

ShopTalk

March 2017
ATI
 Automotive
 Training Institute

www.autotraining.net

705 Digital Drive, Suite V, Linthicum, Md. 21090 • 1-888-471-5800

Upcoming Classes:

APRIL

- 3, 4 Service Advisor - Advanced Sales
- 3, 4 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 1
- 5, 6, 7 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 5, 6, 7 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 6, 7 20 Group - Las Vegas - Las Vegas, NV
- 10, 11 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 10, 11 20 Group - 20 On Top - Portland, OR
- 12, 13, 14 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 12, 13, 14 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 13, 14 California Service Advisor Course Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 13, 14 20 Group - West Coast Originals - Los Angeles, CA
- 19, 20, 21 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 19, 20, 21 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 19, 20, 21 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 19, 20, 21 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 20, 21 20 Group - Dollars and Sense - ATI Headquarters
- 24, 25 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 24, 25 20 Group - Nothin But Net - ATI Headquarters
- 24, 25 20 Group - Profit Force - Downers Grove, IL
- 24, 25 20 Group - 20/20 Vision - ATI Headquarters

MAY

- 1, 2 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 1, 2 20 Group - 20 For The Money - ATI Headquarters
- 1, 2 20 Group - Dallas Top Twenty - Dallas, TX
- 3, 4, 5 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 4, 5 20 Group - The High Mark - Salt Lake City, UT
- 4, 5 20 Group - Leading Ladies - ATI Headquarters
- 8, 9 20 Group - Back In Black - ATI Headquarters
- 8, 9 20 Group - Score For More - ATI Headquarters
- 8, 9 20 Group - New Baltimore - ATI Headquarters
- 10, 11, 12 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 10, 11, 12 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 11, 12 20 Group - CrashMasters - ATI Headquarters
- 11, 12 20 Group - Game Changers - ATI Headquarters
- 11, 12 20 Group - Phoenix Rising - Phoenix, AZ
- 15, 16 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 2
- 15, 16 20 Group - Best of the West - Irvine, CA
- 18, 19 California Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 18, 19 MasterMind - ATI Headquarters
- 18, 19 20 Group - Nor'Easter - Boston, MA
- 18, 19 20 Group - Rollin In Dough - ATI Headquarters
- 18, 19 20 Group - Atlanta - Atlanta, GA
- 22, 23 20 Group - Rising Tide - ATI Headquarters
- 22, 23 20 Group - The Buck Starts Here - ATI Headquarters
- 22, 23 20 Group - Money Masters - ATI Headquarters
- 24, 25, 26 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 24, 25, 26 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing

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The Best Sales Improvement Secret I Know Of

"The secret to success is to know something that nobody else knows." Aristotle Onassis

Eric M. Twiggs, ATI Coach

If you were to type the term "analytical" into Google, a picture of "James" would appear! He and I were having an intense discussion as to why his sales were trending in the wrong direction. James sent me detailed spreadsheets that summarized his market analysis, product sales comparisons, and the number of new customer visits by month for the past three years.

He believed that tweaking his marketing and merchandising mix would fix the problem. My gut was telling me to dig a little deeper.

I asked James to send me an analysis that compared the sales, average repair order (ARO), and gross profit performance of his three **service managers**. Of the three managers, "John" had the lowest ARO and gross profit results. To make matters worse, he also had the highest customer count and his technicians had the lowest courtesy check to customer percentage!

Based on the math, **James would pick up \$17,000 in additional monthly sales** if John improved his ARO to the **same level as the top producer**. Over twelve months, that works out to **\$204,000** in additional revenue!

One person's performance would move James from owning an \$800,000 establishment to a 1-million-dollar enterprise. **This is why having the right person at the counter, who's doing the right things, is the best sales improvement secret I know of.**

The reason this is a secret is because **most owners look at the market instead of the manager when sales are down**. So what can you do to make the most of this little-known secret? Stay with me to find out.



