



DATA SNAPSHOT

# State of the XM Profession

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# State of the XM Profession

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The data for this report comes from a global study that Qualtrics XM Institute conducted in the second quarter of 2021. Using an online survey, XM Institute collected data from 411 XM Professionals around the world. Highlights from this research include:

- + **XM pros are very satisfied.** Eighty-four percent are extremely or somewhat satisfied with the XM profession, 68% feel the same about their compensation, and 70% about career advancement potential. XM leaders tend to be more satisfied than individual contributors.
- + **Working with insights is fundamental.** Almost 75% of respondents say that uncovering and distributing insights is a significant component of their roles, and it's the area where they feel their expertise is strongest. Their weakest area: experience design.
- + **Leading change needs work.** Forty-eight percent of XM leaders say that "leading multi-year transformation" is a significant component of their role, compared with 35% of individual contributors. However, both groups of XM pros selected this skill as the most important area for them to expand their personal expertise.

## FIGURES IN THE REPORT:

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### *Methodology*

# Respondent Organizations

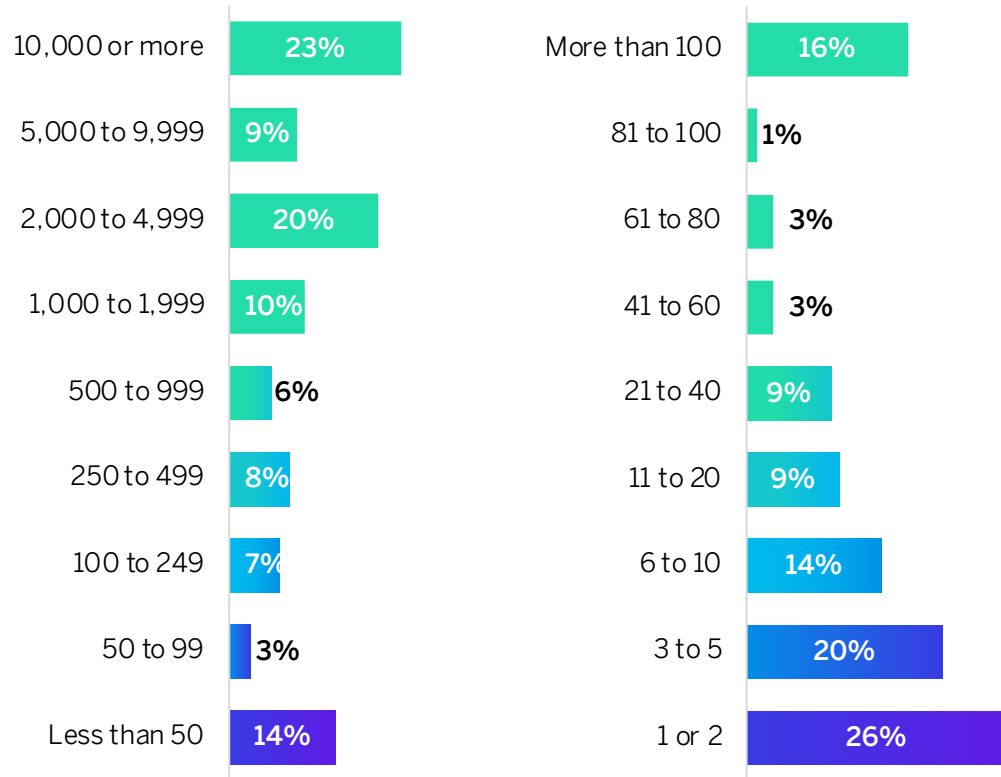
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Most respondents are from larger organizations.
- + Sixty-two percent of respondents work in organizations with at least 1,000 employees and one-third are from organizations with at least 5,000 employees.
- + One-fifth of respondents work in organizations with at least 61 full-time XM employees.
- + Nearly half of respondents work in organizations with fewer than 6 full-time XM professionals.

## ABOUT

This chart examines what size respondents' organizations are and how many full-time employees dedicated to XM are in their organizations.

## How many employees are there within your overall organization? How many full-time employees are dedicated to XM in your organization?



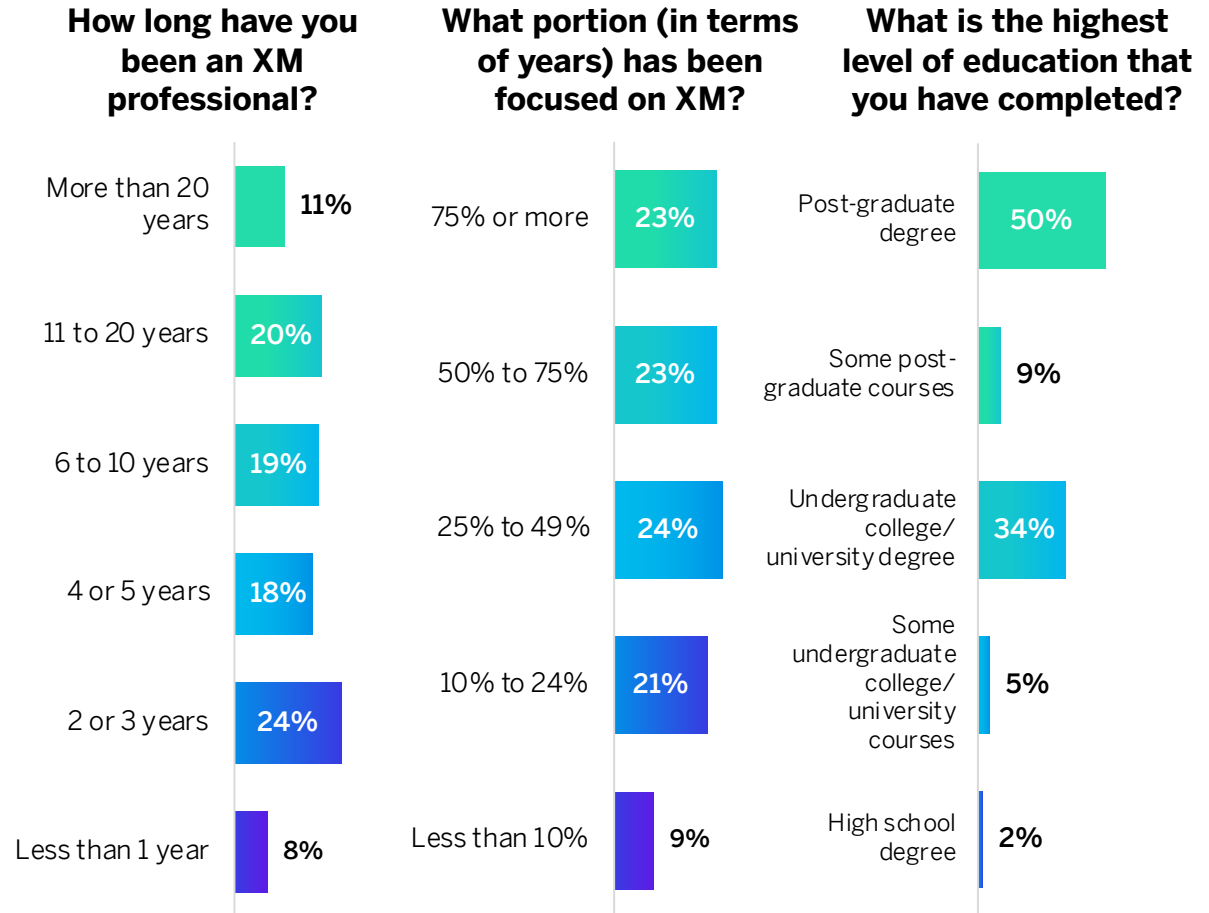
# XM Experience and Education

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Almost one-third of respondents have 11 or more years of XM professional experience and nearly one-third have 3 or fewer years of XM experience.
- + Less than 50% of respondents have been XM professionals for at least half of their career.
- + Ninety-three percent of respondents have at least an undergraduate degree.

## ABOUT

This chart examines how long respondents have been working in XM, what portion of their job has been XM-focused, and the highest level of education they have achieved.



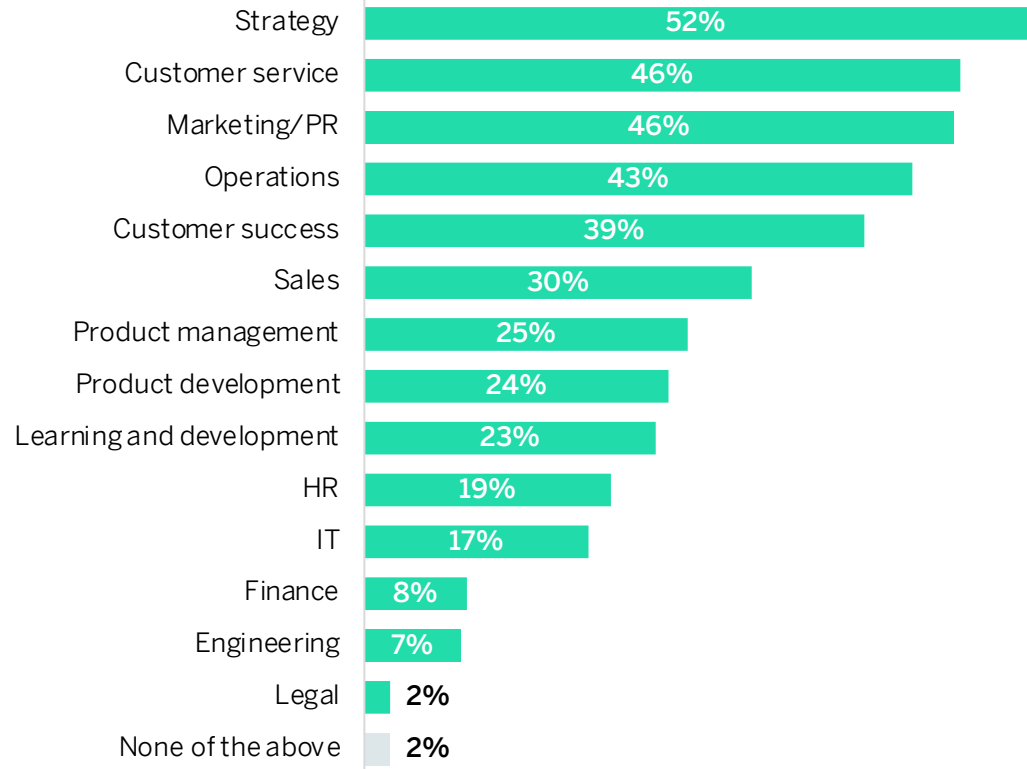
# Experience Across Functional Areas

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + XM Professionals have a variety of different professional backgrounds.
- + More than 40% have spent time in strategy, customer service, marketing/PR, and operations.

