



**THIRD ANNUAL
BENCHMARK STUDY**

FRACUITY[®]

BENCHMARK STUDY

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Special thanks to graduate school interns, Elysia Hung and Roshani Karki of the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations for their help in analyzing the 2018 Benchmark data.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

When we set out to gather data for the initial HR Acuity Employee Relations Benchmark Study in 2016, the goal was to provide Employee Relations (ER) leaders with information that would help them organize their teams, establish processes and practices and manage the function effectively.

As we hoped, the study has grown annually in volume and stature to become an essential tool within the industry. But more unexpected is that in just three years ER practitioners have come to rely on it as the gold standard that helps shape employee relations within organizations of all sizes.

During this time, it has also been exciting to witness the monumental transformation that has occurred for employee relations—particularly in the last year or so. Once viewed more as a back-office necessity that supported HR, employee relations is now becoming a strategic partner to the business and an active contributor to company growth and success. Of course, this makes sense given that ER's customers—employees—are the backbone of every organization. As ER leaders work to structure employee relations strategically and implement purposeful initiatives, they are driving dramatic change.

And as the function has been elevated, ER leaders are now empowered to rethink how employee issues are handled, identify areas of risk and develop strategies that lead to improvements across the organization and to growth in the business. This Study data, along with the shared knowledge on processes, practices, technology use and how to leverage employee data, is enabling employee relations leaders to offer valuable insights that can change workplaces for the better.

We are not only pleased to be a partner in this transformation, but also that employee relations is finally garnering the visibility and emphasis it deserves. We hope the study will continue to grow and mature alongside ER leaders, providing ongoing relevance and encouraging others to become more intentional as they strive to meet the challenges of employee relations and remain instrumental in creating safe and productive workplaces.

We are happy to share this special report, which includes data from more than 150 enterprise organizations, representing nearly 4.4 million employees globally. In addition, you may also be interested in the related, previously released sub-reports to this year's study: **#MeToo in the Workplace**, **Centralization of Employee Relations**, and **Tech & Metrics: Practices and Trends**, which you can download at hracuity.com.

Thank you to every ER leader who participated in the study—and to all of you who are driving transformation in your organizations, every day. We look forward to continuing to work with you and support you as we all work to build better workplaces for our organizations and our teams.



Deborah J. Muller

CEO, HR Acuity® | 888.598.0161 | dmuller@hracuity.com

TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THE STUDY

Employee Relations Professionals: Individuals who are dedicated to managing or working on employee relations matters

HR Business Partners or Generalists: Individuals who provide strategic or operational human resources support to business or functional areas

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

Centralized: Centralized team of Employee Relations Professionals or Center of Expertise (“COE”) responsible for managing employee relations issues and conducting investigations across the organization (Note this group does not have to be geographically centralized.)

Mixed: Centralized team for managing some or most of the employee relations cases and investigations but field resources (HR Generalists, Business Partners and/or managers) still manage some employee relations issues

Decentralized: Employee relations issues are managed within the specific lines of business by HR Generalists, Business Partners or Employee Relations Professionals. (Employee Relations matters are not centralized.)

ACRONYMS USED THROUGHOUT THE STUDY

APAC	Asia Pacific
CHRO	Chief Human Resource Officer
COE	Center of Expertise
CMS	Case Management System
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
EMEA	Europe, Middle East, Africa
ER	Employee Relations
ERP	Employee Relations Professional
FTE	Full-Time Equivalents
HR	Human Resources
HRBP/G	Human Resource Business Partner/Generalist
HRIS	Human Resource Information System
SHRM	Society for Human Resource Management

STUDY TERMINOLOGY

KEY FINDINGS

This year's Study includes input from more than 150 organizations, representing approximately 4.4 million employees. Employee relations has become increasingly important in the wake of #MeToo, and the Study shows that well-defined processes and practices, adequate resources, useful technology and meaningful metrics are all critical components of a holistic approach that will enable practitioners to effectively manage employee relations and continue to elevate the function as a strategic contributor to the business. Specifically, here are the key findings from the Study.



In the aftermath of #MeToo, organizations are seeing issue volumes increase.

In addition to employees feeling empowered by the movement, this trend may also be a result of organizations working to educate employees about reporting processes and encourage reporting and efforts to create cultures of transparency and accountability.

- ▶ Fifty-three percent (53%) of organizations reported an increase in sexual harassment claims with 43% expecting claims to increase again in the next 12 months.
- ▶ Thirty-one percent (31%) of organizations saw an overall increase in the total number of issues raised over the past 12 months, while only 9% saw a decrease.
- ▶ In addition to harassment, other areas where respondents reported widespread increases included unprofessional conduct/policy violations (56% of respondents), accommodation requests (49%), workplace bullying (47%) and discrimination—age, gender, etc. (43%).

While case volumes trend higher, ER resources remain stretched—but organizations are taking steps to address the gap.

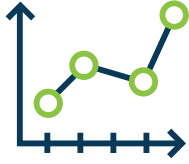
Currently, 30% of ER professionals juggle more than 26 employee issues at any given time. For those who only conduct investigations, almost half (49%) report an average of seven or more open investigations at a time.

With continually heavy caseloads, increasing issue volume and difficult and sensitive subject matter, it is essential that leaders look out for, address and work to prevent burnout. Another consequence of large caseloads may be negative experiences for employees who may feel their matters are rushed or delayed due to lack of resources. The good news is that 43% of organizations expect to increase the number of full-time employee relations professionals over the next 12 months.

Top reasons cited for increasing issue volumes:

- ▶ Organizational changes (64%)
- ▶ Increased awareness of perceived rights (54%)
- ▶ #MeToo (53%)
- ▶ The political environment (51%)

KEY FINDINGS continued



While the use of required investigation processes continues its rapid upward trend, adequate training for investigators is not keeping pace.

The increased adoption of required investigation processes by organizations (41%—an increase of 8% from last year's Study) underscores a deepening commitment to conduct consistent, thorough and fair investigations. However, ensuring that investigators have the appropriate skills and capabilities is also an important part of the process. Right now, 58% of organizations are providing investigatory training on an "as needed" basis, often relying on the experience an individual brings to the role.

Surprisingly, 20% of organizations currently have no investigation training, but rely instead on individual investigator's prior experience.

Technology is driving consistency, though room for improvement remains.

Over the past decade, there has been a huge paradigm shift in the use of technology to support employee relations—from just 15% in 2010 to 80% in this year's Study. While 38% of these organizations are taking advantage of technology specifically built for these purposes, many organizations still rely on a combination of methods and/or legacy service delivery systems that have been adapted to manage these sensitive and confidential matters.

Employee relations behavioral data insights are starting to drive strategy and business change.

More than half of the organizations reported sharing key employee relations metrics and insights with the C-Suite. Overall, 61% are proactively analyzing employee behavior, engagement and performance metrics to influence policy changes and identify opportunities for early intervention.



Organizations are becoming more efficient and effective as the majority move to centralized and mixed models to manage their employee relations resources.

The centralized ER model used by 57% of organizations requires 31% fewer resources than a decentralized model and 11% fewer resources than a mixed organizational model. Following its declining trend in previous years, only 6% continue to operate with a decentralized model.



RESPONDENT PROFILE

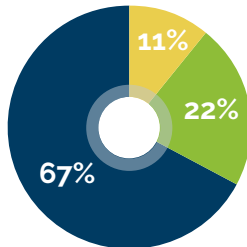
RESPONDENT PROFILE

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Participants in the Third Annual HR Acuity Benchmark Study included CHROs, Heads of HR, Vice Presidents, Senior Directors, Directors, SR Managers and HRBPs, with the majority (62%) of respondents at the director level or higher, with one entry submitted per organization.

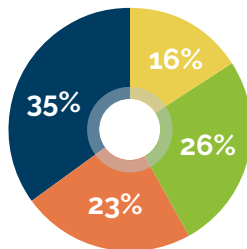
The findings include input from 158 enterprise organizations, representing approximately 4.4 million employees globally.

BY CATEGORY



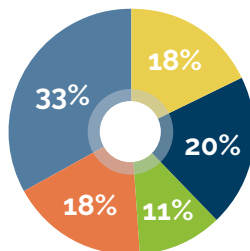
- Fortune 100
- Fortune 500
- Other

BY SIZE



- 1,000-3,499
- 3,500-9,999
- 10,000-19,999
- 20,000+

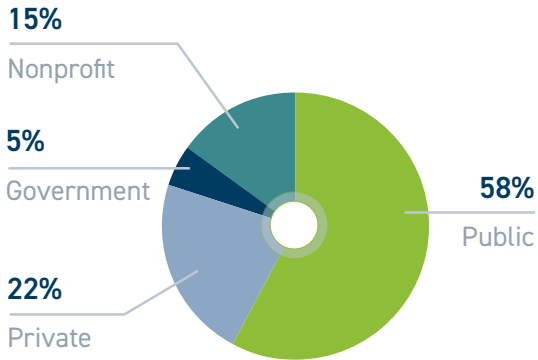
BY INDUSTRY



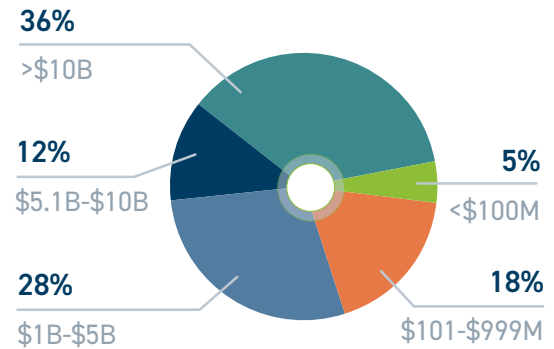
- Financial Services/Insurance
- Healthcare/Hospitals
- Pharmaceuticals/Medical Devices
- Technology
- Other



