



Helping Organizations Worldwide Work  
Smarter, Faster, and With Greater Confidence

# **2023 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES AND PREDICTIONS**

Survey Report

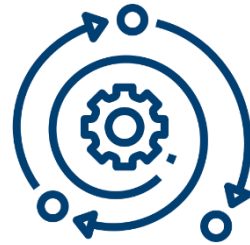
February 2023

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# ABOUT THIS REPORT



While knowledge management has been around for decades, its role and methods are constantly changing. KM's role continues to evolve in line with the ever-changing business environment, technology, end-user expectations, and user needs.



To jump-start 2023, APQC surveyed KM experts and practitioners about their top objectives and upcoming priorities when it comes to knowledge management. This research is designed as a “pulse check” on KM’s current state and an exploration of what the future holds. Topics include:



- KM’s status and role inside organizations
- Top priorities for KM programs
- The relative influence of new technologies
- Where the KM discipline is headed—and what’s required to get there



**227** Valid Global Participants

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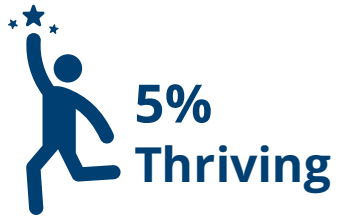
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# **THE CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

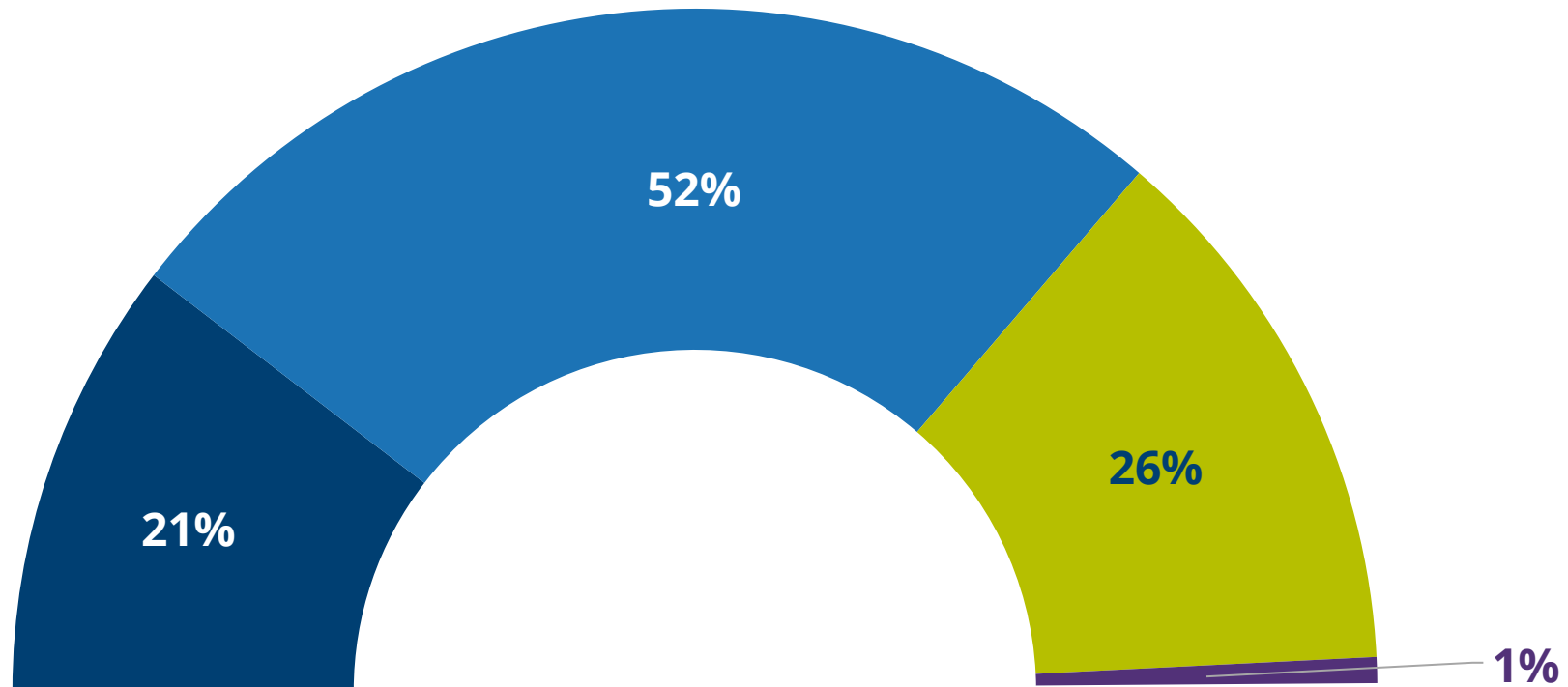
# PERCEIVED CURRENT STATE OF KM

Overall, KM experts and practitioners who responded to our survey are optimistic about KM's outlook. While only five percent see KM thriving, 66 percent say it is gaining ground. Compared to last year, that's an encouraging increase of 16 percent, showing KM is gaining traction. This is excellent news for KM teams gearing up to support emerging needs.



# EXPECTED CHANGE IN KM INVESTMENT

As KM programs gain momentum, so do their budgets. Around three-fourths of respondents say they expect their organizations' investment in KM to increase over the next 12 to 18 months. Spending on new supporting technology—such as AI—is driving at least some of this growth.



■ Increase a lot   ■ Increase a little   ■ Stay about the same   ■ Decrease a little   ■ Decrease a lot



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## **FOCUS AREAS FOR 2023**

# TOP 5 PRIORITIES FOR KM TEAMS 2022-2023

- 33%** Boosting KM participation or engagement
- 32%** Identifying, mapping, or prioritizing critical knowledge
- 25%** Increasing the maturity of the KM program/effort
- 22%** Enabling collaboration across teams/units
- 22%** Improving search and discovery

Around one-third of respondents report boosting KM participation and identifying critical knowledge as the top priority for their organization's KM teams.



