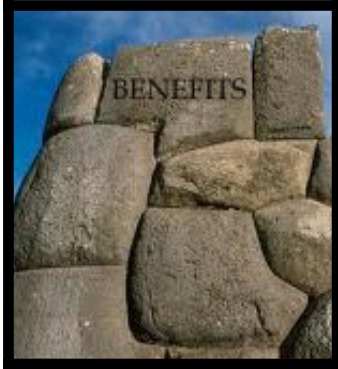


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# **Top Small Workplaces Have Less Benefits Erosion Than Other Small Businesses**

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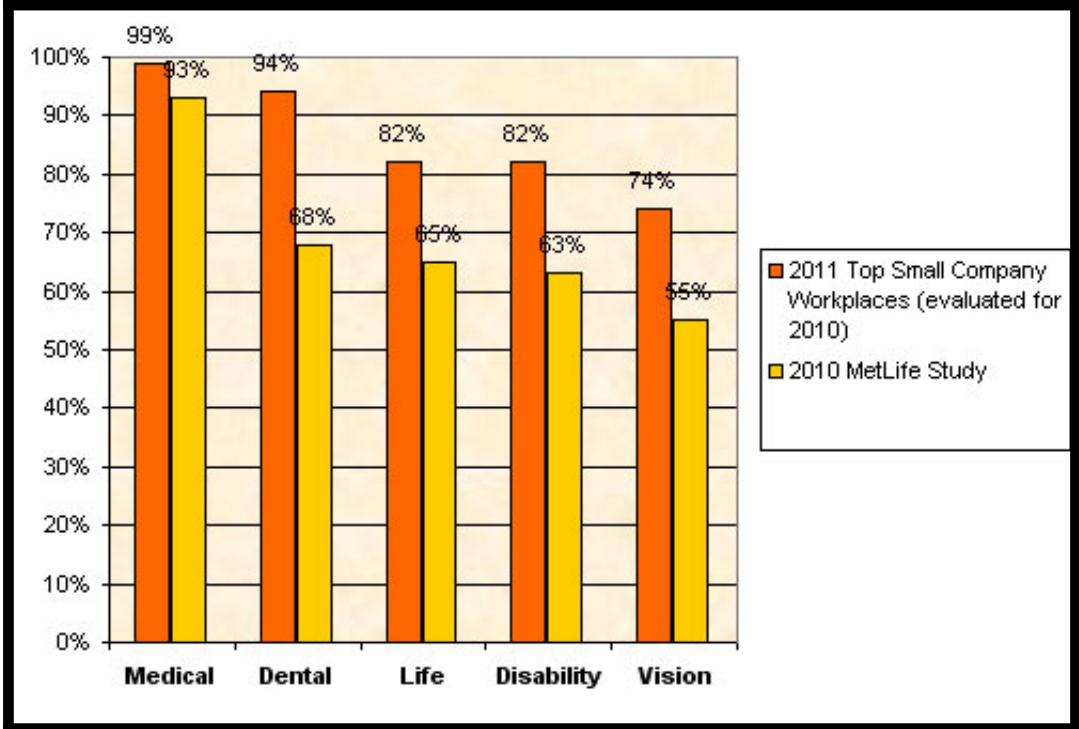
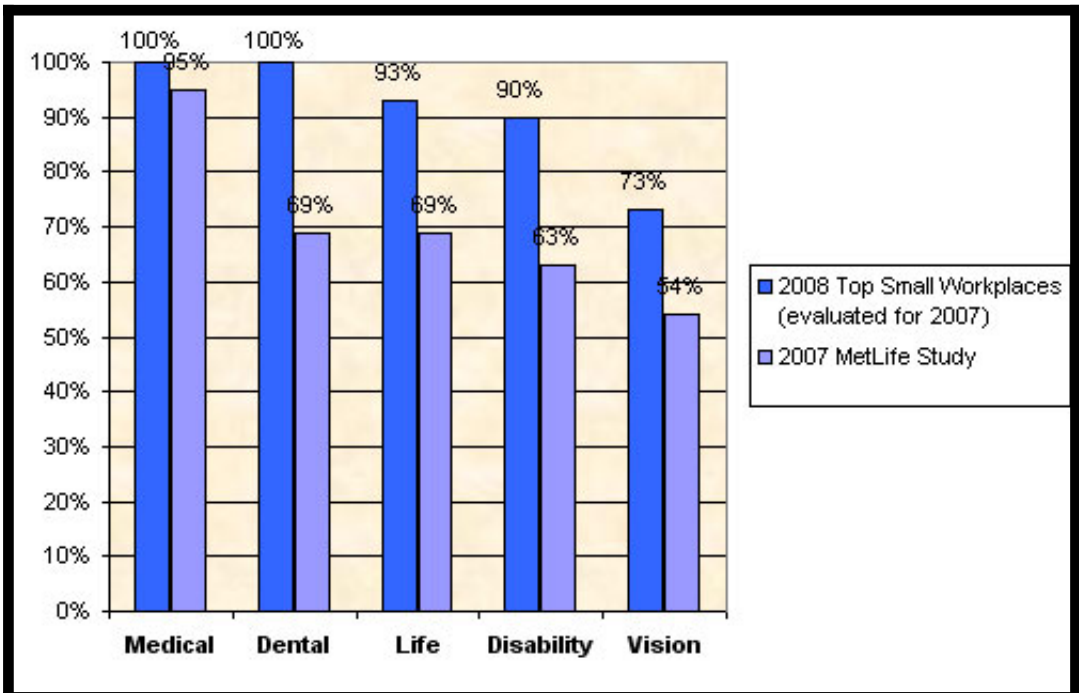
This week winning Workplaces added some new research summaries to our website which speak to how investing in your workplace can improve your competitiveness and bottom line. One of these, a study released last month by the leading online employment platform oDesk, traces the steady growth in contractors used by companies – both because they have continued to find it challenging to find locally based top talent to fill positions, and because they can engage and disengage these workers more quickly than permanent employees to meet the real-time needs of their businesses.

