

RETURN TO THE STAGE

November 10, 2020
Courtesy of



Why this study

Understand how the Performing Arts workforce is responding to this time, agnostic to affiliation, age, geography, or discipline

Help make the case for the field's most dynamic asset - the people

Who we heard from

3,300+ people in the Performing Arts
50 states
Dozens of occupations
College students to CEOs

**The survey link was live July 1-14, 2020*

Who this is for

Everyone in, or in service to, the Performing Arts

Questions

How can we take care of the Performing Arts workforce now?

How can workers be engaged and supported?

How can the workforce pipeline become more supportive and just, for workers at every stage of their career?

What might today's Performing Arts workforce look like in the future?

What would enable a dynamic, well, engaged workforce in the future?

What might a successful, generalist career path look like, as organizations reimagine their workforce needs and resources?

What will this workforce look like in the future?

How can we take care of the Performing Arts workforce now?

Recognize **emotional capacity and anxiety**

Leverage **social connection**

Understand **household and individual financial realities**

Nurture **specialists and generalists**

Respond to emotional stresses. The Performing Arts workforce reports elevated levels of hopelessness and anxiety, when compared to the general US population for the same two weeks as this study (July 1-14, 2020).

Over the past 7 days, have you been bothered by...

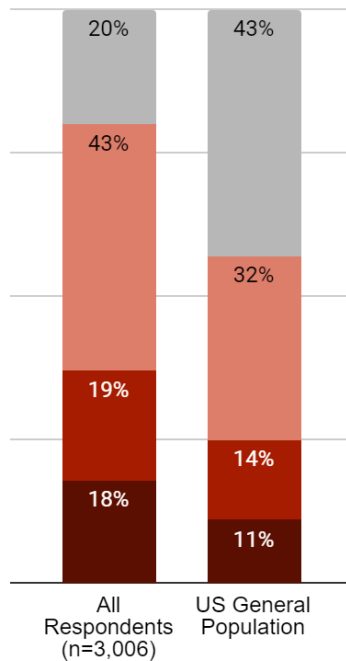
Not at all.

Several days.

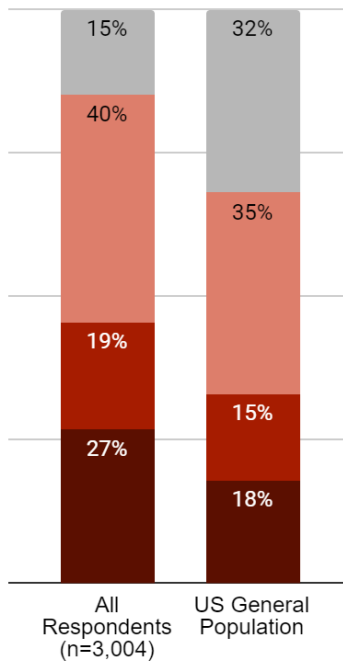
More than half the days.

Nearly every day.

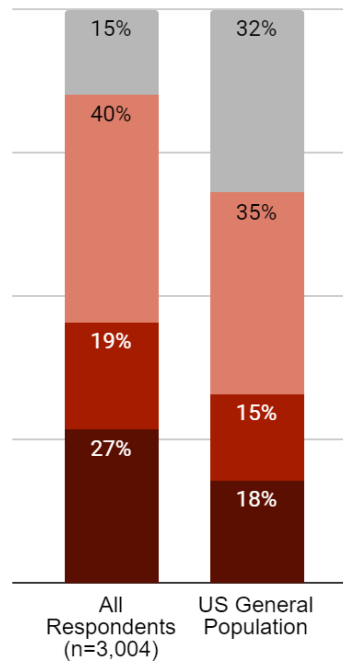
Having little interest or pleasure in doing things?



