



CHARTERED PROFESSIONALS  
IN HUMAN RESOURCES  
CANADA

CONSEILLERS EN RESSOURCES  
HUMAINES AGRÉÉS  
CANADA

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion RESEARCH

March 2023

*All Canada*

# Contents

---

3	Methodology
6	Insights
16	Benefits of DEI
21	Role of Leadership
25	Recruitment
29	Corporate Culture

# Methodology

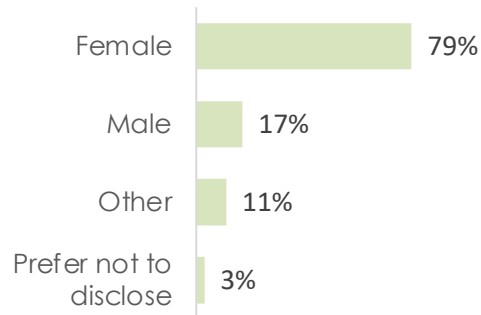
---

<b>Survey Type</b>	Online
<b>Survey Length</b>	9 min
<b>Screeners</b>	Human Resources Professionals
<b># Completed Surveys</b>	1,328
<b>Dates of Interviews</b>	Jan-Feb 2023

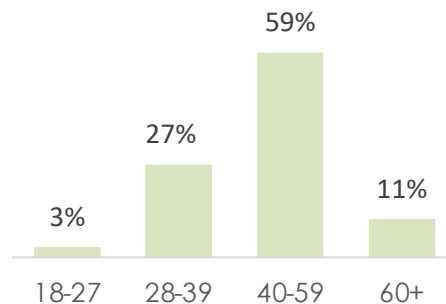
*Note: This report is designed to highlight selected insights from the research. Full data tables are available in the topline reports.*

# Demographics

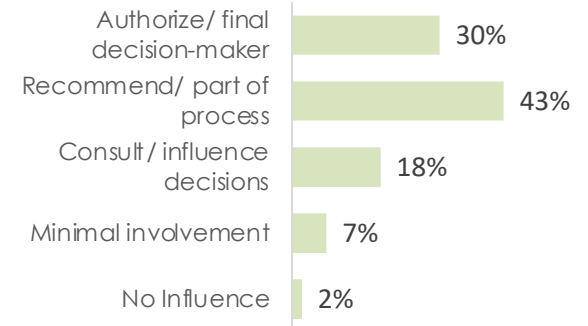
## Gender



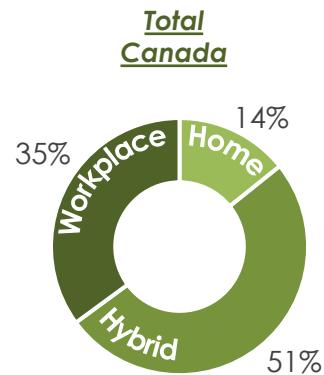
## Age



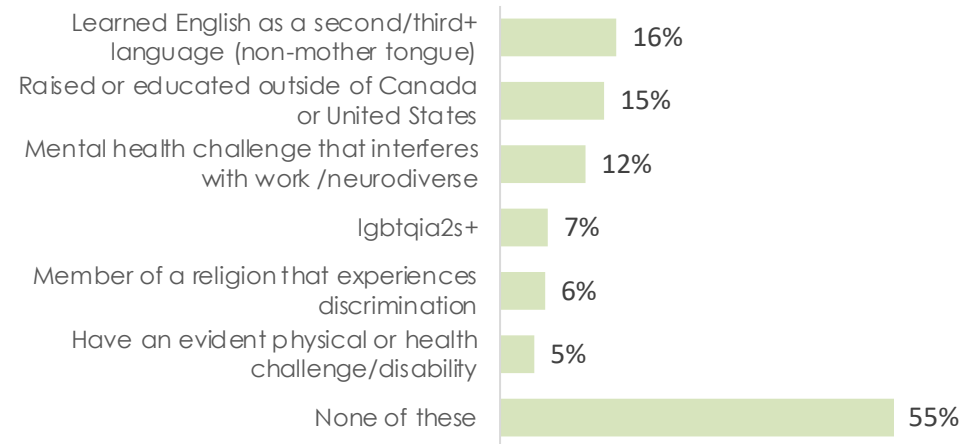
## Role in HR



## Work Location



## Characteristics

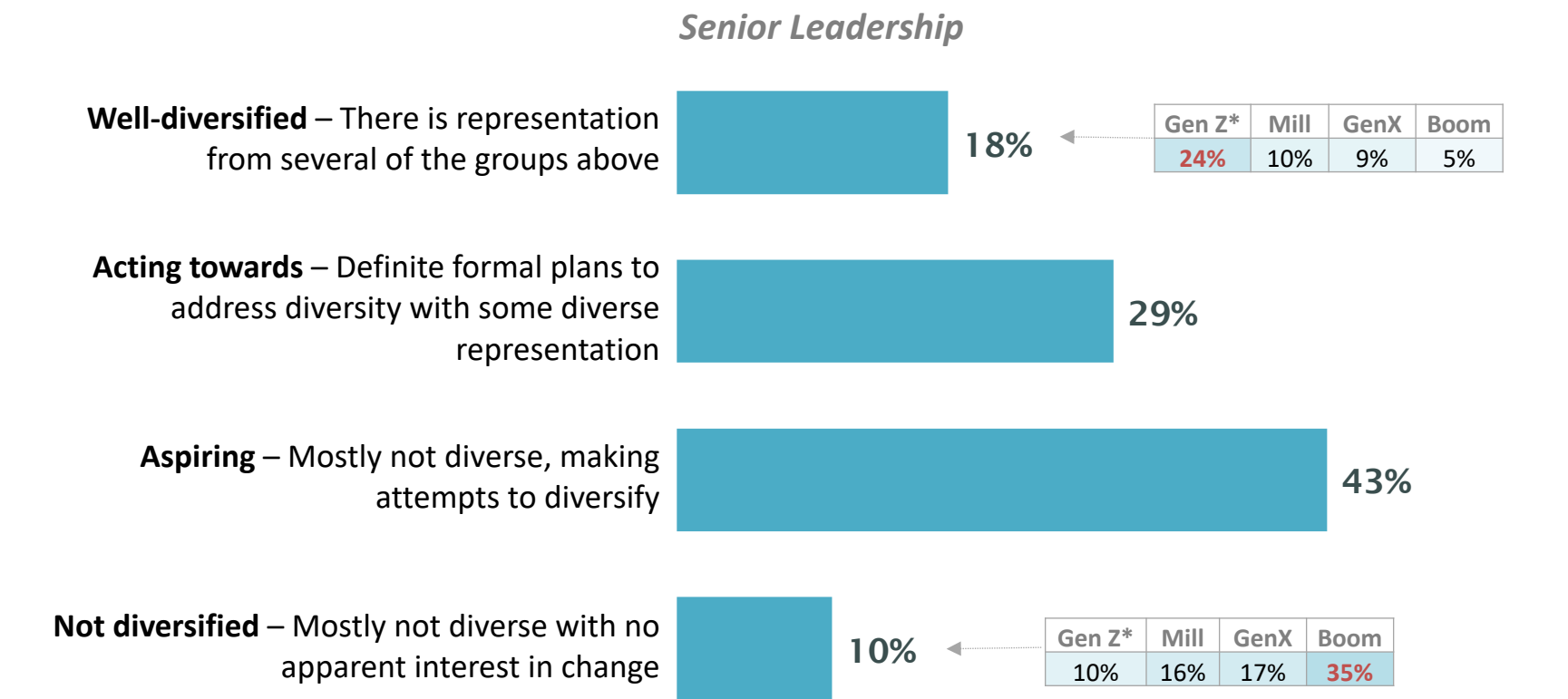


Total Canada (n=1328)

# SENIOR LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE:

## Diversity in senior leadership

- Among the HR professionals surveyed, only 18% describe the senior leadership of their organization as Well-diversified; the majority describe their senior leadership as Acting towards (29%) or Aspiring (43%)



# INSIGHTS

---

# WHY DEI?

## Part I: The **UPSIDE** of Investing in DEI

---

### What is the **VALUE** of DEI?

By showing the organizational benefits of DEI, HR professionals can prove it is key to a healthy workplace culture.

