The Modern, Connected CISO

From Responders to Drivers of Change

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This document presents findings from a survey of 1,003 business leaders, both CISOs and line-of-business executives, concerning the influence and effectiveness of information security in their organizations. For reference, information security is considered to include all aspects of IT security and cybersecurity.

The survey was conducted across Europe, the U.S., and Asia/Pacific between August and October 2018 among organizations with 1,000+ employees.

The overall aim of the survey was to gather insight into the relationship between the CISOs (senior leaders in the information and/or cybersecurity function) and their C-level colleagues, the level of influence they have, and the outcomes that result.

From NO to GO
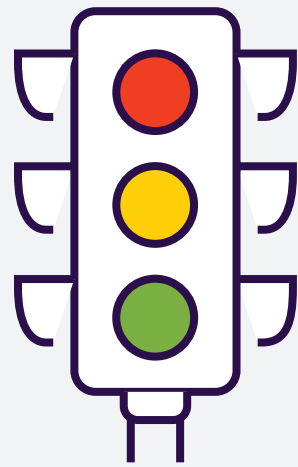
There is a shift in both attitude and perception. The CISO function is less of a blocker and much more of a change agent.

BUSINESS CHANGE AND INNOVATION

INFORMATION SECURITY RISK

"You're the security guy? So, you're the one that says 'No'!"

Goodbye Department of "No"

Historically, information security has had a poor reputation:

○ Viewed as a change/innovation blocker

○ Perceived as not being engaged with the rest of the business
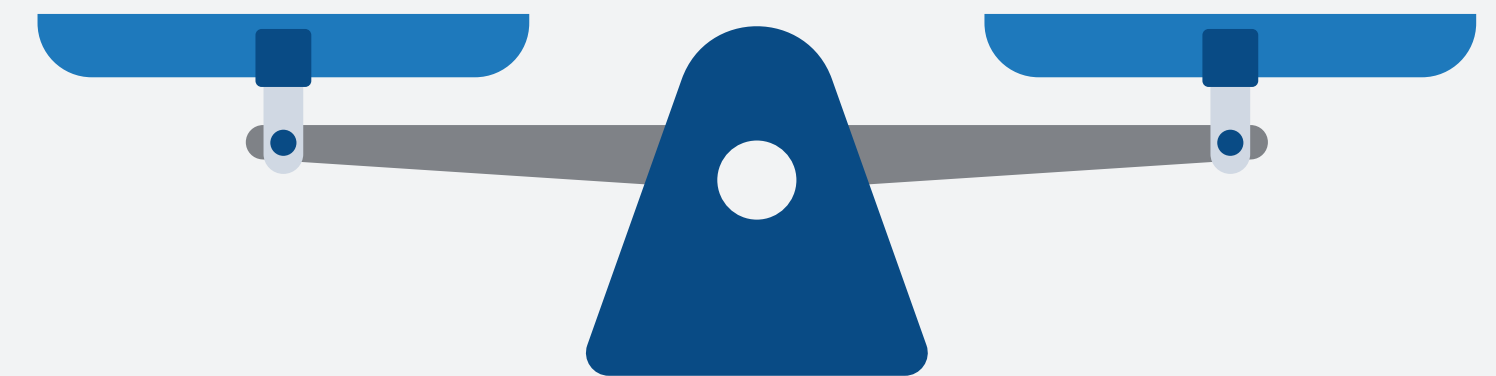
Hello Enabling Attitude

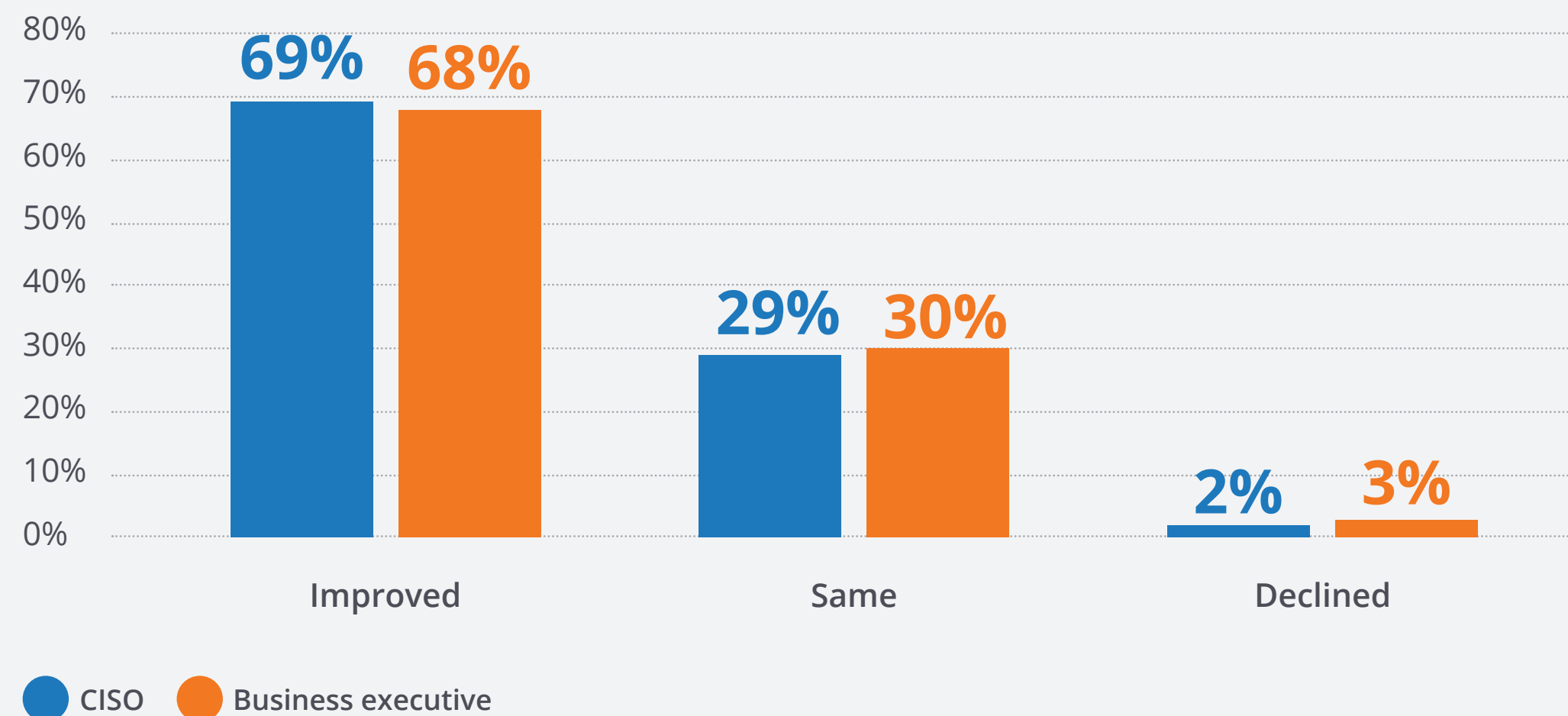Information security is shifting to focus more on helping the organization by:

