

6 Tips for Motivating Your Employees to Get the COVID -19 Vaccine

According to the new [2021 Edelman Trust Barometer](#), 61% of respondents say that communication from "my employer" is the most trusted information source, beating out national government (58%), traditional media (57%), and social media (39%). With the onslaught of COVID-19 vaccine information—and persuasive misinformation—employees will look to you as the employer to set the tone and clearly communicate, leveraging recognized physician leaders in the community. Your ability to do that well can make a significant difference in promoting workforce vaccination, and in turn, accelerating your return to a safer and healthier workplace. While there are still unknowns—namely exactly when and where your employees will get their vaccine—start communicating now if you haven't already.



The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the world with one epic challenge after another—from keeping our businesses open safely to becoming accidental tech experts as we learn to navigate the virtual work environment. Next up: how to motivate your employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

Here are six tips for motivating your employees to get the vaccine.

1. Set Your Direction & Create an Integrated Approach

Start by deciding how extensive your communication approach needs to be. To make that decision, consider your vaccine requirement approach (optional, recommended, incented, or required). Then think about the communication effort you believe is warranted for your organization (minimal, moderate, or extensive). Once you decide your level of requirement and effort, create an integrated communication strategy that reaches your key

stakeholders, uses your most effective communication channels, and leverages content from your health plans, your prescription drug vendor, and other health-related vendors and credible public entities such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Also, involve your legal team in reviewing your communications and developing disclaimers.

2. Lead with Care and Inspiration

Your employees are your most important asset. So first and foremost, emphasize care for the health and wellbeing of your employees and their families. Ask your CEO to share a personal perspective and eagerness to get the vaccine. Frequently thank your employees for caring enough about their own health and the health of others to get the vaccine. You might even consider creating a party-like, celebratory theme and atmosphere around the vaccine. You'll also want to be transparent about how employees getting the vaccine helps the company economically by allowing you to reopen or return to the workplace sooner. But let positive care and inspiration permeate your campaign.

3. Over-Rotate on Skeptics

While you should touch every employee with your communications, concentrate your energy on reaching those who may be most reluctant to get the vaccine. Vaccine adoption among minority groups and those in rural locations is often lower, for example. Consider soliciting employee questions and answering the common ones on a webinar featuring a recognized or prominent community physician. You can also ask Employee Resource Group (ERG) leaders to endorse and promote the vaccine and send targeted emails with tailored messaging. In addition, consider featuring a vaccine-skeptic-turned-advocate in a video memo and sending myth-busting postcards to homes.

4. Use Plain Language

After 2020, practically everyone knows what epidemiologists or infectious disease specialists do. But we certainly don't understand everything that comes out of their mouths. Your job isn't to be an expert nor turn your people into experts. Instead, it's to help them work through any concerns about getting the vaccine and direct them to information about how to get their shots. Keep your language real and simple. Replace, What are the safety and efficacy standards? with questions like Is it free?, Will it make me sick?, and What happens if I don't get the vaccine? And, strongly consider translating this communication for your employees who may not be as comfortable understanding English.

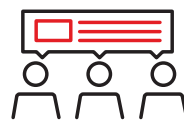
The information contained in this document is intended to assist readers in understanding COVID-19 issues and is for general guidance only. This document is neither intended to address the specifics of your situation nor is it intended to provide medical, legal or specific risk advice. You should review the information in the context of your own circumstances (including further safety or medical information from credible sources) and develop an appropriate response. Decisions should be made in concert with legal counsel and adjusted as new information becomes available. Whilst care has been taken in the production of this document, Aon does not warrant, represent or guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, completeness or fitness for any purpose of the document or any part of it and can accept no liability for any loss incurred in any way by any person who may rely on it. Any recipient shall be responsible for the use to which it puts this document. This document has been compiled using information available to us up to its date of publication and is subject to any qualifications made in the document.

5. Stay in Your Lane

Avoid the mistake of trying to replicate what organizations like the [CDC](#), the [WHO](#), the [U.S. Food & Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), and your [state health departments](#) (see "How Do I Get a Vaccine" white box on right) are communicating. It will be impossible to keep up. And, the likelihood of miscommunicating will be high. Communicate a clear theme and succinct messages, emphasizing the practical steps to take and directing employees and their families to reputable resources with more information for the ever-evolving details. In addition, work with your legal team to create a vaccine policy that reflects geographic nuances.

6. Equip Your Managers

Managers have a lot on their plates these days with keeping their employees focused, motivated, on track...and often managing it all virtually. We do not expect or want them to become health experts or official vaccine spokespeople. However, managers are often the first people employees turn to with questions. Offer them periodic webinars or video training sessions, equip them with talking points, and give them a list of the best resources to refer to when they get questions. And, don't forget to thank them for all they're doing to support their employees' health and wellbeing—including encouraging them to get the COVID-19 vaccine.



**For More Information:
contact the Strategic Advisory
Communication Team**

Jim Hoff
jim.hoff@aon.com

Joann Hall Swenson
joann.hall.swenson@aon.com