*HR professionals say the benefits of inclusiveness include:*

**82%**

Better workplace culture

**68%**

More innovation/creativity  
(especially for Gen Z and Millennials in HR)

**66%**

Doing the right thing/being authentic in the workplace



Position inclusiveness as a **core competency** to make it a priority, and less vulnerable to budget cuts

# WHY DEI?

## Part II: The **DOWNSIDE** of Ignoring DEI

---

### What is the **COST** of ignoring DEI?

Management may be surprised to learn that the greatest threat of ignoring DEI is not to reputation, but to core competencies and access to talent

*HR professionals say the threats of not addressing DEI include:*

**70%**

The risk of homogeneity – group think

**61%**

Losing access to the best new talent

**55%**

Losing good current employees



Remind management that ignoring DEI can mean losing access to the **skillsets** of existing and prospective employees



# LIMITS TO DEI

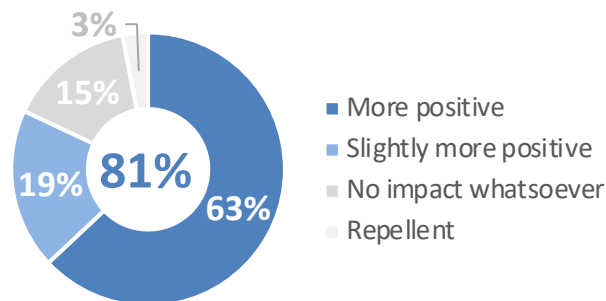
## Impact on Sentiment of DEI Efforts

Can there be  
**“TOO MUCH”**  
DEI?

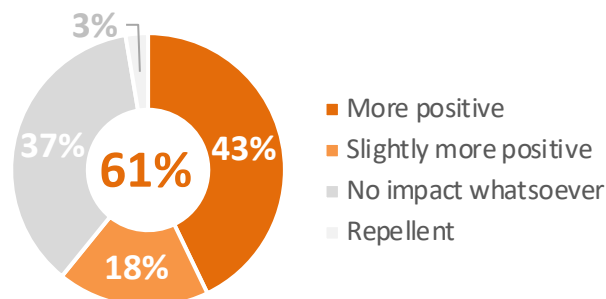
At some point, DEI efforts appear to reach their goals; while poorly diversified companies can raise morale through much-needed efforts, the effect will be far weaker among the already diversified

*% of Sentimental Impact of Company Efforts to Increase DEI*

*Least diversified companies*



*Most diversified companies*



**Diminishing marginal returns;** for well-diversified companies, further DEI efforts will have less of an effect than for less-diversified companies

# BEST PRACTICES

## How to Implement an Effective DEI Strategy

---

What **STEPS**  
should HR tell  
their company to  
take?

HR professionals at diversified companies believe DEI starts at the top; while all employees play a role, leadership support is key

*HR professionals at the **most diversified** companies suggest:*

Senior leadership support  
in backing the initiative

**81%**

Hiring new talent from  
diverse communities

**70%**

Diversity/inclusivity/bias  
training/mgmt programs  
(for employees and management)

**67%**



Having a game plan to implement a DEI strategy **helps HR professionals help their companies**

# BEST PRACTICES

## Effecting Change

---

### What really makes a **DIFFERENCE?**

HR professionals who need real change believe it is key that senior leadership become more diverse, either through hiring or promotion

*HR professionals at the **least diversified** companies suggest:*

**54%**

Hiring diverse talent at senior levels

**52%**

Promoting diverse talent to senior levels

**45%**

Mandatory diversity, anti racism training to produce systemic change



**Real change starts at the top;** for companies looking to increase diversity, senior leadership is the most effective place to start

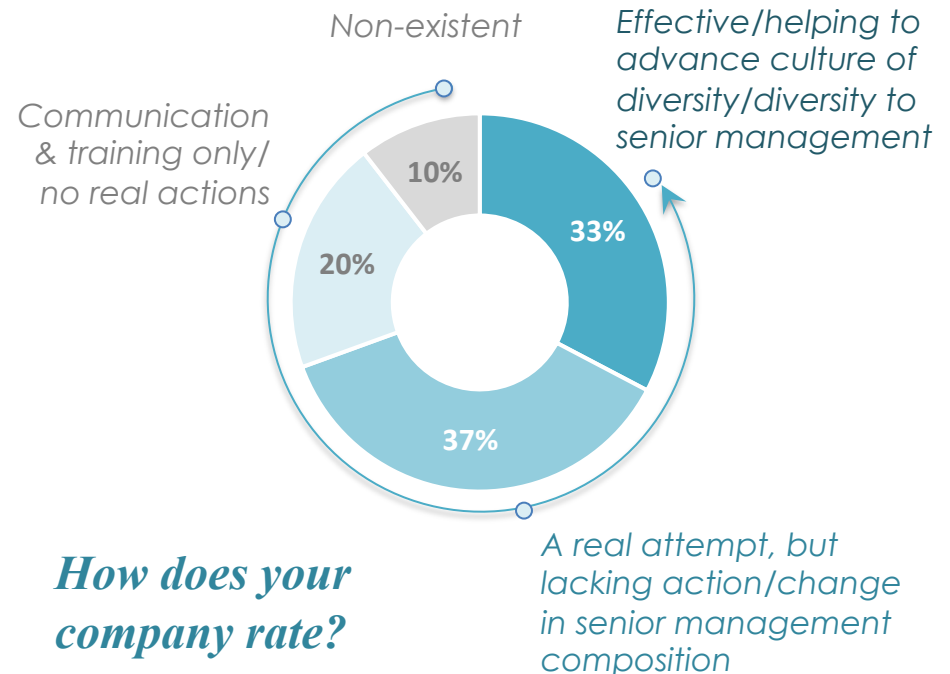
# BEST PRACTICES

## How to Signal Real Change

How do you show that DEI programs are **AUTHENTIC**?

Communication and training aren't enough; assembling a diverse senior management team shows real action

*HR professionals rate their DEI plans:*



**Talk is cheap;** if senior management isn't diverse, other efforts may be interpreted as lacking or disingenuous

# ROLE OF LEADERSHIP:

## Accountability

---

### Who is **ACCOUNTABLE** for DEI?

While most HR professionals say senior leadership is ultimately responsible for DEI, many also see their own department, and other employees, as playing a key role

*HR professionals suggest the following are accountable for DEI:*

82%

Senior Leadership  
(Including Chief Diversity Officer or equivalent)

61%

HR department overall

49%

Employees/staff



**The buck stops here;** senior leadership plays a key role in enacting DEI plans, but many HR professionals believe accountability extends to all company employees

---

# RETENTION:

## Retaining Talent

---

### The **RIGHT WAY** to Retain Talent

When trying to retain talent from marginalized communities, what are the most diverse companies doing differently? An emphasis on promotion and mentorship

*Aside from exit interviews, HR professionals at the **most diversified** companies suggest:*

**65%**

Leadership promotion from within

**60%**

Onboarding/mentorship/allyship designed to make employees feel welcome and valued

**60%**

Celebrate cultural occasions



**Get ahead of the curve;** don't wait for exit interviews to find out how to retain talent, learn right now from what the experts are doing right

