repair company has a full-on “shop” with workbenches and empty space for major appliances to be worked on, but we highly recommend techs get some hands-on practice outside of customers' homes. It could be in your parts warehouse, a garage, or an in-office kitchen— as long as it's possible to work on some major appliances there (such as cheap appliances bought off Craigslist, or appliances donated by customers who opt to replace instead of repair), it'll suffice. Water and gas hookups may also be a challenge, but techs can still practice disassembly and their electrical measurements without them.

It's also important to remember that these time periods are “optimal,” so don't try to rush through it. Some hires will learn faster, some slower, which doesn't mean the latter won't be a good tech - you'll have to assess each trainee individually. For example, we've had some trainees who were slow to get through the training, but they had such strong personal and communication skills that their employer knew it was worth giving them extra time. Other folks have the maturity and talent to start running calls sooner than is typical (we do offer some tips for streamlining the training at the end of section 8).

Next, we'll unpack what should happen during these periods.

5 TRAINEE - THE ONLINE COURSES.

The Training Mix

The focus of the *Trainee* period is to get your new hire ready to run calls independently. In our experience, the best results are achieved when the trainee mixes hands-on practice and exposure to real-life service calls with their online studies.

Our courses are self-paced, meaning your new hire can access them anytime, anywhere, for as long as they want. Obviously, spending 8 hours a day taking the online courses will exceed the attention span of anyone, resulting in less retention of the material. We recommend no more than two hours at a time online, and a max of 2-4 hours per day. This has proven ideal for most techs. (Don't worry, you pay a one-time fee for course access, so it doesn't matter how many days it takes your new hire to complete the training, the cost will be the same.)

Fortunately, there's also a great feedback mechanism that happens when a student sees what they learned in the courses applied to actual repairs, and vice versa, helping them get more out of both their time studying and their time doing hands-on practice. This, more than anything, is why we recommend starting with a mix.

Supervising their Studies

Our courses are carefully structured to guide students from learning the foundational elements of appliance repair—how each appliance works, the principles of electricity, etc.—through advanced diagnostics and repairs. Whenever we've received feedback from students or their supervisors about the order of the modules and units, or the clarity of the material, we've gone in and improved it. You can be sure you're getting a tried-and-true process for teaching techs appliance repair, one which doesn't require much micromanagement on your part.



That said, most students will need some supervision to make sure they stay on track, so someone from your team should be designated their training supervisor. Ideally, whoever is supervising the training will have taken one or more of our courses themselves. If they haven't, we encourage them to [read up on how our courses work](#), so that they at least understand the structure of our courses, how students can get our help when they're stuck, how often students get tested throughout, and, most importantly, [the requirements for Master Samurai Tech Certification](#). We've seen first-hand the difference in outcomes between techs with good supervision and those without.

We will do our part to help your supervisor, as we check in on the progress of all students during these key points:

1. The *Core Appliance Repair Training* midterm exam. This exam requires students to write down the answers themselves, not just answer multiple choice questions. We grade it personally and then communicate back to the student (and supervisor) with feedback.
2. The *Core Appliance Repair Training* final exam. Similar to the midterm exam but with more questions.
3. Quiz and exam reset requests. If a student needs additional attempts to “pass” a test, we will review their progress, identify where they’re struggling, and provide specific guidance to help them master the material.
4. Ask the Teacher Forum posts. Students are encouraged to post questions in our Ask the Teacher Forum, so we can provide direct, personal help.

If at any of these points we see low scores, poor comprehension or other causes for concern, we will communicate via email with both the student and supervisor.

For a lot more details about how to structure and supervise their online training, check out [the resources on our website](#), which you’ll also find in [Part 3 of this guide](#). Make sure every trainee knows how you’ll be supervising their training before they begin.

Goals for the Training

We mention the [Master Samurai Tech Certification](#) because it is an excellent goal for all students to strive for. We have high standards for our certification, so students must work hard to meet them if they want to become certified. Students must score:

- 80% or higher on each unit quiz
- 90% or higher on each module, midterm, and final exam, where applicable.