A consequence of this phenomenon (which has no doubt also been driven by the tough economy since 2008 and rising health care costs) is that company investment in traditional benefits package items has declined somewhat in recent years. I came across this press release on Small Business Trends this week, which shares the results of MetLife's 9th Annual Study of Employee Benefits Trends among firms with 500 or fewer employees.

As the table in the release shows, the share of firms who invest in medical, dental, and life insurance has decreased. It stayed the same for disability, while it rose slightly for vision.

I had this other addition to the Research Studies section of our site in mind when I thought about what this benefits erosion looked like among a set of small organizations that have typically, and purposely, kept their own packages robust in order to attract, retain, and leverage employees to maintain competitive advantage in their marketplaces – firms that happen to match the size criteria of the ones surveyed in MetLife's study. I'm talking, of course, about our Top Small Company Workplaces.

Below are graphs I created comparing the samples' inclusion of five of the six benefits from the MetLife study (I couldn't include Prescription Drugs because our award applications didn't include this option for firms to check as part of their total package offerings). I should also note that I looked at our honored firms from 2008 and 2011, because the years in which we evaluated their benefits were 2007 and 2010, respectively – aligning with Metife's sample.



By a wide margin in most cases, our survey sample of small companies with great workplaces invest more heavily in the five benefits offerings. And in 2010, our current honorees realized significant ROI through these and a whole host of other people practices, including:

- 80% have increased revenues over the past 3 years
- 96% were profitable in 2010
- 88% have increased their number of employees over past three years

**Related:** I mentioned above that we added some new research summaries to our site for your reading pleasure. If you have 2 minutes (literally!) I'd love if you'd take this survey to tell us under which workplace areas you'd like to see us add summaries in the future. If we're not currently covering a topic you'd like to see, you can add it. Thanks in advance!

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