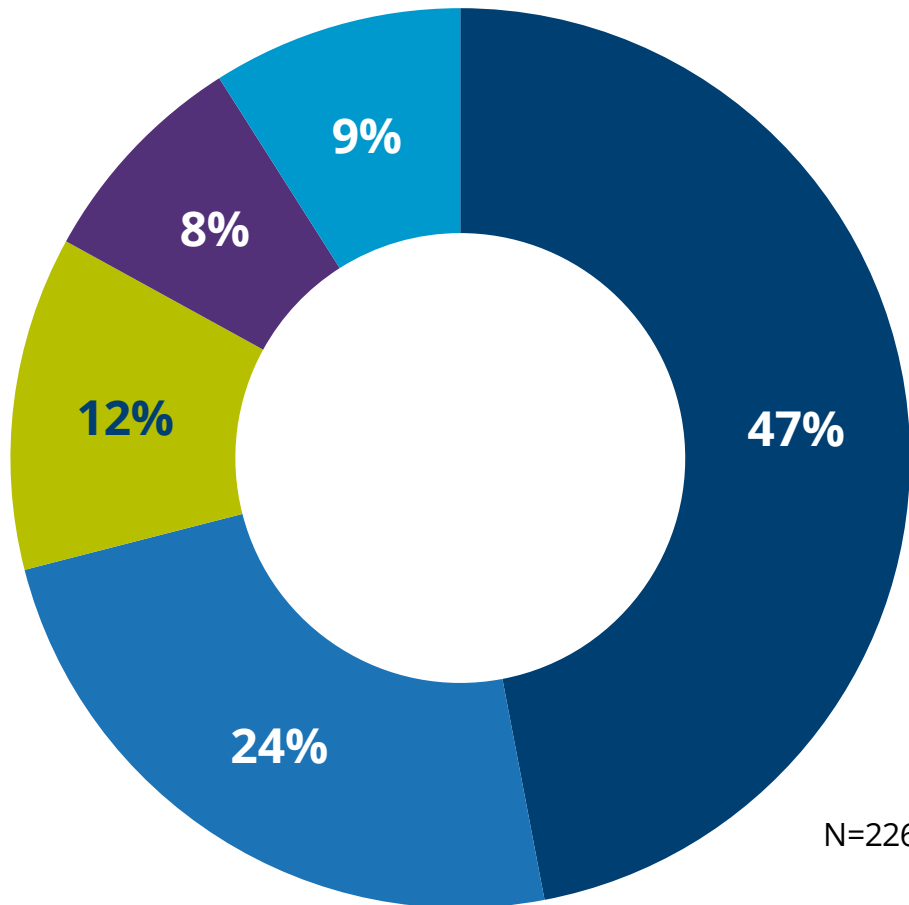
# BUSINESS PRIORITIES KM NEEDS TO SUPPORT RIGHT NOW

In the era of AI and virtual work, respondents feel KM should emphasize its impact on continuous learning. Other priorities include integrating strategies, improving agility, and increasing productivity across the organization. Cost savings continues to remain relatively low on the list, with only 10 percent citing this as a top business driver for KM to support.



# THEME MOST IMPORTANT FOR THE KM USER EXPERIENCE MOVING FORWARD

About three-quarters of respondents say it's essential for KM to provide a simplified and integrated user experience. Embedding KM directly into