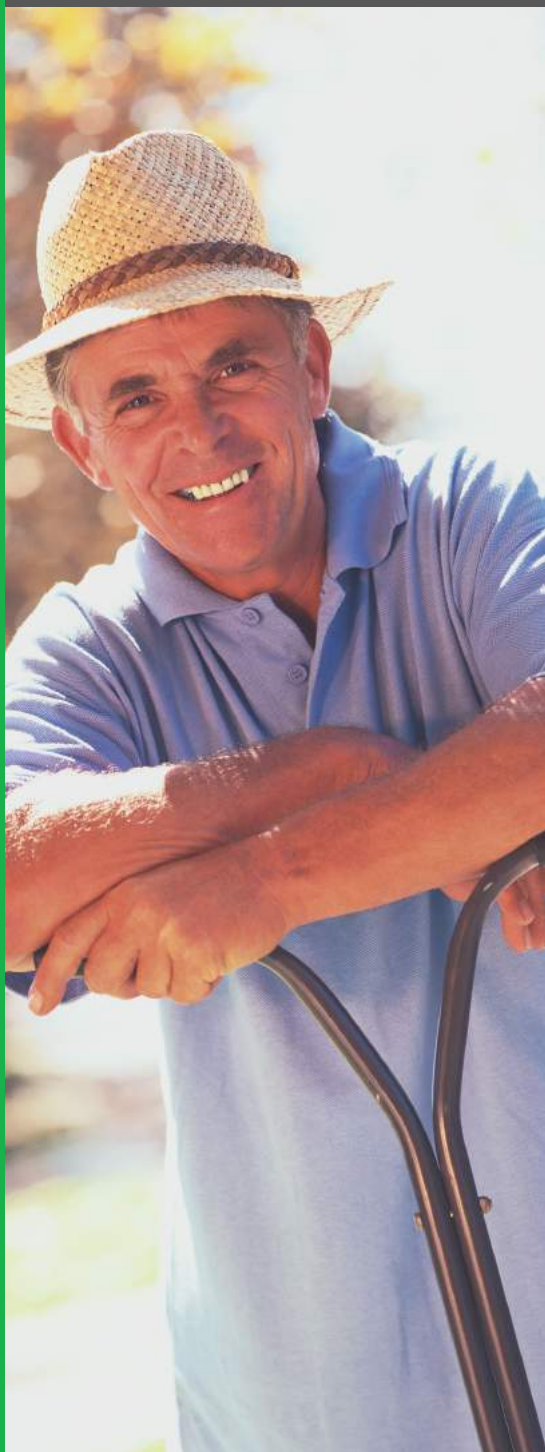


# ***HOW TO HIRE YOUR BEST EMPLOYEES***



**QUICK GUIDE TO FINDING, TRAINING, AND  
KEEPING GREAT EMPLOYEES**

# WHAT YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS GUIDE...



Deciding it's time to hire additional employees can often be a tough decision. If you've never hired an employee before, how do you know you're ready to add to your work family?

If you've already built a good team, perhaps you have so many jobs that need scheduling – but not enough employees to handle the routes.

Then again, you may have enough physical bodies... but are they the right fit for your work culture?

In all three scenarios, hiring good employees will be your number one need right now. Finding the right employee doesn't have to be difficult – if you know what you're doing.

That's why we developed this quick guide. We want to help you cut through the "weeds" of the hiring process. We'll cover when, where, and how to find good employees... and how to make sure you keep them!



# WHEN SHOULD YOU HIRE A NEW EMPLOYEE?



Take this quick quiz to gauge if now's a good time to hire new employees. Check the box next to each statement that applies to you. If you can check any of these statements, it's time to hire.

- ☐ I'm working more exhaustive hours than I ever have before.
- ☐ I feel as though my employees just aren't loyal to me.
- ☐ I've turned down jobs because I don't have enough employees to help.
- ☐ My employee morale is plummeting.
- ☐ An employee has quit.
- ☐ My crews are overextended and burning out... FAST.
- ☐ I do small tasks instead of focusing growing my business.
- ☐ I'm missing calls because I'm too busy, and it's costing me \$\$.
- ☐ I'm working on the low-profit projects because I need my crews on the bigger projects.
- ☐ I'm about to sell a ton of new work and will need additional employees to cover the jobs..

