

State of UX Hiring Report 2024

Your practical guide to landing a job in UX



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Foreword

We're driven by the belief that people deserve meaningful and rewarding careers, and UX provides both.

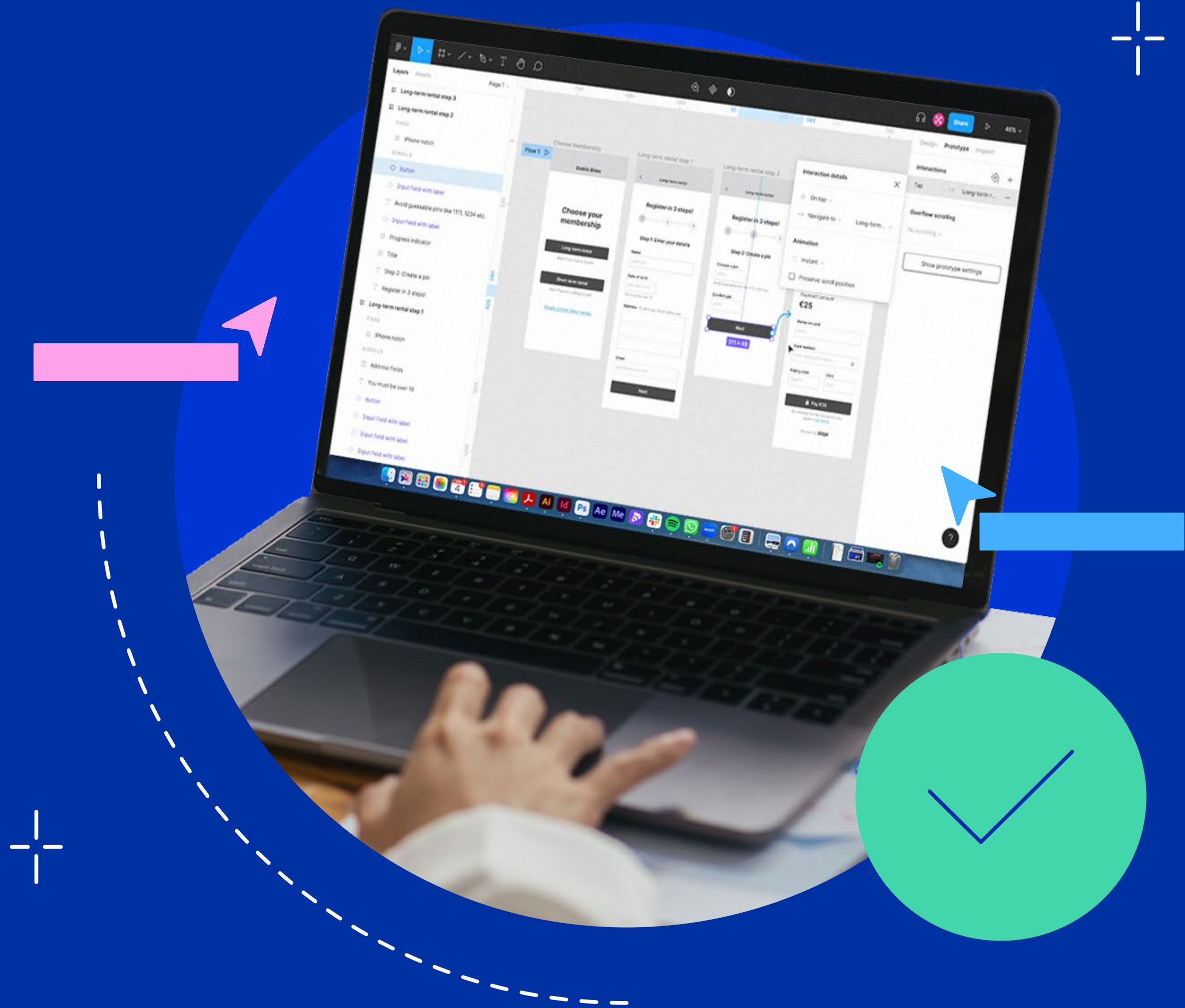
It's an exciting combination of software, psychology and design. And it guides technology towards positive ends: solving real problems for real people.

This report is designed to help people pursue successful careers in UX by providing aspiring UX professionals with practical advice on how to break into the industry and land their first job.

Thanks for reading our report and being part of our community.



Colman Walsh
CEO
UX Design Institute



Introduction

A career in UX allows you to apply your creativity to solve real problems for people. UX skills are in demand worldwide, so there are significant job opportunities and competitive salaries available. For these reasons, UX has become an increasingly popular career choice over the past few years. Like any sought-after career, the UX job market can be competitive. So, it is important that aspiring UX professionals understand what they need to do in order to land their first job.

This report offers insights and practical advice on how to break into the UX industry, from the perspective of both recent hires and those responsible for hiring. It answers important questions about the requirements for portfolios, educational qualifications, practical skills and previous experience. The report reveals hiring predictions for 2024, as well as longer-term expectations around the demand for UX professionals. It also explores what it's like to work in the industry, looking at levels of career and salary satisfaction amongst

UX professionals, as well as their outlook for the future of their careers. Given the significant emergence of AI within the field of UX and beyond, the report also examines perspectives on AI now, and predictions for how it will evolve.

We hope this report will provide you with valuable information to help kick-start your career in UX.

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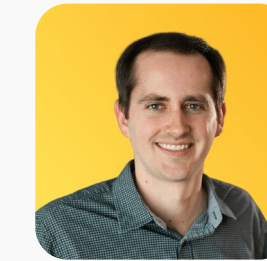
 UX Design Institute



Grace Ling

Founder, Design Buddies

 Design Buddies



Mitchell Clements

Senior Product Design Manager, nCino

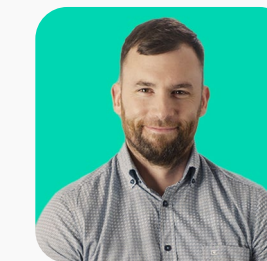
 ncino.



Piyush Arora

Senior Interaction Designer, Google AI

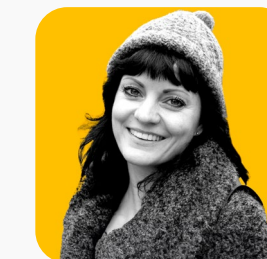
 Google



Ronan Costello

Director of Experience Design, Analog Devices

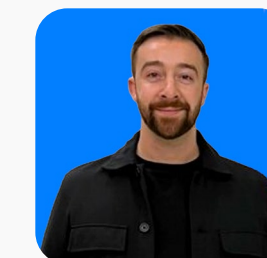
 ANALOG DEVICES



Sarah Fox

Staff Product Designer, Etsy

 Etsy



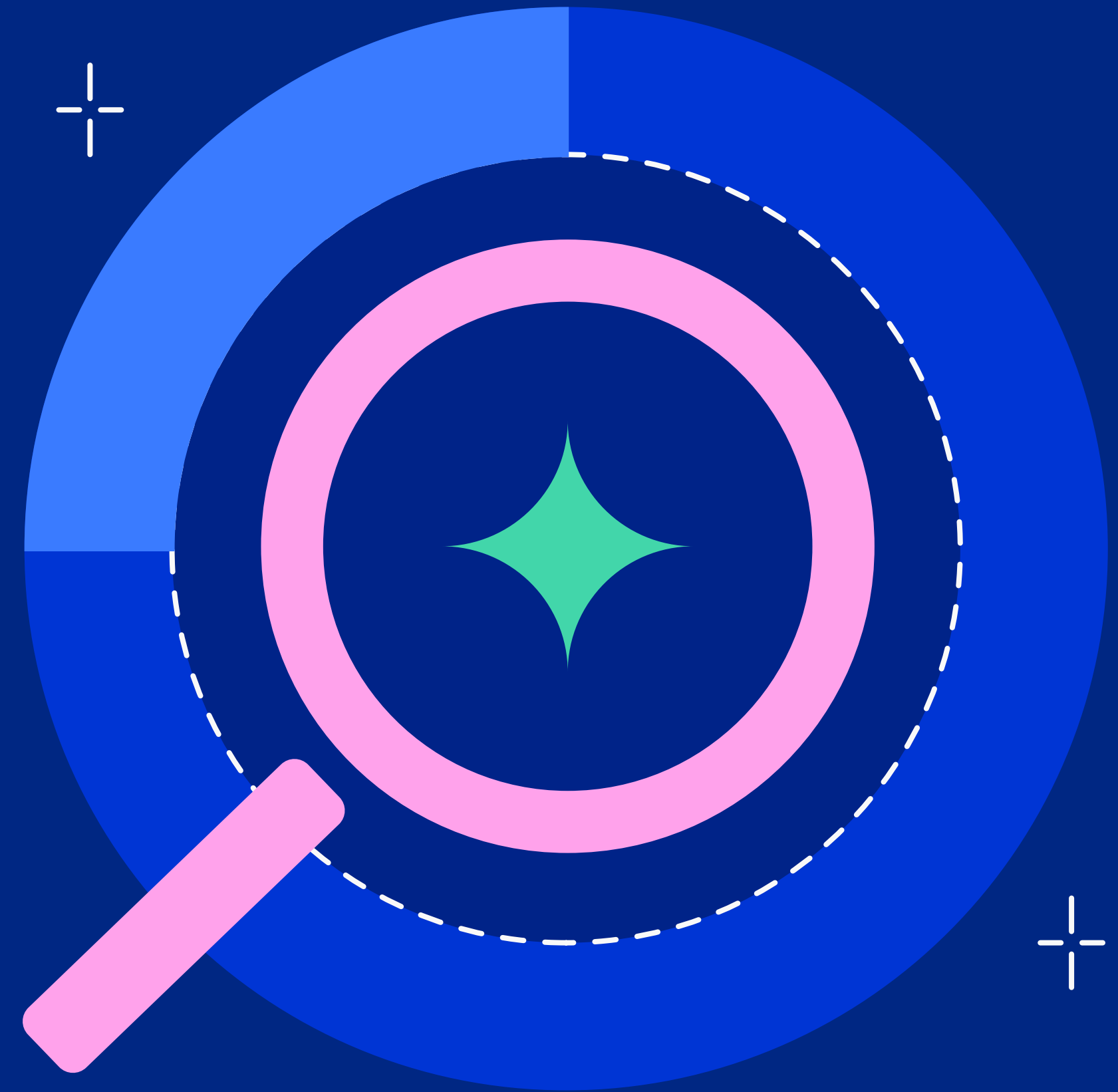
Stephen Kennedy

Head of UX, Etihad Airways

 ETIHAD AIRWAYS



Report highlights at a glance





68%
 of those responsible for hiring expect demand for UX skills at their company/organisation to increase over the next 1–2 years

*20% increase significantly, 48% increase somewhat



76%
 of UX professionals had a previous non-UX career before moving into UX



No.1
 Problem-solving is the top skill hiring managers would look for in an entry-level candidate



90%
 of those responsible for hiring say an entry-level candidate's portfolio is an important part of their application

*32% very important, 31% important, 27% somewhat important



77%
 of hiring managers would look for an entry-level candidate to have a UX qualification

*52% certificate or diploma in UX, 23% Bachelor's degree in UX, 2% Master's degree in UX



92%
 of UX professionals are satisfied in their career

*32% very satisfied, 41% satisfied, 19% somewhat satisfied



70%
 of UX professionals have received a salary increase within the past year



69%
 of UX professionals have found AI useful in their day-to-day work

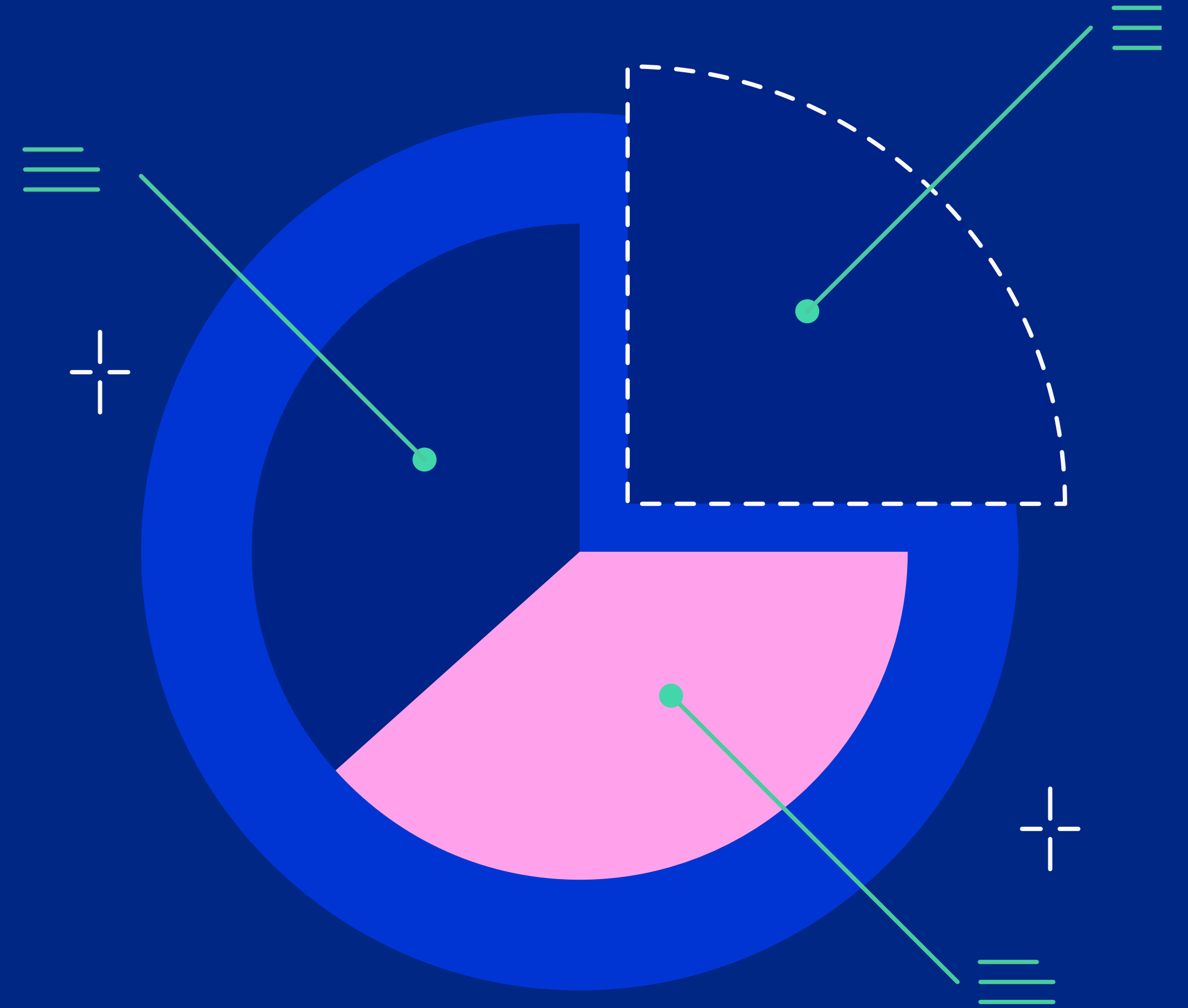
*19% very useful, 23% useful, 27% somewhat useful



88%
 of UX professionals feel positive about their future career

*25% very positive, 40% positive, 23% somewhat positive

Report findings deep-dive



Demand for UX skills and 2024 hiring plans

High demand for UX skills is expected to continue in 2024 (and beyond)

An important question for anyone considering a new career centres around demand and whether or not companies will be recruiting. We understand this is particularly pertinent at the moment, given layoffs within BigTech during 2023 and early 2024. To help answer this, we asked those responsible for hiring whether they believe demand for UX skills at their company or organisation will increase, decrease or stay the same over the next 1–2 years.

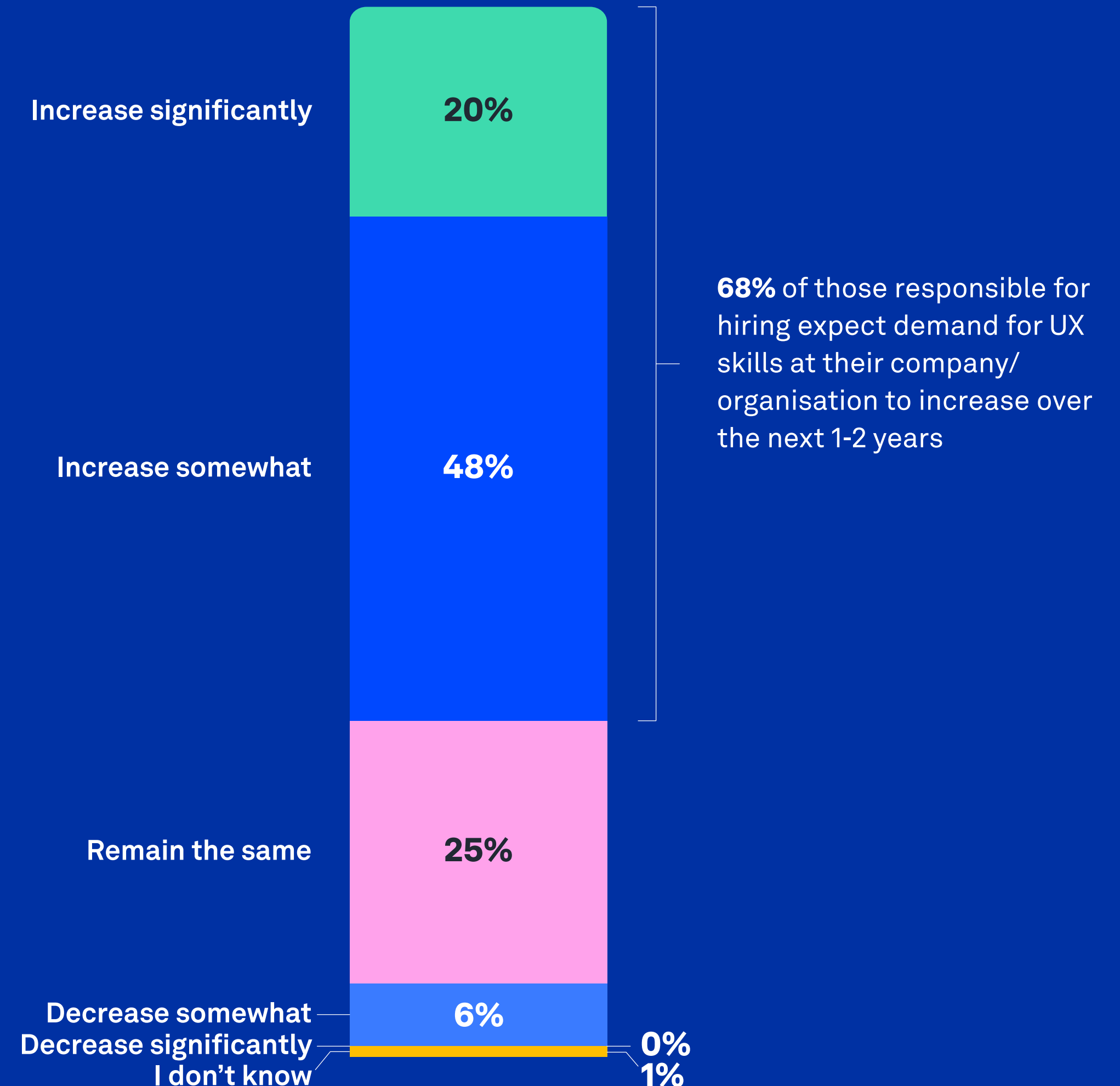
Our results reveal an optimistic outlook from hiring managers, with over two-thirds (68%) saying they expect demand to increase. Of these, 1 in 5 (20%) expect demand to increase *significantly*. A further 25% expect demand to hold steady, while less than 1 in 10 (6%) expect to see any decrease in demand.

Ronan Costello, Director of Experience Design at Analog Devices explains how generative AI will contribute to this increasing demand for UX professionals:



“Demand remains strong for UX skill sets, and with the emergence of new technologies like GenAI, this demand is set to continue. UX design and research will continue to play a central role as our physical and virtual worlds become increasingly intertwined.”

