

A Quick Guide to Happier, Healthier Employees

# **WHY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BENEFIT EVERYONE**

## **Give your workforce what it really wants**

Sourcing the best talent has always been a headache for employers. And when you're a small business with a limited budget, it's even harder. After all, it's a competitive talent market, and on paper, big business can simply offer more. But there are ways to attract the right people to your company that don't require endless financial resources.

Of course, getting talent through the door isn't the only challenge. To maintain standards and meet your growth goals, you also need to find a way to keep that talent around. And to do that you need to truly engage every person in your organisation.

Experts claim successful engagement can lead to workers being as much as 18% more productive<sup>1</sup>. But what leads to successful engagement? Money is one motivator. But there's one thing that's far more important.

Above all else, people want to feel valued by their employer and happy in their roles, and easy-to-implement employee benefits can play a huge part in achieving this – repaying your people for their hard work and contributing to their overall happiness and wellbeing.

<sup>1</sup> Harter et al, 2012/ACAS – Building Productivity in the UK (Junk 2015)

This eBook will show you how you can attract, reward, and retain employees alongside the biggest in your industry with Sage Employee Benefits.

*"Colleague engagement strategies have a big impact on productivity levels...my turnover is up, my profitability has doubled in the last couple of years, the number of people I have in the business has gone down by 30%. Interestingly, at the same time my colleague engagement has gone up."*

**Steve Cooper**, CEO, Personal Banking, Barclays

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## The big benefit of employee benefits

Having a well-thought-out benefits plan will go a long way towards getting the right people through the door. In fact, 87% of professionals say a wellness policy is important to them when considering new opportunities<sup>2</sup>. But beyond this, the right benefits can also be crucial in engaging your employees and showing them that you understand their needs.

Get this right, make your people feel valued, cared for and appreciated, and there are big benefits for you as an employer too.

Research shows that employees who are very satisfied with their benefits are almost four times more likely to be very satisfied in their jobs<sup>3</sup>.

**70%**

of chief financial officers view workplace wellbeing as a strategic priority<sup>4</sup>.

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## Happiness made easy

It's now easier than ever to offer and manage these benefits, too.

Widely available in the form of portals and mobile apps, benefits platforms are becoming an increasingly valuable source of information for employers – who are able to not only administer benefits selections, but post information and monitor uptake, too.

These platforms provide access to key health and wellbeing services, Employee Assistance Programmes, background information, and the ability to select new benefits.

Crucially, they also provide important insights into specific ROIs, like reduced absenteeism and productivity gains. With this information, you can highlight the benefits that have the biggest effect on your people and use that data to continually improve the rewards you offer.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Walters - The Value of Promoting Employee Health and Wellbeing

<sup>3</sup> MetLife 2014/15 Employee Benefits Trends Survey

<sup>4</sup> Deloitte

# Spreading the word

Making your employees aware of the pros and cons of individual benefits is key to any wellbeing strategy. You can have the best programmes in the world, but if people don't know about them then uptake will be low. And if uptake is low, your people and your business will suffer.

You can generate interest for your benefits schemes by signposting information on the benefits platform itself, or by sitting down with people on an individual basis and running them through the rules that apply to things like salary sacrifice, for example – which can impact tax credits.

Taking the time to explain an employee's options not only boosts uptake but adds value to the benefits being offered, according to the independent consultancy, Jelf. Despite this, less than half of the employers surveyed by Jelf provide regular updates to their employees on available benefits.

## Sage takeaways

- Always alert your employees to new benefits
- Look for ways to further promote the benefits you offer
- Consider holding workshops to provide more detail
- Make a point of asking for feedback regularly

# 41%

of companies say they introduce or change benefits based on requests from their employees<sup>5</sup>.

# Choosing the right benefits

The modern workforce is a diverse place, and not everyone is going to want the same benefits.



By 2020, **a third of the UK's workers** are expected to be over the age of 50<sup>6</sup> – and research shows that more and more employees are staying on well beyond traditional retirement age.

It's now vital that you have the ability to attract older workers and understand what's important to people at the various stages of their lives, as this will be a key part of your benefits strategy's success.

A PwC survey of 2,400 UK employees found that preferences for benefits vary greatly between genders and age groups. For example, medical insurance proved more popular with women, while men were more in favour of company car schemes.

Women were also nearly twice as likely as men to ask for childcare benefits, while pensions and workplace share schemes proved more popular among male employees.

Overall, every respondent revealed a preference for employee benefits that cut the cost of living.

<sup>5</sup> The Benefits Research 2014

<sup>6</sup> Office for National Statistics, 2007, Labour market projections 2006-2020

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## When asked to rank a selection of new employee benefits, workers chose:

1. Discount shopping vouchers
  2. Healthcare
  3. Help with mortgage rates
  4. Extra holiday days
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Access to a better rate of mortgage is a popular choice for all employees, with 37% citing it as a benefit they'd most like to see introduced. As you might expect though, the popularity of this perk varied between age ranges, attracting 36% of respondents in their 20s; 43% in their 30s; and 38% in their 40s.

