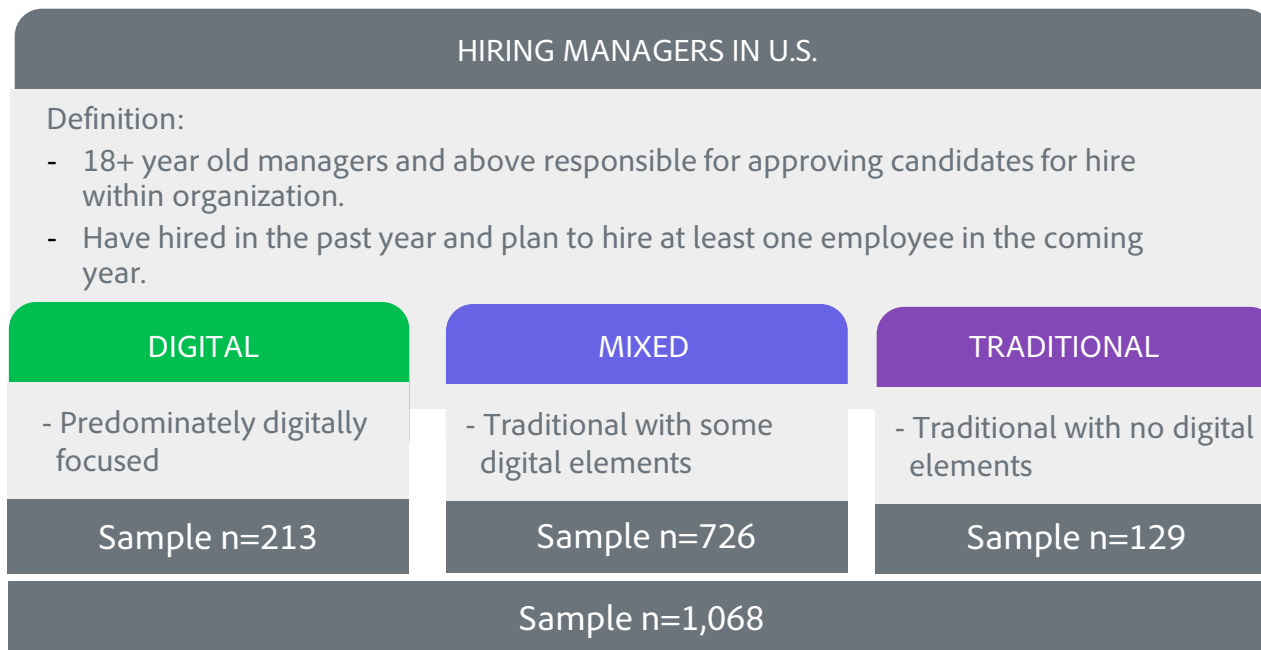# Seeking Creative Candidates:
Hiring for the Future

New insight into hiring managers' attitudes and beliefs about the skills required for success in the workplace of tomorrow

September 2014

Adobe

Methodology

- Online survey among 1,068 U.S. hiring managers
- Data collected July 21- August 1, 2014
- Margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the sample is +/- 2.9%

HIRING MANAGERS IN U.S.		
Definition: - 18+ year old managers and above responsible for approving candidates for hire within organization. - Have hired in the past year and plan to hire at least one employee in the coming year.		
DIGITAL	**MIXED**	**TRADITIONAL**
- Predominately digitally focused	- Traditional with some digital elements	- Traditional with no digital elements
Sample n=213	Sample n=726	Sample n=129
Sample n=1,068		

Audience Profiling

DIGITAL

- Predominately digitally focused

40 year old managers

Larger companies (500+)

YOUNG companies (6-10 y.o.)

Higher revenue (250 mil+)

Technology, business/professional services

MIXED

- Traditional with some digital elements

48 year old managers

Wide range of company size

MID AGE companies (20-30 y.o)

Mid-range revenue

Business/professional and Financial services

TRADITIONAL

- Traditional with no digital elements

53 year old managers

Smaller companies (<500)

OLDER companies (over 30 y.o.)

Lower revenue (50 mil)

Manufacturing, Production, Healthcare, Non-Profit

TOP FINDINGS

Summary: Top Findings

1. Seventy-eight percent of hiring managers believe creativity is required for economic growth and valuable to society (85%), but only 51% think businesses grasp the importance of creativity.

2. Problem solving (51%) and creativity (47%) have gained the most value in driving salary increases in the last five years.

3. Seventy-five percent of hiring managers agree the job market will change significantly in the next five years. Tech-savvy (88%), the ability to communicate through digital and visual media (82%) and creativity (76%) are cited as becoming essential skills.

4. Hiring managers indicate that problem solving skills and critical thinking (58%) and creativity and innovation (41%) will be among the most "in-demand" skills over the next 12 months, along with technical/specialist skills (45%).

5. 94 percent agree creativity is key when evaluating candidates and prefer those with creative skills over conventional skills by more than 5 to 1.
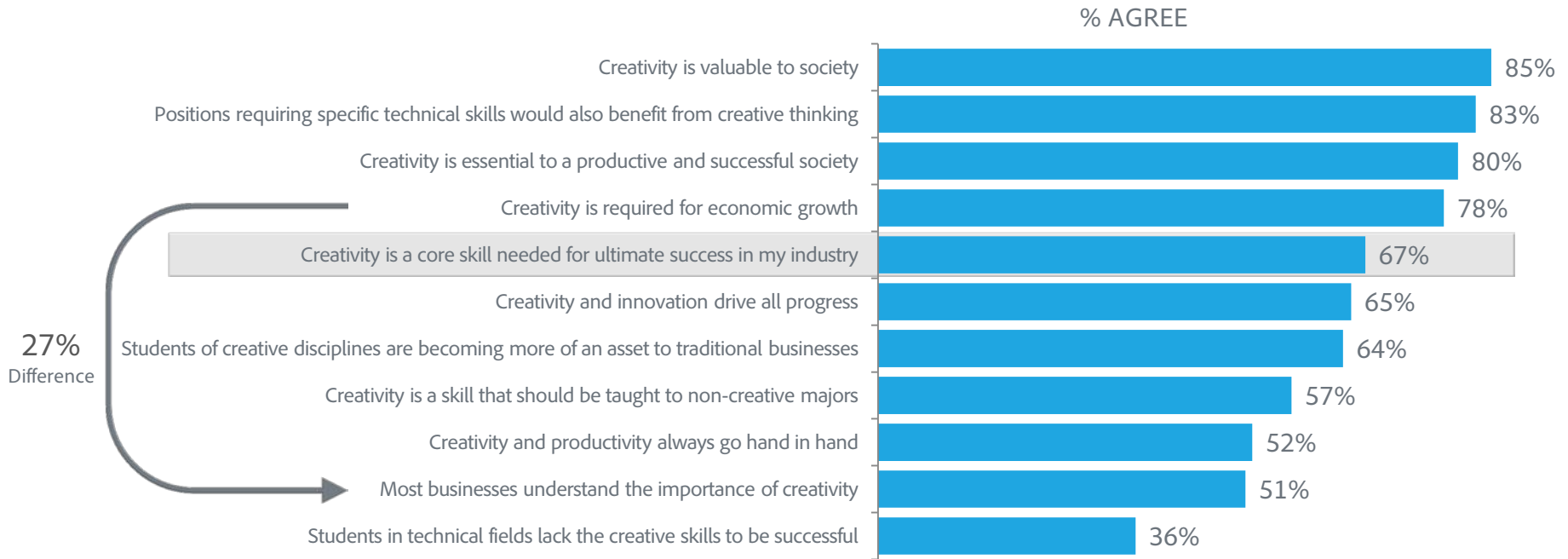
Summary: Top Findings

6. Eighty-two percent of hiring managers say they seek well-rounded candidates who are able to creatively apply core skills to a range of business and technical problems.

7. Seven in 10 hiring managers agree that students are unprepared and lack the necessary skills for success.

8. Hiring managers note that students and recent graduates can set themselves apart by developing a broad range of skills (60%) and increasing their focus on creative thinking – learning what makes their creative wheels turn (47%), understanding that innovation and creativity can be learned (35%) and recognizing that thinking creatively will take them further than technical expertise (35%).