Expected demand for UX skills:

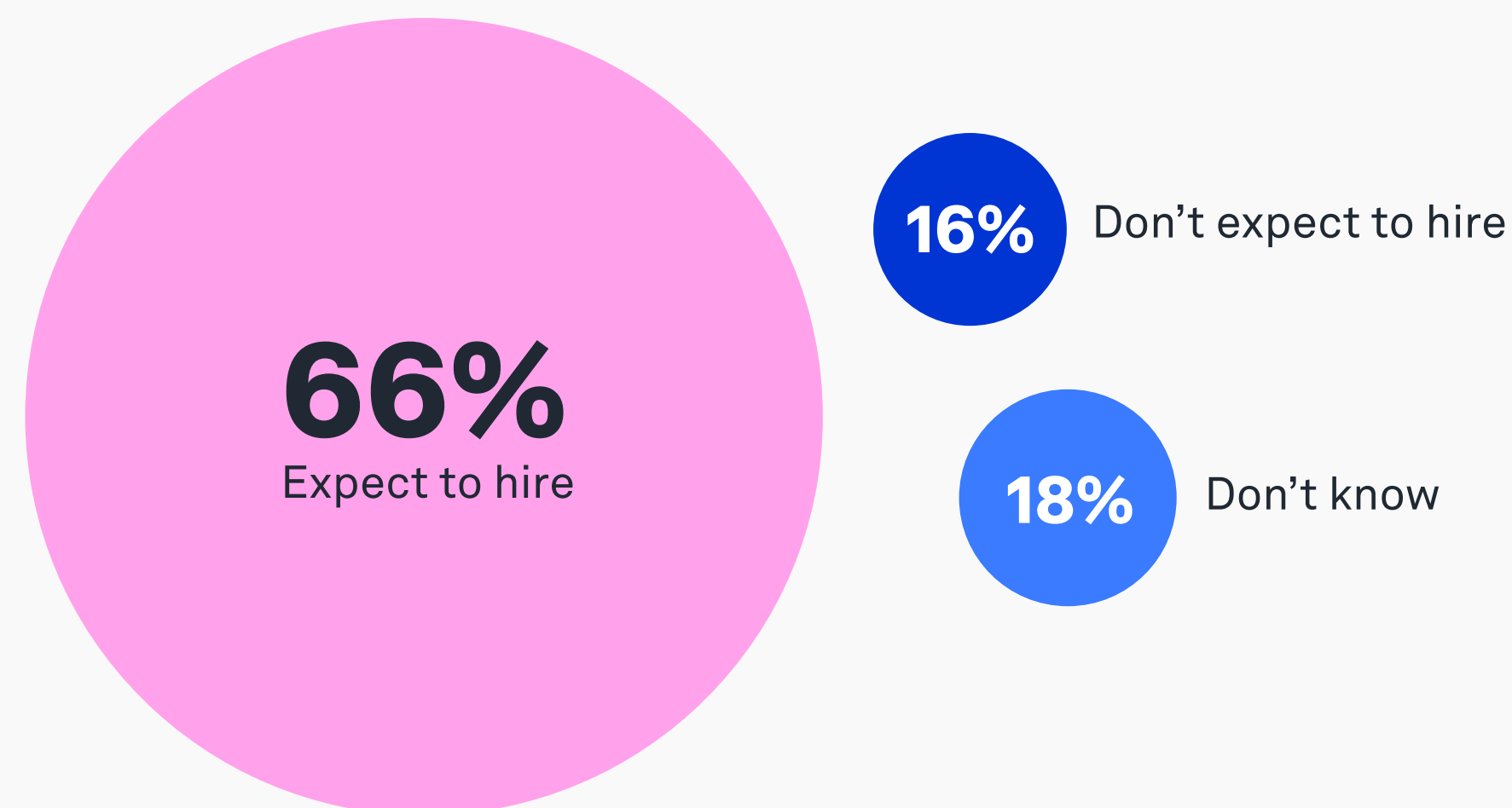


Answered: 109

Those responsible for hiring UX professionals in their current role

We also asked those responsible for hiring whether their company will actually recruit in 2024. Again, the outlook is positive, with two-thirds (66%) saying they do expect UX professionals to be hired this year. Less than 1 in 5 (16%) say they don't expect their company to recruit, while a similar proportion (18%) are unsure.

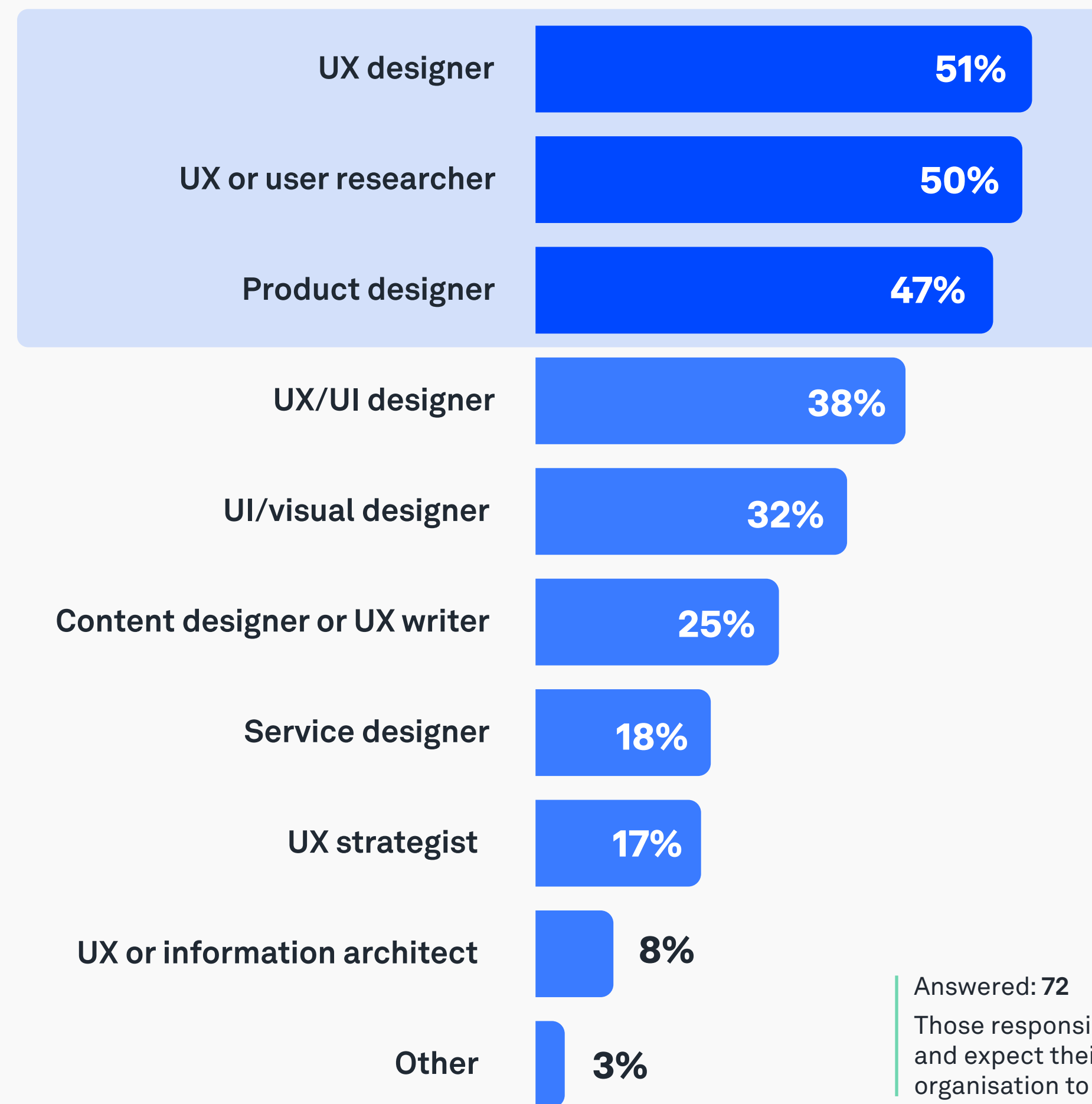
Hiring expectations for 2024:



Answered: 109
Those responsible for hiring UX professionals in their current role

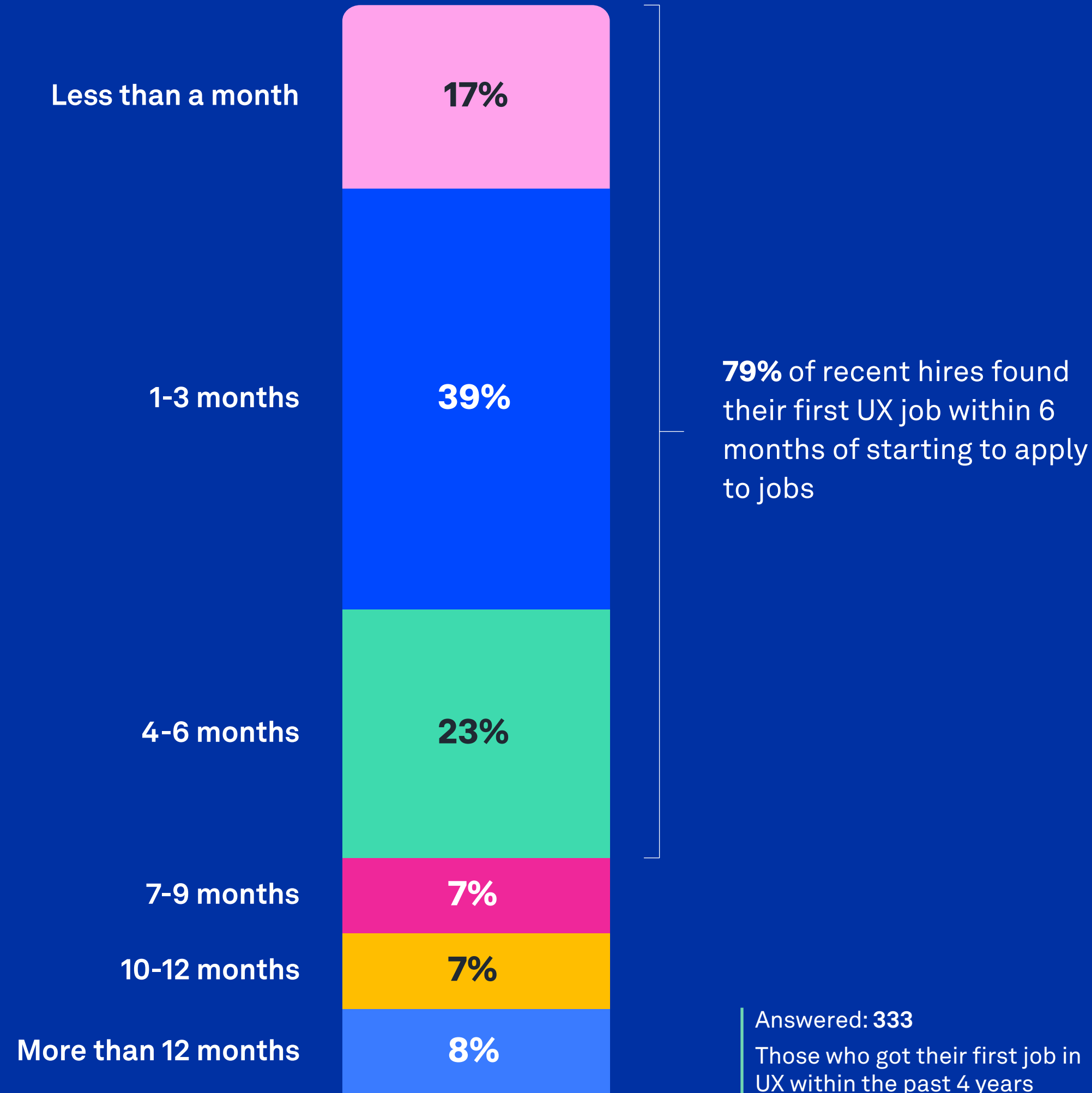
Those who do anticipate hiring, believe that UX designers (51%), UX or user researchers (50%) and product designers (47%) will be top of the recruitment list.

Roles expected to be hired for in 2024:



Answered: 72
Those responsible for hiring and expect their company/organisation to hire in 2024

Time taken to get first UX job:



Swift entry times into the industry speak to the continuing need for UX skills

To understand demand for UX skills from the perspective of recent hires, we asked them how long it took for them to land their first job in UX. The results reveal a relatively short timeframe, with almost 4 in 5 (79%) saying they secured their first role within six months. At the other end of the scale, just 14% of recent hires say it took them between 7–12 months to find their first job, while less than 1 in 10 (8%) say it took over a year.

There are widespread predictions of continuing demand for UX skills

Together, our findings indicate that there is still high demand for UX professionals and that this is set to grow. This outlook is reflected in the results of other industry reports. For example, the [World Economic Forum](#) predicts that AI will create 92 million new digital jobs by 2030. They also forecast that design and user experience will be a top ten priority skill for businesses between 2023 and 2027. According to the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the employment of web developers and digital designers (which encompasses the work of UX designers) is projected to grow 16% from 2022 to 2032. This is much faster than the average for other occupations. Finally, [Forrester](#) is forecasting that global tech spending will reach \$4.7 trillion in 2024, growing 5.3%, which is a significant improvement on 2023's 3.5%.

Routes into the UX industry

Networking is key for accessing job opportunities

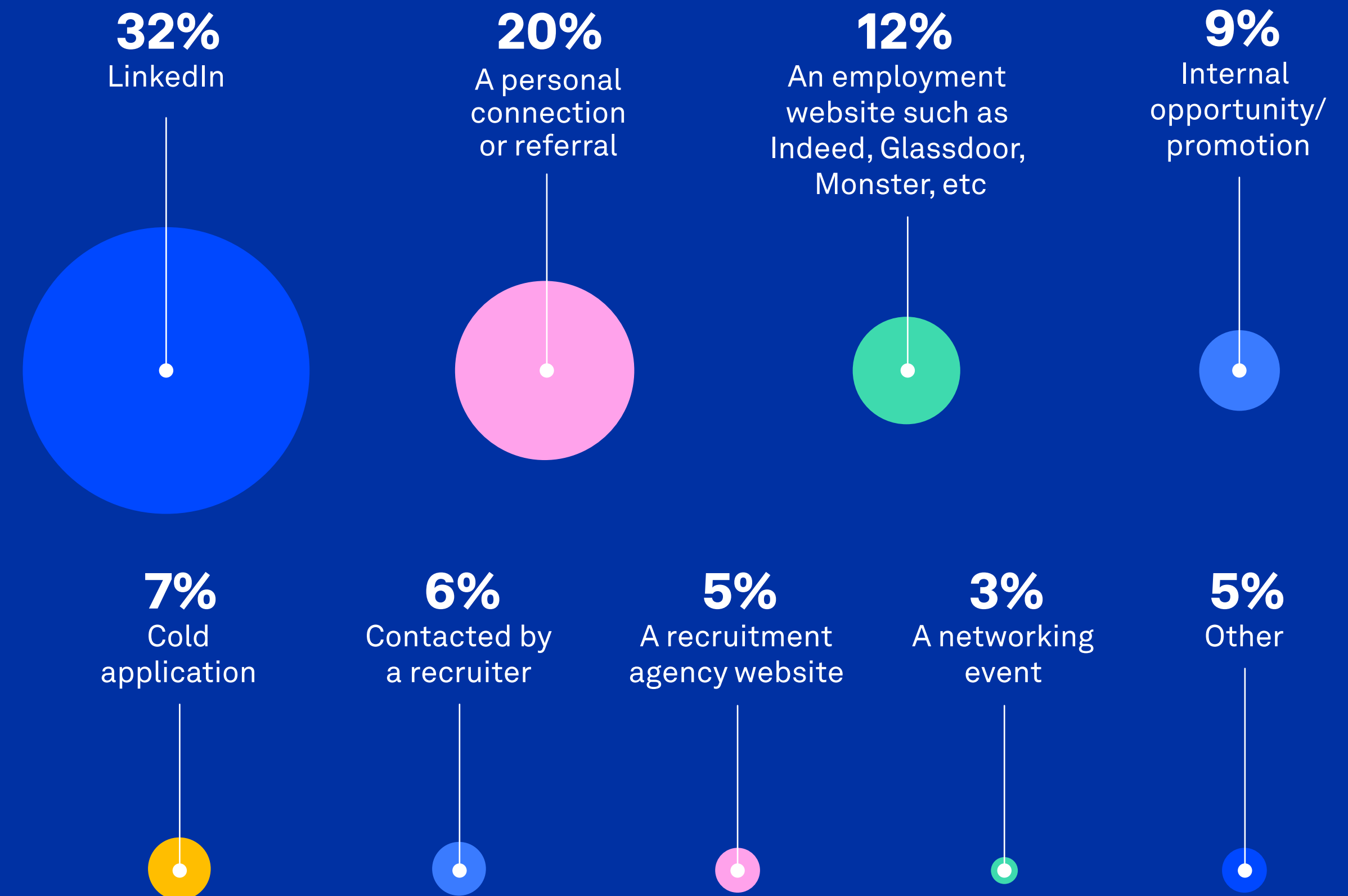
Knowing where to find UX opportunities plays an important role in successfully landing your first job. To help reveal the most lucrative routes into the industry, we asked recent hires where they found their first UX job. Our results show that almost a third (32%) found their first role through the networking site LinkedIn, while 1 in 5 (20%) found it through a personal connection or referral. Interestingly, almost 1 in 10 recent hires (9%) say they got their first UX job through an internal opportunity or promotion. This finding is a reminder of the potential to pave your own UX career path within your current company or organisation.

Grace Ling, Founder of Design Buddies, emphasises the importance of online and in-person networking for accessing job opportunities and enhancing your visibility to hiring managers:



“Personal branding and your connections play a huge role in landing a job. Connect with others on LinkedIn and learn from them. Attend events, both in-person and online to make authentic connections. Instead of looking at other people as competition, focus on what you can learn from each other.”

Where recent hires found their first UX job:



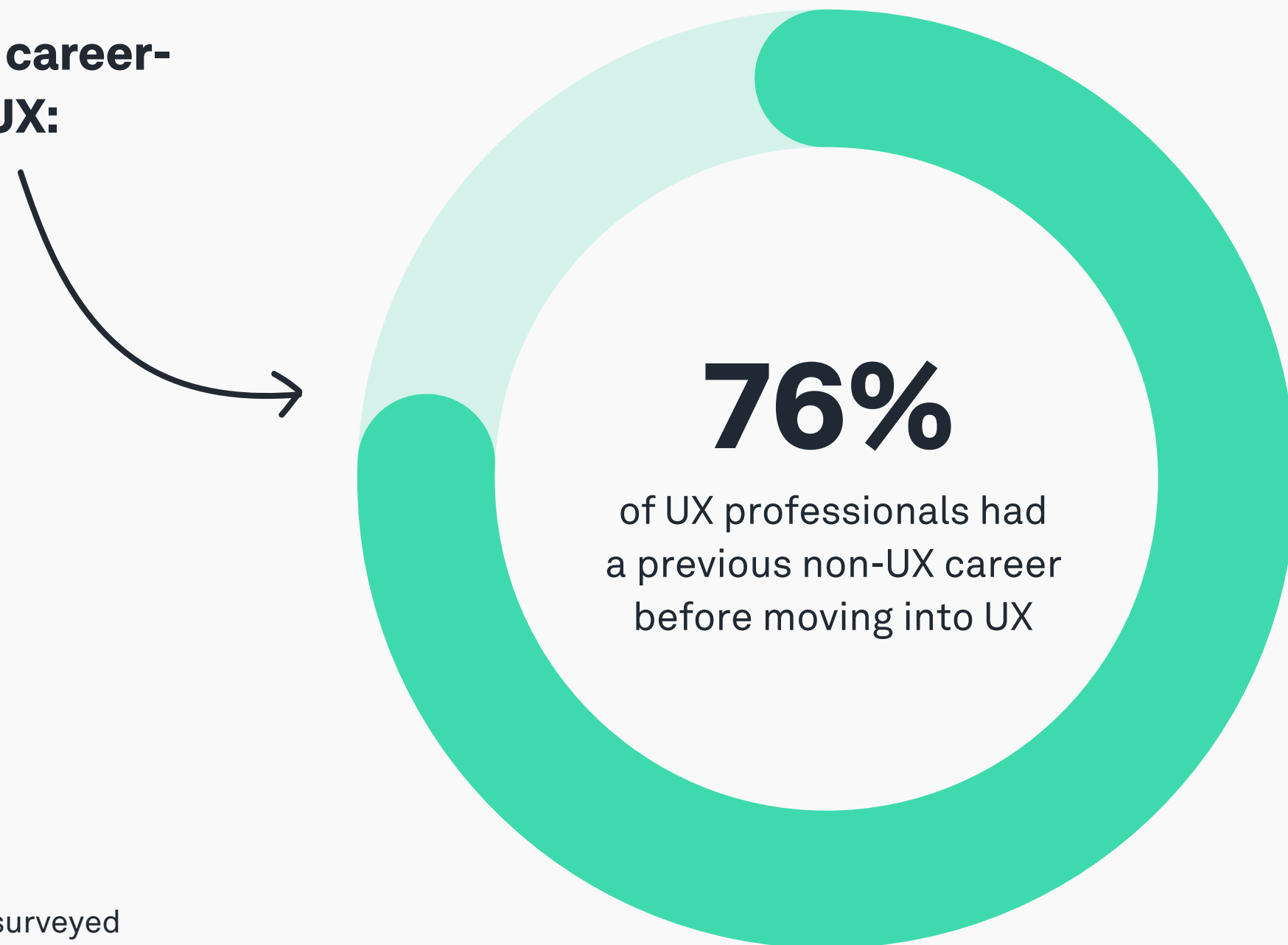
Answered: 332

Those who got their first job in UX within the past 4 years

UX is an industry of career switchers from diverse backgrounds

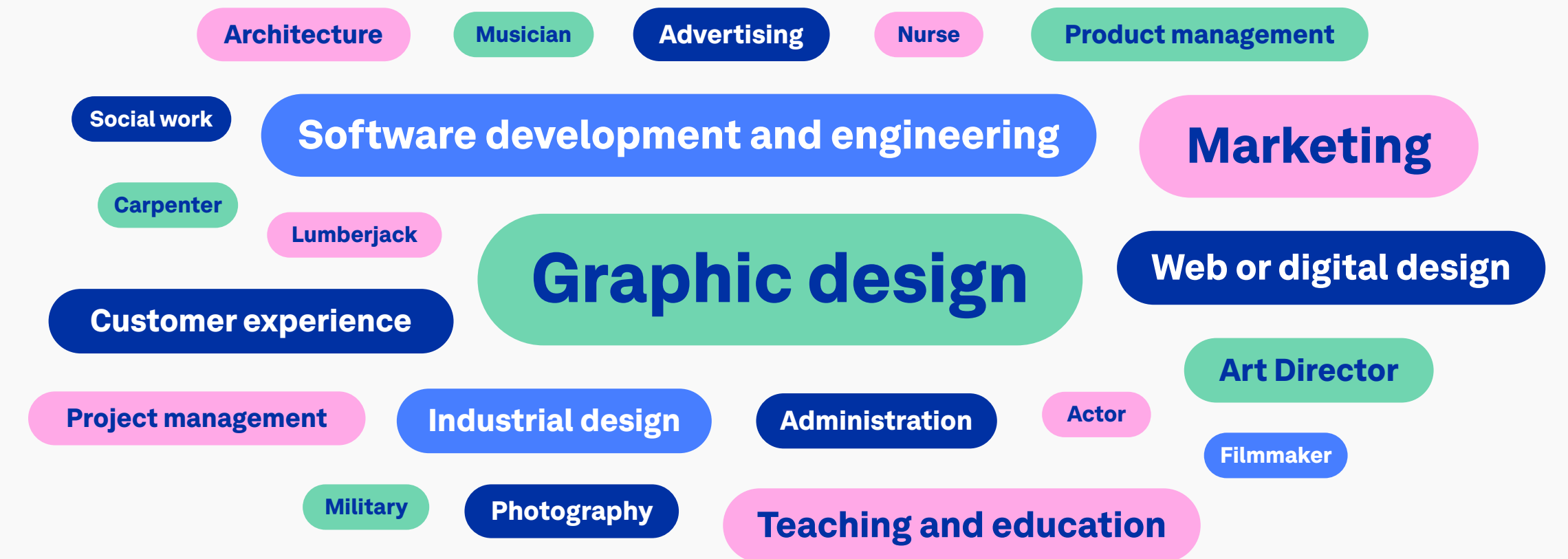
People interested in moving into the UX industry often question whether or not they will be able to successfully make the switch from their current careers. This is a particularly important consideration for those working in non-design careers. To help answer this, we asked UX professionals if they had a previous career before moving into UX. Our findings reveal that a significant proportion (76%) transitioned to UX from another career, meaning less than a quarter (24%) started out their career within the UX industry.

