



PSA News

The Association for Service Professionals

You Dove into the Pool... So Now What?

By **Ralph Wolff- MCAP, CSM**

So you wanted to go into business for yourself. Become an Entrepreneur. You believed that owning your own business would bring you independence and financial freedom. You thought that your technical success would translate to business success. How is that working out for you?

Many of us who have gone the route of entrepreneur soon find out that just because you are an expert at some form of technical work, it does not mean you can run a business. Let's go through the typical myth that we all have justified to ourselves.

I am a good technician and have lots of friends so I can easily open my own service business doing what I know best, fixing appliances. My friends all say that I should be in business for myself. If I were, I would not have anyone looking over my shoulder all day and I could keep all the monies I collect each day from the service work I do. So you say to yourself, I'll open my own shop. First there is exhilaration, followed by terror, exhaustion and then despair. Does that sound familiar?

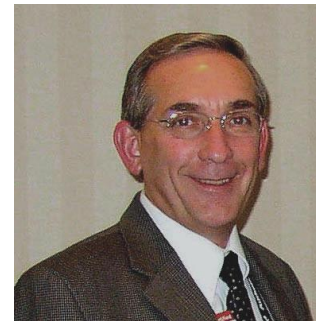
So why do so many technicians fall victim to the fatal assumption that while you might know how to fix things, do you really know how to run a business? Practically speaking, the most in-depth financial statement that you have probably seen prior to starting your business was your 1040.

Now as your business enters a more mature state, you wonder why you cannot keep your head above water. You bring in lots of money but you can't keep any of it and, as a matter of fact, you not only can't keep it but you owe more than you bring in. What happened?

The truth of the matter is that while you were so busy working in your business, you failed to "work" on your business. You failed to get the necessary education you needed to actually run your business.

It takes a lot of time and effort to successfully run your business. How many times have you heard the statement, "if you fail to plan you plan to fail"? How many of you have failed to create a plan for your business? What are your strategic objectives? What are your organizational strategies? What is your management strategy? Yes- it takes some time to strategically plan for the next 3 to 5 years, but if you set your goals now you will have your road map for growth and success.

And what about those nasty, confusing financials? Why can't I just leave it to my accountant to figure it out? Accountants do not know your business. They know numbers and which side of the equation to put them on. When your accountant gives you your Profit and Loss Statement and your Balance Sheet, everything you need is right there in front of you. But do you know what to look for? Do you know how to determine trends? Is your business in a positive growth period? Are you on a Cash basis accounting system or an Accrual basis and which one gives a better picture of your business? Are you bankable? What metrics does your bank look at to determine if you are worth the risk when you want to establish a line of credit? What is a common size analysis? What is a burden ratio?



Okay, I am writing this and my own head is spinning with all those financial terms..... many businesses fail because, frankly, the business owner failed to plan. The owner failed to grow within themselves and acquire the skills necessary to successfully operate the business. The owner failed to work on the business choosing to continue to do what was comfortable to him by continuing to be a technical person and not a business person.

So what now? My challenge to you is for you to determine if your business is growing and if not, why?

There are many resources available to you entrepreneurs to help you succeed. Your industry associations like PSA are very fine resources. Other resources include the SBA, your local Chamber and a new program offered by Goldman Sacks called 10,000 Small Businesses (10ksb.com). I encourage you to ask the serious questions and find the right answers.

Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Randy Carney, PSA Executive Director

Welcome to summer! Thankfully, at least here in Iowa, June is about over. So far, we have had more than 10" inches of rain this month up here, which follows a trend that we have experienced over the past 8-9 years or so. At least this year, at least to this point, we aren't dealing with major flooding, as the rivers were down as a result of a mild winter and fairly dry spring.

And don't think this is a bow to global warming, climate change, or whatever they are calling it these days. I am not a "warmist"- I believe that climate is always and has always changed and evolved, and it always will. As guests on this planet, we all have an obligation to take care of it. So let's all take the sensationalism out of it and manage our resources in an appropriate manner. Sermon over!

Anyway, have a great summer! Here are a few things to chew on while you are working the grill...



- I recently did an article on technician development and was pleased to get some great feedback, especially as it relates to working with local technical schools and supporting the SkillsUSA initiative. These are very important keys to helping to promote the position of the appliance service professional in our job market- this is a solid job opportunity for a lot of people, but we as an industry have to continue to promote it and build upon it. PSA is pleased to be a supporter of SkillsUSA and over tech school partners and we look forward to driving even greater improvements in our industry.
- Keep an eye on this newsletter for important information NASC 2016- we are excited about a new direction and look forward to sharing this information with you soon! (OK- cheap way to drive curiosity)
- In an upcoming issue, we will be introducing our membership and readers to new committee members that will be supporting all of our PSA members. We are excited about the talents and viewpoints of our new members and volunteers and appreciate their willingness to step up and speak out for the appliance service industry, and we hope their stories will help spur even more involvement from the PSA membership. In addition to this, we will be spotlighting various PSA committees in future issues, so keep an eye out and if you see something that you'd like to take part in, please let us know. We'll be sure to keep you engaged and involved!

