

2021

Work Tech Report

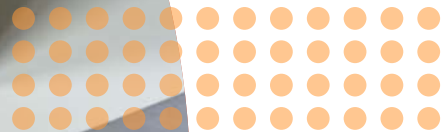
For Behavioral Health &
Human Services Organizations

 ContinuumCloud



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Executive Summary	4
Demographics	8
The Employee Experience	12
The Client Experience	23
Operational Outcomes	33
Technology in the Workplace	41
Future of Human Services	50
About ContinuumCloud	54



Introduction

Welcome to the 1st Annual Work Tech Report for Behavioral Health & Human Services Organizations

Discover industry-specific technology trends, challenges, and priorities that are shaping the future of work.

This report specifically examines three key dimensions of behavioral health and human services technology: the employee experience, the client experience, and operational outcomes. Throughout each organizational dimension, the report explores the evolving role that technology plays in enabling organizations to achieve their mission.

Methodology. The 2021 Work Tech Survey was administered online in June 2021. Participants were recruited by email invitation, and a nominal reward in the form of a gift card was made available. More than 350 human services professionals at all organizational levels and across a diverse range of job functions completed the survey. Please note that percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.



01

Executive Summary

KEY TAKEAWAY #1

There is a lot of optimism right now.

Human services organizations are producing positive outcomes. Respondents gave high ratings about their own employee experience as well as the experience they're creating for their clients. However, they also noted that these are areas that could benefit from further improvement, signaling the need for leaders to have a mindset of continuous improvement.

70% of employees rated the employee experience as good or excellent, and **78%** rated the client experience as good or excellent.





KEY TAKEAWAY #2

Automation is the path forward.

Automating workflows and eliminating redundancies is an area where human services organizations need to improve. By moving away from manual processes and repetitive tasks, employees can focus on more meaningful work – and the organization can scale more effectively to meet the growing demand for services.

Only 50% of organizations feel confident in their ability to scale effectively to meet growing demand.

KEY TAKEAWAY #3

Technology is a problem. But it's also the solution.

Sentiment toward the technology employees currently use at work was rather negative, especially among higher level executives and those in a clinical job function. Respondents also recognized that they need better reporting for operations, productivity, and outcomes. The right technology can enable employees and provide the insights needed to make improvements.

87% of those who gave their HCM technology a high rating also rated the employee and client experiences more positively.



