

# 2021 Law Firm Inclusion Study



# About the Study

Calibrate Legal's annual research program, Calibrate ID, aims to measure and understand inclusion and diversity among business service professionals at Am Law 200 firms. The first-of-its-kind study seeks to address inclusion and diversity efforts at law firms more holistically and to foster innovation. The Calibrate ID research supports Calibrate Legal's longer-term efforts to champion the recognition of law firm business services professionals as Revenue Enablers™, who are essential components for any firm's ongoing success.

As part of our research, we conducted an anonymous survey focused on how law firm business services professionals feel about their firm's DE&I efforts.

This report is drawn from a web-based survey over a two-week period from late January to mid-February 2021. It features responses from 256 marketing and business development professionals within US, Canadian, European, UK, Asian and Australian law firms. 237 responses came from US-based respondents.

Please reach out to us with suggestions, questions and comments.

Thank you

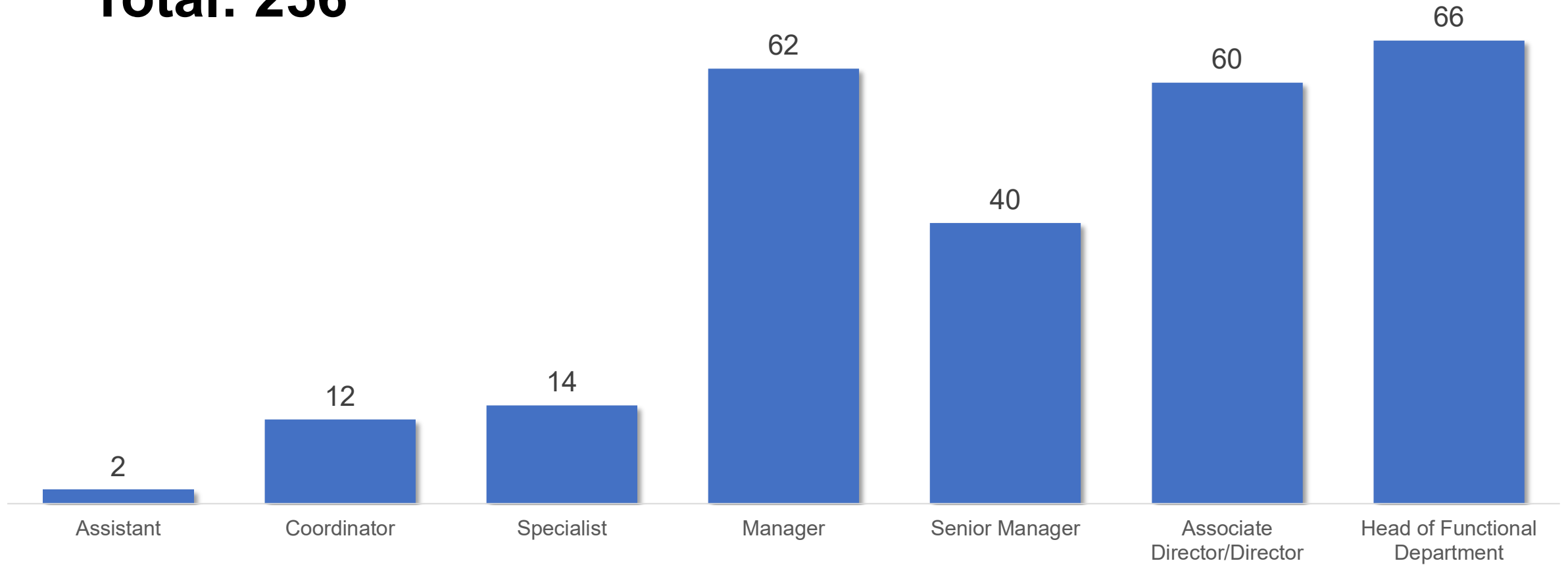


Jennifer Johnson, CEO & Founder, Calibrate Legal, Inc.

