

# OFF THE FLOOR

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The Electronic Bulletin of the Australian Timber Flooring Association

## New Techniques Program draws participants from around the globe



Participants and ATFA instructors gather to celebrate the success of the three day program.

The inaugural Australian ATFA New Techniques Program (NTP) was recently held in Perth, Western Australia. Participants came from as far as Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney to find out about floor laying, sanding and finishing. Participants learnt different methods and were exposed to new techniques in a fun and inspiring environment. Read what they had to say on page 2.

### Inside:

Find out what NTP participants had to say  
How to convert quotes into sales  
Why it's important to combat stress  
New member promotion  
Plus more...

## ATFA New Techniques Program hits the high notes of success due to industry involvement

The **New Techniques – Installation and Finish Program in Perth in April 13-15** was a resounding success due to industry involvement. ATFA gratefully thanks the following Educational Partner Sponsors for their generous support:

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**Bostik**  
**Norton**  
**Embelton Flooring**

And of course, a big **thank you** to volunteer ATFA instructors and assistant instructors who successfully ran the New Techniques Program.

Tony Powell  
 Chris Stringer  
 Brett Scarpella

Robert Clague  
 David Stringer  
 Josh Triplett

Barry Olszak  
 Sam Marafioti  
 Brad Marsdon

Jim Hilston  
 Chris Hunter  
 Grant Whitehead

**Special mention** to Lyn Marafioti and Sam Marafioti – WA Chairman, who graciously invited ATFA instructors and staff to their home for dinner, Pam John, TAFE – WA Polytechnic, Balga Campus and the WA Standing Committee. ATFA thanks them for the generosity and hard work.



## Check out what New Techniques Program participants had to say...

“All instructors were very knowledgeable and very sociable.”  
 “Very well put together, well recommended to other businesses and colleagues.”  
 “The combination of theory and practical is very suitable for our industry.”  
 “Interaction and content is totally practical.”  
 “What a fantastic learning experience and opportunity to talk about our trade with other experienced people.”  
 “Very good course content and great value for money, should be a requirement for all contractors.”

## ATFA New Techniques Program pictorial



**APRIL 13-15, PERTH WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

# Why it's important to combat stress

ATFA thank Jason Kiely for contributing this article.

Is stress every bit the disease of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we make it out to be, or is it just our misinterpretation of the word?

To an engineer stress is neither good nor bad, it describes the ability of a material (such as concrete) to handle loading or force. What is generally important is the point at which the material can no longer handle a given load, or its 'failure' point, as this will determine its applications.

The first 'medical' usage of the word stress dates back to 1930s when a physiologist named Hans Selye discovered that humans respond in predictable ways when subject to various stimuli, which he termed stressors.

A normal response when exposed to a stressor, such as running with the bulls in Spain, a close encounter with a rather large Rottweiler, or possibly dinner at the mother-in-law's, will initiate the 'fight-and-flight' response. In this response, adrenalin is released causing your body to go into overdrive, allowing you to high-tail it out of there as fast as possible. Once the stressor is removed or you have escaped the danger, well maybe not in the last example, the body returns to normal. Thus the nature of the fight-and-flight response is that it acts in 'short bursts' to get you out of danger. The other response is termed the 'rest-and-digest' and does the exact opposite to return you to normal.

	<b>Fight-and-Flight</b>	<b>Rest-and-Digest</b>
Medical term	Sympathetic	Parasympathetic
Hormone	Adrenalin	Acetylcholine
Action on heart & lungs	Speeds up	Slows down
Blood flow	To the muscles for running and fighting	To the gut for digestion-it's why you sometimes feel tired after meals
Overall Function	Survive, escape danger, defend or pursue attacker	Eat, sleep and make love☺

Selye's experiments looked at the effects of long term exposure to stressors, where the body stays in flight-and-flight longer than it was designed to. He observed 3 stages of adaptation.

1. Alarm stage as already discussed above;
2. Resistance stage: body attempts to deal with the stressor but hasn't the resources to do it indefinitely, and;
3. Exhaustion stage: body depletes its resources and is unable to maintain normal function.

