



CAPRICORN

...it's just easier!

Other resources in step 9e:

- **No other resources**

The anatomy of a good workshop business

Over the years TaT Biz has worked with a vast range of workshop owners across Australia and New Zealand, ranging from sole traders to large operations employing up to 15 full time staff.

There have been many discoveries along the way. This article reveals the characteristics of highly successful workshop owners.

Continued improvement

Without a doubt, the number one trait of a highly successful workshop owner is the desire for continuous improvement. They are always looking for ways to do things better. They are very open minded and always challenging themselves and their staff. On the other hand, less successful owners tend to become complacent with the way things are and are narrow minded towards change.

Face their fears

Most sportsmen will tell you that a certain amount of fear is a good thing. It keeps them sharp and on their toes. The same applies to top workshop owners. The fear of not doing a good enough job for their customers, the fear of a new competitor moving into town, and the fear that comes with investing in themselves and their employees are all shared by the top workshop owners. These owners face their fears head-on, and they take the proper action to ensure their success. Struggling workshop owners are paralysed by their fears, they take no action, and their worst nightmares will invariably come true. They lose their key employees, customer retention drops, and their profits disappear. In summary, the first thing to attack, is the fear that you fear most.

Find time to work on the business

Every business owner has heard the saying 'work on your business and not just in it'. Easier said than done, but something that must be mastered to get the most out of your business. Successful workshop owners always find the time to set goals, review results, train staff and network with other successful businesses. Those from less successful workshops work just as hard but spend any spare time with their head under a bonnet, chasing parts and sweeping up. These are all things that need to be done, but by other people.

Delegate responsibility

Successful workshop owners work very hard recruiting the right people and delegating responsibility to them. They equip their staff with skills and confidence to make decisions within their role. Less successful workshop owners tend to have control of everything. For varying reasons they have taken away the decision-making ability of their staff which only results in business paralysis when the owner is absent.

Invest in themselves and their staff

Most workshop owners are quick to invest in equipment and inventory. This kind of investment may be obvious, but there is more to it than that.

The top workshop owners constantly invest in their most important assets, themselves and their staff. On the other hand less successful workshop owners are reluctant to invest in training as they feel that their staff will just leave once they have become up-skilled.

Systems for everything

Successful workshops have clearly defined procedures for answering every phone call, inspecting vehicles, recommending and selling repairs, performing services, ordering stock and customer follow-up. Less successful workshops rarely have systems in place. They fail to recognise procedure break down and on many occasions their employees typically have their own ways of doing things, which is a guaranteed recipe for failure.

Don't try to be everything for everybody

Most workshop owners try to please everyone, and that's good. But the top workshop owners realise that bringing in the wrong customers will only drive down their profitability. They know exactly who their ideal customers are, and they target them. Less successful workshops are more interested in filling up their service bays than in bringing in the right people. While they are thinking of vehicles in the bays, the top workshop owners are thinking of the right people and the right vehicles.

Goals and targets

Top workshop owners have clearly defined goals and targets for themselves and their staff. They are passionate about their business mission and this rubs off on their staff. Less successful workshop owners live week to week and are dispassionate about their workshop. No guessing how their staff feel about work.

TaT Biz is not in a position to guarantee success by following these principles. It is really up to the individual workshops to adopt the proven principles and make them work within their capabilities. But if you set your goals, put fear aside and open your mind to continuous improvement it is possible, like many others before you, to build a highly successful workshop that will fairly reward you for your efforts.

The place to start is www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn

Just go for it!