11 Recruiting Trends for Mid-Sized Companies

LEVER

Introduction

Like nearly every industry of any size, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended business as usual. One thing that hasn't changed, however, is the importance of focusing on the people who are core to a company's success. We surveyed 220 talent leaders at mid-sized companies (201-1500 employees) to better understand how their people processes have transformed as a result of the pandemic.

We discovered takeaways that were:

Surprising

Only 7%
of mid-sized companies are on a hiring freeze as a result of COVID-19.

Reassuring

59%
say it's more of a priority to put an emphasis on diversity and inclusion as a result of COVID-19.

43%
of recruiters believe they'll emerge from the pandemic stronger.

Informative

70%
agree they will need to hire workers with skills that weren't needed before. 68% say they will screen for adaptability.

80%
of recruiters at mid-sized companies say it is now more important that candidate relationship management be built into their applicant tracking system.

Introduction

With the move toward remote work—at least in the short term—and the need to rethink hiring processes and their surrounding assets (job descriptions, best practices, etc), automation, relationship building and integrated systems are key. Anthony Buatti, Head of Recruiting for Lever customer Mastery Charter, recognizes the urgency of this moment and the need for technology to help us thrive.

"The more our technologies work together to eliminate steps for us, the faster we can move toward authentic relationship building."

- Anthony Buatti, Head of Recruiting for Lever Customer Mastery Charter

This report is a snapshot of the trends mid-sized companies are experiencing as a result of the pandemic. But there are lessons of adaptability and flexibility that we can all learn from, no matter the company size or industry.

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Mid-Sized Companies Haven't Stopped Hiring

Remarkably, unlike 14% of companies overall, only 7% of mid-sized companies instituted a hiring freeze at the start of the pandemic. These companies—though not shielded from the economic downturn—may have been better positioned to weather the uncertainty. 40% did institute some form of a hiring freeze, but more than half have been actively hiring during this period of time.

Hiring activity during the pandemic:
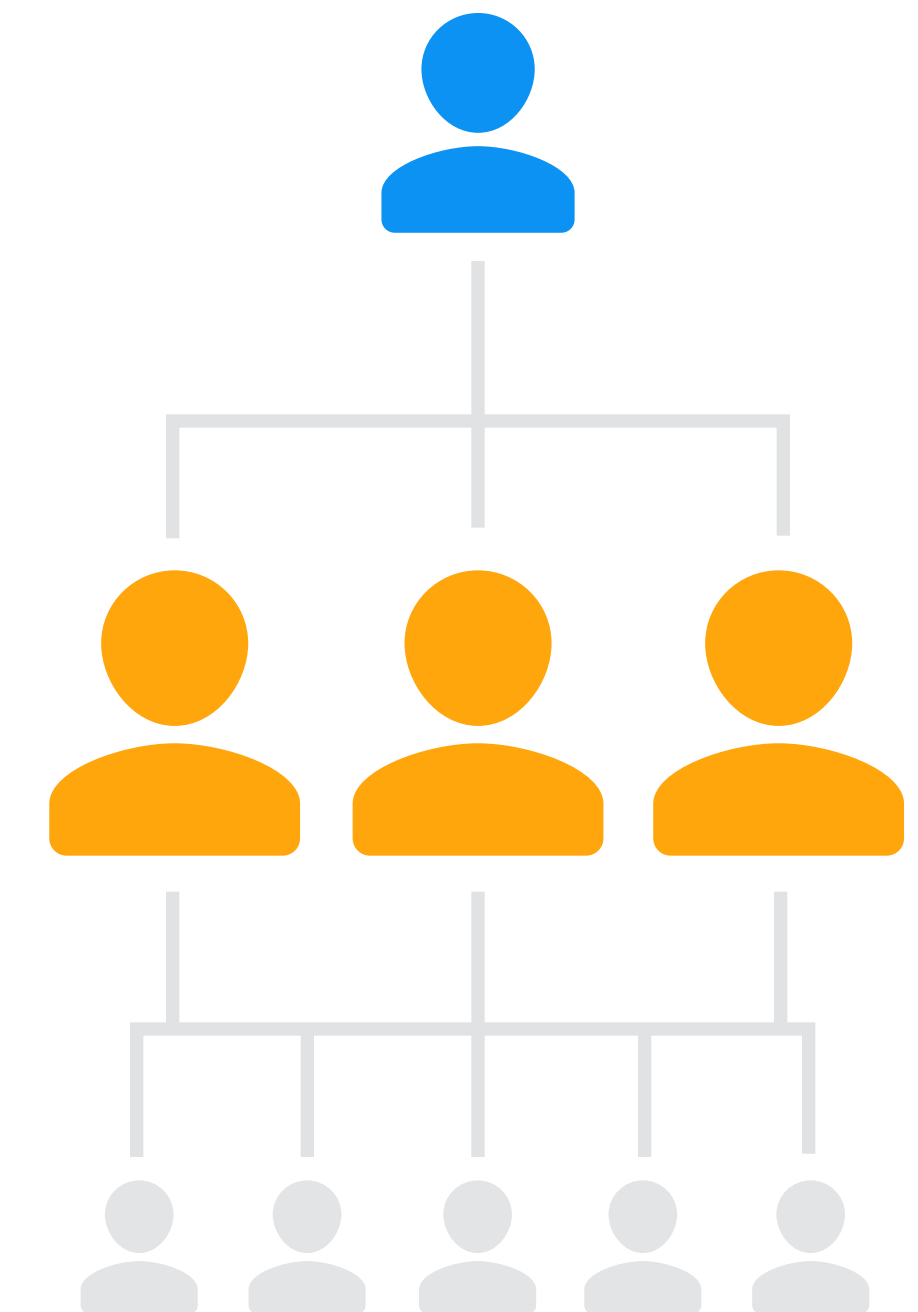
We are hiring — **53%**

We are technically on a hiring freeze, but still hiring for specific roles or backfills — **40%**

We are on a total hiring freeze — **7%**
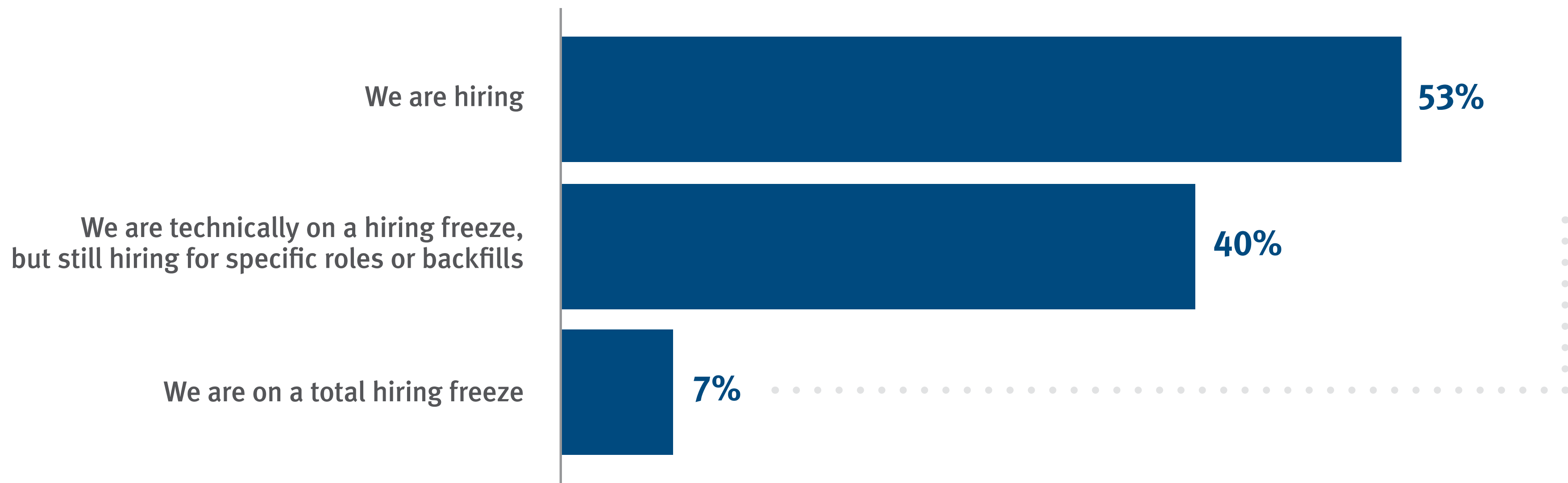
Only **7%** of mid-sized companies were on a total hiring freeze

