

ShopTalk

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UPCOMING CLASSES

October

- 2, 3 20 Group - Nothin But Net - Sylvania, GA
- 2, 3 20 Group - Leading Ladies - ATI Headquarters
- 2, 3 20 Group - Phoenix Rising - Poway, CA
- 4, 5, 6 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 5, 6 20 Group - Score for More - ATI Headquarters
- 5, 6 20 Group - Best of the West - Sacramento, CA
- 5, 6 20 Group - Nor'Easter - Boston, MA
- 9, 10 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 9, 10 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 1
- 11, 12, 13 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 11, 12, 13 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 12, 13 California Service Advisor Course Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 12, 13 20 Group - Dallas Top Twenty - Centennial, CO
- 12, 13 20 Group - CrashMasters - ATI Headquarters
- 16, 17 20 Group - Rising Tide - ATI Headquarters
- 16, 17, 18 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 16, 17, 18 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 18, 19, 20 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 18, 19, 20 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 19, 20 20 Group - Dollars And Sense - Ft. Collins, CO
- 19, 20 20 Group - European Imports - ATI Headquarters
- 23, 24 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 23, 24 20 Group - Pace Setters New Baltimore - ATI Headquarters
- 23, 24 20 Group - Margin Masters Atlanta - Atlanta, GA
- 23, 24 20 Group - Peak Performers - VA

November

- 1, 2, 3 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 1, 2, 3 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 2, 3 California Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 6, 7 Shop Owner Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 6, 7 Collision Owners Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 6, 7 Collision Production Course
- 8, 9, 10 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 8, 9, 10 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 13, 14 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 16, 17 Service Advisor - Service Manager
- 27, 28 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 29, 30 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 29, 30 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership

December

- 1 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 1 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 4, 5 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 4, 5 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 2
- 6, 7, 8 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 11, 12 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 13, 14, 15 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 13, 14, 15 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing



How to Take the Headache Out of Hiring Your Next Service Manager

By Eric M. Twiggs, ATI Coach

“The closest to perfection anyone ever comes is when he fills out a job application form.” - Stanley J. Randall

Are you sick and tired of working IN instead of ON your business? Well, so was “Rachel,” a shop owner in the Midwest, who asked me to do a phone interview with “Ann,” a local service manager prospect.

According to Rachel, Ann was “the cat’s meow,” “the greatest thing since sliced bread,” and any other metaphor you would use to describe a high-potential prospect.

Rachel desperately wanted to replace herself on the counter and believed Ann was the missing link that would free her up to focus on the bigger picture.

There was one small problem. I wasn’t impressed after interviewing Ann. I now look back on that time as **twenty minutes of my life that I will never get back!**

Ann spent most of the twenty minutes telling me how bad things were at her current job at the local parts supply store, where she had worked for the past six months. She said that the main source of the problem was her boss and her unethical co-workers.

Prior to working at the parts store she worked at the local auto repair competitor in town, but was laid off due to “the area being slow after the election.” She had been out of work for two years prior to working at the parts store, which she attributed to “the economic downturn during that time.”

I conducted a virtual call with Rachel where I shared my concerns and I could see her frown as if she had a headache. “But Eric, **I have this gut feeling** about Ann that I can’t explain,” she said.

We were at an impasse. To break the tie, I suggested that she call Ann’s former supervisor at the auto repair shop and do a **reference check**.

The following week Rachel and I spoke and here is what she found out: “Well, Eric, I spoke with Bill, her former boss, and he told me that Ann was let go, because **she struggled to generate sales and because she blamed everyone except herself for her results!**”

Sometimes, the decision NOT to hire is the best hiring decision you can make. Recognizing this reality can help to take the **headache out of hiring**.

A bad hire can cost a business anywhere from **six to twelve times the salary of the employee**, when you factor in pay, benefits, training, lost customers and lost opportunities.

