

The ConnectionXPS & Key Findings

Executive Summary

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Intent

The intent of this study was to design a reliable instrument with which to measure people's feelings of being seen, heard, and valued.

Without a reliable way to measure these items in the moment and over time, we do not know if society at large is getting better or worse in this area, nor do we know which programs and prescriptions lead to greater levels of Inclusion at work.



Methodology

Over the course of four months, we conducted forty open-ended qualitative interviews and several focus groups and used the findings to identify 349 possible items with which to measure Connection. After hours of discussion around the hypothesized model, we condensed to 70 items to be tested. We then fielded these items to U.S. samples to pinpoint the most powerful ones, testing and retesting them across 12,523 respondents until we found the 12 items that showed variance, had characteristics of validity, and yielded reliable data.

These 12 items measure a stable psychological construct which we came to call Connection. **Connection is one's feeling of being seen, heard, and valued at work for one's whole person.** Connection is an important aspect of Inclusion – other aspects include feeling Engaged and Resilient at work, both of which can be reliably measured using a different set of items.

Research Team

For this study, we assembled a cross-functional team that brought together the practitioner, strengths coach, and economic trends and implications points of view. This research was informed by the lived experiences shared through the qualitative interviews conducted by our primary qualitative researchers.

Nela Richardson, Ph.D.,
Head of Labor
Market Research



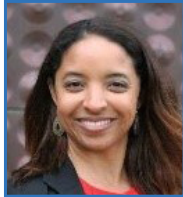
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What Is Connection?

In our measurement of Connection, we found that it is comprised of three distinct aspects: **feeling seen, feeling heard, and feeling valued.**

Connection is the feeling that you are seen and valued for your uniqueness.

You feel safe to present yourself authentically and to voice your thoughts and opinions.



You are confident that you will be given a fair shot at succeeding, and that you will be assessed only on your actual contribution to the organization.

Each of the three factors plays an important role in how connected employees feel within their organization. Within the factors, each item has a distinct loading that both provides statistical variance – so-called Construct Validity – and tells a story – Content Validity. Together, the twelve items that comprise this metric, which we are calling the **ConnectionXPS (Connection XPerience Score)**, provide useful information that can be leveraged to bring about real change in the DE&I space.

The ConnectionXPS Metric

When combined, here is the full ConnectionXPS (Connection XPerience Score) metric:

Seen

1. *I never have feelings of being an outsider on my team.*
2. *I see myself represented in the leadership of my organization.*
3. *I believe my company promotes people based on the work they do, not what they look like.*
4. *I never feel invisible at work.*

Heard

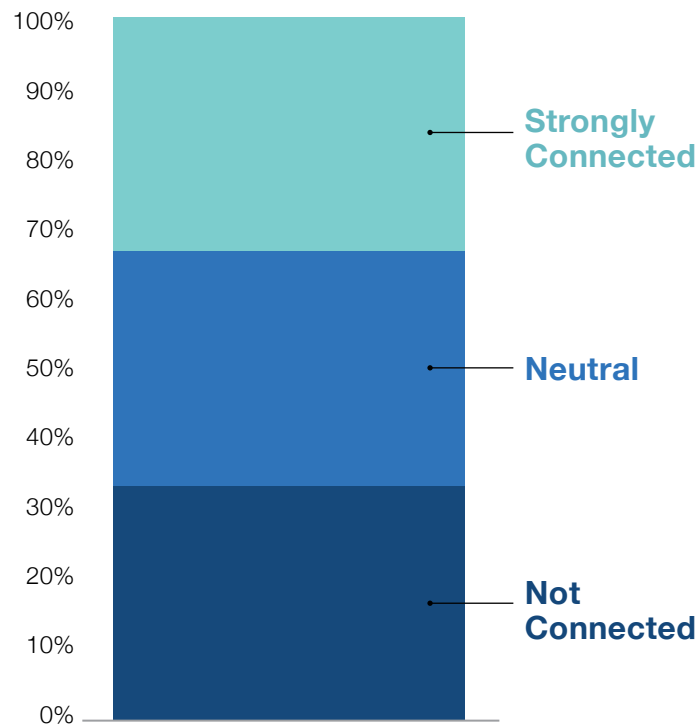
5. *I feel safe having spirited debates with my manager.*
6. *I can speak freely without fear of retribution.*
7. *When I share my opinion, I feel heard.*
8. *I can let my guard down with my team.*

Valued

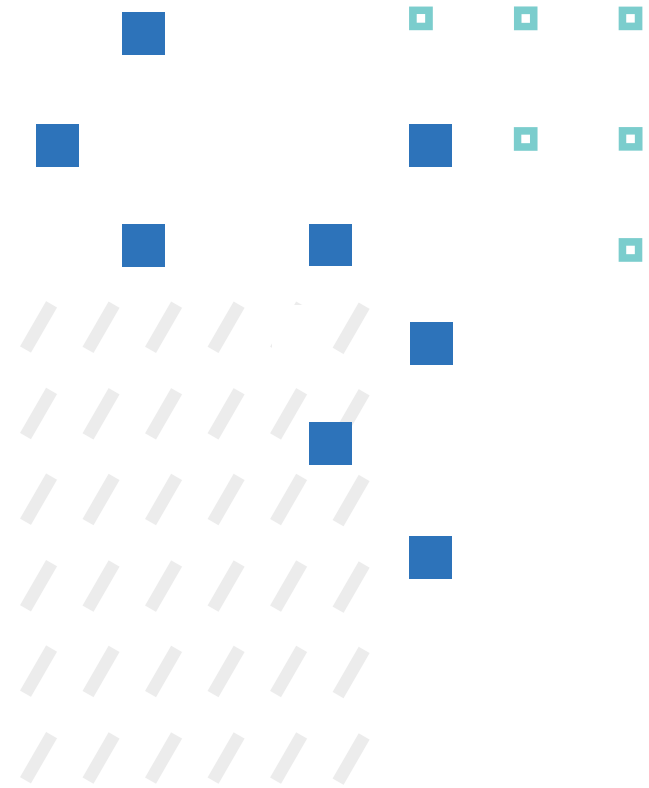
9. *I believe I must work twice as hard to earn the same respect as my peers.*
10. *I constantly censor my views to fit in at work.*
11. *I switch my language to make others feel comfortable.*
12. *I have to work hard to avoid being stereotyped at work.*

Three Categories

The twelve items are combined into a weighted algorithm that help to differentiate levels of Connection. Participants who complete the ConnectionXPS items can be put into one of three categories: **Strongly Connected, Neutral, and Not Connected.**