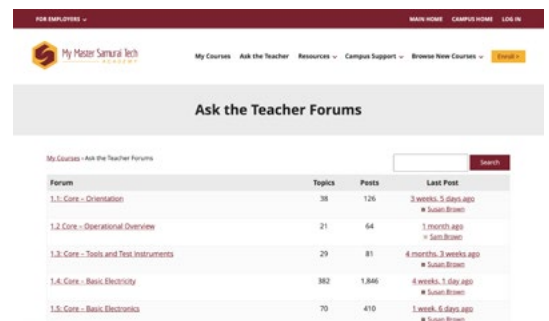


We do allow students to retake quizzes and exams if they do not achieve the target results the first time, but we are fairly strict about how often they can (it doesn’t help anyone if students guess their way to the correct answer after 20 tries). Our goal is that students master the material so that they can excel at their job. Meeting the criteria for certification ensures that they’ve mastered the material. Would you demand anything less from your employees?

Key Talking Points

Every single one of our courses begins with a series of tips on how to get the most out of the training. It's worth sitting down with them before they start to go over these:

1. Read all instructions carefully before acting.
2. Work steadily, but don't rush. Learning takes time and often requires repetition, especially when the material gets challenging. Don't be afraid to repeat readings or videos when you need to.
3. Do not skip any of the assigned readings or videos. *Have them watch [this short video](#) on how to make the most of our videos.*
4. Get a notebook and take handwritten notes as you go along. This has proven to help students understand and retain the information. You'll also find these notes useful when you study for exams (yes, you should study for quizzes and exams).
5. Print out and use any study sheets provided at the end of a unit.
6. Make use of the [Ask the Teacher Forums](#). Team Samurai will answer any of your questions and step you through anything you are struggling with. This is a powerful feature of the Academy; be sure to use it!
7. Don't ask fellow techs or Google for the answers to quizzes and exams. It may not seem like cheating, but if you get answers right without learning the material, you'll only have yourself to blame when you can't do the job later. *You may want to have them take the midterm and final exams in office, under supervision, to ensure they do not cheat.*



Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
1.1. Core - Orientation	38	126	3 weeks, 5 days ago ■ Susan Brown
1.2. Core - Operational Overview	21	64	1 month ago ■ Sara Brown
1.3. Core - Tools and Test Instruments	29	81	4 months, 3 weeks ago ■ Susan Brown
1.4. Core - Basic Electricity	382	1,846	4 weeks, 5 days ago ■ Susan Brown
1.5. Core - Basic Electronics	70	410	1 week, 6 days ago ■ Susan Brown

6 PRO-TIP #2: TRAIN THEM TO CONTRIBUTE RIGHT AWAY.

Even trainees can contribute to the bottom line. Start by training the new guy or gal to do a few simple tasks that will help your company generate revenue. This could be maintaining tools, stocking parts, doing administrative tasks around the office. Being the “second man” on more complicated appliance repair calls, those that require more than a single pair of hands or may take a single tech a long time to complete, can help expedite things, making for happy customers and more jobs completed. Bottom-line, if it helps your company run smoother and keeps your revenue-generating staff happy and operating at the top of their game, it will earn you money. Maybe not a lot at first, but every little bit helps.



7 HANDS-ON PRACTICE.

Hands do what the brain tells them, so everything a tech does starts between their ears with the mental troubleshooting process. But even someone who can read schematics in their sleep ultimately needs to transfer what they see on the neat and tidy diagram to the mess of wires and components under the shroud or panel of the appliance. Master Samurai Tech (MST) can provide all the “brains-on” training your techs need, but for them to succeed, you’ll need to provide some “hands-on” practice.

Use Videos to Start

Videos are a great start. Our courses include many videos showing the troubleshooting process in action. And for model-specific info, there are tons of free videos at parts sites like [RepairClinic](#) or [AppliancePartsPros](#). These are great for showing someone how to gain access to the various areas of a particular appliance and change parts. Seeing it all in action first makes it easier when the hands get involved.

The Two Ways to Get Hands-on Experience

Eventually though the tech will have to channel what’s in their mind through their hands. This is especially true for taking electrical measurements. Taking measurements looks easy in videos, but we find that rookies make a lot of mistakes when they first use their meter in the field.



There are two basic ways for trainees to get this hands-on experience:

1. Working on appliances in the shop.
2. Riding along with an experienced tech.

If you have a shop, it’s great to do both. Start in the shop, which is a very low-pressure environment, then gradually give the trainee more time in the field.

In both instances, the trainee will need someone with experience there to supervise and teach them. And the experienced tech can’t just do the work while the trainee watches, he needs to explain what he’s doing and get the trainee involved, eventually working up to giving the trainee tasks to complete by themselves. Ideally, this experienced tech will have taken our courses, so that they can speak the same language and reinforce the good troubleshooting habits that we teach.

