

Go-To-Market Executive Leadership Study

Executive Summary | 2024



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Introduction

Welcome to our Go-to-Market (GTM) Executive Leadership Study. This past year underlined the critical importance of getting it right when building leadership teams. From recruitment to talent development and retention, identifying key drivers of success is paramount to growth. This study is specifically focused on go-to-market leaders and seeks to provide a lens into the state of the GTM talent market across various industries and ownership structures.

For this report, we reached out to executives across the U.S. and invited them to participate in our survey designed to gather data on the top goals and challenges, talent & teams, growth expectations, and overall mindset of GTM leaders across sales and marketing.

The study provides CEOs, hiring managers, and investors who are planning to hire GTM leaders with valuable current benchmarking data. We hope you find value in the information provided in this study and welcome any questions and comments.



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Executive Summary

JM Search's GTM Executive Leadership Study surveyed senior executives across a broad spectrum of organizational roles across industries. The survey revealed key insights into corporate leadership and market strategies for organizations looking to meet growth and profitability objectives.



Top Goals for GTM Leaders

Top-line growth stood out as the primary goal for the year to come, signifying its universal importance as a health indicator for all commercial organizations. Confidence in achieving this goal was generally high, particularly among C-Suite GTM executives.



Promoters & Detractors of Established Goals

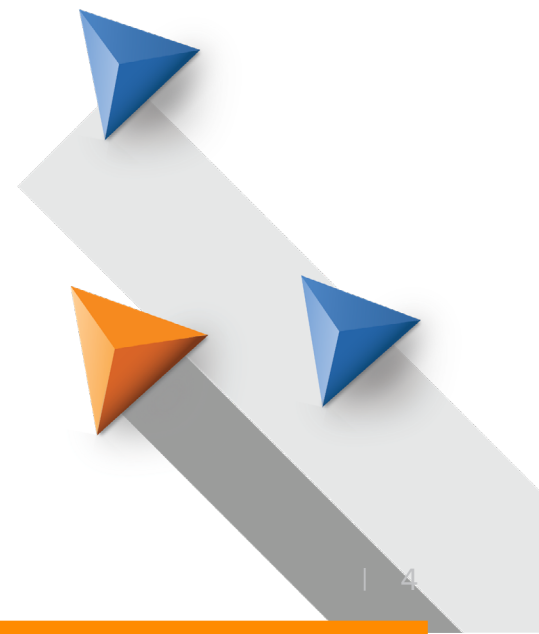
Among the study's findings, there was also confidence in the existing talent within defined teams to meet organizational goals, though this was slightly less so on a wider scale—i.e., in the company's talent overall. Leaders in high-growth companies were recognized as needing a blend of strategic vision, financial savvy, and the ability to foster high-performing teams. Further, the study also highlighted resource allocation and budget constraints as significant hurdles in realizing company goals, with leadership skills being a crucial focus for overcoming these challenges.



Attracting & Retaining Top-Tier GTM Leaders & Teams

When considering new job opportunities, company culture and compensation emerged as top factors, followed by the go-to-market leader's alignment with the company's vision, size, and stage of growth, and the potential for working with disruptive technologies. Respondents rated their teams highly in such areas as soft skills, leadership, and functional expertise but found room for improvement in data analytics.

Overall, the study paints a picture of cautious optimism, with a focus on revenue growth tempered by a realistic assessment of the leadership and talent challenges ahead. Organizations poised to leverage strategic leadership and talent management to meet their objectives will likely have an advantage in an increasingly competitive and resource-constrained environment.



Setting & Fulfilling Goals

A balanced approach to delivering on topline revenue and other key goals

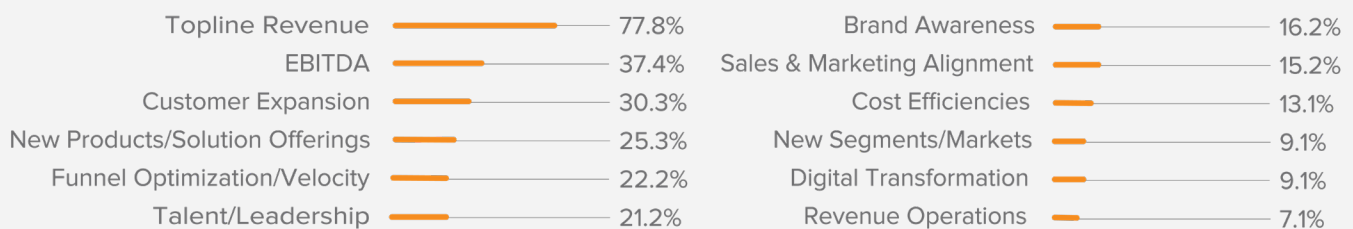
The vast majority of respondents indicated top-line revenue (78%) is their top goal for the next 12 months, followed by EBITDA (37%) and customer expansion (30%). Other goals for the coming year include new products/solution offerings (25%) and funnel optimization (22%), as well as talent/leadership (21%) **(Exhibit A)**. Across sales and marketing leaders, every respondent reported top-line revenue, EBITDA, and customer expansion as their top three goals with the exception of CMOs who reported funnel optimization/velocity as their second goal over EBITDA.

The emphasis that respondents place on increasing top-line revenue signifies the importance of growth and market expansion for these executives. In order to accomplish their stated top goals, they should concentrate on key strategies that drive sales and attract new customers.

In response to these top goals, only 56% of respondents have some level of confidence in their organization's ability to deliver over the next 12 months with just 4% extremely confident and 52% fairly confident. Conversely, 44% of respondents expressed neutral (30%), not very confident (12%), or extremely low confidence (2%) levels about their organization's ability to deliver on their top goals over the next 12 months **(Exhibit B)**.

78% of go-to-market leaders identify topline revenue as a primary goal.

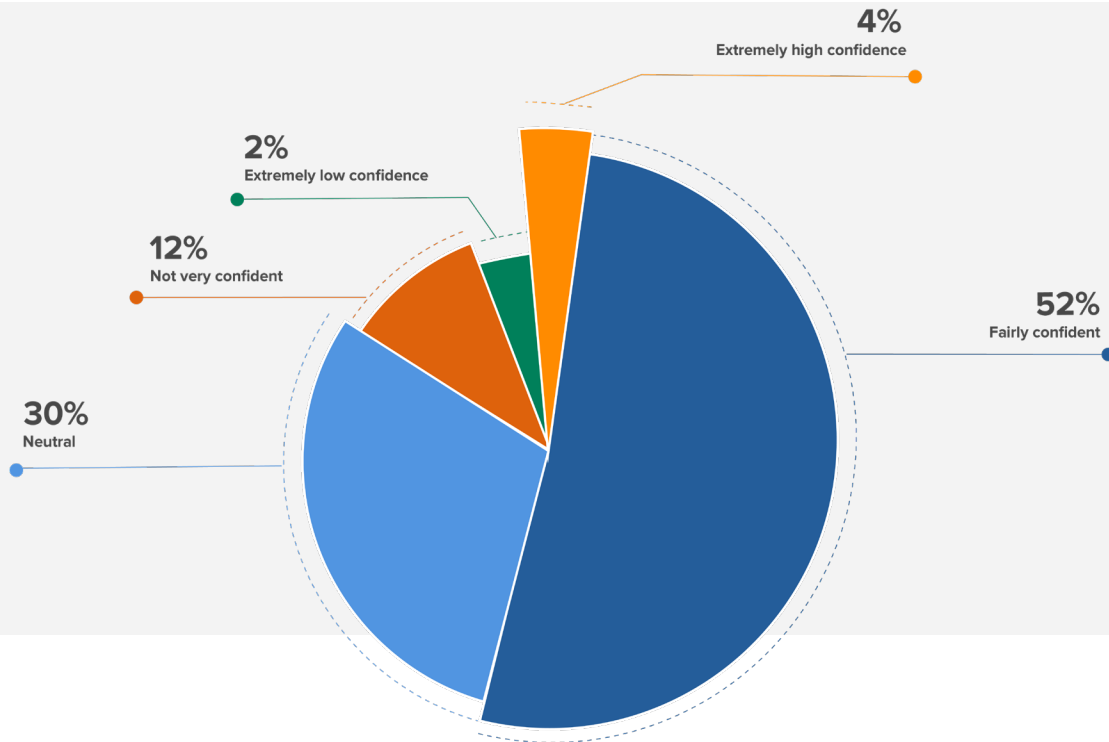
Exhibit A: In which of the following areas are your top goals for the next 12 months? (Select up to 3)



Setting & Fulfilling Goals

A balanced approach to delivering on topline revenue and other key goals

Exhibit B: How do you feel about your organization's ability to deliver on your top goals in the next 12 months?



Putting it Into Context

In summary, our respondents reported that topline revenue (78%), EBITDA (37%), and customer expansion (30%) are their top goals for the next 12 months.

These goals are critical for go-to-market leaders, especially CROs and CMOs to prioritize because they directly reflect the organization's financial health and growth potential. Just as important as these factors are for a company's success, it is just as important for CROs and CMOs to be aligned in their pursuit of achieving their team goals.

When CROs and CMOs foster a collaborative relationship and unified vision across their teams, they can coordinate marketing efforts to generate high-quality leads that sales can effectively convert to revenue. This joint effort ensures an efficient use of resources, consistent messaging, and a seamless customer journey, ultimately enhancing profitability and expanding the customer base. The more cohesive sales and marketing teams are, the more confident leaders will be in their company's ability to achieve their goals.