Demographics

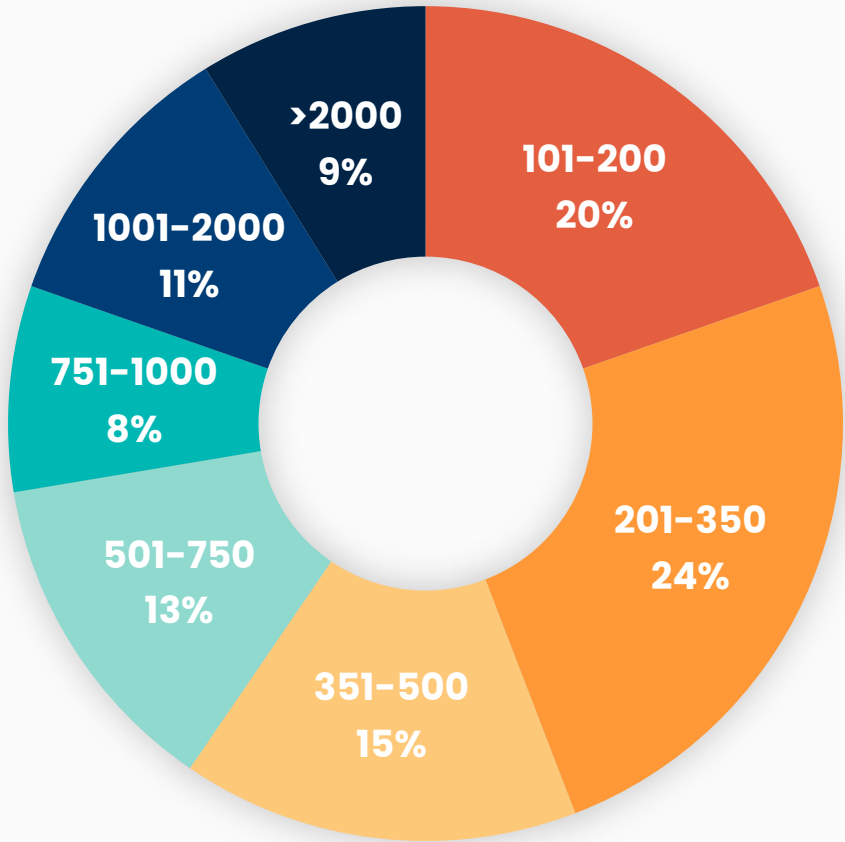
022



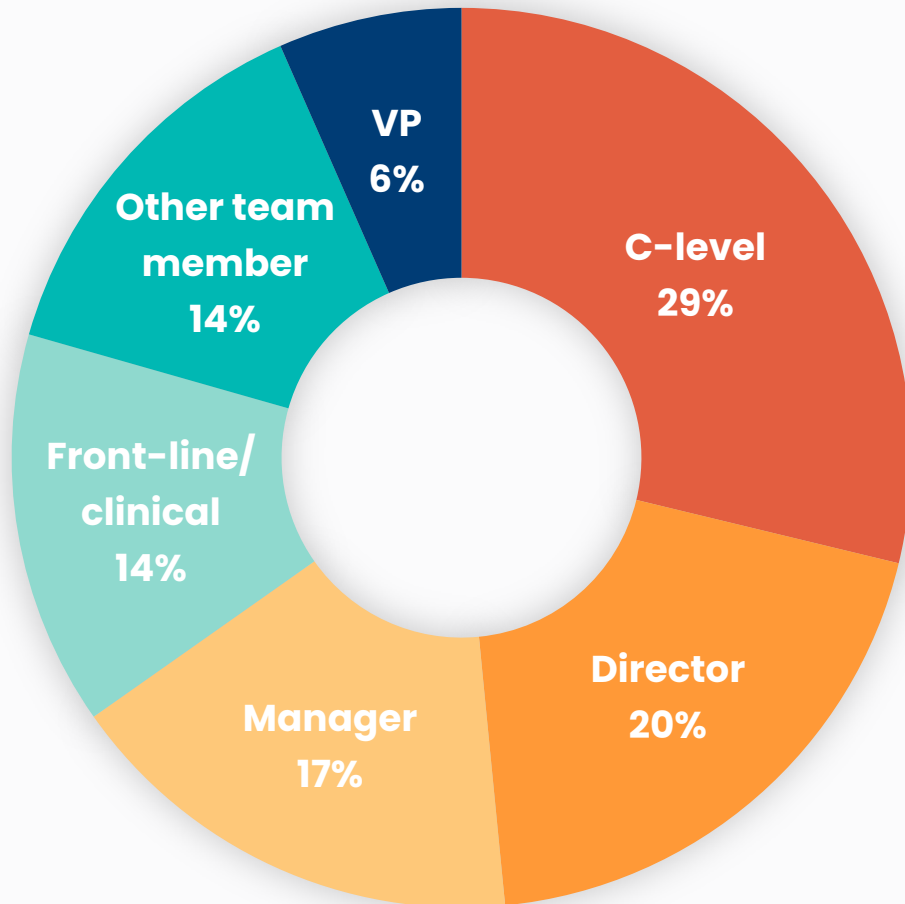
Organization Size

Who Took the Survey?

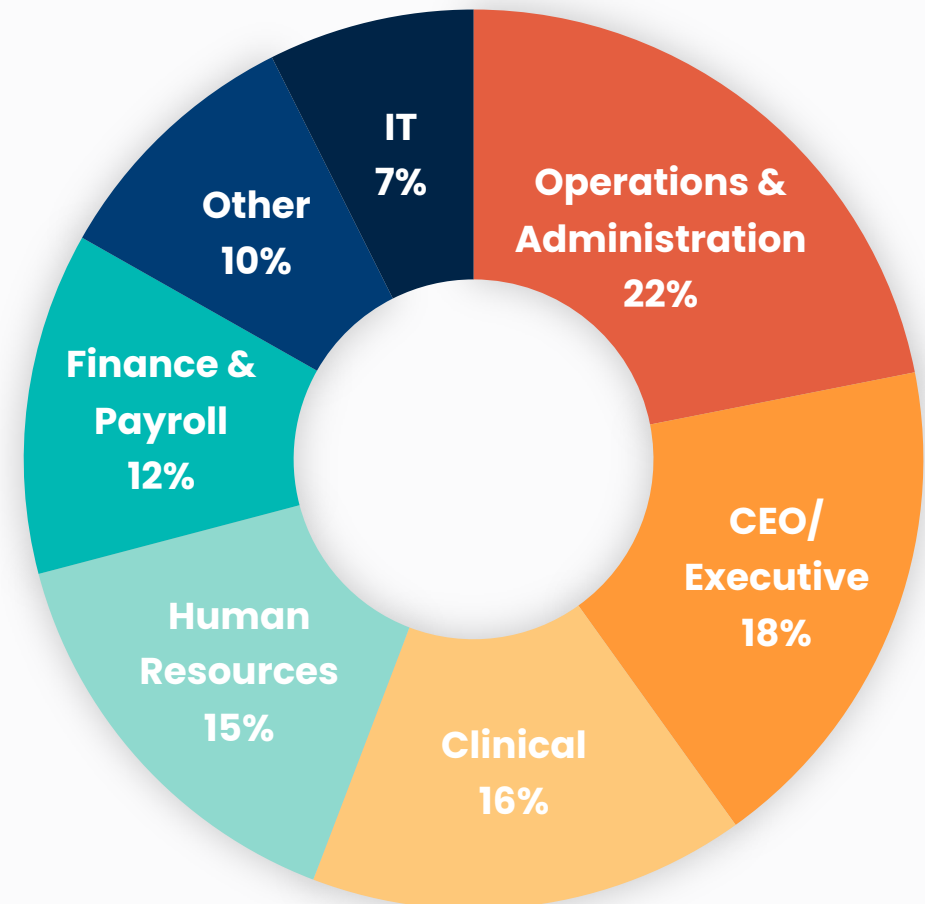
Survey respondents included human services professionals from a diverse range of job functions and job levels. Collectively, they represent mid-sized human services organizations from across the nation that provide a wide range of social good services, including mental and behavioral health, substance use disorder treatment, child and family services, and more.



