



# 2016 COMPENSATION AND CAREER SURVEY

conducted by [Regional Executive Assistants' Cocktail Hour](#)

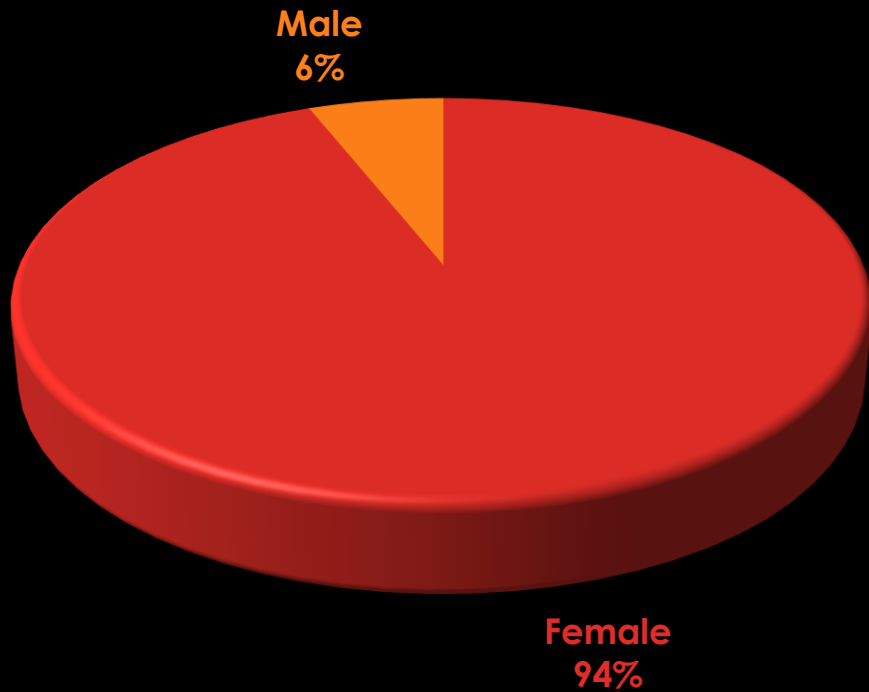
# OVERVIEW

In February 2016, Regional Executive Assistants' Cocktail Hour (REACH) conducted on a voluntary basis with its membership a comprehensive compensation and career survey.

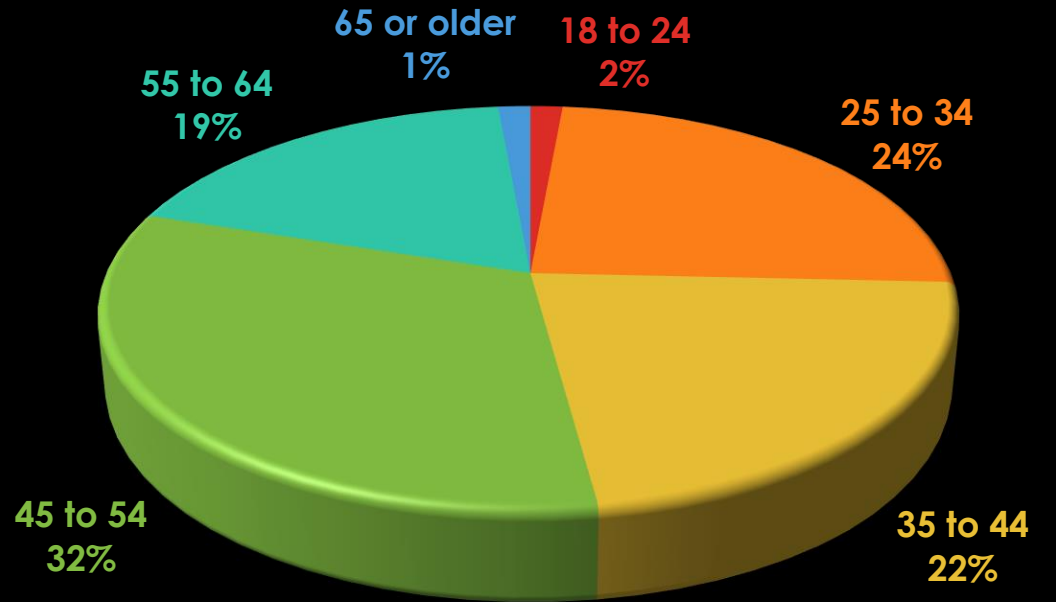
Nearly 150 assistants in the Chicagoland area confidentially and anonymously provided responses to assist in the collection of data that provides relevant, detailed, and contemporaneous information to better inform colleagues, hiring managers, recruiters, and executives about the current state of the Executive / Personal Assistant career track.

It is our hope that this information can be used collaboratively and progressively to better empower, employ, and compensate Executive and Personal Assistants. It is only through informed examination and candid discussions that we, as assistants and those in our professional orbits, can effectively advocate for the personal happiness and success of assistants.

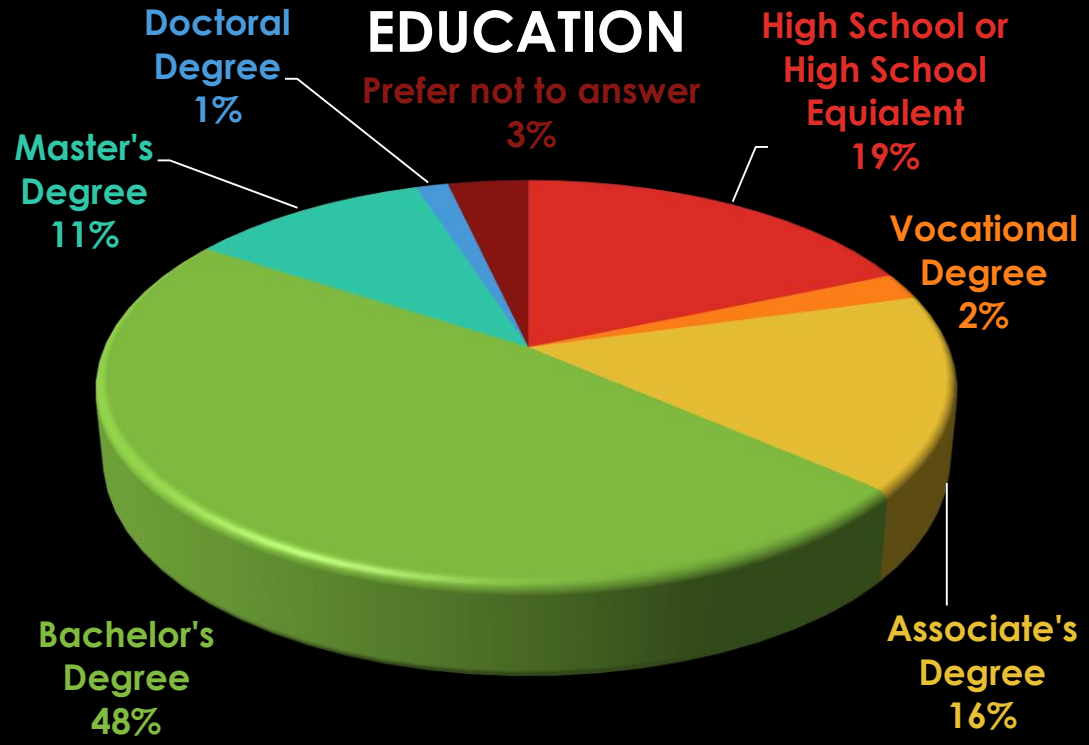
### RESPONDENTS



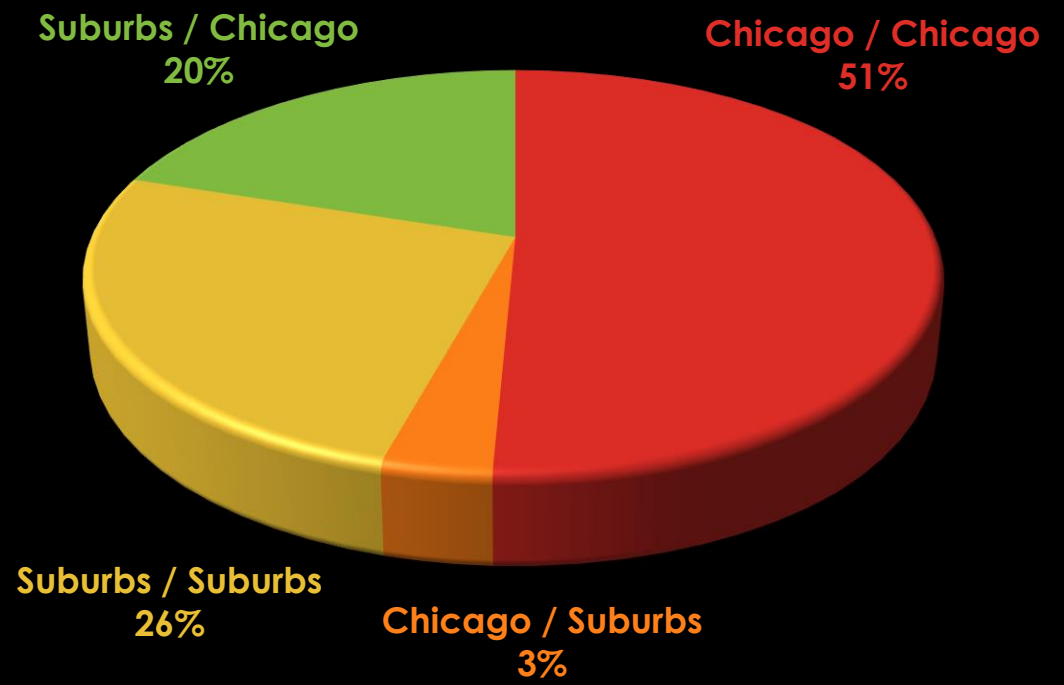
### AGE RANGES



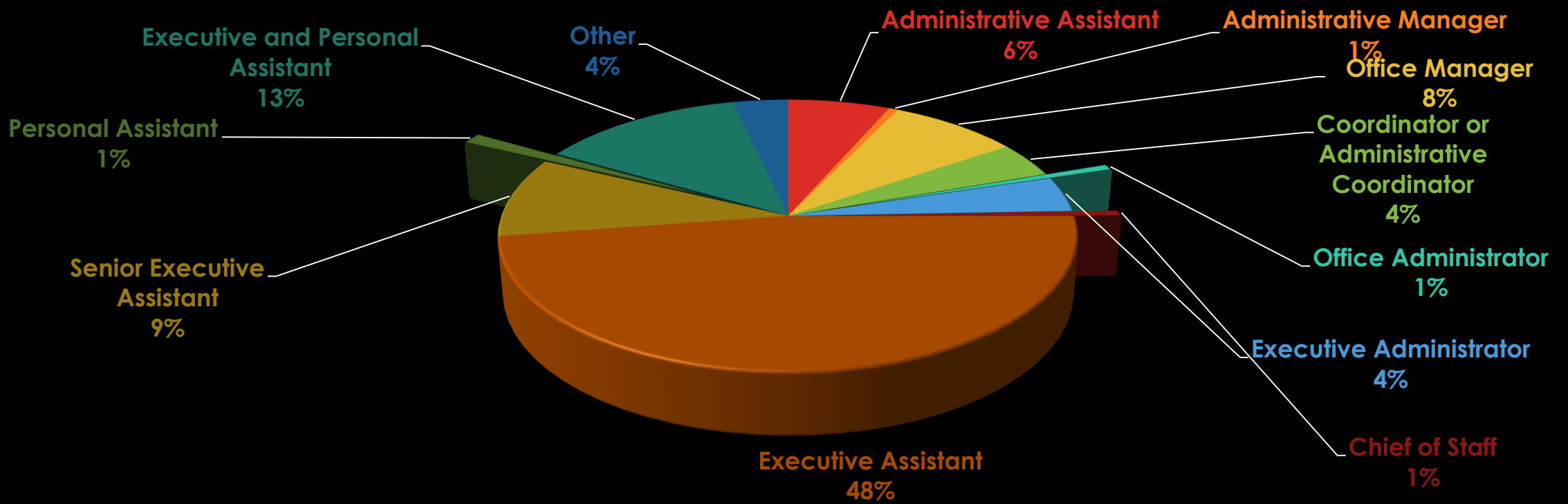
### EDUCATION



### LIVE / WORK



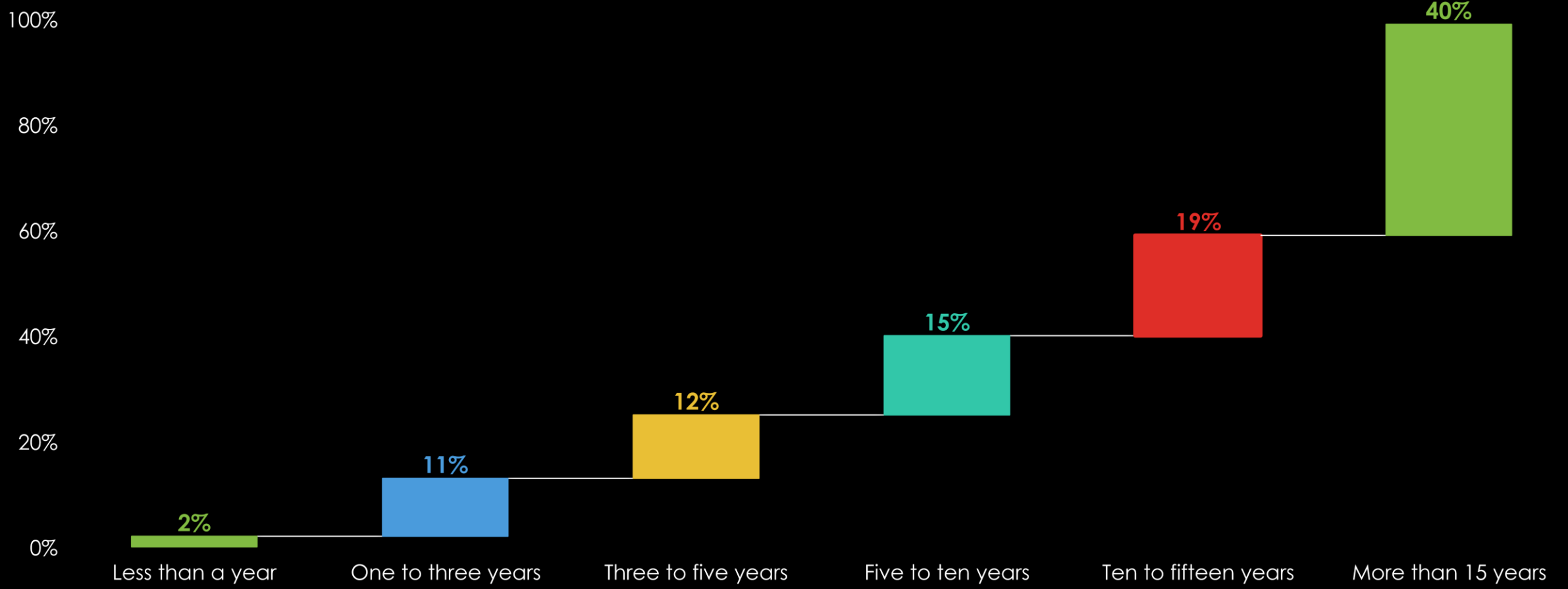
# JOB TITLES



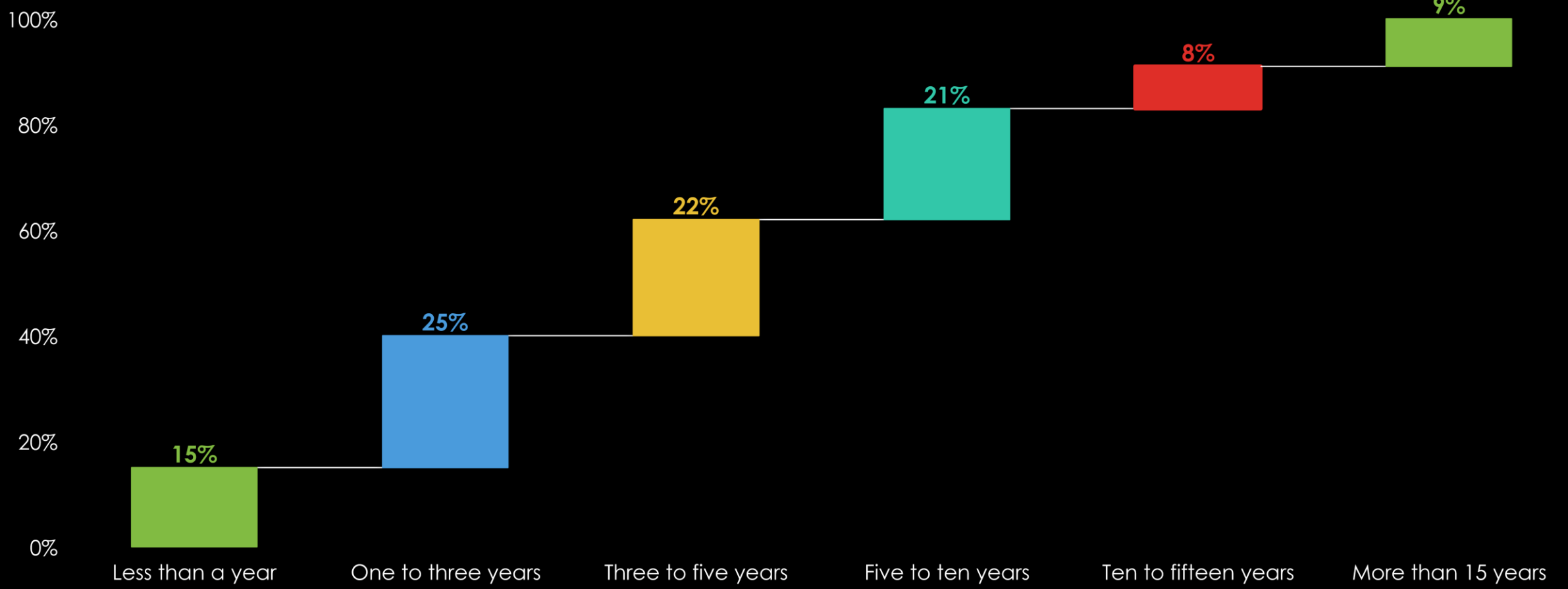
## Other job titles included...

- Executive Assistant, Personal Assistant and Business Manager
- Executive and Personal Assistant, Family Office Manager
- Executive Assistant and Event Coordinator
- Senior Administrative Assistant

# YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS EXECUTIVE / PERSONAL ASSISTANT

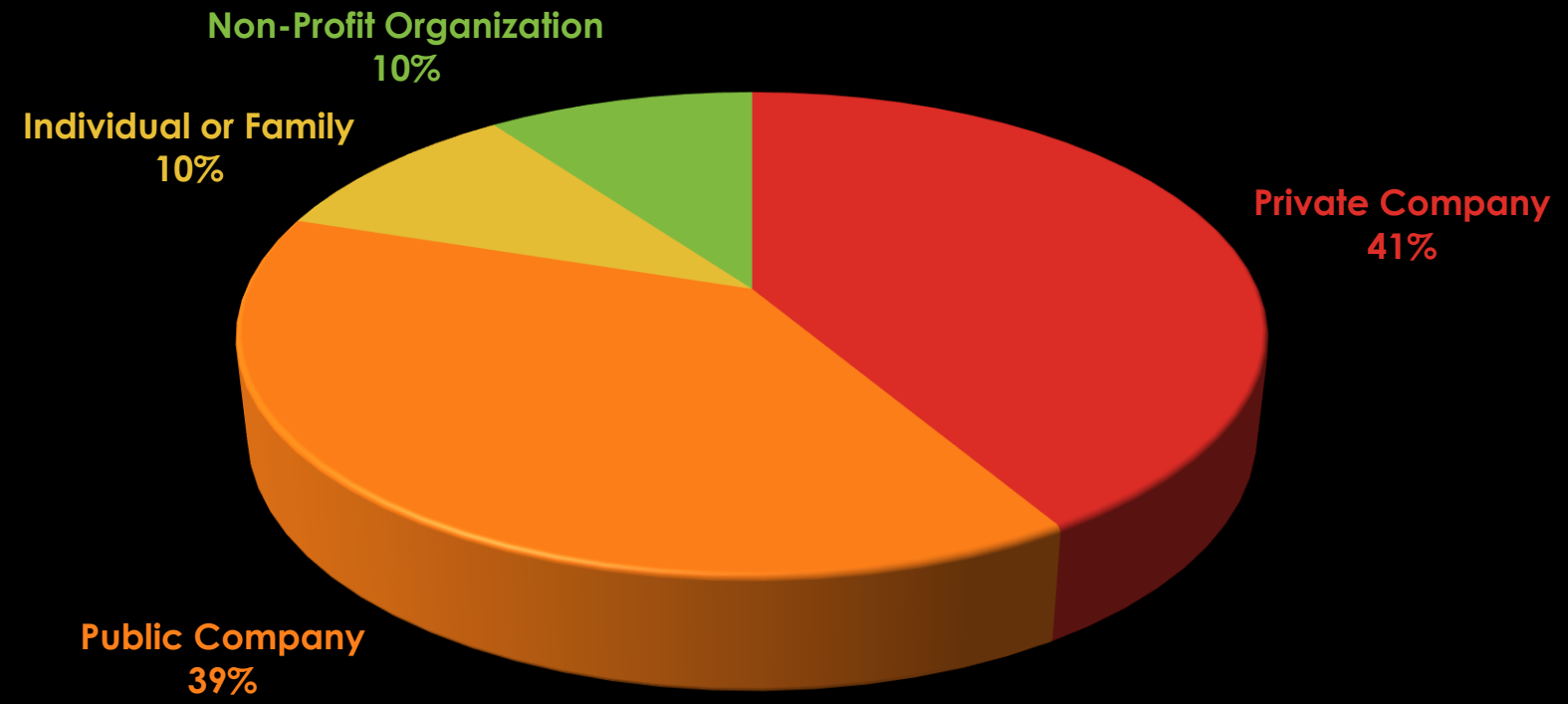


# YEARS OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE (PRIOR TO EA / PA)

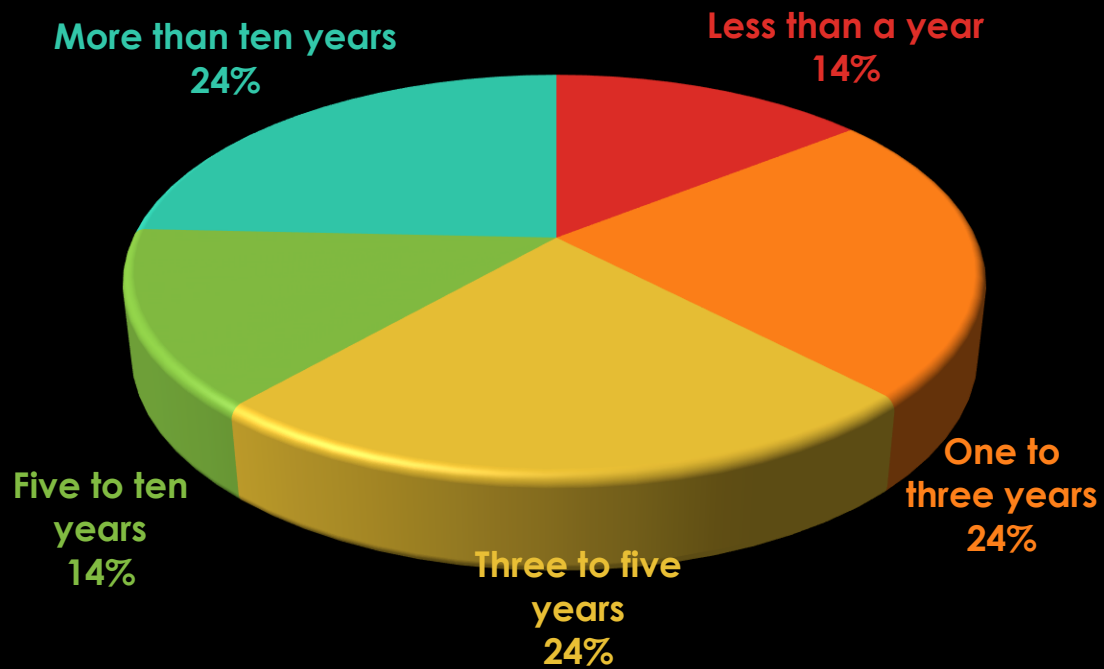




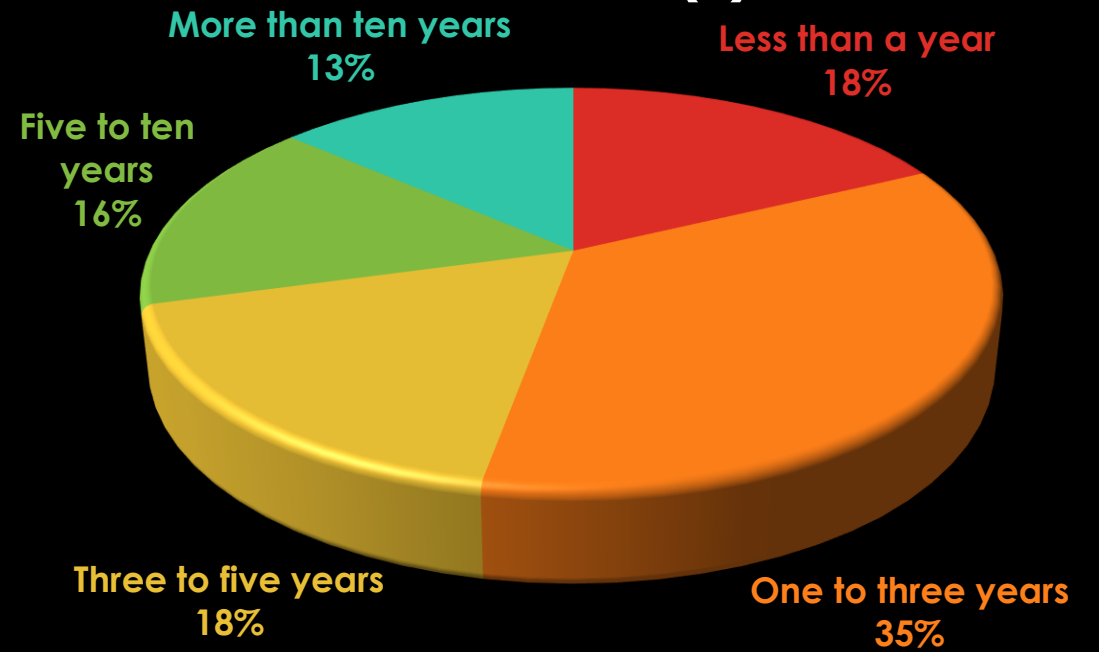
# EMPLOYER



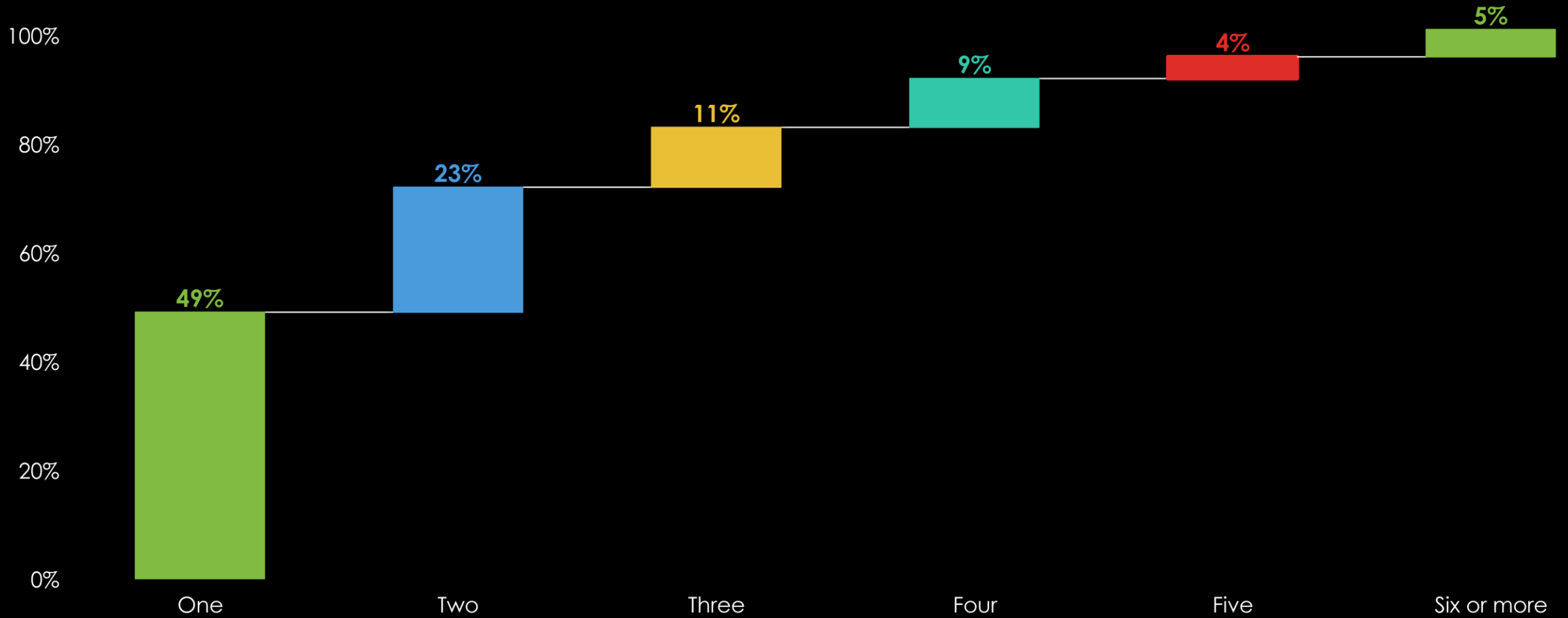
### TENURE WITH CURRENT COMPANY



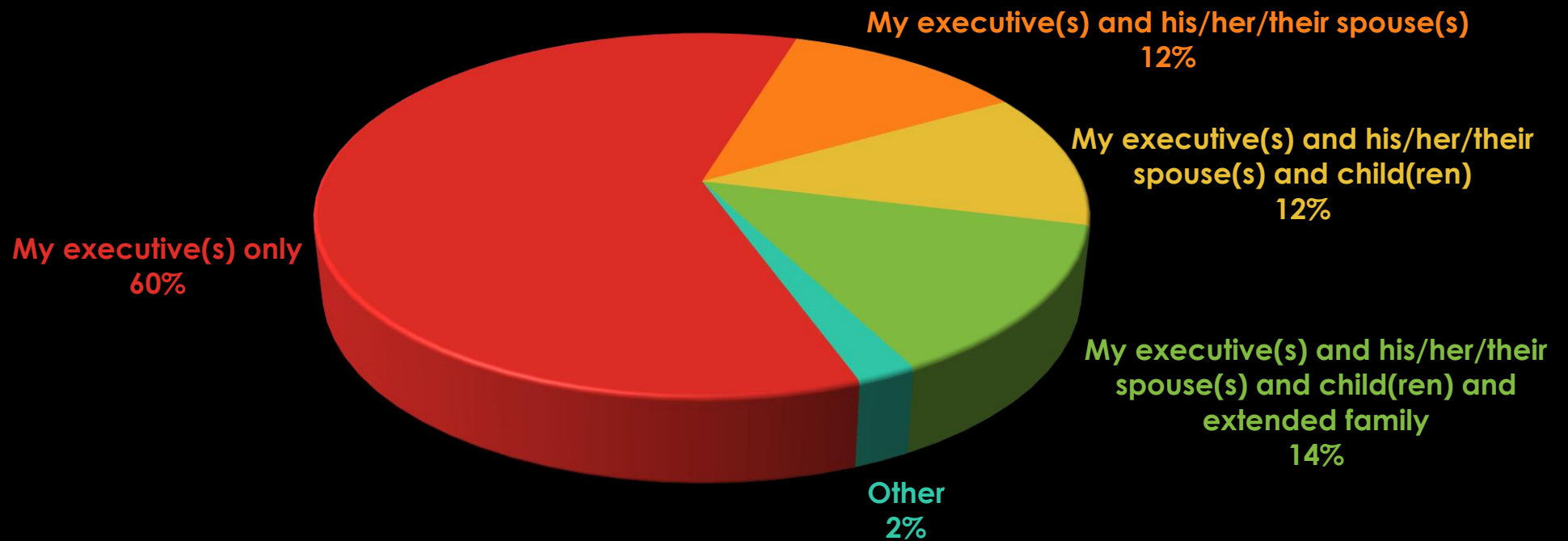
### TENURE WITH CURRENT EXECUTIVE(S)



# NUMBER OF EXECUTIVES SUPPORTED



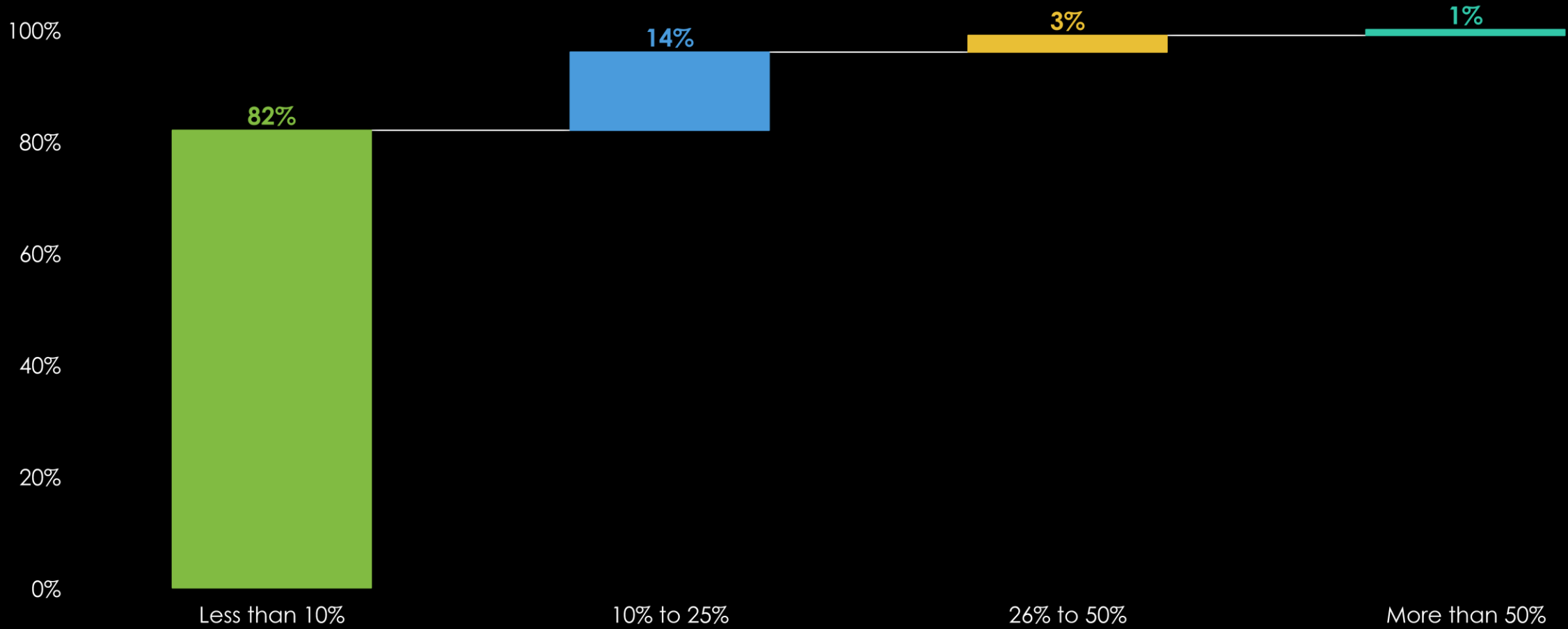
# I PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR...



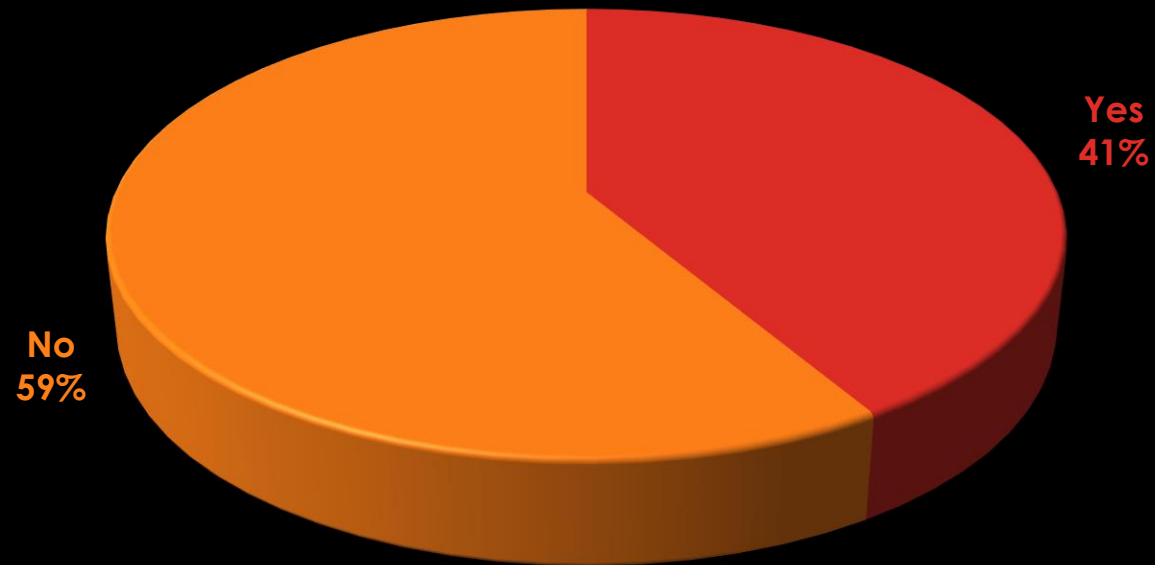
## Other responses included...

- Support to executive(s), spouse(s), and sibling(s)
- Rare “side support” to executive’ (s’) family
- Support to executive(es) and child(ren)

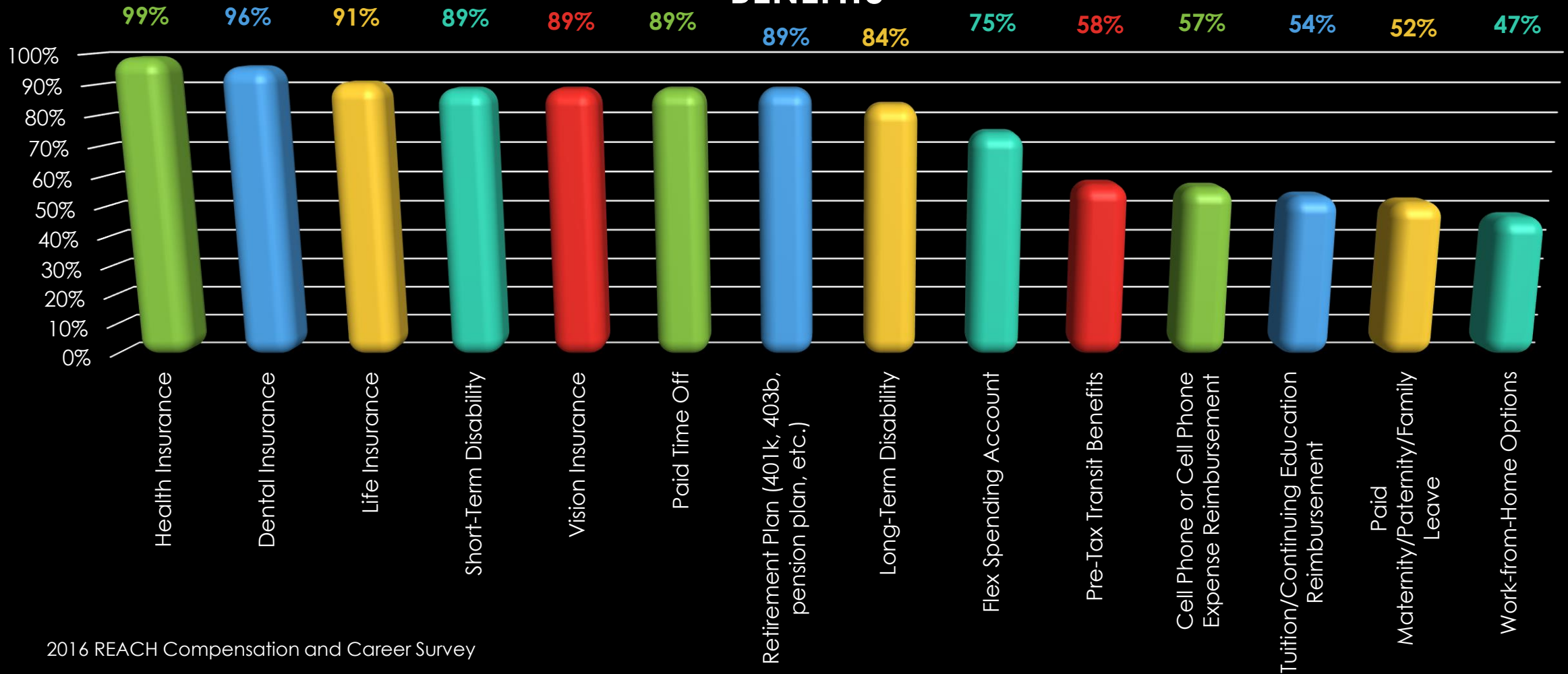
## TIME SPENT ON MATTERS RELATED TO CHILDREN



## SIGNED A NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT



## BENEFITS

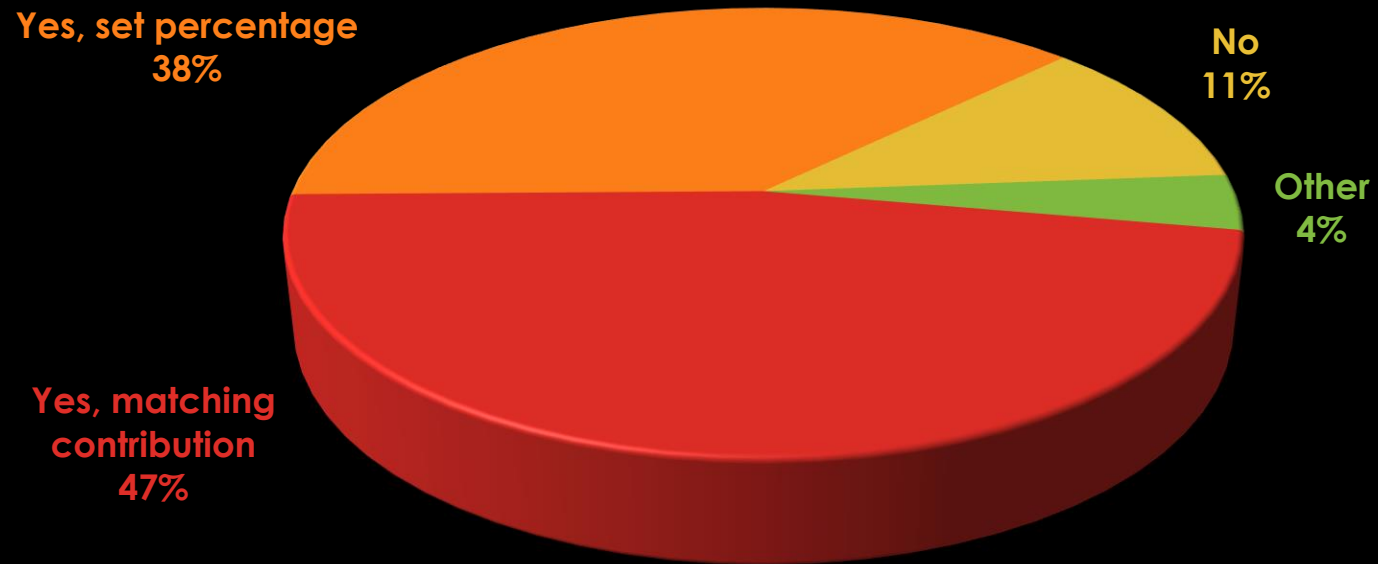




## Other responses included...

- Free or discounted tickets to cultural/art events and venues
- Company-paid deductibles
- Gym membership
- Flexibility with work hours
- Five eight-hour days of paid time for volunteer activities
- Adoption benefits
- Accidental death insurance
- Spousal death insurance

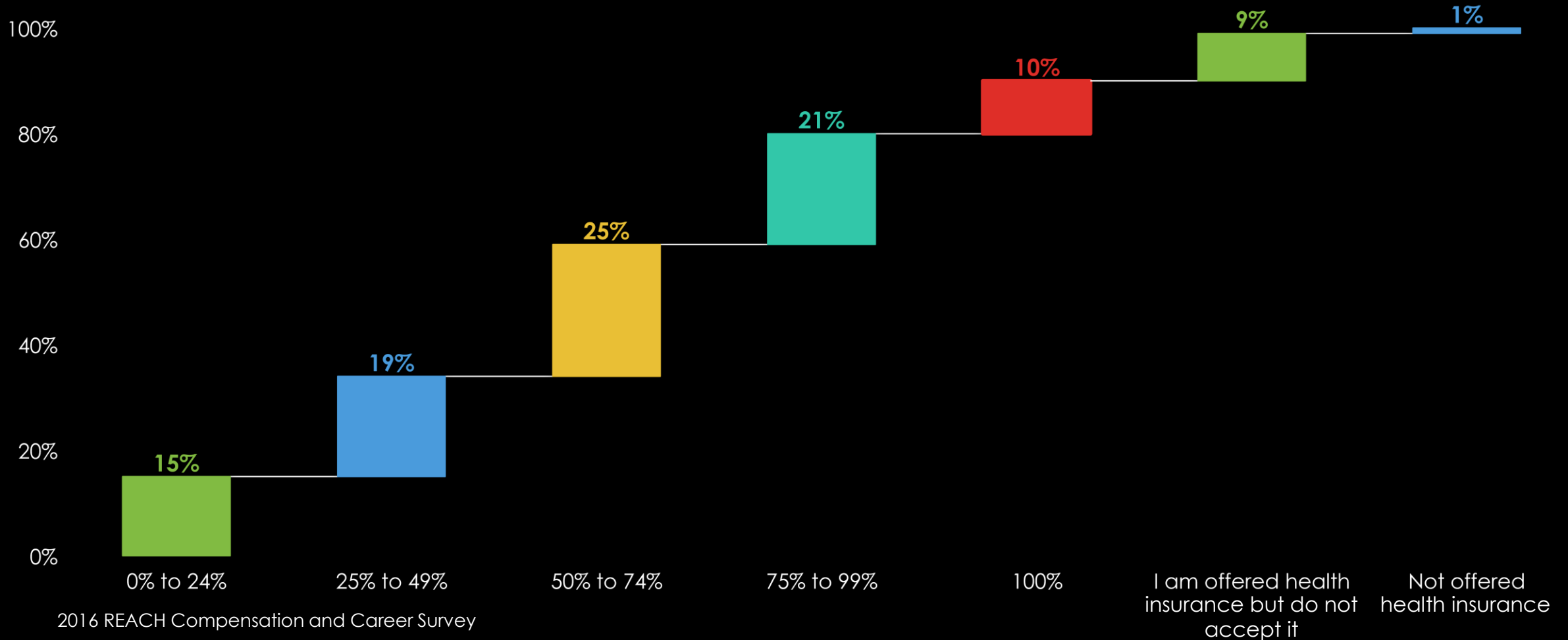
# DOES YOUR EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR RETIREMENT PLAN?



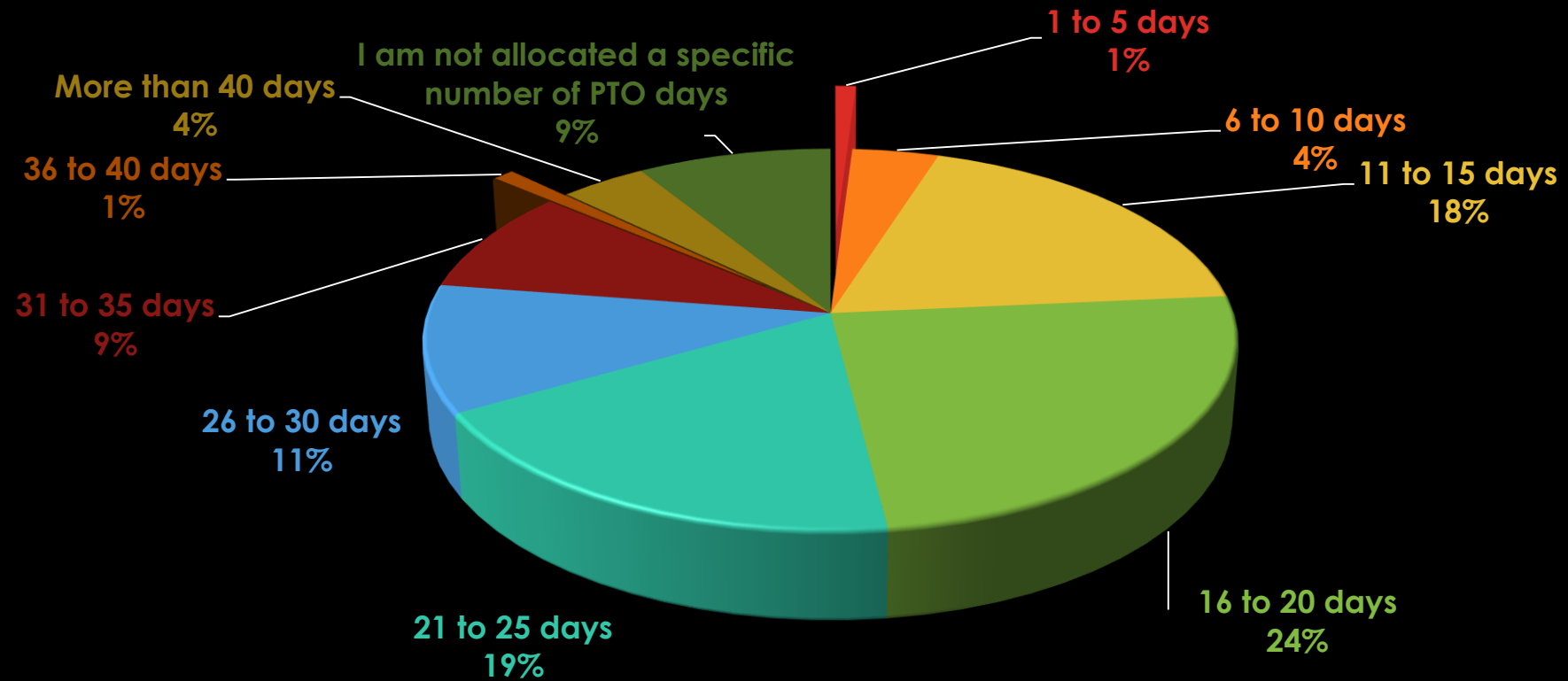
## Other responses included...

