



Making Flexible Working Models Work

Insights from our “What the Flex?!” surveys of office-based employees

AUGUST 2023



Of the office-based workers surveyed, 85% reported that their organization has adopted a hybrid model—but the definition of hybrid varies

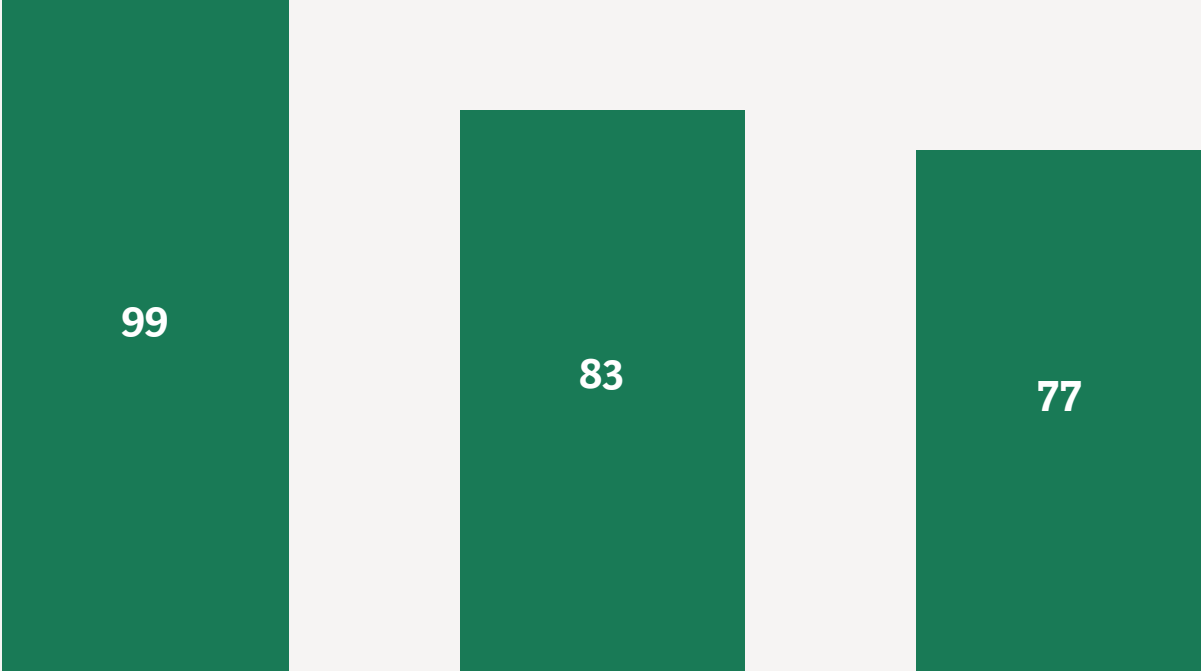
Question: What is your organization’s policy for where you work?



Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.
Note: “Office-based” defined as employees who can potentially work from anywhere with a laptop and the internet.

