State of Work-Life Balance in Hong Kong Survey 2012 – Methodology and Key Findings

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Outline of Presentation

- **Research Background and Methodology**

- **Major Research Findings:**
    - **Achievement in Ideal Work-life Balance**
    - **Work-life Initiatives**
    - **Use of Technology for Work**
    - **Company Culture & Self Views on Work-life Balance**

- **Concluding Remarks**

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Research Background and Methodology

Research Background

- **Objective: To track changes in the work-life balance of the local working population, and to examine related current issues.**

- **7th survey on the work-life balance of the local working population by Community Business Limited and HKUPOP**

- **POP consulted Community Business in designing the questionnaire; POP enjoys full autonomy in doing the survey; POP takes full responsibility for all findings.**

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Research Design

Date of interview
3 August – 19 August 2012

Sample size
1,002 full time workers of age 15 or above

Survey method
Random telephone survey conducted by interviewers under close supervision.

Telephone numbers
Random numbers drawn from residential directories, plus another set of numbers generated by "plus/minus one/two", in order to capture unlisted numbers.

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Research Design

Birthday rule

When contact was established with a target household, one full time worker of age 15 or above was selected. If more than one subjects are available, one was selected using the "next birthday rule".

Response figures

Effective response rate = 69.8%; Sampling error = not more than plus/minus 3.2 percentage points at 95% confidence level.

Booster samples not necessary

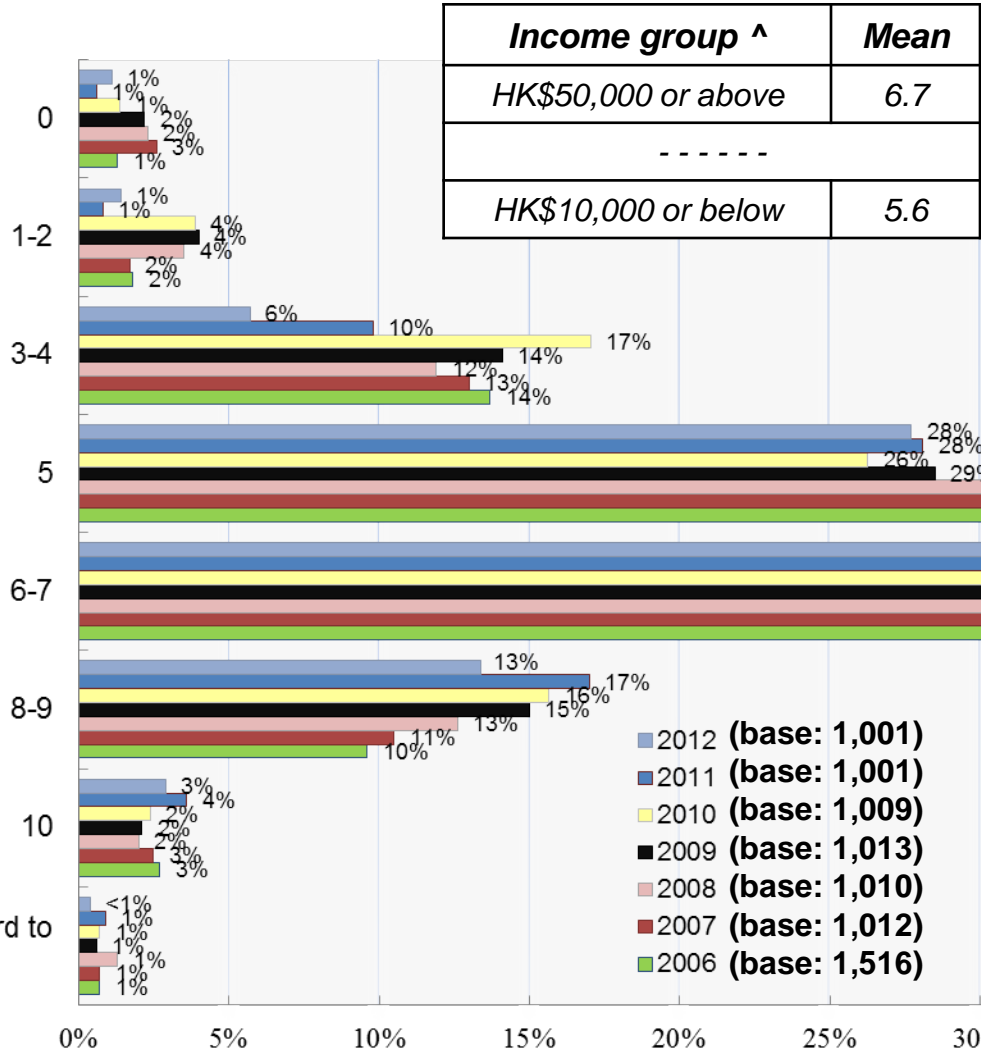**Distribution between white vs blue collars was around 77:23, procedures for booster sampling not triggered.**

