

Taking advantage of a tipping point

---

# Now Meets Next in Knowledge Work

---

Introducing the industry's first Knowledge Work Maturity Model™

**metia**

Commissioned by  
 iManage

# Table of contents



- 3 Foreword by Neil Araujo, CEO, iManage
- 4 Some important definitions

## Executive summary

- 5 What is now and next for knowledge work?
- 5 The Knowledge Work Maturity Model™: Defining now and next
- 7 What does the move from now to next look like?

## 01 Carpe diem. Carpe scientiam.

- 8 What is the knowledge economy and why does it matter?
- 9 Is the future of work knowledge work?
- 9 Why does the industry need a Knowledge Work Maturity Model™?

## 02 In the beginning, there was data.

- 10 Five steps to a robust, global dataset

## 03 State of the nation by the numbers.

- 13 Global headlines, highlights, and apparent contradictions

## 04 Regional headlines, highlights, and cultural differences.

- 16 Summary of trends at a regional level
- 17 Africa
- 18 Asia
- 19 Europe
- 21 North America
- 22 Oceania
- 23 LATAM

## 05 The mechanics of maturity.

- 24 How we built the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™
- 27 How to use the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™
- 27 Three simple steps to get started

## 06 Getting to know the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.

- 28 Understanding the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity
- 31 Let's get familiar with the five phases of knowledge work maturity
- 32 Let's get familiar with the drivers of knowledge work maturity at each phase
- 33 Let's get familiar with how you progress within the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™

## 07 Deep diving into data behind each knowledge work maturity phase.

- 35 How to get down with the data

## 08 Benchmarking the knowledge work industry.

- 66 Benchmarking maturity by role
- 67 Benchmarking maturity by size
- 67 Benchmarking maturity for professional firms
- 68 Benchmarking maturity by vertical
- 69 Benchmarking maturity of departments within corporate KWOs

## 09 Start your next, now.

- 70 Final thoughts on taking advantage of a tipping point

# Foreword

by Neil Araujo, CEO, iManage

## Why did iManage want to build a Knowledge Work Maturity Model™?

As a leading global knowledge work platform, we're witnessing the knowledge work industry evolve at a pace we've never experienced before.

Work must ignite people's passion to strengthen their commitment to remaining with our organizations. Knowledge workers' expectations are radically changing, and they must feel valued both internally and by clients. Hybrid work is becoming a permanent fixture, flexibility in place and mode of work matters, and asynchronous collaboration is quite simply the way that today's busy and successful professionals get work done.

This is true for every knowledge-intensive vertical, from legal and financial services to healthcare, media, and entertainment.

We believe that the industry is at a critical tipping point, and while every technology business would love for technology to be the best way to embrace this tipping point, it is not. Because no matter how powerful or intelligent a technology is, if you adopt it before your processes or culture are ready, you won't get the return on investment you want.

So how do organizations whose primary output is knowledge "know" when it is the right time to invest in any type of knowledge work technology?



Every industry expert would answer this question differently. But at iManage, we want to be able to answer this question in a definitive, data-driven, and unbiased way.

That's why we commissioned an independent marketing and insight firm, Metia, to create the industry's first data-driven Knowledge Work Maturity Model™. Metia designed, executed, and analyzed an extensive global survey of 2,002 knowledge work organizations in 44 countries and 13 languages to create this model.

We're pleased to share this research and the story it tells, and proud to support knowledge work organizations everywhere in their efforts to benchmark themselves against the industry, assess where they are today, and make the right investment decisions to move confidently forward into the knowledge workplaces of tomorrow.

# Some important definitions

Familiarizing yourself with the following concepts will help contextualize the insights that follow.

## Knowledge work organizations (KWOs)

KWOs are either a professional firm (e.g., a legal firm, financial services firm, tax firm, accountancy firm) or specialist teams within an organization (e.g., corporate law, corporate finance, regulatory, tax, audit procurement, HR department) that relies on digital documents containing intellectual property (IP) that requires protection and governance.

## The knowledge work industry (KWI)

This is the collective term we use to refer to the full dataset.

## Knowledge work (in a commercial context)

Commercial knowledge work draws on a deep level of accumulated experience and expertise combined with critical analysis and communication skills to translate documented processes into meaningful action. It involves processing and interpreting information through the lens of context to understand its relevance, applicability, and the associated risks of using it to solve problems, deliver services, and generate value.

## Knowledge workers

Knowledge workers continuously engage in processes that create and exploit knowledge — typically by applying theoretical and analytical knowledge acquired through formal training — to develop and deliver products and services.

## Statistical significance

All survey data comparisons highlighted in the report are statistically significant at a 90% confidence level. For example, 25% of African KWOs vs. 17% of KWOs overall are reducing their budgets means that this is a statistically significant finding.

## The global knowledge management market

This is the defined commercial market representing the tools, services, and technologies that underpin the managerial approach through which an organization collects, analyzes, systematizes, stores, and shares its knowledge assets or knowledge-based intellectual property.

## Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ (KWMM™)

While there are many maturity models that speak to technology adoption, business culture, decision-making, or lines of business, this is the first time that a Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ has been created using a robust, global dataset like ours. Like all maturity models, it's designed to help KWOs understand where they are in relation to the knowledge work industry as a whole and determine where they need to invest based on their growth and maturity goals.

## Collective intelligence

Collective intelligence has its roots in science — sociology, sociobiology, political science, and anthropology. It's typically considered the outcome of the collaboration, collective efforts, and competition of many individuals that typifies consensus decision-making or crowdsourcing.

In a commercial knowledge work context, we're defining collective intelligence as successfully operationalizing past and present experience, data, knowledge, best practices, and IP by building an infrastructure and culture of collaboration that values and rewards diverse knowledge resulting in superior employee and customer experiences, market leadership, growth, and organizational value.

# Executive summary

## What is now and next for knowledge work?

The global economy and the knowledge work economy are at a tipping point.

Society is transitioning from a reliance on traditional industries toward the production of goods and services created through knowledge-intensive activities.

If knowledge is the future means of production for the global economy, the future of work is knowledge work.

Regardless of the industry that you work in, understanding how to attract, retain, value, and motivate knowledge workers will become increasingly important.

If your organization works with sensitive and valuable data, knowledge, or intellectual property, it's time to have a clear knowledge work strategy in place.

## The Knowledge Work Maturity Model™: Defining now and next

Until now, approaches to knowledge work have been scattered, and leaders have been left to take “best guesses” at how to support their knowledge workers and activate knowledge. There's been a lack of clarity around what works: what processes, behaviors, and technologies take companies from managing knowledge to making knowledge work.

### The Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ provides:

1. A framework for assessing how effectively an organization approaches their reliance on knowledge.
2. A “score” that quantifies how far an organization has to go to achieve the knowledge work maturity they aspire to.
3. A clear understanding of the actions needed to close that gap.

This benchmarking model derives its strength from a data-backed index, informed by qualitative and quantitative analyses of:



The model in figure 1 (next page) starts with KWOs in the Seeker stage, which are building a secure foundation for a future of knowledge work. They prioritize investment in protecting documents, data, and intellectual property while they explore and experiment with the type of culture and ways of working that will allow them to increase the value of the work they do.

It ends with the KWOs at the Pioneer stage, which are the shining lights of the industry. They are flourishing now and continuously innovating to define the “next” of knowledge work.

FIGURE 1

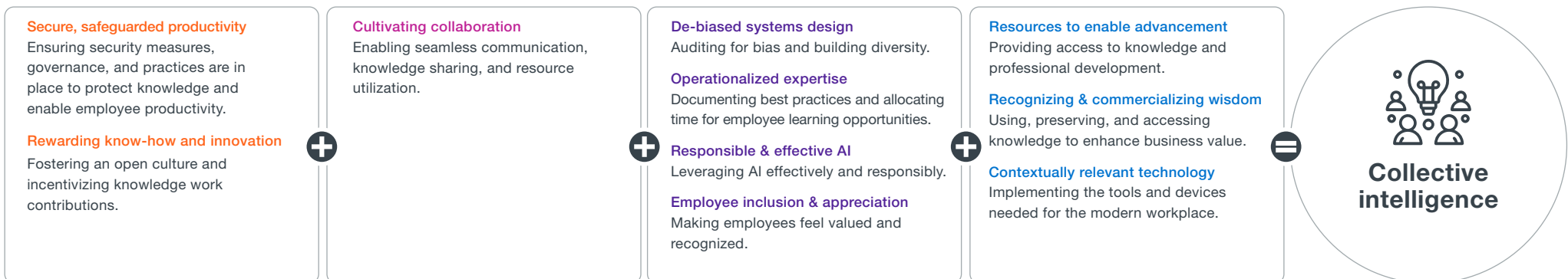
# Knowledge Work Maturity Model™



Primary knowledge work goal	Investment priorities	Their mindset
Productivity	Profitable collaboration	Market differentiation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process</li> <li>Tech</li> <li>Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process</li> <li>Tech</li> <li>Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process</li> <li>Tech</li> <li>Culture</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intrigued</li> <li>Data driven</li> <li>Experimental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative</li> <li>Organized</li> <li>Customer focused</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organized</li> <li>Transforming</li> <li>Customer first</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent employee and customer experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process</li> <li>Tech</li> <li>Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic</li> <li>Future forward</li> <li>Digital first</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collective intelligence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process</li> <li>Tech</li> <li>Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative</li> <li>Creative</li> <li>Thriving</li> </ul>

## Driving maturity

Foundational requirements → Prioritized knowledge work investments → Outcome



### **Mature KWOs look different, feel different, and act differently.**

They are customer-centered and bring shared value to every interaction through a commitment and infrastructure that allows them to deliver work quickly, consistently, and proactively.

Perceived as industry leaders, they are held up as examples of excellence in knowledge management and work. Their employees not only want to stay with them, but also actively advocate for their employer as a great place to work.

They are recognized internally and externally for making investments aimed at delivering superior value to customers and for making knowledge work easier by allowing employees to focus on their most valuable and important work.

They make room for innovation and people are encouraged to learn from both success and challenging situations.

They are forward-looking yet retain respect for the past. Historical knowledge is considered as important as new, innovative perspectives.

Knowledge work is valued and knowledge workers are rewarded for specific contributions made to collective intelligence through standard remuneration, bonuses, and promotional opportunities.

They have a defined knowledge management strategy in place, and they are more likely to increase their investments in knowledge work tools and training in the coming year.

They are more likely to offer flexible working.

They actively recruit for diversity of thought, background, and experience. They systematically pursue diversity and inclusion through auditing job descriptions, policies, practices, and internal and external communications for bias.

Most importantly, they look outside their own domain to enhance their knowledge and broaden their collective intelligence, taking best practices from different industries and applying them to their own.

## **What does the move from now to next look like?**

Modern, mature knowledge work organizations are the future of work and personify collective intelligence.

Think of a thriving natural ecosystem where every organism has a place and a role to play in the health and vitality of the ecosystem. Think about the energy that's created as the ecosystem expands, new organisms emerge, successful organisms increase their productivity, and the ecosystem gets stronger.

That's how successful knowledge work organizations will operate. By following the investment priorities laid out in the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™, every knowledge work organization now has a roadmap to get there.

# 01

## Carpe diem. Carpe scientiam.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Carpe diem. Carpe scientiam. Seize the day. Seize the knowledge. We are at an economic and industry tipping point. The knowledge economy and the knowledge work economy are poised for exponential growth.
2. Knowing how to build the knowledge work organization of the future will be the key to unlocking value for your team, your organization, and the knowledge workers you employ.
3. Understanding the drivers of knowledge work maturity will ensure that you make the right investments at the right time.

## What is the knowledge economy and why does it matter?

We're living through a period of significant economic change, moving from a reliance on traditional industries toward the production of goods and services principally created through knowledge-intensive activities.

As early as the 1950s, academics and global development organizations like OECD and UNESCO have argued that successful nations will be forced to place a significantly higher value on skills, innovation, research, and knowledge to build their economies. Intangible assets like brand, skills, innovation, intellectual property (IP), and academic knowledge will become the primary means of production and profit.<sup>1</sup>

These predictions are coming to fruition. In the past four decades, the expansion of R&D capacity has seen considerable momentum worldwide, growing from 3 FTE to 5.4 FTE per 1,000 employed. The volume of patents registered globally has increased 81% since 2007, when some 1.8 million patents were registered, compared to 3.4 million in 2021.<sup>2</sup>

The number of students in higher education was 99 million in 2000, rose to 216 million in 2016, and is predicted to rise to 594 million in 2040.<sup>3</sup>

We are witnessing strong leading indicators that this shift is firmly underway, and we're reaching a societal and industrial tipping point.

---

**“Since the 1980s, the advanced nations have been moving from an older, industrial economy — where people work with their backs and their brawn — to a knowledge economy, where they work with their minds. This trend is apparent when you look at the percentage of people with advanced degrees and who work in the knowledge economy, or the rise of what I dubbed the creative class of scientists, techies, innovators, knowledge workers, artists and designers.”**

**Richard Florida**  
London School of Economics, 2021

---

1. Drucker, P. (1969). *The Age of Discontinuity: Guidelines to Our Changing Society*. New York: Harper and Row and Frank, David John and Meyer, John W., *The University and the Global Knowledge Society*, Princeton University Press 2020.

2. Zapp 2022: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11024-021-09455-4#Fig1>

3. <https://monitor.icef.com/2018/10/study-projects-dramatic-growth-global-higher-education-2040/>



**50%  
of GDP**

in major OECD countries depends on knowledge.

**\$9.2 trillion**

was contributed to global GDP by knowledge intensive industries in 2019.

**“Hitting one billion knowledge workers is a momentous occasion in human development, not just information technology or digital workplaces. It is a milestone in the movement from working the land to work creating and manipulating information.”**

Craig Roth  
Gartner, December 2019

## Is the future of work knowledge work?

Together with the macroeconomic shifts, there are many leading indicators that suggest that the knowledge work industry is itself reaching a critical tipping point of maturity.

While there's no definitive agreement on the size and value of the global knowledge work economy today, there are reliable proxies that suggest it's now a significant and growing part of global gross domestic product (GDP).

Knowledge- and technology-intensive industries — those that globally invest the largest shares of their output in research and development — contributed 11% to global GDP (US\$9.2 trillion) in 2019 and rose a further 2.2% in 2020.<sup>4</sup>

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce uses (IP)-intensive industries as a proxy for the US knowledge economy, and these industries now represent 38.2% of the country's GDP.<sup>5</sup>

39% of UK organizations are now defined as being in “knowledge intensive” industries estimated to be worth £98 billion (\$108 billion) to the British economy on an annual basis.<sup>6</sup>

Gartner predicted that by the end of 2019, someone somewhere in the world started a new job and they became the one billionth knowledge worker.<sup>7</sup>

Together, these data points provide a strong indication that this is a significant moment for knowledge work organizations across the globe.

We are at an economic, social, and industry tipping point.

**“The most important and indeed truly unique contribution of management in the 20th century was the fifty-fold increase in the productivity of the manual worker in manufacturing. The most important contributions management needs to make in the 21st century is similarly to increase the productivity of knowledge work and the knowledge worker.”**

Peter Drucker  
Landmarks of Tomorrow

## Why does the industry need a Knowledge Work Maturity Model™?

The knowledge work industry should be poised to take advantage of this unique moment in economic history.

However, until now, approaches to knowledge work have been scattered, and business leaders have been left to take “best guesses” at how to evolve their organizations and support their knowledge workers.

There's a lack of clarity around what works, about which processes, behaviors, and technologies will take organizations forward.

When an economy or industry reaches a tipping point, it's useful to have a guidance on how and when to take advantage of the opportunities presented.

The Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ is designed to help any KWO understand its current level of maturity and picture what can be achieved with a prioritized investment strategy.

The Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ will help you set realistic expectations of ROI, define a clear path to success, and ensure that you make the right investments at the right time.

As we'll later reveal, despite average annual technology budgets of about \$14 million, only 21% of KWOs strongly agree that they are currently optimizing technology to support knowledge work. This shows that introducing new tools or processes when an organization is not ready can lead to low adoption levels and a failure to achieve the anticipated return on investment.

Whether you're building a knowledge work organization or a knowledge work team, it's important to understand what best practices look like, know where you are relative to others in the industry, and most importantly, understand where you need to invest next to meet your business goals and compete.

Carpe diem. Carpe scientiam. Read on.

4. <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsb20226/executive-summary>

5. <https://www.theglobalipcenter.com/resources/why-is-ip-important/>

6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/tips-for-the-future/the-knowledge-economy/#:~:text=In%20Britain%2C%20it%20is,to%20research%20by%20Universities%20UK.>

7. <https://blogs.gartner.com/craig-roth/2019/12/11/2019-exceeded-1-billion-knowledge-workers/>

# 02

## In the beginning, there was data.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Our insight is based on robust data.
2. The data is based on 2,002 survey responses covering 44 countries and 13 languages.
3. Our respondents have more than three years' experience in the knowledge work industry, and their current role is delivering, supporting, or leading commercial knowledge work activities.

### Five steps to a robust, global dataset

#### Step 1: Qualitative research to develop the research hypotheses

We conducted in-depth interviews with 29 subject matter experts ranging from professional knowledge workers in a variety of verticals to industry influencers, knowledge work technology innovators, and business leaders.

#### Step 2: Digital ethnography to learn the strategic priorities and language of the knowledge work industry

We used collation and machine-led analysis of over 56,000 digital conversations to create the research questionnaire.

#### Step 3: Setting a high bar to participate

Every respondent completing our online survey was subject to a highly specific screening process to ensure that they were qualified, experienced, and familiar with the key concepts of knowledge work. They were only invited to take part if they:

- Work full time in a KWO.
- Have worked in a qualifying field for three or more years.
- Worked in an organization where digital information and files are the most important thing or enable the most important thing in the organization.
- The department they work in is engaged with four or more specified knowledge work activities.
- Worked in either a professional services firm or a corporate department within a vertical and a line of business where the majority of work conducted was knowledge work.

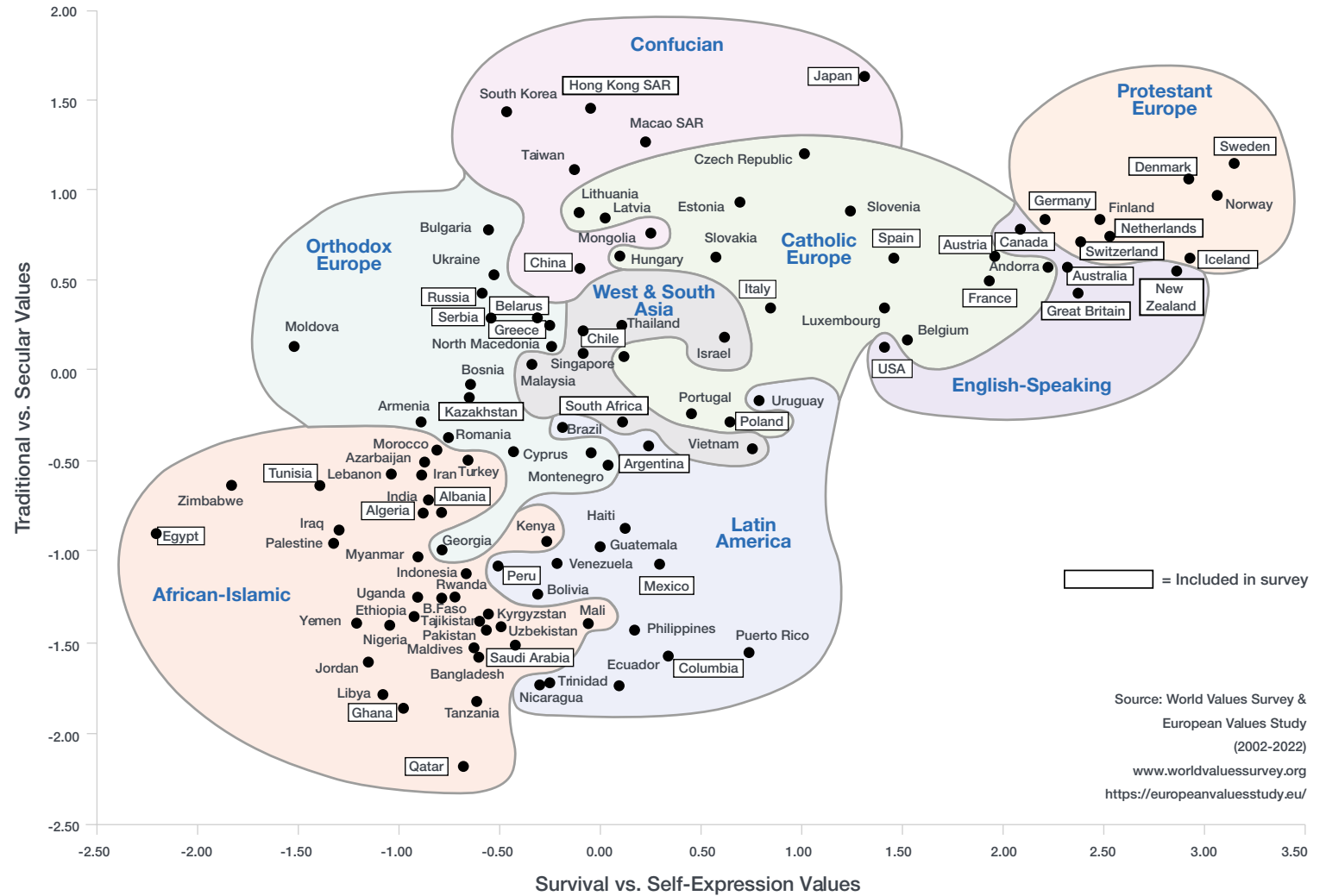
#### Step 4: Embedding culture into our sample

We used the Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map to choose the markets we researched. It's a globally accepted policy framework that defines world cultures on two dimensions: traditional values versus secular-rational values and survival values versus self-expression values. Consequently, we have both regional representation and diversity of work style, learning style, and communication style built into the dataset.

Figure 2 shows the countries that we included in the sample together with the cultural groups they represent.

FIGURE 2

### Inglehart-Welzel Map with research geographies overlaid



**Step 5: Focusing on well-established knowledge work verticals to optimize learning**

We focused on key industries that represent leading indicators of the future of knowledge work. The tables in Figure 3 show the interlocking quotas that we sampled globally.

In summary, the data is based on 2,002 survey responses covering 44 countries and 13 languages.

FIGURE 3

**Sample profile by size, vertical, and department**

<b>Corporate quota</b> 40% Midmarket; 60% Enterprise					
<b>Lines of business</b>	Financial services: Banking; Asset management; Accounting and auditing; Insurance	Technology	Entertainment and media	Healthcare	<b>Total</b>
<b>Legal</b>	85	29	42	80	<b>236</b>
<b>Finance</b>	102	55	40	64	<b>261</b>
<b>Compliance</b>	98	59	52	63	<b>272</b>
<b>HR</b>	56	49	46	62	<b>213</b>
<b>Accounting</b>	67	32	31	31	<b>161</b>
<b>Tax</b>	81	17	31	51	<b>180</b>
<b>Procurement</b>	58	38	34	49	<b>179</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1,502</b>

<b>Professional services quota</b> 18% Small; 47% Midmarket; 34% Enterprise			
<b>Roles</b>	Finance: Asset management; Accounting and auditing; Insurance; Tax	Law firms	<b>Total</b>
<b>Knowledge workers</b>	99	151	<b>250</b>
<b>Decision makers</b>	99	151	<b>250</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>500</b>

Notes: Quotas and sample sizes have been set to be both representative and statistically significant.

Organization size is determined by total # of employees, where:

- Small = 1–249 employees
- Midmarket = 250–999 employees
- Enterprise = 1,000 or more employees

# 03

## State of the nation by the numbers.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Simply investing in technology won't work. A culture that values knowledge work and workers is a prerequisite for success.
2. Diversity, equity, and inclusion is the root of collective intelligence, and the knowledge work industry still has work to be done.
3. Watch out for emerging markets – Eastern Europe, LATAM, and Africa. They've got knowledge work culture sorted; just add updated technology and watch this space!

## Global headlines, highlights, and apparent contradictions

**The future of work is knowledge work, and the knowledge work industry is investing accordingly.**

91% of knowledge work organizations (KWOs) believe that knowledge will be more important than ever in securing a strong future for their company, so they are investing heavily. The average global KWO invested \$13.8 million in knowledge work technologies during the last fiscal year:

- Corporates tended to have higher budgets: \$14.1 million per annum.
- Firms are slightly lower: \$12.8 million.
- Small KWOs (<250 employees) invest an average of \$2.4 million a year.
- Midmarket KWOs (250–999 employees) invest an average of \$7.5 million.
- Enterprises (1,000+ employees) invested \$20.6 million on average.

And they intend to invest more next year.

75% of global KWOs intend to increase their annual budget for knowledge work technologies next year. 17% will increase expenditure by more than 10%.

**Technology investment is not a panacea for successful knowledge work.**

Despite their investments, global KWOs still struggle to get ahead of the curve. 42% feel that at best they are keeping pace with competitors, while 28% feel their digital capabilities are behind their competition. Only 21% strongly agree that they are currently optimizing technology to support knowledge work, and 42% also say that their current technology is out of date.

