

Why Is Quality Important and How Do I Achieve It?

By Chuck Dailey, ATI Coach

All too often, we practice crisis management. We are consumed with “putting out fires” while struggling to meet payroll, cost of goods sold and our fixed cost. We hope there will be something left for the business and ourselves.

Is this the best we can expect? I don’t think so! So, how do we change it?

First of all, doing something repeatedly and expecting or wishing for different results is not the answer. We must commit ourselves to change.

But what do we change? Should we recruit and hire new employees, change pay plans, change our business model or hire more consultants? The options are virtually endless. We only need to make one good move!

I would suggest we document and implement proven processes (best practices, etc.) for each element of the business. Each aspect or element of the business requires a minimum number of deliverables to function efficiently and profitably.

In other words, we should not rely only on the talent and desire of our employees to achieve our goals. While there is no substitute for talent, experience and desire, it is not enough to perform at peak levels consistently. For instance, consider the pain felt and disruption experienced when a key employee is lost. Defined processes ensure consistency, which produces the quality results.

What is quality?

It is the product of a management system that will help you to continually monitor and manage the desired results in every aspect of your business, while outlining ways to achieve, as well as benchmark, consistent performance and service. It will assist you to put in place processes to improve the way you operate at all levels.

What are the benefits?

- Allows you to become a more consistent competitor in your marketplace
- Better quality management helps you meet customer needs
- More efficient ways of working will save time, money and resources



- Improved operational performance will cut errors and increase profits
- Motivates and engages staff with more efficient internal processes
- Wins more high-value customers with better customer service
- Broadens business opportunities by demonstrating commitment

At this point, you are no doubt thinking, yet another person preaching my adopting a “cookie cutter” approach to business.

Not at all! You wouldn’t be successful in business at some level if you were not doing something right. The objective is to improve performance by defining what you are doing right and enhancing whatever process is working for you.

For example, everyone has a method of selling their services. Maybe it is “flying by the seat of your pants” or playing “lucky dice.” Whatever method you practice, it should be consistent and should include the deliverables recommended by any of the best practices available. ATI has a “seven-step sales process” for selling service and maintenance to customers. It includes proven deliverables that produce optimal results. You may choose to modify it to suit your personality, facility, staffing level, etc.

You may not ignore the required deliverables, only those recommended.

If you have ever watched a train rolling down the track, you will notice it appears to sway from side to side. However, it does not go off the track except in the case of a derailment. We should seek to avoid derailments by documenting and implementing a sales track on which our salespeople run.

You should begin by examining the various elements of your business and scoring yourself objectively. Once you have done this, it is easier to determine what action to take and establish priorities. *Consult your coach for details.*

What are the elements I am talking about?

They include management, organization, personnel, accounting, information, marketing, sales and service, parts and financial controls. Do you have an annual business plan? Does it include an annual marketing plan with a defined budget and calendar? What are your short and long term goals for the business? Does the informational element include IT issues? Does the organizational element include mandatory health and safety rules and regulations? Is your accountant delivering the information you need to effectively “work on the business” as well as in it? Is the personnel element in compliance with current state and federal requirements? You get the idea!

Make excellence a habit!

Tools of the Trade

Are you going to miss out on the best Customer Acquisition holiday tool you will ever have?

By Geoff Berman, Coach / Instructor

As you probably know, a good response to new customer acquisition is typically 0.5% to 1.0%. What if I told you that over the last three years with this program I have seen up to 40 times that. Most shops are seeing a 2% to 10% result, but occasionally I have seen as much as a 20% return. The bottom line is, whatever your result, it will be better than just about any other acquisition tool you have ever used. In addition to great response rates, what I have seen the last three years is that the ARO is typically over \$200 (two to four times the ARO on your cheap oil change offer), and usually half or more of these customers come back and spend even more when they return.

What is this incredible program? The ATI Holiday Gift Card Strategy.

Make sure you ask your coach for the details and follow the instructions to the tee. After you have decided how many you want to send, in your portal go to the Resource Center and to the ATI Marketing Tool Box and place your order.