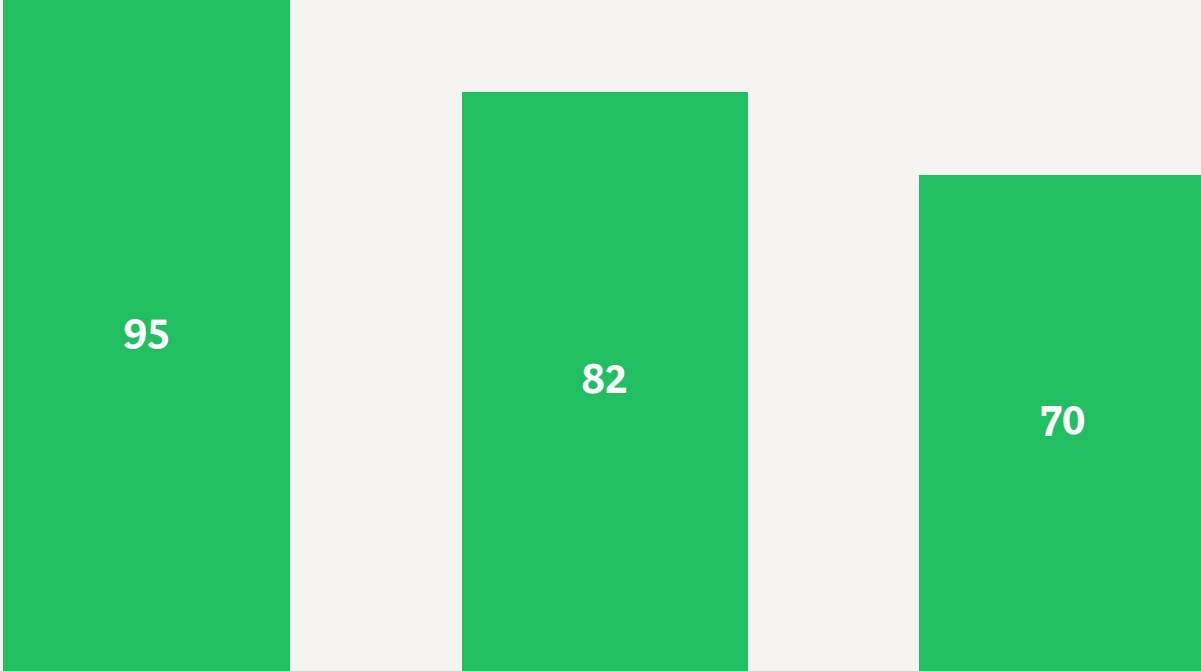
Prescribed hybrid models lead to lower levels of compliance and satisfaction

COMPLIANCE¹ WITH THE WORK MODEL POLICY (%)



Hybrid: only key events in person Hybrid: days vary each week Hybrid: set days of the week

SATISFACTION² WITH THE WORK MODEL POLICY (%)



Hybrid: only key events in person Hybrid: days vary each week Hybrid: set days of the week

■ Compliant with the policy ■ Satisfied with the policy

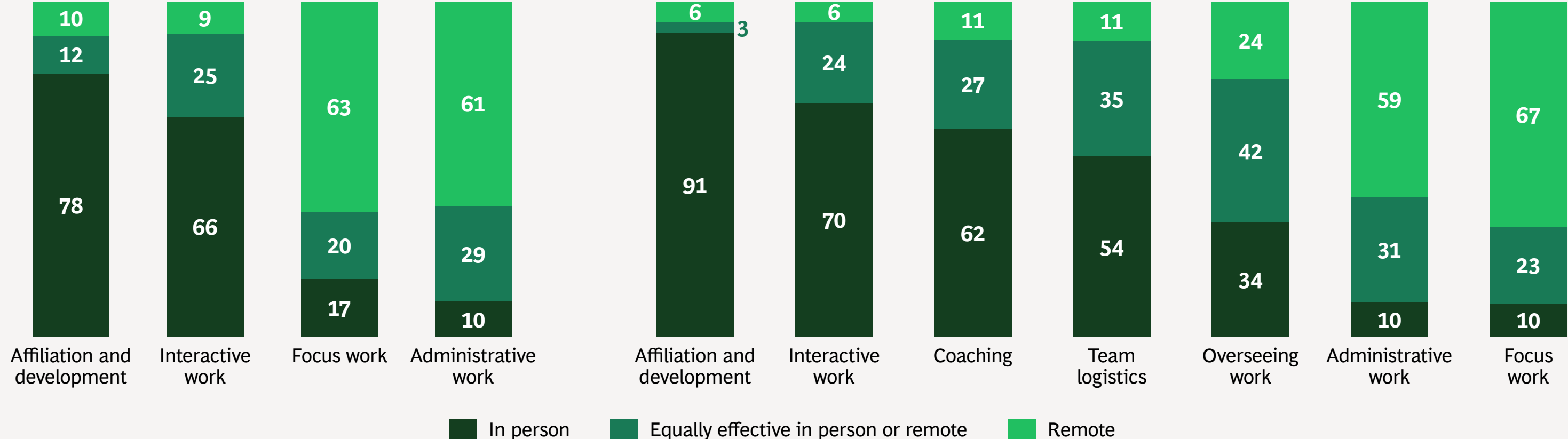
Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.
¹Respondents were asked “Where did you actually work last week?” ²Respondents were asked “How satisfied are you with the arrangement for where you work?” and assigned “Satisfied” if they responded with “Very satisfied” or “Somewhat satisfied.”