○ Balancing risk with opportunity

○ Being a source of objective, impartial input

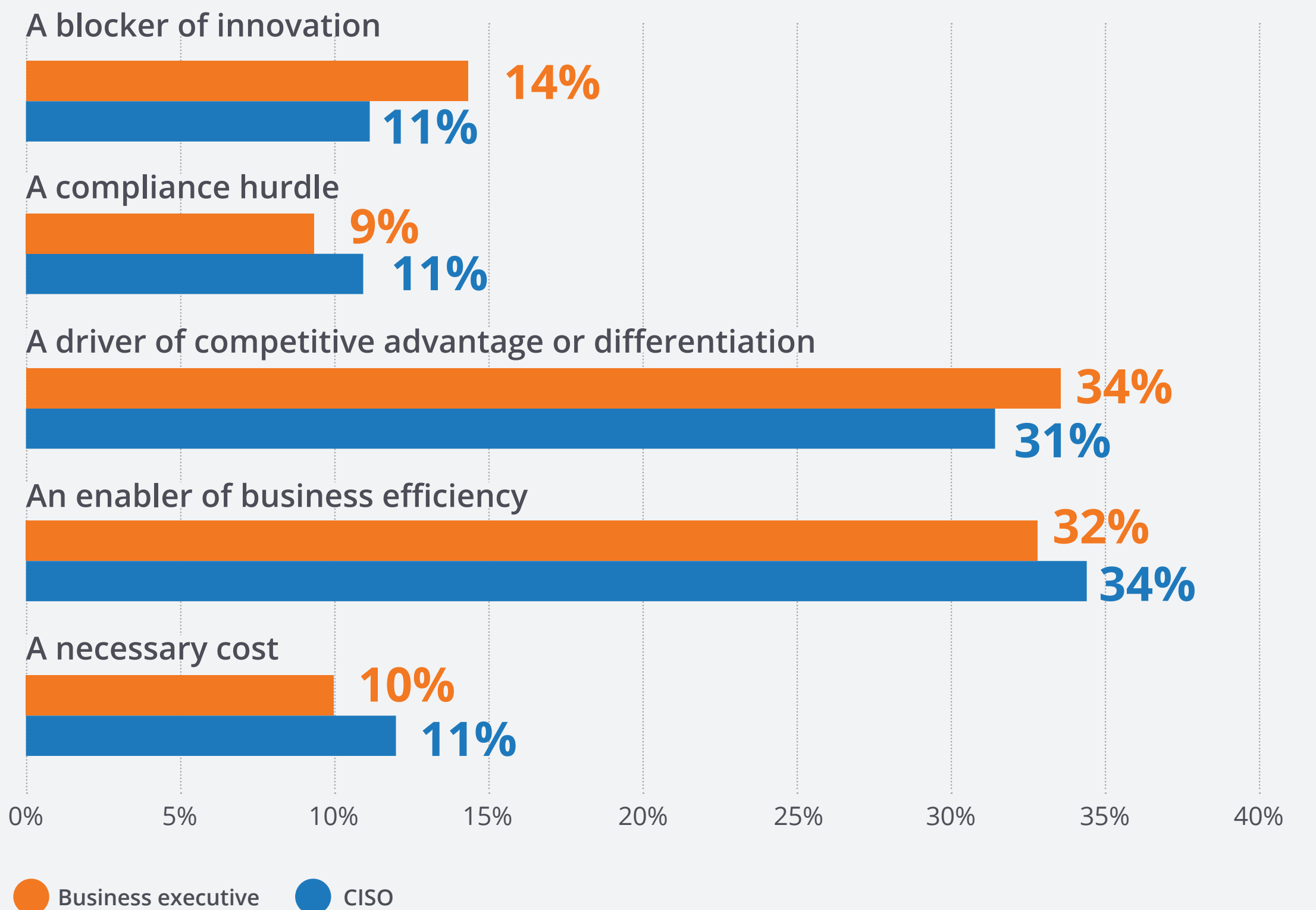# It's Agreed: Information Security is Fundamental to Business Success

Information security is overwhelmingly viewed as being important to the business — by both the CISO and business executives.

There has been a considerable shift in perception over the last three years, with information security becoming more important.