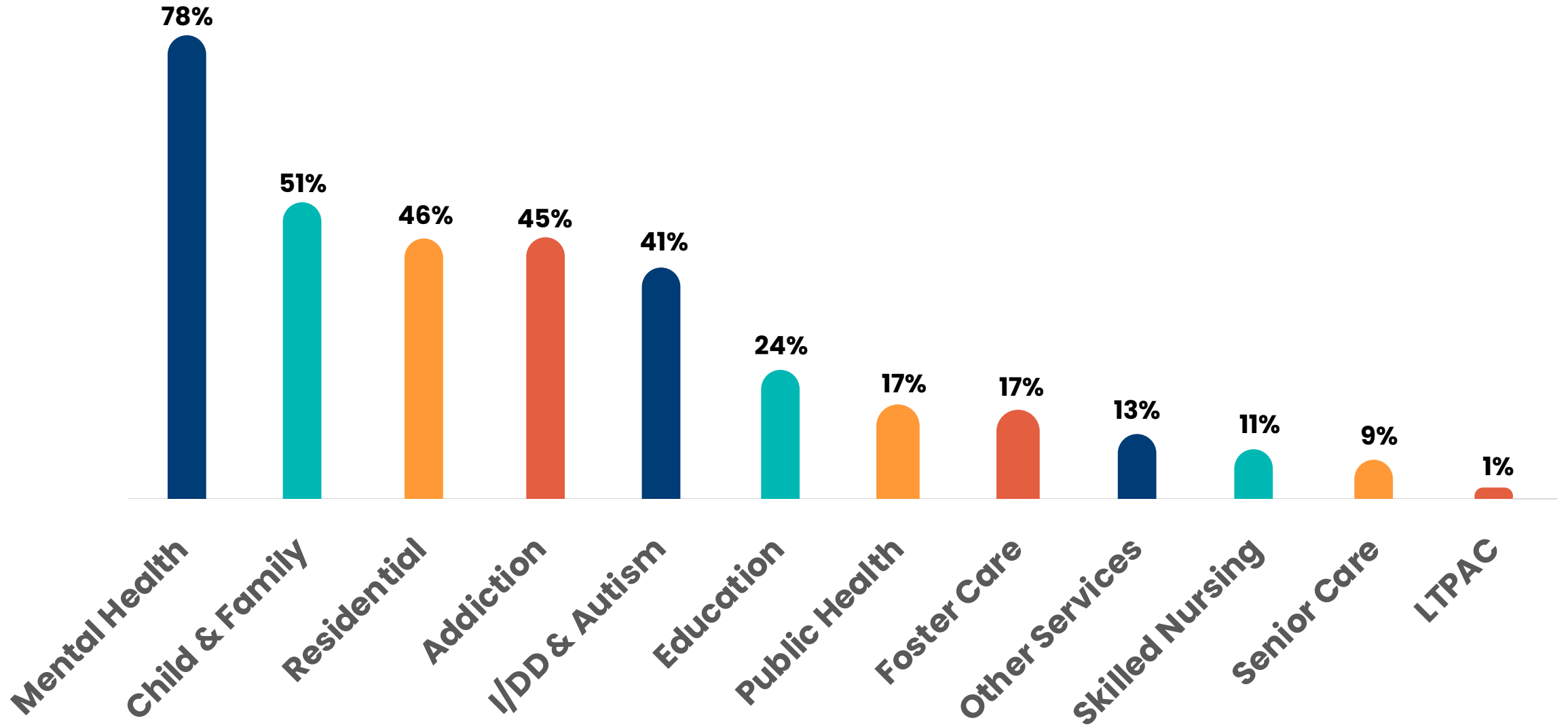
Job Level



Job Function



Services Provided





Employee Experience



Employee Experience

The employee experience encompasses everything from the initial job posting to the eventual exit from the organization. It's a combination of all the interactions an employee has with the organization's people, processes, culture, and more, throughout the entire employee lifecycle.

Improving the employee experience ensures high levels of engagement, productivity, and morale throughout the workforce, enabling the organization to deliver on its mission.

Employee Engagement

70%

At all levels of the organization, employee sentiment about their experience at work is positive. More than 70% of human services professionals rated the employee experience at their workplace as “good” or “excellent.”



Not so fast!

Before human services leaders can breathe a sigh of relief though, it's also important to consider that employee engagement was rated as the top workforce management area that could use improvement. Close to 72% of respondents identified this as an area where their organization could improve.

Only 36% of respondents gave their company's engagement strategy an above average rating.

The Details

Respondents rated these 5 elements of the employee experience on a scale of one to five stars. Percentages represent the proportion of respondents that ranked each category as "above average" with four or five stars.






The Big Picture

While the positive sentiment about the employee experience may seem contradictory to these ratings, they paint a more holistic picture of the complex nature of employee engagement at human services organizations. There's a lot of optimism about work right now, but there's also still some work to be done.

Human services leaders can reflect on their current successes and continue to build from there, as the employee experience is an area where continuous improvement is the key to success. And, as the results show, there's always room for improvement.

A man in a suit is shown from the chest up, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The image is overlaid with a teal filter. The text is centered over the image.

Employee engagement is
an area that requires
continuous improvement.

Where is there the most room for improvement?



Top 3 Areas for Improvement

A circular progress indicator with a teal outer ring and a white inner ring. The teal ring is filled with 72% of the circle, and the percentage '72%' is written in white in the center.

72%

Employee Engagement

may be the top area where respondents saw room for improvement, but this was closely followed by recruiting and onboarding as well as operations and communication, which relate to employee engagement as well.

A circular progress indicator with a teal outer ring and a white inner ring. The teal ring is filled with 63% of the circle, and the percentage '63%' is written in white in the center.

63%

Recruiting and Onboarding

the early stages of the employee lifecycle – are when engagement levels are typically at their highest. Making the most of this critical period can help ensure long-term engagement for the employee.

A circular progress indicator with a teal outer ring and a white inner ring. The teal ring is filled with 50% of the circle, and the percentage '50%' is written in white in the center.

50%

Operations & Communication

greatly influence the employee's day-to-day experience. Repetitive administrative tasks can waste employee time, while streamlined processes allow employees to focus on meaningful work so that they can feel that they're making an impact.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your organization:

Regularly measures the progress and outcomes of its workforce management initiatives



Provides professional development and growth opportunities to employees



Makes an active effort to promote a positive company culture through communication and transparency



● Strongly Disagree ● Disagree ● Neutral ● Agree ● Strongly Agree



Only 65%

of respondents reported that their organization regularly measures workforce management outcomes

But 83%

said that their organization promotes a positive culture and provides professional development opportunities

Organizations have taken action to improve company culture and DE&I initiatives.

Company culture and professional development were both strong points according to respondents at all levels of the organization. When initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion took on renewed importance in 2020, human services organizations recognized the need to take action. The positive results in this area show that progress is being made.

044

Client Experience





Client Experience

The client experience is defined by all the interactions a client has with the organization. This includes finding the provider, setting up appointments, receiving care, and following through with treatment plans.

A positive experience in this area can increase engagement and improve outcomes for the people that the organization serves. Human services organizations need to deliver high-quality care in an efficient and effective manner to successfully achieve transformative outcomes.

Client Engagement

78%

Similar to the employee experience, human services professionals had an optimistic view of the client experience their organization provides. Close to 78% of respondents rated the client experience as “good” or “excellent.”



Focus on Clinical Roles

Among those in clinical roles, the percentage is even higher at 82%. When it came to rating their ability to provide effective care in person and remotely, close to 70% gave an above average rating. Additionally, 77% agreed or strongly agreed that their organization is able to provide coordinated and integrated care to meet client needs.



The infographic features a warm orange background with a faint image of a person's hands holding a smartphone. Two large, semi-transparent circular frames are overlaid on the image. The left frame is red and contains the text '82%' and 'With a clinical job function rated the client experience as good or excellent'. The right frame is yellow and contains the text 'Only 65%' and 'Of human services professionals believe their organization measures client outcomes'.

