

# ShopTalk



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**Upcoming Classes:**

**Shop Owner**

- Align Your Shop for Profit*  
October 5, 6 & 7
- A.B.M. Always Be Marketing*  
October 12, 13 & 14
- Succession Planning*  
October 24, 25 & 26
- Leadership Mastery*  
October 26, 27 & 28
- A.B.M. Always Be Marketing*  
November 2, 3 & 4
- Staffing & Hiring*  
November 7 & 8
- Align Your Shop for Profit*  
November 9, 10 & 11
- Leadership Mastery*  
November 30, December 1 & 2

**Service Advisor**

- The Role of the Service Advisor*  
October 10 & 11
- The Role of the Service Advisor - LAX*  
October 13 & 14
- ATI's 7 Step Sales Process*  
October 24 & 25
- ATI's 7 Step Sales Process - LAX*  
November 3 & 4
- The Role of the Service Advisor*  
November 14 & 15
- Service Manager*  
November 17 & 18
- ATI's 7 Step Sales Process*  
November 21 & 22

**Collision**

- Keys to a Successful Collision Business*  
October 5, 6 & 7
- A.B.M. Always Be Marketing*  
October 12, 13 & 14
- Leadership Mastery*  
October 26, 27 & 28
- A.B.M. Always Be Marketing*  
November 2, 3 & 4
- Production*  
November 7 & 8
- Keys to a Successful Collision Business*  
November 9, 10 & 11
- Leadership Mastery*  
November 30, December 1 & 2

Please be sure to check out the exciting new feature of your ATIconnect App! With a tap on your phone screen you can now view the most correct class schedule, check for class availability and register for classes! Class registration has never been easier!

## The Blind Man in the Batting Cage

Eric M. Twiggs; ATI Coach

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is judging the success of your effort by the initial response you get. I was reminded of this as I sat through a recent 20 Group meeting. Mike Haley, the former hiring class instructor, was the guest speaker on the agenda.

He opened his session by asking about the current state of hiring in the shops. One owner talked about running an employment ad that didn't work. Someone else mentioned having a scheduled interview with a great candidate who didn't show up for the appointment. Then there was another entrepreneur who chimed in about using a head hunter only to have the resulting hire quit on them.

Then Mike asked the group to comment on how they found the best employee who currently works for them. Several people mentioned finding them through advertisements. They were then asked how many ads it took to hire "**Mr. or Ms Right.**"

Here is what surprised me about their response: **Nobody mentioned finding their "A" player on the first attempt!** It took an average of five to seven ads to find the right person! They would have missed out on a great hire if they had judged the success of their effort by the response to the initial attempt.

This is why you must approach your goals like the **blind man in the batting cage:** If you just keep swinging, you can get a hit, even if you **can't see** how it will work! Keep reading, and you will learn about two other aspects of your business that require you to keep swinging.

**•Follow-Up Calls**

I had a service writer tell me that follow-up calls don't work. I asked him how many he made, to which he replied: "**Five. And none of them came in!**" Based on the latest marketing research, the typical response rate when you are contacting existing customers is 15 percent.

If you had a goal to get **three** customers as a result of "**declined service**" calls, you would need to make **twenty** calls to accomplish your goal! (**20 x 15%=3**) Judging the success of your program based on a five call effort, will cause you to **strike out** on the bottom line!

The right number of calls, delivered the right way, can lead to a **home run** and improve your response rate beyond the 15 percent average.

**•Fleet Business**

Have you ever given up on a potential fleet customer because they didn't say yes on the first attempt? The **Thomas Publishing Company** did a recent study concluding that only **10 percent** of salespeople go beyond the third contact. They then found that 80 percent of "new business" sales are made on the **fifth contact! This perspective can help you to overcome future resistance with persistence.**

The key is to change up your methods of communication so that you "**keep swinging**" without coming across as pushy. A phone call, followed by an email, a LinkedIn message, a mailed package and then a visit, works better than just making multiple phone calls.

One of our clients mails his potential fleet customers a pair of socks with a letter promising to provide a level of service that will "knock their socks off." His next "swing," which is a visit, is usually well received, and he has become known as "the socks guy!"

### Summary

**Sometimes, your most common objection is a reflection of YOUR personal beliefs.** If you always get the following objection: "I can't afford it," check the mirror to make sure your beliefs line up with your financial goals. **What you believe determines what you see.**

*This is important because it takes faith to keep swinging when you don't see immediate results. Approaching your **follow-up calls and fleet managers** success rate, and keep you swinging like the **blind man in the batting cage!***

**I have a New Fleet Acquisition Kit with the details on the above mentioned "socks mailer," that will help you swing for the fences. Email me at [etwiggs@autotraining.net](mailto:etwiggs@autotraining.net) and I will send it to you.**

# The Coach's Corner

## It's Not the 80's Anymore

### Out of Date Habit #10: I Have No Time to Talk When I Drop Off My Car. I Got to Go!

Geoff Berman  
ATI Coach and Instructor

In the last article in this series, I stressed the importance of making sure you do the best job you can to have the customer feeling the way you want them to when they leave. This is true if they are leaving a phone conversation or a face-to-face interaction. In that article dated July of 2016 (Out of Date Habit #9), I covered how you can have them leave the initial phone call properly when they are calling you for the first time. In this article, I will cover how to properly let them go when they drop off the car.

How often would you say a customer is in a hurry to drop off their car, and you barely have the time to get a phone number? Or maybe you're the one in the hurry because you feel the pressure to get them out quickly? Have you ever wondered why this happens? You will never get a second chance to make the right first impression and if you miss this opportunity, your chance of success with this customer is cut in half.