- Matching contribution of 6% and 5% end-of-year contribution
- 50% matching contribution, up to the first \$1,000
- Matching contribution up to a set percentage
- Matching contribution plus one (1) deposit of 4% of employee's annual salary

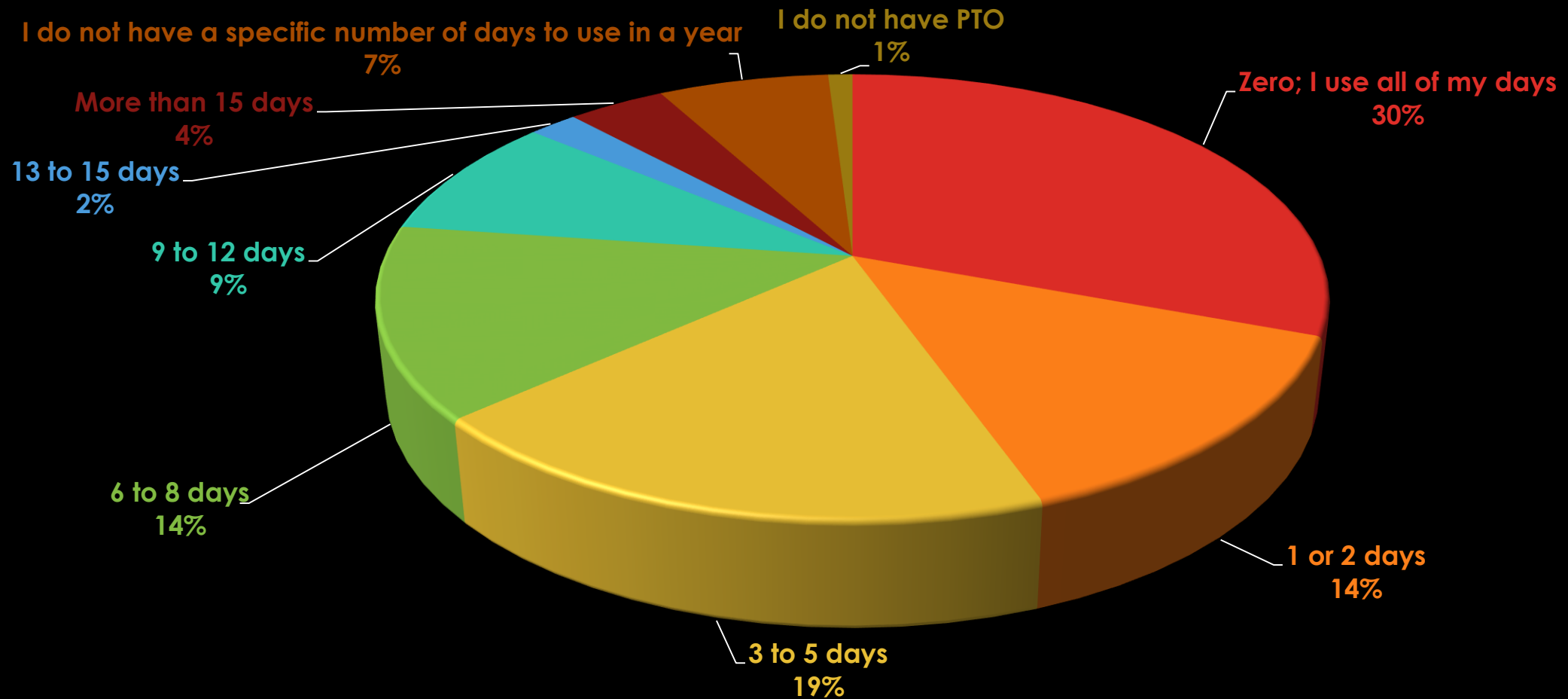
# PERCENTAGE OF HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM PAID BY EMPLOYER



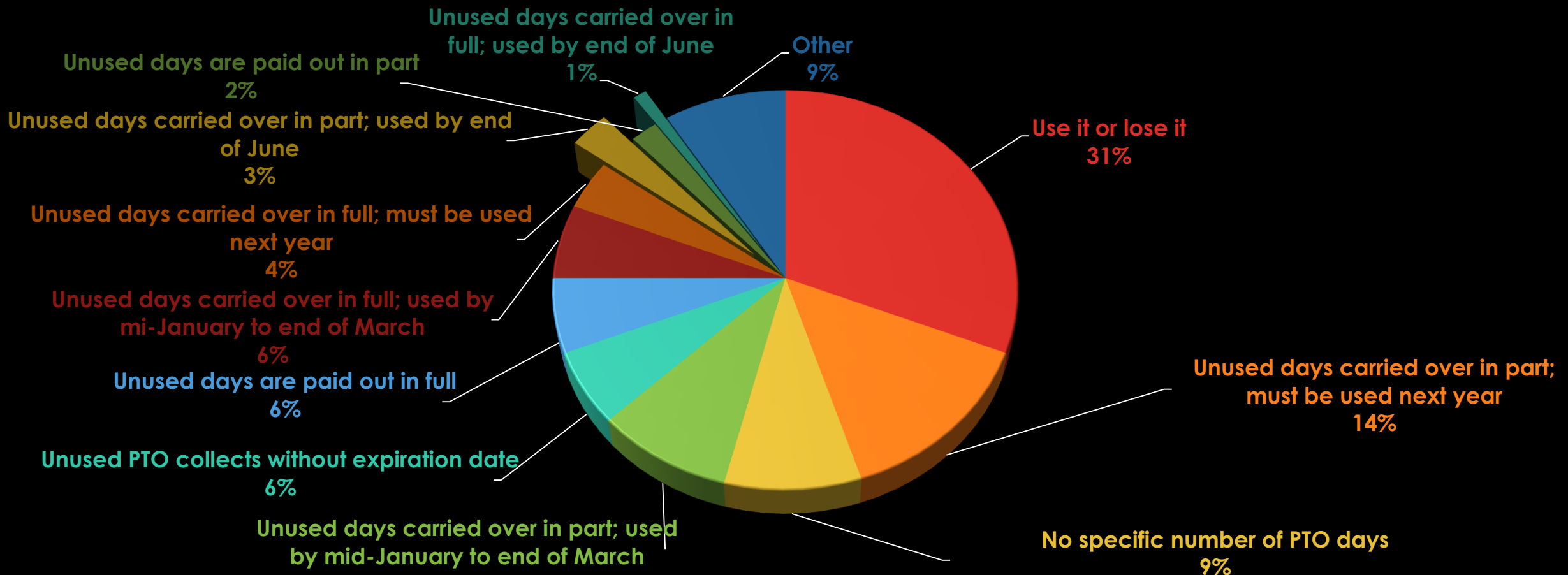
## ANNUAL PTO DAYS ALLOTTED



## UNUSED PTO DAYS AT YEAR-END



# UNUSED PTO POLICY

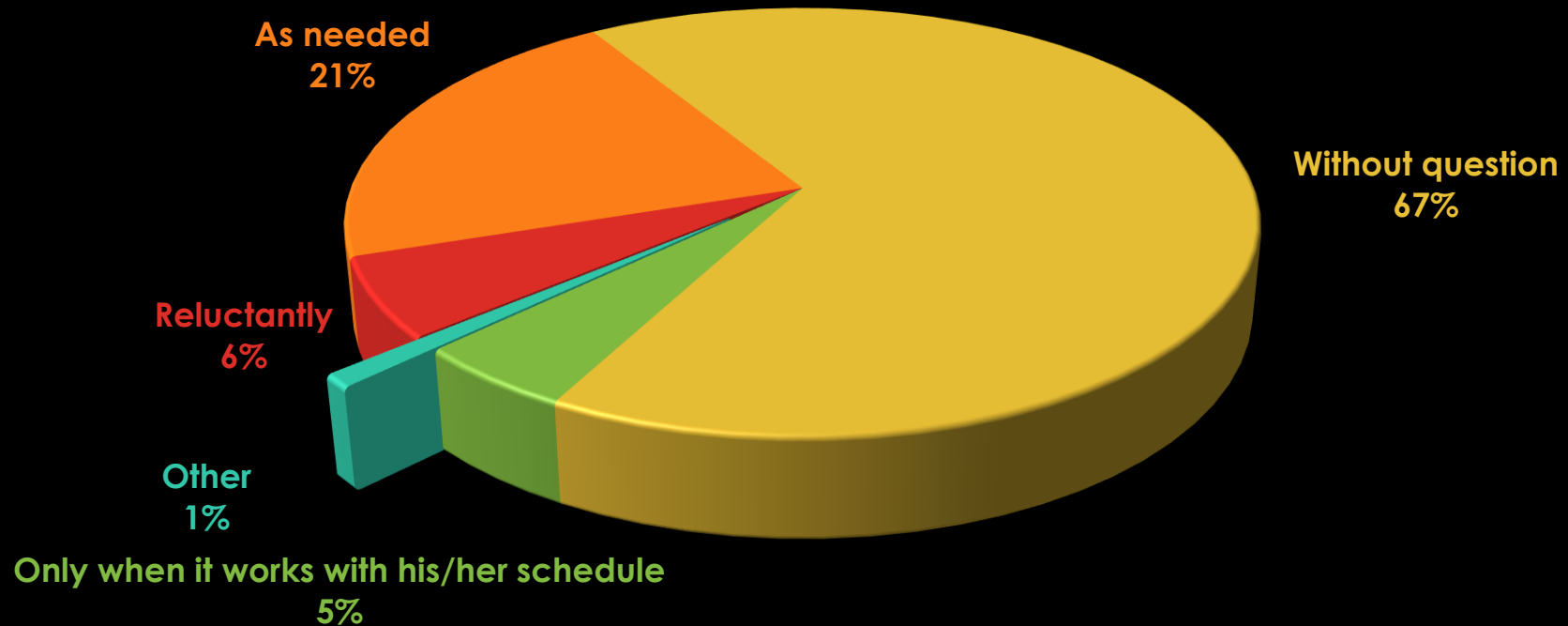


## Other responses included...

- Employees can carry over up to eight (8) days but lose anything beyond that
- Employees can carry over up to seven (7) days but lose anything beyond that
- Employees can carry over up to five (5) days but lose anything beyond that
- Employees can carry over up to four (4) days but lose anything beyond that
- Employees can carry over 20% of unused PTO time
- Days that are not used are carried over until an employee accumulates two years' worth of benefits. After that it, is use it or lose it.
- Non-exempt employees are paid for unused sick days (up to 40 hours) and unused vacation up to (40 hours).
- A maximum of 30 days may be carried over. Any hours over that are paid out at 50% in January.
- A "use it or lose it" policy applies to personal days (four [4] per year); sick time carries over; vacation time carries over and accrues based on years of service
- Days may carry over, but employees cannot accrue any more PTO than policy allows based on seniority level.



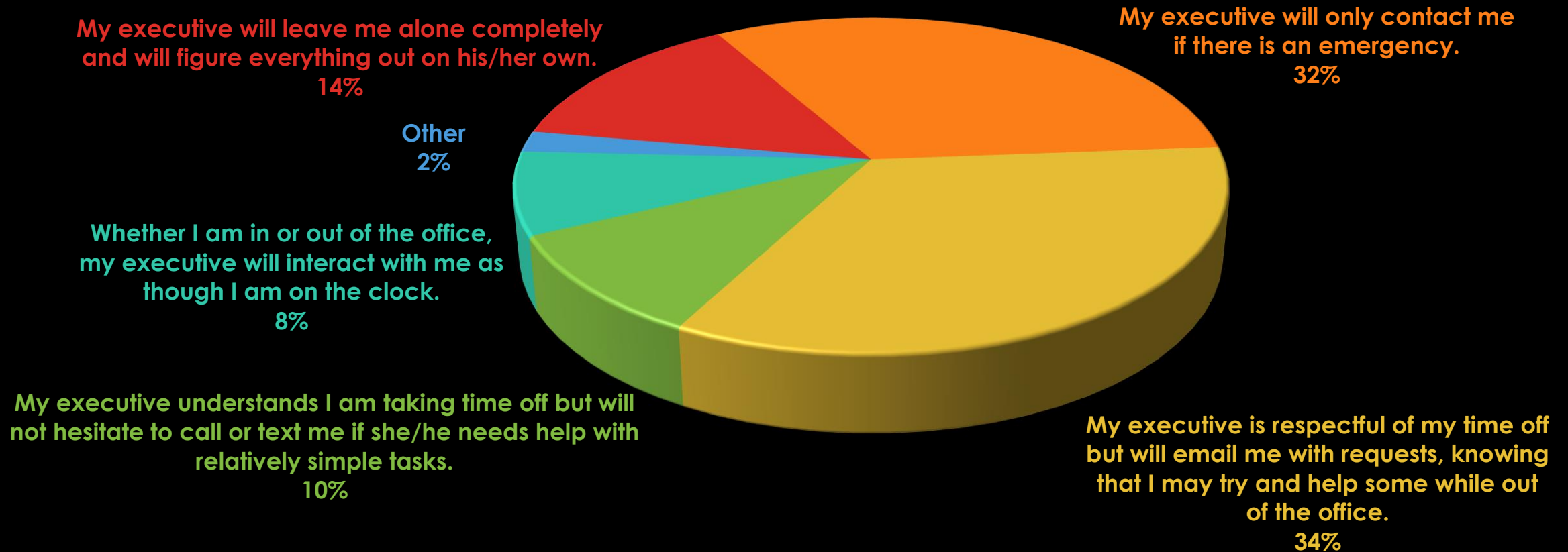
## DOES YOUR EXECUTIVE ALLOW YOU TO TAKE TIME OFF?



## Other responses included...

- Yes, when it works well for my executive's schedule, despite it sabotaging previously arranged travel.

## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS MOST TYPICAL WHEN YOU USE PTO?

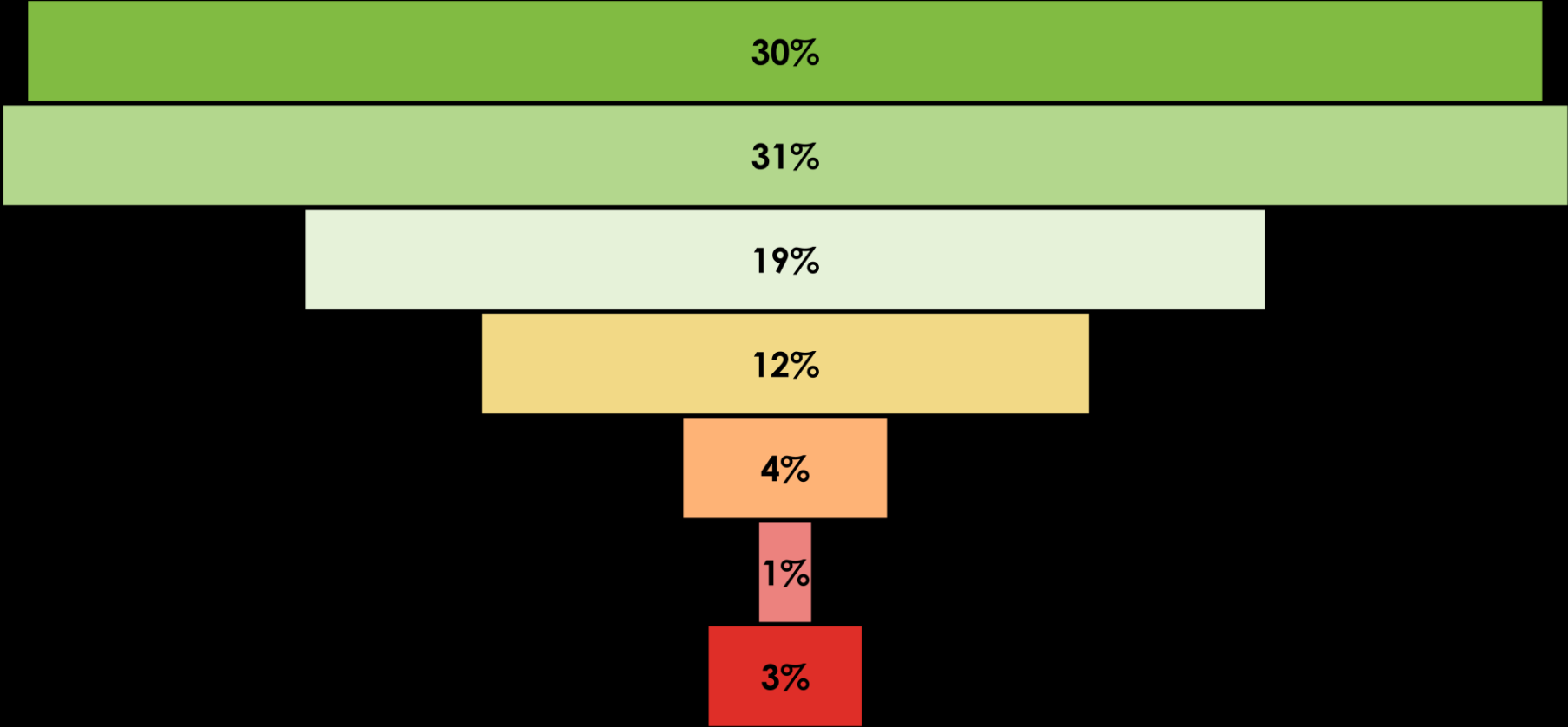


## Other responses included...

- My boss will leave me alone; however, I must have a temp or other person in place when I am gone and be available for his/her questions.
- I have a person that backs me up during my scheduled time off.
- I have not taken time off yet, as I have been in this position for only a couple months.

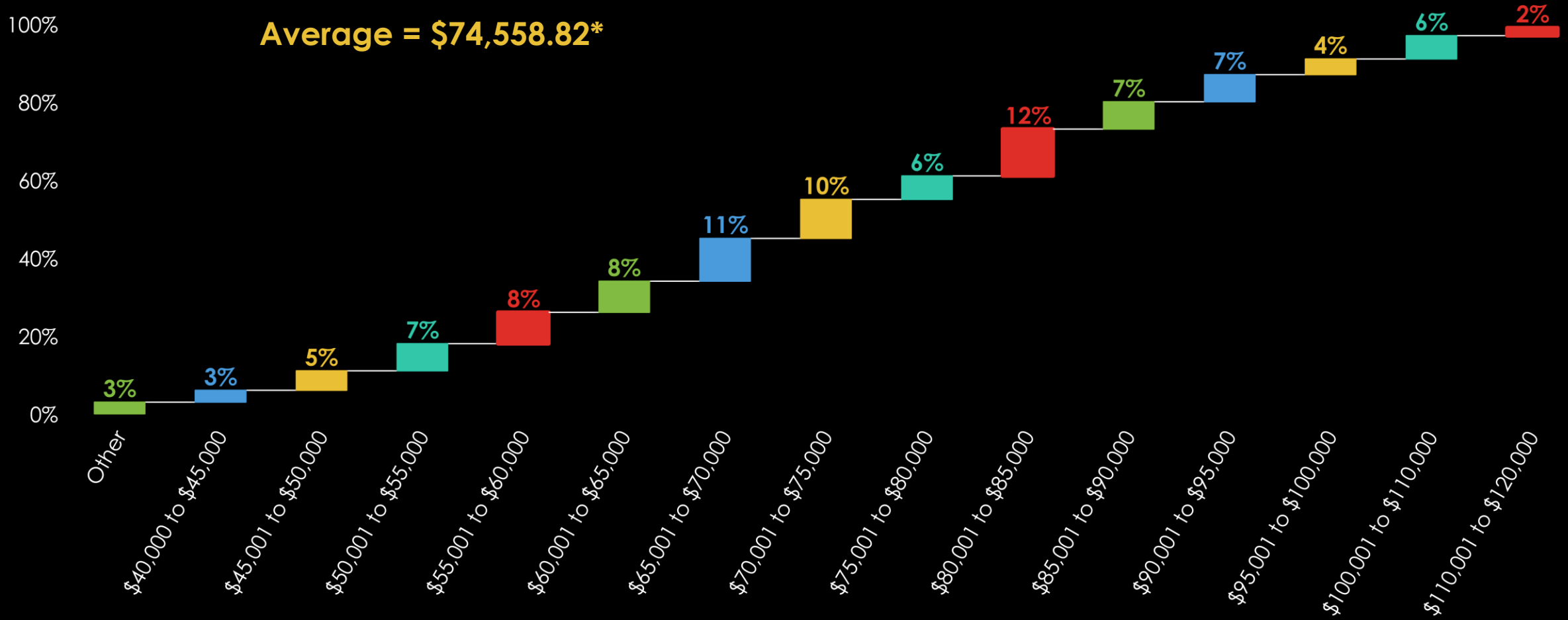
# SATISFACTION WITH COMPANY BENEFITS

Very Satisfied



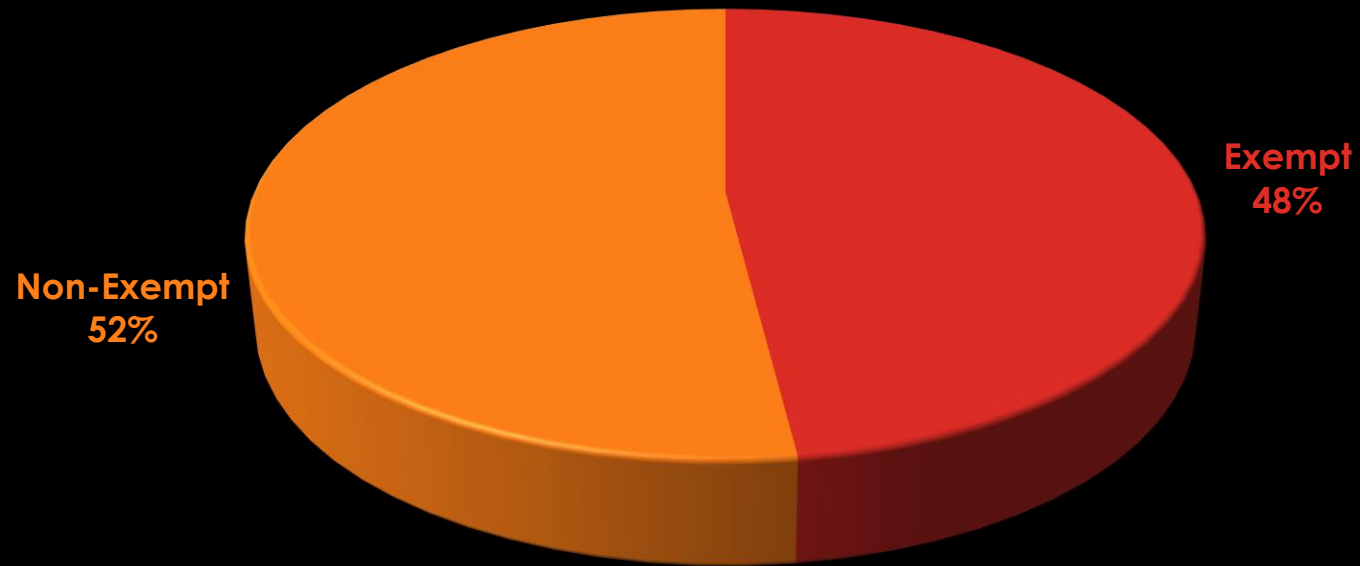
Very Unsatisfied

## BASE PAY

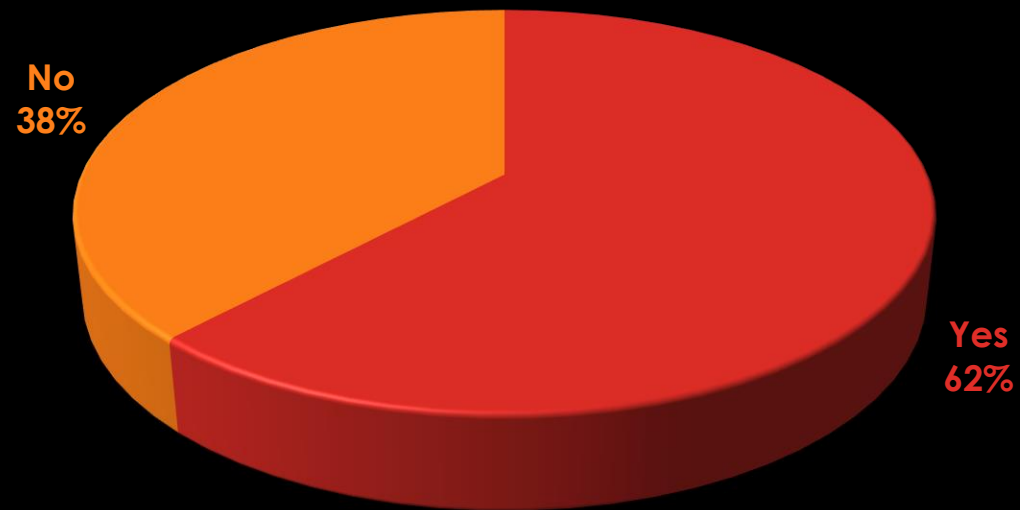


\* Average does not take into account the "Other" responses, which included, "Less than \$40,000," and, "More than \$120,000."