Employees want to be in the office for interaction, affiliation, and development—and remote when they need to focus

Question: Given the option, where do you do your most effective work? (by category)

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS (%)

MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES (%)



Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.

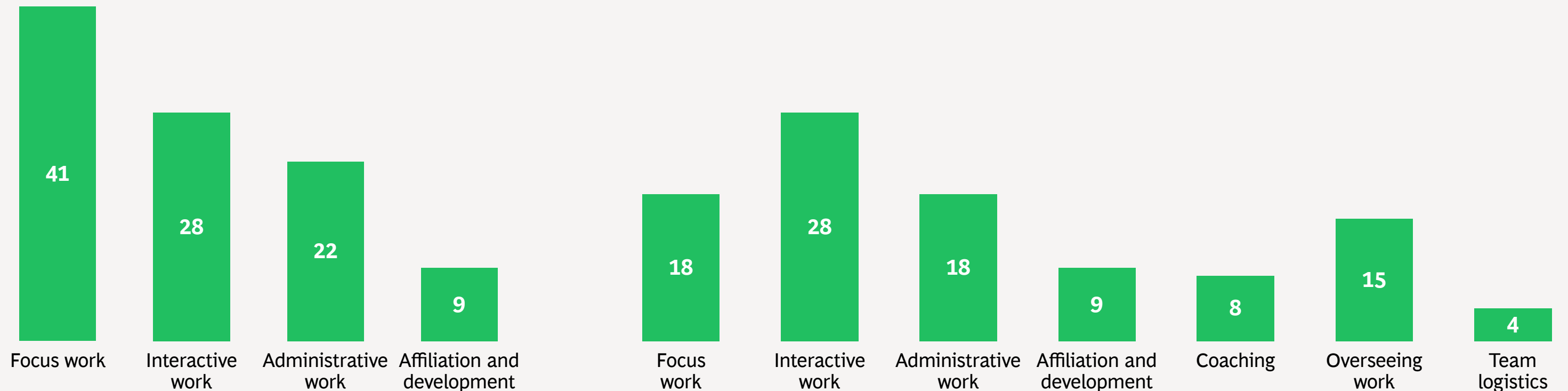
Note: “Administrative work” defined as, e.g., emails, scheduling meetings, maintaining files; “affiliation and development” defined as, e.g., training, social events, internal networking; “focus work” defined as, e.g., analysis, writing reports, planning work; “interactive work” defined as, e.g., meetings, collaboration, spending time with clients; “coaching” defined as, e.g., giving feedback, performance reviews (question asked to managers and executives only); “overseeing work” defined as, e.g., reviewing work, conducting team meetings (question asked to managers and executives only); “team logistics” defined as, e.g., onboarding new hires, affiliation activities (question asked to managers and executives only).

Time allocation is a critical factor in determining how people work—and different roles have different needs

Question: What proportion of your time is spent on each task category?

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS (% OF TOTAL TIME)

MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES (% OF TOTAL TIME)



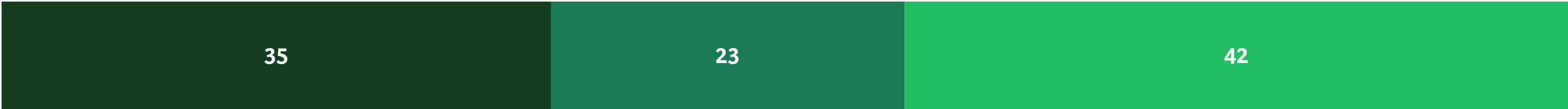
Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.

