

The Ultimate Guide
to Issuing an
**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
BROKERAGE SERVICES**



SHOPPING FOR A NEW EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BROKER: THE RFP PROCESS

It's certainly up for debate whether or not an RFP (Request for Proposal) is really the best method of finding a new employee benefits broker for your business. Nevertheless, if you're planning on issuing an RFP for a new employee benefits advisor, it's important to do it right.

After all, a relationship between you and your employee benefits broker can span 10 years or more. Shouldn't you strive for the best partnership imaginable? The RFP process is a time-consuming one, but when it's done well, it creates a fruitful relationship with a trusted and highly valued business partner for years (and hopefully decades) to come.

WRITING AN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS RFP

First Things First: What is an RFP?

A request for proposal is "a type of bidding solicitation in which a company or organization announces that funding is available for a particular project or program, and companies can place bids for the project's completion." In the case of employee benefits, a company is saying that they're interested in hiring an employee benefits broker and that they're open to new advisors.



In a way, an RFP is a little bit like a job description, stating exactly what the issuing company needs, from resources to reporting to cost-saving initiatives, and will ultimately help them codify the evaluation criteria on which the vendors' proposals will be assessed. Essentially, the RFP should ensure all parties are on the same page in terms of requirements.

Additionally, RFPs should include background on the issuing organization, such as its lines of business, needs and expectations, as well as a set of specifications that describe the ideal solution.

Why an RFP?

It's important to ask yourself why you're issuing an RFP in the first place. Do you have performance issues with your current employee benefits broker? Is it a required diligence obligation? Are you simply canvassing the marketplace to see if there are better options available than your current benefits broker? Or are you looking to hire an employee benefits advisor for the first time?

Approaching the RFP process with the answers to these questions in the back of your mind will help you maintain your focus and objectives. For example, if you're simply canvassing for better options, make sure to ask a few questions to mine additional information from each employee benefits broker, such as "What question(s) haven't we asked?" or "What do you see being our three biggest challenges in the years

ahead?” Of course, this second question requires you to give some business-specific information in order to get something helpful in return — or you could choose to save that one for a phone call or an in-person meeting after the initial request for proposal.

Questions like this will go a long way in helping you learn something new — and quite possibly will shed light on performance or service-level deficits with your current benefits advisor. In fact, most HR personnel (especially those who haven't gone through the RFP process in many years) don't realize that most employee benefits brokers today provide a much higher level of service than they used to.

HOW YOU KNOW IT'S TIME TO BEGIN THE RFP PROCESS

In our opinion, you should consider shopping around for a different employee benefits broker when any (or all) of the following describes your situation:

You're dissatisfied with your current broker's performance, whether it's a quality of service or financial issue (providing the latter is something controllable).

Your business has grown substantially since the last time you hired an employee benefits broker and your needs have changed, and the solutions you put in place long ago no longer fit with your company.

Your broker appears to be self-serving, seeming to work more for themselves or your insurance carriers partners than for you.

You've been with the same benefits advisor for a long time and you wish to educate yourself on the current standard offerings of brokers in your market.

You feel your employee benefits broker has become complacent after working together for so long — as if perhaps they don't think you'll ever leave, and they aren't putting forth their best effort.



The Top Reasons Employers Fire Their Employee Benefits Broker

Zywave surveyed 623 employers across all regions of the United States in 2017 regarding their reasons for firing their benefits advisor. The overwhelming majority of respondents were from companies employing fewer than 500 people.

Here's what these respondents listed as the top eight factors that would lead them to make a change in brokers:

69% said their broker doesn't provide prompt and effective service or answer questions in a timely manner.

42% believe their advisor only sells insurance without providing trusted advice.

38% said their broker lacks consistent communication.

33% said their broker doesn't offer resources to keep their company in compliance with complex laws and regulations.

29% believe their broker lacks understanding of their company or expertise in their relevant industry.

24% were interested in switching if another broker was able to negotiate lower premiums for their workforce.

