

Industry Snapshots

(Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook 2006-2007 and Career Guide to Industries 2006-07)

- **Employment of automotive service technicians and mechanics is expected to increase as fast as the average through the year 2014. Between 2004-2014, demand for technicians will grow as the number of vehicles in operation increases, reflecting continued growth in the number of multi-car families. Growth in demand will be offset somewhat by slowing population growth and the continuing increase in the quality and durability of automobiles, which will require less frequent service. Additional job openings will be due to the need to replace a growing number of retiring technicians, who tend to be the most experienced workers.**
- **Most persons entering seeking employment in the automotive industry can expect steady work, even through downturns in the economy. While car owners may postpone maintenance and repair on their vehicles when their budgets become strained, and employers of automotive technicians may cutback hiring new workers, changes in economic conditions generally have minor effects on the automotive service and repair business.**
- **Opportunities in the automotive industry should be plentiful in vehicle maintenance and repair occupations, especially for employees with formal automotive service technician training.**

High Growth INDUSTRY PROFILE

Workforce Issues

Image and Promotion

Among the challenges automotive employers face is overcoming negative public perceptions of the industry due to stereotypes and misinformation. Specifically, the industry seeks to counteract this lack of awareness by demonstrating the availability of viable occupations that pay well and have growth potential. The industry is also working to develop a pipeline of young employees and transitioning workers from which health care employers can recruit.

Diversity of the Workforce

The industry is also focused on increasing diversity in the workforce. To this end, employers are working to improve the pipeline and the demographic make-up of the workforce in areas such as race, gender and language diversity.

Capacity and Instruction

The automotive industry is working to assist employees in the attainment of basic soft skills, such as communications, basic reading, writing and math, problem solving and customer service skills. Training efforts must include the resources and curriculum to stay current with today's technology. To aid industry employers in this effort, the industry has focused on recruiting more teachers and trainers; ensuring that they are industry-certified and current in their field of knowledge. There is also a need of continuing education for instructors.

Training and Education

Another concern among industry employers is the availability of training for new employees and the re-training of incumbent employees. Education centers will be utilized to focus on the development of standardized curriculum and the importance of industry-based certification for training programs.

Skill Sets

(Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006-07 Career Guide to Industries and 2006-07 Occupational Outlook Handbook)

- Automotive technology is rapidly increasing in sophistication, and most training authorities strongly recommend that persons seeking automotive service technician and mechanic jobs complete a formal training program in high school or in a postsecondary vocational school or community college. However, some service technicians still learn the trade solely by assisting and learning from experienced workers. Courses in automotive repair, electronics, physics, chemistry, English, computers and mathematics provide a good educational background for a career as a service technician.

- Opportunities in vehicle maintenance and repair should be plentiful, especially for persons who complete formal automotive service technician training. The growing complexity of automotive technology increasingly requires highly trained automotive service technicians and mechanics to service vehicles. Most persons who enter maintenance and repair occupations in this industry may expect steady work because changes in economic conditions have little effect on this part of the dealer's business.
- Some automotive manufacturers and their associated dealers sponsor 2-year associate degree programs at postsecondary schools. Students enrolled in these programs typically spend alternate 10 to 12-week periods; attending classes full-time and working full-time in the service departments of participating dealers.
- For trainee positions, dealerships increasingly prefer to hire automotive service technician graduates of postsecondary automotive training programs. Good reading and basic math skills are required to study technical manuals, keep abreast of new technology and learn new service and repair techniques as vehicle components and systems become increasingly sophisticated.
- Production workers account for three out of five motor vehicle and equipment manufacturing jobs. These workers receive most of their training on the job or through apprenticeship programs.

E TA in Action

In June 2003, ETA announced the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative to engage businesses with local education providers and the local/regional workforce investment system to find solutions that address changing talent development needs in various industries.

In October 2005, the Community-Based Job Training Grants were announced to improve the role of community colleges in providing affordable, flexible and accessible education for the nation's workforce.

ETA is investing more than \$260 million in 26 different regions across the United States in support of the WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Initiative. Through WIRED, local leaders design and implement strategic approaches to regional

economic development and job growth. WIRED focuses on catalyzing the creation of high skill, high wage opportunities for American workers through an integrated approach to economic and talent development.

These initiatives reinforce ETA's commitment to transform the workforce system through engaging business, education, state and local governments and other federal agencies with the goal of creating a skilled workforce to meet the dynamic needs of today's economy.

I nvestments

ETA has invested over \$20,681,511 in the automotive industry. This includes 12 High Growth Job Training grants totaling \$14,395,956 and five Community-Based Job Training Grants totaling \$6,285,555. Leveraged resources from all of the grantees total \$39,061,021.

R esources

For additional background information about the industry and details on the grants, information about employment and training opportunities and workforce development tools for employers, educators and workforce professionals, please visit: www.doleta.gov/BRG, www.careervoyages.gov, www.careeronestop.org, and www.workforce3one.org.