9. Hiring managers agree that preparing students for the future requires a more modern approach, including courses and training opportunities to prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow (54%), rewarding innovation and creativity in education and on the job (38%) and requiring technical majors take courses in creative disciplines (33%).

HIRING MANAGERS TURN
FOCUS TO CREATIVITY

Hiring managers see creativity as important to society and the economy, but only half of businesses grasp its importance

% AGREE

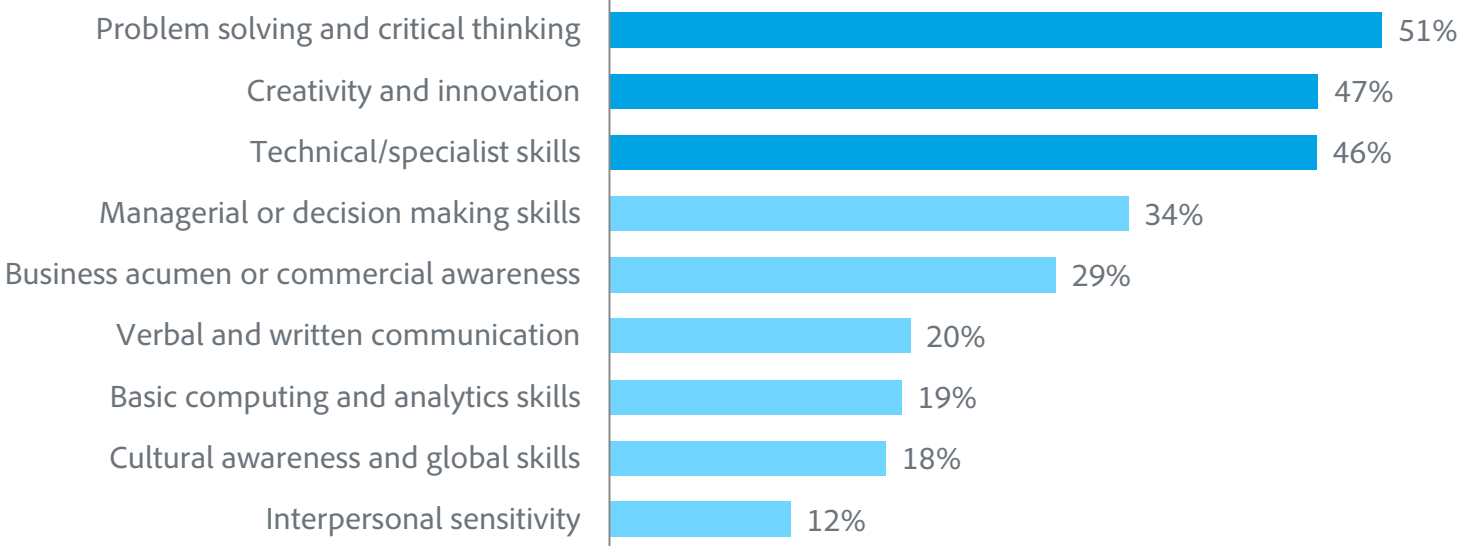| Statement	%
Creativity is valuable to society	85%
Positions requiring specific technical skills would also benefit from creative thinking	83%
Creativity is essential to a productive and successful society	80%
Creativity is required for economic growth	78%
Creativity is a core skill needed for ultimate success in my industry	67%
Creativity and innovation drive all progress	65%
Students of creative disciplines are becoming more of an asset to traditional businesses	64%
Creativity is a skill that should be taught to non-creative majors	57%
Creativity and productivity always go hand in hand	52%
Most businesses understand the importance of creativity	51%
Students in technical fields lack the creative skills to be successful	36%

27%
Difference

Q30. Below are some statements that may or may not reflect how you personally feel about the value of creativity in your business. Please indicate how much you either agree or disagree with each statement.; n=1068
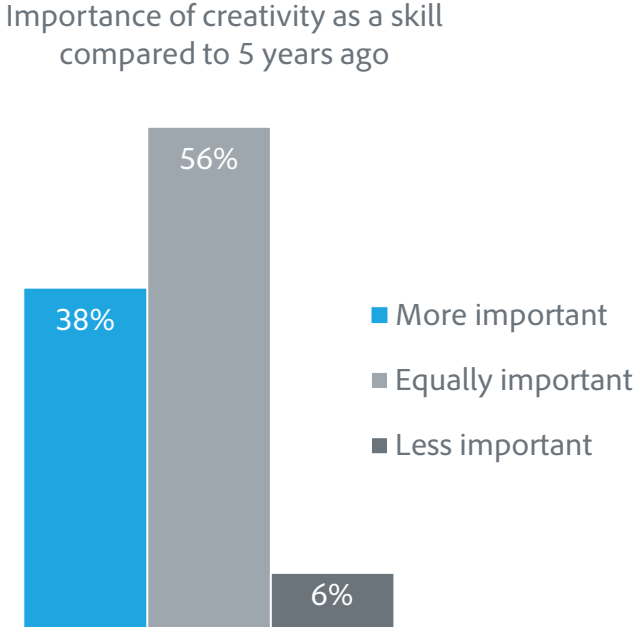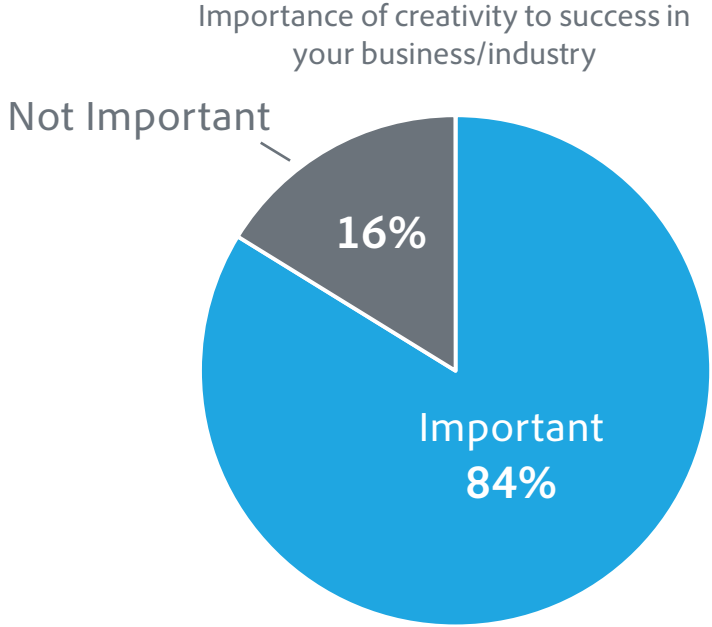
Problem solving and creativity have gained the most value in driving salary increases in the last five years

WHICH OF THE SKILLS GAINED MOST VALUE IN TERMS OF AVERAGE SALARY INCREASES IN PAST FIVE YEARS?

Skill	Percentage
Problem solving and critical thinking	51%
Creativity and innovation	47%
Technical/specialist skills	46%
Managerial or decision making skills	34%
Business acumen or commercial awareness	29%
Verbal and written communication	20%
Basic computing and analytics skills	19%
Cultural awareness and global skills	18%
Interpersonal sensitivity	12%

Q8. And which of the skills below in your opinion have gained the most value in terms of salary increases in the last 5 years? Select up to 3 skills. n=1,068
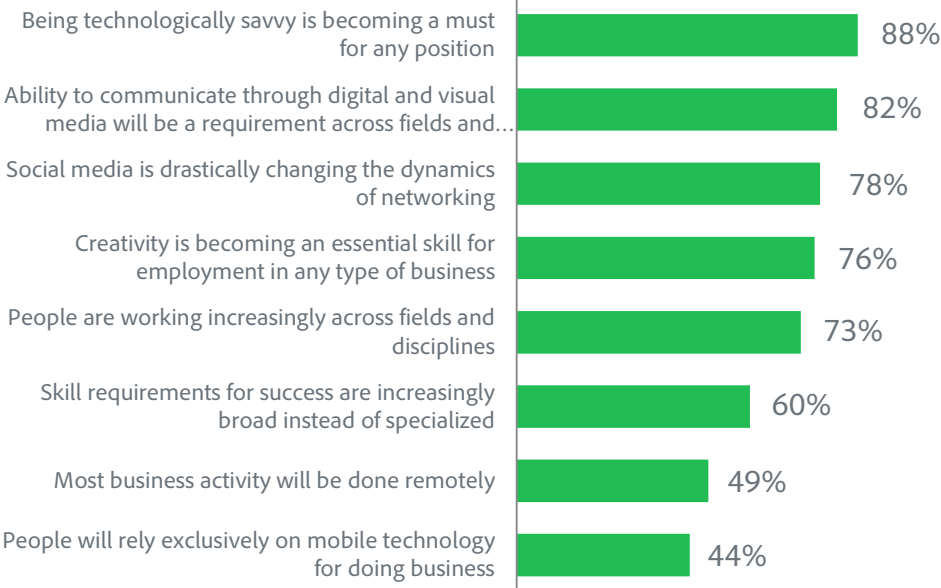
More than 8 in 10 hiring managers view creativity as important to success