**Thinking about your entire professional career, which of the following functional areas have you worked in for at least one full year?**

(Select all that apply)



## ABOUT

This chart examines what functional areas respondents have worked in for one full year previously in their careers.

# Roles and Responsibilities

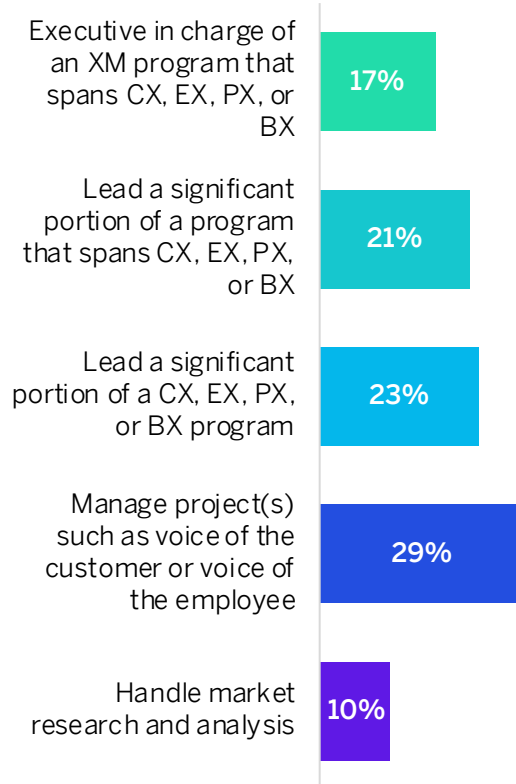
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + More than 60% of respondents lead a significant portion of their XM programs.
- + About half of respondents are individual contributors.

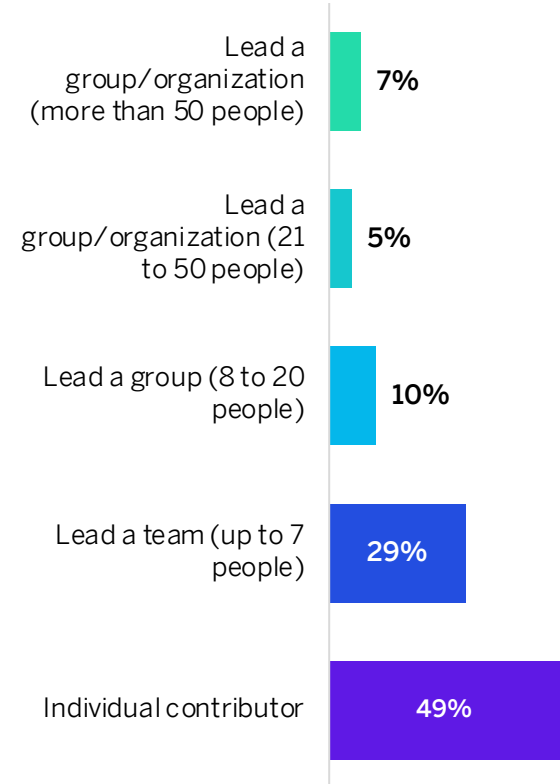
### ABOUT

This chart examines what roles and responsibilities respondents hold.

### Which of the following best describes your PRIMARY responsibility?



### Which of the following best describes your role?



# Satisfaction with the XM Profession

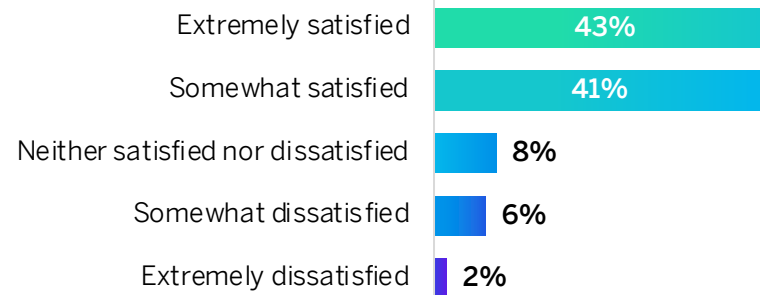
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Eighty-four percent of respondents are satisfied with the XM profession, while only 8% are dissatisfied.
- + Sixty-eight percent of respondents are satisfied with their level of compensation, while only 18% are dissatisfied.
- + Seventy percent of respondents are satisfied with their opportunity for career advancement, while only 13% are dissatisfied.

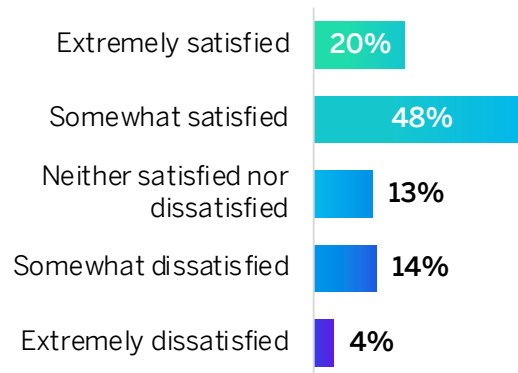
## ABOUT

This chart examines how satisfied respondents are with their profession, with their current level of compensation, and their opportunity for advancement as an XM professional.

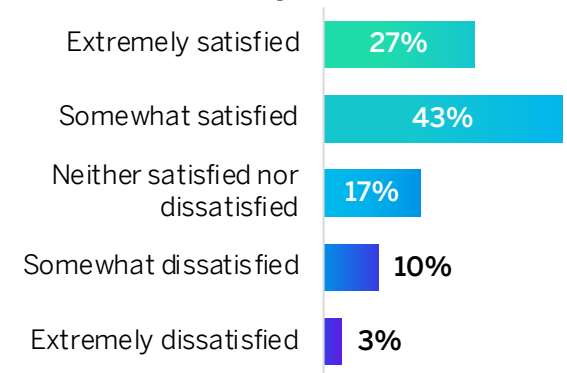
### How satisfied are you with being an XM professional?



### How satisfied are you with your current level of compensation?



### How satisfied are you with your opportunity for career advancement as an XM professional?



# Appreciation and Job Searching

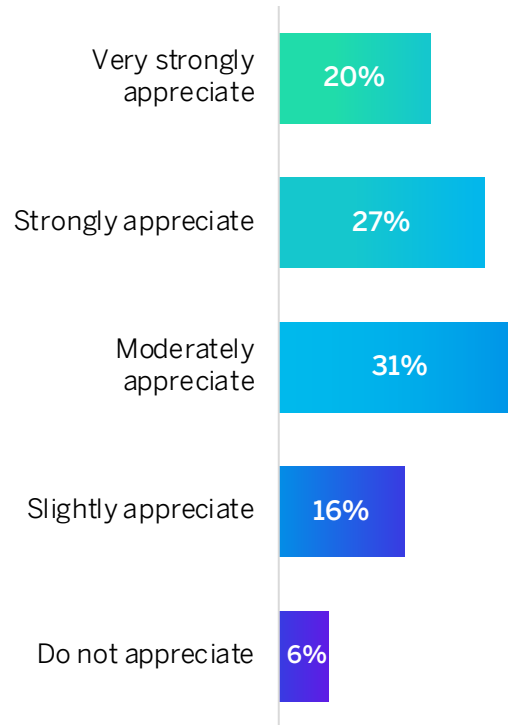
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Nearly half of respondents feel strongly or very strongly appreciated by their senior leadership team, while less than a quarter feel less than moderately appreciated.
- + Thirty-seven percent of respondents are likely to look for a new job within six months, while 39% are not likely to look for a job.

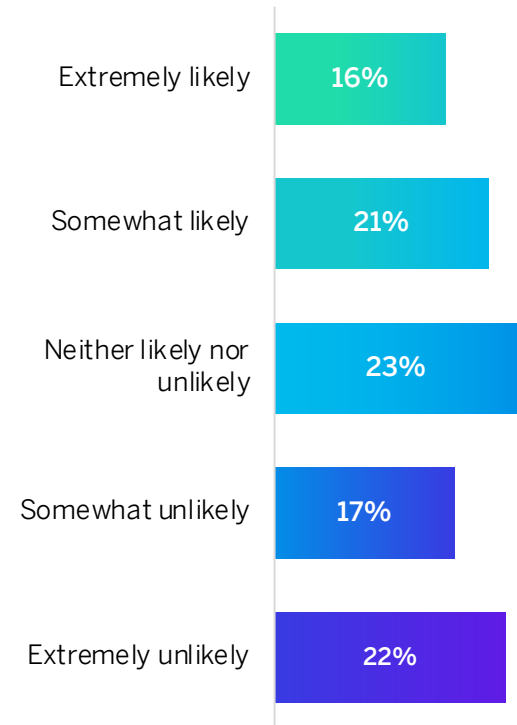
## ABOUT

This chart examines the percentage of respondents that feel appreciated by their senior leadership team and the percentage likely to look for a new job in the same profession in the next six months.

