

Tofaş' Training Draws College Graduates to Automotive Sales Careers

Tofaş Türk Otomobil Fabrikası A.Ş.
Best Advance in Talent Acquisition Process
February 2018



Company Background



TOFAŞ TÜRK OTOMOBİL FABRİKASI A.Ş.

Company At-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Istanbul
Year Founded	1968
Revenue	160,000,000 \$
Employees	10,000 employees
Global Scale	Multiple locations in Turkey
Customers/Output, etc.	University undergraduate students
Industry	Automotive
Stock Symbol	TL
Website	http://satis-akademisi.org/

Budget and Timeframe

<i>Budget and Timeframe</i>	
Overall budget	\$51,428.57 Dollars
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	40
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	10
Number of contractors involved with implementation	8
Timeframe to implement	10 weeks
Start date of the program	8/5/2016

Business Conditions & Business Needs

The main objective of the Sales Academy of Tofaş Türk Otomobil Fabrikası is to develop competent sales employees who can shape the future, driven by awareness for social responsibility that would contribute to the automotive industry. In pursuit of that goal, the academy launched a gender-equality project, “For My Country – He for She.”

The Sales Academy team envisions creating a sustainable-dealer network by recruiting individuals who are aware of automotive culture, by creating employee loyalty, and by raising the bar for knowledge. Because of its contents, the new Sales Academy project is not restricted to in-house boundaries. It is actually an overall social-responsibility project that will contribute to the sector and the Turkish economy.

The new Sales Academy program targets university graduates who are willing to launch a career as sales representatives in the automotive sector and consider the Sales Academy a springboard to success.

Overview

In the automotive industry, consumer behaviors are becoming more diversified and customer expectations are changing. Those trends require Human Resources to respond by hiring competent graduates and investing in training that will enhance their abilities to respond quickly and efficiently to change.

In its efforts to create an effective labor force in the Turkish automotive sector and market, Tofaş continues to maintain a pioneer role with projects that will set the bar in the industry as it defines human-resource standards in the dealer network.

The academy's new project offers opportunities in business with a focus on gender equality.

Training content includes information about the past and present of the automotive sector with its milestones, brands, pioneers in the industry, and state-of-the-art technologies. The first week of the program focuses on technology, competition, market analyses, passion for the automotive industry, and solution processes with other sectors.

In handling the relationship between the insurance and finance sectors, the training has an economic theme. In later stages of the program, the academy team deals with personal development, psychological approaches, consumer behaviors, communication methods, and management.

This entire program has been designed using applied learning. By completing the program, candidates are eligible for a participation certificate and are admitted to a dealer-trainee process to maximize their experiences. One of the opportunities offered by the trainee program is that the dealer and candidate relationship may result in employment, an important aspect given the high unemployment rate in Turkey.

With the implementation of this program, Sales Academy was chosen as the best practice in the Fiat Best Practice portal, which reflects the best practices of all Fiat factories.

This Sales Academy project was developed in collaboration with TOFAŞ Academy, Koç Holding, Vehbi Koç Foundation, TOFAŞ Human Resources Directorate, FIAT Business Unit Directorate, and Fiat Sales Directorate. Academy leaders also have been talking with Koç University, UNDP Turkey.

Design and Delivery

The project was announced on the Tofaş web site and via social-media channels. Simultaneously, posters were placed on advertisement billboards at FIAT dealers. Posts were shared weekly on social media channels to encourage people to apply for the program.

After candidates were selected, the academy team maintained contact during the program via Facebook and WhatsApp groups that were accessible only by attendees and trainers. The team is still in communication with attendees via the same channels.

In addition, the project was promoted over social media while the Sales Academy was in progress. National press and social media continue to be used in conjunction with TOFAŞ Türk Otomobil Fabrikası A.Ş. Corporate Communication Directorate.

In 2017, the academy team made changes to the program with the goal to ensure that all attendees are employed:

- Innovations in training- and-dealer experience processes.
 - Pre-training dealer experience.
 - Training term now three weeks and supported by Koc University.
 - Two-month work experience in the dealership.
 - Gamified-learning experience.
- Enhancement in the scope of project cooperation by adding Koc University.

All expenses for the project were covered with funding from the Koc Foundation (140,000TL) and Tofaş Academy (40,000TL). Project expenses consist of the following:

- Promotion costs.
- Opening ceremony expenses.
- 17-day accommodation expenses for 35 attendees.
- Pocket money based on minimum wage for 35 attendees.
- 17-day Social Security premiums at the same level as minimum wage for the attendees.
- Closing organizational expenses.

The project team included a Sales Trainee, Trainee Design Specialist, Training Technologies Expert, and Dealer Development Specialist. Courses were taught by senior in-house trainers of Tofaş Academy. Subject matter experts from FIAT Business Unit Directorate, FIAT Sales Directorate, FIAT Aftermarket, Spare Part Directorate, and Koc FIAT Credit House and Automotive took part in sessions called “Automotive - My Job.”