82%

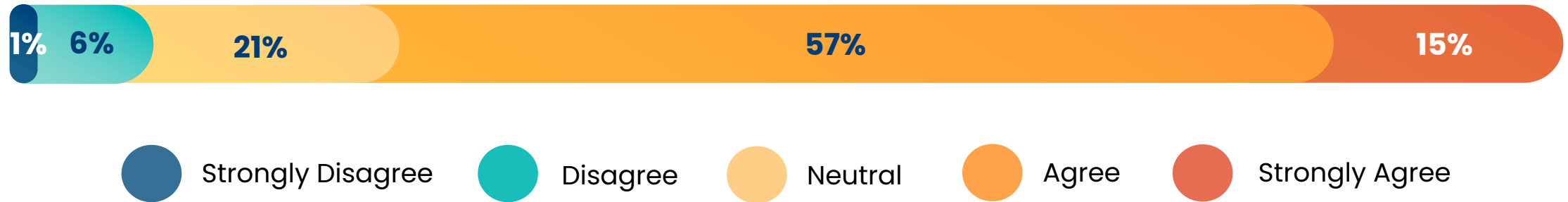
With a clinical job
function rated the
client experience as
good or excellent

Only 65%

Of human services
professionals believe
their organization
measures client
outcomes

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your organization is able to:

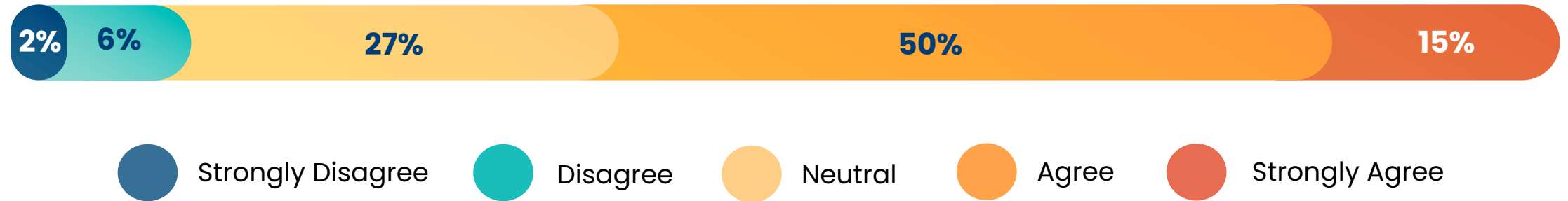
Make it easy for employees to focus on providing high-quality care



Best practices for providing high-quality care are constantly evolving, especially as models of care change. The diverse populations that human services organizations serve, along with the evolving role of technology in delivering quality care, pose both challenges and opportunities. It appears organizations are taking the necessary steps to enable their employees though, as 72% agreed or strongly agreed that their organization makes it easy for employees to focus on providing that high-quality care.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your organization is able to:

Effectively measure client outcomes to report on quality of care

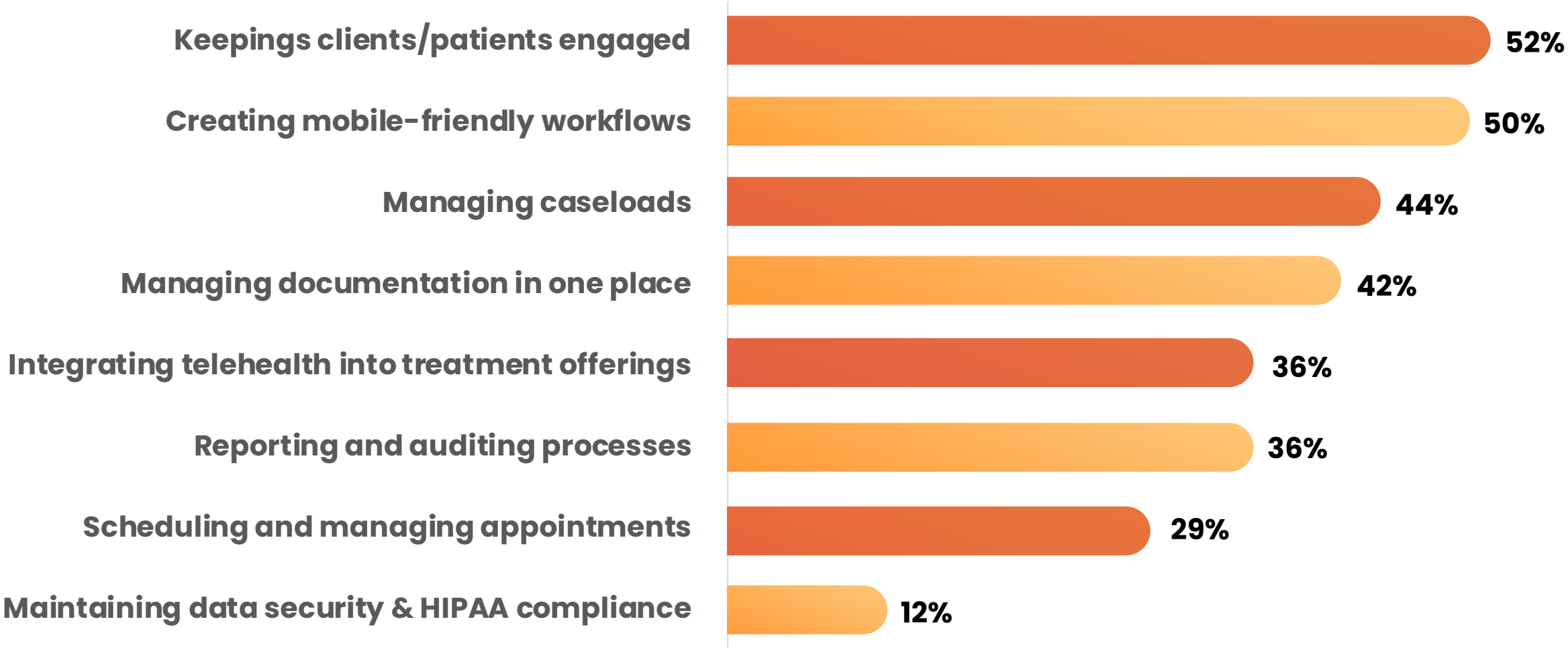


As with any process, initiative, or goal, the key to making improvements in client engagement is first having strong metrics in place to enable data-driven decisions. Only about 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their organization effectively measures client outcomes to report on quality of care. With the current emphasis on outcomes-based care, this percentage seems surprisingly low and may provide a starting point for organizations committed to improving client engagement.



