

The Story Of Scroogescapes

The logo for Turf, featuring the word "Turf" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A green grass blade graphic is integrated into the letter 'T'.The logo for Tree Services, featuring the words "Tree Services" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A small green leaf graphic is above the 'e' in "Services". Below the main text is the tagline "Taking Tree Care to New Heights" in a smaller, italicized font.The logo for DesignBuild, featuring the word "Design" in a black, sans-serif font and "Build" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. A small orange square graphic is above the 'i' in "Design".The logo for PLOW, featuring the word "PLOW" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly slanted to the right.

Source: www.TurfMagazine.com



It was Christmas Eve and Mr. Scrooge was in his parlor reflecting on the past year and his business. He had already downed several Christmas ales and was muttering a “humbug” about his employees. Everyone in town knew about Mr. Scrooge and what a miser he was even though he had lots of money. There was talk of how he would not let his crews turn on the heat in their trucks because he thought it would waste gas. He was so cheap that he even made all of his foremen use flip phones. If his crews complained about the bald tires on the mowers, he would tell them to stop whining, and if they didn’t like it they could go down the street and work for Joe’s Mow and Blow. Bah! Humbug!

It wasn’t always this way for Scroogescapes. Rumor has it that Mr. Scrooge was a very optimistic guy in his younger years. Back then he treated everyone who worked for him like family. He even let the employees run the heat in the trucks. He had big dreams for his company, and it wasn’t all about the money either. One Christmas, he had the best employee appreciation party ever. Scroogescapes was a top-notch company and everyone wanted to work there. But that was back then.

Over the years Mr. Scrooge became bitter. He had employees who wouldn’t show up, customers who would pay late or not at all, and he felt like he was constantly putting out fires. Slowly, like a tire with a small leak, he started to deflate.

At first, it was just yelling and telling everyone who worked for him they were stupid. Then came the pay cuts. He figured that since his employees did stupid stuff like forget equipment at the shop or run over dog chains with the mowers that he would just cut their pay to make up for it. He stopped giving them holiday pay and did away with the parties. He simply didn’t have the time or patience to do anything nice for all of the minions who worked for him. And why should he with all of the grief they caused him?

His customers would shy away from him as well because he just didn't want to deal with them. He would say things like, "Scroogescapes is the biggest landscape company in town, and if they don't want to work with us they can find someone else!" Every time the company lost a customer, he would go browbeat the sales team and threaten to fire them if they didn't exceed their already enormous sales quotas.



[Click image to enlarge.](#)

PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO

As he nodded off to sleep in his big leather recliner, the clock struck 12. He was then visited by the spirits of Christmas ale. They took Mr. Scrooge on a journey through the years of his company. They showed him how his employees would work together to get the jobs done, even when someone called off or didn't show up. They pointed out that, unfortunately, some customers are bad and don't pay their bills on time, but Scroogescapes also had many other customers who were loyal and even paid early.

The spirits took him to one of his competitors who was using systems to manage its employees instead of threats. Then they went back in time and visited the Christmas party that Mr. Scrooge had for his employees, and he witnessed how much his employees appreciated it. At the end of the journey, one spirit came up to Mr. Scrooge and said to him, "You have become very bitter, like an accountant, and if you don't change your ways you will end up old and cranky and no one will want to work for you."

When Scrooge woke up on Christmas morning, he ran to the window and looked outside. It was snowing and his first thought was to call up his operations manager and chew him out for whatever mishaps might have happened over night with the plow crews. Instead he went to Starbucks and got a whole bunch of peppermint mochas and spent the day delivering them to all of his employees who were plowing and shoveling for Scroogescapes. Mr. Scrooge realized that Scroogescapes was a great company and that he had great employees and loyal customers. He was able to look at the whole picture again instead of just the challenges a business faces. He vowed to become a less bitter man and better appreciate his employees.

Steve Rak is the owner of Southwest Landscape Management, Columbia Station, Ohio, and a partner with his brother, Jeff, in Rak Consulting. Contact him at steve@sw-landscape.com.