



**INSIGHT REPORT**

# **State of the CX Profession, 2018**

**SEVENTH ANNUAL STUDY OF 200+ CX PROFESSIONALS,  
INCLUDING COMPENSATION STUDY**

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

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To understand the mindset and roles of customer experience professionals today, we surveyed 221 CX professionals and then compared their responses to similar studies we've conducted over the previous six years. We asked respondents about how their CX efforts impacted their organization last year and what their company plans to do during the coming year. This report also includes a compensation study, which is based on the 148 respondents who agreed to participate. Here are some highlights from the research:

- Eighty-seven percent of respondents say that their customer experience efforts have had a positive business impact in 2017.
- Ninety-six percent think that customer experience is a great profession to be in.
- Eighty percent think that customer experience will be more important for their companies in 2018 than it was in 2017, compared to the 5% who think it will be less important.
- Forty-eight percent expect to see an increase in their customer experience staffing levels this year, compared with only 6% that expect a decline.
- Respondents plan to increase their spending most on voice of the customer software.
- Respondents plan to increase their focus most on Web experiences and customer insights and analysis.
- The total amount of compensation in our study ranges from \$104,000 for mid-level individual contributors to \$296,000 for CX executives.

## THE LIFE OF A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROFESSIONAL, CIRCA 2018

Great customer experience (CX) doesn't happen by accident, it happens through the efforts of dedicated CX professionals who work hard to help their organization succeed. To understand the mindset and roles of these professionals, we surveyed 221 CX professionals from different geographic regions, different positions within organizations, and from companies of different sizes (see Figure 1). Although this is the seventh year we've conducted this research, we focused most of our analysis on the most recent three years of data.<sup>1</sup> The CX professionals we surveyed feel that

- **Their efforts have a very positive impact.** Eighty-seven percent of respondents report that their CX efforts had a positive impact on their company's business results in 2017. Forty-nine percent of respondents say that their efforts in 2017 had a

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<sup>1</sup> See Temkin Group Insight Report, "The State of the CX Profession, 2017," (February 2017). Although we have data for the previous six years, most of the charts in this report only include three years of data. This makes it easier to highlight recent changes.

“moderately positive” or “significantly positive” impact on their company, (see Figure 2).

- **Customer experience is a great profession.** Ninety-six percent of those surveyed agree with the statement, “Customer experience is a great profession to be in,” while 79% agree with the statement, “My company appreciates CX professionals like me” (see Figure 3).
- **They are very satisfied with their roles, but less so with their opportunities.** Eighty-eight percent of CX professionals are satisfied with the people they work with and 87% are satisfied with the content of their jobs (see Figure 4). However, only 54% are satisfied with the opportunities for professional advancement. We’ve also seen a steady decline in the level of satisfaction with overall compensation, which dropped down to 71% this year.
- **They are more likely to look for new jobs in other companies.** Only 10% of CX professionals are very likely to look for a new job inside their organization, while 25% are very likely to look for something outside their company (see Figure 5). The number of respondents who are at least somewhat likely to look for a new job outside of their company has increased from 44% last year to 51% this year.
- **Customer insights analysis is the key responsibility.** Eighty-three percent of CX professionals say that *customer insights analysis* is one of their key responsibilities, coming in just ahead of *voice of the customer (VoC) programs* (see Figure 6). Since last year, *experience design* has increased the most, going up by nine percentage-points.

## CX Professionals Have More on Their Plates in 2018

We asked our respondents about their CX plans for the upcoming year and found that:

- **CX continues to increase in importance.** Eighty percent of respondents believe that CX improvements will be more important to their firm in the upcoming year than they were in the past year, while only 5% think that CX improvements will be less important (see Figure 7).
- **CX staffing is growing.** Forty-eight percent of respondents expect their company to have more CX employees on staff in the coming year, compared with only 6% who expect to have fewer.
- **CX spending is growing.** Sixty-two percent of companies expect to spend more on CX in 2018, whereas only 5% expect to spend less (see Figure 8).
- **Spending on VoC is on the rise.** We asked respondents how much money their organization plans to spend on nine different types of CX technology in the coming year and found that companies expect to spend significantly more on each technology than expect to spend less. At the top of the list, 34% of companies plan to increase spending on VoC platforms, while only 6% expect to cut spending in this area.
- **Web experiences remain the most important.** We examined the 2018 priorities for seven interaction experiences and found that companies plan to focus the most on *online self-service experiences*, making it the most popular area for improvement for the seventh year in a row (see Figure 9).

- **Customer insights and analytics is the top CX activity.** Eighty-one percent of respondents' companies plan on putting more effort into *customer insights and analytics*, making it the most popular area of focus on the list (see Figure 10). Compared with last year, every CX activity is expected to receive more attention in the coming year, with the exception of *CX training for employees*.

## CX PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION STUDY

As part of this year's survey, we asked respondents to participate in our fourth annual compensation study. We analyzed responses across five categories of professionals: mid-level individual contributors, senior-level individual contributors, leaders of small group (less than 16 individuals), leaders of large groups (16 or more individuals), and executives.<sup>2</sup> While the sample sizes for each of these groups is relatively small, we believe that the insights are still representative of the profession at large and therefore contain valuable content for CX professionals to review.<sup>3</sup> We have also compiled information about the experience and educational levels of the different groups.

Here's what we found (see Figures 11 and 12):

- **Mid-level individual contributors' average salary: \$104,548.** The mid-level individual contributors who took the survey have an average base salary of \$88,000 and an average bonus of \$17,000.
- **Senior-level individual contributors' average salary: \$145,817.** The senior-level individual contributors have an average base salary of \$124,000 and an average bonus of \$22,000.
- **Leaders of small groups' average salary: \$140,566.** CX professionals who lead teams of less than 16 people have an average base salary of \$116,000 and an average bonus of \$25,000.
- **Leaders of large groups' average salary: \$172,000.** CX professionals who lead teams of 16 people or more have an average base salary of \$133,000 and an average bonus of \$39,000.
- **Executives' average salary: \$296,136.** The CX executives have the largest compensation packages – an average base salary of \$221,000 and an average bonus of \$75,000.

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<sup>2</sup> We did not include any entry-level CX professionals in the compensation study.

