LEVELAI

2024 STATE OF THE CONTACT CENTER REPORT

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2024 has been yet another year of massive technological advancements in the area of customer experience, with contact centers being the focal point of a lot of this change. Consumers' expectations have continued to rise, and operational efficiency pressure has only increased - leading to a challenging balancing act for those in the contact center space. Level AI has been at the forefront of technological advancements in this space since our inception, and we wanted to share the insights of contact center leaders and professionals in the interest of tackling these challenges together. AI-powered technologies have the potential to streamline processes, enhance agent efficiency, and improve customer experiences. By automating routine tasks, AI empowers agents to focus on more complex and value-added interactions where the human touch matters. Furthermore, AI-driven analytics can provide valuable insights into customer behavior, enabling businesses to tailor their strategies and optimize resource allocation.

We have surveyed a wide range of people across industries and roles to capture the zeitgeist of the contact center today and here's what we found:

↘

All of the contact center leaders we have surveyed have said their contact centers are either adopting new contact center AI tools or considering it.

↘

Agents report higher job satisfaction when using real-time AI automation and with more coaching.

↘

Contact center employees of all roles report lower job satisfaction when organizations prioritize savings oriented metrics like cost reduction and AHT rather than quality metrics like CSAT or FCR.

IT'S ALL ABOUT AI

AI has come a long way from the clunky text analytics days of the early 2000s to cutting edge LLMs that are shaking up the industry today. Contact centers are not left out of this revolution, and our results back it up. All of the contact center leaders we have surveyed have said their contact centers are either adopting new contact center AI tools or considering it. That's right, not a single respondent said they were not considering AI solutions. This speaks to the inherent value people see in AI solving the unique challenges of the contact center.

❌ **None of the respondents have said NO.**

Does your organization plan on adopting new Contact Center AI tools?