Note: “Administrative work” defined as, e.g., emails, scheduling meetings, maintaining files; “affiliation and development” defined as, e.g., training, social events, internal networking; “focus work” defined as, e.g., analysis, writing reports, planning work; “interactive work” defined as, e.g., meetings, collaboration, spending time with clients; “coaching” defined as, e.g., giving feedback, performance reviews (question asked to managers and executives only); “overseeing work” defined as, e.g., reviewing work, conducting team meetings (question asked to managers and executives only); “team logistics” defined as, e.g., onboarding new hires, affiliation activities (question asked to managers and executives only).

Both employees and managers believe they should be in person at least one-third of the time

The ideal location based on preference and average time spent by type of work¹

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS (%)



MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES (%)



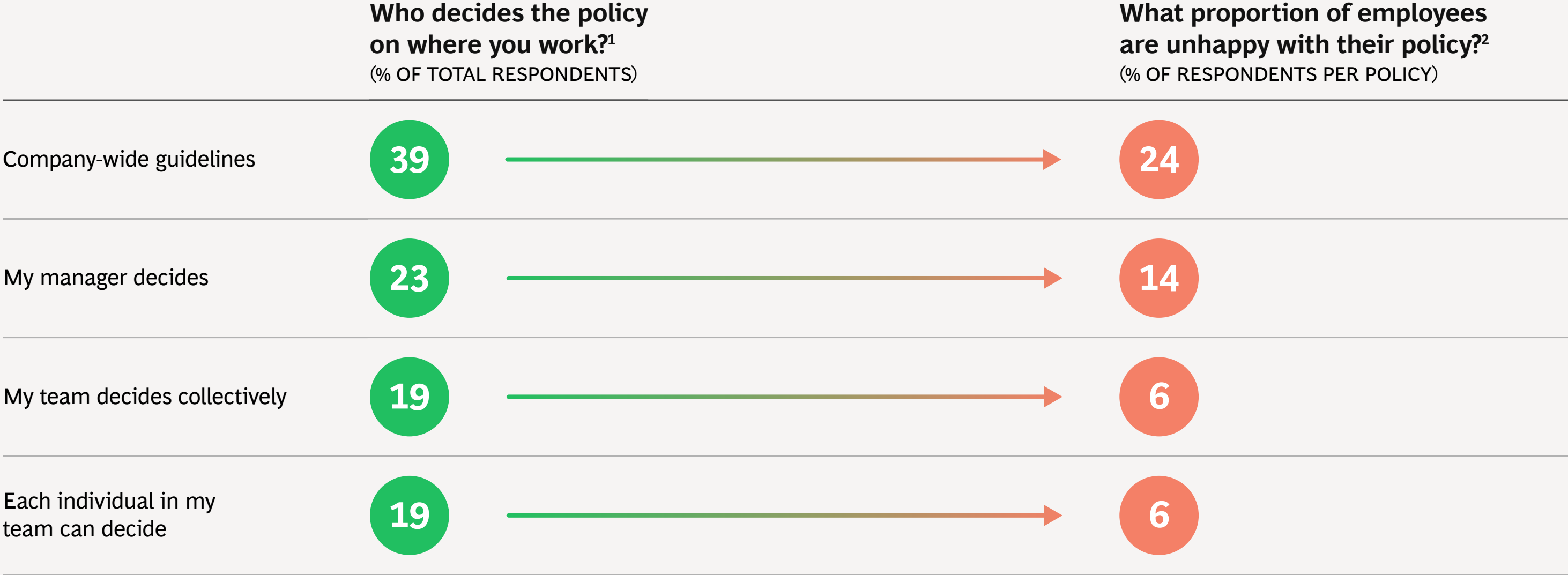
■ In person ■ Equally effective in person or remote ■ Remote

Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.