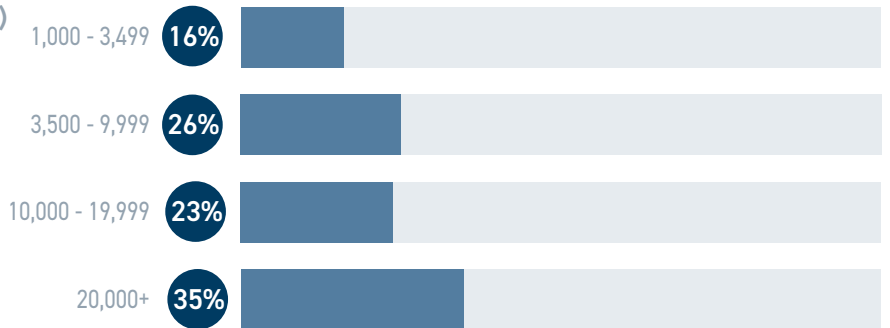
ORGANIZATION CLASSIFICATION



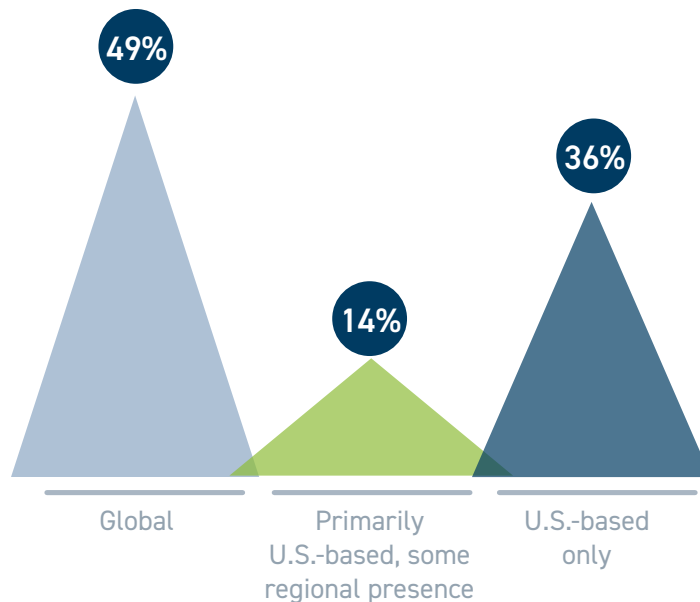
ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REVENUE (not-for-profit – annual budget)



NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (global)



REGIONAL PRESENCE



The background features a bokeh effect of warm, out-of-focus lights in shades of orange, yellow, and red. Overlaid on this are several white line-art elements: four interlocking gears of varying sizes and orientations, and several network diagrams consisting of white dots connected by thin white lines. The overall aesthetic is modern and technological.

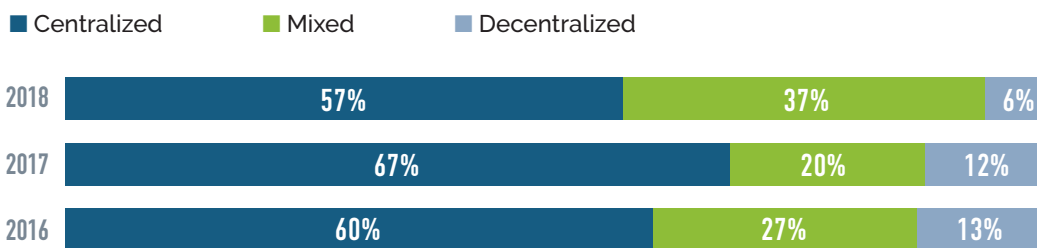
ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

Participants were asked to define the model they use to organize and manage employee relations. Use of a centralized model has trended upward over the past several years, but this year's data shows an increase in organizations using a mixed model. This shift could be based upon the mix of participants in this year's study. The data also supports a year over year decline in the number of organizations using a decentralized approach for employee relations, with 94% of organizations now using centralized or mixed models. (See Study Terminology, page 1 for organizational model definitions.)

CURRENT EMPLOYEE RELATIONS MODEL (US)

TOTAL



BY NUMBER OF U.S. EMPLOYEES

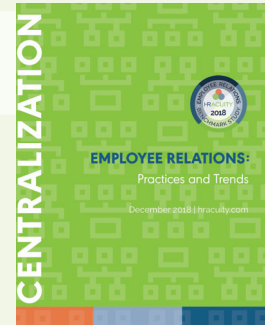
	1,000-3,499	3,500-9,999	10,000-19,999	20,000+
Centralized	75%	55%	48%	56%
Mixed	15%	45%	41%	38%
Decentralized	10%	0%	11%	5%

BY INDUSTRY

	Financial Services/ Insurance	Pharma/ Medical Devices	Technology	Healthcare/ Hospitals
Centralized	53%	69%	69%	58%
Mixed	47%	19%	23%	37%
Decentralized	0%	13%	8%	5%

Organizations within the pharma/medical device and tech industries heavily favor a centralized model. None of the participating companies within the financial/insurance sector and very few healthcare/hospitals use a decentralized model. This may be as expected given the regulations within these industries.

For a deeper dive into the Centralization of Employee Relations



Read **Centralization: Practices and Trends** to learn how the vast majority (94%) of participating organizations are using a centralized or mixed model to manage employee relations. This report examines the benefits and challenges of this approach, along with the scope of responsibilities, caseloads, processes and tools being used to support effective employee relations practices.

AT A GLANCE—

A few comments from respondents on using a centralized (or mixed) approach:

“It has created greater trust in the team, especially at the staff level, as the employee relations team and the function are viewed as independent and not tied to leadership.”

“Centralization supports our self-service model, allowing us to scale and meet the needs given rapid organizational growth.”

“Work/life balance is a challenge given the stress of the job, workload, resiliency, and managing turnover.”

“Our streamlined process offers consistency in how an investigation is conducted, helping to align on consistent outcomes for similar behaviors.”



RESOURCES

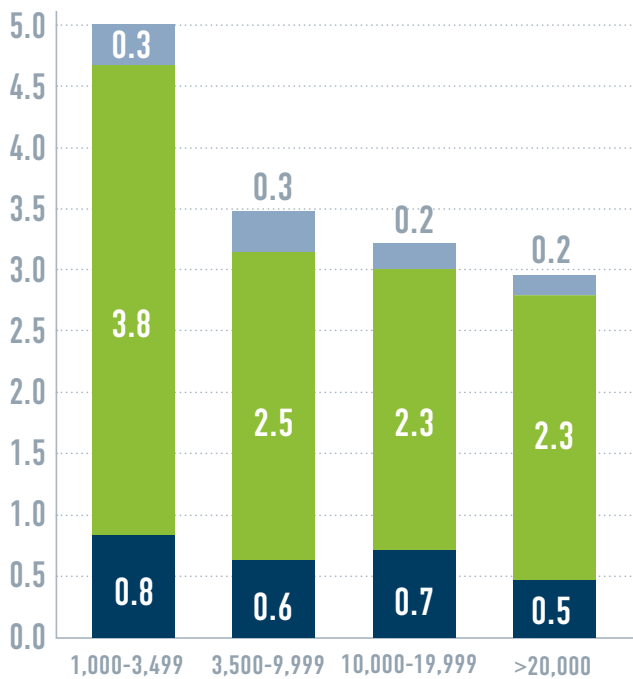
STAFFING RATIOS

An ongoing challenge for ER leaders is how to determine the appropriate number of Employee Relations Professionals (ERPs) for their teams. To help organizations benchmark their resources relative to organizational size, we normalize the data by providing the median number of resources per 1,000 employees.

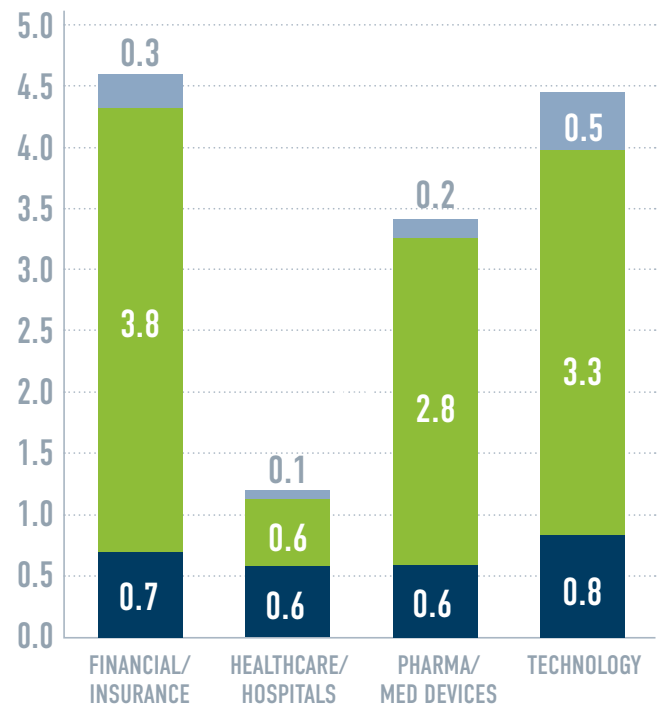
The data supports the economies of scale where larger organizations use fewer overall resources than smaller organizations. And the use of both central and mixed models allow for better resource utilization. However, further data gathered in the Study evokes the question as to whether savings comes at the expense of high workloads.

The greatest contrast occurs in the healthcare/hospital industry which has significantly fewer resources overall, largely due to the ratio of HRBP/Generalists, which is dramatically lower than in the finance/insurance, pharma/medical device, and technology sectors.