## 5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU HIRE AN EMPLOYEE

If you've answered YES to any of the questions on the previous page, you need a new employee.

Whether that person is out in the field or in your office, you're going to need help. Hiring more employees frees you up to work ON your business, instead of IN your business. If you're still not sure you need another full-time employee, you could start a new employee as part-time. Part-time is the great "in between." It's a stepping stone for owners who still have concerns about bringing on full-time employees. Make sure you know the following answers before you hire a new employee:



### STRATEGY: IF YOU'RE A NEW OWNER OR HAVE NEVER BUILT A TEAM...

- Hire one part-time worker for 15-25 hours per week.
- **Market your business** to get more jobs to fill up your schedule.
- When you have enough hours, hire a second part-timer. Flex their hours based on need, from 30-50 hours per week.
- Repeat this until you have enough hours to fill a full-time position.

### Grab a pen and paper, and write down your answers to the following questions:

- How many hours do you want them to work by next week? Next month?
- Do you have the time and resources to properly train them?
- Is your service running smoothly and are clients happy? Until clients are satisfied, don't bring a new employee into chaos.
- Do you have money built up to handle a short-term profit loss? You may take a hit while your new hire learns the ropes.
- Do you have a process in place for new hires?



## STRATEGY: STEAL THIS! YOUR NEXT HIRING AD FOR FACEBOOK

Do you have experience in Lawn Care? Want a better job with a friendly company? Here are 17 reasons you should work for Sunrise Lawn Care:

1. Get paid weekly.
2. We've never missed payroll.
3. The harder you work, the more money you make.
4. Benefits include Health Insurance...
5. ...401k retirement plan
6. ...And HOLIDAY & VACATION pay
7. We're friendly and easy to work with
8. You get to use NEW Equipment every year
9. Our team has been with us a long time
10. Access to full-time mechanics
11. In-house maintenance and blade sharpening
12. We will train you. We want you to be successful and make more \$\$\$
13. Lots of opportunity to move up if you learn new skills
14. We focus on quality work
15. Our clients love us
16. We speak English and Spanish
17. Fast growing company = more opportunities

Call (XXX) XXX-XXXX and start your new job with Sunrise Lawn Care. Our jobs go fast, so call today!



## FINDING GOOD EMPLOYEES

There are several excellent sources where you can place job ads. Most of the sources below are low to no cost options and will canvas a large area. Try posting ads in and on:

- Job sites such as Indeed, Monster, CareerBuilder, and ZipRecruiter
- Job Boards on LinkedIn and Craigslist
- Facebook posts, groups, and job boards
- Word of mouth/referrals
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Local colleges/tech schools
- Put up flyers at Churches and Community centers
- Ask hardware, garden supply vendors, and equipment suppliers

Your ad should show the benefits of working for you – steady payroll, PTO/Holiday Pay, opportunities for advancement, etc. These are the benefits that talk about why THEY would love working for YOU, not why your company is so great. Be sure to also include a clear call-to-action – a phone number to call to setup an interview.

## FACEBOOK AD TEMPLATE

To the left is an example of an ad you can use on Facebook. This ad will engage people who are actually interested in working for your company. They'll be drawn to the main headline, then read the ad due to its simple but lengthy text. This ad hits all their "checklist items" for a new job... while keeping it easy to read.

For more ad options, including Craigslist and Spanish versions, download our [Lawn Care Hiring Ad templates here](#).

# WHAT YOU WANT (AND DON'T WANT) IN A NEW EMPLOYEE

## Two words: Business changing.

You want someone whose presence in your company can help grow your business. It could be a marketer/salesperson, crew leader, field worker, or office manager. Whichever position you choose to hire, you want an employee that can bring a new set of knowledge, experience, and understanding to your business. They'll be taking a ton of stuff off your shoulders. Sure, they may cost a little money – so make sure you have enough revenue to cover a good employee's wages.

Remember – a 15-year veteran in the industry who knows it inside and out, would be a great win for your company. But don't discredit someone new to the industry or young, if they have the experience. If they are hungry enough to want a seat at your table, then you better give them a great meal! Just make sure they are willing to work, willing to figure things out, and willing to ask questions. Someone who presents new ways to do things may end up saving you even more time than you imagined.

