



HAVE HER BACK

WOMEN & THE WORKPLACE:

What Women Need to Thrive in
Today's Workplaces

Proprietary Research



WOMEN AND THE WORKFORCE

During the pandemic:

- An average of more than **3.95 million** workers **quit their jobs each month** in 2021, the highest average on record, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.¹
- **Women's participation** in the paid labor force hit its **lowest point in over 30 years**.²
- About **one-third of mothers** in the workforce have **scaled back** or **left** their jobs or planned to do so.³

Recent studies show:

- Although **nearly half** of women (48%) said the pandemic has **negatively impacted** their careers, **almost two in three** (63%) who left the workforce during this period say they are **ready to return**.⁴
- **Job transitions** among women on LinkedIn have **increased by 54%** year-over-year.⁵
- **77%** of executives say **hiring and retaining talent** is their most critical growth driver in 2022.⁶

Sources:

¹<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/interactive-quits-level-by-year>

²<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNS11300002>

³<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2021-08-18/pandemic-pushes-moms-to-scale-back-or-quit-their-careers>

⁴<https://www.metlife.com/about-us/newsroom/2021/october/women-and-stem--harnessing-the-great-reevaluation/>

⁵<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-women-changing-jobs-like-never-before-rob-milner/>

⁶<https://www.pwc.com/us/en/library/pulse-survey/executive-views-2022.html>

WHAT WE WANTED TO KNOW

OBJECTIVES

- Explore **how companies can improve women's retention** during a time of significant transition for women, including switching employers, changing careers, or leaving the workforce all together.
- Identify **why women are leaving their jobs**, outside of pandemic-driven reasons, such as lack of childcare.
- Understand **what components of women's career goals are most important today**, so employers can mitigate losses and improve women's retention tomorrow.

METHODOLOGY

- 15-minute online survey
- **n=574** Women who meet the following criteria:
 - Currently employed full-time or part-time
 - Employed in an **office environment**, either in an offsite location or in their home (no retail stores, restaurants, hotels, outdoor, etc.)
 - Natural fallout for age, race/ethnicity, geographic location
- Fielded November 11-20, 2021

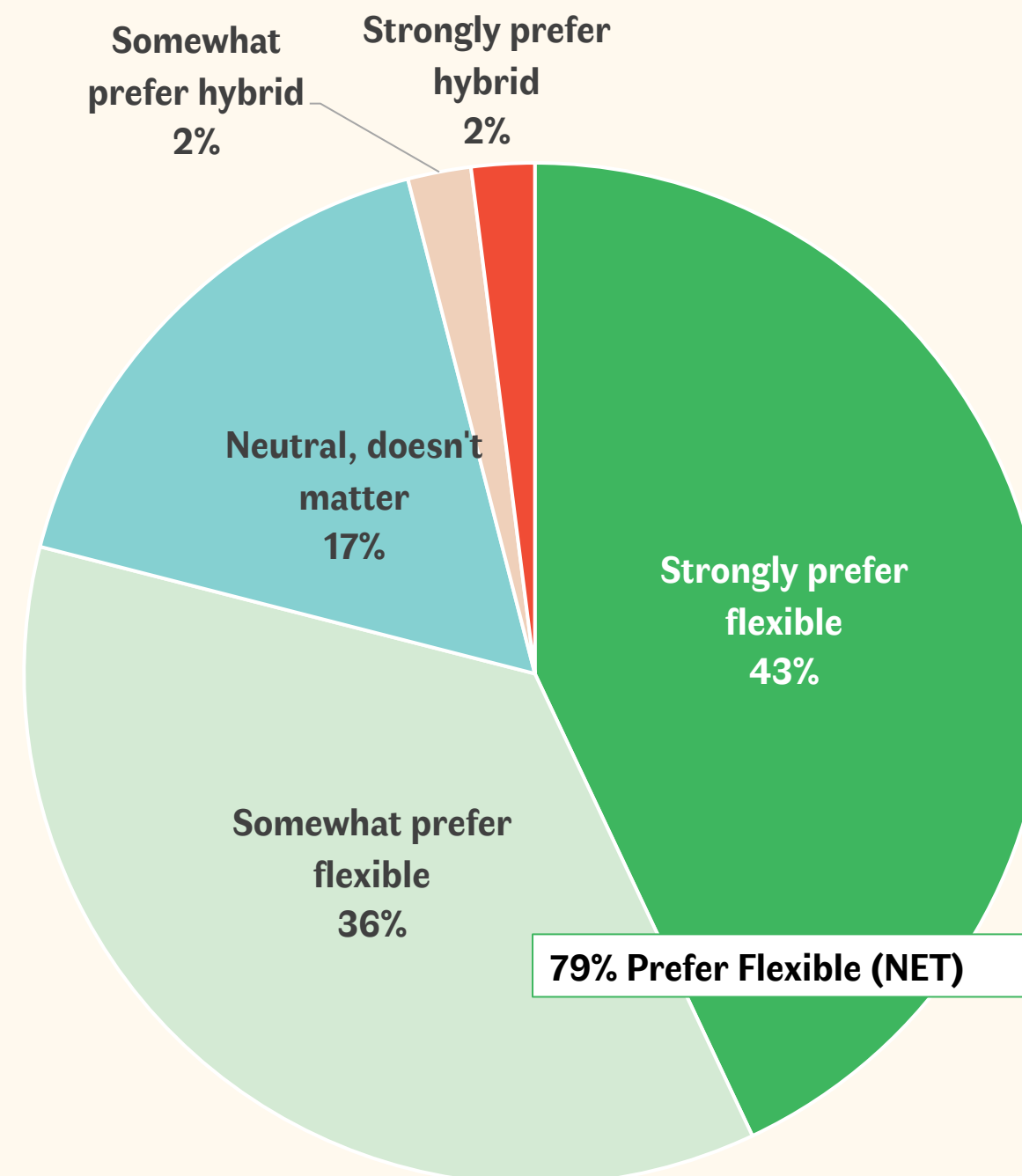


Flexibility is necessary but nuanced.

Respondents clearly prefer a flexible vs. hybrid workplace environment.

Women want the ability to make their own arrangements vs. follow a set schedule of on- and off-site days.

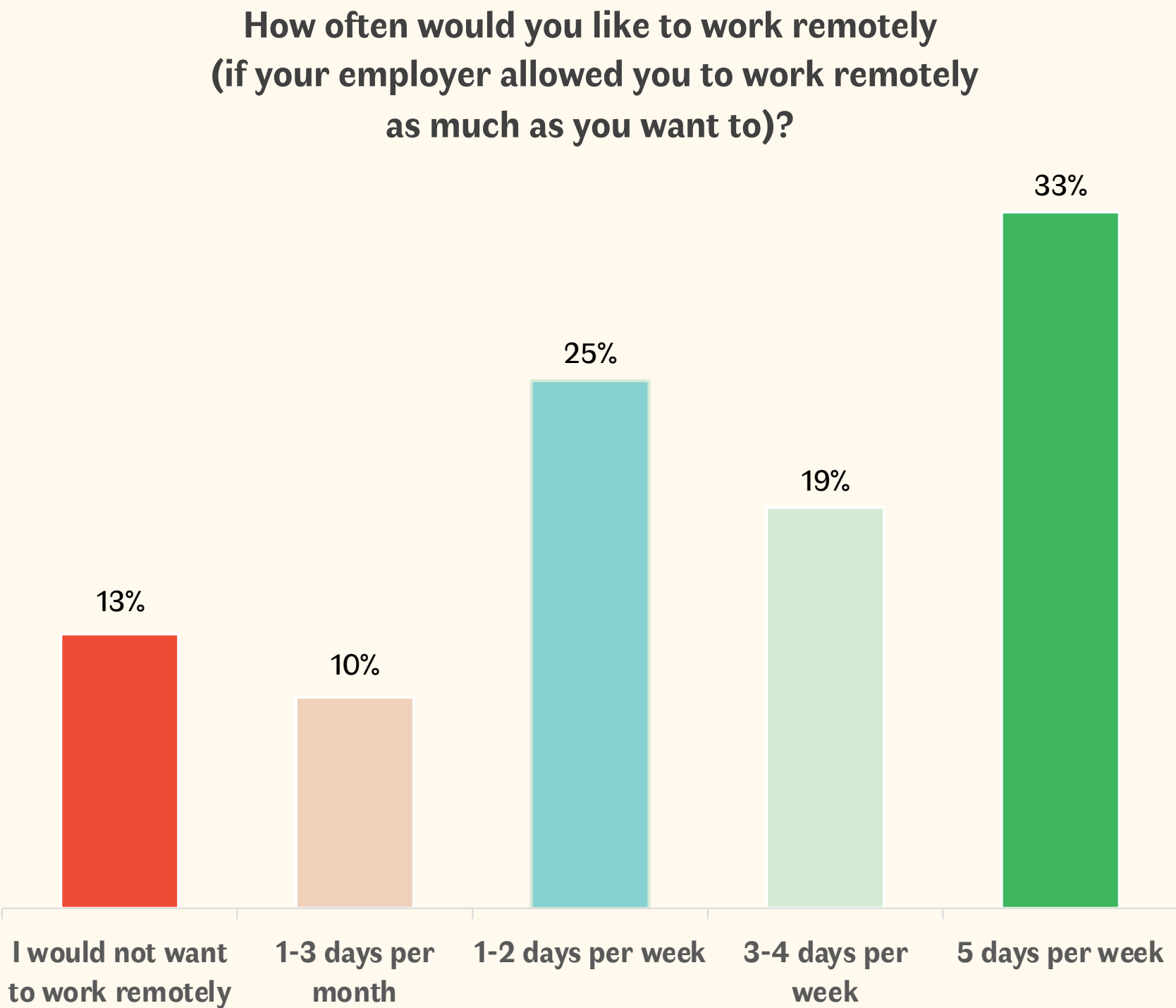
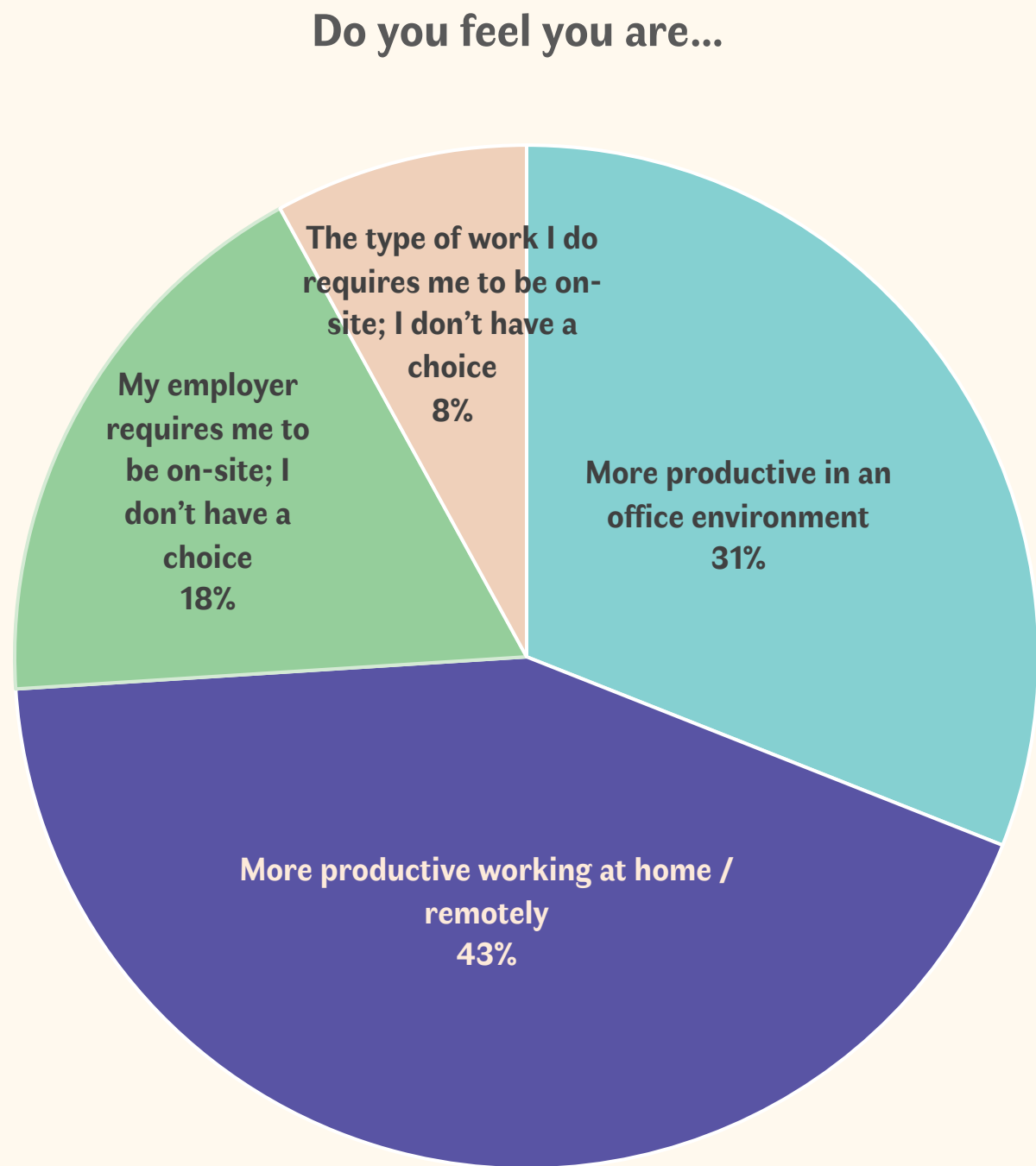
To what extent would you prefer a flexible workplace environment versus a hybrid arrangement?



