

**The
Automatic**



**Hiring
Machine**

Summary Guidebook

The landscape business owner's guidebook to find, recruit, pre-screen, pre-sort and select the Super Star employees while leaving the lazy, unreliable and unqualified people for your competitors.

Tony Bass

CO-AUTHOR OF
THE E-MYTH LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

Contents

The Automatic Hiring Machine - Playbook & Summary Action List.....	3
Step 1 - Avoid the 5 Biggest Hiring Mistakes!.....	3
Step 2 - You'll Need.....	4
Step 3 - Create Your Story	4
Step 4 - Record Your Story	4
Step 5 - Your Automated Message Delivery System	5
Step 6 - Attracting Prospective Employees to Your Message	5
Step 7 - Message Delivered...what's the next step?.....	7
Step 8 - The 10-Minute Interview That Reduces Your Employee Cost by \$2000 to \$6000 Per Person	8
Step 9 - Check References & Background	9
Step 10 - A Powerful Conversation.....	9
Step 11 - A Written Job Offer Wins Super Star Employees.....	10
Conclusion.....	10

The Automatic Hiring Machine - Playbook & Summary Action List

Congratulations on your purchase! You're about to enhance, streamline, automate & improve your company's employee recruiting & hiring system. We recommend that you study each & every portion of this summary plan BEFORE you begin to build your Automatic Hiring Machine (AHM).

The AHM combines powerful marketing techniques, online recruiting tools and a unique approach to sorting, sifting, screening and hiring employees for your company. Our clients who implement this system collect 2x to 10x the number of applicants, find higher quality applicants and typically LOWER their cost for employees along the way.

Finding employees is infinitely easier when you realize that your recruiting & hiring efforts are simply a marketing and purchasing function. To effectively market any product, service or worthwhile cause you need three things:

1. A target audience
2. A message
3. A delivery system

In order to purchase any product or service at the best possible value/price, you're going to:

1. Research your options
2. Evaluate the features (may include testing)
3. Examine the prices weighing benefits
4. Create a formal bid process between qualified suppliers (sometimes)
5. Make an educated and informed purchase

In our study of lawn & landscape contractors, very few combine effective marketing with a proven purchasing system within their hiring process. When you take this approach, your company recruiting & hiring system will become one of your most effective tools in business! You'll own your very own Automatic Hiring Machine. One word of caution: skipping or altering the order of the steps will change the results or (possibly) diminish the return on your investment of money and time.

Step 1 – Avoid the 5 Biggest Hiring Mistakes!

1. Advertising for EXPERIENCE .
2. Hiring FRIENDS and FAMILY MEMBERS without an ESCAPE PLAN .
3. Failure to build an AVATAR .
4. Failure to treat recruiting as a MARKETING and PURCHASING function.
5. Failure to hire ROBOTS or adopt AUTOMATION in your business.

You can gain access to commentary on these mistakes & best hiring practices. Just listen to the BONUS RECORDING interview with Roger Braswell. The link is at the end of this summary guidebook.

Step 2 – You’ll Need

1. Written Job Descriptions for each position you want to fill.
2. A determined pay range for the position(s).
3. A list of company benefits.
4. A completed one-question survey of your existing employees. Here’s the question: What do you like most about working here? OR (if you only have 1-5 employees) what are the TOP 3 things you like about working here? **Make sure you collect these answers BEFORE you go to step 3.**

Step 3 – Create Your Story

What would you say to the perfect employee prospect? Remember, you’re competing for employees. You don’t want to attract lazy or unreliable people to your company. This is a critically important step in creating your AHM. Failure to produce a well thought out script will prevent you from moving through step 4 with ease. We recommend a 5 to 10-minute long script. This translates to 750 to 1500 words.

Your job is to write the answer to the question above using the following format.

1. The top 5 to 10 reasons someone would enjoy working at your company.
2. The 2 to 5 reasons someone would NOT be qualified to work at your company.
3. What is the next step a highly qualified prospect should take to join your company?

Step 4 – Record Your Story

Automation frees you from the time-consuming process of endless phone calls, one-on-one interviews and long work hours. There’s a number of ways to record your story.