How to Structure the Hands-on Practice

There’s a lot to cover when teaching appliance repair, so it can feel like a daunting task to know where to start. Here are a few tips:

- Find out what the tech is learning in the online courses, then put their training into practice. If they’re learning how to use a meter to take electrical measurements, give them an appliance to take electrical measurements on (even if it’s just the appliances in your office kitchen). If they’re learning about motors, help them disassemble an appliance to see the motor. In most cases, it will be pretty common sense how to go about giving them hands-on practice.

- As we mentioned in Pro-tip #2, if there are any hands-on tasks your tech can learn to more quickly contribute to your bottom-line, start by training them in that. You may also focus on training for the kinds of service calls you want to start the tech on when they begin transitioning towards independence.
- Don't overthink the ride-alongs. Whatever repairs they are guided through by the experienced tech they're shadowing will be helpful to the learning process. Even if they see the same repair done several times, that repetition will help them learn. All of which is to say, you don't need to pre-diagnose all of your tech's calls to find which one will provide the best ride-along experience for your trainee.

As the trainee becomes more skilled and comfortable with appliance repair, the experienced tech should gradually let them take the lead on jobs, including handling the customer service part. In other words, the trainee should act like he is the lead tech, and the experienced tech will step in with comments or corrections as needed. This will help prepare them for their transition to independence.

8 TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE.

Once your trainee has completed about three months of ride-alongs, shop work, and online training (and has, at a minimum, completed our *Core Appliance Repair Training*), they can begin to handle select jobs independently on a part-time basis (filling the rest of their time with online training and ride-alongs). This transition period typically lasts months 3 - 6 of their tenure.

What this next step in your new hire's training process will look like depends a lot on how many techs your company has and your call volume. If you're a larger company that isn't scheduling calls too far out, you have the flexibility to select specific jobs that appear to be more straightforward to start the tech out on. If your call volume is high or you have too few techs, you may need to trust them with all types of jobs as soon as they're reasonably ready. Luckily, no matter what path suits your situation best, your new hire will be bringing in revenue. So stay patient and be sure to give a lot of support.

Example Transition Plan

A typical pattern would be to send the trainee out on independent service calls two to three days a week, with a max of three to four jobs scheduled a day. On the other days, they will finish their online courses and continue to do ride-alongs. Their supervisor / hands-on practice partner can offer recommendations on the types of jobs the trainee is prepared to handle. If you want to be more deliberate, we know many companies that structure their hands-on practice to get their new techs up to speed quickly on specific types of appliances or repairs.

During this transition period, a senior tech or service manager should help the new tech go over their service calls ahead of time - either the afternoon before or the morning of - to help with pre-diagnosis. They can also use this time to point out any tips that may be helpful to the new tech. The new tech should also have a senior tech that he can reach out to during the day if needed. (The goal is to avoid these calls by advance planning, but the need will inevitably arise on occasion.)

Once the tech completes the online courses, they can run service calls 5 days a week, both independently and as a second man. You can adapt this example to fit your company's situation and the trainee's readiness.

Ways to Speed up the Transition

- Get them well-oriented on how the courses work and how to get the most out of training (how to take notes, how to get help, what their scores need to be, how to get a quiz reset, etc.)
- Supervise them closely to identify when they need an intervention.
- Actively curate hands-on practice with certain tasks and jobs that will allow them to take on some revenue-generating jobs sooner.
- Carefully select which service calls they should shadow / support on to build their familiarity with the kinds of service calls you will start them on as an independent tech.
- But remember! Avoid pushing them too hard. You don't want to sacrifice mastery for the sake of speed.

9 ROOKIE: CONTINUING EDUCATION.

Once your trainee is running service calls independently five days a week, you're in the final stretch. *They'll continue to need more supervision than your other techs for a few months*, but as they build experience and confidence that'll soon be unnecessary. Your goal now should be twofold:

1. Increase their call volume during the next three months until they achieve what you would consider normal for your business.
2. Help them establish good habits for continuing education.

Part of being a professional is continuing to learn and sharpen your skills. Our courses are a very thorough foundation, but there is always more to learn. Plus, students will only retain so much from their studies. Review and practice are necessary to become a true master.

Appliantology.org

In addition to any in-house training you offer at your company, a great way for all of your techs to continue to hone their craft is to be active on our tech support site, [Appliantology.org](https://www.appliantology.org). As Master Samurai Tech (MST) students and alumni, they are eligible for either a free or discounted Appliantology membership, depending on whether they got certified in *Core Appliance Repair Training*. ([You can read more about Appliantology memberships here.](#))

The tech-only forums at [Appliantology.org](https://www.appliantology.org) are a fantastic resource for both appliance knowledge and camaraderie with other techs. Your techs can browse through topics, ask questions, even answer the questions of other techs to build their own confidence. Another feature is a huge and ever-growing library of service manuals, tech sheets and schematics to help your techs troubleshoot any appliance. If we don't have a document uploaded, request it and we'll get it added ASAP.

