

MULESOFT RESEARCH

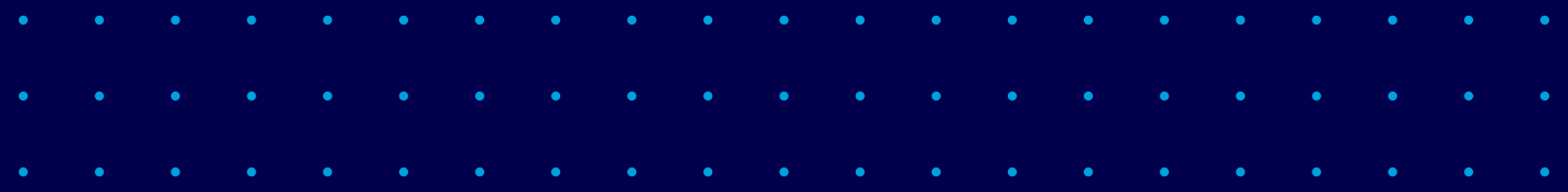
IT Leaders Pulse Report 2022: Retail and Consumer Goods

Insights from 1,000 IT leaders on people,
processes, and technology



Contents





Retailers and consumer goods companies face an increasingly difficult list of challenges as they strive to build seamless commerce experiences across multiple channels, improve operational efficiency, and meet increasing customer and consumer demands. Already tasked with managing a plethora of networks, devices, and applications critical to business growth, IT teams have now been elevated to a strategic role, charged with driving multiple digital transformation initiatives – often with little increase in team capacity or resources.

These technology challenges are not unique to the retail and consumer goods sector, which means IT leaders are in high-demand. As a result, IT retention grows more challenging every year and can impact innovation if unaddressed.

But IT teams don't need to throw in the towel – leveraging the right technology strategy with easy-to-use tools that empower everyone can help mitigate these challenges and drive improved business results.



Aurélie Martin, Manager of Integration and Application Support, SMCP

Executive summary: Retail and consumer goods sector

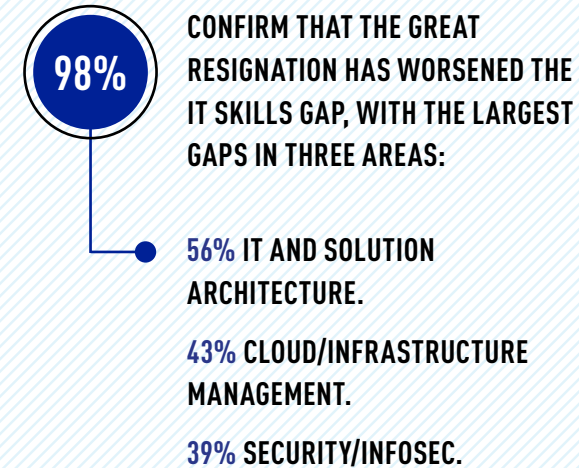
MuleSoft's IT Leaders Pulse Report, in partnership with Vanson Bourne, was produced from interviews with 1,000 senior IT leaders across the globe. Out of 1,000, 149 were senior IT leaders from the retail and consumer goods sector. Below are the statistics specific to this industry.

The Great Resignation – a recent phenomena where workers left or switched jobs in mass numbers as a result of shifting personal and professional priorities following the pandemic – has evolved the role of senior IT leaders. Their focus has shifted from technology-centric to creating strategic people- and experience-centric capabilities – enabled by the technology – for customers and employees.

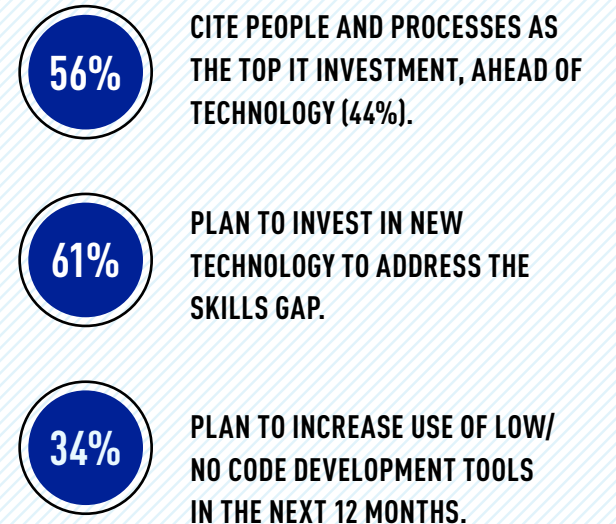
The retail and consumer goods sector is no exception. Retailers and consumer goods companies are under increased pressure from supply chain challenges, inflation implications, and the changing global economy.

In turn, their IT teams are feeling the impact of greater demands and are looking to technology strategies and investments to help deliver customer value faster. The findings of this report reveal the critical need for companies within the retail and consumer goods sector to reevaluate IT operating models, increase alignment to ease the pressure on IT teams, and empower everyone across the enterprise to innovate.

THE SKILLS GAP INTENSIFIES



TECHNOLOGY IS AN INVESTMENT PRIORITY



COMPLEXITY CONTINUES



IT AND BUSINESS ARE ALIGNING



About the report

MuleSoft's IT Leaders Pulse Report, in partnership with Vanson Bourne, was produced from interviews with 1,000 senior IT leaders across the globe.

We conducted an online survey during June and July 2022 with participants from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan. We used a rigorous, multi-level screening process to ensure that only suitable candidates participated in the survey.

Respondents are all senior IT leaders, which are defined as those who hold a departmental or intermediate managerial position or above within the IT function.

All respondents work at an enterprise organization in the public or private sector with at least 1,000 employees.



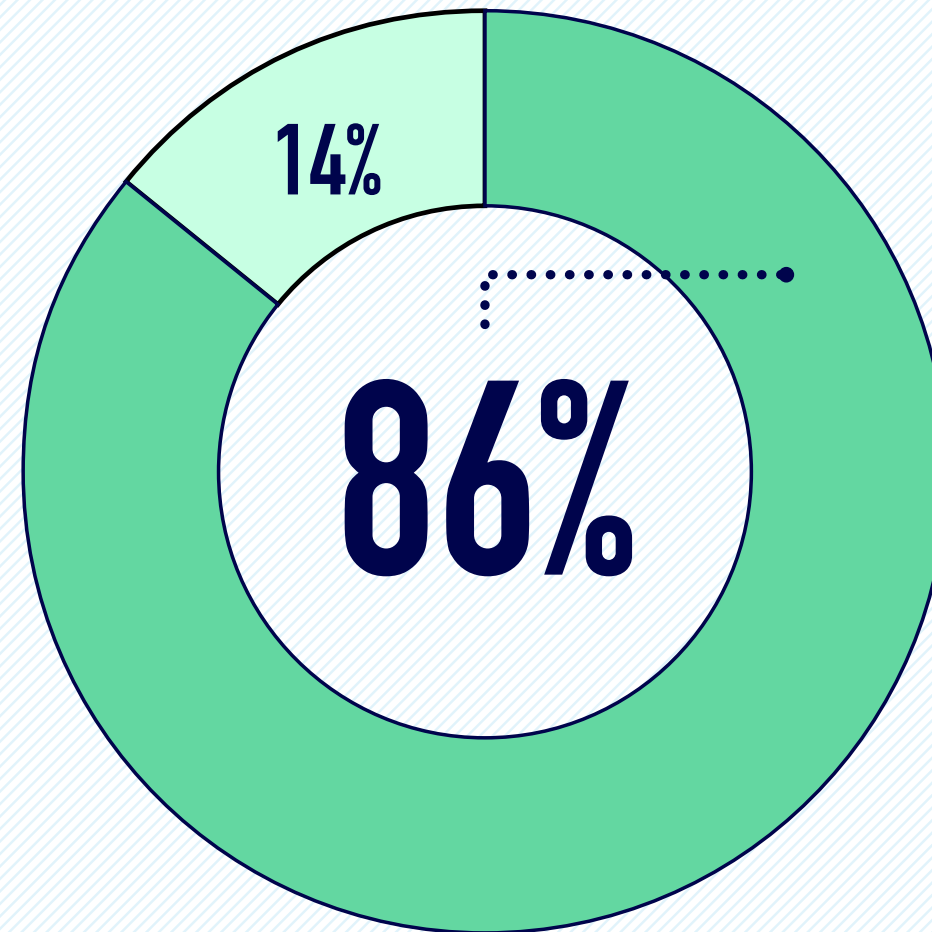
From technology enabler to business leader



Experiences become increasingly important

As digital transformation increasingly drives business strategy, senior IT leaders are moving from acting as IT operators to business leaders with deep technical expertise. Organizations are now realizing the importance of creating positive employee experiences to attract and retain talent after the Great Resignation.

This type of exceptional experience is also expected for customer interactions. Today, 86% of senior IT leaders agree that the experience an organization provides is as important as its products and services.

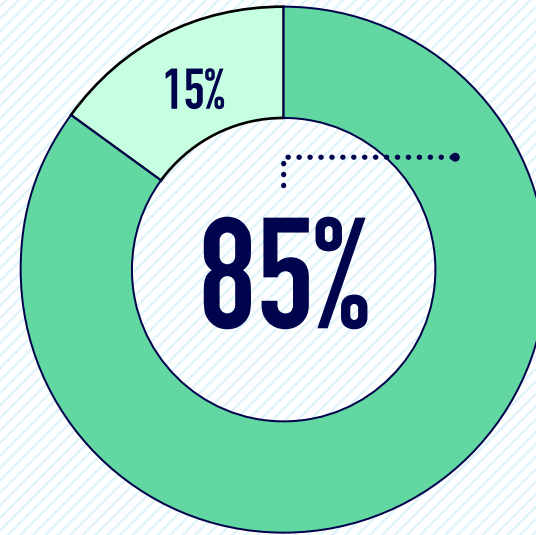


86% OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT THE EXPERIENCE AN ORGANIZATION PROVIDES IS AS IMPORTANT AS ITS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

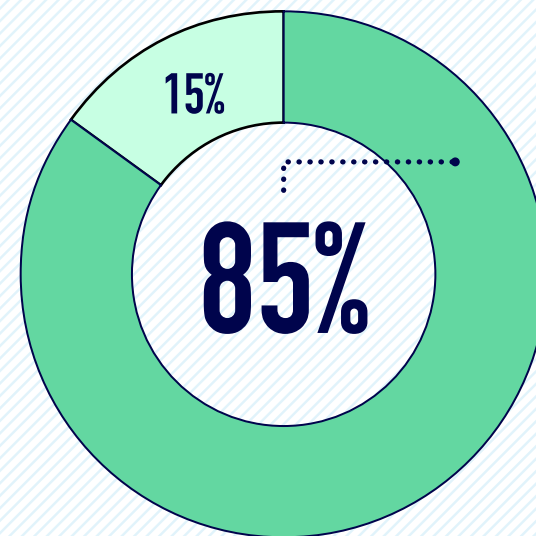
Success relies on tech-enabled experiences

Roughly four out of five of respondents agree that improved customer-facing and employee technologies are critical for their organization to compete.

This means that senior IT leaders are now making important business decisions with technology-enabled experiences in mind. This includes everything from technology investments to workplace environments to team structures and opportunities.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT IMPROVED CUSTOMER-FACING TECHNOLOGY IS CRITICAL FOR THEIR ORGANIZATION TO COMPETE.



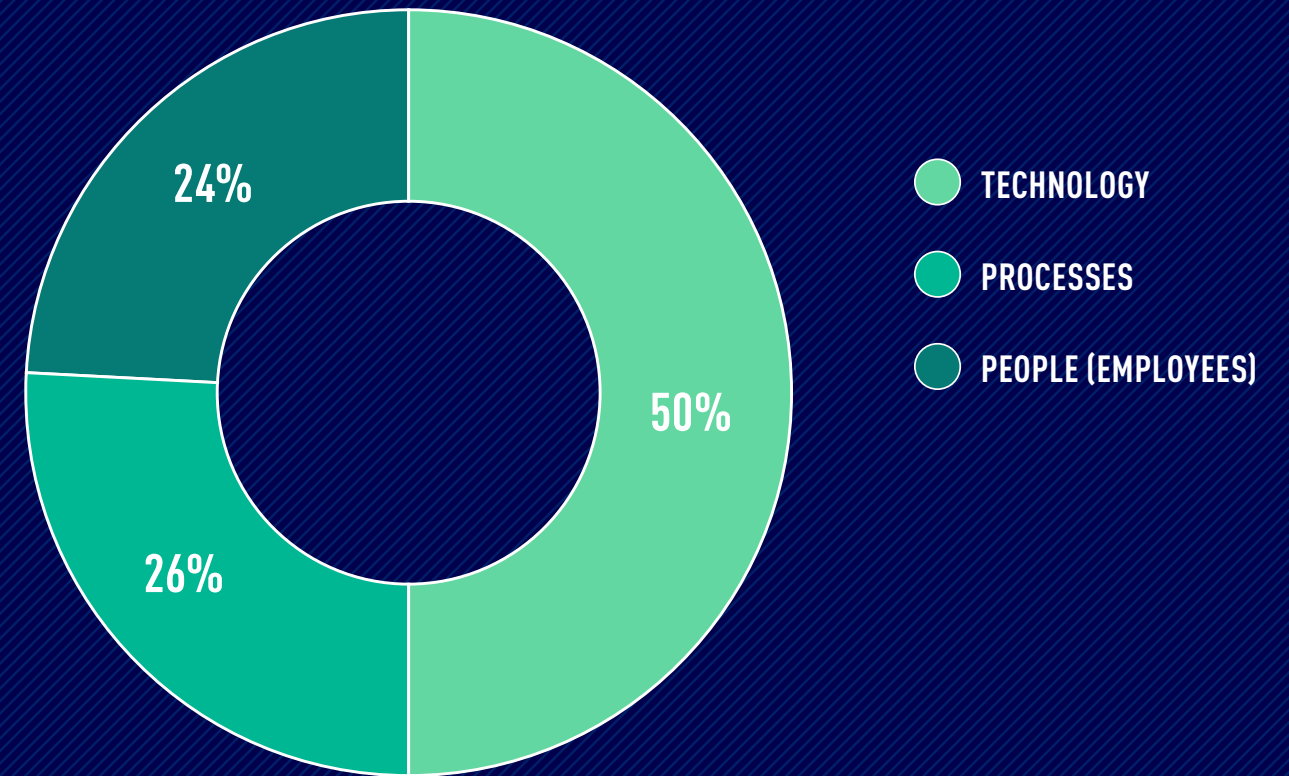
OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT IMPROVED EMPLOYEE TECHNOLOGY IS CRITICAL FOR THEIR ORGANIZATION TO COMPETE.