1. Audio recording
2. Video
3. Webinar type recording with slides and audio

A simple audio recording will work great. If you have more time and a larger budget to produce your recording, video may be your automation tool of choice.

Most smart phones and laptop computers have an audio record function. You can use this tool to record your message. However, you may have a challenge with sound quality. For best results, go to a professional recording studio with your written script. You get professional quality and your message will be easier on the ears of job seeking prospects looking for a quality-minded employer.

I have found that recording your message inside of parked car will give you a happy medium between the sound quality of sitting at your laptop and going to a professional recording studio. Your bedroom in your home may even offer a suitable place to record. Avoid rooms that have hard floors and echoes.

A tool that I (and many news reporters) use to produce good quality audio recordings is a Zoom Handy Recorder. It’s small enough to be carried in your briefcase or laptop bag, with the ability to hook up external microphones or integrate with video recordings.

You may choose to simply record your message over the phone. But please, if you do this, use a landline to avoid the crackles and skips often found during cell phone calls. (More on this in step 5.)

Step 5 – Your Automated Message Delivery System

In an employee recruiting environment, I like the idea of having a prospect call a specific telephone number to listen to my recorded message. There are several reasons I prefer an initial phone call.

1. Dialing a number requires a physical action.
2. Listening to a recording requires active listening.
3. The caller will not be judging me on my appearance.
4. The caller is less likely to be distracted by video backgrounds or video delivery system environments.
5. You can create a unique phone number using a tool like www.itelecenter.com. There's no limit to the length of the recording using this tool. You may use www.ringcentral.com or www.grasshopper.com but you will face a limit to the length of the recorded of just 5 minutes. Each of these tools allows you to use their call-in to record function. You will have to pay for these tools after a free-trial period, but they are inexpensive and you may find many other uses for these tools inside your company.
6. If your company has a PBX phone system or a VOIP phone system, you may be able to set up a specific extension in your company's existing phone system to place your recording.

If you choose to create and use a VIDEO message, avoid using YOUTUBE. Once you place your video on YOUTUBE, competitors could buy ads to run before your video or YOUTUBE will place competitors' ads right next to your video. I prefer to use www.wistia.com or www.vimeo.com for video hosting so I can actually control my videos and the environment in which they are displayed.

You can record a slide presentation using www.gotomeeting.com or www.gotowebinar.com. Camtasia by www.techsmith.com allows you to record your screen and audio through your PC or MAC. I've used both tools. Gotomeeting is easy to use. If you don't use this tool today in your business, shame on you!

Step 6 – Attracting Prospective Employees to Your Message

In order to get your message heard by as many prospects as possible, you've got to start with a very important realization: It's Not About YOU!

Go back to page one. Look at the first step of marketing. You must correctly identify your **target audience**. And...if you avoid mistake #1 of the top 5 hiring mistakes most employers make, you will avoid limiting your ads toward (only) "experienced" prospects.

We have identified 7 prospect profiles (also called AVATARS) your employment ads COULD be targeting. You may even discover your own uniquely targeted profiles in the future. But today, let's focus on these 7 proven targets.

1. Hate their job – ready for a significant career change

2. Internship – need job experience
3. Passionate about horticulture, landscaping or lawn care
4. Already in the lawn maintenance industry, not happy with their company
5. Already in construction, not happy with their company
6. Need to lose weight, get healthy, get fresh air
7. Spanish speaking prospect

Your job as an employee recruiter is to create a job ad that targets each one of these prospects for EACH job you have to fill. In other words, **to get the maximum number of employment prospects for a lawn maintenance crew leader, you should post the same position with 7 unique headlines and opening sentences that speak directly to the targeted prospect.** Here are seven headlines that speak directly to the employee prospect situations as described above.

1. Fresh Start – Working Outdoors
2. Horticulturist In Training Opportunity
3. Do YOU LOVE Horticulture?
4. Landscaping & Lawn Maintenance Opportunity
5. Landscape Construction Opportunity
6. Get Paid To Exercise Outdoors (in the landscape)
7. Oportunidad De Jardinería Y Mantenimiento Del Césped

When you advertise your openings to a wide target of prospects, you will greatly increase the number of prospects attracted to your job opening. I know that many of the people who respond will not be perfectly suited for your company or the job you are offering. That's why we MUST use automation to sift, sort and screen these prospects.

