

ShopTalk

ATI
Automotive
Training Institute

www.autotraining.net

8611 Larkin Road, Suite 200, Savage, MD 20763 • 1.888.471.5800

December 2010

Man Boobs as Your Measurement Device

For years my nickname has been Chubby. I've been in danger of losing that nickname to one I'd rather not have.

I have decided I need to change what I'm doing, or you'll have to start calling me "Fatty." Why, you ask? I woke up one morning, looked at myself in the mirror and was horrified to find man boobs.

Here at ATI several of us are working together to lose weight. We are trying a revolutionary diet program. It involves eating less and exercising more. Believe me, I wish there were some pill I could take to go from Fatty back to Chubby, but there isn't. It's going to take work and sacrifice. The good folks at Cracker Barrel are going to have to get along without me for a while.

One of the most surprising things I've learned while dieting is how bad I am at estimating how many calories are in a meal. I think I'm doing a good job, but when I look up the food later I figure out it was a lot more calories than I expected. Usually by then I'm already hungry for something else. This is especially true if I go the entire day without keeping track of what I'm eating. I find that I eat a whole lot more when I'm not keeping track. The only way I eat less is when I keep track of my meals as I go through the day.

I dropped into a training session here at ATI and saw a similar problem. Not man boobs, but a shop owner who didn't realize how bad his shop was going until he had a "man boob" type revelation one day. He hadn't noticed the little problems along the way. Then his shop got to the point where the situation was so bad that reality finally confronted him in the face one morning.

This is why your coach works with you to track and monitor your numbers every week. As a shop owner, it's easy to slip when you don't get your numbers done. Just like I think

I can look at a chicken dinner at Shoney's and guess the calorie count, shop owners think they can tell if they are operating at maximum profitability without looking at their numbers. After all, tracking, reporting and evaluating numbers is a lot of work. Yes, but it's the most important work you can do in your shop because it means the difference of whether you put a lot of money in your bank account and leave work early or you work at your shop for 30 years and leave with nothing.

I got blindsided with man boobs because I did nothing to monitor my eating habits. By then my habits had gotten so bad it was painful to change. I had to make huge changes in my diet to get control.

Same with shop owners. Monitoring your business without composites is like gauging your health without stepping on a scale. You feel the same, but you don't notice the small changes until your bad habits are hard to break.

What gets measured gets improved. Can you imagine if we didn't give any grades to the children in our schools? No way, without grades it's too easy to allow important things to slip.

Don't allow anything to slip in your shop. Track your numbers, submit them to the portal and review your metrics with your coach. It'll save you from having a "man boobs" experience like mine. In the meantime, I'm going to go eat a salad. **ATI**



Seven Secrets for the Busy Shop Owner to Rev Up Your Metabolism



By Sherry L. Granader
Sports Nutritionist

The fact is, your body may not be burning calories quickly because of poor eating habits and a way-too-busy but ultimately sedentary lifestyle. Fortunately, you CAN boost your metabolism with a little help from my seven sure fire tips:

Start your engines!

Secret #1: Get to bed early

The number of zzz's you catch can have a big effect on your waistline. Research shows that sleep deprivation can send your hunger and appetite hormones out of whack.

Secret #2: Get up earlier

Does your morning ritual consist only of showering, brushing your teeth and getting dressed? Then you're neglecting two important activities that could boost your metabolism.

The first: Eat breakfast – and coffee doesn't count. Skipping that bowl of oatmeal might sound harmless, but you're missing the first opportunity of the day to jumpstart your metabolism.

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ATI Client Profile

You Can Work Hard ... or You Can Work Smart

After watching his grandfather and then his father run their family auto repair shop in Columbia, S.C., Michael Andrews says he has learned you can do business one of two ways: “You can work hard, or you can work smart.”

The third-generation owner of Bob Andrews Motors Inc. says auto repair comes naturally to him. “My grandfather opened the business in 1923, and I kind of grew up in the shop,” Michael says. “You pick up a lot of things you think are natural for everyone to know. In fact, I have a 10-year-old son who hangs around the shop now, and he knows more about cars than most grown men.”

“Michael says he is able to provide his customers a much better product, it’s a win-win-win all the way around.”

