

# ACEC/Michigan

FUTURE OF ENGINEERING LEADERSHIP  
INDUSTRY SURVEY & FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
*of Michigan*

# AGENDA



Study Overview



Data Insights



Firm Considerations



Association Involvement



Question & Answer

# SURVEY BY THE NUMBERS

**8**

quantitative  
questions

**2**

qualitative  
questions

**407**

responses

**1-30+**

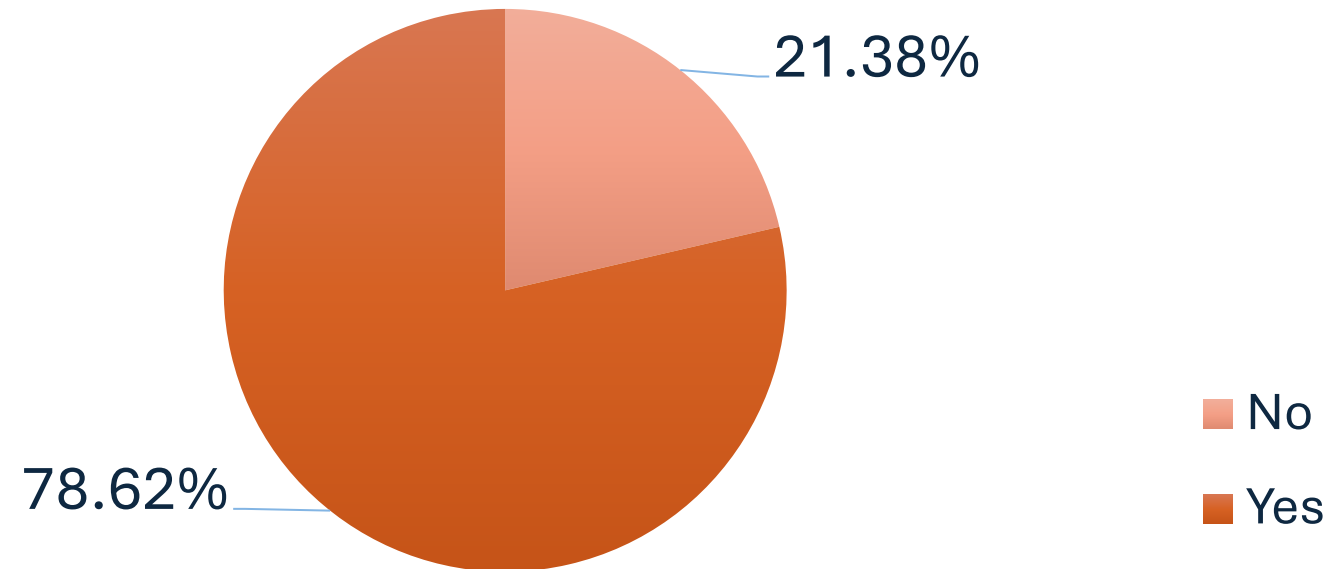
years of tenure

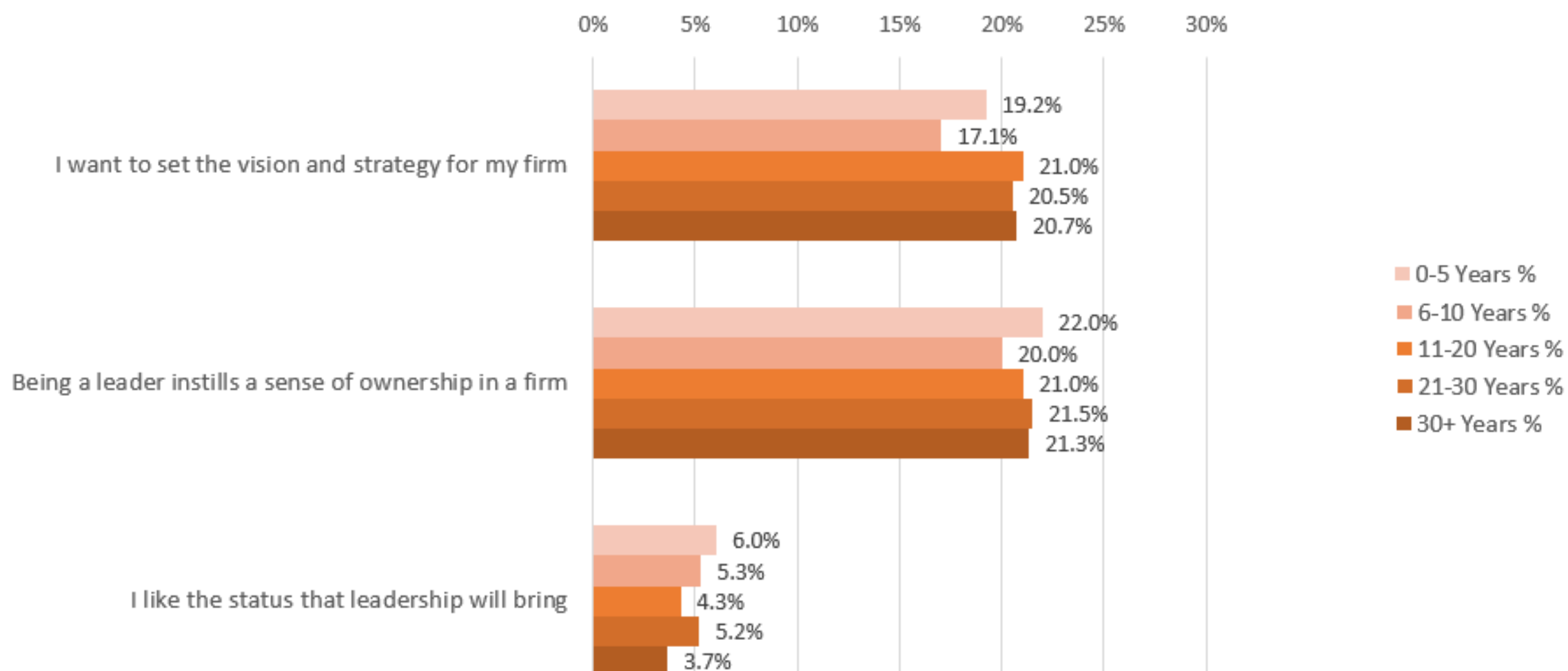
# SURVEY INSIGHT

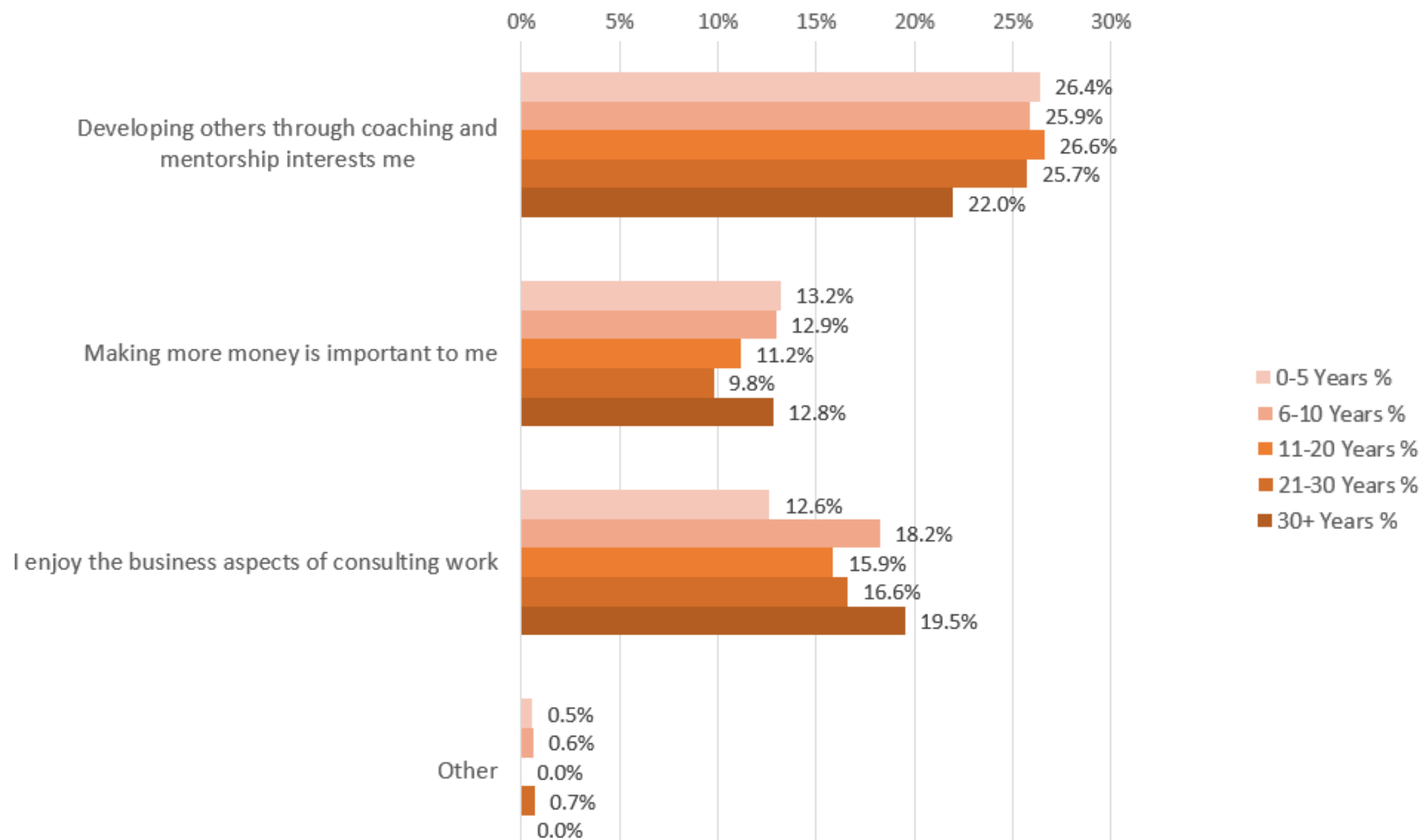


# SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Are you interested in leadership in the consulting industry?







# COMMON “NO” RESPONSES

## 0 – 5

- Lack necessary experience
- Prefer technical work

## 6 – 10

- Work/life balance of greater importance

## 11 – 20

- Time commitment too great
- Desire less stress

## 21 – 30

- Work/life balance of greater importance
- Past age to pursue

## 30 +

- Been there, done that
- Past age to pursue

# SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

What  
matters  
to me in  
a firm is:

Benefits

Building professional relationships

Compensation

Growth opportunities

Flexible work arrangements (ability to work remotely)