22% feel their broker doesn't provide a strategic plan consistent with their business needs.

22% feel their broker doesn't provide a wide enough range of services to meet necessary HR, wellness, plan design, risk management and/or other employee safety needs.

When examining employee benefits brokerage services even further, these same Zywave respondents ranked the following core capabilities as the most important to their organizations:

Compliance

Employee Communications

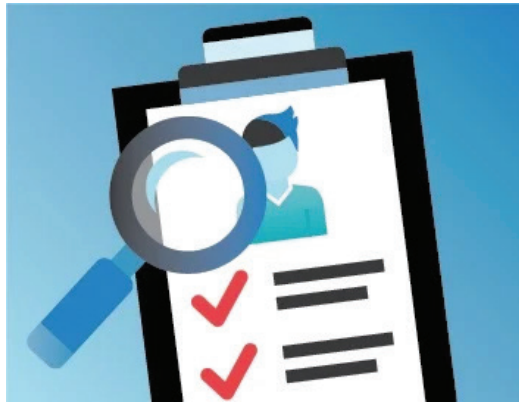
Plans Design & Benchmarking

Claims Analysis & Reporting

Employee Advocacy & Assistance

Enrollment and Onboarding Tools

Wellness



THE PROS AND CONS OF ISSUING AN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS RFP

The possible upsides to issuing an RFP for employee benefits include the following:

A standard set of questions will yield an apples-to-apples comparison of answers (which can be scored, a subject we'll tackle later on).

A request for proposal helps you guide the conversation, meaning you'll get answers to questions that are important to you versus a broker-led discussion, which is often predetermined and doesn't necessarily address your concerns.

The process of putting together an RFP can often times challenge you to craft a very clear vision of what is needed, how it could be accomplished, and by what deadline.

The RFP process helps to sometimes negotiate lower costs (or more importantly, better value) for the project.

RFP vendor responses can help identify false assumptions or unrealistic expectations you may have.

The RFP process can reveal whether portions of the project can be managed internally, or in some cases, by a separate vendor.

The downsides of issuing an RFP for employee benefits include the following:

It's time-consuming to review RFP submissions from numerous employee benefits brokers, many of which could be upwards of 100 pages.

RFPs are sometimes better suited for procurement-driven commodities. Hiring an expert to manage your employee benefits program doesn't quite fit that mold as you're purchasing expertise, not products.

If your questions restrict responses to only what you think you should be asking, you could be missing out on important information that could help you make better decisions for your workforce.

It requires a formal screening process, multiple reviews, meetings, presentations, and follow-ups.

The RFP process requires tremendous key stakeholder engagement within your organization.

HOW TO STRUCTURE THE RFP PROCESS

Before You Start Writing A Single Word

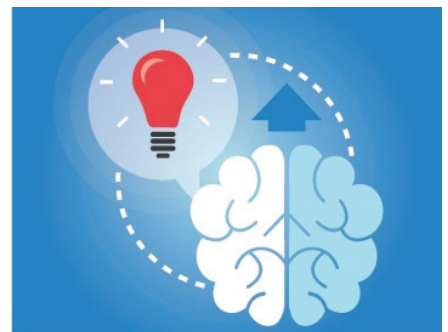
Before you can bring potential employee benefits brokers into the foray, the first thing that needs to happen in the RFP process is to have internal discussions. Identifying several crucial factors upfront will save you countless miscommunications and potential setbacks later.

Key internal questions should include:

Have we selected a project manager? It's crucial to establish who the point person will be if respondents have questions. The project manager will also be responsible for making sure the process keeps moving.

Have we established the key stakeholders? You'll want to include HR, finance, and IT in those considerations. Be sure to involve all of your key stakeholders and evaluators early in the RFP process.

