2019

SCRUM MASTER TRENDS

An update to Age of Product's 2017 Scrum Master Salary Report following the profession's most comprehensive survey ever conducted

2019

SCRUM MASTER TRENDS

Contents

The top trends of one of this century's most lucrative job roles

The role of the Scrum Master has become increasingly popular and important in recent years. In 2018, Glassdoor continues to include Scrum Master in their list of highest paying jobs [1] — ranking at Number 20 with a median salary of $98,239 USD [2], it's climbed two spots since 2017. LinkedIn also included Scrum Master in its 2019 Most Promising Jobs list [3]. With the growth of Agile and Scrum as a whole, this does not come as a surprise.

1. Glassdoor, Inc. "25 Highest Paying Jobs in America".

2. United States Dollars

3. Pattabiraman, Kumaresh. "LinkedIn's Most Promising Jobs of 2019". LinkedIn, 10 Jan 2019.

To gain broader perspective and to increase their reach and the number of survey participants as compared to what they achieved for 2017's Scrum Master Salary Report, Age of Product partnered with Scrum.org — and grew the number of survey participants worldwide from more than 500 in 2017 to more than 2,100 in 2018. Now titled Scrum Master Trends, this new report covers not only salaries but also many of the trends affecting the profession. Herein you'll find facts and statistics not readily available anywhere else, and clarity on a number of issues likely to be of concern to Scrum Masters and others who work as members of agile teams:

- Trends in gender equality

- Trends in the use of agile frameworks, practices, and techniques

- The use of agile scaling frameworks

- Trends in agile adoption

- The importance of Scrum and Agile training and certification

Survey participants

Geography

Participants in the 2018 survey came from 87 different countries all over the globe. The top countries this year included the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, India, the United Kingdom, Canada, Poland, France, Brazil, and Australia.

Participants by country

Australia **2%**   France **3%**   Netherlands **7%**   USA **28%**

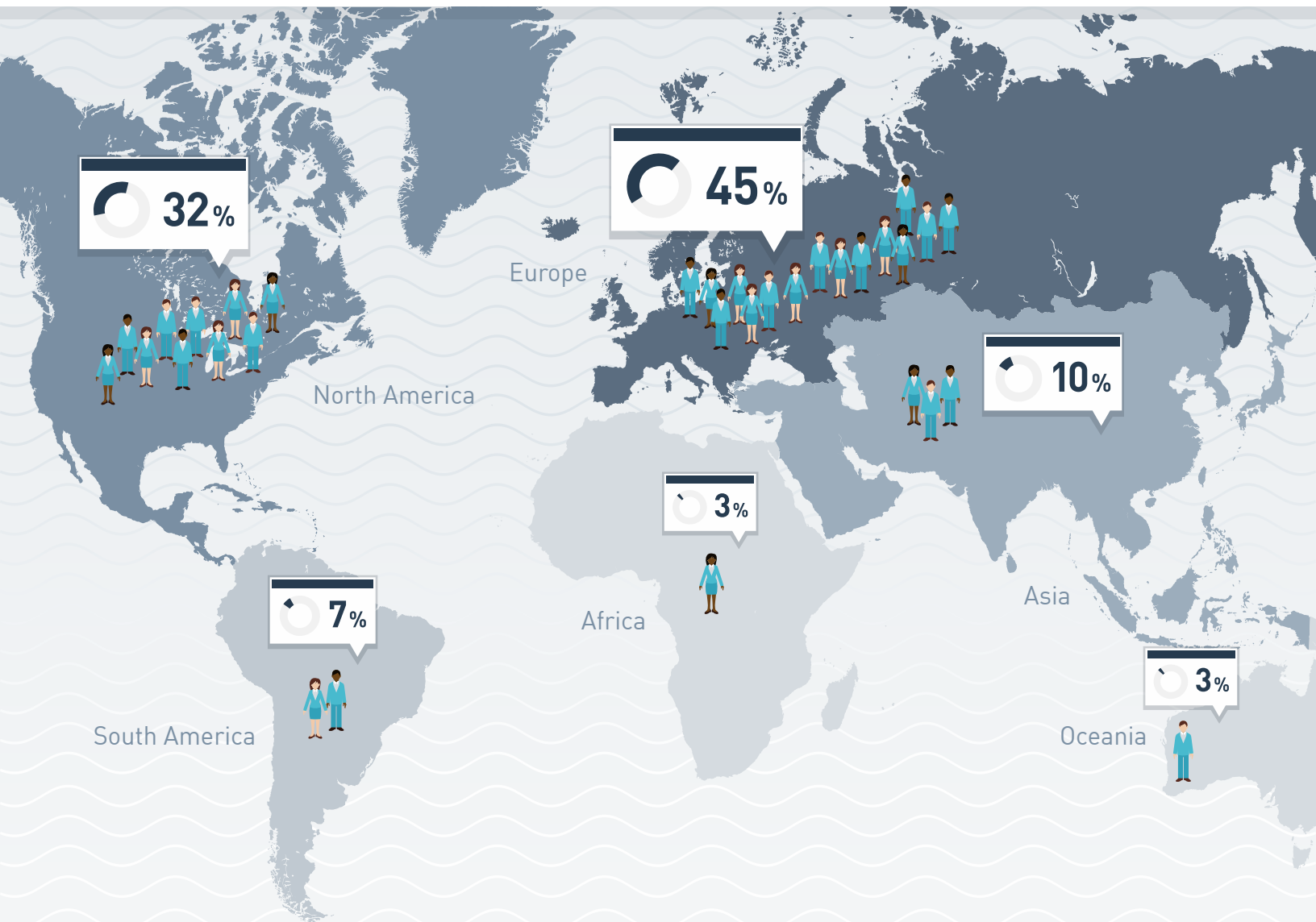Brazil **3%**   Germany **9%**   Poland **3%**

Canada **4%**   India **7%**   UK **6%**

Participants by region

North America — 32%

Europe — 45%

Asia — 10%

South America — 7%

Africa — 3%

Oceania — 3%

Age

Although the ages of survey participants were diverse, almost half of participants were between 30 and 39 years of age. Age distribution was similar between male and female participants.

Participants by age

- 30 or younger
- 40 or younger
- 50 or younger
- 60 or younger
- older than 60

12 %
41%
27 %
16 %
4 %
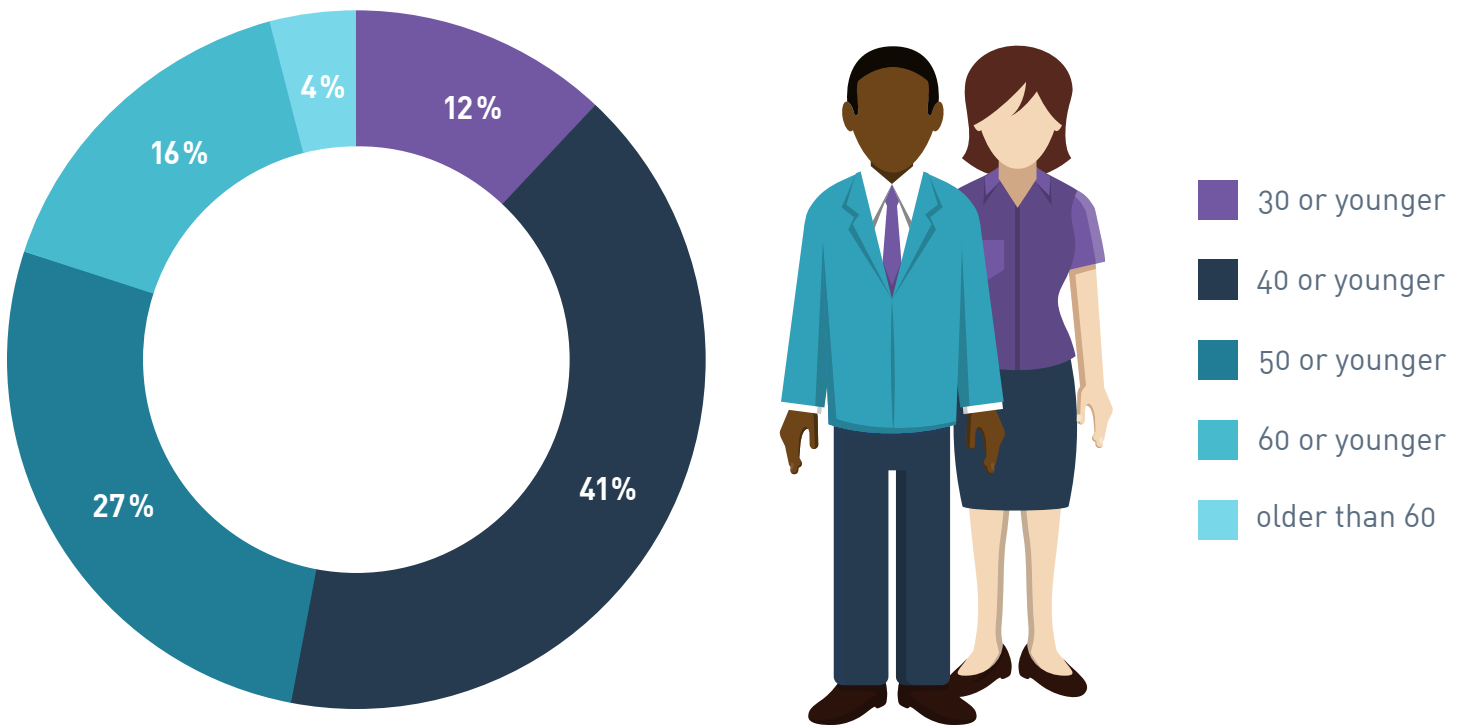
Gender

The male to female ratio among participants did not change in comparison to the 2017 survey. However, when you look at the ages of the participants, the younger generation of females is catching-up — which looks promising for the future.

Participants by gender

29 %
female

30 or younger	**17 %**
40 or younger	**37 %**
50 or younger	**24 %**
60 or younger	**18 %**
older than 60	**4 %**

71 %
male

30 or younger	**10 %**
40 or younger	**43 %**
50 or younger	**28 %**
60 or younger	**15 %**
older than 60	**4 %**

Industry

33 percent of participants were in industries related to software and the internet. This was followed by 16 percent in finance and insurance, 10 percent in consulting and professional services, and 7 percent in engineering and technology.

Participants by industry

Industry	Participants
Software and internet services	33 %
Finance and insurance	16 %
Consulting and professional services	10 %
Engineering and technology	7 %
Telecommunications	5 %
Transportation	4 %

Industry	Participants
Healthcare	4 %
Energy	2 %
Manufacturing	2 %
Media	2 %
Defense	1 %
Real estate	1 %

Education

The majority of both male and female participants hold either a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. 85 percent of males and 66 percent of females across all age groups have backgrounds in IT, business, or engineering.
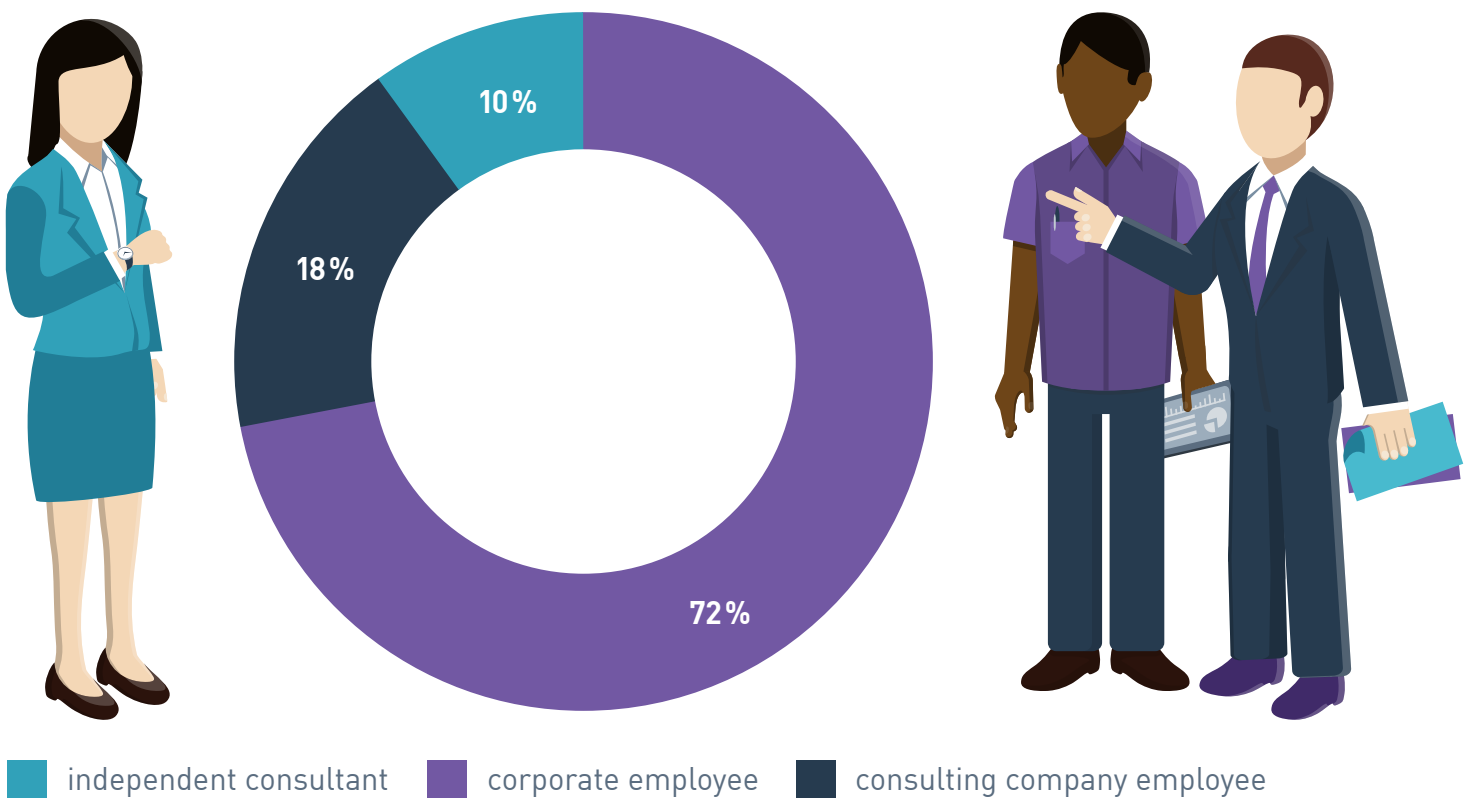
Participants by education

