

# Why Benefits Communication Is a Culture Strategy

When employees truly understand their benefits, something powerful happens: they feel more valued and positive about their employer. In fact, research shows 76% of workers who understand their benefits report being happy in their jobs, compared to only 47% who don't <sup>1</sup>. Better benefits understanding even translates to loyalty—about half of employees say that knowing more about their benefits would make them more loyal to their company <sup>2</sup>. This conversational white paper explores how clear and engaging benefits communication isn't just an HR admin task; it's a strategic tool for building a strong workplace culture. We'll discuss how effective benefits communication builds trust and transparency, makes employees feel valued, and ultimately boosts engagement and retention. We'll also look at examples (including a fictional case study, *InnovateCorp*) that demonstrate these outcomes in action. Finally, we'll highlight how FlashBenefits helps companies foster a positive culture through better benefits communication—using multi-channel tools like microsites, videos, podcasts, and chatbots, delivered on a rapid timeline to reach today's diverse workforce.

## Employees Who “Get” Their Benefits, Get Engaged and Loyal

One big insight for HR leaders: when employees are well-informed about their benefits, they tend to view their employer far more positively. Benefits are a tangible investment in employees' well-being, but that investment only pays off if employees understand and appreciate it. Studies confirm this link between **benefits understanding** and **employee sentiment**. When employees know what benefits they have and how to use them, they're much more likely to feel valued and appreciated by their employer <sup>3</sup>. It's no surprise that engagement and satisfaction climb as a result. A MetLife survey found that employees who understand their benefits are not only happier at work, but also feel more stability in their lives <sup>1</sup>. In other words, good benefits communication boosts peace of mind. Importantly for HR, it also boosts loyalty: 50% of employees say that having a better understanding of their benefits would make them more loyal to their employer <sup>2</sup>. Greater loyalty often means higher retention.

On the flip side, poor communication about benefits can create a void. If employees aren't aware of the benefits available to them, they may start to feel *undervalued*. They might even think the company is withholding support, which can breed frustration. In extreme cases, employees who feel in the dark about their benefits may begin looking for a new job <sup>4</sup>. After all, if they don't perceive value or care from their employer, their own loyalty will dwindle. This scenario is costly for employers – leading to higher turnover and lost talent. The lesson is clear: helping employees understand their benefits is not just nice-to-have, it's essential for keeping employees engaged and committed.

What does an engaged, benefits-literate employee look like? They're someone who actually *uses* their benefits and sees the real-life impact of those perks. As FlashBenefits succinctly puts it, employees who truly understand their benefits end up using them more, feeling more valued, and appreciating their employer's investment in them <sup>5</sup>. For example, an employee who clearly knows about a mental health counseling benefit is far more likely to utilize it when needed, leading to lower stress and higher productivity—whereas an uninformed employee might struggle alone, to the detriment of their well-being and work <sup>6</sup>. Similarly, a working parent who learns (through good communication) that their company

offers a childcare support program or flexible spending account will feel relieved and supported; as a result, they're more likely to stay with the company <sup>7</sup>. In short, effective benefits communication helps ensure employees actually *experience* the value of their benefits. This boosts their morale and gratitude, which translates into a stronger emotional connection with the employer. Employees who feel cared for in tangible ways ("My benefits helped me when I needed it") tend to be more **engaged, loyal**, and eager to contribute to a positive workplace culture.

## Building Trust and Transparency through Benefits Communication

Workplace culture thrives on trust and transparency. Benefits communication—when done right—can be one of the most concrete ways to demonstrate those values. Think of benefits info as more than dry paperwork; it's a dialogue between employer and employee that says, *"We're invested in your well-being, and we have nothing to hide."* Open, effective communication creates an environment where employees feel valued, stay engaged, and perform at their best <sup>8</sup>. When companies prioritize clear communication around benefits, they improve job satisfaction and help create a culture that **fosters loyalty** <sup>9</sup>.

