

A STUDY BY
MUCK RACK

STATE OF
**PR AND
JOURNALISM**

SALARIES 2023



How much do PR and journalism professionals make?

It's a question many in the industry has asked themselves at some point. This report aims to answer that question and more.

Executive summary

PR pros

- The typical salary for PR professionals is **\$85,000**. At brands, it is **\$107,000** and at agencies it is **\$80,000**. This aligns with data from the [Census Bureau collected by Data USA](#), which places PR salaries at **\$84,737**.
- **57%** of PR pros report working more than 40 hours a week, and nearly **80%** of people report working after hours at least once a week.
- Generally, at agencies, the more senior the position, the more likely men are to hold the role.

Journalists

- The typical journalist salary is in the **\$40,000–\$70,000** range. Freelancers are more likely to earn less than full-time staff journalists.
- There is not a strong relationship between tenure and pay in journalism. Salaries only increase slightly with more years of experience.
- Only **17%** of journalists earn **\$100,000** or more, compared to **36%** of PR pros.



PR pro salaries

Salaries in the PR and communications industry cover a wide range. During our State of PR survey, some people said they made less than **\$40,000** while other reported salaries in excess of **\$1 million**. There are a lot of reasons why compensation varies. Some are more obvious, like job title, but others are less apparent. PR pros at brands are the highest paid.

Brands (Fig. 1)

\$107,000

Agencies (Fig. 2)

\$80,000

Brands

With a typical salary of more than **\$100,000**, PR pros at brands are making more than their agency counterparts.

Compared to last year, there are fewer PR pros at brands are getting paid under **\$40,000** and more are in the **\$40,000–\$70,000** range.

Salaries for PR pros at brands

Typical Salary: \$107,000

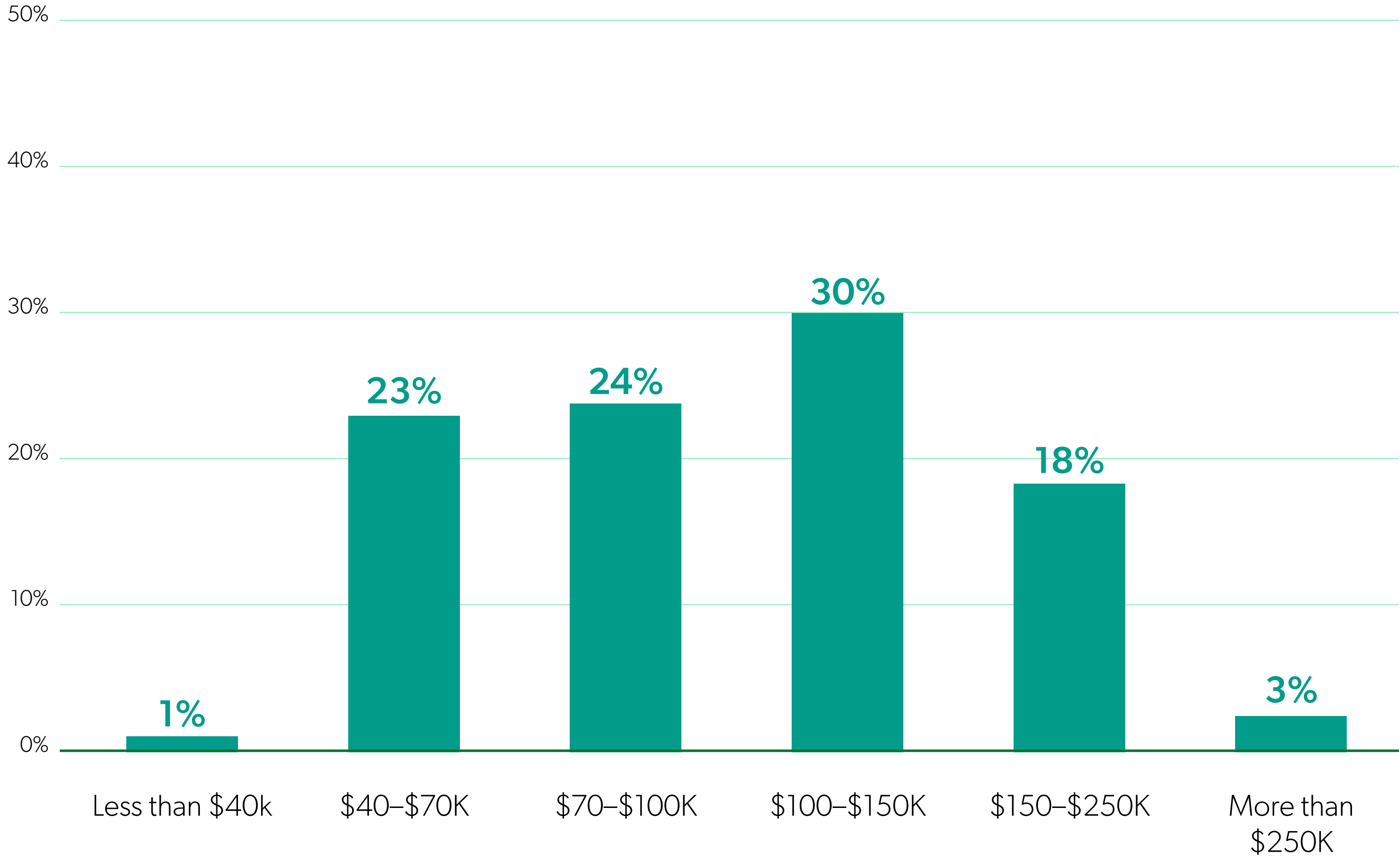


Fig. 1

Agencies

Part of the reason the typical agency salary is more than **\$20,000** less than at brands could be because there are simply more roles across different functions.

A small brand team could have only one or two roles for people with limited experience, while large agencies might have dozens.

But there was a notable increase of **12%** in the number of people earning **\$40,000–\$70,000** and **15%** in those earning **\$70,000–\$100,000** compared to last year.

