



top banana

# Barriers to communication in live events

Well - first of all a big thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey on barriers to engaging communication. Over 400 of you took part and the results make for really interesting reading.

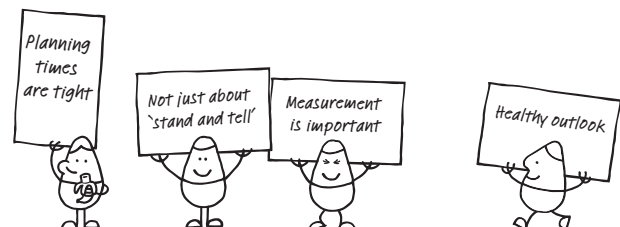
Responses show that live events are predominantly being used as strategic communication platforms rather than for tactical initiatives and there is general acknowledgement that audience involvement is an essential element in engagement, with most of you reporting a move away from 'stand and tell' delivery.

It's revealing to see the level of importance respondents assigned to understanding the audience mindset and agreeing objectives for events at an early stage.

Planning times are generally pretty tight, with almost 50% having a lead time of less than three months.

Again – where evaluation is concerned it's great to see there is widespread support for meaningful measurement.

It's apparent that coaching for senior leaders is seen as an important aspect of the service available from external partners, whilst acting as trusted advisor was also high on the wish list. A lack of budget is widely regarded as a barrier to working with external partners.



There is a perception that leaders' ability to communicate with passion, their understanding of the audience mindset and time commitment are all major barriers to communicating effectively at live events.

The overall outlook for live events appears to be healthy, with most respondents believing they have real value in engaging teams.

We will be further dissecting the responses and drawing conclusions in a forthcoming article in SCM and for those who are interested in delving further into the statistics, please [follow this link](#) to request some additional data.

We hope you find the contents useful and would be keen to hear your thoughts.

*If you'd like a chat about anything in this report, give us a call on 0845 612 6121 and ask for Nick (he's our M.D.) or drop him an email: [nick@top-b.com](mailto:nick@top-b.com)*

# events

Q1. What typically are the main areas of focus of your leadership / management events?

77.4%

Communicating  
the company vision  
& direction

50.4%

Informing employees  
on new initiatives,  
products or services

70.9%

Reviewing  
past year & laying  
out priorities going

16.7%

A single priority  
(e.g cost saving)

11.1%

Other

Q2. What media do your business leaders tend to use to communicate at an event?  
(Score each option 1-5 where 1 = don't use to 5 = primary method)

The primary method of presentations is still  
through standard bullet point presentations



52%

19.7%

17%

5.7%

5.7%

1

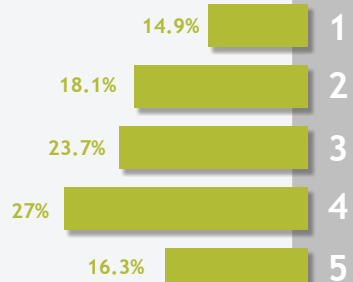
2

3

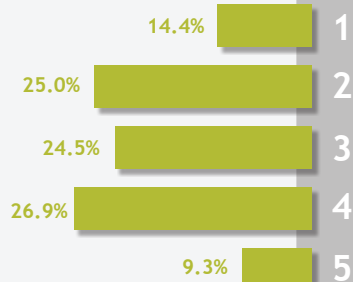
4

5

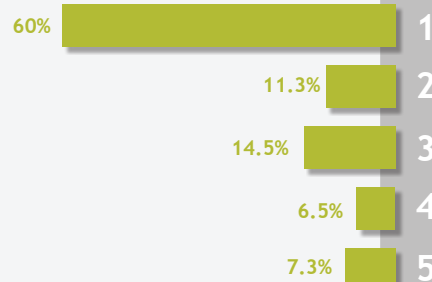
Percentage of leaders using striking  
visuals with strong imagery as their  
presentation method



Percentage of leaders using video



Percentage of leaders using no media



Q3. Please briefly describe the most effective tactics you have used and found to engage the audience most effectively.

The word cloud picks up on the tactics most respondents believed to have greatest impact including audience involvement and video.