NUMBER OF RESOURCES per 1,000 Employees (Median)



STAFFING RATIOS BY INDUSTRY per 1,000 Employees (Median)



■ Employee Relations Professionals ■ HR Generalist/Business Partners ■ In-House Employment Counsel

STAFFING RATIOS BY ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL (FTE per 1,000 employees - median)

Staffing Ratios by Organizational Model (U.S. only)	Employee Relations Professionals	HR Generalist/ Business Partners	In-House Employment Counsel
CENTRALIZED	0.708	2.308	0.227
MIXED	0.667	3.824	0.250
DECENTRALIZED	0.478	3.000	0.173
ALL	0.667	2.500	0.212

STAFFING RATIOS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (FTE per 1,000 employees - median)

Staffing Ratios by Number of Employees (U.S. only)	Employee Relations Professionals	HR Generalist/ Business Partners	In-House Employment Counsel
1,000 - 3,499	0.833	3.824	0.333
3,500 - 9,999	0.625	2.500	0.333
10,000 - 19,999	0.667	2.307	0.207
20,000+	0.470	2.307	0.157
ALL	0.667	2.500	0.212

IN-HOUSE LEGAL RESOURCES

When asked about in-house labor and employment legal resources to support the employee relations function, 83% of organizations reported they had some in-house legal support. As expected, this number increases as organizational size increases. The median staffing of in-house legal resources is .22 FTE per 1,000 employees.

BY MODEL

	Centralized	Mixed	Decentralized
YES	83%	88%	71%
NO	17%	12%	29%

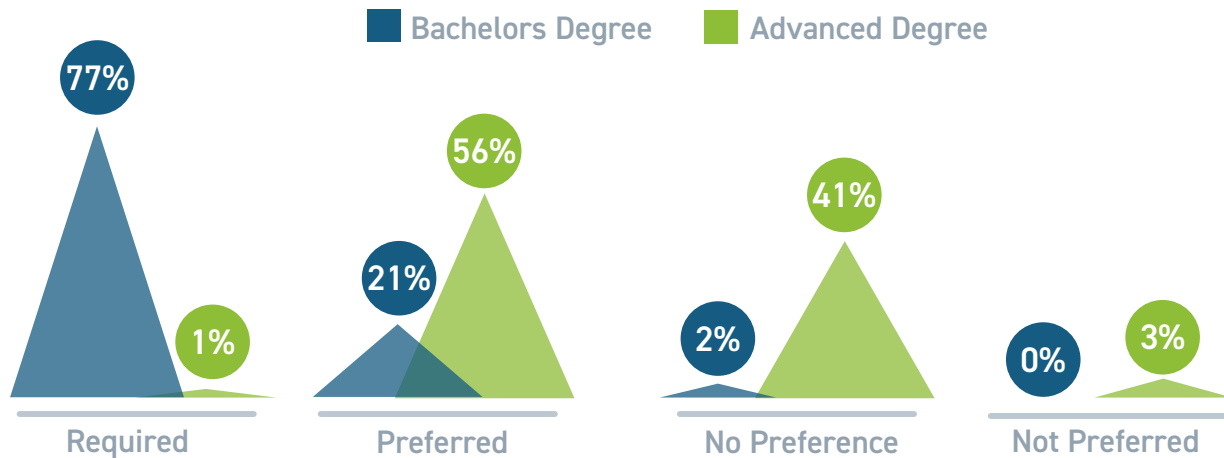
BY COMPANY

	1,000 - 3,499	3,500 - 9,999	10,000 - 19,999	20,000+
YES	59%	86%	85%	100%
NO	41%	14%	15%	0%

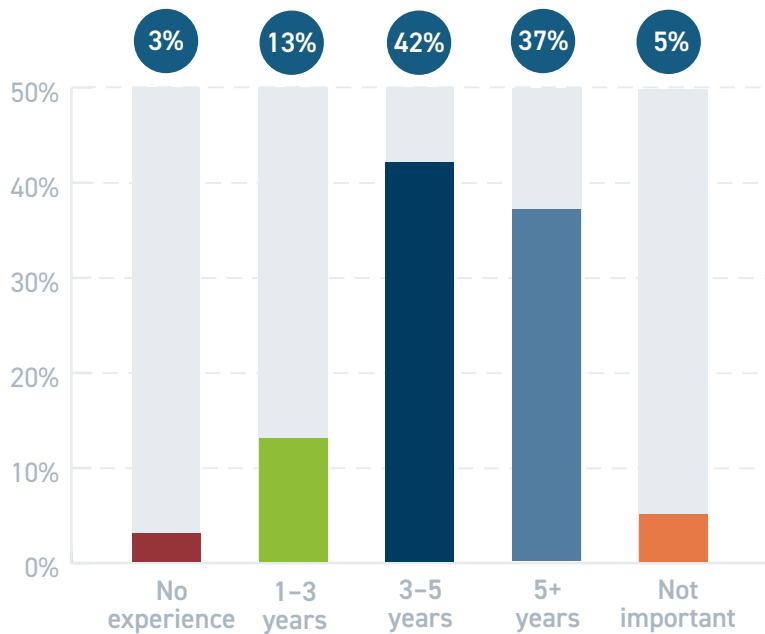
HIRING REQUIREMENTS

Finding employee relations professionals with the right skills and experience is a challenge and an ongoing topic of conversation among the **Employee Relations Roundtable** community. Benchmarking data on hiring practices can help ER leaders as they build their teams. The study data shows that hiring a minimum of three years of experience is essential for 42% of participants, and 37% prefer candidates with five years of more experience.

Educational requirements for hiring Employee Relations Professionals



Years of previous employee relations experience required for Employee Relations Professionals

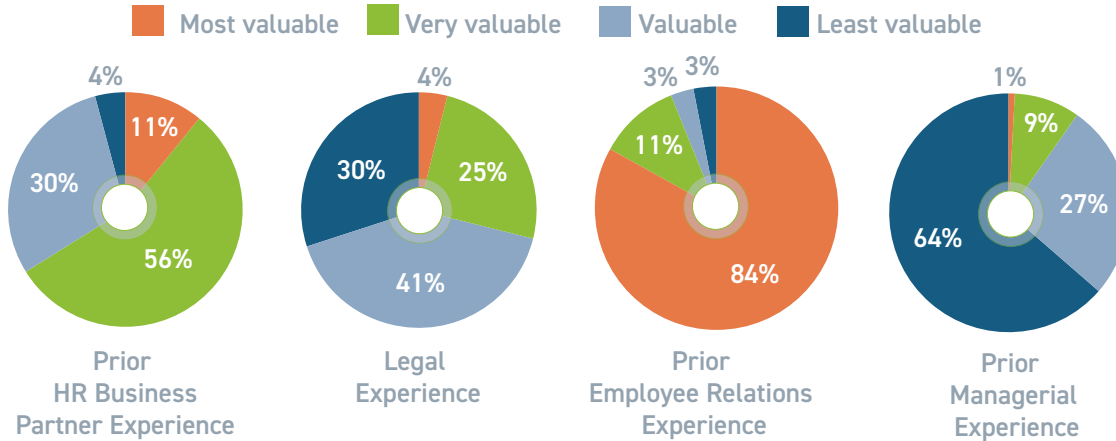


Employee relations is a great development opportunity for our junior HR professionals to grow into or from generalist roles.

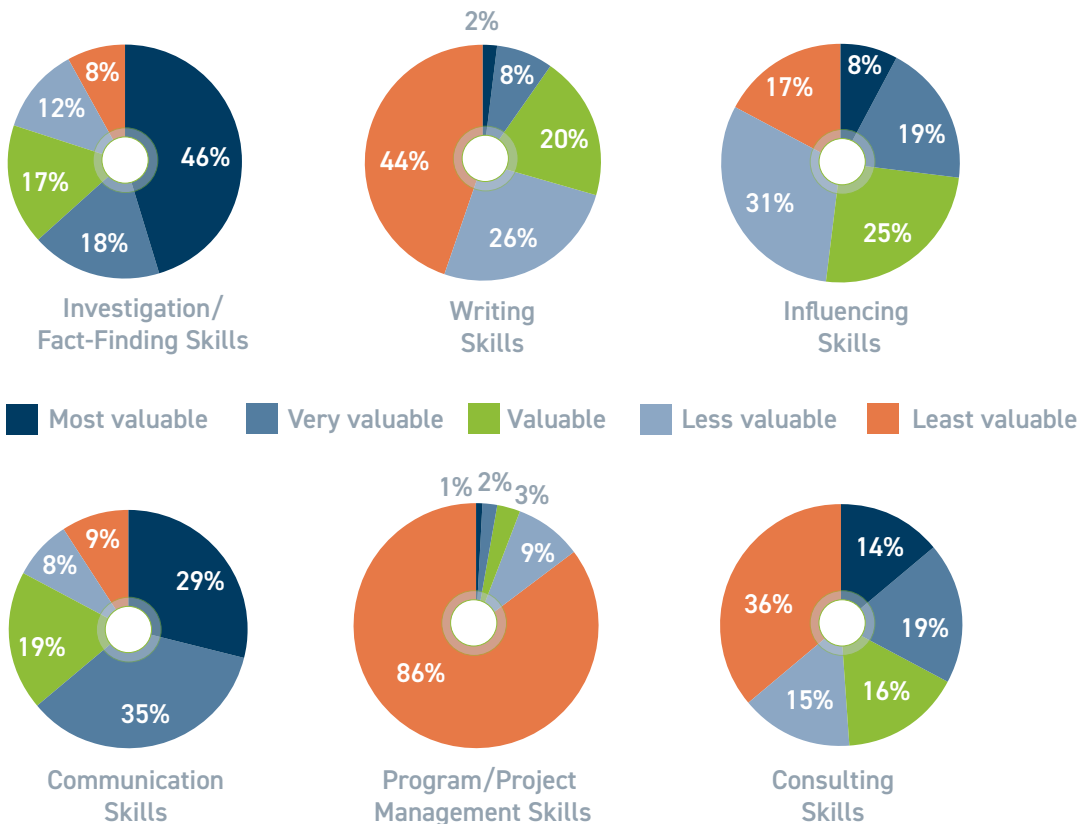
HIRING REQUIREMENTS continued

Given the unique nature of employee relations, it's not surprising that 95% of participants ranked prior employee relations experience and 67% rated HRBP experience as highly valuable. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents also reported that legal experience is valuable. These findings go hand-in-hand with the skills respondents identified as most important for success in the field: investigation/fact-finding skills and communication skills.

