

# The New Employee Experience

How to maximise and optimise every step of the employee journey







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#### **Executive Summary**

Today, from the very beginning stages of recruitment through to job performance, career development, and offboarding, companies understand that technology plays an ever-important role in employee experience.

This shouldn't be as a surprise living in the digital age that we do today. Employees have come to expect sophisticated technology to help them in their jobs and to be connected 24/7, which is why more companies are offering their employees apps and other digital experiences to improve productivity and increase engagement.

In today's competitive job market, employee experience is everything. Employee experience is no longer just something that happens and stays within company walls. Today, both current and former employees share their experiences online and with their networks – be it positive or negative.

Today, organisations realise it's imperative to provide a positive employee experience, and many companies are rethinking the way they work. Employee experience isn't restricted to working hours. Employees are healthier, happier and more productive when they have work-life balance and more organisations realise the value of offering attractive benefits to support their employees' lives.

To that, we are happy to share that in March, Benify was certified as a Great Place to Work for being exactly that – a great place to work. Benify was also identified and named one of Sweden's Best Workplaces and included in the esteemed Great Place to Work list for 2019. We are very proud of this achievement.

This book is divided into 7 chapters which you can read in any order you choose. We hope that you, as an HR Leader, feel inspired about the content and, in turn, helps you attract, reward, and retain talent.

Happy reading!





Joakim Alm CEO, Benify



TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE



### The Role of Technology in HR

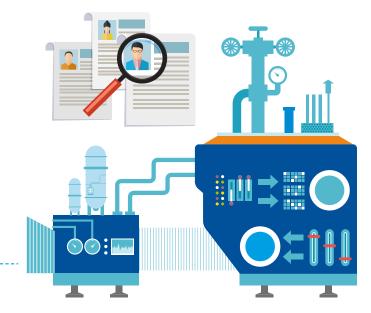


If this were 20 years ago, you might say that technology doesn't play a huge role in employee experience. But today, it's a very different story. From the beginning stages of recruitment all the way through to training, development and overall job performance, technology is playing an increasingly important role in the day to day lives of employees.

Just think about this: In the first half of 2018, \$1.33 billion was invested in HR Technology, surpassing the total spending of 2017. And that's just for new technologies, not upgrades to existing systems. In other words, organisations are betting that technology is a vital tool for analysing and improving employee productivity and performance, and, ultimately, retention. They're putting their faith in algorithms that are designed to track employee behaviours and monitor engagement levels so that managers and HR professionals know when and how to intervene.

Savvy enterprises know that today's younger generation have come to expect that employers will make an effort to ensure they are challenged, motivated, and fulfilled in the workplace, while also supporting their lives outside the office. The innate comfort that today's younger generation has with technology

makes it a no-brainer for employers offer employees techtools that manage their work experiences. After all, today, we already track our health and keep tabs on our finances – why not the workplace too?





#### **How Technology is Reshaping Employee Experience**

Today, HR departments act as integral strategic cogs for business. But where did this journey begin? And what does it look like today?



#### THEN

- Periodic face-to-face check-ins with your supervisor to discuss progress and development
- Make an appointment with HR to go over questions about or make changes to your benefits
- Little flexibility in working hours since all systems are on-site
- Banning social media and other personal web activity in the workplace



#### NOW

- Immediate performance feedback via machine learning and data analytics that share insights and coaching for each team member
- Log in to your employee benefits portal and DIY
- Mobile and cloud technology allows for remote work and flexitime
- Encouraging employees to serve as brand ambassadors online, and incorporating social apps into the workflow







### **Technology Makes for More Efficiency**

71% of employees say they want their employer to provide them with the same level of technology as they use in their personal lives as consumers.<sup>1</sup>

What's more, according to research by the McKinsey Institute<sup>2</sup>, the average worker spends nearly 20% of their time searching for internal information or asking colleagues to help them with specific tasks. That's wasted time that could have been used to be more productive, not to mention a distraction to the employees whose help was being requested.

As for concerns that technology is taking the human element out of work, the key is to find the right balance. In a recent PwC survey, approximately 45% of employees said they prefer

face-to-face interactions for things like performance reviews, getting help with difficult problems, and asking questions of their HR team, however the same number also said they prefer or expect many of these same tasks to be partially or fully digitised.<sup>3</sup>









### To Improve Employee Experience with Technology, Consider the Following:

• **Upgrade legacy technology.** As many as 72% of HR leaders say digital technology is not a core part of their people strategy today, however, 47% say it will become so in the next 12 months.<sup>4</sup>

• Empower employees with technology training. Make it a priority to get employees up to speed on how to use cloud-based systems, communications apps, and their benefits portal.

