



Risk & Insurance | Employee Benefits | Retirement & Private Wealth

# Making the Complex Simple

Practical Strategies for Managing  
Benefits and Retirement Plans





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# 1 Why benefits delivery has become so complicated

How accumulated complexity creates operational burden, low utilisation, and stretched HR teams



# Key Insights – The Complexity Challenge



## Programs are growing

### Five generations

now coexist in the workplace, each with different benefits needs and expectations

**72%**

of employers are planning benefit changes due to the economic environment; of those, 75% are expanding - not cutting

Only **42%**

of Canadian employers offer financial wellness tools; only 28% offer EAP

## But utilisation isn't keeping up

**50%**

of employees say they would use wellbeing programs if offered, yet only 15% currently participate

**34%**

of Canadian employees say they need help with mental health and wellbeing, but less than 1 in 4 with mental health concerns participate in related programs

**22%**

of Canadian employers wait 3+ years to evaluate their insurance partners and benefit offerings

Sources: HUB 2025 Workforce Vitality Gap Index

# 2

## **Simplifying plan design without sacrificing value**

Smarter approaches to benefits and retirement plan design - modular, life-stage-based options rather than one-size-fits-all



# Key Insights – The Design Disconnect



## What employees actually value

**40%**

of employees rank flexibility and work-life balance as their top value - ahead of compensation and job security

**73%**

of employees say a comprehensive and personalised benefits program would increase the likelihood they'd stay

Among employees aged 25–34, more than 80% say they'd be more likely to stay for personalised benefits

**80%**

## Where employer assumptions diverge

Employers are split three ways: 33% say employees value job security most, 31% say flexibility, 31% say compensation. Employees aren't split – 40% chose flexibility.

**32%**

of Canadian employers haven't revisited their plan design in 3+ years

Only **42%**

of Canadian employers offer financial wellness tools

Sources: HUB 2025 Workforce Vitality Gap Index (Canada); HUB 2025 WVGI Report

# 3

## **Making financial wellbeing accessible and understood**

RRSP participation gaps, the employer match story, and the connection between financial stress and employee health and performance



# Key Insights – The Financial Wellbeing Gap



## Financial stress is the #1 employee concern

**49%**

of employees cite financial concerns as their biggest stressor at work; of those, 60% say it reduces their productivity

**71%**

of employees aged 18–24 and 40% of those aged 25–34 report having student debt

Employees aged 25–34 report the highest levels of financial stress; employees 55+ report the lowest

## The tools don't match the need

Personal wealth planning is the most meaningful financial benefit for employees aged 18–34, yet only 43% of Canadian employers offer it

**43%**

Retirement planning is ranked most meaningful by employees 35+, but only 57% of Canadian employers offer it as a financial wellness tool

**57%**

1 in 3 employees with student debt ranked education on managing day-to-day finances among their top three most meaningful financial wellness benefits

Sources: HUB 2025 Workforce Vitality Gap Index (Canada); HUB 2025 WVGI Report; WVGI Employer Q9 (Canada)

# 4 **Knowing what to measure - and what really matters**

Moving past vendor scorecards to the few numbers that actually tell you whether your plan is working



# Key Insights – Measuring what Matters



## The perception gap

**82%**

of employers believe their benefits programs reduce stress, boost productivity and improve overall wellness — only 63% of employees agree (a 19-point gap)

Employers ranked workplace culture issues last out of eight factors impacting productivity; employees ranked it fourth

Only **16%**

of employers believe health concerns are a top factor impacting productivity, while 42% of employees say health concerns impact their productivity

Sources: HUB 2025 Workforce Vitality Gap Index (Canada); HUB 2025 WVGI Report

## What employers are using to decide

**64%**

employee satisfaction surveys

**60%**

internal HR guidance

**60%**

industry benchmarks

**50%**

employee demographic data

**36%**

employee utilisation data

**30%**

insurance broker/ carrier guidance

# 5 **Communication as the simplifier**

A well-designed plan that employees don't understand is still a complicated plan



# Key Insights – The Communication Gap



## How employers communicate benefits

**72%**

rely on information packages from benefit providers

**72%**

use written internal communication (newsletters, intranet, email)

Only **44%** use personalised communication

Only **40%** use live virtual presentations; only 34% use video content

## The evidence it's not landing

**50%**

of employees would use wellbeing programs if offered, yet only 15% currently participate

**34%**

of Canadian employees say they need help with mental health and wellbeing, but less than 1 in 4 with mental health concerns participate in related programs

Generic benefits communication achieves approximately 35% effectiveness vs. 70% for personalised

**35%**

vs.

**70%**

Sources: HUB 2025 Workforce Vitality Gap Index (Canada); WVGI Employer Q20 (Canada); HUB 2025 WVGI Report



**Q&A**



# 6 Key Takeaways & Next Steps



## • Final Reflections •



**If there's one thing you'd  
want attendees to remember  
from our discussion today,  
what would that be?**

# Key Takeaways



01

**Benefits delivery has become more complex, not less**

Five generations, expanding programs, but only 15% of employees utilise wellbeing offerings. More isn't better without simplification.

02

**Smarter plan design starts with what employees actually value**

40% rank flexibility first. 73% would stay for personalised benefits. Designing for the "average employee" means designing for no one.

03

**Financial wellbeing is the #1 employee concern - and the tools aren't reaching the right people**

49% cite financial stress. Life-stage differences in what employees need are sharp, but most programs aren't designed around them.

04

**The right metrics cut through the noise**

The 19-point perception gap shows that confidence without evidence creates risk. Measure what matters, not just what's easy.

05

**Communication turns a good plan into an understood plan**

Only 44% of employers use personalized communication. Year-round, targeted engagement closes the gap between what's offered and what's used.

# What Leaders Should Do Next



## 01. **Assess your plan's complexity**

Where have programs grown without a corresponding review of how they're delivered and communicated?

## 02. **Understand what your employees actually want**

Use persona analysis and employee surveys to design around life stages, not assumptions.

## 03. **Connect financial wellbeing to plan performance**

Look at RRSP participation, benefits utilisation, and absence data together - not in silos.

## 04. **Rethink your communication strategy**

Move beyond the annual enrolment email. Year-round, personalised communication drives engagement.

# How HUB Can Help





Thank you.