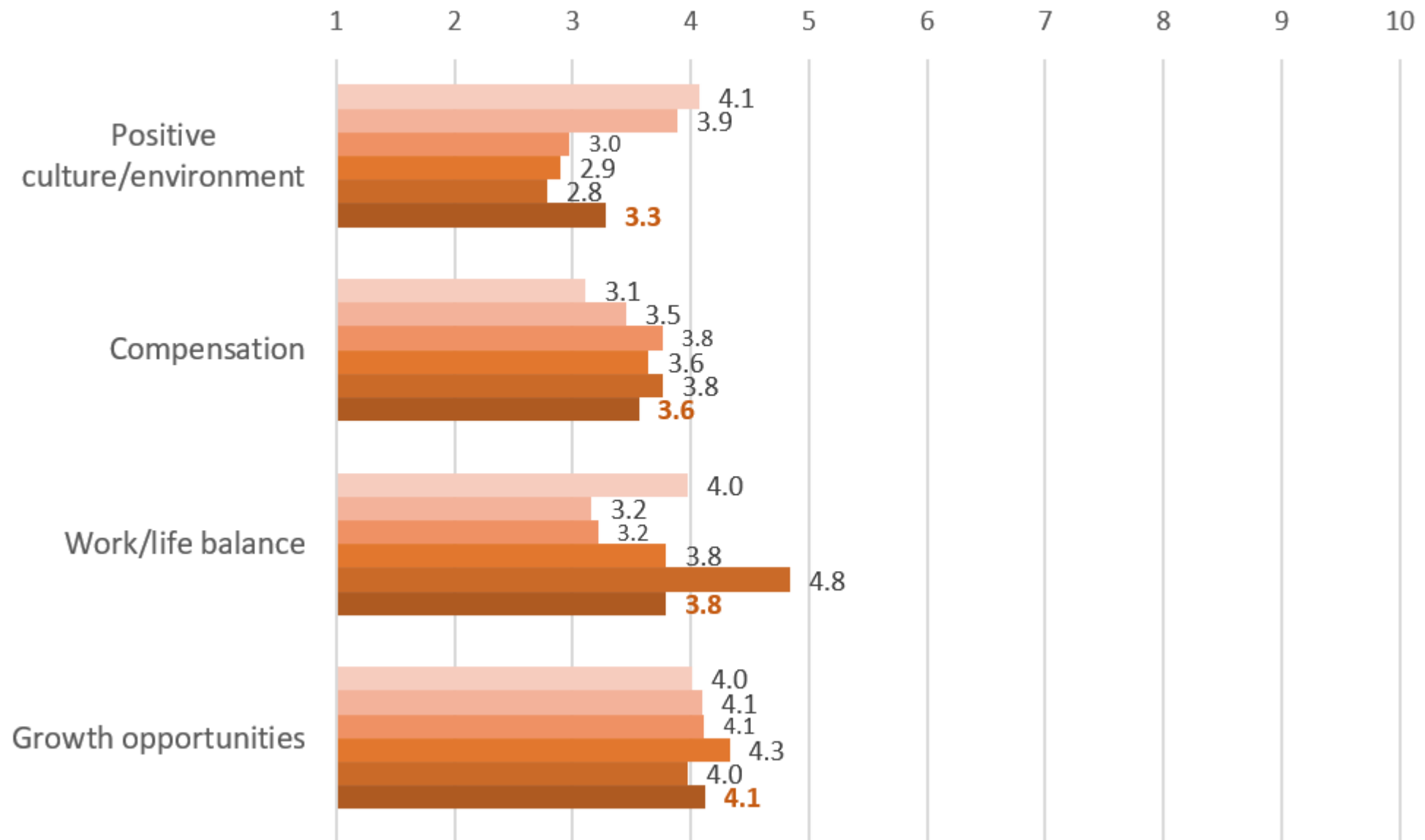
Work/life balance

Paid time off

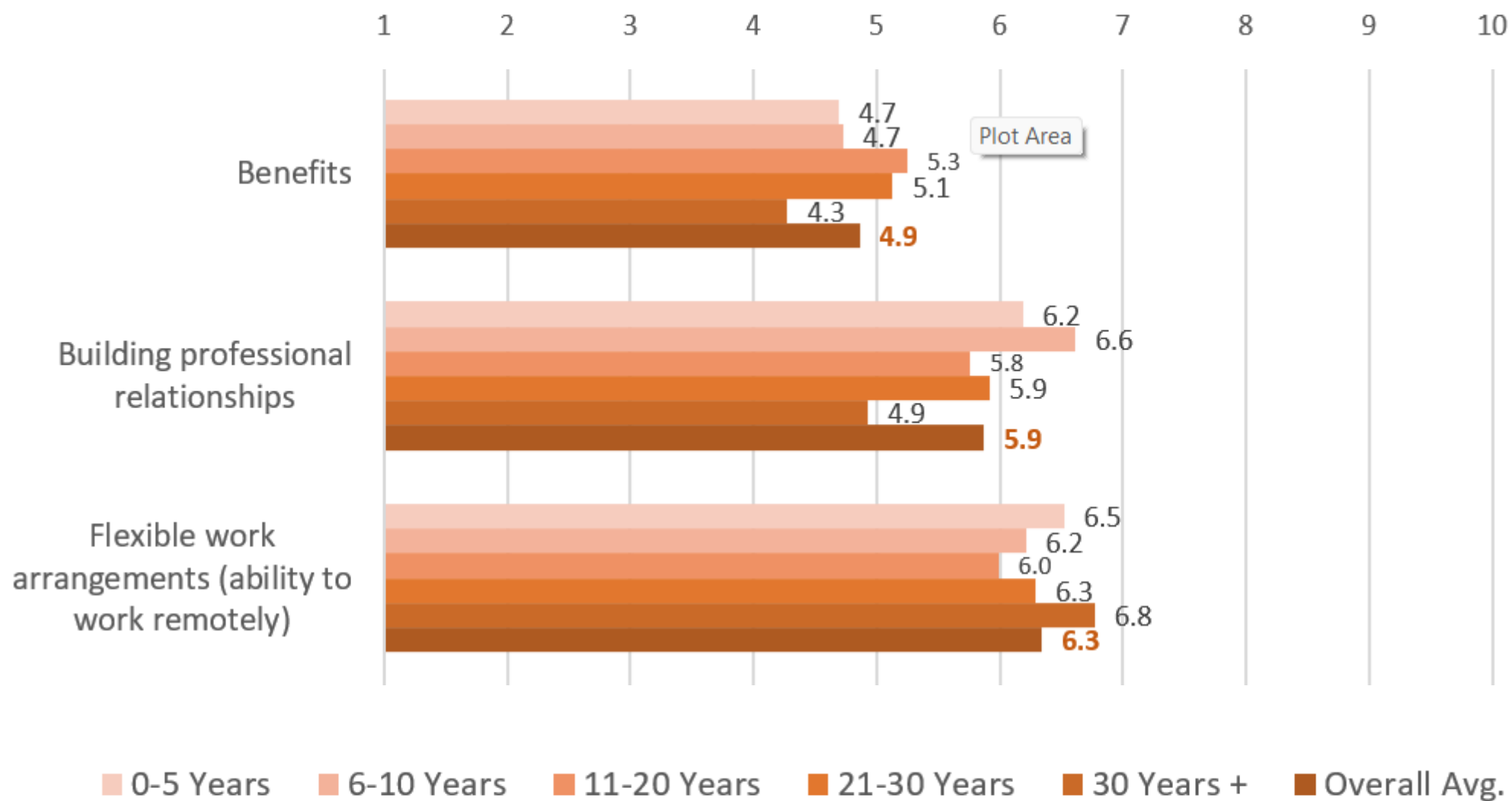
Positive culture/environment