If Rachel paid Ann \$50,000 per year and Ann cost the business six times her salary, Rachel just avoided a **\$300,000 hit by deciding not to hire**.

Are you still feeling the hit from your last hire? Stay with me to learn two strategies to help you take the headache out of hiring your next service manager.

Avoid the ‘Same Bird Syndrome’

The four personality types are described as the following **four birds: the eagle, peacock, owl, and dove**. The eagle is the “type A” personality who is competitive and results driven. The **peacock** is assertive, outgoing, and dislikes the details.

The owl tends to be introverted, analytical, and more process- than people-oriented. The dove is sensitive, likeable, and prefers to avoid conflict. Which bird are you? This is an important question to answer, if you want to avoid the “**same bird syndrome**.”

The same bird syndrome occurs when you are attracted to employment prospects because they are the same “bird” as you.

Think about your most recent trip to the beach. You probably didn’t see ducks and seagulls mixing in the same group. The ducks were with the ducks and the seagulls were with the seagulls proving that **it’s natural to want to seek out similar “birds.”**

The problem is that looking for the “same bird” can cause you to make a bad hire, if the personality isn’t a natural fit for the role. For example, both Rachel and Ann are “owl” personalities. Rachel felt a connection because they had the same personality type.

As mentioned earlier, owls tend to be introverted, and can struggle to connect with customers. Over the years, I have found that peacocks and eagles are the most natural personality fits for the service manager role. Matching the bird with the role can help you avoid the same bird syndrome.

Do a Ride Along

The familiar story is told of a candidate who was interviewing for a high paying, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position with a Fortune 500 firm. He would be responsible for twenty-five million dollars in annual revenue, and had just completed an **interview in the office** of the firm’s president, which he passed with flying colors.

The president decided to take the CFO prospect down to the cafeteria for lunch, to work through the details of the offer. While in line to purchase their food, he noticed something interesting about his candidate.

The cafeteria charged an additional twenty-five cent fee for butter. He watched as the candidate hid the butter behind his cup so the cashier wouldn’t notice it, saving himself twenty-five cents. Based on this observation, he decided not to hire him.

After all, **how could he trust him with twenty-five million dollars if he couldn’t be trusted with twenty-five cents? Witnessing him outside of the interview environment gave the president the information he needed to make an accurate decision.**

Doing “a ride along interview” with your candidates will give you additional information that can help with your decision making as well.

A ride along is when you allow the prospect to spend part of their day at your location, shadowing you to observe “a day in the life.” This gives you the opportunity to see the individual outside of the formal interview. Does she pick up trash on the floor, or just keep walking?

Does she greet your customers, or is she more introverted? How does she interact and engage with your employees? The ride along will provide you with information you need and help take the headache out of hiring.

SUMMARY

Several weeks later, I interviewed an excellent service manager candidate with a peacock personality for Rachel. She had him spend the morning at the shop observing “a day in the life.” I conducted a virtual call with her and noticed that she was smiling.

And then it hit me: **By avoiding the same bird syndrome, and doing the ride along, she had taken the headache out of hiring her next service manager.**



Sincerely,
Eric M. Twiggs
The Accountability Coach
www.autotraining.net

PS. Email etwiggs@autotraining.net to receive a cheat sheet to help you understand your next service manager’s Seven Primary Personality Traits.

The Coach's Corner By Eric M. Twiggs, ATI Coach



How to Succeed as an Expensive Shop

"Value is more expensive than price."

-Toba Beta

Are you the most expensive shop in town? This question reminds me of an [ATI podcast](#) interview I recently listened to. **Ryan Kuhnle**, owner of **East End Automotive**, located in a **small Pennsylvania town**, was being interviewed by Coach Geoff Berman on the topic of the customer experience.

To gain best practices, Ryan reported taking an "outside the box" approach. He visited the most expensive, high-end dealership in his market. What Ryan discovered was surprising.