Note: Task categories surveyed: “administrative work” defined as, e.g., emails, scheduling meetings, maintaining files; “affiliation and development” defined as, e.g., training, social events, internal networking; “focus work” defined as, e.g., analysis, writing reports, planning work; “interactive work” defined as, e.g., meetings, collaboration, spending time with clients; “coaching” defined as, e.g., giving feedback, performance reviews (question asked to managers and executives only); “overseeing work” defined as, e.g., reviewing work, conducting team meetings (question asked to managers and executives only); “team logistics” defined as, e.g., onboarding new hires, affiliation activities (question asked to managers and executives only).

¹Responses for “What proportion (%) of your work time is spent on each task category?” were multiplied by responses for “Given the option, where do you do your most effective...” for each task category listed.

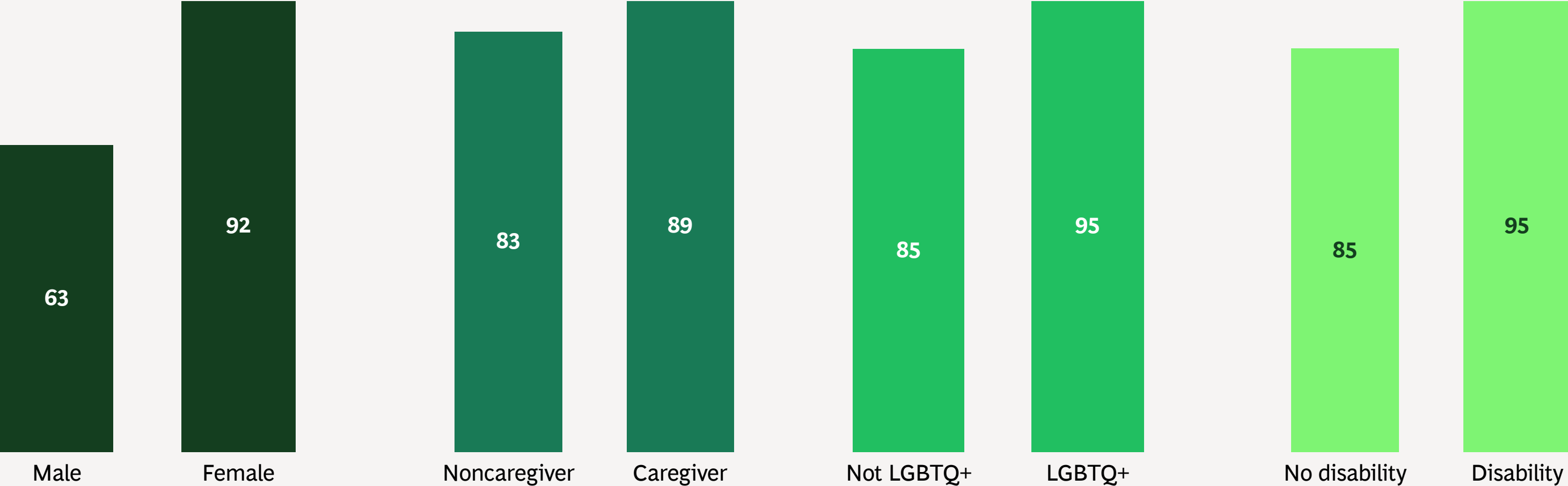
Employees are more likely to be dissatisfied when work model policies are decided by company leaders or managers



Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.
¹Respondents were asked “Who decides the policy on where you work?” ²Respondents were asked “How satisfied are you with the arrangement for where you work?” and assigned “Dissatisfied” if they responded with “Somewhat dissatisfied” or “Very dissatisfied.”

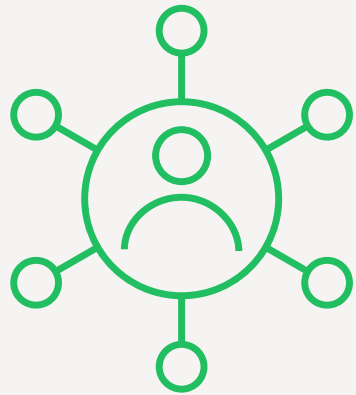
If you care about diversity, equity, and inclusion, you should care about flexibility

Question: My flexible work options are very important or important in driving my decision to stay in or leave my job
(% OF RESPONDENTS)



Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.