Prior experience found most valuable when hiring Employee Relations Professionals

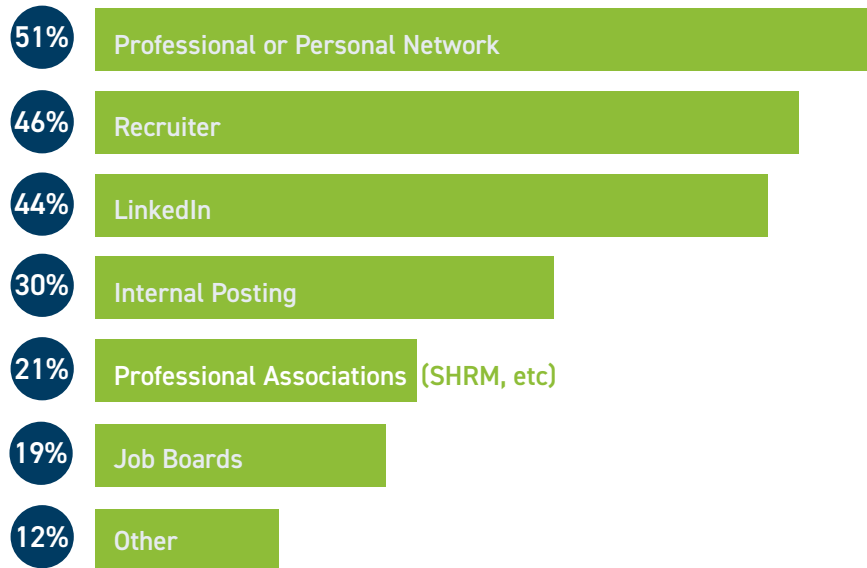


Important skills for successful Employee Relations candidates



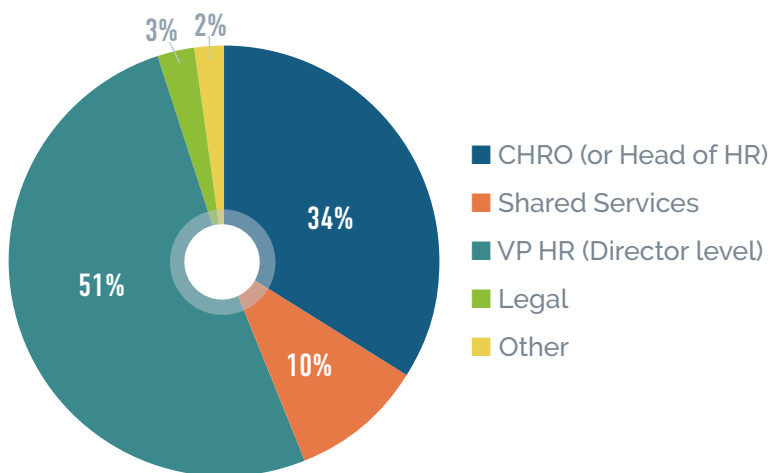
SOURCING

Where have you had the best success sourcing quality Employee Relations Professionals?



STAFF REPORTING

Where do Employee Relations teams report?



More than one-third (34%) of ER teams report to the Chief Human Resources Officer signifying employee relations is now seen as a strategic component of the HR function. It will be interesting to see if this trends upward in the post #MeToo environment as organizations focus to create safer workplaces, proactively identify issues and strive to demonstrate that employee matters will be taken seriously and addressed with consistency and fairness.

Here are some additional comments respondents shared around hiring employee relations professionals.

BEST PRACTICES

- ▶ We focus on those with high EQ and increasingly look for interest/experience in conflict mediation background.
- ▶ I look for personable and approachable people.
- ▶ Our best candidates are recommended by colleagues who offer prior knowledge about personality and previous work experience.
- ▶ Head hunting has proven to be most helpful.
- ▶ Strong behavioral sciences background in college, or social services background is easily transferrable to ER and often yields the best candidates.
- ▶ It is all about relationships and networking...
- ▶ We're hoping to hire a junior ER professional as we focus on more centralization of ER and emphasize strategic partnership for the HRBPs.
- ▶ We prioritize institutional knowledge.
- ▶ We have begun hiring and developing more junior talent—e.g., a recent hire had some ER experience, but was a seasoned certified mediator.
- ▶ We look for different skill sets in experience and education for varying roles within ER—e.g., a legal background is preferred for some roles.
- ▶ We've had some success promoting from our Tier 1 HRdirect contact center to an entry level ER Analyst Role.
- ▶ Our ER team does more investigations and conflict management; so we recruit specifically for this.
- ▶ Our team was recently established and is in the process of building foundational blocks. The current team was built from all existing internal employees.

CHALLENGES

- ▶ It's challenging to find top ER talent in some geographies where the skill set has not yet matured.
- ▶ In a COE dedicated to ER work, we find most candidates do not have the depth of investigatory experience required—they've done some investigations but not at the pace we perform.
- ▶ It's hard to find people who just want to do ER work—many want to be HRBPs.
- ▶ It has been very challenging finding individuals who offer the right mix of HR and legal/ER.
- ▶ Recruiting qualified ER professionals remains extremely difficult. The demand is growing and few people have ER skills or interest.
- ▶ We've wrestled with the notion that we're competing for talent with similar companies in our region and debating whether to hire remote team members.
- ▶ I can't find candidates even remotely qualified for what our comp people claim I should pay.

We follow a rigorous, team-based interview process; candidates must deliver a craft demonstration involving a complex ER issue we've presented.

We really look at the whole person. Customer service skills, passion, interest in learning and being action orientated have proven to be more helpful than ER experience.

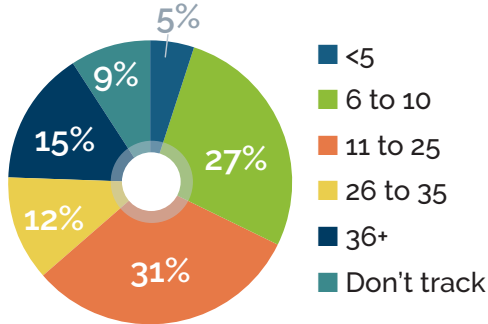


MANAGING CASES

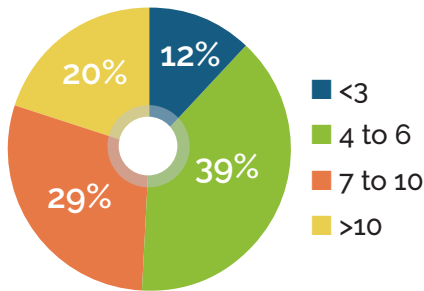
CASE VOLUMES

NUMBER OF CASES AT ANY ONE TIME

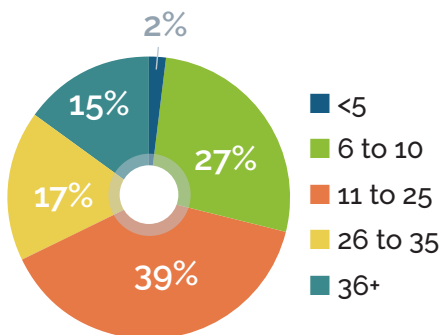
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS WHO HANDLE ALL ER ISSUES (including performance and investigations)



EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS WHO ONLY CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS

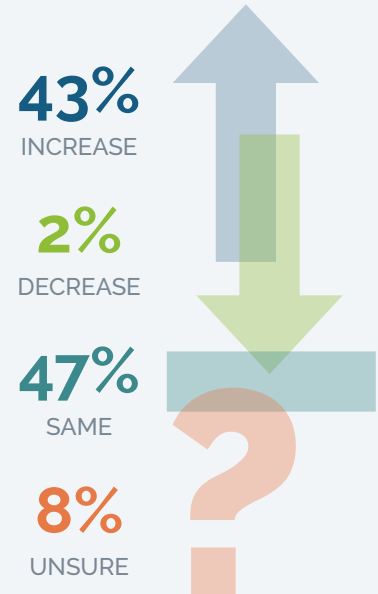


EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS WHO HANDLE ONLY ER ISSUES (including performance, but not investigations)



Across the board, Employee Relations Professionals experience heavy workloads. Of those who only conduct investigations, 49% have on average seven or more open investigations at one time—and almost half of those have more than ten. Considering that each investigation may involve multiple parties, interviews, and detailed documentation, it is unknown how this impacts the integrity, timeliness and thoroughness of each review.

