LET'S TALK FINANCIAL WELLNESS®

July/August 2026

Time To Review Your Benefit Package?

Researchers at Oxford University discovered that happy workers are 13% more productive. Additionally, a study by the job search firm Indeed, "Classic Employer Benefits Still Drive Job Seeker Decision," reported that 49% of US job seekers say "better benefits" motivate their search—second only to higher pay. These figures alone might encourage you to review your benefits package. But there's more to consider.

Make New Friends, But Keep the Old

Another Indeed study shows that both "newer" and "traditional" benefits can work together to attract and retain the best employees for your needs. Traditional benefits are the standard offerings most employees expect: health insurance (including dental and vision), paid time off, and retirement plans. These essentials top the list of benefits workers seek, along with one newer benefit: flex time.

Regarding newer benefits gaining popularity, consider flexible work schedules, remote work options, student loan reimbursement, paid parental leave, and mental health days. These perks have become especially significant in a post-pandemic world where work-life balance is a top priority for many employees.

Offering flexibility shows your staff that you trust them to manage their own time. Plus, it helps you appeal to a wider talent pool, especially younger generations who prioritize work-life balance.

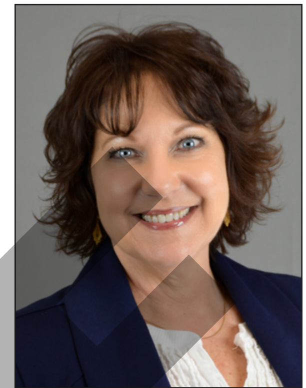
The Interplay

When traditional and newer benefits are combined, they create a well-rounded package that's more likely to help you attract and retain qualified employees. For example, if you offer solid health insurance and a retirement plan along with flexible hours or remote work options, you're not just checking boxes; you're sending a message that you care about both their professional and personal lives. It shows potential hires that your business values stability and adaptability—two qualities that resonate in today's workforce.

Putting it Together

You face financial constraints, and each company's workforce is unique. The effectiveness of benefits can differ by industry, so it's important to customize your approach to meet your business and employees' needs.

Review your workforce demographics and the benefits other small-business owners offer. Then consult your benefits advisor to see how you and your employees can maximize your benefits package.



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Small Business Version

Prudential

Celebrate Independence

As we prepare to celebrate Independence Day on July 4th—marking America's 250th birthday—fireworks, parades, and barbecues symbolize freedom from tyranny and the fight for self-determination. This spirit of liberty also strongly relates to personal finances: becoming debt-free is your own declaration of independence from financial burdens.

In recent years, U.S. household debt has reached record highs, with total consumer debt exceeding $18 trillion, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. High-interest credit card balances alone surpass $1.2 trillion, often with rates over 20%. Carrying excessive debt limits options, causes stress, and hampers true independence.

Debt management starts with a plan:

- Create a budget to track income and expenses, identifying areas to cut back.
- Prioritize high-interest debt using strategies like the debt avalanche (target highest rates first) or snowball (pay smallest balances for quick wins).
- Pay more than the minimum to reduce interest and accelerate payoff.
- Build an emergency fund to avoid new borrowing.
- Seek help if needed—credit counseling or consolidation can provide structured relief.

Just as the Founding Fathers fought for national sovereignty, take control of your finances to pursue freedom from creditors. This Independence Day, pledge to reduce your debt—your path to financial freedom and peace of mind.

Back-To-School Shopping Tips

Back-to-school shopping is an exciting but costly time for families. Households with K-12 students are expected to spend about $850–$900 on clothing, shoes, supplies, and electronics, according to the National Retail Federation. As costs increase, smart budgeting and saving strategies can help manage expenses without sacrificing quality.

Begin with a realistic budget and a prioritized list
Check your child's school supply list and take stock of what you already have at home—many notebooks, pens, or backpacks from last year might still be usable. Categorize needs into "must-haves" (essentials like binders and calculators) and "nice-to-haves" (new outfits or gadgets).

Shop sales and timing carefully
Back-to-school deals hit their peak in July and August—check weekly ads from stores like Target, Walmart, and Amazon. Take advantage of sales tax holidays in many states, and spread out your purchases to get the best discounts instead of buying everything at once.

Hunt for extra savings
Use coupons, cash-back apps, and credit card rewards. Buy gently used or refurbished clothing and tech from thrift stores, online marketplaces, or community groups. Think about buying in bulk for shared supplies like glue sticks or markers.

Involve the family
Establish spending limits together and promote reusing or repurposing items. These actions not only lower expenses but also help teach essential money-management skills.

With careful planning, you can outfit your student for success while staying financially comfortable.

