5 WHY'S ROOT CAUSE WORKSHEET

From Growing Green Landscapes
Solve Operational Problems at the Root

Instructions

Use this worksheet to uncover the root cause of recurring issues in your landscaping operations. Ask "Why?" repeatedly (at least five times) until you reach a cause that can be fixed through systems or processes. This method helps ensure long-term solutions that align with our values: **Safety, Quality, Reliability.**

Example 1: Crew arrives late to job sites

- **Why 1?** They leave the yard late.

- **Why 2?** They are not ready to go at 7:00 AM.

- **Why 3?** They are loading tools at 6:55 AM.

- **Why 4?** Tools were not pre-loaded the night before.

- **Why 5?** No checklist or process is in place for tool prep.

- **Root Cause:** Lack of standardized pre-load checklist.

- **Fix:** Create and enforce an end-of-day tool prep checklist.

Example 2: Lawn stripes are uneven

- **Why 1?** The mower is not being driven in straight lines.

- **Why 2?** Operator does not follow a pattern.

- **Why 3?** No training on striping techniques.

- **Why 4?** Training program not implemented.

- **Why 5?** No system for onboarding new hires.

- **Root Cause:** Lack of formal training system for new hires.

- **Fix:** Implement striping technique training during onboarding.

Example 3: Truck is constantly dirty inside

- **Why 1?** Crew does not clean it after shift.

- **Why 2?** No one is assigned to do it.

- **Why 3?** It is not part of their end-of-day checklist.

- **Why 4?** Checklist does not include truck cleanliness.

- **Why 5?** Checklist has not been updated in a year.

- **Root Cause:** Outdated checklist missing truck cleaning duties.

- **Fix:** Update and enforce end-of-day checklist.

Example 4: Crew misses scheduled irrigation check

- **Why 1?** Crew leader did not have it on their calendar.

- **Why 2?** Office did not communicate it clearly.

- **Why 3?** No centralized scheduling system.

- **Why 4?** Still using paper job tickets.

- **Why 5?** No adoption of digital job tracking tools.

- **Root Cause:** Lack of centralized digital scheduling system.

- **Fix:** Implement digital scheduling and alerts.

Example 5: Crew uses wrong plant material on job site

- **Why 1?** They loaded the wrong items from the shop.

- **Why 2?** They were not clear on which plants were needed.

- **Why 3?** Labeling was confusing.

- **Why 4?** No photos or clear identifiers on plant tags.

- **Why 5?** No SOP for labeling inventory in the yard.

- **Root Cause:** No SOP for inventory labeling.

- **Fix:** Standardize plant labeling with images and color codes.

Your Turn: Solve a Problem

Problem Statement:

Why 1?

Why 2?

Why 3?

_____

Why 4?

_____

Why 5?

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Identified Root Cause:

_____

Action Steps to Fix It:

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