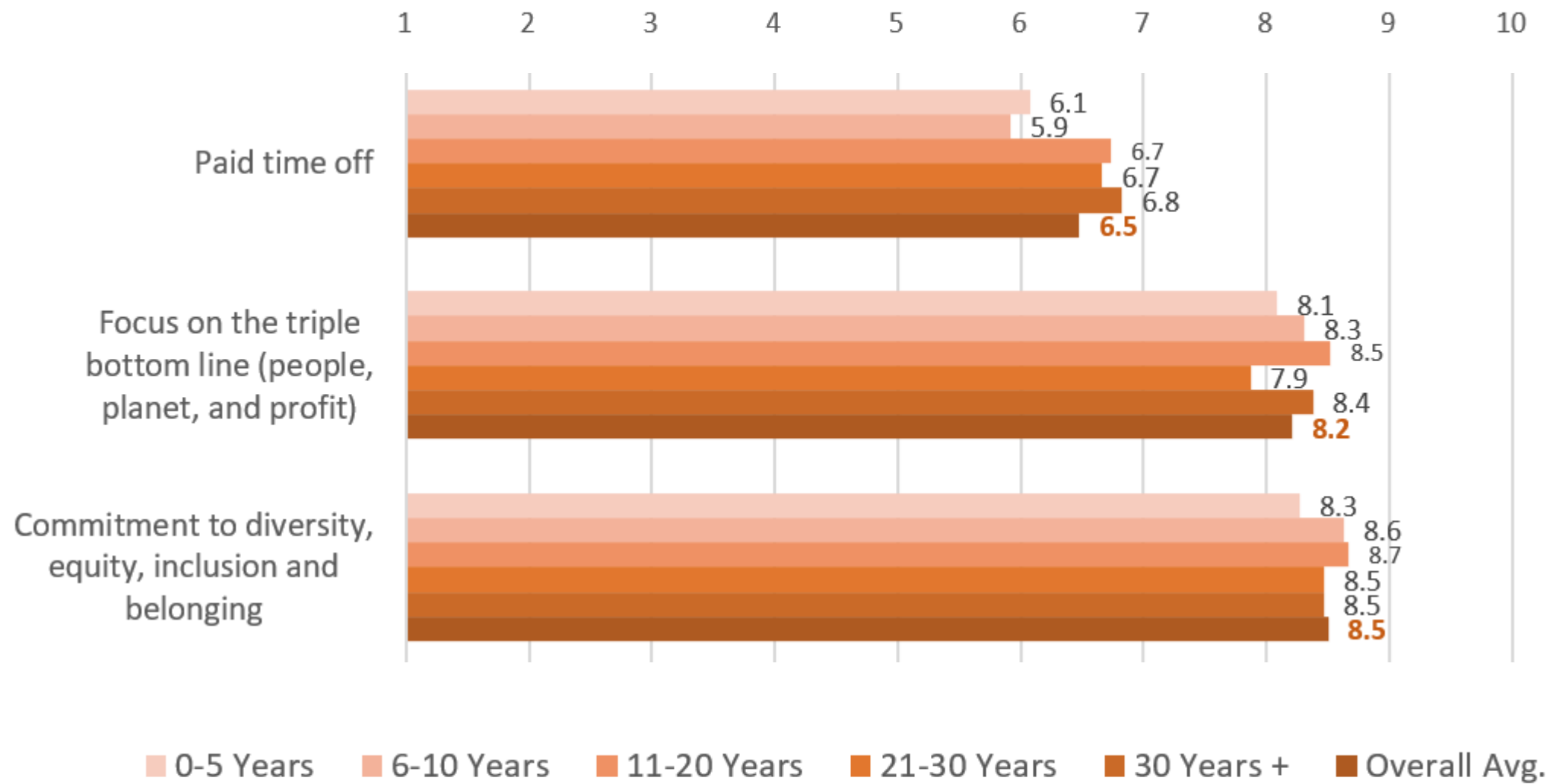
Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Focus on the Triple Bottom Line – People, Planet, and Profit