Instilling & Developing the Right Talent

Varied confidence in talent both within sales and marketing teams and at the company level

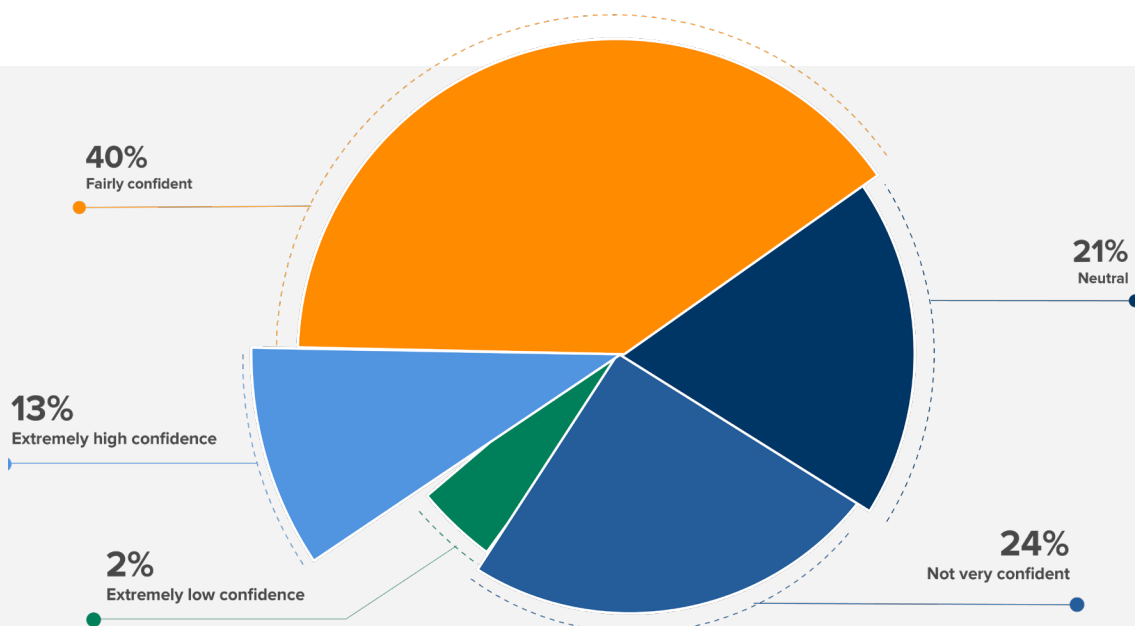
The slight majority of respondents (53%) are either extremely (13%) or fairly confident (40%) that their team has the right talent to deliver on their top goals over the next 12 months with. The remaining respondents are neutral (21%), not very confident (24%), or have an extremely low confidence (2%) **(Exhibit C)**.

Compared to the talent of their own teams, respondents are slightly less confident that their company has the right talent in place to deliver on their goals in the next 12 months, with 41% either extremely (2%) or fairly confident (39%) in their company's overall talent, 30% neutral, and 29% not very confident (25%) or having extremely low confidence (4%) **(Exhibit D)**.

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Respondents expressed cautious optimism regarding both their team's and company's current talent state.

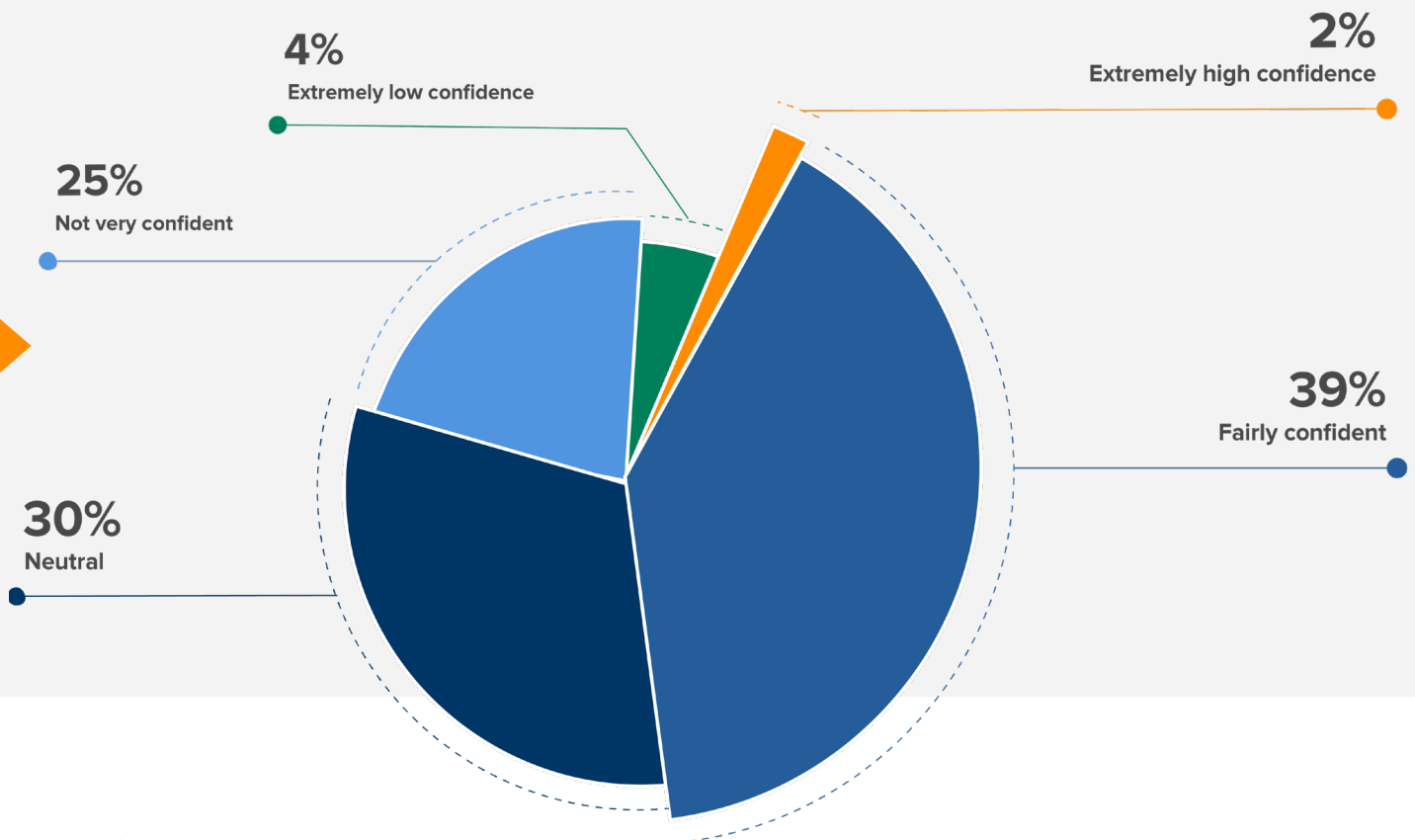
Exhibit C: How confident are you that your team has the right talent in place to deliver on those goals in the next 12 months?



Instilling & Developing the Right Talent

Varied confidence in talent both within sales and marketing teams and at the company level

Exhibit D: How confident are you that your company overall has the right talent in place to deliver on those goals for the next 12 months?



Putting it Into Context

Respondents expressed cautious optimism regarding both their team's and company's current talent state. While approximately 40% for both are fairly confident, extremely high confidence responses were rare at the team (13%) and company (2%) levels.

With a mix of confidence and concerns about the right talent and expertise in place to meet organizational goals, go-to-market and company leaders can take steps to increase their confidence. For example, invest in talent

through ongoing training and development programs to enhance skills and knowledge, conducting regular performance evaluations to ensure alignment with strategic goals, and fostering a supportive culture that encourages innovation and collaboration.

By actively managing and developing their workforce, GTM leaders and companies can ensure that their teams are well-equipped and motivated to achieve their goals for the next 12 months and beyond.

Obstacles in Achieving Your Goals

Strengthening sales and marketing dynamics through leadership unity

Broader economic factors (35%) and competition or competitive dynamics (27%) round out the top five challenges. Both talent acquisition and expertise are cited by 25% of respondents, which aligns with their reported lower levels of confidence in the current quality of the company's overall talent to deliver on their goals (**Exhibit E**).

Among respondents, 46% are fairly confident in their ability to fill the challenge gaps in the next 12 months, followed by neutral (31%), not very confident (21%), and extremely low confidence (2%). No respondents felt highly confident in their ability to fill those challenge gaps in the next 12 months (**Exhibit F**).

Respondents cited leadership (43%), resources or access to the right resources (37%), and budget (36%) as the top three challenges toward their organizations' ability to deliver on their goals in the next 12 months.

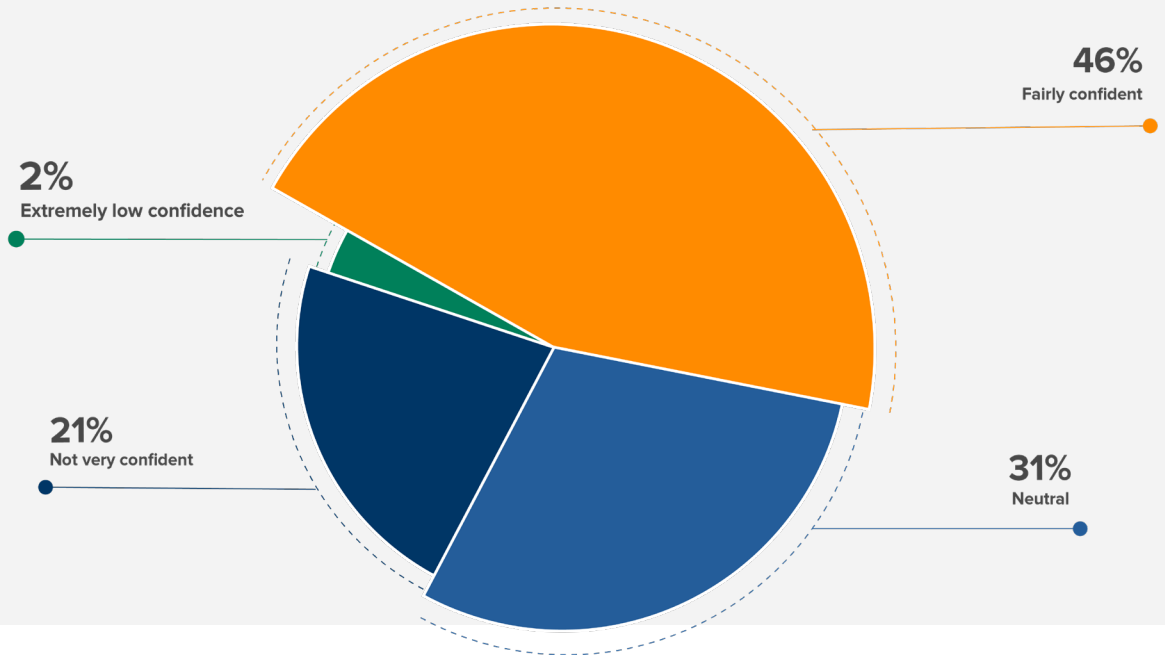
Exhibit E: What do you see as the biggest challenges toward your organization's ability to deliver on those goals in the next 12 months?
(Select up to 3)



Obstacles in Achieving Your Goals

Strengthening sales and marketing dynamics through leadership unity

Exhibit F: What is your confidence in your ability to fill those challenge gaps in the next 12 months?



