



PDXWIT 2023



STATE OF THE COMMUNITY REPORT





02

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03



The technology industry can be a pathway into economic empowerment, but only if you can thrive once you're there.

As a BIPOC-led organization committed to advancing inclusion in the technology industry, PDXWIT believes that centering the most marginalized in our community is the first step in shaping a better tech future for all.





Research **Aims**

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Goal: The State of the Community survey is designed to capture data about the tech industry. Our goal is to quantify the depth and breadth of lived experience for people working in tech and identify specific challenges that must be addressed in our collective journey towards equity in the workplace. Additionally, we were interested in exploring the Great Resignation phenomenon and how it impacted the tech community. Survey questions were based on the Pew Research center's 2022 report [1].

Target population: U.S.-based tech professionals, defined as having a technical job at a non-tech company, or a technical or nontechnical job at a tech company. We were specifically interested in those who were currently employed either full-time or part-time (i.e., not self-employed).

Survey methodology: PDXWIT newsletter subscribers were sent invitation and reminder emails, and invitations with a link to the survey were also shared via our social media channels (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter). Responses were collected between July and August 2022. The survey took on average thirteen minutes to complete. Additionally, twenty two PDXWIT members were recruited via the above channels to participate in a paid focus group centered around the great resignation. There were a total of five focus group meetings, including two dedicated for BIPOC members.

[1] "Majority of workers who quit a job in 2021 cite low pay, no opportunities for advancement, feeling disrespected." Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (March 9, 2022) URL: <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/03/09/majority-of-workers-who-quit-a-job-in-2021-cite-low-pay-no-opportunities-for-advancement-feeling-disrespected/>.

LIMITATIONS:

Due to small sample sizes, we were unable to conduct an intersectional analysis for the following groups: refugees/immigrants, transgender individuals, people with disabilities



Executive Summary

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There was a lot on our minds when we administered the 2022 State of the Community survey. On the national stage, we saw the overturning of Roe v. Wade, devastating impacts of gun violence—and towards the end of the year, fears of an impending economic recession. Internally, PDXWIT had undergone leadership and staff transitions. The PDXWIT community, including our volunteers, were feeling the signs of burnout after two long pandemic years.

As we publish this report in Fall 2023, we've seen massive layoffs follow on the heels of the Great Resignation—layoffs that disproportionately impacted Women of Color, H1-B workers, and DEI initiatives. At the same time, return to office mandates began to spring up. In spite of this, we still felt there was much to glean from this “data snapshot” of 2022. One of our takeaways: The most successful companies will be those who embrace the future of work, and care about their employees.

It was heartening to see that the majority of individuals were in companies with DEI programs, and that a small number of companies were experimenting with the 4-day work week. It was especially heartening to see the number of tech workers willing and able to exercise their autonomy with the power of exit.

Despite the progress, harmful workplace behaviors persist—emphasizing the need for continued work. These findings underscore the importance of an ongoing (financial) commitment to rooting out systems of oppression in tech.

TERMS:

- BIPOC = Black Indigenous and People of Color
- LGBTQ+ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
- WOC= Women of color
- Wm = White men
- WW = White women



Key Findings



06

Tech workers are in all sectors

Of 335 respondents, tech workers spanned 23 different industries, including education, finance, and government.

Workplace culture

While the majority of respondents were at companies with a DEI program, they experienced a range of harmful behaviors from small slights to workplace harassment and retaliation—indicating there is still work to do.

Money talk

Of 275 respondents, 52% reported salaries of \$100k or more, with LGBTQ+ BIPOC reporting lower salaries on average.

Additionally, our data revealed that Women of Color expressed higher concerns about retaliation when negotiating salaries, highlighting a focus for DEI efforts.

On the job

While respondents generally had positive impressions, white men expressed the highest satisfaction while Women of Color and LGBTQ+ BIPOC folks were more likely to feel underutilized.

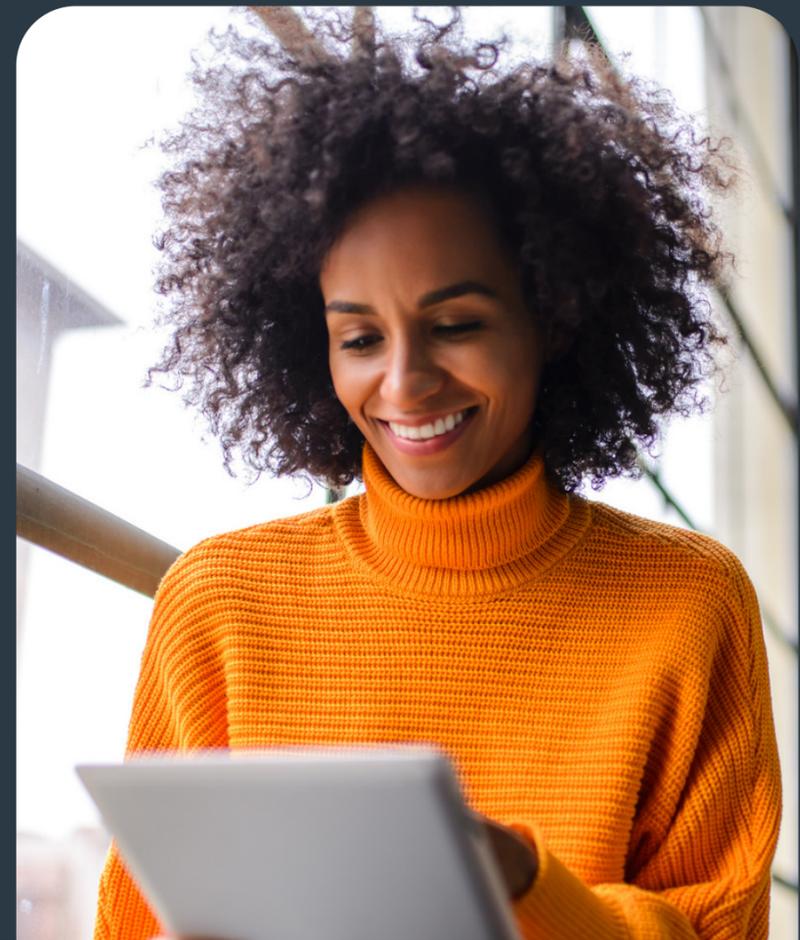
The Great Resignation

Of 305 respondents, nearly 30% participated—with the majority finding improvements in pay, benefits, and work-life balance.



Who were these tech workers?

Survey respondent demographics



A total of 428 individuals completed the survey ("All respondents"). Of these, 335 met the eligibility requirements for the employment-based survey questions ("Employed in tech").

There were four respondents outside of the U.S. whose data were not included in the report due to their small sample size.



08

What does it mean to “be in tech?”

Given the wide-spread use of technology in all aspects of our lives, we decided to broaden our perspective of the tech workforce.

For this survey, we defined “being in tech” as having a technical role at a non-technical company, or having either a technical or non-technical role at a tech company.