Trust your gut instinct. If you get a bad feeling, they are late for an interview, or don't look or act professional, it's not going to work out. Don't hire them if they aren't the right fit.





# HOW TO PHONE SCREEN YOUR JOB APPLICANTS

When you're ready to start conducting interviews, do a phone screen first to weed out anyone not qualified or not serious about wanting to work hard. Phone screens cut down the overall time you spend on the hiring process. Your time is valuable. You don't want to spend it doing in-person interviews for someone who isn't qualified. Ask them the following questions during the phone screening:

## 1) "What is your work experience in this industry?"

- If they've said they have industry experience, ask them a question about mowing or landscaping that proves they know what they're talking about.
- If they don't have experience, move them off the list. Inexperienced applicants will only slow you down as you build your team, especially if you don't have the time to train them. Let this rule apply to your first few hires. Once you've built your team and trained great employees, you can then look at hiring inexperienced team players who are willing to learn and apply themselves.

## 2) "Why do you think you're a good fit for this business?"

- You want to assess their passion for the industry and see what they can bring to the table.

If they've passed the test so far, move on to an in-person interview. Ask them to meet you on your terms – you pick the time and place. Use this next step to see if they'll be on time to the meeting - a good test to see if they are punctual and will show up to work when scheduled. But don't necessarily worry about how they are dressed. Not everyone owns a fancy suit, nor do you necessarily want someone in a suit. Just be honest about your expectations on how they should dress when they are on the job.

# INTERVIEW QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK



*Strategy: The in-person interview tells you everything you need to know about your candidates, short of performing a background check. Ask the following questions in the interview:*

- "Why do you want to leave your current job?" Dig a littler deeper and find out what bothered them about their last position.
- "What types of equipment have you worked with and for how long?"
- "Are you excited to work for my company?"
- "What would you bring to our business?"
- "Did you ever have a situation where a customer was wrong or upset you – how did you handle it?"
- "What makes you different from the other people applying for this job?"
- "Can you drive a manual transmission?"
- "Pitch me an upsell on a lawn care job."
- "Are you legal to work in the United States or do you have/need a Visa?" Just cover your legal bases with this question. You could also move this question to your written application.
- "Could you give me some references – 2 previous jobs, 2 personal."





## HIRING OFFICE STAFF

If you're hiring office staff, use a phone screen to test their phone skills – do they speak clearly, are they polite? Once in person, assess the following:

- Are they tech-savvy? Have they used Microsoft Office, Word, and Excel? Are they comfortable learning new software?
- Are they organized, friendly, and personable?
- Are they professional and respectful?

**Bonus!** If they are comfortable with social media, they can run your business's Facebook and Instagram accounts!

## A FEW INTERVIEW POINTS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION...



### BACKGROUND CHECKS

Always complete a background check on a candidate before letting them out into the field or alone in your office.



### JUST SAY NO TO FAVORS

Don't hire friends or family. If you can't afford to ruin your relationship, don't hire them. They may feel entitled to special treatment.



### WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS

Avoid candidates looking to "make a quick buck" or a hand out. Hire people because they'll grow your business.



### LOOK FOR LANGUAGE

Having bi-lingual or Spanish speaking-only staff could help you better communicate with clients and other employees.

# HOW TO CONVINCE A GREAT CANDIDATE TO WORK FOR YOU

Finding a great candidate is only half the battle. Convincing them to work for you... that can sometimes be the tricky part as competition is stiff in some areas...and more than likely, you always seem to be in need of GREAT employees!

During the interview process, showing a candidate the benefits that your company provides will go a long way in winning them over. Consider the following additions to your employees' well-being:

- Compensate them; explore average wages in your area and make sure you're paying a fair amount.
- Offer a hiring bonus and another one if they stay past 3 months
- Reward them for cross-selling/upselling services, and for bringing in new clients
- Show them a career path. Let them know they can work their way into a crew leader position and turn a job into a career.
- State that you are looking for longevity. You want employees who will grow with you.
- Above all, show them respect.





# 4 STEPS TO TRAIN NEW AND CURRENT EMPLOYEES

## You've just hired a new employee or team... now what?

Step 1: You'll need a solid training plan. Training employees not only ensures safety on the job, but also improves the QUALITY of their work. With quality work comes long-term customer satisfaction.

