

How to Build COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence in the Workplace

By providing information about COVID-19 vaccination and building confidence among their employees, employers can help increase vaccine uptake. Employees' decision to get vaccinated can protect more than just their own health. If everyone at the workplace – from upper management, to frontline staff, contractors, or temporary workers – gets vaccinated, it will help protect staff, customers, and visitors. According to [OSHA guidance](#), [fully vaccinated](#) employees do not need to wear a mask or social distance, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations. Unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk (e.g., because of a prior transplant or other medical condition) employees should continue to wear a mask and take other precautions, especially in [higher-risk settings](#).

What is vaccine confidence?

Vaccine confidence is the trust that people have in

- Recommended vaccines
- Providers who administer vaccines
- Processes and policies that lead to vaccine development, licensure or authorization, manufacturing, and recommendations for use

Why is vaccine confidence important?

Although some employees have already been vaccinated, others may be hesitant to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Before employees agree to be vaccinated, they may want answers to their vaccine questions. By answering questions and taking time to listen to concerns, you can help employees be informed and confident when they decide to get vaccinated. When they decide to get vaccinated, employees may also influence their families and communities. Furthermore, communities with strong confidence in the vaccines lead to more people getting vaccinated, which can help us move past the COVID-19 pandemic.

Seven steps to building vaccine confidence among personnel in your workplace

Employees need to feel confident in their decision to get vaccinated. One way to build that confidence is by making vaccine confidence visible in your workplace. Here's how:

1. Implement supportive policies and practices.

Employers can take several steps to help employees access vaccines and demonstrate support for vaccination:

- Providing paid time off and help with transportation to get vaccinated in the community
- Offering vaccination at the worksite
- Providing flexible, non-punitive sick leave options (e.g., paid sick leave) for employees with signs and symptoms after vaccination.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Resources:

- [Workplace vaccination program](#)



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines

2. Recruit vaccine champions from your workforce.

Identify trusted leaders from various units in your organization to serve as vaccine champions. Ask them to lead by example by getting a COVID-19 vaccine and being photographed while doing so. Invite staff who have already been vaccinated to share their reasons for doing so and the importance of vaccination. Don't forget to also engage workers and union leadership (if applicable) as vaccine champions, as peer-to-peer approaches can be very effective. You can share their stories and photos using:

- Testimonials given during staff meetings, presentations, and break room conversations
- Short videos
- Email blasts
- Social media
- Blogs or web articles

3. Host discussions where personnel at different levels can provide input about how to build vaccine confidence.

An important step to building vaccine confidence at your workplace is to hold discussions across job areas and levels of the organization about how to promote confidence in COVID-19 vaccines. These open discussions can help address staff questions and concerns and get their input on how to best build vaccine confidence within your workplace.

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Resources:

- View [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about COVID-19 Vaccination.
- Use *Appendix A. COVID-19 Vaccine Communication and Confidence Checklist for Businesses and Employers* as you plan these discussions.
- Use *Appendix B. Vaccine Confidence Conversation Starter for Businesses and Employers* to help you effectively structure these discussions. Focus your discussions on gathering input to tailor approaches that will work best in your facility to build staff buy-in and vaccine confidence.

4. Share accurate information with staff using multiple communication channels.

Use a variety of communication channels such as email blasts, recorded announcements, posters in common spaces (break rooms, bathrooms, hallways), local safety committee meetings, your company's intranet, and social media to share information with staff about the importance of COVID-19 vaccination and vaccine confidence. If your industry uses toolbox talks and safety stand downs, consider integrating tailored messages. Messages could include:

- Get a COVID-19 vaccine to help protect yourself, your co-workers, and your family from infection.
- Vaccine confidence starts with you! Building defenses against COVID-19 is a team effort in our workplace.
- Getting a COVID-19 vaccine adds one more layer of protection against infection for you, your co-workers, and your family—ultimately protecting the community.
- You can do several things to build vaccine confidence:
 - » Choose to get vaccinated yourself.
 - » Share your reasons for getting vaccinated and encourage others to get vaccinated.
 - » Learn how to have effective [COVID-19 vaccine conversations](#) with others to encourage them to get vaccinated.

5. Share COVID-19 vaccine resources with key personnel and vaccine champions.

Share resources with your vaccine champions, executive leadership, human resources staff, safety staff, union leadership, managers, and others with responsibility for frontline supervision, as well as community and medical partners who may be involved in vaccinating employees. Empower personnel with accurate and timely information on how vaccines are developed and monitored for safety and how to talk about COVID-19 vaccination.

