



Sales Engineering

2023 Compensation & Workload Report



ABOUT CONSENSUS

Presales research has come to mean more to us than just serving as an avenue for thought leadership. It has literally shaped our business. Several years ago, we found a glaring problem in B2B that nobody was solving successfully: how to scale Presales.

There were, and are, waves of disruption in B2B – bigger buying groups, more asynchronous buying journeys, changes in buyer behaviors, etc. Buyers were spending less time engaging with vendors, and pulling them into conversations later in the process. But when they did engage, they preferred Presales interactions.

This led to a surge in demand for Presales resources across the customer lifecycle that has only grown. But there's a gap between that demand and the availability of Presales talent to deliver it, creating bottlenecks that delay and can even kill deals.

We researched these trends – which led to our first workload and comp study – and found that, rather than fixing it, leaders were mostly trying to grow Presales teams through hiring. At the same time, sellers hold buyers hostage to a calendar because they operate as though they close deals. Garin Hess, Founder and CEO of Consensus, determined from the data that “sellers can't close deals, only buyers can.”

What buyers really want is to be enabled. They want authentic, guided and frictionless buying, and they want more of it on-demand.

Consensus solves this with the #1 Intelligent Demo Automation Platform. We use patented interactive video demos along with a stakeholder discovery and insights engine to scale Presales as well as help technical sales teams deliver better buying experiences. Our research informs our strategy. We are purpose-built for scaling Presales and enabling buyers. For more information, visit our website at www.goconsensus.com.

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92 VERSION HISTORY

Executive Summary

Think about your most recent B2B buying experience. How did you feel? Were you pressured, confused, and talked at? Or were you educated, assured, and listened to? If it felt more like the latter, you likely have a Sales Engineering team to thank.

From the buyer's perspective, Sales Engineers are the key to superior buying experiences. They serve as trusted advisors who focus not on selling products but on solving customer problems. Authentic, substantive, and invaluable, it's no surprise that demand for this Presales function is growing across the entire buying process.

For the fourth year running, we're pleased to present our "***Sales Engineering Compensation & Workload Report.***" This is no mere summary of survey results. Our research is based on detailed answers from about 1,000 Presales Leaders and Individual Contributors, with statistically and practically significant findings drawn from in-depth modeling and consultations with data science expertise. The result? Timely coordinates and fresh insights to help upgrade Presales to the disruptive differentiator it deserves to be. As always, we welcome your feedback.

A Note On Leaders and Individual Contributors

Leader titles include Sales Engineering managers and above, as well as Sales leadership roles which bear responsibility for Sales Engineering.

Individual Contributor titles include Sales Engineer (SEs) and similar variants such as Solutions Consultant, as well as Senior Sales Engineer, Principal Sales Engineer, etc.

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Advance Praise

"I just finished reading the Sales Engineering 2023 Compensation & Workload Report. There are some incredible insights in there. 3 areas of the report that really jumped off the page for me were around KPIs, burnout, and seat at the table. Don't waste a minute. Get in there and start reading it!"



TODD JANZEN
Global VP Solution Engineering,
Q Branch | Salesforce

"Are you curious about how your fellow SEs are being compensated? Or how much time they are spending on different tasks like demos or discovery? If so, you are going to want to check out the Consensus Sales Engineering 2023 Compensation & Workload Report put together by our friends at Consensus."



JULIE HANSEN
Founder
Performance Sales Training

"The Consensus Sales Engineering 2023 Compensation & Workload Report offers a goldmine of insights to help Presales Leaders and Enablement properly support and develop their Presales Team and work together better with their Sales counterparts to become more efficient and close more deals, impacting the entire Selling and Buying process."



ART FROMM
Owner & Founder
Team Sales Development Inc.

"I am absolutely delighted to see the release of Consensus' Sales Engineering 2023 Compensation & Workload Report. Some individuals and organizations will simply use the report to compare their situations with their peers. Others will identify and pursue opportunities for change and improvement and THAT is the real power of the report."



PETER COHAN
Founder
Great Demo!

Advance Praise

"The Consensus Sales Engineering Compensation & Workload Report is a great piece of work and I learned 1) We are hiring more than ever from outside the industry 2) the 2nd most common KPI is "satisfaction from sales" which I find concerning and 3) We have an overwhelming focus in Presales on demos and I think we should be spending more time on relationship building and discovery."



JOHN CARE
Managing Director
Mastering Technical Sales

"By shifting intro demos towards discovery, we enhance their value and enable our teams to feel more impactful. Discover more insights in the Sales Engineering 2023 Compensation & Workload report - let's make every demo count!"



NATAJA BAX
Trainer & Coach
The DemoScene

"Presales organizations have traditionally lacked quality insight into best practices, benchmarks and other data with which to better understand their own efficiency and how they compare to industry best practices and norms. Consensus' landmark SE Compensation and Workload Report continues to admirably fill that gap, not only through an incredibly expansive set of data, but with unique insights that aren't available anywhere else."



KERRY SOKALSKY
Founder & President
Presales Mastery

HIGHLIGHTS 

New and Notable Findings

COMPENSATION

- 20 Recently hired ICs report higher OTE than their tenured counterparts, while the opposite is true for Leaders.
- 22 Stock options are a newer perk for ICs in the last 4-6 years.
- 23 Personal quotas are a major predictor of higher OTE (& base salary) for ICs.

WORKLOAD

- 41 Too much time spent on Intro Demos; not enough on developing product expertise.
- 60 ICs and Leaders want the perks of Sales, less repetition, and more help.

DEMOS

- 73 More unqualified demos predict greater misallocation of time spent on Intro Demos.

BURNOUT

- 78 Misallocating time and resources fuels burnout, draining productivity and perpetuating a cycle of inefficiency and frustration.
- 80 Unqualified demos are comparable to long work hours in predicting burnout.

DEMO AUTOMATION

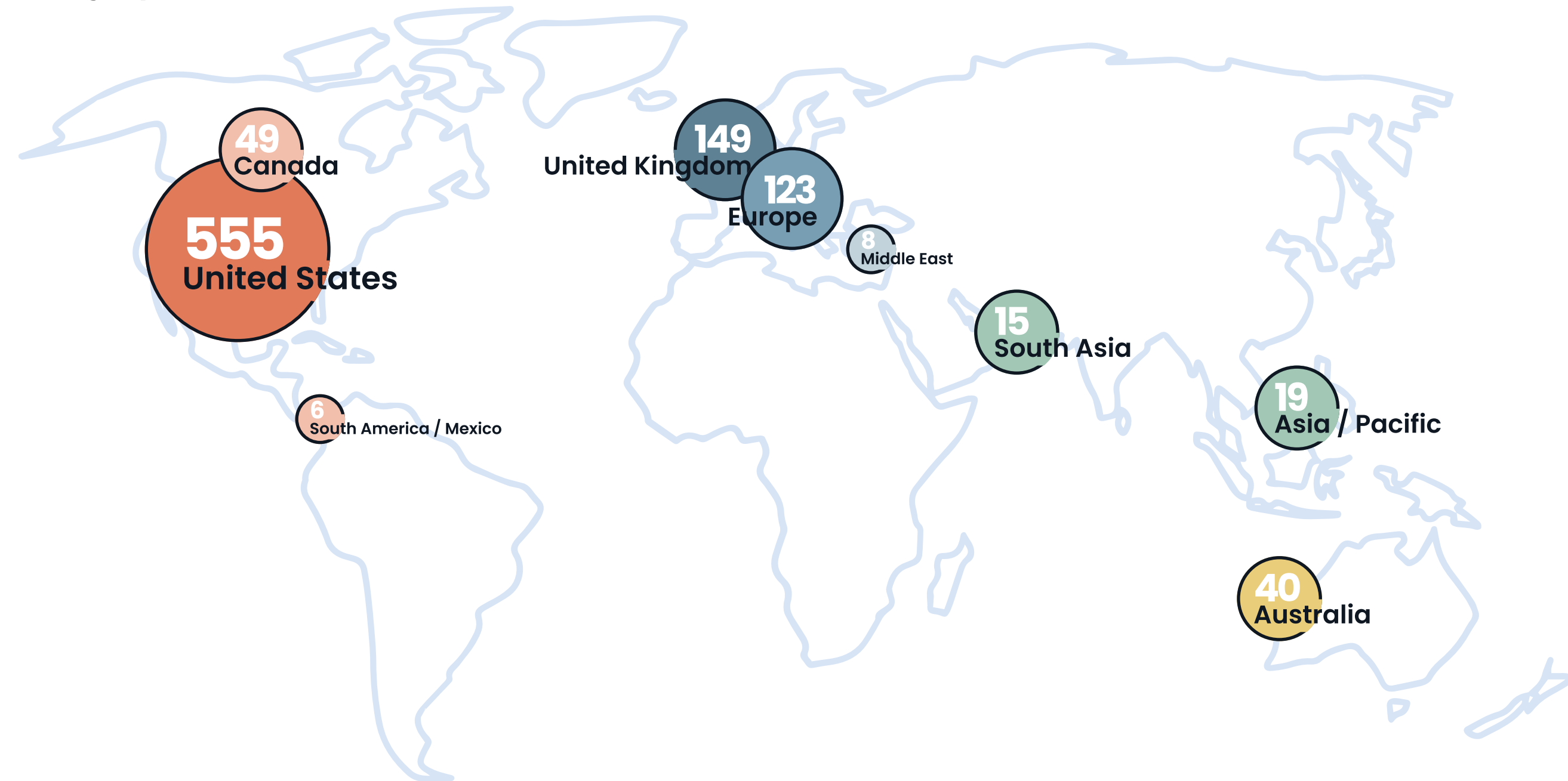
- 88 Firms who automate a portion of the demo process report less burnout.
- 89 Automation optimizes IC time to be spent on higher impact activities.

ABOUT THE SAMPLE: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

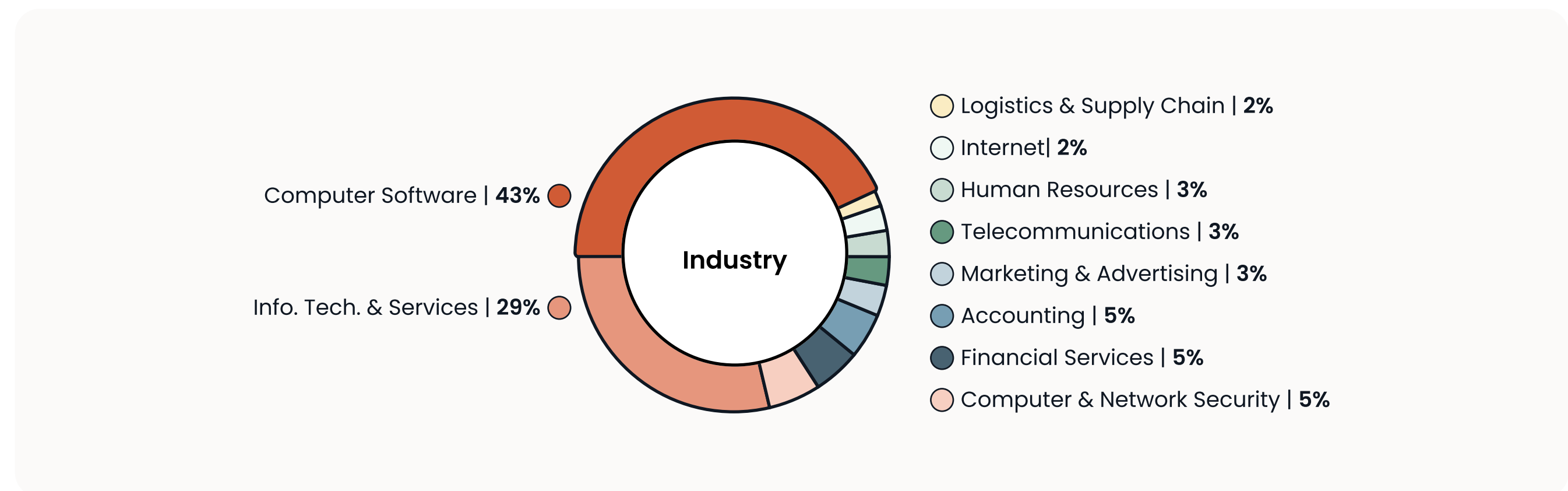
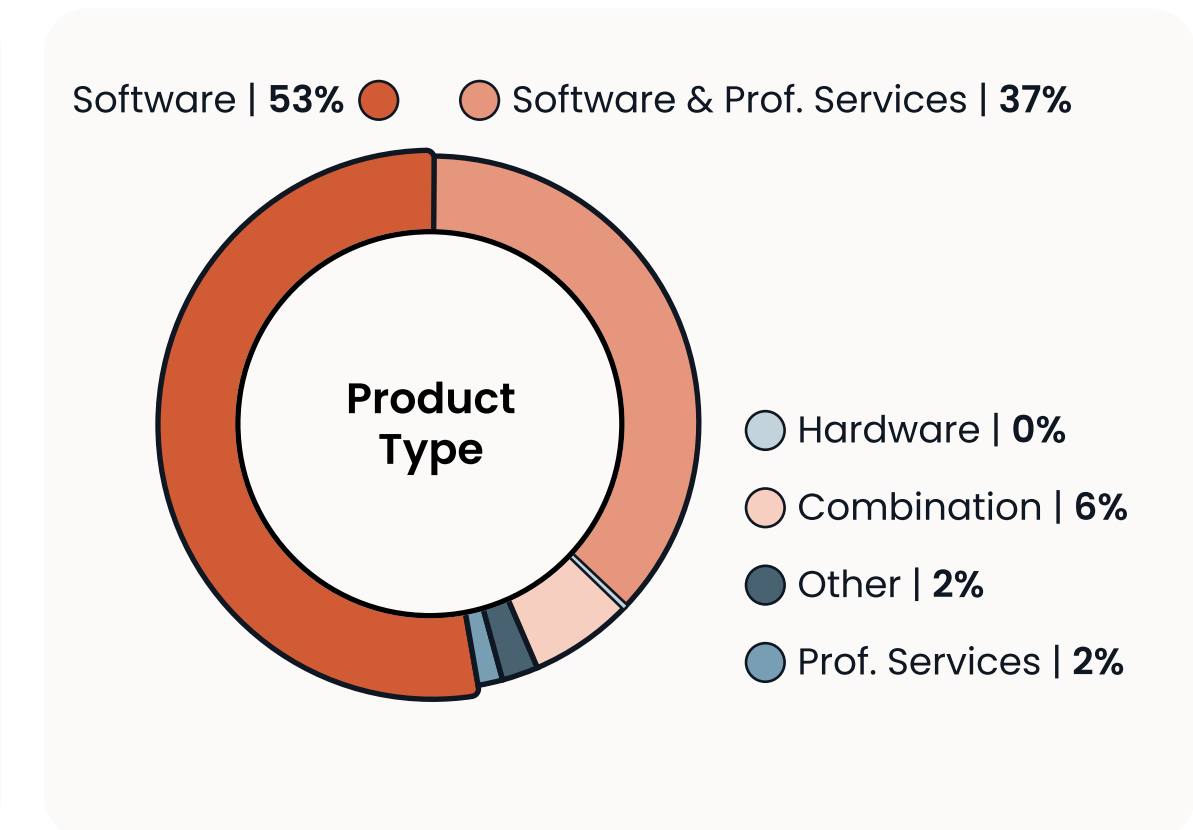
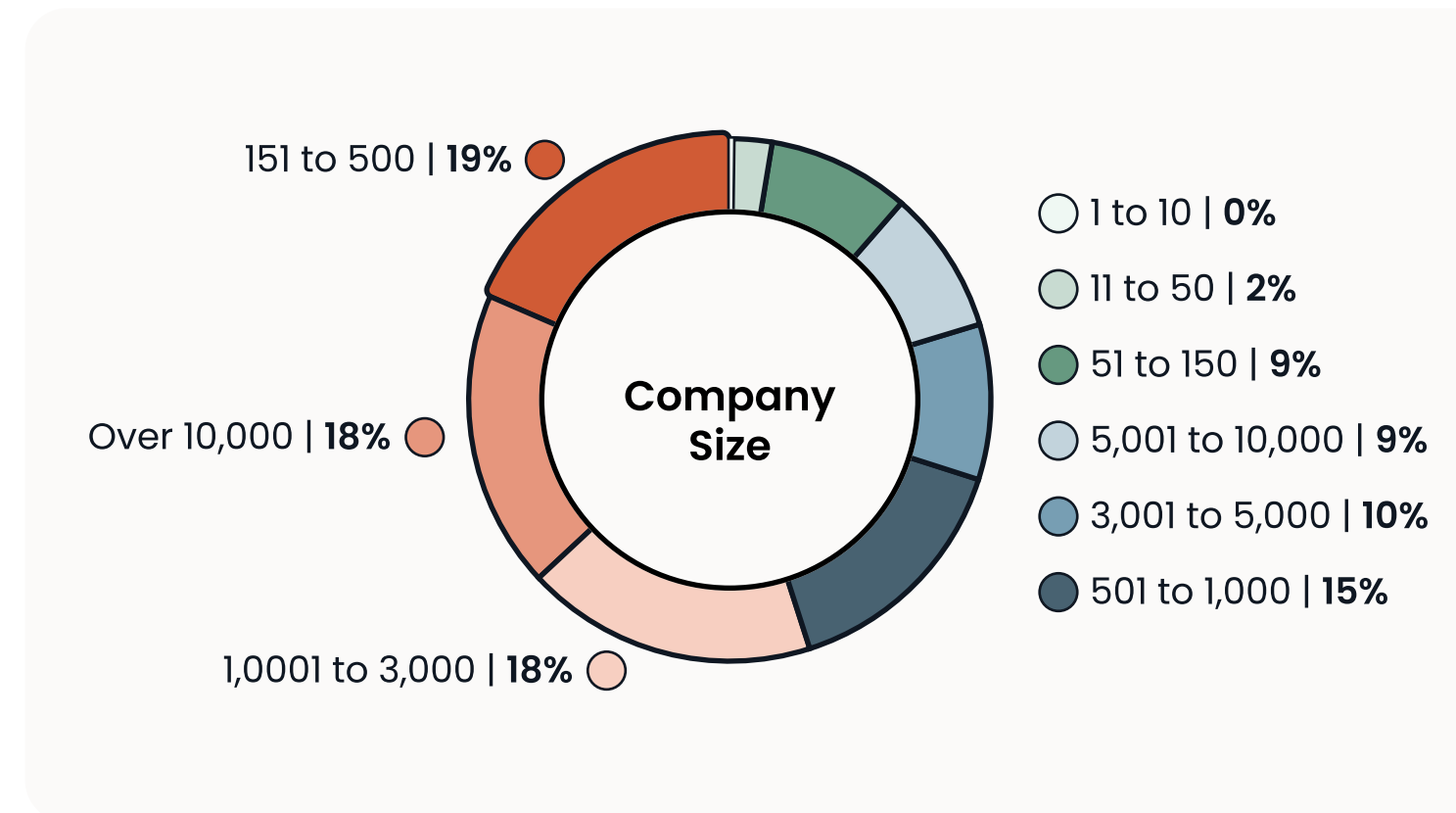
We gathered about 1000 responses* from Sales Engineering professionals all over the world. The following charts illustrate general characteristics of the survey respondents.

* **Note:** Sample sizes vary throughout the report because not all respondents answered all questions.

Geographic Location

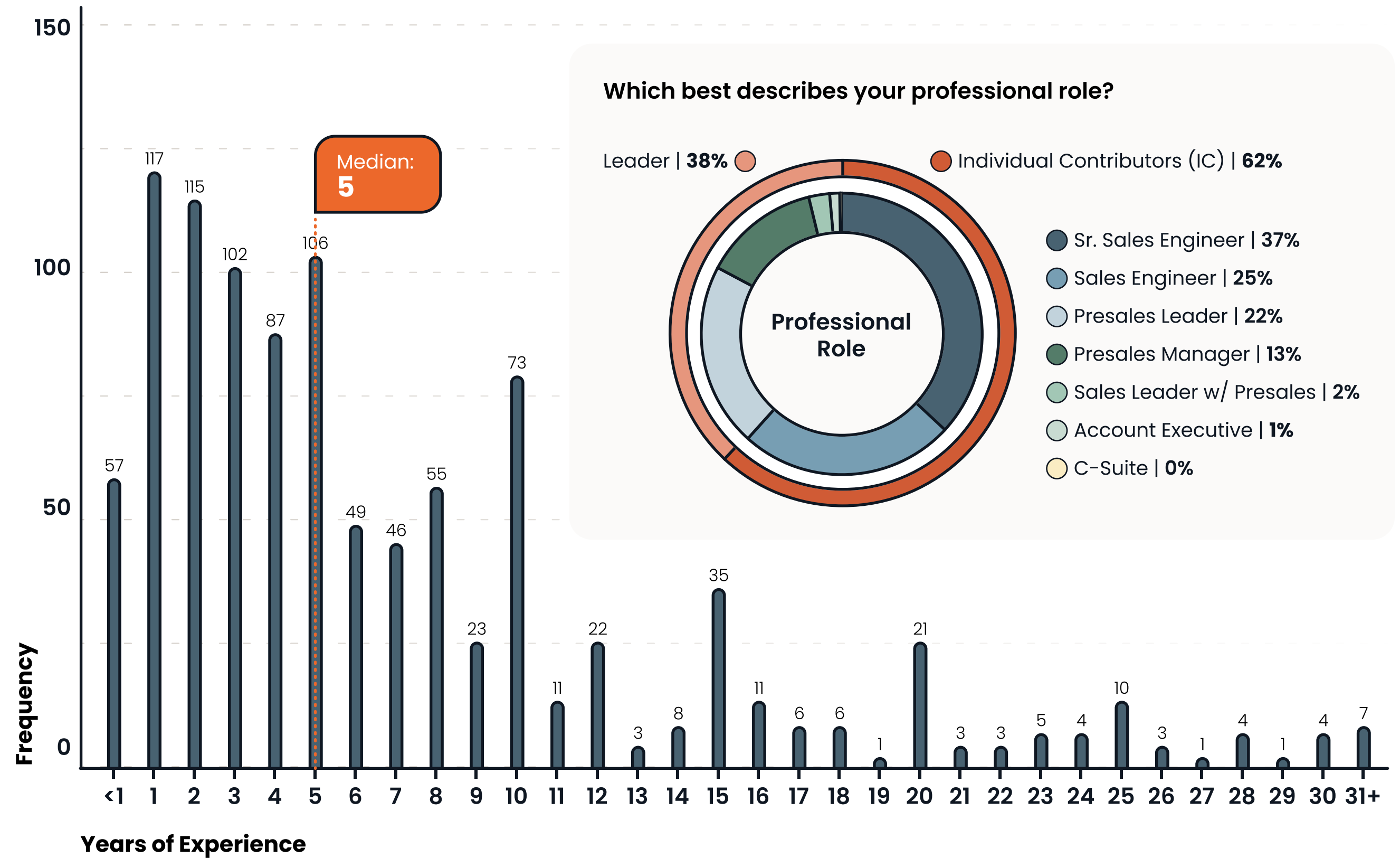


**ABOUT THE SAMPLE:
COMPANY INFORMATION**



**ABOUT THE SAMPLE:
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE**

How many years of experience do you have in your current role?

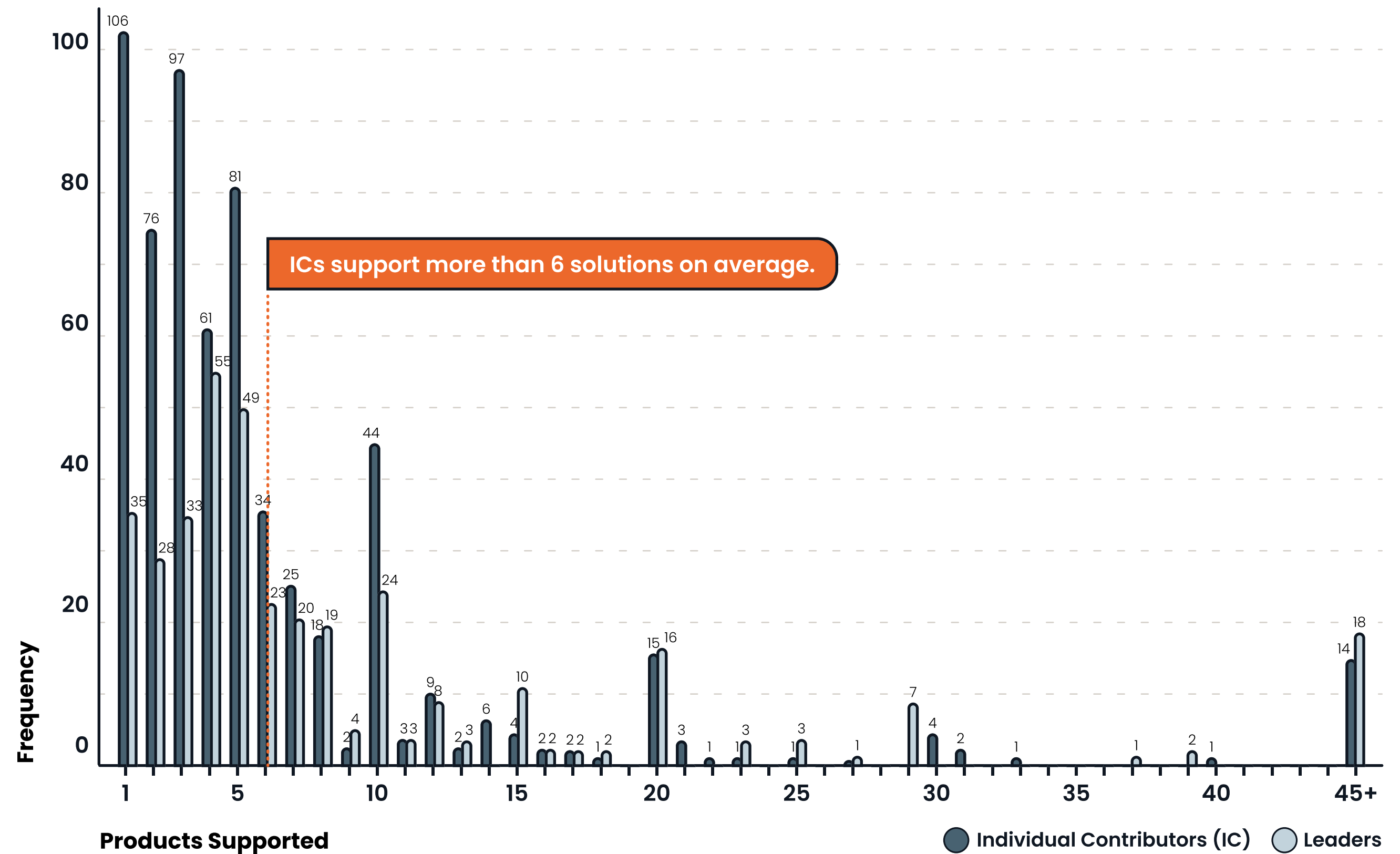


Count: 999 | Median: 5 | Mean: 6.61 | Min: 0.5 | Max: 31

ABOUT THE SAMPLE:
NUMBER OF SOLUTIONS

ICs support 4-5
products/solutions
on average.

How many products/solutions do you (ICs) or your Presales team (Leaders) support?



ICs support more than 6 solutions on average.

Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 4 | Mean: 6.34 | Min: 1 | Max: 46
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 5 | Mean: 9.24 | Min: 1 | Max: 46

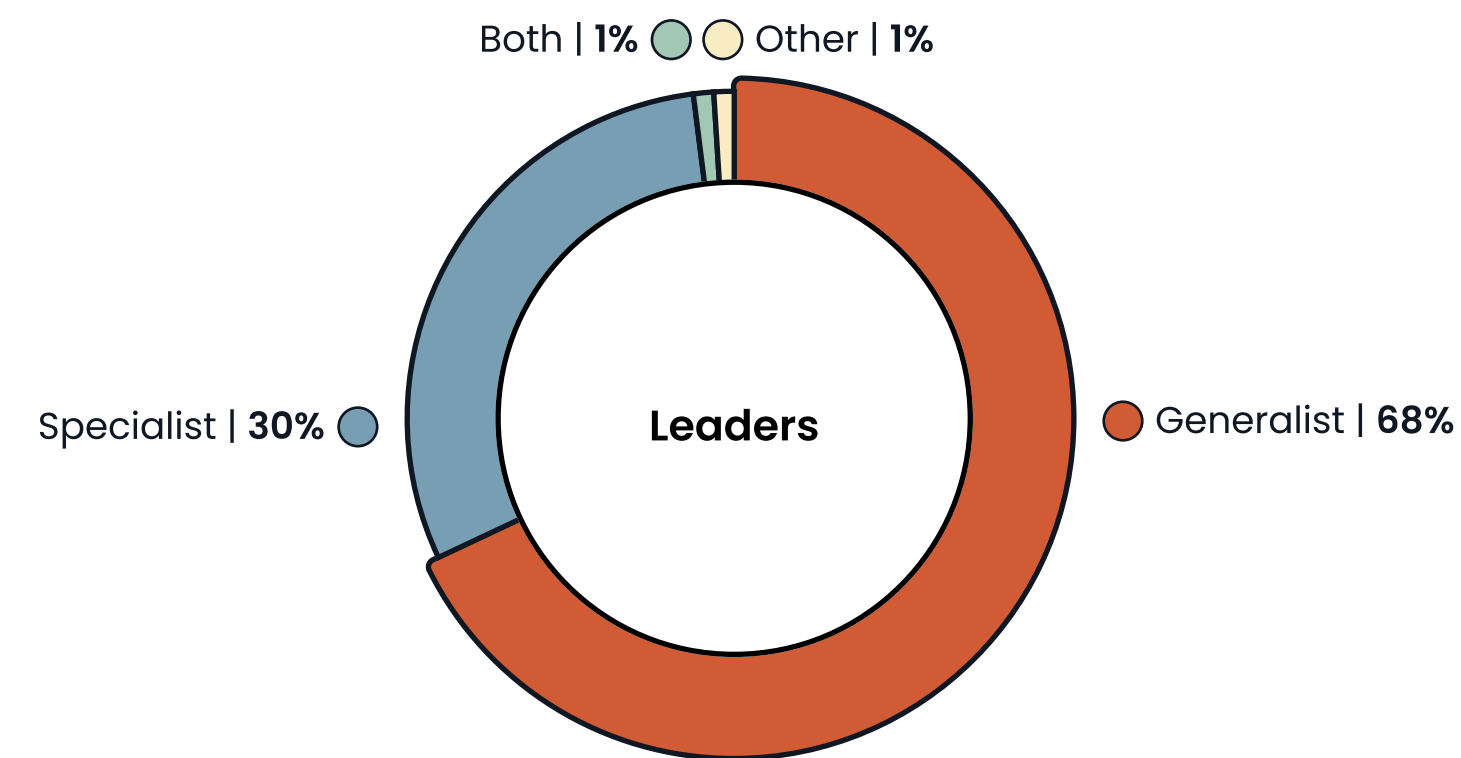
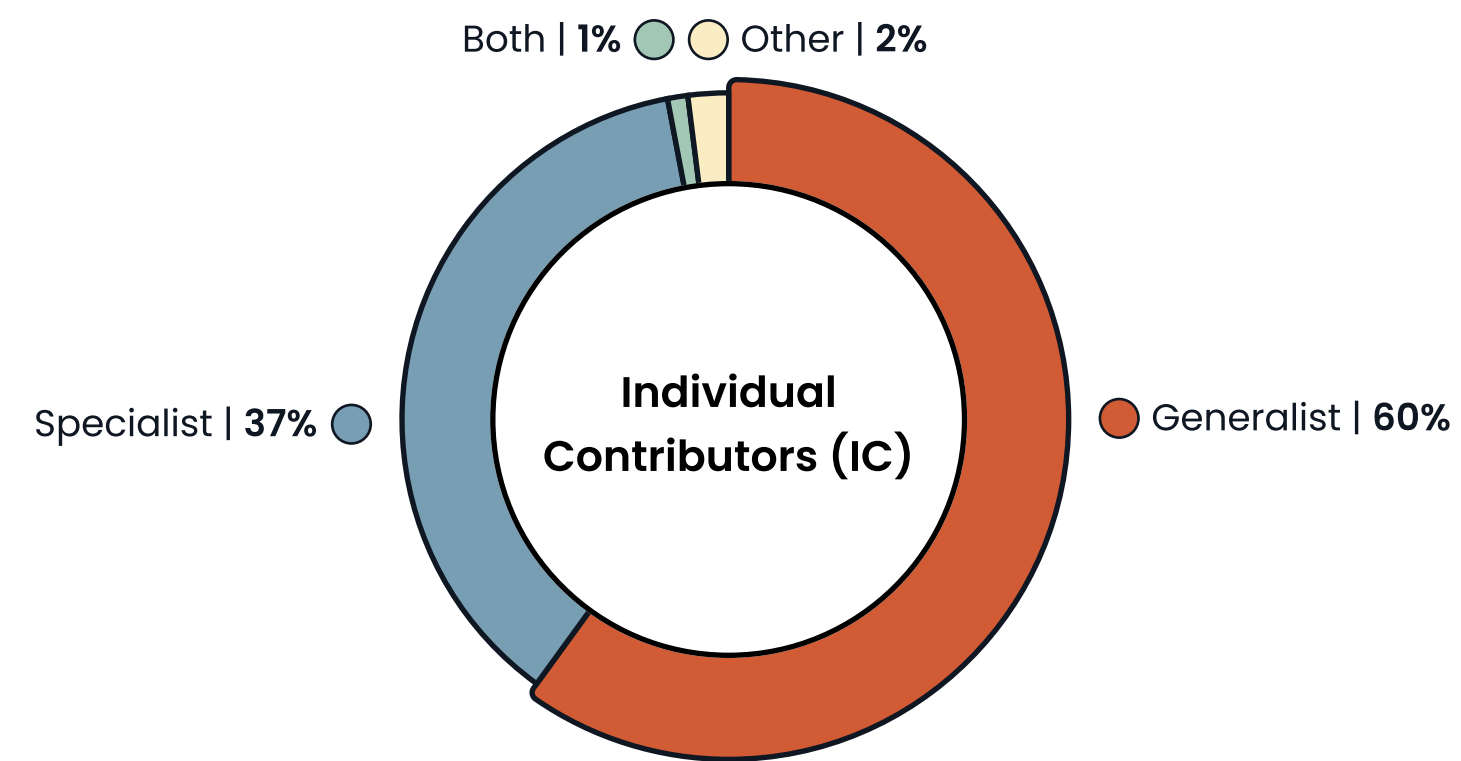
**ABOUT THE SAMPLE:
GENERALIST VS. SPECIALIST**

Leaders and ICs report roughly twice as many generalists as specialists.

37% of ICs are specialists and 60% are generalists.

30% of Leaders are specialists and 68% are generalists.

Would you classify yourself as more of a “generalist” or “specialist”?





Compensation

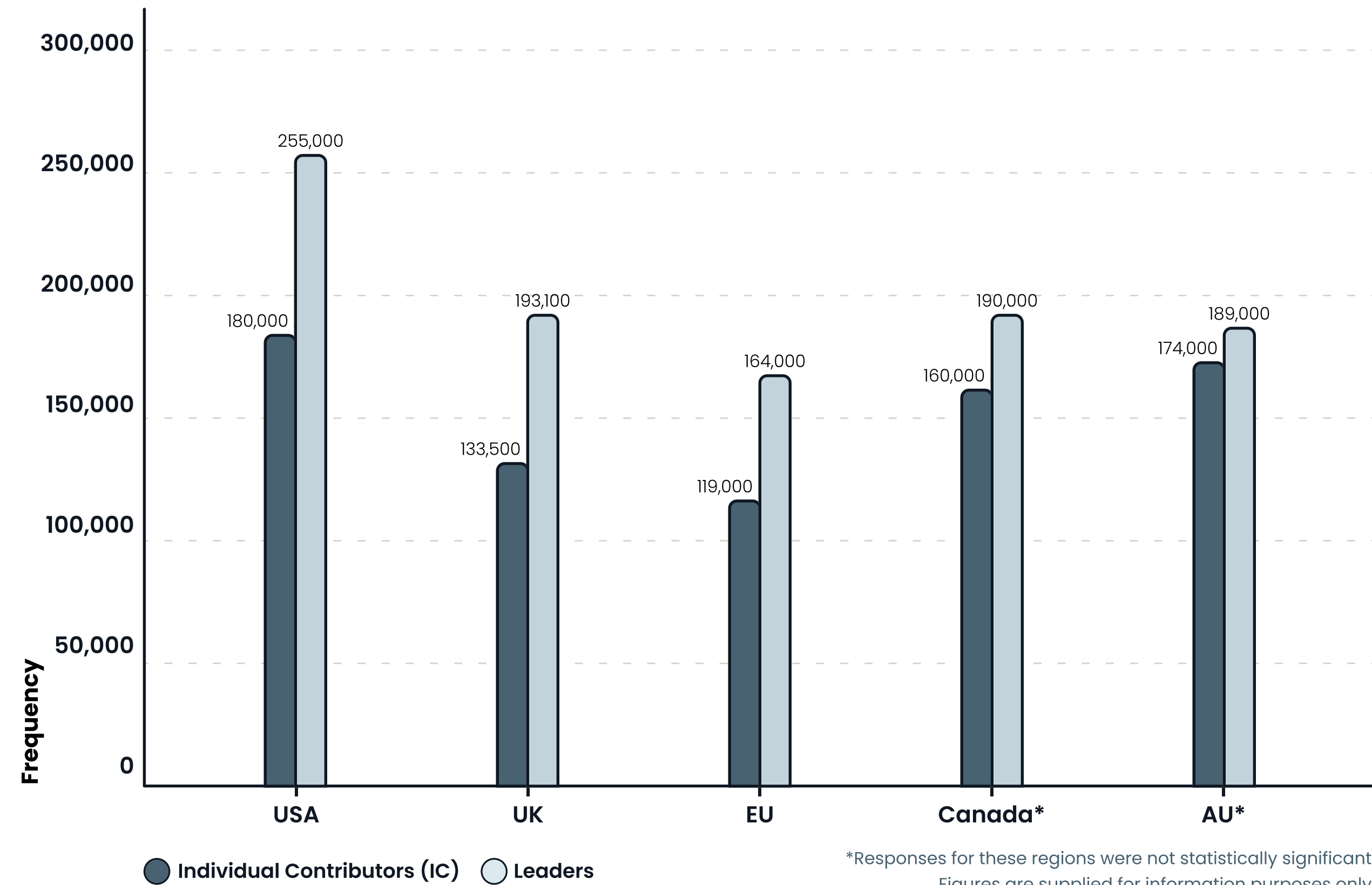
OTE AT A GLANCE

OTE = On-target Earnings, or annual compensation, assuming they hit quota or mid-level target.

On regions and currency: All compensation amounts were reported and are shown in USD regardless of the currency in which the participant is actually paid. This conversion to USD is meant to facilitate more meaningful comparisons between regions.

On small sample sizes: Small samples for especially Canada and Australia make estimates less reliable.

Median On Target Earnings



OTE AT A GLANCE (CONT'D)

OTE = On-target Earnings, or annual compensation, assuming they hit quota or mid-level target.

On regions and currency: All compensation amounts were reported and are shown in USD regardless of the currency in which the participant is actually paid. This conversion to USD is meant to facilitate more meaningful comparisons between regions.

On small sample sizes: Small samples for especially Canada and Australia make estimates less reliable.

Individual Contributors (IC)

	OTE						Stock Options	Quota			
	Median	Mean	Min	Max	Count	Median Exp. in Years		Personal Only	Personal & Team	No Quota	Team Only
USA	180,000	188,222	51,500	416,500	325	3	63%	12%	6%	37%	45%
UK	133,500	136,358	55,000	292,000	80	5	56%	16%	2%	44%	38%
EU	119,000	143,771	53,000	902,000	65	5	52%	9%	8%	32%	51%
Canada	160,000	163,797	56,400	309,485	29	5.5	63%	30%	16%	24%	30%
AU	174,000	175,311	77,977	328,000	19	5	73%	26%	0%	21%	53%

Leaders

	OTE						Stock Options	Quota			
	Median	Mean	Min	Max	Count	Median Exp. in Years		Personal Only	Personal & Team	No Quota	Team Only
USA	255,000	277,481	104,000	623,000	177	5	74%	4%	6%	32%	58%
UK	193,100	226,696	75,000	971,500	51	5	78%	2%	4%	43%	51%
EU	164,000	160,921	77,142	299,000	47	7	54%	8%	9%	35%	48%
Canada	190,000	222,253	105,000	500,000	15	5	73%	0%	7%	27%	66%
AU	189,000	207,037	580	480,000	17	8	76%	12%	11%	18%	59%

OTE BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

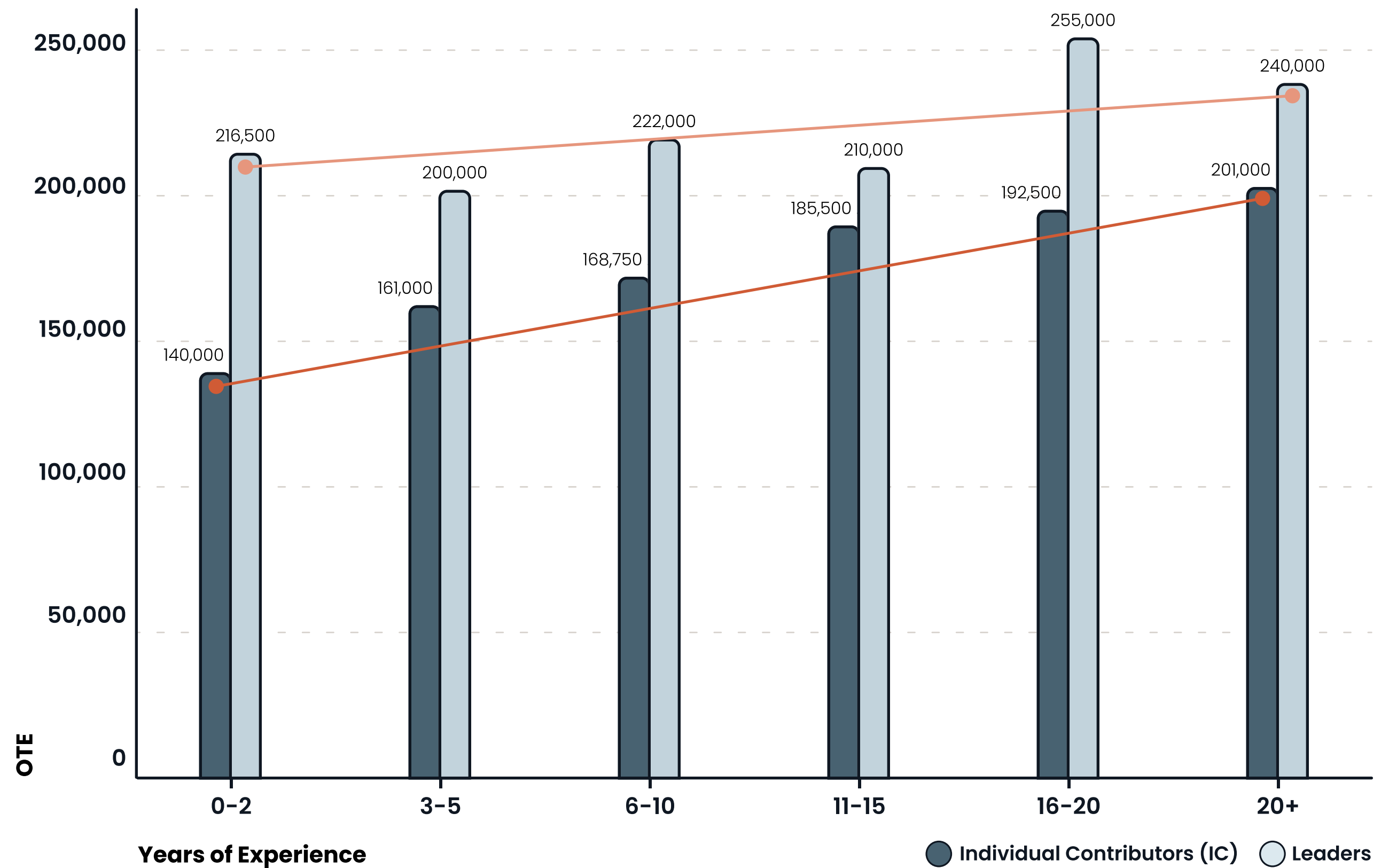
Tenure has a greater impact on IC wages than Leader wages.

It appears ICs get regular raises over the majority of their careers.

Leader wages start strong but do not appear to rise as steadily.

OTE = On-target Earnings, or annual compensation, assuming they hit quota or mid-level target.