IT investing in technology, people, and processes

Senior IT leaders are shifting their investment priorities. Across all industries, IT investment priorities over the next 12 months are evenly split, with half going toward technology and the remainder being spent on people and processes.

The remainder of this report highlights the ways organizations are using or plan to use automation, best-of-breed technologies, and low/no-code tools to empower their employees and create market-winning experiences.

How organizations plan to prioritize IT investments over the next 12 months:



People: Enhancing the employee experience

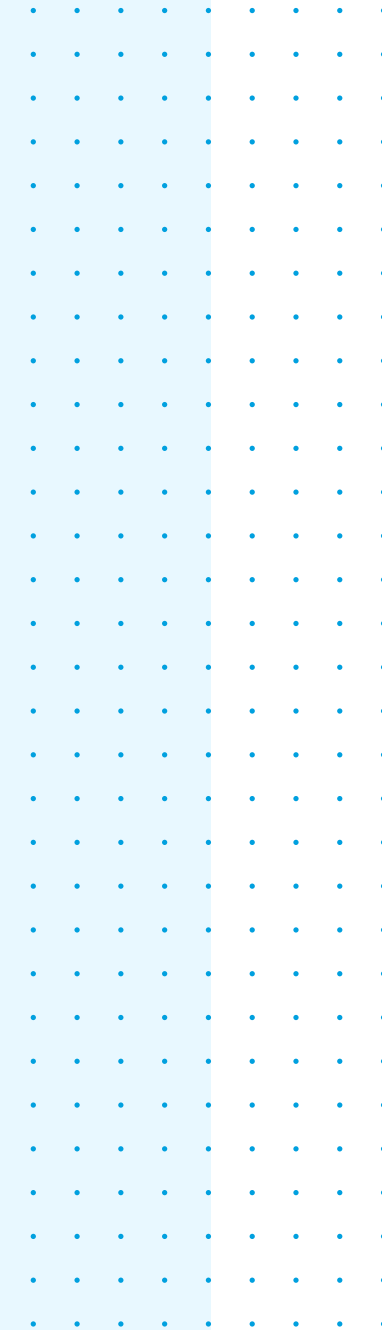


Wellbeing is shaping the future of work

It's a new era for the world of work. As people recalibrate their lives, values, and priorities, many are leaving their jobs in search of better employment conditions and opportunities. Accelerated by the pandemic, the Great Resignation has created new expectations for senior IT leaders. [Workers today](#) want employers that offer work-life balance, remote- or hybrid-working policies, more meaningful work, flexible hours, or higher pay.

And as companies lose talent, they experience short-term business disruptions and skills gaps that can become increasingly difficult to fill.

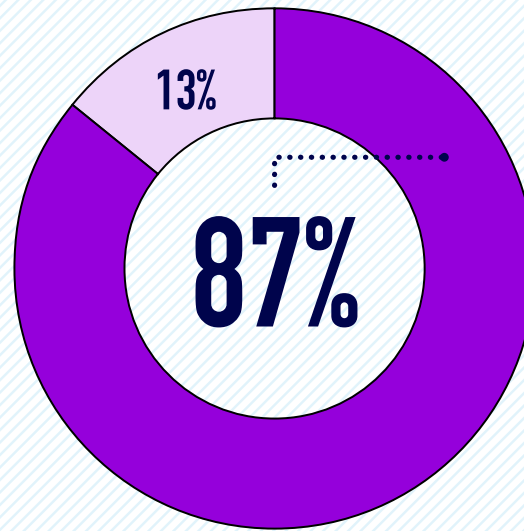
To appeal to top talent in today's job market, companies must offer more than a competitive salary – they must also consider employee wellbeing. Many senior IT leaders are already recognizing this and are urgently adjusting their operations to center their focus on people.



Employee wellbeing now an investment priority

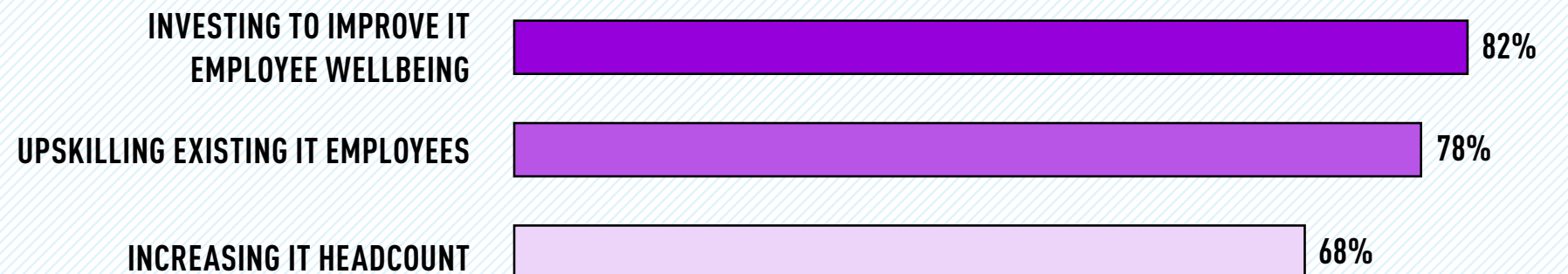
While technology remains a standout priority, nine out of ten senior IT leaders agree that investment in people is hugely important – and they're reevaluating their investment budgets accordingly.

Over the next 12 months, the majority of respondents plan to invest in improving IT employee wellbeing, ahead of upskilling and increasing team headcount. This includes providing enhanced remote and flexible working capabilities.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT INVESTING IN PEOPLE IS HUGEY IMPORTANT.

IT team investment priorities over the next 12 months:

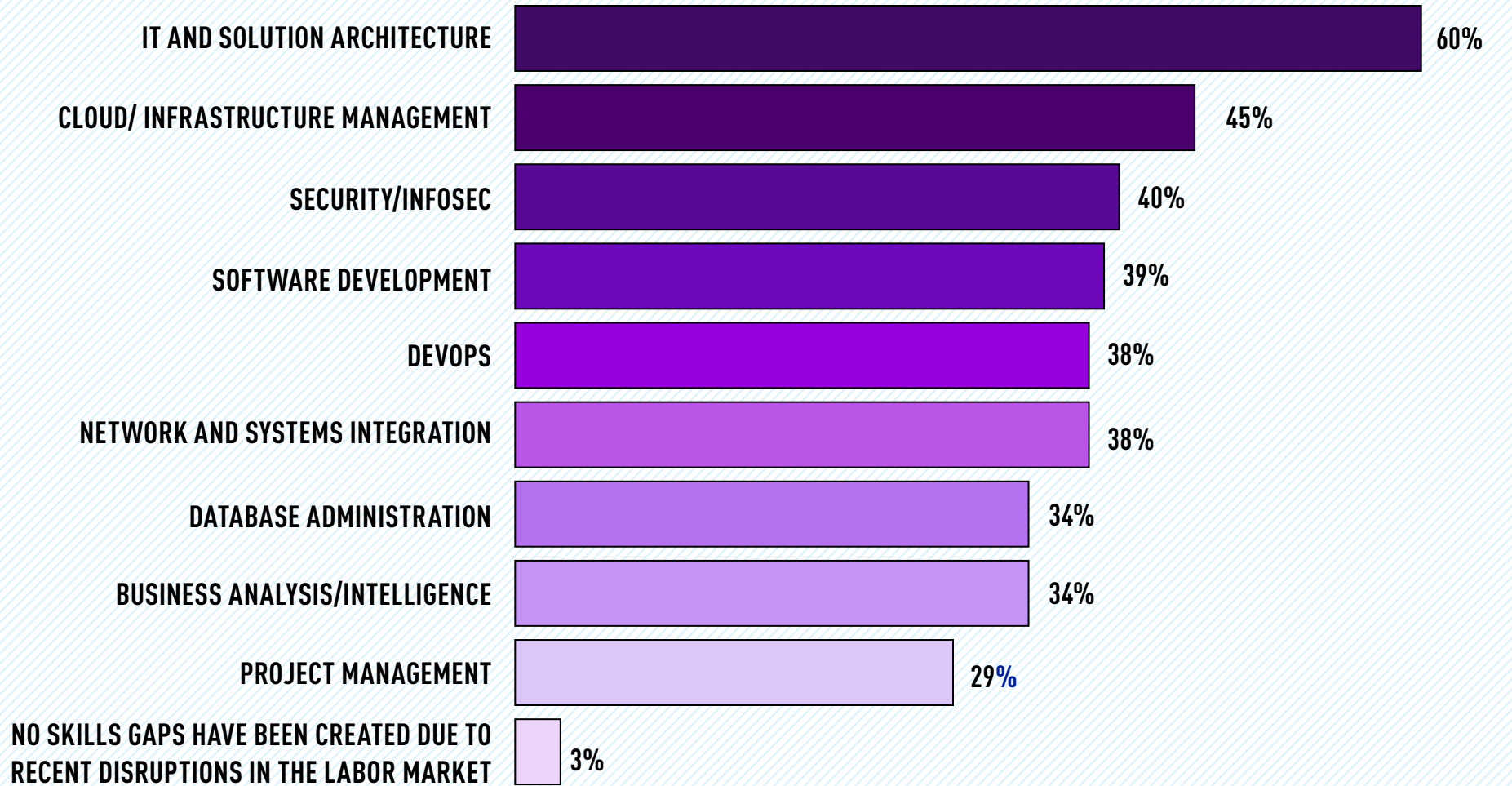


Skills gap stretch across IT functions

Skills gaps related to implementation and management of new technologies is not a new issue for IT. However, the Great Resignation has made the problem much worse across a wide spectrum of IT functions.

Most notably, three out of five (60%) senior IT leaders say they now have skills gaps within their IT and solutions architecture function, while almost half (45%) see gaps when it comes to cloud and infrastructure management.

