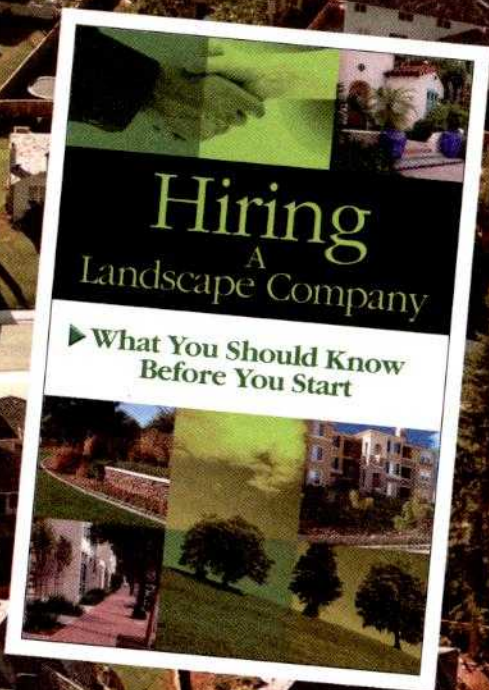


Hiring

A
Landscape Company

**What You Should Know
Before You Start**

**Interview Outline,
Worksheet
& Suggested Questions**



This document is intended as a companion guide to the *Hiring a Landscape Company – What You Should Know Before You Start* brochure. The purpose of this guide is to provide consumers with a helpful tool for planning and conducting interviews, as well as a selection of suggested interview topics and potential interview questions. (Use one worksheet per candidate.)

INTERVIEW PROCESS OUTLINE

► Pre-Interview Preparation

- Develop Project Outline
 - › Goals and Expectations
 - › Type of Project & Assistance Needed
 - Installation
 - Installation and/or Scheduled Maintenance
 - › Budget
 - Installation
 - Maintenance
 - › List of Local Regulations and Restrictions
- Generate a List of Potential Candidates
- Check with Better Business Bureau
- Check with California Contractors State License Board
- Review Portfolios/Resumes
- Check References

► The Interview

- Schedule Interview
- Review Project Outline
- Review Interview Topics
 - › Soil Evaluation
 - › Erosion Control
 - › Irrigation Systems
 - › Plant Selection
 - › Maintenance
 - › Fertilizer Management
 - › Pest Management and Weed Control
- Review/Examine Credentials
 - › Contractor's License
 - › Liability Insurance
 - › Workers' Compensation Insurance
 - › Maintenance Gardener Business License
 - › Employee Credentials
 - Experience/Education/Certification



PROJECT WORKSHEET

Candidate _____

Goals and Expectations

Type of Project and Assistance Needed

Installation _____

Maintenance _____

Budget

Installation Item

Cost

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
	TOTAL \$ _____

Maintenance Item

Cost

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
	TOTAL \$ _____

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - INSTALLATION

Soil Evaluation

- What type of soil test do you conduct?
- How do you incorporate soil test results into the landscape plan?

NOTES

Erosion Control

- What solutions do you recommend for existing erosion problems?
- Are potential erosion issues examined? If so, how?
- What preventative actions do you recommend to minimize or avoid erosion?

NOTES

Irrigation Systems

- Is the irrigation system divided into watering zones?
- Do you base the irrigation system design on plant needs? If so, how?
- Do you design an irrigation system to apply water uniformly within a watering zone?
- What climate resource information do you consider when planning an irrigation system?

- How is over-watering avoided?
- Do you use organic amendments to increase water-holding capacity of soil? If so, how?
- How will the irrigation system be maintained?
- Is water runoff eliminated? If so, how?

NOTES

Plant Selection

- Are plants that are site appropriate and suitable for the area recommended for your landscape design? If so, what factors do you consider?
- How do you select plants that contribute to the landscape design?
- Do you select plants that are pest-resistant? If so, how?
- Do you select plants that are non-invasive?

NOTES

Budget:

Will your installation activities fit

within my installation budget of: \$ _____ ?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - MAINTENANCE

General Maintenance

- What type of service program will be necessary to maintain my landscape?
- What type of maintenance will be required on a weekly, monthly, seasonal, and/or annual basis?
- What will be my responsibility, if any, in maintaining the landscape?
- What type of emergency maintenance plan do you make available for situations such as a broken irrigation line?

NOTES

Fertilizer Management

- What are your fertilizer application practices including timing, amounts, and location?
- How are your fertilizer practices tied to plant selection?
- Do you consider runoff potential when using nutrient products? If so, how?
- How do you determine if it is appropriate to use organic fertilizers?

NOTES

Pest Management & Weed Control

- Please describe the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach you utilize regarding pest management and weed control.
- Do you include a regular scouting or pest monitoring program as part of your IPM approach? If so, how often?
- Do you have a knowledge of local pests and weed problems? If so, what do you consider the top issues?
- How do you utilize biological agents for pest control?
- What type of physical controls do you use for weed suppression?
- Please explain how you minimize the effects of pesticide use on the environment.
- Do all your employees associated with pesticide use have current appropriate licenses? (See box below.)
- How and when do you provide clients with safety information and the potential environmental impact regarding the possible pesticides that may be used?

NOTES

Budget: Will required ongoing maintenance activities fit within my maintenance budget of \$ _____ per month?

Minimum Required Licensing and Certification

- › State Contractors License (Landscape Contractor License C-27)
 - For installation/remodeling projects valued at \$500+
- › Minimum of Qualified Applicator's Certificate Card for pesticide application regulated by the CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulation
- › Maintenance Gardener Business License provided by the CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulation
- › Registered with County Dept. of Agriculture

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