

Creating a Culture of Productivity



Source: www.TurfMagazine.com

As important as they are, performance reviews are part of a larger culture of productivity that pervades the highly successful landscape business. Most top landscape business owners carefully consider and cultivate this sort of company culture rather than leaving it to chance.

Developing an atmosphere of trust is critical. "When you have trust it fosters the spirit of the company," says landscape business consultant Ed Laflamme of [The Harvest Group](#). "When we do internal employee surveys one of the main questions we ask is, 'Can you trust the person you report to, and can you trust the leader?' Many times on a scale of one to five the number is three. They don't truly trust the management and as a result they don't work at an optimal level and profits suffer."

How can you build trust and a culture of productivity within your company?

Here are a few things to consider:

- **Foster a positive attitude.** It's critical for performance reviews to take place in a safe emotional environment where people can confront each other with their strengths and weaknesses without it becoming a personal affront. Even one negative person on the team can create a toxic emotional environment that makes people secretive and defensive and undermines trust.
- **Solicit feedback.**
- **Be transparent.** Being open with the team about what's going on gives employees a sense of security and belonging. This is true not only of day-to-day operations but also long-term goals. It is inspiring for employees to feel they are part of a larger mission; it gives them a sense that their job is important and encourages optimum performance.
- **Strive for excellence.** Ask the question Steve Jobs was famous for: "Is this the best we can do? Can we make it better?"
- **Make it fun.** Studies show that having fun at work increases

productivity. Find ways to incorporate play into your company. Friendly competition between crews is a great place to start, but make sure to set things up so everyone experiences wins on a regular basis.

- **Follow through.** Good leaders do what they say they are going to do. This gives the employees they oversee a sense of security and fosters trust.

When you hire good people, it pays to leverage their ideas. “I’m a fan of multiple opinions,” says Utendorf. “I love getting all the team to weigh in. We’re constantly tweaking stuff. I think everybody in our group has an opinion on stuff and the more the better.”

Levelling up your

landscape business

Ultimately, no matter the size of the company or team, it’s the leader who sets the standards and the tone for productivity in the business. Knowing this can put a great deal of pressure on a landscape industry owner or manager. However, it is also empowering. Nearly every highly successful landscape business owner started small. Most learned their productivity secrets through trial and error over time, and the great majority of them continue to strive for improvement. No matter where you are in your business, you’ve got the potential to make it better. Where do you think is the best place to start?