Q4. To what extent are the following factors a barrier to your (messaging) leaders communicating effectively at a live event? (1 = no barrier at all – 5 = major barrier)

	1	2	3	4	5
Linguistic ability of the leaders (language & vocabulary)	4.7%	11.6%	23.3%	26.3%	<b>29.3%</b>
Leaders' ability to present with clarity of message	3.9%	20.2%	<b>28.8%</b>	28.3%	18.5%
Clarity of the message itself	6.9%	16.5%	<b>32.5%</b>	29.9%	13.9%
Leaders' ability to communicate with passion	9.1%	<b>28.4%</b>	21.6%	24.6%	14.7%
Leaders' fear of presenting	6.1%	15.2%	22.9%	<b>26.8%</b>	25.5%
The time leaders have to prepare their presentation	12.9%	<b>27.6%</b>	23.7%	20.3%	13.4%
Leaders committing the time that is necessary to fully prepare for the event	19.3%	<b>27.9%</b>	20.2%	18.5%	11.6%
Understanding the audience and their current mind set	10.7%	26.9%	<b>28.2%</b>	25.6%	8.5%
More focus on the sender rather than the receivers (e.g. stand and tell)	15.9%	<b>30.4%</b>	24.2%	19.4%	9.7%
Cultural barriers within the business	8.3%	22.7%	<b>25.8%</b>	21.0%	18.3%

Clearly leaders' ability to communicate with passion combined with time commitment and understanding of their audience are key issues here.

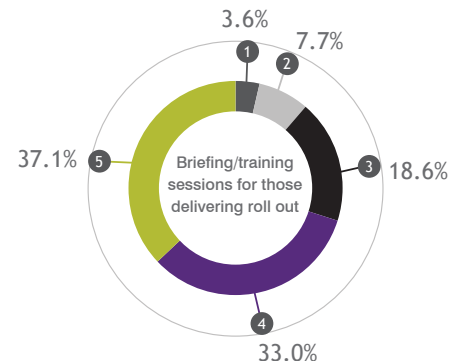
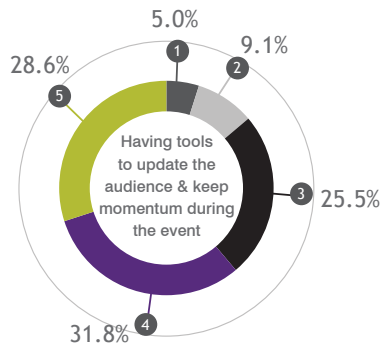
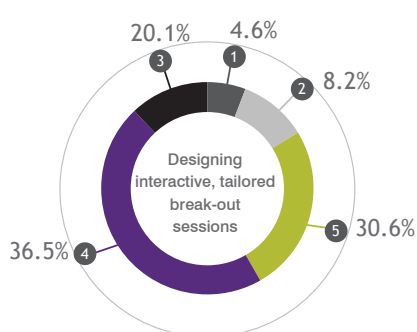
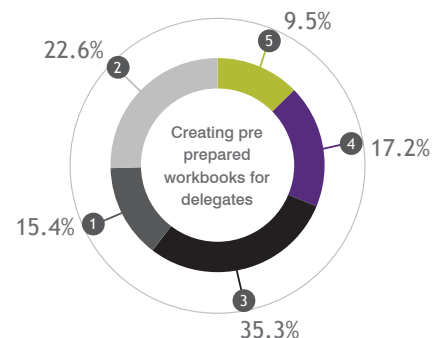
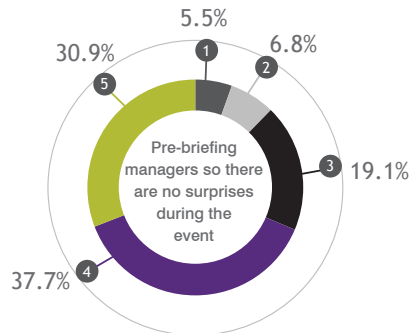
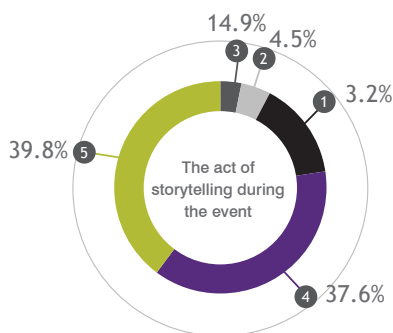
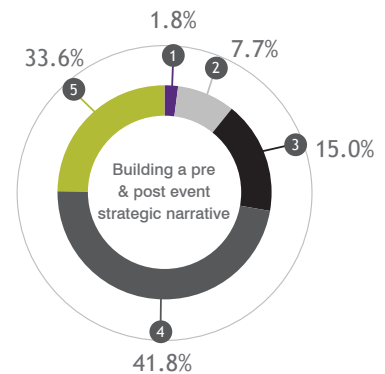
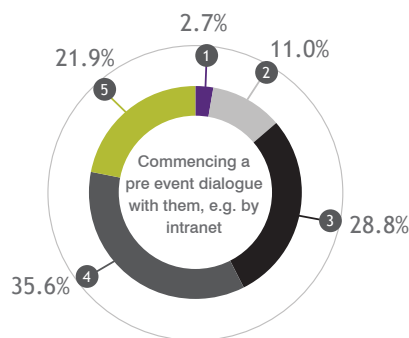
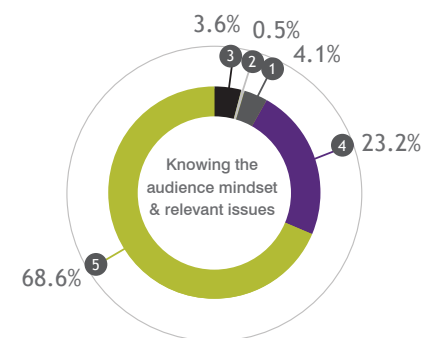
**Q5. How do you think a live event partner can help you (directly or indirectly) improve the ability of your leader(s) to communicate their messages more effectively?**

