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## Free employee work schedule template

Many organizations schedule employees to work 24-7, 365 days per year to meet work demands and to provide a higher level of service than competitors. Effectively scheduling staff members to cover these shifts requires balancing expected demand, desired service levels, employee availability and costs. Since wages and benefits are often the largest line items within a department budget, the accuracy of scheduling has a direct impact to the bottom line. Many businesses rely on scheduling software, also called workforce management packages, to assist with this important task. Understand the business tasks that require staffing coverage such as answering inbound sales calls, responding to customer emails or entering fax orders. Recognize the business goals, metrics and customer service level expectations for each task. Determine the average time required to complete each task effectively. Identify any factors that can positively or negatively influence staff productivity. Determine who will complete the work (e.g. representatives, managers) and at what business locations. If there are multiple work locations, find out whether there are time zone differences. Consider your mix of part-time and full-time staff members. Become familiar with any company policies or legal regulations that could affect your scheduling decisions. Seek input from your human resources department. Sales. image by Egor Tkachenko from Fotolia.com Forecast business demand using data, reports and forecasting software. Analyze historical work volume for the same time periods. Consider future demand fluctuations for seasonality, product changes, advertising, market conditions, business growth or decline, and other relevant factors. Identify the total volume of work expected, broken down by time increments such as month, week, day and hour. By creating a very detailed, demand forecast you can more accurately forecast staffing needs. Forecast staffing exceptions, which are the hours that employees will be unavailable to complete work tasks. Exceptions include sick time, vacation time, breaks, meetings and training. Review historical information and create assumptions about future exception time. top of the chart image by Steve Johnson from Fotolia.com Create a staffing, "what if" model using workforce management (WFM) software or Microsoft Excel. Inputs should include tasks, productivity, expected workload and exception forecasts. Outputs will include the projected customer service levels, staffing and shift designs. Test different staffing models. Finalize the staffing/demand model, and then create a plan to cover the required shifts. Schedule both front line employees and management personnel. Many businesses allow employees with the most seniority and the best job performance to choose their desired shifts. Continually monitor and adjust schedules, based on changing business needs. Tips Many employers offer incentives for employees who work the less desirable shifts, paid within the hourly wage or as a bonus. Since work volume fluctuates, it is common to schedule enough employees to handle the busiest or peak hours within a particular shift, then use less busy times for training or breaks. Warnings Although constantly changing shifts and schedules may align with your business needs, too many changes can negatively affect employee morale. Most employees prefer consistent schedules. Keeping your employees on track can be a tricky business, especially if they have multiple tasks to juggle. Scheduling tasks ahead of time, however, ensures that employees are never blindsided by sudden due dates and that the workload is split evenly across your team. There are several ways in which to schedule tasks, depending on the nature of your business and your personal preferences. Split your important tasks into daily, weekly and monthly categories. Assign one day each week to cover weekly tasks and one day each month for the monthly tasks. This breaks up something like store maintenance, for example, while ensuring deep cleaning tasks are still accomplished. Give each of your employees a daily tasks checklist. This list should include everything the employee is expected to do that day. Assignments may include things like cleaning the store, resetting visual displays or regular maintenance tasks. If desired, allow employees to split these tasks between themselves however they see fit. Work with managers or shift leaders to determine a realistic task workload for each employee. It is important to keep employees busy without overwhelming them, and direct managers will have better input as to what that will entail. Place the most important tasks near the front of the list. Accept that employees may not always complete the tasks you schedule. With that in mind, make sure that they start with the things that absolutely have to be done. Offer draft task lists to employees and ask for feedback on whether they