

WHEN ROLLING OUT NEW BENEFITS CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PRE-LAUNCH TASKS:

Consider the impact of the new benefit impact your employee's lives

While deciding to launch a new benefit might be the result of a cost cutting exercise or even responding to employees' concerns, it is critical to consider what effect a change from the status quo will have on your employees' lives.

While some may welcome the change, many others will be reluctant. All change is not perceived with equal enthusiasm across all levels of a company.

For example, if you are changing insurance providers due to a majority of staff requesting it, you will still find a vocal minority of employees who might be agitated by the change and what it could mean for their and their families' level of care.



Therefore, it is imperative that all proposed changes are well thought out and considered via a communication plan prior to launch.

Review other policies within your handbook that may be impacted by this new benefit

Since some benefits changes may have unexpected impact on other policies or offerings, it is critical to think through the possible domino effects any new product will have on the rest of the organization.

For example, will changing deductible levels have any tax impact?

Would allowing a vacation buy back cause budget issues? What about changing insurance providers that benefit only families but are more costly for employees who are single?

These are all avoidable missteps in the communications process as long as all possible impacts are considered prior to rollout.



Appoint Champions

Appoint employee champions who will be responsible for encouraging participation among their peers. Choose champions from different seniority levels, office locations and departments within the organization both to maximize reach and to engage these champions to promote understanding of the new benefit.

To ensure that champions are well equipped to serve in their role, provide them with talking points and other resources that might be included in a communications toolkit.



Engage Leadership



The first step in building a culture of trust is to involve and engage company leadership.

When company leaders demonstrate support and proactively model healthy behavior, employee health efforts have been found to be more effective.

Once the communications plan and tools are ready, share them with organization leaders so they understand how to help encourage engagement.

Develop a Plan

Communications about the benefit should come early and often. These communications are critical to raising employee awareness and discouraging the perception of decision making in a vacuum.

Before launching the benefit, develop a rollout communications strategy and timeline, including your launch date, and checkpoints.

Regular communication with your employees about the the new benefit will demonstrate that your organization is transparent and open to feedback. We recommend that your communications plan includes details about when, how, and from whom, communications will be delivered.



Prepare Communications Tools

We recommend developing a series of emails to announce the benefit.

Initial communications and a few of the follow-up communications should come directly from the CEO or senior leader in the organization.

It is often helpful to create additional internal communications materials, such as flyers and intranet posts, using the provided messages and templates.

The following resources and templates may also prove useful in a communications toolkit:

- Core messages
- Talking points
- Frequently asked questions
- Slide presentation about the new benefit
- Template CEO emails
- Template newsletter
- Shareable infographic



Customize Messages Accordingly

Communications will be more effective if you are clear, concise and consistent in the way you talk about the new benefit.

However, one set of messages is unlikely to effectively motivate all of your employees.

Employees may seek different benefits and resources at different stages of life or based on different values.

The talking points provided in the communications toolkit are a sound starting point and will help create consistency, but your team should tailor this messaging based on additional insights you have into what your employees care about.

It is also important to diversify the different mediums used, such as email, hard copies of brochures or fliers, presentations with videos or slides, speaker series, lunch-n-learns, etc.



Host Employee Meetings

A few weeks prior to the launch date, we recommend hosting an employee town hall to let them know about the upcoming launch and provide an overview of the benefit.

This will provide a chance to raise awareness of the opportunity to use the tool and to start to address any questions/concerns your employees have.