Putting it Into Context

Leadership (43%), access to the right resources (37%), and budget (36%) are the three main challenges respondents view as hindering their ability to achieve their goals over the next 12 months.

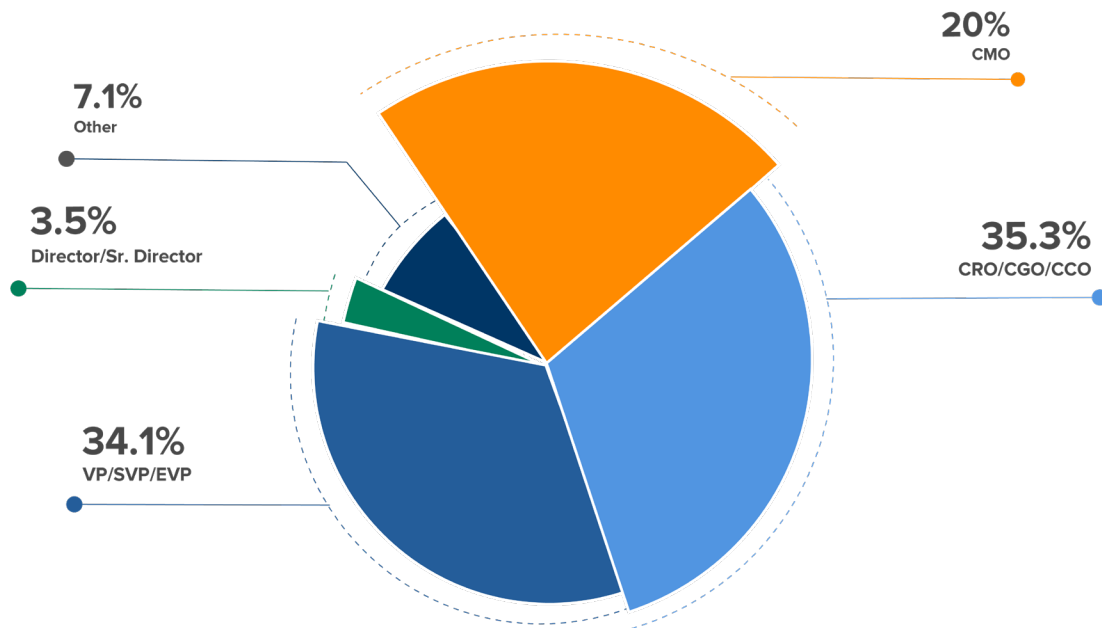
Without effective leadership, a company may struggle to define a clear strategy, make informed decisions, or adapt to changing market conditions. Poor leadership can result in a lack of direction, internal conflicts, and misalignment among employees, which can impede progress and hinder revenue growth.

Access to the right resources and a company's budget are closely interconnected, so it makes sense why they are perceived similarly as challenges. A company's budget is essential for acquiring and maintaining resources needed for strategic planning and growth. Adequate funding allows for investment in high-quality resources like technology and talent, while effective budgeting prioritizes needs, manages costs, and ensures resilience. It is crucial that go-to-market executives are aligned on their organization's budget outlook and potential constraints so they can plan resource allocation for their teams accordingly.

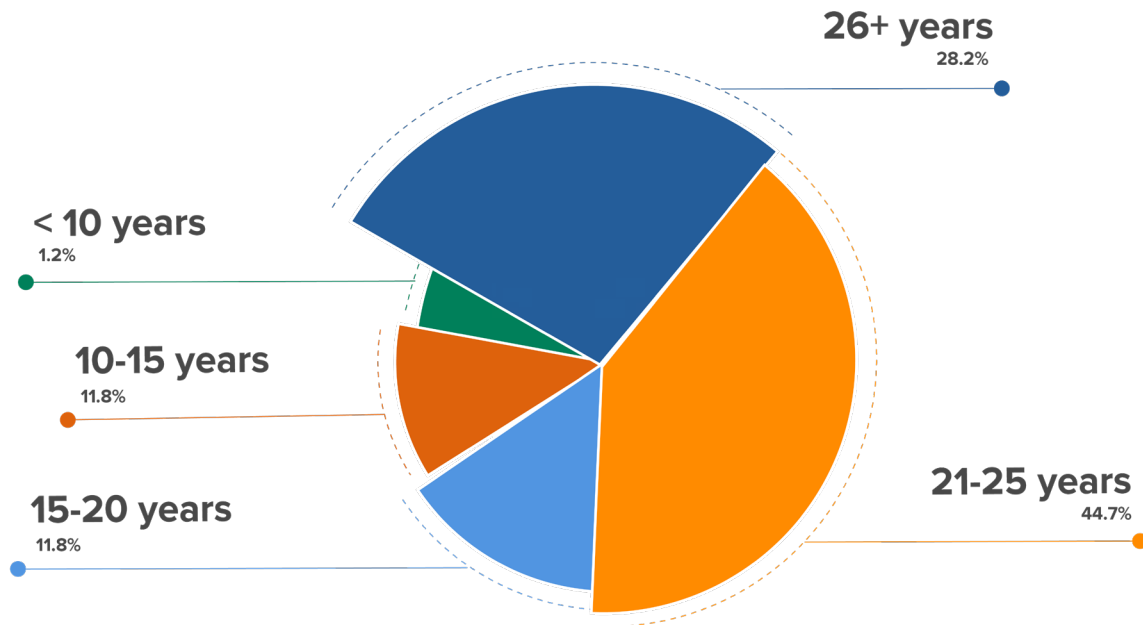
Demographics

JM Search invited over 1,000 executives to participate in its Go-to-Market Executive Leadership Study. The study was designed to provide CEOs, hiring managers, and investors who are planning to hire GTM leaders with valuable current benchmarking data. Over 100 completed responses were received to the 13-question survey.

► Functional Role

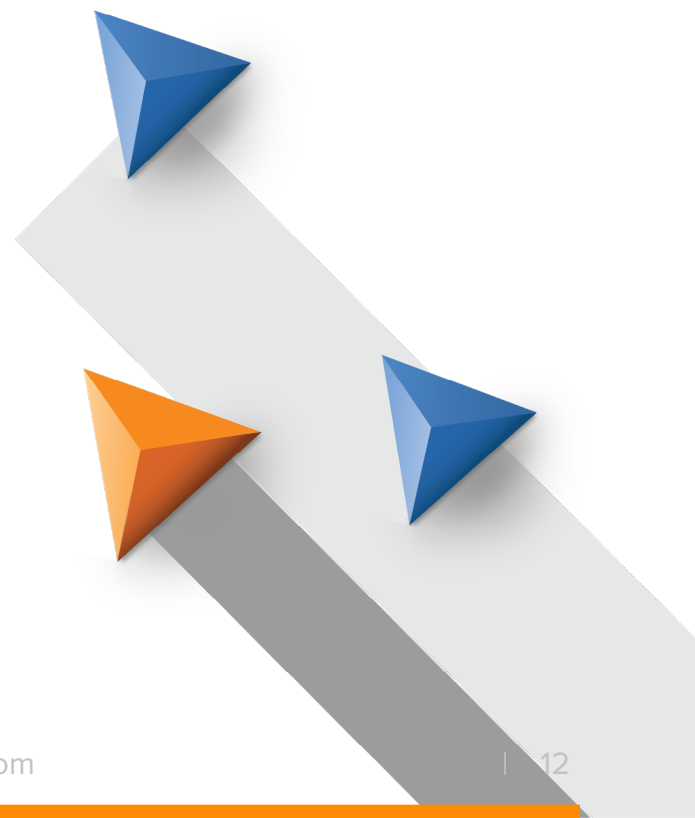
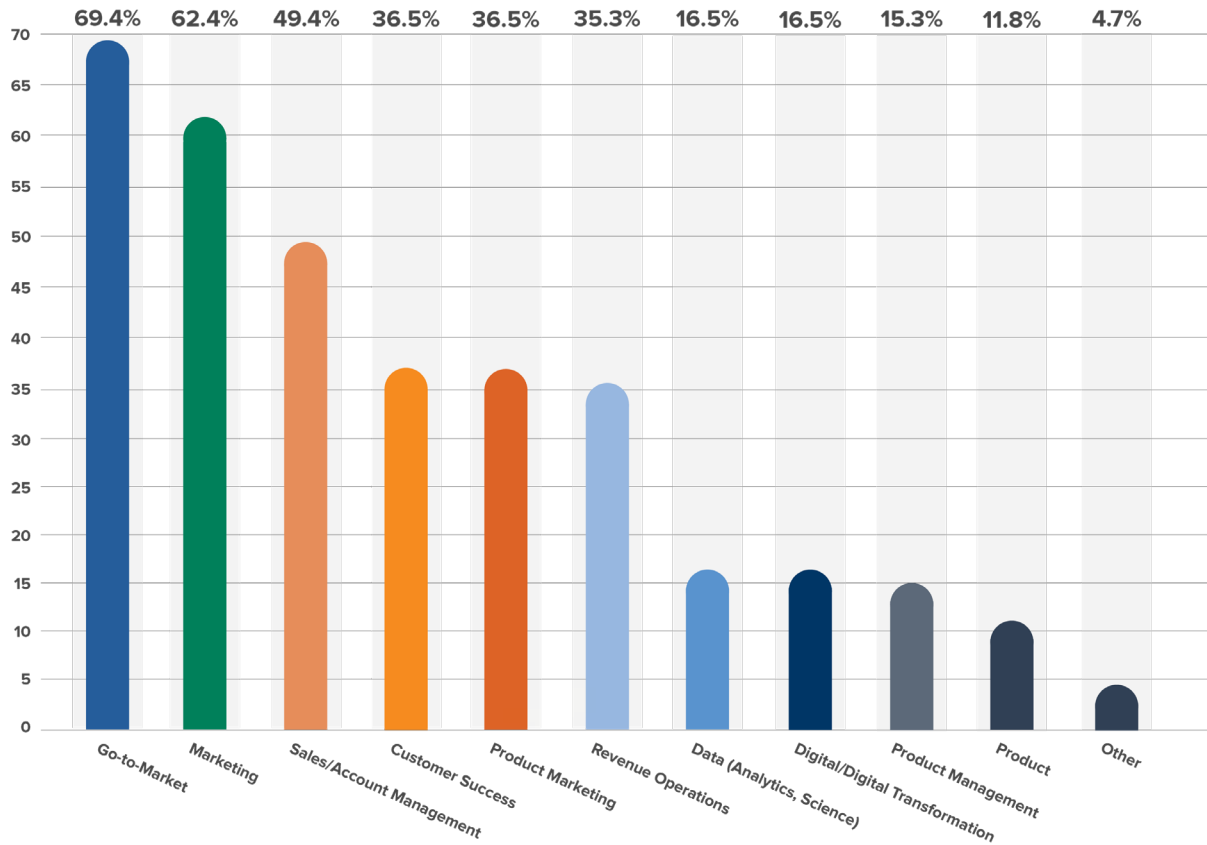