Of course, knowing about cars doesn’t necessarily mean you know about business. Michael’s dad handled the business end while Michael managed production and workflow. All that changed on the day Michael’s dad passed away. Michael recalls, “He went home from work one day and died. He worked till the last day and hadn’t really finished my training. I didn’t know the difference between gross and net.”

Michael says business after that was O.K., but not really profitable. The business lost money the first three or four years he ran the shop. He moved to a new location, where he had more capability, but he realized his team needed more training.

Several calls about a workshop from the Automotive Training Institute ended up being the wakeup call Michael needed. “I think they called me three or four times when they were bringing a workshop to the Columbia area,” he says. “I was interested, of course, but something always came up and I couldn’t go. Finally, I made it a point to go.”

Attending that workshop was the first step in Michael’s transition from working hard to working smart.

“It was a good workshop,” Michael says. “They go through a lot of information, and you can actually do well in your business just by making the changes they recommend at the workshop.”

The next step was a little harder for Michael: joining one of the coaching programs ATI offers. “It was a huge financial commitment for me,” he explains, “but I realized if the program did for my business what they said it could do, then my investment would be minuscule compared to the profits I would gain. So, I made the decision to join and didn’t look back.”

That’s one decision Michael will never regret. Through coaching, he has learned to monitor the statistics that help him keep control of his shop’s profits. In particular, Michael says he is keeping a close eye on his profits on parts. “I learned that it’s important to realize what it costs you when you have to give something away,” he says, “because that really kills your statistics and affects your average repair order.”

Michael has also implemented doing free inspections on most vehicles that come into the shop. He says the ATI coaching has helped him train his team members to the point that they want to do the inspections because they understand how those inspections will increase

the shop’s profitability by increasing the value of each job. “ATI talks you through training your team to the point where they’re excited about doing these inspections versus it being a chore. There’s even a training video so they can learn to do the inspections quickly,” he says.

By offering free inspections, Michael says he is able to provide his customers a much better product. “Most of the time, they’ll fix what you tell them to fix, and your average repair order will skyrocket,” he says. “Technicians will be making more money, you’ll be making more money and it’s just a win-win-win all the way around. Even if they don’t do the repairs on the car, at least they’re leaving with knowledge of what’s wrong, and chances are if they have a problem with it later, they’re going to come back to you for the service.”

Michael’s strongest advice for other shop owners? “You can work hard, hard, hard and make very little money, or you can work smart, smart, smart and have a lot more time off and a lot less pressure,” he says. “You need to answer that weekly call from your ATI coach and implement the suggested changes. Even if you disagree, it’s important to make the changes. I can’t tell you how much of a difference it’s made in my life.” **ATI**



The Final Step to Freedom from the Counter

By Rick Johnson



OK so we have fixed the parts margins with the parts matrix, we have fixed the labor margins with a pay plan and the labor matrix. We have cleaned up the shop and increased our warranty and maybe even painted or remodeled the place. Heck we have even increased productivity by posting hours and focusing on hours sold per repair order. We now have a decent bottom line and have the bills paid and some money in the bank. We have hired a Service Advisor and sent him or her to class, and they are selling jobs at the level of profit desired and your customers like them. So what's the problem?

Still tied to the counter answering customers' questions and dealing with the technicians and making 100 little decisions every day? Sure the money is good and the new look at the shop makes you proud. But what about the freedom of having a Service Advisor that you were told about? What about being able to work on the business instead of in it, what happened to that dream? What about being able to take a few days off and not come back to a mountain of notes and little fires to have to put out?

Could it be that you have not let go? Could it be separation anxiety? I think that a lot of the problem could be that you have

not empowered the Service Advisor. You need to have a coronation ceremony and let the techs know that this is "the man/woman." This is the new boss and you have put your confidence in this person and they need to come to this person with their needs from now on. You have to do this with your customers as well. Hand the customers over to them and let the customer know that this person is the one who will be taking their calls and handling scheduling and taking care of all their needs. Then stand back and actually let the advisor do his or her job.

You need to support this person once they have shown they are capable of the position. You need to work hard to not come and undermine their decisions about how technicians or customers were handled as long as their issues were resolved. Of course having the job description and expectations and responsibilities written up go without saying. But a good shop flow and everyone in the shop understanding how the system works are crucial if you ever want to be free from the day-to-day working in the business.

