

# ShopTalk

APRIL 2018  
**ATI**  
 Automotive  
 Training Institute

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## UPCOMING CLASSES

### APRIL

- 4, 5, 6 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 5, 6 California Service Advisor Course Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 9, 10 Service Advisor - Advanced Sales
- 11, 12, 13 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 11, 12, 13 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 12, 13 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 16, 17 Shop Owner Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 16, 17 Collision Owners Course Part 4 - Staffing and Hiring
- 18, 19, 20 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 18, 19, 20 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 18, 19, 20 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 18, 19, 20 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 23, 24 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 30, 1 Collision Production Course

### MAY

- 2, 3, 4 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 2, 3, 4 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 3, 4 LAX - Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 7, 8 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 14, 15, 16 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 14, 15, 16 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 21, 22 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 31, June 1 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor

### JUNE

- 1 Service Advisor Part 1 - The Role of the Service Advisor
- 6, 7, 8 Shop Owners Course Part 1 - Aligning Your Shop For Profit
- 6, 7, 8 Collision Owners Course Part 1 - Keys to a Successful Collision Repair Business
- 11, 12 Service Manager
- 11, 12 Collision Repair Estimating and Sales Course Part 2
- 13, 14, 15 Shop Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 13, 14, 15 Collision Owners Course Part 5 - Succession Planning
- 13, 14, 15 Shop Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 13, 14, 15 Collision Owners Course Part 2 - Advanced Management and Leadership
- 20, 21, 22 Shop Owner Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 20, 21, 22 Collision Owners Course Part 3 - A.B.M. Always Be Marketing
- 21, 22 Service Advisor Course Part 2 - ATI's 7 Step Process
- 28, 29 Service Advisor Advanced Sales

## The Secret to Sustained Success at Your Shop

by Eric M. Twigg, ATI Coach



**"What got you here, won't get you there."**

*-Marshall Goldsmith*

Are you a "one-hit wonder" who can't maintain the success you experience? This question reminds me of an encounter I had with "Jim," a shop owner who was struggling to find the right technicians. He **desperately** posted hiring ads and communicated with his vendors, in an effort to find "Mr. Right."

He normally spent most of his time working **IN** the business turning wrenches, and was averaging **\$15K** per week in mechanical sales with a **\$350** average repair order (ARO). Jim's struggle to find the right tech ended when he hired "Tom" to be his diagnostic technician.

If you were to Google the term "A player near me," Tom's picture would show up on letter A of the map! He was master certified, and could flag 50 hours a week, with zero comebacks. During the first four weeks of Tom's tenure, Jim's sales jumped to **\$20K** a week, with a **\$471 ARO**. For the month, his gross profit improvement performance was on par with the top shops in the ATI program.

There were no **billboards, blimps, or banners** added to his marketing mix. The secret to Jim's sudden success was Tom. Thanks to Tom, Jim was finally out of "**desperation mode**" and on his way to experiencing the freedom he'd been seeking since he opened his shop.

Everything was going great, when Tom approached Jim on the following Monday morning to **let him know that he was resigning to pursue another opportunity**. Tom was offered a pay guarantee from the shop down the road that exceeded what Jim could afford to match.

After Tom's last day, Jim went back to turning wrenches and his shop's sales dipped to **\$13K** per week. Jim's great month was just a fluke and not a trend. **He was a one-hit wonder**. So, why was Jim unable to sustain the success he experienced?

It's because he ignored the following secret that all consistently great performers know: **The secret to sustained success is staying desperate after you've succeeded.** *Sometimes desperation is the best inspiration when it comes to pursuing your goals.*

**Jim lost his desperation once he gained a technician**, so he stopped doing the things that made him successful. He stopped running ads. He stopped talking to vendors. He stopped posting signage. **What have you stopped doing since you lost that desperate feeling? Stay with me to learn two things you can start doing to experience sustained success at your shop.**

### Stay With "WHY"

I was recently watching the movie "**Invincible**" starring Mark Wahlberg. This picture is based on the true story of Vince Papale, who defied the odds by making the Philadelphia Eagles football team as an undrafted walk-on. Every morning before football practice began, the lead character would open up his locker, read from this sheet of paper, and then close his locker with renewed

enthusiasm. What was on that sheet of paper?

The "locker room letter" was a note from his ex-wife, who wrote that he would never succeed or amount to anything in life. Part of his "WHY" was to prove her wrong. **Staying with his why** helped him to maintain the level of desperation he needed to stay on the team.