**To what degree do you feel that your organization's senior leadership team appreciates the value of XM professionals like you?**



**How likely are you to look for a new XM job outside of your company within the next six months?**





# Motivation and Enjoyment

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Respondents are most motivated by helping their organization succeed.
- + Respondents most enjoy helping other people use experience insights and driving change across their organizations.

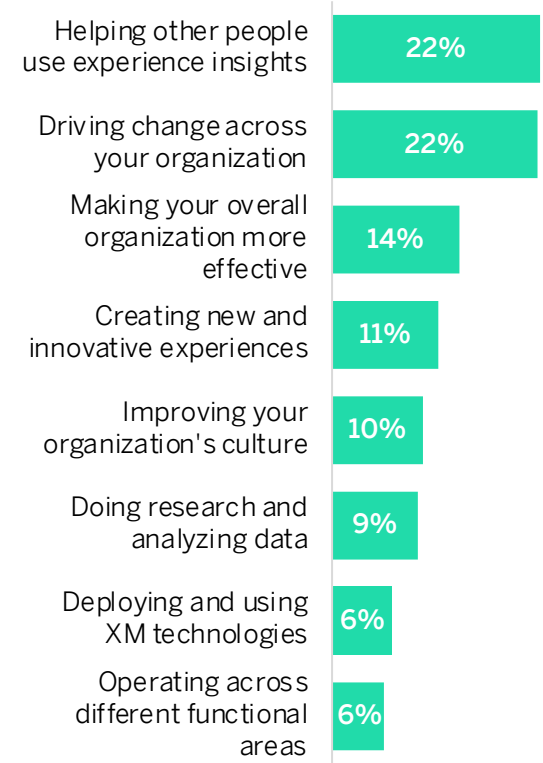
### ABOUT

This chart examines what respondents are currently motivated by, and what they enjoy most about being an XM professional.

### Thinking about the current moment in your career, which of the following motivates you the MOST?



### Which of the following do you most enjoy about being an XM professional?



# Key Components of XM Role

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

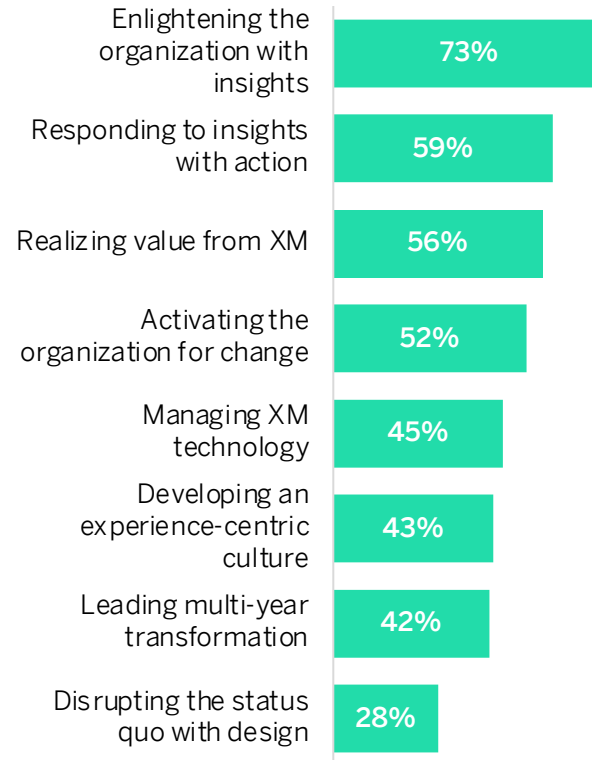
- + Almost three-quarters of respondents are focused on uncovering and distributing insights across their organizations, but only about one-quarter are focused on experience design.
- + Respondents believe they need to expand their expertise the most in leading multi-year transformation, and they have the least need to improve at managing XM technology.

## ABOUT

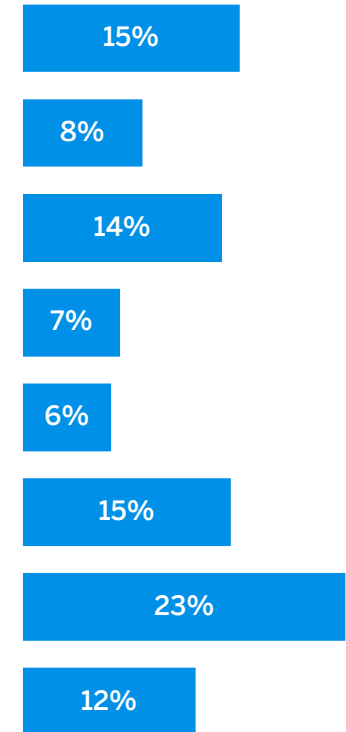
This chart examines the significant components of respondents' current roles and which area they believe is most important to expand their expertise on.

### Which of the following are SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS of your current role?

(Select all that apply)



### As you think about the next few years of your career, which of the following is the MOST IMPORTANT area for you to expand your personal expertise?



# Personal XM Expertise

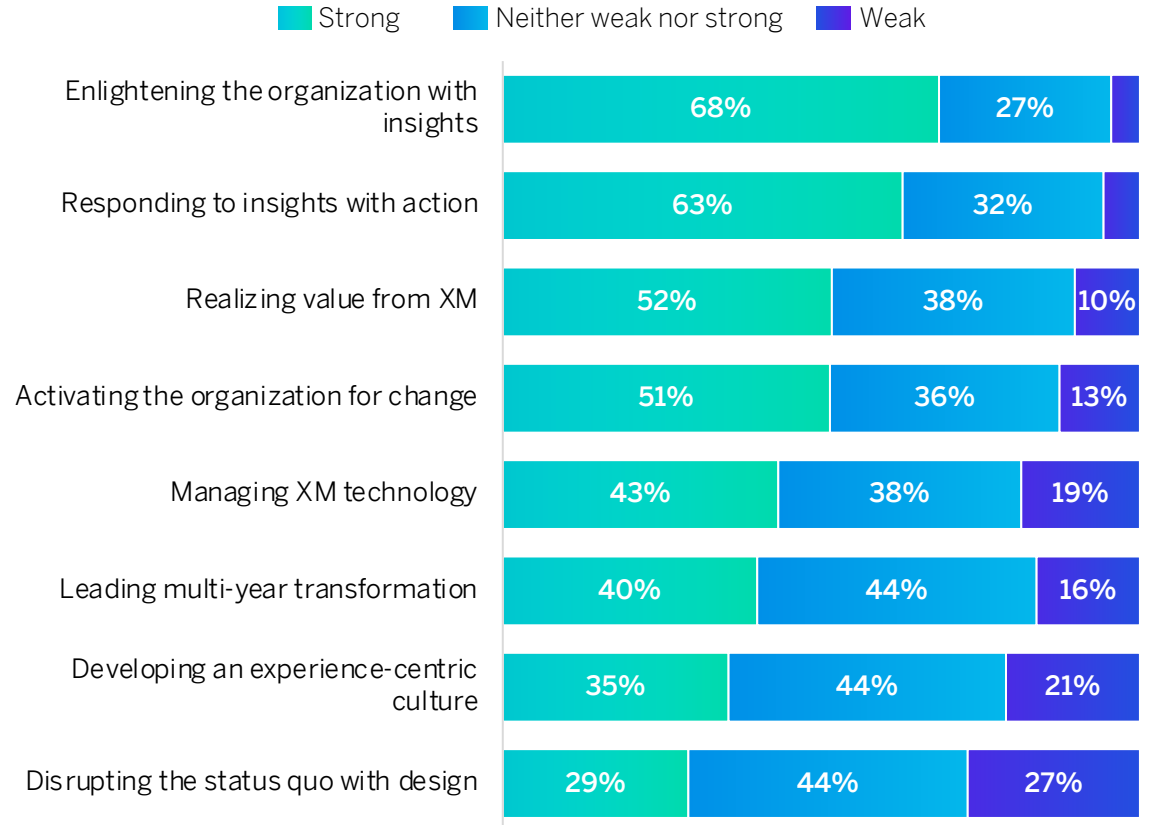
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + More than 6 out of 10 of respondents rate themselves as strong at uncovering, distributing, and driving action with insights, while only about 1 in 20 view themselves as being weak in these areas.
- + Respondents are weakest at disrupting the status quo with design, with almost an equal number of people thinking they are weak as those who think they are strong.

## ABOUT

This chart examines how respondents rate their personal expertise in each of these areas of XM.

## How would you rate your personal expertise in the following areas?



# Organization XM Maturity

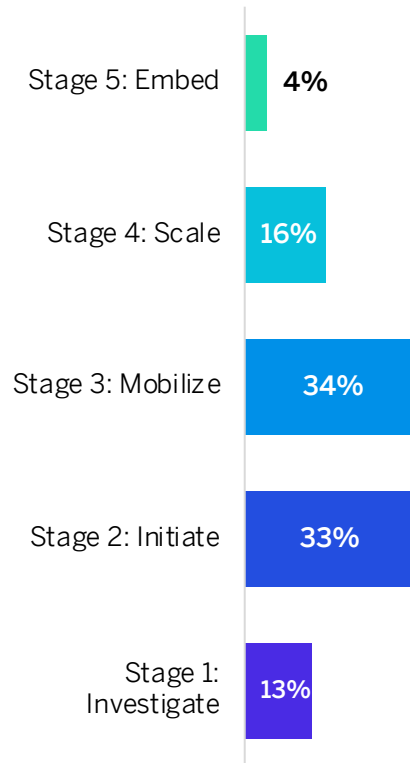
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + One-fifth of respondents are in the two highest levels of XM maturity, while 46% are in the lowest two levels of XM maturity.
- + More than one-half of respondents rate their organization's commitment to XM as being strong, while 21% rate it as being weak.