9% — High school

48% — Bachelor's degree

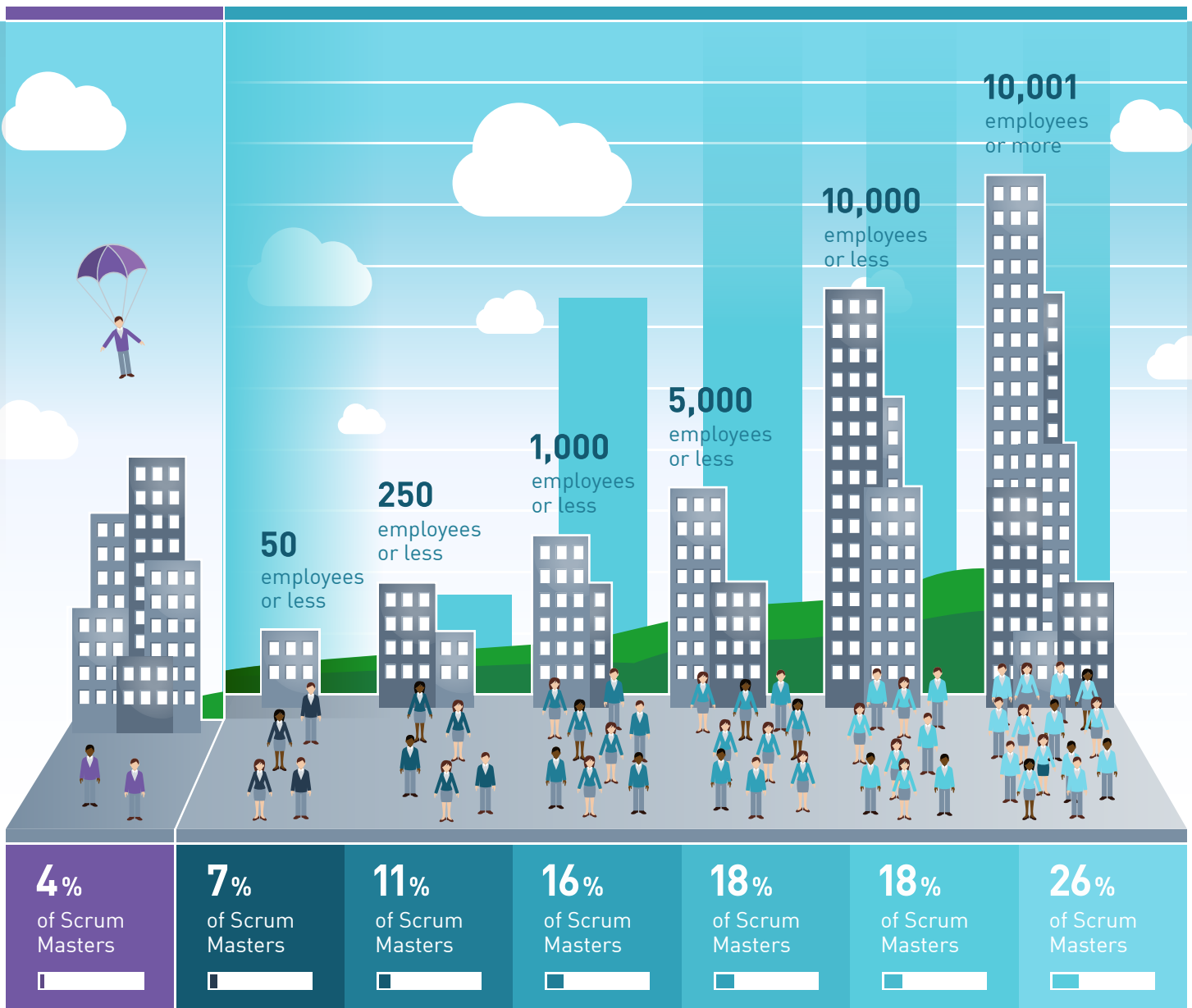41% — Master's degree

2% — Doctorate
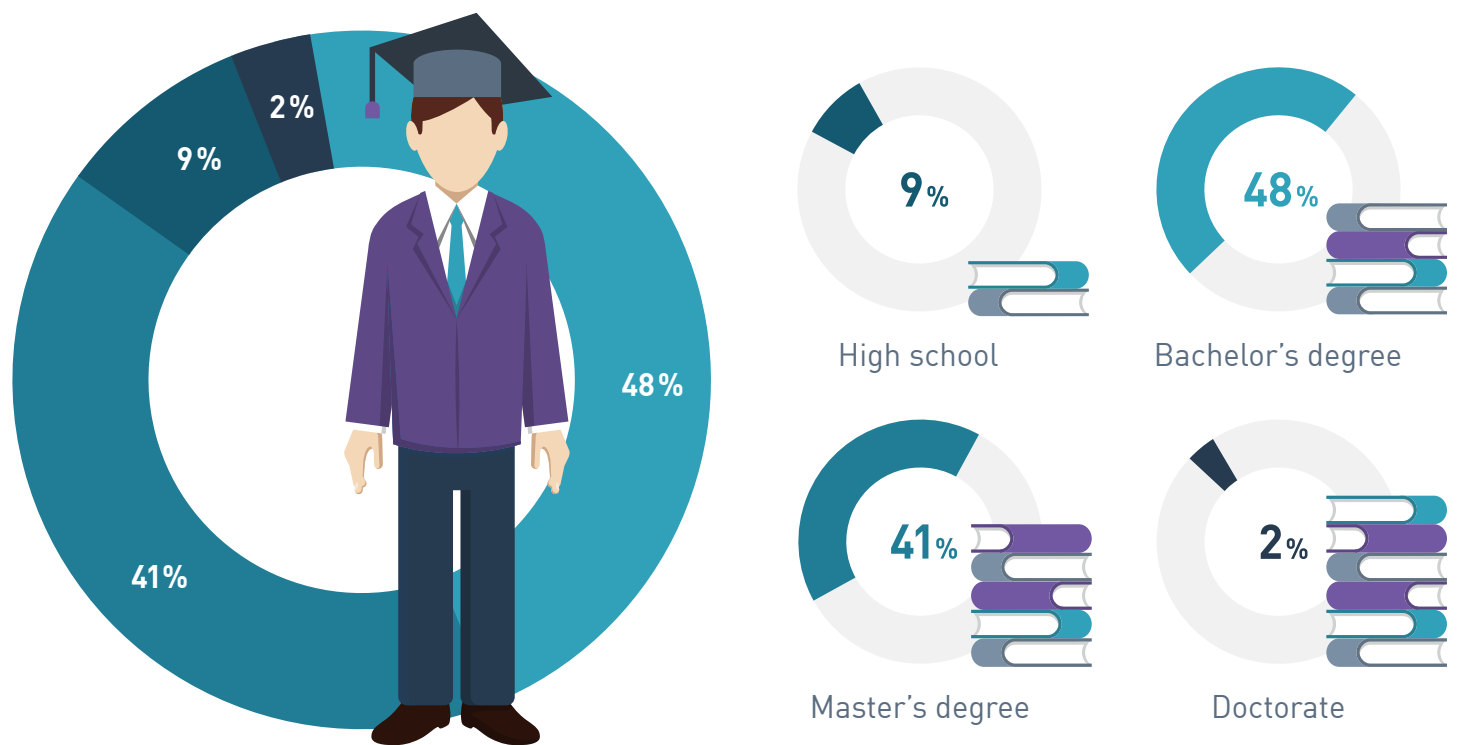
Company size and work arrangement

Participants reported working for companies of all sizes. 34 percent of the participants were working for companies under 1,000 people. Only 4 percent of participants were working with multiple clients. 72 percent of participants were corporate employees, and the remaining 28 percent were working either at consulting companies or as independent consultants.

Scrum Masters by work arrangement

10 %

18 %

72 %

■ independent consultant   ■ corporate employee   ■ consulting company employee

Scrum Masters by size of organization

10,001
employees
or more

10,000
employees
or less

5,000
employees
or less

1,000
employees
or less

250
employees
or less

50
employees
or less

4% of Scrum Masters

7% of Scrum Masters

11% of Scrum Masters

16% of Scrum Masters

18% of Scrum Masters

18% of Scrum Masters

26% of Scrum Masters

■ Scrum Masters working with multiple clients

■ Scrum Masters employed by size of organization

Agile transitions and scaling
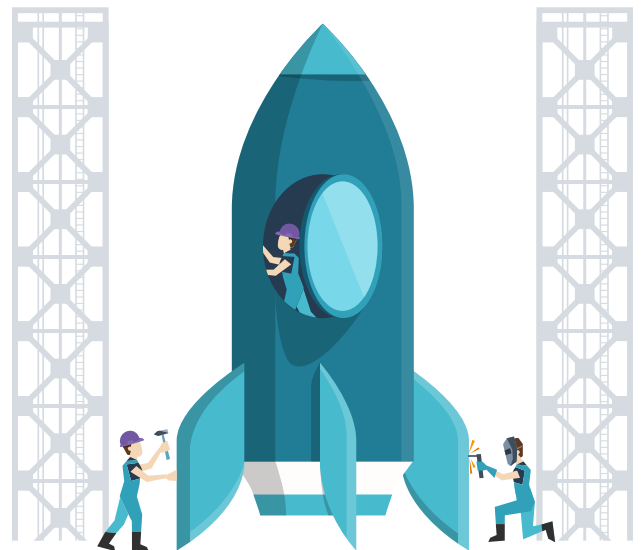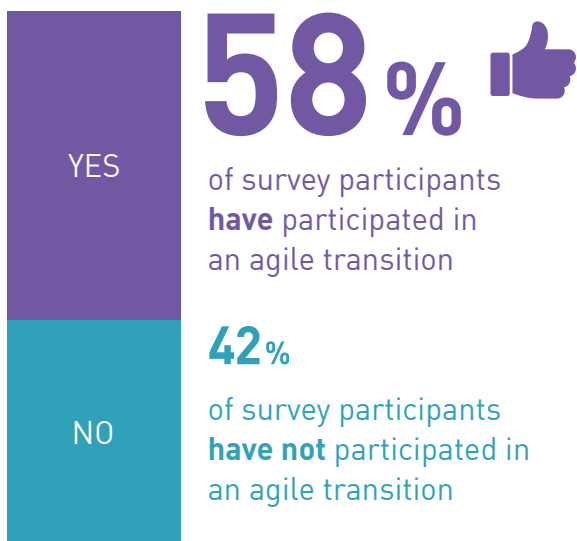
Agile transition trends

Agile transformations and transitions are top-of-mind and in-progress for enterprise and small to midsize organizations alike. Economist Carlota Perez describes these transitions as a common-sense response to the digital age:

> No one today would propose a centralized, rigid, top-down organizational structure, where you cannot communicate across functions except through your bosses, but that was precisely what Alfred Sloan set-up at General Motors, to great advantage at his time. With today's communications and flexible

> technologies, agile creative networks make more sense and lead to much
> more productivity. [4]

The survey results indicate that this trend will not be slowing down any time soon. Of the survey's participants, 58 percent have taken part in an agile transition. 42 percent of participants have launched an agile transition. Of those who said they were a Scrum Master, 58 percent said that they have launched an agile transition. These statistics prove that the role of Scrum Master is a prominent role in transitions, likely a result of their mandate to remove impediments and protect the Scrum Team.

