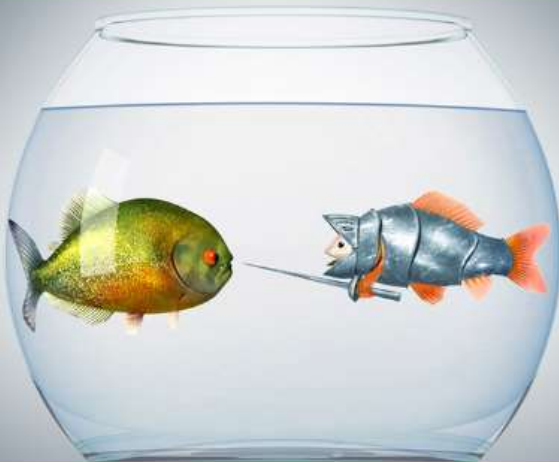


WHEN YOU DON'T SEE **EYE TO EYE** WITH YOUR MECHANIC

A QUICK GUIDE FOR IMPROVING
COMMUNICATION, AND KNOWING
WHAT YOU ARE GETTING
FROM YOUR AUTOMOTIVE MECHANIC



By **MARVIN R. RAY**

When You Don't See Eye to Eye With Your Mechanic

A Quick Guide for
Improving Communication,
And Knowing What You are Getting from
Your Automotive Mechanic

By Marvin R. Ray

AutoRepairMatch.com Publishing

When You Don't See Eye To Eye With Your Mechanic. A look at auto repair facilities and the industry across the country.

Copyright © 1996 by Marvin R. Ray. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission.

Books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. If interested in training or a speaking engagement or additional information please write:

Contact@AutoRepairMatch.com

FIRST EDITION 1996

SECOND EDITION 2013

Designed by Marvin R. Ray

Have you ever asked yourself any of these questions?

How come I feel like my mechanic just mugged me?

Did I just get grossly overcharged on my car repair?

Why can't they get my car fixed right the first time?

Is my mechanic qualified at what he does?

How can I save money on my auto repairs?

How come I would rather go to the dentist than a mechanic?

If you have ever asked yourself any of these questions, this book is for you!

*This book is dedicated to
all former customers
who gave me experience*

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Chapter 1	Will car repair financially cripple you?
Chapter 2	Where are the spark plugs?
Chapter 3	What do you mean, “There’s a charge?”
Chapter 4	What’s it gonna cost?
Chapter 5	How does my mechanic arrive at costs?
Chapter 6	How do I choose a good shop?
Chapter 7	What are the real costs for my mechanic?
Chapter 8	How can I save money on car repairs?
Chapter 9	Is car maintenance a scam?
Chapter 10	New meaning for “Eat your vegetables.”
Chapter 11	What is NGV & CNG?
Chapter 12	The cost to operate a car in America.
Chapter 13	134 point inspection? Really!
Chapter 14	Lost in thought?
Chapter 15	Moonshine?
Chapter 16	The un-diagnosable car problem!
Chapter 17	Expensive DIY fix.
Chapter 18	Should you stay or should you go?
Chapter 19	Oil change translator.
Chapter 20	Technology lures women.
Chapter 21	What women what women should get!
Chapter 22	Good bad & ugly.
Chapter 23	Tips in a minute.
Chapter 24	What’s he mean by that?

Acknowledgments

I thank my dear wife Diane, for being by my side every step of the way in my life, making me a better person.

I thank my dear friends, Brad & Leiza Povey, Sherman & Terri Sanders for years of continued support all the way back to my college days.

I thank the many auto repair shops, dealerships and franchises (far too many to mention) for their participation and concerns regarding the future along with the many parts stores, tool and equipment companies I have worked with.

Most of all, I credit the many wonderful and not so wonderful customers I have had over the years. It is because of them I have the knowledge, background and information for putting this book together.

May all who read this book be enlightened by the technology they drive and their automotive repair shops future.

Chapter One

Will car repairs of the future financially cripple you?

For a long time the do-it-yourself auto repair has been gone. As a result of this, costs associated with fixing cars have increased. Hybrid cars are not only more expensive when you buy them, they are currently more expensive to fix than cars that run with a conventional engine. Working on a Hybrid is a specialty; it's not something you want to trust with your next door neighbor who works on his old 1975 Chevy Pickup. This high technology, along with more and more gadgets on your car, is going to cost you when something doesn't work correctly, and trust me that will happen it's just a matter of time. A CVT transmission for a 2001 to 2003 Toyota Prius can cost around \$8,695 a far cry from my 1997 Ford F350 transmission that costs \$2,500.

As we progress further into automotive technology, some fear we will find ourselves deeper in debt when these cars break down. Hybrid cars represent a large portion of our future in the country.