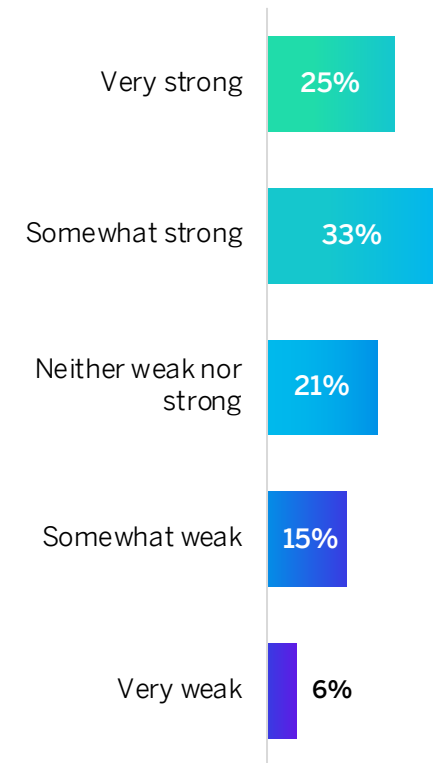
## ABOUT

This chart examines how respondents described their organization's maturity and commitment to XM.

### Which of the following best describes your organization's overall stage of XM maturity?



### How would you rate your organization's overall commitment to XM?



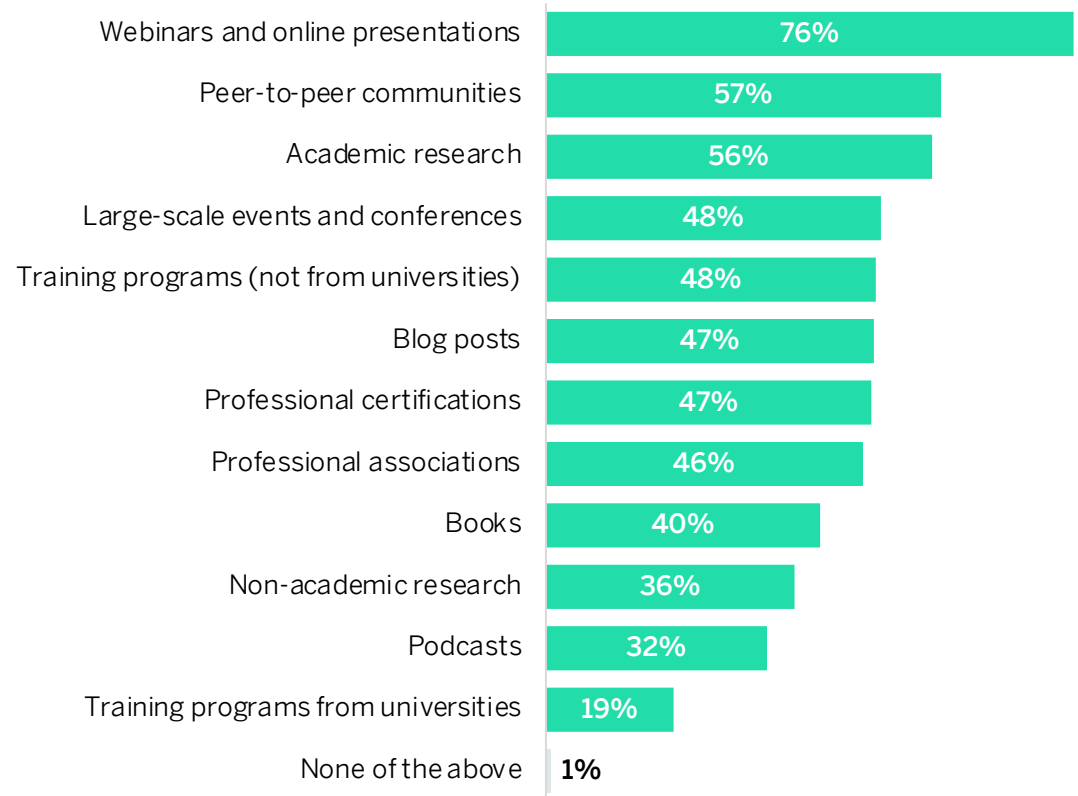
# Valuable Resources For XM Professionals

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Respondents find webinars and online presentations as the most valuable resource on our list followed by peer-to-peer communities.
- + Training programs from universities are the least valuable resource on the list.
- + Nearly all respondents find at least one of these resources valuable.

### Which of the following resources do you find valuable in advancing your XM knowledge and career?

(Select all that apply)



## ABOUT

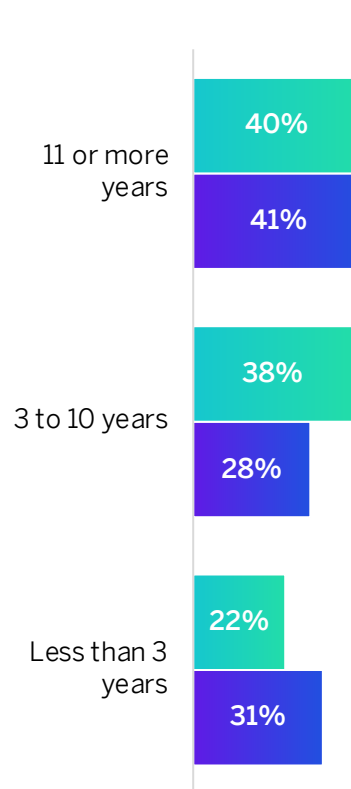
This chart examines which resources respondents find valuable for advancing their XM knowledge and career.

# Professional Demographics: By Role

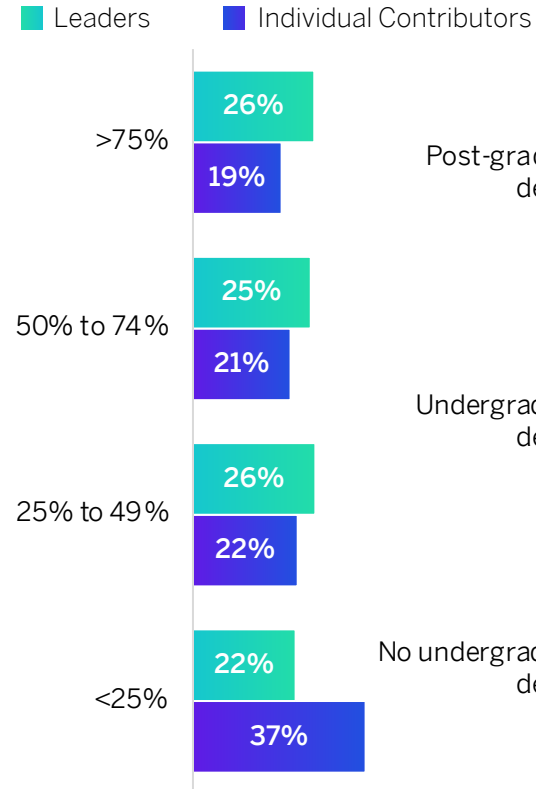
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Seventy-eight percent of XM leaders have been an XM professional for three or more years, compared with 69% for individual contributors.
- + Fifty-one percent of XM leaders have been XM professionals for at least half of their careers, compared with 40% of individual contributors.
- + XM leaders and individual contributors have the same levels of education.

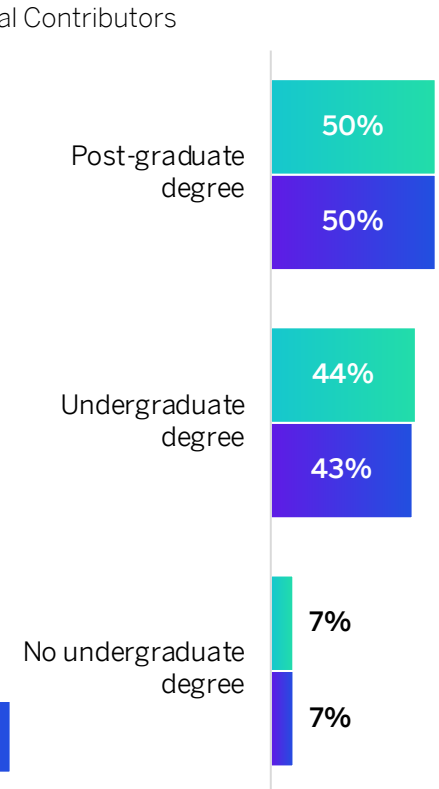
### How long have you been an XM professional?



### What portion (in terms of years) has been focused on XM?



### What is the highest level of education that you have completed?



## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows how long respondents have been working in XM, what portion of their job has been XM-focused, and the highest level of education they have achieved according to their leadership status.