**Trust** is a core component of feeling valued, and transparency in communication is how that trust is built. Every benefits communication—whether it's an email, a video, a guide, or an info session—is an opportunity to build credibility or erode it <sup>10</sup>. Informed employees tend to feel supported by the organization, which directly fuels higher engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty <sup>11</sup>. Consider recent findings from a global benefits survey: 79% of employees who receive engaging benefits communications feel their employer genuinely cares about their health and well-being, versus only 22% of employees who received little or poor communication <sup>11</sup>. That's a staggering difference in sentiment. With good communication, employees actually perceive that "my company cares about me." Along with that comes trust – over half of employees in the well-communicated group *trusted* their employer to provide timely, quality healthcare (54%), compared to just 23% trust among those who didn't get effective communication <sup>11</sup>. In other words, transparency and clarity in benefits info aren't just "nice extras," they actively build employees' trust in leadership's decisions and promises.

How does benefits communication foster transparency? One way is by explaining the *why* behind benefit changes or complex policies. Rather than simply announcing a change in coverage or costs, a transparent communicator will provide context: is the change due to new regulations? rising healthcare prices? an effort to improve offerings? Explaining these reasons treats employees like stakeholders, not bystanders. This honesty goes a long way. Even when changes are difficult, being open about them demonstrates respect for the workforce and helps foster trust <sup>12</sup>. For example, if health plan premiums are increasing, an upfront explanation ("premiums are rising by 5% because we've added a richer mental health benefit and costs have gone up industry-wide") will be far better received than a terse, context-free notice. Clear communication during these moments can reduce confusion and anxiety, helping employees feel supported despite the changes <sup>13</sup>. The takeaway: **transparency, even in tough situations, builds credibility**. Employees are much more likely to trust leadership that communicates openly about benefits and company decisions, rather than feeling blindsided by fine print.

Furthermore, effective benefits communication is **not a one-way street**. It's not just HR broadcasting information; it's also about listening and responding. Encouraging questions, feedback, and dialogue around benefits shows employees that their voices matter. Benefits should be a two-way conversation, not just an HR email blast <sup>14</sup>. When employees have channels to ask things like "How does our tuition reimbursement work?" or to express concerns ("I wish our dental plan covered orthodontics"), it makes

them feel heard and respected. Companies can facilitate this by setting up Q&A sessions, benefits fairs, or even AI chatbots that answer questions on the fly. (A quick tip: setting up a chatbot or live Q&A during open enrollment season can invite real-time questions and build trust through responsiveness <sup>15</sup>.) When employees feel *heard* and get answers, it reinforces that the company is being honest and attentive, further strengthening trust. Over time, this open dialogue creates a culture where employees aren't afraid to speak up, and management isn't afraid to communicate – a hallmark of high-trust organizations.

Finally, **clarity and simplicity** in communication signal respect as well. Ditching jargon and communicating in plain language shows that you want everyone to actually understand, not be baffled by legalese. Using visual and engaging formats (like infographics or explainer videos) can also boost comprehension and send the message that “we want to meet you where you are.” Studies suggest people retain about 80% of what they see, versus only 20% of what they read <sup>16</sup>, so providing information in a visual, digestible way isn't just more fun—it's more effective. When you make the effort to simplify complex benefits information, employees recognize that effort. It demonstrates empathy: you're saying “we know insurance terms are confusing, so we've broken it down for you.” That feeling of being looked out for contributes to a culture where employees feel valued and confident that leadership is being straightforward with them.