## JOB CATEGORY

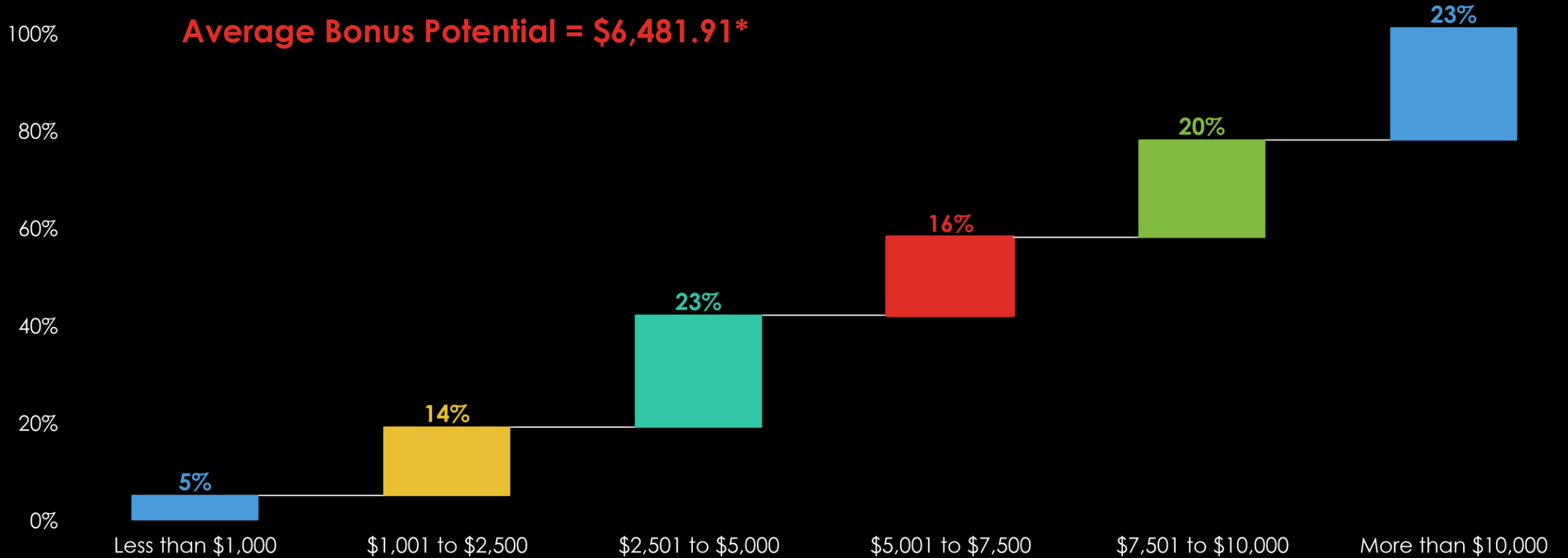


## ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A QUARTERLY, SEMI-ANNUAL OR ANNUAL BONUS?



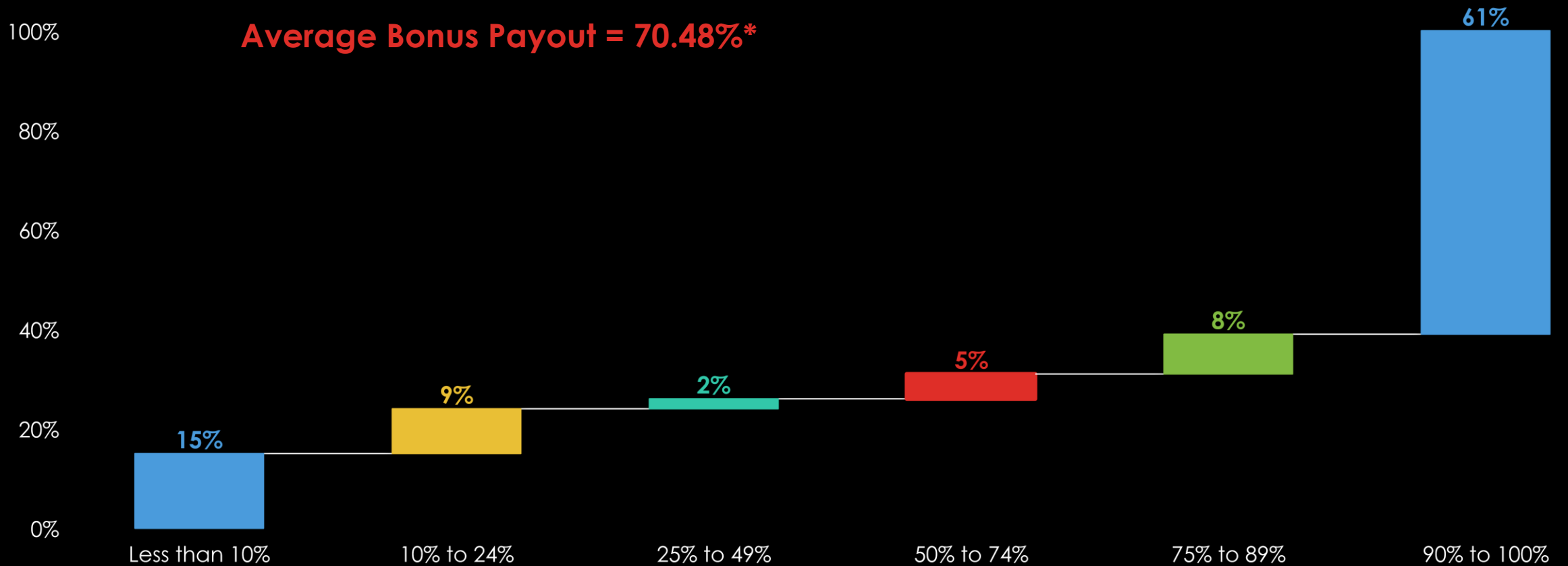


## BONUS POTENTIAL



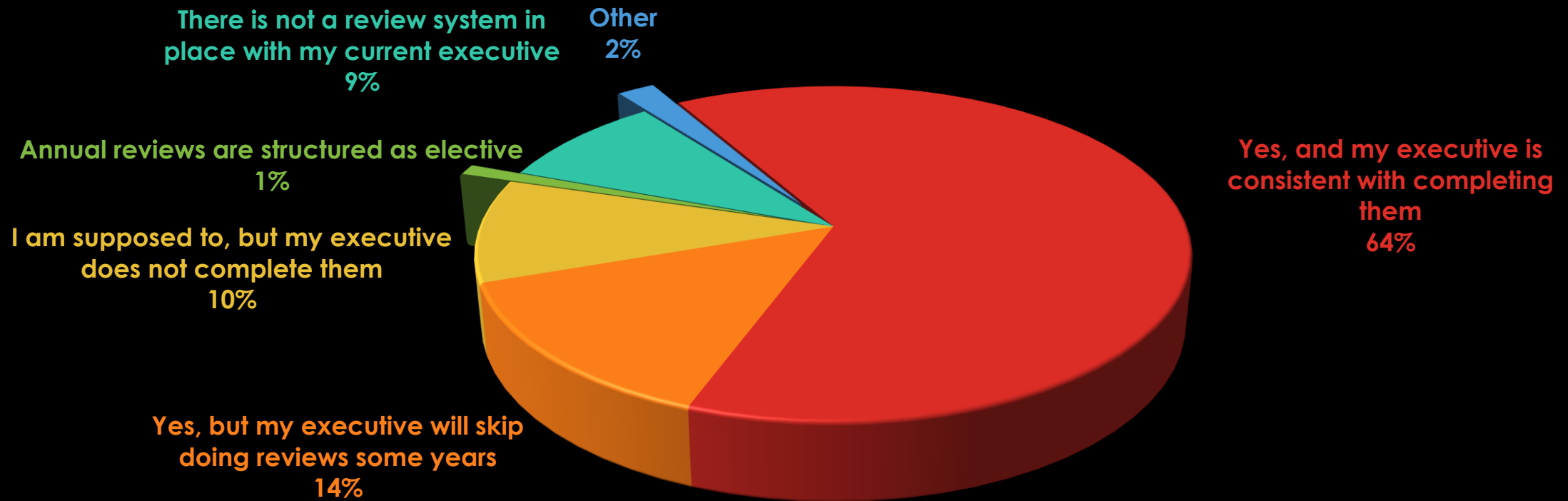
- Average bonus potential assumes an average of a \$500 bonus potential per person for those who answered, "Less than \$1,000." Average bonus potential also conservatively assumes an average annual bonus potential of \$11,183.82 per person for those who answered, "More than \$10,000." The figure \$11,183.82 was reached by calculating a 15% bonus potential on the average base salary provided on the preceding page.

## TYPICAL BONUS PAYOUT PERCENTAGE



- Average bonus payout percentage assumes an average of a 5% bonus potential per person for those who answered, "Less than 10%."

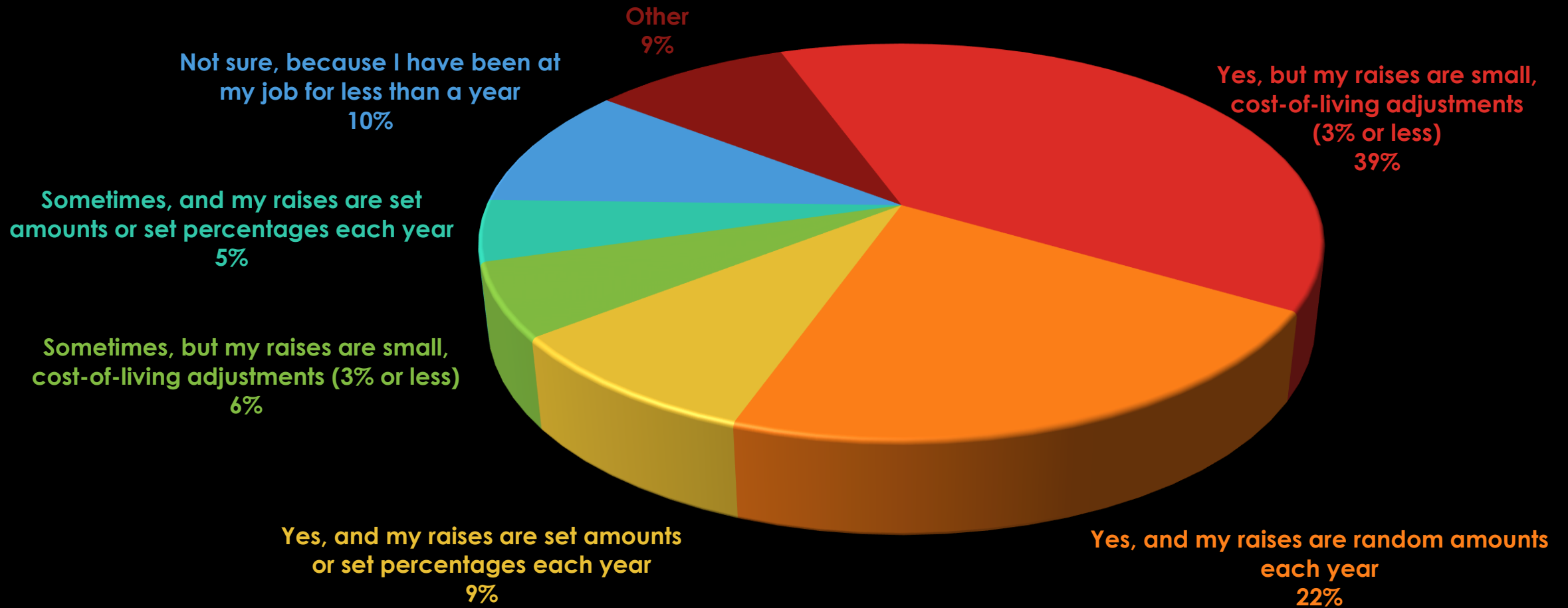
## DO YOU RECEIVE AN ANNUAL REVIEW?



## Other responses included...

- Yes, but I have not received one yet (I am new)
- I never get an annual review or salary increase unless I bring it up

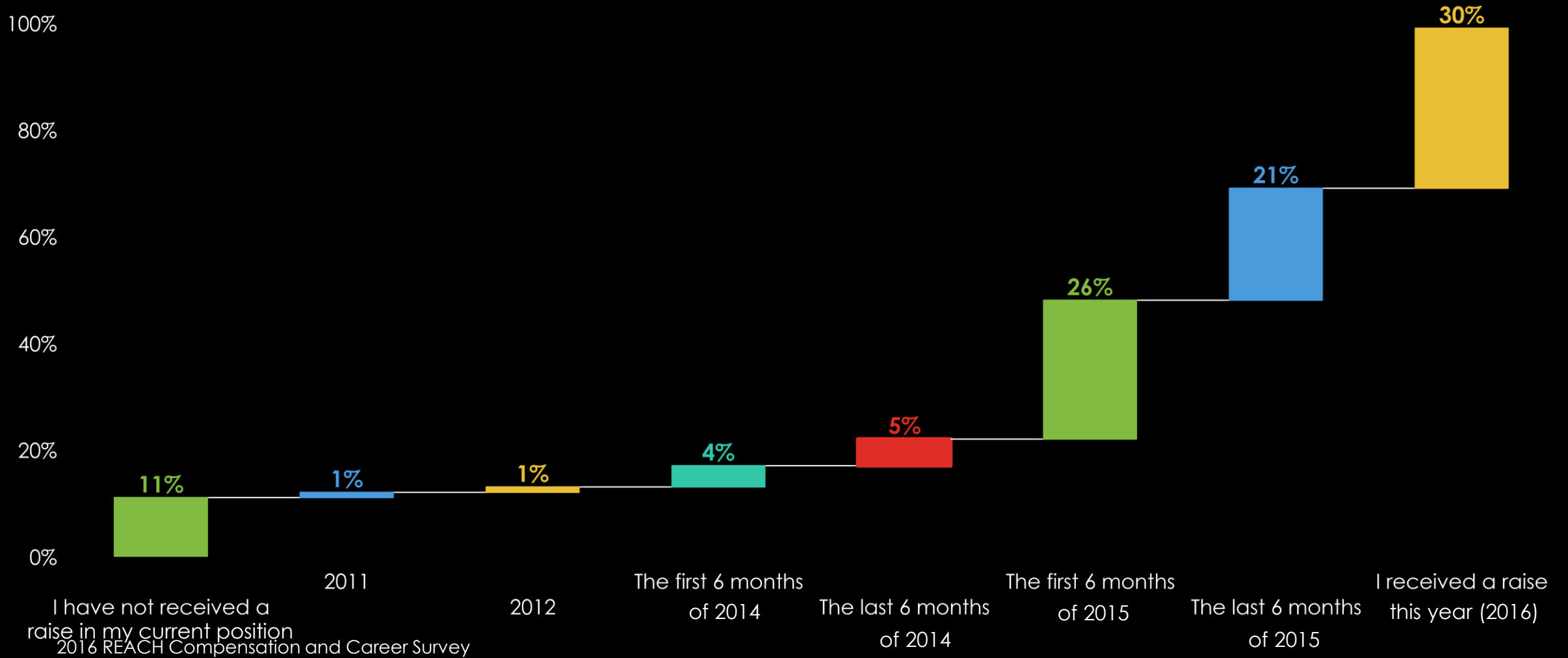
## DO YOU RECEIVE ANNUAL RAISES?



## Other responses included...

- Yes, but my raises are small because we have pay ranges for jobs, and I am at the top of my current career track in terms of job title.
- Every other year, some random amount.
- Some years we get them, and other years we do not; it's very random.
- We are supposed to but have not received one in the last five years.
- Some years, yes; other years, no. I've gone up to three years without an increase or bonus.
- Small raises, alternating with bonuses equal to a small raise but not added to base pay every other year.
- No; I have only received a raise when I asked for it.
- I do not receive a cost-of-living raise when other employees do.
- No

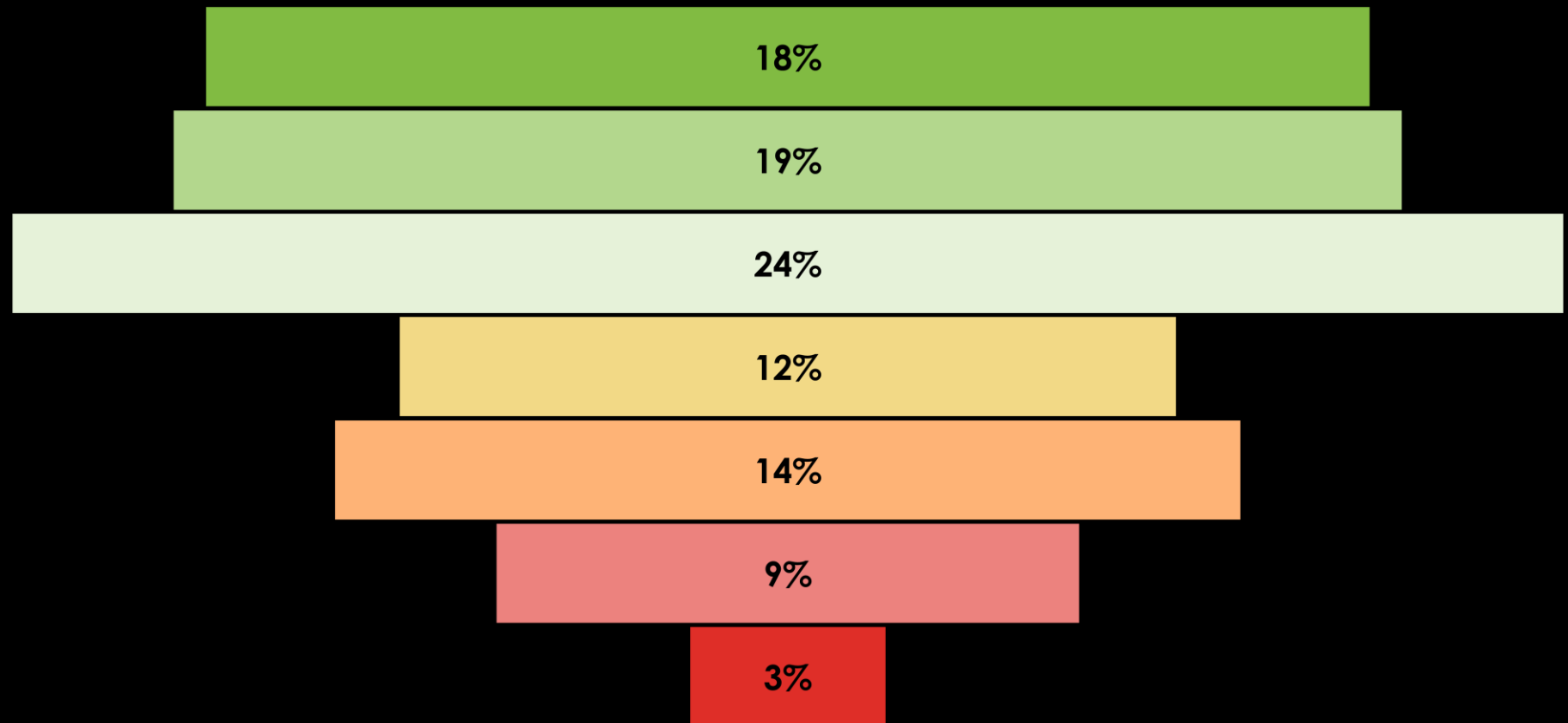
## WHEN DID YOU LAST RECEIVE A RAISE?



\* There were zero respondents who selected "2010 or earlier" or "2013"