Placing a Strong Focus on Mid-Level Managers

Looking ahead, mid-sized companies will focus more than half of their hiring efforts on mid-level managers. This is followed closely behind by senior leadership at 43% and entry level positions at 41%.

How will your hiring priorities change as a result of COVID-19?

We will be hiring more mid-level managers — **53%**

We will be hiring more senior leadership — **43%**

We will be hiring more junior and entry-level — **41%**

It will not change — **16%**

6
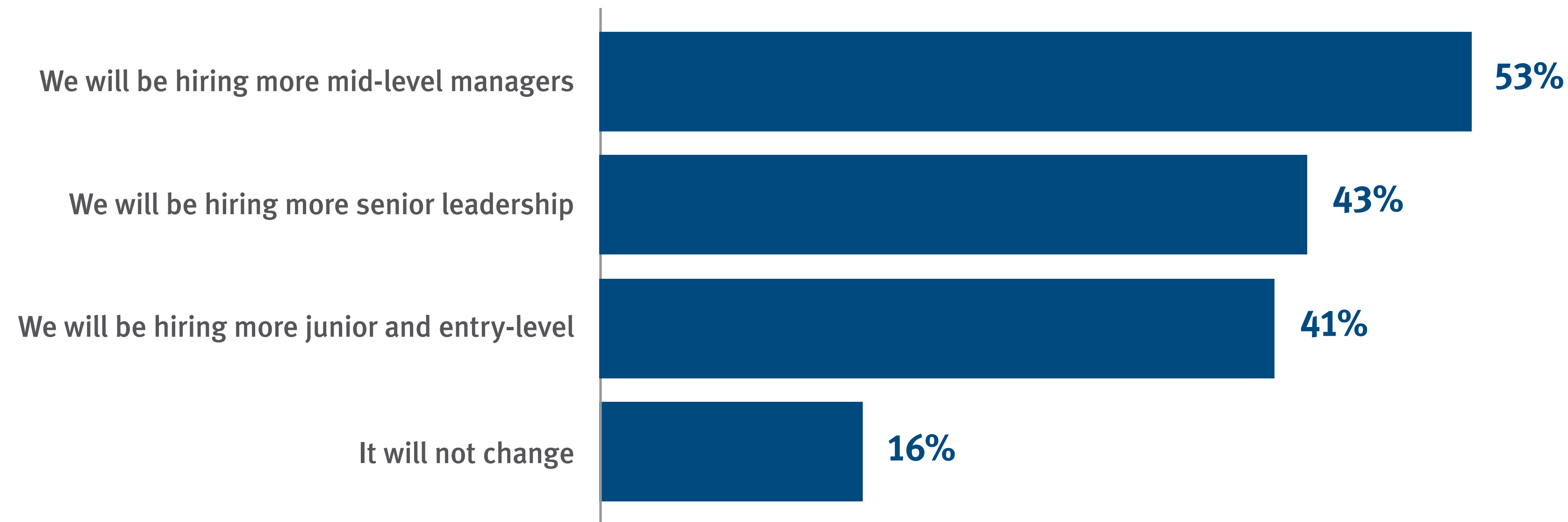
A Growing Reliance on Phone and Video Interviewing

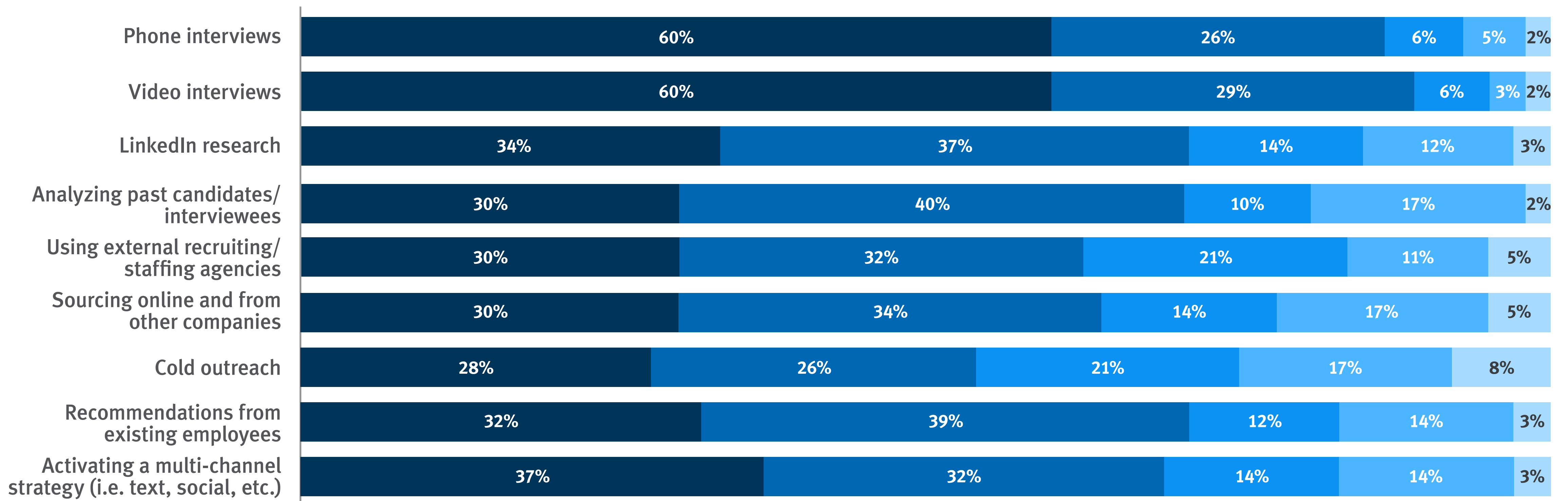When we think about what strategies stick around post-pandemic, connecting with candidates over the phone and through video may continue to supplement—or replace—in person interviews.

