Kantata

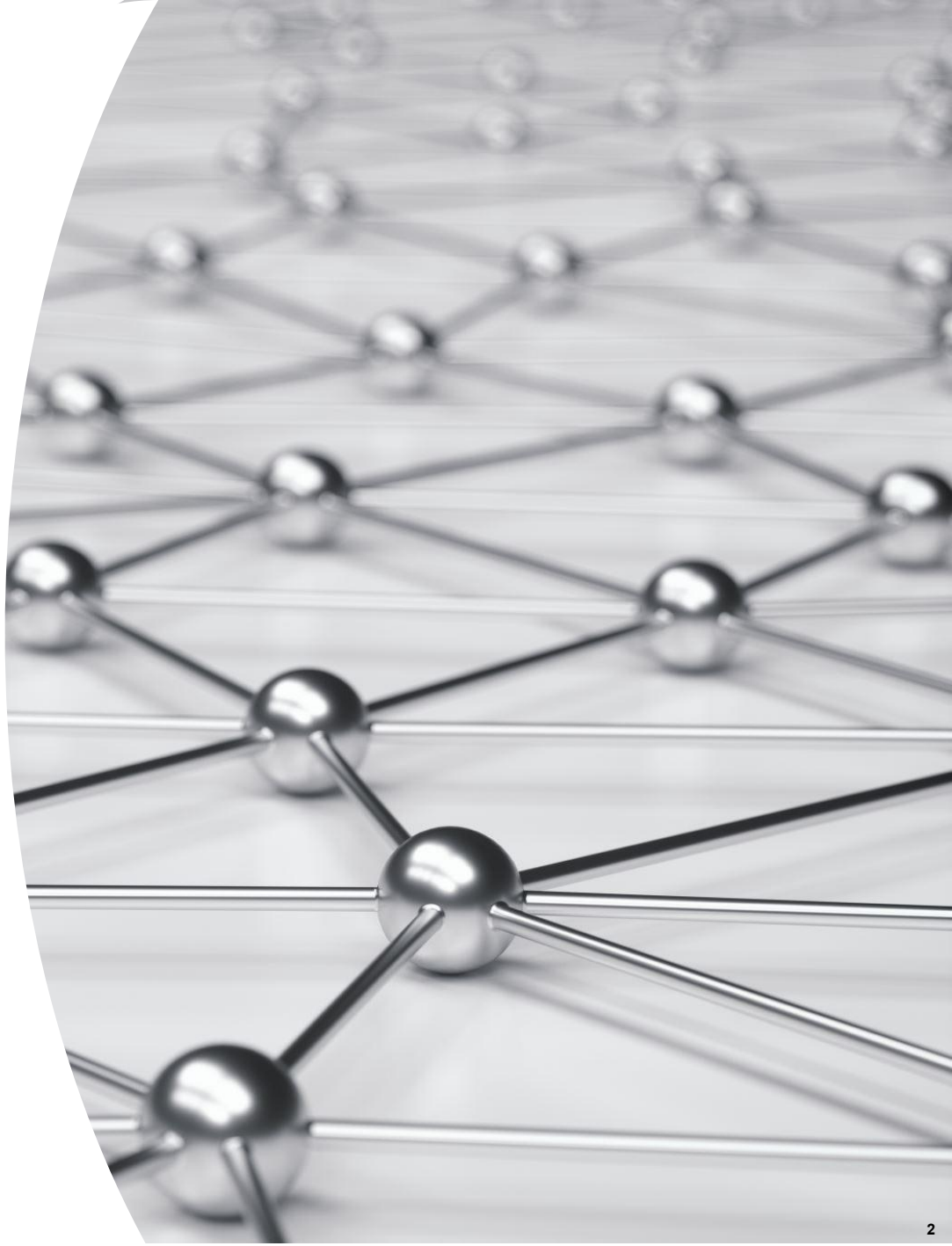
Resource Management in the Age of AI

Executive Summary

The RMI and Kantata collaborated on this study, Resource Management in the Age of AI, to take a deeper look at Resource Management in the Age of AI. With Professional Services organizations undergoing a period of significant transformation—driven by AI agents, evolving pricing models, and growing expectations to deliver outcomes rather than simply allocate hours, this study explored how prepared resource managers feel to guide their organizations through this shift, the roles they anticipate playing in the future, and the challenges that may stand in their way.

Insights for this study were gathered from a diverse group of professionals, including services executives, resource managers, resource management office (RMO) leaders, project managers, and delivery leaders. Participants represented 44 organizations across a broad spectrum of industries, including Professional and Consulting Services; Enterprise IT; Product Development; Engineering; Marketing Agencies; and Accounting, Audit, Tax, and Advisory Firms.

The findings from this study show that while interest in AI-augmented resource management is high, most organizations remain early in their maturity, operating with traditional, utilization centric models and limited readiness to orchestrate hybrid human and AI teams. Resource management continues to be viewed largely as an operational function, constrained by fragmented data, unclear AI application models, and insufficient outcome visibility. At the same time, the results signal a clear aspiration shift: resource management professionals are seeking more data-driven, outcome-aware, and strategically influential roles, where skills intelligence, forecasting accuracy, and proof-of-delivery impact become as critical as capacity and utilization.



Survey Questions

Q1: What type of organization do you represent?

Q2: What is your level in your organization?

Q3: Which option best describes your role?

Q4: How many resources in total does your organization manage collectively with all resource managers?

Q5: In your opinion, how would you describe the role resource management currently plays in steering strategic decisions about service delivery at your organization?

Q6: How confident do you feel today in your ability to guide your organization through major shifts in delivery models (AI, hybrid teams, new pricing models, etc.)?

Q7: Which factors most limit resource management from playing a more strategic leadership role in your organization today? (Select up to three)

Q8: To what extent do you expect AI agents to become part of your assignable workforce in your organization, ensuring the cost, revenue, and capacity implications of assigning an AI teammate versus a human teammate are understood and accounted for?

Q9: How equipped do you feel to orchestrate hybrid teams made up of both human experts and AI agents?

Q10: Please estimate what percentage of the work you assign today falls into each category?(Please ensure responses total to 100%)

Q11: How likely do you believe that your organization will meaningfully adopt outcome-based pricing?

Q12: If outcome-based pricing becomes more common in your organization, what implications do you foresee for resource management?

Q13: How easily can you see or quantify the outcomes (business results) past resource combinations have delivered for clients?

Q14: How valuable would it be to know which combinations of people (or agents) consistently produce strong outcomes for specific types of clients or projects?

Q15: To what extent does the ability to demonstrate outcome experience (“this team delivered X outcome for a client like you”) influence your staffing recommendations for prospective deals?

Q16: How would you like to see AI support resource management decision-making in the future? (Select all that apply)

Q17: Which of the following best describes your organization’s overarching objective for AI adoption?

Q18: Where would you place your organization on the journey from traditional resource management to outcome-driven, AI-augmented resource orchestration?