## Culture Outcomes: Trust, Value, and a “We’ve Got Your Back” Environment

What do all these positive communications ultimately lead to? In short: a stronger culture. When employees consistently receive clear, empathetic communication about their benefits, it creates a ripple effect across the organization. They feel **valued**, they trust their leaders, and they feel comfortable being open themselves. Over time, this builds a workplace atmosphere of support and engagement – essentially, a culture where people know “*my company has my back.*”

Let's paint a picture of what effective benefits communication can do, by looking at a few scenarios and outcomes:

- **Higher Benefits Utilization and Well-being:** At a company with great benefits communication, employees actually use their benefits. That means more people getting preventative care, using mental health resources, taking advantage of professional development funds, etc. Each of those actions improves employees' lives *and* their performance at work. For example, if an employee is struggling with anxiety but knows (because HR made a point to communicate it) that the company health plan covers counseling with a minimal copay, they're more likely to seek help. That employee may become healthier and more focused, rather than letting issues fester. Employers who effectively communicate programs like mental health support or childcare assistance often see increased uptake of those programs, which in turn boosts employee satisfaction and loyalty <sup>7</sup>. People feel genuinely grateful when a benefit eases a real burden in their life. That gratitude shows up as appreciation for the company.
- **Stronger Trust and Engagement:** As discussed, communication builds trust. When employees see that leadership is transparent about benefit options and changes, they're more inclined to trust management in other areas too. They'll bring up concerns sooner, participate in feedback opportunities, and engage with company initiatives because there's a foundation of trust. For instance, an employee who knows HR will give them a straight answer on a 401(k) question is more

likely to also trust the company's direction and speak positively about the employer to others. Over time, this can translate into higher engagement scores and a community feel—employees know they're not being kept in the dark. They feel like *partners* in the organization, not just recipients of top-down decisions.

- **Retention of Talent:** A culture of good communication helps retain employees. We've seen how understanding benefits can increase loyalty. When employees feel valued and supported (because they actually *feel* the support through their benefits), they have fewer reasons to leave. Consider a working parent at a company that not only offers a great parental leave policy, but also communicates it clearly, guides them through the process, and maybe even shares stories of other employees who benefited. That parent will likely feel a strong sense of loyalty and peace of mind, making them less likely to jump ship to a competitor. Even something as simple as reminding employees about lesser-known perks—say, a free subscription to a meditation app or a stipend for home office equipment—can delight and re-engage someone who might've been job-hunting out of disillusionment. Effective communication maximizes the *perceived* value of the total rewards package, which directly impacts retention. Why leave, when you know your current employer is taking care of you and making sure you don't miss out on anything?
- **Positive Employer Reputation:** Employees who feel taken care of often become vocal advocates. In HR terms, they become "engaged employees" who contribute to a positive culture and even bolster the employer brand externally. They might share their positive experiences on Glassdoor or with peers: "My company's benefits education is amazing—we have videos, a chatbot, everything, so I actually understand my options!" This kind of goodwill is invaluable for recruiting and overall company reputation. It all starts internally with treating benefits communication as an ongoing conversation and cultural priority.

In sum, clear benefits communication creates a virtuous cycle. Employees feel informed and supported; they trust the company and feel valued; they use their benefits and see personal gains, which reinforces their positive feelings; they stick around and contribute to a supportive environment for others. Over time, you cultivate a culture where employees genuinely feel the company cares about their well-being. And that culture **pays off** in engagement, productivity, and retention. As one HR thought leader put it, benefits communication is "*a massive role in employees' lives both at and outside of work*" – it leads to a "happier, more stable, and generally more satisfied workforce" <sup>1</sup> <sup>17</sup>. All of that starts with the simple act of communicating clearly and often about the support you provide.

## FlashBenefits: Building a Strong Culture with Better Benefits Communication

Making benefits communication a pillar of your culture strategy is easier with the right tools and partners. FlashBenefits helps companies bring all the ideas we've discussed to life through a **multi-channel, engaging communication platform**. Our mission is to turn benefits communication from a one-off HR task into an ongoing cultural advantage. How do we do that? By providing modern, interactive ways to inform and engage employees, all rolled out quickly and tailored to your workforce's needs.

