

Businessolver's Benefits Insights report has consistently found that an average of 85% of employees struggle to understand their benefits. This confusion leads to difficulties throughout the entire experience, from enrolling in right-fit benefits to using crucial programs when employees might need them most.

The data is telling us a harsh truth: Employees are never going to understand their benefits. And they shouldn't have to.

It's no surprise that benefits are complex, and that complexity often results in a burdensome workload for many HR and benefits teams. And with healthcare costs continuing to rise and benefit expectations shifting as a new generation enters the workforce, these same HR teams are under added pressure to drive value across the benefits program for both their employees and their bottom line.

# Here's a look at some top-line benefit insights:



**97%** of employees **prefer email** as their primary method of communication.



**50%** of our virtual benefits assistant chats (Sofia<sup>SM</sup>), took place **outside of the Annual Enrollment period.** 



67% of employees elected a "right fit" health plan and a savings vehicle with personalized decision support.

We looked at how employees understand and engage with their benefits at the industry level to help HR teams better understand how to tailor their benefit programs with strategies and tactics aligned to their organization and workforce. This includes data to support:

- Personalizing the experience to drive engagement
- · Reducing friction and hurdles between employees and their benefits program
- Highlighting the value of the benefits program based on employees' needs

Across all industries, we found that personalization is critical to driving engagement and value, but that personalization looks different for each industry.

Ready to see how you can drive value in your benefits program? Read on to see how your company stacks up against industry findings.

#### Here's a look at some topline benefit insights:



**59%** of all employees described themselves as "healthy."



62% are on 1 or more prescription medications.



47% would feel panicked about a large ER bill.



19% unique engagement rate (a click or call) with a non-electable benefit such as telemedicine when employees were served personalized touches.

## **Table of Contents**

Finance Industry	5	$\Rightarrow$
Healthcare Industry	8	$\Rightarrow$
Retail Industry	11	$\Rightarrow$
Manufacturing Industry	14	$\bigcirc$
Business Services Industry	17	$\bigcirc$
Transportation Industry	20	
Hospitality Industry	23	
Construction Industry	26	

#### Methodology

Data for this ebook was captured across the Benefitsolver® platform to provide a more holistic view of employee benefits behavior and engagement. Specifically, data was pulled from the MyChoice® Recommendation Engine, which provides decision support at enrollment; Sofia, Businessolver's virtual benefits assistant: and personalized engagement solutions, including an embedded communication framework within Benefitsolver. By looking at data across the entire Businessolver book of business, encompassing 4.4 million employees across a wide variety of clients, we can better understand how employees are engaging with their benefits across the entire benefits lifecycle—from awareness to selection and ultimately activation.

## **Finance Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Finance employees are typically desk-based and willing to adopt and use tech-enabled solutions to manage their benefits. Millennials (41%) and Generation X (33%) make up nearly three-quarters of the population. A large percentage of finance employees (44%) make over \$100,000 a year.



## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

63% of finance employees describe themselves as healthy, +3 pts. compared to our entire book of business. 67% say they are fully prepared with cash savings for a large, unexpected expense (+5 pts.).



**47%** have a family history of illness

93% don't smoke

**60%** are on one or more prescription medication



**89%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**49%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

37% would feel panicked



**86%** are confused about their benefits

## **Finance Industry**

## **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

32% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our Al-enabled personal benefits assistant Sofia, on par with our book of business. 67% of finance employees elected right-fit coverage with the help of decision support, +24 pts. compared to our entire book of business.

#### How finance HR can drive value in benefits:

Overall, employees in the finance sector are likelier to be savvy about their benefits when it comes to pairing financial support and solutions alongside their medical elections. Though their risk tolerance mostly mirrors tolerance across the book of business, finance employees likely have a better understanding of how their lifestyle, such as planned events and overall health, play a deciding role in which benefits are most appropriate for their needs.

**84%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**33%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 4+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **43%** open rate



**70%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**17%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**48%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **87%** same-day resolution rate



## **Finance Industry**

## These employees are:

More financially prepared for the unexpected and less likely to feel panicked about large expenses.



Leverage personalization tactics, such as claims data and behavioral analytics, to target timely and specific messaging to your employees to help them put that financial knowledge to good use.

More engaged with their benefits across a variety of access points, most notably email communications and leveraging Sofia's support.

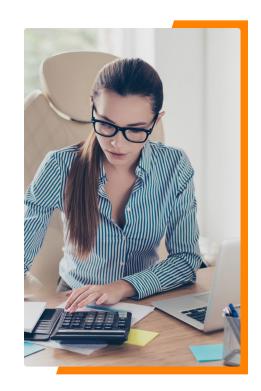


Use omni-channel communication to highlight the value of the entire benefits program.

