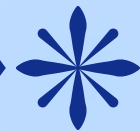


Other Duties as Assigned: *Preventing Overwork in Nonprofit Leadership*



**By: Mette Loulou von Kohl, Rose Malenfant,
Melissa Minaya, Kristal Ramos**



PASE INSTITUTE

Introductions



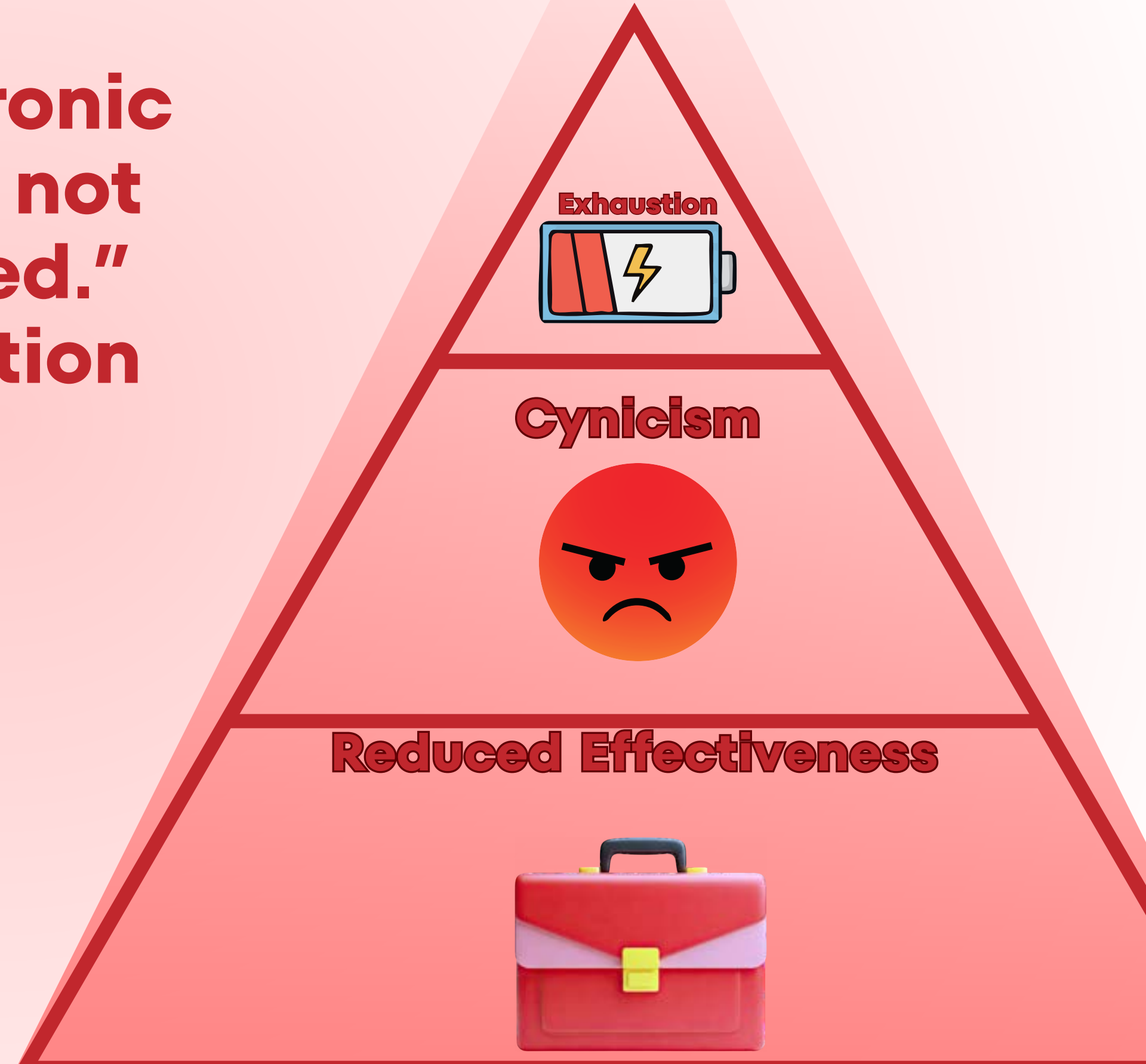


Research Question

**What equitable practices can
organizational leaders
implement to prevent middle
management staff from feeling
overworked?**

What is Burnout?

**"A syndrome caused by chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."
— World Health Organization**



What is Presenteeism?

“The act of being **physically present** at work but **not fully functioning** due to illness, injury, or burnout, leading to significant productivity losses.”

— **National Institute of Health**



Showing up but not fully there

- **Low Energy & Fatigue**
- **Difficulty Focusing**
- **Not Fully Present**

2 ***Conditions in the Field***

Conditions in the Field



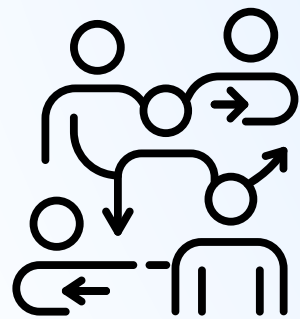
High Workload Demands



Emotional Labor



Limited Resources



Multiple Roles per Staff

Systemic Issues



Loss of funding & Funding Patterns



Mission-driven narratives



Funding Challenges & Workforce Impact



Funding cuts since 2024



Delayed & Restrictive funding






Services cost > funding



Staffing cuts increase workload

“Underfunded systems force organizations to choose between supporting staff and sustaining services”

Mission Driven Culture & Burnout Risk

-  • **Expectation to accept low pay for meaningful work**
-  • **Long hours**
-  • **"We are family" culture blurring boundaries**

Mission alignment motivates people, but it does not replace fair pay, boundaries, or sustainable workloads