• Embrace social connections. Today's culture thrives on validation and feedback (think about all of those thumbs up on Facebook!). Consider how you can incorporate tools that increase collaboration, improve communication, and allow for instant feedback between colleagues. This can remove the frustration of sending emails that go unanswered, or trying to set meetings when everyone has conflicting schedules.

"When employers invest in systems that their employees value, it improves engagement and retention."

"Demystifying Technology in the Workplace" by Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)<sup>5</sup>





# 24/7 ACCESS TO INFORMATION



# **Technology and Data in the Workplace**

Today, we live in an always-on, 24/7 digital world, so it's no wonder that employees have come to expect that same level of connectivity and instant gratification when it comes to employee benefits access and workflow. More and more employers are heeding the call, offering employee mobile apps and other interactive, customisable digital experiences so their workforce can stay connected, engaged and empowered.

Investing in this kind of technology makes it easier to implement things like rewards programs, allows employees to access their benefits information, and cuts down on the number of inquiries that HR has to field.







# **How to Take Your Employee Experience Into the Digital Age**

#### **Mix-and-Match Connectivity**



In a Deloitte's 2018 Global Human Capital Trends report, 44% of respondents said they believe that face-to-face meetings will decrease in the future, and 30% believe that phone and text usage will decrease. To fill the void, 70% believe that workers will spend more time on collaboration platforms, 67% see growth in "work-based social media," and 62% predict an increase in instant messaging.1

By experimenting with a variety of tools and platforms, you can find ones that appeal to the different communication styles and different levels of technical savvy of your employees.

#### **Global Mobile Revolution**



Multinational organisations need to be able to provide a consistent employee experience to their global workforce, and increasingly mobile is the answer. In fact, by 2022, it's expected that more than 42% of the global workforce will be mobile, according to Global Mobile Workforce Update.<sup>2</sup>

Through a mobile employee portal, the employee can log in to their personal page and engage with a whole range of content and services at work, at home or on the go – from any location in the world.

#### **Prioritise App Adoption**



By offering your employees a smartphone app, you're able to send push notifications and message your workforce on the device that goes everywhere with them. It also gives them a seamless digital employee experience that allows them to stay connected and gain access to employer content, company news, communications, and programs.

It's not enough to simply launch an app, however. Build excitement around it, provide ample training, and encourage and incentivise employees to use its various functions.



# **5 Benefits of an Employee App**

- Employees can manage their own benefits without having to wait on busy personnel.
- Customisable platforms allow the employee to control the user experience and add or remove their own benefits.
- It can serve as a one-stop portal for health benefits, wellness programs, financial perks, and more.
- Instant and remote access frees up HR professionals from being inundated with questions.
- Interactive spaces allow employees to connect and collaborate with colleagues, ask questions, and leave feedback.





# TREAT EMPLOYEES AS CUSTOMERS



"Most business leaders haven't fully committed to making the changes necessary to move the needle on employee satisfaction", savs Sarah Patterson, SVP, Product Marketing & Strategy at Salesforce.1 In her estimation, the way to move that needle is for companies to stop seeing workers as servants of the organisation, and instead offering employees "the same levels of attention, dignity, and respect typically reserved for their highly valued customers."

#### **3 Ways to Treat Your Employees as Customers**



#### Apply customer retention strategies to employees.

"Companies use predictive analytics to better understand customers and micro-target them with tailored messages to address their specific needs and situations, as well as to identify opportunities for additional sales and services. Similarly, employers can mine information (e.g. from talent surveys as well as operational data) to understand employee preferences and needs and curate a personalised talent experience."

Deloitte's Carolyn O'Boyle and Susan K. Hogan<sup>2</sup>



#### Offer seamless "customer" support for employees.

"Today, every employee requests, participates and delivers services as part of their work – no matter their department. Providing a one-stop shop for serving all employee requirements, employee service management provides the platform necessary to unify and improve internal services. Imagine if you could eliminate the silos and increase collaboration across the organisation from one service provider to the next, creating effortless support and services, while centralising the service management experience."