Have we established a budget and ideal compensation structure for services? Keep in mind that it's critical to have both the input and approval from your Finance department in these matters, ideally prior to looking for providers. Also remember that employee benefits brokers can help you do more than just bring down the cost of benefits, and sometimes the best they can do is slow the rate of increase. Net, it's often times wise to look at bottom line results rather than just topline costs. (A benefits program which costs more than prior year but leads to a healthier workforce and/or better workforce retention and talent recruitment might be actually costing your company less overall.)



What are our critical deal breakers? Ask your team what, if anything, would eliminate broker candidates. For example, if your HR department absolutely needs access to HR software, make sure your RFP specifically states such — and that you only review submissions from brokers who can deliver on that requirement.

How are we going to evaluate candidates? A common pitfall associated with assessing responses from RFPs is the lack of an evaluation and scoring process. Remember, you can't measure something if you're not sure what you're evaluating.

What is our main goal? Visualize what success looks like and the biggest determining factors involved.

Will we offer a formal Q&A session? Holding a Q&A session after publishing your RFP will ensure everyone is on the same page, so long as you invite everyone to attend. This will also serve you well as it relates to managing your time and your prospects' expectations. (Conversely, handling Q&A on a prospect-by-prospect basis could inadvertently give one broker an unfair advantage.)

Remember that these questions are just for internal use. There are plenty of other questions you'll need to reserve for potential employee benefits brokers.

What Types of Questions You Should Ask Broker Prospects

A typical employee benefits broker RFP contains between 20 and 50 questions, which typically span 10 primary categories and include the following topics:

General Information: History of the firm, ownership and organizational structure, experience within your industry, experience within your geographic market.

Account Management Services: Structure of department, team biographies and resumes, project management capabilities, and scope of services (such as employee assistance and advocacy, open enrollment assistance, new hire onboarding, enrollment technology, employee communication services).

Strategic Planning, Underwriting, and Actuarial Services: Short-term and long-term planning, goal setting, plan design, contribution analysis, vendor negotiations, contract review, data analysis, reporting, benchmarking capabilities, financial projections, and claims analysis.

Compliance: Legal counsel access and expertise, document preparation and filing, on-going education and alerts, HIPAA compliance, ACA compliance, federal, state, and local legislative education and compliance, and other resources to assist with ad hoc compliance issues.

Communication & Employee Engagement: Open enrollment materials and services, new hire onboarding materials services, HR technology, automation resources and platforms, and ongoing communication efforts.

Wellness: Program oversight, goal setting, vendor coordination, awards and recognition, process for measuring success or failure, etc.

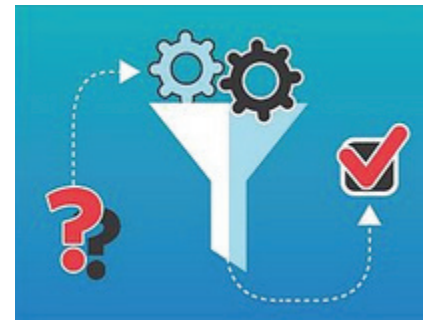
Additionally, it's not uncommon for a request for proposal to include two additional sections, though some companies choose to hold these questions in reserve for finalists:

Fees: Commission or fee-based, one year versus multi-year. Make sure to ask if any services mentioned in the proposal aren't covered by the fees quoted.

References: Ideally from clients of similar size, geography, industry, and complexity. Consider asking for at least one reference from a client who no longer works with them (in this way they won't be able to only provide you with clients who will give them a shining review).

What Information You Should Provide

The saying "garbage in, garbage out" is quite applicable to the RFP process. You want to be thoughtful and thorough with the information you provide. In return, you'll receive thoughtful and thorough responses. Your RFP should provide invited participants with the following information:



Process Schedule: This should include the key dates and times, such as the date you wish your contract to begin, question submission period, Q&A session, response submission deadline, finalists decision, finalists interviews, award selection, and broker of record declaration.

Key Contacts: This should include a specific person to whom respondents can contact with any questions during the process, as well as the point of contact for final submission of proposals. (Note that it's not uncommon for companies to insist all questions be submitted in writing, and that all answers be distributed to all participating parties. This ensures that everyone is on the same page during broker selection.)