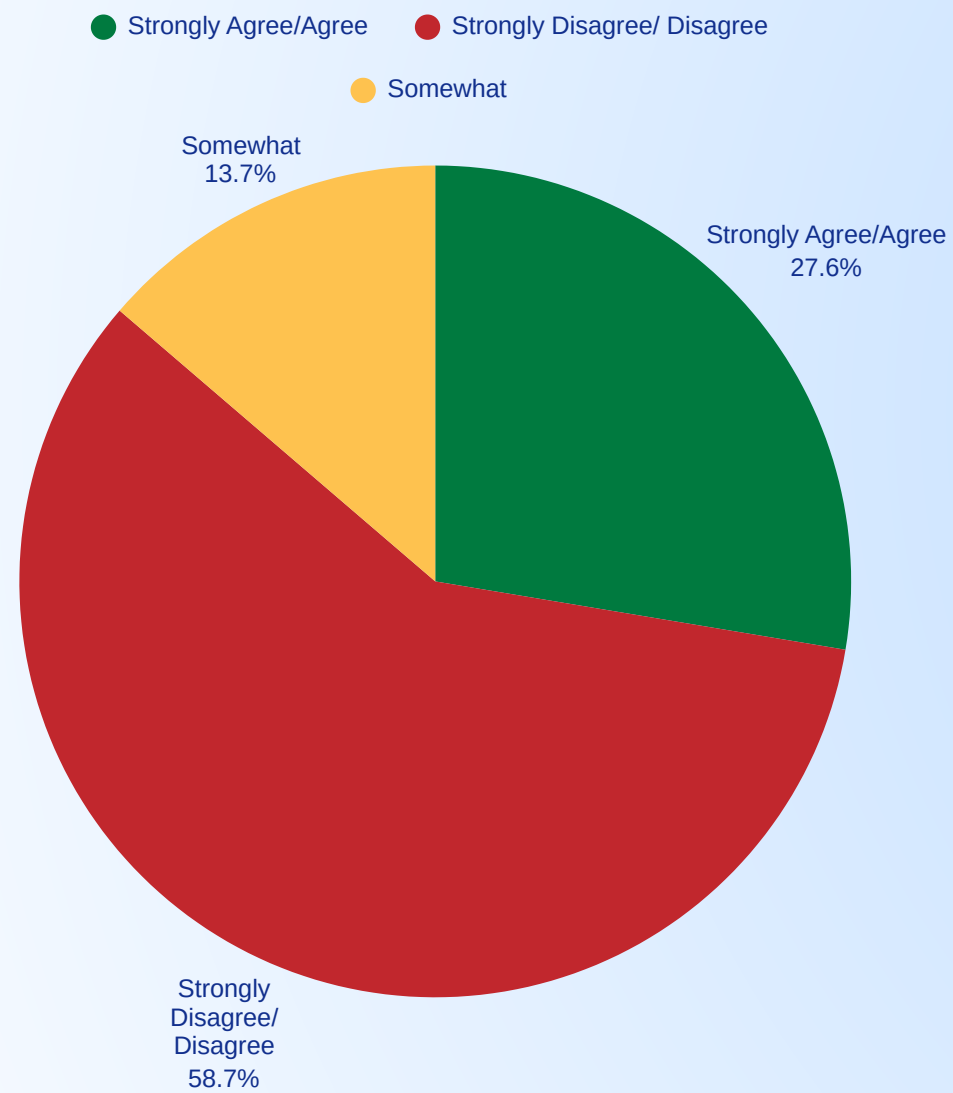
 **3** *Survey Insights*

Thank you Shreya & Lysandra
Our Cohort & Coworkers
PASE Alum
PASE Speakers

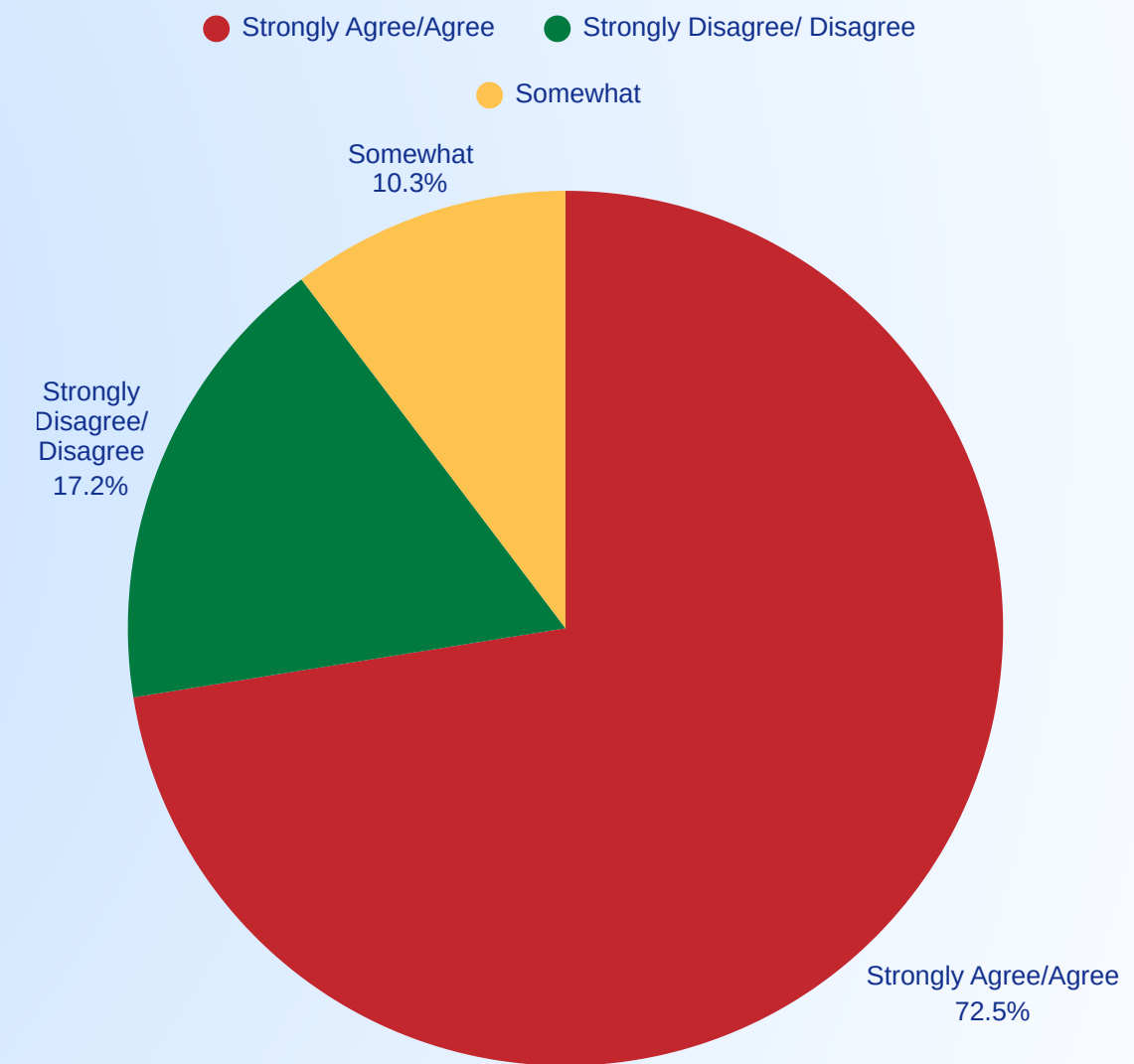
**Burnout in the non-profit
sector is no longer a
buzzword, is a *pandemic*.**



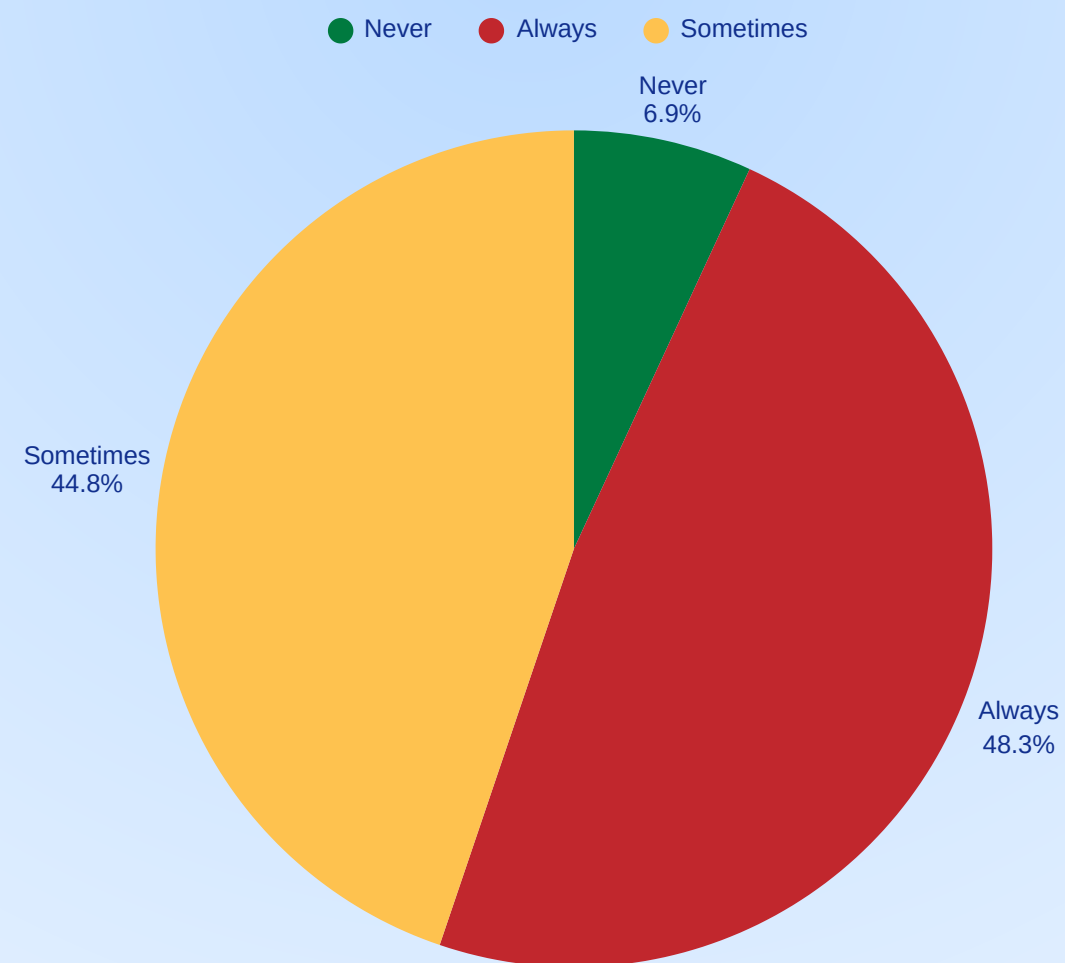
My workload is manageable within my scheduled work hours



Overwork is normalized at my organization.



How often do you work beyond your scheduled hours to meet job expectations?