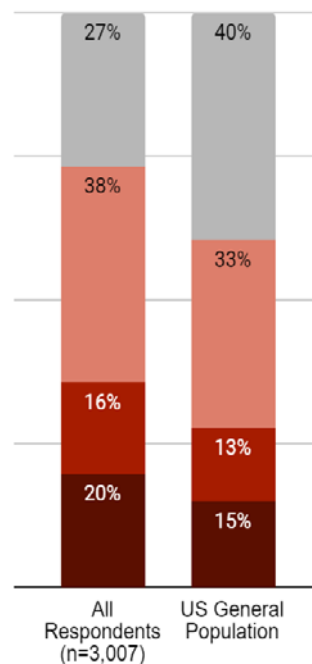
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?



Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge?

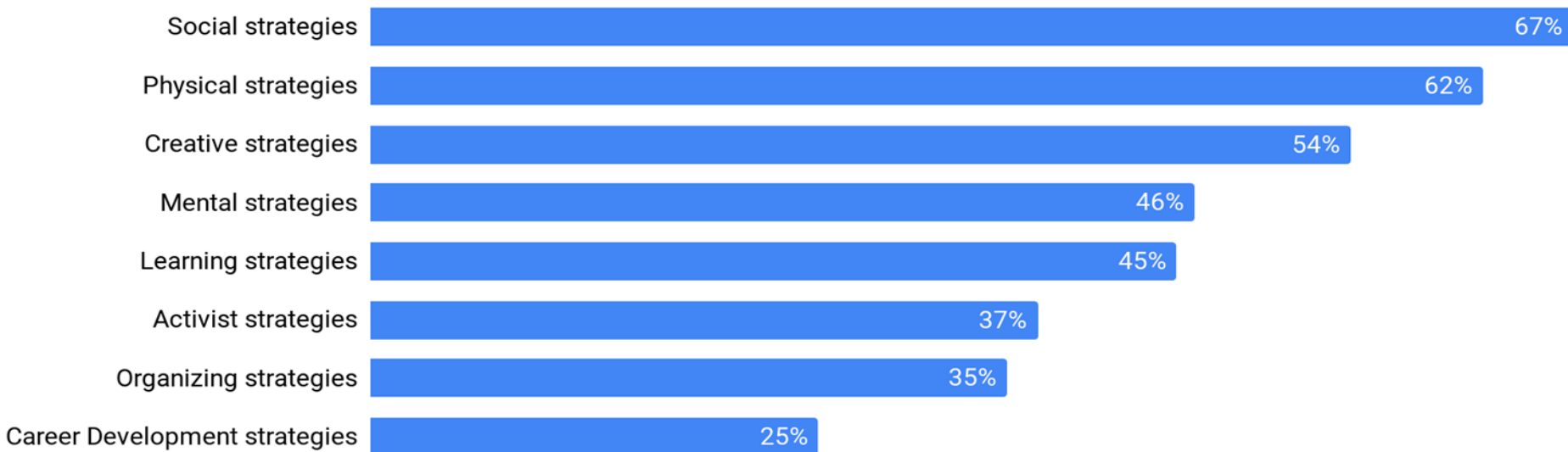


Not being able to stop or control worrying?



Leverage social coping strategies. Most respondents use social, physical, and creative coping strategies; over a third are using activist strategies. Nearly a quarter are coping through career development.

Coping strategies respondents are currently using (n=2,896)

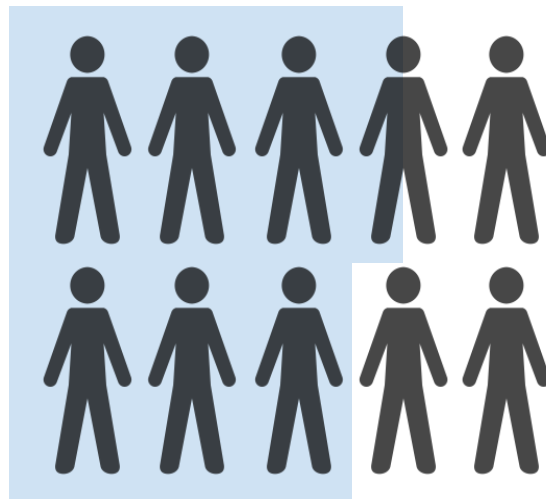


Celebrate the universality of creative coping strategies. Over half of respondents in every region and every level of experience reported using creative coping strategies.