Flexible is defined as the ability to make your own arrangements, as needed

Hybrid is defined as working scheduled days on-site and some off-site

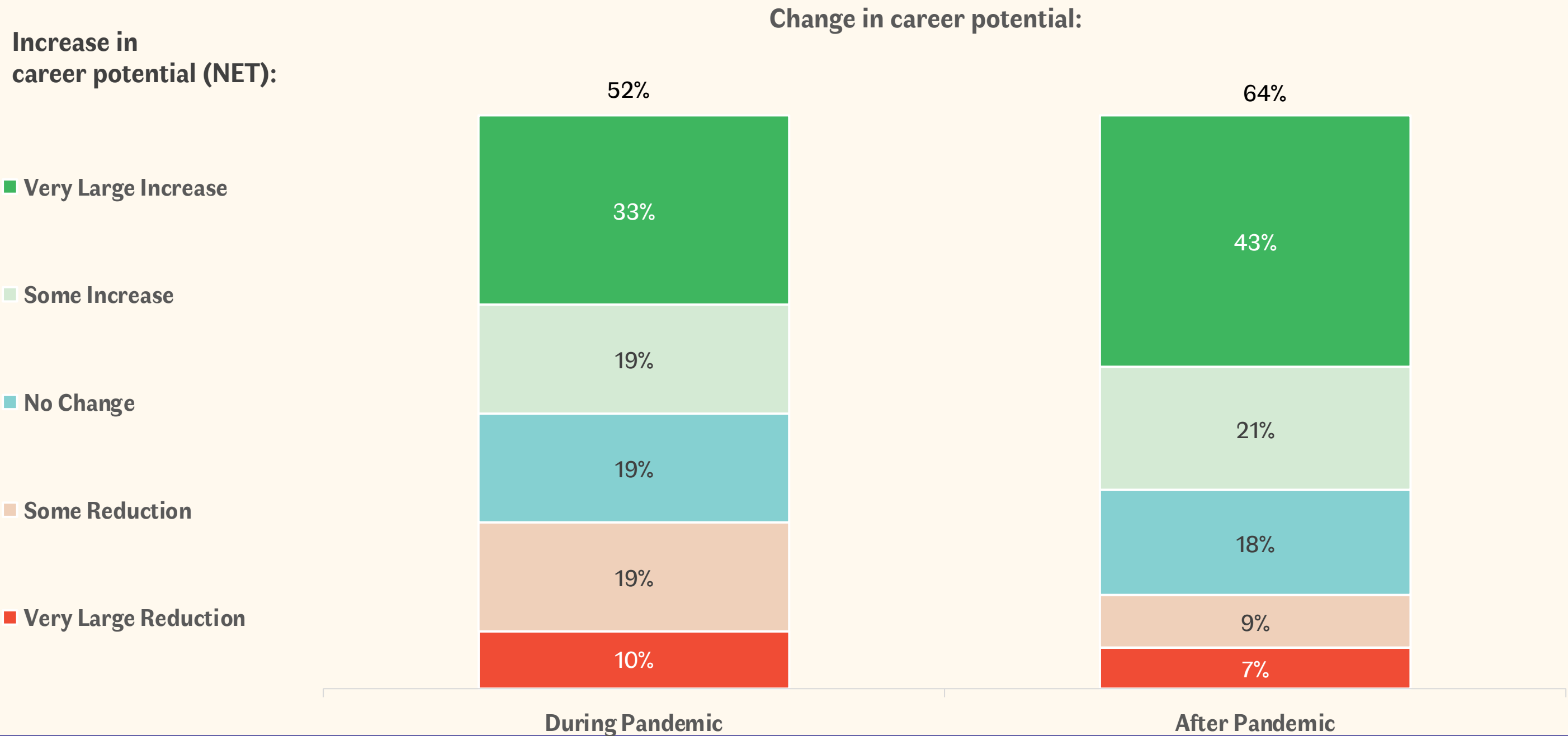
There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to remote work.
While respondents tend to work more productively while remote, the ideal frequency of remote work varies.



Respondents expect the opportunity to continue working remotely following the pandemic will elevate career potential.

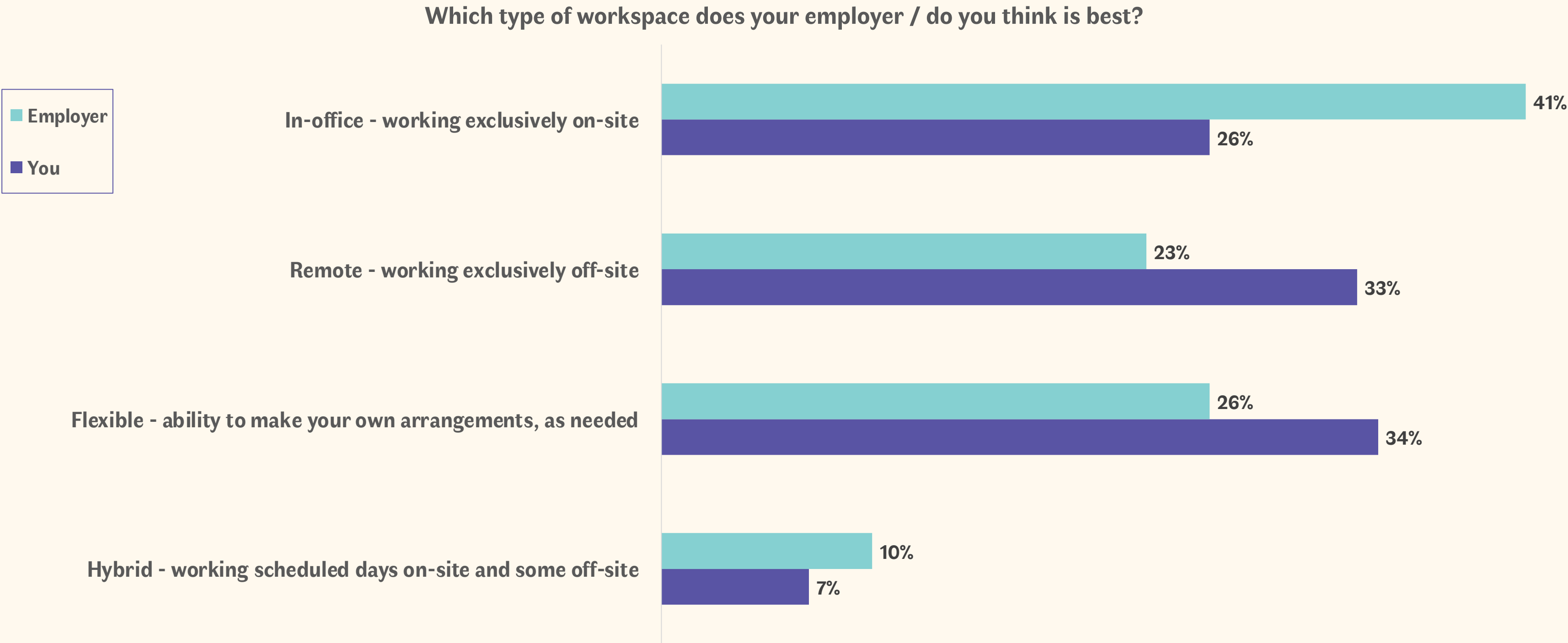
Historically, remote work hampered women’s career progress. Women’s proven ability to deliver from any location during the pandemic has led to expectations of increased career opportunities while working remotely.

To what extent do you think working remotely has an impact on women’s career opportunities?



However, respondents don’t necessarily feel their employers are aligned on the ideal workspace.

While women prefer remote or flexible work, they believe their employers are more likely to prefer on-site.



Flexibility is necessary but nuanced.

What we learned.

- Women want flexibility, and do not “flexible” and “hybrid” as synonymous.
- There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to meeting employees’ unique needs.

Implications.

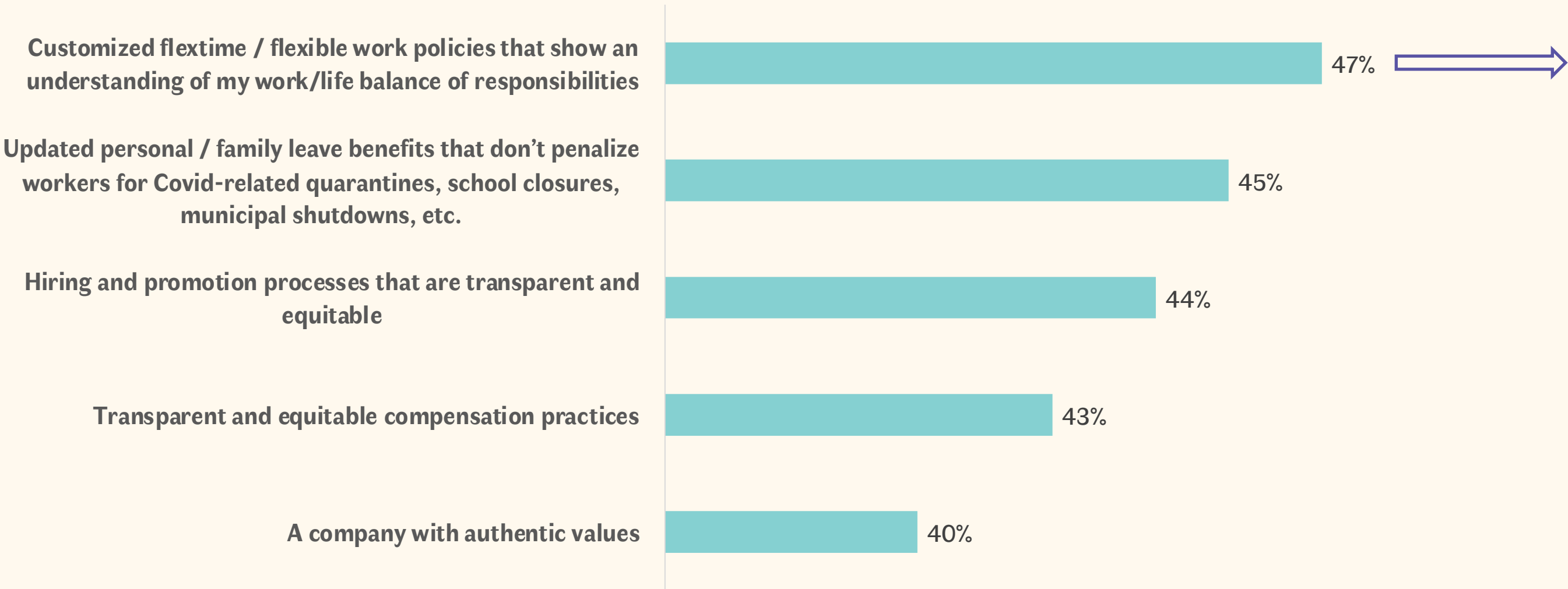
- Defining “flexibility” in one standardized way is viewed by employees as inflexible.
- Allowing employees to define flexibility for themselves and developing policies that allow them to customize for their needs is critical to retaining women.