Importance of creativity to success in your business/industry

Not Important

16%

Important
84%

Importance of creativity as a skill compared to 5 years ago

56%

38%

6%

- More important
- Equally important
- Less important

Q28. Do you feel creativity is more important today as a skill than it was 5 years ago? n=1068
Q26. How important is creativity to ultimate success in your company or industry? n=1068
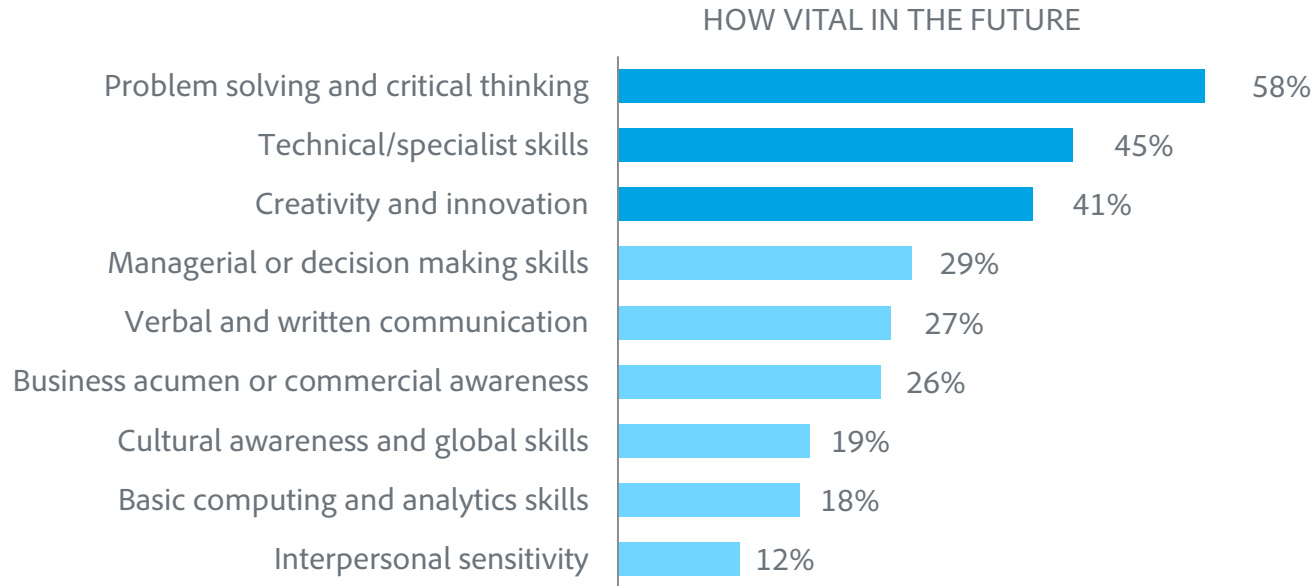
Expectations increasing for candidates to be tech-savvy, digitally-sophisticated and creative

25%
No

HOW MUCH DO YOU EXPECT IT TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

75%
Yes

Being technologically savvy is becoming a must for any position	88%
Ability to communicate through digital and visual media will be a requirement across fields and...	82%
Social media is drastically changing the dynamics of networking	78%
Creativity is becoming an essential skill for employment in any type of business	76%
People are working increasingly across fields and disciplines	73%
Skill requirements for success are increasingly broad instead of specialized	60%
Most business activity will be done remotely	49%
People will rely exclusively on mobile technology for doing business	44%

Q2. How much do you expect the US job market to change in the next 5 years? (0-5 is NO CHANGE; 6-10 is CHANGE). n=1,068
Q4. What do you believe will be most significantly different about the job market in the years to come? (% AGREE). n=1,068
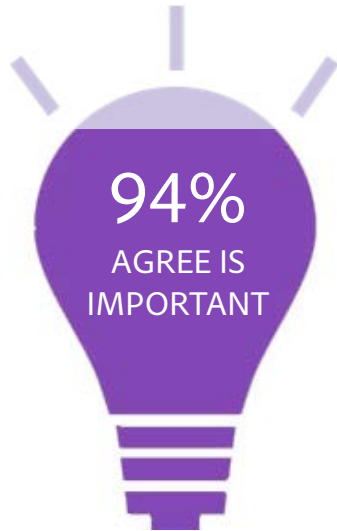
Problem solving and critical thinking, creativity and innovation and technical/specialist skills will be most "in-demand" over the next 12 months

HOW VITAL IN THE FUTURE

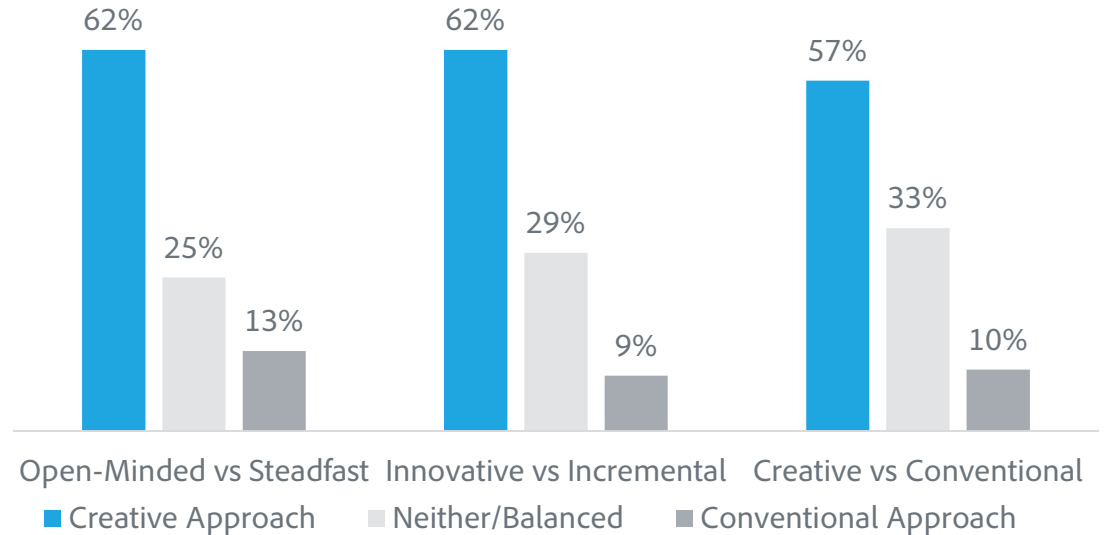| Skill	Percentage
Problem solving and critical thinking	58%
Technical/specialist skills	45%
Creativity and innovation	41%
Managerial or decision making skills	29%
Verbal and written communication	27%
Business acumen or commercial awareness	26%
Cultural awareness and global skills	19%
Basic computing and analytics skills	18%
Interpersonal sensitivity	12%

Q10. Which of the skills and qualities below do you think will be most 'in-demand' over the next 12 months? Select up to 3 skills. n=1,068

Creativity is an important hiring consideration; creative applicants preferred over conventional by more than 5 to 1

IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY WHEN CONSIDERING A JOB CANDIDATE

94%
AGREE IS IMPORTANT

TRAITS BEST DESCRIBING IDEAL CANDIDATE FOR HIRE

	Open-Minded vs Steadfast	Innovative vs Incremental	Creative vs Conventional
Creative Approach	62%	62%	57%
Neither/Balanced	25%	29%	33%
Conventional Approach	13%	9%	10%