## SATISFACTION WITH SALARY

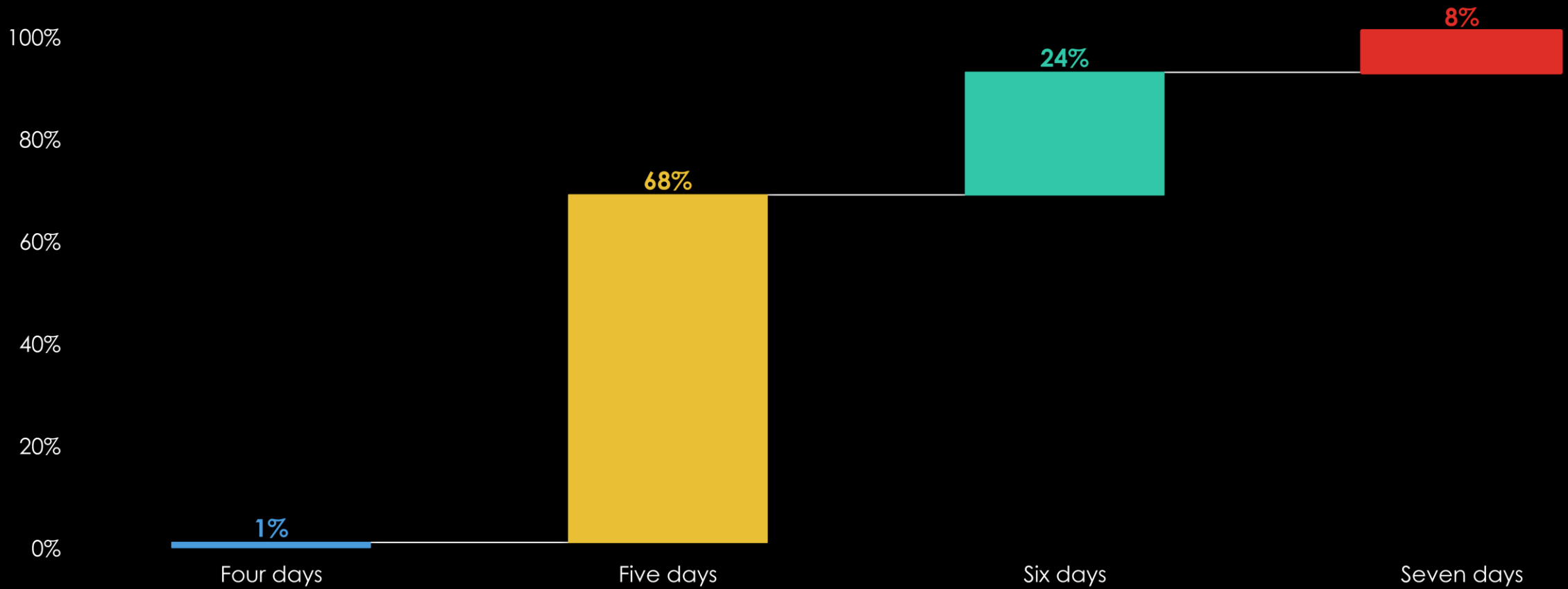
Very Satisfied



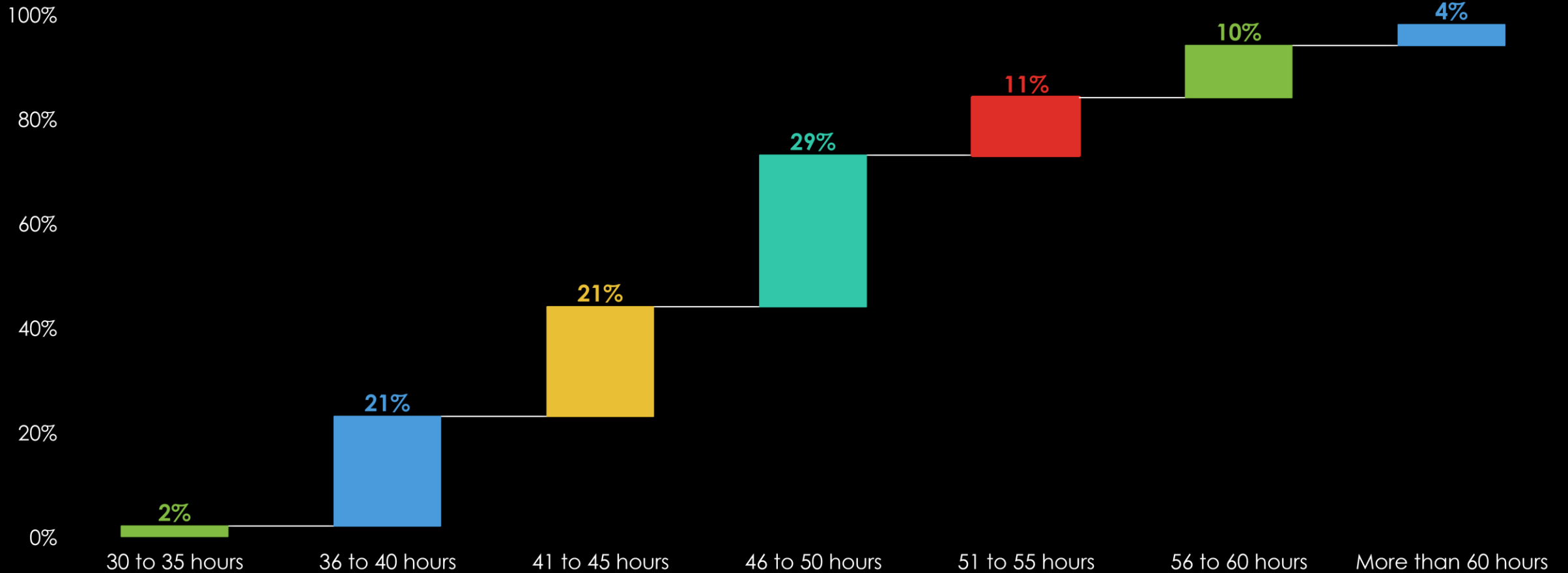
Very Unsatisfied



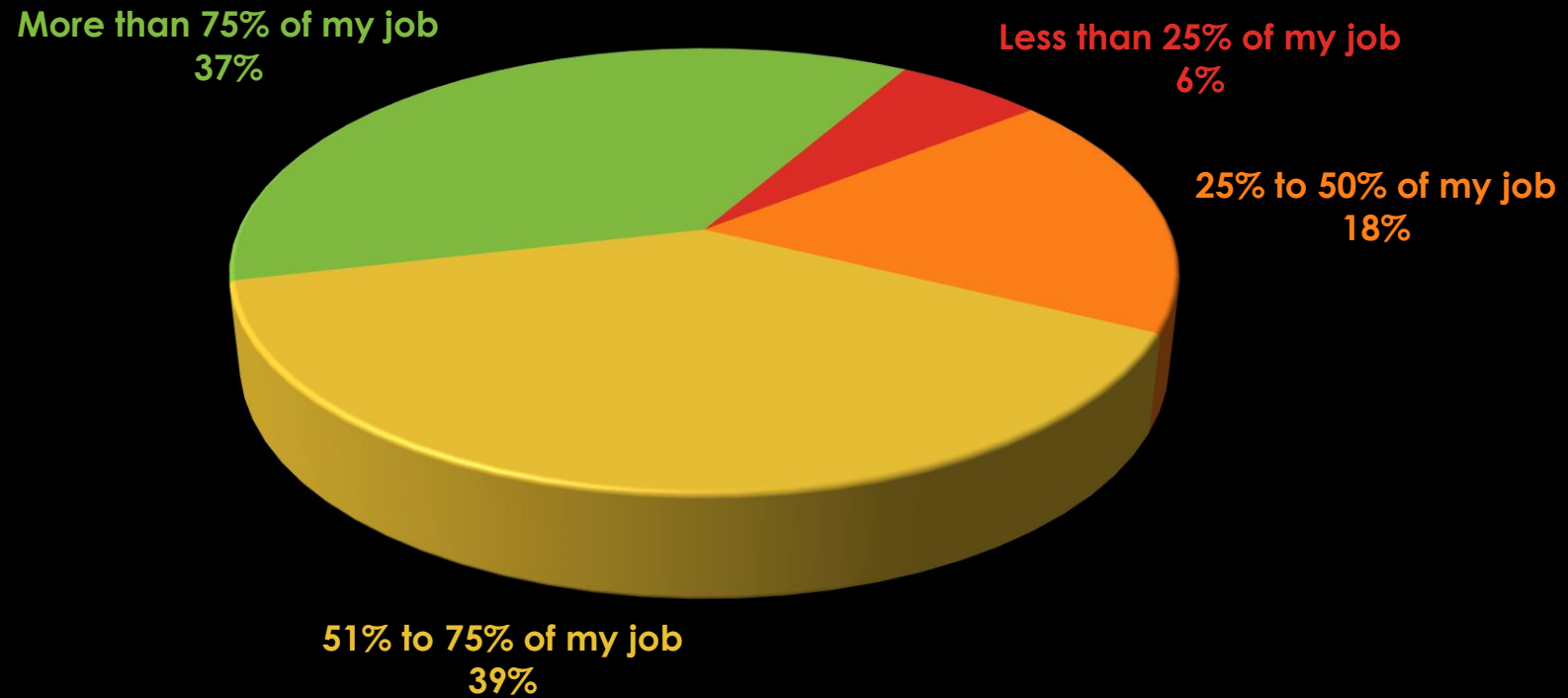
## AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WORKED PER WEEK



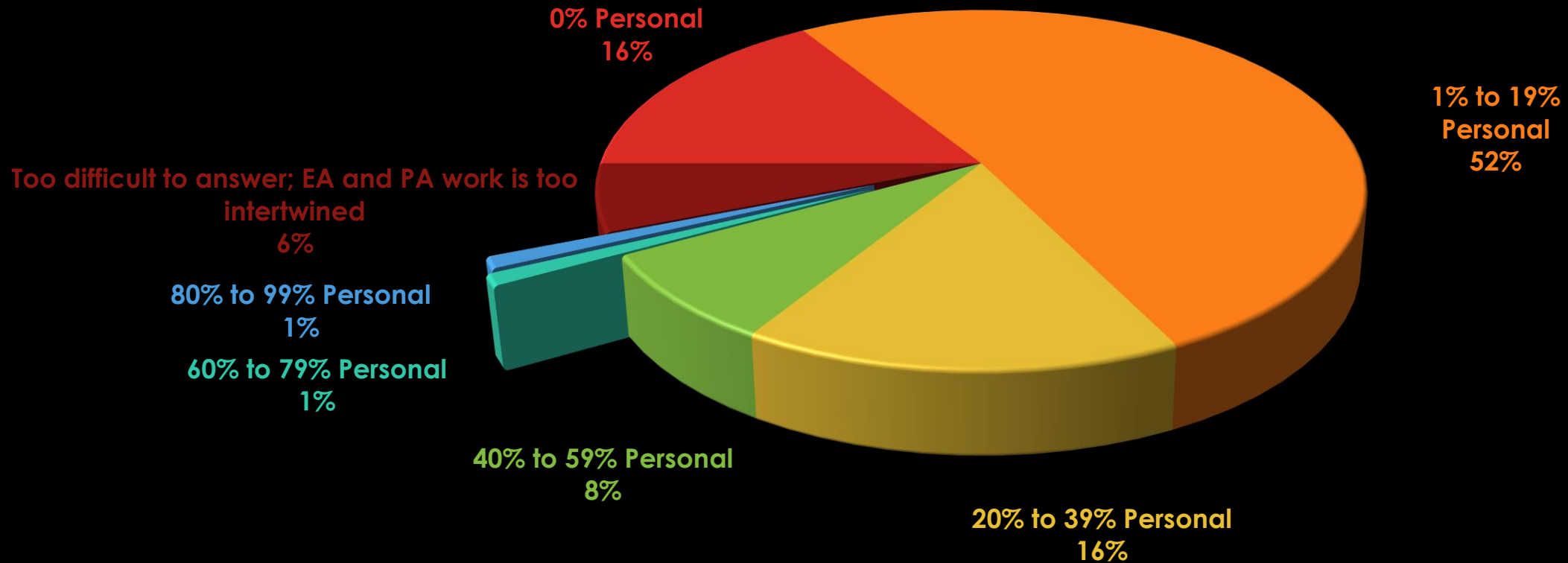
# AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK



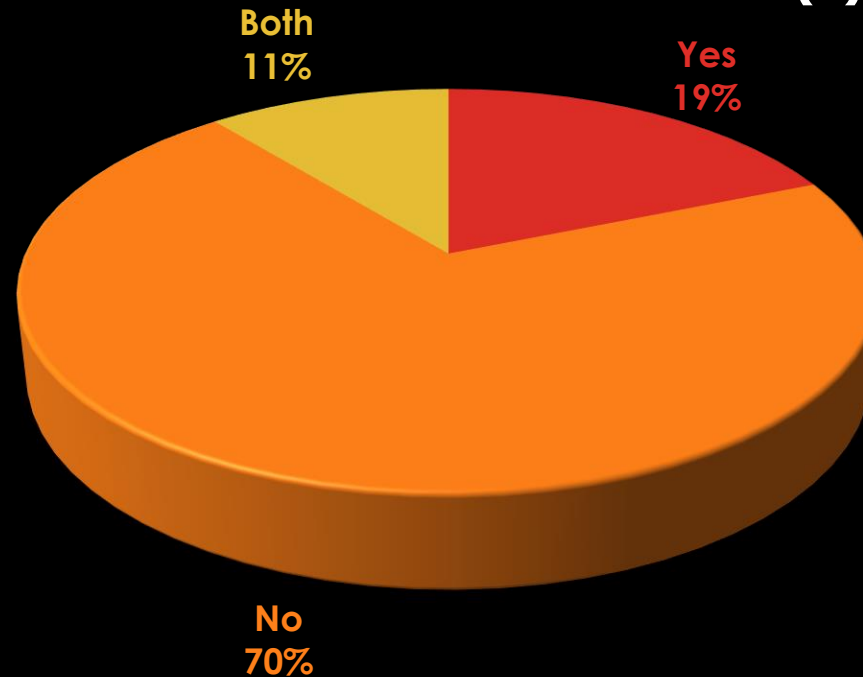
## PORTION OF JOB DEDICATED TO TRADITIONAL DUTIES



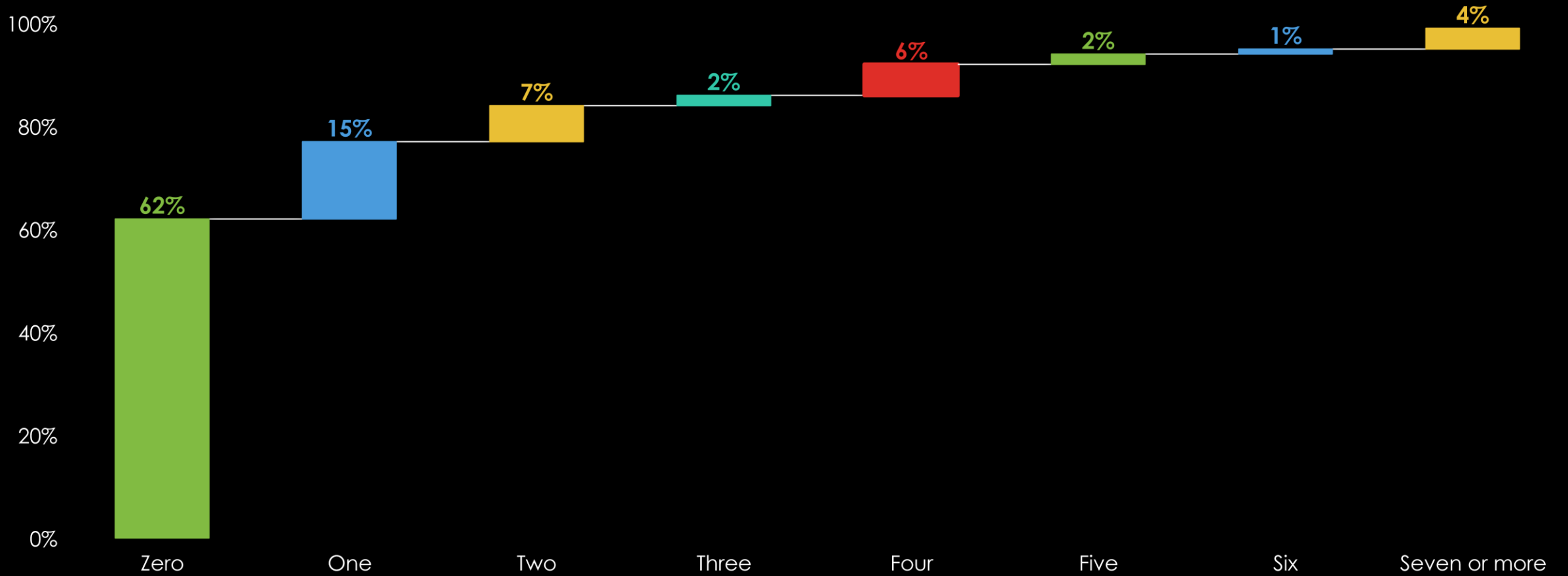
## WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR WORK IS PERSONAL ASSISTANT WORK?



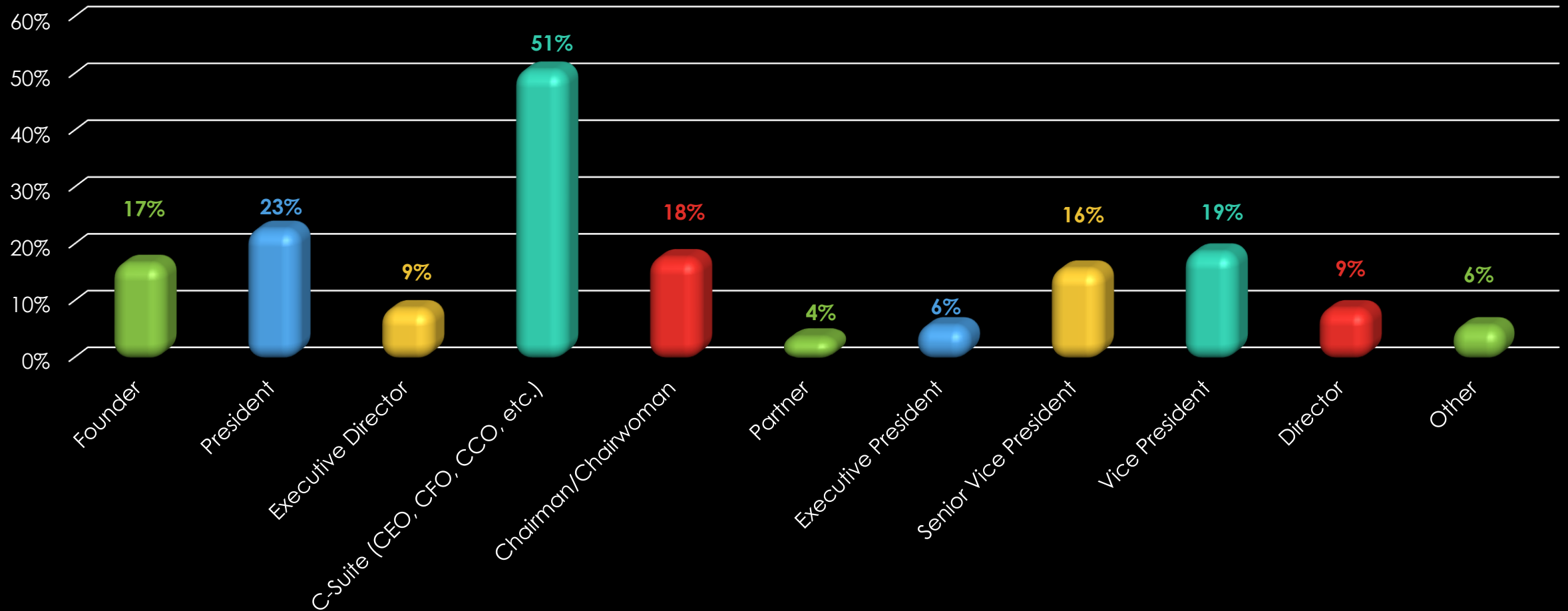
## DO YOU WORK WITH ONE OR MORE ASSISTANTS PROVIDING SUPPORT TO YOUR EXECUTIVE(S)?



# NUMBER OF DIRECT REPORTS MANAGED BY YOU



## TITLE(S) HELD BY EXECUTIVE(S)

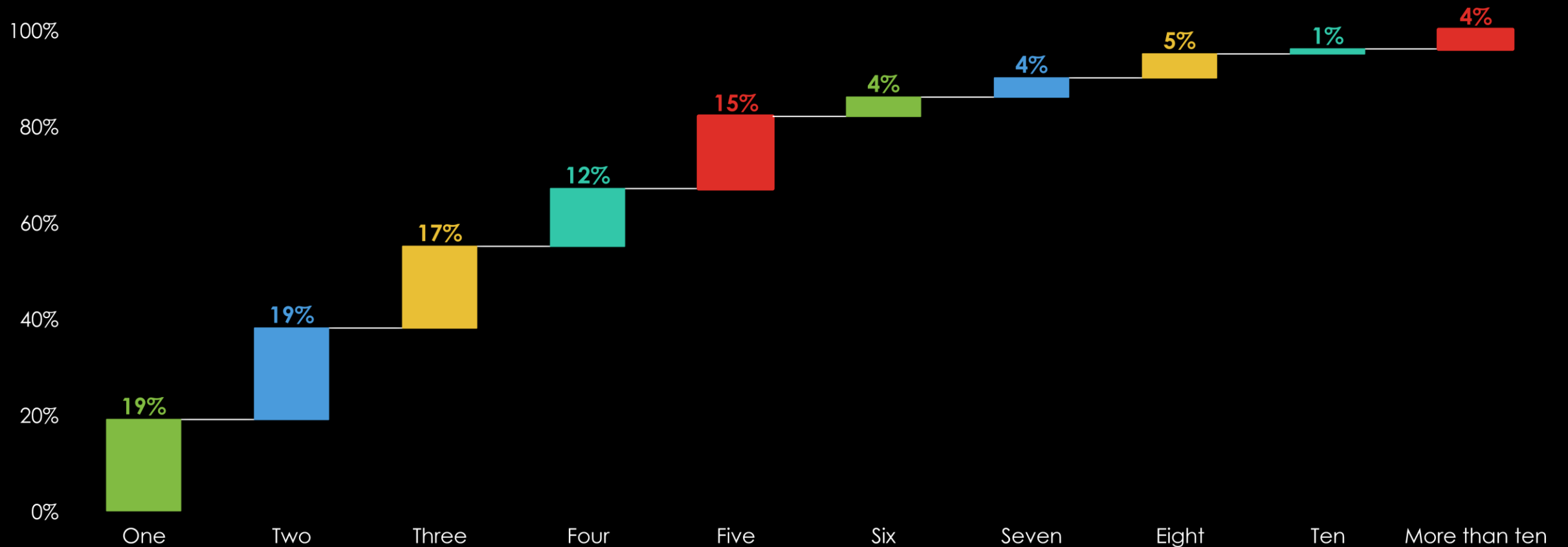


## Other responses included...

- Vice Chancellor
- Senior Managing Director
- Senior Director
- Principal
- Managing Partner
- Group Vice President
- Associate Vice President



## NUMBER OF BOARDS / COMMITTEES YOUR EXECUTIVE(S) SERVES ON

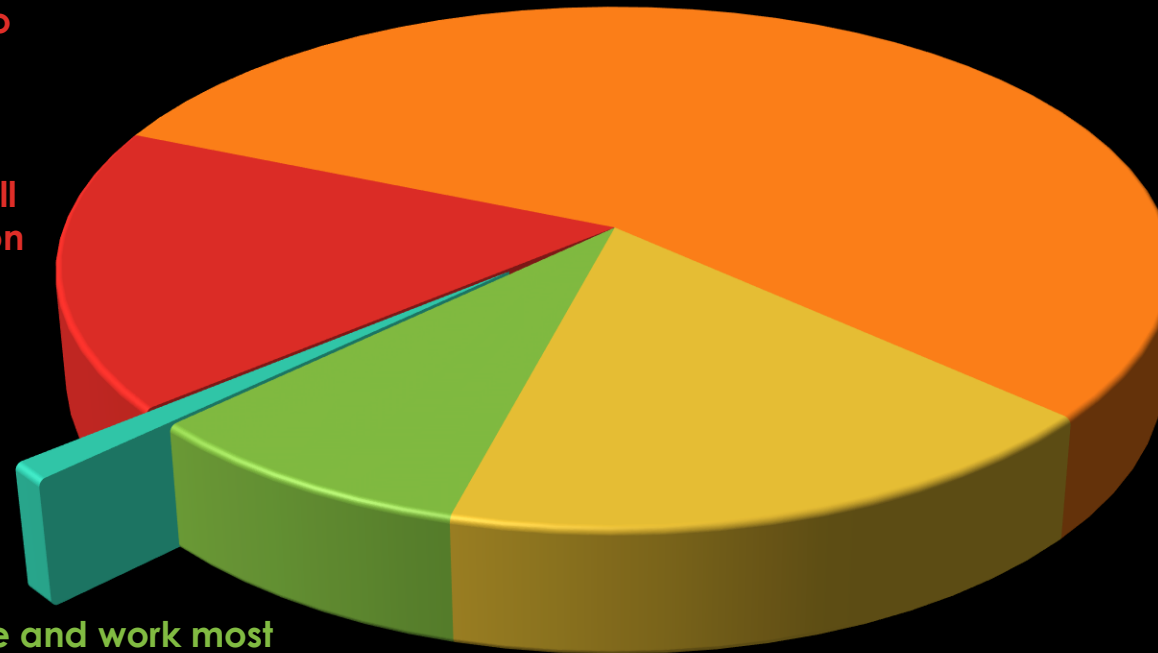


## WHICH SCENARIO BEST DESCRIBES YOUR OUT-OF-OFFICE AVAILABILITY?

I am not on call outside of my regular business hours. I either do not have my work email on my phone or, if I do, I infrequently monitor my email outside of the office. My executive does not call me or text me in the evenings or on the weekends.

17%

Other  
1%



I have my work email on my cell phone but don't regularly check my email outside of business hours. I am available to my executive as needed outside of business hours, but my executive very rarely will call or text me outside of my regular business hours.

56%

I have my work email on my cell phone and work most evenings or weekends, even after leaving the office. It is normal for my executive to contact me in the evenings or on the weekends via phone call or text message for assistance.

9%

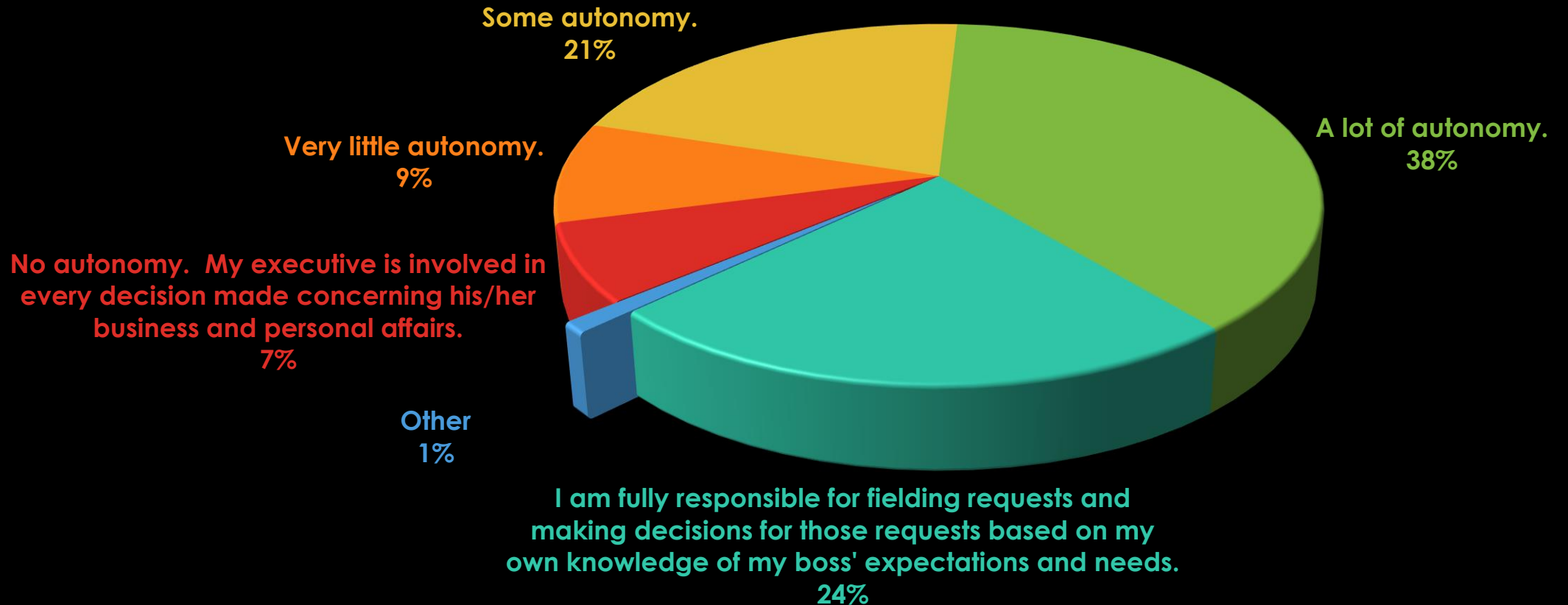
I have my work email on my cell phone and check outside of work. I regularly address work-related matters via email outside of regular business hours. My executive will sometimes call or text me for assistance outside of business hours.

17%

## Other responses included...

- I do not have my work email on my phone, but can be on call at any time, on any day.