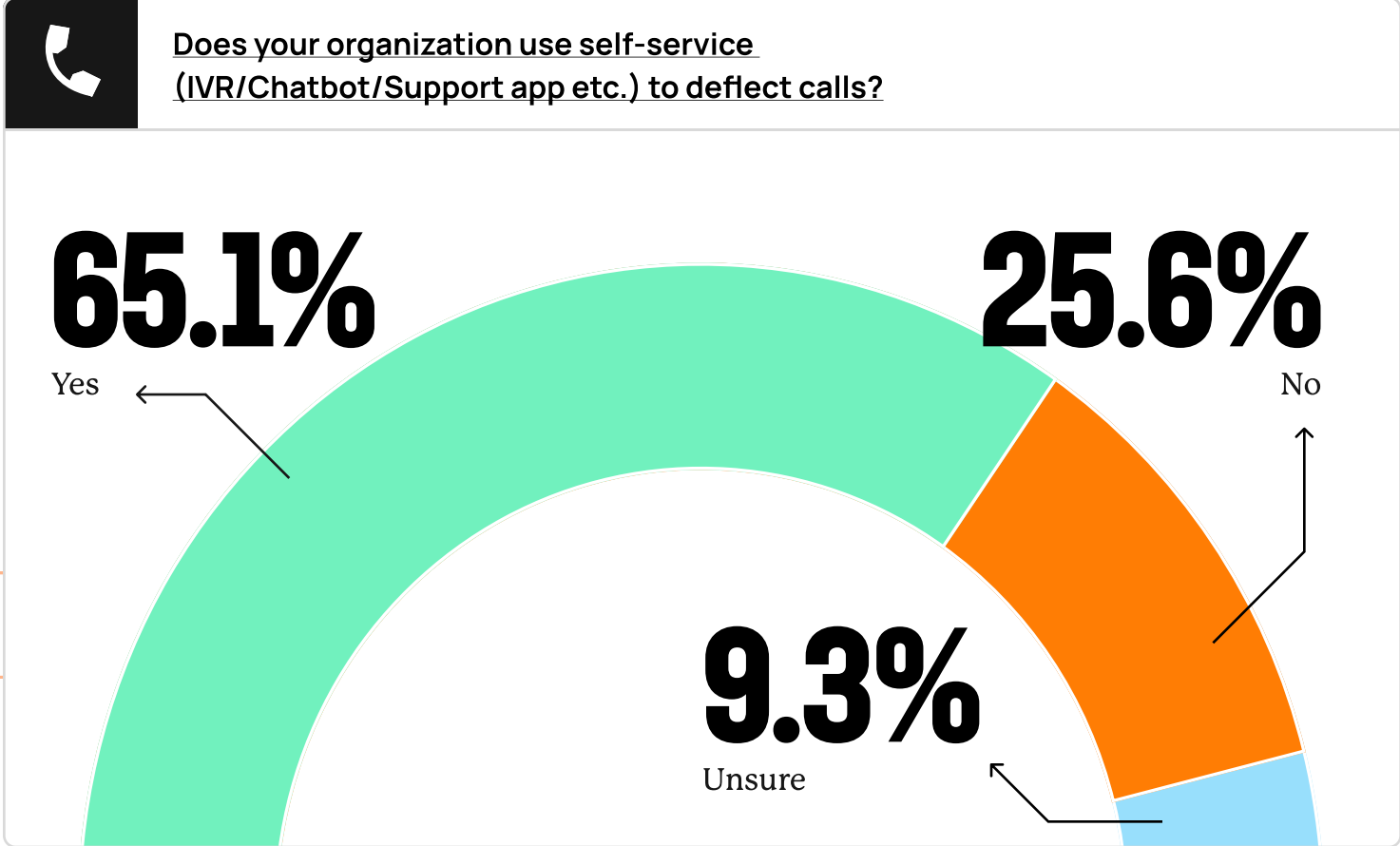| 30.4%	69.6%
Yes	Maybe
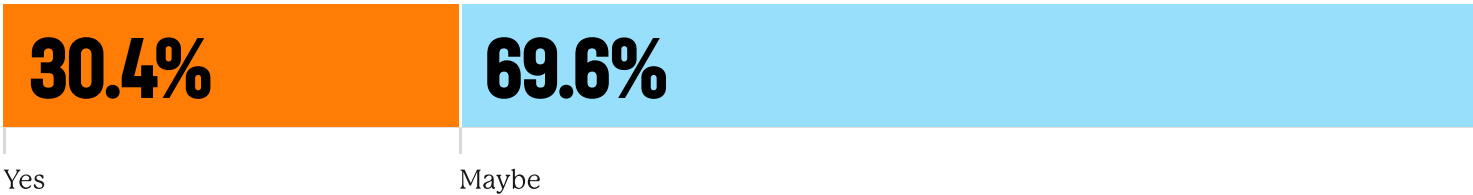
It's not just a trend, among the organizations that are planning on adopting new contact center AI tools, 93% have reported that they are under high pressure to perform. In fact, more than two thirds of survey respondents feel there's an elevated pressure on contact centers compared to only 4% who believe there's less than normal pressure. We see this across multiple industries, as increasingly the competitive landscape requires companies to provide the best possible customer experience or lose out to competitors who do.

How much pressure is there on the contact center to perform this year?

36.4%	33.3%	26.4%	2.3%	
Very High	High	Normal	Very Low	
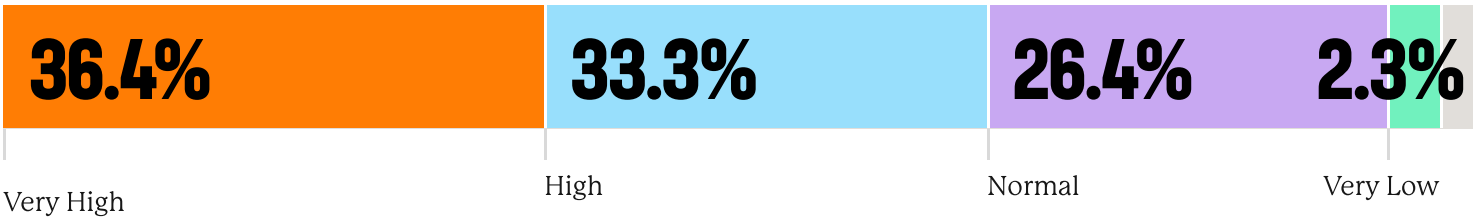
One of the first areas contact centers have automated is call deflection with self-service Interactive Voice Responses (IVRs), chatbots and support apps. Nearly two thirds of our respondents reported that their organization uses some form of call deflection automation. With AI technology getting smarter by the day, self-service bots are seeing higher customer satisfaction rates than ever before. The challenge here continues to be making sure you understand the customer needs and intent and provide the appropriate level of service. Some people have an easily solvable problem and prefer an automated solution, but for other more complex needs, having to navigate automatic tools to get to a live person can create a negative perception on the part of the customer. The key here is understanding the customer intent and giving the customer the type of service they prefer, and managing that for your customers at scale.