**Multi-Channel Communication Tools:** FlashBenefits offers a comprehensive suite of communication tools to ensure every employee gets the message in a way that resonates. No single method reaches everyone,

so we leverage a mix of digital, print, and interactive channels to keep employees informed and engaged

<sup>18</sup> . Some of our key solutions include:

- **Branded Microsites:** We create a one-stop benefits hub for your company – a microsite where employees can access all their benefits information 24/7 <sup>19</sup> . This site is user-friendly (mobile-ready, searchable) and can house everything from plan details and FAQs to enrollment resources. It becomes the go-to place employees (and their families) can find answers, reducing confusion and repetitive questions to HR. (Think of it as your always-open benefits library.)
- **Personalized Videos:** Complex benefits topics become easy to understand when explained in short, engaging videos <sup>20</sup> . FlashBenefits produces custom videos that can walk employees through, say, how a High Deductible Health Plan works or how to enroll in the 401(k) in just a few minutes. Visual storytelling simplifies the jargon – employees tend to remember video content better than text, making these explainer videos highly effective. It's great for onboarding new hires or introducing a new benefit; instead of a dense email, employees get a quick, animated overview that sticks.
- **Podcasts:** For those who prefer audio or want to learn on the go, we create benefits podcasts <sup>21</sup> . These might be short episodes where we discuss topics like “Making the Most of Your Health Savings Account” or share employee stories (an interview with someone who used a benefit, for example). Podcasts are conversational and convenient – employees can tune in during a commute or while taking a walk. It's an easy way to build engagement and keep benefits top-of-mind without feeling like “more paperwork.”
- **AI-Powered Chatbots:** One of our most popular features is the benefits chatbot. This is like an “instant benefits helpdesk” available to employees 24/7. The AI-driven chatbot can answer common questions (“What's my deductible?” or “How do I add a dependent to my plan?”) instantly, in plain language <sup>22</sup> . It's accessible via the microsite or other channels and provides real-time support, which especially shines during crunch times like open enrollment. The chatbot not only empowers employees with quick answers, but it also reduces the load on HR teams by handling FAQs. And if the question is too complex, it can direct the person to the right human contact or resource. Having this always-available Q&A builds employees' confidence that *help is always just a quick message away*, reinforcing that supportive culture.
- **Interactive Newsletters & Email Updates:** FlashBenefits helps you deliver regular communications (monthly newsletters, enrollment countdown emails, etc.) that are actually engaging. We design newsletters with a mix of media – short articles, infographics, reminders, and even employee spotlights. Regular updates ensure that benefits stay in the conversation year-round, not just during hiring or open enrollment. These communications can be personalized to different employee groups (for example, highlighting retirement planning tips to an older cohort, or promoting student loan resources to younger staff). It's all about relevance, which keeps employees reading and builds trust through consistency.
- **SMS Text Reminders:** Need to reach employees who might ignore emails? Or want to catch people's attention for an urgent deadline? We incorporate text message alerts for important notices (e.g., “Reminder: Open enrollment closes tomorrow – enroll now if you haven't!”). Text/SMS notifications offer quick, direct communication and boast much higher open rates than standard emails <sup>23</sup> . They're great for ensuring no one misses a critical update or timeline. By meeting employees on

their phones, you increase the chances every individual, from in-office staff to field workers, gets the memo. It's another way to adapt to diverse communication preferences.

- **Physical Mailers:** For segments of the workforce that are offline, less tech-savvy, or simply appreciate a tangible touch, FlashBenefits can send out physical postcard mailers <sup>24</sup>. These mailers can highlight key benefits or serve as reminders (for instance, a mailer to home addresses announcing Open Enrollment dates or summarizing new benefits for the year). Partnering with print/mail ensures **no employee is left out**, even those without regular computer access <sup>25</sup>. Reaching deskless or remote employees with print materials shows inclusivity and care. An eye-catching postcard arriving at home can also engage an employee's family in the benefits conversation, which is valuable for decision-making and underscores transparency.