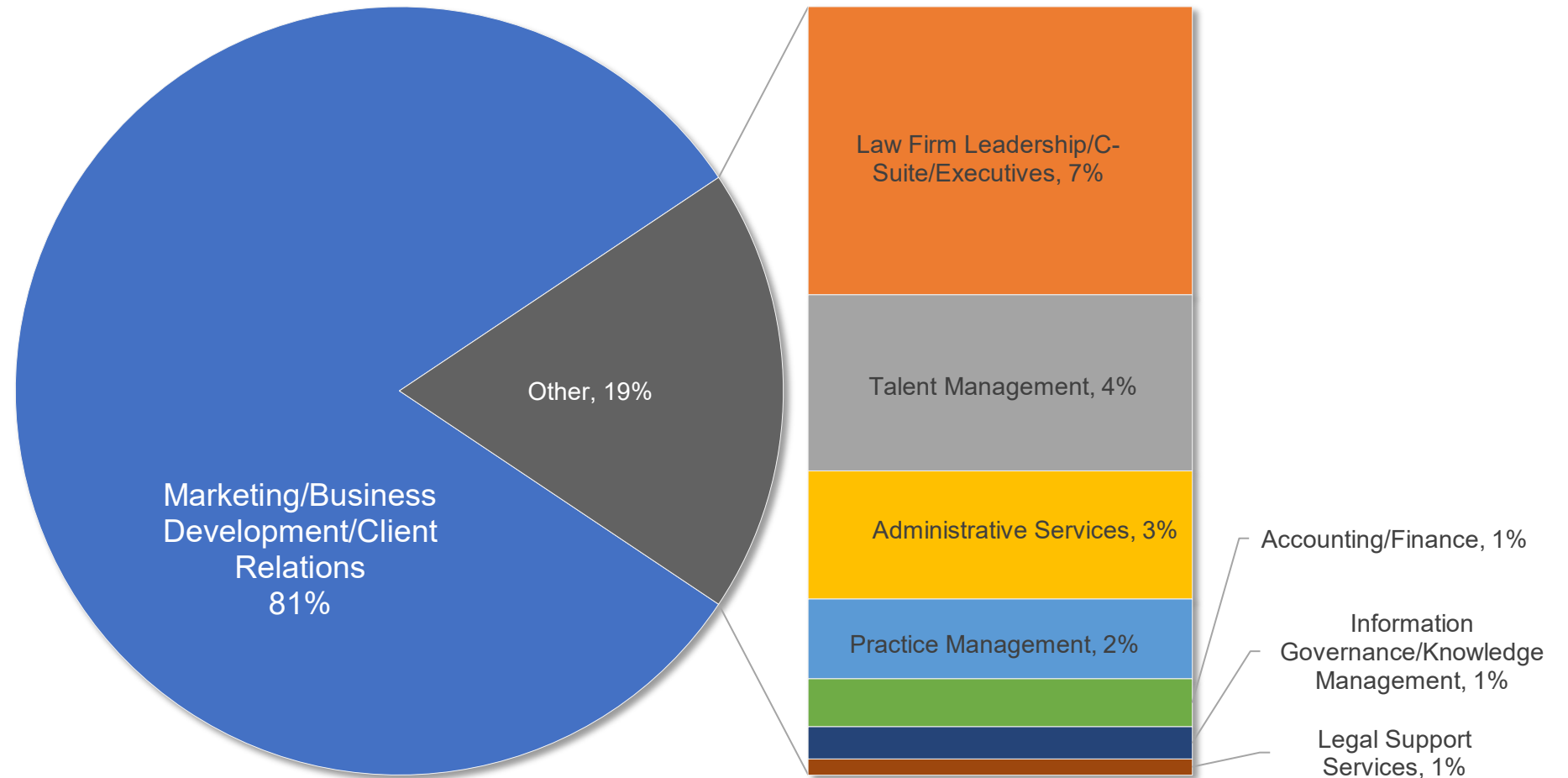


# Respondents by Job Level

**Total: 256**