Have you participated in an agile transition?

YES

58% 👍

of survey participants **have** participated in an agile transition

42%

of survey participants **have not** participated in an agile transition

NO

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4.   Kleiner, Art. "Carlota Perez: The Thought Leader Interview". Strategy+Business, 29 Nov 2005.

Have you **launched** an agile transition?

45%
of survey participants
have launched an
agile transition

55%
of survey participants
have not launched an
agile transition

YES

NO
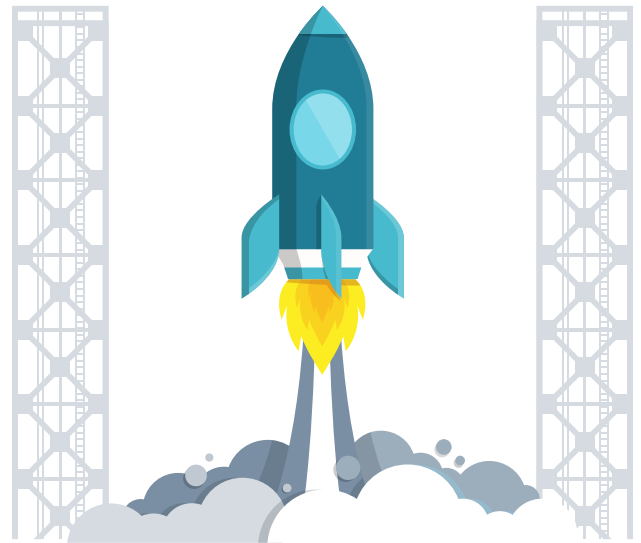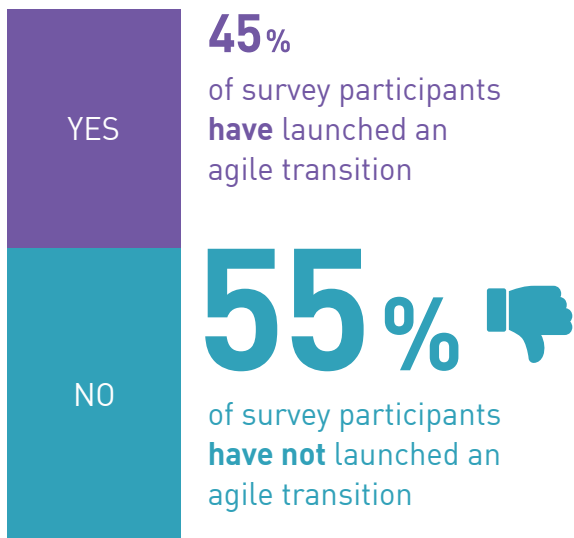
Scaling is on the rise

For enterprise-level organizations, while they are transitioning, they are also looking to scale. Nearly 50 percent of survey participants reported using a scaling framework for their agile practices. SAFe, LeSS, and Nexus were the most popular. While 71 percent of participants use a single scaling framework, 29 percent use more than one. Much like what was found with agile frameworks as a whole, organizations are combining frameworks and practices to do what is best for their teams. Of those using multiple frameworks, 39 percent used SAFe and others, 28 percent used LeSS and others, and 27 percent used Nexus and others.
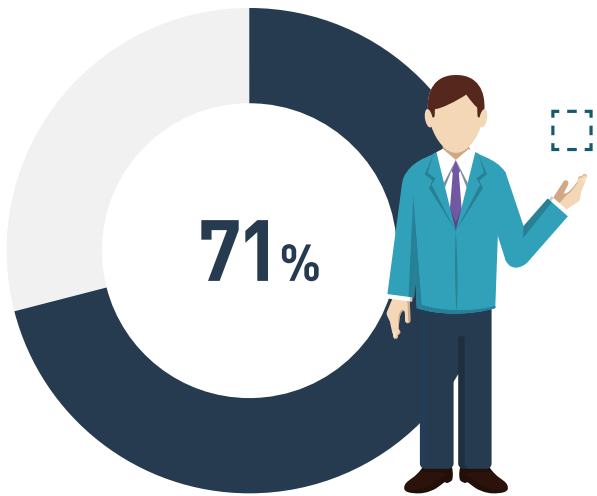
One other item in relation to scaling is the breakdown of participants that are consul-tants, working for consulting companies, or working for a corporate organization: 72 percent were corporate employees, 18 percent consulting company employees, and 10 percent independent consultants. [5]

Popularity of scaling frameworks
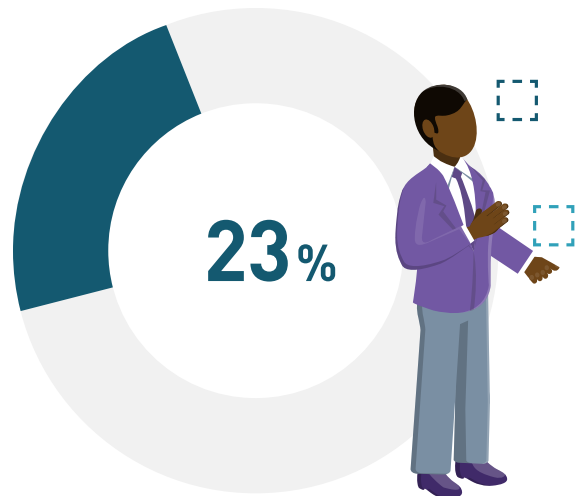
49 %

51 %

23 %

10 %

9 %

7 %

2 %

No framework

DAD   LeSS   Nexus   SAFe   Other
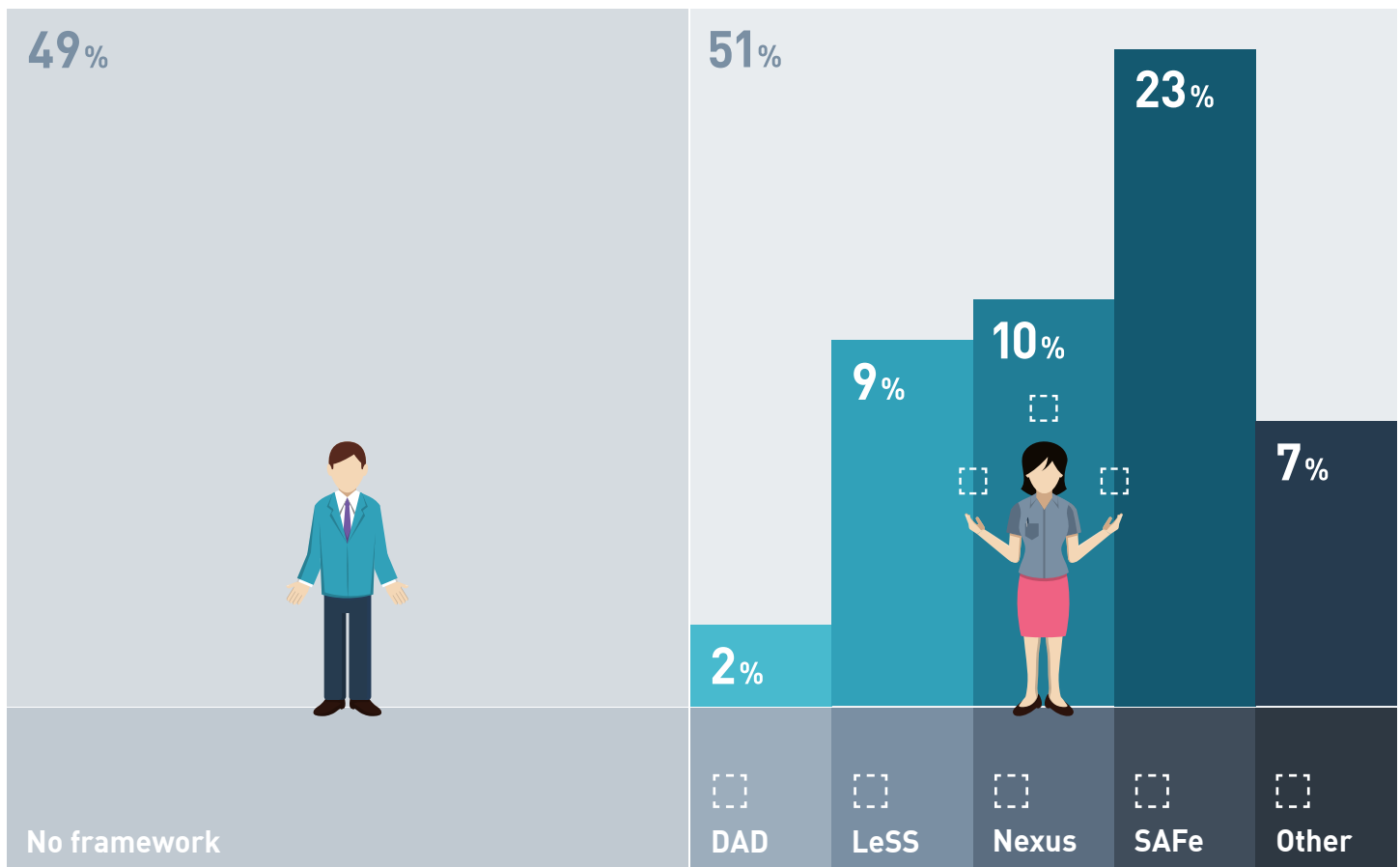
Use of multiple scaling frameworks
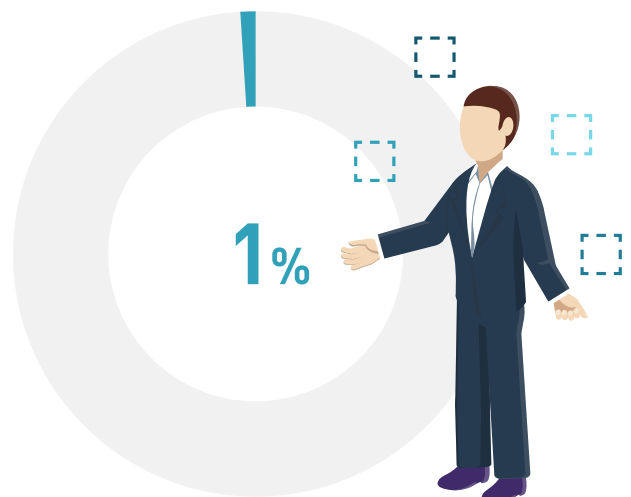
71%

1 framework

23%

2 frameworks

5%

3 frameworks

1%
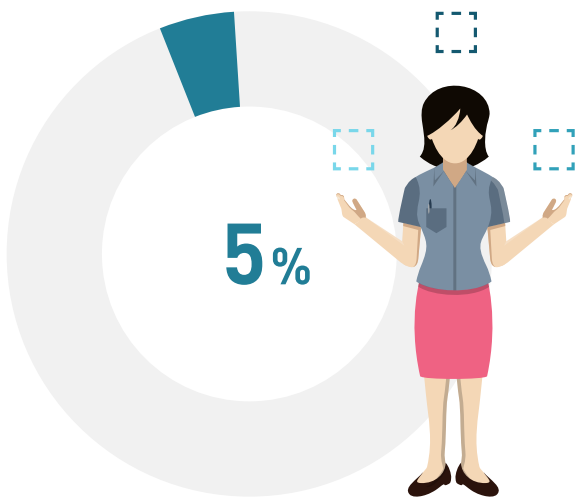
4 frameworks

State of the Scrum Master

Outside of salary, this survey looks at a number of other factors indicative of trends affecting the role of Scrum Master, including the experience, education, training, and certification of Scrum Masters, the number of agile projects worked on, and the number of Scrum Teams involved.

78 percent of participants have less than five years of experience and 35 percent less than two. 50 percent of participants have worked on more than ten projects, and there was a relatively even distribution of projects from small scale (one or two teams) to complex (more than nine teams). 81 percent who have complex projects (more than nine teams) are using a scaling framework.

The majority of participants had been with their companies for less than six years (77 percent), yet 14 percent had been with their companies for more than ten. Formal job titles varied among participants: 39 percent held the title "Scrum Master", 15 percent "Agile Coach", and there was an array of others — including "Product Owner", "Development Team Member", and "Product Manager". 63 percent of participants said that agile processes are owned by the "IT" or "Software Development" group within their organization, followed by "Project Management Office" (PMO) and "Product Management" — the many responses assigning ownership of agile processes to "other" indicates ownership of these processes by the entire organization.

When participants were asked what their previous role was before becoming a Scrum Master, there was a wide array of responses, including 31 percent saying "Project Manager", 25 percent "Software Developer", 9 percent "Business Analyst", and 8 percent "QA".

