

# The New Gen Z Mindset

How Today's Students View Employers & Careers

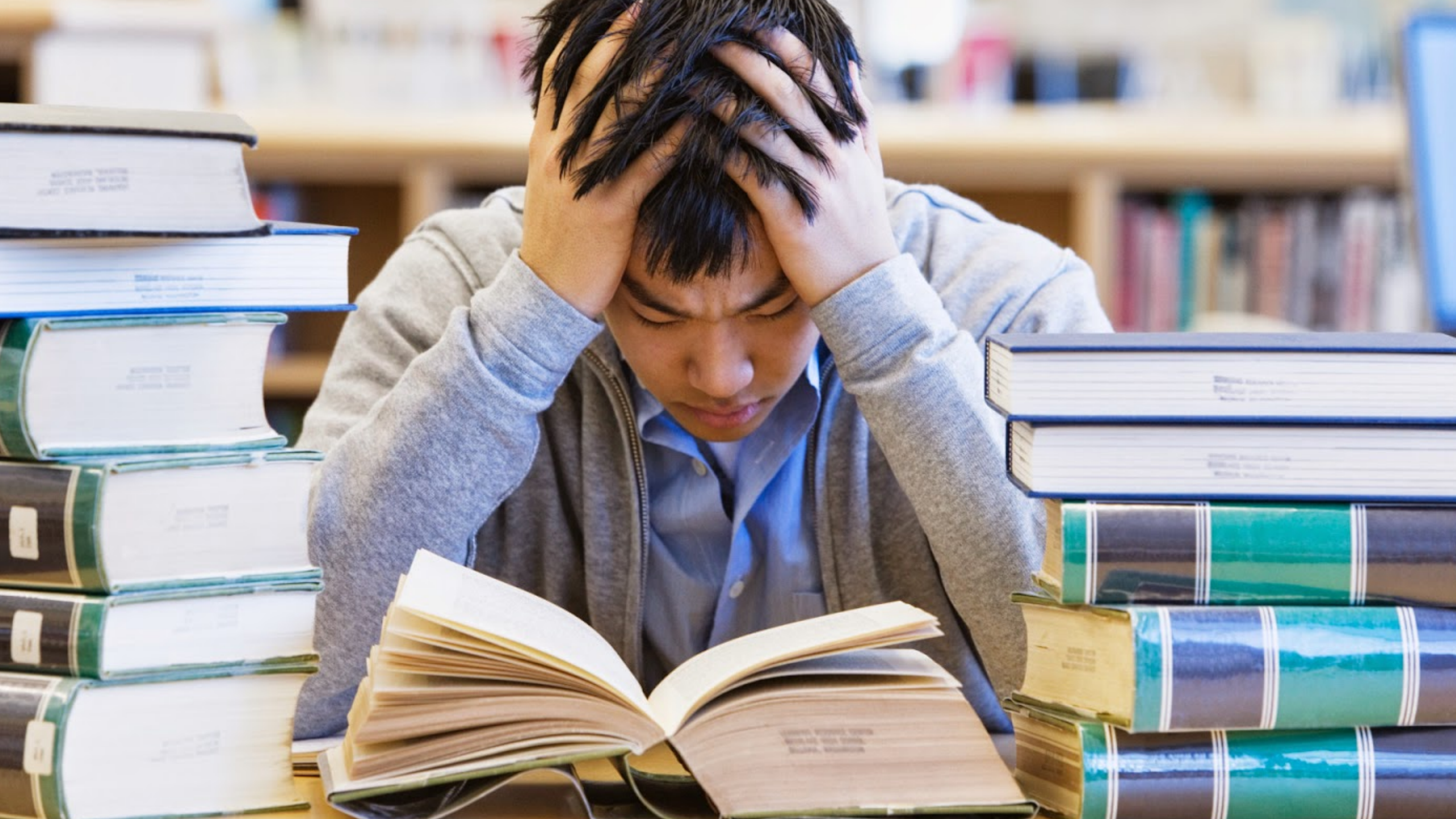
Graham Donald

Brainstorm Strategy Group Inc.









# re·sil·ience

the capacity to recover from difficulties.

Why is this important to  
your work?

**Data matters.**



# The Brainstorm Report

Student Career Interests & Employer Preferences

**March-July 2020**

**100+** questions

**200** institutions

**16,000+** responses

**67,000** employer evaluations

Domestic / international

Major area of study

GPA

University / college

Degree / diploma level

Age

Year of study

Diversity group

Why do they go to  
Post-Secondary?

Get a Better  
Job



How do they  
choose their school?

1. Close to home
2. Reputation / quality of programs
3. Co-op

Where do career  
ideas come from?



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# STAT

Students' Thoughts and Trends

# 48%

of university and college students say that, “someone working in a specific career that interests me” is among the biggest influences on their career decisions.



