

what's working

powering the employee experience with innovation and elevation



Francesca Vance
People Manager,
Enable,
Toronto, Ontario

by | **Francesca Vance**

Following a period of mass disruption and uncertainty, the labour market is experiencing a record-setting change in the talent landscape that has been dubbed The Great Resignation. However, such a name would imply a mass exit of employees rather than a reshuffle of employees seeking different opportunities outside the walls of their current employer—and even outside of their industry. A more accurate name for the phenomenon organizations are experiencing may be The Great Rethink, whereby business stakeholders have an opportunity to unearth strategies to reinvent and elevate the employee experience.

Organizations that have developed a purpose-driven approach to talent recruitment and retention have seen the positive outcomes associated with novel and innovative strategies. Enable, a rapidly growing technology company headquartered in the United Kingdom with offices in Silicon Valley, Toronto and Australia, has continued to be a leading player in the tech talent pool despite the challenges of a pandemic.

An Opportunity Arises out of a Problem

Founded in the U.K., Enable provides cloud-based software programs for business-to-business rebate management for distributors, wholesalers, manufacturers, retailers and buying groups. The company opened an office in San Francisco, California in 2020 and its third office in Toronto during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its customer base had tripled by 2021. Shortly after the Toronto office opened, the company realized that its Canadian payroll provider would not be able to support its existing benefits program.

Instead of hitting the panic button, the organization took this as an opportunity to redesign its well-being strategy and elevate the offerings. Partnering with People Corporation, a national provider of group benefits consulting, Enable executed a win-

“How you support your people is how your people support clients.”

—Alex Genetti, Head of People, Enable

ning plan design and employee communication strategy that drove engagement, attracting and retaining talented employees. Unlocking the potential of the mass exodus coming out of the software and tech industry, Enable launched a robust and forward-thinking plan effective May 1, meeting the needs of employees from physical, mental, social and financial perspectives.

Benefit Enhancements

One of Enable's core philosophies is to ensure it removes barriers for employees, aptly named “Enablees.” Aligned with this mission, Enable launched People Connect, a digital mental health platform, to ensure that all plan members have access to therapy at preferred rates. The company has also introduced a digital pharmacy, PocketPills, to minimize out-of-pocket costs for members and increase accessibility to medication by providing free delivery right to Enablees' own homes. Enable has also shifted costs within its current spend to add greater flexibility, value and choice for plan members by introducing a health care spending account (HCSA) that provides reimbursement for medical and dental expenses beyond a core benefits plan. Such changes have been well-received by Enablees and their families, transforming the way the organization can help support its workforce with innovation and plasticity.

Communication

Critical to the deployment of these programs was a comprehensive and strategic communica-

tion plan that involved customized benefit program updates, frequently asked question (FAQ) documents, interactive Enablee webinars, and ongoing reminders about the many offerings newly available to all members and their families. With a customized approach developed in partnership with its group benefits consulting firm, Enable transformed its benefits program into an effective attraction and retention tool while increasing employee education surrounding smart plan consumerism.

Aligning Offerings With Employee Needs and Values

Enable also shaped its new offerings by finding out what Enablees value most in a benefits program, ensuring that the new design would be deeply aligned with its mission and values. The company seeks to keep a consistent pulse on the engagement level of employees and frequently provides a poll called “You Talk, We Listen.” After receiving the results, the organization takes action to evolve current programs and offerings and follows up with an announcement called “You Talk, We Listen, We Act” to demonstrate its commitment to the employee experience. With a diverse and multigenerational workforce, Enable sought to curate a program that would meet the needs of all employees while providing cost sustainability over the long term. Listening to feedback from employees, the organization prioritized benefits such as prescription drug and mental health coverage as well as an internal wellness program that dedicates \$1,000 annually to each employee to use toward wellness.

Enhancing the Employee Experience

To further enhance the employee experience, Enable has also developed “EnableYOU,” a comprehensive employee platform with program streams for diverse purposes, including onboarding, performance, progression, learning and development. The EnableYOU learning and development stream has a catalogue of courses Enablees can enroll in, which leaders believe further enhances the employee experience. Examples of course offerings include *Supporting Enablee Growth*, *Working in a Hybrid World* and *Performance Management: Helping your Enablees Succeed*. As part of this program, employees in a management role are paired with a dedicated career coach to help them achieve personal and professional growth as a leader, refine leadership skills and make strategic, positive business impacts.

One unique aspect of Enable’s programs is the company’s dedication to cross-border partnerships and mobility. Enable’s global mobility program allows Enablees to visit another Enable location (including sites in Canada, the U.K., the United States and Australia) for two to six weeks to learn more about the company’s history, gain exposure to other areas of the business and be immersed in the diverse cultures of each country.

“By employing proactive and interactive communication and implementing innovative benefit solutions and diverse programs that promote growth and development, we have gained a competitive edge with their employee-focused culture,” said Alex Genetti, head of people at Enable. “These ideas and actions have allowed us to enhance our value proposition for our people, enabling us to attract and retain high-performance employees.”