More likely to elect right-fit health plan options but less likely to pair their medical elections with financial support vehicles, such as HSAs with an HDHP.



Implement decision support at time of enrollment and educational resources year-round to highlight the value of savings vehicles, like HSAs, and healthcare cost support, such as hospital indemnity.



## **Healthcare Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Healthcare employees are a diverse population and include a mix of desk-based employees, like administrative workers, and mobile employees, such as healthcare practitioners. Millennials (42%) and Generation X (32%) make up nearly three-quarters of the population. A large percentage of these employees (40%) are low-to-midrange earners, bringing in between \$30,000 - \$60,000 per year.



## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

38% of healthcare employees describe themselves as "average health," +3 pts. compared to our entire book of business, though fewer employees compared to all industries describe themselves as "healthy" (57%, -3 pts.). 56% say they are fully prepared with cash savings for a large, unexpected expense (-6 pts.).



**56%** have a family history of illness

94% don't smoke

**69%** are on one or more prescription medication



**85%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**40%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

54% would feel panicked



**83%** are confused about their benefits

## **Healthcare Industry**

#### **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

34% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our Al-enabled virtual benefits assistant Sofia, on par with our book of business. 70% of healthcare employees elected right-fit coverage with the help of decision support, +27 pts. compared to our entire book of business.

#### How healthcare HR can drive value in benefits:

Overall, employees in the healthcare industry demonstrate a willingness to engage with their benefits and a preference for tech-enabled support. However, these employees are also less prepared overall for unexpected healthcare costs, even though they self-report being more knowledgeable about their benefits in comparison to the book of business. These employees often work "non-traditional" hours outside of 9-5 and may not always be at a desk or have a computer available to them, so their engagement with email, Sofia, and mobile illustrates the value of omnichannel engagement.

Surprisingly, these employees also have a lower overall engagement with their employer-sponsored medical options compared to the book of business, indicating that they're either on a spouse/partner's plan or simply don't understand the value of what's available to them.

**87%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**34%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 4+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **53%** open rate



**58%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**56%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**37%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **89%** same-day resolution rate



## **Healthcare Industry**

## These employees are:

Less financially prepared for the unexpected and more stressed about it.



Promote financial wellness and support benefits, such as savings vehicles, cost-effective health plans, and other pre-tax benefits designed to help employees build savings and support themselves through unexpected health expenses.

#### More likely to seek out support after hours and on weekends.



Leverage technology that creates mechanisms for engaging in benefits and information 24/7.

## More likely to understand how their lifestyle and family history impacts their overall health.



Consider integrated claims information into your decision support and year-round engagement to drive a different level of understanding with your healthcare-savvy employees.



## **Retail Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Retail employees are typically made up of non-desk-based workers, such as sales associates and mobile management, and benefit from a tech-driven benefits engagement approach. Millennials (41%) and Generation Z (22%) make up a majority of the employee population. Over half (57%) are low-midrange earners, bringing in \$30,000-\$60,000 per year.



## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

40% of retail employees describe themselves as "average health," +6 pts. compared to our entire book of business, though fewer employees compared to all industries describe themselves as "healthy" (55%, -5 pts.). 54% say they are fully prepared with cash savings for a large, unexpected expense (-8 pts.).



**49%** have a family history of illness

87% don't smoke

**58%** are on one or more prescription medication



**83%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**38%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

54% would feel panicked



**86%** are confused about their benefits

## **Retail Industry**

## **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

30% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our Al-enabled benefits assistant Sofia. 17% of active eligible employees enrolled in a high-deductible health plan, -26 pts. compared to our entire book of business.

#### How retail HR can drive value in benefits:

Overall, employees in the retail sector struggle to protect or maintain financial stability and are more likely to feel panicked when faced with an unexpected cost. Retail employees have a higher desire to engage with digital communications, such as email and mobile, but likely would benefit from steerage to in-platform support (such as Sofia or a resource center) to help them avoid waiting on hold for a live rep.

**82%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**31%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 4+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **51%** open rate



**54%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**45%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**33%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **93%** same-day resolution rate



## **Retail Industry**

## These employees are:

More likely to engage with digital access points, like a mobile app or Alpowered support tools.



Leverage and promote benefits platform apps, especially those that offer full access to view, manage, and engage with benefits same as through a desktop platform.

#### Less financially prepared for the unexpected and more stressed about it.



Promote the availability and value of financial wellness benefits, such as pre-tax savings vehicles, ancillary voluntary benefits and paycheck-protectors.

