

Shiftwork and Rostering Survey

What Makes A Good Roster?

2016 Roster survey

About this survey

We are gathering data about shiftwork practices in New Zealand. We are doing this to help our clients make informed decisions about rostering preferences and work towards best practice. We believe this will help shiftworkers and managers make informed decisions when developing rosters.

This survey was to find out what shiftworkers thought was best practice

What Makes A Good Roster?

1. Features for a good roster would be to share working thru holidays among the team instead of the same people working them. Otherwise the roster suited our team up until recently 2013-2014. Home life in the meantime was hectic but my young family then 2 boys coped which made me organize time with them in family outings as treats and booked time with my husband also(weekends away).
2. It is important to have the resources required to give everyone a fair run for example being able to take leave if and when required and having a suitable work/life balance for all parties.
3. Something that covers each period well i.e. having as many people on for busy periods and also having sufficient cover during typically quiet periods.
4. A good roster will have enough staff to cover the workload even with one or two away.
5. Public holidays should be rotating
6. The roster needs to be chosen with an eye to staff first and business processes second. If it's decided between the shift staff and management between them then that's probably the best option.
7. Managers that understand what it is like to work shifts - often, managers have no sense of what it's like to do shift work and don't understand the needs of the staff.
8. With public holidays it generally follows that everyone does them at some stage due to the roster pattern. After that it's down to the team members. For example, I'm single and it doesn't bother me working public holidays so if someone else is due to work it who has family I may do a swap with them or cover for them.



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9. Have had the same roster since 1999, 12 hour shift roster. Except we changed from starting days to starting nights in 2003. Blocks of 4 days 3 nights 3 days and 4 nights with 7 days off duty, to 4 nights 3 days 3 nights and 4 days, which we all found to be better on our bodies and minds. From our work perspective the new shifts came back on shift 'COLD' and needed to catch up quickly on what had been happening while off duty for 7 days.
10. We have no incentive to cover public holidays as we get paid extra whether or not we work them. The only difference is that if you work it then you get a day in lieu, otherwise you don't.
11. It's better doing days first, then nights. You get the equivalent of a day off because you're not catching up on sleep.
12. Two days followed immediately by two nights is not good. It's like wasting that day in the middle as you have to hold back because of work that night.
13. It's not always easy to balance business needs with personal needs, but some staff prefer working, say, days only and others nights only. Their reasons for this may be valid – they may work better during the day or night. I think their needs should be taken into consideration when rosters are being planned and they shouldn't be forced to work one way or the other unless it had a definite impact on business. If the staff working their opposite shifts are happy enough with the situation, and if the work is being carried out satisfactorily and not to the detriment of the business, then I don't see a problem operating shift rosters in this way.
14. I don't think there is such a thing as a "perfect roster" because you can never please everyone all the time.
15. One other consideration, not to do with roster patterns but with shift work, I think it is necessary to have a quiet area for staff to go, away from the general crowd (if open plan). Having a break area shared with other teams can be OK, if it's not too big, but during an eight or 12 hour shift it is of great benefit to be able to go somewhere quiet, preferably isolated and comfortable, just to get away from the work atmosphere. For example, a small kitchen where you could read or study quietly, and a separate area with a couch or bed.

To arrange an appointment or discuss your business please send us a message [here](#).

Fiona Johnston
Shiftwork Services
www.shiftwork.co.nz

