

Planning to Schedule Workers: A Major Advantage of Housekeeper Team Staffing



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Conventional Methods of Worker Scheduling

Not many hotels or hospitals close on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. **Worker scheduling** would be greatly simplified if such were the case. Everyone would have weekends and holidays off, and when the doors of the department were closed, workers and managers alike could relax, knowing that nothing was happening at the office.

In hotels, hospitals, restaurants, and other seven-day operations, however, worker scheduling is a major task that must be performed with absolute regularity. Not only must the manager and supervisor devote time and forethought to the task of scheduling, but they must also take into account the needs of people whom they schedule. For example, some workers may not be able to work on Tuesdays and others want weekends off; family demands and illness must also be recognized and accommodated. Add to these concerns the problem of fluctuating occupancy, which has the greatest effect on housekeeper scheduling, and the manager has a full-time task that may not allow time for other less repetitive but more creative tasks.

The manager who schedules a group of individual workers on a weekly basis and who must adjust schedules on a daily basis may well earn the label "tied down." In order to improve this routine of scheduling and in so doing greatly reduce the time that management has to spend performing these tasks, you should try the team system of organization and scheduling.

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After studying the chapter, students should be able to:

1. Describe the use of conventional individual worker scheduling, and list its negative aspects.
2. Describe the use of team scheduling and its positive aspects.
3. Construct a standing rotational schedule for a housekeeping department, given the necessary information.
4. Construct a tight schedule, given the necessary information.
5. Develop a reasoned argument to persuade a union to adopt a team-based standing rotational schedule system.

A Word about Team Staffing

The **team system of organization** presented in Chapter 2 has many advantages. A principal advantage to the manager is in being able to schedule a group of people as though it were one entity. It is true that not every person in the department can be handled in such a manner, but the majority of employees in a housekeeping department can be grouped for scheduling purposes. Another advantage of the team system of organization is that cooperation and workers' morale will be higher when they are part of a small unit than when they perform as individuals in a large group of people. A worker who is a member of a seven-person team is much more likely to relate to team performance where the impact of a personal contribution can be seen than to a large organization where he or she is but one of many.

The system of **team scheduling** and **staffing** also embraces the idea that the team will work together and will regularly be off together. Having assigned teams to work in specific areas of the hotel (red team in the red division, yellow team in the yellow division, and so on), the teams become responsible for the entire cleaning function in their areas. The team—which has a supervisor (senior GRA) in charge, several guestroom attendants (GRAs) who clean guestrooms, and a section housekeeping aide who assists and also cleans other areas of the division such as corridors, stairwells, and elevators—becomes totally responsible for the entire division of the hotel. Cleaning performance within the division becomes a primary responsibility of the entire team under the supervisor, and performance is measured on a team basis rather than an individual basis.

If the premise that each individual worker wants to be a part of a worthwhile operation is true, team spirit will cause the entire group to excel. There will always be a few above-average GRAs who excel in room cleaning and take personal pride in their individual work; however, in the eyes of the guest, the reputation of the best housekeeper will never be better than the reputation of

the poorest GRAs in the entire group. GRAs, once they understand that their individual reputations are judged by the performance of the poorest in the team, will become more willing to help the poorer performers to improve. It should not be surprising, therefore, to find many small disciplinary problems such as absenteeism and tardiness resolved at the team level, because to be absent or late could have a negative effect on the team's reputation.

Promoting Teamwork

Even though the entire department is one team, and teamwork must be fostered at every turn, promoting teamwork within each individual team requires special effort. Susan C. Bakos¹ offers the following observation:

Most people, management and employees alike, pay lip service to the teamwork concept. "Teamwork" looks good in company slogans and fits nicely into speeches. But the word usually means getting someone else to cooperate with you. Unfortunately, everyone on the "team" feels the same way!

Individuals work for the achievement of personal goals; promotions, raises, benefits, and recognition. Today's economy has made competition for these goals more fierce, with the obvious result; workers are even less willing to be team players than ever before. And managers often contribute to this situation by espousing "teamwork" yet rewarding individual performance.

Bakos continues by saying that managers who follow a teamwork approach should reward cooperation, and suggests a **Manager's Teamwork Checklist**, which includes the following:

- Rewarding teamwork through (team) praise, choice assignments, raises, and promotions, just as we would reward individual performance
- Including teamwork as a part of performance appraisals
- Rotating special assignments, allowing everyone an opportunity to shine as an individual occasionally

- Considering team ideas as well as individual ideas
- Sharing information, decision making, *and* credit for jobs well done
- Setting an example by cooperating with others

Bakos concludes by indicating that such a Teamwork Checklist helps make competitive individuals part of a goal-oriented group and helps individuals put self-interest aside and make company goals first priority.

Teamwork and Swing Teams

Swing (or **relief**) **teams**, although not assigned to a regular division of the hotel, are as accountable as regular teams for performance and for the condition of jointly used equipment on the days they are scheduled to work in a given division. This helps resolve problems that come up. For example, GRAs on occasion complain about the condition of “their” section after returning from scheduled days off, or about the condition of “their” maid’s cart, vacuum cleaner, or other equipment. Such complaints are often resolved when the regular GRA knows exactly who will be cleaning in the section when the regular team is off. Problems are much easier to talk out when the same workers face each other and

are held accountable for the condition of jointly used equipment.