Procedural Rules: This should include the number of proposals to be delivered, where the proposals should be sent and to whom, and in what form (hard copy or digital).

Company Background: Participants will appreciate a little insight into your firm's history, mission, and values. More germane to the topic at hand, they would love to hear about your employee benefits philosophy, so make sure you have a clear vision. Is your goal to meet minimum requirements according to the law or set a best-in-industry standard?

Existing Coverage Information: You'll elicit the best responses to your employee benefits RFP if you provide a bit of information on your existing benefits program. Include details such as the number of eligible employees, number of covered lives on the plan, funding mechanisms, and current benefits offered with corresponding carriers. As far as medical coverage is concerned, it's very helpful if you can share plan types, contributions, deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, coinsurance, and copays.

Assessment of Benefits Program: Perhaps the most valuable information for a potential employee benefits broker is your assessment of your current benefits program. How have your rates changed in the last few renewals? How has the operational execution of the last few open enrollments gone? What are the three largest challenges you're facing with your current benefits program? Why are you shopping around for a new carrier?

Disclaimers: You'll want to reserve the right to reject proposals that don't meet requirements, waive formalities, etc. Be sure to consult your in-house counsel for appropriate language.

How To Determine Who and How Many Brokers to Invite

We recommend inviting no more than three, but five or six at most — any more than that and you'll drive yourself crazy trying to evaluate the proposals. You're also more likely to get better responses if the brokers participating know they're part of a small group who was asked to respond.

It's a good idea to call a few business owners, CEOs, CFOs, board members, or heads of HR you respect to get the names of employee benefits brokers (not just firms) they trust. Consider choosing a mix of both privately held and publicly traded brokers, as each is likely to bring different skills, resources, and approaches to the table.

Don't be overly concerned with total company size, nor the size of the blocks of business they place with carriers, but rather the breadth and depth of the team who would be working with your business. Larger brokers don't necessarily have access to better rates than smaller ones. As for second round finalists, we would recommend no more than two or three for formal presentations and interviews.

Where Do We Find A List of Brokers to Invite?

If you don't have any peers you can (or want to) call, then consult a business journal in your city, many of which publish a list of top employee benefits brokers, Illustration of a business journal for Employee Benefits Brokerage Firms. even though they're usually ranked by size, rather than a more meaningful ranking (like customer feedback). Regardless, if you're looking for a place to start, it's better than nothing.



You can also contact the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBP), a leading objective source of relevant employee benefit education and information, as well as the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM).

Lastly, don't be afraid to Google (in fact, you should research all companies that submit RFPs). Spending five or ten minutes on a website can help you get a pretty good feel for the broker, which can help you determine if you might be interested in hiring them. For example, if their website looks dated and difficult to use, perhaps you don't want them leading your benefits automation efforts. If their content is dense, full of industry jargon, and difficult to read, perhaps you don't want them leading communication efforts with your workforce.

Appropriate Length of Time To Respond

Considering the time and effort you put forth in preparing your RFP, the last thing you want to do is preclude an employee benefits broker from responding because of an unrealistic turn-around time.

You'll want to allow enough time for the brokers to absorb the request for proposal, ask questions, and then formulate their proposals. In that regard, four to six weeks seems reasonable, and not too long that the process will drag out indefinitely.

THE BEST WAY TO EVALUATE RFPs FOR EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The easiest way to evaluate proposals is by setting up some type of scoring mechanism for each committee member to complete individually upon reviewing proposals. These scores can then be tabulated individually, you could hold a group scoring session where these individual scores simply inform the discussion, or you could create a system that uses both methods, where each committee member scores all proposals and then there is a group discussion about them.

Most score sheets are designed to correspond to the sections and specific questions asked in the RFP. We tend to favor scoring sheets which evaluate on a 1 to 5 scale (5 being the best), scoring each question on how well the broker's answer (if true), meets the requirements to complete an activity outlined in the RFP. In this way, each question is worth a total of 5 points, and those who answer each question in sufficient detail are rewarded more than those who are vague.