Shifts in hiring tactics used during the pandemic:

Legend: A lot more of | A little bit more of | A little bit less of | The same | Not applicable

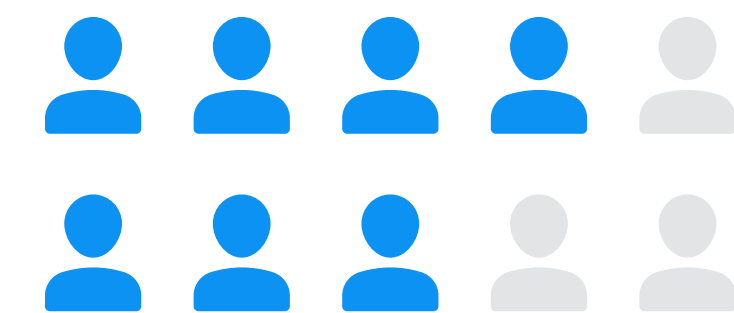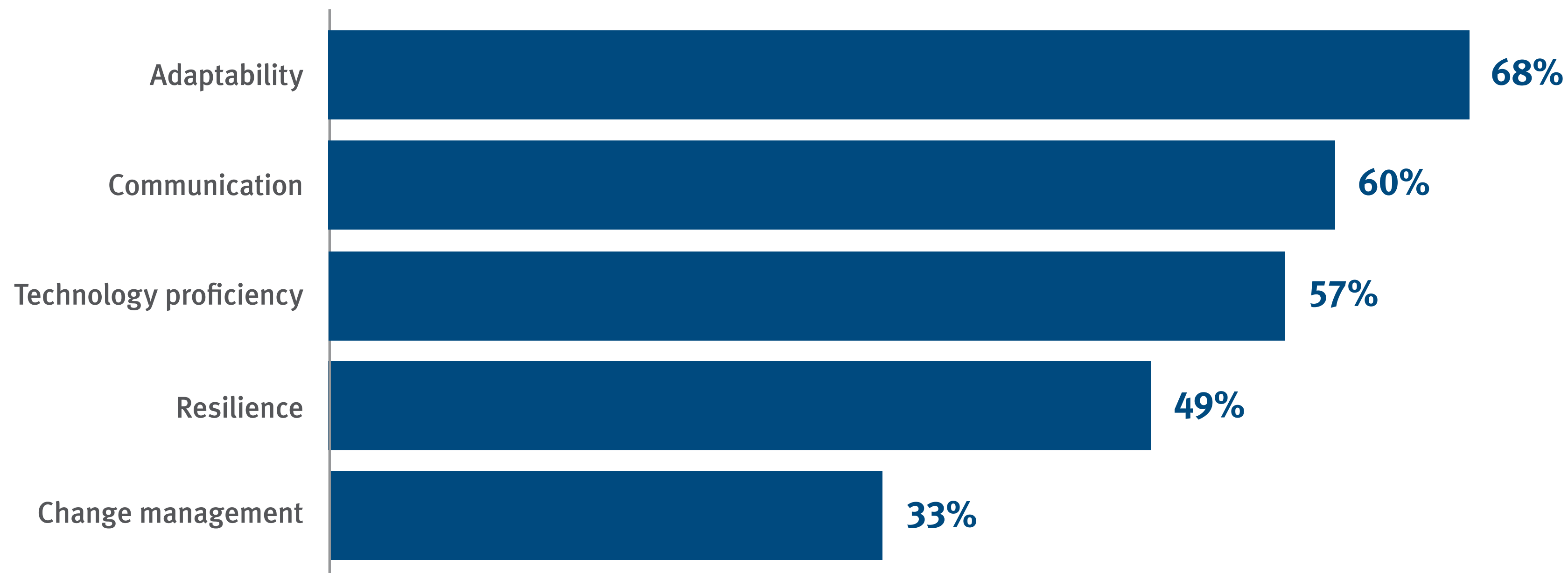| Tactic	A lot more of	A little bit more of	A little bit less of	The same	Not applicable
Phone interviews	60%	26%	6%	5%	2%
Video interviews	60%	29%	6%	3%	2%
LinkedIn research	34%	37%	14%	12%	3%
Analyzing past candidates/ interviewees	30%	40%	10%	17%	2%
Using external recruiting/ staffing agencies	30%	32%	21%	11%	5%
Sourcing online and from other companies	30%	34%	14%	17%	5%
Cold outreach	28%	26%	21%	17%	8%
Recommendations from existing employees	32%	39%	12%	14%	3%
Activating a multi-channel strategy (i.e. text, social, etc.)	37%	32%	14%	14%	3%

Adaptability Is Key

In an unpredictable business environment, screening for skills like adaptability and communication is more important than ever.

## New key skills required as a result of COVID-19?

Adaptability **68%**

Communication **60%**

Technology proficiency **57%**

Resilience **49%**

Change management **33%**

70%
agree they will need to hire workers with skills that weren't needed before

COVID-19 Is Transforming the Standards for Vetting

A whopping 78% of recruiters at mid-sized companies agree that they will introduce new candidate criteria in the wake of the pandemic. But vetting is a two-way street. As employers adapt their approach to find and vet the right talent, Lever allows employers to gauge how candidates feel as well throughout the process through candidate experience surveys.

With candidate experience surveys from Lever, companies can gather valuable insight on how their processes are working for candidates so that they can strengthen their employer brand, boost their offer acceptance rate, and increase referrals.

78% of recruiters at mid-sized companies agree that they will introduce new candidate criteria

We will introduce additional candidate criteria before conducting interviews as a result of COVID-19:
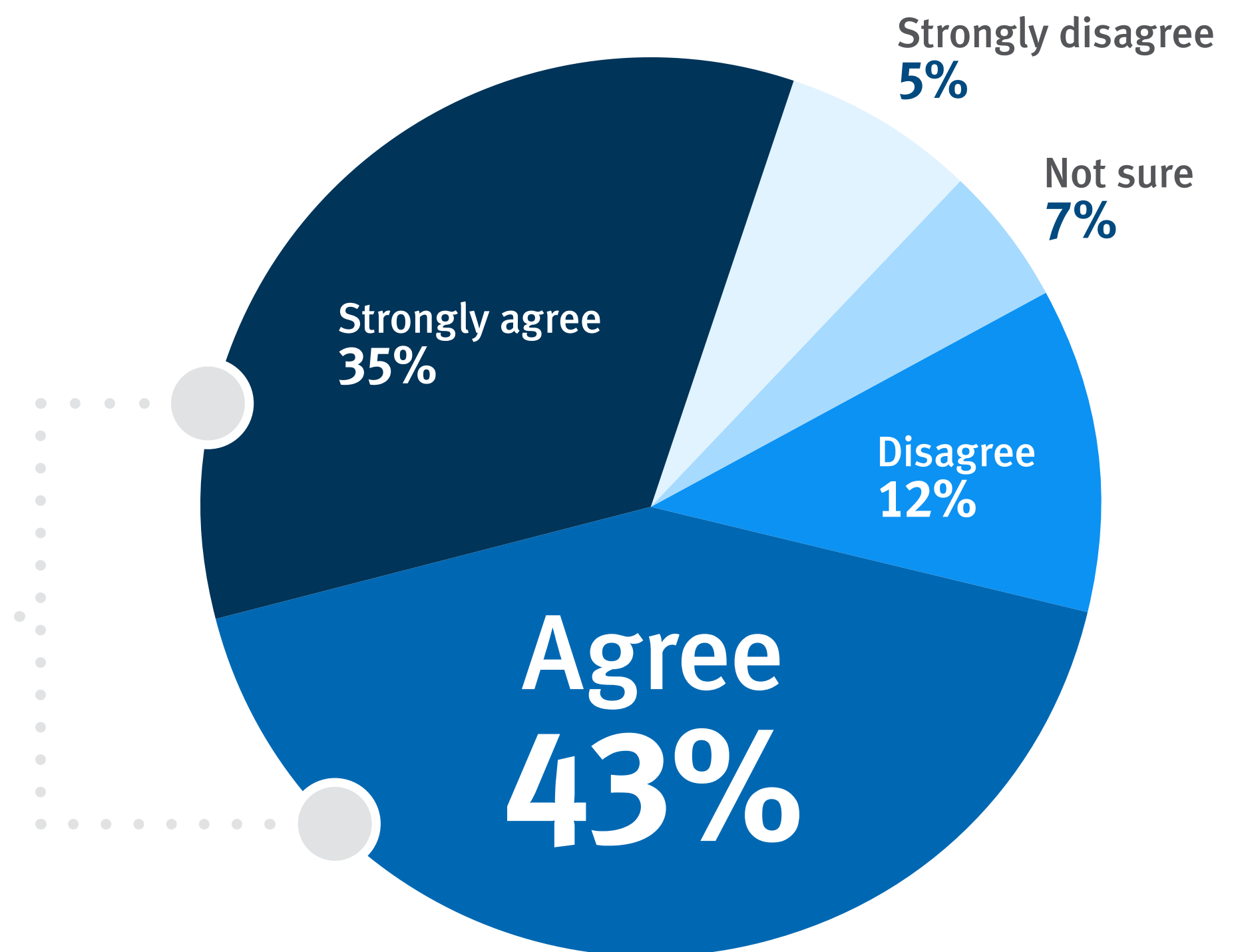
Strongly disagree
5%

