

# Is your business in trouble, or do you need to improve?

Just like diagnosing a car – you'll need a flow chart!

**T**his month, let's listen to ATI Coach Brian Hunnicutt explain how he begins to diagnose shops that want to do better. The first question in the flow chart would be: "Do you have enough cars?" Let's assume the answer is no. Then we would need to check into marketing, phone skills, location and a bunch of other things, but you get the idea. If the answer is yes and you have enough cars, we would check to see if you are asking for enough with the estimate. If you aren't asking enough with the estimate, then we would either work on the courtesy check, or look at maintenance for the estimate using time and mileage. If the courtesy checks and maintenance are not an issue, then we need to look closer. Now we would look into the conversion rate of estimate dollars to dollars sold. You do this by examining the relationship you build with the customer. Do you provide education in your presentations? Do you build value with the sale or in service after the sale?

## Need more car count?

If you do not have enough cars, first ask

yourself, "What are you getting for an average repair order?" For a Euro shop it should be around \$1,000. For an Asian shop, it should be around \$700. For a normal auto repair shop, it should be around \$500. For a quick lube, it should be around \$125. So you may not need more cars — you may need to get more per car. So do you need more cars? Yes? Then are you posting on Google My Business at least three times a week? Are you doing all of the customer retention ideas (things like thank you calls, CSI calls and deferred work calls)? Are you working on re-scheduling calls, and where-have-you-been calls? Are you exit scheduling?

Once you have enough cars, are you asking for enough? If the answer is no, then are you doing a courtesy check before doing any other work except a no start? Is it a complete courtesy check? Are you building the estimate that has everything included that should be? Are you adding the maintenance, like shocks/struts, flushes, filters, belts and battery services by time and mileage as you are supposed to? The estimate average should be

at least \$1,250. If you don't ask for enough, then the answer is "no" before you even ask. On the courtesy check, is anyone double-checking to make sure that nothing is being missed? Are you putting your eyes on the car so that when you talk to the client you can give them the image of what you saw? This way they understand the importance of the service.

**ONCE YOU HAVE ENOUGH CARS, ARE YOU ASKING FOR ENOUGH? ARE YOU BUILDING AN ESTIMATE THAT HAS EVERYTHING INCLUDED THAT SHOULD BE?**

## Need larger estimates?

If you are asking for enough, the estimate would be at least \$1,250 on average. Not every car but on average — some will be almost nothing and others will be in the thousands. You do this by examining the relationship you build with the customer. Do you provide education in your presentations? Do you build value with the sale or in service after the sale?

Relationships start on the customer's side of the counter with a handshake and a warm smile. You walk out to the car with the customer, showing interest in both the customer and the vehicle. Do you walk around noting anything wrong with the car and pointing it out to the customer? Start the vehicle and make sure that the warning lights go out — this protects you and the customer. Any warning lights that are on — are you checking them out today?



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## CAN YOU FIRE CUSTOMERS?

You may not have ever fired a customer or you may have done it just last week. It isn't a task you do often; however, it comes with some caveats. A shop owner panel shares why they would do it and taking a dive inside your business to find the true problem. Listen at [MotorAge.com/customerfire](http://MotorAge.com/customerfire).

Get the mileage and start having the maintenance conversation with them. You bridge into maintenance at this time. You let the customer know what you are doing with them and for them. This way it does not feel like you are doing anything *to* them later. Without this step and you putting a huge amount of "pump" and "wow" into the beginning part of the process, then you have to put way more effort into getting the customer to buy later. The customer will never feel as good about it and will have way more buyer's remorse.

You need things like Edmunds' "True Cost to Own" ([www.edmunds.com/tco.html](http://www.edmunds.com/tco.html)) in your back pocket so you can explain to the client how you are saving them money and the importance of repairing and maintaining their car versus



**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 former shop owner and ATI Coach Brian Hunnicutt.

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buying a new or used one. If you skip the education step, when you present the entire estimate later with maintenance, it will be like clubbing them over the head.

### Download your own flow chart

This Customer Service Checklist is designed to get you the right return busi-

ness with the right average repair order amount. If worked properly, it will allow owners to work on their business and not in it. Track, measure and hold your employees accountable to this and set yourself free. If you would like to download your own checklist simply go to [www.ationlinetraining.com/2019-08](http://www.ationlinetraining.com/2019-08) for a limited time. **MA**



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