Median On Target Earnings by Years of Experience



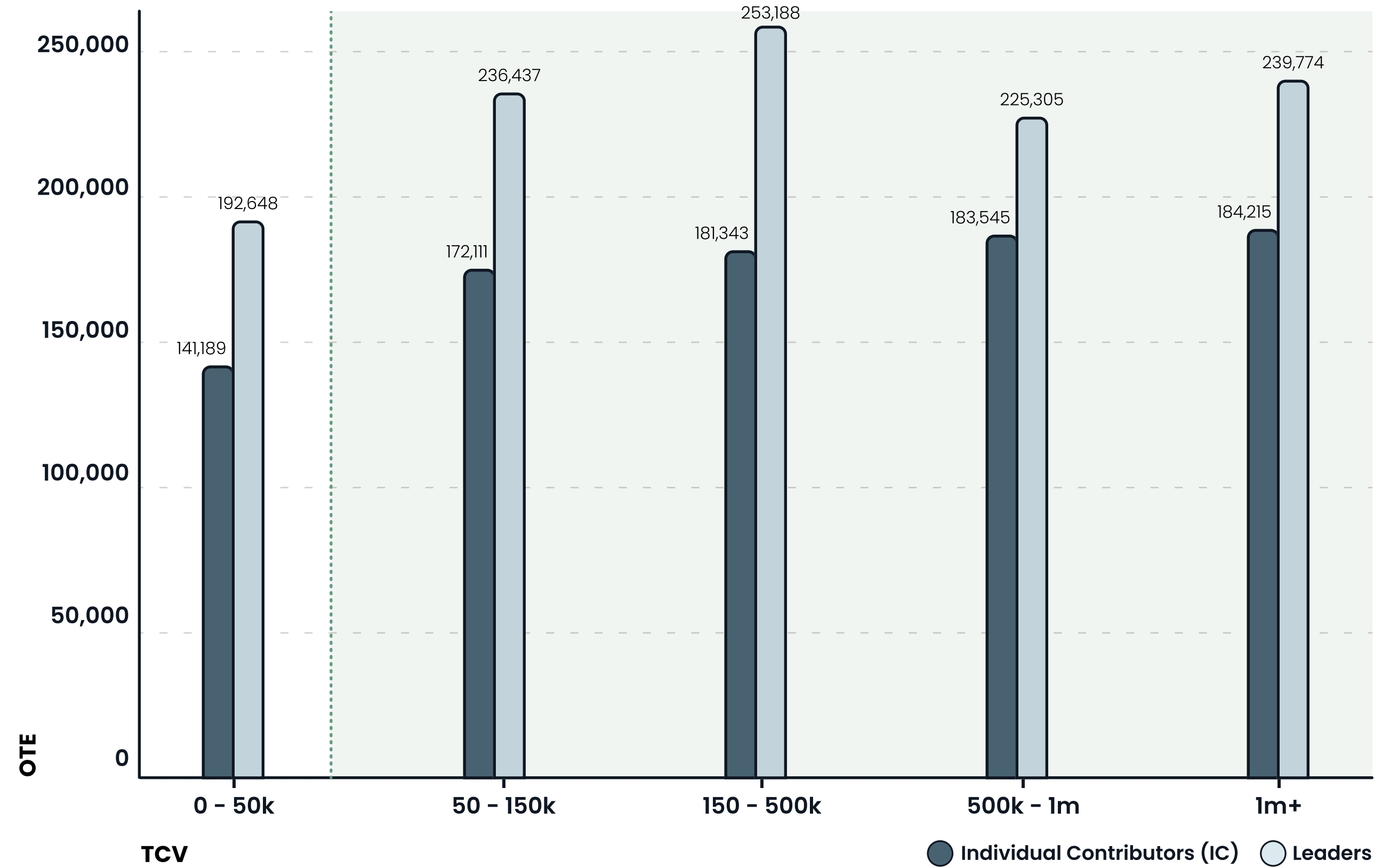
OTE BY TOTAL CONTRACT VALUE (TCV)

Bigger deals, higher earnings.

For both ICs and Leaders, bigger deals drive higher earnings especially when Contract Value is over \$50K.

TCV = Total Contract Value

Median On Target Earnings by Typical Total Contract Value

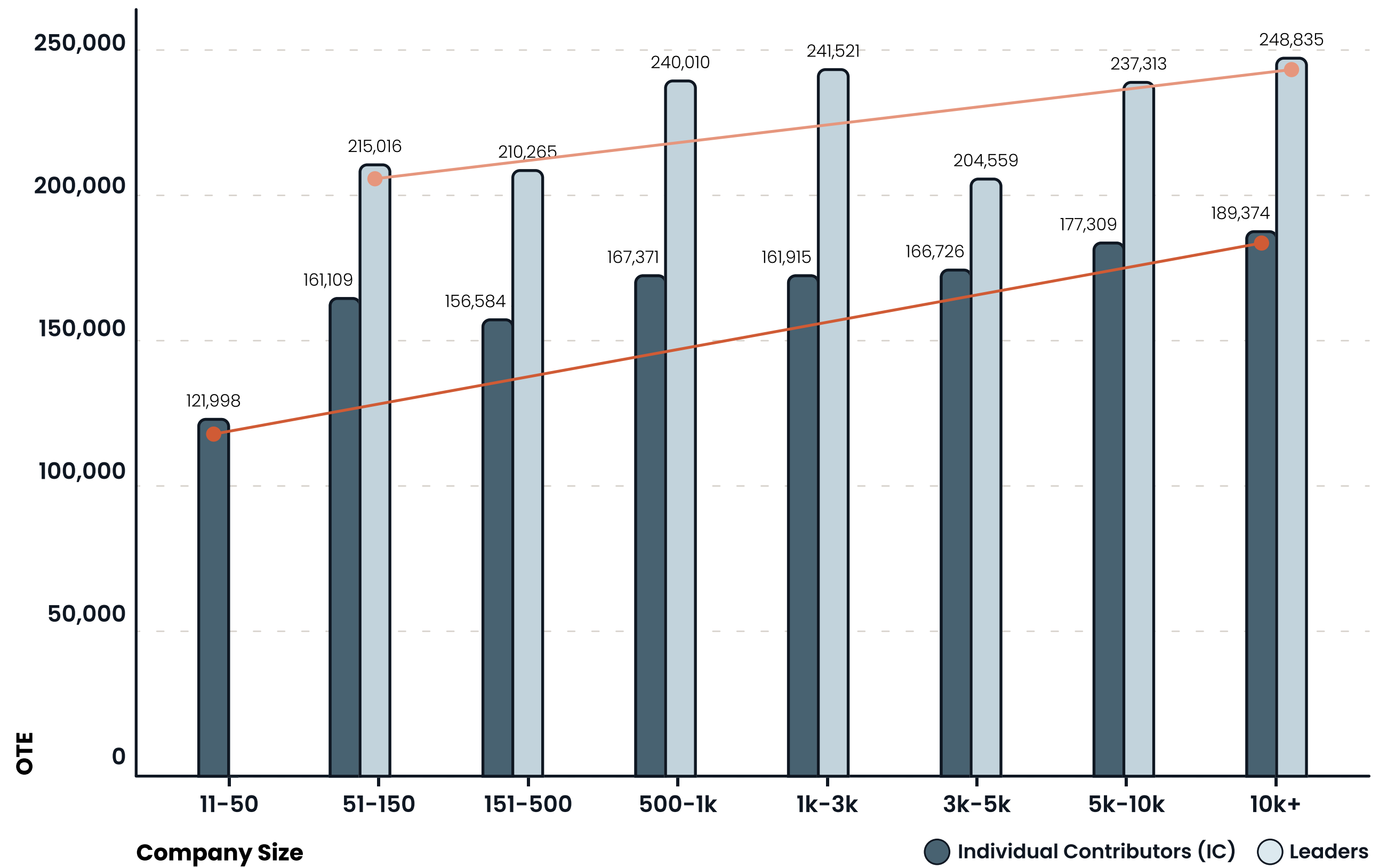


OTE BY COMPANY SIZE

Larger firms pay more.

All else equal, larger corporations offer ICs and Leaders higher wages.

Average On Target Earnings by Company Size

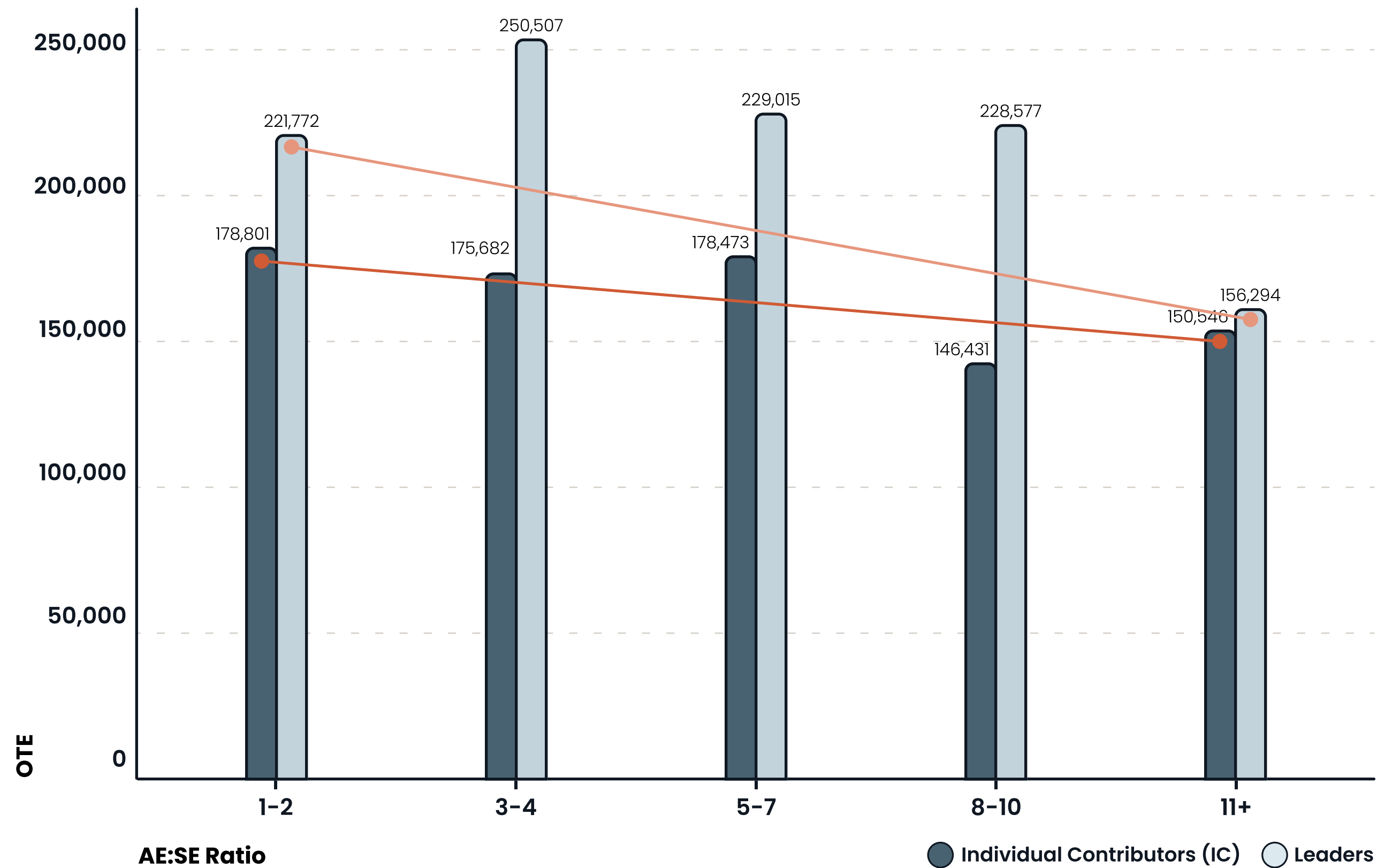


OTE BY AE:SE RATIO

Higher earners report a lower AE:SE ratio.

As SEs become more experienced, they are moved up market to partner with Account Executives (AEs) and cover more strategic enterprise accounts with larger deal sizes.

Average On Target Earnings by AE:SE Ratio



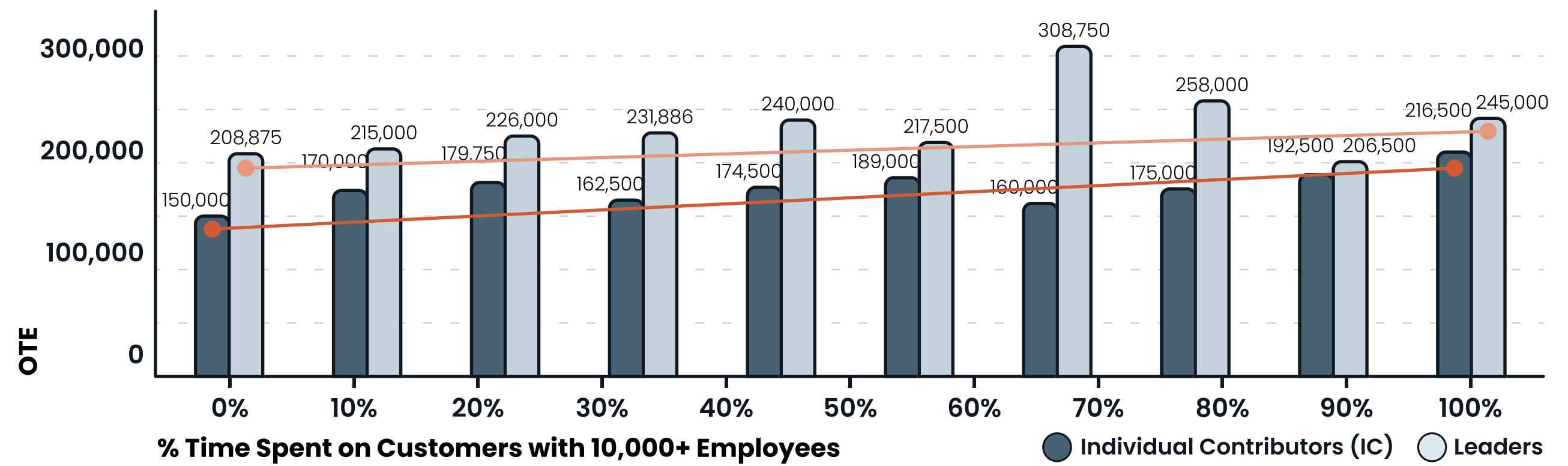
OTE BY CUSTOMER SIZE

Customer size predicts OTE for ICs, but Leaders selling into smaller companies do not sacrifice OTE.

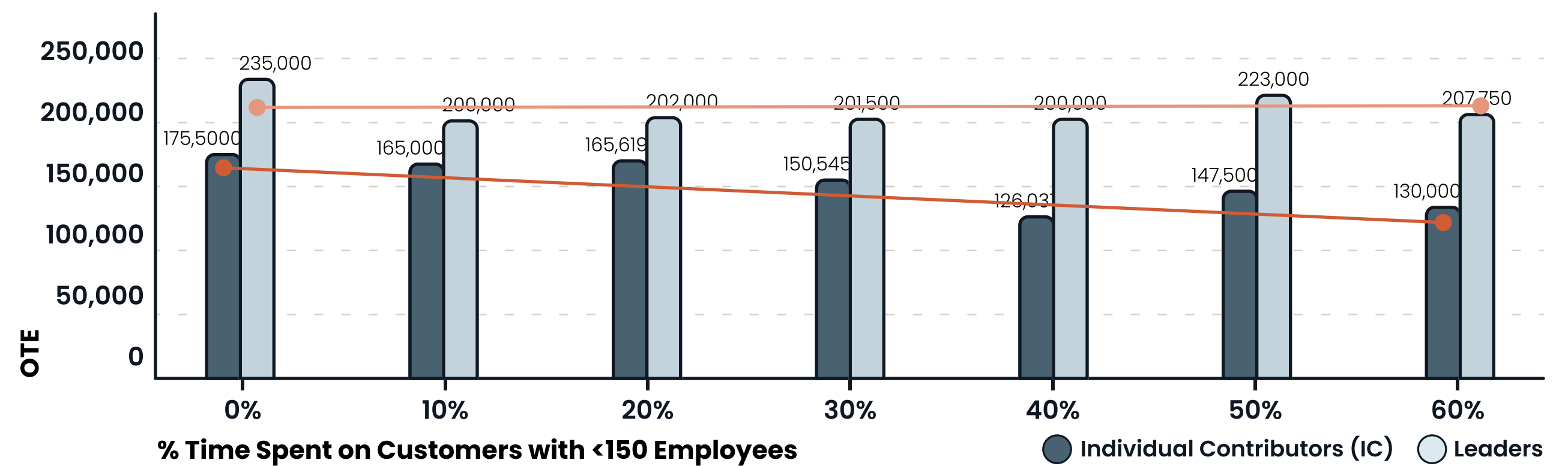
ICs and Leaders who make the most money are spending more time working with larger customers.

However, salaries for Leaders who support smaller customers hold steady, statistically speaking.

Median OTE by Time on Customers with over 10,000 Employees



Median OTE by Time on Customers with under 150 Employees



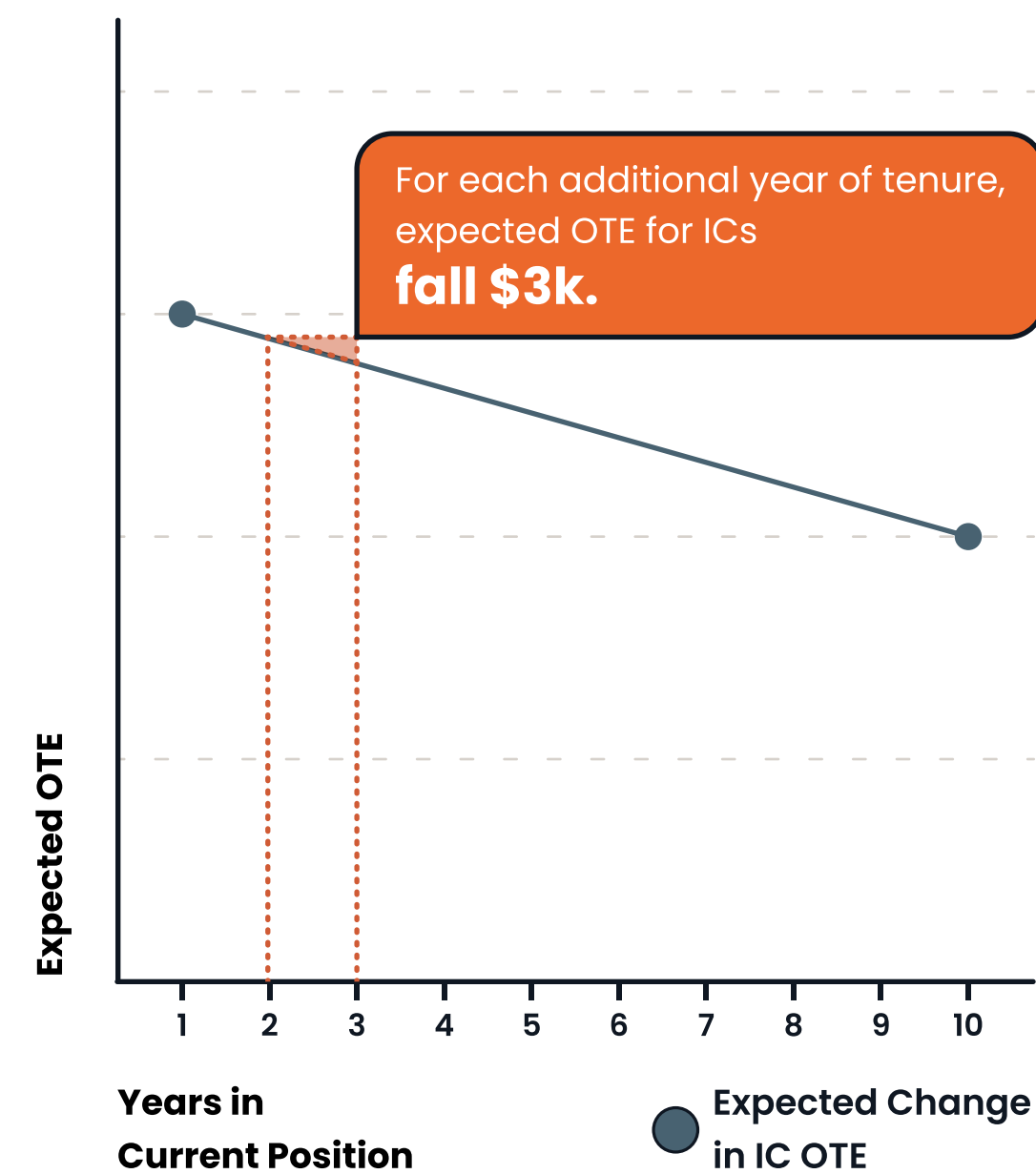
OTE BY TIME IN CURRENT POSITION

Recently hired ICs report higher OTE than their tenured counterparts, while the opposite is true of Leaders.

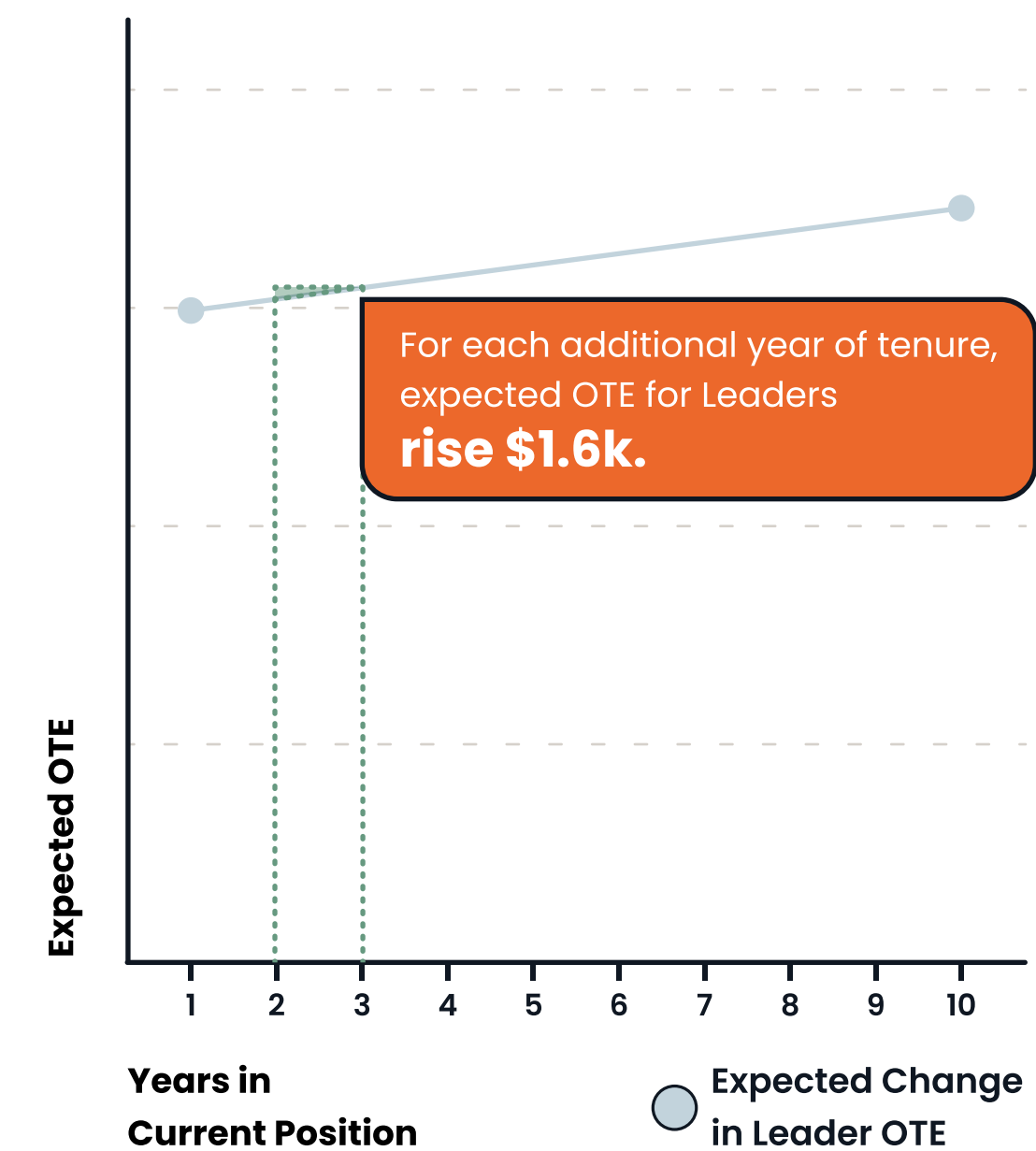
New SEs joining the firm are negotiating higher salaries upfront and often make more than more tenured SEs on day one. On average, all else equal, we expect new SEs at a firm to make \$3k more per year of tenure than existing SEs.

Leaders tend to steadily increase their pay with tenure. For each year of tenure, Leaders can expect to make \$1.6k more annually.

Expected Change in On Target Earning (OTE) for ICs by Time in Current Position



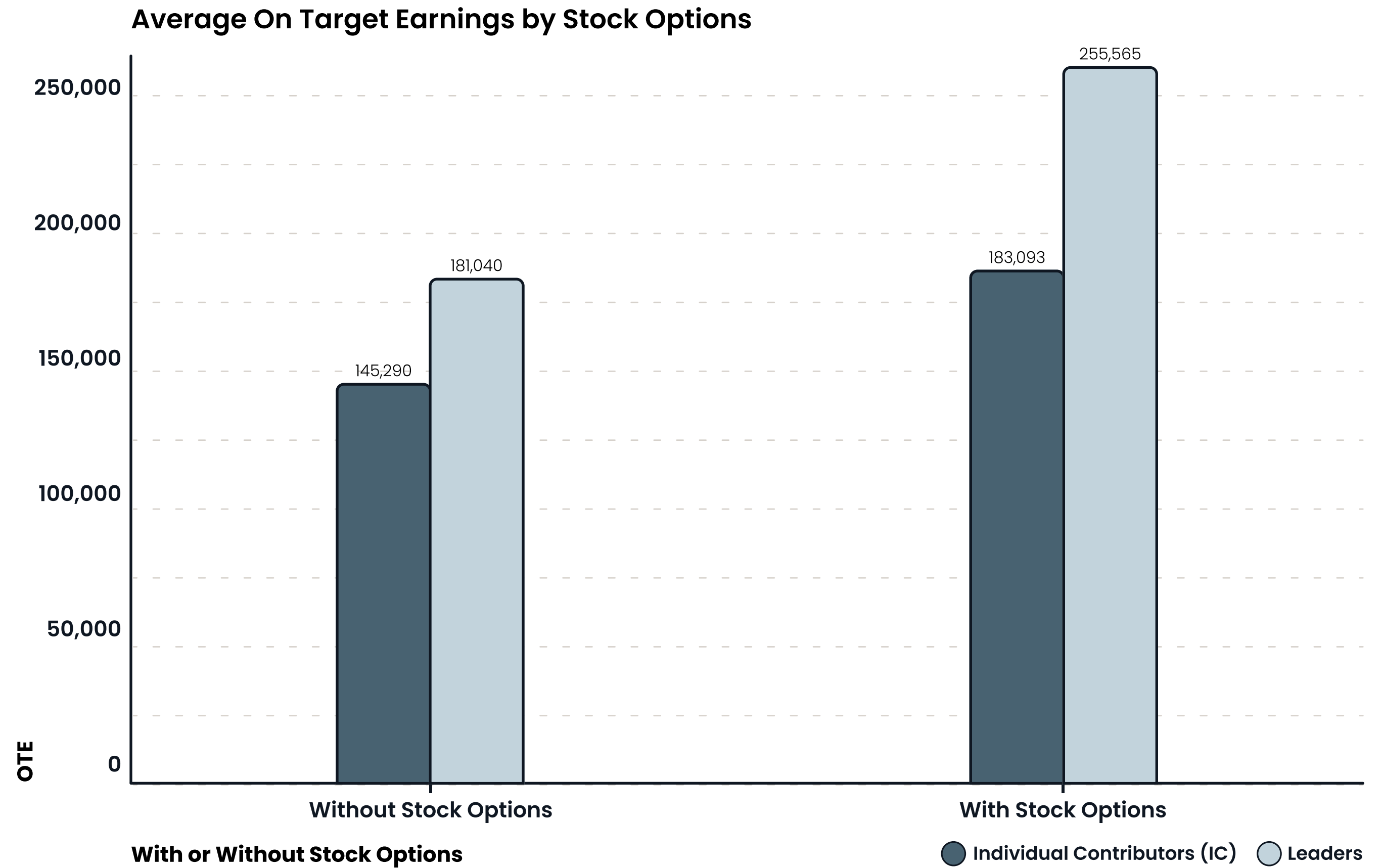
Expected Change in OTE for Leaders by Time in Current Position



OTE BY STOCK OPTIONS

Stock options are a growing compensation strategy and also predict higher OTE.

Increasingly, Presales professionals do not have to choose between stock options and higher OTE. Respondents who have stock options report 26% more OTE, while Leaders with stock options earn 46% more than those without stock options.



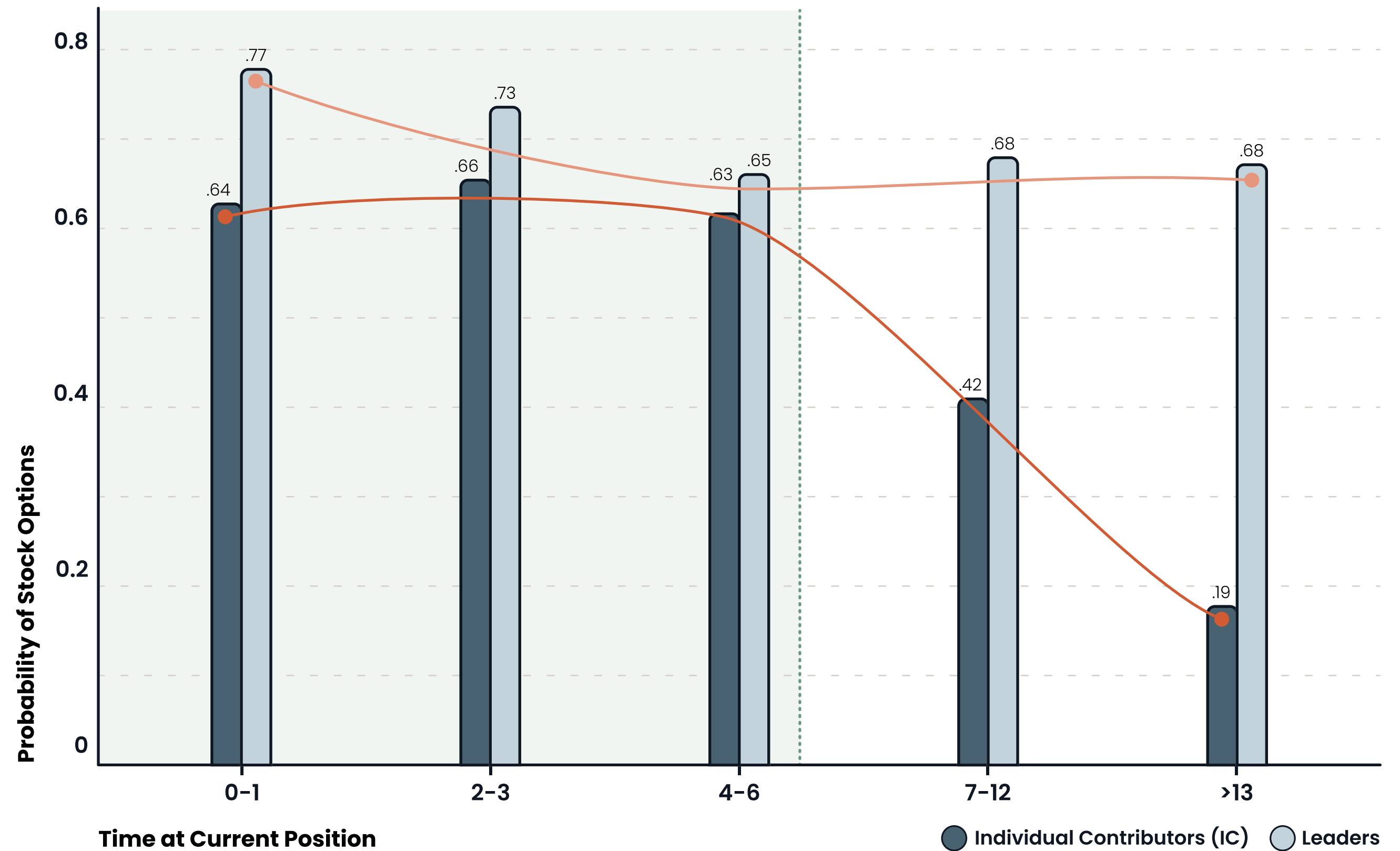
OTE BY STOCK OPTIONS (CONT'D)

Stock options are a newer perk for ICs in the last 4-6 years.

Stock options have always been a compensation tool for Leaders, but there has been an uptick in recent years. 77% of Leaders who got a job less than a year ago have stock options, up from an average of 67% for more seasoned (>4 years) Leaders.

Approximately 64% of ICs now have stock options. This is up nearly 50% from ICs starting in their current role 7+ years ago.

Probability of Stock Options by Time at Current Position



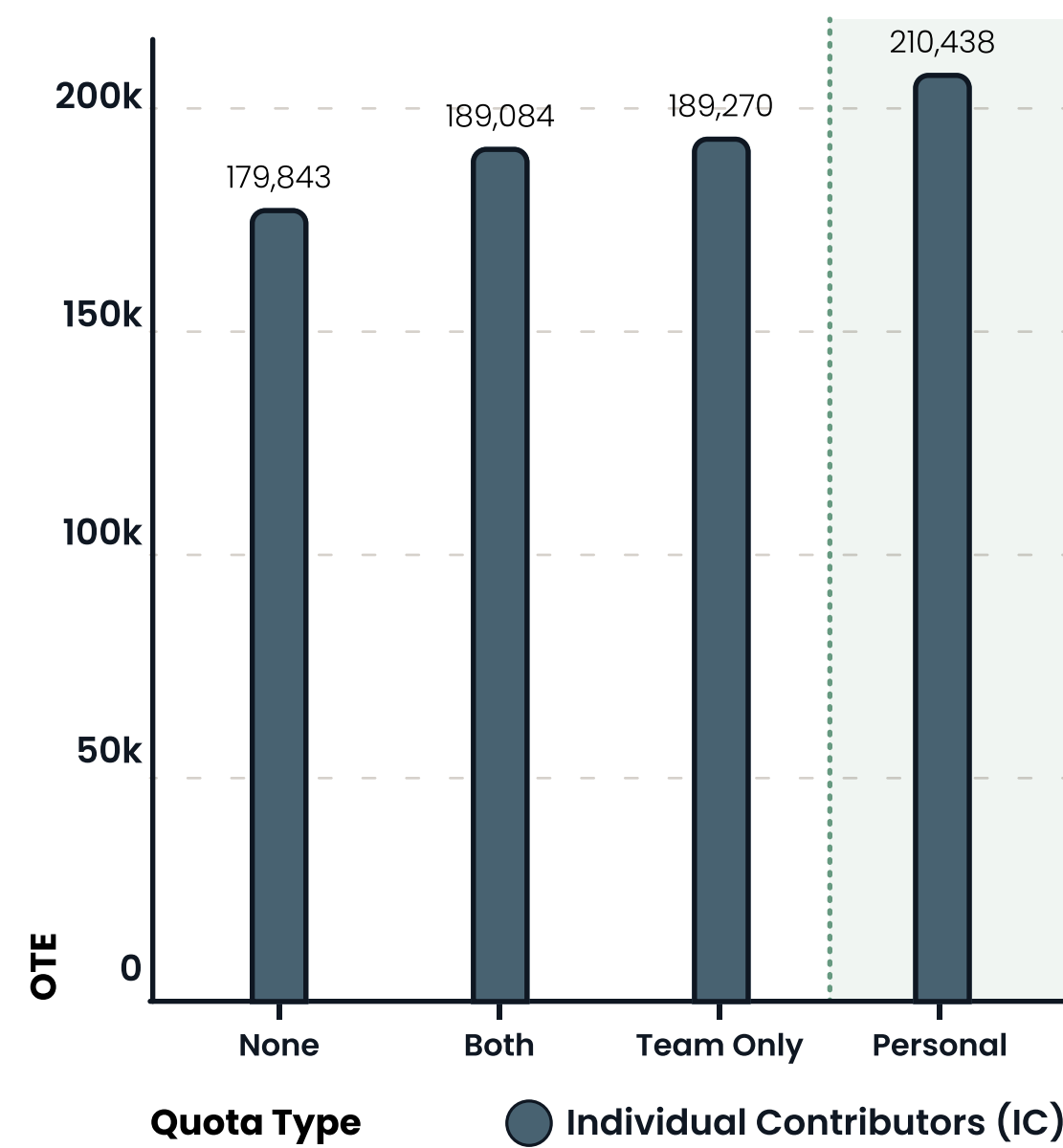
OTE BY QUOTA

Personal quotas are a major predictor of higher OTE (& base salary) for ICs.

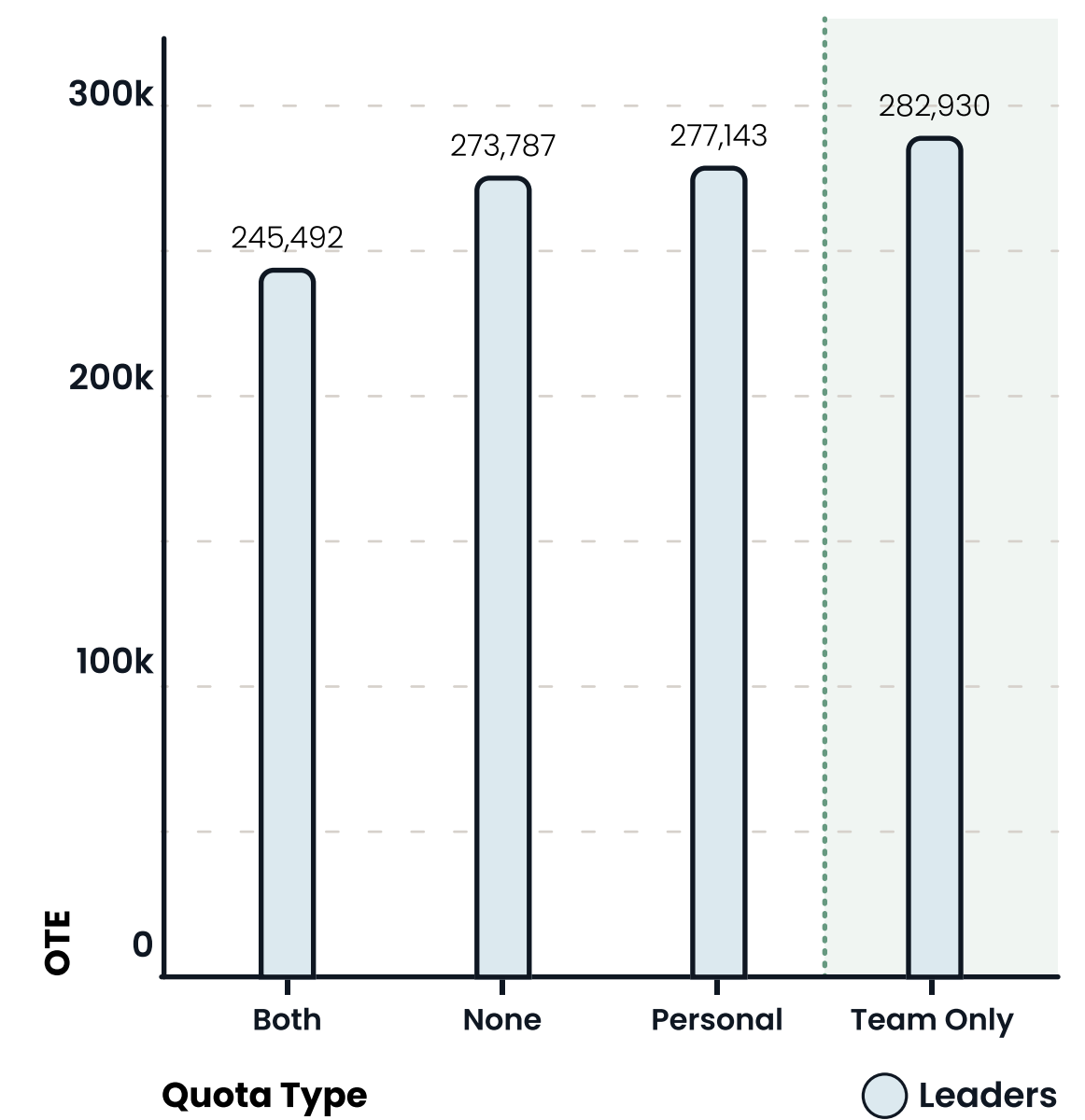
In the US, a quota appears to be a carrot and not a stick. Carrying a personal quota predicts higher salary and higher OTE for ICs. **An IC with a personal quota is expected to make about \$30k more than someone with no quota.** In fact, on average, an IC carrying any type of quota has higher earnings than an IC with no quota.

In our sample, Leaders with a team quota reported the highest average earnings.

Average OTE by Quota Type (US only)

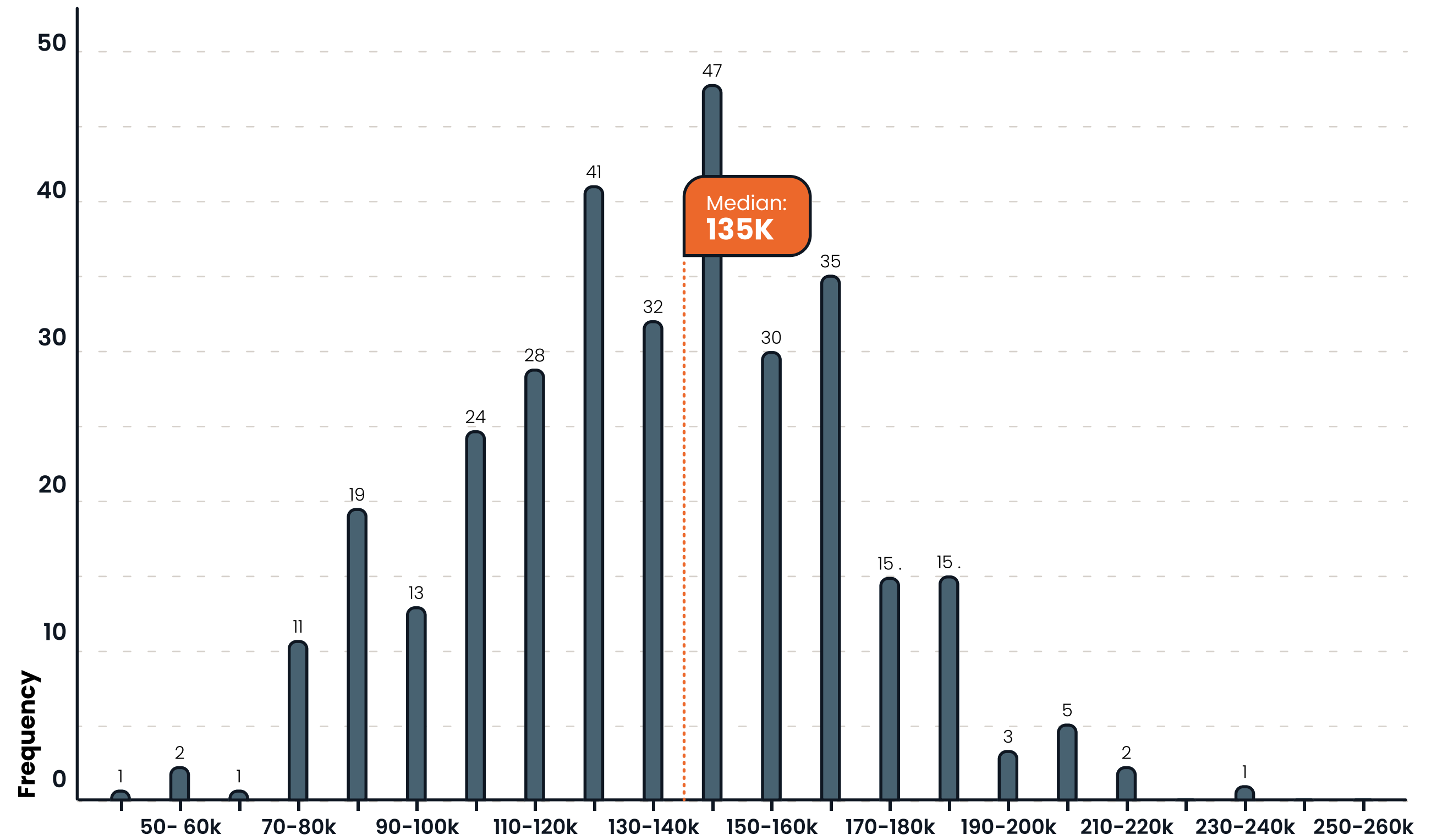


Average OTE by Quota Type (US only)



 **USA**
**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR
BASE SALARY**

What is your annual base salary in USD(\$)?