Not sure
7%

Strongly agree
35%

Disagree
12%

Agree
43%

Recruiters Need to Keep Up With the Volume of Candidates

Half of recruiters at mid-sized companies say that they are able to build relationships with candidates. However, as the volume of applicants increases due to the number of people in the job market, that may become more challenging.

How has the volume of applicants changed since COVID-19?

More 54%

Fewer 35%

Same 11%
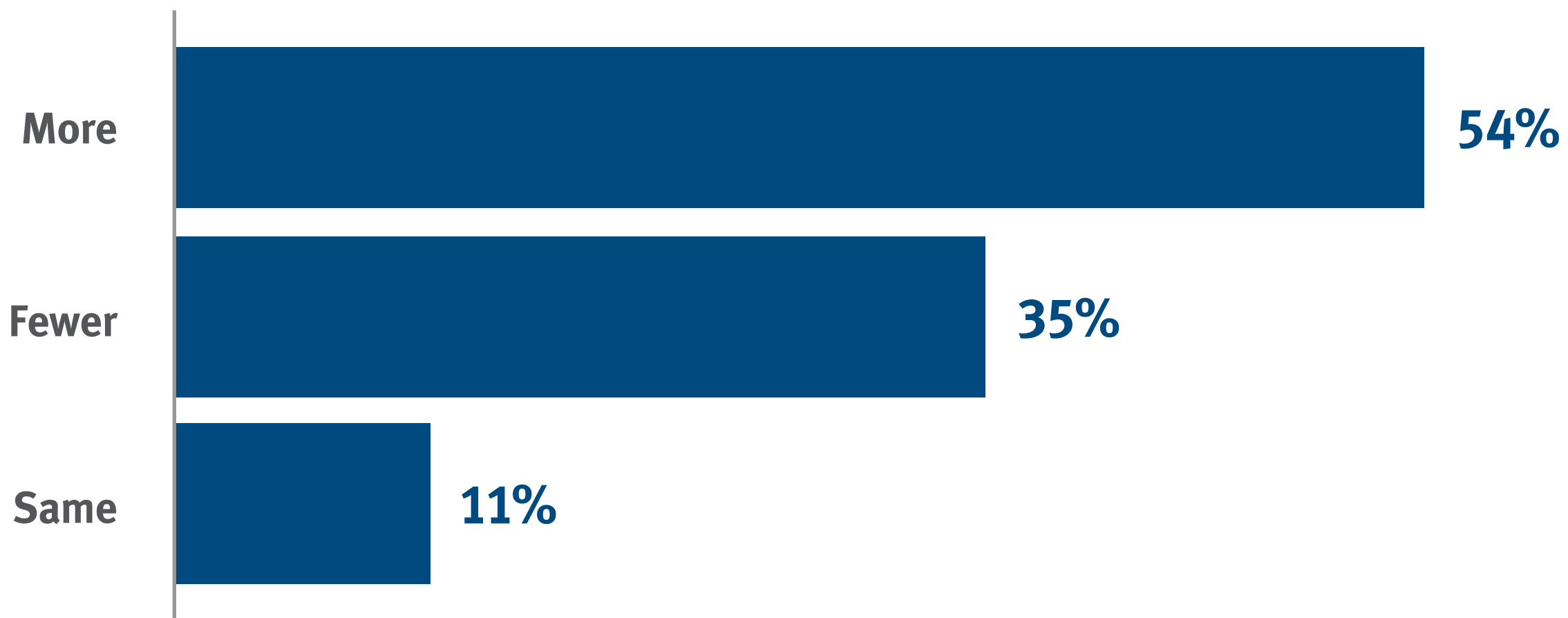
Lever's Fast Resume Review can help you stay on top of the influx of candidates.
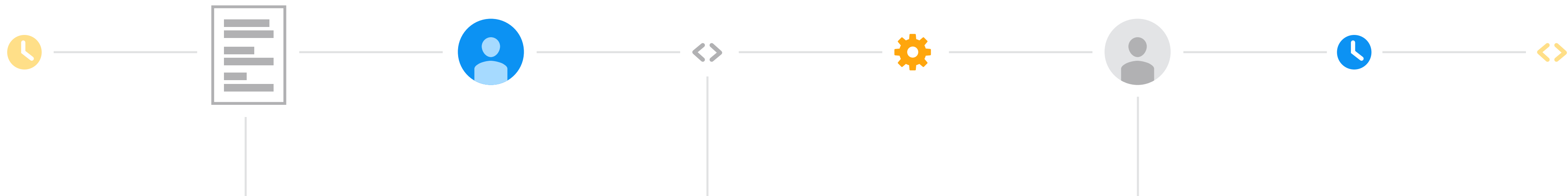
It allows you to:

1 Screen inbound candidates and take action, all in one view

2 See how much time each recruiter spends on screening

3 Close the loop with rejected or silver medalist candidates

Added Automation Is Needed—and Customizable Tools Are Key

Recruiters at mid-sized companies are eager to automate more areas of their job, with more than half wishing that setting up interviews with video capability was handled by technology.

Hiring workflows may be similar across companies, but they're never quite the same. This means that out of the box automation solutions just won't cut it. Lever's Automation Workflows, however, allow companies to automate the elements of the recruiting workflow that are unique to their business needs, providing them with configurable "building blocks" to build their own rules. At a time when hiring needs can change quickly, Automation Workflows can execute key functions, from alerting applicants of a sudden hiring freeze to scheduling interviews. Learn more here.