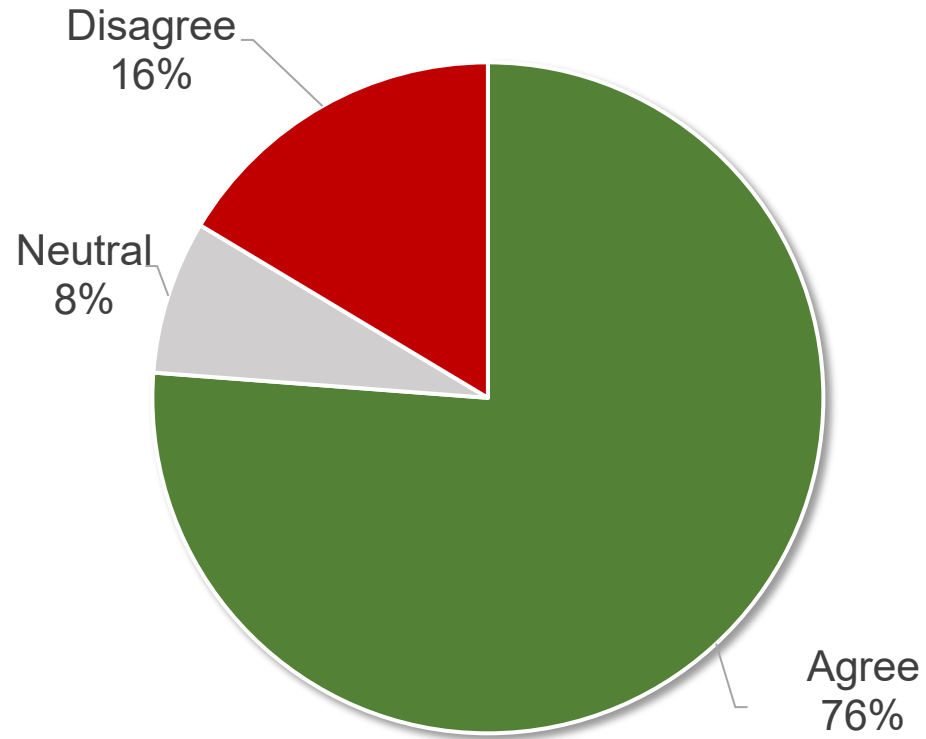
# Responses by Business Services Department