Proportion of career-switchers to UX:



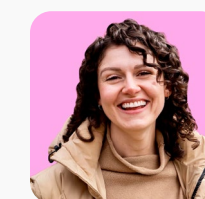
Answered: 537
All UX professionals surveyed

We also asked UX professionals which careers they came from. The results reveal a diverse range of over 80 different backgrounds, from lumberjacks and nurses to actors and musicians. To provide a sense of this diversity, we have included just some of these former careers in the word cloud below. We can see that graphic design is the most common background, however, there is a range of non-design careers too.



*The larger the word, the more times it was mentioned

Emilie Mazurek, Senior Product Designer at VEERUM explains why she believes UX is such an attractive option for people looking to make a career switch:



“One of the reasons I was drawn to UX when I was looking for something new is that there aren’t huge barriers to entry, even if you’re coming from a totally different background like education, hospitality or healthcare. There tends to be lots of overlap with the skills most career switchers already have. Soft skills are arguably far more important than technical skills, so it’s easy to understand why so many people are making a transition to UX.”

Essential skills and experience

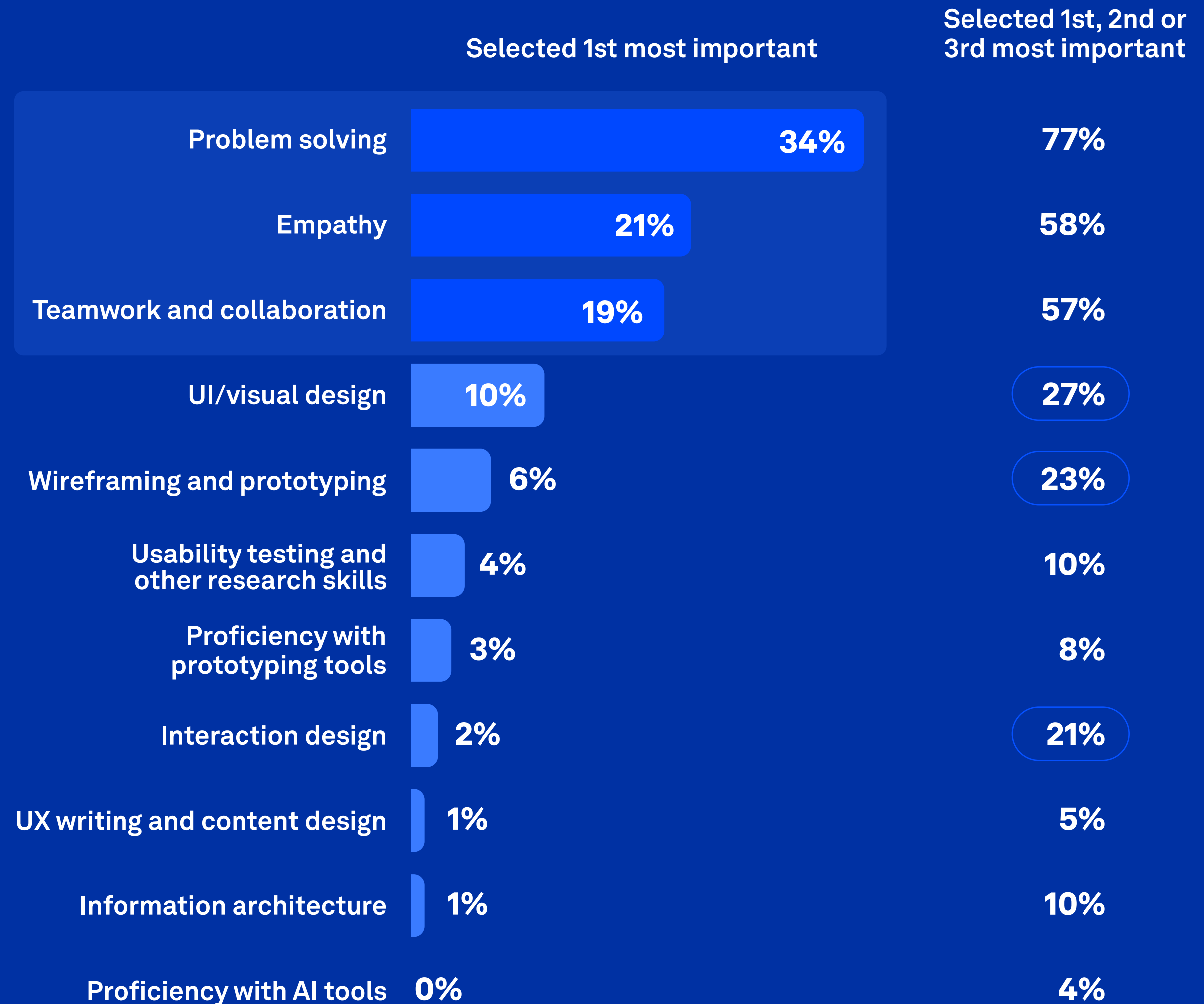
Soft skills are a top priority for hiring managers

Aspiring UX professionals often fear they won't have the skills necessary to successfully make the transition into the industry. To explore this, we asked hiring managers which skills they believe are the most important when it comes to landing a job in UX. Interestingly, the results reveal that the top three are actually soft skills, rather than technical hard skills relating specifically to UX.

Top of the list was problem-solving, chosen as the first most important skill by just over a third of hiring managers (34%). Empathy was the next most commonly selected skill, chosen first by 21% of hiring managers. This was closely followed by teamwork and collaboration, chosen first by 19% of hiring managers. These results point to the perceived value of interpersonal skills, which are not unique to UX and can be developed in many different professional roles.

Nonetheless, there are core hard skills that hiring managers are also on the lookout for. UI and visual design, wireframing and prototyping, and interaction design were all chosen as top three priority skills by over 1 in 5 hiring managers (27%, 23% and 21% respectively). Interestingly, despite the significant emergence of AI within the UX industry, proficiency with AI tools was selected in the top three by only 4% of hiring managers.

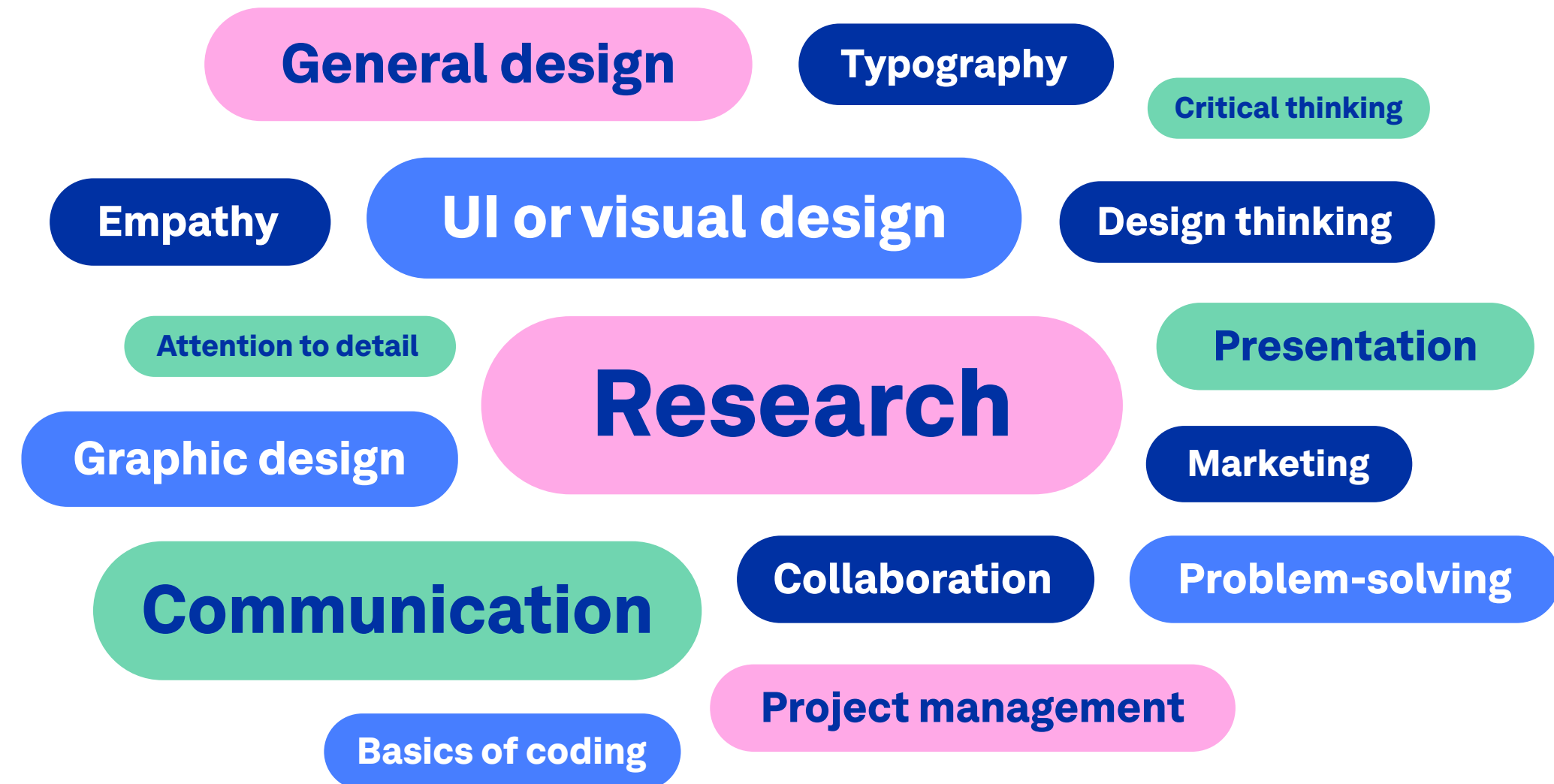
Most important skills for an entry-level UX designer:



Answered: 107

Those responsible for hiring UX professionals in their current role

To add to these insights, we also asked career switchers which skills from their previous roles were most helpful to them in their transition to UX. Over 100 different skills were mentioned. We've included some of the most commonly mentioned skills in the word cloud below.



*The larger the word, the more times it was mentioned

Here are just some of the quotes from career switchers who completed our survey, telling us which skills helped them in their transition to UX.

“The ability to do research for clients was something I really appreciated when transitioning to UX. It was a smooth change because of the similarity in mindset between the two roles.”

Graphic Designer → UX Lead

“Having a basic understanding of coding, the HTML and CSS behind the design of websites. Understanding the role of developers and how they work.”

Marketing Professional → UX Design Specialist

“Problem solving! Finishing a song requires you to think critically as well as being creative.”

Musician → UX/UI Designer

“Managing a restaurant and years of customer experience massively helped me understand customers and pick up on nuances.”

Restaurant Manager → UX/UI Designer

“Presentation skills from teaching and dealing with high pressure situations from my customer service roles.”

Teacher → UX/UI Designer

Practical experience is not *always* essential

Many UX job descriptions, even those for entry-level roles, specify previous UX work experience as a necessary requirement. To explore the reality of this, we asked those responsible for hiring if they would consider an application from an entry-level candidate with no previous UX work experience.

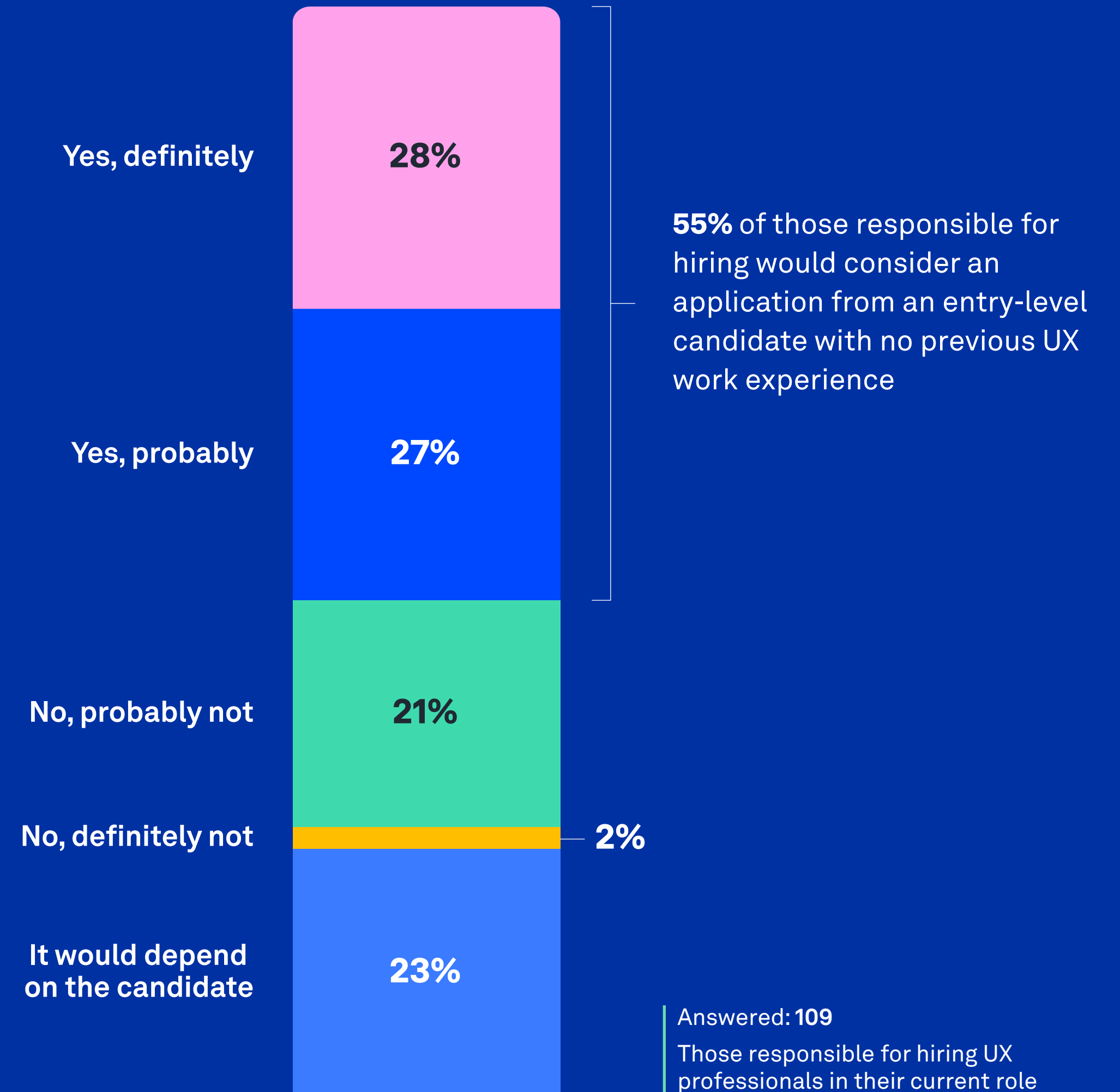
Our results reveal that over half (55%) of hiring managers would consider an entry-level candidate without prior experience — of these, over 1 in 4 (28%) say they *definitely* would. A further 23% say it would depend on the person. While 21% say they probably wouldn't consider a candidate without experience, only a very small proportion of 2% say they *definitely* wouldn't.

These results suggest that not having previous industry experience does not mean the door to UX is closed. **Eoghain Cooper, Career Advisor at the UX Design Institute**, explains why aspiring UX professionals should apply to jobs they believe they would be a good fit for, even if they don't meet all of the minimum requirements:



“Previous UX experience isn't always necessary to secure a role in the field. People come from careers in a range of different industries and transferable skills are valued by hiring managers. I see many candidates who are intimidated by job descriptions that contain a long list of 'required' skills. In reality, this is a wish list. The perfect candidate doesn't exist, so as long as you possess 50%+ of what they are looking for, it is definitely worth applying.”

