



## Is working with a benefits broker right for your business?

Employee benefits account for around 31% of overall compensation for the average employee<sup>1</sup>—nearly a third. With that kind of money on the line, you want to make sure you're picking the right benefits for both your business and your employees.

One solution: a benefits broker. These are individuals who specialize in developing benefits packages for businesses. Benefits brokers aren't necessarily a fit for all businesses—but depending on what your needs are, they can enhance your overall benefits package. In fact, 59% of employers surveyed by Aflac use a benefits consultant of some sort, including brokers and agents.<sup>2</sup>

Should you work with an insurance broker? Read on for some questions to ask yourself.

### **Do you know what employee benefits you want or need?**

Insurance agents—the people representing specific carriers, whom you work with directly—dedicate themselves to understanding the current benefits landscape, so they can suggest their carriers' products that best fit your needs. But because benefits brokers work with a broad range of carriers, they're well-positioned to develop holistic benefits strategies, which can be helpful for people who aren't sure what their needs are.

### **Do you know what employee benefits you desire, but you are finding that the combined coverage you want to offer is too expensive?**

Most employers—76%—say they get more for their money by working with a benefits broker.<sup>2</sup> If you're assembling a benefits package from a number of carriers, using an employee benefits broker who has developed relationships with various insurers could save you money. A broker can also help you compare plans to find the best value while determining a cost-saving benefit strategy. They can also help ensure your employees have the financial protection they need by suggesting strategies such as pairing a health savings account (HSA) or high-deductible plan with supplemental benefit offerings.

<sup>1</sup>Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—September 2020." Published 12.17.2020. [Accessed 12.17.2020.](#)

<sup>2</sup>Aflac WorkForces Report. "Workplace Benefits Trends Executive Summary." Published September 2020. [Accessed 12.17.2020.a](#)

### **Do you anticipate needing help with employee enrollments?**

Brokers can help you determine and implement the enrollment strategy that's best for your business. This can be a major headache-saver—of the business leaders who used an advisor for enrollment by phone, 88% said the process was extremely or very effective.<sup>3</sup> Many employees may feel the same way: Benefits professionals are a top resource to help employees determine insurance options that best fit their needs.

### **Is having a one-stop shop for employee benefits crucial for your business needs?**

Some employers find that they're able to effectively handle benefits packages by working with various agents, and that it doesn't detract from their ability to fulfill other responsibilities. Others find that the benefits landscape is so complex that they're not able to understand it well enough to help their employees, or that it takes up so much time that they're not able to complete other job tasks. As a result, employers often seek assistance from benefits brokers.

If you've decided to invest in a relationship with a benefits broker, the first step is to find one. So, how do you find a benefits broker? You may already have a few that you are familiar with. Brokers are in many ways salespeople—and like most salespeople, they're used to approaching businesses, so you may have already had conversations with brokers. If you're starting from scratch, you can turn to word-of-mouth by asking your peers about brokers they work with, or by reaching out to professional associations your business is affiliated with.

Once you have your benefits broker, you'll want to get the most out of your relationship. Here are a few tips:

#### **Educate yourself on benefits—and on the needs associated with them.**

Your benefits broker is the expert, but the more knowledge you come in with, the better equipped you'll be to ask the right questions—and the more time your broker will be able to spend on discovering the right benefits for your business. And don't stop at learning about the benefits themselves: Tax implications and state regulations aren't the first thing that comes to mind when you think of benefits, but they have an enormous impact on what's feasible for your organization. If you don't know where to start, ask your broker for recommendations—or just start reading outlets like [BenefitsPro](#) or [Human Resource Executive](#). Most brokers are well-versed in the requirements and regulations surrounding health coverage, so they're also allies in helping you stay compliant with the laws in your area.

#### **Make time for the relationship.**

One of the more compelling reasons for hiring a benefits broker is to save time. That doesn't mean it won't take any time on your end. Things like responding to emails promptly and keeping meetings instead of canceling at the last minute add up for brokers. A track record of respecting their time will come in handy when you need your broker to come through for you.

#### **Involve the right people at the right time.**

Benefits brokers frequently interact with more than just the business owner. Connecting your broker to the right people in your organization is important so that decisions are made in a timely manner, there is buy-in across the organization and the rollout of your benefits plan is successful.

<sup>3</sup>Aflac WorkForces Report. "Workplace Benefits Trends Executive Summary." Published September 2020. [Accessed 1.19.2021.](#)

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