



INSIGHT REPORT

The State of Customer Experience Management, 2017

EIGHTH ANNUAL BENCHMARK OF CX ACTIVITIES, COMPETENCIES, AND MATURITY LEVELS

By **Bruce Temkin**, CCXP
Head of the Qualtrics XM Institute

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the eighth straight year, Temkin Group has evaluated the state of Customer Experience (CX) management at large companies. When we analyzed their efforts and their progress this year, we found that:

- While only 8% of companies view themselves as industry leaders in CX today, 55% aspire to be leaders within three years.
- A majority of companies have a CX executive in charge of their efforts and a central team who coordinates significant CX activities. The median number of CX staff members falls between 11 and 15 full-time professionals.
- Companies find significant value in working with voice of the customer vendors, and the percentage of companies who get value out of this relationship has been steadily increasing.
- We used Temkin Group's *CX Competency and Maturity Assessment*, which evaluates four CX competencies (Purposeful Leadership, Compelling Brand Values, Employee Engagement, and Customer Connectedness) to benchmark the maturity of companies' CX efforts and found that only 10% of companies have reached the highest two levels of customer experience, while 59% still find themselves in the lowest two stages.
- When we compared CX leaders with CX laggards, we discovered that the leaders enjoy stronger financial results, are more likely to have senior executives leading company-wide CX efforts, employ more full-time CX employees, use more experience design agencies, and feel more supported by senior leaders.
- This report also includes an assessment that companies can use to benchmark their CX efforts and capabilities.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT WITHIN LARGE FIRMS

To understand how companies' customer experience (CX) management efforts are progressing, we surveyed 180 CX professionals from companies with at least \$500 million in annual revenues.¹ The results of this survey show that:

¹ Temkin Group fielded an online survey during March 2017. The data was cleansed to eliminate partial, duplicate, and questionable responses. This report analyzes 180 responses from companies with annual revenues of at least \$500 million. These respondents come from a global set of companies.

- **Companies have strong CX ambitions.** While only 8% of companies believe that they are leading their industries in CX today, 55% aim to be the best within three years (see Figure 1).
- **Most have centralized CX leadership.** We found that 67% of respondents have a senior executive in charge of their company's overall CX efforts, and that 69% have centralized CX groups (see Figure 2). Half of the companies have had these corporate CX elements in place for 12 months or more.
- **Most CX teams have more than 10 FTEs.** Fifty-three percent of respondents report that their CX efforts are significantly coordinated across their organization (see Figure 3). Of the companies with centralized CX teams, the median firm has 11 to 15 full-time CX employees. More than one-quarter of respondents have 21 or more CX employees.
- **Customer insights is the most successful area of focus.** When we asked respondents which activities have most positively impacted their company, 57% said that their *customer insights & analysis efforts* are "strong" or "very strong" (see Figure 4). The only other area where more than 45% of respondents consider themselves strong is *working with senior leaders*.
- **Market research and VoC software are the most valuable tools.** We asked respondents about which tools and services their company uses and found that market research vendors and VoC software deliver the most significant value (see Figure 5). Voice of the customer software and speech/voice analytics are the only areas that respondents say have increased in value over each of the last two years (see Figure 6).
- **Experiences differ across channels.** Sixty percent of respondents feel that their phone agents typically deliver either a "good" or "very good" experience, by far the highest level of any interaction channel (see Figure 7). Conversely, only 14% of respondents feel the same way about their efforts across multiple channels. When we compared this year's results to results from previous years, we found that the quality of CX across every interaction channel decreased in 2017 (see Figure 8).
- **Companies struggle with competing priorities.** Sixty-eight percent of respondents identified *other competing priorities* as a significant obstacle to their CX efforts (see Figure 9). Fifty-two percent of respondents selected *lack of a clear CX strategy* as the next most significant obstacle to their CX efforts. The percentage of respondents who cited a *lack of clear CX strategy* increased by 10 points between 2016 and 2017, the largest increase for any obstacle.

ASSESSING THE FOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE CORE COMPETENCIES

Temkin Group has identified four CX core competencies that companies must master if they want to become customer-centric: Purposeful Leadership, Compelling Brand Values, Employee Engagement, and Customer Connectedness (see Figure 10).² As part of the survey, respondents completed our *CX Competency and Maturity Assessment*, which evaluates how proficient their company is across these four competencies (see Figure 11). The results show:

² See the Temkin Group report, "The Four Customer Experience Core Competencies," (April 2017).

- **Few companies are truly customer-centric.** Only 10% of the companies that completed this assessment have made it to *Align* or *Embed*, the top two stages of CX maturity (see Figure 12). While companies have a lot of work to do across all four competencies, they received the lowest ratings for Compelling Brand Values.
- **CX maturity rises with CX leadership tenure.** We examined the CX maturity levels of companies based on the tenure of their senior CX leaders (see Figure 13).³ The data shows that CX maturity jumps considerably for companies that have had a CX executive in place for more than 18 months.
- **Customer experience maturity remains about the same.** Temkin Group often refers to the bottom three levels of maturity as “fluff” because they can be reached without significantly disrupting the way than an organization operates. We refer to the top three levels of maturity as “tough” because they require significant change across an organization. We examined the results of the maturity assessments from 2010 to 2017 and found that the percentage of companies in the three highest levels of CX maturity has dropped a bit from last year (see Figure 14). This drop is driven by the fact that each of the four competency areas individually declined over the previous year.
- **Senior leaders communicate the value of CX.** In order to learn where companies’ CX efforts excel and where they fall down, we asked respondents whether or not their company does 20 different CX activities from across the four competencies (see Figures 15 and 16). At the top of the list, more than half of respondents’ companies have senior executives who communicate the importance of customer experience and regularly collect and act upon customer feedback. At the bottom of the list, less than one in six companies provide industry-leading training for employees.
- **Employees better understand core values.** When we compared the percentage of companies that did each CX activity in 2016 versus the percentage doing it in 2017, the activity that increased the most was *marketing does as much brand marketing inside of the company as it does outside the company* (see Figure 17).

COMPARING CX LEADERS AND CX LAGGARDS

What distinguishes CX leaders from CX laggards? We split the respondents into two groups based on their *CX Competency and Maturity Assessment* scores. We labeled companies with scores of 54 and above “CX leaders” and companies with scores below 54 “CX laggards.” When we compared the results of these two groups, we found that CX leaders:

- **Have better financial performances.** Seventy-three percent of CX leaders report better financial results than their competitors, while only 44% of CX laggards report the same (see Figure 18).
- **Have a more active CX efforts.** More than 80% of CX leaders have a senior executive in charge of their CX efforts, compared with only 53% of CX laggards. The CX laggards fall even further behind when it comes to having significant, highly-coordinated CX

³ For this evaluation, we examined smaller segments of companies than is our general practice; however, we still believe that the insights from the analysis can be useful and are indicative of broader trends.

efforts, trailing CX leaders by a full 34 percentage-points. CX leaders also have considerably more CX employees.

- **Work better with executives.** CX leaders perform better across all CX activities we looked at (see Figure 19). These two groups differ the most when it comes to *working with senior leaders* as the percentage of CX leaders that excel in this area is 36 points higher than the percentage of CX laggards that excel.
- **Use more experience design agencies.** When we looked at the tools and services that companies use, CX leaders are much more likely to use all of the items, except market research vendors (see Figure 20). These two groups differ most – 21 percentage-points – when it comes to using experience design agencies. Interestingly, we found that CX leaders are considerably better at gaining value from their market research vendors than their laggard counterparts (see Figure 21).
- **Deliver better cross-channel experiences.** CX leaders report delivering a higher percentage of good experiences across all of the interaction channels on our list (see Figure 22). They outperform CX laggards by the highest margin when it comes to cross-channel experiences, followed closely by phone experiences with agents.
- **Have more executive support.** When asked about major obstacles to their CX efforts, both groups struggle equally with *competing priorities* (see Figure 23). CX laggards, however, were more likely than CX leaders to select all of the other obstacles on our list. These two groups differed the most in *lack of commitment from senior executives*, with CX laggards falling 36 percentage-points behind CX leaders.
- **Focus more on delighting customers, less on cutting costs.** We asked respondents to rate how important their executives consider different business goals (see Figure 24). CX leaders are much more likely than CX laggards to focus on *fixing customer experience problems*, *making the culture more customer-centric*, and *finding ways to delight customers*. CX laggards, on the other hand, are much more likely to focus on *cutting costs*.

ASSESS AND IMPROVE YOUR CX COMPETENCIES

As some companies focus on the four core CX competencies more than others, we expect to see the gap between CX leaders and CX laggards continue to grow. To gauge your organization's progress, use Temkin Group's *Customer Experience Competency and Maturity Assessment*. You can use this tool in a number of ways:

- **Self-assessments.** Take the test yourself to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your organization.
- **Group discussions.** Use the self-test in a group exercise and discuss the strengths and weaknesses you identify as well as the areas of agreement and disagreement in the results.
- **Benchmarking.** Compare your results to Temkin Group's data about other companies. We've provided a chart you can use to identify how your score compares to 180 large companies (see Figure 25).

- **Action planning.** Develop plans for making progress towards being a Customer-Centric Organization.
- **Progress tracking.** Repeat the self-test every six months to track your progress.

