

Dear HR Knowledge, how do I better inform my employees of their benefits?

About 70 percent of employees don't believe they get good value for the money they spend on benefits, but only 15 percent of them realize how much those benefits cost you.

When your employees know more about their benefits, they're more likely to appreciate them and believe you care about their well-being. That's why developing a strategy to market, sell and communicate your employee benefit program to employees pays off. We recommend utilizing the following strategies to inform your employees of their benefits:

Know Your Benefits Program

Before you start informing your employees of their benefits, make sure you know exactly what plans your company offers, and all administrative information such as the dates and contracts that apply for each plan. It might be useful to create a comparison of benefits features and costs for each plan.

Develop a Communication Plan

Tailor your communication plan to the demographics of your workforce. Conduct a short survey, or talk to employees about what they want to know. Your benefit provider will have materials you can share. Add information about how much employees are paying for their benefits.

Offer information in a variety of formats:

- Written materials employees can read and bring home to their families.
- Interactive online materials that help them learn, model and compare benefit scenarios.
- In-person presentations and focus group sessions.
- Q&A sessions staffed by your benefit provider.

Help prepare your communication plan by designating who will prepare each communication and any necessary costs. It might be helpful to consider both internal and external assistance.

Ensure Communications are Accessible

Be sure to include all required plan material (and any relevant optional material) in formats that make them accessible to all employees. You may need to print in other languages, and make them accessible for mobile devices. Be mindful of the language you use to make sure everyone understands each benefit clearly, without simplifying any



important terms or conditions. Keep all your employees and beneficiaries informed of all changes to their plans as well.

Try Selling Your Benefits Program to Employees and Manager

While the purpose of some communication material might be to educate, the purpose of other communication might be to promote your benefits program to your employees. Ask your Benefits Broker for help when you draft materials. Just as you might market a new customer loyalty program to customers, you might need to market and sell your employee benefits program to employees for maximum awareness and appreciation. Be sure to take employee feedback into consideration as well, and study any research or reports from your providers.

You can also try selling your benefits program to a manager or senior staff member. Some key areas to focus on when promoting the communication plan include measurable objectives on the benefits of your communication plan such as money or time saved, and prioritize compliance with legal regulations and clarity.

Evaluate the Success of the Program

When you've shared your benefits communication plan with everyone, be sure to follow up and provide methods of obtaining feedback, such as surveys or establishing and monitoring behavior, to find out what worked best and which goals you need to revise to meet your employees' and organization's needs.

About HR Knowledge

Founded in 2001, HR Knowledge, Inc. is a privately funded company providing integrated outsourced HR services tailored to our clients' needs. Our full array of offerings includes managed payroll, employee benefits administration, and HR consulting and support services, such as training, compliance, custom-built software solutions, and Hiring Process Management™, our comprehensive recruitment service that takes you from finding to onboarding new talent. Our major markets are fast-growing small- and medium-sized businesses, many of which are venture-capital-backed; foreign companies expanding into the states; and charter schools. Partnering with HR Knowledge can reduce your administrative costs, minimize your legal risk, help you find and develop talent, and alleviate the HR burden so that you can focus on your core business.

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