# Career Paths: By Role

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

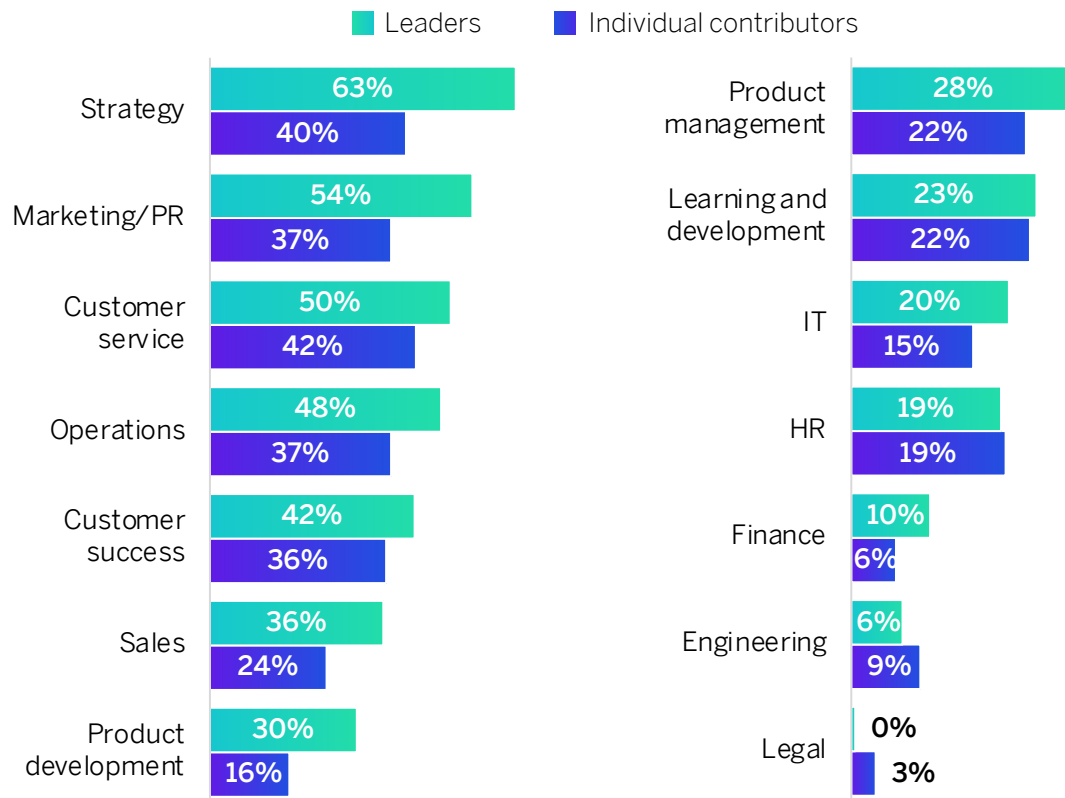
- + XM leaders have a more diverse set of experiences across functional groups than individual contributors.
- + XM leaders are most likely to have strategy experience, compared with 40% for individual contributors – this is the functional area with the largest experience gap.
- + Individual contributors are most likely to have customer service experience.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows the functional areas that respondents have worked in for at least one full year in their career according to their leadership status.

## Thinking about your entire professional career, which of the following functional areas have you worked in for at least one full year?

(Select all that apply)



# Professional Environment: By Role

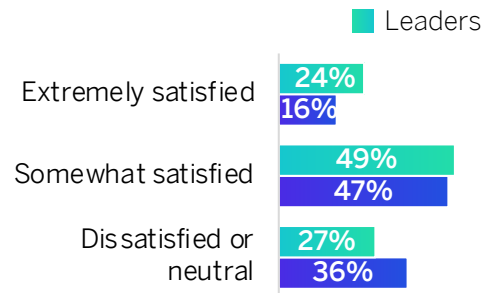
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Seventy-three percent of XM leaders are satisfied with their current compensation, and 63% of individual contributors are satisfied.
- + XM leaders are slightly more satisfied with being an XM professional than individual contributors.
- + Both groups are similarly satisfied with their opportunity for advancement and have similar likelihood to look for another job.

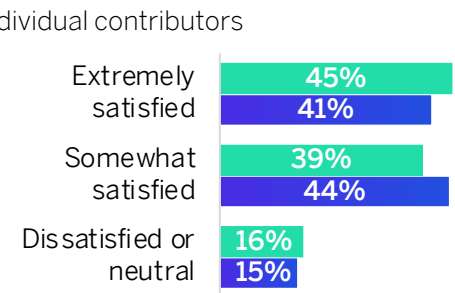
## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows how satisfied respondents are with their compensation, their opportunity for career advancement, how valued they feel by their senior leadership team, and how likely they are to look for a new job in the next six months according to their leadership status.

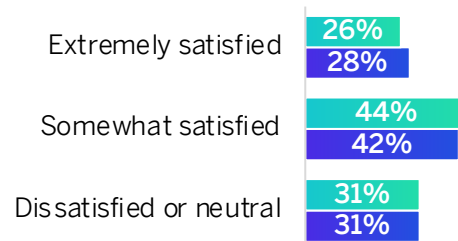
### How satisfied are you with your current level of compensation?



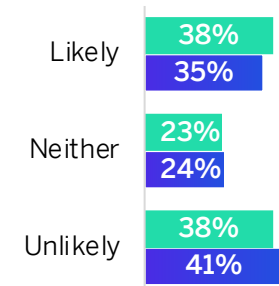
### How satisfied are you with being an XM professional?



### How satisfied are you with your opportunity for career advancement as an XM professional?



### How likely are you to look for a new XM job outside of your company within the next six months?





# Motivation and Enjoyment: By Role

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + XM leaders are most motivated by helping their organization succeed and individual contributors are most motivated expanding their knowledge and skills.
- + XM leaders most enjoy driving change across their organizations and individual contributors most enjoy helping other people use insights.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows what motivates respondents the most about their career right now and what they enjoy the most about being an XM professional according to their leadership status.

### Thinking about the current moment in your career, which of the following motivates you the MOST?



### Which of the following do you most enjoy about being an XM professional?



# Components of Job: By Role

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

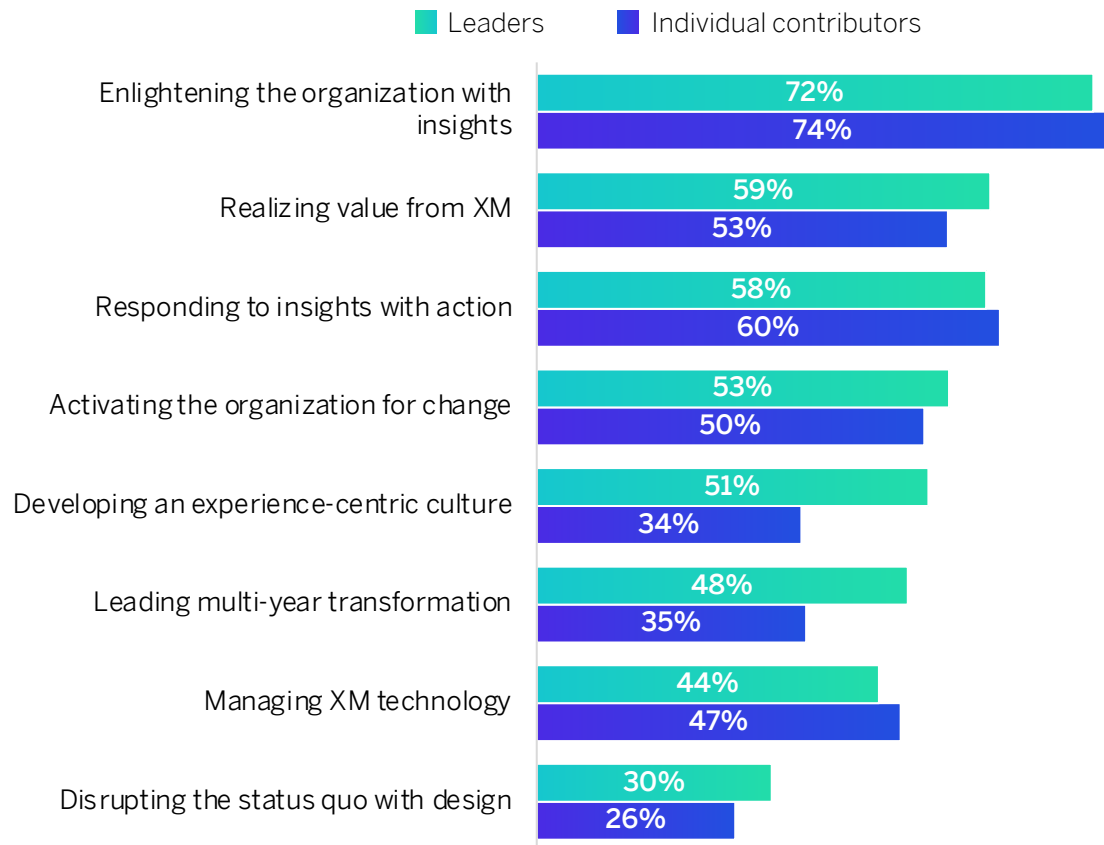
- + Both XM leaders and individual contributors are most likely to be responsible for enlightening their organizations with insights.
- + XM leaders are considerably more likely than individual contributors to be responsible for developing an experience-centric culture and leading multi-year transformation.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows the significant components of respondents' roles according to their leadership status.