**Flexible work options must be customized,
inclusive, and equitable.**

Customized flexibility is a leading expectation women have of their employers.
 Related policies must be customized, empathetic and inclusive, reflecting women’s current realities and varied needs.
 Women also expect transparency and equity regrading hiring, advancement and compensation.

Which of the following do you feel are important for your employer to provide?
 Top 5 of 21 Choices

“Extremely Important” (Top Box):



“Create remote policies that everyone participates in so remote work is more inclusive”

The top selection among respondents to make a “flexible” or “hybrid” workforce better for women (**46%** agree)

Bottom 3 of 21 (all 19%):
 On-site (or nearby) childcare facilities Subsidized childcare support Male allies / allyship programs

Flexible work options must be customized, inclusive & equitable.

What we learned.

- Women want customized work options that demonstrate an understanding of their needs and are inclusive of everyone in the company.
- Women expect hiring, promotion and compensation practices to be transparent and equitable.

Implications.

- Flexibility goes beyond addressing location or hours. Remote work requires remote policies.
- Women are concerned about a stigma – particularly if the majority taking leave or working remotely are women.
- The participation and support of senior leadership may be necessary to help mitigate negative associations.

Women's retention goes beyond equitable compensation.

Employer empathy and corporate culture are leading drivers of women’s retention.

In addition to pay equity, women want the ability to take leave without fear of retribution, a sense of accomplishment from the work they do, accountability for toxic behavior, and respect from management.

How important are the following characteristics, in regard to how you feel about your job and long-term career potential?
Top 7 of 29 Choices

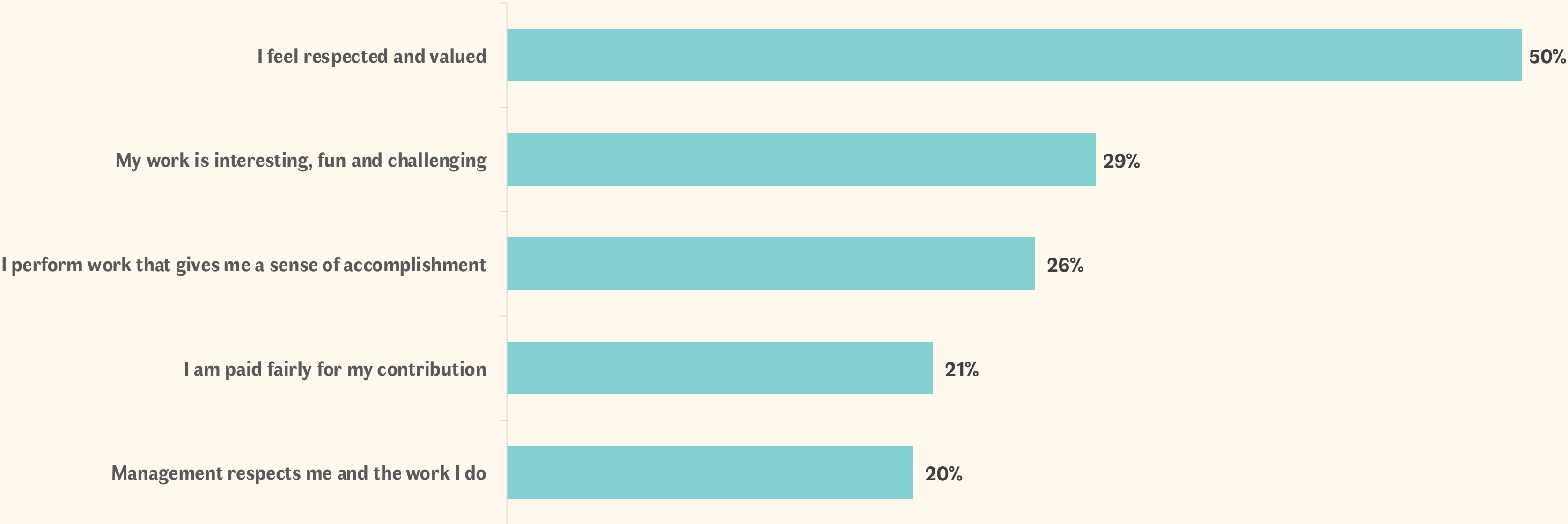
“Extremely Important” (Top Box)



Above all, women *must* feel respected and valued to stay with their current employer. Respect and value are demonstrated in a myriad of ways: women are more likely to stay if their work is challenging and generates a sense of accomplishment and if they receive fair pay and recognition for a job well-done.

Which characteristics are “must haves” when it comes to considering switching employers?
 Select the TOP THREE must haves that would keep you from looking for another job.

Most frequently ranked within Top 3 of 29 Choices:



Women's retention goes beyond equitable compensation.

What we learned.

- Retention is rooted in company culture, motivated by feeling respected and valued by employers.
- Women want the ability to achieve a sense of accomplishment and be fairly rewarded for the work they do.

Implications.

- Employers need to surround sound pay equity with consistent, inclusive, and empathetic policies and culture.
- Employees must *feel* respected and trusted in order to respect and trust leadership.
- Toxic managers will no longer be tolerated.



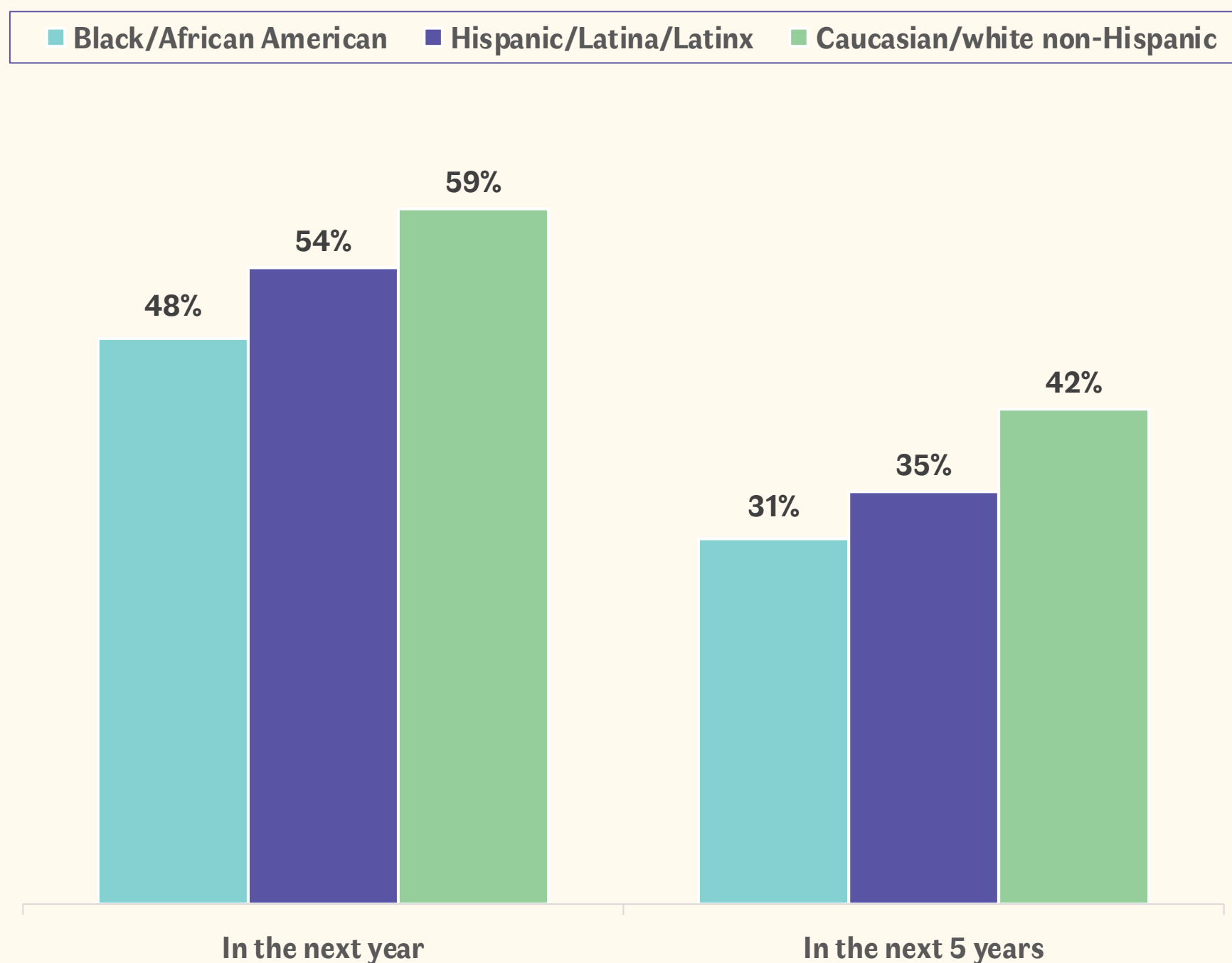
Women of Color are at greatest risk.

Women of Color are the most vulnerable to leave their current employers.