If you need further assistance, Jennifer at FSR will be happy to assist you. She can be reached by email at customerservice@fsr1.com or by phone at 434-973-4152. Do not delay if you want to be ready in time for the holidays!

Shop Owner Options:

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- [Message Post](#)
- [Resource Center](#)
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Then click here



Sam's Corner

Come to SuperConference and Road Test Your Shop!

SuperConference 2014 beckons. Who wouldn't want to spend a long weekend along the white sand beaches of Puerto Rico? There, the mid-March weather doesn't *dare* you to go outside — it invites you!

But you're on the fence and asking yourself a lot of hard questions, one of which I hear every year, especially from relatively new clients: "What will happen at my shop if I'm away for *four entire days*?"

If for no other reason than to find out what *will* happen in your shop during a short, planned absence, you should *indeed* attend SuperConference 2014!

Think of it as a road test for your shop.

Road test is defined as: "a test of a motor vehicle's operating capability under *actual* road conditions." If you had to spend three weeks recovering from surgery, or broke your hip skiing, you would have no choice but to leave your shop in the hands of your crew. Those actual conditions are real possibilities.

Let's face it: life happens. Sooner or later, you are going to be away from the shop for some length of time, whether or not you want to be. And you owe it to yourself to find out what will happen — sooner rather than later.



If you have been implementing the changes presented to you in your Re-Engineering program for any length of time, chances are very good that everything is going to be just fine. That will prove to you that you are well on the way to the goal of being able to work *on* your business (not in it) — or are already there!

Either way, the best place you can be is in the company of hundreds of the most successful shop owners in North America. If you're close to your goal, your fellow attendees will help you move faster toward the finish line. If you're already there, your fellow attendees can share tips on what to do to take your business to the next level, now that you have the time and freedom to do it.

If *things* don't go quite as well as you had hoped, you'll learn a lot about where things need to be improved so those problems never happen again.

And again, if things are going sour while you're gone, you couldn't be in a better place to prepare for the work ahead. When you return from SuperConference, you will be completely re-energized to tackle whatever problems await you. You'll have a brain full of new knowledge, a fired-up attitude from hearing some of the best motivational speakers out there, and a new set of fresh friendships and business contacts with folks who are just like you, face the same challenges every day — and very likely have the solutions you need to overcome them.

SuperConference is March 12–15 and filling up fast with only 30 rooms left. Register now so you don't miss out!

I hope to see you there!

C. L. Frederick

Chris "Chubby" Frederick



Reasons or Excuses?

By Kim Hickey, ATI Coach



During my coaching sessions, I hear a lot of “reasons” about why things are the way they are at your shop and even more “reasons” why you “can’t” run your shop the way you want it to run, and why you “aren’t” able to make the changes that you know you need to make. As I think about the difference between a “reason” and an “excuse,” my take on the difference is this: A “reason” can be described as an honest justification. An “excuse” can be described as an apology disguised as a justification. Here are Webster’s definitions:

rea-son (noun)

a statement presented in justification or explanation of a belief or action

ex-cuse (verb)

to seek to remove the blame of
to serve as an apology or justification for; justify

You need to really think about this. Go sit in your office and tell your staff that you are not to be disturbed. Write down the number one thing that you feel needs to be changed or fixed at your shop, and then write down all of the “reasons” you have not been able to accomplish it thus far. Take some time to review your list. This time, for each “reason,” you need to honestly determine if what you think is stopping you is a “reason” or an “excuse.” If you can’t determine this objectively, ask your partner or spouse, or even your staff. I bet they will be more than happy to give you the unvarnished truth and keep you honest.

To help you put things into perspective, I have included some quotes I found on excuses. My favorite quote is from Florence Nightingale. I hope that going forward, this is the quote you choose to run your business by. Practice saying that quote, memorize it word for word, so that when you win the ATI Top Shop Award someday, you can repeat it verbatim at the podium while standing next to Chubby.

“No more excuses or procrastination! Stop allowing your days to be stolen by busy nothingness and take calculated steps towards your goals.”

— Steve Maraboli

“Anyone can find an excuse. It takes a special person to find the time.”

— Linda Poindexter

“The weak makes excuses, the strong makes changes.”