## Which of the following are **SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS** of your current role?

(Select all that apply)



# Areas of Personal Growth: By Role

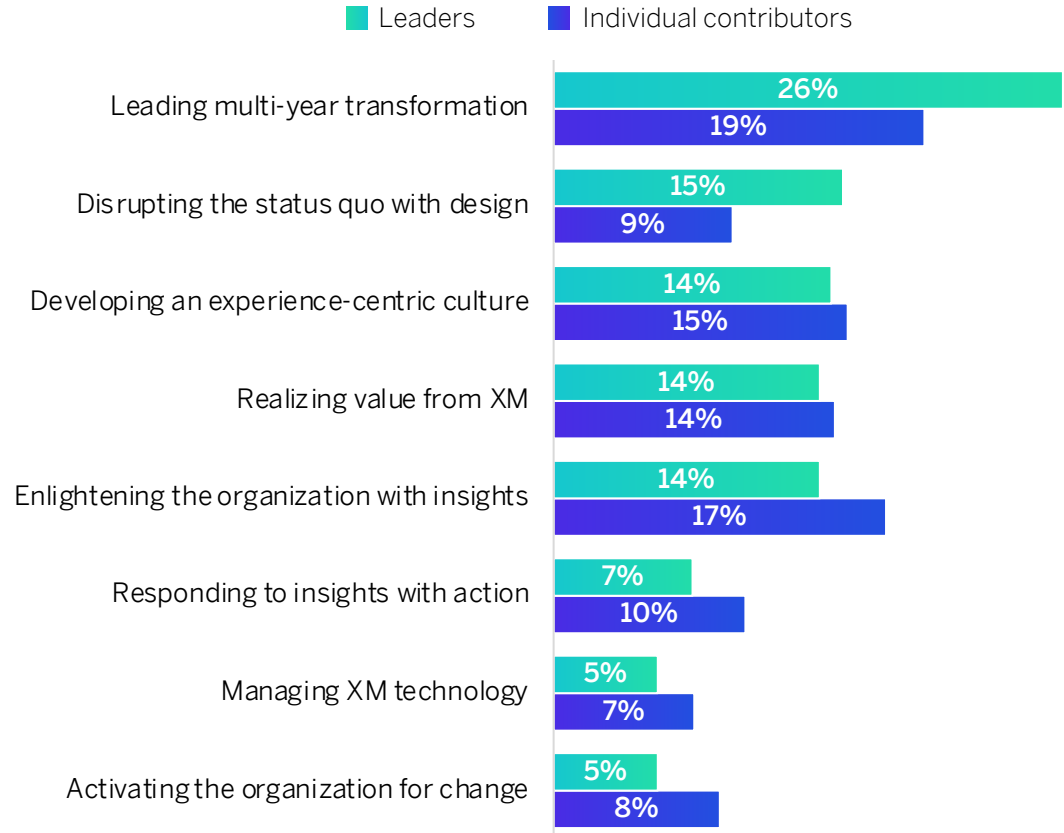
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + XM leaders view leading multi-year transformation as the area that is most important for building their personal expertise.
- + XM individual contributors view leading multi-year transformation as the area that is most important for building their personal expertise, but it is only slightly more important than enlightening the organization with insights.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the difference between XM individual contributors and XM leaders. It shows the area respondents believe is most important to expand their personal expertise into according to their leadership status.

As you think about the next few years of your career, which of the following is the **MOST IMPORTANT** area for you to expand your personal expertise?



# Organization Demographics: By Satisfaction

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

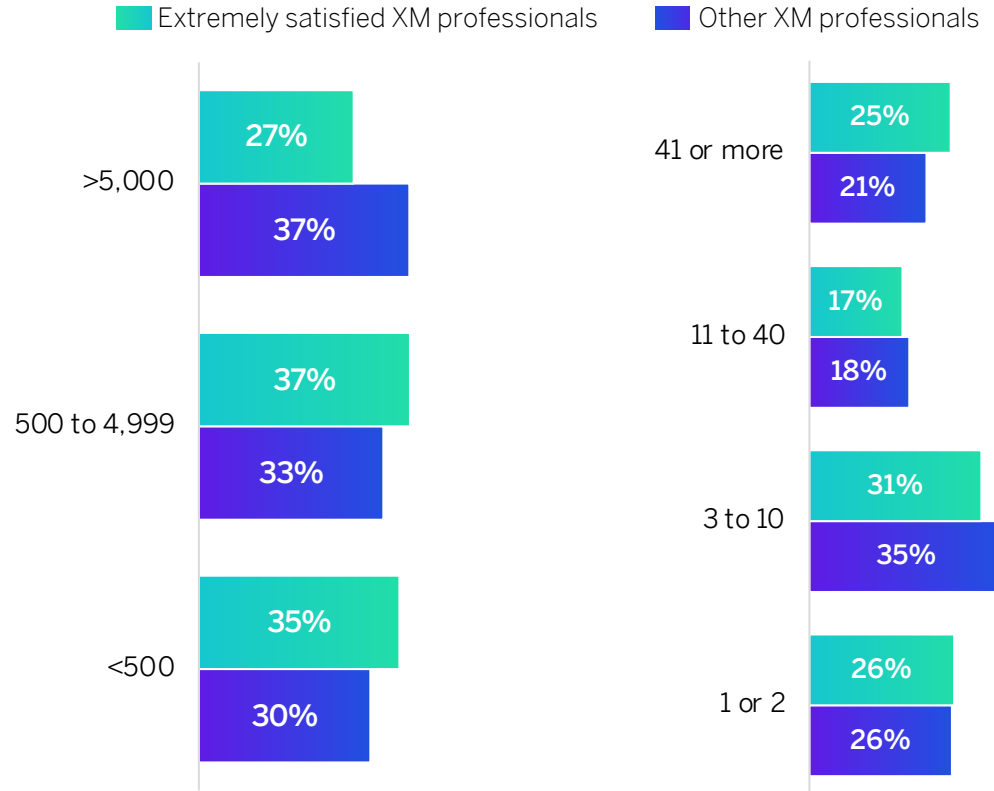
+ Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to come from smaller organizations.

### ABOUT

This chart examines the number of overall employees and the number of full-time XM employees in respondents' organizations according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

How many employees are there within your overall organization?

How many full-time employees are dedicated to XM in your organization?



# Professional Demographics: By Satisfaction

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

+ Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to have spent at least half of their careers as an XM professional.

## ABOUT

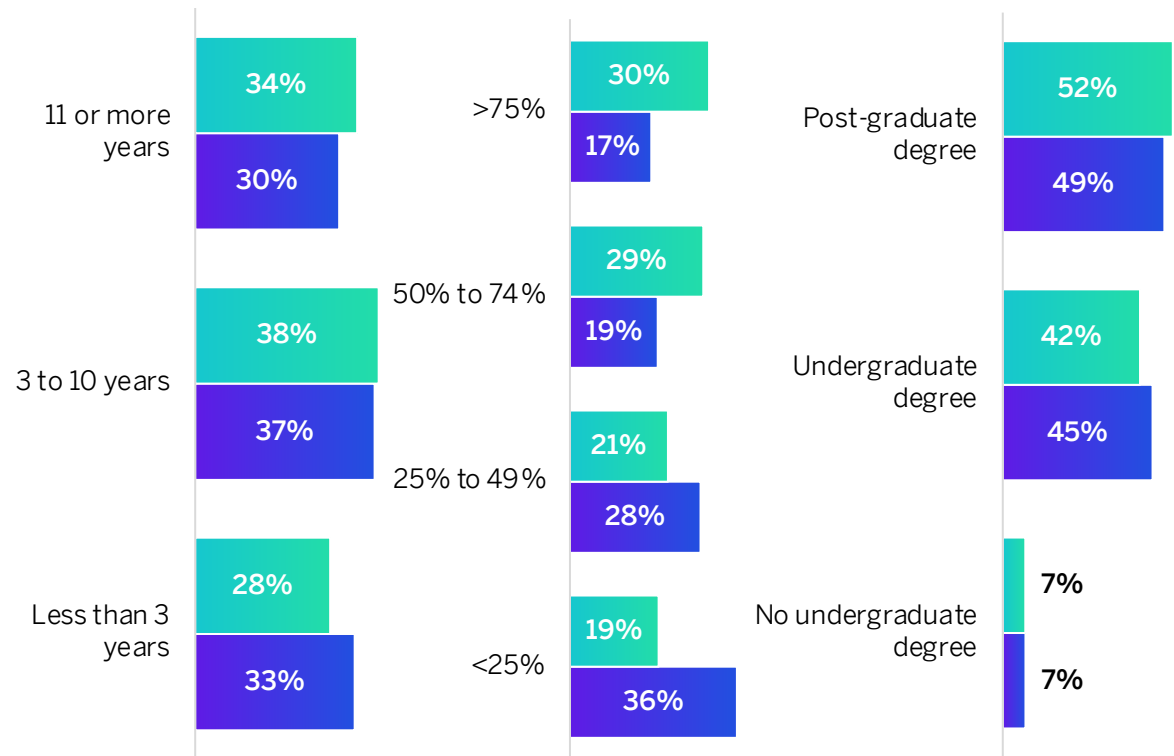
This chart examines how long respondents have been working in XM, what portion of their job has been XM-focused, and the highest level of education they have achieved according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

How long have you been an XM professional?

What portion (in terms of years) has been focused on XM?

