Graduates of TTC’s automotive technology program like Nicholas Dubois learn to use diagnostic software to determine necessary automobile system repairs.

You don’t want to plant seeds of doubt in your customer’s mind when you are asking for business. “Any consumer is going to have to go to work,” he says. “We do have some who can’t afford to get that system repaired.”

Varella adds, “Mechanics haven’t been run out of the business. But there are very few people left who can do the things that we can do.”

The automotive repair industry is most definitely competitive. “The more work you do, the more money you can make. But you have to know your stuff and you have to be good at what you do.”

The next time you are working for free, ask yourself the question, “Am I doing this work because I have to or because I want to? Am I going to make any money?”

Another important aspect is professionalism, both in attitude and appearance. Snider gives the example of someone bringing in a 30,000-mile car in for a tune-up. “If you are not this clean, you are not going to last in the business.”

Patience is required to learn interwoven electronics-controlled systems, says Snider. “You have that background and are now ready to go specialise. With experience you can become a master technician.”

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of automotive service technicians and mechanics is projected to grow 9 percent during the current decade. Varella agrees that the job outlook is bright. “You need to learn everything that you can about the industry. Develop a love for reading technical material, and be patient. Skills are available.”

Wages by Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>U.S. $20,600-$67,000+</th>
<th>S.C. $21,700-$70,000+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Body and Related Repairers</td>
<td>U.S. $22,900-$55,000+</td>
<td>S.C. $22,900-$55,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Glass Installers and Repairers</td>
<td>U.S. $19,900-$47,100+</td>
<td>S.C. $18,000-$48,400+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Master Mechanics</td>
<td>U.S. $20,800-$61,200+</td>
<td>S.C. $23,500-$60,700+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Specialty Technicians</td>
<td>U.S. $20,800-$61,200+</td>
<td>S.C. $23,500-$60,700+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education and Training**

**Quick Facts**

A successful automotive technician should have good technical skills and a thorough knowledge of automobiles and how they work. Good computer skills are a necessary part of the modern automotive technician’s job, even when they are working on older vehicles without onboard computers.

**Skills**

- **Technical skills:** The ability to diagnose and repair automotive systems, understand electrical and electronic components, and use diagnostic software.
- **Communication:** The ability to communicate clearly and effectively with customers and colleagues.
- **Problem-solving:** The ability to identify and solve automotive problems.
- **Customer service:** Excellent customer service skills to ensure customer satisfaction.
- **Computer skills:** Proficiency in using diagnostic software and basic computer literacy.
- **Safety knowledge:** Understanding of safety protocols and practices.
- **Interpersonal skills:** Strong interpersonal skills to work well with colleagues and customers.
- **Continuous learning:** The willingness to learn new technologies and practices.