Importance of information security in your organization: change in the past three years?
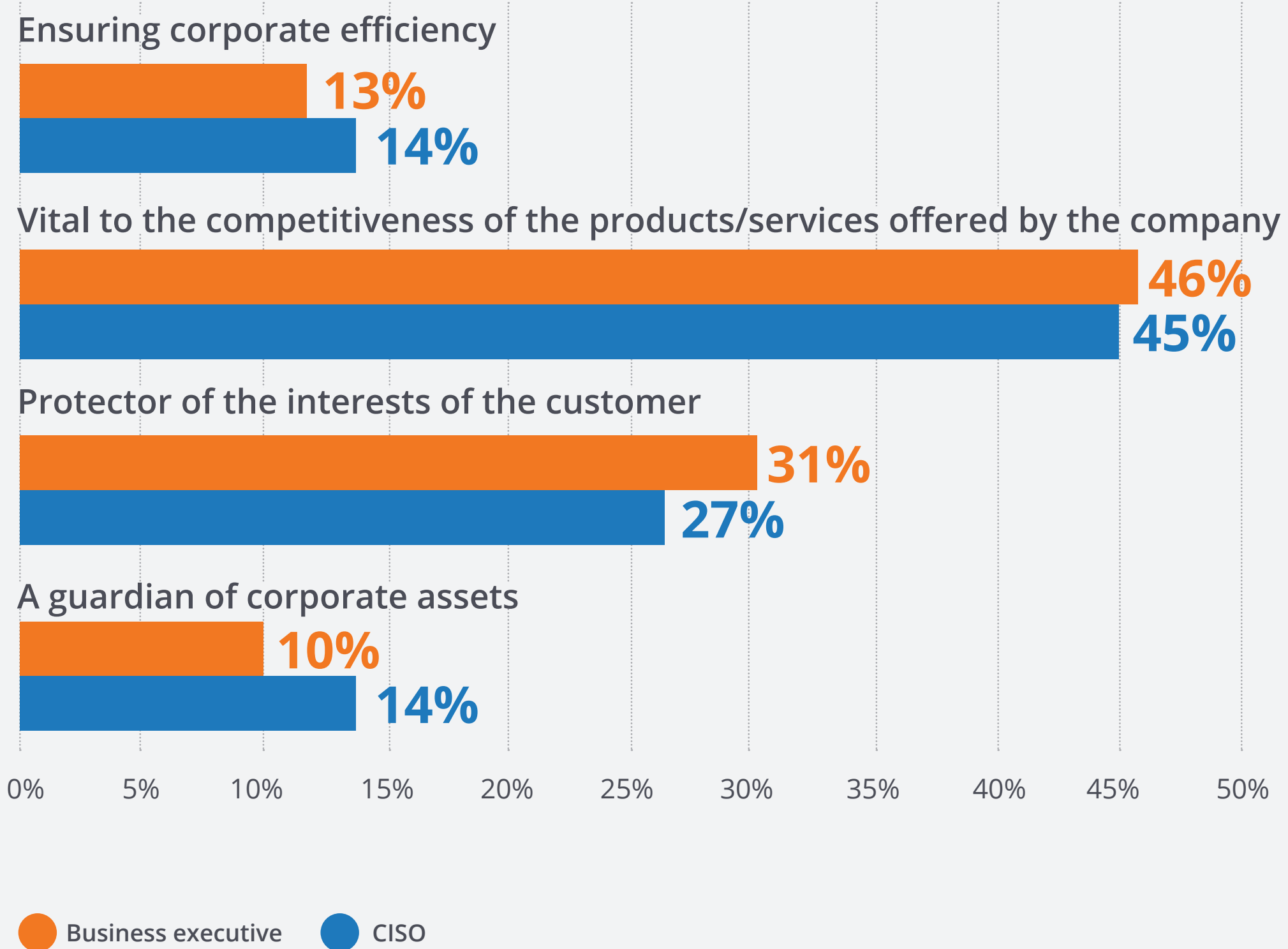
	Improved	Same	Declined
CISO	69%	29%	2%
Business executive	68%	30%	3%

- CISO
- Business executive

Perceptions of information security in the business

A blocker of innovation
- 14%
- 11%

A compliance hurdle
- 9%
- 11%

A driver of competitive advantage or differentiation
- 34%
- 31%

An enabler of business efficiency
- 32%
- 34%

A necessary cost
- 10%
- 11%

- Business executive
- CISO

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It's Agreed: Information Security is Fundamental to Business Success

Information security is contributing to the competitiveness of the company and protecting the interests of the customer.

Why is information security important to the business?

Ensuring corporate efficiency
- 13%
- 14%

Vital to the competitiveness of the products/services offered by the company
- 46%
- 45%

Protector of the interests of the customer
- 31%
- 27%

A guardian of corporate assets
- 10%
- 14%

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% 45% 50%

● Business executive   ● CISO

Business leaders see the ability of the security function to differentiate products and services as being their most important benefit.

# Improved Attitude to Security is Reflected in the Raised Profile of the CISO Function

75%
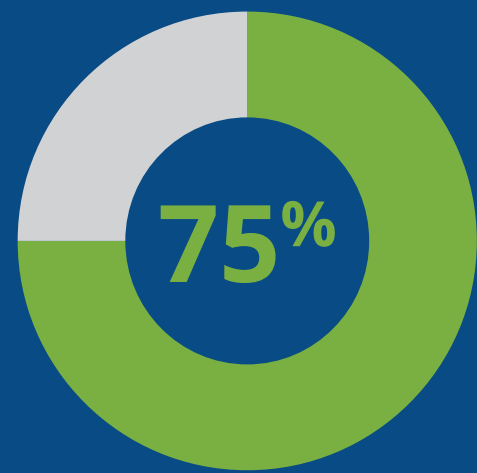
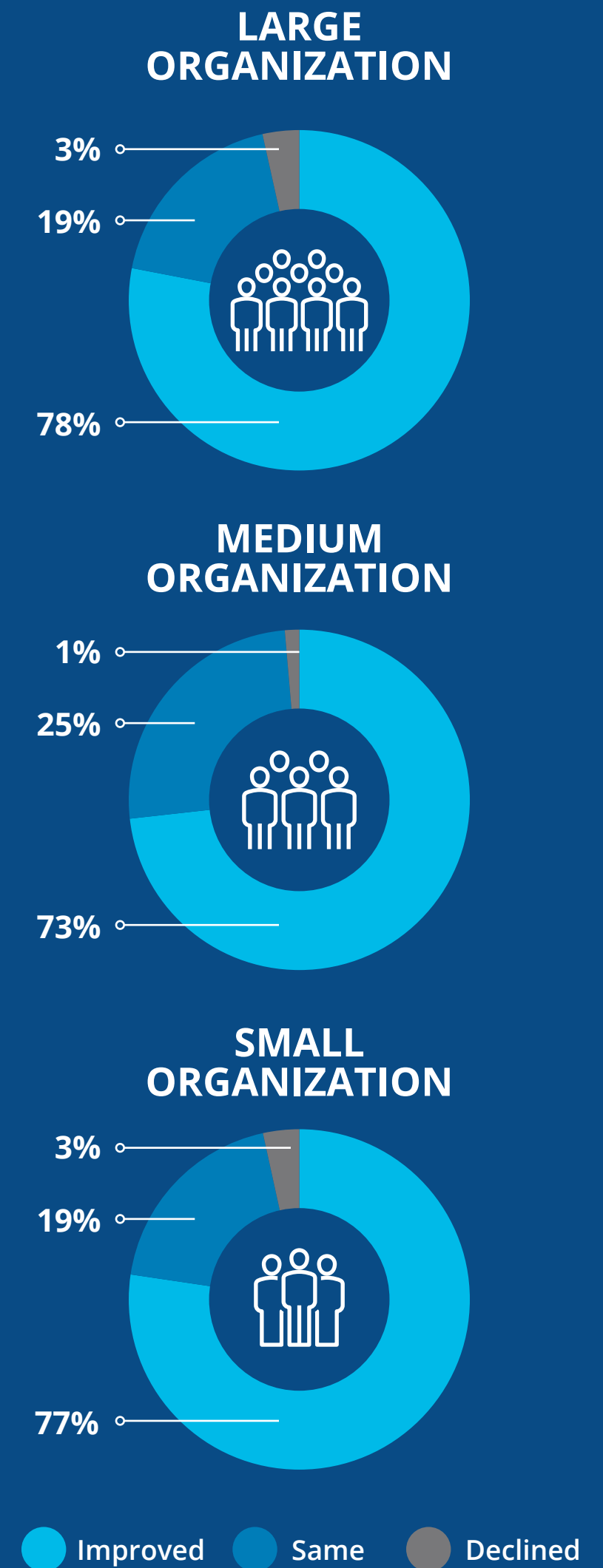The personal influence of the CISO has improved over the past three years, according to business executives and CISOs