They work across many industries

While nearly 60% of our respondents work in the tech sector, others work in a variety of industries including education, finance/services government, and healthcare. (n=335)

1	Technology	59.7%
2	Education	4.5%
3	Finance & Financial Services	4.2%
4	Government	3.6%
5	Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals	3.3%
6	Entertainment & Leisure	3.3%
7	Advertising & Marketing	3.3%
8	NPO or NGO	3.0%
9	Professional services	3.0%
10	Retail & Consumer Durables	2.4%
11	Automotive	2.1%

12	Utilities, Energy, and Extraction	2.1%
13	Insurance	1.2%
14	Food, Beverages, Events, Hospitality	1.2%
15	Construction, Machinery, and Homes	0.9%
16	Trucking/Transportation/Logistics	0.3%
17	Manufacturing	0.3%
18	Real Estate	0.3%
19	Gaming	0.3%
20	Freelance	0.3%
21	Localization	0.3%
22	Science	0.3%
23	Legal	0.3%

US-based respondents

10

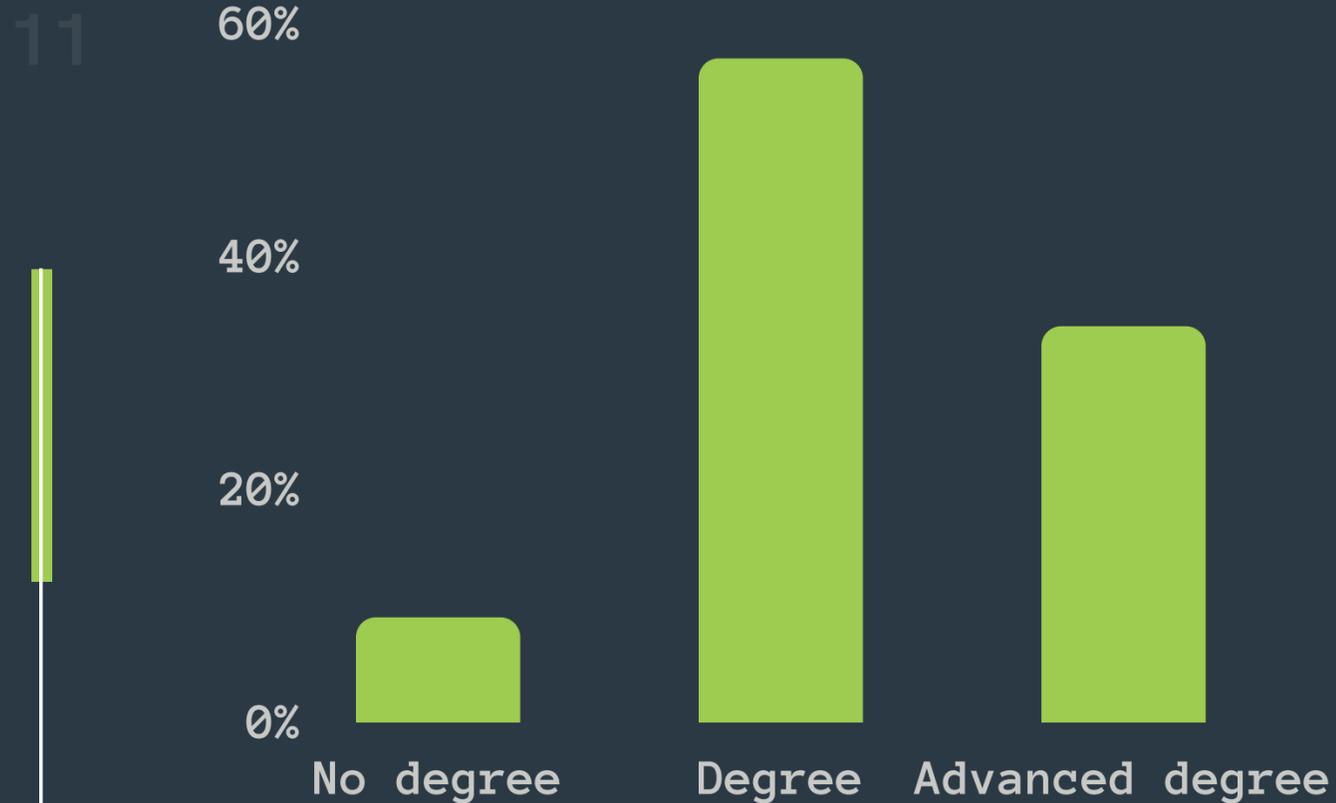
93%

of respondents reported living in the Pacific Northwest, with the vast majority being in Oregon. (n= 275)



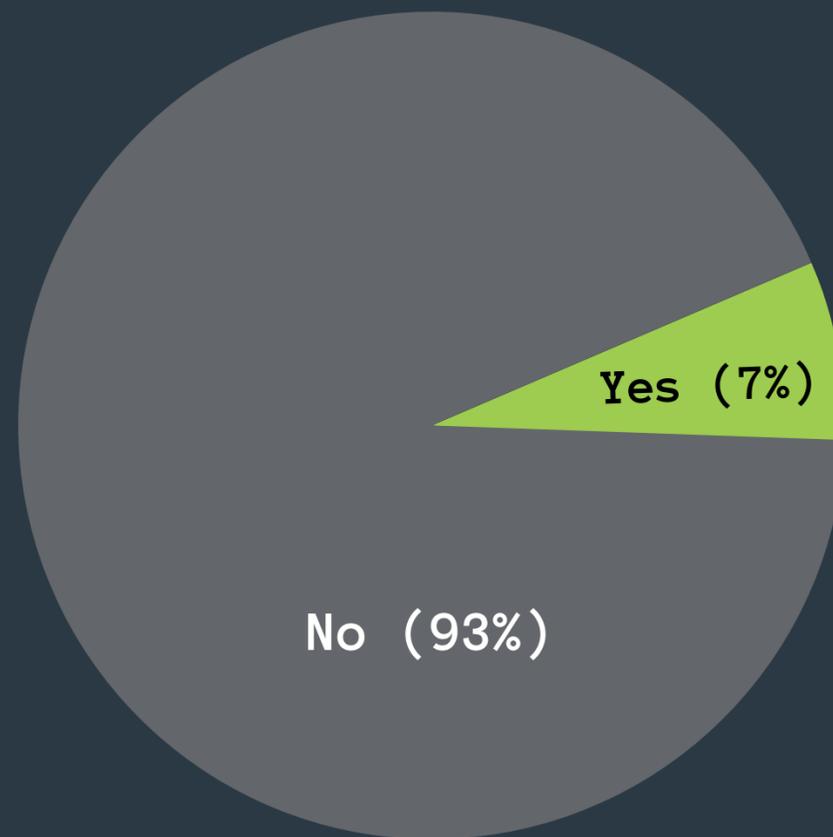


Demographics: Educational attainment



WHAT IS YOUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION? (N=279)

ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL (N=281)



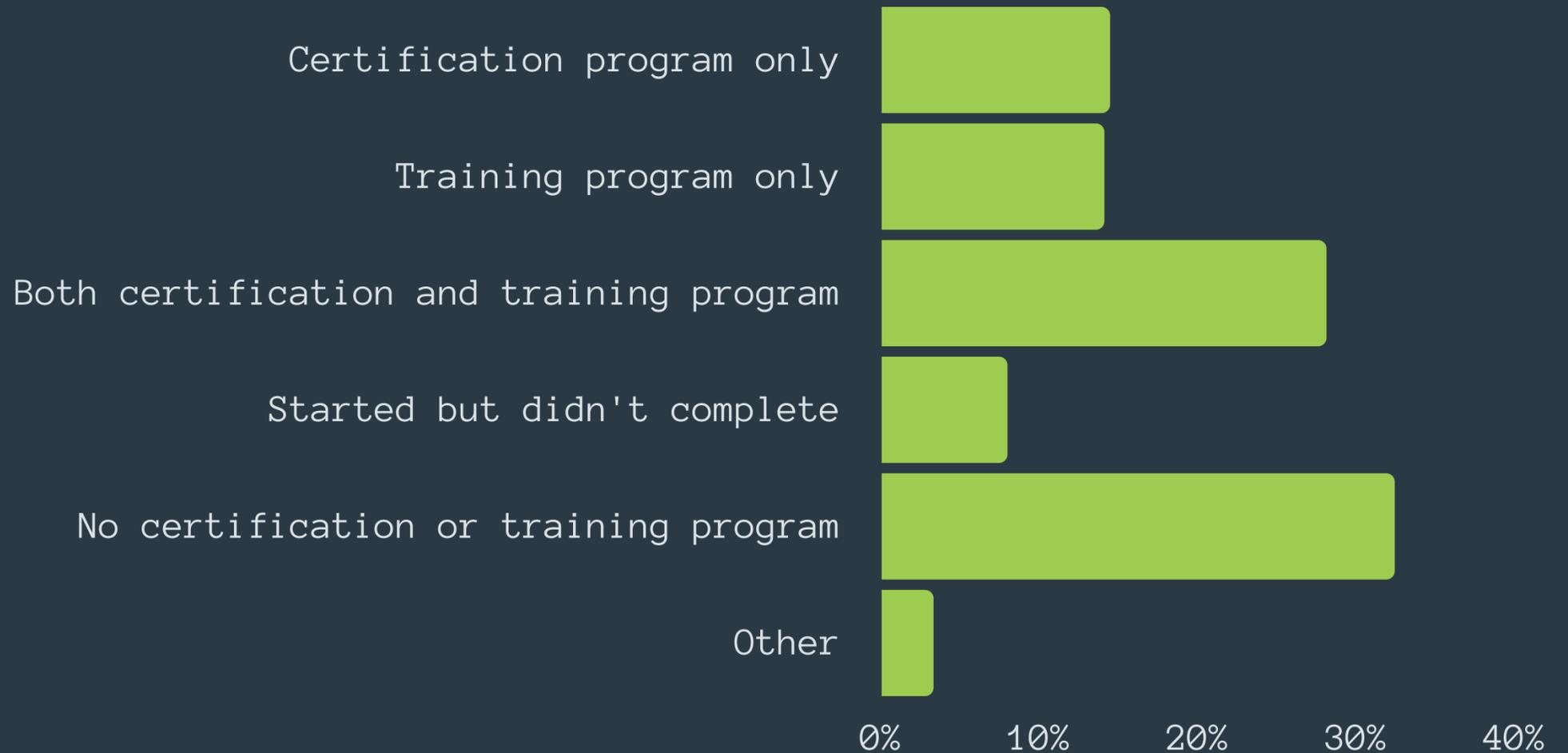
→ **95%**
of those currently in college are seeking a career change or career advancement.