feel the schedule is realistic and fair. This is an excellent way to get your staff involved in important decision-making processes. Perform regular "check-ups" with employees to ensure that tasks are being completed. You should also speak with employees to understand whether they are familiar with the tasks you require them to complete. This is important as assignments and expectations can often be lost in translation as they are relayed through several layers of management. Tips While a simple printed checklist is often enough for small businesses, you may wish to invest in task/productivity-specific software if you are dealing with a large workforce. This article is part of a larger series on Employee Scheduling. With free employee scheduling software, you get web-based and mobile options that you can use to create, manage, and publish staff schedules. Aside from helping you keep costs down, these free solutions are designed to streamline and digitize scheduling processes, so you no longer have to maintain and print spreadsheets that contain your employees' work shifts. Most employee scheduling solutions offer time tracking, leave management, team messaging, shift swapping, and an online schedule builder. Some even provide artificial intelligence (AI) powered auto-scheduling tools and mobile apps that allow employees to access the software from anywhere—provided internet connection is available. How We Evaluated the Best Free Employee Scheduling Software We compared several reputable providers that offer free software for creating and managing employee work schedules. We looked for essential features like overtime planning, shift swapping, time tracking, and reporting tools. Then, we rated each based on the following criteria: Scheduling software functionalities Aside from looking at whether the provider has transparent pricing for its paid plans, we checked if its scheduling solution can be accessed or purchased separately from the provider's other software products. The best scheduling software includes at least basic tools, such as shift swapping, overtime, break, and paid time-off planning. Plus, having access to team messaging, multi-location scheduling, mobile apps, and a self-service portal are also ideal. Geofencing, geolocation tracking, and multiple clock-in/out options (such as fingerprint, badge, and pin code) are just some of the essential functionalities that we checked for. We also verified whether or not the software has the capability to set up approvals and limit early clock-ins. Having an employee scheduling platform that's intuitive and easy to learn is a must. We looked at whether the provider offers live phone support, training, quick system implementations, and integration options with payroll, point-of-sale (POS), and timekeeping systems. We checked reviews that actual users left on third-party sites like G2 and Capterra. \*Percentages of overall score Based on our evaluation criteria, we found Homebase to be the best option for small businesses. Its free option lets you create schedules and track time for unlimited employees, provided they work in a single location. Unlike other scheduling software, you also get hiring and team messaging tools, including POS and payroll software integration options—all at no cost. Best Overall Free Employee Scheduling Software for Small Businesses The free plan includes employee scheduling, attendance monitoring, online time clocks, job postings, and applicant tracking User-friendly interface Can handle unlimited employees Free plan limited to one location only Geolocation tracking, geofencing, PTO accrual tracking, and overtime alerts are included in paid plans Software lags from time to time RATING CRITERIA Pricing 0.50 OUT OF 5 Scheduling Software Functionality 4.88 OUT OF 5 Popularity 4.00 OUT OF 5 Reporting 5.00 OUT OF 5 Reporting 5.00 OUT OF 5 Ease of Use 4.75 OUT OF 5 What's great about Homebase is that its free plan is feature-rich. Apart from scheduling and time tracking tools, you can use its platform to post jobs, track applicants, and communicate with team members. This is what makes Homebase a good option for small businesses, including retail stores and restaurants, as it provides basic recruiting features that other scheduling software don't offer—all at no cost. You can even integrate POS and payroll solutions to its platforms. For small businesses that want to streamline employee pay processing, this is helpful as it prevents manual uploading of time data for payroll runs. However, you have the option to download Homebase's timesheets as CSV files, in case you're using a payroll service that will upload this data. While Homebase doesn't have an employee limit, its free option covers only one location. So, if you have a multi-location business, you need to upgrade to one of Homebase's paid plans. Note that its monthly fee (starts at \$19.95) is charged on a per-location basis. Plus, you have to pay extra for premium services, such as job post boosts and expert