Salaries for PR pros at agencies

Typical Salary: \$80,000

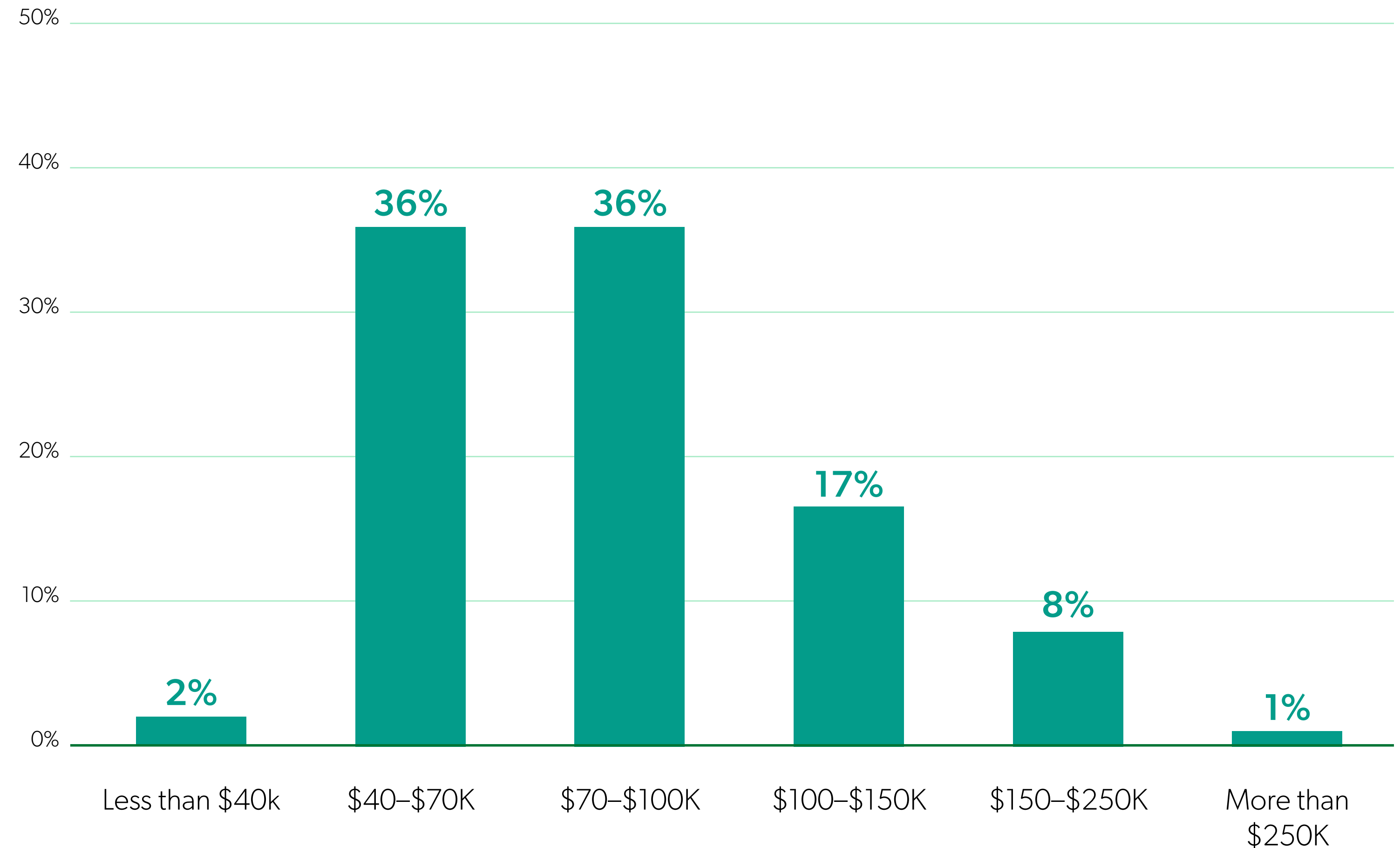


Fig. 2

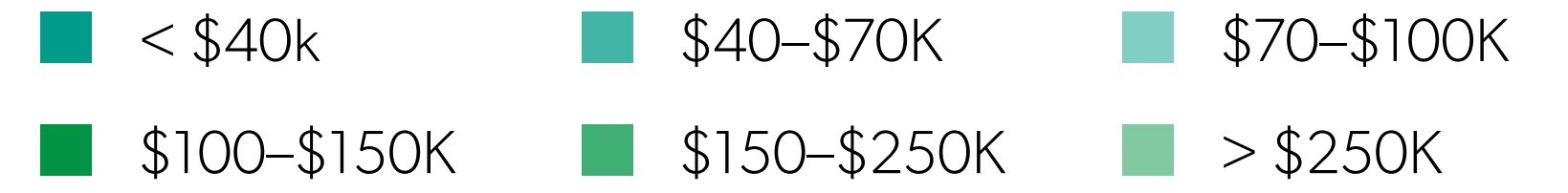
Job titles

Seniority has the strongest correlation to a higher salary. People in the C-suite are more likely to make more than **\$150,000** than any other job title (*Fig. 3*). This trend continues as expected with less senior positions earning lower salaries.

Director-level employees had the broadest range of possible salaries. Although the typical salary for that role is **\$120,000**, a director is only a little more likely to make **\$70,000** as they are to make **\$250,000** (*Fig. 4*).

Meanwhile, coordinator-level salaries are firmly entrenched in the **\$40,000–\$70,000** range with about **68%** reporting in this range (*Fig. 6*).





Salaries for C-suite (CCO, CMO, EVP, SVP, CEO) employees

Typical Salary: \$150,000



Fig. 3

Salaries for Director (VP or Director) employees

Typical Salary: \$120,000



Fig. 4

Salaries for Manager (Manager or account supervisor) employees

Typical Salary: \$87,000



Fig. 5

Salaries for Coordinator (Coordinator, specialist, associate or account executive) employees

Typical Salary: \$63,000



Fig. 6

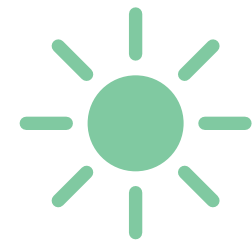


Hours worked

The hours worked and the amount of days someone works after hours do not have a strong impact on salary, but that hasn't stopped PR pros from putting in the work. Overall, **57%** of people reported working more than 40 hours a week. And nearly **80%** of people reported working after hours at least once a week.

Director-level employees were most likely to say they work more than 41 hours a week (*Fig. 9*) while coordinators were most likely to keep it under 40 hours (*Fig. 13*). It is a toss up between directors and CEOs on who works after hours most often (*Fig. 8 & 10*).

Remember: our survey data is **self-reported**. It's hard for someone to remember exactly how many hours they worked last week, and even more difficult to figure out an average in their head. So, people guess instead. We did our best to correct for this in the survey design, but keep it in mind when you see the charts saying some CEOs work more than 51 hours a week (*Fig. 7*).