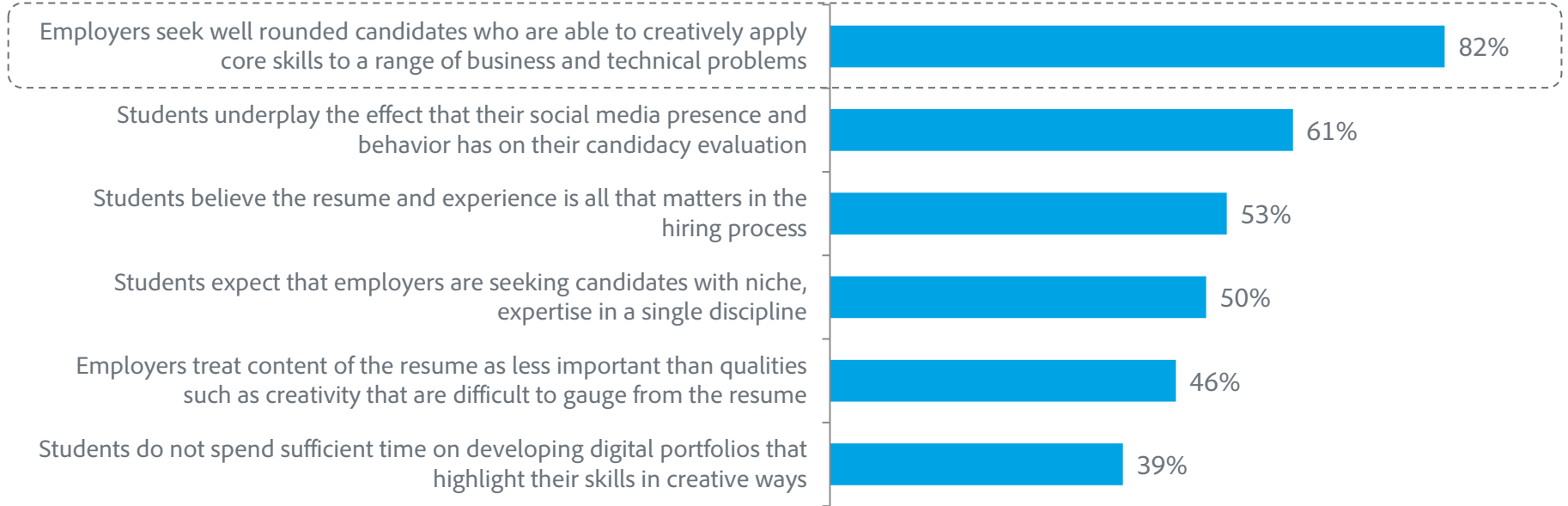■ Creative Approach   ■ Neither/Balanced   ■ Conventional Approach

Q13. From the perspective of a hiring decision-maker, how important are each of the following to you when considering a candidate for a job? Top 3 Box n=1,068
Q15. For each of the personality traits below, select the option that best describes the ideal candidate for hire. n=1068

Well-rounded applicants with creative skills are in high demand

% AGREE WITH HIRING STATEMENTS

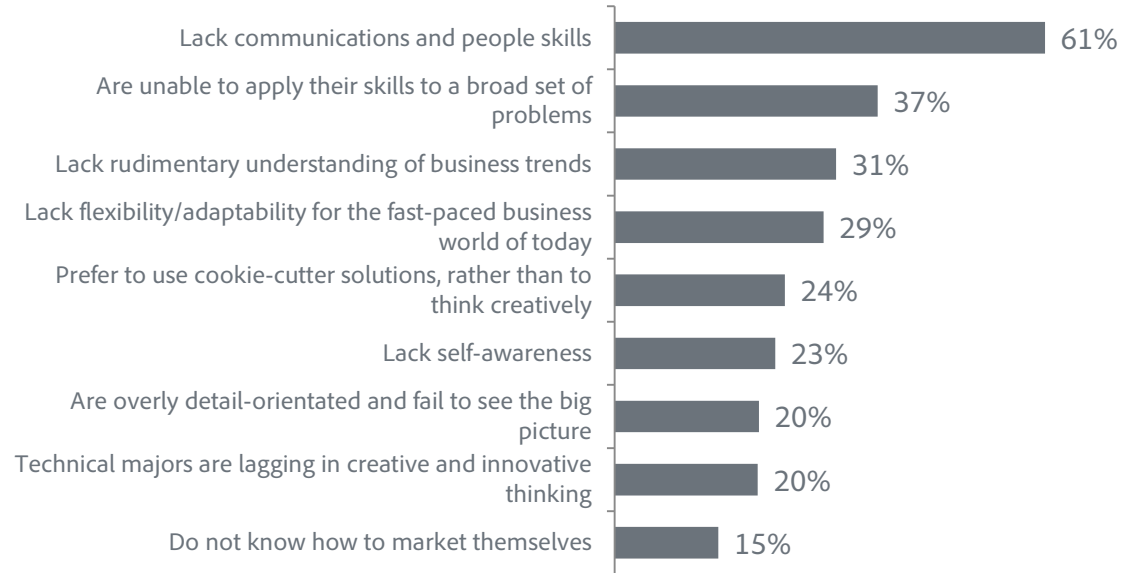| Statement	%
Employers seek well rounded candidates who are able to creatively apply core skills to a range of business and technical problems	82%
Students underplay the effect that their social media presence and behavior has on their candidacy evaluation	61%
Students believe the resume and experience is all that matters in the hiring process	53%
Students expect that employers are seeking candidates with niche, expertise in a single discipline	50%
Employers treat content of the resume as less important than qualities such as creativity that are difficult to gauge from the resume	46%
Students do not spend sufficient time on developing digital portfolios that highlight their skills in creative ways	39%

Q35. How does your understanding of skills needed for success compare to that of recent graduates? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements; n=1068

Seven in 10 hiring managers say students are not ready for success in the workplace of tomorrow

STUDENTS TODAY

31% Well prepared; have skills needed for success

69% Underprepared; lack necessary skills for success

WHY UNDERPREPARED? GRADUATES OF TODAY...

Lack communications and people skills	61%
Are unable to apply their skills to a broad set of problems	37%
Lack rudimentary understanding of business trends	31%
Lack flexibility/adaptability for the fast-paced business world of today	29%
Prefer to use cookie-cutter solutions, rather than to think creatively	24%
Lack self-awareness	23%
Are overly detail-orientated and fail to see the big picture	20%
Technical majors are lagging in creative and innovative thinking	20%
Do not know how to market themselves	15%

Q31. Do you feel students of today are well prepared for the workforce of tomorrow?; n=1068
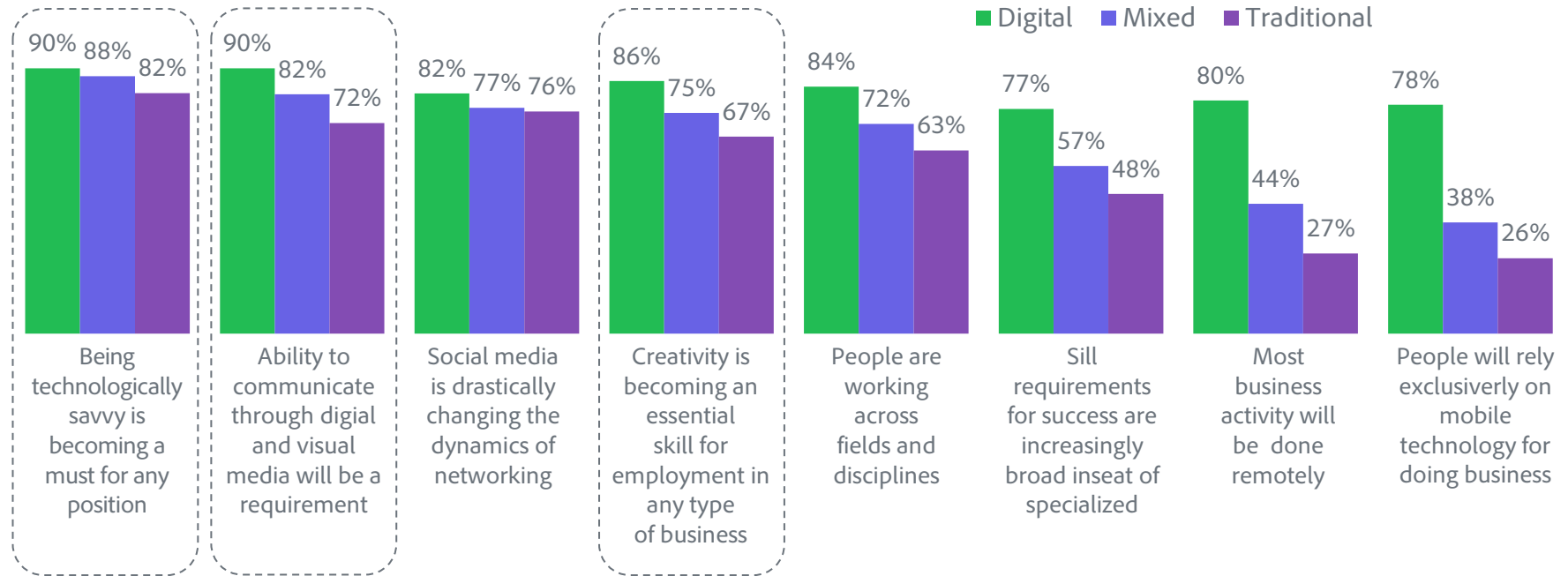
Q32. (If underprepared) What are your top negative perceptions of students who are underprepared for success in their future profession? Please select up to 3; n=733

