



Est. reading time: 2 minutes



## Bob Grover

President

Pacific Landscape Management, Hillsboro, Ore.

### 1. Tell me about your family and how you got started in the industry.

I am a lifelong Oregonian and chose this industry because of my love for the outdoors. I went to Oregon State University and graduated in horticulture. That's where I met my wife. We are true OSU Beaver believers as all three of our children have graduated there as well. I started my career working for a local landscape contractor, and then after 15 years, they sold out to a national company. After a few years, I started up my own company.

### 2. In your 35 years in the industry, what do you think has changed the most?

When I entered the industry, I was the first horticulture graduate working for what was at the time the most sophisticated, largest landscape contractor in Oregon. At that time, the industry was not that sophisticated. Over the years, the technical aspect of the business has developed dramatically. We now have 15 on staff with horticulture-related degrees.



Bob Grover told employees, "Pull all weeds taller than my son David." Photo: Bob Grover

### 3. What's your favorite tool to get the job done?

I love the camera and especially love the camera on our phones today. The ability to share information and tell stories with pictures has been tremendously effective. I tell my team, "When you see something you like or don't like, it's easier to snap a pic." A lot of times, I'll drive by something, maybe a plant combination I like, and I'll take a photo and show it to our clients and say, "This is a great solution!" We sell visuals in this business ... being able to use a picture rather than words is great.

#### 4. What is the weirdest thing you can remember seeing while you were out on the job?

The first thing that pops into my mind is once, while taking my son to school as a kindergartner, I drove by one of our job sites and saw a very tall weed — a big thistle, it really stood out. I stopped and took a picture of my son with his lunchbox standing next to the weed and posted it in our office saying, "Pull all the weeds taller than my son David." I should mention, it was a big weed with my previous company ... we don't have any weeds like that today! But I still do have that picture today, 24 years later (see photo at right).

#### 5. Seven years ago you had a near-death experience when you fell into a canyon. Now that it's several years in the rearview, what have you taken away from it?

Most people talking to me after my accident assume that it was because I was a thrill-seeker. I'm not a thrill-seeker — I just love the outdoors, was on a hike and fell. My comeback was "I'm not reckless; I'm clumsy." Hearing me say that repeatedly, my wife challenged me one day saying, "If the result's the same, does it matter?" She helped me understand that I need to be more careful. Throughout my life and business, I've learned that while striving for adventure and fulfillment, I need to be careful personally and professionally.

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Seth Jones, a graduate of Kansas University's William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, was voted best columnist in the industry in 2014 and 2018 by the Turf & Ornamental Communicators Association. Seth has more than 19 years of experience in the golf and turf industries and has traveled the world seeking great stories. He is editor-in-chief of *Landscape Management*, *Golfdom* and *Athletic Turf* magazines. Jones can be reached at [sjones@northcoastmedia.net](mailto:sjones@northcoastmedia.net).

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Great interview! Especially love the story about pulling weeds taller than his son! LOL