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Parents

Role models

Friends, girl/boyfriend, spouse

Professors

What are their  
career goals?

1. To achieve work-life balance
- 2. To serve a greater cause or good**
3. To achieve secure employment

(Unless...)

What's on their minds  
right now?

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# STAT

Students' Thoughts and Trends

# 75%

of students agree or strongly agree that, “the current economy makes me more worried about my job prospects.”

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# STAT

Students' Thoughts and Trends

# 64%

of students agree or strongly agree that “there should be a required course on career planning and finding a job as part of curriculum at my school.”



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[SIDEBAR]



Pandemics accelerate trends

+

Students go to school to get a better job

+

Students *want* more career focus in school

=

It's time to 10X  
the investment in  
career development

# The most important investment that colleges and universities can make today is in:

- helping students explore their strengths and interests;
- educating them in career planning and job search;
- giving them access to real-world work experiences;
- building their hopefulness and confidence;
- preparing them to be successful in the workplace; and,
- connecting them with opportunities.

“It’s time for academic institutions to evolve from a culture of grades to a culture of success. High grades without life skills (including financial and career literacy), without physical and mental well-being, and without a transition to meaningful work, is not success.”

– Graham Donald

Financial barriers and stress

Mental well-being

Academic success

Alumni loyalty

Workplace readiness

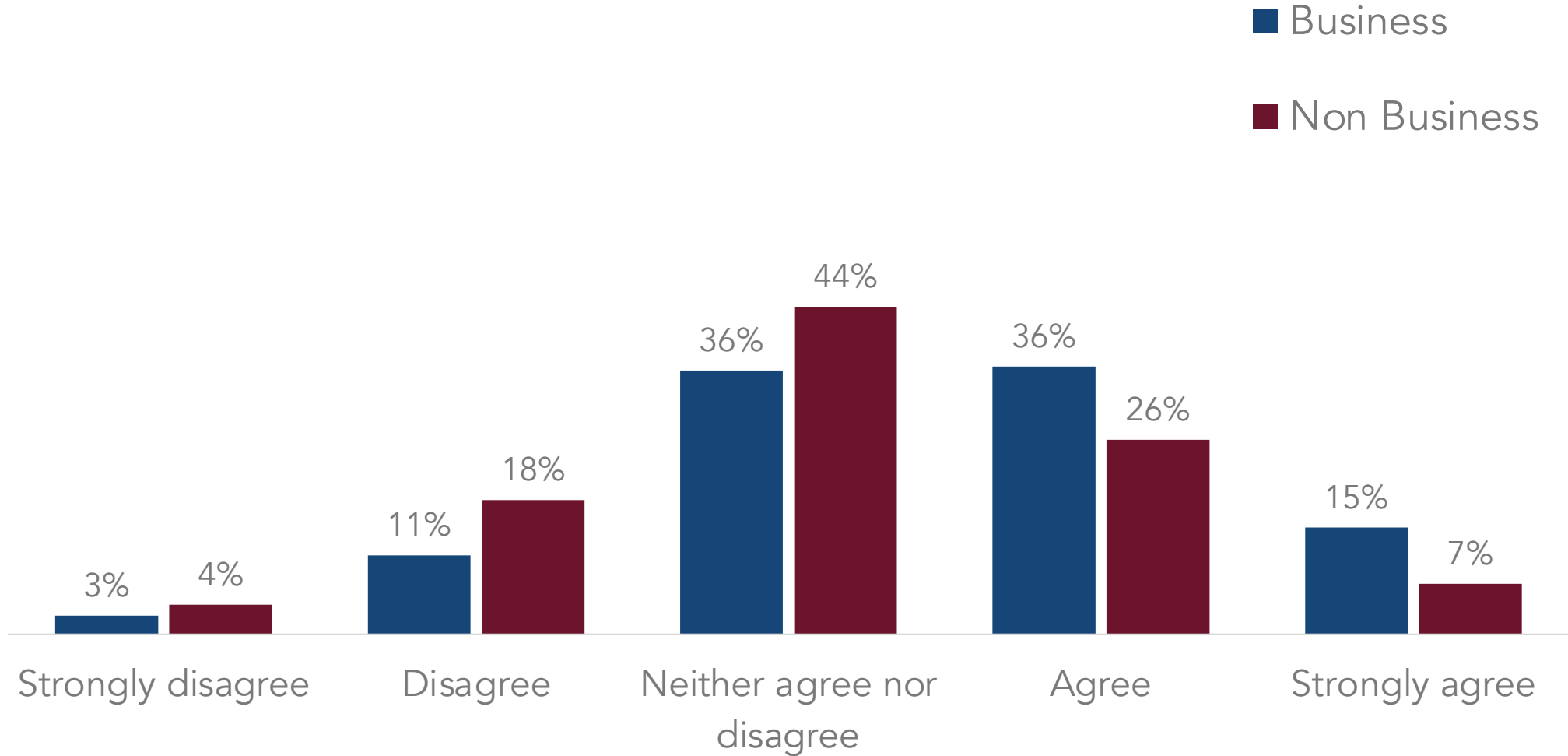
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Where do they  
want to work?

