
What Flavor Should I Choose?

Determining the appropriate retirement plan design

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DC vs. DB Plans

- It's all in the name
- Defined Contribution plans
 - The contribution is the defined element
 - E.g. – Employer contributes 5% of pay for participants each year
 - Amount of savings at retirement is uncertain
 - E.g. - 401k plans, profit sharing plans, money purchase plans, SEPs, SIMPLEs



DC vs. DB Plans

- Defined Benefit plans

- The benefit at retirement is the defined element
 - E.g. – Participant will get a benefit equal in value to \$800 per month beginning at age 62, payable for life
- Annual contributions needed to fund that benefit are uncertain

DC vs. DB Plans

■ DC Plan Advantages

- ❑ Appreciated by employees
- ❑ Easy to understand
- ❑ Portable benefits
- ❑ Extremely flexible

■ DC Plan Disadvantages

- ❑ Participant bears all the risk
- ❑ Minimal benefit to owners/ executives
- ❑ Often difficult to build sufficient retirement plan assets



DC vs. DB Plans

■ DB Plan Advantages

- ❑ Substantially higher contribution limits for owners/ executives
- ❑ Likely reasonable cost for non-owners and rank and file
- ❑ Greater assurance of achieving retirement goal

■ DB Plan Disadvantages

- ❑ Employer bears nearly all the risk
- ❑ Minimum employer contributions required
- ❑ Financial reporting can be volatile



DB Hybrid Plans

- DB plans that have certain aspects of a DC plan
 - More predictable contributions and financial reporting
 - Understood and appreciated by employees
 - Higher contribution limits of a DB plan
- Often paired with a DC plan
 - Can keep existing DC plan, if any
 - Adds flexibility
 - Spreads risk
 - Maximizes contribution for business owner

DB Hybrid Plans

- Examples include
 - Cash balance plans
 - Floor offset arrangements
 - Pension equity plans (PEPs)
 - Adjustable pension plans
- There are also DC hybrid plans
 - Age-weighted profit sharing plans
 - New comparability plans
 - Target benefit plans

Motivations for Sponsoring a Retirement Plan

- Traditional motivations
 - Attraction/retention
 - Competitiveness
 - Paternalism
- Alternative motivation
 - Allowing the business owner or partnership group to save a large amount of money for retirement in a short period of time, on a tax-deferred basis

Comparing Plan Designs

- At IAI we design, administer and provide consulting advice to virtually all types of retirement plans
- Four most prevalent
 - Traditional defined benefit
 - 401k profit sharing (often cross-tested)
 - Cash balance
 - Floor offset