Another powerful asset at Applianceology is [our collection of webinar recordings](#), currently 70+ hours and growing, which cover a variety of appliance repair topics, from reviewing fundamentals to technological deep-dives. These recordings are an excellent resource for continuing education.

Financial Incentives

Sometimes the best means for ensuring that techs maintain good habits and continue to educate themselves is through financial incentives. Some companies continue to use the training progress worksheet to track a tech's continuing education, offering small bonuses for meeting certain thresholds. Others offer financial incentives to their techs for spending time researching and pre-diagnosing jobs, which can be measured by improved first-call complete (FCC) rate. And for techs who work on commission, more FCCs mean more time for more jobs, increasing their income potential. That said, some techs don't need the added incentive. If they take pride in their work, they will do what it takes to keep getting better. It's up to you to determine what level of motivation your techs require.

Continued Course Access

Lastly, techs should be encouraged to take advantage of their [continued course access](#) to revisit and review our training material while they have access to it. They may forget a few things over time, or they may realize, after a few jobs don't go smoothly, that there's a certain topic they need to get better at. Periodic refreshers can really help them up their game as they run calls independently.

The screenshot displays the Applianceology.org website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Activity, Memberships, Webinar Recordings, Training, Tech Tips, Newsletter, Samurai's Picks, and Clubs. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there is a secondary menu with links for Forums, Downloads, Calendar, Blogs, Gallery, Guidelines, and Staff. The main content area features a 'Home' link and a 'All Activity' link. A central section includes links for FAQs, Repair Videos, Academy, Newsletter, and Contact, along with social media icons for YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. A prominent banner for 'Appliance Repair Training Webinar Recordings' is visible. The 'Forums' section is highlighted, showing a 'Professional Appliance Technician Forums' dropdown menu. Below this, three forum listings are displayed: 'Appliance Repair Tech Forum' with 350.3k posts, 'Professional Appliance Technicians Forum' with 489 posts, and 'Samurai's Appliance Repair Video Classroom' with 764 posts. A 'Blog Entries' section on the right lists several recent posts, including 'Merry Christmas from Team Samurai!', 'Prediagnosis: How a Real Tech...', 'Diagnostic Modes: What They Can Do...', 'Do Ohms Lie?', and 'NTC Thermistors: What Are They, Ho...'. The website footer includes the Applianceology.org logo and the Master Samurai Tech logo with the tagline 'LEADING APPLIANCE EXPERTS'.

10 TRAINING FOR EXPERIENCED TECHS.

There are a lot of experienced folks working in the trade today that struggle with troubleshooting anything that falls outside of their comfort zone of pattern recognition (“if this problem, replace that part”). Low first-call completion rates, high call-back rates, and longer-than-average job times are usually evidence of this problem.