BROADENING SKILL SET AND CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING VITAL FOR SUCCESS

Creativity and skill versatility to play a bigger role in the future workplace

Legend: **Digital** **Mixed** **Traditional**

Category	Digital	Mixed	Traditional
Being technologically savvy is becoming a must for any position	90%	88%	82%
Ability to communicate through digial and visual media will be a requirement	90%	82%	72%
Social media is drastically changing the dynamics of networking	82%	77%	76%
Creativity is becoming an essential skill for employment in any type of business	86%	75%	67%
People are working across fields and disciplines	84%	72%	63%
Sill requirements for success are increasingly broad inseat of specialized	77%	57%	48%
Most business activity will be done remotely	80%	44%	27%
People will rely excluserivly on mobile technology for doing business	78%	38%	26%

Q4. What do you believe will be most significantly different about the job market in the years to come? (% AGREE). n=1,068

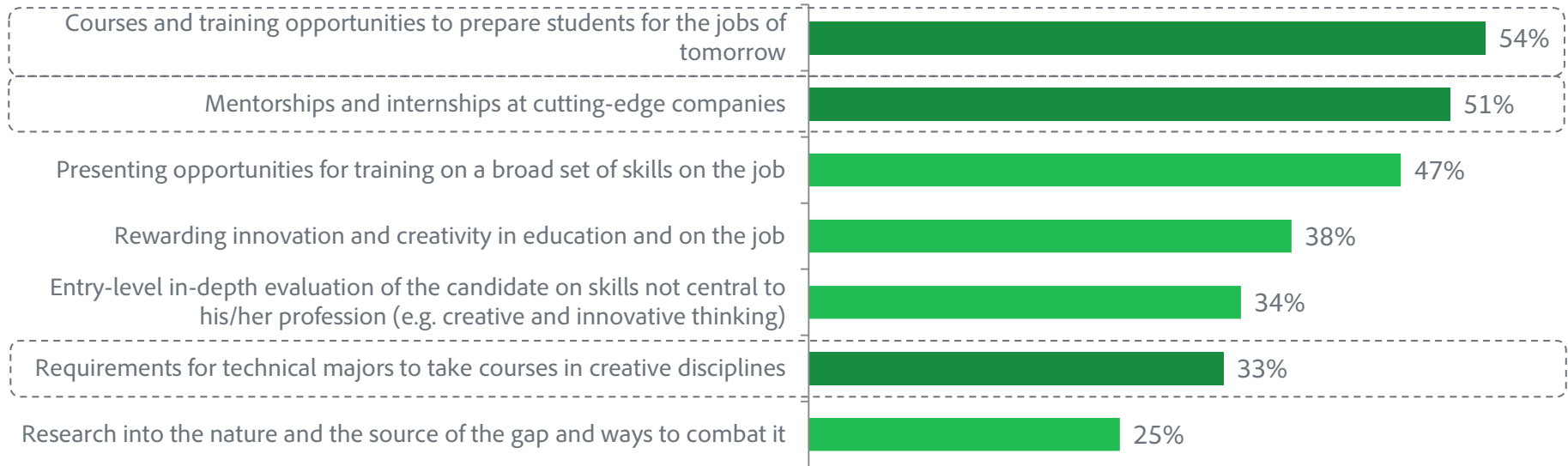# Students should develop wide range of skills and focus on creativity to set themselves apart

CAREER ADVICE TO STUDENTS OR RECENT GRADS

60%
Concentrate on developing a range of skills instead of a single skill or discipline

47%
Learn what makes your creative wheels turn and use it to set yourself apart in any environment

35%
Innovation and creativity are skills you can learn

35%
Learning to think creatively will take you further than any technical expertise

33%
Social media can make or break you, so learn to use it wisely

30%
Concentrate on your personal way of being creative, productivity will follow

Q38. What advice would you give to students and recent graduates that you wish someone would have given you at the start of your career? n=1,068

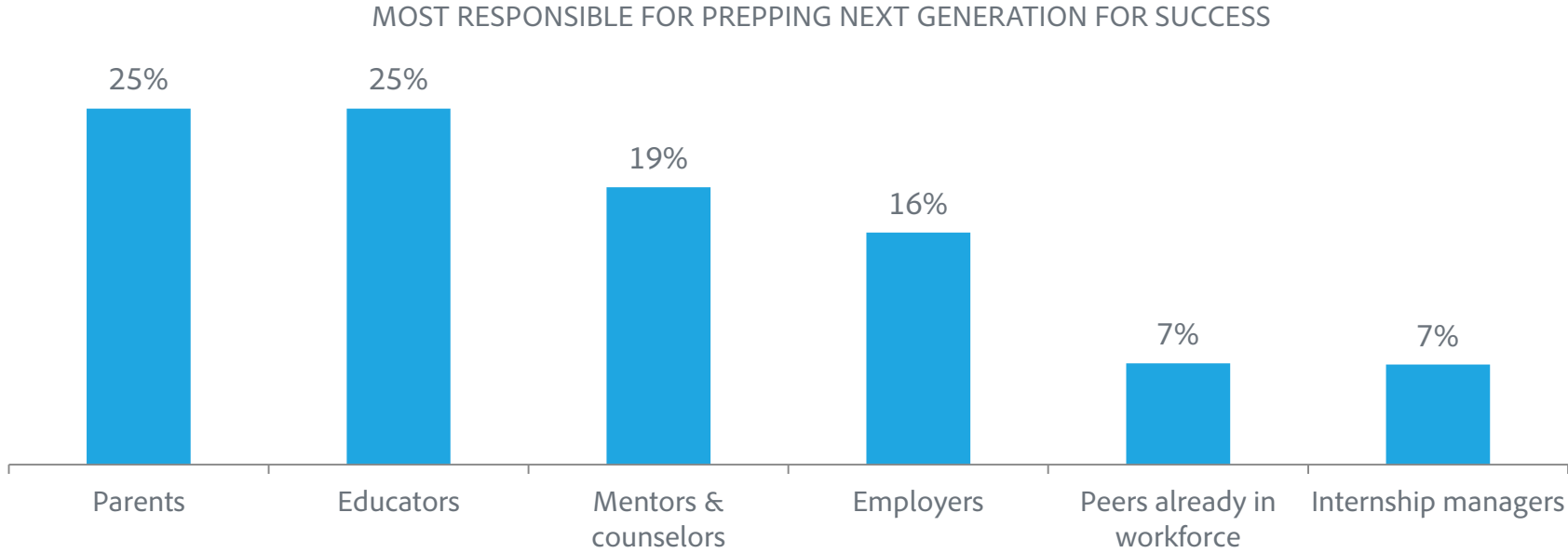# Modern approach needed to help students prepare for success