<sup>3</sup> The sample sizes for each of the groups are as follows: mid-level individual contributors (22), senior-level individual contributors (30), leaders of small groups (54), leaders of large groups (18), and executives (22). Since these sample sizes are relatively small, they may not portray an accurate picture of the overall market. However, we believe that the insights are still representative of CX professionals at large organizations – at least in North America and Western Europe – and therefore represent valuable content for CX professionals to review. Given the low sample sizes, we do not provide a direct comparison with the results from previous years.



Figure 1

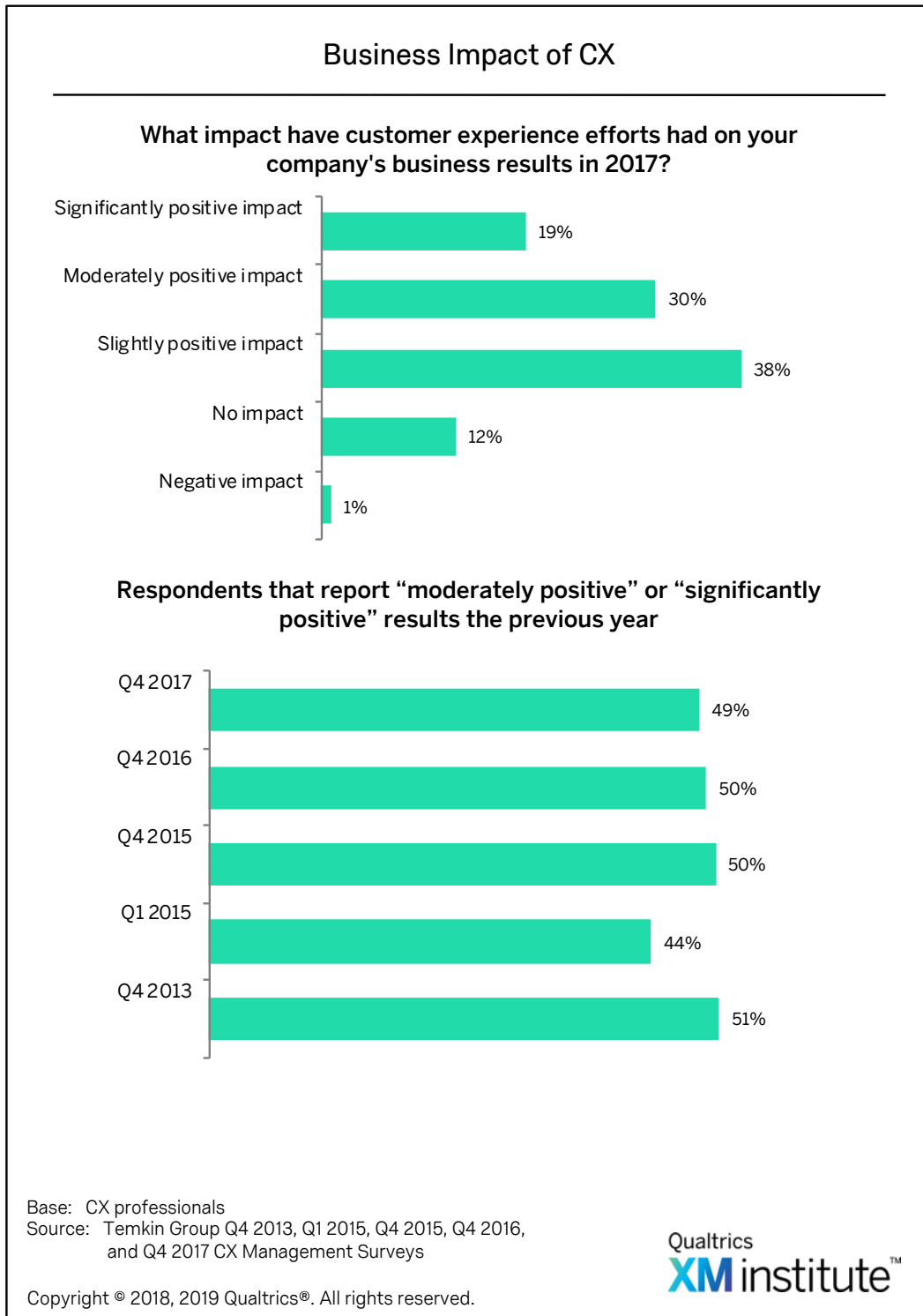