Q19: What are the biggest gaps standing in the way of AI-augmented resource management at your organization? (Select up to three)

Key Observations

1. **Resource Management Is Still Perceived as Largely Operational**

   A majority describe RM as primarily operational with some strategic influence (53%), with another 15.6% calling it largely operational. Only 26% say RM is moderately strategic and 2.6% say highly strategic, underscoring an influence gap with senior decision-makers.

2. **Readiness to Orchestrate Hybrid (Human + AI) Teams Is Low**

   Over half report not being equipped (52.7%) and 28.4% say slightly equipped to manage hybrid teams. Just 4.0% feel well equipped, signaling a near-term need for playbooks, skills enablement, and workflow changes before hybrid staffing becomes routine.

3. **Assignable AI Agents Are Not on the Roadmap Yet**

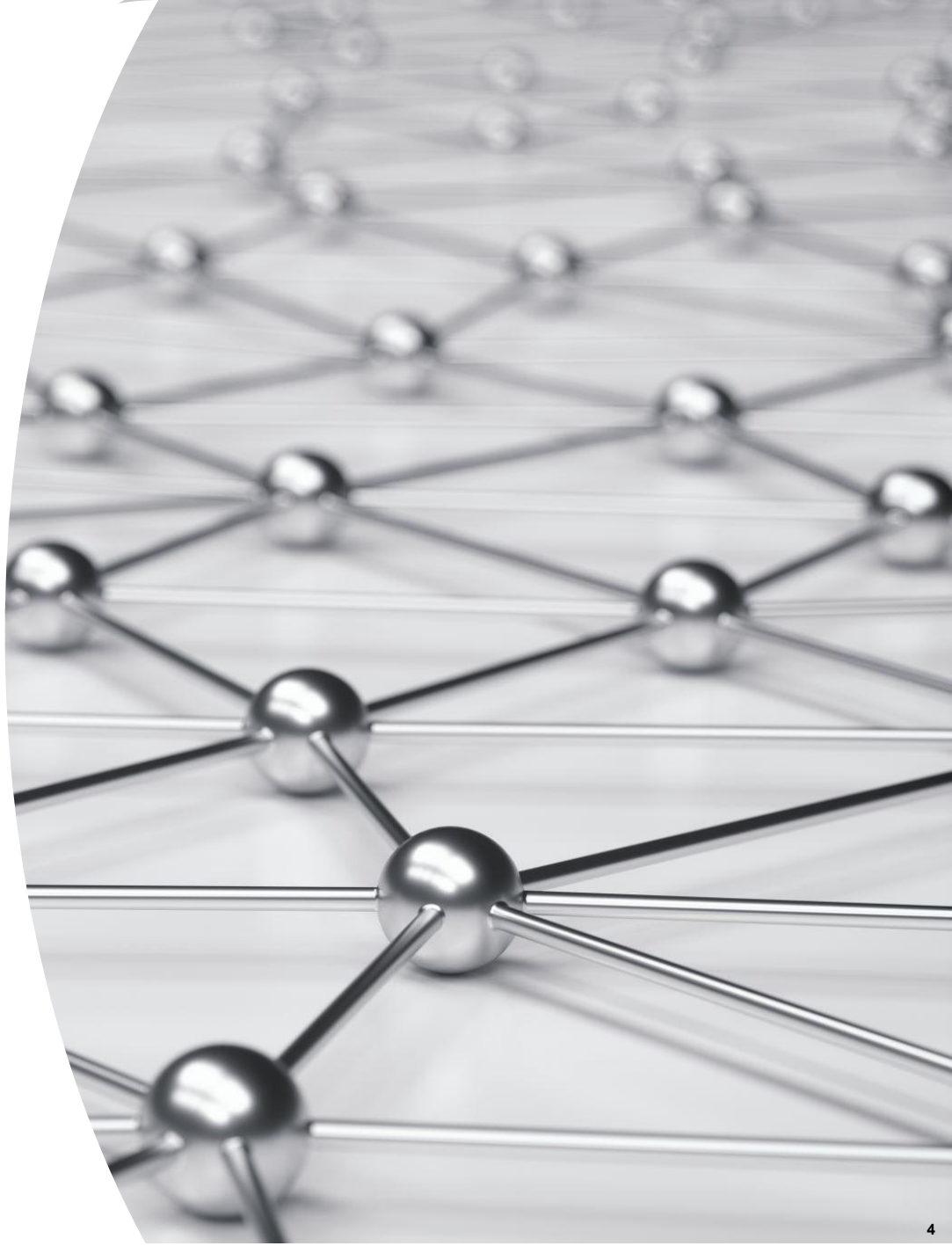
   32% say agents are not on the roadmap, while 25.3% are in exploratory experiments and 10.7% are actively implementing pilots that formalize how agents are planned and assigned. Maturity mirrors this posture: 39.1% are still in traditional staffing with ad hoc AI and 30.4% are only exploring, with fewer than a third reporting more advanced operating models.

4. **Outcome Intelligence Is a Blind Spot—Yet It Heavily Influences Staffing**

   Only 7.3% say outcome data is easily accessible and used in staffing, while 24.6% see only extremes (wins or failures) and 24.6% say outcomes are not available to RM. At the same time, respondents place high weight on outcomes: 43.5% say “very valuable” and 30.4% “extremely valuable” to know team combinations that drive strong results, and 47.8% report outcome experience has high influence on deal staffing (another 2.9% say very high).

5. **AI Priorities Are Pragmatic; Data and Know How Are the Blockers**

   The top asks for AI support are forecast refinement (72.1%), skills intelligence (67.7%), and automated matching/scheduling (66.2%)—all aimed at immediate planning and staffing gains. The biggest impediments are limited understanding of where/how to apply AI (48.6%), poor or fragmented data (47.1%), and technology limitations (41.4%), suggesting foundations must improve before advanced orchestration can scale.