Your goals represent WHY you are doing what you do. **Having a vision board that you never see isn't enough.** If you want to be an **invincible** shop leader, I challenge you to take things a step further. First, get in the daily habit of writing down your three most important business goals on a 3 X 5 index card.

Next, make sure you write them in present tense as if you have already achieved them. For example, "I am an absentee owner," or "I have \$30,000 in my savings account." Lastly, review what you have written each day to verify that your daily actions line up with your WHY. Taking these steps will allow you to **stay with WHY**.

### Always Be Shorthanded

At the beginning of every month, I pose the following question to the members I coach: **"How many employment interviews did you conduct during the previous month?"** I get answers ranging as high as 12 to as low as 0. Lately, I have noticed an interesting trend.

Several of my members who consistently conduct the most interviews, are fully staffed and tend to rank high on the top shop rankings. Now why would a shop that's fully staffed, lead the pack in average monthly interviews? It's because they've embraced the **"always be shorthanded"** mindset.

Embracing this mindset means that after you hire your "A" player, you keep posting ads, and networking with the same feeling of desperation that inspired you to fill the opening.

So you've just made a great hire. Congratulations! Your work has just begun. Don't stop recruiting, start building your rolodex. Don't stop networking, start asking your recent hire about who she knows. Don't stop displaying your signs, start building your career opportunities tab.

If Jim had embraced this mindset, he would have had other technicians to call after Tom resigned. If you fail to embrace this mindset, and go back to business as usual, **you will always be shorthanded.**

### SUMMARY

The secret to sustained success at your shop is to **stay desperate after you've succeeded. If you commit to staying with WHY and to embracing the always be shorthanded mindset**, you will avoid becoming a one-hit wonder!

**PS. Email [etwigg@autotraining.net](mailto:etwigg@autotraining.net) to receive your "always be shorthanded" checklist.**



# What's In It For You? by Kim Hickey, ATI Coach



In today's overbooked society, where we are under constant pressure to do more in less time, it is hard to figure out what can we add to our already full plates. Whenever you are asked to do or participate in something, you need to take a step back and really look at what your return on investment will be for the time you are giving out.

In my opinion, one of the best tools in your toolbox that can yield an unmeasurable and limitless return on your investment of your time is participation in an ATI 20 Group. I can provide you with stats of 20 Group members' increased ARO, LHPT, parts margins, productivity — but I don't think those numbers have as much impact as to tell you that with the exception of one, this year's ATI Top 50 shops are all part of a 20 Group. And if you think that is a coincidence, I can tell you that 11 of ATI's Top 25 Shops are not only in *one* of our 20 Groups but are in *two or more* 20 Groups and have also their service advisors/managers in 20 Groups. This year's Top 12 consisted of 7 shops that are in 1 of our 20 Groups, 3 shops that are in 2 of our 20 Groups, and 1 shop that is in 3 of our 20 Groups.

The next question I am frequently asked when I share similar stats year after year is "If an ATI 20 Group is so great, why would anyone need to be in more than one of them?" The reasons are many and up to each shop individually. We have groups for shop owners, separate groups for your service managers, and for those of you grooming your second in command we have a group for that too. Last but not least, we have a group for future owners for shops that are in the actual process of transitioning to a new owner.

I don't expect you to just take my word for it, so I took the liberty of asking a few of our Top 12 shops how they felt that being in an ATI 20 Group helped get them to the Top 12.

**Jeana Babcock from Babcock Auto Care** shared with me:

*"We were clients of ATI for a year or two before we joined a 20 Group. Although the information we received from ATI classes and our coach was valuable, it did not begin to compare to what we have learned from our 20 Group. The relationships we have built are precious to us — they are part of our extended family — sometimes offering more loyalty and support than our own families! Each member is in the same boat we are, they have the same challenges we do and often their goals are the same as ours. If we have an idea, a question, a problem, etc., not only do we have our coach to help us — we have a group of brilliant shop owners from across the country that we can reach out to. We also get to use the tools we have learned over the years to help others — making us feel valuable for our contributions to our group. I believe that the power of a 20 Group is priceless — the help, advice and support we receive has been invaluable to us as a small business. Were it not for the Peak Performers, we would not have grown professionally or personally in the ways we have over the last five years nor would our shop be what it has grown to be. We are beyond blessed to be in a group like this."*

