

7 Steps to Promote your Employee Share Plan like a Pro

The tactics, techniques and tips you need to boost enrolment in your Employee Share Plan.



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Why it matters



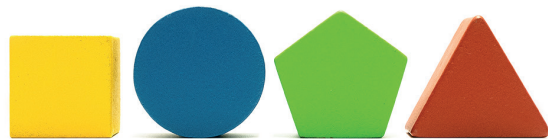
Enticing more staff to join your company's employee share plan is good for business: it means more workers have a stake in its success. Higher engagement levels improve everything from productivity to profitability – so it's in your best interest to have a well-subscribed employee share plan.

That's why we've put together this e-book – so you can promote your employee share plan with confidence, no matter how much of an expert you are (or aren't).



“Treat employees like they make a difference and they will.”

- Jim Goodnight, CEO, SAS



STEP 1

Bring the team together

You shouldn't have to do this on your own. Too often, it's left down to individuals to manage the employee share plan, from its administration to its internal promotion.

Bring people together from different departments - particularly marketing - to create and execute a plan to communicate the benefits of your share plan. Create easy-to-understand supporting materials, nominate champions to spread the message to eligible employees, and be consistent and timely with your messaging.



Tip:

Bring in an expert from the finance team too. They'll be able to explain the more complex terms to you and the marketing team for more efficient company-wide communication. Without this expertise, a lack of confidence in the messaging may quickly become apparent.



Productivity increases up to 4-5%, on average, in the year an employee share plan is adopted.

- *Employee Ownership, Employee Attitudes, and Firm Performance: A Review of the Evidence, Kruse and Blasi*

STEP 2

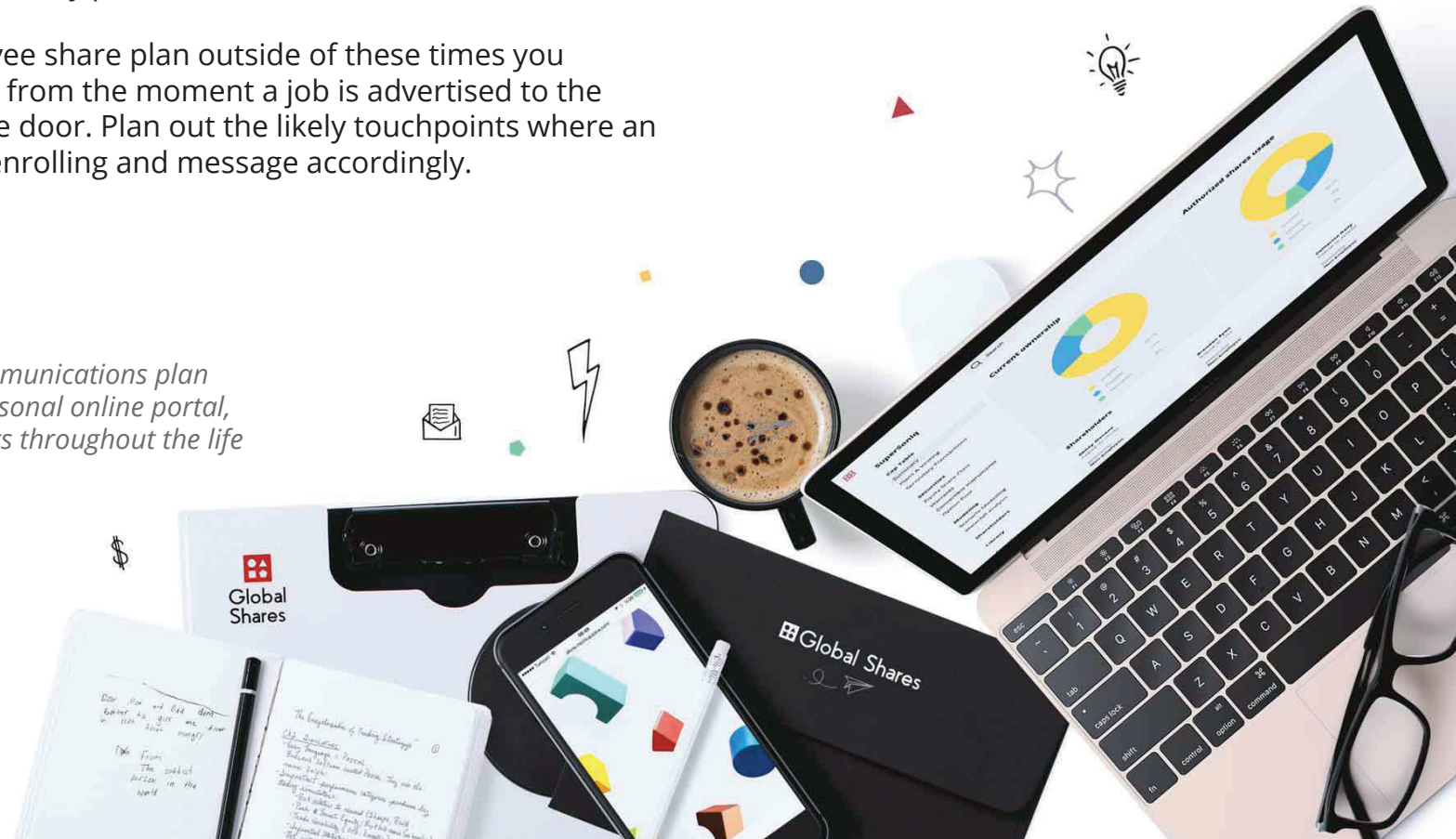
It's a marketing campaign; treat it like one