Expectations for the number of Employee Relations Professionals (FTE) over the next 12 months

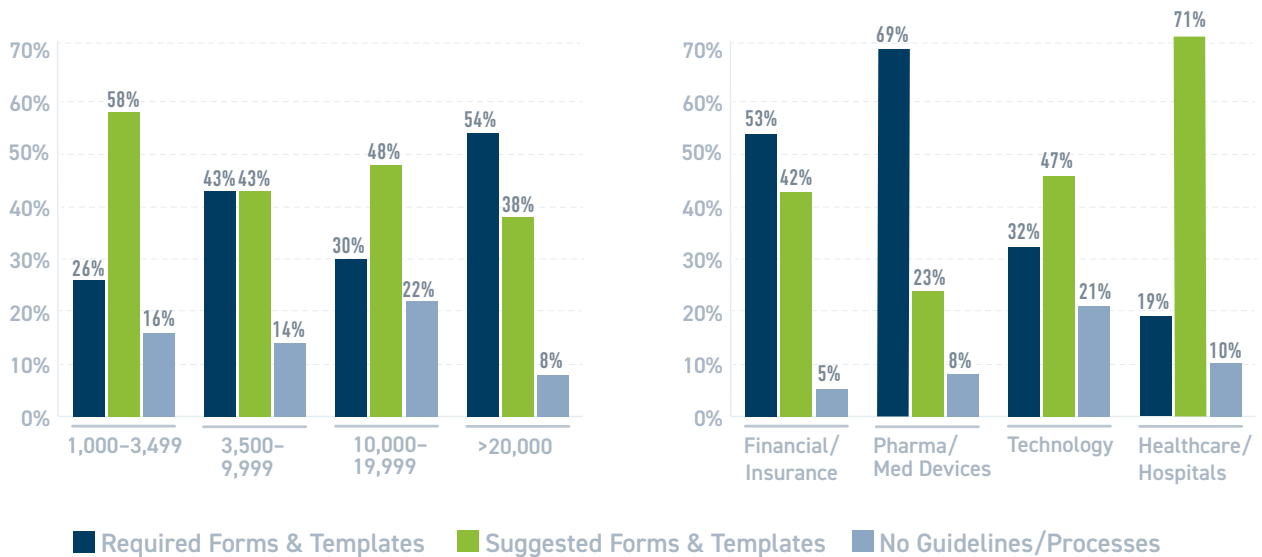
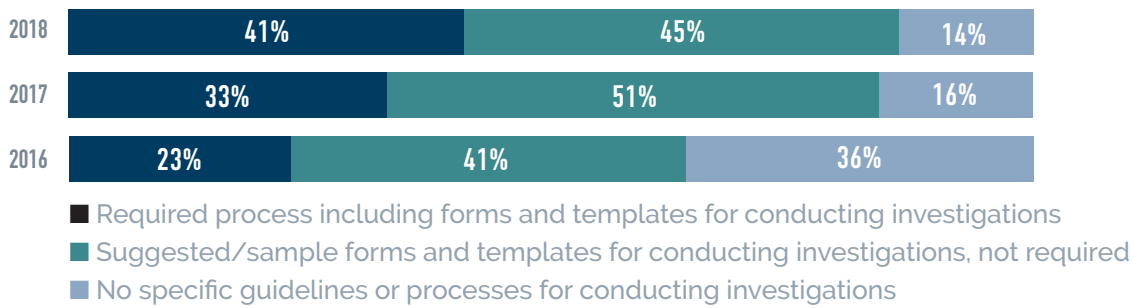


Many organizations (43%) report that they will add resources in the next year. It is unclear whether the purpose is to address growth projections or expected increases in harassment allegations, a trend to watch in the future.

INVESTIGATION PRACTICES

The trend toward required investigation processes continues, which is good news. According to responses from our **#MeToo In the Workplace Special Report**, this number should continue to rise as 10% of organizations reported plans to implement such requirements for harassment allegations within the next 12 months.

Method that best describes how investigations are conducted within organizations in the U.S.

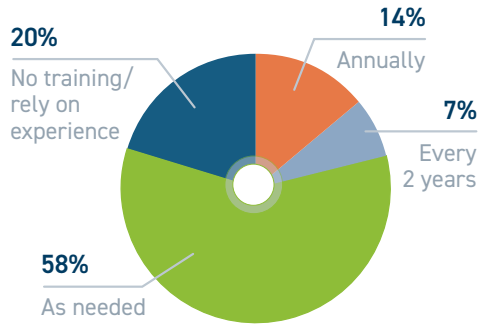


When looking at investigation practices by company size and industry, the data provides more detail. Large companies (20,000+ employees) are more likely to use required processes. Pharma/medical device companies primarily use required processes (69%), whereas the majority of healthcare/hospitals (71%) use suggested forms and templates when conducting investigations.

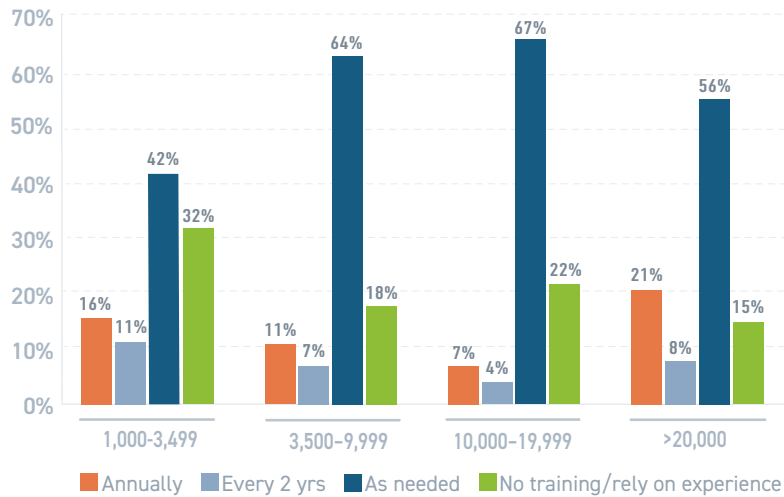
INVESTIGATION TRAINING

The majority of companies (58%) train investigators on an as needed basis. The exception is the 20% of large companies (20,000+ employees) that use annual training. It is surprising that approximately one-third of technology companies (37%) and healthcare/hospitals (29%) have no formal investigation training. It will be interesting to watch for future trends and consider whether the increasing use of required investigation processes impacts the approach to investigation training methods.

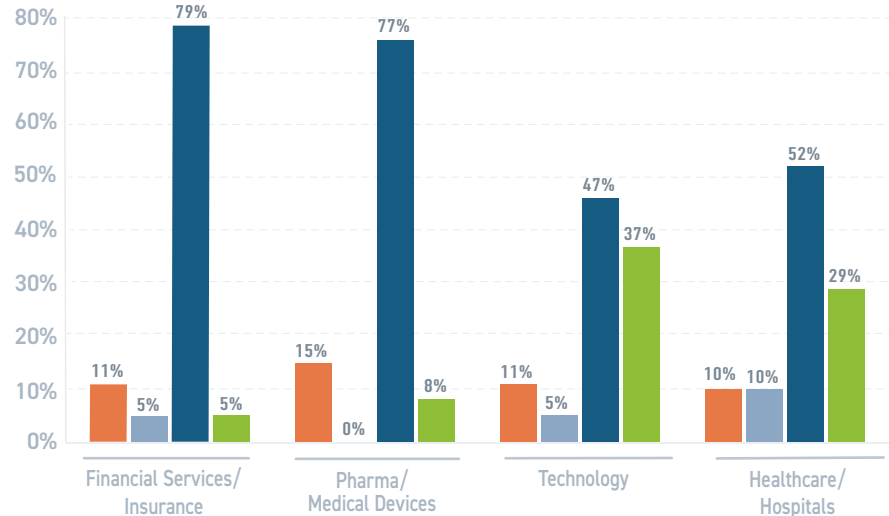
How often are investigators trained on proper investigation techniques?



BY COMPANY SIZE



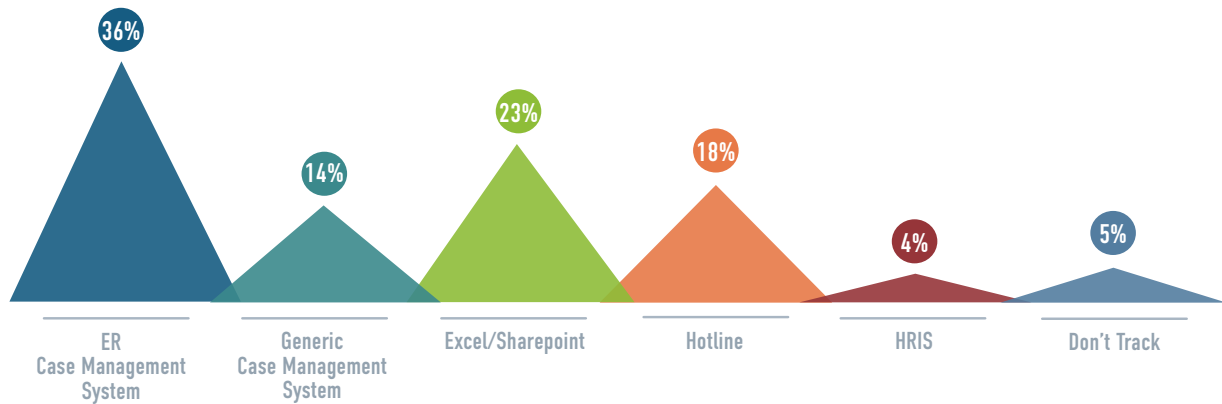
BY INDUSTRY



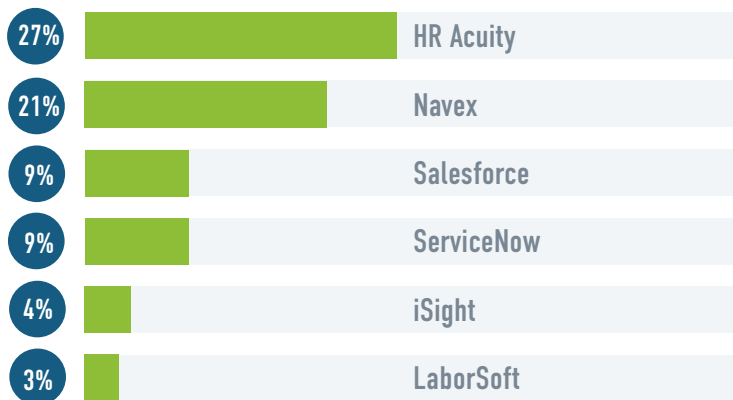
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS TRACKING

Half of all organizations (50%) are using some sort of case management system to track employee relations issues, and more than two-thirds of those (70%) are using technology specifically designed to address the unique needs of employee relations. We expect this trend to continue as organizations look to minimize risk and avoid being thrust into the spotlight due to poorly managed issues. In addition, it is expected that the percentage of organizations that do not track at all (5%) and those that continue to use spreadsheets or document management systems to track ER issues and investigations (23%) will decrease.