This is perhaps not surprising as only 6% say return on investment (ROI) is the main priority when technology is adopted. The pressure to digitize quickly has led to a focus on building infrastructure rather than delivering productive knowledge work outcomes.

From a regional perspective, Asian and Oceanian KWOs are most likely to feel that they are behind their competition in terms of digital tools to support knowledge work (35% and 33% respectively vs. 28% of KWOs overall).

### Culture is key.

98% of global KWOs agree that future success will come from a wider focus on people, resources, and process — not just the tools used to support knowledge work. This is reflected in global KWOs' top three knowledge work optimization strategies:

- Evaluating and optimizing existing technologies: 54%.
- Reorganizing the company structure to align with the knowledge work goals: 46%.
- Training existing employees to gain required skills: 46%.

### Remote working needs to work.

63% of global KWOs have embraced remote working within the last two years, primarily in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

39% of knowledge workers are predicted to be hybrid workers by the end of this year, but there are challenges with the working model today.

Current approaches to remote working don't foster inclusion. Only 45% strongly agree that people who work remotely or outside of the main headquarters are included, valued, and heard.

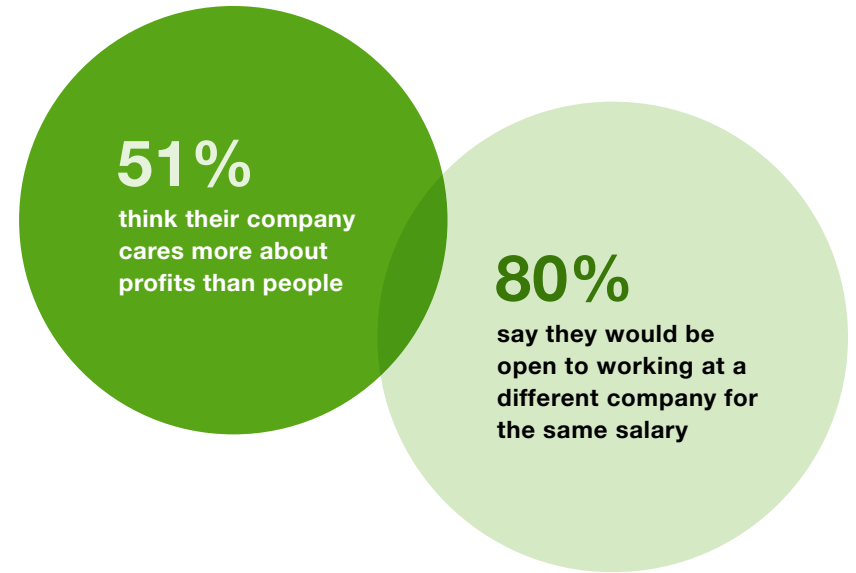
92% say that they can adjust how their work gets done to accommodate their personal preference and schedule, but only 46% feel that they have the resources required to work effectively.

This highlights the importance of building a modern workplace because, despite challenges, 56% still feel that their personal productivity is better when they work remotely because they can avoid the stress of commuting and retain a healthier work-life balance.



# 63%

of global KWOs have embraced remote working within the last two years



### Collaboration should be fun, or at least it should be easy.

Only 35% agree that collaborating with others in their company is enjoyable.

81% are using unapproved methods of communication such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger for work purposes. This represents a significant security risk, but it's driven by frustration with the tools and processes they are forced to work with.

### Security gets in the way of productivity.

Everyone accepts that protecting knowledge and intellectual property is critical. However, 57% say that current security practices slow them down when they are trying to work, and two-thirds admit that their current security systems impede their knowledge workers from adding or using knowledge stored on their infrastructure. Security and productivity need to operate cohesively.

### It's time to value people, not just the knowledge they have.

51% think their company cares more about profits than people. For example, while 52% of respondents strongly agree that their work is valued by the company, only 28% feel strongly that they are valued as an individual. As a result, 80% say they would be open to working at a different company for the same salary, and only 33% feel that other people in their KWO understand the expertise that they offer.

89%

state they have DEI requirements in place for their vendors and suppliers

But only

33%

strongly agree that employees of all genders have equal chances to be respected as experts

### **Work remains to be done around diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

There's good news and conflicting news on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the global knowledge work industry.

- 89% state they have DEI requirements in place for their vendors and suppliers.
- 91% agree that their KWO interviews and hires people from many different backgrounds.
- 90% agree they advertise job openings to a diverse range of audiences.

These are great statistics but need to be juxtaposed with some telling contradictions.

- 86% say their KWOs recruit from and give preference to graduates from specific programs and colleges.
- Only 43% have implemented standardized interviewing processes.
- 76% of respondents have had to make lifestyle adjustments to be successful in their current role.
- Only 33% strongly agree that employees of all genders have equal chances to be respected as experts in their KWO, while 54% feel that employees of all racial backgrounds do.

There's still DEI work to be done.

### **Enhancing customer and employee experience trumps buying more software.**

Focusing on customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX) is recognized as the key to unlocking the value of existing investments in knowledge work technologies.

90% of KWOs agree that they are constantly evolving how they work to meet their customers' changing needs. 46% say their top current business goal is to better meet the changing expectations of customers, and 38% have the ultimate goal of delivering best-in-class customer experience.

36% are also focused on improving employee experience, with a strong emphasis on tackling collaborative working (39%), improving employee productivity and collaboration (38%), and increasing flexible working opportunities (34%).

This signifies a move away from infrastructural investment focus to an outcome focus driven by employee expectation for hybrid, flexible working conditions in the post-COVID-19 workplace.

# 04

## Regional headlines, highlights, and cultural differences.

### Summary of trends at a regional level

1. Emerging markets Africa, Eastern Europe, and LATAM are outperforming the more established European markets, North America, and Oceania.
2. They are not relying on technology. Instead, they are adopting agile and vibrant cultures that make knowledge work enjoyable and collaborative.
3. They are more likely to value their people and the knowledge their workers possess.
4. They may not have the ideal technologies in place or have the largest budgets, but these markets are quickly adapting and are effectively poised to be winners at the knowledge work tipping point.

The following summaries highlight the relative strengths, weaknesses, and uniqueness observed on a regional basis.

Africa



Asia



Europe



North America



Oceania



Latin America







## Africa

### A region poised for growth.

52% of African KWOs strongly agree that knowledge work is substantially more important than it has ever been in the past, which is 12% above the global average. They may be investing the least today — 31% have a knowledge work budget of less than \$1 million, compared to only 16% of the knowledge work industry as a whole — but 81% plan to invest more in the next 12 months. 25% of those (vs. 17% overall) are planning to increase their budgets by 10% or more.

### Collaboration is cultural.

African KWOs have the strongest culture of collaboration. 54% say that their company prioritizes collaboration (vs. 45% overall). 56% say they have physical space that's dedicated to collaboration (compared to 45% overall). Experts are accessible at any time (47% vs. 35%) and specifically when you need their input on a project (48% vs. 37% of KWOs overall).

### The customers' voice rings loud and clear.

51% strongly agree that they solicit feedback from their customers about their customer experience regularly through research programs, compared to only 38% globally. 48% also strongly agree that they actively use that customer feedback to improve products and services, compared to only 40% overall. They also are the KWOs most likely to share that customer understanding widely with their employees (56% vs. 37% overall).

### Diversity of thought brings strength.

African KWOs place the highest value on intuition out of all the regions (33% vs. 24% overall). They are also most likely to recognize that differences should be seen as strengths in knowledge work (56% vs. 43% overall).

### Technology is the route to next-generation knowledge work.

African KWOs are the most likely ones to have already optimized their technology for knowledge work (31% vs. 21% of KWOs overall). They are also most likely to choose investment in technology as their primary strategy to optimize their future knowledge work practices (49% vs. 40% place technology investment in their top three priorities).

Africa is building an impressive foundation for future success.



## Asia

### **Asia is investing heavily in knowledge work.**

Asia has the highest proportion of KWOs with annual knowledge work budgets of \$15 million or more (43% vs. 36% overall). 80% will be increasing their budgets next year, 20% of those by 10% or more.

### **Employees feel that technology is behind the curve.**

Despite high levels of investment, Asian KWOs feel that they don't have optimal technology solutions in place. 41% strongly agree that they could do more and better work if they were using newer technology. They are planning to tackle this issue. 47% say technology investment is one of their top three investments, and 49% versus 44% overall agree that the right technology will be extremely important in enabling optimizations and improvement of knowledge work in the next five years.

### **Knowledge work is recognized and rewarded.**

Asian KWOs are more likely to have a culture of reward and recognition. 51% of Asian respondents (compared to only 44% globally) strongly agree that their contribution to the collective knowledge of their organization is recognized. They are also most likely to publicly reward employees for knowledge work (87% strongly agree vs. 83% globally).

### **Asian KWOs believe work should be fun and fulfilling for all.**

Asian KWOs invest in their people more than any other region (45% strongly agree vs. 40% globally). They are

most likely to try to make their employees workdays easier (87% vs. 84% globally) and more enjoyable (92% vs. 87% globally).

They also have cultures that encourage sharing (91% strongly agree vs. 87% globally).

29% strongly agree that professional development opportunities are equally accessible to employees of all backgrounds, compared to 26% globally, and innovation is encouraged without the fear of failure (86% strongly agree vs. 79% globally).



## Europe (Western)

### Europe is a story of many parts.

Europe can be separated into four distinct regions: Southern, Northern, Eastern, and Western. Southern and Northern Europe tend to align with overall global trends and have very few factors that separate them from the rest of the world. However, there's something very interesting happening in both Eastern and Western Europe, so we'll focus on the dichotomous knowledge work cultures of these two regions.

### What's up Western Europe?

Western European KWOs lag behind those in other regions in terms of work culture and job satisfaction. Only 29% of respondents strongly agree that they would recommend their place of work to other knowledge workers, compared with 39% globally.

They are least likely to strongly agree that professional development opportunities are equally accessible to employees of all backgrounds (16% vs. 26% overall). They are also less likely to strongly agree that they know how promotions work in their organization. As a result, only 36% feel that there's a clear career/growth path for them in the KWO (vs. 51% globally).

Western Europeans are also least likely to understand what's expected of them in their current role (27% vs. 39% globally), which contrasts starkly to Eastern Europe, where 47% strongly agree that they know exactly what's expected of them.

Only 40% strongly agree that their KWO actively develops staff, compared to 54% globally. Similarly, only 40% strongly agree that it's easy to find appropriate mentors within their KWO versus 49% globally. They're also less likely to be given opportunities to cross-train.

Western European KWOs are lagging the rest of world in terms of developing the positive, rewarding work cultures that modern knowledge workers demand. Experts don't speak to each other (only 18% strongly agree they do vs. 27% globally). It's the same with business centers. Only 37% versus 51% globally strongly agree that interdepartmental communication works well.

All these workplace challenges have resulted in the perception that Western European KWOs don't invest in their people as much as those in other regions. Only 28% strongly agree that their KWO invests in its people (vs. 40% globally and 44% in Eastern Europe).

Ultimately, only 20% strongly agree that they are valued in their KWO, compared to 28% overall and, most importantly, 33% in neighboring Eastern Europe.



## Europe (Eastern)

### **It's a knowledge work “high-five” for Eastern Europe.**

Eastern European KWOs are betting their futures on knowledge work. 66% completely agree that optimizing the resources, processes, and tools we use to support knowledge work will be key to helping them reach their goals. This is the highest of all regions and compares to only 53% globally.

They are also the most confident region in terms of the return on investment for their knowledge work strategies so far. 40% feel they are currently ahead of the competition from a digital capabilities' perspective, compared to only 29% globally.

Ultimately, these KWOs' commitment to knowledge work is recognized by both employees and customers. 58% versus 40% globally strongly agree that employees see them as knowledge-driven, and 44% versus 38% globally say the same about their customers. In both cases, this is the highest level in any region.

### **Success on a budget.**

Eastern Europe is thriving on a budget. 18% have a budget of \$1 million or less versus 13% globally.

### **Eastern European KWOs listen, learn, and contribute to the industry.**

Eastern European KWOs use their knowledge to contribute to the world. They are the region most likely to contribute to research and academic projects (56% vs.

48% globally), to use knowledge for social good, and to do pro bono work (53% vs. 45% globally).

They also have the highest level of agreement that they use employee and vendor feedback to improve their processes (94% vs. 88% globally). In addition, they also value customer relationships. KWOs in this region are most likely to strongly agree that long-term relationships are key to their ability to deliver a premium product to clients (64% vs. 55% globally).

Eastern Europe, like Africa, is embracing knowledge work with passion, commitment, and a client-centered mindset.



## North America

### **Diversity and inclusion leadership.**

North America aligns closely to the global knowledge work ecosystem overall. The budgets of North American KWOs tend to be larger, and they're the most likely organizations to have budgets over \$30 million (13% vs. 10% globally).

Otherwise, the only notable difference is that they are showing leadership in diversity and inclusion from racial and socioeconomic perspectives. 59% strongly agree that employees of all racial backgrounds have equal chances to be respected as experts in their KWOs versus 50% globally. KWOs in this region are also most likely to be actively interviewing and hiring people from many different backgrounds in pursuit of breadth of knowledge and experience (60% vs. 57% overall).



## Oceania

### **Underinvesting and behind the curve.**

Knowledge work budgets in Oceania vary but broadly follow global patterns. However, this region's KWOs are the most likely to state that they are currently under-invested (35% vs. 28% globally). They are also most likely to feel that they are behind the competition in terms of digital capabilities supporting knowledge work (34% vs. 28% globally).

### **A region of contradictions.**

Oceania has the most evolved document management approach but is not yet optimizing for true knowledge work or collective intelligence. This region's KWOs are most likely to have information about the documents they use. For example, 93% can tell when a document was created (vs. 88% globally), 93% can also tell who created it (vs. 89% globally), and their inventory is most likely to be searchable by task (59% vs. 52% globally). However, this approach is not delivering for them. They are also most likely to strongly agree that their projects get delayed because they have to spend too much time sorting through information. 47% versus 43% globally say that documents are scattered across systems.

### **Security versus knowledge work productivity.**

Oceanic KWOs are struggling to balance the need for secure working practices and knowledge work productivity. 95% (vs. 86% globally) have regular, mandated security training, but their current approach is impeding how work gets done. 80% (compared to only 66% globally) state that current security measures

hinder them from adding or using knowledge from their knowledge bank.

Consequently, Oceanic KWOs are those most likely to feel that there are both formal and informal deterrents to being a good knowledge citizen (47% vs. 41% globally).

### **Work life is harder than it should be.**

Only 16% strongly agree that their KWO uses preserved knowledge to improve business outcomes, which compares to 25% globally.

In this region, KWOs are most likely to review workflows and processes to make continuous updates (96% vs. 91% globally), but they are least likely to have automated workflows so that employees can focus on value-added tasks (17% strongly agree vs. 28% globally).

Consequently, people feel that their job is the same every day (89% vs. only 81% globally). They also feel that they can't truly deliver value; only 34% versus 44% strongly agree that their value is recognized within their organization.

Oceanic KWOs need to focus on evolving from an emphasis on document management to pursuing a culture and infrastructure that truly reflect the future of knowledge work and meet the demand of the modern knowledge workforce.



## Latin America (LATAM)

### Poised to play catch up.

50% of LATAM KWOs agree that knowledge work will be extremely important in securing a strong future for their organization, compared to only 43% globally. They feel that they have work to do to catch up with the competition.

Their knowledge work budgets sit in the \$1 million to \$15 million range (56%). While they are keeping pace with the competition overall (58%), the region is least likely to feel that they are doing better than their competitors in terms of digital capabilities to support knowledge work (23% vs. 29% globally).

Consequently, they have the highest intent to invest further in new digital tools and technology to improve their knowledge work capabilities (21% vs. 13% globally).

### Knowledge work culture is alive and well.

While the region's KWOs may feel they are behind from a technology perspective, vibrant and collaborative work culture is alive and well.

LATAM is the region most likely to strongly agree that experts speak to each other (36% vs. 27% globally), that collaboration with others in the organizations is enjoyable (49% vs. only 34% overall), and that there's transparency in how work gets done (56% vs. 46% globally). They are also the region most likely to value social intelligence (53% strongly agree vs. 42% globally), and they attach greater value to intuition overall (28% strongly agree vs. 24% overall).

LATAM is also the best-performing region in terms of mentorship, with 37% of KWOs strongly agreeing that they offer formal mentorship programs, compared to only 28% globally.

As a result, KWOs in this region are most likely to agree that knowledge workers would recommend their KWO as a good place to work (48% vs. 39% overall), and they are most likely to strongly agree that they are valued by their KWO (36% vs. only 28% globally).

### Great culture means great customer experience too.

In this region, KWOs' approach to knowledge work is reflected strongly in how they deliver to their customers. 50% (compared to 40% globally) strongly agree that their customers/clients believe their company is knowledge-driven. They are also most likely to strongly agree that they are proactive in the work they do for customers (49% vs. 44% globally).

Their customer centricity extends to the use of customer feedback to improve their products and services, with 48% strongly agreeing versus 40% globally.

# 05

## The mechanics of maturity.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. There are some serious statistics behind the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.
2. Understanding what's measured in the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity will help you form your future knowledge work investment strategy.
3. The global Knowledge Work Maturity Index is 92 out of 200. The industry has room to grow and evolve.

### How we built the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™

Our survey covered over 250 different attitudinal, behavioral, and cultural measures on topics ranging from diversity and inclusion to incentivization, technology investment, and business goals to the commercial outcomes of knowledge work.

Our analysis hypotheses were:

- There was a direct correlation between maturity and the extent to which each KWO was currently experiencing the positive outcomes of knowledge work.
- If we identified the key attitudinal, behavioral, and cultural drivers that delivered positive business outcomes from knowledge work, and we measured how each KWO performed on the drivers, we could predict their level of maturity.

We explored these hypotheses using a three-step statistical analysis process:

#### Step 1: Factor analysis: Moving from interesting data to critical factors

Our first task was to explore the extensive dataset, which contains over 250 variables, and identify emerging themes using factor analysis. Factor analysis finds hidden patterns in data by identifying key influencing factors or variables that explain the big ideas contained within the whole dataset. We uncovered 10 factors that we call the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity and are explained in more detail later in this chapter.

#### Step 2: Key driver analysis: Predicting knowledge work maturity

Our second task was to understand the relative importance of each of the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity in predicting the commercial outcomes of effective knowledge work. This is where key driver analysis comes in. It's a statistical technique that allows you to understand the relative importance of an attribute (an independent variable such as peoples' response to a question or agreement with a statement) in predicting an outcome variable (a dependent variable such as business growth or customer satisfaction).



Our initial analysis revealed that variation in performance on three out of the 10 knowledge work outcomes most accurately define and predict knowledge work maturity. These cover two themes:

**Collective intelligence**

**Agree:** The benefits of collective intelligence are fully realized.

**Industry leadership**

**Agree:** Other companies look at this company as an example of being knowledge-driven.

**Agree:** Knowledge workers would recommend this company to other knowledge workers.

These three outcomes became our dependent variable (i.e., our proxy for knowledge work maturity), and the 10 drivers were regressed against it, revealing the relative importance of each on maturity.

We then used the algorithm created to score the relative performance of each KWO against the drivers of maturity to give the organization a maturity score that was ultimately used to build an industry-wide index.

**Step 3: Building the global Knowledge Work Index – a new industry benchmark**

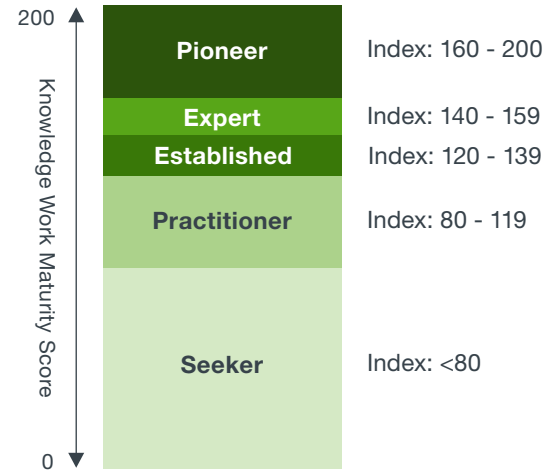
We scored the KWOs on each of the key drivers as either Very High, High, Middle, Low, or Very Low. The classification depended on the unique distribution of scores for each driver. We elected to build the index using a net indexing methodology, meaning that the percentage of the Very Low category for each driver was subtracted from the proportion in the Very High category, and we added 100 to ensure that we avoided negative scores. This means that the maximum possible score for each driver and for the Knowledge Work Maturity Score is 200.

Once we had an index score for each driver, we used the subsequent algorithm to score each of the KWOs. Deep analysis of their behaviors, investments, and culture across the scale revealed **five distinct phases of knowledge work maturity** and the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ was created.

FIGURE 4

**The five phases of knowledge work maturity and the KWOs' distribution**

**The five phases of the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™**



**The distribution of the global knowledge work industry across the five phases**

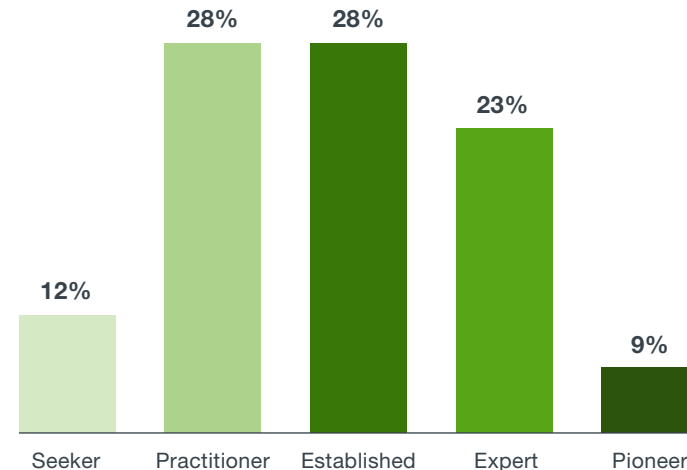
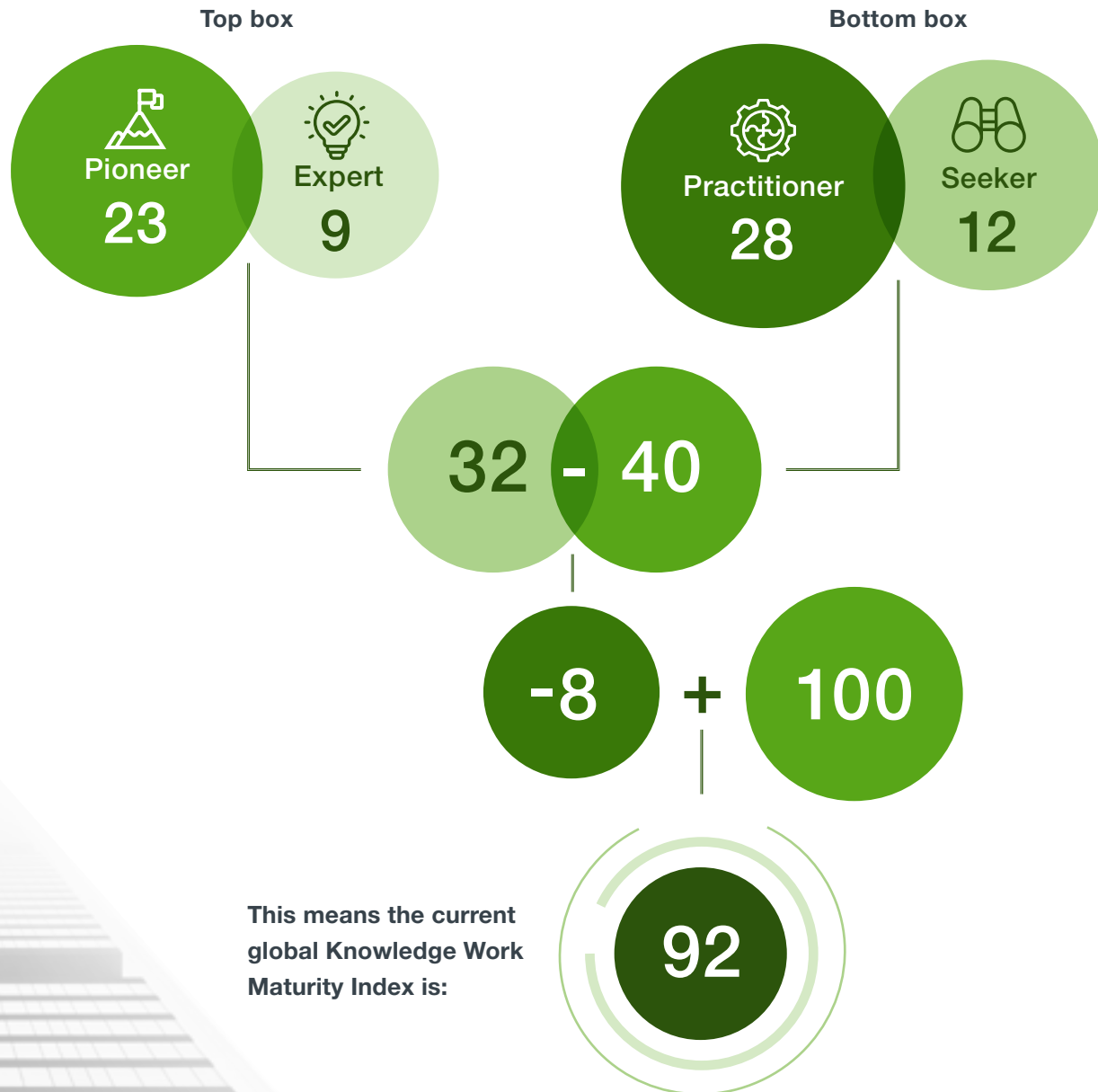


FIGURE 5

## Creating the global Knowledge Work Maturity Index

The final phase of the process was to calculate an overall global Knowledge Work Maturity Index. Again, we used the net indexing methodology, as figure 5 shows. We equated being a Seeker and Practitioner with a low or bottom box score and being an Expert or a Pioneer with a high or top box score.