More than half of respondents across **all geographic regions** report using creative coping strategies.

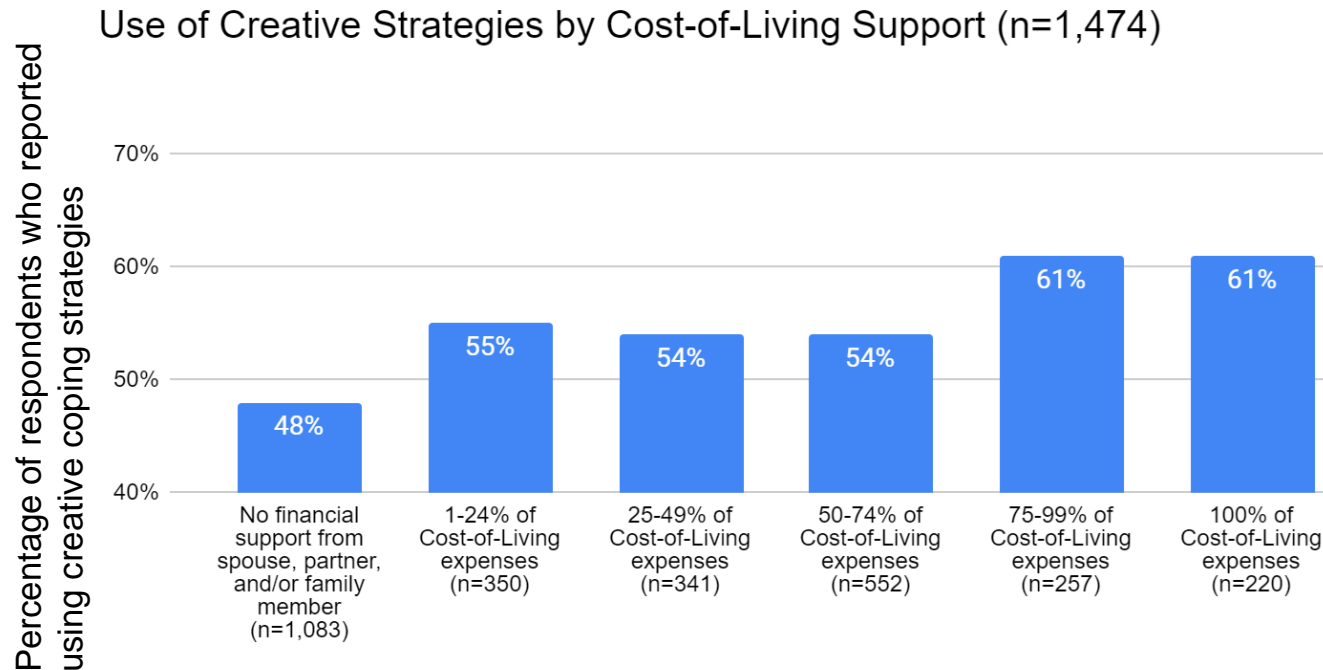


Creative coping strategies are used by **over 50%** of respondents across **all categories of tenure in the field.**



Recognize the importance of family and household financial wellbeing.

Financial support from a spouse, partner, or family member correlates positively with use of creative coping strategies.



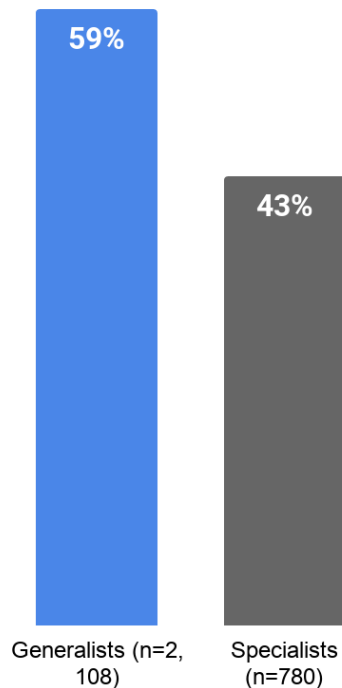
Among all respondents, 54% use creative coping strategies, such as writing, composing, design, performance, and/or building and fabrication projects.