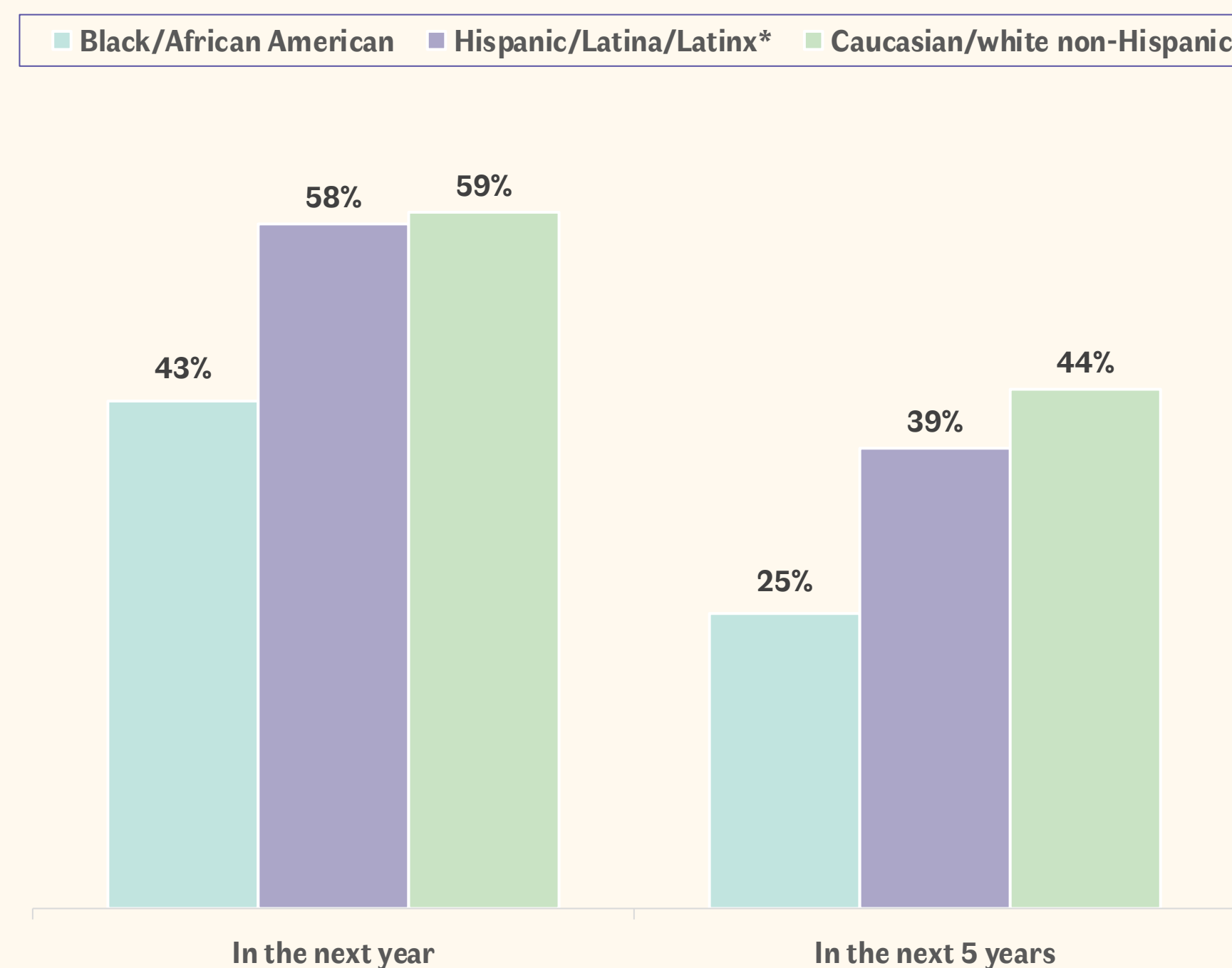
This is particularly true of Black/African American women, less than half of whom are "extremely likely" to stay in the next year, and even more pronounced among Black/African American Millennials.

How likely are you to remain employed in your company...?
"Extremely Likely"

All Generations



Millennials



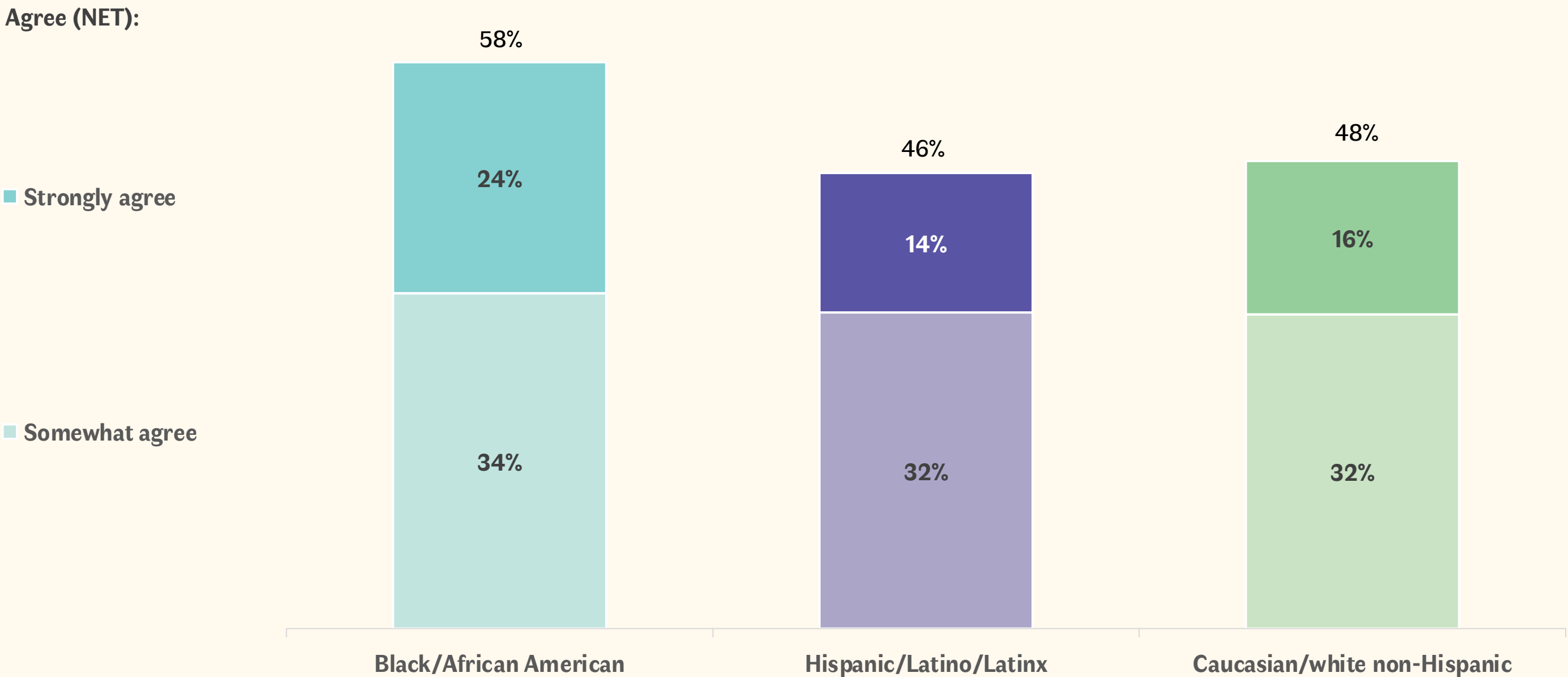
n=131: Black/African American; n= 105: Hispanic/Latina/Latinx; n= 261 Caucasian/white non-Hispanic

*Caution, low base size: n=63: Black/African American Millennials; *n=38: Hispanic/Latina/Latinx Millennials; n=143 Caucasian/white non-Hispanic Millennials

Women (Black/African American women, in particular) aren’t seeing companies enact meaningful, actionable change regarding gender equity.

Despite widely-publicized efforts to improve diversity, equity and inclusion in corporate America over the past two years.

“My company / employer has talked the talk on gender equity, but I don’t see them walking the walk.”



n=131: Black/African American; n= 105: Hispanic/Latina/Latinx; n= 261 Caucasian/white non-Hispanic

While top priorities are largely similar, Black/African American women have some notable differences. Transparent and equitable hiring practices rank first among Women of Color. Black/African American women also rank diverse leadership and health and safety in the top 5.

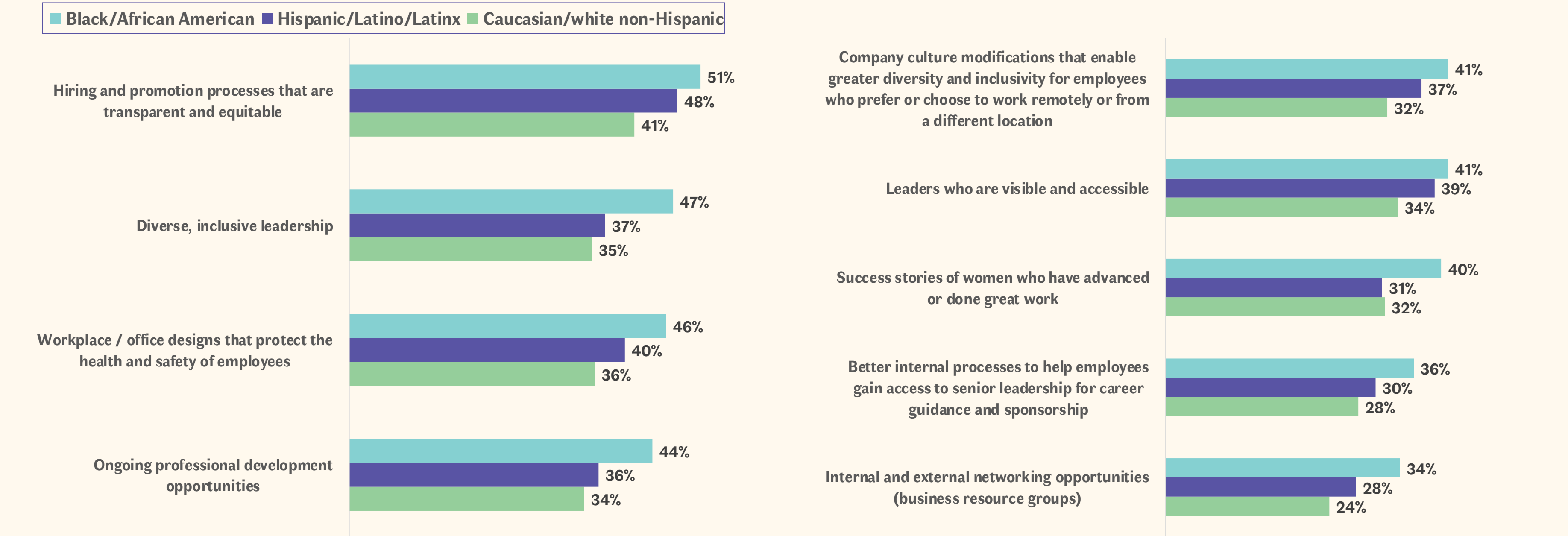
Which of the following do you feel are important for your employer to provide?
Top 5 of 21 Choices based on “Extremely Important” (Top Box):

= Unique to top 5 / no overlap with another group

RANK	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latina/Latinx	Caucasian/white non-Hispanic
1	Hiring and promotion processes that are transparent and equitable	Hiring and promotion processes that are transparent and equitable	Customized flextime / flexible work policies that show an understanding of my work/life balance of responsibilities
2	Updated personal / family leave benefits that don't penalize workers for Covid-related quarantines, school closures, municipal shutdowns, etc.	Customized flextime / flexible work policies that show an understanding of my work/life balance of responsibilities	Updated personal / family leave benefits that don't penalize workers for Covid-related quarantines, school closures, municipal shutdowns, etc.
3	Transparent and equitable compensation practices	Updated personal / family leave benefits that don't penalize workers for Covid-related quarantines, school closures, municipal shutdowns, etc.	A company with authentic values
4	Diverse, inclusive leadership	Transparent and equitable compensation practices	Transparent and equitable compensation practices
5	Workplace / office designs that protect the health and safety of employees	A company with authentic values	Hiring and promotion processes that are transparent and equitable

Black/African American women place elevated importance on equitable opportunities for growth.
Transparent hiring and promotion processes, diverse and accessible leadership, and networking and professional development opportunities are all areas of relative importance among Black/African American women.