- 18.5%** Medium-sized company (101- 500 employees)
- 16.6%** Large company (more than 500 employees)
- 12.5%** Hospital or other Health/Medical Service
- 12.1%** Government / Public Service
- 11.1%** Small business (up to 100 employees)
- 8.8%** Educational Institution / School
  
- 5.6%** My own business
- 3.7%** Non-profit organization / Charity



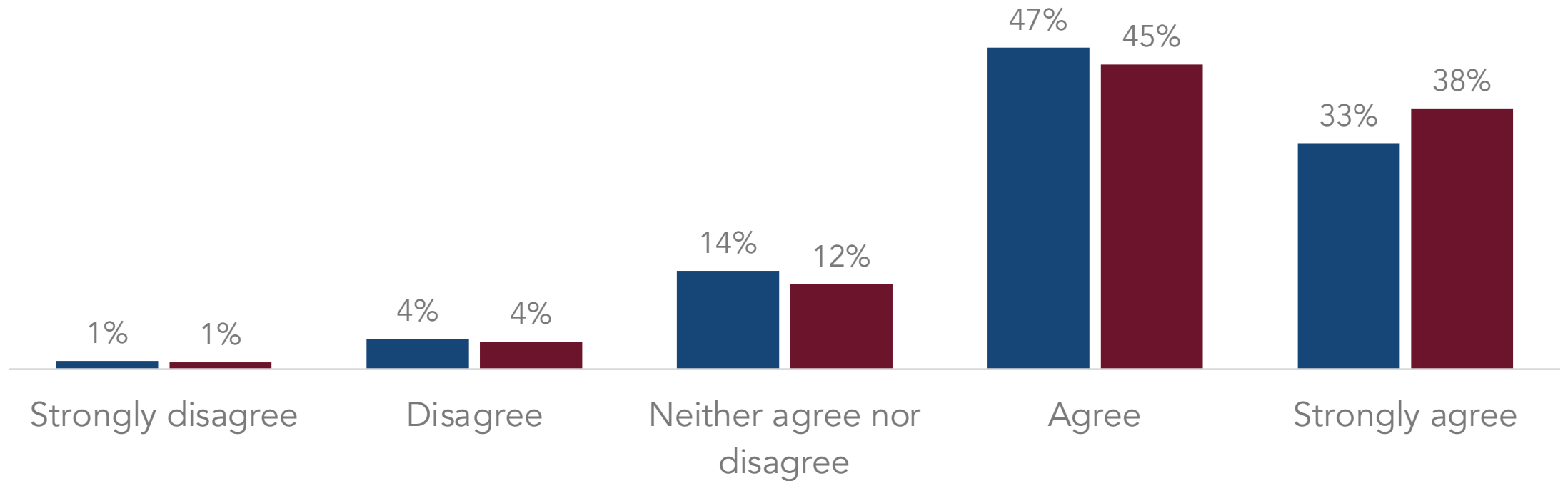
Is a well-known brand a  
big advantage?



I would much rather work for a company with a well-known brand.

■ Business

■ Non Business



If a job opportunity really interests me, I don't care if the employer is well-known or not.



How well do you know  
the students who  
never applied?

Where do they look  
for jobs?

Indeed

LinkedIn

Google

Employers' sites

Career centre sites

~~Social media~~

How do they connect with  
employers (and employers  
with them)?



Friendly, responsive, knowledgeable reps

Interested in me

Recruiters I can relate to

More 1:1 interaction on campus

Live interviews

Detailed job postings with salary

How do they choose  
among opportunities?

1. Work-life balance
2. Good people to work with
3. Good initial salary
4. Training and development

(Unless...)

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Students' Thoughts and Trends

# #1

Black students select “good initial salary level” as the most important criteria when considering employment opportunities after graduation.