Does your organization use self-service (IVR/Chatbot/Support app etc.) to deflect calls?

65.1%
Yes

25.6%
No

9.3%
Unsure

THE AGENT EXPERIENCE

Contact center agents are often the first and only human touchpoint that a customer has with a brand and those impressions matter. Agents report higher job satisfaction when using AI automations (4.2 out of 5 vs the baseline of 3.5 out of 5 for all agents) to help with knowledge base assist and call summarizations.

The significant preference for text-based communication (chat, SMS, email) over calls, as indicated by 74.5% of agents, reflects a broader trend towards digital interactions. This shift has profound implications for contact centers, requiring them to adapt their strategies and technologies to meet the evolving expectations of customers.

↘ **79.3%** of contact center agents get less than 4 hours of coaching a month.

This lack of dedicated coaching time has significant implications for both agent performance and overall customer satisfaction. The impact on agent job satisfaction is particularly strong for organizations that are dealing with high agent turnover and difficult training and onboarding processes. Happy agents are better at their job and require far less investment over time compared to constantly hiring replacements. Coaching is a key lever that organizations have to boost both agent and customer satisfaction - and the data shows it.

What's your preferred channel of communication with customers?
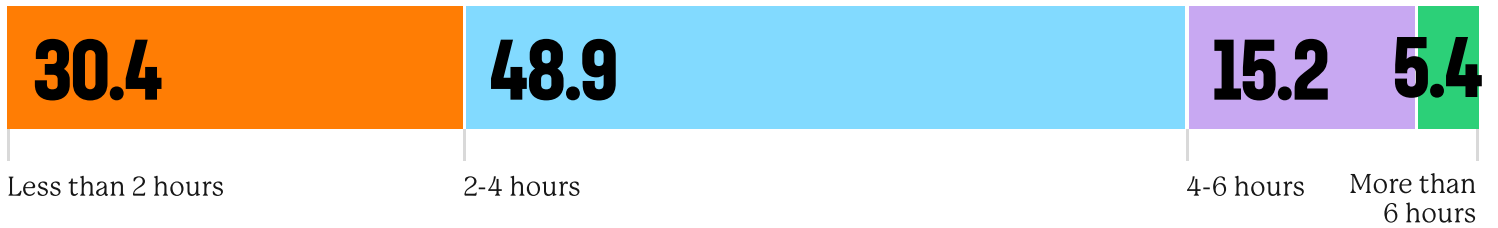
💬
37.3%
Chat/SMS

📞
37.3%
Call

✉️
25.5%
Email

Direct impact of ai-driven coaching on NPS
As QA score increases, so does NPS

QA Score %				
Months	NPS 0-2	NPS 3-5	NPS 6-7	NPS 8-10
Mar	74.7	74.3	74.1	75.2
Apr	73.4	71.5	74.5	76.0
May	73.4	76.1	79.8	77.6

Hours of monthly coaching for agents (%)