#### There are two reasons this happens

Before I share these two reasons, I first need to explain why what you're doing now is not setting you up for success. As you read this you may be thinking "What's wrong with getting them out quickly? Isn't that what I should be doing?" If you're thinking this, you would be correct. What I am asking you to consider is that there is a correct way, and if that takes a minute or two longer, that does not mean it was not still done quickly. You cannot allow yourself to think faster is better if it means sacrificing your service and reducing the customer's experience.

The first reason this happens is you asked for it! If you tell everyone you open at 8:00 and they all come at the same time, then you asked for it. I know you cannot control when I actually show, but you can help me understand why it is important to show up at the agreed-upon time. Here is an example of what you might say. *"John, it can get very busy in our office in the morning. We know how valuable your time is. Most everyone wants to get in as early as they can and get on their way as quickly as possible. This is why we have reserved times set aside for each of our customers. This ensures we can get you in and out quickly and efficiently. Would 8:15 or 8:25 work better for you?"*

The second reason this happens is we do not set the right expectations. They think a minute or two, leave no time for you, and when there are two or three people ahead of them, they become impatient. So rather than leave this up to the customer's own imagination, try something like this, right after what you said above in your initial conversation with John. *"We leave 10 minutes between reservations just in case, but most customers are out in five minutes or less. Please make sure you have five minutes to go over any important details with us at that time."*

Isn't this the same thing your doctor did the first time you visited their office, only they asked for three to six times the amount of time to fill out all that paperwork. Very rarely will you get any objection to this request.

#### What do I do with that time?

If you remember from the July article, I told you it was crucial that when you book the appointment you get all the basic information you can. Things like name, all phone numbers, address, email, vehicle information, etc. Not only is this appointment more likely to show, but it will allow you the time you need to focus on me when I drop off my car. This is that moment we have been leading up to. I am leaving five minutes from now. Let's make the most of it.

What you must remember is that this time is not about my car, it is about me and only me. Has this ever happened to you? While taking in a customer's car, they tell you they are considering giving this car to the teenager in that house who will be driving soon. "Please look it over and tell me what you think?" I'd be willing to bet, more often than not, this turned into a decent sale. It was cheaper than a new car and they want it in the best condition possible when they give it to their kid. This was not about the car, it was about them. If every vehicle dropped went this way, you would have a better experience, wouldn't you! So let's stop waiting for it to happen and let's start making it happen.

Your goal is to get me talking just like that concerned parent. The more I talk about me, the more I like you. That is only half the battle, though. You need to get me talking about me and how that relates to my car. There is nothing wrong with me talking about my family if I want to, but you must find out how I feel about my car, and what my relationship with that car is. The good news is this is very simple to do. *"John, this car is going on six years old now. Did you buy it new or used?"* What if he said it was in his grandfather's will, is it important to know that? What if he bought it used a year ago and thinks it is the "best car" he ever bought or the "worst car" he ever bought. Is that important to know? No matter the answer, the words they use and the tone in their voice tells you a lot about their relationship with the car. You must find this out and it must be at the drop. Ever hear a customer tell you they are getting rid of the car after you told them they needed to spend \$1,400, only to find them still driving it at the next visit? That is because you did not find out their needs at the drop. If you don't, they will most certainly lie to you at the sale.

Next month we will discuss best practice for the sales call. Like what you have read? Want more? Email me at [gberman@autotraining.net](mailto:gberman@autotraining.net) and I will send you more info on finding out the customer's needs.



## Why Should I Read The ATI Blog

Eric M. Twigg; ATI Coach

As I reflect on this question, I'm reminded of the story about a college freshman who had an idea he wanted to share with his friends.

He decided he would organize a special meeting in his dorm room to discuss the concept. He invited five of his buddies, but only two showed up. The other three said they were too busy to attend.

The freshman's name was Mark Zuckerberg and the idea was for an online platform known as **Facebook**. As a result of attending the meeting, Zuckerberg and the two friends are now billionaires. Here's the takeaway: **One great idea can change everything.**

By now you may be thinking: *"Eric, that's a cute story, but what does this have to do with reading the ATI Blog?"*

Well, I'm sure the friends who missed the meeting would advise you to stay open to receiving new information, because **you never know where the game changer may come from.** It's possible that the idea you've been searching for resides at the following address: [www.autoshopcoaching.blogspot.com](http://www.autoshopcoaching.blogspot.com)

Every Wednesday, you have the opportunity to receive new information to help change your business for the better. Struggling to hire the right person? You can access several blog posts containing real world examples of how to find **"A" players.**

Looking to grow your car count? We've researched the best practices of the top 12 shops in the program in order to communicate what the best of the best are doing with their marketing.

In addition to receiving ideas from the blog, you will also be directed to other books, articles and studies related to the weekly topic. Each post has time-saving hyperlinks which are designed to expose you to additional content with one click of the mouse.

If reading the posts, and clicking on the hyperlinks, isn't enough, you can email the author of the post to request checklists to help you implement and execute the idea at your shop.

It's been said that there are two pains in life: **the pain of discipline and the pain of regret.** Committing to the habit of reading the blog is a discipline that can set you up for long-term success.

The pain of regret will cause you to spend your time surfing **Facebook** with Mark's three friends wondering what might have been.



## Daylight Savings Time

Kim Hickey, ATI Coach

November Marketing Idea! 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 XX 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 owner's manual 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.*



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