

Small Business Benefits on a Budget

Attract and retain top talent with team
development and other perks

Why perks and benefits are a must-have for small businesses and how to introduce them



1. The value of benefits in a small business



2. Make team development your priority



3. Small yet impactful employee benefits



4. Master more than just employee benefits



5. Support your team's development, whatever your budget





1.

The value of benefits in a small business

The value of benefits in a small business



It's not enough to simply say you have a good culture. **You have to make this a reality through your values, HR policies, and the perks and benefits you offer.**

Salary and reputation play a large part in someone joining (or staying with) your company, but it's often the benefits and extra perks that can motivate them to take action.

Offering benefits and perks to your team helps you:

- Attract talented employees
- Retain existing team members
- Motivate and inspire employees
- Stand out from other companies in your industry
- Take care of employee wellness and wellbeing
- Reinforce your company culture through action
- Enhance your reputation as a good place to work

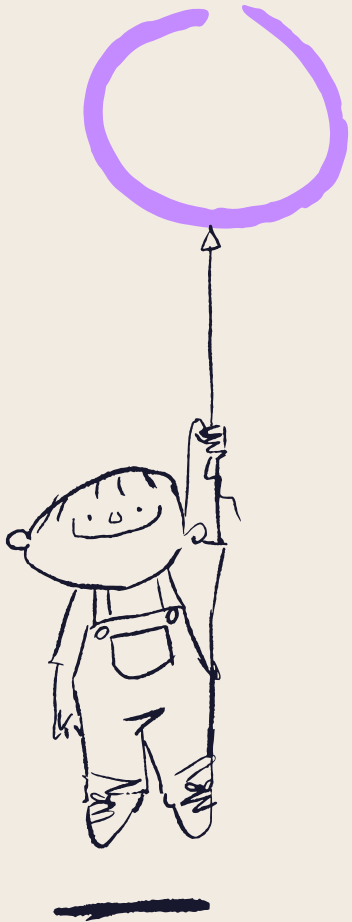
Sounds like it's a win-win for everyone, right?

The difficulty is that offering attractive benefits can be time-consuming and expensive. Common challenges for small businesses include:

- Lack of money
- Lack of time and energy
- Nobody dedicated to HR
- Not sure where to start

It's not always easy to give your employees access to perks and benefits, especially if you're a small business — but there are ways you can make it happen. From investing in development and wellbeing to introducing the right HR policies, there's a lot you can do right from the start.

We know why employee benefits are so valuable, and this guide will help you introduce them in a way that's manageable for your small business. **Learn the most impactful ways you can make a difference to your employees' experience and wellbeing, no matter your size or budget.**



2.

Make team development your priority

Make team development your priority



People often make a conscious choice to join a small business instead of a big, established company — and it's for a variety of reasons.

As a small business, you offer unique opportunities to your employees, like:

- **Climbing up the career ladder** more quickly
- **Learning new skills** and becoming multi-talented
- Tailoring their role to **match their interests**
- Becoming known as the **go-to expert in their field**
- **Understanding how to work creatively** with limited resources
- Learning how to **manage and lead others**
- **Influencing the growth and future of the company**

These opportunities exist in most small businesses, but we don't always make the most of them. Be inspired by this to make team development your priority and the benefit that helps you stand out in your industry or local area.

“Understanding what your team wants, and how you're going to be able to work around these needs is crucial if you want to be a good business leader. It doesn't matter if you're small, there's always a way around it to make it work as long as you think creatively.”



Yasmin Lord-Pottinger
People & Talent Partner
@ CharlieHR

What this looks like in practice

The small business environment naturally makes it easier for top talent to make an impact, but you can encourage your employees' growth even further with a few tactics and strategies.