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Major Research Findings

Achievement in Ideal Work-life Balance

Year	Mean
2012	**6.0**
2011	6.2
2010	5.7
2009	5.7
2008	5.7
2007	5.6
2006	5.7

Income group ^	Mean
HK$50,000 or above	6.7
- - - - - -	
HK$10,000 or below	5.6

Industry ^	Mean
Telecommunication	7.3
Education	6.5
Government / public affairs	6.5
- - - - - - - -	
Wholesale / retail	5.4
Property	5.2
Warehouse duties	5.1

Type of employer ^	Mean
Government / public sector	6.7
- - - - - - -	
International company	5.9
HK / Chinese company	5.8

Chart legend:
- 2012 (base: 1,001)
- 2011 (base: 1,001)
- 2010 (base: 1,009)
- 2009 (base: 1,013)
- 2008 (base: 1,010)
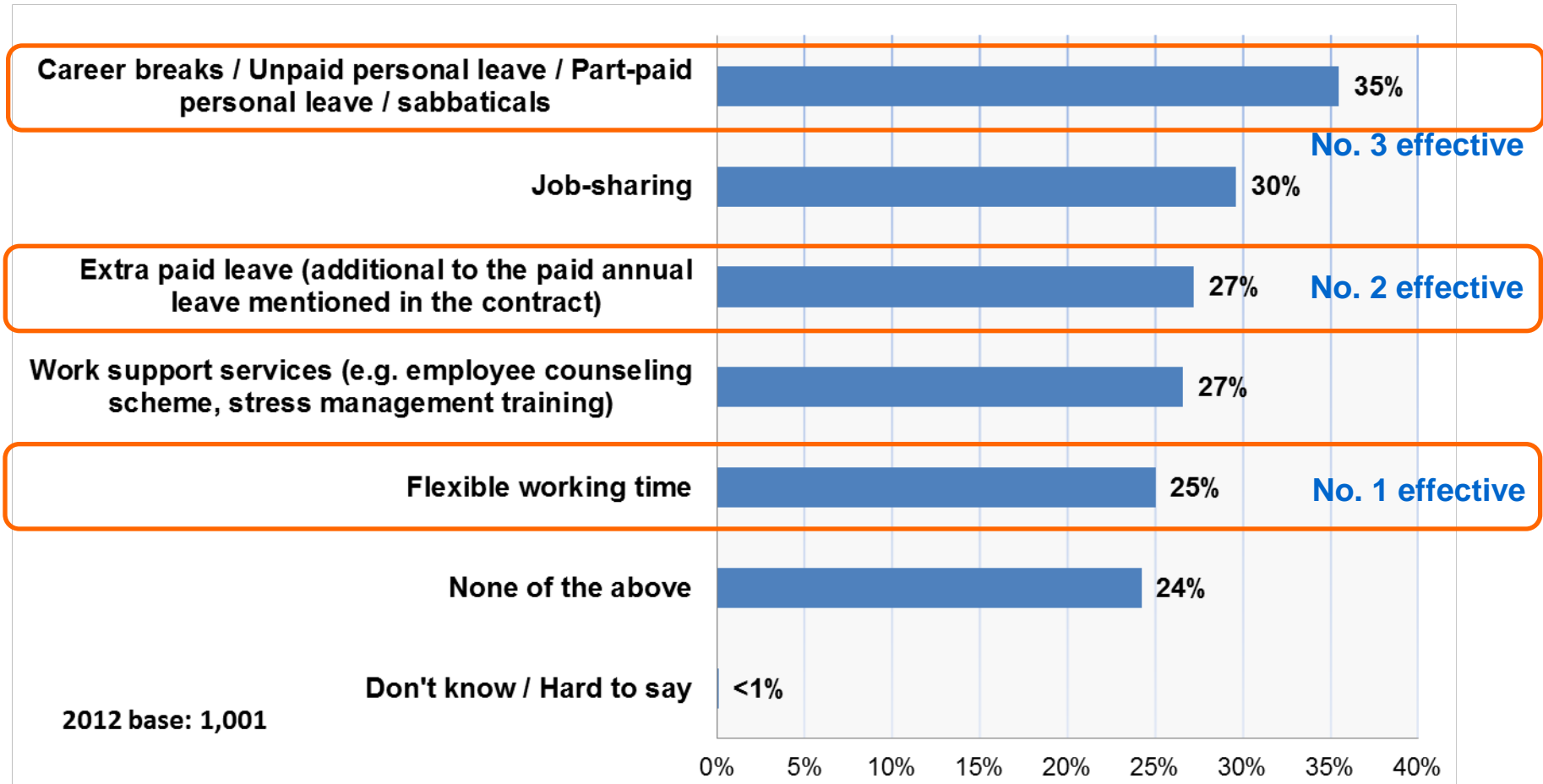- 2007 (base: 1,012)
- 2006 (base: 1,516)