Which of the following do you feel are important for your employer to provide?
Key Differences based on “Extremely Important” (Top Box):

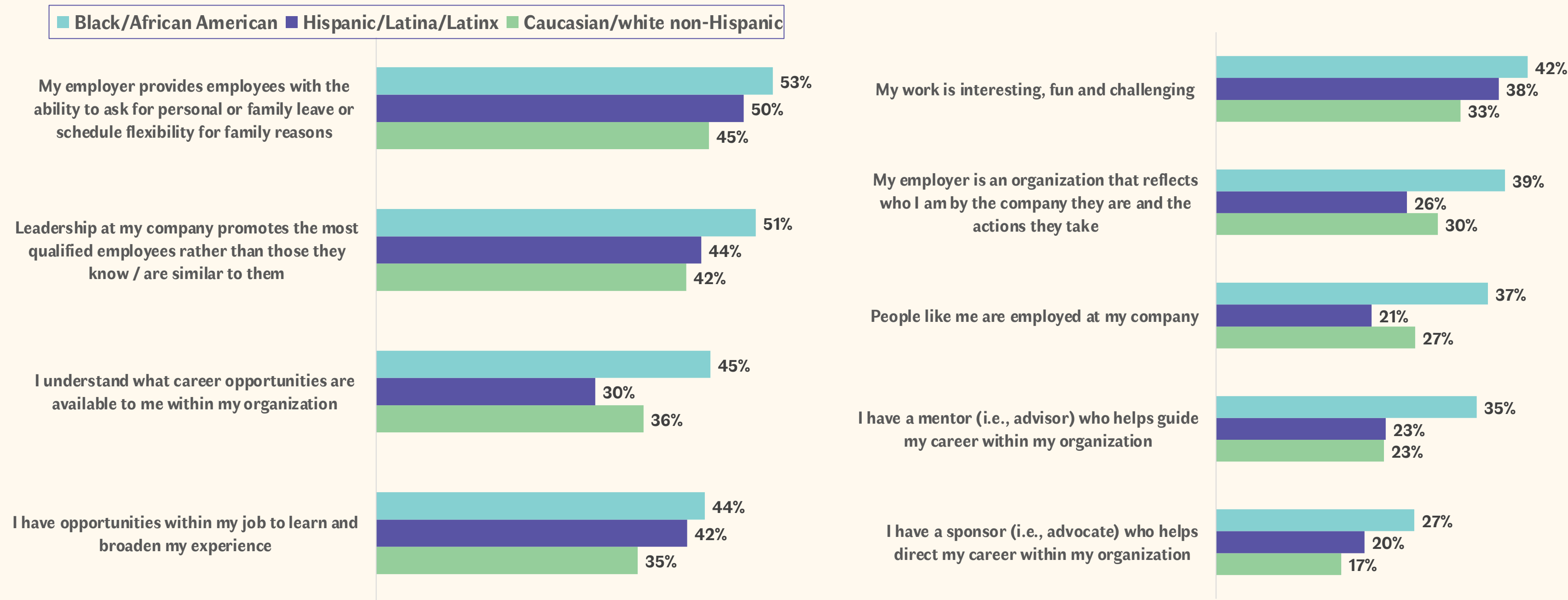


n=131: Black/African American; n= 105: Hispanic/Latina/Latinx; n= 261 Caucasian/white non-Hispanic

A clear path to advancement, guidance, and representation are critical to retain Black/African American women.

Black/African American women place elevated importance on opportunities for career development and merit-based advancement, as well as mentorship and sponsorship for career guidance and direction.

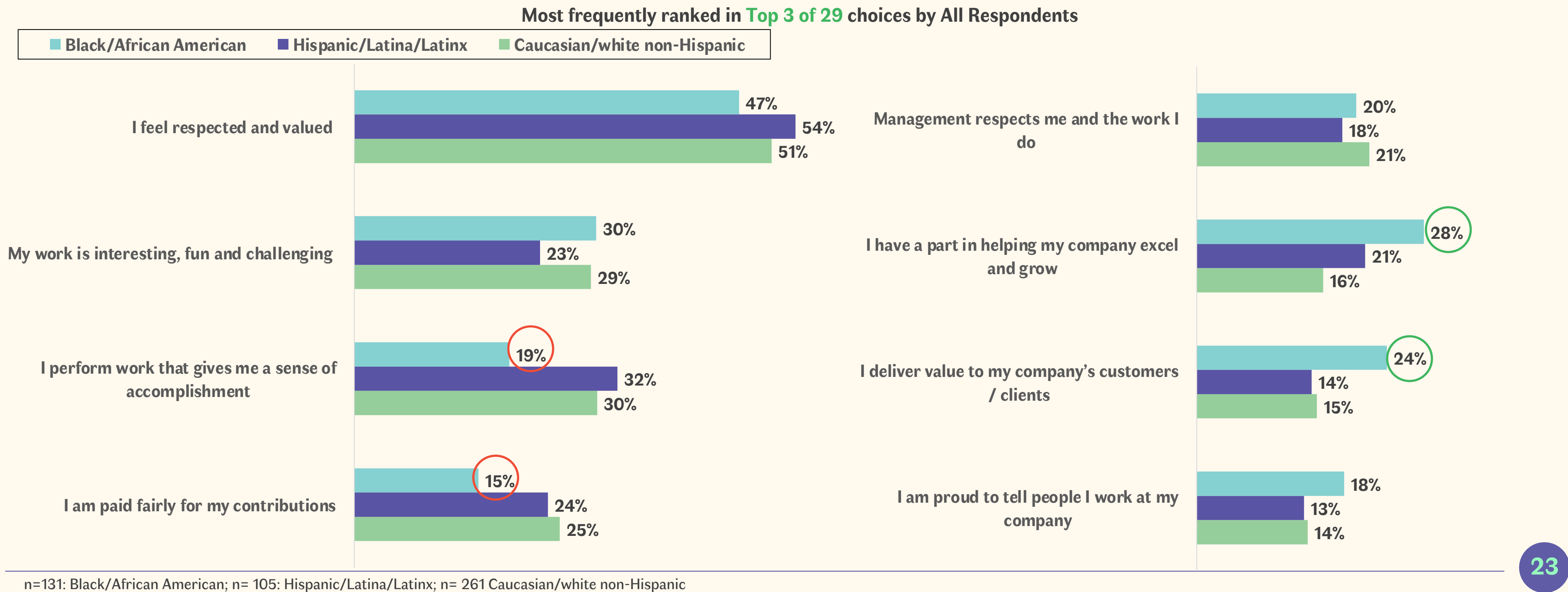
How important are the following characteristics, in regard to how you feel about your job and long-term career potential?
Key Differences based on “Extremely Important”



n=131: Black/African American; n= 105: Hispanic/Latina/Latinx; n= 261 Caucasian/white non-Hispanic

Women need to feel respected and valued overall; other “must haves” vary. Black/African American women tend to rank their contribution to their company (deliver growth, value) more highly; Hispanic and Caucasian women tend to rank what they receive (sense of accomplishment, fair pay) more highly.

Which of the following characteristics are “must haves” when it comes to considering switching employers?
Select the TOP THREE must haves that would keep you from looking for another job.



Women of Color are at greatest risk.

What we learned.

- Women of Color are more likely to leave their employers if needs are not met, most notably Black/African American women.
- Transparent, equitable hiring and promotion policies are most important to Women of Color.
- Black/African American women are particularly motivated to stay by accessible, diverse leadership, opportunities for career development and advancement, and their sense of contribution to the company.

Implications.

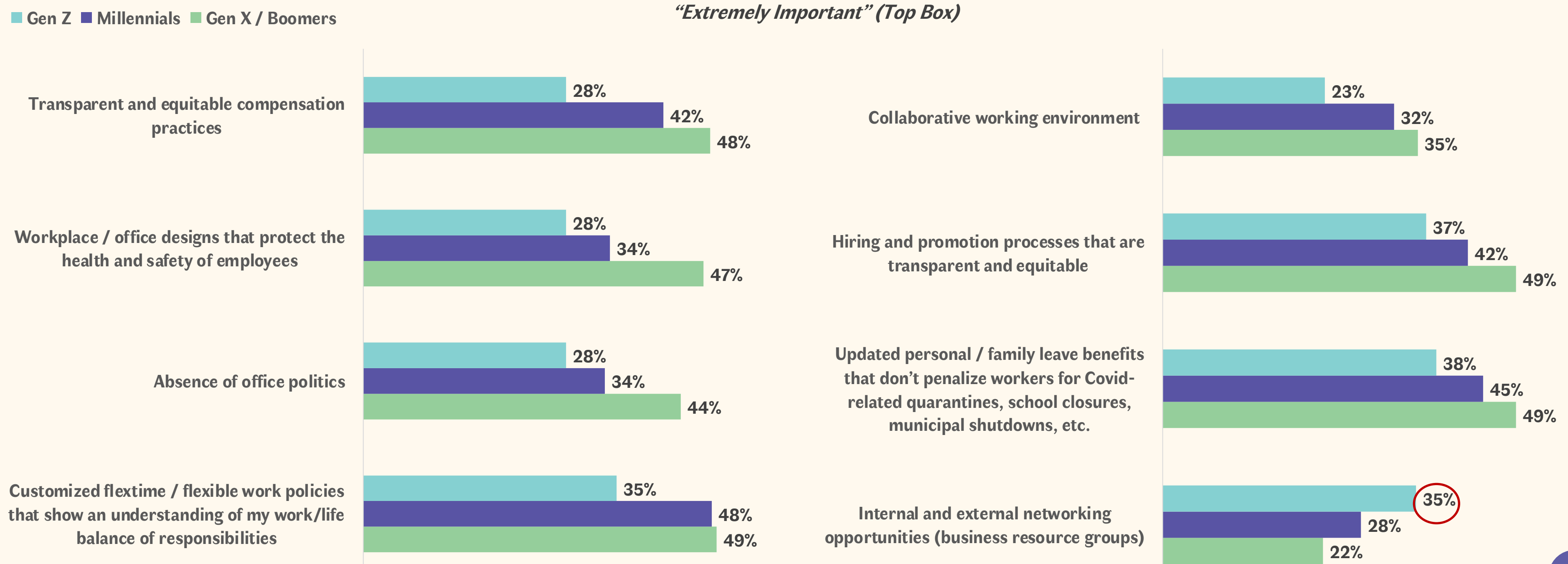
- Those companies who don't walk the talk risk losing half of the already small number of Women of Color within their organizations.
- Transparency builds trust with employees and demonstrates respect from leadership.
- Mentors, sponsors, and role models play an invaluable role in retaining Black/African American women.
- Ensure ongoing, equitable opportunities and experiences that foster connection and growth.



Lived experience results in higher expectations.

Gen X / Boomers expect more from their employers than younger generations.
Employers need to rise to these higher expectations or risk losing these more experienced women who are more challenging to replace.