the flow of work processes promotes knowledge sharing and makes KM more intuitive. These goals won out against anticipating and personalizing knowledge needs based on personas/user needs.



## **In the flow**

Embedding KM directly into work processes and applications

## **Simplified**

Making the KM user experience less confusing and more intuitive

## **Anticipatory**

Proactively delivering or recommending knowledge to users, without their having to search

## **Deep**

Incorporating tacit knowledge and expertise, as well as content and information

## **Personalized**

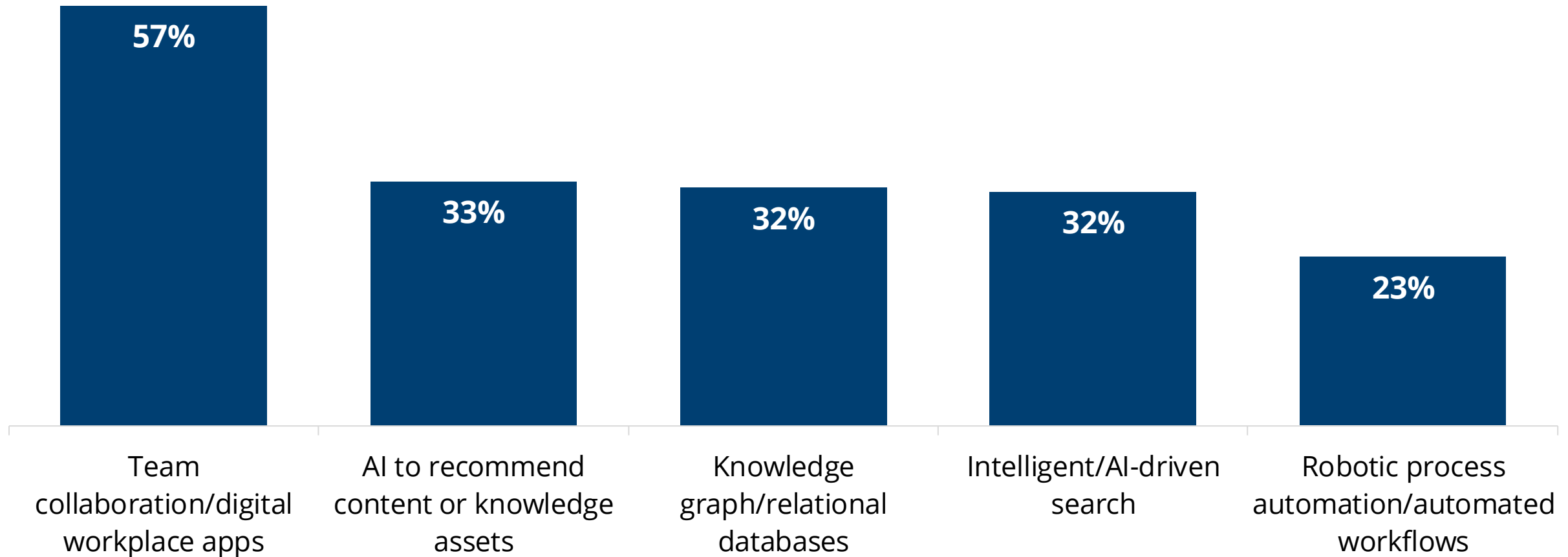
Customizing the knowledge and experience to each user