Many employees believe their organizations aren't putting in the effort to make flexible work *work*

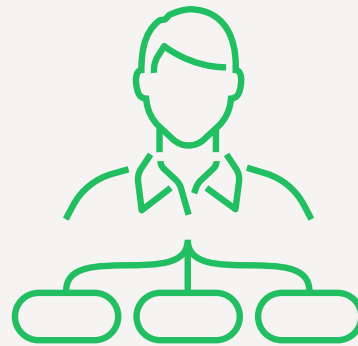


Supporting employees

My organization provides me with resources and training to support my employees to work flexibly

42%

of managers and executives disagree or are neutral

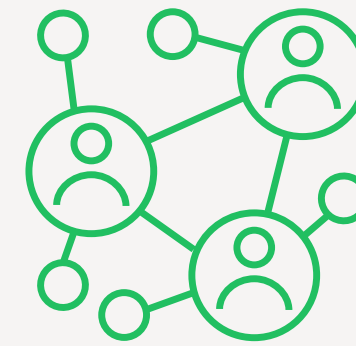


Modeling flexible work

My senior leaders are role models for flexible work

41%

of all respondents disagree or are neutral



Adapting the model

My team regularly reviews and adapts our work model

53%

of all respondents disagree or are neutral

A broad range of office-based employees responded to our survey

1,576

Total respondents

Diversity

% OF RESPONDENTS

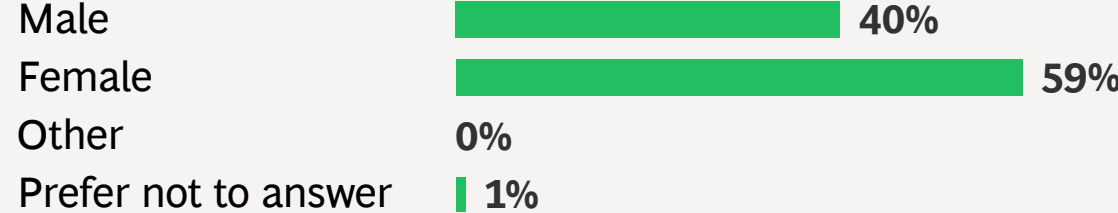
- 38** Child caregiver
- 8** Adult caregiver
- 18** Ethnic minority
- 4** Disability
- 7** LGBTQ+