Steve Stover, vice president of product at Samanage in CIO magazine<sup>3</sup>



#### Incentivise your top performers (aka, best customers) with rewards and loyalty programs.

"Productivity is partly a matter of motivating employees, and rewards programs play a big role. Rewards programs should include elements that go beyond compensation and benefits—it's about things like well-being, learning and development opportunities, and taking a more holistic look at the relationship between employee and employer. By viewing employees as rewards 'customers,' organisations should define, develop, adapt and deliver total rewards offerings in ways that employees love."

Pete DeBellis, associate vice president and total rewards research leader, Bersin, Deloitte Consulting LLP4



#### From Customers to Brand Ambassadors

Companies often worry about how negative employee reviews and a sketchy corporate reputation might impact the ability to attract top talent. But what about tackling that problem in a more proactive way by unleashing an army of satisfied employees to serve as brand ambassadors?

By encouraging your workforce to share their positive workplace experiences with their networks, you can capitalise on "good gossip" about your company.



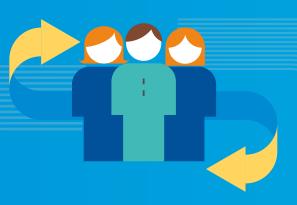


#### **5 Steps to Help Turn Your Employees into Your Best Advocates**

- 1. Create a brand guidelines document. If you're going to encourage your employees to act as your brand ambassadors, you want to provide some guidance as to how to describe the organisation, its mission, and its values. Making sure this information is easily accessible will help ensure that communications stay on brand.
- 2. Give some leeway. While you want everyone to know what the organisation stands for, you don't necessarily want to have 100 employees parroting the company's mission statement online. That won't be perceived as authentic. Instead, let employees have a voice of their own and share their own unique workplace experiences to illustrate how they live the company's values in real life. That will help build a sense of trust, while also illustrating that your organisation thrives on independent thought and creativity rather than a stuffy corporate structure that dictates what its employees are allowed to say.
- **3. Provide training.** If your goal is to deploy satisfied employees onto social media channels and company review sites to share their experiences, create a cheat sheet or instructional video on how to navigate the various platforms. You can also have a shared folder with assets such as company logos, key URLs, or other materials that they can easily copy or drag into their posts.
- **4. Encourage distribution.** Employees might not even think about posting about the company without a little prompting. Have managers share with their teams that this is a company initiative that everyone can contribute to. Whether it's retweeting a company announcement or leaving a positive employer review, every employee who participates expands the company's reach. It can also help to acknowledge and reward employees whose company-posts generate a lot of interest or social shares.
- **5. Build on the momentum.** If you see a spike in site traffic or begin hearing job candidates mention how happy current employees seem to be, you might consider taking a brand ambassador campaign to the next level. Have your marketing and communications teams collaborate with HR leaders to select employees from various departments who have great communication skills. They could post articles on LinkedIn, or share thought leadership insights on industry blogs and message boards.



# FROM CANDIDATE TO FORMER EMPLOYEE



# EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE

#### **Section 1: The Candidate Experience**

- The main complaint among candidates was that the process took too long (26%)
- 52% of candidates said they were still waiting for a response after 3 months
- 46% of candidates said they would sever a business relationship due to a poor candidate experience<sup>1</sup>
- 52% of candidates who were interviewed and then given job-related feedback by the end of that same day said they were more likely to further their relationship with the employer (e.g. apply for another position with the company, refer others, make purchases if and when applicable).
- In 2018, the three most common reasons candidates said they withdrew from the recruitment process were:
- 1) because their time was disrespected during interviews and appointments
- 2) poor rapport with recruiting professionals
- 3) the recruiting process took too long<sup>2</sup>

#### **Handling rejection**

A 2018 study showed that candidates who were told they were no longer being considered after the screening and interview process were told by:

- automated email replies (63%)
- personal emails from recruiters and hiring managers (21%)
- personal phone calls from recruiters and hiring managers (7%)

What's more, positive candidate ratings were 28% higher for a phone rejection versus automated email rejection. Up to 80% of will share their positive candidate experiences (50% of them, online) and over 60% (35% online) will share their negative experiences.<sup>3</sup>



# EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE

### **Section 2: Onboarding**

Once you offer a candidate the position, the work must continue. In fact, a strong onboarding program has been shown to increase retention rate, which is why talent professionals are spending more time getting employees ready to work. In 2018, 39% of talent pros said they dedicated between 1-3 business days to onboarding. That's up from 33 % in 2017, and 31% in 2016.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Onboarding Must-Haves**