CDC Resources:

- [Letter to Your Employees](#): Customize this letter about COVID-19 vaccination to send to your staff.
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Basics for Workers \(Slide Deck\)](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)): These slides can be shared at internal meetings in your workplace. You can use all or part of the slide set and can include any additional information specific to your workplace.
- [Key Things to Know](#): Use these key messages about COVID-19 vaccine to educate your employees.
- [Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#): Proactively address and mitigate the spread and harm of misinformation by sharing credible and accurate information.
- [Facts About COVID-19 vaccines](#) (fact sheet available in multiple languages)
- [Stopping the COVID-19 Pandemic Is Going to Take All of Our Tools](#) (low literacy fact sheet)
- [Infographics](#): Explain how different types of COVID-19 vaccines work (available in multiple languages)
- [Fotonovela](#): Comic-book style graphic that tells the story of a daycare worker's decision to get vaccinated against COVID-19 (also available in Spanish and Haitian Creole).
- [Essential Worker Posters](#) (some available in Spanish)
- Sample [Social Media messages](#)
- [Printable Stickers](#) (also available in [Spanish](#))

6. Create safe spaces for staff to get answers to their vaccine questions.

Create safe and confidential opportunities for staff to ask questions related to COVID-19 vaccines and receive accurate and timely answers. Express appreciation for their questions and let them know they also have an important role in the health of the workplace.

- Offer staff a dedicated phone line or email address to ask questions about vaccination.
- Solicit and regularly update frequently asked questions (FAQs) about COVID-19 vaccination on the staff intranet and public website. Provide links to [the CDC's COVID-19 FAQ Vaccination webpage](#) and other state and local resources (for example, information from health departments, health systems, and employee associations and unions).
- Host live question-and-answer sessions with vaccine experts and local staff members by having:
 - » Brown bag sessions for staff
 - » Public-facing social media livestreams

7. Make the decision to get vaccinated visible and celebrate it!

- Provide "I got my COVID-19 vaccine!" pins, lanyards, bracelets, water bottles, etc.
- With staff permission, post a photo gallery in common or break areas of the workplace or online as part of a social media campaign showing cheerful staff who were just vaccinated. Once fully vaccinated, show staff removing their masks and enjoying lunch with coworkers.
- Offer a small, sincere token of gratitude for staff who choose to get vaccinated (such as a personalized thank you note from management, a fun food treat, or a profile in your staff newsletter).
- With permission, record testimonials on why workers decided to get vaccinated and share online, on your website, with the media, and in other public places as appropriate.
- Get creative with producing and sharing inclusive, positive, behind-the-scenes moments of vaccinated workers in action.
- Reach out to local news outlets to highlight your company's leadership in COVID-19 vaccine uptake and share a few personal stories of your vaccine champions.

COVID-19 Vaccine Communication and Confidence Checklist for Businesses and Employers

Use this checklist to promote COVID-19 vaccine confidence among workers.

Activity	
1	<p>Give COVID-19 vaccine communication and confidence basics presentation to upper management, supervisors, workers (<i>including contract and temporary workers</i>), and union representatives (<i>if applicable</i>).</p> <p>CDC Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ COVID-19 Vaccine Basics for Essential Workers (Slide Deck) (<i>also available in Spanish</i>) ▪ How to Build Employees Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines (Guide)
2	<p>Hold an initial discussion with 8–10 staff to identify strategies for making vaccine confidence visible.</p> <p>CDC Resource:</p> <p>COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Conversation Starter for Businesses and Employers (Guide)</p>
3	<p>Provide training and education</p> <p>Educate all staff about COVID-19 vaccine.</p> <p>Train agency teams about the vaccines, how to build vaccine confidence, and how to talk about COVID-19 vaccination with their staff.</p> <p>CDC Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facts About COVID-19 vaccines (Fact sheet) ▪ How to talk about COVID-19 vaccines with friends and family (Web page) ▪ Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines (Web page)
4	<p>Post COVID-19 vaccine educational materials in staff break rooms and common areas in your health facility (<i>posters, handouts, FAQs</i>).</p>
5	<p>Post COVID-19 vaccine information blogs and/or articles on your website, intranet, and social media platforms (<i>blog posts, social media, videos</i>).</p>
6	<p>Create and publicize a feedback mechanism for staff members to ask questions or receive guidance about COVID-19 vaccination (<i>email inbox, phone number, point of contact</i>).</p>
7	<p>Share regular staff updates on COVID-19 vaccination efforts (<i>staff meetings, email blasts</i>).</p>
8	<p>Communicate where, when, and how personnel will be offered the vaccine. Share any plans to support personnel needing time away from work duties if they are experiencing any expected post-vaccine side effects (<i>posters and flyers in break rooms, staff meetings, email blasts</i>).</p>
9	<p>Have conversations with staff about the vaccines, and use strategies identified during staff discussions to make vaccine confidence visible in your facility.</p> <p>CDC Resource:</p> <p>COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Conversation Starter for Businesses and Employers (Guide)</p>
10	<p>Share testimonials from workers who volunteer to speak about why they got vaccinated and promote among staff, such as on the intranet or internet, in staff meetings, and on social media (<i>social media, blog posts</i>).</p>
11	<p>Recognize workers, union representatives, managers, and agency leaders who have been effective vaccine confidence boosters (<i>staff meetings, email</i>).</p>

COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Conversation Starter for Businesses and Employers

Objective: Engage staff at different levels to identify practical ways to promote vaccine confidence and support high vaccine uptake.