Where has the Great Resignation created skills gaps for IT:



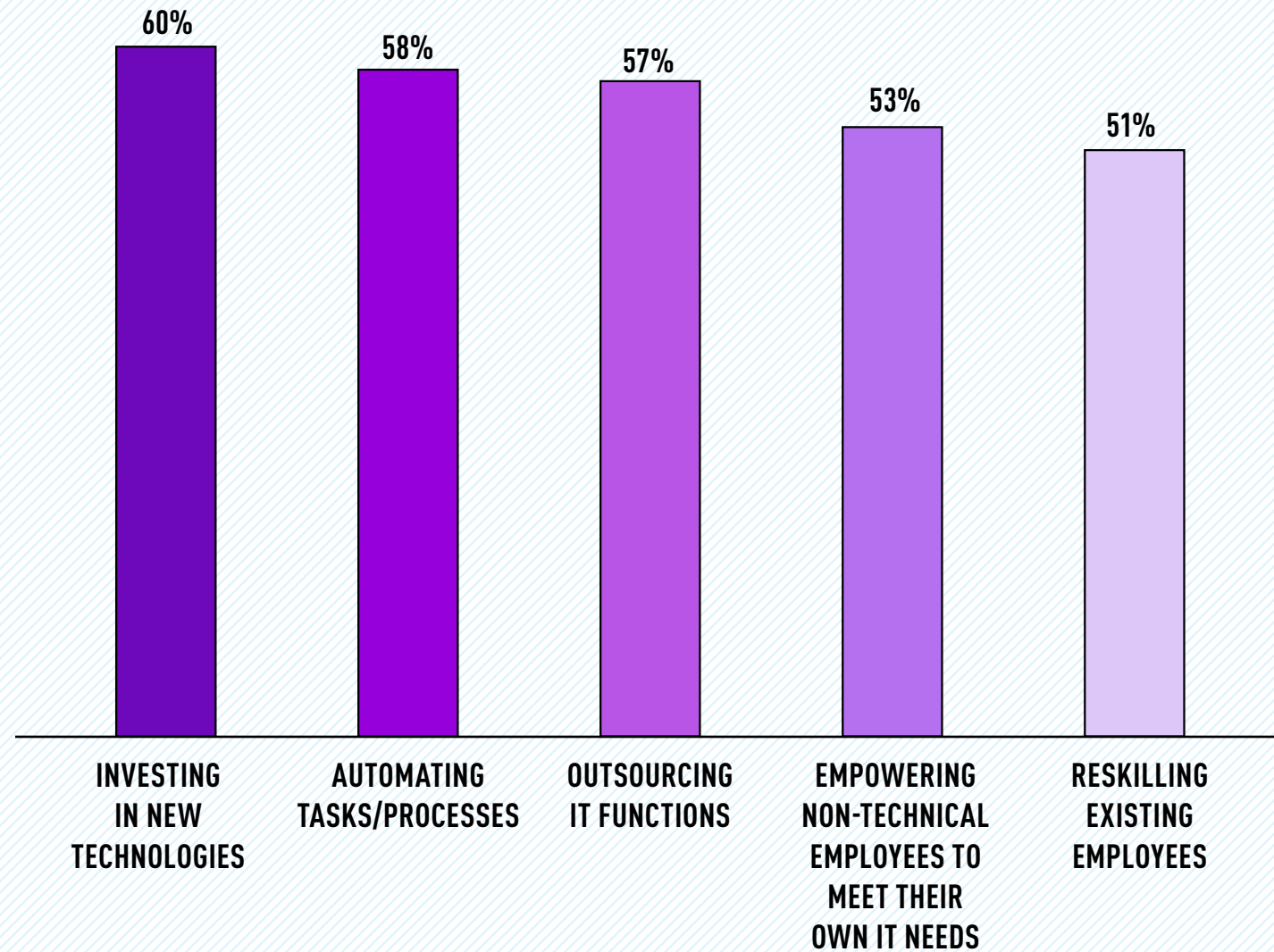
Addressing the skills gap with automation

Many senior IT leaders are turning to automation and self-serve initiatives to address the growing skills gap. Across industries, 58% of organizations are tackling this by automating tasks and processes, while 53% are empowering non-technical employees to meet their own needs. Other strategies include outsourcing IT functions and reskilling existing employees.



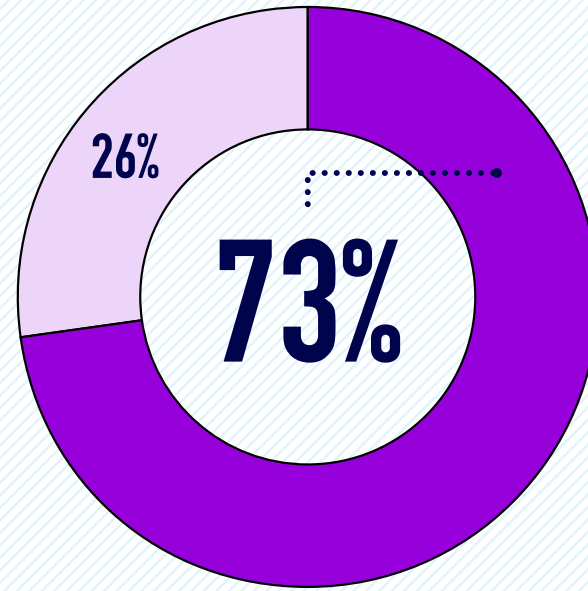
Empower your organization with an end-to-end automation strategy. [Watch now.](#)

How organizations are addressing the IT skills gap:



Technology choices driven by talent acquisition challenges

As more people leave their current roles, organizations struggle to hire people with the right skills. Nearly three quarters (73%) of senior IT leaders agree that acquiring IT talent has never been harder. As a result, the challenge of talent acquisition now influences technology choices for 98% of organizations, and reskilling existing employees.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT ACQUIRING IT TALENT HAS NEVER BEEN HARDER.

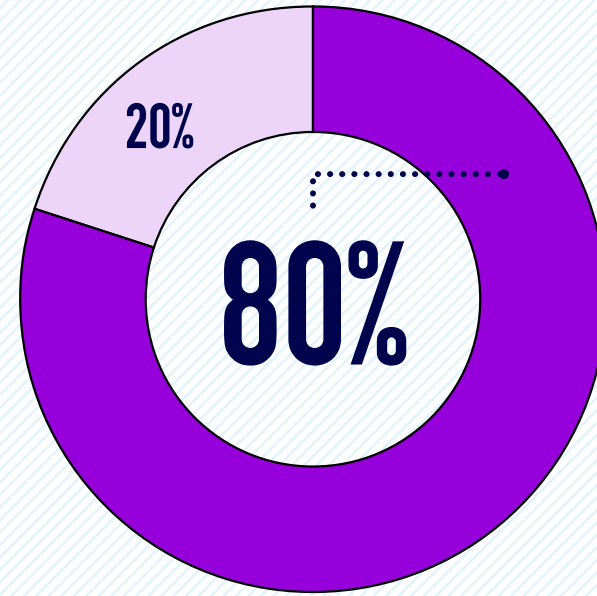


OF ORGANIZATIONS SAY THAT TALENT ACQUISITION CHALLENGES INFLUENCE TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT DECISIONS.

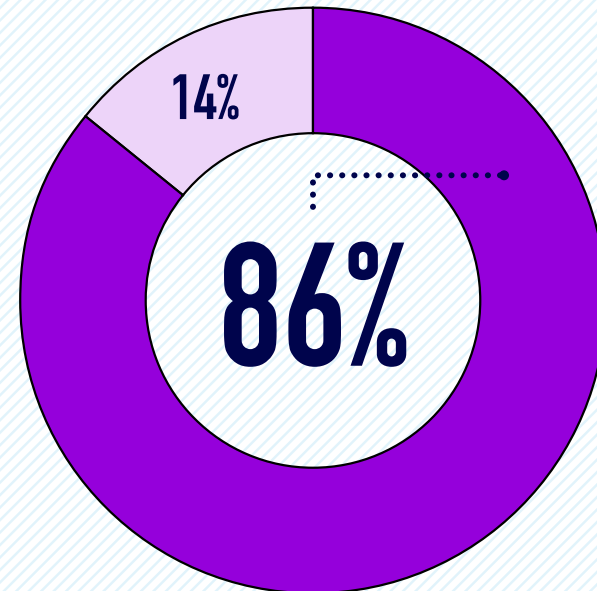
Widening recruitment criteria

Companies are adapting their people strategy to build a workforce that meets the needs of the business today and tomorrow. This means widening their recruitment criteria – 80% of senior IT leaders are seeking developer talent from non-traditional backgrounds and focusing on upskilling and reskilling workers.

At the same time, 86% of senior IT leaders agree that business acumen is an important skill for technical talent.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT THEY SEEK DEVELOPER TALENT FROM NON-TRADITIONAL BACKGROUNDS (E.G., VETERANS, NON-TECHNICAL PEOPLE CHANGING CAREERS, ETC.)

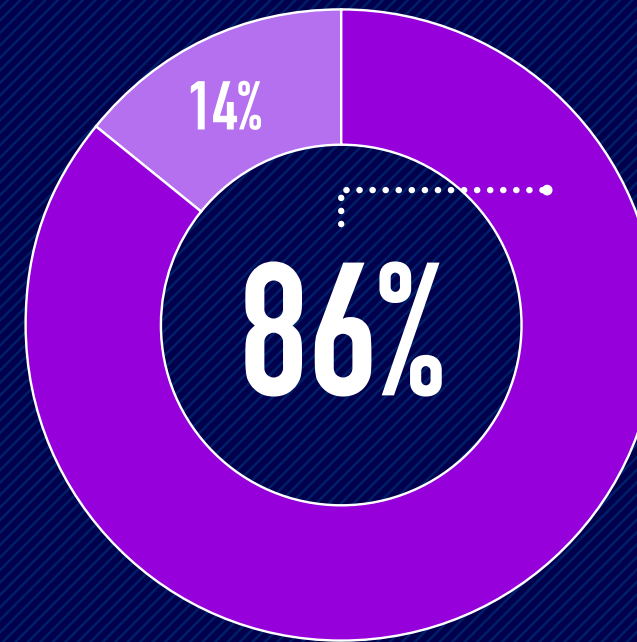


OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT BUSINESS ACUMEN IS AN IMPORTANT SKILL FOR TECHNICAL TALENT.

Move to improve development resources

Eighty-six percent of senior IT leaders recognize that they must improve their training and development resources to properly upskill and reskill employees in other areas or as an incentive to attract new talent.

While people are an important piece of the puzzle, an IT and business strategy also requires efficient processes to be successful.



86% OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT THEIR ORGANIZATION NEEDS TO IMPROVE THEIR TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES.

Process: Bringing IT and business teams together



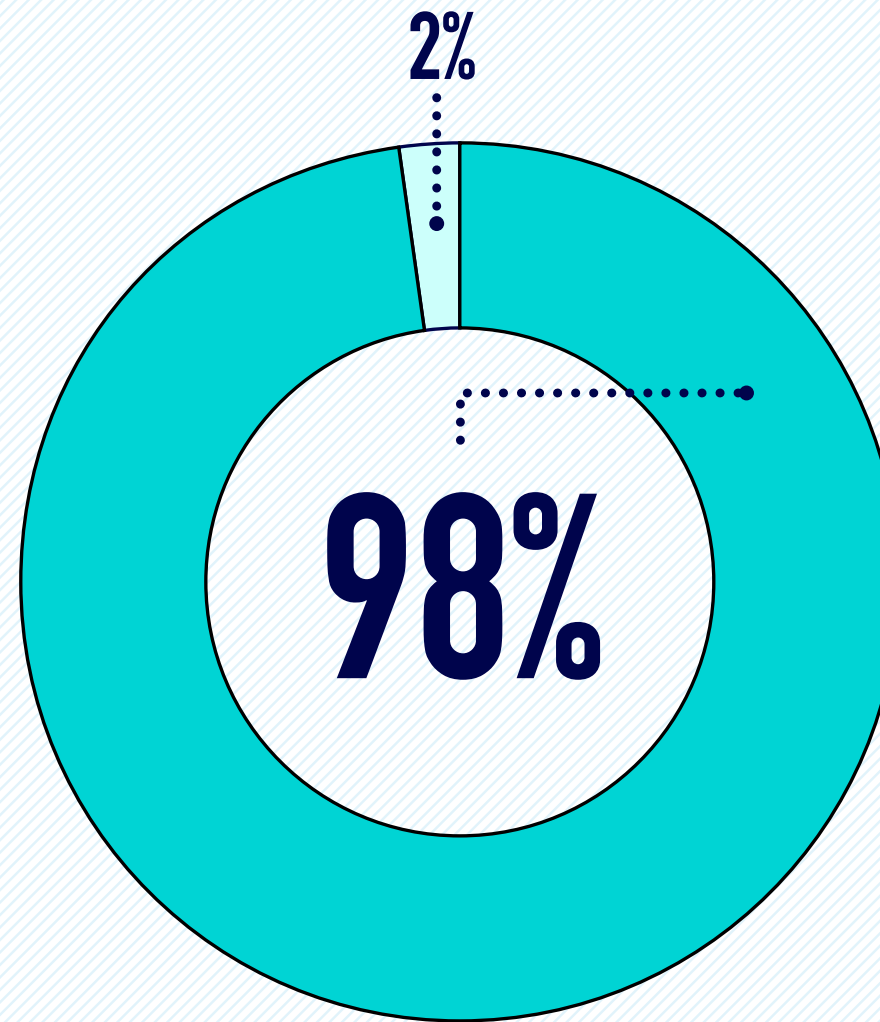
Improved collaborative processes needed between IT and business teams

IT is no longer just a technology enabler; IT now solves business-critical problems, tackles major business objectives, and helps develop competitive advantages with technology. This shift requires IT and business teams to work in closer collaboration for strategic objectives.

However, more than half of respondents (54%) think that working processes between IT and business teams could be significantly improved – while only 2% said there was no room for improvement.



