As you may already know, Chubby takes all of the advanced classes fishing in the Chesapeake Bay each season. This quarter, Chubby and Coach Dave Derbin, took two boats out of Mill Creek in Annapolis, MD. Fishing in the Chesapeake Bay has been exceptional in 2008. Among the lucky clients were, Mike Valentine of Twin City Auto Care, Lisa & Jr. Bailey of Ex मे े न, Jeff Ruffing of Ruffing Automotive, and Phoenixville Tire.

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Advanced Owner’s Class
Fishing Trip

by Chris Frederick

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Chubby takes clients fishing 4 times a year after each advanced owner’s class to motivate the owners to finish school. On average, ATI clients do not return in more classes do better in the re-engineering program.

Leading A Manager To Water

By Chris Frederick & Senior Coach George Zeeks

In consulting with automotive shops across the country, I have talked to many owners and one thing is clear; when it comes to creating an environment for managers and staff to flourish, most owners just don’t get it. As an industry, we have not stepped up to the idea that managing an automotive shop is a profession. Much of the population would rather go to the dentist than take their car into a shop for work. Many think that as an industry, we score just above a collection agency. I certainly do not believe that stereotype is real nor deserved and most shops have the right environment to grow and be the type of managers that we need in the industry.

Leaders lead and people will follow a dynamic leader. I’m not saying you have to be a General Patton. There were many people that followed Gandhi, and I don’t think that he yelled much. Leadership is a frame of mind and needs to be built within ourselves and our managers. The old phrase is “the speed of the leader is the speed of the crew” but the standards have to be set so that everyone knows what speed is expected of them. Guidelines need to be set so that all involved know what they and the shop should be achieving.

Often, I have spoken with owners that are unhappy with their managers but the managers are unaware of the real issues. Too often, “seagull owners” swoop in and unload on the manager and he in turn unload on the employees. Clear-cut goals, standards & expectations that have been developed with the involvement of everyone in the shop eliminate this negative behavior and creates the proper environment.

PAYING YOUR MANAGER

We need to praise our employees but we fail, many times, to listen. Almost everyone invests some amount of their self image in their job. Praising our managers when they do well, teaches them to praise the staff and that positive feedback increases the positive self image everyone gets from the job. Make people care about their job and watch how the results grow. When we do have to correct some action or behavior, do it in private.

The need for positive correction is essential to grow a manager. If you are candid and honest with them in an effort to help them grow, they will love you. If you save it all up for one annual review, they will hate you because you gave them the feeling during the year you were happy with everything they did. What you want from your manager may not have been what important at their last job, they may not even know what you want and that is totally your fault. When there is a lack of clear-cut expectations, most people will perform based on the expectations they have come to know in the past. Have you given them the tools needed to measure the performance of the shop? Do you measure and set standards for daily sales, technician productivity, and customer satisfaction? If not, how will they be able to give you the results that you need or want? If you are reading this and are not sure what I am talking about, then you need guidance to become the leader first. Don’t worry, it is not a disease and even CEO’s of the biggest companies have “coaches” to help them through. I have been using a CEO coach for the past two years and my personal growth has benefited tremendously.

PAY THEM CORRECTLY

A tough topic for many owners is how much to pay a manager and set the pay plan. A set salary, without any incentives, will not reward the best managers and will encourage apathy. Not many people are money motivated but money does help pay the bills. A pay schedule based only on sales can result in...
Continued from page 1

high sales but low net profit. Too much emphasis on sales can lead to discounting and an unprofitable shop. In addition, never talk about Average Repair Order (ARO) unless you include shop profit and gross profit margins. If you want $500 per car, any manager can do that, but they will kill your business. Changes and new cars are the seeds of the future. A pay plan that rewards sales and gross profit margins, along with customer satisfaction bonuses, will result in a profitable shop with happy customers. The owner needs to know how much they need to be able to make from the business to keep the shop running and provide their expected return on investment. Remember that you have to provide a "Living Wage" for the area that you are in. If the shop is not large enough to be able to do that, then you cannot afford a manager yet. The right pay plan is key. In addition, I think that we can help motivate the manager & the staff to produce the "exceptional experience" because it will ensure that customers return and bring in new ones.

LEARN TO LEAD Managing a shop is creating a new staff or acting in that management role yourself, it is very important to understand the disciplines. The most important issue to resolve is to provide a clear and consistent message to your employees. It is important not to overuse this foundation for the next three steps. It is important that all of the steps are followed in a sequence without interruption. The first step is to have the owner, the person who is in charge of the business, set a time frame for resolution. It is not enough to do the discussion, the owner has to agree. This has to be a 2 way conversation where you are both talking. It is important to be open to customer feedback and the customer has to feel that the appreciation will not have to be feigned.