Years of Scrum Master experience

10%

35%

less than 2 years

33%

more than 2 years

17%

more than 5 years

4%

more than 10 years

1%

more than 15 years

Number of agile projects worked on

10%
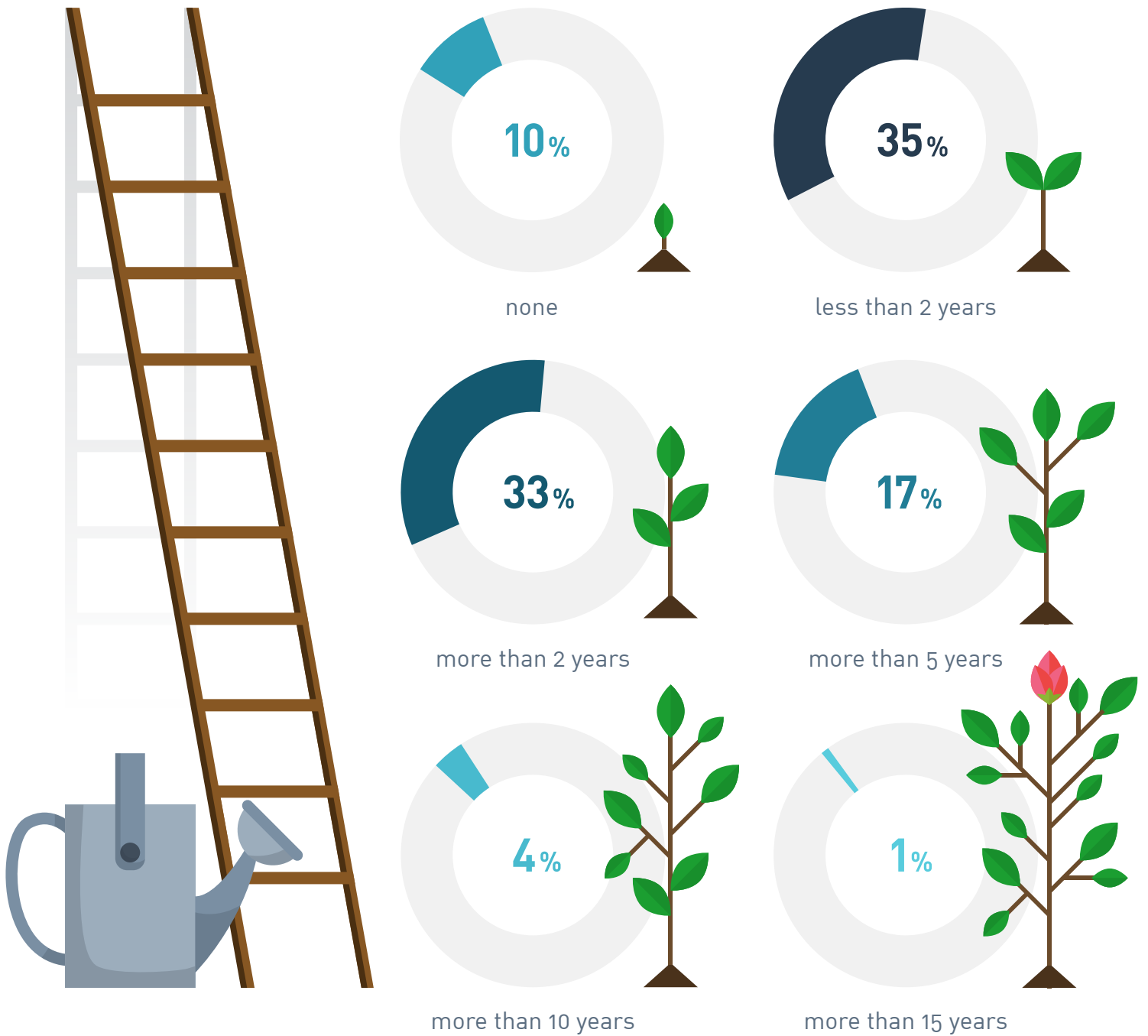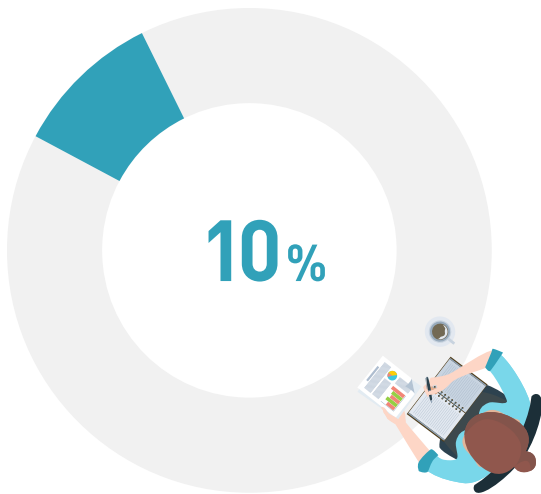
less than 2 projects

24%
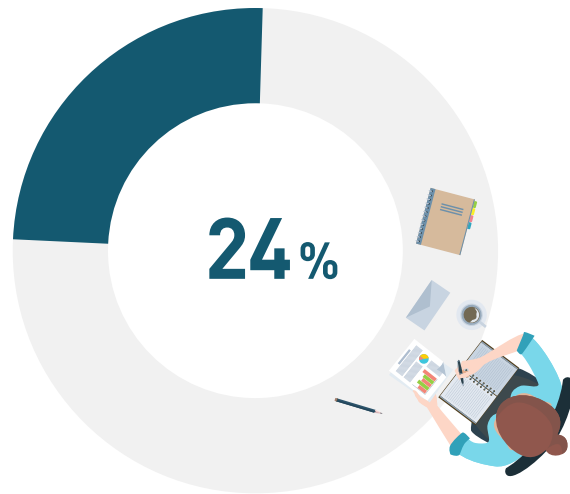
more than 2 projects

16%
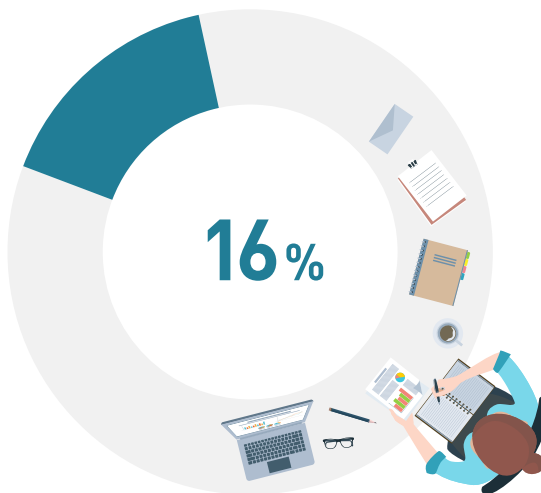
more than 5 projects

50%

more than 10 projects

Number of Scrum Teams working together

25%
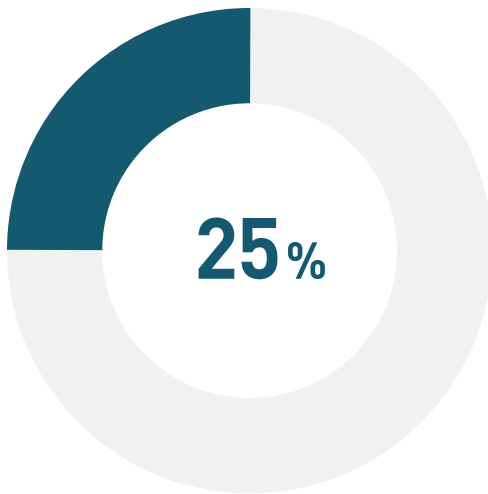
1 or 2 teams
small scale projects

35%
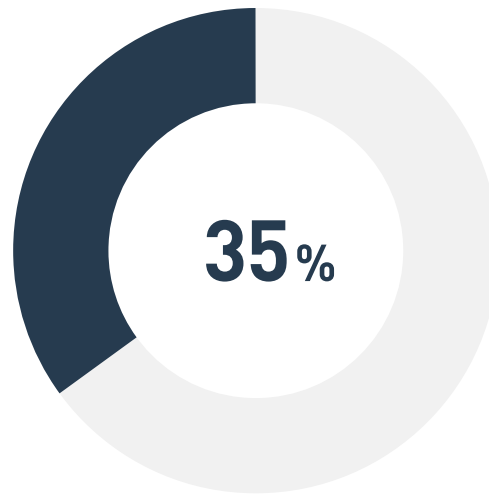
3 to 5 teams
medium scale projects

19%
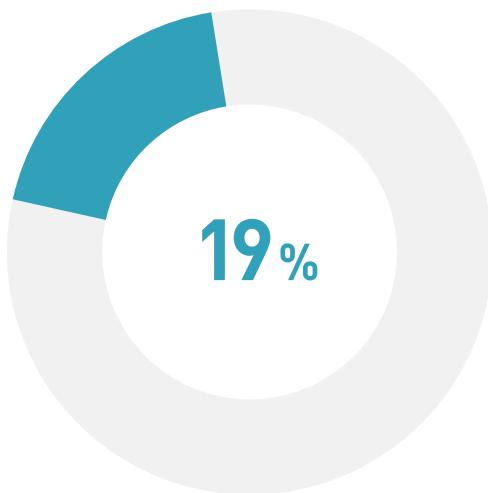
6 to 9 teams
large scale projects

21%
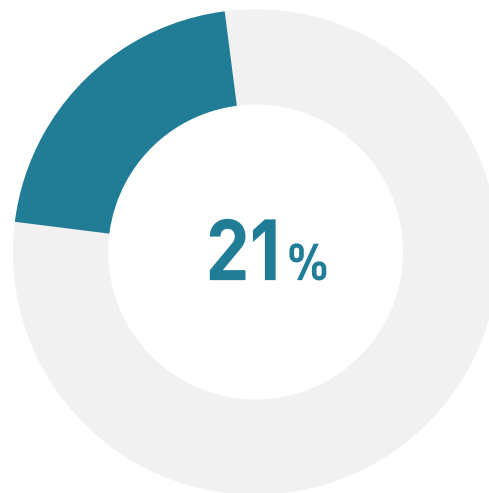
9 or more teams
complex projects

Which part of the organization is responsible for agile?

63%

IT or Engineering

14%

Project Management Office

10%

Product Management

13%
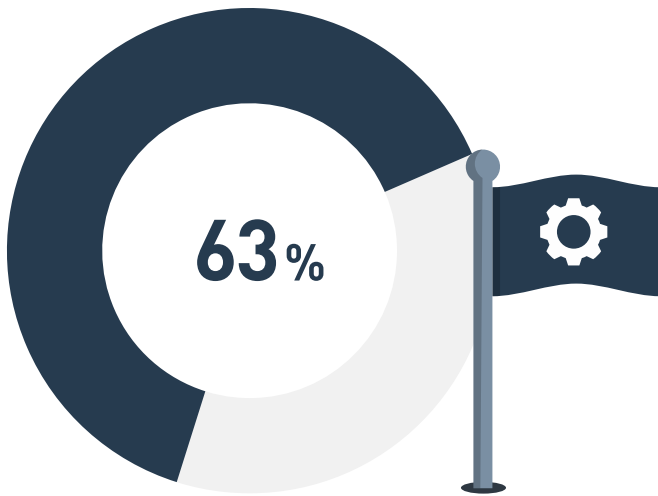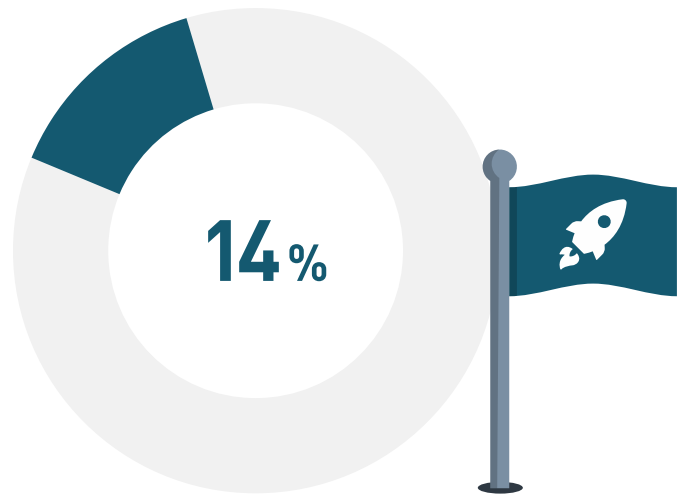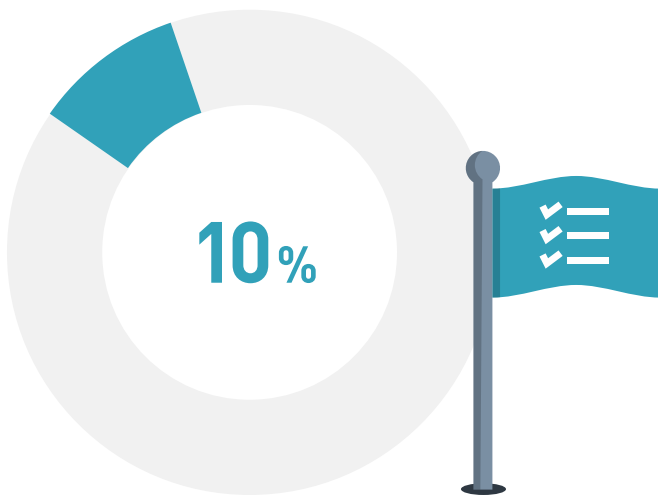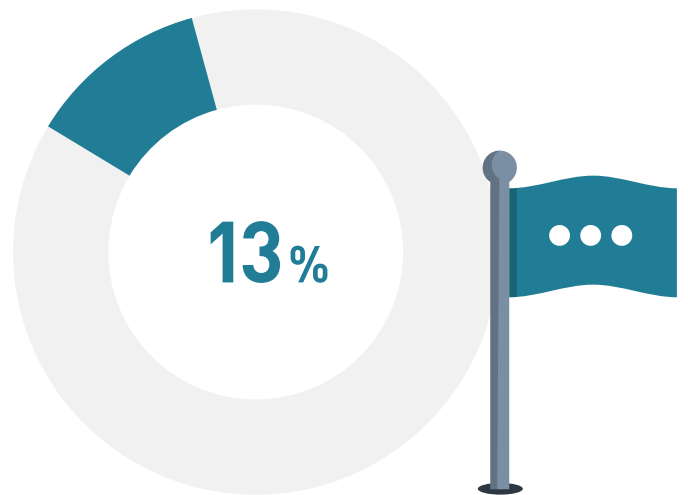
other

Complementary practices used with Scrum

Many organizations are not agile framework agnostic. Scrum is a framework in which you add practices that make sense for your Scrum Team or organization to build and define your overall process. Kanban practices, for example, can be used to enhance that overall process and improve how your Scrum Team works.