This calculation supports the fact that the industry is relatively immature but is at a tipping point overall. To put it into context, this means that the industry is in the Practitioner phase. We'll dive more deeply into what it means to be in this phase of maturity in chapters 6 and 7.



# How to use the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™

There are a few fundamental rules that are worth noting before diving into the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™:

- You can start anywhere on the continuum, but you can't shortcut the process, tools, and cultural requirements at each phase. You need to be consistently improving and delivering all the experiences that define each phase to advance.
- There's no obligation to keep striving to move up the maturity model. It depends on your individual business goals and ambition for growth. Go at your own pace.
- Don't worry if you don't see yourself definitively fitting neatly into a single phase. It's OK. The model is a continuum, not five clear steps. You can't flick a switch or buy a piece of technology to suddenly leap from the early phase of maturity to being a mature leader.
- You'll spend time between phases as you build out new processes, install new technology, and let your culture evolve. It takes time to fully realize the ROI of the knowledge work investments you make, so stay the course.

## Three simple steps to get started

Ultimately, you'll be able to conduct a quantifiable assessment of your maturity based on a self-assessment tool, which is being developed and will be provided for the benefit of the industry by iManage, the report sponsor. But there's no need to wait.

You can start thinking about your maturity levels today. This report provides you with all the data required to qualitatively assess your current position and understand what you can do to progress. Here are the basic steps to effectively use the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.

### **Step 1. Assess where you are today.**

Go to chapters 7 and 8 and dive into the characteristics of the KWOs at each phase of maturity. You can explore their attitudes, behaviors, and profile. Which sounds most like you? Which mirrors the work you do and the tools you use? Which knowledge work outcomes are you experiencing today? Remember, it won't be a perfect description of your organization, but you should be able to place yourself somewhere on the model.

### **Step 2. Define your target maturity level.**

The maturity level you aim for depends on your strategic goals. Think about your business or departmental plan. Think about your appetite for investment in tools and technology. Think about the work you need to do to evolve your culture and set a maturity goal that's both beneficial and achievable.

### **Step 3. Build a plan to advance your maturity.**

Determine what process, technology, and cultural investment you need to make to reach your target maturity phase.

# 06

## Getting to know the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.

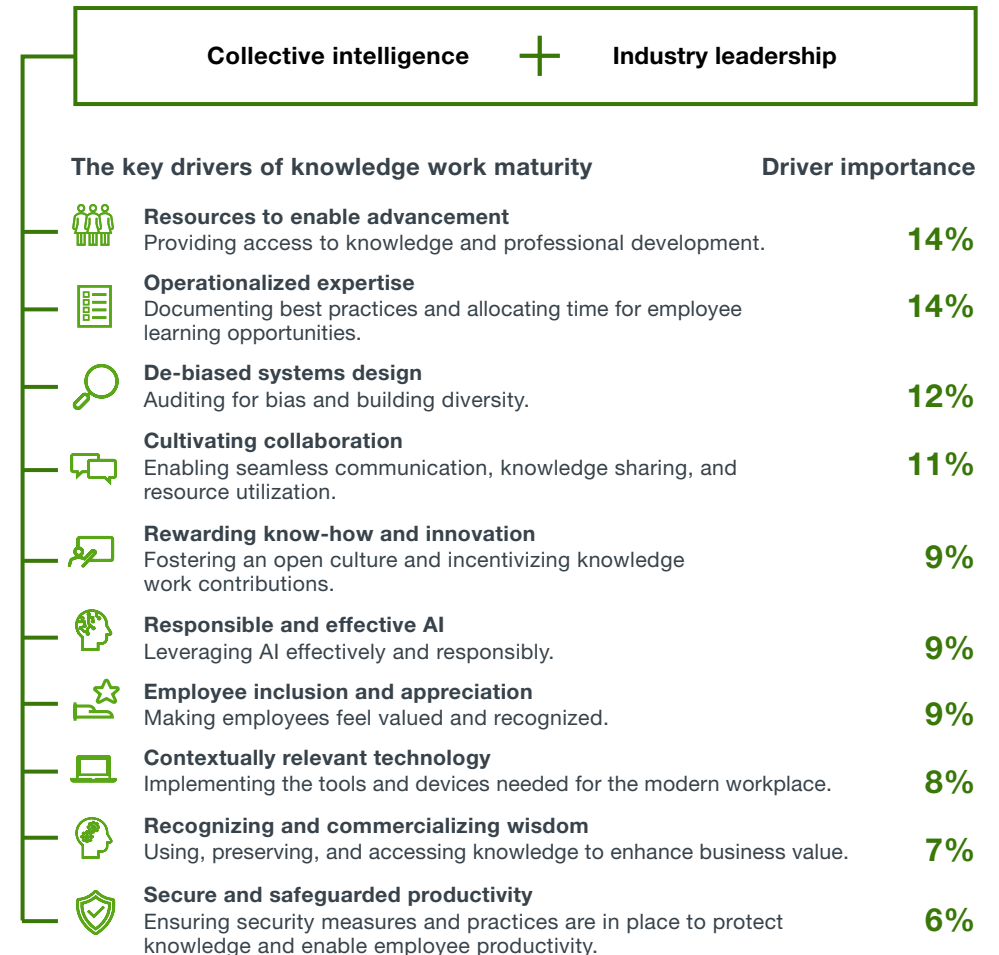
### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Driving knowledge work maturity involves a combination of process, technology, and culture. You can't just buy your way to maturity.
2. You need to focus on a combination of innovation and continuous improvement on all the key drivers of knowledge work maturity.
3. If you invest in tools and technology before your culture is ready, you won't get the ROI you expected.

## Understanding the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity

The 10 statistical drivers of knowledge work maturity are the core strategies that you need to put in place and measure yourself on to drive the maturity of your KWO. Figure 6 shows the relative contribution that each driver makes to knowledge work maturity and the meaning of each driver is summarized below.

FIGURE 6  
**The 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity**





### Strategy 1: Resources to enable advancement

#### Providing access to knowledge and professional development.

This driver is about whether you provide clear career pathways, mentorship programs, and access to data and training about the company, customers, and the market. It assesses if you operate a meritocracy and offer opportunities to grow at all levels of the organization.



### Strategy 2: Operationalized expertise

#### Documenting best practices and allocating time for employee learning opportunities.

This reflects the extent to which you're seen to invest in your people. It's about how effectively you document best practices for knowledge working, provide opportunities for employees to learn, and apply cross-functional knowledge in your organization. A key component is ensuring that there's formal time allocated for knowledge documentation, and you share your customer experience design with employees, partners, and other stakeholders so everyone is aligned on how to best serve your clients.



### Strategy 3: De-biased systems design

#### Auditing for bias and building diversity.

This driver measures how well your organization audits their communications, job descriptions, and algorithms for bias, as well as the extent to which you consult a diverse body of knowledge workers to help define what success looks like.

It represents a commitment to embrace diverse voices, thoughts, experience, and identities not only to deliver work but to define their business goals and make strategic decisions.



### Strategy 4: Cultivating collaboration

#### Enabling seamless communication, knowledge sharing, and resource utilization.

This driver measures the extent to which different business units within your organization can communicate with one another. It's focused on how well teams and individuals can proactively share knowledge, search for relevant knowledge by task, and efficiently outsource tasks when they can't be accomplished by internal teams.



### Strategy 5: Rewarding know-how and innovation

#### Fostering an open culture and incentivizing knowledge work contributions.

This key driver is about how effectively you're building a culture that's committed to recognizing, celebrating, and financially incentivizing innovation, diversity, learning, and the sharing of knowledge at all levels in your organization.

For example, if things don't work out as planned, you view it as a learning moment, not a failure. You protect established knowledge, make room for new and innovative perspectives, and meld legacy and new approaches to build exponential value.



### **Strategy 6: Responsible and effective AI** **Leveraging AI effectively and responsibly.**

There's a phase in KWOs' maturity where AI becomes a reality. This measures where you are in the process, from establishing a strategy to implementing the basics like automating simple workflows to advanced AI functionalities that are allowing employees to focus on value-added tasks. An important component is the extent to which you foster an ethical approach to the use of AI and ensure all employees understand how to use it.



### **Strategy 7: Employee inclusion and appreciation** **Making employees feel valued and recognized.**

This measures how much you value expertise in multiple forms. It includes your ability to recognize different skills and perspectives as an organizational strength together with your commitment to celebrate knowledge and ensure that you recognize the unique contributions that people make. It's about valuing people as individuals, not just for the work they produce.



### **Strategy 8: Contextually relevant technology** **Implementing the tools and devices needed for the modern workplace.**

This measures how effectively you're investing in the right technology to provide rapid access to critical information and shared knowledge. Do you have a modern IT infrastructure that meets the expectations of modern knowledge worker, and do you keep it up to date and relevant? Do you consult employees on the work devices you issue?

Building value from knowledge needs time and focus. This driver measures the extent to which knowledge workers can safeguard their focus time without obligations to respond to communication immediately. Is it okay to be out of office while you're working on something significant? Is it okay to have "no meetings" Fridays?



### **Strategy 9: Recognizing and commercializing wisdom** **Using, preserving, and accessing knowledge to enhance business value.**

This reflects the degree to which you're using your preserved knowledge to support your business goals, such as profitability, productivity, market leadership, and growth.

It also involves recognizing the role of emotional intelligence (EQ) in knowledge work, valuing employees' intuition, and empowering experts to contribute across the organization by collaborating, supporting, and advising outside of traditional silos.

It's essentially about your culture of sharing and the ability to quickly get access to the people and knowledge that you need.



### **Strategy 10: Secure and safeguarded productivity** **Ensuring security measures and practices are in place to protect knowledge and enable employee productivity.**

The foundation of successful knowledge work is a safe environment in which to store, share, work, and collaborate on documents. This driver is about creating a culture of security that protects the knowledge and IP of the company while facilitating efficient work. We saw earlier that many KWOs struggle with a balance between security and productivity. This driver measures how effectively you ensure that employees can securely access company knowledge resources and be productive in multiple locations, at various times of the day, and outside of traditional places of work.

# Let's get familiar with the five phases of knowledge work maturity.

We would like to remind you at this stage that we set a high bar to be part of the study. Only knowledge work organizations that have already committed to knowledge work as a discipline are included. Everyone is already on an informed, deliberate journey to maturity.

Each phase of the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ should be viewed as a mindset. Each phase is defined by a spectrum of investments made, attitudes expressed, and behaviors exhibited.

## Seeker

In this stage, KWOs are focused on securing documents and protecting the information and data they have to build a foundation for a more sophisticated knowledge work strategy in the future.

## Practitioner

Here, KWOs have successfully evolved to more sophisticated and collaborative approaches to knowledge work and are focused on servicing their customers proactively, effectively, and profitably.

## Established

KWOs at this level of maturity are ready to pursue scale and diversification because they have consistently invested in technology, training, and people to build what they consider best-in-class employee and customer experiences.

## Expert

At the expert stage, KWOs are truly digital-first, ready to experiment with AI and ensure that diverse knowledge is valued, documented, and used to drive profitable growth for both the organization and its clients.

## Pioneer

This stage is the domain of KWOs that are single-mindedly pursuing collective intelligence with continuous innovation, diversity, and inclusion, and they are nurturing a culture where employees meet personal goals, clients enjoy superior value, and the organization's market value grows.

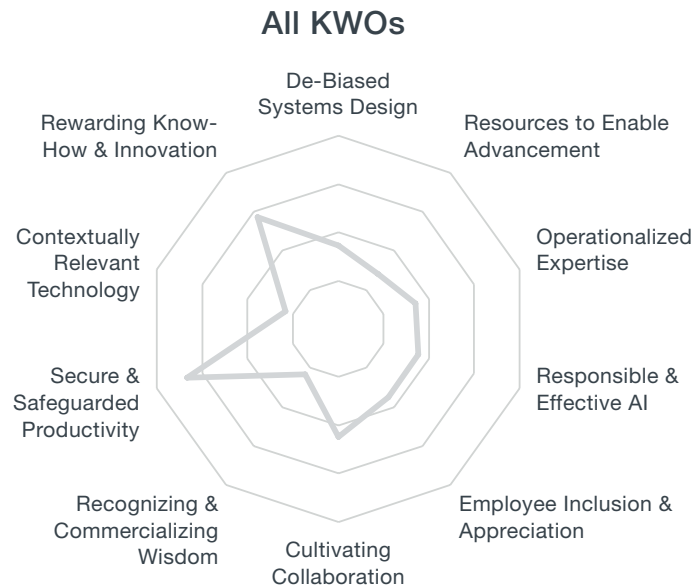
Figure 7 shows the five stages together with evolving goals and mindsets as organizations move through the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.

FIGURE 7

## A snapshot of the five phases of knowledge work maturity



Description	Description	Description	Description	Description
KWOs in the early stages of knowledge work. Starting out on securing documents and information as a foundation for more sophisticated knowledge work in the future.	KWOs that are pursuing more sophisticated and collaborative approaches to knowledge work and are focused on servicing their customers proactively and effectively.	KWOs that have consistently invested in technology, training, and people to build technology-led, best-in-class employee and customer experiences. They are pursuing scale and diversification.	KWOs that are truly digital-first. They're experimenting with AI and enable diverse knowledge to be documented, shared, and used to drive profitable growth for both the organization and its clients.	KWOs single-mindedly pursuing collective intelligence with continuous innovation, diversity, inclusion, and nurturing a culture where employees meet personal goals, clients enjoy superior value, and the organization's market value grows.
Primary knowledge work goal	Primary knowledge work goal	Primary knowledge work goal	Primary knowledge work goal	Primary knowledge work goal
Productivity	Profitable collaboration	Market differentiation	Excellent employee and customer experience	Collective intelligence
Their mindset	Their mindset	Their mindset	Their mindset	Their mindset
Intrigued Data driven Experimental	Collaborative Organized Customer focused	Organized Transforming Customer first	Strategic Future forward Digital first	Innovative Creative Thriving



## Let's get familiar with the drivers of knowledge work maturity at each phase.

Knowledge work maturity is about establishing, perfecting, and continuously improving performance on all 10 drivers. Figure 8 shows the average performance on each of the drivers for all KWOs (bold grey line) compared to the profiles of the KWOs at each of the five phases.

The base requirement to be on the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™ — in the Seeker phase — is that you've established processes and invested in some technology that delivers a secure and productive work environment. This needs to be supported by a reward and remuneration strategy that incentivizes knowledge workers to embrace processes and deliver work efficiently and cost-effectively.

Once this foundation is established, the next area of focus is building processes and tools to systematically support collaborative working. Collaboration is what separates Practitioners from Seekers.

The process of continuous improvement and innovation continues until you reach the Pioneer phase of maturity. You're now substantially over-indexing on every one of the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity.

FIGURE 8

### Performance on the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity by maturity phase

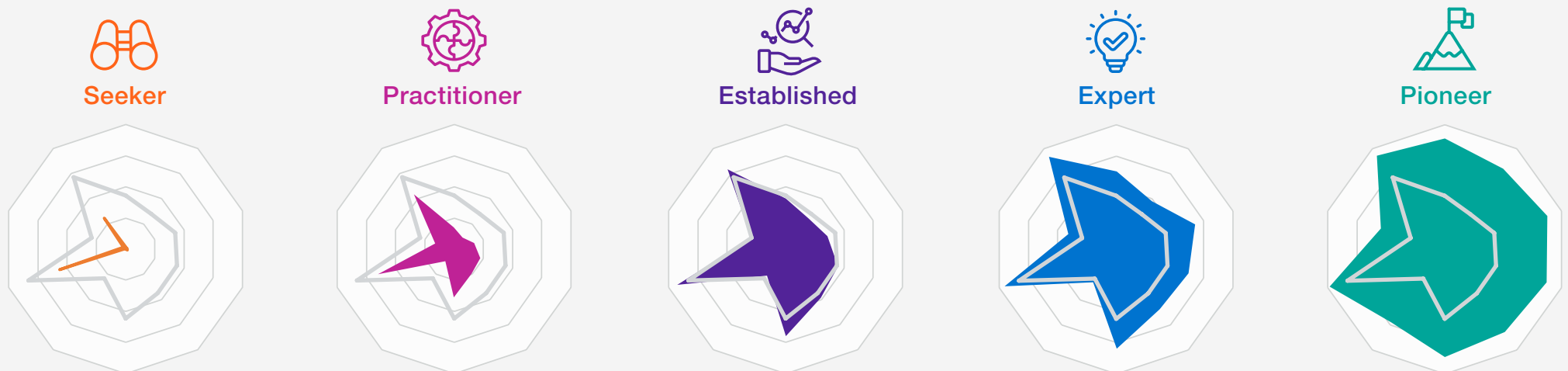
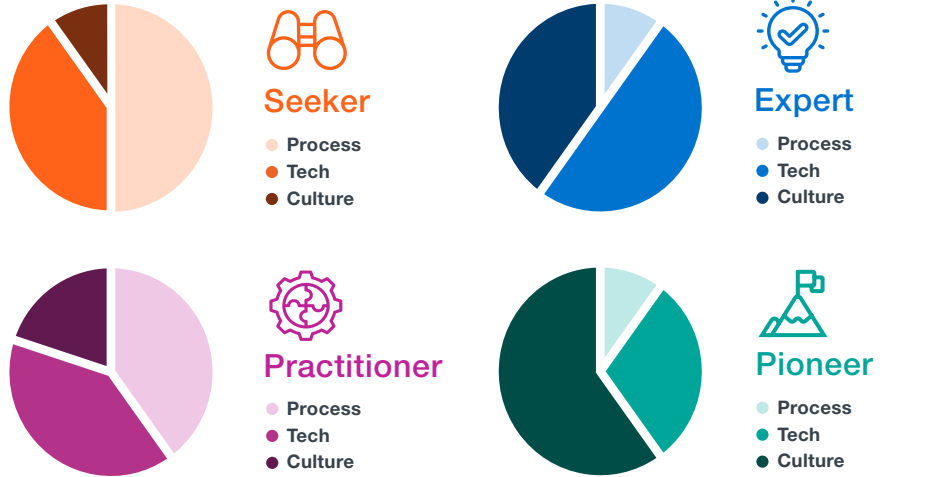




FIGURE 9

## Distributions of investment in process, technology, and culture by maturity phase



KWOs in the Pioneer phase have built a modern workplace where diversity and inclusion are embedded in the culture. Knowledge workers feel fulfilled, valued, and respected. The KWO and its clients are thriving together, and the exchange of knowledge is baked into the organizational DNA. Knowledge sharing, enhancement, and creation happen up, down, and across the organization.

As figure 9 shows, the Pioneer phase is more about culture than technology and process.

As you move up through the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™, the reliance on process declines substantially once you enter the Established phase. This is the technology tipping point created as the KWOs in the Established phase fully invest in digital transformation.

The cultural tipping point occurs when you move from the Established to Expert phase and ultimately to the Pioneer phase.

KWOs in the Expert phase are focused on developing a culture that's not just based on rewards, but also values and recognizes the skills and knowledge of all their people. They are experimenting with the role of AI in removing mundane, repetitive tasks to free knowledge workers to focus on the elements of their role that they are passionate about and deliver most value to clients.

In the Pioneer phase, culture trumps tools and technology. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are institutionalized, and there's a clear culture of advancement at all levels in the organization. Of course, this is still supported by powerful infrastructure that enables the KWO to fully realize the benefits of collective intelligence.

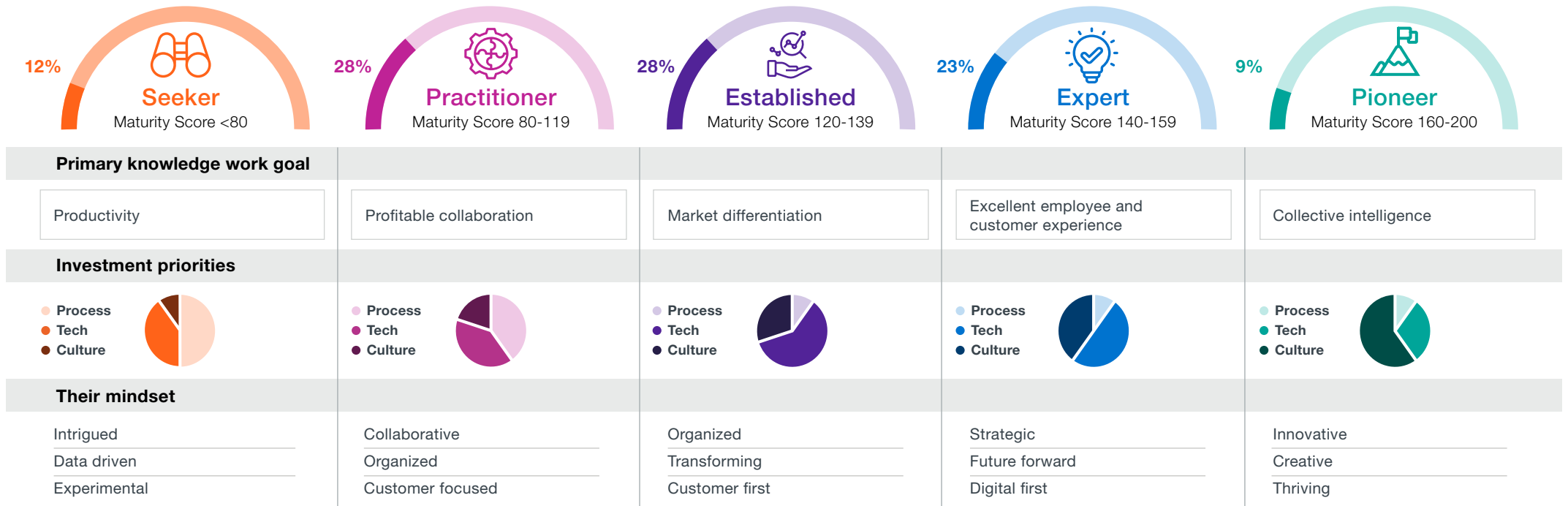
## Let's get familiar with how you progress within the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™

Figure 10 (next page) shows where to focus investment in the 10 drivers of knowledge work to pursue knowledge work maturity. It sets out both the tipping point investment and continuous improvement priorities for advancing to the next phase.

It's important to remember that once you reach a tipping point and move to the next phase of maturity, you need to continue to improve without losing focus on your earlier achievements. Reaching the Pioneer phase requires excellent performance on all 10 drivers, not just the cultural factors that differentiate KWOs in the final phase.

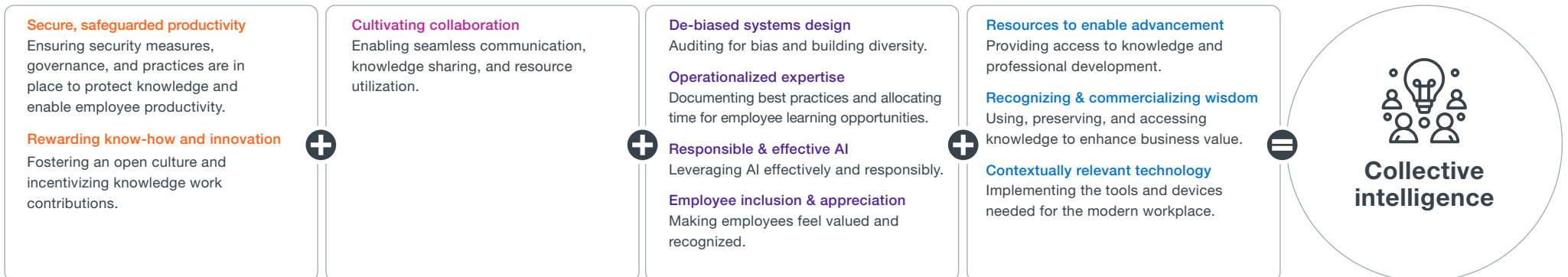
FIGURE 10

# Investment priorities: Advancing within the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™



## Driving maturity

Foundational requirements → Prioritized knowledge work investments → Outcome



# 07

## Deep diving into the data behind each knowledge work maturity phase.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Maturity is a mindset, not a demographic or firmographic concept.
2. Data is beautiful. Invest time to find your closest maturity phase.
3. This is the beginning of your journey to accelerate knowledge work maturity. Good luck!

