



The State of the Mission-Driven Workforce in 2026

IN THIS REPORT:

This report reveals the priorities, challenges, and experiences of nonprofit and association employees, identifying key skill gaps, career development needs, and technology adoption trends. These insights can help organizations make data-driven decisions to improve employee satisfaction, effectiveness, and impact through talent retention strategies specifically for the mission-driven sector.



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INTRODUCTION

Understanding the “Who” Behind Mission-Driven Orgs

Each year, Momentive surveys nonprofit and association leaders to help them benchmark their successes and challenges against peer organizations. Our research has focused on operational priorities—the programs they run, the technology they implement, the strategies they employ to drive impact—to provide leaders with the insights they need to make data-driven decisions.

This year, we’re adding something new: a comprehensive look at the workforce itself. For the first time, we’ve surveyed professionals across both nonprofits and associations to understand what drives satisfaction, retention, and resilience among the people who power mission-driven organizations to bring on better outcomes. This research is designed to help leaders support their teams’ professional growth and career goals, which is a critical factor in organizational success.

We were encouraged to find that mission-driven professionals remain deeply committed to their work.

Most (85%) feel strong workplace belonging, and nearly all (94%) are optimistic about younger generations entering the field.

These organizations have built something powerful: genuine community and shared purpose.

What we also discovered reshaped our assumptions: the challenges facing nonprofit and association professionals are remarkably similar. Both groups face nearly identical retention rates, burnout, and job-seeking intent due to three interconnected issues: unclear career paths, technology inefficiency that stifles productivity, and preparation gaps for an AI-enabled future.

Here’s what makes this research particularly valuable: we can now quantify the impact on retention that results from dismissing these challenges. Employees with clear career paths are twice as likely to stay than those without (65% vs. 27%). Workplace belonging also creates a meaningful retention advantage—among those who feel a strong sense of belonging, they’re more likely to stay than those without that connection (43% vs. 27%). Meanwhile, employees experiencing technology-driven burnout show significantly elevated turnover risk, with 6 in 10 actively exploring opportunities.

The results of this combined research offer an exciting opportunity for mission-driven organizations to address widespread challenges and develop solutions across an industry deeply impacted by economic, political, and environmental forces. Whether you’re an executive working to reduce turnover, a leader preparing to redesign your organization, or a professional wondering if your experience is typical, this research provides both validation and a roadmap forward: a new benchmarking tool showing where engagement is strong, where systematic barriers create risk, and what organizations can do to strengthen resilience and retain the talent that drives impact.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff Retention = Organizational Revenue

This research reveals how mission-driven organizations face a retention challenge worth examining closely. While 85% of professionals feel strong workplace belonging, **59% are exploring other opportunities**. Understanding this requires an examination of career development, technology efficiency, and engagement together—and recognizing that these patterns hold true across both nonprofit and association organizations.



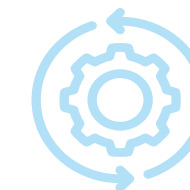
Career Development Drives Retention

Career path visibility has the strongest measured impact on retention in this survey. Employees with clear career paths are twice as likely to stay with their organization: 65% are not considering leaving, compared to just 27% among those without visible growth pathways.

Most professionals (64%) don't see clear career paths at their organization—nearly identical across nonprofits (65%) and associations (63%). Of those lacking clear paths, only 27% say they're staying—meaning path visibility could more than double retention among affected employees.

Career clarity has ripple effects beyond advancement alone. Those without clear paths report significantly higher dissatisfaction across multiple areas: work-life balance (52% vs. 37%), skills development (53% vs. 35%), and even compensation (34% vs. 19%).

Organizations recognize development matters. Most (92%) agree that intentional employee development would make their organizations more effective. When asked what would most improve job satisfaction, 66% chose focused skills development over pay raises. Yet barriers persist: 41% cite lack of budget for development, and 38% cite lack of time.



Technology Efficiency Consumes Time and Creates Risk

Time constraints for professional development directly connect to technology inefficiency. Most professionals (82%) agree that disconnected systems contribute to burnout, consistent across both organization types. Nearly half (48%) waste time on repetitive tasks, while 46% manually enter data across multiple platforms.

The retention impact of technology frustration is significant: among employees who agree that inefficient technology contributes to burnout, 63% are actively exploring other opportunities, compared to 41% among those who don't experience technology-driven burnout.

These challenges are interconnected: among those experiencing technology burnout, 71% also lack clear career paths—compared to just 34% among those without tech frustration. When disconnected systems require manual workarounds, they waste time and eliminate capacity for the career development conversations and learning opportunities employees need.

When asked about integrated technology platforms, leaders projected strong benefits across multiple areas: 76% ranked improved operational efficiency in their top three, 76% ranked allowing staff to focus on mission-critical work, 75% ranked better data-driven decisions, and 73% ranked reduced burnout.

Staff Retention = Organizational Revenue

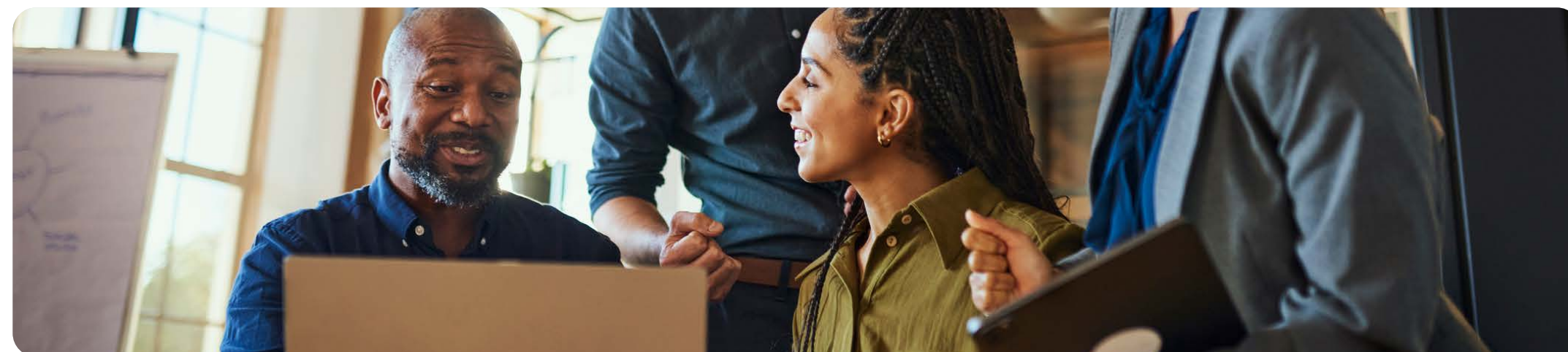


Workplace Belonging Reduces Attrition

Despite career development and technology challenges, engagement remains remarkably strong. Most professionals feel a sense of workplace belonging (85%), largely through team collaboration (53%), followed by direct access to leadership (52%), and shared mission (45%).

Belonging notably drives retention: 43% of those who feel strong workplace belonging are not considering leaving—compared with 27% among those who lack belonging. This 16-percentage-point difference shows that belonging provides a tangible retention advantage.

Compensation trade-offs are real but accepted. Three out of four employees surveyed (75%) acknowledge they could earn more elsewhere, yet only 28% cite pay as a main source of dissatisfaction. Mission-driven retention is stronger in nonprofits (77% accept lower pay) than in associations (69%), but both groups widely accept earning lower pay for mission-aligned work. Looking forward, 94% remain optimistic about younger generations entering the sector—identical across organization types.



The Path Forward

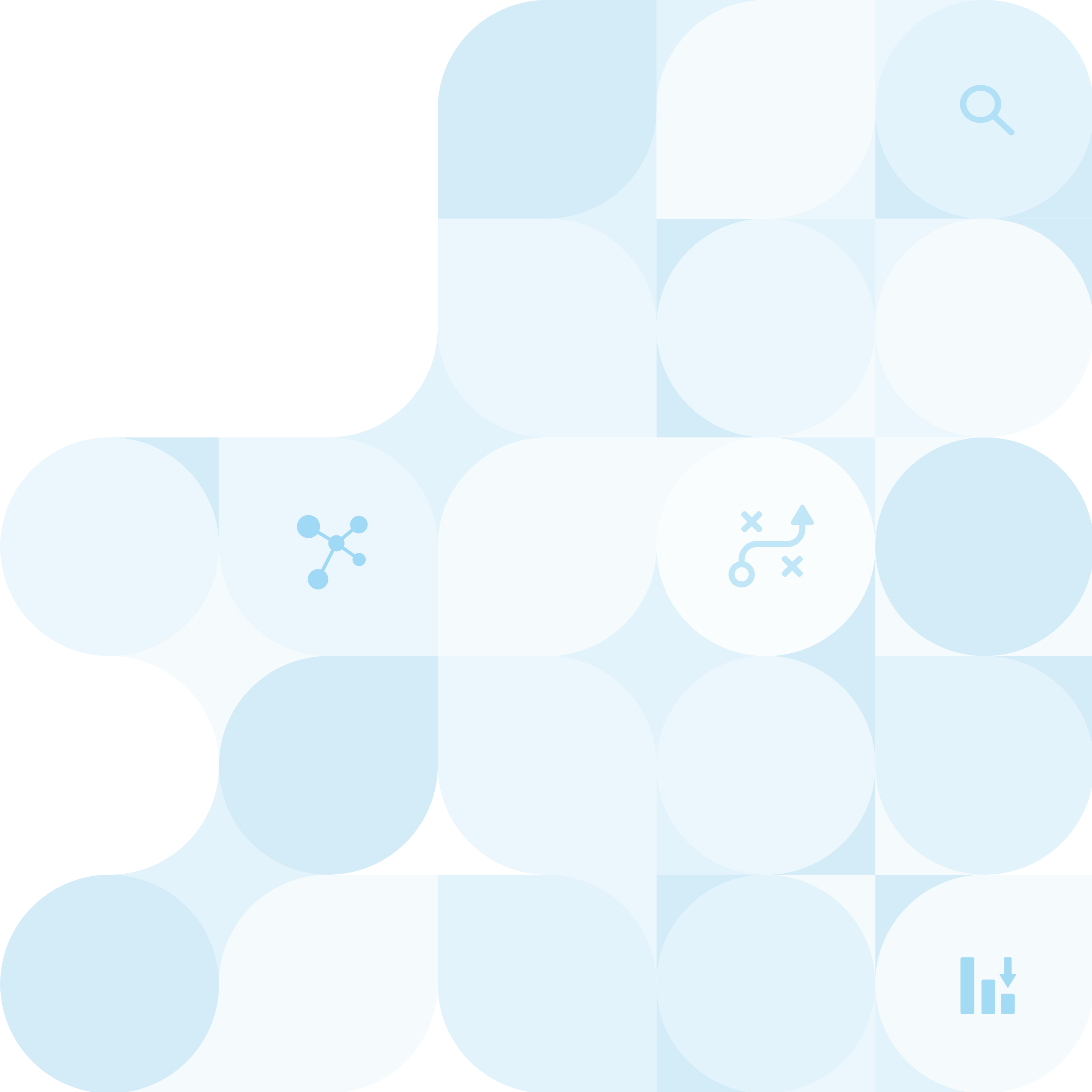
Organizations don't need to choose between mission and effectiveness. The workforce has already chosen mission-driven work despite compensation. They want clarity on career growth, efficient tools, and the development opportunities as a trade-off for accepting lower pay. The data reveals three strategic priorities:

1. Make career paths visible
2. Address technology efficiency
3. Protect workplace belonging

Organizations that combine their existing community and mission strengths with visible career pathways and operational efficiency will retain talent and amplify impact.



Key Findings



KEY FINDINGS

Shifting Workforce Priorities in Mission-Driven Organizations

Growth Beats Compensation

66%

of professionals would prefer focused skills development over a pay raise

... even though

75%

acknowledge they could earn more elsewhere



Only 28% cite lower pay as a key dissatisfaction

→ Mission-driven professionals choose **growth over money**, but only when development opportunities exist.

Career Clarity Doubles Retention

65%

of employees with clear career paths are not considering leaving



VS

27%

of those without clear paths

71%

with tech burnout also lack career paths

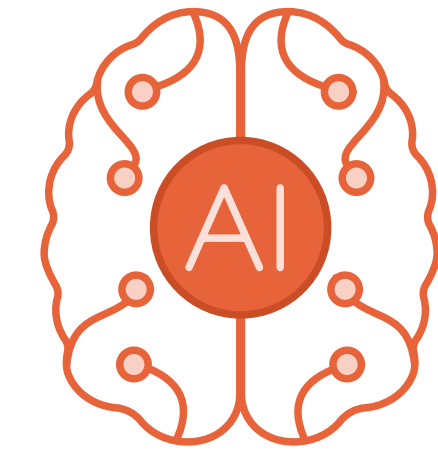


Tech-Frustrated Employees Are Your Biggest AI Advocates

Only

49%

feel technologically prepared for the future



89%

of those with tech burnout say AI skills are essential

→ vs. 65% without tech burnout

63%

of those experiencing tech burnout are **actively exploring other opportunities**



The Skills Nonprofit and Association Employees Say Will Define Mission-driven Success in 2026:

1. Data analytics

2. AI/automation literacy

3. Digital skills

4. Revenue diversification

5. Cross-sector collaboration

Career Gaps Amplify Every Other Frustration

Without clear career paths, dissatisfaction surges across:

Work-life balance

52% vs 37%

↑ 15 PT JUMP

Skills development

53% vs 35%

↑ 18 PT JUMP

Compensation

34% vs 19%

↑ 15 PT JUMP

RESEARCH FINDINGS PART I



Career Satisfaction and Development



01 Most Professionals Lack Visible Career Paths

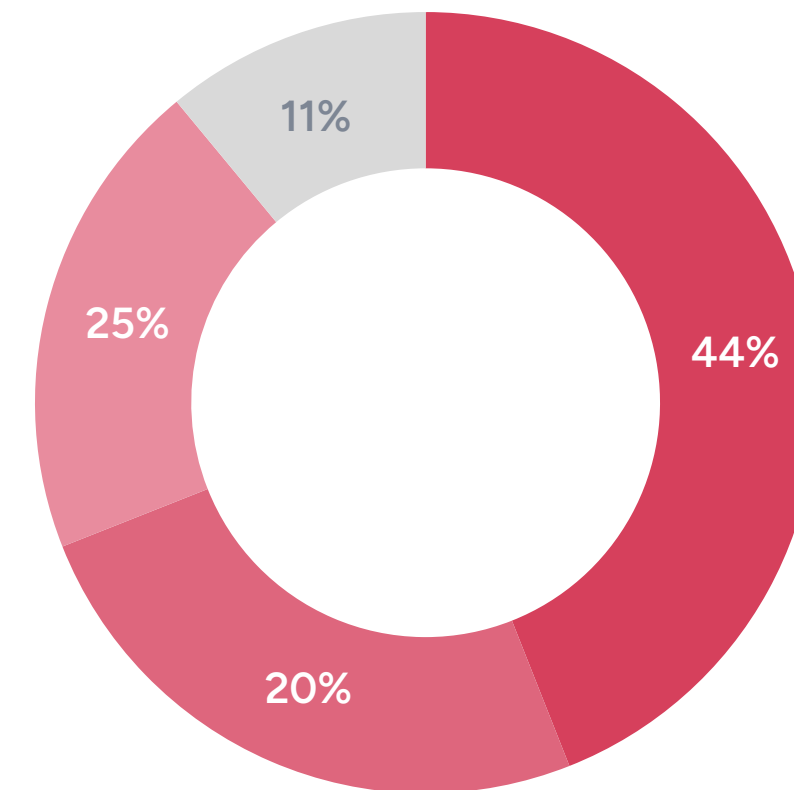
➔ Most mission-driven workers don't see clear career paths at their organization.

Among those without clear career paths, the vast majority are actively exploring other opportunities. **Career path clarity halves flight risk.** Two in three employees who see a clear growth path say they're not considering leaving, versus just 27% among those who don't see a path. The cost of replacing mid-level staff typically runs 6-9 months of salary for recruiting, hiring, and training—plus the loss of donor or member relationships and institutional knowledge.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Organizations can change this by making skills and career development a priority. When asked what would most improve job satisfaction, two out of three chose skills development over pay raises. Building visible career pathways costs less than the turnover from neglecting them. For organizations competing with higher-paying corporate roles, this finding shows where to focus retention efforts.

AGREEMENT ON LACK OF CLEAR CAREER ADVANCEMENT

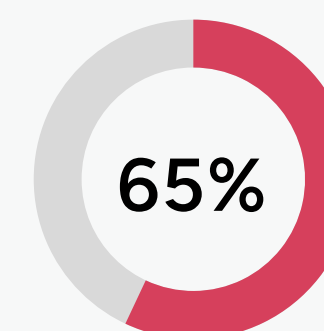


64% agree they **don't see a clear path for career advancement** in their organization

Of the those who lack clear career paths, **73%** are actively exploring other opportunities

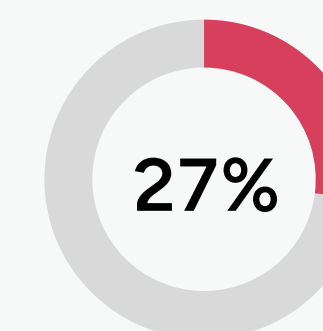
● Strongly disagree ● Somewhat disagree ● Somewhat agree ● Strongly agree

LIKELIHOOD OF STAYING



of those **with** clear career paths are staying

vs



of those **without** clear career paths are staying



02 Lack of Investment Blocks Career Advancement

➔ Most mission-driven professionals say lack of budget is the primary barrier to career advancement, followed closely by lack of time.