Coaching is definitely the primary area where respondents believe a live event partner can have impact. Innovation was another element deemed important but for many, budget was perceived as a block to working with an event partner at any level.

**Q6. What would you like your event partner to do more of?**

Acting as a trusted advisor was something respondents want live event partners to offer. Bringing ideas based on best practice and experience was also flagged as valuable.

**Q7. When planning an event, how important are the following aspects? (1 = Not important at all to 5 = Very important)**



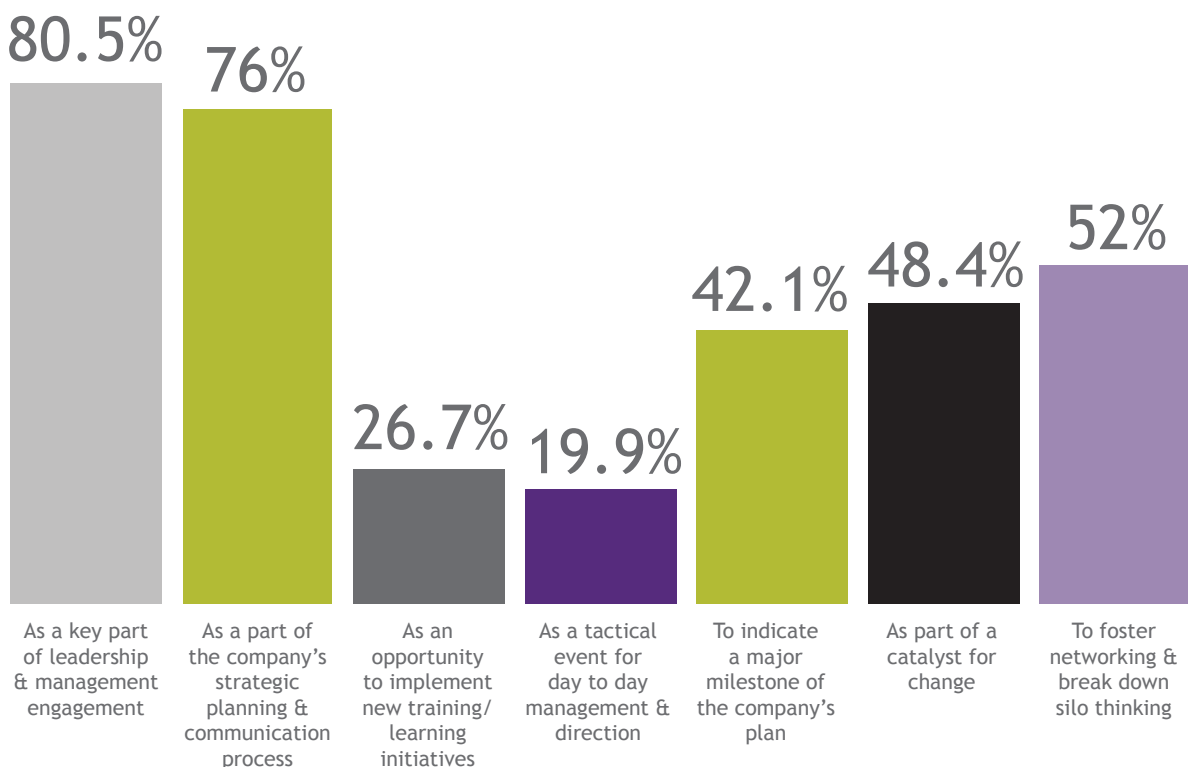
Despite much research to show that note taking helps to reinforce learning, relatively low importance was attached to supporting this through workbooks tailored to an event.

Q8. What trends do you observe in designing and producing live events that truly engage and communicate effectively with the leaders and managers of a business?