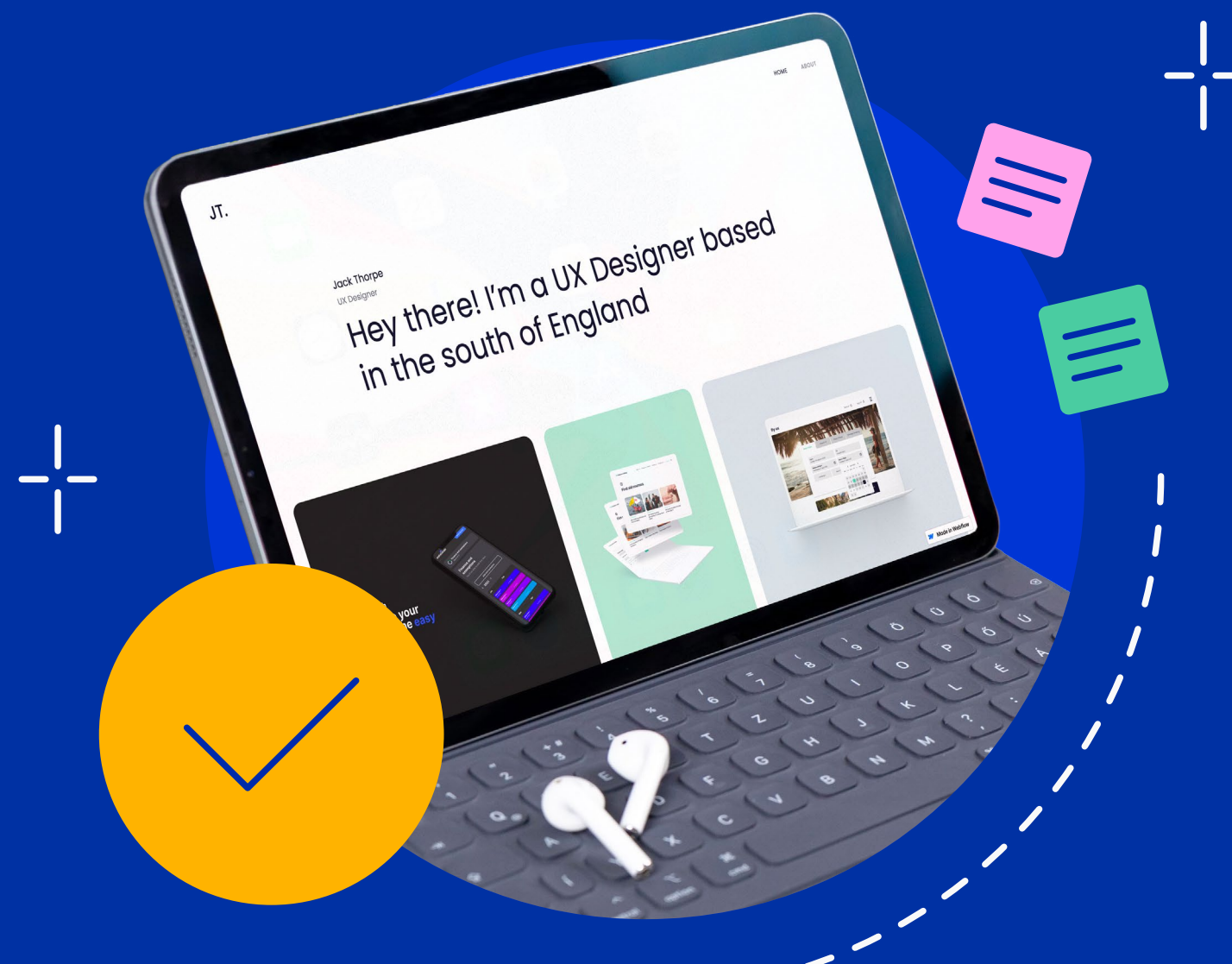
Willingness to consider entry-level candidate with no UX experience:



Portfolio advice and recommendations

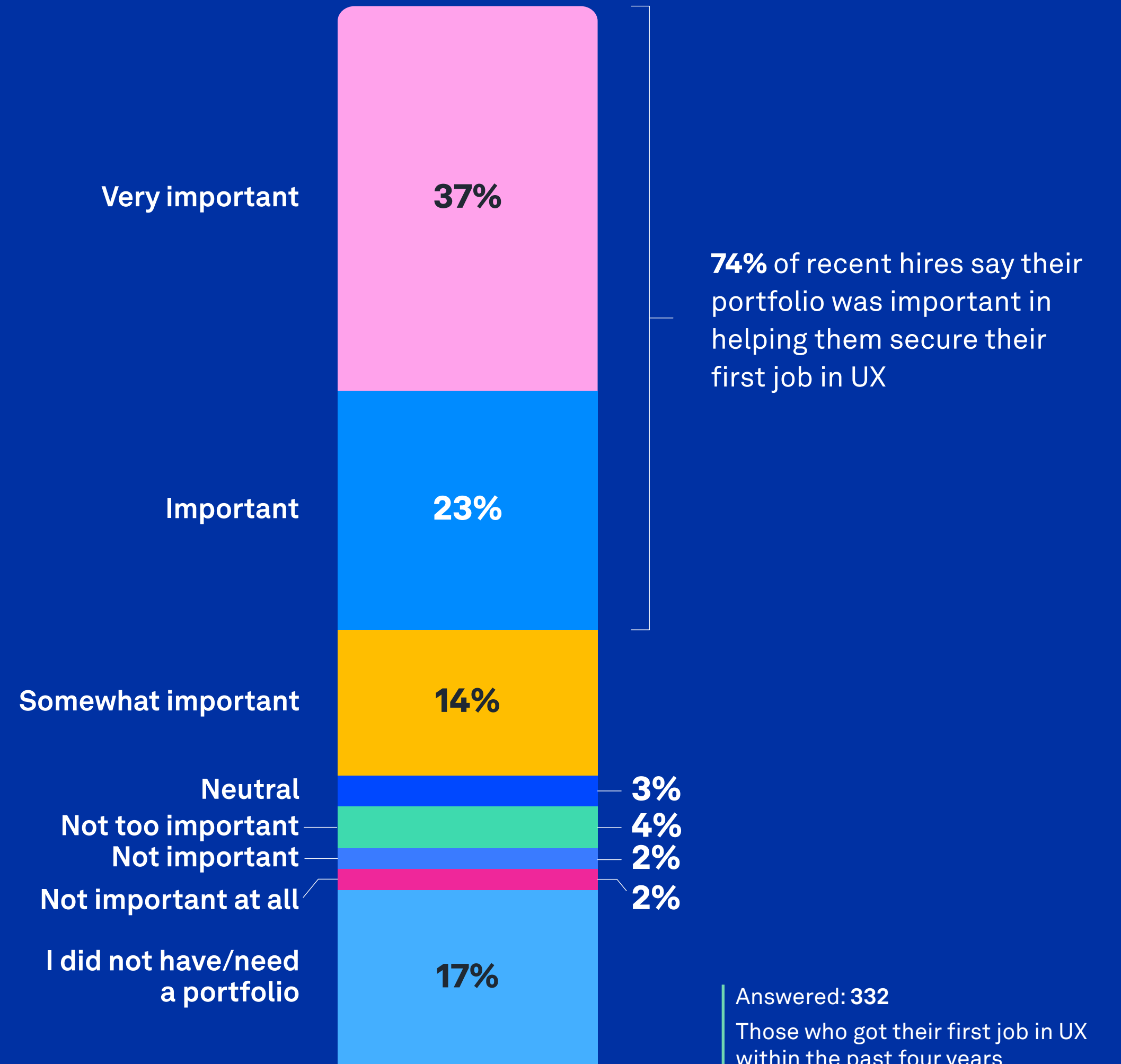
A portfolio is essential for landing your first UX job

Aspiring UX professionals often wonder if having a portfolio is a mandatory component of job applications. To help answer this, we asked recent hires how important their portfolio was in helping them secure their first job in UX. The results highlight the portfolio as a key ingredient, with just under three-quarters (74%) saying it was important in helping them land their first UX role. Of these, over a third (37%) say it was very important.



Source: Jack Thorpe

Importance of a portfolio in securing first UX role:



We also explored the perspective of hiring managers by asking them how important an entry-level candidate's portfolio is when they are evaluating applications.

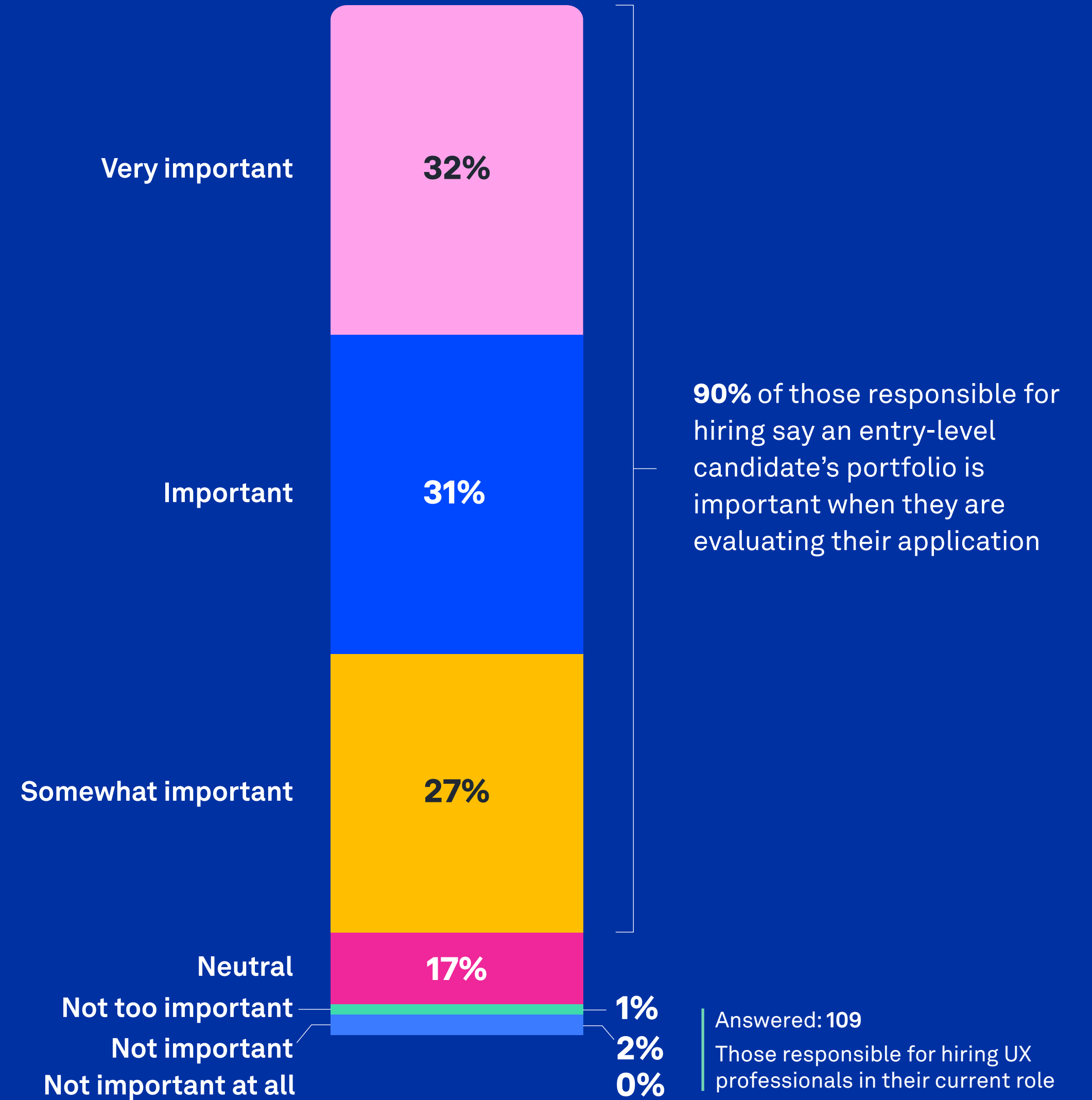
Here the results reveal the necessity of having a portfolio even more clearly. 90% of those responsible for hiring say they consider a portfolio to be an important element of an entry-level candidate's application — of these, almost a third (32%) say it is very important.

Ronan Costello, Director of Experience Design at Analog Devices explains how a well-crafted portfolio can help you stand out in the job market:



“Whilst demand for UX professionals is significant, the candidate pool for roles is competitive. Hiring managers are seeing a lot of applicants, so candidates should spend some time refining their ‘pitch’ to help them stand out. That means matching their portfolio and outreach to both the type of work they are most passionate about doing and the industry they want to work in. Generic applications and portfolios are likely to be overlooked.”

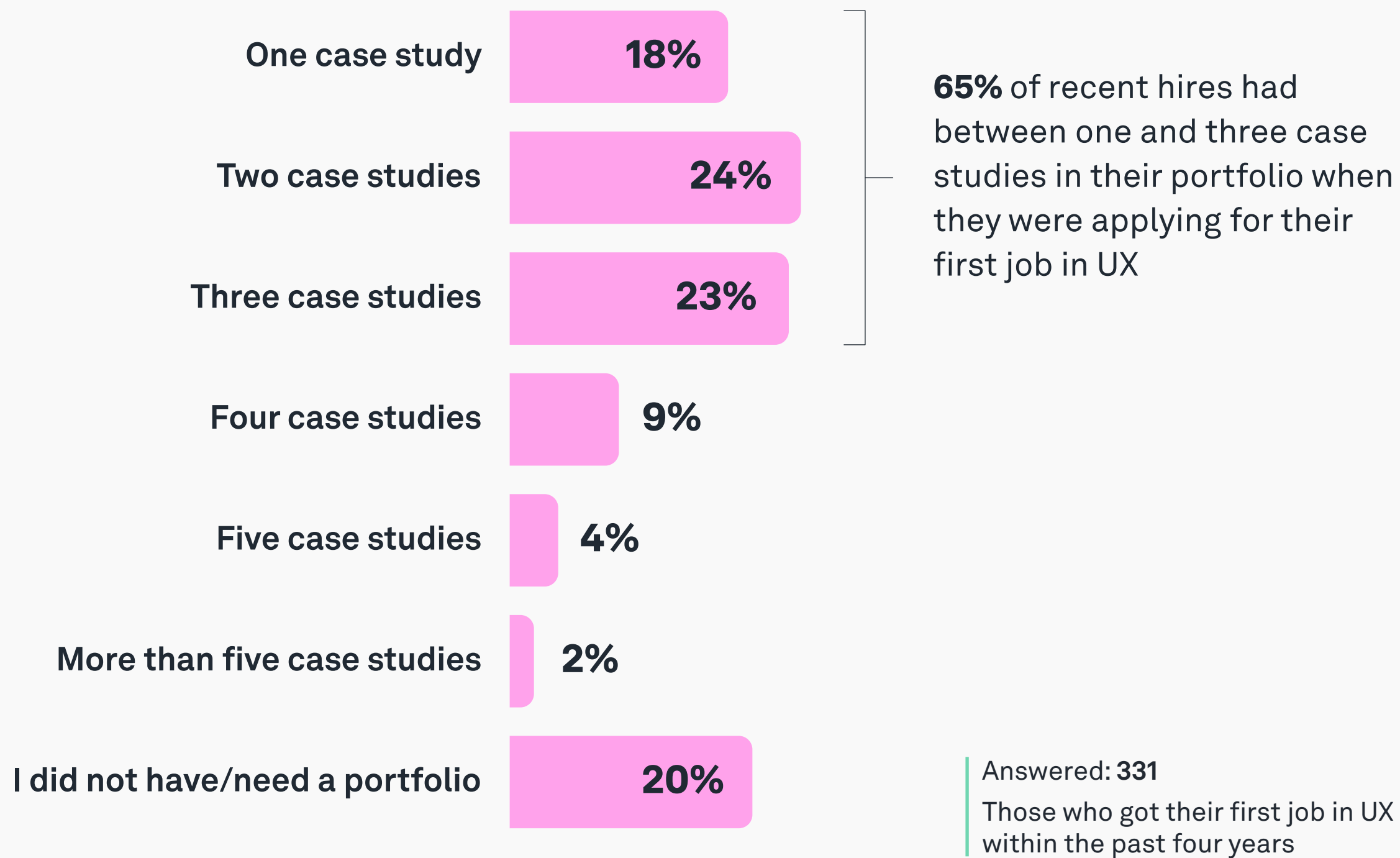
Importance of a portfolio to hiring managers:



Quality trumps quantity when it comes to case studies

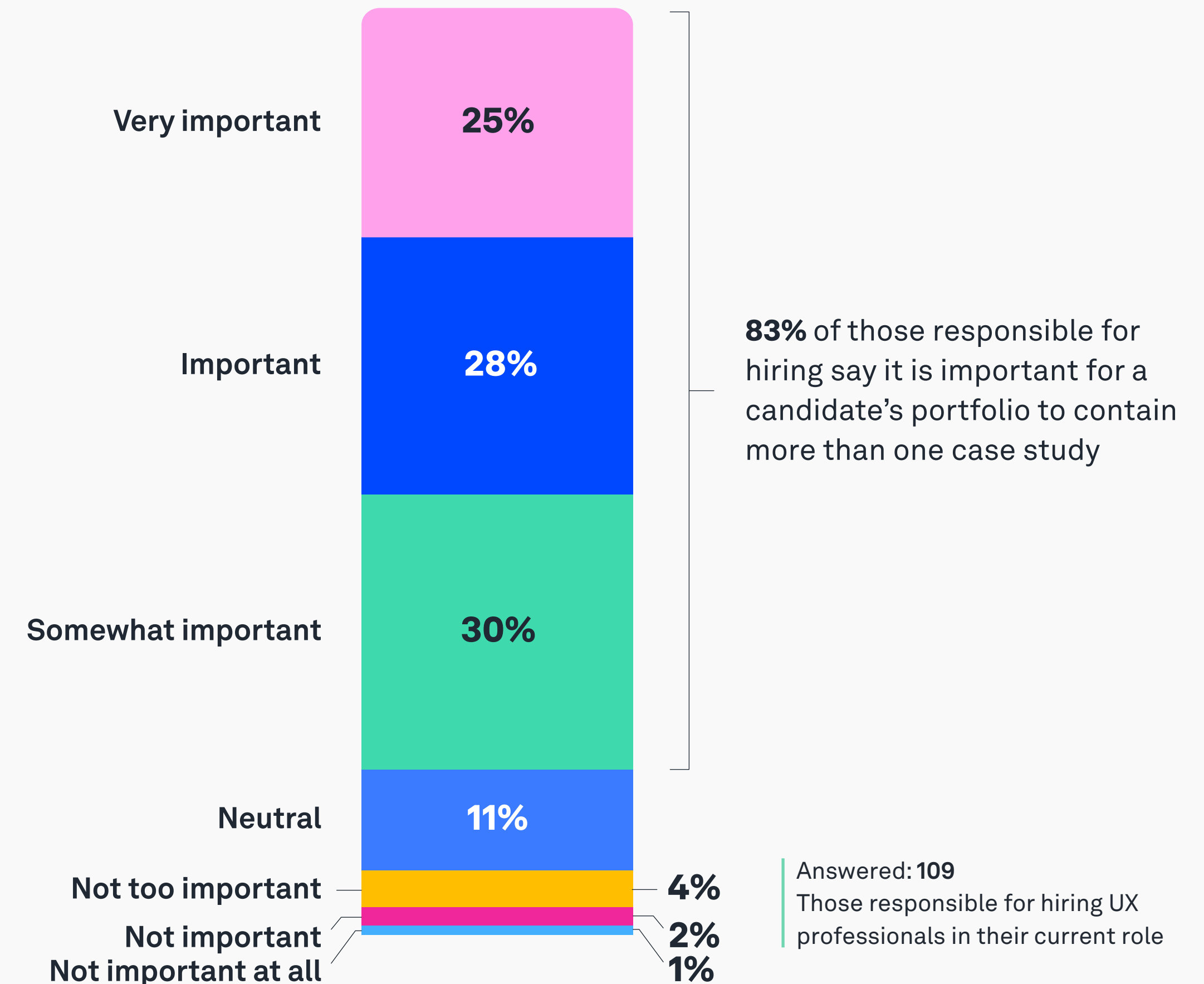
Another common query relating to portfolios surrounds the number of case studies that are required. In order to provide guidance on this, we asked recent hires how many case studies they had in their portfolio when they were applying for their first UX job. The results reveal that just under two-thirds (65%) had between one and three case studies. A comparatively low proportion of recent hires (15%) had more than three case studies.

Number of portfolio case studies when applying for first UX job:



We also asked those responsible for hiring how important it is for an entry-level candidate’s portfolio to contain more than one case study. The results reveal that over 4 in 5 hiring managers (83%) believe that having more than one case study is important — of these, a quarter (25%) believe it is very important.

Importance of having more than one case study:

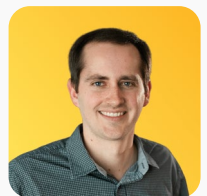


Our results show that the preference of hiring managers is to see more than one case study in a portfolio. But can you start applying to UX jobs if you only have one case study to show? **Eoghain Cooper, Career Advisor at the UX Design Institute** shares their expertise:

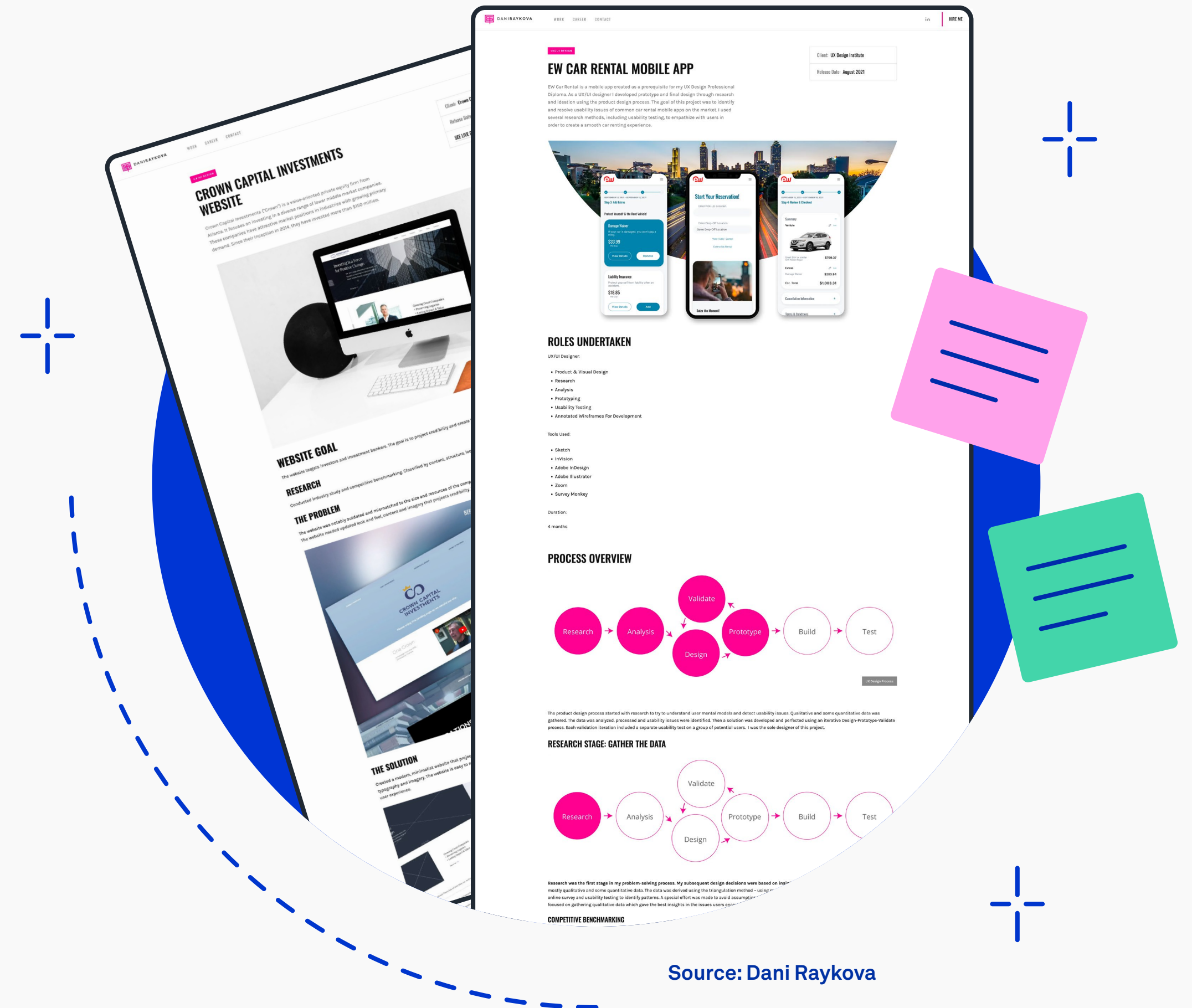


“Your UX design portfolio is your first real opportunity to show hiring managers what you’re capable of, but you don’t need loads of projects. One or two case studies are enough to get your foot in the door, as long as they’re well thought-out and communicated. You can always continue to build your portfolio to three or four case studies as you gain this experience.”