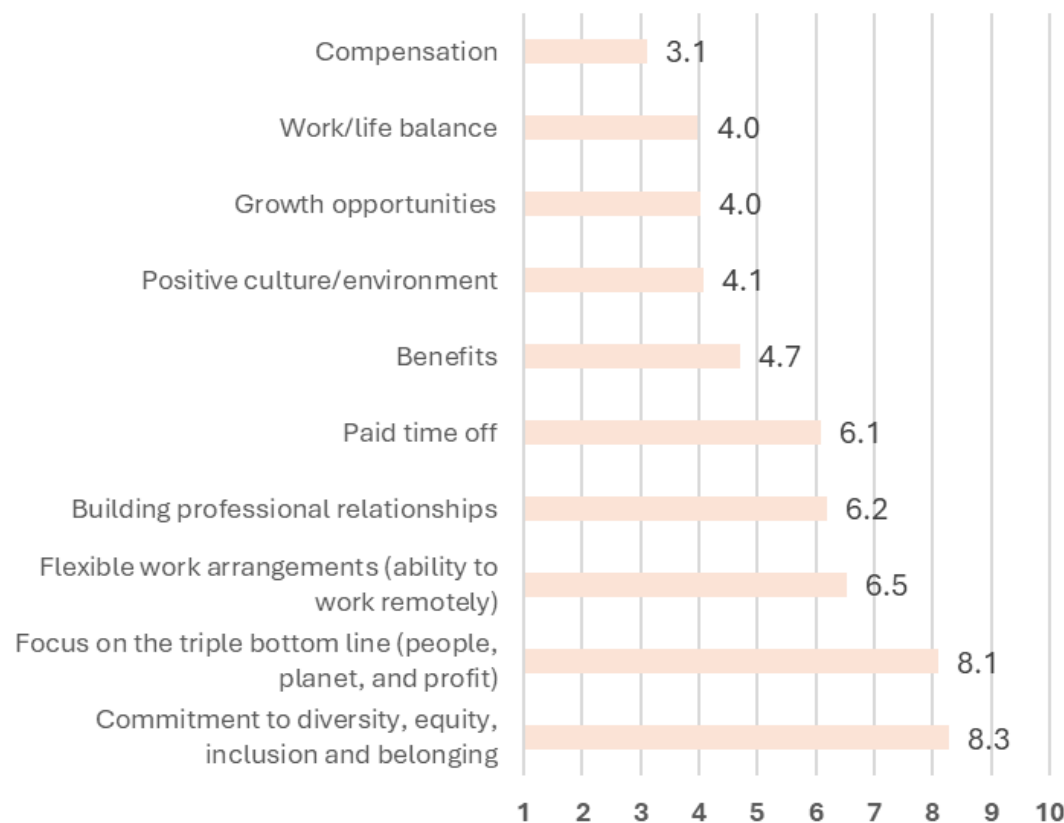
0-5 Years   6-10 Years   11-20 Years   21-30 Years   30 Years +   Overall Avg.