advice from its "HR Pro" team. Free plan: Covers one location and unlimited employees; comes with staff scheduling, time tracking, hiring tools, basic reports, PTO requests, payroll and POS integrations, mobile apps (for iOS and Android), and online time clock options (for smartphones, tablets, computer, and POS devices) Paid plans: Three plans (Essentials, Plus, and All-in-One); fees range from \$19.95 to \$99.95 per location monthly; premium tiers include budgeting and labor cost controls, PTO policies and accruals tracking, and onboarding tools Add-on services: Job posting boosts (starts at \$79 per job post) and access to HR advisers and resources (\$99 per month for non-All-in-One plan subscribers) Online schedule builder with drag-and-drop functionality Open shifts, shift swaps, and shift covers Auto-scheduling, shift preferences and availability, and schedule templates PTO requests, policies, and accrual tracking (PTO requests included in free plan) Automatic standard breaks and overtime settings for your state Employee time tracking with digital time sheets Limits early time-ins (available in paid plans) Time clock apps for tablets, desktop computers, smartphones, and POS devices Pin code-based time-ins/outs Verified time entries via geofencing and geolocation tracking (available in paid plans) Health screening questions for employees who are clocking in Offline mode (in case Wi-Fi is down, Homebase will record the time-ins/outs and then sync these later to the virtual clock once the internet connection is restored) Applicant tracking, applicant screener questions, and job postings to top job boards New hire onboarding, electronic signatures, and document storage (available in premium tiers) Access to HR advisers and an HR resource library (available in premium tiers) Built-in messenger for sending group/individual messages POS systems: Square, Clover, Vend, Toast, Shopify, Revel Systems, and Lightspeed Payroll solutions: Paychex, Rippling, ADP, Gusto, QuickBooks, and Square Payroll Job boards: Indeed, Glassdoor, and ZipRecruiter Other business apps: Restaurant365, Shopventory, CtuIt Software, and BevSpot Mom-and-Pop Restaurants That Need Simple Scheduling and Time Clocking Solutions User-friendly interface Has all the basic scheduling and time tracking tools small restaurants need Offers a 14-day free trial for paid plans Free plan includes only one location and 10 employees Schedule templates, POS and payroll integrations, and shift data exports are available in paid plans Occasional software glitches RATING CRITERIA Pricing 0.50 OUT OF 5 Scheduling Software Functionality 4.88 OUT OF 5 Popularity 4.00 OUT OF 5 Reporting 4.25 OUT OF 5 Security 3.25 OUT OF 5 Ease of Use 4.88 OUT OF 5 7shifts offers a cloud-based platform to help you efficiently manage staff schedules and track time. Designed specifically for businesses in the fast food and restaurant industries, it has robust scheduling and communication tools that both employees and managers can use even while on the go. However, for its free "Comp" plan, you are granted access only to its simple scheduling and time clocking solutions. This includes staff scheduling notifications, shift trading, PTO requests, basic reporting, staff availability tools, and mobile app access. It is also limited to one location and 10 employees. You have to upgrade to a paid plan if you require multi-location scheduling and additional user seats. The paid plans also come with additional features such as advanced reporting, payroll and POS integrations, overtime and break alerts, and employee clock ins/outs through the mobile apps (iOS and Android). In addition, you have to pay extra if you want account setup assistance, sales data import, a monthly operations overview report, and task management. "Comp" plan: Free; covers one location and 10 employees; comes with basic scheduling and time tracking tools Paid plans: Four options (Appetizer, Entree, The Works, and Gourmet) with monthly fees that start at \$19.99 for 20 up to unlimited employees Add-ons: Account setup (\$150 one-time fee); sales data import (\$100 one-time fee); task management (\$12.99 per location, per month), operations overview (\$6.00 per location, per month) to help you track and compare your multiple business locations' sales, labor, and employee engagement data Online schedule builder with drag-and-drop functionality Staff availability management Schedule templates, shift swaps, and notifications AI-powered auto-scheduling tool (included in highest tier) Employee time tracking with digital time sheets Limits early time-ins (included in highest tier) Time clock apps for tablets and smartphones Pin code-based time-ins/outs Mobile clock in/out with facial recognition time-in verifications (included in highest tier) Health screening questions for employees who are clocking in Custom health screening questions (included in highest tier) Individual and group messaging POS systems: Clover, Brink POS, Bypass, CAKE, Heartland