As another example, let’s consider the regular GRA on the red team who works in section 1 five days each week. When the red team is off, swing team 1 works in the red division, and Jane from that swing team regularly works in Mary’s section. On a different day, swing team 1 relieves the yellow team, and Mary and Jane both work in the hotel. Both of them, as well as their supervisor, thus have the opportunity to talk about section 1 and to discuss and resolve any problems. Also, when plaudits are offered for the condition of section 1, the red team and swing team 1 receive equal praise.

Other advantages of team staffing and scheduling will be discussed later in the text. Of primary concern at this time is the scheduling of the staff for work. You can see that scheduling four regular teams, two swing teams, and the laundry team as a group is simpler than scheduling 49 individual workers. In our model hotel, team scheduling will take care of the scheduling of 49 workers’ positions. Twelve workers’ positions, however, will still require individual scheduling.

Standing Rotational Scheduling and Tight Scheduling (Two Parts of the Total System)

There are two major tasks that must be accomplished in order for the following complete scheduling system to work. One is the task of constructing a system for **standing rotational scheduling**. (The word “standing” is used to denote a continuous system, and the word “rotational” to denote the cyclical nature of the system that provides for two regular days off for people each week and for staff to cover a full seven-day workweek at 100 percent occupancy.) The other task is that of providing **tight scheduling**, which is a modification of the rotational system to account for reduced occupancy. This will be accomplished by assigning extra days off when occupancy is low. The tight schedule is actually a daily modification of the standing rotational schedule based on occupancy.

In new operations, these two systems are designed before opening and are then easily implemented on a given start date. In ongoing operations, these systems may be used, but they require a thorough briefing of staff and an understanding by employees before they are implemented. Usually several weeks must pass after training employees on the scheduling system so that the one-time shock of shifting from one system to another can be accommodated. Once the system is designed and employees are properly prepared, the standing rotational system is implemented on a given start date, which usually falls on the first day of the property workweek.

Change Agents

David Frank

PRESIDENT
KNOWLEDGE WORX

David Frank is known as “the high-impact speaker who motivates.” Every year he presents more than 100 seminars specifically designed for manufacturers and distributors. He is a nationally recognized authority with over 25 years of experience in distribution, manufacturing, motivation, leadership, facility management, indoor air quality, and numerous other areas. He is the president of Knowledge Worx, a consulting and training firm dedicated to developing leaders at all levels of the sanitary supply industry. A visionary and leader, he has worked with the foremost cleaning organizations, manufacturers, and distributors, gathering experience with all levels of the industry.

Frank is an active member of the International Sanitary Supply Association (ISSA) and has served on Indoor Air Quality committees for the Carpet and Rug Institute and Underwriters Laboratories. During his tenure on these committees, he has helped to establish standards for healthy building designs, cleaning practices, and environmental remediation.

Standing Rotational System

Using the model hotel, assume the following work situation:

1. The hotel workweek has been established as beginning on Saturdays and ending on Fridays.
2. Workers may work no more than five days in any workweek without drawing overtime pay.
3. Days off will be consecutive unless the employee can be shown an advantage for having split days off.
4. A condition of employment will be that all team employees must be willing to work their share of week-ends. (This can be a condition of employment, provided it is specified at the time of employment.)

The Work Calendar

The **work calendar** is divided into seven distinct workweeks. In each week, teams (or individual employees) will be assigned two regular days off. Each following week, the days that are assigned off will rotate forward one day. For example, if the red team is scheduled to be off on Friday and Saturday of workweek 1, then it will be off Saturday and Sunday of workweek 2, and Sunday and Monday of workweek 3. This form of rotation (off days moving forward) continues through the seventh workweek. The eighth workweek is a repetition of the first workweek, creating a cycle of workweek schedules that repeats every seventh week. Figure 3.1 is an illustration of this system.

Note the seven workweeks, with each day of the week indicated (workweeks are separated by a vertical line). Note also the horizontal bar under the regularly assigned days that the worker is scheduled off. As the weeks progress, the bar moves to the next succeeding

days until the days off are Friday and Saturday. Here the days off split to the opposite ends of the week. Although days off are split in a particular week, each of these split days joins the two adjacent days off in the prior week or the succeeding week, causing the worker to have three days off in a row. This will happen twice in seven weeks. Note that there are never more or fewer than two days off in any workweek, even though in most cases the worker is working six days straight. Now that we have explained the cyclical method of days off, we can construct workweek 1.

Construction of Workweek 1

First, let us look at Figure 3.2—the **Housekeeping Standing Schedule Form** that has been specifically designed for the model hotel. The four regular teams, laundry staff, two swing teams, and individual positions that must be staffed are listed. Note that it is the **position** that is scheduled, not a specific person.

The color designations—red, yellow, brown, and green—in the column “Team Position Person” correspond with the divisions of the hotel described in the House Breakout Plan. If there is *no* indication in a schedule block, it means that the team designated by a specific color is working in the division of that same color designation; for example, the red team working in the red division will be indicated by a blank schedule block. For the swing teams, it is necessary to specify, in the appropriate schedule block, exactly where the swing team is to work. In the standing rotational system, all members of a given team will be considered as scheduled to work if the team schedule block is left blank.

We can now construct workweek 1, using Figure 3.2 as the scheduling form.