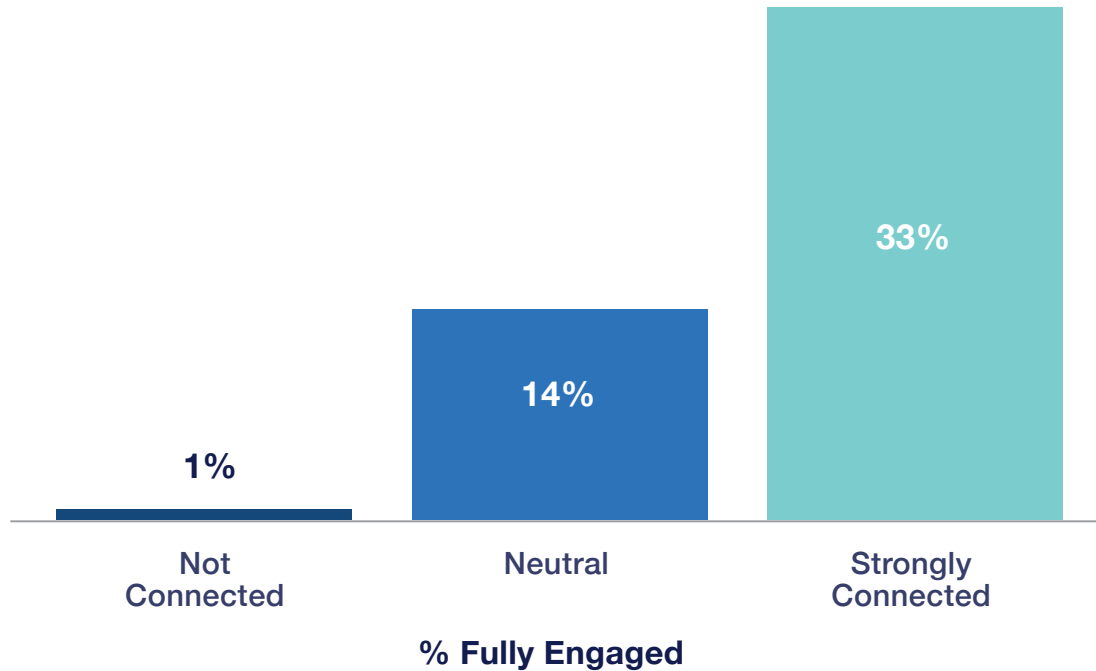


Three categories were created to separate the data into levels of Connection. Each level is distinct and provides a story of the experiences of the employees.



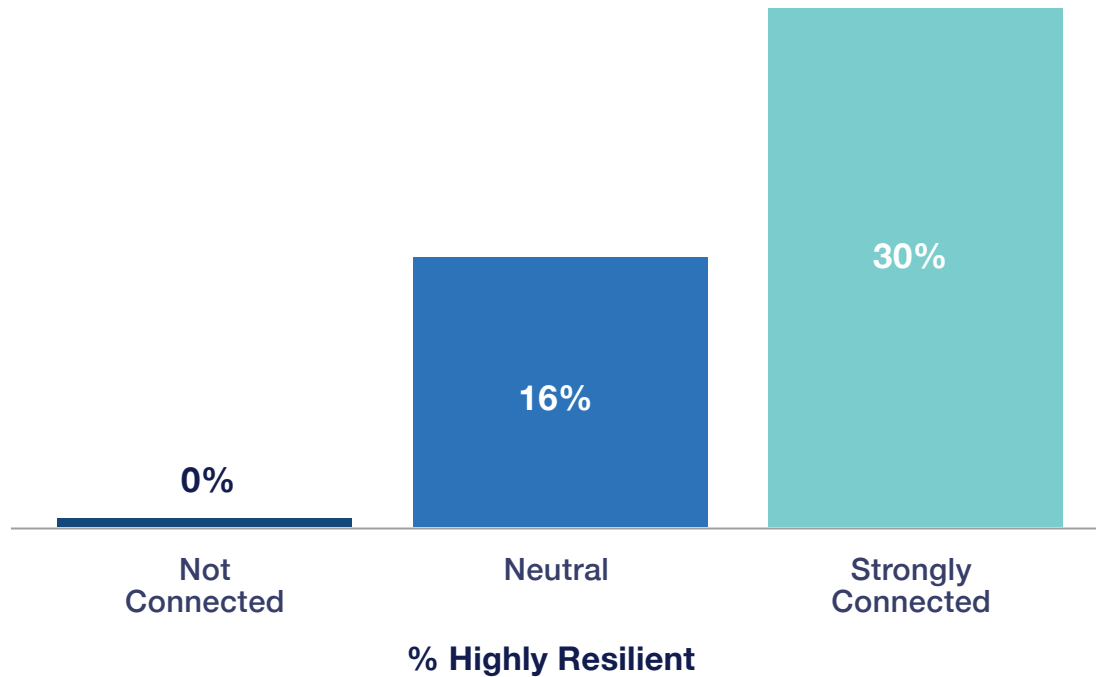
What Relates to Connection?

1 Connection and Engagement



Those who are **Strongly Connected** are **75x** more likely to be Fully Engaged at work compared to **Not Connected**. **Strongly Connected** are **3x** more likely to be Fully Engaged compared to **Neutral**.

2 Connection and Resilience

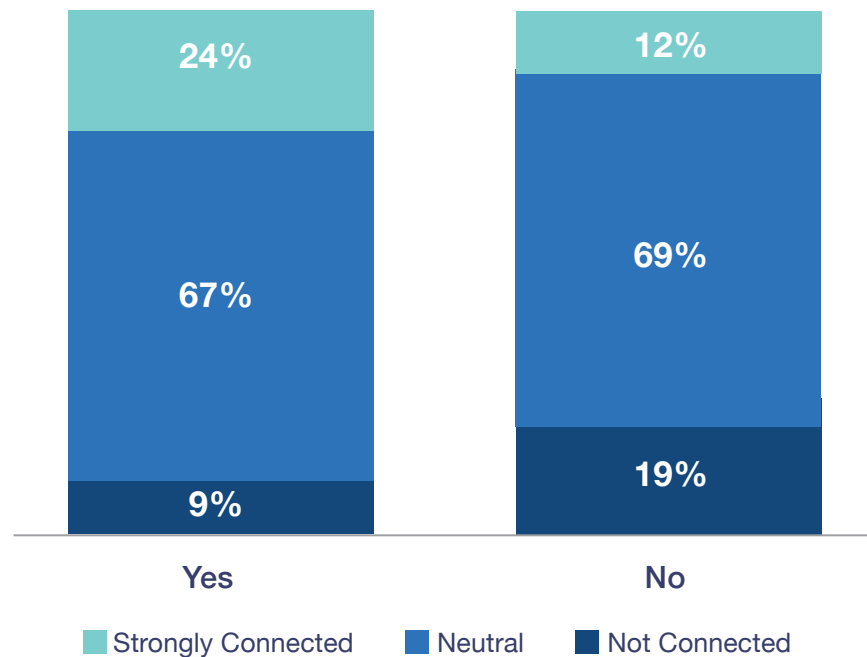


Those who are **Strongly Connected** are **191x** more likely to be Highly Resilient at work compared to **Not Connected**.

In addition, **Strongly Connected** are **2x** more likely to be Highly Resilient than those who are **Neutral**.

3 Connection and Pay Equity

My pay is fair for the work I do.