**Eddie Cleveland from Rob'e Mans Automotive Service** shared the following with me:

*"I love the camaraderie of our group. We are all in the same boat. When we are at class we hear things from our teachers and are taught great things, but in our 20 Group meetings we get to hear about current real-life experiences and what the other shops are experiencing in real time. The sharing within the group and the camaraderie really encourages you to move forward. You push yourself harder and farther because you have the inspiration of the other members. You have 19 other shops you can call at any time and ask questions. Your group becomes your family, not just when you are physically in the room with them, but also when you are apart. Myself and others in our group have even flown out to visit and spend time at shops in our group that were struggling. If you love what ATI has done for you, and want to continue to keep growing, then being part of an ATI 20*

*Group is the next natural step for you to take."*

**Brian Ordway from Techway Automotive** shared the following with me:

*"Being in an ATI 20 Group definitely played a role in reaching the Top 12. Everyone in my 20 Group pushes each other to a higher standard, and then in turn we go back to our shops and do the same with our employees. Between spouses, partners and members, you can have 40 other shop owners holding you accountable and encouraging you to take action. Within the group there are times when some shops are doing better in a specific area or KPI we are discussing. Those group members are constantly working with the members that are not up to their level in that area and then the favor is returned and the roles reverse in another area. It is a real give and take."*

Remember that everyone in our Top Shop rankings started out where you are, whether they are in the Top 150 or Number One. Through hard work and CONSISTENCY they have risen to the top. They will tell you there wasn't a magic bullet. There wasn't just one thing. And I guarantee you that they will tell you their 20 Group was part of them staying the course.

If you are not in a 20 Group, and/or have not enrolled your service advisor/manager in a 20 Group yet, what are you waiting for?



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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Our mission at ATI is to drive Profits and Dreams home for our members, their businesses and their families.

It's all about driving sales and margins to maximize profitability, all the while delivering an exceptional customer experience.

This year, ATI recognized the hard work and passion that goes into being the Best of the Best with a full lineup of high achievement awards. All awards were presented at the SuperConference 2018 Awards Banquet in Orlando, Florida, on March 24, 2018.

See all the winners below, or visit the [Top Shops page of CPTS Resource Center](#).

### Top Shop 2017

**WINNER:** Precision Auto – Bud, Jackie, & Andy Wildman

### Top 12 Shops

- Babcock Auto Care LLC – Rochester, MN  
Jeremy & Jeana Babcock  
Mike Bennett – Peak Performers
- Ben Nielsen's Skyline Automotive – Falls Church, VA  
Ben & Erin Nielsen  
Mike Bennett – MasterMind
- BG Automotive, Inc. – Fort Collins, CO  
Bryan & Cendi Gossel  
Eric Twiggs – Peak Performers; Second In Command; Profiteers
- Caton Auto Clinic – Catonsville, MD  
Ken & Scott Steinbach  
Eric Twiggs – MasterMind
- Fifth Gear Automotive – Lewisville, TX  
Bill & Rhena Bernick, Rick Jordan, & Rick Jordan Jr.  
Brian Hunnicutt – Peak Performers
- Krietz Auto Repair, Inc. – Frederick, MD  
Kim & Charlie Krietz  
Mike Bennett – MasterMind; Second In Command
- Murphy's Autocare, Inc. – Beavercreek, OH  
Dave, Jan & Brian Murphy  
Brian Hunnicutt – MasterMind; Future Owners
- Precision Auto – Germantown, MD  
Bud, Jackie, & Andy Wildman  
Geoffrey Berman – MasterMind; Second In Command
- Rob'e Mans Automotive Service – Birmingham, AL  
Eddie & Trish Cleveland, & Kenny Krackenberg  
Eric Twiggs – MasterMind; Future Owners
- Taylor Company BMW – Pomona, CA  
Bruce Taylor  
Brian Hunnicutt – MasterMind
- Techway Automotive – Dothan, AL  
Brian & Michelle Ordway  
John Leslie – Game Changers
- Toole's Garage – San Carlos, CA  
David Toole & Audra Del Carlo  
Mike Bennett – Peak Performers

### Humanitarian of the Year Award

**WINNER:** Quality Service Center – Keith Katz

#### Humanitarian of the Year Award Nominees

- Quality Service Center, Keith Katz
- Keystone Quality Motors, Larry Martin
- Community Car Care, Scott & Debbie Fleckinger
- Auto Aid, Chuck & Julie Cannon
- Rob'e Mans Automotive Services, Eddie & Trish Cleveland

ATI's Humanitarian of the Year award is different from all others.