### How to get down with the data

In this chapter, you'll find a standard profile of each of the five phases of maturity. It's broken down into three themes:

#### Profiling

- A profile of the KWOs that are typically found in each phase (size, vertical, department, business goals).
- Their investment strategy (budgets today and for the next 12 months).
- Attitudes toward knowledge work and their KWO.

#### Key drivers and outcomes of knowledge work maturity

- Tools and technologies used.

#### Knowledge work behaviors and key documents used by their primary organization

Each of the three themes has observations from the data. Use these guides to explore the charts.

#### How to read the bar charts

Each chart shows the profile of the KWOs in each maturity phase compared to the research group overall. For example, it will tell you the proportion of KWOs in the Seeker stage that are tax firms compared to the proportion of total KWOs in that industry.

---

**The goal is to give you a deep enough understanding of all five phases so you can identify your own KWO in the maturity model.**

---



Knowledge Work Index: <80

# Seeker

Invested in document management to drive efficiency and cost-effective delivery to clients.

## Mindset

Intrigued

Learning

Data-driven

### A five-fact summary:

---

Internally focused

---

Prioritizing productivity and cost savings

---

Process improvement trumps technology investment or evolving their culture

---

Informal knowledge management strategy and budget process

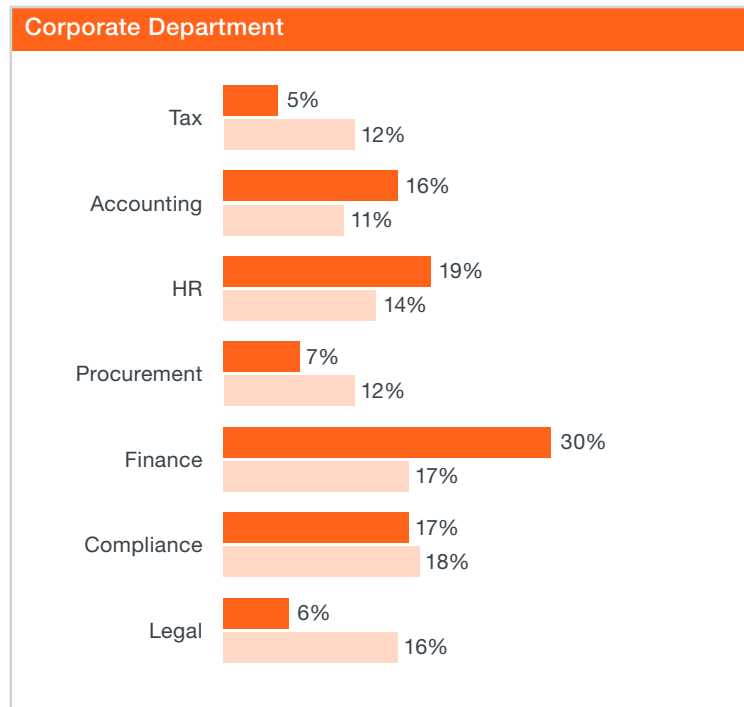
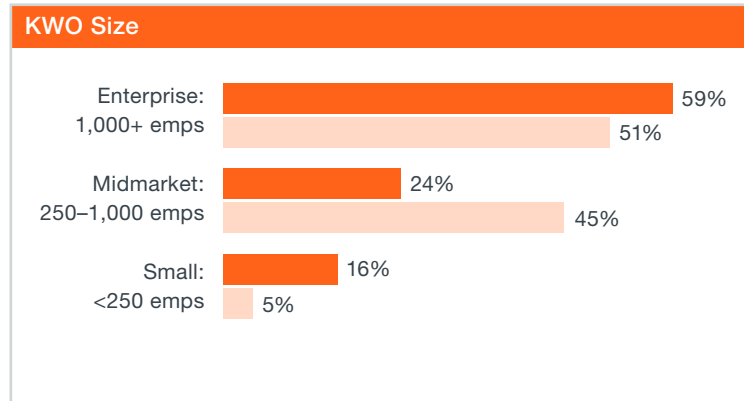
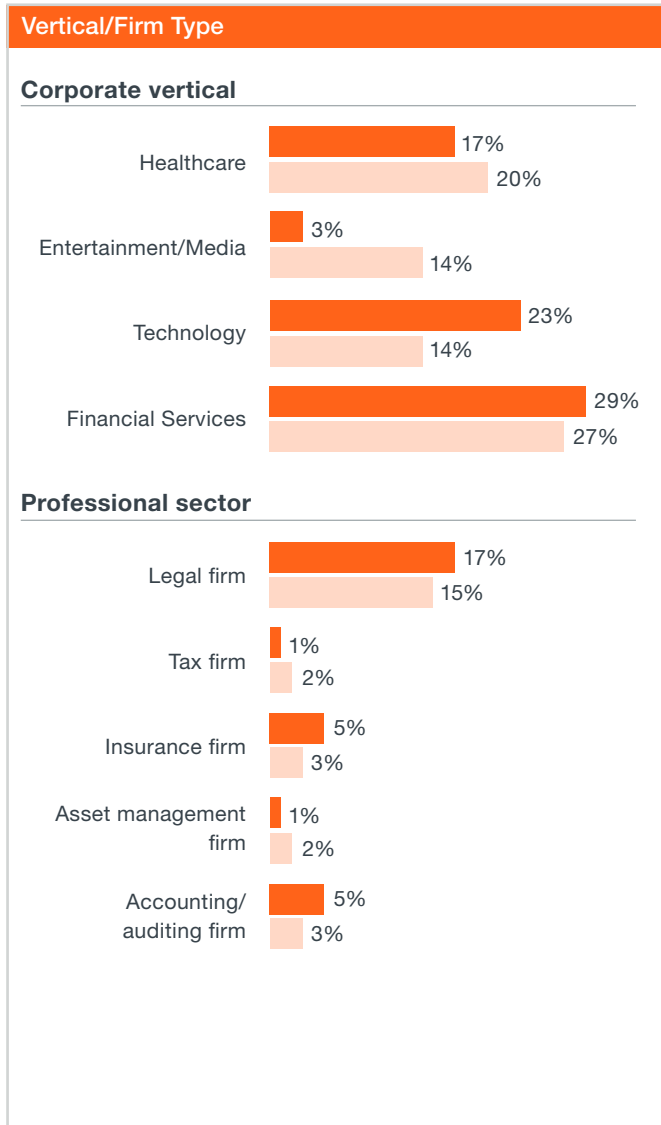
---

Prefer to take one step at a time

---

The percentage of global KWOs remains the same across all maturity stages. You are comparing the characteristics of organizations at each stage with the profile of the average global KWO.

## Knowledge Work Organization Profile



## Key observations

Corporate KWOs are more likely to be Seekers than professional firms. Within corporates, the finance, HR, and accounting departments are significantly more likely to be Seekers than tax, compliance, and legal.

- Corporate technology and finance businesses over-index as Seekers (52% versus 41% of the sample).
- Healthcare and Media companies are less likely to be Seekers because their regulated data and content-rich business models require sophisticated knowledge, document, and data management.
- Corporate finance, HR, and accounting departments account for 65% of Seekers within corporate businesses.

There are challenges at both ends of the spectrum. Small organizations are challenged to start and large enterprises are challenged to transform their complex organizations, leading to higher-than-expected levels for both in the Seeker phase of maturity.

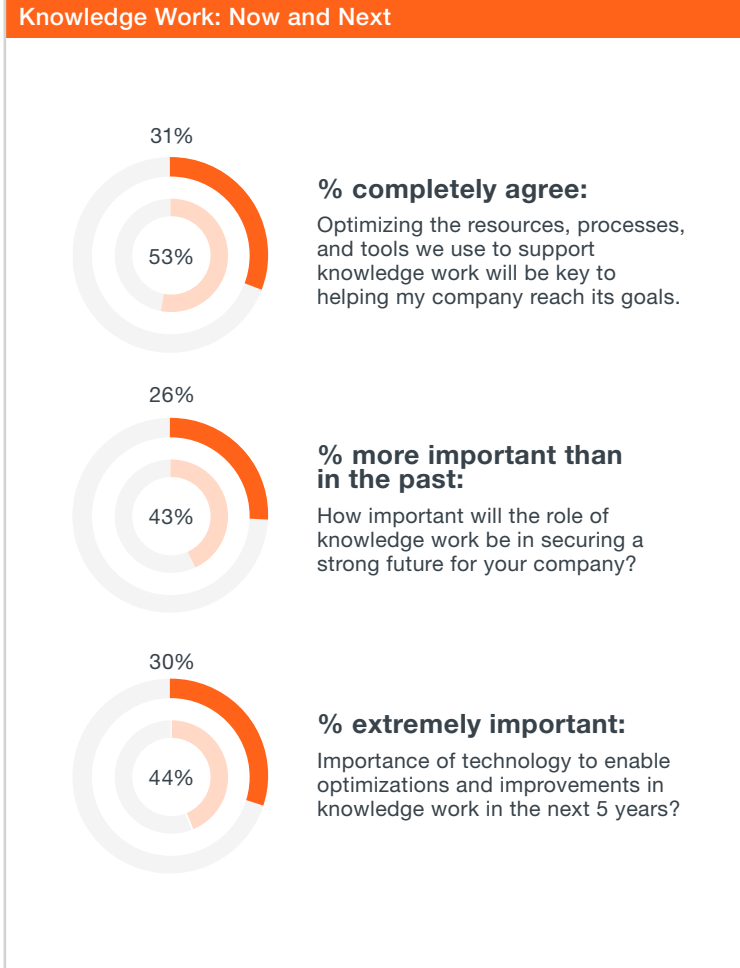
- Small firms are three times more likely to be Seekers, representing 16% of organizations at this stage compared to only 5% of the sample.
- Enterprise organizations are also more likely to be Seekers, 59% versus only 51% of the KWI.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Business Goals



## The Future of Knowledge Work in the KWO



## Key observations

Seekers focus on productivity and cost savings to deliver work more efficiently.

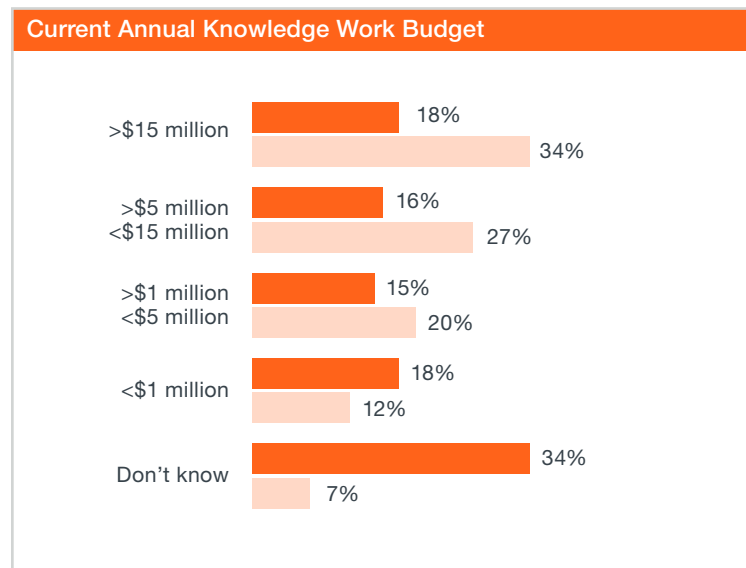
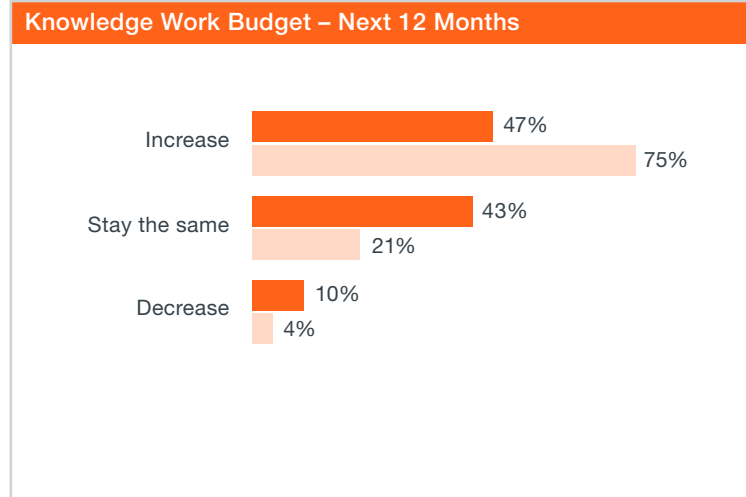
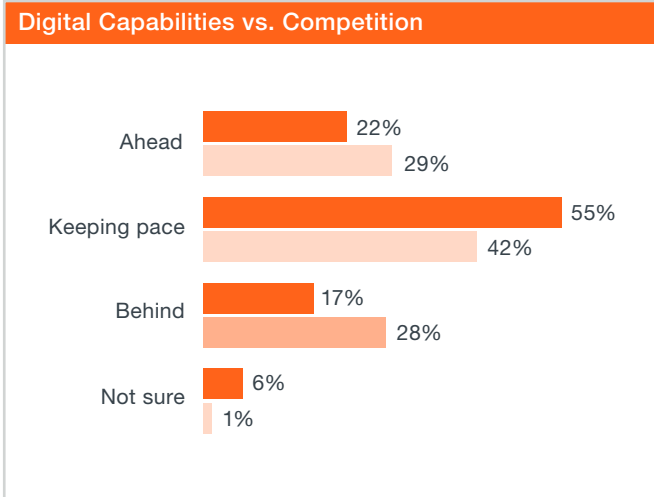
- Seekers' top 3 focus areas are: investing in driving effective collaboration (48%), reducing costs (44%), and delivering good customer experience (41%).

Seekers are not definitively sure about the future value of knowledge work in their organization. This uncertainty is their main barrier to investment and evolution of their knowledge work strategy.

- Almost one-third of KWOs at the Seeker phase believe that optimizing knowledge work will be key to meeting goals.
- Only 26% believe knowledge work will be more important in the future compared to 43% of the sample as a whole.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Knowledge Work Investment Strategy



## Key observations

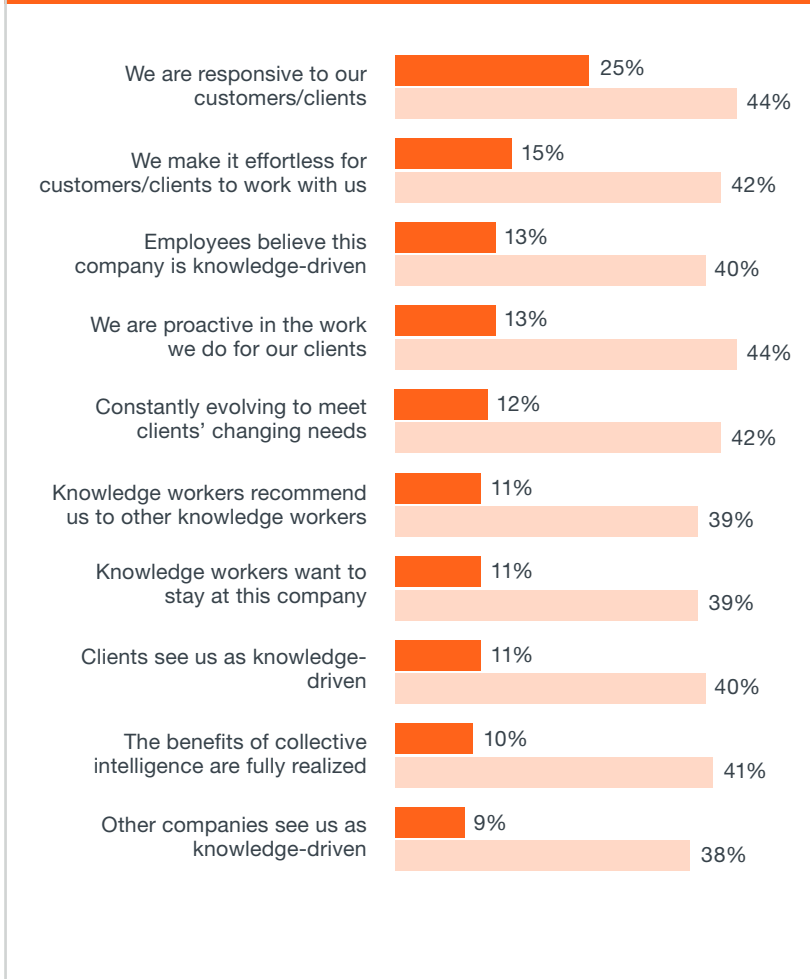
Seekers have the lowest knowledge work budgets and less than half intend to increase them in the next 12 months. Believing they are keeping pace with competitors, they are focused on improving workflows and institutionalizing processes rather than technology investment.

- Seekers are significantly more likely to be spending less than \$1 million a year on knowledge work initiatives (18% of Seekers vs. 12% of all KWOs).
- 34% don't know or can't say what their annual budget is, which suggests that they typically have an informal approach to their knowledge work budgets.
- Less than half are planning to increase their investment in knowledge work solutions in the next 12 months, significantly lower than the rest of the industry.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## The Outcomes of Current Knowledge Work Approach

### Strongly Agree: Experiencing Outcome



## Drivers of Knowledge Work Maturity

### Driver Performance vs. All KWOs



## Key observations

Seekers are significantly less likely to be experiencing positive outcomes of successful knowledge work. They are building a foundation for secure and repeatable processes rather than cultural or infrastructural change.

- Seekers are least likely to strongly agree that companies or customers look to them as knowledge-driven (9% vs. 38% and 11% vs. 40% respectively). They are least likely to agree that the benefits of collective intelligence are fully realized (10% vs. 41% overall), and that their knowledge workers want to stay at the company (11% vs. 39% overall).

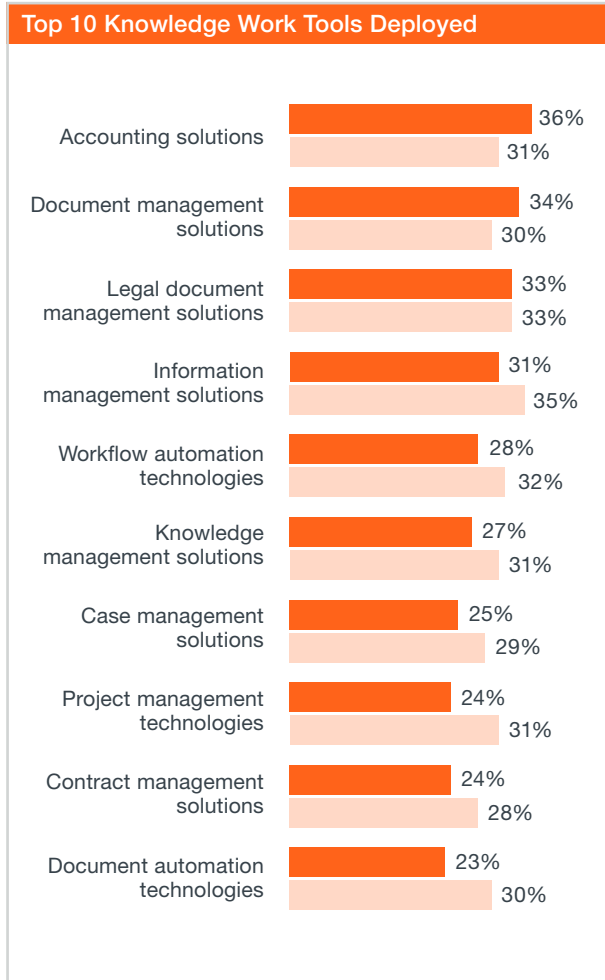
Seekers only perform well on two of the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity, which reflects their historical investment priorities: securing and developing processes to drive efficiency. They have recognized and are beginning to focus on that by building a rewarding culture where knowledge workers can not only be productive but feel valued and appropriately rewarded.

- Seekers index at 113 (out of 200) for Secure and Safeguarded Productivity (i.e., the ability for their teams to work effectively and securely wherever they are and whatever they are doing).
- Their second-highest index is Rewarding Know-How and Innovation (60), but the average for all KWOs is 141.

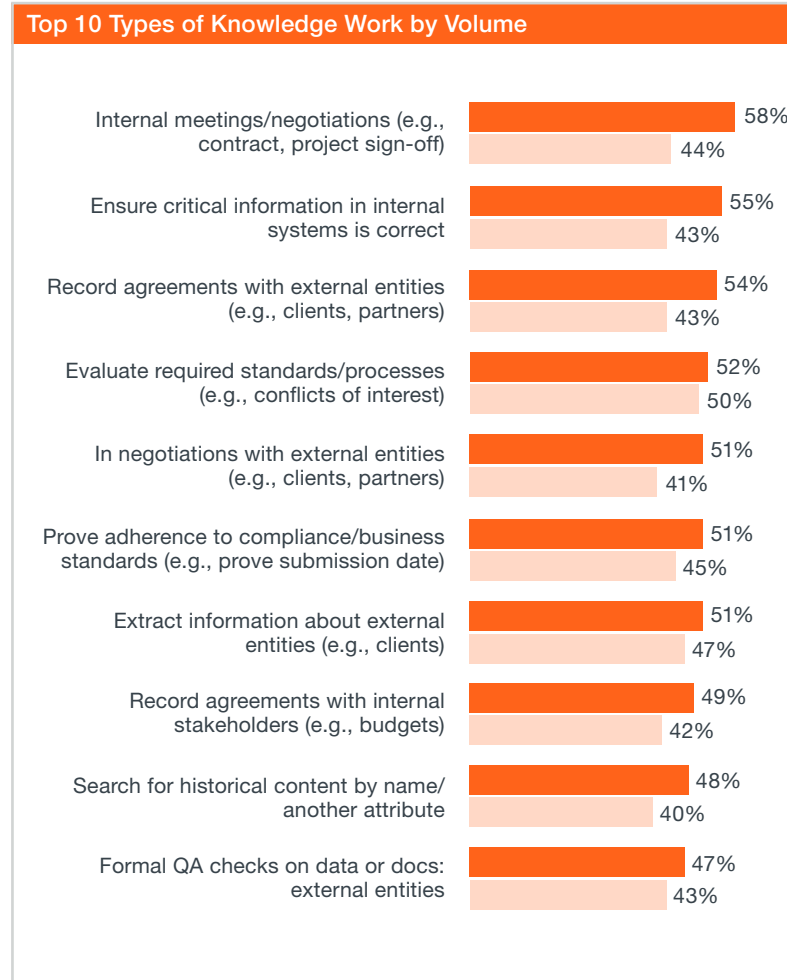
KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



## Tools and Technology Used



## Knowledge Work Undertaken



## Key observations

Seekers' current tools and technology reflect their productivity and cost-saving goals. Accuracy, data, security, and effective document management are priorities.

Seekers over-index on:

- Accounting solutions (N.b., financial services firms and corporate finance departments over-index here)
- Document management solutions, which allow them to securely store, interrogate and organize documents to drive efficiency and reduce cost to serve

KWOs at the Seeker phase of maturity engage in more types of knowledge work than KWOs in the more mature phases. They have not yet successfully consolidated their processes into consistent or streamlined workflows.

- Seekers use documents to record and institutionalize work processes — for internal and external meetings and the work products that result from them, and to ensure that processes are followed and the work product is compliant.
- This is reflected in the types of documents they engage with most. Email communications, business contracts, and compliance documents are considered the most important in their organization.
- They also over-index on the use of financial documentation and spreadsheets, suggesting that they are still largely relying on manual processes to manage both their knowledge and their organizations.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization

KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



Knowledge Work Index: 80 - 119

# Practitioner

Invested in knowledge management practices, security, and collaboration technologies to proactively deliver higher-value work and offer enhanced customer experiences.