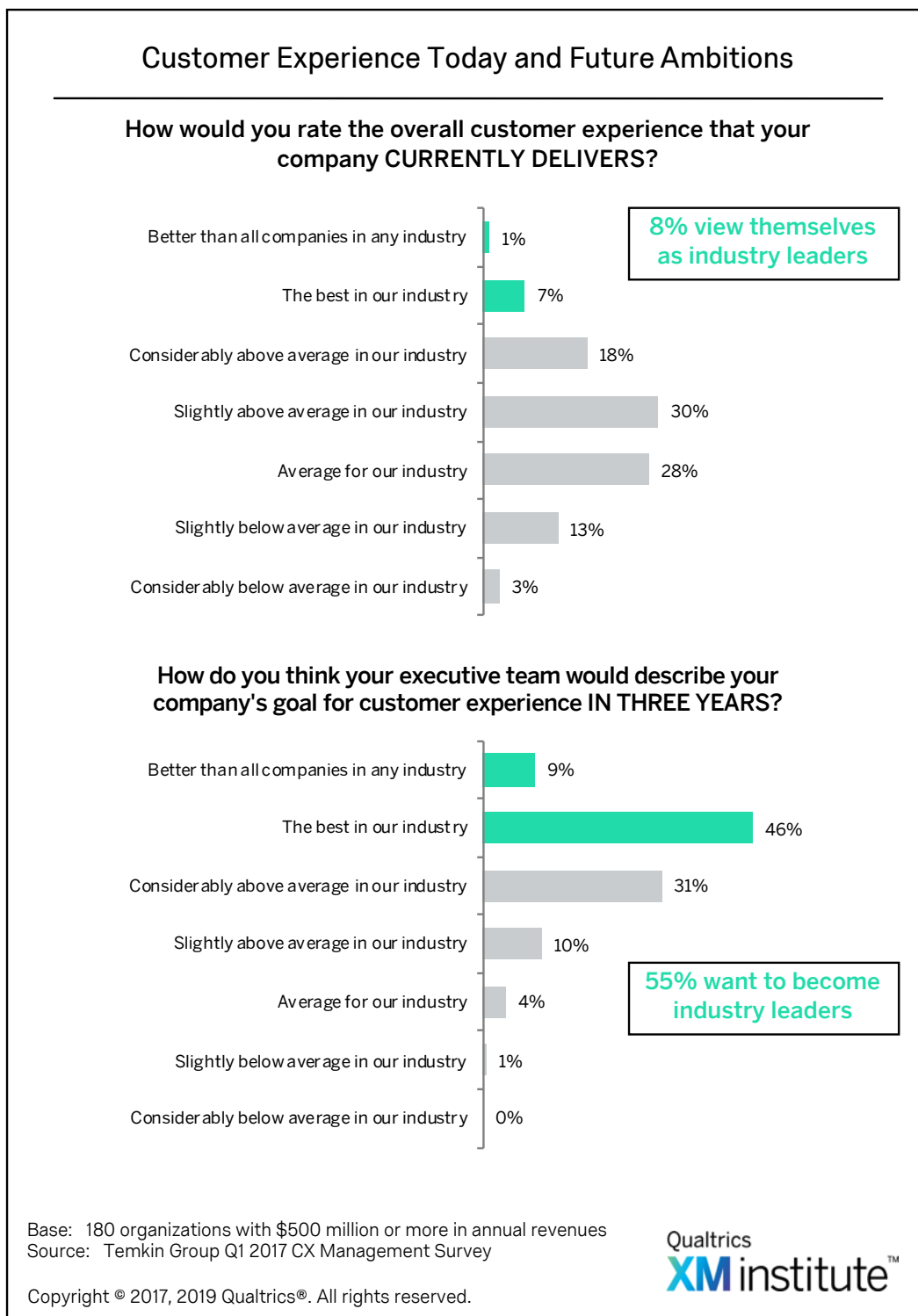
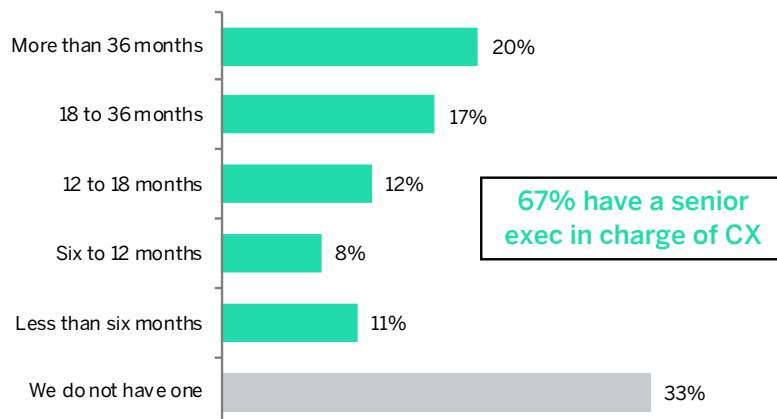


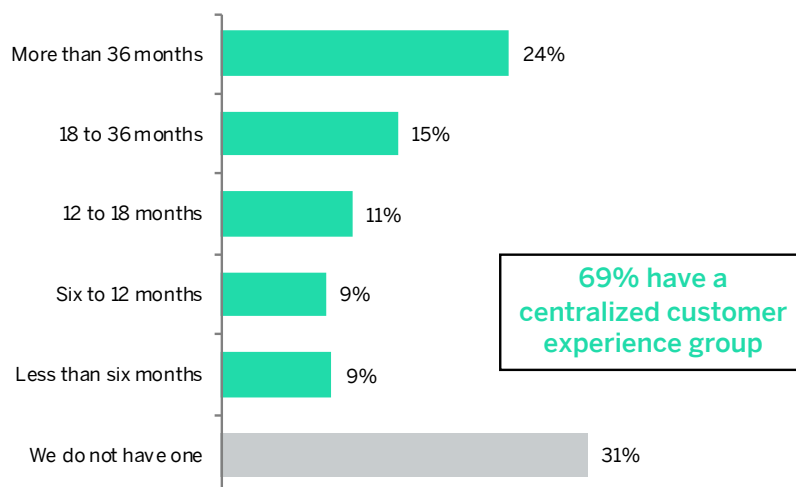
Figure 1

Customer Experience Leadership and Organization

How long, if at all, has your organization had a senior executive in charge of customer experience across products and channels?



How long, if at all, has your organization had a centralized customer experience group?



Base: 180 organizations with \$500 million or more in annual revenues
Source: Temkin Group Q1 2017 CX Management Survey

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Figure 2

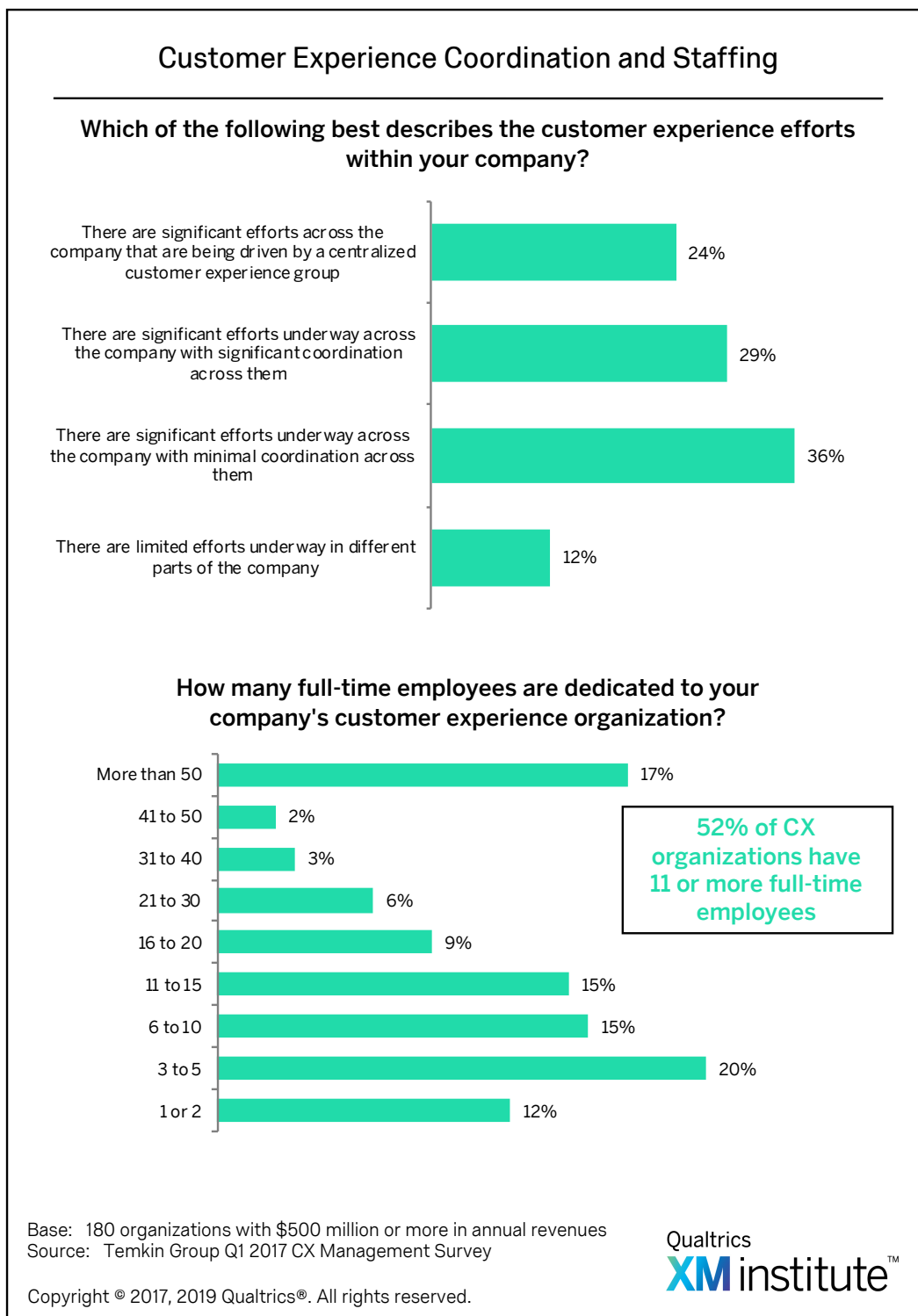


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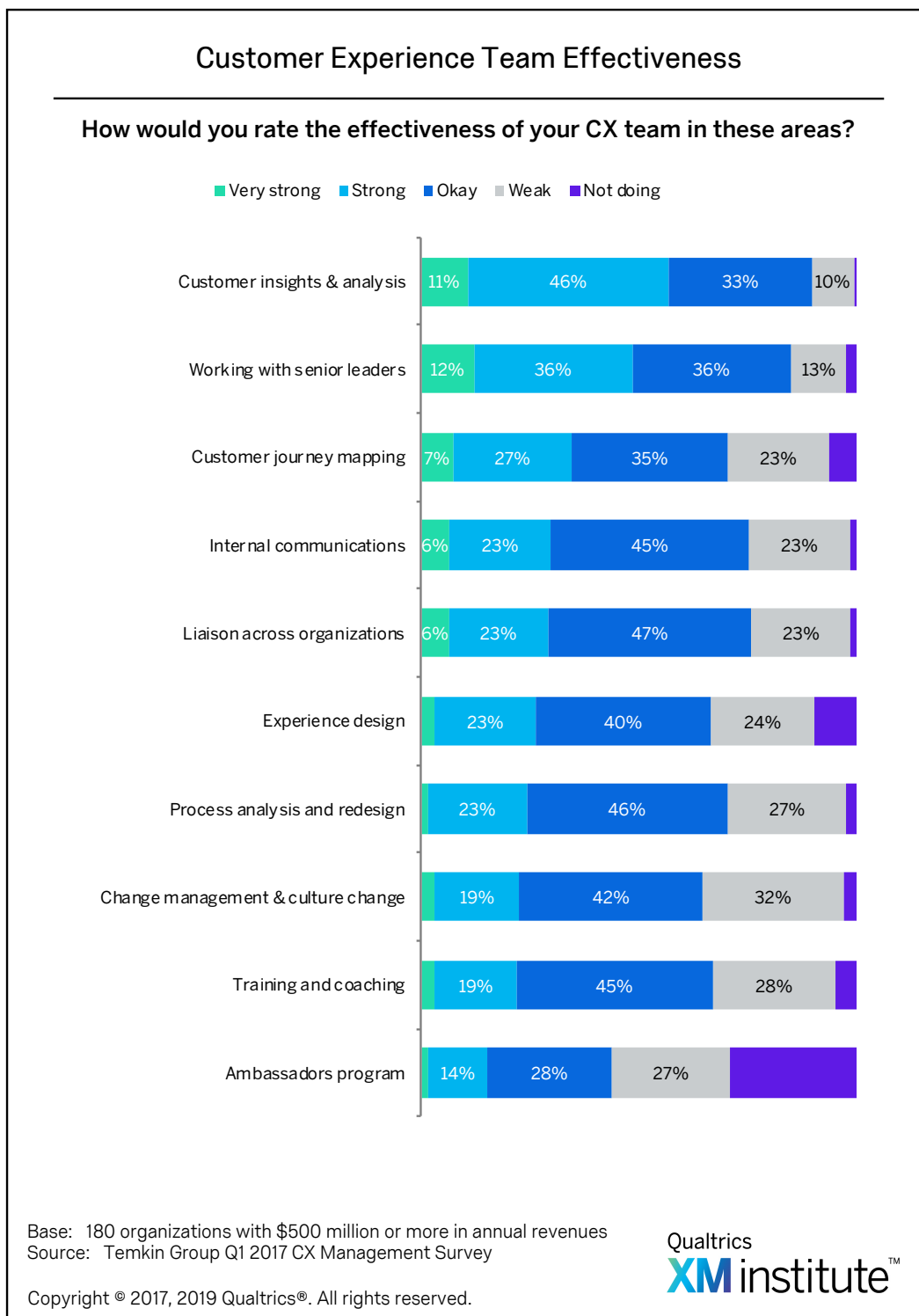