Increasing client
engagement is a top priority
for **improving outcomes.**

Where is there the most room for improvement?



What needs the most improvement?

Well, it depends on who you ask. Overall, increasing client engagement took the top spot, closely followed by enabling mobile-friendly workflows.

But there were also differing priorities among the various job functions. While Operations staff identified client engagement as the top priority here, those in IT, Clinical, and CEO positions all identified mobile-friendly workflows as the area most in need of improvement. HR professionals were the outliers, identifying clinical documentation as the most important area to focus on.



While providing effective care is a strong point, revenue cycle management could use some improvement.

Only 57% gave their revenue cycle management (RCM) an above average rating. As an essential system for ensuring organizations get paid for services provided, RCM is an area that many organizations could stand to improve.

By contrast, 70% gave an above average rating to their ability to provide effective care, both in person and remotely.



Gave their revenue cycle management an above average rating



Gave an above average rating to their ability to provide effective care in person and remotely

Operational Outcomes





Operational Outcomes

Tying together the employee and client experiences are the processes, workflows, and systems an organization has in place to keep things running smoothly. Your operations can either help streamline processes and enable employees or it can impede progress and lead to constant frustration.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your organization is able to:

Use digital tools to automate workflows and processes



Use workflows and processes to help improve efficiencies



● Strongly Disagree ● Disagree ● Neutral ● Agree ● Strongly Agree

Can that be right?

Only 55% of human services professionals reported that their organization uses digital tools to automate workflows and processes, and only 53% said they use workflows and processes to help improve efficiencies. These numbers are surprisingly low considering how reliance on technology in the workplace has only increased over the years.

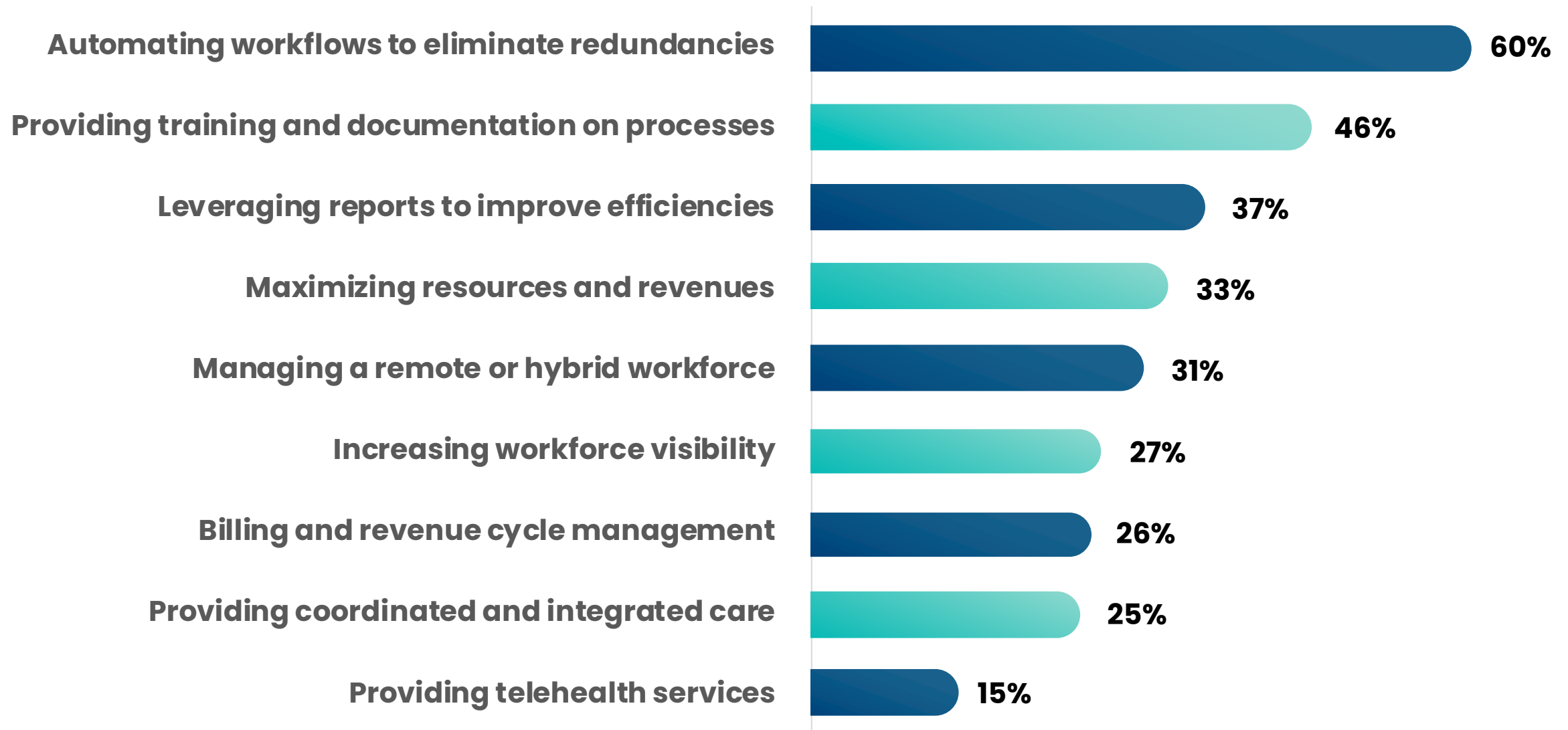
Digital Tools & Workflows

Given these data points, it comes as no surprise that human services professionals identified workflow automation as the operational area that most needs improvement at their organization.

There was strong agreement across job functions and job levels in singling out workflow automation, with the exception of Finance professionals. This subset of respondents identified leveraging reports to improve efficiencies, along with billing and RCM, as slightly higher priorities over workflow automation.



Where is there the most room for improvement?



A blue-tinted photograph of two men in business attire looking at a smartphone together in a modern office setting. The man on the left is wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and glasses, while the man on the right is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, a tie, and glasses. They are both smiling and looking at the phone. The background shows a blurred office environment with other people and a railing.