This award is not about the numbers or Key Performance Indicators of any kind. This award is about people – people giving to others less fortunate and people who are thankful for what they have received for their passion and hard work.

Previous winners of this award have donated their time and manpower building homes for the homeless and hospitals in third-world countries. They have donated their time and cash to develop and mentor youth education programs in their neighborhoods. They have donated their time – and their hearts – to many in need.

The winner of this award was chosen from a list of finalists by ATI members, live at SuperConference 2018 in Orlando, Florida.

### Bob Cutler Succession Planning Award

**WINNER:** Rob'e Mans Automotive Services – Eddie & Trish Cleveland, and Kenny Krackenberg

The winner of this award is the member that has created and implemented the most comprehensive strategy to transfer leadership of the business to their Second in Command.

### Re-Engineering Individual Awards

#### Best Service Sales

**WINNER:** Myers Auto Service – Neil Myers

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that has the Best Service Sales (parts, shop supplies, labor, and sublet).

#### Honorable Mentions:

Pro Auto Care – Al Oramas  
Autotek Auto Repair – John & Susan Brekke

#### Most Improved Service Sales

**WINNER:** WOW Auto Care – David Pike

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that had the Most Improved Service Sales (parts, shops supplies, labor, and sublet).

#### Best Tire Sales

**WINNER:** Tire Tread Service, Inc. – Chris Barnett

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that had the Best Tire Sales.

#### Honorable Mentions:

Fleming Tire & Auto Service – Mike & John Fleming  
Lenawee Tire & Supply Co. – Terry Francoeur

#### Most Improved Tire Sales

**WINNER:** Tire Tread Service, Inc. – Chris Barnett

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that had the Most Improved Tire Sales.

#### Best Gross Profit Margin

**WINNER:** The Car Doctor – Gary & Chris Schaller

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that had the Best Gross Profit Margin.

#### Honorable Mentions:

United Service & Automotive – Brad Wells  
A-1 Import Autoworks – JP Cadoux

#### Most Improved Gross Profit Margin

**WINNER:** ASR Automotive Services & Repair LLC – James Miller

The winner of this award is the Re-Engineering member that had the Most Improved Gross Profit Margin.

### Alumni Individual Awards

#### Best Service Sales (Large Volume)

**WINNER:** Gil's Garage, Inc. – Mike Brewster

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Service Sales (parts, shop supplies, labor, and sublet) in a large volume shop.

#### Best Service Sales

**WINNER:** Cobb Tire & Auto Repair – Darrell & Rich Cobb

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Service Sales (parts, shop supplies, labor, and sublet).

#### Honorable Mentions:

Cardinal Plaza Shell – Scott Brown  
Krietz Auto Repair – Kim & Charlie Krietz

#### Best Tire Sales (Large Volume)

**WINNER:** South Side Tire & Auto – Jeff & Onna Keeney

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Tire Sales in a large volume shop.

#### Best Tire Sales

**WINNER:** Toscalito's Marin Tire & Automotive – Vince Ippolito

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Tire Sales.

#### Honorable Mentions:

Millar's Point S Tire & Auto Service – Ben Millar  
Penner's Tire & Auto – Clarence Hoffman

#### Best Gross Profit Margin (Large Volume)

**WINNER:** BJ's Automotive – Brad Johnston

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Gross Profit Margin in a large volume shop.

#### Best Gross Profit Margin

**WINNER:** David's Automotive Repair – David Nix

The winner of this award is the Alumni member that had the Best Gross Profit Margin.

#### Honorable Mentions:

Van Dam Auto & Truck – Jim Van Dam  
Bob's Main Street Auto & Towing – Bill & Laurie Rate

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## 20 Group Awards

### Best Gross Profit

**WINNER: Future Owners (Bryan Stasch, Facilitator)**

The winner of this award is the 20 Group that had the Best Gross Profit Margin.

### Most Improved Gross Profit

**WINNER: Nor'Easter – Boston (Kevin Green, Facilitator)**

The winner of this award is the 20 Group that had the Most Improved Gross Profit Margin.

### Best 20 Group Member

**WINNER: Brian Ordway – Techway Automotive (The Game Changers, John Leslie, Facilitator)**

The winner of this award is the 20 Group Member that had the best attendance and contribution to their group.