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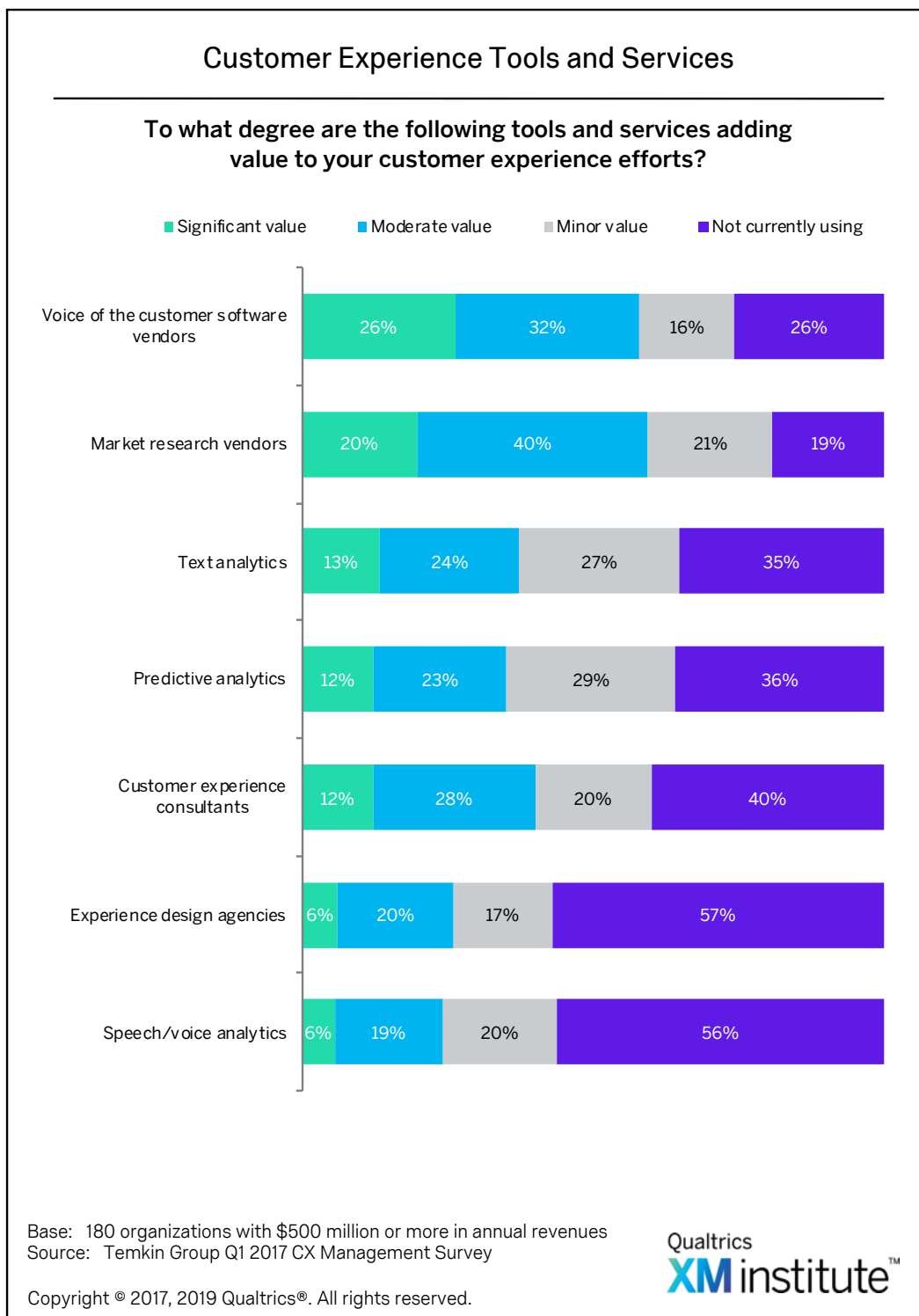


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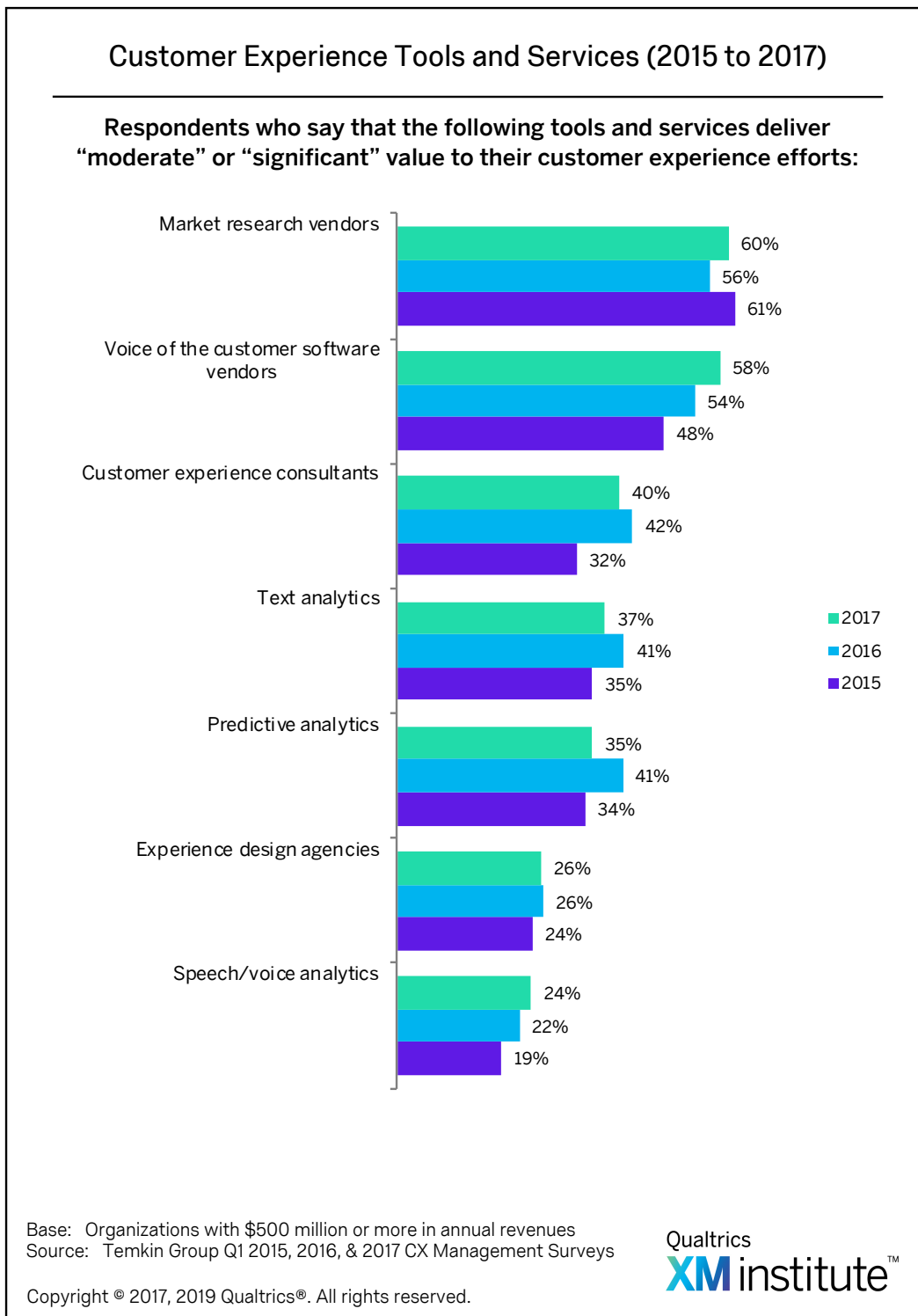


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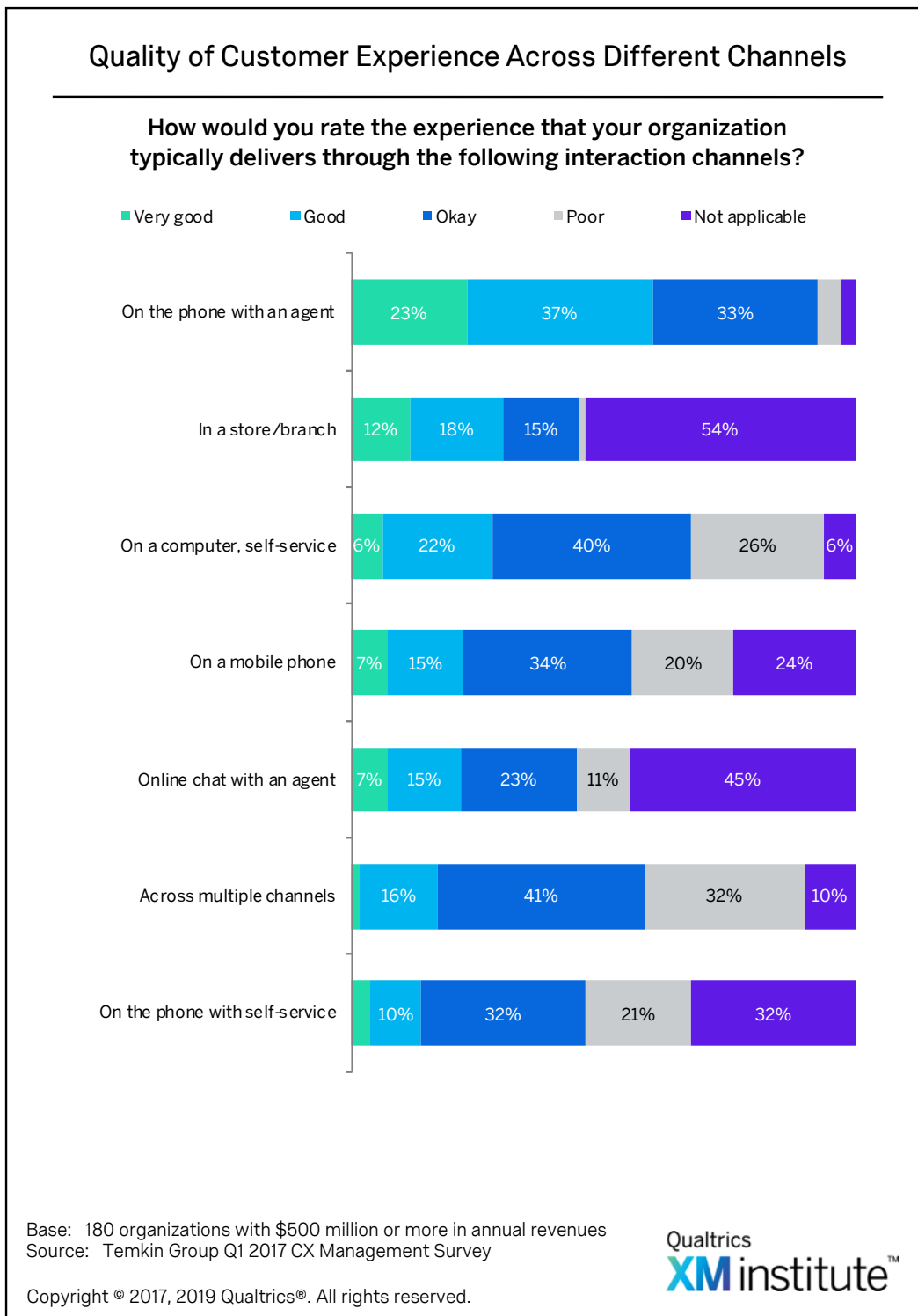