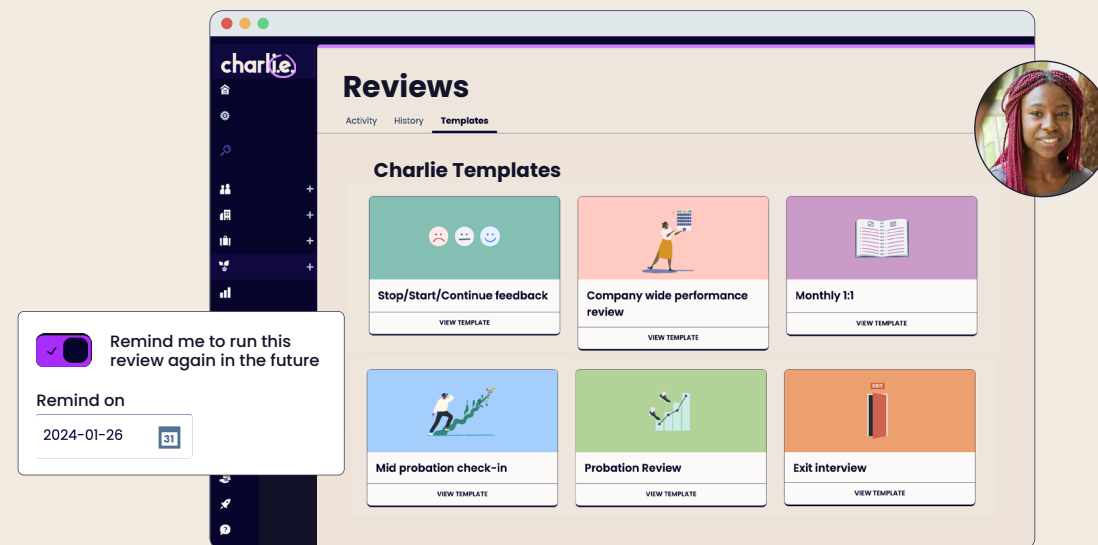
Proactive team development can include:

- A small budget for conferences and courses
- A clear career progression system
- Access to the right tools and resources
- Effective management from team leads and senior leadership

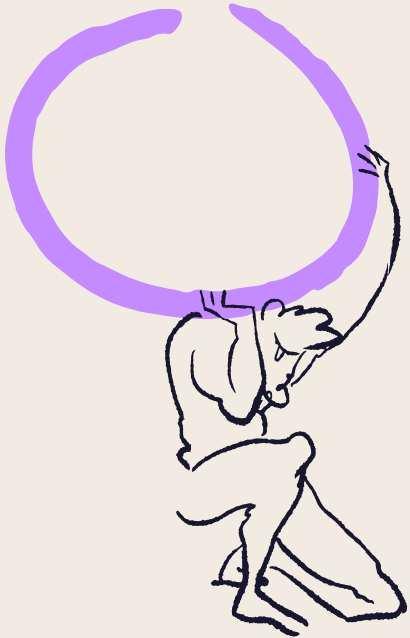
- Mentorship and learning opportunities
- Regular performance reviews and 1:1 catch-ups
- Policies that promote and enable professional development

Get the most impact from these strategies by **tailoring them to each individual employee.**

Understand their goals, discuss opportunities, and help them map out a future where they stay and grow with your small business.



How we do it at Charlie



Let's take a look at how a real small business handles professional development. Here at Charlie, we believe in developing our people so they can do their best work.

Our approach to individual development includes:

- Performance reviews twice a year
- Monthly 1:1 meetings for managers
- Weekly 1:1 meetings for team members
- Budget for growth and development

By using Charlie to run our performance reviews, we save time and remove those repetitive admin tasks.

There's no need to write new questions or remember to schedule a meeting — **Charlie takes care of it all.**

And with 360 degree feedback built in, it's easier to gather thorough feedback from everyone involved in the process.

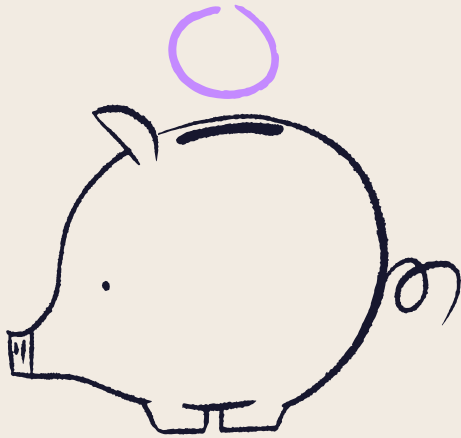


"Having performance reviews within the software is brilliant. It's great to be able to come back to past check-ins, but it also takes away the fear of irregular 1 to 1's as it's just become part of our routine."