In exhaustion stage, Selye noticed the same pattern no matter what stressor he was using; stomach ulcers, cardiovascular problems, high blood pressure and high blood sugar levels.

In exercise science, stress is seen as positive when given in the correct dose. To build athletic performance coaches employ the concept of 'progressive overload', meaning that athletes are given incremented levels of loading or stress, allowing them to strengthen over time. Injury occurs when the level of loading was greater than the athlete could handle or was too soon between training sessions (i.e. not enough recovery).

Stress is neither good nor bad, but can be used to our advantage if we understand how it works. The term was borrowed from physics, to describe the failure of a person to respond adequately to a stimulus, be it *physical*, *mental* or *emotional*.

Daily stressors are always going to be there which will trigger the fight-and-flight to some degree, such as problem floors or customers, traffic and even mother-in-law's. Stressors in moderation are beneficial as they can motivate us to perform better or 'lift our games' and as such can actually strengthen the 'flooring athlete'. It really becomes a problem when fight-and-flight gets stuck on, as the body is not wired to maintain this state. Perhaps what is needed in today's world is more of a conscious effort to switch gears, from the high-gear 'fight-and-flight' to the low-gear 'rest-and-digest'. A simple idea is to leave work at work, and when at home, be at home and be happy.

## New members jump on board

### Congratulations to the following new members and welcome to the ATFA family

Colin Belmore	Diamond Property Developments Pty Ltd
Jason Mackay	Flooring Instyleations
Stephen Jolly	Park Avenue Floors
George Papadopoulos	Peak Chemicals
Mike Lyons	Southern Sanding
Diego Rubio	Floors 2 Go
Jonathan Blackburn	RENOprep Pty Ltd
Peter Grasser	Accent Timber Flooring
Dean & Samantha Thake	Select Flooring
Mark Mathot	My Timber
David Inglis	David Inglis
Peter Duncan	Peter Duncan's Timber Pty Ltd
Diego Beccegato	Aspen Flooring
David Tatler	David Mark Tatler
Daniel Carnachan	Daniel Carnachan
Richard Smith	Distinctive Timber Floors
Fazlrah Ferozkohei	Home Legend Australia Pty Ltd
Christopher Hunter	Christopher Hunter
Robert Daws	Sandman Floor Sanding & Polishing
Sangchoul Kim	Top-Five Floors Pty Ltd
Geoff & Helen Collins	Newry Carpet Service
Scott Reyne	Let Us Build Your Dream
Paul Dragwidge	City Floors
Vitali Rodin	VR Improvements
Joseph Zou	Tip Top Floors
Damon Lyne	Timber Flooring Unlimited



## Mark your calendars now with the latest ATFA training and trade nights

There are some great workshops coming up next week, so register today and up skill! Registrations for most workshops and courses are posted on [www.atfa.com.au](http://www.atfa.com.au) or click on the links below. However, should you wish to pre-register for any not listed simply give us a call on 1300 36 1693. For other registrations please email [admin@atfa.com.au](mailto:admin@atfa.com.au) or fax to 1300 36 1793.

Date	Event	Location
May 10	<a href="#">Troubleshooting Workshop</a>	Brisbane, 1 day workshop
May 19	<a href="#">Timber Grading Workshop</a>	Melbourne, 1 day workshop
June 8	Bamboo Forum	Perth, 1 day forum
June 9	<a href="#">Timber Grading Workshop</a>	Perth, 1 day workshop
June 15	SA Trade night	Adelaide
June 22	TAS Trade night	Hobart
June 30	T&G Timber Flooring Forum	Gold Coast, 1 day forum

## Praise for ATFA's Coating Essentials Workshop

'A big thank you to ATFA for the recent Coatings Essentials Workshop in Melbourne, it was very useful and greatly appreciated.'

Jarlath Weingott  
 Owner  
 Melbourne Red Flooring Company

## ATFA invited to speak at trade nights

Trade nights are an opportunity to find out what's happening in the market place. It allows contractors, suppliers and manufacturers to get together hear about the latest products and just generally catch up. ATFA are often involved, and it's a great chance to catch with up existing members and to meet new members.

