

BACK TO SCHOOL...

My high school English teacher Mr. Sterling always told me, “Be direct and to the point. Less is more.” This came to light again last week while diagnosing a hard start, no start, power loss problem on a 1999 Chevrolet K1500 with the 5.7L (R) engine. The problem wasn’t easy to duplicate. I scanned for codes, quick scoped ignition and checked fuel pressure & volume, all in an attempt to baseline the vehicle. It all looked good which made me more suspicious. It even passed a quick road test. Obviously more information was needed. The clock was ticking and the number of cars coming in the door for repair was going up, sort of like my blood pressure!

“Hmmm, what do we have in the diagnostic arsenal for this problem?” I thought to myself and then remembered that my new Solarity scope from OTC arrived last week and in it was InfoTech™ software. Beyond just specifications and data, it gives you real world solutions from the bays AND also gives simple step by step instructions on how to perform tests and analysis on the specific vehicle.

I decided to go fact finding on the road. “I’ll watch data stream, ramp the fuel pump and keep an eye on fuel pressure” I thought to myself. Using the optional pressure transducer for Solarity and the amp clamp to current ramp the fuel pump I was able to watch both of these, and record the events for playback or printing later on. About 15 minutes into my road test the fuel pump waveform started to show a drop out. The good news was that at that same moment of watching the fuel pump waveform the fuel pressure started to drop off also. I knew I had a fuel pump problem. “Hey, didn’t I see a tip in InfoTech™ on how to measure and calculate pump RPM?” “Sure did!” Checking the pump speed against the specification in InfoTech™ gave me the answer I was looking for.

Intermittently, the pump would lose RPM and create a running problem. A replacement pump solved the problem. When I cut the old pump open, a chunk was missing from one of the commutators. While I knew it was fixed from the post repair ramp of the pump, seeing a hard mechanical failure made me feel better, especially

when it came time to get paid for the diagnosis and repair. This also went with Mr. Sterling’s English class. Direct and to the point. The truck was fixed and I passed the class... Again!

Till the next time I’m Ron Ananian, The Car Doctor, reminding you,

“Good mechanics aren’t expensive, they’re priceless”!

Ron Ananian, AKA – The Car Doctor
Owner, RVA Automotive – Waldwick, NJ
As heard on the WOR Radio Network
As seen on DIY Television & Speed Channel



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