Hours worked per week for C-suite (CCO, CMO, EVP, SVP, CEO) employees

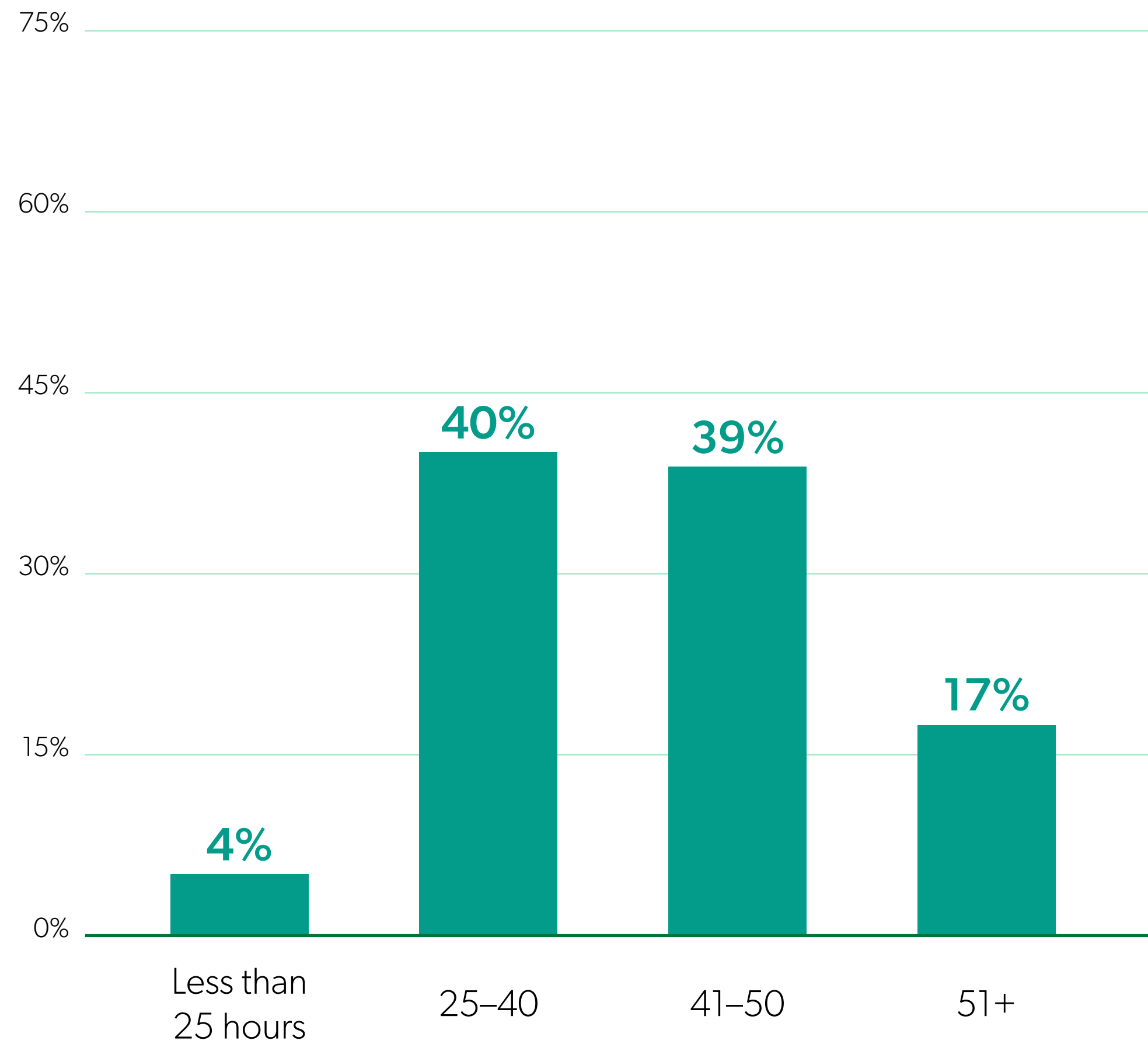


Fig. 7



Frequency of after hours work for C-suite (CCO, CMO, EVP, SVP, CEO) employees

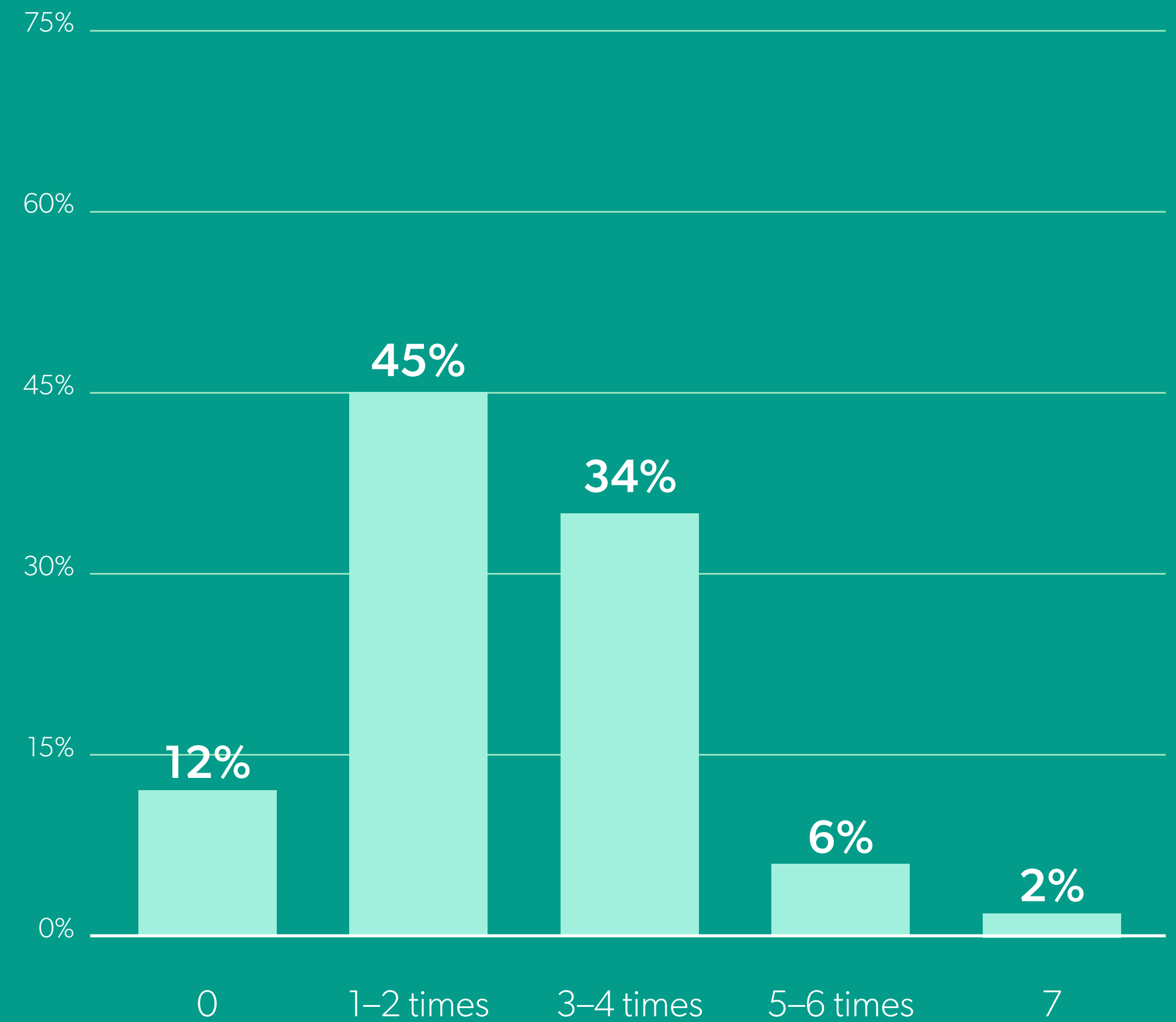
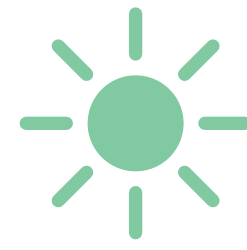


Fig. 8



Hours worked per week for directors (VP or Director)

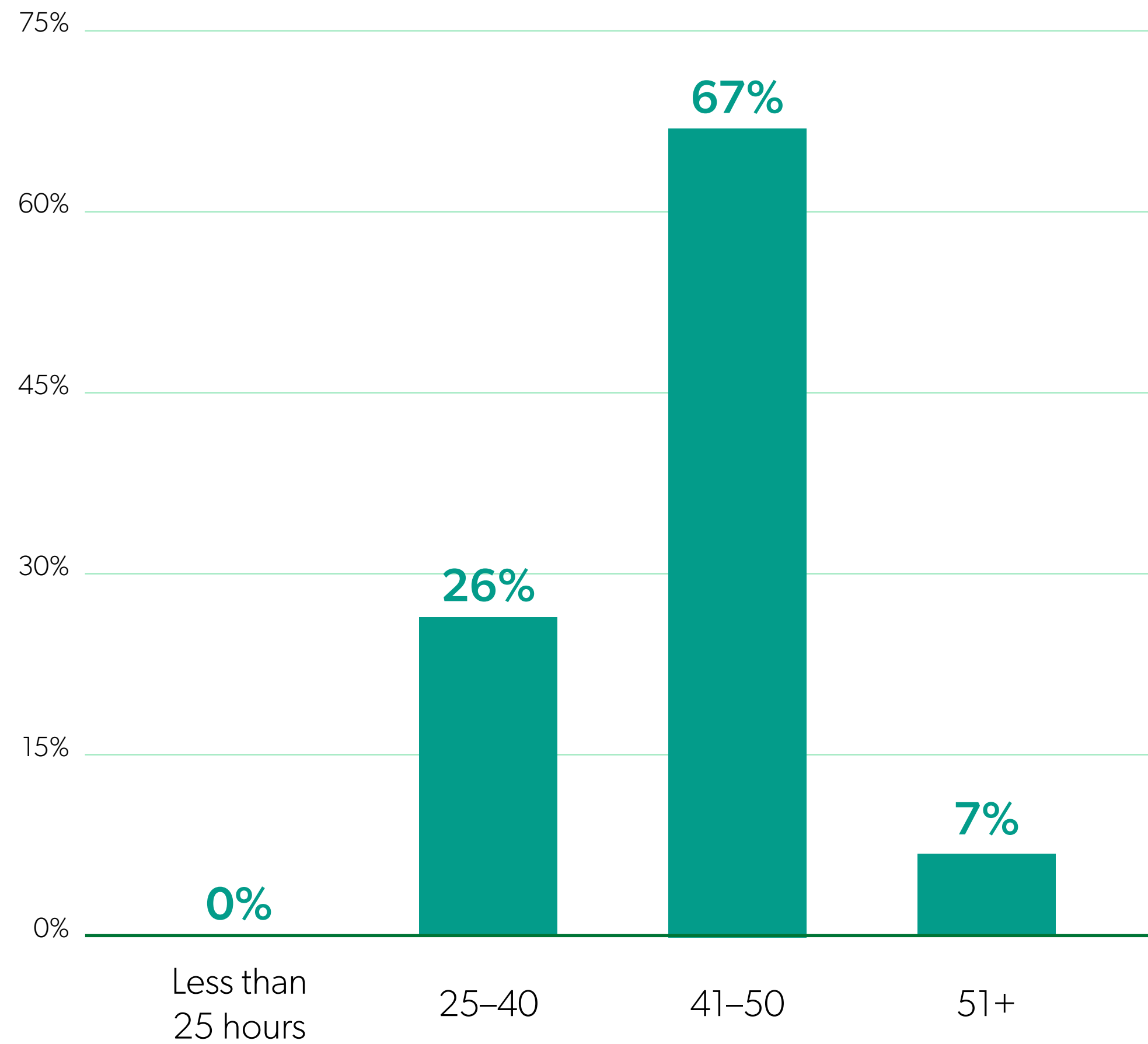


Fig. 9



Frequency of after hours work for directors (VP or Director)