If you're really serious about getting the maximum number of employment prospects into your Automatic Hiring Machine, you're going to need all the tools available in your market to get the word out. In our online recording of the Automatic Hiring Machine Training Program, we featured a case study using a website called www.indeed.com. As of this recording, this website has tremendous market position and is working well to generate prospects.

To maximize your number of prospects, we recommend that you PAY for advertising to boost your rankings on the www.indeed.com site. This could change over time, but if you want maximum prospects, this works well today. But please, always use FREE job posting tools as well. Each tool has specific benefits and exposes your company to a unique demographic. Here's a list of 13 FREE tools to list your job openings:

1. Build your AVATARS (see step 6)
2. Post Internally – let your current employees recruit for you
3. Post on the front door – let customers & vendors recruit for you
4. Post on the street – recruit local traffic
5. Department of Labor – nationwide recruiting for FREE
6. 2 Year College – post internal to the school

7. 4 Year College – post internal to the school
8. Tech School - post internal to the school & always remember Job Corps locations nearby
9. Social Media – how many do you use? (this can get crazy these days)
10. Company Website – use your website forever
11. Company Trucks – a magnetic sign along with job applications onboard
12. Company Newsletter – your customer-facing print media is a FREE place to recruit
13. Craig’s List – make sure you have an automated screening process

Step 7 – Message Delivered...What’s the Next Step?

Let’s get back to your **message** for a moment. Step 3 in **creating your message** is to determine the “next step” a highly qualified person should take to be considered for your company. I’m going to share four very effective tools that allow you to invest the minimum amount of time and effort evaluating prospects (or reading resumes) while gaining access to the maximum number of prospects.

1. Get old fashioned on them by giving specific instructions requiring them to **FAX in their resume or completed/downloaded application** during your recorded audio, video or webinar presentation. Almost any small hurdle in the screening process quickly eliminates the tire kickers who will hit one magic button to send in their resume. If they don’t follow instructions, don’t waste your time on them. If you plan on an **in-house job fair** (option 4 below), use the email template function inside of www.indeed.com to notify every person who sent in a resume about your upcoming job fair date and time. This template allows you to send out batches of emails very quickly.
2. Require them to come to your office to complete **an in-person application**. But please, if you’re going to require them to come to your office, go ahead and ask them to bring in additional qualifying documents like: a motor vehicle report, driver’s license, social security card, diploma, copy of related job certification, examples of prior work, etc. Further, limit the in-person application to a certain time of the day or days of the week. For example, come in between 1 PM and 4 PM Monday through Thursday.
3. My favorite screening technique for 1 or 2 positions is to require the prospect to **call my office between 12 noon and 1 PM for a short 10-minute phone interview**. Failure to control your schedule will destroy your personal productivity. Limiting the amount of time you are available to talk to applicants will force you to move through the phone interviews quickly and stay on point. I recommend a 6-question scripted interview. More on this later.
4. If you need to hire a group of 3 to 20 employees, I strongly recommend the **in-house job fair hiring strategy**. Pick one day to dedicate your efforts to screening, interviewing and hiring employees. Invite prospective employees to your office for a group presentation, question & answer session and follow-up interviews. When you have a room with 20 people looking for a job and you are filling 3 positions, you have created an “auction process” within your company. If you need help executing this strategy, I recommend you purchase **50 Low Cost Ways**

Landscape Business Owners Find, Recruit, Hire & Retain Super Star Employees. Go here for information on the online, print & audio training course: <http://findemployees50.com/purchase>

The 4 techniques above help you quickly screen out the lazy and unreliable people and insulate you from having to review endless resumes. Using one or a combination of the 4 techniques above stops the inconsistent communications, spontaneous interviews, and wasted personal time and allows you to pre-screen your applicants.

Step 8 – The 10-Minute Interview That Reduces Your Employee Cost by \$2000 to \$6000 Per Person

Moving forward to a point in time where you are going to invest your personal time (or hiring manager's time) in interviews, you need to have a plan. You also need to understand that in order for you to find Super-Star employees, you're going to have to be willing to quickly identify and avoid the lazy, incompetent, crazy, unreliable, mean or unstable prospects.