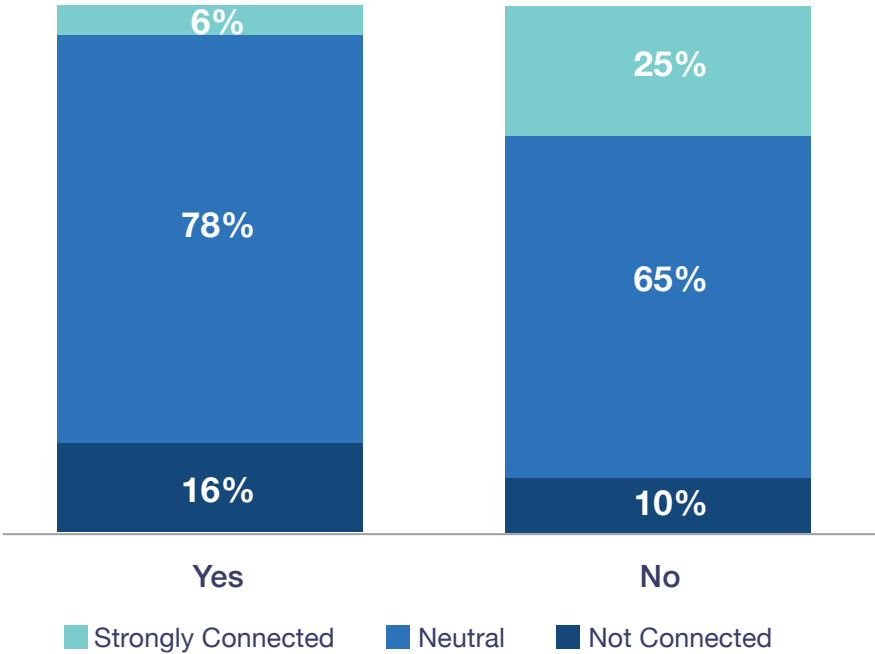


Those who believe they are paid fairly are **2x** more likely to be **Strongly Connected**.

Those who do not believe their pay is fair are **3x** more likely to be **Not Connected**.

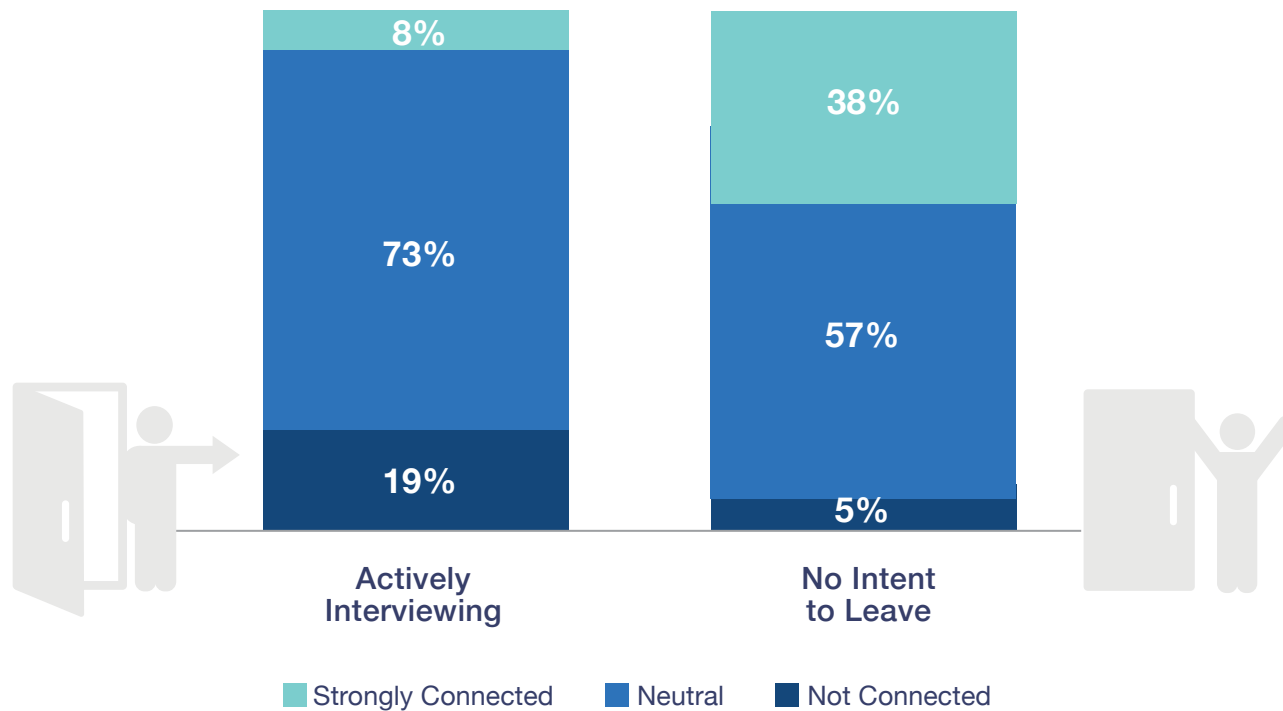
4 Connection and Discrimination

Are you currently experiencing discrimination in the workplace?



Those who are experiencing discrimination are **5x less likely** to be **Strongly Connected**, and **2x more likely** to be **Not Connected**.

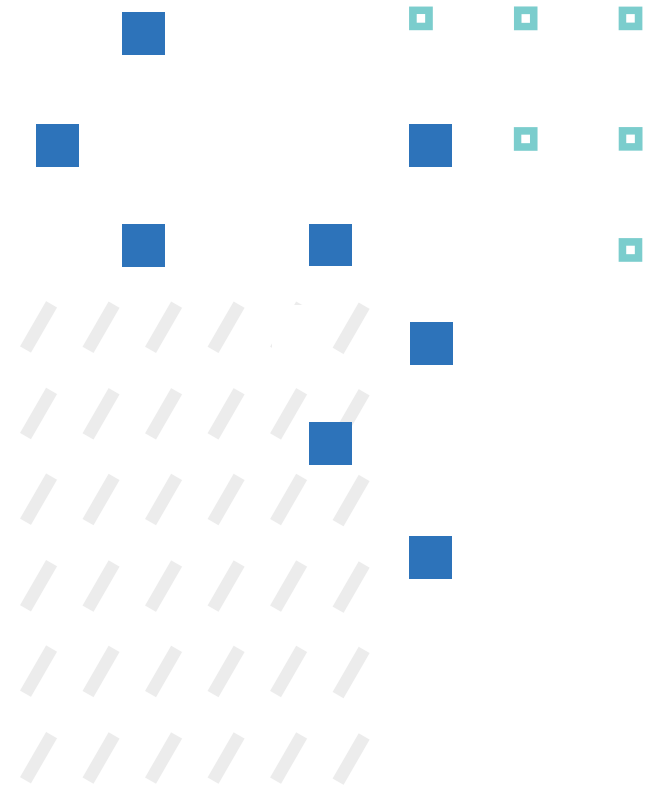
5 Connection and Intent to Leave



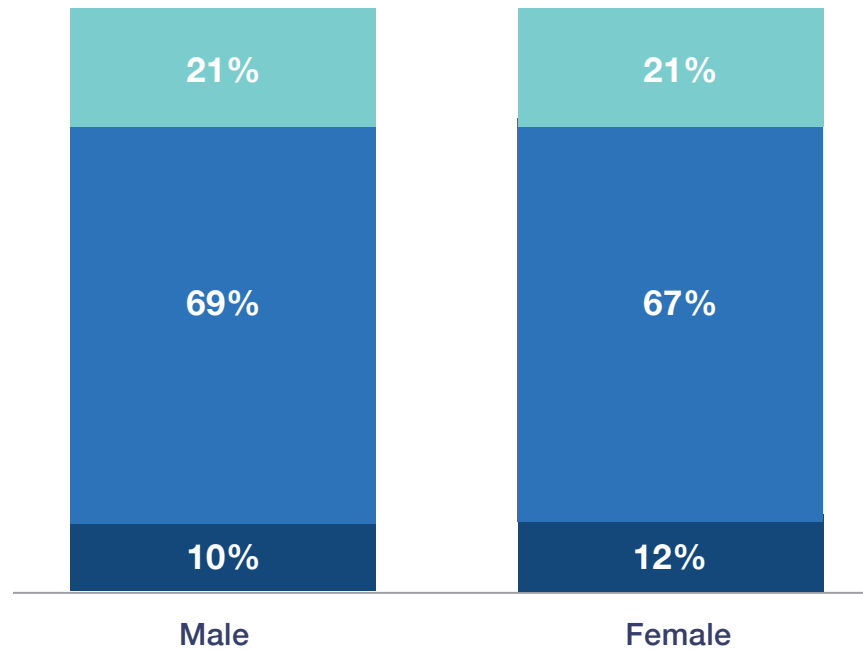
Those who are actively interviewing for a job are **4X more likely** to be **Not Connected**.