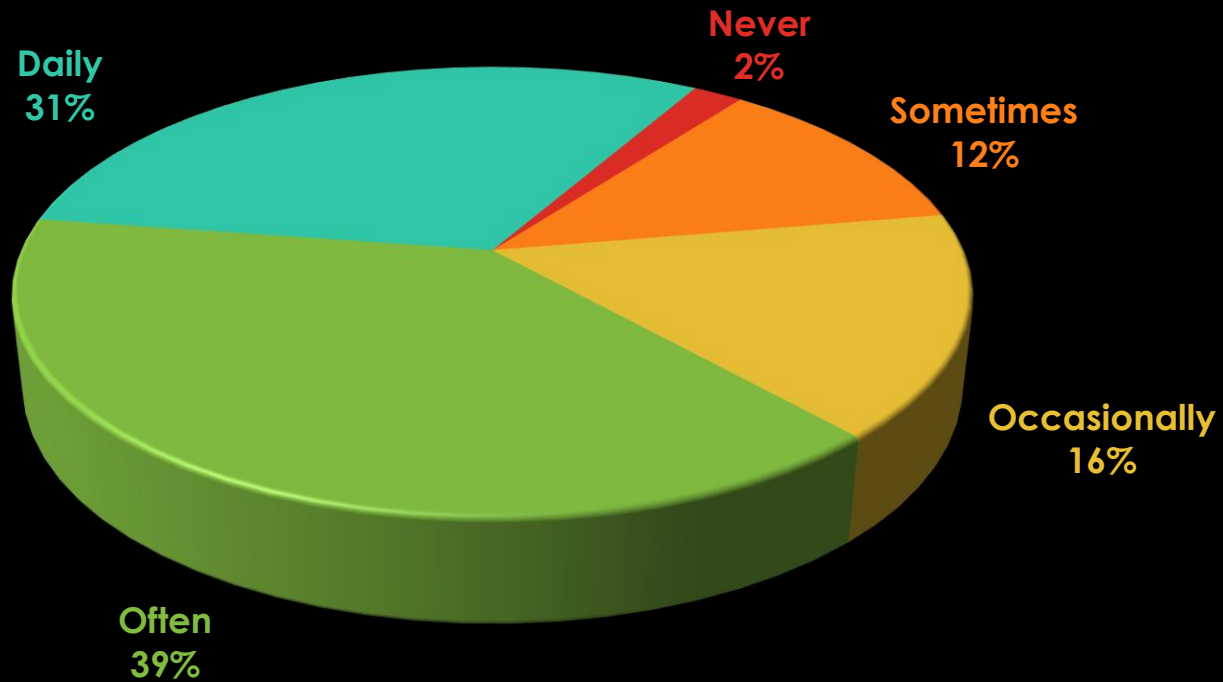
# AUTONOMY WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ON BEHALF OF EXECUTIVE(S) (SCHEDULING, RESPONDING TO EMAILS, ACCEPTING INVITATIONS, ETC.)?



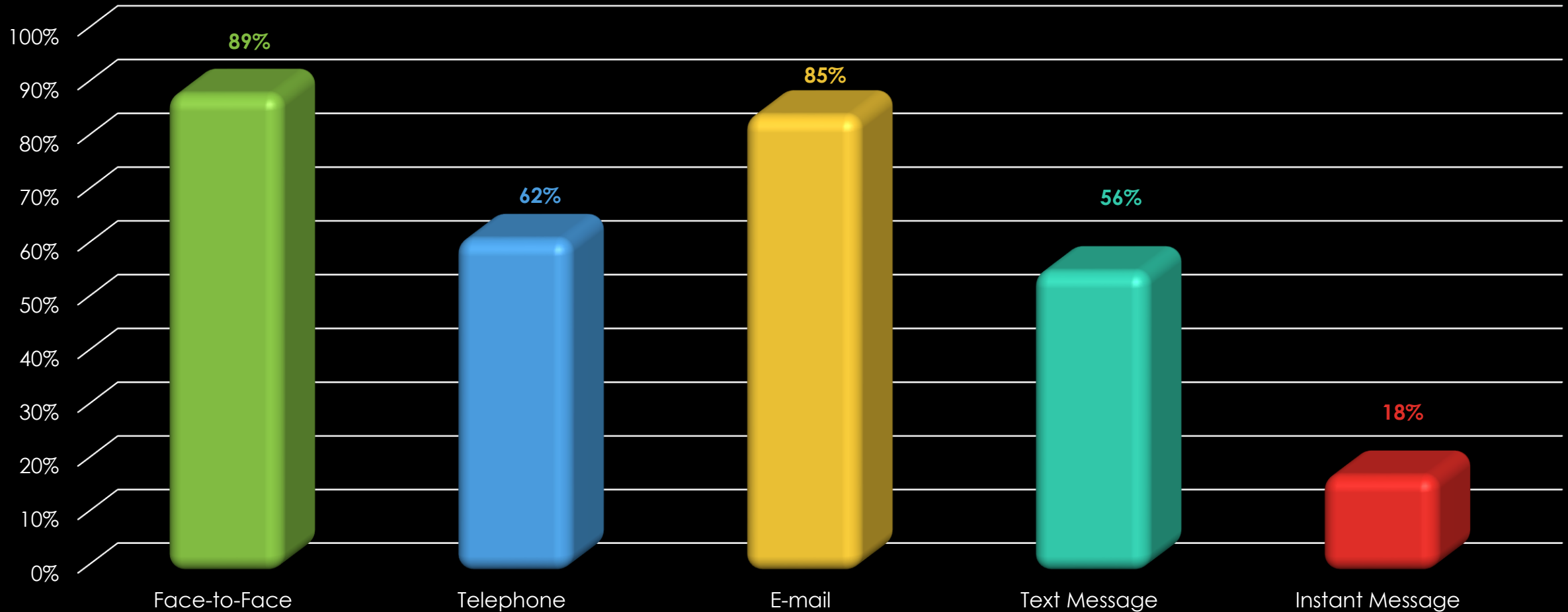
## Other responses included...

- My CEO is inconsistent, but the other Executives I support are better about empowering me to make these decisions.
- A lot of autonomy for one and no autonomy for the other.

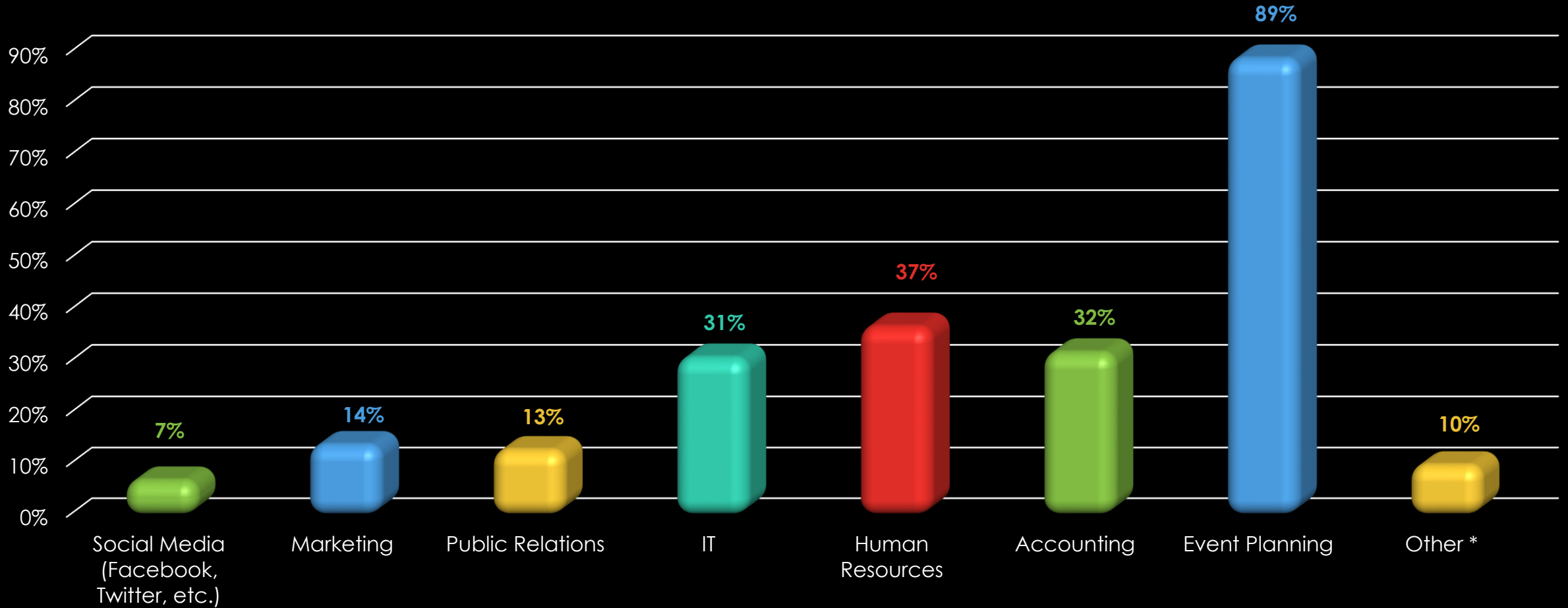
# HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU SEE YOUR EXECUTIVE IN PERSON?



## TYPICAL INTERACTIONS WITH EXECUTIVE(S)



## NON-TRADITIONAL JOB RESPONSIBILITIES





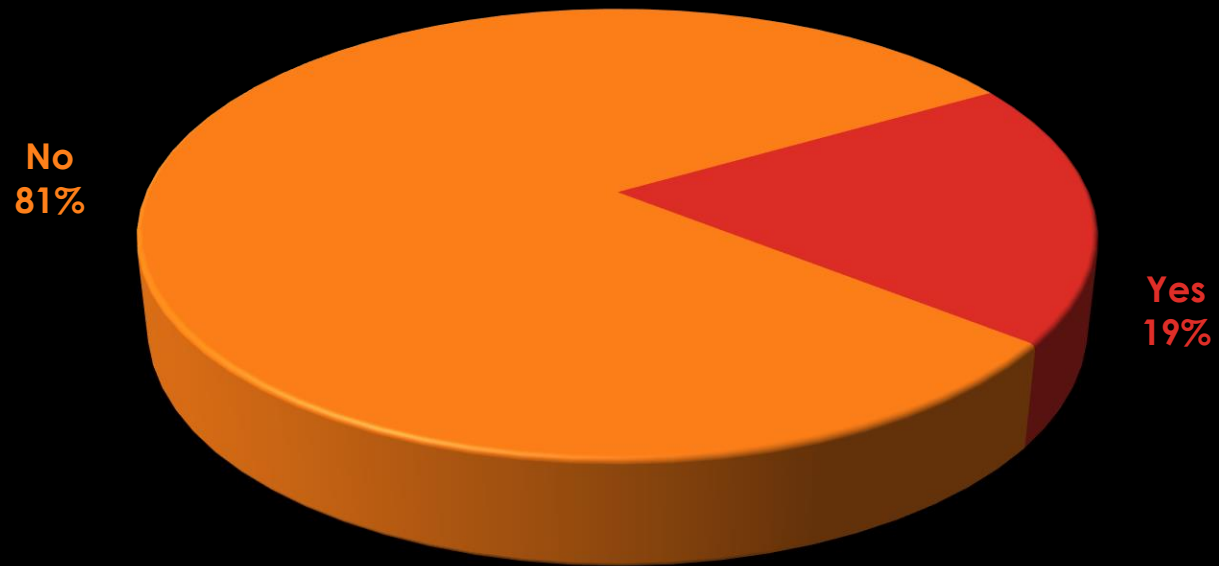
## Other responses\* included...

- Running errands
- Project management/coordination
- Miscellaneous projects for other departments
- Minute-taking for board and committee meetings
- Managing business/social calendar for spouse and providing occasional support to family members
- Maintaining SharePoint website
- Board coordination
- Building management and floor planning
- Annual Service Awards Administrator

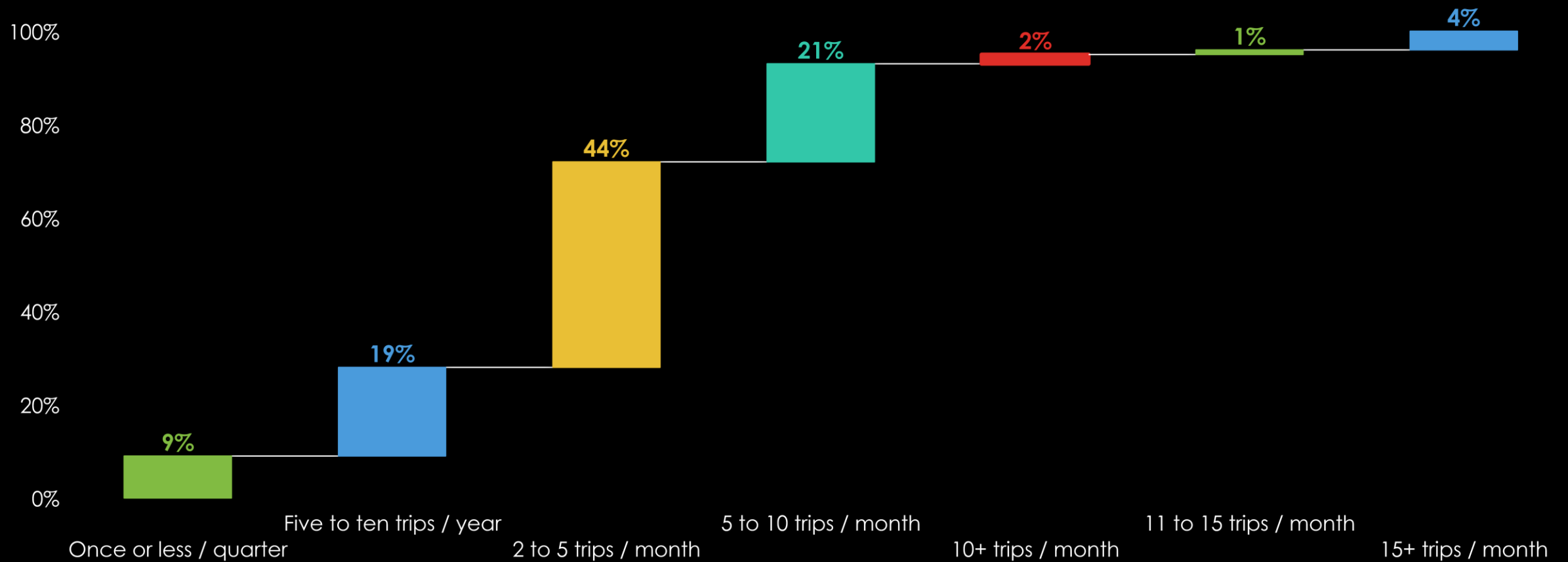
## HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ASKED BY YOUR EXECUTIVE(S) TO DO SOMETHING INAPPROPRIATE OR UNETHICAL OR WHICH SIMPLY MADE YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE?



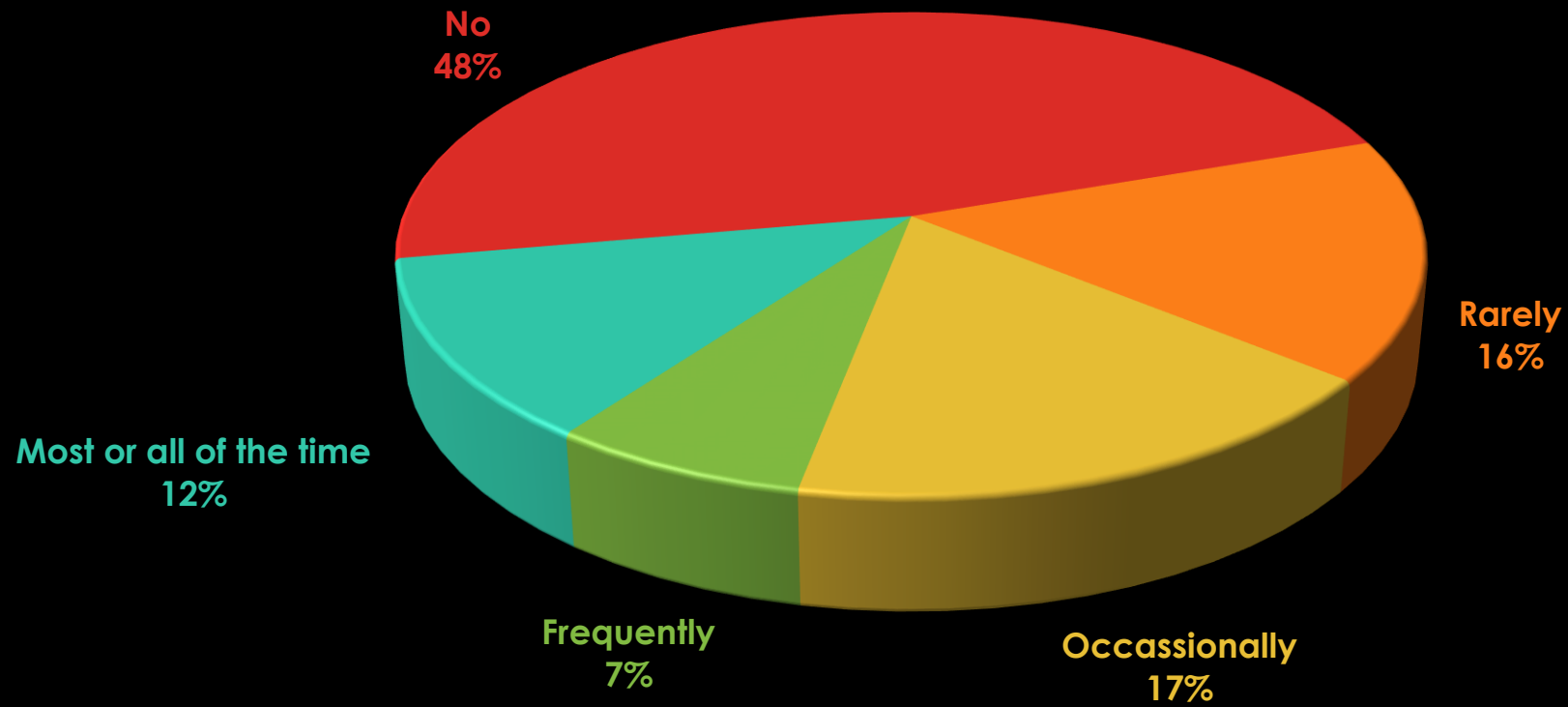
# IS THERE A SUCCESSION PLAN IN PLACE FOR YOUR POSITION?



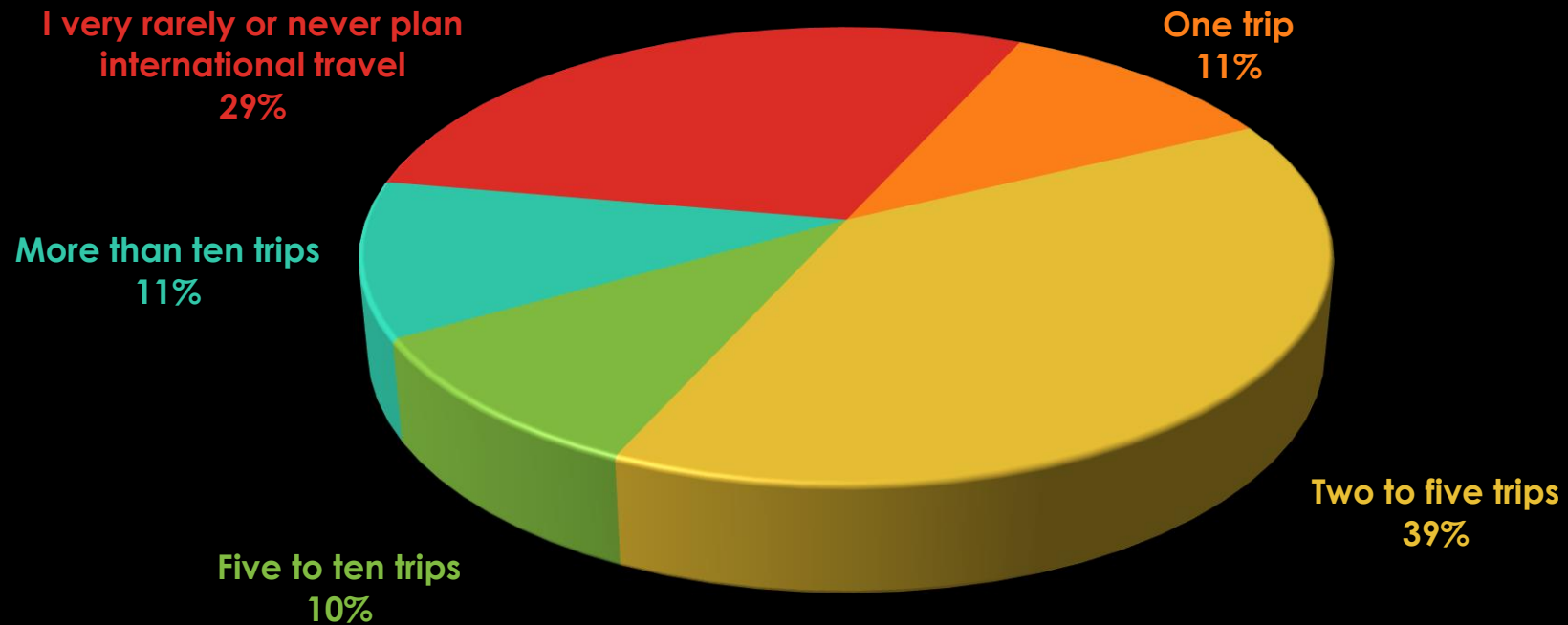
## TRAVEL FREQUENCY FOR EXECUTIVE(S) FOR WHICH YOU COORDINATE TRAVEL AND, AS NEEDED, MEETINGS AND APPOINTMENTS?



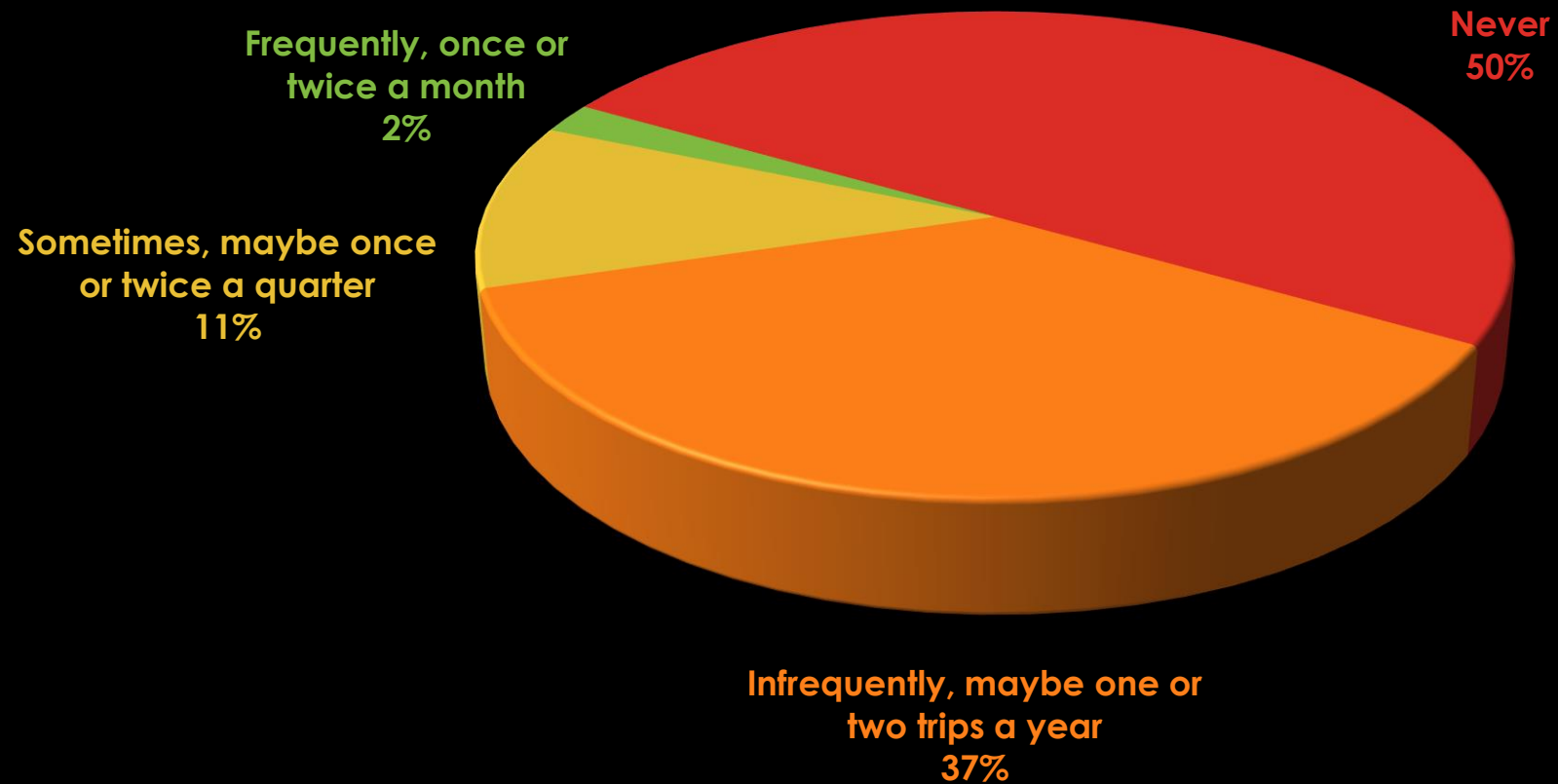
## ARE YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR ARRANGING PRIVATE/CHARTERED AIRFARE?



## ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING



## HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?



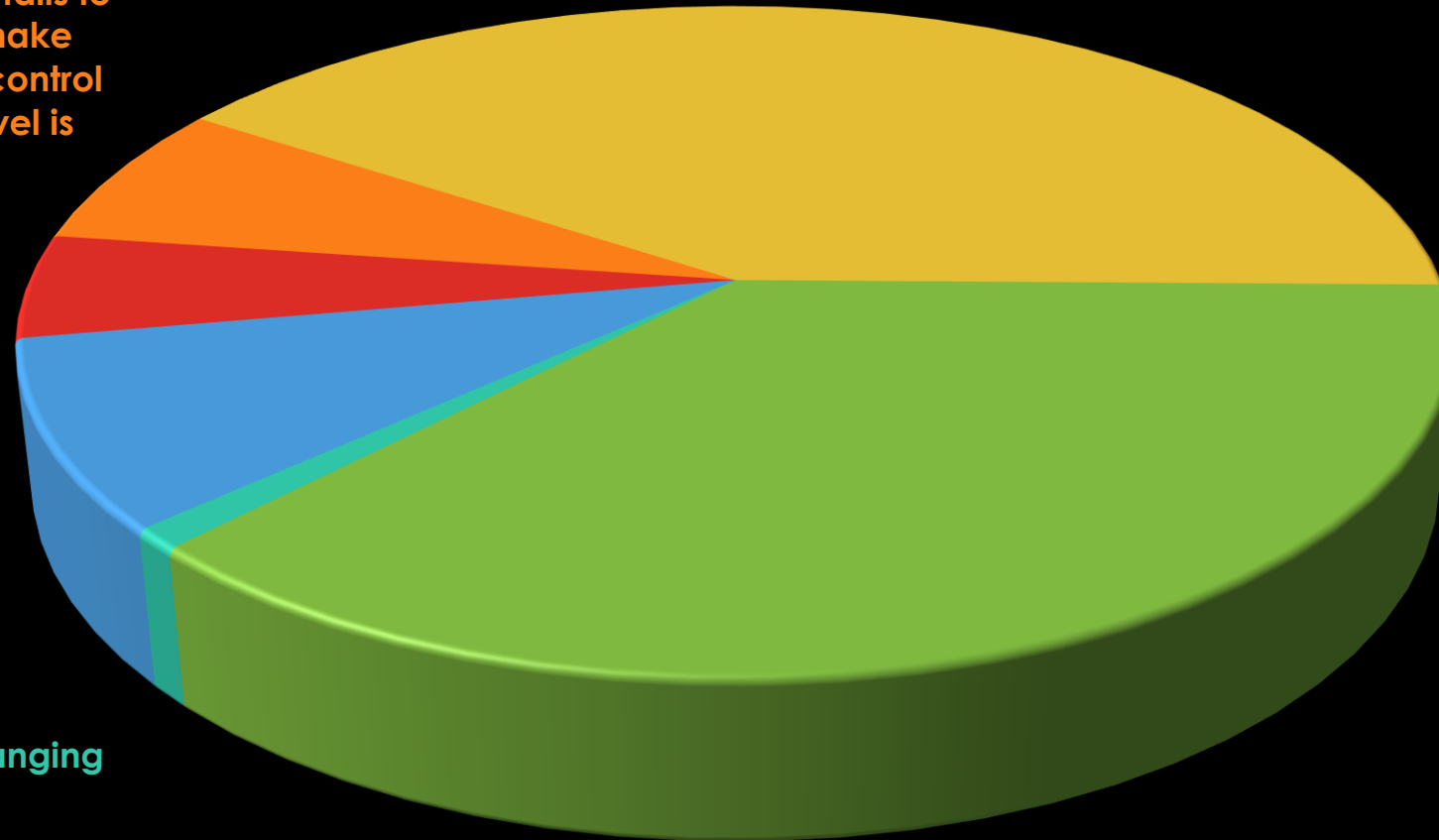
## HOW DO YOU ARRANGE TRAVEL?

I tell an internal travel coordinator details to book travel & let the coordinator make arrangements. I have partial or full control over making changes after the travel is booked.  
7%

I tell an internal travel coordinator details to book travel & let the coordinator make arrangements. The coordinator is responsible for making changes along the way.  
5%

Other  
9%

I am not responsible for arranging any travel.  
1%



I collaborate with an external travel agent to identify options & decide on final arrangements. The travel agent makes the reservations, & I collaborate with the agent on future arrangements.  
41%

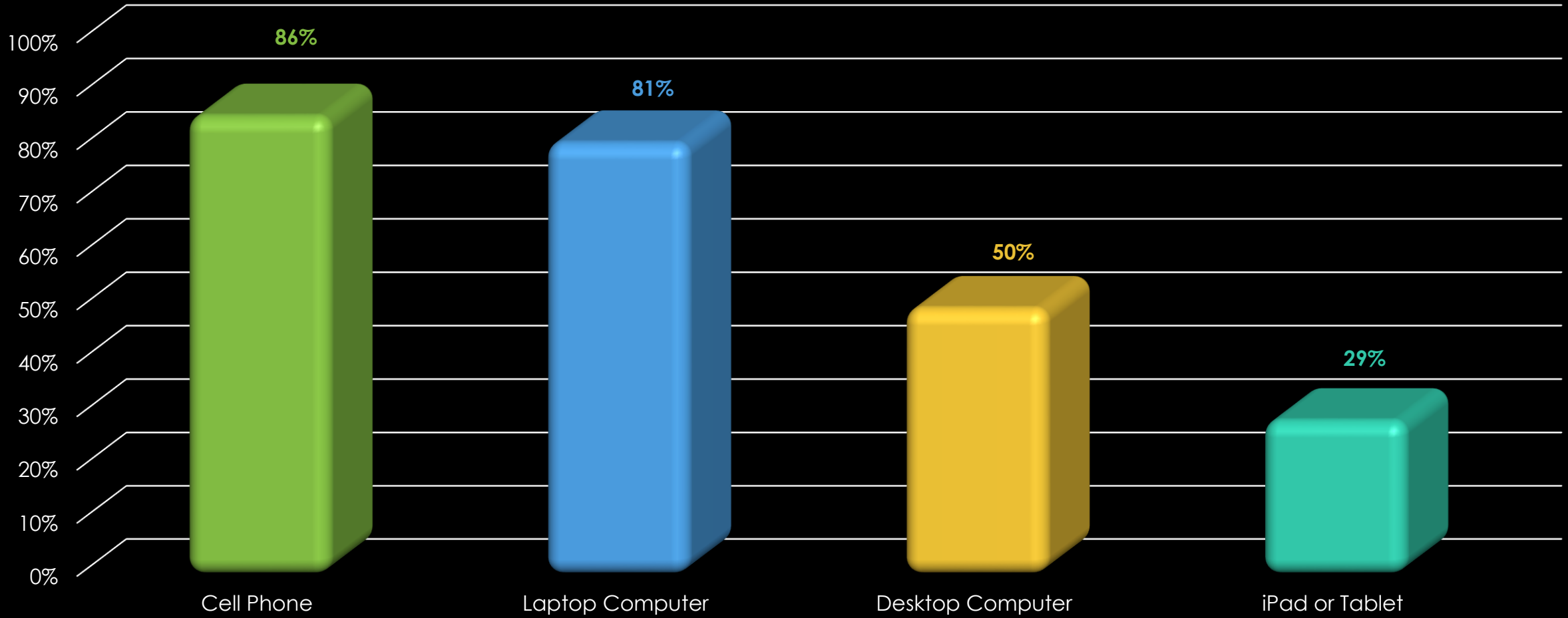
I am solely responsible for booking all travel directly with airlines, train companies, charter companies, etc. I am responsible for last-minute travel plan modifications.  
37%



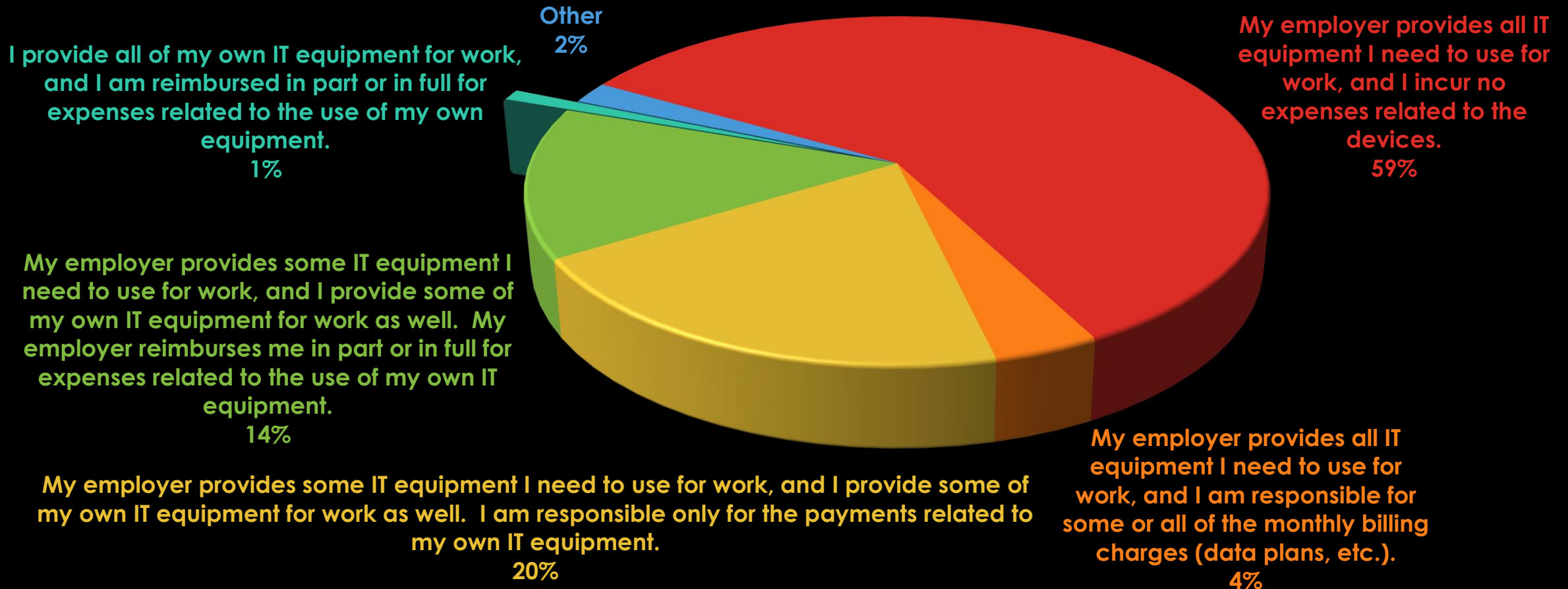
### Other responses included...

- We use an online booking tool. Changes or modifications are made by phoning an external travel agent.
- We use an online booking tool through AmEx. I plan travel and make arrangements/changes as needed. Access to AmEx agents is available when weather or other issues affect travel and changes cannot be made online.
- We utilize our on-site travel agent. For changes, we work with the agent during regular business hours or occasionally after hours. We contact the airline directly on occasion, which runs smoothly due to executive's status with the airline, as we can utilize a VIP-dedicated phone number.
- Sometimes we use agent, and other times we book directly with airlines/hotels; it all depends on the trip complexity and destination.
- My executive owns a plane.
- I work with an outside travel agent for commercial flights, cars and hotels. I also arrange private jet reservations for boss and family members, as directed, for personal travel.
- I tend to book most travel online so we don't have to pay a travel agent fee, but I work with a travel agent 25% of the time.
- I manage all travel arrangements via an online service.
- I book travel via internal system and work with an internal travel coordinator for any changes needed.
- I book travel through Concur Solutions. In the event I am booking an international trip, I use an internal travel coordinator to assist in booking the trip after choosing flights.
- I use a third-party agent when booking personal travel and directly book business-related travel.

## IT DEVICES USED



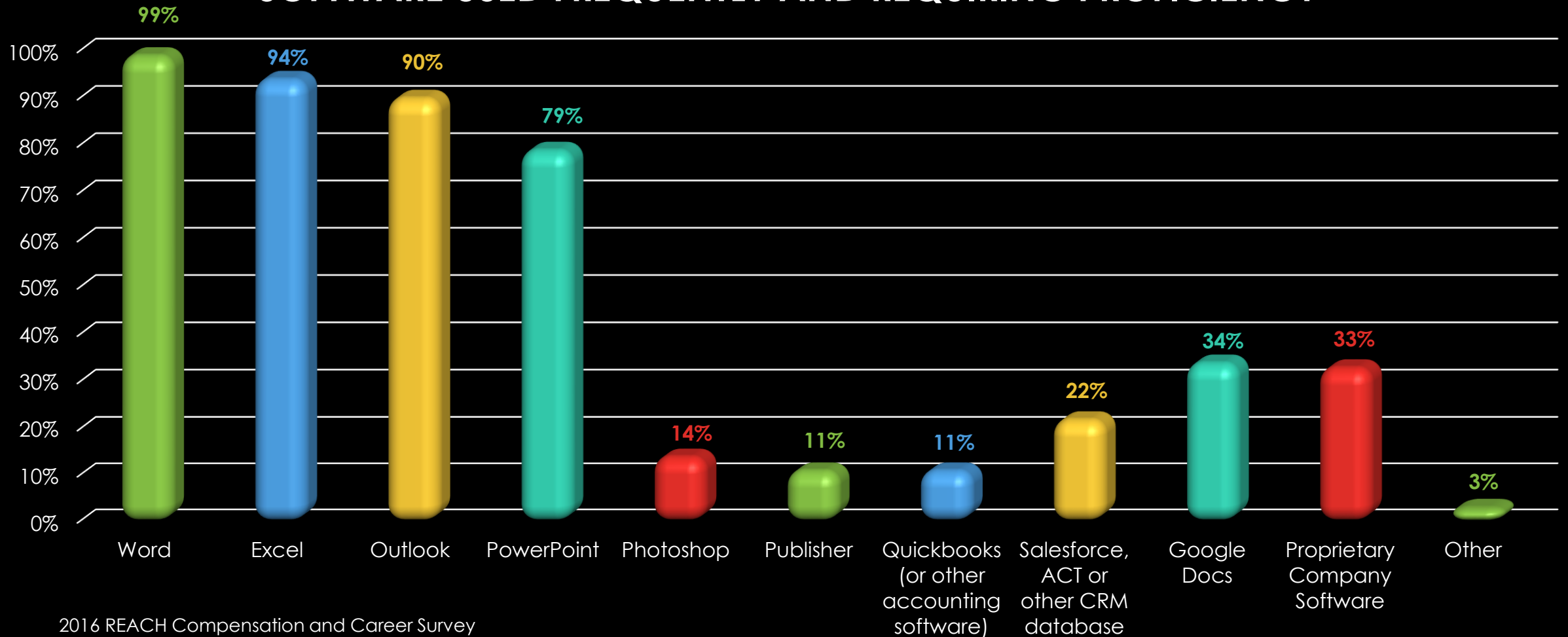
## IT USE AND REIMBURSEMENT



## Other responses included...

- I provide all of my own IT equipment and am not reimbursed.
- My employer provides IT equipment, but I am responsible for my own cell phone and am not provided reimbursement.

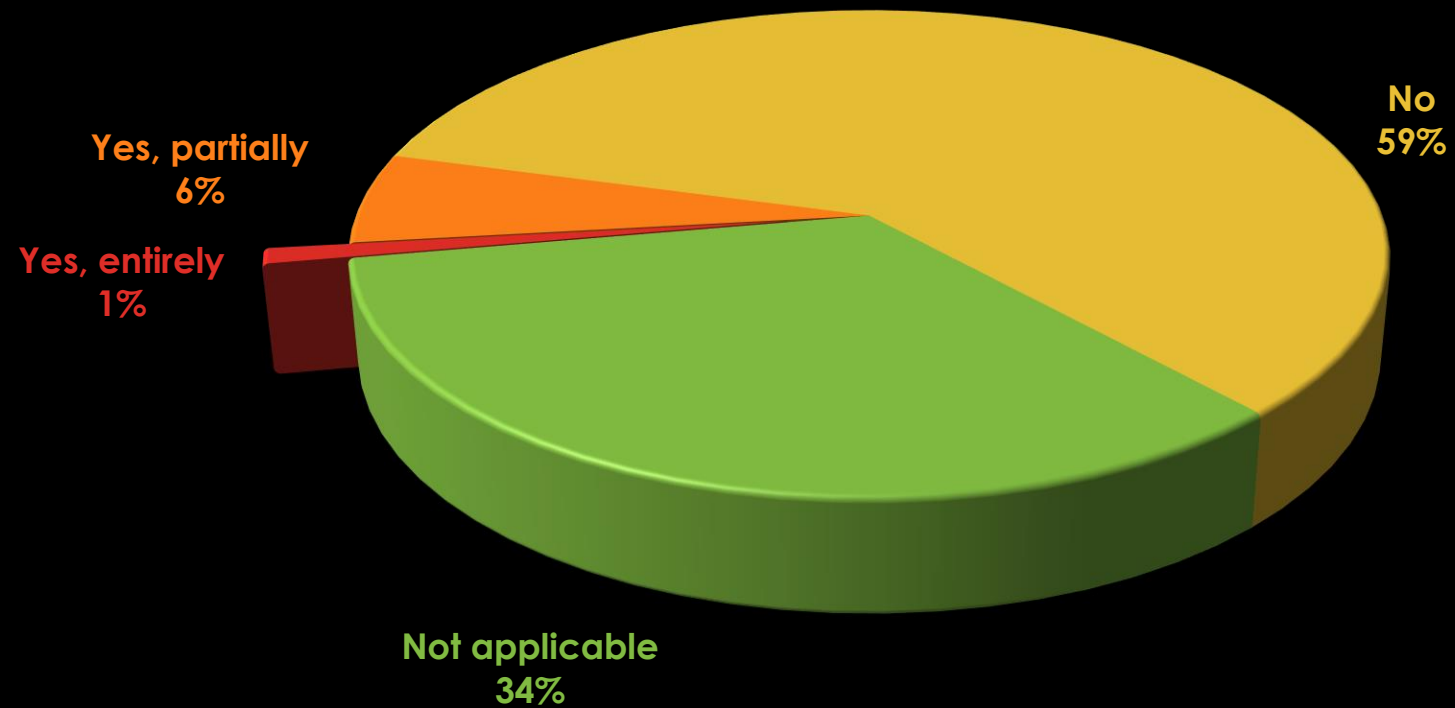
## SOFTWARE USED FREQUENTLY AND REQUIRING PROFICIENCY



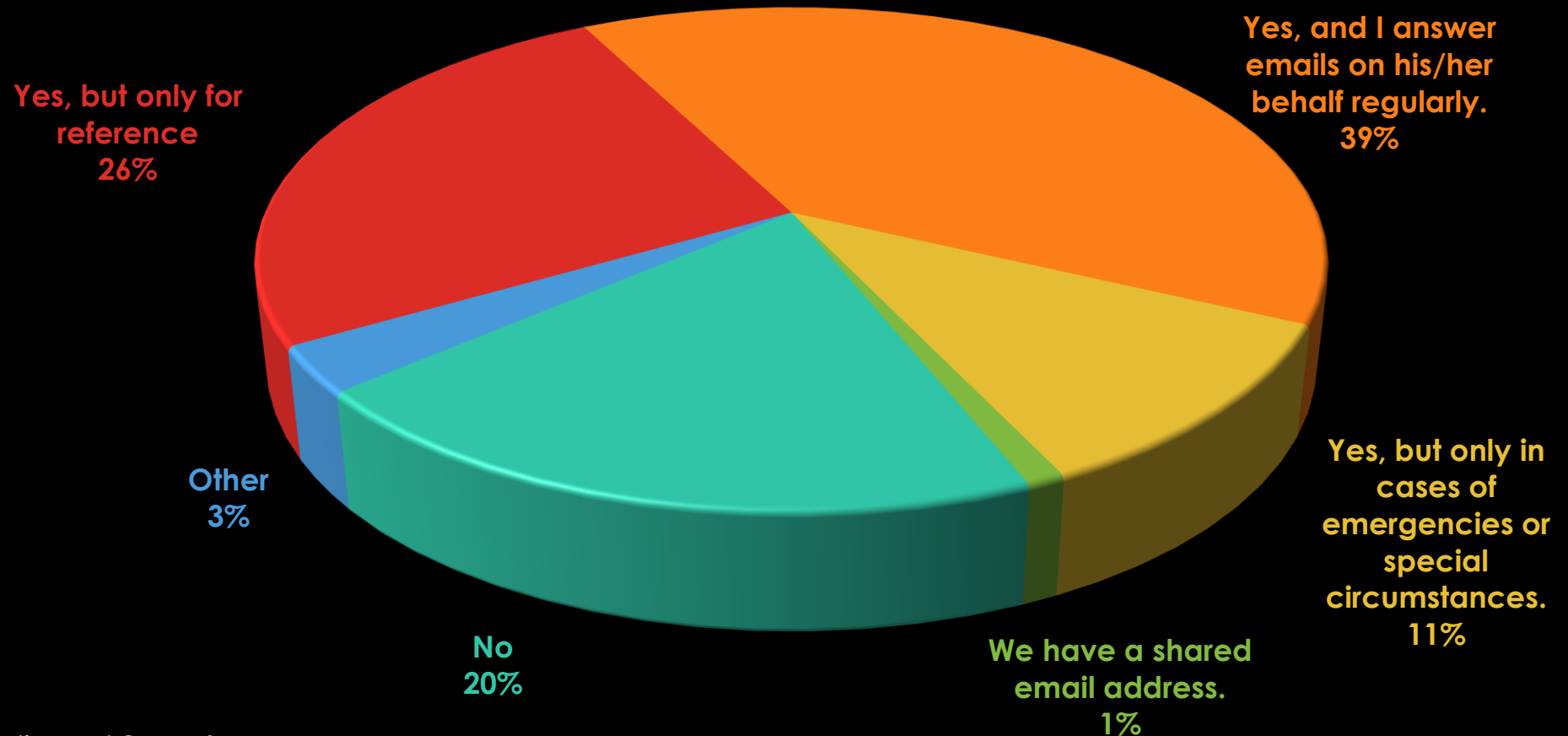
## Other responses included...