It comes down to leadership. If you are doubt and fearful of where the economy is headed, you need to be optimistic and get your people to do the things that they should. You cannot accept the economy as an excuse to not be as aggressive, but it is inconsistent or a reason not to talk to your customers about maintenance. You technicians must be willing to do courtesy checks and make recommendations for maintenance. You need to believe that the sky is not falling and that if you are not doing what you should, you need to convince everyone around you of it as well. Turn off the TV. We've got work to do and we must keep your employees thinking about their responsibilities.

5. Critical Thinking: We have heard that we need to sandwich our criticism when we are counseling our employees. Positive, Negative, Positive. Almost everyone has heard it, and it only works a few people for a few months somewhere but so few people put it in practice on a daily basis. Stating the facts and your statement lets the person know that we see the value and potential that they have in the business. It is what makes the process consistent and makes the employee feel like they are a part of the production process. One of the things they hear from owners is that you come to their aid unasked. It is not expected or required and it makes the process effective in helping to build that bond.

7. Seek Their Opinion: There are people who want to be positive and seeking them and opinions from feedback from those who work for you is a great way to keep the employee and the customers be aware of the preferences that the customer and the employee are more likely to be with. This will help you manage your employees in a way that increases their connection to their work and the company they work for.

6. Stress & Release: Everybody is working on the average less hard than they are at times. It is times that people are in stressful situations. It is important and valuable to pay attention to when this is happening. This is one of your greatest opportunities to help bond that employee to you. You may even go so far as to plan that phase to occur when the employee feels that you care about them if they are in a stressful state and then be able to come and help them. To have someone in an employee or customer stressed state and then be able to come, with a positive attitude, help them through it, and make them feel that they have been able to deal with a tough time, will reinforce the great years of image that you will receive from it. It is important to not overuse this technique or you may find that you end up doing their job for them too often. The idea is the intermittent positive feedback will increase their connection to you and the company. This can be a very dangerous situation for some owners, the possibility of deskilling yourself and the employee is very high. If you "call them out" too often, the employee will begin to see your help as part of your job and begin if an employee comes to expect to that you will come to their aid whenever they need just then they do not feel the sole responsibility for getting the job done. They have become less productive and skilled and you have brought yourself down working on the business to being an active part of the production process. One of the things that are a big part of it and have already happened is that the employees are being kept waiting for repair orders. Somebody has forgotten to tell the customer that they waited in the average workplace, there is no reason for correction. We then need to reestablish the employees self-worth and most importantly that you value them & their potential. If your employees do not feel that you value them and their hard work, then you have lost your place as their leader.

You Perhaps, Not The Economy? By By George Zeeks

The first four steps that we have outlined are what set the foundation for the next three steps. It is important that all of the steps are followed in a sequence without skipping forward. It is not enough to do the discussion, the owner has to agree. This has to be a 2 way conversation or it ends up being something very close to your mother nagging at you to pick up your clothes. You may have to go on a wild goose chase to find out what you wanted and you may feel better about it, if you did not have to spend your time on something that was not your fault. It is important to not overuse this technique or you may find that you end up doing their job for them too often. The idea is the intermittent positive feedback will increase their connection to you and the company. This can be a very dangerous situation for some owners, the possibility of deskilling yourself and the employee is very high. If you "call them out" too often, the employee will begin to see your help as part of your job and begin if an employee comes to expect to that you will come to their aid whenever they need just then they do not feel the sole responsibility for getting the job done. They have become less productive and skilled and you have brought yourself down working on the business to being an active part of the production process. One of the things that are a big part of it and have already happened is that the employees are being kept waiting for repair orders. Somebody has forgotten to tell the customer that they waited in the average workplace, there is no reason for correction. We then need to reestablish the employees self-worth and most importantly that you value them & their potential. If your employees do not feel that you value them and their hard work, then you have lost your place as their leader.
Building A Bond With Your Employees, Pt. 2

By George Zeeks

1. Learning to Lead: Managers are creating a new staff or acting in that management role yourself, i.e., a new leader or a new employee. The new challenges and disciplines. The most important issue to resolve is to provide a clear understanding of the expectations. This will ensure that customers return and bring in new ones.

2. How to Bond: We need to sandwich our criticism when we are counseling our employees. Positive, Negative, Positive. Almost everyone has heard it, or even worse it has been pointed out to them. That is why words need to be tactful, including the appropriate main- tenance recommendations that are a big part of it and have gotten a good response. These guys were deadly late to the party because they never saw the urgency but now are discovering huge potential in maximizing and completing the tasks. You need to believe that the sky is the limit, but you also need to say that you need to convince everyone around you of it as well. Turn off your ego and say, and you tube statement lets the person know that we see the value and potential that they have. It is what makes the process continuous, and that is what makes the process continuous, and that is what makes the process continuous, and that is what makes the process continuous.

