

What you should look for in a second in command

Define and set your expectations to ensure the best fit for your shop

You've spent many years building your business with a great culture and happy employees. Now it's time for you to enjoy the fruits of your labor and take a much-needed vacation. But first, you'll need to designate a Second in Command (SIC).

An SIC is the person that fits the criteria you deem fit to run your business when you're not there. You would train this individual on your standard operating procedures and expectations until you're confident that they could run your shop on their own.

For some shop owners, this is a difficult pill to swallow. They take that much-needed vacation, but they're constantly watching the phone until they finally give in and call the shop. Meanwhile, their wife and children are irritated and feel ignored and less important. These shop owners don't trust that their SIC has it covered, because they don't trust that they've hired the right person.

In some cases, the shop owner's suspicions are confirmed. They find out that the SIC does not have everything under

control at the shop. They find out bad news: customers are upset, their lead tech is ready to quit or their service advisor needs help.

So, how did this happen? Chances are they didn't hire the right person for the SIC position. The reason why many shop owners make this mistake is because they don't take the time to define and set their expectations. Then they don't allow the new hire time to learn while the owner is present in the shop to mentor them. Let's listen to ATI Coach Bobby Poist explain how he mentors shop owners on dealing successfully with this extremely important position.

KNOWING WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR WILL HELP YOU STAY ON TRACK TO FINDING THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB.

How to hire the best SIC

The first step in hiring an SIC for your shop is to create a job description. Think about what duties your SIC will

be responsible for on a daily, weekly and monthly basis and write them down.

Once you have a job description you can interview potential candidates. You can also use this information to determine whether promoting from within is best. Consider whether any of your current employees would fit the job description and be effective in the role. You already know these individuals and have seen their track record of successes.

If none of your current employees meet your expectations, look outside your shop by placing an ad for someone with management experience, among other qualities. You can use your job description to help write the ad as well as pre-qualify candidates before interviewing them in person.

Last, create reference check questions based on your hiring criteria. A candidate with a good professional background usually comes with great references and no shortage of past employers who will discuss their performance.

What to expect from an SIC

The SIC's main duty is to free you up to do the things you enjoy and allow you time to work on growing your business. You can't do this if you're tied up in running the day-to-day operations of your shop. In order to be the reliable support you need, a good SIC must be multi-faceted and possess the following attributes:

Good communicator. An effective SIC listens and communicates with their shop owner. They'll understand what you want and regularly keep you updated. They possess good upward and downward communication skills, along



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with the ability to be an active listener on the team.

Empowered decision maker. Empowering SICs to make decisions is crucial to their success and your ability to have free time. SICs should be problem solvers and take the initiative to work toward overcoming daily challenges without being micromanaged. They can be more creative when they think of the consequences to their decisions.

Shared values. As a shop owner, you should identify what's important to you and what made you successful. Understanding your strategic business values is very important and necessary for educating your SIC. This level of understanding is crucial to achieving desired results.

A drive to succeed. A good SIC will recognize where your shop needs to focus to be successful. They'll take the time to work with employees and customers to achieve the best results. They'll strive to make your shop look good and aim to please internal and external customers. Their goal is to identify areas of improvement and work to make it better. With your guidance, they'll come up with ways to keep the company in a healthy growth cycle.

The power to hire a good SIC is in your hands. Placing the right person in this role will make your business grow, and you'll regain some of your own passion. The time and effort you've put into the business should allow you to reap

the benefits of all your hard work. The time has come to start living the life you dreamed about all those years ago when you started your business!

Getting started

Once you have a good job description, the best place to start is with a great interview! If you are not sure what to

ask them, a great place to start is our Prospect Interview Questions. You can have these proven questions to get you started. Why not give yourself the edge you need to find the people that you deserve. To download your very own copy of these questions simply go to www.ationlinetraining.com/2019-09 for a limited time. 

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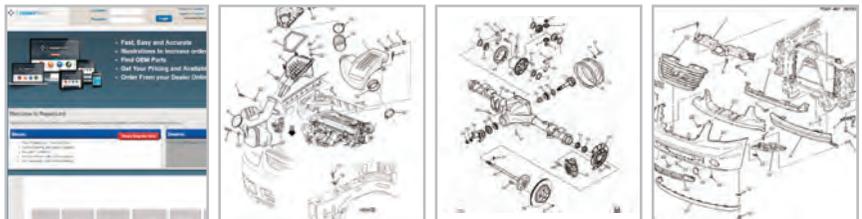


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CHRIS "CHUBBY" FREDERICK is the CEO and founder of the Automotive Training Institute. ATI's 130 full-time associates train and coach more than 1,500 shop owners every week to drive profits and dreams home to their families. Our full-time coaches have helped our members earn over 1 BILLION DOLLARS in a return on their coaching investment since ATI was founded. This month's article was written with the help of Coach Bobby Poist.

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