Human services
organizations see the most
room for improvement in
workflow automation.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that your organization is able to:

Maximize resources to operate in a financially efficient manner



Measure and report on the financial efficiency of specific programs, departments, etc.



Scale effectively to meet growing demand



Key Stats On Scaling to Meet Demand

A circular progress indicator with a dark blue outer ring and a light blue inner ring. The inner ring is filled with the percentage value 50% in white text.

50%

Automation and tech enablement are also essential for scaling operations for sustainable growth. Just under **50%** agreed that their organization could **scale effectively to meet growing demand.**

A circular progress indicator with a dark blue outer ring and a light blue inner ring. The inner ring is filled with the percentage value 58% in white text.

58%

However, respondents were more confident regarding their current operational workflows. Nearly **58%** indicated that their organization is able to **maximize resources to operate in a financially efficient manner.**

A circular progress indicator with a dark blue outer ring and a light blue inner ring. The inner ring is filled with the percentage value 57% in white text.

57%

57% agreed that they're able to **measure and report on financial sustainability across different organizational dimensions.** These systems may be sufficient for the time being but may not be effective for future growth.

Technology in the Workplace

06





Technology in the Workplace

Technology is central to every organization's operations, and how effectively it's used also impacts the employee and client experiences. From sending an email to writing up case notes to logging time at the end of the day, there are numerous forms of technology ingrained into our everyday work lives.

With employees relying on so many systems and solutions each day, it's important to understand how well technology is working for your workforce.

Exploring Two Key Workforce Systems

We looked individually at two of the most integral areas of human services organizations operations: their Human Capital Management (HCM) system and their Electronic Health Record (EHR) platform. These two areas cover the following processes:

HCM

Recruiting and Onboarding

HR Management

Time and Attendance

Payroll Processing

Talent Management

Benefits Administration

Workforce Analytics

Credential Management

EHR

Clinical Documentation

Supervisory and Auditing Tools

Revenue Cycle Management

Telehealth Capabilities

Scheduling and Appointment Reminders

Secure Client Messaging & Patient Portal

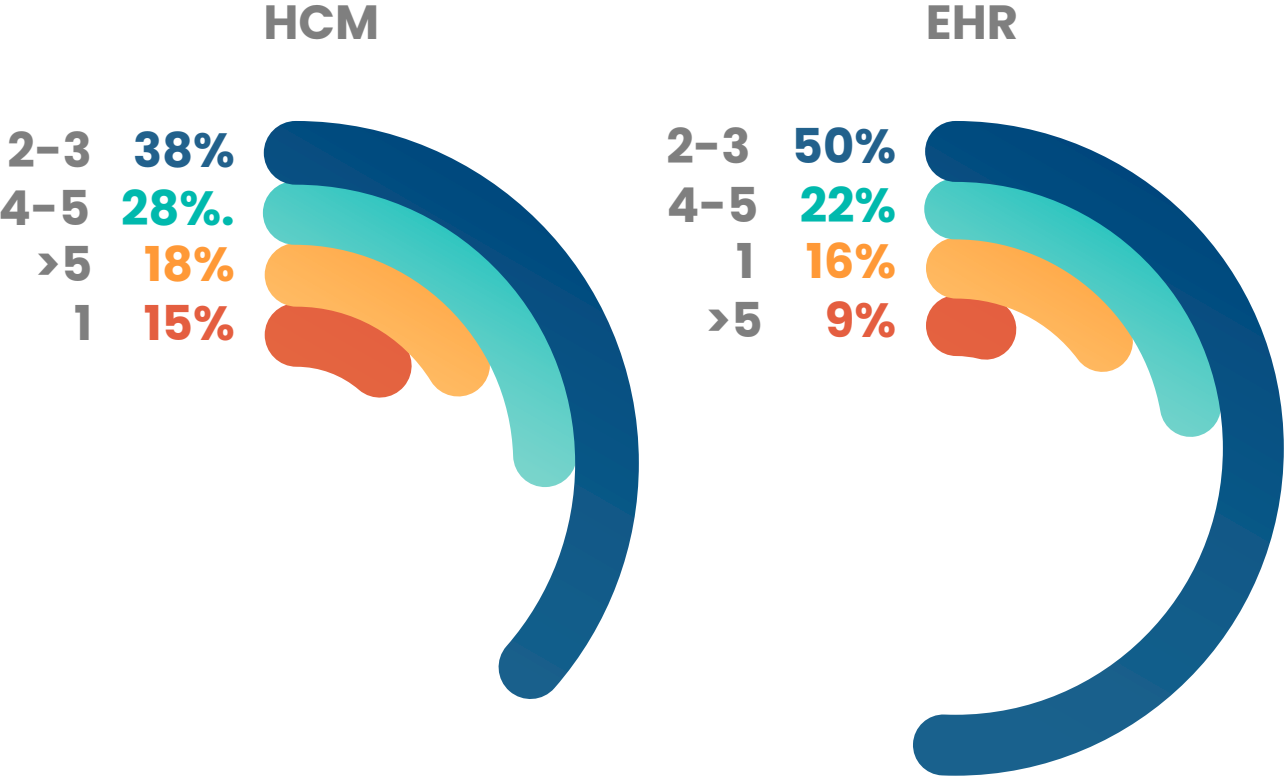
Secure Internal Messaging

Advanced Reporting

How many tech solutions do you currently use?

By far, most organizations are using 2-5 different systems to handle each of these domains, which adds up to a lot of different logins, reporting systems, and information sources that may or may not communicate with each other.

This pieced-together approach to technology solutions is likely contributing to the negative ratings employees reported in their experience with technology.