Mindset

Organized

Customer-focused

Collaborative

## A five-fact summary:

Compliance and rigor are top priorities

Supporting effective collaboration is their current organizational imperative

Investing significantly in transforming to be digital-first

Open to the power of knowledge work as one component of their future

Committed to investing in serving clients more effectively but are not yet where they want to be

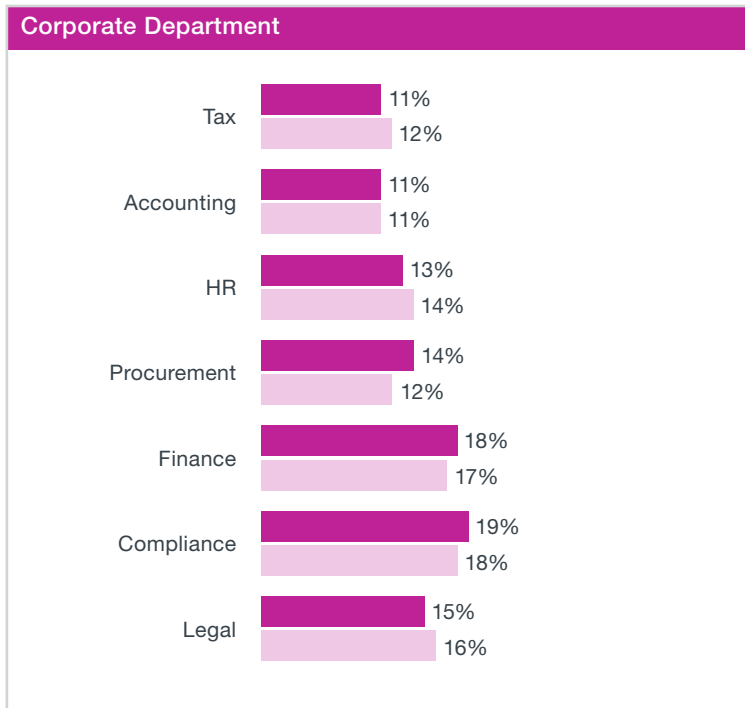
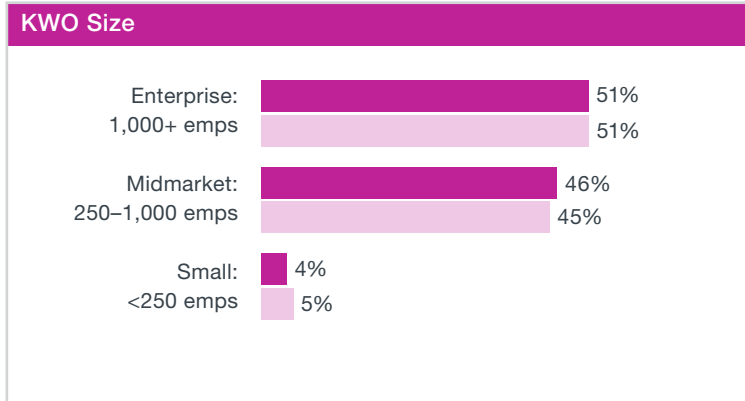
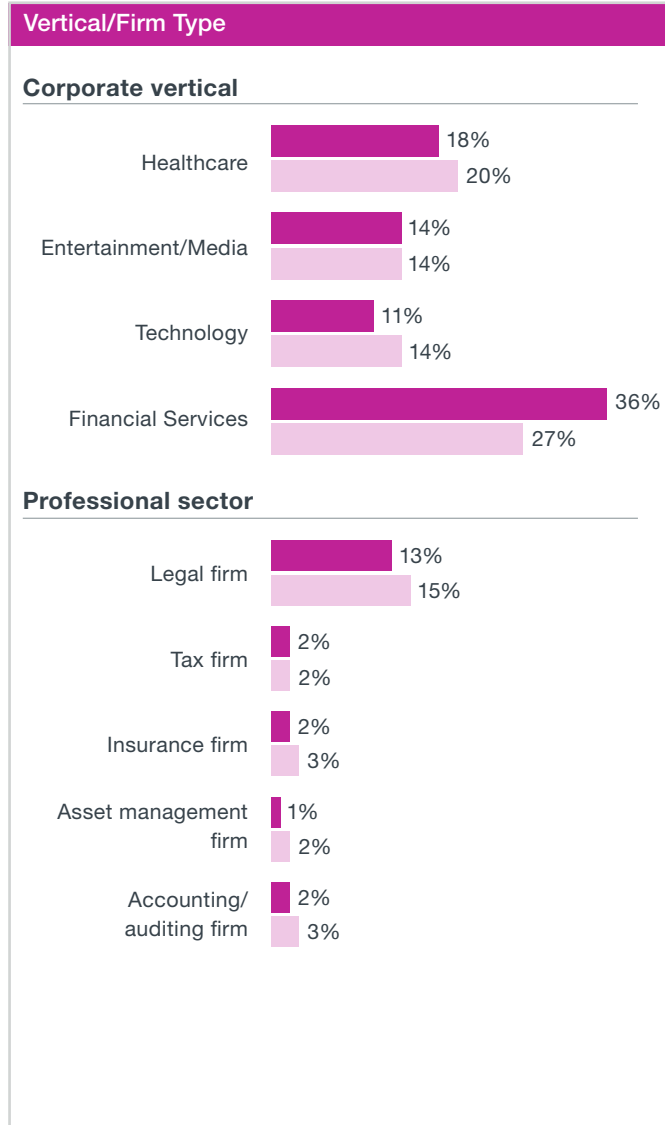


# Practitioner

■ % of Practitioners  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

The percentage of global KWOs remains the same across all maturity stages. You are comparing the characteristics of organizations at each stage with the profile of the average global KWO.

## Knowledge Work Organization Profile



## Key observations

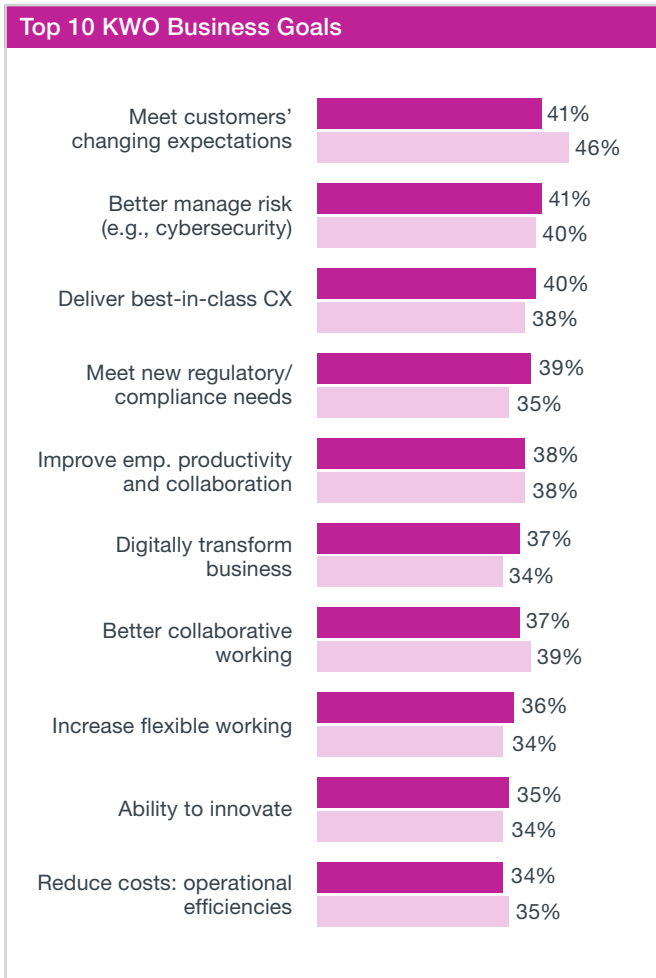
Corporate KWOs are again more likely to be in the Practitioner phase of maturity compared to professional firms.

- Corporate KWOs in finance over-index (36% of all Practitioners vs. 27% of all KWOs).
- Within corporates, the procurement, finance, and compliance departments over-index as Practitioners with a strong focus on compliance management of documents and processes.

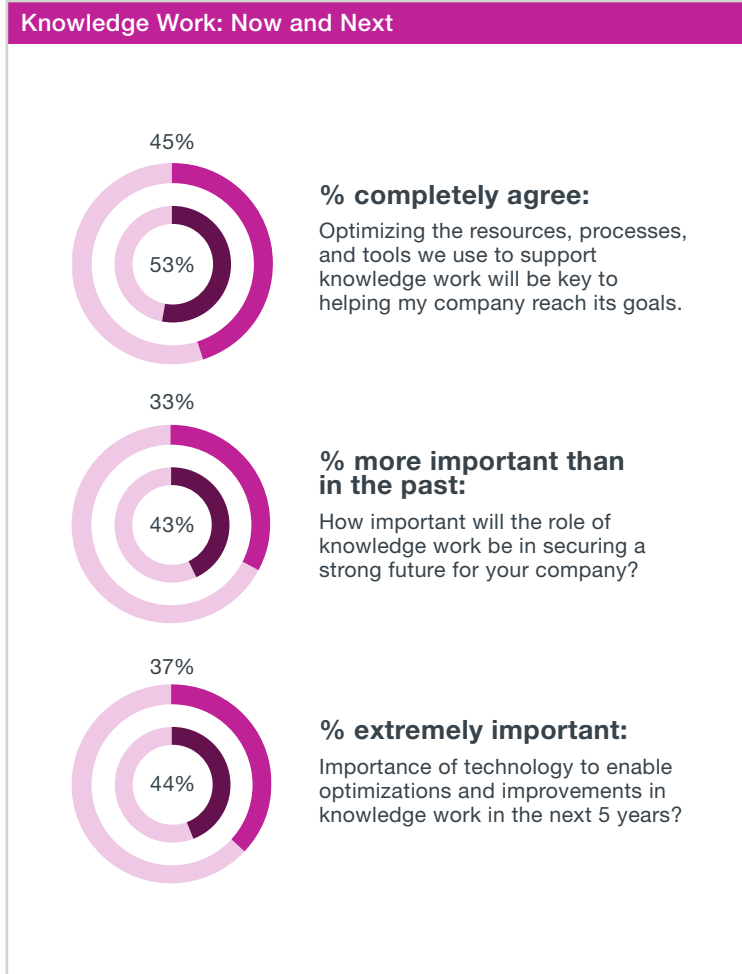
There are no significant patterns in the size of organizations at the Practitioner phase of maturity.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Business Goals



## The Future of Knowledge Work in the KWO



## Key observations

KWOs at this stage of maturity invest in digital tools to improve customer experience, with an emphasis on compliance and consistent delivery.

- Their top 3 focus areas are: meeting customers' changing expectations (41%), better managing risk (41%), and delivering best-in-class customer experience (40%).
- They significantly over-index on meeting new regulatory/compliance requirements (39% vs. 35% of global KWOs) and driving toward digital transformation (37% vs. 34% of global KWOs).

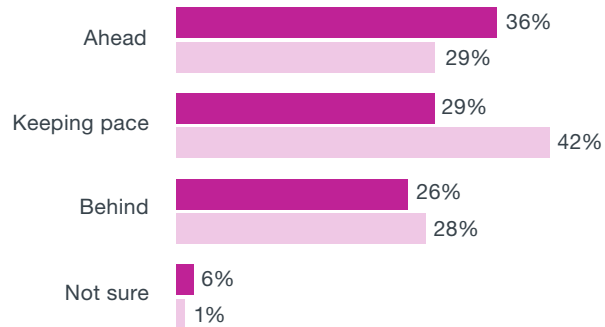
They agree that knowledge work is important and will be more important in the future but remain tentative about going all in with a knowledge-first strategy. Instead, they focus on creating a stable environment and digital infrastructure that will make knowledge work easier and more collaborative.

- 45% completely agree that investing in knowledge work is key to helping their company reach their goals compared to 53% of all global KWOs.
- A third agree that knowledge work will be more important in the future success of their organization, but again this under-indexes compared to the average global KWO (43%).
- Similarly, only 37% feel that technology is extremely important in enabling improvement of knowledge work compared to 44% of global KWOs.

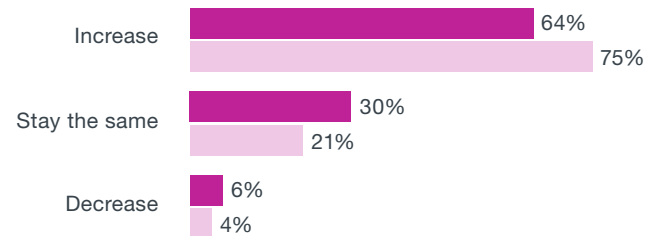
KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Knowledge Work Investment Strategy

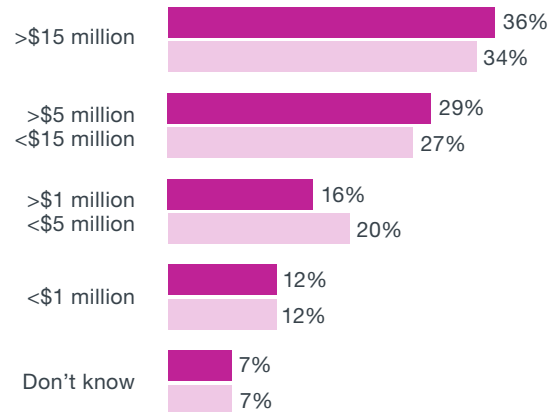
### Digital Capabilities vs. Competition



### Knowledge Work Budget – Next 12 Months



### Current Annual Knowledge Work Budget



## Key observations

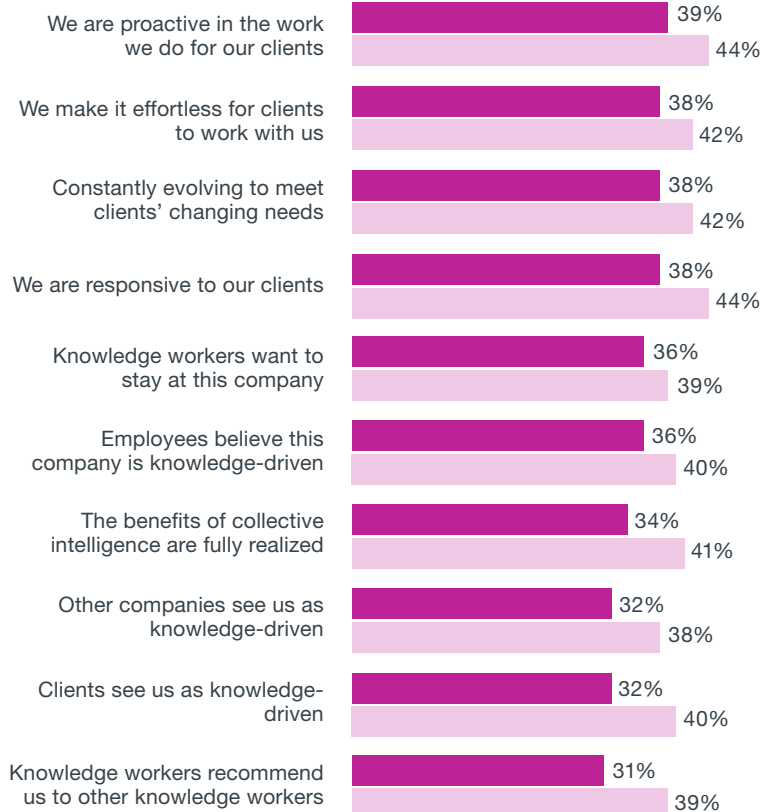
At the Practitioner phase of maturity, KWOs typically have annual knowledge work budgets of at least \$5 million, with over a third spending more than \$15 million. They feel that they are ahead of their direct competition and want to retain that advantage by increasing their budgets next year.

- Only 12% invest less than \$1 million on knowledge work.
- 36% feel that their digital capabilities are ahead of the competition and are committed to retaining their lead.
- 64% plan to increase their budgets next year.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

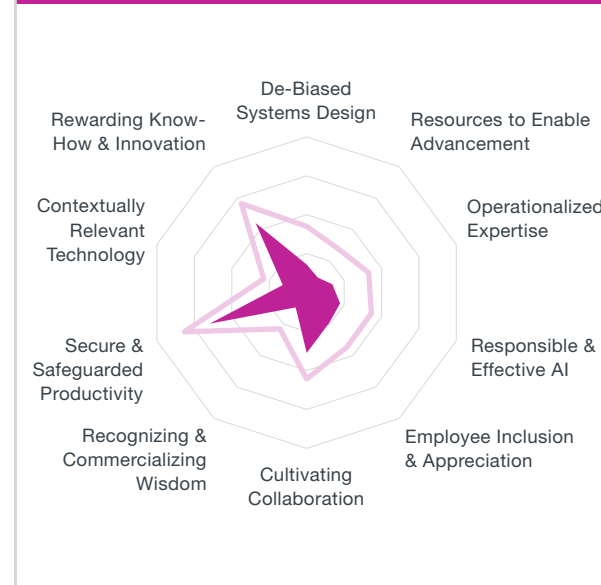
## The Outcomes of Current Knowledge Work Approach

### Strongly Agree: Experiencing Outcome



## Drivers of Knowledge Work Maturity

### Driver Performance vs. All KWOs



## Key observations

KWOs in the Practitioner phase still under-index on all the outcomes of successful knowledge work. They are creating a digital-first environment that encourages collaboration and secure document management but don't feel that their efforts are being recognized externally. They don't believe that knowledge workers, customers, or competitors recognize the investment they are making in their systems and processes yet.

- Only 32% believe that clients recognize them as a knowledge-driven company (vs. 40% of global KWOs).
- Similarly, only 32% believe that other companies recognize them as knowledge-driven, compared to 38% of global KWOs.
- Only 31% believe that knowledge workers would recommend their organization as a good place to work (vs. 39% of global KWOs).

Practitioners have advanced Secure and Safeguarded Productivity and are rewarding Know-How and Innovation more than KWOs in the Seeker phase. They are focused on building infrastructure that drives systemic collaboration, but their Cultivating Collaboration score is 77 while the average for all KWOs is 111, so while a differentiator compared to those at the Seeker stage, it cannot be considered a strength at this stage of maturity.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

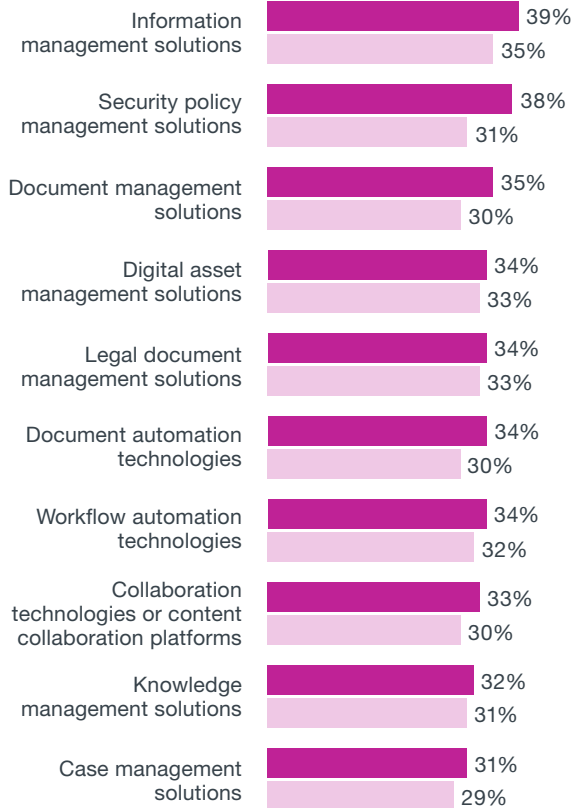


# Practitioner

■ % of Practitioners  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

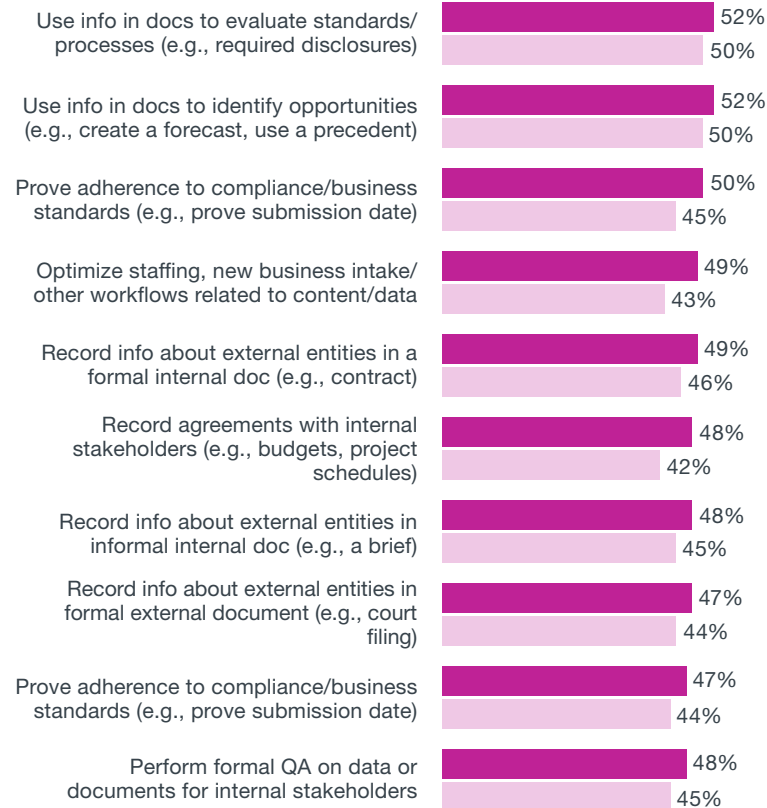
## Tools and Technology Used

### Top 10 Knowledge Work Tools Deployed



## Knowledge Work Undertaken

### Top 10 Types of Knowledge Work by Volume



## Key observations

KWOs at the Practitioner phase of maturity over-index on most knowledge work tools, particularly on:

- Information management solutions (39% of practitioners vs. 35% of all KWOs)
- Security policy management solutions (38% vs. 31%)
- Document management solutions (35% vs. 30% of all KWOs)

Practitioners have moved from managing documents to managing and using the information contained in them.

- Practitioners, like Seekers, over-index on the full range on knowledge work activities. They primarily use digital documentation to ensure that people adhere to standard process and can prove that they have done so. For example, 52% use documents to identify and ensure that required standards and processes are followed, and 50% use information about those documents (data, tagging, etc.) to prove that they have adhered to those standards (e.g., prove submission dates or track contract redlining).
- 52% of Practitioners also use documents to identify or generate opportunities for their team and their clients (e.g., creating a forecast in financial services or using a precedent in a law firm to support and solve client problems in efficient and consistent ways).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



Knowledge Work Index: 120 - 139

# Established

Building best-in-class digital customer and employee experiences to deliver exponential value to clients, open new revenue streams, and pursue scale and diversification.

Mindset

Experiential

Growth-focused

Competitive

## A five-fact summary:

---

Share knowledge to build value for their organization, their clients, and their employees

---

Operate collaboratively

---

Committed to digital transformation

---

Strong and functional knowledge work infrastructure

---

Developing a culture of knowledge work

---



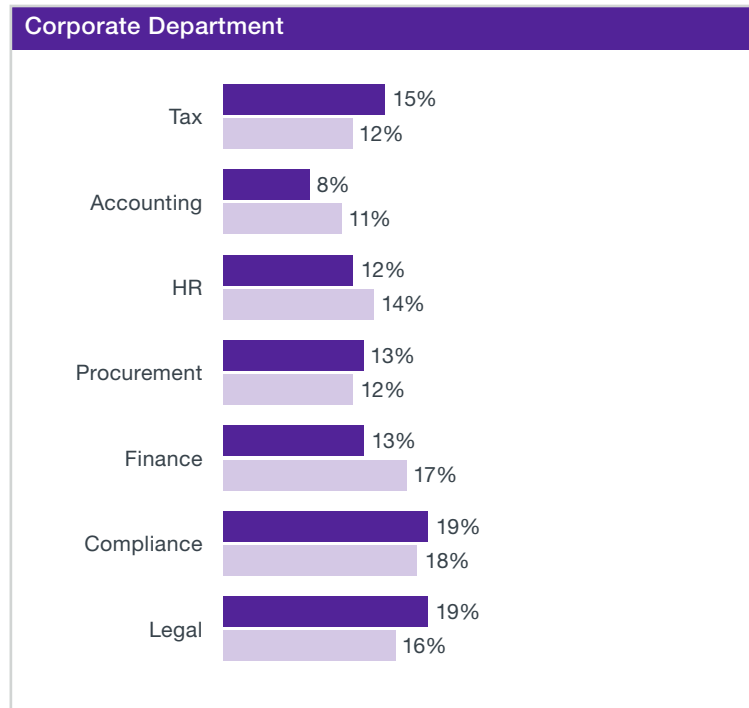
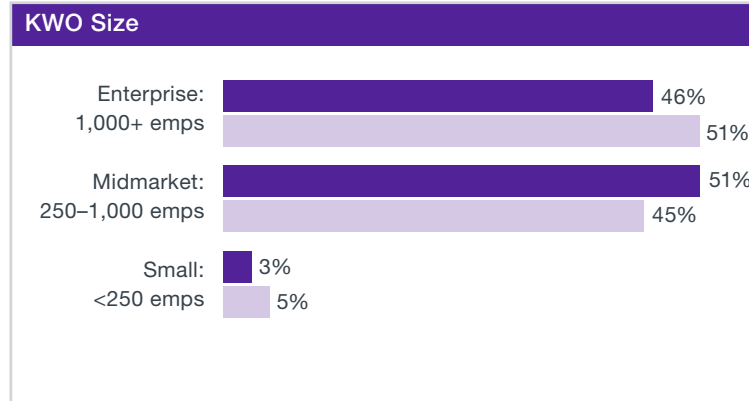
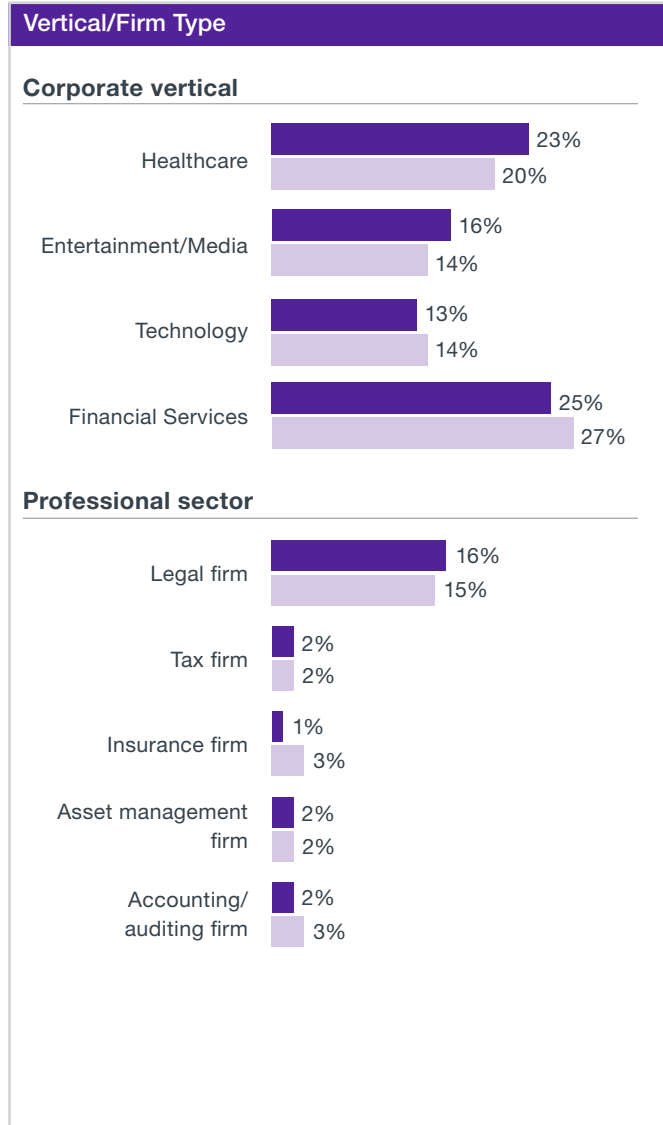


# Established

■ % of Established KWOs  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

The percentage of global KWOs remains the same across all maturity stages. You are comparing the characteristics of organizations at each stage with the profile of the average global KWO.