Here are 6 power questions to quickly screen prospective employees:

1. Where did you see my help wanted ad (how did you find us)?
2. What's going on with you? Why are you interested in _____ (job name & applying here)?
3. What was the best job you've had and why?
4. What was the worst job you've had and why?
5. **What is the lowest pay you would accept if offered a job at our company?**
6. If offered a job, when would you be able to start?

If at anytime during the interview, you don't like the answer that you have just heard, you can end the interview. Just say, "Thanks for your interest. We wish you success in the future. This concludes our interview today. Bye bye." I want you to end time wasting once and for all.

Please, NEVER EVER skip question #5 in an initial interview. By using this question in every single interview, you'll lower your cost of people. Test what I tell you. You'll find the guy you were going to offer \$15/hr to start will be willing to accept \$13/hr saving you \$2 per hour.

I promise you'll discover that you can find people to work for lower wages than you pay today. Why do I think this? After reviewing the payroll records of over 300 lawn & landscape companies from across North America, rarely do I find even one single employee being paid minimum wage. Most company owners have already decided that to get good people, they must pay significantly more than minimum wage. They are wrong.

There are certain people entering the workforce who can do a great job for your company for a reasonable wage. I want you to find those people. In one case, I had a 20-year marine veteran accept my job offer for \$4/hr lower than his existing job just so he could reduce his drive time and weekly fuel bill getting to work. If you don't ask, how can you compare prices from one employee to another?

One final note on this subject: If you ask a prospective employee (who is currently employed elsewhere) question #6 (because you like them and can afford them) and they tell you they can start tomorrow, forget it. They will never show you the courtesy of a 1 to 2-week notice when they leave your company.

Step 9 – Check References & Background

I'm including a very short reminder for each and every employer. Hiring employees is the single biggest risk in business. There are unlimited hazards in business when you mix people, money, customers and your responsibility to the public. Check references!

I got my butt kicked by skipping this process of a simple background check when hiring an office manager. This lady came highly recommended. I hired her. Two years later I discovered she had stolen \$24,000 over an 8 month period. I ended up prosecuting her. She ended up in prison. It was her second offense. If I had only known how important a background check could be, I could have avoided the whole thing.

So...call the previous employers. Ask them one question: Would you re-hire this person? That says it all. If someone is going to be handling money, a criminal background check is essential. If they are going to be driving your trucks, a motor vehicle report with no history of traffic violations is the best evidence of a safe driver. Avoid the bad hires. Do your homework and skip hiring the lazy, incompetent and unreliable people.

Step 10 – A Powerful Conversation

One of my clients owns a company with 400 plus lawn and landscape employees. When he got access to my program: **50 Low Cost Ways Landscape Business Owners Find, Recruit, Hire & Retain Super Star Employees** (<http://findemployees50.com/purchase>), he told me this next strategy would dramatically improve his company employee hiring system. Here's the private conversation you should have with every future employee PRIOR to hiring them:

“John Doe, I am glad you have decided to accept this position here at ABC Landscaping, and I want to make you a couple of promises. First, I will pay you what we have agreed to, on time, each and every pay cycle. Next, I will provide the benefits associated with your continued employment as promised. Third, you will be more employable if you stay with me for a few years and learn this business, because I will invest money into your ongoing training. You will learn while working here! John, I also want your word that you will do a couple of things for me while working here. First, I want you to know that you can come to me in private and talk about anything work related. If you ever witness anything going on that makes you uncomfortable, please come see me or your supervisor and let us know about it right away. Can you do this John? (pause and look for agreement)”

“Next, I want you to strive every day to take care of our client's needs, protect the company's assets, and try to find new ways of doing things to improve this company. Can you promise me you will do this to the best of your ability? (Look and listen for agreement.) There is one more thing. Please give me your word that if, or when, you decide to leave my company, you will give me a two-week notice. This will give us a chance to find your replacement. John, I appreciate your word on this matter, because I have found that, in many cases, my ability to provide a positive job reference for former employees or my decision to consider rehiring

someone is based on how our relationship ends. As long as you do your job, continue to learn, and the company has work for everyone to do, you will have a job with me. Does this sound fair? (Stick out your hand) Let's shake on it. Thanks, John!"

