



Providing clarity around COVID-19 vaccinations for your employees

John O'Brien
Vice President,
Employee
Performance Group
BIWORLDWIDE

Do your employees have clarity around the risks and benefits of COVID-19 vaccines as you plan to return to work in some manner? Whether you're choosing to implement a hybrid work schedule or bring all employees back at once, it's important to show your organization's commitment to creating a safe and health-focused environment. And that includes providing timely and clear vaccine guidance.

Whether your employees will be returning to a corporate office space or you're reintegrating remote workers with essential workers who never stopped coming in, your return-to-work plan should:

- **Show you care about employees and customers.**

First and foremost, make it clear in every aspect of your plan that your priority is the physical and mental wellbeing of your employees and customers.

- **Focus on education.**

There's a lot of conversation happening about what employers can and can't mandate as they bring employees back together, as well as around COVID-19 vaccines. In your dedication to your employees and customers, make sure you are providing them with up-to-date, unbiased information so they can make the best decision for themselves.

- **Leverage behavioral science.**

The context in which something is presented can influence how decisions are made and ultimately, how action is taken. 77% of decisions are driven by emotion (and only 23% are driven by reason). That means your plan should include addressing the variety of emotions employees are feeling about returning to work and be presented in a way that shows how you as a company are planning to move forward, together.

- **Align with and reinforce your corporate culture.**

Every company's return to work plan will look different. Take inspiration from those around you but don't forget to incorporate things that are specific to your unique company culture.

- **Leverage non-cash incentives to drive advocacy.**

A proven way of reinforcing corporate values and prompting action is to use non-cash incentives or rewards. (And yes, the kind of reward matters – read more [here](#) on why non-cash rewards are more effective than cash.) Whether you're asking employees to return on a different work schedule than they were before, requesting they show documentation of vaccination or anything in between, remember that offering a reward will emphasize the importance of what you'd like them to do and show you appreciate their efforts.



Providing clarity around COVID-19 vaccinations for your employees

A specific part of your return-to-work plan should include helping employees understand COVID-19 vaccines so they can make the best decision for themselves and their families. We're seeing companies take three distinct approaches in this area:

1. The company wants to **educate only**.

In this instance, the company's main goal is to provide unbiased, timely information to employees regarding COVID-19 vaccines. This typically includes a company-wide training module or course and ongoing communications campaign, both designed to dispel common misconceptions about the vaccines and encourage employees to speak with their primary doctor about any individual medical concerns. It also includes rewarding employees who complete the training to reinforce the company's dedication to the initiative and thank them for participating.

Focus On: Promoting the availability of educational resources and recognizing employees when they use them.

2. The company wants to **encourage the vaccine without mandating it**.

In addition to providing and rewarding for education, this approach focuses on showing employees the company believes getting vaccinated is the fastest and most effective way to open back up safely. Here, companies are promoting and recognizing employees for completing COVID-19 training but also for taking the next step to get vaccinated.

Focus On: Educating, encouraging, recognizing and rewarding employees for participating in training and receiving the COVID-19 vaccination.

3. The company wants to **educate and encourage vaccination but also has long-term plans for corporate incentives or recognition**.

If you have a corporate recognition system in place, use it for COVID-19 vaccination education and rewards. It's a seamless way to get attention and track completions. If you don't, but see potential future use for it, there are ways you can recognize COVID-19 education and vaccination now that will allow you to transition to a larger platform later (like our [Breathe Easy](#) solution).

Focus On: Educating, encouraging, recognizing and rewarding employees with an ongoing approach.

No matter what your return-to-work plan looks like, focus on educating your employees in a vivid, emotional way – so they can make the best vaccination decision **for themselves**.

Visit our blog to read or share this article.