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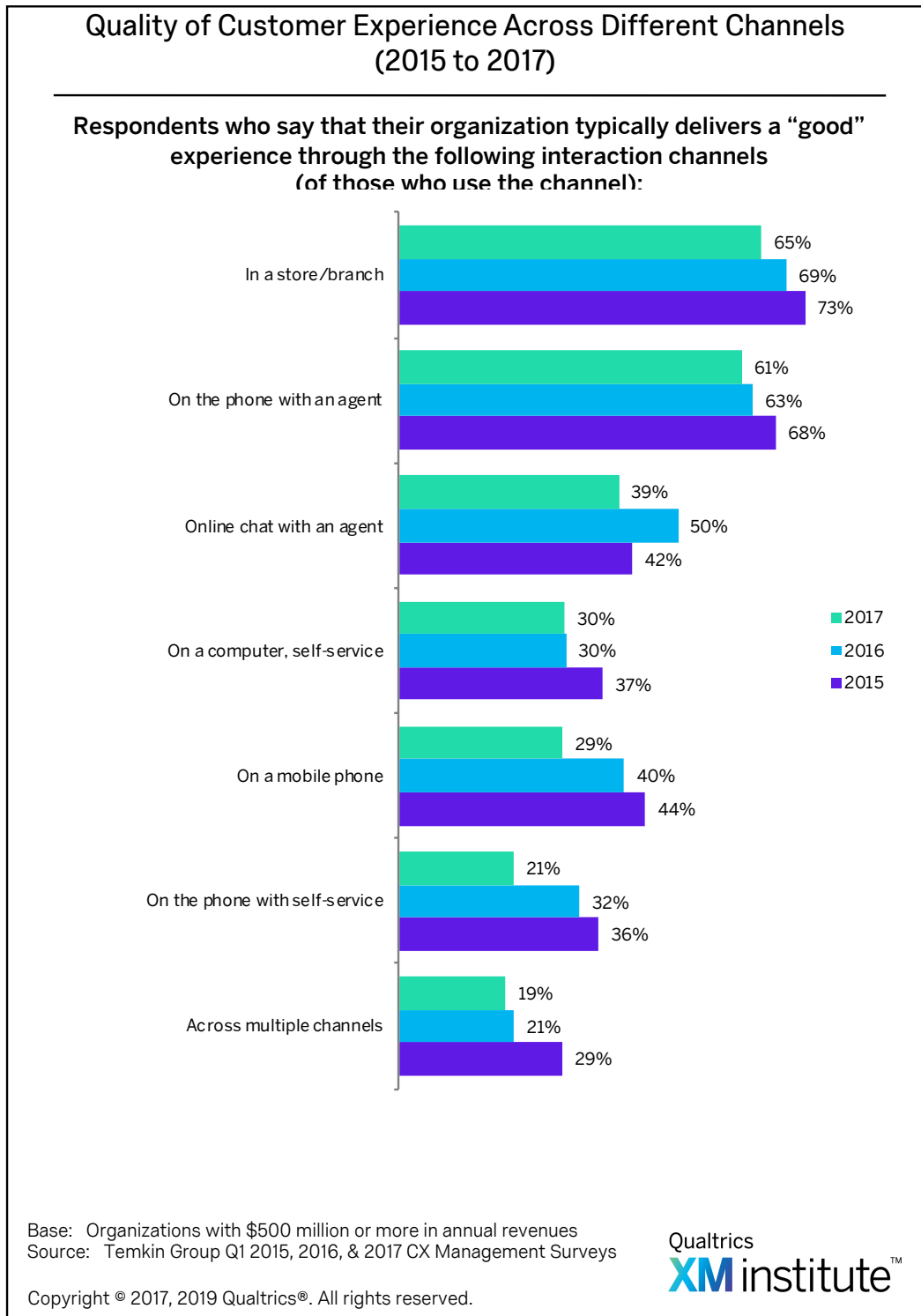


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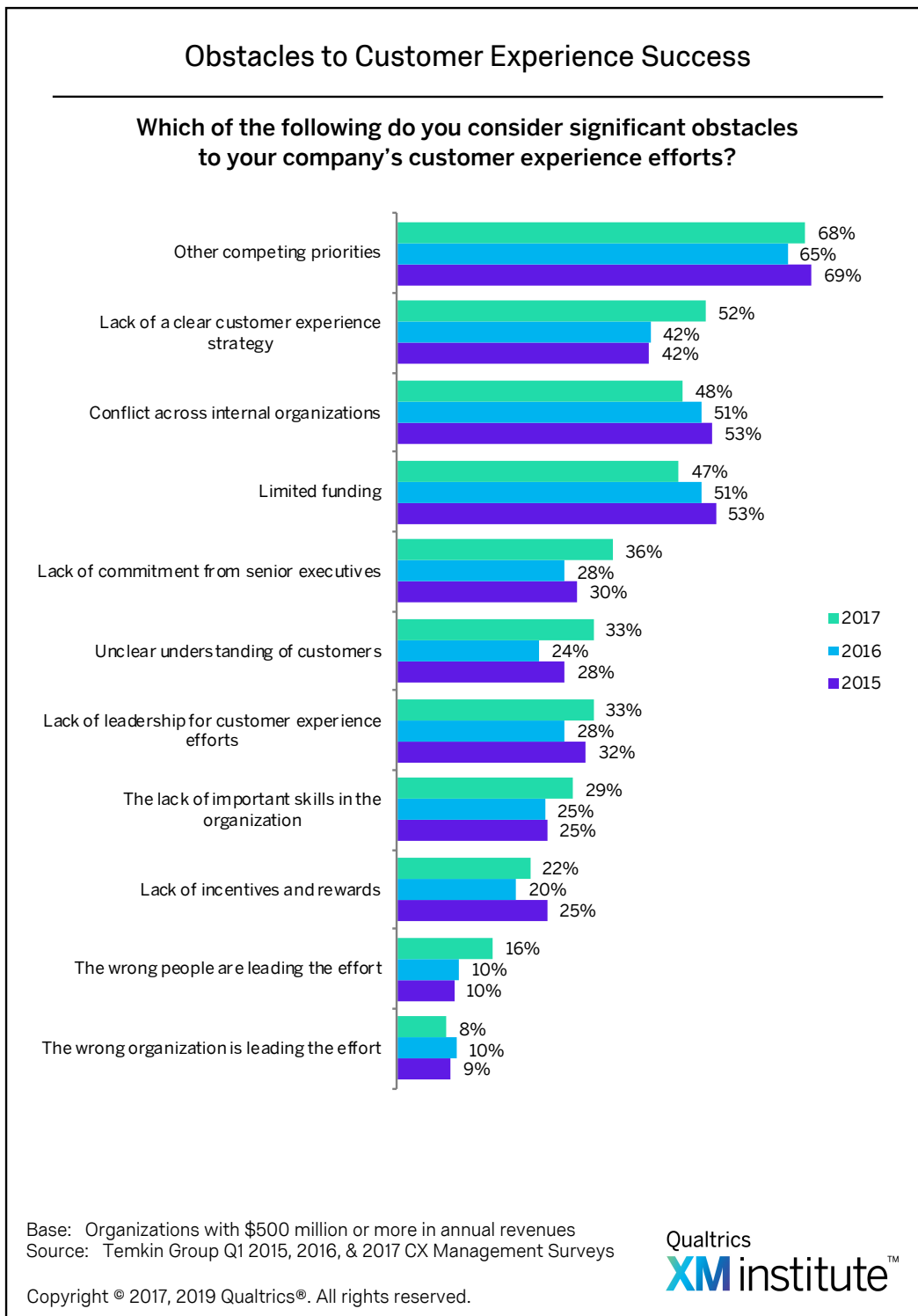


Figure 9

The Four Customer Experience Core Competencies



Purposeful Leadership

Do your leaders operate consistently with a clear, well-articulated set of values?

Compelling Brand Values

Are your brand attributes driving decisions about how you treat customers?

Employee Engagement

Are employees fully committed to the goals of your organization?

Customer Connectedness

Is customer feedback and insight integrated throughout your organization?

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Figure 10

Temkin Group Customer Experience Competency Assessment															
To what degree do the following activities occur within your company?															
1 = Never 2 = Periodically 3 = Usually 4 = Almost always 5 = Always															
1. Customer experience metrics are reviewed and treated as financial metrics															
2. Senior executives regularly communicate that customer experience is one of the company's key strategies															
3. The executive team uses a clearly defined set of values to guide how it makes decisions															
4. Employees across the company understand the core values of the company and understand how those values relate to their role															
5. Senior executives support decisions to trade off short-term financial results for longer-term customer loyalty															
PURPOSEFUL LEADERSHIP total															
6. The company's brand is translated into a clear set of promises to customers															
7. The company's brand guides decisions about how customers are treated and interactions are designed															
8. The company regularly examines how effectively interactions live up to its brand values															
9. Marketing does as much brand marketing inside the company as it does outside the company															
10. Employees are encouraged to interpret how their efforts can reinforce brand values															
COMPELLING BRAND VALUES total															
11. Employee feedback is actively solicited and acted upon															
12. Managers are evaluated based on the engagement level of their employees															
13. The company provides industry-leading training for employees															
14. The company celebrates and rewards employees that exemplify its core values															
15. The human resources organization is actively involved in strategic initiatives															
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT total															
16. Customer feedback is regularly collected and acted upon															
17. User-centered design approaches are used to design interactions in all touch points (e.g., web, phone)															
18. The company has a well-defined set of target customer segments that guides priorities															
19. Executives regularly interact with customers in target segments															
20. Customer feedback is integrated throughout key processes like product development and marketing rollout															
CUSTOMER CONNECTEDNESS total															
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Competency Area Totals:</th> <th>Overall Total:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5 to 10 Very Poor</td> <td><50 Ignore</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 to 15 Poor</td> <td>50 to 59 Explore</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 to 20 Okay</td> <td>60 to 69 Mobilize</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21 to 25 Very Good</td> <td>70 to 79 Operationalize</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>80 to 89 Align</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>90 to 100 Embed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Competency Area Totals:	Overall Total:	5 to 10 Very Poor	<50 Ignore	11 to 15 Poor	50 to 59 Explore	16 to 20 Okay	60 to 69 Mobilize	21 to 25 Very Good	70 to 79 Operationalize		80 to 89 Align		90 to 100 Embed	OVERALL TOTAL
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Figure 11