The review committee overseeing presentations should also have a scorecard that is tailored to in-person interviews. The final decision about the winning employee benefits broker is typically made a few days after presentations and interviews have finished.

THE RIGHT TIME OF YEAR TO START THE RFP PROCESS

The best time of year to issue a request for proposal is not right before renewal season, and it's definitely not during open enrollment. The ideal time to start the RFP process is actually right after a renewal or when open enrollment closes.

Illustration of an Employee Benefits Brokerage Firm bulls-eye calendar. Why? Because every single challenge you faced and struggled with is still fresh in your mind. Plus, it will take you weeks, if not months to draft a request for proposal you really like (or one your bosses and senior management sign off on).



At the very latest, you should begin the RFP process no later than six months prior to your renewal. That should give you enough time to issue, review, and award the business while still giving the new employee benefits broker enough time to set up the renewal.

That being said, you can onboard a new broker at any time. Changing brokers during a plan year does not mean you'll also have to change your plans, carriers, or networks. Everything can remain as-is until you decide to make a change to the program.

TIMING THE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BROKER TRANSITION

The timing is entirely up to you, but most employers have their new broker take over a few days after they announce their final selection. At that point, you essentially have a lame duck broker on your hands, anyhow.

Assigning your account to a new benefits advisor is as simple as submitting a broker of record letter to your carriers. Don't worry, you don't have to create yet another document — your new broker will have this template ready to go. Undoubtedly, they'll be anxious to get started.

BEFORE DIVING IN

Before diving into the RFP process we strongly recommend that you consult with a few of your peers in companies you respect around town. When consulting with smaller companies, try talking to the owner, while at larger companies it's probably best to talk to someone in finance and/or HR because they'll have more in-depth knowledge about their company's experience with their broker.

Ask them if they are happy with their current broker. If you keep hearing positive feedback with regards to a particular broker, or set of brokers, it might make sense to simply meet with each of them one on one. These discussions may help to inform your RFP or you may choose to skip the RFP process altogether.

GETTING STARTED: BUILDING YOUR RFP

Issuing an RFP for employee benefits can be a laborious and time-consuming process. Inquiring about specific capabilities of prospect organizations, most especially as they relate to your primary needs, is a critical step in the RFP process. Your ability to properly articulate your needs and probe for those from the outset will prove immensely beneficial to your evaluation.

While all businesses have unique requirements, we've identified over 100 sample questions you can use to customize your RFP. A well-refined subset of these questions should serve as your guide in selecting the right employee benefits broker for your business. Just be careful not to include too many questions in your RFP, lest you scare off otherwise qualified brokers. (An ideal number of questions to shoot for is between 20 and 30.)

Sample questions are organized by major functional areas of a modern employee benefits brokerage firm, including; account management, strategic planning, underwriting and actuarial services, compliance, communication and marketing, wellness, and more. We've also included general background questions about the firm, as well as questions about compensation and references. Finally, you'll find a scorecard at the back which may come in handy when rating responses and comparing partner candidates.

SAMPLE RFP QUESTIONS

General Information & Qualifications

1. Provide a brief history of your firm, particularly your employee benefits division.
2. Describe your current market position and customer base.
3. Outline your main differentiators from your competitors.
4. Describe what makes your firm uniquely qualified to work on our account?
5. What is your general philosophy when it comes to managing employee benefits programs?
6. Describe your vision of an ideal client.
7. Provide an example of how your firm is taking a leadership role in the industry.
8. What size clients does your firm generally support?
9. Does your firm have experience in the **[insert your industry]** arena?
If so, please describe.
10. Does your firm have experience in the **[insert your geography]** area?
If so, please describe.
11. Provide details of your firm's ownership structure, financial status and stability.