Role

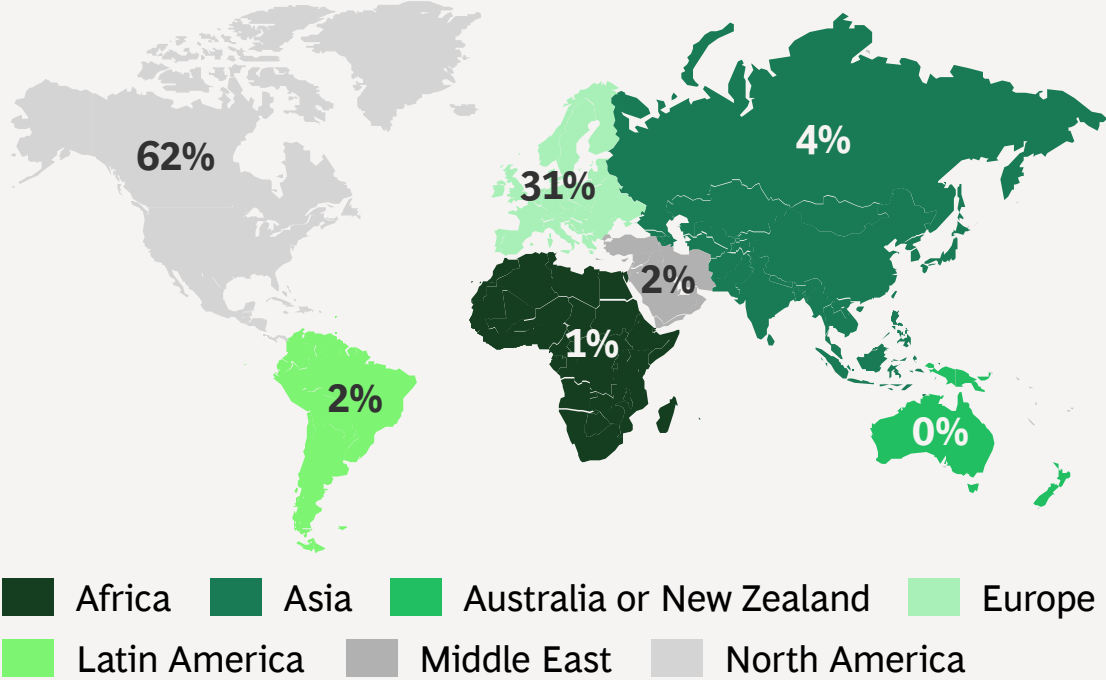
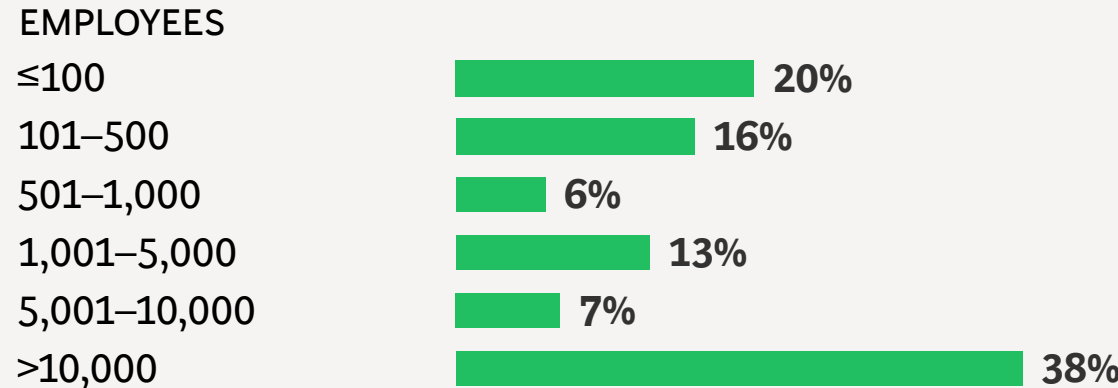
% OF RESPONDENTS



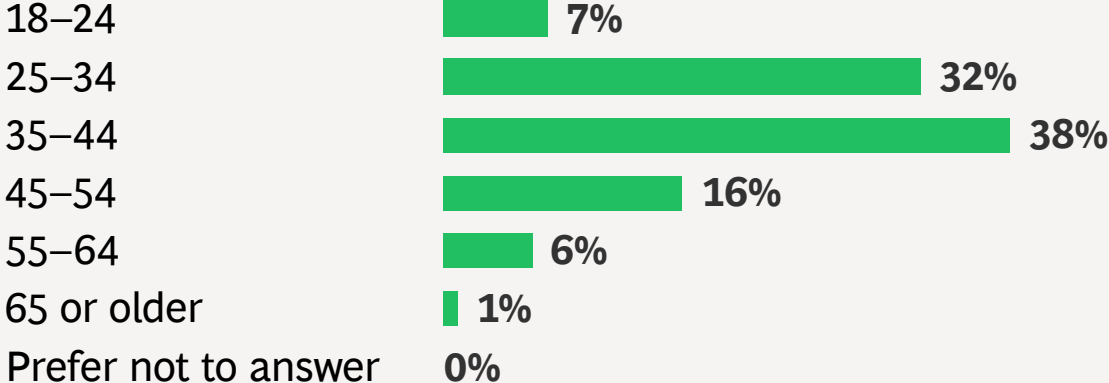
Gender



Company size



Age



Sources: BCG “What the Flex?!” employee surveys, conducted March 2023 through May 2023; BCG analysis.