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Extremely satisfied XM professionals    Other XM professionals



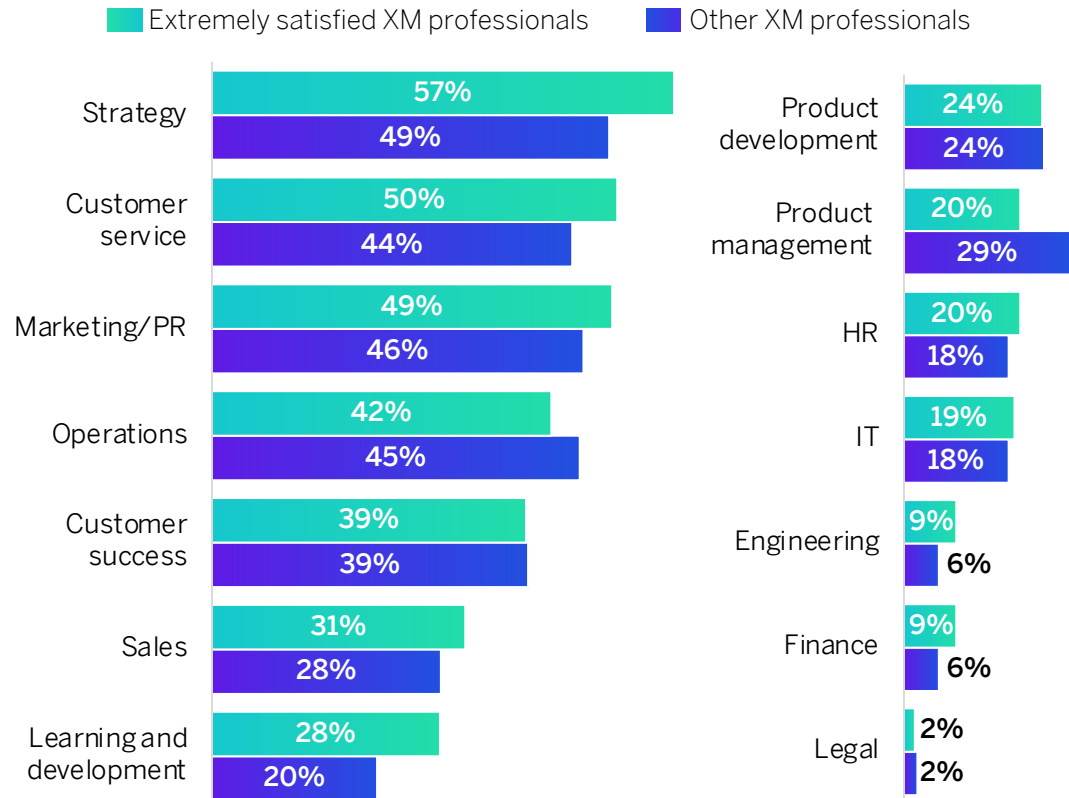
# Career Paths: By Satisfaction

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to have had previous experience in strategy or customer service, and less likely to have previous experience in product management.
- + Less satisfied XM professionals are more likely than extremely satisfied XM professionals to have operations and product management experience.

## Thinking about your entire professional career, which of the following functional areas have you worked in for at least one full year?

(Select all that apply)



## ABOUT

This chart examines the functional areas that respondents have worked in for at least one full year in their career according to their satisfaction with their current profession.

# Roles and Responsibilities: By Satisfaction

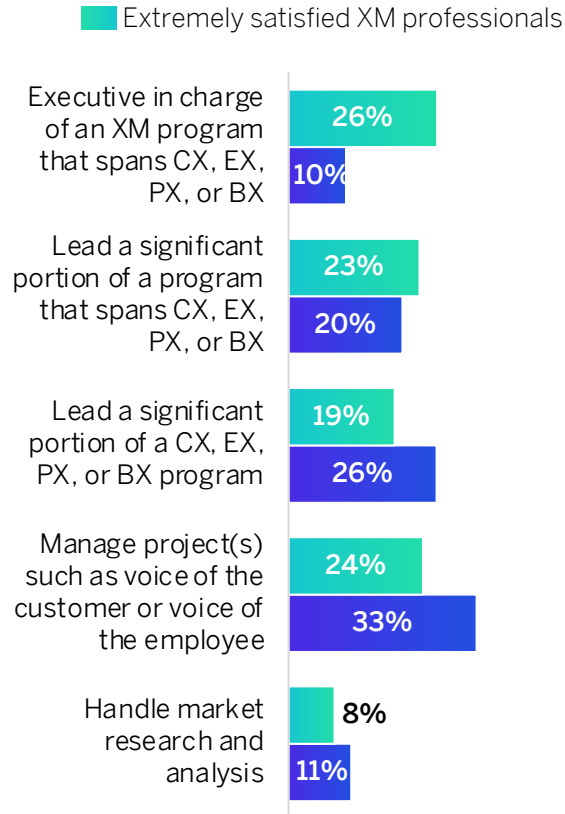
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to lead larger portions of their XM programs.
- + Executive XM leaders are significantly more likely to be extremely satisfied by their profession compared with other leadership roles.

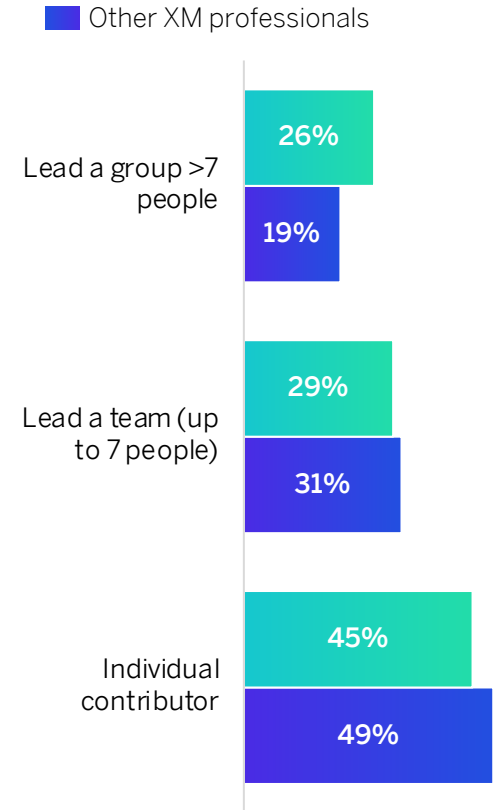
## ABOUT

This chart examines what roles and responsibilities respondents hold according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

### Which of the following best describes your PRIMARY responsibility?



### Which of the following best describes your role?



# Professional Environment: By Satisfaction

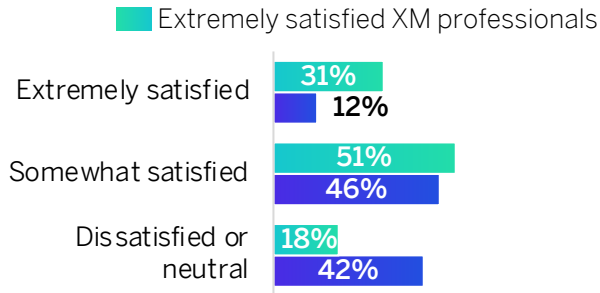
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

+ Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more satisfied with their compensation, their opportunity for career advancement, feel more appreciated by their organizations, and less likely to look for a new job.

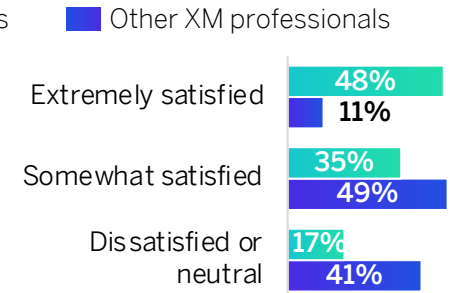
## ABOUT

This chart examines how satisfied respondents are with their current level of compensation, their opportunity for career advancement, how valued they feel by their senior leadership team, and how likely they are to look for a new job in the next six months according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

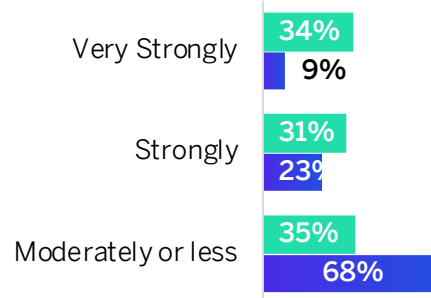
**How satisfied are you with your current level of compensation?**



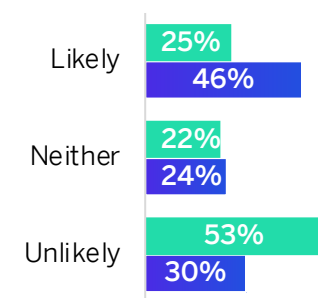
**How satisfied are you with your opportunity for career advancement as an XM professional?**



**To what degree do you feel that your organization's senior leadership team appreciates the value of XM professionals like you?**



**How likely are you to look for a new XM job outside of your company within the next six months?**





# Motivation and Enjoyment: By Satisfaction

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more motivated by improving people's lives and less motivated by expanding their knowledge and skills.
- + Extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to enjoy driving change and less likely to enjoy doing research and analyzing data.