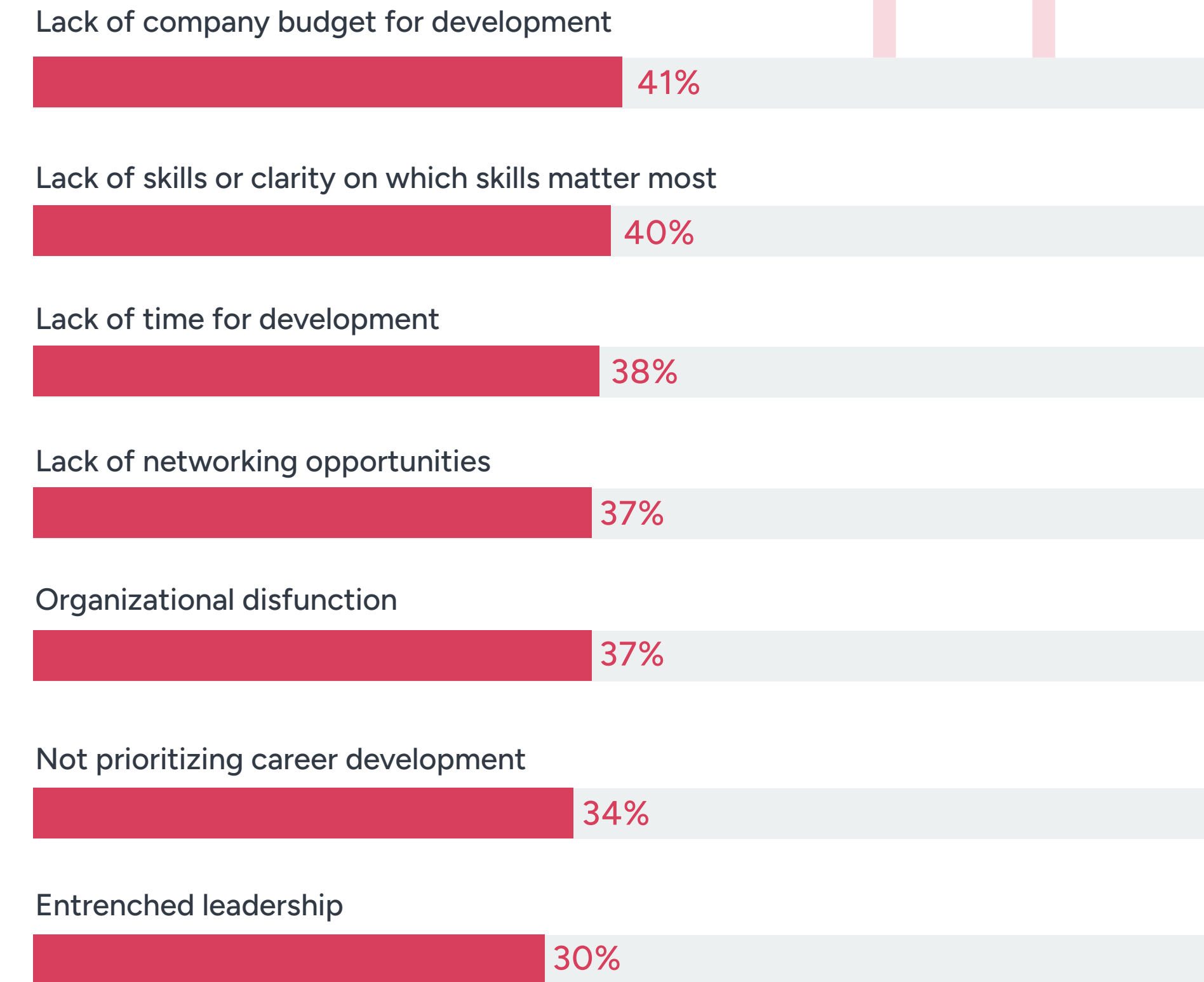
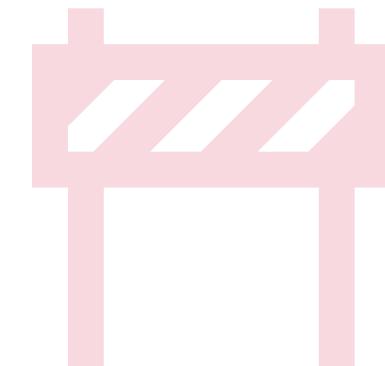
Both indicate organizations aren't investing enough in development. With a similar number facing unclear skill requirements, dedicated effort is needed to address these gaps. The lack of clarity about which skills matter most suggests there could be management challenges that need to be uncovered.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

"Lack of time" as a barrier can be partly attributed to the technology inefficiency findings discussed later in Part II. When nearly half of professionals say they waste time on repetitive administrative tasks and manually enter data across platforms, they're losing out on time that could be better spent on development.

Organizations facing budget constraints should note that employees value skills development over pay raises by a 2-to 1 margin. A learning management system or professional development program may cost less than across-the-board salary increases—and addresses what keeps employees engaged.

KEY BARRIERS TO EMPLOYEE CAREER ADVANCEMENT





03 Advancement Is Seen as the Organization's Responsibility

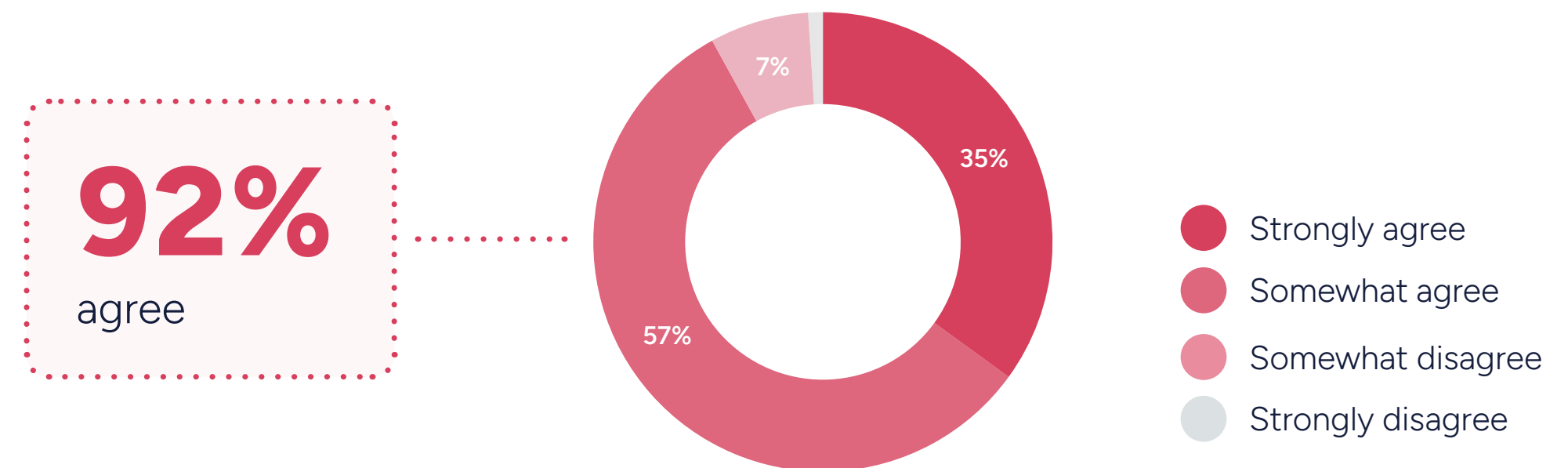
➔ 92% agree that their organization would be more effective if it invested intentionally in skill and career development.

At the same time, 61% believe advancement is the organization's responsibility—highlighting clear expectations for structured pathways.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

When employees see career advancement as the organization's responsibility, this reflects who controls resources. Employees can pursue their own learning, but only organizations can create job architecture, approve promotions, allocate training budgets, and build formal development programs. The overwhelming majority who agree that development would improve organizational effectiveness suggests this isn't just employee preference—leaders see the value, too. The gap is in execution.

AGREEMENT THAT SKILL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IMPROVES ORGANIZATION'S EFFECTIVENESS



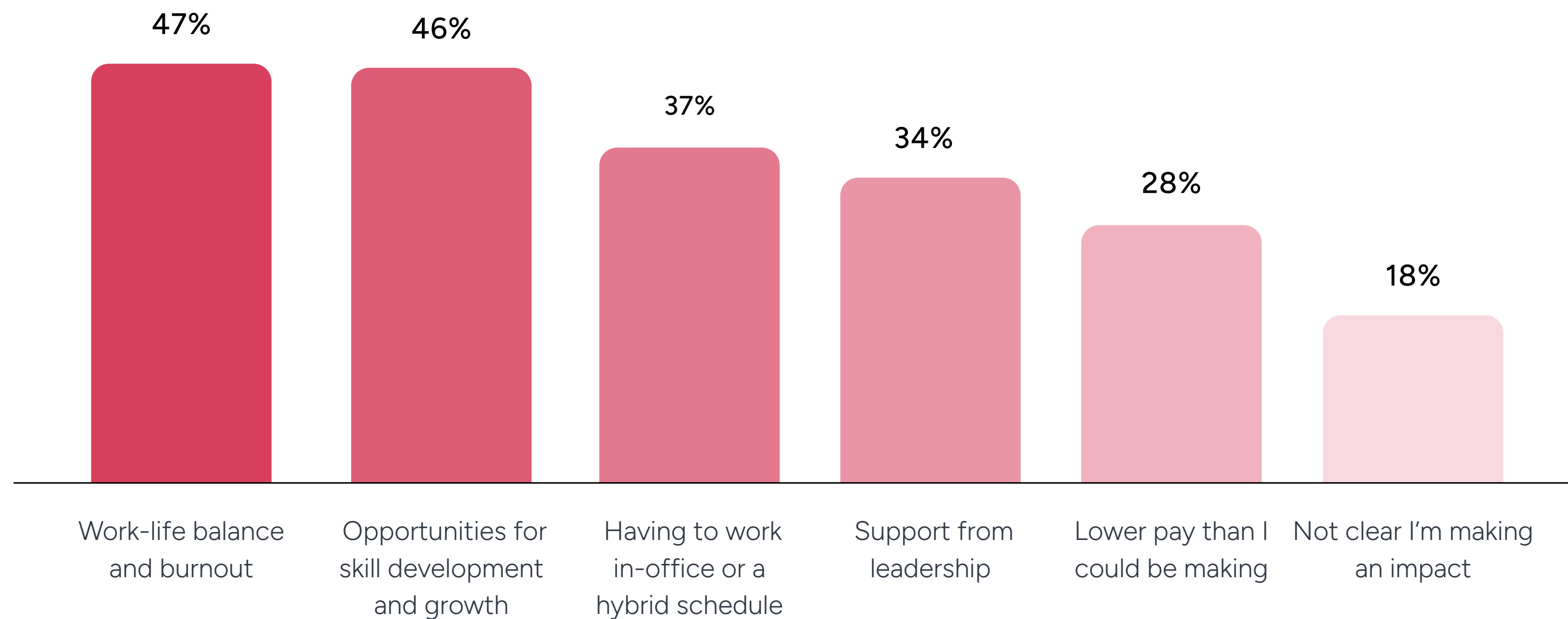
RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE ADVANCEMENT





04 Dissatisfaction Is Driven by Burnout and Limited Growth

WHICH ASPECTS OF YOUR JOB ARE YOU MOST DISSATISFIED WITH?