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[Q1] On a scale of 0-10, how much have YOU achieved in terms of an ideal work-life balance? 0 represents the worst case possible, 10 represents already ideal, and 5 being half-half   ^ *significantly different between groups at 99% confidence level*

Top 5 Work-life Initiatives Offered & Perceived Effectiveness

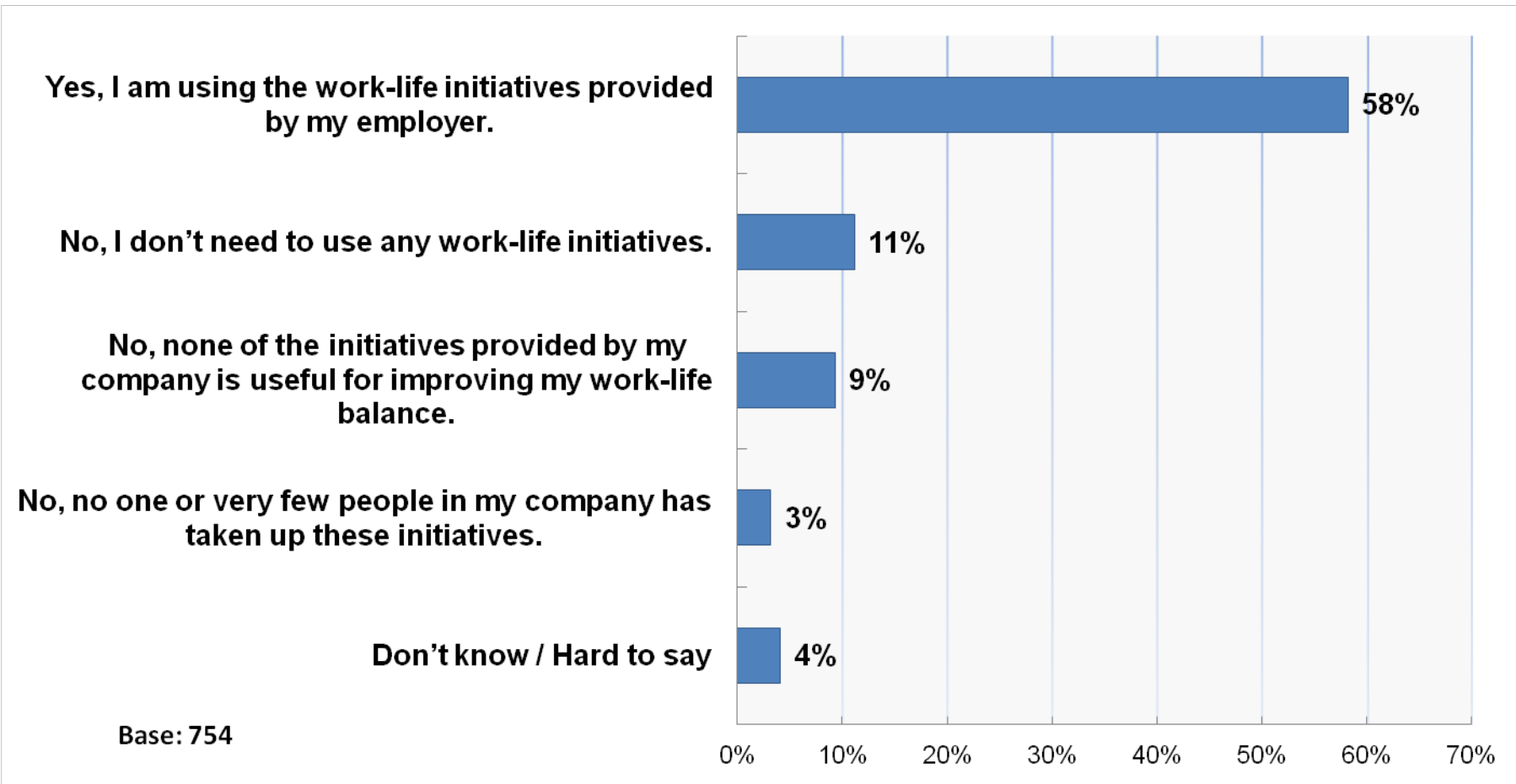| Initiative	Percentage
Career breaks / Unpaid personal leave / Part-paid personal leave / sabbaticals	35% — No. 3 effective
Job-sharing	30%
Extra paid leave (additional to the paid annual leave mentioned in the contract)	27% — No. 2 effective
Work support services (e.g. employee counseling scheme, stress management training)	27%
Flexible working time	25% — No. 1 effective
None of the above	24%
Don't know / Hard to say	<1%

2012 base: 1,001

[Q2] What types of work-life initiatives does your company currently provide? [Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer, multiple responses allowed]

[Q3] Which of the above work-life initiatives do you think will be most effective for improving your work-life balance? [Repeat the above options if necessary, multiple responses allowed]

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Usage of Work-life Initiatives Provided by Employers and Top 3 Hindrances