It was evident that 'PowerPoint and Tell' style events are not seen as useful in engaging audiences with most respondents indicating that interactivity was the way forward.

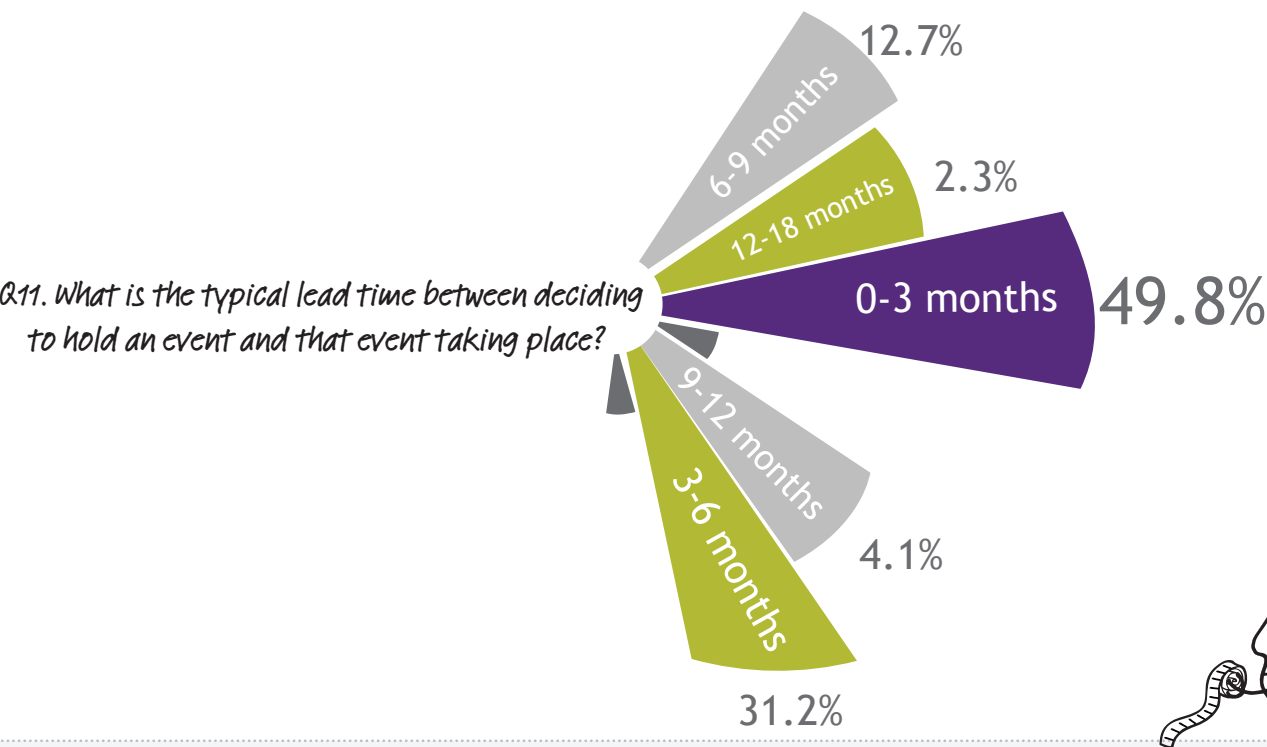


Q9. Why does your company use live events?



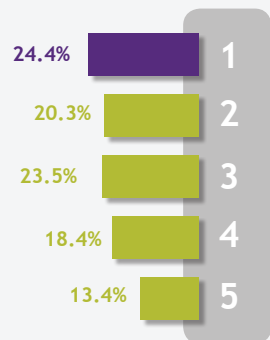
Q10. In terms of planning and holding an event, which part of the business takes the lead for the following elements?

	HR	Marketing	Sales	Corporate Communications	Internal Communication	CEO Office
Deciding to hold a live event	5.0%	3.6%	0.9%	16.3%	24.4%	42.1%
Owning the agenda	5.0%	5.9%	0.9%	16.3%	32.1%	33.0%
Organising & 'sponsoring' the event	11.0%	7.3%	2.3%	19.7%	38.1%	14.7%
The main reporting channel for progress & outcome	4.5%	6.3%	1.8%	20.8%	52.5%	8.6%

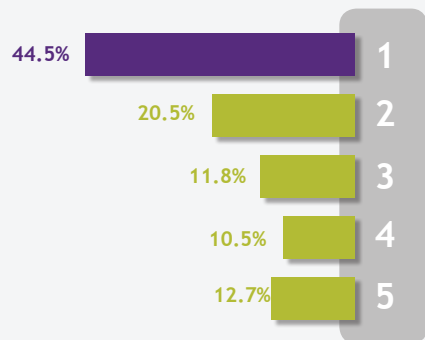


Q12. In the context of the objectives for an event, how important is it to your company that the live event is evaluated to the following levels? (1 = very important – 5 = least important)