► Years of Experience



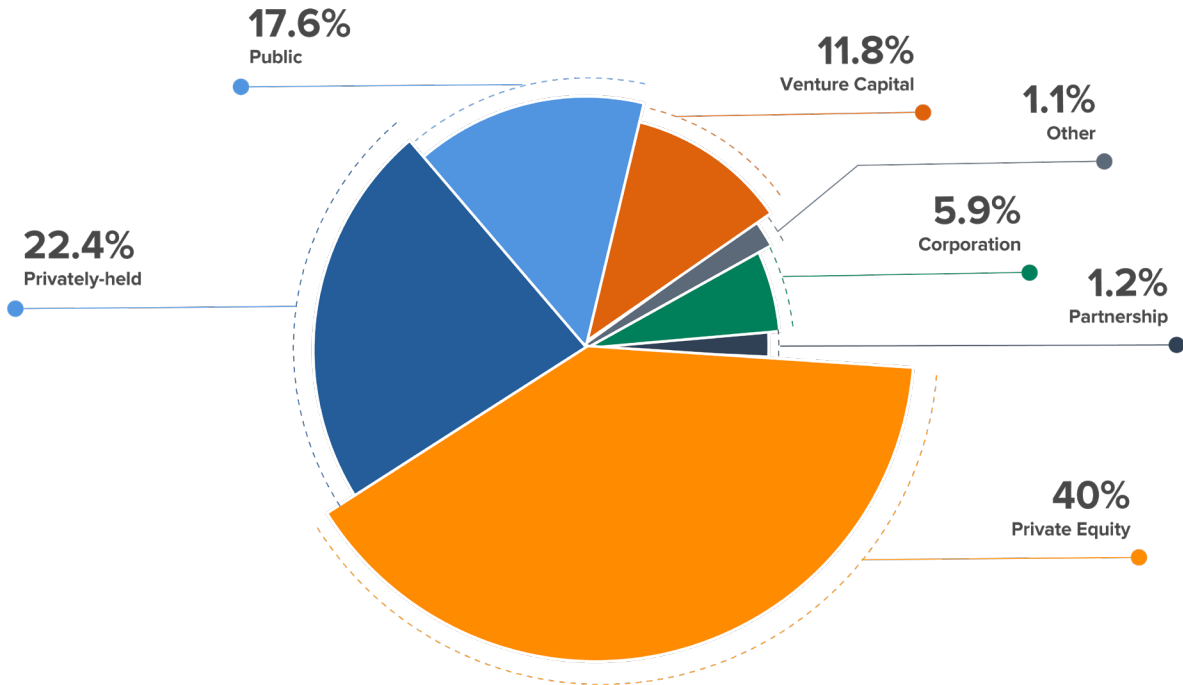
Demographics (continued)

► Areas of Responsibility

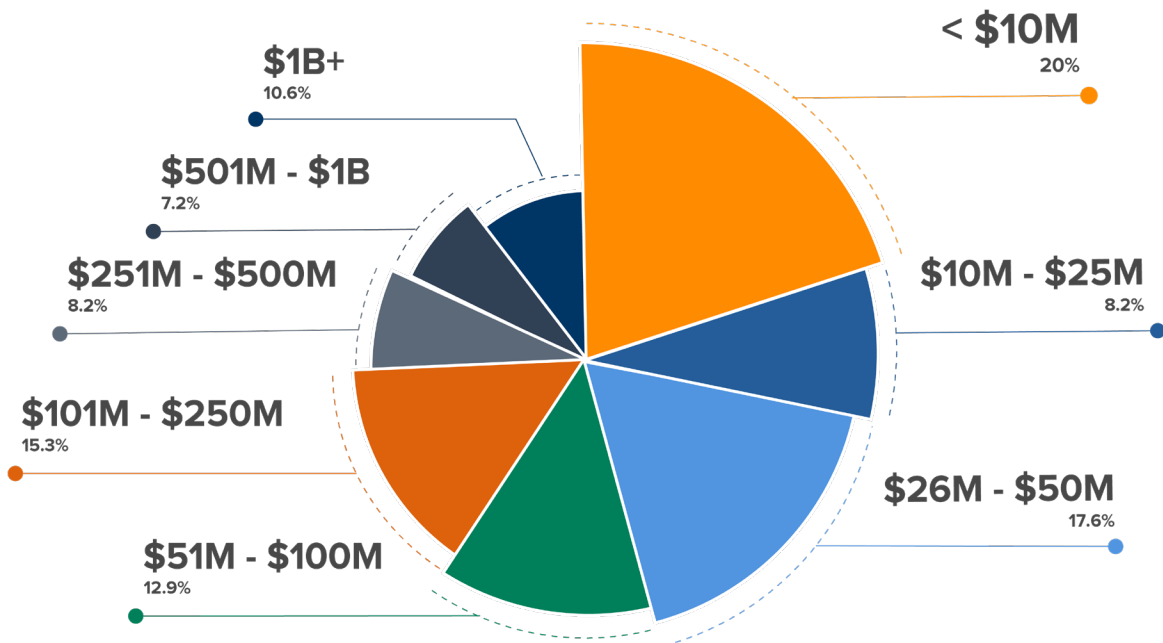


Demographics (continued)

► Company Ownership



► Company Annual Revenue



Methodology

▶ Survey Design and Implementation

- A 13-question survey was developed to gather information on go-to-market strategies and leadership within various organizations.
- The survey aimed to collect benchmarking data for CEOs, hiring managers, and investors planning to hire go-to-market leaders.

▶ Participant Selection and Recruitment

- Over 1,000 executives were invited to participate, targeting a diverse range of industries, with a notable emphasis on the technology sector and more than 100 completed surveys were received.
- Respondents included C-suite executives, VPs, SVPs, EVPs, and Directors/Senior Directors, encompassing a broad spectrum of organizational roles.

▶ Respondent Demographics:

- Respondent demographics were collected to understand the composition of the participant pool, including their roles, industries, years of experience, and company ownership structures.
- A diverse set of industries was represented, with the majority of respondents coming from the technology sector.

▶ Confidentiality and Ethics:

- Throughout the survey process, confidentiality was maintained to ensure that individual ethical considerations were observed to protect the privacy and voluntary nature of study participation.



