

Auto Shop Tips© by Michael Strautman

mikestrautman@turnaroundtour.com

www.turnaroundtour.com

800-233-8551



Auto Shop Tip #19

Creating Independent Teams – Part 2
Question Employees to Make Them Think
By Michael Strautman

When team building, it is important to learn how to teach team members to think more independently. While feedback and constructive criticism from a manager can be helpful, it can also be a stumbling block for building a team; if it is not done in a way that builds the team, your employees will find it difficult to improve their own performance.

Please notice that I said, "...improving their OWN performance." Part two in creating independent teams is allowing your teams to create solutions to their own problems *with your guidance*. There are two guidance types: guidance by directive, and guiding questions. Guiding by directive only requires repetition of a set of instructions, while questioning employees encourages understanding of your expectations; respectively, dependence versus independence.

Instead of telling your team member what to do, ask them questions that lead them to selecting that choice. Use questions starting with "Why, What, or How." These questions encourage the employee to explain things to you in a way that may expose a lack of understanding, lack of will, or lack of training. For example, consider the following when addressing your next employee regarding their tardiness: "How do you think you could begin getting here on time?"

This will encourage them to tell you how they will handle this situation, allowing you to ask them *why they think you would be concerned* about this behavior. The turning point for most employees is when they begin to see you as a business partner, helping them, rather than the "superior." Asking questions of your employees could prove to be the missing link to your team's success. Examine how you are building your team and make some changes that may eliminate your involvement in some of the problems with your team.

If you have the desire to learn how to question employees to success, and don't know where to begin, I'm happy to help. Please feel free to email or call me:
mikestrautman@turnaroundtour.com or 270-782-6455.