Nurture generalists and specialists, recognizing that these groups cope in different ways. Generalists are much more likely to use creative coping strategies, which are linked to longer tenure in the field but independent of income and age.

Nearly two thirds of generalists report using creative coping strategies.

Good to know:

- Between 68-76% of all age groups report generalist careers.
- A majority of survey respondents across primary occupations report general careers, spanning performance, technical, managerial, executive, and more functions.
- About 73% of generalists report continuing to participate in the performing arts in any way.



Less than half of specialists report using creative coping strategies.

Good to know:

- Shorter career tenure correlates positively with specialization, suggesting that early career experiences artificially constrain the occupational range of workers.
- About 48% of specialists report using learning and/or career development strategies, a lower frequency than generalists (56%).
- About 59% of specialists report continuing to participate in the performing arts in any way.

What might today's
Performing Arts
workforce look like in
the future?

Consolidated, still **diverse**

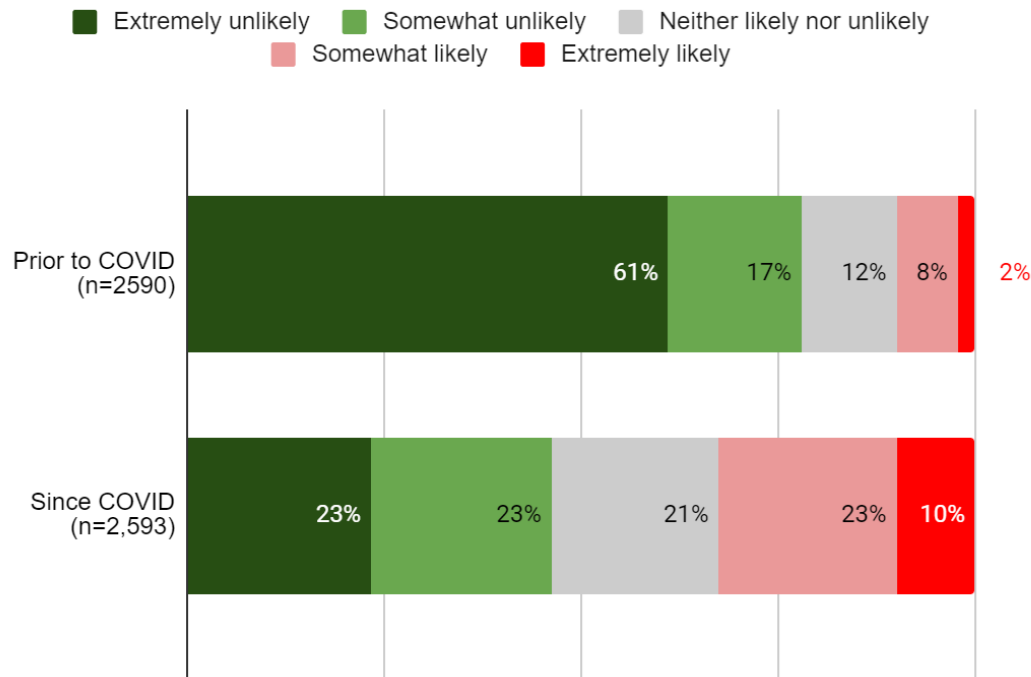
Versatile **generalists**

Creative outlets **support retention**

Think in terms of **vines, not pipelines**

Consolidated, but still diverse. Up to a third of the workforce may exit the field in the next 5 years, but the remaining two-thirds retain some demographic diversity.

