

Level up the Employee Experience with Amazing Employee Programs



Attracting and retaining top talent is key to competing in business today as companies look to acquire advanced skillsets and creative thinkers. Recognizing the need to compete with the Facebooks and Googles of the world, companies are implementing employee programs to help improve employee engagement and workplace loyalty. However, these programs introduce new challenges. To be successful, employee programs must be well managed and promoted, without adding to HR's already heavy workload.

This white paper reviews recent workplace trends as well as the role of on-site employee programs, the challenges they present, and how companies can overcome those challenges to improve employee retention, engagement, and loyalty.

Workplace Trends: The Future of Work Is Here

The workplace has changed dramatically over the past decade, and it will continue to do so as Millennials take over the workforce. Gone are the days when employees stayed at the same job decade after decade. Today, employee loyalty is tenuous. Turnover is higher than it used to be, as workers no longer feel obligated to stay with one employer for their entire career. Instead, they move from job to job every couple of years. While employees might benefit from varied experience and regular pay increases, the companies they work for are challenged with retaining them. In fact, one new survey estimates that attracting and retaining talent has become 34% more difficult in recent times.¹

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Meanwhile, the information age has changed the type of work we engage in. An increase in knowledge-based work has left companies competing for top talent even as educational institutions struggle to keep up with advances in technology, science, and engineering. Unfortunately, this means there are talent shortages in key industries, like financial services and data analytics. And the battle doesn't end once a company hires key talent. The shortage means that other companies may be recruiting employees even if the employees themselves aren't actively looking for another job.

That doesn't necessarily mean your employees will jump ship at the first opportunity. More than ever, people are looking for jobs that have real meaning. Workers — especially Millennials — seek jobs that fulfill their sense of purpose. They want jobs that make them feel like they are contributing to something important, something bigger than themselves, and something that makes the world a better place. This has positive implications for companies. These employees, when working in positions that fulfill their sense of purpose, tend to be more engaged. And companies with highly engaged workforces have a 44% higher retention rate and generate 29% more revenue.² It also means that the employees you hire are less likely to take a job simply for a pay check. Those who don't feel passionate about your workplace are more likely to weed themselves out — making it more likely that you'll hire people who share your company's values.

With a sense of meaning and purpose driving their job searches, candidates are putting less emphasis on salary when evaluating companies. Instead, they focus more on the workplace culture and employee engagement, asking themselves questions like, *Would I fit in here?* and *Do the employees look like they enjoy working here?* This is good news for companies that compete with the Internet behemoths for top talent but don't necessarily have huge personnel budgets.

It does, however, mean investing in programs and benefits that attract and retain top talent — and that's exactly what successful companies are doing. They are beefing up their benefits packages to help employees maintain work-life balance, improve their engagement at work, and increase employee loyalty.

Studies show that it works. A recent survey of U.S. workers found that 80% prefer new or additional benefits to a pay increase.³ All of Fortune's 100 Best Places to Work have on-site programs. It makes sense. On-site programs allow employees to take care of mundane chores, personal health, fitness, errands, and other activities during working hours as opposed to during their personal time.

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The Challenge with Providing Employee Programs

To be successful, employee programs can't exist in a vacuum. They must be integrated into the company culture so that employees come to depend on them in the normal course of the workday. That means they routinely use the programs and services, and realize their benefits not just within the context of work but also within the greater context of life. A number of factors come into play when offering programs and services employees will grow to rely on:

- **Ease of use.** If services are difficult to schedule, a hassle to accommodate, or distracting in any other way, employees simply won't use them. On-site programs and services must accommodate the employee — not the other way around.
- **Quality.** The services and programs companies offer must be pre-vetted and of high quality. No one wants someone's friend — fresh out of beauty school — to cut their hair. Poor service results in a bad experience that, in turn, reflects poorly on the employer.
- **Desirable.** On-site programs must offer what people want. It doesn't do any good to offer services that no one will use because they simply have no need for them.

Unfortunately, companies rarely offer on-site programs that are easy to use, high-quality, and desirable. In reality, on-site programs at large companies are often inconsistent or ad-hoc, which results in a bad user experience for employees. Small and mid-sized businesses often don't offer on-site programs at all, dismissing them as being beyond their means. It's easy to understand both of these scenarios. Executing a successful on-site program could be a full-time job for smaller companies and require a team of employees for enterprises with multiple campuses.

It takes a lot of work to put together and execute an on-site employee program. First, the company has to decide what type of wellness, fitness, events, and services it wants to offer, how often they will be available, and whether they will be incorporated into an employee incentive program. Next, someone must solicit potential service providers, evaluate them, and, once they've been selected, establish contracts. The vendors must be scheduled, and the related information must be communicated to employees. Someone must continually manage the vendor relationships and contracts, and employees must be supported to ensure that they're getting the services they need and the quality they deserve. Oftentimes, these responsibilities fall to HR, which is already overworked.

The Answer: Espresa

What if you could offload the majority of the overhead associated with on-site programs *and* improve the employee experience? Espresa allows you to do just that. Espresa's platform does the heavy lifting, enabling companies to "level-up" the employee experience. Espresa streamlines vendor selection, background checks, security, contracts and insurance, employee communications and support, incentive and contribution management, property management coordination, and ongoing quality. In addition, Espresa's customer success team works with companies to help configure, promote, and drive engagement via the platform. As a result, HR has less to manage, employees can easily take advantage of the programs, and the company realizes a greater return on investment as usage increases.