Now if you say "my advisor could never do this or handle this," then I say to you that you need to replace them with one who can! Or "my advisor has not been to class yet" or "still needs to finish class first" – then dang it get them to class! What are you waiting for? Hey guess what? I know it costs money to send an

advisor to class and get them trained – have you ever figured out what it costs to not train them? Not just in lost sales and mishandled opportunities and lost profits. But in not being able to reach your potential!

I am here to tell you that your business is right now perfectly designed to get you the results you are getting. If you're happy with those results then by all means don't change anything. But if you want something more, if you want to be the owner who truly does work on his business and not in it, then you have got to change. I would highly recommend pointing my compass toward that coronation ceremony, and once it is accomplished you will find that freedom you so desperately wanted when you signed up for the program. **ATI**



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Second, you should exercise. Even a 20-minute walk or jog will make a difference. So skip that second cup of java and strap on your walking shoes instead.

Secret #3: Lift Weights

Weight training is important too, because it tones your muscles and boosts lean tissue mass, which burns more calories per pound than fat. The more lean muscle tissue you have, the more calories you burn daily.

Secret #4: Eat all day

Forget about three large square meals a day. Graze on healthy snacks or munch on smaller meals instead, which will keep your metabolism revved up all day.

Secret #5: Raise a glass

If you are not drinking lots of water all day long you're risking major weight gain.

Secret #6: Eat spicy foods

Turning up the heat on your meals may do more than just add fun flavor. "Hot" foods, such as jalapeños, chili peppers and spices (like curry and cayenne) increase body temperature, stimulating the use of stored fat as energy.

Secret #7: Count on calcium

Look for a good quality calcium/magnesium supplement to take in the morning and again at night about an hour before bed. It helps lower blood pressure by relaxing the muscles including your heart for a great night's sleep.

I can't wait to see you all at SuperConference 2011 in San Diego in March where we can drink lots of water together.

Your Available Training Programs for December and January










December 2010

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday/Sunday

		1 Shop Owner 1 of 9	2 Hanukkah Shop Owner 2 of 9	3 Shop Owner 3 of 9	4/5
6 Service Advisor 1 of 4	7 Service Advisor 2 of 4	8 Shop Owner 7 of 9	9 Shop Owner 8 of 9	10 Shop Owner 9 of 9	11/12
13 Service Manager 1 of 2	14 Service Manager 2 of 2	15 Shop Owner 4 of 9	16 Shop Owner 5 of 9	17 Shop Owner 6 of 9	18/19
20 Service Advisor 3 of 4	21 Service Advisor 4 of 4	22	23	24	25/26 Christmas
27	28	29	30	31	

January 2011

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday/Sunday

					1/2
3	4	5	6 San Jose Service Advisor 1 of 2	7 San Jose Service Advisor 2 of 2	8/9
10 Service Advisor 1 of 4	11 Service Advisor 2 of 4	12 Shop Owner 1 of 9	13 Shop Owner 2 of 9	14 Shop Owner 3 of 9	15/16
17 M.L. King Day	18	19	20 Master Mind	21 Master Mind	22/23
24	25	26 Shop Owner 4 of 9	27 Shop Owner 5 of 9	28 Shop Owner 6 of 9	29/30
31 Service Advisor 1 of 4					

Sam's Corner

New Ideas to Sell Your Company

Consumers today typically have a warped idea of business owners and how they got started. Much of this is due to the bad press we hear about big corporations ripping off consumers, as well as small business shady practices. Although I find very little of this in our industry, it isn't about reality but about the perception people have of business owners. Heck, even though we have an A plus Better Business rating a known felon slammed us on the internet with fake clients and tried to blackmail me to have the posting taken down. My point is you have to work hard

at producing positive information on your company because once it is on the internet it is on there forever.

A few great ideas for selling your company are radio and business networking groups. I was recently asked by Executive Leaders Radio Program to go on the air and explain how I got started in business. They wanted to hear how a below average student that was academically dismissed could rise up to create the largest training and consulting company by far in the automotive industry. They were doing case studies for college students, to give

them the confidence that they could succeed in business regardless of their beginnings if they had the passion to help other people grow as well. It's important to let your customers know you are an ordinary person.

I would suggest you try to get involved in helping consumers through automotive radio programs and business networking groups where people can learn how you got started. Teach them your beliefs and help them with their questions before they become your customer. You just may gain some customers for life! **ATI**



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