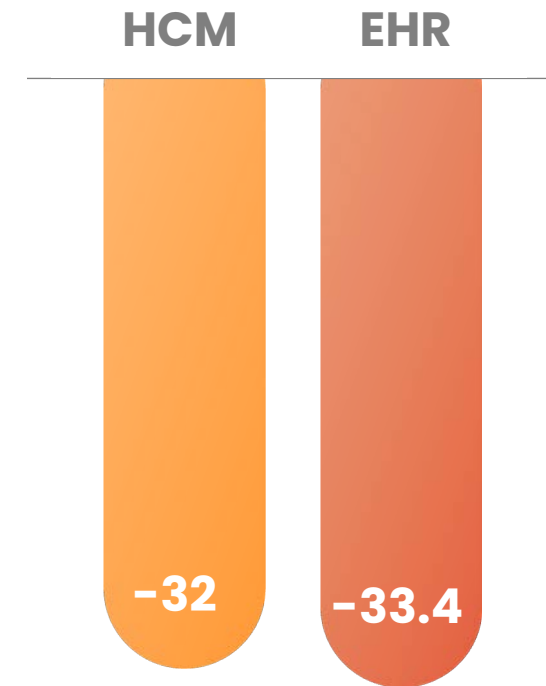
How likely are you to recommend your tech?

Employees report a negative experience across the board with their current technology. The NPS was -32 for HCM systems and -33.4 for EHR systems.

What's an NPS?

This survey utilized the **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**, which asks respondents to rate how likely they are to recommend the technology they're using to a friend or colleague on a scale from 0 to 10.

Those who provide a rating of 9 or 10 are considered promoters, 7 or 8 are considered passives, and 6 and below are considered detractors. To calculate the score, the percent of detractors is subtracted from the percent of promoters to produce a score that falls between -100 and +100.

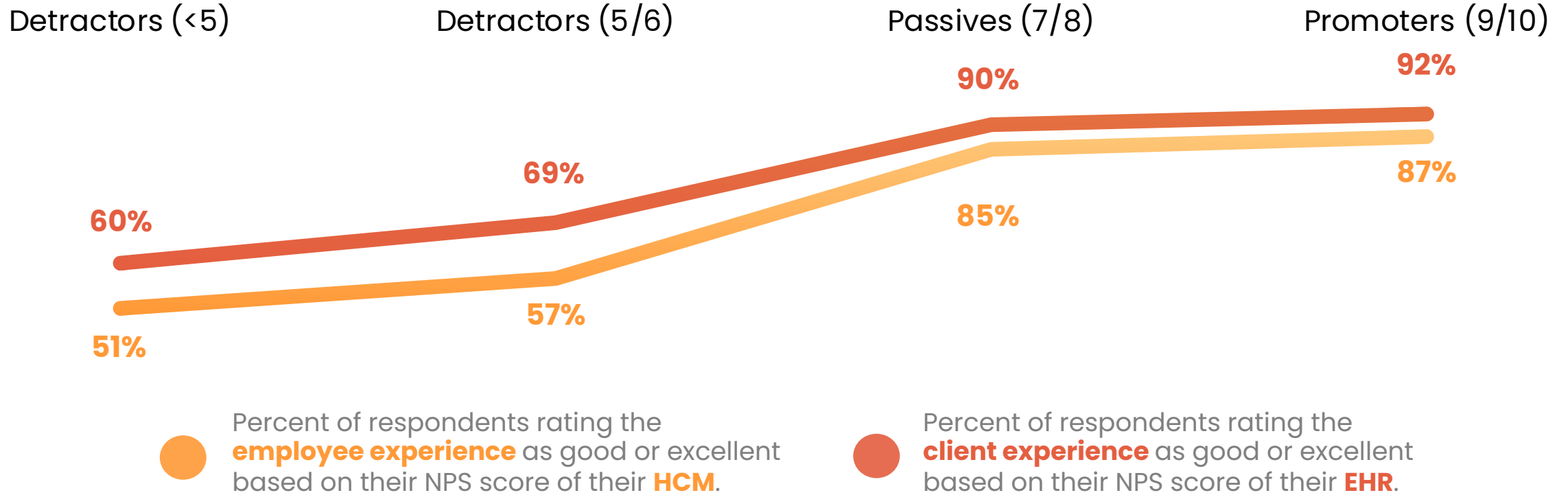


A man in a white shirt is looking at a tablet. The image has a warm orange overlay and a bokeh background. The text is centered and reads:

Improving technology in the workplace can enhance both the **client and employee experiences.**

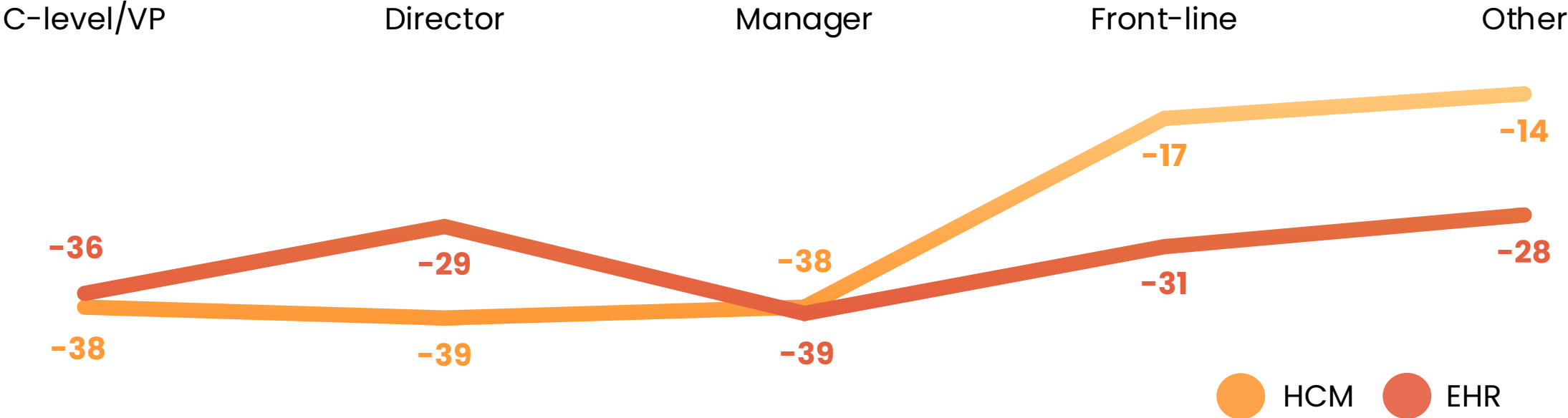
NPS and Engagement Ratings

As the employee experience with technology improves, so does their overall experience at work as well as the experience they provide to clients. Understanding this relationship and the impact technology can have across the organization can help guide human services leaders in making strategic decisions as they invest in technology at their workplace.