Mitchell Clements, Senior Product Design Manager at nCino, also emphasises the importance of quality over quantity when it comes to case studies:



“In the current hiring market, portfolios are no longer a ‘nice to have’. They’ve become a ‘must have’. But hiring teams are receiving a high volume of applications and only have time to skim 1–2 case studies. My recommendation is instead of showing all of your work, focus on showing your best work.”



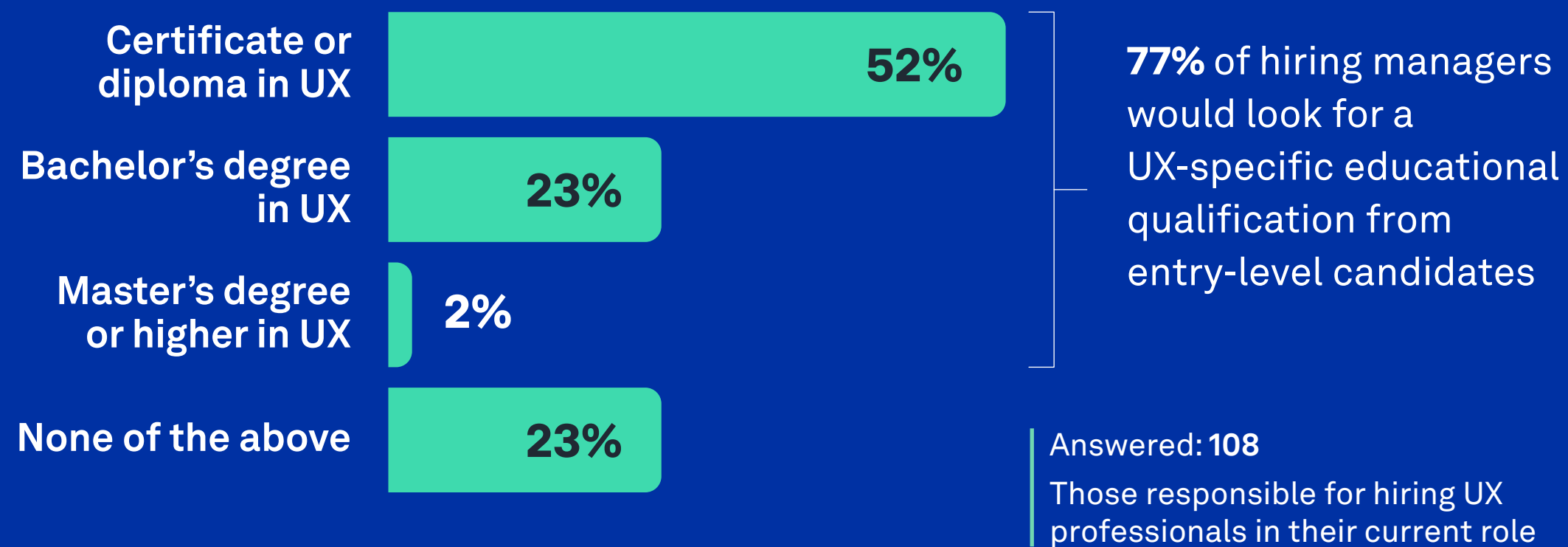
Source: Dani Raykova

Educational requirements for a career in UX

Hiring managers value UX-specific education (but you don't need a degree in UX)

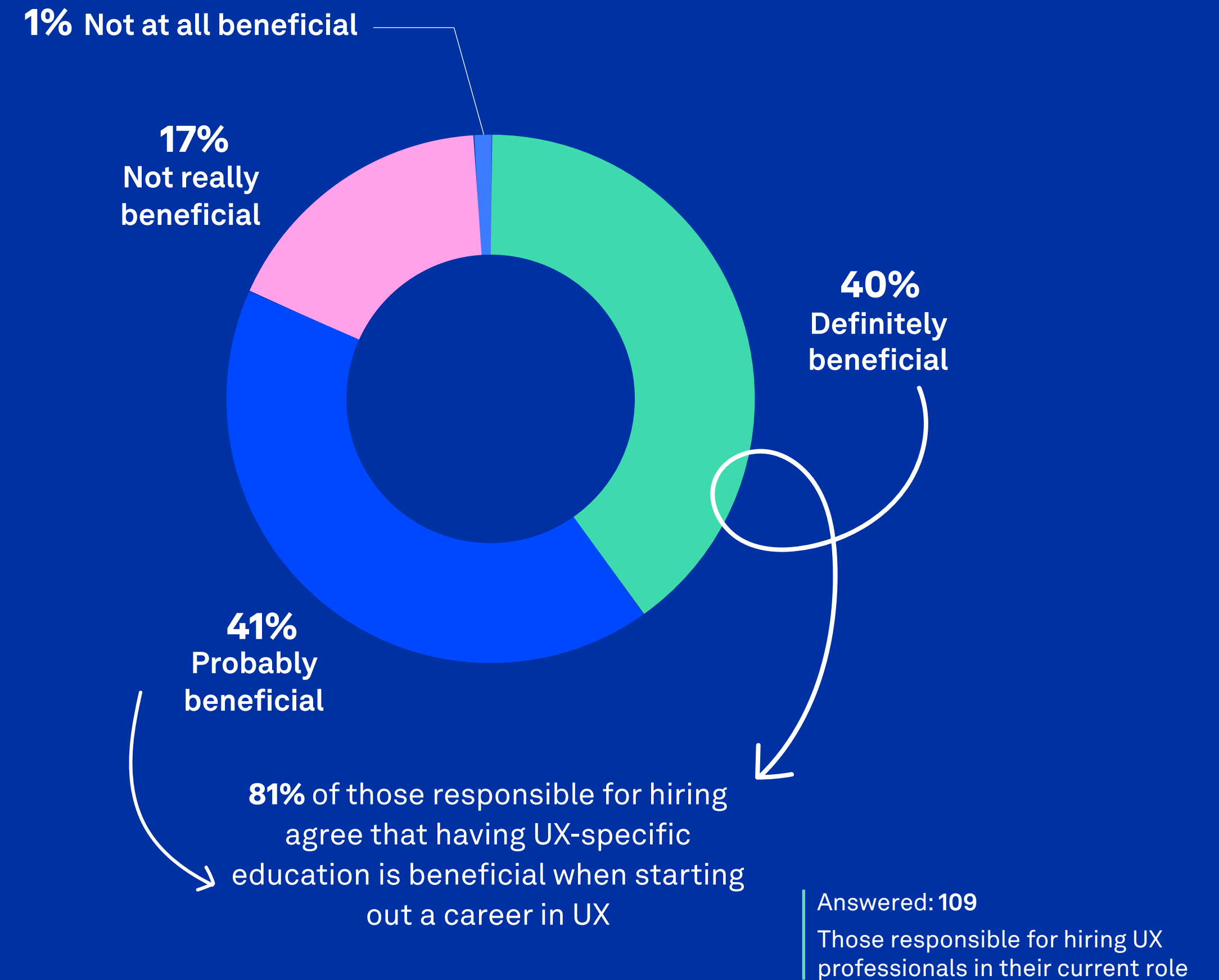
Do you need a degree in UX to land a job in the industry? This is a question often voiced by aspiring UX professionals. To help answer this, we asked those responsible for hiring what level of UX-specific education they would look for from an entry-level candidate. The results show that over two-thirds (77%) of hiring managers would look for some form of UX qualification. The majority (52%) would expect a certificate or diploma in UX. The majority (52%) would expect a certificate or diploma in UX. Just under a quarter (23%) would look for a Bachelor's degree in UX. Only a very small minority (2%) would expect a Master's degree or higher in UX. A further 23% would not look for any UX-specific education.

Hiring managers' expectations for UX-specific education:



Our results also reveal that hiring managers see value in entry-level candidates having this kind of formal UX knowledge. 81% believe having a UX educational qualification is beneficial when starting out in the industry. Of these, 40% believe it is *definitely* beneficial.

Hiring managers' perceived benefit of UX-specific education:



Stephen Kennedy, Head of UX at Etihad Airways explains why he values candidates with an educational qualification in UX:



“Formal education equips candidates with in-depth knowledge of the full UX process, making them well-rounded, valuable professionals. I prioritise candidates with this background, as they offer a more holistic design perspective, as well as a clear understanding of how to deliver business value through seamless digital experiences.”

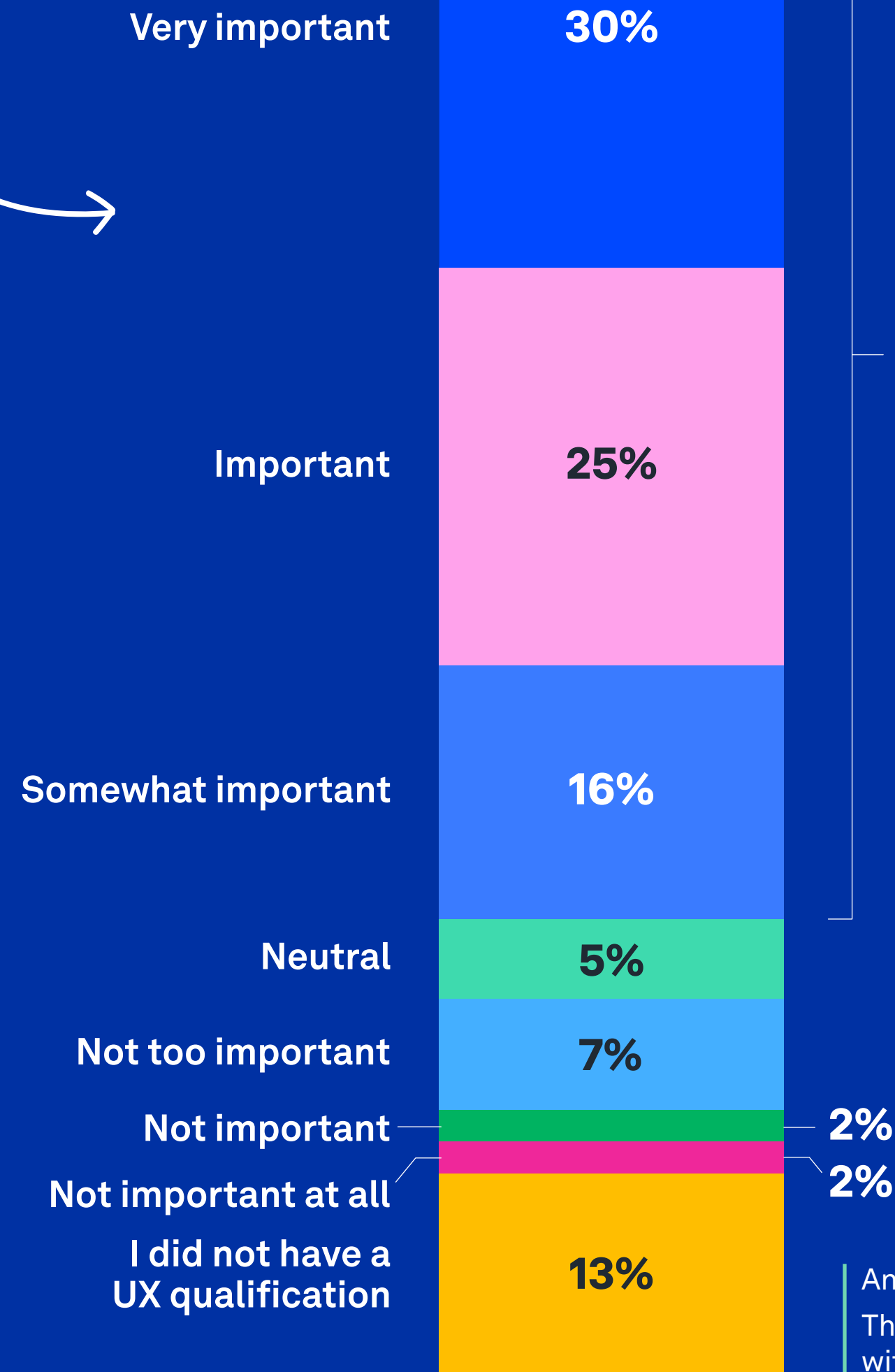
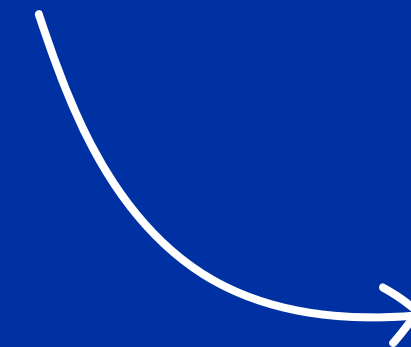
In addition to hiring managers’ perspectives, we wanted to understand recent hires’ points of view on this topic. We asked them how important their UX-specific educational qualification was in helping them secure their first job in UX. The results support what we heard from hiring managers, with 71% of recent hires saying their UX-specific education was important in helping them land their first UX role — of these, 30% believe it was very important.

Emilie Mazurek, Senior Product Designer at VEERUM explains why she opted to take a diploma course when she was making the transition to UX:



“I had just graduated with a degree in biochemistry when I realised it wasn’t the career for me. The idea of going back to school for an additional four years to get another degree that still didn’t guarantee me a job was not nearly as enticing as the idea of doing a UX course over a few months, receiving a diploma and being job-ready.”

Importance of UX-specific education in securing first UX role:



71% of recent hires say their UX-specific education was important in helping them secure their first job in UX

Answered: 333
Those who got their first job in UX within the past 4 years

What it's like to work in UX

UX professionals are happy in their jobs

We understand that before embarking on a new career path, you want to be sure the work you'll be doing will be meaningful and rewarding. To understand UX professionals' feelings about working in the industry, we asked them how satisfied they are in their careers. The results paint a highly positive picture of a career in UX, with over 9 in 10 (92%) saying they are satisfied. Of these, just under a third (32%) say they are *very* satisfied. An extremely low proportion (4%) are dissatisfied with their UX career.

Brian Herron, Principal Designer and Director at Each&Other explains how finding meaningful solutions to user problems is key to career satisfaction for UX professionals:



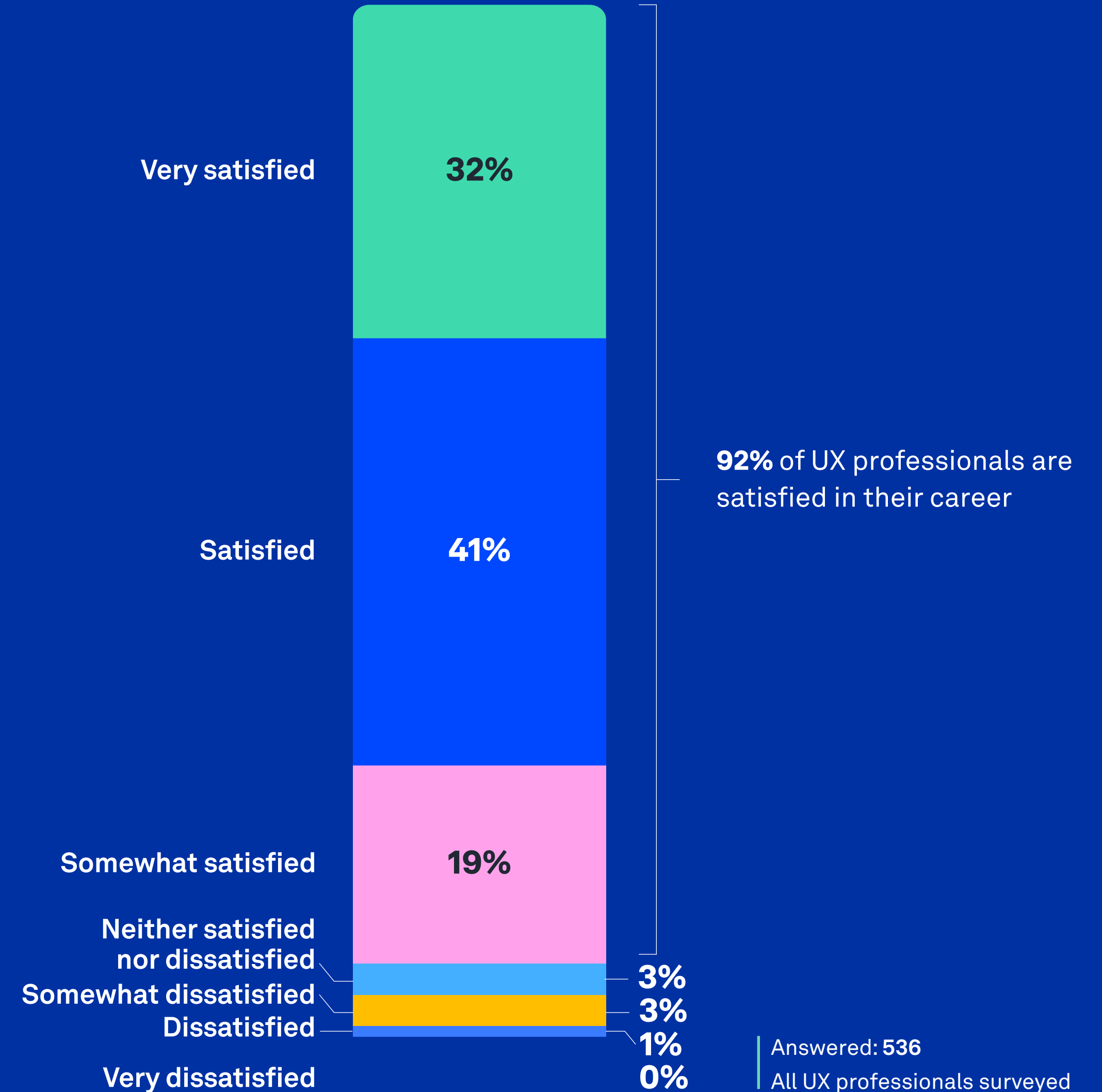
“UX remains a rewarding discipline, providing high levels of personal and professional fulfilment. This signifies that UX professionals continue to find compelling user problems to solve, meaningful challenges to address, and abundant opportunities to create an impact through good UX design.”

Emilie Mazurek, Senior Product Designer at VEERUM echoes this point, and also highlights some of the practical benefits of a career in UX, such as competitive salaries and flexible work arrangements:



“Many people come to UX from roles where they have been overworked, underpaid and not appreciated. The truth is, UX is a fantastic job for people who love problem-solving, thinking creatively and who want to help others. On top of that, it pays well and often allows for flexible and remote work.”

Career satisfaction amongst UX professionals:



What do UX professionals love most about their job?

When asked what they enjoy most about working in UX, our survey respondents most commonly referred to the satisfaction they experience from interacting with users, learning about their problems, and designing effective solutions. Here are just some quotes from the passionate UX professionals who completed our survey, telling us what they enjoy most about working in UX.



“What I love most about working in UX is improving the experience of an application that is part of millions of people’s lives.”

“I love working with people who appreciate UX, and I really enjoy engaging with our users in interviews and testing. I like hearing what they have to say.”

“Getting paid to solve problems creatively and intelligently with a team of really great people.”

“I enjoy working in UX because I love the process of understanding users’ needs and behaviours, and using that knowledge to create intuitive and user friendly designs. It is satisfying to see how our work can positively impact the user experience and make a difference in people’s lives.”

“UX allows me to explore many different perspectives of people’s lives and how they interact with the products we build. Each project brings new learnings.”

“The people side. Getting in touch with the users that are actually going to use your product. Learning about them and their needs.”

“I’m learning every day from my colleagues and the people who use our platform. I’m constantly improving my skills, knowledge and confidence. No two days are the same.”