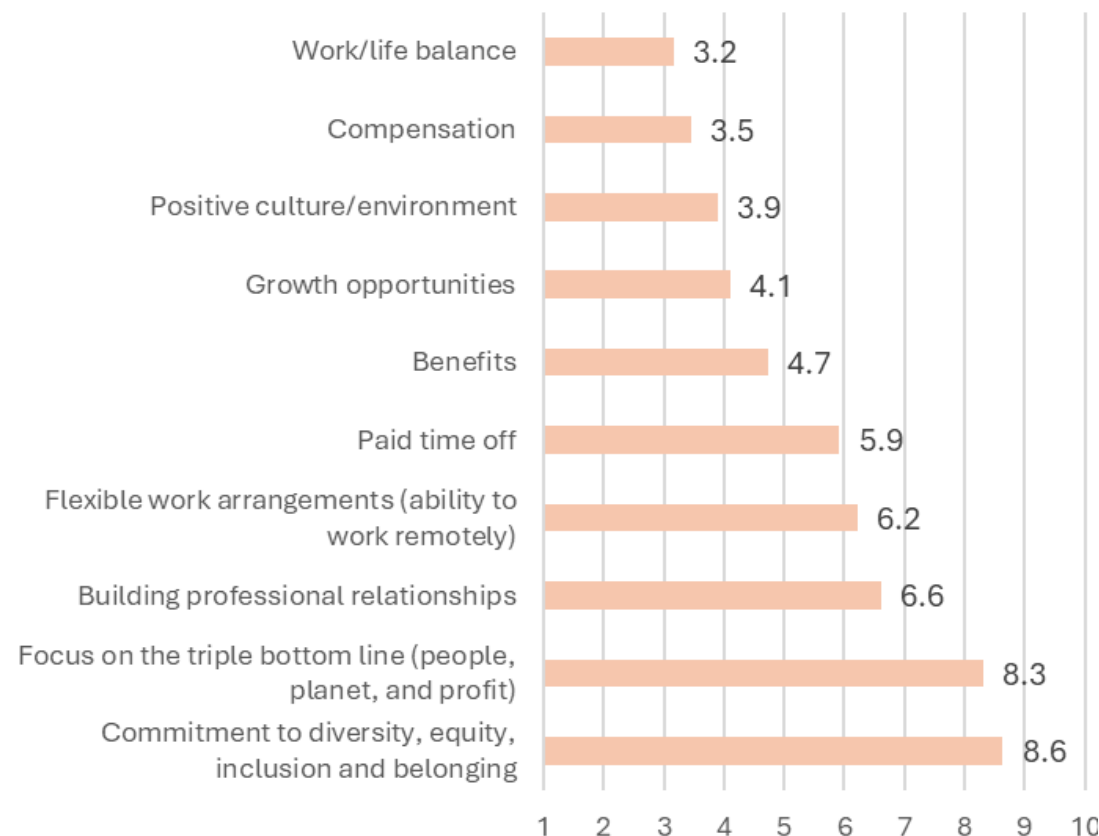


# WHAT MATTERS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

## 0-5 Years Experience



## 6-10 Years Experience

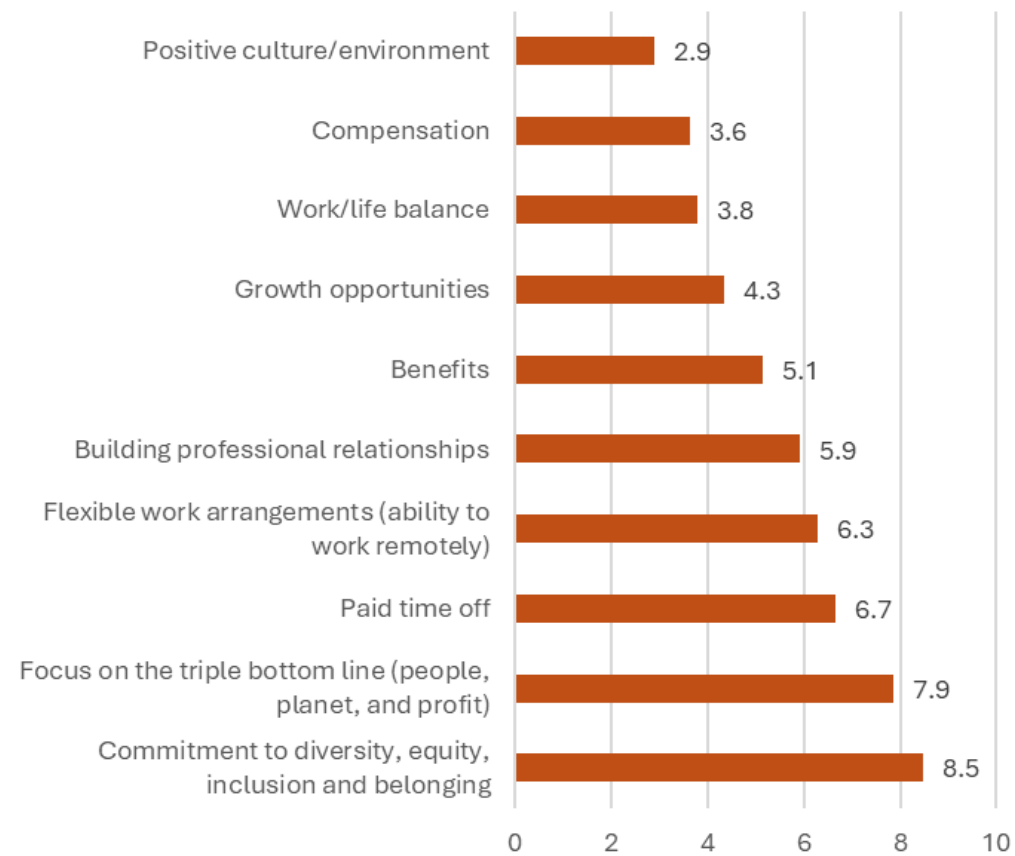


# WHAT MATTERS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

## 11-20 Years Experience

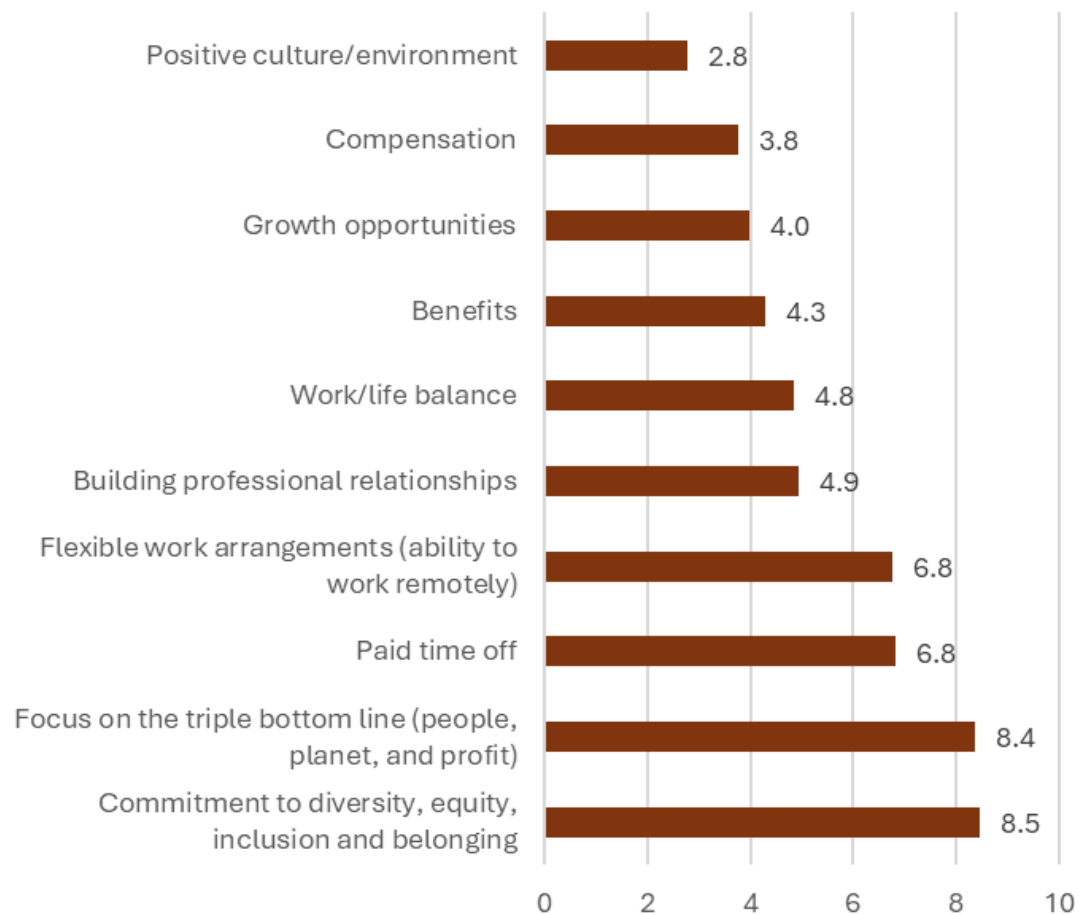


## 21-30 Years of Experience



# WHAT MATTERS BY DEMOGRAPHIC

## Over 30 Years Experience



# FOCUS GROUPS BY THE NUMBERS

**5**

focus groups  
conducted

**25**

engineering  
professionals in  
attendance

**13-29**

years of tenure

# FOCUS GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

## Focus Groups

- Query: Generation or Stage of Life/Career?
- Areas of interest:
  - Professional relationships in the AEC industry
  - Work/life balance & flexibility
  - Association membership & involvement

# KEY THEME 1: PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

1

Lay the  
foundation  
for growth  
and success

2

Form the  
basis of  
trust

3

Create a  
community

4

Offer  
opportunities  
for learning

5

Provide  
stability when  
things go  
“sideways”

# KEY THEME 1: HIGHLIGHTS

- Recognize attractiveness of remote/hybrid work
- Believe early-in-career professionals need in-person interaction for:
  - Learning and growth
  - Career development