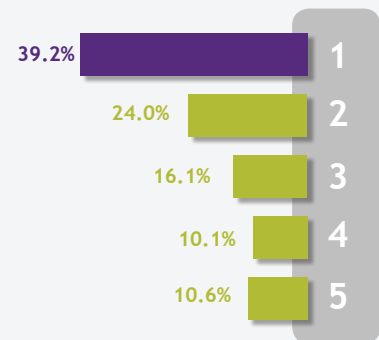
The logistics, organisation & environment of the event



The way people feel & think following the event

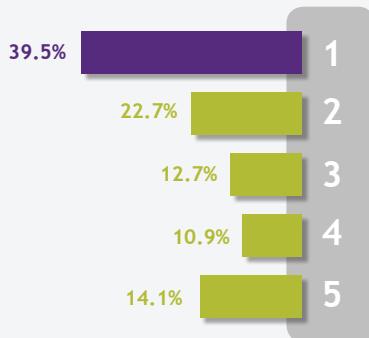


What people have learned from the event

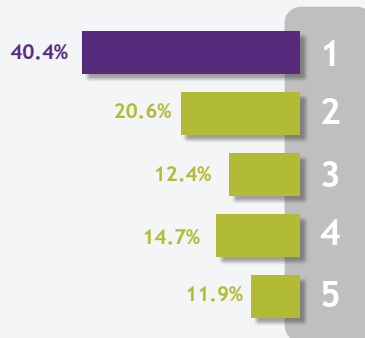


### Q12. (Cont...)

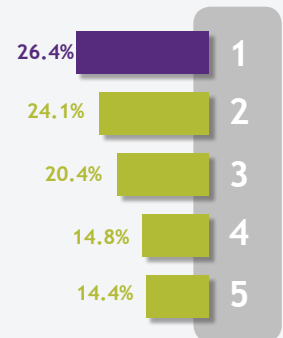
What people do differently after the event