Learn how IT and business team alignment impacts business outcomes. [Download report.](#)



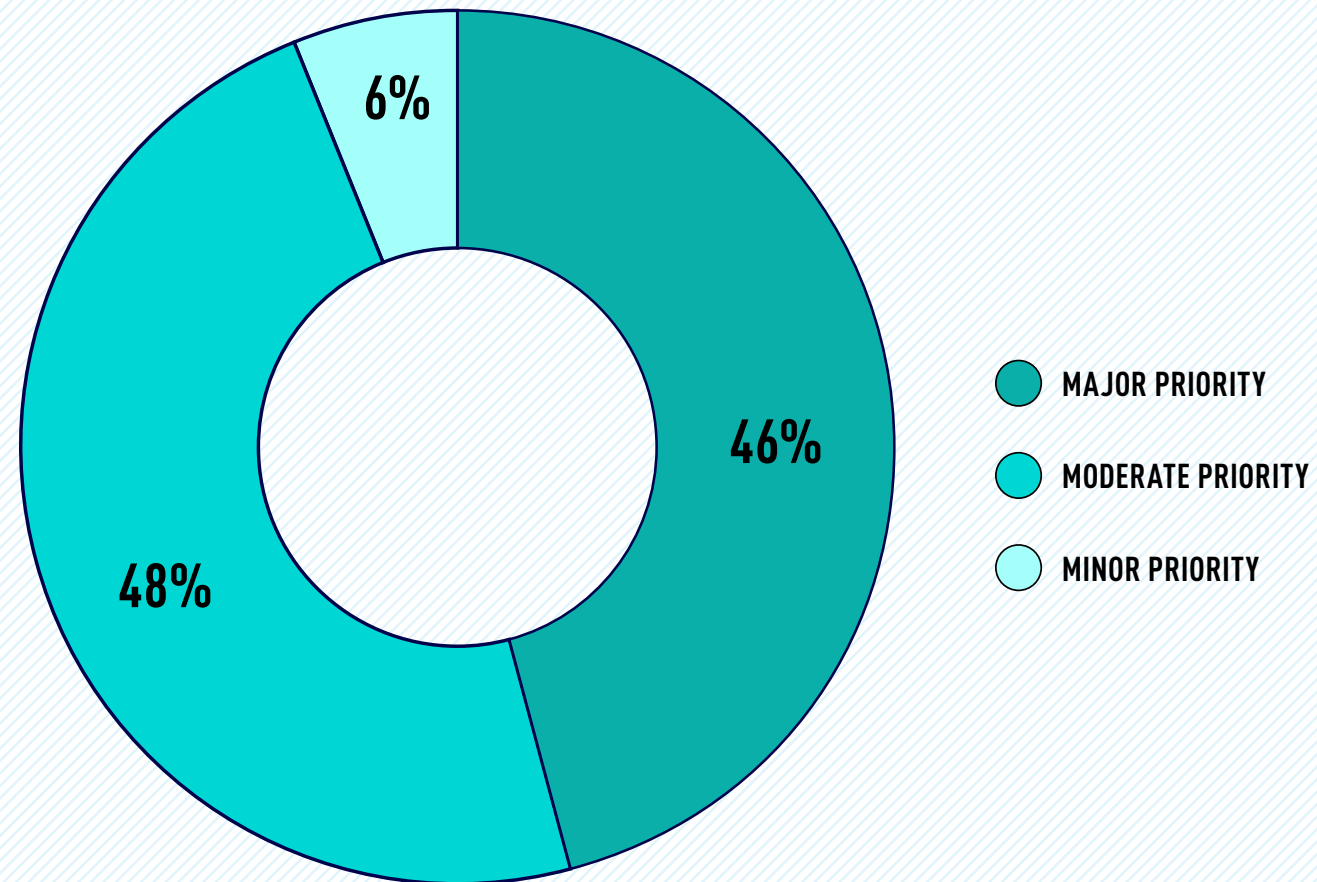
OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT WORKING PROCESSES BETWEEN IT AND BUSINESS TEAMS COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED.

Process improvements are a key priority for IT

Forty-six percent of senior IT leaders say making process improvements is a major priority for their organization over the next 12 months – with many reporting that their existing processes are hindering progress.

This push to improved processes is particularly prevalent in the communications, media, and technology (CMT) industry (60%), as well as the public sector (52%).

Where do process improvements fall for IT organizations:



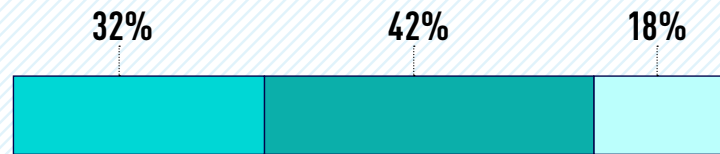
Existing processes block productivity and transformation

Nine out of ten (91%) senior IT leaders say that existing IT processes are blocking their team’s productivity. Process challenges are also hindering innovation, technology adoption, and customer and employee experiences.

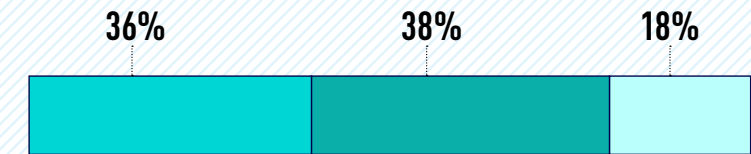
Where IT processes are hindering the organization:

● TO A MAJOR EXTENT ● TO A MODERATE EXTENT ● NOT AT ALL

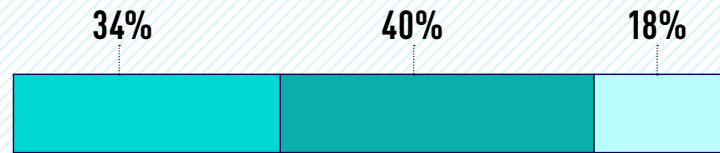
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



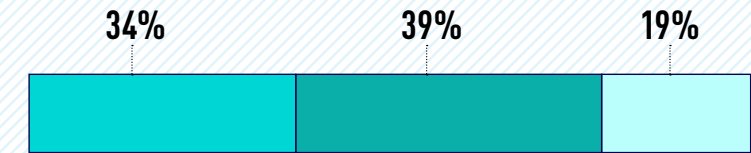
INNOVATION



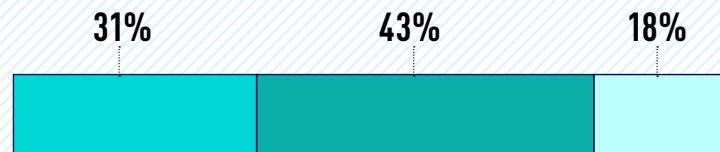
EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE



TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION



PRODUCTIVITY



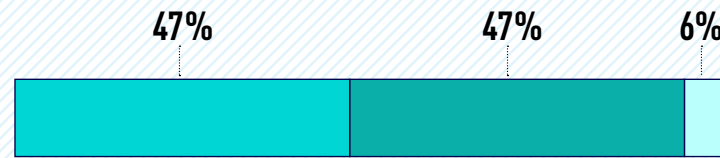
Innovation hinges on process improvements

Most IT leaders believe processes need to improve across a range of IT functions – including data management, integration, and security and governance – to support innovation effectively.

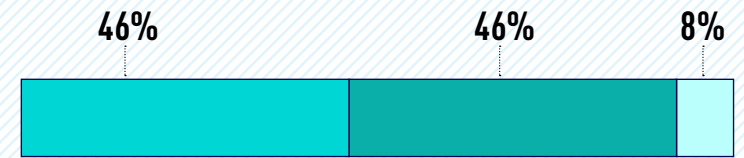
Where IT processes need to improve to support innovation:

● THEY COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED
 ● THEY COULD BE SOMEWHAT IMPROVED
 ● NO ROOM TO BE IMPROVED

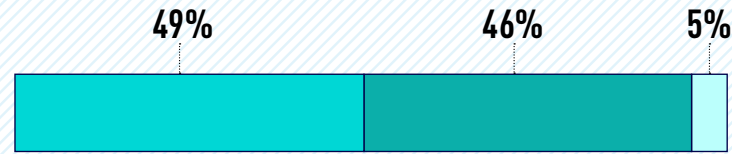
DATA MANAGEMENT / ANALYTICS



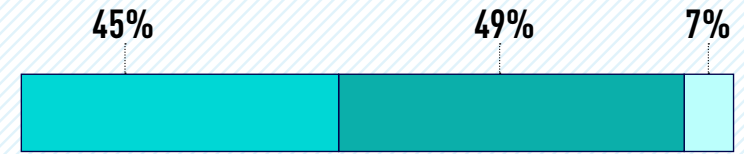
IT SERVICE MANAGEMENT



IT INTEGRATION



SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT



SECURITY & GOVERNANCE

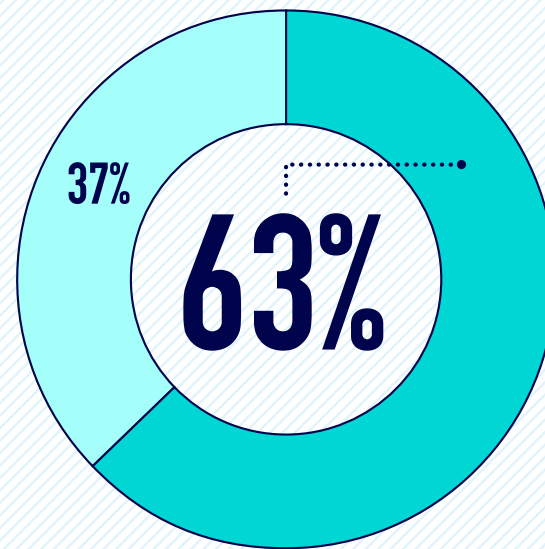
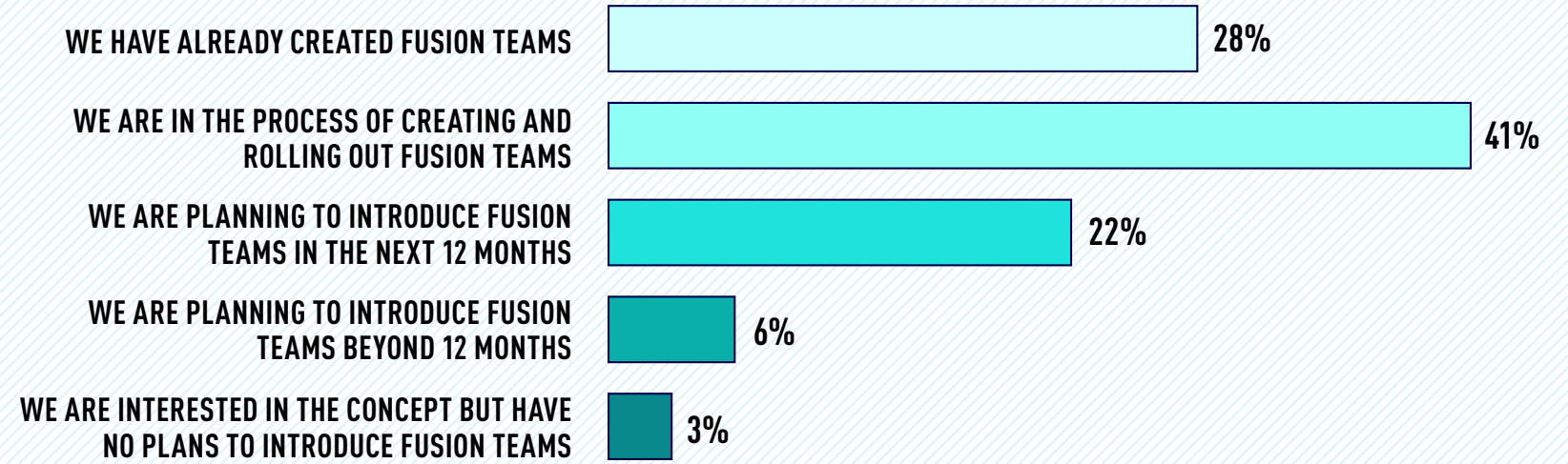


Fusion teams bridge alignment and drive success

To address process challenges, senior IT leaders are looking to create fusion teams. These are multi-disciplinary teams that blend workers with technology, analytics, or domain expertise and who share responsibility for business and technology outcomes.

Already 69% of organizations have created or are in the process of rolling out fusion teams, and an additional 22% plan to do so within the next 12 months. Of organizations with fusion teams already in place, 63% of IT leaders say these teams have helped the business meet its goals.