IC Salary - USA

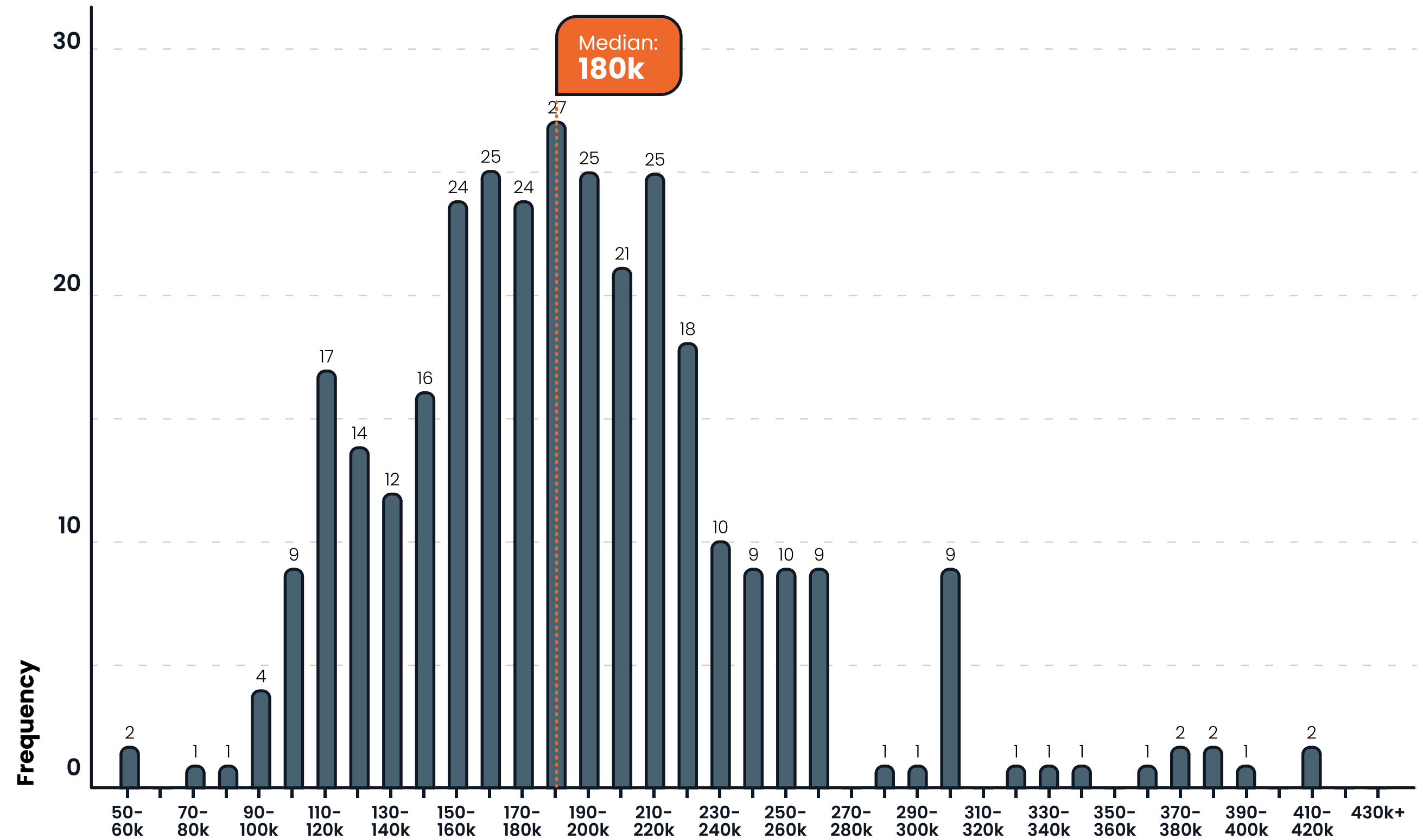
● Individual Contributors (IC)

Count: 325 | Median: 135,000 | Mean: 133,696 | Min: 49,500 | Max: 240,000



INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR OTE

What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?



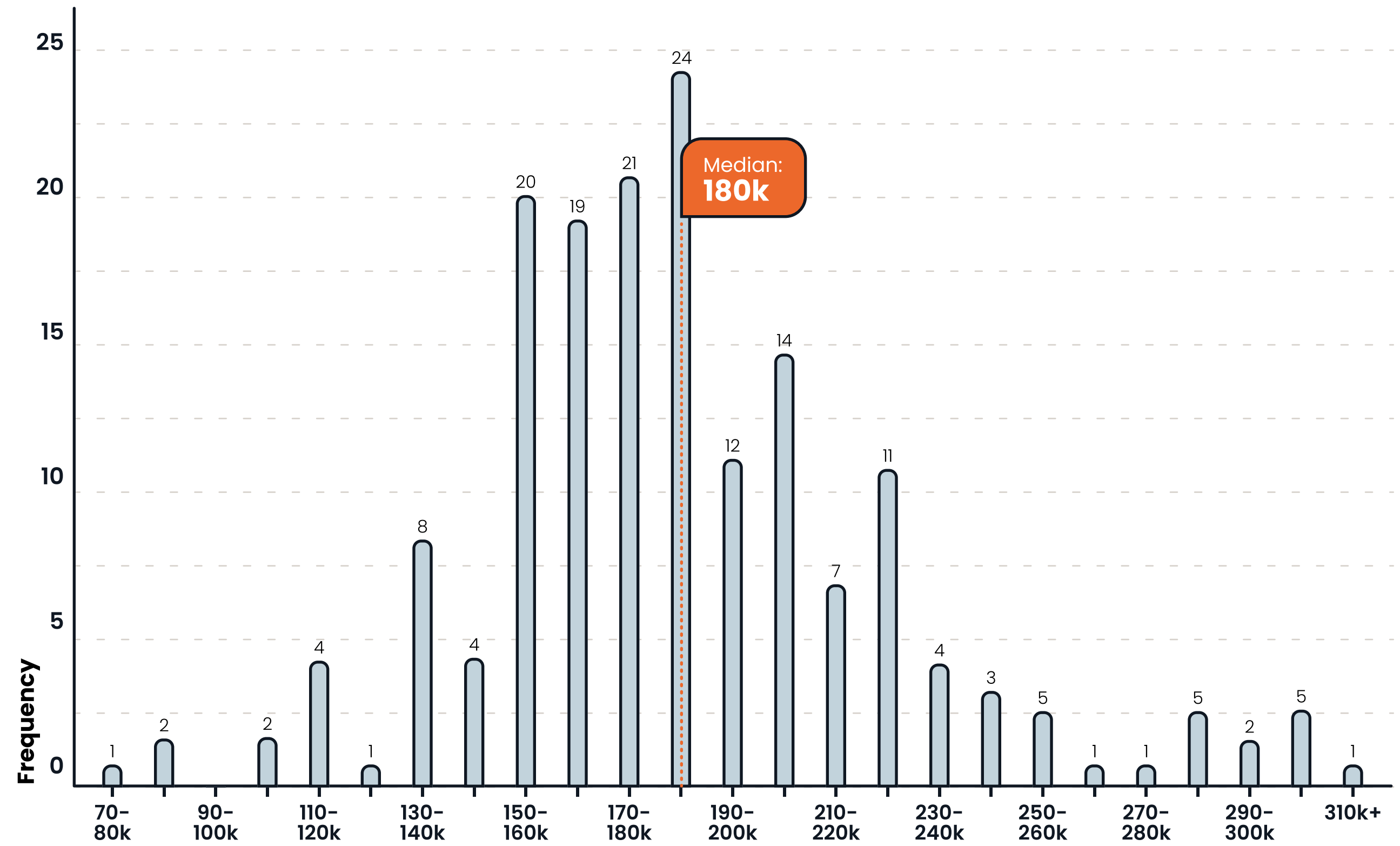
IC Salary + At Risk - USA

● Individual Contributors (IC)

Count: 325 | Median: 180,000 | Mean: 188,223 | Min: 51,500 | Max: 416,500

 **USA**
LEADER BASE SALARY

What is your annual base salary in USD(\$)?



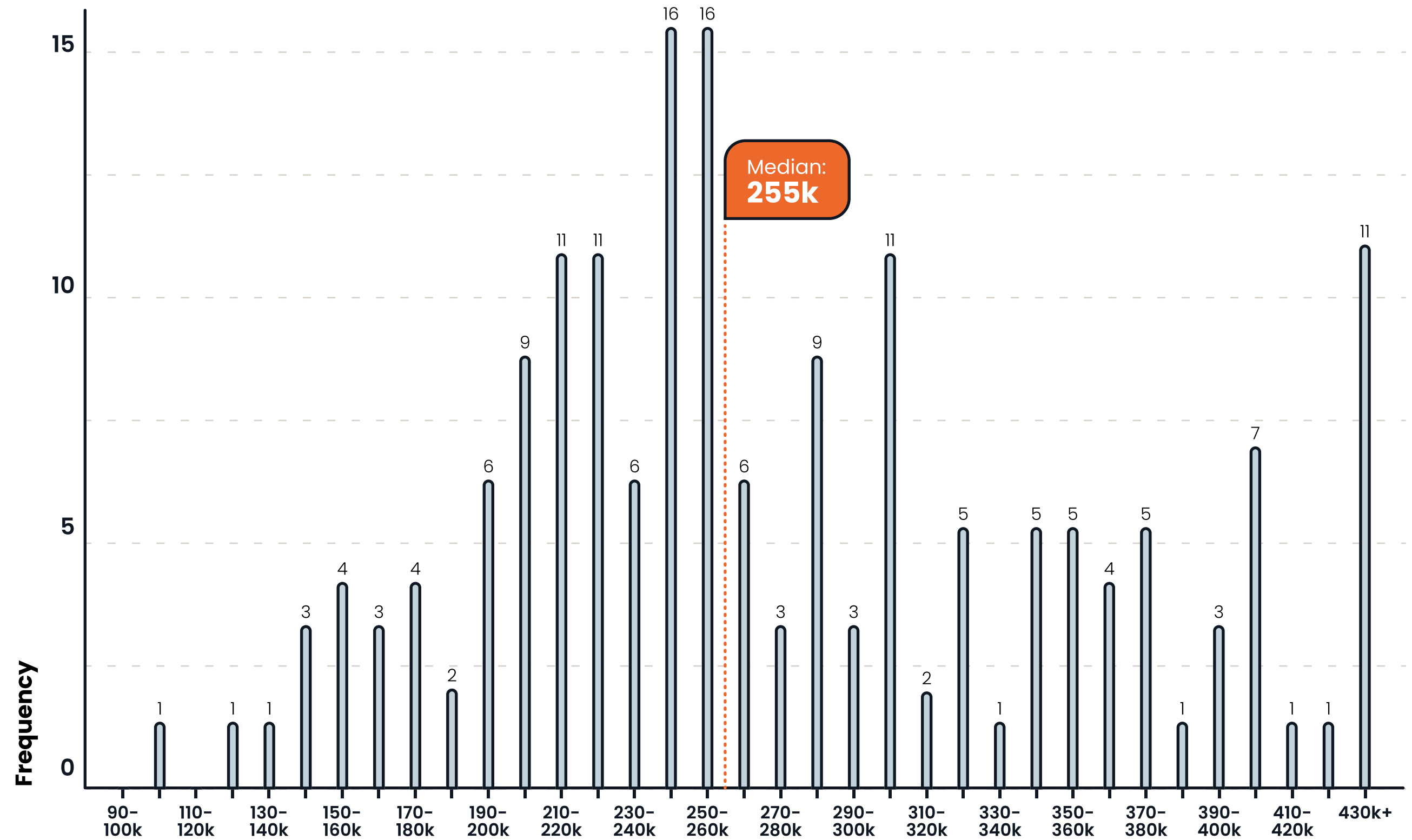
Leader Salary - USA

 Leaders

Count: 177 | Median: 180,000 | Mean: 187,611.6 | Min: 70,000 | Max: 370,000

 **USA**
LEADER OTE

What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?

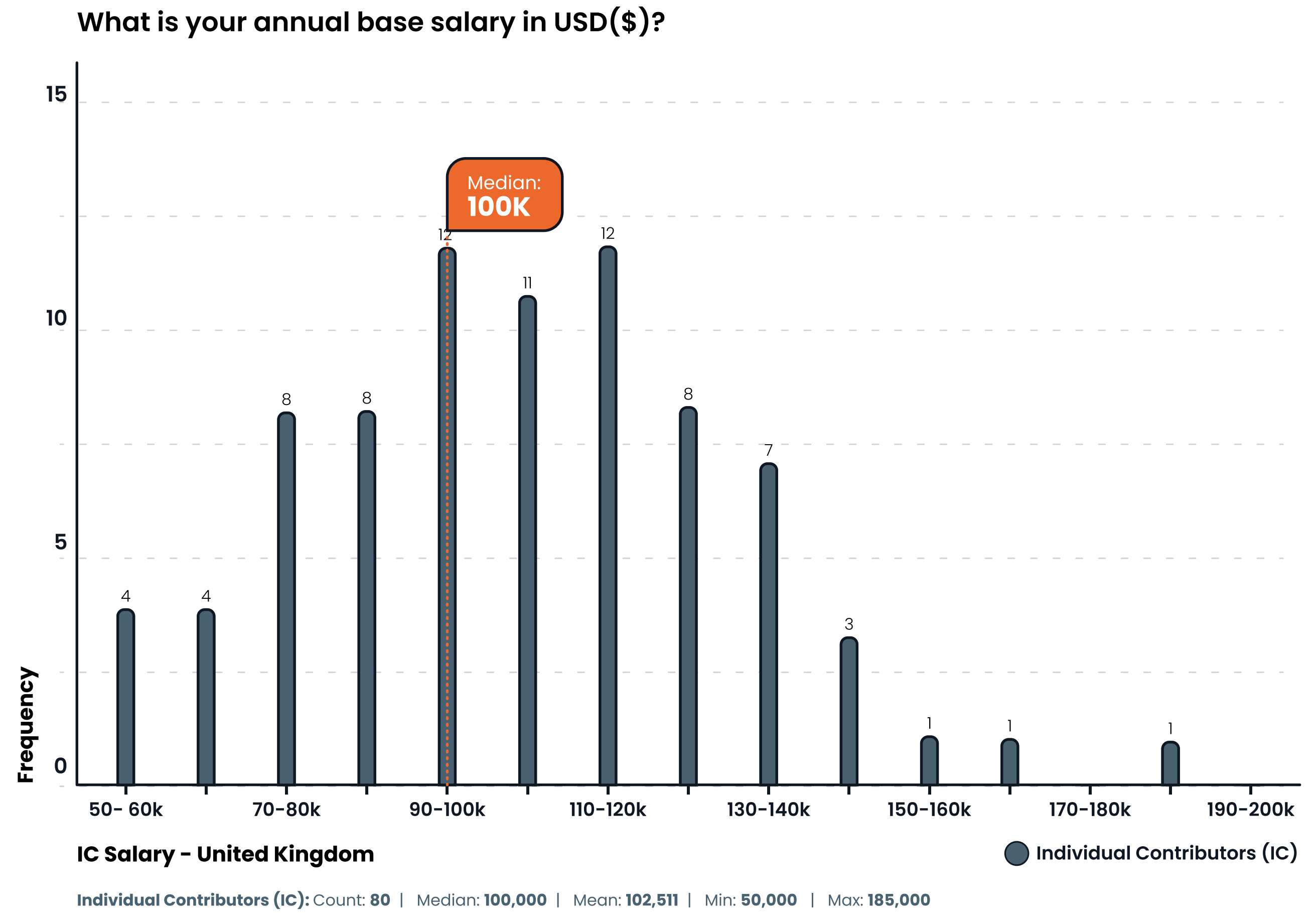


Leader Salary + At Risk - USA

 Leaders

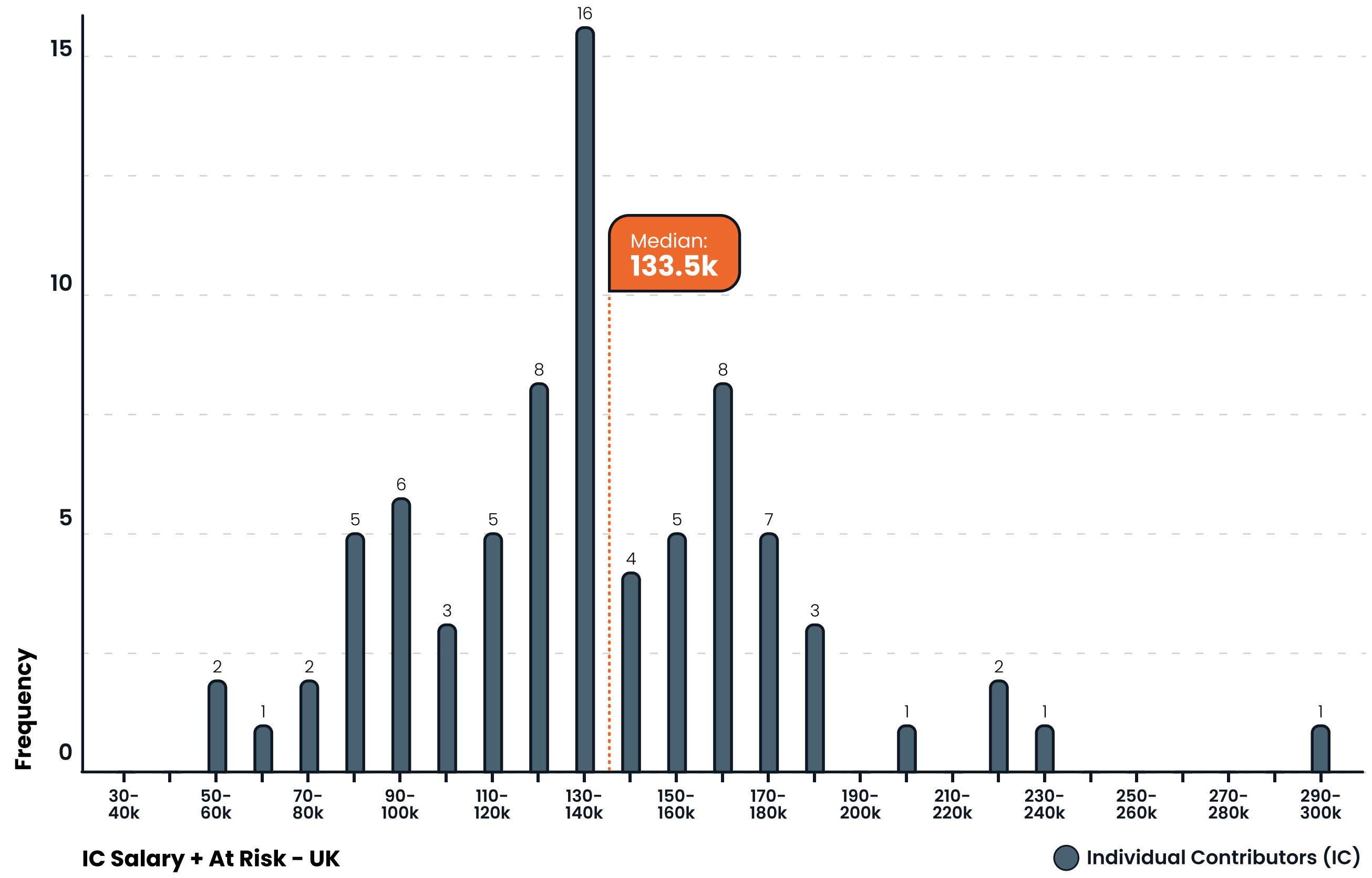
Leaders: Count: 177 | Median: 255,000 | Mean: 277,481 | Min: 104,000 | Max: 623,000

 **UK**
**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR
BASE SALARY**



 **UK**
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR OTE

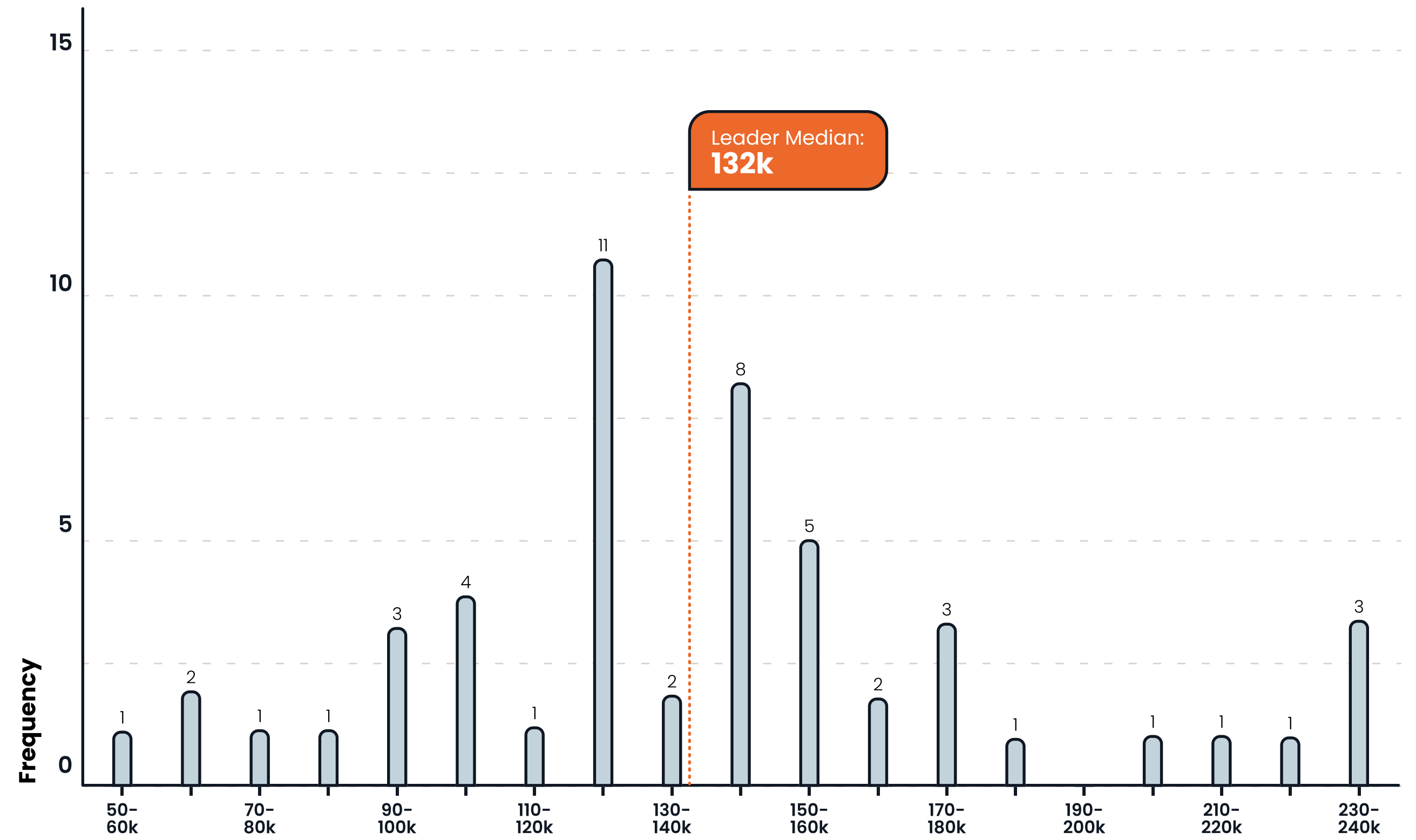
What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?



Count: 80 | Median: 133,500 | Mean: 136,358 | Min: 55,000 | Max: 292,000

 **UK**
LEADER BASE SALARY

What is your annual base salary in USD(\$)?



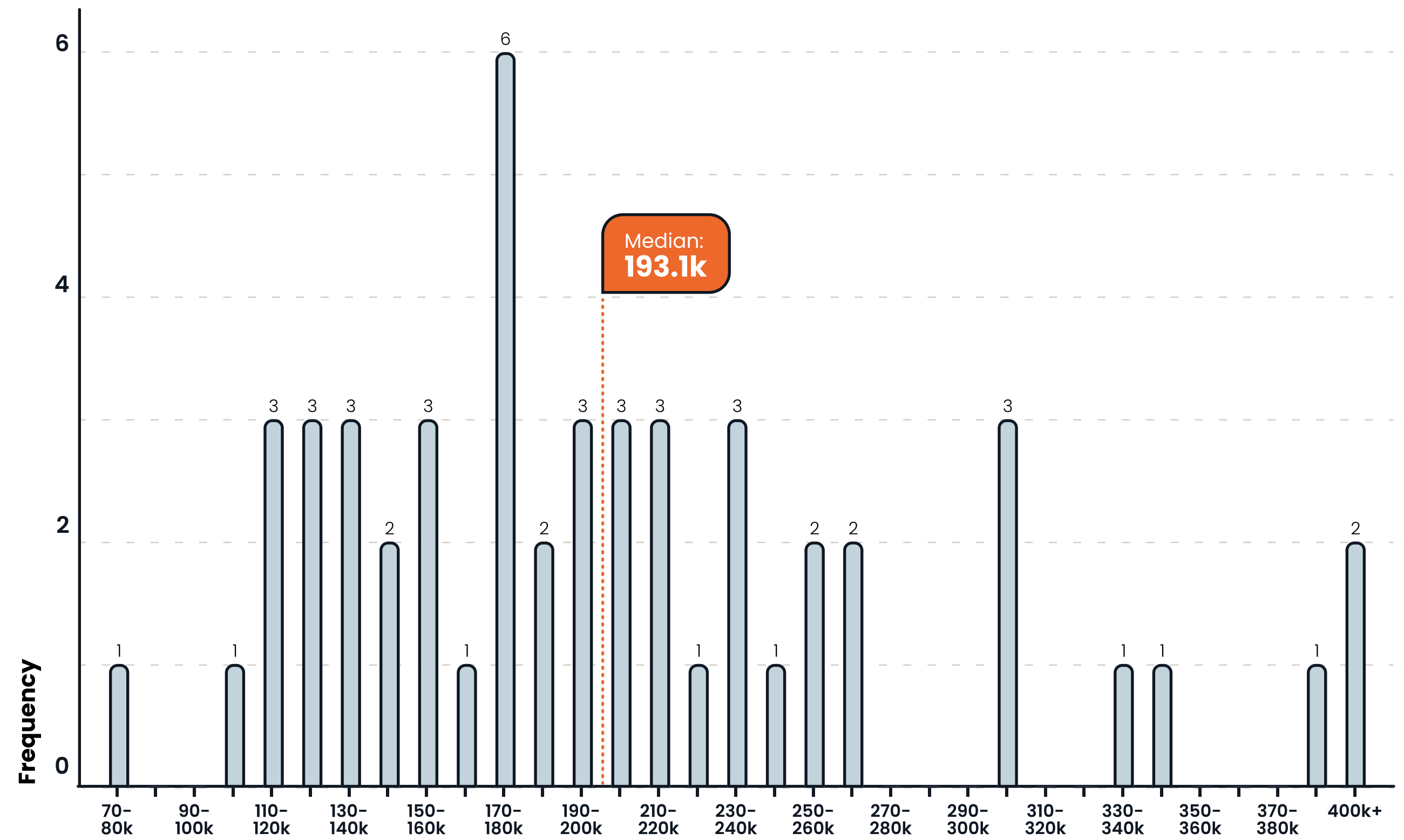
Leader Salary - United Kingdom

 Leaders

Leaders: Count: 51 | Median: 132,000 | Mean: 165,452 | Min: 55,000 | Max: 940,000

 **UK**
LEADER OTE

What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?

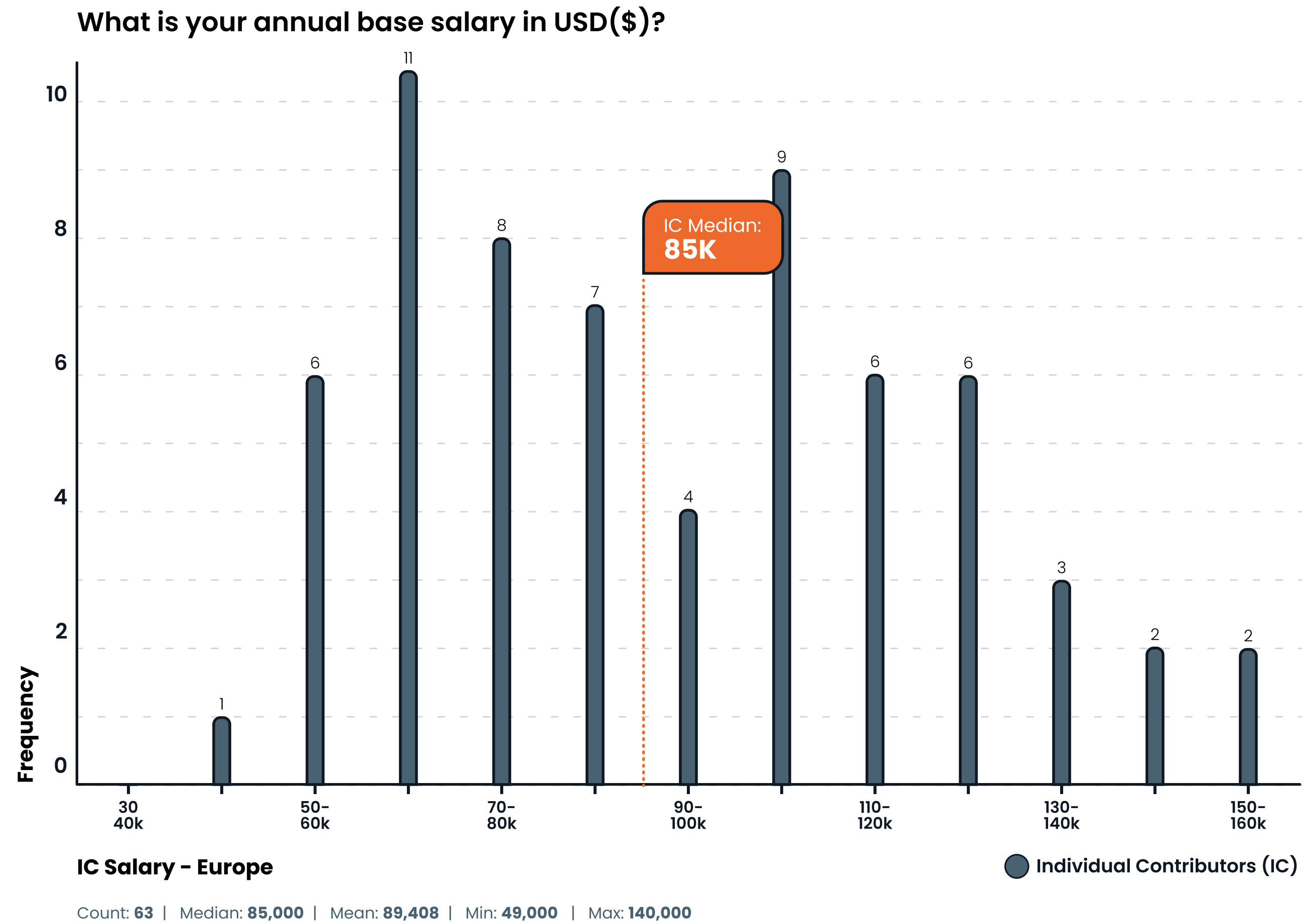


Leader Salary + At Risk - UK

 Leaders

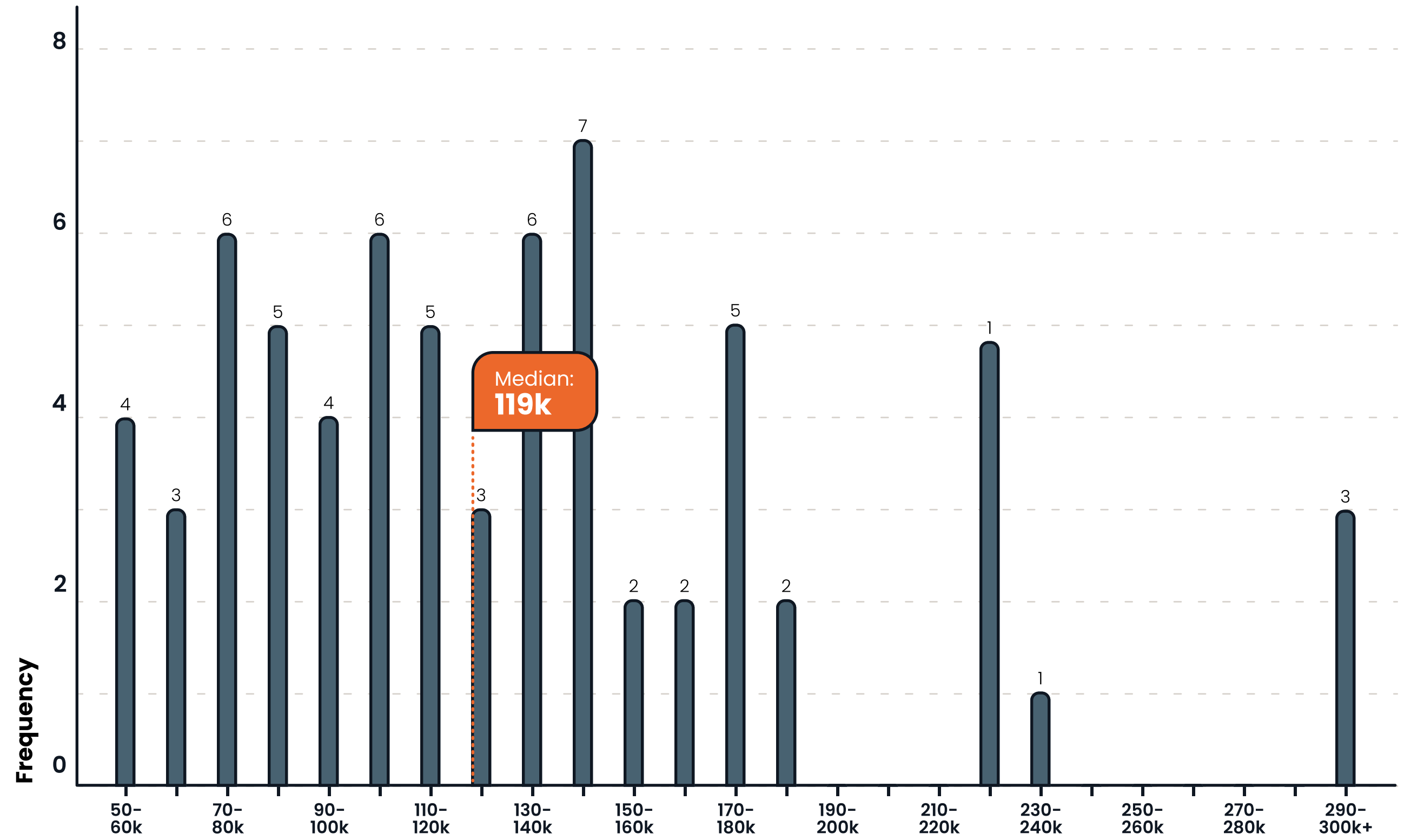
Count: 51 | Median: 193,100 | Mean: 226,696 | Min: 75,000 | Max: 971,500

 **EU**
**INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR
BASE SALARY**



EU
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR OTE

What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?



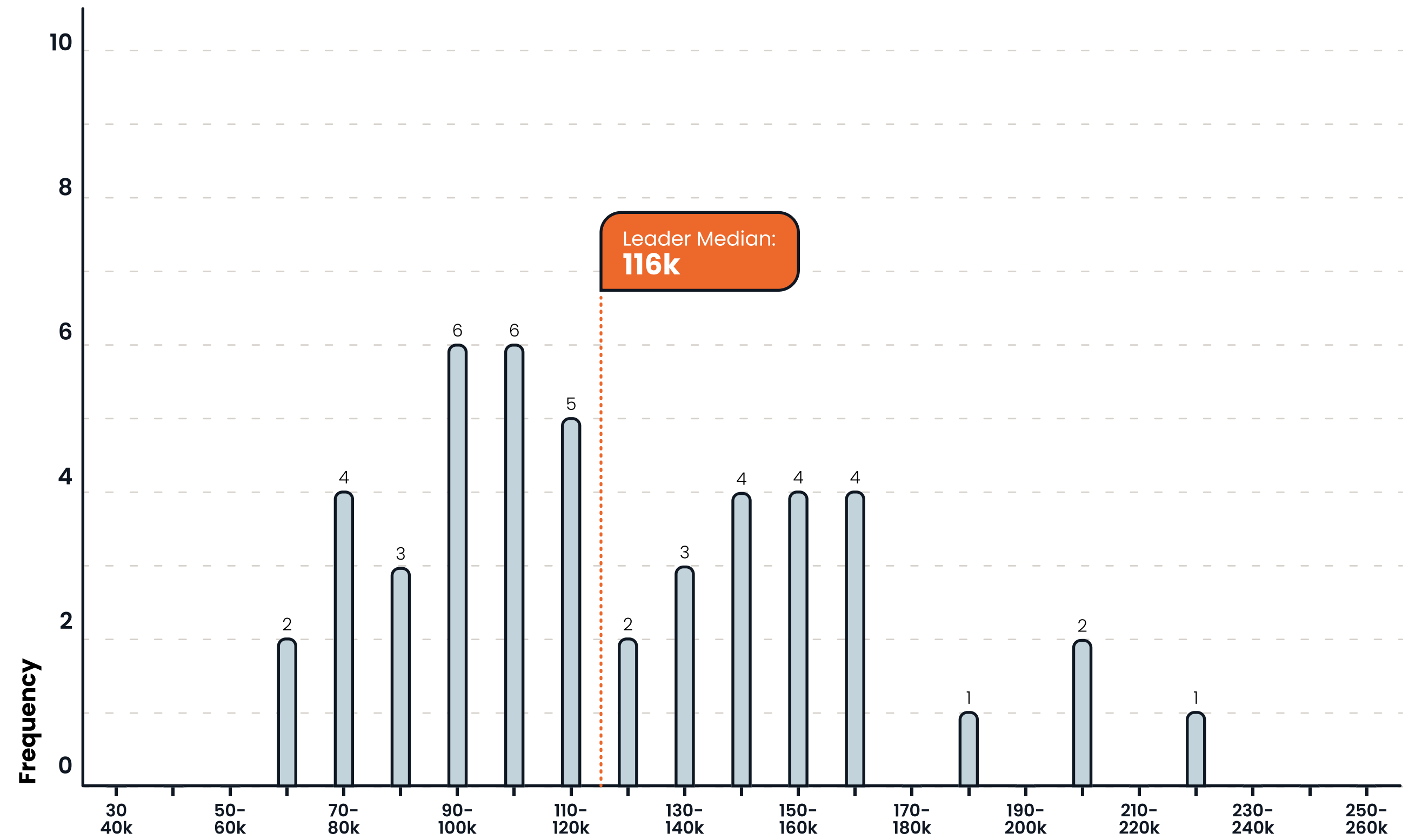
IC Salary + At Risk - Europe

● Individual Contributors (IC)

Count: 65 | Median: 119,000 | Mean: 143,771 | Min: 53,000 | Max: 902,000

 **EU**
LEADER BASE SALARY

What is your annual base salary in USD(\$)?



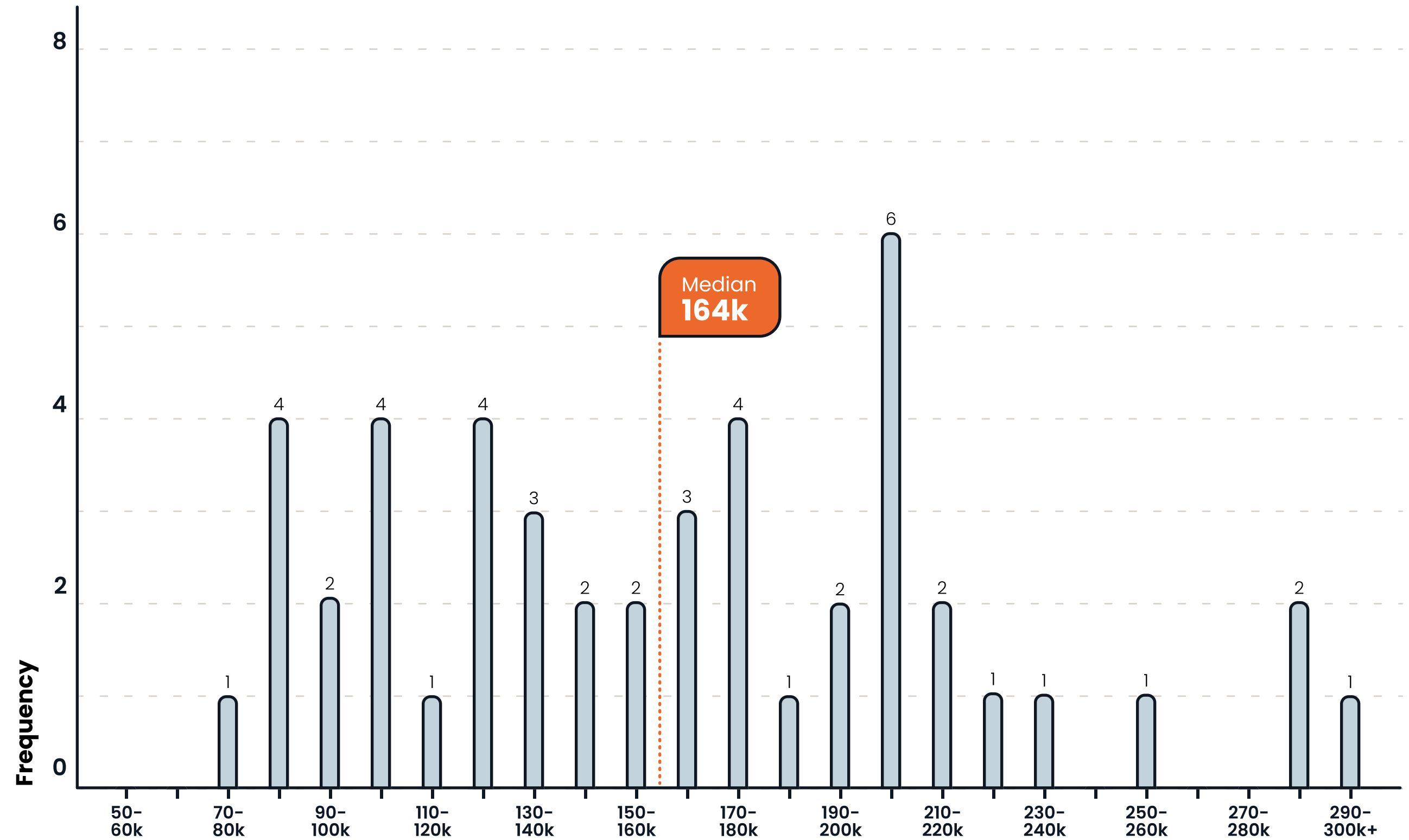
Leader Salary - Europe

 Leaders

Count: **47** | Median: **116,000** | Mean: **121,190z** | Min: **62,209** | Max: **230,000**

EU
LEADER OTE

What is your total annual (including at-risk) compensation (commission, bonuses, etc) in USD(\$), assuming you meet quota?



Leader Salary + At Risk - Europe

Leaders

Count: 47 | Median: 164,000 | Mean: 160,921 | Min: 77,142 | Max: 299,000



Workload

PRESALES WORK WEEK

Long hours are easing, but nearly half of Leaders regularly log over 46 hours.