What result or impact those different behaviours have on the business

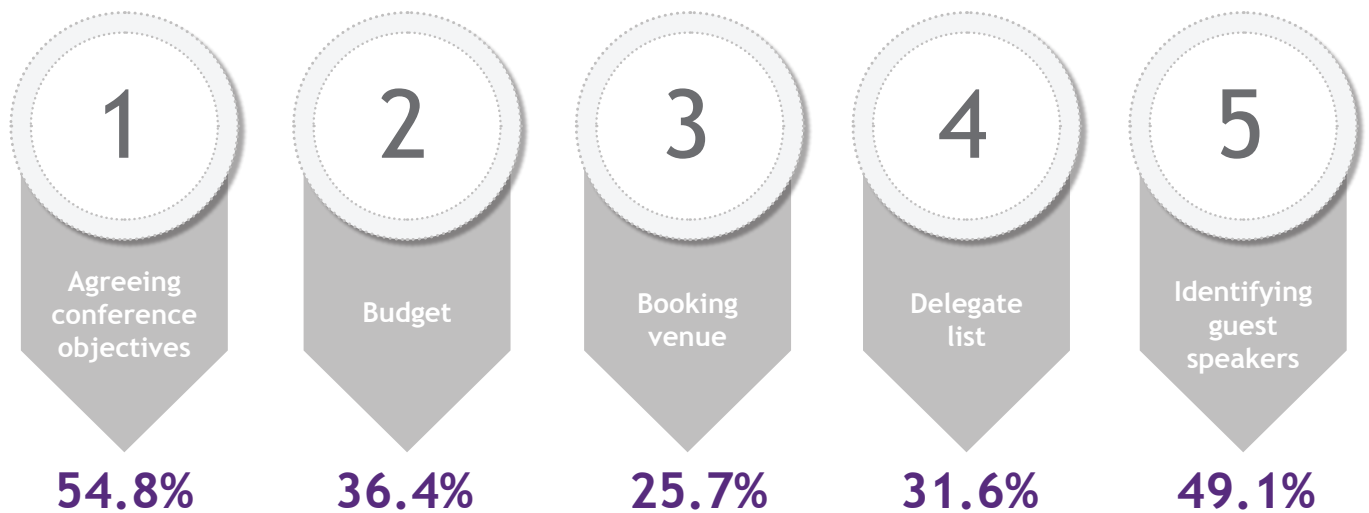


How those results affect the bottom line - the financial ROI

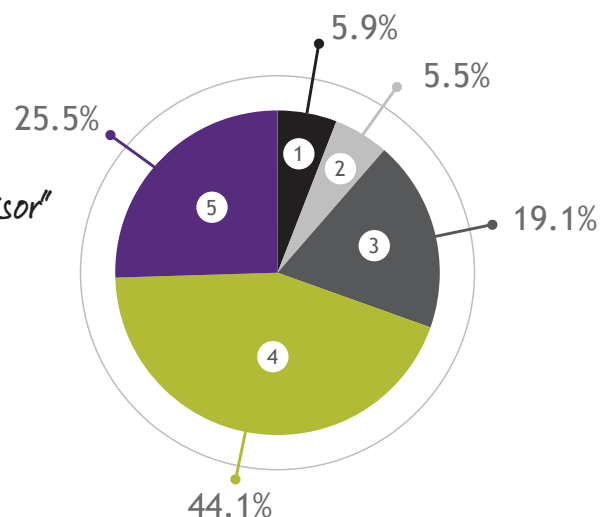


Excellent news that measurement is seen as an important element in event design.

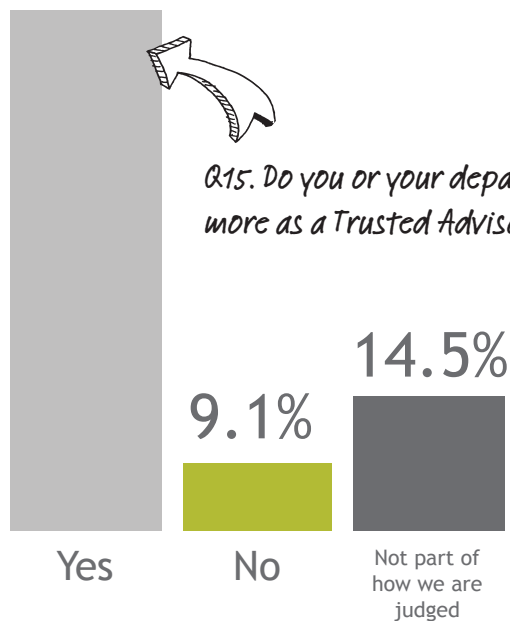
### Q13. In what order do you undertake the following actions?



### Q14. On a scale of 1 to 5 do(es) your leader(s) treat you as a "Trusted Advisor" regarding producing effective communications at a live event?



76.4%



Q15. Do you or your department aspire to be treated more as a Trusted Advisor regarding events?

Q16. Given the following traits of a Trusted Advisor, how do you think you score on a scale of 1 to 5? (1 = not relied on at all – 5 = totally relied upon)

	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of the business mission & vision	2.7%	4.5%	14.1%	<b>41.4%</b>	37.3%
Knowledge of the strategy & plans	2.3%	5.5%	19.1%	<b>50.9%</b>	22.3%
Knowledge of the audience; their mindset & expectations	1.4%	6.4%	16.8%	<b>40.5%</b>	35.0%
The ability to simplify complexity & produce key messages	1.4%	3.2%	11.4%	33.6%	<b>50.5%</b>
The guile & confidence to support or challenge the 'top table'	2.3%	10.0%	33.3%	<b>35.2%</b>	19.2%
The ability to advise on leadership engagement & events in a proactive manner	2.7%	5.5%	19.1%	<b>38.6%</b>	34.1%
The ability to act as a coach/mentor in the area of excelling at communication	3.6%	8.2%	25.0%	<b>40.0%</b>	23.2%

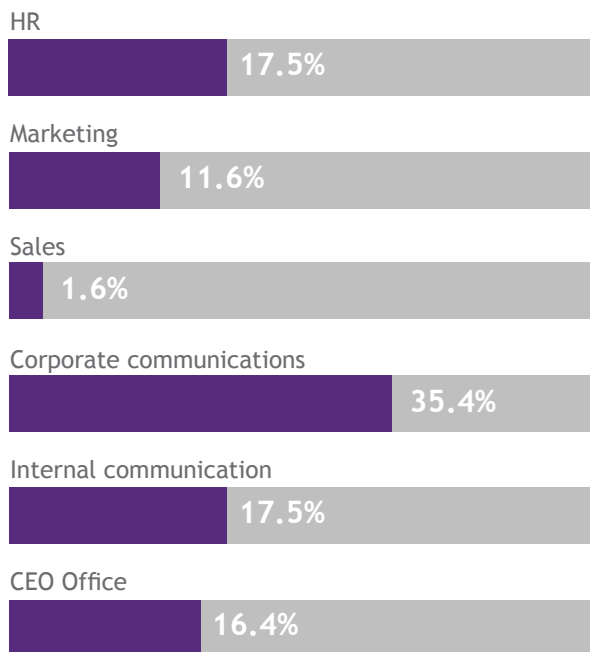
A positive view on the skill set and expertise to act as trusted advisors although falling short of having the confidence to bring this to the top table.



