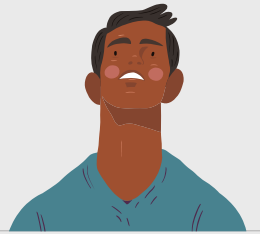
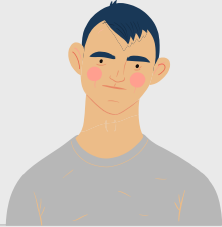


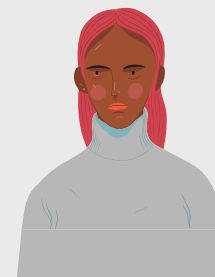
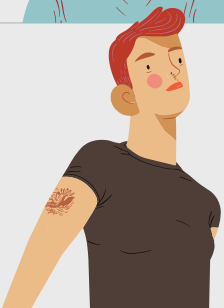
# Today at Work



# TALENT BRANDING



The labor market is tighter than ever. To attract skilled workers, companies need to cultivate a stellar reputation among the people they already employ.



# About Today at Work:

Today at Work is a quarterly workforce report that blends ADP's extensive data set representing 25 million people with monthly worker sentiment surveys from a stratified random sample of 2,500 workers to provide a recurring, people-centered, and comprehensive view of the world of work.

Today at Work presents a complete view of the employee's job lifecycle rooted in data from every career touchpoint, coupled with surveys that capture how people feel about the workplace and how those feelings drive their actions.

The mission of the ADP Research Institute® is to generate data-driven discoveries about the world of work and derive reliable economic indicators from these insights. We offer these findings as our unique contribution to making the world of work better and more productive, and to bring greater awareness to the economy at large.

[Learn more at www.ADPRI.org](http://www.ADPRI.org)



# Marcus & Nela

Marcus Buckingham is a world-renowned researcher on strengths, leadership, and high performance at work. Nela Richardson, a Ph.D. and ADP's chief economist, is on the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Advisory Committee and a frequent contributor to NPR, CNBC, Bloomberg, and Fox News.

Their mission, as co-heads of the ADP Research Institute, is to combine proprietary labor market data with psychometric sentiment insights to provide intelligence on worker behavior and how people think and feel about their jobs. The Today at Work report serves this mission.

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# Talent Branding Contents

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## Demographics

Who are the promoters - and where are they?

## Outputs

How are talent brand promoters different?

## Inputs

How can talent brand promoters be cultivated?

## Section 1: Talent Branding

**F**or the past two years, the U.S. has been locked into one of the tightest labor markets in modern memory. Employers have nearly 10 million job openings, but only about 6 million people are actively looking for work.

That means that companies are fighting over a small and possibly shrinking pool of workers. In such a competitive environment, every employer should be thinking about their talent brand – the perceptions employees have about their companies, how those workers promote their employer to friends and family, and what they say about it online and to potential recruits.

A company's reputation among the people it already employs is critical to attracting new talent in a tight labor market. Employers need to be laser-focused on cultivating their talent brand as both a marketing and recruitment tool.

In this issue of Today at Work, we look at talent brand promoters – who they are and what drives them. The goal is to provide employers with data-driven information that can help them cultivate strong promoters within their own employee ranks.

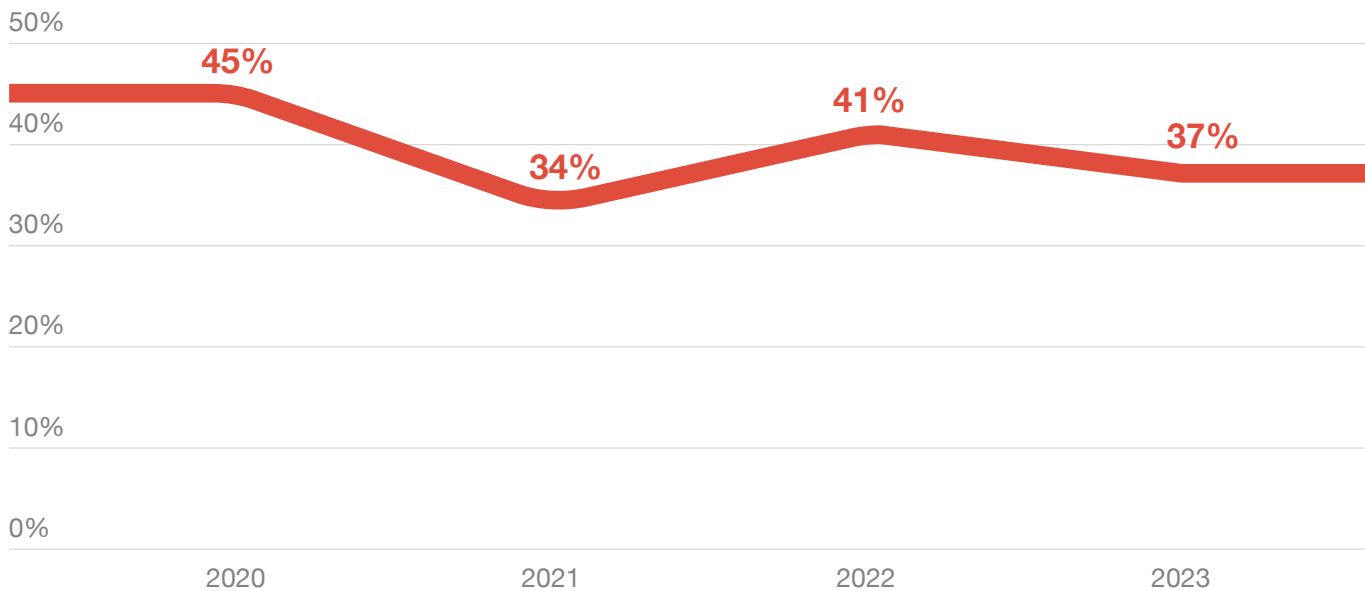
# Talent Brand Promoters: The Demographics

## Who are they – and where are they?

Every month, the ADP Research Institute asks a stratified random sample of 2,500 U.S. workers how likely they would be to recommend their company to a family member or friend as a place to work. Responding on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being “extremely likely”, 37 percent of people emerged as **talent brand promoters**, recording a score of 9 or 10 on the likelihood scale.

But as we’ll see, the prevalence of talent brand promoters can vary widely depending on industry, company size, employee rank, and a host of other demographics.

## How likely are you to recommend your company as a place to work?



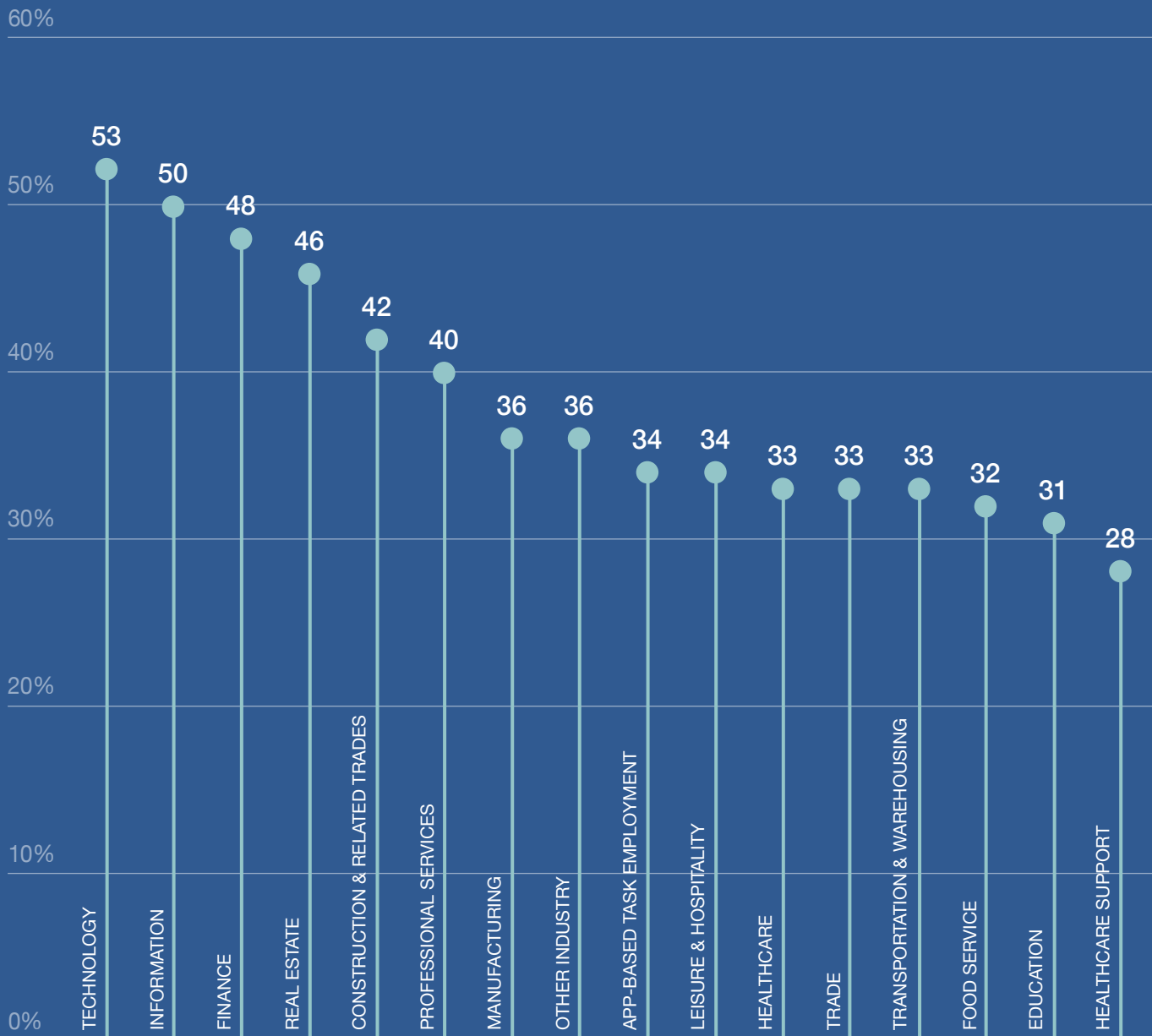
# Industry

When it comes to industries, technology leads the way on worker advocacy, with 53 percent of survey respondents saying they'd recommend their company as a place to work.

Healthcare brought up the rear, with the smallest share of talent brand promoters at 28 percent.

As employers think about their talent brand, they should look to their peers and competitors for comparison. As you can see in the chart below, because advocacy varies so significantly, benchmarking to other industries is less helpful.

## Talent brand promoters by industry

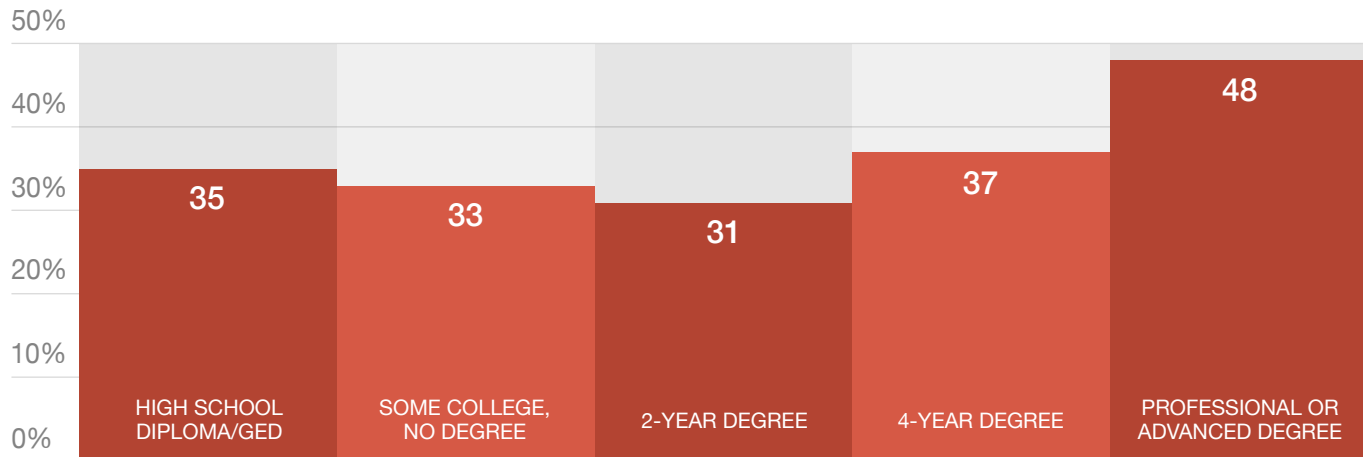




# Education

A person's level of education can make a big difference when it comes to talent branding. Nearly half of workers with a professional or advanced degree would recommend their employer. But as the chart shows, there's no linear trend. Employees with a high school diploma are more enthusiastic about their workplace than some of their college-educated colleagues. Education alone cannot explain why some workers advocate a company's talent brand and some don't.