Yes, I am using the work-life initiatives provided by my employer. — 58%

No, I don't need to use any work-life initiatives. — 11%

No, none of the initiatives provided by my company is useful for improving my work-life balance. — 9%

No, no one or very few people in my company has taken up these initiatives. — 3%
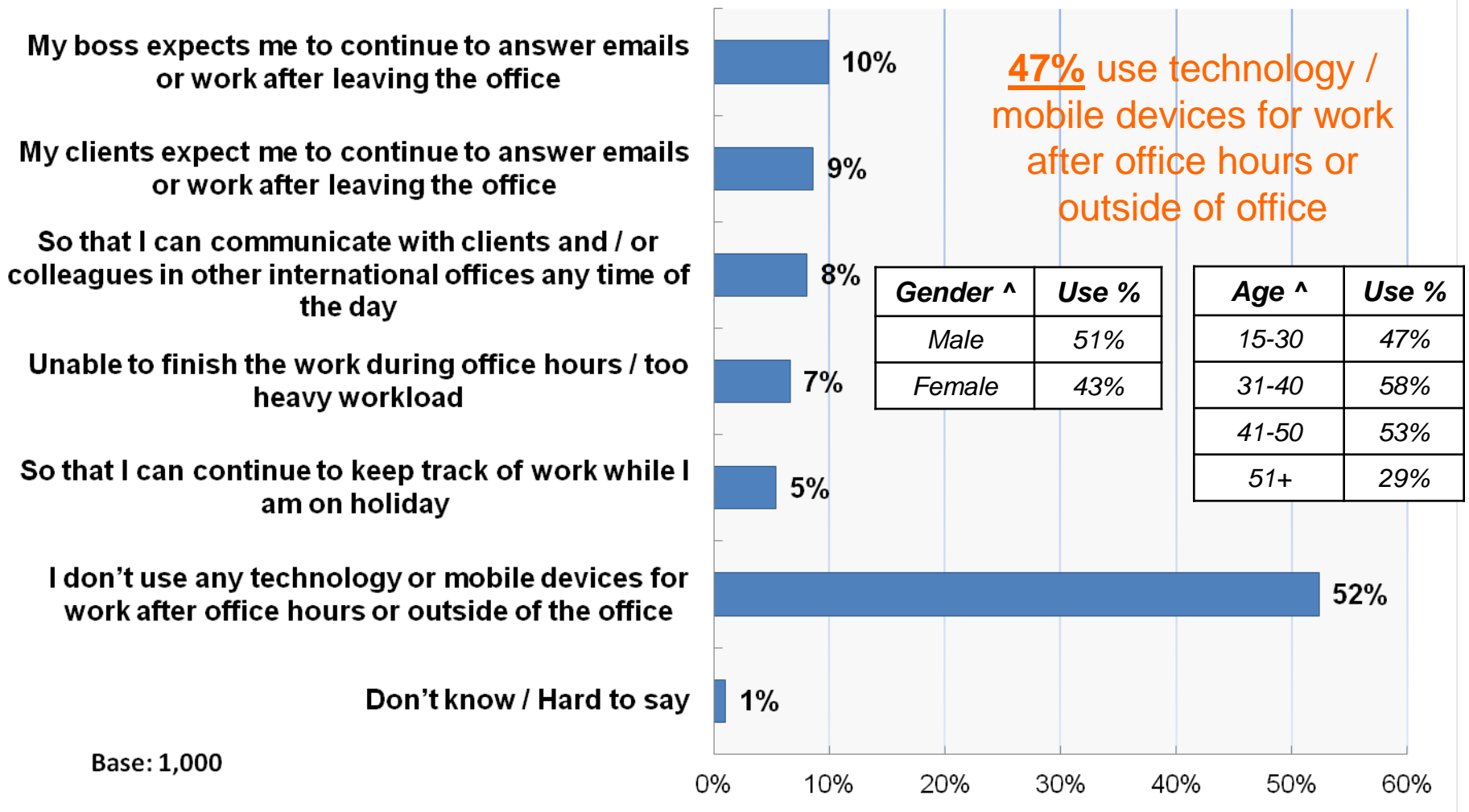
Don't know / Hard to say — 4%

Base: 754

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[Q4] [Only ask those who did NOT answer "none of the above" in Q2, base=760]
Are you currently using any of the work-life initiatives provided by your employer?
If not, why? [Do not read out answers, multiple responses allowed]

My boss expects me to continue to answer emails or work after leaving the office — 10%

My clients expect me to continue to answer emails or work after leaving the office — 9%

So that I can communicate with clients and / or colleagues in other international offices any time of the day — 8%

Unable to finish the work during office hours / too heavy workload — 7%

So that I can continue to keep track of work while I am on holiday — 5%

I don't use any technology or mobile devices for work after office hours or outside of the office — 52%

Don't know / Hard to say — 1%

Base: 1,000

47% use technology / mobile devices for work after office hours or outside of office