Those who have no intent to leave are **7X more likely** to be **Strongly Connected**.

Characteristics that *Do Not* Relate to Connection



1 Gender



Being a certain gender **does not increase the likelihood** of being in any category.

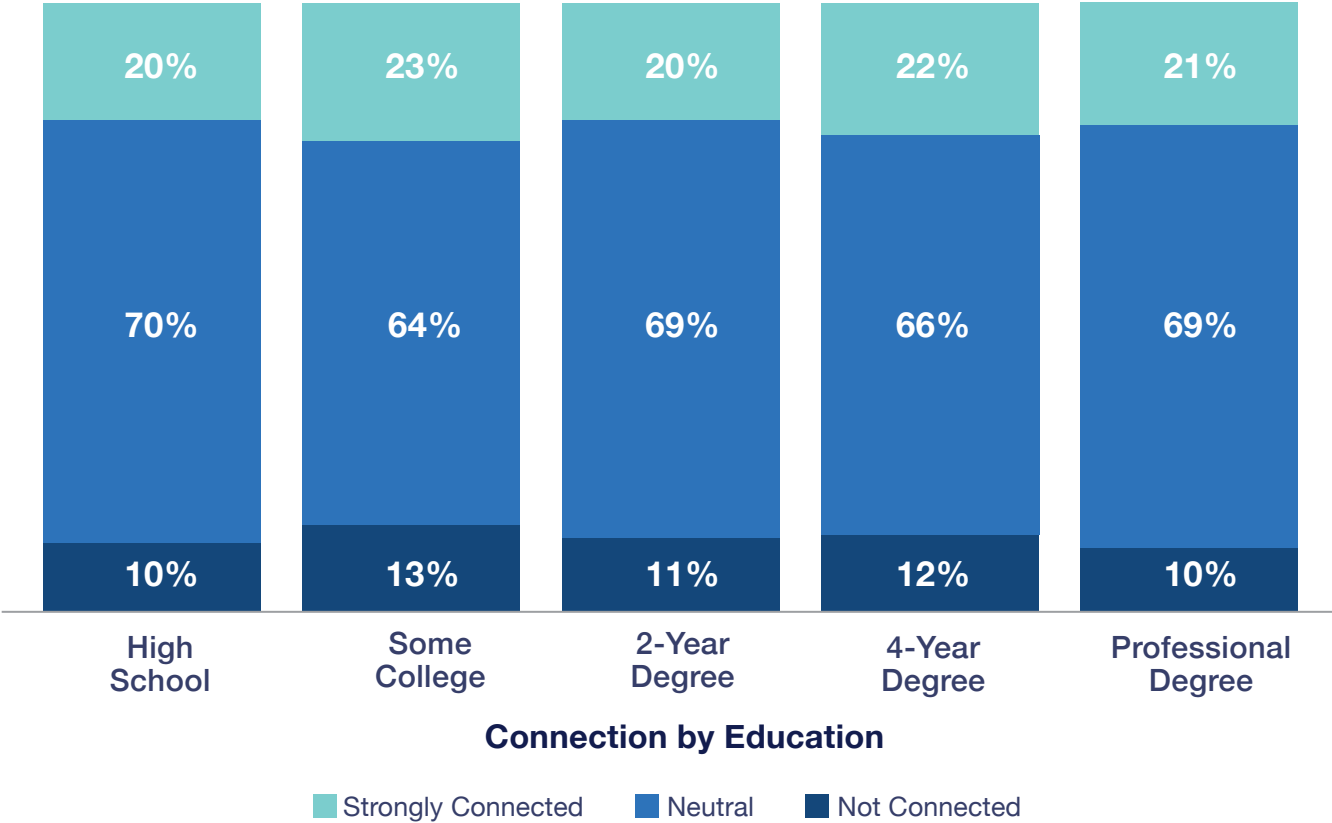
Comparison of Gender

“Non-binary” and “Prefer not to answer” samples were too small to report.

■ Strongly Connected ■ Neutral ■ Not Connected

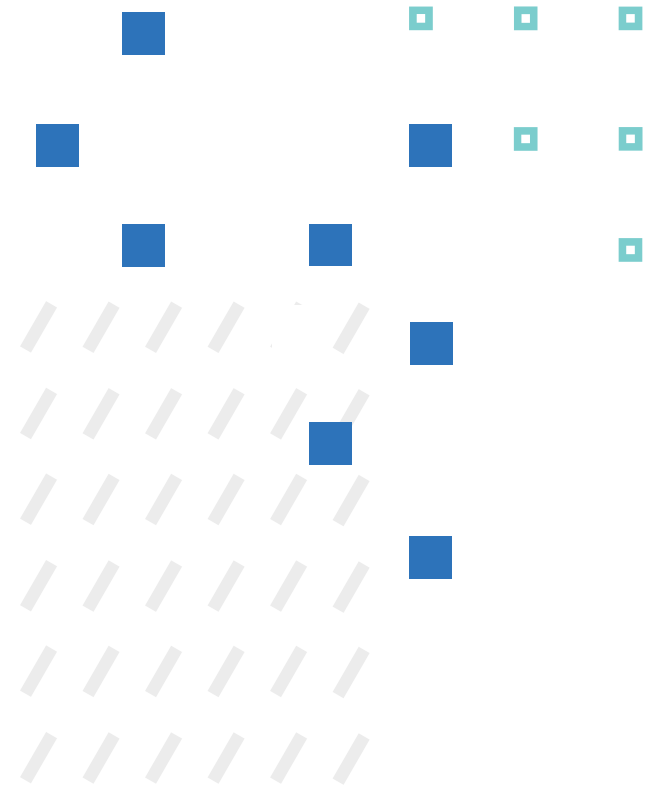


2 Education

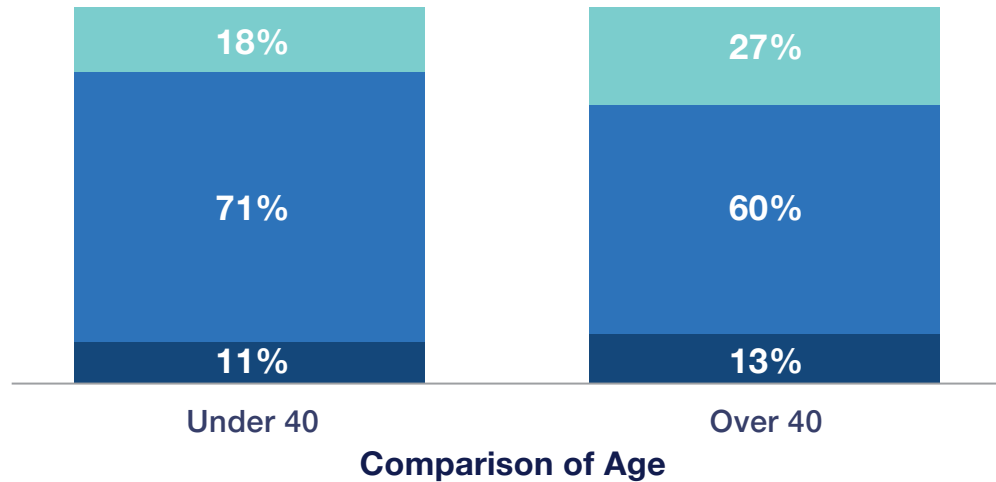


Level of education **does not directly affect** the level of Connection.