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## **TECHNOLOGY IMPACT**

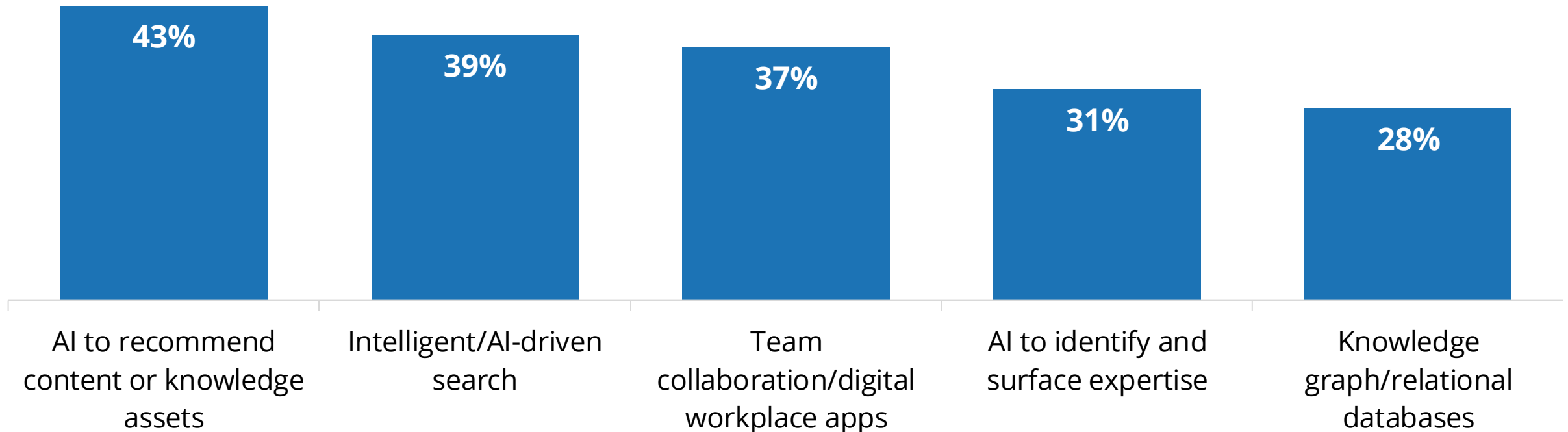
# TOP 5 TECHNOLOGIES IMPORTANT TO KM RIGHT NOW

As organizations move more and more towards digital work, it's imperative for KM to integrate with in-person and virtual team collaboration and digital workplace apps. Additionally, AI-fueled search and discovery tools enable employees to sift through vast amounts of information and find what they're looking for.



# TOP 5 TECHNOLOGIES IMPORTANT TO KM IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS

As respondents look further on the horizon, the need for intelligent technology continues to take center stage. Over the next three years, the most important technologies for KM to embrace are heavily focused on AI — to suggest relevant knowledge, improve search results, and make the workplace digital. Team collaboration and access to automation tools also remain central to KM's mission.