30.4	48.9	15.2	5.4
Less than 2 hours	2-4 hours	4-6 hours	More than 6 hours

Agent Job satisfaction by hours of monthly coaching

■ Less than 2 hours ■ 2-4 hours ■ 4-6 hours ■ More than 6 hours

Job satisfaction

Hours of coaching per month
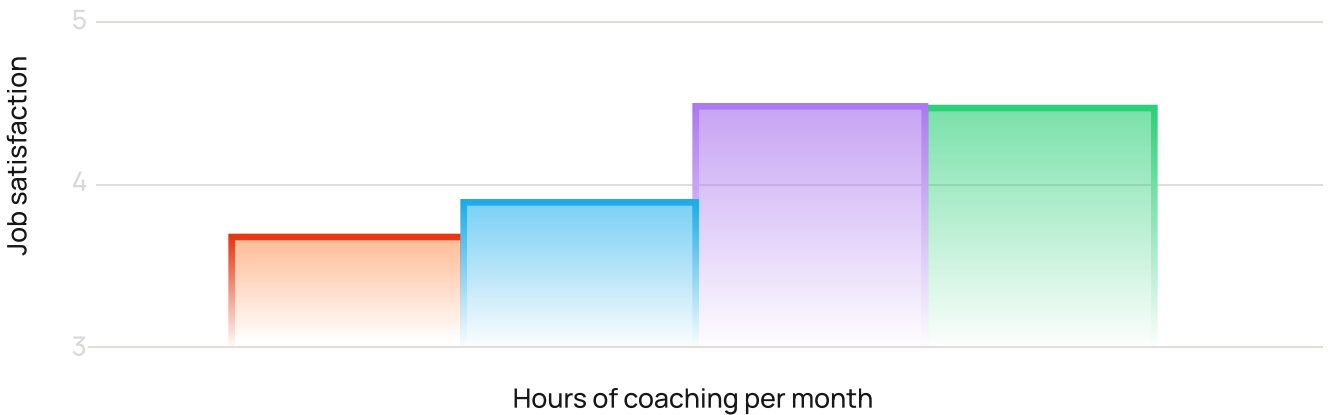
WHAT LEADERS FOCUS ON

36.6% of contact center leaders believe that implementing new technologies is the top priority, but many contact center leaders believe that their team lacks the technical knowhow and resources to implement and manage the solutions effectively. This technology gap can hinder their ability to modernize operations, improve customer experiences, and drive efficiency gains. To bridge the technology gap and successfully implement AI solutions, contact centers should consider partnering with specialized contact center AI providers like Level AI. Customers we work with are typically most impressed by Level AI's ability to quickly ingest their custom rubrics and scorecards and get up and running in a matter of weeks (compared to months and without custom scorecard support with legacy solutions).

As businesses seek to harness the power of AI, it is crucial to carefully consider the risks and tradeoffs involved. A well-planned strategy, coupled with the right AI tools and expertise, is essential to maximize the benefits and mitigate potential challenges. Here is where leaders need to understand that all AI solutions are not created equally - especially when it comes to data governance, transparency, and customization. Level AI was built as an AI-native solution from the ground up focusing on delivering value to the enterprise, meaning data security and other protections are paramount.

Most important thing for contact center leaders

36.6%
Implementing new technologies and processes to improve efficiency

31.7%
Providing ongoing coaching and feedback to agents

22%
Identifying and resolving operational problems

9.8%
Working with other departments to resolve customer issues

61.9% of contact centers prioritize quality oriented metrics like Customer satisfaction and First Call Resolution, while 37.3% of contact centers prioritize revenue/cost related metrics. The survey results also reveal lower job satisfaction when organizations prioritize savings oriented metrics like cost reduction and AHT (3.6 out of 5) rather than quality metrics like CSAT or FCR (4.1 out of 5).

By prioritizing quality-oriented metrics and creating a supportive work environment, contact centers can improve customer experiences, enhance agent satisfaction, and drive sustainable business growth. The key finding here is that to impact your bottom line, measure the things that indirectly *increase topline* (CSAT and FCR) versus those that impact cost savings.

Do you feel your team lacks the technical knowledge or resources to implement and manage automation solutions effectively?

56.6%	24%	19.4%
No	Unsure	Yes
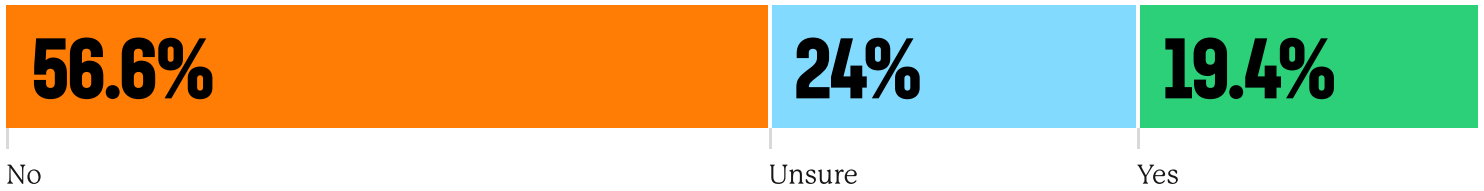
Northstar Metric for the contact center (%)