Characteristics that *Do* Relate to Connection

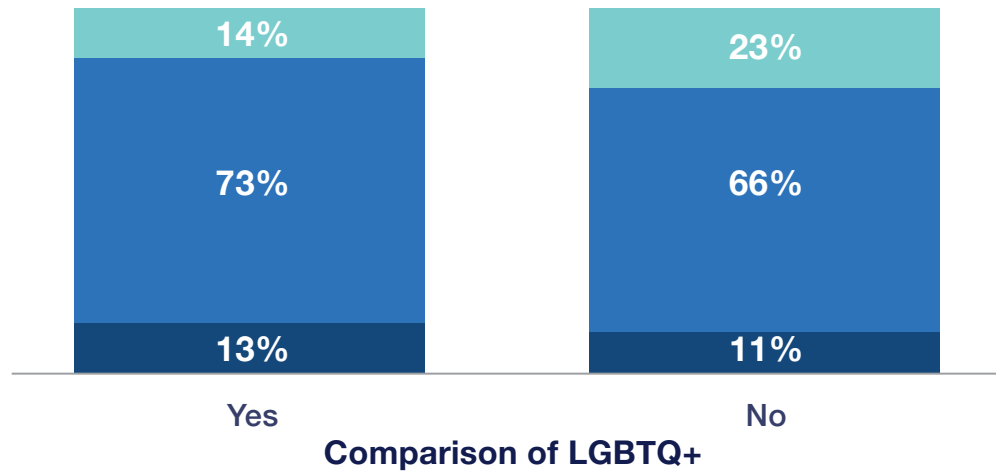


1 Age



Those who are over 40 are **2X more likely** to be **Strongly Connected** to their organization. (This might be an interaction with tenure.)

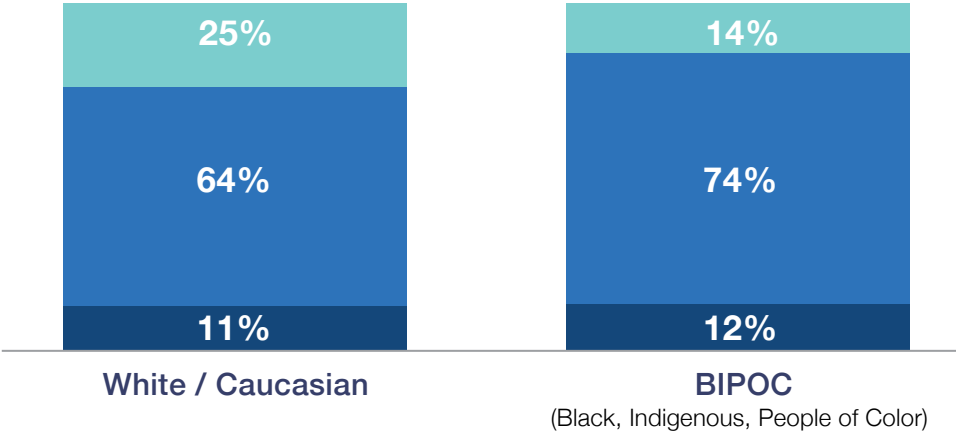
2 LGBTQ+



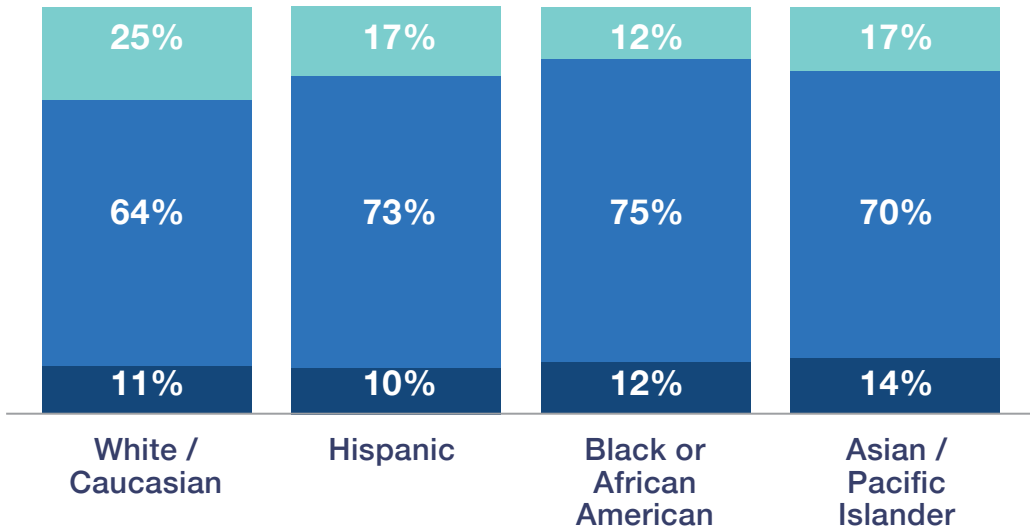
Those who do not identify as LGBTQ+ are **2X more likely** to be **Strongly Connected** compared to those who do.

Strongly Connected Neutral Not Connected

3 Race



BIPOC are **2x less likely** to be **Strongly Connected** compared to White/Caucasian people.