12. Discuss any impending changes in your organization that could impact the delivery of services.
13. Provide a count of your existing clients categorized by large, medium or small groups.
14. Provide the primary industries your firm represents, e.g., manufacturing, construction, education, hospitality, etc.
15. Describe the form of professional liability or errors and omissions insurance carried by your company and the amount of coverage.
16. Does your firm have experience in assisting companies with multiple locations and across multiple states and/or countries? If so, please explain.
17. Describe how employee benefits are structured within your firm.
18. Why do clients leave your organization?
19. How does your firm recognize and celebrate employee's successes?
20. Furnish a list of insurance companies, third party administrators, and other major providers for which you are not an authorized agent or broker.
21. Does your company have a code of ethics that establishes high standards for ethics and business conduct? If so, do you require all employees to receive training on the code of ethics?
22. Describe your expertise with clients with multiple locations in multiple states.
23. How do you manage vendor relationships?
24. In your opinion, what are the two major challenges companies our size face and how will your firm help meet these challenges?



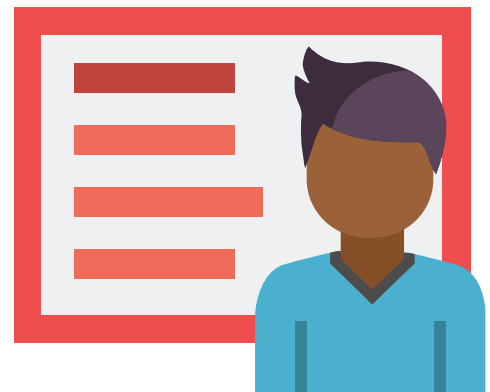
Staff

1. Identify all service locations and any subcontractors that will be utilized in the delivery of services.
2. Provide professional biographies for everyone who will be working on our account, including their tenure with your organization and their primary role as it relates to our account.
3. Describe the proposed team that would work with us and provide information about the qualifications and expertise of each team member.
4. How many employees are in your company? Generally, what are their job categories (e.g., management, sales, account management, etc.)?
5. Is your company at least 51% owned, controlled and operated by one or more members of a diverse group (e.g., minority, women, veteran service disabled veteran, disabled and/or LGBT)?

6. Do you have a company diversity initiative or program? If so, please describe.
7. Does your company's diversity initiative or program include diversity in recruiting candidates for hire? If so, please describe.
8. Please identify who will be present at the oral interviews if selected as a finalist.

Account Management Services

1. Describe the structure of your account services department, as well as the structure of the account services team who would be assigned to our account.
2. How often does your team meet with your clients and for what purposes?
3. What processes and tools will you use to manage our account, ensuring critical deadlines aren't missed?
4. Do you have a process in place for tracking communication between you and your clients? If yes, please elaborate.
5. What is your service plan/service philosophy?
6. If your firm is selected, how would you transition our account?
7. What will you require while transitioning from the current consultant to your firm? Include steps, timetables and data that must be received from us. Include documentation and any other elements you consider important from the prior consultant.
8. What is your process for ensuring client satisfaction, both at the employer and employee level?
9. Will you provide our employees with a dedicated customer support desk and if so, what will be the hours of operation, standard response times and contact mechanisms (e.g. email, phone, chat, etc.)?
10. What is the turnover rate of the employees within your account management organization?
11. What happens when a team member needs to be replaced due to turnovers or service issues?
12. What kind of training (industry, internal, computer, other) does your account management staff receive?
13. Describe your experience assisting clients with complicated administrative issues and with fostering positive resolution.
14. Will you assist with employee claims issues?
15. Describe your claim advocacy services.
16. Describe the support you provide for managing employee claims escalation.