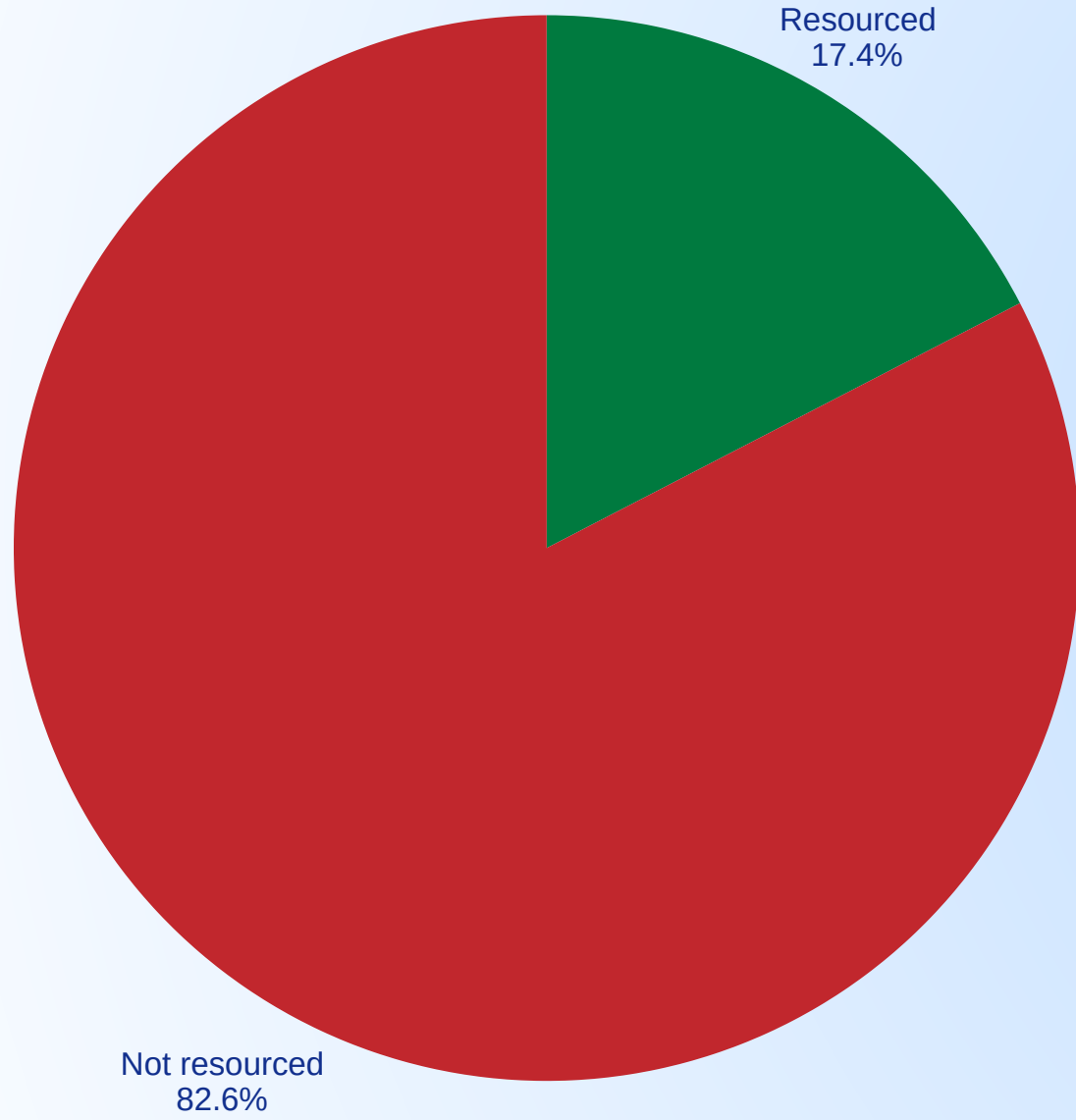
“... the norms are to be selfless and put other’s needs first; to work long hours and do whatever it takes to help the client or patient or student, to go the extra mile and to give one’s all.”