How does your organization primarily track employee relations issues and investigations in the U.S.?



What specific technology platform does your organization use for employee relations case management in the U.S.?



In addition, a number of respondents (32%) cited use of a variety of ad-hoc, non-case management tools to support the employee relations function.

Organizations planning to transition to an employee relations or HR case management system

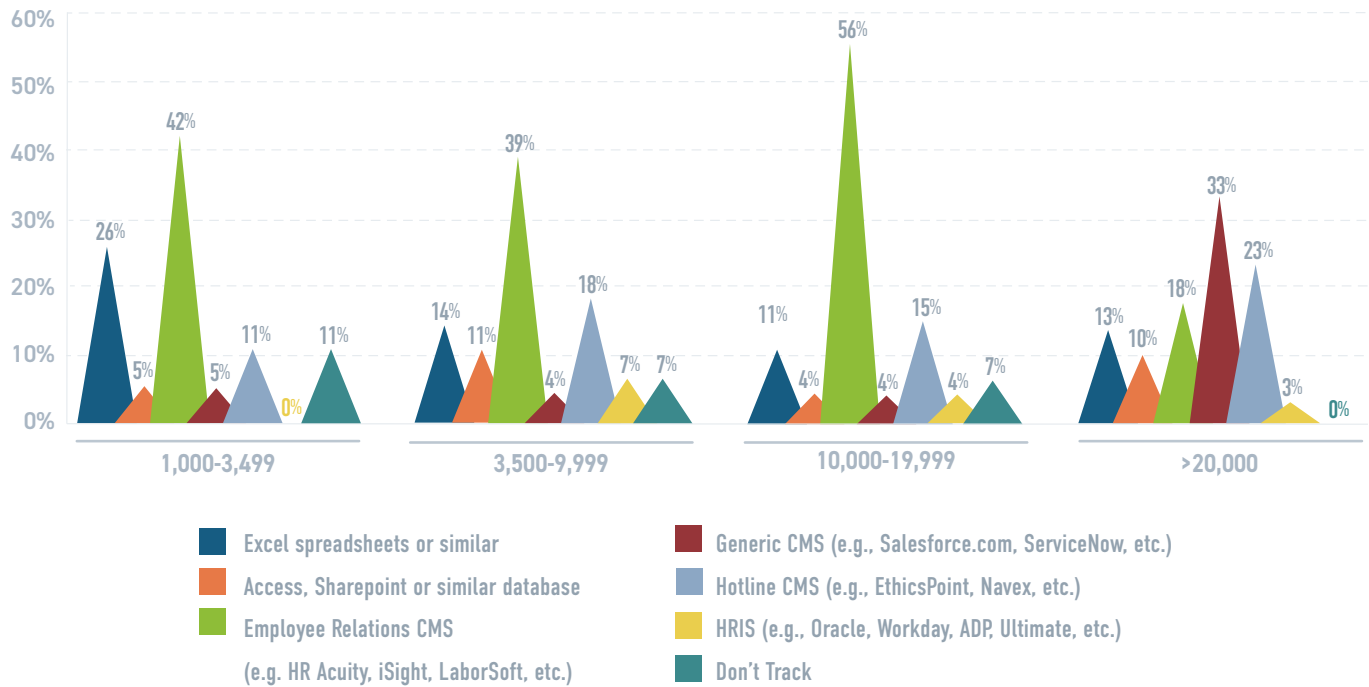
44% Yes, within the next 12 months

25% Yes, in the future (beyond 12 months)

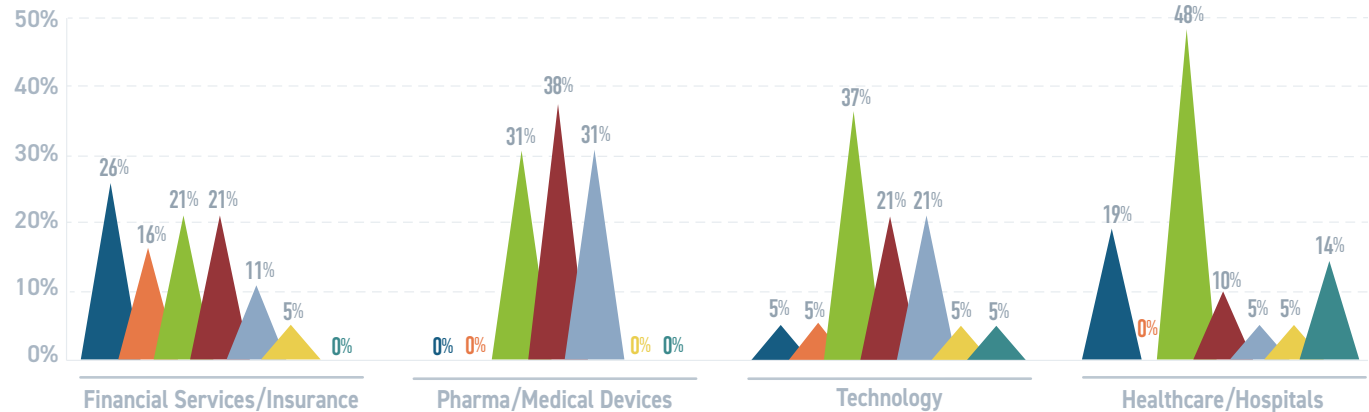
31% No plans for transitioning

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS TRACKING – In Detail

BY COMPANY SIZE



BY INDUSTRY



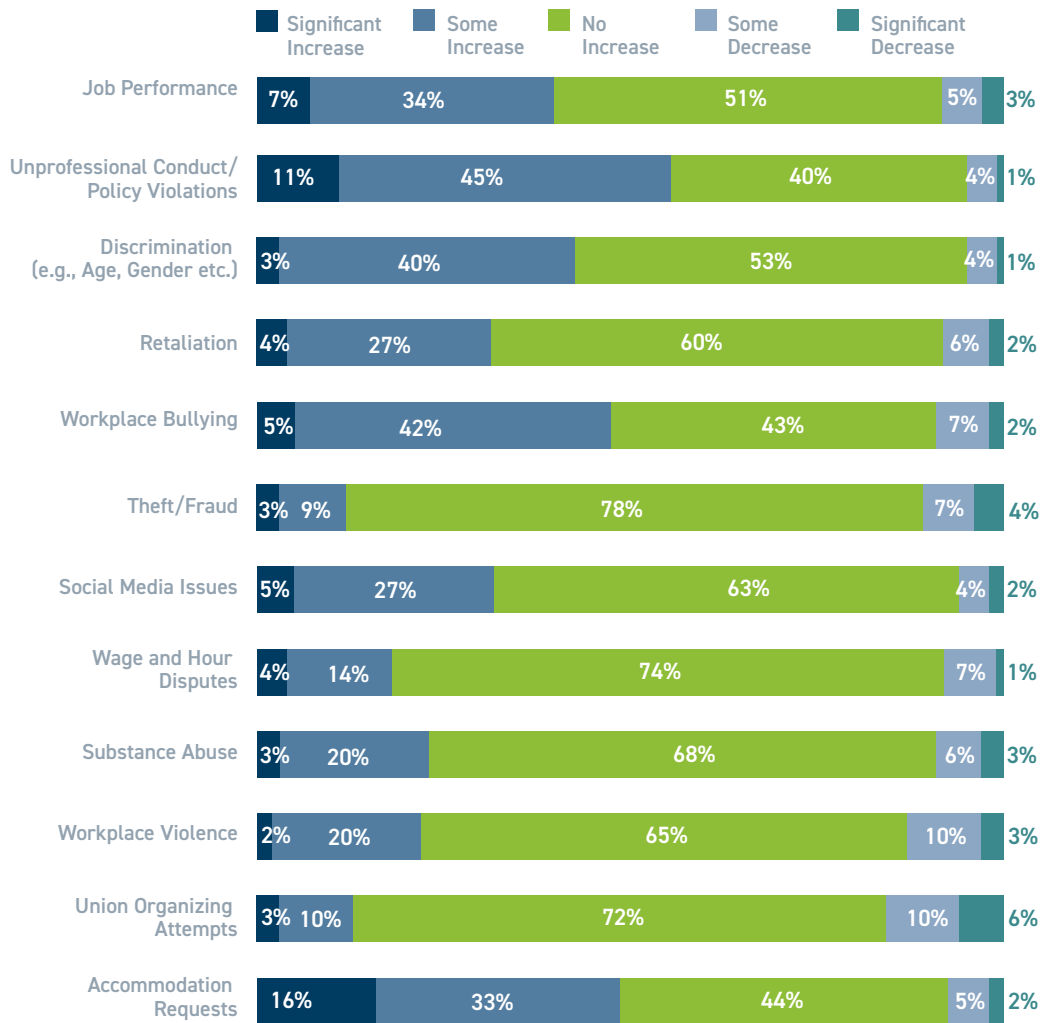
A deeper look at the data reveals that ER case management systems are the leading technology within the tech and healthcare/hospital industries. Larger companies are more likely to use legacy service delivery systems (such as Salesforce, ServiceNow, etc.) and adapt them to manage employee relations. In addition, one in four small companies (1,000 - 3,499 employees) is still using Excel.