# Survey Questions

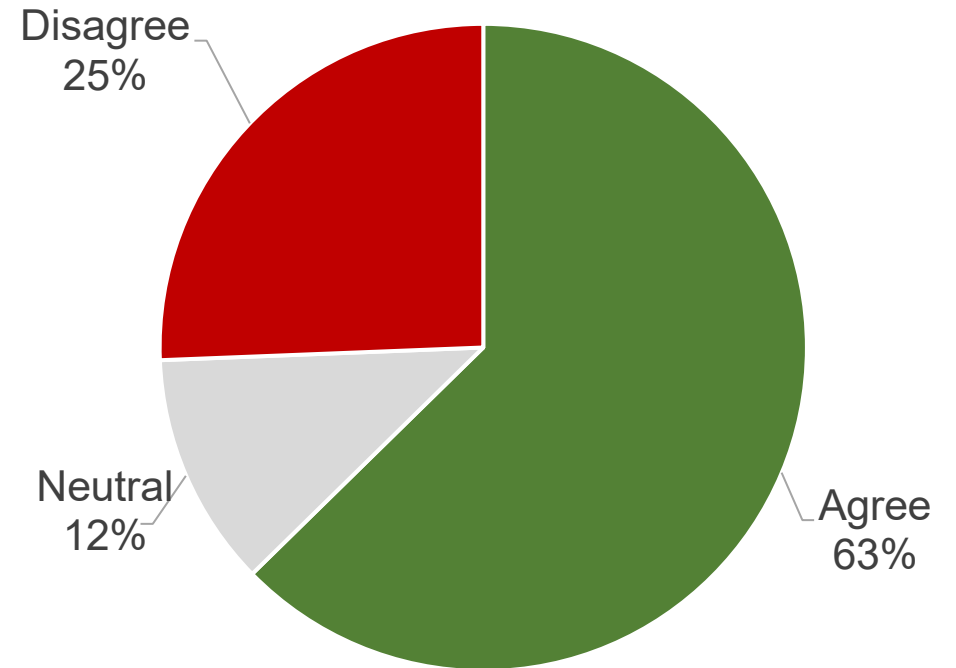


**My firm cultivates an environment that values differences, fairness, and inclusion.**



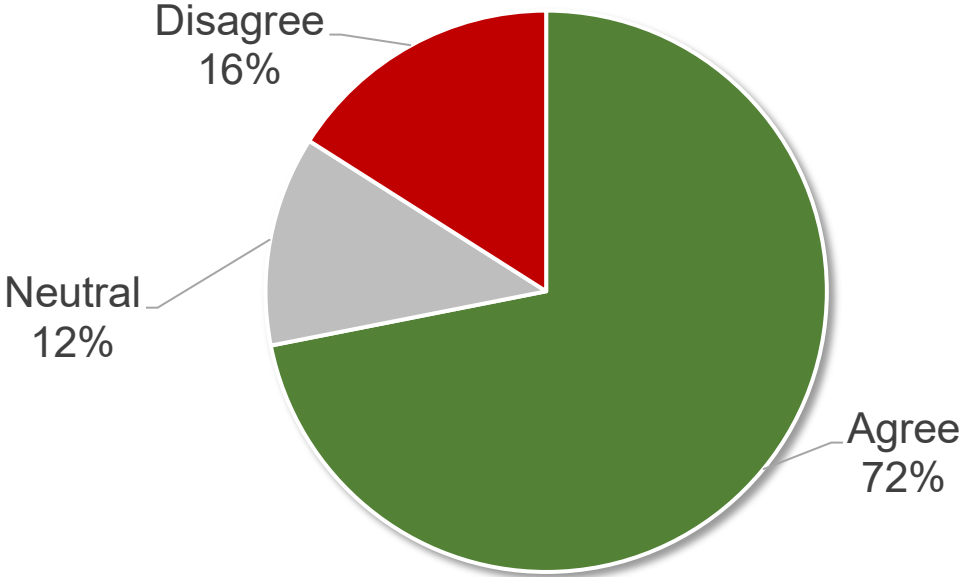
*Junior staff (coordinators, specialists and assistants) disagreed with this statement the most.*

**At my firm, I feel empowered to talk about barriers to inclusion, and the need to hold myself and others accountable for removing them.**

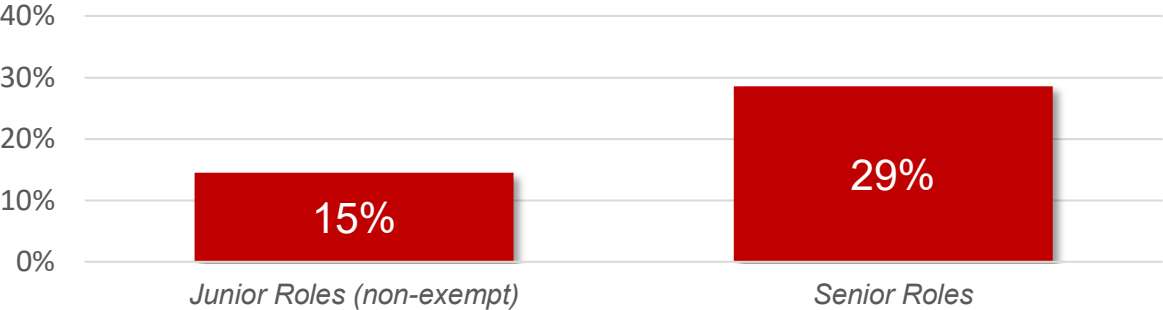


*Managers and senior managers disagreed with this statement slightly more than leaders (functional heads and directors).*