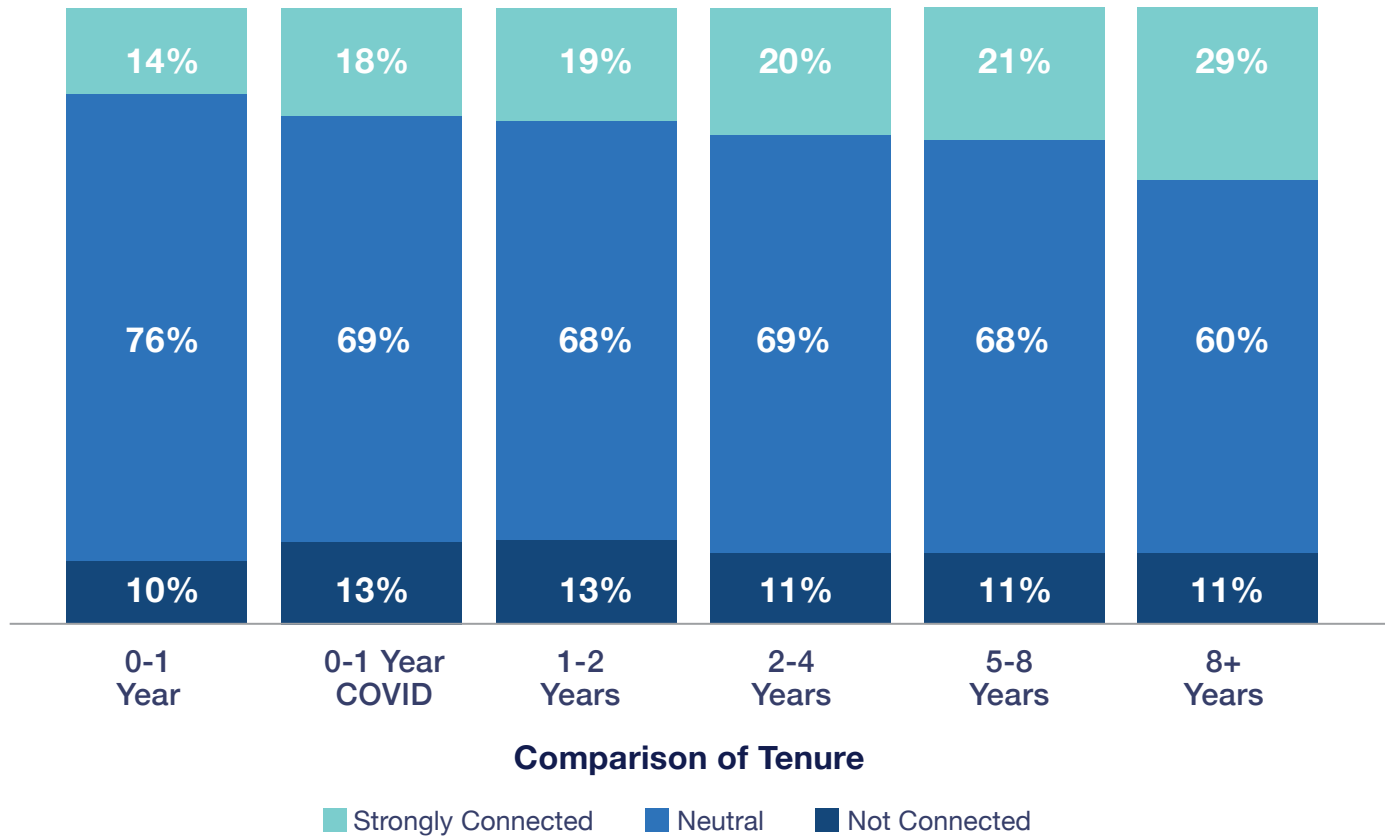


Findings suggest that there are and will be differences across the different groups represented in BIPOC, making it important to be able to address the concerns for each.

Comparison of Race

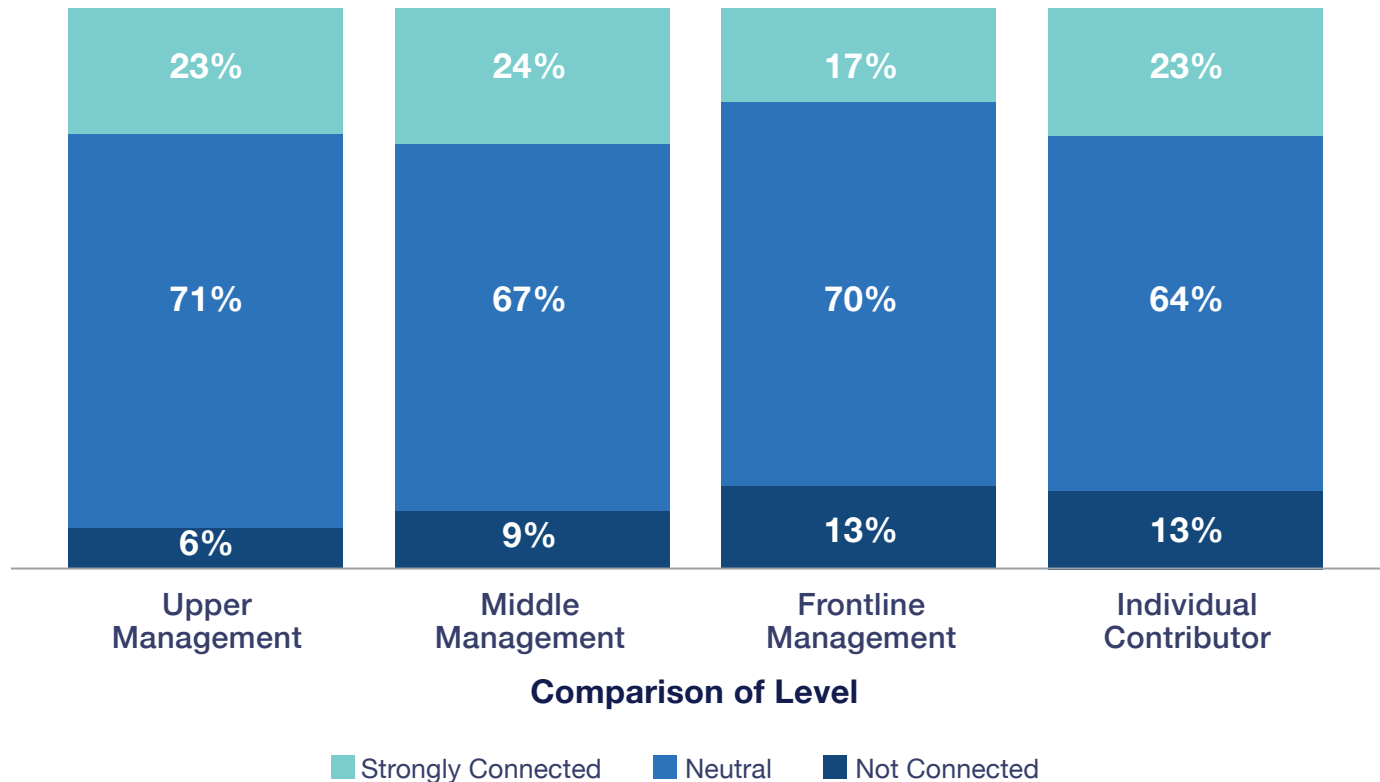
■ Strongly Connected
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Not Connected