Top 7 tasks recruiters at mid-sized companies wish were more automated:

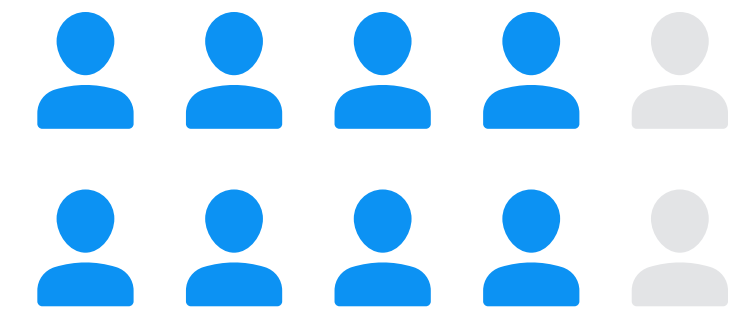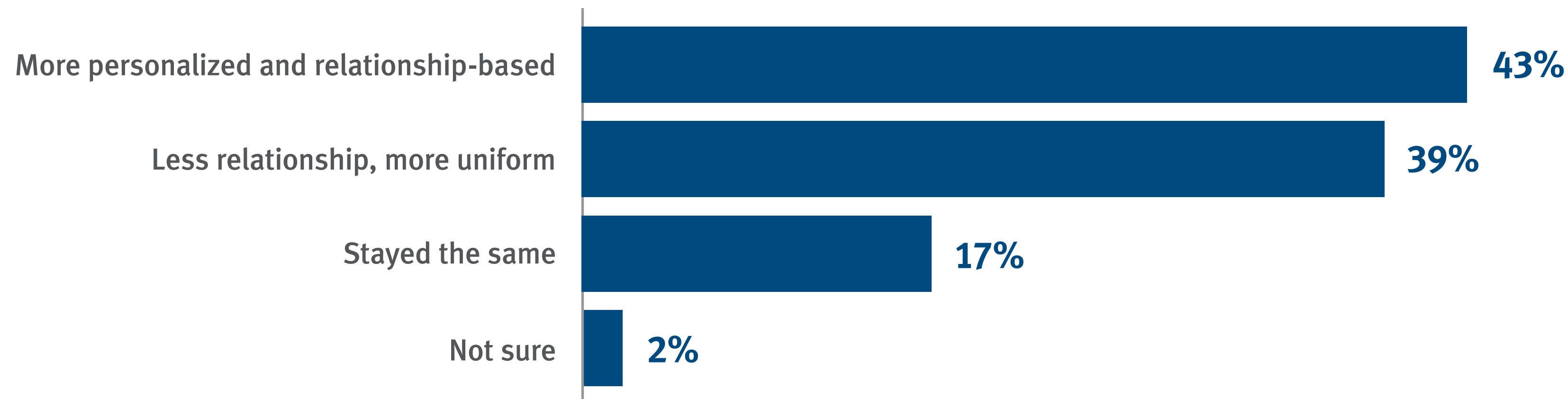| Task	%
Interviews with video capability	53%
Hiring manager feedback	47%
Auto-screening applicants	44%
Scheduling	40%
The candidate survey process	39%
Offer letter editing	34%
Data and reporting	30%

CRM Is Essential to Your ATS: Introducing TRM

Even before the pandemic, candidate experience was due for an upgrade. Now, with little to no in-person interactions to rely on for that personalized touch in the hiring process, candidate communication and updates have become more important.

Recruiters are ready for a new kind of candidate relationship tool—one that combines the functionality of a CRM system and an ATS. Enter Talent Relationship Management from Lever, a new breed of technology designed to meet the need for more personalized candidate relationships.

How have interactions with talent changed as a result of COVID-19?

More personalized and relationship-based	43%
Less relationship, more uniform	39%
Stayed the same	17%
Not sure	2%

SOURCE · NURTURE · INTERVIEW · HIRE · ANALYZE · REDISCOVER

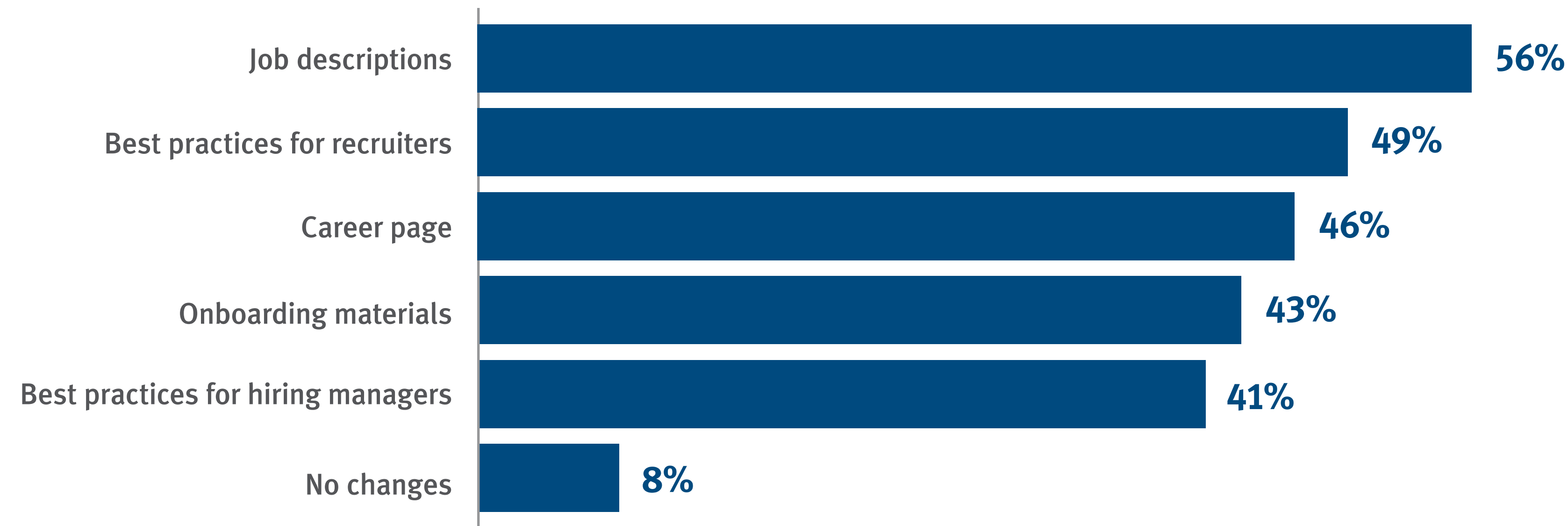**Talent Relationship Management**

80%

of recruiters at mid-sized companies say it is now more important that candidate relationship management be built into their applicant tracking system

Recruiting Assets Must Be Updated—and Fast

What will recruiters do with their "spare time" if a CRM system and automation were to streamline their work? As remote work changes how workforces interact and perform their jobs, they will need to take time to redefine roles and pinpoint new hiring criteria.

Assets recruiters will update as a result of COVID-19:

Asset	Percentage
Job descriptions	56%
Best practices for recruiters	49%
Career page	46%
Onboarding materials	43%
Best practices for hiring managers	41%
No changes	8%

Prioritizing D&I

As racism and unconscious bias are more actively addressed and combated in the workplace, more than half of recruiters at mid-sized companies will be dedicating more time to diversity and inclusion efforts.