## Promoters by education

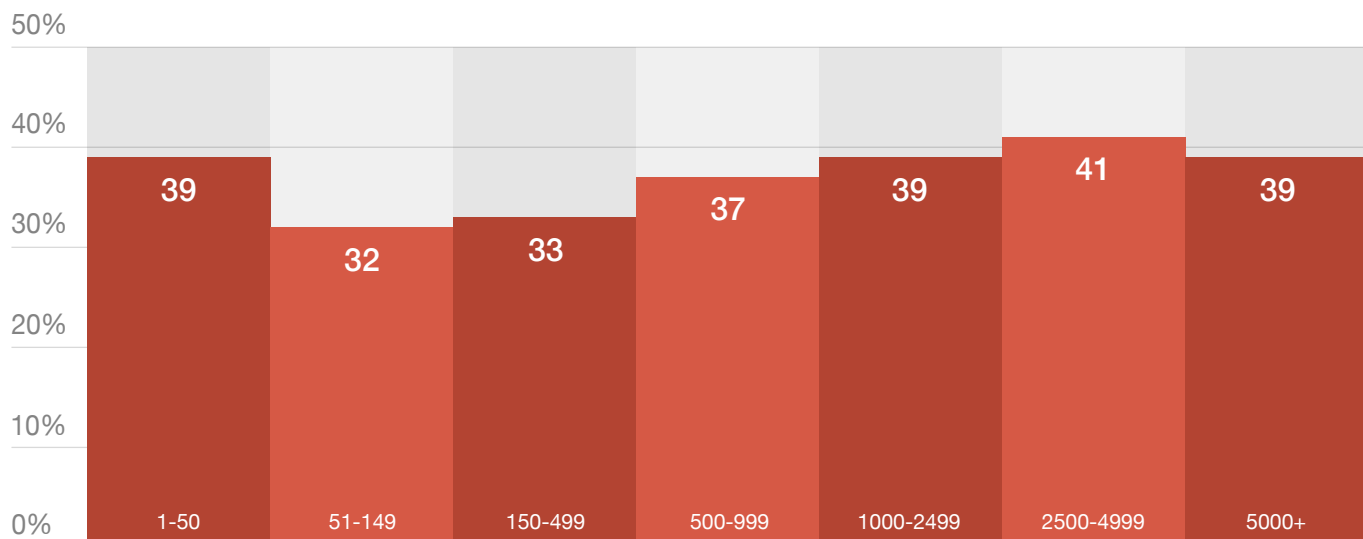


# Company Size

Company size seems to play some role in cultivating promoters, but as this chart shows, smaller isn't necessarily better. Yes, the smallest companies have more promoters than midsize companies, but look inside the largest companies and the number of promoters is about the same as in the smallest.

Creating a strong talent brand is possible no matter what your company's size.

## Promoters by employer size



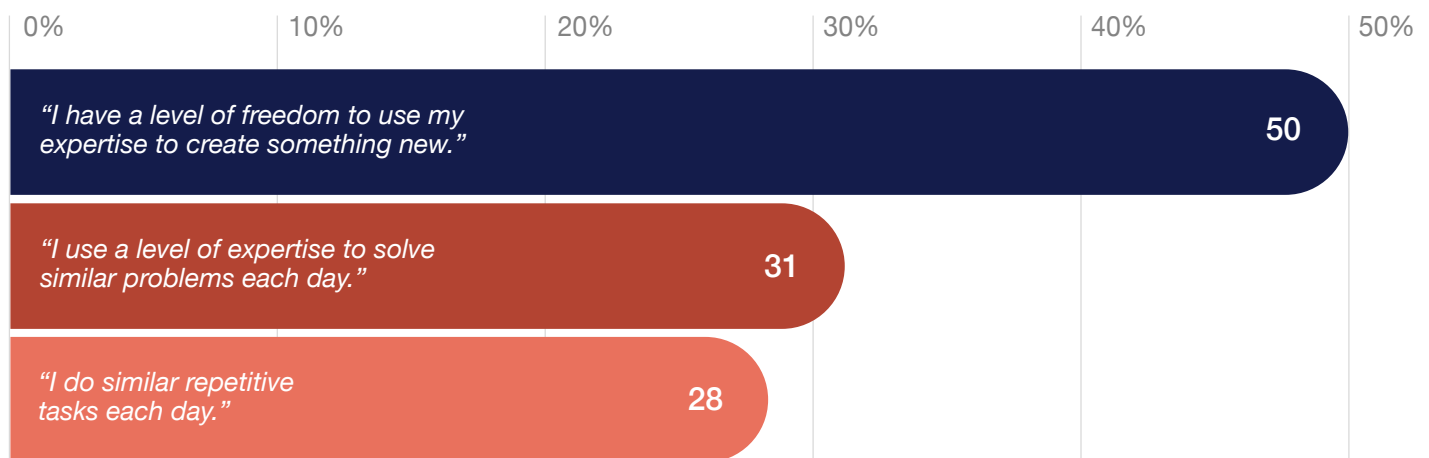
# Type of Work

The kind of work you do does seem to have an effect on how likely you are to be a talent brand promoter. People who have higher levels of autonomy at work overall are much more likely to be promoters. Fully half of workers who say they have freedom to use their expertise would recommend their organization as a good place to work.

The share of talent brand promoters drops quickly among workers who have less autonomy or hold jobs that require repetitive tasks.

As we dig further into our survey data, this link between autonomy and talent brand promoters shows up repeatedly.

## Promoters by worker type

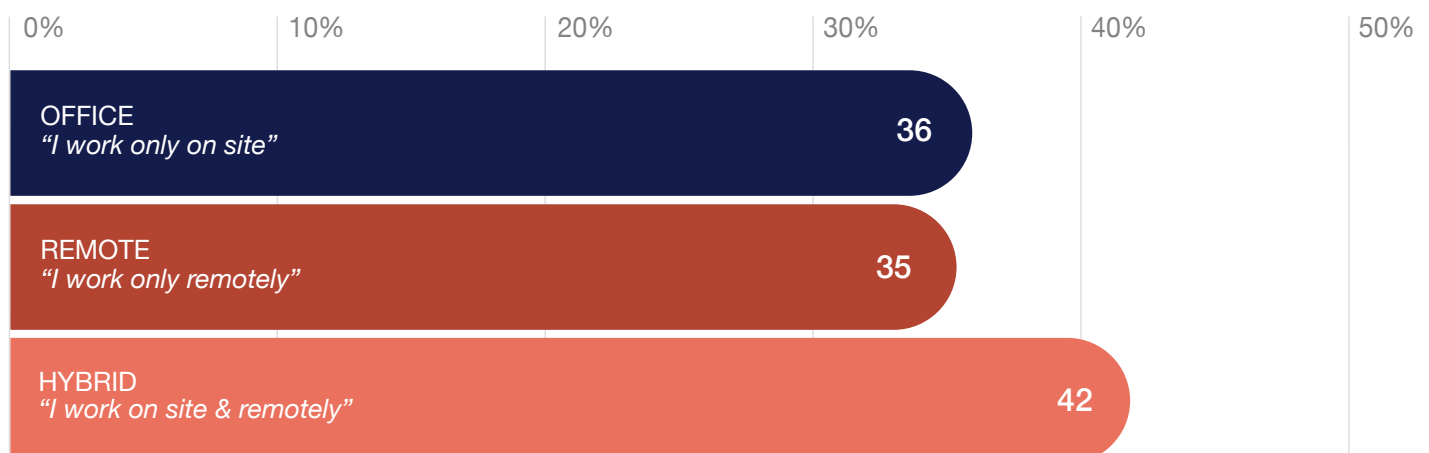


# Location

Our data consistently has shown that hybrid workers – those who split their time between remote and on-site work – are more likely to be talent brand promoters.

To be sure, hybrid work sometimes is mandated, but often it's a choice made by the worker. And as we've already seen, employees with greater levels of autonomy are more likely to speak highly about their place of work. When employees experience more choice, the likelihood that they will be a talent brand promoter is higher.

## Promoters by work location

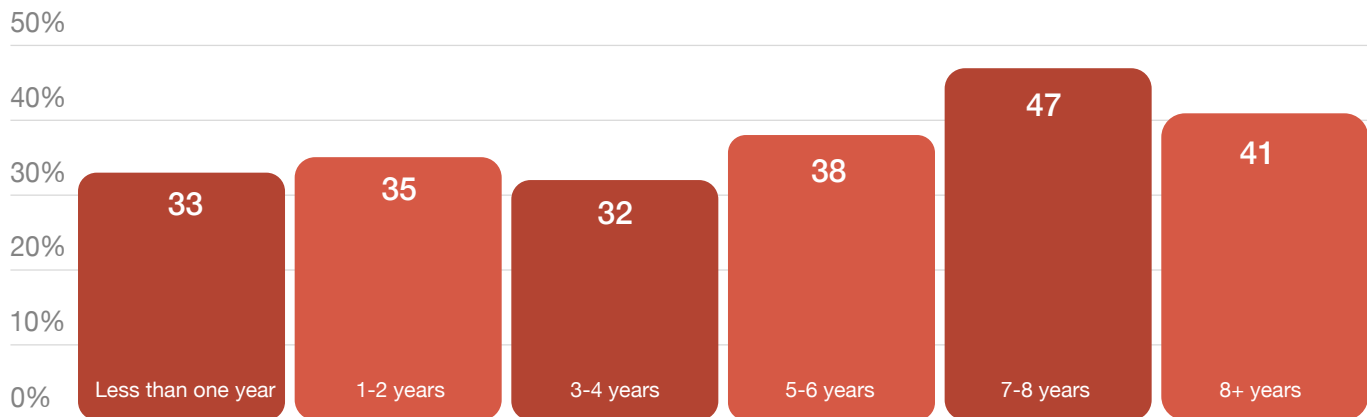


## Time On The Job

The link between talent brand and tenure is not as clear as one might expect. From zero to four years there is very little difference in the percentage of promoters, which means companies cannot assume that time on the job alone will inevitably build their talent brand. It won't.

Among workers with five or more years on the job, the percentage of promoters rises, but this is likely a function of these workers being a skewed sample. It's not that something magical happens after five years; it's more that all the really unhappy people have already left the company, leaving a skewed sample of workers who say they would recommend their employer simply to justify their own decision to stay.