How organizations are using or planning to use fusion teams:



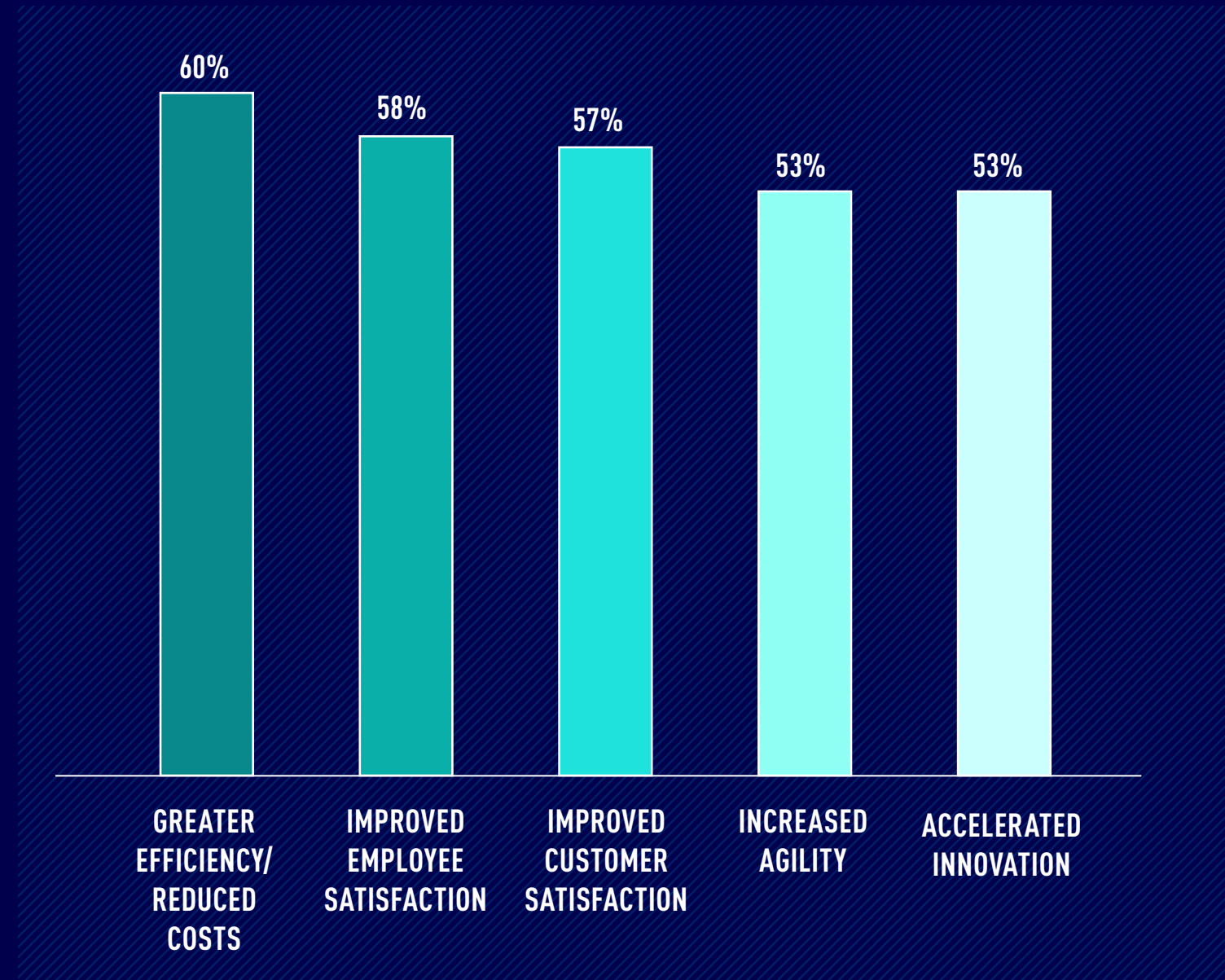
OF SENIOR IT LEADERS SAY THAT FUSION TEAMS HAVE HELPED THEIR BUSINESS MEET ITS GOALS.

Fusion teams adding value across the business

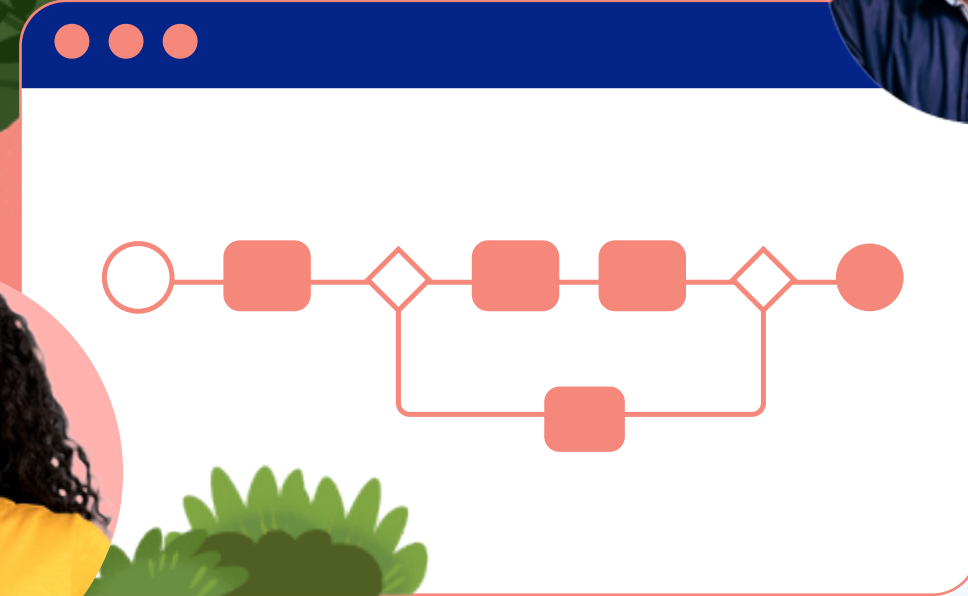
Fusion teams also deliver value across the business via improved efficiency, higher employee and customer satisfaction, increased agility, and accelerated innovation.

Both people and processes rely heavily on technology to meet business objectives. The next section looks at the ways organizations are using technology to make people and processes more efficient.

Expected outcomes from fusion teams:



Technology: APIs, integration, automation, and low/no-code

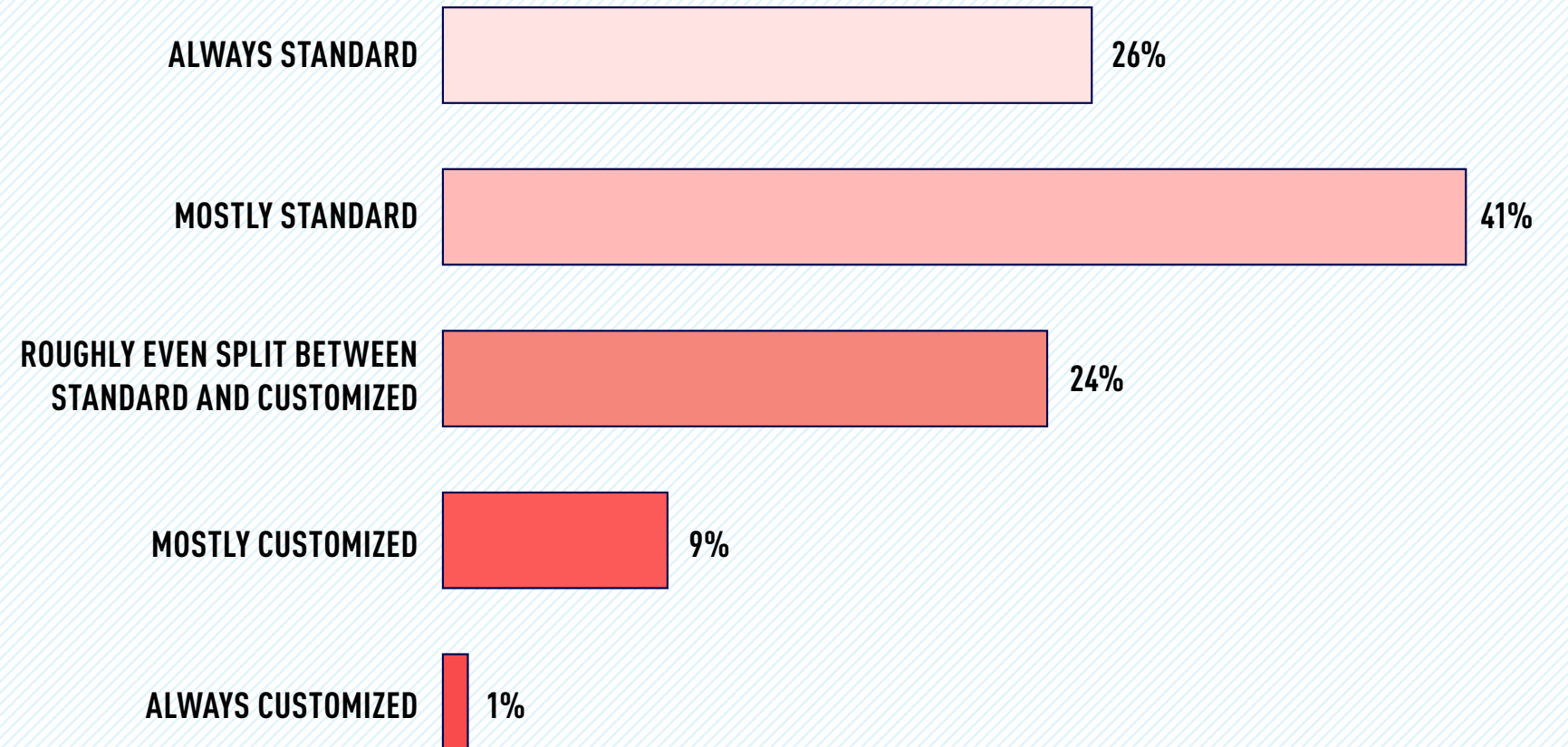


New software requires custom implementation processes

Implementing new software allows organizations to evaluate their existing processes and standardize them. However, 75% of organizations require customized processes when adopting new software to meet their business requirements.

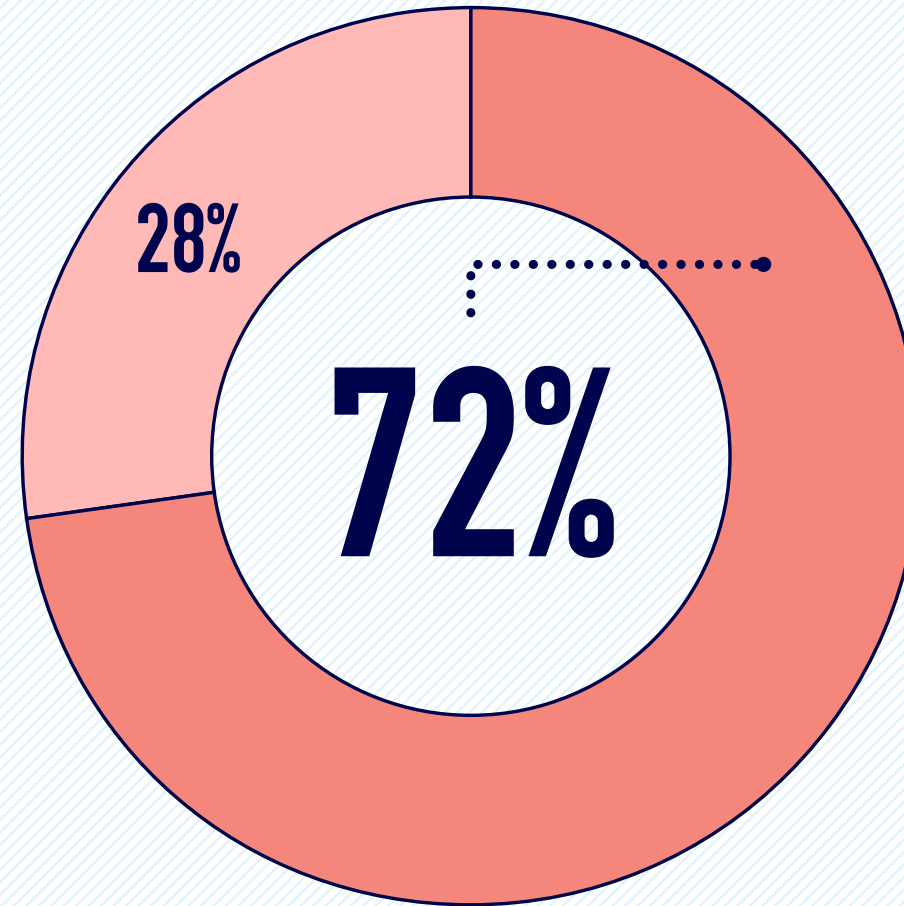
This is one of many considerations senior IT leaders face as they look to future-proof their technology stack.

Processes IT organizations use to adopt new software:



IT is leaning in to existing investments, rather than buying new technology

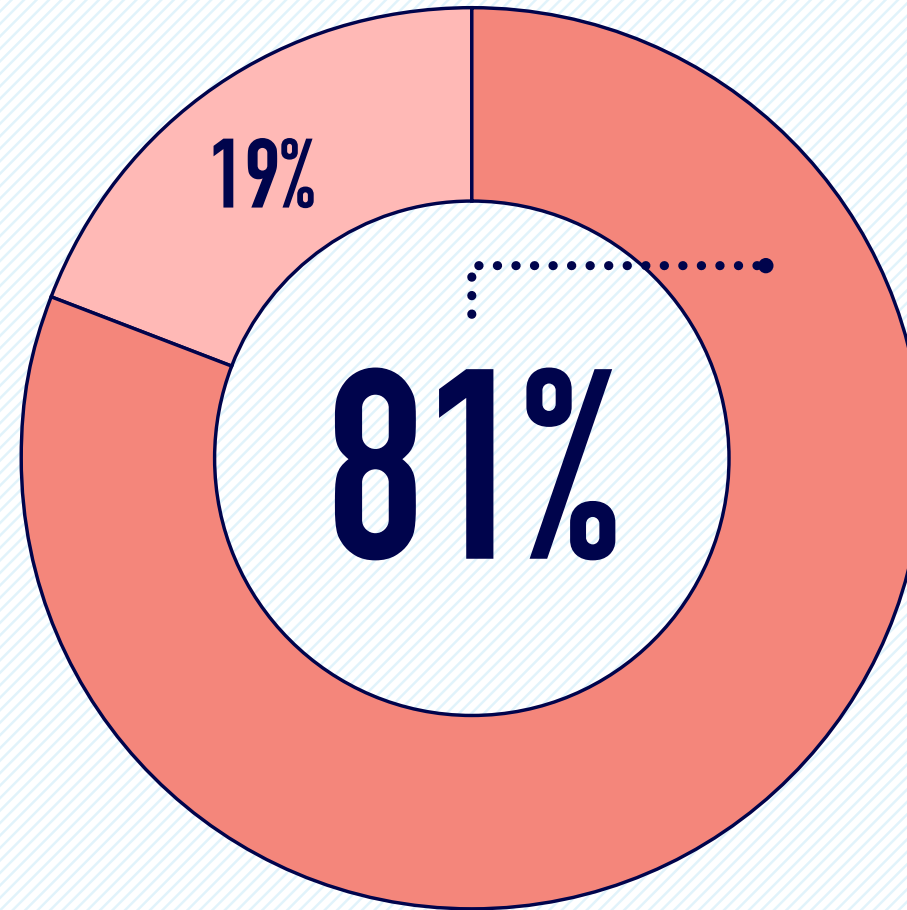
Most IT leaders (72%) prefer to update or upgrade existing solutions wherever possible, rather than replacing them. With growing economic headwinds, many organizations are looking to extract further value from their existing infrastructure instead of making investments in brand new technology.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS PREFER TO UPDATE OR UPGRADE EXISTING SOLUTIONS WHEREVER POSSIBLE, RATHER THAN REPLACING THEM.