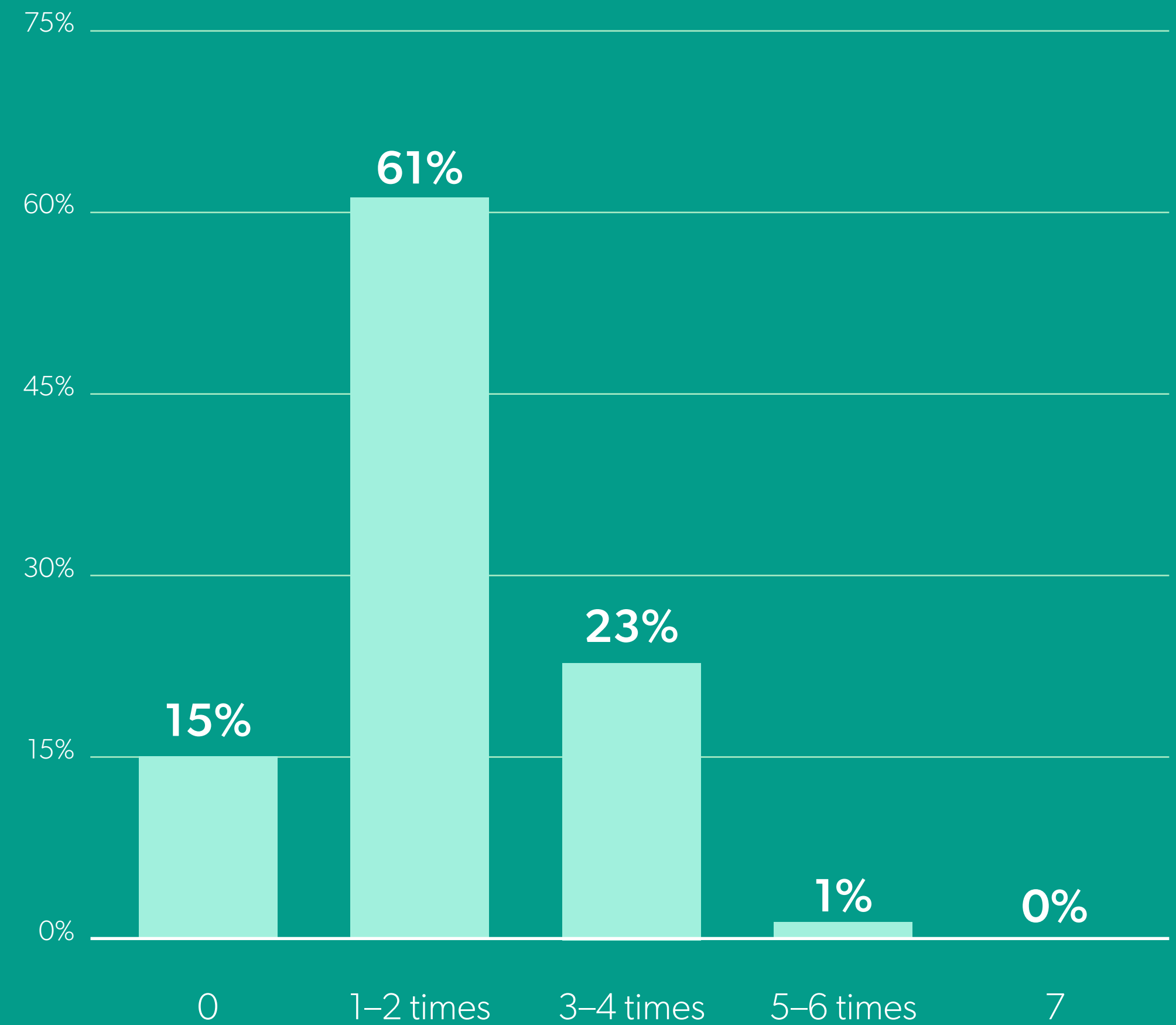
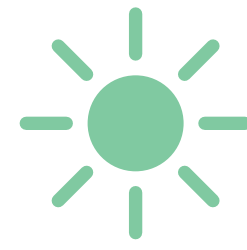


Fig. 10



Hours worked per week for managers (Manager or account supervisor)

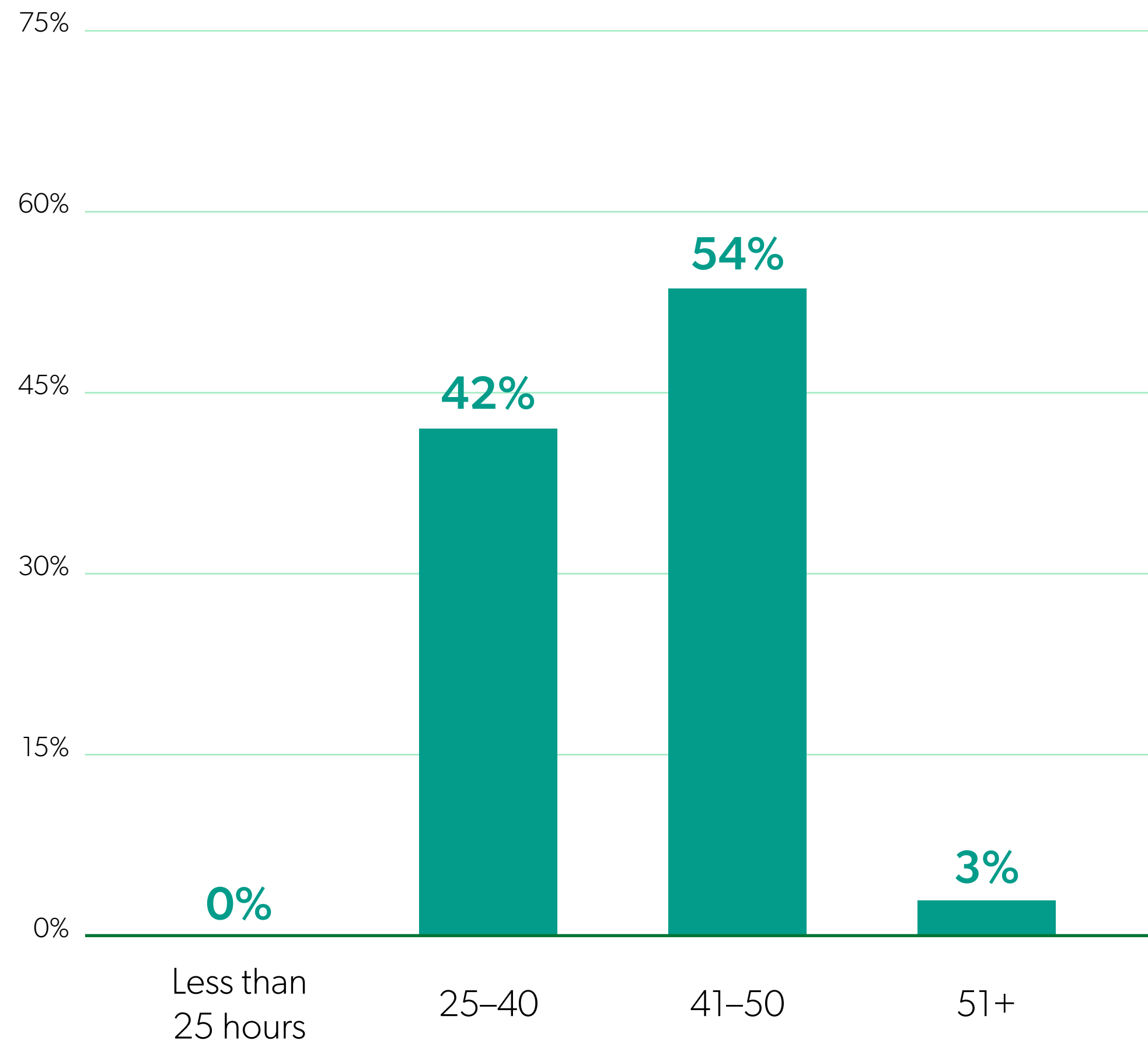


Fig. 11



Frequency of after hours work for managers (Manager or account supervisor)