CISOs are more engaged and more visible

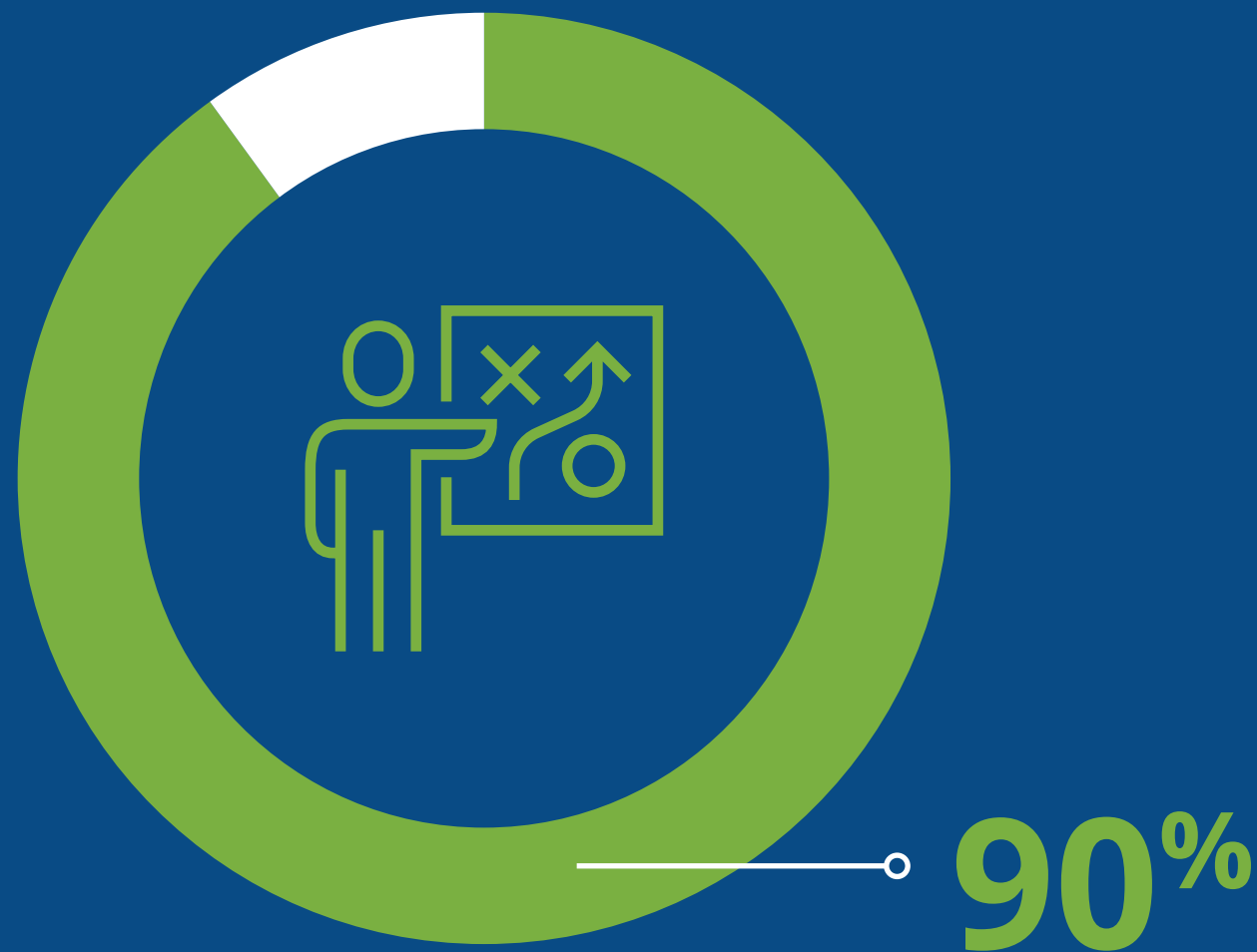CISOs' personal influence in your organization — how has this changed in the past three years?