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## **OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS**

# TOP 5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR KM TO CAPITALIZE ON RIGHT NOW

- 39%** Employees are frustrated with chaotic, disorganized information
- 35%** Employee retirements and churn make it critical to capture/transfer knowledge
- 34%** KM is essential as organizations embrace more remote/hybrid work
- 32%** Leaders are recognizing the risk of knowledge gaps and siloes
- 30%** KM is essential as organizations strive to reskill and upskill employees

Respondents identified disorganized repositories as a top priority pain point for KM to capitalize on. By optimizing the structure and management of information, KM teams ensure employees have access to the appropriate knowledge, which in turn can increase productivity.

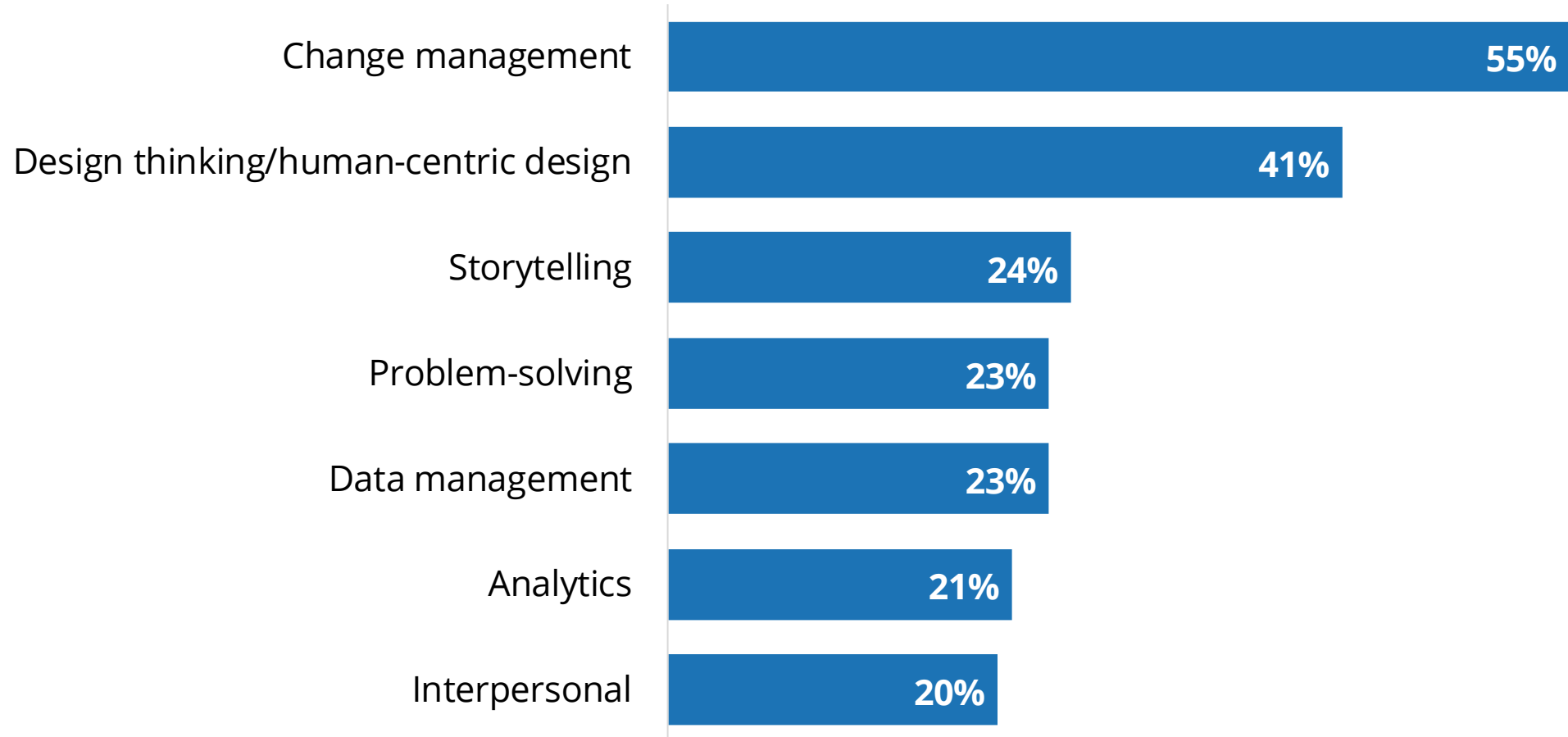
Another driver for having good processes and knowledge infrastructures in place are the concerns over critical knowledge leaving due to the so-called Great Resignation.

