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Benefits Communication Drives Bottom Line for Business

Research shows employers, employees find strong communication critical to benefits program effectiveness

COLUMBIA, S.C. (April 6, 2009) — A strong benefits communication plan can lead to greater employee satisfaction and a stronger bottom line for business, according to a new white paper released by Colonial Life. And employers who discount the value of communication risk wasting their company's considerable human capital investment.

"Benefiting the Bottom Line: How a Strong Benefits Communication and Education Strategy Helps Drive Business," was released nationally by Colonial Life today. The paper cites recent information from national human resources and business research organizations, as well as its own proprietary research, to examine the role of benefits communication in employee satisfaction and productivity and the return on investment for employers who implement effective communication strategies.

Key findings in the paper include:

- 90 percent of employers surveyed agree it's important to their business that employees understand and appreciate their benefits, but only 21 percent think their employees actually have a good understanding of them.[1]
- 94 percent of employers are interested in gaining access to resources to help educate employees about benefits.[2]
- 90 percent of employers said having one-to-one meetings significantly improves employees' understanding of their benefits. [1]
- 85 percent of employees feel happy about their benefits enrollment when their employer gives them all the resources needed to make informed decisions.[3]
- Employers can expect to realize key business and competitive advantages when they implement a strong benefits communication and education program, including decreased turnover, enhanced recruiting, increased enrollments, reduced benefits administration, more engaged and loyal employees, and improved productivity.

"Strong communication may be the single most important investment an employer can make in a benefits program," says Tom Gilligan, Colonial Life's senior vice president of marketing & branding. "Communication outweighs even the richness of the benefits package when it comes to how much employees value their benefits program."

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The paper also outlines key considerations for employers when creating or improving their benefits communication, including:

- Interactivity
- One-to-one support
- Multiple touchpoints
- Convenience
- Engaging employees throughout their employment lifecycle

Effective benefits communication strategies don't have to add expenses or administrative burdens for employers, according to the paper. There are many relatively easy and practical steps employers can take to strengthen the value of their benefits plans, including partnering with a benefits provider who can offer comprehensive benefits communication and education services.

Downloadable copies of "Benefiting the Bottom Line: How a Strong Benefits Communication and Education Strategy Helps Drive Business" are available at www.coloniallife.com/About/Newsroom.

For more information about benefits communication, call Colonial Life at (803) 798-7000 or visit www.coloniallife.com.

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1 Colonial Life, SHRM National Conference Survey, June 2008
2 Colonial Life, "Target Model and Larger Case Research: Break Out for Benefits Communications and Education," July 2008.
3 MetLife, 2008 Employee Benefits Enrollment Study, 2008.

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