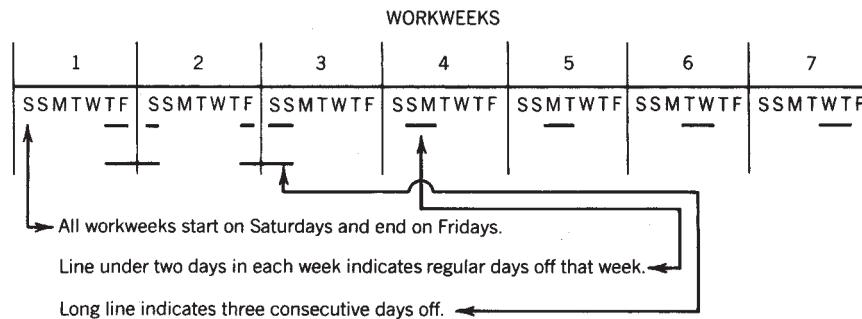


Figure 3-1 The standing rotational scheduling system. Each week in the seven-week system begins on a Saturday and ends on a Friday. Underlines indicate regularly assigned days off. Days off rotate forward one day each succeeding week. In workweek 2, when days off are Friday and Saturday, they must be split, with Saturday being the first day off in the week and Friday being the last day off in the same week. Thursday and Friday of workweek 1 join with Saturday of workweek 2, providing three consecutive days off. The same happens when workweeks 2 and 3 are combined. This offers a strong selling point for the system. When the employee’s days off are on the weekend, there are three days off in a row, yet only two days off in any one workweek, allowing for a full 40 hours of work in each week. The eighth workweek is a repeat of workweek 1, hence the cyclical character of the system.

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED							
YELLOW							
BROWN							
GREEN							
LAUNDRY							
SWING TEAM 1							
SWING TEAM 2							
LINEN ROOM SUPERVISOR							
LINEN ROOM ATTENDANT							
SENIOR HSKPG. AIDE							
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #1							
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #2							
A.M. PUB AREA (RELIEF)							
NIGHT SUPERVISOR							
NIGHT HOUSEKEEPER							
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #1							
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #2							
NIGHT P.A. (RELIEF)							

Figure 3-2 Housekeeping standing rotational schedule form.

STEP 1. As a starting point, assume that in workweek 1 the red team will work in the red division on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and will be off on Thursday and Friday. On the days off, swing team 1 will work in place of the red team. This is indicated on the schedule sheet in Figure 3.3.

In the Thursday and Friday schedule blocks, note the “off” and the “ST-1,” indicating that swing team 1 is working in place of the red team. Note also that “red” must be placed opposite the Thursday and Friday schedule blocks for swing team 1.

STEP 2. Now that swing team 1 has been scheduled to work on Thursday and Friday for the red team, it is necessary that the team be *kept working* five consecutive days. Given that swing team 1 also relieves the yellow team two days and works in the laundry one day, its schedule may now be completed as shown in Figure 3.4.

At this point the scheduling of the red team, yellow team, and swing team 1 has been completed, and one day off for the laundry personnel has been designated.

Figure 3-3 Beginning of preparation of the standing rotational schedule for workweek 1. The red team is scheduled to work Saturday through Wednesday and to be off Thursday and Friday. Swing team 1 (ST-1) is scheduled to work in place of the red team where indicated.

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK ONE

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED						Off	Off
YELLOW						ST-1	ST-1
BROWN							
GREEN							
LAUNDRY							
SWING TEAM 1						Red	Red
SWING TEAM 2							

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK ONE

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED						Off / ST-1	Off / ST-1
YELLOW	Off / ST-1	Off / ST-1					
BROWN							
GREEN							
LAUNDRY			Off / ST-1				
SWING TEAM 1	Yellow	Yellow	Laundry	Off	Off	Red	Red
SWING TEAM 2							
LINEN ROOM SUPERVISOR							
LINEN ROOM ATTENDANT							

Figure 3-4 Continuation of scheduling system preparation for workweek 1. Swing team 1 is kept working five days straight by swinging in for the yellow team on Saturday and Sunday and for the laundry on Monday.

STEP 3. Swing team 2 is next introduced to give the laundry team its second day off. The team will also work two days for the brown team and two days for the green team, giving it five consecutive workdays. (Note that the off days for both swing teams are now established.) Figure 3.5 shows the completion of the scheduling for all regular teams, the laundry, and both swing teams.

STEP 4. The next step is to schedule individual positions for workweek 1. Note that individual positions are normally referred to as **fixed positions**, since their scheduling does not fluctuate based on occupancy. It is logical for the linen room supervisor and the linen room attendant to be off on different days. It is also reasonable to have one day in between their days off to facilitate

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK ONE

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED						Off / ST-1	Off / ST-1
YELLOW	Off / ST-1	Off / ST-1					
BROWN					Off / ST-2	Off / ST-2	
GREEN	Off / ST-2						Off / ST-2
LAUNDRY			Off / ST-1	Off / ST-2			
SWING TEAM 1	Yellow	Yellow	Laundry	Off	Off	Red	Red
SWING TEAM 2	Green	Off	Off	Laundry	Brown	Brown	Green
LINEN ROOM SUPERVISOR							
LINEN ROOM ATTENDANT							
SENIOR HSKPG. AIDE							
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #1							
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #2							
A.M. PUB AREA (RELIEF)							
NIGHT SUPERVISOR							
NIGHT HOUSEKEEPER							
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #1							
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #2							
NIGHT P.A. (RELIEF)							

Figure 3-5 Completion of team scheduling for workweek 1. Swing team 2 is scheduled to work for the laundry team on its second consecutive day off; then it works two days for the brown team and two days for the green team. Having completed five consecutive days of work in relief, swing team 2 is then off for two days.