Likelihood to leave the Performing Arts in the next 5 years



“Extremely unlikely,” “somewhat unlikely” and “neither likely nor unlikely” to leave the field.
(n=~1,600)



Gender

Female (61%)

Male (35%)

Gender Non-Conforming (3%)

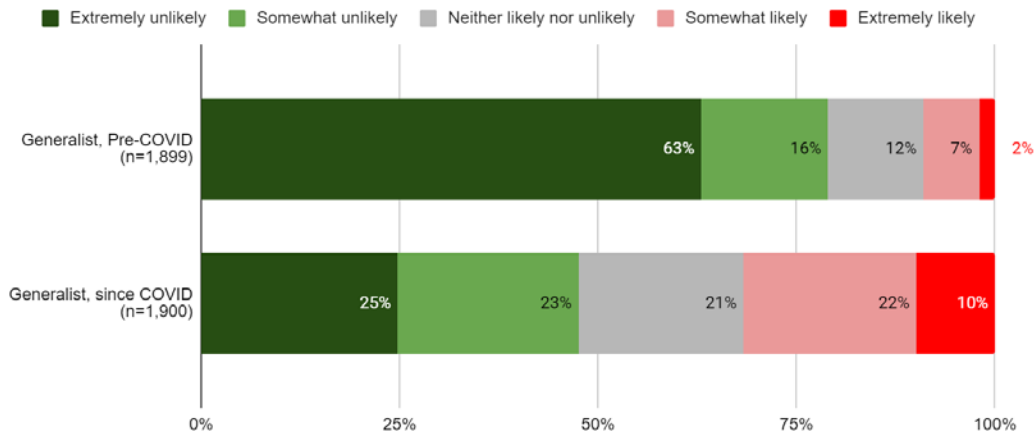


Race

BIPOC (11%)

Not BIPOC (89%)

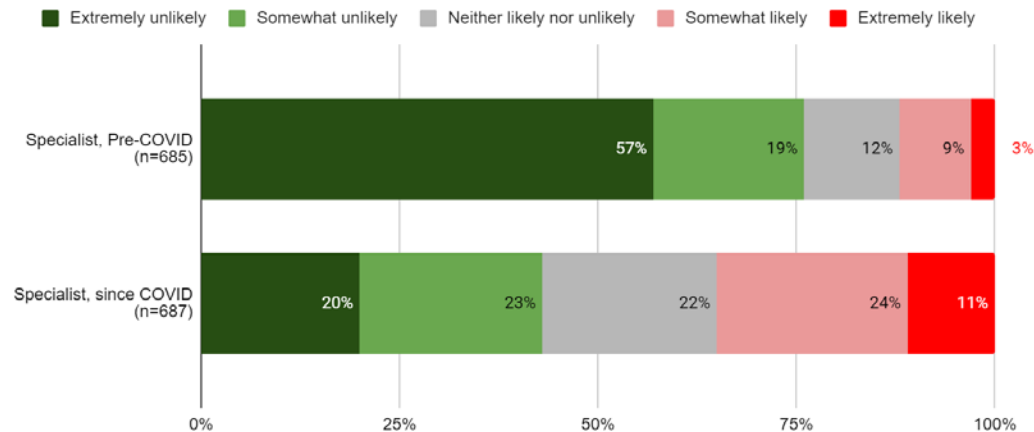
Generalists' attrition from the field, pre- and post-COVID



Versatile and peopled with generalists.

Generalists are more likely to stay in the field than specialists. To take advantage of their wide array of skills and interests, consider cross-functional jobs that serve organizations' and workers' goals.