## Knowledge Work Organization Profile



## Key observations

Corporate Healthcare and Entertainment/Media KWOs over-index in the Established phase of knowledge work maturity, a reflection of their legacy of highly sensitive data and high volumes of digital content.

- Corporate KWOs in Healthcare (23% of all Established KWO vs. 20% of sample) and Entertainment/Media (16% vs. 14% of sample) over-index as Established KWOs.
- Within corporates, the tax, legal and compliance departments over-index as Established KWOs.

Established KWOs are most likely to be midmarket firms or departments within midmarket corporates. These KWOs remain small enough to be agile as technology, processes, and cultures evolve.

- 51% of Established KWOs are in the midmarket although they only represent 45% of all KWOs.
- Both small and large enterprises under-index in the Established maturity phase.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



# Established

■ % of Established KWOs  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

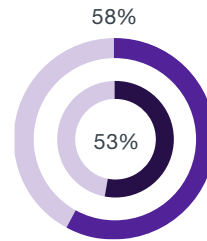
## Business Goals

### Top 10 KWO Business Goals



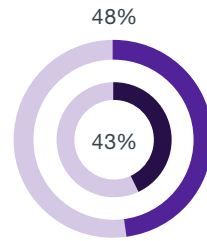
## The Future of Knowledge Work in the KWO

### Knowledge Work: Now and Next



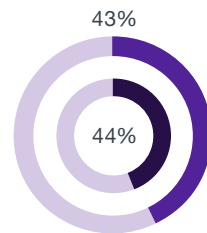
#### % completely agree:

Optimizing the resources, processes, and tools we use to support knowledge work will be key to helping my company reach its goals.



#### % more important than in the past:

How important will the role of knowledge work be in securing a strong future for your company?



#### % extremely important:

Importance of technology to enable optimizations and improvements in knowledge work in the next 5 years?

## Key observations

KWOs in the Established phase of maturity focus on improving their customer and employee experience with the aim of expanding into new markets and building competitive advantage.

- Their top 3 focus areas are: Meeting customers' changing expectations (47%), better meeting employees' expectations (41%), and working better collaboratively (39%).
- Although not in the top 10, their most differentiating goals are increasing competitive differentiation (35% vs. 30% of KWOs), opening new channels (33% vs. 30% overall), and entering new markets (27% vs. 22% of all KWOs). They have growth ambitions.
- They also over-index on aiming to migrate to the cloud (34% vs. 29% of the sample), reinforcing their commitment to pursuing digital and knowledge work transformation.

KWOs in this phase of maturity believe that optimizing for effective knowledge work is key to achieving their goals and accept that this means making the right technology investments now and in the future.

- 58% completely agree that investing in knowledge work is key to helping their company to reach their goals (vs. 53% of all KWOs).
- 48% agree that knowledge work will be more important in the future success of their organization compared to 43% of all KWOs.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

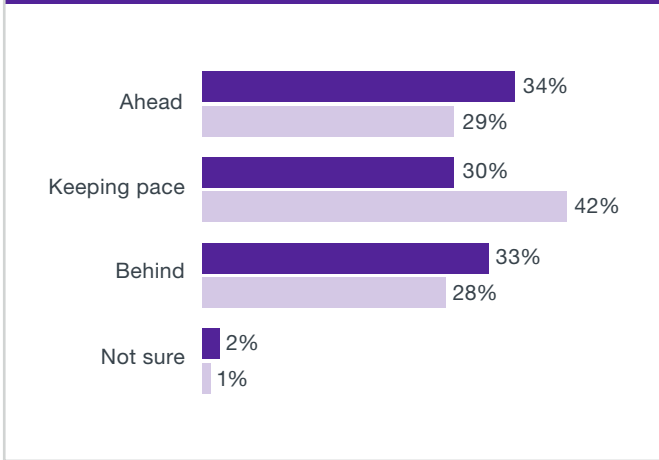


# Established

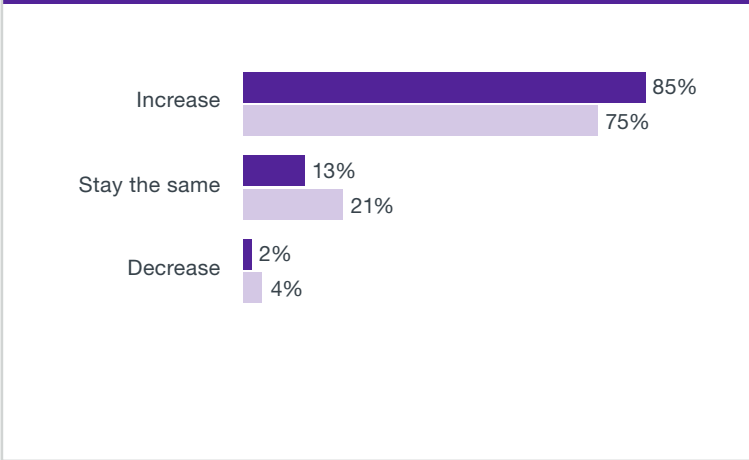
■ % of Established KWOs  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

## Knowledge Work Investment Strategy

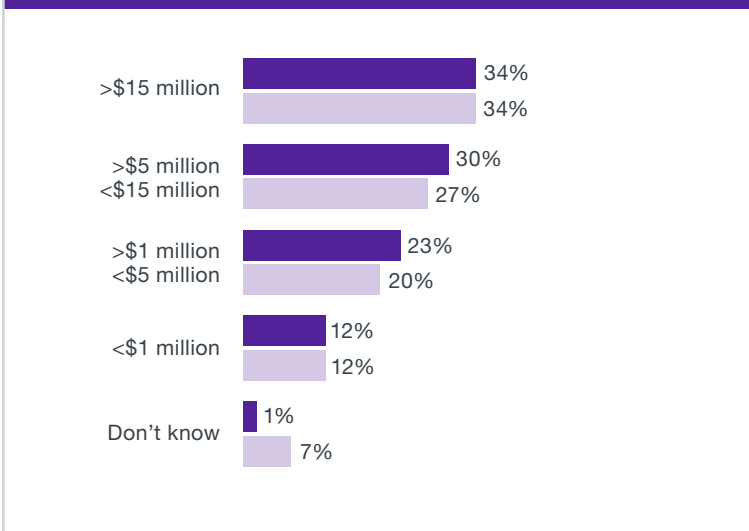
### Digital Capabilities vs. Competition



### Knowledge Work Budget – Next 12 Months



### Current Annual Knowledge Work Budget



## Key observations

Successfully reaching the Established phase of maturity is not just a function of budget. It is about making the right investment decision with a focus on exhibiting leadership internally and externally.

- Levels of investment varies considerably at this phase, with 23% investing between \$1 and \$5 million, 30% between \$5 million and \$15 million, and the remaining 34% investing more than \$15 million.
- Regardless of current budgets, they plan to continue to invest. 85% plan to increase their budgets next year.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



# Established

■ % of Established KWOs  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

## The Outcomes of Current Knowledge Work Approach



## Drivers of Knowledge Work Maturity



## Key observations

KWOs in the Established phase of maturity can focus on delivering excellent experiences to their clients and their employees because they invested early in knowledge management technologies to support collaboration and productivity.

- They focus on both proactive delivery and responsiveness to their clients (48% strongly agree that they are experiencing both outcomes vs. 44% of all KWOs).
- Their employees acknowledge that their organization is knowledge-driven and confidently evangelize the benefits of working for their KWO (44%).

This phase of maturity requires high performance on Secure and Safeguarded Productivity and Rewarding Know-How and Innovation, supported by a knowledge work infrastructure that drives collaborative working allowing the KWO to focus on developing a strong knowledge work culture.

- Established KWOs over-index on Cultivating Collaboration with an index value of 140 compared to an average of 111.
- They also over-index on Employee Inclusion and Appreciation (97 vs. 87 overall), which when added to their strong performance on Rewarding Know-How and Innovation (161 vs. 141 average) suggests an emerging culture where knowledge and knowledge work are valued and invested in.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



# Established

■ % of Established KWOs  
 ■ % of KWOs (Global average)

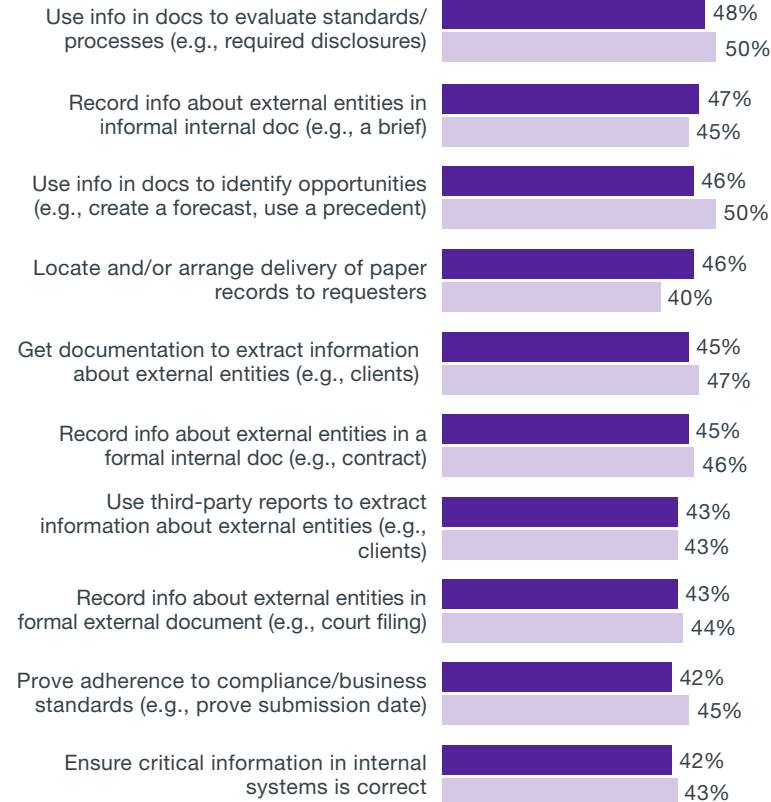
## Tools and Technology Used

### Top 10 Knowledge Work Tools Deployed



## Knowledge Work Undertaken

### Top 10 Types of Knowledge Work by Volume



## Key observations

KWOs in the Established maturity phase must have a digital-first strategy. They have established integrated knowledge management systems to allow secure storage, analysis, retrieval, and reuse of high-value knowledge. Supported by project management systems and digital asset management solutions ensures that the knowledge work experience is positive for both clients and employees.

- Legal firms and corporate departments are more likely to have made a specific investment in specialist legal management software by the time they reach the Established maturity phase (35% of Established KWOs vs. 33% of global KWOs).
- KWOs in the Established maturity phase only over-index on two forms of document use, both of which allow successful collaboration and reuse of knowledge: 47% use information extracted about external entities to build working documents (e.g., legal briefs, contracts) and 40% tag content for future retrieval vs. 37% of KWOs overall.
- They also over-index on retrieval and delivery of paper records to requesters (46% of Established KWOs vs. 40% of global KWOs).
- The top use of documents containing critical information is to ensure that standards and process are adhered to (48%) reflecting their goal to standardize and institutionalize processes to make proprietary knowledge accessible.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



Knowledge Work Index: 140 - 159

# Expert

Building a culture and infrastructure enabling diverse knowledge to be documented, shared, and used to drive profitable growth for both the organization and its clients.

Mindset

Inclusive

Strategic

Future-forward

## A five-fact summary:

Continually future-proofing their KWO

Committed to knowledge work as the key growth opportunity

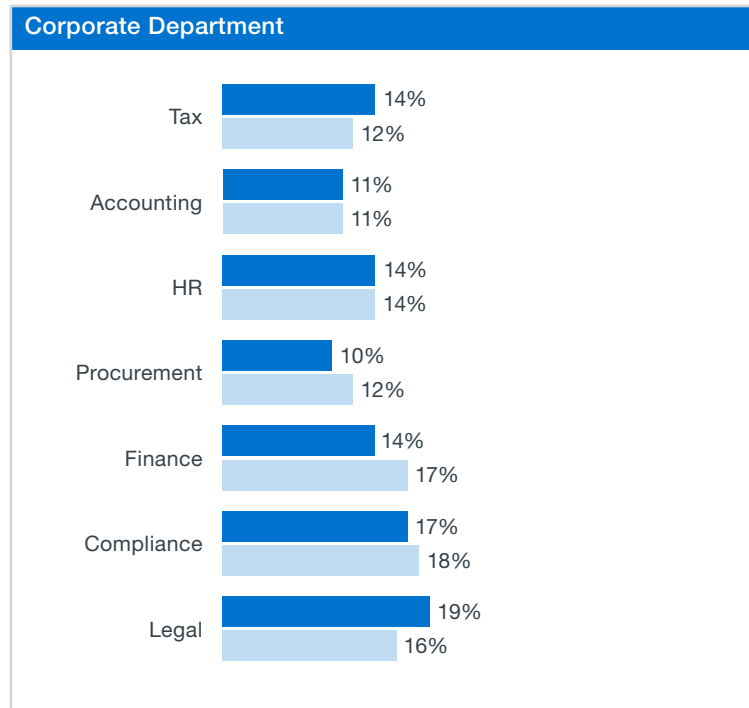
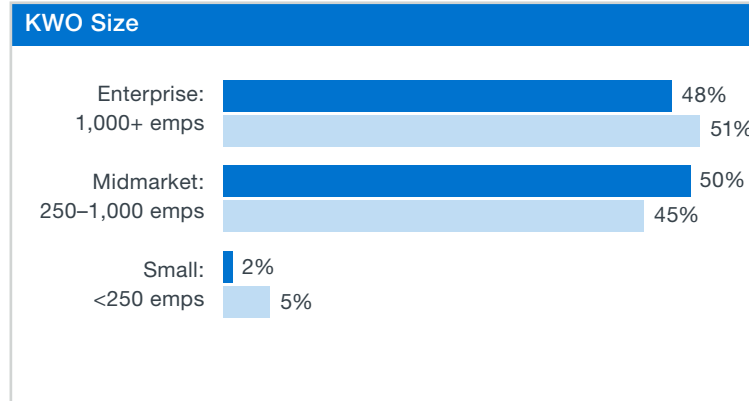
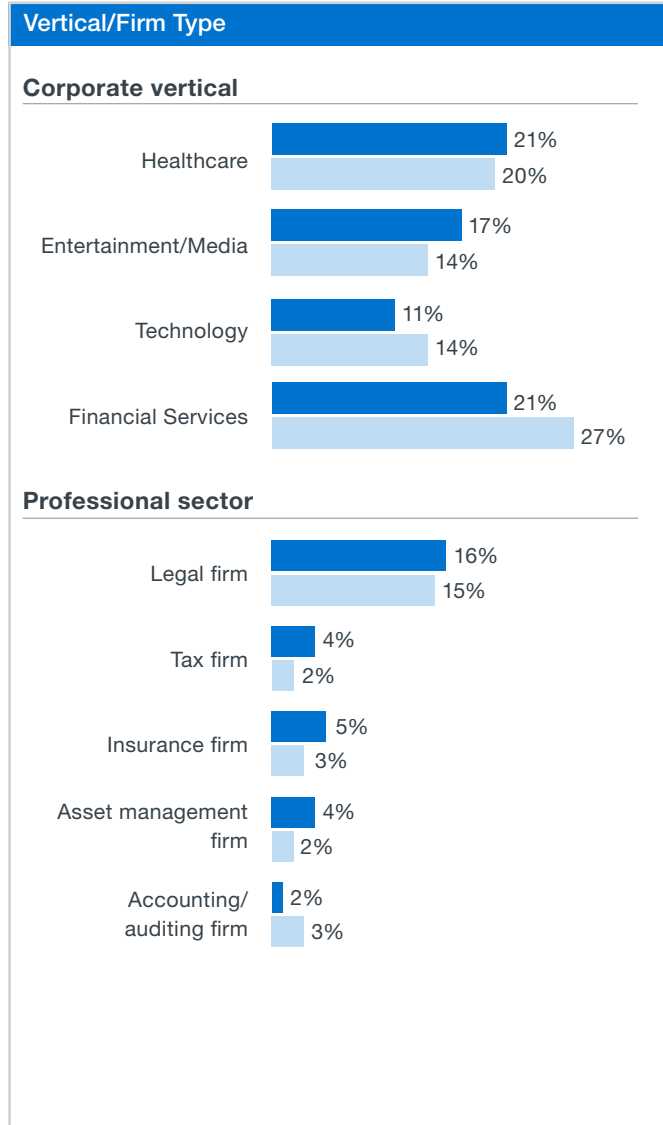
Actively investing to rebalance historical tech investment by evolving their knowledge work culture

Pursuing collective intelligence

Exude leadership internally and externally

The percentage of global KWOs remains the same across all maturity stages. You are comparing the characteristics of organizations at each stage with the profile of the average global KWO.

## Knowledge Work Organization Profile



## Key observations

Healthcare and Entertainment/Media corporates consistently over-index as you move up the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™, but the Expert phase is the first time that all types of professional firms (apart from accounting firms) over-index.

- Corporate KWOs in Healthcare (21% of Experts vs. 20% of sample) and Entertainment/Media (17% of Experts vs. 14% of sample) both over-index as Expert KWOs.
- Within corporates, tax and legal departments also over-index.

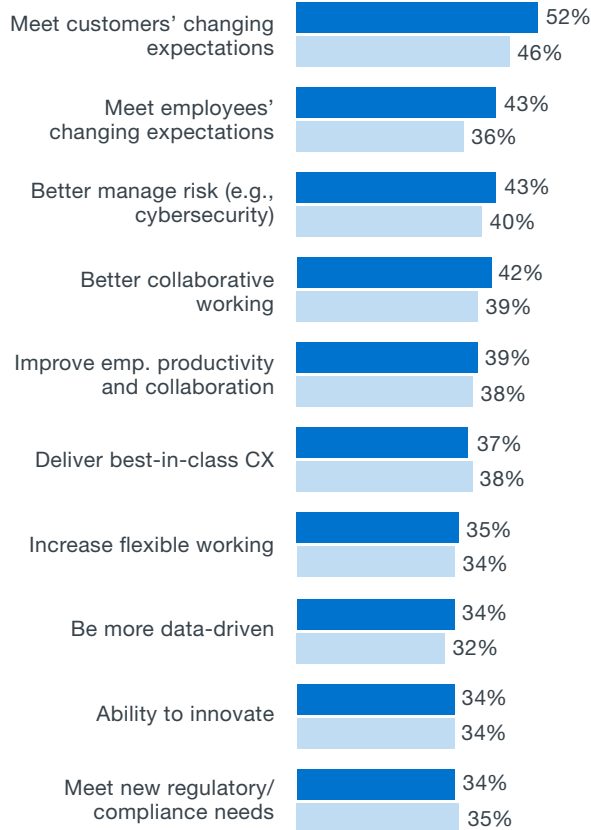
KWOs at the Expert phase of maturity are also more likely to be midmarket. This enforces the fact that the midmarket companies sit in a sweet spot where agility can prevail and investments can demonstrate a return more rapidly.

- 50% of KWOs at the Expert phase are in the midmarket, although they only represent 45% of global KWOs.
- Both small and large enterprises under-index in the Expert phase.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

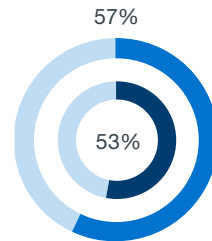
## Business Goals

### Top 10 KWO Business Goals



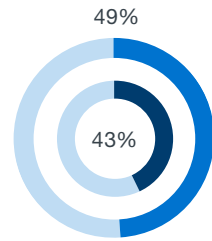
## The Future of Knowledge Work in the KWO

### Knowledge Work: Now and Next



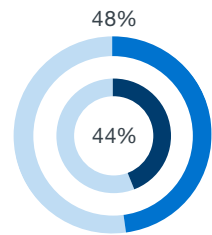
#### % completely agree:

Optimizing the resources, processes, and tools we use to support knowledge work will be key to helping my company reach its goals.



#### % more important than in the past:

How important will the role of knowledge work be in securing a strong future for your company?



#### % extremely important:

Importance of technology to enable optimizations and improvements in knowledge work in the next 5 years?

## Key observations

KWOs in the Expert phase focus on being responsive to the needs of both employees and the market, reinforcing the importance of effective collaboration to achieve those goals.

- The top 3 focus areas are: Meeting customers' changing expectations (52%), better meeting employees' expectations (43%), and working to better manage risk (43%), over-indexing on all three goals compared to the industry overall.

Once in the Expert phase, KWOs are committed to a future where the ability to collect, curate, access, and share knowledge is the core of their organization.

- 57% of KWOs in the Expert phase completely agree that investing in knowledge work is key to helping their company reach its goals (vs. 53% of global KWOs).
- 49% agree that knowledge work will be more important in the future success of their organization compared to 43% of all KWOs.