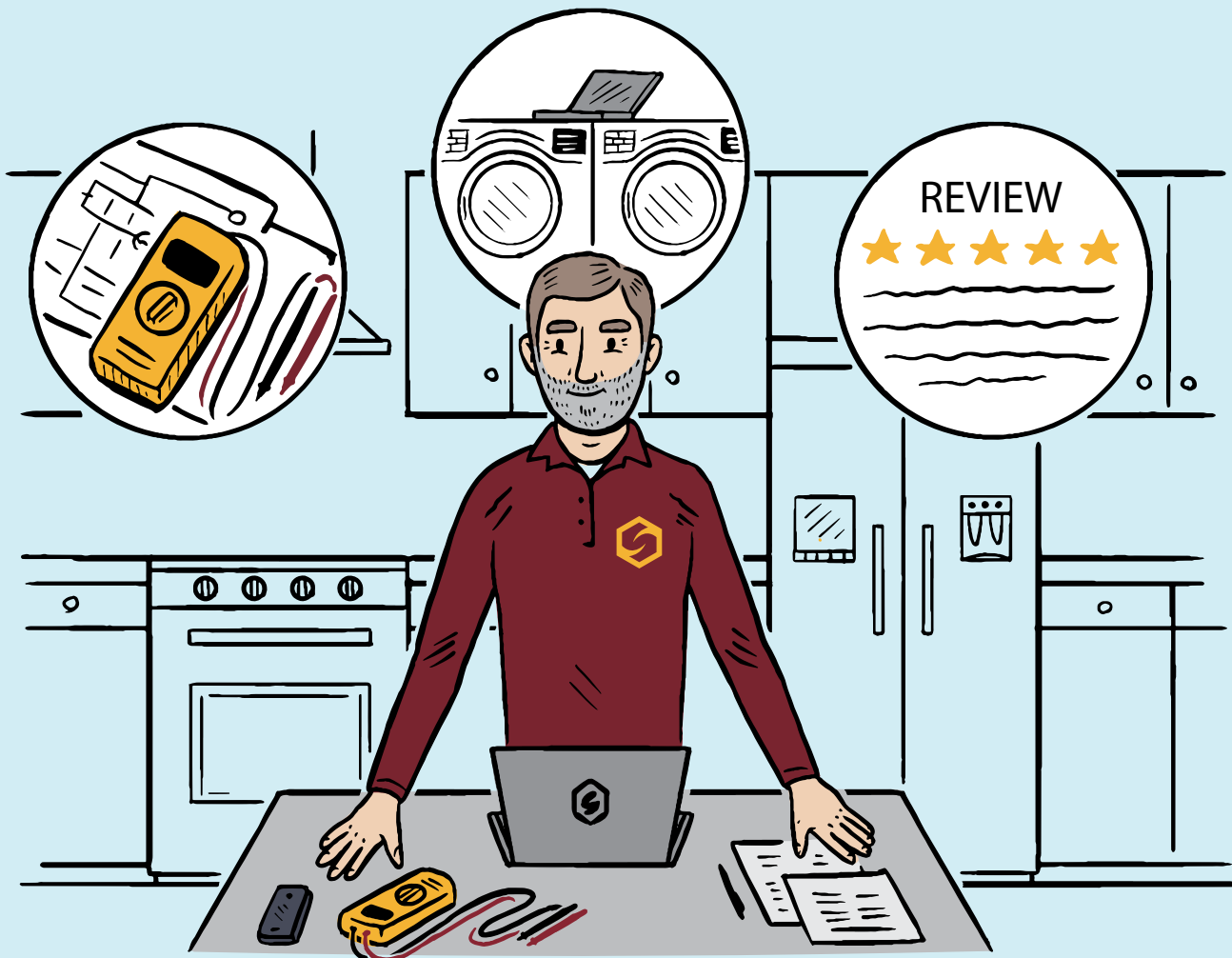
If you have techs with poor stats, they would also benefit from taking some or all of the courses at Master Samurai Tech. A significant percentage of our [*Core Appliance Repair Training*](#) students already have a number of years of experience under their belt. In fact, they’re some of our biggest fans, since they were overjoyed to increase their income while making their job significantly less challenging.

If you decide to put your experienced techs through additional training, you should implement many of the same procedures outlined in this guide, though hands-on practice and ride-alongs are unnecessary.

- Have a written-out training plan and agreement on expectations.
- Make sure the tech understands the time commitment and is on board.
- Supervise their progress and monitor their first call-complete rate as agreed-upon in the training plan.



Techs who are on commission might not want to sacrifice their work hours and income in order to study several hours per week. It’s important to make it clear that if they invest the time to train now, they significantly improve their chances of earning more bonuses and commissions moving forward with better performance. It’s even possible that they can earn a raise if they sustain their improved performance and bring in more revenue for the company. Because it’s worth it to you for them to train and get their stats up, you may want to give them time in-office to study. But you may also encourage them to study on their own time at home if neither of you want to lose income-generating hours. You’ll need to work with them to determine the best path.



Part 3: Additional Resources

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Customers deserve the best repairs, Master Samurai Tech is the best online appliance repair training program.

Paul MacDonald, Appliance Service Business Consultant, PMDgroup.ca
(formerly President, United Servicers Association)