Safe Financial Travel

Summer getaways are fun—but costly if you're not careful. Protect your money with these quick tips:

- Alert your bank/credit cards — Tell them your travel dates and destinations to avoid card freezes.
- Set a firm budget — Include flights, lodging, food, activities, souvenirs, plus a 15% buffer for surprises. Track spending daily.
- Use credit cards wisely — They offer better fraud protection than debit. Avoid public Wi-Fi for banking; use a VPN if needed. Carry some cash as backup.
- Dodge scams — Book only through trusted sites, skip wire transfers, ignore "free trip" offers or fake rentals. Verify everything.
- Monitor accounts — Check balances daily via apps and enable transaction alerts. Report issues immediately.

Plan smart, stay vigilant, and enjoy your trip worry-free—your wallet will stay safe too!

Advice For The College-Bound

You spent 18 years caring for almost every aspect of your child's life. Soon, your child will be heading to college and becoming independent. Help your child get ready for a life of independence – and responsibility – by reviewing some basic life skills.

Bank Account Basics
College-bound students need to know how to balance a checkbook, and that bounced checks cost a lot of money. Emphasize that an ATM card is not free money but merely simplifies withdrawals from a checking account.

Establish Credit
College students can benefit from establishing their own credit early in their first year. Because high interest charges add up quickly over time, teach your student to pay off any balance each month so that growing interest charges do not create a financial burden. Building good credit while in school can lead to cheaper credit after graduation, helping students buy vehicles and rent apartments more easily.

Health Insurance
Before your child leaves, ensure you are not automatically billed for college-sponsored health insurance. Usually, you can include or keep your children on your health insurance policy until they turn 26.

Let Go
Teaching your child the basics of money now will help you let go and see your young adult flourish.

Last Will And Testament

A last will and testament (commonly called a will) is a legal document that details your wishes for how your assets—such as property, money, and personal belongings—should be distributed after your death. It gives you control over your legacy, prevents confusion, and spares loved ones from relying on state intestacy laws, which might not match your preferences.

Key basics of a will include:

- Testator — You, the person creating the will, must be at least 18 (in most states) and of sound mind (understanding the document's purpose, your assets, and beneficiaries).
- Beneficiaries — Individuals, charities, or organizations you name to receive your property. You can make specific bequests and include a residuary clause for remaining assets.
- Executor — The trusted person you appoint to manage your estate, pay debts/taxes, and distribute assets during probate.
- Guardians — If you have minor children, designate a guardian to care for them.
- Validity requirements — The will must typically be written, signed by you, and witnessed by at least two disinterested people (not beneficiaries). Some states require notarization.

A will only covers probate assets; jointly owned property or accounts with beneficiaries pass outside it. While simple wills can be created with online tools, consult an estate attorney for complex situations to ensure enforceability.

Importance Of Managing Cash Flow

Effective cash management is the first step to making sure you have enough funds to meet your business's financial obligations. Cash planning helps you increase inventory, expand to new locations, and pursue other growth opportunities. It requires the focus and skills of everyone on your management team.

Providing a Snapshot

Your business's cash flow statement is an essential document. It records the cash coming in (inflows) and cash going out (outflows), including cash from operating, financing, and investing activities. The bottom line shows the amount of cash available to the company. It's a helpful starting point for your planning.

Maximizing Available Cash

Maximizing cash on hand should be a primary goal in managing cash flow. You can speed up collections by encouraging electronic payments and credit card use, and by offering customers discounts for prompt payments. Delay cash outflows by postponing payments to vendors as long as possible to keep more cash available. Implementing a purchasing plan can also help prevent your business from holding excess inventory without receiving payment, which can tie up cash in unsold goods.

Having Adequate Insurance

Business insurance protects you from financial setbacks caused by accidents, natural disasters, product defects, and legal claims. You can purchase individual policies for each risk or opt for a business owner's policy that combines all coverage options. Bundling is generally more cost-effective. Business owners with a home-based business who might not need extensive coverage can add a rider to their homeowner's policy, offering protection for a small amount of business equipment and liability coverage for third-party injuries.

Coordination is Key

Maintaining close relationships with your financial, legal, and tax professionals can provide the guidance needed to keep your business running smoothly. Financial and tax planning are essential activities for small business owners. Having professional guidance can offer an unbiased perspective to your efforts and help you better manage your business's cash flow.

ADVERTISING REGULATION DEPARTMENT REVIEW LETTER

March 5, 2026

Reference: **FR2026-0217-0226/E** Org Id: 23568

1. LTM-177 July/August Small Business
   Rule: FIN 2210
   5 Pages

Our review is based on the understanding that the final version of this communication will prominently disclose the name of the member, pursuant to FINRA Rule 2210(d)(3)(A). If our understanding is inaccurate, please notify the Department immediately as additional comments are necessary.

The communication submitted appears consistent with applicable standards.

Reviewed by,

Jeffrey R. Salisbury
Principal Analyst

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