

## Planning And Scheduling

Supervisors must become good at planning and scheduling their time. Without proper planning, your job will become very stressful. Do not let circumstances control how your time is spent.

Here is sampling of what could happen when supervisors fail to plan:

- ◇ Supplies in buildings run out.
- ◇ Misunderstandings between yourself and employees, which leads to frustration for both.
- ◇ Customer complaints not taken care of in a timely manner, resulting in more complaints or loss of the account.
- ◇ Project work does not get done on schedule, resulting in a loss of income and profits.
- ◇ Low employee morale, which results in poor quality work.
- ◇ Lower production rates because employees don't have the tools and supplies needed and also because of low morale.
- ◇ Lower profit due to low production rates.

When it comes to scheduling, use whatever tools work best for you. In these days of mobile technology, there are all sorts of calendars and task lists that you can use to plan your day and keep organized.

One of the most important things to remember when it comes to time management is to keep your schedule simple and flexible. If you schedule out every minute of your day, you'll become frustrated because you will inevitably have interruptions that will affect your schedule. If you continually find yourself moving certain tasks to the next day because of interruptions, it's a clue that you're not allowing yourself time to deal with unexpected situations.

Start by planning what you would like to accomplish this week. Then break it down into what you need to do each day. If you are scheduling appointments or tasks, choose a start time and approximate end time. Be sure to allow for travel time between appointments. When planning for tasks such as project work, decide who is to do the work, and how it fits into their schedule.

As you complete a scheduled item or task, be sure to check it off your list as completed. This will not only give you a sense of accomplishment, but it will make it easier to see what is left to be done.

Below are additional time management tips:

- ◇ Set attainable goals. Then make daily “to do” lists identifying high priority items.
- ◇ After prioritizing your responsibilities, delegate those you should not be doing.
- ◇ Never procrastinate. Rather than checking off several easy tasks from your list, tackle the big projects first whenever possible.
- ◇ Systematize projects whenever possible. For example, on project work like carpet cleaning, create an equipment and supply check off list so the team never forgets a piece of equipment like an extension cord. Systematizing projects saves time and increases profits.
- ◇ Break down large jobs into a series of smaller tasks that are easy to complete.
- ◇ Plan travel efficiently. If your job today is to inspect buildings, plan your route appropriately.
- ◇ Make quick decisions on trivial matters.
- ◇ When checking email, deal with it in this way.
  - Do it (if it takes less than two minutes)
  - Delegate it
  - Defer it

If the item does not require action, either File it, Delete it, or Incubate it for possible action later.

- ◇ Use “waiting time” wisely. Catch up on email, make notes, update your schedule, etc.
- ◇ Use the telephone whenever possible instead of wasting travel time for unimportant tasks.
- ◇ Communicate with employees in groups when possible instead of going to each one individually. Keep your meetings on task (e.g., have an agenda, keep on time, and stay focused).