

## A Quick Guide to Navigating Benefits & Enrollment in Changing Times

With the employee experience evolving day-by-day due to the ongoing pandemic, benefits and enrollment in this new environment is a top concern for both employers and employees alike. In our recent SHRM webinar, "Navigating Benefits and Enrollment in Changing Times: Trends, Tips and Strategies for Success" we surveyed employers about their current employee benefits challenges and goals. Here's what the majority of respondents said:

Which benefits challenges are you most apprehensive about?

**52%** benefits engagement in a fully virtual environment

What key issues are you trying to tackle now and into next year?

**51%** brainstorming creative methods for educating and engaging remote employees with benefits

What's your main goal when it comes to improving your benefits communications?

**32%** creating more engaging benefits materials

**30%** making communications easier to understand

In short, employers have a lot to consider when it comes to navigating benefits and enrollment in today's uncertain world. Here are a few employee trends and how today's employers can respond to provide a positive benefits and enrollment experience.

bswift, 2020. Navigating Benefits and Enrollment in Changing Times: Trends, Tips and Strategies for Success - A SHRM webinar featuring bswift, sponsored by Aetna, a CVS Health Company

Employees are putting health first.



**75%+** of employers have remote workers but employees say **only 1/3** of them are offering additional resources for a healthy adjustment to remote work<sup>1</sup>

### What can you offer to help?

Telemedicine

Mental Health Care

Voluntary Insurance



**2/3** feel the pandemic has increased their willingness to try telehealth.<sup>2</sup>



**7 in 10** employees say COVID-19 is the most stressful time of their career.<sup>3</sup>



Employees say life insurance, hospital indemnity and critical illness coverage would offer peace of mind.<sup>4</sup>

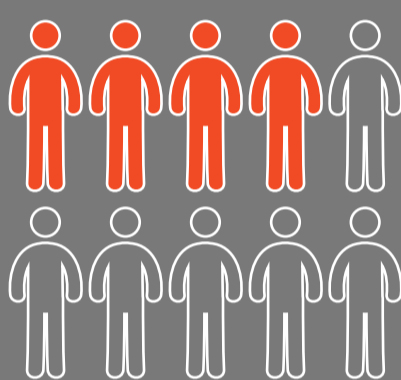
<sup>1</sup>Society for Human Resource Management, 2020 - [https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM\\_COVIDResearch\\_060120.pdf](https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM_COVIDResearch_060120.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Sykes, 2020 - <https://www.sykes.com/reports/2020-telehealth-survey/>

<sup>3</sup>Ginger, 2020 - <https://inexecutive.com/inex-number-of-the-day-coronavirus-stress/>

<sup>4</sup>MetLife, 2020 - Source: MetLife <https://www.metlife.com/about-us/newsroom/2020/april/more-than-half-of-employees-cite-financial-health-as-biggest-concern/>

## Employees need better benefits communications.



**Only 4 in 10** employees strongly believe their employer's benefits communication is simple to understand<sup>1</sup>



**37% of employees** strongly believe their employer's benefits communication is personalized.<sup>1</sup>

### How should you communicate?



Use a multichannel strategy



Communicate year-round



Keep communications simple



Be empathetic in tone

<sup>1</sup> MetLife, 2019 - <https://www.metlife.com/content/dam/metlifecom/us/ebts/pdf/MetLife-Employee-Benefit-Trends-Study-2019.pdf>

Employees are juggling many priorities.

More than **80%** say the crisis is materially affecting their daily work lives.<sup>1</sup>



### How can you make enrollment convenient?



Offer benefits and enrollment access via mobile device



Offer an enrollment experience that integrates with their benefits vendors

**73% of consumers** say valuing their time is the most important thing a business can do during a digital experience<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mckinsey & Company, 2020 - <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/covid-19-and-the-employee-experience-how-leaders-can-seize-the-moment>

<sup>2</sup>Forrester, 2016 - [https://go.forrester.com/blogs/16-03-03-your-customers\\_dont\\_want\\_to\\_call\\_you\\_for\\_support/](https://go.forrester.com/blogs/16-03-03-your-customers_dont_want_to_call_you_for_support/)

Employees are apprehensive about enrollment.

**50%** of employees felt apprehensive about open enrollment last year, even before the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

### How can you ease their apprehension?



Create a benefits education and resource hub within the enrollment platform



Provide access to experienced benefits professionals for guidance

<sup>1</sup>MetLife, 2019 - <https://www.metlife.com/about-us/newsroom/2019/september/one-in-three-us-employees-would-rather-talk-about-their-weight/>

## Employees are watching their finances.



By mid-April, **43% of U.S. adults** had already reported they or someone in their household had lost a job or taken a pay cut due to the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

### How can you help employees save?



Decision support tools can offer benefits cost transparency

<sup>1</sup>Pew Research Center, 2020 - <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2020/04/21/about-half-of-lower-income-americans-report-household-job-or-wage-loss-due-to-covid-19/>