### Promoters by tenure

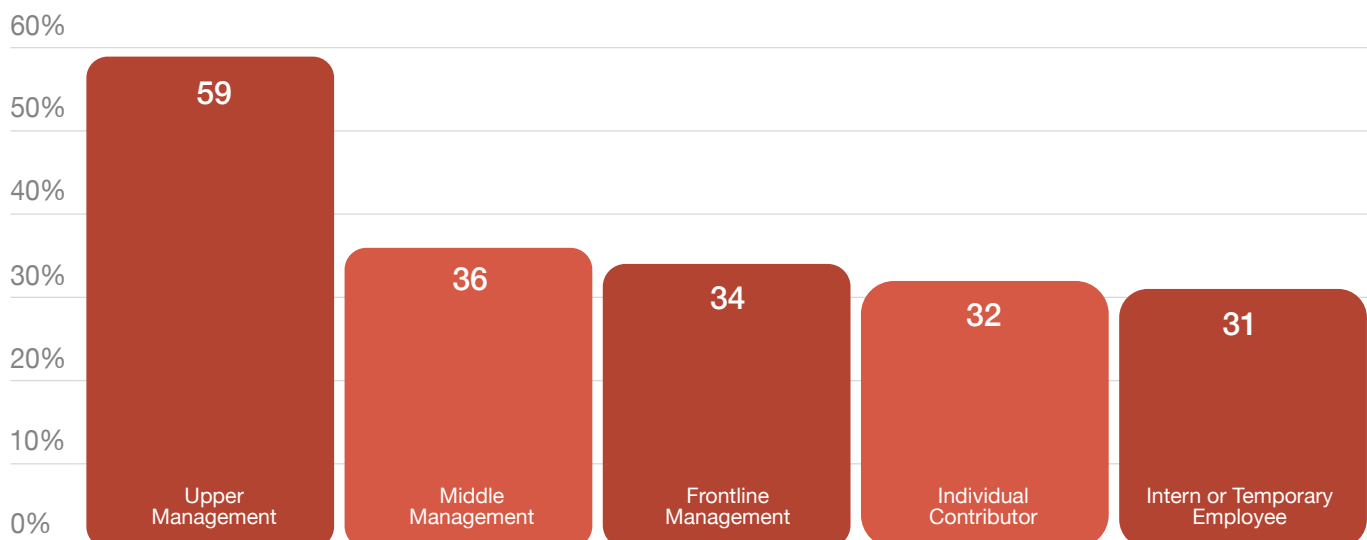


## Rank

As might be expected, executives in upper management are more likely to be advocates for their companies.

It's interesting to see, though, that moving individual contributors to first-, second-, and third-level management roles cannot be relied upon as the only tool for building their talent brand.

### Promoters by rank



# Demographics

We looked carefully at demographics to learn how, where, and if a worker's demographic characteristics would affect a company's talent brand.

The results displayed some intriguing patterns.

First, as one might have predicted, younger workers are less likely than their older colleagues to promote their company.

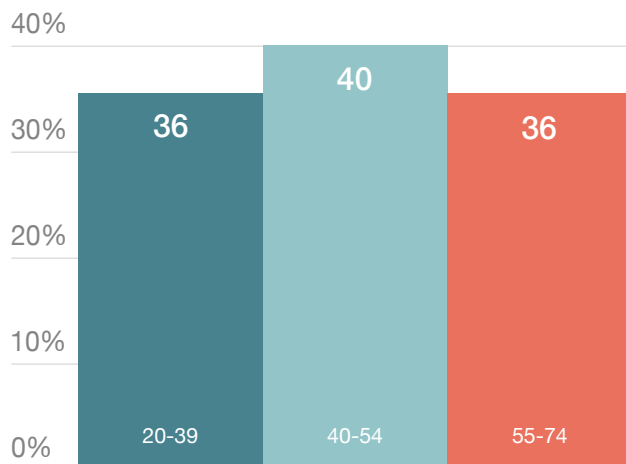
Yet skip to the next-older generation, and the percentage of talent brand promoters slips back down. The youngest and oldest workers are more similar than one might think. Watch out for generational generalizations. The data don't support them.

Second, gender reveals little about the likelihood of a worker to be a promoter or not. Women are neither more nor less positive than men.

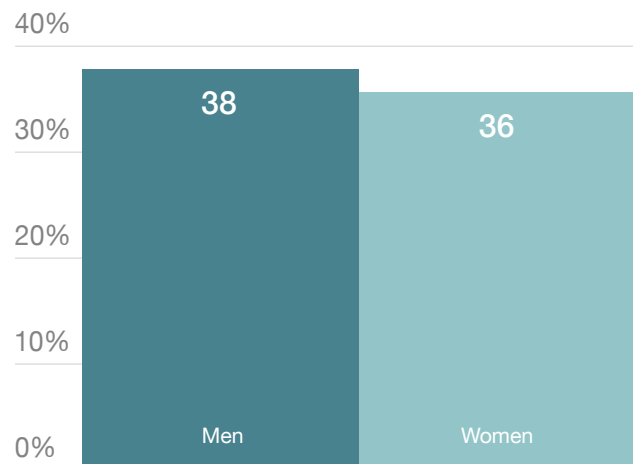
Third, a person's reported sexual orientation tells us little about their likelihood to promote the company. A person of any sexual orientation can become, or fail to become, an advocate for your company.

Finally, one's reported race revealed some interesting patterns, but as of yet it is difficult to pinpoint what these patterns truly reveal. Yes, white workers are the most likely to promote their workplaces, and Asian workers are the least likely. That pattern, its stability, and its variance by industry, region, level, and tenure all deserve further study.

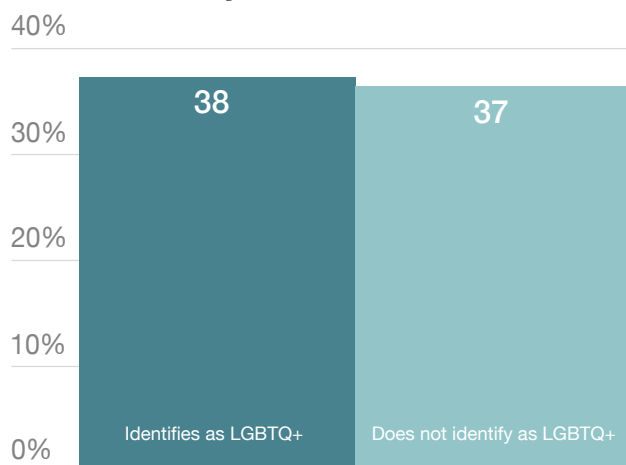
## Promoters by age



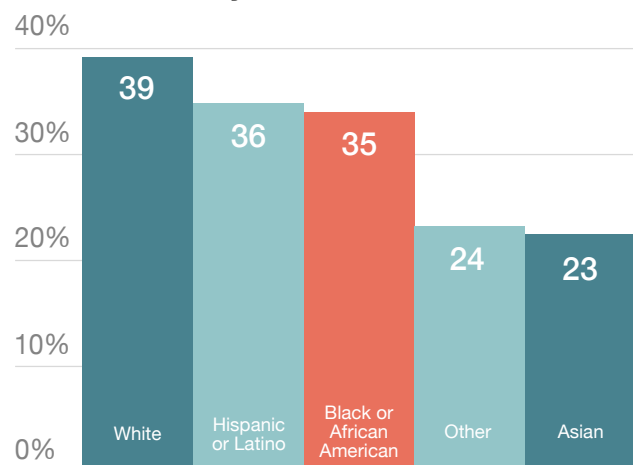
## Promoters by gender



## Promoters by LGBTQ+ identification



## Promoters by race



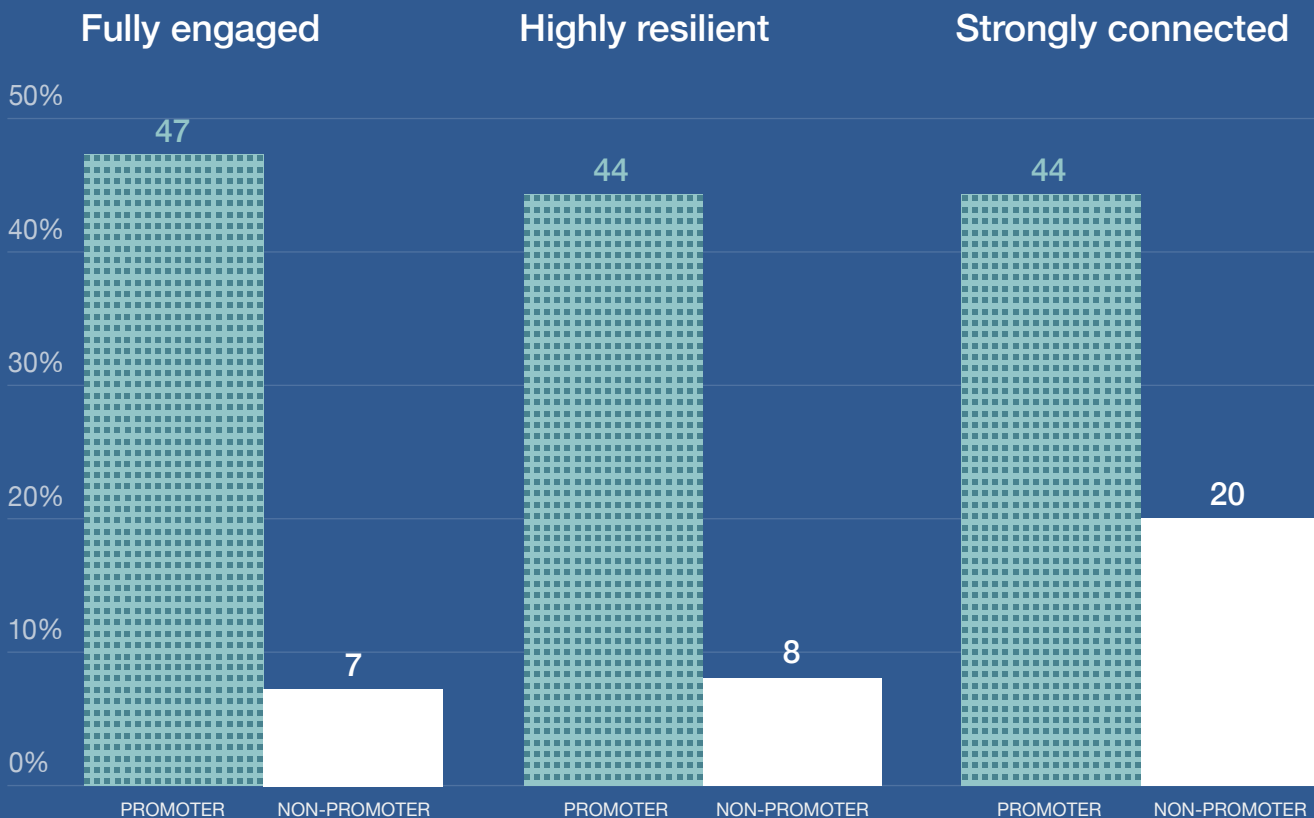
# Talent Brand Promoters: How Are They Different?

Sentiment, outcomes, and other important signals every employer should heed.

We know talent brand promoters can help employers polish their reputations and boost recruitment, but what else do they bring to their organizations?

At the most fundamental level, talent brand promoters are more likely to be fully engaged, resilient, and strongly connected to their organizations. Anything your company does to increase engagement, build resilience, and create stronger connections also will increase the strength of your talent brand.

Employees who are...



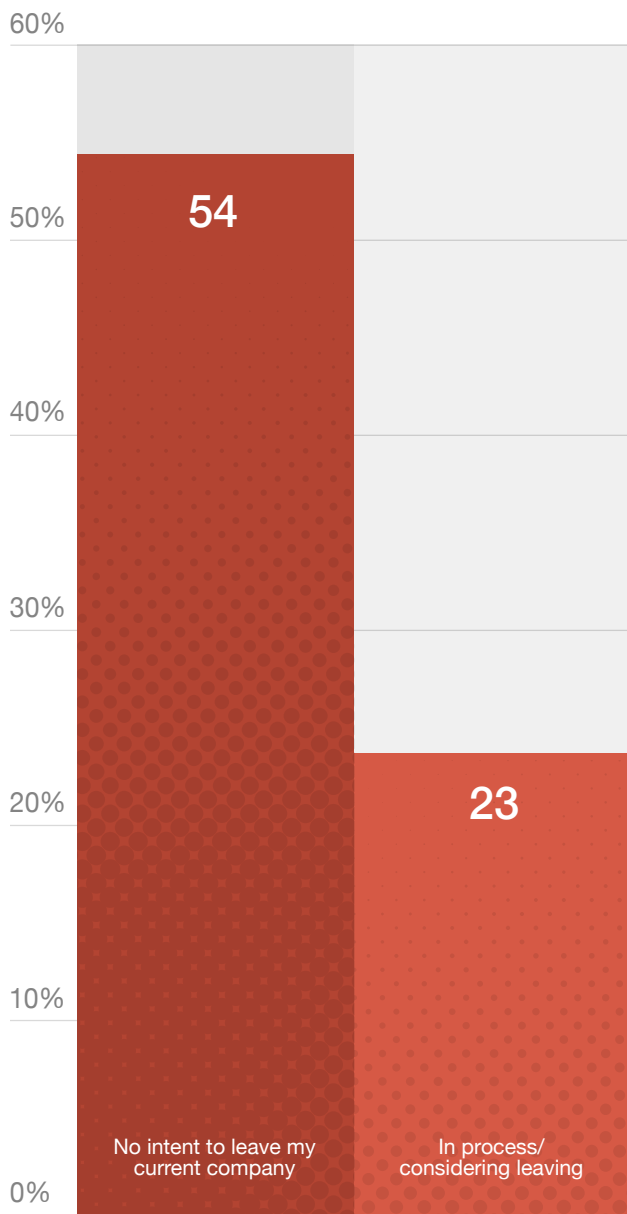
# Intent To Leave

Not surprisingly, we found a strong relationship between talent brand promoters and people's intention to leave their organization. People who have no intention of leaving their jobs are nearly four times as likely to be talent brand promoters than those who are open to leaving or actively looking for a new job.

