

# Your next technician is working for a competitor

Does your shop have what it takes to lure them away?

**W**e are all aware of the technician shortage in our industry. There are likely more shops out there looking for a tech than not. One thing we need to realize is that the tech we are looking for is currently working for someone else. So how do we attract them to come to us, and away from where they are? Let's listen to veteran ATI coach Steve Privette explain how it is done.

In many cases, if a tech is looking to leave his current job it is usually for one of these five reasons: money, time, convenience, environment or relocation.

Your ads need to touch on all of these areas to give you the best chance of finding your next technician.

## Money

If we don't pay them well, someone else surely will. In our search, we do not want to use words like "competitive pay" in our postings, as this equates to average. How about this instead: "Industry top pay for the right individual." That will

pique the interest of a tech searching for more money. Another idea is to offer a hiring/signing bonus, which can be paid over service time.

Think you cannot afford to pay more? Realistically you can't afford not to. You may have to adjust your labor rate to compensate for paying more, which is what every industry does. As costs go up in any business, this gets passed along to the consumer. If you view yourself as the best shop in town, you should be able to pay the best and charge the best.

## Time

Many techs are currently working five or more days per week, some including weekends. These days it appears many employees value their time just as much as — or more than — money. One of my members was getting very minimal response to his tech search, so we decided to modify his listing to say "four- or five-day work week, your choice." His responses increased a good bit, as he was getting interest in the four-

day work week option. We decided that getting a good tech four days per week was better than zero days a week. That shop owner ended up doing four-day work weeks for all of his techs, and added another tech for full weekly coverage. He hasn't experienced a work force issue since. A potential tech who is on the fence about working for you due to distance might be swayed by commuting one less day weekly.

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## Convenience

This is the one we have the least control over. Some techs are searching for a change due to a long commute. We cannot move our shop to where the tech is, but we can offer to assist with the costs related to his/her commute by helping with fuel expense and/or even offering a car to drive for the right individual. These can be worked into a pay plan. Again, you can also offer a four-day work week to help compensate for the commute.

## Environment

There's nothing worse than spending the majority of your waking hours in a negative environment. This can wear on you and become toxic. There are techs out there who make good money, the hours are fine, and the shop is convenient, but

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Chris "Chubby" Frederick, CEO



the negative environment drives them out. When posting ads, project the opposite. Things like, "Come be part of the family" or "We BBQ/grill for lunch every week." Is your shop an enjoyable environment to work in? Do you focus on recognizing and rewarding your employees? Another environment category is a dirty shop with outdated and/or nonworking equipment. This too can drive a tech out. Is your shop clean and with updated working equipment? If so, let's list that in our posting. Something like, "State-of-the-art equipment," and/or "Clean, organized shop." If not, let's get it clean with updated equipment to attract techs.

### Relocation

When searching for a tech, use sources that will attract from all over the country and not just locally. Consider a statement like: "Relocation assistance available for the right individual." This can work similar to a hiring bonus where you would pay their moving expenses over time after they have been employed with you for a while.

Finding technicians is getting harder every day as our seasoned techs are slowly retiring, and the number of people entering our industry is dwindling. The shops that are willing to adapt to the needs of technicians are the ones that will have technicians. The shops that say they won't pay the most, won't offer four-day work weeks, won't be convenient, or won't create a positive, clean environment also won't have technicians.


Chubby and many economists are



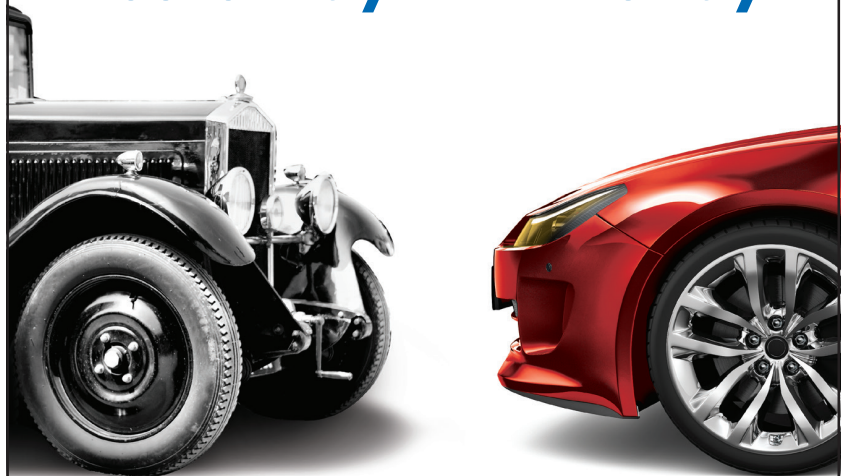
**CHRIS "CHUBBY" FREDERICK** is the CEO and founder of the Automotive Training Institute. ATI's 115 associates train and coach more than 1,400 shop owners every week

across North America to drive profits and dreams home to their families. This month's article was written with the help of Coach Steve Privette. [chubby@autotraining.net](mailto:chubby@autotraining.net)

predicting a slowdown in the general economy starting in the third quarter of 2018 and into 2019. When this happens, your customers will slow down buying new cars, and the automotive repair business will grow quickly. Everyone will be looking for more techs, but the smart shop owners will have them on board before it happens.

If you are like many shop owners and are unsure of what are the best interview questions that you need to ask, we have them for you. Simply go to [www.ationlinetraining.com/2018-04](http://www.ationlinetraining.com/2018-04) for a limited time and we will give you the interview questions that can make the difference between hiring the next superstar or someone who just sounds like one! 

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