

Appointment Slots

- Creating Appointment Slots

Ever need to meet with everyone on your team on a single day or week? You've played the email game of scheduling/rescheduling appointments, trying to find times that work for everyone. As soon as you get someone schedule, another person requests a spot that is no-longer available. It's a frustrating experience, for sure. However, it's an experience of the past because Google Calendar offers appointment slots making the game of scheduling appointments a simple process.

Creating Appointment Slots

1. Open Google Calendar (Only if you have a Google App Accounts, this does not work with a standard gmail calendar)
2. Select the day you want to add appointment slots
3. A small window will display asking for you to add a title and time
4. By default, "event" will be selected. Instead, select "appointment slot"
5. Adjust time and date if necessary
6. Set duration of each appointment
7. Verify which calendar the appointments will post to
8. Click "more options" if you want to update more settings or make final adjustments
9. Click save
10. Click on the appointment you created to see the window appear
11. Click on the link "This calendars appointment page"
12. Send this link to anyone you want to reserve an appointment with you

This new appointment will show up on your calendar like any other appointment. It will display the name of the appointment slot and the time of the appointments you created. However, once people click on the link you sent them, they'll see individual gray boxes for every appointment you have available. When they select a slot, they will be prompted with a window where they can rename the appointment, change/add the location and edit/write the description. As soon as they hit save, this appointment will show up on your calendar in conjunction with you overall appointment block. The appointment will also be added to their calendar. If either of you cancel the appointment, the slot will become available on your appointment page and someone else could book this slot.

Disclaimer: Your appointment page is only visible to people who have email accounts associated with your organization, so this really only works with people within your organization.

Application: There are two ways I love to use appointment slots with my staff:

Irregular One on Ones with all my staff

A couple times a year, I need to gather with all of my staff individually. This might be for annual reviews or to give updates about upcoming changes. Normally, I'd try to clear my calendar for a day or two and make myself available for when my staff has time. Creating some appointment slots available through Google Calendar is always a simple way to get everyone on my calendar very quickly. I usually create more slots than I have people to meet with so that no one feels forced into the last available spot. Even with appointment slots, there may be some slight re-arrangements to get everyone where they want to be.

Weekly Slots for Impromptu One on Ones

Interruptions are a very real problem. If my staff has 100% access to me at all times, it will be incredibly difficult for me to get important things done. If I only give staff access to me during regularly scheduled meetings, that's a problem as well. A great way to live in this tension is through appointment slots. Schedule an hour or two everyday (or every other day) with 15 or 30 minute appointment slots. If someone needs 15-30 minutes of your attention, they can grab a spot with you. Encourage less interruptions and plan for more thorough conversations when the time is right for everyone.