

Network News

Produced by:





**A monthly newsletter informing
and educating the LandOpt Nationwide Network**



Inside this issue:

Southern Scape Strengthens the Southeast Region	1
Professional Development Announcements for Training	1
Compensate per LandOpt Message from the President	2
Five Tips to Break the Funk Best HR Practices	2
Network Success	2
News with a New Look	2
Empower Your Team to Perform	3
Avoid Missed Expectations Professional Sales Leadership	3
Did You Know? Tidbits for Licensees	3
What LandOpt is to Me... Message from the Network	3
Reduced Cost Online Safety Training for LandOpt	4
Environmental Tips For the LandOpt Network	4
Social Media How To	4

Southern Scape Strengthens the Southeast Region as the LandOpt Network Continues to Grow

Southern Scape, LLC based in Huntsville has joined the LandOpt Network, becoming the third LandOpt Licensee in the Southeast region and strengthening the Network’s presence in that part of the country.

Primarily a landscape installation operation specializing in high-end residential work throughout Alabama and neighboring states, Southern Scape has more than 35 employees. Co-owners Greg Shaw and James Hagood intend to utilize the LandOpt Business Operating System to establish and develop a maintenance base with a more localized focus. Additionally, they have plans to open a second location in the future, further establishing the LandOpt footprint in that southern region. They quickly became interested in the maintenance concept when they discovered LandOpt in January at an industry trade show. The idea of recurring vs. reactive project work and the access to the many tools and ongoing coaching services provided by LandOpt drew their interest.

“The idea of bringing more structure to our business was definitely appealing,” noted Shaw when asked why he investigated LandOpt’s further. “In the past we have used consultants

who have had a singular expertise and ultimately provided very short-term advice. LandOpt was able to provide much needed structure in the form of defined business processes, along with a wealth of expertise in a variety of areas. Most importantly, they understood the green aspect of our business.”



Shaw also noted that Southern Scape employees are enthusiastic about the LandOpt affiliation as it will create uniform systems and processes that can be adopted and followed by everyone.

The growth of the LandOpt Network is an exciting time for everyone and reinforces the value that business owners receive within our system. “This is a well-established, successful company that will fit the Network perfectly. We look forward to working closely with Greg, James and their team, and introducing them to the LandOpt network of professional contractors,” noted Tim Smith.

LandOpt Professional Development Training and Webcasts for our Network

The following schedules are for the best in class LandOpt training for upcoming times in 2011.

Training:

- July 25 through 28—Transformation Training
- Aug. 8 through Aug. 10—General Manager Boot Camp
- Sept. 12 through Sept. 14—Con Ed

Webcasts: (Subject to change)

- June 23—“GMAC” Managing Customer Complaints
- July 7—Performance Appraisals
- July 21—2011 Halftime!

Network Success!

- Congratulations to PROCARE for their interview by Yard and Garden Magazine for an upcoming article.
- Congratulations to ProScope for a recent article in the Marion Star about how the company donated and planted trees for local schools.
- Congratulations to PROCARE Tree Service for some local news exposure as they participated in recent emergency storm cleanup efforts in the Battle Creek area
- LandOpt kicked off the Friday Account Manager webinars which have been well-received.
- LandOpt was recently featured in a digital [Charlotte Business News](#) publication!
- LandOpt was recently featured in a digital [Baltimore Business News](#) publication!

News with a New Look!

Beginning with the July 2011 issue, LandOpt's *Network News* will undergo a bit of a makeover. We plan to make changes to the layout and standard content in an effort to add more value to this important news vehicle.

We welcome your input as part of our makeover effort. If there are particular stories, features or other elements you'd like to see, please let us know. Send your thoughts and comments to :

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Compensate According to LandOpt Systems

A Message from Tim Smith, President/CEO



The retention of your team members is a vital part of your organization's success and must be regarded as a high priority by each manager. Fair compensation is key to maintaining key team members in the roles developed for each organization in the Network.

The LandOpt systems for compensating your team are measured by examining the Green Industry as a whole. Many factors come into play when determining roles and compensation and are never taken lightly. That information delivered to the Network, if followed appropriately, will help to ensure value in each team member. If managers select compensation packages for specific team members, based on individual perceived value the research of fair compensation structures is lost, replaced by temporary opinions (good or bad), which cannot be held accountable for the long-term.

Take the time to understand the roles and responsibilities data LandOpt has assembled and maintains. It's one of the many tools supplied that help to deliver the success we strive for in each company of the Nationwide Network.



Five Tips to Break the Funk

Best Human Resources Practices

By Mike Gaydos



We've all been there. An otherwise well-performing team member is in a slump. They may miss deadlines for the first time in their tenure with the organization, or maybe they just aren't performing at par.