Demographics: Educational attainment

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56%

of respondents have completed a certification and/or a training program in the information technology field (n=278).



Demographics: Identity-based

20%

of respondents identified as having a disability or having accommodation needs (n=279).

28%

of respondents identified themselves as being 45 years old and over (n=335).

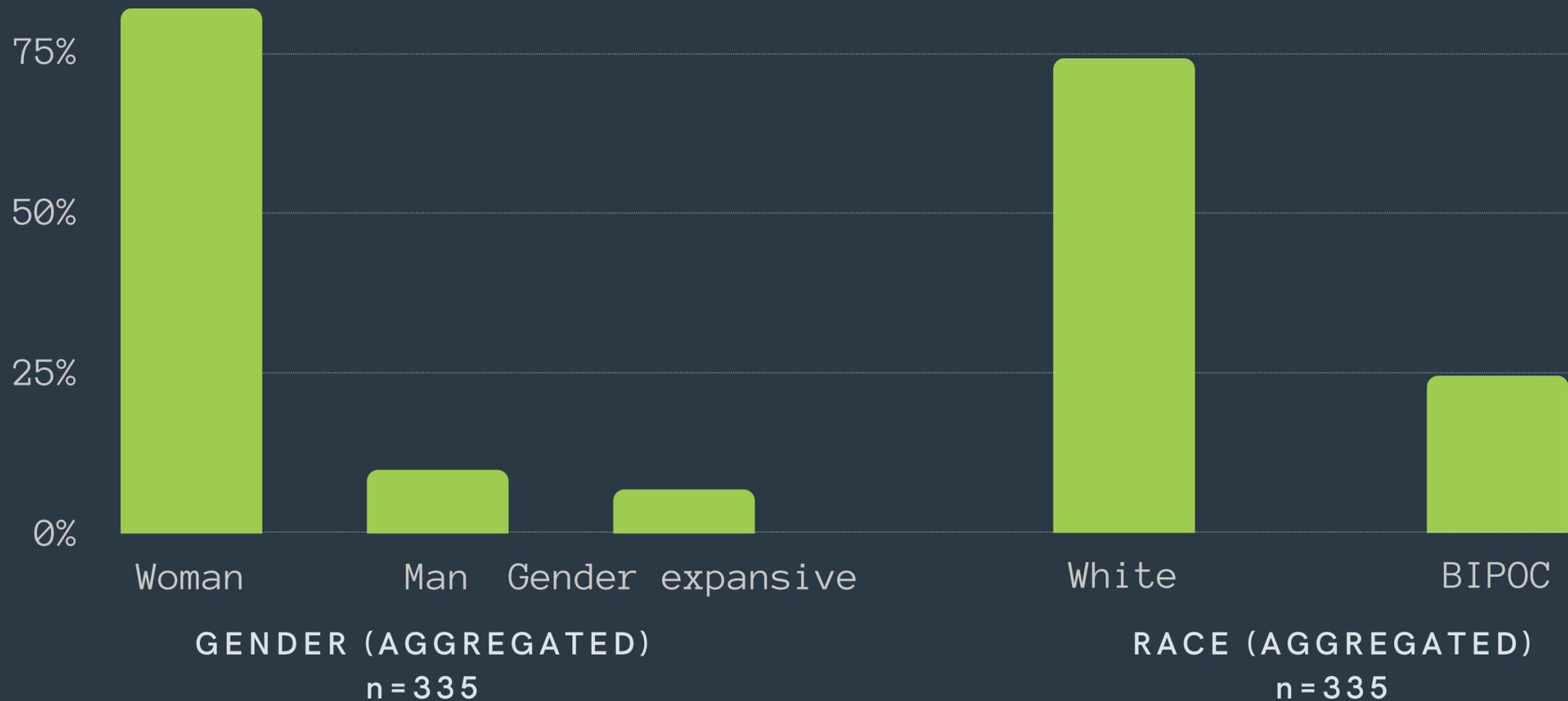
35%

of respondents identified as LGBTQ+ (n=279).



Demographics: Identity-based

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Salary Data

- Approximately 52% of respondents reported salaries of \$100,000 or greater. (n=275)
- LGBTQ+ BIPOC tended to have reported salaries that skewed lower compared to other groups.
- Women of Color were more likely to be concerned about retaliation or a negative reception from their employer over salary negotiations.

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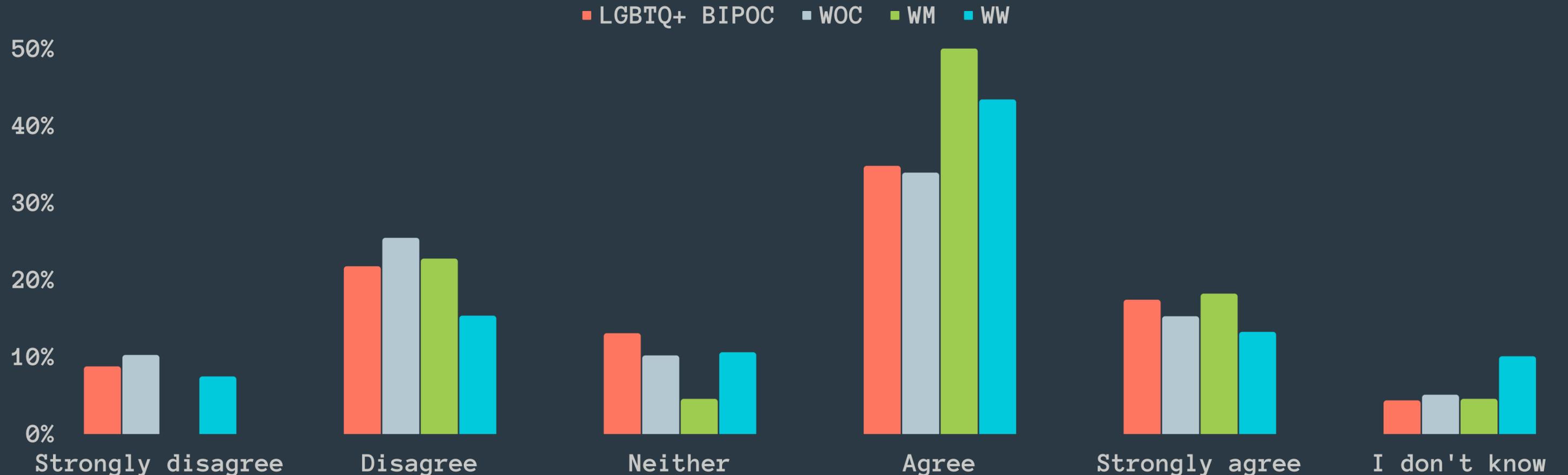
LGBTQ+ BIPOC salaries skewed lower compared to other groups.





