



Improving Scheduling Practices in Lower-level Jobs

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Why focus on improving scheduling practices?

- Key to worker and family well-being
- Critical to worker performance: When jobs are unstable and unpredictable, so are workers
- Scheduling can interfere with workers accessing supports defined in public policy
- Feasible target of intervention



Challenging scheduling practices

- **Just-in-time scheduling**
 - Last minute scheduling of workers and changes to schedules
- **Fluctuating hours: from over-time to down-time**
 - the timing of hours may vary season to season, week to week, day to day
- **Shifting days and shifting shifts**
 - The number of hours may vary season to season, week to week, and day to day.
- **Workloading: “No-time jobs”**
 - At extreme, workers not given any hours for extended periods of time



Aspects of scheduling that can be targeted for improvement

Number and timing of hours

- Employee control (required for flexibility)
- Stability
- Predictability (advance notice)



The Scheduling Intervention Study

- Study of the effects of improved scheduling practices on lower-level retail workers' performance, well-being, family practices, and access to benefits defined in workplace and public policy.
- Targeted at improving two aspects of scheduling
 - *predictability* = posting schedules for a month
 - *control* (flexibility) = protocol for requesting time off and changing availability
- National women's apparel retailer has generously agreed to participate in study



Key elements of the study

- Cluster-randomized experiment
 - Stores randomly assigned (intervention and control)
 - Five regions: Chicago, Baltimore, New York, Detroit, and Boston
- Have received support from the Ford Foundation, Russell Sage Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation to conduct the experiment in the Chicago area



Key elements of study

- Extensive organizational data
 - Monthly personnel data to track turnover
 - Posted, revised, and worked (actual payroll) schedules for associates in each store
 - Sales data by associate and store
- Pre and post intervention surveys of sales associates and managers (well-being, family practices, work attitudes and experiences)
- Pre and post surveys of managers regarding their scheduling practices and challenges



Generating Employer Commitment to Improving Scheduling Practices

- Leadership Greater Chicago
- Women Employed
- Families and Work Institute: *When Work Works (Project on Workforce Effectiveness and Workplace Flexibility)*