



# STOP

&  
"Shop your Shop"

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got." Henry Ford. I love this quote because it reminds me to take a fresh look at what I am doing.

I live in Corpus Christi on the gulf coast of Texas and have access to the beach just minutes away. Fishing is good here year round. Walks along the beach are good here too, along with all the normal tourist things to do in Corpus Christi. Most locals begin to get absorbed by their everyday life and soon forget about the beach and where we live and all the fun things there are to do along the Texas Riviera. Every once in a while we have friends or family with kids come to visit and we all play tourist in our own home town. It is always loads of fun and it reminds us why we live here, and also what we would like to add or change to our seaside town.

Have you ever been a tourist in your own home town? Well, along that same line of thought, have you ever been a customer in your own store? I would like to suggest that on a closed day, or on a day you have off, walk into your own store. What does it say about you and your company?

**1. Cleanness:** When was the last day the trash cans were emptied, floor mopped, shelves dusted, corners dusted? How about behind products? Is there a daily or weekly cleaning schedule posted? (I'm going to make some of you mad with this next one), when was the last time you cleaned the bathroom? Does the key machine look clean and ready to cut keys? What about the tech's table for rekeying?

**2. Displays:** If you sell safes, is there enough inventory on hand to last 3 months without having to place an order? Do all items for sale have a price tag? If you sell high security products such as Multi-lock or CCTV, do you see the display? Is it priced? Does it work? Is there a description of features and benefits? Is everything in your showroom available for sale? Does the items you have on display have a turn rate? Personally, I would love to see a TV with an endless loop DVD demo of you demonstrating products you want to sell. They work!

**3. Front Counter:** Is it clean? Only have products you sell. No donation cans or cards or brochures of some other business. This is your counter and how you make a living. Are there impulse products to purchase?

**4. Employees:** Are you greeted? Do they look the security professional that they are? Are

they wearing a uniform? Do they know your products?

**5. Attention Grabber:** What grabbed your attention when you first walked in? Did you want the customers attention to go that direction? Is it selling something, or just an antique that hasn't sold in the last 10 years? If it is antique, discount it and get it out. It's taking up valuable retail floor space.

**6. Interior Décor:** Is it freshly painted? Do all the light fixtures have working bulbs? Ceiling tiles look new? Flooring look fresh and clean? Does the wall paint match the flooring and shelving? Windows look clean?

You should now have a note pad filled with ideas and areas of how your shop can be improved. If you don't, then you may want some more ideas. Go look at franchise businesses in your area. Also, when you are traveling and visiting large cities, find the largest locksmith and go visit. See what they are doing right and what you would do differently if you owned that store. Shopping a competitor in a different part of your state or even the country can be very educational. Sam Walton was famous for visiting retail stores of all kinds as he traveled across the country. Some were competitors and some were not. But he was always learning and figuring ways to improve and help his customers receive a better shopping experience.

Henry Ford did not invent the automobile. He was not the first to use the assembly line. He did not invent the gasoline engine. He didn't even invent the tire! But he did take a fresh look at what others were doing in this industry and then improved upon it. It was this desire to improve. This desire to be better, faster, stronger, and willing to do something different than what he had been doing that brought him such huge success. I wish everyone reading this huge success in your business. Now go make it work.