11 EMPLOYER CHECKLIST FOR BUILDING A TECH

1. Determine what your training program will look like before you hire your next tech, so you can include the requirement in the job offer and contract. (You can adapt this as you gain experience, but you've got to start with a plan.)
 - a. Which course or courses will you require?
 - b. How long will you give them to complete the courses?
 - c. How much time in the office will you set aside for them to study? Be specific with days and times.
 - d. How much can you afford to pay them until they begin to contribute revenue to the company?
 - e. What financial penalty will you include in the job offer in case they leave?
 - f. What incentives will you offer for completing and getting certification in all courses?
2. Create your online training plan. (For more resources to help create your plan, read on or visit our [Supervising Your Employee's Training](#) page.)
 - a. If you haven't taken our courses yourself, [read this page](#).
 - b. Put the details of the training plan in writing ([see chapter 12](#) or [click here for a training plan template](#)) and have the tech sign it.
 - c. Create your supervision strategy. Will you track their emails? Have them log their study time on a Student Progress Sheet ([see chapter 13](#) or [click here](#))? And/or will you log into their account on a scheduled basis? Note: if you're training 2 or more techs at the same time, we can create a Supervisor Dashboard for you.
3. Create your hands-on plan.
 - a. Determine who will be in charge of this part of the training.
 - b. Set up a schedule for ride-alongs and shop time.
 - c. If opportunities for these things are limited, also identify disassembly videos from the free resources we mentioned in [Chapter 7](#) for the trainee to watch.
 - d. Make a list of revenue-generating skills and tasks that trainees can be taught early and then perform on their own.
4. Set up a transition to independence plan.
 - a. Update their schedule to increase the number of ride-alongs they perform, and let them shadow more techs in your company.
 - b. Schedule times to meet with your experienced techs to make sure they understand how the transition period will work, and to get feedback on the trainee during the training period.
 - c. Set up a schedule for someone to do prediagnostic work with the new tech when they begin running calls independently—either the afternoon before or morning of their calls.

5. Continuing education

- a. Once they can comfortably run calls independently, will you continue to give them a little time in the office to continue their training, or will the expectation be that it be done on their own?
- b. Will you offer incentives to encourage pre-diagnosis and/or participation in ongoing education, such as participating in the Applianceology forums?
- c. Will you let their course access expire or will you pay for the ongoing access subscription?
Set a reminder on your calendar to periodically ask if they are spending time reviewing the coursework.

12 TRAINING PLAN

Master Samurai Tech Academy Training Plan

To be completed by the Supervisor/Employer, signed by the Student/Tech

Student/Technician name: _____ **Date:** _____

MST Academy Account info*

Username: _____

Password: _____

email address: _____

Course(s) you are enrolled in (put a check mark in front of them):

- Core Appliance Repair Training
- Advanced Refrigerator Repair
- Advanced Oven & Range Repair
- Advanced Washer & Dryer Repair
- Advanced Troubleshooting
- Delivering Professional Service

Supervisor: _____

GOALS

MST Certification yes/no (circle one)

[this requires minimum scores on each quiz and exam - 80% on quizzes, 90% on exams]