86%

are dissatisfied with some aspect of their job

While burnout is a common complaint across all industries, including in the for-profit sector, it is closely tied with dissatisfaction with opportunities for skill development and growth for mission-driven workers.



05

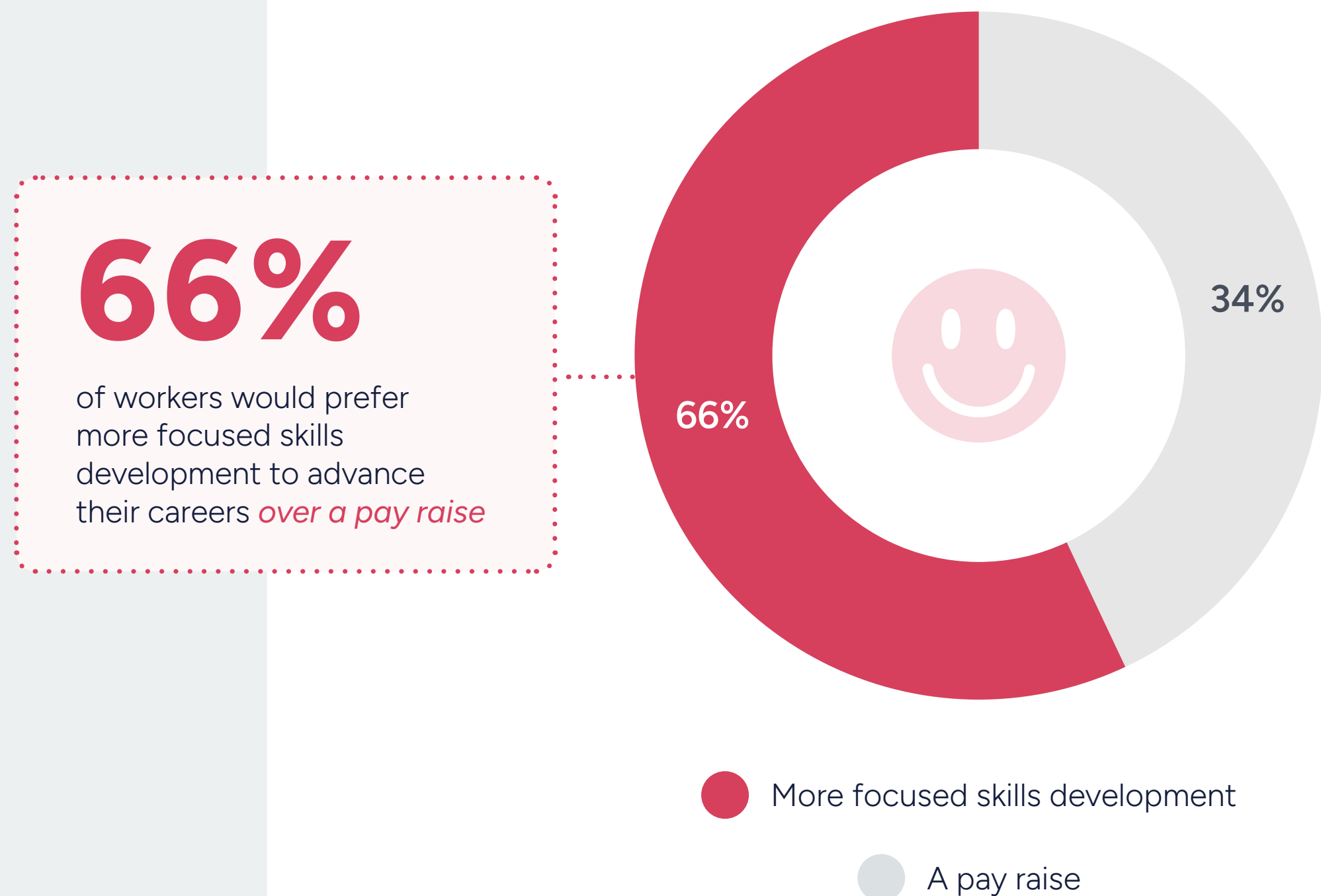
Two-Thirds Would Prefer Skills Development Over a Pay Raise

➔ While it's widely accepted that mission-driven professionals could earn more elsewhere, most don't see a pay raise as the best way to improve job satisfaction.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

This 2-to-1 preference gives organizations a strategic option. If improved development programs keep even two or three employees from leaving who otherwise would have (remember: 73% of those lacking career paths are exploring opportunities), the organization saves the replacement costs of those positions while building organizational capability. Career development must be viewed as a strategic investment with measurable ROI, not just considered an employee benefit.

WOULD SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OR A PAY RAISE INCREASE JOB SATISFACTION?





06 More Than Half Are Considering Other Job Opportunities

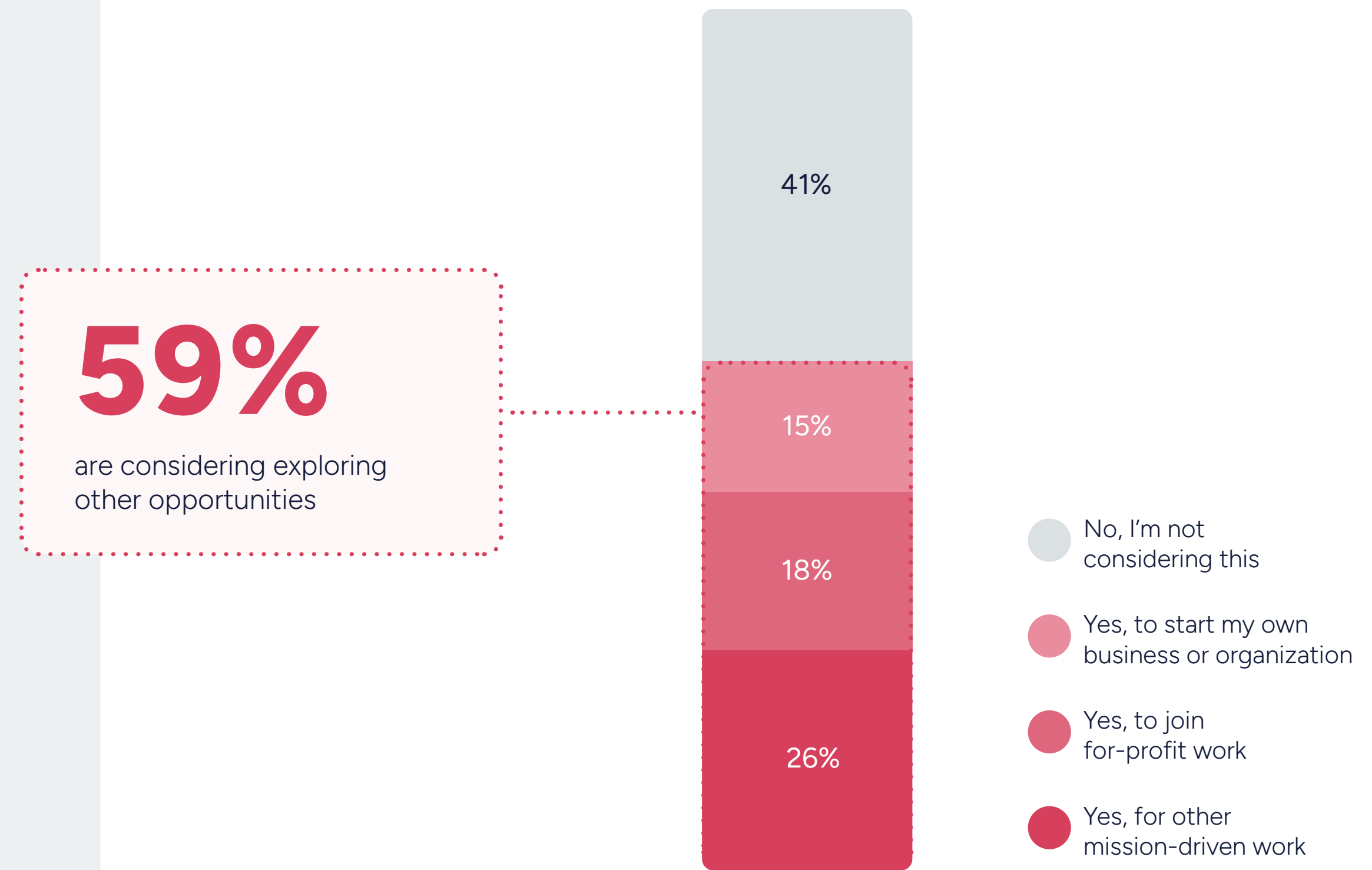
➔ Career mobility is high in mission-driven work, with a majority exploring other opportunities.

This highlights retention risks for organizations that don't prioritize development. Notably, most of those without a clear path for career advancement are considering looking for a new opportunity. Not all of those exploring opportunities pose equal risk, so it's worth noticing some are looking for mission-driven work, possibly at other organizations, considering for-profit work, or want to start their own organization.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Those looking at other mission-driven organizations represent the highest retention risk. These staff are not just burned out on the mission. They're likely burned out on their current organization. These are precisely the employees career development programs could keep as they're not leaving the sector; they're often instead leaving for organizations that offer clearer growth paths.

