



## Stay HR Savvy with HR Elements®

Welcome to the UBA Partner Firm exclusive monthly newsletter, delivering insights into timely human resources and employee benefits topics.

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### Employee Benefits | Rethinking What *Modern* Benefits Mean

You may feel that your benefits offerings are up to date—but your employees might disagree.

[Nearly 3 in 4 employees say they struggle to afford anything beyond basic living expenses.](#)

As day-to-day living costs increase and personal responsibilities grow, the gap between what companies offer and what employees need is becoming more visible. [Only 35 percent of employers believe their benefits address day-to-day financial stress.](#)

#### Focus on What's Happening Now

Your employees aren't just thinking about retirement or health coverage. They're worried about today—covering rent, paying for groceries, and getting through the week without added stress. And while well-being is a common priority in HR conversations, employees may not feel that's reflected in the support they're actually offered.

Benefits that address these immediate concerns—like emergency savings programs, financial coaching, or even flexible workweeks—are increasingly seen as meaningful indicators of whether an employer understands its workforce.

## Reassess and Realign

Now is the time to take stock. What you offer—and how you communicate it—matters more than ever.

[Three out of four employees say the pandemic drove positive, lasting changes to their benefits experience, highlighting a clear shift in expectations that employers must continue to meet.](#)

This isn't about overhauling everything at once. It's about closing the gap between intent and impact. Consider how you can build more flexibility into your offerings, introduce options that support budgeting or financial literacy, or add benefits that reflect the realities of your employees' lives outside the office.

## Make Support Personal and Practical

Personalization doesn't require massive change. It starts with listening. When employees can choose benefits that reflect their situation, it signals that your organization sees them as humans—not just employees.

The outcome? A workplace culture that feels relevant, modern, and grounded in real-world needs. Meeting employees where they are today sets the tone for the kind of engagement and trust that attracts and retains top talent.

## Workplace Culture | Rebuilding Trust After Layoffs

Layoffs—even when necessary—leave a lasting mark on workplace culture. Beyond the immediate impact on those who exit, remaining employees often experience uncertainty, guilt, and decreased engagement. This emotional residue can quietly erode retention and productivity long after restructuring ends if not addressed.

To rebuild trust, leaders must move beyond the layoff announcement and actively reshape how the organization communicates, supports, and reconnects with its people.

## Understanding the Post-Layoff Dip

After layoffs, it's common for performance and morale to drop. Employees may question their job security, hesitate to take risks, or withdraw from collaboration. Even high performers can disengage if they feel the organization is no longer stable or transparent.

After layoffs, companies see a sharp decline in employee experience across key areas. [According to a recent study, company confidence dropped by 17 percent, belief in career growth fell by 12 percent, and trust in leadership declined by 10 percent.](#)

The path forward isn't just about reassurance—it's about rebuilding credibility.

## Prioritize Consistent, Honest Communication

Employees don't expect all the answers—but they do expect honesty. Vague reassurances can backfire, while clear, consistent communication helps reset expectations. Leaders should share what's changing, what's not, and how future decisions will be made. When trust has been shaken, transparency is the fastest way to start repairing it.

## Reinvest in Relationships

Post-layoff, managers need to reconnect with their teams—not just through status updates, but through meaningful conversations. Acknowledge the strain, ask how people are doing, and create space for feedback. Even short check-ins go a long way in rebuilding connection and stability.

## Make Retention Intentional

After a layoff, your remaining team is your priority. “Re-recruit” them. Show that they matter by investing in their development, recognizing their contributions, and giving them a say in shaping what comes next. Trust is rebuilt through follow-through—not just sentiment.

## Culture Recovery Is a Leadership Priority

Layoffs may be over in a day, but their impact can linger for months. Addressing the emotional and cultural fallout with intention is critical. Organizations prioritizing rebuilding trust will recover faster—and help attract and retain top talent.

## Dear HR Manager | Sorting the Genuine from the Generated Resumes

Lately, I’m seeing spotless resumes—flawless phrasing, our values echoed back to us, and cover letters that hit every note. However, in interviews, some of these candidates fall flat.

Am I seeing better prep—or are AI tools doing the heavy lifting? And how do I stay objective without assuming every strong application is too good to be true?

*– Sorting the Genuine from the Generated*

Dear Sorting the Genuine,

You’re right to ask. AI-assisted applications are everywhere now. Candidates use tools to fine-tune resumes, write responses, and prep talking points. Some use them well. Others lean too hard. Either way, it’s time to adjust how we evaluate talent.

### Focus on Substance, Not Surface

Using AI doesn’t mean a candidate lacks skill. The question is whether they *understand* what they submitted. Ask for real examples:

“Walk me through your role on that project.”

“What would you do differently next time?”

You’re not testing memory—you’re testing ownership.

## Be Clear About What Matters

If your process rewards polish, that's what candidates will focus on. Be specific about what you value—sound judgment, flexibility, and real problem-solving. Ask questions that reflect the job, not just the job post.

[More than 70 percent of job seekers now use AI tools to craft applications.](#) The polish is expected. The insight isn't.

## Keep It Human

Don't turn hiring into a search for who's "faking it." Candidates want to be seen for who they are—not flagged for using modern tools. Give space for real conversation. That's where the signal rises above the noise.

The future of hiring isn't about outsmarting the tools. It's about seeing the human behind them.

– *HR Manager*

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