Goal for completion (date): _____

Goal for time spent on the courses each week: _____

Any other goals or incentives: _____

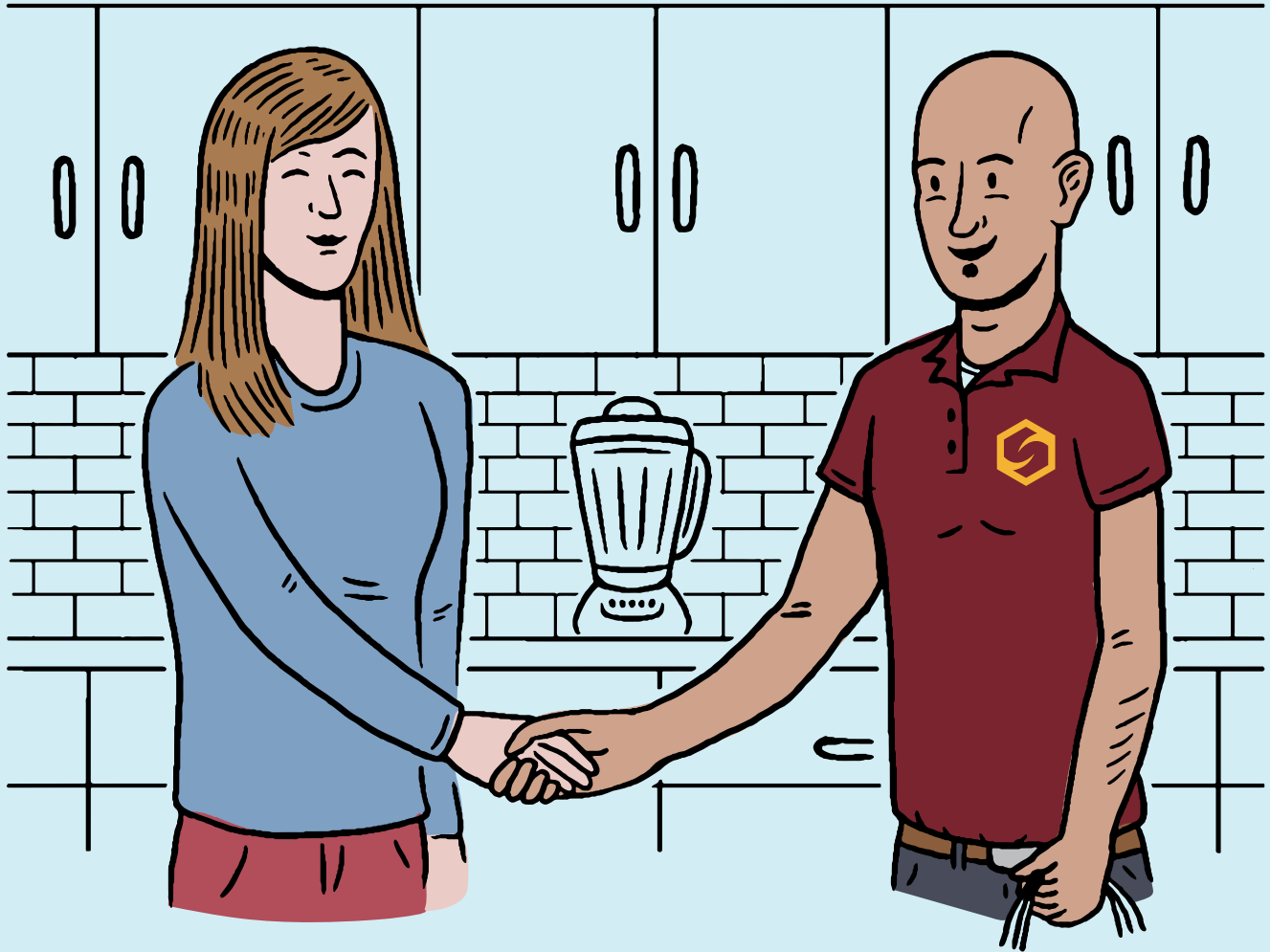
If the student/tech is going to use the MST Academy Tech Progress Sheet to record his/her progress, how often/when should they submit that sheet for review? _____

*The supervisor will periodically log in to the student's account to check on progress. If the student changes their password, they must immediately give the new one to the supervisor.

Signature of technician acknowledging and agreeing to this plan:

Date: _____

version 02/01/2021



Part 4: Conclusion



I firmly believe these courses are the greatest thing to ever happen in our industry.

Todd Daganaar, President, Hometown Hero Appliance Repair

14 DOES THIS REALLY WORK?

Yes! We were able to put this guide together because we work with hundreds of companies who use our training to build new techs and turn their current techs into rock stars. Over the past few years alone, as the business world has become more familiar and comfortable with online training, the number of companies who have created powerful training programs that combine Master Samurai Tech courses with hands-on practice has increased exponentially. Our training has made such a difference in helping appliance repair companies across the nation grow, we have been told it's a "game changer" for the industry.

Don't believe us? [Our Testimonials page](#) features feedback from a few of the many companies we've worked with over the years. Or you can check out [the reviews for all our courses](#) (we've yet to have a student leave us less than a 4-star review).

If you're still not sure, do please connect with us to discuss how it might work for your business. We've been exposed to a wide variety of situations and implementations, and we would be more than happy to help you work through your own solution. Just email me at susan@mastersamuraitech.com to start the conversation.

But the only surefire way to know if it's possible to build techs using the process outlined in this guide is to try it yourself. Our training is so cost-effective and flexible that you can try it out on a small scale with minimal investment. Even putting just one new hire through the process should be enough. And then, if it works, which it will, you can go (and grow!) from there.

Questions, concerns, or want to start the conversation? Please email me.



Susan Brown
Dean of Students & Business Liaison
susan@mastersamuraitech.com

15 TIPS FROM OTHER SERVICERS

Sloan Appliance Service

1. Test their aptitude and intelligence before signing them up (we use HireSelect)
2. Wait a week or two after hiring before signing up and confirm with the trainee they are committed to learning (we make them sign a repayment plan if they resign or are fired for cause)
3. Mix in hands-on training with the online training to avoid burnout and teach them to apply the knowledge in real situations (we have shop work, and they ride along with techs occasionally)
4. Have an expected time frame for completion but stay flexible since people learn at different rates (the only thing I check for is consistent progress). If a trainee is not progressing and not putting in the effort, we will put them on a performance Improvement Plan with milestone dates and if those milestones are not met they will be terminated
5. Once they complete online training don't throw them to the wolves, start slowly and build up their confidence

Aaron Veltre, Operations Manager
Sloan Appliance Service - sloanappliance.com

Mr. Appliance of Vancouver and Portland

The foundational depth of the Master Samurai Training course is phenomenal. These courses build the knowledge and skills so an appliance technician can handle any brand or any model.