Specialists' attrition from the field, pre- and post-COVID

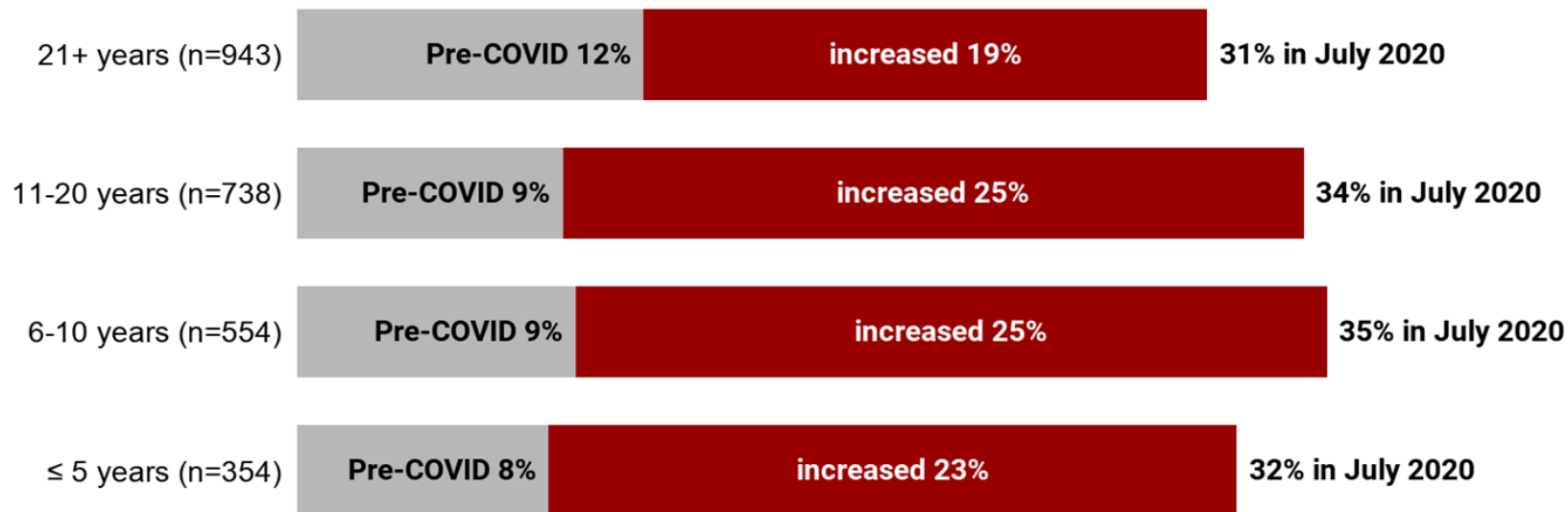


For example, a stage manager may also be able to manage grant proposals, and a HR generalist may also be able to teach classes to the general public.

Understand what drives the 'leaky pipeline' for mid-career individuals.

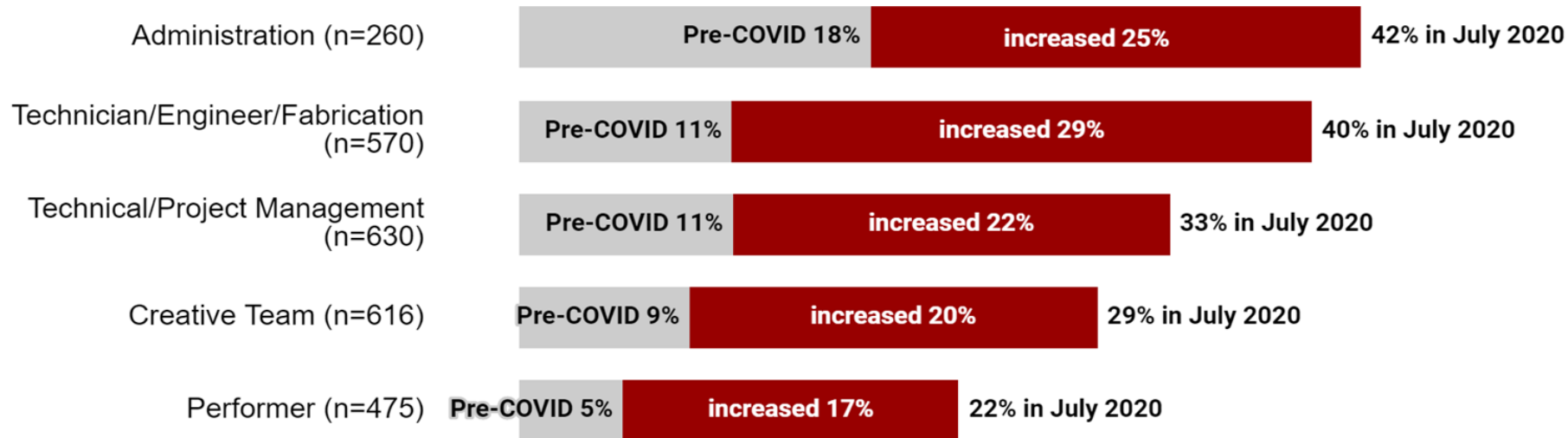
People with 5-20 years' experience are most at risk of exiting the Performing Arts in the next 5 years.