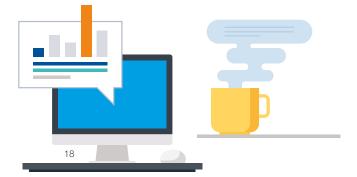
During their first week on the job, here's what employees say they value most:

- On-the-job training (76%)
- Review of the company's policies, such as dress code, time-off policy, etc. (73%
- Review of administrative procedures, touring the facility, and setting up work station (59%)
- Assignment of an employee "buddy" or mentor (56%)



- 23% said they wanted to, "receive clear guidelines to what responsibilities were"
- 21% wanted, "more effective training"
- 17% said, "a friendly smile or helpful co-worker would have made all the difference" 6

The bottom line: When employers offer new hires opportunities to communicate goals, meet key team members, and answer questions – all prior to their start date –new hires are 72% more likely to increase their relationship with the employer.





# EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE

#### **Section 3: The End of the Road**

Just as employee experience is shaped before the first day in the office, final impressions also can have a significant impact if the employee decides to move on to a new opportunity. In other words, how your employee's last days go at your company can be just as important as what came before.

An employee's final days could influence how they speak about your company to their future colleagues and industry contacts. And who knows, under the right circumstances, you may even lure them back into a new role down the line.

That's why it's important to have a good offboarding plan in place.



#### **Offboarding Best Practices**

To end the employee journey on a positive note, there are a number of things you can do during offboarding:

- Notify team members about the employee's upcoming departure. Prepare necessary paperwork including benefit and final salary documents, nondisclosure agreements, a signed resignation letter, and collect any company assets such as laptops and ID badges.
- Work with the employee to transition the team. Ask the employee to share the status of projects and allow other staff members to shadow him or her.
- Conduct an exit interview. Get feedback about their employee experience. Encourage the employee to stay in touch regarding future opportunities. Add them to your alumni database.



# PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE



### **Happy at Work, Happy in Life**

It should come as no surprise that employees who love their work excel and thrive even more so when there's a healthy balance between their jobs with their non-work life. That's why work-life balance has become such a rallying cry for employees over the past couple of decades, and smart employers have responded with strong benefits and wellness options.

However, merely adding a couple of random items to your benefits package isn't enough to prove that you're a company

**75%** 

of job seekers said they consider an employer's brand before even applying for a job.<sup>1</sup> that puts employee experience first. Your commitment to supporting your employees should be a natural extension of the ideals that comprise your employer brand. So, start with this question: What kind of company do you want to be?

What makes your company unique? What are its core values? Once you figure those out, you need to show employees and potential candidates that you've created an employee experience which reflects your values and offers work-life balance.

For example, let's say your company culture has an emphasis on "reciprocity". In that case, some of your key benefits might be generous PTO (paid-time-off), the opportunity for flextime, and company sponsored outings. If the company is focused on innovation, you might focus your efforts more on training and education benefits like reimbursement for tuition expenses.







# YOUR BRAND APART

#### 1. A Unique Employee Experience

Did you know only 22% of HR executives reported that their companies were excellent at building a differentiated employee experience? Just think about how much potential there is to stand out from among your competitors.

What you can do: Give HR leaders the green light to prioritise employee experience. It can be treated in much the same way as sales and marketing aim to deliver a strong "customer experience." The employee experience must resonate through the entire organisation. Define the organisation's employee experience, and weave it into the candidate experience, the onboarding of new hires, and across every level of employment.



#### Keep regular tabs on employee experience.

That means conducting regular surveys and listening carefully to employee feedback so you can keep evolving to meet their needs and expectations.



**Empower employees** by providing them with self-service tools to make managing their work life easier.



Measure employee experience in a meaningful way. Find solutions that help you examine employee experience holistically, including employee wellness, diversity, performance management, and more.



# YOUR BRAND APART

#### 2. Commit to Financial Wellness

Did you know that 53% of employees in a Bank of America Merrill Lynch survey reported that stress caused by their finances regularly interferes with their ability to focus and be productive at work? And that Barclays' research estimates that lost productivity from money worries alone can reduce profits by 4%?

**What you can do:** Supporting the financial wellness of your employees is not only the right thing to do, but it's also an investment that can provide the company with big returns.





Offer a selection of financial wellness benefits and resources. Think about your workforce, and the types of financial tools that can help them succeed and be more productive employees. From student loan repayment benefits to discounts to on-site expert financial guidance and more, your support can go a long way.