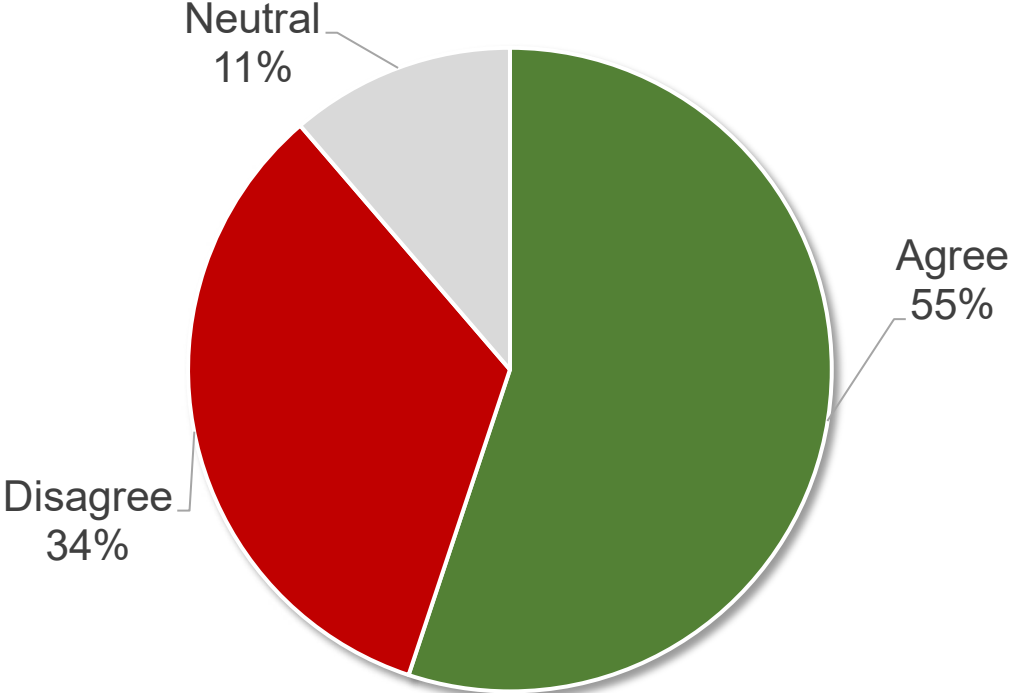
**My firm takes action to decrease bias and discrimination in the workplace.**



**“Disagree”:  
% breakdown between roles**

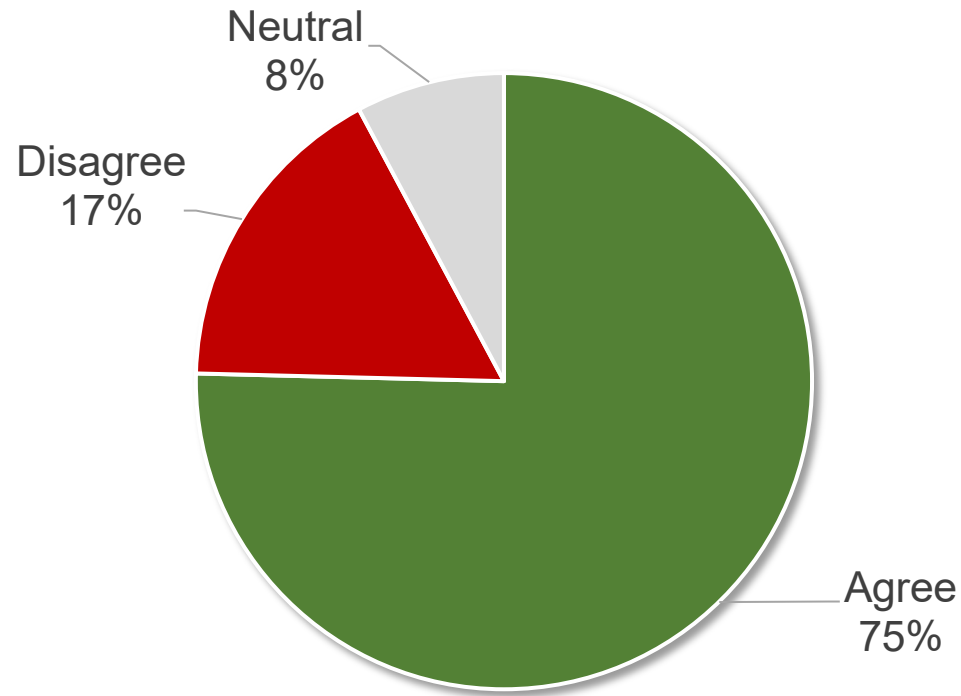


**My firm recognizes multiple forms of diversity (including educational attainment, socioeconomic background, and diversity of thought in addition to race, gender, age and sexual orientation).**