	Improved	Same	Declined
CISO	76%	22%	3%
Business executive	77%	22%	1%

- CISO
- Business executive
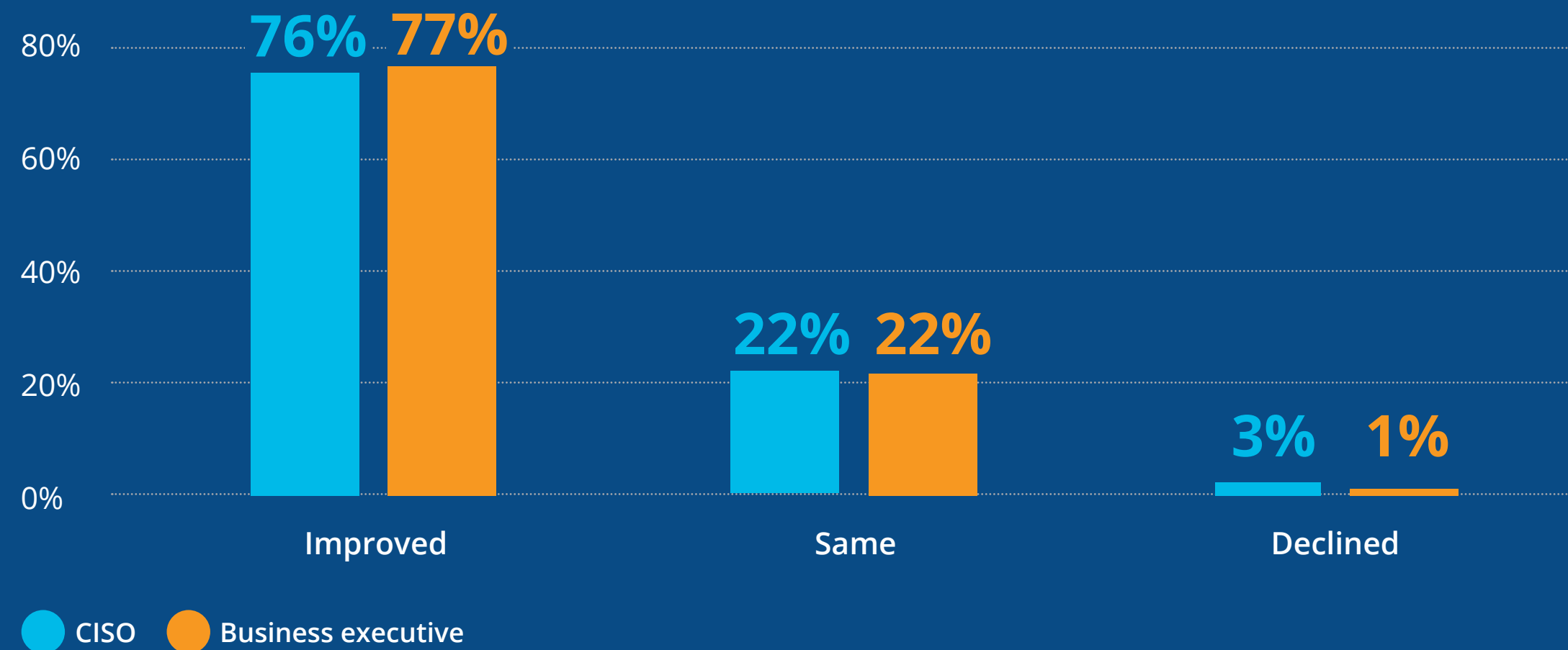
CISO influence improved across all geographies, organizations, and industries

LARGE ORGANIZATION
- 3%
- 19%
- 78%

MEDIUM ORGANIZATION
- 1%
- 25%
- 73%

SMALL ORGANIZATION
- 3%
- 19%
- 77%

- Improved
- Same
- Declined

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All the Way to the Boardroom Table

90%

Business executives and CISOs agree that the CISO is involved in significant business innovation or change decisions
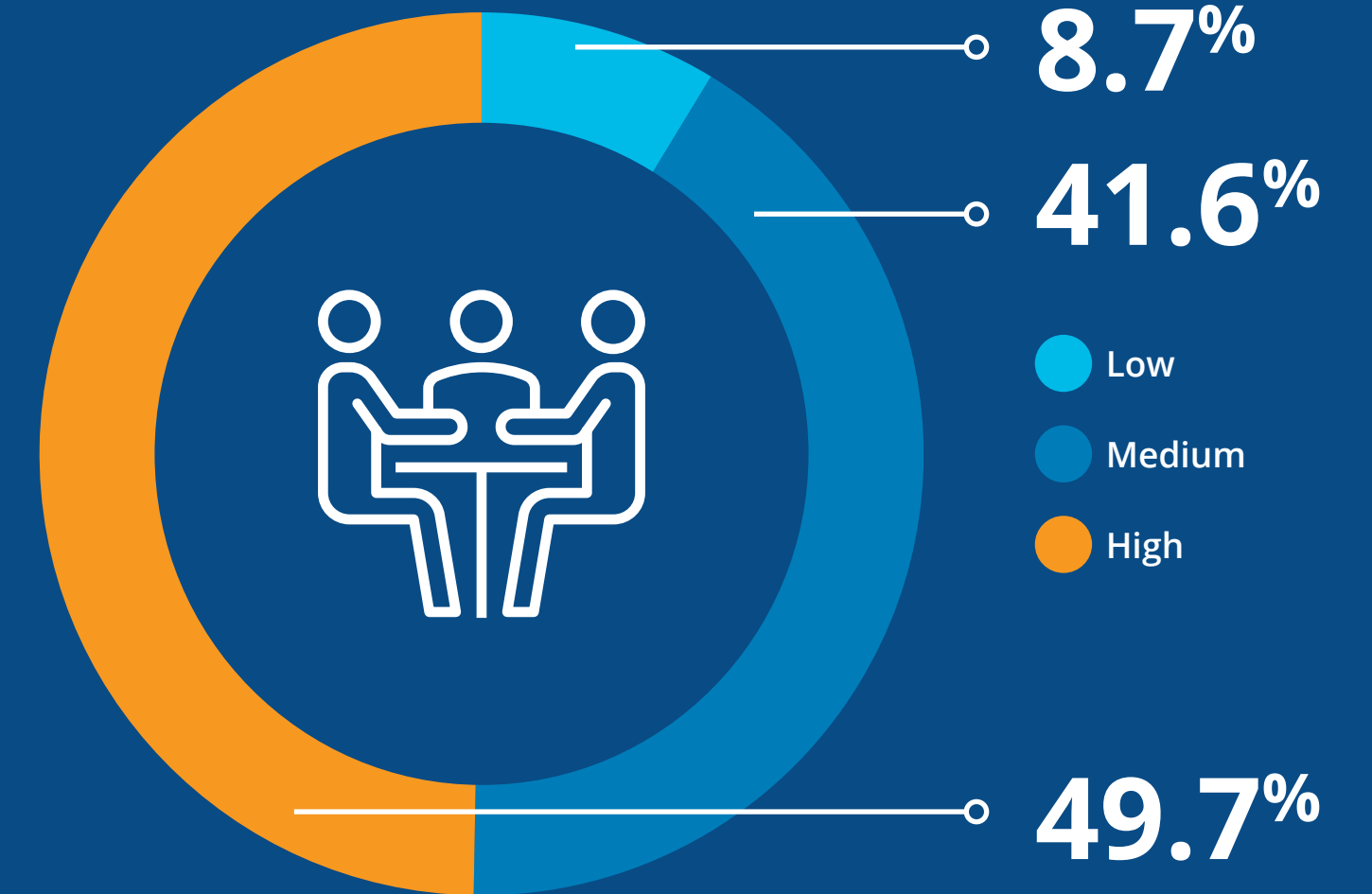
>60%