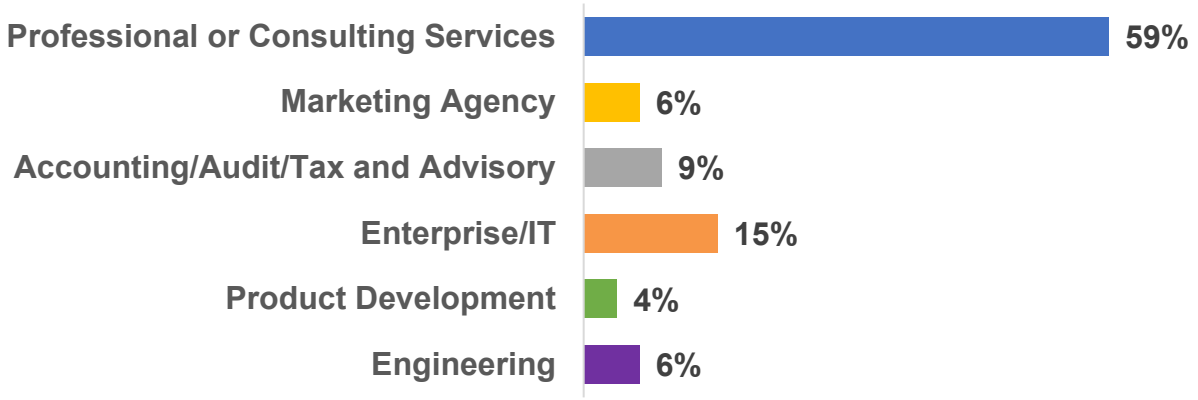


CONSOLIDATED DATA

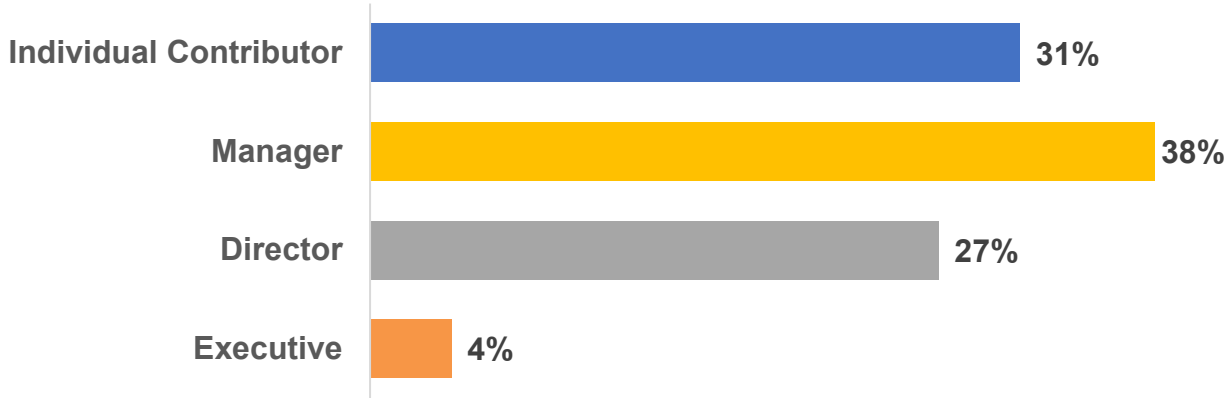
All respondents

Demographics

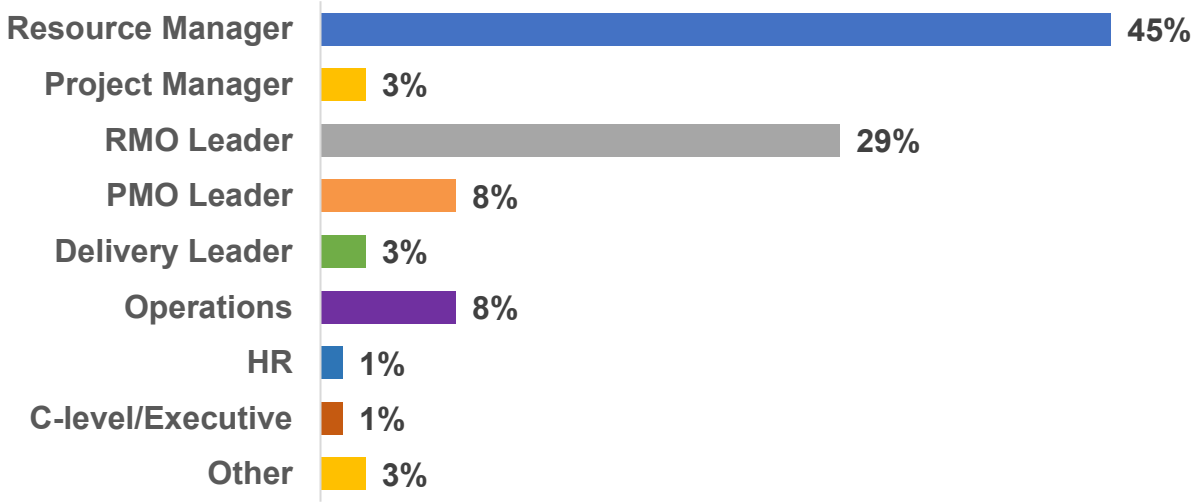
Domain



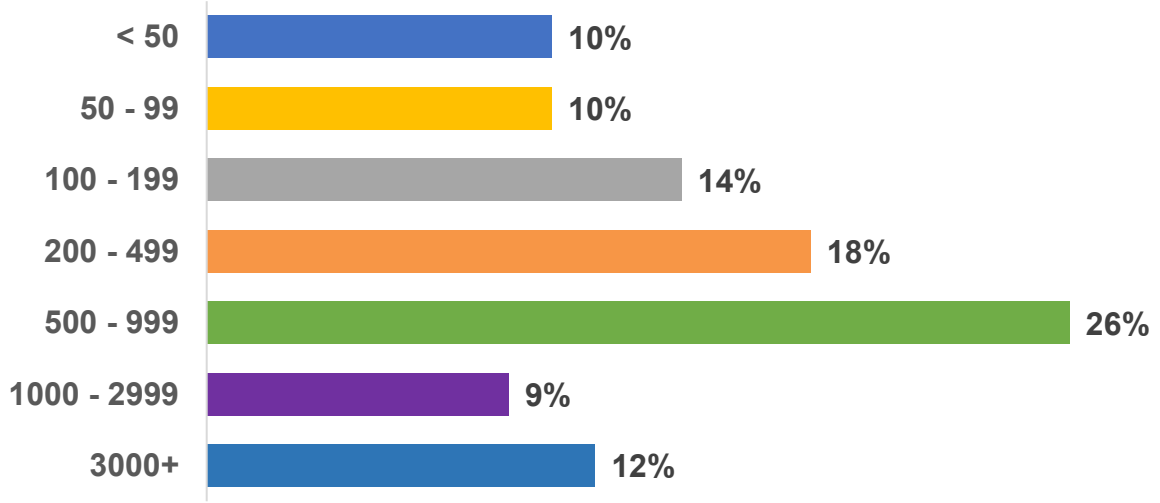
Level in Organization



Role



Resources Managed



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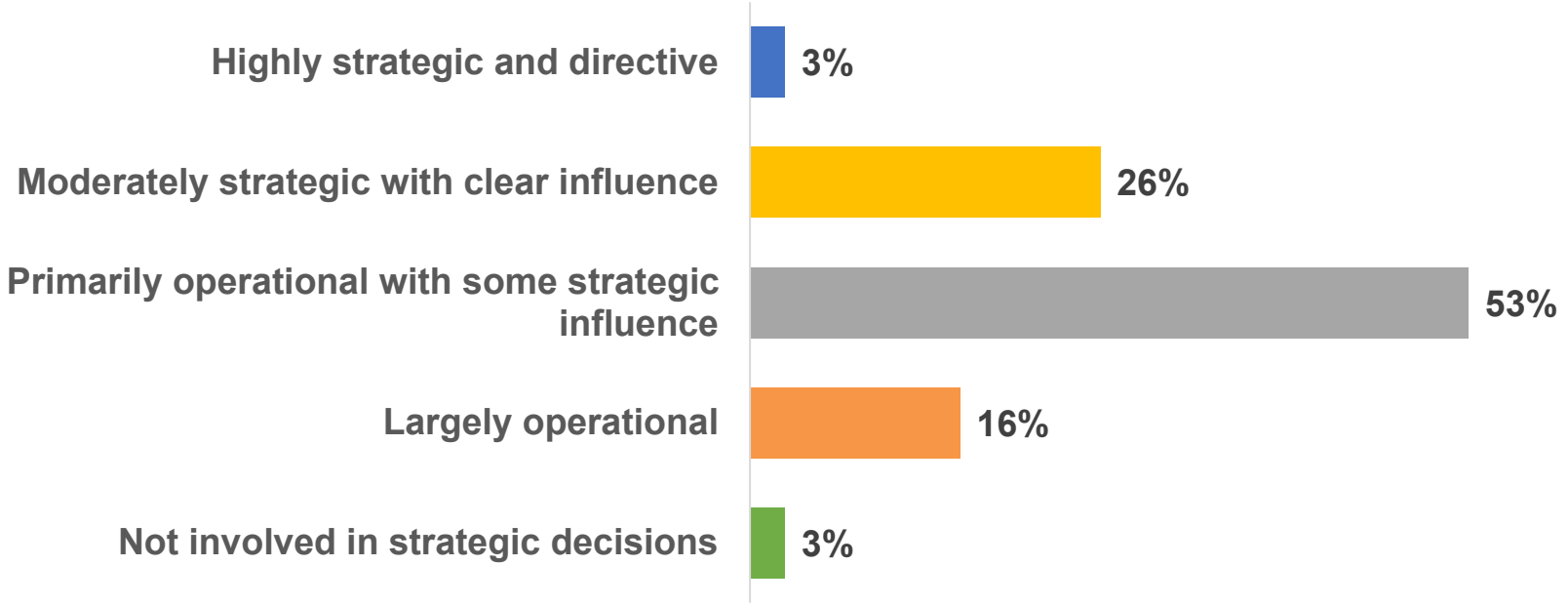