The use of Scrum with Kanban is very common within the agile community, and 81 percent of participants use Scrum and Kanban together. We also see that the use of Scrum with DevOps is very common, with 54 percent of participants using these together. This shows that there is no silver bullet when it comes to choosing an agile framework: organizations are choosing the frameworks that work best for their teams, and often adding practices from the broad variety available to help define their overall process.

What practices do you use in addition to Scrum?

81% Kanban **55**% DevOps **34**% TDD **27**% XP
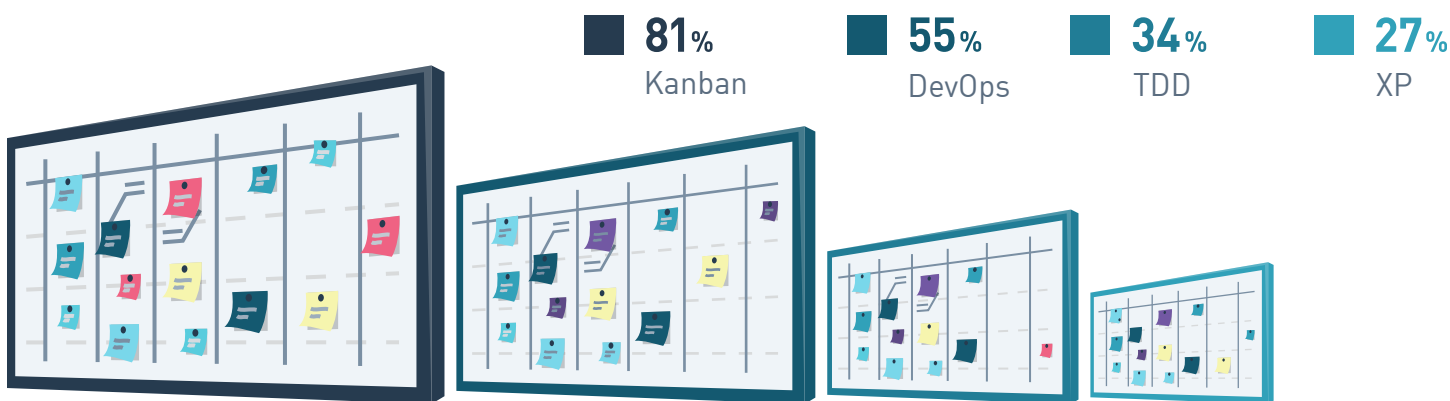
Level of agile maturity

While agile development has been around for some time, this data shows that many organizations are still in the adoption process or at the very beginning of their agile transition. This likely foreshadows the need for more Scrum Masters in the near future, considering only 10 percent of participants work in organizations with a mature agile practice.

Stages and progress of agile adoption

waterfall	early	growing	stalled	mature
7%	35%	42%	4%	11%

progress of participants' organizations
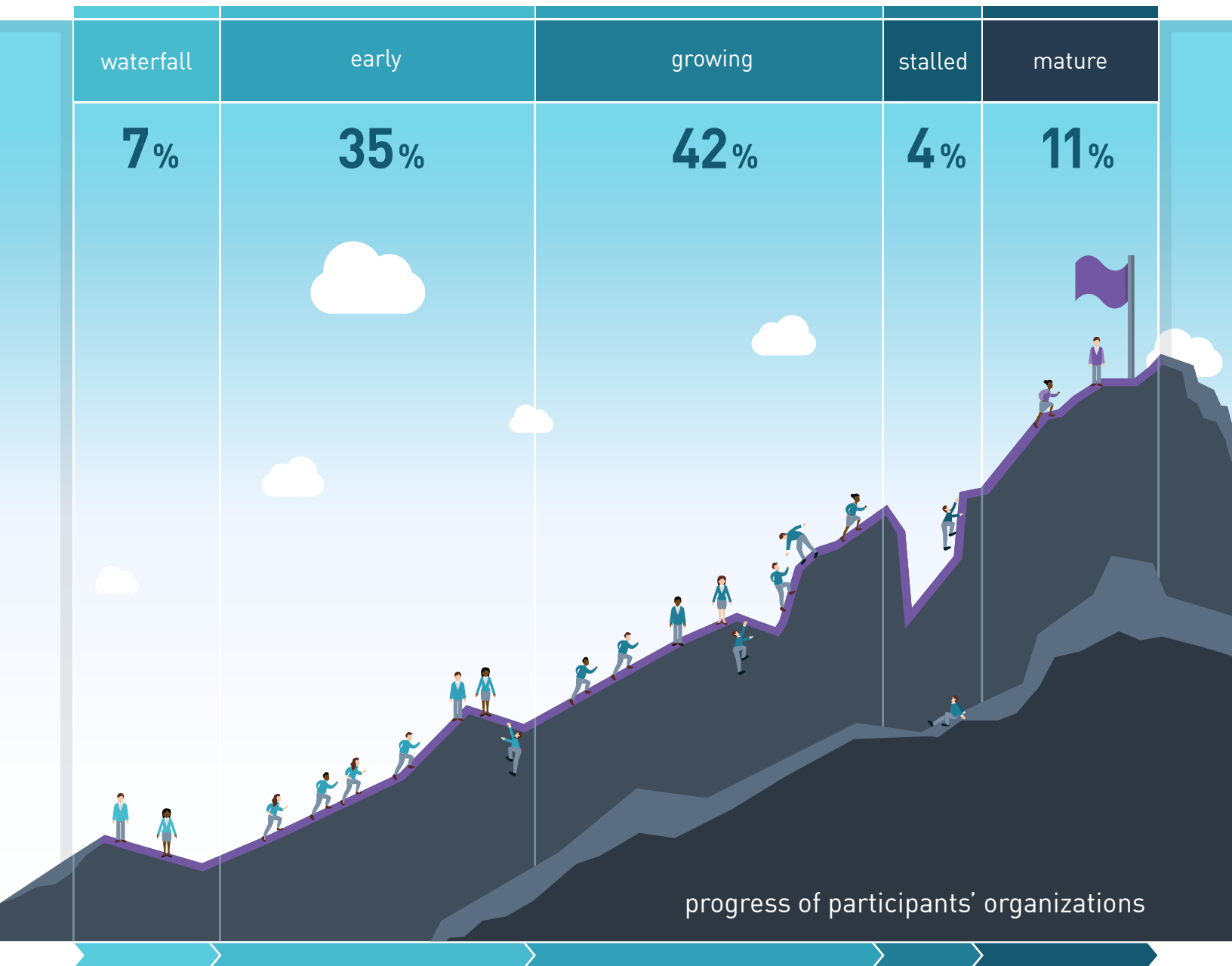
Training and certification

A major topic among new entrants to the agile workforce is the importance of training and certification, and the value that it has. Value in this case encompasses much more than salary: training and certification help Scrum Masters learn so that they can continue to improve.

The 2018 survey looked at Scrum and facilitation training. 83 percent of participants had formal Scrum training, and 17 percent had formal facilitation training. Only 15 percent of participants did not have a certification. 45 percent of participants had more than one certification. The top three certifications among the participants were Professional Scrum Master I (PSM I), Certified Scrum Master (CSM), and Professional Scrum Product Owner I (PSPO I).

Scrum training

83% 👍

YES

of survey participants **have** completed Scrum training

NO **17**%
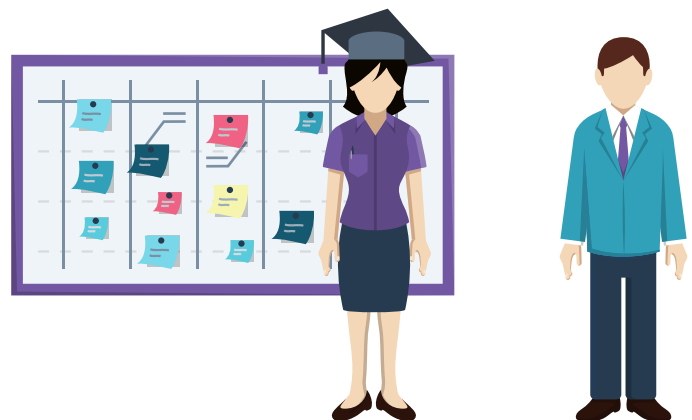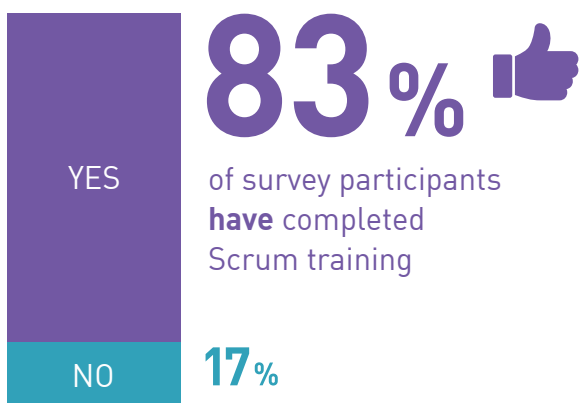
Number of certifications held

55% of survey participants — **1** certification

22% of survey participants — **2** certifications

11% of survey participants — **3** certifications

6% of survey participants — **4** certifications

3% of survey participants — **5** certifications

3% of survey participants — **6** certifications
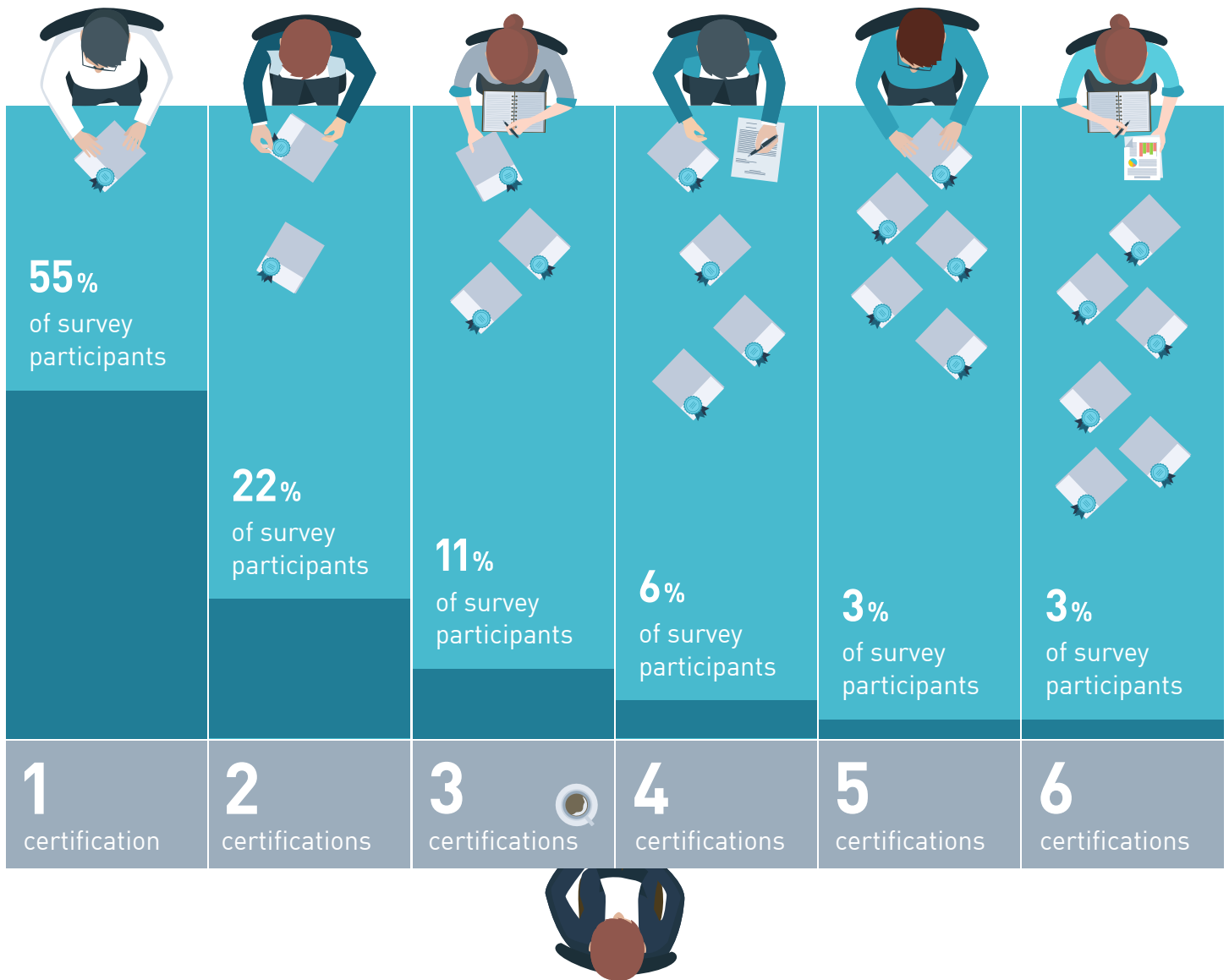
Most common certifications