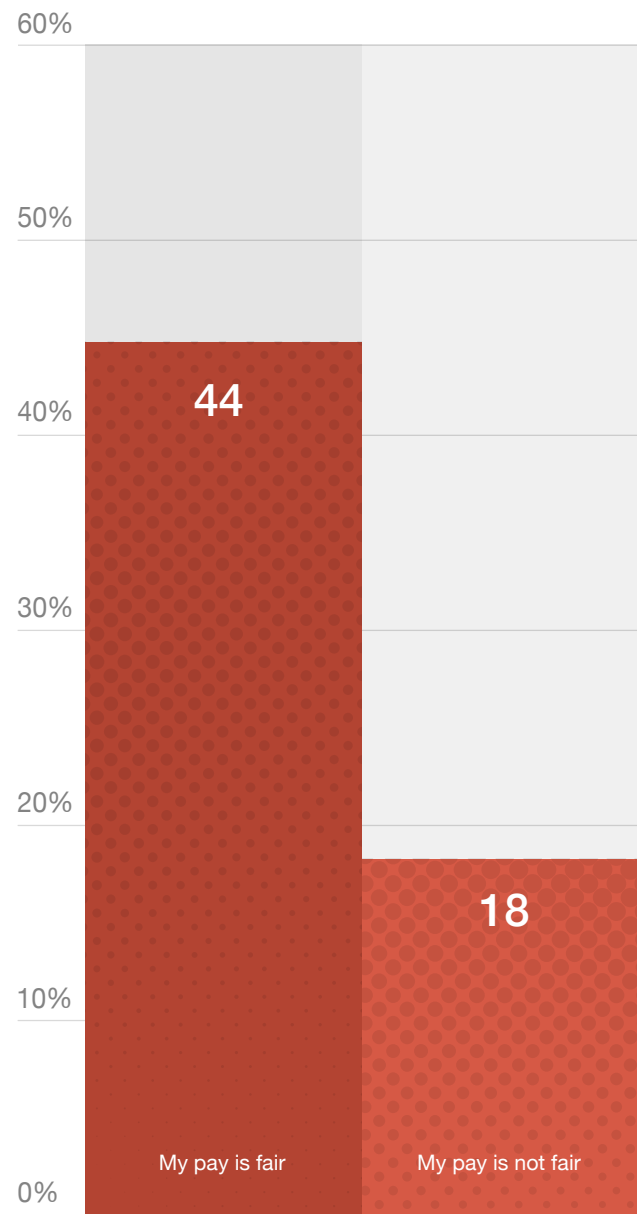
# Pay Equity

People who believe they're fairly paid are nearly four times more likely to recommend their organization as a good place to work than people who think they're unfairly paid.

Promoters by intent to leave



Promoters by pay equity



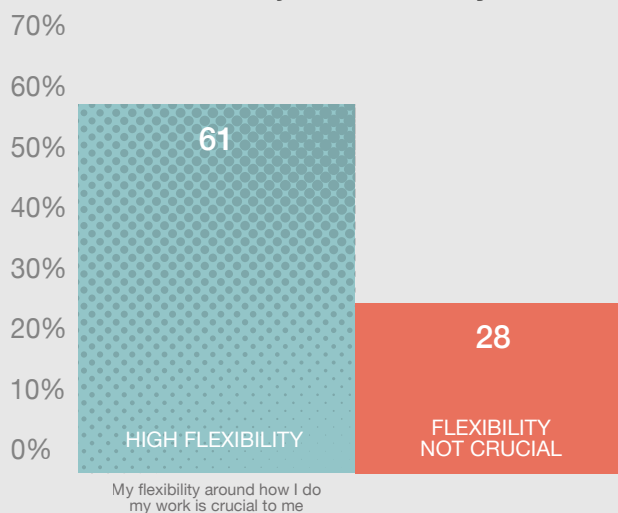
# Talent Brand Promoters: How Can They Be Cultivated?

Because talent brand promoters are such a valuable group – they are more engaged, more resilient, more connected, less likely to leave – what can the best companies do to turn more employees into talent brand promoters? Here are four ideas.

## Flexibility

People are invigorated by choice. The more flexibility you can give workers, the more likely they are to recommend your company.

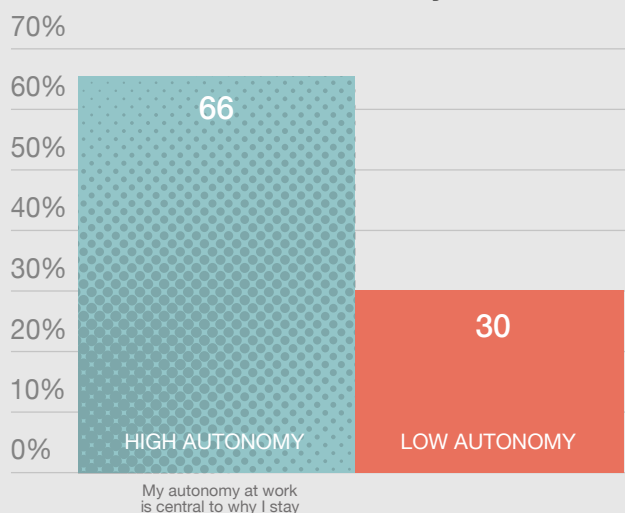
### Promoters and job flexibility



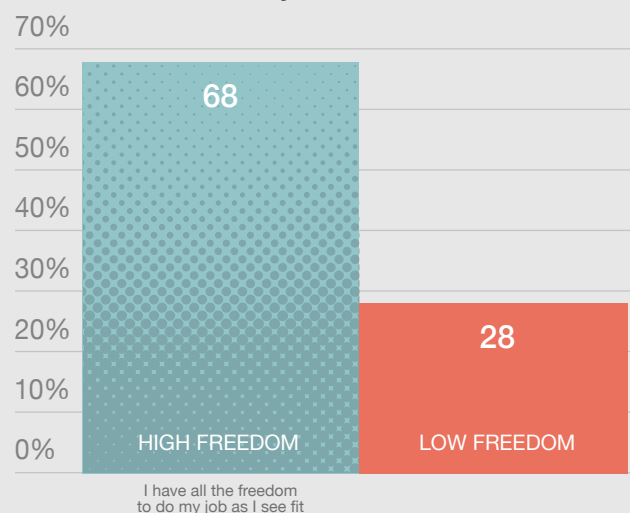
## Autonomy

People respond well to feelings of self-efficacy. As the charts below show, if you can give a worker a greater sense of control, they are more likely to advocate for your company.

### Promoters and autonomy



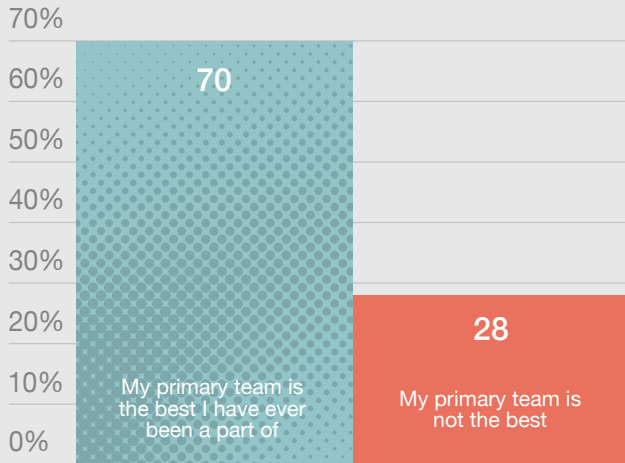
### Promoters and job freedom



## Team Connection

People do best at work when they feel like they're part of a team. When they sense that their colleagues support them, that they're all working toward the same ends and have each other's back when things get tough, workers feel much more inclined to recommend their company to friends and family.

### Promoters and teams

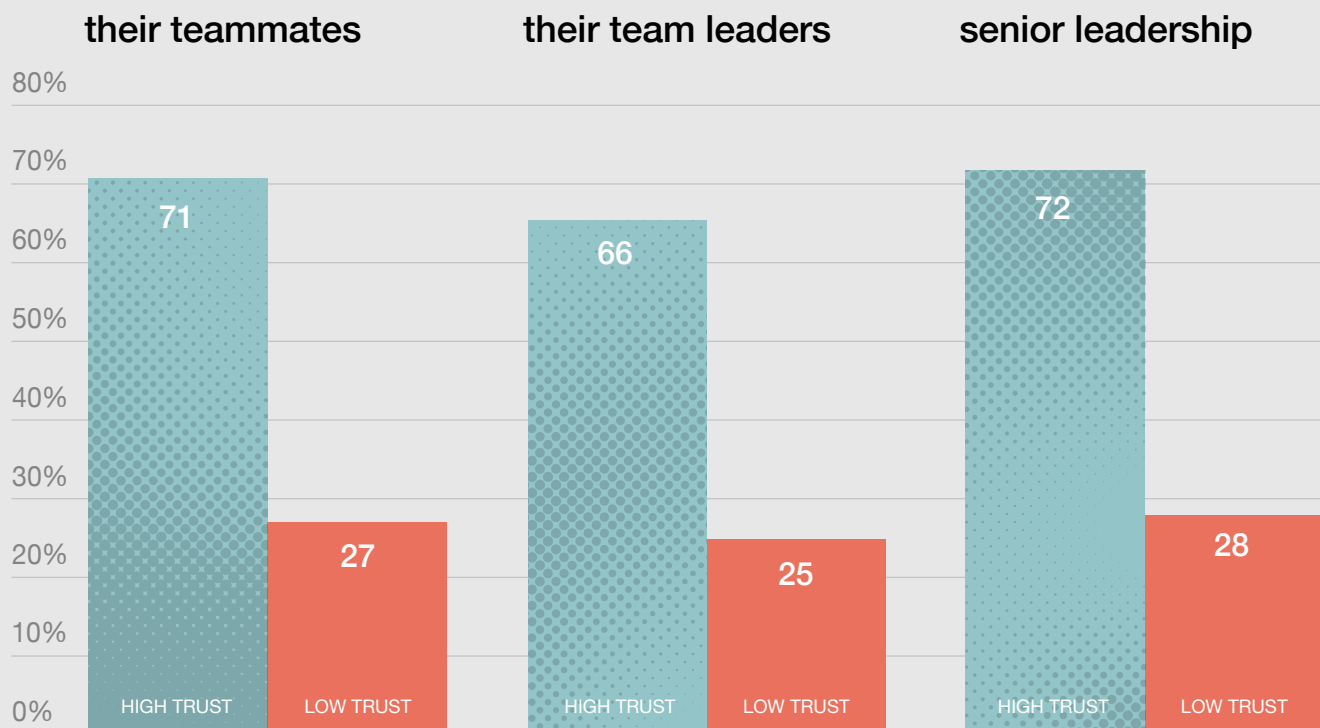


## Trust

Trust lies at the foundation of flexibility, autonomy, and team. And when we cut the data by a worker's feelings of trust, the vital importance of trust to talent brand is revealed.

As the charts below show, anything that a company can do to bring more trust into its workplace will help build its talent brand.

Promoters by level of trust in ...