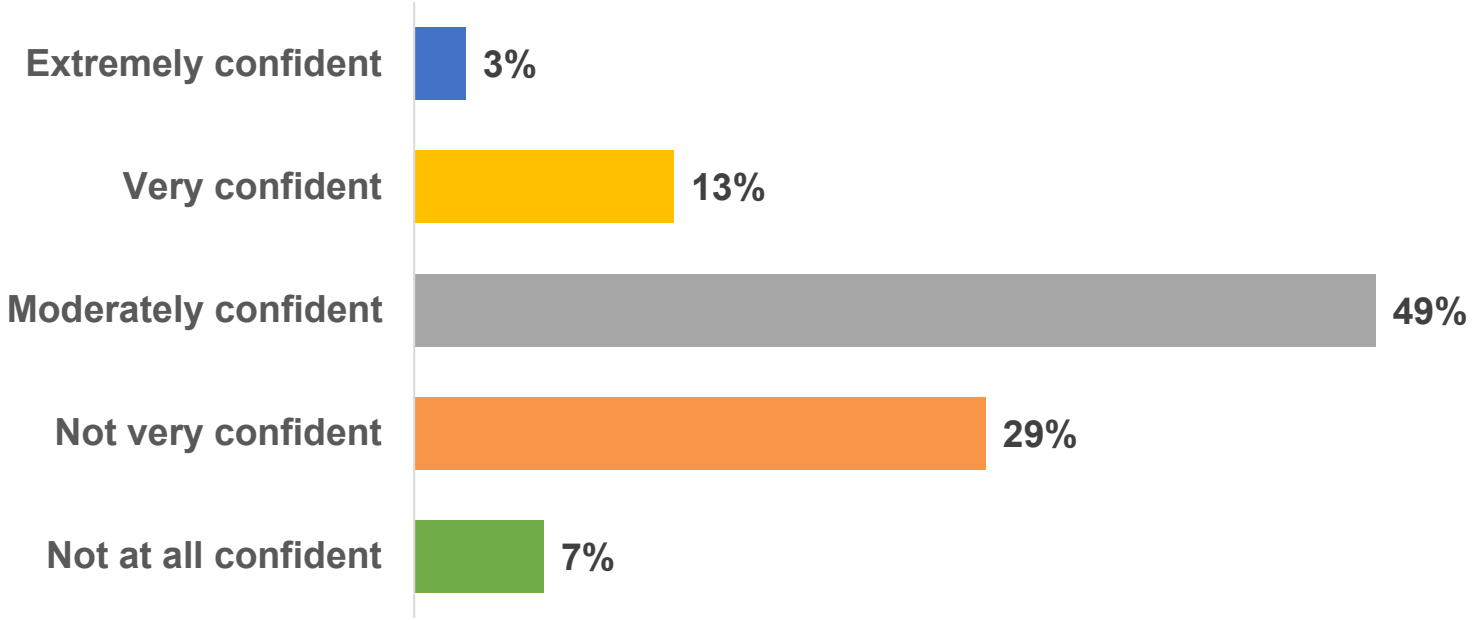


Q6. How confident do you feel today in your ability to guide your organization through major shifts in delivery models (AI, hybrid teams, new pricing models, etc.)?



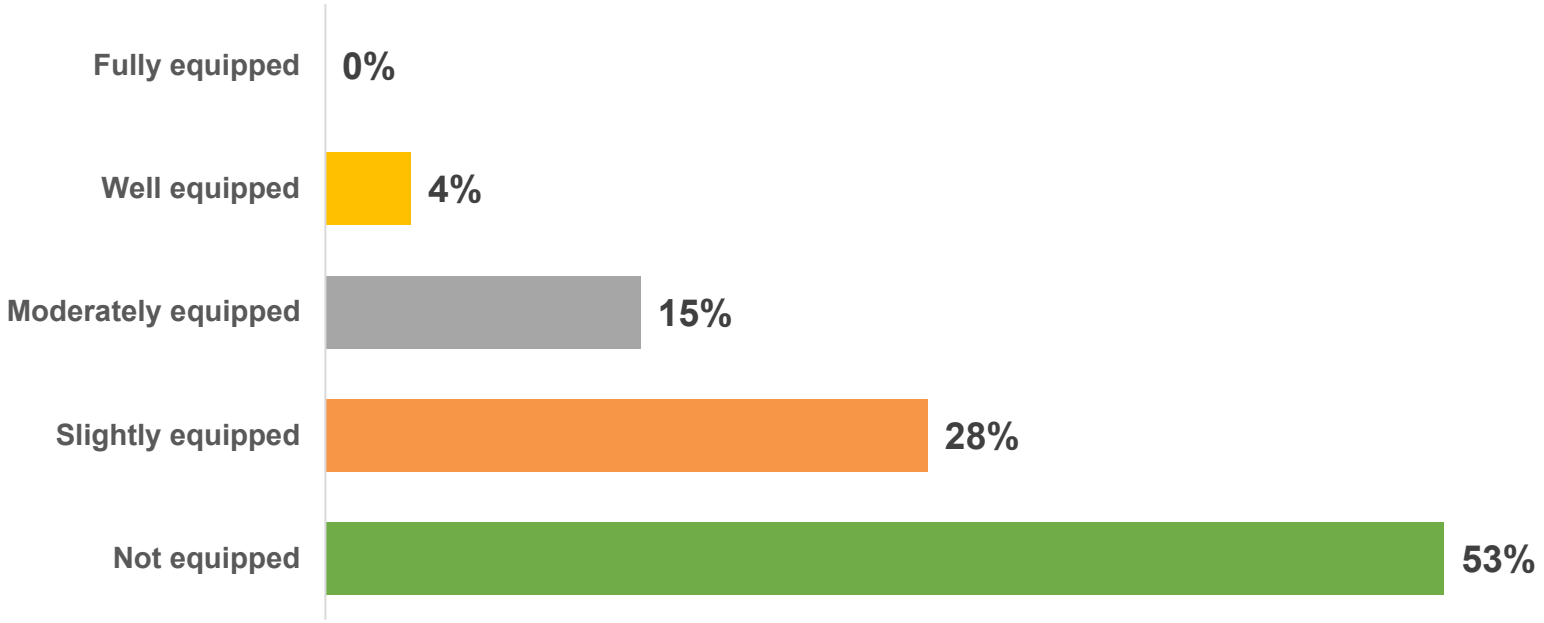
Q7. Which factors most limit resource management from playing a more strategic leadership role in your organization today? (Select up to three)*