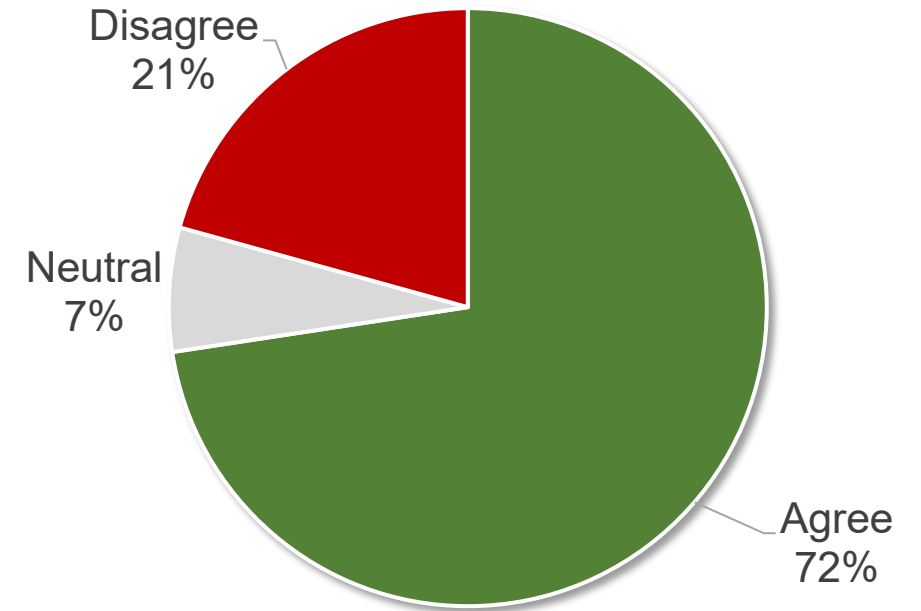
*This statement had the highest “disagree” score (34%) of all 6 survey questions.*

## My colleagues, including attorneys, show open and welcoming behavior.



*Respondents who added comments agreed with this statement much less (63%) than who added no comments (78%).*

## I have been included in my firm's D&I initiatives/projects/training programs.



*Only 57% of managers agreed with this statement vs. 86% of functional heads.*



# Insights



**Business services people are reasonably happy with their firms' diversity efforts (68% agree with the statement overall).**



**This is less true for exempt staff (below the level of manager), who agreed with the statements (59%) significantly less than their leaders (69%).**



**Respondents with the title “Manager” are much less satisfied (57% agree) with their firms’ diversity efforts than other levels (71% agree).**

**Respondents who left comments agreed with the statements much less (51%) than those who did not (72%).**



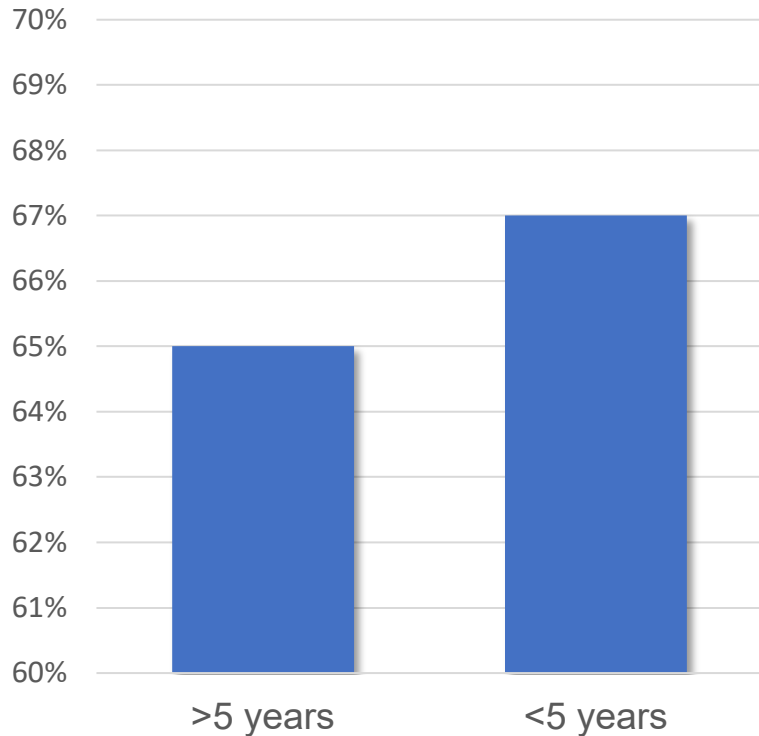


**The majority of respondents “somewhat agree” with the statements, as opposed to completely agree.**

This shows us there is room for **growth** — for firms to increase their DEI efforts with their business services teams.