Connect with Our Experts



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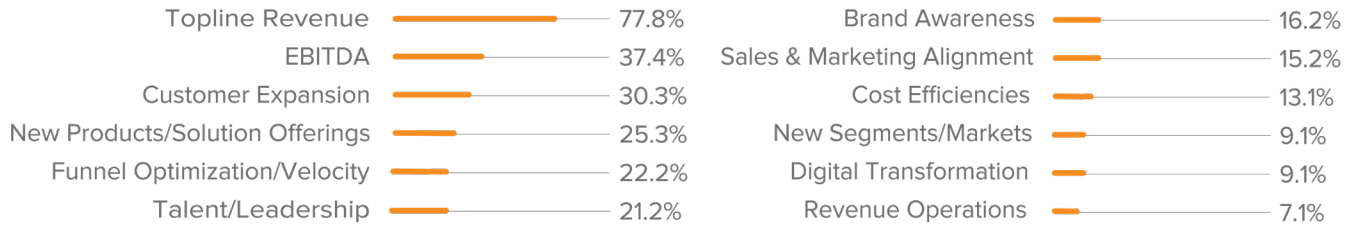
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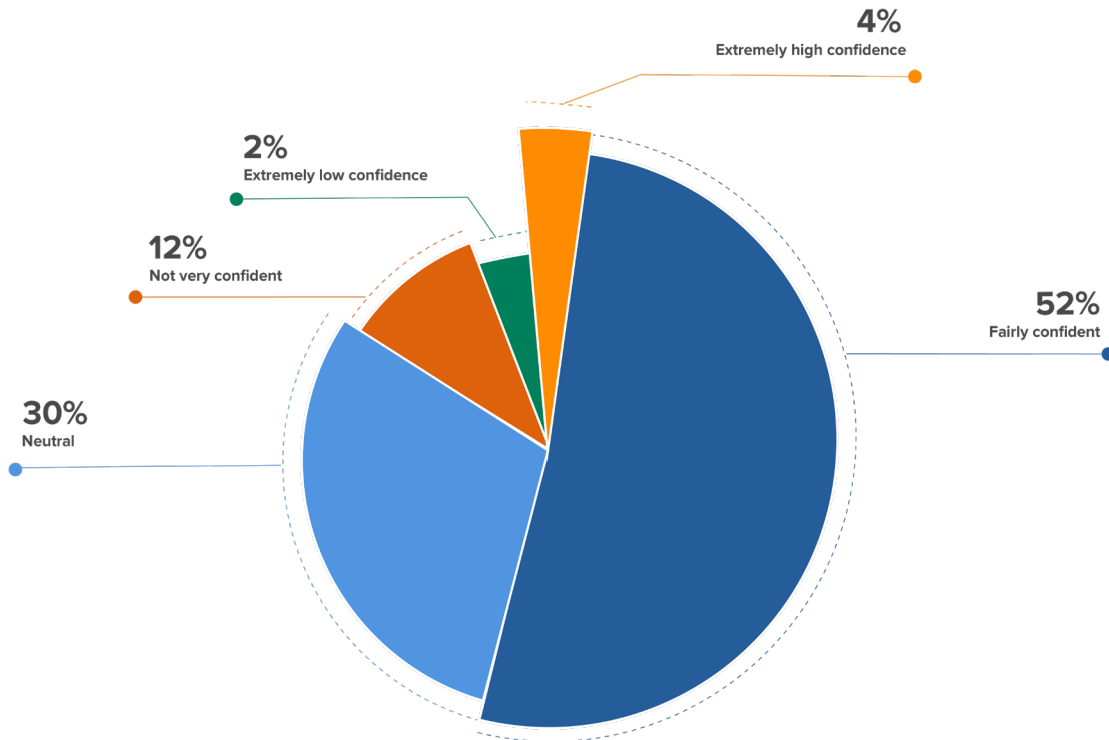
Data Appendix

Data Appendix

Question 1: In which of the following areas are your top goals for the next 12 months? (Select up to 3)

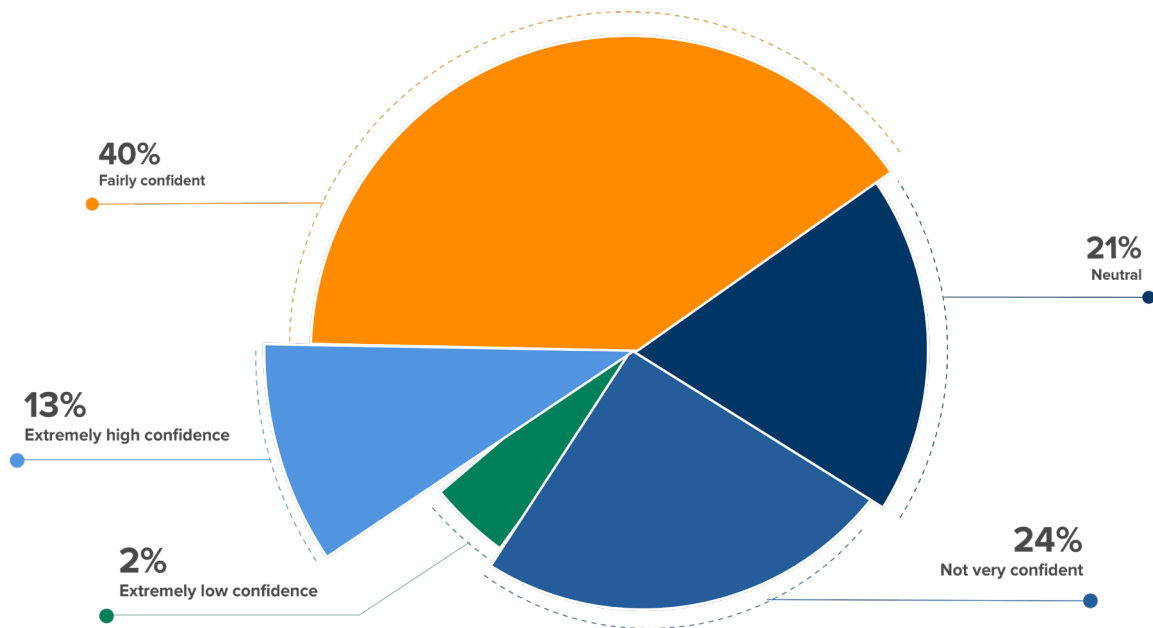


Question 2: How do you feel about your organization's ability to deliver on your top goals in the next 12 months?

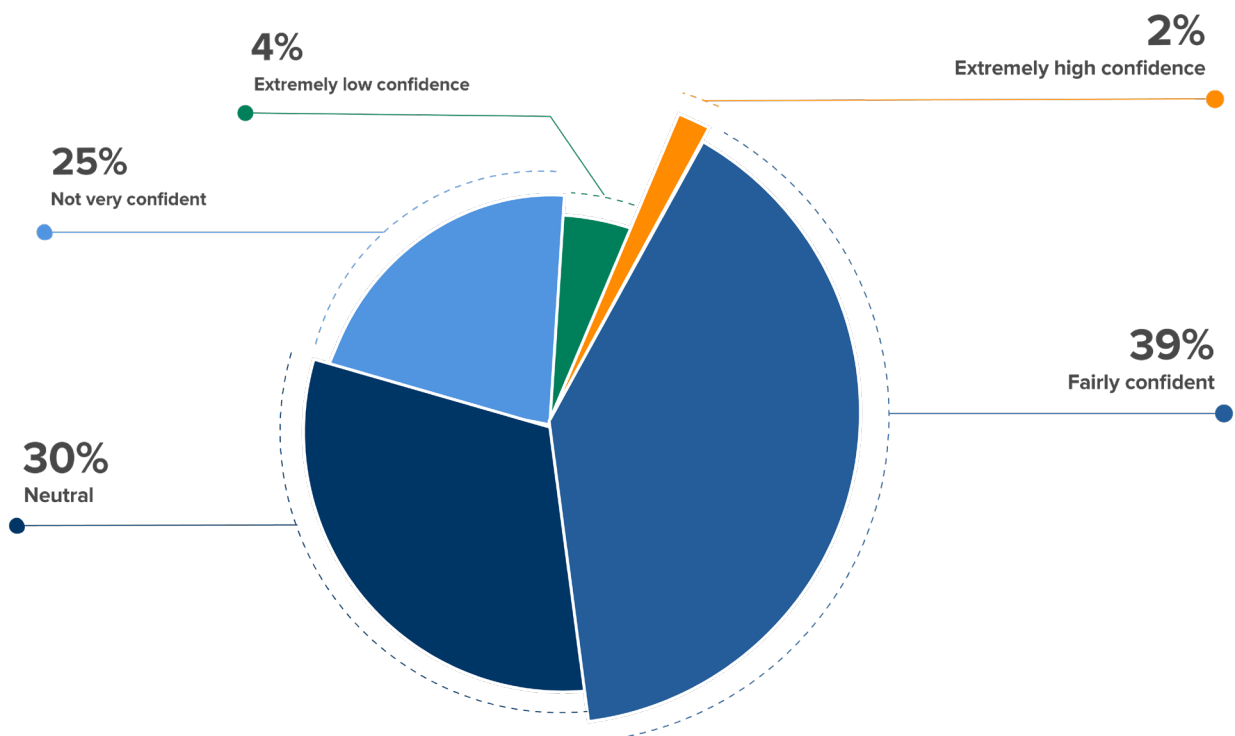


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 3: How confident are you that your team has the right talent in place to deliver on those goals in the next 12 months?



Question 4: How confident are you that your company overall has the right talent in place to deliver on those goals for the next 12 months?

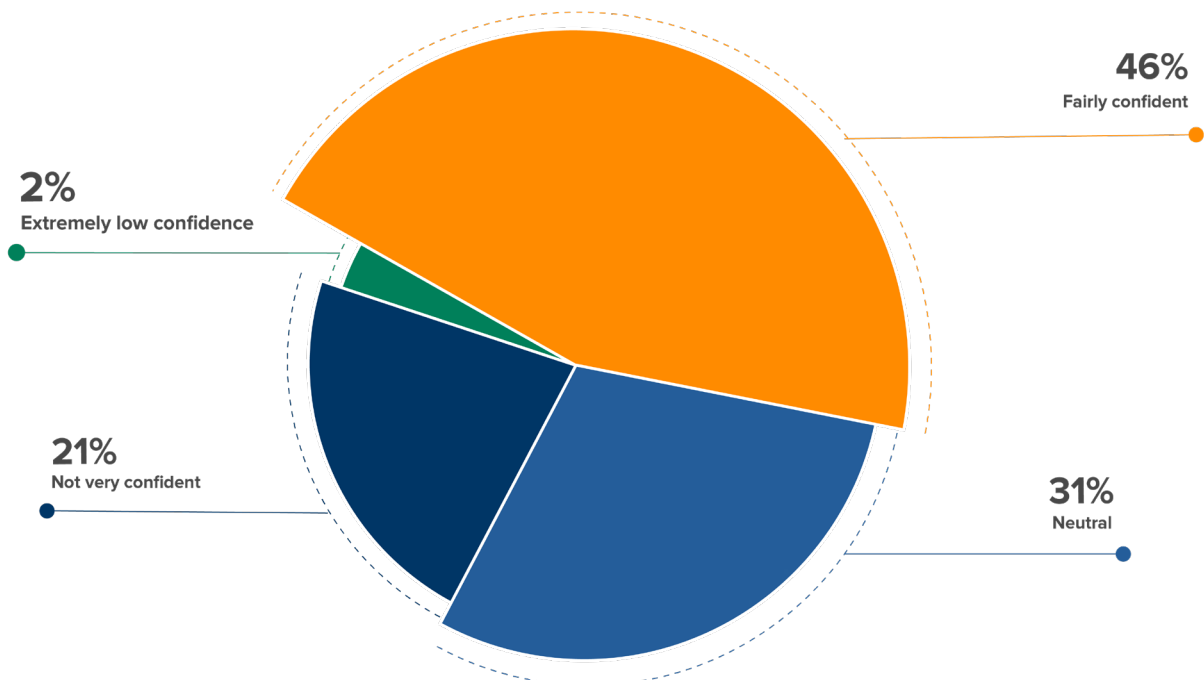


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 5: What do you see as the biggest challenges toward your organization's ability to deliver on those goals in the next 12 months?
(Select up to 3)