1	Competing operational demands	49%
2	Lack of executive mandate or influence	48%
3	Organizational resistance to change	45%
4	Insufficient data or insight	44%
5	Limited tooling or systems	41%
6	Skills or capability gaps	15%
7	Other	1%

* Multiple responses allowed. Table depicts % of respondents that selected each option.

Q8. To what extent do you expect AI agents to become part of your assignable workforce in your organization, ensuring the cost, revenue, and capacity implications of assigning an AI teammate versus a human teammate are understood and accounted for?

Q9. How equipped do you feel to orchestrate hybrid teams made up of both human experts and AI agents?



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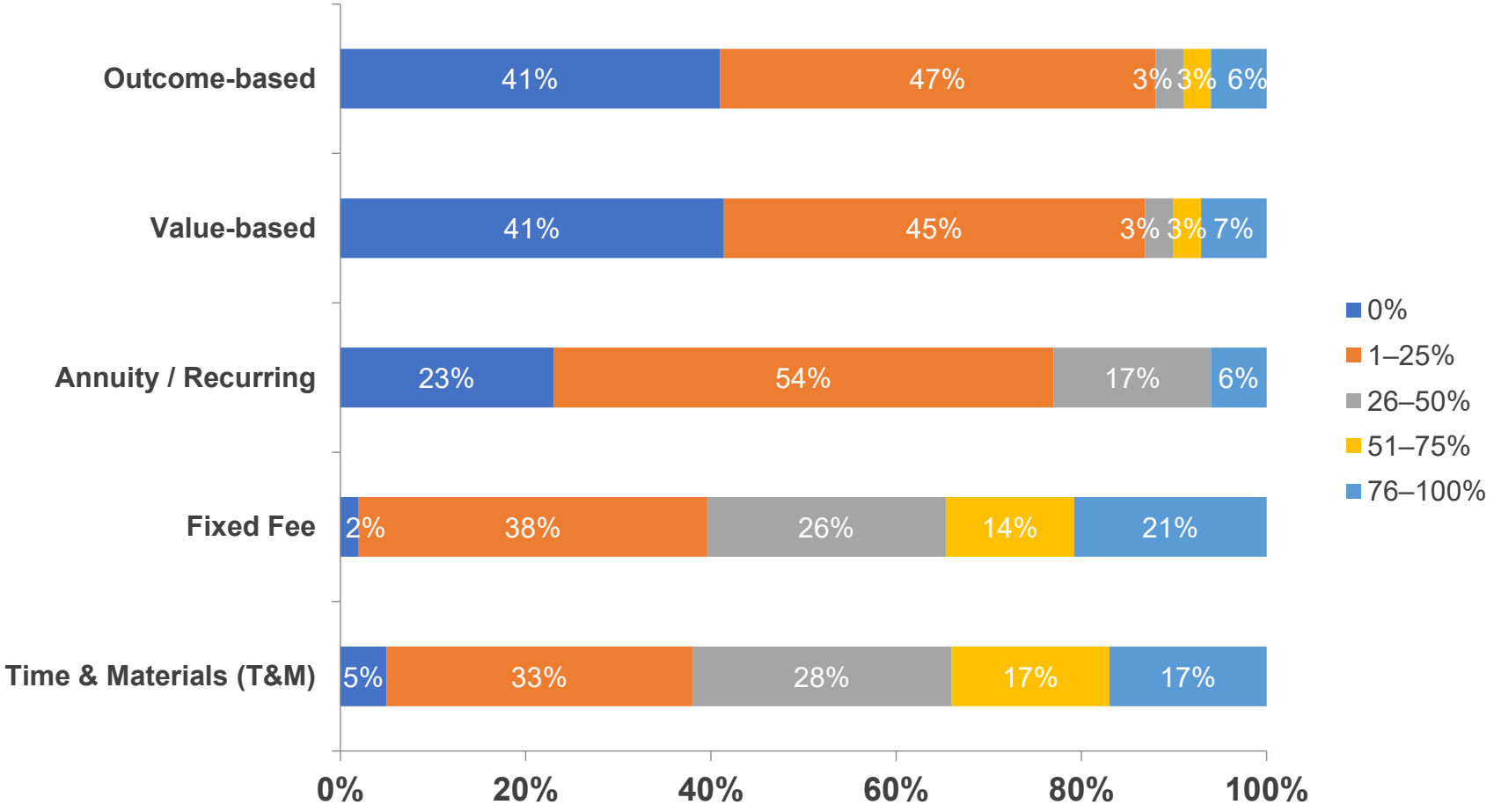
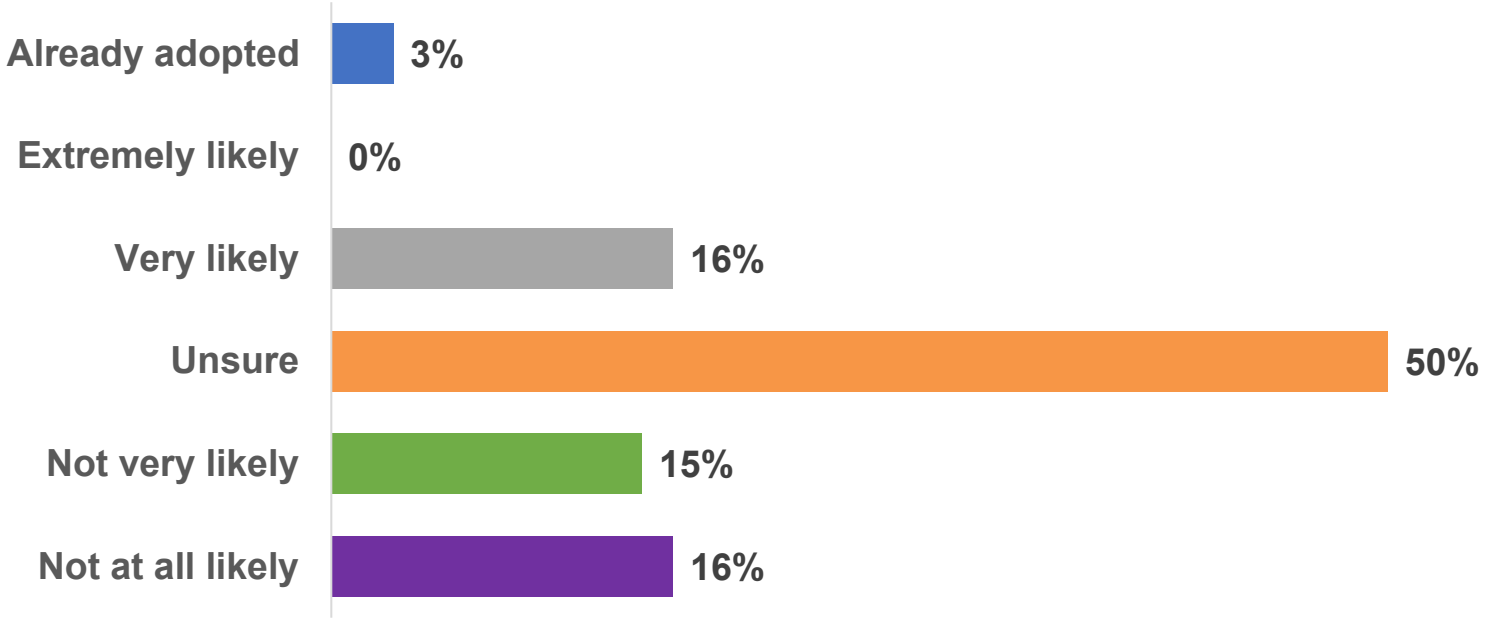


