

Need to know what insecticide would be best to use to control chinch bugs? Or you've stumbled across some mysterious yellow patches on one of your customer's lawns and want to know what's causing them. Perhaps you're looking for tried and true ways to retain your employees or improve their performance. Look no further than our Quick Reference Technical Guide, your guide to greater knowledge and better business.

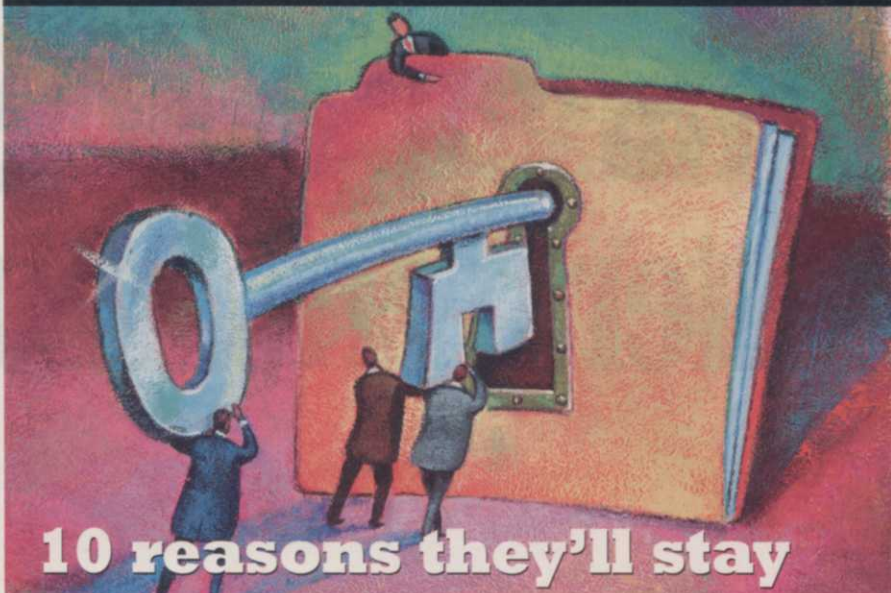
THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES WAS TAKEN FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES OF LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT.

Winning the retention game

How landscape managers keep their employees

Incentives/bonuses	67.4%
Uniforms	52.2%
Retirement savings plans	38.0%
Promotions	31.5%
Transportation	28.3%
Recognition programs	23.9%
Education reimbursement	21.7%
Profit-sharing plans	19.6%
Health care programs	9.8%

Managing your labor force



10 reasons they'll stay

Follow this plan to cut employee turnover at your operation:

- 1 Improve the candidate-to-job match as you build your team — no square pegs in round holes.
- 2 Place a higher priority on training. Use the start-up program to “set the hook” and start building positive thoughts and feelings.
- 3 Build in some “people magnets.” Let employees do what they do well. Communicate often. Give the staff credit consistently. Share the results of success. Get out of the office and be around your people. Put some contests and fun into the job.
- 4 Give people a reason to believe. Stop flying by the seat of your pants. If you're organized and set an example, people will want to follow you because they see strong management. Talk constantly about company values and beliefs to build a sense of pride. Brag about your staff in public and in your advertisements.
- 5 Recognize and treat people as individuals. Identify individual talents and potential while you respond to their individual needs.
- 6 React to each employee's performance every day. Look for something to reward and don't send mixed signals.
- 7 Be fair to everyone. Don't play favorites. Tell your people why you want them to do it your way.
- 8 Be honest 100% of the time. Remember: If you lie, you die.
- 9 Set a positive leadership example. Put a smile on your face before you go through the door each morning. Never let the staff see you down. Positives create positives; negatives create negatives.
- 10 Balance your concern for tasks and people evenly. Try to be someone your staff just likes to be around.