Changing emphasis on diversity and inclusion as a result of COVID-19:

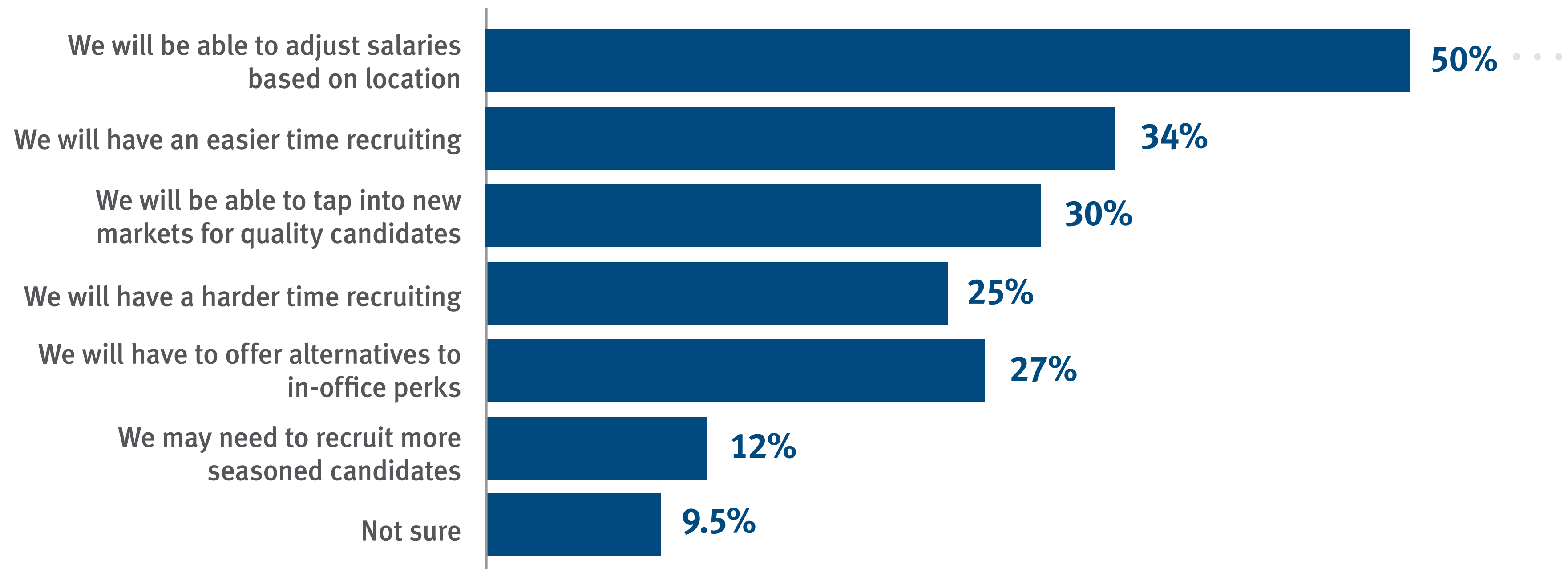|	
More of a priority	59%
Less of a priority	16%
Stay the same	23%
Not sure	1%
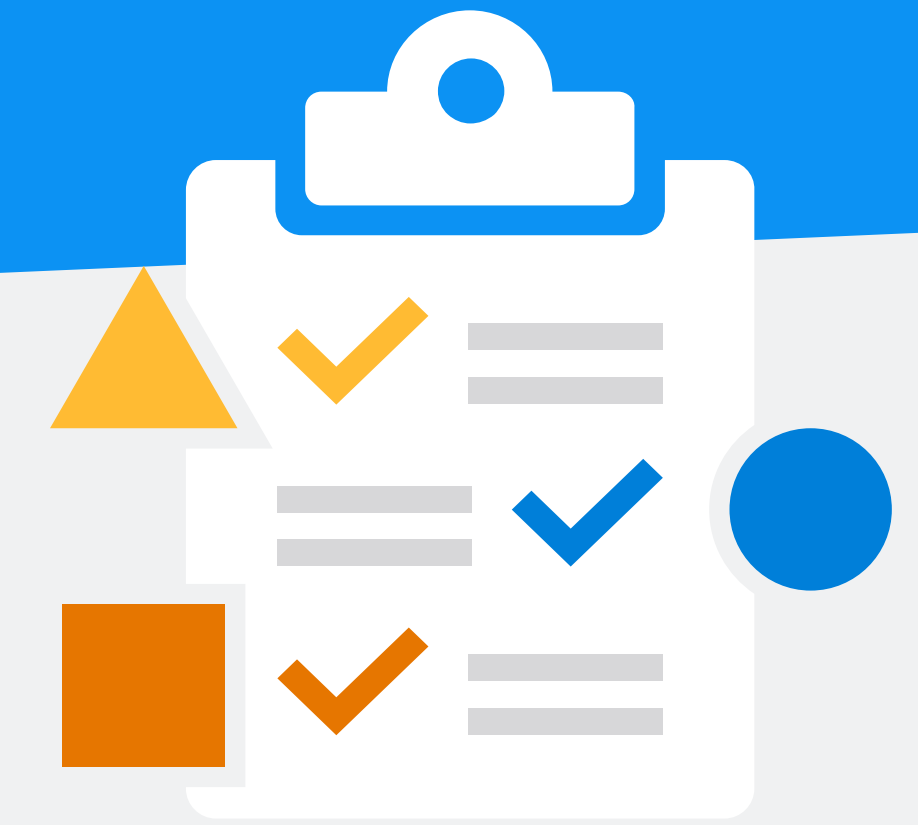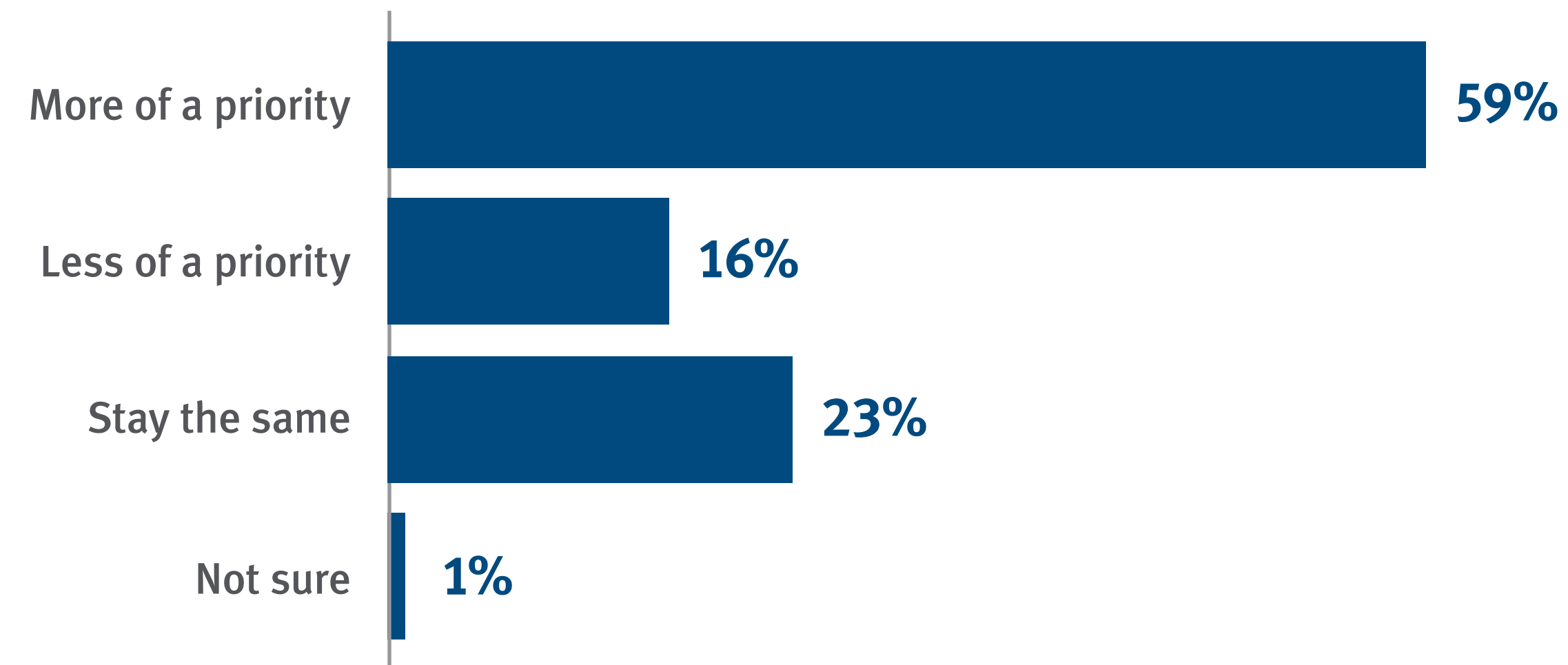
Lever's Diversity Surveys is for customers who want to ask questions that accurately reflect a candidate's diversity in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity.

