

Like A Boss: Letting Go To Grow

The logo for 'Turf' features the word in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A green grass blade graphic is integrated into the letter 'u'.The logo for 'Tree Services' is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A small green leaf icon is placed above the 'e' in 'Services'. Below the main text, the tagline 'Taking Tree Care to New Heights' is written in a smaller, italicized font.The logo for 'DesignBuild' features the word 'Design' in a black, sans-serif font, followed by 'Build' in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. A small orange square icon is placed above the 'i' in 'Design'.The logo for 'PLOW' is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly slanted to the right.

Source: www.TurfMagazine.com

Mark Borst, owner of [Borst Landscape & Design](#) in Allendale, New Jersey says that in his early years in business it was always a struggle to work on the business – rather than *in* the business – as the popular adage goes. Today, Borst does some occasional consulting work and says he sees other landscape business owners struggle with the same thing. He says the challenge is to empower your people to do the work and then to trust them that they'll get it done. But it requires letting go, which isn't easy to do.

"As the owner, I think you often feel the need to be very involved in the jobs and you feel like you still need to be on site," Borst says. "Years ago, I would have this feeling as though I was being replaced when I would allow others to do the work without my input. It also felt like a responsibility to be there."

But ultimately, Borst realized that in order to grow the business, he had to be in the mindset of growing his people. In other words, he had to allow them to be challenged and to excel – without him looking over their shoulder. Of course, that's easier said than done.

One thing that Borst did, many years back, to start evaluating how he spent his time, was to write down everything he did in a day. He was surprised by just how many tasks he handled that could have been delegated. These included things like listening to the answering machine messages and writing them all down, opening the mail, or doing bank deposits. These were all little tasks, but Borst says they added up.

"It's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day stuff only to have the day end and wonder *What did I actually do today?*" Borst says. "Look at your daily functions and figure out what you can delegate to someone else."

Borst says another good starting point in starting to work on the business more than in it, is to find that one key person in your company that can become your righthand leader.

“Treat that person extremely well,” he adds. “When I grew my company, I had a key person become my righthand man and it was essential to our growth. I would sell and he would do estimates and run production. You must ultimately realize, as a business owner, that you can’t do it all.”

Our [Like a Boss](#) series highlights some common business challenges landscape professionals face and how they conquer them.