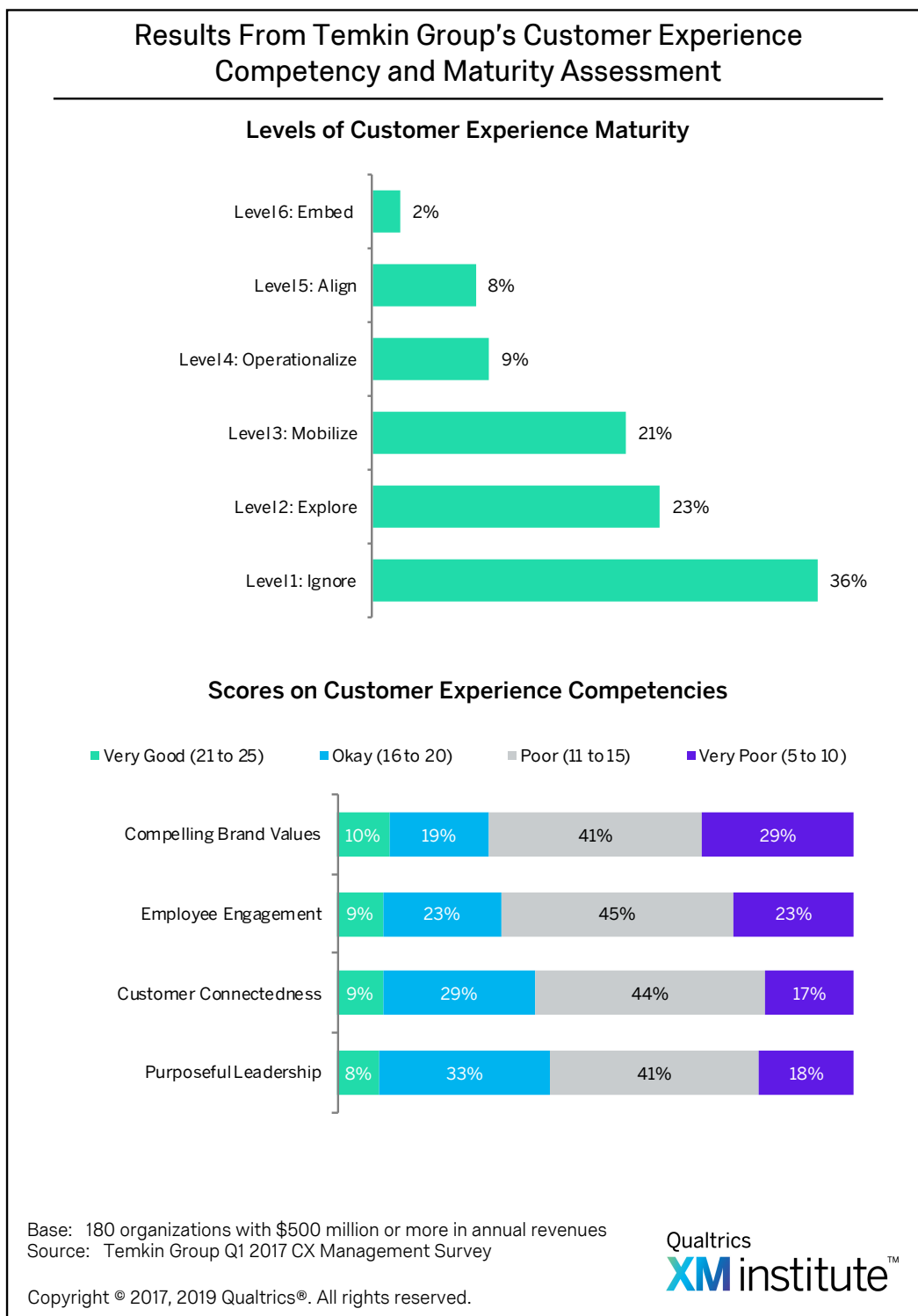


Figure 12

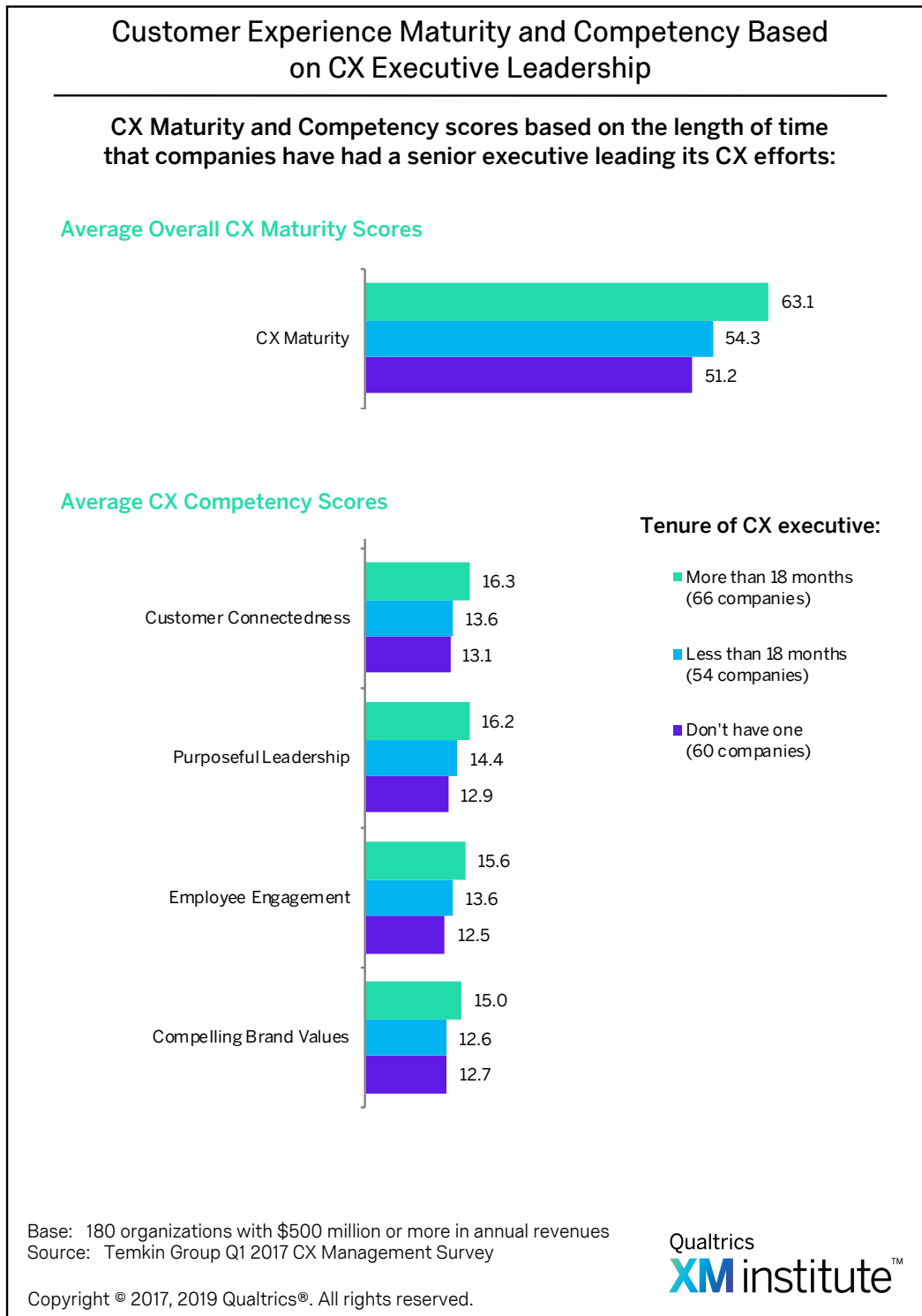


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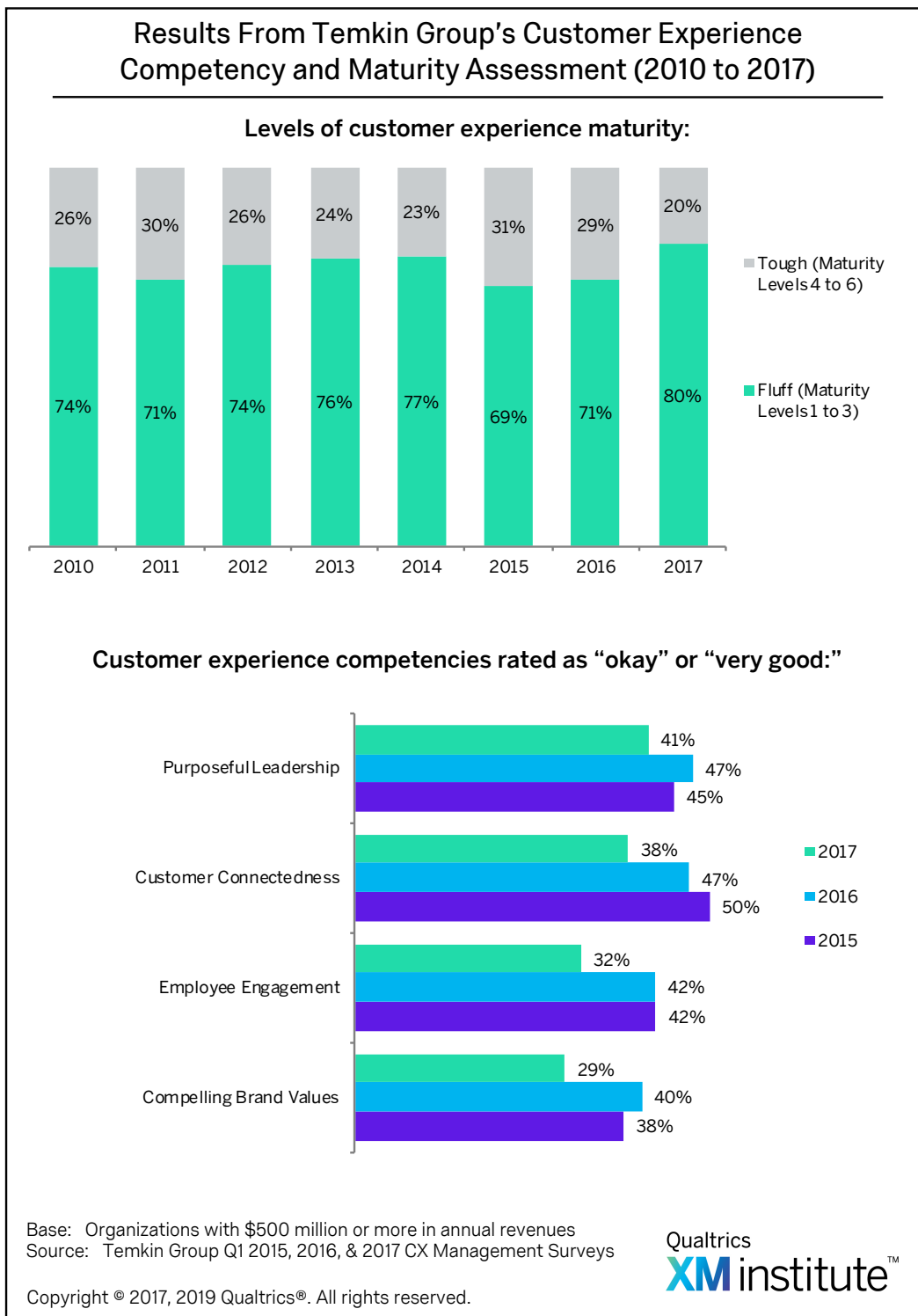