With Multiple Diversity Surveys, Lever users can customize demographic questions by location as part of the application process. This feature enables the collection and reporting on demographic data from applicants, while creating a welcoming experience for candidates and facilitating compliance for hiring organizations.

Location Will Dictate Salary

With remote work as an option, recruiters will be able to source candidates from around the country, and potentially the world. Half of recruiters at mid-sized companies acknowledge that salaries can be tailored to geographies, allowing for flexibility if budgets decrease.

How will a more flexible remote work policy affect recruiting:

| Category	Percentage
We will be able to adjust salaries based on location	50%
We will have an easier time recruiting	34%
We will be able to tap into new markets for quality candidates	30%
We will have a harder time recruiting	25%
We will have to offer alternatives to in-office perks	27%
We may need to recruit more seasoned candidates	12%
Not sure	9.5%

50%

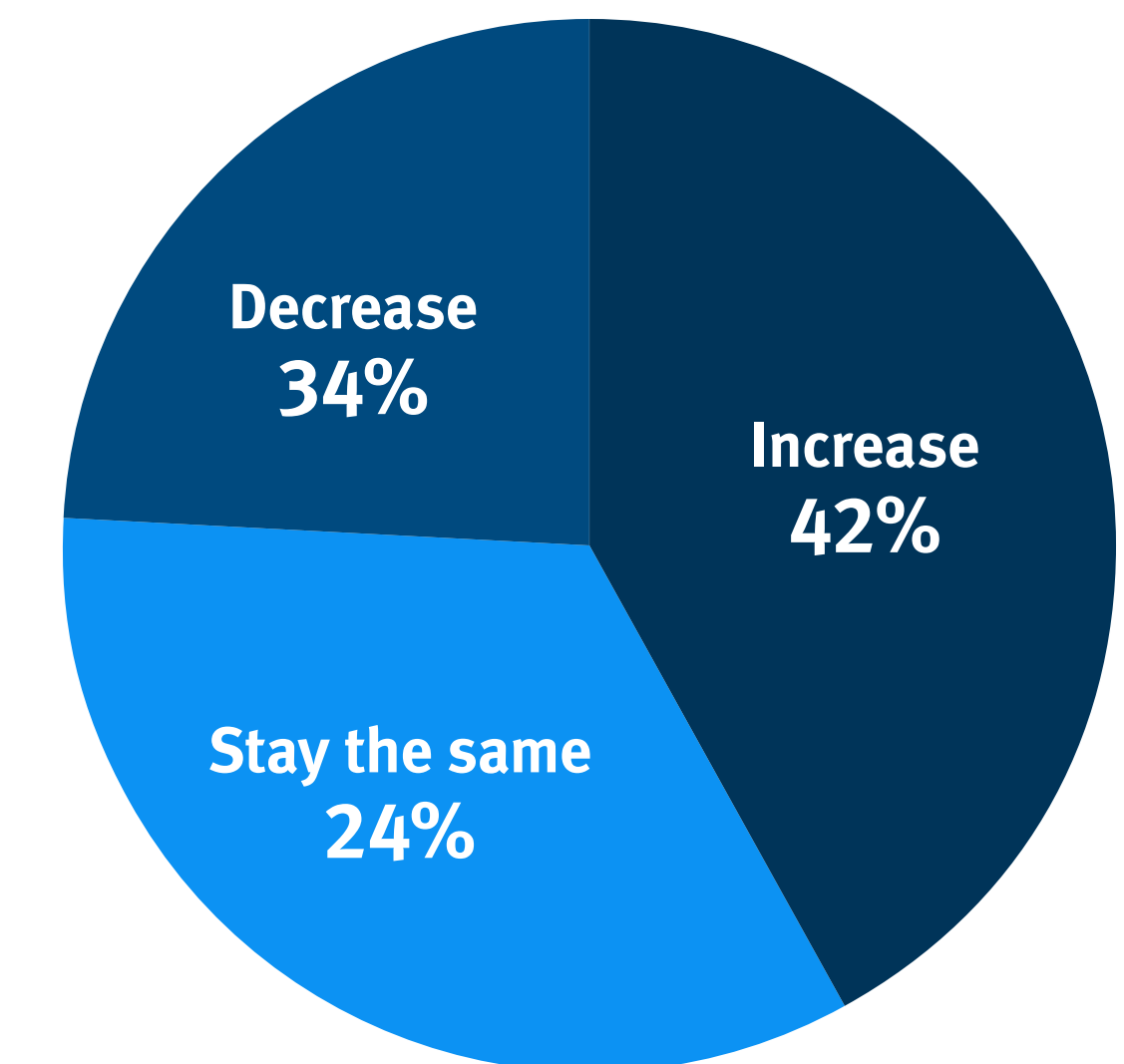of recruiters say they'll be able to tailor salaries to geographies

Employers Aren't Ready to Let Go of the Office

Although many companies are retaining a work-from-home status into 2021, many are still planning on a return in the long run. 65% of recruiters at mid-sized companies reported that more than half of their employees worked in physical offices pre-COVID. And 42% predict that number will increase.