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK *TWO*

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED	Off ST-1						Off ST-1
YELLOW		Off ST-1	Off ST-1				
BROWN						Off ST-2	Off ST-2
GREEN	Off ST-2	Off ST-2					
LAUNDRY				Off ST-1	Off ST-2		
SWING TEAM 1	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Laundry	Off	Off	Red
SWING TEAM 2	Green	Green	Off	Off	Laundry	Brown	Brown
LINEN ROOM SUPERVISOR		Off	Off				
LINEN ROOM ATTENDANT					Off	Off	
SENIOR HSKPG. AIDE	Off						Off
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #1		Off	Off				
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #2				Off	Off		
A.M. PUB AREA (RELIEF)						Off	Off
NIGHT SUPERVISOR				Off	Off		
NIGHT HOUSEKEEPER						Off	Off
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #1	Off	Off					
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #2			Off	Off			
NIGHT P.A. (RELIEF)					Off	Off	

Figure 3-6 Completed standing rotational scheduling system for workweek 1. Days off have been assigned to individual workers not considered part of housekeeping teams.

routine communication and continuity between the two positions. Similarly, the senior housekeeping aide should not be scheduled off on the same day as the linen room supervisor. (Even though management positions do not show on the hourly worker schedule, it is illogical to schedule them off at the same time. Management positions are therefore assigned two consecutive days off in such a way that either manager can cover for the one who is off or who has important obligations for part of each workday.) Note also that in the case of public area (PA) housekeepers, the third position provides a relief for the first two positions, provided the relief is not scheduled off on the same day as public area housekeepers 1 and 2. There will be one day out of seven when all three public area housekeepers are on duty. On this particular day, many special projects can be scheduled and completed that would otherwise require the hiring of additional personnel. Figure 3.6 is a logical completion of the design of workweek 1.

Even though the total staff may be reduced at times, cross-training and overseeing by other supervisors is used to keep staffing at an optimum. For example, on days that the night supervisor is off, the head housekeeping aide or the linen room supervisor might be scheduled to come in late, thereby being available to

take over part of the night supervisor's duties. Another possibility is that management might be scheduled to cover for the night supervisor. The rest of the scheduling for workweek 1 as indicated is therefore one of several logical arrangements.

Construction of Workweeks 2 through 7

Recalling the standing rotational system illustrated in Figure 3.1, we can now construct the rest of the workweeks. By using the identical form shown in Figure 3.2, the days off expressed in workweek 1 are, in each and every case, advanced one day on each of the six remaining workweeks. Similarly to how Figure 3.6 shows the complete workweek 1, Figure 3.7 represents the complete workweek 2. Once again, in the case in which days off are Friday and Saturday, they are at opposite ends of the schedule.

System Posting and Initiation

After the standing rotational system has been designed, all that remains is posting and initiation. The schedules should be posted on a bulletin board next to a copy of the **Department Staffing Guide** on which the incumbents to all positions are indicated. Remember, these schedule forms are to become permanent and should

HOUSEKEEPING STANDING SCHEDULE
WEEK *TWO*

TEAM/POSITION PERSON	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
RED	Off / ST-1						Off / ST-1
YELLOW		Off / ST-1	Off / ST-1				
BROWN						Off / ST-2	Off / ST-2
GREEN	Off / ST-2	Off / ST-2					
LAUNDRY				Off / ST-1	Off / ST-2		
SWING TEAM 1	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Laundry	Off	Off	Red
SWING TEAM 2	Green	Green	Off	Off	Laundry	Brown	Brown
LINEN ROOM SUPERVISOR		Off	Off				
LINEN ROOM ATTENDANT					Off	Off	
SENIOR HSKPG. AIDE	Off						Off
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #1		Off	Off				
PUBLIC AREA HOUSEKEEPER #2				Off	Off		
A.M. PUB AREA (RELIEF)						Off	Off
NIGHT SUPERVISOR				Off	Off		
NIGHT HOUSEKEEPER						Off	Off
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #1	Off	Off					
NIGHT P.A. HOUSEKEEPER #2			Off	Off			
NIGHT P.A. (RELIEF)					Off	Off	

Figure 3-7 Workweek 2 of the standing rotational system. Compare workweeks 1 and 2 and note how regular days off have been rotated forward one day for each entity to be scheduled. Workweeks 3-7 are prepared in a like manner by continuing to move days off forward one day each week.

therefore be typed and protected with coverings. The worker only needs to know what position he or she is filling and what workweek is in effect to know his or her regular days off. Figure 3.8 shows how a Department Staffing Guide and seven weeks of standing rotational schedules might be displayed on an employee bulletin board within a housekeeping department.

System initiation is begun on any upcoming day that is designated by management as the beginning of the

workweek (it is Saturday in our example). Once initiated, the system is in perpetual rotation, requiring only that someone move a marker every week to indicate what workweek is in effect.

In a new operation, the system should be initiated several days before opening. In an ongoing operation, the system should be explained several weeks before changing to it because of the effect the change may have on day-off rotation.