This conversation sets the stage for RETENTION (or an announced exit) based on mutual respect and an appeal to a person's word. In our society, a person's word is associated with honor and integrity. Employee recruiting is all about having a plan and creating a mindset within your mind and your prospective employee's mind. Try this and see how effective it is.

Step 11 – A Written Job Offer Wins Super Star Employees

If you really want to win in the competition known as finding and hiring Super Star employees, follow my advice. Prepare a written job offer. You will position your company far above the competition in the eyes of prospective employees who are careful about whom they choose as an employer.

I encourage you to explain mandated government benefits as well as elected company benefits. Employers who provide the most comprehensive explanation of benefits can win access to Super Star employees when pay is on equal footing.

I'm not an attorney. I'm not going to provide any type of legal advice around this subject of hiring agreements, contracts or the like. I'm here to tell you that if you want BETTER employees, you're going to have to conduct your hiring practices as professionally as a Fortune 500 Company.

Company policy manuals, holiday pay, vacation pay, insurance, training and bonus incentives are tools that allow you to WIN in the recruiting and hiring game. If you need help with these subjects, we recommend ***The Business Building Secrets of a Multi-Million Dollar Landscape Contractor*** (just go to <http://www.tonybassconsulting.com> to get the digital, print & audio training package). Look under the "products" tab to purchase your copy.

Conclusion

Are you ready to put the Automatic Hiring Machine to work for your company? There's real work here my friend. Skipping steps, omitting details, ignoring technology and changes to this sequence will greatly alter your results. Handouts are found at www.superlawntoolkit.com/autohire-dl.

This program includes access to FOUR online training videos and ONE podcast. Each and every portion of this summary playbook is explained in greater detail and reinforced when you study the recordings. This summary playbook is not intended to be a replacement for these four online training videos.

Video Training #1

Automatic Hiring Machine Training Video- Part 1 - We lay out the system and share results from our ground breaking case study. <https://superlawntools.wistia.com/medias/ukupt77ydd>

Video Training #2

Automatic Hiring Machine Training Video - Part 2 - We share our data on why we believe the idea that we have a labor shortage is a hoax. Then we have a detailed interview with Doug Robbins, Case Study #1. <https://superlawnrucks.wistia.com/medias/abosolw540>

Video Training #3

In **Bonus training #1 - we interviewed Roger Braswell, founder of Compact Power**. In case you missed the news, Roger sold his company for \$265,000,000 to Home Depot for an all cash deal to close in the 3rd quarter of 2017. Roger shares insights on employee hiring, management & motivation. Roger comments on the education and training program we have provided to the lawn and landscape business owner. <https://superlawnrucks.wistia.com/medias/i0357lovej>

Video Training #4

Bonus training #2 - Talking Money With Employees lays out strategies for lowering your cost of employees, retaining your best ones, and how to cleverly teach your team that you're not making 50% net profit. <https://superlawnrucks.wistia.com/medias/zym1v3qtlc>

Podcast Bonus

Surprise bonus training #3 - the Podcast Review of the Wall Street Journal Article on the Fortune 500 Company, Unilever. This **provides a glimpse into future technologies** that will automate pre-testing of prospective employees, conduct initial interviews, and even grade the person being interviewed against other applicants for the same position. (You can ignore the short invite to join the AHM Training at the end since you have already purchased). <https://superlawnrucks.wistia.com/medias/g23r2ca295>

In order for you to build a successful Automatic Hiring Machine you'll need to follow the practices outlined here PLUS you'll need to update, enhance and modify your AHM from time to time. But please, like any science experiment, only make changes one at a time. This way you can monitor how one small change can impact your results.

The best way to gain access to ongoing training and product updates is to join the Super Lawn Toolkit Marketing & Management Membership Training Program. You get immediate access to hundreds of online and offline training products to get you and your team functioning at maximum potential. Learn more at www.superlawntoolkit.com. There's a long list of monthly benefits and you'll be part of a group of success-minded lawn and landscape professionals who are making progress towards worthwhile goals.

Copyright © 2017 Tony Bass

No portion of this manuscript, online recordings, images or processes may be reproduced by anyone without the written permission of the author. To contact Tony Bass, you may call 478-822-9706 or tony@tonybassconsulting.com.