Step 2: Train employees on your equipment and trucks, daily procedures, software/mobile apps, clocking in/out of jobs, invoicing, routes, company culture, etc. Also make sure they know your company history and what you want your brand to represent.

Step 3: Once they get a good grasp on the basics, let them shadow you (or your best employee) until they can maneuver the ropes for themselves.

Step 4: You can also use this training course as a great refresher for current employees. Remind them of the safety rules, of staying hydrated during the summer, and to stay true to your company's culture.

Whatever you do, just don't let them fly by the seat of their pants. That could be disastrous! Give them enough guidance to stay on track, and enough slack to let them be themselves.



## **Strategy: Things to consider adding to your training plan:**

- Initial equipment training with ongoing refresher courses.
- Office processes and procedures to understand how the business works.
- Teach them the importance of reporting back on their day's events. (Did they break something or notice something different on someone's yard? Did a client ask them a question they couldn't answer, inquire about additional services, or ask invoice questions?)
- The Do's and Don'ts for lawn care and landscaping techniques. You could plan a monthly session on each of the services your company offers to clients.
- Sales training on how to cross-sell and upsell. Teach your employees how to sell additional services to your clients. (Remember to reward your employees if they sell something!)
- Teach them about 9-arounds and how to place door hangers.
- Make sure they understand professionalism on the job – they are the front lines of your business.

# BUILDING A POSITIVE CULTURE TO KEEP GOOD EMPLOYEES

To retain great employees, you'll have to give them something worth sticking around for.

Incentives are a great place to start. Give them bonuses for winning new clients, selling more services, staying with you through the winter, returning in the summer, and employee referrals.

You can also provide perks for them such as a refrigerator in the office continually stocked with cold drinks and fresh fruit, or a company cooler for each team to keep their drinks cold in the truck. Company-paid team breakfasts and lunches are also great morale boosters. Providing your employees with these comforts goes a long way in retaining them. However, the biggest impact comes from building a solid culture.

A good company culture means:

- You take pride in your business.
- You exceed customer expectations and get it right the first time.
- You encourage each other and keep positive attitudes.



## STRATEGY: "CLONING" YOUR BEST EMPLOYEES

*Have you ever had an employee that was so GREAT that you wished you could clone them?*

*One way to do that would be to ask them for a referral. There's a good chance that if they have a great work ethic, they'll recommend someone with the same motivation and skill set.*

*You could also train your new employees to be as good – or BETTER – than existing employees. That's why it's recommended that you have your new employees shadow your best employees. In essence, you want them to create other versions of themselves!*

- You are professional, but not uptight.
- Everybody knows their job and is ready to work together.
- You don't try to turn your employees into machines.
- You are truthful and always communicate with your employees.
- Your employees tell the truth – and you are ready to hear it.
- You reward your employees for a job well done.
- Everyone is kind and respectful to each other and to customers. Showing your employees respect will go a very long way in keeping a positive and enjoyable culture.



# WANT MORE HIRING RESOURCES?

*Here are a few additional blogs, articles, and podcasts to help you stay informed on hiring practices in the lawn care industry:*

## **Blogs and Articles:**

[How to Hire Your First Office Assistant](#)

[Build a Company Culture that Your Team and Clients Will Love](#)

[Top 12 Hiring Mistakes Most Lawn Care Companies Make](#)

[Lawn Care Uniforms: How to Pick the Best for Your Company](#)

[5 Steps to Compensate Your Best Employees \(and Make Them Want to Work for You\)](#)

## **Podcasts:**

[Gain Traction in Your Hiring and Team-Building](#)

[The #1 Reason Your Employees Leave You](#)

[How to Motivate Employees to Solve Your Problems](#)



**Hiring** new employees doesn't have to be a difficult process. The most important aspect is finding a good fit – someone who is respectful of you and the company you've built, knowledgeable and experienced, and willing to put in a hard day's worth of work.

This can sometimes be difficult to find but keep trying! There ARE good employees out there. New people move to the area, while others get frustrated at their current jobs. You'll need to show them why YOU are worth working for...and what you can provide them that no one else can provide.

Hiring is a two-way street. What you give out, you'll get in return.

