

Talking Points C2: Telling Employers About Community Events (page 1 of 2)

YOU: (*To Contact Person*): Hi. This is [name] of [pharmacy]. I'm following up on a letter I sent you a few days ago, about a service my pharmacy is offering to provide influenza vaccinations at your [company/facility/church etc]. Did you get that letter?

If contact person did not receive the letter:

YOU: Basically, my pharmacy and your company want to help as many people as possible get vaccinated against influenza. You're probably aware of the impact influenza has on [your company's productivity, absenteeism, and healthcare costs/the health of the community]. One of our services is to come to places where people [work/play/assemble] to give influenza vaccinations, so it's easy and convenient. I'd be happy to discuss the program with you now if you like, or I can resend the letter. Should it go to you or someone else at your [company/organization]? Can I verify the mailing address with you, or should I send it by e-mail?

If contact person did receive the letter:

YOU: I'm sure you're as concerned as I am about the impact influenza can have, not only on yourself and your family, but on [a company's productivity, absenteeism, and healthcare costs/life in our community]. And of course, influenza is highly contagious. One person might spread the disease to many other people—a big problem when you have lots of people [working together/getting together] in close quarters (not to mention family time at home!) That's why this year my pharmacy has decided to offer vaccinations in [workplaces/community facilities] such as yours, so we can do as much as we can to prevent the spread of influenza. As I said in my letter, we can come to your building at a time that works for you and your staff. We can provide promotional materials, and handle the vaccination event, including setting up appointments and collecting payments. Does this sound like a program you'd like to offer your staff?

If contact person answers yes:

YOU: Great! Then the next step would be for me to meet with you to discuss some of the details. When might be a good time?

In closing:

YOU: I'm sure this will be a successful program that will do a lot of good for you and your [workers/members]. I look forward to meeting with you—have a great day!

If contact person answers no:

YOU: Okay. Would you mind helping me understand why?

Some possible scenarios:

CONTACT PERSON: It sounds like too much work, and I'm already overburdened.

YOU: My staff will do all the work. We can provide some promotional materials like posters and memos that you can send out. We'll work with you to figure out the best way to schedule [employees, members, residents] to come in for their vaccinations. We'll take care of payments. And we won't disrupt your operations—we can set up wherever you can find us enough space for a table and a few chairs.

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CONTACT PERSON: People can get flu shots* elsewhere.

YOU: Well, I'm sure you're aware that some people won't take care of their health needs unless it's really easy for them. Sometimes they don't have time to make or keep doctors' appointments. It's been our experience that the more convenient it is, the more likely people are to take steps to prevent disease. And it doesn't get much more convenient than having the service come to you. That way they don't even have to take time off from work – and everybody in the whole community benefits.

CONTACT PERSON: Flu* isn't that serious.

YOU: It's a common misconception that influenza and its complications aren't serious. It can be. In fact, on average, each year in the US 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 die from influenza complications. And the virus constantly changes, so even if you didn't get influenza last year, you could this year. Sponsoring a program like this builds good will among your staff and our community, knowing you're looking after everyone's health.

Closing: contact person refuses.

YOU: I understand. If you decide to reconsider, I'll be happy to discuss it with you further. In any case, I hope you'll spread the word to your staff about the importance of being vaccinated against influenza. Thanks for your time.

Closing: contact person agrees to consider having the event.

YOU: That's great. I'm sure this will be a successful program that will do a lot of good for you and your [staff/members]. Then the next step would be for me to meet with you to discuss some of the details. When might be a good time?... I look forward to meeting with you—have a great day!

*"Flu" and "Flu shots" are what consumers say—pharmacists can help them recognize the seriousness of the problem by using the terms "influenza" and "influenza vaccination."