Figure 2

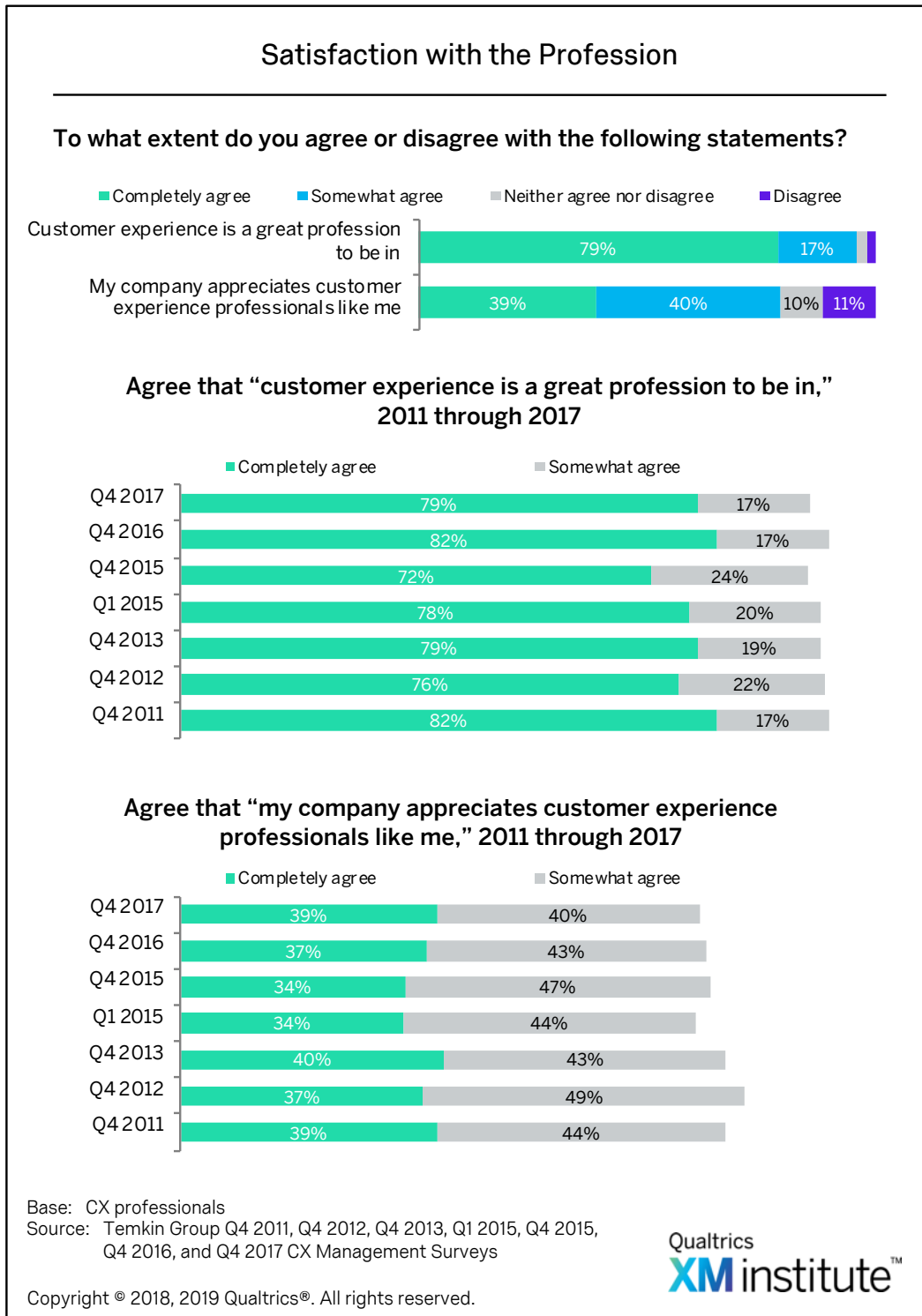


Figure 3

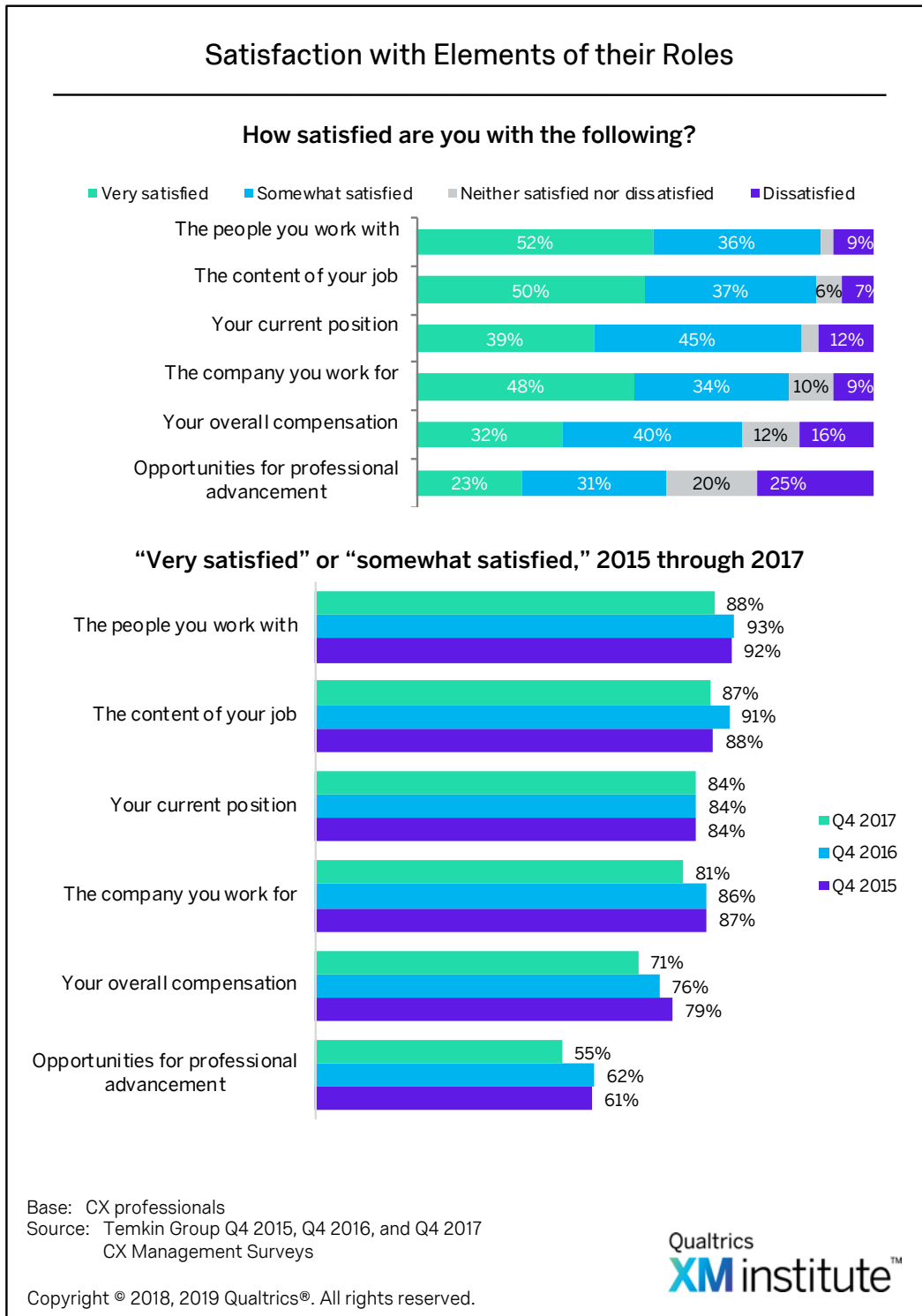


Figure 4



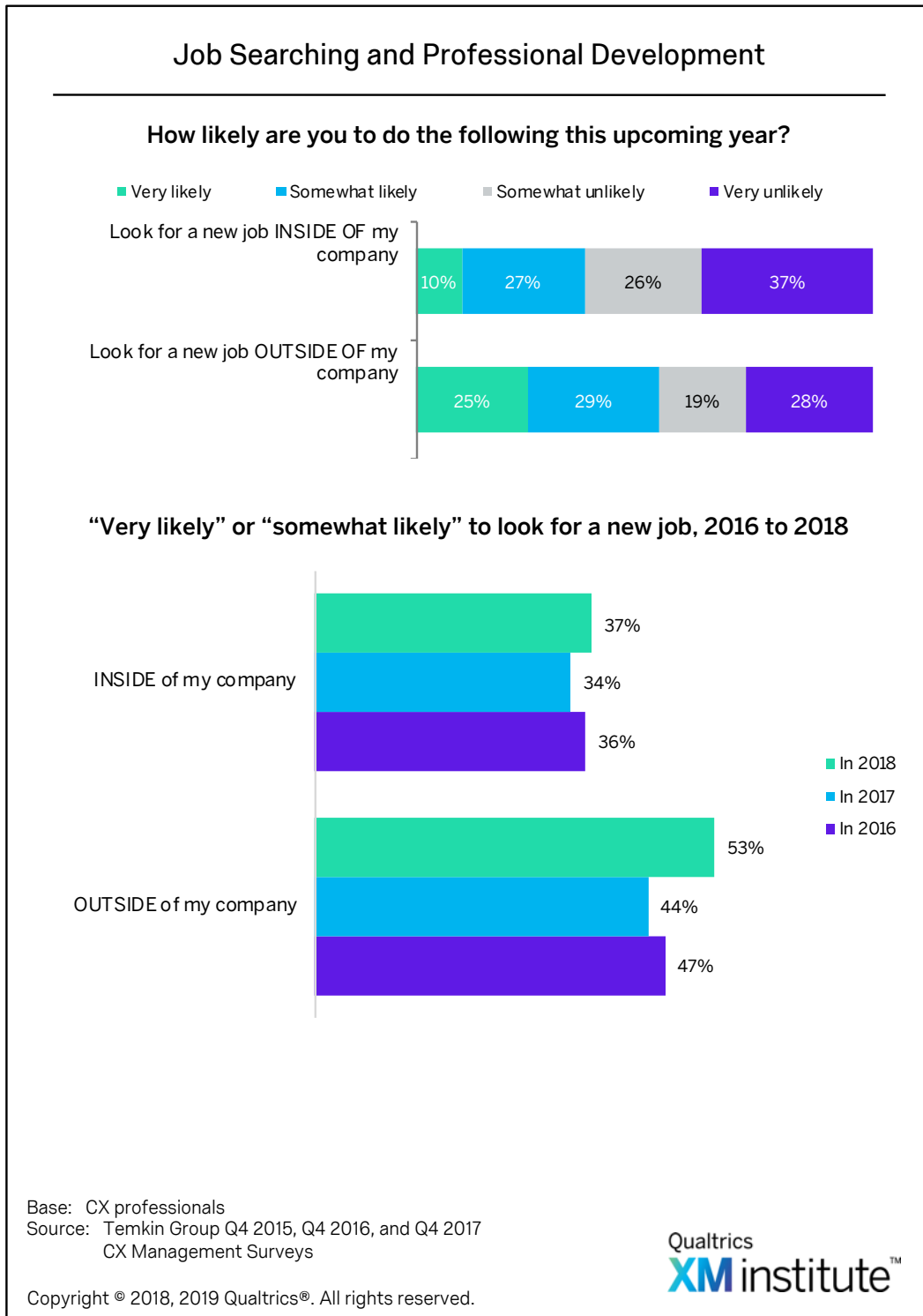


Figure 5