My base pay is competitive compared to similar positions at other companies.

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(LGBTQ+ BIPOC N=23 | WOC N=59 | WM N= 22 | WW N=189)

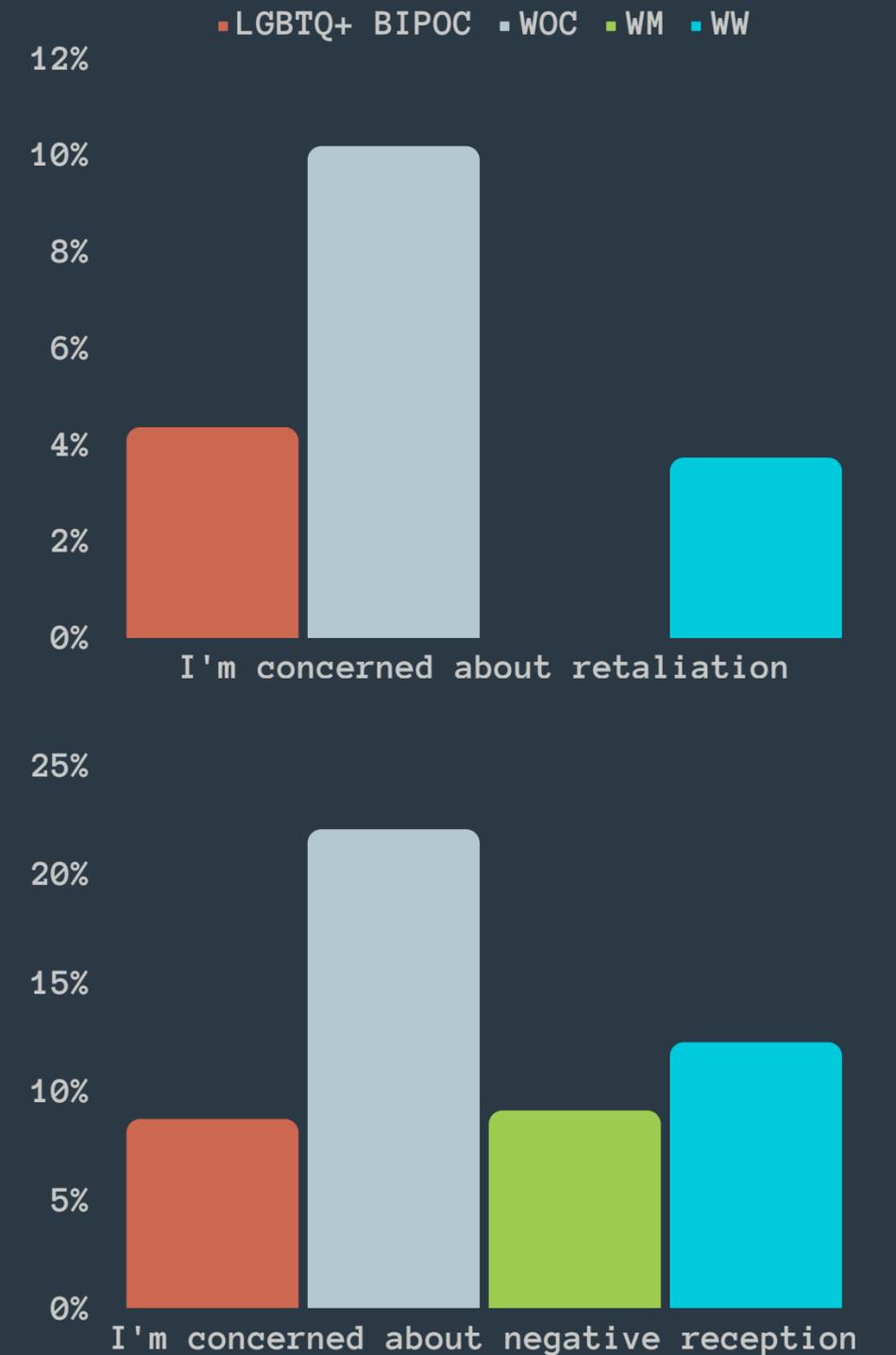
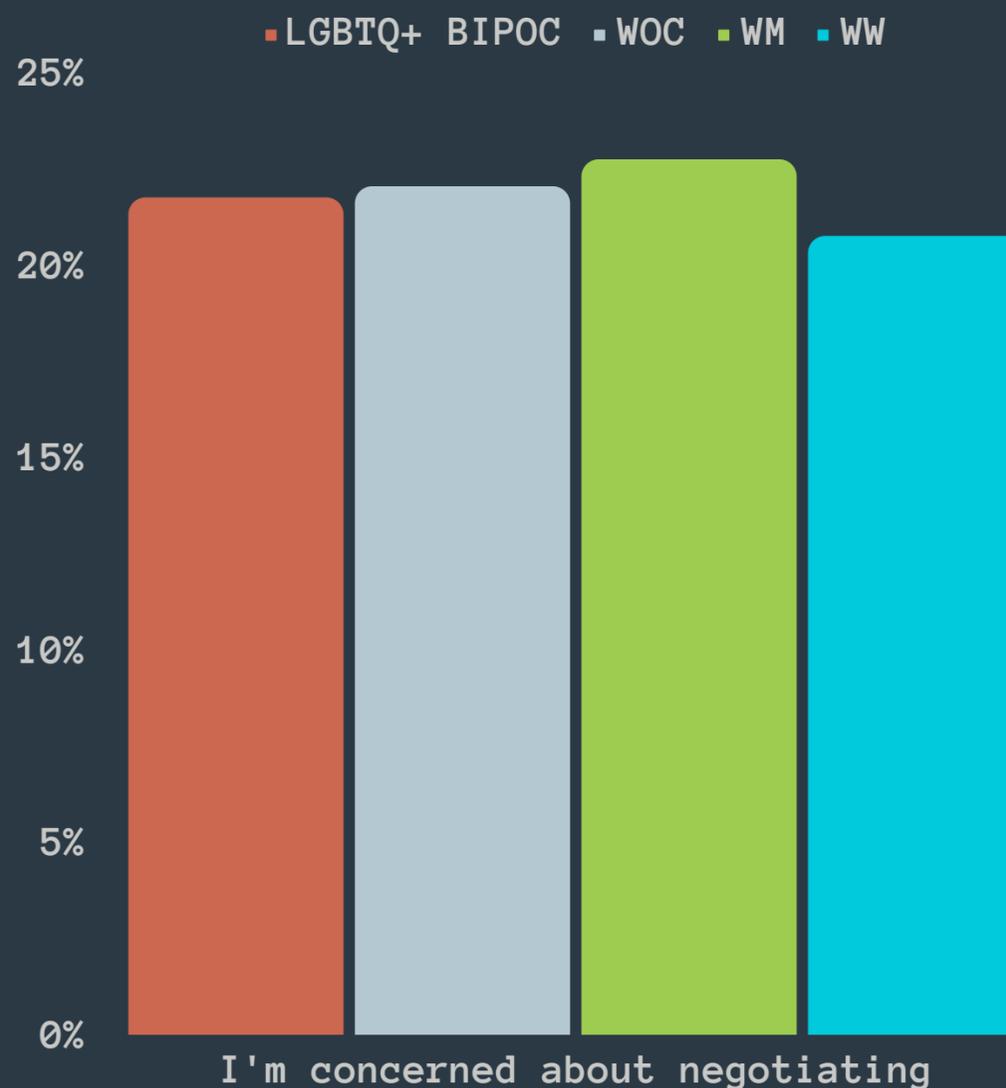


26% of survey respondents reported that they had no problem asking for a raise.
(n=297)

Of those with concerns around asking for a raise...

All groups had similar levels of concern about negotiating.

However, **Women of Color** were more likely to be concerned about **retaliation** or a **negative reception** from their employer.