Well-resourced to do your job

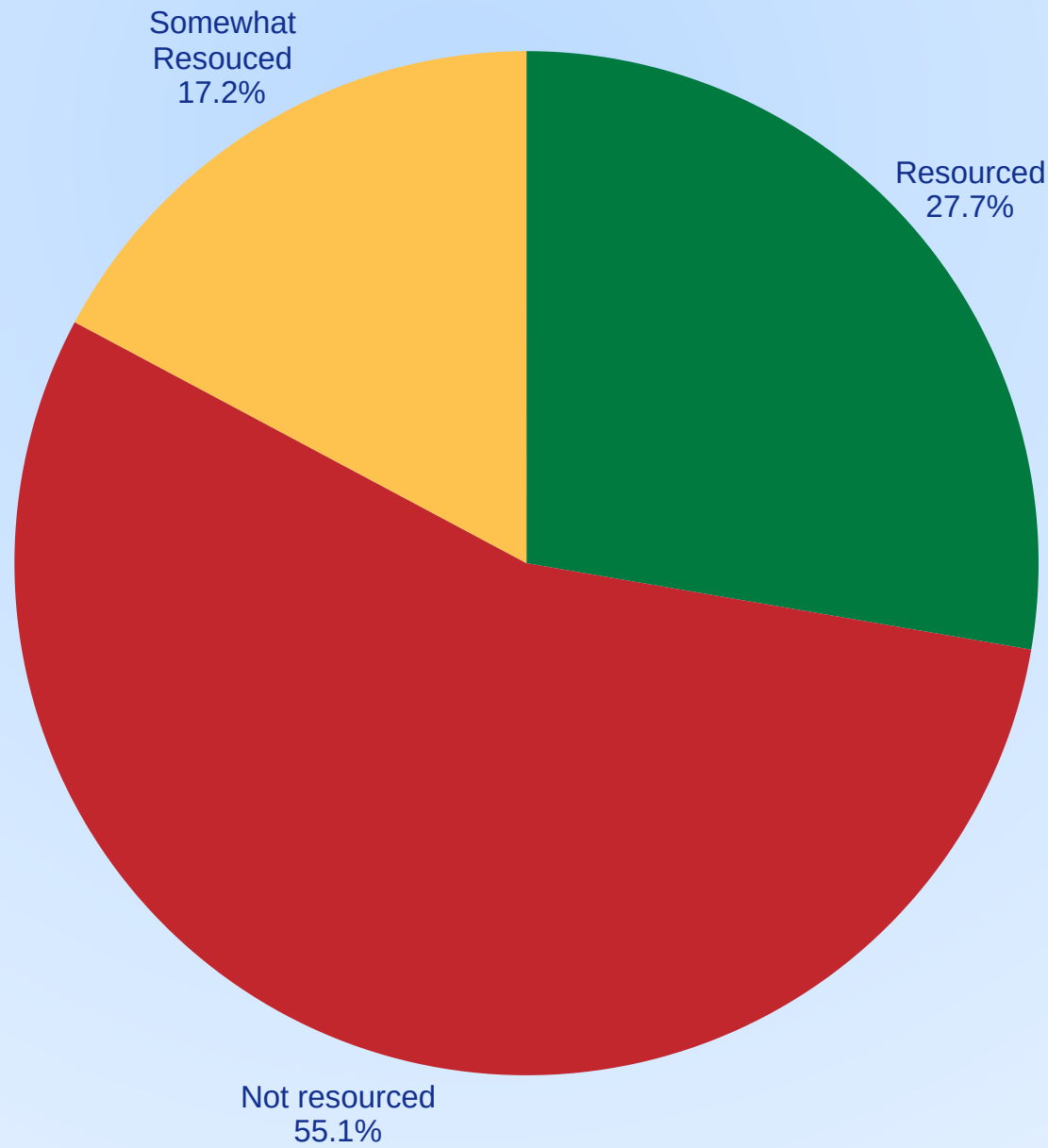
Time

Resourced Not resourced



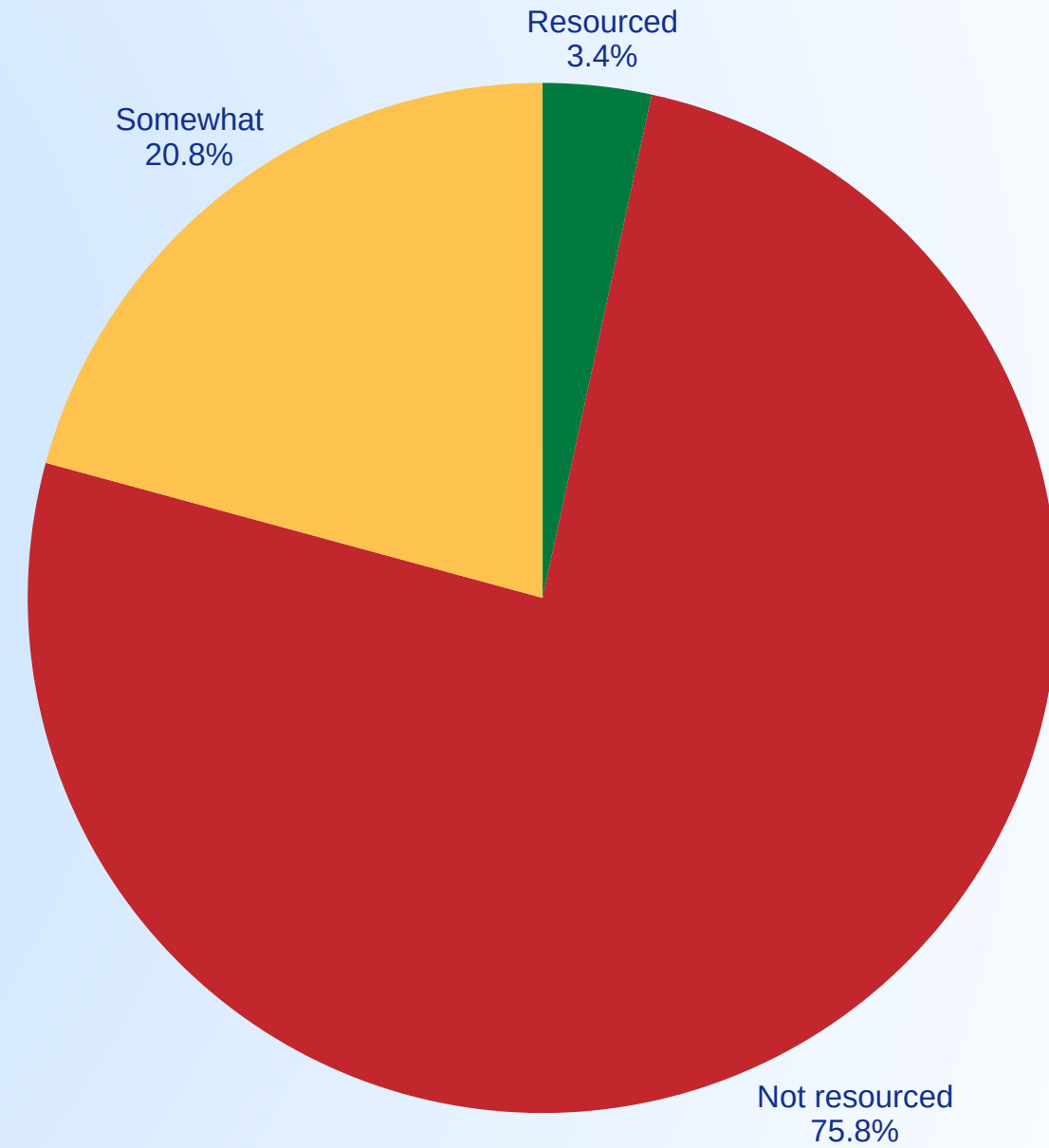
Sufficient Budget

Resourced Not resourced Somewhat Resourced



Sufficient Pay

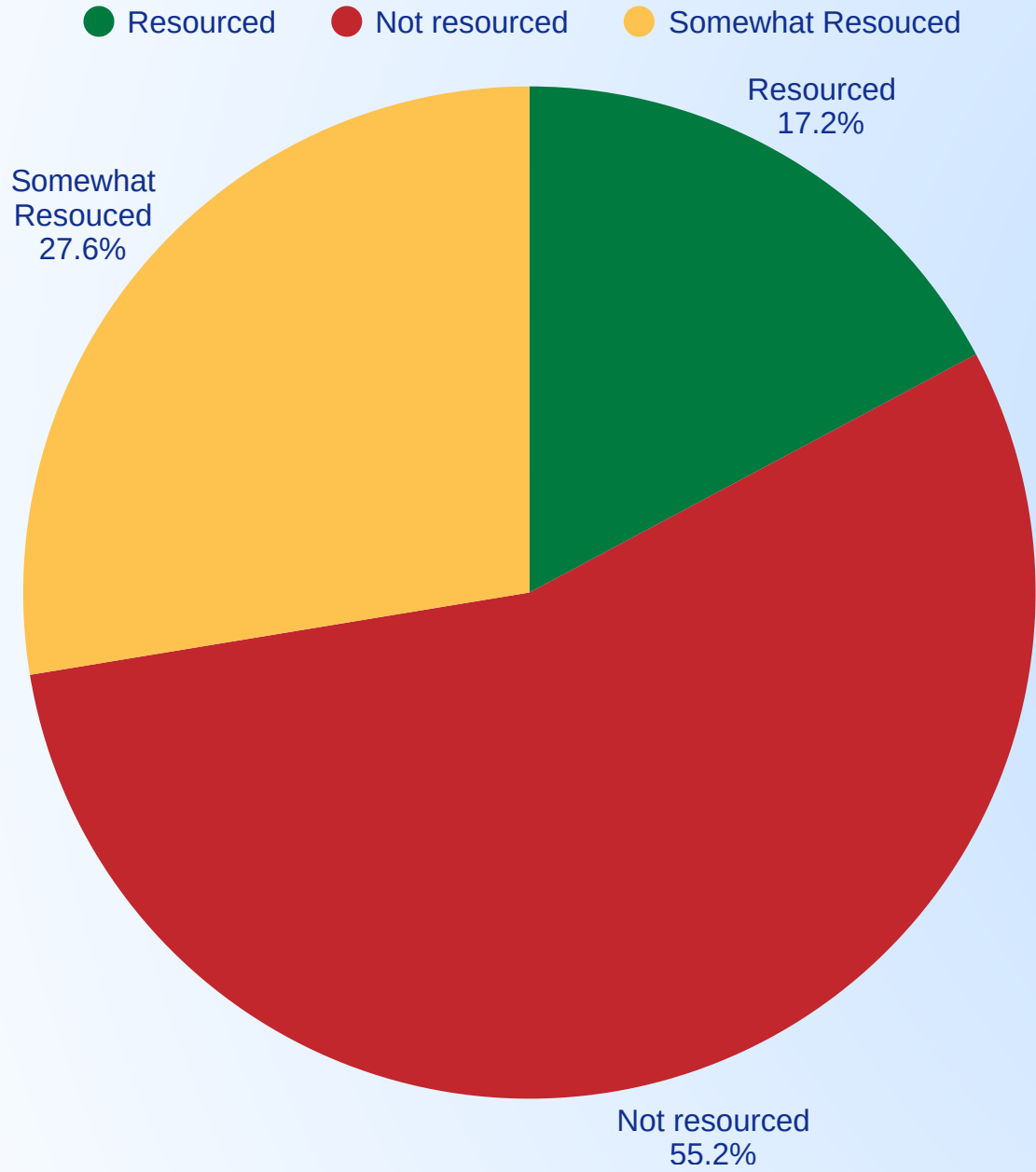
Resourced Not resourced Somewhat



