



## IDEAS TO HELP EMPLOYEES FIND THEIR 'BEST FIT' PLAN (COMPARE & CONTRAST BEST PRACTICES)

### **Compare, Contrast, Comprehend**

Comparative thinking is one of our first and most natural forms of thought. When we are infants, one of the first differences we must identify is that between mother and other. Without the ability to make comparisons—to set one object or idea against another and take note of similarities and differences—much of what we call learning would be impossible.

Feature comparison tables are helpful, though not only in their primary function. When designed properly, they can aid in decision-making, beyond placing product specifications side-by-side. They can also simplify products, like employee benefits, explaining why a certain feature is relevant to the employee or how a certain plan choice is advantageous over others. Finally, compare/contrast tables have been proven to alleviate your stress and boost your confidence in compensatory decisions.

Below, you will find four of the best practices to consider when creating compare/contrast tables in your employee benefit guides to ensure maximum comprehension of the data presented.

### **Use Your Words Wisely**

It's easy to forget not everyone is as fluent in benefits speak as you are. Utilize laymen's terminology and explain acronyms.

### **Group Together Similar Items**

Group similar benefits together. For instance, Vision benefits and the differences across plans should be represented in a vision-specific table. Varied emergent care benefits – such as hospitals, urgent care, ER, in/out patient options – should be grouped together in your medical plan compare/contrast table.

### **Color Can Offer Clarity at A Glance**

Use color to highlight your premium plan advantages and your most inexpensive or easiest to use benefits. Use it sparingly enough that areas you want to draw interest to stand out and draw attention. You can also limit the overuse of color within cells by highlighting section headers to draw attention to a group of plan benefits (i.e. Preventative Care).

### **Be Consistent and Brief**

Within your table, use a consistent format, alignment and description. For example, choose to use (or not use) dollar signs but do so across the board. Choose to use descriptors once at the top of a column or at the beginning of a row. Keep the comparative content within the cells simple and brief. If you use abbreviations, make sure they are commonly understood and clear.

When it comes to employee benefit communications, using tables within your benefit guide allows employees to compare/contrast the different aspects of plan choices your company offers by relevance. Contact a Hierl advisor and take the first step to a better benefit strategy today.