Figure 1: Automotive Sales Representative Program

Automotive Sales Representative Program	
Day One	Opening- Project Promotion –Introduction and Communication Activities
Day Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Koç Holding - FIAT Corporate Identity → History and development of Automotive Sector → Automotive Market in the world and in Turkey → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Brands in automotive sector → Segments → Passion for Automobiles → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Our Products and Security → Our Engines → Our Light Utility Vehicles and Passenger Cars → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Our processes in second hand sales → Our insurance processes → Marketing Activities → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Visits to Historic Places – TOFAŞ Anatolian → Cars Museum – Italian cuisine → Gastronomy Event- Concert
Day Seven	Listening
Day Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Professional Development → Communication Methods → Social Styles → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Interview Methods → Questioning Art → Persuasion Methods → Time Management → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Customer Data → Corporate Communication → Portfolio Management → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session

Day Eleven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Financial Calculations → Submitting Quotations → Legislation → Invoice and Tax operations → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Twelve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Exclusive Sales → Transforming Dealers into a corporate structure → Dealer-Distributor Relations → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Thirteen	Uludag Travellor – Cinema Activity
Day Fourteen	Listening
Day Fifteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Field Applications → Test Driving → Vehicle Delivery → Visits by rival brands → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Sixteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Measurement and Assessment (three stages) → Automotive as My Job – Experience Sharing Session
Day Seventeen	Graduation Ceremony

Source: Tofaş Türk Otomobil Fabrikası A.Ş. 2018

- **Trainee observation.** During training courses, trainees made observations about the group's communication skills, grasping levels, and behavioral competency necessary for sales.
- **Assignments.** Studies were carried out on the use of research resources for the automotive sector, their interpretation, and application. Learning involved job-related techniques, tools that can be used, and applicable legislation from various channels. Attendees asked questions, conducted online research, learned about benchmarks, etc.
- **Written exam.** A written exam consisted of three open-ended questions that measure financial computation skills in the sales process, terms and definitions and other information about the automotive sector, and behavioral approaches.
- **Project presentation.** Team projects were presented for regional marketing. Presentation competence was measured.

- **Simulations.** Case studies used situation analyses and role studies. Certain processes provided insight into the mechanics of problems faced by attendees, demonstrated their ability to diagnose the root cause of a problem, showed whether they can size-up options at hand and identify the most appropriate solution, and revealed their ability to pay attention to the details of a problem so a timely solution can be devised.
- **Executives' observations.** Report observations about a trainees' communication skills, problem-solving skills, planning and organizational skills, work knowledge and corporate information. Results are tracked.
- **Certificate.** Candidates become eligible for the program admission certificate after successfully completing the assessment process and receiving approval from the assessment committee.

Integration

With the goal to develop college graduates willing to grow careers as Sales Representatives and Wholesales Spare Parts Sales Representatives, the academy team made efforts to raise awareness at the macro level by contributing at the micro level to the Turkish economy and the automotive sector on the basis of “social development, employment, gender equality, equal opportunity, and training.”

All expenses, including housing and minimum-wage salaries, for the 17 days of the program were covered by the Vehbi Koc Foundation and TOFAŞ Türk Otomobil Fabrikası A.Ş.

The program gave candidates an opportunity to find their first jobs in the sector, a precious situation given the unemployment ratio in the industry and the Turkish economy and as a support to equal opportunity for men and women.

Measurable Benefits

- **Economic support** – The academy team believes this program sets the stage for similar projects in the automotive sector to provide support to the Turkish economy. In this respect, the Sales Academy focuses on developing human resources in such areas as cooperation, communication, equality, employment, vocation, and economic support. The most challenging part was to build all those processes into training. As training is a long-term information and behavior

investment that cannot be measured by numbers, indicators of success include feedback from trainees and stakeholders at the end of the project, communication studies, and the eventual-employment ratios.

- **Cooperation/social responsibility.** All expenses and needs of participants were met by project sponsors and TOFAŞ Türk Otomobil Fabrikası A.Ş. This method gave candidates an opportunity to find their first jobs in the sector. Eleven women were among the trainees for Automotive Sales Representative jobs; consequently, six were recruited.
- **Vocational efforts: equality & employment.** Applications were collected from all provinces by making use of the Fiat Dealer network and social media as well as the internet during the project-selection stage. Consequently, graduates gained their first work experiences in 22 different points in 19 different provinces. Many candidates received offers from automotive-industry players following the program as well as companies where they had their trainee period. For example, a graduate managed to make his first Fullback dealer sale by selling a Fiat 500c. Others have helped make deliveries quicker, provided consultancy and sales services to customers with no handicap, sold light-utility vehicles, and made effective use of social media for sales.
- **Achievements.** This Sales Academy program was chosen as the best practice in the Fiat Best Practice portal, which reflects the best practices of all Fiat factories

Overall

The Sales Academy is guided by its efforts to create a new look for the automotive sector in the area of human resources. By focusing on collaboration, cooperation, communication, equality, employment, vocational efforts and economic support, the program will help shape the future.

The most challenging part was to build all those learning topics into training. While this type of training is a long-term investment in knowledge and behavior that cannot be directly sized by figures, investment in this project made in line with Tofaş' social-responsibility vision.

The academy team believes the program will be sustainable into the future.



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