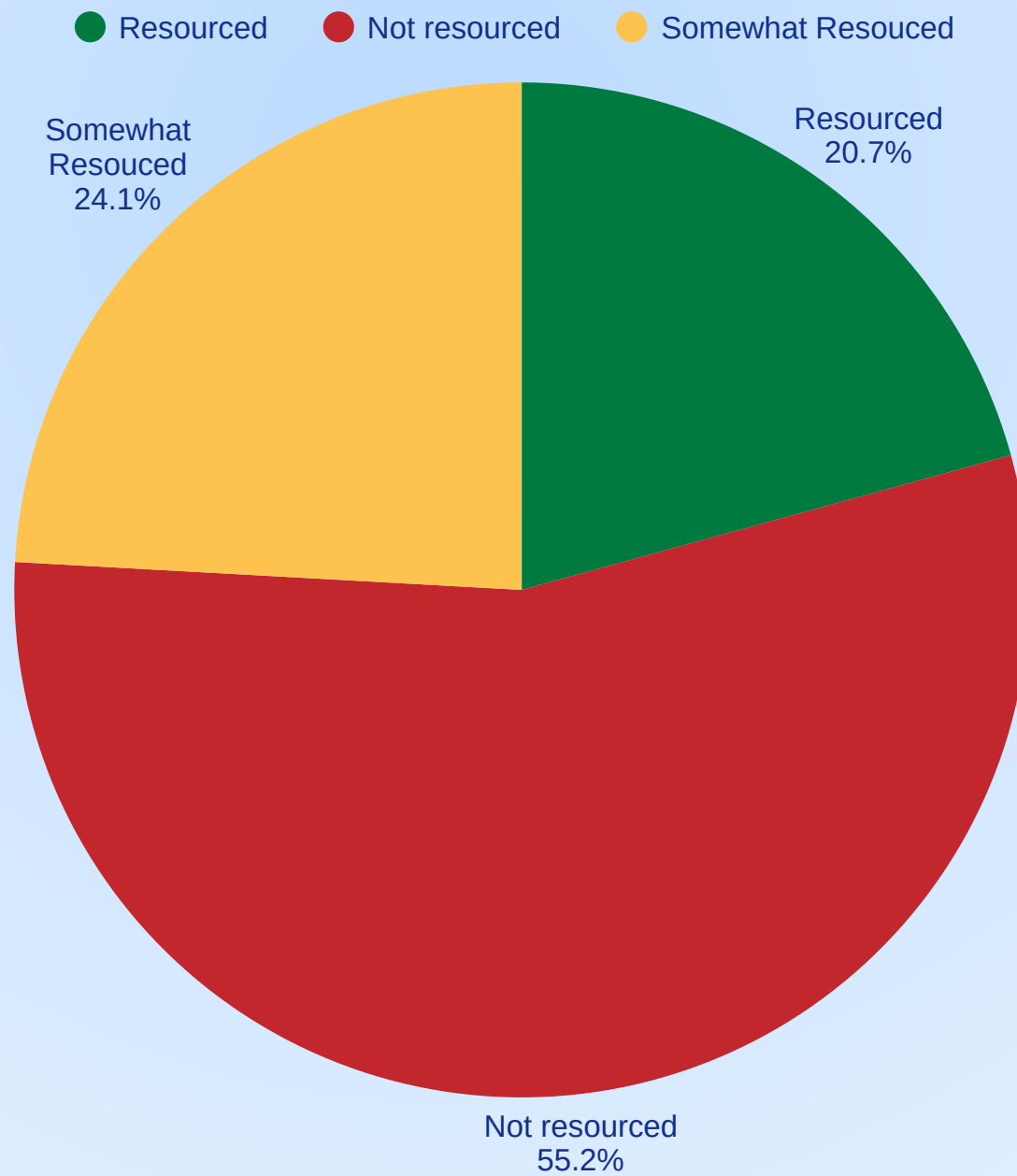


Well-resourced to do your job

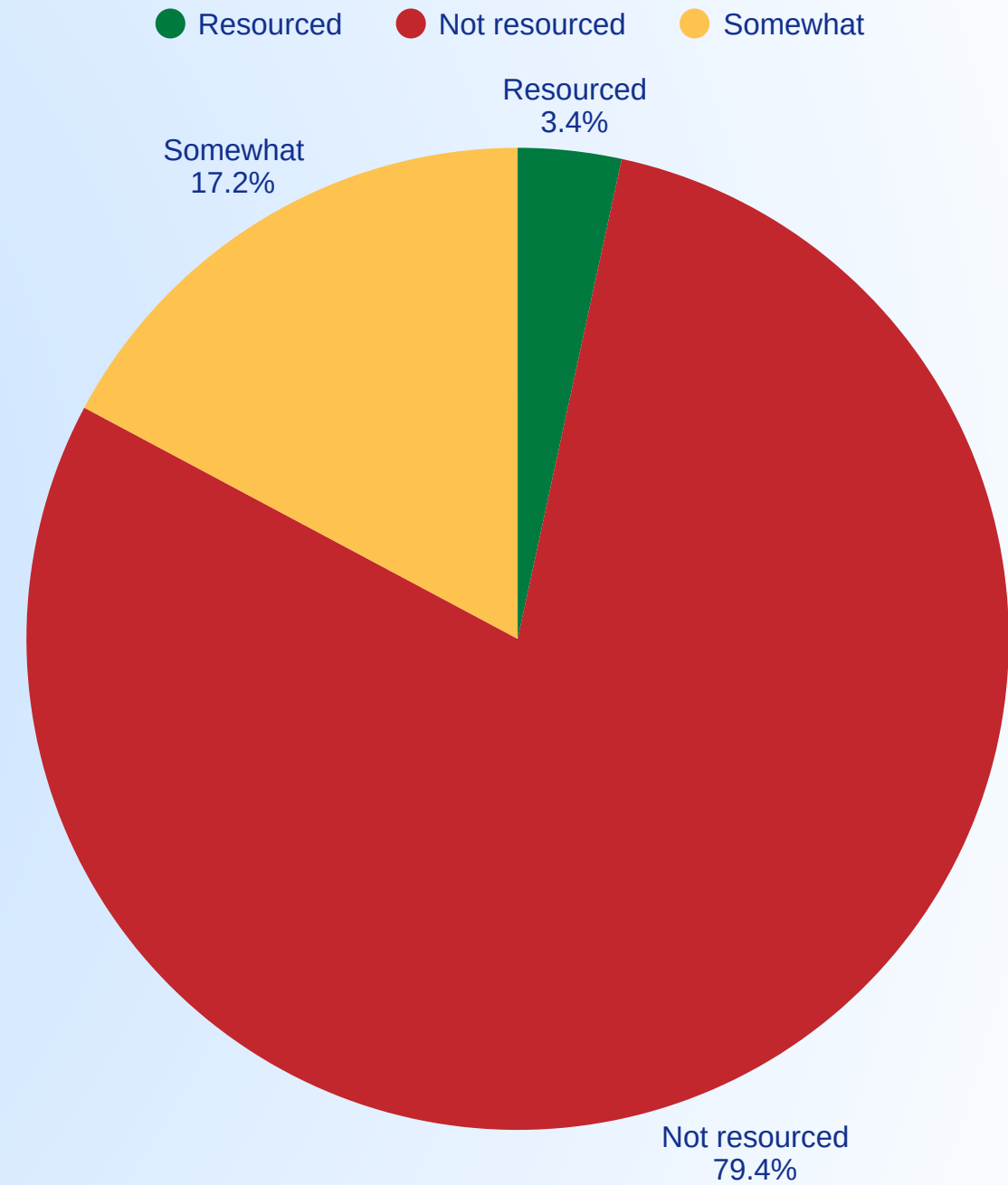
Organization Leadership Support

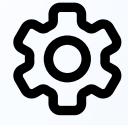


Supervisor Support

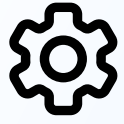


Staffing

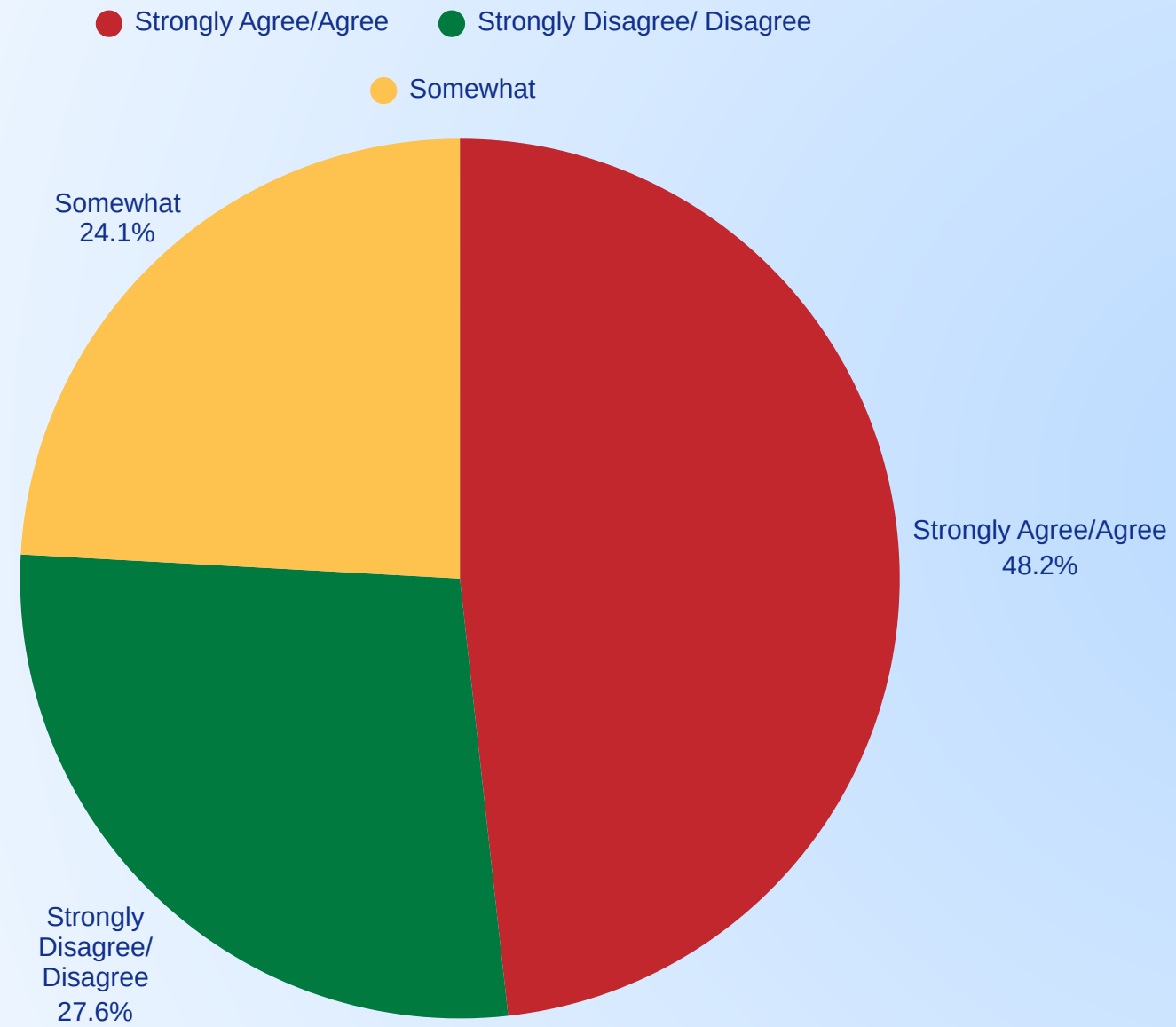




