

Auto Shop Tips© by Michael Strautman

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Auto Shop Tip #7

How to Get Started – “Working on the Business”

By Michael Strautman, Automotive Service Leaders

So, you have invested in training program after training program to learn how to fill the void in your business. Many training programs provide great information, concepts, and principles that without doubt will help your business succeed. One of the most popular questions I hear from shop owners, is how to actually get this information to work in your shops. Here are some principles that will help you put the training to work.

- **Schedule Business Development Time** – The information that you have learned is useless without a desire to use the information. Start scheduling your time. It is important to schedule time either daily or weekly to strategize and develop the business. Some owners schedule an hour a day, some four to five hours one day a week. During this time, make yourself unavailable to others. Even out of the shop if necessary-- especially if you are like most shop owners who must be involved in production. If you don't have staff members to help with production, try coming in early or using 2 or 3 hours of your weekend time to begin “working yourself out of a job.” Start working yourself into a business!
- **Begin Writing Procedures for the Work** – Use this newly-found business development time to begin writing down your processes in an organized fashion. These tasks will become easily repeated. If they are written down, it eliminates the “guess work” by employees, and provides a performance expectation of your employees. No task is too simple to document, if it is important, it

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should be documented and delegated to others whenever possible. Begin with the processes that make money for your shop first. Then, move on to processes that create the atmosphere or spirit of your shop.

- **Ask your trainer or business coach about forms to use for systemization-** Your trainer or business coach should have a document that helps you put together systems for your business. The forms should be clear and concise, making the processes as easy as possible to read, write, and repeat. If you don't have a trainer or business coach for your business, you may be missing an opportunity for a real success story with your business.

Remember, as with any new information, it is useless until it is applied by the learner. Use the above principles to get started putting the information to work. Then, share the developments with your team members and delegate some of the work. You will then find even more time to, "Work ON the business!"