Best-of-breed approach can lead to greater IT complexity

Organizations are using best-of-breed technologies to create new customer and employee experiences. While a best-of-breed strategy can increase agility, 81% of respondents say that this approach correlates to struggles with IT complexity – especially within the healthcare sector (87%).

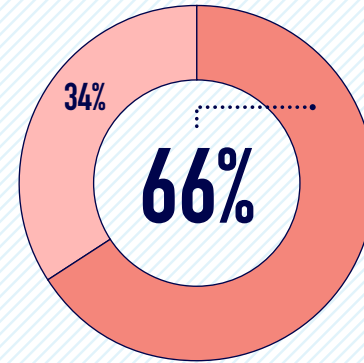


OF IT LEADERS AGREE A BEST-OF-BREED APPROACH MEANS THEIR ORGANIZATION STRUGGLES WITH IT COMPLEXITY.

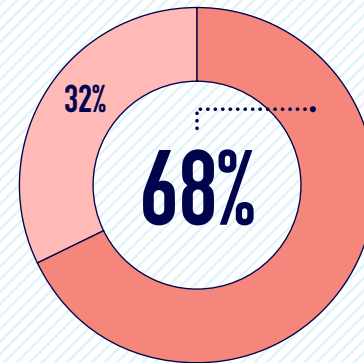
Integration projects take too long and cost too much

In order to create connected experiences, organizations need integration. Two-thirds (66%) of IT leaders believe data or system integration projects take too long and 69% of them say they are too expensive.

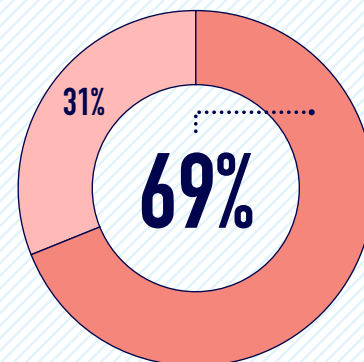
At the same time, 68% of senior IT leaders recognize that a lack of data or system integration creates a disconnected customer experience, which damages customer loyalty and retention.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS BELIEVE DATA OR SYSTEM INTEGRATION PROJECTS TAKE TOO LONG.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS LEADERS AGREE THAT A LACK OF DATA OR SYSTEM INTEGRATION CREATES A DISCONNECTED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATION.



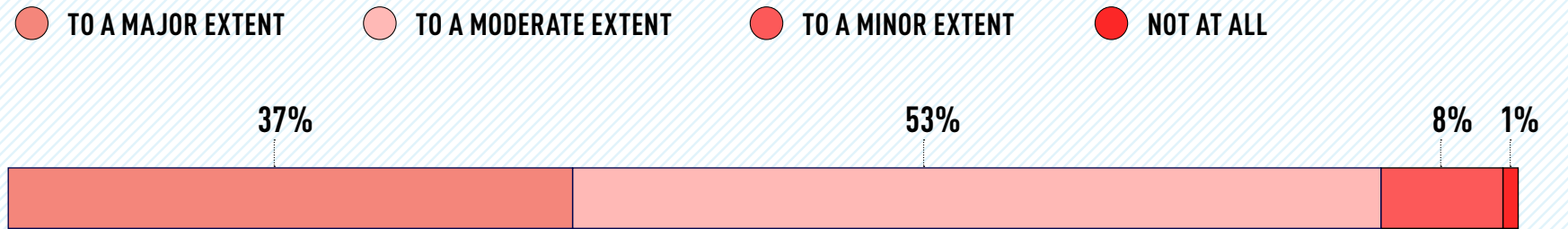
OF SENIOR IT LEADERS BELIEVE DATA OR SYSTEM INTEGRATION PROJECTS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE.

Integration now major factor in purchasing decisions

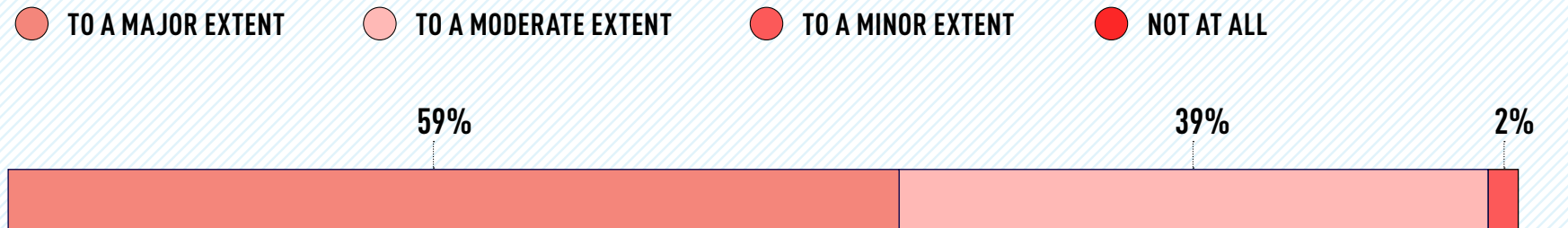
Integration struggles are now influencing buying decisions.

Most (98%) of senior IT leaders say that new technology investments are influenced by a tool’s ability to integrate with existing technology. While roughly 90% say that the decision to build or buy is influenced by integration concerns.

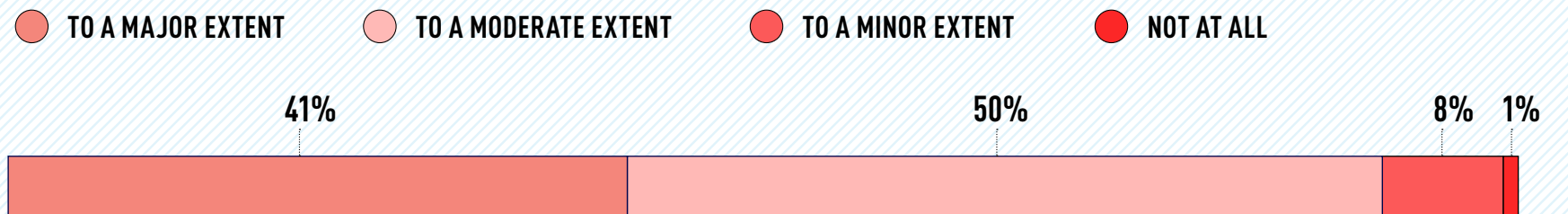
How integration concerns influence an organization’s decision to build a new application or software in-house:



How integration with existing technology influence IT investment decisions:



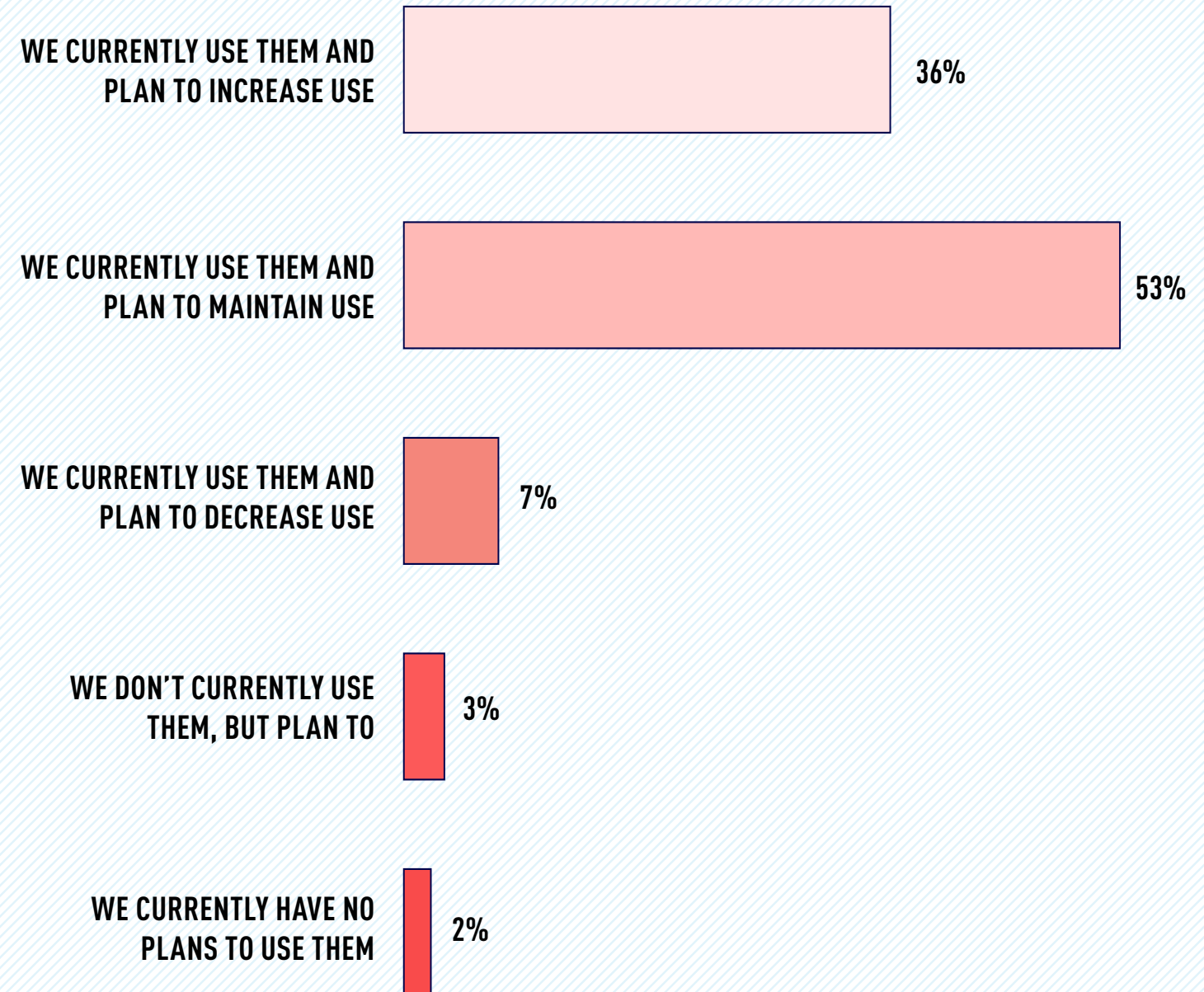
How integration concerns influence an organization’s decision to buy a new application or software:



Low/no-code tools play a key role in IT strategy

Faced with a lack of coding talent, many senior IT leaders are turning to low/no-code tools to enable business users to build and test new experiences. Almost all organizations (96%) currently use low/no-code tools and 36% plan to increase their use over the next 12 months.