James Chessum
Founder @ Red5 people

[Read case study](#)

Affordable ways to support development



There's a lot you can do in-house, but bringing in external support can help you make even more of an impact. The idea of investing in outside coaching or training for your employees sounds expensive, but it doesn't have to be.

Affordable ways to support your employees' development include:

- **Coaching sessions:** Offer a package of career coaching sessions or a one-off call to employees through a service like More Happi, without the need to hire an HR expert
- **Charlie's Perks platform:** Give team members access to courses through Community Online Academy, so they can level up their skills at any time

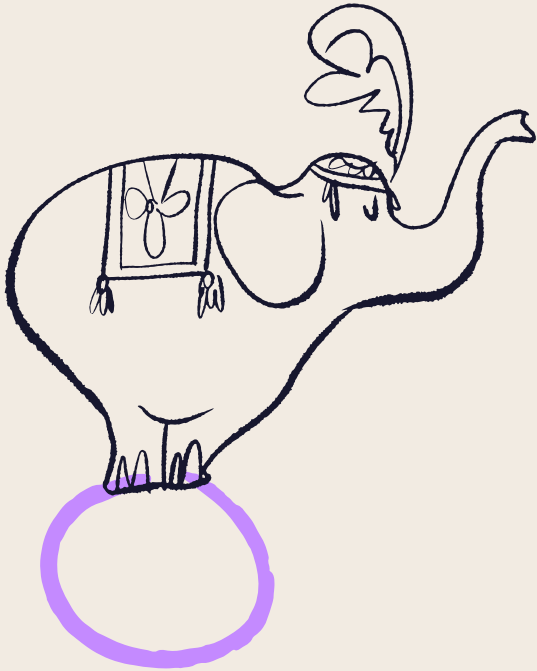
Perks are included in your Charlie subscription at no extra cost, giving you a completely free way to engage, inspire, and support your team members.

Discounts on coaching services, including More Happi, are also available within the [Charlie Marketplace](#) — so you can enrich your employees' career journey in a way that's sustainable for your budget.



"We were struggling to come up with benefits that everyone in our team would truly appreciate. Charlie's Perks does exactly that and our team is really happy with it."

Jonathan Lindon
Co-founder @ Talent Heroes



3.

Small yet impactful
employee benefits
to focus on

Find out more about Charlie's Perks

Book a demo

The right perks and benefits can attract new talent and help you keep your best employees. Perks like flexible or remote working can even mean more to someone than a pay rise.

But how do you offer attractive perks without endless resources? The answer is to use your budget wisely and focus on three key areas.

1. Financial wellbeing

As a small business leader, you want your employees to feel financially safe and secure. It's not always possible to increase salaries or offer bonuses, but there are ways you can support team members to make their money go further.

Small business-friendly financial perks include:

- Travel budgets for hybrid or remote companies
- Access to services that help with household bills, like [Nous](#)
- Perks as part of Charlie, with access to discounts and deals

Benefits like these don't have to be expensive, but the right mix of them can provide real practical support to employees and demonstrate that you care about their financial wellbeing.

2. Mental health and wellbeing

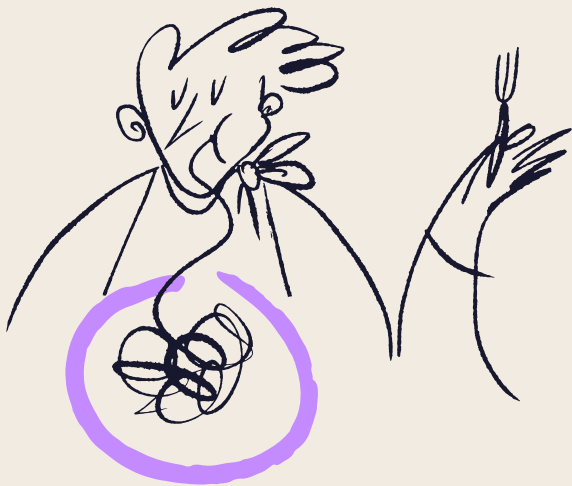
Employees show up as their whole selves, which means that mental health and wellbeing should be a priority if you're an employer that cares. It's not just human, but it also makes business sense — happy and healthy employees are more productive.