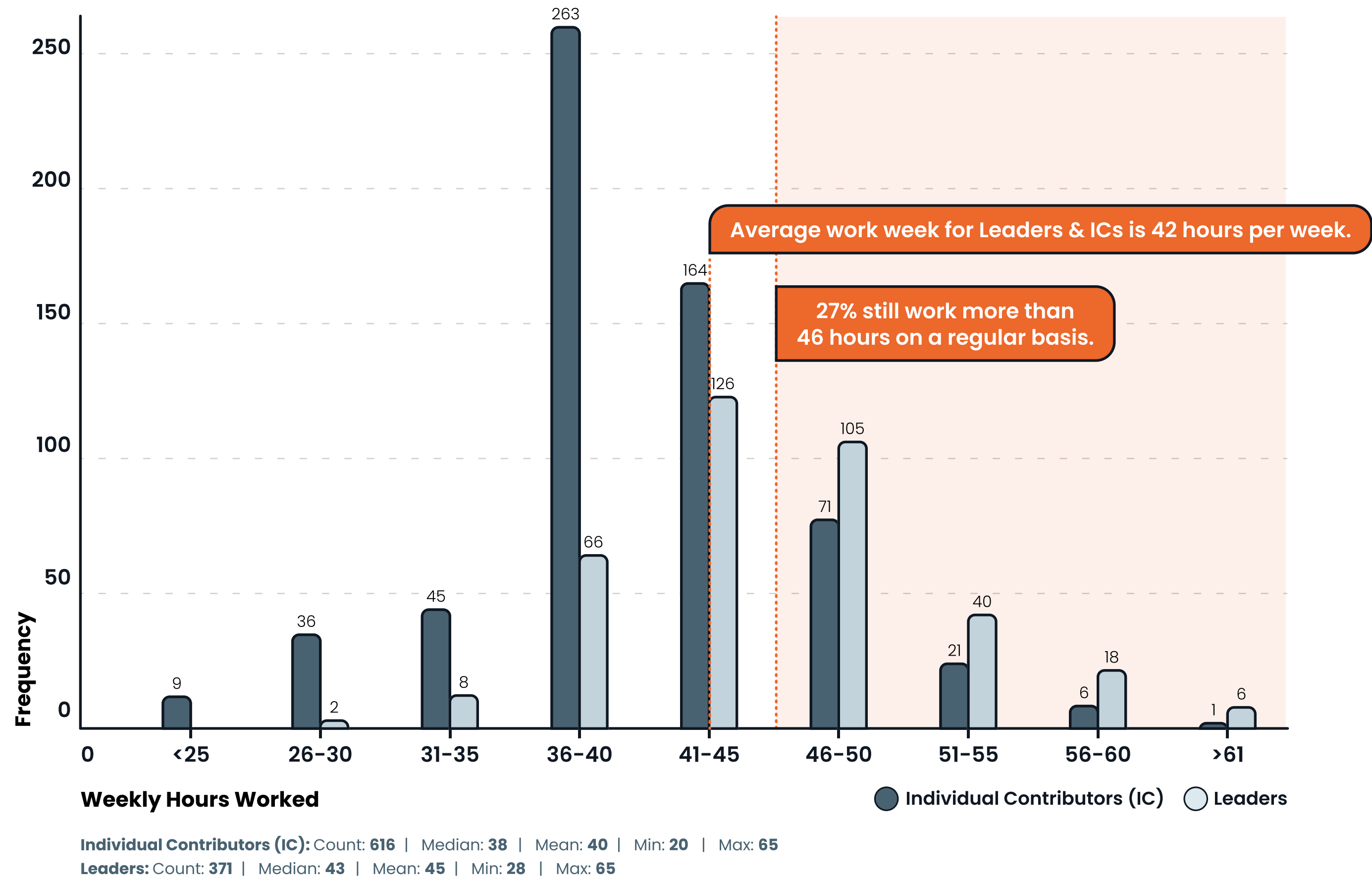
The number of ICs & Leaders who work more than 46 hours is down 14 percentage points from 2022, but 27% still work more than 46 hours on a regular basis.

The mean combined work week for Leaders and ICs is holding steady at 42 hours per week.

ICs report a mean work week of 40 hours, with 16% of respondents working more than 46 hours on a regular basis.

Leaders estimated a mean work week of 45 hours, with over 46% working more than 46 hours on a regular basis.

How many hours do you work in a typical week?



PRESALES CRUNCH WEEK

Frequent crunch weeks predict higher earnings for Leaders, but not for ICs.

The number of crunch weeks worked in a 3 month period is a strong predictor of OTE.

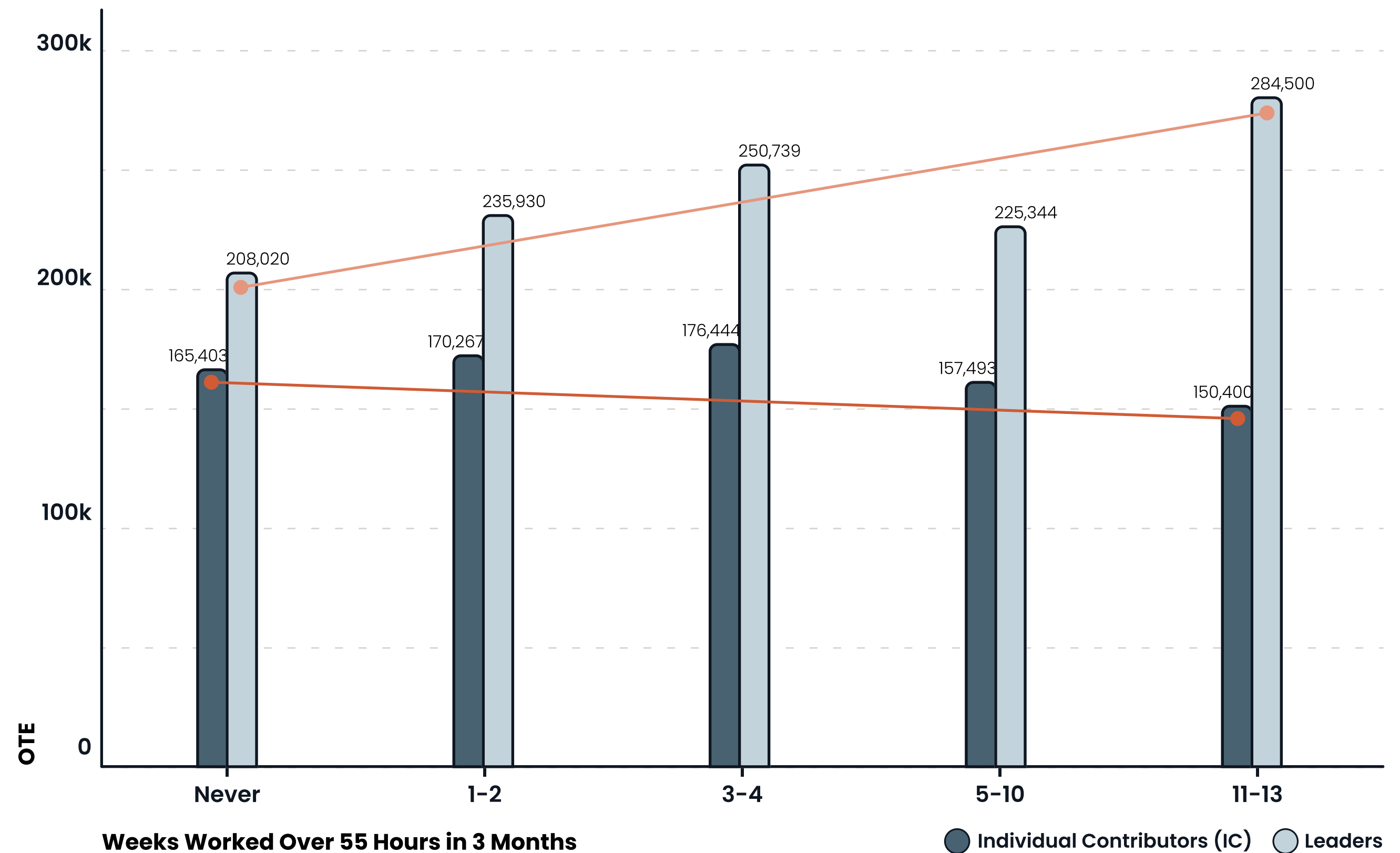
The more crunch weeks Leaders work, the higher their earnings.

For each additional crunch week Leaders work in a 7 week period, we see a \$3.3K increase in annual earnings.

Crunch weeks were not a significant predictor of IC earnings.

Crunch weeks = Typical Number of Weeks Worked Over 55 hours in a 3 Month Period

Average OTE by Typical Number of Weeks Worked Over 55 hours in a 3 Month Period



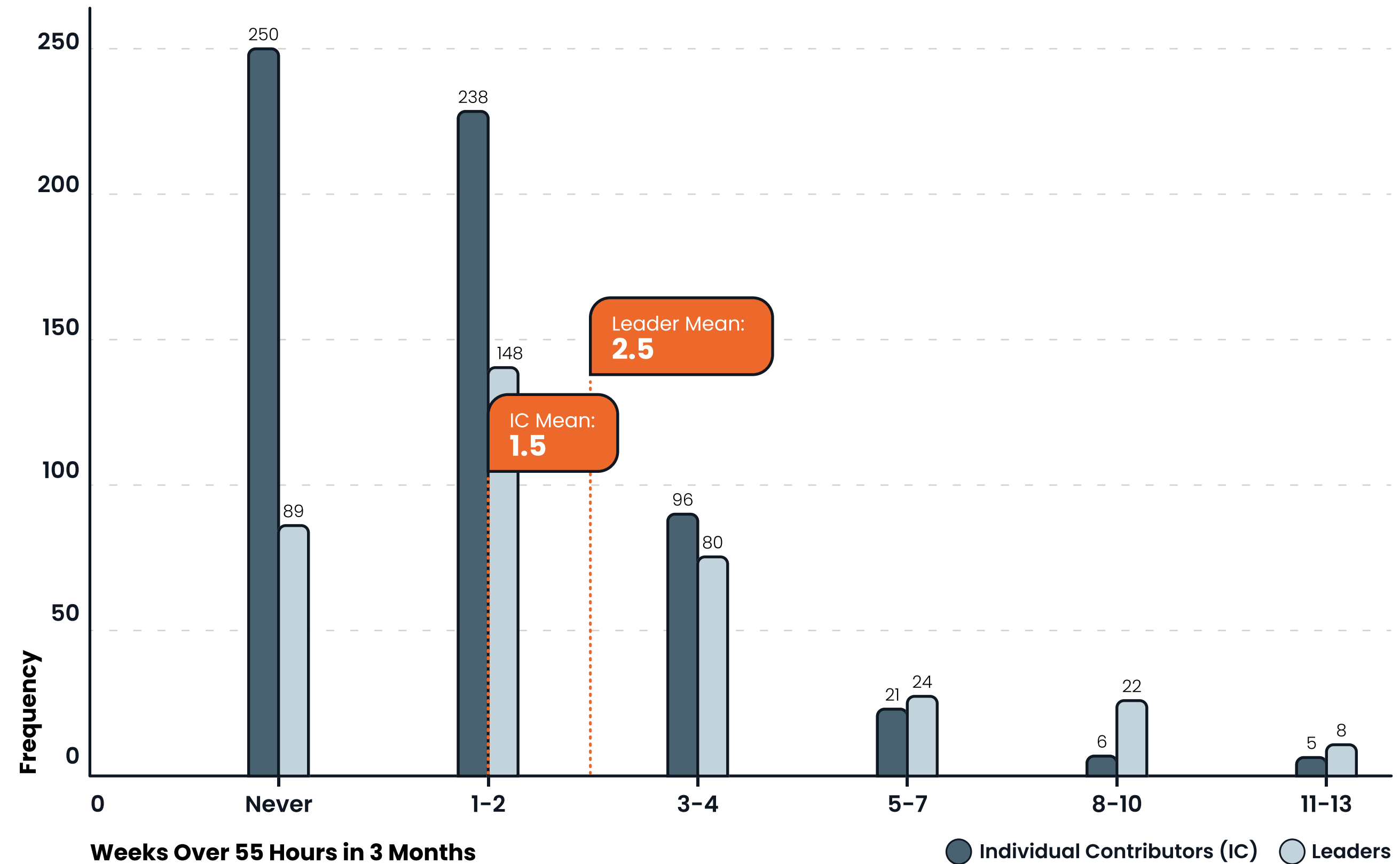
PRESALES CRUNCH WEEK (CONT'D)

Leaders report 1 more crunch week than ICs in a 3 month period.

About 21% of ICs said they worked more than 55 hours for at least 3-4 weeks, compared to almost 36% of Leaders.

Generally, even in their crunch weeks, Leaders and SEs are working fewer long hours than they reported in 2022.

In a typical 3 month period, how often do you need to work more than 55 hours in a week?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 1.5 | Mean: 1.51 | Min: 0
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 1.5 | Mean: 2.53 | Min: 0

PRESALES CRUNCH WEEK (CONT'D)

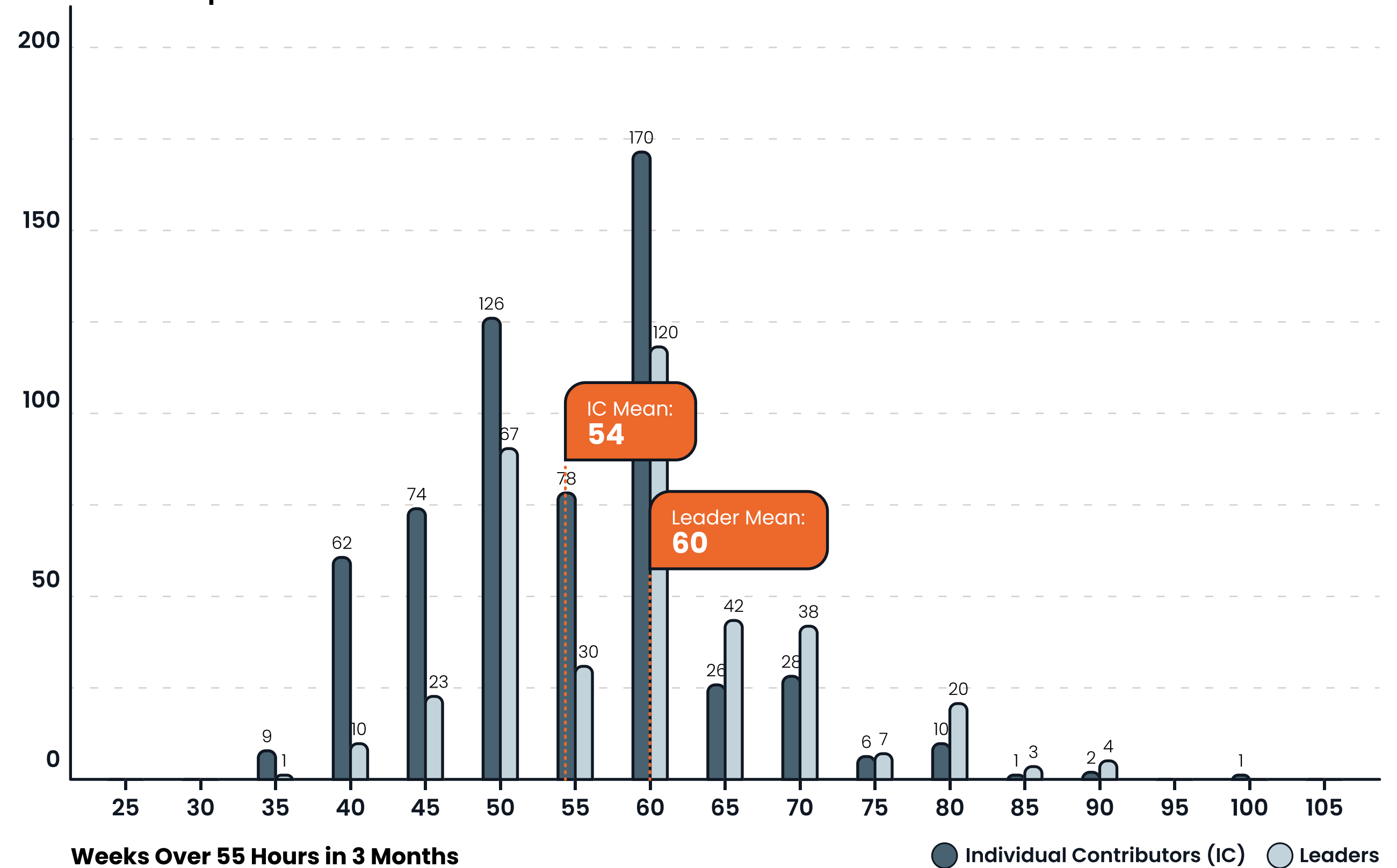
Max hours have tapered since last year, but Leaders still log about 5 hours more than ICs during crunch week.

During crunch week:

- The average IC maxed out at 54 hours.
- 7% of ICs logged 70+ hours or more.
- The average Leader logged as many as 60 hours.
- 20% of Leaders worked 70+ hours.

Generally, even in their crunch weeks, Leaders and ICs are working fewer long hours than they did in 2022.

What is the maximum number of hours you've worked in a single week (seven day period) over the past 12 months?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 593 | Median: 55 | Mean: 54.31 | Min: 35 | Max: 100
Leaders: Count: 365 | Median: 60 | Mean: 59.68 | Min: 35 | Max: 90

NEW AND NOTABLE

PRESALES ACTIVITIES

Too much time on Intro Demos; not enough on developing product expertise.

Misallocation is a disconnect between how Leaders and ICs actually spend their time and how they feel their time should be spent.

We find the difference between where they rank the activity in terms of time spent and subtract where respondents rank that same activity in terms of order of impact.

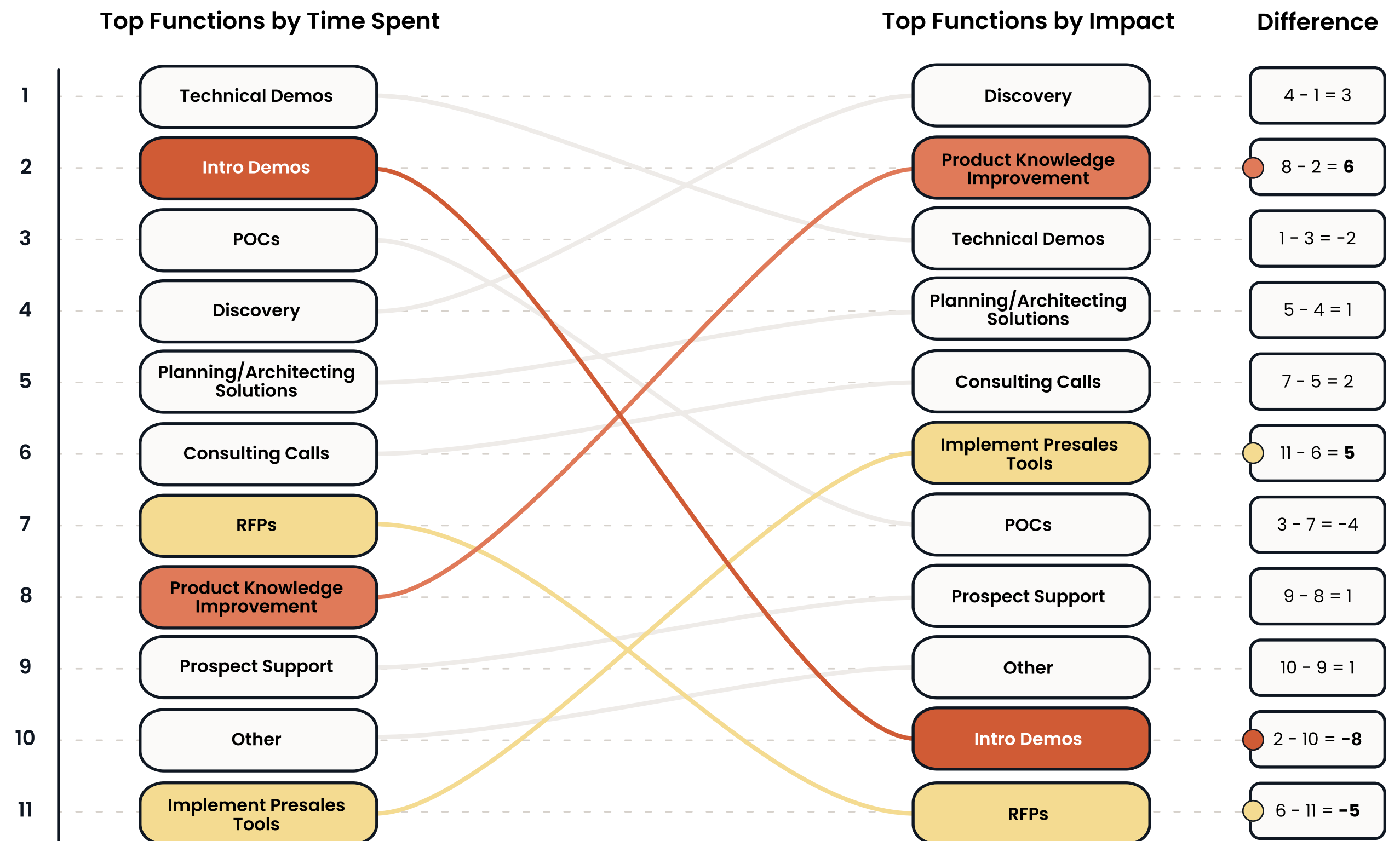
Intro Demos has the largest misallocation delta, ranked 2nd in time spent and 10th in order of impact on average.

Product Knowledge has the next largest misallocation delta, signaling that respondents want more time to develop their product expertise.

This data suggests that Intro Demos and RFPs are prime candidates for automation.

Note: You will see this misallocation difference calculation referenced throughout the report.

Top Functions Ranked in Order of Time Spent vs. Order of Impact



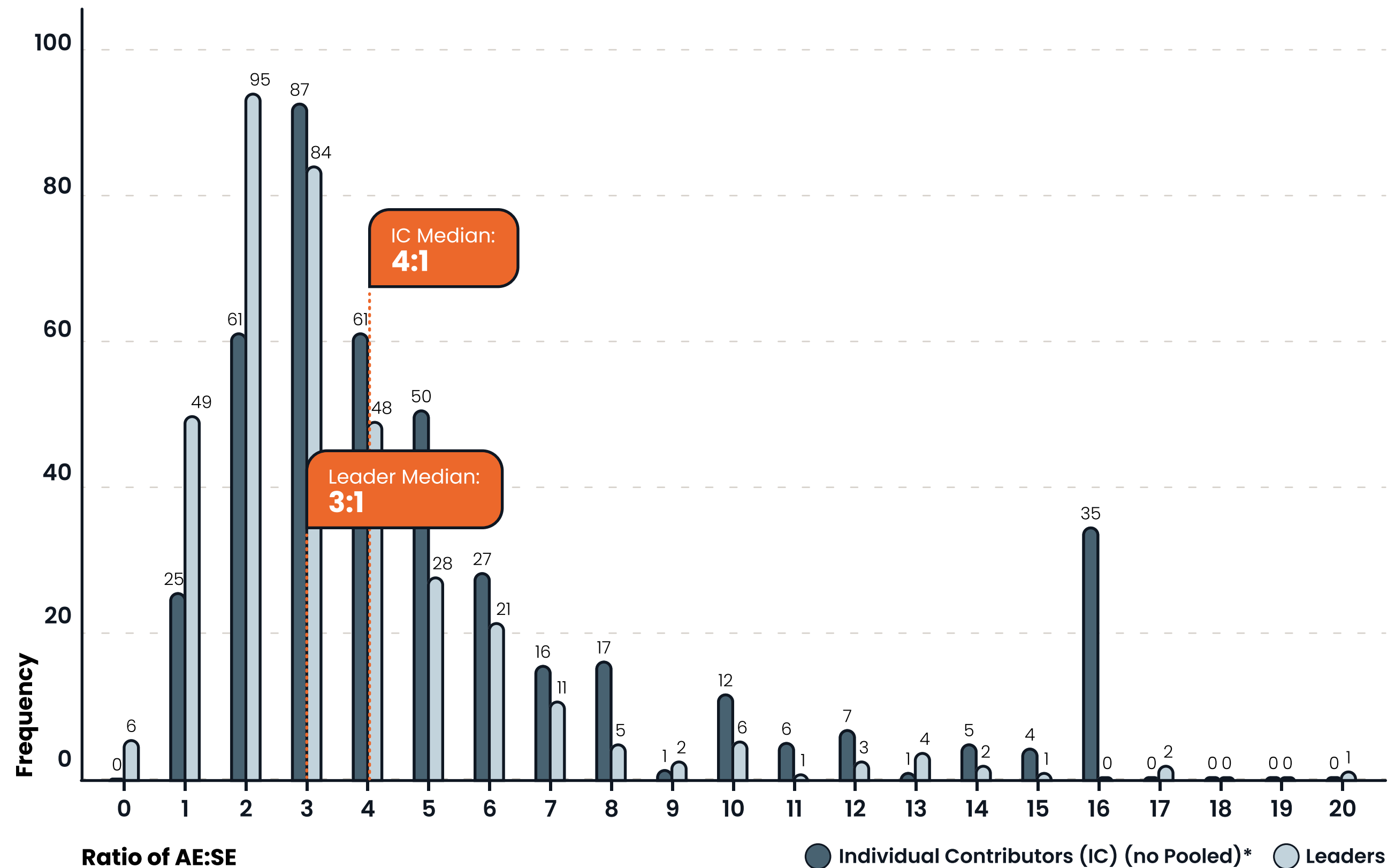
Positive - respondents want to spend **MORE** time on the activity.
Negative - respondents want to spend **LESS** time on the activity.

AE:SE RATIO

ICs report a median ratio of 4:1.

Leaders report a median AE:SE ratio of about 3:1, whereas ICs who are not working in a pooled assignment model report ratios of 4:1.

What is the ratio of Account Executive to Sales Engineers?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 415 | Median: 4 | Mean: 5.52 | Min: 1 | Max: 15+
Leaders: Count: 369 | Median: 2.83 | Mean: 3.57 | Min: 0.2 | Max: 20

*Removed ICs in a pooled assignment model from this analysis.

STAKEHOLDERS PER DEAL

There are nearly 5 stakeholders per deal.

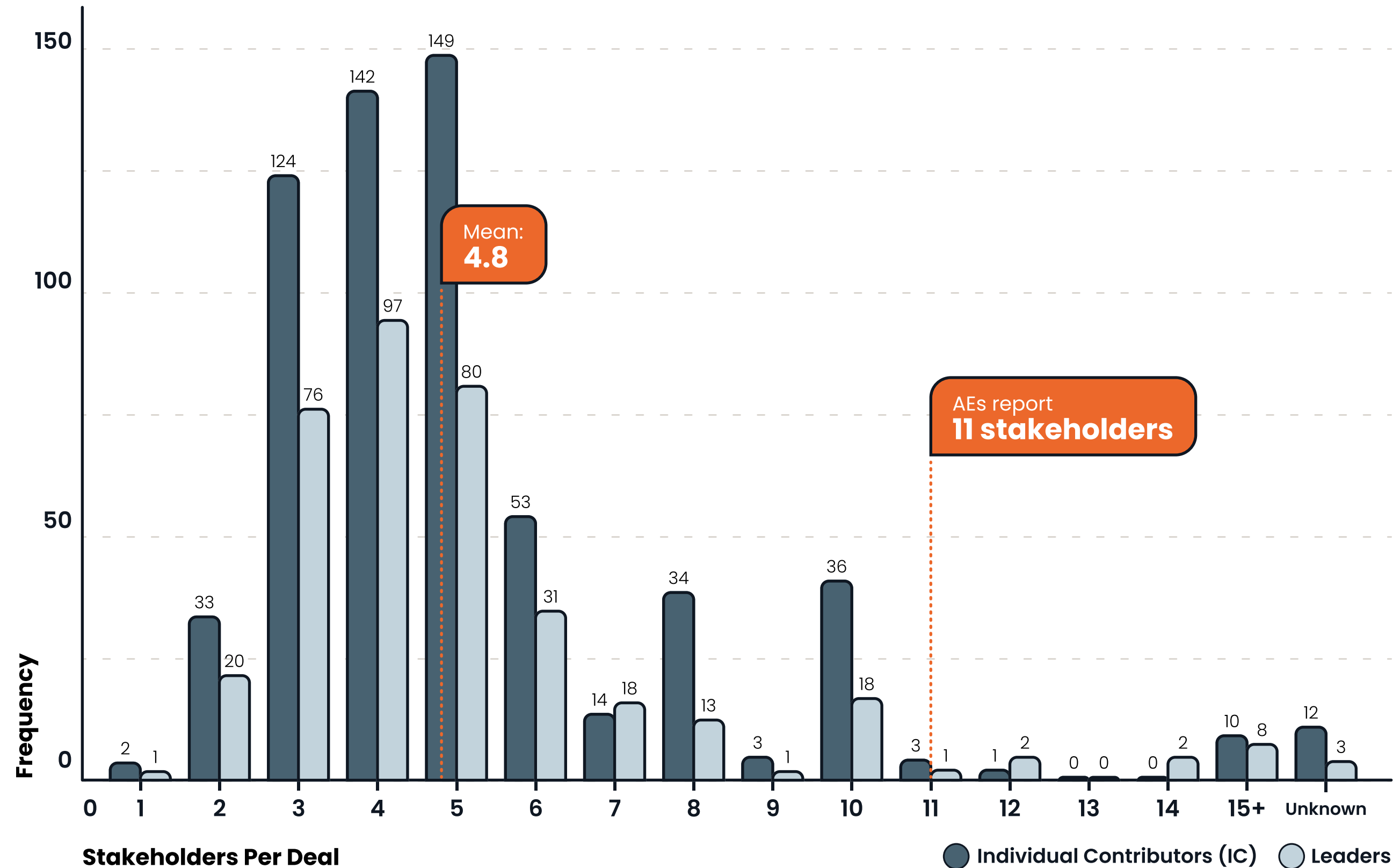
ICs and Leaders report an average of 4.8 stakeholders per deal.

Analysts consistently show enterprise B2B buying groups are much larger, made up of 11 stakeholders on average*.

The difference is a matter of who's answering the question and at which stage. AEs generally report on buying group sizes to analysts. As with our previous study, this supports the sentiment that SEs are often less exposed to the complexity of the buying process and buying group dynamics because of how and when they're utilized by Sales.

* According to Gartner, "An average of 11 individual stakeholders are involved in a B2B purchase; that number can occasionally flex up to nearly 20.

How many stakeholders (including influencers and decisions makers) are usually involved in the typical buying process for your product(s)?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 594 | Median: 4 | Mean: 4.84 | Min: 1 | Max: 12
Leaders: Count: 360 | Median: 4 | Mean: 4.79 | Min: 1 | Max: 14

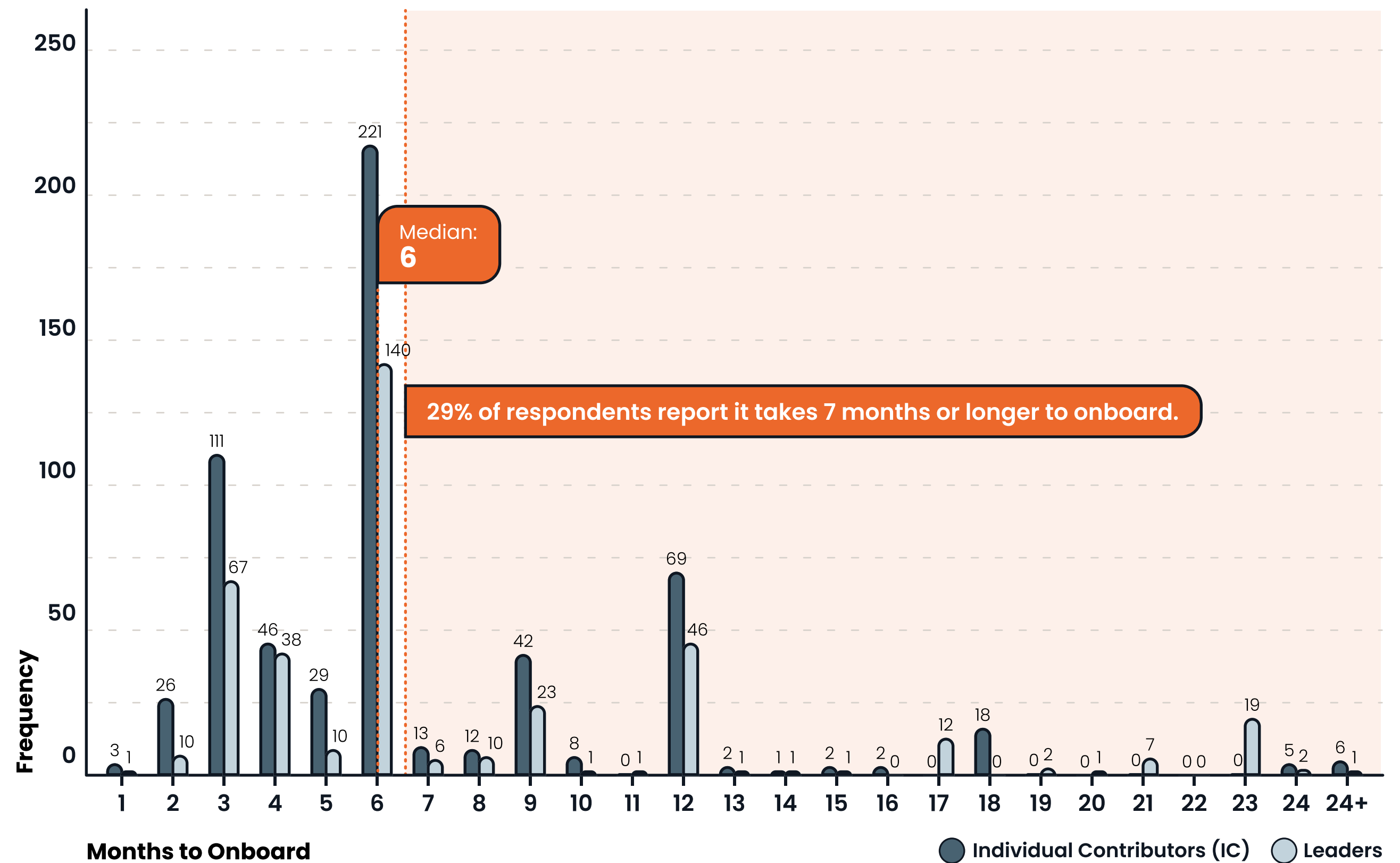
SE ONBOARDING TIME

Median time to ramp a new SE continues to take 6 months.

29% of respondents said it takes 7 months or longer to onboard.

Average SE onboarding times are up 6% YOY.

How many months does it take to fully onboard a Sales Engineer?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 6 | Mean: 6.84 | Min: 1 | Max: 25
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 6 | Mean: 6.73 | Min: 1 | Max: 25

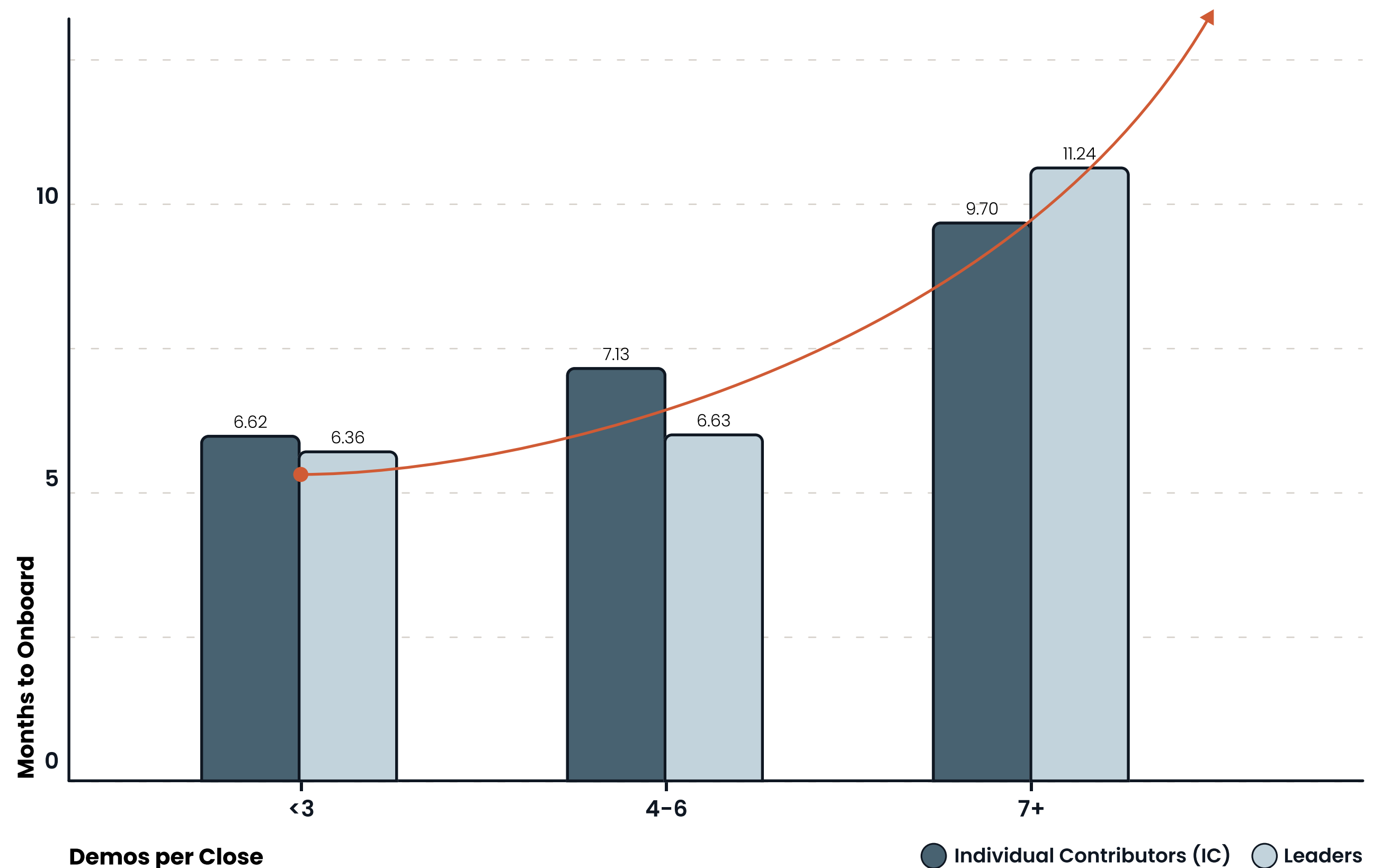
SE ONBOARDING TIME (CONT'D)

SE ramp time increases exponentially with each additional demo required to close.

All else equal, it takes a little over 1 week longer to onboard an SE going from deals that take 1 demo to close compared to deals that require 3 demos per close.

It takes about a month longer to onboard when going from 3 to 5 demos per close.

Average Time to Onboard an SE by the Number of Demos Required per Typical Close/Win Deal

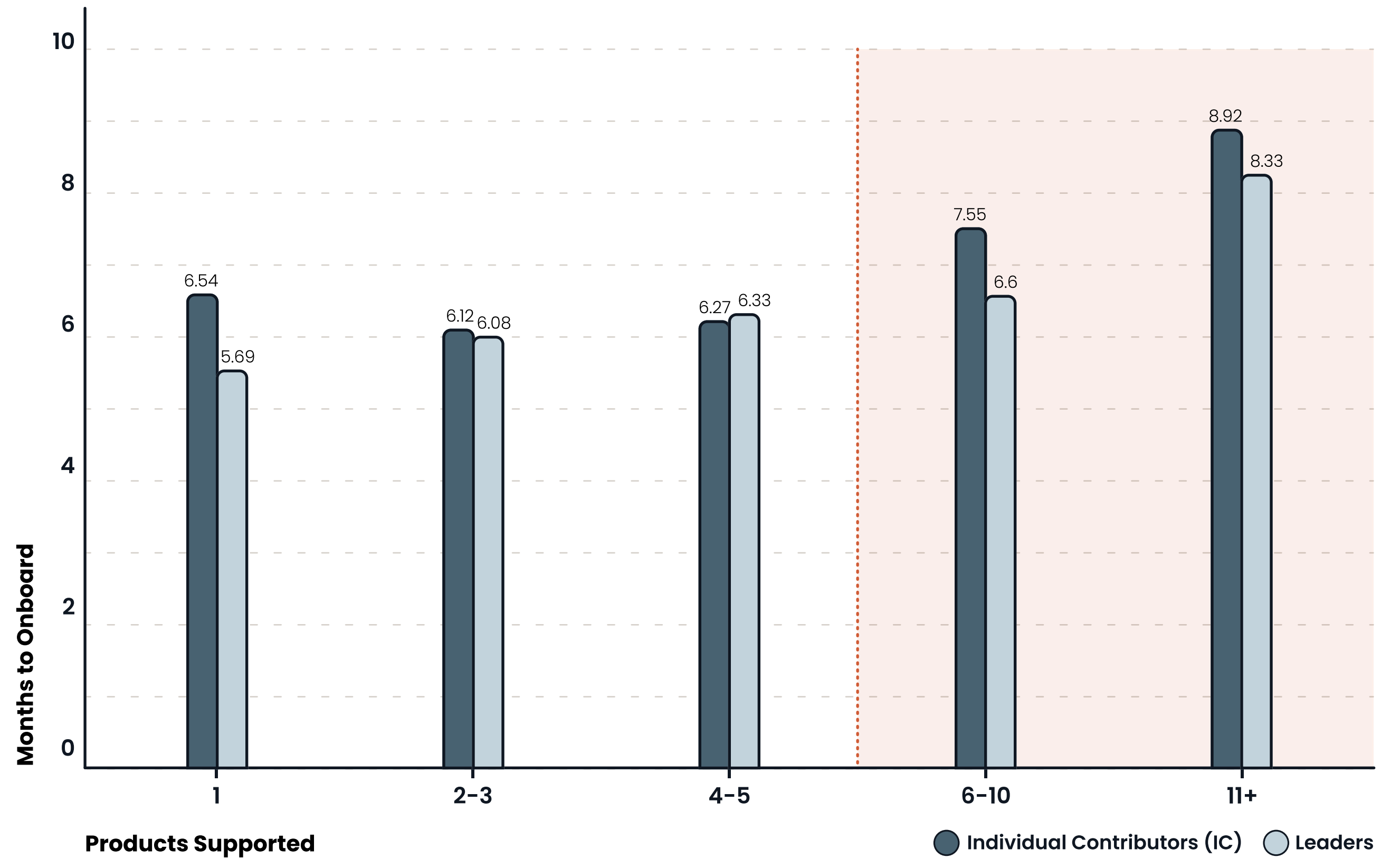


SE ONBOARDING TIME (CONT'D)

More products/solutions drive longer ramp times.

SEs who support more than 5 products have a longer onboarding time.

Average Time to Onboard an SE by the Number of Products/Solutions Supported by the Presales Team



SUPPORTING DIFFERENT REVENUE FUNCTIONS

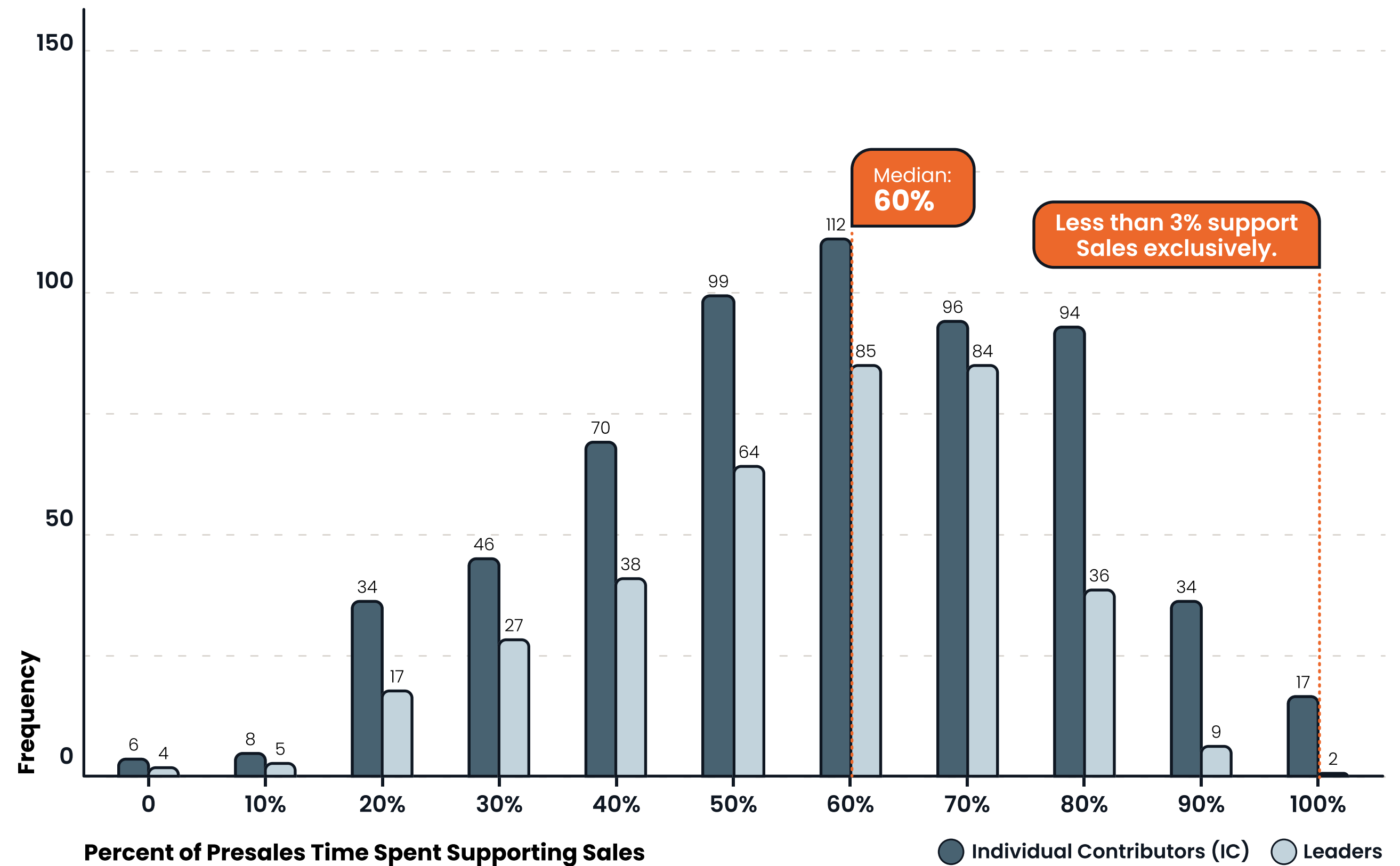
Less than 3% of ICs support sales exclusively.