Basic Appliance Training

PSA Certified B.A.T. Training Program



Carmine D'Alessandro, Mcap, CSM
PSA Official Appliance Technology Instructor

3 Full Days

Only

\$425.00

Including Lunch each Day

Date: September 22-23-24, 2015
Tues, Wed, Thurs

Time: 8 am-4:30 pm

Where: Tribles Appliance Parts
2 Madison Rd
Fairfield, NJ 07004

Day 1-Basic: Electricity

Electrical Safety
Theory, Voltage, Amperage, Wattage, Resistance
Ohm's Law and application of Ohm's law
Alternating and Direct Current
Circuit Fundamentals, series, parallel, combination circuits
Electrical component operation and testing
Use of Test Instruments
Recognizing electrical symbols
Reading electrical schematics and diagrams
Diagnostic routines and troubleshooting

Day 2- Basic: Gas

Gas Basics, Safety, Characteristics
Fuel Gas Code requirements for Gas appliances Gas testing devices
Gas Ranges, operate and test components
Gas Dryers, operate and test components
Gas Water Heaters, operation and testing components

Day 3-Basic: Refrigeration

The Refrigeration system
Refrigeration system components
Refrigeration system components operation
Fundamentals and application of refrigeration systems
Refrigerants
Troubleshooting refrigeration systems
EPA Requirements and Refrigerant Recovery

- **Send Your New Tech!**
- **Send Your Tech That Needs Help in These areas!**
- **Send the Old Guy Who Just Needs a Refresher!**



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Why are Press Releases Important for Your Business?

By Mark Maupin- Right Now Marketing

Most independent companies consider publishing press releases on events involving their business to be the domain of much larger corporations. When we read national publications (either in print or on the web) we generally see stories covering well-known and established brands – most seem to hog the media cycle on a daily basis - leaving little room for the little guys, or so you think. Surprisingly, your news can not only get published to a wide audience, but it also matters more than you might think.

Press releases are an easy way to get the word out about goings on with your company. Be it a major contract signing, the opening of a new warehouse, store or office location or simply an anniversary of your company's launch; there are always events that are part of your story. And, believe it or not, telling your story can be a great marketing method.

Unlike most other forms of marketing – which are generally filled with sales lingo – press releases are more editorial in nature, and are viewed as news rather than ad copy. Therefore, press releases offer higher consumer confidence and comfort levels than sales letters or flashy advertising graphics. Additionally, press releases have proven to be a reliable and affordable tool for search engine optimization – getting your business noticed online.

Because press releases can be picked up by a variety of news sites and blogs, your press releases can likely reach high positioning in the search engines. In Google's algorithms, interest and credibility mean a lot. When your press release is published through a credible service, it has a little authority behind it. When additional publishers begin to pick it up; it then starts to gather momentum in the search results. The icing on the cake is that with each press release, you are able to build in live links that will lead back to your website – helping to build strong backlinks for company's credibility as well. Considering the nominal cost of publishing press releases, and the inherent benefits; using press releases becomes a bit of a no-brainer.

Video training tape at <http://www.rightnowmarketing.org> or you can call Mark Maupin of Right Now Marketing Group for any questions or additional info (248) 939-6232 or email him at Maupin.Mark@gmail.com.

BAT's All Over the Country!

PSA's Basic Appliance Training (BAT) initiative is continuing to sweep the country in 2015!

The BAT program focuses on basic principles and repair functions related to electricity, gas and refrigeration, the core basis of a successful appliance service technician. The BAT training provides a solid foundation for new technicians, along with a strong refresher course for more experienced techs that will make the product specific training offered by manufacturers more understandable and also help to make your technicians more efficient and effective.

There is one BAT class confirmed in early 2015- please keep your eye on the December PSA News and our web site www.psaworld.com, for the complete 2015 BAT and PSA training schedule...

September- Triple's Appliance Parts- Fairfield, NJ- September 22-24

October- Dey Distributing- Minneapolis – St Paul, MN (dates tbd)

November- Pending

December- Appliance Parts Depot- Phoenix, AZ (dates tbd)

Men and Women Shop for Appliances Differently.... (But Getting a Good Price is Still the Common Goal)

By Ed Perratore- Consumer Reports

When men and women go shopping for appliances, they're both looking for the best price but they go about getting it in slightly different ways. Women are more likely to take advantage of e-mail notices of sales and discounts while men are more likely to negotiate. That's what Consumer Reports discovered in our annual [Appliance Retailer Satisfaction survey](#) when we talked to more than 21,000 subscribers who bought more than 32,000 appliances.