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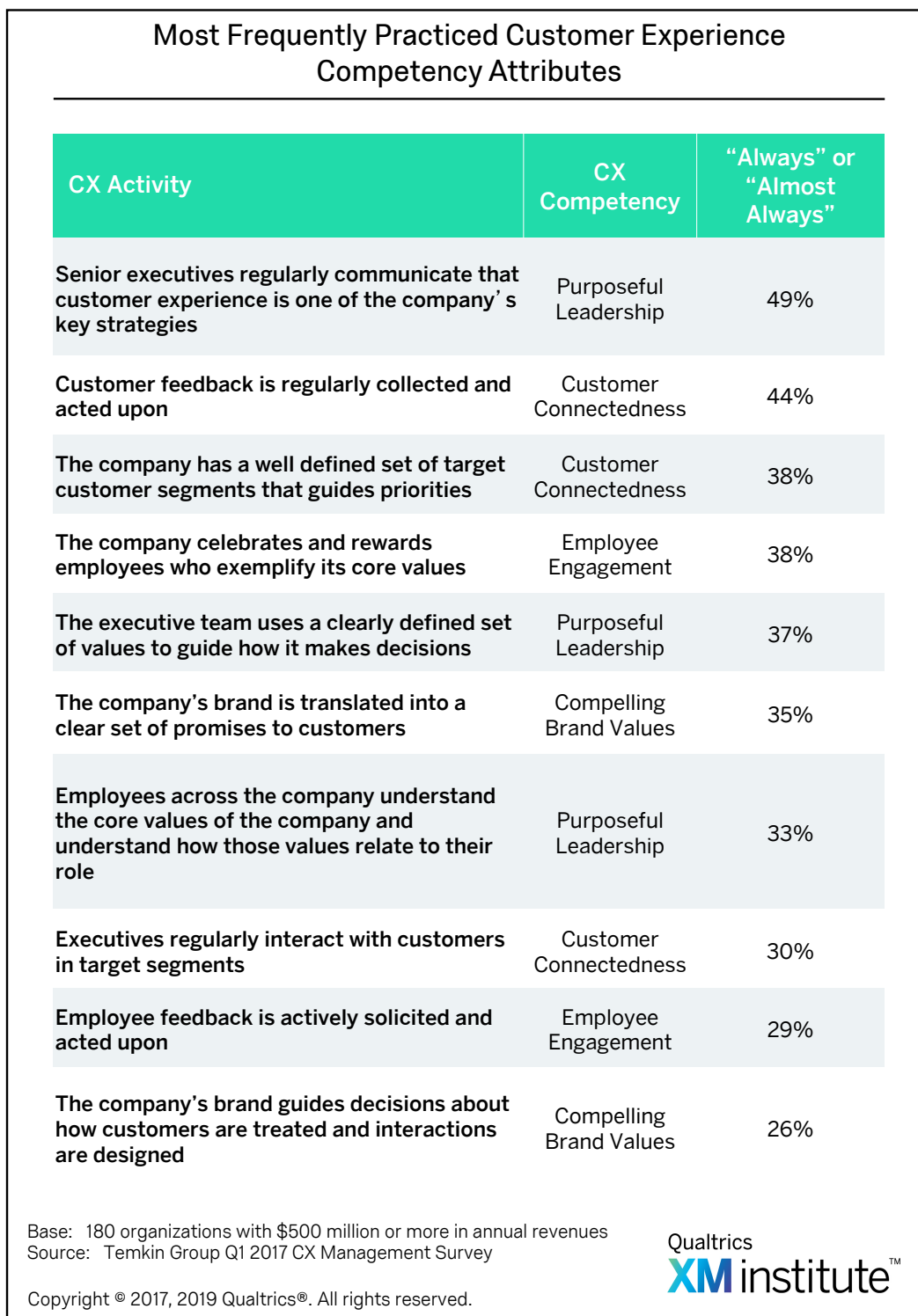


Figure 15



Figure 16

Customer Experience Competency Attributes that Improved and Declined Between 2016 to 2017

Change in companies that “always” or “almost always” do these activities:

MOST IMPROVED (Least declined) CX Activities	CX Competency	Change between 2016 and 2017 (%-points)
Marketing does as much brand marketing inside the company as it does outside the company	Compelling Brand Values	3.2
Senior executives support decisions to trade off short-term financial results for longer-term customer loyalty	Purposeful Leadership	0.9
The human resources organization is actively involved in strategic initiatives	Employee Engagement	-0.2
The executive team uses a clearly defined set of values to guide how it makes decisions	Purposeful Leadership	-1.3
Executives regularly interact with customers in target segments	Customer Connectedness	-2.4
MOST DECLINED CX Activities	CX Competency	Change between 2016 and 2017 (%-points)
The company provides industry-leading training for employees	Employee Engagement	-12.5
Employees across the company understand the core values of the company and understand how those values relate to their role	Purposeful Leadership	-11.5
Customer feedback is integrated throughout key processes, like product development and marketing rollout	Customer Connectedness	-10.9
The company's brand is translated into a clear set of promises to customers	Compelling Brand Values	-9.8
The company has a well defined set of target customer segments that guides priorities	Customer Connectedness	-9.3

Base: 180 organizations with \$500 million or more in annual revenues
Source: Temkin Group Q1 2017 CX Management Survey

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Figure 17

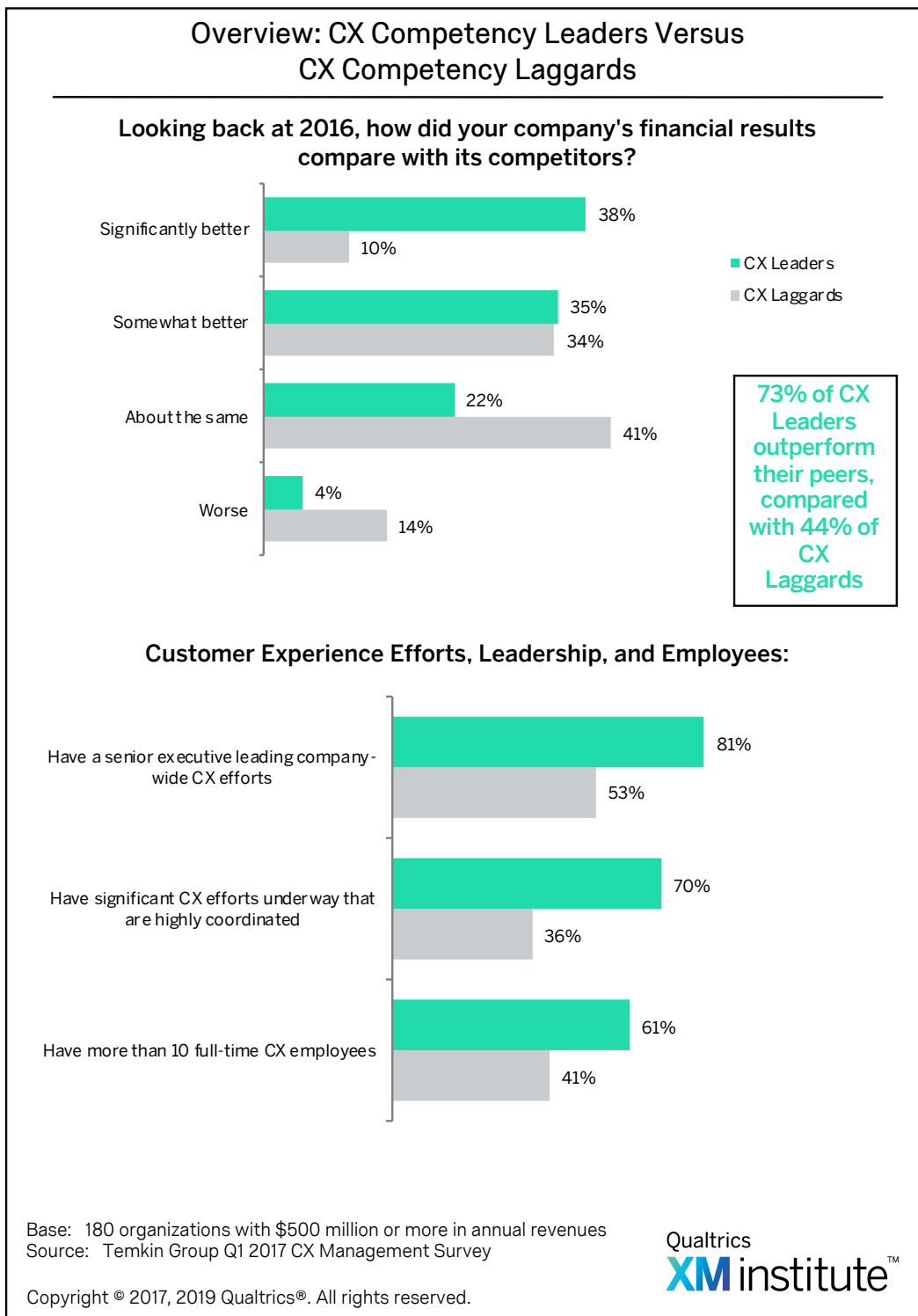


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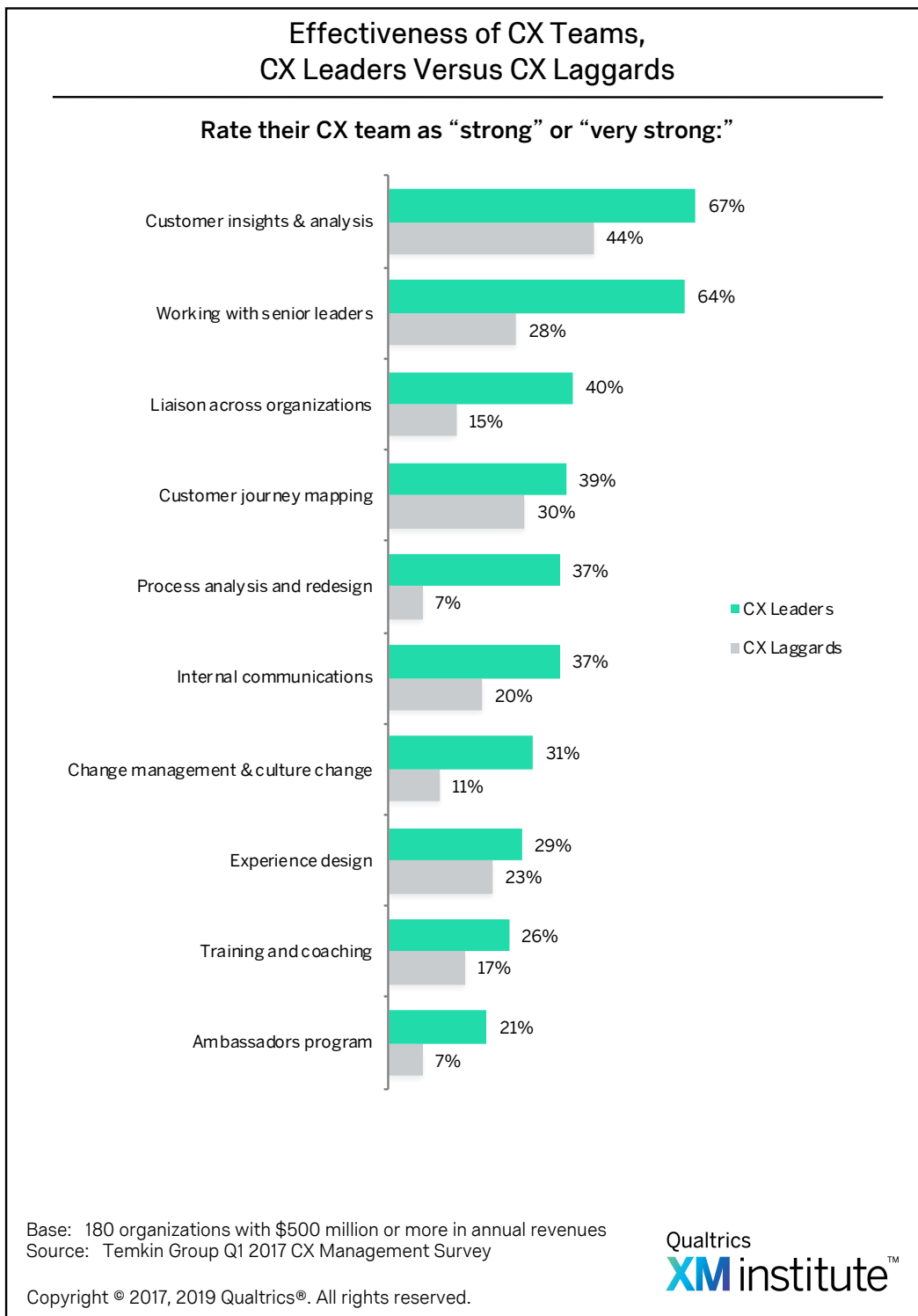