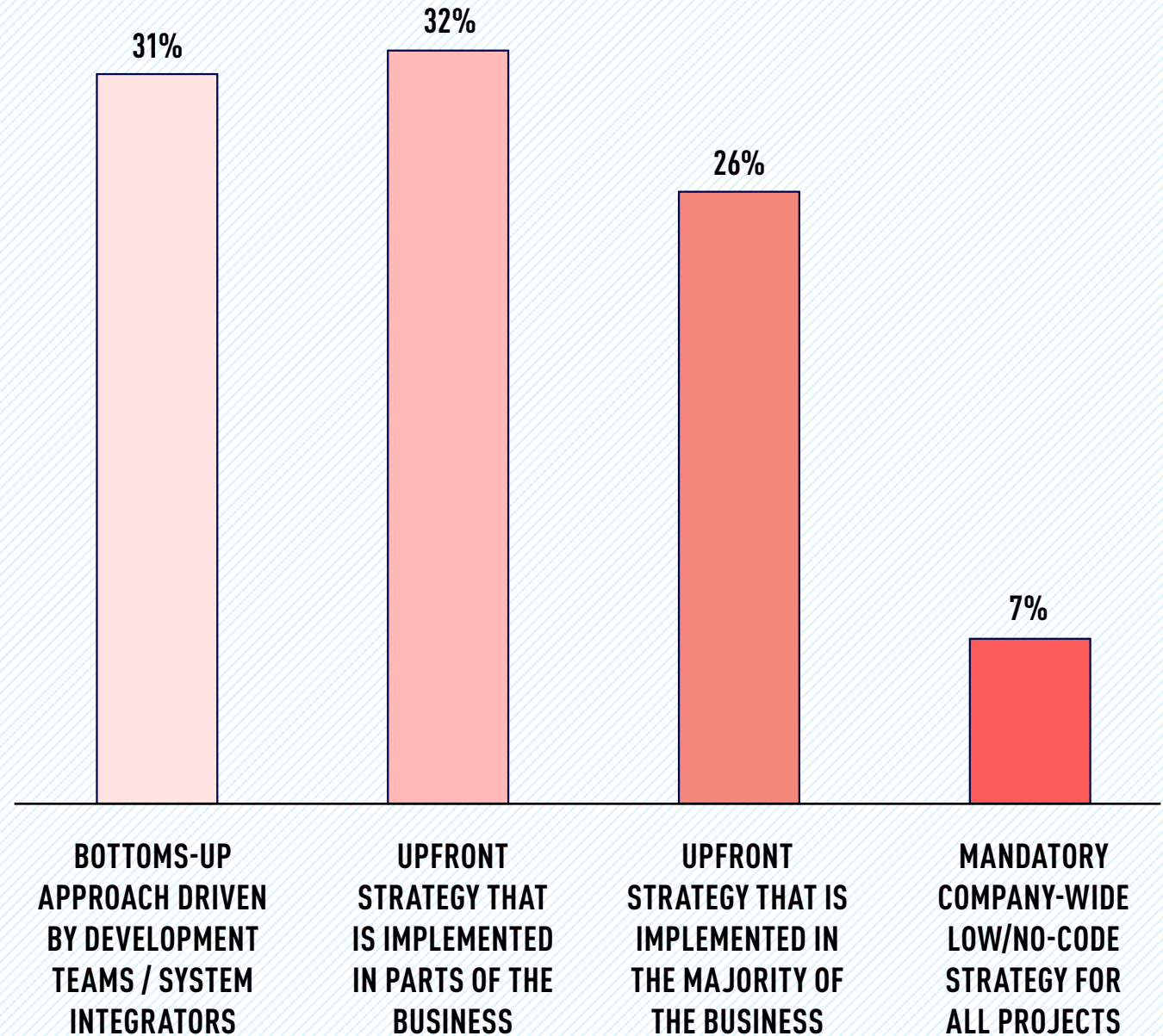
How organizations plan to use low/no-code tools over the next 12 months:



Variety of low/no-code strategies used

IT leaders have various approaches for implementing low/no-code tools. An upfront strategy is used by 32% of organizations in parts of their business, 31% have adopted a bottom-up approach driven by developers or systems integrators, while 26% have implemented an upfront strategy across a majority of the business.

Current IT strategies for low/no-code tools:



Automation is driving process efficiency

Automation maturity is growing as more organizations turn to automation to enhance customer experiences and product/service quality. Two-thirds of organizations (67%) have either automated their IT operations and many have introduced automation across other business functions — including

finance, customer support, marketing, sales, and HR.

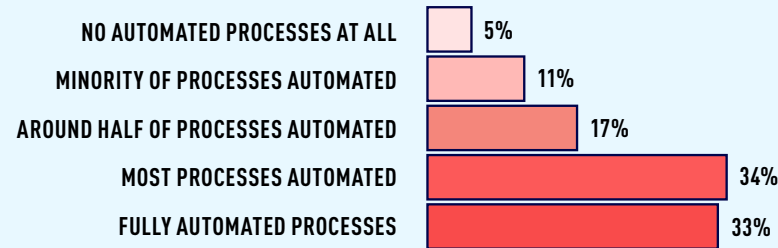
However, fully automated processes remain quite low — with an average of 23% of organizations saying they've reached this across business functions.



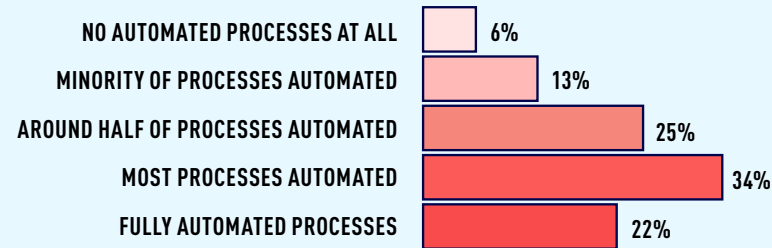
See how automation is already revolutionizing the way the world works. [Read more.](#)

How automated are the following business functions:

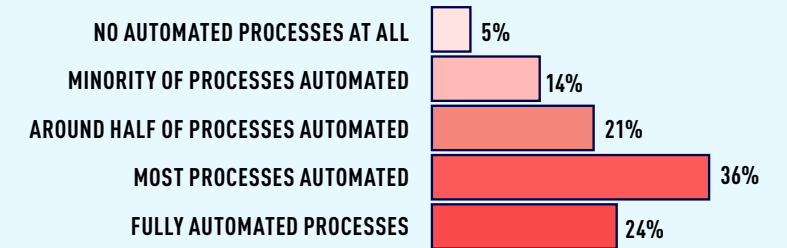
IT OPERATIONS



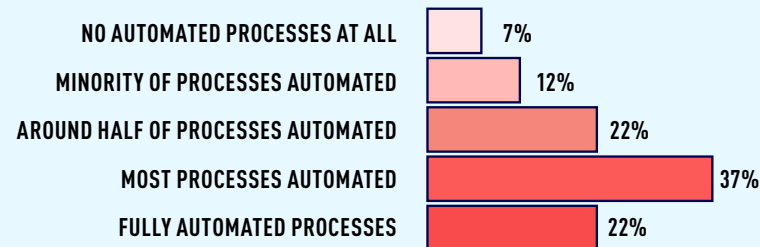
SALES



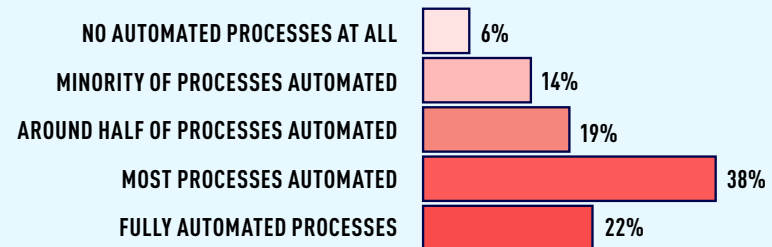
FINANCE



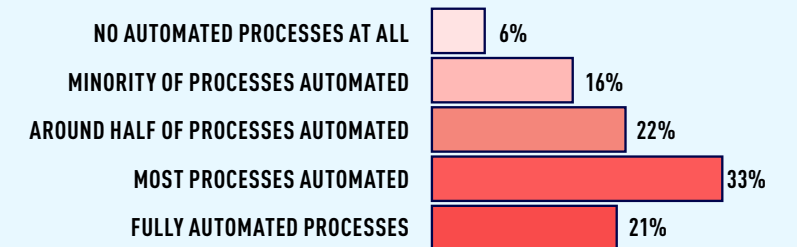
CUSTOMER SUPPORT



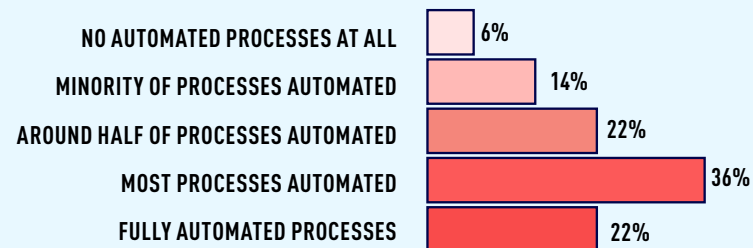
ENGINEERING



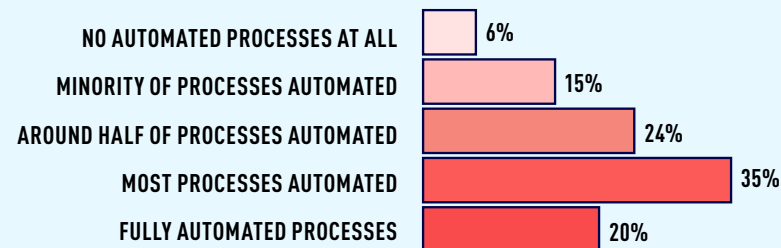
EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING



MARKETING



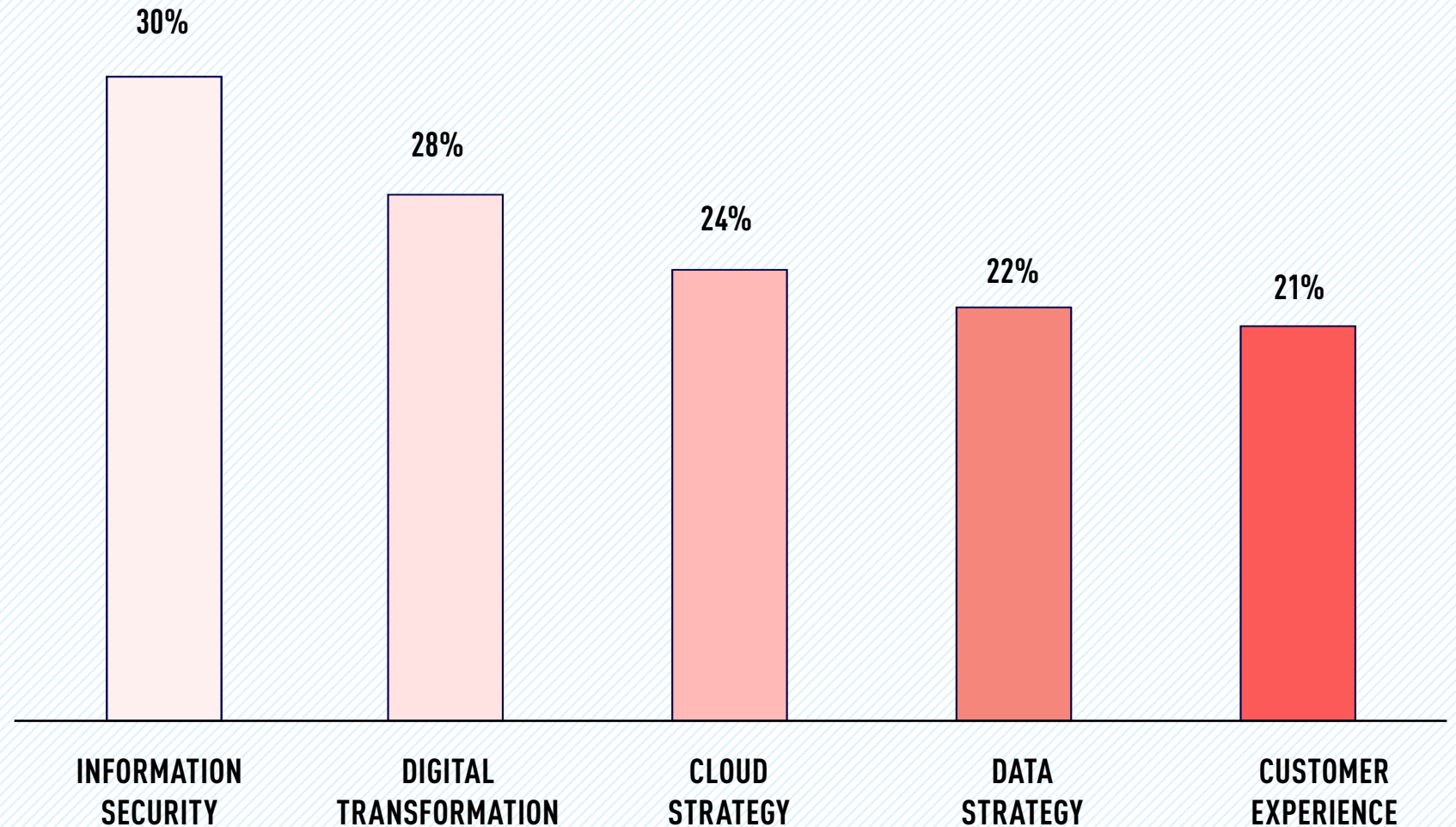
HR



Information security #1 priority for business

With new laws and regulations emerging every year requiring businesses to adhere to complex data control requirements, data privacy and protection remain top of mind. Information security is the most significant business priority for organizations in the next 12 months, ahead of digital transformation and cloud strategy.