# RETENTION :

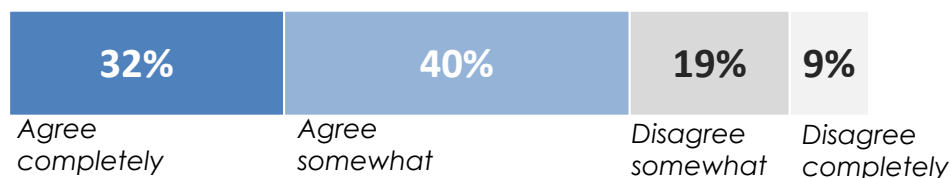
## Retaining Key People

### Is Diversity the Secret to **RETENTION**?

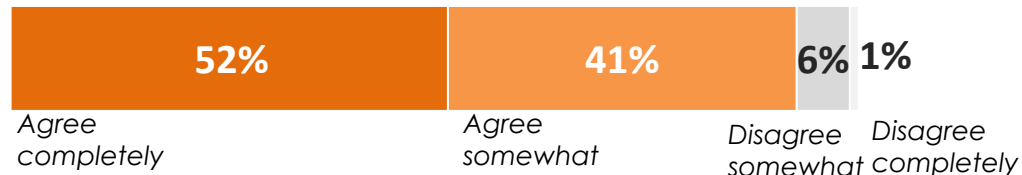
More diverse companies are likelier to retain key people. Is this due to their inclusiveness? Or is diversity one of many benefits of a company with a healthy work environment

*% of HR professionals who agree key people tend to stay with their organization:*

**Least diversified companies**



**Most diversified companies**



**Whether cause or correlation,** diversity is at the very least a sign of a healthy company, and perhaps a key driver

# BENEFITS OF DEI

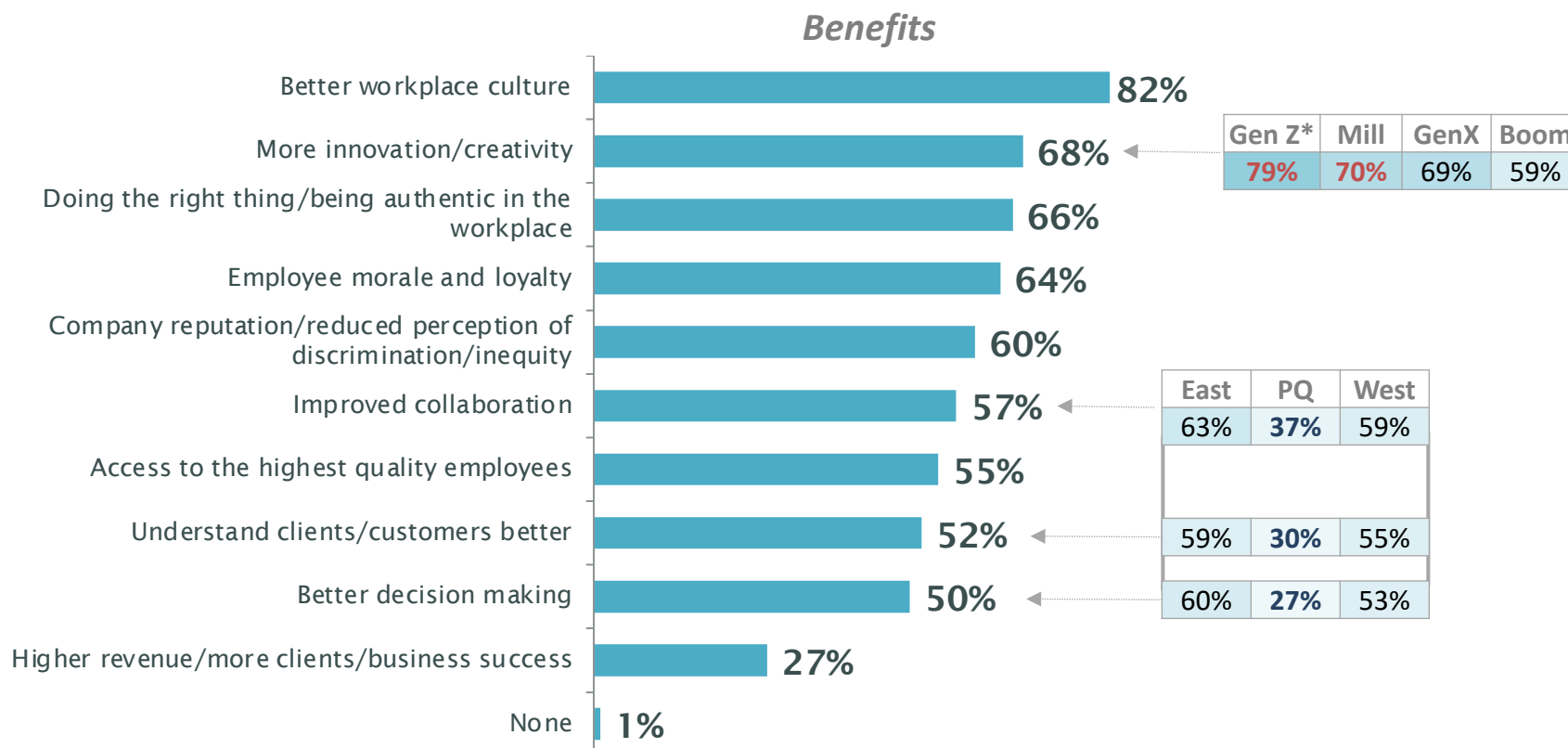
---



# BENEFITS OF DEI:

## Organizational Benefits

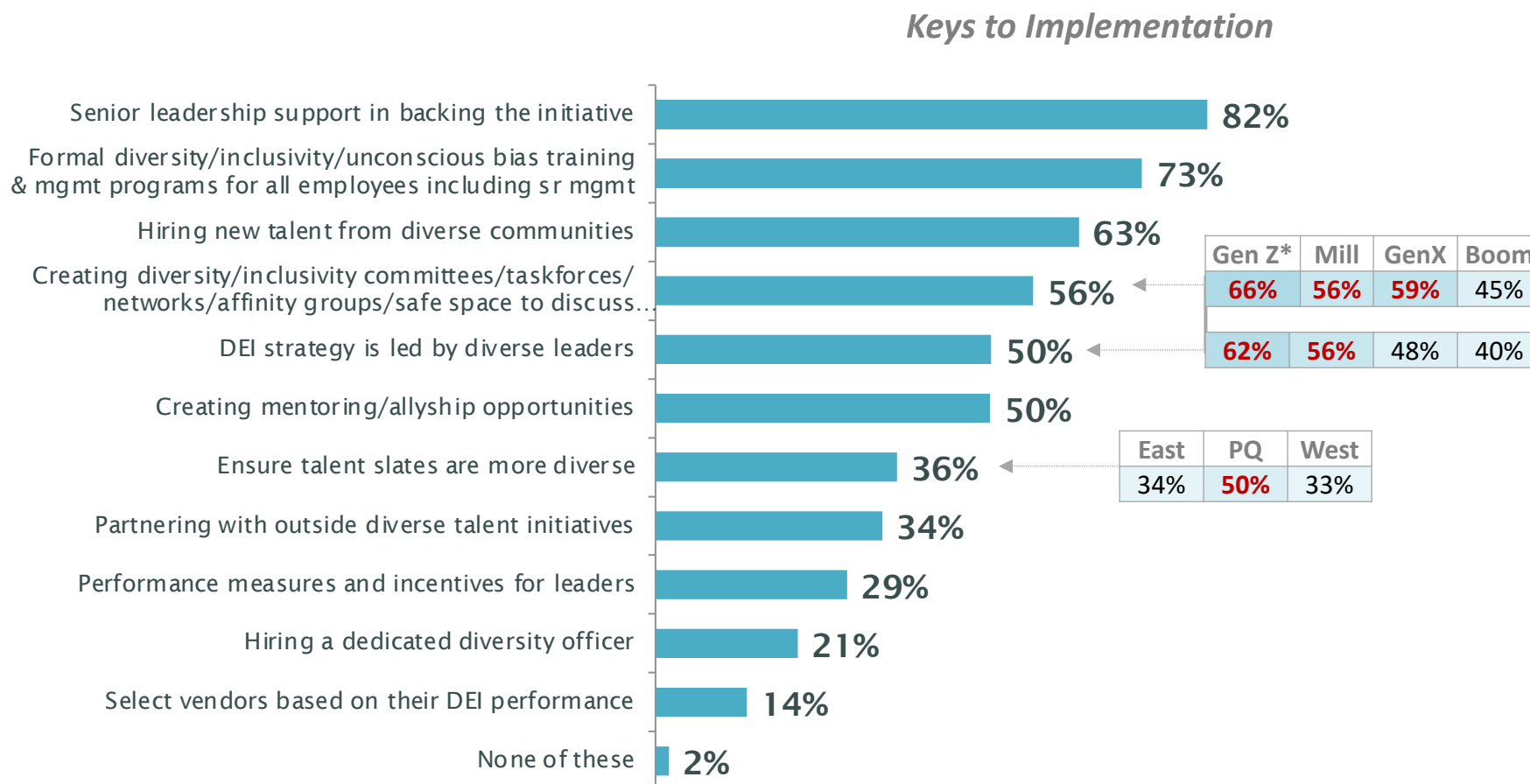
- *Almost all HR professionals cite at least one organizational benefit of working in a fully inclusive work environment; the top benefit is a better workplace culture*
- *Those in companies with Aspiring and Acting senior leadership are more likely than those with Well-diversified senior leadership to mention many of the benefits below; women are more likely to see benefits than men*