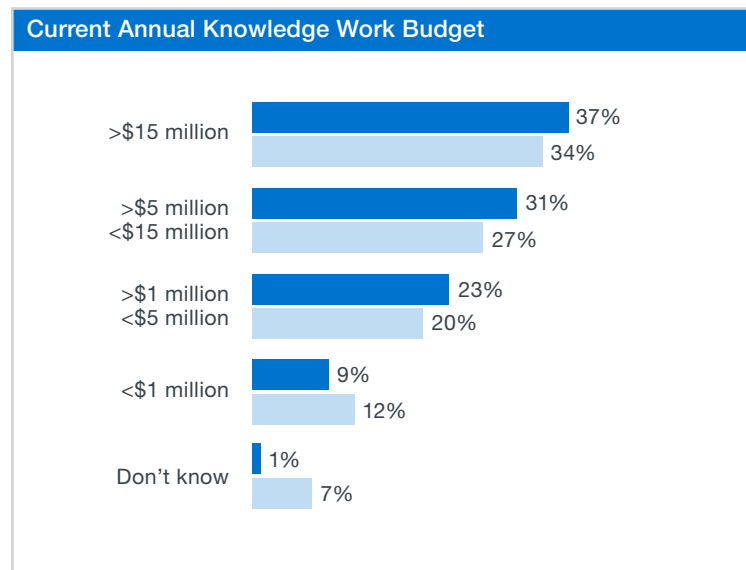
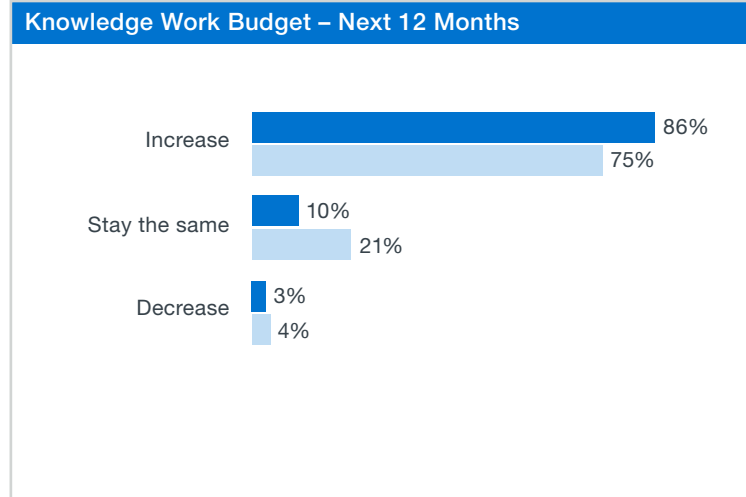
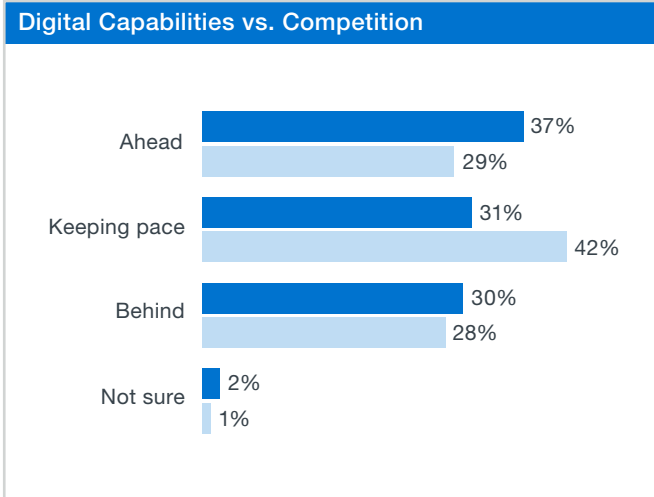
They are also more likely to say that investing in technology will be key to their future success (48% vs. 44% of the sample).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization

KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



## Knowledge Work Investment Strategy



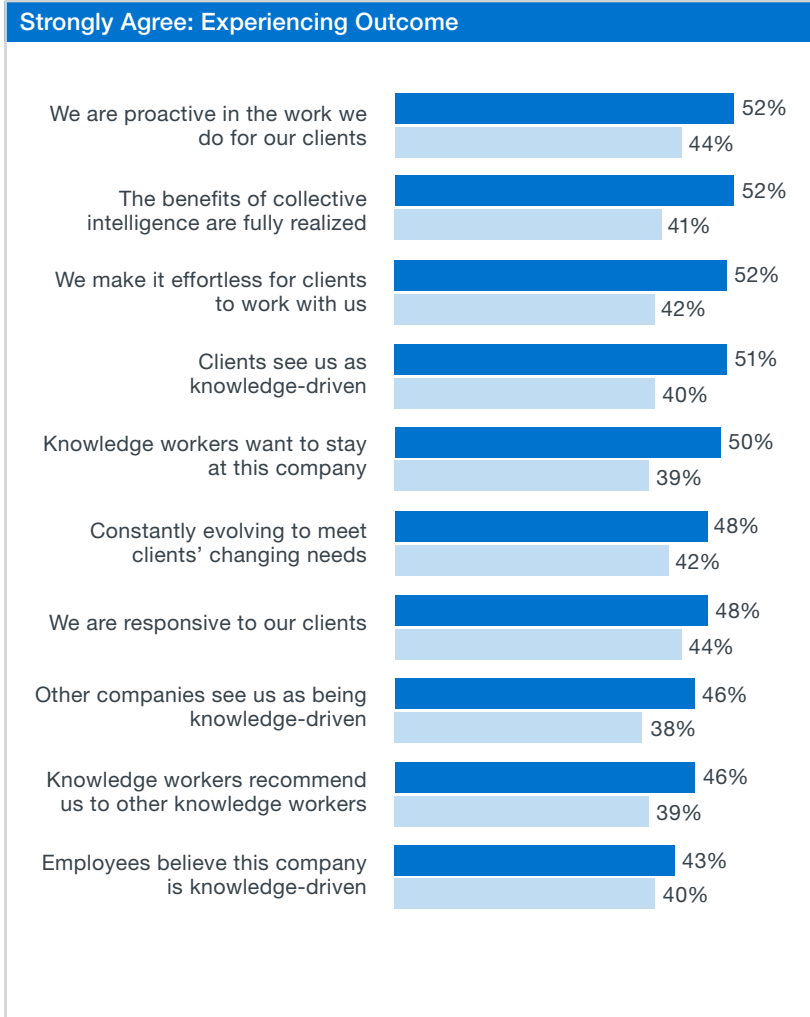
## Key observations

The Expert maturity phase requires a firm commitment to building a knowledge-led future, and KWOs that reach this level are confident that they are achieving competitive advantage.

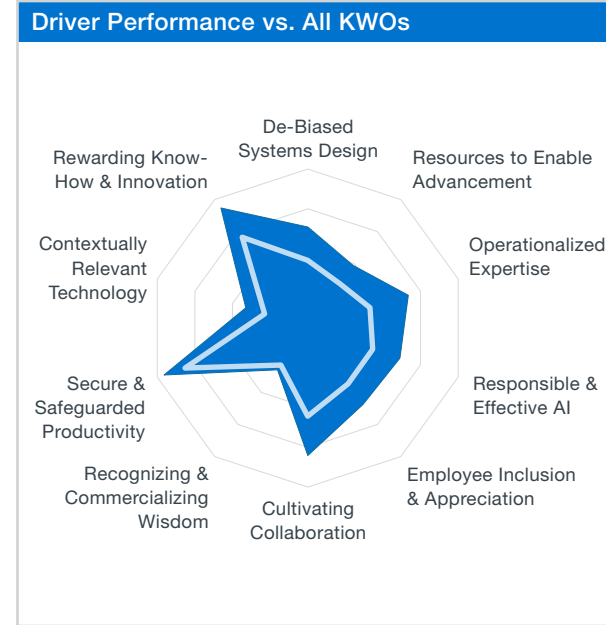
- 68% of Experts invest more than \$5 million on knowledge work a year compared to only 61% of all KWOs.
- None of the Experts intend to reduce their expenditure and 86% intend to increase their budgets for the next 12 months.
- They feel that they are on a positive trajectory, with 37% compared to only 29% of all KWOs believing they have successfully invested to get ahead of the competition.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## The Outcomes of Current Knowledge Work Approach



## Drivers of Knowledge Work Maturity



## Key observations

KWOs in the Expert phase of maturity are achieving ROI from their historical investments and can now focus on creating a positive, collaborative knowledge work environment.

- 52% strongly agree that they are proactively serving their customers compared to only 44% of global KWOs.
- More than half strongly believe that the benefits of collective intelligence are fully realized, and as a result they can be proactive with customers (52%) and make them feel effortless to work with (52%).
- 50% strongly agree that their knowledge workers want to stay with them compared to 39% of KWOs overall.

To reach the Expert phase of maturity requires high performance on all 10 drivers of maturity.

Having successfully created a knowledge work infrastructure, they are ready to explore the integration of AI into workflows and knowledge management practice.

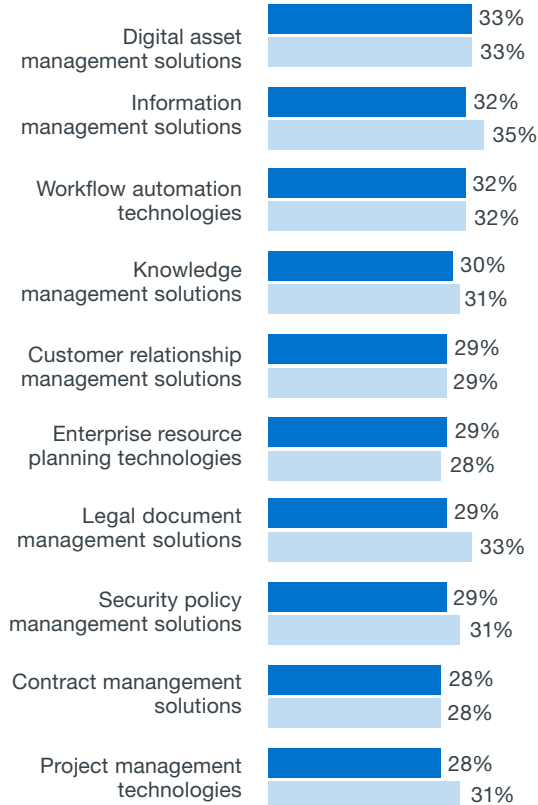
Three factors differentiate those in the Expert phase from those in the Established phase:

- Responsible and Effective AI (Index: 122 vs. 86 overall).
- Operationalized Expertise (Index: 65 vs. 58 overall).
- Employee Inclusion and Appreciation (Index: 119 vs. 87 overall).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
 KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

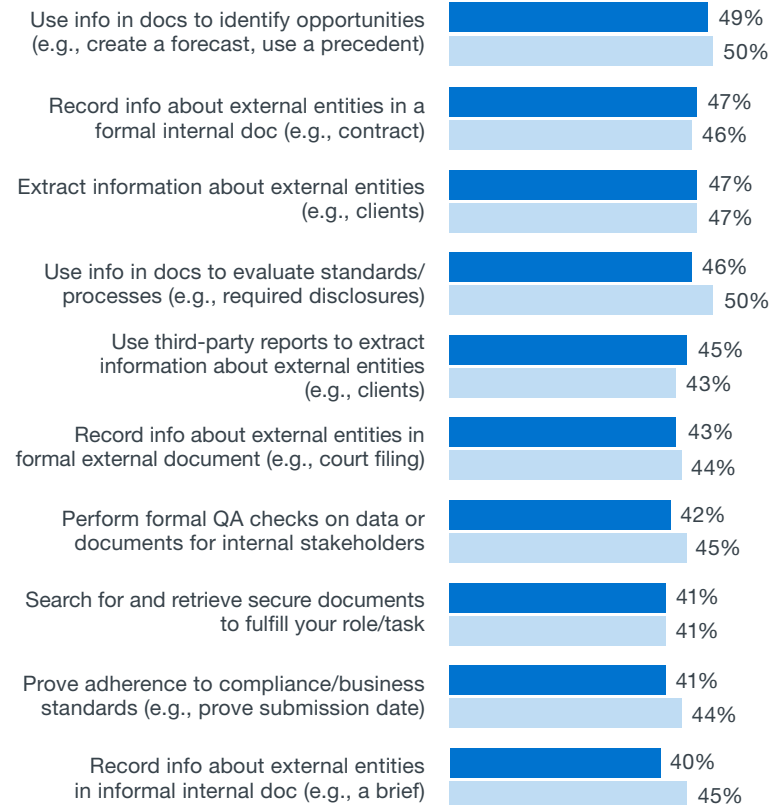
## Tools and Technology Used

### Top 10 Knowledge Work Tools Deployed



## Knowledge Work Undertaken

### Top 10 Types of Knowledge Work by Volume



## Key observations

KWO in the Expert phase of maturity are digital-first and exploring AI within their processes and infrastructure. They have consolidated their tool strategy around collaboration, sharing, and utilizing company-wide knowledge.

- They typically have digital asset management solutions (32%), information management solutions (22%), workflow automation (32%), and full-blown knowledge management solutions in place (30%).
- They over-index on use of content services platforms (27% vs. 24% on average).

Their goals are to optimize the value of information by ensuring that standardized processes can be followed (46%), and that key information can be easily extracted and used purposefully to add value to clients.

- They use information in documents to identify and generate opportunity (i.e., proactively serve their clients [49%]); record information extracted about external entities in formal documents like contracts or claims documents (47%); and use first-party (47%) and third-party (45%) reports to extract, interrogate, and utilize information about external entities (e.g., partners, clients, and industries [45%]).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization

KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



Knowledge Work Index: >160

# Pioneer

Single-mindedly pursuing collective intelligence with continuous innovation, diversity, inclusion, and a culture where employees meet personal goals, clients enjoy superior value, and the organization's market value grows.

Mindset

Innovative

Creative

Thriving

## A five-fact summary:

---

True leaders

---

Relentlessly pursue innovation

---

Committed to furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion

---

Technology and culture evolve in partnership

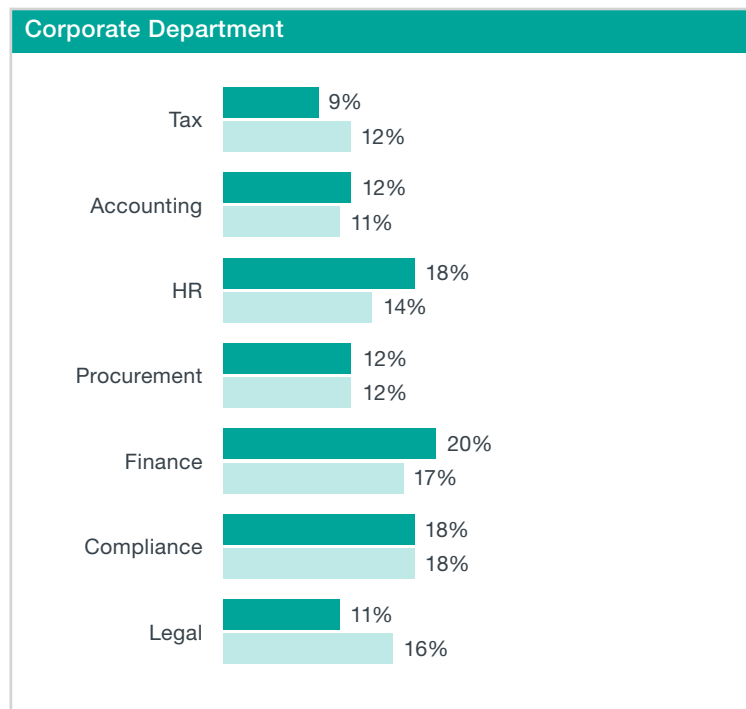
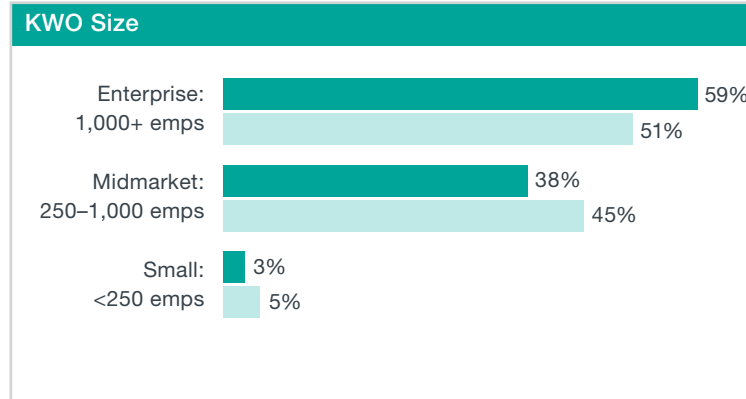
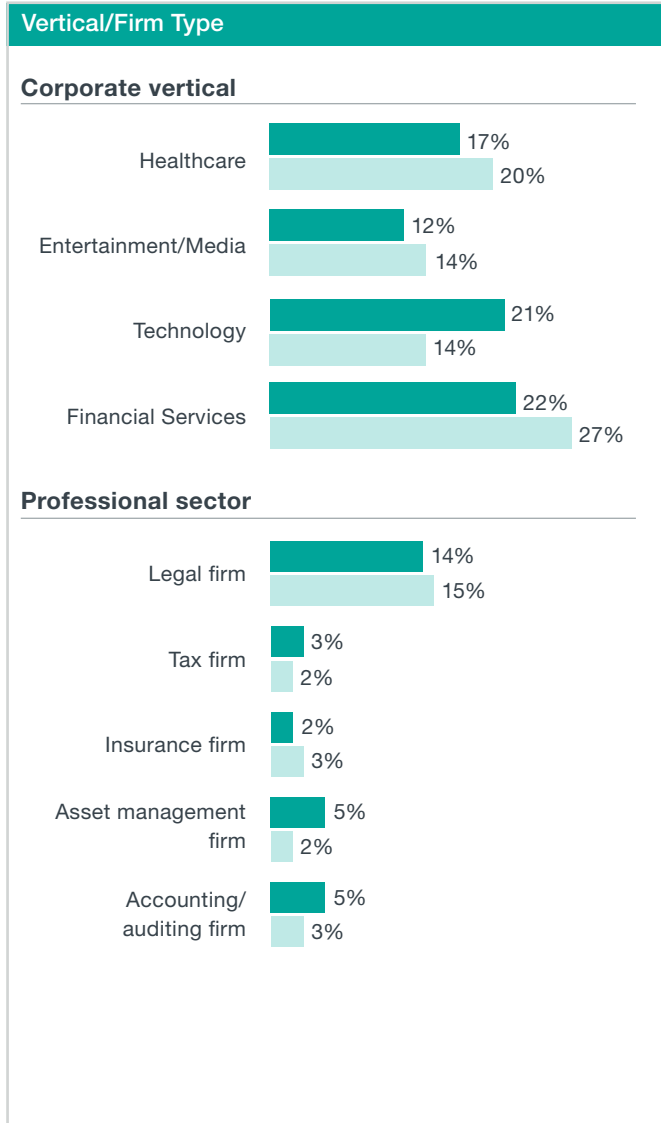
---

Creating commercial benefits through collective intelligence

---

The percentage of global KWOs remains the same across all maturity stages. You are comparing the characteristics of organizations at each stage with the profile of the average global KWO.

## Knowledge Work Organization Profile



## Key observations

Technology businesses, together with asset management and accounting/audit firms, are more likely to have reached the Pioneer stage of maturity.

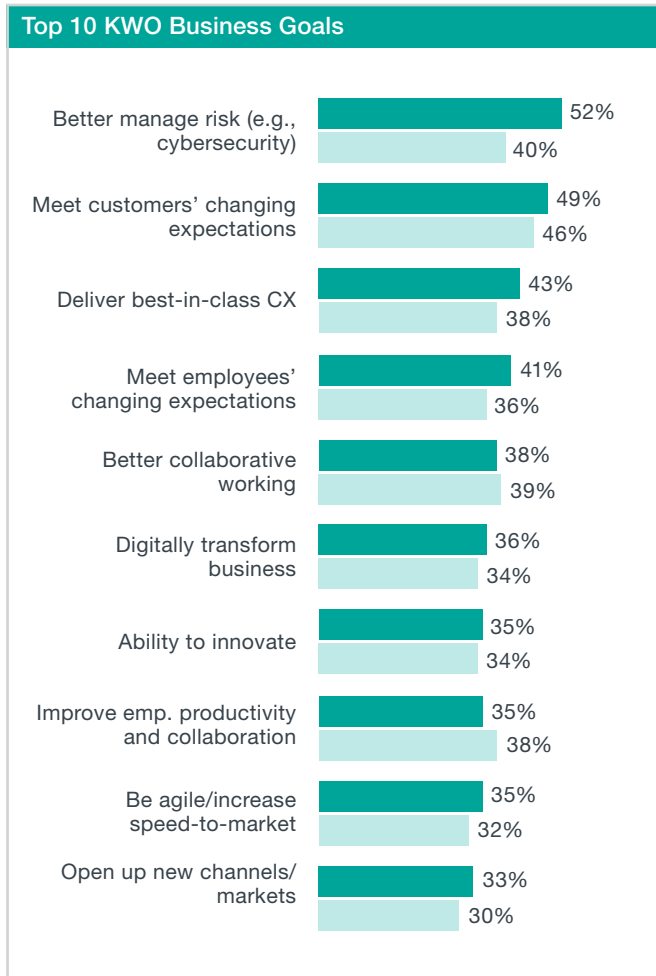
- Technology businesses significantly over-index in the Pioneer stage (21% of Pioneers vs. 14% of sample).
- Within corporates, it is HR and finance departments that are most likely to be Pioneers.
- Two professional firm types over-index in the Pioneer phase: asset managers (5% of Pioneers compared to 2% of the sample) and accounting/auditing firms (5% of Pioneers compared to 3% of the sample).

Enterprise KWOs are also more likely to be in this phase of maturity with fully integrated knowledge work best practices, streamlined knowledge work tools, and a vibrant knowledge work culture deliberately nurtured as the organization matured.

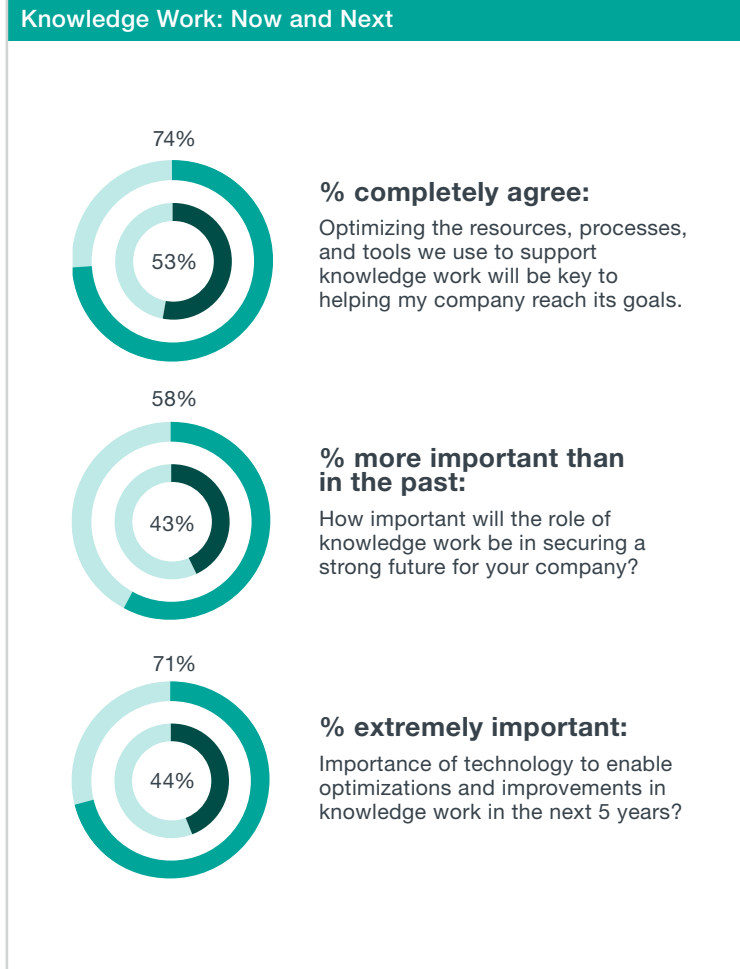
- 59% of those in the Pioneer phase are enterprise KWOs vs. 51% of KWOs overall.
- Both small and large enterprises under-index in this phase, particularly midmarket organizations, which represent 45% of all KWOs but are only 38% of those in the Pioneer phase.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Business Goals



## The Future of Knowledge Work in the KWO



## Key observations

Reducing risk is still a significant priority for KWOs at the Pioneer stage of maturity, but external goals are market leadership and best-in-class, proactive customer experiences.

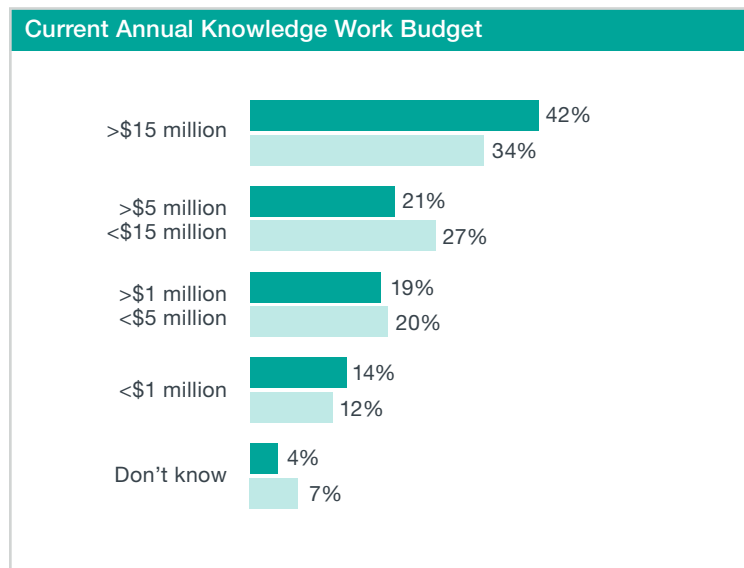
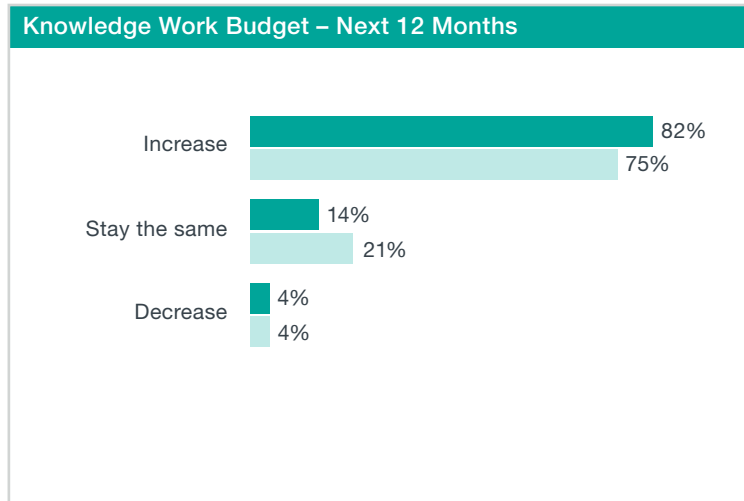
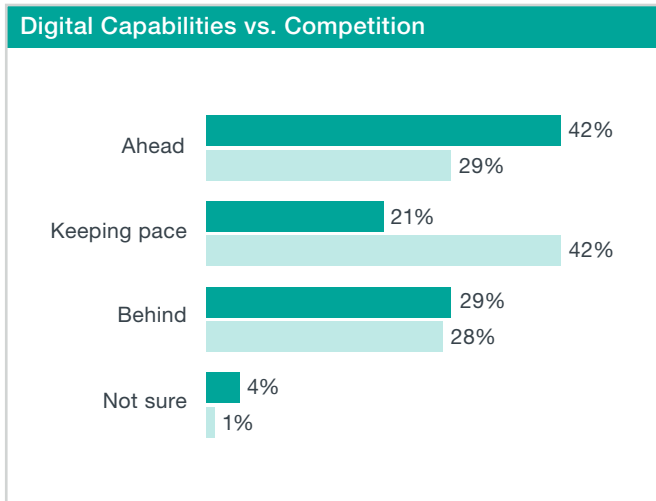
- The top 3 focus areas are: better managing risk (52%), meeting customers' changing expectations (49%), and delivering best-in-class customer experiences (38%).
- They also over-index on several other goals: meeting employees' expectations (41% vs. 36% overall), agility/speed to market (35% vs. 32%), and migrating to the cloud (32% vs. 29%).