### 20 Group Loyalty & Commitment Award

**WINNER: Score For More (Kevin Myers, Facilitator)**

The Loyalty & Commitment Award is given to the 20 Group that has demonstrated, as a group, that they best embraced the challenge of working together and that they were willing to make their fellow group members the utmost priority.

They put in time for things like pre-work and follow-up, ultimately ensuring everyone on the team walked away from meetings with real solutions to solve the everyday problems we all face managing the shop.

As the saying goes, “showing up is half the battle.”

The members of this team fought that battle, refusing to allow distractions to keep them from achieving their goal. They juggled their schedules, they sat in airports and they got it done!!!

## Graduating Class

- **Scott Santos – Advantage Auto Service**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **Andy Werden – Andy’s Automotive**  
Bobby Poist, Coach
- **Aaron & Alice Higgins – ASAP Repair**  
Rick Johnson, Coach
- **Ben & Erin Nielsen – Ben Nielsen’s Skyline Automotive**  
Mike Bennett, Coach
- **Jim & Cathy Berge – Bob’s Auto Service**  
Rick Johnson, Coach
- **Lewis Brazelton – Brazelton Auto Care LLC**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **John & Kathleen Losch – E & J Auto Service**  
Kim Hickey, Coach
- **Stephen & Sarah Konyndyk – Endurance Auto Repair and Tire**  
Kevin Allen, Coach
- **Mike Boller – Jim’s Auto Repair**  
Mike Bennett, Coach
- **Darren & Jodi Knepper – Lee Myles Autocare & Transmissions**  
Mike Bennett, Coach
- **Rich Lines – Lines Auto Service**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **Mike Parker – Parker Automotive Service Center**  
Donald Walter, Coach
- **Larry, Jeff & Laura Lewark – Ski Country Shell & Towing**  
Mike Bennett, Coach
- **David Pike – WOW Auto Care**  
Mike Warren, Coach

## 5+ Years

- **Steven Fielder – AAMCO of Lakewood**  
Eric Twiggs, Coach
- **Cameron Tormanen – AG Diesel Repair**  
Brian Hunnicutt, Coach
- **Rich Cobb – Cobb Tire & Service, Inc.**  
Eric Twiggs, Coach
- **Marty Vibert – Farmington Motor Sports, Inc.**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **Brad Choyle – G & M Auto Service**  
Kim Hickey, Coach
- **Troy & Kori Vaninetti – Graham Auto Repair**  
Kim Hickey, Coach
- **Jeff & Mike Moench – JB Import Automotive Repair**  
Charles Dailey, Coach
- **Kim & Charlie Krietz – Krietz Auto Repair, Inc.**  
Mike Bennett, Coach
- **John Byler – Luxury Auto Service**  
Kevin Allen, Coach
- **Judson Matthey – Matthey Automotive**  
Geoff Berman, Coach
- **Michael & Eve Lilley – Michael’s Automotive**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **David & Jeannette Wostarek – Northwest Imports**  
Kim Hickey, Coach
- **Quentin & Lonnie Taylor – Q’s Quality Auto Repair, Inc.**  
Rick Johnson, Coach
- **Rick & Ann Thomas – Rick’s Auto Service**  
Kevin Allen, Coach
- **Andrew & Denise Slater – Salter’s Exeter Auto Repair, Inc.**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **Ken & Paula Fay – Star Autohaus**  
Kim Hickey, Coach
- **Brian & Michelle Ordway – Techway Automotive**  
John Leslie, Coach
- **Tom & Jon Meacham – Triangle Motors**  
Bobby Poist, Coach
- **Andy & Diana Walko – Walko Automotive Service**  
Geoff Berman, Coach

## 10+ Years

- **Bill & Laurie Rate – Bobs Main Street Auto & Towing**  
Brian Hunnicutt, Coach
- **Mark & Chad Gines – Gines Auto Service, Inc.**  
Steve Privette, Coach
- **Rodger Cochran – Grassland Car Care**  
Rick Johnson, Coach
- **Ricky Baughan – Meadowbridge Auto Service**  
Geoff Berman, Coach
- **Ben & Kyle Millar – Millar’s Point S Tire & Auto Service**  
Steve Privette, Coach
- **Ed Whalen – Whalen’s Auto Repair**  
Tom Ringle, Coach