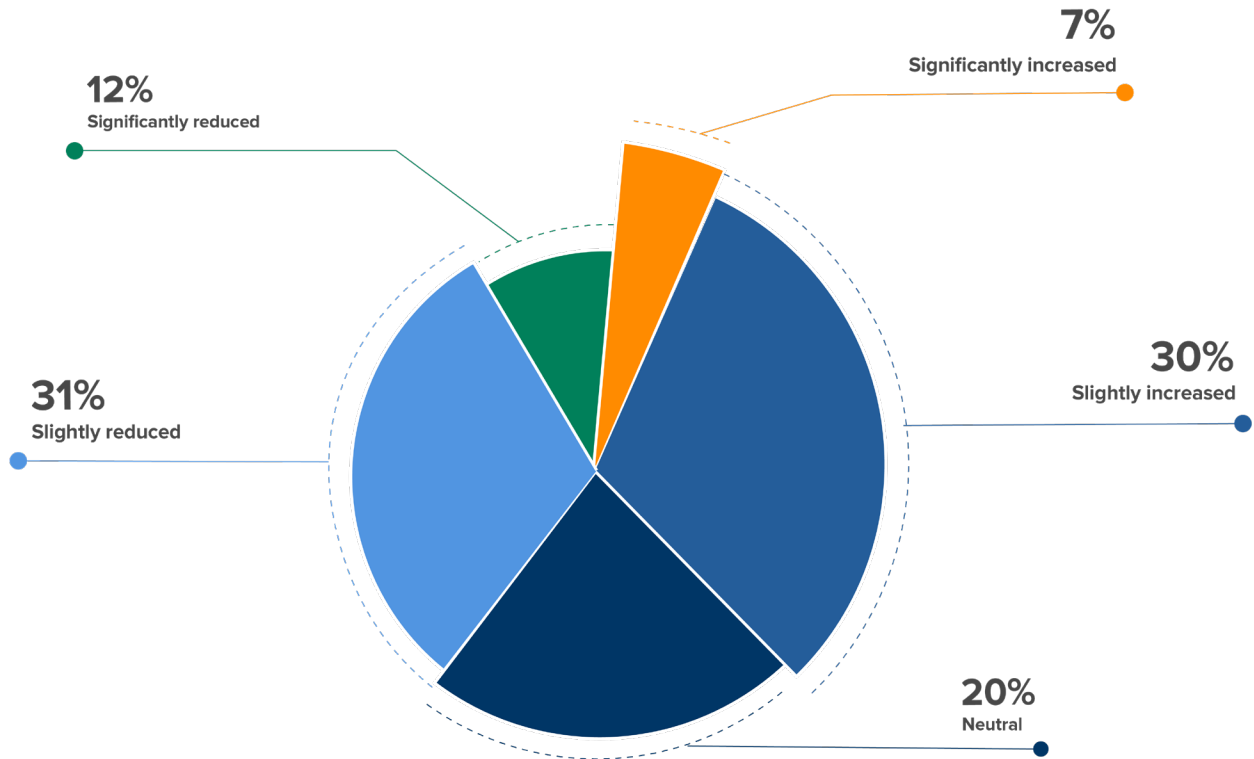


Question 6: What is your confidence in your ability to fill those challenge gaps in the next 12 months?

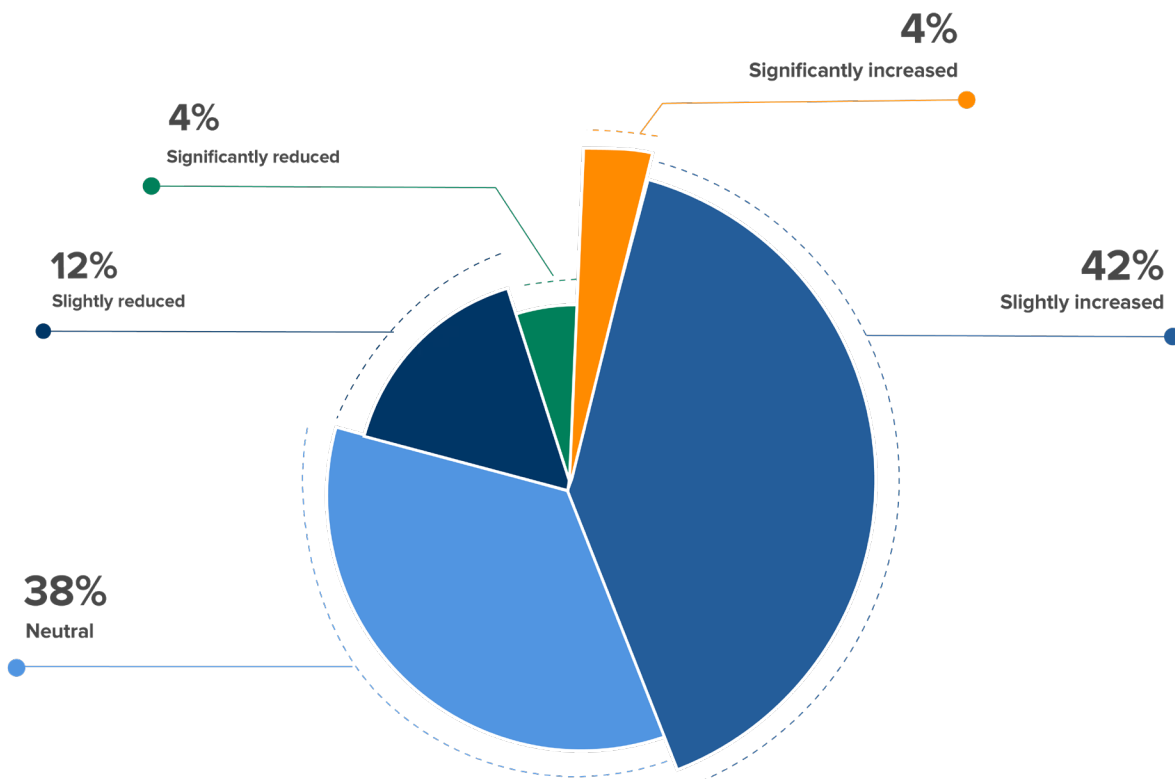


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 7: Your team's size/growth rate over the last 12 months has:

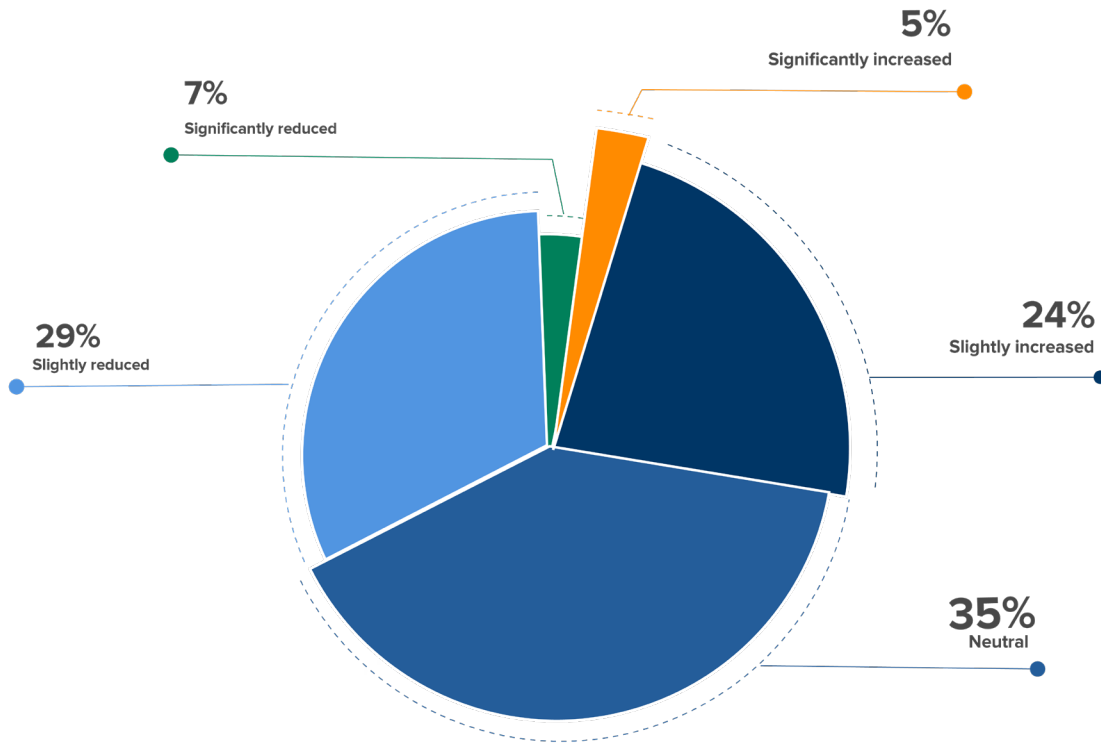


Question 8: Your team's projected size/growth rate over the last 12 months will:

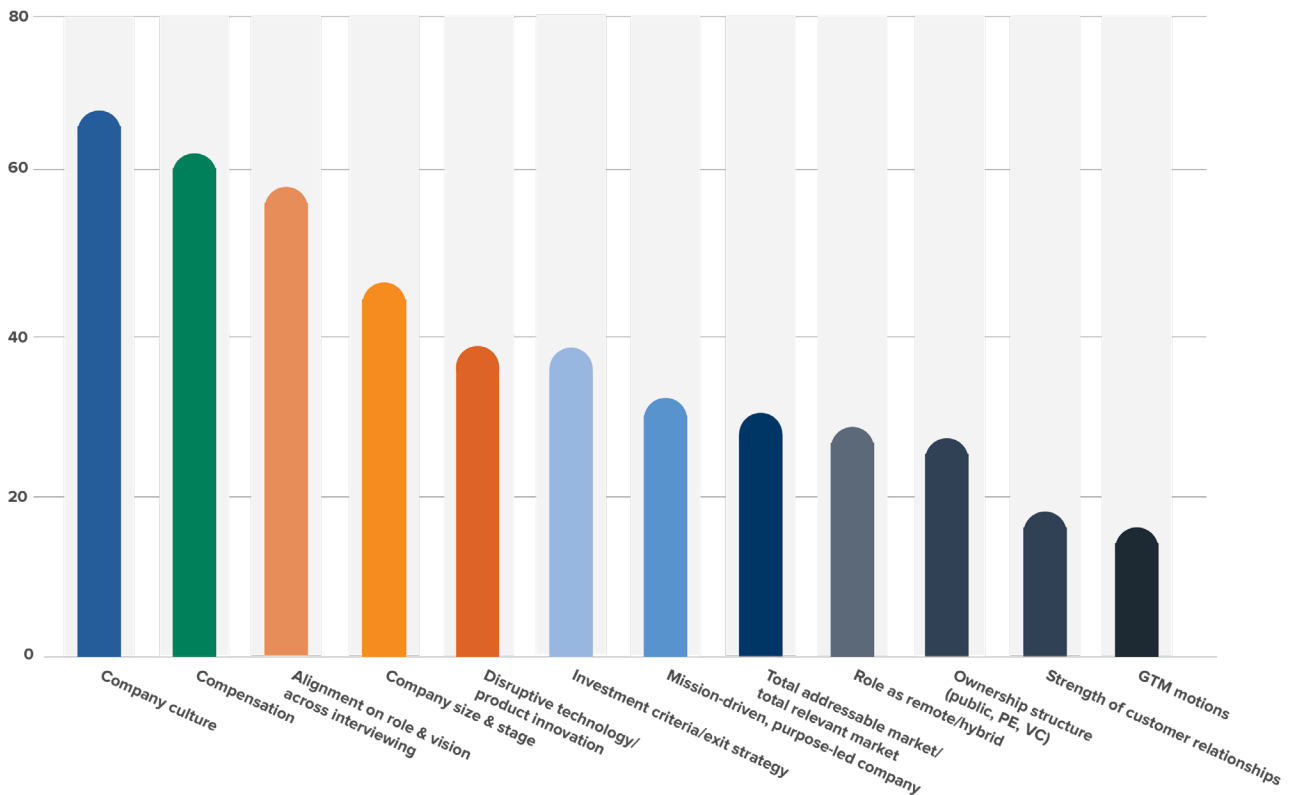


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 9: Your projected budget for the next 12 months compared with the prior 12 months has:

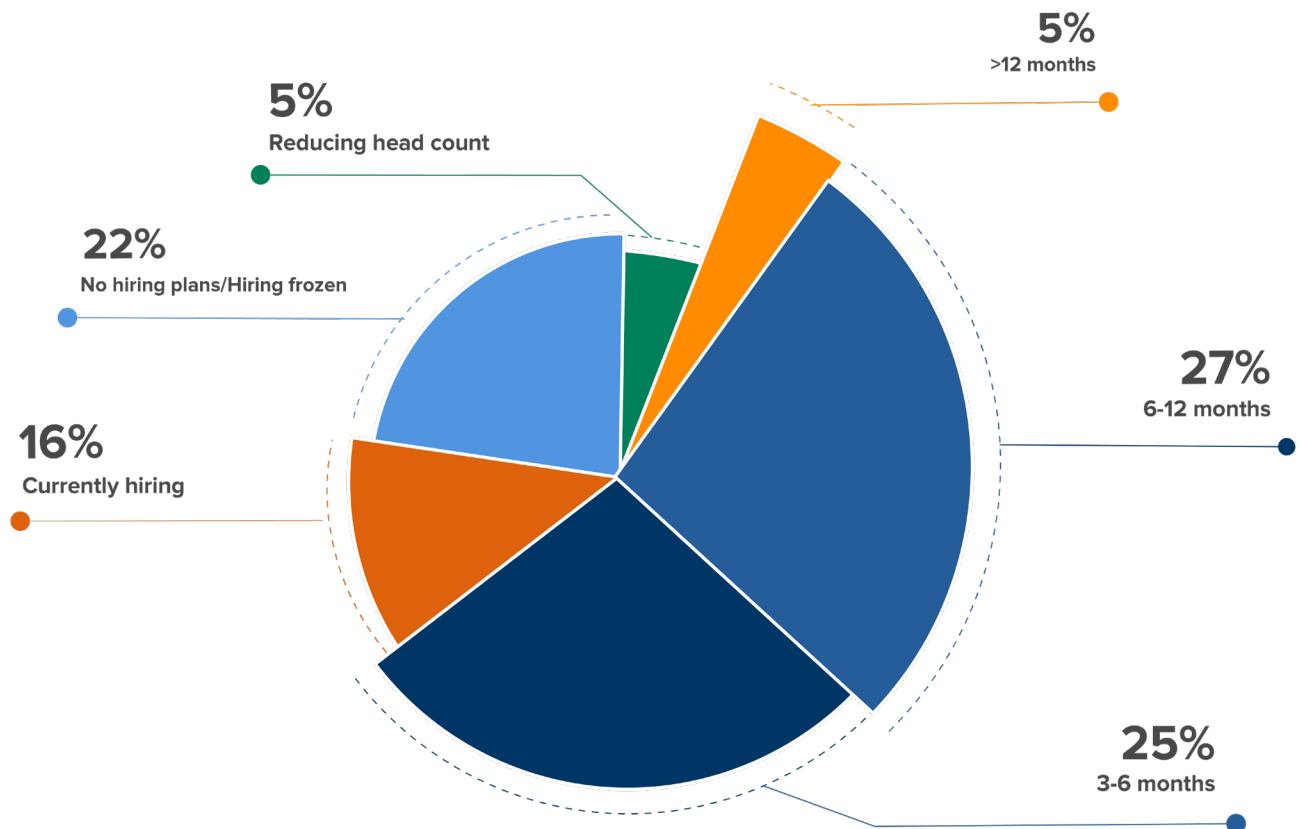


Question 10: What is most important to you when considering a new job opportunity? (Select up to 5)



Data Appendix (continued)

Question 11: What is your timeline for current or future team hiring?



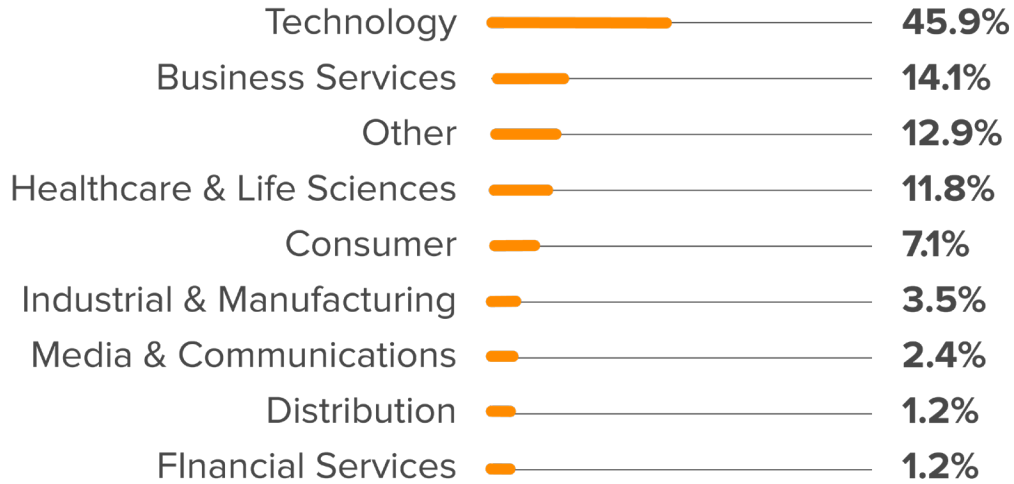
Data Appendix (continued)

Question 12: How would you rate your team's capability in each of the following?