#### More likely to seek out support after-hours or on weekends.



Use a "mobile and personal email first" approach to drive effective communications across your employee populations year-round, especially so they continue to seek information outside of business hours.





## **Manufacturing Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Manufacturing employees are typically made up of non-desk-based workers, such as assembly line workers and mobile management, and benefit from a tech-driven benefits engagement approach. Millennials (44%) and Generation X (28%) make up a majority of the employee population. Over a third (37%) are low-midrange earners, bringing in \$30,000-\$60,000 per year, and another third (36%) bring in \$90,000 or more per year.





## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

33% of manufacturing employees describe themselves as "average health," on par with our entire book of business, and 62% describe themselves as "healthy." 56% say they are fully prepared with cash savings for a large, unexpected expense (-6 pts.).



**43%** have a family history of illness

91% don't smoke

**54%** are on one or more prescription medication



**86%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**43%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

46% would feel panicked



**87%** are confused about their benefits



## **Manufacturing Industry**

## **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

34% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our Al-enabled benefits assistant Sofia. 37% of active eligible employees enrolled in a high-deductible health plan, +11 pts. compared to our entire book of business.

## How manufacturing HR can drive value in benefits:

Overall, employees in the manufacturing industry describe themselves as slightly healthier and more prepared for unexpected costs compared to the book of business as a whole. These employees also tend to have a higher risk tolerance and a lower stress response in the face of the unexpected. Though employees in this industry appear to have a higher likelihood of adopting a tech-enabled experience, they are less likely to engage with Al support, such as Sofia.

**86%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**43%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 4+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **46%** open rate



**70%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**44%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**61%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **85%** same-day resolution rate



## **Manufacturing Industry**

#### These employees are:

More risk tolerant, but not fully aware of how their job or lifestyle impacts their wellbeing.



Offer decision support at enrollment to help guide employees towards right-fit plans and connect the dots between their health, wellbeing, risk, and lifestyle.

Willing to engage with digital engagement tools but more likely to prefer to speak with a live representative when they need to resolve an issue.



Capitalize on this population's high adoption of technology by highlighting navigation, decision, and knowledge support tools. Encourage an omni-channel approach to support where a live rep is available during the 9 to 5 but still provide access to AI benefits assistance to support on nights and weekends.

More likely to adopt cost-effective plan options, such as HDHP+HSA.



Use a mobile-first approach to ensure year-round benefits engagement with these programs and getting the most out of the HSA.





## **Business Services Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Business services employees are typically made up of a mix of desk and non-desk workers and benefit from a tech-driven benefits engagement approach. Millennials (45%) and Generation X (31%) make up a majority of the employee population. A third (30%) are low-midrange earners, bringing in \$30,000-\$60,000 per year, and half (51%) bring in \$90,000 or more per year.



## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

36% of business services employees describe themselves as "average health," on par with our entire book of business, and 58% describe themselves as "healthy." 61% say they are fully prepared with cash savings for a large, unexpected expense.



**48%** have a family history of illness

92% don't smoke

**60%** are on one or more prescription medication



**84%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**41%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

47% would feel panicked



**81%** are confused about their benefits



## **Business Services Industry**

#### **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

28% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our Al-enabled benefits assistant Sofia, -8 pts. compared to our book of business. 23% of active eligible employees enrolled in a high-deductible health plan, -3 pts. compared to our entire book of business.

#### How business services HR can drive value in benefits:

Overall business services employees have a lower risk tolerance compared to the book of business, though their benefits understanding is on par with other industries. These employees' behavior in the platform indicates a willingness to engage with omnichannel communications, especially mobile options, as well as tech-enabled support like Sofia.

While these employees are less likely to elect employer-sponsored medical benefits, those who do are much more likely to elect cost-effective health plans and pair that with a savings vehicle, such as an HSA. These employees' self-reported financial preparedness and emotional responses to health expense scenarios indicates a larger gap in financial wellness and understanding compared to other industries.

**88%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**38%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 4+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **43%** open rate



**60%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**28%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**69%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **76%** same-day resolution rate



## **Business Services Industry**

## These employees are:

More willing to engage with omnichannel communications.

Deploy year-round communication efforts across channels that highlight both the full shelf of benefits available and the value of those benefits as it relates to employees' needs.

#### More likely to seek out support after hours and on weekends.

Utilize a tech- and data-driven approach to benefits administration, especially personalized decision support at enrollment and 24/7 support, like an Al benefits assistant, to reduce wait times and help guide employees through their benefits in the moments they're engaging.

