

# COLORMATCH gold



This is a true story: A lady came into a local body shop with a damaged car in tow (not even close to the Ronn Motor Scorpion shown here). The car had obviously been in a recent accident. She owned the vehicle and authorized the repairs, providing the necessary insurance information. A claim number was received from the insurance company and the body shop proceeded to repair the vehicle. In the process of repairing the car, the technicians discovered that the engine wouldn't crank, so they pushed the car wherever it needed to go in the shop. When the repair work was completed they towed the car to the mechanics, who determined that the engine was blown! It was discovered that the engine was not working prior to the accident, and the collision occurred while the car was parked and inoperable. The customer assumed that everything, including the engine, would be taken care of because of the accident. However, the insurance company

## Communication First...

refused to pay for *any* repairs, since the vehicle hadn't been operable. The body shop ended up in the middle of a situation that could probably have been circumvented with some basic communication.

In retrospect, this is sort of amusing, but we can't afford future snickers at our expense. So how can we improve our communication skills to avoid scenarios like this? As our example illustrates—outside communication failures occur in the body shop industry between the customer, the shop and the insurance company. Within the confines of the shop, breakdowns most often occur between the front office and the technicians, and between the estimator and the customer.

Effective communication is about conveying messages clearly. It's also about receiving information with as little distortion as possible. "Distortions" can be prevented by taking extra

time getting the full story. Quality time spent communicating "up-front" will save time in the end. One of the most helpful communication techniques available to us is "active listening". It allows us to obtain information, to understand, and to learn. Paying attention is communication that really pays for itself.

Building a business requires us to communicate with and influence others, whether they are prospects, clients, or employees. Studies show that miscommunication in business can mean lower productivity, higher turnover, and greater tension and anxiety. Being good at communicating and influencing others makes our job easier!

*Remember that communication is only successful when it results in the sender and the receiver understanding the same information.*

See page 2 for the Top 10 Ways to Listen Effectively.

- ▶ TIPS & TOP 10 ..... 2
- ▶ TEAM COLORMATCH..... 2
- ▶ HUMOR & WISDOM ..... 2

### ADVANTAGE THROUGH EDUCATION



"Getting Your Slice of the Pie"  
COLORMATCH  
Business Development Seminar

It's a proven fact that EDUCATION impacts your business and career, so we are pleased to provide this class to give you ammunition for the battles of the body shop! In this session, find out how marketing is necessary to win the fight and get your slice of the success pie! The cost of \$25 per shop includes dinner. Contact your sales rep for location and reservations or email: [solutions@colormatch.com](mailto:solutions@colormatch.com)

The subject and dates for our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Business Development Seminar will be provided next month.

DATE 6-8pm	LOCATION
Mar 19	Mobile, MS
Mar 24	Nashville, TN

#### COLORMATCH Publications Available Monthly by Email

- COLORMATCH Gold Newsletter
- Sales Flyer
- Training Brochure
- Benchmark Performance Trend
- Account Statements

Please provide your contact name, email address, and send requests to: [solutions@colormatch.com](mailto:solutions@colormatch.com)

# TIPS

**Sales & Marketing:** Research indicates 91% of customers will come back if they have an excellent service experience. You may consider perks and rewards for employees who focus on quality as well as quantity.

**Profitability & Management:** Find out which tasks your employees like best and try to schedule accordingly. Research by the Gallop Organization indicates that people who are doing what they enjoy and feel good about it are consistently more productive and profitable.

**Production & Cycle Time:** Keep a log of vehicles that don't leave on schedule, along with the reason. As a problem begins to surface on a regular basis, develop ways to put procedures in place to prevent the problem. An example might be to place stripes in the vehicle when it arrives, instead of checking for availability the day the car is being detailed for delivery.

**Safety & Thinking Green:** Make sure that each technician has completed a medical evaluation by a physician or go to re-spexam.com and do the online questionnaire. Once this is completed make sure that all technicians have completed a respirator fit test.

**Estimation:** To prevent the transfer of steel particles to aluminum and vice versa (which causes galvanic corrosion), make sure to R&I aluminum parts so they can be repaired in a separate area. Check for Aluminum panels with a magnet.

**Technical:** Airbag residue and electrolyte from a NiMH battery (most Hybrids) is highly alkaline. A solution of vinegar and water will neutralize either of these, as well as make a good window cleaner that will not harm after-market window tint.

