

Auto Repair Industry Hiring Expert Urges Owners: Stop Hiring Babysitters, Start Hiring Managers

Automotive hiring expert Chris Lawson identifies "The Babysitter Problem" as the hidden cause of management turnover in independent repair shops

OCEANSIDE, CA, UNITED STATES, January 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new analysis of [automotive hiring](#) patterns reveals that the majority of shop owners are inadvertently sabotaging their own management hires before day one—not through poor candidate selection, but through a fundamental misunderstanding of what managers actually need to succeed.



REMARKABLE RESULTS RADIO AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR PODCAST NETWORK

BEYOND BABYSITTERS: DEVELOPING STRONG MANAGERS AND FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

CHRIS LAWSON

NAPA AUTO CARE NAPA TRACS EPISODE 1076

Chris Lawson, founder of Technician Find and automotive hiring expert, explains the "Babysitter vs. Manager" framework after hundreds of conversations with shop owners about hiring challenges.

The findings, shared in a recent episode of the Remarkable Results Radio podcast, challenge conventional wisdom in the automotive aftermarket about why "good managers are impossible to find."

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Chris Lawson

"Most shop owners aren't hiring managers," says Chris Lawson, founder of Technician Find and an [automotive hiring specialist](#) who has conducted over 500 shop owner interviews. "They're hiring babysitters and expecting manager-level results. It's a structural problem, not a talent problem."

The "Babysitter vs. Manager" Framework

According to Lawson, the distinction comes down to one critical factor: information access.

A babysitter:

- Shows up, completes assigned tasks, and goes home
- Has no visibility into business performance
- Cannot make informed decisions independently
- Has no stake in outcomes they cannot influence

A manager:

- Owns outcomes and drives results
- Sees the financial scoreboard
- Makes decisions based on real data
- Understands how their work impacts profitability

"You cannot hold someone accountable to a scoreboard they can't see," Lawson explains. "You can't expect someone to manage profitability if they don't know what profitable looks like. And you definitely can't pay someone a bonus on gross profit while keeping gross profit a secret."

The Three Hidden Reasons Shop Owners Avoid Transparency

The podcast discussion, which included comments gathered from multiple successful multi-shop operators, uncovered three primary reasons business owners resist sharing financial information with their general managers—none of which involve the commonly cited fear of creating future competitors:

- Unclean books — Financial records that aren't accurate or organized enough to share confidently
- Undisclosed personal expenses — Business accounts used for non-business purposes
- Compensation imbalance — Owner compensation that would appear disproportionate if visible

"The fear of 'they'll learn everything and start their own shop' is almost never the real issue," Lawson notes. "In hundreds of conversations, I've found that the resistance to transparency almost always traces back to one of these three factors."

The Transparency Advantage: Real Results from Real Shops

The episode features testimony from shop owners who have implemented full financial transparency with their management teams. One multi-location operator shared his exact compensation structure:

"Between rent and my salary, I'm taking 20%. That's before anybody else gets anything from the net. Then 50% of the leftover stays in the company. The rest gets split between the people who

got us there."

The result? His managers are more motivated, not less—because they can finally see how the game works.

"The shops with the most loyal teams, the managers who actually step up and own results—they're the transparent ones," Lawson observes. "Every single time."

Implications for the Automotive Aftermarket

With the automotive industry facing a well-documented technician shortage—the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 73,000 annual openings for automotive service technicians through 2032—the ability to develop and retain management talent has become a critical competitive advantage for independent auto repair shops.

"This isn't just about one position," says Lawson. "When you get management right, it changes everything. Your retention improves because good managers create good cultures. Your recruiting improves because quality technicians want to work for real leaders. The whole operation levels up."

The discussion also addresses common concerns about the "transparency approach," including:

- How to structure compensation that's defensible when visible
- The identity shift required for shop owners to share control
- Why the fear of creating competitors rarely materializes
- Specific steps to transition from "babysitter hiring" to "[manager hiring](#)"

About the Podcast Episode

The full conversation is available in Episode RR 1076 of Remarkable Results Radio, titled "Beyond Babysitters: Developing Strong Managers and Financial Transparency."

Watch or listen here: <https://www.technicianfind.com/blog/Are-You-Hiring-a-Babysitter-or-a-Manager>

The episode runs approximately 45 minutes and includes actionable frameworks for shop owners at any stage of the management hiring process.

About Chris Lawson and Technician Find

Christopher T. Lawson is the founder of Technician Find, a specialized recruiting service that helps independent auto repair shops attract and hire qualified automotive technicians. With a

mission centered on connecting great technicians with great shops, Technician Find has helped hundreds of auto service businesses across the United States build stronger teams.

Lawson's approach emphasizes attraction over pursuit—targeting employed technicians who aren't actively job searching rather than competing for candidates on traditional job boards. His methodology includes comprehensive onboarding interviews with client shops to uncover unique cultural elements that differentiate independent operations from dealerships and chains.

Technician Find also operates a community for auto repair shop owners focused on technician attraction, retention, and shop culture development.

Visit the Technician Find website for more information: <https://www.technicianfind.com/>

About Remarkable Results Radio

Remarkable Results Radio, hosted by Carm Capriotto, is part of the Automotive Repair Podcast Network (ARPN). The show has produced over 1,000 episodes featuring discussions with shop owners, industry experts, and thought leaders in the automotive aftermarket. The podcast reaches thousands of auto repair professionals weekly and has been a trusted resource for the industry for over a decade.

Visit the site to view the episode: <https://remarkableresults.biz/remarkable-results-radio-podcast/e1076/>

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