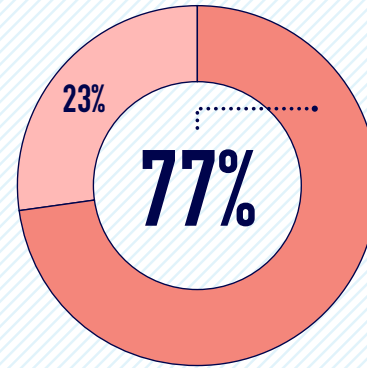
Top 5 business priorities over the next 12 months:



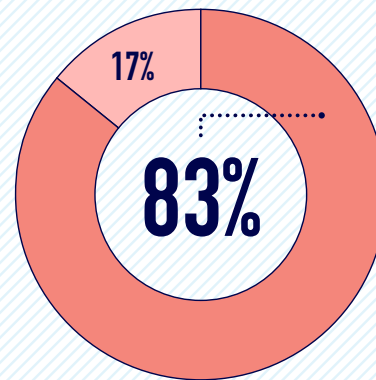
Security degrading customer experience

More than three-quarters (77%) of senior IT leaders agree that internal security and governance risks are as high as external ones – with 83% saying they monitor how employees access and use customer data.

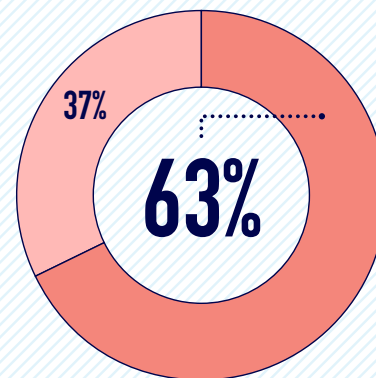
However, maintaining high-quality customer experiences while securing data can be a challenge. Sixty-three percent of IT leaders say their security and governance controls degrade the customer experience.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT INTERNAL SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE RISKS ARE AS HIGH AS EXTERNAL RISKS.



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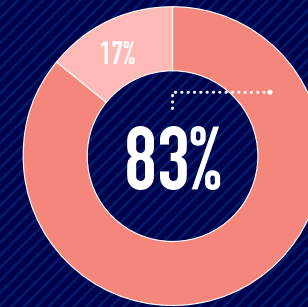


OF SENIOR IT LEADERS BELIEVE THAT THEIR ORGANIZATIONS SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE CONTROLS DEGRADE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.

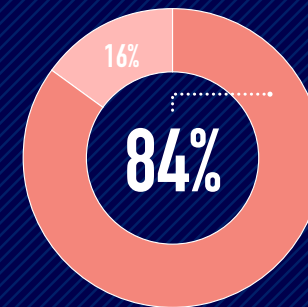
Data privacy concerns driving security and governance investments

Eighty-three percent of senior IT leaders say public concerns over data privacy have prompted their organization to increase security and governance investments. For 84%, data protection regulations – such as GDPR and CPRA – have influenced investment decisions.

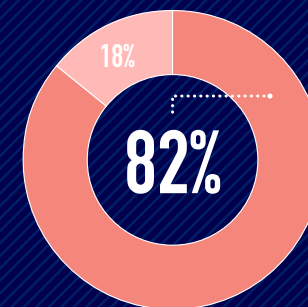
Most organizations are also communicating with customers about their data security strategy with 82% saying they are transparent with customers about how their data is used.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS SAY PUBLIC CONCERNS OVER DATA PRIVACY HAVE PROMPTED THEIR ORGANIZATION TO INCREASE SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE INVESTMENTS.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS, SUCH AS GDPR AND CPRA, HAVE PROMPTED THEIR ORGANIZATION TO INCREASE SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE INVESTMENTS.



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Measuring future IT success

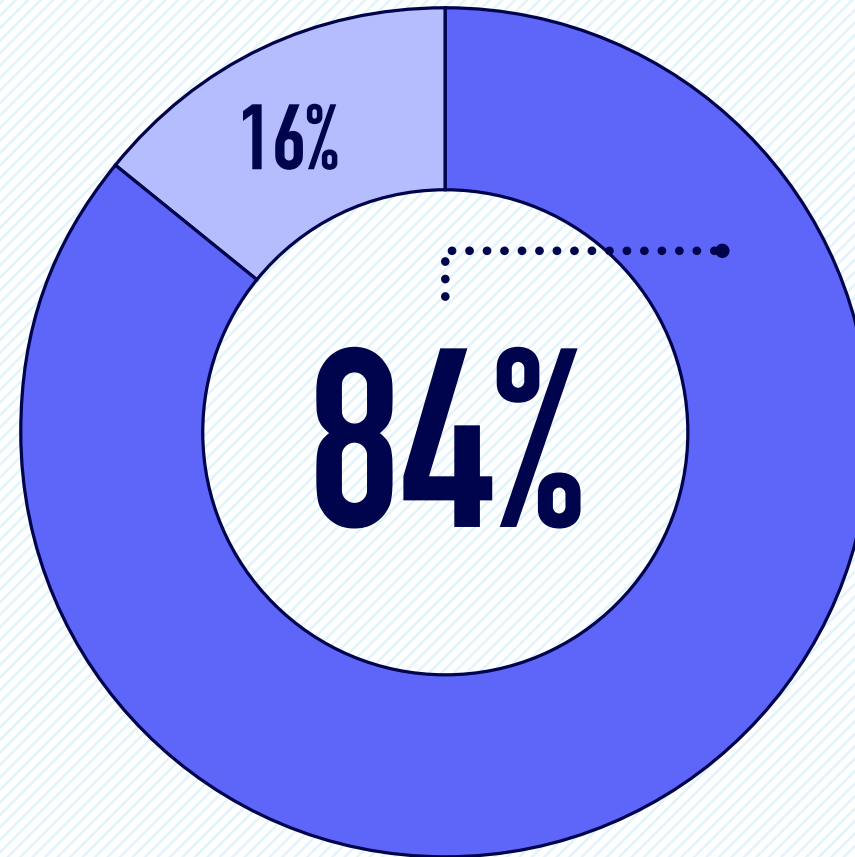


The evolving role of senior IT leaders

The role of senior IT leaders has shifted dramatically in recent years – more than any other enterprise function.

As technology becomes increasingly integral to business success, so has the senior IT leaders' influence in shaping organizational strategies in the modern digital era.

In a post-pandemic world, senior IT leaders require a skill set that is much broader than technology expertise.



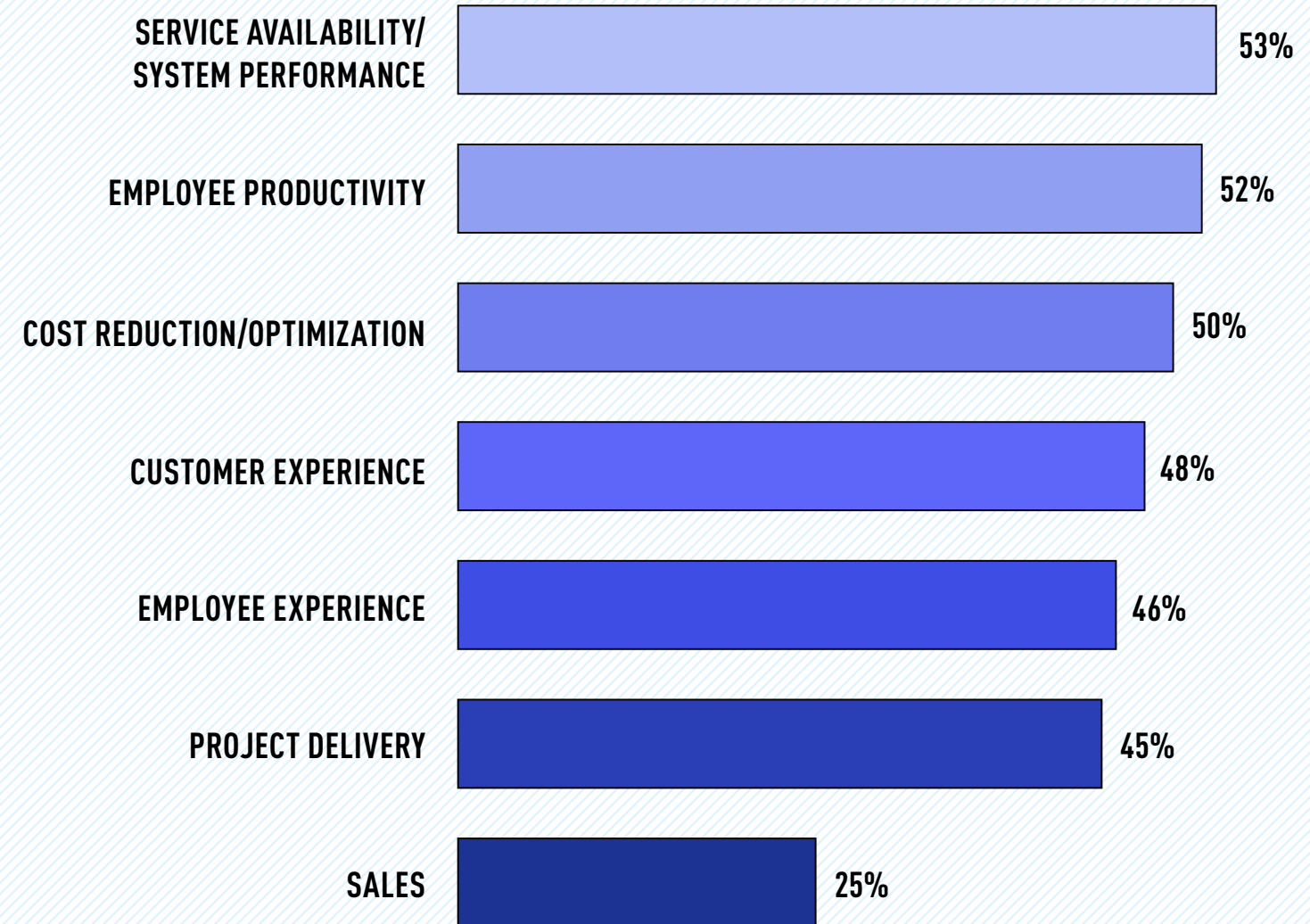
OF SENIOR IT LEADERS SAY THEY'VE HAD TO DEVELOP NON-IT SKILLS TO BECOME MORE STRATEGIC WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATION.

IT now measured by productivity, cost reduction, and experiences

Roughly half of all senior IT leaders are now evaluated on employee productivity (52%), cost reduction and optimization (50%), and customer (48%) and employee experience (46%).

This varies between industries; for financial services and insurance, for example, 62% of senior IT leaders are measured on employee productivity.

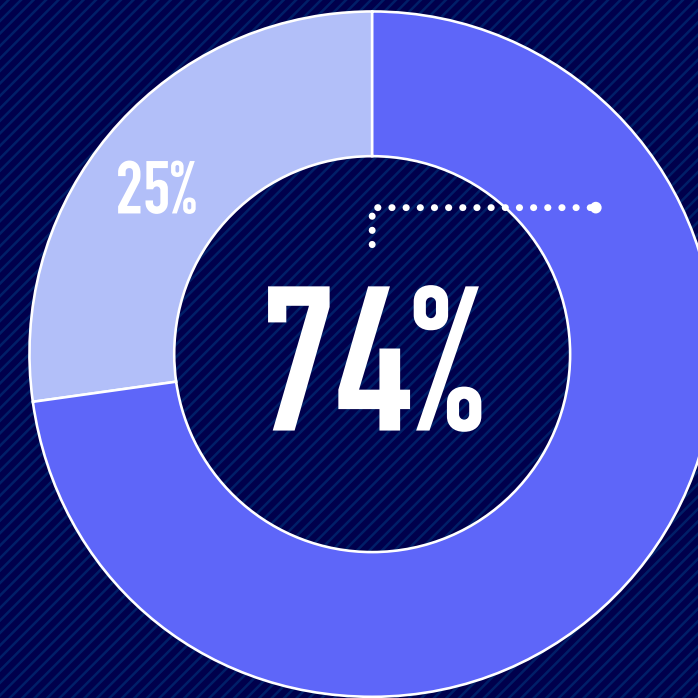
KPIs IT leaders are being measured on:



IT burdened with project backlogs

As economic conditions remain volatile, senior IT leaders are under pressure to empower their organization to remain agile while focusing on meeting business goals. However, three-quarters (74%) of respondents say project backlogs are preventing them from working on strategic initiatives.

To overcome these challenges, organizations need to leverage APIs, automation, and low/no-cost tools to create connected customer and employee experiences. By automating processes where feasible, senior IT leaders can **realize value faster, accelerate innovation, and successfully support their organization** navigate today's challenging landscape.



OF SENIOR IT LEADERS AGREE THAT PROJECT BACKLOGS PREVENT THEM FROM WORKING ON STRATEGIC INITIATIVES.

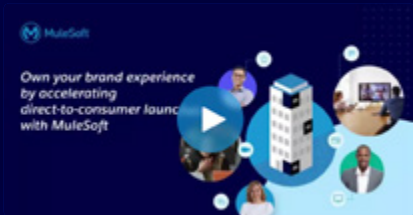
Want to learn more?



The state of digital transformation for retail and consumer goods

Take a look at the Connectivity Benchmark Report data through a retail and consumer goods lens to see how digital transformation has become a critical driver of customer engagement and employee productivity.

[Read the report](#)



Own your brand experience

Discover how MuleSoft helps consumer goods companies accelerate new channel launches and create connected customer experiences. [Watch the webinar](#)



Build the connected retail experience

Learn how leading retailers use APIs to implement a strategy that enables agility, accelerated delivery, and automated security. [Download the eBook](#)



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