Which of the following do you feel are important for your employer to provide?
Notable Differences

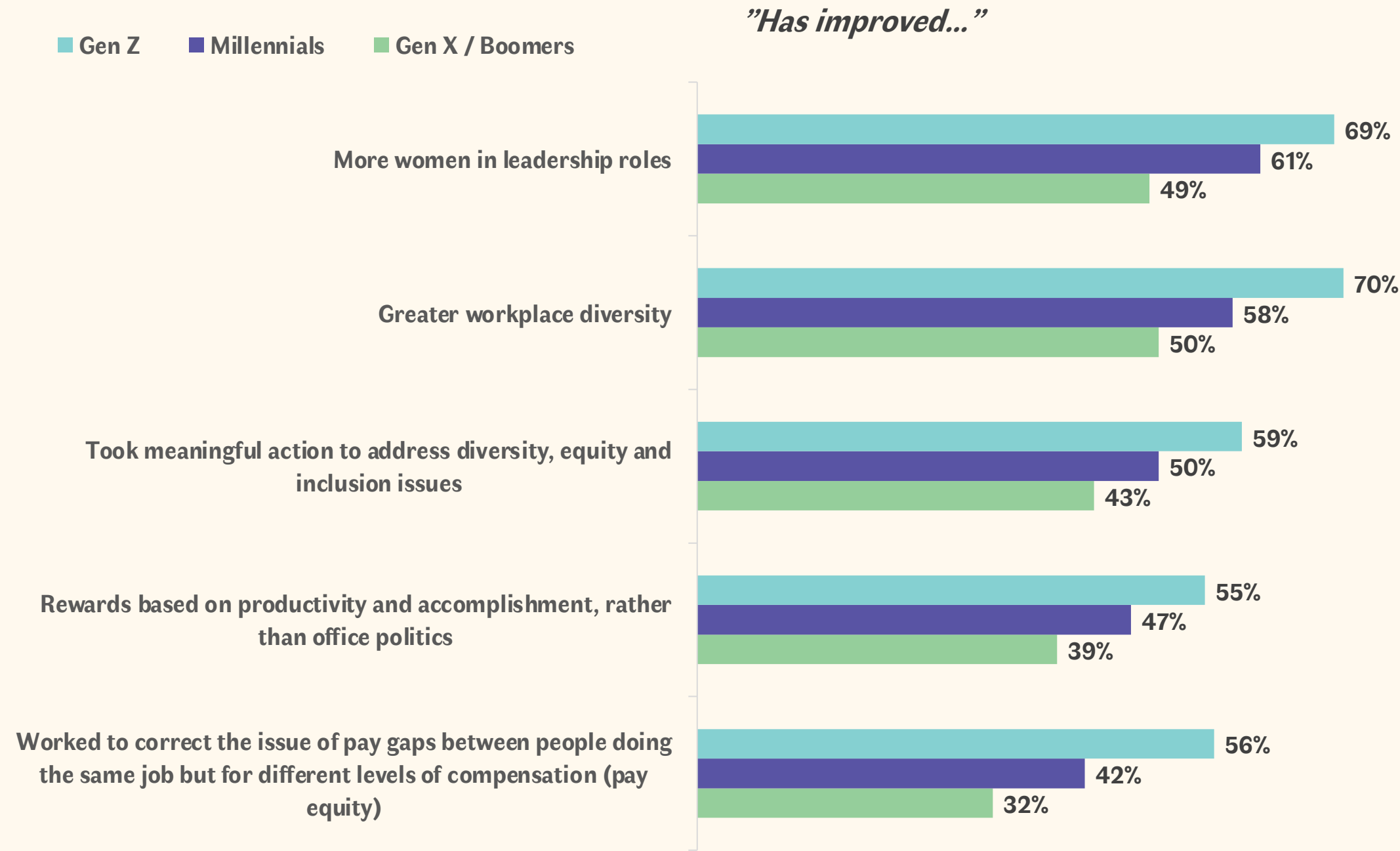


n=71: Gen Z; n= 283: Millennials; n=220: Gen X / Boomers

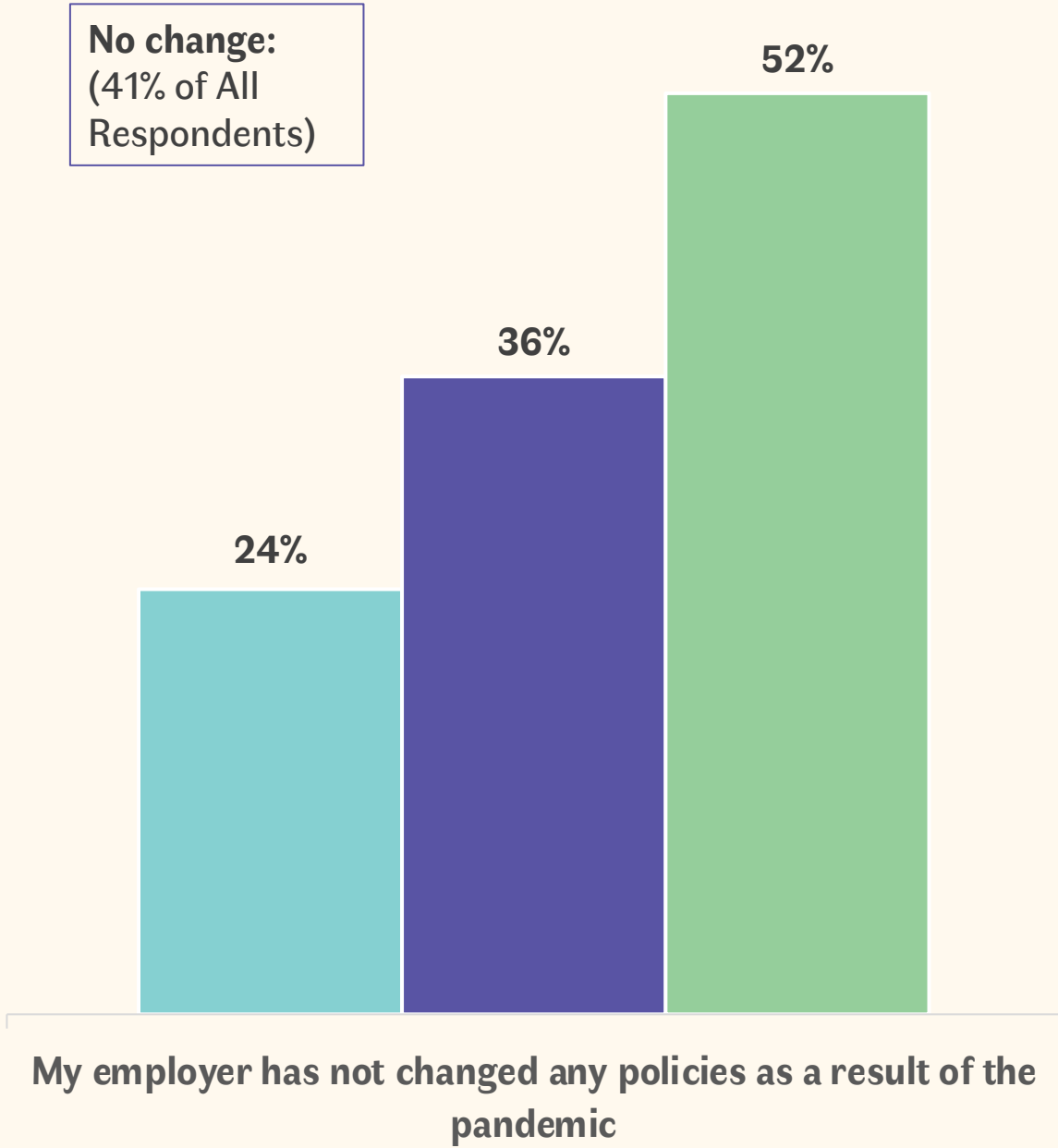
Greater lived experience also results in more skepticism regarding change.

Boomer, Gen X and Millennial women are more likely to say not enough is being done, while Gen Z – with barely any workplace experience pre-pandemic – are more likely to say improvements have been made.

Would you say that your employer has made changes on these issues in the past two years?



What has your employer done differently during the pandemic for working parents to address the strains the pandemic presents?



n=71: Gen Z; n= 283: Millennials; n=220: Gen X / Boomers

Lived experience results in higher expectations.

What we learned.

- Boomer, Gen X and Millennials all express higher expectations of their employers than younger workers do.
- Expectations for a more flexible workplace and meaningful action on diversity and inclusion efforts are higher than two years ago.
- Women don't believe companies have done enough for working parents.

Implications.

- Those who have been in the workforce longer have higher expectations, but less confidence in seeing those expectations realized – due past work experience.
- Losing the more senior, experienced and less satisfied women is costly and time-intensive for a company.



Recap

What we learned.

Flexibility is necessary but nuanced.

Women all want flexibility but need employers to develop policies that allow them to customize to their unique needs. There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to scheduling work around personal responsibilities.

Flexible work options must be customized, inclusive and equitable.

Women expect their employers to ensure customized work options are equitable and inclusive of everyone in the company. This includes involvement of senior leadership, who serve as role models and may help destigmatize negative associations.

Women’s retention goes beyond equitable compensation.

Retention is motivated by feeling respected and valued by the employer, including being given interesting, challenging work, the ability to achieve a sense of accomplishment and being paid fairly for her contributions.

Women of color are at greater risk.

Women of color are more likely to leave their employers if needs are not met, with Black/African American the most vulnerable. Greatest expectations include equitable opportunities for career development and advancement and access to diverse leadership, mentors and sponsors.

Lived experiences result in higher expectations.

Boomer, Gen X and Millennials all express higher expectations for their employer than younger workers do. Expectations for a more flexible workplace and meaningful action on diversity and inclusion efforts are much higher than two years ago.



What does this mean for organizations?

Organizations need to A.C.T. in order to retain their women employees.

Ask before you act.

Listen to the unique needs and expectations of your employees to create customized approaches that best fit your organization. When employees feel they have an opportunity to contribute to policy development, those policies become more transparent and inclusive, ultimately leading to greater opportunities for growth.

Coach key leaders to build on cultural competencies.

Cultivate inclusive leadership to develop an empathetic culture where all employees can thrive. Senior executives must become role models for new ways of working where all employees participate, driving organizational change that is inclusive, measurable, and sustainable.

Tell people about your efforts.

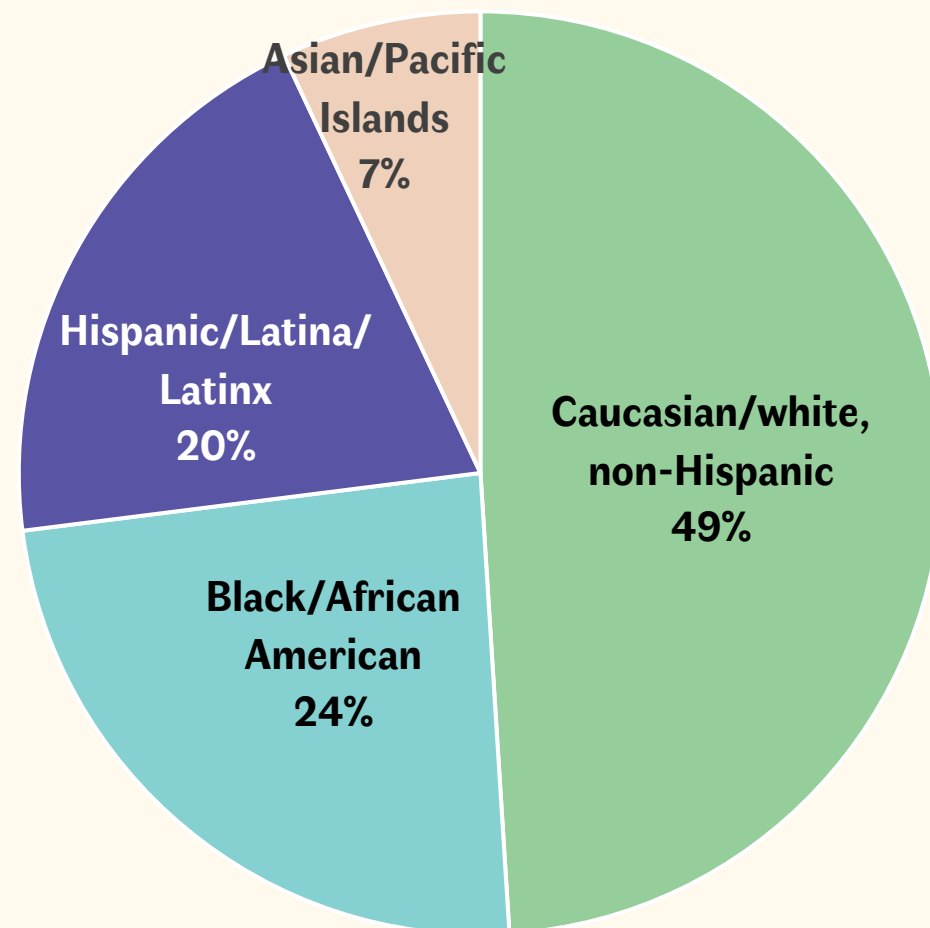
Creating a truly inclusive organization provides the opportunity to lead the way in retaining the best talent in the industry. Track and share progress against goals to attract and retain valuable talent, as well as demonstrate innovation that inspires others to provide an inclusive organizational culture that benefits all.