Ryan has a friend who works there who gave him a tour of the facility. As they walked, he noticed that **the service bays and floors were clean and organized**. No surprises there. Next, he noticed that **they washed every car they serviced**. Again, not surprising.

He then observed that **the waiting room was clean, had a cappuccino machine, and a charger for customers to charge their mobile phones**. Nice touch, but not over the top. The visit took an interesting turn when Ryan's friend showed him the CSI survey reports.

Ryan and his friend reviewed the customer comments and stumbled across the following surprise: **The most expensive shop in town didn't have a single complaint about price! Even in a small town, the customers had no problems paying a higher price.**

The reason they can charge what they charge is because they have adopted [Jim Rohn's](#) definition of success: **"They do the ordinary things extraordinarily well."**

I know what you're thinking: **"My customers are different. They won't pay for better service in my area."** This **limiting belief** poses two challenges: 1) Your costs of doing business are always increasing. 2) **No matter what you believe, the bills are still due.**

In all my years of running shops, I have never had a bill collector call me and say: "Eric, we heard that your customers are different, so we won't charge you this month!" So, these challenges make delivering value at an extraordinary level, a great business decision.

Stay with me to learn about **two focus areas that will help you succeed as an expensive shop.**



Make It Personal

I was recently speaking with **Bud Wildman**, owner of Precision Auto, and member of the **2016 ATI Top 12 Shops**. One of his customers left an internet review that reads as follows: **"After leaving this shop, all I can say is wow, wow, wow!"**

As I inquired further, he concluded that the key was **to make it personal**. "How are you making it personal?" I asked. He went on to explain the details of the program he has in place that was mentioned at the SuperConference.

Many of his transactions begin with his customers being picked up by his shuttle driver. The driver, the technicians, and the service advisors, each have wireless walkie-talkies to enhance their communication

levels. The shuttle driver gets the name of the customer and communicates it via the walkie-talkies, to the writer at the desk. When the customer gets to the shop, the writer says, "Good morning, Mrs. _____, how may I serve you?"

Which type of email are you most likely to read: a mass email that's sent to hundreds of different addresses, or one that is personally addressed to you? You probably chose the second option **because the experience that's personal is more valuable.**

Just calling the customer by name is an ordinary thing. Using the walkie-talkies helps Bud and his team to execute this in an extraordinary way, and makes the experience personal. When was the last time a customer said **"wow"** after leaving your shop?



Exceed Their Expectations

I have a habit of reading internet reviews for different businesses. When reviewing those for airline companies, I have never seen a raving five-star review that read: *"The plane didn't crash, I arrived on time, and they didn't lose my luggage!"*

The reason you will never see this type of review is because **customers don't rave about an experience they expect to receive**. They expect to land in one piece along with their luggage.

Southwest Airlines is an example of an airline that exceeds expectations. Here is a review from one of their raving fans: *"They went to the most ultimate extreme by presenting my fiancée and I an entire bottle of our favorite champagne once they heard we had just gotten engaged!"* Just like Southwest, you can create raving fans by moving beyond what's expected.

Your customer expects to get a computer-generated thank-you card after getting their car worked on. A hand-written thank-you note would exceed their expectations.

Your new customer expects someone to greet her when she comes in. Giving her a welcome tour, putting her in a loaner car, and then leaving her with a parting gift, would exceed her expectations. These are each examples of ordinary things delivered in an extraordinary way!

Summary

Because of the experience, the customers at the high-end dealer mentioned earlier, didn't think to question the price. If you commit to **making it personal** and **exceeding their expectations**, you will succeed as an expensive shop.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Twiggs
The Accountability Coach
www.autotraining.net

PS: Email etwiggs@autotraining.net to receive a new customer intake procedure that will help you make it personal and exceed their expectations!





November Marketing Ideas Kim Hickey, ATI Coach

Hunting Season



Promote "hunting trip inspections". Remind the hunters that they don't want to be stranded in remote places or on their way to or from their location. If they drive their vehicle into the woods

great time to bring up tires, suspension, etc. Maybe an alignment special or promo for after they are done hunting and beating up their vehicle. You could promote the inspection as a 2 part "before and after" event.

with you). It's as simple as that.