A side benefit which came about for us was a stronger sense of being a team. We meet one morning a week for one hour to discuss what we've been studying/learning. In these discussions people gain more clarity. There's nothing like having to explain a new concept to someone else to help you learn. These discussions have helped those who struggled with a concept and helped those who, on their own, would not push themselves to learn. It's been great. And with more experienced techs in these meetings alongside the new recruits, the experienced ones can relate it to specific jobs they've been on. This helps the new ones see how what they are learning applies in the day to day.

I not only endorse this program, but highly encourage you to set aside a weekly time to meet as a group. I think you'll find not only better diagnosing/repairing taking place within your organization, but you'll also build a better team spirit.

David McCall, owner
Mr. Appliance of Vancouver and Portland

Nebraska Home Appliance

1. Begin by identifying candidates based on traits such as mechanical ability and personality traits that make them good customer service candidates first. Look for work histories doing mechanical work like oil changes, auto body, HVAC, etc, but also look for work histories doing customer facing customer service work, like grocery stores, retail, etc.
2. Start with clear expectations regarding the time commitment that training requires, and a timeline of when you expect course modules completed, and expectations on grades. Will you require them to hit scores for certification, or just make it through? Clear expectations keep everyone on the same page. We lay out our schedule and expectations on day 1, and we have them sign it.
3. If you're doing the technical bundle, start with the Professional Service Training course. It's quick, and sets the tone for expectations on how to behave in home while training, and once they're independent.
4. Our general order is Professional Service Training, Core Training, Manufacturer specific training outside of Samurai, Refrigerator Repair Course, Advanced Troubleshooting Course, Washer & Dryer Course, then Ovens and Range Repair.
5. We have our apprentices ride along with a trainer on a diverse spread of service calls every day, while working on online training mostly nights and weekends.
6. We try to ease them into low volume, simple procedural repair jobs about halfway through their training plan because it gives them a feel for all the procedures of the job and practice with customer interaction without needing to be a super technician just yet.
7. Whenever someone falls behind in training we warn them and restate expectations, and we give any support we can to get them back on track. If they don't get back on track promptly, we cut them loose. When you're getting paid to train, it's your job. It sounds cold, but all the people we've bent the rules for haven't worked out anyhow, and it just prolongs the pain for everyone involved.
8. Finally, be available for questions, and provide any help you can to keep students on track with the learning, and help get them over speedbumps. Scott is the instructor, but you can be the facilitator. Sometimes technicians need things explained in a different way, and with a deep understanding of the content you can provide that. I believe the best way to do this is to take the courses yourself as the business owner or leader, because it will deepen your understanding of the work, and it will help you to support your technicians.

Todd Daganaar, President

Hometown Hero Appliance Repair - hometownheroappliancerepair.com

PSE&G

I think the best advice I could give would be to stress to the student the importance of truly understanding the material. When I enroll my techs in the courses, I insist that they not be shy about using the “Ask The Teacher” feature if they do not understand any of the material presented. The whole point of this training is to learn a skill, not just pass a test. If they complete the training with knowledge gaps, they are doing themselves a disservice.

Dave Rubin, Sr. Supervisor
PSE&G Centralized Appliance Service Business

Energy Company in the US

When building an Appliance Technician, it is a good idea to have every candidate take a personality and mechanical aptitude test. There are different companies that offer this type of testing. This will help see how they measure up to the other candidates and help decide who should be brought in for an interview.

Once they have started with the company, enroll them in the Master Samurai program. There is a lot of good information, but it can be overwhelming to spend a full day doing online training. We built boards with light sockets and switches so they could wire series and parallel circuits. We also had our technicians save defective parts from jobs and use them for show and tell.

It's also important to have an appliance lab so they can get hands on experience. A good way to build up appliances for this is by going on garage sale sights or craigslist. You can often find where people are giving away broken appliances for free. We also have them spend 2 days a week doing ride alongs. It is best to put them with a technician who will let them do the work.

It is also important to touch base with them on a regular basis. Letting them know how they are doing and getting their feed back on what you can do to help them to succeed.

J.S., Appliance Repair Supervisor



Master Samurai Tech
LEADING APPLIANCE EXPERTS