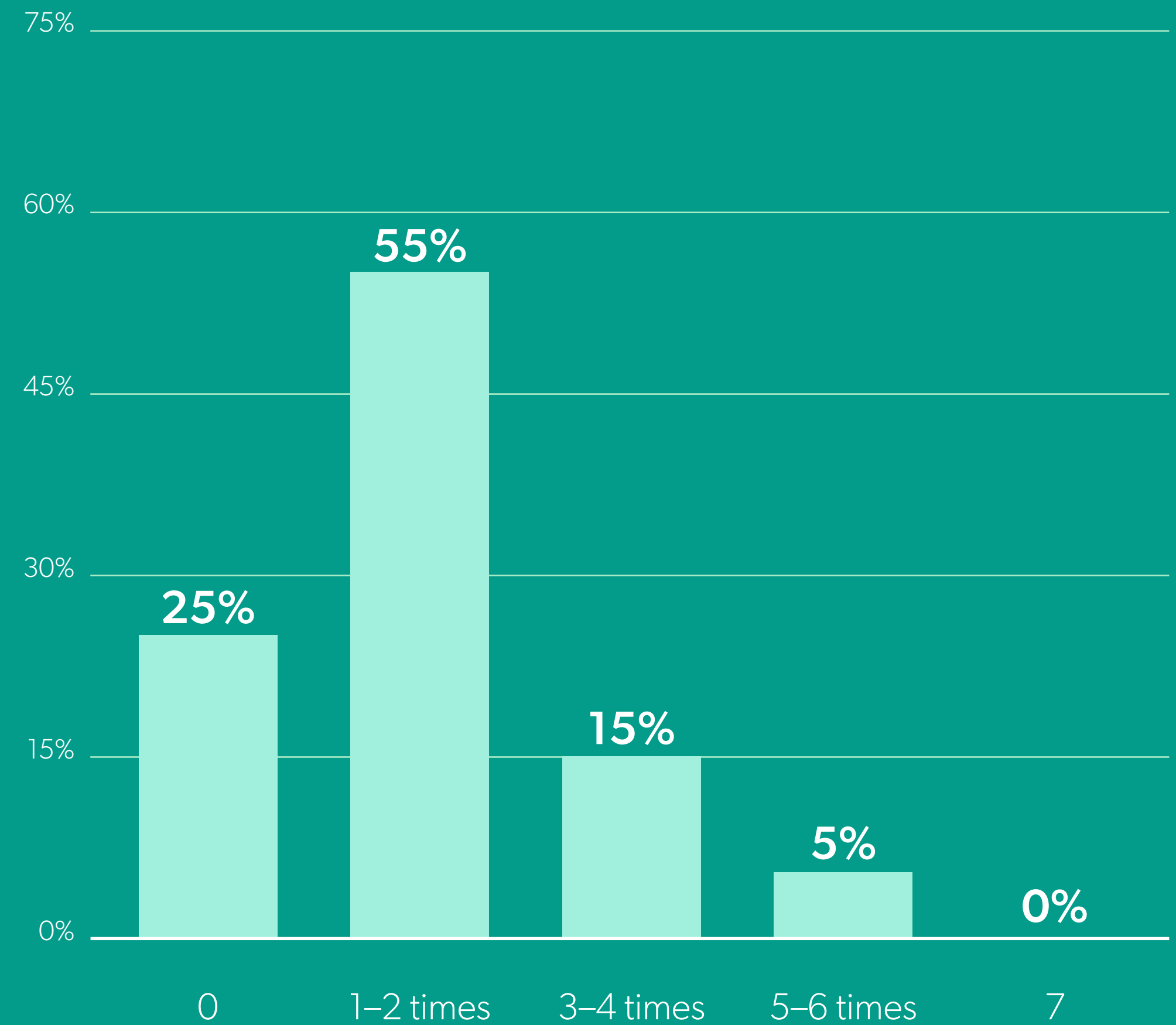
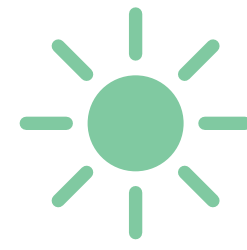


Fig. 12



Hours worked per week for coordinators (Coordinator, specialist, associate or account executive)

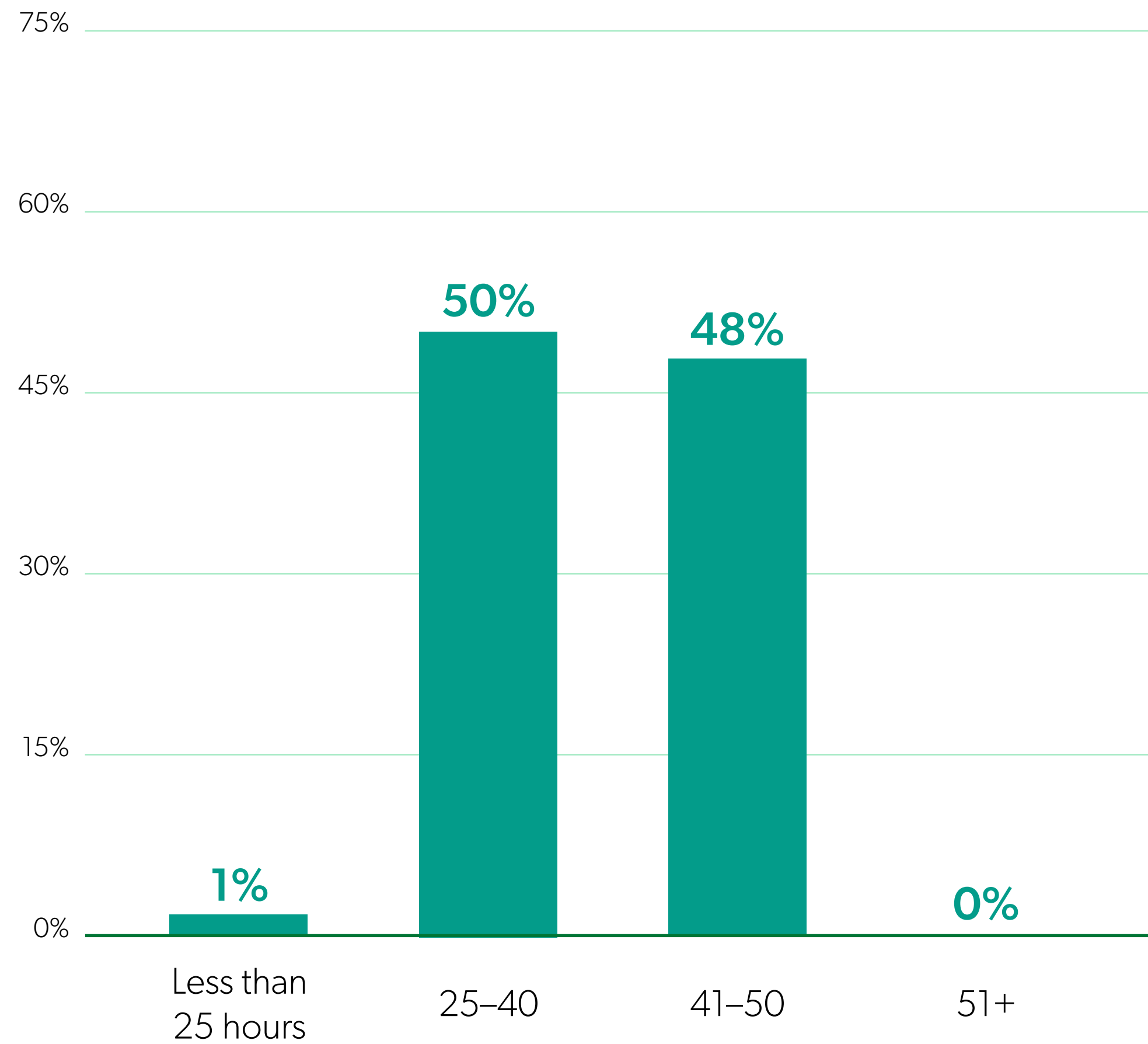


Fig. 13



Frequency of after hours work for coordinators (Coordinator, specialist, associate or account executive)

