

Why a good schedule is important.

(excerpt from the Fast Food Managers Bible)

There is no part of your business that affects your employees more than the schedule you write every week.

At home it affects time together with loved ones, established family routines, childcare and so much more. In the workplace a well thought out schedule keeps staff happier, better prepared for business and will dramatically reduce turnover.

Lets cover the basics of scheduling for the needs of your business (and your employees):

- *When an employee is hired, you must note their availability and follow it. Never ever schedule contrary to it without asking first. A regular schedule allows people the same time off they can count on.*
- *Scheduling should be the first thing to be covered with a new hire. It's vitally important that they understand it, know when it gets posted and how to request days off.*
- *Have a request protocol that is fair and works. Staff should be aware of the deadline to put requests in for the following week. Make sure all requests are dated to break ties.*
- *Some holidays can be tough to staff. Give employees with children first priority to have Halloween off, mothers should have Mother's Day off, rotate the rest to be fair. And always remember birthdays.*
- *If there is a call off, try to lengthen shifts of employees already on duty first. Calling people at home and spoiling their day off to fill a vacancy should be your very last resort.*
- *When you absolutely need to bring someone in, ask, don't tell. And always, always suggest a trade that they might be interested in (a three day weekend, a Friday off, etc) to help sweeten the deal for coming in.*

Scheduling for the needs of your business is crucial. Staffing must meet demand consistently, so keep your sales history in mind as you make a schedule. An unprepared and short-staffed business will lose customers in the long term and employees in the short term.

In short, employees are your most important resource as a business owner. They are the face of your establishment and set the pace probably more than you do. Schedule them carefully with accuracy and compassion. Then you'll see them grow into an amazing and reliable team.