17. Do you assist with creating second appeal protocol standards?
18. How do you help your clients' employees deal with noncontractual coverage and plan modifications to accommodate changes in medical services? (e.g. telephone treatment charges)

Strategic Planning, Underwriting, and Actuarial Services

1. Describe your plan design process and provide an example, if possible.
2. What resources do you have available to help us manage our benefits and outline a long-term benefits strategy consistent with current and future business needs?
3. How will you help us with the competitive marketing and placement of our plans, including development of marketing specifications, identifications of market conditions, evaluation of proposals, negotiations and placement of insurance contracts for annual renewals?
4. Describe your underwriting and actuarial services.
5. Describe your process for negotiating renewals. Be prepared to share examples of your success in negotiating renewals.
6. What do you do to help manage on-going high dollar claims?
7. Will your organization complete a provider analysis of physicians, clinics and hospitals that treat our plan participants?
8. Describe any special analysis that you would provide to help manage our programs.
9. How is the "rebidding" process handled?
10. How are plan design changes handled?
11. How will you assist us with insurance company relations?
12. How will you save us money?
13. How will you demonstrate savings?
14. How do you review PPO discounts and what is your criteria for recommending changes in network affiliations?
15. What sort of benchmarking data can you provide?
16. How would your firm help us decide whether we should offer a cafeteria plan or a modified flexible program?
17. Describe your process for checking the accuracy of coverage binders, policies, certificates, endorsements, and premium audit adjustments from carriers.
18. How will your firm support our mission?



19. Describe your firm's ability to build strategies based on forecasting; both cost and employee satisfaction on various consumer driven plans and private exchanges.
20. Describe any large claim patient advocacy service you have recommended.
21. What resources do you use to analyze medical and pharmacy claims? Include elements of how an analysis of the claims data drives the renewal process.
22. Do clients have access to the data for ad hoc queries?
23. Will your organization provide a wellness and preventive health analysis of our employees and claims experience?
24. What is the cost of customization for ad hoc reports?
25. Please provide samples of periodic reports.
26. How can you help us develop cost projections tied to our fiscal goals?
27. Who do you use for actuarial services? Please provide credentials.
28. How will you help with the management of insurance, including: monthly (or quarterly) supervision and/or preparation of claims activity reports from carriers; executive summary reports; underwriting analysis for annual renewals; annual financial projections for budgeting purposes; and alternative funding analyses?
29. How will you assist us with contract renewals with current insurance companies/vendors?
30. What is your philosophy on frequency of going to market with plans?
31. How/when will you communicate the financial performance of our plans?
32. Do you have the ability to measure the actual discounts between networks in various states?
33. How will you assist us in selecting the proper risk profile with regard to stop loss?
34. Do you believe that annually marketing stop loss coverage is effective?
35. Describe advantages your underwriting department has over that of your competitors.
36. Share with us your perspective on the value of audits, including claim and eligibility audits.
37. Describe your experience with evaluating ancillary plans, such as life and disability.
38. Describe your experience supporting clients with mergers and acquisition, including the due diligence process and integrating the acquired company's benefit plans with the client's benefits plans, communication to employees, etc.

Compliance

1. How do you support your clients in ensuring their employee benefits programs remain compliant with all federal and state laws?
2. Do you have in-house legal advisors or outside counsel who provide guidance to you and your clients? Please provide their credentials in terms of length of service and areas of expertise.
3. Describe the methods you employ to disseminate information about current trends and legislation. Please provide examples.
4. Do you provide training and webinars on frequently changing regulations as part of your services?
5. How does your firm stay current with changes in federal and/or local laws that would affect us?
6. How does your firm stay current with and advise your clients on state regulations that impact multi-state employers?
7. Do you assist your clients in the preparation of their Form 5500s and Summary Annual Reports? Is there a cost for these services?
8. Do you assist your clients in ensuring their wellness programs are compliant?
9. How do you provide ACA compliance to your clients?
10. Are you qualified to assist with COBRA compliance?
11. How does your firm assist clients with HIPAA compliance?
12. Describe how your firm maintains client records in a HIPAA secure environment.