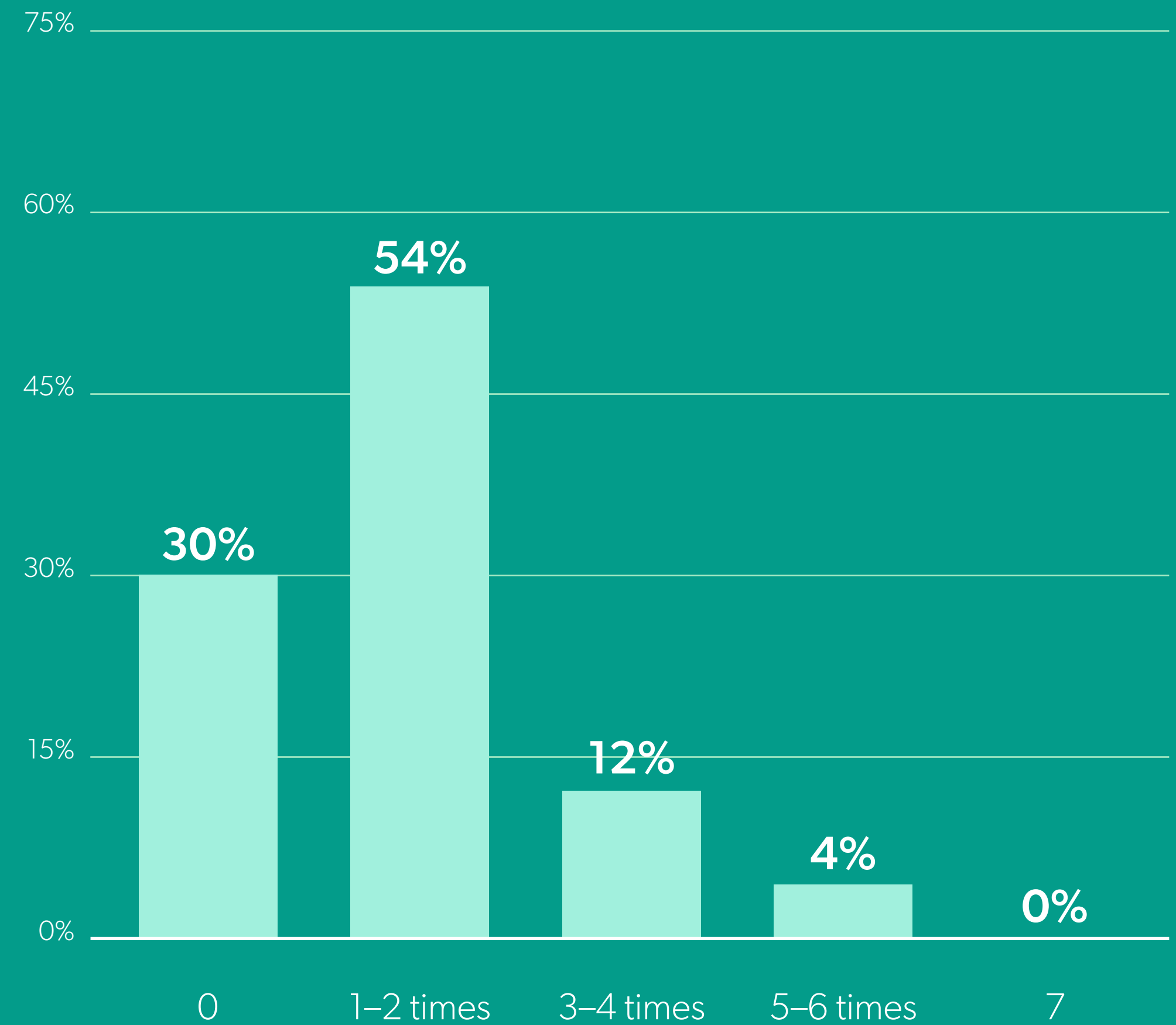


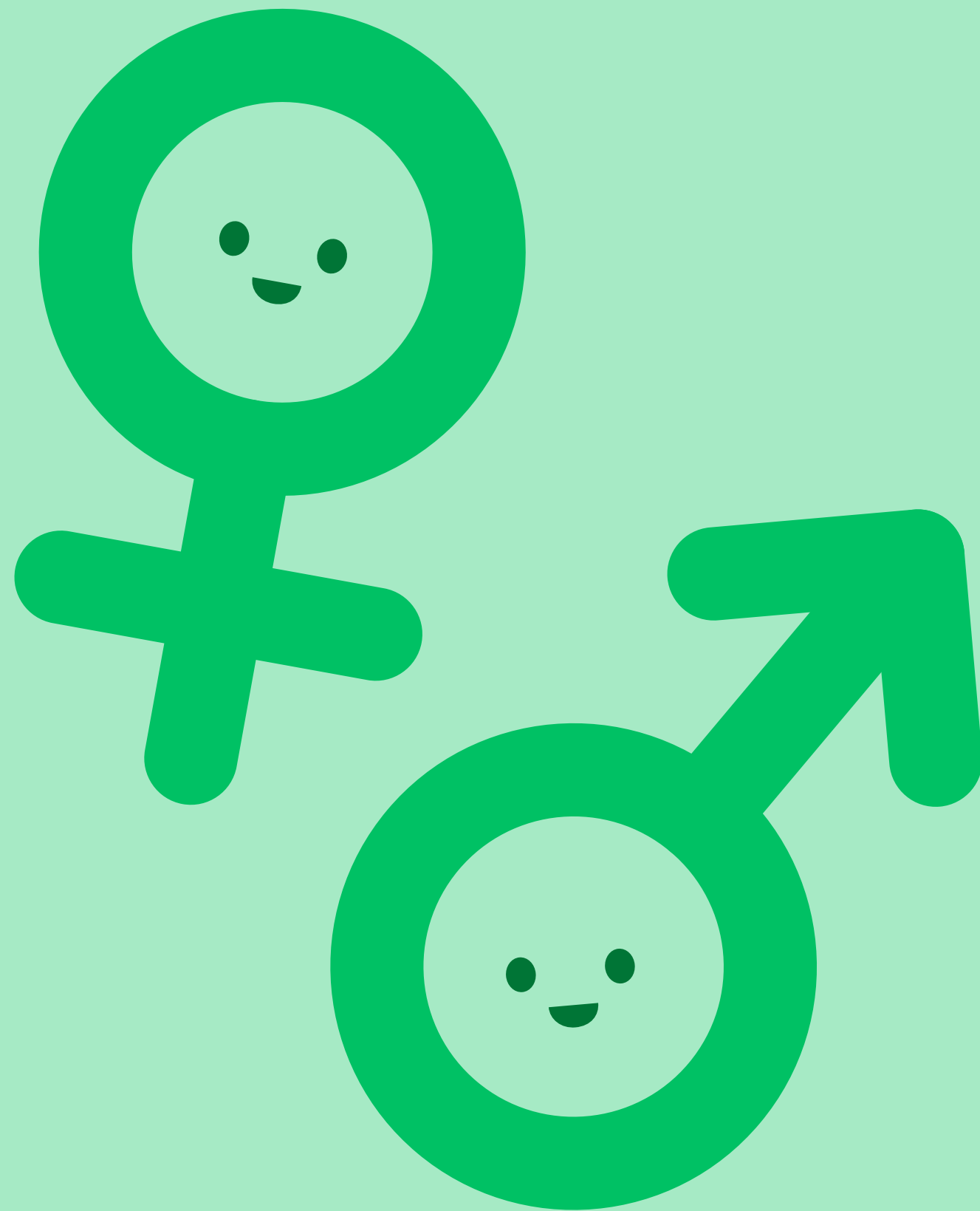
Fig. 14

Gender

We are interested in examining the gender pay gap, but because of our sample size, we did not find concrete evidence of one. To be clear, that doesn't mean there is no gender pay gap, only that there wasn't one we could find in our data. We did however find other interesting insights related to gender.

Looking specifically at agencies, the data shows that as positions become more senior, there is a decline in female representation. Men are underrepresented in lower-level positions including coordinators and managers, but are overrepresented in higher-levels like C-suite. While **65%** of C-suite employees being women seems like a win—and you'd be right—it's important to remember just how skewed the demographics of PR and communications are.

While we did collect data on other genders, we only had enough responses to analyze this information based on two: male and female.



Gender breakdown at agencies

Our gender data for employees at agencies skews from the official data for the PR industry as a whole, but it is similar. According to Census data collected by [DataUSA.io](#) women make up around **65%** of the PR workforce while men make up around **35%**.

The Census Bureau does not collect data on gender outside the traditional gender binary.