All these channels work in concert. The goal is to meet employees *where they are* and in ways they prefer. By simultaneously leveraging digital tools and traditional methods, FlashBenefits ensures comprehensive reach and understanding across diverse employee groups <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup>. A multi-channel strategy acknowledges that a workforce isn't monolithic—people have different learning styles and communication access. By providing information through multiple avenues, you create a more inclusive communication culture. Everyone from Gen Z techies to long-tenured offline workers gets the message in a form that resonates.

**Fast and Tailored Implementation:** We know that timing and relevance are everything when it comes to communication. FlashBenefits stands out for its **rapid implementation** and customization capabilities. Unlike some traditional communications rollouts that can take 2-3 months of lead time, FlashBenefits can deliver a fully tailored benefits communication solution in just 1–2 weeks <sup>28</sup>. This speed means you can respond quickly to emerging needs—whether it's a sudden policy change, a new benefit you're rolling out, or simply getting your open enrollment communications prepared without breaking a sweat. Our ability to move fast comes from combining standardized best practices with cutting-edge tech (like AI content generation for videos and chatbot knowledge bases). The communications are **tailored** to your company's branding, benefits, and messaging priorities, so it feels personal to your employees, yet we've streamlined the process so it's efficient to implement. The result: you get engaging, high-quality content without the typical wait. This fast turnaround is especially valuable for fostering culture because it allows you to keep the conversation current and continuous. Benefits communication isn't a one-time dump of info; it's an ongoing flow. FlashBenefits helps you maintain that steady drumbeat of communication with minimal lag, reinforcing trust through consistency and responsiveness.

**Reaching a Diverse Workforce:** As we've emphasized, reaching *everyone* is key to an inclusive culture. FlashBenefits prides itself on being able to engage a diverse, distributed workforce. Whether your employees sit in corporate offices, retail floors, factory lines, or are always on the road, we have channels to connect with them. We can accommodate various languages (so multilingual workforces get content in their preferred language) and various formats to address accessibility needs (like transcripts for videos, mobile-friendly design for all tools, etc.). By using a blend of email, mobile, web, and print communications, we make sure essential benefits messages effectively reach every employee, regardless of their access to technology or preferred communication method <sup>29</sup> <sup>25</sup>. This inclusive approach not only improves understanding, but also signals to employees that "we see you" – no matter your role or location, the company wants you informed and engaged. That sentiment in itself is culture-building: it breaks down the common feeling that remote or frontline employees are "out of the loop." Instead, everyone feels equally valued and informed.

**InnovateCorp Example (A FlashBenefits Case in Practice):** To help illustrate how these tools come together, FlashBenefits has created a robust example solution for a fictional company called *InnovateCorp* (a make-believe case study designed to show impact). This example is showcased on our website as a demo, and it exemplifies our full-service offering <sup>30</sup>. In the InnovateCorp scenario, employees have a fully branded “**InnovateCorpCares**” microsite dedicated to their benefits – the central hub where they can explore all their options and resources. There’s a customized AI-driven **chatbot** that answers InnovateCorp employees’ benefits questions instantly, any time of day <sup>22</sup>. Personalized **videos** clearly communicate key benefit offerings (for example, a video might walk an InnovateCorp new hire through their health plan choices in 2 minutes). Employees also have access to a library of engaging **educational videos** on various topics (e.g., retirement planning, wellness tips), so they can learn at their own pace. To keep everyone continuously informed and involved, InnovateCorp’s program includes monthly **newsletters** packed with tips and reminders, each accompanied by an informative **podcast** episode <sup>31</sup>. This multi-channel, branded approach means that if you were an InnovateCorp employee (remember, it’s a fictional company), you would always have an easy way to learn about your benefits—whether you prefer reading details on a site, watching a quick video, asking the chatbot a specific question, or listening to a podcast on your commute. The InnovateCorp example is clearly labeled as a hypothetical case, but it provides a concrete vision of what is possible. HR professionals who see it often say, “I wish *my* company’s benefits communication looked like this!” The purpose of InnovateCorp is to inspire real organizations to imagine the cultural impact of a fully engaged benefits communication strategy: more informed employees, fewer headaches for HR, and a workplace where everyone feels the company genuinely cares about their well-being. *(You can explore the InnovateCorpCares demo on the FlashBenefits website; remember, it’s a sample created to illustrate potential impact.)*