HOW TO INCREASE PREPAREDNESS

Category	Percentage
Courses and training opportunities to prepare students for the jobs of tomorrow	54%
Mentorships and internships at cutting-edge companies	51%
Presenting opportunities for training on a broad set of skills on the job	47%
Rewarding innovation and creativity in education and on the job	38%
Entry-level in-depth evaluation of the candidate on skills not central to his/her profession (e.g. creative and innovative thinking)	34%
Requirements for technical majors to take courses in creative disciplines	33%
Research into the nature and the source of the gap and ways to combat it	25%

Q36. What do you think can be done to help identify and close the gap between candidate's preparedness and job success requirements? Select as many as apply; n=1068

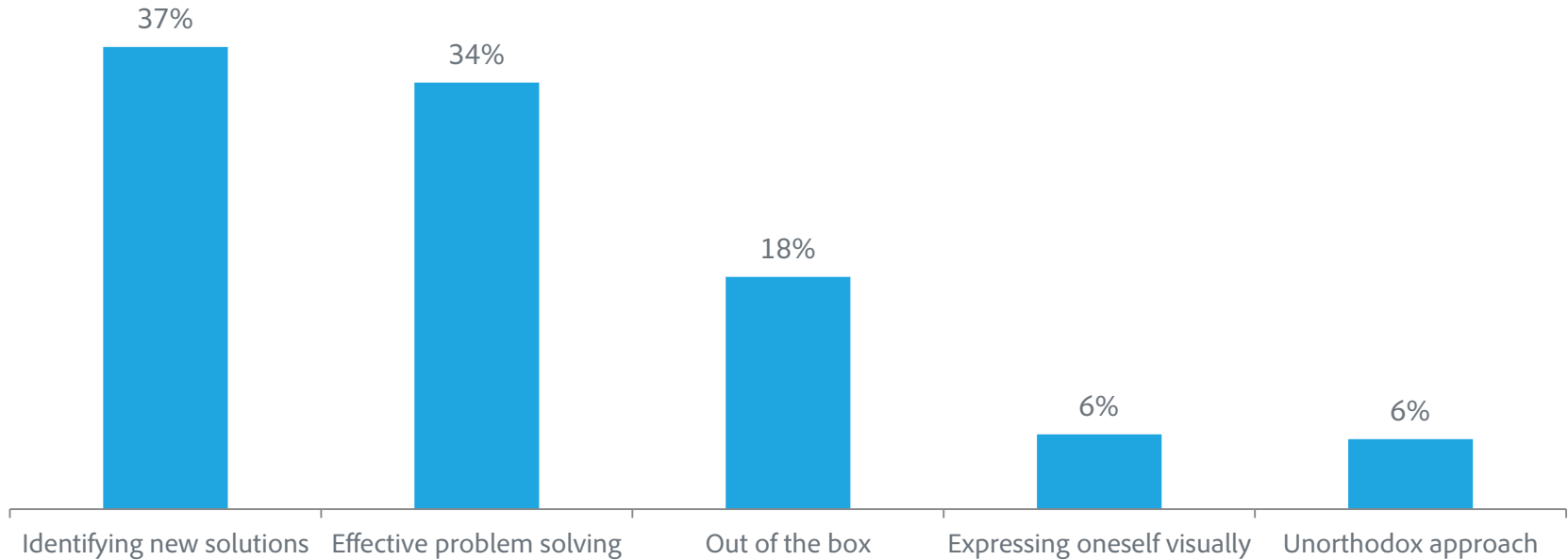# Educators, mentors & counselors and employers key to helping prepare candidates for success

MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPPING NEXT GENERATION FOR SUCCESS

25%	25%	19%	16%	7%	7%
Parents	Educators	Mentors & counselors	Employers	Peers already in workforce	Internship managers

Q34. Who do you think is most responsible for preparing the next generation of employees for long-term success? Please select one answer.; n=1068

APPENDIX

Defining Creativity

37% — Identifying new solutions
34% — Effective problem solving
18% — Out of the box
6% — Expressing oneself visually
6% — Unorthodox approach
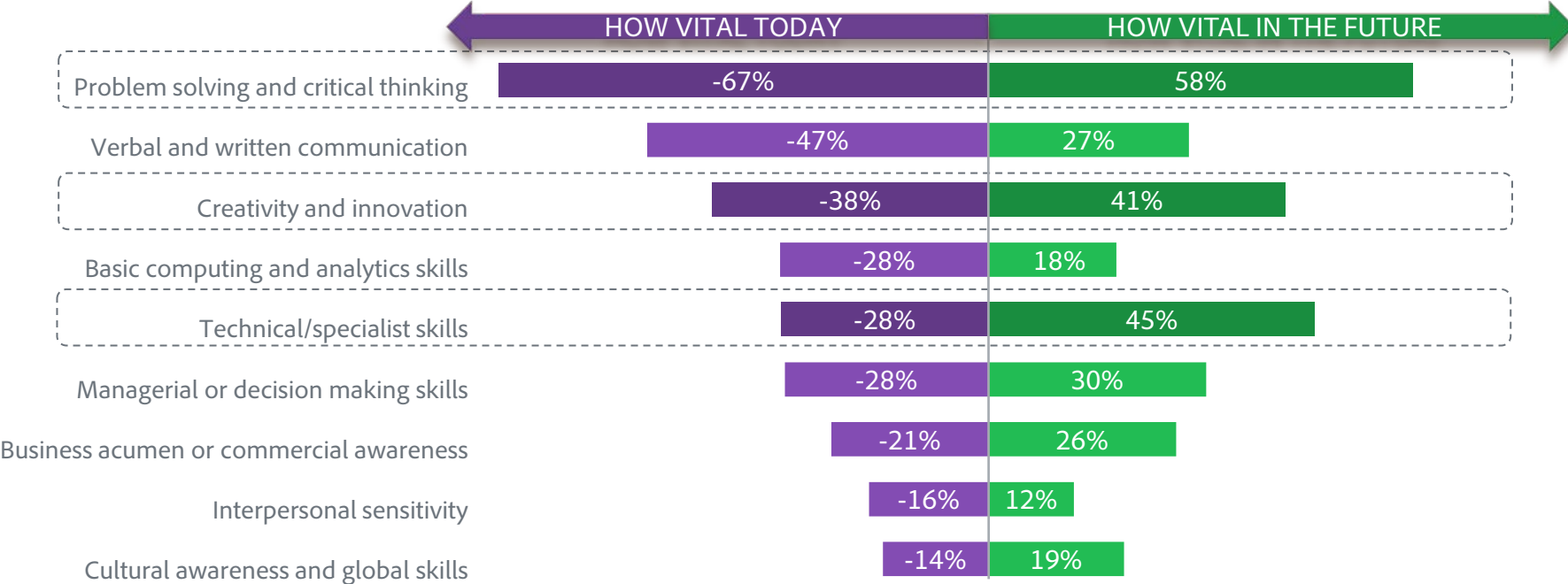
Q25. We have asked a number of questions about creativity and creative thinking or skills. Which of the following phrases best fits your own definition of "creative thinking"?; n=1068