Gender breakdown at agencies

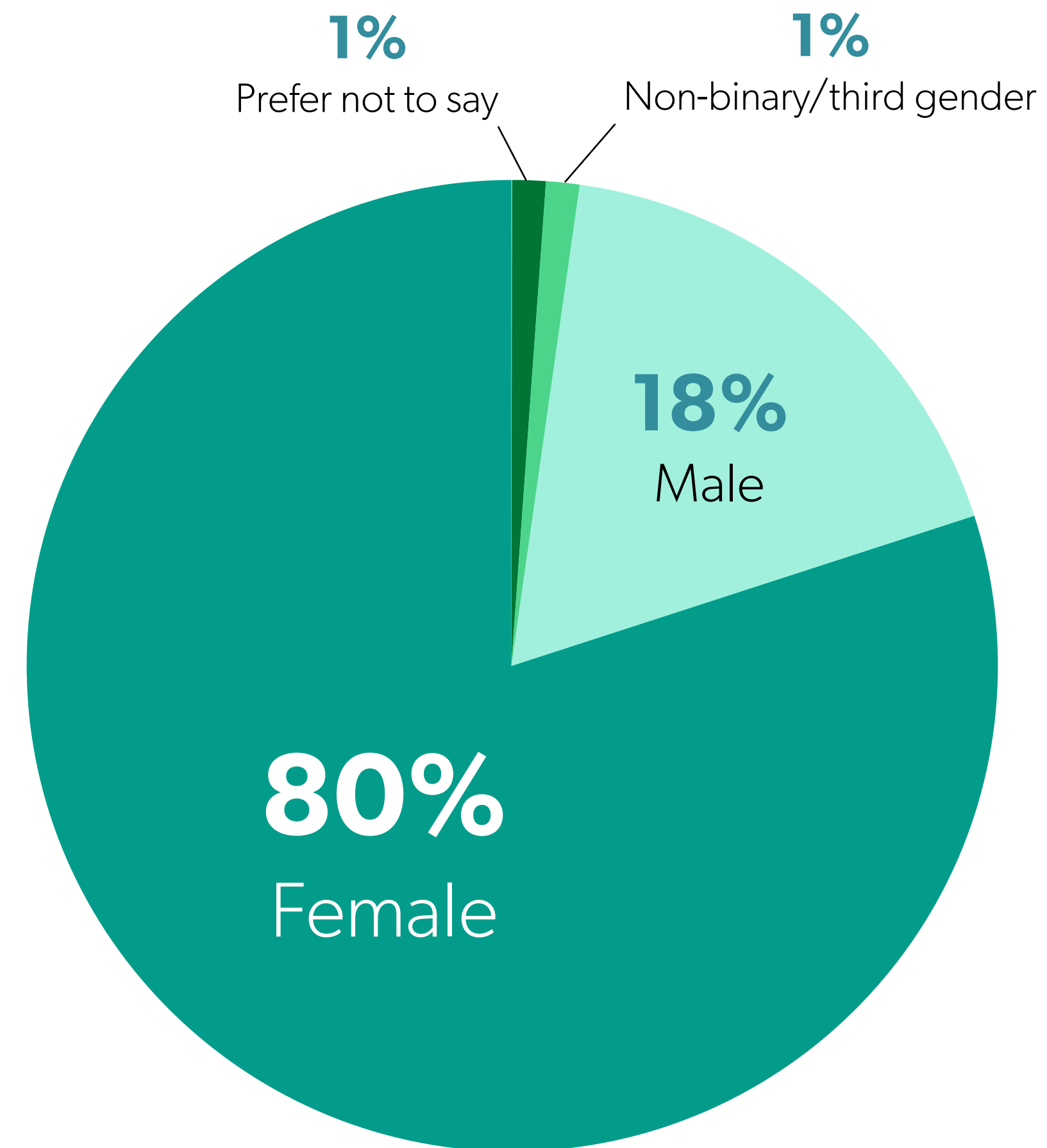


Fig. 15

Gender breakdown by role at agencies

Since our data shows **80%** of PR pros who responded to the survey are women and **18%** are men, we would expect to see a similar distribution of women and men in each of the different positions.

Instead, we see the share of men in each role grow as the jobs become more senior.

To put it another way, the more senior the position, the more likely men are to hold the role.

Gender breakdown by role at agencies

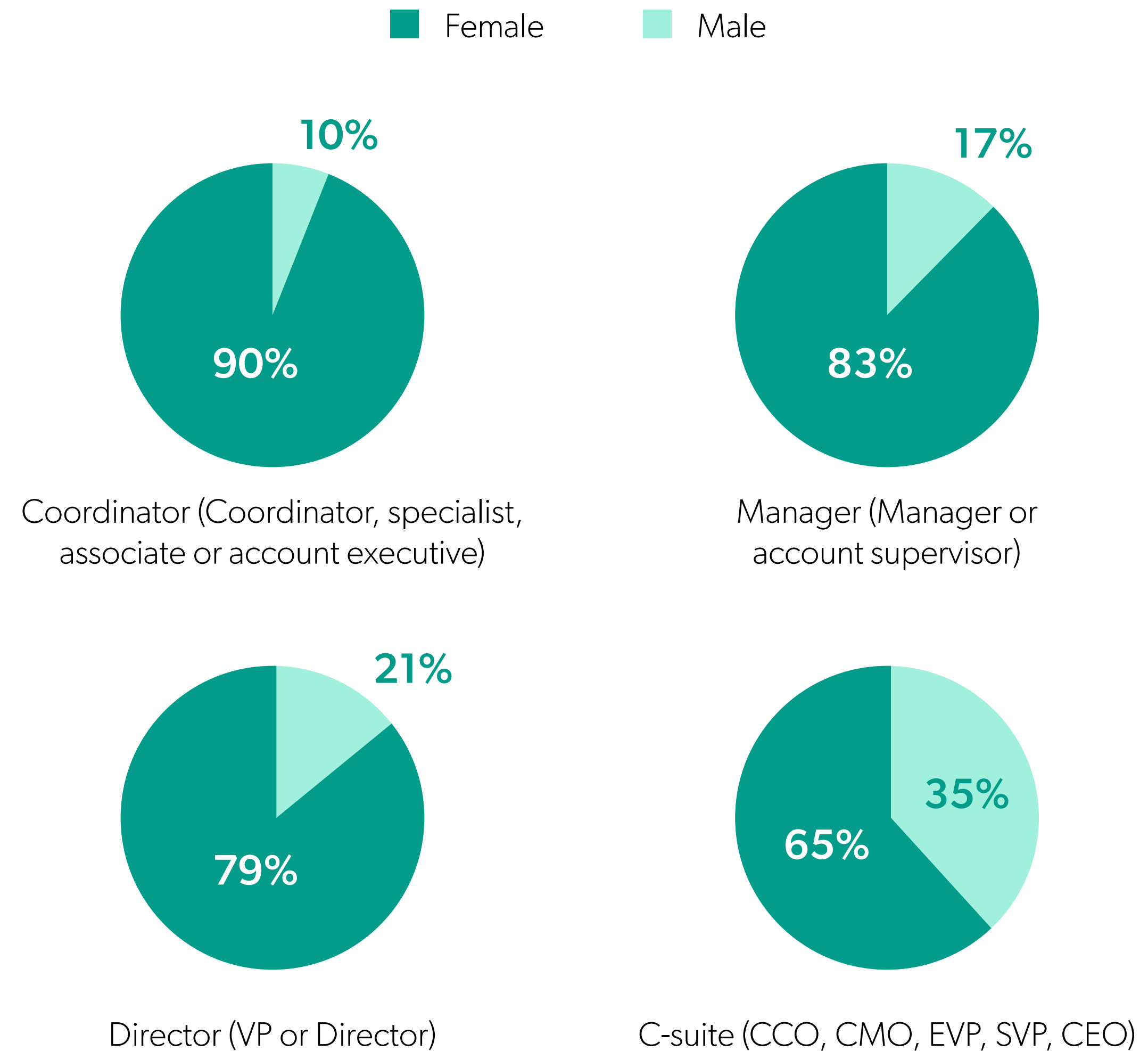


Fig. 16



Journalist salaries

The typical journalist's salary is in the **\$40,000–\$70,000** range (*Fig. 17*). Our data only collected salary ranges from journalists. Interestingly, while the number of people with higher salaries increases as their years of experience increases, this is always the most common salary range. The data shows a certain amount of wage stagnation across the industry across seniority levels.

There is also a low amount of variability across beats. No matter whether journalists cover politics or finance, the average salary stays just about the same.

Additionally, our data shows a distinct lack of higher paying jobs, especially compared to PR. A higher percentage of journalists, **84%**, earn **\$100,000** or less, compared to PR professionals where **65%** are in the same range.

Finally, we found that full-time freelancers are more likely to earn less than **\$40,000** compared to full-time staff journalists (*Fig. 19*). They are also underrepresented in the upper income brackets.