Gender ^	Use %
Male	51%
Female	43%

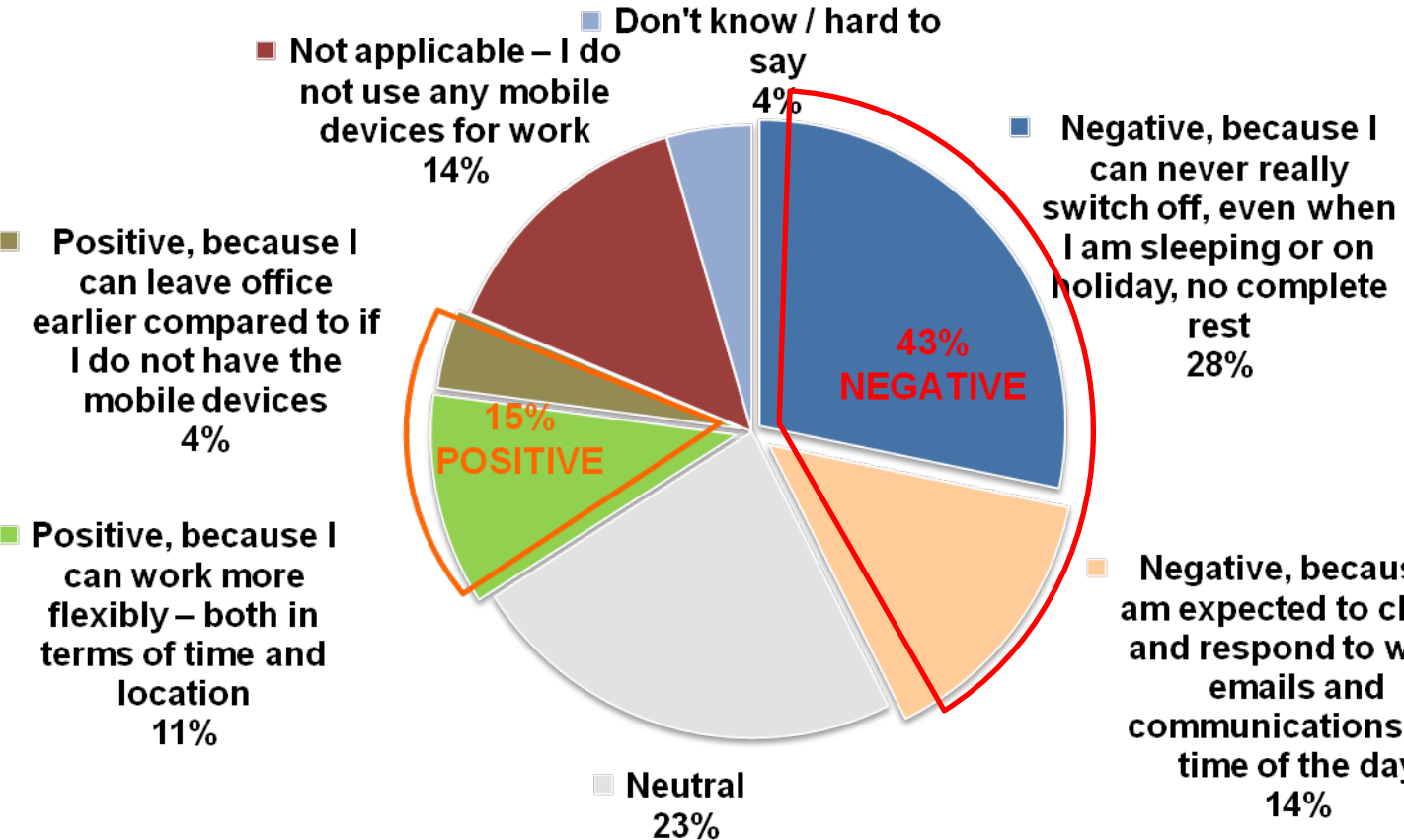| Age ^	Use %
15-30	47%
31-40	58%
41-50	53%
51+	29%

[Q5] Do you use technology or mobile devices for work after office hours or outside of the office? If yes, what are the reasons? [Do not read out answer, multiple responses allowed]   ^ *significantly different between groups at 99% confidence level*

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Effect of Using Mobile Devices for Work Outside of Office Hours or Physically Outside of the Office

Pie chart legend and values:

- **Don't know / hard to say** 4%
- **Not applicable – I do not use any mobile devices for work** 14%
- **Positive, because I can leave office earlier compared to if I do not have the mobile devices** 4%
- **Positive, because I can work more flexibly – both in terms of time and location** 11%
- **Neutral** 23%
- **Negative, because I am expected to check and respond to work emails and communications any time of the day** 14%
- **Negative, because I can never really switch off, even when I am sleeping or on holiday, no complete rest** 28%