10 reasons why they'll leave

- 1 "This job isn't what you said it would be." Translation: You either failed to explain the job requirements, or you've had smoke blown in your face during a hiring interview. Under pressure to "fill the chairs," we try to see the best in people. If you hear this phrase, you've misread the job candidate or mislead yourself.
- 2 "I just can't do this job." Translation: More than likely, there has been a failure to provide adequate start-up training or the employee is simply bored by the work.
- 3 "All we do here is work." Translation: Typically, the manager has been unable or unwilling to control work hours. This happens frequently during a bad weather spring, when we fail to eliminate long days and/or Saturday work after promising we would in the hiring interview.
- 4 "Nobody here knows what the heck is going on." Translation: From the employee's view, your operation is disorganized and inconsistent.
- 5 "All we ever hear is what's wrong." Translation: When I hear this, I usually find a manager who is totally task-oriented. When the task goals aren't met, there can be only one reason for him or her — lazy workers. This may not be true, but that's the employee's view . . . and that's the point.
- 6 "You never say thank you." Translation: Employees in this operation probably get little recognition and few rewards. Managers who don't give credit to the team and don't share rewards will lose 100% of the time.
- 7 "I don't fit in here." Translation: The workplace climate isn't people friendly. It may work for you, but what is it like for your employees?
- 8 "You always promise but never deliver." Translation: Many managers promise an employee whatever they have to just to boost productivity, then fail to deliver. They are so stressed and beaten down they see no other way to get people to work hard than to "promise the world." This is a big mistake.
- 9 "You expect us to work while you 'goof off.'" Translation: Tired managers can develop a habit of showing up for the start of the day, then disappearing (at least they believe they've disappeared) to the golf course or other activity while the staff "delivers the goods." Whether you own the business or not, employees won't tolerate what they consider lazy leadership while being pushed to the limit themselves.
- 10 "It's just no fun working here." Translation: This is a typical "exit interview" comment from employees of "task-oriented" managers. To keep people, there must be a perceived balance between the manager's concern for people and tasks. When the employee doesn't sense the balance and feels that work is the only thing management thinks about, turnover rises.

Typical Performance Appraisal Sheet

Employee Name _____

Title _____

Instructions: Read over the general factors and rate each employee's performance on a scale of 0 to 10, 0 being the most unsatisfactory and 10 being the most satisfactory.

General Factors

Quality — accuracy, thoroughness and acceptability of work performed

Productivity — quality and efficiency of work produced in a specified period of time.

Job knowledge — practical/technical skills and information used on the job

Paperwork — proper timeliness, accuracy and legibility. Includes time etiquette.

Reliability — the extent to which a task employee can be relied upon regarding completion and followup.

Independence — the extent of work performed with little or no supervision.

Availability — the extent to which an employee is punctual, plus his/her overall attendance record. Includes overtime and/or weekend work.

Equipment — care, proper use, upkeep, service, safety, and appearance of equipment this employee uses.

Safety — the extent to which the employee adheres to company safety policies and is safety-conscious (i.e., wearing safety equipment, following designated procedures).

Adherence to policy — the extent to which an employee adheres to company policy, conducts him or herself, follows rules, and observes good housekeeping practices.

Customer service — willingness and demonstrated ability to cooperate, work, and communicate with co-workers, supervisors, subordinates, outside contacts, and customers. Includes the stability, courtesy, personal appearance and judgment demonstrated on the job.

Total point score (1 - 100) _____

Discussed with individual on _____

Employee's signature _____

Follow-up req./denied: Yes__ No__ On what date? ____

Evaluator's signature _____

Date _____

Evaluator's supervisor's signature _____

Date _____

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Top Five Reasons H2B Workers Quit

1. Housing is too expensive. Most H2B workers can only afford \$25 per week. The H2B housing should not be a direct company rental or it would fall under HUD standards.
2. Bad attitude from the foreman or supervisors. Use of foul language drives workers away.
3. No ride to and from work.
4. No evening recreation. These men are many miles from their families.
5. "Us" versus "them" atmosphere at work. They don't feel they are part of things.

Note: Check your local Labor Certification Office at the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment Training Administration for more information.