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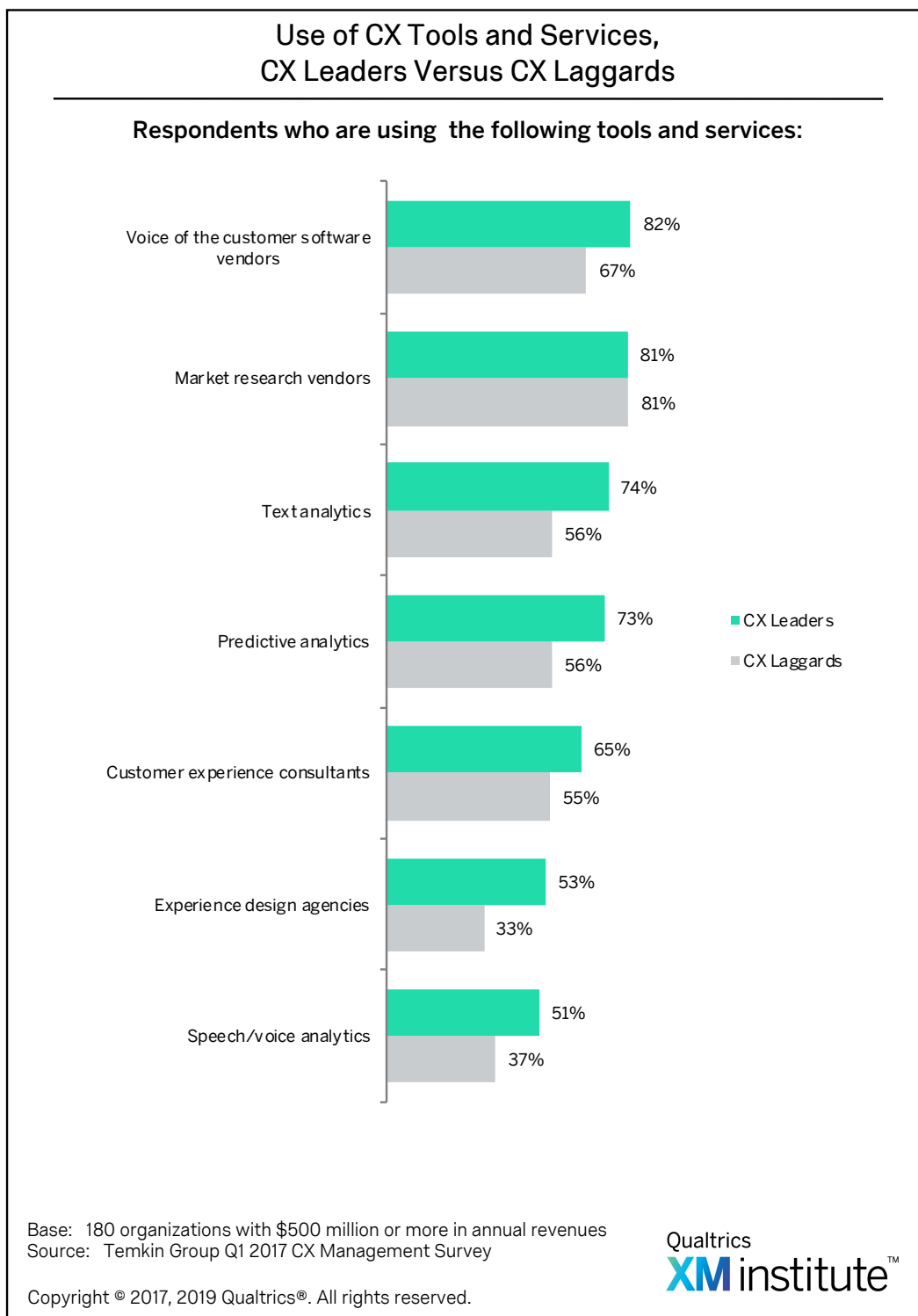


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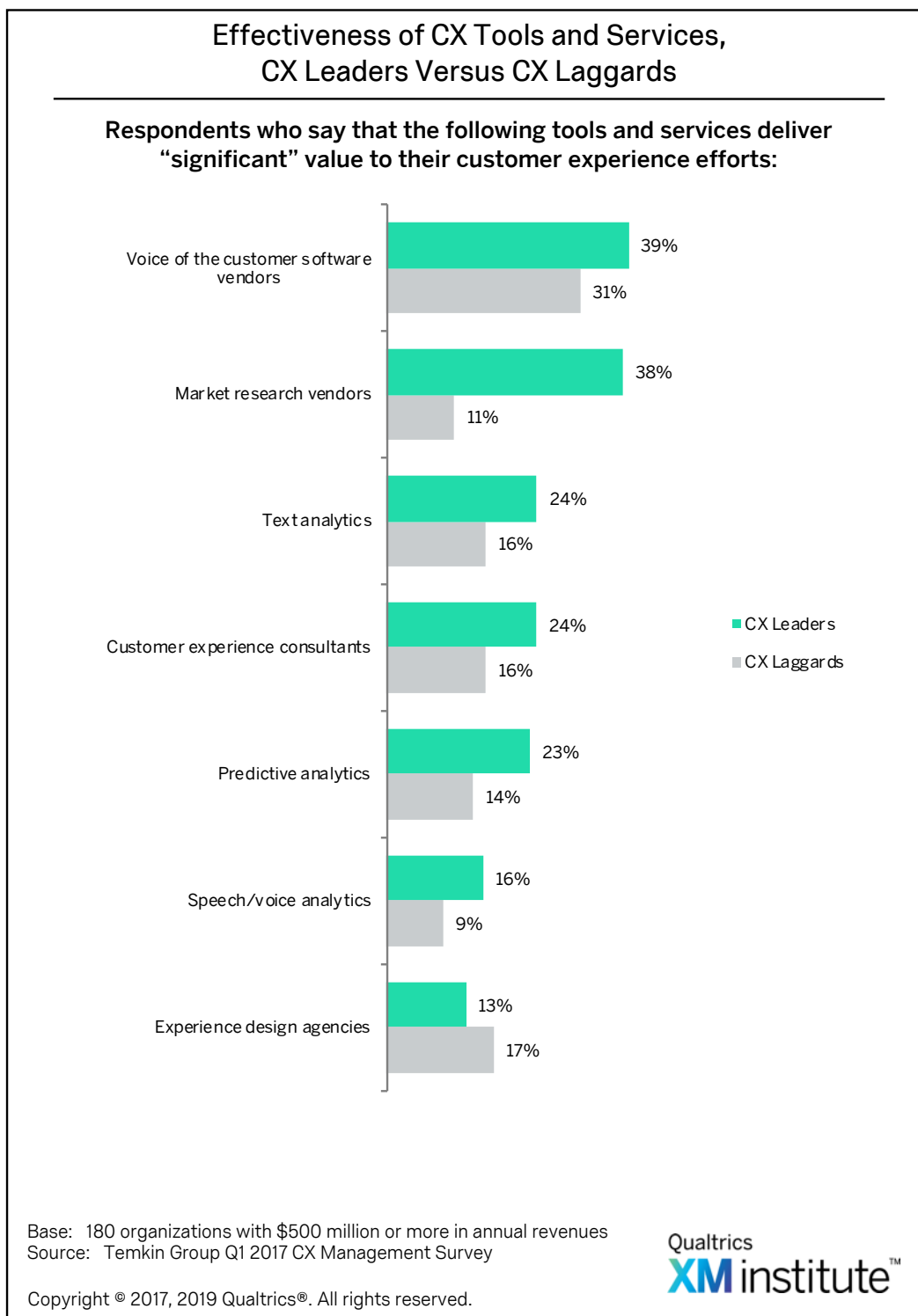


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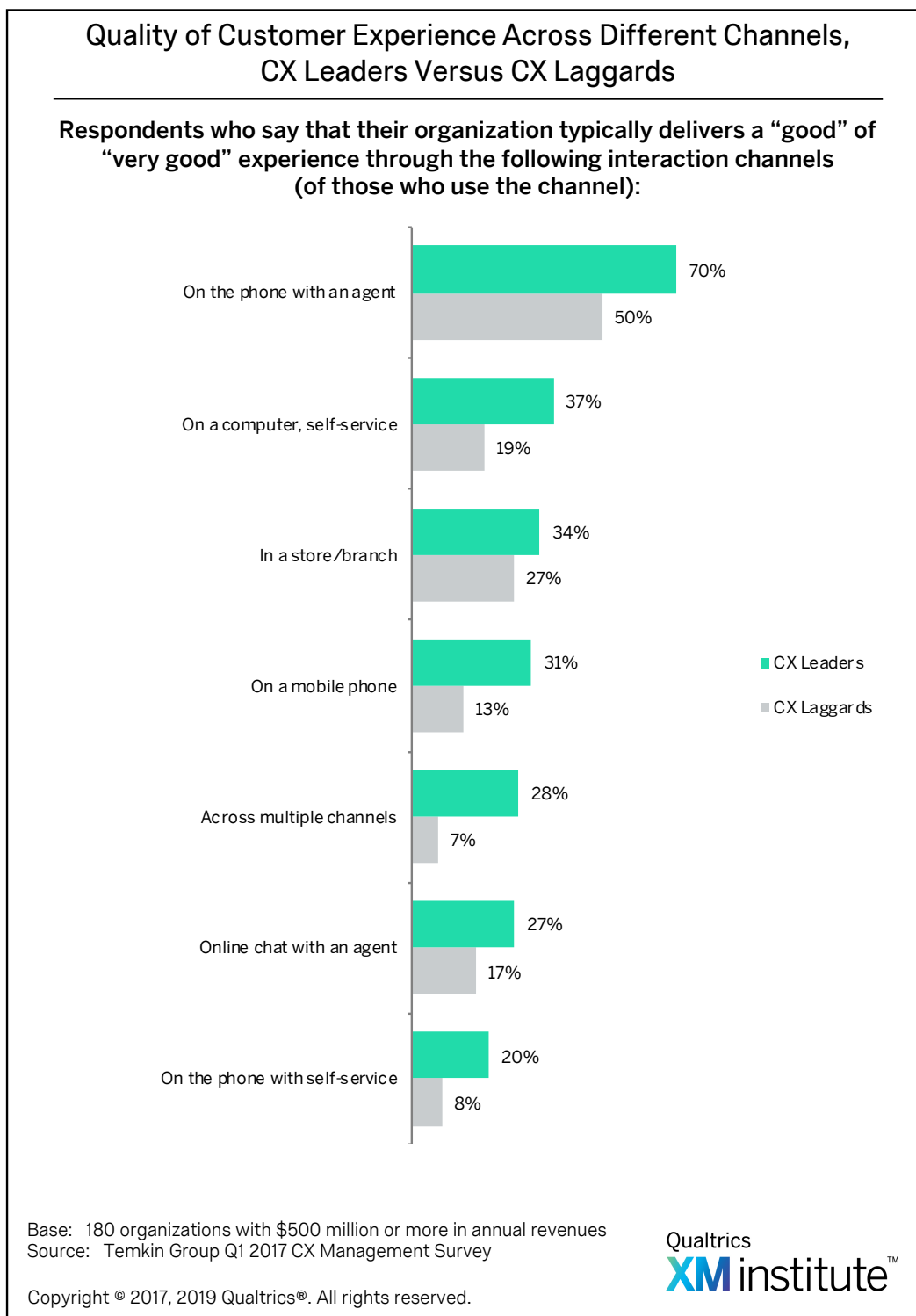