Most organizations report low shares for outcome/value-based; T&M and Fixed Fee show broader, higher distributions.

Q11. How likely do you believe that your organization will meaningfully adopt outcome-based pricing?



Q12. If outcome-based pricing becomes more common in your organization, what implications do you foresee for resource management?

Respondents suggest that broader adoption of outcome-based pricing would require Resource Management to evolve from an operational, capacity-focused function into a strategic lever centered on outcomes, risk, and delivery economics.

Theme	Implications for Resource Management
Shift from utilization to outcomes	Resource management moves from filling hours to maximizing delivery success, profitability, and achieved outcomes. Utilization remains relevant but is no longer the primary success metric.
Greater emphasis on skills and team composition	Stronger focus on skills matching, top performers, and team synergy to reduce outcome risk. Increases need for skills visibility, upskilling, and deliberate team design.
Increased planning complexity and flexibility	Less predictability and more dynamic resourcing. RM must support rapid adjustments, scenario planning, and redeployment as delivery risks emerge.
Higher cost, margin, and risk sensitivity	Pressure to control delivery costs and protect margins while absorbing more delivery risk. Accurate scoping and early RM involvement become critical.
Greater strategic influence of RM	RM becomes more central in sales-to-delivery decisions, workforce strategy, and portfolio governance, requiring tighter collaboration across Sales, Delivery, and Finance.

* Input to this question was provided via a free-form text field. Responses have been summarized for themes and implications.

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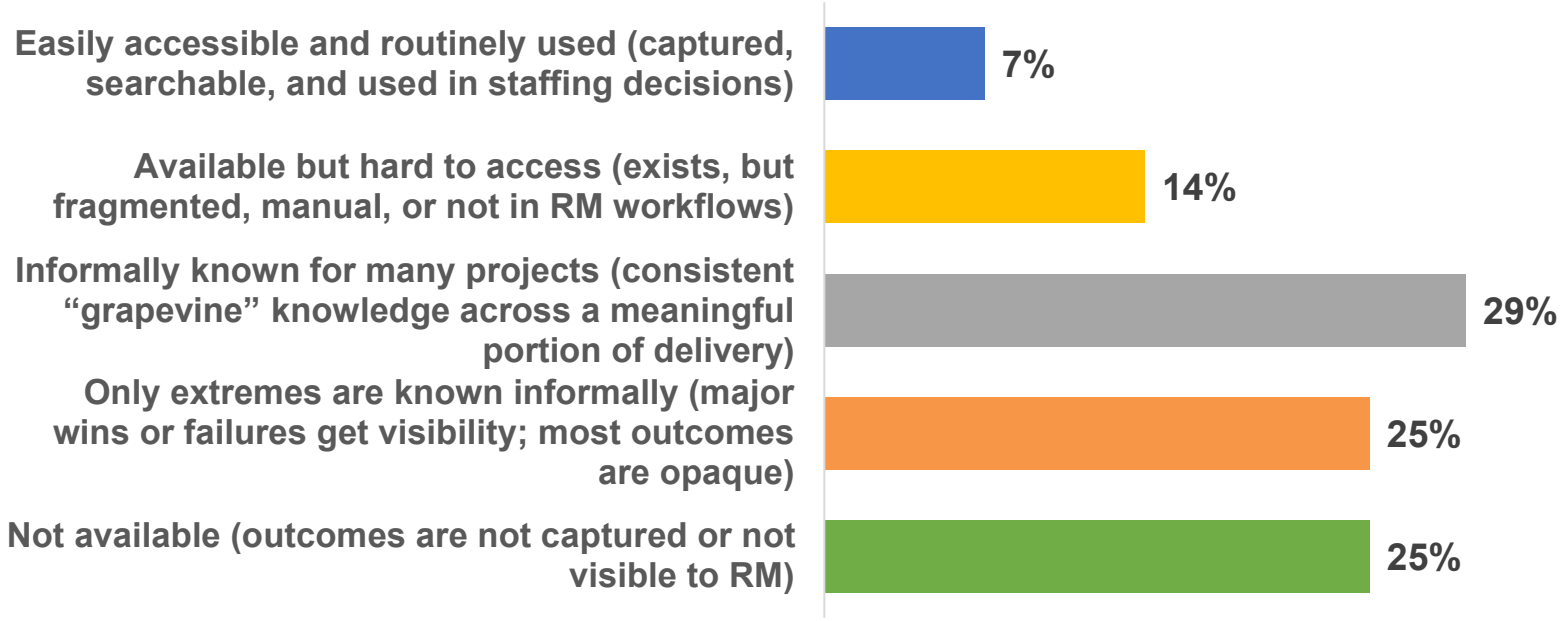