#### Less prepared to handle unexpected expenses emotionally and financially.

Promote the availability and value of financial wellness benefits, such as pre-tax savings vehicles, ancillary voluntary benefits and paycheck-protectors.





## **Transportation Industry**

#### What this population looks like:

Transportation employees are a diverse population struggle to maintain financial stability and struggle to understand the connection between their lifestyle behaviors and their wellbeing. Millennials (41%) make up just over two-fifths of the population. A majority of transportation employees (60%) make between \$30,000 and \$60,000 a year.



## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

96% of transportation employees describe themselves as healthy or of average health, but lifestyle habits suggest otherwise: 15% smoke tobacco, 17% are on 2 or more medications, and 42% say they have a history of family illness. 57% said they would feel panicked about a large, unexpected medical expense like an ER bill.



**42%** have a family history of illness

85% don't smoke

**51%** are on one or more prescription medication



**83%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**35%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

**57%** would feel panicked



**85%** are confused about their benefits



## **Transportation Industry**

#### **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

22% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our <u>Al-enabled personal benefits assistant Sofia</u>, slightly below par with our book of business. However, medical benefits enrollment is quite low compared to book of business, indicating that these employees are likely seeking medical plans through a partner or spouse's employer instead.

## **How Transportation HR can drive value in benefits:**

Overall, employees in the transportation sector are likelier to need more support when it comes to understanding what benefits are available to them, the value of those benefits as it relates to their needs, and how their lifestyle plays a role in defining their overall health and wellbeing. Though these employees have a low risk tolerance, they also have a low understanding of their benefits and a relatively low rate of engagement compared to the overall book of business. Transportation employees especially would benefit from greater adoption of mobile services and tools, including an app, given that this population likely isn't desk-based.

**80%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**26%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 5+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **51%** open rate



**58%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**23%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**35%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **86%** same-day resolution rate



## **Transportation Industry**

## These employees are:

More willing to engage with omnichannel communications.

The use of email and text as the primary communication channels presents an excellent opportunity for HR to promote benefits awareness and engagement through these platforms.

#### Less financially prepared for the unexpected and more stressed about it.

Promote financial wellness and support benefits, such as savings vehicles, cost-effective health plans, and other pre-tax benefits designed to help employees build savings and support themselves through unexpected health expenses.

#### More likely to seek out support after hours and on weekends.

More likely to seek out support after hours and on weekends. Leverage technology that creates mechanisms for engaging in benefits and information 24/7.





## **Hospitality Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Hospitality employees are a diverse population who struggle to maintain financial stability and are more likely to consider themselves as "healthy" compared to their peers in other industries. Millennials (41%) make up just over two-fifths of the population. A majority of hospitality employees make between \$30,000 and \$60,000 (40%) or \$90,000+ (32%) a year.





## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

96% of hospitality employees describe themselves as healthy or of average health, but lifestyle habits suggest otherwise: 15% are on 2 or more medications, 31% live a risk-driven lifestyle, and 42% say they have a history of family illness. 47% said they would feel panicked about a large, unexpected medical expense like an FR bill



42% have a family history of illness

92% don't smoke

52% are on one or more prescription medication



87% are able to save money some or all of the time

> 45% could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

**57%** would feel panicked



85% are confused about their benefits



## **Hospitality Industry**

#### **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

41% of all service center phone calls are resolved via our technology, such as our <u>Al-enabled personal benefits assistant Sofia</u>, nearly double compared to our book of business. Hospitality employees are more likely to benefit from digital and mobile-based support, such as the MyChoice Mobile App or Sofia, though they have a lower benefits engagement or utilization of those tools, likely due to confusion or lack of awareness.

## **How Transportation HR can drive value in benefits:**

Overall, employees in the hospitality sector are likelier to need more support when it comes to understanding what benefits are available to them, how to leverage the technology available to them, and how to connect the dots between their lifestyle, finances, and wellbeing. Though hospitality employees have a relatively low risk tolerance, their anxiety around expected costs and low utilization of savings vehicles (such as an HSA) indicate that their lack of benefits understanding is taking a toll on their overall stability. Additionally, this population would greatly benefit from tech-driven tools and support, such as AI or mobile applications, but their utilization is low either because these employees aren't aware of these tools or don't have access to them.

**79%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**20%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 5+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **51%** open rate



**47%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**30%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**29%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **93%** same-day resolution rate



## **Hospitality Industry**

#### These employees are:

More likely to benefit from omnichannel communications and mobile resources.



The use of text and mobile app as the primary communication channels presents an excellent opportunity for HR to promote benefits awareness and engagement through these platforms.

Less financially prepared for the unexpected and more stressed about it.