Turbochargers and superchargers help force air through the engine, allowing it to use more fuel, generate a bigger explosion in the cylinder and increase power. These devices typically operate at high rotational speeds, which make them vulnerable to damage and susceptible to heat. When they go bad, it can cost about \$1,600 to replace them, with related repairs spiking the price by \$700 to \$3,000.

When a catalytic converter fails, it's pricey. Repairs can cost up to \$2,692. It's the parts that are expensive, not the labor.

A hybrid battery is often bundled with an integrated motor-assist battery, which charges it. Change one and you have to change both — to the tune of about \$2,700.

A clogged injection pump, the device that delivers fuel into the engine's cylinders, is a relatively common problem for drivers. A Honda fuel pump might run a couple of hundred dollars and be straightforward to change. But in trucks and SUVs, the repair can cost upward of \$2,900.

Engine replacement can cost upward of \$8,000, leading many car owners to scrap the vehicle altogether.

“Saving for tomorrow”

Chapter Two

Where are the spark plugs?

The purpose of this book is to help educate you about the future of the automotive repair shop, and where it is going. In addition, I will help you better understand your automotive mechanic. As you cruise into this book, you will see why the “Grease monkey” or “Mechanic” of yesterday is now known as an “Automotive Technician.”

In today’s society of auto repair the question, “what does he mean by that?” has been asked repeatedly by virtually everyone who owns some mode of transportation, be it worth fifty dollars or two hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

If you have been in a driver's seat since 1975 you would remember the brand new clutch smoking, tires screeching, ground thumping, blur that cost you four or five thousand dollars. Your boyfriend or husband was proud to do the work by themselves on this sleek machine; it was easy back then. You could see the spark plugs. And they were pretty simple to change.

Back then automotive parts seemed fairly inexpensive. Besides, it was enjoyable for some to spend the weekend bonding with their ride.

Let’s look around 1985. What about those changes? Isn’t this about the time we heard more talk about a car’s computer? Didn’t some of us say, “That’s impossible!”

And what about the cost for one of these environmentally safe gutless wonders? They sure saved us time at the gas pump though, and hey we were helping the gas shortage, right? What a price to pay. I remember it took twice as long to reach 55 mph! Did you ever find yourself leaving the house ten minutes early to make up for the lost performance of your new car? After all, you could jam the throttle through the floor and hardly even move. And what about the cost? The last time you spent that much money, it had a foundation under it. Sure, you could still kind of see those spark plugs, even though they were a little harder to get to, but hey, you were able to stick the money saved on next month's car payment.

What about 1996, the year of the stylized, sleeker, aerodynamically designed automobile, with hundreds of different shapes, sizes and an array of colors that would make even Picasso jealous. What power, what class, what gas mileage! All this, and still environmentally safe. The cost? Well, it's only a monthly payment.

About this time, you're thinking, "This is awesome. I've got it all." Then comes that dreaded day when you open the hood, scratch your head, saying something like "I know those spark plugs are somewhere, right? And where is the oil filler cap?" No problem, I'll just follow the spark plug wires. Now where do you suppose they hid them? Where's the distributor? And what is DIS? And can you explain what you mean when you say my O₂ sensor told the ECM to dump less fuel through the EFI?

Now, in 2013 we have shapes and sizes that most of us never knew existed. From the Smart Car to the Hummer, these cars come equipped with so many technological gadgets that I could write another book describing each of

them individually. Following is a small sample of what can be found standard in most of today's cars.

- Air Bags
- Driver Assistance
- Electric Cars
- Hybrid Technology
- Natural Gas
- Navigation systems
- OnStar
- Rearview cameras
- Self-Parking
- Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems
- Tons of cup holders
- Traction control
- Video System

Automotive technicians start what they finish!"

Chapter Three

What do you mean, “there’s a charge?”

Is there really anything in life that has no cost? If there is, how do I get it?

I think back to a time when I had a customer come into my shop (without an appointment) and said "My oil light is on. Can you check it?" Well, this seemed simple enough, so I said "Sure." Since the day was heavily scheduled, and all the shop bays were full, this was going to be a parking lot job. But then why not, it was a beautiful day. Grabbing a handful of tools that I knew I would need, I set out to check what this customer might have considered his pride and joy: a 2002 Saab?! I was on a mission to please another potentially good customer. First, I proceeded to check the wiring to the oil pressure sending switch, which is under the intake manifold. Everything looked in place. Next, by making sure that the connection was okay, I checked the wiring to the sending switch with a Digital Volt Ohm Meter (Technician grade, cost \$600). When the wire checked out okay, I went on to check the sending unit and oil pressure. I arrived at the conclusion that the oil pressure was probably adequate. After all, this fine bucket of bolts did arrive without Billy Bob’s Tow Service, and there wasn’t that horrible noise that sounds like rocks left in your kids pants when going through the dryer. But to make