Here's how it works:

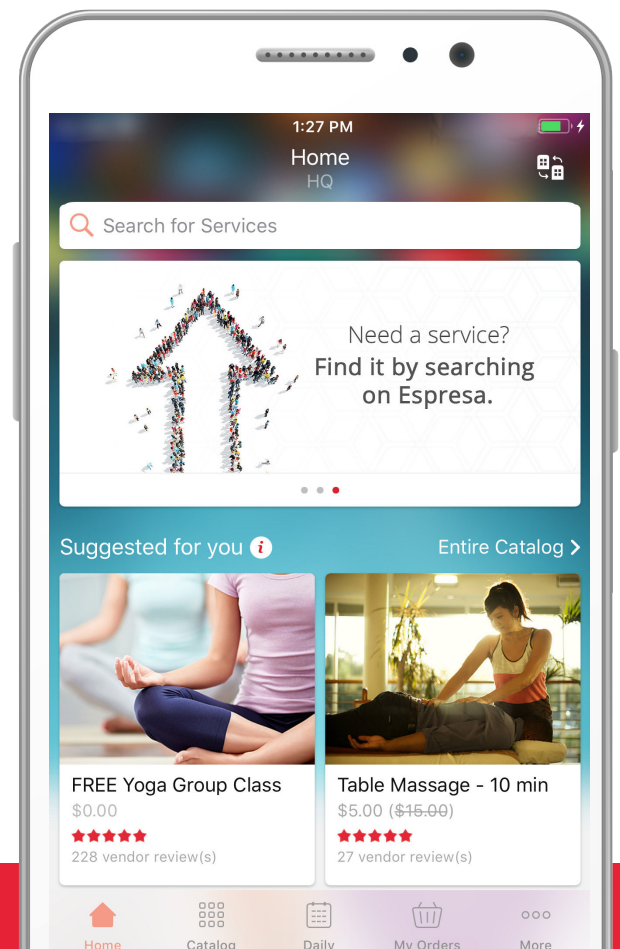
- Companies with existing on-site employee programs can integrate their service providers into the Espresa platform.
- Alternatively, companies can select (or add) programs and services from a vast network of pre-vetted service providers on the Espresa platform.
- Companies manage invoicing and payment of services via the Espresa platform.
- Employees sign up for programs and services via a user-friendly mobile app or web portal with your company branding.
- Companies review employee feedback and analytics on the impact of the new programs to determine return on investment (ROI) and fine-tune offerings to optimize usage and engagement.

Espresa's Advantage: More than Your Typical Employee Benefits

Espresa offers a variety of benefits for both companies and their employees to ensure that on-site programs are successful for everyone involved.

For starters, employers have access to a wide variety of programs. On-site health and wellness services include physician, dentistry, and chiropractic services. Fitness programs include Yoga, TRX, Bootcamp, Zumba, and Hip-hop classes. Everyday necessities are services that employees use on a regular basis, including car wash, dry cleaning/laundry, oil change, car refueling, and manicure/pedicure services. Espresa also offers services that are used less frequently, but are nonetheless essential. These include notary services, visa and passport services, phone repair, windshield replacement, tax preparation, and more.

Espresa also makes on-site programs easier for HR to manage. A "utilization engine" helps integrate programs into the corporate culture. For example, instead of separately managing employee communication channels via flyers, the company intranet, vendor websites, and employee emails, Espresa enables HR to easily send personalized newsletters to employees. Those who have a car, for example, receive updates on car-related services. The newsletters are automated and allow HR to add content. The utilization engine also incorporates features and capabilities that improve adoption. Rewards for usage, service reminders, and gamification help promote programs and encourage their use.





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employee perks—perks that no one will use or value in a matter of months, even weeks. A foosball table won't improve employee engagement or loyalty over the long term. However, everyone needs to pick up groceries, go to the doctor, exercise, do laundry, and get a haircut on a regular basis. These are often mundane tasks we need to do to live from day to day; when we can do them without sacrificing our personal time, we become more loyal to the company that facilitates this.

Conclusion

Workplace trends — like employees' desire for a job that fulfills their sense of purpose and a greater focus on employee benefits — help level the playing field when companies are competing for key talent. In fact, when well executed, on-site employee programs can be just the competitive advantage companies need. And with Espresa, companies of all sizes can offer successful employee programs. Espresa reduces the burden of managing on-site programs while making it easy for employees to take advantage of programs and services they need and want. As a result, companies can realize a greater return on their investment, as well as an increase in employee productivity, engagement and loyalty.

In addition, companies benefit from analytics that enable them to better manage their on-site programs. They can see which services and programs are being utilized, the number of employees who are using the various services, and read employee feedback via ratings and reviews. This information can be used to fine-tune service offerings so that you get better business results and increase your ROI.

Employees also benefit from on-site programs delivered by Espresa. Everything they need to take advantage of these programs is available on a mobile app and a corporate-branded website. They can see a schedule of services and programs, book appointments or reserve a spot, and pay — all from their mobile device or desktop. There's no need to go through separate booking systems for different services or enter their credit card multiple times.

On-site programs deliver the very benefits that today's employees need to achieve better work-life balance. Workers can be more productive both at work and at home by taking care of routine tasks like going to doctor and dental appointments, and fitness classes, which normally eat up precious lunch hours and personal time. There's no need to leave work early to get a flu shot before the clinic closes, or to spend a lunch hour in the car repair shop. And with access to a wide variety of offerings, there's a service for everyone.

Finally, employees receive the programs and services they want and need — in other words, the programs and services *they'll use*. Silicon Valley tech companies regularly make headlines in the trade press for their outlandish

For more information about the Espresa solution and its growing portfolio of services, go to **espresa.com**.

¹ Willis Towers Watson, "Attraction, retention, and engagement of digital talent," September 28, 2017

² Dr. John Izzo and Pam Withers, "Values Shift: The New Work Ethic & What It Means for Business," Fairwinds Press, 2001

³ Glassdoor Statistical Reference Guide 2017