INTEREST IN EXPLORING OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES



RESEARCH FINDINGS PART II

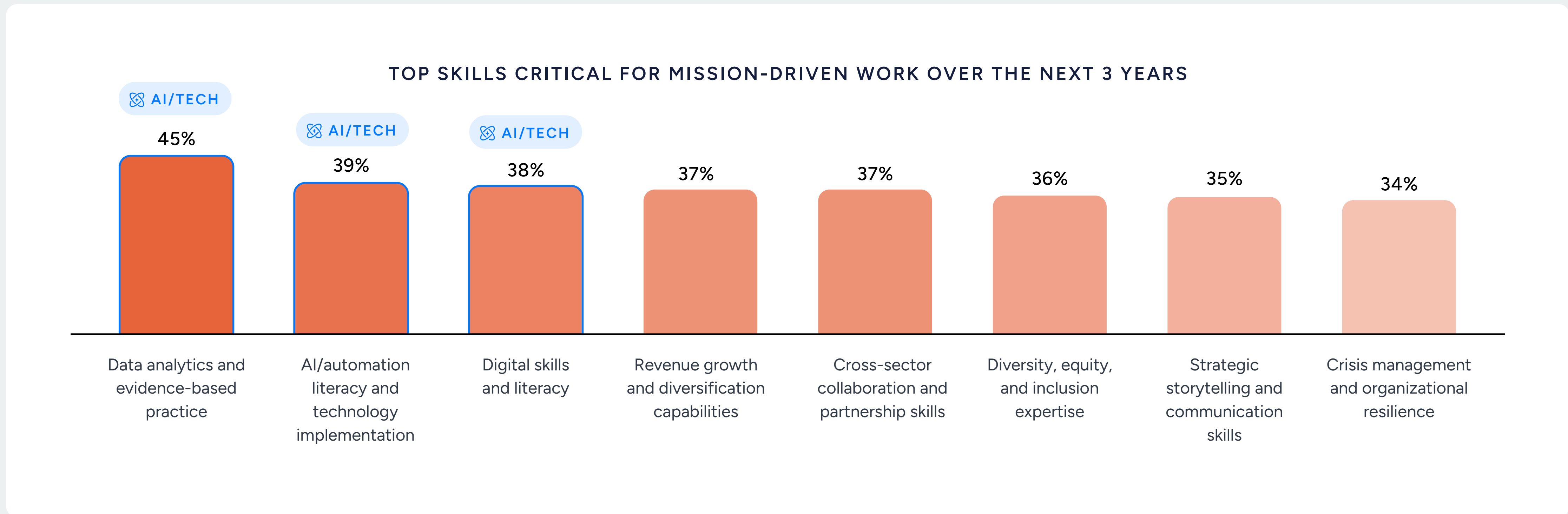
Skills, Technology, and the Future of Work





01 A Wide Range of Skills Will Be Needed for Mission-Driven Work, Including Data Analytics and AI

Looking specifically at the skills workers say will be important over the next three years, the list is led by data analytics and evidence-based practice, AI/automation literacy and technology implementation, and digital skills and literacy. Organizations that don't prioritize developing AI skills among workers risk being left behind.





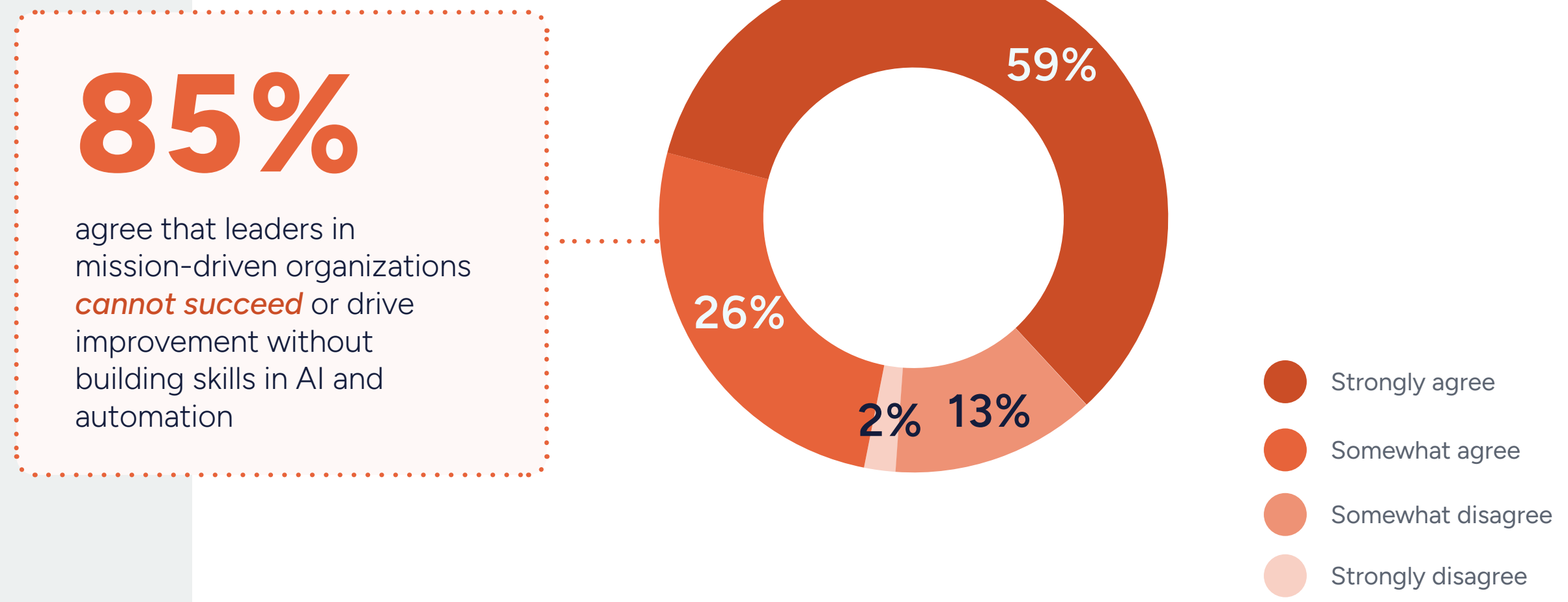
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Most Agree That AI Skills Are Essential for Success

→ A significant number of professionals agree that mission-driven organizations can't succeed or drive improvement without building AI and automation skills.

And 59% *strongly* agree with this. AI adoption is expected to primarily streamline tasks, enhance data analysis, predict behavior, and support fundraising. When deployed effectively, it can reduce burnout while increasing impact.

AGREEMENT THAT LEADERS NEED AI AND AUTOMATION SKILLS TO SUCCEED



TOP AREAS WHERE AI AND AUTOMATION WILL HELP MISSION-DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONS

64% Streamlining administrative tasks

52% Improving data analysis and insights generation

52% Predicting behavior and providing automated support

48% Enhancing fundraising and donor engagement

45% Assisting with content creation and writing

39% Supporting event/program management



03

Repetitive Tasks and Multiple Platforms Cause Tech Frustration and Burnout

→ Day-to-day work becomes frustrating and inefficient when time is spent on repetitive tasks and manual data entry across multiple platforms.

Technology that’s up-to-date and interconnected is essential for a productive workplace, especially since 8 in 10 employees agree that disconnected technology systems contribute to their burnout, and more than half of those experiencing burnout report they’re exploring other opportunities.

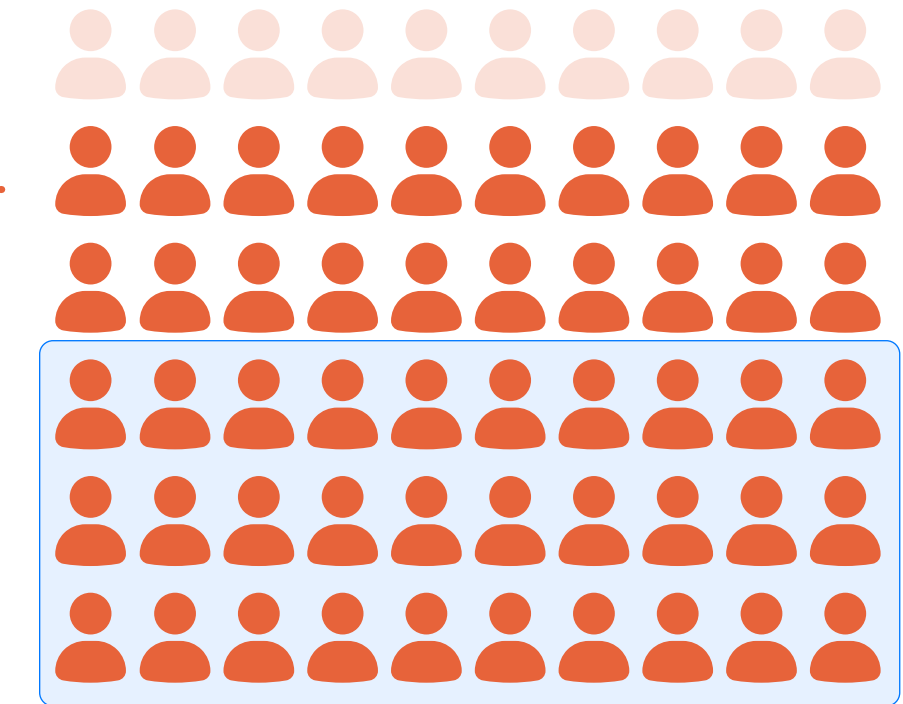
WHAT THIS MEANS:

Technology burnout creates severe retention risk. Coupled with unclear career paths, the compounding effect is substantial: **an employee who lacks career clarity AND suffers technology burnout experiences increased retention risk.**

As noted earlier in this report, 38% cite “lack of time” as a barrier to professional development, while 48% waste time on repetitive tasks, and 46% on manual data entry. Technology inefficiency is consuming the time employees need for the career development they want.

