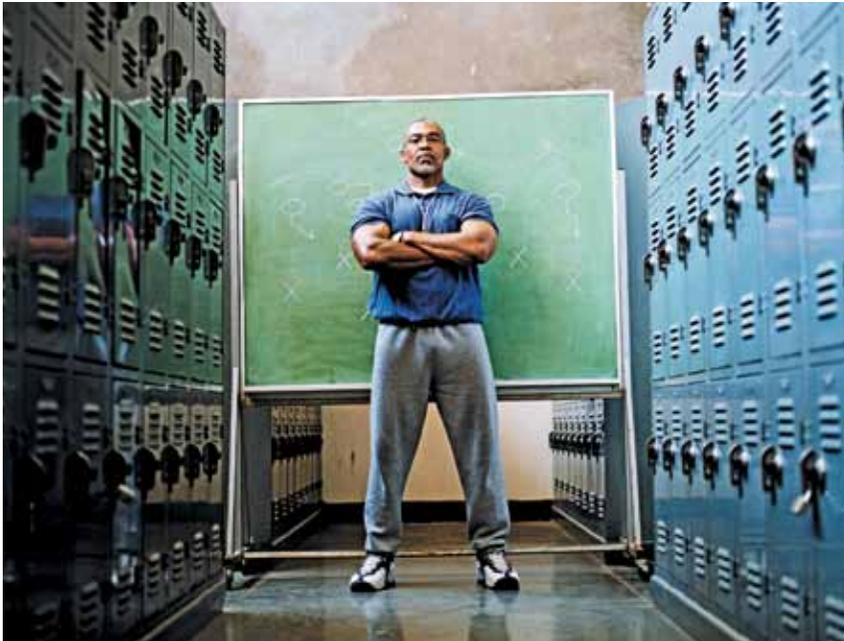


WHY IN THE WORLD DO I NEED A COACH?

EVEN THE BEST ATHLETES, ACTORS AND OTHER PROS HAVE COACHES. FINDING THE RIGHT ONE CAN STEP UP YOUR GAME.

BY CHRIS "CHUBBY" FREDERICK | CONTRIBUTOR



MOST OF us sleep with a great coach; but if you won't listen to him or her, let me give you some suggestions before you hire a coach. Whether you want to stay the best shop owner or the best athlete, remember you are in the game, and you can't see the whole field or the big picture when you are in it. We all have blind spots, and a good coach will enhance your strengths and reduce weaknesses. Successful athletes, shop owners, CEOs and actors all have coaches.

If you want to increase profits, the right coach could decrease the time it

would take you to achieve greater profits while reinforcing what many owners need to hear, which is that it is OK to make money in your business. If you are comfortable and just want more free time, a coach can work with your employees and keep an eye on your money while you are on vacation, plus help you grow your second in command. Most owners have difficulty transferring their own skills because they have never been trained to teach. If you are in a slump and stressed out, a coach can help you make the right decisions.

If you don't like change and just want things to stay the way they are, you

really need a coach because this industry is changing rapidly. If you don't like change, you might have developed a bad habit of not taking anyone's advice, including the coach you sleep with, who probably knows you better than anyone.

I can tell you that I never would have been able to grow my business to where it is today if it were not for my three coaches. I am guilty of all the above and fought hiring my first coach until about 10 years ago. I rarely listened to my wife, and that was a big mistake as well! Today, there is not any important decision I make without asking for advice. I also have seen tens of thousands of owners accomplish things that they never thought possible with a coach's help and in less time than they ever imagined.

What Kind of Coach to Hire?

You want to hire a coach who works for a company that guarantees results. Then you want coaches with at least 18 to 20 years of automotive management experience. They need to have walked the talk and understand exactly what it takes to be successful in a repair shop.



“IF I KNOW I HATE CHANGE IS A COACH A GOOD IDEA? YES, BECAUSE YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO CHANGE ON YOUR OWN OR FROM FAMILY INFLUENCE,”

CHRIS “CHUBBY” FREDERICK [ATI CEO]

I have seen many well-intentioned accountants that understand accounting well but know nothing about automotive service, so they make many mistakes on operational practices. Because your problems might move from finance to sales to hiring to advertising to marketing to management to leadership, what do you think the odds are a coach could be an expert in all of them? Slim, right! So, you want a coach that works with coaching and training specialists in the same company so they can fix your entire operation, not just one part of it.

Because you need hands-on training to become perfect, you want a coach connected to a school where trainers can teach you accounting, finance, sales, marketing, recruiting, advertising and leadership, just to name a few.

Most importantly, because you will need tune-up training in every category every year for you and all your people, make sure the training is unlimited and all-inclusive. If you pay a la carte, you never will buy enough training and you will overpay for the training.

You also want a coach with lots of experience coaching, not just success fixing their shop. Most professionals do not realize how they do things and therefore cannot transfer their skills. Successful shop owners are like successful quarterbacks, they might not make great coaches. New coaches need to shadow successful coaches for six months, implementing more than 40 different strategies a week before they



are allowed to fly solo. Unless a coach has worked successfully with at least 80 clients, don't let them learn on you.

You also don't want a coach with the same personality as you! If you are a directive leader and act fast under pressure, it is extremely important to have a strategic coach to slow you down to make sure you are making the right decision. If you are a strategic leader and overthink everything, a directive coach would hold you accountable and make you take action.

Finally, you want to hire a coach with a proven track record of success in the field as a practitioner and as a coach. They should be coaching lots of clients, so talk to as many as you can to ensure they will fit you and your business.

What to Look For in a Coach

You want a coach that is assertive and will hold your feet to the fire. A good listener, one that cares about your success and can think outside the box to help you. A good coach will always tell you the truth even if you don't want to hear it. One that keeps you in balance and focused, gives direction and encouragement but stands on principle, knowing what works and is workable for you.

Also, look for a coach with a boss, a head coach and interview their head coach. Your coach needs to be held accountable for your satisfaction and return on investment. You might want a second opinion or want a coach change to someone stronger in the area you lack the most, so work with a company that has lots of coaches to choose from.

This leads us to your board of directors. You might not think you are big enough, but if you join a 20 Group of successful shop owners, they can give you advice like a board. But you only want to be part of a group that is highly successful; otherwise, you will get lousy advice or none at all. And the 20 Group should be included in the coaching fee.

Finally, you need a training and coaching company that will create a five-year roadmap to get you where you want to go and will help you make the investment monthly in a total plan, so you don't have to shell out the money all at once or load up your credit card.

Most of us are sleeping giants, and with effective coaching we can accomplish everything in life we have not yet succeeded in. If you want to see whether you are coachable, for a limited time you can download an “Are You Coachable?” test at www.atonlinetraining.com/2014-01 and find out whether an investment in a coach is for you or not. Everyone needs a coach. The question is, are you coachable, or have you decided to stop growing? **TL**

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Chris “Chubby” Frederick, CEO



CHRIS “CHUBBY” FREDERICK
CONTRIBUTOR

Chris “Chubby” Frederick is the CEO and founder of the Automotive Training Institute. ATI's 108 associates train and coach more than 1,150 shop owners every week across North America to drive profits and dreams home to their families. Our associates love helping shop owners who are having the same struggle as many of them have had, and who are looking for the same answers — and in some cases looking for a lifeline.

✉ E-mail Chubby at cfrederick@autotraining.net