Sentiments on the job

- Overall, respondents felt positively towards aspects of their organizations and jobs.
- White men had the most positive responses across virtually all categories, while Women of Color and BIPOC LGBTQ+ were less likely to feel that their jobs made full use of their skills.
- Nearly 5% of respondents were at organizations with a 4-day work week.

Workplace context at a glance

21

4.5%

worked in organizations experimenting with the 4-day workweek (n=325).

92%

worked in remote or hybrid roles (n=336).



Experiences within their organizations

(mean scores)

22

On a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5), groups had generally reported positive (green) or neutral (grey) experiences.

ITEM	LGBTQ+ BIPOC	WOC	WM	WW
My organization gives me the tools and technologies I need to do my job well. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	4.0	3.9	4.5	3.9
I feel that my contributions at work are recognized. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.0
My organization offers financial support for continuing education or professional development. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.2
On my team, everyone is treated with respect. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	5.0	4.4	4.6	4.3
On my team, everyone is empowered to take time off from work on a regular basis. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.2
I maintain a regular relationship with a mentor in my organization (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.1	2.9	3.0



Experiences within their organizations

(mean scores)

23

All groups gave a neutral response when it came to maintaining a regular relationship with a mentor within their organization.

ITEM	LGBTQ+ BIPOC	WOC	WM	WW
My organization gives me the tools and technologies I need to do my job well. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	4.0	3.9	4.5	3.9
I feel that my contributions at work are recognized. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.0
My organization offers financial support for continuing education or professional development. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.2
On my team, everyone is treated with respect. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	5.0	4.4	4.6	4.3
On my team, everyone is empowered to take time off from work on a regular basis. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.2
I maintain a regular relationship with a mentor in my organization (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.1	2.9	3.0



Experiences within their organizations

(mean scores)

24

White men scored highest across all items—with the exception of having a mentorship relationship (where they scored the lowest).

ITEM	LGBTQ+ BIPOC	WOC	WM	WW
My organization gives me the tools and technologies I need to do my job well. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	4.0	3.9	4.5	3.9
I feel that my contributions at work are recognized. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.0
My organization offers financial support for continuing education or professional development. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.2
On my team, everyone is treated with respect. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	5.0	4.4	4.6	4.3
On my team, everyone is empowered to take time off from work on a regular basis. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.2
I maintain a regular relationship with a mentor in my organization (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.1	2.9	3.0

Experiences within their jobs

(mean scores)

25

On a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5), groups had generally reported positive (green) or neutral (grey) experiences.

ITEM	LGBTQ+ BIPOC	WOC	WM	WW
My job responsibilities are clearly defined. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4
I find my work to be meaningful. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.5	4.1	3.8
My job makes full use of my skills. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	3.0	3.2	4.2	3.5
I feel like I have enough time each week to get my work done. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.5
I have freedom to decide how to do my work each week. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.2

Experiences within their jobs

(mean scores)

26

Women of Color and LGBTQ+ BIPOC were less likely to feel that their job didn't make full use of their skills.

ITEM	LGBTQ+ BIPOC	WOC	WM	WW
My job responsibilities are clearly defined. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4
I find my work to be meaningful. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.4	3.5	4.1	3.8
My job makes full use of my skills. (N=23, 59, 22, 188)	3.0	3.2	4.2	3.5
I feel like I have enough time each week to get my work done. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.5
I have freedom to decide how to do my work each week. (N=23, 59, 22, 189)	4.3	4.1	4.5	4.2

Workplace culture

While the majority of respondents were at companies with a DEI program, they experienced a range of harmful behaviors from small slights to workplace harassment and retaliation. This indicates there's still more work to do.



28

In your current role, do you ever experience any of the following?





ITEM	Never	Yes, to some degree**	Prefer not to answer
Being told you were hired to fill a diversity and inclusion quota (n=291)	89%	10.3%	0.7%
Being asked to educate others about your identity (whether you want to or not) (n=291)	69.4%	29.9%	0.7%
Being told you are too aggressive (n=292)	65%	35%	-
Being told you are not the right fit for a role because of experience (n=291)	59.4%	39.2%	1.4%
Being excluded from important work events (n=292)	56.5%	43.2%	0.3%

** "Yes, to some degree" includes those who responded: "Very infrequently", "Sometimes", "Very frequently", or "Frequently"



ITEM	Never	Yes, to some degree*	Prefer not to answer
Feeling like your identity is erased or ignored (n=292)	54.1%	45.9%	-
Feeling like you need to change how you talk or act to fit in (codeswitching) (n=292)	32.5%	67.5%	-
Being given administrative or support jobs outside your actual job duties (n=292)	32.53%	66.4%	1.07%
Having your ideas ignored, overlooked, or unattributed (n=292)	27.7%	72%	0.3%

**"Yes, to some degree" includes those who responded: "Very infrequently", "Sometimes", "Very frequently", or "Frequently"



ITEM	Never	Yes, to some degree**	Prefer not to answer
Use of images (memes, gifs) of Black or Brown folks as a joke (digital blackface and brownface) (n=287)	84.3%	15.3%	0.4%
Use of racist language, anecdotes, or references (n=287)	76%	24%	-
Use of homophobic or transphobic language, anecdotes or references (n=287)	76%	24%	-
Cultural appropriation by non-members of marginalized groups (n=286)	64.3%	34.6%	1.1%
Assumptions that you or others are spokespeople for their culture (n=287)	60.3%	38.3%	1.4%
Use of gendered language that excludes you or others (n=287)	43.2%	55.4%	1.4%

**"Yes, to some degree" includes those who responded: "Very infrequently", "Sometimes", "Very frequently", or "Frequently"



32

In your current organization, how likely would you be to report workplace harassment?





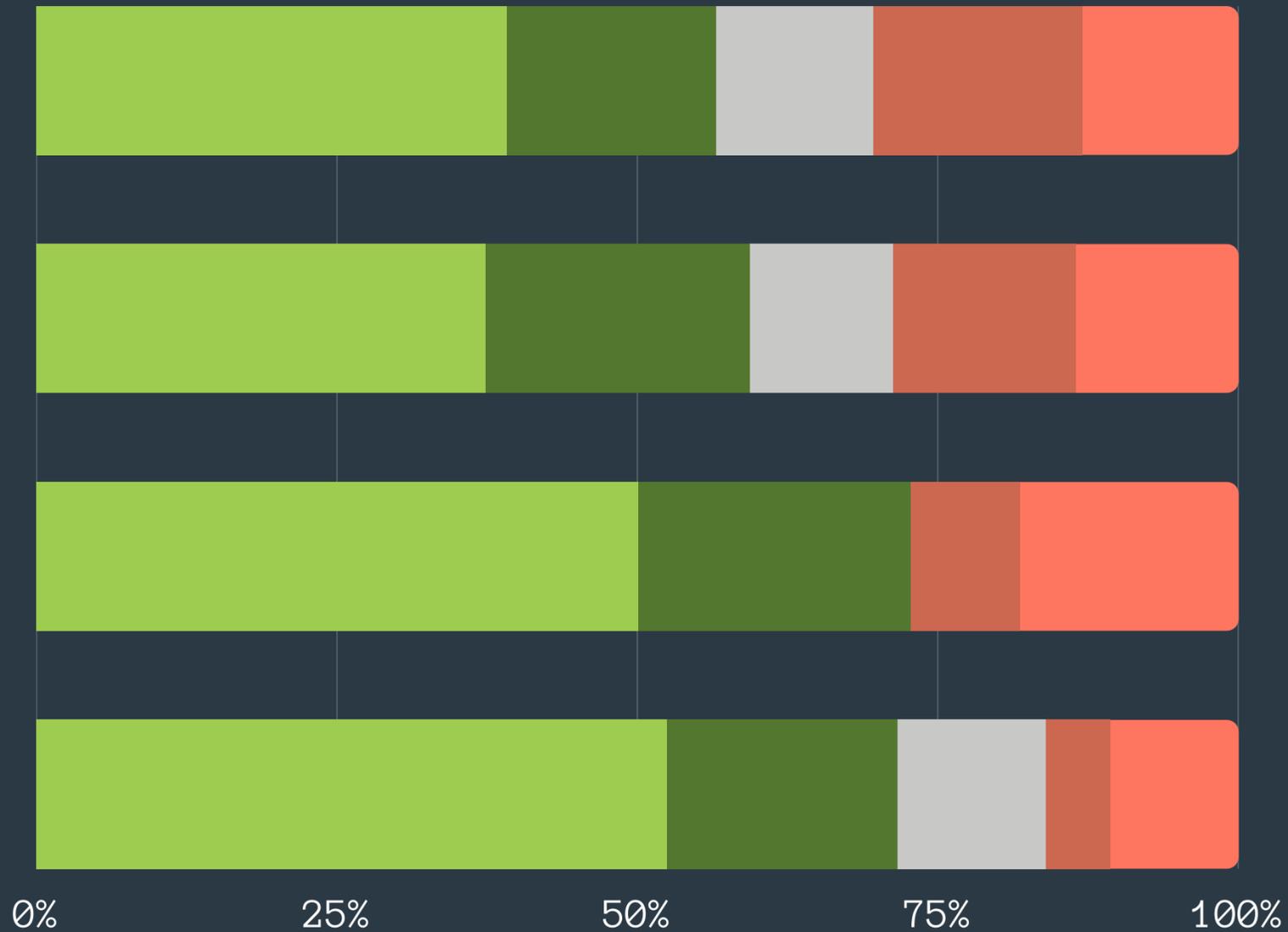
■ Very likely
 ■ Somewhat likely
 ■ Unsure
■ Not so likely
 ■ Very unlikely