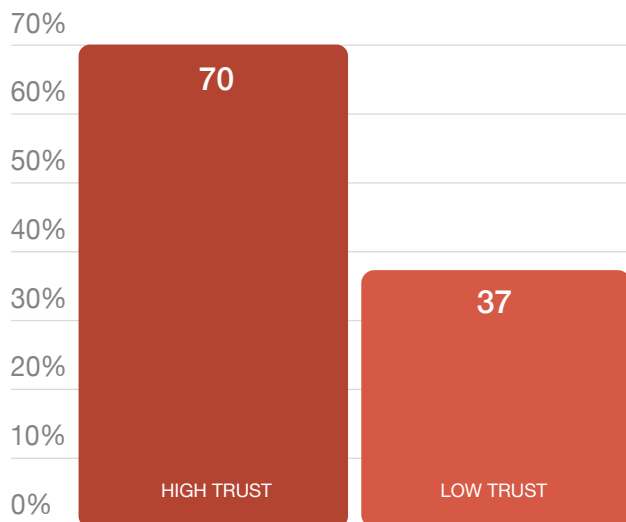
# Trust In Human Resources

This demand for trust includes one more very important group: The Human Resources department.

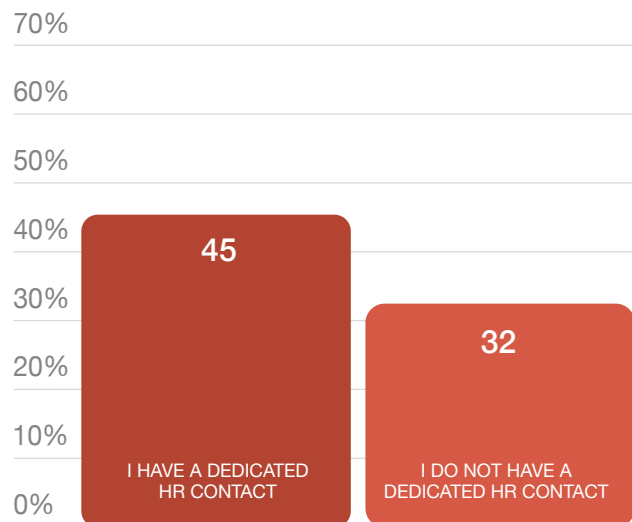
Trust in HR doesn't negate the need for trust in a team or management. But it can make or break a person's willingness to advocate for their employer. It's difficult to be enthusiastic about the company you work for if you don't trust how it serves and responds to its own employees.

And here's an interesting correlation: People with a dedicated HR contact are more likely to be promoters. Ideally, employees want one person in HR to know everything about them and their jobs. Even if they are then passed on to a different HR department dedicated to the specific issue they're facing, initially they want to talk to an individual who knows them as a whole person.

## Promoters by trust in HR



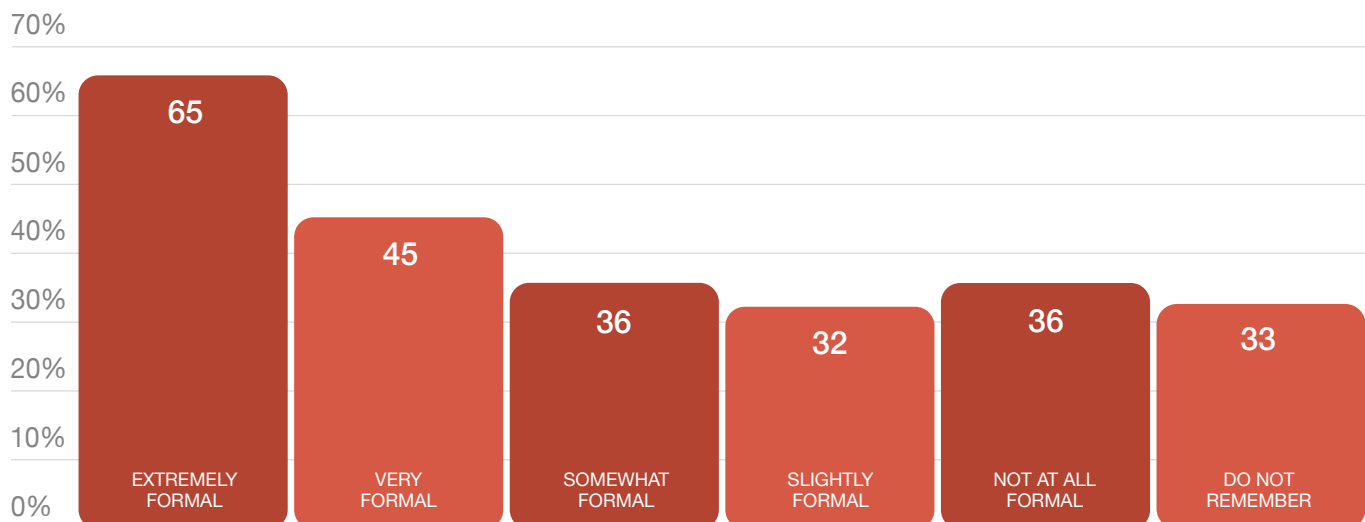
## Promoters by HR contact



It is also clear from our data that the building of a strong talent brand begins from the very first day of employment. Those companies who take onboarding very seriously, who make the welcoming of a new person into the organization and onto their team more formal, are much more likely to have a high percentage of talent brand promoters.

If a company wants to build its talent brand, it should start by looking at the front door, and how carefully and caringly it welcomes each person in. As part of our ongoing monthly sentiment survey of 2,500 workers, ADP Research Institute asks: How formal is your company's process for onboarding hires?

## Promoters by formality of onboarding process



# Attention

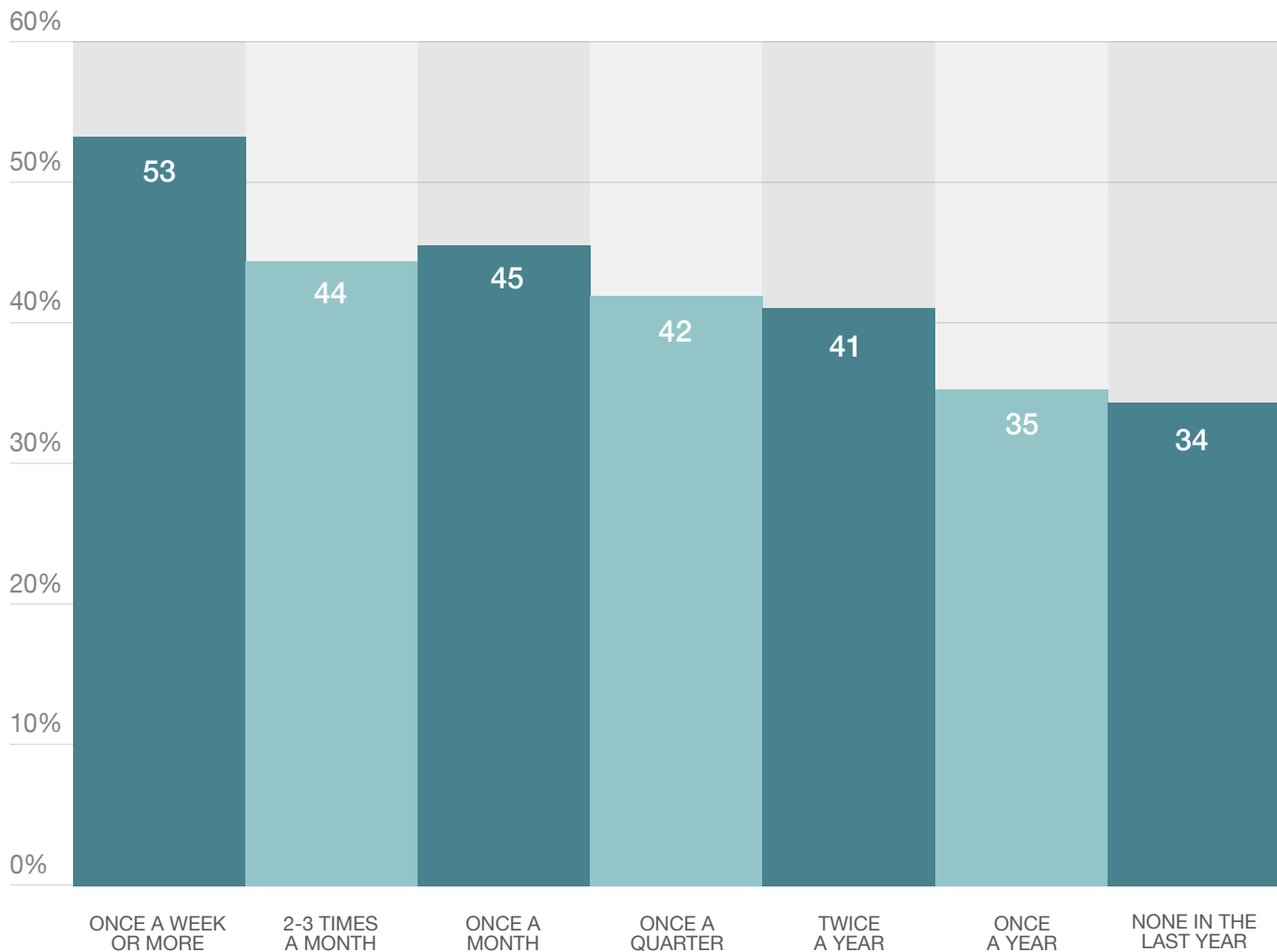
Once these employees have been welcomed, what do they need from their employer? Attention.

Providing more frequent attention to employees can more than double the number of promoters. When we asked people about the attention they receive at work, from annual reviews to informal input on specific projects, we found that workers who reported more frequent contact with their managers, HR, or colleagues were far more likely to be talent brand promoters.

When companies take seriously each employee's need for frequent attention, a stronger talent brand grows.

Conversely, if you want to shrink your talent brand, ignore your people.

## Promoters by level of attention



# Love and Work

Finally, how a person feels about their job and their own performance can have a huge influence on how they feel about their company. An employee who loves their job and is good at what they do is nearly three times more likely to endorse their organization as a good place to work.

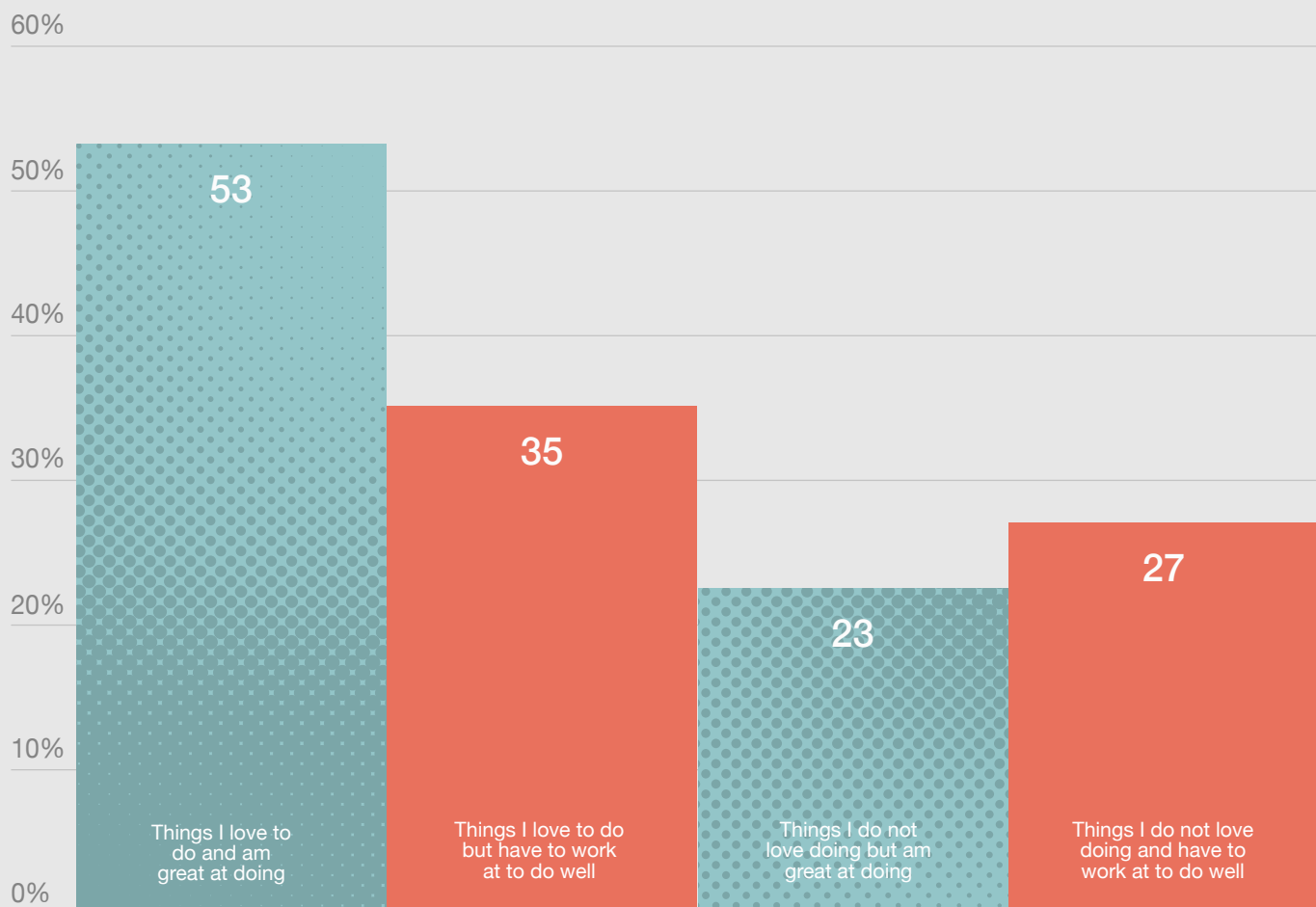
It's interesting to note that even when a worker reports that they are great at their job, if they do not find love in the work itself, they're dramatically less likely to promote the company to friends and family as a good place to work.