Salaries ranges for journalists

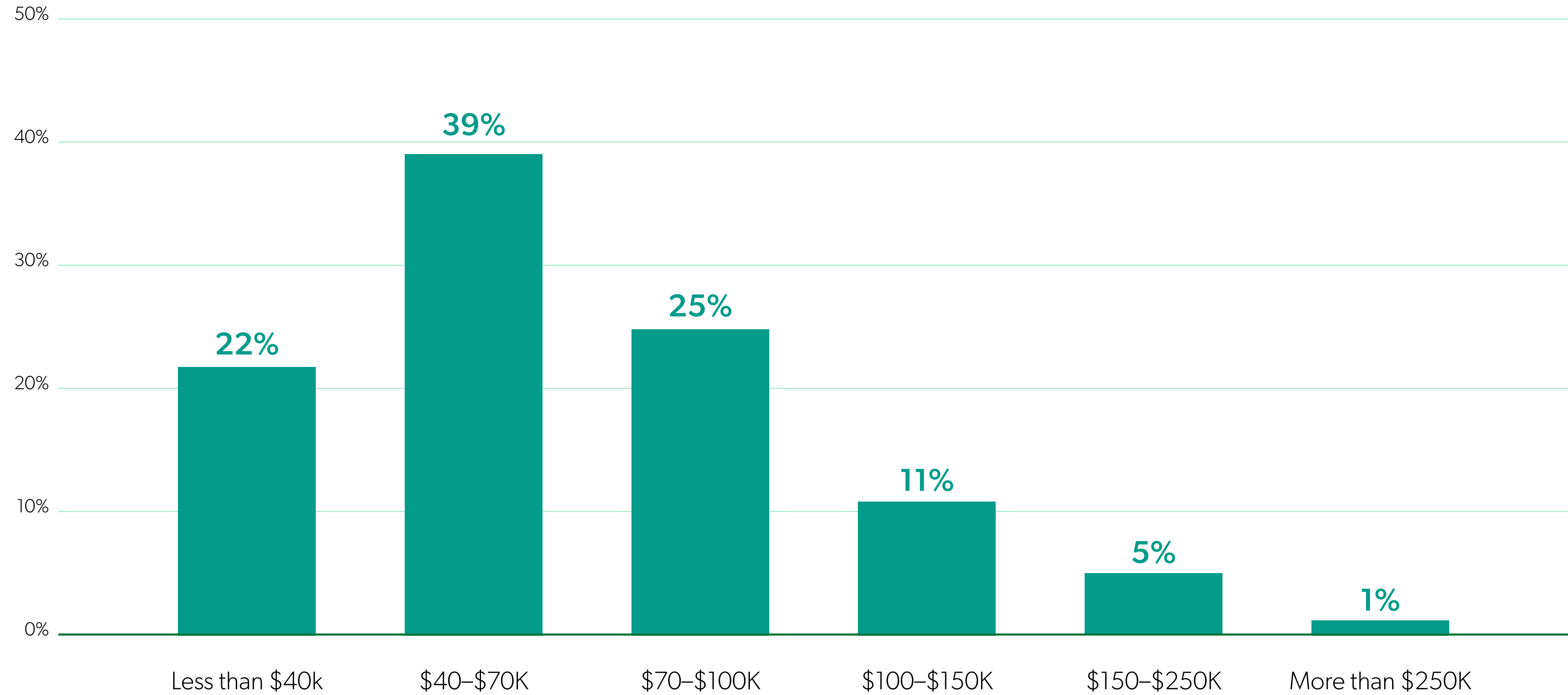


Fig. 17

Freelance journalist yearly earnings



Fig. 18

Full-time staff journalist salaries



Fig. 19

■ Less than \$40k ■ \$40-\$70K ■ \$70-\$100K ■ \$100-\$150K ■ \$150-\$250K ■ More than \$250K

How much do PR and journalist professionals make?

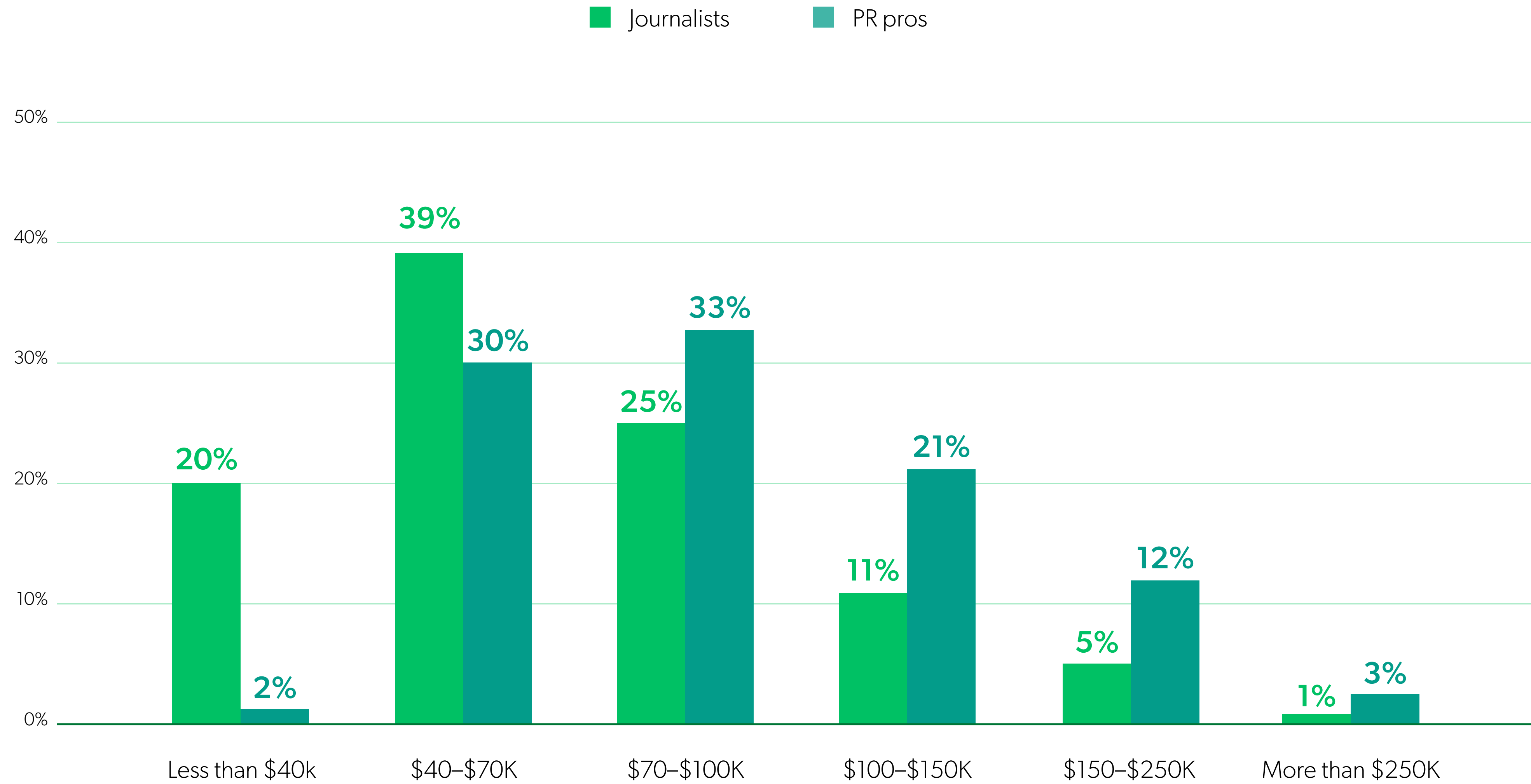


Fig. 20

Methodology

Data for this report came from two surveys. We surveyed 1,034 PR professionals from March 31 to April 25, 2023 for the [State of PR](#) report and 2,226 journalists from January 4 to February 6, 2023 for the [State of Journalism](#) report. Survey responses were sought primarily through email and most respondents came from outreach to Muck Rack's database and email contacts.

Unless specifically mentioned, data only includes full-time workers in permanent positions. Typical salaries are based on the median of each salary range. Typical salary calculations exclude CEO/founders since their pay structure can differ significantly from a regular employee. Salary data is only for U.S.-based respondents. Data was cleaned to remove spam responses, major outliers, identifiable mistakes, and low-effort responses. This left a total of 1,437 journalists and PR professionals. Median was used as the main measure of salary. Other methods were explored, but we found median gave the most reliable results and accounted for outliers in the data.

While we did collect more demographic information from PR professionals, we did not receive enough responses to properly analyze pay gaps across any other dimensions.

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