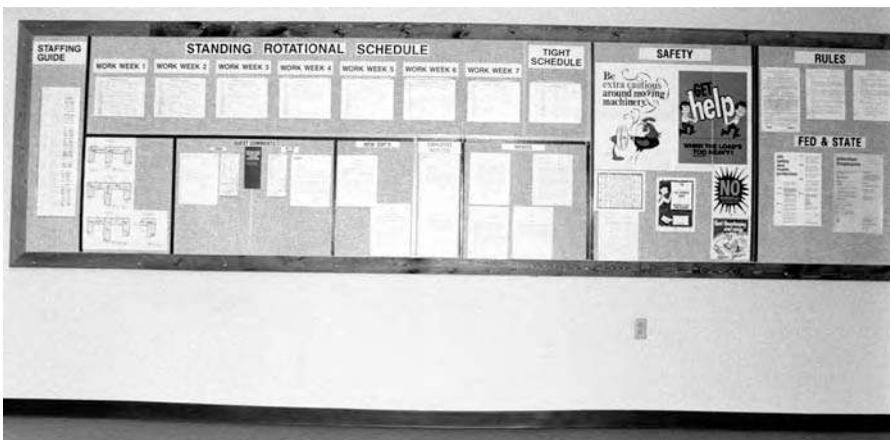


Figure 3-8 Bulletin board display of the standing rotational scheduling system and the department staffing guide.

Tight Scheduling System

Whereas the standing rotational schedule is a *permanent* system that, once established and initiated, continues to cycle on its own, the tight scheduling system is an *operational* system. It provides simple day-by-day modifications of the standing rotational schedule that are needed because of fluctuations in occupancy. The tight schedule pertains only to team scheduling; it has no effect on the individual positions scheduled (bottom portion of the standing rotational schedule), in as much as all positions other than teams are considered fixed and are not affected by occupancy.

Figure 3.9 is a form especially designed for the model hotel on which the tight schedule modifications will be shown. Note especially the space for tomorrow's date, day, and workweek; and the columns labeled "area" (division), to which tomorrow's schedule refers; "team scheduled," indicating which team is to work; and "bring in," which is for a directive issued to the appropriate supervisor as to how many section housekeepers within the indicated team are to be used. In this way, management is *delegating* to the team supervisor the task of determining which people within the team are to be brought in; said another way, it indicates which team members are to be scheduled for an extra day off.

Developing the Tight Schedule for a Typical Day

For illustrative purposes, assume that the following hypothetical situation exists regarding the 353-room model hotel:

1. Tomorrow's day and date are Thursday, June 16.
2. Tomorrow's date falls at a time when the standing rotational schedule is cycling through workweek 2 (Figure 3.7).
3. Today's occupancy was 95 percent, and tomorrow's occupancy is forecasted to be 76 percent (268 rooms expected to be occupied tonight; see Table 2.2, Table of Personnel Requirements).

The following steps are required to operationally develop a tight schedule for tomorrow.

STEP 1. At about 4:00 P.M. on the afternoon of Wednesday, June 15, one of the managers of the housekeeping department refers to the standing rotational schedule (Figure 3.7) and notes the following teams scheduled to work on that date (in workweek 2): red team in red division, yellow team in yellow division, swing team 2 in brown division, and green team in green division (the brown team and swing team 1 are scheduled for a regular day off, and the laundry crew is scheduled to work in the laundry). This information is then transferred to a copy of the form for tight scheduling (Figure 3.9).

STEP 2. The manager contacts the front desk manager and asks for an estimate of tonight's occupancy (tomorrow's workload for the housekeeping department). The manager is informed that 268 of the hotel's 353 rooms are expected to be occupied.

STEP 3. The housekeeping manager refers to the Table of Personnel Requirements (Table 2.2) and notes

Figure 3-9 Form used for the model hotel to prepare the tight schedule.

TIGHT SCHEDULE FOR _____ / _____ / _____
(date) (day) (workweek)

EXPECTED OCCUPANCY % _____ # ROOMS _____

AREA	TEAM SCHEDULED	BRING IN	SUPERVISOR ASSIGNMENT	EXTRA DAY OFF	OTHERS ON CALL
RED	SUPERVISOR:		1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	
YELLOW	SUPERVISOR:		6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____	6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____	
BROWN	SUPERVISOR:		11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____	11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____	
GREEN	SUPERVISOR:		16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____	16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____	
LAUNDRY	SUPERVISOR		1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	

that 268 rooms reflects a 76 percent occupancy, requiring the use of 15 housekeepers.

STEP 4. In the “Bring In” column on the tight schedule, the housekeeping manager indicates as close to an equal distribution as possible of the 15 housekeepers required to service tomorrow’s occupancy. For example, three teams bring in four, and one team brings in three of the five section housekeepers who are permanent members of the indicated teams.

STEP 5. The laundry will be working to service the soiled linen workload created by *today’s* occupancy (95 percent), requiring a full laundry staff of all five members.

STEP 6. Within a period of about 5 minutes, the housekeeping manager has developed the directive portion of tomorrow’s tight schedule, which is now posted in a specially designed place adjacent to the standing rotational schedule. Figure 3.10 is a copy of the tight schedule prepared for tomorrow’s workday.

STEP 7. Within the next 10 or 15 minutes, each senior housekeeper (supervisor) will note the bring-in requirement for tomorrow and will, on a fair and equitable basis, determine who (by name) among the team members will be assigned to work. Similarly, he or she will indicate who will be assigned an extra day off. Such indications are made on the tight schedule (Figure 3.11), which all

employees may refer to for tomorrow’s staffing needs before the end of today’s workday.

Tight scheduling is now complete for Thursday’s workday and is available for all to see. (Note that the regular laundry staff was off the previous day.) It will be necessary for the laundry supervisor to call in and ask about tomorrow’s requirement for workers. The supervisor will specify by phone how many laundry employees will work from among the members of the laundry team. The supervisor will then call the team members and specify tomorrow’s requirement for workers.