LGBTQ+ BIPOC

WOC

WM

WW



White men and white women reported that they felt more comfortable to report workplace harassment compared to Women of Color and LGBTQ+ BIPOC folks.

33



34

Have you ever reported any instance of workplace harassment?





■ Yes, within the past 12 months
■ Yes, more than 12 months ago
■ No
■ I don't know

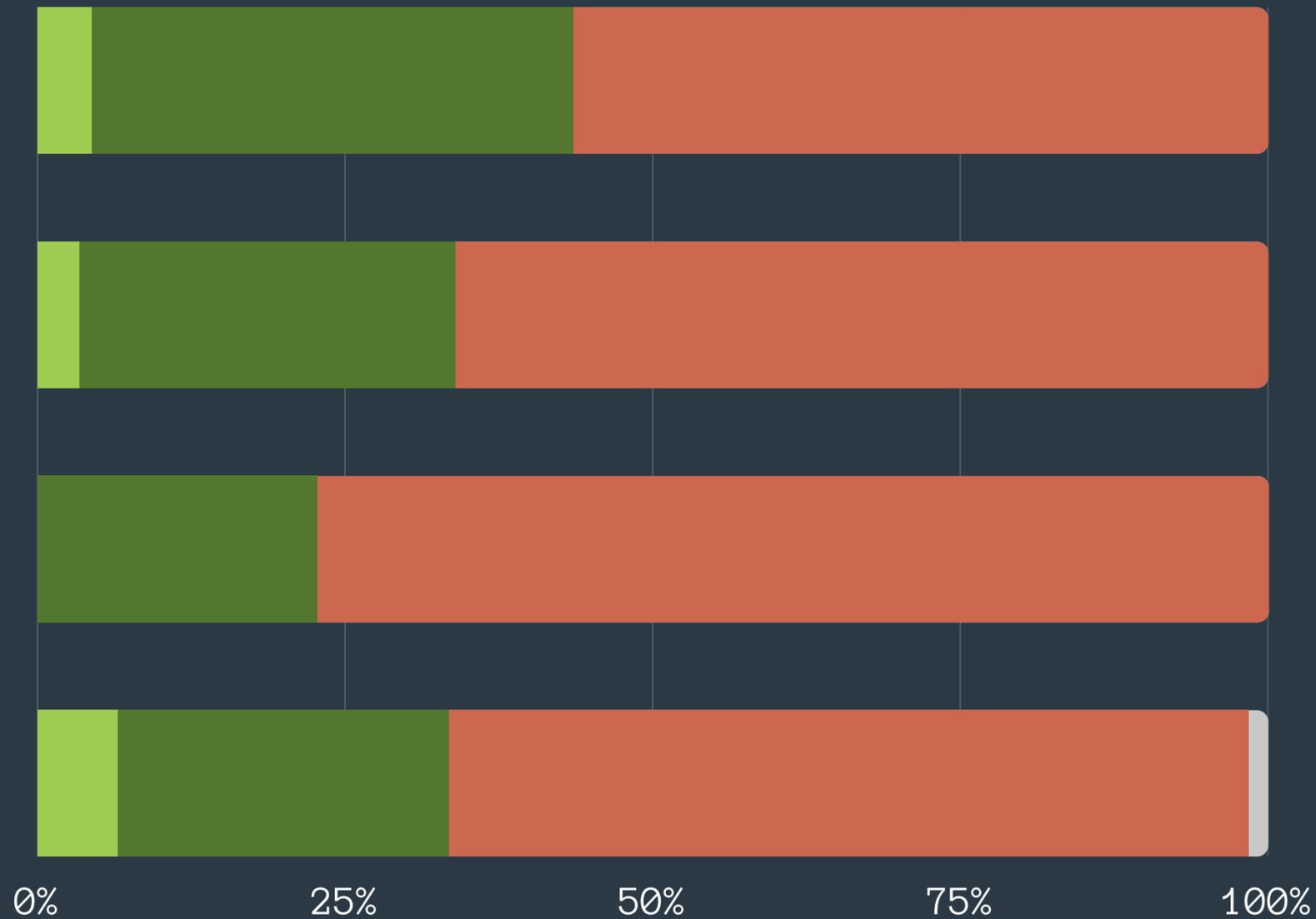
35

LGBTQ+ BIPOC

WOC

WM

WW



However, white men were the **least likely** to have reported workplace harassment, while LGBTQ+ BIPOC folk were the **most likely**.