of organizations have the CISO attending key board/ exec management meetings

>90%

of cases the CISO is seen as having a medium or high influence on board and management decisions
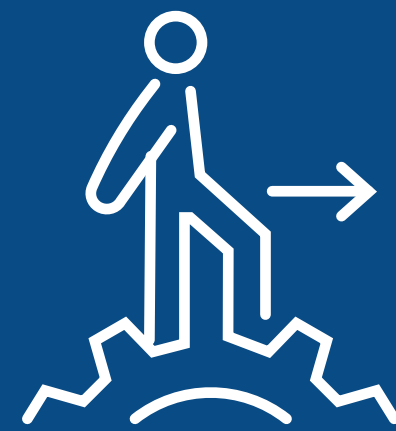
CISO influence on board and management decisions?

8.7%

41.6%

Low

Medium

High

49.7%

CISOs Are Board-Level Influencers

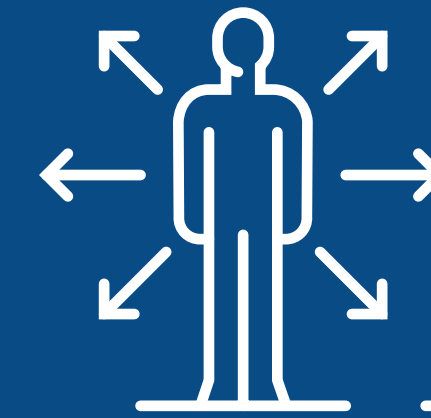IDC | ANALYZE THE FUTURE

CISOs Must Now Become Drivers of Change

Get involved earlier in the process and be a connected CISO

CISOs have made great leaps forward

- Focused on making security operations more effective and efficient
- Engaged with the rest of the business
- Seen as key SMEs to the board
- Responding to business requests and enabling change

CISOs now need to pivot to become business leaders

- Need to be part of the business change ecosystem
- Must be seen as drivers rather than responders
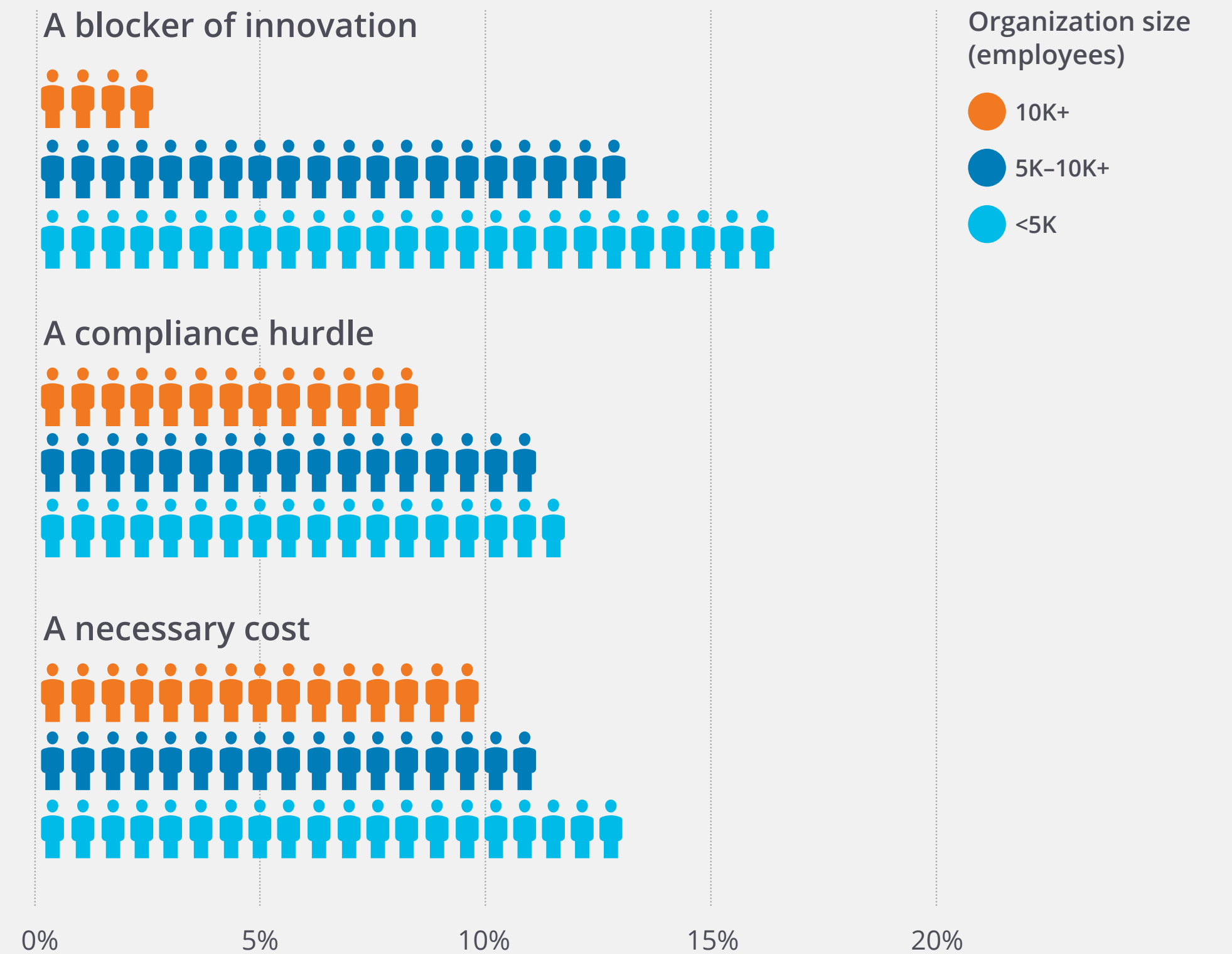- CISO as entrepreneur and innovator