— Habeeb Akande

“He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else.”

— Benjamin Franklin

“Do not make excuses, whether it’s your fault or not.”

— George S. Patton Jr.

“Excuses are merely nails used to build a house of failure.”

— Habeeb Akande

“I attribute my success to this – I never gave or took any excuse.”

— Florence Nightingale



Tom McGee Will Speak at NACE | CARS 2013 Conference



ASRW welcomes Tom McGee, Director ATI Collision, as a speaker at the NACE | CARS Convention at the Mandalay Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV, on October 16, 2013. The collision industry is changing rapidly. You’re seeing changes in vehicle technology and in every area of the collision repair process. In order for you to be successful in today’s highly competitive collision repair industry, you have to develop and implement new systems, procedures, and processes throughout your operations. We’re excited to bring you this life-changing one-day seminar: “Creating a Results-Driven Business.” Register today!



ATI’s Jim Silverman will be traveling to many conventions over the next couple of months. Please make sure you stop by the trade show booths to say hello!

ASA, CAN Conference in Chicago, IL, September 20–22, 2013

ASA Tire, InfoExpo 2013 Conference in Nashville, TN, September 22–24, 2013

ASTE, Automotive Service and Technology Expo in Cary, NC, September 27–29, 2013

IMDA Convention and Tradeshow in Orlando, FL, October 1–4, 2013

2013 Meineke International Franchisee Convention in Boca Raton, FL, October 6–8, 2013

ASRW, NACE | CARS Convention in Las Vegas, NV, on October 16–18, 2013

Fitness Matters A Series by Gary Siegel, Fitness Matters Gym

Summer Is Over. Watch Out!

The warm weather activities that helped you stay fit are coming to a close. Here are some helpful tips that can help you stay in summertime shape all winter long.

1. Eat vegetables to help you feel full.
2. Drink plenty of water.
3. Remove tempting foods from your home.
4. Stay busy – you don’t want to eat just because you’re bored.
5. Eat only from a plate, while seated at a table. No grazing in front of the ‘fridge.
6. Don’t skip meals.
7. Choose smaller, more frequent meals and snacks over larger, less frequent meals and snacks.



Stop Making Excuses!

Your very own **Virtual Fitness Coach** is as close as your desktop or tablet.

www.fitnessmattersgym.biz Gift Certificates Available



October is Car Care Month! Are You Ready?

By Mike Haley, ATI Team Leader

It’s not too late to plan your Car Care Month Event! Car Care offers everything you need to help schedule, plan and promote your event. For a fee of \$59 (tax deductible) you will receive your car care kit which includes all the point of sale tools needed to have a successful event.



Your Available Training Programs for October and November 2013

October 2013

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday/Sunday

 1 20 Group SLC Service Advisor Part 2	2 Shop Owner Part 1	3 20 Group Irvine Shop Owner Part 1	4 20 Group Irvine Shop Owner Part 1	5/6	
7 Service Advisor Part 1	8 Service Advisor Part 1	9	10	11	12/13
14 Service Manager 1 of 2	15 Service Manager 2 of 2	16 Shop Owner Part 2	17 20 Group Dallas Shop Owner Part 2	18 20 Group Dallas Shop Owner Part 2	19/20
21	22	23	24 20 Group Baltimore Chesapeake	25 20 Group Baltimore Chesapeake	26/27
28 20 Group Leading Ladies Service Advisor Part 2	29 20 Group Leading Ladies Service Advisor Part 2	30 Shop Owner Part 3	31 Shop Owner Part 3 Halloween	 	 

November 2013

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday/Sunday

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

20 Group Key

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Potomac 5 (previously Baltimore 4) | Chesapeake 5 (previously Baltimore 5) |
| GRP 3 - Rollin' in Dough | GRP 1 - 20 for the Money |
| GRP 4 - European Imports | GRP 5 - Back in Black |
| GRP 11 - Profit Force | GRP 7 - 20/20 Vision |
| GRP 12 - Money Masters | GRP 9 - Score for More |
| GRP 14 - New Baltimore Group | GRP 10 - Nothin' but Net |

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