This year ATFA have been invited to South Australia, where they presented at the EFP trade night, where guests learnt about the Bona sanding system, and more recently to Embelton Flooring where Craig Kennedy from ERA Polymers had also been invited to present their new coating product. Embelton Flooring's National Flooring Manager, Glyn Taylor said, "It was great to be able to run such a successful evening for Embelton Flooring customers and to welcome ERA and ATFA."

"We are proud to be part of member trade nights," said Lisa Alexiou, ATFA Marketing Coordinator. "They contribute to the professionalism of the industry, through the dissemination of timely information designed to assist members in their day-to-day work."



ATFA's Lisa Alexiou talks passionately about why ATFA works.



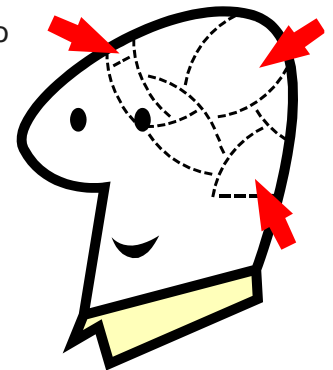
Craig Kennedy from ERA educates audience on new coating.

Have you got a trade night planned and would love ATFA to come and chat with your customers? Email [lisa@atfa.com.au](mailto:lisa@atfa.com.au)

## Got something on your mind?

We'd love to hear it. ATFA is interested to hear what we do well. What could we do better? What training would you like us to develop for the future? Take the time to shoot off an email to [lisa@atfa.com.au](mailto:lisa@atfa.com.au). Your feedback is what makes ATFA successful.

The first 10 emails will receive a marketing pack, consisting of ATFA pens, marketing brochures and an ATFA t-shirt – great for helping your business grow.



## Converting quotes to sales

Source: <http://www.actioncoach.com>

In this issue we look at the time potentially wasted on quotes that never turn into sales.

If you are like many business owners, you spend a lot of time generating and preparing proposals or quotes for customers and prospects. Yes, quotes are the pipeline for your revenue and cash flow, but leads that are not converted to sales are a waste of time and money!

So why do some businesses convert 80 percent to sales while others struggle to convert 5 percent? Consider this - it's all in the process they put in place. They recognise that proposals are part of a "bigger" sales management process -- not THE sales process.



### Tips To Improve Your Conversion Rate and Profitability:

- Clearly define your ideal customers and understand what is really important to them. Without a clear target, every quote looks like a "great opportunity".
- Recognise your company's strengths and weaknesses. Be honest with yourself. What do you do well (and profitably)? An opportunity is only an opportunity if you can make money at it!
- Be willing to "No Quote" those opportunities that do not fit with your strengths or meet your "ideal customer" profile. We all acquire customers, then regret it later -- usually after we lose money on the job or fail to deliver on our promise- so they are not raving fans!
- Communicate with prospects from start to finish. Many businesses require quotes to make decisions - but few businesses actually acknowledge when they get a request from a potential prospect. How you communicate from the start is an indication of how you will communicate with them as a customer.
- What does your communication say about you? Hint: Templates work well and can save a lot of time.
- Build a formal quote process for consistency and profitability. Most quotes or estimates require input from other team members, suppliers and/or subcontractors. A documented system insures a prospect's needs are understood and input from others actually occurs - to minimise rejects and reworks that erode profitability. Another big benefit - happy customers who got what they needed, when they needed it!
- Integrate "sales and marketing" messages into your quote or proposal. Since quotes are part of the sales process, use them to reinforce the benefits or compelling reasons to choose you versus one of your competitors. If you don't give them a reason to choose you, they will simply base their decision on price.
- Know the numbers! Track your leads, number of quotes and conversion rate so you know how your company is performing. Know your costs and the assumptions you are using to develop your quotes - then evaluate the actual versus estimated costs and learn from it. A "no sale" today does not mean forever. What do you do with the prospects that weren't converted to a sale? If you're like many business owners, the answer is nothing. What a waste! You already know they have a potential need for your products or services (they contacted you!).
- Convert this lost opportunity into a future sale by educating (read 'marketing') them on your company. It is vital to stay connected and build a relationship and the results may surprise you!

