

***Your Local Shop;
what you should expect.***

A good shop is like most everything else, namely hard to find. As a matter of fact, gun shops in general are becoming harder and harder to find. This is caused by many things, but certainly two of the most prevalent are the high cost of operating a gun business and the mega-mart stores. While the cost of doing business isn't getting any cheaper, the mart stores are now backing off of their gun lines opening the door again for the local gun shop to be successful.

In today's market place, you may be asking, "Why should I stick with one shop?" The simple answer is that it will help you in the long run if you are familiar with those who are servicing your needs. It may be as simple as needing a gun repaired quickly, or it could be that you need help finding that special gun for your collection. Whatever the case may be, like everything else in life you will benefit from having a good relationship with a shop.

Perhaps you have been unfortunate enough to go to a shop where everyone who worked there was a genius and you were a ignoramus (it may be true that you are an ignoramus, but you shouldn't be made to feel that way when you ask a question). Avoid any shop where everyone is a commando and you are made to feel like a simpleton. Remember that they are there to serve you and make you successful in your shooting disciplines. If you have had this experience, here is what you should look for in a good shop.

First, a knowledgeable staff who are glad that you have come to their shop. I say knowledgeable because there are too many areas where you can make a misstep if you are not given the right information. Being knowledgeable means that they are well versed in the shooting sports, or that they are connected enough so they can find the information that you need to be successful. Too many shops employ smug, arrogant individuals who are content to punch the clock and do nothing else. A good shop will also employ people who at the expense of a sale will tell you the truth (no your wife will not like the new S&W 500 for a carry gun!).

Second, a good shop will offer basic gunsmithing services. Most shops have someone that can perform the basics such as scope mounting, cleaning and general repair. This is important because you are going to need a gunsmith at some point. Why not go to the same place where you bought the gun? Remember that good relationships are key.

Third, look for a shop that has a decent selection of accessories. The Internet is great, but nothing is like seeing the holster on your belt with your gun in it. A good shop will carry the basics for all your needs. Holsters, ammo, scopes, knives, slings, sling swivels etc. Even if it is a little more than the "mart" stores or <http://bargain.com> you will appreciate the advice and the instant gratification of being able to purchase right when you need it. Remember that good relationships are key.

If you haven't noticed, **RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY!!!!** It really isn't any different than anything else in life. When you have a good relationship *you* reap the benefits. You will avoid costly mistakes, and you just might build a friendship that will help you in your hobby.

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