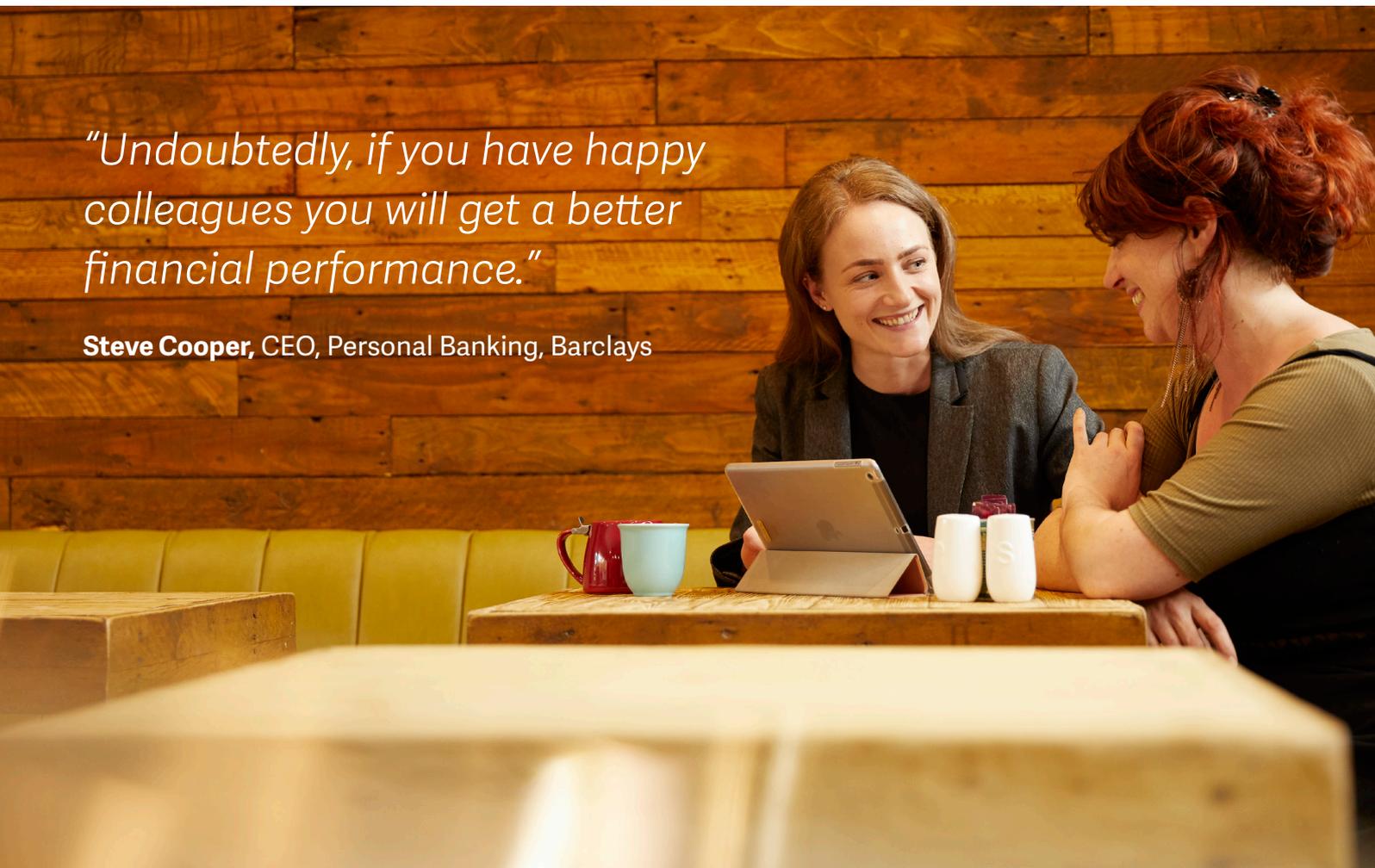
Younger employees were also more likely to opt for workplace training, with a quarter of 18-24-year-olds choosing a four-day training programme over monetary benefits.

Other benefits that proved popular with this demographic included:

- Company cars
- Gym membership
- Discounted (or free) food and drink

### Sage takeaways

- Offer benefits that appeal to a wide range of employees
- Help your employees personalise their plan
- Ask for feedback and be open to change



*"Undoubtedly, if you have happy colleagues you will get a better financial performance."*

**Steve Cooper**, CEO, Personal Banking, Barclays

# The importance of wellbeing

In small businesses, employees are like family. Naturally you care about their wellbeing, and a selection of health benefits can go a long way towards showing that.

Fears about the state of the National Health Service has led to an increasing interest in health-related benefits for employees, according to a study by Busy Bees Benefits. In its Changing Perceptions of Personal Financial Health and Wellbeing Research, it found:



**69%**

of employees are more concerned about their health than they used to be



**65%**

are worried that the level of health support they can expect to receive from the state is declining



**40%**

would purchase health and wellbeing products through their employee benefits programme in the future

Health benefits for your employees also benefit your company, leading to fewer sick days and greater productivity.

*"Motivate, inspire and engage...and so a lot of my time is spent thinking 'is the company fully engaged? Are we doing things that are disengaging people? What can we do to improve that?'"*

**Jane Griffiths**, Company Group Chairman, Janssen EMEA

## Sage. Rewarding the Nation.

With Sage Employee Benefits you can truly reward and inspire your team, making lives easier and people happier with OnDemand GP, ride to work schemes, retail discounts and lots more.

Businesses like yours using Sage Employee Benefits have seen savings of £64k through salary sacrifice schemes, £510 saved through reduced sick days, and £1k saved by staff thanks to retail discounts.

To find out more about how you can attract the best talent in a competitive landscape, and keep your people happy and healthy, visit <https://www.sage.com/en-gb/products/sage-employee-benefits/>