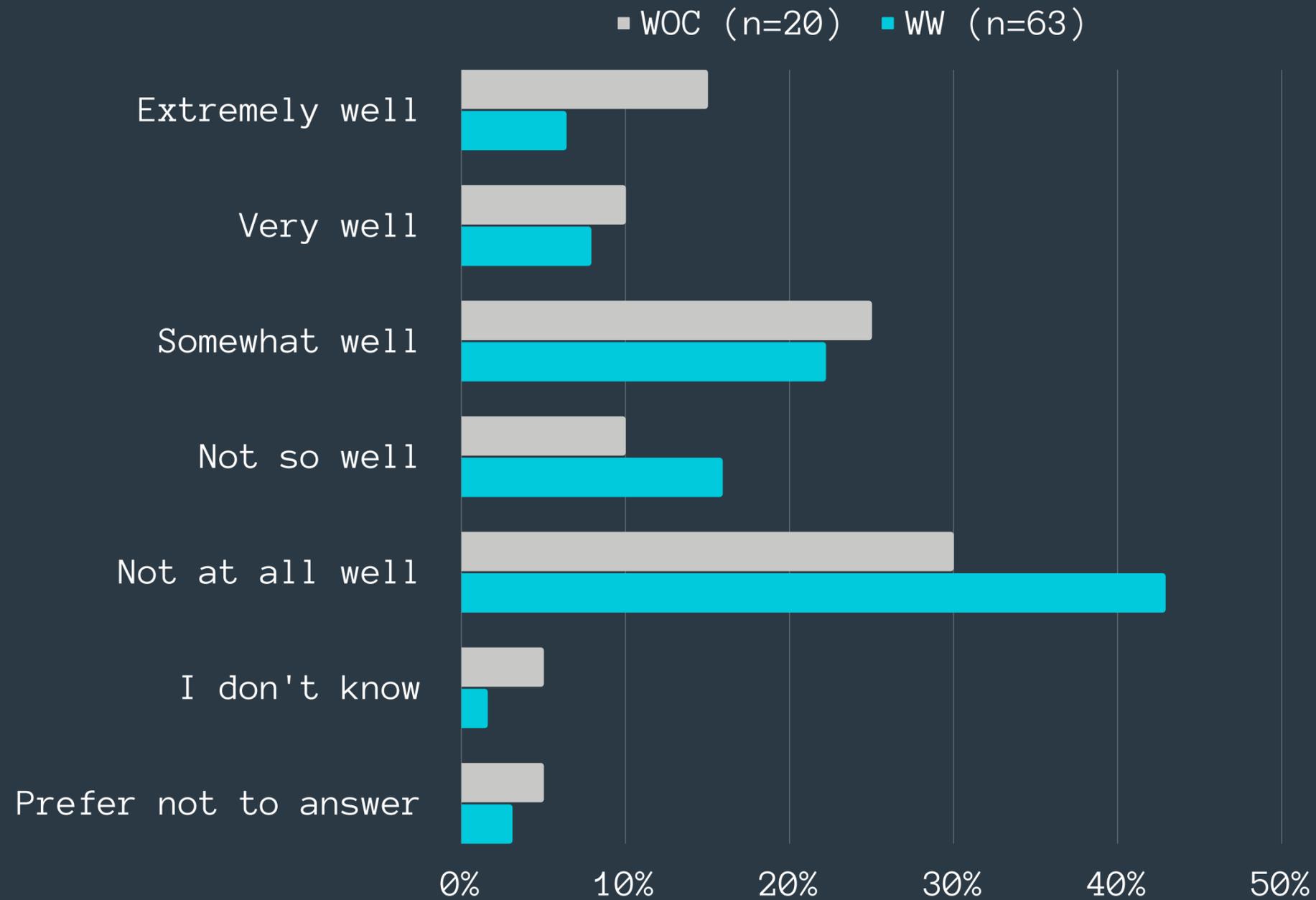
36

**How well do you feel your
report(s) of workplace
harassment were handled?**





37



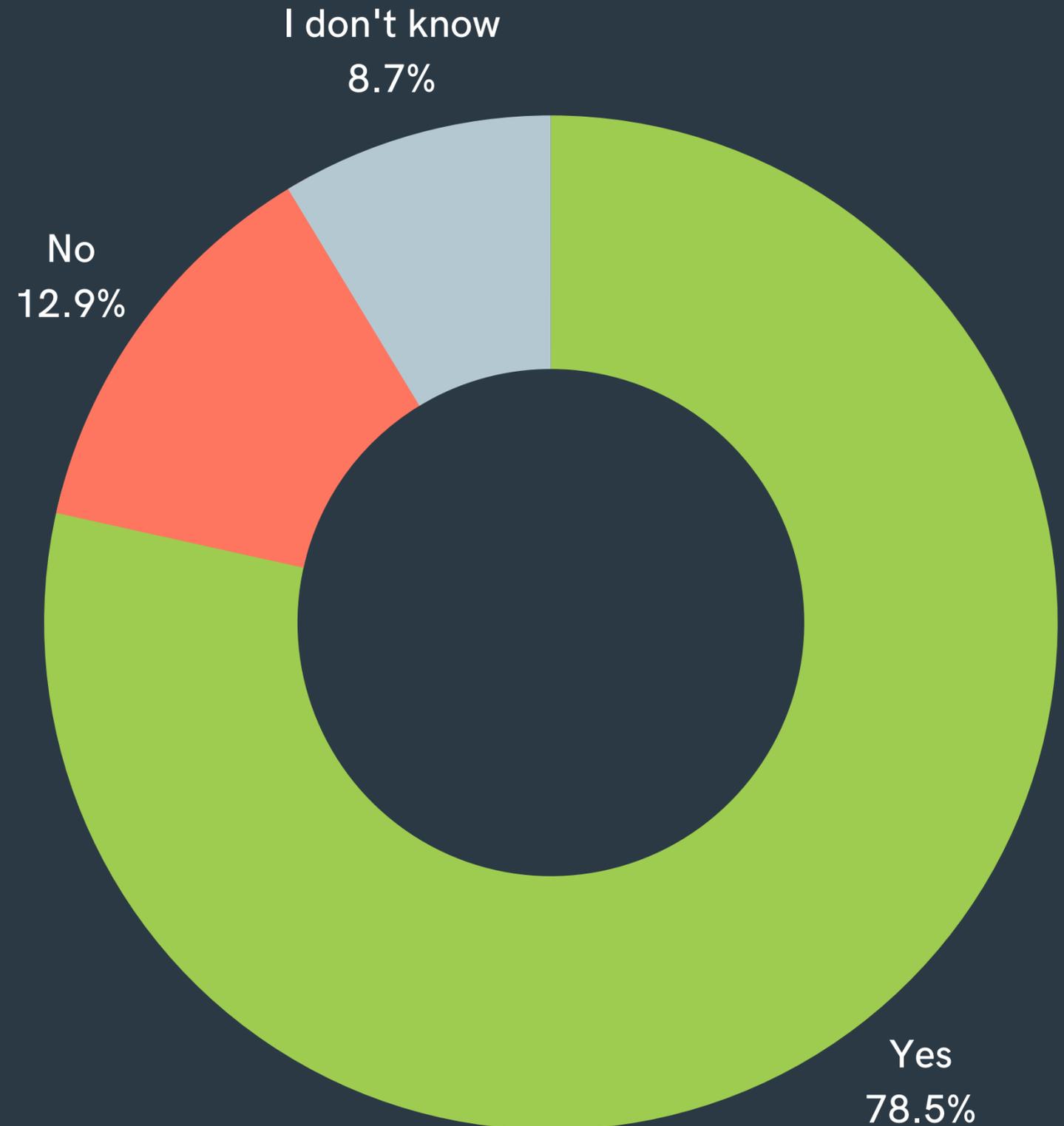
Additionally, 45% of Women of Color and 41% of white women **experienced retaliation** after reporting workplace harassment.