# BENEFITS OF DEI: Best Practices

## Keys to Implementation

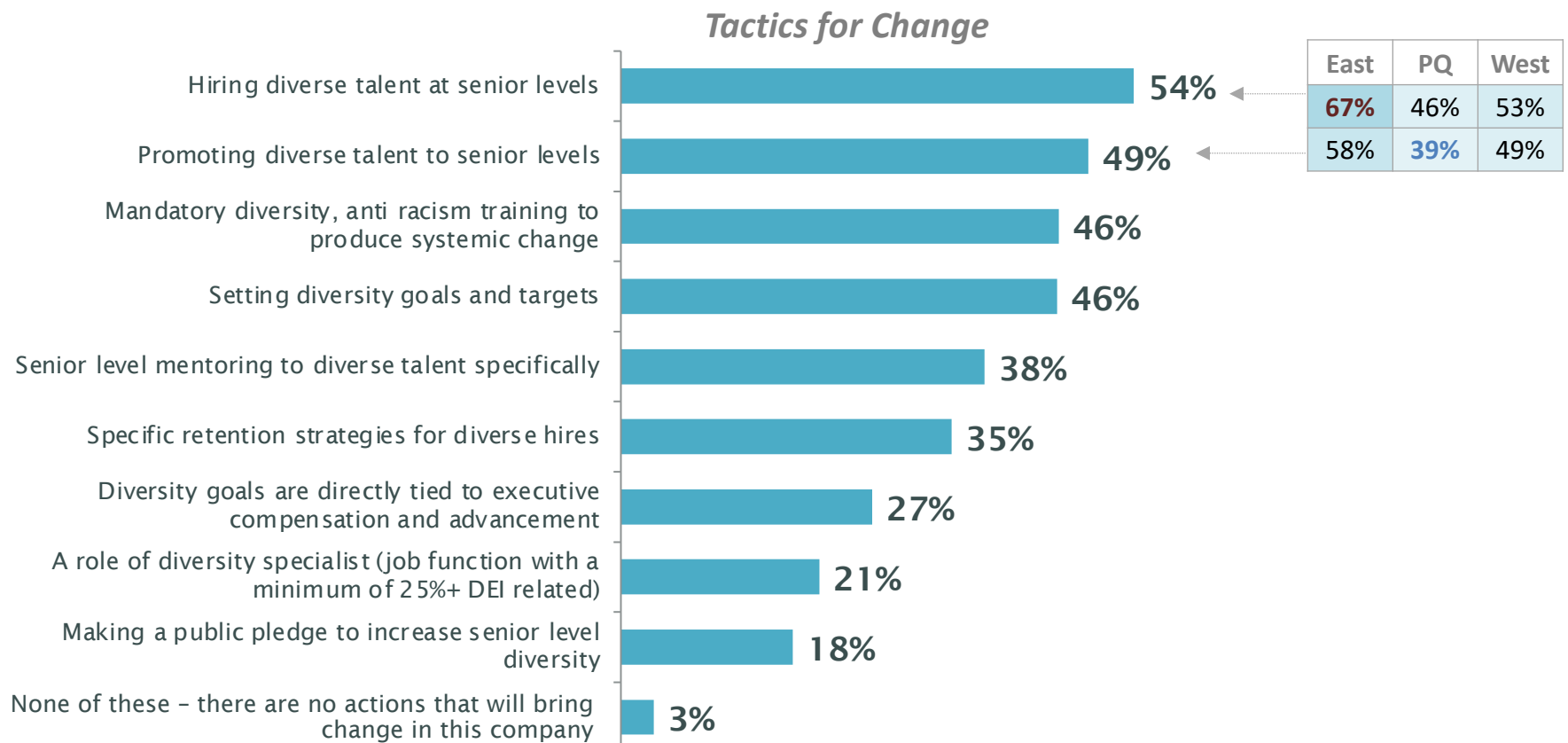
- *Almost all HR professionals cite at least one tactic that is key to implementing an effective DEI strategy*
- *Top tactics include senior leadership support, formal DEI training (including for senior management)*



# BENEFITS OF DEI: Best Practices

## Strategies for Bringing Change

- *Diversity at senior levels, through hiring or promotion, is most commonly viewed as likely to bring change*
- *Those in companies with less diverse leadership are most likely to emphasize the importance of diverse leadership in bringing change*

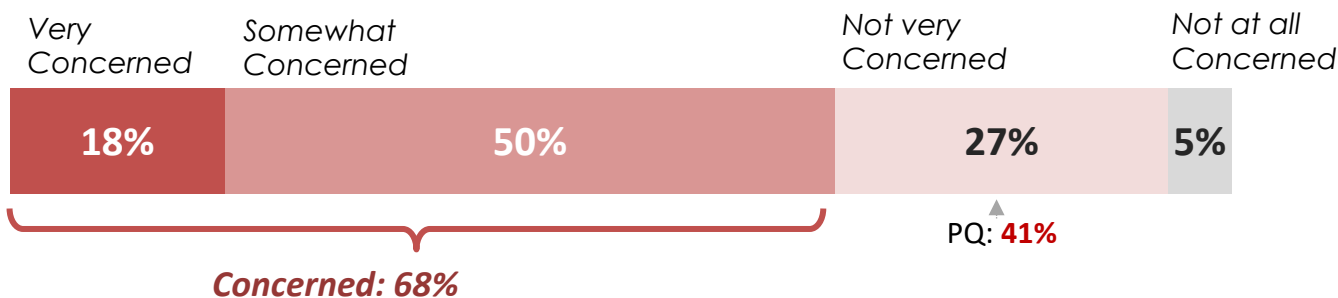


# BENEFITS OF DEI:

## Perceived Threats of Failing to Address DEI

- Among those whose leadership is not Well-diversified, there is significant concern about the lack of diversity
- Possible damage to the core abilities of the organization (group think, losing talent) are perceived as a greater threat than reputational risks