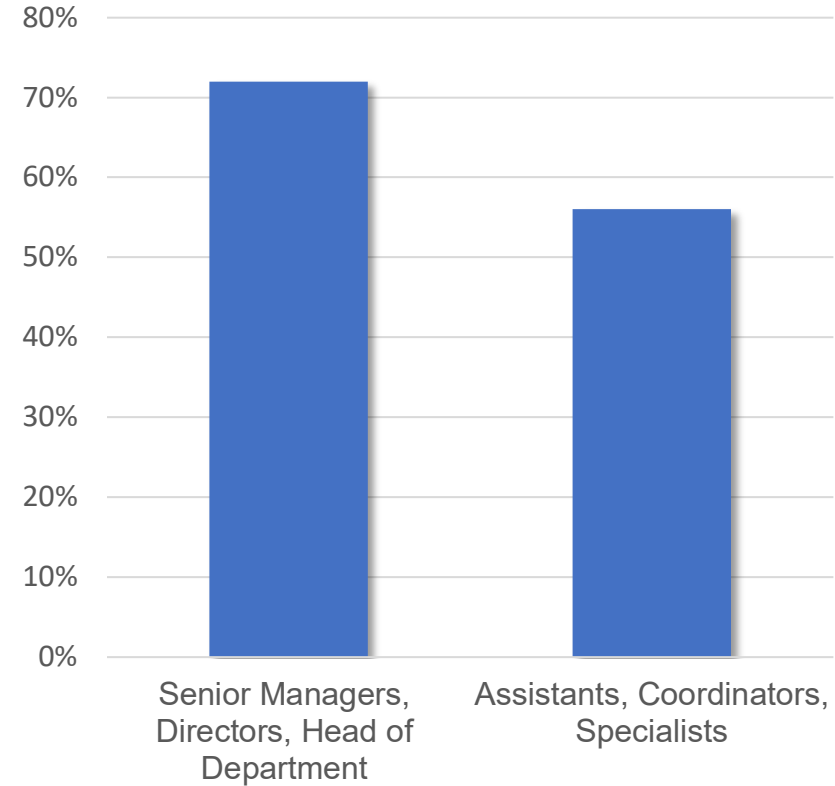


## Job tenure slightly impacted results



*Those with less than 5 years at their firms were 65% positive; those with more than 5 years were 67% positive.*

## Senior staff responded more positively



*Respondents with senior titles (senior manager and above) had more overall positive responses (72%) than those with junior titles (56%).*

# Comments



# There is a vocal minority of respondents who are feeling negative enough to make specific comments.

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- Out of 87 comments received, 65 are negative.
- The majority of these comments relate to *lawyers being prioritized over staff*.
- More support and effort needed in D&I efforts.
- Many mentioned there were *no actions, change or accountability* and others *feel frustrated* by the slow progress of change.
- Some comments related to *hypocritical actions of leadership*, saying one thing and doing another.



# A Selection Of Comments Received

*The D&I activities are often open to diverse lawyers but not to diverse staff.*

**Manager**

*Recognizing multiple forms of diversity, especially diversity of thought, can often hinder more progressive I&D work.*

**Associate  
Director/Director**

*I've not seen anything to suggest more than lip service to the cause*

**Manager**

*They do this for lawyers mostly; legal staff are still significantly under represented. A big focus for our firm right now is gender equality for comp. Women lawyers have been consistently been paid less than their male counterparts. Same goes for many female staff members -- but when I've raised this with COO, CHRO, and Chief DE&I Officer (individually and in a group meeting, by email and face-to-face), I was shot down, told its not true, and basically told to keep my mouth shut even after presenting data received directly from HR/Comp proving my point. It took 5 years, but now they're starting to quietly talk about pay equity for female lawyers and said staff pay equity will follow in a few years. A few years!!!!*

**Head of Functional Department**

*The firm has included me, but I have often felt harmed by the conversations had in those spaces and have had to put forth immense emotional labor.*

**Specialist**

*Lawyers rule, everyone else drools!*

**Manager**

*I would be reprimanded for doing this - At my firm, I feel empowered to talk about barriers to inclusion, and the need to hold myself and others accountable for removing them.*

**Head of Functional  
Department**





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