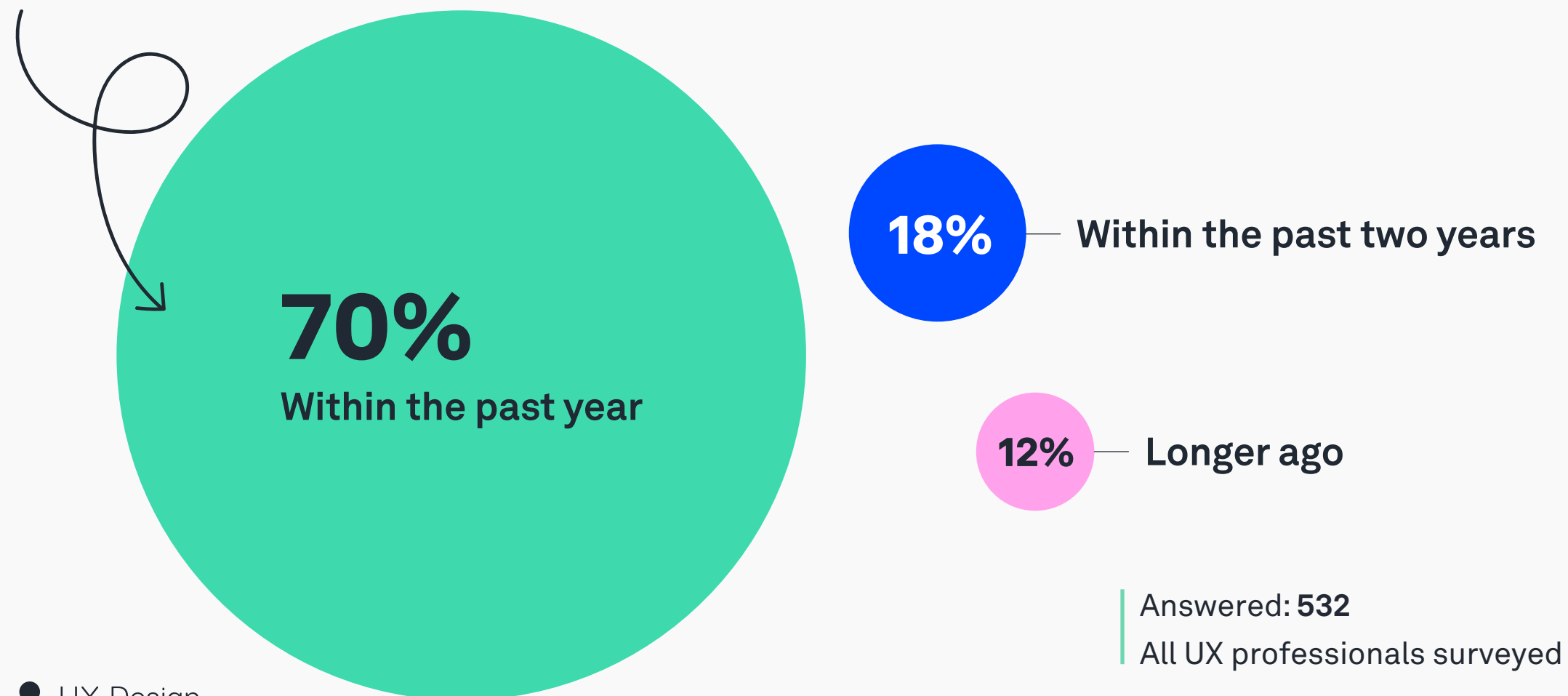
“I really enjoy it when I thoroughly understand people’s problems and frustrations. Designing the right solution makes you feel like you are positively influencing people’s lives.”

Majority of UX professionals have had a salary increase within the past year

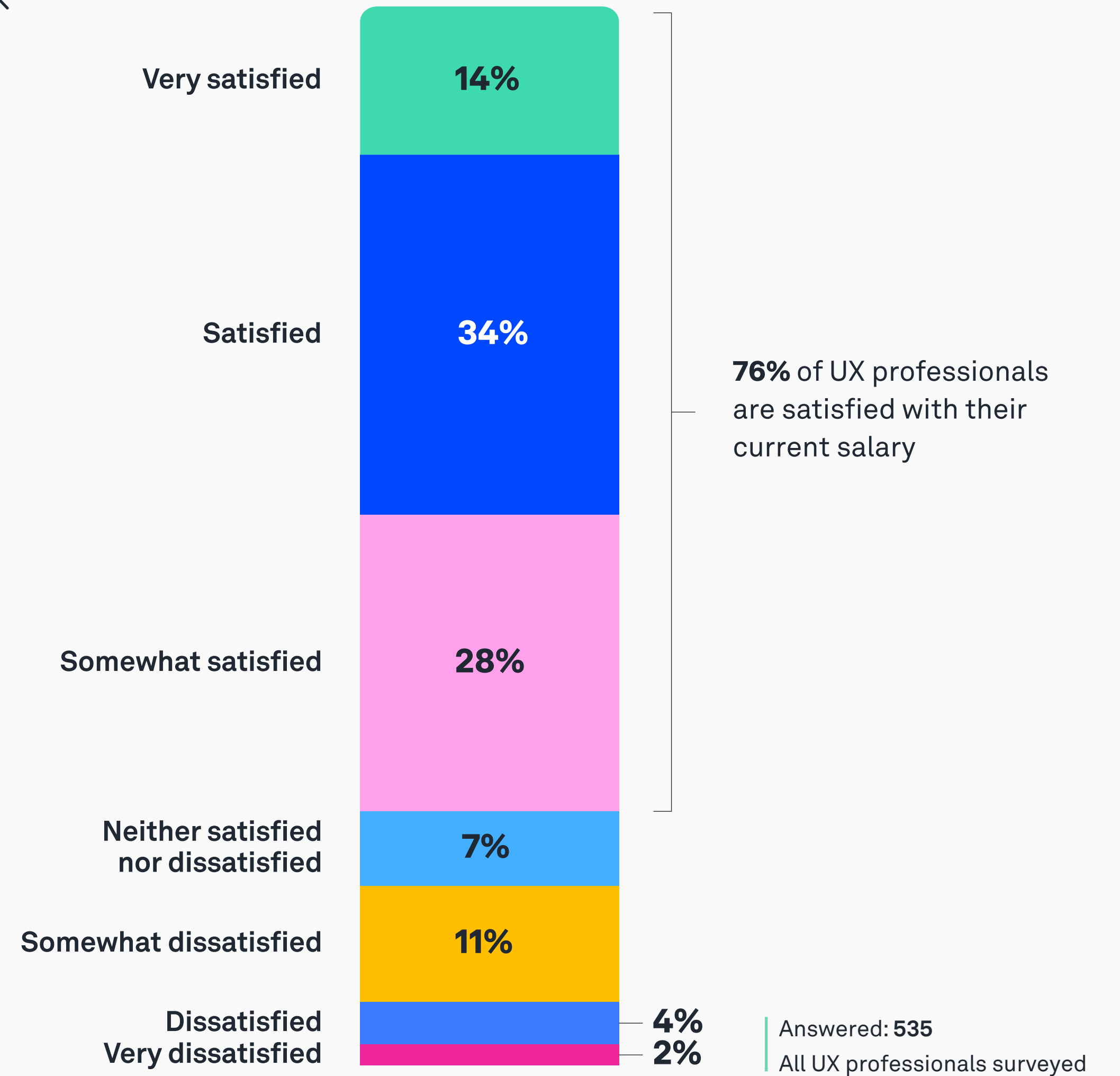
As salary satisfaction is a crucial component of overall career satisfaction, we asked UX professionals how satisfied they are with their current salary. The results reveal that just over three-quarters (76%) are satisfied with how they are compensated in their role. There is some level of discontent evident, with just over 1 in 10 (11%) saying they are somewhat dissatisfied with their salary. However, extreme dissatisfaction is low, with only 2% saying they are very dissatisfied.

We also asked UX professionals when they last received a salary increase. Our results suggest that UX salaries are frequently reviewed, with 70% saying they have received a salary increase within the past year. Almost 1 in 5 (18%) say they have had their salary increased within the past two years, while just over 1 in 10 (12%) say it has been longer than two years.

UX professionals' most recent salary increase:



Salary satisfaction amongst UX professionals:



UX professionals are optimistic about their future career

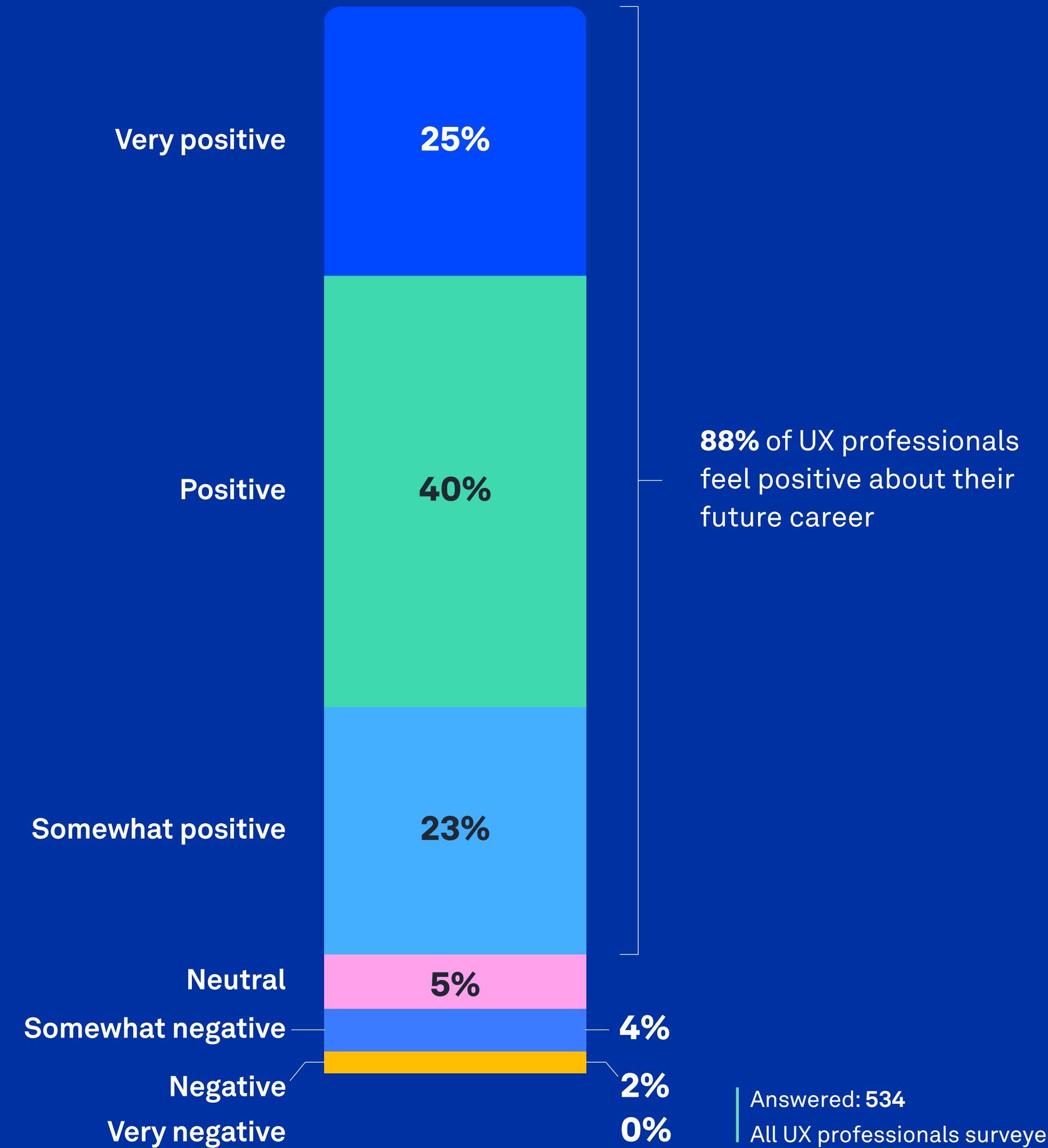
We asked UX professionals how they feel about the future of their UX career. Despite 2023 being a difficult year for UX, our results reveal an optimistic outlook for the future. Just under 9 in 10 (88%) UX professionals say they feel positive — of these, 1 in 4 (25%) feel very positive. Levels of pessimism about the future are low, with only 6% saying they feel at all negative.

Sarah Fox, Staff Product Designer at Etsy, shares her optimism for the future of UX and highlights the opportunities that exist for those who embrace the current industry developments:



“This is an interesting time to work in UX and I’m optimistic about the future. Tech is changing and evolving with the emergence of AI. But these developments have critical ethical and accessibility considerations which UX professionals are best suited to navigate. If we can stay curious and adapt to the evolving landscape, we will be well-positioned to create impactful and meaningful user experiences. The future is exciting and full of opportunities for those who are willing to embrace this change.”

UX professionals’ outlook for their future career:

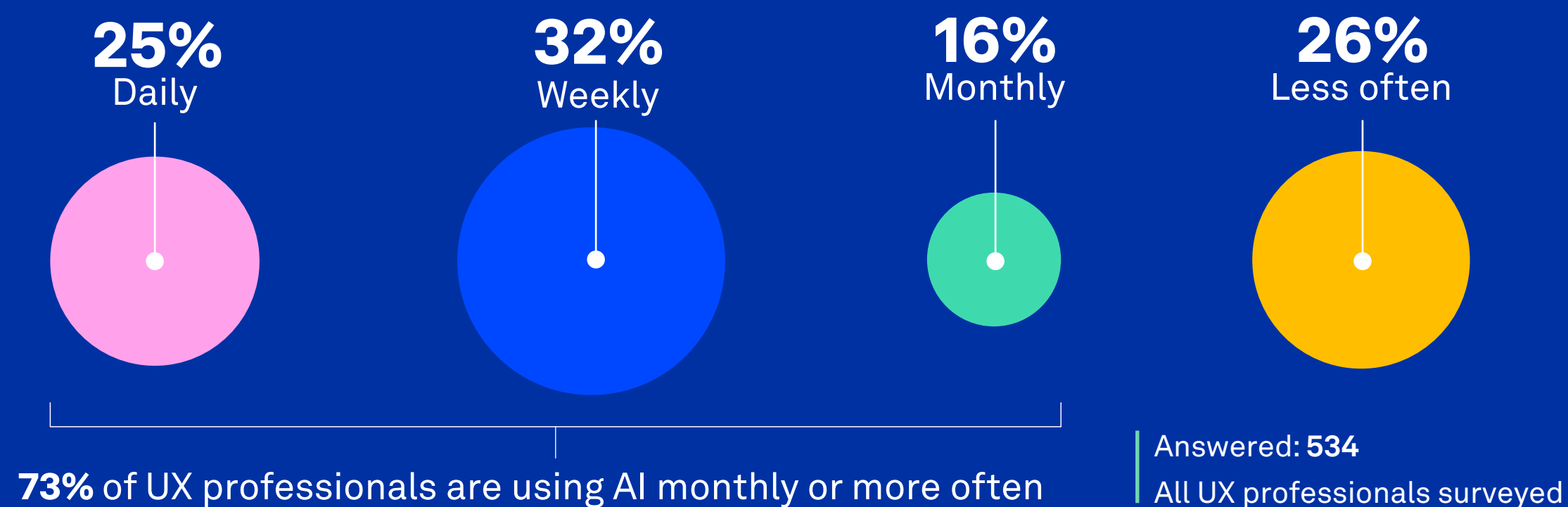


How UX professionals are using AI

Most UX professionals are embracing AI (and finding it useful)

With the significant emergence of AI over the past two years, we wanted to cut through the hype and explore how UX professionals are actually using these tools. We asked UX professionals how often they are using AI in their day-to-day UX work. The results reveal that most are embracing this latest evolution in the industry, with a quarter (25%) saying they are using AI daily, just under a third (32%) weekly and 16% monthly. However, this is not to say all UX professionals are regularly making use of AI - a notable proportion of roughly a quarter (26%) are currently using AI less than monthly.

UX professionals' use of AI tools:



We also asked UX professionals which AI tools they have been using. ChatGPT emerged as by far the most popular, mentioned by over 3 in 4 (76%). In total, almost 50 different AI tools were mentioned, but these were in much smaller proportions. The next most commonly mentioned tools after ChatGPT were Midjourney (6%), Gemini (6%), Figma AI (5%) and Adobe AI (5%).

Piyush Arora, Senior Interaction Designer at Google AI, explains how these levels of engagement with AI tools suggest an openness and curiosity among UX professionals:



“I’m excited about the AI revolution. These results highlight the enthusiasm within the industry about the potential benefits AI will bring, from automating mundane tasks to unlocking new realms of creativity and innovation.”

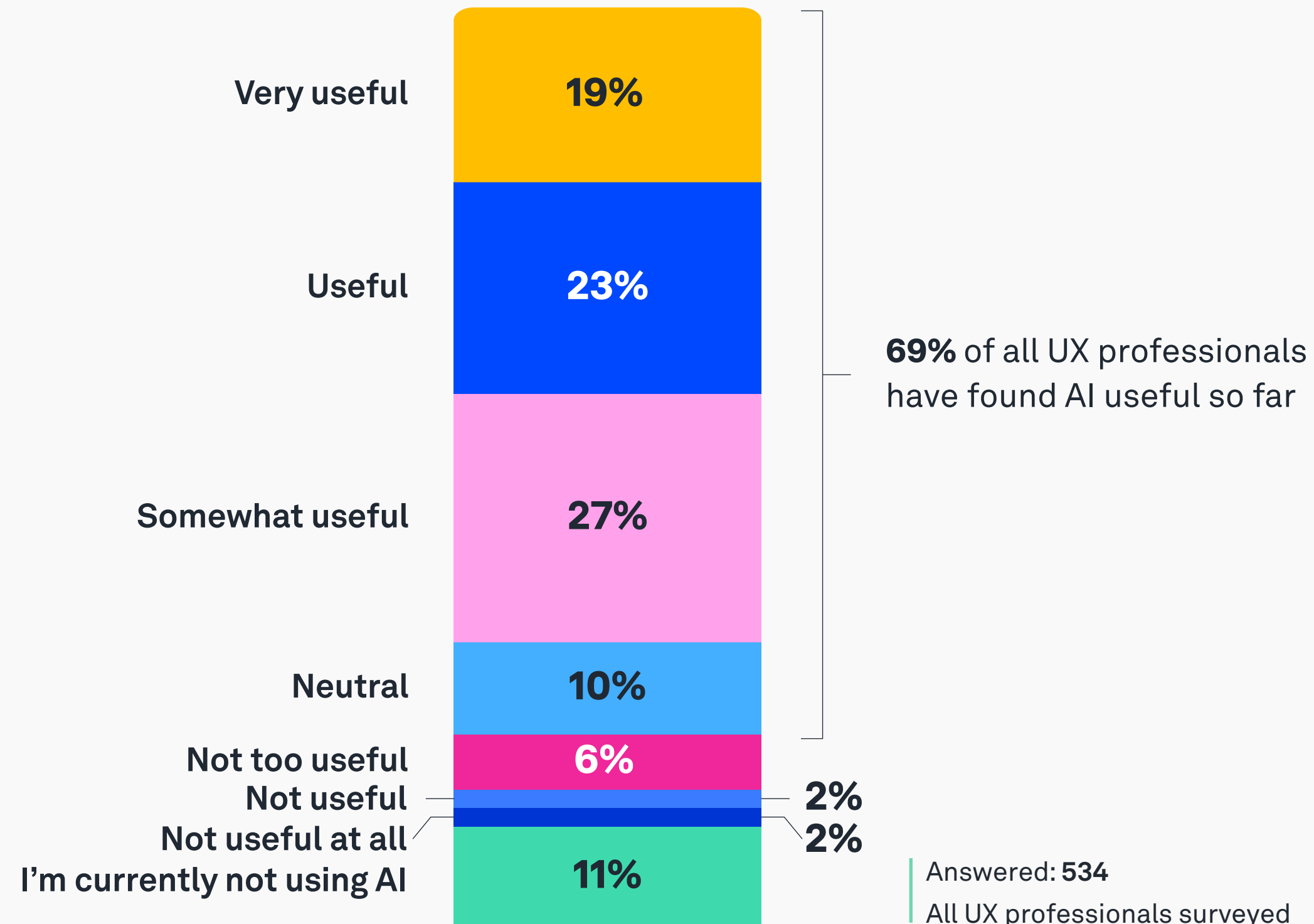
Becca Finnegan, Research Manager at Meta AI, explains that as well as using AI tools, UX professionals also need to begin to build their knowledge of how AI actually functions:



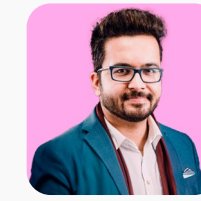
“My advice to UX practitioners is to actively embrace AI. This doesn’t just mean using the tools, but also starting to explore how these tools have leveraged AI — how machine learning works at a basic level. AI will eventually be embedded into every product you’re researching or designing, so you’ll need to understand how it actually works.”