Appendix: Sample Composition

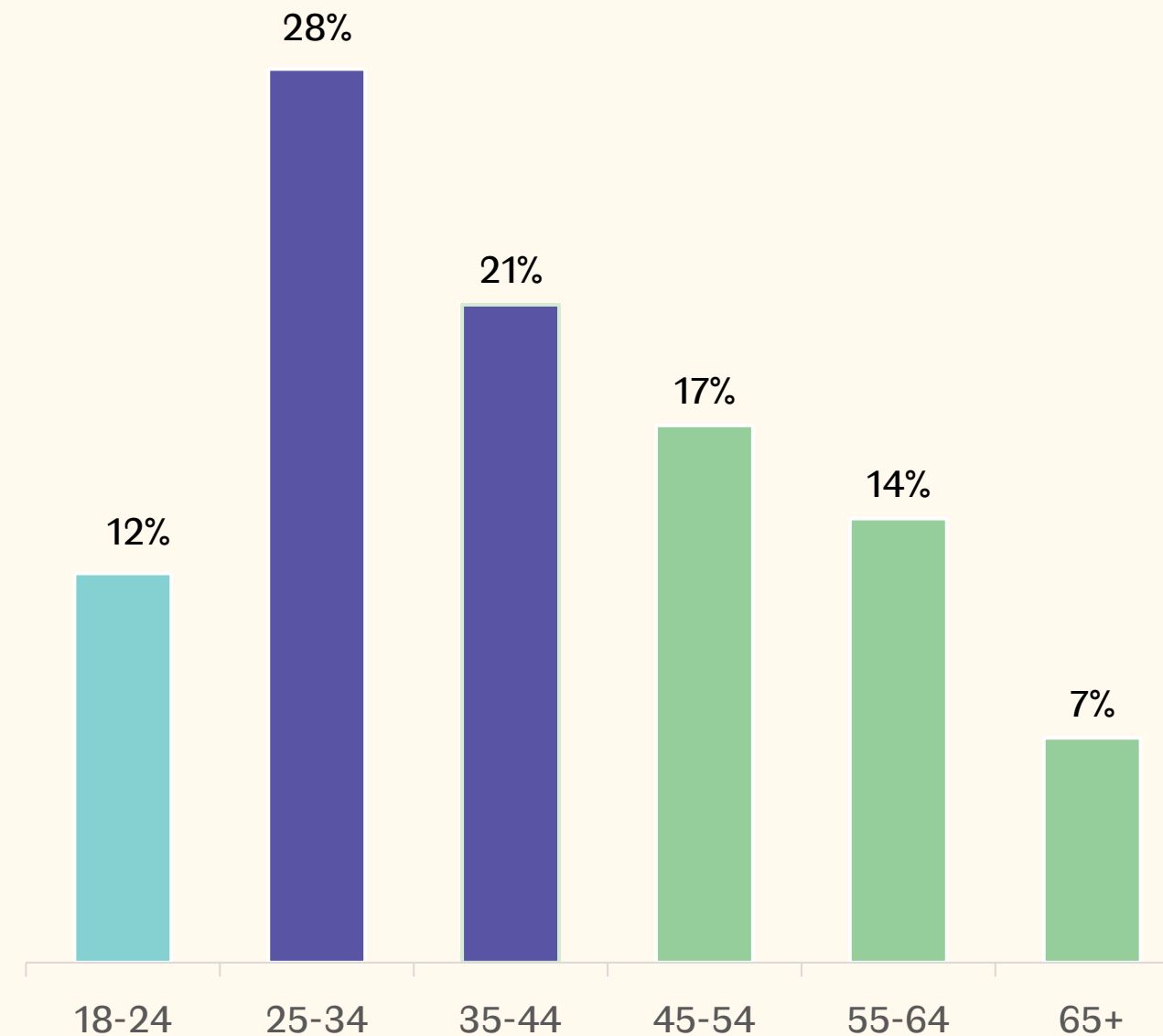
SAMPLE COMPOSITION: DEMOS

Natural distribution of sample based on screening criteria outlined on prior slide.