Communication & Employee Engagement

1. Describe your employee benefits communication philosophy.
2. Describe your communications planning methodology.
3. Describe your standard package of employee communication services as they relate to open enrollment. Please provide samples.
4. Describe your standard package of employee communication services as they relate to non-open enrollment communications. Please provide samples.
5. Do you have any digital and/or internet-based employee communication tools? If so, please elaborate.
6. Do you offer automation/online enrollment services? If so, please elaborate.
7. For your marketing pieces, do you create them internally or do you use a preferred outside vendor?



8. Do you provide ongoing employee education & communication services for your clients' employees? If so, please provide a general description of your capabilities. Please provide sample employee communications materials that you have distributed to other clients.
9. Describe the research services you offer to support employee surveys and/or focus groups.
10. Describe the services you provide to solicit employee feedback.

Wellness

1. What is your wellness philosophy and how does it play a role in your employee benefit services?
2. Does your company provide and/or support corporate wellness initiatives?
3. Describe any programs you provide to your clients that foster employee wellness.
4. What tools can you provide to us to help implement/continue our wellness program?
5. Can you provide examples of low/no-cost wellness tools?
6. How can you help evaluate and refine our wellness program over time?
7. What is your process for measuring the success or failure of a wellness program?
8. As it relates to chronic diseases, describe an innovative approach you've used to help employers manage these expenses and the method of evaluating the program's success.
9. As it relates to preventative care, describe an innovative approach you've used to increase usage and the method of evaluating the program's success.
10. As it relates to age appropriate screenings, describe an innovative approach you've used to increase usage and the method of evaluating the program's success.

Compensation

1. Describe how you would prefer to be compensated for your services.
2. Describe your proposed form of compensation (e.g., commission, annual retainer, fee-for-service). If you are proposing a fee, please include your fee schedule/hourly rates.
3. Please specify if any services mentioned in your proposal are not included in your standard compensation and subsequently require additional fees.
4. What are your compensation preferences in regard to services?
5. Does your firm have any reservations in sharing documentation of the commissions received from insurers?



6. Has your firm been subject to any lawsuits or settlements specific to compensation disclosure or practices within the last five years?
7. What is your company's philosophy on accepting contingency/override compensation from insurers relative to the placement of insurance programs?
8. Describe our right to terminate a contract with you. Is there a minimum contract period?

References/Other

1. Please provide a list of at least three reference companies, preferably of similar size and/or need and complexity who are currently using your services. Please include contact name, job title, address, phone number, email and length of time associated with your organization. Also include number of lives on plan, type of medical plan(s) offered and funding mechanism.
2. Please provide a list of at least two recently lost or terminated accounts, describe the services your firm provided, and state the reason(s) why the relationship was terminated. Please include contact name, job title, address, phone number, email and length of time associated with your organization.



Other / Miscellaneous

1. Provide an entire scope of services listing.
2. Describe the services you provide to assist with benefits benchmarking.
3. Describe how you support the ongoing professional development of your clients.
4. Does your firm provide general HR consulting services and/or support?
5. Does your firm offer actuarial services?
6. Does your firm provide assistance with executive benefits review and design?
7. Describe any additional services offered by your company that may be of interest to us.
8. Is there any question we failed to ask which you wish we would have and how would you have answered?
9. Describe any other facets of your organization and your firm's experience that are relevant to the proposal which have not been previously described and that you feel warrant consideration.

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ULTIMATE GUIDE TO RFP COMPARISON SCORECARD

Rate each broker on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest.

5 Level Rating Scale	Descriptors	Description
5	Exceptional	Broker's answer greatly exceeds the requirements to meet this activity
4	Exceeds Expectations	Broker's answer exceeds the requirements to meet this activity
3	Meets Expectations	Broker's answer satisfies the requirements to meet this activity
2	Improvement Needed	Broker's answer partially satisfies the requirements to meet this activity
1	Unacceptable	Broker's answer does not satisfy the requirements to meet this activity

Section/Question Number	Broker 1	Broker 2	Broker 3	Comments
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Section/Question Number	Broker 1	Broker 2	Broker 3	Comments
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Section/Question Number	Broker 1	Broker 2	Broker 3	Comments
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
Total				