Support your team members with affordable perks like:

- A small monthly or yearly wellbeing budget
- Healthy work-life balance
- Reasonable workload
- Flexible working and remote working
- Mental health first aiders
- Anonymous feedback processes
- Access to mental health providers like [Spill](#) (via the [Charlie Marketplace](#))

Unhappy employees end up taking sick days, showing up to work tired, or not being able to work at their best. Empower team members to access support, provide a healthy workplace environment, and make wellbeing a priority.





3. Good HR policies

The power of a good HR policy often goes unnoticed. Beyond the essential [HR policies](#) every small business needs, the way you handle topics like flexible working, holidays, and leave can have an outsized impact on your employees.

HR policies allow you to document and streamline processes, so you don't have to start from scratch every time. Not only are they time-saving, but they prevent accidental unfairness and promote equity.

To help you figure out which policies to introduce or adjust:

- Do some market research and see what other companies offer
- Ask your employees for feedback on existing policies
- Speak to a HR consultant through [Charlie Advice](#)

Looking for inspiration on how you can make a difference?

Explore these creative and impactful HR policies from other startups and small businesses:

- [Dice's unlimited holiday policy](#)
- [Charlie's nine day fortnight](#)
- [Juro's pregnancy loss policy](#)

You can also ask your team members to share their thoughts on what they'd like to see, or how you can change an existing HR policy for the better. Listen to your employees and build policies that empower and support them right from the start.

"It's super important to be intentional. Start backwards, and ask yourself what you want to achieve with your policies. What you don't want is to be in a situation where, in two years, you realise it hasn't worked and you have to roll it back. It could be very damaging, so a lot of work needs to go into it before rolling it out."



Yasmin Lord-Pottinger
People & Talent Partner
@ CharlieHR



4.

Master more than
just employee
benefits

More visibility, less admin



Running a small business takes a lot of energy, and you don't always have enough left over to dedicate to extra HR tasks like researching or introducing perks and benefits.

We've introduced some ways you can enhance what you offer to employees, but what about all those other HR tasks?

We think that simple, effective HR shouldn't be reserved for big businesses that can pay for HR consultants or an in-house team. **With the right software and some simple policies, you can have HR running smoothly** — without adding another member to your team.

Charlie can help you bring all your HR operations together in one place, saving time and effort. Our software has all the workflows, templates, and support you need to tackle key areas like employee data, onboarding, and time off management.

Charlie can also support your wider employee experience efforts, including:

- **Performance management:** Benefit from reviews that run themselves, and demonstrate that you're committed to employee development and growth.
- **Engagement surveys:** Understand what your employees truly want, and monitor trends over time, so you can be proactive about the way you support your team.

- **Perks:** Use the integrated Perks at Home platform to offer rewards and discounts to everyone.
- **Discounted services:** Charlie's Marketplace is home to discounts on useful services like coaching and therapy.

With Charlie, you can confidently tackle everyday and unexpected HR tasks. And when you want extra support in the future, call on the help of our HR advisors with Charlie Advice.



"To me, Charlie has this ability to be simple, helpful and foundational to HR — it's also a very joyous software that our team loves to use."

Rachel Carrell
Founder & CEO@ Koru Kids

[Read case study](#)

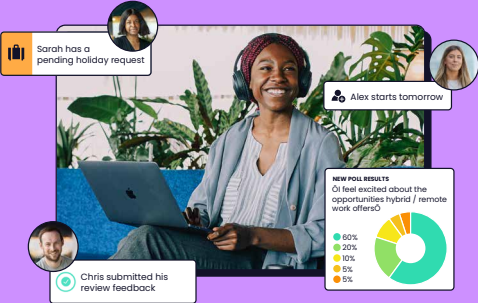




5.

Support your team's
development, whatever
your budget

Ready to make your HR effortless?



Make your HR effortless

Book a demo

If larger salaries and jaw-dropping benefits aren't a reality right now, you can still engage your team with perks tailored to your small business.

Use this guide to find the best options for your needs and budget, then pair them with Charlie to maximise the impact.



Before Charlie

- No time to dedicate to HR tasks
- No clear employee benefits and perks
- Generic or ineffective HR policies
- Too distracted to focus on your main work

After Charlie

- Your HR seems to run itself
- Unique and tailored perks and benefits
- HR policies that match your employees' needs
- More time and headspace for high-value work