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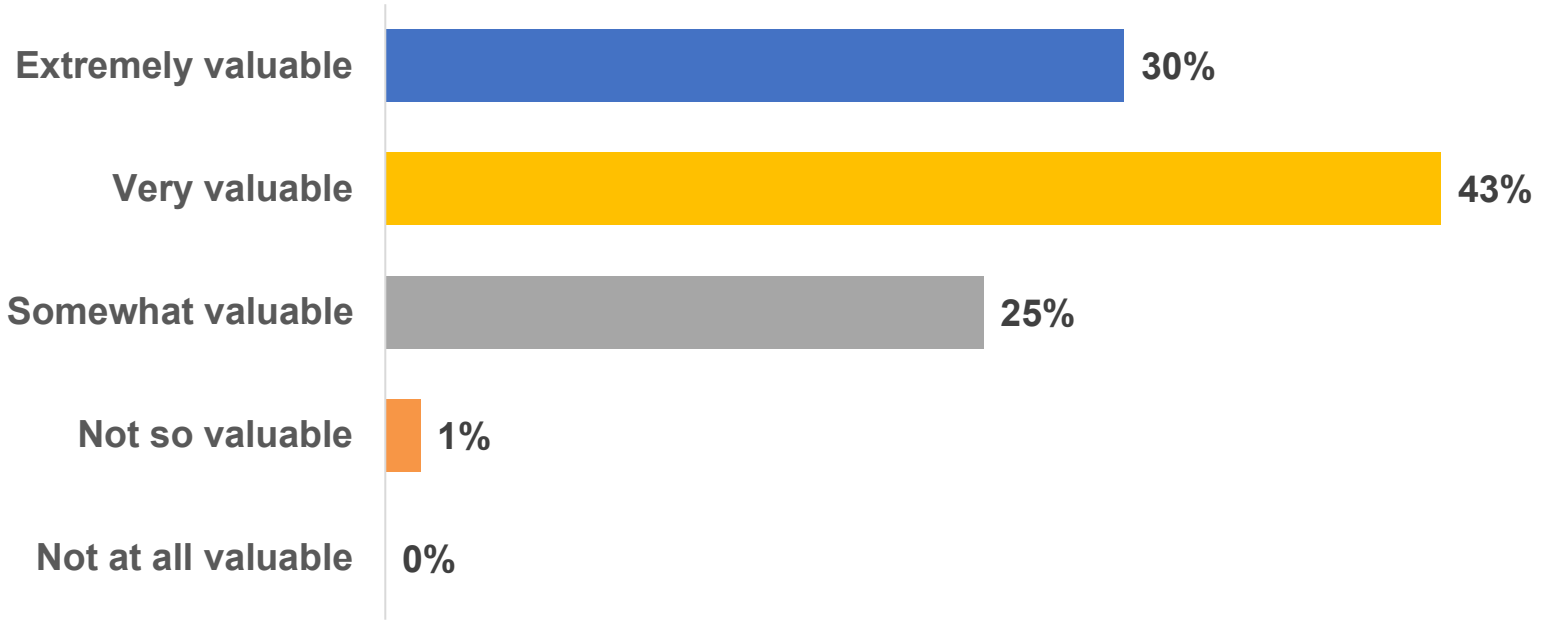

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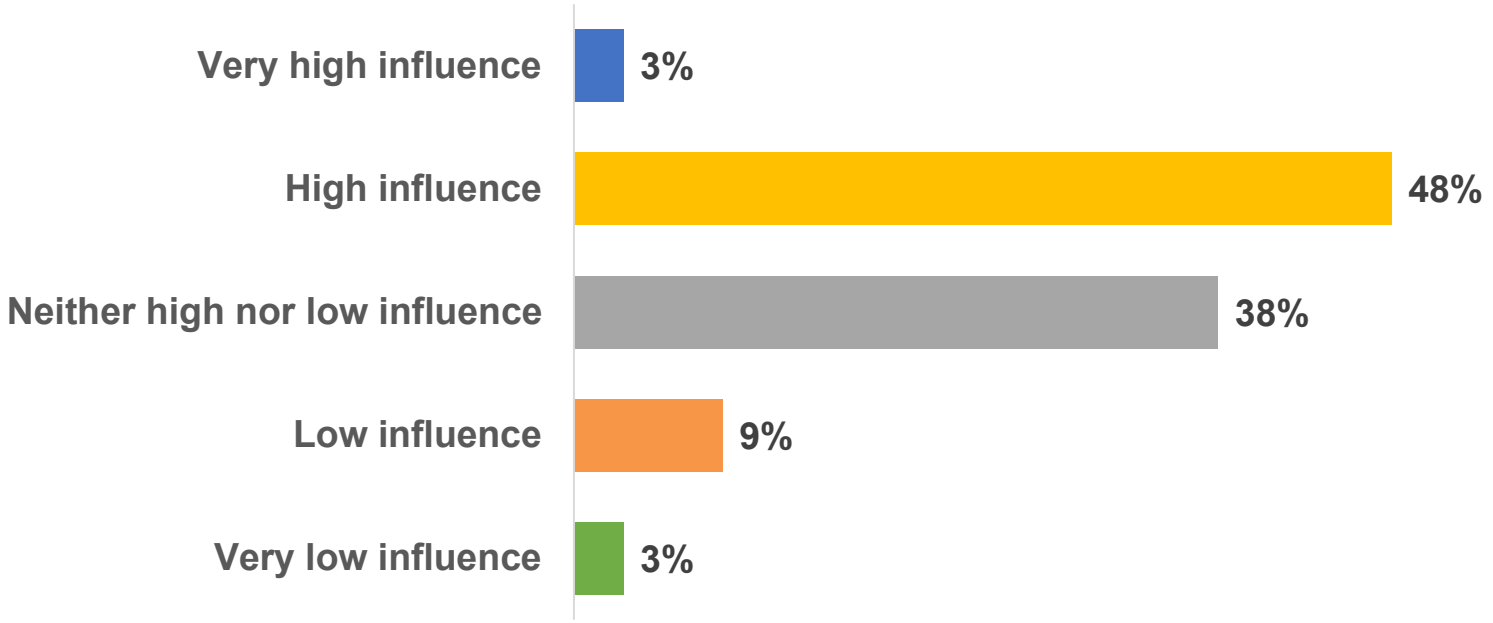
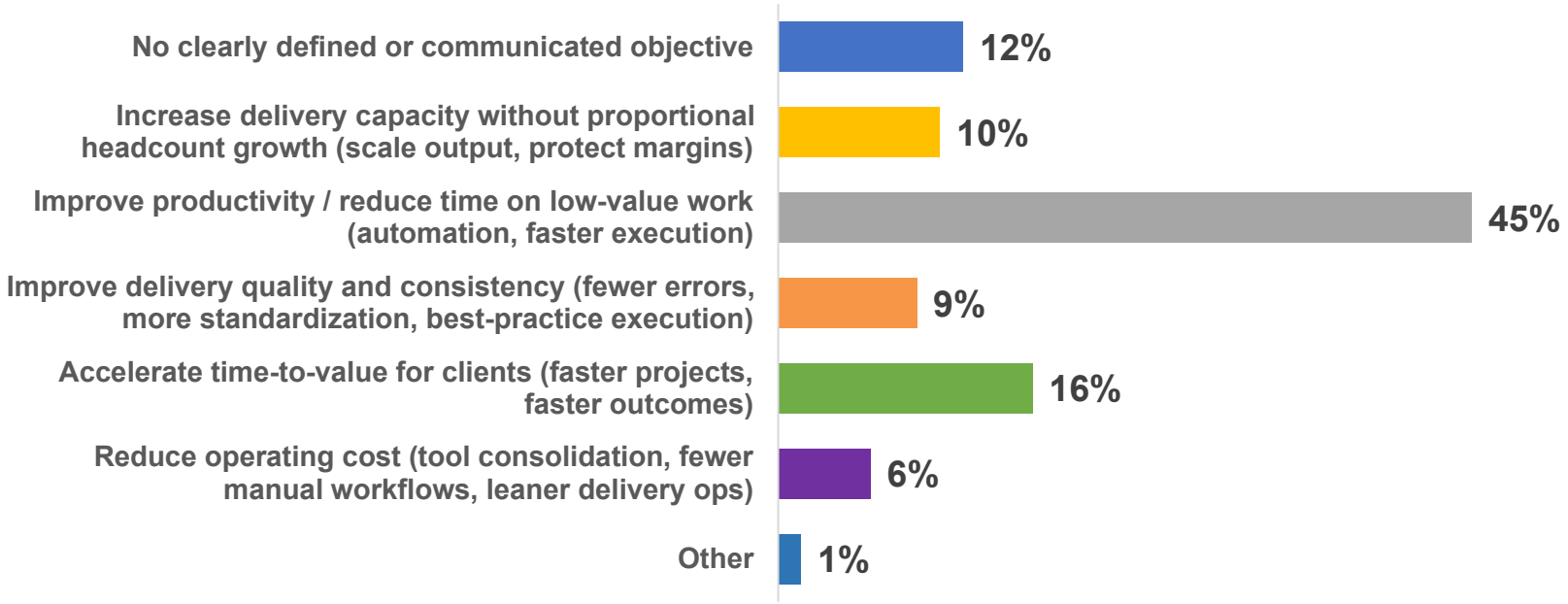