82%

agree that *inefficient or disconnected technology systems* contribute to burnout at their organization



63% of them are **exploring other opportunities**

TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES IN DAY-TO-DAY WORK

- 1. Time spent on repetitive administrative tasks 48%
- 2. Manual data entry across multiple platforms 46%
- 3. Difficulty accessing real-time information when needed 44%
- 4. Technology that doesn't meet our organization's specific needs 44%
- 5. Inadequate training on existing technology 41%
- 6. Using too many disconnected systems that don't talk to each other 41%



04 An Integrated Tech Platform Could Be a Game-Changer

Leaders overwhelmingly believe integrated platforms could enable mission focus, improve operational efficiency, and support data-driven decisions. These platforms pave the way for faster, smarter decisions, sharper focus, and greater overall impact.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Agreement this strong across different outcomes is notable in survey research. The pattern suggests near-consensus that integrated platforms address multiple challenges simultaneously. Organizations currently using 5+ disconnected systems should calculate the cost of staff time. If approximately half manually enter data across platforms and spend time on repetitive tasks:

- *What does that time cost in salary?*
- *What strategic work isn't getting done?*
- *What is the risk of errors when data lives in multiple places?*
- *What is the cost of staff frustration and turnover?*

The direct cost of an integrated platform should be compared to these hidden costs. In many cases, the efficiency gains from integration pay for the platform investment—before counting the retention benefits or the capacity for career development it creates. Organizations hesitating on platform consolidation should consider: if three-quarters of leaders believe integration would improve efficiency and reduce burnout, the question isn't whether to integrate, but when and how.

TOP BENEFITS OF AN INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

76%

Allowing staff to focus more on mission-critical work

76%

Improving operational efficiency

75%

Improving data-driven decision making

73%

Reducing staff burnout



05

Tech Adoption Is Shared Between Leadership and IT

The adoption of new technology and tools is split between technology/IT and leadership, underscoring the importance collaboration between these groups to drive successful implementation and adoption.



RESEARCH FINDINGS PART III



Compensation, Engagement, and Optimism About Mission-Driven Work



01 Most Employees Feel a Strong Sense of Belonging, With Team Collaboration Fueling Connection

→ Despite dissatisfaction in some areas, most feel engaged at work. Engagement is strongest among employees who experience team collaboration, leadership transparency, and alignment on mission and values.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

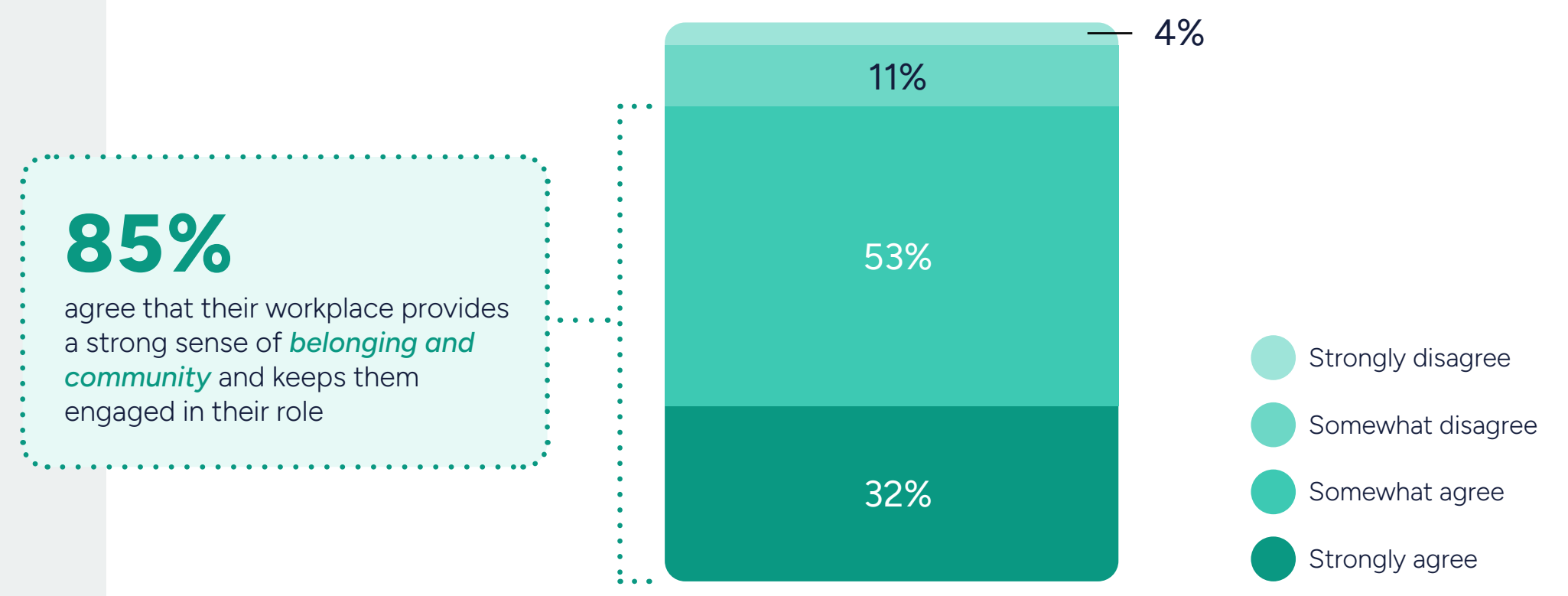
Workplace belonging drives powerful retention and organizations should recognize this as an existing strength. Almost all report strong belonging, indicating most mission-driven organizations have already fostered the community and connection that many for-profit companies struggle to build.

However, belonging has limits. The 59% exploring other opportunities (despite the strong sense of belonging) shows that community alone won't overcome systematic barriers indefinitely. Think of it as a retention bank account: belonging and mission create micro deposits, but career development gaps and technology frustration make withdrawals. At some point, people evaluate their balance and decide belonging and mission are not enough anymore to stay somewhere for lower compensation.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION:

Organizations that maintain their strong culture of belonging while addressing career clarity (shifting retention from 27% to 65% for those without paths) and technology efficiency (reducing the 63% turnover risk among those with tech burnout) will have compounding retention advantages. **Belonging keeps people engaged, career paths give them a future to envision, and efficient technology lets them focus on mission-critical work rather than workarounds.**

AGREEMENT THAT MY WORKPLACE PROVIDES A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING



FACTORS DRIVING WORKPLACE CONNECTION

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. REGULAR TEAM COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION | 53% |
| 2. LEADERSHIP ACCESSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY | 52% |
| 3. SHARED MISSION AND VALUES WITH COLLEAGUES | 45% |
| 4. SOCIAL EVENTS AND INFORMAL GATHERINGS | 42% |
| 5. CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL PROJECTS | 37% |
| 6. MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIPS | 33% |



Salary Still Matters, as Many Believe They Could Earn More Outside Mission-Driven Work

➔ Mission-driven employees accept trade-offs: for 83%, salary is a priority, yet 75% acknowledge they could earn more outside mission-driven work.

This highlights the trade-off employees make to align their work with personal mission, giving organizations insight into retention strategies that balance purpose and pay.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Most employees believe they can earn more elsewhere, yet about 1 in 4 cite “lower pay” as a key dissatisfaction (ranking it 5th out of 8 factors). This gap is significant for any organization’s retention strategy. While employees remain aware of compensation differences, with the majority still acknowledging salary is a priority, they also say it’s not always a deal-breaker. Many accept a lower salary when doing mission-aligned work. The dissatisfaction comes from other sources: lack of career paths, skills development, work-life balance, and technology frustration.

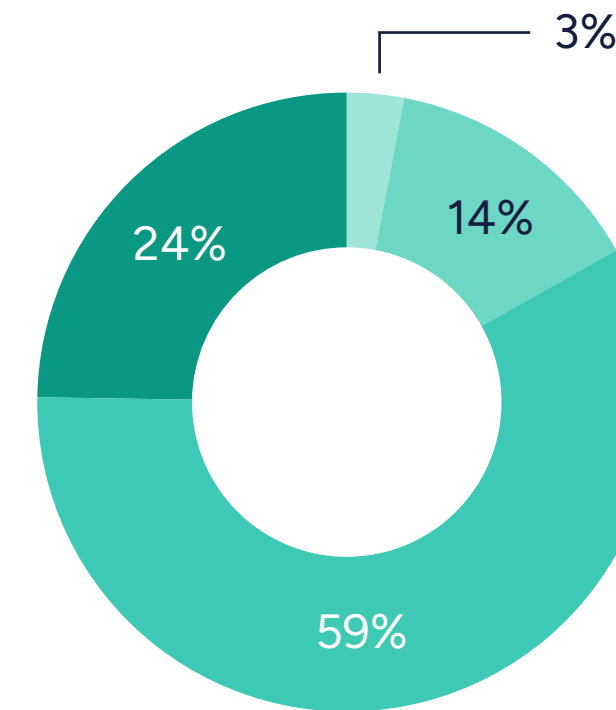
🎯 STRATEGIC IMPLICATION:

Organizations that frame their employee value proposition around purpose alone, without investing in development and efficiency, will struggle. Those that combine mission with growth and effective tools will retain talent even when they can’t match corporate compensation.

