



5 WAYS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

WITHIN YOUR LANDSCAPE COMPANY

A landscaper wearing a grey hoodie, a dark jacket with reflective yellow-green stripes, a grey cap, and blue jeans is bent over, operating a blue and black planer. The planer is mounted on a log skid steer. The planer has a label that reads "KING KING CANADA" and "12-1/2\"/>

Implement proper systems and procedures to improve your landscaping and snow business.



INTRO

Landscaping is hard work. It's often times harder than it needs to be if the right processes aren't in place. Most landscape business owners or operators don't even realize when and where they can create streamlined workflows to cut wasted time and increase their productivity.

While the fix isn't always a "one size fits all", most processes can add precious minutes that will then lead to hours or days of potential billable hours down the line. It should go without saying that more billable hours typically mean more money in yours and your crew's pockets.

We check out how to make your landscape business more efficient through creating roadmaps, making the right purchases, implementing proper systems and procedures, understanding your capacity, and setting standards.

CREATE A *ROADMAP*

The ability to positively read and react to an unexpected issue or “hidden cost” can be a skill. Having to frequently use that skill can be an issue for you and your crew. It’s 9.5/10 times better to prepare rather than react, and that can be achieved by creating a roadmap for your business and every contract you take on.

Efficiency is non-existent when crew members are waiting around for a problem to resolve. Waiting is one of the biggest sources of waste in the landscape industry. In order to mitigate the potential damage of sending your crew onto a site blind, take the time to brief them with all the information.

This applies to any prep-work as well, like hiring a designer to develop a construction detail to work off of. The more knowledge your crew is equipped with, the sooner you can take steps in anticipation of a potential snag happening. Spend the time and money upfront so that those costs aren’t multiplied later down the line.

PURCHASE THE *RIGHT TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT*

Don’t wait for an obstacle for you to invest in proper tools and equipment for your business. Investing in the right tools and equipment can save time on each site it’s used for, compounding time to let you take on more work as your capacity opens up and as your resources allow.

The first step is to do an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of your business. What does your business specialize in, and is it delivered with quality and efficiency? Where do you lose the most time, and can you fix it with a purchase, rental, or lease? Is there a service your business can provide to bring in additional revenue, and what tools or equipment would you need to fulfill that contract?

From there, your company should be able to determine what the next step is for equipment purchases no matter the scale. A purchase can span from upgrading a tool kit, purchasing a faster functioning laptop, acquiring better handheld gas or electric equipment like edgers or trimmers, or taking the size up to a truck or trailer to transport: yourself, your crew, and the required equipment and tools.





DEVELOP PROPER SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

Take the time to develop and implement standard operating systems and procedures into your landscape business. Spending that extra half-hour to hour on the yard to prepare for the day or next day can save unnecessary trips to and from the yard or store. The more time you spend on the road, the less time you'll have to bill your clients.

Time is valuable, so you should develop procedures like checklists, counting inventory, systems to build more efficiency into your business and ensure team members have clear expectations for each task. A good exercise is to adopt a continuous improvement mindset. Sit down every Sunday night and re-write how to complete a routine task more efficiently. A great example of this could be something as simple as loading and fuelling equipment. How can you and your crew do that more efficiently in a step by step format?

UNDERSTAND YOUR BUSINESS' CAPACITY

Scaling up your business is always an exciting moment for every business owner. Making the move up generally means more additions to the team, new equipment, and more contracts to take on through additional services you can offer. But at what moment can you make those major decisions to take that next step for your business?

Just like in sports, the numbers don't lie. Utilize budgeting metrics like [throughput](#) to determine when and where you can create additions that will contribute to the overall efficiency of your landscaping business. LMN offers a series of budgeting tools to help you make informed decisions on increasing staff, hiring subcontractors, and renting or purchasing equipment or tools.

Landscaping business development legend, [Jeffrey Scott](#), takes a deeper dive with Landscape Disruptors host, Stan Genadek, as they review some critical benchmarks all landscape business owners should take into account as they look to grow efficiently. They discuss billable hours, efficiency goals, job costing, revenue per person hour, and throughput.



SET THE STANDARD

It's up to the business owner to dictate the flow of the business, not the crew members. It's important to communicate goals and standards so that crew members can meet the bar set, and continue to work at an efficient pace that contributes to the growth of the business. Establishing these standards ensures that crew members hold accountability, and mitigate lost time because they weren't aware of how long certain projects should take.

Try to set reasonable standards for the crews to follow. These are meant to keep crews on track, rather than used as metrics for punishment. If the standards aren't being met, maybe it's time to review training procedures, or reevaluate the goals and standards set for a more realistic target.

KEEP LEARNING

LMN offers a wide variety of training tools, content, and events for business owners and operators in both the green and snow industry. Keep an eye on LMN's upcoming events as there are Q&A periods where you can directly ask questions that matter to your business. The moment you stop learning is the moment you stop growing.

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