4 Tenure



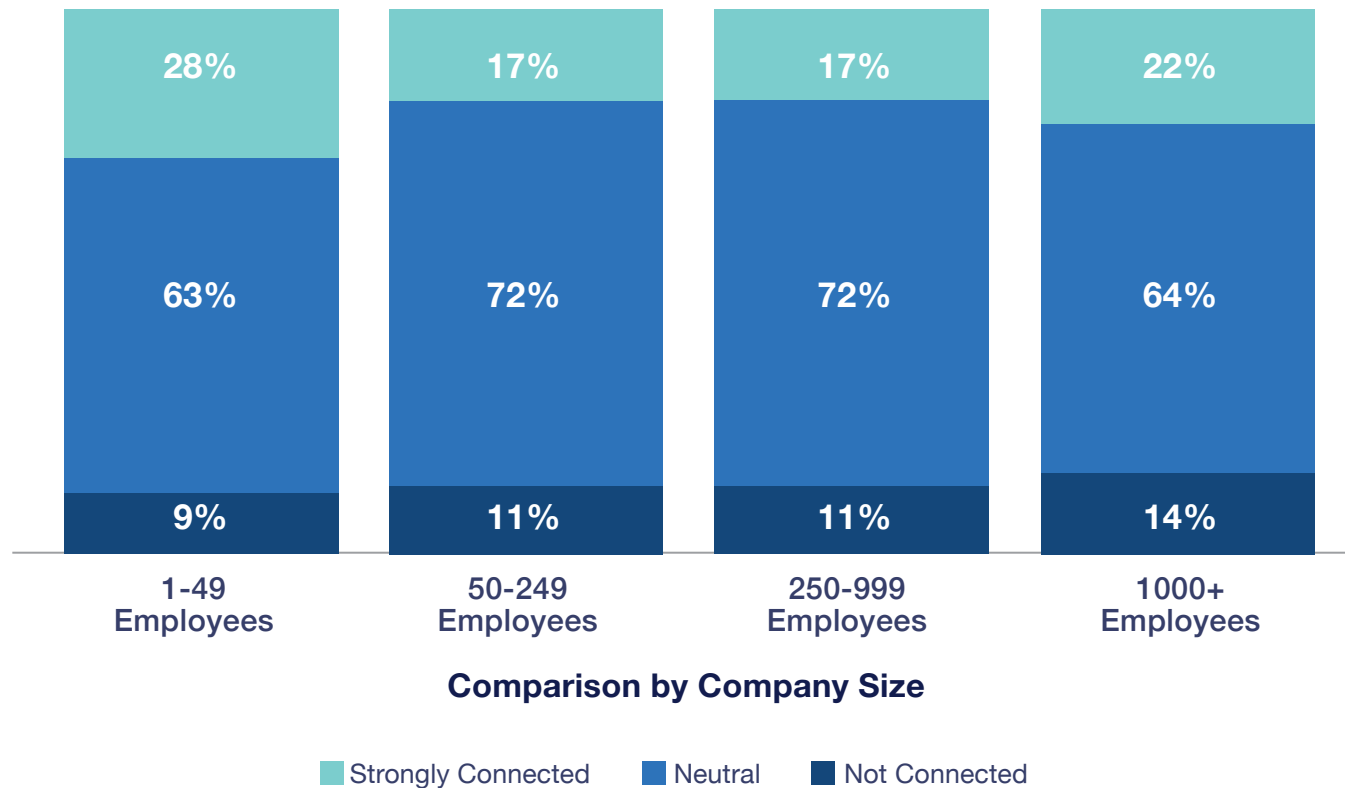
The longer you are with an organization, the higher likelihood to feel a sense of Connection. Employees with the greatest tenure are **3x more likely** to be **Strongly Connected** compared to those in the first year of tenure.

5 Level



There is little difference in the likelihood of being **Strongly Connected** by level, but Individual Contributors are **2x more likely** to be **Not Connected** compared to upper management.

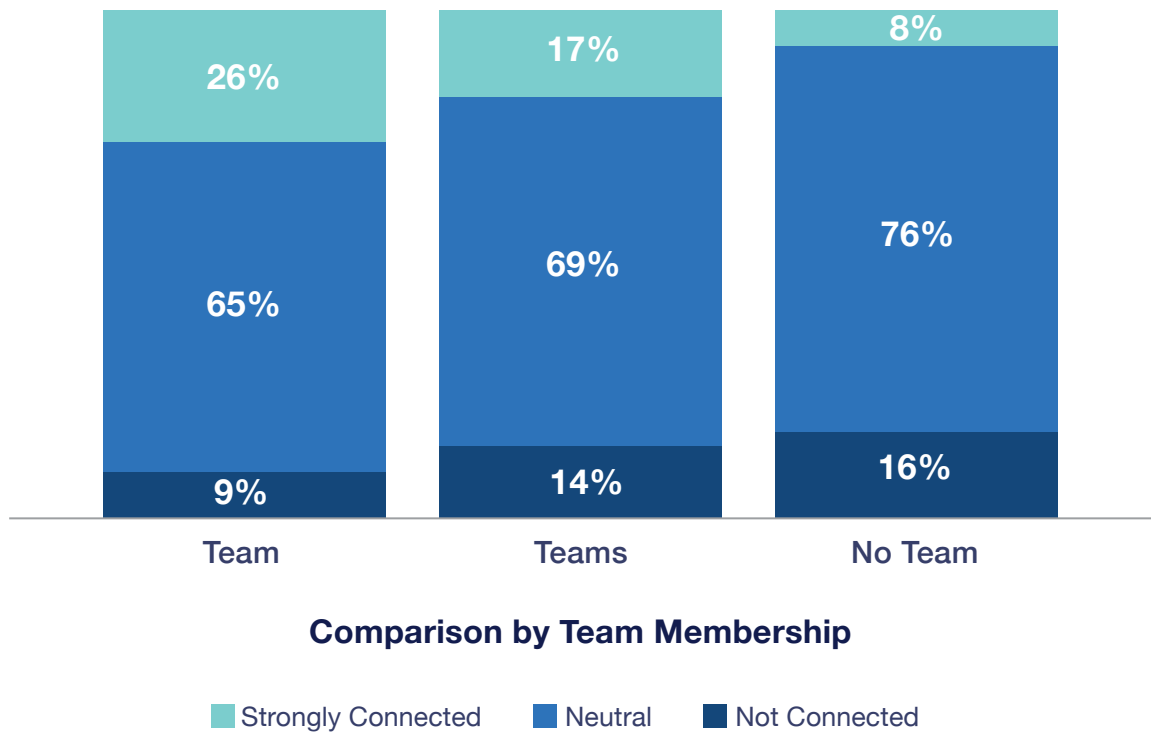
6 Company Size



Smaller organizations have a **2x higher likelihood** of being **Strongly Connected** compared to companies with 50-999 employees.

Larger organizations have a **2x higher likelihood** to have employees who are **Not Connected** compared to smaller companies.

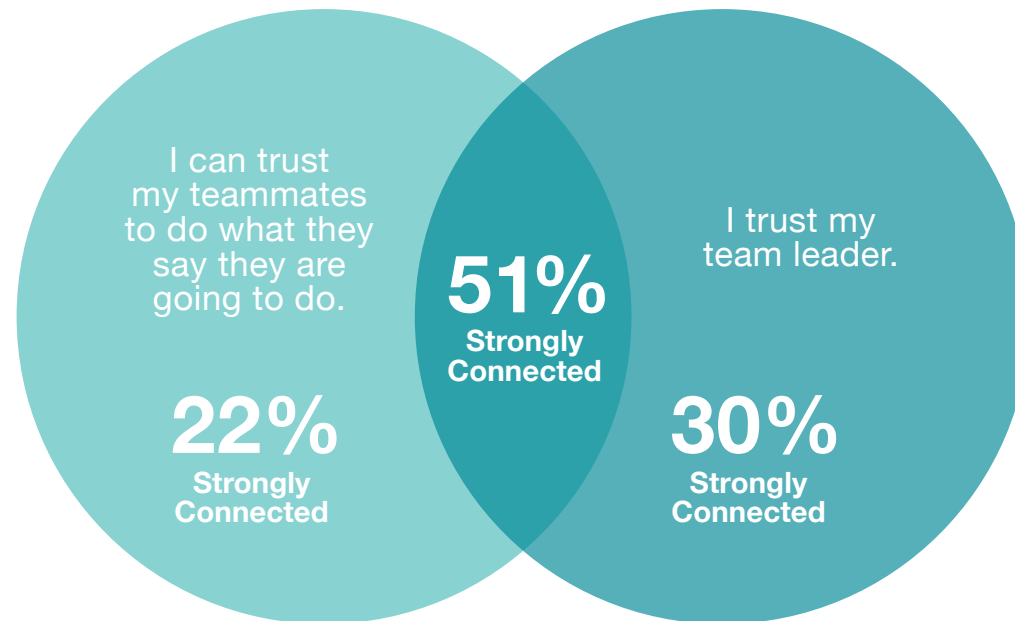
7 Teams



Team membership has a positive effect on Connection.
Those who are a member of a team are **4X more likely** to be **Strongly Connected** compared to not being on a team.