### Concern over lack of diversity in senior leadership



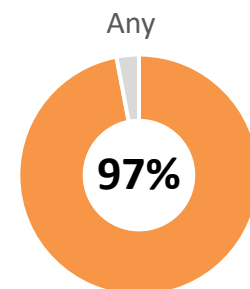
# ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

---

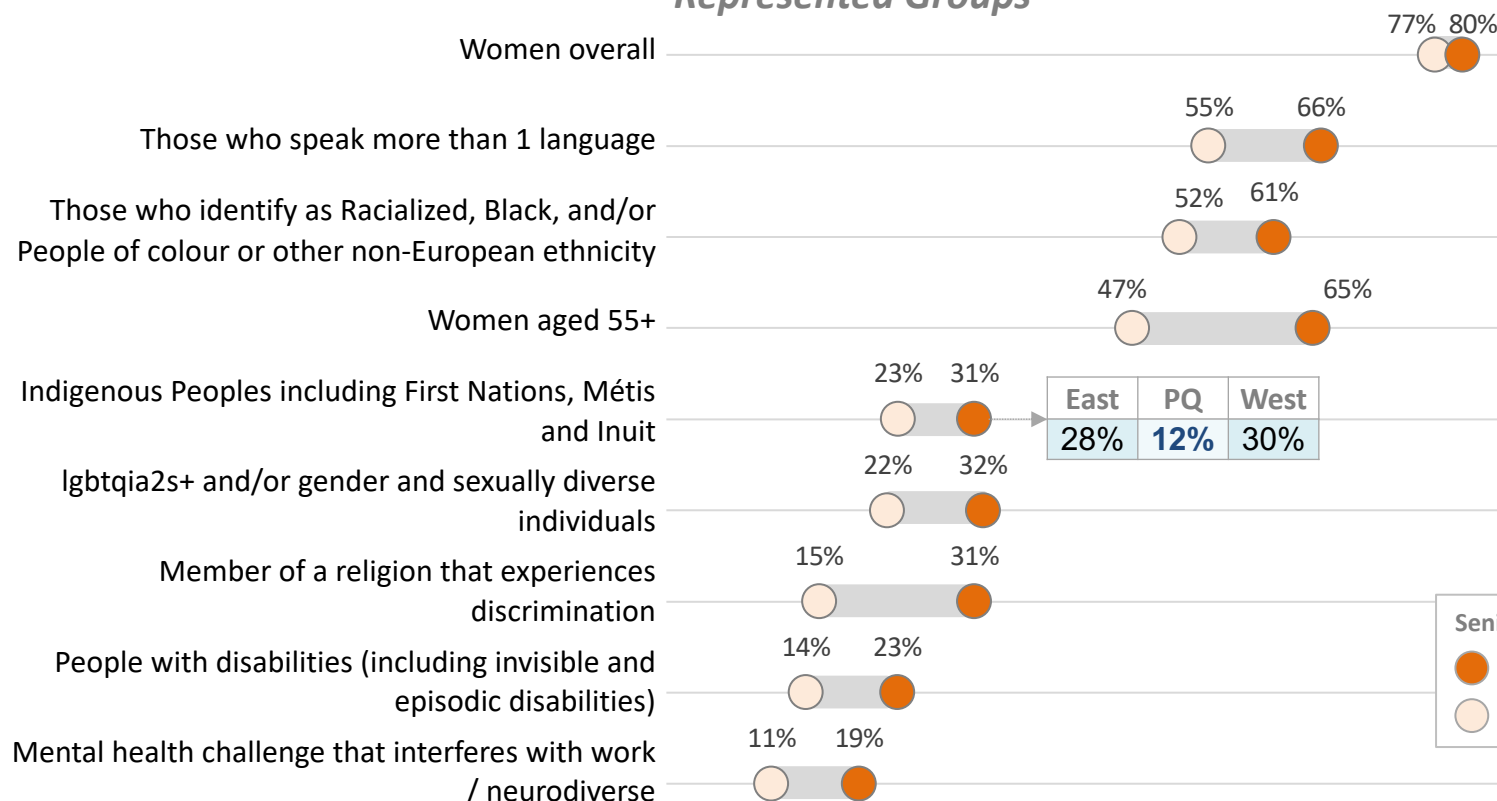
# ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

## Makeup of organization

- Among those at companies with Acting towards or Well-diversified senior leadership, most say women are represented in senior leadership
- Those in Well-diversified companies are more likely to say women aged 55+ are represented



### Represented Groups



#### Senior Leadership

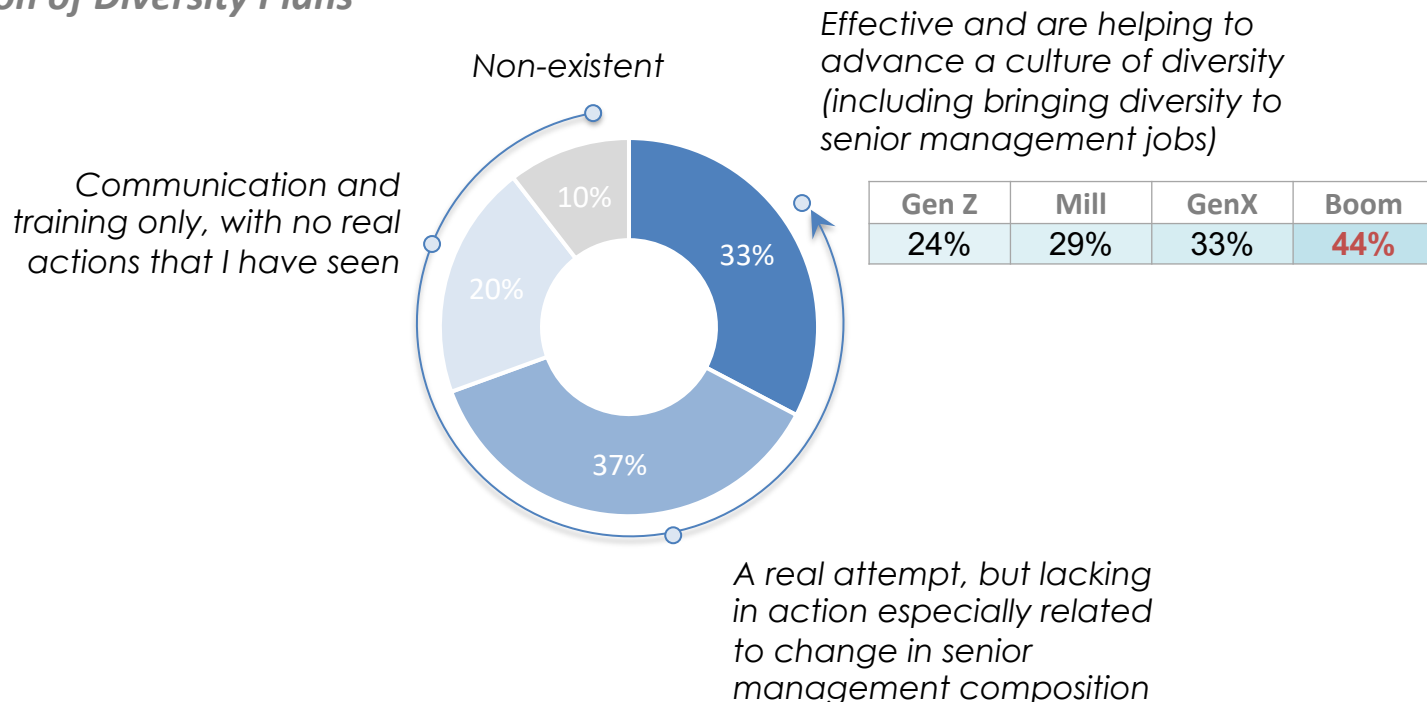
- Well-diversified
- Acting towards

# ROLE OF LEADERSHIP:

## Current State of Engagement

- *Most HR professionals say their organization's diversity plans are either effective or a real attempt*
- *Those in more diversified companies are much more likely to agree that their organization's diversity plans are at least a real attempt*