sure, out came the oil sending switch, which required a ratchet (technician grade ratchet, cost \$129) and a three-inch extension, to enable me to reach the blasted thing (technician grade extension, cost \$26) along with an oil sending switch socket (technician grade socket, cost \$58). With the sending switch out, it was time to verify that oil pressure was between operating specifications. To make sure that this customer would not be the next set of flashing amber lights on the side of the road, I took the oil pressure gauge tester (technician grade, cost \$382). and proceeded to thread it into the block to check the oil pressure. I started the engine, and observed the oil pressure. After seeing where it was, I referred to the manufacture specification on my web based information system (cost \$195 per month) to verify that the oil pressure was within operating specifications. The diagnosis at this point was that the oil pressure sending switch was bad. So I wrote up a bid for a new switch and labor, and presented it to my new customer. I felt he had one option, replace the switch. But this customer knew he had another option, forego the new switch and put the old switch back in, saying, "Don't worry about it." I warned him that if any time in the near future he lost oil pressure, he would not have any indication of this, because his oil light would remain on all the time. He agreed that it would be okay. From there, I buttoned up the job and finished writing up the ticket. Total owed for the test: \$45 dollars. Then it happened, like an F-16 being shot off an aircraft carrier. His attitude changed. He went ballistic! **“What do you mean there’s a charge? It only took you 30 minutes!”**

From here, I proceeded to explain the cost of the tools used to make my diagnosis (total cost \$1,390) not to

mention, he had taken me away from my already good customer base, along with my time involved, my education, shop insurance, overhead etc. He did not buy any of this. I'm telling you; this guy was one tough customer. He just knew that there should not be a charge. After wasting another 30 minutes of my time he finally paid, with the remark "I will never come back!" Was I upset that he felt he had been overcharged? You bet. Was I happy he was gone? For sure! Was there a time in the whole presentation when I lost my cool? Absolutely! Our heated conversation ended with my counseling him that next time, he should go to school, get an automotive degree, open his own shop, buy his own tools, and fix the *#!^ problem himself.

As he drove down the lane I proceeded to put my day back together and not let his actions influence the next good paying customer who came through my door.

"Life is short so paddle hard"

Chapter Four

What's it gonna cost?

Have you ever wondered why your automotive technician cannot seem to give you a straight answer from a fairly simple question like, "Hey, Vern how much to fix this bucket of bolts?" Or, how about "What do you mean it is going to cost me?" These questions come up all the time. This is the first misunderstanding between the technician and the customer. Just like any other industry, whether it is a plumber, electrician, doctor, dentist even your washer repair man, you cannot receive an accurate estimate on what it is going to cost if you do not evaluate and narrow down the problem. If there were a crystal ball that told auto technicians the car's problem I would own it, and would be living on the top floor of the Wynn's in Las Vegas because you would be paying me for this information. Have you ever pulled a weed and thought you got that entire dirty bugger, only to find it back a few days later? Sometimes things are not what they seem to be.

I remember a close friend speaking with a persistent auto body shop customer on the phone one day, before cell phones and Skype. This customer felt that my friend should be able to give an estimate to the very penny of what it was going to cost to fix their car. After a lengthy conversation, to my amazement, my friend finally said, "Listen, why don't you put the phone up to the car so I can see it, and then I'll give you an estimate." This may seem ridiculous, but you cannot do what you cannot see, even with a cell

phone or Skype. The same goes for diagnosing a problem on your car. The approach should not be "how much will it cost to fix my car?" It should be, "how much will it cost to diagnose my car's problem properly?"

HOW IMPORTANT IS DIAGNOSING?

Diagnosis accounts for close to 80% of the job, leaving 20% for the actual repair. Diagnostics is the final frontier of the automotive industry; cars of today have computerized electrical components. To fix these components, you have to diagnosis the problem first.

Back in the 1960's and 1970's your technician could easily tell what the cost was going to be to repair your car. Since then, things have changed. In the "Good-ole-days" we were listening to cassette tapes and CD's. We had no idea that we could talk on a cellular phone, and see the person we were talking to, and the changes Google would make to our lives. Since we have arrived at the full blown computer age, it is virtually impossible to give an exact estimate on repairing a car without diagnosing the car first.

HOW DOES THE COMPUTER AFFECT MY CAR?

Let's use the brake system for an example. The first brake ever designed was the hand brake. Think back to the covered wagon days, where you grabbed the lever with all your might, using both feet to brace yourself as you slowly came to a stop. Sometime after that came the manual hydraulic brake system. This system enabled us to stop much more quickly after having reached much higher speeds of travel. There was less physical force required by the driver. However, we still had to jam pretty hard on that

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

