



PROFIT MATTERS

HOW DO YOUR NUMBERS LINE UP? | BY CHRIS "CHUBBY" FREDERICK

Riding the Fine Line Between Shop and Home Life

Helping shop owners do the balancing act of driving profits at work and taking dreams home is part of our mission. The challenge is there is no such thing as work-home balance. In real life, you are either heading for a crisis or coming out of one. Most of us keep pedaling the bike even when we know we are off-balance. When we lean too far to the left, by making too many withdrawals, we try to balance by making deposits. We fall off the bike when we lean too far to either the family or business side. And how would that look?

Many owners are recognition-dependent and want to run the best shop in their area. This is admirable, but if recognition becomes more important than profits, it will affect employees, family and customers. The primary job of a CEO of any small business is to make it profitable. Not paying daily attention to your financial key performance areas will make the bike lean to one side, and then you have to focus all of your energy on setting it right. You also could lean too far toward home by spending too much time away from the shop.

Find Your Balance

First, list what you want to accomplish tomorrow at the end of your day. Create one list for your business and one for home.

Home priorities may be spiritual or related to family and health. This will help you get started faster every day on what is most important for you to accomplish. Make sure you are focused by being 100 percent at work when you are at work, and 100 percent at home when you are at home. Many of us, even when we do take vacations,



think more about work than the vacation.

I love helping shop owners grow, and I spend most of my waking hours figuring out how to help more of you. I rarely took a vacation until five years ago when I decided to take a month off to be with family. Before I left, I had cameras installed at work to see what was going on while responding to e-mail. I became obsessed monitoring the cameras and barking orders through e-mail while the family enjoyed the beach. Finally, someone asked me why I had come to the beach if I was going to work the whole time. I said I was multitasking because I was with them.

To this my family said, "It seems you are not with us at the moment, you are still at work." They were right. I weaned myself off my laptop a little each day until I gave 100 percent to the family. The business actually did better without me during the vacation.

Commit to Change

Nothing changes until you change, so make a list of things you are not going to do anymore: a "no" list! We perform 220 seminars in North America every year, and I used to do most of them because someone said I wouldn't be able to duplicate myself. I loved speaking and helping shop owners, so it was difficult for me to even consider a replacement for myself.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

QUESTION:

How can I keep my production stable when I am on vacation?

Create a strong second in command your people trust and believe in like they believe in you. If they won't believe in your beliefs it's time for a change!

Do you have a question for Chubby? E-mail him at cfrederick@autotraining.net.

I never did consider it until my wife was diagnosed with cancer. She told me the average life span of people with her disease was seven years and asked me if I wanted to spend that time with her or the business. That did it for me. I began to train instructors who ended up being as good as I was. I spent my business time working on my business, not on its day-to-day operations. Business began to grow and helped more owners than I ever dreamed was possible.

Ask For Help

Ask for help from someone you trust, and create a written plan to balance your life. It is difficult to change without support from someone you trust. We have 18 coaches at ATI who work with shop owners and their families. They tell me they spend almost as much time helping you with your personal life as they do with your business. Let's face it, if you are not happy at home, you are not going to be happy at work either, and vice versa. Start executing the plan in 24 hours and celebrate any victories along the way.

You owe it to yourself and the people around you to build a better you. Give the important people in your life all the credit for doing it. If this article motivates or inspires you to take action, great, but don't tell your loved ones, who have been trying to change you for years, it was Chubby's article. Give them the credit for trying to help you all those years.

Become Inspired Again

Why do you need inspiration? You need to be inspired to change or else nothing will move you. Nothing inspires us more than having short- and long-term goals. We have managers and owners create a list of all they want to accomplish before they die and a list of everything they want to accomplish this year. They glue pictures of these goals on a huge poster board and hang it where they will see it every day to remind them of their goals.

The biggest reason goal-setting doesn't work is because we write them down and put the list out of sight and mind.

Take Action Today

There is always time to take more control over where you are headed in business. Ninety-three percent of the time, we can financially re-engineer a shop to double their investment with us in less than a year. Remember, if the people in your life

feel you will never change, they may start to wonder if they need to change whom they spend time with. The clock is ticking! Contact me at cfrederick@autotraining.net and I will e-mail you Chubby's Balancing Your Shop and Home Life Kit.

Scholarships Available

To learn more about this and other management techniques, look into scholarships being offered from ATI for 2010 to *Motor*

Age readers. To apply, send an e-mail to cfrederick@autotraining.net and tell him why you deserve a scholarship. Scholarships are made available by ATI, CustomerLink, Moving Targets, ALLDATA and LSI.

Chris "Chubby" Frederick is CEO and president of the Automotive Training Institute. He is thankful for assistance from George Zeeks and Brian Canning in preparing his monthly column. Contact Chubby at cfrederick@autotraining.net.



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