Format:

- Small group brainstorming session to identify feasible ways to promote COVID-19 vaccination at work
- Online or in-person meeting (if staff are back in the office)
- Facilitator should be a staff member or outside health professional who is well-respected and seen as a neutral convener on the topic. Consider identifying a facilitator who represents or identifies with a large section of the staff assembled for the discussion; you may need to identify multiple facilitators for different groups of staff.
- It can be helpful to also have a vaccine expert in the room to answer more technical questions, such as those about vaccine safety.
- If management staff members are in the room, explain that, "In this meeting, everyone is an equal participant because we are all conveying our personal feelings and perspectives."
- A note-taker should be prepared to take detailed notes of staff questions, concerns, and ideas for future use.

Audience: 8-10 Employees. Ensure representation of different functions and levels (e.g., upper management, human resources, supervisors, union representatives). Large employers may want to hold a series of conversations in order to reach a variety of functions and levels. Focus on inviting staff who have already gotten vaccinated or are open to vaccination (in the "wait and see" group).

Rationale:

- Employees' decision to get vaccinated can protect their coworkers, customers, families, and communities.
- Vaccine hesitancy and concerns might vary from workplace to workplace, so a tailored approach to promoting vaccine confidence may be needed.
- Ideas on how to make vaccine confidence visible should come from workers themselves.

Note: If non-management staff members are not comfortable participating in a discussion with management, consider organizing separate sessions. By ensuring that personnel who are in direct or chain reporting relationships participate in different groups, you can enhance their willingness to speak candidly.

Suggested Time: 60 minutes

Supporting Materials: CDC has multiple resources available in the [Workplace COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit](#), and you are welcome to adapt them for use in your facility. Some of the materials that might help in this discussion include:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Basics for Essential Workers](#) (Slide Deck) (also available in [Spanish](#)): Will be used to introduce vaccine confidence concepts in the "Conversation Starter" session
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Communication and Confidence Checklist for Businesses and Employers](#)

Presentation and Discussion Flow:

Welcome (Discussion, 10 minutes)— Facilitator:

- Facilitator greets everyone in the meeting.
- If people don't know one another, do a quick round of introductions.
- Outline meeting objectives and any "house rules" about speaking up or asking questions.

COVID-19 Vaccine Communication and Confidence Introduction (PowerPoint, 15 minutes)

- Use [COVID-19 Vaccine Basics for Essential Workers](#) slide deck and include question and answer session for addressing common questions and concerns.

How Might We Build Vaccine Confidence Here? (Discussion, 30 minutes)

- Facilitator asks the following questions and invites staff to share ideas that can be used to strengthen staff communication at your facility.
 - » How many of you have already received or are planning to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?
 - » What motivated you to make the decision to get vaccinated?
 - » Can you think of any specific messages you heard in the media, online, or in the community about COVID-19 vaccine?
 - Using sticky notes, notecards, or chat box, list the reasons for vaccination mentioned and/or [CDC's key messages about vaccine benefits](#). Discuss and rank those that are most effective, and capture any suggestions for updating the messages or adding new ones.
- How might we work together to promote COVID-19 vaccination in this company?
 - » Using sticky notes, notecards, or the chat box, list ideas. Then facilitator can discuss and draw connections between similar ideas and encourage people to build on them.
- Vaccine confidence is the trust that patients, parents and providers have in: 1) recommended vaccines, 2) providers who administer vaccines, and 3) the processes and policies that lead to vaccine development, licensure, manufacturing, and recommendations for use. How might we make vaccine confidence visible to workers?
 - » Probe: What has worked before for promoting flu vaccination? For promoting some other healthy behavior?
 - » Using sticky notes, notecards, or chat box, list ideas. Then the facilitator can discuss and draw connections.

Closing (Discussion, 5 minutes)—Facilitator:

- Present a list of top suggestions and identify any action points and next steps for management. Determine who is responsible for tasks and set timelines.
- Inform staff how they can submit future suggestions for consideration and where they can go to get their additional questions answered.