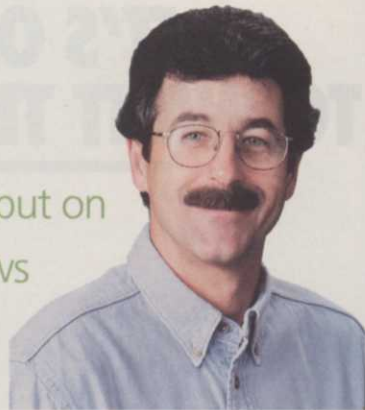


"I've found that the most efficient crews are put on the difficult projects and the less experienced crews are put on the easier projects." - JG



Rate employees by teams

Evaluating your crews' performance is not as simple as it sounds. It would seem that all you need to do is check the time spent on the job and compare it to the estimated hours for the job. Many companies do just that, but I always have to ask these questions:

- ▶ Are all of my estimates correct?
- ▶ What happens if the estimator has produced an incorrect bid?

Your crew may have done an outstanding job, thereby reducing the loss, but not matching the budgeted hours. I've found that the most efficient crews are put on the difficult projects, and the less experienced crews are put on the easier projects. In this case, evaluating crew performance based solely on the hours used on the project may not provide an accurate picture of their performance.

Rate work quality first

You have to evaluate job quality when you review job hours. I do this in monthly job inspections, with a written evaluation for maintenance projects and at the completion of any landscape construction projects. Quality may have been sacrificed to meet the estimated hours, so that's something to watch.

Job scheduling can affect job performance as well. Suppose your manager keeps switching employees on a crew and pulling the crew off the job to solve problems elsewhere. This would affect performance on a job.

Are you giving the crew the proper tools and equipment to do the job? How well your crew takes care of the equipment is very important. A crew could be completing the job under the budgeted hours, but

abusing the equipment, which can cost your company a great deal of money.

One detail, often overlooked in crew evaluation, is how they handle paperwork. If time sheets, job reports, delivery tickets, extra charges and back charges are not completed and submitted to accounting for collection, you could be losing money for the work you are doing. Paperwork that is filled out and turned in is one of the crew's important functions.

Jerry's evaluation targets

- ▶ Level of project difficulty
- ▶ Hours per project
- ▶ Job quality (monthly for maintenance; at completion for construction)
- ▶ Scheduling changes that might affect work
- ▶ Equipment/tool care
- ▶ Timely, efficient paperwork
- ▶ Participation in training
- ▶ Attitude, reliability, willingness to cooperate
- ▶ Interaction with clients

Finding a remedy

Many companies are quick to criticize performance, but do not provide proper training for their employees. Training can be simple, in-house programs to teach basic techniques and standards to keep uniformity in your work, regardless of which crew performed the work. Education and training can be tied to wage increases.

On-the-job characteristics such as attitude, reliability, adherence to company policy, willingness to cooperate with others and interaction with clients is very

important, but often overlooked in an employee or crew evaluation.

Using teams of evaluators

If several people rather than one person perform the evaluations, it will give a more accurate representation of a crew or an employee's performance. Another benefit is the crew or employee will not be able to direct negative feelings toward the evaluator if the evaluation is carried out by several people, rather than one person who

multiply this score by the dollar amount and you will have each person's bonus. Bonuses help employees understand how they can improve their performance to receive more money next time.

—The author is a partner in The Good

Earth Inc., Mt. Pleasant, SC, a green industry consultant and a member of Landscape Management's Editorial Advisory Board. He can be reached at 843/884-6114.

MULTIPLE EVALUATION SYSTEM	
	Total Score
Evaluator # 1	92
Evaluator # 2	87
Evaluator # 3	94
Total	273
Average score	91

was put in a difficult position.

Evaluations indicate the areas that need improvement and highlight the areas in which people excel. I suggest structuring each category on a point system from 1 to 10. Points are assigned based upon performance. Develop categories like the ones I've mentioned, as well as others which reflect things important to your operations.

Once all the evaluations are complete, total all the points and find the average score. Now you have a fair assessment of that crew or employee. Different categories can be developed for management and field employees.

Working for a bonus

This type of evaluation can also be used as a bonus system. First, establish an amount of money that you would like to provide as a bonus for everyone. Next, total all the points earned by everyone. Then, divide the total points earned into the bonus money. Each point will be worth a dollar value.

Finally, go to each individual's score and

THE ULTIMATE WHEELBARROW



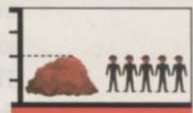
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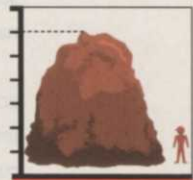
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5 MEN AND A WHEELBARROW

A typical 5-person crew can spread 8 cubic yards per hour.



1 MAN WITH THE EXPRESS BLOWER

One person, can blow 30 to 100 cubic yards per hour.