DEI Initiatives

38

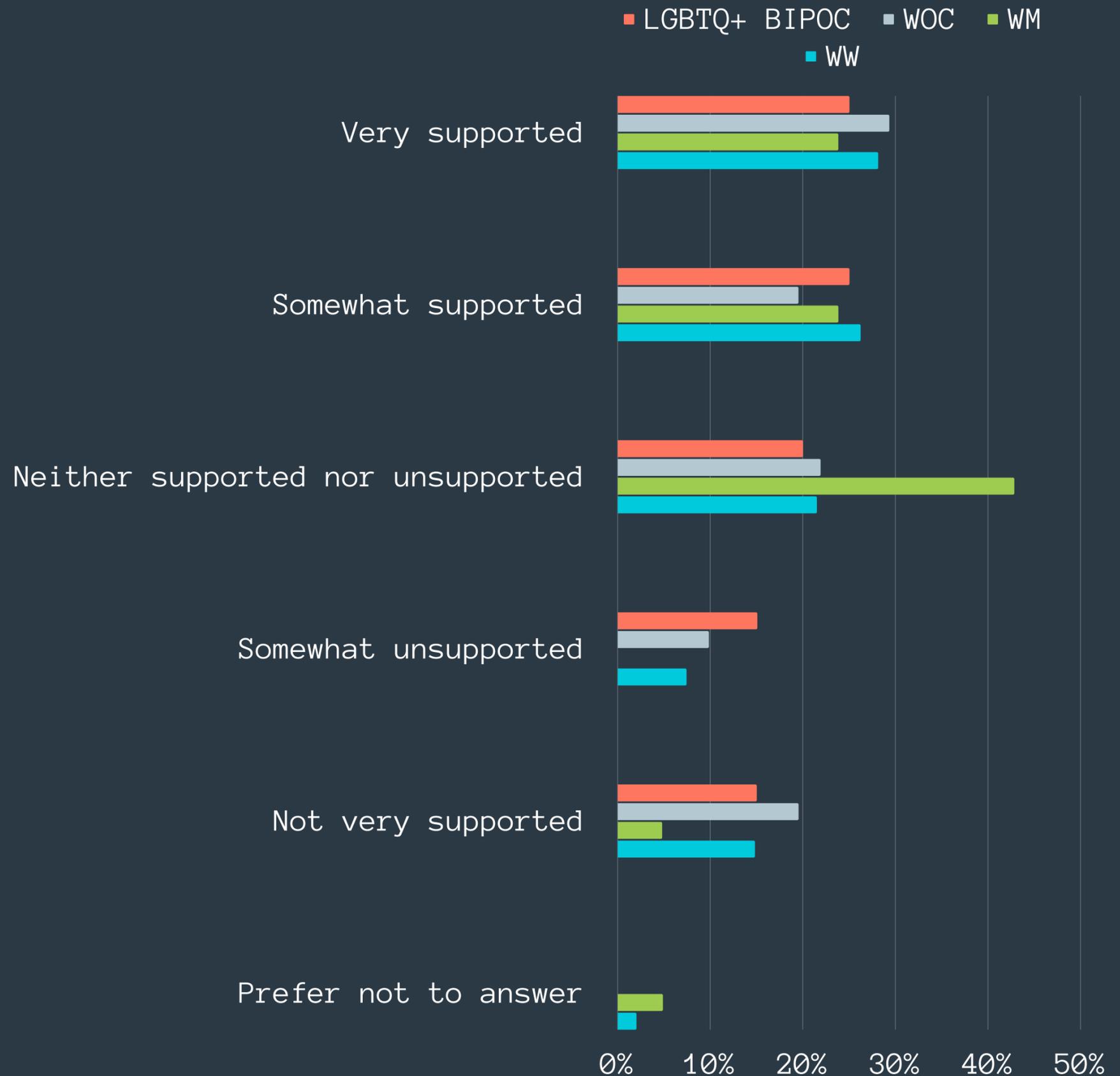
78.5%

Were in companies that had a DEI program (n=288).





How supported did workers feel about their workplace's DEI initiatives?





40

**Would you recommend someone
from a marginalized group in
tech to work at your company?**



41

76.2%

Yes

6.3%

No



42

Centering BIPOC LGBTQ+ Perspectives

78.3%

Yes

4.4%

No

“[Yes] because this corporate world is bullsh*t **but I want my community to get closer to financial stability so more people can go from survival to living and healing.** Tech allows a path that previously wasn’t marketed to us, and still isn’t fully.”

We’re going to get exploited. We’re going to be overworked. We’re going to continue experiencing sh*t even within DEI “leaders” or companies that have “diversity.” As if I didn’t experience some of the worst racial, cultural, sexist etc aggressions towards me while at a very well known “dei aware” pdx tech company. So if an opportunity arises that someone can take advantage of, I just make sure to be clear about environment and importance of **setting boundaries and putting ourselves first.**

So yes, come work here, but first I’m going to tell you the truth and you can decide if the value you hope to get from it is worth trying it out.”

The Great Resignation

- Nearly one third of survey respondents participated in the Great Resignation.
- Of those, nearly 40% were in their early tech careers (1-5 years).
- Those who left their previous jobs were seeking better advancement opportunities, pay, and benefits.



27%
of respondents
participated in
the Great
Resignation.
(n=305)
Of those...

37%

identified as LGBTQ+

39%

were in tech for five
years or less



21%

identified as BIPOC

28%

were between the
ages of 25 and 34

65%

were in individual
contributor roles
(i.e., non-leadership)



Top 3 reasons for leaving their jobs

45

79%

cited having **no opportunities for advancement** as a minor or major reason for leaving their previous job (n=81)

74%

cited **low base pay** (before benefits) as a minor or major reason for leaving their previous job (n=81)

47%

cited having **subpar benefits** as a minor or major reason for leaving their previous job (n=81)

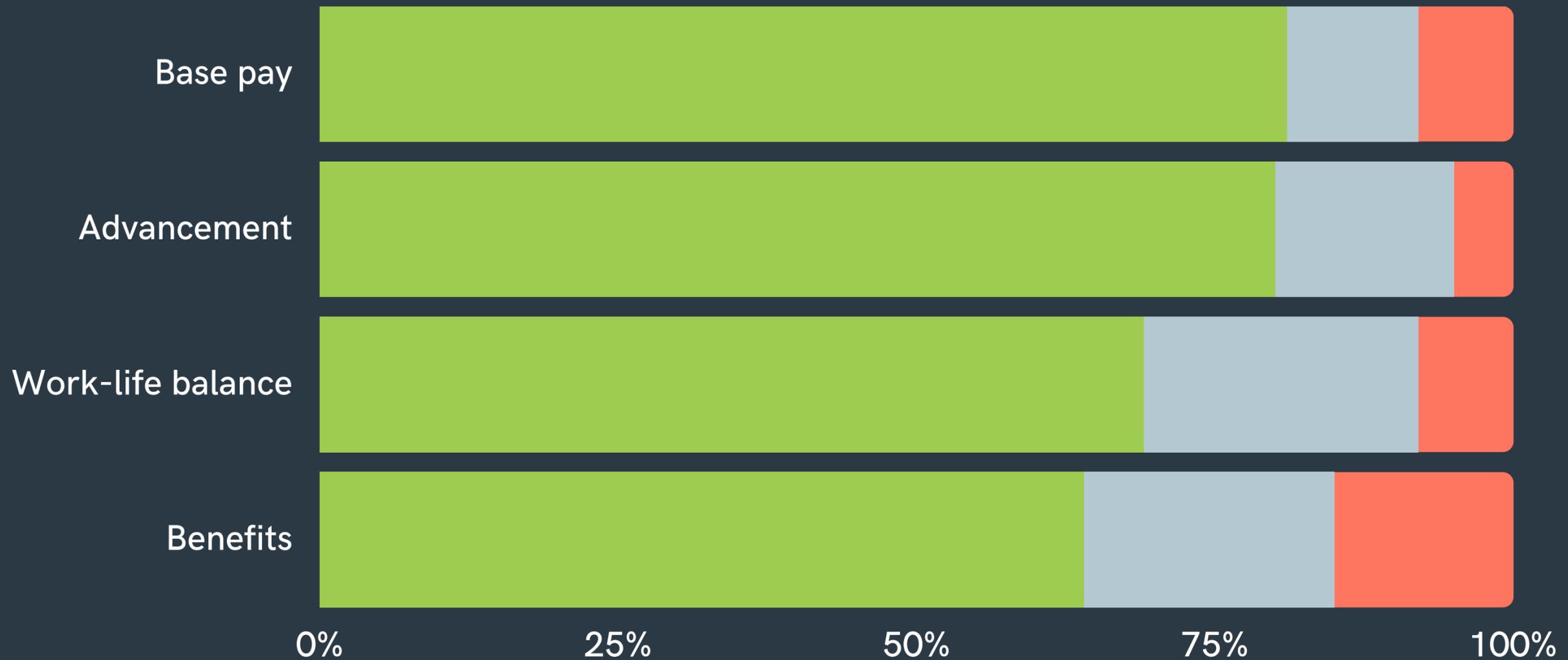
Additionally, 27% reported that a reason for leaving was also related to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Outcomes for participants of the Great Resignation

46

■ Improved ■ No change ■ Worsened



(N = 81)



In their words

What would you tell your previous employer if you had the chance?

"I want them to know that they lost a very hard dedicated worker, due to their neglect to people of color and women, especially mothers."

"...your mission statement really has to be lived internally to continue to have buy-in from your employees."

"...how come there aren't as many efforts made in talent retention?"

"...pay equity and pay transparency [are] coming now...you want to be ahead of the curve."

"Stop having all these meetings just to be having meetings."

"I'd love to tell my previous employer to just do better and to actually care about retaining its employees and collect feedback."



Our Recommendations

For managers & the C-suite

- Invest in employee retention
- Utilize peer mentoring programs in the workplace and/or work with organizations like PDXWIT that have established mentoring programs
- Create psychologically safe and culturally responsive workplace environments (including but not limited to ERGs, affinity spaces, etc.)



Our Recommendations

For tech workers

- Communicate with your colleagues to support transparency
- Join networks and seek support from peers and mentors
- When job seeking, research a prospective company's culture



STATE OF THE COMMUNITY REPORT

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Connect with Us

PDXWIT is a 501c3 nonprofit on a mission to build a better tech industry.

 hello@pdxwit.org

 <https://linktr.ee/pdxwit> 