PRIORITY OF SALARY IN CAREER CONSIDERATIONS

83%

consider *salary* a priority in their career

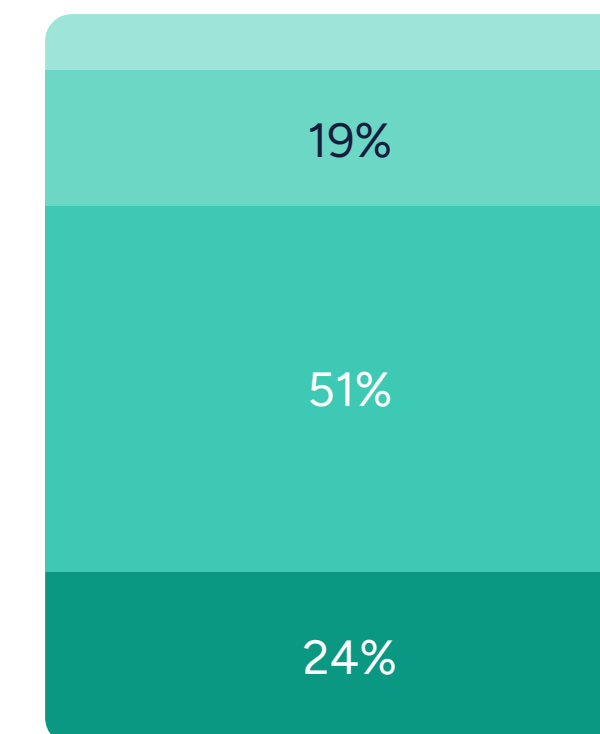


- Not a priority at all
- A low priority
- A priority but not the top priority
- The top priority

MISSION-DRIVEN WORK LIMITS EARNING POTENTIAL

75%

agree they could earn more if *not working* for a mission-driven organization



- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree



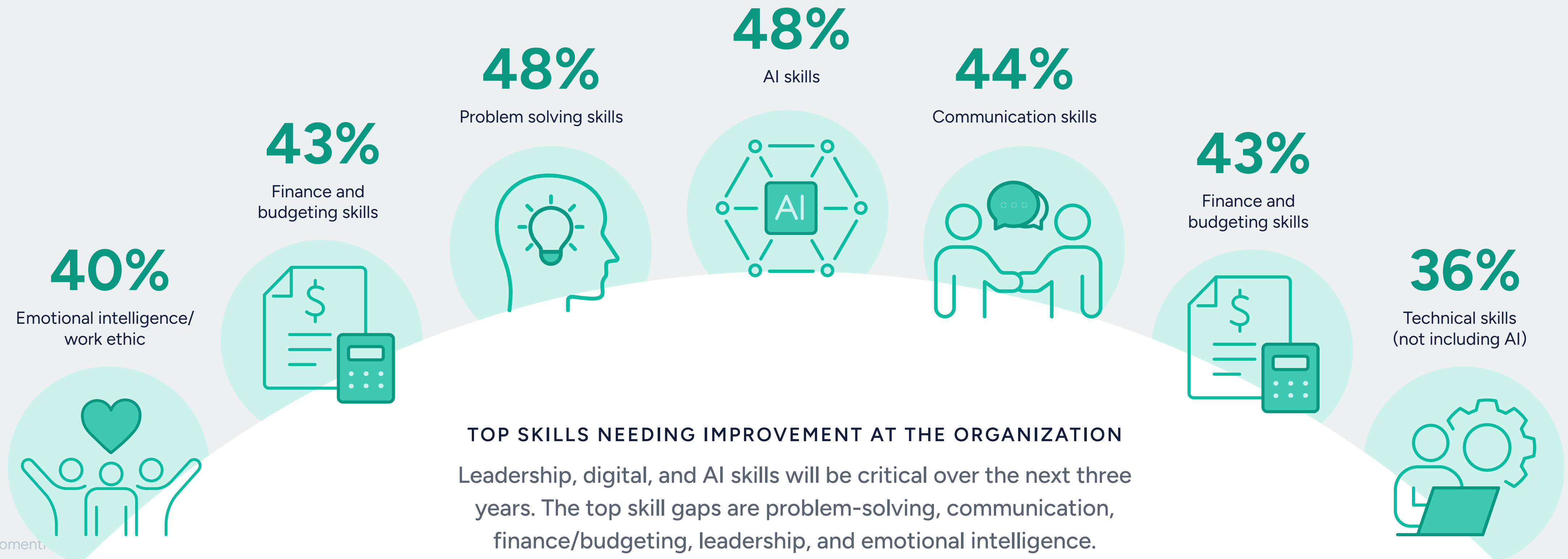
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A Wide Range of Skills Need Improvement

WHAT THIS MEANS:

Almost half say data analytics and evidence-based practice will be essential over the next three years, and nearly 4 out of 10 rank AI/automation literacy in their top three most important skills. However, about 1 in 3 cite technical and AI skills as the areas most in need of improvement right now. Organizations recognize what their workforce needs but aren't closing the gap fast

enough. This creates a compounding retention risk: employees who see the skills gap but don't get development support will leave. Professional development support through learning management systems, networking, and mentorship will be important for reducing attrition risk.



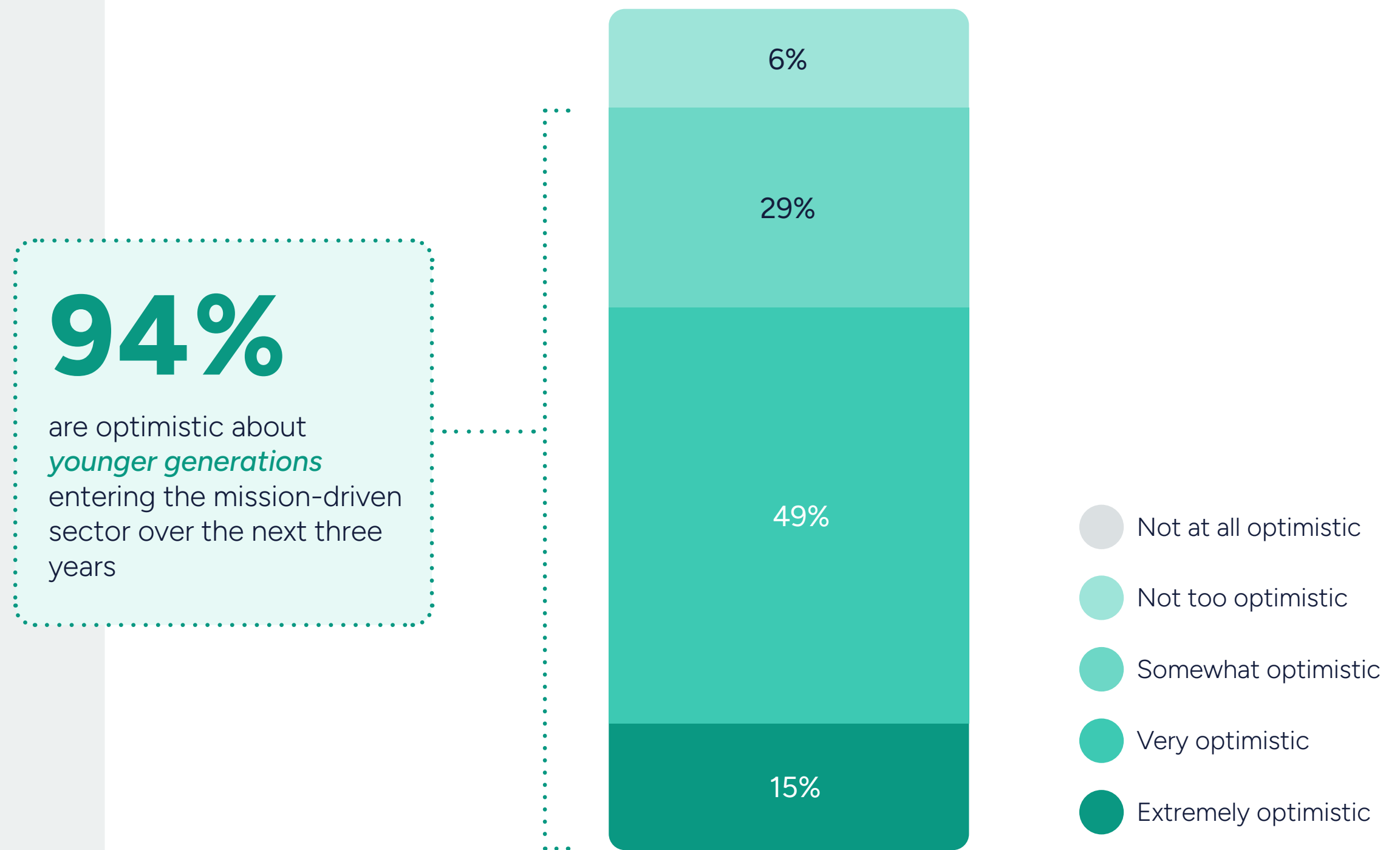


04 Nearly All Are Optimistic About Younger Generations Entering Mission-Driven Work

➔ Mission-driven work remains attractive to younger professionals.

Despite career development and technology challenges, almost every respondent across all demographics are optimistic that younger professionals will enter the mission-driven sector over the next three years. This signals continuity and opportunity for organizations investing in skill development, engagement, and technology.

OVERALL, *HOW OPTIMISTIC ARE YOU* ABOUT YOUNGER GENERATIONS TURNING TO THE MISSION-DRIVEN INDUSTRY OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?



CONCLUSION

The Path Forward for Mission-Driven Organizations



CONCLUSION

The Path Forward for Mission-Driven Organizations

Mission-driven professionals remain deeply committed to their work. Most feel strong workplace belonging, nearly all are optimistic about younger generations entering the field, and two-thirds value professional growth over higher salaries. These organizations have built what many companies struggle to create: mission alignment and genuine community.