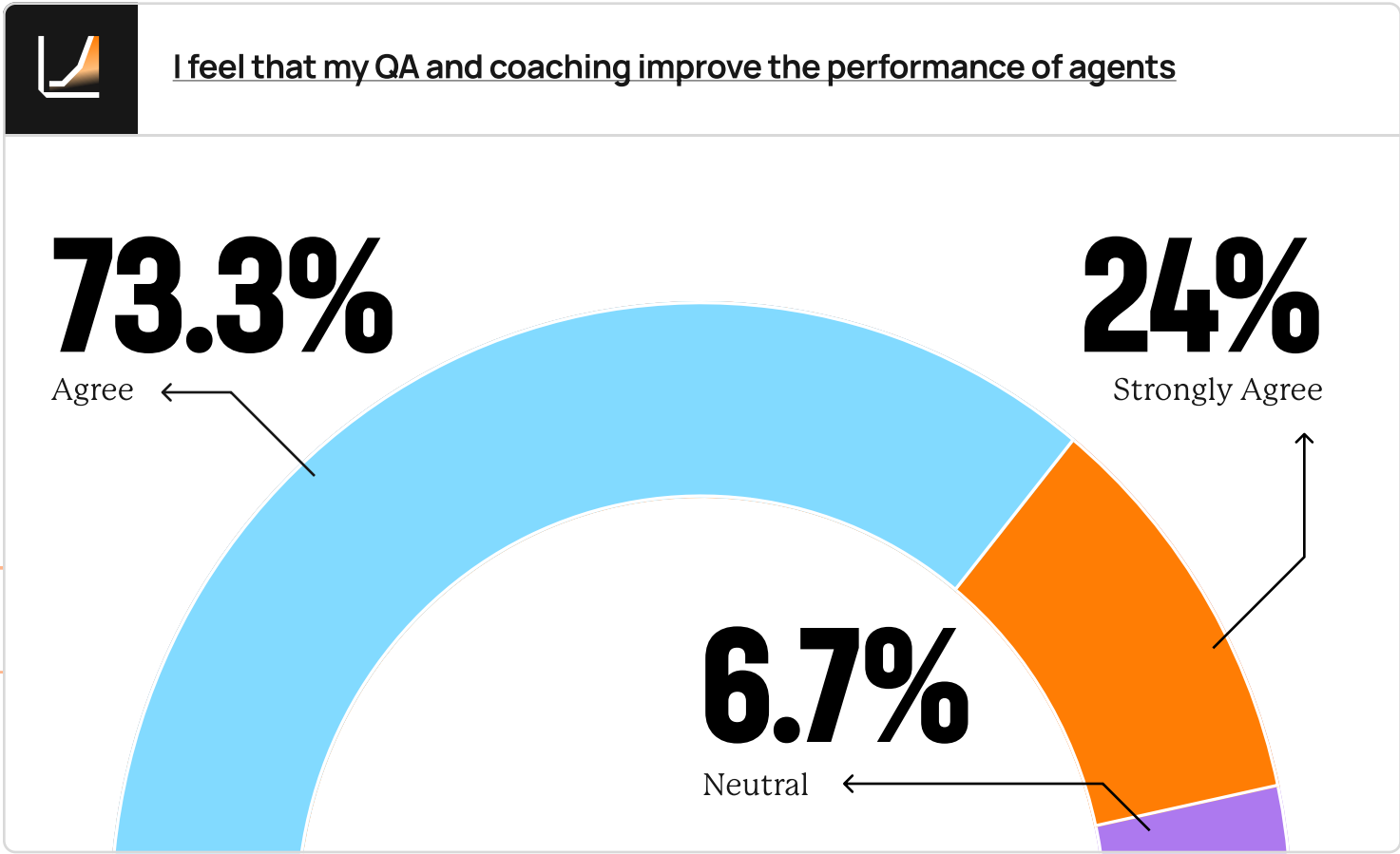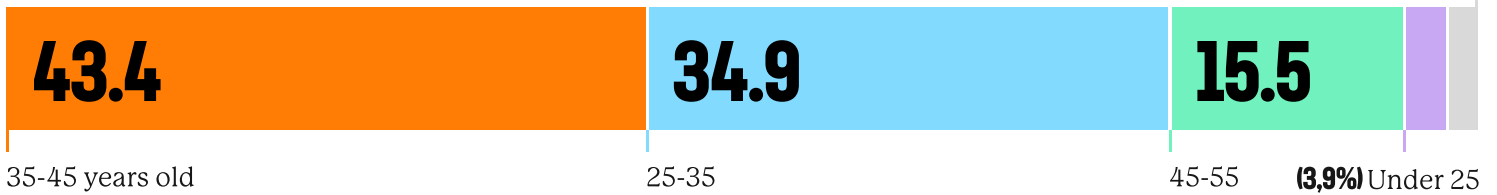| **36.4**	**22.5**	**13.2**	**13.2**
CSAT (Customer Satisaction)	AHT (Average Handing Time)	Revenue	FCR (First Call Resolution)
2.3	**2.3**	**2.3**	**0.8**
Cost reduction	QA	Quality	None