- WIKI and JIRA
- Visio
- SAP
- Concur
- Adobe

## RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE (FACEBOOK, TWITTER, ETC.)



## ACCESS TO E-MAIL ACCOUNT OF EXECUTIVE(S)

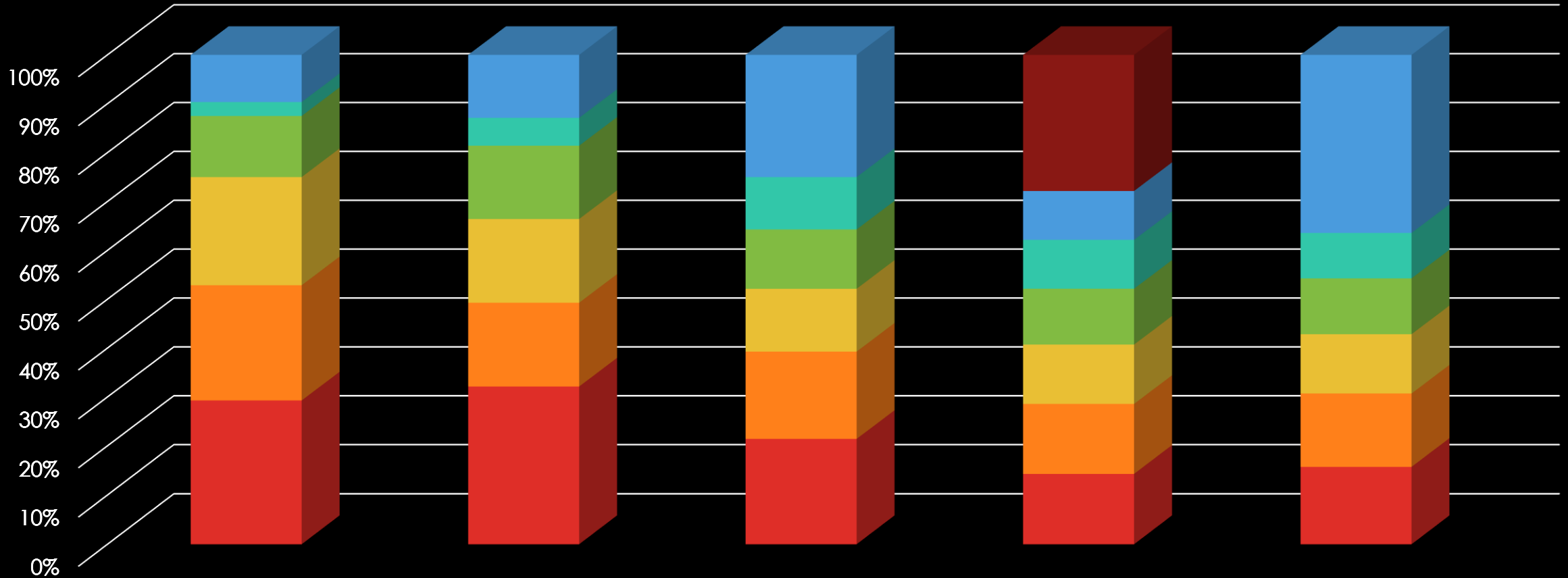




## Other responses included...

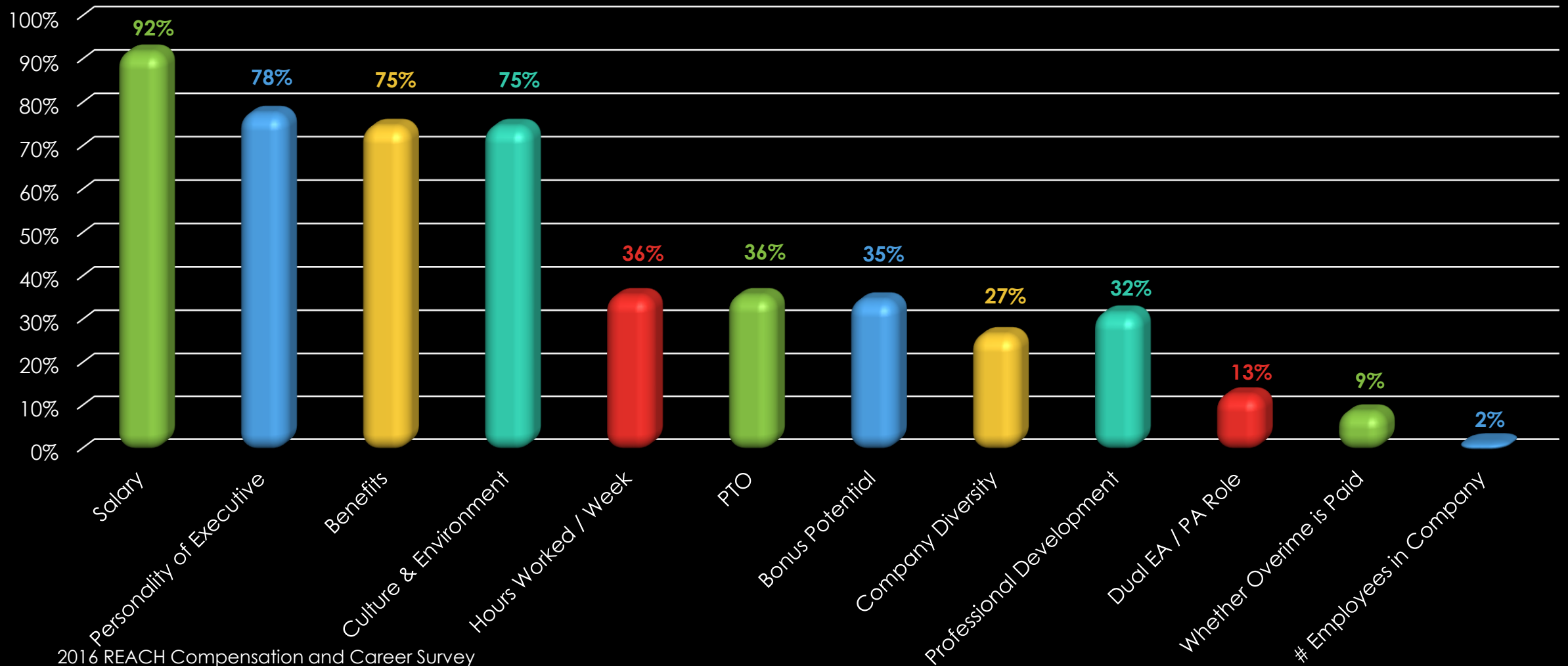
- Yes, but only calendar items.
- Yes, but my executive prefers to answer emails personally. I respond on executive's behalf when necessary, but I must first ask for permission.
- I have access to email for two of the three executives I support.
- I can send email on my executive's behalf, but I do not have access to my executive's inbox.

# FIVE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CAREER HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION

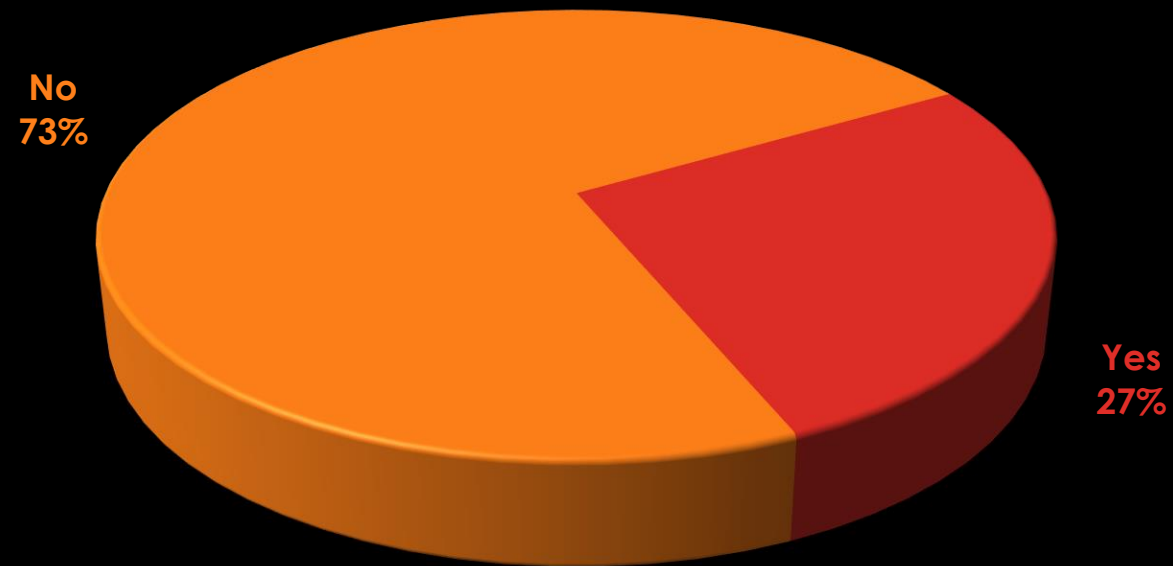


- 1st Priority**
  - Personality of Executive
  - Salary
  - Environment & Culture
  - Benefits
  - Company Diversity
  - Other
- 2nd Priority**
  - Salary
  - Personality of Executive
  - Environment & Culture
  - Benefits
  - Company Diversity
  - Other
- 3rd Priority**
  - Salary
  - Benefits
  - Environment & Culture
  - PTO
  - Hours Worked per Week
  - Other
- 4th Priority**
  - Benefits
  - PTO
  - Personality of Executive
  - Environment & Culture
  - Hours Worked per Week
  - Opportunity for Bonus
  - Other
- 5th Priority**
  - Opportunity for Bonus
  - Benefits
  - Professional Development
  - Environment & Culture
  - Hours Worked per Week
  - Other

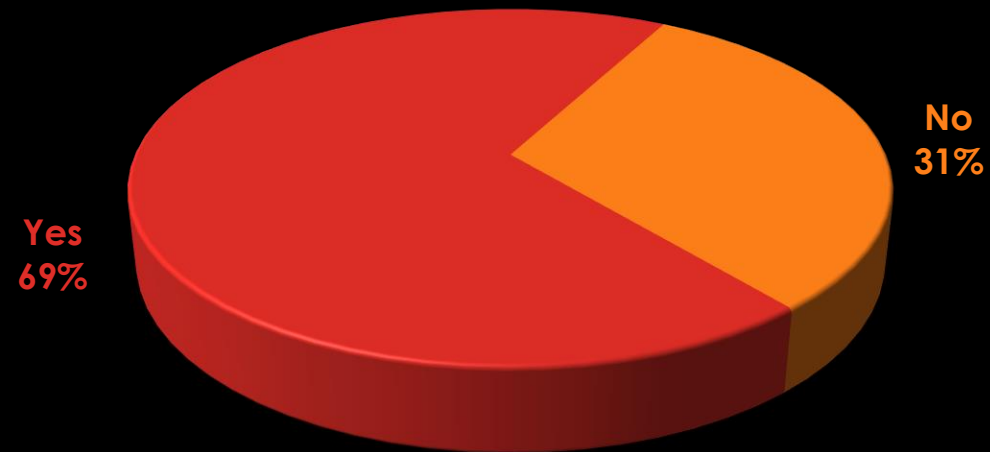
## FREQUENCY OF FACTOR SELECTION WHEN EVALUATING TOP FIVE FACTORS TO CAREER HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION



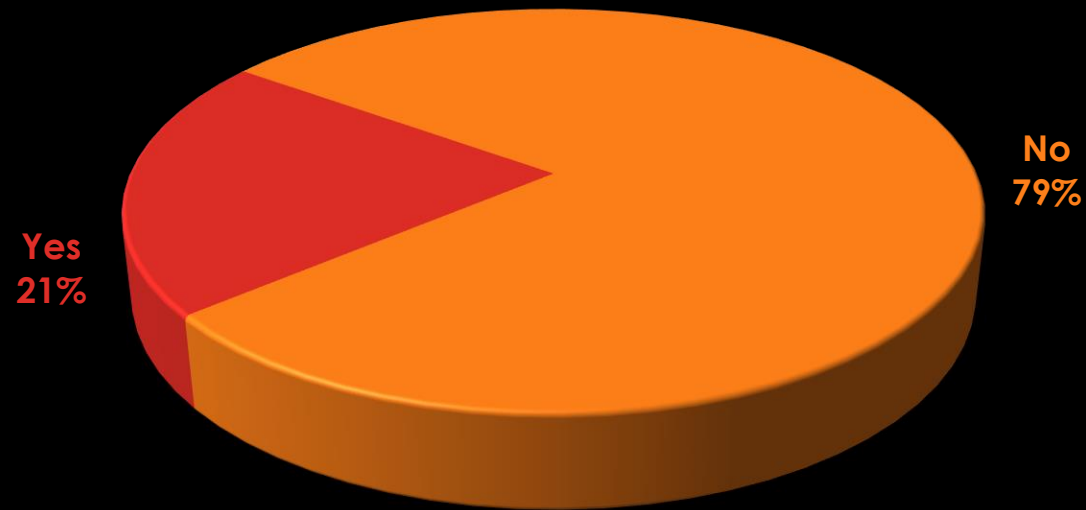
## LOOKING TO SWITCH OUT OF THE ASSISTANT CAREER



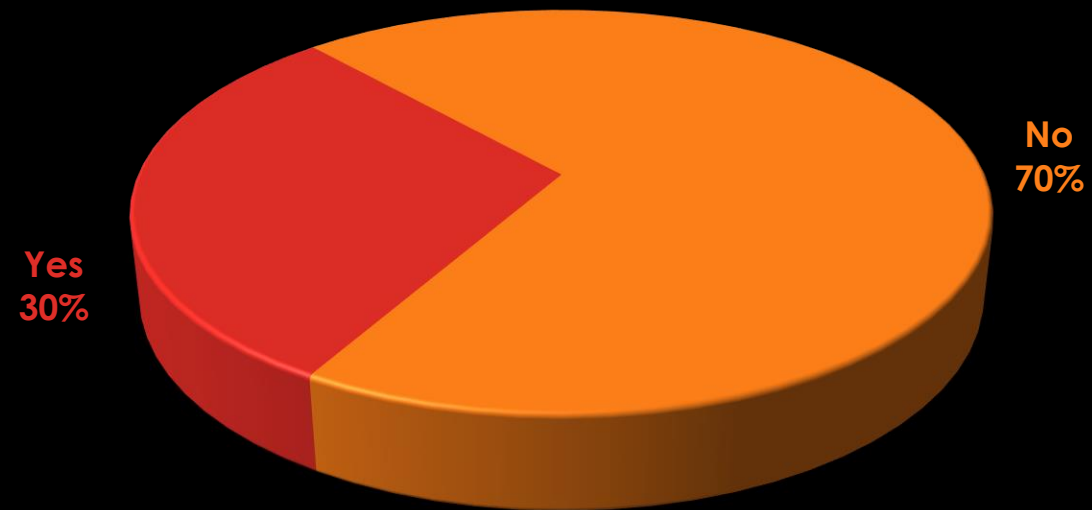
**DO YOU SEARCH JOB OPENINGS ONLINE (CAREERBUILDER, LINKEDIN, ETC.) OR SPEAK TO COLLEAGUES OR RECRUITERS ABOUT JOB OPENINGS AT OTHER COMPANIES?**



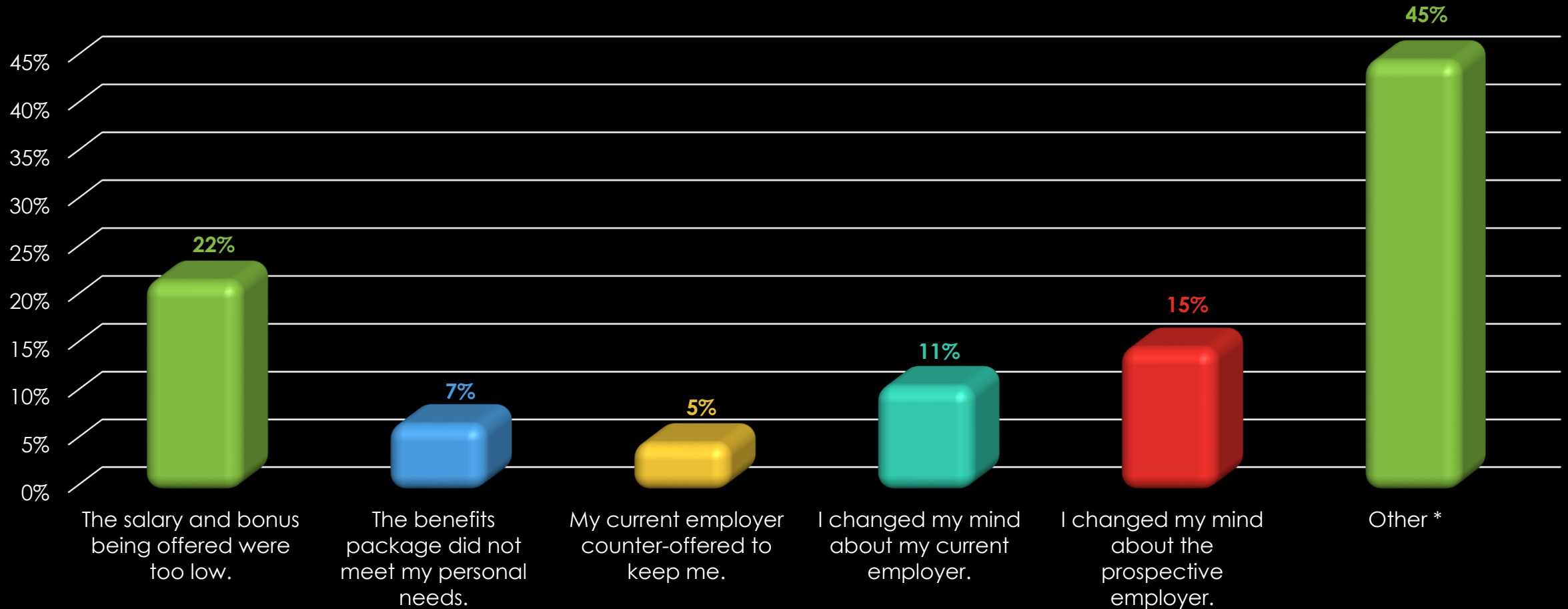
# ARE YOU APPLYING FOR JOBS AND/OR INTERVIEWING FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES?



## HAVE YOU BEEN OFFERED A JOB OUTSIDE OF YOUR CURRENT COMPANY IN THE PAST YEAR THAT YOU DECLINED?



## REASON FOR JOB DECLINATION

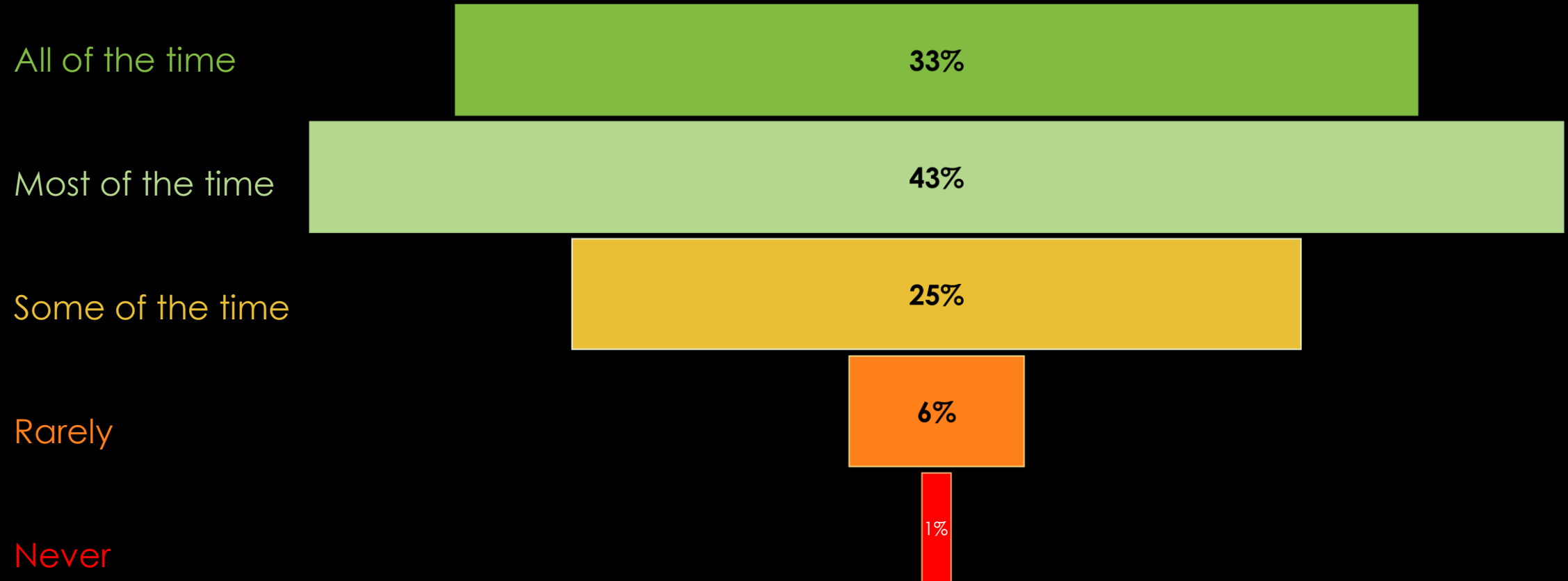




## Other responses\* included...

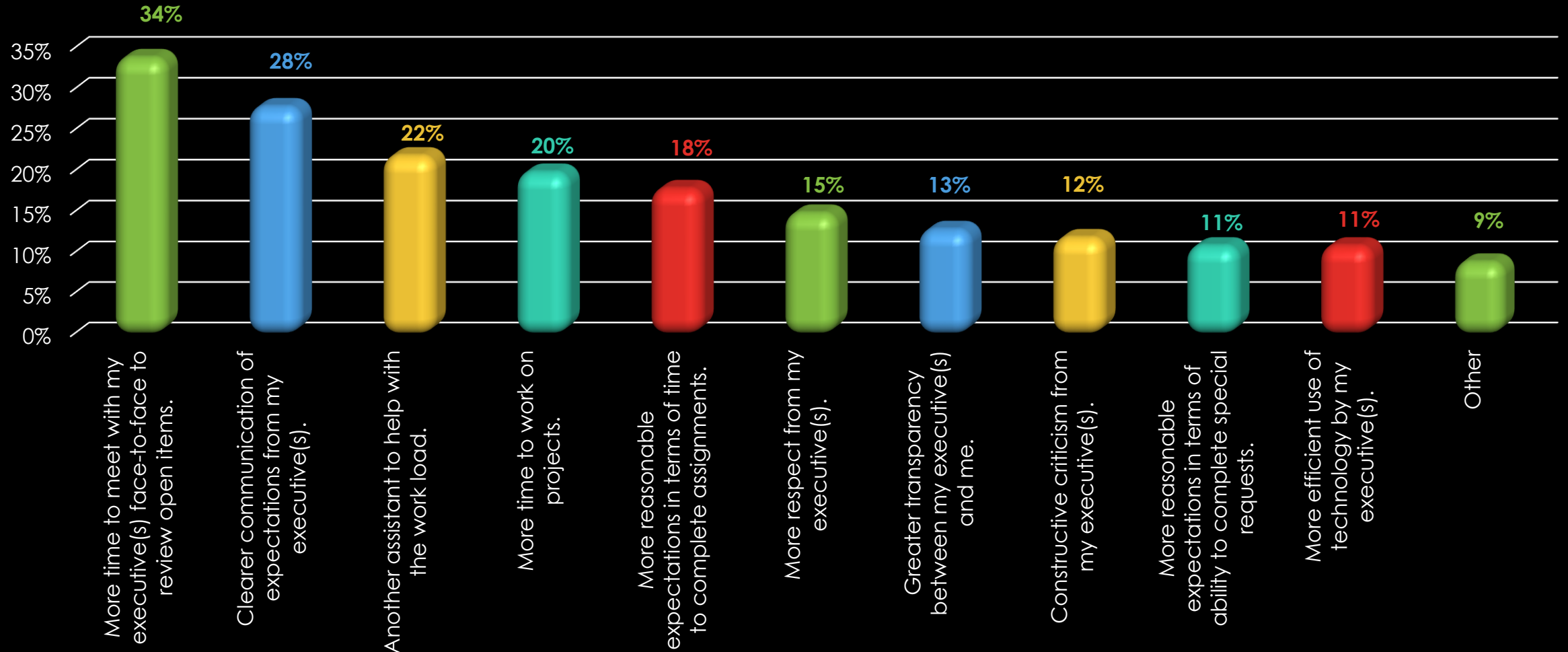
- The position was in Chicago, but I wanted to stay in the suburbs.
- I had no interest in leaving my current position.
- It wasn't the right timing.
- I wasn't looking to make a move.
- I wasn't interested in changing positions.
- I like working with my executive.
- I like my present position.
- I felt a loyalty to my executive and my executive's family.
- I did not want to commute 80 miles for work daily, even though the prospective employer was willing to provide mileage reimbursement.

## DO YOU FEEL VALUED BY YOUR EXECUTIVE(S)?



Never

## GREATEST BARRIERS TO HAPPINESS



## Other responses included...

- Trust in my capability to accomplish tasks.
- Being treated and compensated as a member of the executive team.
- Earlier communication of needs and priorities.
- Understanding of my personal time and limits.
- More projects and fewer administrative tasks.
- More meaning/connection to work on a personal level.
- Greater responsibility.
- Bullying
- A better work schedule; I work with assistants who have the same benefits but a much smaller work load.

# QUESTIONS WE MISSED

- What type of salary do you feel you deserve?
- What do you like least about being an assistant? What do you like best?
- What opportunities for growth do you have in your current role?
- What are the titles of the individuals who report to you?
- What industry do you work in?
- What level of leadership is expected of you?
- How many associates aside from your executive do you support?
- How many assistants are you responsible, even though they don't report to you?
- Does your executive apologize when your executive makes mistakes?
- Do you network and knowledge-share with your colleagues?
- Have you ever negotiated a salary or raise?
- Are there other departments within the company that you provide support to?
- Do your executives seek or value your input in terms of what skills you bring to the table?
- Questions concerning...
  - Work-life balance
  - Dress code
  - The number of individuals reporting to your executive(s)
  - Office location and transportation convenience

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO PROVIDE THAT WASN'T COVERED...

- When I was younger I would have left the EA position for an opportunity to move into an executive role. Unfortunately, I never had a mentor to help facilitate that.
- These are demanding positions working for demanding people. There is no perfect job. There is a lot of stress in these positions. However, establishing a good working relationship with your executive from the beginning in order to address issues/situations is the best possible scenario.
- Job satisfaction is not always about salary or workload; sometimes a boss is a tyrant.
- I support two Directors, two Vice Presidents and an SVP, but I also consistently support a group of 150 associates in my department. A lot of time is also spent supporting them with internal requests for IT issues, system access, HR questions, etc., so the volume is very large in comparison to someone who may only support five executives exclusively.
- I accepted a job beneath my qualifications because of the economy.
- Don't be afraid to ask for fair-market compensation when accepting a job offer. Know your value. We should be paid well, not because we 'deserve' it but because we earn it every day by going above and beyond expectations. Executives don't succeed on their own.
- Executives should be more candid and not automatically scapegoat assistants.
- A large part of this profession is finding the right fit with the right executive. It took me years (at the last 10 years of my career) to find a person whom I admire and will work for until retirement.

# COMMENTS / CONCERNS ABOUT REACH

- I really loved the opportunity to do the personality survey and learned so much about myself from that. I would like other opportunities to expand my learning, especially from other EAs. Maybe a "how to" session around newer software or social media.
- I would like to exchange business cards more often.
- I would like to see more male assistants involved.
- I think this is a great group to talk about our careers and experiences. Having the support of other EAs/PAs is very satisfying.
- I would love to see REACH develop an EA-approved resource guide of vendors/contacts we have personally used and will vouch for.
- I would like to see events in the suburbs.
- I would like to see events on Fridays or the weekends.
- I would like events to start earlier.
- I like seeing the open-position notifications.
- It's been a great chance to meet people I've only ever emailed or called for years.