When it is known that an annual occupancy of less than about 90 percent is forecast, 100 percent staffing is not required; that is, teams need not be staffed to capacity and may be reduced in size to provide more scheduled workdays for the staff. If staffing is reduced and occupancy exceeds the capabilities of the staff, people who are regularly scheduled off may be offered overtime to fill the gaps.

Control over the Tight Schedule

Recall that the task of specific designation as to who works within each team has been delegated to each team supervisor. Although this delegation is job enriching to each supervisor, control must be maintained to ensure equitable and fair rotation of the assignment of extra days off for team members. For this reason, each supervisor should be required to maintain a notebook indicating rotational assignment of extra days off for each member of the specified team. If questioned by any

TIGHT SCHEDULE FOR 6/16/ Thursday / 2
(date) (day) (work week)
 EXPECTED OCCUPANCY % 76% # ROOMS 268

AREA	TEAM SCHEDULED	BRING IN	SUPERVISOR ASSIGNMENT	EXTRA DAY OFF	OTHERS ON CALL
RED	<i>Red</i> SUPERVISOR: <i>Miller</i>	4	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	
YELLOW	<i>Yellow</i> SUPERVISOR: <i>Jones</i>	4	6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____	6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____	
BROWN	<i>Swing Team 2</i> SUPERVISOR: <i>Foster</i>	3	11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____	11. _____ 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. _____	
GREEN	<i>Green</i> SUPERVISOR: <i>Smith</i>	4	16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____	16. _____ 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____	
LAUNDRY	<i>Laundry</i> SUPERVISOR <i>Thomas</i>	5	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	

Figure 3-10 Tight schedule form based on tomorrow’s forecast occupancy for our hypothetical situation.

TIGHT SCHEDULE FOR 6/18/ Thursday 2
(date) (day) (work week)
EXPECTED OCCUPANCY % 76 % **# ROOMS** 268

AREA	TEAM SCHEDULED	BRING IN	SUPERVISOR ASSIGNMENT	EXTRA DAY OFF	OTHERS ON CALL
RED	Red SUPERVISOR: Miller	4	1. Julia 2. Yvonne 3. Billie 4. Margaret	1. Gladys 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	
YELLOW	Yellow SUPERVISOR: Jones	4	6. Dianne 7. Vivian 8. Marie 9. Mildred	6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. Janice 10. _____	
BROWN	Brown team 2 SUPERVISOR: Foster	3	11. Harriet 12. Marnie 13. Jane	11. Elvira 12. _____ 13. _____ 14. _____ 15. Mary	
GREEN	Green SUPERVISOR: _____	4	16. Georgia 17. Tommy 18. Donna 19. Louise	16. Lillian 17. _____ 18. _____ 19. _____ 20. _____	
LAUNDRY	Laundry SUPERVISOR: Thomas	5	1. Jane 2. Marie 3. Wilma 4. Helen 5. Laura	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	

Figure 3-11 Supervisors complete the tight schedule by indicating who from among the indicated teams will be working and who will be scheduled for an extra day off. The completed tight schedule is posted daily next to the standing rotation scheduling system (see Figure 3.8, extreme right).

employee regarding fairness of assignment, the supervisor must be able to produce a record of fairness in the designation of extra days off. In many cases, if a team is to be scheduled down, a request for volunteers to accept an extra day off is usually all that is needed; in other cases, the extra day off must be assigned. Records must be kept to indicate that this assignment has been performed in a fair manner.

Equipment Use Related to the Tight Schedule

There are two major pieces of equipment that are associated with each room section—maid’s cart and vacuum cleaner. This equipment should be identified by a number corresponding to the section to which it belongs. At 100 percent occupancy, each of the GRAs working in one of the 20 assigned sections will have the exclusive use of the specified equipment. In this manner, a specific GRA from a regular team and a swing team may be held accountable for the condition and care of the equipment. At less than 100 percent occupancy, however, several sections will not have a GRA assigned. Note that in Figure 3.11, sections 2, 9, 12, 15, and 16 have no one assigned. This does not mean that there will be no work to perform in those sections, only that the workers scheduled are to use their assigned equipment. At a later time, the actual placement of the GRA in a specific work area will be covered by a procedure known as *opening the house*.

Union Contracts and Their Effects on Scheduling

We have shown you one of the most efficient scheduling techniques available to executive housekeepers. In real-life situations, however, **union contracts** can have an overwhelming effect on scheduling techniques. They may insist on a guaranteed 40-hour week and the requirement of additional positions on the labor force rather than cross-trained employees to perform more than one type of task (e.g., housekeeping and laundry).

Executive housekeepers thus have the challenge of presenting to unions plans that guarantee fairness to current employees as opposed to plans that pad staffs with unnecessary workers. In most cases, the best argument in favor of cross-training and scheduling of employees is that a 40-hour job does not exist and the company will not hire a full-time employee to work where only 8 or 16 hours of work actually exist. Many union houses are able to deal with this problem by having a very small cadre of full-time employees and a majority of workers who are considered **steady extras** (workers who are not guaranteed 40 hours).

Where union contracts are in force, the executive housekeeper should work to ensure fairness to employees. If union contracts are not in force, executive housekeepers should do everything possible to ensure that

Executive Profile

Larry Morgan *Making the Team Investment*

His canter is slow and easy, revealing his confidence and satisfaction with life. His mouth opens often into broad smiles directed toward those who cross his path. A natural manager, Larry Morgan is similar to many other I.E.H.A. managers in the sense that he just kind of landed in Environmental Services. His childhood aspiration wasn't to work in a hospital; however, now he couldn't imagine being anywhere else.