QA MATTERS

Generative AI based Auto-QA solutions are smarter than ever with industry leading QA-GPT by Level AI that can score conversations to your existing scorecard right out of the box. However, they don't replace the QA team entirely. QA managers report higher job satisfaction when using automation to augment their QA process and greatly cutting down call review time. 93.3% of QA managers believe their QA and coaching helps agents, underscoring the value of manual QA.

I feel that my QA and coaching improve the performance of agents

73.3%
Agree

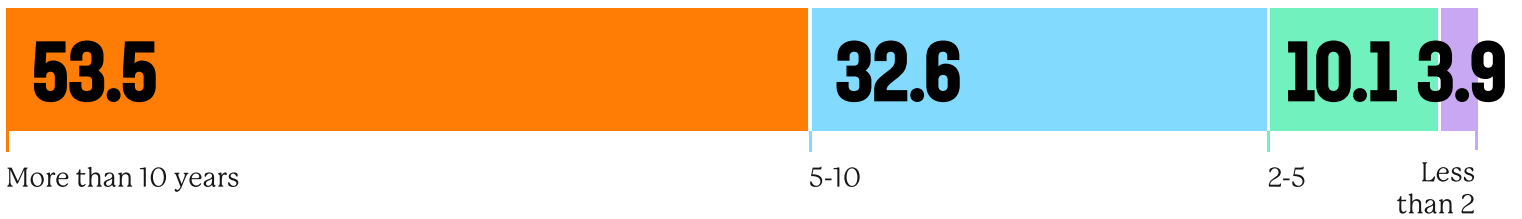**24%**
Strongly Agree

6.7%
Neutral

DEMOGRAPHICS

We collected responses from over 300 contact center leaders, agents, QA managers and others for this survey from a wide range of industries, experiences, and enterprises.
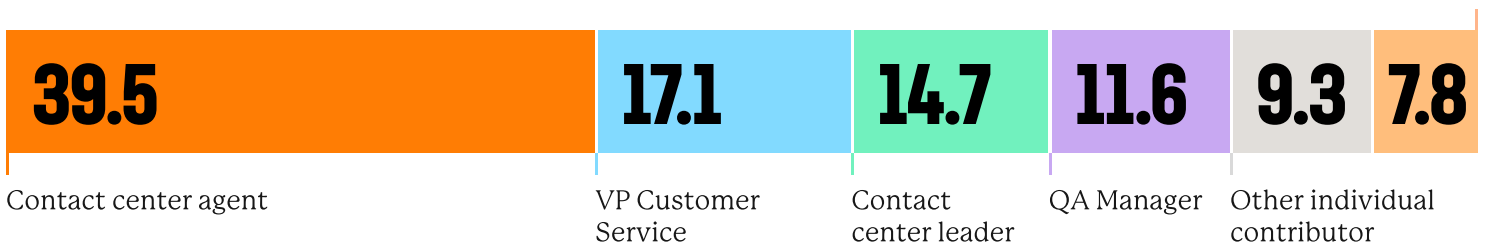
What is your age? (%)

(2,3%) More than 55

43.4	34.9	15.5		

35-45 years old   25-35   45-55   **(3,9%)** Under 25

How many years of experience do you have in contact centers? (%)

53.5	32.6	10.1	3.9

More than 10 years   5-10   2-5   Less than 2

How big is your contact center? (%)

70.5	11.6	11.6	6.2

More than 200 agents   100-200 agents   Less than 50 agents   50-100 agents

How would you best describe your role (%)

Other business leader

39.5	17.1	14.7	11.6	9.3	7.8

Contact center agent   VP Customer Service   Contact center leader   QA Manager   Other individual contributor

DEMOGRAPHICS

What industry do you currently work in?