Male and female shoppers also differ in how they approach their purchases. Women are more interested in seeing and touching the models they're considering. By a margin of 6 percent, women preferred shopping for a major appliance in person. The margin was smaller with small appliances. And although women paid, on average, almost \$40 more for major appliances than men, they were much more likely to get a price break by doing their homework first and finding discounts.

Male shoppers were somewhat more likely to try to negotiate the price of a major appliance—though only 36 percent of all respondents made an effort. Yet when the women we surveyed did haggle, they were just as effective at getting a deal. And about 75 percent of men and women who tried to negotiate ended up saving money. Telling a retailer they found a better price at a competitor often did the trick. Just as effective: Simply asking for a better price.

Neither males nor females dominated decisions over which appliance to buy with one exception—gas grills, proving the old stereotype that outdoors men wear the aprons. When it came to grill purchases, men were 5 percent more likely to make the purchase.

Supervisor's Interactions with Employees Make a Difference

By Barbara Richman

As employers assess their organizations and begin to make plans for the year ahead, one area to be considered is the effectiveness of supervision in interacting with employees. Although there is a need to focus on all members of management, particular attention should be given to employees' immediate supervisors. Since their responsibilities involve day-to-day interactions with employees, front-line supervisors play a pivotal role in influencing employees' perceptions of the overall organization, and, in turn, their level of engagement, job satisfaction, morale and productivity.

While supervisors normally are not responsible for developing compensation plans, evaluating benefit programs, making investments that determine the financial health of the organization, or taking similar actions, their impact still is significant. For example, it is a supervisor's responsibility to communicate with employees on an ongoing basis, elicit their input and provide regular feedback related to their performance.

The way in which supervisors interact with employees can make a difference in their commitment to the job, the department and the organization as a whole. The degree of this commitment can be a determining factor in whether employees speak positively about their employer, go the extra mile in relationships with co-workers and customers, and make decisions not to pursue other employment opportunities.

The following tips can help supervisors and others in management positions focus on their effectiveness in interacting with employees.

1. Build trust with employees by consistently “walking the talk.” You will gain credibility if your actions are aligned with the values and expectations that you communicate.
2. Foster a respectful workplace environment. Make a choice to act respectfully in all of your workplace interactions, regardless of the circumstances. Also establish this expectation for your employees.
3. Recognize that your ability to communicate effectively plays a key role in developing positive relationships with employees. Assess your effectiveness in all areas of your communications, including words, tone of voice, body language and listening.
4. Give credit to your team when others praise you individually for successful outcomes. The team’s pride in a job well done can be diminished if their contributions are overlooked. Keep in mind the quote by John Wooden, “The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team.”
5. Develop a habit of recognizing individual employees and the overall team for performance that exceeds expectations or in other ways merits acknowledgement. Positive feedback, a “thank you” and other expressions of appreciation, whether given in public or private, are means of reinforcing behaviors that contribute to individual, team and organizational success.
6. Show employees that you value and care about them as individuals. You can make a difference in workplace relationships by doing little things that have meaning to each employee, such as celebrating birthdays, sending cards on special occasions and discussing favorite hobbies or sports teams.
7. Create a workplace that is inclusive and values diversity. View your team as an orchestra in which each position plays an instrument that contributes to its overall “voice.” The team’s success depends on the unique contributions of each team member in working toward common goals.
8. Maintain open lines of communication with employees. Take time to interact with employees in their work setting. Also, establish an “open door policy” that encourages employees to bring questions and concerns to your attention.
9. Keep in mind that the negativity or positivity expressed in a leader’s communications can influence employees’ perceptions. Consider how your tone impacts the workplace environment and employee morale. Decide if there is a need to examine ways to communicate messages in a more positive and caring manner.
10. Raise issues related to problems with an employee’s performance or conduct in private. An employee who is criticized publicly may become defensive and less receptive to making needed changes in behavior. Discussions of this nature also can be embarrassing for those who are present and result in questions about your judgment as a leader.
11. Share information on an ongoing basis to increase employees’ knowledge of their jobs and the organization. Informed employees are more likely to offer suggestions that build and improve upon others’ ideas.
12. Initiate discussions related to job performance on a regular basis with employees. These communications decrease the potential for surprises, since they provide an opportunity for employees to gauge how well they are performing relative to management’s expectations and to make timely changes, as necessary.
13. Adopt a constructive approach to resolving conflicts. Demonstrate skills in conflict prevention and resolution that enable you to serve as a role model for employees. Your behavior can lead employees to express differences of opinion in a more respectful and professional manner.
14. View your leadership development as a process of continual learning. Look for opportunities to increase the effectiveness of your interpersonal as well as technical skills, recognizing that both play a role in your success as a leader.

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