Clarity... I believe that clarity is the starting point of success. In his book "[The Five Levels of Leadership](#)," [John Maxwell](#) uses the metaphor of "**the messy workbench**" to highlight the importance of having clarity when looking for people or pursuing a goal.

Here's how it goes: **When you have a messy workbench in your shop, you need to know exactly what a tool looks like if you want to find it.** If you aren't clear, you end up wasting a lot of time and making the wrong choice.

Searching the various hiring sites is like looking for a tool on a messy workbench. **So how do you determine what the right service manager looks like?**

Having clear expectations is a great place to start. I often talk with shop owners who would define the right person as someone who arrives to work on time, has a good attitude, and likes long walks on the beach! When looking for "Mr. or Ms. Right," you have to ask yourself the following question: **Can they achieve the desired outcomes?**

When you are interviewing, I recommend creating a scorecard that lists the specific outcomes you expect the candidate to achieve. A 53 percent total gross profit, \$450 ARO and 95 percent CSI score would be examples of results to notate.

After the interview, rate the candidate on a scale of 1-10 to determine the likelihood of their achieving the outcomes based on how they answered the questions. For additional information on using a scorecard to achieve clarity, review my previous blog post titled [The Sound of Silence](#).



Certainty... Now that you are clear on the results you expect, you must be certain that your people can deliver on those outcomes. Using a technique known as **zero based thinking** is the first step.

Zero based thinking is a decision making process where you imagine yourself being in the past with the knowledge you have today. Here's the zero based thinking question in action: **If you could go back in time, would you rehire John knowing what you now know about him?**

If your reflex response is **NO**, the follow-up question is **how soon can you find a qualified replacement?** Asking this question **BEFORE** sending your recent hire to training will increase the odds of you experiencing a return on your investment. When I asked James this question, he admitted that he wouldn't rehire John based on what he now knows about his attitude and performance.

The next step is to take your overall shop performance and drill down by the individual. If the shop **ARO** is \$250, and one of your managers is at \$190, moving his performance will take the shop to the next level. Using zero based thinking will tell you if you have the right person. Reviewing individual performance will tell you if they are doing the right things.

Conclusion

So there you have it. If you embrace the ideas I just mentioned, you will grow in the areas of clarity and certainty. Your shop will become the worst kept secret because the sales improvement will be too obvious to hide!

The Coach's Corner

Stop Taking The Easy Way Out

Like It or Not, You Lead by Example. Are You Proud of What Your Staff Sees?

Geoff Berman, ATI Coach

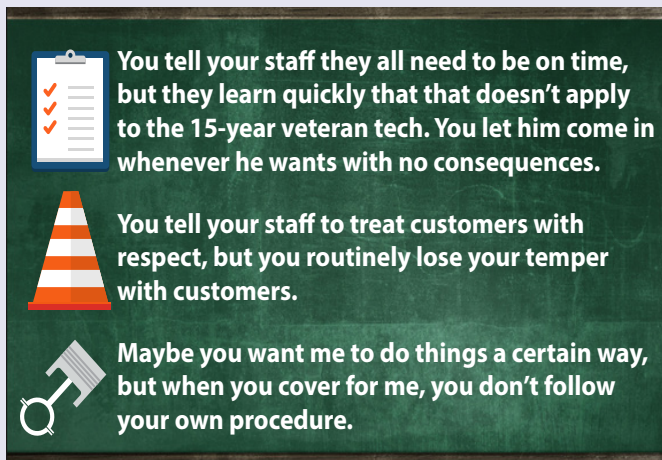
As a parent of four teenage children, I can tell you that there is no question that what they see me do has far more impact on them than what I tell them to do. As they have grown, I can see my strengths as well as my shortcomings show in their behavior. I can recall moments where I have reacted to something they have done I don't like, and connected it to something I have done I don't like. It scared the hell out of me. Let me give you an example.




As a young father, I often had a short fuse at home. I would tend to have an immediate negative reaction to things that bothered me rather than approaching these matters from a place of curiosity. These were usually small things like not closing the front door, or leaving the lights on after exiting a room, or not rinsing the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher. Most would say this was normal behavior.