The more that HR and team leaders can do to help each worker find something to love about their day-to-day work – not all of it, but some of it – the more likely they are to be a talent brand promoter.

Phrased another way, no matter how much a worker believes in the values and mission of their company, if they find no love in the day-to-day activities of their work, they will be far less likely to promote the company.

## Promoters by love and work

As part of our ongoing monthly sentiment survey of 2,500 workers, ADP Research Institute asks people how they spend most of their time in their current position. Among people who say they spend their days doing what they love to do and are great at doing, more than half are talent brand promoters.





## Section 2:

# Happening Now In People Analytics

## To build your talent brand, raise the career development bar

Career development lies at the heart of talent brand development. Although promotion and development is not the only way to build your talent brand, it is one way. Many workers advance their careers by moving up the ranks of their employers' management chains. Promoting from within benefits employers by lowering recruitment costs. Workers benefit from stronger resumes and higher pay.

Workers also develop their careers by pursuing certifications to qualify for higher-paying jobs. To attract quality candidates and encourage retention, a growing number of employers include education incentives in their compensation packages.

But how hard is it to upskill or get promoted in the U.S.?

ADP Research Institute analyzed the job histories of more than 51 million U.S. workers who collectively worked for more than 93,000 employers between January 2019 and February 2023.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the rates of promotion and job separation in each month of a worker's tenure, we calculated the share of workers who ever get promoted by their employer, rather than leave before any promotion happens. We also calculated the share of workers who ever upskill and move to better jobs at their current employer.

# In The U.S., The Bar Is Low For Career-Development Opportunities

Only 4.5 percent of the 51 million workers in ADP Research Institute's sample get promoted within two years of being hired.<sup>2</sup> Nearly 75 percent leave an employer—for any reason—without ever getting promoted. Among those who stay, fewer than 1 percent get promoted within their third year.

The career development challenge continues with upskilling. Only 3.8 percent of workers upskill within two years of being hired.

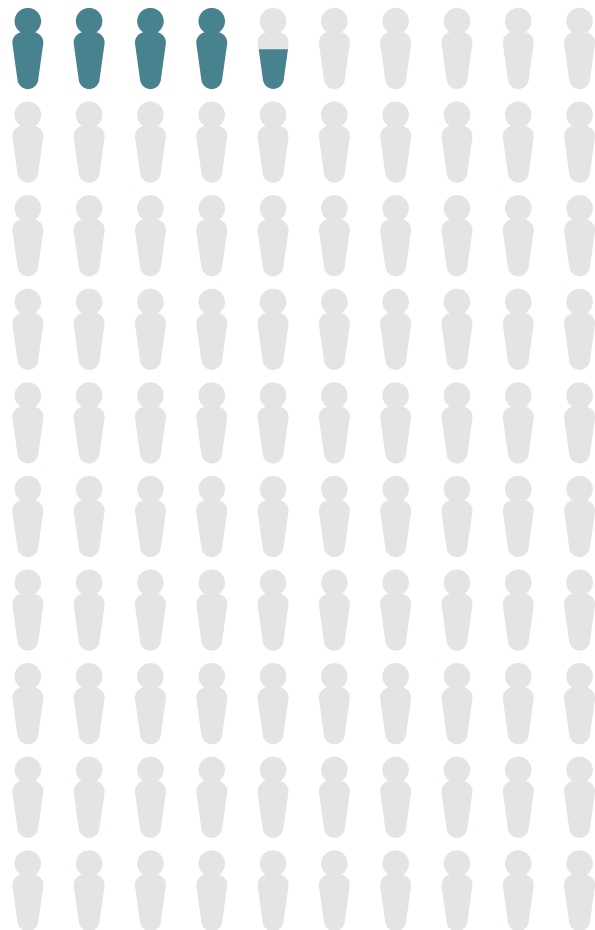
A big reason for that low number is the lack of upskilling opportunity—too few employers offer education incentives, or they do offer them but don't give workers a chance to use the training to pursue a better position within the company.<sup>3</sup>

That lackluster opportunity is bad news for workers. The good news is that employers can stand out by raising the low bar on promotions and upskilling.

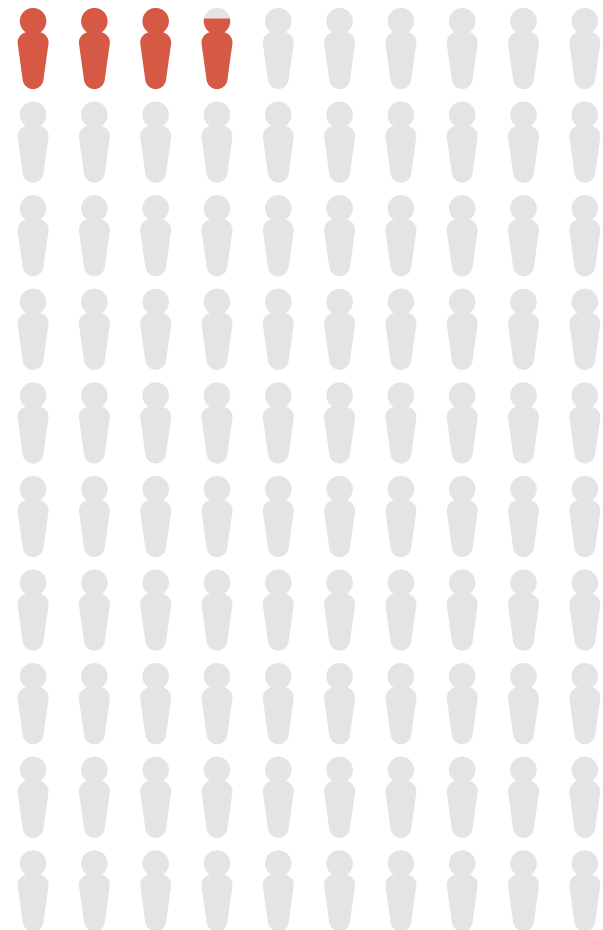
## Promotion and upskilling are rare

Share of workers who are *promoted* or *upskilled* within two years since hire

### Promotion



### Upskilling



# With Promotion Opportunity Comes... More Promotion Opportunity

Only so many management slots exist, which is one reason only 2.9 percent of non-managers rise into management within two years.

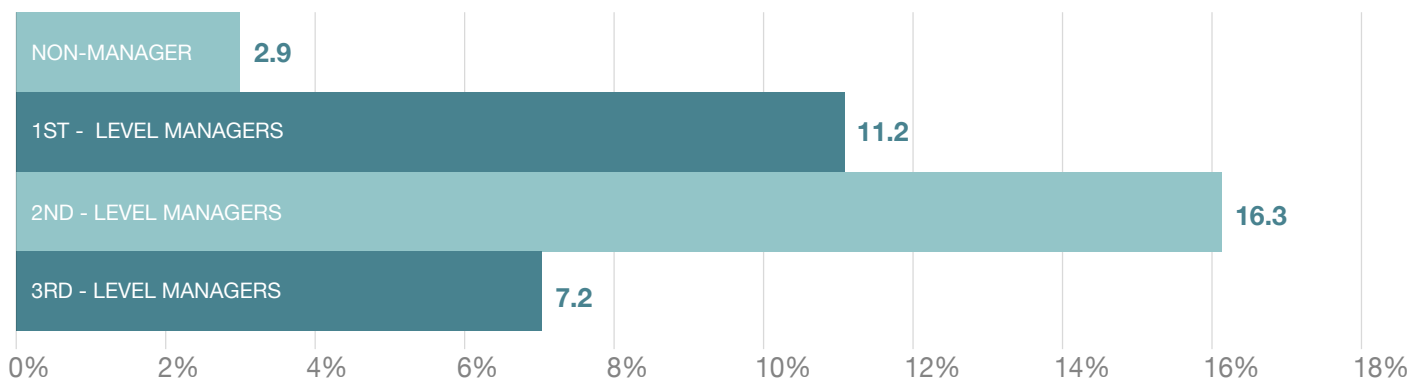
In contrast, a first-level manager—someone who manages only non-managers—has a more than 11 percent chance of advancing in that same timeframe.

Promoting from second-level management is easier than advancing as a third-level manager, but the chances that a third-level manager will be promoted within two years is 7.2 percent, or 2.5 times higher than for non-managers.

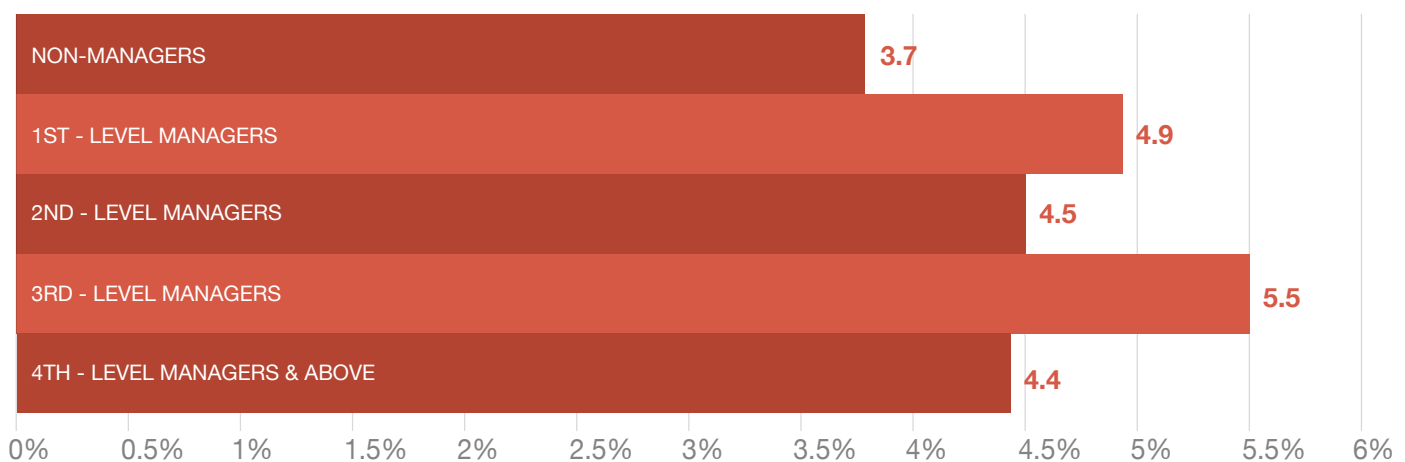
For upskilling, no clear pattern emerges.