### Perception of Diversity Plans

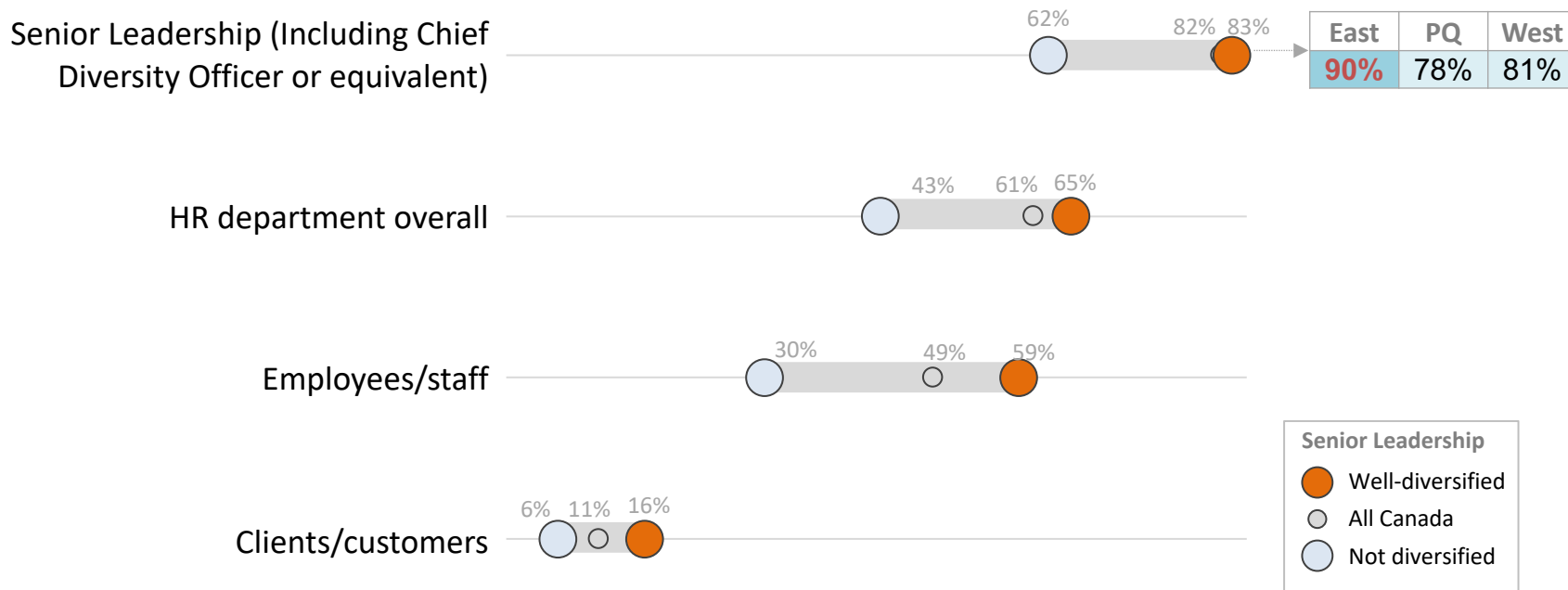


# ROLE OF LEADERSHIP:

## Accountability for DEI

- Senior leadership is most likely to be seen as accountable for DEI plans, regardless of diversity of senior leadership
- Those in companies with more diverse senior leadership are more likely to view all groups as accountable for enacting DEI plans in a meaningful way

### Accountable for DEI





# RECRUITMENT

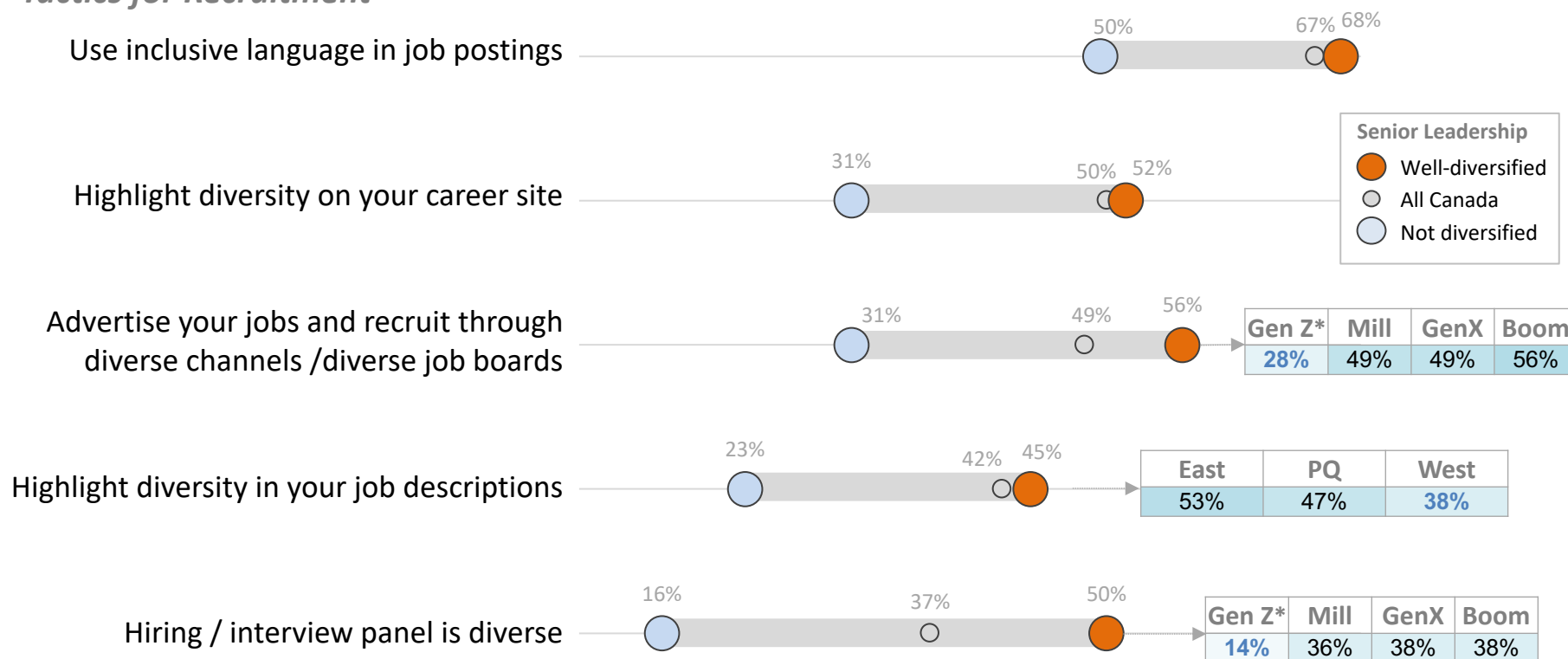
---

# RECRUITMENT:

## Attracting a Diverse Candidate Pool: Top 5

- *Using inclusive language in job postings is the top tactic for attracting all available talent, regardless of diversity of senior leadership*
- *Those in Well-diversified companies are much more likely to also ensure hiring panels are diverse*

