

expert contributor



This One's for the Ladies

By Lauralee Schmidt, Co-Owner of Schmidt Auto Care

Picture this. You are a coffee-fueled mom, happily cruising along with your adorable Kool-Aid stained toddler, singing the 100th verse of "Baby Shark," and your check engine light comes on. Your blood pressure soars, and you know this means you must go to an auto shop immediately, but your brain hops into overdrive with questions. *Who do I trust with my car? How much is this going to cost? Am I going to lose my car for a few days? Why is this happening to me?!* It's a whirlwind of emotions including panic and utter annoyance that only a super mom can balance. From mom to mom, I want you to do something the next time your engine light comes on. I want you to rise above the fear and frustration, take note of all smells, vibrations and sounds surrounding the car, and call the people at Schmidt Auto Care.

Hi. I'm Lauralee Schmidt, the co-owner of Schmidt Auto Care. Generally, you have the pleasure of reading my brilliant husband's expertise, but this month, you get me. I come with no automotive experience, but I am incredibly passionate about people and ethical business. I stepped into the automotive business in 2016 after almost 20 years in the cosmetics industry. Why? Because business is business, and I needed a change. I was pregnant with our daughter and couldn't fathom the idea of being on the road 5 days a week any longer. I had gotten all I could get out of cosmetics and wanted a new challenge. My husband asked me to join his team, and after careful consideration, I hopped on board. I did this with two agendas top of mind. First, I wanted our shop to be a haven for women to bring cars. Next, I wanted it to be a destination for education.

As a female, I know how terribly humiliating and intimidating it can be to walk into an automotive shop. I have several poor experiences ingrained in my brain from way before I met my amazing mechanic (and now husband). The one that stands out the most occurred when I was 30 and owned a well-taken-care-of Toyota Corolla. I was at a routine maintenance appointment when a tech told me that if I left the shop without changing one of my belts, I would crash on the highway and cause a terrible accident. I don't remember the price they quoted, but I do remember telling him I didn't have the money to change the belt



that day. I was told I couldn't wait even 2 days to make the repair. I left that shop crying and scared to death I was about to meet my demise as I drove the 11 miles back home. I never EVER want a client to feel the way I felt that day. It's unacceptable for a shop to use scare tactics, and I refuse to allow that in the shop we have now. In a nutshell, I feel it's my mission to protect and educate women who visit automotive shops.

So, ladies (well, anyone really), if you feel like you were not treated fairly or not educated properly when inside my shop, please come find me. And if you are treated unfairly at another shop, know our door is open for you. I'm happy to help turn a bad experience into an excellent one.

GOT A CAR QUESTION?

If you have a topic you would like discussed, please email us at Contactus@schmidtautocare.com. For appointments, call 937-514-7860.