43% NEGATIVE

15% POSITIVE

Base: 1,001

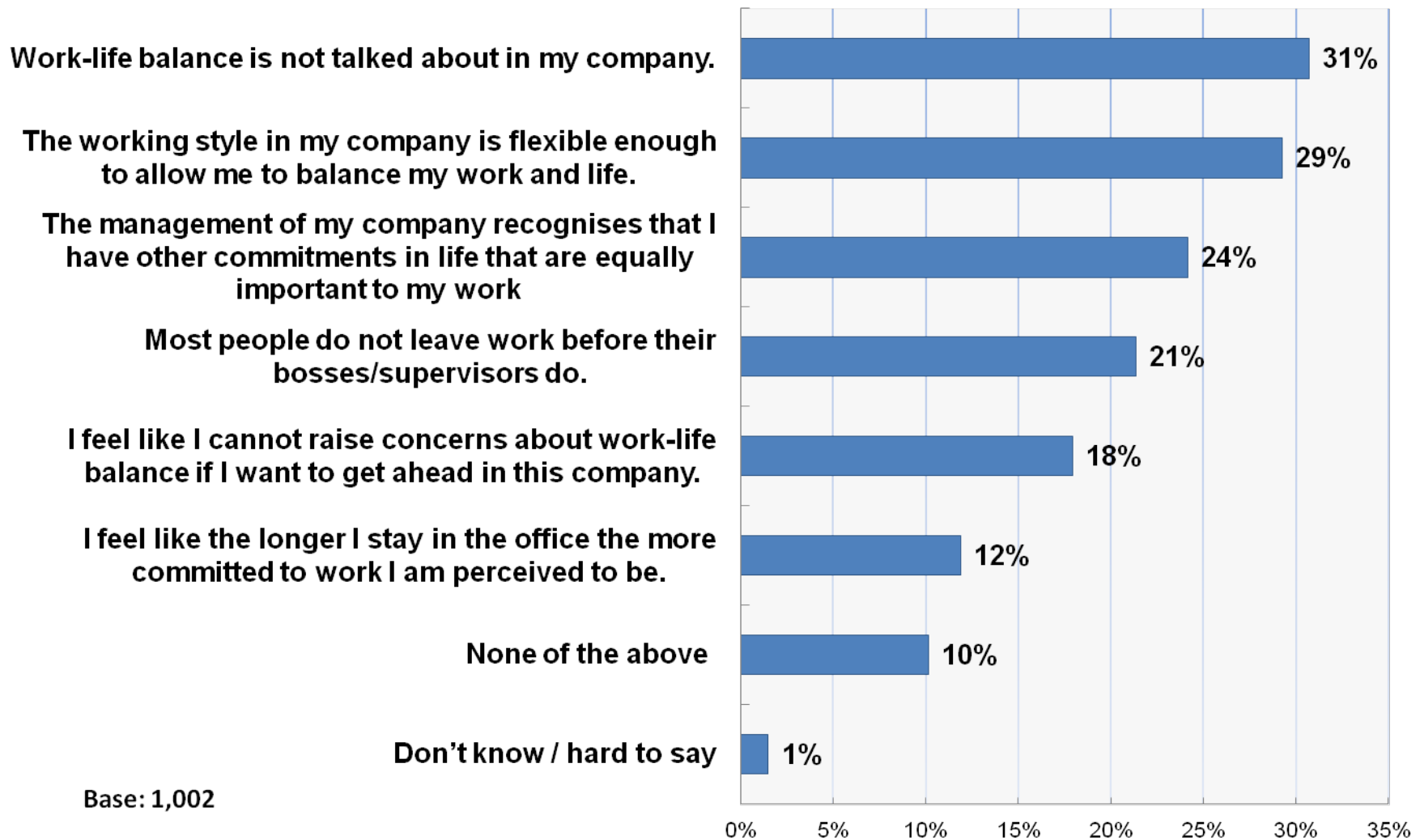| Age ^	Agree %
15-30	37%
31-40	37%
41-50	22%
51+	19%

[Q6] Do you think the use of mobile devices for work outside of office hours or when you are outside of the office has a positive, negative or neutral effect on your overall work-life balance? Please choose **1 statement** that most accurately describes your view: [Interviewer to read out items 1 to 5]

^ *significantly different between groups at 99% confidence level*

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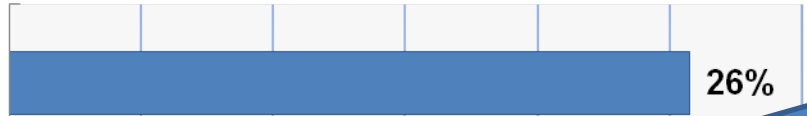
Work Culture of Local Companies

Work-life balance is not talked about in my company. — 31%

The working style in my company is flexible enough to allow me to balance my work and life. — 29%

The management of my company recognises that I have other commitments in life that are equally important to my work — 24%

Most people do not leave work before their bosses/supervisors do. — 21%

I feel like I cannot raise concerns about work-life balance if I want to get ahead in this company. — 18%

I feel like the longer I stay in the office the more committed to work I am perceived to be. — 12%

None of the above — 10%

Don't know / hard to say — 1%

Base: 1,002

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[Q7] Which of the following statements most accurately describe the work culture in your company when it comes to work-life balance? Please choose the top 2.