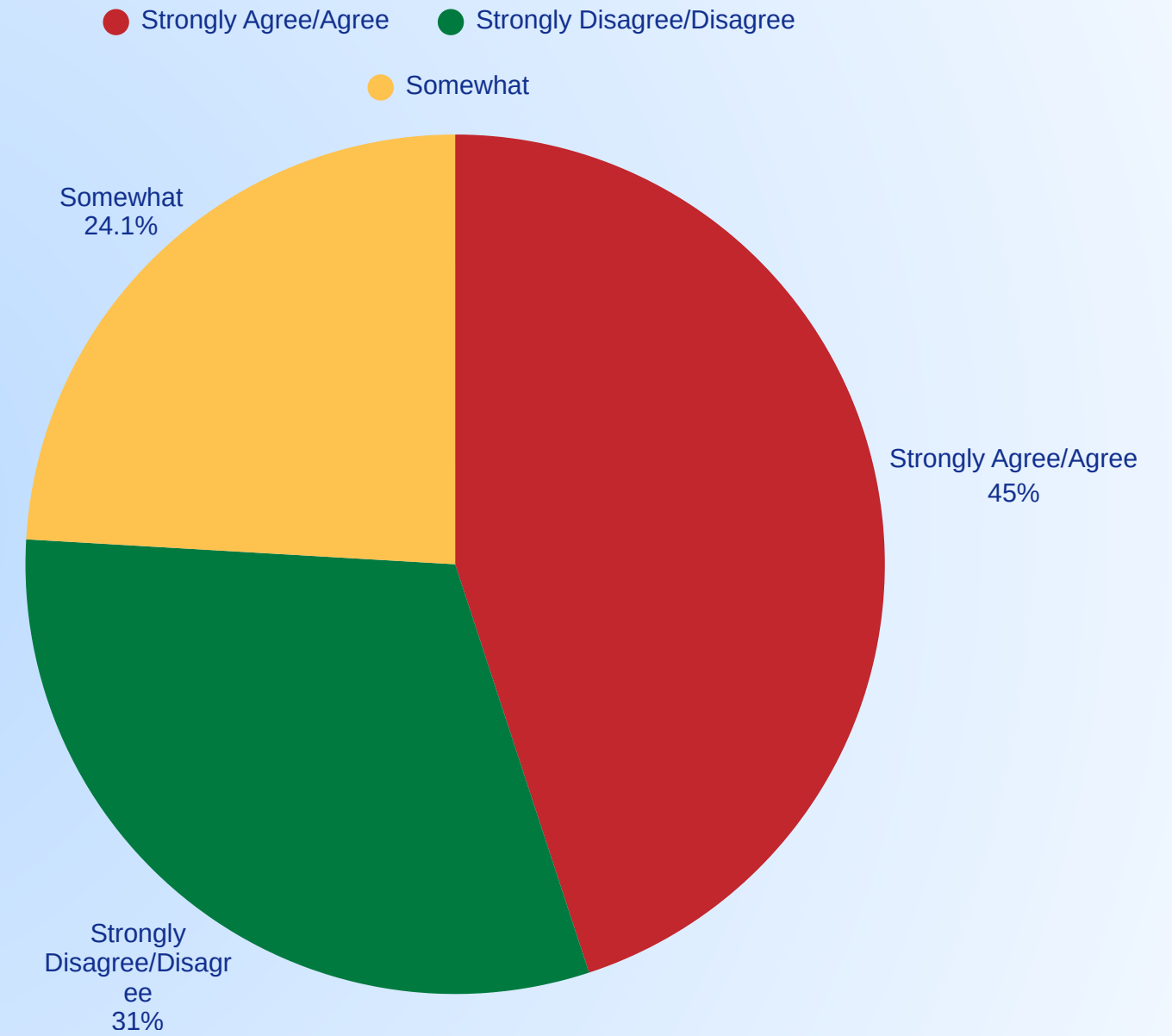
Burnout = Demands > Resources



I feel emotionally exhausted from my work.

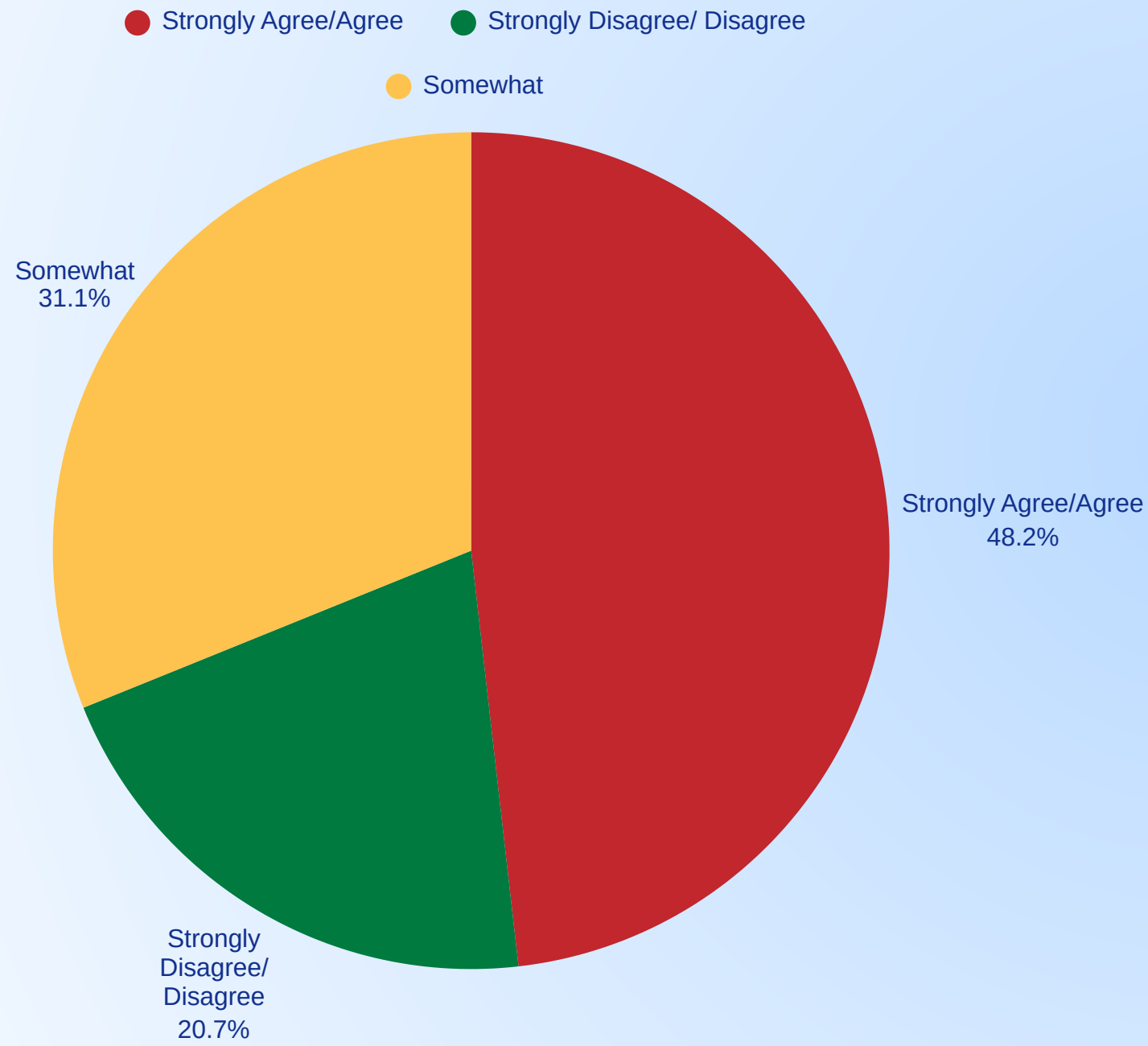


My workload negatively affects my well-being.

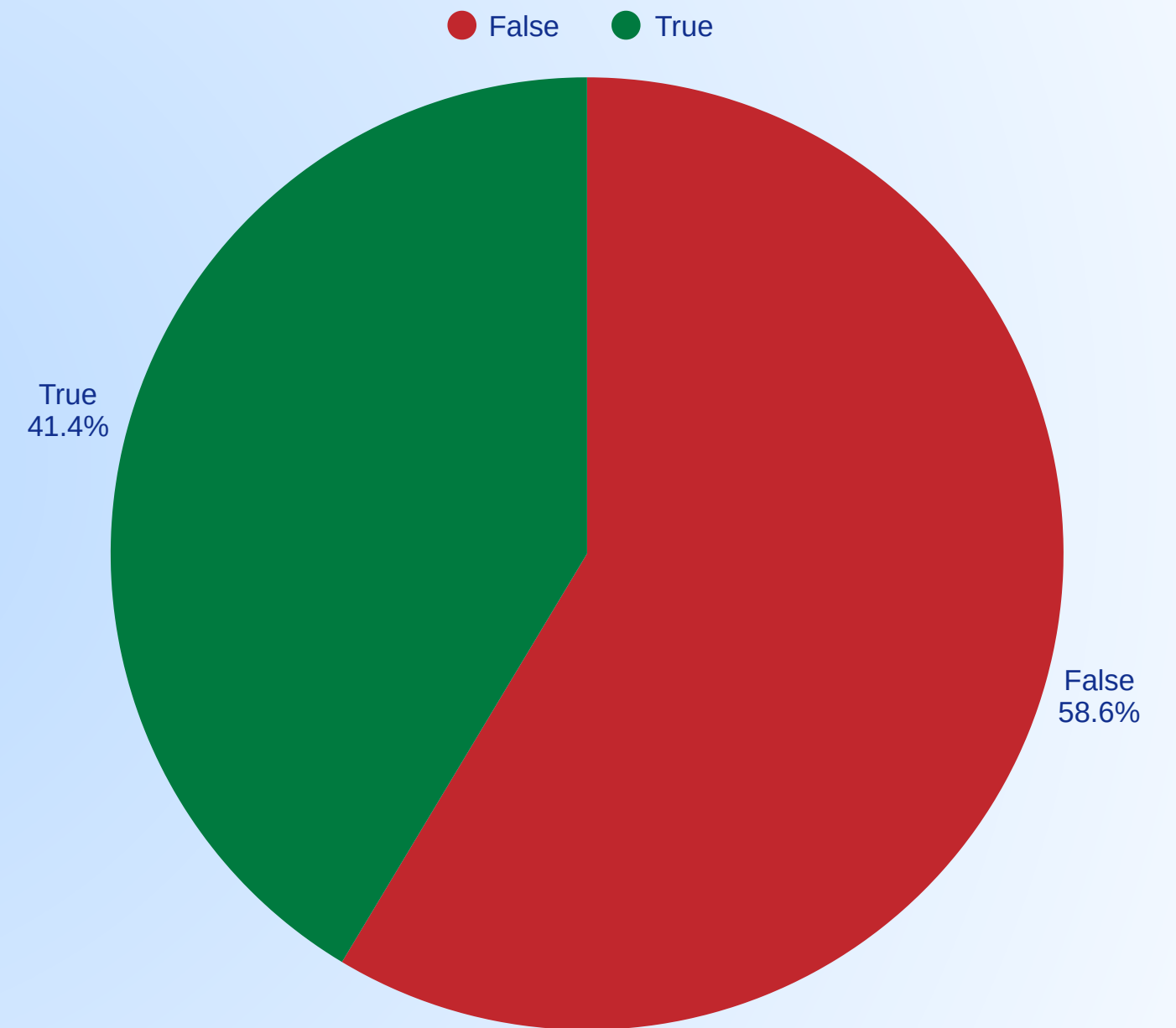




I have considered leaving my role due to workload.