24% Retail

16.3% Information technology

9.3% Financial services

9.3% Manufacturing

5.4% Healthcare

26% Others
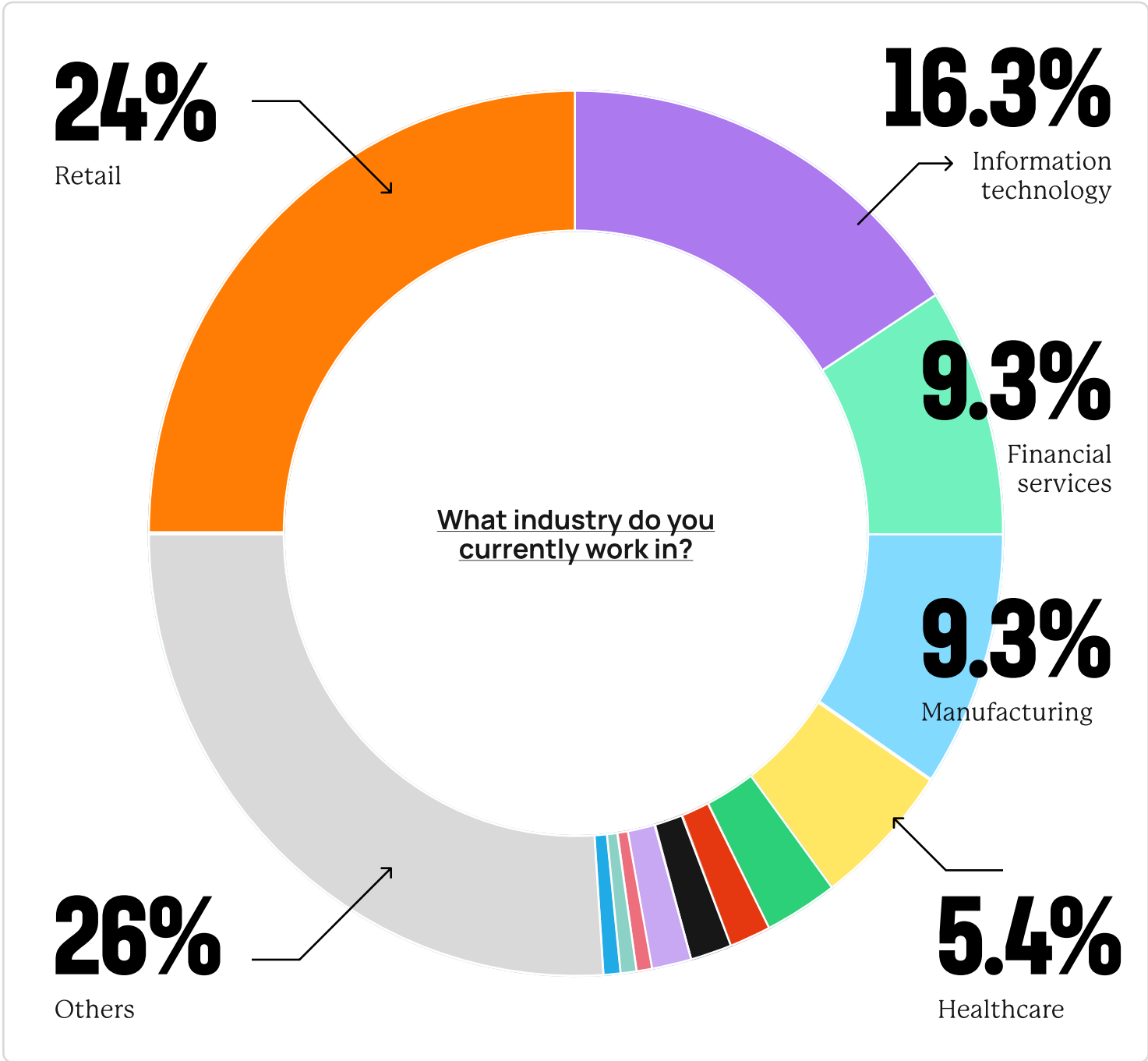
2.3% Customer service

1.6%
· Customer care
· BPO
· Design

0.8%
· BPO Sector
· Contact center
· Online Marketplace

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted by Level AI in September 2024. Survey participants were given 22 to 25 questions that are tailored to their role covering a range of topics including contact center resources, automation, pressure, technology, metrics and more. The sample population spans a wide range of roles, industries, age cohorts and other demographic parameters.