NPS Rating by Job Level

Higher level executives were less satisfied with their HCM solutions than front-line workers and non-supervisory team members. At the higher levels of the organization, executives and leaders are likely using more advanced features than those needed by front-line employees. For instance, budget reports, workforce analytics, and payroll dashboards might be some of the most important features for executives to leverage, while front-line employees use fewer areas of the system. Meanwhile, sentiment about EHR solutions was fairly even across job levels.



NPS Rating by Job Function

Those in clinical roles are the least satisfied with all of the technology they're using, followed by those in IT. Clinical positions may rely on these systems more than most other job functions on a day-to-day basis while providing care. Similarly, IT may be responsible for troubleshooting these systems and have a more in-depth understanding of where there are challenges.



Future of Human Services



7



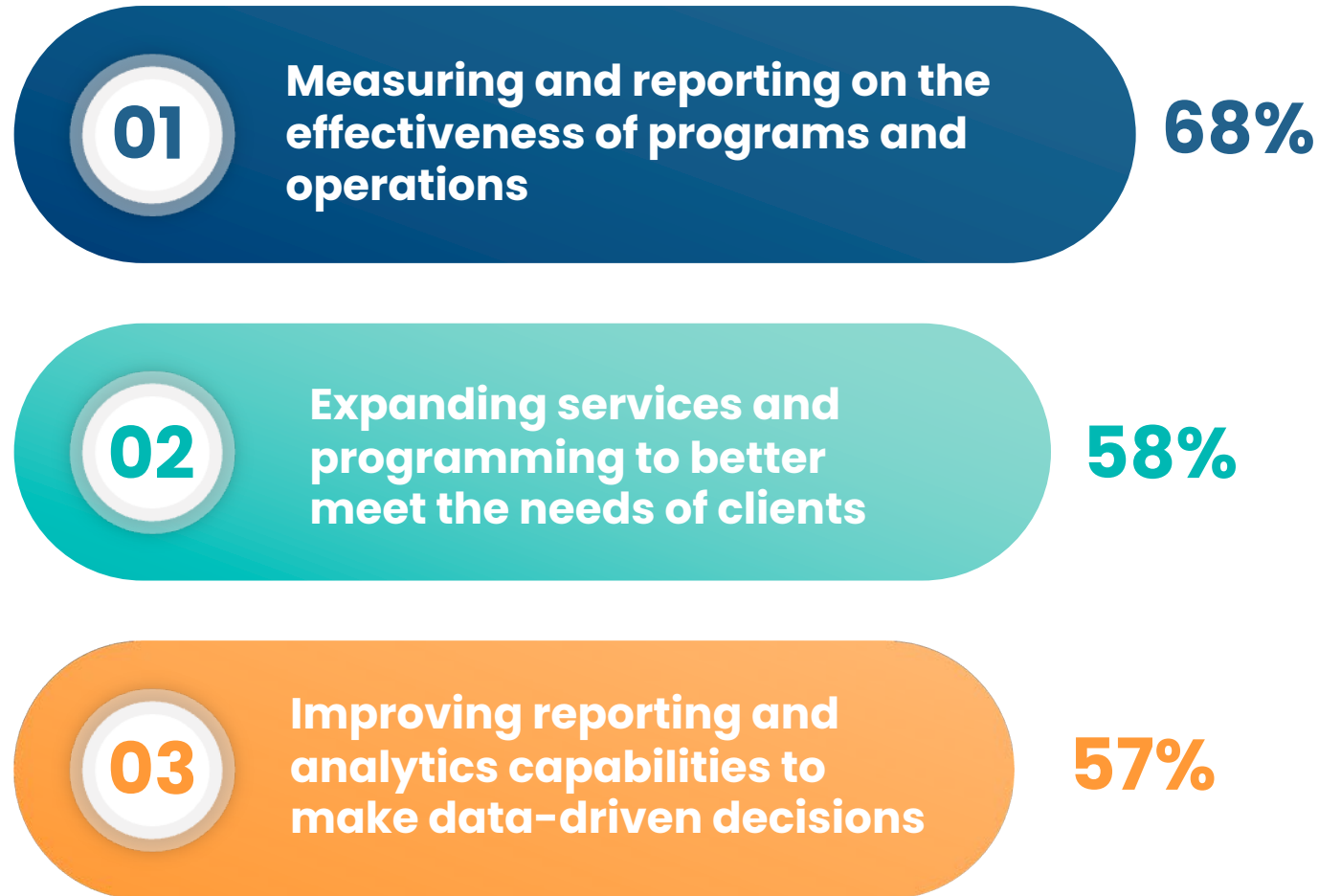
Future of Human Services

Considering employee sentiment, client outcomes, and how operations are helping or hindering progress can all help us narrow down which initiatives to prioritize in the future.

With an understanding of the current state of workplace tech across the organization, the strategic human services leader can begin to plan a clear path forward.

Priorities for the Future

At the end of the survey, after being asked to think about the employee experience, client experience, and operational outcomes, respondents took a moment to answer a final question about their organization's future priorities. These top three priorities are:



Conclusion

Together, these priorities indicate a change in focus from the past year. While 2020 was a year defined by resilience and a focus on people and culture, 2021 builds on successes seen in those areas to focus more on improving efficiencies and enabling organizational growth.

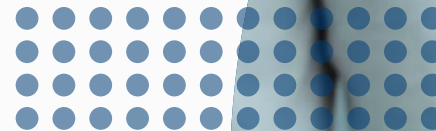
These priorities can be accomplished with the right tech enablement to streamline processes and illuminate the insights needed to drive the organization forward.

As shown throughout the report, the future of human services is mobile, integrated, and automated.

About ContinuumCloud

A spectrum of solutions for social good

ContinuumCloud offers a spectrum of cloud-based software solutions intentionally designed to meet the unique needs of the behavioral health and human services industry. These solutions include an EHR platform, powered by Welligent, and an HR & Payroll system, powered by DATIS HR Cloud. Through these offerings, ContinuumCloud empowers organizations to provide high-quality care and deliver on their mission.





A spectrum of solutions designed specifically for
organizations that do social good in our communities.

www.continuumcloud.com

© 2021 ContinuumCloud. All rights reserved.