## Two-year chance of promotion and upskilling by managerial level

### Ever Promoted



### Ever Upskilled



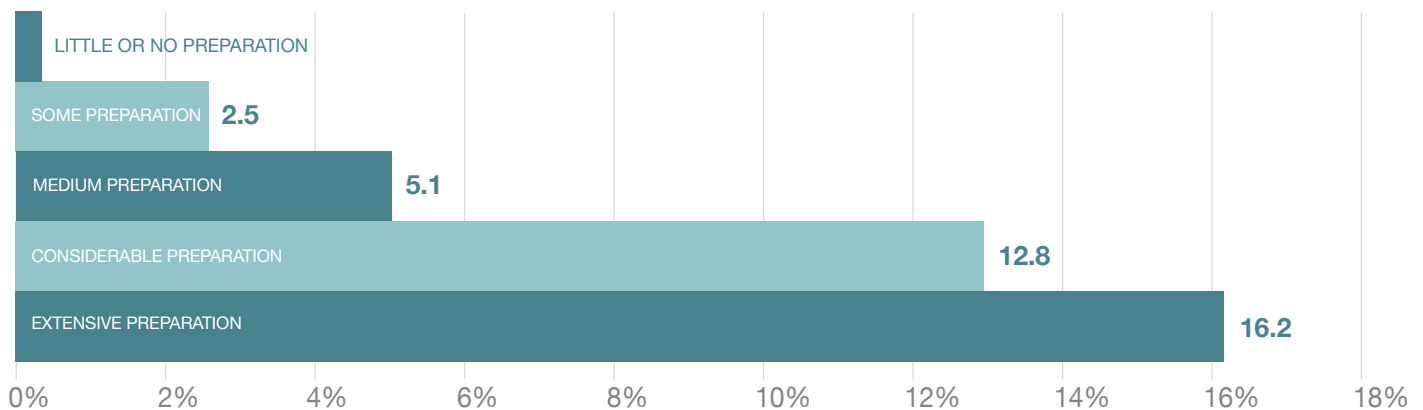
## Barriers To Job Entry Mean Barriers To Promotion

ADP Research Institute looked at how a person's chance of promotion varied depending on their education, on-the-job training, and the level of experience their job required.<sup>4</sup>

Workers in jobs that require more education, training, and experience have a better chance of promotion within their first two years on the job. Someone whose work requires extensive preparation, such as a graduate degree, has a 16.2 percent chance of promotion, 19 times better than the chance of advancement for someone whose job requires a high school diploma and little experience or training.

For upskilling, no clear pattern emerges.

### Two-year chance of promotion by job requirements



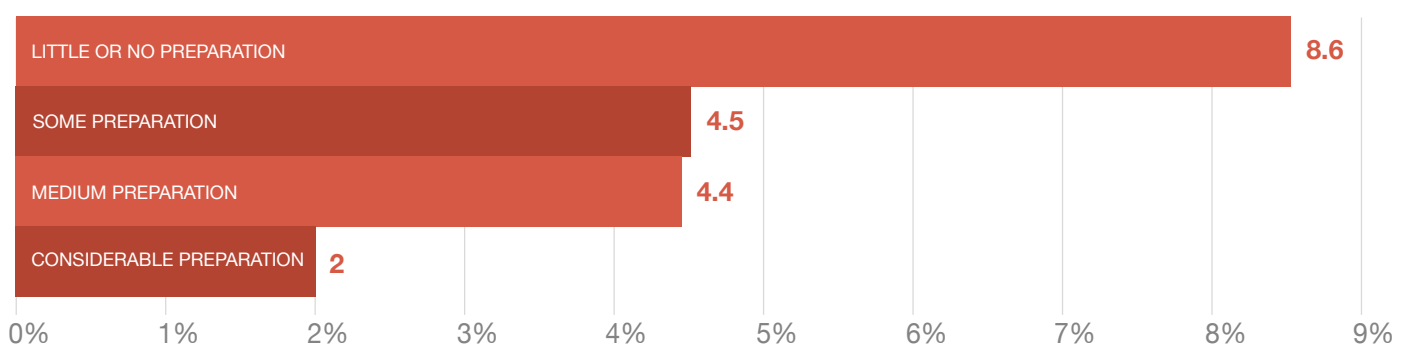
## Upskilling Is A Promising But Uncertain Path To Promotion

While promotion chances are higher for workers in jobs with more rigorous entry requirements, upskilling chances are higher for workers in jobs with fewer requirements.

Someone in a job that requires little to no preparation has an 8.6 percent chance of upskilling within two years. A person in a job that requires considerable preparation, such as a four-year degree and years of experience, has only a 2 percent chance of moving to a job that requires a graduate degree.

Because workers in jobs that require more preparation have better promotion prospects, upskilling could enhance careers by moving people into jobs with greater upward mobility through management. Yet upskilling becomes more challenging the higher workers move through the job levels. Moreover, if too many workers upskill, the promotion advantage of upskilling could disappear.

### Two-year chance of upskilling by job requirements



# Career Development Opportunities Have Improved Little For Recent Hires

The figures presented so far are based on prevailing promotion, upskilling, and separation rates for people who worked at any time between 2019 and 2023. But how have more recent hires fared in terms of career development?

About 3.7 percent of workers hired in January 2021 upskilled within two years, a tenth of a percentage point lower than would be expected based on 2019-2023 rates. Promotion chances for this cohort are a percentage point higher than expected.

The scenario is similar for the upskilling and promotion chances of workers hired 12 months later and on the job only a year.

The improved promotion chances might reflect employers' need to backfill management positions as quits continue their decade-long climb. The pace of quits reached a historic high in November 2021 and has remained elevated.

## Promotion and upskilling chances by hire cohort

### Two-year outlook for workers hired January 2021

Chance of upskilling

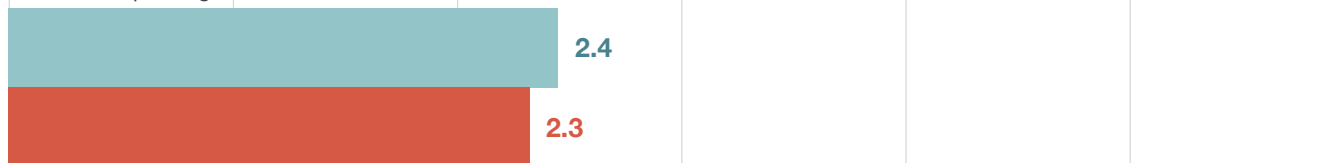


Chance of promotion



### One-year outlook for workers hired January 2022

Chance of upskilling



Chance of promotion



0% 1% 2% 3% 4% 5% 6%

● Expected from 2019-2023 rates ● Actual cohort experience



## CONCLUSION:

### Build Talent Brand By Improving Career-Development Opportunity

One way to attract talent is to increase career development opportunities for existing workers. Employers that raise the bar on opportunities internally can strengthen their talent brand externally. Even a small improvement raises the bar more than you might think.

For example, if a worker in a job that requires vocational training has even an 8 percent chance of upskilling to a position at your company that requires at least a bachelor's degree, then your company already has provided that worker nearly 2 times the upskilling opportunity of similar workers in the U.S. as a whole.

#### Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> We calculate promotion chances for workers whose management level is known from employer HR records, and upskilling chances for workers whose Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) [<https://www.bls.gov/SOC/>] code is known from a job title match. We define termination dates based on employer HR records or a gap of at least three months in paid/active status.

<sup>2</sup> We measure time since workers were last hired by their current employer. Workers can appear more than once in the data if they are re-hired by an employer.

<sup>3</sup> For example, a November 2017 study [<https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/2015958>] in the Academy of Management Journal showed that a tuition reimbursement program reduced voluntary turnover while employees were in school, but increased it for those who finished school if they didn't also get promoted.

<sup>4</sup> We measure a job's combined education, experience, and training requirements using the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) [<https://www.onetonline.org/help/online/zones>] Job Zone.





## Section 3:

# This Quarter's Employee Sentiment Score Card

## Employee Sentiment

Findings from ADP Research Institute's monthly survey of 2,500 U.S. workers



### Fully Engaged

Respondents who feel motivated to deliver their best at work



### Highly Resilient

Employees who feel strong enough to withstand workplace challenge and change



### Strongly Connected

Respondents who say they feel seen, heard and valued



### Trust

Respondents who completely trust their team leader and senior leaders



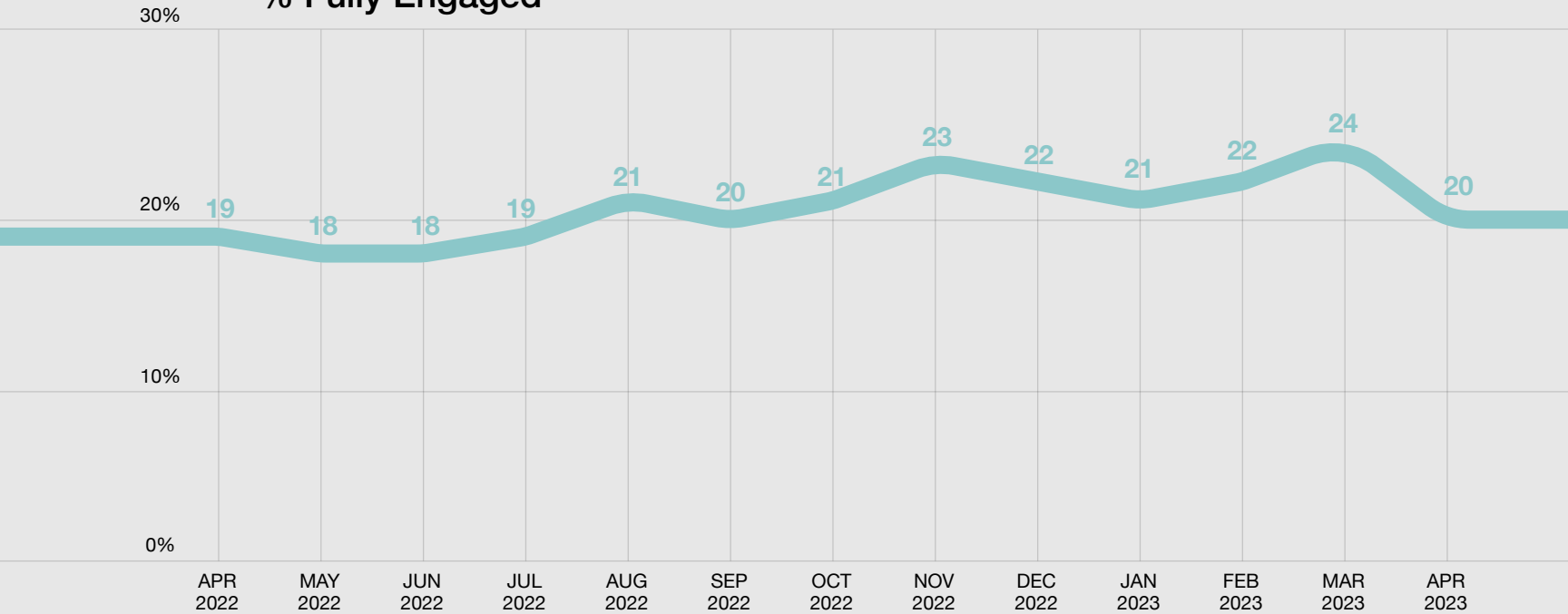
### Intent to Leave

Respondents actively looking for a new job or interviewing

# Fully Engaged

Respondents who feel motivated to deliver their best work.