Employee's Views on Work-life Balance

|	
It is among the top 3 factors affecting my motivation and productivity at work.	26%
It is more important than money when I choose to join, stay with or leave a company.	24%
It is among the top 3 factors I consider when I choose to join, stay with or leave a company.	22%
It is not an important consideration when I choose to join, stay with or leave a company.	21%
None of the above	6%
Don't know / hard to say	2%
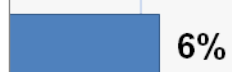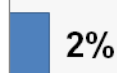
Base: 998

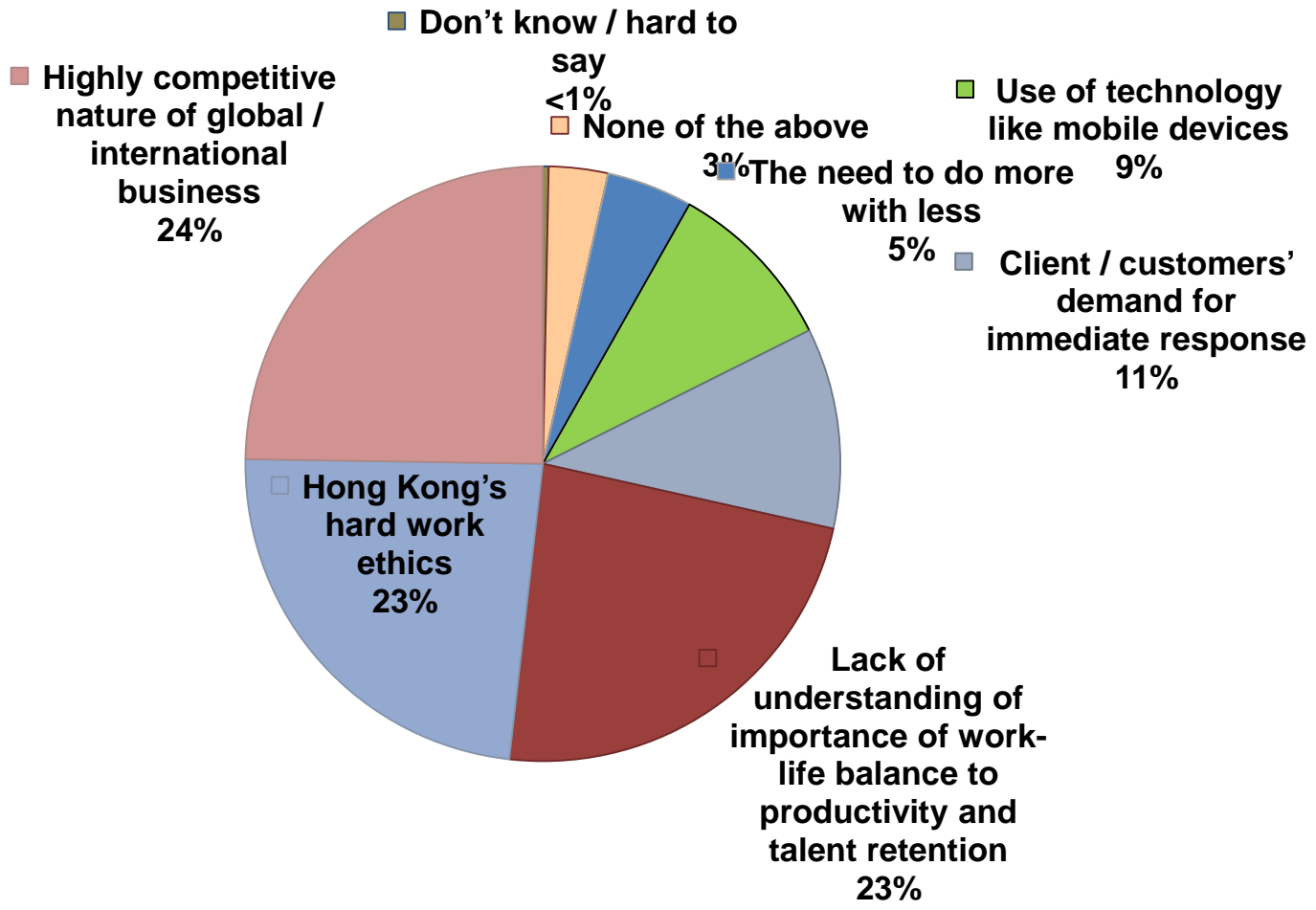| Age ^	Agree %
15-30	38%
31-40	27%
41-50	24%
51+	17%