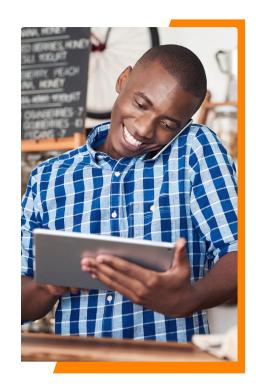


Promote financial wellness and support benefits, such as savings vehicles, cost-effective health plans, and other pre-tax benefits designed to help employees build savings and support themselves through unexpected health expenses.

More likely to seek out support after hours and on weekends.



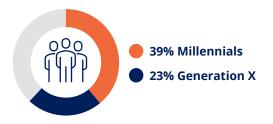
Leverage technology that creates mechanisms for engaging in benefits and information 24/7.



## **Construction Industry**

## What this population looks like:

Construction employees are a majority non-desk-based population that struggle to connect the risk of their job, lifestyle, and wellbeing. Gen X (23%) and Baby Boomers (24%) make up over half of the population, followed closely by Millennials (39%). A majority of construction employees make between \$60,000-\$90,000 (34%) or \$90,000+ (39%) a year.





## Health, wealth, and preparedness:

96% of construction employees describe themselves as healthy and 69% say they lead a low-risk lifestyle, but their job and lifestyle habits suggest otherwise: 15% say they smoke, 48% have a family history of illness, 59% are on at least one prescription medication. Additionally, these employees are likely not considering the risks they encounter at their job sites. .



**48%** have a family history of illness

85% don't smoke

**59%** are on one or more prescription medication



**90%** are able to save money some or all of the time

**44%** could manage a large ER bill (even though they would rather not)

47% would feel panicked



**84%** are confused about their benefits



## **Construction Industry**

## **Engagement, enrollment, and self-service:**

Construction employees are more to prefer mobile and digital communications: 24% enrolled in mobile and all prefer email. However, they're more likely to call in when they need support or have a benefits question: only 32% of construction employees chat with <u>Sofia</u> (-15 points compared to book of business), though construction employees have a higher rate of self-service overall: 90% of chats are resolved same-day and 32% of calls are resolved via technology.

## **How Transportation HR can drive value in benefits:**

Overall, construction employees align to their peers across other industries when it comes to benefits understanding, preparedness, and willingness to leverage modern technology and digital communications. However, given this population's career risk level, there's a marked gap in how these employees understand the connection between their lifestyle and their overall health. Additionally, while these employees indicate that they struggle to prepare for unexpected health expenses, they're willing to utilize tools to help them self-serve and save if they understand the value of what's available to them, such as pairing an HSA with a HDHP.

**76%** enrolled in their benefits on desktop



**21%** of employees logged in to benefits portal 5+ times after enrollment

Emails reminding employees of their benefits have a **43%** open rate



**64%** of employees enroll in their employer's medical coverage

**78%** of employees with an HDHP also enrolled in an HSA



**32%** of employees chatted with Sofia to resolve an issue with an **90%** same-day resolution rate



## **Construction Industry**

## These employees are:

More willing to use digital communications and tools, but a lack of awareness may be driving down utilization.



HR teams should ensure these employees understand what tools are available to them, especially on mobile apps or through their benefits portal to access and manage their benefits.

Likely to struggle with financial preparedness, but willing to engage with options when they understand the value.



HR teams should ensure their employees understand the financial benefits of cost-effective plans and financial support in their total rewards, such as FSAs, HSAs, and other pre-tax savings options.

Eager to self-serve and likely to seek support out after "standard" working hours but may lack insight into what resources are available to them.



HR teams should ensure their employees understand where to go for support 24/7, such as an Al benefits assistant, document center, or a mobile app.





#### In Conclusion

Regardless of industry, the data paints a clear picture: personalization at every moment of the benefits experience drives positive results.

As HR teams face a shifting landscape of new generations in the workforce, rising healthcare costs, and economic turbulence, building stability and familiarity into their benefits engagement strategy will be critical to managing costs and ensuring employees have the support they need.

#### The core of that strategy? Personalization.

Personalization will look slightly different for each industry, business, and employee, but at its core is data:



Behavioral, from how often people log in to view and manage their benefits to the questions they're asking.



Participation, like what they're electing versus what they're using (and what they're leaving on the table).



Engagement, including which emails they're reading to the questions they're asking.

HR's biggest opportunity is to tap into the data already available at their fingertips to help them drive value and relevancy across their entire benefits program, leading to improved cost management and employee outcomes.

#### **Learn more**

Want to learn more about how personalization can drive lasting results across your entire benefits program?

Read the latest **Benefits Insights Report.** 