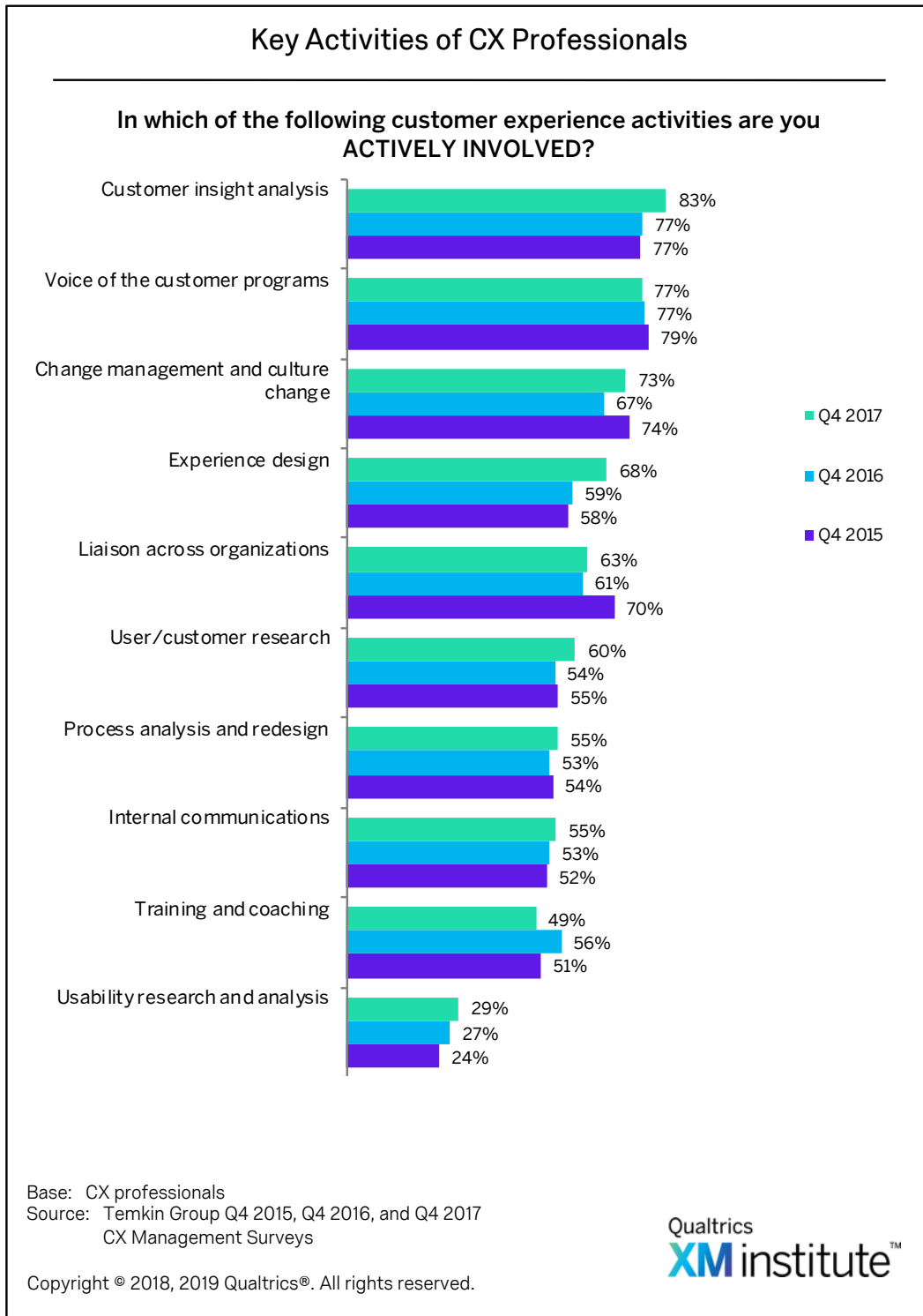


Figure 6

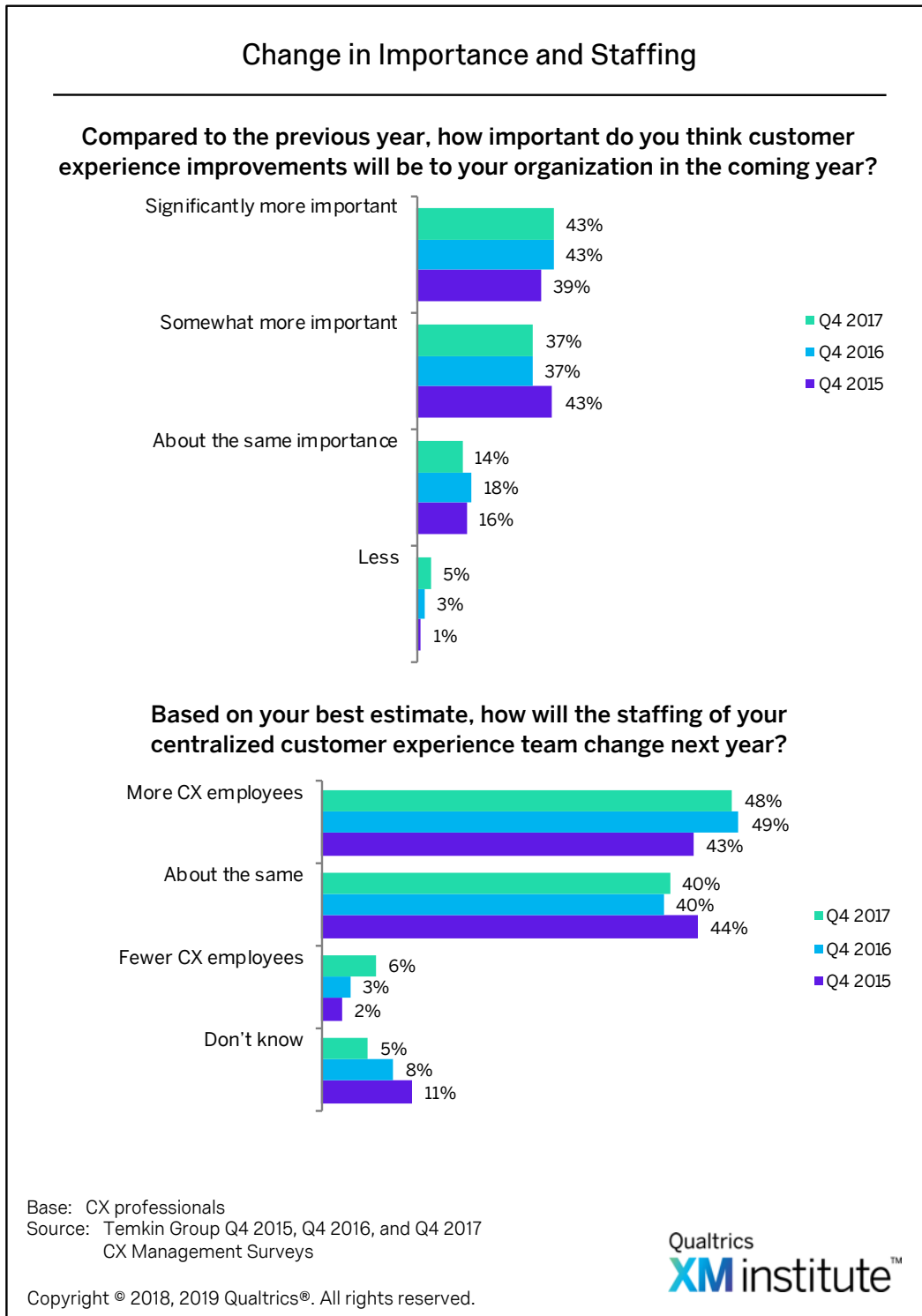


Figure 7

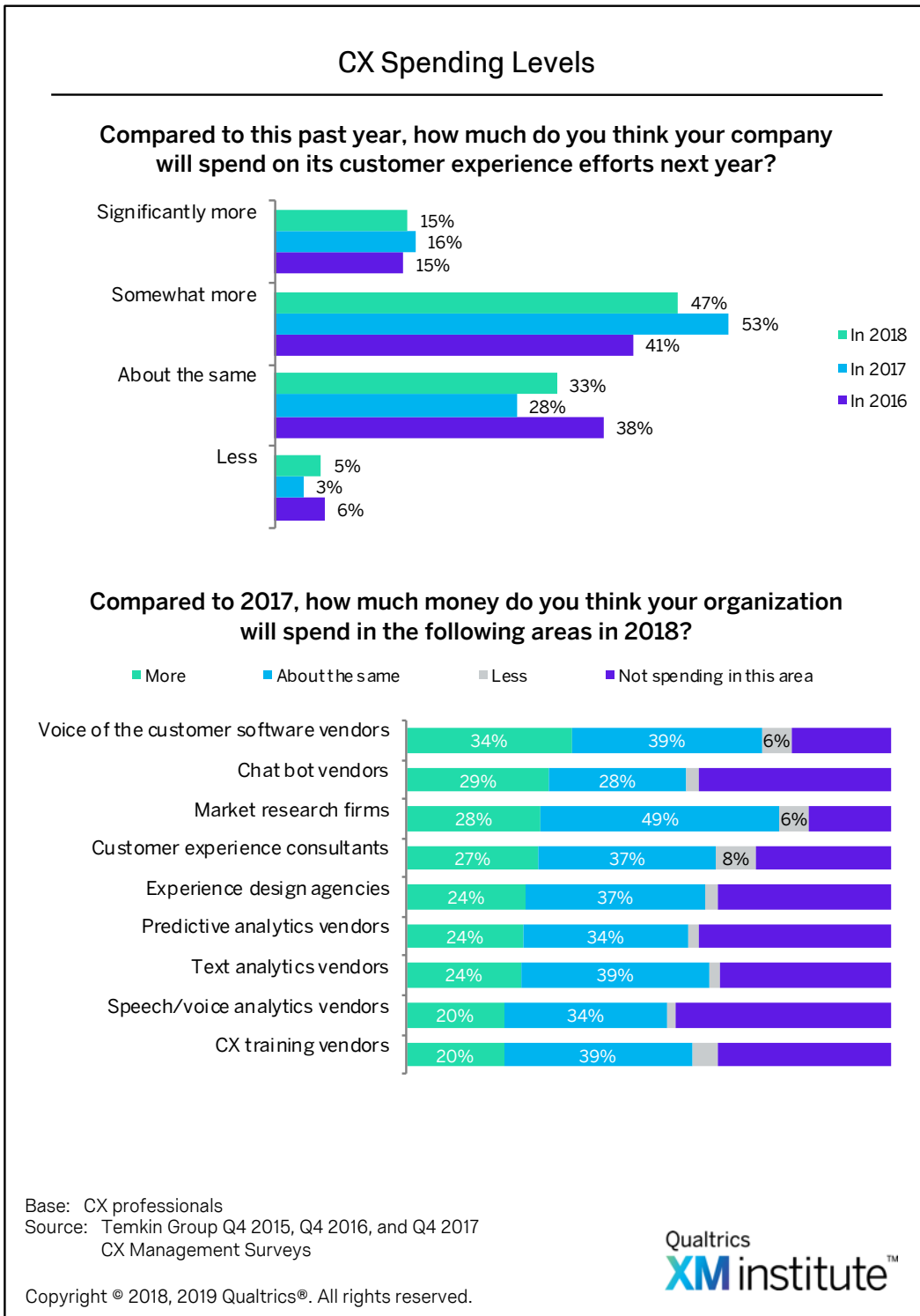


Figure 8

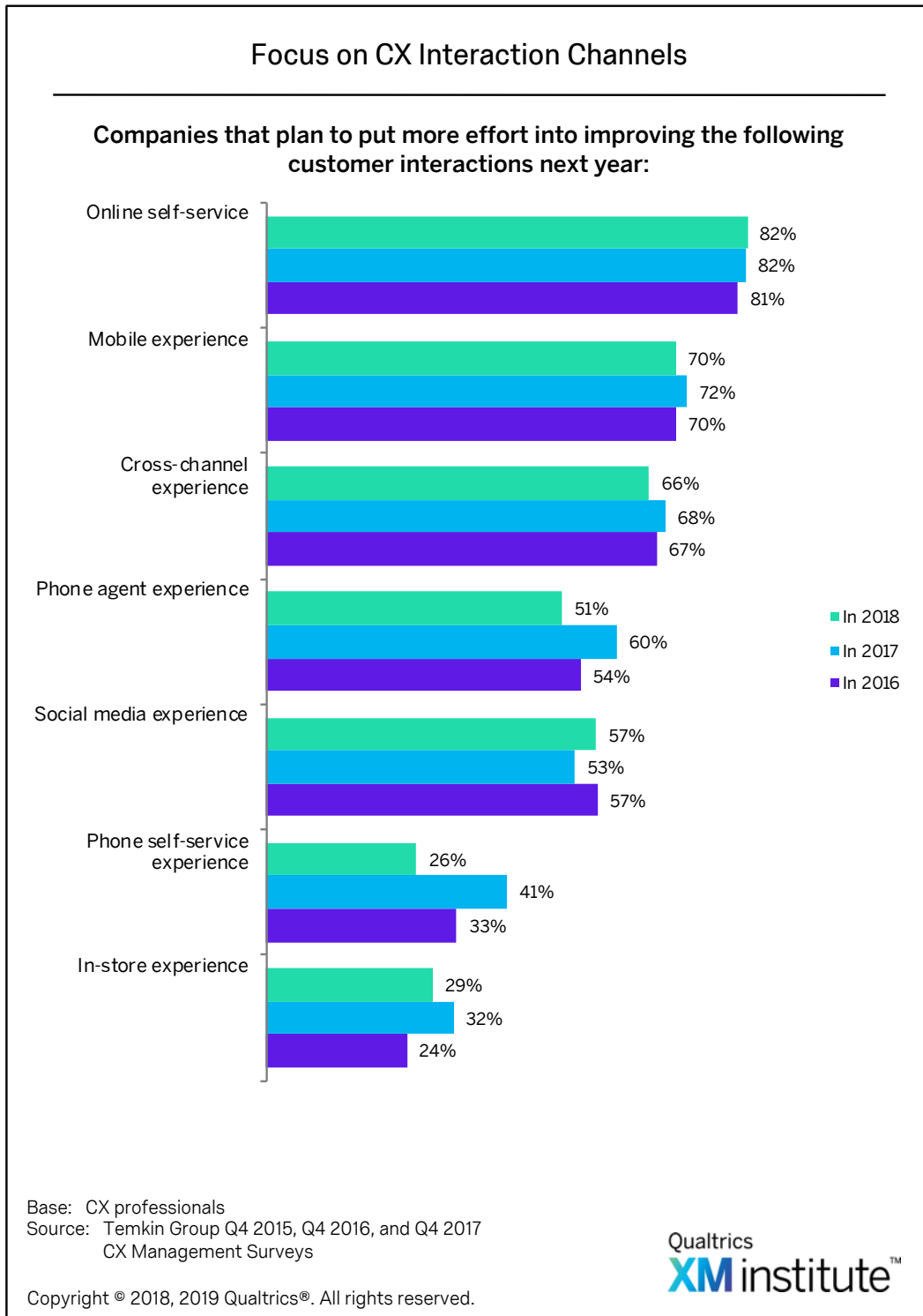