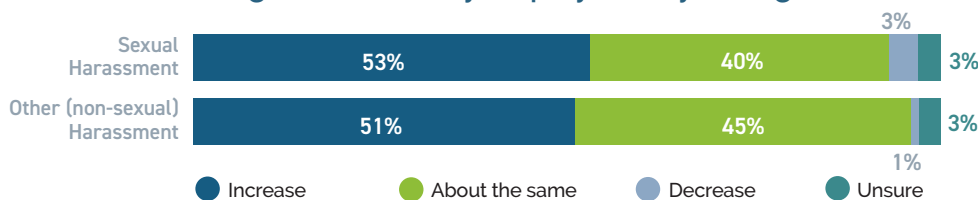
ISSUE MANAGEMENT & TRENDS

ISSUE TRENDS

Participants reported issue trends as detailed below, with special attention given to harassment trends following #MeToo. More than half of the organizations reported an increase in the number of sexual harassment allegations in the past year (53%). Furthermore, 45% expect that this trend will continue in the next 12 months. This could be attributed to a number of factors including better reporting mechanisms, encouraging employees to come forward, or simply employees becoming more educated and empowered to report. It will be interesting to see whether this trend continues or if allegation volumes decrease as organizations implement better processes and improve corporate culture. Regardless, #MeToo has grown into a movement that is causing organizations to rethink how they are doing things to improve employee experience and provide safer work environments. Beyond harassment, areas with most reported increased issue volumes were unprofessional conduct/policy violations, accommodations, workplace bullying and discrimination.



Since #MeToo went viral in November 2017, have you experienced a change in the volume of harassment allegations made by employees in your organization?

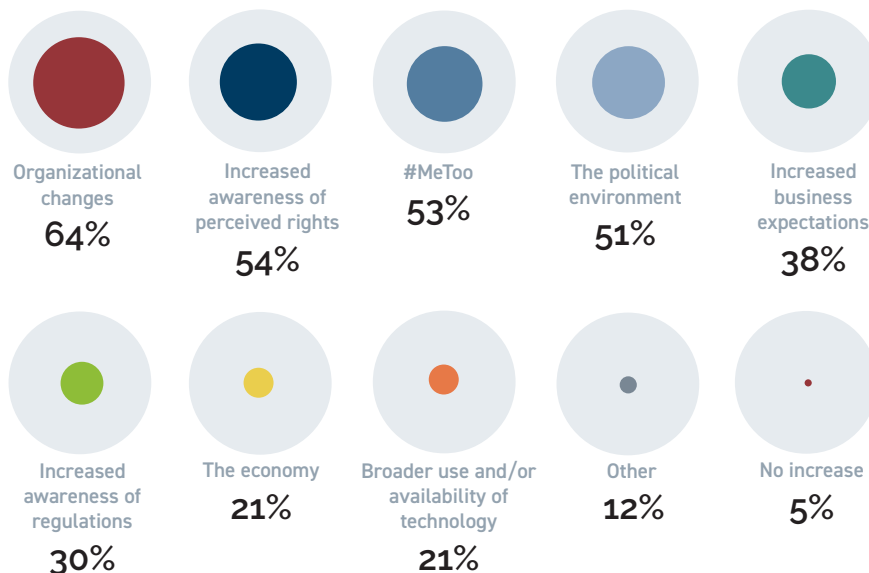


ISSUE VOLUME

As employee relations leaders strive to implement effective practices and policies and create positive workplace cultures, they seek benchmarks to determine how their organization is faring regarding the volume of employee relations issues they are experiencing. Given that each organization defines issues a bit differently, these numbers serve as guidelines. However, participants are becoming more precise in their calculations every year.

ISSUE CATEGORY	Average number per 1,000 employees	Change from 2017:
Performance Issues (e.g., Performance Counseling or Discussion with employee, Performance Advising or Coaching with manager or supervisor, Performance Documentation, Performance Employee Rebuttal etc.)	65.40	
Behavioral Issues (e.g., Unprofessional Conduct, Inappropriate Behavior, Bullying, Non-protected Harassment, Insubordination, Conflicts between co-workers, etc.)	30.43	
Policy Violations (e.g., Inappropriate use of Social Media, Workplace Violence, Electronic Communication, Code of Conduct, Confidentiality, Theft, Fraud, Falsification, Attendance, Substance Abuse, etc.)	32.77	
Leave Management Issues (e.g. FMLA, Disability, Jury, Military, PTO, etc.)	33.72	
Accommodations (e.g. ADA, Religious, Gender, Interactive Discussions, etc.)	15.13	+19%
Non-EEOC Allegations (e.g., Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation)	10.87	+48%
EEOC/Administrative Charges	1.29	

To what would you attribute any increase in employee-related events/issues over the last year?



For a detailed review of #MeToo in the Workplace...



Read this **Special Report**, an excerpt of the HR Acuity Employee Relations Benchmark Study created in response to the viral hashtag. The focus is on reported allegation volume, how organizations are reacting and responding with program enhancements and new initiatives to protect their people and their brand, and how they will measure the impact of these efforts.

AT A GLANCE—

Some comments about specific actions taken to help manage harassment claims and investigations the right way:

“Increased transparency with complainants on investigation findings and corrective action taken.

“Implemented new investigation methodology that jointly involves HR and Legal/Compliance.

“Conducted an evaluation of the global consistency of our investigation processes.

“We are proactively assessing our current culture in consideration of the external climate, with the goal of being intentional about ensuring our values and aspirations are present in pursuit of our mission.

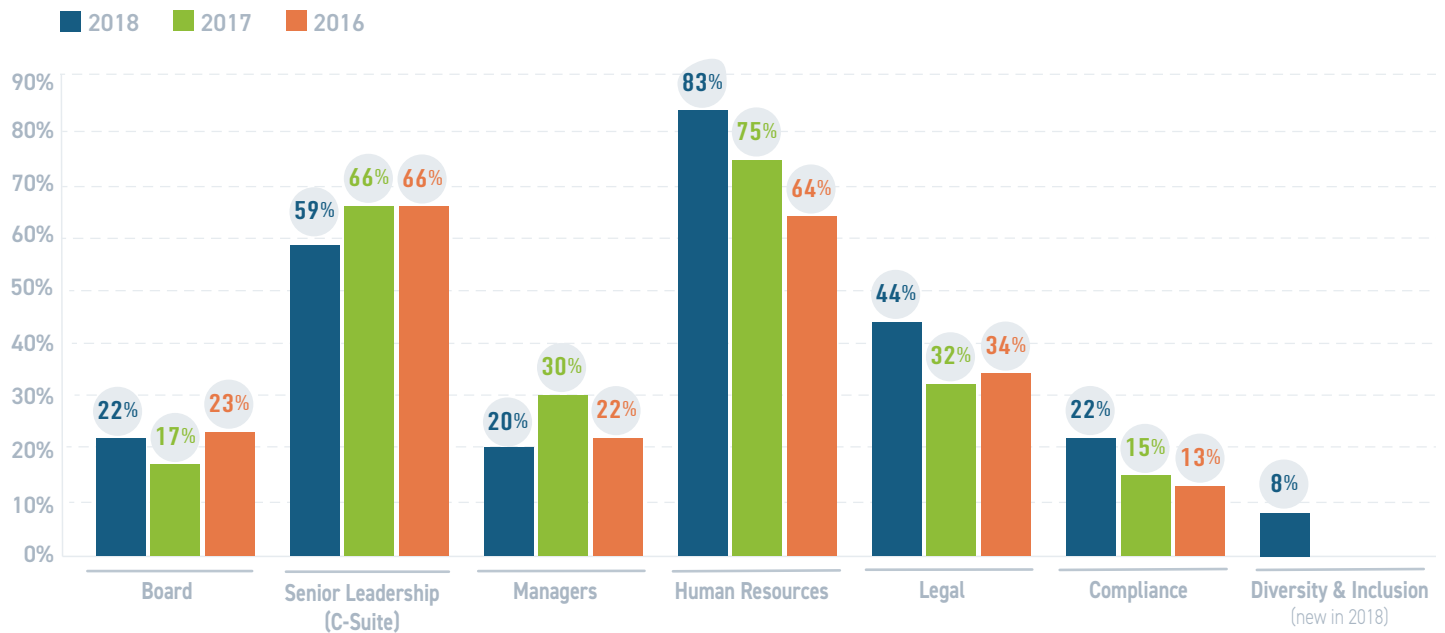


METRICS & ANALYTICS

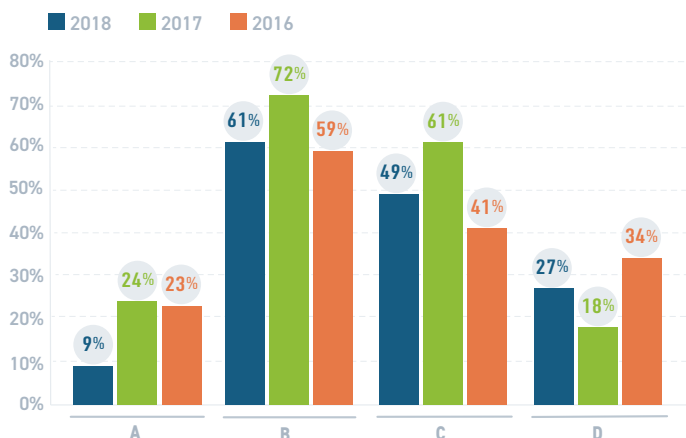
METRICS REPORTING

The data from this year's Study is fairly consistent with that of the past two years as respondents continue to use metrics primarily to provide insights into employee behavior, engagement and performance, and also improve policies. Beyond HR, the metrics are most widely shared with senior leadership. The biggest change this year is that 50% of respondents are combining employee relations data with business performance data for further analysis—a 31% increase over last year.

To whom in your organization do you report metrics related to employee relations activities?

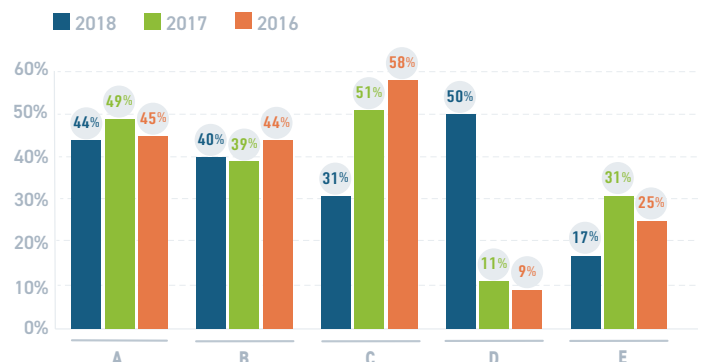


How are metrics currently used?