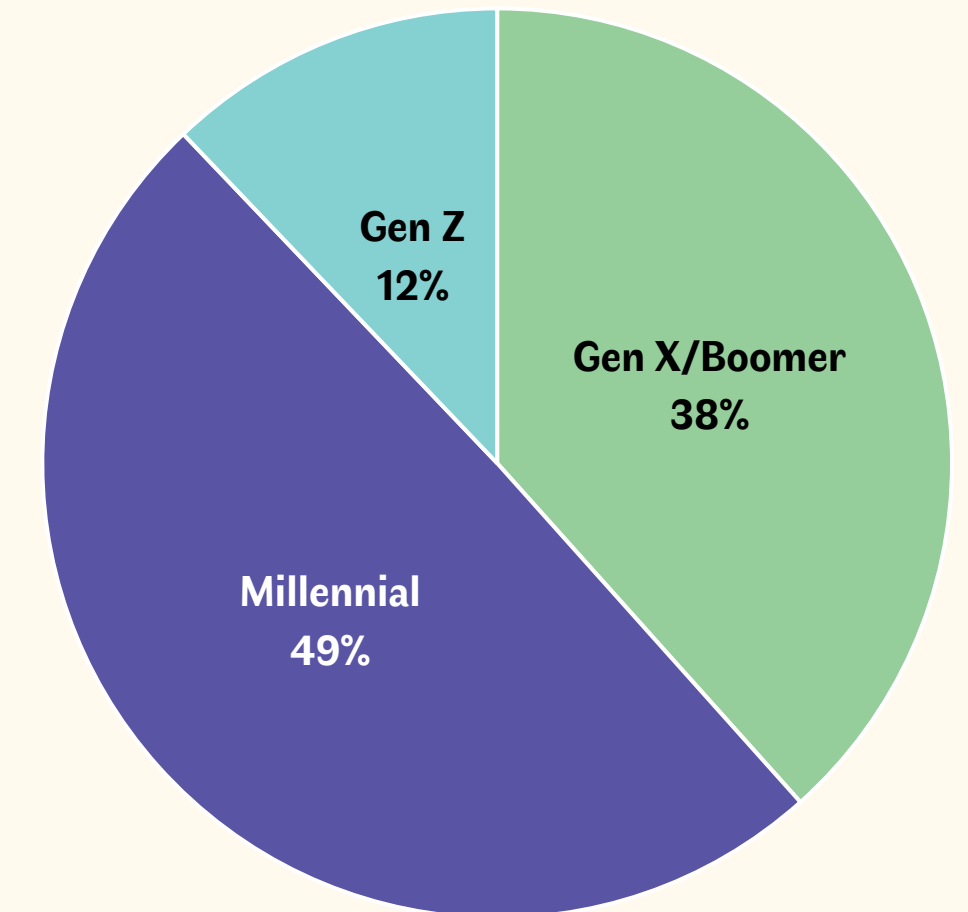
Racial Identity/Ethnicity



Age

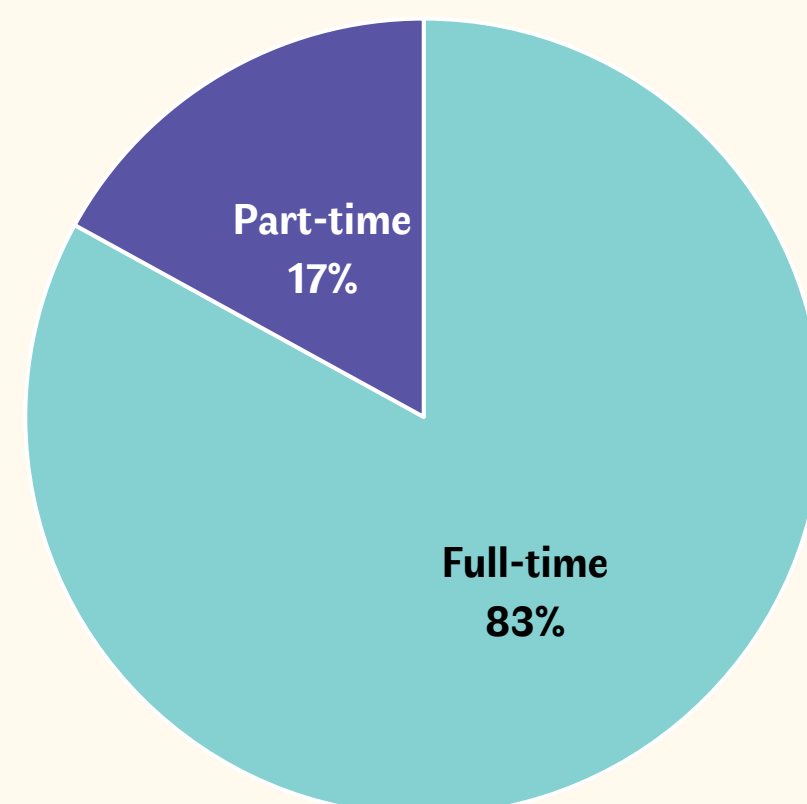


Generation

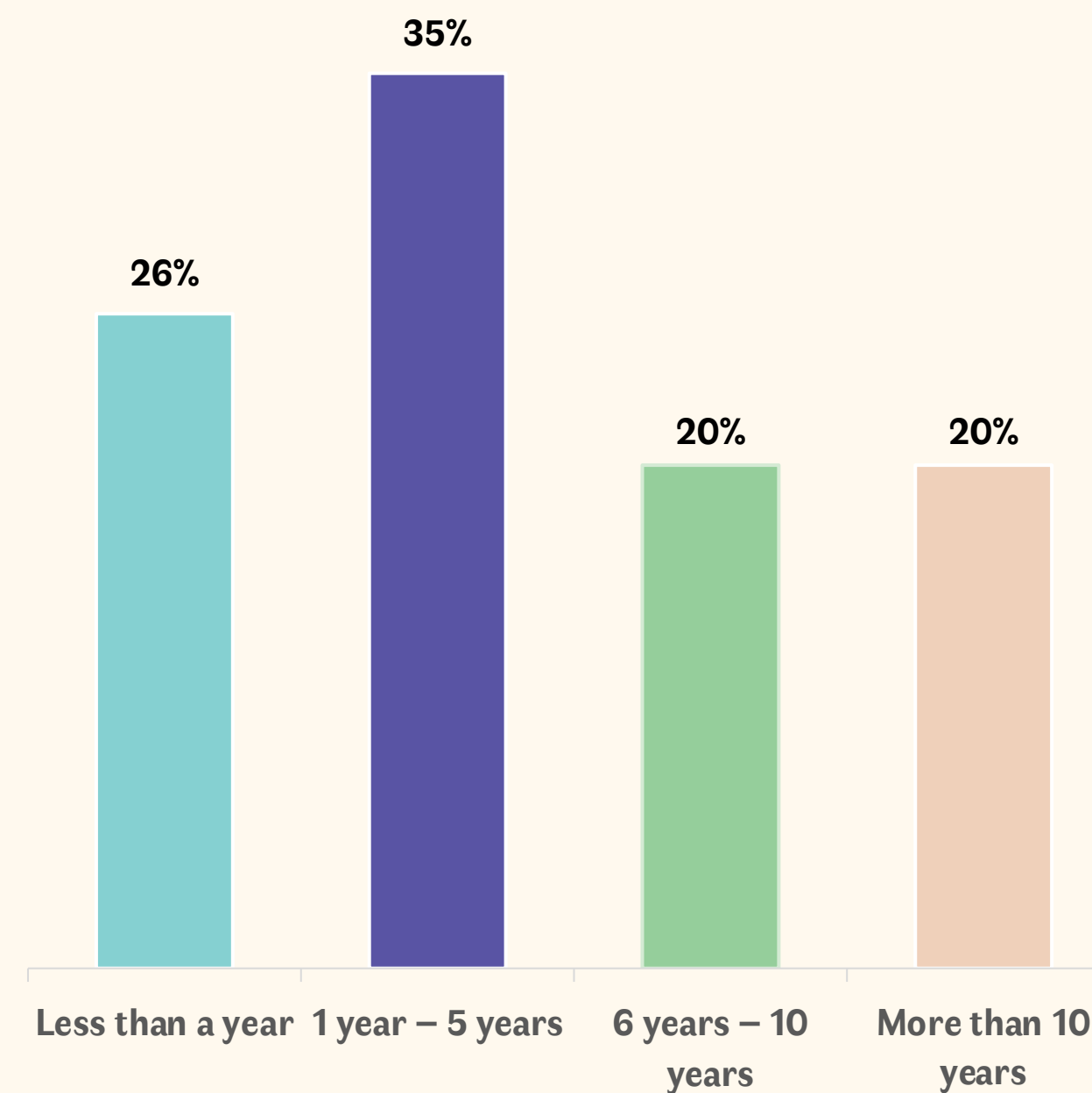


SAMPLE COMPOSITION: EMPLOYMENT

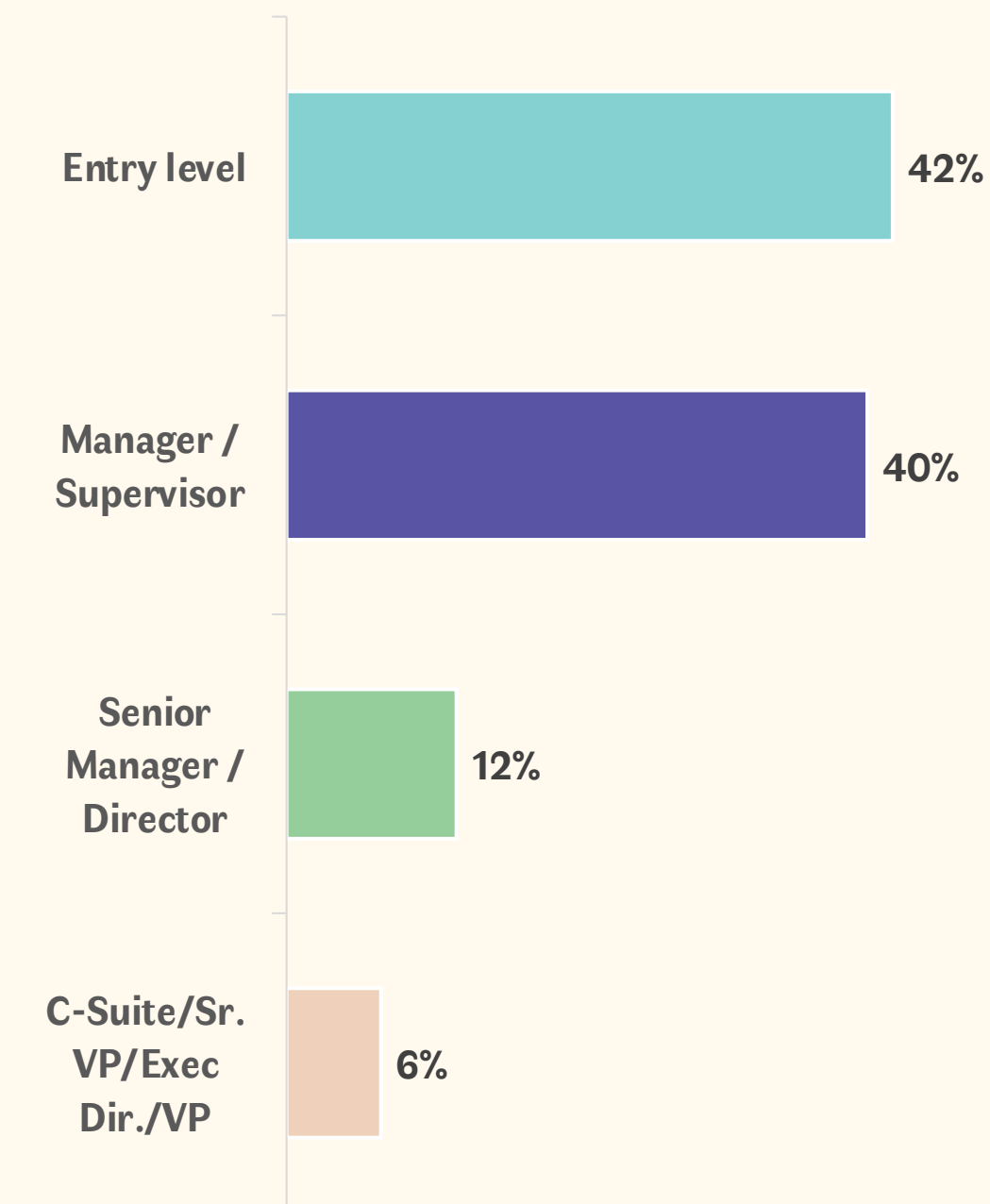
Employment



Tenure

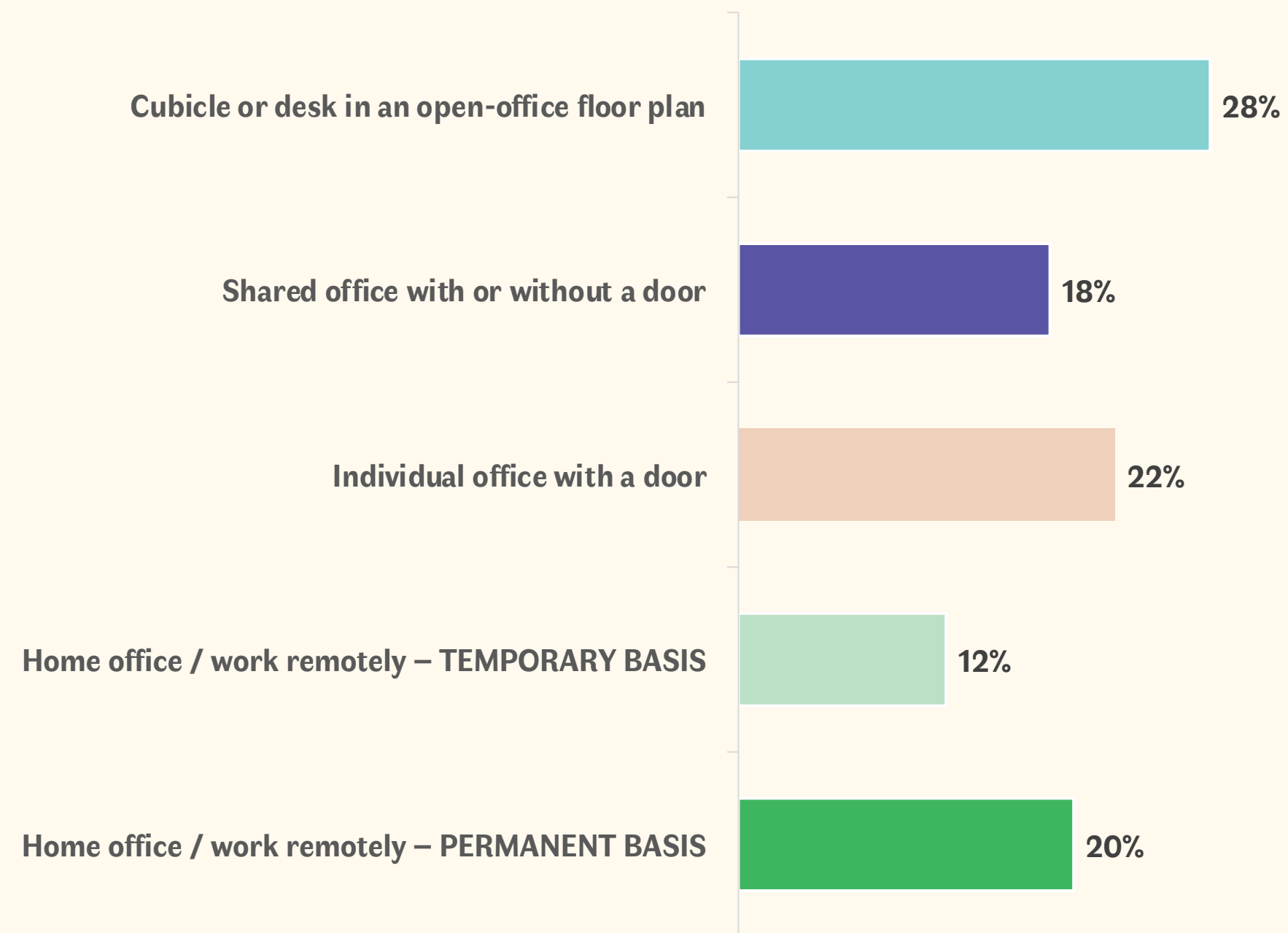


Role

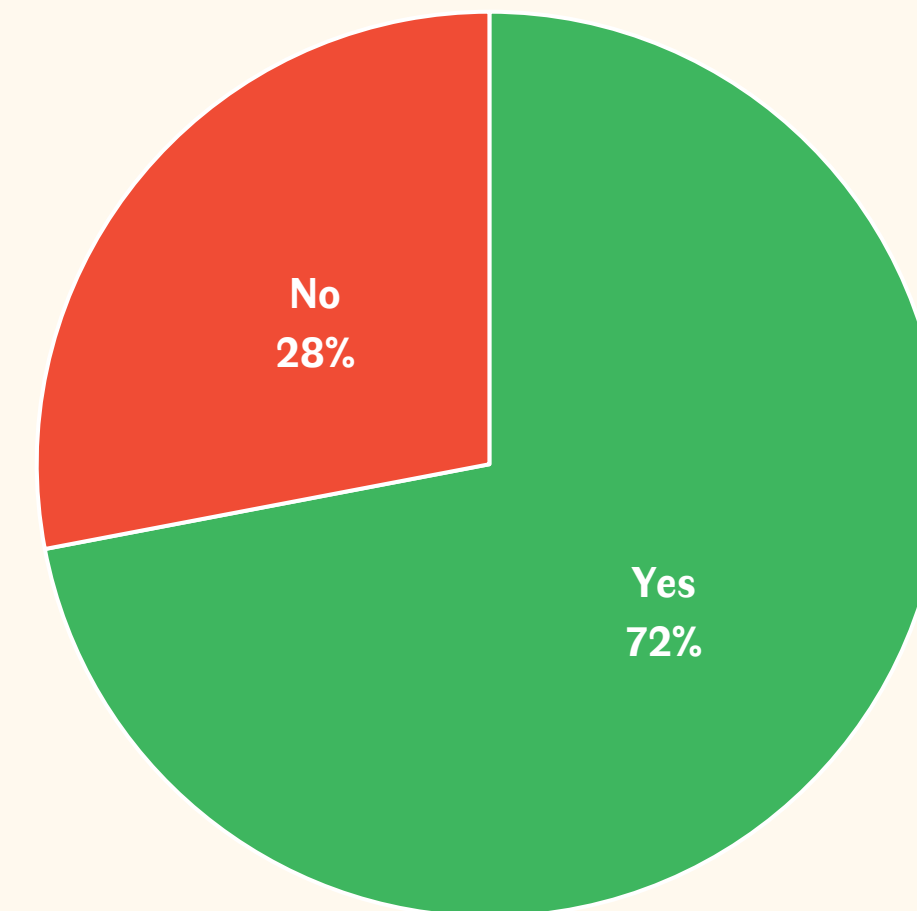


SAMPLE COMPOSITION: WORKSPACE

Personal Workspace



Ever Worked Remotely





To learn more, contact us at:

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