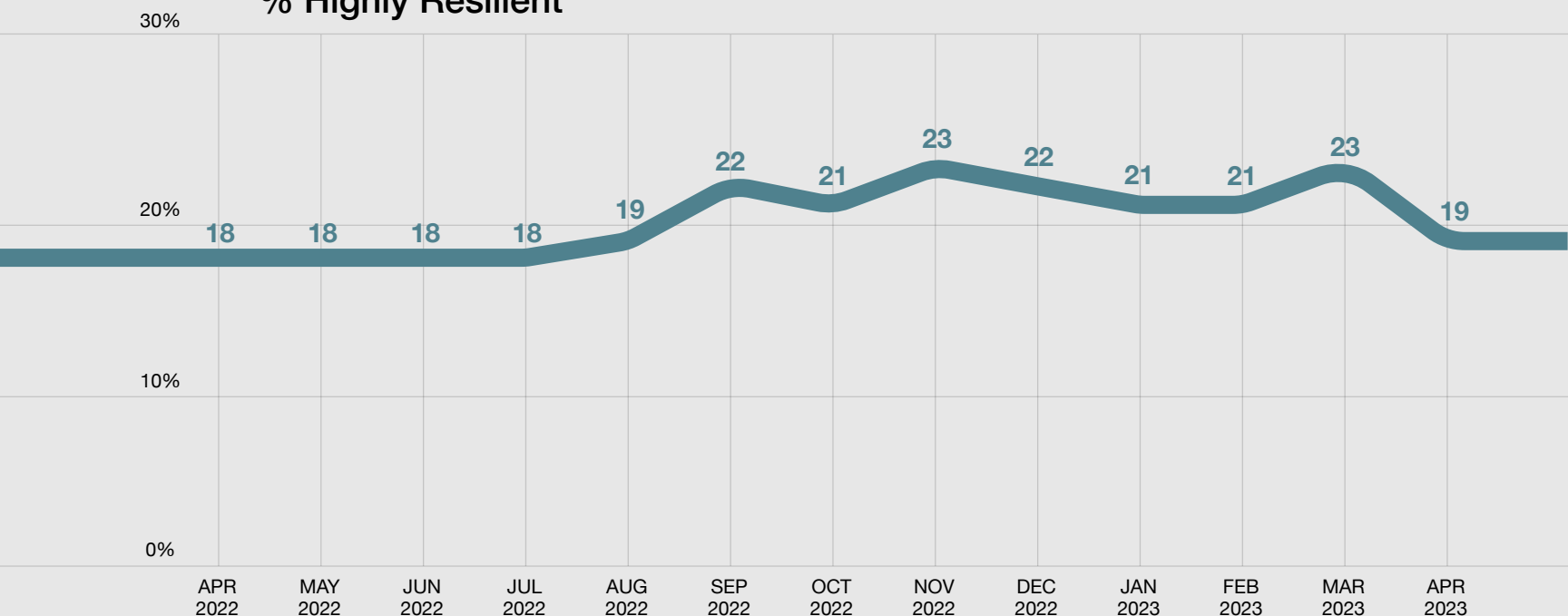
## % Fully Engaged



# Highly Resilient

Employees who feel strong enough to withstand workplace challenge and change.

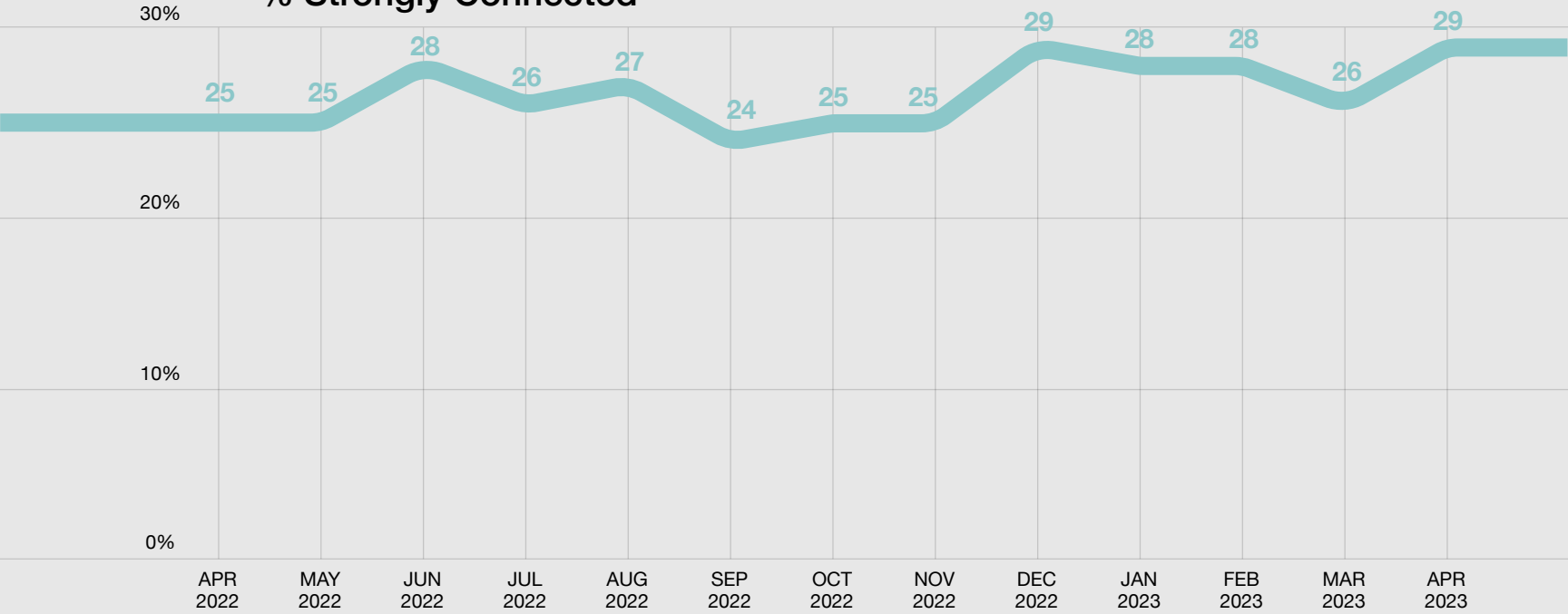
## % Highly Resilient



# Strongly Connected

Respondents who say they feel seen, heard and valued.

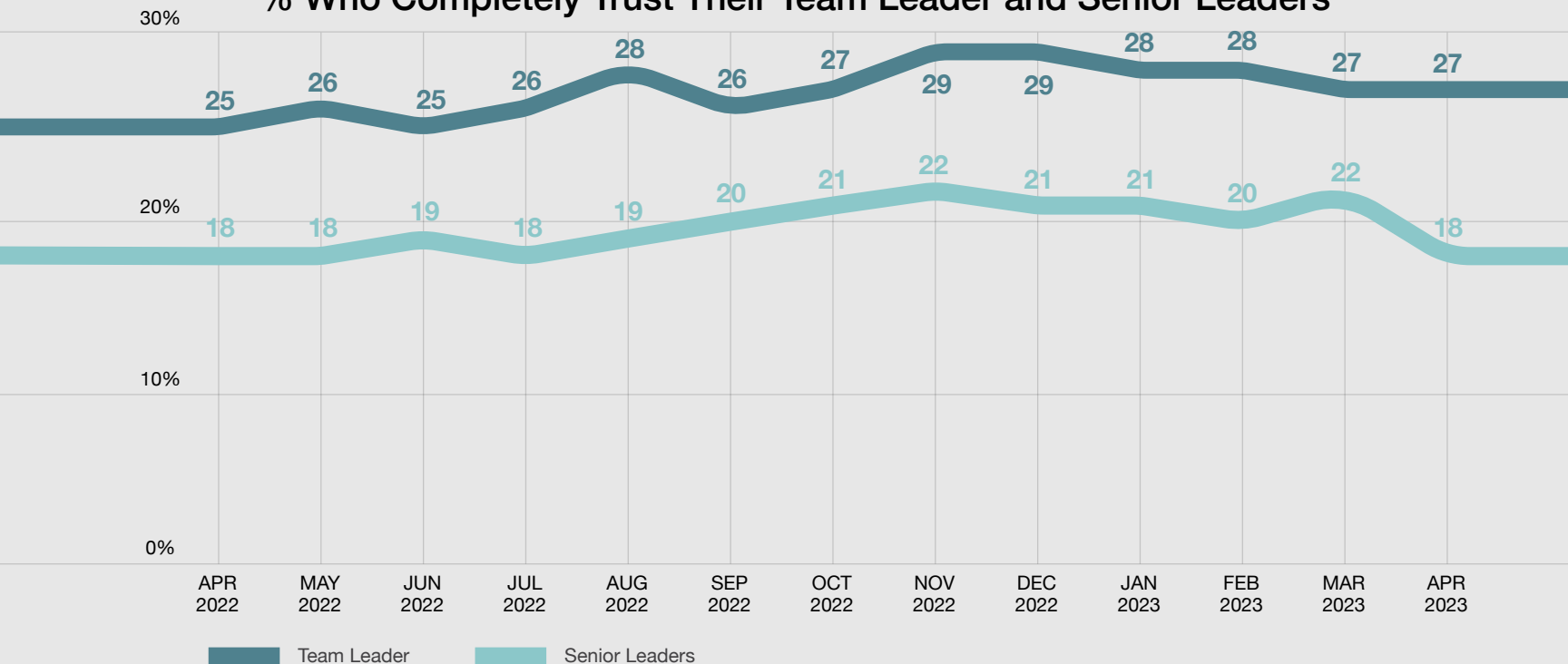
## % Strongly Connected



# Trust

Respondents who completely trust their team leader and senior leaders.

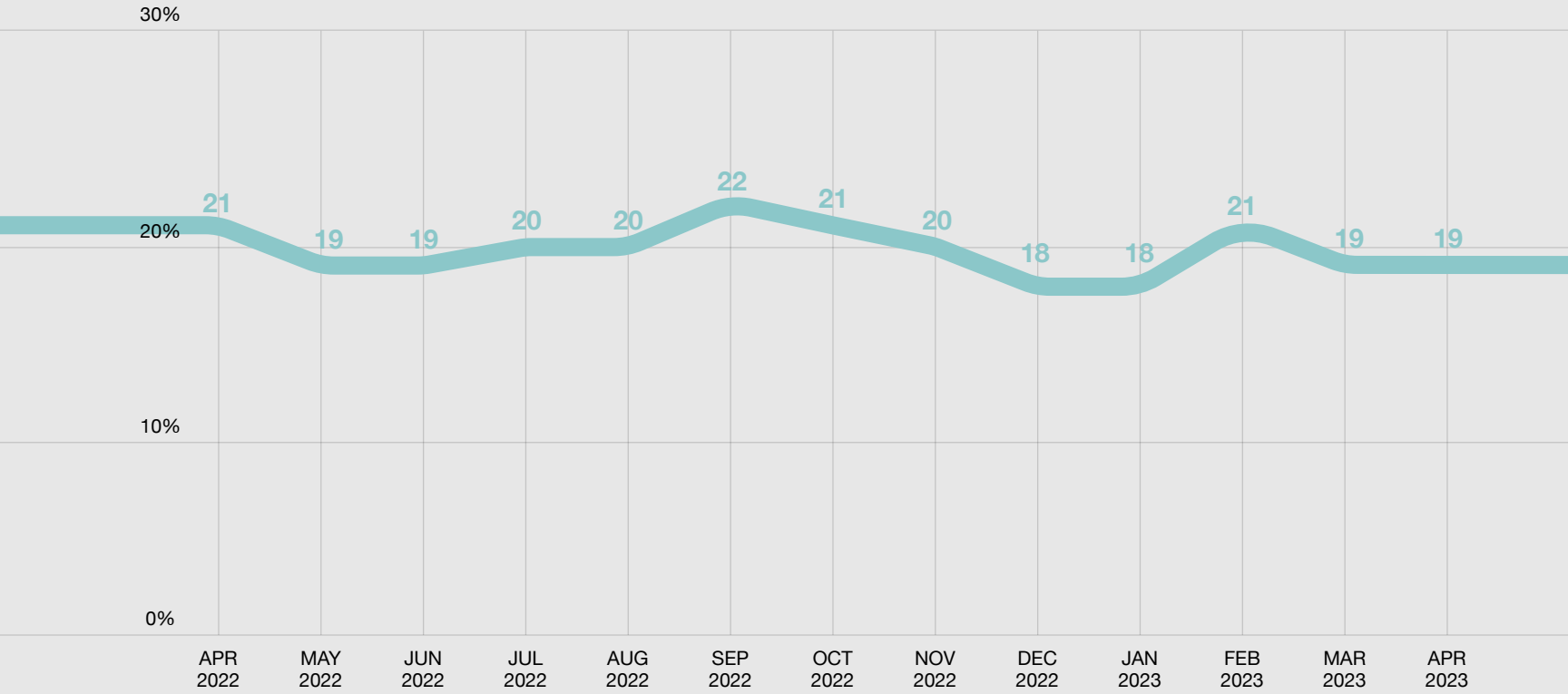
## % Who Completely Trust Their Team Leader and Senior Leaders



# Intent To Leave

Respondents actively looking for a new job or interviewing.

**% Who are actively seeking or already interviewing for a new job**



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