Less than 3% of respondents reported supporting Sales exclusively.

Client Success, Marketing, and even Business Development are reaching out for Presales' time.

- Sales: 58% (average time spent)
- Client Success: 15%
- Marketing: 8%
- Business Development: 9%
- Channel: 6%
- Other: 4%

What percentage of your time is spent supporting Sales?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 60 | Mean: 57.81 | Min: 0 | Max: 100
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 60 | Mean: 56.04 | Min: 0 | Max: 100

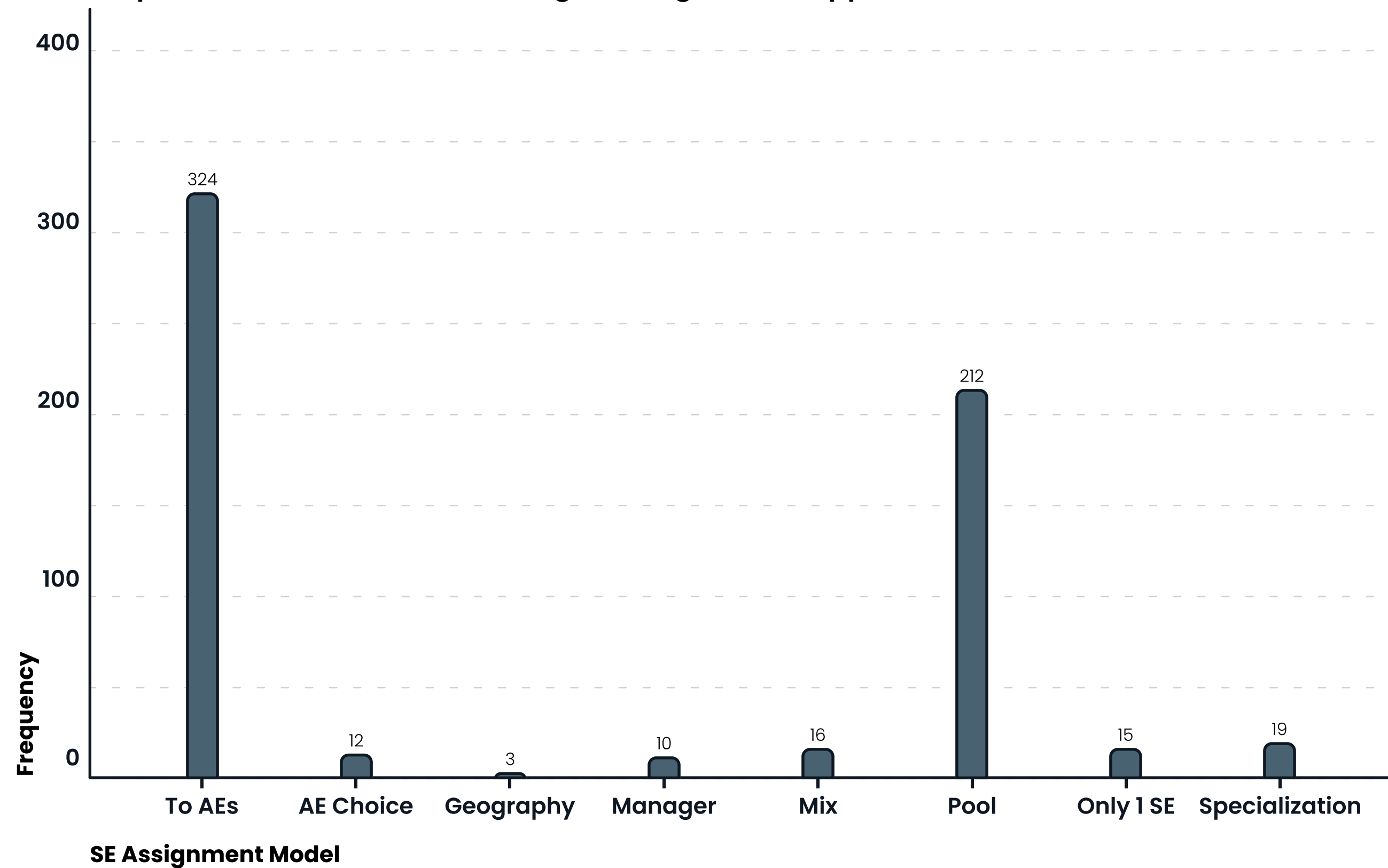
ASSIGNING PRESALES RESOURCES

AE assignment and pool assignment models are the most common Presales deployment strategies.

53% of SEs are assigned to specific AEs.

35% of SEs are placed into a shared pool for AEs to engage as-needed.

Which of the following best describes how SEs are assigned to fill requests for presales resources (within a given segment, if applicable)?



ASSIGNING PRESALES RESOURCES (CONT'D)

Customer size influences IC Assignment models.

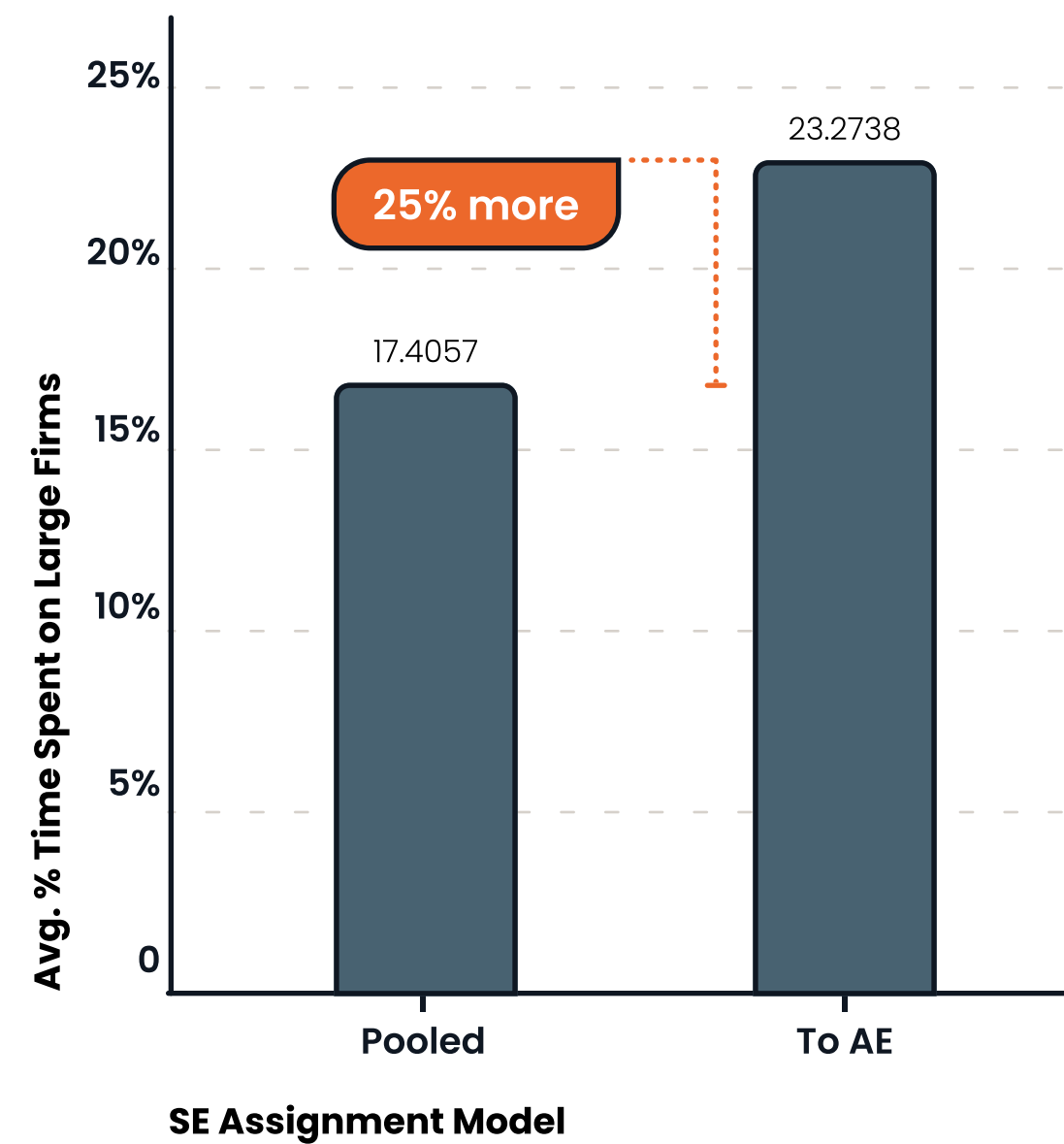
ICs working with larger customers are more likely to be assigned directly to AEs.

On average, ICs directly assigned to AEs spend 25% more time with larger customers (+10K employees) compared to pooled ICs.

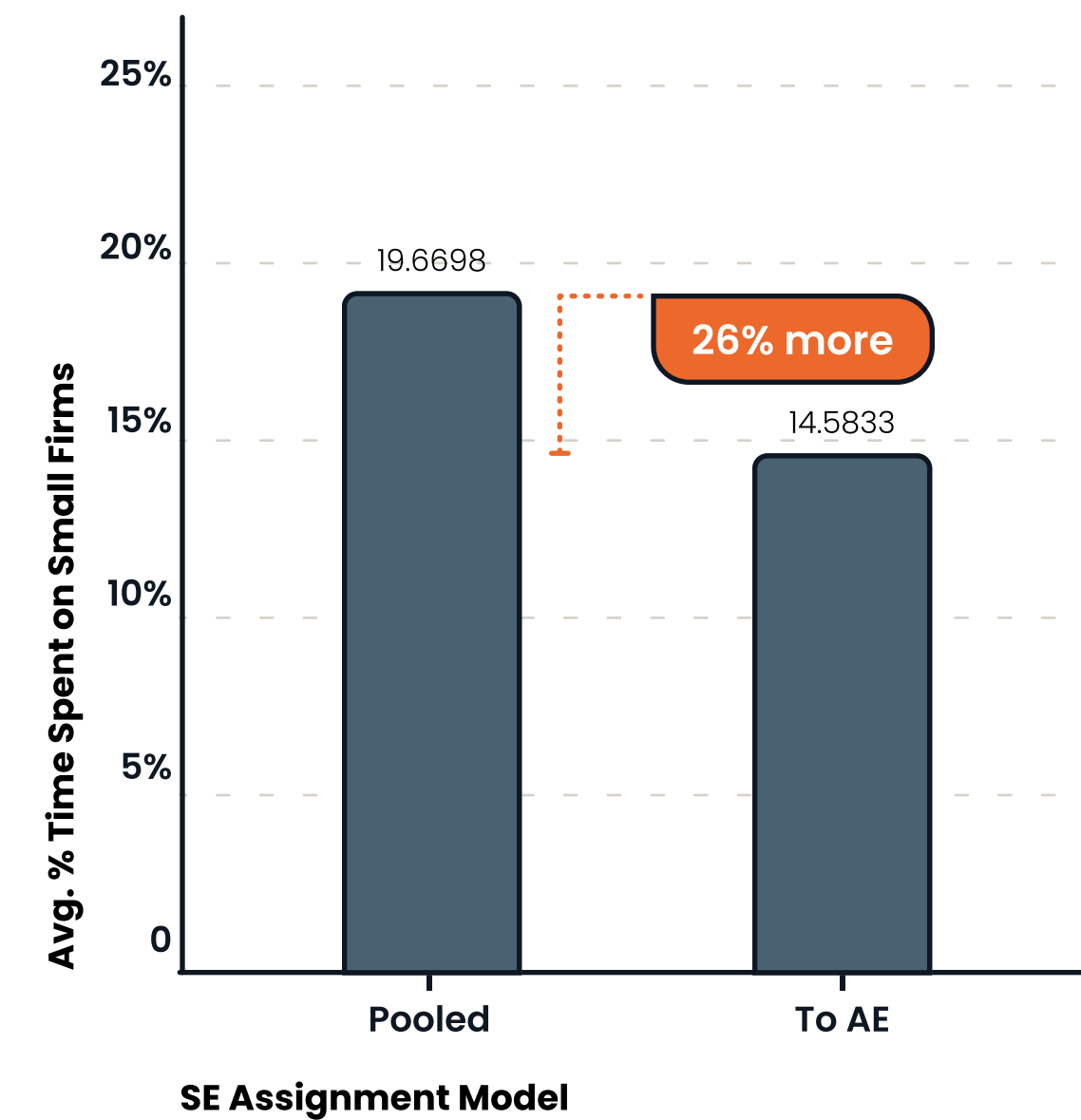
SEs working with smaller customers are more likely assigned using a shared pooled model.

On average, SEs in a pooled model spend 26% more time with smaller customers (<150 employees) compared to SEs directly assigned to AEs.

Average Percent of Time Spent on **Large** Firms



Average Percent of Time Spent on **Small** Firms

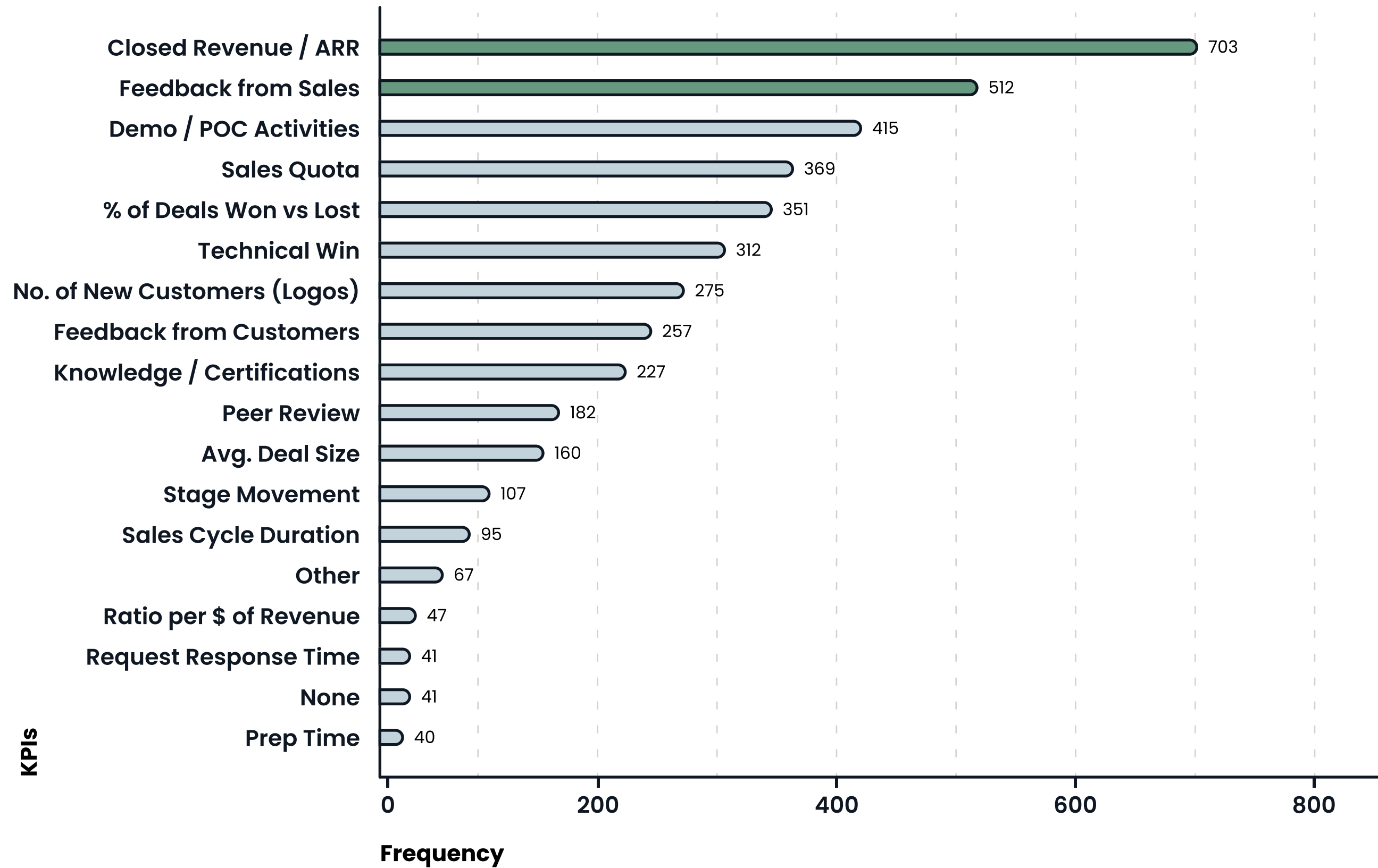


PRESALES KPIS

Revenue KPI is the most used measure of IC & Leader performance.

77% selected Revenue as top KPI followed by 56% who selected Feedback from Sales.

What Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to judge your performance?
Select all that apply.



PERFORMANCE QUOTA

Quotas are on the rise. Personal quotas predict higher base salaries for ICs.

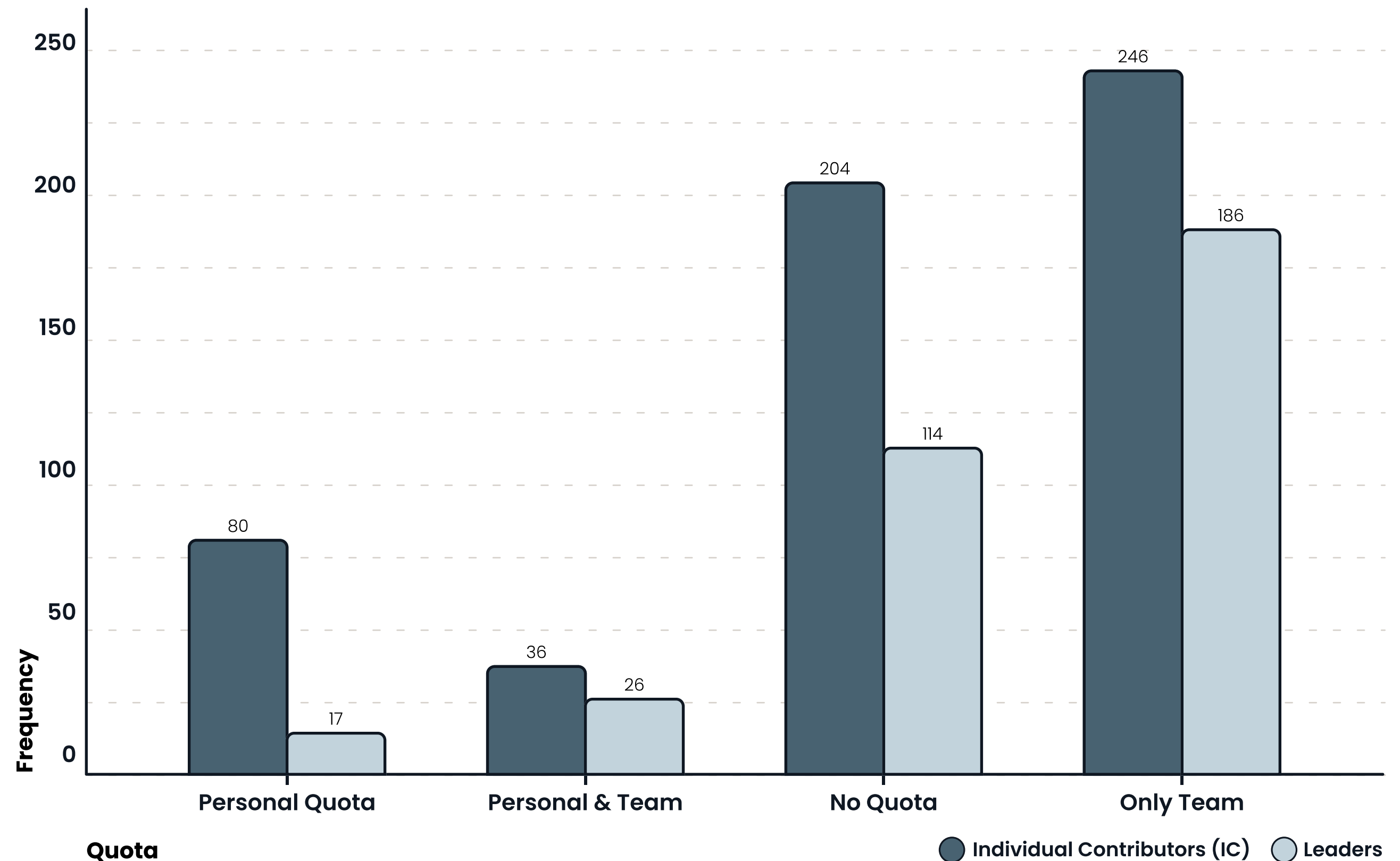
ICs

- 64% had some kind of quota this year, up from 61% last year.
- 14% only have a personal quota which is up 1% YOY.
- 50% have a team quotas.
- Personal quotas are correlated with higher salaries.

Leaders

- 67% had some kind of quota this year, up from 64% last year.
- 55% have a team quota.
- 33% of Leaders have no quota.
- 54% have only team quotas.

Do you carry a performance quota? Select all that apply.



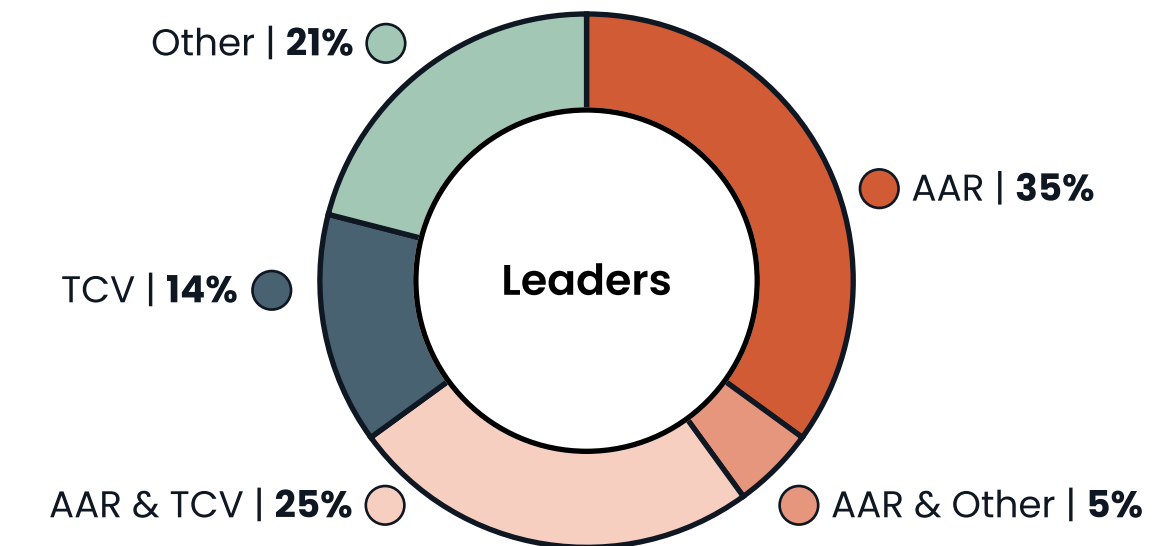
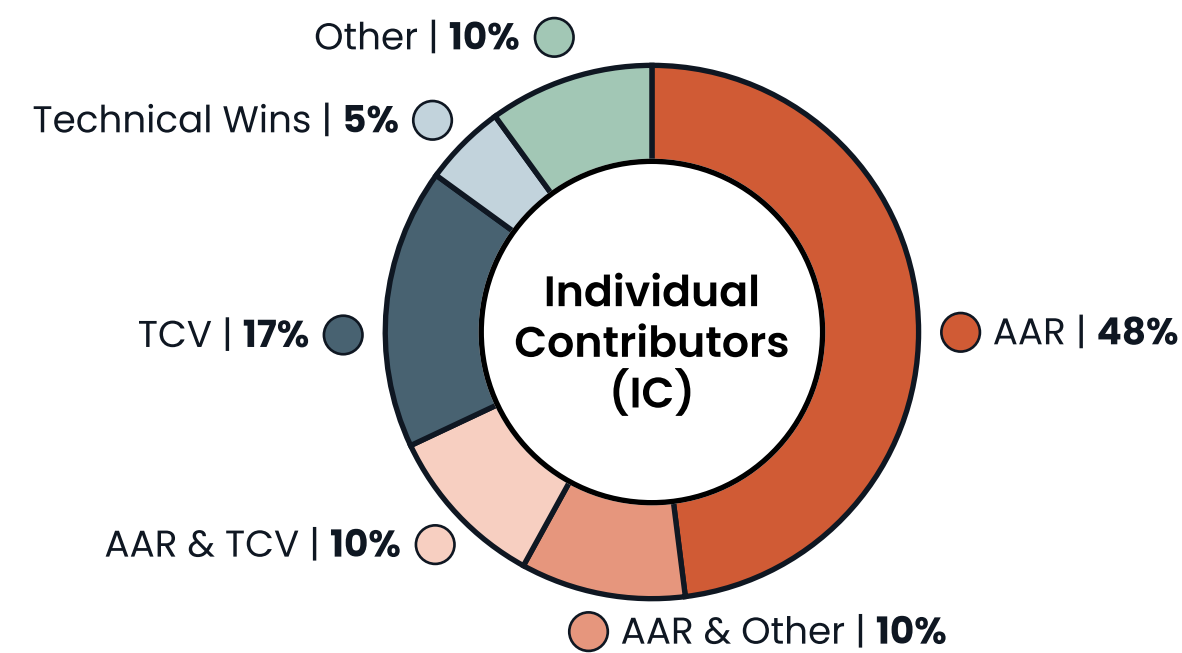
MEASURING QUOTA

ARR is the most popular quota metric, irrespective of position and quota type.

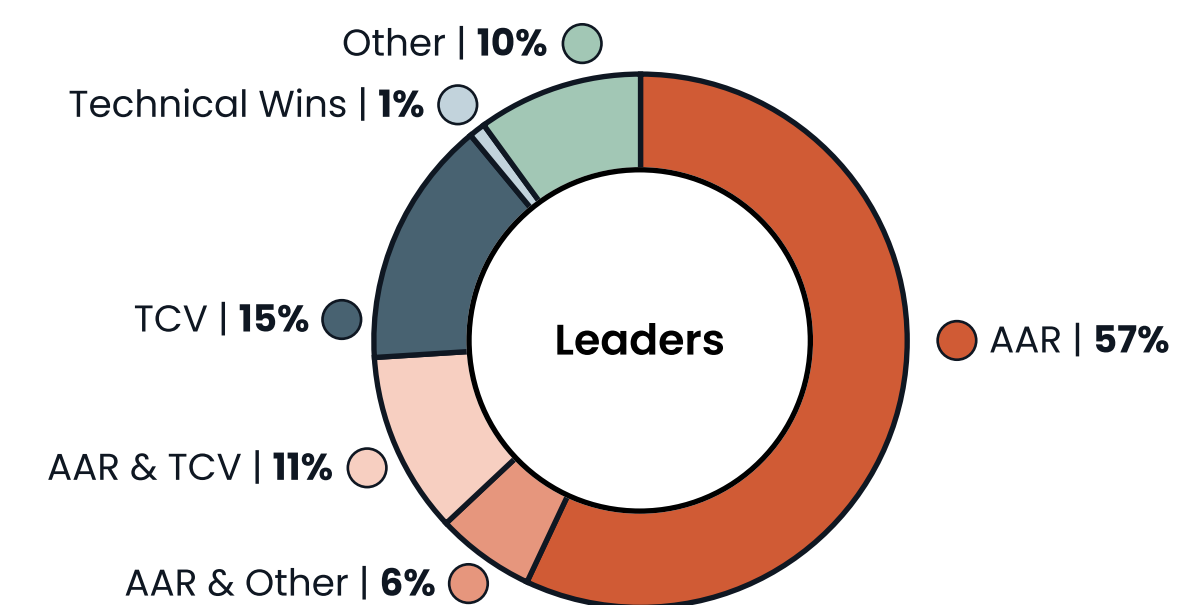
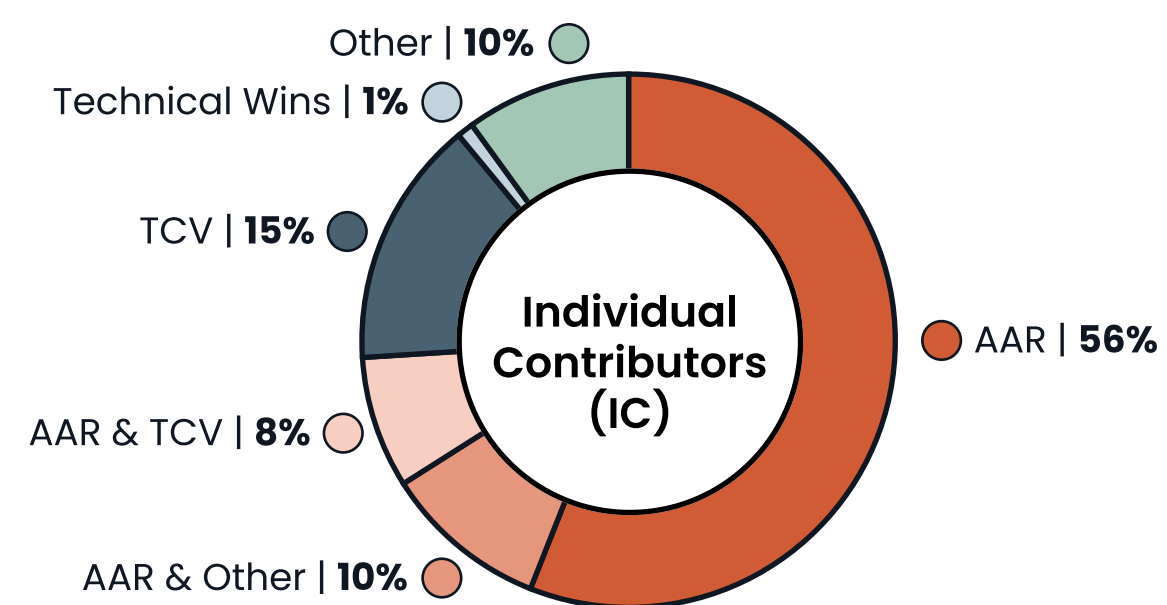
Approximately 66% of personal quotas for SEs and Leaders are measured exclusively on, or contain, the amount of Annual Recurring Revenue (ARR) that they influenced. Weighing in at second is the Total Contract Value (TCV) that they influenced.

Approximately 74% of team quotas for ICs and Leaders are measured exclusively by ARR or contain ARR, again with Total Contract Value coming second.

How is your **personal** quota measured?



How is your **team** quota measured?



PRESALES VS. SALES INFLUENCE

Presales reports less influence & recognition relative to Sales, YOY.

68% of Leaders say Presales influence is less than Sales, up from 59% a year ago, an increase of 15%.

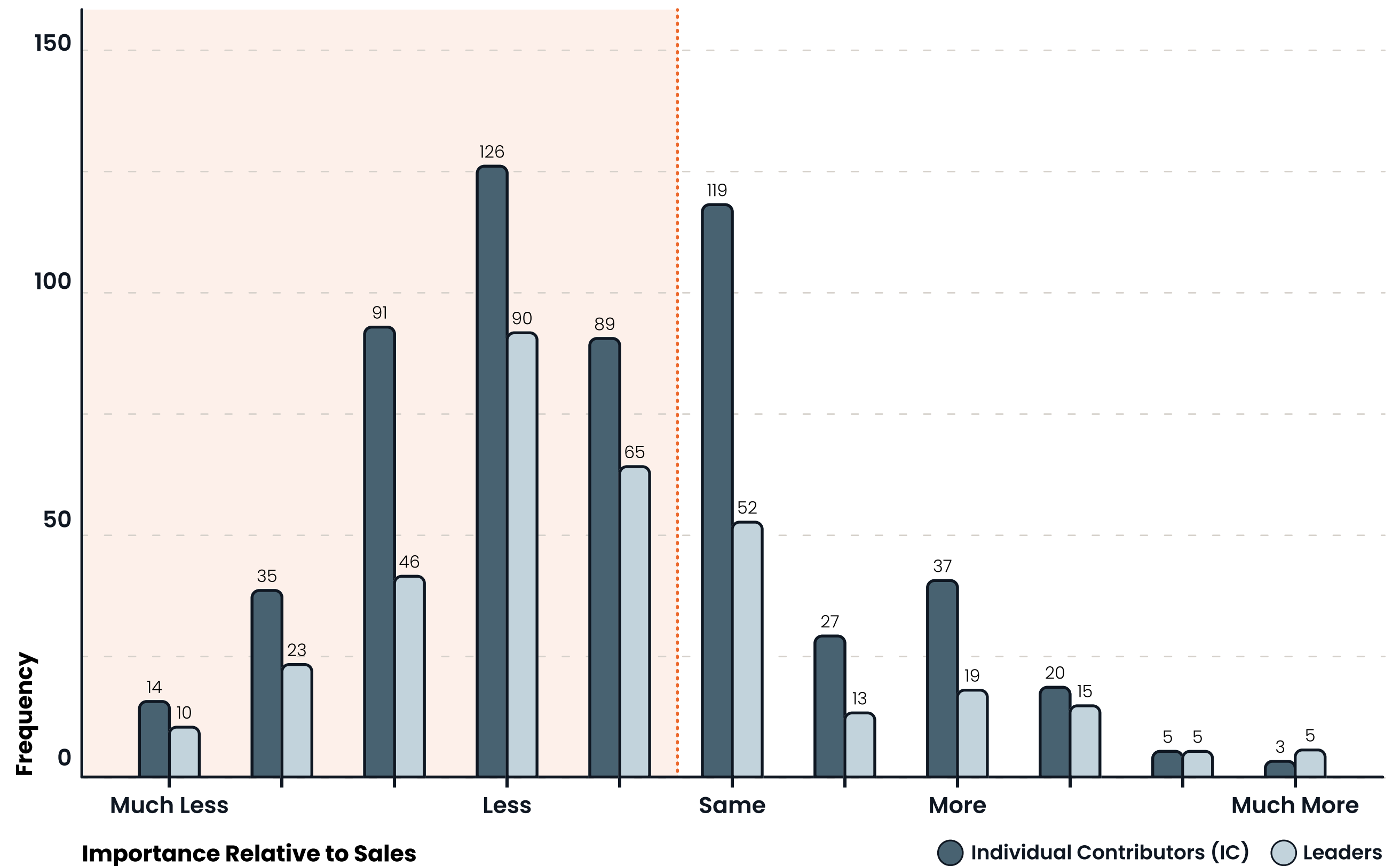
63% of ICs say Presales influence is less than Sales, up from 52% a year ago or 21%.

Macroeconomic factors may be shifting focus toward Sales as firms struggle to achieve their quarterly targets.

Respondents working at smaller firms report higher Presales influence relative to Sales than those respondents working at larger firms.

Low AE:SE ratios and a lower percentage of unqualified demos correspond to higher perceived influence and recognition related to Sales.

Relative to Sales, how much influence and recognition does Presales have within your organization? (0-10)



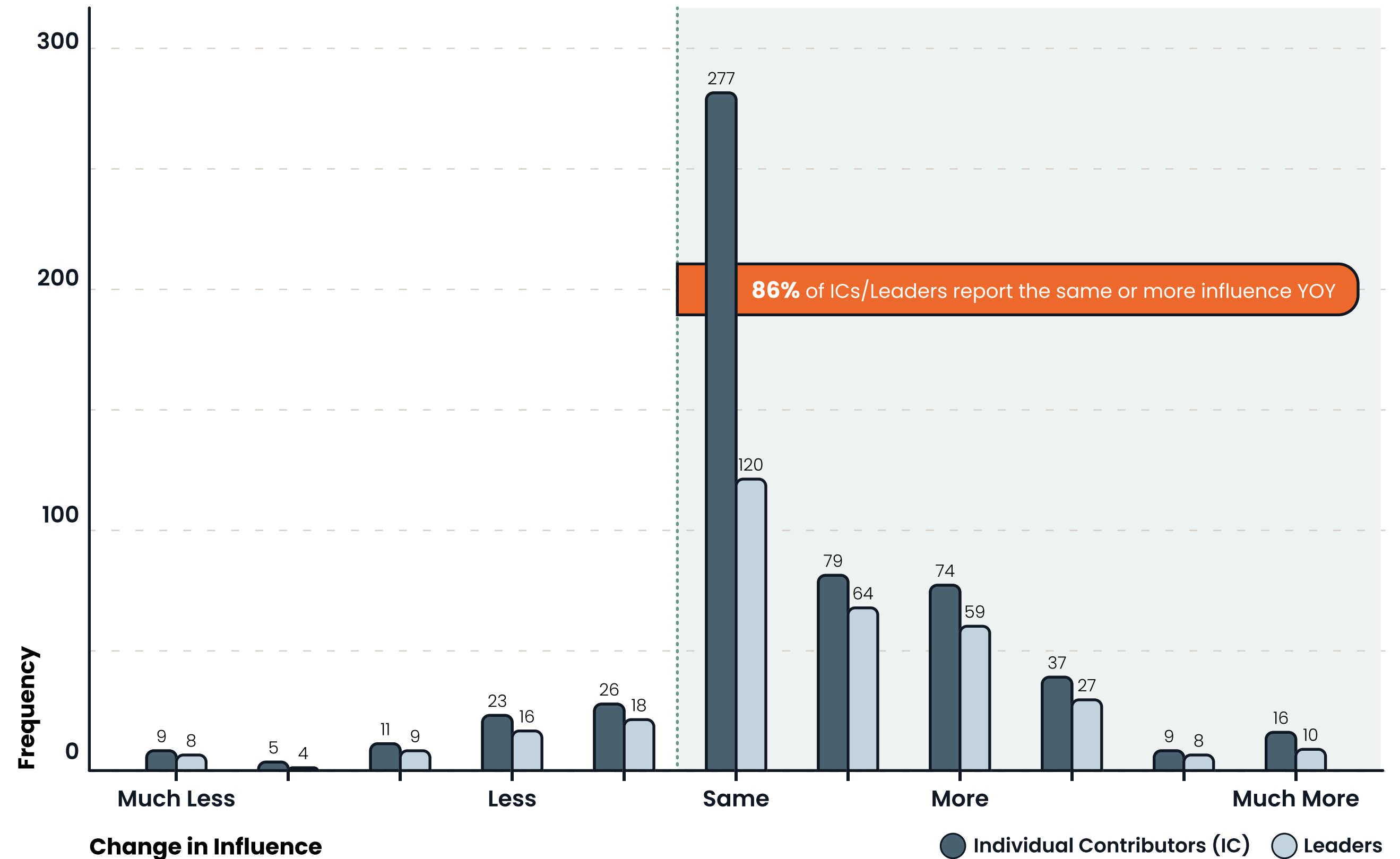
Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 566 | Median: 4 | Mean: 3.89 | Min: 0 | Max: 10
Leaders: Count: 343 | Median: 4 | Mean: 3.88 | Min: 0 | Max: 10

PRESALES INFLUENCE OVER TIME

Growth of Presales influence slows compared to a year ago.

Although 86% of ICs/Leaders report the same or more influence year over year, this is down from 90% in 2022.

Does Presales have more or less influence at your organization compared to 1 year ago?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 566 | Median: 5 | Mean: 5.50 | Min: 0 | Max: 10
Leaders: Count: 343 | Median: 5 | Mean: 5.62 | Min: 0 | Max: 10

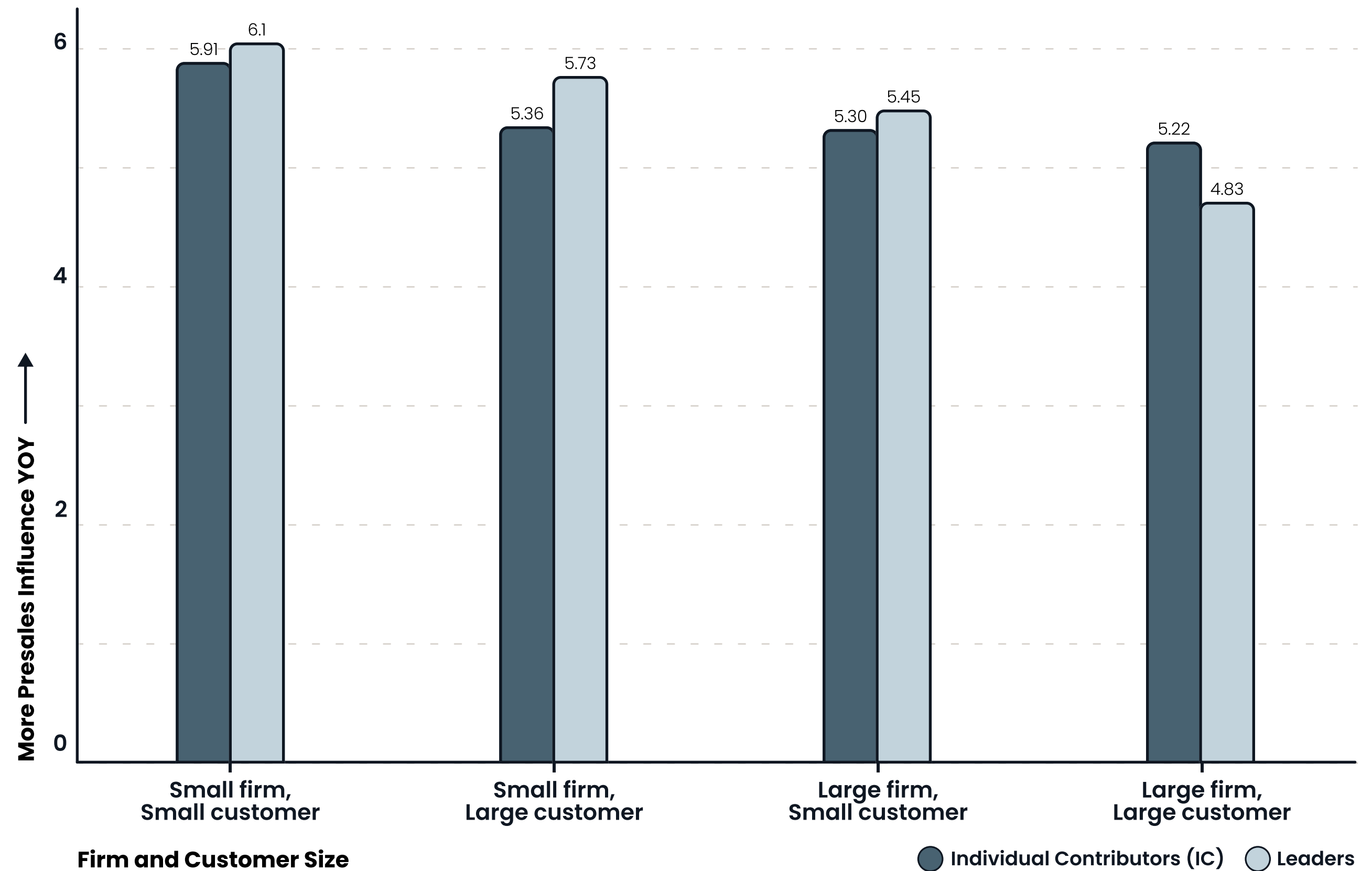
PRESALES INFLUENCE OVER TIME (CONT'D)

Presales influence in smaller segments may herald growing demand.

Respondents from smaller firms and those who sell to smaller customers report a greater positive change in influence YOY than those at larger firms or selling to larger customers.

As Presales is traditionally more prevalent in larger firms, this may be further evidence of changing buyer demands which emphasize more substantive interactions with sales across every market segment.