Q16. How would you like to see AI support resource management decision-making in the future? (Select all that apply)*

1	Refining demand and capacity forecasts based on pipeline and delivery patterns	72%
2	Enhancing skills intelligence (inferring skills from work, highlighting adjacencies)	68%
3	Automating matching and scheduling	66%
4	Recommending optimal team combinations (humans + agents)	54%
5	Predicting outcomes and delivery risks of staffing choices	53%
6	Turn successful delivery patterns into reusable playbooks	51%
7	Surfacing “proof of outcome” (teams that delivered outcomes for similar clients) for deal staffing	37%

* Multiple responses allowed. Table depicts % of respondents that selected each option.

Q17. Which of the following best describes your organization's overarching objective for AI adoption?



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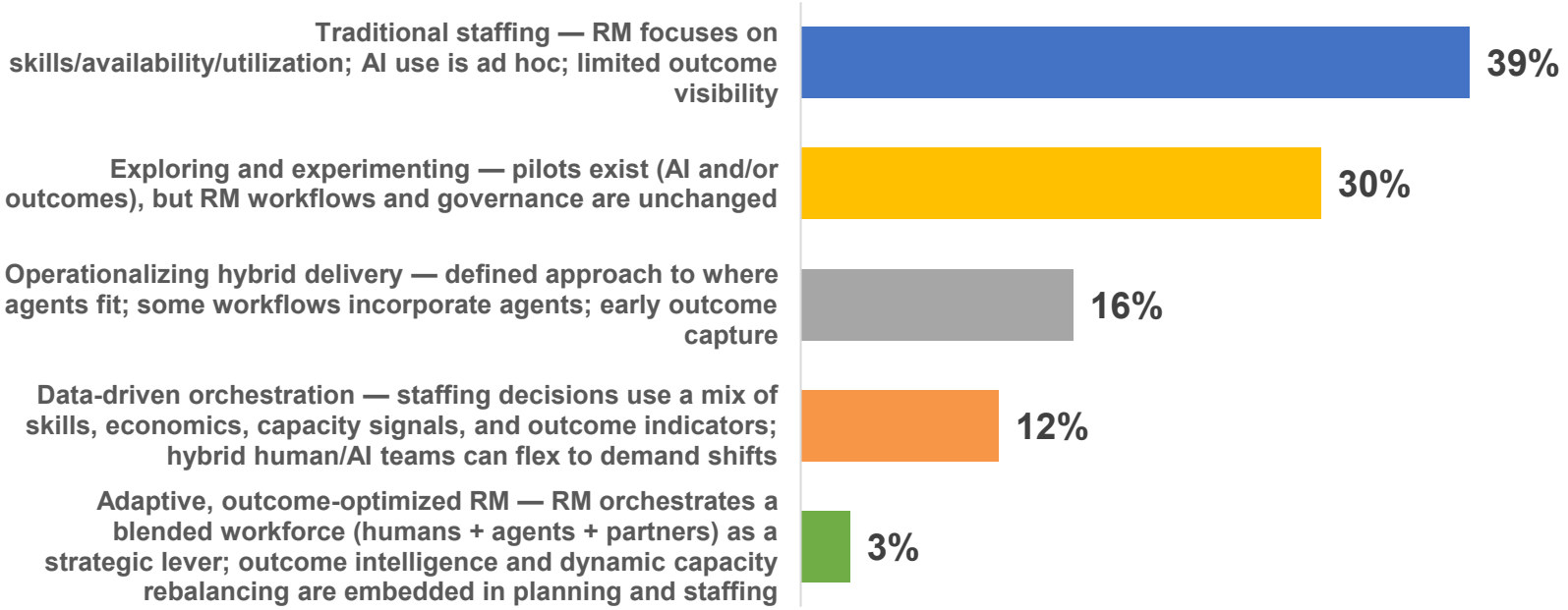

Q19. What are the biggest gaps standing in the way of AI-augmented resource management at your organization? (Select up to three)*

1	Limited understanding of where and how AI should be applied in resource management	49%
2	Poor data quality or fragmented data (skills, outcomes, demand, capacity)	47%
3	Technology limitations (systems not designed to support AI-driven or hybrid staffing)	41%
4	Insufficient AI proficiency or training for resource managers	26%
5	Lack of visibility into which AI capabilities or AI agents are available	26%
6	Unclear ownership (who decides where AI is used, governance, accountability)	20%
7	Unclear economics and value measurement of AI use (cost, margin impact, client transparency during billing, ROI of AI)	10%
8	No significant gaps today	6%
9	Organizational resistance to AI adoption in resource management	6%
10	Ethical/compliance concerns related to AI use in resource management	4%

* Multiple responses allowed. Table depicts % of respondents that selected each option.

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