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In conclusion, **benefits communication is far more than just explaining insurance options once a year**. It is a strategic lever for shaping your company’s culture. When employees consistently receive clear, transparent, and engaging communication about their benefits, they internalize an important message about your organization’s values: that you care, that you listen, and that you invest in your people. They, in turn, feel greater trust, loyalty, and motivation. As HR professionals and benefits managers, elevating your benefits communication strategy is one of the most direct ways you can influence workplace culture for the better. It builds a foundation of trust and appreciation that spills over into all aspects of the employee experience.

The great news is that you don’t have to do it alone. With partners like FlashBenefits, you can quickly implement a multi-channel, modern communication approach that resonates with today’s employees. Whether it’s through microsites, videos, chatbots, or good old-fashioned print, the goal is the same: make sure every employee understands their benefits and feels the company’s support. By doing so, you turn benefits communication into a culture strategy—one that cultivates a happier, more engaged, and more resilient workforce. It’s an investment not just in better HR outcomes, but in a stronger company culture where employees truly feel “*we’re in this together.*”

#### Sources:

- MetLife, *Employee Benefit Trends Study 2023* – Findings on the impact of benefits understanding on employee happiness and loyalty <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>.
- Justworks, *The Power of Effective Employee Benefits Communication* – How clear benefits communication makes employees feel valued and boosts satisfaction <sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> <sup>6</sup>.

- Employee Benefit News, *How communication boosts employee retention and satisfaction* – Effective communication (including about benefits like childcare) fosters a valued feeling and improves retention <sup>8</sup> <sup>7</sup> .
- Mercer Marsh Benefits, *Health on Demand 2025* – Data showing engaging benefits communication significantly increases employees' trust in and sense of care from their employer <sup>11</sup> and that transparency during benefits changes builds trust <sup>12</sup> .
- FlashBenefits "5 Steps to Transforming Employee Benefits Communication" Infographic – Tips on personalizing communication, diversifying channels, and encouraging two-way dialogue <sup>32</sup> <sup>15</sup> .
- FlashBenefits Internal Documents – *Product Carousel and MN Cup Submission* detailing FlashBenefits' multi-channel solutions (microsites, videos, podcasts, chatbots, SMS, mailers) and rapid implementation (1–2 weeks vs. industry 8–12 weeks) <sup>33</sup> <sup>26</sup> , as well as the fictional InnovateCorp example illustrating these tools in action <sup>31</sup> .

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> <sup>17</sup> **EMPLOYEES WHO WANT HAPPINESS AND STABILITY CAN'T OVERLOOK BENEFITS**

<https://www.metlife.com/about-us/newsroom/2023/september/employees-who-want-happiness-and-stability-cant-overlook-benefits/>

<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> <sup>6</sup> **Effective Employee Benefits Communication - Justworks**

<https://www.justworks.com/partners/blog/the-power-of-effective-employee-benefits-communication>

<sup>5</sup> <sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> <sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> <sup>33</sup> **FlashBenefits Product Carousel.pdf**

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<sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup> **Communication boosts employee retention and satisfaction | Employee Benefit News**

<https://www.benefitnews.com/news/communication-boosts-employee-retention-and-satisfaction>

<sup>10</sup> **Benefit Communications Is a Test of Trust - WordsFresh**

<https://www.wordsfresh.com/benefit-communications-is-a-test-of-trust/>

<sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> **Building trust through benefits: Why communication matters more than ever | Marsh**

<https://www.marsh.com/en/services/employee-health-benefits/insights/effectively-communicating-benefits.html>

<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> <sup>32</sup> **Transforming EE Benefits Comms - InfoGraphic.pdf**

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<sup>22</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> <sup>31</sup> **MN Cup Submission.pdf**

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