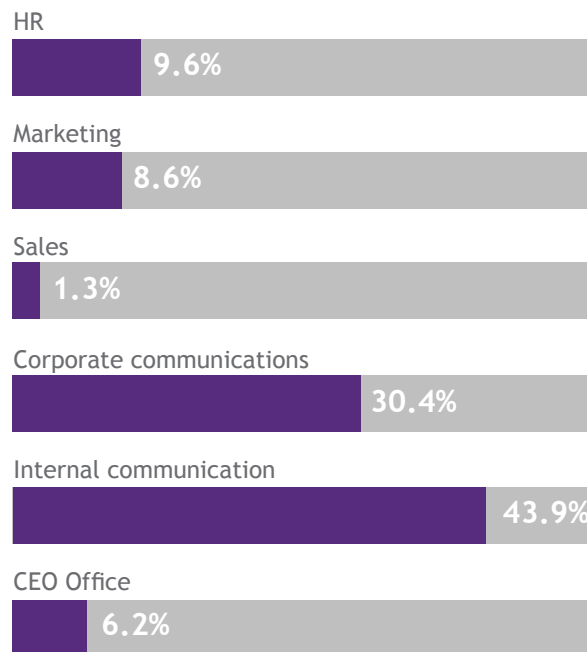


# about you

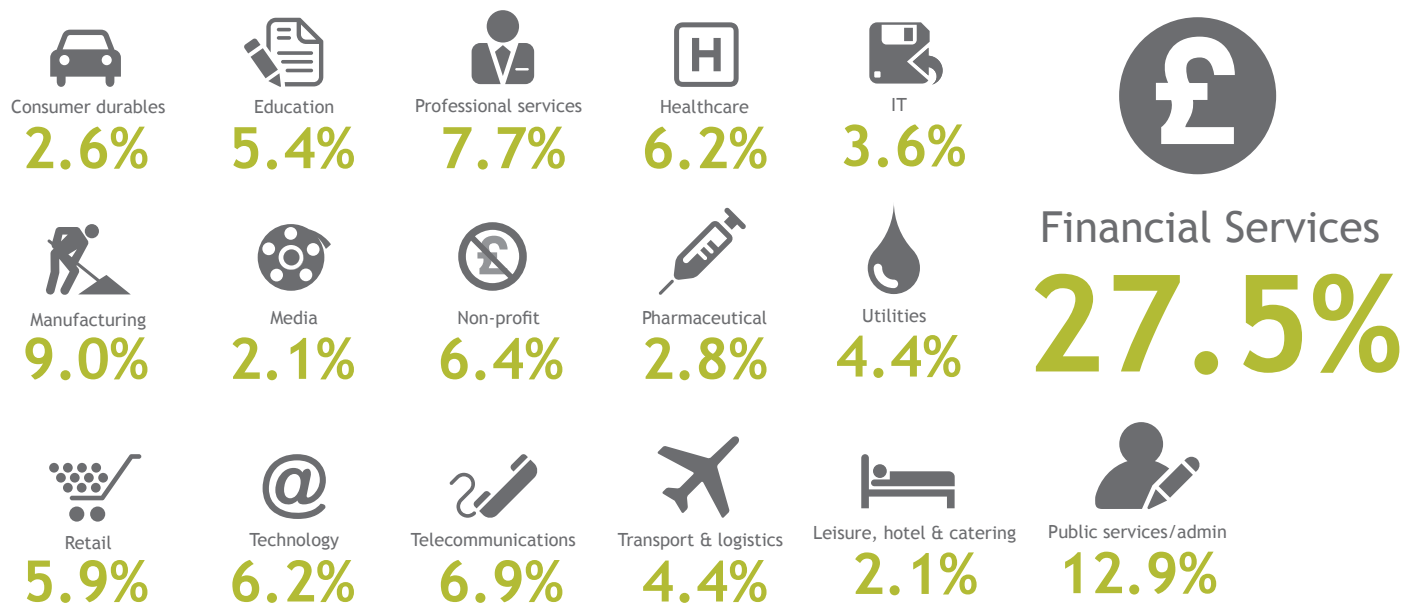
Q17. Which function/directorate do you report to?