Voluntary benefits are no longer "fringe" – they're necessary. A survey by SHRM found that 69% of employers believe voluntary benefits will be a very important or more important component of their total rewards strategy in three to five years.<sup>5</sup>



# YOUR BRAND APART

### 3. Better Lifestyle Benefits

Did you know that in the UK, just 30% of employees say the health and wellbeing initiatives offered by their employers meet their needs? Or that, 55% of workers say they would be at least somewhat likely to accept a job with lower compensation but a more robust benefits package.6

**What you can do:** Recognising that health benefits can be a gamechanger when it comes to recruiting and retaining top talent, evaluate your current offerings and compare them to competitors.

#### Provide education around benefit offerings.

Sometimes it's the confusion around the different plans that frustrates employees most of all. In one study, only 53% of employers who offered high-deductible health plans said their employees understood the cost potential and overall pros and cons "extremely or very well."

#### Offer a variety of nontraditional benefits.

Not all employees are at the same financial point in their lives. This is especially true if you have a multigenerational workforce. From flexible spending accounts to health and wellness discounts to extended family benefits, incorporate voluntary programs so that there is something for everyone.



# HOW TO CULTIVATE HAPPY EMPLOYEES



Organisations know that it's imperative to provide a positive employee experience, and many companies are doing a fantastic job by rethinking some of their day-to-day processes and programs. When done right, employee recognition programs, smarter performance evaluations, and development programs can help keep your employees engaged and supported.

Is your organisation doing enough to make the employee experience a positive one? Explore some of the ways in which successful companies are keeping their workforce happy and motivated.



#### **Rewards and Recognition Programs**

Employees who receive regular small rewards, in the form of money, points, or thanks, **are 8x more engaged** than those who receive compensation and bonus increases once a year.<sup>1</sup>

That's probably why **89%** of HR professionals agree that employee recognition positively affects employee experience.<sup>2</sup> So, what makes a recognition program great? First and foremost, it's about listening to your employee's needs and interest, thinking about the company's values, and then putting together a program that aligns both. A great recognition program should:

- Be in line with the company's key values.
- Be based on individual performance and team performance.
- Be tied to business goals.
- Make it easy to reward an employee on the spot.
- Allow employees to recognise their teammates.
- Be fun!





#### **Performance Reviews**

If your company is like most organisations, you probably conduct annual performance reviews for employees. The question you have to ask is if these reviews really have value and if once a year is really enough?

Consider this: Just 14% of employees in a Gallup survey said they strongly agree that their performance reviews inspire them to improve, and only 2 in 10 strongly agree that their performance is managed in a way that motivates them.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, yearly reviews in and of themselves probably aren't providing much value. They are often viewed as a tedious task to get through.

That's why more than 70% of the companies included in Deloitte's 2017 Global Human Capital Trends research said they were in the process of reinventing their performance management process.<sup>4</sup>

Will you join these organisations that have ditched traditional performance review formats?

Deloitte. Adobe pwc

JUNIPER accenture





#### **The New Way to Review**

Among the 51% of companies that say they have updated their performance appraisal processes in the past two years, here's what's they've done:

1. Made the process shorter	39%
2. Increased the frequency of feedback	36%
3. Added rating scales	27%
4. Added peer (360 degree) feedback	25%
5. Separate Review/Compensation discussion	<b>20%</b> <sup>5</sup>

Having more frequent feedback and making the review itself less cumbersome benefits all. Regular check-ins and real-time performance metrics can help pinpoint potential issues before they snowball out of control. But even better, they can help the employee stay on course by setting both short-term and long-term goals, while giving them a channel to share feedback and concerns.

If you're considering a performance review makeover, keep these best practices in mind:

- Create a continuous feedback loop.
- Establish clear expectations.
- Discuss what motivates the employee and create common goals.
- Offer solutions along with criticisms.
- Revisit issues and concerns often (not just once a year).







#### **Development Programs**

In a LinkedIn survey of 4,000 global professionals, executives identified 'getting employees to make time for learning' as the top challenge facing talent development in 2018. Yet, 94% of employees say that they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development. Digital learning formats may be the best solution.<sup>7</sup>

How employees prefer to learn:

**58%** said at their own pace

49% said at the point of need



Online learning can engage employees and deliver learning experiences on demand. "An employer who doesn't focus on learning is going to lose out — in performance, engagement and retention."

Meghan M. Biro, CEO of TalentCulture





# DO EMPLOYER REVIEWS MATTER?



#### For All the World to See

Employee experience is no longer just something that happens within the confines of your office. People routinely share their experiences, not only by word of mouth but digitally on employer review sites like Glassdoor and on social media for all the world to see.