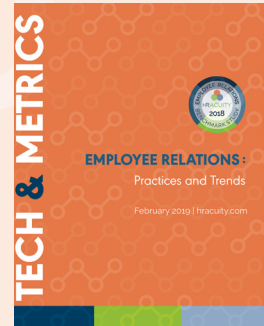
- A. Used to construct predictive models of employee behavior
- B. Obtained for more data-driven employee insights and initiatives
- C. Utilized to create better ER policies
- D. Gathered, but not really used

What other data do you integrate with employee relations data for further analysis?



- A. Employee Demographics (e.g., gender, age, race, etc.)
- B. Performance Ratings
- C. Turnover
- D. Business Performance
- E. Engagement Scores

For a more in-depth look at Metrics & Analytics...



Read **Technology & Metrics: Practices and Trends** to see how Employee Relations leaders are capturing and providing meaningful data and more complete analytics to drive business strategy from a legal, ethical and resource planning perspective. Organizations are using employee data to transform the way they handle ER issues, identify areas of risk and leverage opportunities for improving the workplace.

AT A GLANCE—

A few examples and best practices around using employee relations analytics:

It has created greater trust in the team, especially at the staff level, as the employee relations team and the function are viewed as independent and not tied to leadership.

Centralization supports our self-service model, allowing us to scale and meet the needs given rapid organizational growth.

Work/life balance is a challenge given the stress of the job, workload, resiliency, and managing turnover.

Mitigate risk and view trends in the business or with leaders, plan training for gaps, improve organizational culture and help develop policies.

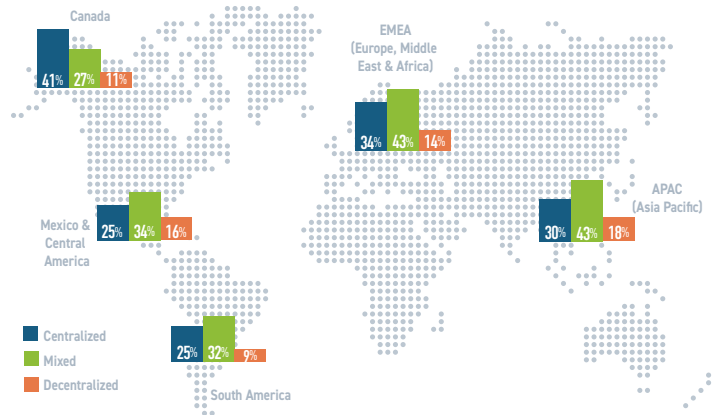


GLOBAL EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

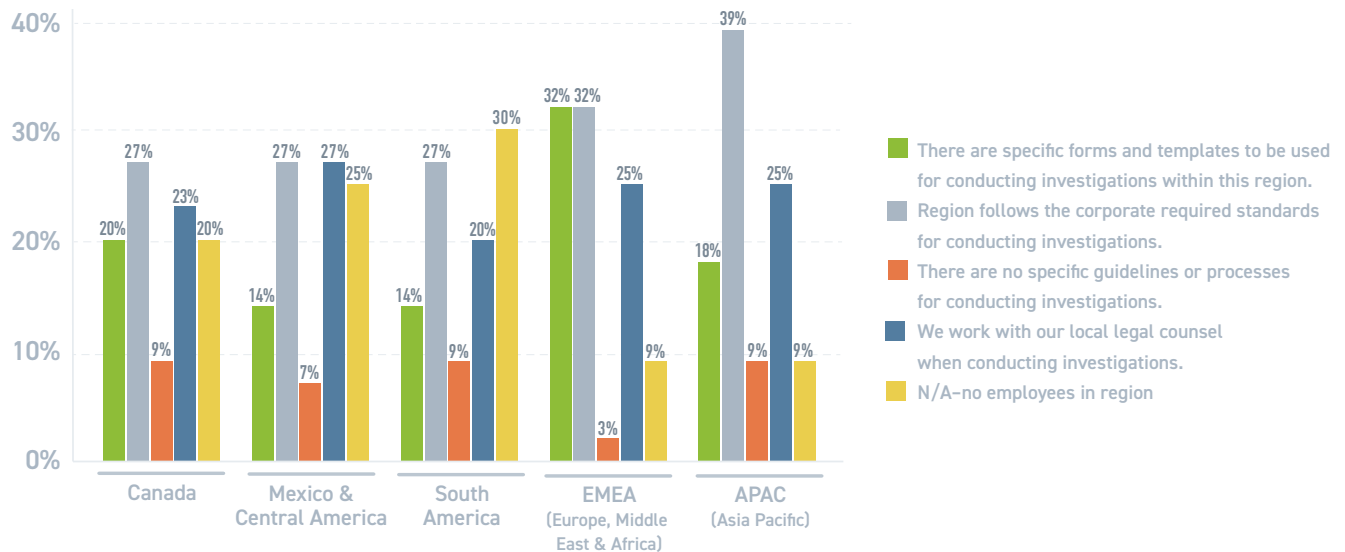
GLOBAL EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

While the Benchmark Study primarily focuses on employee relations practices in the U.S., we have expanded the Study to include information regarding global employee relations practices. This year, 40% of participants completed the global section. While the data sample remains on the small side, when compared with last year's data, it appears that there is a move toward centralization. Every region saw an increase in the use of centralized and mixed models, while the percentage of organizations using a decentralized approach decreased in each region. It will be interesting to watch and see if this is a developing trend as the data sample grows.

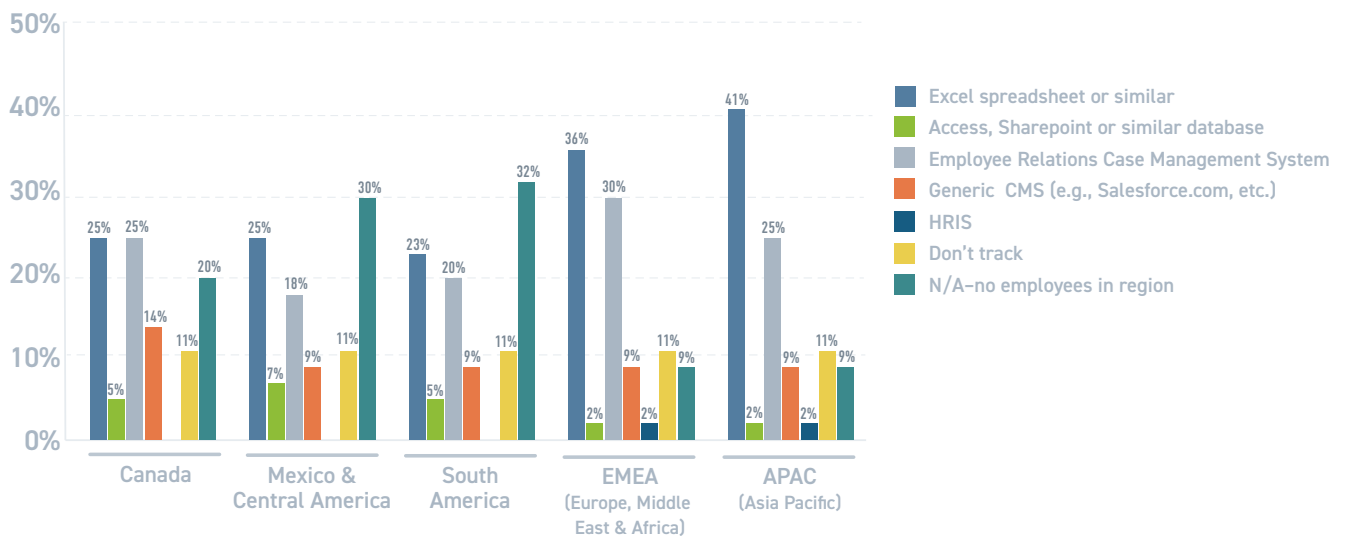
What best describes your current employee relations model within each region?



The method that best describes how investigations are typically conducted within each region.



The method that best describes how each region tracks employee relations issues and investigations.



ABOUT THE STUDY

Now in its third year, the annual HR Acuity Employee Relations Benchmark Study was initially launched in 2016 to identify and define best practices for Employee Relations (ER) management. An Employee Relations Benchmark Advisory Board was established to provide insight and expertise toward study and question development and included Employee Relations leaders from Adventist Health System, Brown University, Citizens Bank, John Hancock/Manulife, LinkedIn, Medtronic, MetLife, TIAA-CREF and Walgreens.

Organizations across a wide array of industries provide data on employee relations practices related to their organization model, case management processes, employee issue types, volumes, trends and internal data-driven metrics. Each year the Study has grown in both the number of participants and breadth of topics. We continue to work with participants and members of the HR Acuity **Employee Relations Roundtable** community to refine and expand the instrument to include relevant topics on which practitioners seek benchmarking information.

Today, with participation from 158 organizations, representing approximately 4.4 million employees, the Study is the definitive resource for employee relations management and trends across the evolving landscape. The Study provides organizations with best practices and metrics to compare their organization's ER function with other similarly situated organizations.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This Study targets participants from medium to enterprise-sized organizations (with 1,000+ employees) across a wide range of industries.

The primary focus of the Study is on practices within the U.S., with a small set of questions related to global employee relations practices.

The primary tool used for collecting data is an online questionnaire containing both quantitative and qualitative questions. However, follow-up interviews may be done for further clarification.

Only one questionnaire per organization is collected.

All responses remain confidential. No attribution to any organization or participant is included in the Study results.

Information is only used for aggregate reporting.

If you would like to participate in the next Study or have any questions about the Study, please email us at benchmark@hracuity.com.



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