[Q8] Which of the following statement most accurately describes your view on work-life balance? [Interviewer to read out items 1 to 4, items to be randomized by computer, single answer only]
^ *significantly different between groups at 99% confidence level*

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Biggest Contributor to the Current State of Work-life Balance in Hong Kong

Highly competitive nature of global / international business
24%

Hong Kong's hard work ethics
23%

Don't know / hard to say
<1%

None of the above
3%

The need to do more with less
5%

Use of technology like mobile devices
9%

Client / customers' demand for immediate response
11%

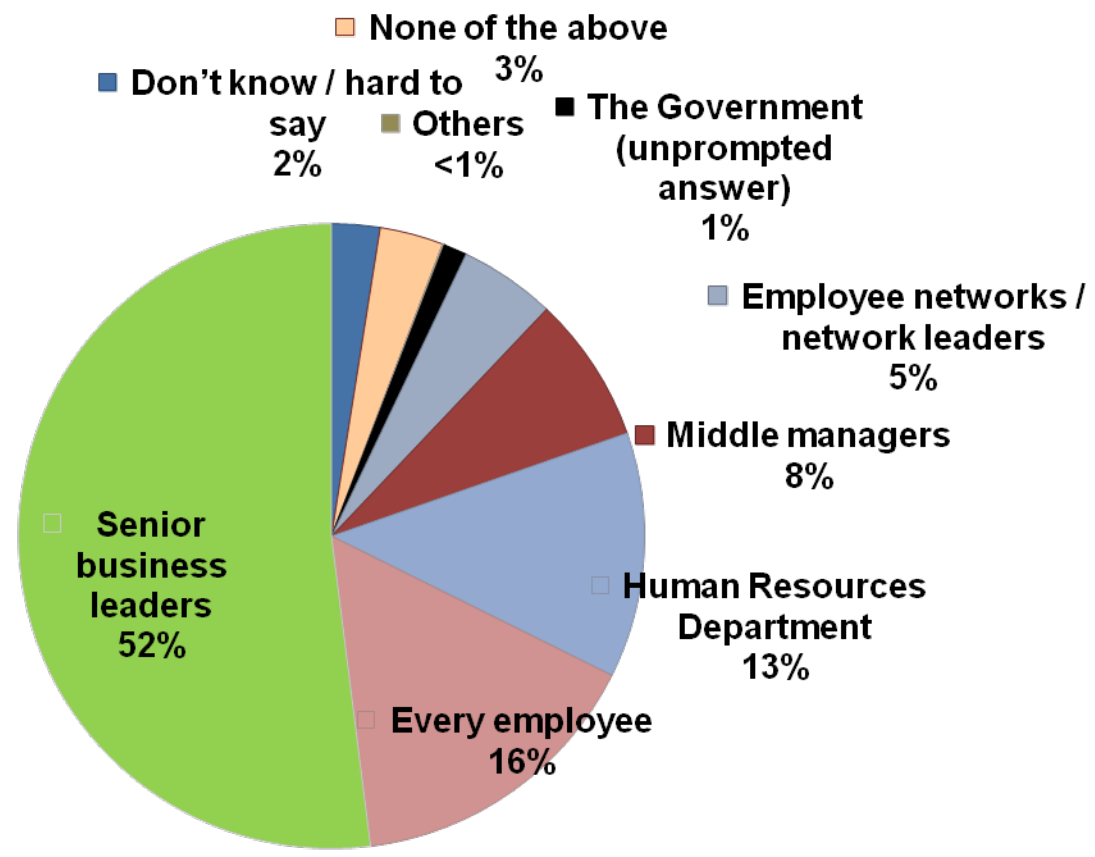Lack of understanding of importance of work-life balance to productivity and talent retention
23%

Base: 998

[Q9] What do you think has been the biggest contributor to the current state of work-life balance in Hong Kong? [Interviewer to read out items 1 to 6, items to be randomized by computer, single answer only]

Who Should Take the Primary Responsibility for Improving Work-life Balance in Organizations?

Base: 1,002

Pie chart data:
- Senior business leaders 52%
- Every employee 16%
- Human Resources Department 13%
- Middle managers 8%
- Employee networks / network leaders 5%
- None of the above 3%
- Don't know / hard to say 2%
- Others <1%
- The Government (unprompted answer) 1%

[Q10] Finally, who do you think should take the primary responsibility for improving work-life balance in your organisation? [Interviewer to read out items 1 to 5, items to be randomized by computer, single answer only]

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Concluding Remarks

Concluding Remarks

- Self-assessment of their achievement in attaining work-life balance remains fairly stable over the past 7 years, it stands at 6.0 marks this year.

- Three areas of concern have been identified in this year's survey:

  - mismatch of expectation between the companies and their staff

  - lack of open discussions on work-life balance

  - misplace of modern technology in enhancing work-life balance

- More studies should be conducted; better communication between employers and employees recommended.

Thank you!

For more details, please go to:
http://hkupop.hku.hk

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