Along with critical thinking and technical skills, creativity expected to become more vital in the future
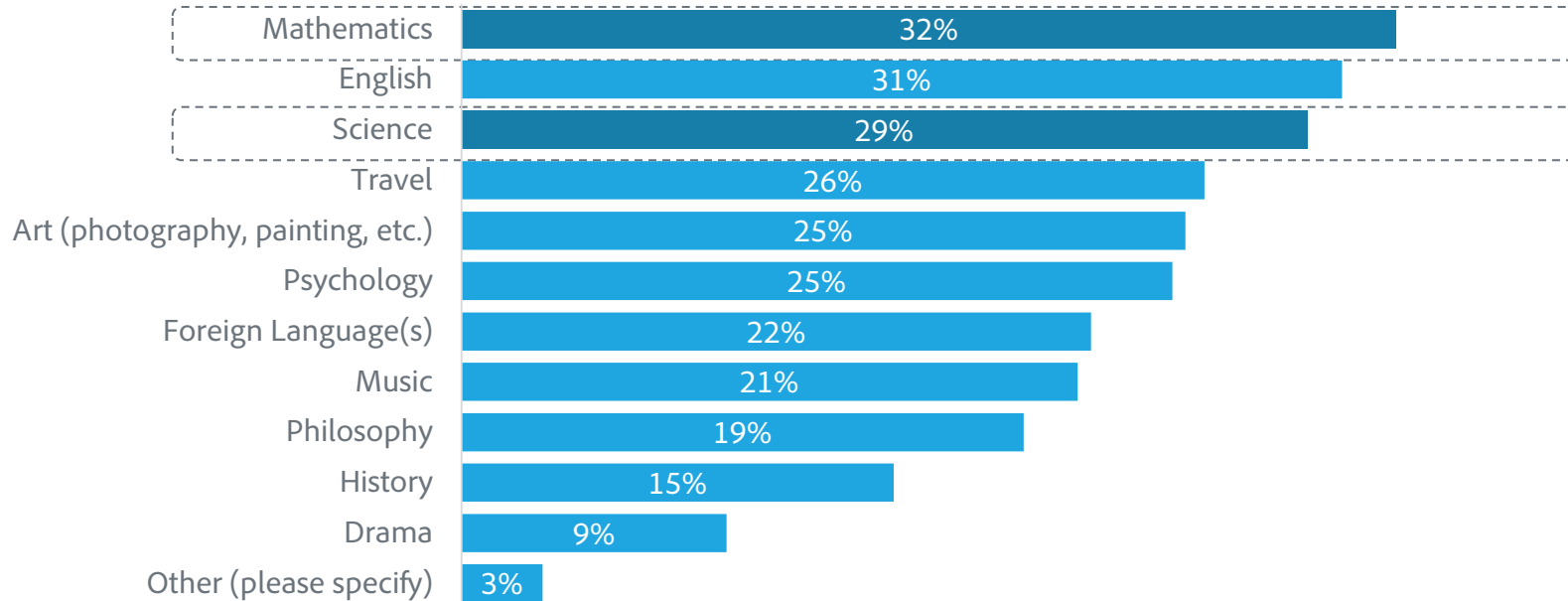
	HOW VITAL TODAY	HOW VITAL IN THE FUTURE
Problem solving and critical thinking	-67%	58%
Verbal and written communication	-47%	27%
Creativity and innovation	-38%	41%
Basic computing and analytics skills	-28%	18%
Technical/specialist skills	-28%	45%
Managerial or decision making skills	-28%	30%
Business acumen or commercial awareness	-21%	26%
Interpersonal sensitivity	-16%	12%
Cultural awareness and global skills	-14%	19%

Q7. Which of the skills below do you think are vital for success in today's job market? Please select up to 3 most vital skills. Select up to 3 skills. n=1,068

Q10. Which of the skills and qualities below do you think will be most 'in-demand' over the next 12 months? Select up to 3 skills. n=1,068

Math and science among top fields viewed as complementary to creativity

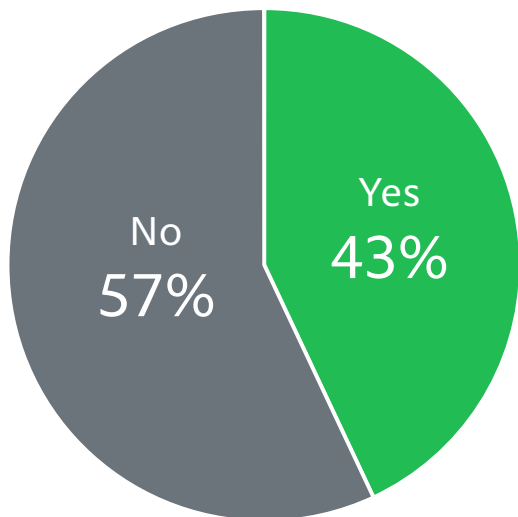## FIELDS COMPLIMENTARY TO CREATIVE THINKING ON THE JOB

Field	%
Mathematics	32%
English	31%
Science	29%
Travel	26%
Art (photography, painting, etc.)	25%
Psychology	25%
Foreign Language(s)	22%
Music	21%
Philosophy	19%
History	15%
Drama	9%
Other (please specify)	3%

Q18. Considering your employees, which of the following interests or fields of study do you view as complementary to creative thinking on the job? % of n=1,068
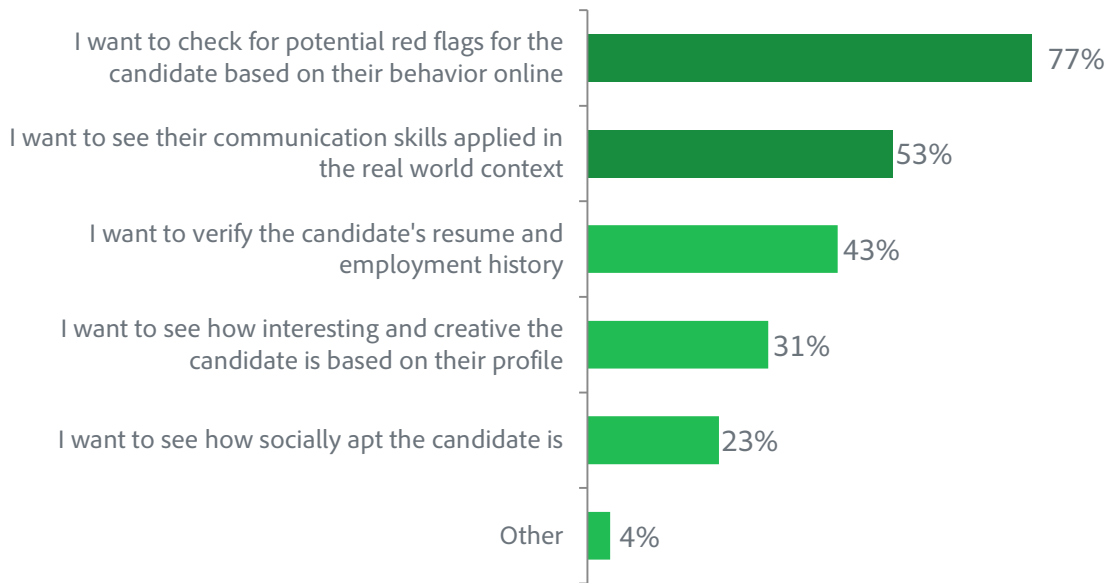
Nearly half of hiring managers use social media to research applicants, primarily for red flags and to better understand communication skills
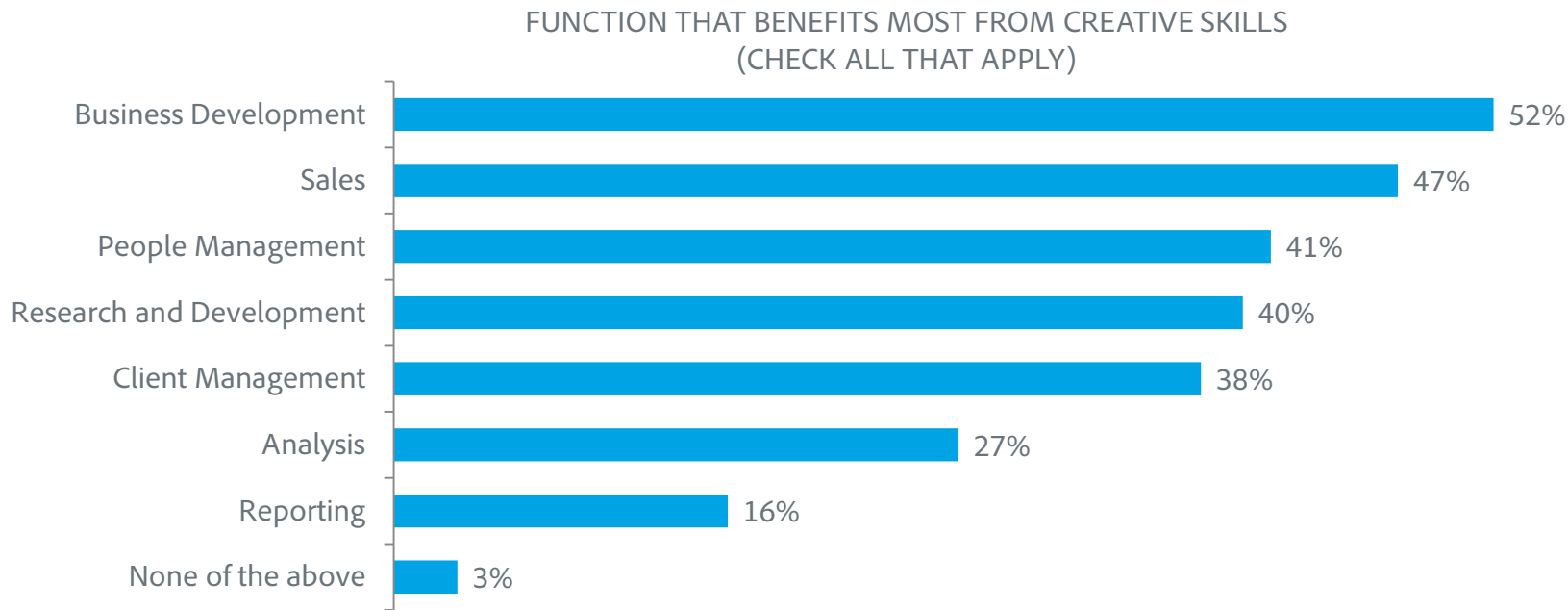
LOOK UP APPLICANTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