By Andi M. Vance, Editor, *Executive Housekeeping Today*

The official publication of the International Executive Housekeepers Association, Inc. (This article first appeared in the February 2003 issue of *Executive Housekeeping Today*.)

The best attributes of southern hospitality fill the disposition of Larry Morgan, who was born and raised in Savannah, Georgia. A "people person" through and through, Morgan has worked to achieve a great balance between his public and private lives. Oftentimes, people find it difficult to enjoy their work as much as they enjoy their leisure time, or vice versa. Larry Morgan has developed a blend of activities to keep his mind and body stimulated and in shape. This results in a good-natured administrator who engages in work with a clear mind and an easy spirit.

In the Beginning . . .

Larry Morgan has worked since he was old enough to pick up a shovel. His grandmother had him doing household chores before he started working at a local restaurant where he made his introduction to the workforce in Savannah. His next job was at a local plywood mill where he worked until the economy went sour and the plant was forced to close. In search for employment elsewhere, Morgan found himself on the steps of a local hospital. He knew he was qualified for a position in Maintenance and Engineering, but found that there were no available positions in that department. When a position in housekeeping was suggested, Morgan embraced it without any preconceived notions or biases.

"I had never done anything in housekeeping before," Morgan admits, "so I decided to give it a try."

When he began as a floor tech, Morgan had no clue he'd be spending the next 21 years developing his career at the facility.

New Beginnings . . .

When corporate downsizing swallowed Morgan's position as Operations Manager over a year ago, he contacted a director who suggested he apply at St. Joseph's/Candler. Immediately after he filled out his application, he was interviewed and hired as the Night System Operations Manager. Approximately six months ago, he was promoted to Site Manager. He is responsible for 55 staff members, running operations, training, recruiting, quality improvement procedures, accessing chemicals and equipment. Quality improvement is a key focus area for the department at the moment, as department administrators work to involve all staff in procedures.

Morgan has introduced a program in its initial stages of implementation called the Seven Step Cleaning Process. He learned it while working for a contract cleaner at a former facility.

"The Seven Step Cleaning Process is a standardized method where you make rounds in the room," explains Morgan. "Each round entails a specific task. The final step in the process is for the staff member to go in and do a thorough check to assure the room has been thoroughly

cleaned. Recently, the frontline staff became involved. No longer does the supervisor regulate the quality checks; staff members are responsible for their own work."

Quality scores are accessed through checklists and rating systems. "We have a checklist developed for the supervisor or manager to inspect the room," Morgan details. "We have a way of aggregating the information to get a quality score or percentage of clean in a particular area. We have a set goal for cleanliness in a room, so if we don't meet that standard, then we come back to access the staff members and see if they need training and/or other development."

JCAHO

Last year, JCAHO (the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Health Care Organizations) made a much anticipated visit to the facility. While the staff strives to keep the hospital immaculate on a day-to-day, minute-to-minute basis, when JCAHO is coming, the staff works a little harder to ensure the hospital and one another are prepared for the survey. Morgan recounts everything they underwent in preparation.

Close to the time when the JCAHO survey team was ready to arrive, the staff double-checked everything to make sure the facility was spotless. "It seemed as though everyone wanted us to clean everything at one time. We don't often have the staff clean all areas simultaneously, so you have to stagger and schedule those duties as you go."

"In regard to my own responsibilities," says Morgan, "I started about 90 days prior to JCAHO's arrival. I wanted to make sure all the floors had been stripped, carpets extracted, walls washed and things of that nature. I also checked to make sure my staff was completely educated on chemicals, processes, MSDS sheets, etc. They also have to have a general knowledge of procedures like biomedical waste disposal. Really, it's anything and everything that has to do with regulations."

"Extensive maintenance of paperwork is another responsibility of Environmental Services Managers. All the cleaning records, orientation checklists, infection control training and refrigerator cleaning logs should be together and in place for a JCAHO inspection," says Morgan. "As far as I'm concerned, it's all ongoing. Have your processes in place and then follow through on a day-to-day basis. My philosophy is that once you get into JCAHO mode, you need to stay in that mode for the rest of the time, rather than relaxing until the next JCAHO visit."

Best Investments

As an administrator, Morgan doesn't look at his equipment or type of flooring as his best investment, he looks to his staff. In a time when obtaining qualified and diligent workers poses somewhat of a challenge, Morgan puts a lot of time and energy into recognizing his staff and showing his appreciation for their labors. When Morgan first started at the facility, high turnover plagued the facility. With a recent salary increase, more qualified individuals are staying on the job longer.

To reduce turnover, the management staff is continually brainstorming and looking for ways and ideas to help employees and build loyalty within their first year. They've found that if they stay with us for the first

year, then they'll be less likely to leave if they have a job offer with similar salary elsewhere. After that first year, they're entitled to a variety of benefits including a 403B pension plan, healthcare benefits and access to an onsite credit union.

"One thing I've come to recognize when working with people is that human resources is your most valuable asset," professes Morgan. "You can bring in all the state-of-the-art equipment, new chemicals, robots, anything you want. But if you don't have good, competent people to utilize these things, then you don't have anything."

To recognize loyal employees, Morgan continually shows them appreciation and recognition. His boss, Peter Schenk, Vice President of Clinical Services, has also been extremely supportive of the staff. Funding is provided for staff recognition functions such as International Housekeepers Week and a holiday reception.