Your employer reputation can be an asset or a liability – and what people say about your company isn't something you can really control. Of course, by providing an exceptional employee experience, you'll make it more likely that employees will share why they love working for your company.

Prospective employees, potential clients, and anyone who does business with your organisation are likely to do some online research to see what your company is all about. Reviews from former and current employees are among the many things that may turn up in the results.

### Why it matters?

78% of people said that how a company treats its employees is one of the best indicators of its level of trustworthiness.<sup>1</sup>









### **Reputation is Everything**

29% of prospective hires said in a 2017 survey that they looked at employer review sites like Glassdoor to evaluate the company, up 23% from the year before.2

So, yes, your employer reputation matters, and it starts as early as the recruiting process. In one survey, 33% of companies said they received negative reviews online based on interactions that occurred during their recruiting process.3

Once hired, the employee experience you provide matters even more, as disgruntled workers are often the ones who take the initiative to share their reviews and thoughts online.







While no company can please 100% of people it recruits and eventually hires, perception is reality. If the only reviews that exist for your company are negative ones, then you have some work to do.





#### **How to Counter a Negative Review**



Take criticism seriously. If prospective hires complain that they never heard back after interviewing for a position, that's something that can easily be remedied. If anonymous employees complain that there is no work-life balance, or that they feel that management doesn't support their growth, those are important considerations when making company policy decisions.



Share employee testimonials on your own channels and on social media. Candidates want to hear from other employees just as customers seek out reviews from other customers. Create videos for your career site. Give your workforce the greenlight to be brand ambassadors on social media so that your employee experience content is available beyond what's on the Glassdoor-type sites.



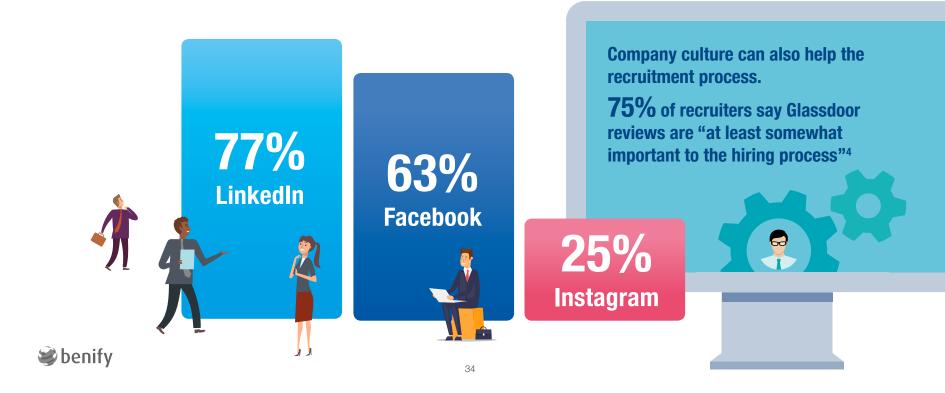
Give a thoughtful response to negative reviews. Consider it as an opportunity to thank the reviewer for the feedback, acknowledge their viewpoint, and then share how your company is working to improve.



Encourage current employees to submit a review. More positive reviews will hopefully rise to the top of your profile page, and help increase your overall ranking if a negative one has brought it down.



### **Which Social Media Channels are Recruiters Using to Connect with Candidates?**



# We're in The Top 10 Best Places to Work



In addition to being certified by Great Place To Work® in March 2019, Benify was also identified as one of the best places to work in Sweden and included in the Great Place To Work® Institute's esteemed list for 2019, ranking in the top 10 for large organisations.

"High levels of engagement creates success. This is a fact known to us at Great Place to Work® and to our clients who invest their resources, energy and their time on their workplace culture. Being named Sweden's Best Workplace is the ultimate proof that Benify has succeeded!"

Maria Grudén, CEO, Great Place to Work, Sweden



Happier employees



Stronger employer brand



# The World's Most Personalised Engagement Platform

Benify's award-winning platform has reinvented how modern employers engage with their employees.

Through our powerful cloud platform – accessible via computer or as an app via smartphone or tablet – employees can discover tools and services relevant to their employment and order incredible benefits hand-selected by their employer.

Our platform helps you as an employer put the spotlight on what makes your organisation unique. Strengthen your employer brand and attract, reward and retain talent you need today.



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#### FROM CANDIDATE TO FORMER EMPLOYEE

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#### **WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

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