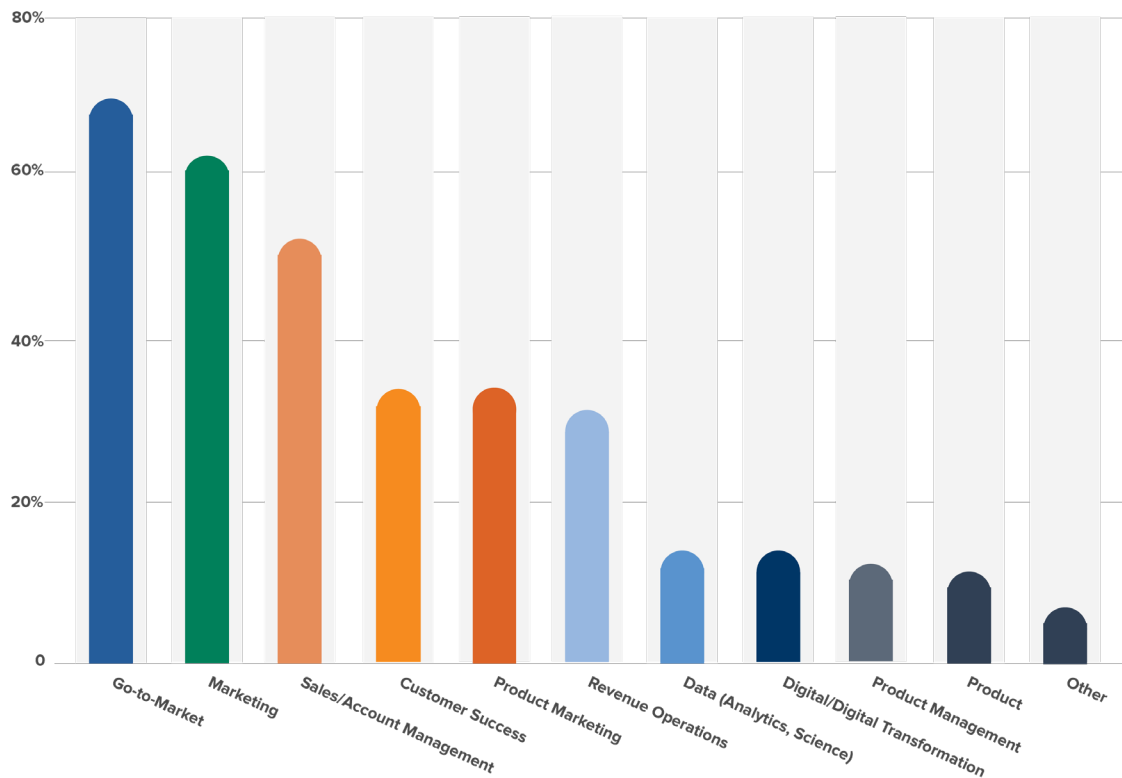
	Weak	Fair	Neutral	Good	Strong
Business Acumen	8.5%	20.7%	19.5%	41.5%	9.8%
Customer-Centric Approach	3.7%	12.2%	9.8%	40.2%	34.1%
Data & Analytics	11.0%	13.4%	32.9%	31.7%	11.0%
Execution	2.4%	13.4%	31.7%	41.5%	11.0%
Functional Expertise	1.2%	8.5%	19.5%	45.1%	25.6%
Leadership Skills	6.1%	17.1%	22.0%	47.6%	7.3%
Soft Skills	1.2%	11.0%	20.7%	52.4%	14.6%
Strategic Thinking	11.0%	15.9%	30.5%	35.4%	7.3%

Data Appendix (continued)

Question 13: What (primary) industry are you in?

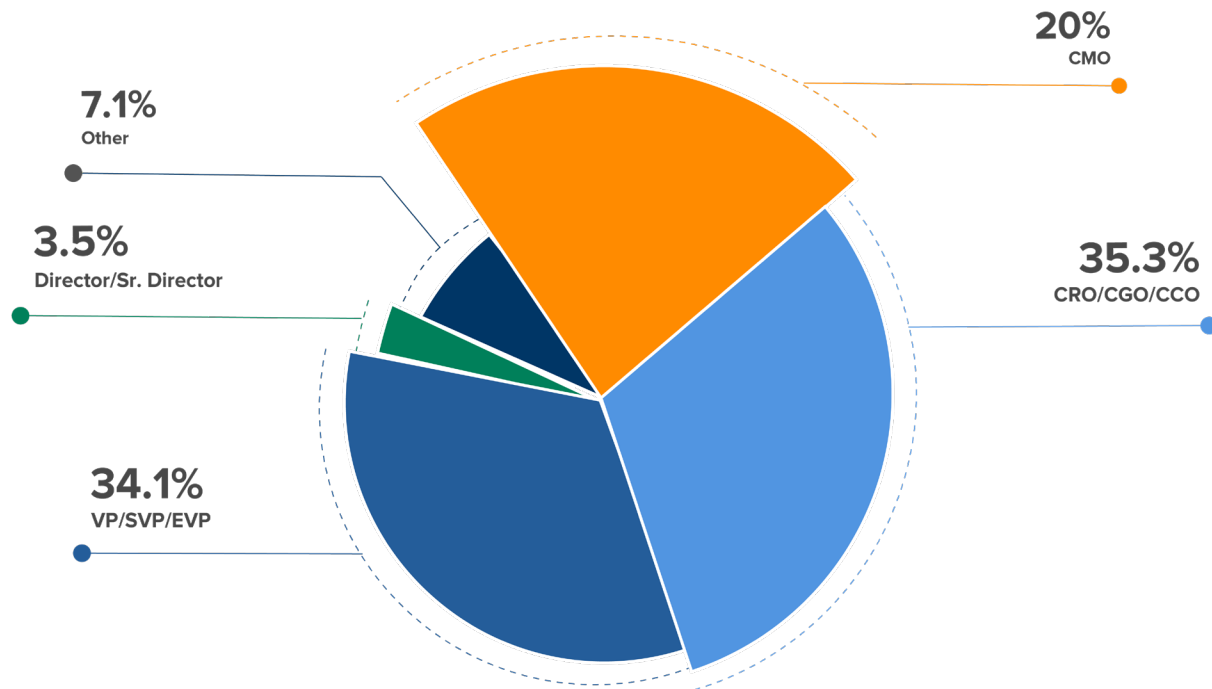


Question 14: What are your areas of responsibility? (Select all that apply)

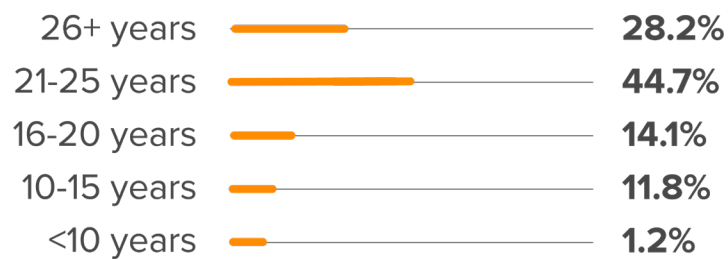


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 15: What is your current title/level?

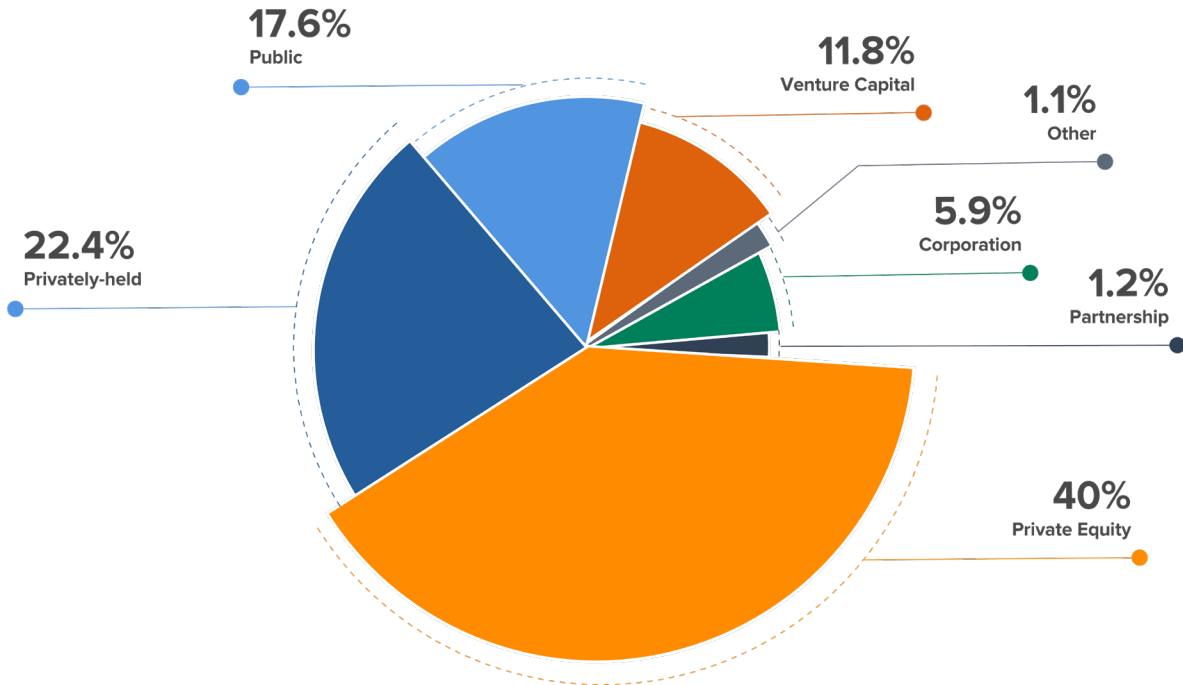


Question 16: How many years of experience do you have?

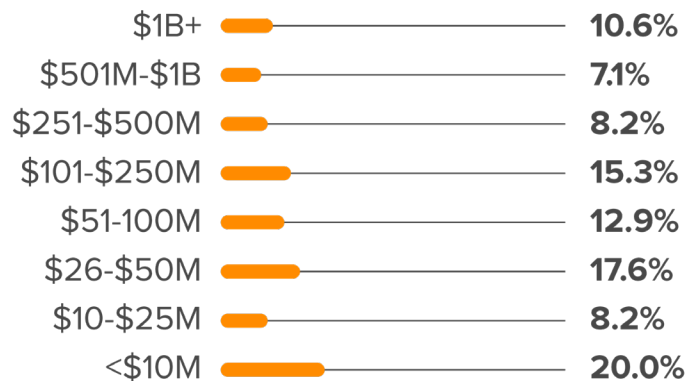


Data Appendix (continued)

Question 17: What is the ownership structure of your current employer? If unemployed or solo, what was the ownership structure of your previous employer?



Question 18: What is your company's annual revenue range?



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