Pioneers are knowledge work organizations first. Current and future success reflects their relentless commitment to facilitate, nurture, and reward knowledge work.

- 74% of Pioneers completely agree that investing in knowledge work is key to their KWO reaching its goals.
- 58% agree that knowledge work will be more important in the future compared to 43% global KWOs overall.
- They believe strongly that technology will be the primary enabler of their future success (71% vs. 44% of KWOs overall).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

## Knowledge Work Investment Strategy



## Key observations

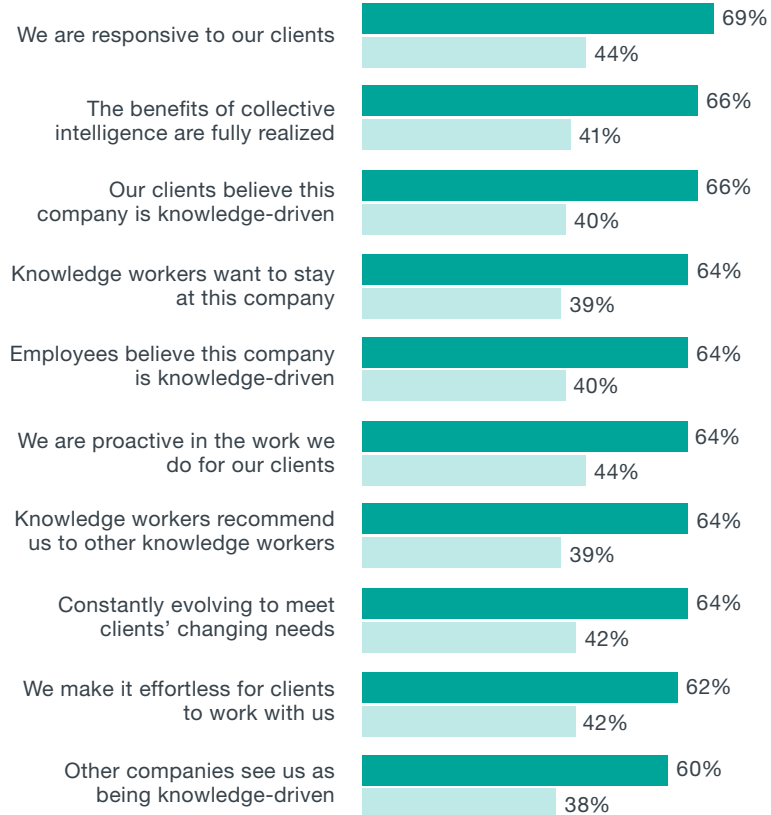
KWOs in the Pioneer phase of maturity have consistently invested in knowledge work as the foundation of their organization. They plan to increase investment as they continue to focus on growth and leadership.

- 42% invest more than \$15 million a year on knowledge work compared to 34% of global KWOs. 14% of Pioneers spend over \$30 million.
- 82% intend to increase their budgets for the next 12 months.
- They feel that they are on a leadership trajectory, with 42% stating that they are investing ahead of their competition (vs. 29% of global KWOs).

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization  
KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

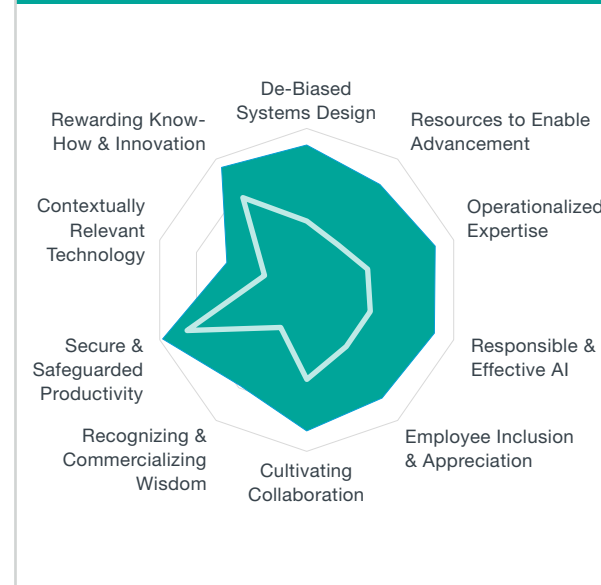
## The Outcomes of Current Knowledge Work Approach

### Strongly Agree: Experiencing Outcome



## Drivers of Knowledge Work Maturity

### Driver Performance vs. All KWOs



## Key observations

KWOs reaching the Pioneer phase are experiencing the benefits of historical investments and commitment to knowledge work. Recognized as leaders, they are reaping the benefits of collective intelligence and enjoying the organic growth and innovation it facilitates.

- 69% strongly agree that they are responsive to customers vs. 44% of KWOs overall.
- Two-thirds strongly believe that the benefits of collective intelligence are fully realized.
- 64% (vs. 39% of all KWOs) strongly agree that their knowledge workers want to stay with them and 64% of their employees believe that their KWO is fully knowledge-driven (vs. 40% of KWOs overall).

They nurture diversity and inclusion. Ethical behavior is valued, celebrated, and rewarded. Personal, career, and commercial success align as they commercialize collective intelligence.

- Three factors differentiate this maturity phase, and they are all cultural: De-Biased Systems Design (Index: 179 vs. average 85), Resources to Enable Advancement (Index: 161 vs. average 69), and Operationalized Expertise (Index: 147 vs. 58).
- Deploying Contextually Relevant Technology remains challenging, and they intend to continue to identify and deploy the next generation of knowledge work solutions that align with their culture.

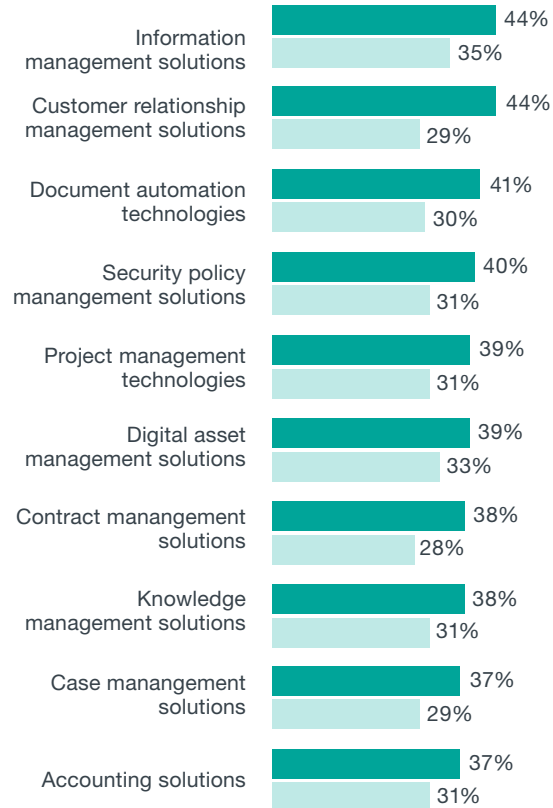
KWO = Knowledge Work Organization

KWI = Knowledge Work Industry



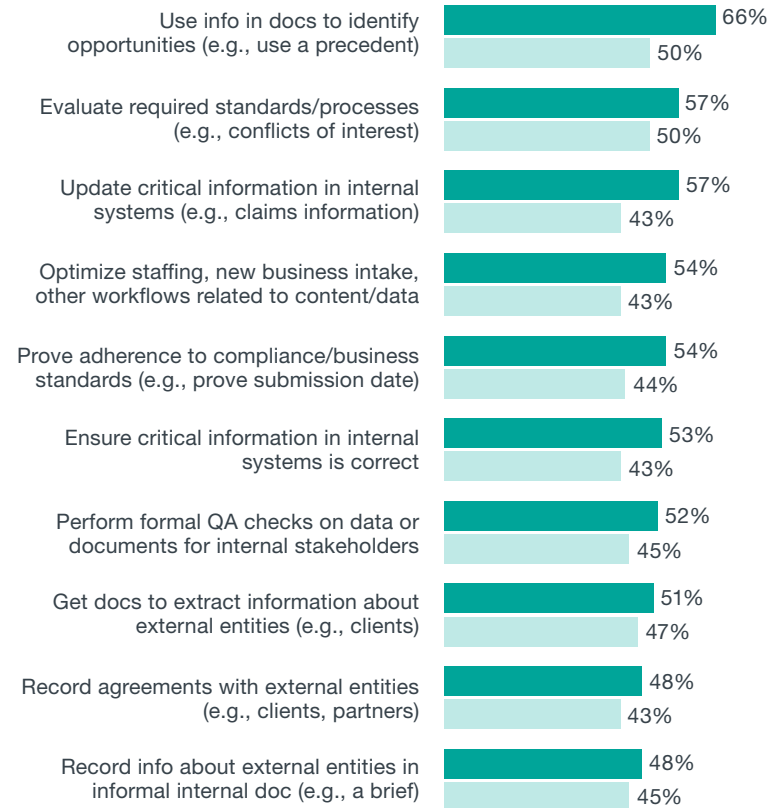
## Tools and Technology Used

### Top 10 Knowledge Work Tools Deployed



## Knowledge Work Undertaken

### Top 10 Types of Knowledge Work by Volume



## Key observations

KWOs in the Pioneer phase over-index on almost all knowledge work tools.

- Information Management Solutions (44% vs. only 35% of KWOs overall).
- CRM solutions (44% vs. 29% of all KWOs).
- It is also the first time that document automation technologies are prominent (41% vs. 30% overall).
- At this phase of maturity, KWOs have combined multiple technologies to build their own platform for knowledge work that is focused on collaboration, security, and promoting a culture of innovation.

KWOs at this stage engage in the most diverse types of knowledge work, over-indexing on almost the complete set of activities measured.

- Collective intelligence adds value and drives innovation. 66% use the information in documents to identify new opportunities for themselves and clients (vs. 50% overall).
- They rely on sharing knowledge and collaborating within documents to ensure their knowledge work is compliant and follows required procedures (57% vs. 50% of KWOs overall).
- They employ collaborative knowledge work best practices for both their internal tasks and delivery to clients.

KWO = Knowledge Work Organization

KWI = Knowledge Work Industry

# 08

## Benchmarking the knowledge work industry.

### Three things to remember from this chapter

1. Professional services firms are the most mature KWOs (index = 101).
2. The maturity sweet spot is the midmarket, where it's easier to be agile.
3. Business decision makers are not feeling the commercial benefits of their investment yet, but they can take heart that knowledge workers are feeling the benefits in their workday.

## Benchmarking maturity by role

We now know that the global knowledge index is 92. The index methodology allows us to benchmark KWOs based on their size and industry, but let's start with the three different roles we measured in the survey:

**Knowledge workers** directly create, use, analyze, interpret, share, or deliver services using their knowledge or expertise within a KWO.

**Business decision makers (BDMs)** significantly influence decisions related to technology used in knowledge work and primarily evaluate the commercial impact and outcomes of the solution for their KWO.

**Technical decision makers (TDMs)** are also key influencers in technology purchases but primarily evaluate technical capabilities and outcomes of the solution for their KWO.

FIGURE 11

### Knowledge Work Maturity Index: By role

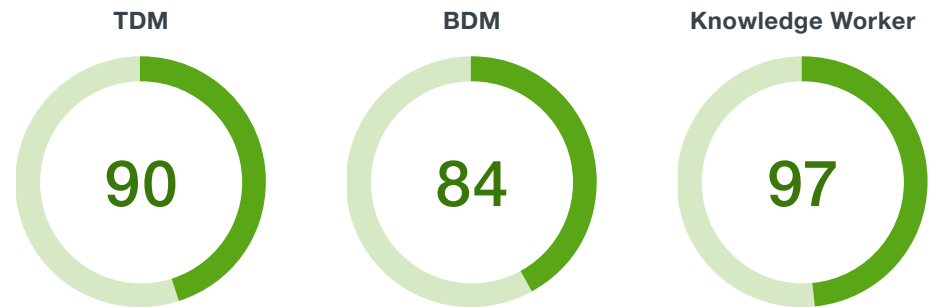


Figure 11 shows that knowledge workers are likely to assess their KWOs' maturity higher than either technical or business decision makers. Knowledge workers are the primary users of the tools and technologies that BDMs and TDMs are investing in and providing.

This implies that while knowledge workers believe that their KWOs are providing tools that allow them to do their job more effectively, BDMs are not getting the level of commercial return on investment they aspire to.

33% of BDMs believe that their current digital capabilities are behind the competition, compared to only 24% of knowledge workers and 28% of KWOs overall. BDMs believe that knowledge work will be more critical than ever before in securing a strong future for their organization. 55% of BDMs versus only 39% of knowledge workers and 43% of TDMs feel that knowledge work will play a substantially more important role than it did in the pre-COVID-19 world.

## Benchmarking maturity by size

Small knowledge work organizations (those with fewer than 250 employees) have the lowest Knowledge Work Maturity Index. This reflects their low knowledge work budgets, which average \$2.4 million a year compared to an average of \$13.8 million for the industry.

FIGURE 12

### Knowledge Work Maturity Index: By KWO size



Midmarket KWOs have the highest Knowledge Work Maturity Index score by size (99).

They are less definitive about the future role of knowledge work than enterprise KWOs. That is, only 39% think that the adoption of knowledge work technology will be extremely important for their future success, compared to 48% of enterprise KWOs. Only 40% of midmarket KWOs completely agree that investing in knowledge work will be critical to securing a strong future for their company, compared to 45% of enterprise KWOs.

So while they may be less committed to the concept of knowledge work, their existing investments have delivered significantly better returns than those made by enterprises. For example, midmarket KWOs are significantly more likely to be considered knowledge-driven by customers (43% vs. 37% of enterprises), and they are more likely to believe they are already fully realizing the benefits of collective intelligence (46% strongly agreeing vs. only 39% of enterprises and 17% of small KWOs).

## Benchmarking maturity for professional firms

While the average Knowledge Work Maturity Index for professional firms is the highest, they still benchmark at the Practitioner phase of maturity. Interestingly, asset management firms are the only type of firms that are benchmarked in the Established maturity stage, with tax firms close to transitioning to the next level of maturity (index of 117 against a threshold of 119).

FIGURE 13

### Knowledge Work Maturity Index: By firm type



Asset management firms' knowledge work maturity reflects a requirement to serve their clients in real time in a high-pressure, data-heavy, and highly regulated environment.

Asset management firms believe that investing in knowledge work technology is critical for their future. 53% agree that the adoption of technology to enable optimization and improvements in knowledge work will be extremely important to their firm in the next five years (compares to 44% for KWOs overall).

Tax firms' maturity level reflects their need to adapt their processes, procedures, and knowledge frequently. They work in a constantly evolving regulatory environment where tax treatment precedents change daily.

They prioritize driving employee collaboration (48% have this as one of their top three goals vs. only 38% of KWOs overall). They are also more likely to be focused on investing in building a culture that will allow them to stay ahead and deliver best-in-class customer experiences (48% vs. 38% of all KWOs).

Legal firms have an index of 95, and they typically aligned with the knowledge work industry average for all organizational and attitudinal factors.

Notable differences include that legal firms are more likely to believe that they are behind their competition in terms of digital capabilities supporting knowledge work (37% vs. 28% of all KWOs). They are also more likely to believe that they are underinvested in knowledge work right now (33% vs. 28% of all KWOs). In recognition of this, they are ready to invest more in the future. 20% compared to 17% of all KWOs say they will increase their annual knowledge work technology budget by 10% or more in the next 12 months.

In terms of the 10 drivers of knowledge work maturity, the legal industry is relatively strong in Secure and Safeguarded Productivity and Rewarding Know-How and Innovation, but as an industry, it is in the early stages of the Practitioner phase. This means the additional planned technology investment needs to be primarily focused on enhancing collaboration to drive the overall legal industry's maturity further.

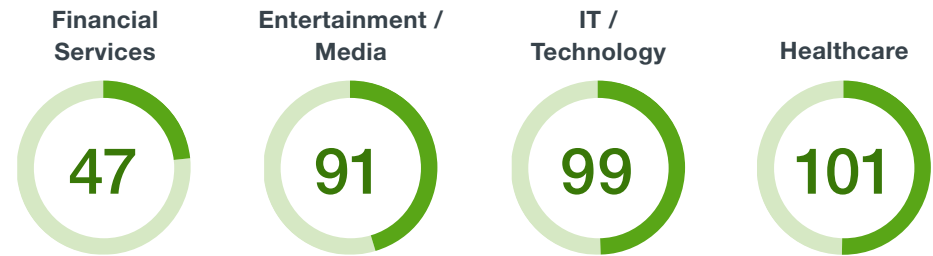
Accounting firms are the least mature and have shown the lowest-level use of tools specifically for formal knowledge management. They are dependent on traditional accounting software and document management solutions to deliver their core work.

## Benchmarking maturity by vertical

The financial services industry has a low Knowledge Work Maturity Index score, sitting in the Seeker phase on the Knowledge Work Maturity Model™.

FIGURE 14

### Knowledge Work Maturity Index: By corporate vertical



These KWOs are investing in line with industry levels, and they feel that they are ahead of their competitors with their existing digital capabilities. In addition, they have invested in a full range of knowledge management tools, yet they are not getting significant levels of ROI.

They under-index on being recognized as knowledge-driven by both employees (35% vs. 40% of all KWOs) and customers (37% vs. 40%). They are not fully realizing the benefits of collective intelligence (36% vs. 41% of the overall KWOs), and as a result they are not delivering good customer experiences.

Only 38% of financial service KWOs strongly agree that they make it effortless for customers to work with them, compared to the 42% of all KWOs and 47% of KWOs in the legal vertical.

This suggests that they have potentially invested in technology ahead of readiness, because 17% of work is still siloed compared to 13% of KWOs overall.

## Benchmarking maturity of departments within corporate KWOs

Corporates are less mature than professional firms and the knowledge work industry as a whole. They have a score of 90, lower than both the industry average of 92 and the professional firm score of 101. Despite difference in scores, all three benchmarks remain in the Practitioner phase of maturity.

Legal and tax departments within corporates have the highest maturity index but remain Practitioners (100 and 101 index scores, respectively).

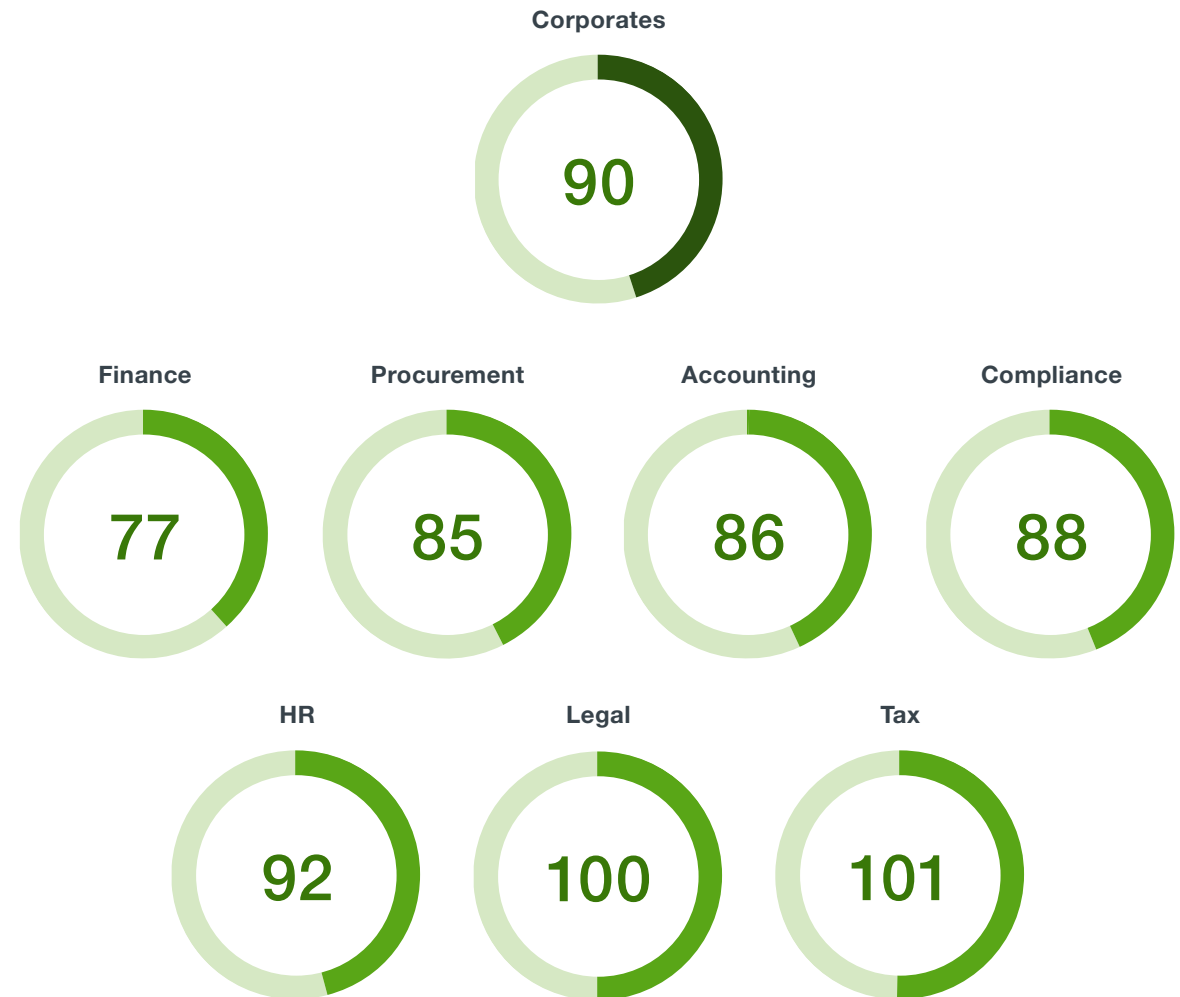
Corporate legal departments take their lead from professional firms. Many lawyers that move from a professional firm into the corporate world bring best practices and tools to their new roles.

While corporate departments like finance and accounting may have to use generic tools to assist with document and information management, legal departments are more likely to have specialist vertical tools in place. For example, 34% have a solution for legal document management, and only 25% have to rely on a generic solution for document management, significantly lower than KWOs overall at 35%.

The profile of tax departments is interesting. They are using a relatively advanced set of tools to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. They are more likely to have a solution for legal document management than legal departments (37% vs. 33% of legal departments). They also over-index on collaboration technologies (33% vs. 30% of KWO overall), matter management (28% vs. 24% overall), and e-discovery solutions (29% vs. 22% of all KWOs). They are behaving more like lawyers than their legal teams.

Finance departments have the lowest level of maturity, indexing at the Seeker phase. They rely on traditional line-of-business tools such as accounting software and spreadsheets to support their knowledge work activities (38% vs. 30% of the sample as a whole).

FIGURE 15  
Knowledge Work Maturity Index: By corporate department



# 09

## Final thoughts: Start your next, now.

---

Throughout the report, we've demonstrated that the global economy and the knowledge work economy are at a tipping point.

If knowledge is the future means of production for the global economy, the future of work is knowledge work.

Regardless of the industry that you work in, understanding how to attract, retain, value, and motivate knowledge workers should be your primary focus.

It's important that your process, technology, and culture all advance together.

Maturity comes with strong foundations in tools and processes, but the true benefits of collective intelligence will only be realized if you commit to creating a working environment where employees and customers thrive. Only when that's happening, can you truly take advantage of the tipping point.

Look to the emerging markets. They have a fresh perspective that's culture-first. It's easier to invest in technology than it is to build culture, but it's imperative that you start now.

We're in a perfect time for knowledge work innovation.

**Carpe diem. Carpe scientiam.**