Thank you for continuing to make us your only choice in auto service!

*See you soon,
(Shop Owner)*

PS. If you have any friends that need assistance setting their vehicle clocks, please send them our way and tell them to mention you sent them. We will be happy to assist them as well.

Veterans Day



Email blast, Tweet, Facebook, Google +, etc. a promo for Veterans and active duty
Possible ideas:

- A discount off repairs and/or maintenance
- Complimentary oil service
- Free gift (call your vendors and ask them for tchotchkes you can give away (like hats, screw drivers, tire pressure gauges, die cast cars, etc.)
- Free wiper blades
- You could donate a % or dollar amount of their ticket to the Veteran charity of their choice.
- You could partner with a local restaurant, car wash, movie theatre, or any type business and get free or discounted gift cards from them to give away.
- Offer double reward points for Veteran Appreciation Day promotion. For those of you with Royalty Rewards, Lift Network, or any other reward systems, this is another option you could take advantage of.

Here are some links about Veterans Day. Many people confuse the sentiment of Veterans and Memorial Day:

http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetday_faq.asp

<http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetdayhistory.asp>

Daylight Savings Time



Offer to change your customers' clocks. Here is a sample email blast you can send:

Dear (Customer),

It is that time of year again and in a few days we will be setting our clocks back 1 hour on Saturday night November 5th before we go to sleep. While I am excited for the extra hour I get to sleep that day I hate that I have to reset all those clocks. I have a lot of clocks and this can be quite a chore. If you're like me the one in my car is the most complicated of all. This year I decided this should be our responsibility and we are going to take care of this for you. When you have the time, or maybe at your next service, just bring your car by the shop and we will be happy to reset the clock for you (Please have your vehicle owners manual

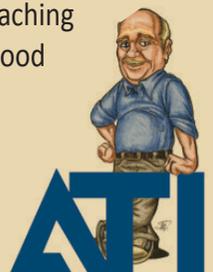
SuperConference Roundtable Sessions

We are going to try something a little different over the next couple of months. Many of you attend our annual SuperConference and we always get questions on what are the Roundtables going to be next year. The amount of work needed to put the Conference together is incredible. The work started for next year's SuperConference before this year's Conference was over. The coaches are no exception. They start the work on their Roundtables in June, to be ready for the next March.

This year we are going to give you a preview of what the Roundtables will look like for SuperConference 2018. Each month a coach will give you a quick insight into what their Roundtable is about and what you will learn from it. The challenges they are seeing in their coaching is what typically drives them to teach on a certain subject. They will be able to share with you why they chose the topics. What they hope you will learn from the topics. What will be, just some, of the big takeaways for their Roundtable.

Many members have a very hard time choosing which Roundtables to attend. You only have time to see four presentations and it can be a real challenge to pick those four from the ten great topics available. That's why we decided to give you an early preview into SuperConference 2018, written by the coaches that will be teaching the Roundtables. Make sure that you take good notes and remember your favorites!

C.L. Frederick





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Hear shop owners talk about their AH-HA moments and tell their stories of change. Introducing the latest ATI innovation “Driving Change.” This is a podcast we created to improve our members’ experience and further assist with their growth. Each week I will be interviewing a client about something they are passionate about. We have a great start with several clients that have already stepped up and shared their stories. Will you be next? What wisdom and experience do you have to share? If you have a burning desire, and a great story to tell (and I know you do), we want you on the program. Please email me at podcast@autotraining.net to set up your personal interview.

Please go to <http://drivingchangeatati.podbean.com/> to listen to the podcasts already there. Be sure to download the app and subscribe so you will be notified when new podcasts are added. Don’t forget to leave a comment if you liked it. Share it with a fellow shop owner or just a friend.