Dinerware, Lightspeed, POSitouch, Revel Systems, Aloha, Square, Toast, TouchBistro, Squirrel Systems, SilverWare POS, and Micros (Micros 3700 and Micros Simphony) Payroll solutions: Gusto, Paychex, Paycor, Paycom, QuickBooks Payroll, Paylocity, Toast Payroll, Ultiprio, Ceridian Powerpay, Wagepoint, and ADP (ADP Run and ADP Workforce Now) Free plan only covers one department, one location, and up to 10 employees Lacks live phone support Limited payroll integration options RATING CRITERIA Pricing 0.50 OUT OF 5 Scheduling Software Functionality 4.88 OUT OF 5 Popularity 5.00 OUT OF 5 Reporting 5.00 OUT OF 5 Security 2.88 OUT OF 5 Ease of Use 4.00 OUT OF 5 With SocialSchedules (formerly OpenSimSim), you get a cloud-based employee scheduling software that's position-based. This means that you have to indicate the position each employee has before you can create and assign shifts. However, its free plan has limited features. You can create schedules and track employee time for up to 10 staff—provided they belong in the same department and work in a single location. While you get free access to PTO management, time sheets, in-app messaging, and a tablet time clock, you have to subscribe to one of SocialSchedules' paid plans if you want premium features like shift confirmations, multi-location scheduling, POS integrations, advanced reporting, and a mobile time clock). Basic: Free; includes one location, one department, up to 10 employees, and cloud storage of 28 days Starter: \$15.99 per location, per month; includes two departments per location, unlimited employees, and cloud storage of seven years Premium: \$39.99 per location, per month; includes five departments per location, unlimited employees, and cloud storage of seven years Enterprise: Custom priced; includes unlimited departments and employees plus cloud storage of seven years Setup assistance: Ruby package (\$149 per location) includes system setup, employee data import, creation of company positions, and manual format and import of up to 12-weeks historical sales data; Sapphire package (\$299 per location) has additional features like training sessions, configuration of compliance rules, and integration to support POS/payroll solutions Online schedule builder with drag-and-drop functionality Schedule planning by position Multi-location scheduling and shift confirmations (available in paid plans) Staff availability, schedule templates, and PTO management Shift swaps, open shifts, and schedule templates Create shifts for off-site address and remote staffs Employee time tracking with digital time sheets Limits early time-ins (available in higher tiers) Time clock apps for tablets and smartphones Clock-in and out disclaimers (available in higher tiers) Mobile clock in/out with geofencing and facial recognition time-in verifications (available in higher tiers) Offline mode for tablet time clock In-app messaging (private and group messages) with unlimited chat history POS systems: Square POS, Heartland Restaurant POS, Future POS, Restaurant Manager, Harbortouch, Heartland Retail POS, and POSitouch Payroll solutions: ADP Workforce Now, Coastal Payroll, Heartland Payroll, and Payroll Systems Alternative Free Employee Scheduling Software The three free employee scheduling software we recommended may provide you with all the essential tools you need to create and manage staff shifts with ease. However, if you're looking for an online tool that schedules employees based on projects and clients, then you may want to consider Tick. Tick is ideal for companies that do project-based work with multiple clients. It has time tracking capabilities that allow employees to clock in and out of tasks related to their assigned projects. It also comes with project budget tracking, timers, powerful reporting tools, and mobile apps (for iOS and Android). Similar to the Homebase and the other employee scheduling software in this guide, Tick has a free plan that includes unlimited users and a single project limit. If you need to plan for more than one project, you have to upgrade to a paid subscription (fees start at \$19 per month). Visit Tick Bottom Line Employee scheduling software helps you create and provide work schedules for your staff, ensuring that you're well equipped during your business' peak hours. Free cloud-based scheduling solutions often have communication and messaging tools to let employees swap work shifts and stay in touch. When determining which tool is right for you, you have to consider the size of your business, the number of employees, and any other factors that affect your scheduling needs. free weekly employee work schedule template. free weekly employee work schedule template excel. free monthly employee work schedule template. free monthly employee work schedule template excel. free printable employee work schedule template. free weekly employee work schedule template printable. downloadable free weekly employee work schedule template. downloadable printable free weekly employee work schedule template