



**PLOT TWIST!**  
Reframing Leave as a Benefit  
Improves the Employee Experience

Jennifer Limon, VP of Industry Solutions, AbsenceSoft  
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### Meet Your Speaker



**Jennifer Limon**  
Vice President, Industry Solutions

With 10 years of experience in the leave management industry and an extensive background in client-facing roles, Jennifer has industry and product knowledge critical to her role as Vice President of Industry Solutions at AbsenceSoft.

During her tenure at AbsenceSoft, Jennifer has spent time managing implementations for clients as well as leading the product team. She has extensive experience working with clients on maximizing their leave programs and leveraging software to improve employee experiences at a wide range of companies.



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### Agenda

1. Introduction
2. What can easily go wrong with leave
3. How perceptions of leave are changing
4. Leave as a retention strategy
5. Positioning leave to improve recruitment
6. Integrating leave into strategic initiatives
7. Partnering with leadership and reframing leave
8. Q&A



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## My Experience

### Maternity Leave

- 10 years of experience in leave
- Went on maternity leave in late 2021

**In contrast, friends have said theirs was:**

- Confusing
- Time-consuming
- Made worse by lack of sleep!
- Had issues with pay, insurance, lack of support, and return to work



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## Six Things That Go Wrong with Employee Leave

- 1 Employees don't know what they don't know.** Employees often don't know about the different leaves and benefits available to them. They don't understand job protection, how much or if they will get paid, and more.
- 2 The leave process isn't transparent.** Employees can often end up not knowing about the status of their leave request, what their next steps are, what documentation is needed and by when, and more.
- 3 Employees don't know when to come back to work.** HR teams often don't have the time to communicate regularly with employees on leave. Employees end up not knowing what to expect or when they can return to work.
- 4 Employees can't get the information they need.** If an employee has a question about their leave status or eligibility, there is no single source of truth that employers can access. The details might be buried in emails, calendar reminders, or even post-it notes!
- 5 Employees aren't ready for employees to come back.** Sometimes, managers aren't fully aware of when employees are returning to work. This can lead to employees showing up with no access to a building, no permission to access email, and more.
- 6 Employees don't feel supported to take leave.** Employees may feel like they are letting their team or company down when taking leave of absence.



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## Traditional Thoughts on Leave

Managing leave has historically been a stressful, time-consuming, and complicated process for both leave managers and employees.

Leave has also been:

- Positioned as a burden on the company and coworkers
- A red mark on employee file
- Looked at closely for abuse



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## That's Changing!

### Leveraging Leave as a Benefit

- Employee experience and employee satisfaction are directly impacted by what leaves are provided, and the quality of the leave taken.
- When leave and return-to-work processes are easy, employees feel cared for and supported by both their company and management.
- Once an employee is burnt out or feels they have no options available, it's often too late to retain that employee.



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## Access to Paid Leave is Growing

States across the US are adding laws to support different types of leave including **paid parental leaves**, with the most recent being:

- Minnesota: Minnesota Earned Sick and Safe Leave (ESSL)
- Maine: Maine Earned Paid Leave law
- Colorado: Family & Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI)
- Delaware: <sup>2023</sup> Healthy Delaware Families Act
- New Hampshire: Paid Family & Medical Leave
- Oregon: Paid Oregon Leave



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## Leave as a Retention Strategy

### What's the big deal?

- According to research done by SHRM, it costs **200% more** to recruit an employee than it does to retain them.
- Leave and accommodations provide a way for employees to get the care they need without searching for it at another workplace.
- How well the process of requesting, taking, and returning from a leave goes has a large impact on its benefit for the employee.



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## Slide 8

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**MSO** [@Kia PeKarna] are there newer ones to add?

Mandie Sellars, 2023-07-26T20:55:16.339

## Leveraging Leave for Recruitment

### A huge, missed opportunity

- Being successful at recruiting top talent today means rethinking current recruitment strategies.
- Only an estimated 22% of organizations leverage any of their benefits during recruitment.
- Benefits, such as generous and innovative leave options are often an afterthought, presented only with employment contract.



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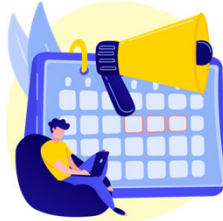
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## Highlight Your Leave Benefits

- Have an impressive leave policy such as extended parental leave or sabbaticals? Show what sets you apart!
- Fine-tune your job descriptions and recruiting communications to include your leave benefits.
- Create awareness through social media and marketing efforts.
- Sharing your generous leave policies will boost your organization's reputation and set your organization apart.
- Work with your marketing team to pitch a story about your leave policies to your PR team or agency.



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## What are Other Companies Offering?

Spotify offers **six months of fully paid parental leave** to all employees, regardless of gender or how you became a parent.

Salesforce offers **20 days of fully paid bereavement leave** for the death of a family member.

Sevenerooms offers all new hires **two weeks of fully paid refresh leave** between their hire date and start date.

Zillow offers a **six-week paid sabbatical** for employees who have six years of consecutive employment.



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## Integrating Leave into Strategic Company Initiatives



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### Building the Business Case for Improving Leaves

**Improving your employee leave program can:**

- Boost productivity and creativity
- Reduce absenteeism - productivity loss linked to absenteeism costs employers **\$225.8 billion annually** in the US, or **\$1,685 per employee**
- Improve employees' mental health
- Reduce employee burnout
- Improve employee recruitment and retention
- Support the value of work-life-balance
- Improve company culture
- Reduce medical and disability costs for your company




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### Reframe Leave to Become a Strategic Partner to Leadership

You can position yourself as a strategic partner to your executive team. Use your leave program results and planned path forward to positively impact business goals.

**Leave programs impact:**

- Satisfaction and experience
- Retention
- Recruitment
- Efficiency of HR and the leave team
- Productivity of employees
- Bottom line




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### Driving Results and Measuring Success

- Give leadership visibility into leave data and analytics. Unburden yourself and your HR team from manually compiling information during an audit.
- Allow managers increased visibility into cases so they can better plan for their employees' return to work.
- Planned leaves reduce absenteeism, allowing for increased productivity and higher employee morale.




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## Q&A



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## Connect with us!

Learn more at [AbsenceSoft.com](https://AbsenceSoft.com) or reach out to us directly at [leavecommunity@absencesoft.com](mailto:leavecommunity@absencesoft.com)



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