The majority of people sign-up for an employee share plan either when they start or are promoted – the moments when they are a captive audience and focused. The rest of the time, they are just like any potential customer - distracted.

To boost enrolment in your employee share plan outside of these times you need to run a marketing campaign, from the moment a job is advertised to the moment an employee walks out the door. Plan out the likely touchpoints where an employee would be most open to enrolling and message accordingly.



Global Shares has created an entire communications plan that you can easily deploy from your personal online portal, informing and engaging your participants throughout the life cycle of your organisation's equity plan.



STEP 3

Dispel myths, give facts

Research has shown that the uptake of employee share plans can be low because of uncertainty or fears about what may happen in certain situations.

Alleviate that uncertainty by clearly explaining what happens in those situations people are often afraid to ask about, such as death, termination of employment, or under what circumstances participants can withdraw if they so choose. Also explain what happens if the share value goes down, or even if the business goes bust, so that they have all the facts in their hands to make an informed decision.



Tip:

In an average share plan, many participants sell their shares within the first year – before they can see any benefits. During the long stretches of holding or vesting, keep participants engaged and focused on the long-term benefits through a 'nurture' style campaign.



The median tenure of an employee who owns shares is 5.2 years, compared to 3.4 years for non-employee owners.

- US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018

STEP 4

Give people time and deadlines

People tend to do the same things today as they did yesterday, so to do something different they need to be jolted out of their comfort zone.

Create a sense of urgency through enrolment deadlines (there will be concrete deadlines like vesting periods which you can leverage) but also talk to senior management about creating slices of time during working hours where employees can carefully consider their options and discuss it with colleagues.



Friday afternoons can be a great time to get people to reflect. Host a company-wide workshop explaining the employee share scheme and allocate an hour afterwards for employees to make decisions, fill in forms and talk to colleagues in breakout groups. If your plan is well established, have champions (see next page) share their experiences in these groups.



STEP 5

Nominate champions

People buy from people. No matter how many clear, engaging emails, infographics, videos etc. you send to employees, putting a face to your employee share plan is key to people understanding and engaging with it.

Find champions within your organisation that can tell their stories and how they benefited from the employee share plan and use their testimonials as a prime driver of your campaign. When supported with easy-to-understand materials, these voices are a powerful tool in getting where you want to be.



Try to get champions from all levels of your business. While the story of a senior leader making millions from their share options might be exciting, it might not be relatable to the average employee.



STEP 6

Gather data and define success

What's not measured, is not managed, and employee share plans are no different. If you want people to get involved, from senior management buy-in to employee enrolment, numbers are a great way to get their interest.

Initially, simply counting the figures – number of employees enrolled, percentage of shares owned by current employees, length of service of enrolled employees etc. – can be a powerful act. Once you've gathered this data, decide on targets and goals to be agreed on by the wider team and redefine your campaigns accordingly.



Tip:

Commit to reporting these numbers at defined moments, such as quarterly or annual board reports. Without this commitment, it's very likely to not get done. Through partnering with Global Shares, you'll get immediate access to visually appealing, understandable and insightful reports at the touch of a button.



Employee ownership companies have more stability, higher survival rates, and fewer layoffs in recessions.

- *Does employee ownership improve performance? Douglas Kruse, 2016*

STEP 7

Play it again, Sam (and again, and again)

Promoting your employee share plan never really stops. Refresh your campaign every few years (or more regularly if you have the resources) by adding more testimonials, acquiring new champions, and updating all the materials to ensure they are accurate.

By taking the simple steps outlined in this e-book, and repeating them consistently, you'll find enrolment starts becoming less of a challenge and more of a part of your organisation's culture.



"A sense of ownership is the most powerful weapon a team or organisation can have."

- Pat Summitt, Former
Tennessee Women's Basketball
Coach

What's next?



Communicating your share plan in a simple, concise and user-friendly way is essential to its success. Here at Global Shares, we've been managing the share plans of public and private companies all over the world for more than 15 years. We have the expertise and knowledge to help you maximise the power of your share plans and to empower your employees, enabling your company to grow to its full potential.

Contact us today to book a free consultation and a demo of our award-winning product.

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