"Every day, I make rounds and tell them how much I appreciate their great work. At staff meetings, I always thank them for the job they're doing," acknowledges Morgan. "I try to instill that in my management staff as well. Whenever I can say thank you, I do. A simple thank you helps a lot."

Association Involvement

Larry Morgan has been participating in IEHA since 1986, when he was introduced to the Association by Olli Gaskin, who was President of the Georgia Coastal Chapter at the time. Serving as a mentor to Morgan, Gaskin retired and later handed over the presidential ropes to Morgan, who is currently serving his third term as the President of the Georgia Coastal Chapter.

Under his leadership, the Chapter continues to flourish. At convention last year, Morgan accepted the Father Hindel award on behalf of the Georgia Coastal Chapter for having the largest percentage increase of certified and registered members.

To maintain chapter meeting attendance, the Chapter's leadership works diligently to provide resourceful education and limited business sessions. Next year, they will sponsor a large seminar and workshop that will provide continuing education units for the members while helping generate revenue for the Chapter treasury.

Morgan's excited about the direction of the Chapter as some new blood has been introduced. He looks forward to handing over the reins of leadership to someone with new ideas and resources. Arthur Coleman has played an active role in Chapter activity, providing a venue for meetings at his facility, Savannah State University. With increased direction and resources, they hope to overcome obstacles they encounter, such as the distance between members. Some members are located as far North as Hilton Head and others reside in Atlanta.

Winding Down

Larry Morgan is not any different from other managers in that he does feel stress from his work. He identifies customers as a source of his stress. Unrealistic expectations place demands on his job that are sometimes impossible to fulfill.

Conclusion

Similar to the birds in his backyard, Larry Morgan feeds his employees with the berries of recognition and acknowledgment. He recognizes that the people who work on his staff are his best investment, and that without them, he'd be unable to direct the daily operations at St. Joseph's Hospital. Through the implementation of programs and procedures, he provides his staff with goals to reach, and measures their productivity along the way. Morgan's relaxed demeanor and attentiveness to his staff is a result of his own personal satisfaction in life. He's able to separate work and pleasure, which makes Larry Morgan a "berry" good manager.

"Sometimes, you have customers who will give you accolades and recognition," Morgan acknowledges. "Other times, you have those who only accentuate the negative. The only time they're ever going to call you is when something's wrong. If they're not calling you, then you're doing a good job. You just have to take it all in stride."

To Morgan, the key is finding the right way to relax from a stressful day. To stay in shape and release the physical effects of stress on his body, Morgan runs a couple of miles a day. On extremely stressful days, he runs up to four or five miles.

His other hobbies include freshwater and saltwater fishing, gardening, reading, playing basketball, bicycling—essentially anything that he can get his hands upon. Last year, his gardens were filled with various species of berry plants, including strawberries, blackberries and blueberries. He laughs as he recalls the birds in his backyard. "They just had a feast," he says. "They all got so fat."

Larry Morgan can be reached at St. Joseph's/Candler at (912) 927-5423.

workers have fair treatment and adequate wages and benefits.

Summary

Although there are several ways to schedule workers in seven-day operations, the best techniques are simple methods that use managers' time wisely, ensure fairness to workers, provide adequate coverage, and are understandable. A combination of two systems—the standing rotational system which, once initiated, operates in a cyclic manner for an indefinite time, and a tight scheduling system, which modifies the standing system daily to accommodate hotel occupancy—has been presented in this chapter. The model hotel provided the vehicle by which these systems have been demonstrated.

The standing system defines regular days off from scheduled positions, and the tight system defines extra days off due to hotel occupancy being reduced below

100 percent. Both systems are displayed on the department bulletin board next to a copy of the Department Staffing Guide.

Both systems are adaptable to hotels of 100 rooms or more. The systems are, in fact, adaptable to any departments in which scheduling is based on a fluctuating occupancy or workload. The team method of staffing and scheduling allows for friendly competition and the delegation of more tasks to supervisors.

The executive housekeeper of the soon-to-open hotel should consider the type of scheduling presented in this chapter during the planning stage. If scheduling techniques are dealt with after opening, many overtime hours could result and workers and management will be adversely affected by the lack of a good scheduling system. In an existing operation, the system should be introduced, the staff trained, and a specific date chosen on which to institute the system. The best plan is to develop scheduling techniques before hiring the first employee.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Worker scheduling
Team system of organization
Team scheduling
Team staffing
Manager's Teamwork Checklist
Swing teams

Relief teams
Standing rotational scheduling
Tight scheduling
Work calendar
Housekeeping Standing Schedule
Form

Position
Fixed position
Department Staffing Guide
System initiation
Union contract
Steady extra

DISCUSSION AND REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Assume that a state law will not allow a worker to work more than five consecutive days without paying the person overtime. Design a standing rotational system (similar to the one described in Figure 3.1) that will meet the criteria of working five days in a row but will not require paying the overtime premium.
2. How does a tight scheduling system take advantage of the directional activity of delegation?
3. Assume that a standing rotational system and a tight scheduling system have been designed for an ongoing operation. What must be done before they can be initiated? Why?
4. Assume an ongoing operation that is currently cycling through workweek 3. A new employee has been hired to fill a vacancy in a housekeeping team. How would you explain the system to the new employee?
5. Are standing rotational and tight scheduling systems feasible in a union environment?
6. Assuming your answer to question 5 is yes, how would you go about justifying the system to union officials?

NOTE

1. Susan C. Bakos, "Promoting Teamwork," *Executive Housekeeping Today*, September 1982, p. 26.