8 Trust

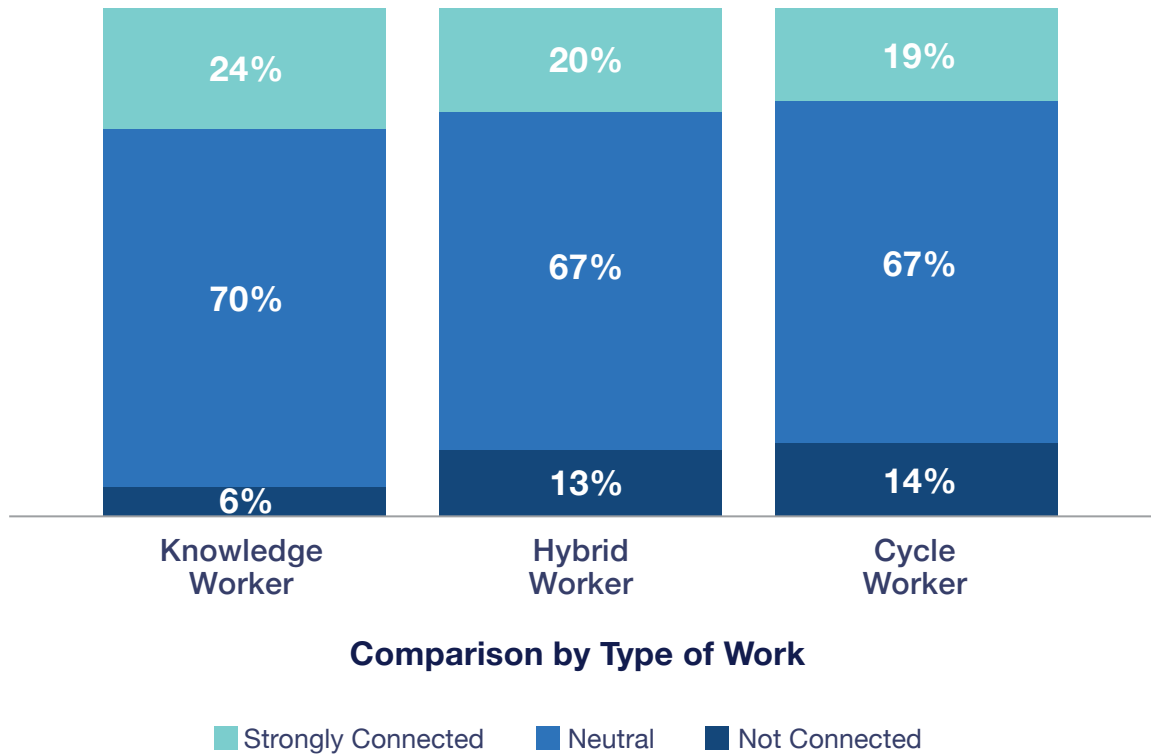
Trust and Connection



Trusting in both your teammates and team leader increases your likelihood to be **Strongly Connected** by anywhere between **3-4x**.

Trusting those around you (Teammates & Team Leader) increases your likelihood of being **Strongly Connected** by **7x** compared to no trust.

9 Type of Work



All three types of workers have approximately the same likelihood of being **Strongly Connected**.

The interesting thing is that Knowledge Workers are **3X more likely** to be **Not Connected** compared to Cycle Workers.

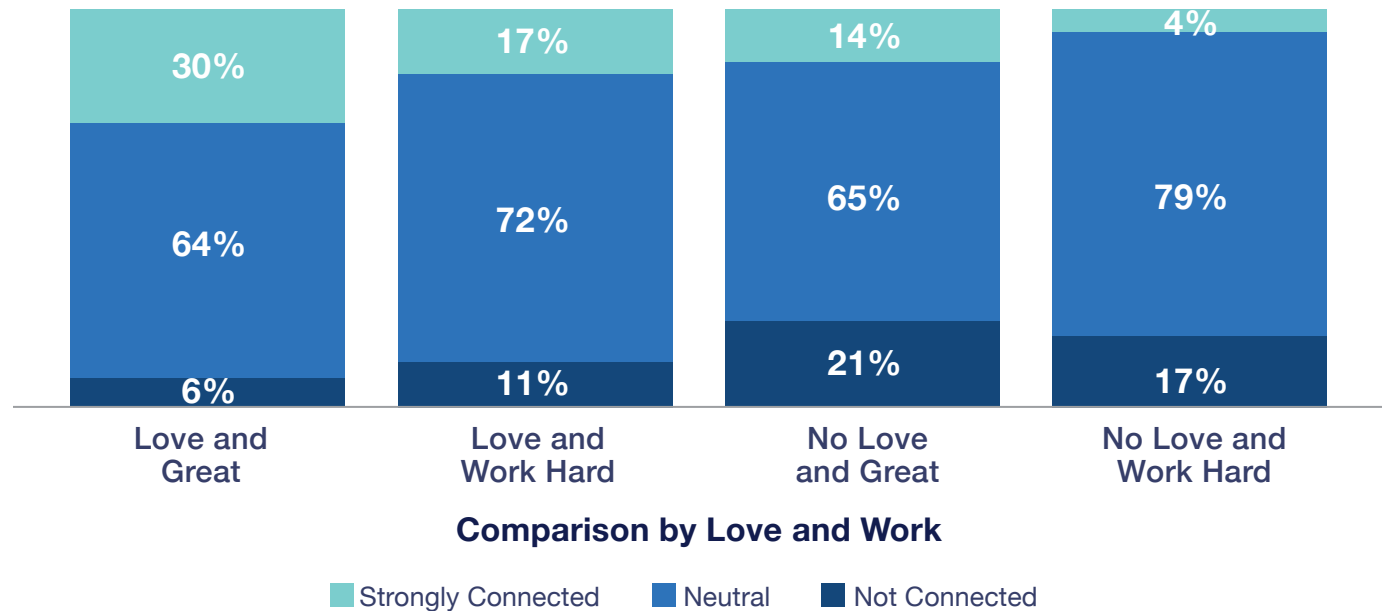
10 Love and Work

I love what I do and I'm great at it.

I love what I do and I have to work hard to be good at it.

I do not love what I do and I'm great at it.

I do not love what I do and I have to work hard to be good at it.



Employees who love what they do and are great at doing it are **8x more likely** to be **Strongly Connected** compared to those who dislike what they are doing.

Those who dislike their jobs and have to work hard at doing it are **3x more likely** to be **Not Connected**.

In addition, those who love their work are **4x more likely** to stay with their organization.



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