

10 Steps to a Successful Employee Benefits Rollout

Employee Benefits onboarding presents a trying time for both employee and human resource teams. As much as 58 percent of employees in the US face a broken onboarding process, according to a study from Nintex. Their problems center around healthcare enrollment and document and software tools, as well as other factors. Alleviating these concerns is critical, no matter if these are new employees or seasoned vets moving into new benefit offerings.

HR & Benefits managers are tasked, then, with creating a strategic plan to address these areas, build communication, and streamline the benefits rollout period. Doing so helps employees, as well as boosts HR productivity, efficiencies, and compliance. Here's how you can do this for your organization.

1. Establish Specific Enrollment Goals

The human resource team must first decide what the specific goals of the open enrollment period are. This can include:

- Rolling out new medical plans and wellness programs to boost employee health and reduce missed time off.
- Offering new voluntary plans for the team to improve company morale.
- Sourcing new ideas and learning about the struggles of employees.
- Discussing cost factors impacting current plans.
- Creating a step-by-step plan to onboard new talent in an efficient manner.

Each member of the human resource team should understand the goals and how to communicate these efforts to the workforce.



2. Simplify and Optimize Your Time

The open enrollment process requires communicating a significant amount of information. You should create engaging content that allows employees to explore the plan several days in advance of related meetings. Give employees time to develop questions. Then, be readily able to find solutions to their concerns. Simplify the process by having answers to frequently asked questions before they are asked. Keep communication lines open but optimize your time to limit overwhelming your group.



3. Define Corporate Objectives

Whether you are implementing a wellness plan to support your employees' personal health efforts or a new health insurance product to reduce out-of-pocket costs, be clear. Tell your employees – both the human resource team and the employees themselves - why you are making the change. Employees often times assume the worst, including that the employer is looking to trim costs. Address the actual cause, such as reducing fees paid by employees or improving investment options for them.



4. Communicate in Advance of Your Rollout

In the months leading up to the open benefits period, create opportunities for employees to engage in their new offerings. Allow them time to explore plan details and coverage. When possible, provide access to detailed health care coverage information. It helps to avoid complications and mistakes and also keeps employees from being shocked about an immediate change. Be sure to give them time to make room for open enrollment meetings and required events on their calendars. Refrain from causing any undue worry or stress amongst employees.



5. Require Employees to Participate in the Launch

Require employees to attend events, planning sessions, and rollout meetings. Employees must not assume they are getting equal coverage or a standard product. The goal of any open enrollment is for a company to offer its employees an opportunity to engage. Employees who engage in the enrollment process are more likely to use it and understand it. A few ideas for engagement:

- Create online portals of information requiring employees to watch a video presentation on their new benefits.
- Require them to attend meetings to obtain coverage. Notify employees who do not attend that they may miss the opportunity to obtain their benefits.
- Engage employees in an activity to ensure they understand their benefits. For younger, less seasoned employees, this helps them see what they are receiving.



6. Ensure You Are Digitally Ready

Most often, new plans mean new passwords and websites. Today, there are also apps to consider. Be sure you have taken the time to explore this component of the process. Have everything in place – and the kinks worked out – a few weeks in advance. Consider an online enrollment solution if you don't currently have one in place. Start with something simple and build from there.



7. Create a Schedule

Detail a comprehensive schedule. Timelines are critical during any open enrollment process. Work to delegate tasks to every human resource employee and create follow-ups. Utilize scheduling software and communication tools within the organization to keep this schedule on target. At the very least, it should outline:

- Who is involved
- What needs to be completed
- Who is handling the educational materials
- When initial documents must be filed
- Timelines for required enrollment
- Consequences of actions or inactions



8. Provide Special Assistance Options

Every person learns and gathers information in a different manner. Be sure to provide resources, tools, and guidance to address each employee's needs. Some employees will have ongoing concerns such as not understanding tasks or limited insight into the best decision for their needs. Many will worry about the impact of significant changes, even if they are improved benefits. Create a specific way they can get help and support. This could include:

- Representative engagement opportunities from the benefits provider
- Video demonstrations and tutorials
- One-on-one meetings with the broker or human resource staff
- An email or online network to log into with questions



9. Meet All Compliance Requirements

There are many, but your benefits providers and broker will help ensure you have a plan in place to achieve this. A key part of the communication you provide to your employees is the need to meet these compliance requirements. Stress the value in them, how to complete necessary documentation, and what your end goals are.



10. Show Employees The Value of The Benefits

While the human resource managers may view open enrollment as a challenging few weeks, to employees it is significantly stressful. People tend to view changes in their benefits as a negative vs a positive. During open enrollment periods, invest the time in easing their doubt. Provide information and insight to encourage them to see the move as positive. Take the time to explain their benefits to them. Focus on being as active in the employee enrollment as possible to show employees how important this process is. Ensure they know how important it is to your company that they are satisfied.



Ready to Get Help?

Even the most well-planned benefits rollout comes with challenges along the way. You do not have to do it alone. For help and support, and guidance in selecting the best benefits packages for your employees, give CoreMark Insurance Services a call at 866.340.2247. We're here to help you.



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