How Powerful Scheduling Software Can Increase Employee Engagement

With the right scheduling software, the balance between employee and organizational needs can be met in a way where everyone wins.

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In the health care industry, staff turnover is high and burnout is a real concern. Employment in nursing care facilities is about 13% lower than before the pandemic, but demand for health services will only continue to rise as the aging boomer generation begins to need increased care. Stopping the churn of your best nursing staff by increasing employee satisfaction is a priority for many facilities and communities but is often easier said than done.

Scheduling is a major part of the employee work experience and improving it can be a simple lever to pull to increase employee engagement. A well-designed schedule can be the difference between a harmonious work environment and one that breeds dissatisfaction and burnout, but between juggling different shift patterns, accommodating staff preferences, and ensuring compliance with staffing regulations, it's no wonder that many admins struggle to provide an excellent scheduling experience.

But it doesn't have to be that way. The right scheduling software allows admins to focus on the needs of the facility while placing the power of the employee scheduling experience in the hands of the staff themselves. By increasing communication and providing staff with more control over their schedule, organizations can turn a great scheduling software into a powerful retention tool.

Empowering Staff with Employee Self Service

Imagine a world where every shift update, schedule change, or new assignment is communicated seamlessly, directly to the effected staff member's phone. This is the world made possible by scheduling software that works in tandem with your employee self-service (ESS) portal. ESS acts as a communication hub, where staff can log in at any time, from anywhere, and see exactly when they are needed and what their shift entails.

For admins, ESS reduces the time spent chasing down employees to relay schedule changes. For staff, it provides a sense of autonomy and control over their work life. Knowing when they're scheduled well in advance and being notified instantly of any changes reduces stress and helps employees plan their lives outside of work. It's not just about being informed; it's about feeling valued and in the loop. When staff feel connected to their workplace through consistent and clear communication, their engagement levels naturally rise. In our 2024 Caregiver Onboarding Experience Report, only 40% of caregivers felt as though communication at their organization was clear and transparent. Having the tools needed to solve this issue leads to staff being more likely to feel invested in their roles, show up on time, and go above and beyond in their duties.

Aligning Staff Work Preferences with Facility Needs

One of the most effective ways to combat the retention issue is to offer preferred work schedules. When employees are able to choose shifts that align with their personal lives, they're not only more likely to stay with your organization but also perform better while on the job. One of the biggest gaps currently plaguing the health services caregiver experience is organizations not providing information on work-life balance, with only 24% of caregivers receiving information on work-life balance from their organization. But what better way to demonstrate to new hires (and existing staff) that you value them and their time than asking them what shifts work best for them and then incorporating those preferences into their schedule.

Whether it's a nurse who prefers night shifts or a therapist who needs to work the early shift, the software intelligently matches these preferences with the facility's staffing needs. This flexibility is a win-win: employees get the work-life balance they crave, and administrators can fill shifts with happy, willing participants.

Engaged employees are those who feel that their needs are being considered. By allowing them to have a say in their schedules, you're not just conveniently filling shifts – you're building a team of

committed, enthusiastic professionals who are more likely to stay long term. And in an industry where turnover can be costly, both financially and in terms of patient care, that's a game-changer.

Increasing Employee Satisfaction by Self-Selecting Open Shifts

Last-minute callouts leading to open shifts are inevitable, but nobody wants to be forced into work on their day off and have to inconvenience their personal life. This is where allowing staff to self-select open shifts shines. Unlike traditional methods of filling open shifts that might involve frantic calls to every available staff member, by putting the power in the hands of the nurses, you give them the ability to pick up extra shifts on their own without admins needing to lift a finger.

This not only ensures that shifts are filled quickly but also that they're filled by someone who wants to be there. It means less stress and more confidence that every shift is covered by a competent, well-rested, and willing nurse. Employee engagement grows when staff feel they are being utilized effectively and fairly. Self-selecting open shifts isn't just about filling gaps – it's about making sure those gaps are filled in a way that supports both the employees and the overall mission of the facility.

The Power of Engagement

In an industry where the satisfaction of clients is very closely linked to their quality of life, having an engaged workforce is necessary for the well-being of your residents. While there are many pieces of the puzzle that must come together to provide an engaging experience for staff, scheduling's role can't be overlooked. By creating a workplace where nurses feel informed, considered, and respected, you set your organization up for success in fostering a workforce that's engaged, is ready to provide the highest quality of work, and will stay with your organization for the long run.

At the end of the day, it's all about building a workplace where staff feel respected and that their individual needs matter. With the right scheduling software, the balance between employee and organizational needs can be met in a way where everyone wins. Viventium Scheduling was built with these challenges in mind.

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