# And Break Down Those Few Remaining Barriers ...

Business Prevention Department

And smaller companies need to learn from their larger peers
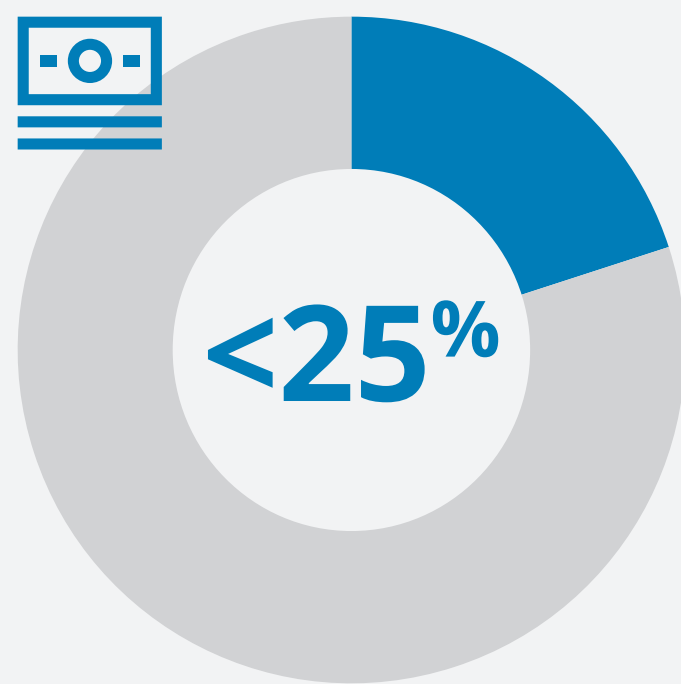
Perceptions of information security

A blocker of innovation

A compliance hurdle

A necessary cost

Organization size (employees)
- 10K+
- 5K–10K+
- <5K

0% 5% 10% 15% 20%

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Because Digital Transformation Dominates Modern Business, CISOs Must Be Proactive to Make it Happen
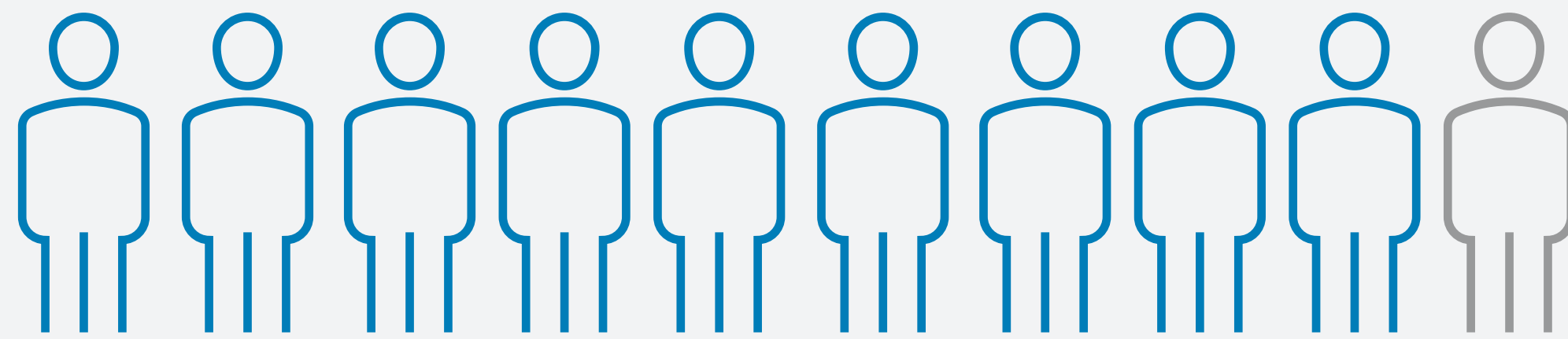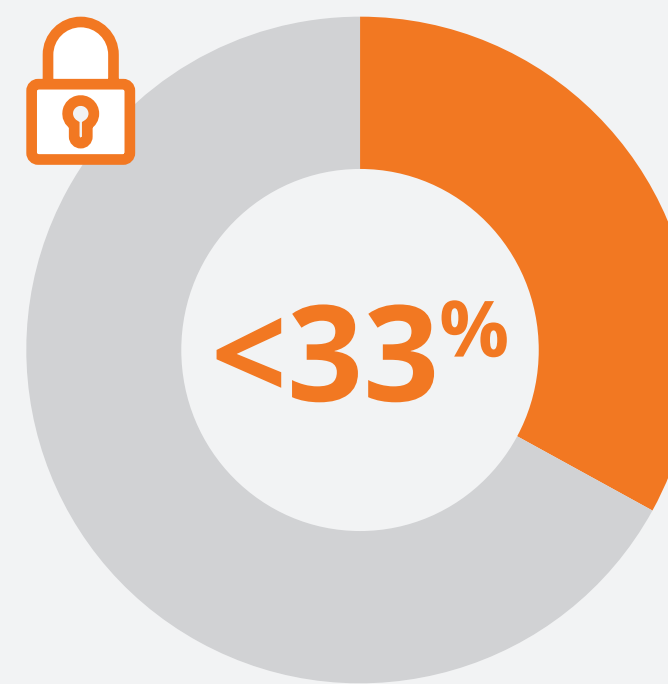
89% of organizations have digital transformation as a business priority

<25% Less than a quarter of business executives see information security as a proactive enabler of digital transformation

&

<33% Less than a third of CISOs see information security as a proactive enabler of digital transformation

To be successful, digital transformation needs to be **supported** and **enabled** by **information security** — an opportunity for CISOs to move onwards and upwards

Some CISOs are Leading the Way and Setting the Agenda for Digital Transformation

A minority of CISOs are becoming significant players in setting the agenda for key initiatives, such as:

**Cloud**   **IoT**   **Mobility**   **AI/ML**   **Blockchain**

But more CISOs need to get involved — up front.