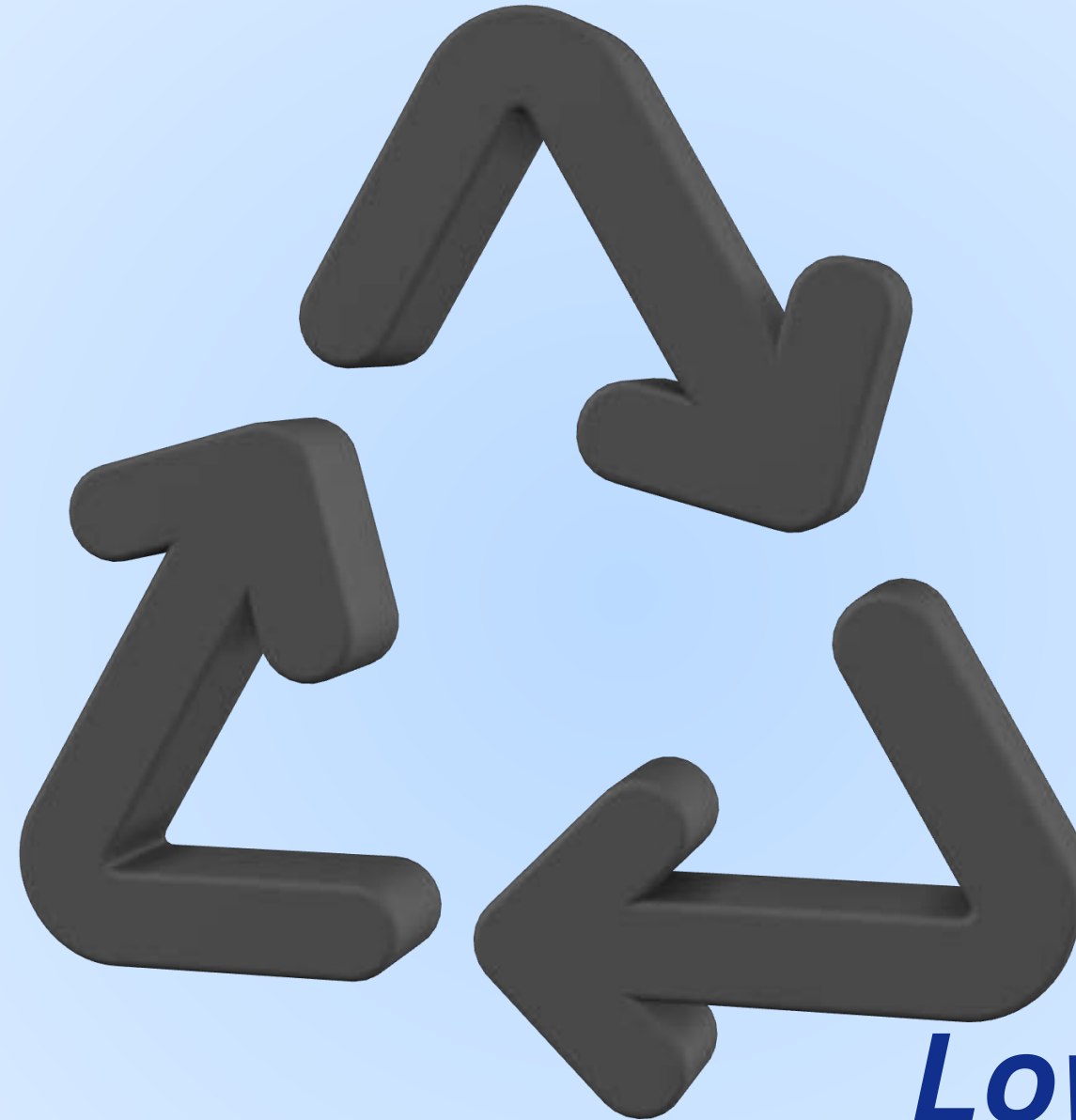
I feel valued by organizational leadership.





Burnout

“I love the work, but I’m stretched too thin and burned out.”



Overwork

Low Retention/New Job

Why staff consider leaving:

Too much responsibility (59%)

Limited growth opportunities (54%)

Unsupportive leadership (52%)

Compensation concerns (50%)



“There is a very toxic culture at my organization where people who are productive are forced to overproduce, and people who are lagging behind that are "favorites" are coddled. There is no need for my role to have such stringent in-person requirements, especially when my budget and team have been cut, so I'm not collaborating with anyone else very often, yet my manager likes to "catch" me... all while allowing other employees to take untracked PTO. In general, nonprofits push employees to have a martyr complex and use targeted language such as "family" to guilt staff into overworking for very little pay.”

“I do feel that sometimes we don't get paid enough to handle certain tasks, but since this is a non-profit, it's somewhat understandable. That's why I think there should be benefits or company policies in place to help improve employees' overall mental health.”

The system isn't broken;
it's functioning exactly as
we've allowed it to.

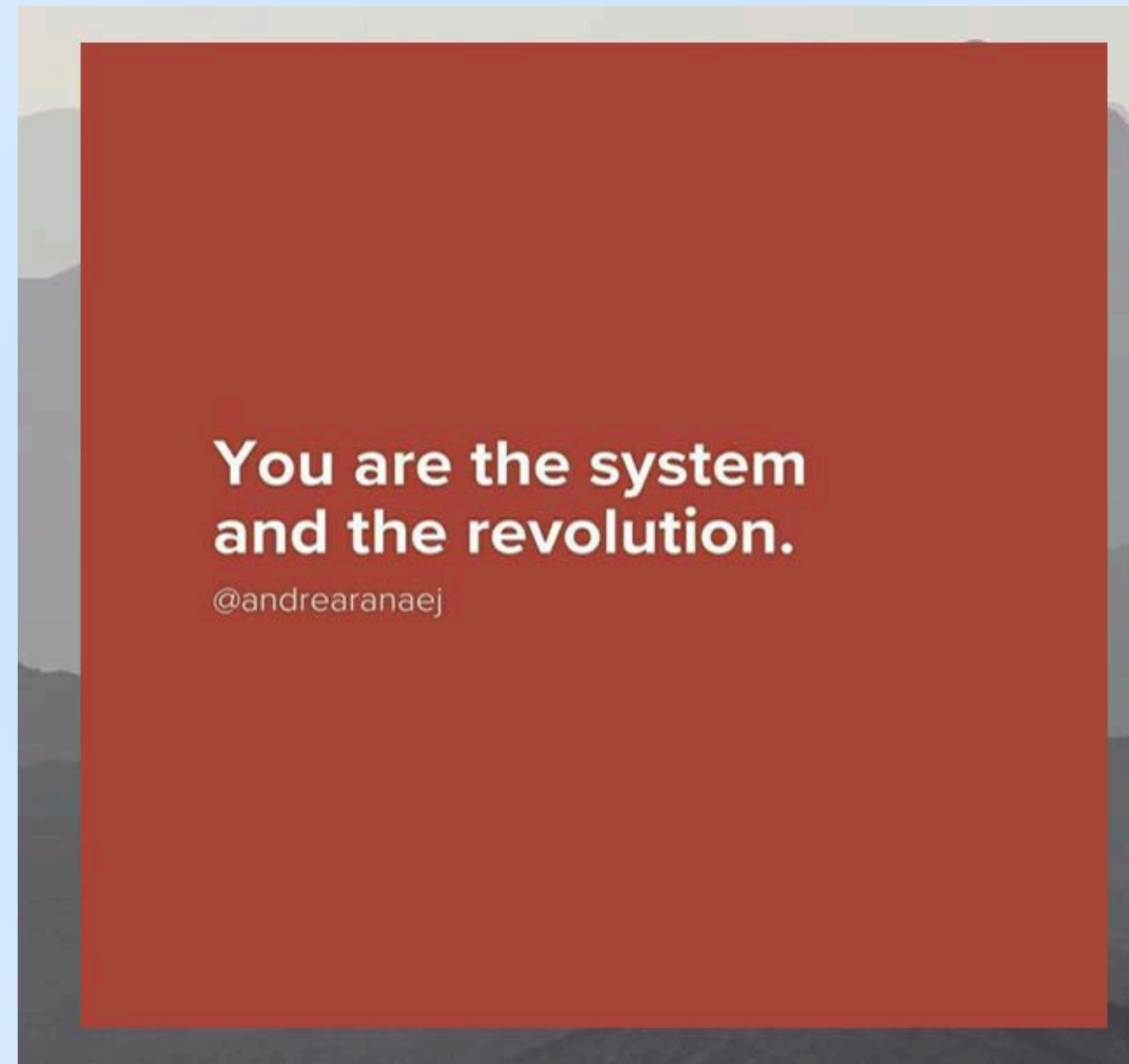
@andrearanaej

The system isn't broken;
it's a reflection of our
individual and collective
decisions and actions.

