Changes I'd make to my application prototype based on the testing results and findings:

- Rethink the color palette of the schedule draft table. This will help

users to understand the schedule better, clearer, and easily as well as

will stop disturbing by possible aggressive and too bright colors.

Efficient color coding of the schedule draft table will also allow users

faster understand employees’ shifts and different scheduling options.

- Completely redesign the “Day Off Requests” section/tab. According to the

testers feedback this was the most hard to understand area of the

application. The redesign might include a pop-up window saying, “Please,

select day offs”, when a user clicks on the “Day Off Requests” button

and redirects to this section/tab. Only one month should be displayed to

minimize the confusion. Plus, the user has to be able to select day from

the next month as well, but not from the previous. This will

minimize possible errors by preventing the user from assigning past day

offs. Also, if the selection calendar is placed on the left side of the

section, a text field area might be placed on the right side. When the

user selects a day, that day is displayed in the right side text field.

This will show the user which days are already have been selected by

him/her.

- Remove the “Make Draft” button and transfer its functionality to the

“Schedule Draft” button. When a user finishes entering employees’ day

offs and availability, he/she can simply press on the “Schedule Draft”

button, and the new draft will be generated. “Make Draft” and

“Schedule Draft” buttons are somewhat redundant.

- Improve the hover effects of the links and buttons plus provide

additional navigation hints to allow users easily understand where they

are while browsing the application prototype. For example, the redesign

version contains text lines “1/3”, “2/3”, and “3/3” right before each

button indicating the logical flow of steps plus the position in the

interface. By making the opacity of this textual links equals to 0.25 by

default and equals 1 during hovering will definitely highlight the

current user position.

- Change the text of the buttons to make them more self-describing. This

will help users to understand the application data flow better plus will

help predict which buttons relates to each step of the schedule making

process.

- Minimize the home/initial page calendar (look at the redesign version)

to 1.5 months. Testers indicated 2 months calendar is too big / long,

while 1 month might be short due to monthly planning specifics and end

of the month reports while managers have to glance to the next month as

well. Consequently, 1.5 month calendar on the home page should work more

efficiently.

- Rethink the home/initial page watch. While the 24 hour analog watch is

closely related to the sun rotation and day light flow, this still might

be slightly confusing for several users. Plus, the time on the schedule

draft table indicated as digital, i.e. numbers. Consequently, having

digital watch on the page might benefit UX.

- Remove the “Home”, “Help”, “FAQ” links on the top right corner to make

the home/initial page simpler and guide the user attention to the main

functions/buttons – Employees, Day Off Requests, Availability. The

initial screen will play the role of the home screen. “Help” and “FAQ”

section might be incorporated into one, which can be introduced as a

question mark pictogram located on the right bottom corner next to the

text navigation links. This will still allow users to access the help

section while minimize the initial page element load.

- Remove the calendar tool that is located above the schedule draft (look

at the original version) and replace it with a slider (look at the

redesign version). This will streamline the process of browsing between

old/new schedule drafts. However, the option for “jumping” over several

drafts has to be designed/ created.

- Replace the “Save as:” button and drop down list with only one button –

for example, “Save draft” or simply “Save”. When a user clicks on that

button a pop-up dialog box will introduce the user several file formats

the draft should be saved as. This will minimize the confusion in saving

procedure.

- Think about the “Employee”, “Day Off Requests”, and “Availability”

button combination. All three of them might be incorporated into one

section since all are basically related to one task – schedule an

employee based on his/her availability. Consequently, “Employee” and

“Availability” sections might be combined into one area eliminating “Day

Off Requests” section since day off might be considered as a part of the

availability. As a result, the design might consist of the one/two tabs.

The first tab is for schedule draft table. The second part is for

employee-availability area. An employee might be selected from a

dropdown list on the left, while his/her availability might be chosen

from a list on the right. This approach/layout will simplify the overall

application structure, might improve the logic of data flow, and

decrease the navigation confusions the testers had.