Figure 9

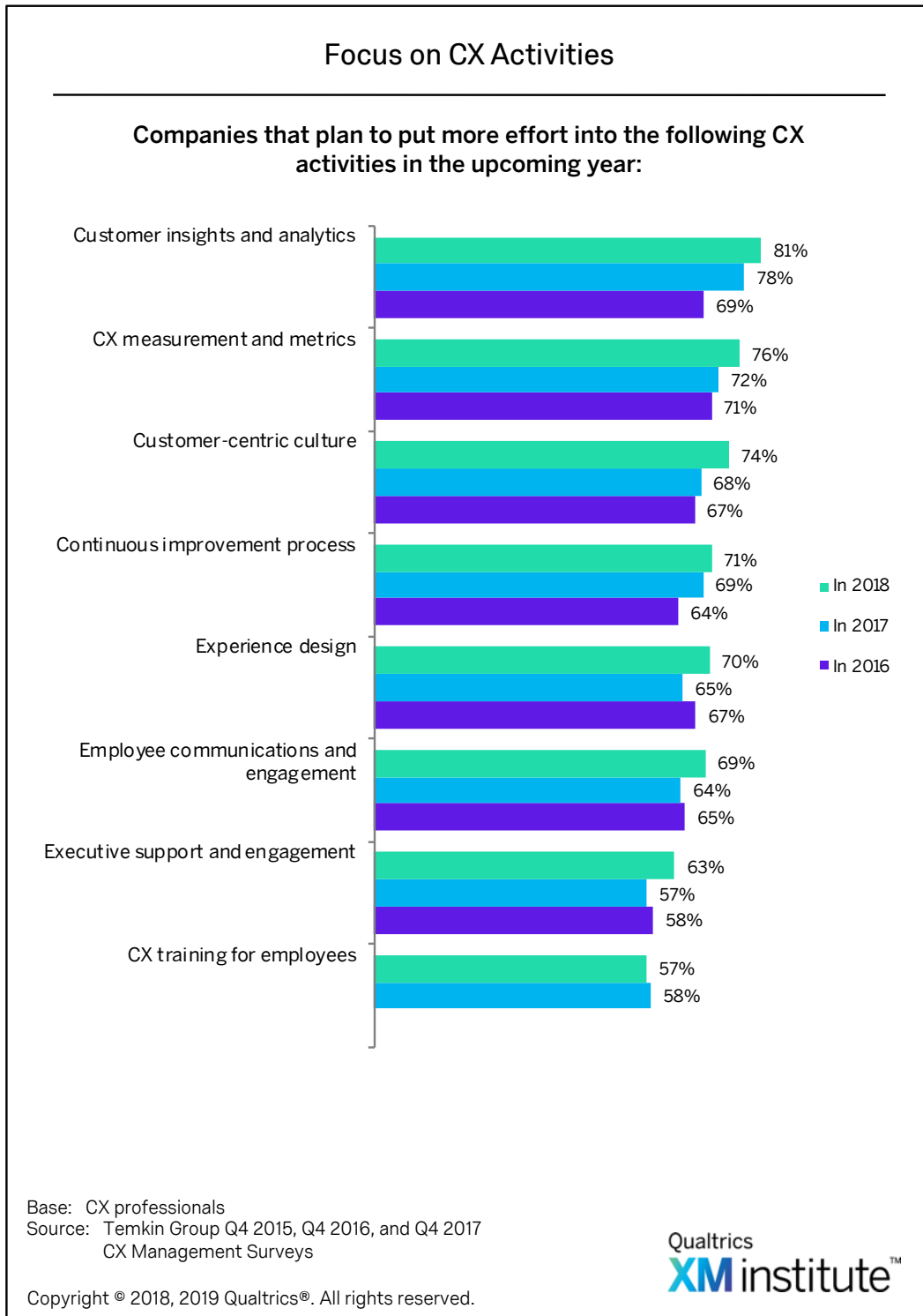


Figure 10

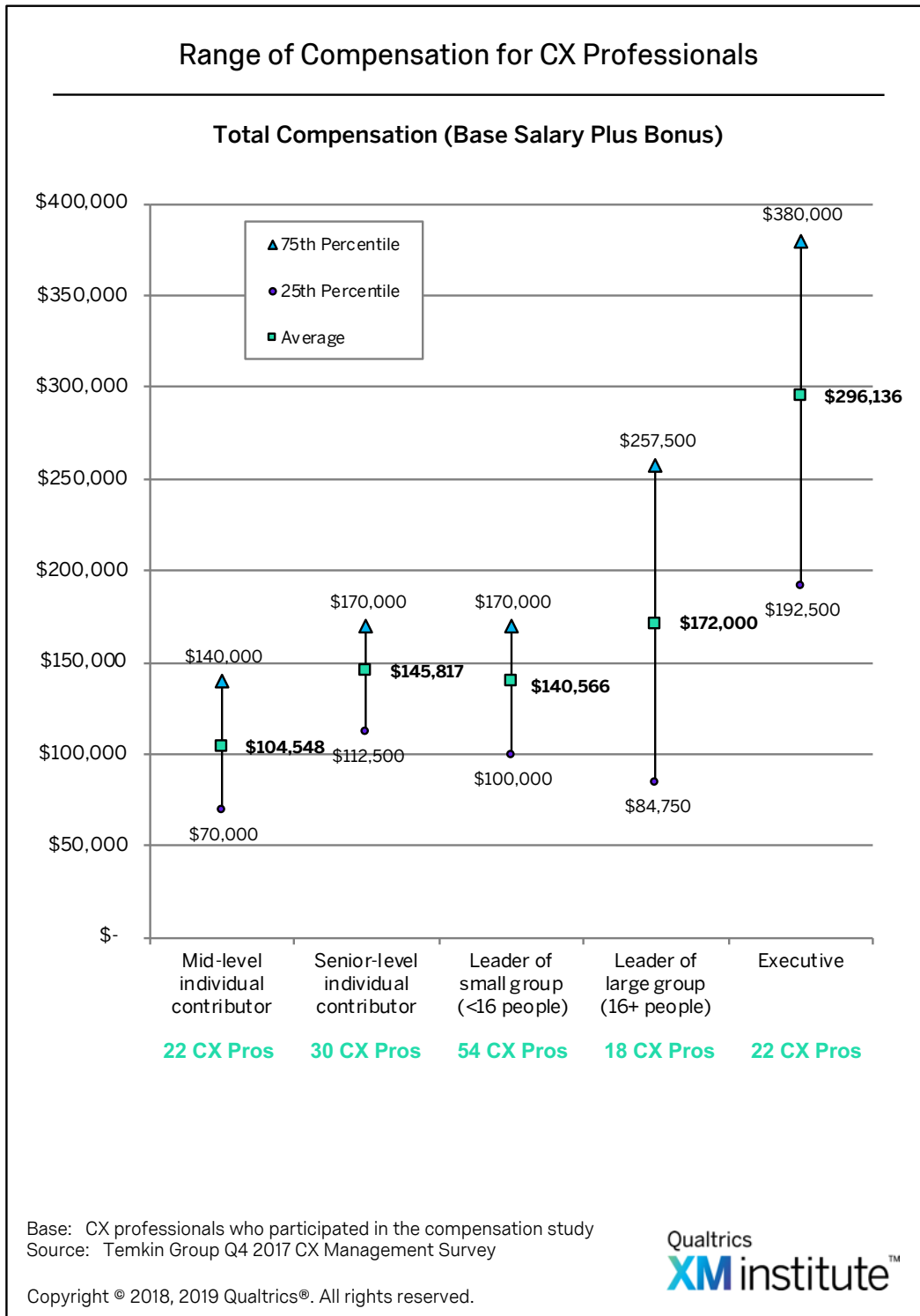


Figure 11

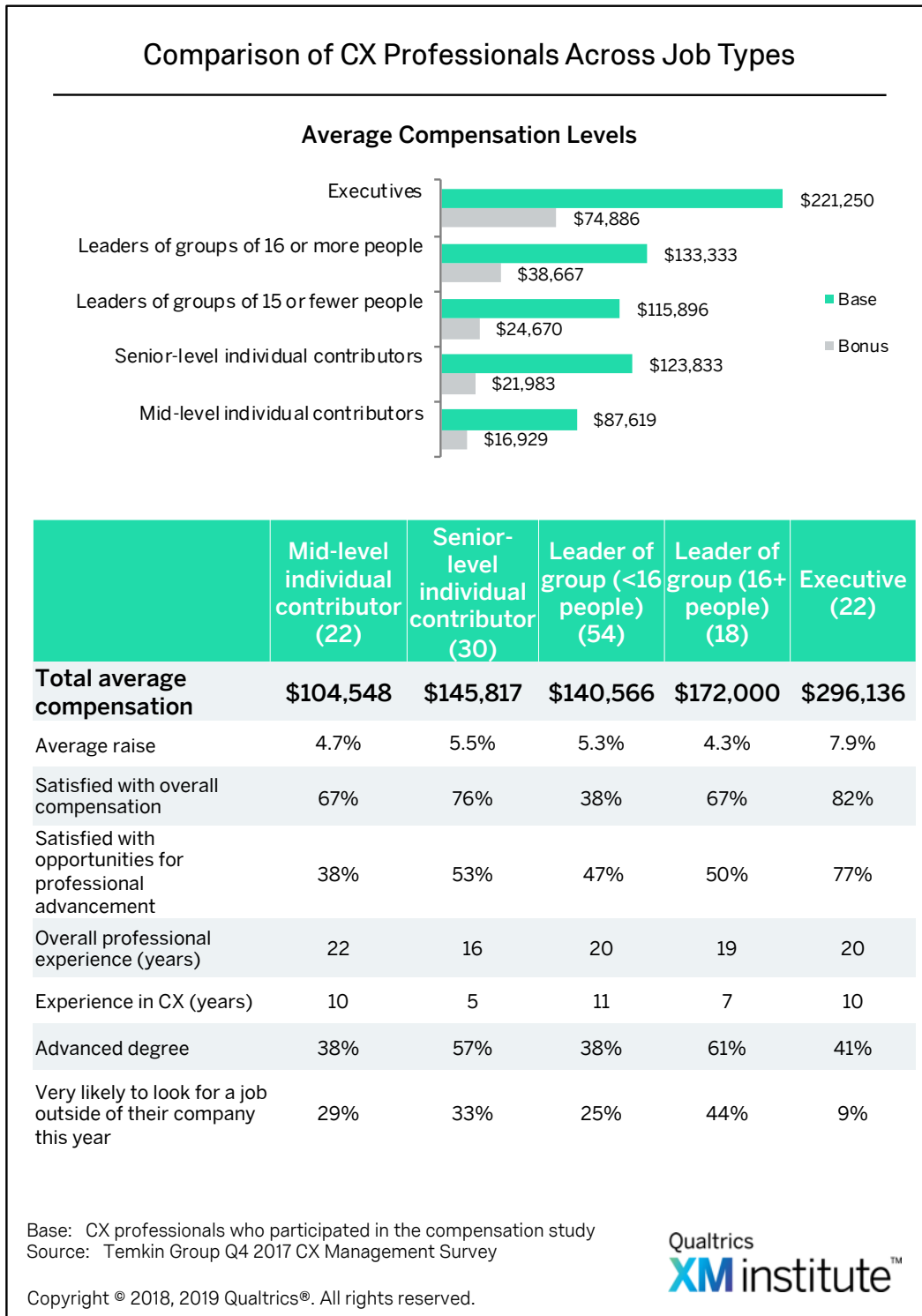


Figure 12