For managers, engaging a team member in a conversation about their troubles might be tough. Maybe he or she doesn't want to discuss it. As is often the case in these situations, the manager is the one that doesn't wish to discuss the issue. They don't want to make it seem like a big deal or they believe the *funk* is temporary.

Truth is ignoring it is far from the best way to deal with it. The following five tips can help the top performer get out of their funk.

Recognize the Issue. This is the biggest hurdle. Approach the employee privately and ask if they see any issues with their work. This will gauge their level of recognition of the issue. Sometimes the question itself can lift a weight from the team member's shoulders. Sometimes it can lead to a defensive reaction. Be prepared for either. If the team member becomes defensive, talk about some recent lapses and compliment their previous work. This isn't a conversation with a problem employee. Give them the benefit of the doubt.

Get to the root cause of the Issue. Sometimes situations change that which we can't control. Maybe a parent has moved into elder care, or a situation with a child or spouse has popped up

recently. Even our best performers can become distracted by elements that we can't control. Managers should investigate and determine if the issue is within their ability to correct. An example may be if a recent work reorganization has left the person with changed duties or perhaps a different manager. Changes can be made to accommodate the team member if they are required.

Empathize with the team member. A team member might be privately going through a horrible personal situation. Nobody at work, even their manager, may know anything about it. The only indication of an issue is their drop in productivity. Empathize with the team member even if the situation isn't as serious as suspected. It's important to regard whatever may be impacting their performance.

Brainstorm solutions. For issues where the *funk* is due to a situation inside the organization, it's time to consider real solutions. It's vital to engage the team member and have them attempt to provide their own solutions. For some team members and situations that are beyond a manager's repair, time may be the only solution. Don't hesitate to provide ideas for solutions that the company can implement and assist the team member get through the personal issue.

Follow up. Timely follow up is absolutely necessary, no matter what the circumstances. Don't assume the problem is solved simply because performance improves.

Communication is the only way to ensure that matter is repaired or requires other options to address the ensuing issue.



Empower Your Team to Perform

Tips from the Director of Success

By David Gallagher



In recent weeks, I have discussed with managers and team members the unhappiness of their situations far too many times.

Not very long ago I posted an [article on chatter, written by Jeffery Gitomer](#), that discusses the importance of being a Leader and not just a boss. In his article, Gitomer calls out the need to coach and mentor your team to success, not just tell them what to do.

As a network we all know that we create sustainable businesses through the application of the LandOpt Business Operating System. That system is based on an environment of empowerment, accountability and candor. Three elements that are required for satisfaction and success.

If you're a manager, ask yourself, "Am I empowering my team to be accountable for their roles in an environment where they can provide and receive candid feedback?" Team members

should pose a similar question. "Am I empowered by my team leader to be accountable for my role in an environment where I can provide and receive candid feedback?" If the answer is "yes," then keep up the great work.



I am betting, however, there are too many "no's." If a manager answered *no*, do whatever it takes to get out of your team's way and let them do the job you hired them to perform. Team members should sit down with their leaders and share the lack of empowerment or accountability.

Managers, talk to other leaders, your coach or even your team to determine how to create a successful environment for leadership to thrive. Delegate the activities you are the weakest in executing and empower those around you.

Avoid Missed Expectations Through Accountability

Professional Sales Leadership

By Steven Bach



"Employee's DO NOT quit on their jobs, they quit on their managers." The statement was engraved in my mind throughout college and then reaffirmed throughout my career.

The statement has merit that I wholeheartedly believe in. It can be boiled down to one simple statement: **missed expectations**. As a manager, it's your responsibility to properly manage the expectations of your team. Handling expectations starts from the hiring process. We must set the record straight and explain what a specific role entails, and ensure the team member comprehends their accountability.

When managers are explaining role expectations in the hiring process they must accurately portray total compensation, including PTO, sick time and required work hours for the success of the organization. All of the "details" must be discussed and revealed, so the team member has all of the

facts to make informed decisions. Knowledge leads to empowerment and accountability.

Compensation is not the only expectation required to be managed. Be prepared to set the record straight regarding the work environment and your management style. The proper effective motivation and the right environment are as important as compensation, because it all relates to the retention of your team.

View your organization as a blank canvas for a future painting. If you carefully prepare all the needed elements, when you apply the paint to your vision, a confident and spectacular image will develop. You will see a direct and positive effect in your employee retention.



Did you know?