CISOs need to transform themselves and their teams in order to be seen as drivers of business change and innovation, rather than responders. And this requires a different mindset, and set of skills, for the CISO.

The role, and profile, of the CISO is changing.

CISOs setting the agenda for initiatives

Bar chart:
- Cloud: 23%
- IoT: 26%
- Mobility: 16%
- AI/ML: 26%
- Blockchain: 13%
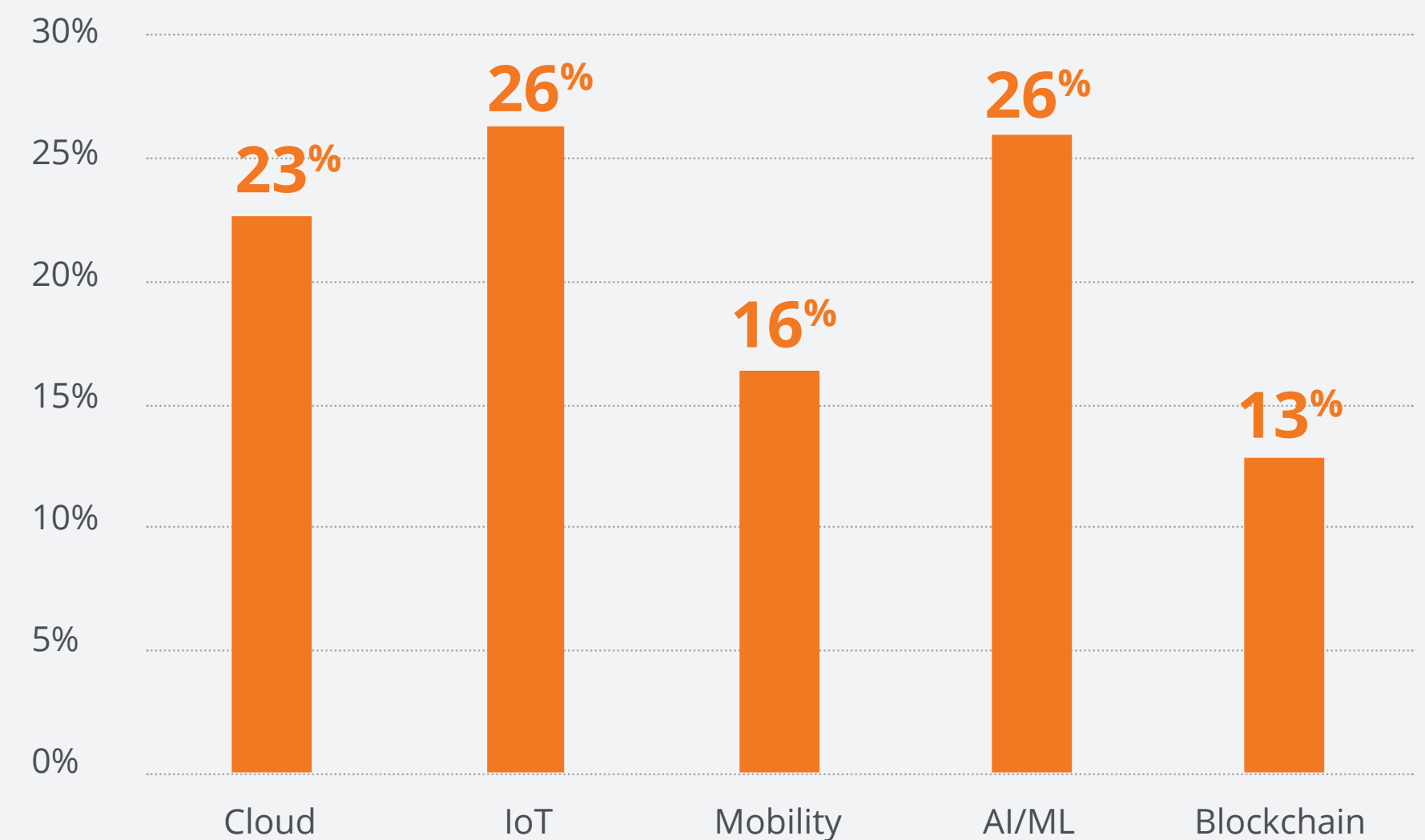
Word cloud: Skills, learning, teachers, professional, student, enhancing, resources, knowledge

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The CISO Must Become a Role Model for Operational Change

Look to outsource non-strategic elements
- Allow your team to focus on the strategic imperatives

Find opportunities to remove obsolete technology, processes, etc.
- Increase operational efficiency and effectiveness

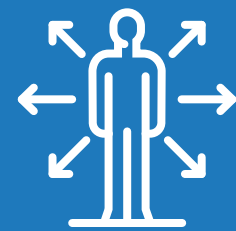### Seek out automation and orchestration opportunities
- Reduce the impact of skills/resource shortages
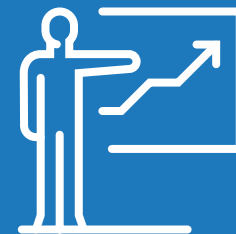
Make security business-as-usual
- Embed information security into business processes

The Future Role MUST be a Modern, Connected, CISO

Increase personal organizational engagement

- Build your personal network with face-to-face interaction

Develop and enhance business skills

- Finance, risk, marketing, comms, etc.

Lead change, don't follow

- Seek out opportunities to participate in business change and innovation initiatives

Be seen as a thought leader

- Invest in adding value to business initiatives by providing objective, impartial input and advice

The CISO Must Become a Leader in Business Change

Engage with the business

- Embed team members in key business processes (e.g., project meetings, development)
- Learn to speak in business terms rather than security terms

Look for diversity in recruitment

- All skills, and thinking, can be helpful to the team (not just techies)

Establish team member development plans

- Include both information security and business skills
- Career paths

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