Using AI is one thing, but we also wanted to understand whether or not these tools are actually helpful. We asked UX professionals how useful AI has been in their day-to-day work. Our results reveal that over two-thirds (69%) have found the tools useful so far — and of these, just under 1 in 5 (19%) say they have been very useful. When we filter this data and look only at those who are using AI either daily or weekly, usefulness ratings increase significantly. Amongst these most frequent users, 95% say they have found the tools useful — and of these, almost a third (31%) say they have been very useful.

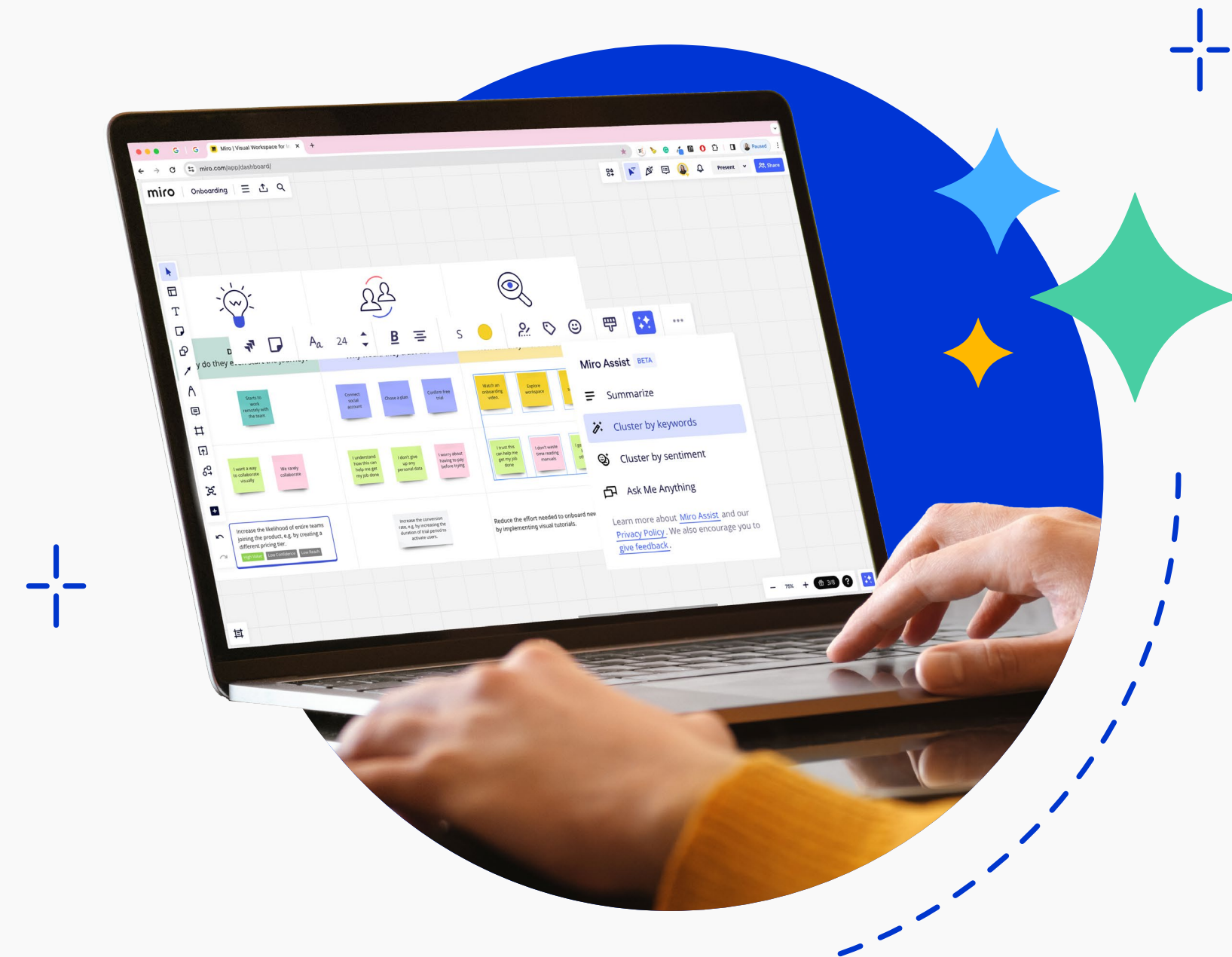
Perceived usefulness of AI tools:



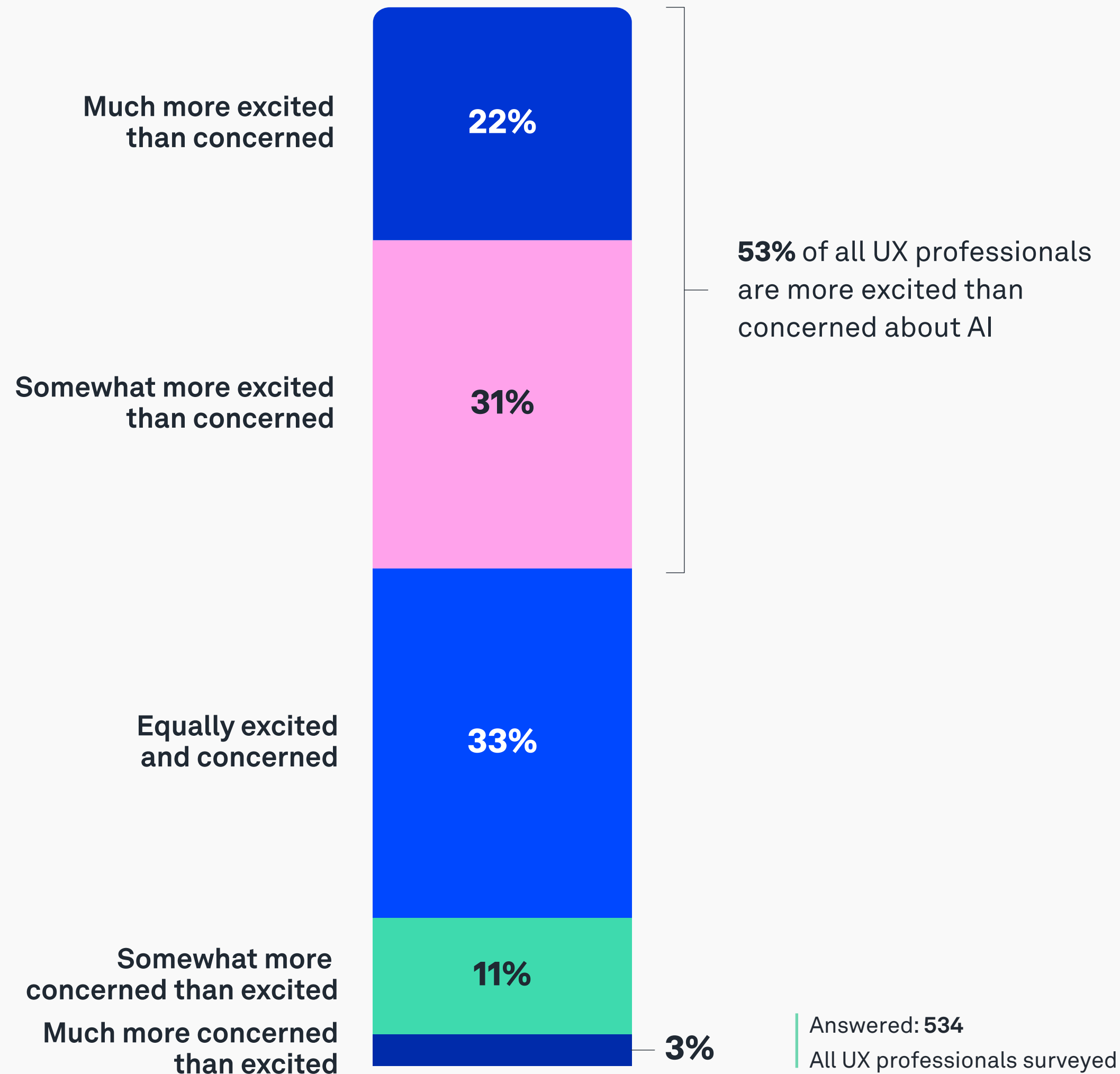
Piyush Arora, Senior Interaction Designer at Google AI, highlights the areas where AI is already beginning to provide meaningful assistance to UX professionals:



“AI can be a fantastic collaborator as a personal digital assistant. There is so much potential for AI in terms of research analysis, content generation, design-to-code prototypes, accessibility, and much more. I do not doubt that AI’s ability to contribute positively to UX and every other profession will only grow over time.”



Outlook for the impact of AI on the UX industry:



UX professionals are more excited than concerned about AI

To understand UX professionals’ outlook on the potential impact of AI on the UX industry, we asked whether they are feeling more excited or more concerned about the advancements. The results reveal that the majority (53%) are more excited — of these, just over a fifth (22%) are *much* more excited. A third (33%) hold a balanced perspective, saying they feel both extremes in equal measure. 14% say they are more concerned — of these, only 3% are *much* more concerned.

Becca Finnegan, Research Manager at Meta AI, explains that we are witnessing an important period of transformation within the UX industry:

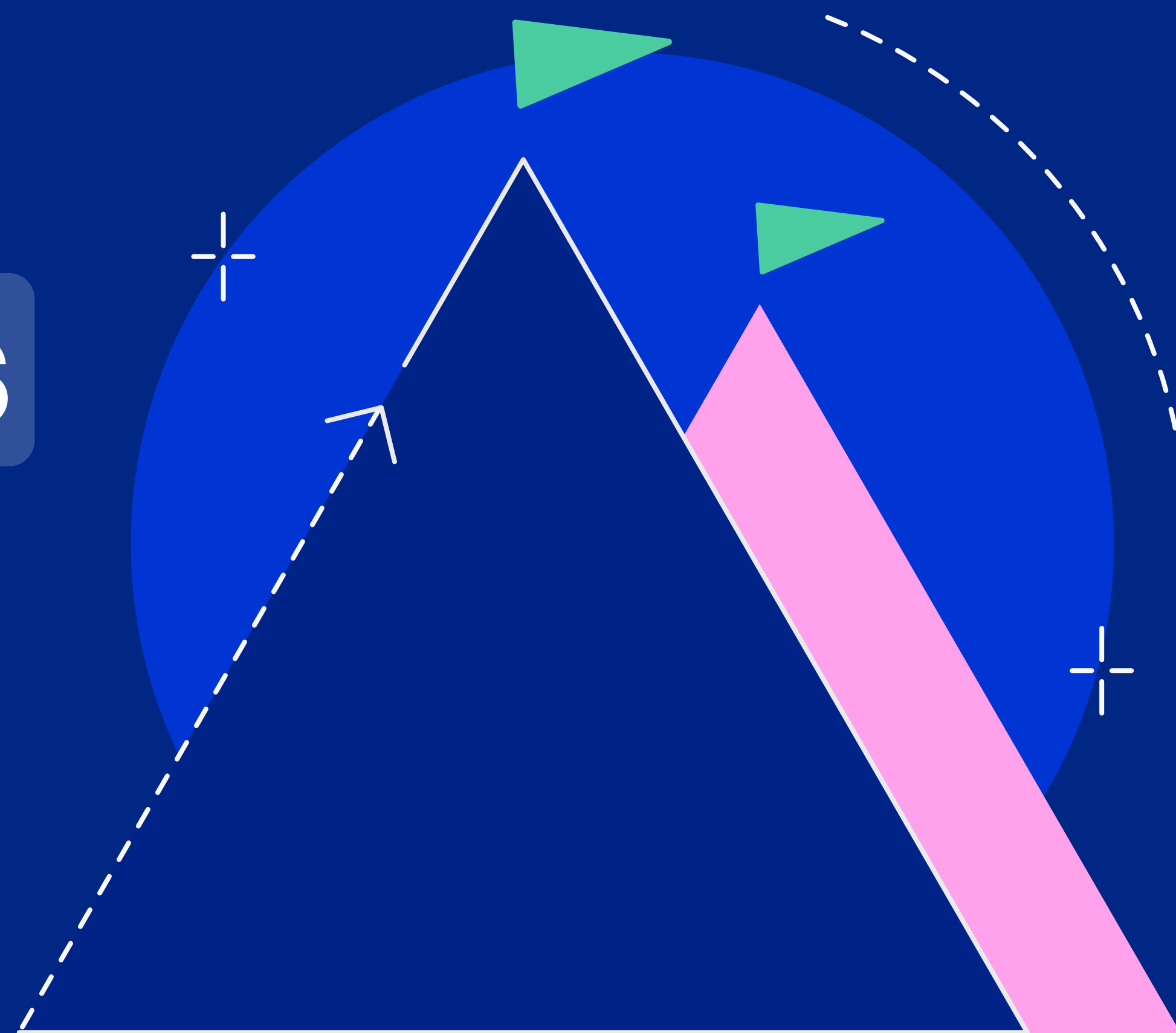


“This figure encapsulates a pivotal moment in our technological journey. It marks a period filled with positive anticipation and a healthy level of apprehension, as we navigate the complexities of AI adoption. The inevitability of change brought about by AI is undisputed. The key question has shifted from ‘if’ to ‘when’ and ‘how.’”

Becca goes on to provide reassurance that AI is something UX professionals will use to support their work, not replace it:

“This should be seen as an evolutionary stage for UX practitioners rather than a replacement. Despite AI’s obvious benefits, it can’t replicate the nuanced understanding, empathy, and creativity inherent to human researchers and designers. These human attributes are the cornerstone of user research and design, enabling us to connect with and understand user needs and experiences on a profound level.”

Recommendations for aspiring UX professionals



1 Don't be discouraged by the competitive job market, demand for UX professionals is still strong.

Our report shows that over two-thirds (68%) of those responsible for hiring expect demand for UX skills at their company to increase over the next 1-2 years, and roughly the same proportion (66%) expect their company to hire UX professionals in 2024. This demand is further emphasised by the finding that almost 4 in 5 recent hires (79%) secured their first UX job within six months. While the industry is changing and evolving, the need for UX skills is not going anywhere.

2 Leverage your network and online profile.

Just under a third (32%) of recent hires landed their first UX role through LinkedIn, while 1 in 5 (20%) got the job through a personal connection or referral. These results highlight the importance of online and in-person networking for accessing job opportunities and enhancing your visibility to hiring managers. [Watch our webinar](#) with Grace Ling, Founder of Design Buddies, to learn more about how networking and personal branding can help you stand out in the UX job market.

3 Look outside of the traditional tech sector.

The results of our survey reveal that over two-thirds (68%) of UX professionals are working in non-tech industries. This points to UX opportunities that are opening up in alternative fields undergoing digital transformation, such as finance, healthcare, government and the civil service. [Read more about this industry growth in our blog article.](#)

4 Embrace your non-UX skills and experience.

Over three-quarters (76%) of UX professionals transitioned from another career. So, if you're coming to UX from another industry, you're in good company. On top of this, transferable skills are valued in the UX industry. Problem-solving is the top skill hiring managers would look for in an entry-level candidate. [Watch our webinar](#) with Emilie Mazurek, Senior Product Designer at VEERUM, to learn the secrets to transitioning into UX from an unrelated career.

5 Start to develop the core hard skills that hiring managers look for.

The findings of our report highlight that having research and design skills will give you an advantage when it comes to breaking into UX. Our [Professional Diploma in UX Design](#) will give you all the skills and knowledge you need, from research to design to prototyping. As part of the course you'll develop a portfolio and learn to use Figma, the industry standard design tool.

6 Apply to jobs you believe you would be a good fit for, even if you don't meet all of the minimum requirements.

Over half (55%) of hiring managers would consider an entry-level candidate without prior experience. A further 23% say it would depend on the person. But remember, it is important to tailor your application to the job so it is clear to the hiring manager why you are a strong candidate. Generic applications are unlikely to stand out.

7 When it comes to your portfolio, don't let perfection be the enemy of good.

90% of those responsible for hiring consider the portfolio to be an important element of an entry-level candidate's application. While having a portfolio is clearly essential for landing your first UX job, you shouldn't wait for the perfect version. Having a portfolio with 1-2 case studies is certainly enough to start applying for jobs. To get started, [watch our portfolio tips webinar](#) with Mitchell Clements, Senior Product Design Manager at nCino. You can also [read our blog article](#) about finding additional case studies for your portfolio.

8 Formalise your UX knowledge with a recognised qualification.

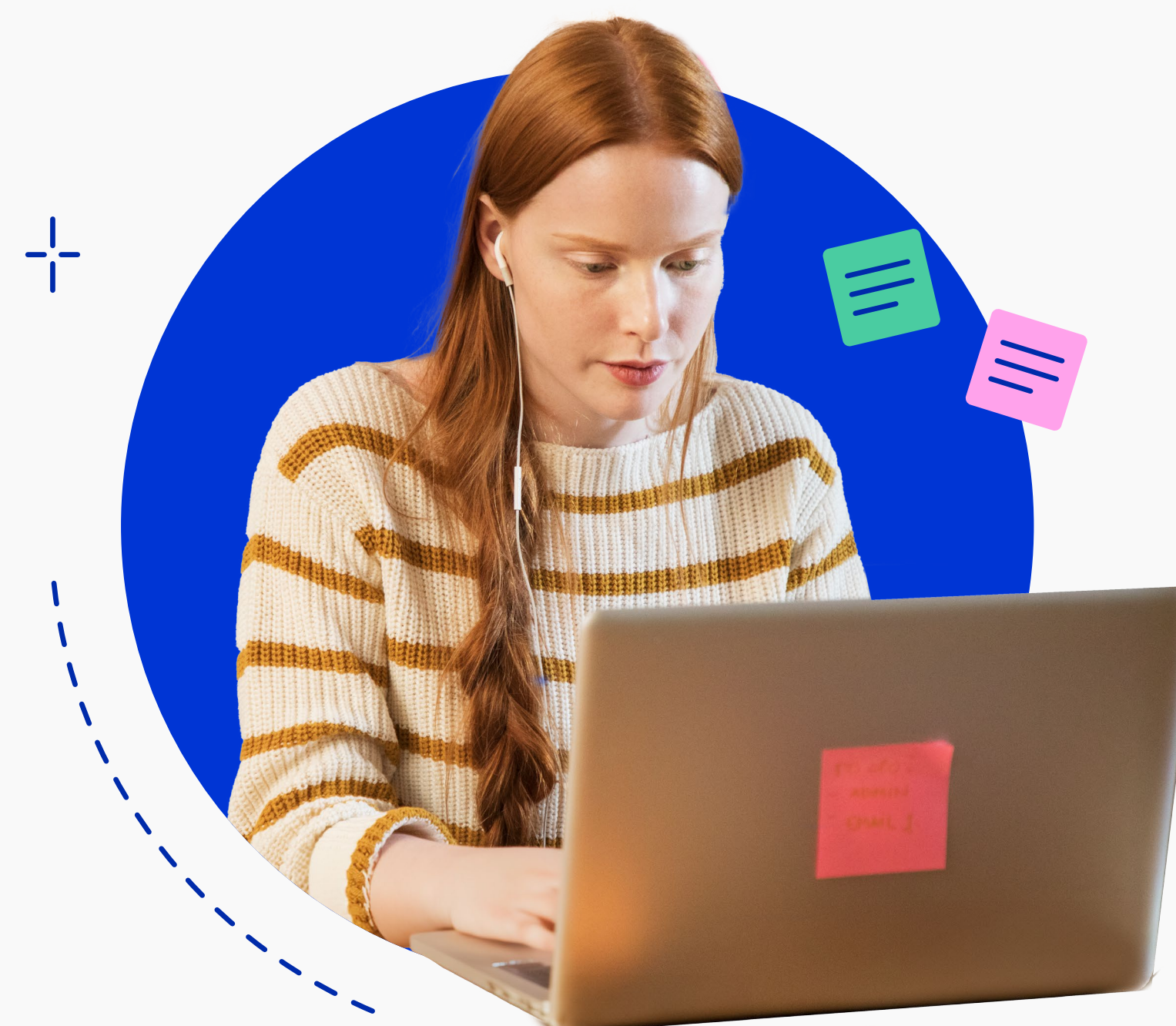
Over two-thirds (77%) of hiring managers would look for a UX-specific educational qualification from an entry-level candidate. Having a solid foundation in the theory and principles of UX is the best way to prepare yourself for breaking into the industry. But, the quality of the education you receive is crucial. [Read our blog article](#) to learn why it is important to choose a course that offers a *recognised* certification. Then check out our *university credit-rated* [Professional Diploma in UX Design](#).

9 Start embracing the AI revolution.

73% of all UX professionals are using AI monthly or more often. This highlights an openness and curiosity about AI amongst UX professionals. It is important to keep up with this trend by exploring AI tools and starting to learn about the basics of machine learning. To start your exploration, [watch our webinar on AI and UX](#) with usability pioneer Jakob Nielsen. If you want to learn more, our [Professional Diploma in UX Design](#) includes a dedicated module on using AI for UX design.

10 Get excited about your future career in UX.

Over 9 in 10 UX professionals (92%) say they are satisfied in their careers, and 88% feel positive about the future. These results show that UX remains a great career choice that offers meaningful and rewarding work. So don't hesitate, start your journey to becoming a UX professional today! To find out if UX is the right career for you, [book a free, no-pressure consultation with one of our education advisors](#).



Ready to kickstart your career in UX?