@andrearanaej

“Over-working is a common challenge in the nonprofit field because many staff members are deeply committed to the mission and the communities they serve. While this passion is important, it can sometimes lead to long hours, limited work-life balance, and burnout.”

It can be particularly challenging in environments where it's generally understood that work-life balance may be limited, and where the message can sometimes be that if that pace doesn't work for you, the organization may not be the right fit. While that perspective is understandable given the demands of mission-driven work, it can still make it difficult for staff to balance deep commitment to the mission with their own well-being.



Call for Change ...



4

Solutions



Organizational Culture

- **The culture of an organization needs to feel safe**
- **About practices not policies**
- **Begins with leadership**
- **Managers need to be “well supported/prepared/positioned”**
- **More staff & more funds can sometimes be a bandaid fix = not about one person**



Practices to Instill Culture

- **Review job descriptions on an annual basis**
- **Review benefits on an annual basis**
- **Equitable Pay & Economic Security**
- **Create spaces for middle-managers to connect**
- **Express appreciation**
- **Invest in Staff**
- **Prioritize mental health**
- **Boundaries**
- **Choice**
- **Flexibility**
- **Growth**



**“Worker well-being is community well-being.
When our staff are taken care of, our community is
taken care of.”**

-Non-profit Leader



5

Impact





The McKinsey Health Institute estimates that investing in holistic employee health could generate between \$3.7 trillion and \$11.7 trillion in global economic value.

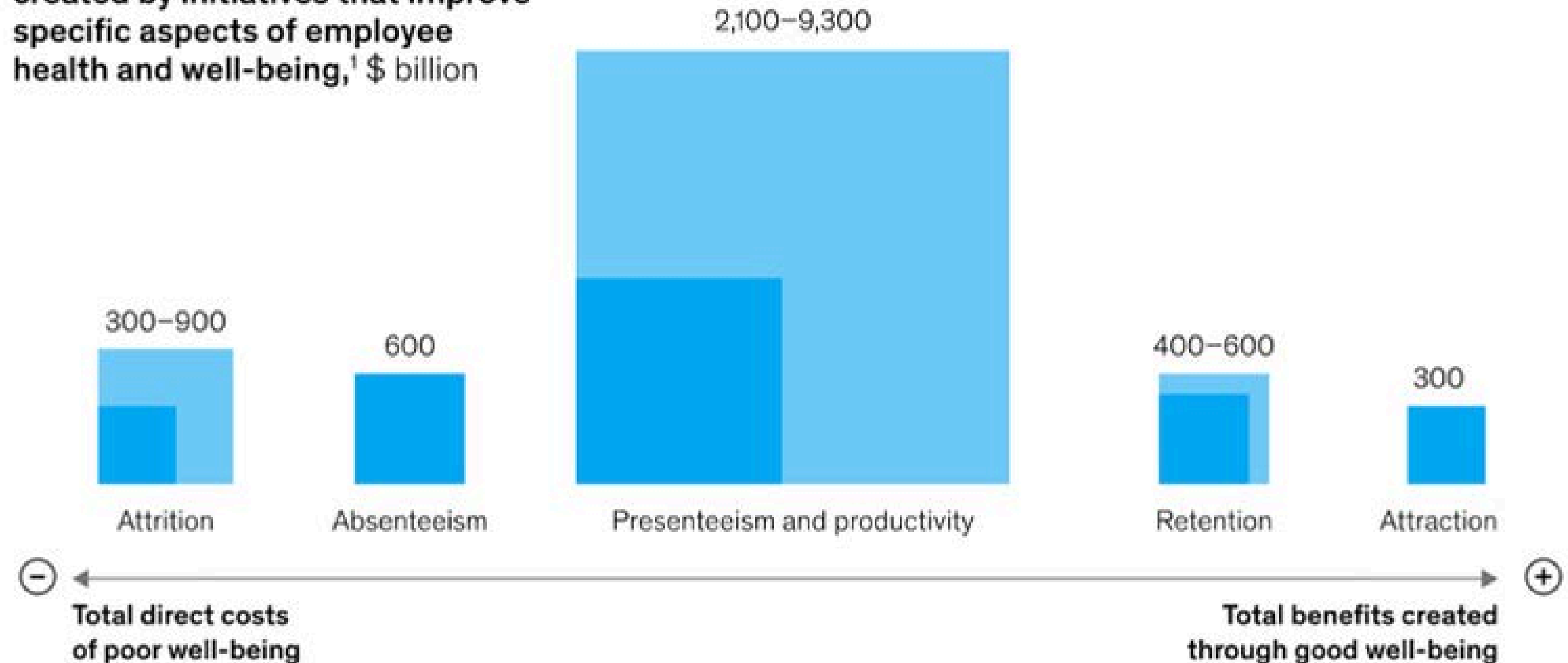
This equates to approximately \$1,100 to \$3,500 per person, or 17 to 55 percent of average annual pay.

This estimate includes the impact of reduced attrition, absenteeism, and presenteeism, as well as improved employee productivity, attraction, and retention.



By investing in employee health, among the biggest benefits are reduced presenteeism and improved productivity.

Estimated total opportunity value created by initiatives that improve specific aspects of employee health and well-being,¹ \$ billion



¹Estimated total opportunity value created by initiatives that improve specific aspects of employee health and well-being.
Source: Expert interviews; McKinsey Health Institute Employee Holistic Health Survey, 2023



**Lets examine impact through
Middle Manager's stories...**



Case Study - Middle Management



Dino



Ottie



Dino

- **has 40 staff to place and 15 schools to manage**
- **gets 100 emails a day between org staff, school admin and parents**
- **has fast staff turn over rate, often has to drop what they are doing to cover last minute**
- **has to put a lot of time into talent scouting, hiring, and training new facilitators**
- **in desperation to fulfill contracts - often hires less than ideal candidates with less experience and professionalism**
- **as a result needs to manage more tricky interpersonal issues between staff and spends a lot of time “putting out fires”**



- **has 6 staff to place and 3 schools to manage**
- **gets 15 emails a day between org staff, school admin and parents**
- **has great staff retention and can count on their team to deliver quality programming**
- **Their staff are ambitious and offer to help with managerial tasks like training new hires because they are excited to share their projects with others**
- **when hiring needs to happen, there is a competitive pool of highly qualified individuals who flock to the org for their good reputation**
- **Ottie can put more time into seeking resources for their staff such as professional development rather than putting out fires**



Ottie



How does this number relate to middle managers?





How does this number relate to middle managers?

Rule of 7

The rule of seven is a basic axiom of management which states that a manager is most effective when the maximum number of people reporting to them doesn't go beyond a handful, the sweet spot being around a ratio of 7:1.

Management Thought (1950s): Thinker Lyndall Urwick, along with military studies, suggested that for effective control and communication, a leader's span should be limited to 5–6 or up to 7 direct reports, say Business Resources One.



Trickle down

When managers are overworked their staff greatly feel the effects of it, and when managers have a balanced workload they can support their staff to do their best quality work



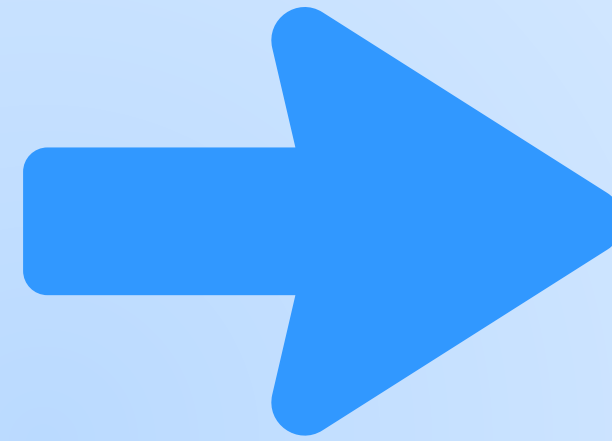
- **greater staff retention and morale**
- **less calling out sick**
- **greater participation and initiative**
- **the quality of work markets itself**
- **staff taking pride in their work support the organizations outreach and communication with stakeholders**





- **Invest in staff by providing**
- **compensation**
- **resources**
- **managable workloads**

- **professional development**
- **role clarity**
- **flexibility**
- **choice**



**increased productivity
and a positive
workplace culture**



Thank You

Questions?



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