  - Building critical relationships
- Responsibility lies with tenured professionals to cultivate understanding and appreciation of building and maintaining professional relationships

# KEY THEME 1: RECOMMENDATIONS



Negotiating in/out of office time with young professionals



Enlisting tenured professionals to serve as networking mentors



Inviting young professionals to attend and observe internal and client meetings



Educating the next generation on criticality of building a professional network



Offering networking opportunities during working hours

# KEY THEME 2: BALANCE & FLEXIBILITY

**Attendees shared  
what these terms  
mean to them**

**Overwhelming  
desire – and need –  
is flexibility**

**Notion of “balance”  
in working hours v.  
non-working hours  
unimportant to  
attendees**

# KEY THEME 2: DEFINING FLEXIBILITY

01

Options  
(hours/schedules/  
hybrid/WFH)

02

Requires reciprocal  
trust on the part of  
firm leaders and  
their employees

03

Based on  
understanding of  
'give and take' – fair  
to firm and  
individual

# KEY THEME 2: DRIVERS & TRADE-OFFS

- FG attendees largely mid-career – most have partners and/or children
- Dedicated to their work & desire authority to manage time to balance career with personal commitments
- To achieve that balance, attendees share they would be willing to make trade-offs, such as:
  - Relinquishing office space
  - Making less money
  - Working part-time (instead of leaving the workforce)
  - Accepting they may not advance as high or as quickly

# KEY THEME 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Establish and communicate clear expectations around flexible working arrangements – including any potential trade-offs

2

Consider incorporating flex work into organizational strategies such as attracting top talent or health/wellness initiatives

3

Create formal feedback mechanisms for employees and their managers

# KEY THEME 3: ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT



Learning and  
development  
opportunities

Clear  
opportunities  
for involvement



In-person  
networking  
events

Access to career  
and industry  
resources



# KEY THEME 3: ASSOCIATION OFFERINGS



Activities over “business” events

Professional development and/or  
continuing education

Opportunities to become involved locally

# KEY THEME 3: HELPS & HINDRANCES

## HELPS

- Knowing someone who is already a member
- If your co-workers belong
- Continuing education offerings

## HINDRANCES

- Cost of membership
- Introverts – uncomfortable networking
- Firms that don't see networking as a value-add

# Q & A



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