3. Build Relationships: It is not expected or required for you to exceed the limits of what your employees are capable of doing, but you will increase their connection and their ownership of the responsibility. Bond will increase the overall potential of all of your employees. The effort that you put into building a bond will be multiplied. Everyone wants to feel that you value them and their hard work, and you will have your place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader.

4. Stress & Release: Everyday the average person is there are times where people are in stressful situations. It is important and valuable to pay attention to when this is happening. This is one of your greatest opportunities to help bond that employee to you. You may even go so far as to put that person up to speed in the situation just to be able to come and help them. To have someone join an employee in a stressed state and then be able to come, with a positive attitude, help them through it, and what they have been able to do in a short time frame for resolution. It is not enough for you to do the work, but you also need to help the employee that they will receive from you. It is important not to overuse this technique or you may find that you end up doing their job for them too much. The idea is the interactive positive feedback will increase their connection to you and the team. This can be a very dangerous situation for some owners, the possibility of deskilling yourself and the employee is very high. If you “ball out” too much, the employee will begin to see your help as part of your job and not an employee comes to expect that you will come to their aid whenever they need you. Then the employee will feel the sole responsibility for getting the job done. They have become less productive and skilled and you have brought yourself down from working on the business to being an active part of the production process. One of the problems that arise is that you come to your employee to ask their aid. It is not expected or required for you to exceed the limits of what your employees are capable of doing, but you will increase their connection and their ownership of the responsibility. Bond will increase the overall potential of all of your employees. The effort that you put into building a bond will be multiplied. Everyone wants to feel that you value them and their hard work, and you will have your place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader. You will have their place as their leader.

5. Constructive Criticism: We have to be willing to ask the employees for their input. If you have something you would like to share, you can email it to office@autotraining.net. The first four steps that we have discussed are covered are what set the foundation for the next three steps. It is important that all of the steps are followed in a sequence without skipping forward. It is important not to form the basis of the relationship between you and your staff. The first step of being confident and positive sets the entire stage for everything to follow. If you are the employee of you, need to work on your own abilities and before you can successfully bond with your employees. We have left off last time on the step that involves constructive criticism, so let’s revisit that step to keep the flow going.

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Leading A Manager To Water

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In consulting with automotive shops across the country, I have talked to many owners and one thing is clear; when it comes to creating an environment for managers and staff to flourish, most owners just don’t get it. As an industry, we have not stepped up to the idea that managing an automotive shop is a profession. Much of the population would rather go to the dentist than take their car in for work. Many think that as an industry, we score just above a collection agency. I certainly do not believe that stereotype is real. No deserved and most shops are a frame of mind and needs to be built within ourselves and our employees. Clear-cut goals, clear-cut expectations, most owners just don’t get it. As an industry, we have not stepped up to the idea that managing an automotive shop is a profession. Much of the population would rather go to the dentist than take their car in for work. Many think that as an industry, we score just above a collection agency. I certainly do not believe that stereotype is real. No deserved and most shops are fair, trustworthy and professional. For now, let’s discuss what we need, so our staff has the right environment to grow and be the type of managers that we need in the industry.

Leaders lead and people will follow a dynamic leader. I’m not saying you have to be a General Patton. There were many people that followed Gandhi, and I don’t think that he yelled much. Leadership is a frame of mind and needs to be built within ourselves and our managers. The old phrase is “the speed of the leader is the speed of the crew” but the standards have to be set so that everyone knows what speed is expected of them. Guidelines need to be set so that all involved know what they and the shop should be achieving. Often, I have spoken with owners that are unhappy with their managers but the managers are unaware of the real issues. Too often, “peaouls” owners sweep in and unload on the manager and he in turn unloads on the employees. Clear-cut goals, standards & expectations that have been developed with the involvement of everyone in the shop eliminate this negative behavior and creates a proper environment.

PRAISE YOUR MANAGER

We need to praise our employees because we fail. Many times, to listen. Almost everyone invests some amount of their self image in their job. Praising our managers when they do well, teaches them to praise the staff and that positive feedback increases the positive self image everyone gets from the job. Make people care about their job and watch how the results grow. When we do have to correct some action or behavior, do it in private. The need for positive correction is essential to grow a manager. If you are candid and honest with them in an effort to help them grow, they will love you. If you save all up for one annual review, they will hate you because you gave them the feeling during the year you were happy with everything they did. What you want from your manager may not have been what important at their last job, they might not even know what you want and that is totally your fault. When there is a lack of clear-cut expectations, most people will perform based on the expectations they have come to know in the past. Have you given them the tools needed to measure the performance of the shop? Do you measure and set standards for daily sales, technician productivity, and customer satisfaction? If not, how will they be able to give you the results that you need or want? If you are reading this and are not sure what I am talking about, then you need guidance to become the leader first. Don’t worry, it is not a disease and even CEO’s of the biggest companies have “coaches” to help them through. I have been using a CEO coach for the past two years and my personal growth has benefited tremendously.

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