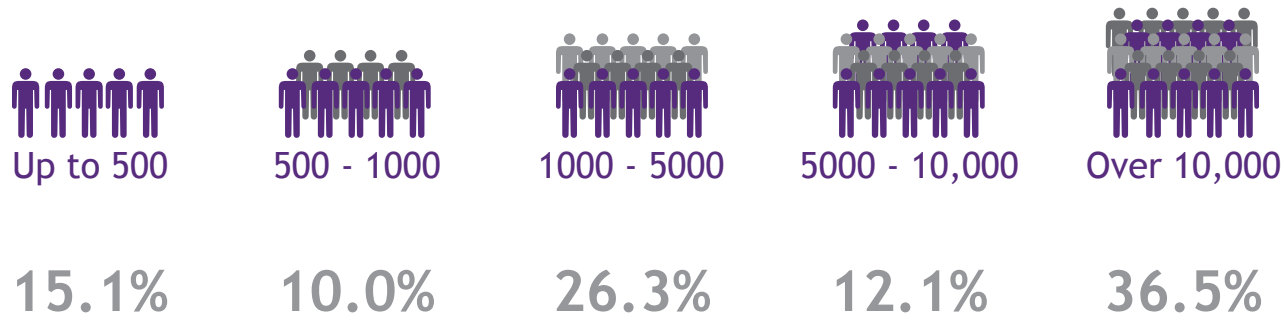
Q18. Which department do you work in?



Q19. Which sector does your business operate in? Select any that apply.



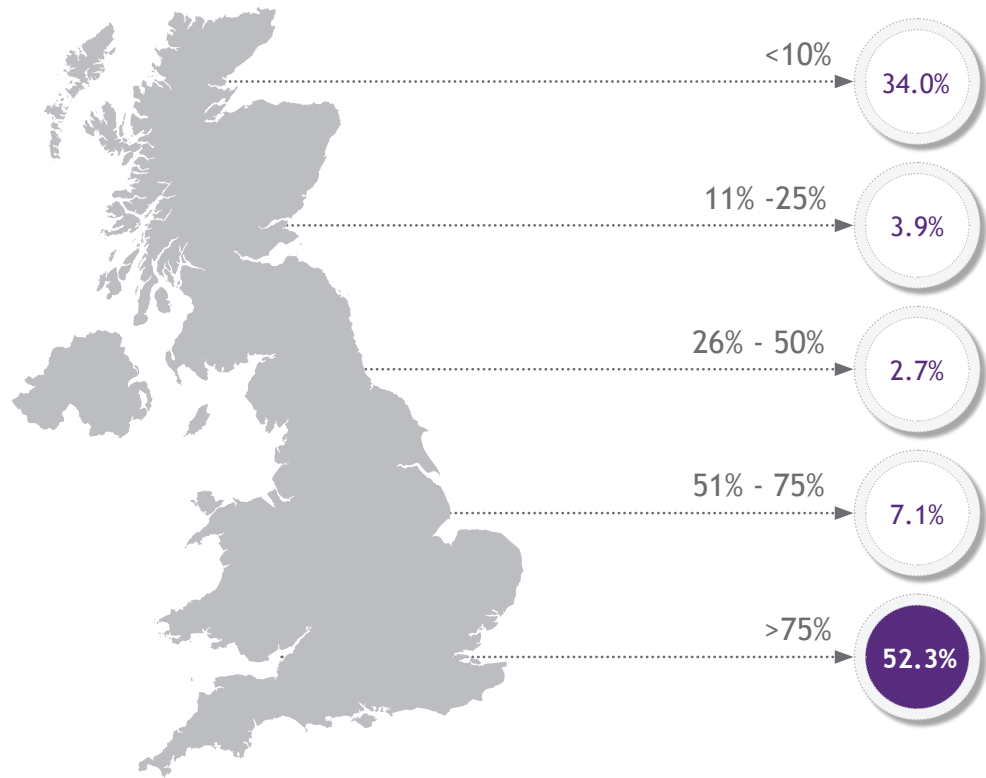
Q20. Approximately how many people does your business employ?



Q21. Approximately how many offices or bases do your people work from?

<10	10-25	25-50	50-100	100-250	250-500	500-1000	>1000
127	64	48	41	48	21	10	18

Q22. Approximately what % of these offices or bases are outside of the UK?





*If you'd like a chat about anything in this report, give us a call on 0845 612 6121 and ask for Nick (he's our M.D.) or drop him an email: [nick@top-b.com](mailto:nick@top-b.com)*

## Specialists in Global Leadership & Management Events

---



0845 612 6121



[top-b.com](http://top-b.com)



LinkedIn



Facebook



Twitter



Vimeo