Average Presales Influence Compared to a Year Ago by Firm and Customer Size

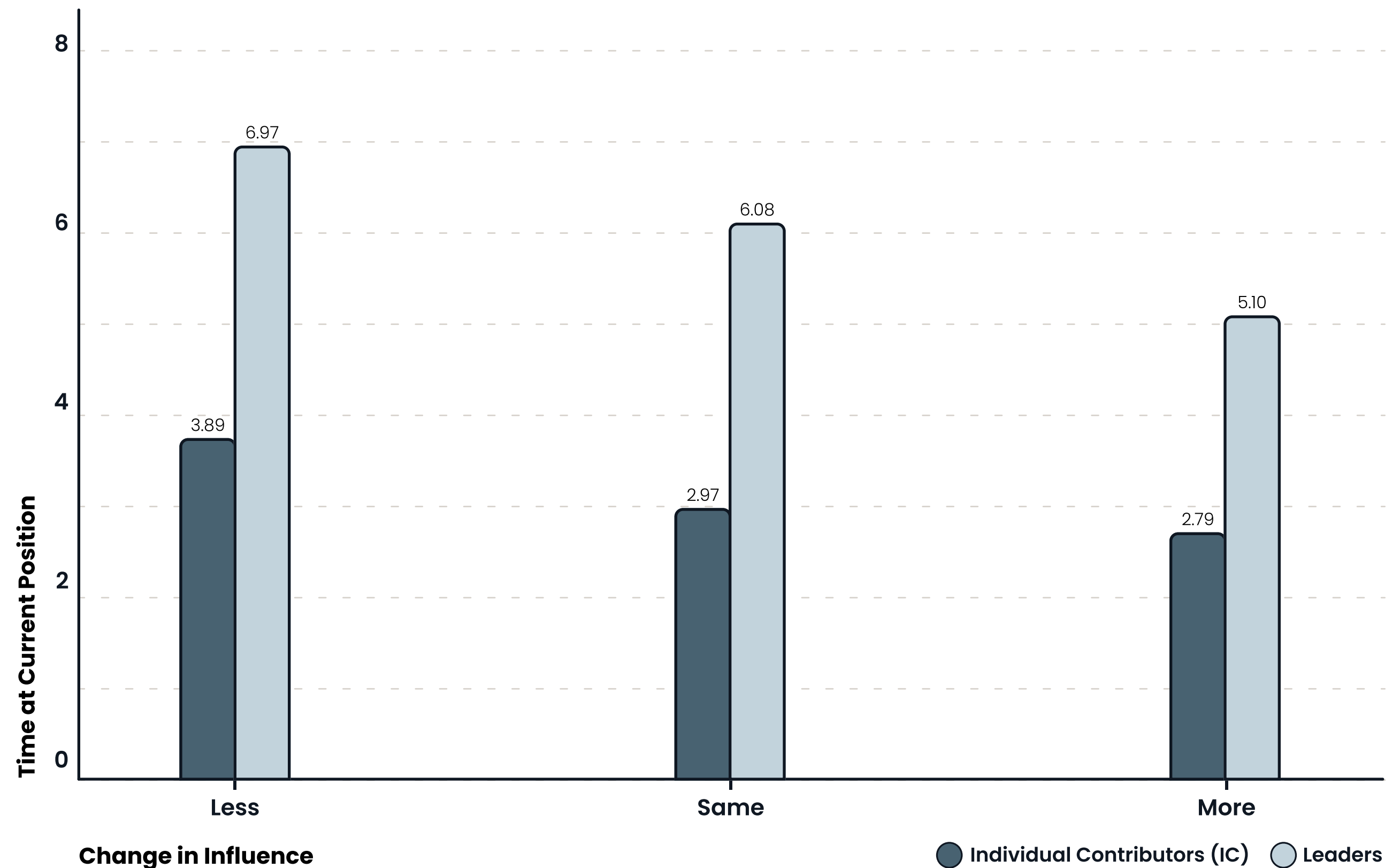


PRESALES INFLUENCE OVER TIME (CONT'D)

Respondents who report less influence YOY are more likely to have been in their position longer.

Respondents who report growing influence have not been in their role very long. This may suggest that ICs and Leaders are leaving when they are not feeling valued.

Average Time at Current Position by Presales Influence Compared to a Year Ago

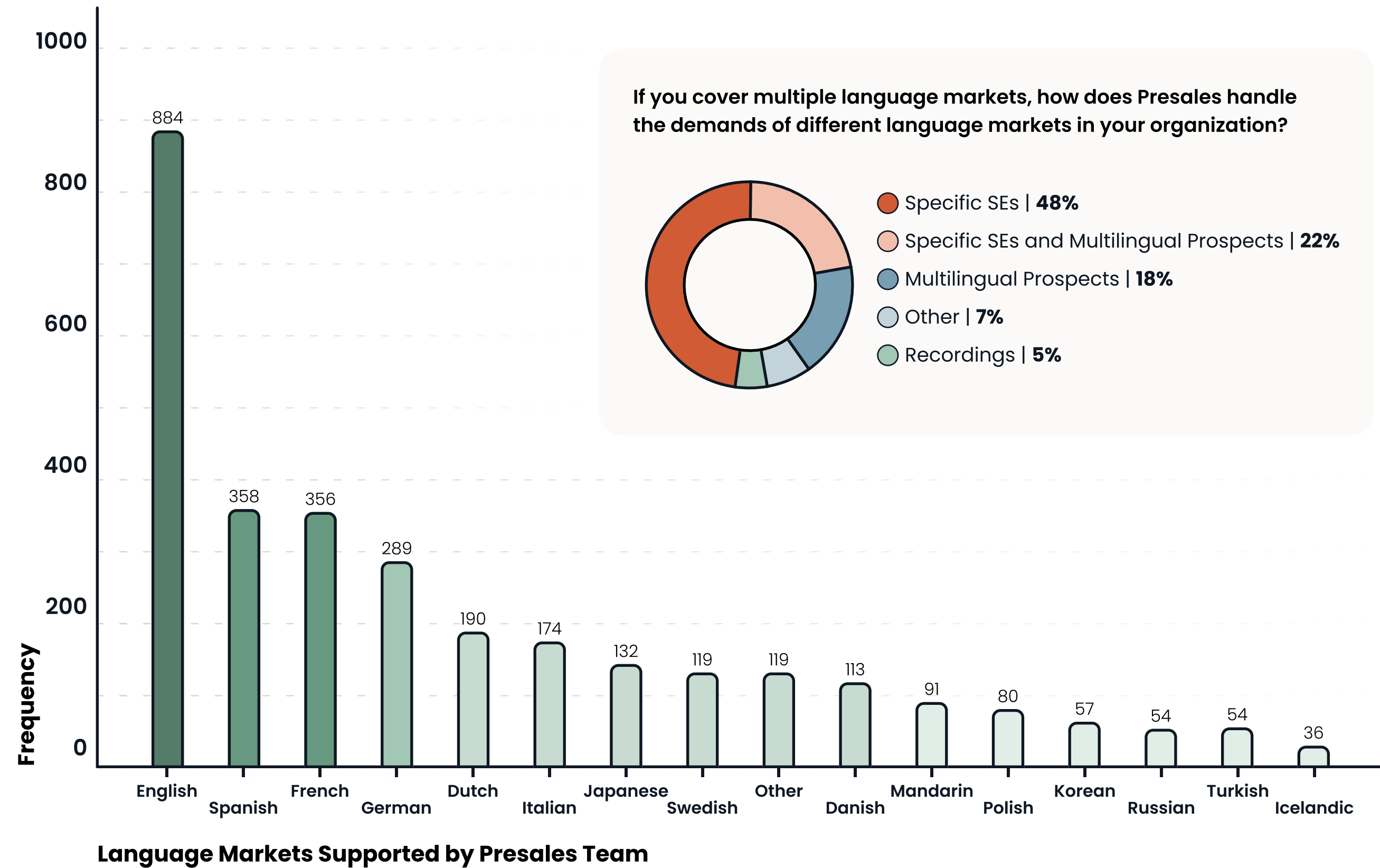


MULTILINGUAL STRATEGIES

Multilingual support poses problems at scale.

Language specific ICs are still the most popular strategy for covering multiple language markets.

Which of the following language markets does your Presales team support?



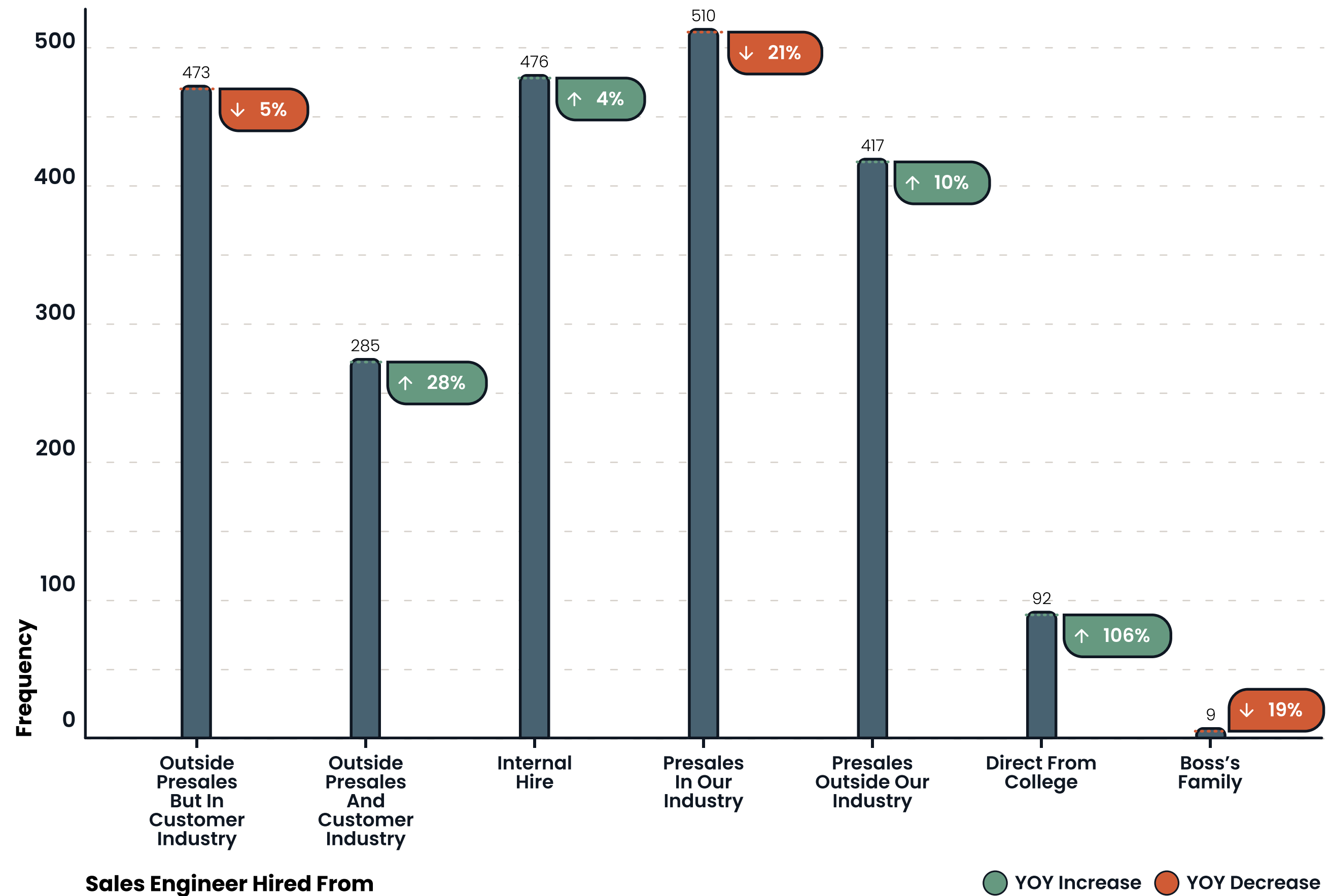
HIRING SALES ENGINEERS

Tight labor market is forcing leaders to look beyond recruiting ICs from other companies in their same industry.

While enticing ICs from other companies in the same industry is still the most common source of new ICs, we are seeing the largest increase in hiring from other departments internally, followed by other professionals within the same industry.

“Presales in Our Industry” fell by 21% year over year. That percentage was distributed over the other hiring sources with “Presales outside our Industry” increasing 10% and “Internal Hires” increasing 4% from last year.

From where did your organization hire your last ten (10) SEs? Select all that apply.

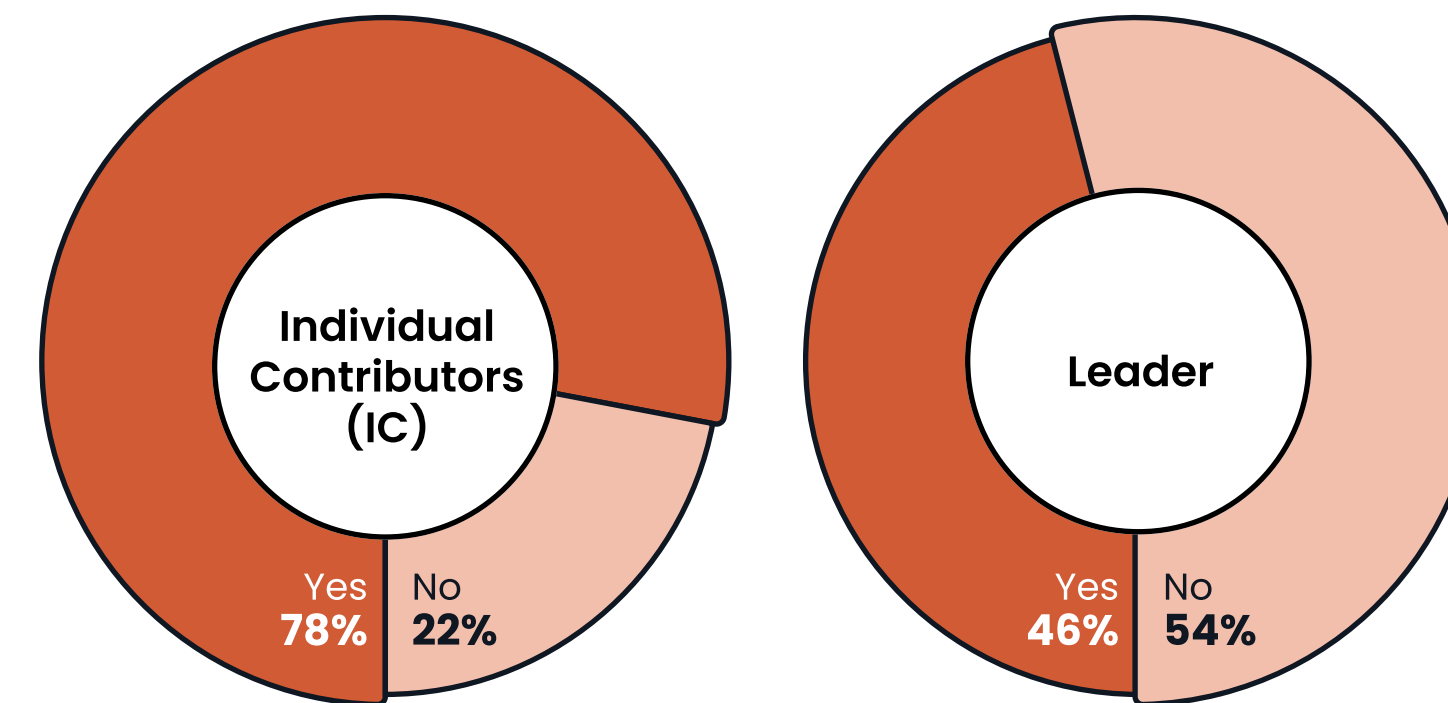


IC PROFESSIONAL MOBILITY

Leaders still report more internal mobility than ICs.

78% of ICs report being hired directly into their current role from outside the company, compared to only 46% of Leaders.

Were you hired directly into your current role from outside the organization?



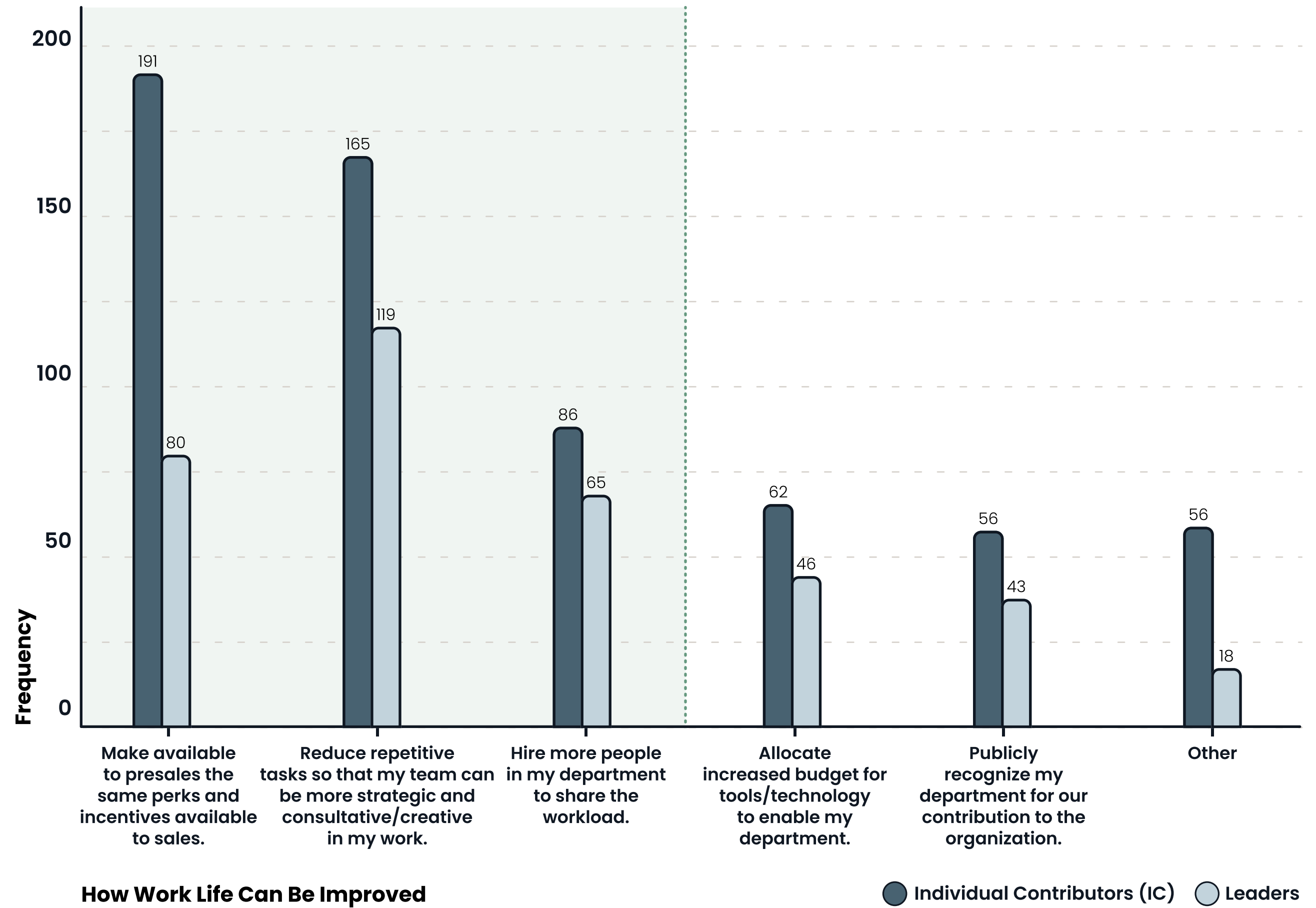
QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

ICs and Leaders want the perks of Sales, less repetition, and more help.

ICs and Leaders report that removing repetition and adding sales perks would most improve their work life.

72% of ICs and 76% of Leaders rank “removing repetition” or “adding perks/incentives” or “more hiring” as the top steps to improve their work life.

Improving Presales Work Life



MOST VALUABLE TOOLS IN TECH STACK

Other than your CRM or virtual meeting tool (like Zoom or MS Teams), which tools in your tech stack are most valuable to you in your Presales functions?



MOST VALUABLE TOOLS IN TECH STACK
(CONT'D)

What tools are you or your team considering?





Demos

WHO DELIVERS DEMOS

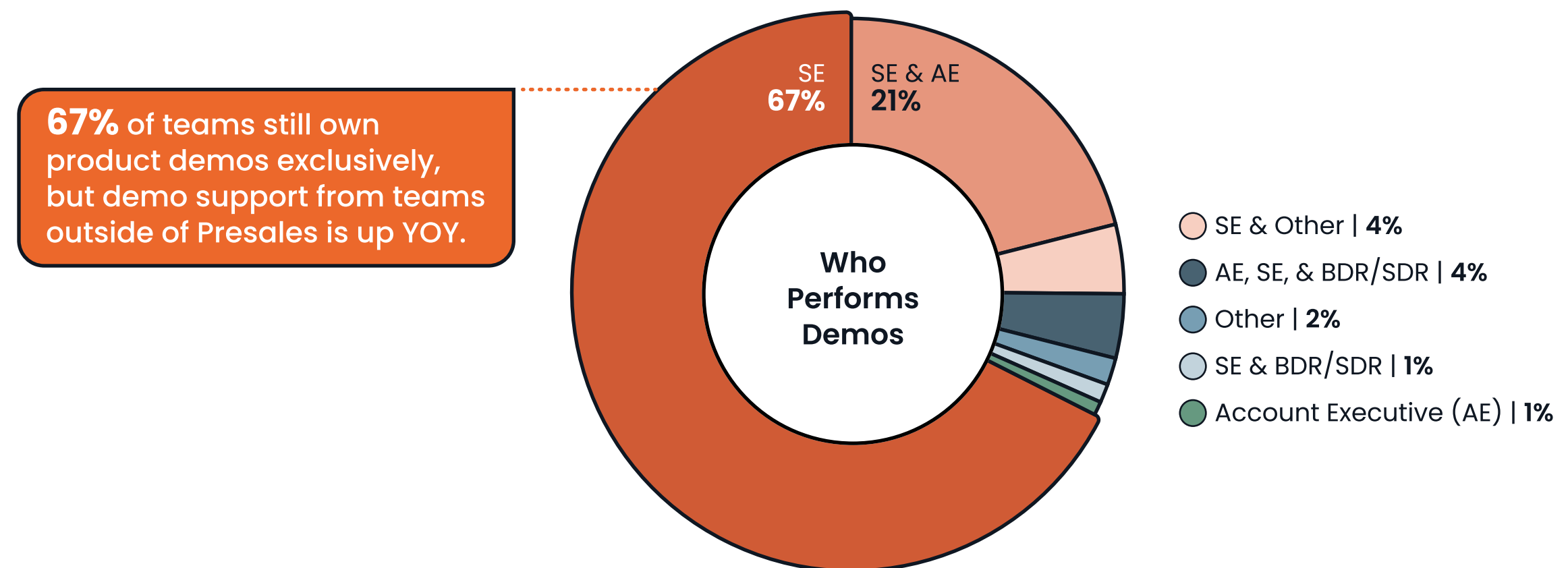
AEs are pitching in with demos to reduce the time customers need to wait.

SEs still do the lion's share of demos at 67%, but we are seeing an increase in demo support from teams outside Presales.

33% of teams reported demo support from outside of Presales, increasing by 6.5% from last year.

Other teams could be pitching in with demo support as a result of growing demo lag times.

Who performs product demonstrations for prospective buyers of your product?



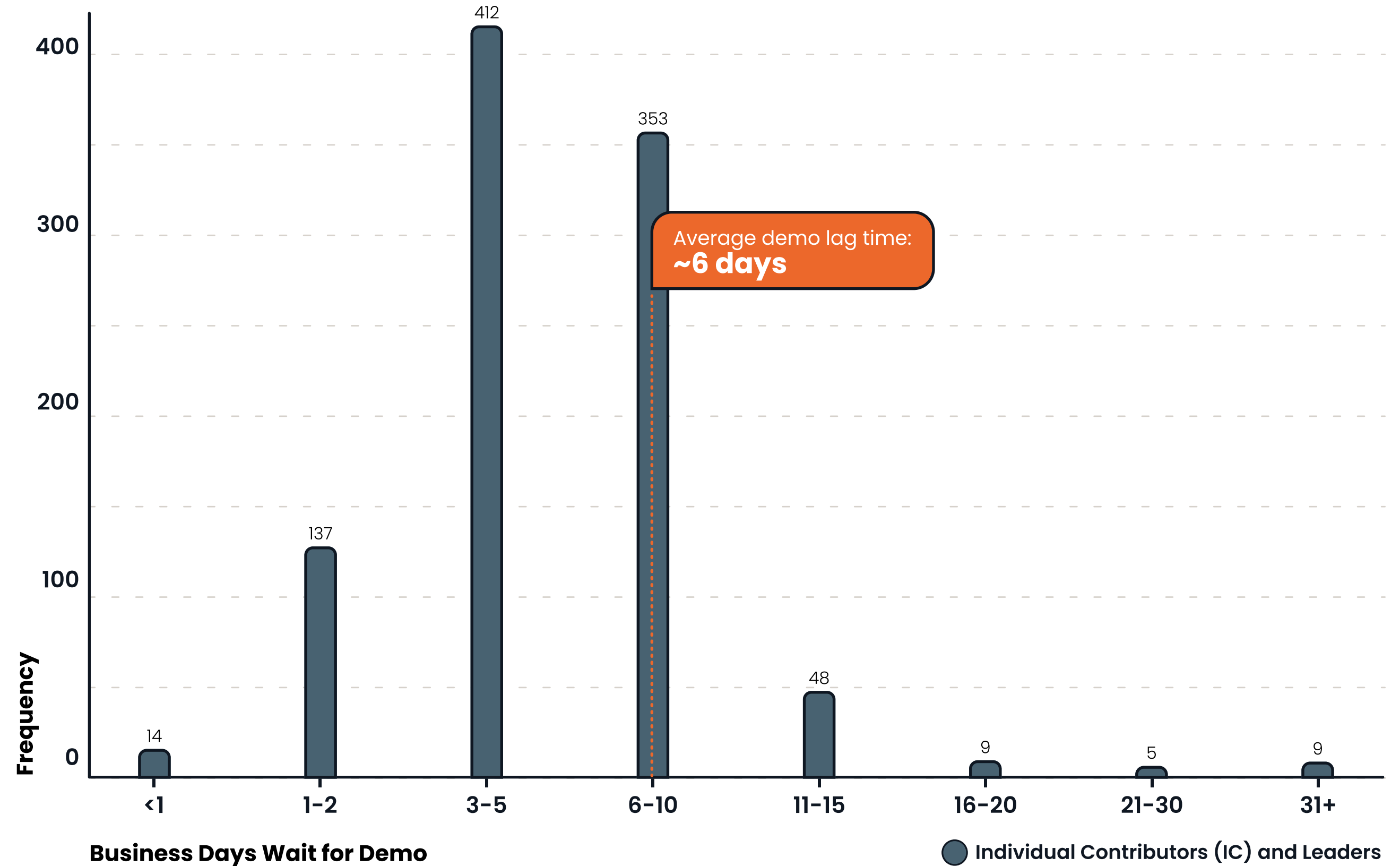
DEMO LAG TIME

Prospects are waiting longer for demos YOY.

43% of respondents reported that prospects have to wait 6 days or more for a demo. This is up more than 13% from last year.

7% of respondents reported that prospects have to wait longer than 2 weeks.

How many business days does a prospect typically wait from the time they request a presales product demonstration to the time they get one?



Count: 987 | Median: 4 | Mean: 5.98 | Min: 0 | Max: 35

DEMO LAG TIME (CONT'D)

Longer SE Onboarding times predict longer demo wait times.

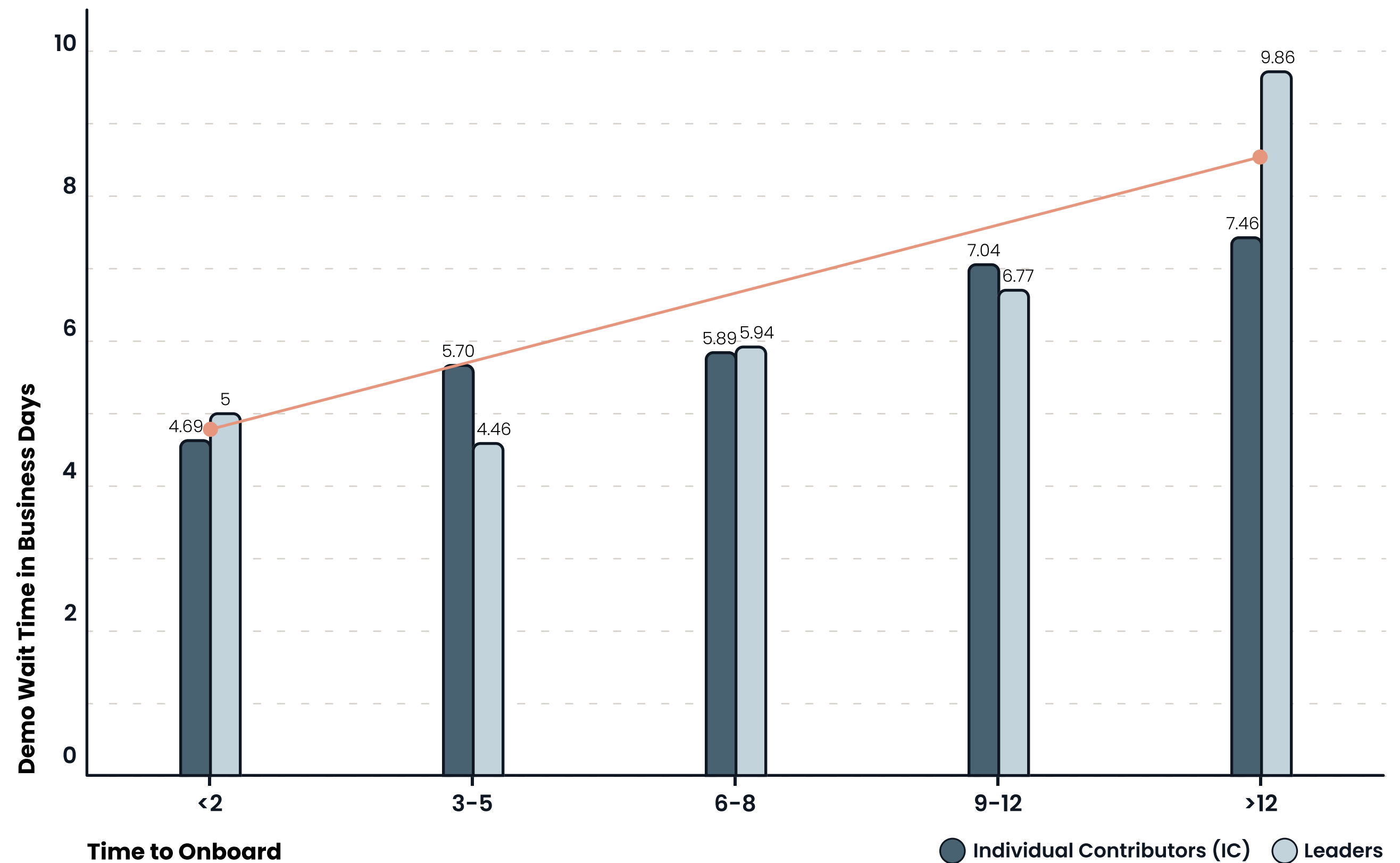
Existing operational SEs on a team with ramping SEs have to handle demo demand until new hires are fully ramped which takes 6 months on average.

The addition of more work and a fixed bandwidth drives up demo wait times, elongates sales cycles, and likely decreases win rates.

Leaders should perform a gap analysis to estimate and account for projected coverage.

To learn more about gap analysis, see [7 Immutable Strategies for Scaling Presales.](#)

Average Demo Wait Times (Business Days) by Months to Onboard



DEMO LAG TIME (CONT'D)

Lower demo lag times predict higher Presales influence.

There appears to be a relationship between lower demo wait times and a perception of increased Presales influence over time. This may suggest that ICs who are able to handle demo demands feel relevant and valuable to their sales teams while ICs hopelessly buried by demo requests feel stressed and mistreated.

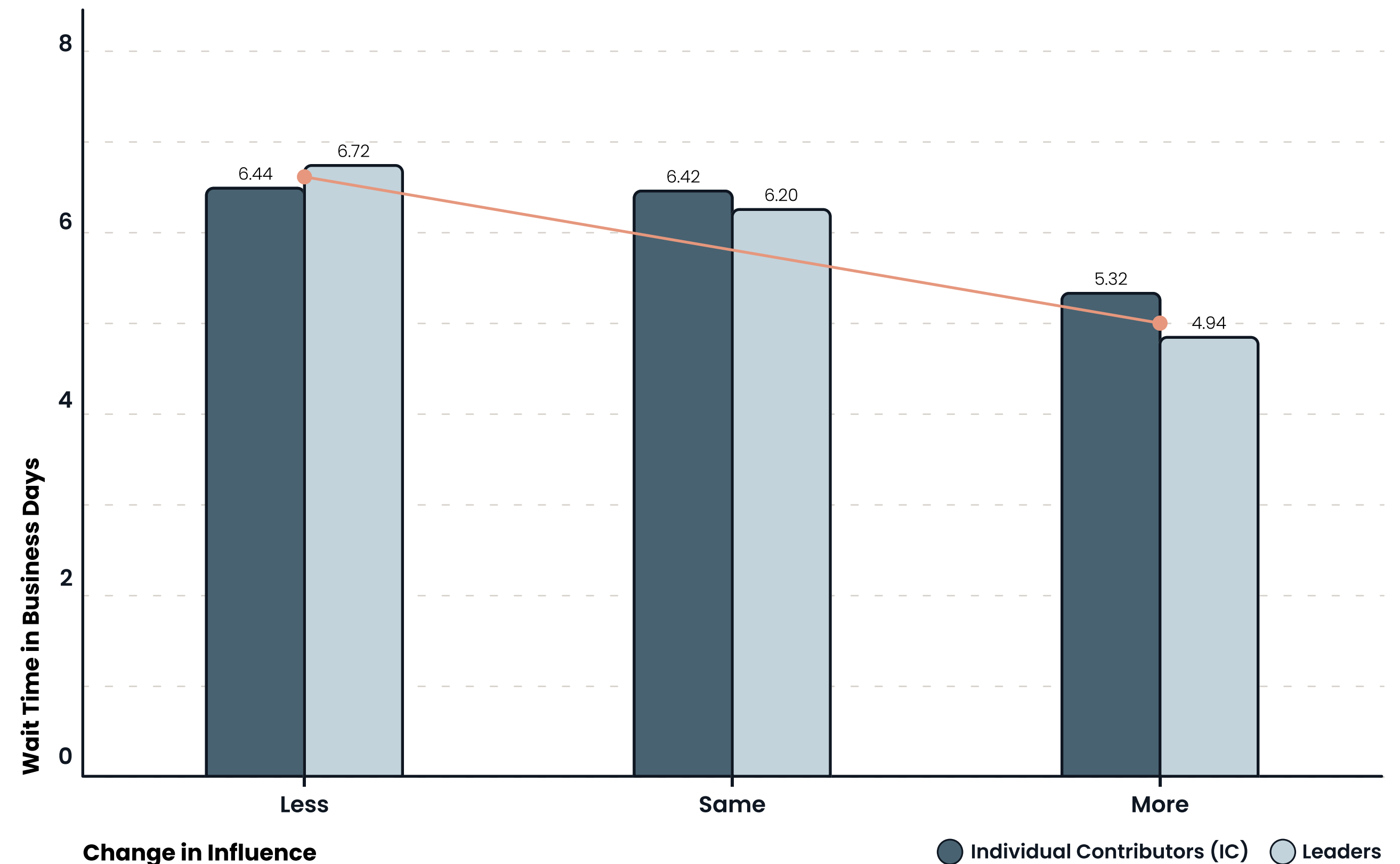
Longer demo wait times also represent an opportunity for more responsive competitors to preempt the initial demo, frame the evaluation criteria, and deliver a better initial customer experience.

Presales influence may decline when IC calendars are seen as bottlenecks.

Consensus helped to dramatically reduce demo lag times at *Visma / Raet*, adding capacity to Presales teams and improving cooperation between Presales and Sales.

[Read the case study.](#)

Average Demo Wait Times (Business Days) by the Change in Presales Influence Compared to a Year Ago



DEMOS PER WEEK

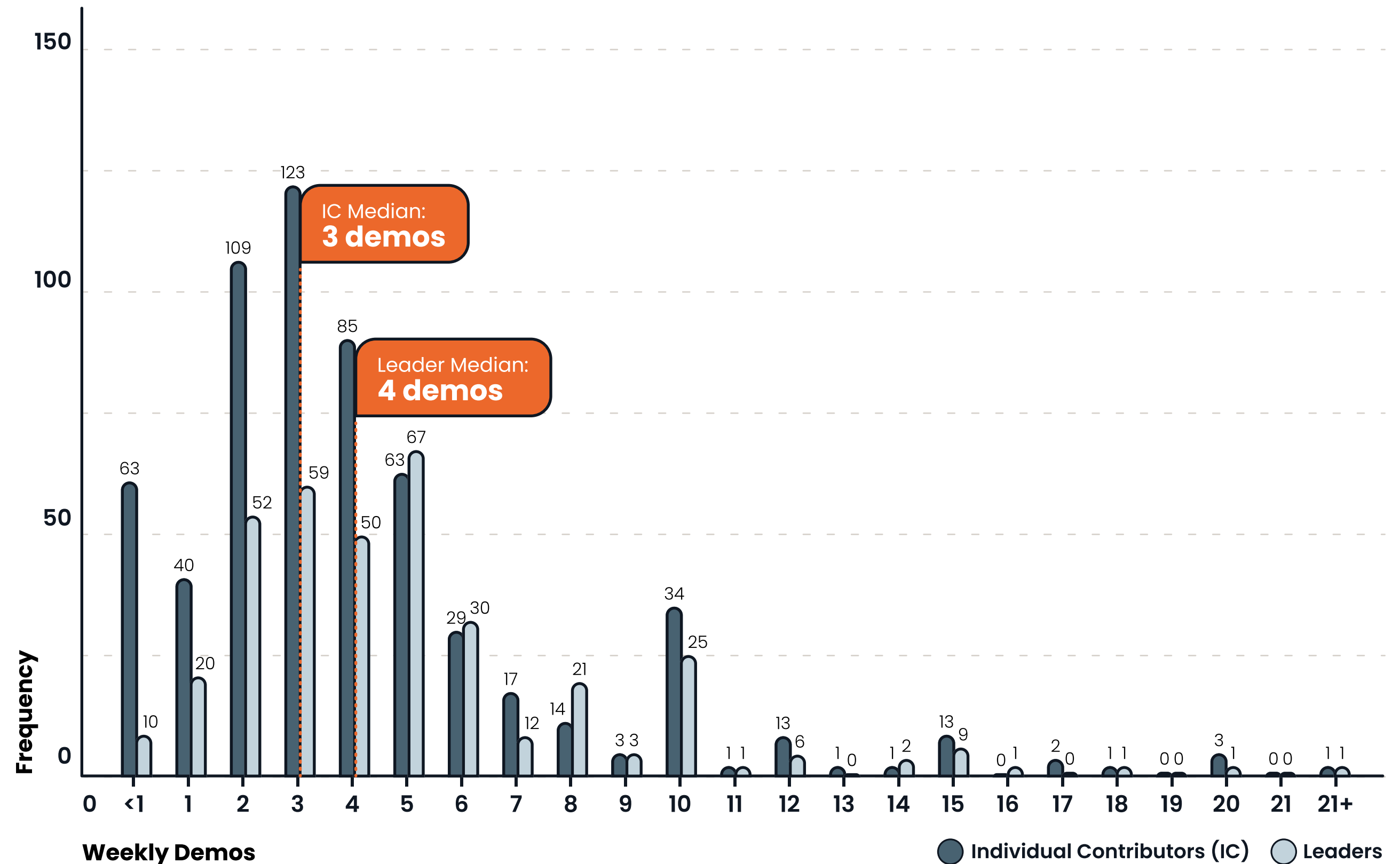
ICs are delivering fewer demos per week YOY.

The reported median demos delivered per week is 3 for ICs and 4 for Leaders.

Regardless, ICs and Leaders report that ICs are delivering one demo less per week than last year.

This may be driven by the reported increase in the average work hours required per demo.

How many product demonstrations does a member of your presales team perform in a typical week?

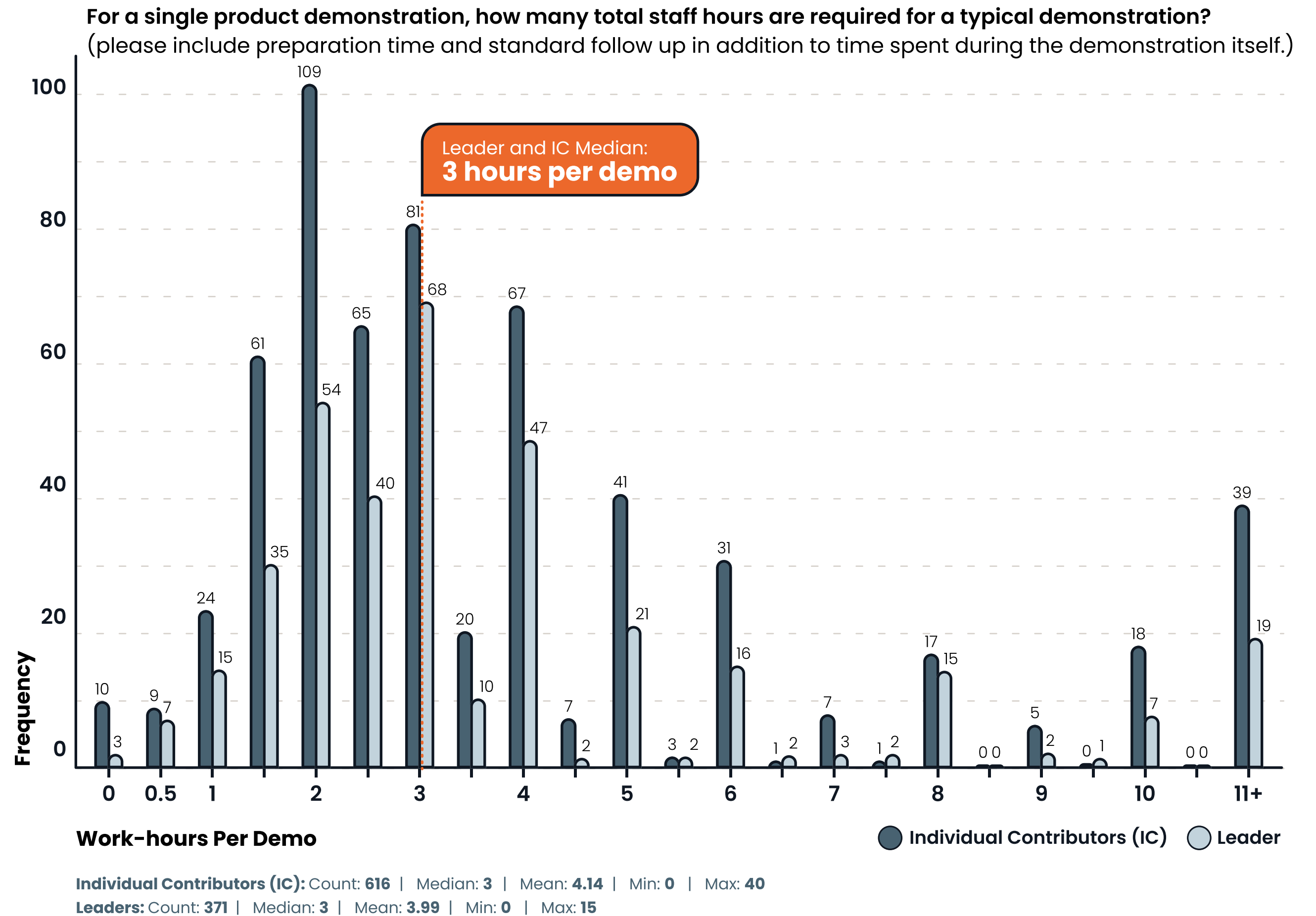


Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 3 | Mean: 4.20 | Min: 0 | Max: 35
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 4 | Mean: 5.04 | Min: 0 | Max: 24

HOURS PER DEMO

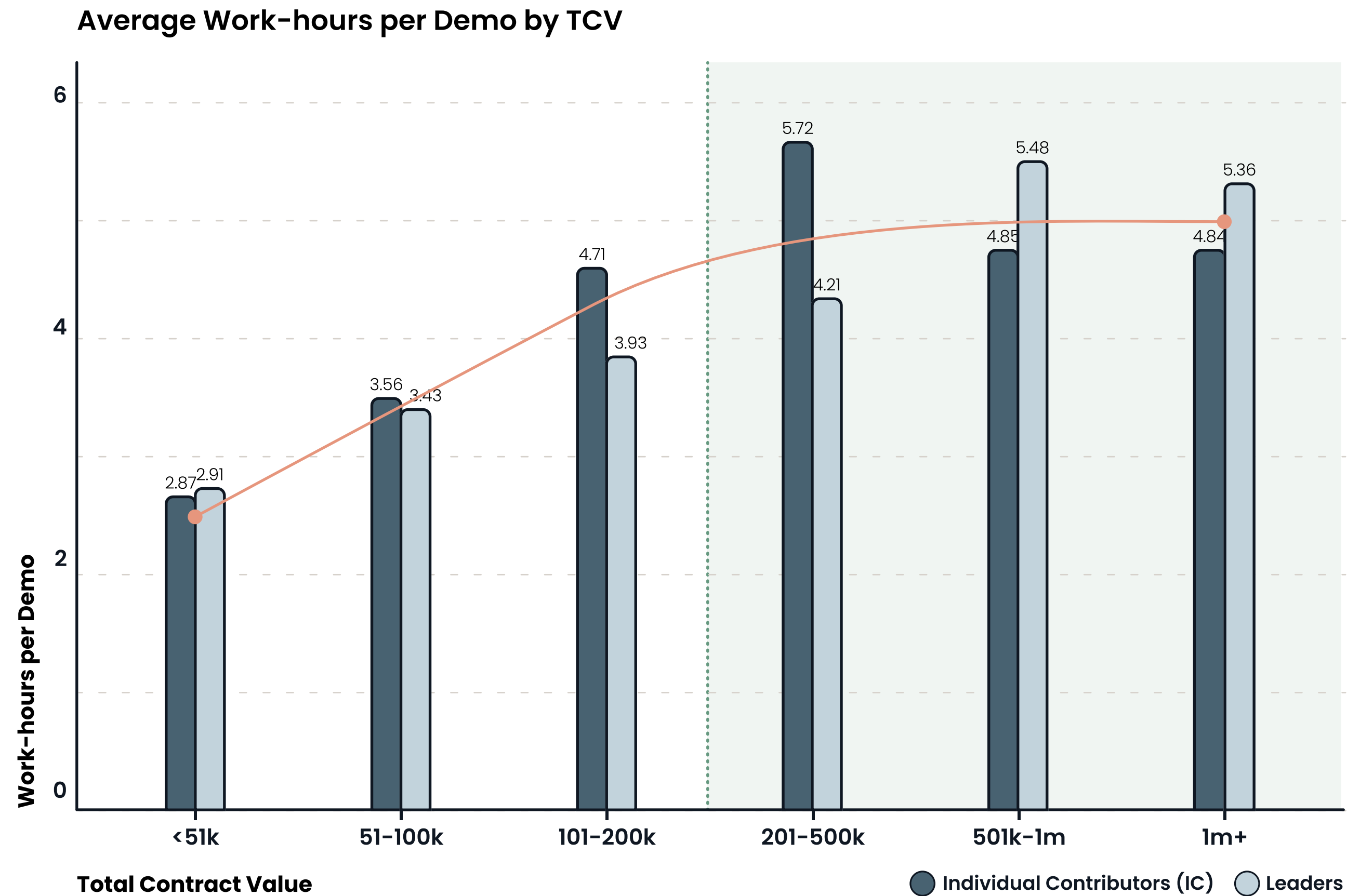
Work-hours per demo is growing, and larger deals predict more work-hours per demo.