In order to capture and transfer this expertise effectively KM teams must first identify what is essential and what is in danger.



# TOP 7 SKILLSETS FOR KM TO DEVELOP RIGHT NOW

With the last few years' rollercoaster ride, it should be no surprise that change management and design thinking remain at the top of in-demand skills to develop. Although analytics remains a valuable skill set, the 16 percent decline since last year's survey shows how KM is being evaluated from a support function into a strategic asset.





# TOP 5 THREATS TO KM RIGHT NOW

The biggest threats to knowledge management are not new but may be accelerating.

In a rapidly shifting market, executives see other priorities as more pressing—this is particularly true if KM has not been clearly articulated as a tool to support the current business strategy.

Similarly, labor shortages resulting in heavier workloads have employees thinking they are too busy for KM. Unreceptive cultures, insufficient KM measures, and disconnected technologies can also have a dampening effect.

**56%**

Leaders are focused on (what they see as) more urgent problems or opportunities

**46%**

Employees are overworked and don't think they have time for KM

**42%**

Organizational culture does not incentivize knowledge sharing and reuse

**42%**

KM's impact is hard to measure, which complicates funding and buy-in

**28%**

Organizations have too many disconnected technologies in place to support KM

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## **RELEVANT RESOURCES**

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

## Recommended Content

- » [Why KM Should Define Its Knowledge Flow Processes](#)
- » [How Technology Affects KM Program Performance](#)
- » [Key Measures for Collaboration](#)
- » [Understanding Structured Knowledge Transfer](#)
- » [Understanding KM Change Management](#)
- » [Business Factors to Consider When Evaluating Organizational Knowledge Needs: Description and Instructions](#)

## Collections

- » [Knowledge Management Overviews](#)
- » [Applying Knowledge Management in the Business](#)
- » [Managing Content so It's Fresh and Findable](#)
- » [Key Measures for Knowledge Management](#)
- » [2022 KM Program Benchmarks and Metrics](#)
- » [APQC's Knowledge Management Portfolio Assessment Process](#)

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## **SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS**

# ORGANIZATION DEMOGRAPHICS

| Top 10 Industries               |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Government/Military             | 23% |
| Services                        | 17% |
| Software/Technology             | 12% |
| Financial Services/Banking      | 6%  |
| Non-Profit                      | 6%  |
| Aerospace                       | 4%  |
| Industrial Products             | 3%  |
| Petroleum/Chemical              | 3%  |
| Utility                         | 3%  |
| Consumer Products/Package Goods | 3%  |

*Other Industries Not Shown: Retail & Wholesale, Healthcare, Pharmaceutical, Education, Automotive, Research Organization, Telecom, & Waste Management.*

| FTEs            |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Fewer than 100  | 8%  |
| 100-999         | 22% |
| 1,000-9,999     | 35% |
| 10,000-49,999   | 20% |
| 50,000-99,999   | 6%  |
| 100,000 or more | 9%  |

| Organizational Role                               |     |
|---|-----|
| Head of Business (Chairman, CEO, President, etc.) | 3%  |
| VP/Senior Executive                               | 4%  |
| Director/Senior Manager                           | 31% |
| Manager/Process Owner                             | 24% |
| Specialist/Analyst                                | 32% |
| Consultant  | 5%  |

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