Certification	Participants
PSM I	53 %
CSM	33 %
PSPO I	16 %
CSPO	11 %
CSP	9 %
SAFe SPC	9 %
PSM II	8 %
PMI-ACP	5 %
SPS	5 %

Certification	Participants
ICP-ACC	4 %
PSD	4 %
PSM III	3 %
CSD	1 %
PSPO II	1 %

Salary comparisons

A very common question in the agile community is: Will education and certification make a difference when it comes to my salary in future positions? This section takes a look at that as well as other factors including gender and education. All participants provided their salary normalized in United States Dollars (USD). 55 percent of participants reported earning more than $75,000 USD annually.

Salaries as reported by Scrum Masters

Legend:
- $ 24,999 or less
- $ 25,000 or more
- $ 50,000 or more
- $ 75,000 or more
- $ 100,000 or more
- $ 125,000 or more
- $ 150,000 or more
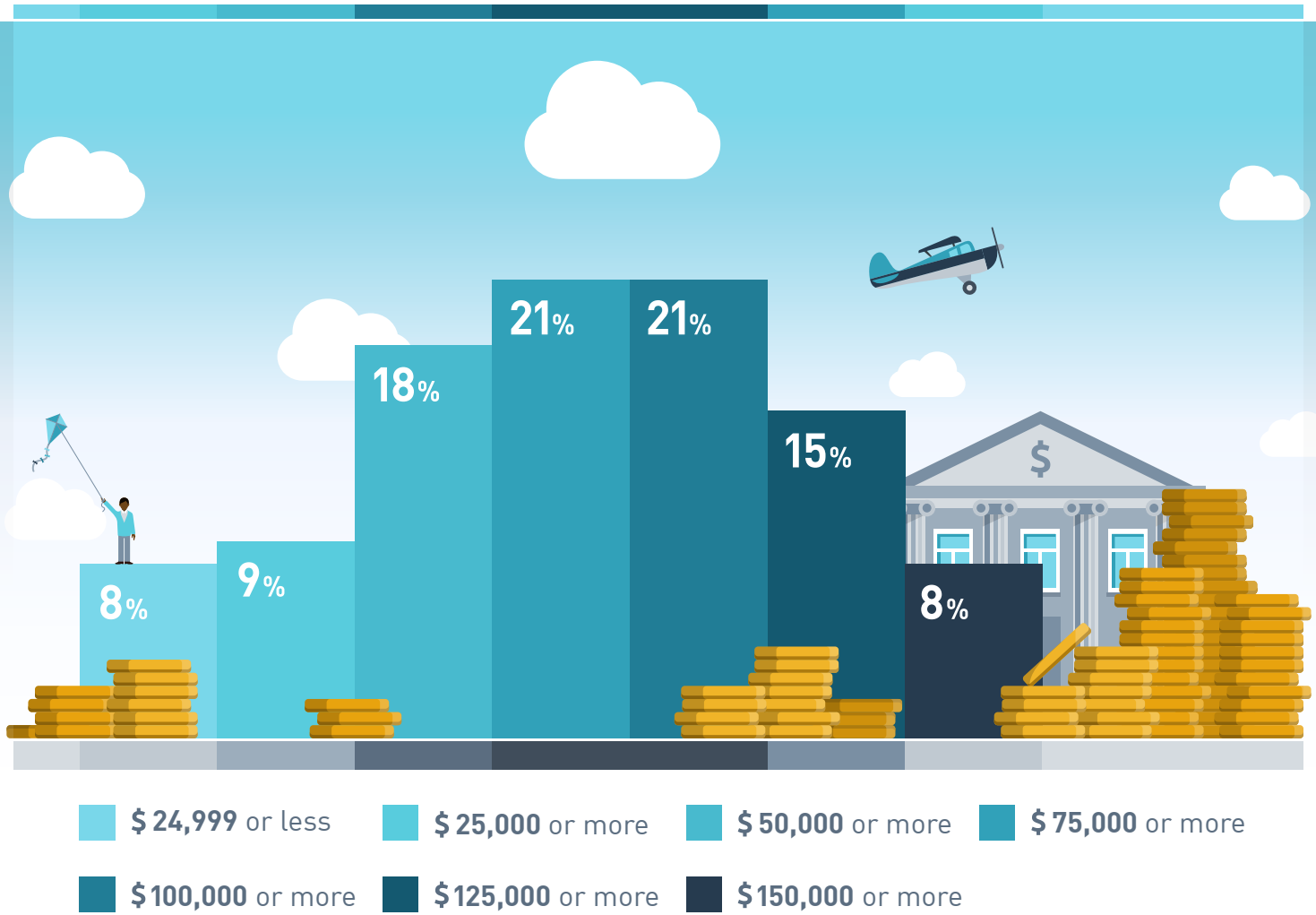
Geography

The following charts show participants' responses sorted and grouped by geography.

Average salary by region

$113,295 — North America

$76,889 — Europe

$40,326 — Asia

$62,571 — Africa

$43,505 — South America

$149,507 — Oceania

Salaries as reported by region

North America

- 0%
- 2%
- 9%
- 25%
- 32%
- 19%
- 13%

Europe

- 5%
- 19%
- 33%
- 24%
- 10%
- 3%
- 6%

Asia

- 36%
- 40%
- 10%
- 4%
- 8%
- 1%
- 1%

South America

- 27%
- 42%
- 22%
- 6%
- 1%
- 0%
- 2%

Africa

- 26%
- 12%
- 35%
- 15%
- 6%
- 3%
- 3%

Oceania

- 0%
- 2%
- 15%
- 28%
- 28%
- 5%
- 22%

Legend:

- $24,999 or less
- $25,000 or more
- $50,000 or more
- $75,000 or more
- $100,000 or more
- $125,000 or more
- $150,000 or more
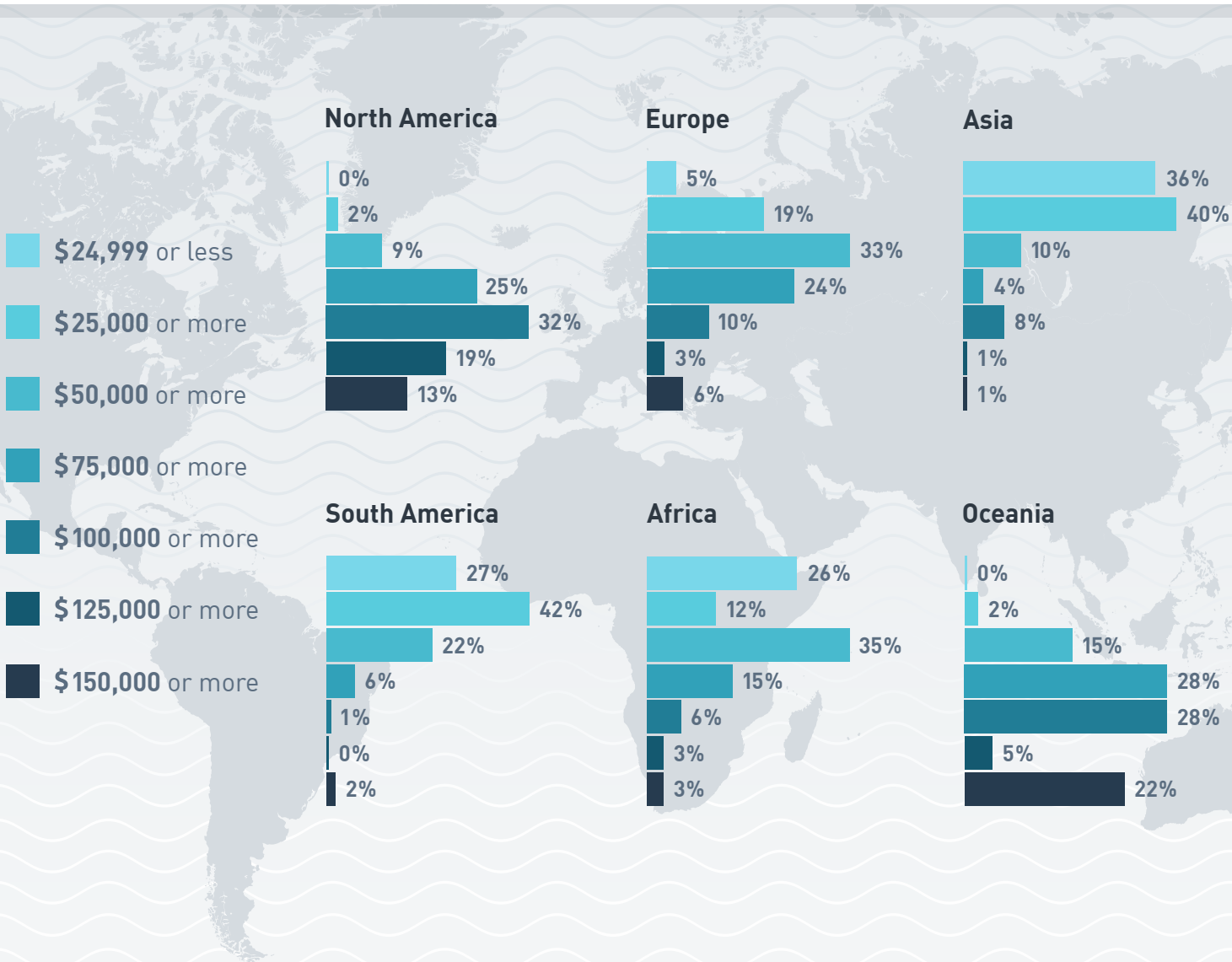
Gender

Females are surpassing males in terms of salary

There were a larger percentage of females compared to males in the $75,000 through $149,999 USD range. While the number of female Scrum Masters is still lower than male, they are making progress when it comes to salary and increasing in numbers overall.