No 57%

Yes 43%

WHY RESEARCH USING SOCIAL MEDIA (TOP 3)

I want to check for potential red flags for the candidate based on their behavior online	77%
I want to see their communication skills applied in the real world context	53%
I want to verify the candidate's resume and employment history	43%
I want to see how interesting and creative the candidate is based on their profile	31%
I want to see how socially apt the candidate is	23%
Other	4%

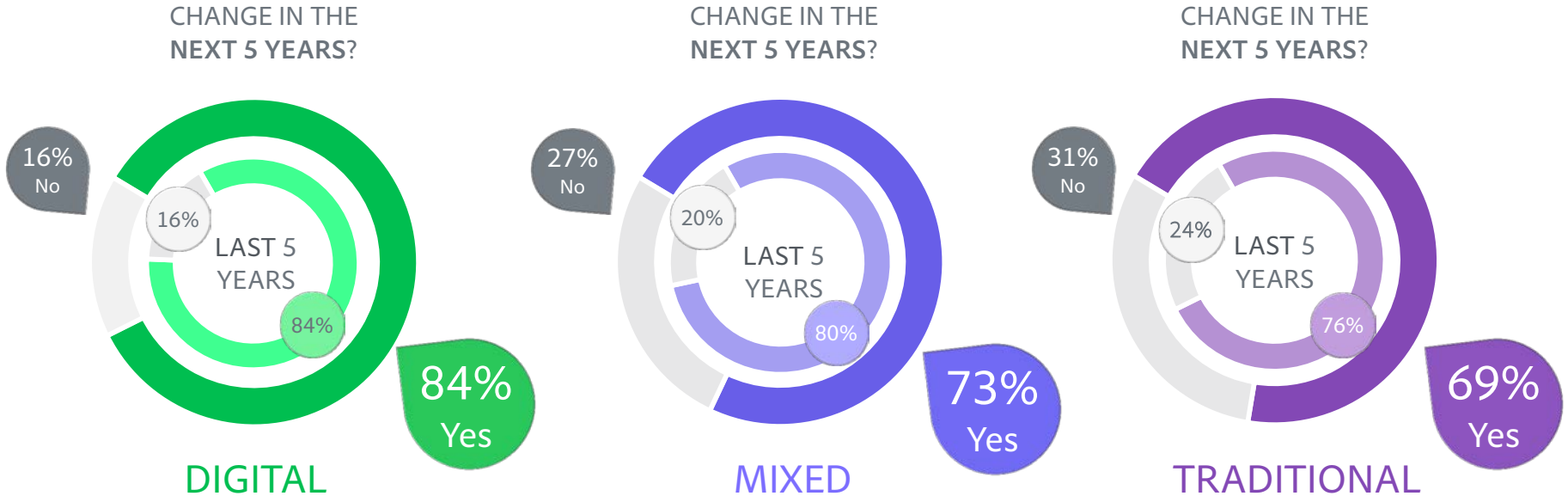Q21. Do you ever use social media to look up a prospective employee? n=1068
Q22. (If use) What are the top reasons for using social media in researching prospects? Please select up to 3 reasons. n=458

Creative skills help business development and benefit companies across many roles

FUNCTION THAT BENEFITS MOST FROM CREATIVE SKILLS
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Function	Percentage
Business Development	52%
Sales	47%
People Management	41%
Research and Development	40%
Client Management	38%
Analysis	27%
Reporting	16%
None of the above	3%

Q27. Which function within your company would benefit most from candidates with strong creative skills? Check all that apply. n=1068

# Significant changes expected in the job market in the next five years

CHANGE IN THE
NEXT 5 YEARS?

CHANGE IN THE
NEXT 5 YEARS?

CHANGE IN THE
NEXT 5 YEARS?

16% No

16%

LAST 5 YEARS

84%

84% Yes

DIGITAL

27% No

20%

LAST 5 YEARS

80%

73% Yes

MIXED

31% No

24%

LAST 5 YEARS

76%

69% Yes

TRADITIONAL

Q1. How much has the US job market today changed compared to 5 years ago? (0-5 is NO CHANGE; 6-10 is CHANGE). n=1,068
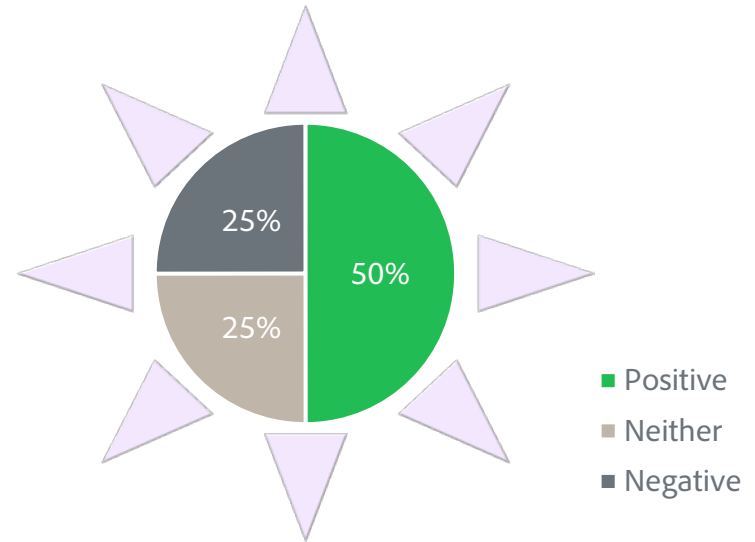Q2. How much do you expect the US job market to change in the next 5 years? (0-5 is NO CHANGE; 6-10 is CHANGE). n=1,068

Hiring managers note a significant change in the job market, but many are uncertain of the future

HAS THE US MARKET CHANGED COMPARED TO 5 YEARS AGO?
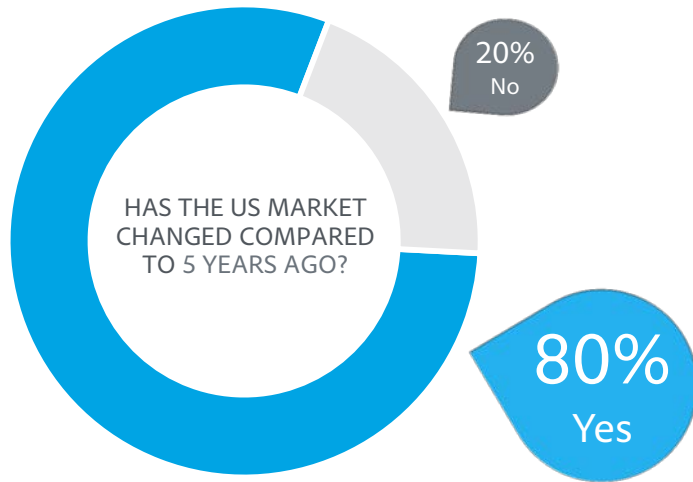
WHAT IS YOUR OUTLOOK ON THE FUTURE OF THE JOB MARKET?

HAS THE US MARKET CHANGED COMPARED TO 5 YEARS AGO?

20%
No

80%
Yes

25%

50%

25%

- Positive
- Neither
- Negative

Q1. How much has the US job market today changed compared to 5 years ago? (0-5 is NO CHANGE; 6-10 is CHANGE). n=1,068
Q3. What is your outlook on the future of the job market? n=1,068

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