## Wise Quotes

**"A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but after a while he gets to know something."**

*Wilson Mizner  
U.S. screenwriter  
1876-1933*

**"It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."**

*Oliver Wendell Holmes  
U.S. author & physician  
1809-1894*

## Top Ten — Ways to Listen Effectively



1. **PRIORITIZE**—*Listening is about the speaker, so listen to understand, not respond.*
2. **FOCUS**—*Don't let your mind wander. Give the speaker a chance to finish before thinking of a reply.*
3. **MAKE EYE CONTACT**—*It lets the speaker see you are interested.*
4. **ASK QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION**—*Don't stay confused about what is being said. Politely interrupt.*
5. **ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS**—*Be understanding of the speaker's feelings (even if you don't agree).*
6. **SUMMARIZE**—*Using different words, repeat what the speaker has said, to be certain you understand.*
7. **GIVE NON-VERBAL FEEDBACK**—*Use body language to convey what is appropriate: murmur, smile, nod, etc.*
8. **QUIET IS OKAY**—*Moments of silence allow you and the speaker to think about what was said.*
9. **PROCESS EVERYTHING**—*Concentrate on the meaning of what was said, not just the words.*
10. **RESPOND APPROPRIATELY**—*Give advice or direction, but only if you are asked, or if it's your job!*

## Introducing the COLORMATCH District Managers



**DAVID WALKER**  
District Manager  
Jackson, TN  
Memphis, TN (4 stores)

David has been with **COLORMATCH** 9 years and has achieved I-CAR Platinum status for technical training. He also has technical certification with an array of DuPont product lines. He describes his business philosophy as "fair, competitive, and honest". His favorite sports are NASCAR & hockey. In his spare time, he likes to hunt, fish, and spend time with his family.



**JERRY GRAHAM**  
District Manager  
Evansville, IN  
Henderson, KY  
Owensboro, KY

Jerry has been with **COLORMATCH** over 4 years. He has been in the auto repair industry for 25 years and has valuable experience both as a painter and as a shop owner. As a result, he can definitely relate to his customers. His business philosophy is "honesty, integrity and appreciation". His major hobby is working with computers.



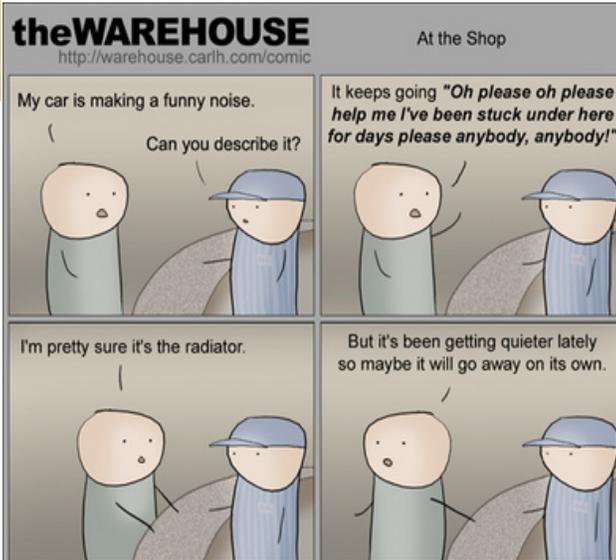
**SAM FLEMING**  
District Manager  
TN—Nashville, Madison, Bristol, Clarksville

Sam has been in the collision industry 37 years and has been with **COLORMATCH** 8 years. Prior to that, he has worked with paint companies and has owned his own jobber store. He really enjoys the relationships he has with customers and his #1 personal philosophy is "to tell the truth". In his spare time, Sam loves to golf and has a low handicap!



**KEVIN BENNETT**  
District Manager  
Mobile, AL  
Pensacola, FL  
Pascagoula, MS

Kevin is the newest addition to our team, joining us in 2008. He has spent over 30 years in the industry and has experience in accounting & profitability, management systems, processes & procedures, and paint performance. His business philosophy is "long-term partnership with success for both sides". He enjoys cross country Enduro motorcycle riding and camping.



**TOOL OF THE MONTH:** Ridiculously Large Craftsman Screwdriver: Let's admit it. There's nothing better for prying, chiseling, lifting, breaking, splitting or mutilating than a huge flat bladed screwdriver, particularly when wielded with gusto and a big hammer. This is also the tool of choice for all oil filters so insanely located that they can only be removed by driving a stake in one side and out the other. If you break the screwdriver -- and you will just like Dad and your shop teacher said -- who cares, it has a lifetime guarantee.

**We have a new COLORMATCH Training Brochure with information on upcoming events, including I-CAR classes. To receive a brochure, please contact your local store, sales rep, or email: [solutions@colormatch.com](mailto:solutions@colormatch.com)**