Then one day, I was having a conversation with my 17-year-old daughter. Very calmly I asked her how clean the inside of her car was (often it was not fit for human habitation). She immediately got defensive and started to yell. Later that evening I was talking with my wife about what happened. She had spoken to my daughter after I did that day. I was looking for her to confirm I handled it correctly. You know that whole male ego pride thing. Instead, what she said blew me away. After she asked my daughter why she got so upset when I asked her about her car, this is what she said: "I don't know why I reacted that way, Mom. I'm not proud of it. All I can say is I guess I learned it from the master." Is that possible? Is her behavior a product of what she has seen in me? Have I done this to her?

The hard but sad truth is I had done this to her. Children learn more from what they see us do, rather than what we say. This truth is the same for your staff. The leader sets the pace. What you do has far more impact on your people than what you say.

Some examples:



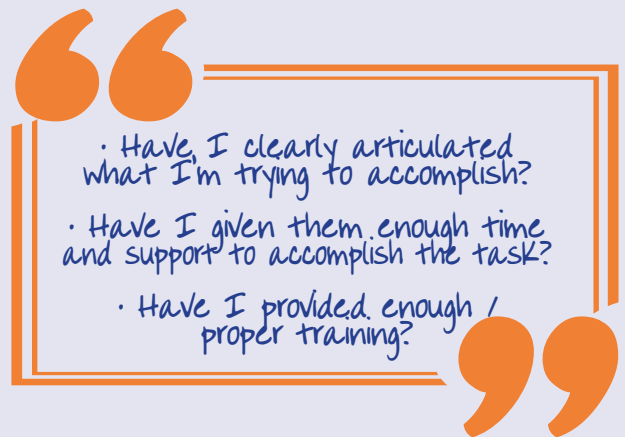
-  You tell your staff they all need to be on time, but they learn quickly that that doesn't apply to the 15-year veteran tech. You let him come in whenever he wants with no consequences.
-  You tell your staff to treat customers with respect, but you routinely lose your temper with customers.
-  Maybe you want me to do things a certain way, but when you cover for me, you don't follow your own procedure.

What message are you really sending if you do not practice what you preach? They will always take their cues from what they see over what you say. Here is an easy effective way to help you determine if you are setting the right example. If your behavior was published in the New York Times, would you be proud or embarrassed by what you read?

So, I ask you this. Do you see your behaviors in your staff? Can you see a path of change leading back to you? If you do, and I know you do, then it should be clear what really needs to change. No matter how hard you try to change your staff it will never happen. The change must begin within you. Here is a poem, written by a monk in 1100 AD, to help you remember this.

When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world.
I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town. I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize the only thing I can change is myself, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world.

To know if the change needs to start with you, ask yourself these three questions:



If you are honest with yourself in your answers, what you will find is, more often than not, you are at least as much a part of the problem as they are, if not more so. Now you can fix it.



Classes continued...

JUNE

- 1, 2 20 Group - European Imports - ATI Headquarters
- 1, 2 Peak Performers - tba
- 5, 6 Shop Owner Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 5, 6 Collision Owners Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 5, 6 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 5, 6 Collision Production Course
- 7, 8, 9 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 7, 8, 9 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 12, 13 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 14, 15, 16 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 14, 15, 16 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 15, 16 Service Advisor - Service Manager
- 21, 22, 23 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 21, 22, 23 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 29, 30 Service Advisor - Advanced Sales

JULY

- 10, 11 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 12, 13, 14 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 24, 25 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 26, 27, 28 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 26, 27, 28 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 27, 28 California Service Advisor Course Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 31 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 2

AUGUST

- 1 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 2
- 2, 3, 4 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 2, 3, 4 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 7, 8 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 7, 8, 9 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 7, 8, 9 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 10, 11 Shop Owner Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 10, 11 Collision Owners Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 16, 17, 18 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 16, 17, 18 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 17, 18 20 Group - Future Owners - Headquarters
- 17, 18 20 Group - Second In Command - Header quarters
- 21, 22 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 23, 24, 25 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 23, 24, 25 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 24, 25 California Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 28, 29 20 Group - Profiteers - ATI Headquarters
- 31 Service Advisor - Advanced Sales

Please be sure to check out the exciting new feature of your ATICoconnect App! With a tap on your phone screen you can now view the most current class schedule, check for class availability and register for classes!