Respondents who are "somewhat" or "extremely" likely to leave the Performing Arts in the next 5 years, by tenure in the field



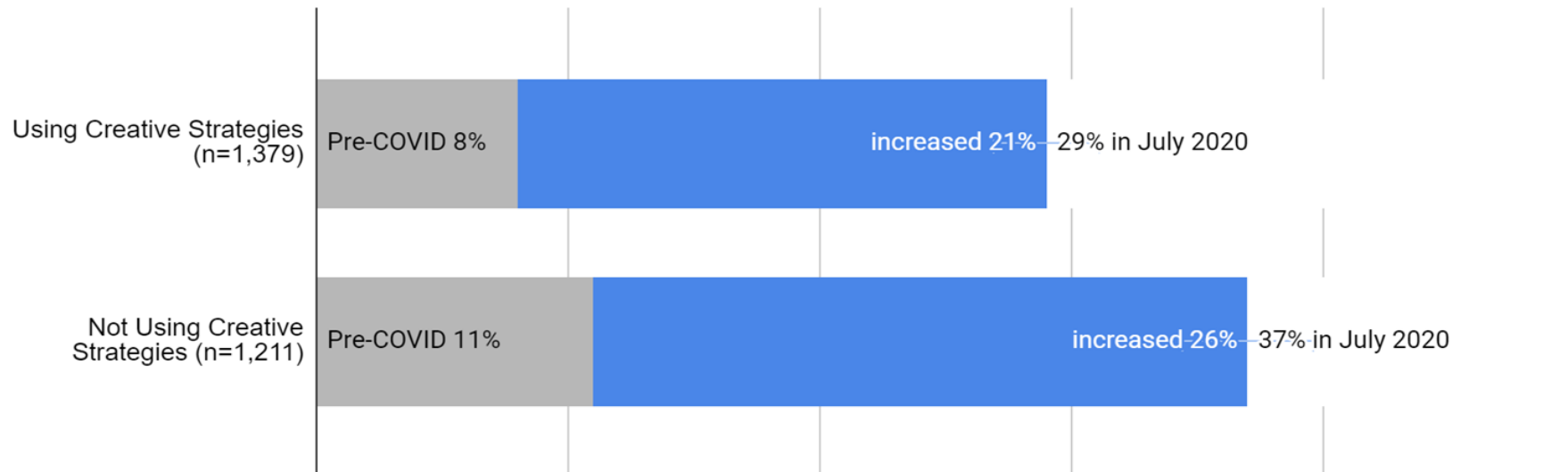
Recognize and adapt roles that rely on highly 'portable' skills. Administrative and technical professionals report the highest likelihood of leaving the field in the near term. Finding ways to engage and leverage their affinity for the Performing Arts may mitigate brain drain.

Percentage of respondents who are "somewhat" or "extremely" likely to leave the Performing Arts in the next 5 years (before and since COVID-19), by category of primary occupation



Strengthen access to creative outlets, directly or indirectly. Loyalty to the field is linked to use of creative coping strategies, highlighting potential retention opportunities for employers.

Percentage of respondents "somewhat" or "extremely" likely to leave the Performing Arts in the next 5 years (before and since COVID-19), by use of creative coping strategies



What would enable a dynamic, well, engaged workforce in the future?

What we know What might be done

Social connection is important, independent of occupation or demographic characteristics



Create and/or share inclusive social and networking opportunities

Creative coping/activity is linked to intent to stay in the field, and to financial support from a partner or family member



Generate and/or share creative opportunities
Respond to family and household financial wellness

Emotional wellbeing is more compromised among Performing Arts workers than the general population



Prioritize emotional wellness now
Collaborate to identify and act on “early wins” for worker mental health support

Loyalty to the sector is high, but ***attrition*** among mid-career workers and those with ‘portable’ skills may cause gaps



Support mid-career workers with customized strategies
Explore how career changes *within* the Performing Arts can retain and develop talent

Please be in touch.

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