### Tactics for Recruitment

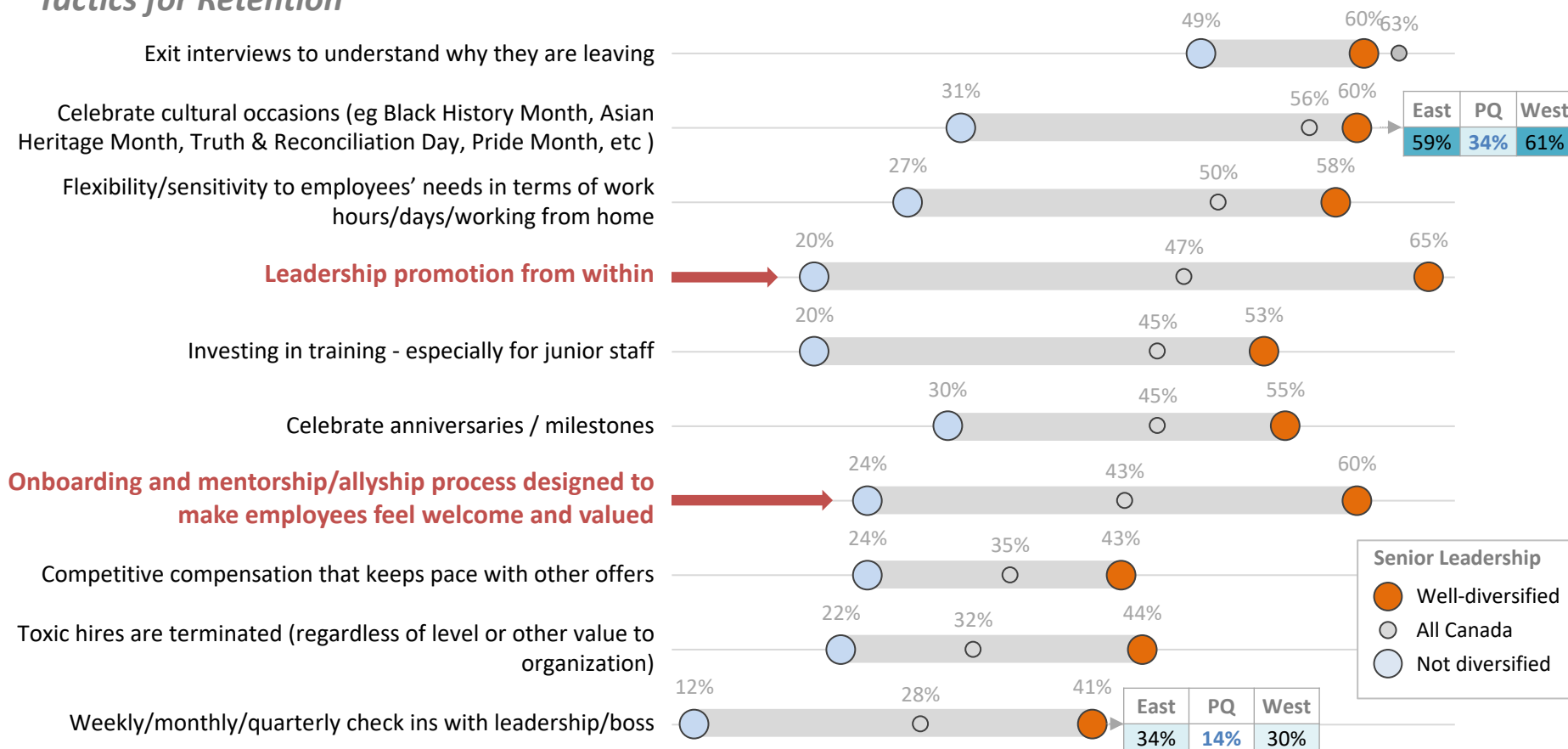


# RECRUITMENT:

## Retaining Talent from Marginalized Communities

- To retain talent from marginalized communities, those at Well-diversified companies are much more likely to promote from within and leverage onboarding/mentorship options

### Tactics for Retention



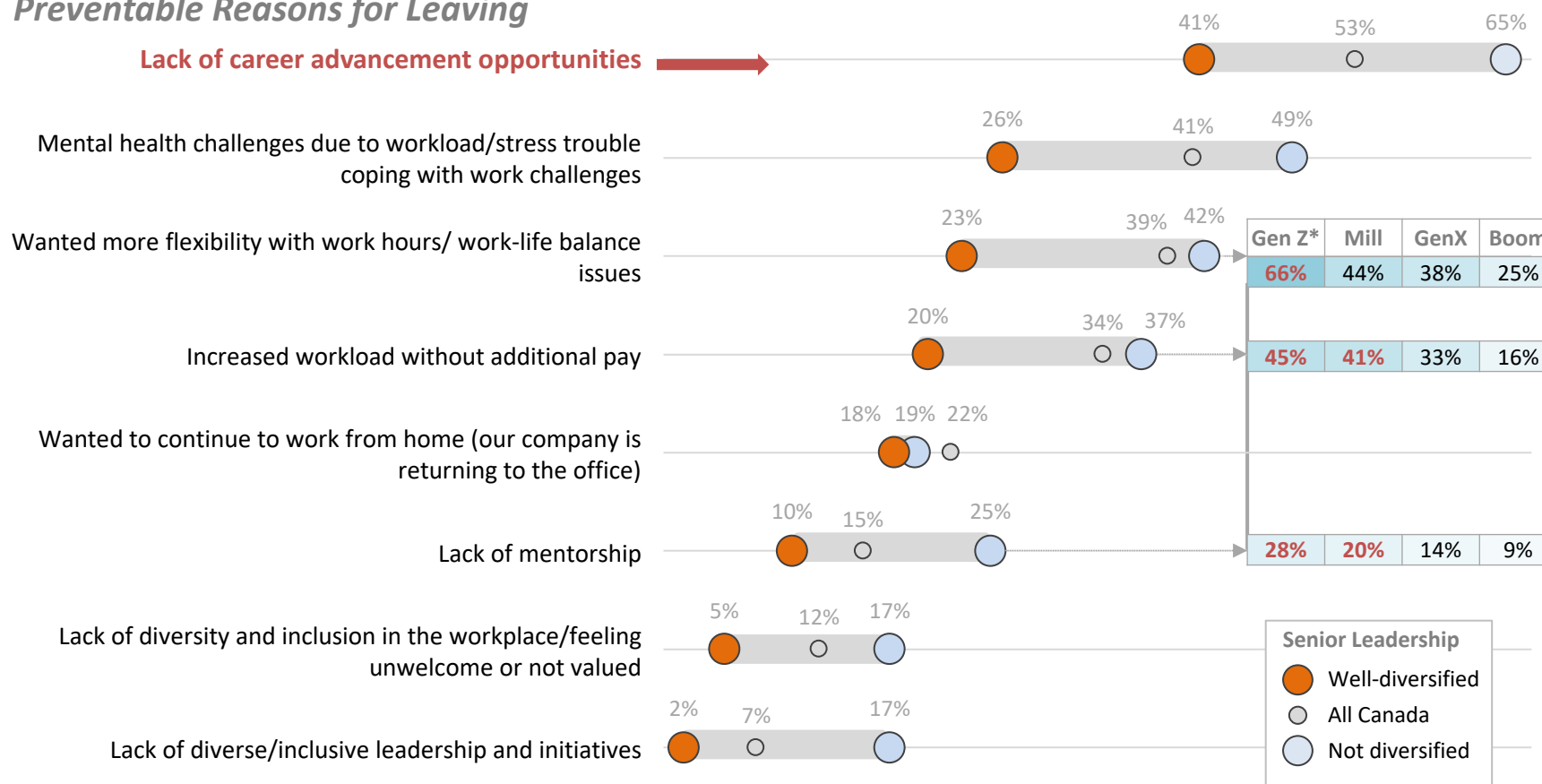
14. Which of the following is your organization doing to retain talent specifically from traditionally marginalized communities?