Class registration has never been easier!

Sam's Corner



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, we want you on the program. Please email me at gberman@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. I need you to help make this the most popular business automotive app out there!

Thanks for listening,

Geoff Berman



L.P. Frederick

4 See you at

SUPERCONFERENCE 2017

TUCSON, ARIZONA

March 22-25, 2017

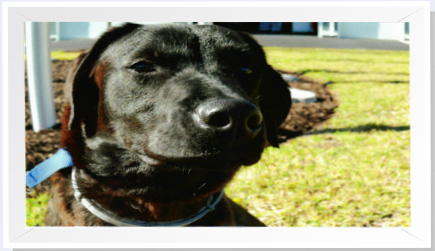
<http://www.autotraining.net/superconference17>

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Giving Back

Kevin Allen, ATI Coach

Being an owner of a small business affords you the opportunity to do things for people that you would not ordinarily be able to do if it were not for the business. Nonprofits and charities are two such groups that shop owners find themselves supporting every day. ATI's elite 20 Group members are a model of this very behavior each year, and it creates a bonding experience between members that cannot be broken.



A few examples would be ATI's groups Money Masters, facilitated by Coach Mike Bennett, and The High Mark, facilitated by Coach Rick Johnson. Money Masters routinely donates their time to Habitat for Humanity and The High Mark surprised one of our SuperConference speakers last year by showing up at his ranch in Utah and constructing a fence while he was away on a speaking engagement.

The most recent examples of 20 Groups giving back were displayed at last year's

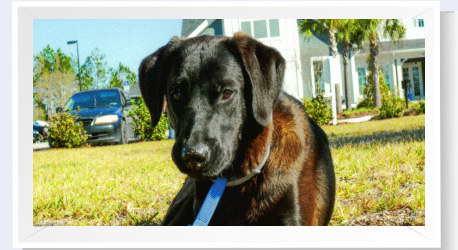
SuperConference in Amelia Island, Florida. Each year at the conference, Richard and his team select a local charity that ATI will sponsor so that we can give back as a group to the host city.



Last year's group was a local charity named K9s for Warriors that supports our military members who have returned home from service and need the use of a service dog. The dogs are found through a rescue mission and then put into a rigorous training program and, after completion, are then given to a service member as a companion. Two of the 20 Groups, Nothin' But Net, facilitated by Coach Kevin Allen, and Phoenix Rising, facilitated by Coach Kim Hickey, raised a combined \$36K for the K9s for Warriors charity and by doing so earned the rights to name two of the rescue dogs. The groups were notified just a few weeks ago that their respective dogs had been located and entered into the training program. The sponsored dogs are named Diesel and Phoenix and will be put into service as soon as their training is complete. Both 20 Groups

are very excited about this news and will continue to receive updates as time goes on.

ATI's elite 20 Groups not only give back to the community but to one another as well. These groups, now over 25 strong, not only give back to the community but to each other as well. The groups have two official meetings a year as well as many other interactions between the meetings. The members support and challenge each other to no end and there is no question that lifelong friendships are developed and maintained by the members. In addition to your coach, training classes, etc., the 20 Groups are an additional resource ATI offers to fuel your growth as individuals and business owners.



If you are not currently involved in one of these elite 20 Groups you should speak with your coach about becoming involved as soon as possible or contact Kevin Green at kgreen@autotraining.net. I challenge each of you reading this to also find a cause that is important to you and give back, as doing so not only helps others but makes you feel good about the work you are doing as well.