**Nothing will change until you make changes. So start implementing some of these ideas and watch your conversion rate and profitability grow!**

## Building approval trends to March 2011

Source: [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)



ABS Building Approvals show that the total number of dwellings approved rose 9.1% in March 2011, in seasonally adjusted terms, after falling 5.3% in February.

Dwelling approvals increased for the month of March in Victoria (26.8%), New South Wales (8.5%), Tasmania (5.8%) and Western Australia (3.4%) while South Australia (-22.5%) and Queensland (-15.0%) recorded decreases in seasonally adjusted terms.

In seasonally adjusted terms, approvals for private sector houses fell 0.8% in March with falls in Western Australia (-8.4%), New South Wales (-5.6%) and South Australia (-2.1%) while there were rises in Queensland (8.2%) and Victoria (3.7%).

The value of total building approved rose 20.8% in March in seasonally adjusted terms. The value of total residential building rose by 3.9% while non-residential building rose by 47.6%.

Further information is available in Building Approvals, Australia (cat no. 8731.0) on the ABS website at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

## Member benefits

### Caltex StarCard. Discount Fuel



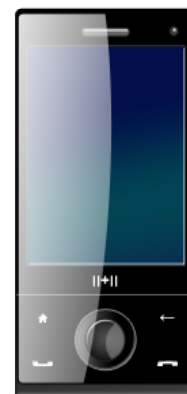
Have you applied for your Caltex StarCard yet? It entitles you to 2.3 cents per litre off fuel. The card can be used at over 1800 service stations throughout Australia. This is a great way to save money and it's easy to apply for – simply request an application from [admin@atfa.com.au](mailto:admin@atfa.com.au)

### Optus Deal

Currently, if you sign-up with Optus before 8/5/2011 you will receive two months free. Click [here](#) to find out more about the latest offer.

'Communication with our sales staff and site workers is imperative to the efficient and constructive daily running of our business. Optusworld Windsor have been with us from day one, really listening and understanding our needs and most importantly, delivering at the end of the day.'

Robert Clague  
Director  
Northern Suburbs Timber Flooring





## Thinking of becoming an ATFA member? Join now and get 2 months free membership, plus the chance to win an Apple® iPad\*

**ATFA** is the peak Australian industry association for timber flooring. The association provides a valuable network to those involved directly and indirectly in the timber flooring industry. **ATFA** is a professionally staffed operation with a CEO, Technical Manager and a Marketing Coordinator. **ATFA** is currently offering **new members:**

**2 months free membership.** Sign up [now](#) to receive 14 months membership for the price of 12  
**Plus go into the draw to win an Apple® iPad\***

**14 months membership valued at over \$500. Pay only \$440 inc GST**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • The Timber Flooring Guidelines maintained and updated by <b>ATFA</b>                      | • Quarterly glossy Timber Floors Magazine and regular electronic bulletins                |
| • The NEW Problems, Cures and Remedial Measures technical manual.                           | • The Annual <b>ATFA</b> Timber Flooring Convention                                       |
| • National draft contract, contract variation, quote and invoice forms                      | • WH&S Compliance assistance and Industrial Relations assistance                          |
| • The respected Floor Inspection Service with accredited inspectors                         | • In-house training services  |
| • The highly successful <b>ATFA</b> website, heavily utilised by the public and contractors | • Our recognised contractor accreditation system  |
| • Marketing of members via our website, brochures and media                                 | • The timber accreditation scheme for producers   |
| • Apprenticeship assistance   | • Technical information from our technical and environmental standing committees          |
| • Insurance tailored to suit our industry and at competitive prices                         | • Invaluable information sheets   |
| • Information hotlines for members  | • Training in coating, adhesives, engineered floors and timber technology plus            |
| • Installation and finishing schools  | • Continuing Industry research  |
| • Constant technical support  | • A dynamic, nationally appointed Board of Directors                                      |
| • Government liaison  | • <b>ATFA</b> is a Company Limited by Guarantee providing greater strength to our members |

Click [here](#) for more info, or contact Lisa Alexiou on 07 5446 5956. \*Offer only valid for new memberships.