- [Bloomberg News](#) reports that home prices fell in more than three-fourths of U.S. cities in the first quarter as foreclosures that sell at cut-rate prices devalued real estate.
- [Green Industry Pros](#) reports the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with Kohler Courage Engines, has announced a voluntary recall of that product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell a recalled consumer product.
- [Landscape Online](#) reports the producer Price Index for finished goods rose 0.7 percent in March, seasonally adjusted. This advance followed a 1.6-percent increase in February and a 0.8-percent gain in January.
- [LandOpt released its new blog](#) recently. The easy to search compilation of news and information is designed to provide the Green Industry with leadership from LandOpt and the Nationwide Network. Trade publications, news outlets, prospective licensees and others will have access to this vital information.

What LandOpt is to Me...

"LandOpt is teaching the Green Industry a lot about growth. It's amazing how these guys partner with a licensee and help them build a stronger business. As an estimator I am glad to be learning about the sales process, because I really think that will help me in my role."

Jaison Van Horn—
Estimator, Eichenlaub, Inc.



LS Training Provides Reduced Cost Online Equipment Safety Training for LandOpt

LandOpt is pleased to provide a cost-effective option for ongoing employee safety training through LS Training – an online provider of equipment training for landscape and turf operations. In an effort to reduce training costs, but allow for necessary ongoing education at each contractor location, LandOpt has negotiated a discounted rate for LandOpt Network members. Currently, LS Training offers more than 20 different online modules that include Blower, Edger, Skid Steer, Landscape Tractor, Powered Trap Rake, MSDS, Personal Safety, Fertilizer Spreader, Dump Truck, and more! Each module is complete with video, self-scoring exams, and a field checklist for supervisors to review with employees. The system also provides value by creating an employee database of completed training, allowing each contractor to easily and seamlessly monitor training progress on an employee-by-employee basis to ensure that all basic safety and reporting requirements are met.

David Gallagher was instrumental in negotiating a favorable agreement for LandOpt Contractors.



“This was an area where LandOpt was not currently providing education, and we realized that there would be great benefit in bringing it to the Network at-large. Eager to form a relationship with LandOpt, Jay Murray at LS Training was more than receptive to the idea of providing a discount to our Network. What we have achieved is a cost-effective means to assist our Network in keeping all of their employees current and well-educated on equipment-related safety matters,” he noted.

Landscape Safety was started by Jay Murray, CLP, and a 23-year veteran of the landscape industry. After running a \$5m landscaping business with 60 employees, he changed careers and focused on filling a gap that always existed in his own landscape business by creating a modern, cost-effective training system. **To learn more about the LS Training System visit: www.landscapesafety.com.**

Or, contact Arden Urbano, VP of Sales:
1-877-482-2323 ext. 2,
arden@landscapesafety.com.

Environmental Tips Towards Sustainability!

- Establish a system of composting.
- Ensure all mowing is completed at the proper height with sharp blades.
- Recycle!
- Use hand tools when possible. Choose electric over gas.
- Minimize soil compaction with lighter equipment.
- Minimize soil and plant disturbance on construction sites.
- Develop long-term goals for vegetation on each site.
- Manage all equipment to minimize pollution.
- Commit to reducing the spread of invasive species through plant selection and site maintenance.
- Review site maintenance plans yearly.
- Use high gas-mileage vehicles or hybrids.

Social Media How To

LandOpt will soon be providing some how-to guidance on setting up basic social media networking sites. We recently put a call out to the Principals of the Network, so we could discover who is using these new and free venues of communications to build relationships with the public. Many of the companies are now using some version of social media and reaching out to the local press to promote their success. Our goal is to find continued ways to help our Network use social media to their benefit.

Business Transformation

LandOpt helps to transform your business by focusing on our four pillars of success:



Human Resource Management



Business Management



Operations Management



Sales and Marketing

LandOpt empowers a select group of highly qualified, regionally-based landscape contractors with a powerful portfolio of business systems to dramatically improve their growth, profitability and productivity.

The LandOpt team facilitates the transformation of landscape contractors by providing the best in class technology, along with proven business processes and systems.

LandOpt enables network licensees to efficiently utilize these systems to increase growth, profitability, and productivity in their

business.

Intensive coaching, followed with a continuing education curriculum ensures the success of the licensees. Training sessions pass along proven business practices in business management, financial planning, marketing & sales, operations and more. Coaching establishes a partnership between LandOpt and the licensee, which builds a growing successful business relationship.

The LandOpt network of licensees is a powerful resource in developing new relationships with peers in the Green Industry. The expanding network cultivates a growth of business experience and knowledge.

LandOpt continually measures and monitors the results gathered from each licensee location to evaluate the effectiveness of the LandOpt systems and ensure success.

Be proud to be a member of the Powered by LandOpt Network.



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