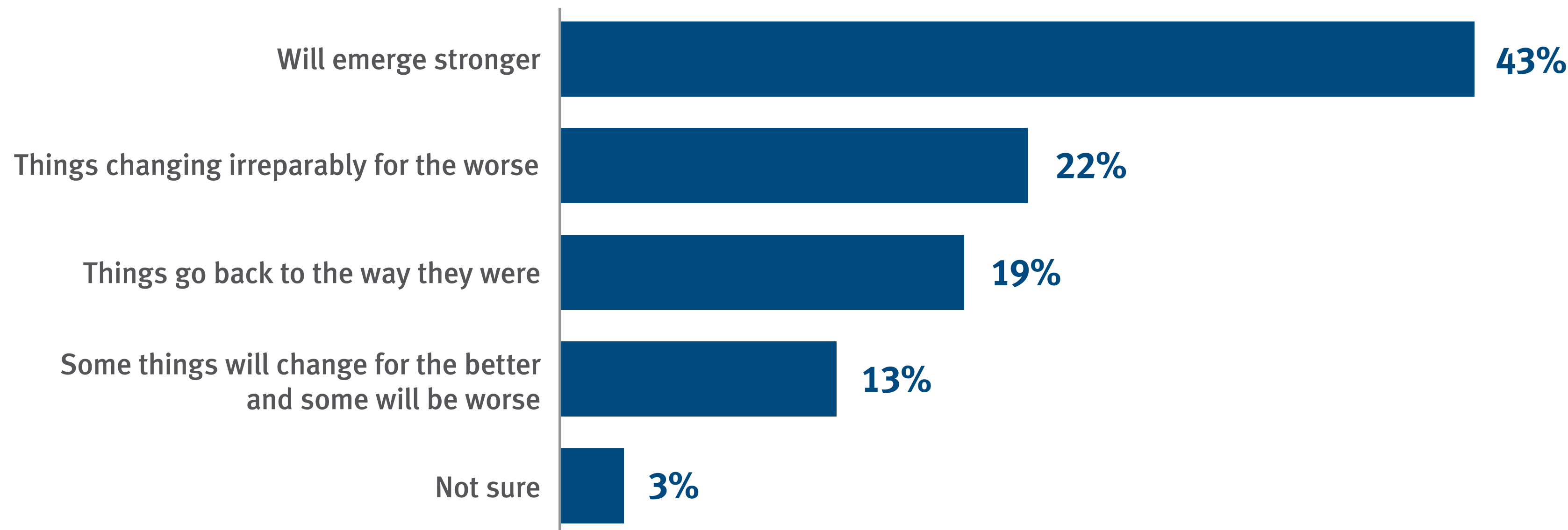## Percent of employees working in a physical office pre-COVID-19:

- 0% — **1%**
- 1-25% — **10%**
- 26-50% — **23%**
- 51-75% — **31%**
- 76-100% — **34%**
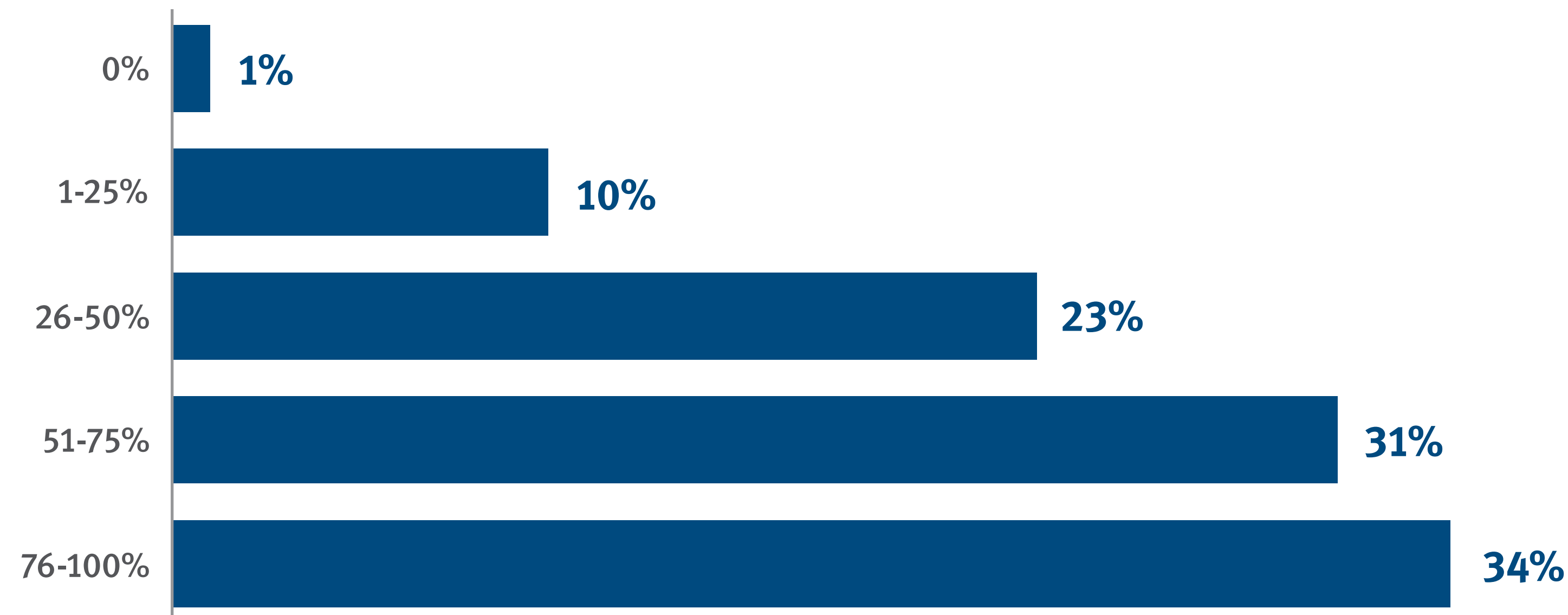
How that ratio will change post-COVID-19:

- Increase **42%**
- Stay the same **24%**
- Decrease **34%**

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Better Days Are Ahead

The pandemic has disrupted so many aspects of the way we work, it wouldn't be surprising if recruiters had a negative outlook for the future. Yet in spite of the uncertainty around the future of work, 43% of recruiters at mid-sized companies are optimistic and believe that they'll emerge stronger, with better tools and strategies.

Recruiters' outlook on their work as a result of COVID-19:

Will emerge stronger	43%
Things changing irreparably for the worse	22%
Things go back to the way they were	19%
Some things will change for the better and some will be worse	13%
Not sure	3%

43%
of recruiters say they'll emerge stronger

11 Recruiting Best Practices During COVID-19

Taking a moment to pause and recalibrate on goals and initiatives can allow teams to drive changes in areas that might have been underutilized in previous time periods. Talent management teams are being asked now more frequently than ever to advise on the business strategy.

These best practices can help your team succeed and grow in the future:

- Optimize your hiring sources

- Tidy your recruiting pipeline

- Cultivate talent pools

- Transform recruiting playbooks

- Revamp your process

- Design a world-class candidate experience

- Build recruiter skill sets

- Train reviewers and hiring managers

- Redesign and build recruiting programs

- Establish your employee and talent brand

- Focus on the data

For more information on these best practices, download the guide.

LEVER

About Lever

Lever was founded in 2012 and supports the hiring needs of over
3000 leading companies around the globe, including the teams
at Netflix, Shopify, Atlassian, KPMG, and McGraw-Hill Education.
Lever is also fiercely committed to building a team culture that
celebrates diversity and inclusion.

For more information, visit lever.co

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