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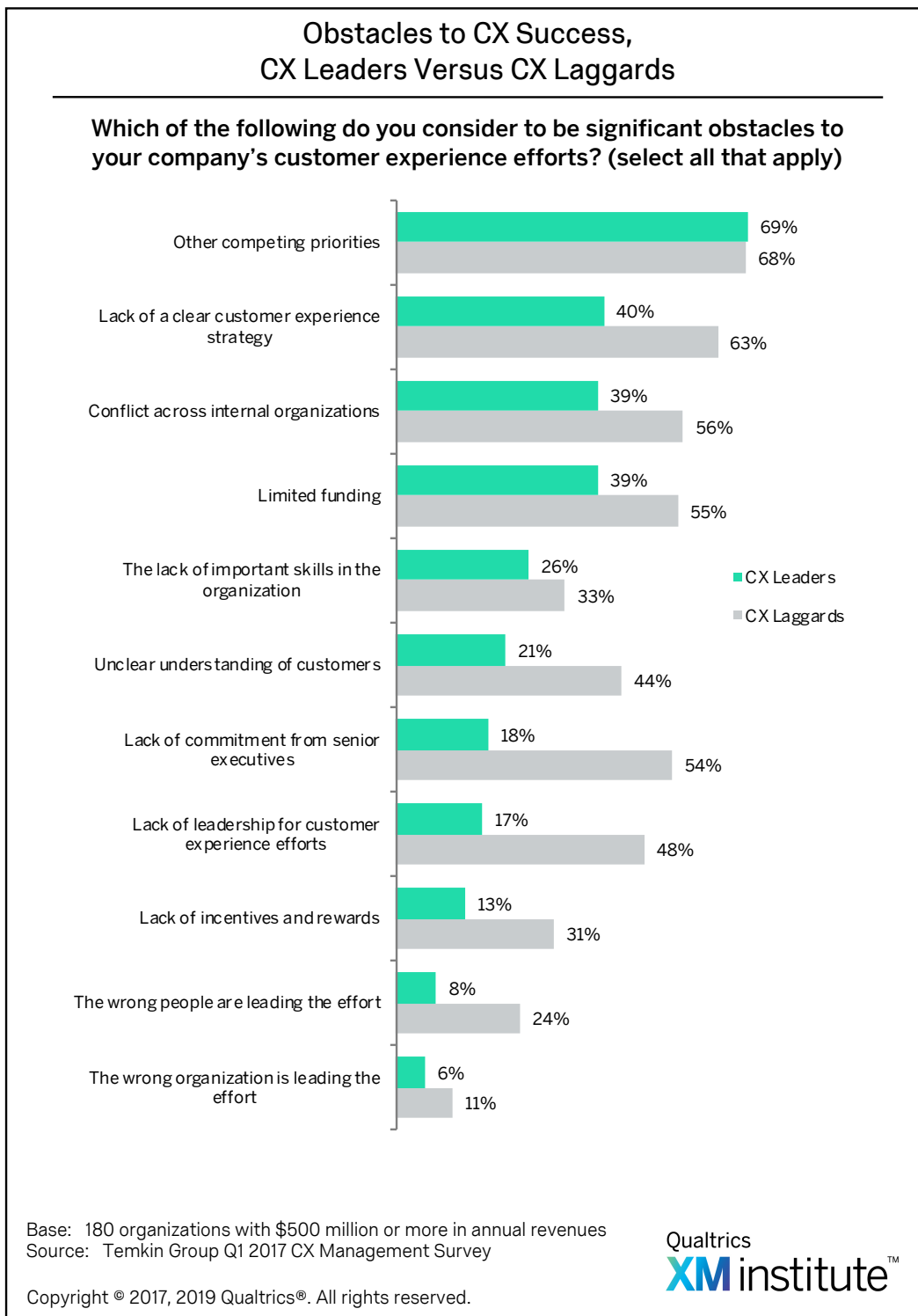


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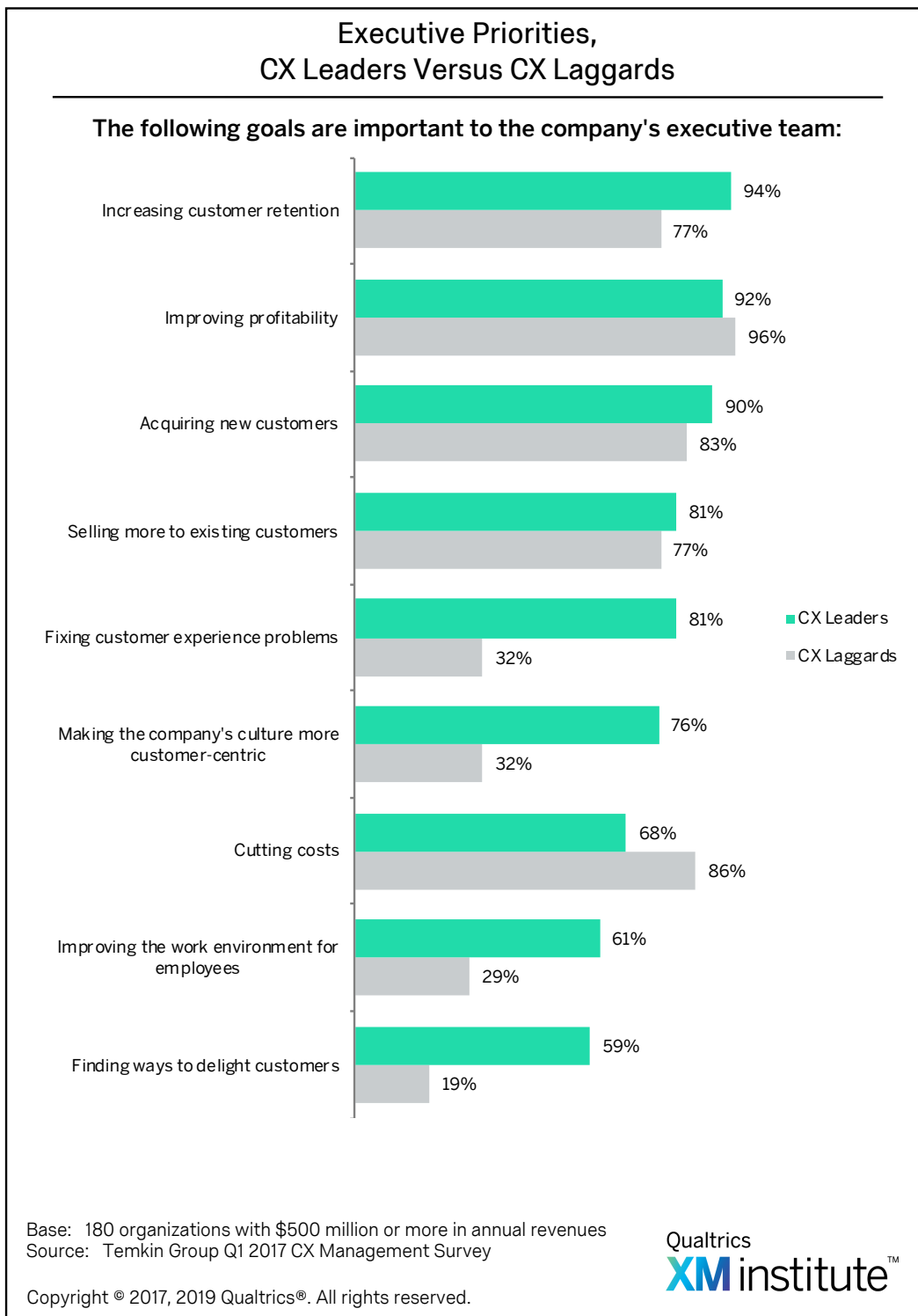


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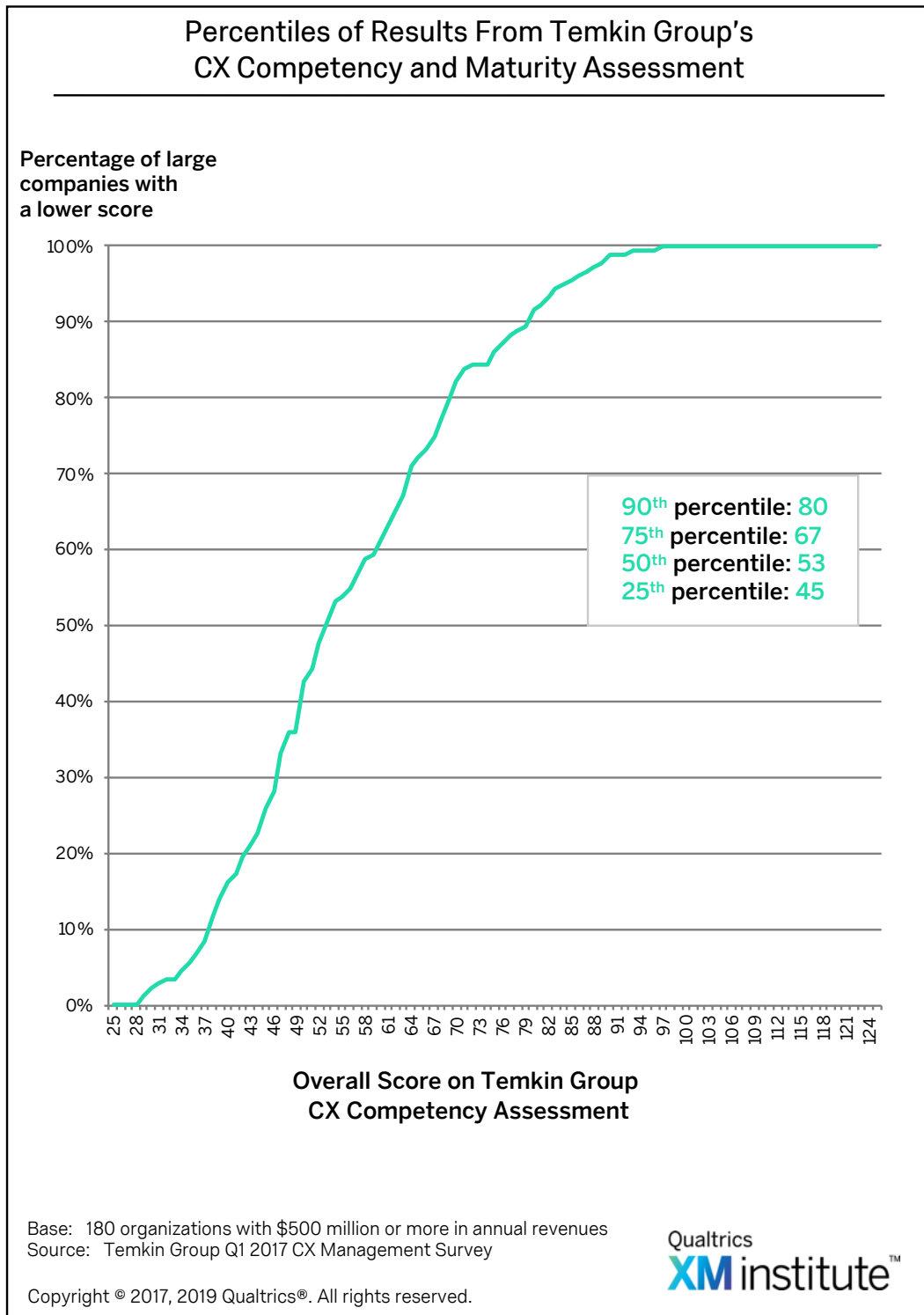


Figure 25