Salaries by gender

	female	male	earning power
$150,000 <	3%	5%	
$125,000 <	5%	4%	
$100,000 <	11%	8%	
$75,000 <			
$50,000 <	12%	10%	
$25,000 <	7%	11%	
$24,999 >	7%	8%	
	5%	4%	

female **male** **earning power**
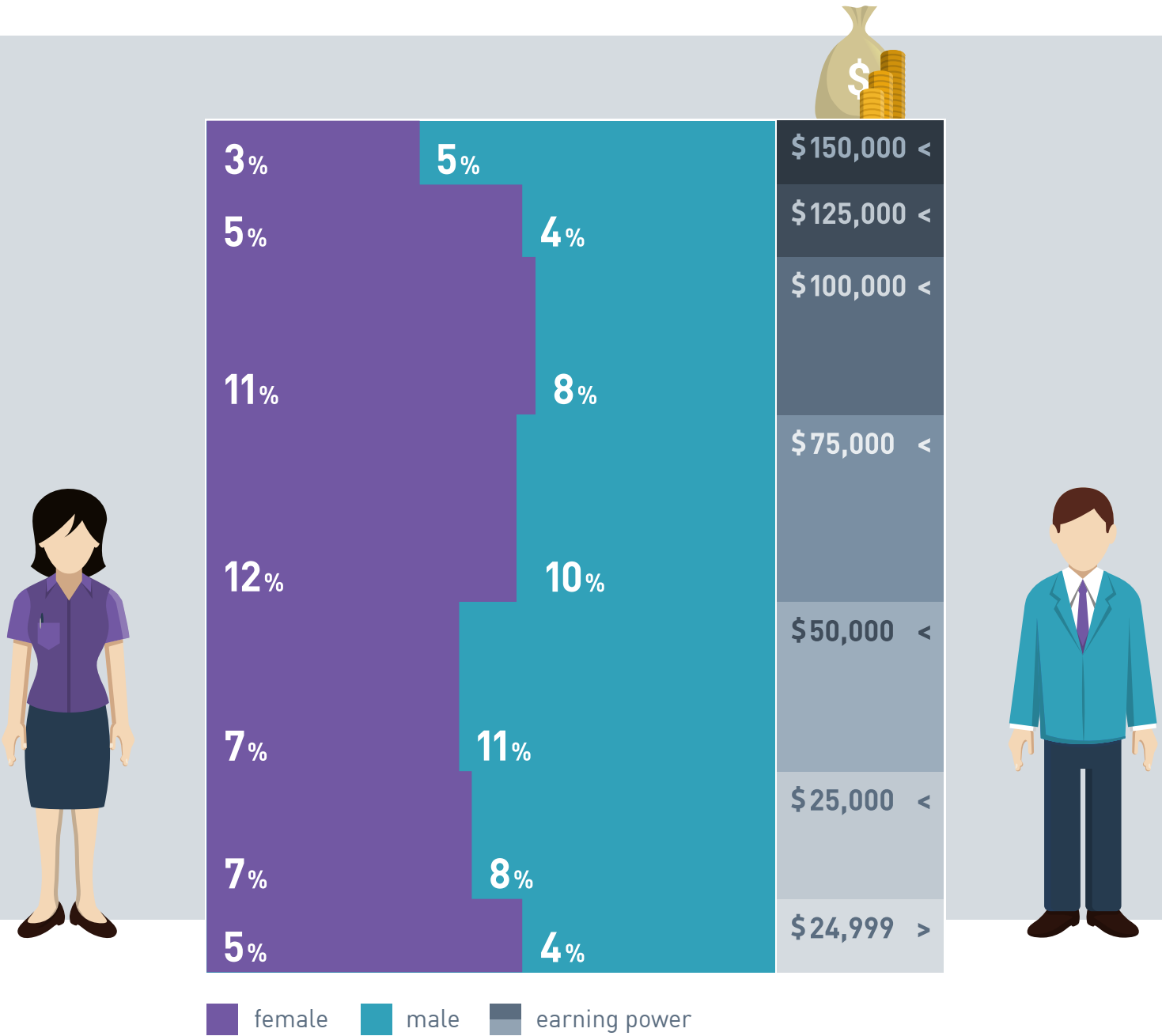
Education

A Bachelor's degree can get you far!

Similar to the findings last year on education, having a Master's degree does not seem to make much of a difference when it comes to salary if compared to having a Bachelor's degree. More people with Bachelor's degrees have higher salaries than those with Master's degrees.

Salaries by education

7%		2%	2%	2%	$150,000 <
3%	2%	3%		1%	$125,000 <
					$100,000 <
4%	3%	5%		5%	
					$75,000 <
7%	4%	6%		6%	
					$50,000 <
2%	6%	4%		7%	
					$25,000 <
1%	5%		3%	3%	
1%	3%		2%	1%	$24,999 >

Legend:
- Doctorate
- Master's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- High school
- earning power
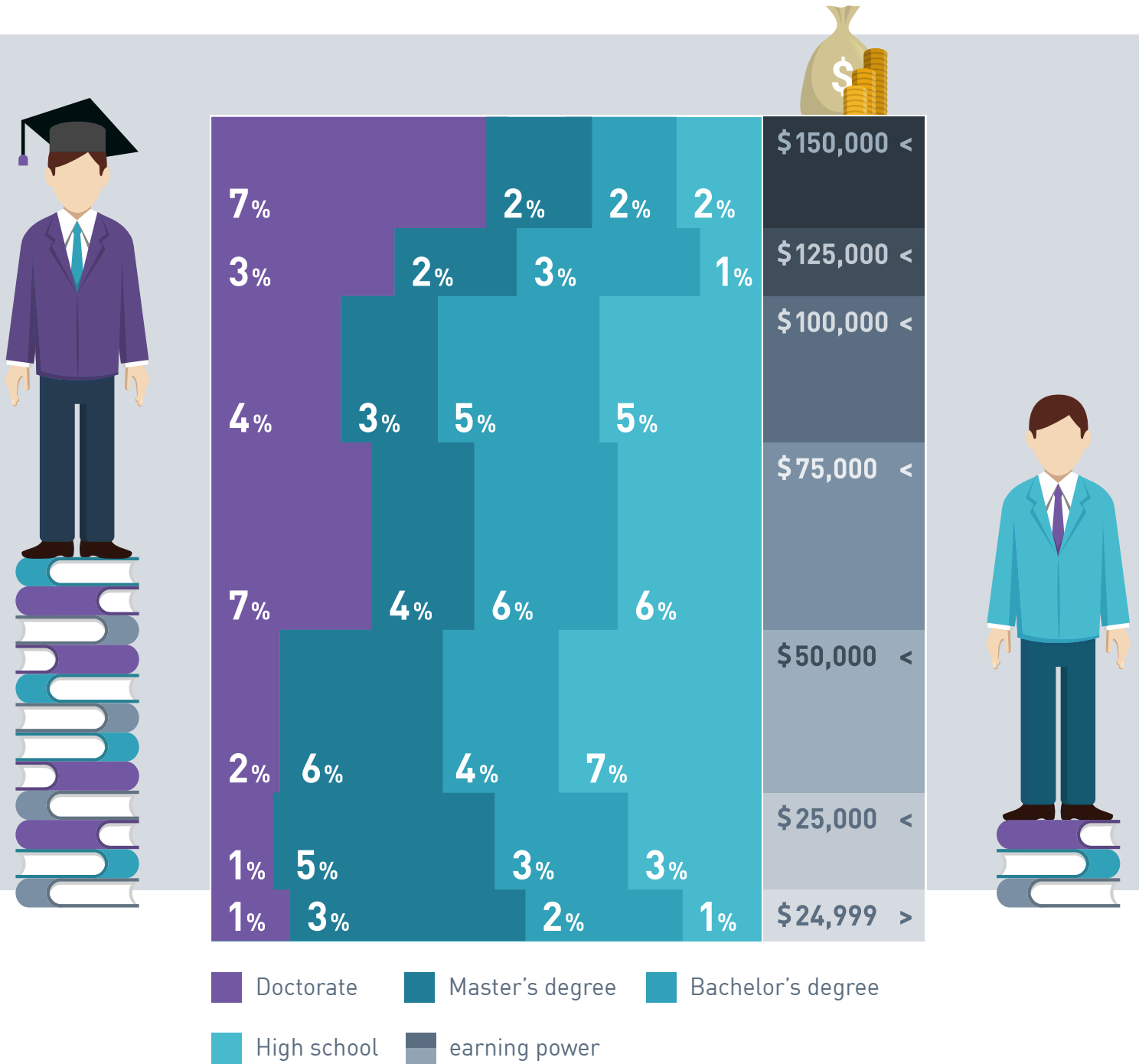
Training and certification

Yes, training and certification make a difference!

A very common topic of discussion among new Scrum Masters is whether or not it makes a difference if you have certification or formal training when considering salary. It is important to remember that the value of certification goes beyond the impact on salary. Certification helps people learn so that they can improve their skills. Just as Scrum is empirical, learning should be empirical as well. When Scrum Masters and other agile practitioners learn, they inspect and adapt the areas in which they need to grow. This helps them continue their personal growth, and the certification process is a way of validating that.

It is also important to look at training and certification separately. People like to learn in many different ways, whether it's in the classroom, online, or self-teaching with books and online resources. Certification tests validate knowledge and indicate where more learning is needed.

When looking at the responses to questions about agile certification, there is a difference in salary when comparing having a certification versus not having one. You also need to take into account the participants' experience and education as contributing factors. 44 percent of participants that have a certification reported earning more than $100,000 USD, while only 18 percent of those without a certification reported the same.

Similar trends were found in regard to training. For Scrum training, only 15 percent of those who reported not having Scrum training earned more than $100,000 USD — compared to 38 percent of those who reported having Scrum training. For participants who reported having facilitation training, an interesting finding was that 51 percent earned more than $150,000 USD. In the other salary ranges, it did not make much of a difference.

Salaries by certification

with certification	without certification	earning power
8%	1%	$150,000 <
5%	2%	$125,000 <
		$100,000 <
10%	6%	
		$75,000 <
9%	10%	
		$50,000 <
9%	13%	
		$25,000 <
6%	9%	
3%	9%	$24,999 >

Salaries by training

with Scrum training	without Scrum training	earning power
5%	1%	$150,000 <
5%	2%	$125,000 <
		$100,000 <
10%	6%	
		$75,000 <
11%	10%	$50,000 <
9%	13%	$25,000 <
7%	9%	
3%	9%	$24,999 >

■ with Scrum training   ■ without Scrum training   ■ earning power
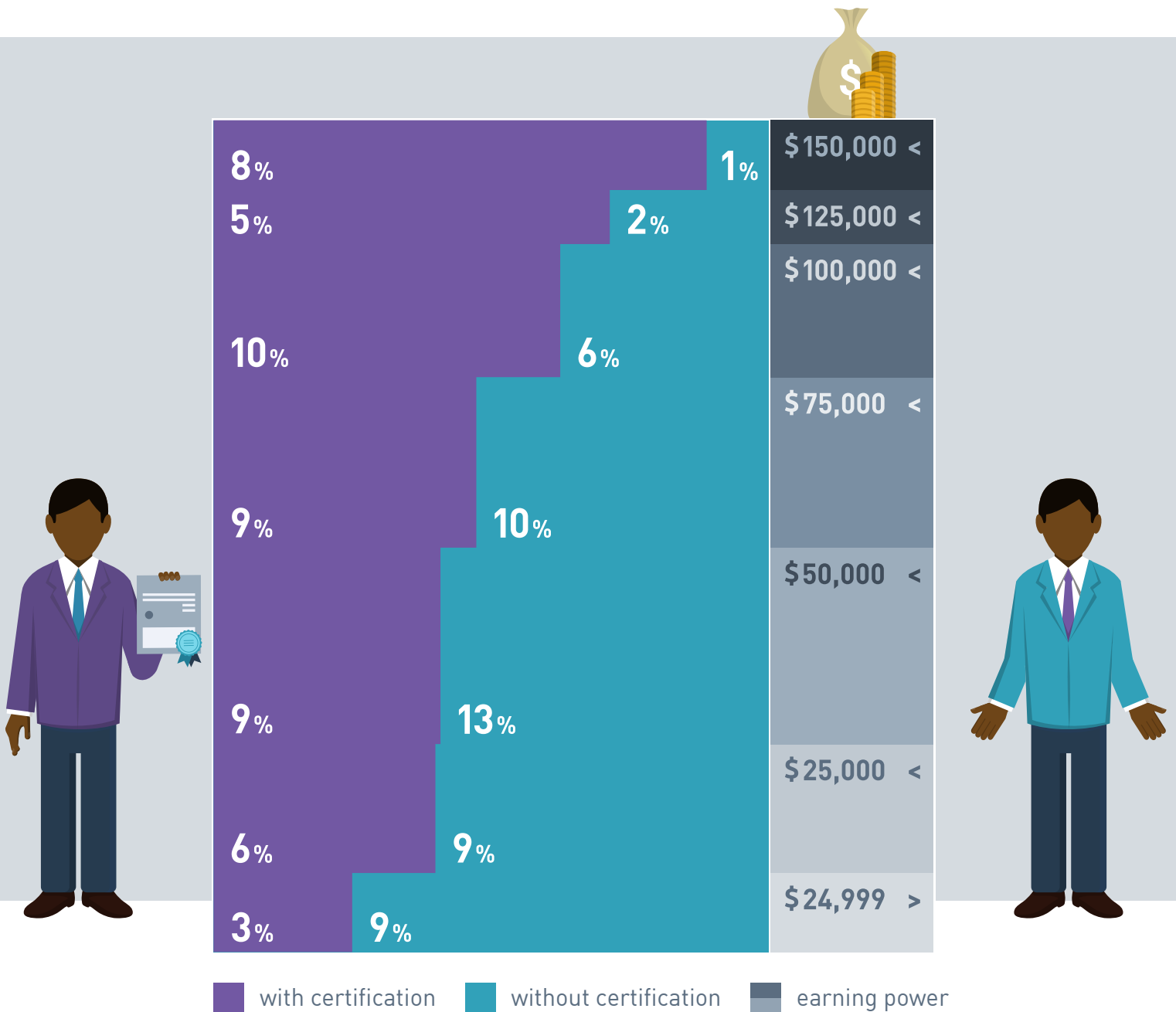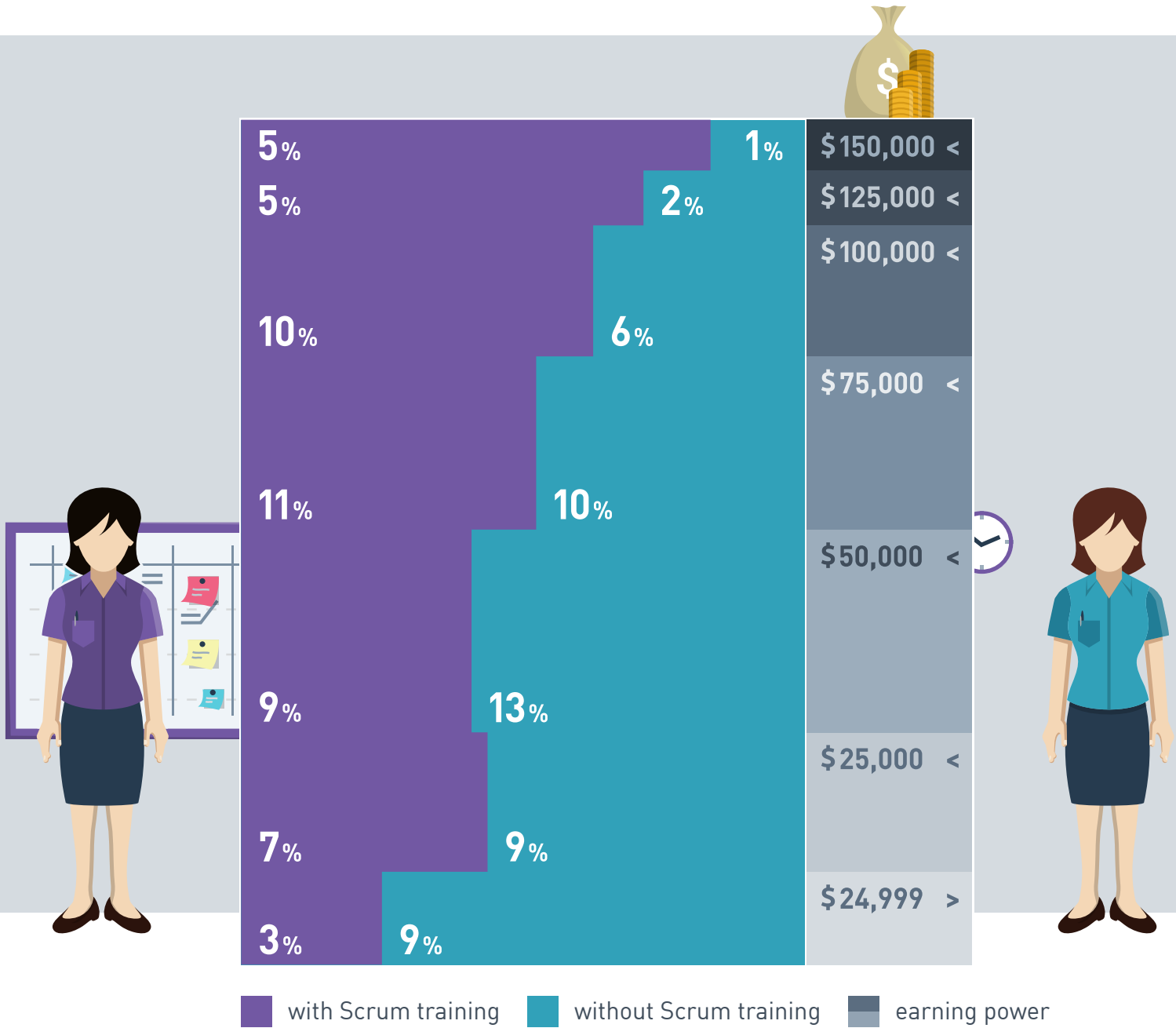
Original survey data