The reported work-hours per demo is up approximately 20% or 30 minutes for ICs and Leaders compared to 2022.



HOURS PER DEMO (CONT'D)

As deal sizes increase above \$200K, the number of work-hours per demo plateaus.



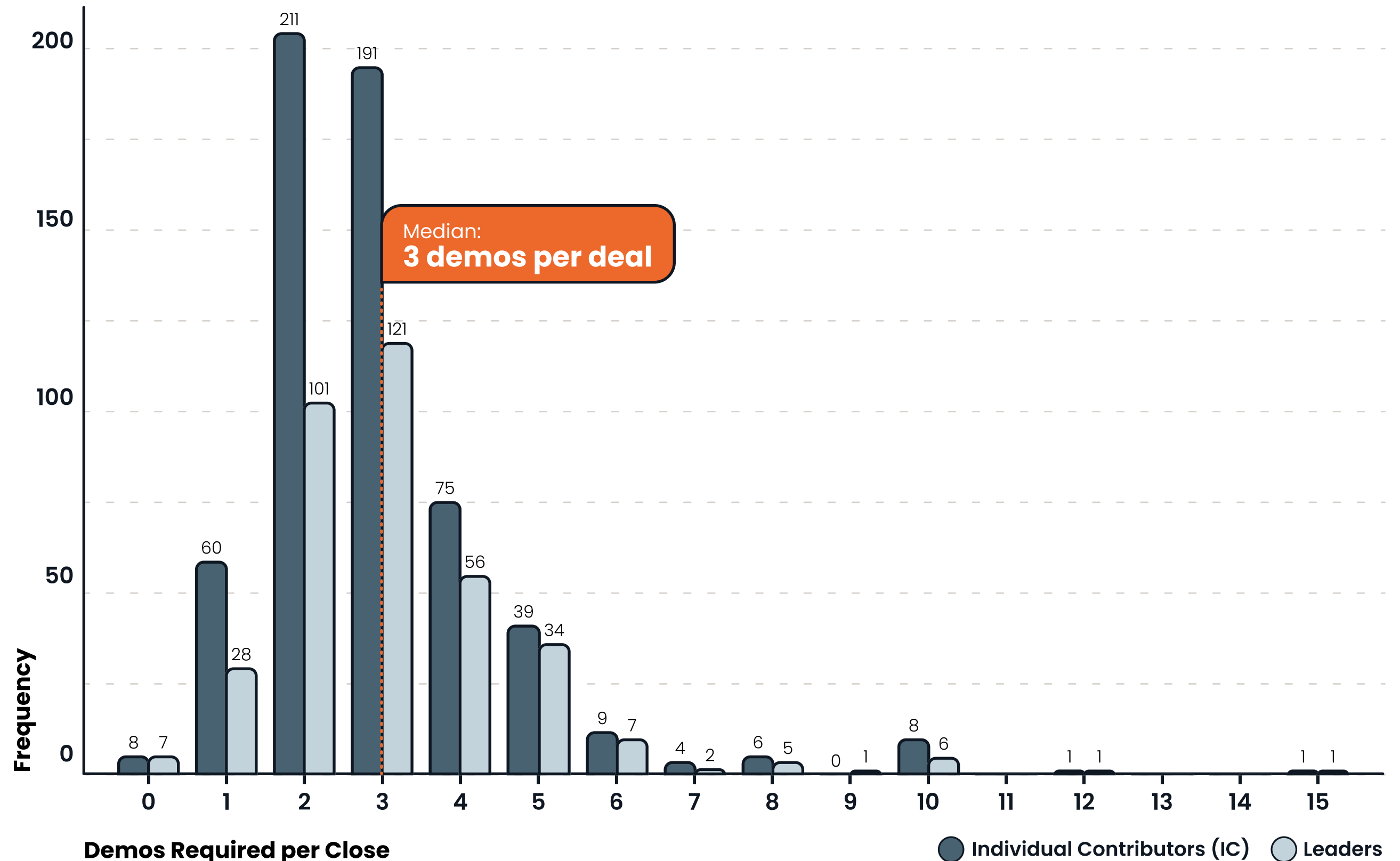
DEMOS PER DEAL

It takes an average of 3 demos to close/win a deal.

26% of respondents said 4 or more (and as high as 15) demos are required.

Organizations define “demos” differently, and generally approach demos with an overly generic strategy. Consensus researched thousands of demos delivered by teams across the globe and across every major industry, and found that there are 6 different types of demos, each serving a unique purpose for various stakeholders at various buying stages. For more information on the different demo types and where they’re applicable, see [The Definitive Guide to the 6 Demo Types](#).

How many Presales product demonstrations (either remote or in person) are required per typical closed/won deal? Please include all repeat demonstrations required due to new stakeholders engaging, etc.



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 614 | Median: 3 | Mean: 2.94 | Min: 0 | Max: 20
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 3 | Mean: 3.23 | Min: 0 | Max: 20

UNQUALIFIED DEMOS

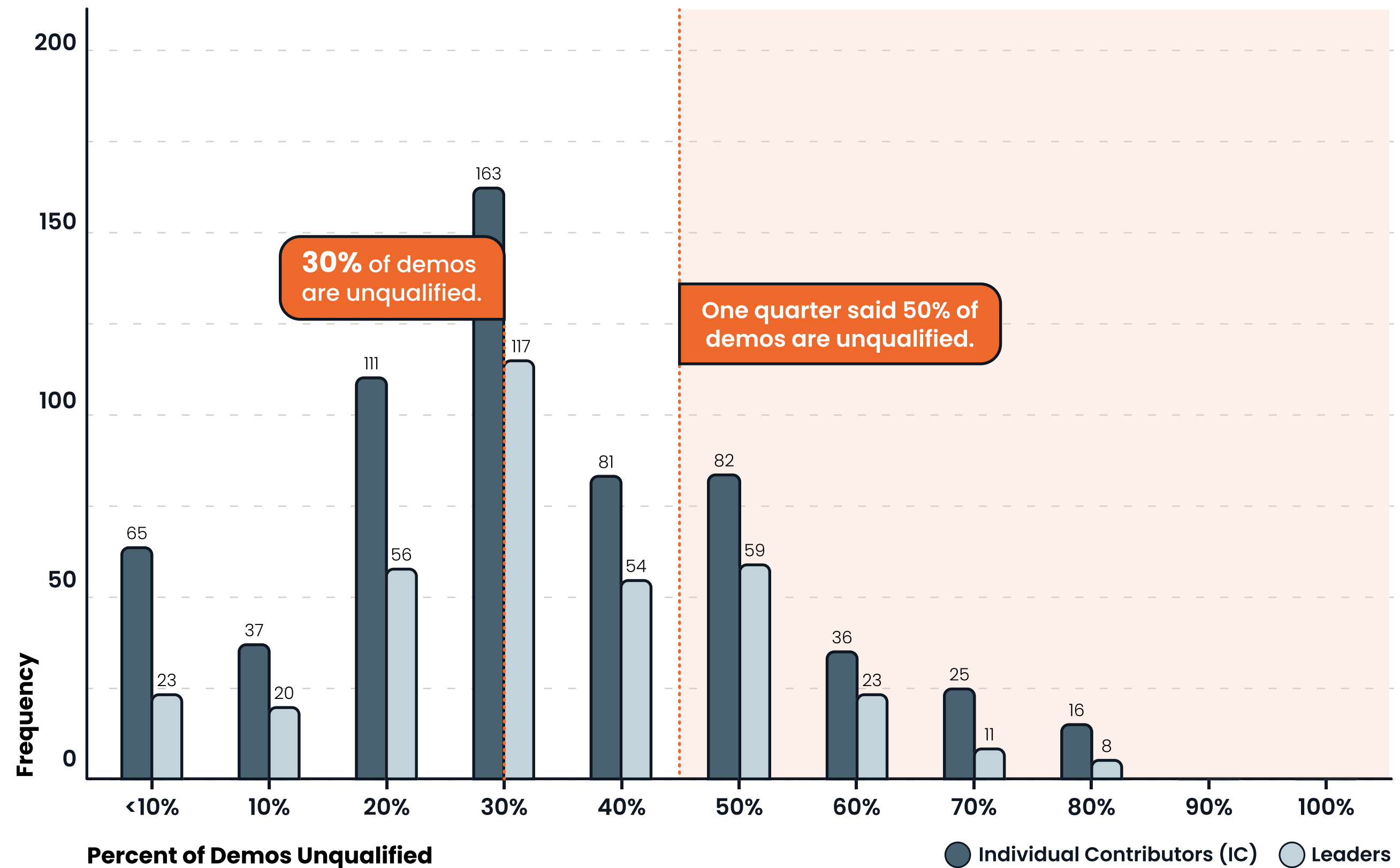
30% of Presales demos are unqualified.

26% of respondents say that more than 50% of demos are unqualified.

For a breakdown of the costs associated with each demo check out [Cost of Demo Calculator](#).

Consensus reduced unqualified demos by 89% at Trintech. [Read the case study.](#)

What percentage of your product demonstrations would you classify as unqualified or under-qualified?



Individual Contributors (IC): Count: 616 | Median: 30 | Mean: 33.125 | Min: 5 | Max: 90
Leaders: Count: 371 | Median: 30 | Mean: 34.78 | Min: 5 | Max: 90

UNQUALIFIED DEMOS (CONT'D)

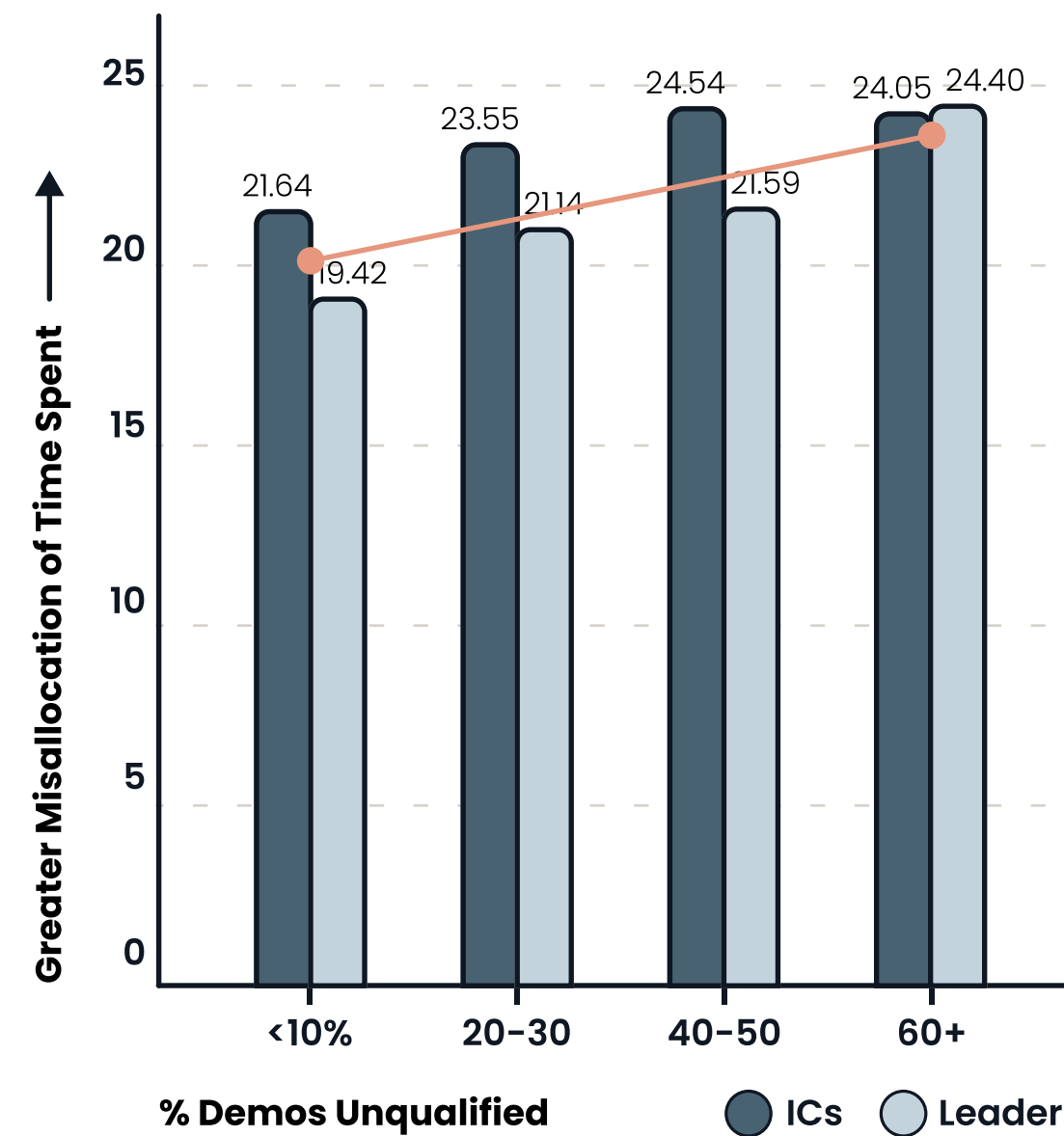
More unqualified demos predict greater misallocation of time spent on Intro Demos.

Teams that report more unqualified demos also report a greater discrepancy between the impact of Intro Demos and the time they demand of the team.

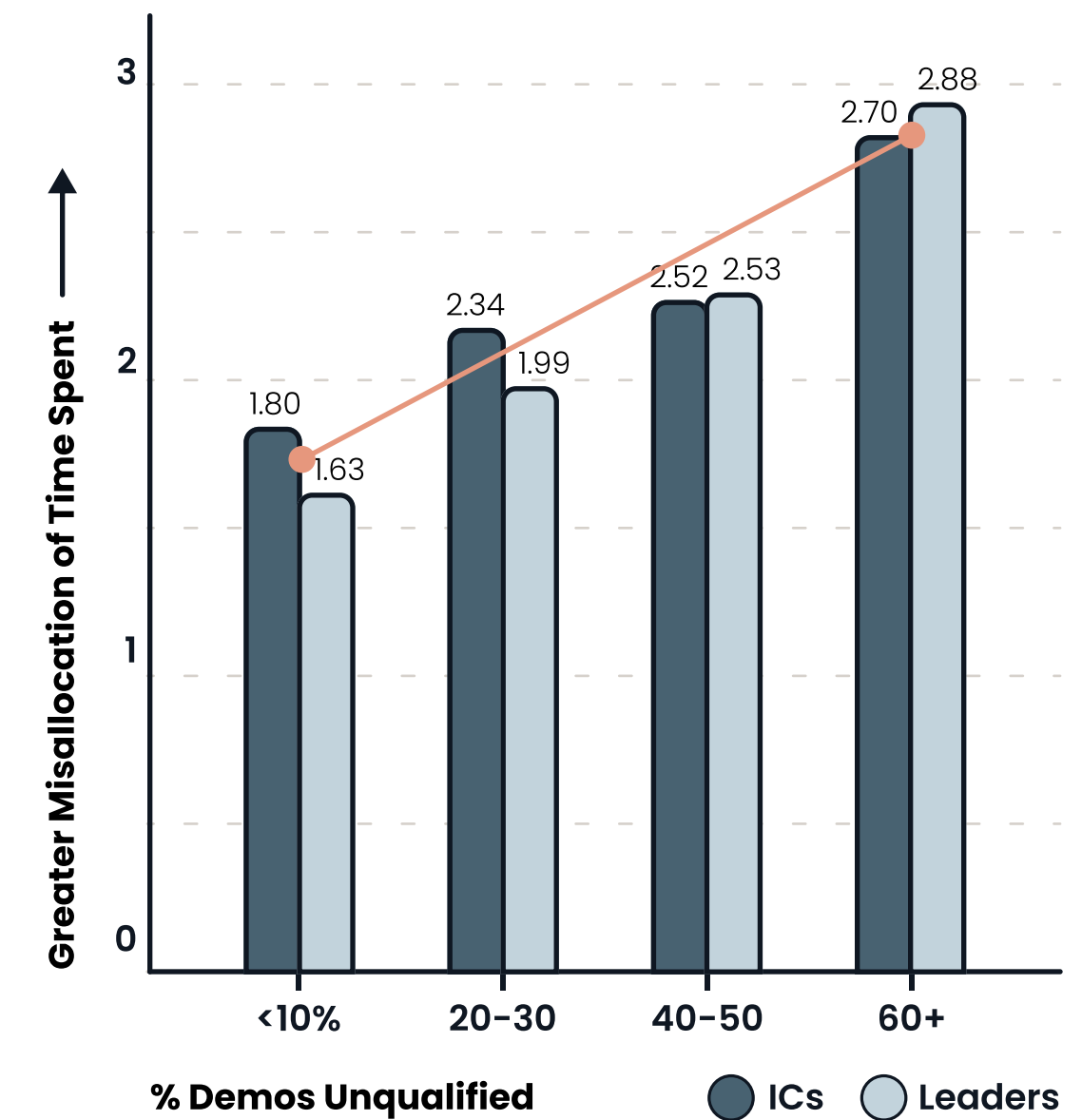
While Intro Demos are rated as low impact generally, unqualified demos are particularly egregious as they waste precious resources that could be better allocated to higher impact activities such as discovery, technical demos, and POCs.

Note: See [Presales Activities](#) to review misallocation and how it is calculated.

The average misallocation of time spent on **Presales activities** by percentage of unqualified demos.



The average misallocation of time spent on **Intro Demos** by percentage of unqualified demos.



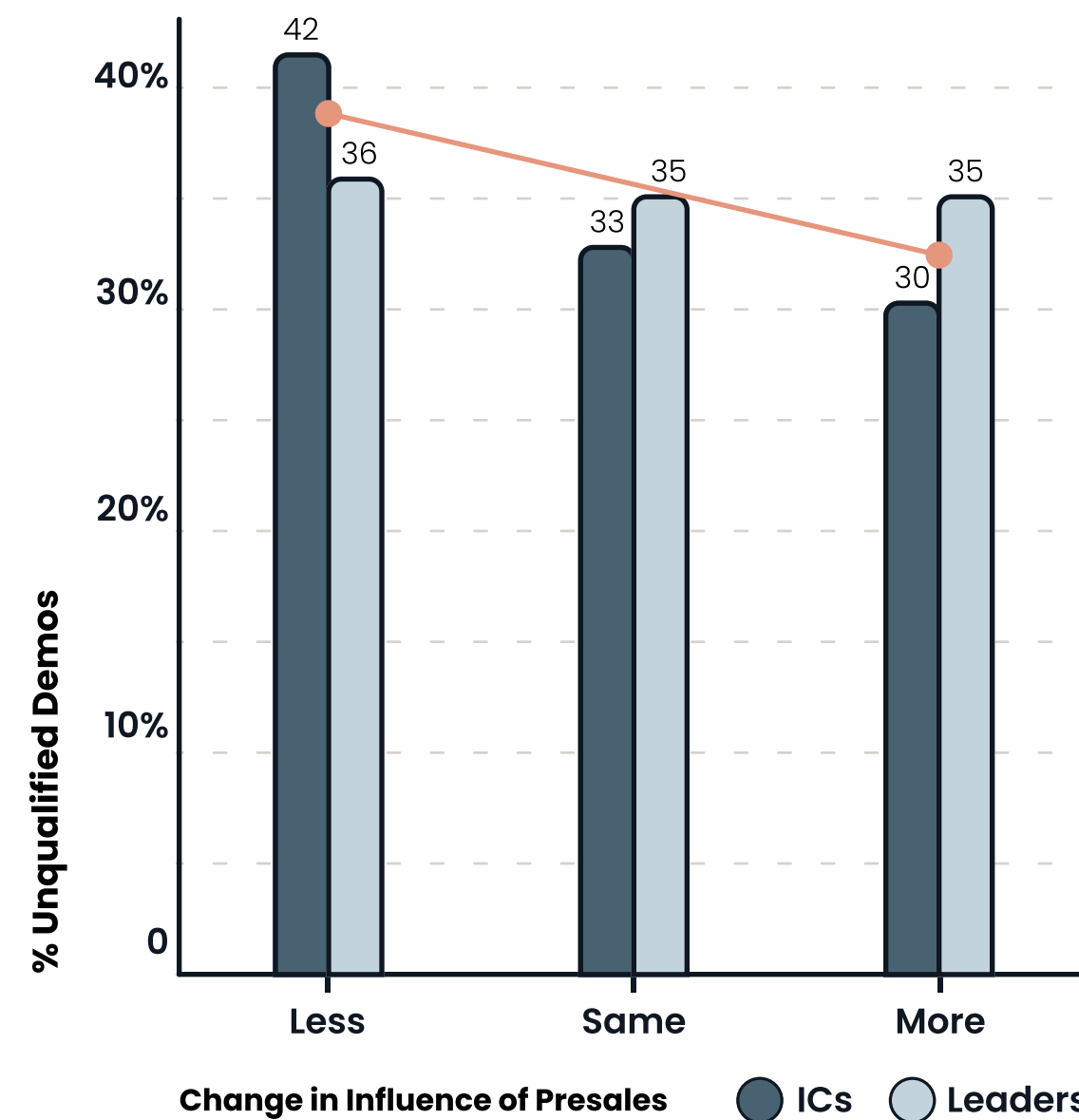
UNQUALIFIED DEMOS (CONT'D)

ICs overburdened with unqualified demos report lower influence and recognition relative to Sales.

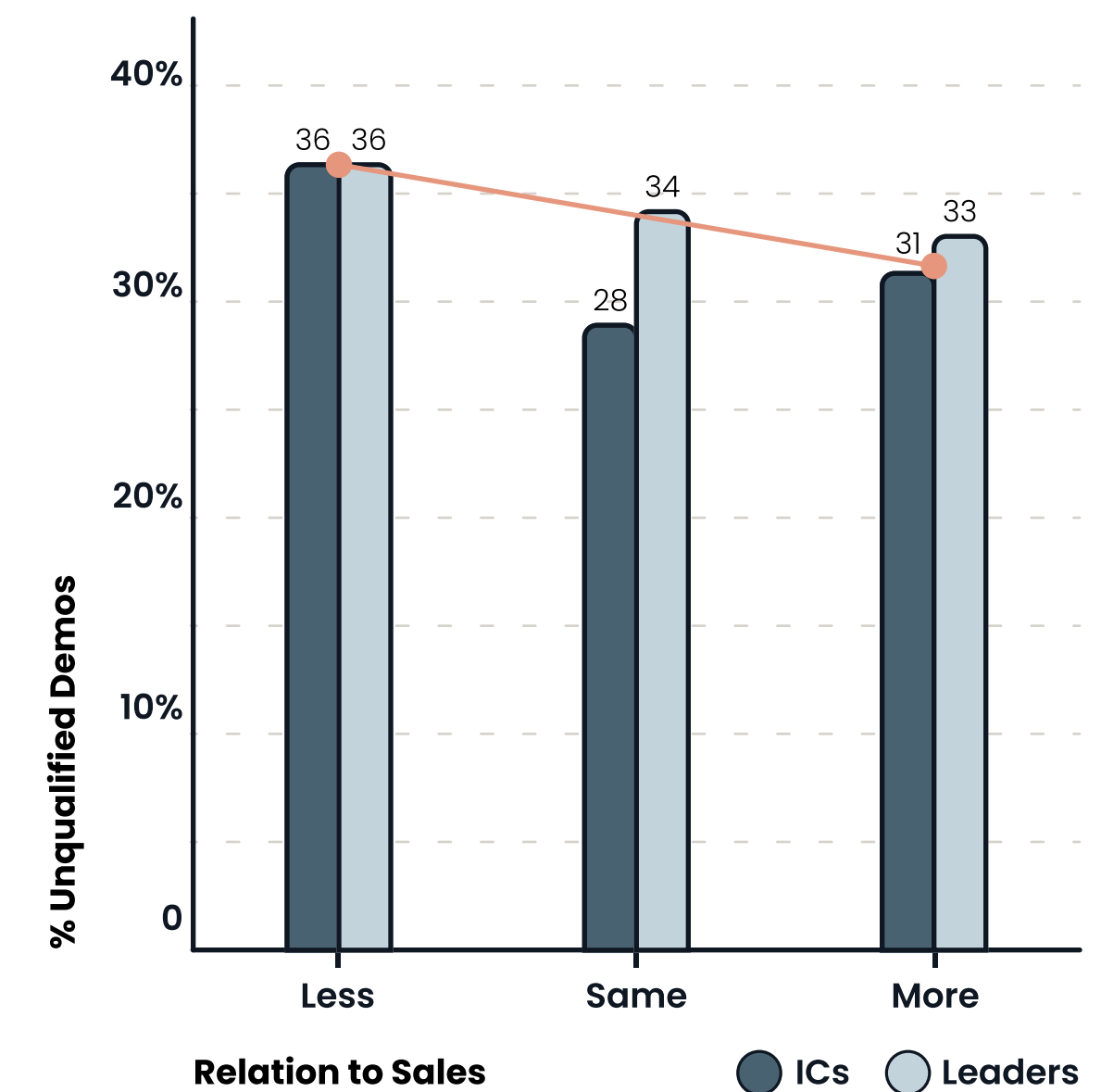
ICs confronted with more unqualified demos are more likely to report that Presales has less influence in their organization than they did one year ago.

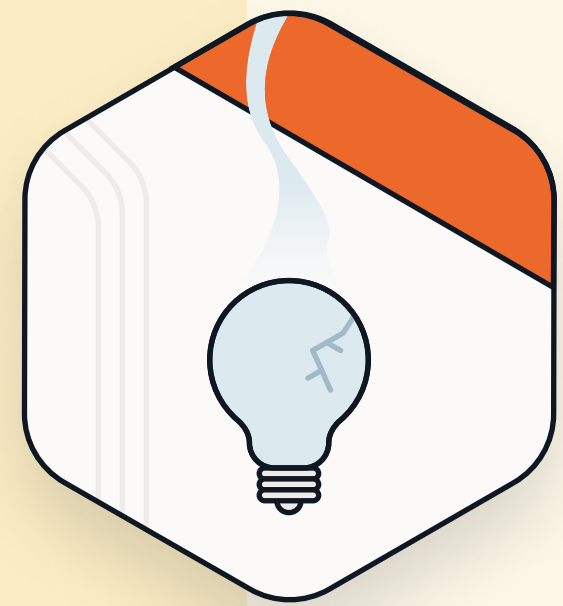
Similarly, ICs confronted with more unqualified demos also report less influence and recognition relative to Sales.

Average % Demos Unqualified by Change in Influence of Presales



Average % Demos Unqualified by Relation to Sales



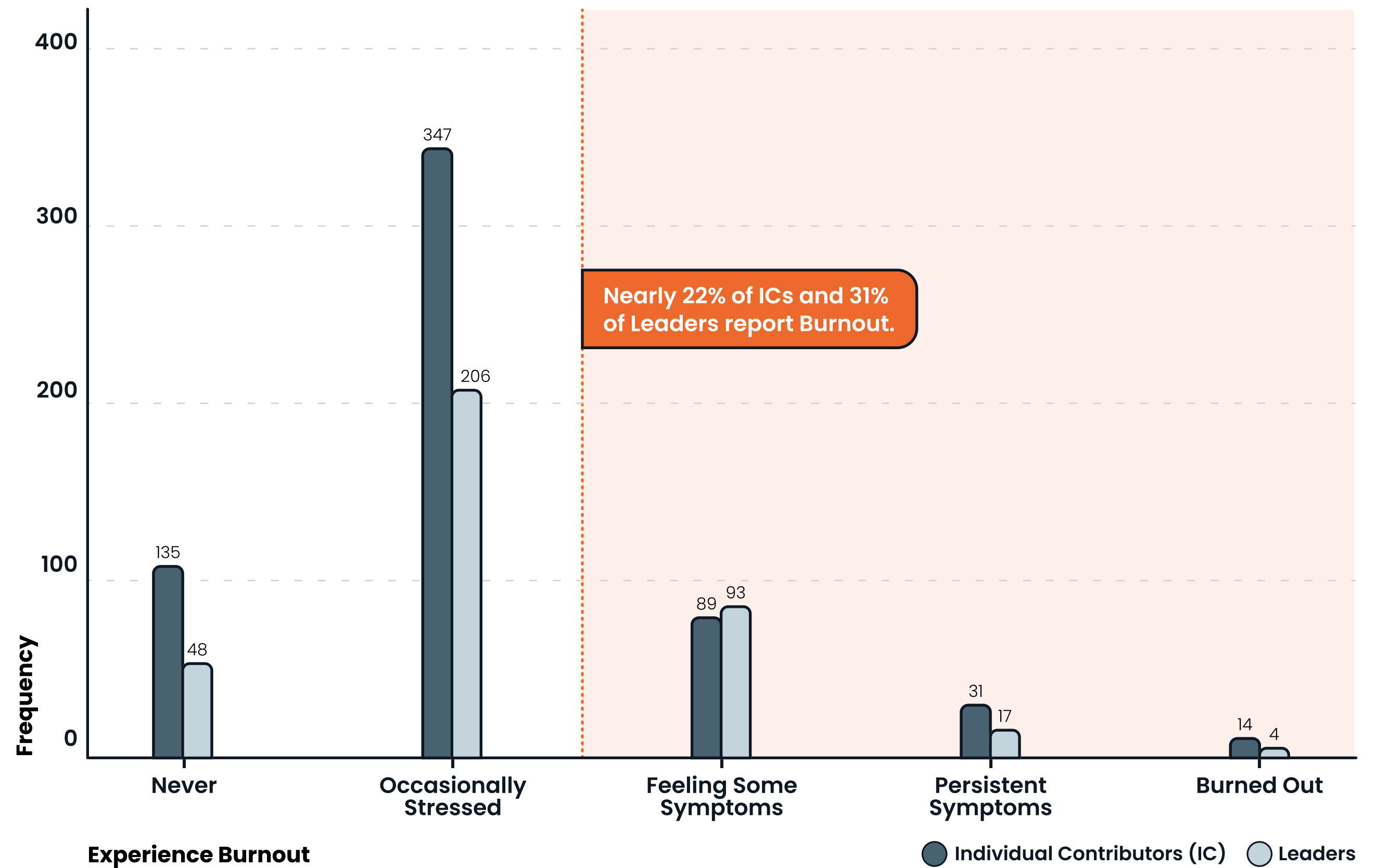


Burnout

COSTS OF BURNOUT

Nearly 22% of ICs and 31% of Leaders report feeling at least some symptoms of burnout.

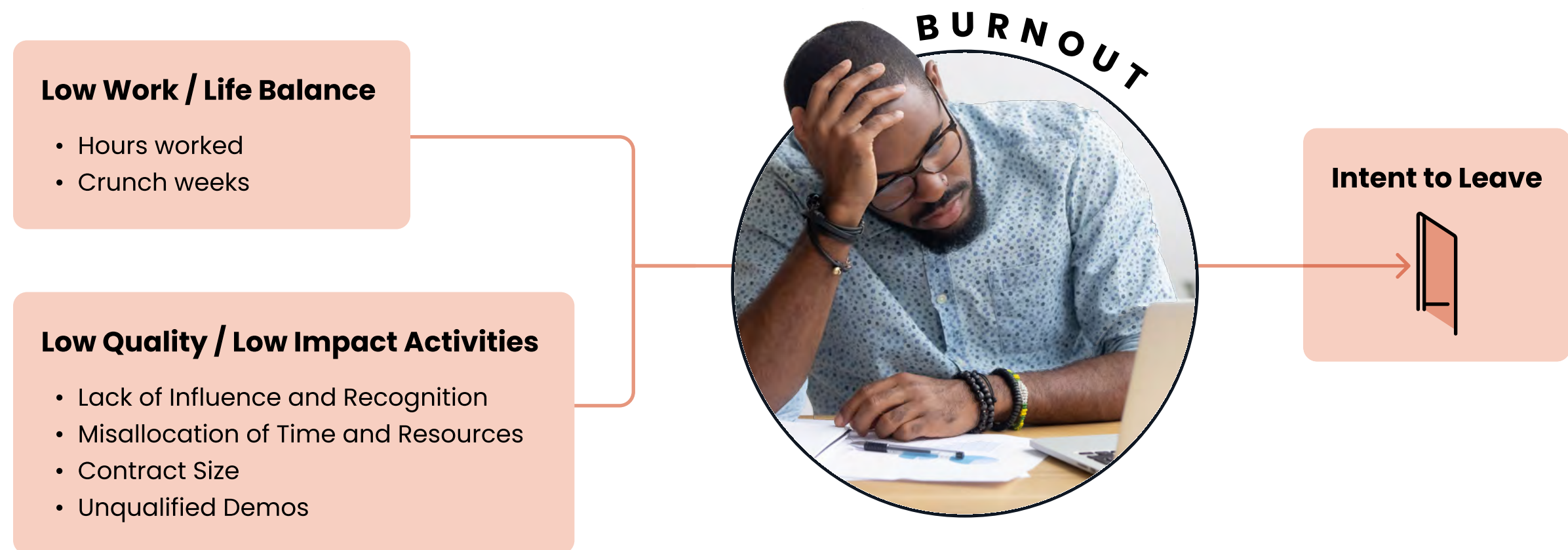
Overall, based on your definition of burnout, how would you rate your level of burnout?



KEY DRIVERS

The many causes of burnout.

The causes of burnout can be placed broadly into two categories: Lack of Work/Life Balance, and Low Quality/Impact Activities



NEW AND NOTABLE

MISALLOCATION OF TIME & RESOURCES

Misallocating time and resources fuels burnout, draining productivity and perpetuating a cycle of inefficiency and frustration.

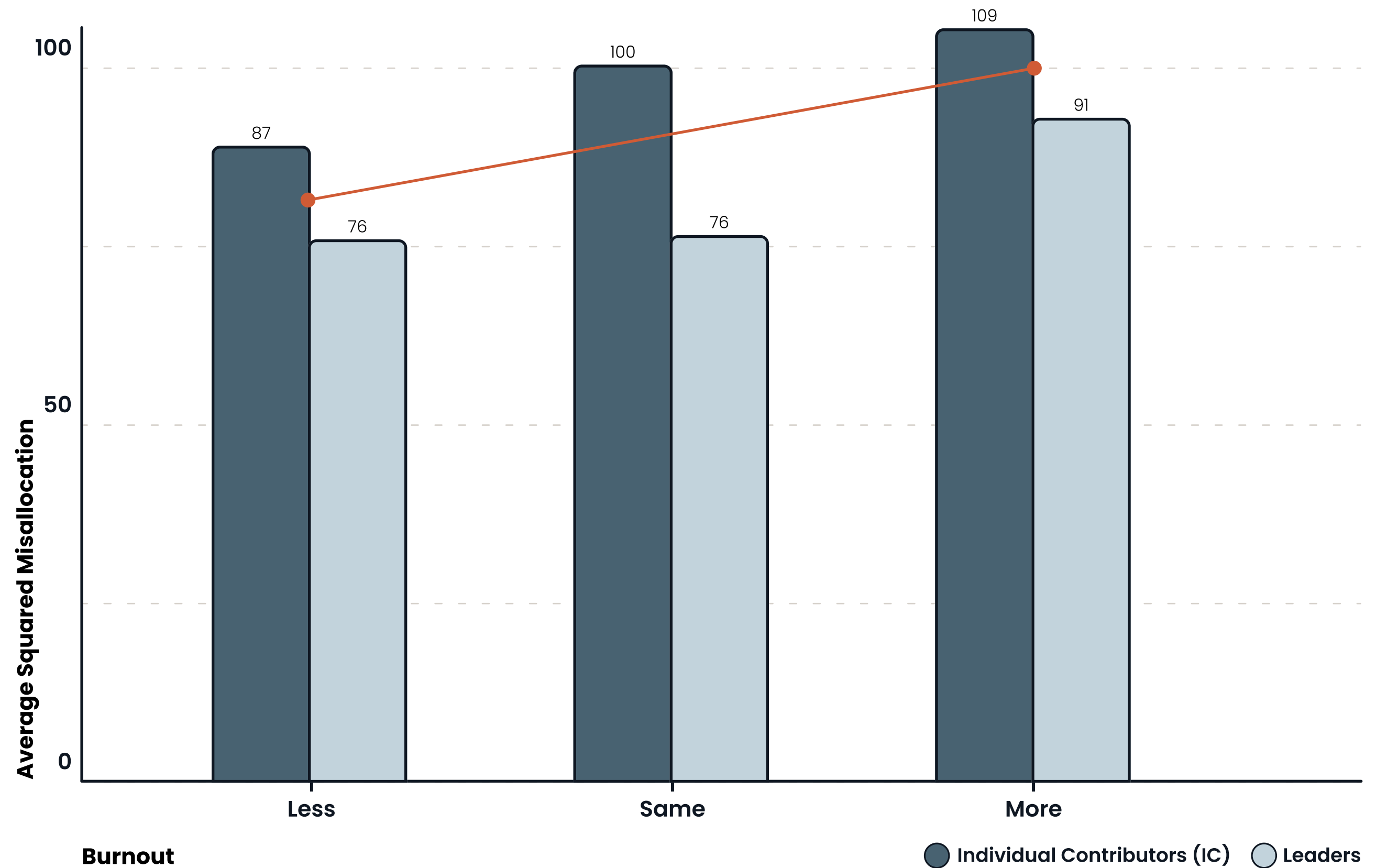
Misallocation is a disconnect between how Leaders and ICs actually spend their time and how they feel their time should be spent.

We find the difference between where they rank the activity in terms of time spent and subtract where respondents rank that same activity in terms of "Moving the Needle."

Squaring this difference exaggerates extreme mismatches and gives a measure of total misallocation which is correlated with burnout.

Note: See [Presales Activities](#) to review misallocation and how it is calculated.