# RETENTION:

## Reasons for Leaving

- A lack of career advancement opportunities is the top reason for preventable loss of employees, regardless of diversity of senior leadership

### Preventable Reasons for Leaving



15. As far as you know have employees left your organization for any of the following reasons over the past 12 months?

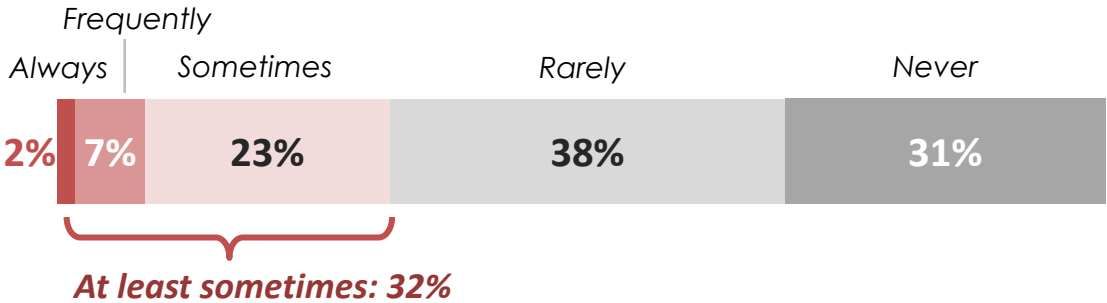
# CORPORATE CULTURE

---

# CORPORATE CULTURE: Engagement

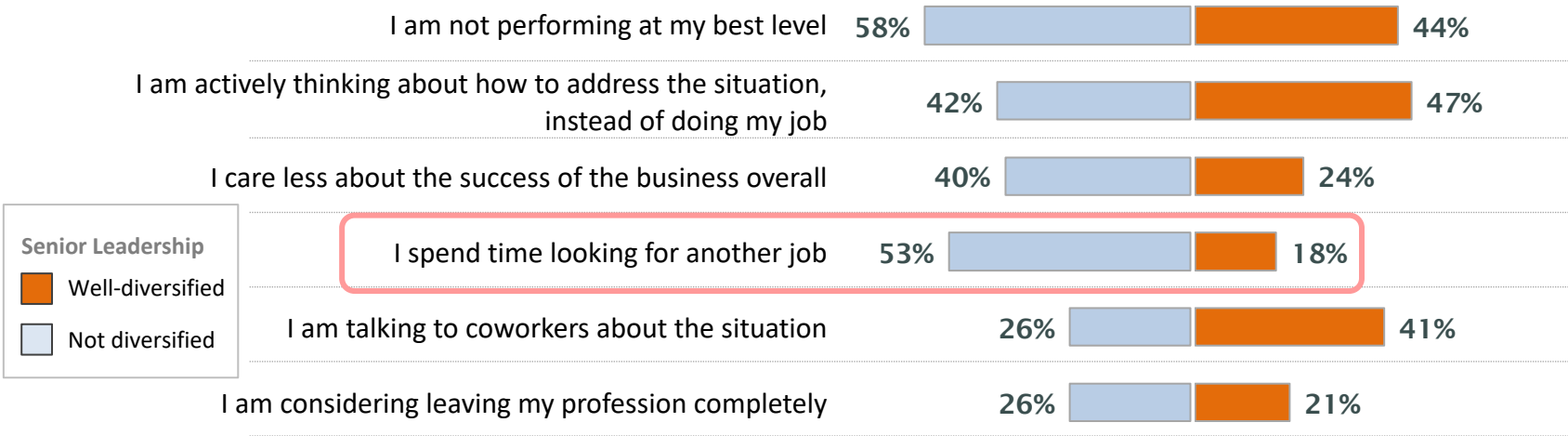
## Discrimination in the Workplace

### Frequency of Feeling Disengaged



- One-third of HR professionals at least sometimes feel less engaged at work due to discrimination
- Among those at Not diversified companies, over one-half says this means they spend time looking for another job

### Reactions to Feeling Disengaged



16. How often are you personally less engaged at work due to either institutional, interpersonal, structural and/or internalized systems of discrimination?

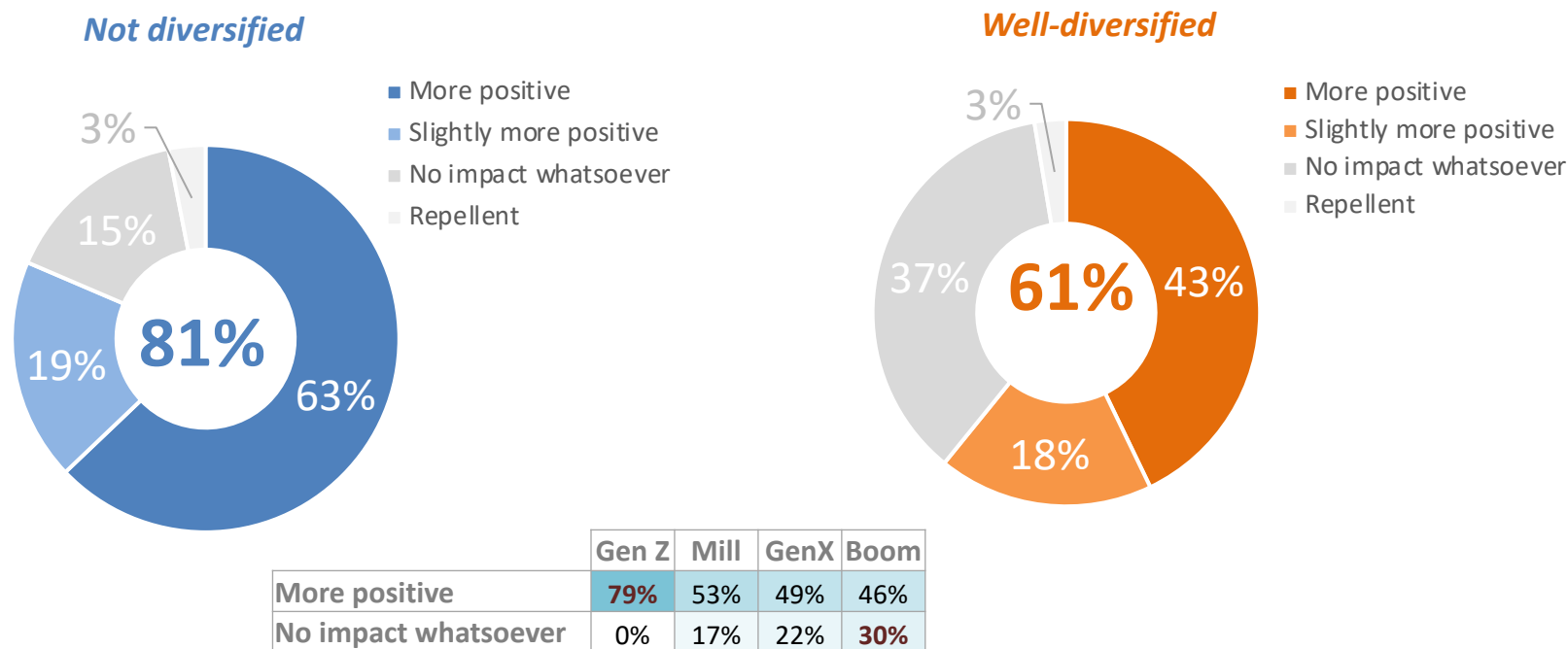
17. When you are less engaged at work due to discriminatory action/policies, how does this manifest at your job?

# CORPORATE CULTURE: Engagement

## Impact on Sentiment of DEI Efforts

- Most HR professionals would feel more or slightly more positively about their job and working in HR if their company made significant efforts to increase DEI
- This is especially true of HR professionals at companies whose senior leadership is Not diversified

### Sentimental Impact of Company Efforts to Increase DEI



# CORPORATE CULTURE:

## Retaining Key People

- HR professionals at companies that are Well-diversified are more likely to agree that key people tend to stay with the organization

*Key people tend to stay with the organization...?*