Are you working as a Scrum Master or Agile Coach?

Answer choices	Responses
I am working as a Scrum Master	42.25 %
I am working as an Agile Coach	13.36 %
I am working as both a Scrum Master and Agile Coach	23.54 %
I am working as neither a Scrum Master or Agile Coach	20.84 %

What is your age?

Answer choices	Responses
Younger than 30 years of age	11.89 %
Younger than 40 years of age	40.79 %
Younger than 50 years of age	27.33 %
Younger than 60 years of age	16.25 %
60 years of age or older	3.74 %

In what country do you work?

Answer choices	Responses
Argentina	0.47 %

Answer choices	Responses
Australia	2.08 %
Austria	0.38 %
Belgium	0.90 %
Brazil	2.79 %
Canada	3.69 %
China	0.09 %
Colombia	0.24 %
Czech Republic	0.43 %
Denmark	1.04 %
France	3.03 %

Answer choices	Responses
Germany	9.19 %
Greece	0.71 %
Hungary	0.28 %
India	7.01 %
Indonesia	0.99 %
Ireland	0.95 %
Israel	0.38 %
Italy	1.28 %
Japan	0.05 %
Malaysia	0.57 %

Answer choices	Responses
Mexico	0.81 %
Netherlands	7.11 %
New Zealand	1.04 %
Norway	0.05 %
Peru	0.28 %
Philippines	0.47 %
Poland	3.27 %
Portugal	0.28 %
Romania	0.81 %
Russia	0.71 %

Answer choices	Responses
Singapore	0.33 %
Slovakia	0.24 %
South Africa	0.85 %
Spain	1.94 %
Sweden	1.23 %
Switzerland	1.71 %
Turkey	0.81 %
Ukraine	1.23 %
United Arab Emirates	0.19 %
United Kingdom	6.40 %

Answer choices	Responses
United States of America	28.04 %
Venezuela	0.14 %
Other	5.50 %

What is your gender?

Answer choices	Responses
Male	69.92 %
Female	28.66 %
Other	0.09 %
Prefer not to disclose	1.33 %

What is your educational background?

Answer choices	Responses
Engineering	18.52 %
IT or software development	46.01 %
Business, finance, or economics	14.91 %
Art or design	2.13 %
Natural science and mathematics	3.96 %
Medicine and psychology	1.44 %
Social sciences	5.15 %
Other	7.88 %

What level of education did you achieve?

Answer choices	Responses
High school	9.01 %
Bachelor's degree	48.39 %
Master's degree	40.76 %
Doctorate	1.83 %

Do you have formal Scrum training?

Answer choices	Responses
Yes	83.11 %
No	16.89 %

Which professional, agile-related certifications do you have?

Answer choices	Responses
None	15.01 %
PSM I	52.55 %
PSM II	8.07 %
PSM III	2.58 %
PSPO I	15.55 %
PSPO II	1.04 %
PSD	3.71 %
SPS	4.80 %
CSPO	11.44 %

Answer choices	Responses
CSD	0.79 %
CSP	8.87 %
CSM	32.79 %
SAFe SPC	9.01 %
ASP	0.20 %
ICP-ACC	3.67 %
PMI-ACP	5.05 %
Other	14.36 %

What professional experience do you have as a Scrum Master or Agile Coach?

Answer choices	Responses
None	10.05 %
less than 2 years	35.17 %
2 years or more	33.04 %
5 years or more	17.04 %
10 years or more	3.86 %
15 years or more	0.84 %

What professional experience did you have before your role as a Scrum Master or Agile Coach?

Answer choices	Responses
less than 2 years	19.59 %
2 years or more	15.74 %
5 years or more	24.54 %
10 years or more	17.54 %
15 years or more	22.59 %

What is your involvement in the Agile community?

Answer choices	Responses
I write a blog	13.05 %
I host a podcast	0.88 %
I write a regular newsletter	1.71 %
I speak at conferences	14.71 %
I organize a local meetup	14.44 %
I participate in online forums	37.06 %
I participate inside my organization	87.11 %
Other	14.33 %

Do you have a special facilitation or coaching education?

Answer choices	Responses
Yes	26.30 %
No	73.70 %

What are your career plans?

Answer choices	Responses
I am happy as a Scrum Master	15.85 %
I am happy as an Agile Coach	10.95 %
I am a Scrum Master now, but I want to become an Agile Coach	20.65 %
I plan to become a certified trainer or coach	22.59 %

Answer choices	Responses
I am working to become a Scrum Master	11.49 %
Other	18.47 %

What is the size of the organization you are working for?

Answer choices	Responses
Fewer than 50 employees	10.57 %
50 or more employees	16.18 %
250 or more employees	18.24 %
1,000 or more employees	17.74 %
5,000 or more employees	7.41 %

Answer choices	Responses
10,000 or more employees	25.60 %
Working with multiple clients	4.26 %

What industry is your organization in?

Answer choices	Responses
Software and internet services	32.87 %
Finance and insurance	16.28 %
Consulting and professional services	10.47 %
Engineering and technology	7.41 %
Telecommunications	4.66 %

Answer choices	Responses
Transportation (e.g. aerospace, automotive)	3.76 %
Healthcare	3.66 %
Energy (e.g. oil, gas, electricity)	2.35 %
Manufacturing	2.15 %
Media (e.g. news)	1.85 %
Defense	0.85 %
Real estate	0.55 %
Legal	0.35 %
Tax and accounting	0.25 %
Other	12.52 %

Are you working as an employee or a consultant?

Answer choices	Responses
Corporate employee	71.25 %
Consulting company employee	18.25 %
Independent consultant	10.50 %

How do you assess the agility of your organization?

Answer choices	Responses
Waterfall	6.83 %
Early adoption	35.57 %
Growing adoption	42.86 %

Answer choices	Responses
Stalled adoption	3.77 %
Mature adoption	10.96 %

What other practices do you use in conjunction with Scrum?

Answer choices	Responses
Kanban	81.03 %
DevOps	54.51 %
XP	27.14 %
TDD	34.30 %
Other	12.55 %

What is your current title?

Answer choices	Responses
Scrum Master	39.45 %
Agile Coach	15.56 %
Development Team Member	5.84 %
Product Owner	3.15 %
Project Manager	9.62 %
Agile Project Manager	3.26 %
Product Manager	1.24 %
Other	21.87 %

To what part of your organization does the agile practice belong?

Answer choices	Responses
IT or Engineering	63.08 %
Project Management Office (PMO)	14.22 %
Product Management	10.34 %
Other	12.36 %

How long have you been with your current organization?

Answer choices	Responses
Less than 1 year	27.30 %
1 year or more	26.11 %

Answer choices	Responses
3 years or more	23.78 %
7 years or more	8.58 %
10 years or more	14.22 %

What was your job title before becoming a Scrum Master or Agile Coach?

Answer choices	Responses
Project Manager	31.36 %
Business Analyst	9.58 %
Product Manager	1.99 %
Product Owner	3.66 %

Answer choices	Responses
UX or UI Designer	0.75 %
Software Developer or Engineer	25.17 %
Quality Assurance	8.07 %
Other	19.42 %

Have you participated in an agile transition?

Answer choices	Responses
Yes	57.83 %
No	42.17 %

How many teams have you worked with?

Answer choices	Responses
2 teams or fewer	18.72 %
3 teams or more	36.04 %
6 teams or more	18.07 %
10 teams or more	27.17 %

How many projects have you worked on?

Answer choices	Responses
2 projects or fewer	10.01 %
3 projects or more	24.53 %

Answer choices	Responses
6 projects or more	15.76 %
10 projects or more	49.70 %

What kind of projects have you worked on?

Answer choices	Responses
Small scale (involving 1 or 2 teams)	25.07 %
Medium scale (involving more than 2 teams)	35.23 %
Large scale (involving more than 5 teams)	18.50 %
Complex (involving more than 9 teams)	21.19 %

Have you ever launched an agile transition for an organization?

Answer choices	Responses
Yes	45.40 %
No	54.60 %

Which scaling frameworks have you used for Scrum or Agile?

Answer choices	Responses
None	57.77 %
Nexus	11.78 %
SAFe	27.17 %
DAD	1.51 %

Answer choices	Responses
LeSS	11.19 %
Other	8.28 %

How many fellow Scrum Masters or Agile Coaches work for your organization?

Answer choices	Responses
I am the only Scrum Master or Agile Coach	16.14 %
2 or more	28.73 %
5 or more	20.33 %
10 or more	11.46 %
20 or more	23.35 %

What is your current salary, normalized in USD? [6]

Salary reported	Responses
$24,999 or less	8 %
$25,000 or more	15 %
$50,000 or more	21 %
$75,000 or more	21 %
$100,000 or more	18 %
$125,000 or more	9 %
$150,000 or more	8 %

6. Answers were provided numerically, normalized in United States Dollars (USD). This table categorizes participants by the range into which their reported salary fell.

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Based on the values and principles of Scrum and the Agile Manifesto, Scrum.org provides comprehensive training, assessments and certifications to improve the profession of software delivery. Throughout the world, our solutions and community of Professional Scrum Trainers empower people and organizations to achieve agility through Scrum. Ken Schwaber, the co-creator of Scrum, founded Scrum.org in 2009 as a global organization, dedicating himself to improving the profession of software delivery by reducing the gaps so that the work and work products are dependable.

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