But three systematic challenges threaten to erode these strengths:

The Career Development Gap

Most professionals don't see clear paths forward—this is consistent across nonprofits and associations. Of those lacking clear paths, only 27% are committed to staying in their roles. Organizations broadly agree development would help (92%), and employees say they'd prefer it over pay raises (66% vs. 34%), yet two notable barriers persist: budget and time.

The retention multiplier is crucial to recognize: employees with visible career paths stay at 2× the rate of those without (65% vs. 27%).

The Technology Efficiency Gap

Most say disconnected systems contribute to burnout. The retention risk is worth addressing: six in ten of those experiencing technology-driven burnout are actively exploring other opportunities.

This connects directly to career development: when many cite "lack of time" as a barrier to professional development, and almost half say they waste time on repetitive tasks and



manually entering data across platforms, technology inefficiency is consuming the time needed for growth.

The Employee Retention Opportunity

Despite these challenges, engagement remains high. Workplace belonging creates an overlooked retention effect, with those reporting a strong sense of belonging and engagement saying they are less likely to be job searching.

This represents existing organizational strength. The 85% who feel belonging, the 75% who accept lower pay for mission-aligned work, and the 94% who are optimistic about the sector's future show that the foundations are strong.

The question is whether organizations will address the gaps before they erode what belonging and mission have built.

CONCLUSION

What Organizations Should Do

The data points to specific, measurable actions:

1. Make career paths visible

- Make career development a manager's KPI instead of just an HR program. Audit managers: can they clearly articulate 2–3 growth paths for each role on their team? If you asked 10 random employees, "What role could you grow into here?" Would 7+ have a confident answer?
- Have honest conversations about possibilities, not guaranteed promotions.
- Large organizations should formalize frameworks to overcome structural complexity.
- Define "skills that matter" by role and level. Create 3–5 core skill expectations for each role and each career stage.
- Use associations as your external development engine. Proactively sponsor memberships in functional associations (finance, marketing, IT, fundraising, membership).

2. Address technology efficiency

- Treat technology as a workforce strategy and partner with your human resources team. Add a standing question to board and executive reviews: "How is our tech stack helping us attract, retain, and grow talent?"
- Quantify the cost of inaction. Track and report: hours lost to manual entry, systems per employee, percentage of staff time spent on non-mission work, etc. Translate that into FTEs and turnover risk, not just dollars, especially as 63% of those with tech burnout are exploring other opportunities.
- Invest in integrated platforms, as ~75% of mission-driven leaders say this would improve efficiency and mission focus while reducing burnout. Make technology partners part of your workforce strategy, with ongoing role-based training, clear adoption and skill-building plans, and clear roadmaps for AI and automation.

CONCLUSION

What Organizations Should Do

3. Protect and leverage belonging

- Make belonging a leadership competency and measure it. Track belonging scores against turnover, internal mobility, and time-to-productivity.
- Focus on further developing the top drivers of belonging: team collaboration (53%), leadership accessibility (52%), and shared mission (45%).
- Create a collaborative culture to facilitate career conversations and peer learning. Launch peer mentoring circles by function or career stage, and rotate facilitators to build leadership depth.
- Train managers to run “future you” conversations, peer career panels, and shadowing programs.

4. Recognize universal challenges across organization types

- Leverage industry partnerships across your industry as the data shows challenges are sector-wide, not organization-specific. Nonprofits and associations face nearly identical retention rates, job-seeking intent, and career path issues, and can offer expanded engagement and revenue-enhancing opportunities.
- Build cross-sector learning cohorts between nonprofits and associations to build new strategies and share best practices.
- Share playbooks across organization types. Talk to your colleagues across the 501(c) aisle. Focus on the 95% of challenges that are shared, not the 5% that differ.

Why Retention Equals Revenue

Organizations don't need to choose between mission and effectiveness, or between purpose and growth. Professionals have already chosen mission-driven work despite compensation trade-offs (75% could earn more elsewhere). **What they're asking for is clarity** about career possibilities, efficient tools, and development opportunities that justify accepting lower pay.

Organizations that combine their existing community and mission strengths with visible career pathways and operational efficiency will win the talent competition—not through higher salaries, but through addressing **what employees say they actually want**: growth, efficiency, and a future they can envision.

In 2026, workforce development must be a responsibility belonging to more than just HR. It must be an essential leadership strategy, a technology strategy, and a revenue strategy.

BRING ON BETTER™

How Momentive Can Help



How to Turn Retention Into Revenue

The research reveals that mission-driven professionals are already committed to their work—they just need clarity on career paths, efficient technology, and development opportunities. Momentive’s tools are built to deliver exactly that. Organizations that combine their existing community and mission strengths with visible career pathways and operational efficiency will be positioned to retain talent and increase impact.

We understand the unique challenges mission-driven organizations face and are committed to helping them achieve greater impact.



Integrated technology: Many organizations struggle to find dependable tools that help attract and retain talent, streamline systems, and effectively support their mission, all in one seamless experience.



Donor & member retention: Maintaining strong, lasting relationships with members and donors is essential for securing ongoing support and engagement.



Data accessibility: Accessing secure, real-time data and advanced analytics for informed decision-making remains a critical challenge.



Growth & revenue diversification: Innovative, adaptable solutions and trusted partnerships are necessary to thrive while ensuring financial resilience through diversified funding streams across multiple products.



Operational efficiency: Limited resources and lean staffing make it difficult for organizations to streamline operations and reduce workload strain effectively.



Risk & compliance: Minimizing organizational risk requires that volunteers are properly vetted, certification programs meet regulatory standards, and that payments, data, and overall system security remain safe and resilient.

This is Where **Momentive** Can Support You

Momentive's ecosystem of tools helps you:

- **Reduce technology friction** through connected platforms that eliminate manual workarounds and free up time for what matters most.
- **See what's really happening** with dashboards and analytics that surface trends without requiring additional resources.
- **Easily adapt AI** in ways that support—not replace—people with MomentiveIQ's user-friendly features and implementation.
- **Advance professional growth** with innovative, integrated learning management tools, delivering learning experiences that drive career development and boost engagement.

Learn more at

momentivesoftware.com

Learn about MomentiveIQ

[Get a Demo](#)

ABOUT MOMENTIVE

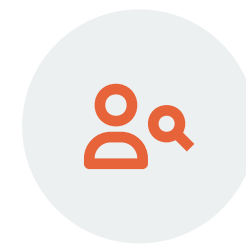
Momentive Software amplifies the impact of more than 37,000 mission-driven organizations across 30+ countries, supporting over \$13 billion raised and 287 million members served annually. Nonprofits and associations rely on Momentive's AI-powered software and services to engage their communities, simplify operations, and grow revenue. Designed to help organizations connect more, manage more, and expect more, Momentive's solutions span fundraising, learning, events, careers, volunteering, accounting, certification, and association management. Momentive partners with organizations that believe "good enough" is never enough—so they can bring on better outcomes for everyone they serve.



Methodology

Research Methodology

The Momentive Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 500 NGO Professionals, with a minimum seniority of Manager, at organizations with a minimum annual revenue of \$500k, in the U.S., between December 4th and December 15th, 2025, using an email invitation and an online survey.



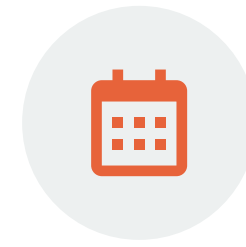
PARTICIPANTS

NGO professionals with a minimum seniority of manager



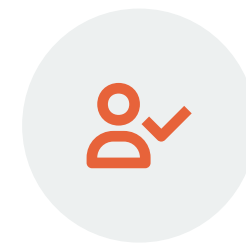
SAMPLE SIZE

500 respondents



FIELDWORK

Conducted in the U.S. from December 4–15, 2025 via email invitation and online survey



RESPONDENTS

From organizations with at least \$500k in annual revenue

APPENDIX

Page 9

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I don't see a clear path for career advancement in my organization.

Page 9 and 14

Are you considering exploring other job opportunities?

Page 10

What are the barriers to career advancement in your organization?

Page 11

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My organization could be even more effective for our cause if we were intentional about employee skill and career development.

Which comes closer to how your organization views employee advancement?

Page 12

Which aspects of your job are you most dissatisfied with?

Page 13

Which of these would most improve your job satisfaction?

Page 16

Which skills or capabilities will have the greatest impact on mission-driven work over the next 3 years? - TOP THREE RANKED RESPONSES

Which areas do you believe AI and automation will be most helpful for in mission-driven organizations? - TOP THREE RANKED RESPONSES improvement without building skills in AI and automation.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Leaders in mission-driven organizations cannot succeed or drive improvement without building skills in AI and automation

Page 18

Which of the following technology challenges create the most frustration or inefficiency in your day-to-day work?

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Inefficient or disconnected technology systems contribute to burnout at my organization

If your organization had access to a fully integrated technology platform that connected software like member management, events, accounting, etc., which of the following areas do you think would benefit most? - TOP THREE RANKED RESPONSES

Page 20

Who usually drives the adoption of new technology at your organization?

Page 22

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My workplace provides a strong sense of belonging and community that keeps me engaged in my role.

Which of the following contributes most to your sense of connection at work?

Page 23

When considering what you do for a living, how much of a priority is salary?

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I could be making a lot more money if I didn't want to work for a mission-driven organization.

Page 24

Which skills are most in need of improvement at your organization?

Overall, how optimistic are you about younger generations turning to the mission-driven industry over the next three years?