Average Squared Misallocation of Time Spent by Burnout

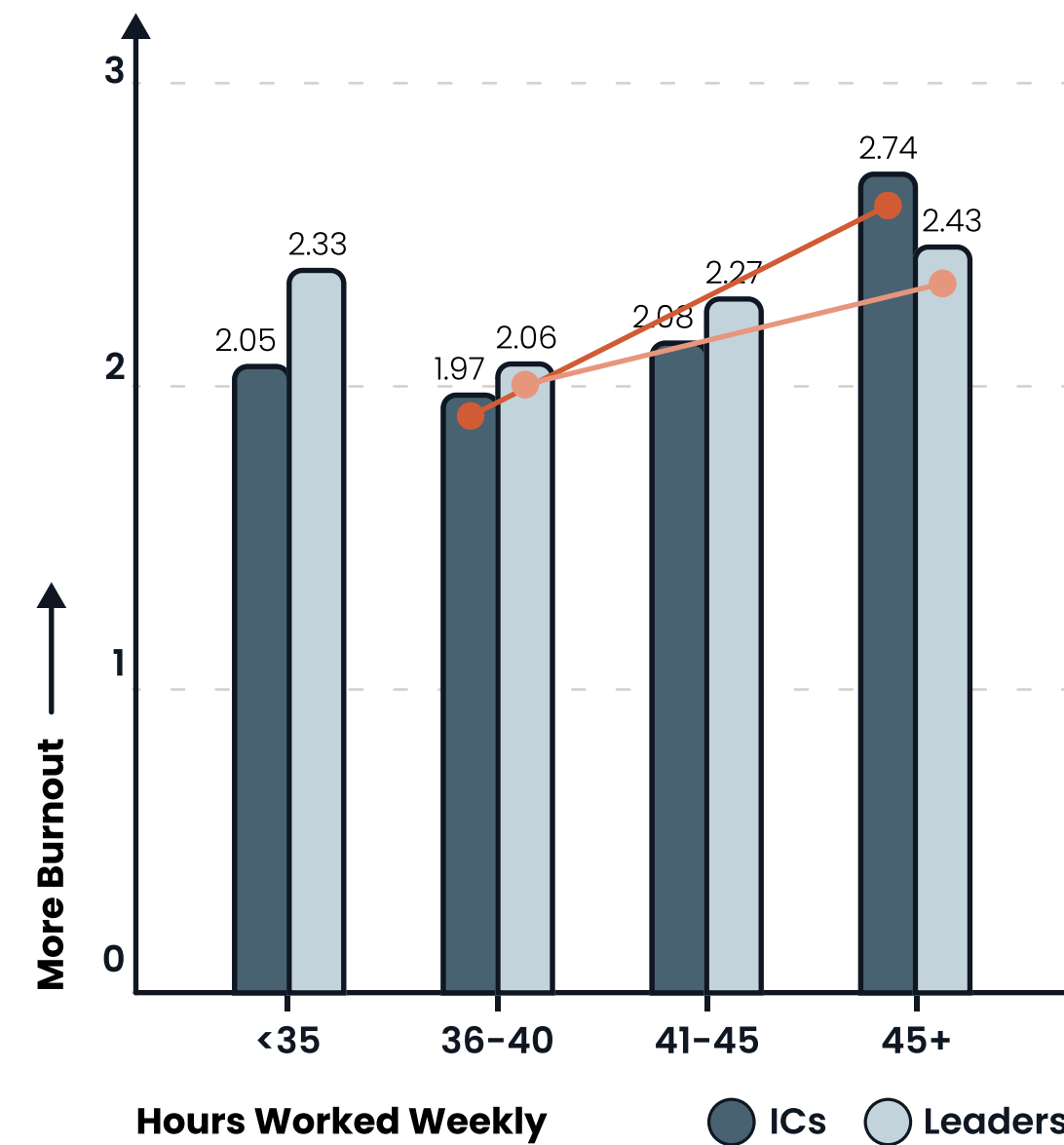


LONG HOURS

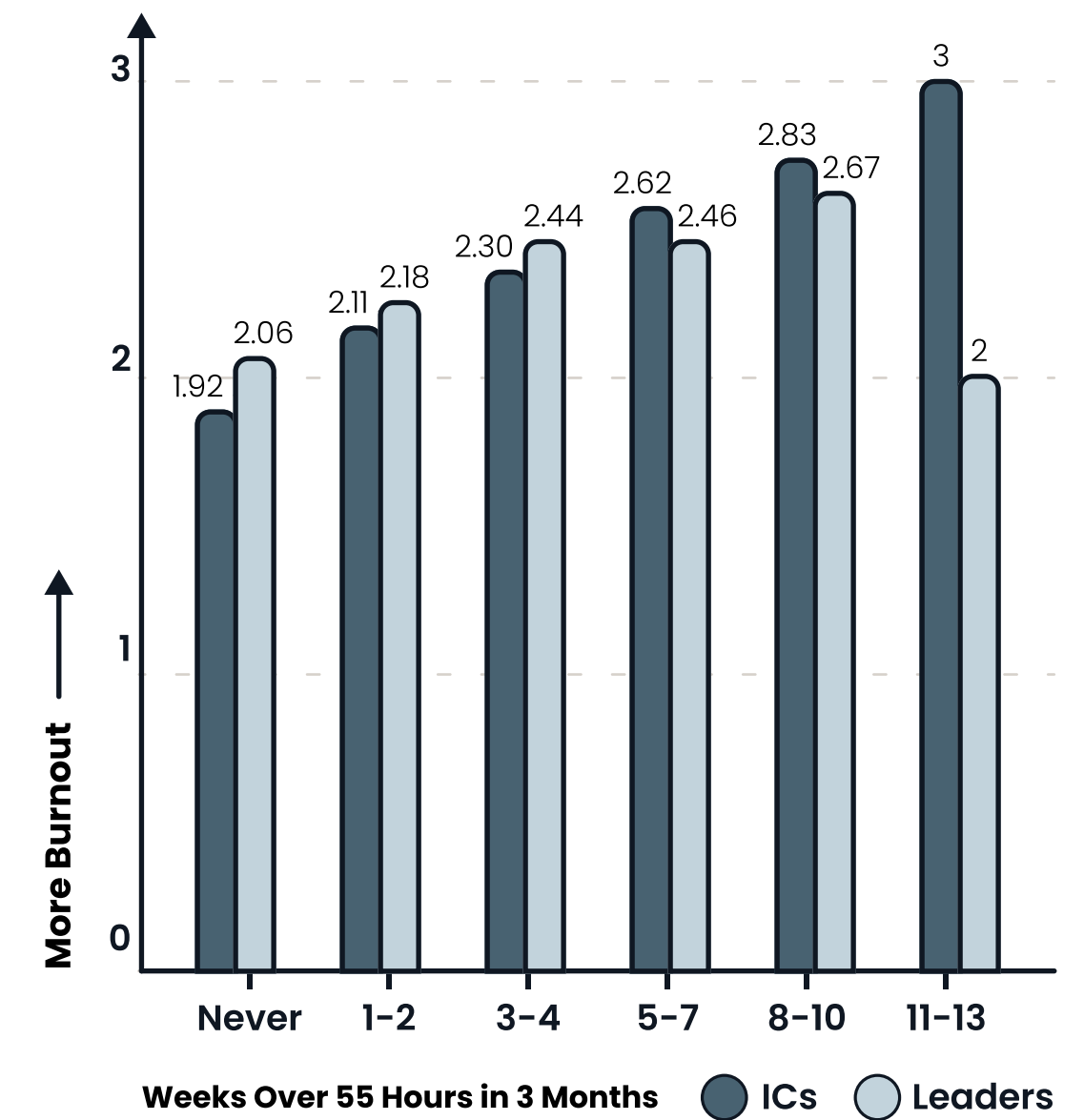
Long hours predict burnout.

The data shows that the total hours worked weekly and the number of crunch weeks in a 3 month period contribute to burnout.

Average Burnout by Hours Worked Weekly



Average Burnout by Weeks Over 55 Hours in 3 Months



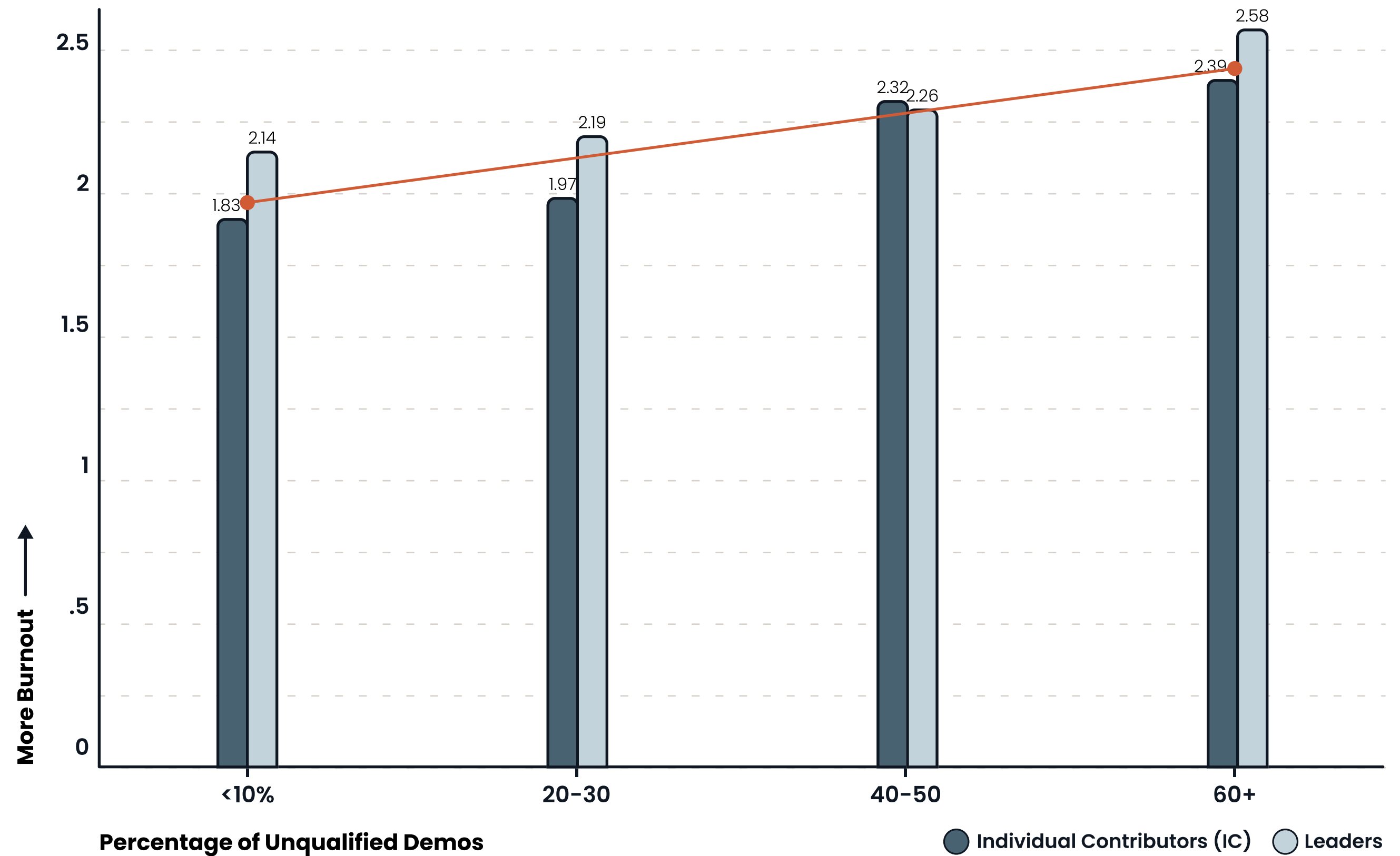
UNQUALIFIED DEMOS

Unqualified demos are comparable to long work hours in predicting burnout.

In the context of burnout, a 10% increase in unqualified demos is equivalent to permanently adding 4 hours to the work week.

Consensus helped free Blackbaud SEs from repetitive Intro Demos, allowing them to refocus on higher impact activities and improving their overall wellbeing and work-life balance. [Read the case study.](#)

Burnout by Percentage of Unqualified Demos



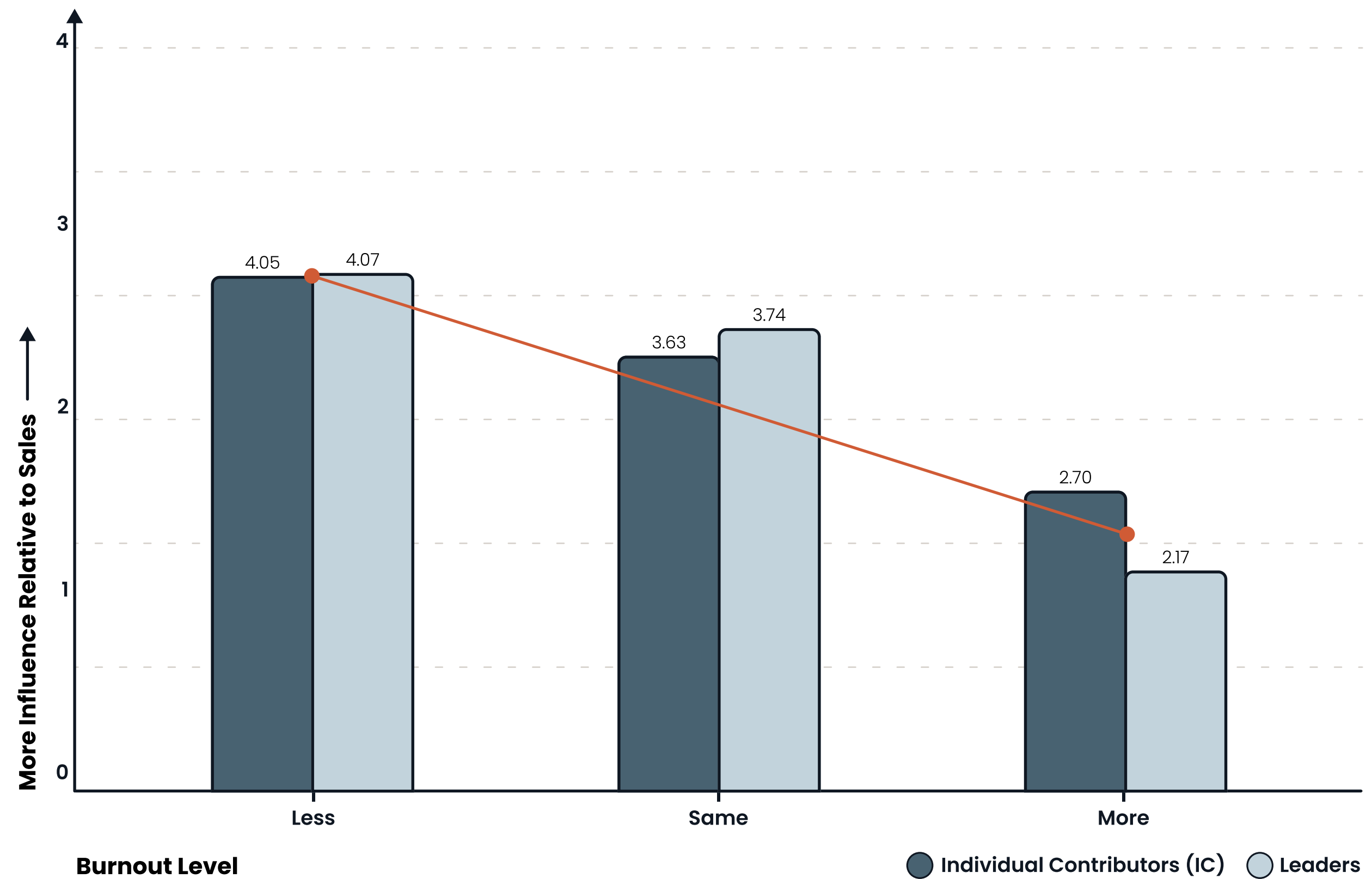
PERCEIVED LACK OF INFLUENCE & RECOGNITION

ICs want recognition for the value they bring to the sales cycle.

Those experiencing the highest levels of burnout consistently reported that they have the least amount of influence relative to sales than any other group.

Consensus helped a Fortune 100 work management company transform the sales process, harmonize the Sales and Presales relationship, and exceed revenue goals even in an uncertain market. [Read the case study.](#)

Average Presales Influence Relative to Sales by Burnout Level



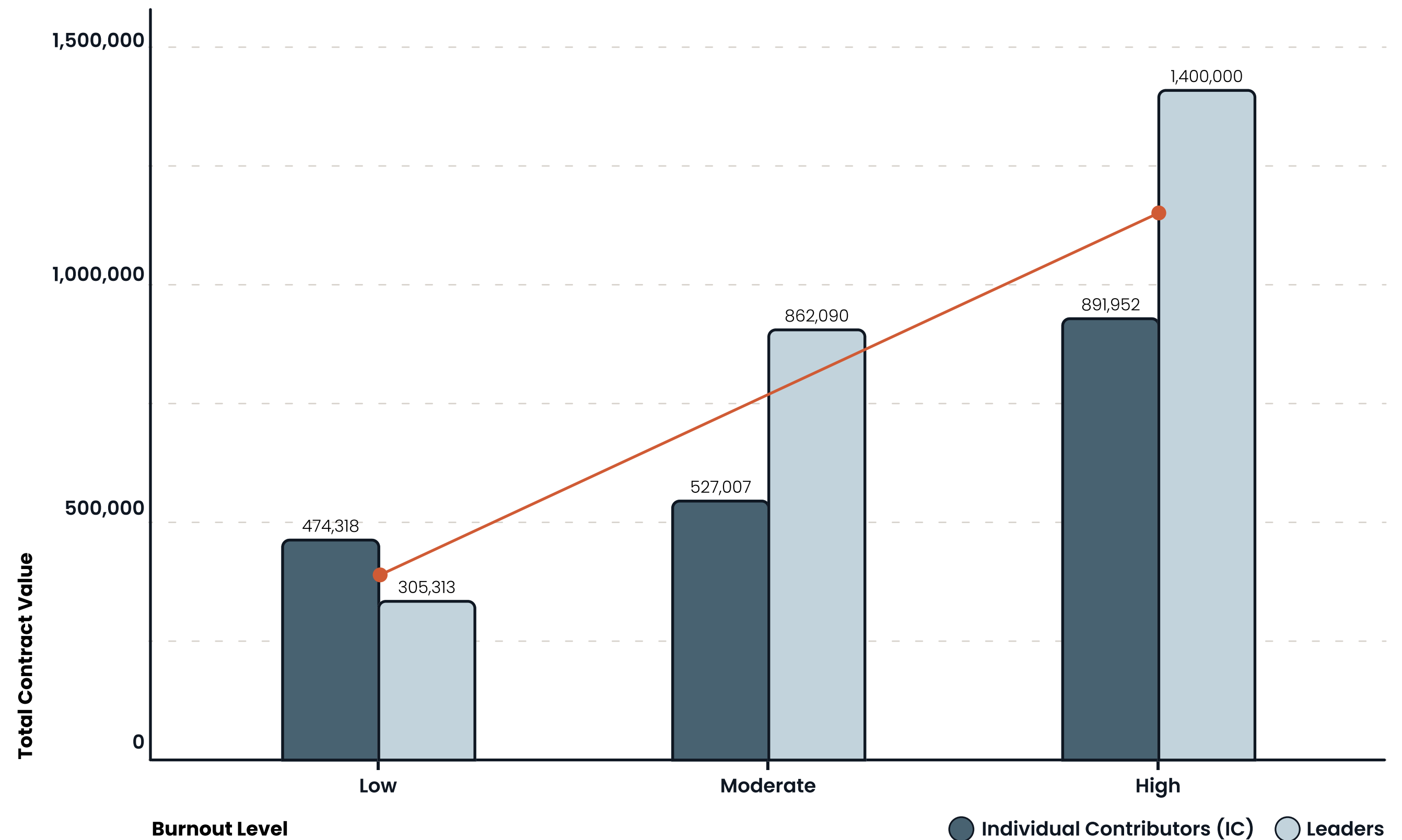
HIGH STAKES DEALS

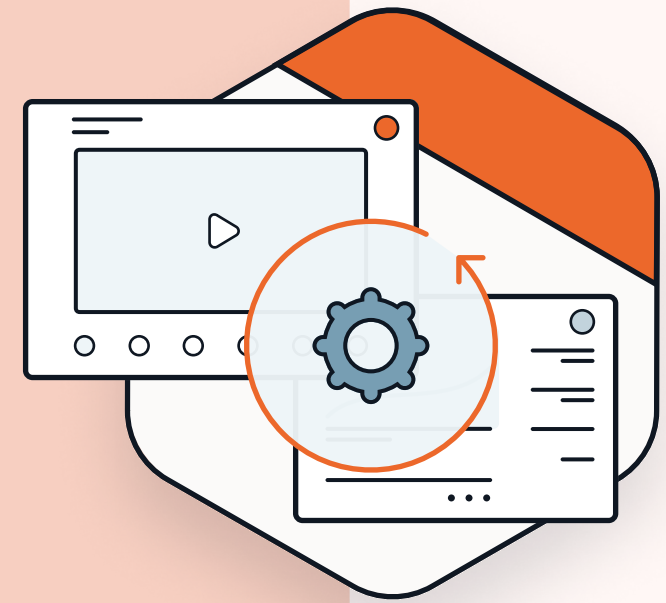
The pressure of large high stakes deals predicts burnout.

All else equal, there appears to be an increasing relationship between burnout and deal size.

This may be due to the fact that larger deals have more stakeholders. Identifying, understanding the needs of, and connecting with the many stakeholders of larger deals to effectively position your solution can be challenging and frustrating. Each additional stakeholder is a potential veto to any closed deal.

Average Total Contract Value by Burnout Level





Demo Automation

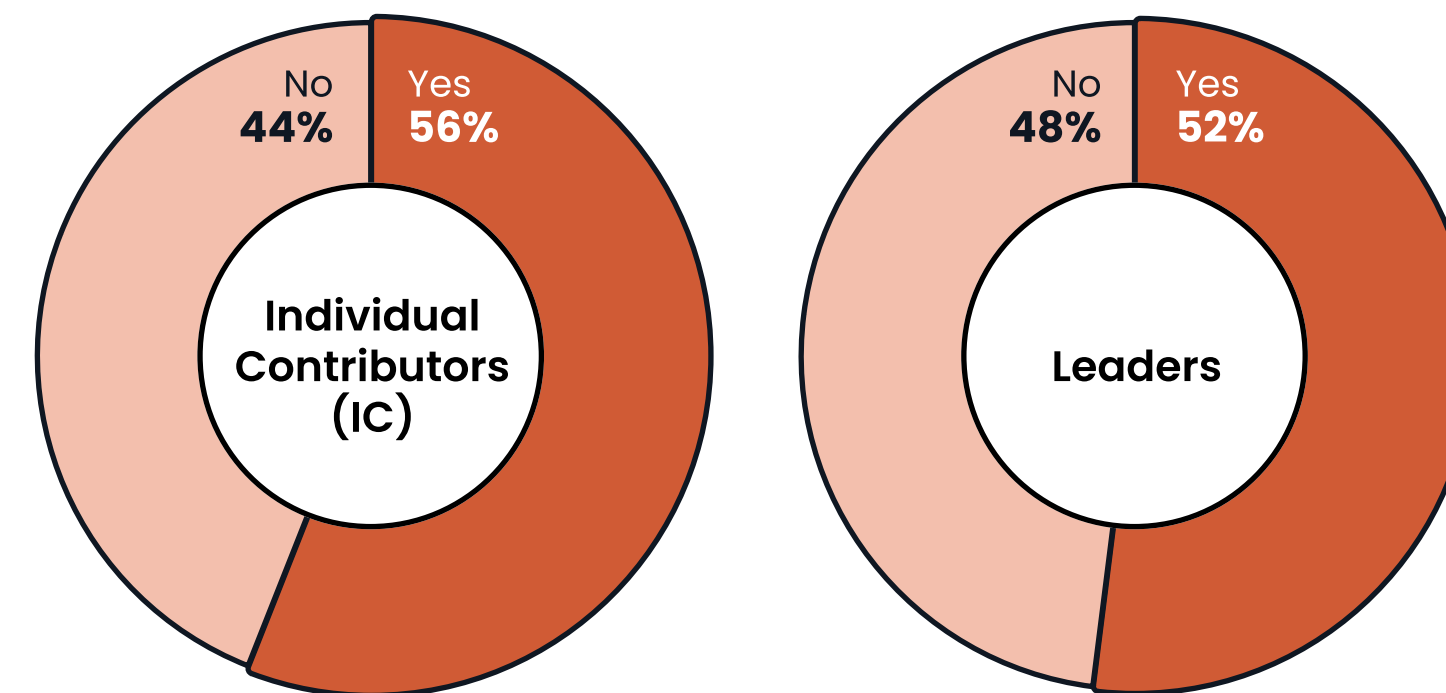
ADOPTION OF DEMO AUTOMATION

The majority of organizations are automating some demo processes.

56% of ICs report automating at least some portion of the demo process.

52% of Leaders report automating any portion of the demo process.

Does your organization automate any portion of the demo process (eg. through videos, webinars, etc)?



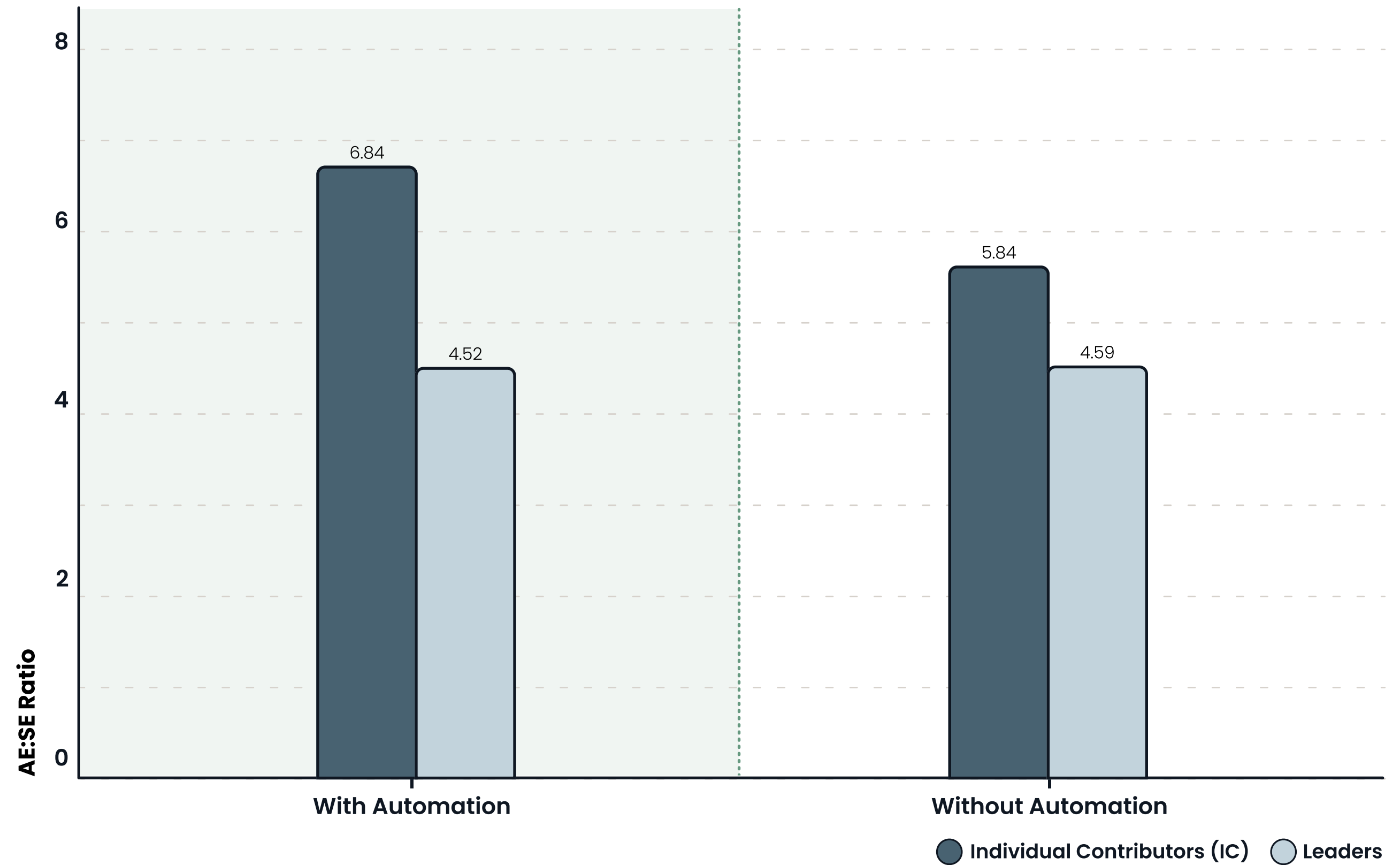
SCALING PRESALES RESOURCES

Demo automation helps support higher AE:SE ratios.

On average, ICs that use automation report 17% higher AE:SE ratios.

Consensus helped Coupa scale their Presales team equal to having 4 additional full-time SEs. [Read the case study.](#)

AE:SE Ratio by Organizations Who Do or Do Not Utilize Automation



SCALING PRESALES RESOURCES (CONT'D)

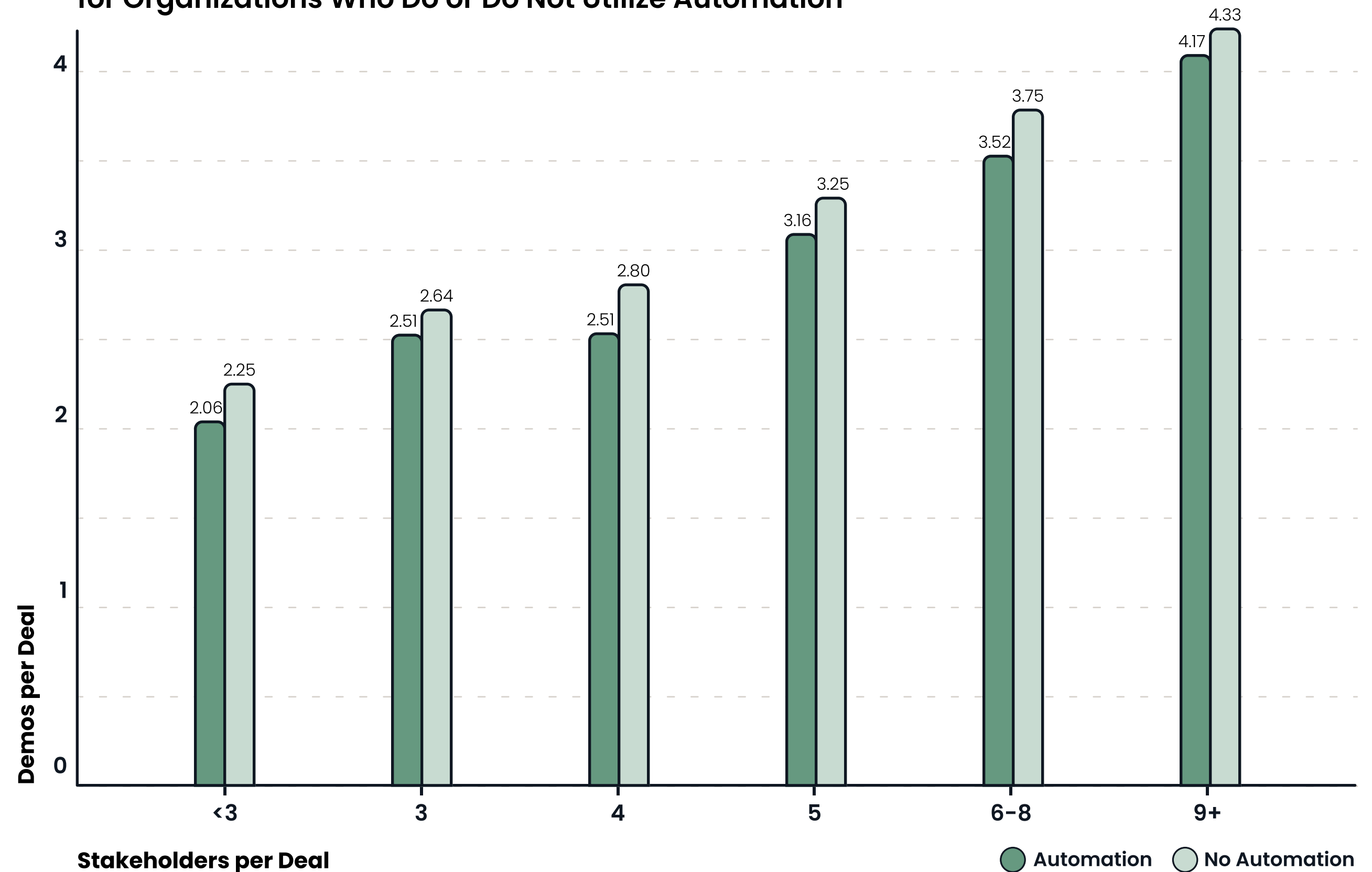
Automation helps shave off the number of required demos to close/win.

Firms who use automation report a lower number of demos required to close/win a deal regardless of the size of the buying group.

This suggests that demo automation is likely satisfying the demand for live Intro Demos and thereby reducing the total number of demos needed to close.

Consensus helped Access use digital demos to scale Presales while growing company revenue by over \$20K.
[Read the case study.](#)

Average Demos Required per Deal by Number Stakeholders per Deal for Organizations Who Do or Do Not Utilize Automation



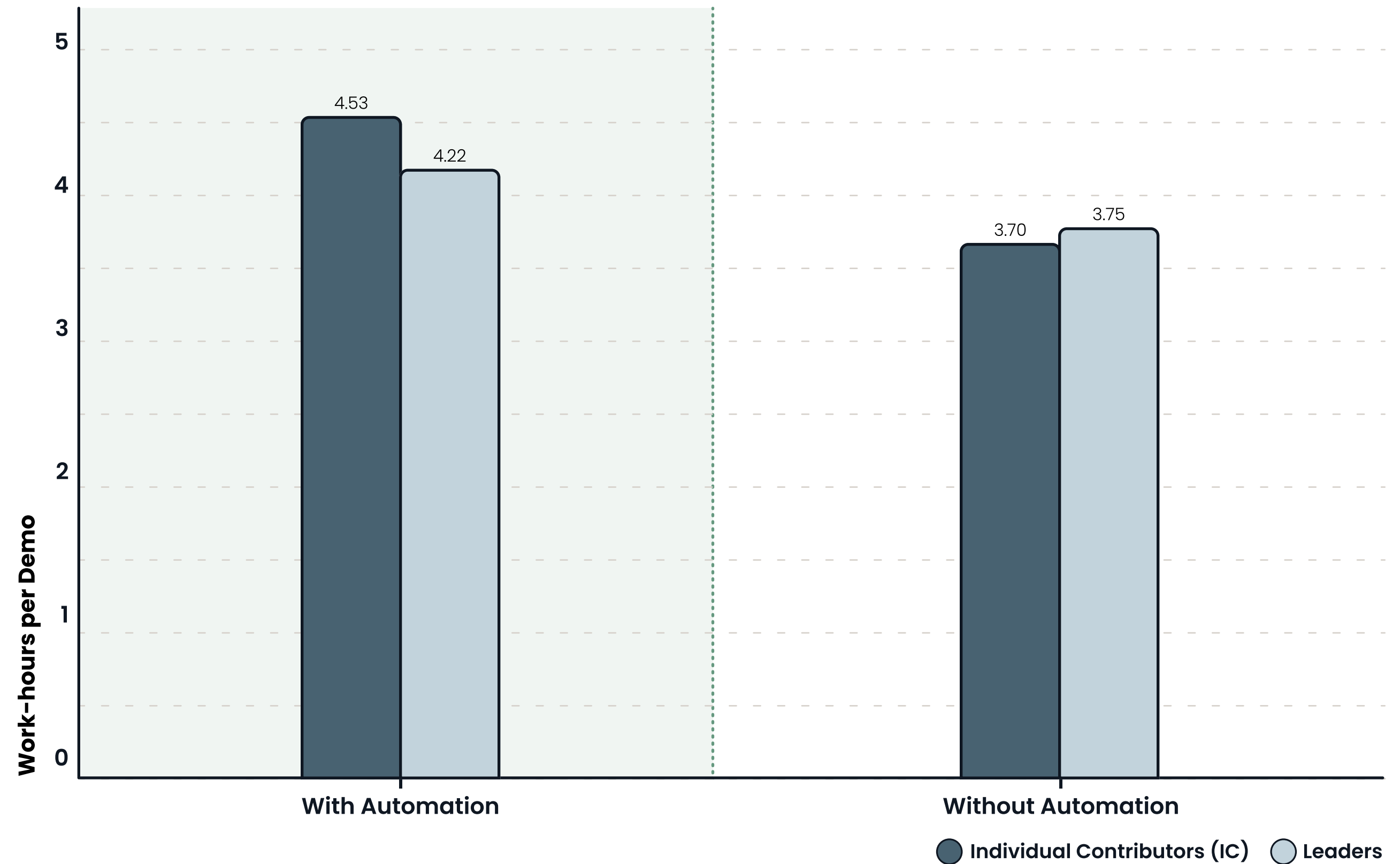
SCALING PRESALES RESOURCES
(CONT'D)

Automation frees up ICs to focus on more customized in-depth demos.

Firms who use automation report higher work-hours per demo than those who do not use automation.

This is likely because automation handles the repetitive Intro Demos for ICs so they can spend more time on higher impact activities.

Average Work-hours per Demo by Automation



REDUCE BURNOUT

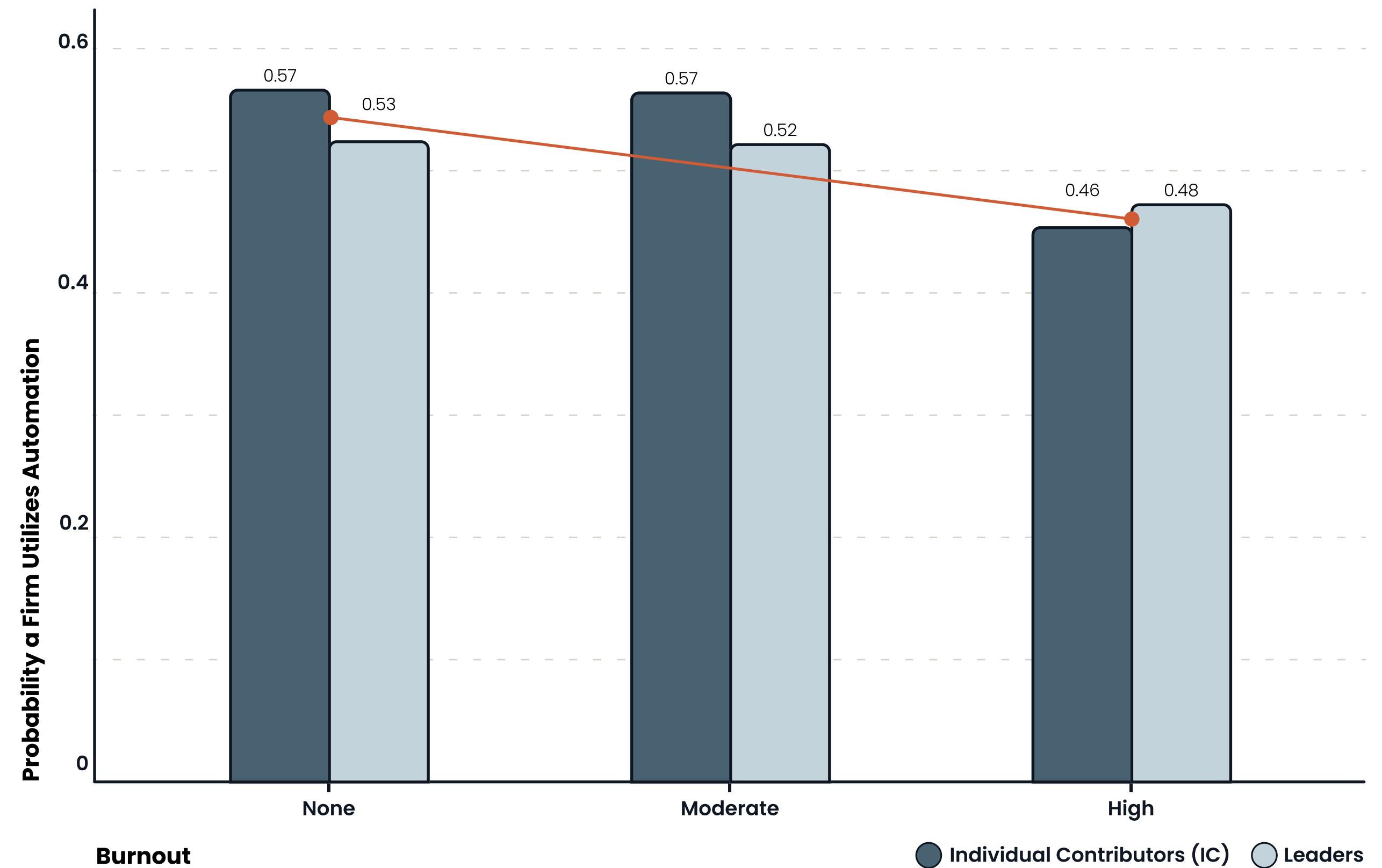
Firms who automate a portion of the demo process report less burnout.

Automation allows ICs to offload the repetitive low impact activities and instead spend their time focused on skilled high impact work.

70% of all IC teams ranked "Removing Repetition" in the top 3 improvements that would create a positive impact on their work life.

ICs reporting High levels of Burnout are 24% less likely to automate.

The Probability a Firm Utilizes Automation by Burnout

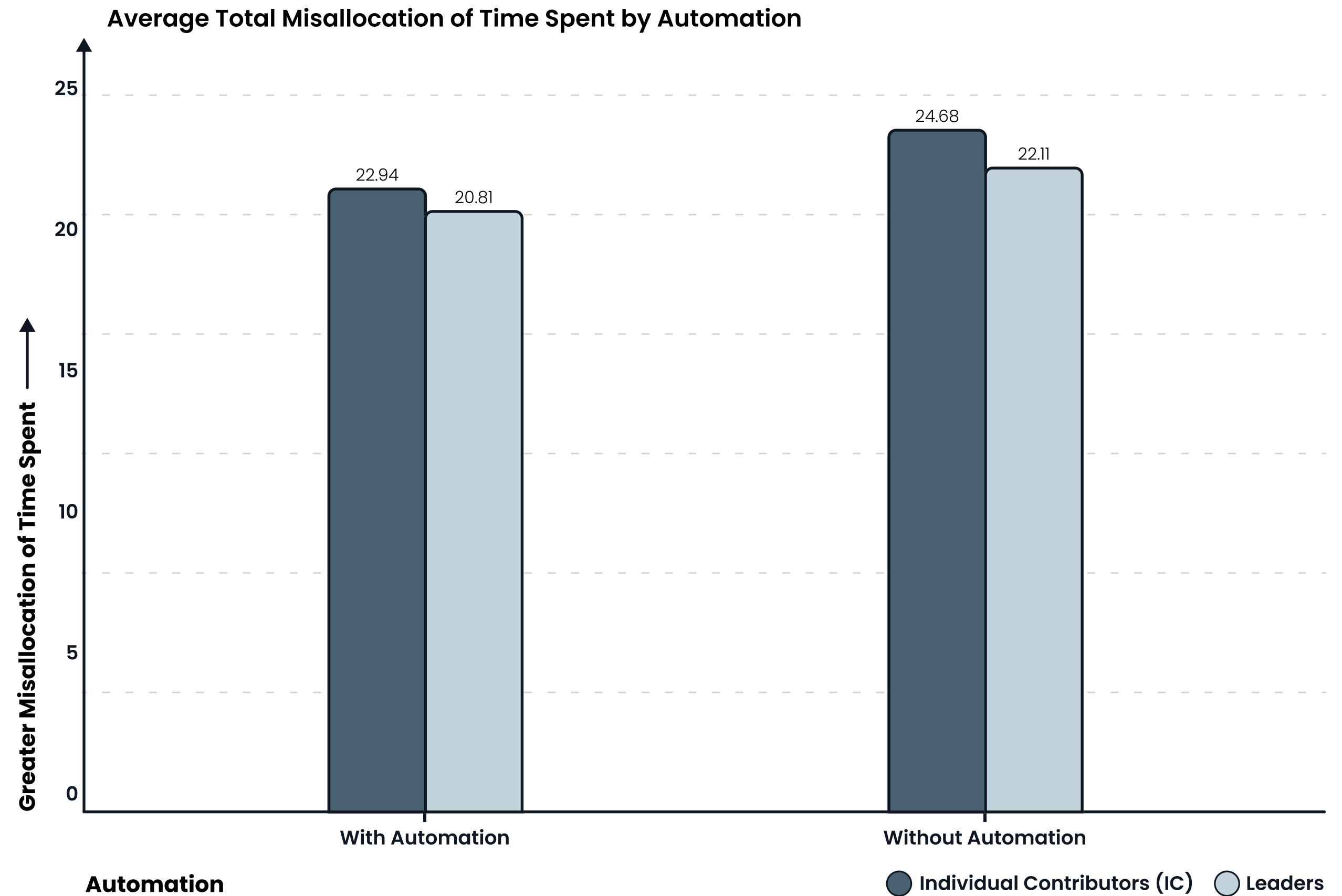


REDUCE BURNOUT (CONT'D)

Automation helps shift IC time to higher-impact activities.

Automation lowers the degree of misallocation, between how Leaders and ICs *actually* spend their time and how they feel their time *should* be spent, which is associated with burnout.

Note: See [Presales Activities](#) to review misallocation and how it is calculated.



The Rise of Demo Automation

Too often, B2B sales cycles are centered on the vendor. Buyers typically have to juggle multiple meetings with sales reps before even experiencing the product. They have to play along with vendor-driven buying processes and drawn-out sales cycles just to gather the information they need to assess - "Is this the right solution for our business?"

There must be a better way – and there is:
Demo Automation.

Both **G2** and **Aragon Research** have identified Demo Automation as a major factor in removing friction from the sales funnel. Demo automation solutions allow buyers to see and understand a product's key feature set and value earlier in the sales process, often without engaging the sales team. This can accelerate sales cycles, provide more qualified leads, and delight buyers by empowering them to self-educate and chart their own enablement course.

G2 and Aragon Research have recently recognized **Demo Automation as an official Presales tech category** to showcase the growing market of solutions that automate the creation and distribution of demos.



Introducing G2's Demo Automation Category



The Rise of Demo Automation Digitizing the Last Mile of the Customer Acquisition Process



PREMIUM PRESALES CONTENT

Consensus offers the #1 hub for premium Presales content and insights.

In addition to this research, we've published a number of guides, eBooks and templates. Consensus has also launched the industry's first publicly available all-Presales virtual conference called DEMOFEST. We host the Scaling Presales webinar series with two events each month, and we recently launched the Burning Presales Podcast.

Explore a few of our most impactful resources here or check out our full library of Presales content at www.goconsensus.com under *Resources*.

"I have (rather dramatically) changed and improved my practices as a result of reading this terrific book. Applying the concepts are already paying off with reduced cycle times and improved customer relationships. Highly recommended!"
-Peter Cohan
Founder & Principal,
The Second Derivative

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The Definitive Guide to the Six Demo Types

A Map for Scaling Presales

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The Five Buyer Enablement Levels

How buyer enabled is your company currently?

Visit the Resource Center →

Version History

VERSION 1.4

- Updated page 3 Executive Summary: Added Licensing terms
- Added pages 4-5 Advance Praise
- Updated page 10 About The Sample | Number of Solutions insights
- Updated pages 13-14 Compensation | OTE At A Glance insights
- Updated page 41 Workload | Presales Activities insights and chart
- Updated page 66 Demos | Demo Lag Time (Cont'd) insights
- Updated page 67 Demos | Demo Lag Time (Cont'd) insights
- Updated page 71 Demos | Demos Per Deal insights
- Updated page 72 Demos | Unqualified Demos insights
- Updated page 80 Burnout | Unqualified Demos insights
- Updated page 81 Burnout | Perceived Lack of Influence & Recognition insights
- Scaling page 85 Demo Automation | Scaling Presales Resources insights
- Scaling page 86 Demo Automation | Scaling Presales Resources (Cont'd) insights