Book a free, no pressure consultation with one of our education advisors to find out if UX is the right career for you.

From teachers to taxi drivers, the [UX Design Institute](#) has helped thousands of people from different backgrounds make a career transition to UX with our [Professional Diploma in UX Design](#).



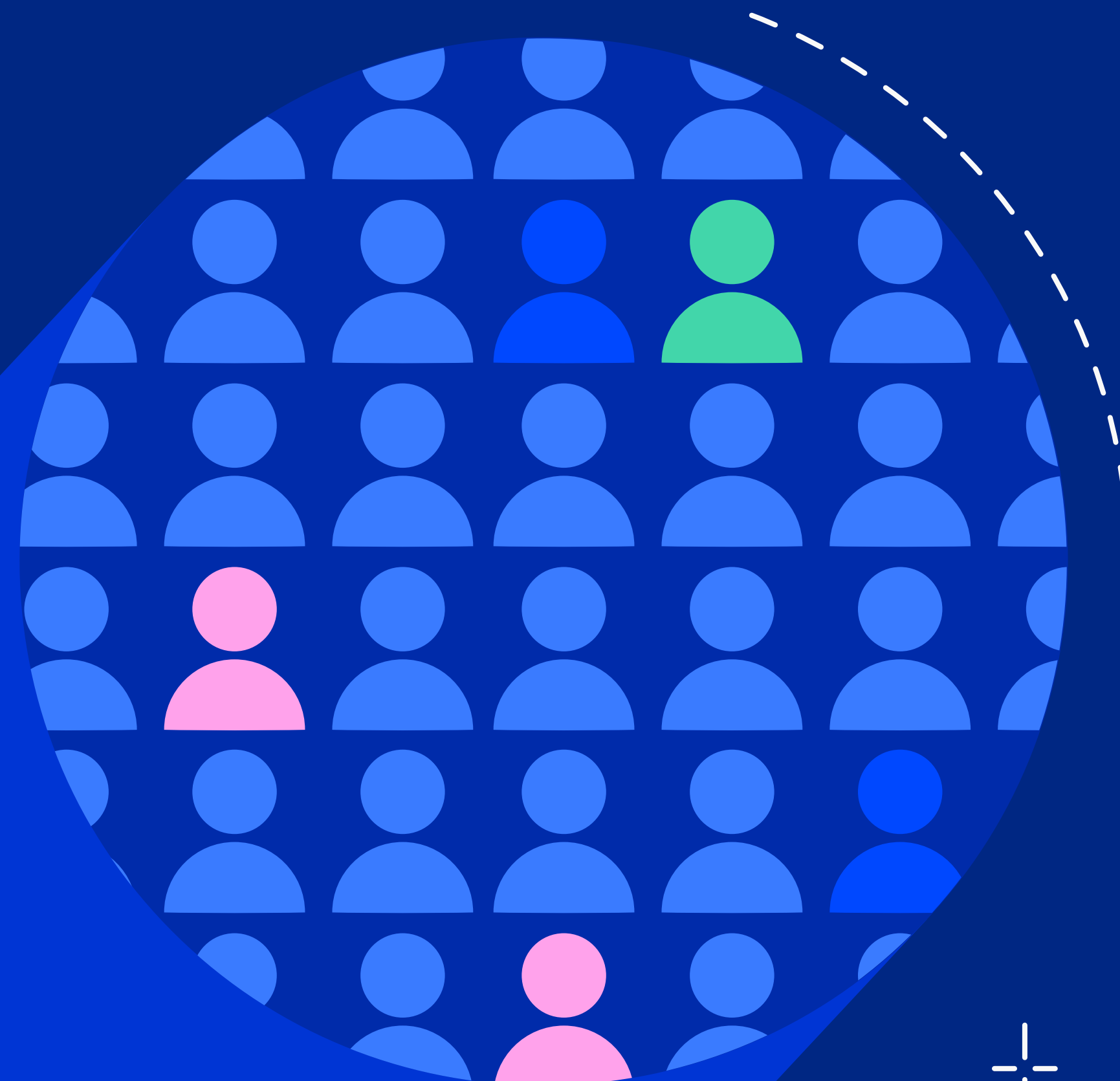
Our education advisors are here to answer your questions. Get honest and impartial advice on how to successfully make a career transition to UX design.

[Book a call](#)

What will you talk about on the call?

- **Your background**
Is UX for you?
- **Your skills**
Are they transferable to UX?
- **Working in UX design**
What is the job really like?
- **The UX job market**
What do you need to land your first role?
- **Salaries**
What do UX professionals earn?
- **Career switching**
How do you move to UX from a different career?
- **UX or UI**
What is the difference between them?
- **Course flexibility**
Can I fit the course in around my busy schedule?

About the research



Research approach

The data for this report was collected via a survey distributed to UX professionals through various social media sites and digital newsletters. Survey fieldwork took place over six weeks between January and February 2024. Anyone currently working as a UX professional in a company or agency was eligible to participate.

A total of 537 UX professionals took part in the survey. Participants who got their first job in UX within the past four years (n=333) were asked a series of questions about their experience of navigating the job market. This group is referred to as ‘recent hires’ throughout the report.

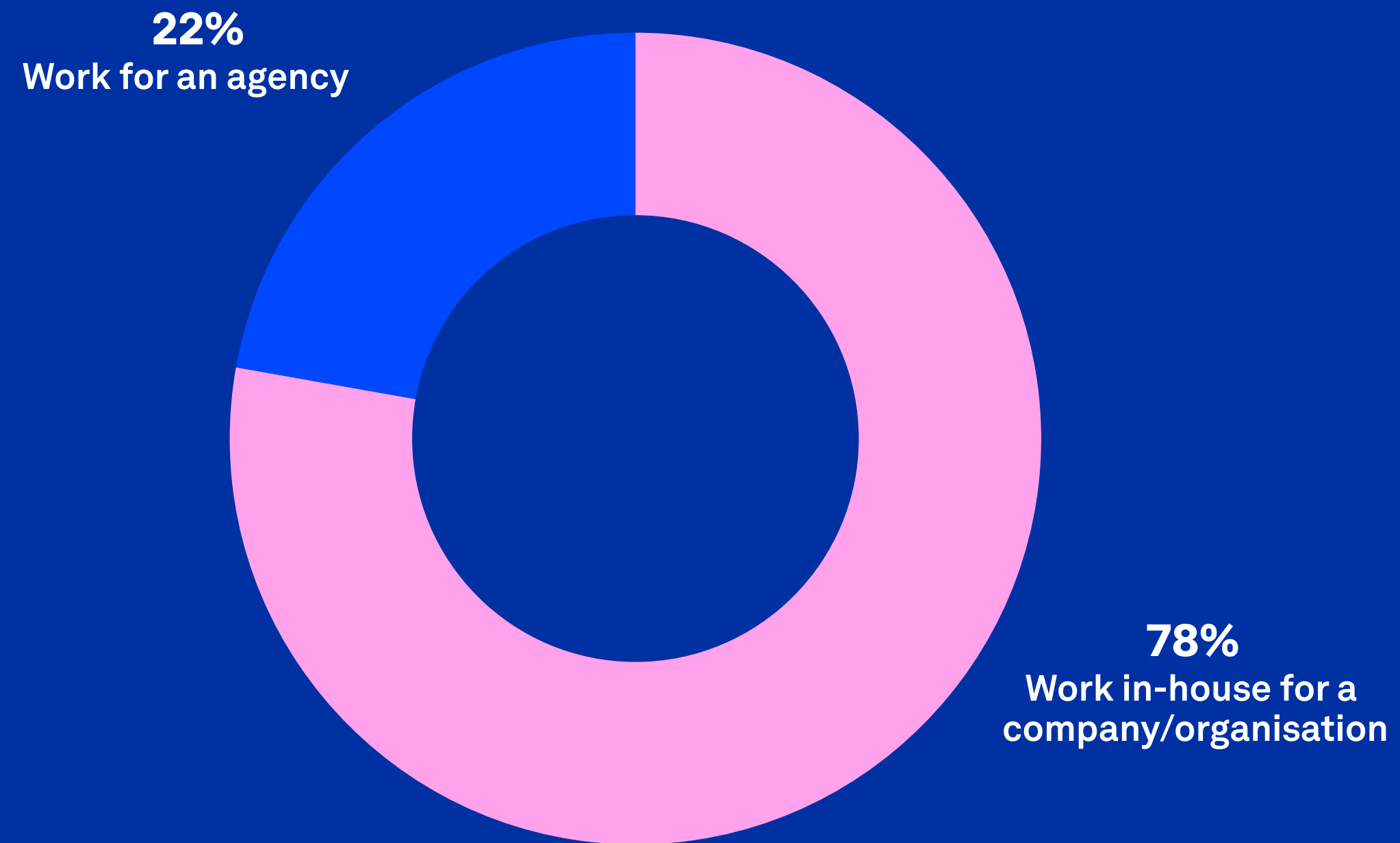
Those responsible for hiring UX professionals in their current role (n=110) were asked about their hiring plans for 2024, as well as their priorities when considering job candidates. This group is referred to as “those responsible for hiring” or ‘hiring managers’ throughout the report.

All participants (n=537) were asked about their experience of working within the UX industry, as well as their use of AI tools in their day-to-day work.



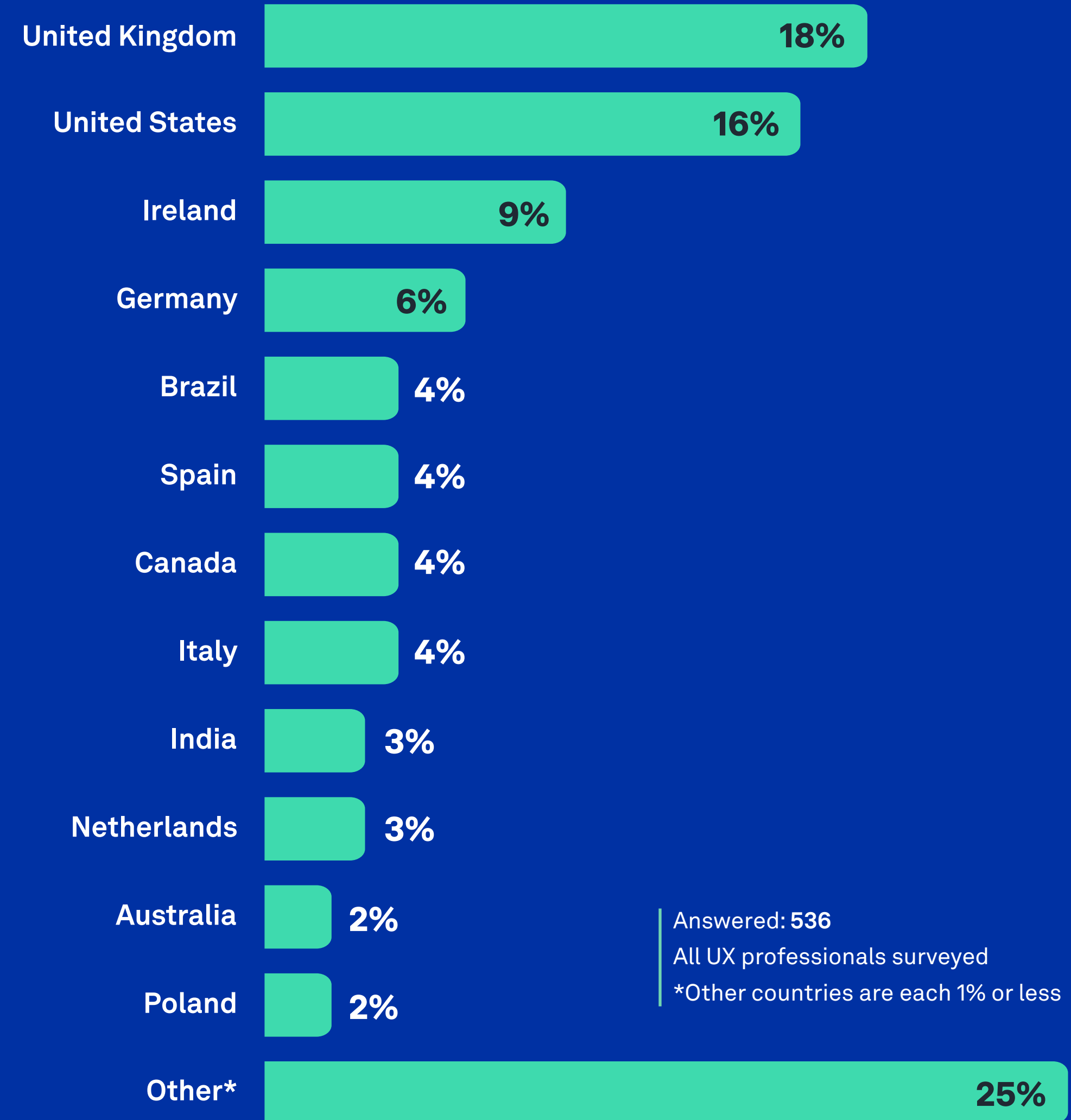
Survey respondent demographics

Workplace:



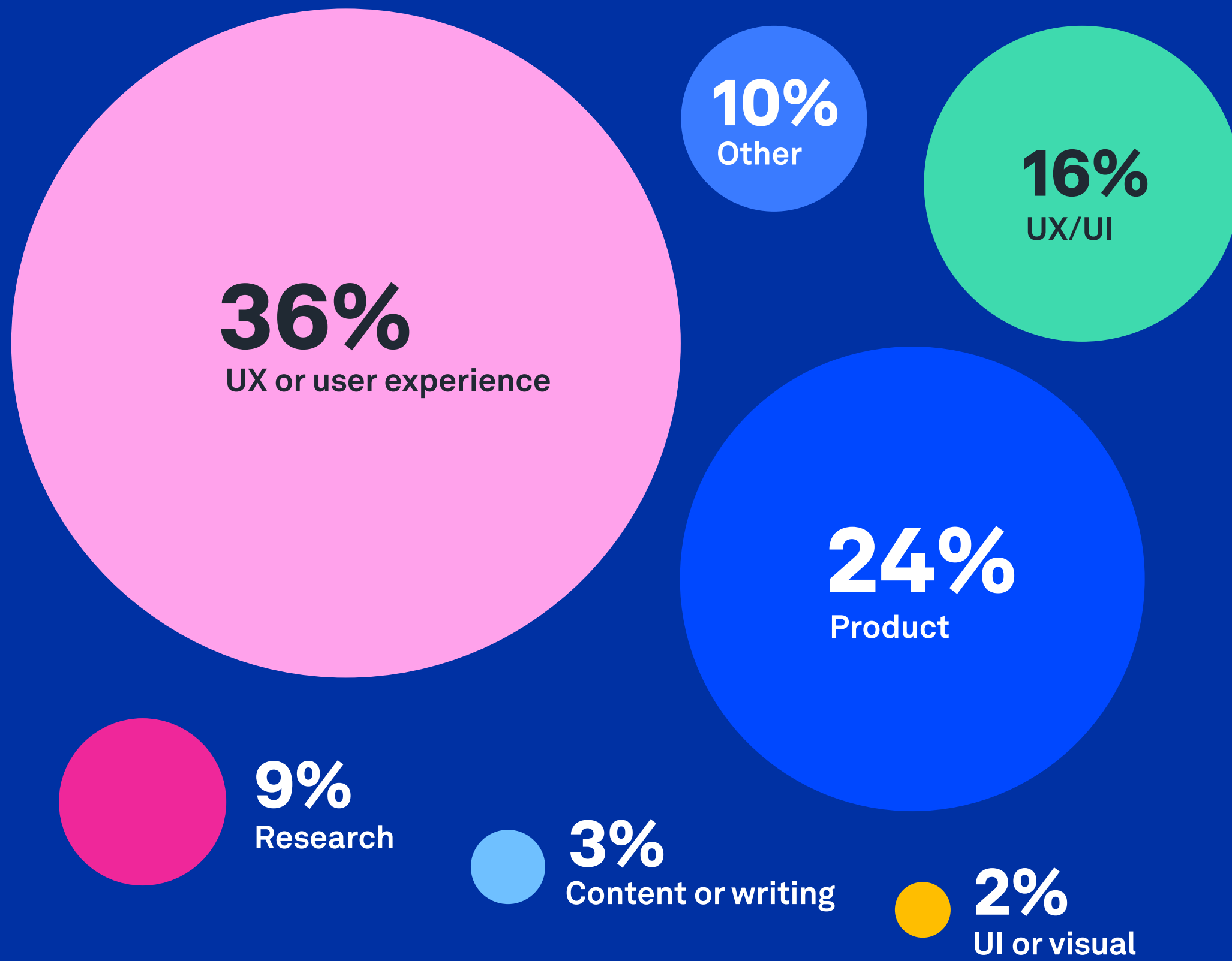
Answered: 537
All UX professionals surveyed

Country:



Answered: 536
All UX professionals surveyed
*Other countries are each 1% or less

Area of work:

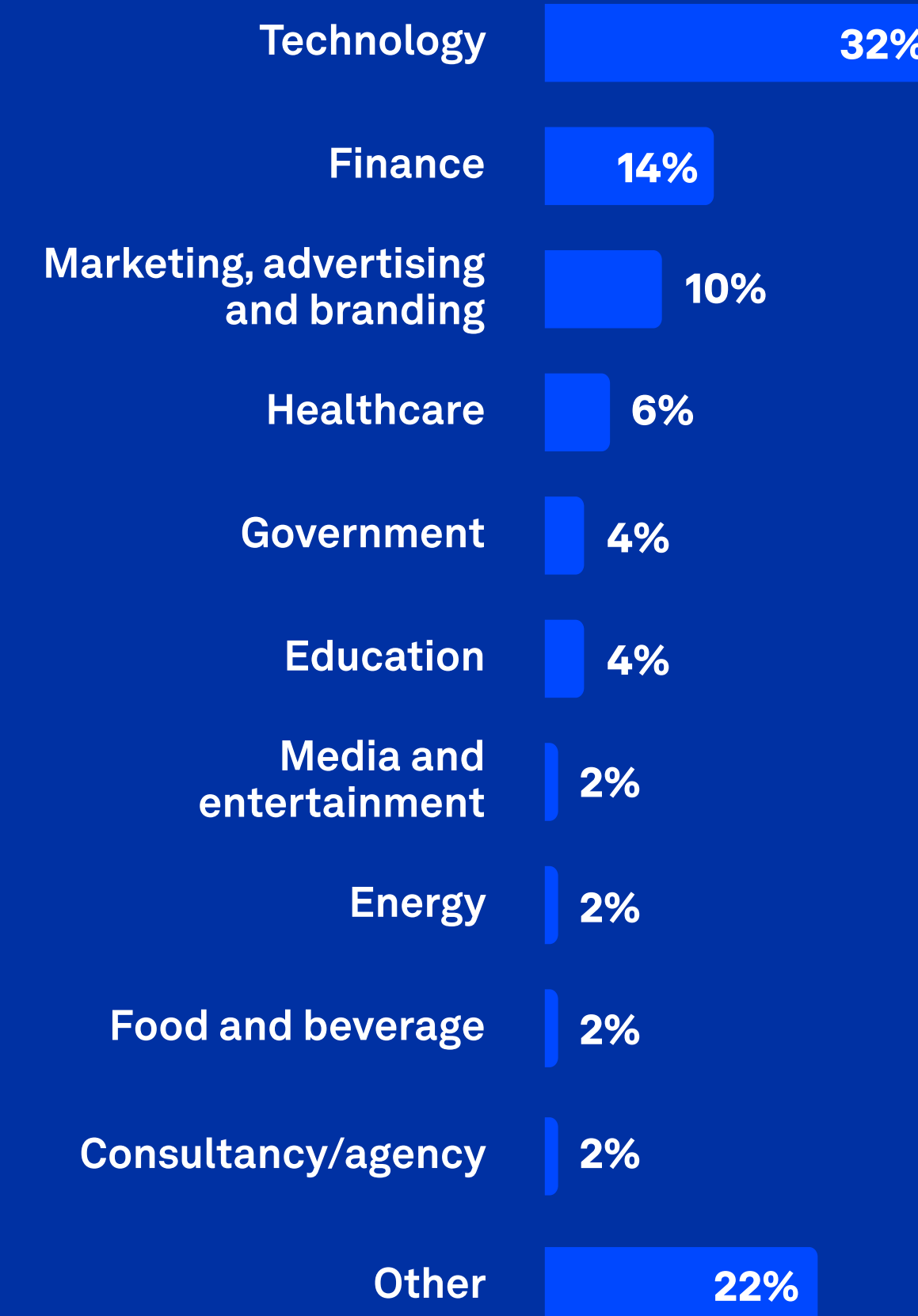


Answered: 537

All UX professionals surveyed

*Job titles containing the above terms were grouped together. Total sums to over 100% as some job titles contained more than one term

Industry:



68% of all UX professionals are working in industries outside of tech

Answered: 534

All UX professionals surveyed

*Other industries are each 1% or less

We hope this report has provided you with valuable guidance on how to land a job in UX.

Our friendly team are available to answer any questions you have. [Book a call](#) with one of our education advisors, or send us an email to: hello@uxdesigninstitute.com

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about how you can become a certified UX professional.