## ABOUT

This chart examines what motivates respondents the most about their career right now and what they enjoy the most about being an XM professional according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

### Thinking about the current moment in your career, which of the following motivates you the MOST?



### Which of the following do you most enjoy about being an XM professional?



# Components of Role: By Satisfaction

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

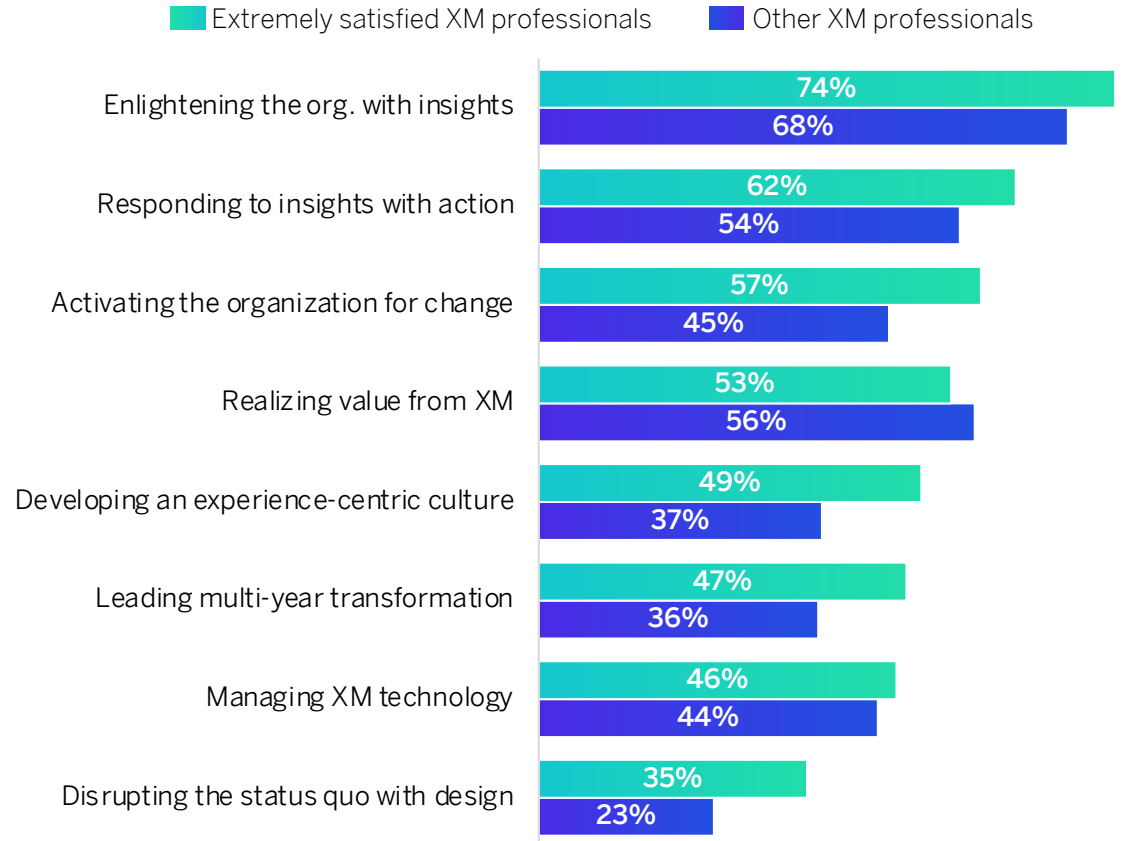
- + Extremely satisfied XM professionals as well as other XM professionals are most often involved in uncovering and distributing insights.
- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are more likely to focus on disrupting the status quo with design, activating the organization for change, developing an experience-centric culture, and leading multi-year transformation.
- + Extremely satisfied XM professionals are slightly less likely to focus on realizing value from XM.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the significant components of respondents' roles according to their satisfaction with their current profession.

### Which of the following are **SIGNIFICANT COMPONENTS** of your current role?

(Select all that apply)



# Areas of Personal Growth: By Satisfaction

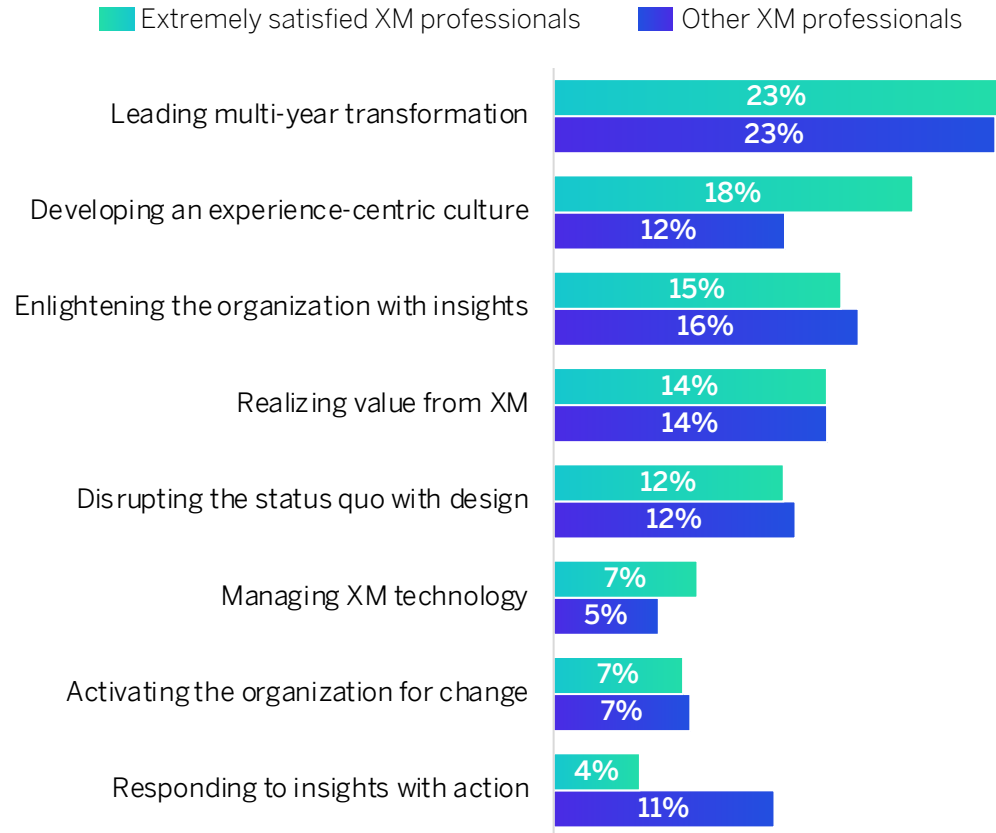
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals are less focused on improving their expertise in doing research and analyzing data.
- + Extremely satisfied XM professionals are more focused on developing experience-centric culture and managing XM technology than other XM professionals.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the area respondents believe is most important to expand their personal expertise into according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

As you think about the next few years of your career, which of the following is the **MOST IMPORTANT** area for you to expand your personal expertise?



# Personal Expertise: By Satisfaction

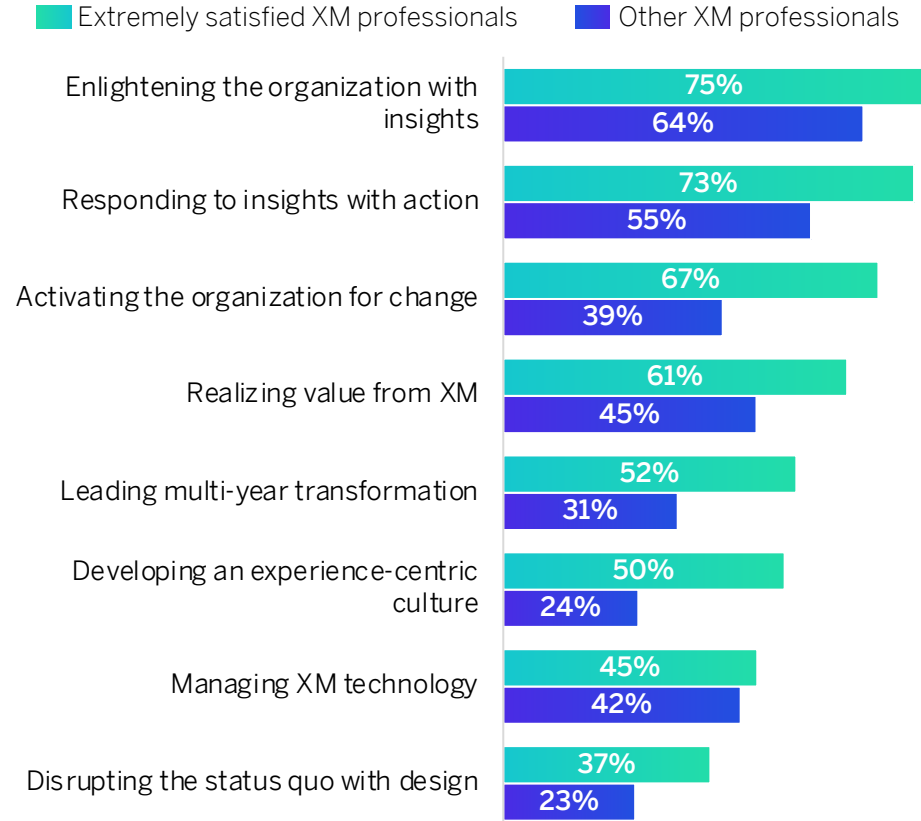
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- + Compared with other XM professionals, extremely satisfied XM professionals rate themselves as being stronger across all of the areas we listed.
- + Extremely satisfied XM professionals have the largest expertise gap when it comes to activating the organization for change, developing an experience-centric culture, and leading multi-year transformation.

## ABOUT

This chart examines the percentage of respondents rating their personal expertise as “strong” in these areas according to their satisfaction with being an XM professional.

### Respondents who rate their personal expertise in the following areas as being “strong”



## DATA SOURCE

The data for this report comes from a global study that Qualtrics XM Institute conducted in the second quarter of 2021. Using an online survey, XM Institute collected data from 411 XM Professionals around the world by soliciting feedback from XM Institute's database of XM professionals and using its online networks.

## DATA CALCULATION

Figures 1 through 11 were calculated by dividing the number of respondents selecting each response by the total number of respondents for that question.

Figures 12 through 17 were calculated by dividing the number of respondents selecting each response by the total number of respondents that previously selected they are either an "individual contributor" to the question "Which of the following best describes your role?" from Figure 4, and the total number of respondents selecting all other choices for that same question: "Lead a team (up to 7 people)", "Lead a group (8 to 20 people)", "Lead a group/organization (21 to 50 people)", and "Lead a group/organization (more than 50 people)".

Figures 18 through 26 were calculated by dividing the number of respondents selecting each response by the total number of respondents that previously selected they are "extremely satisfied" to the question "How satisfied are you with being an XM professional?" from Figure 5, and the total number of respondents selecting all other choices for that same question: "somewhat satisfied", "neither satisfied nor unsatisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied", and "extremely dissatisfied".

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