[SIDEBAR]

Developing our brand on campus

Overcoming misconceptions about our  
company/jobs

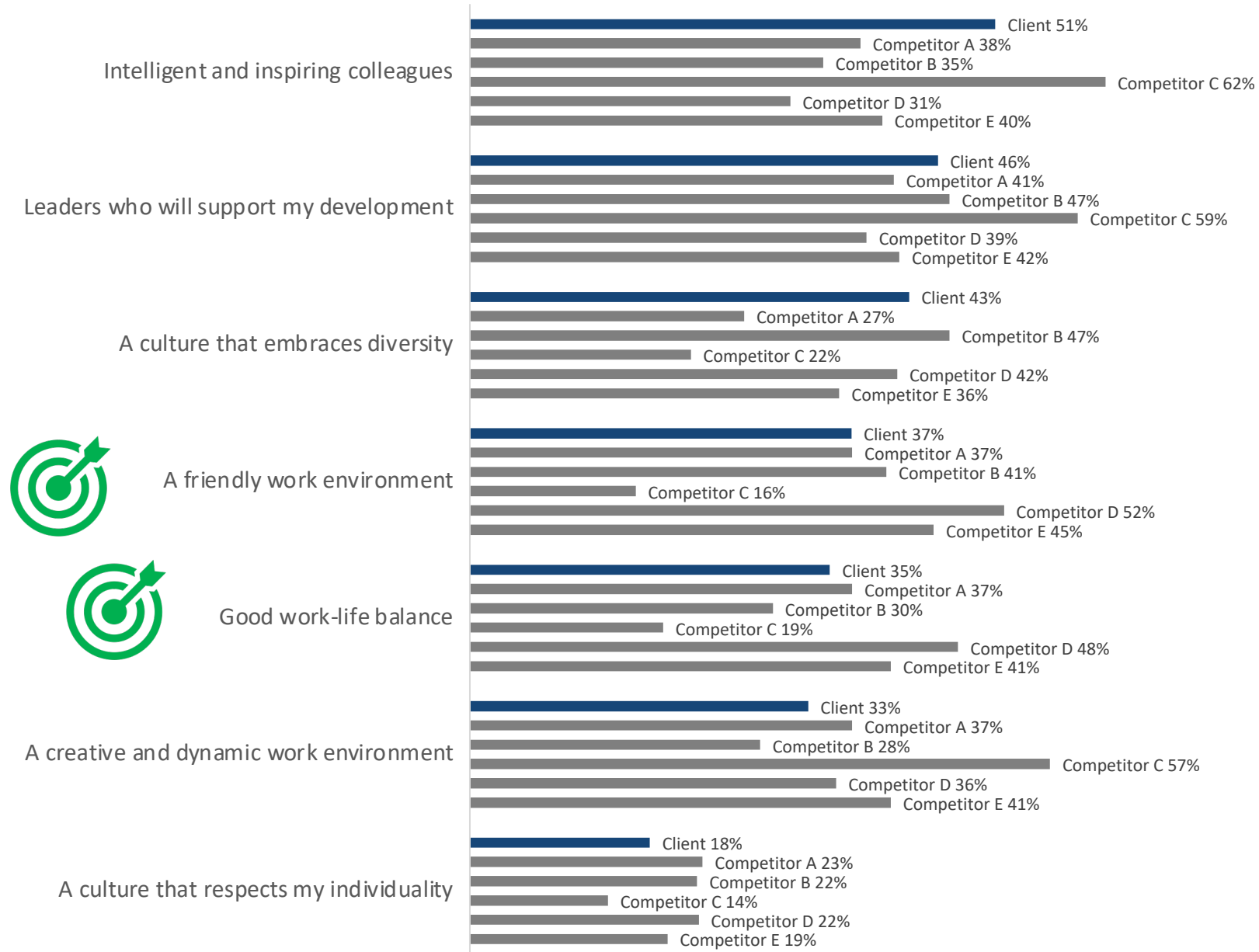
Attracting the right candidates

Employers, how well do  
you know yourselves?

# Workplace culture

1. Good work-life balance
2. A friendly work environment
3. Leaders who will support my development
4. A creative and dynamic work environment
5. Intelligent and inspiring colleagues
6. A culture that embraces diversity
7. A culture that respects my individuality





What matters most  
is who your candidates  
think you are.

[END OF SIDEBAR]

A word cloud featuring various terms related to employment and student life. The words are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner. The largest words are 'Best', 'Aspects', 'Internships', 'Coop', and 'Job'. Other prominent words include 'Black Students', 'Worst', 'Priorities', 'Remuneration', 'Meaning', 'Salary', and 'Expectations'. Smaller words include 'Job Hopping', 'Characteristics', 'GPAs', 'Work-Life Balance', 'Females in STEM', 'Workplace Culture', 'Usage', 'International Students', 'Job Search', 'Challenges', 'Indigenous Media', 'Social High', 'Career Fairs', and 'Pay Increases'. The colors used are primarily shades of green, blue, and grey.

Job Hopping Characteristics GPAs  
Remuneration **Best**  
Priorities Work-Life Balance  
**Black Students**  
Females in STEM Workplace Culture  
Usage **Aspects** International Students Job Search  
Meaning **Internships** Challenges  
Indigenous Media **Coop** Salary Social High  
Career Fairs **Job** Pay Increases  
**Worst** Expectations

What do they want in the  
workplace?

Meaningful Impact

Mentoring

Learning

Advancement

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# STAT

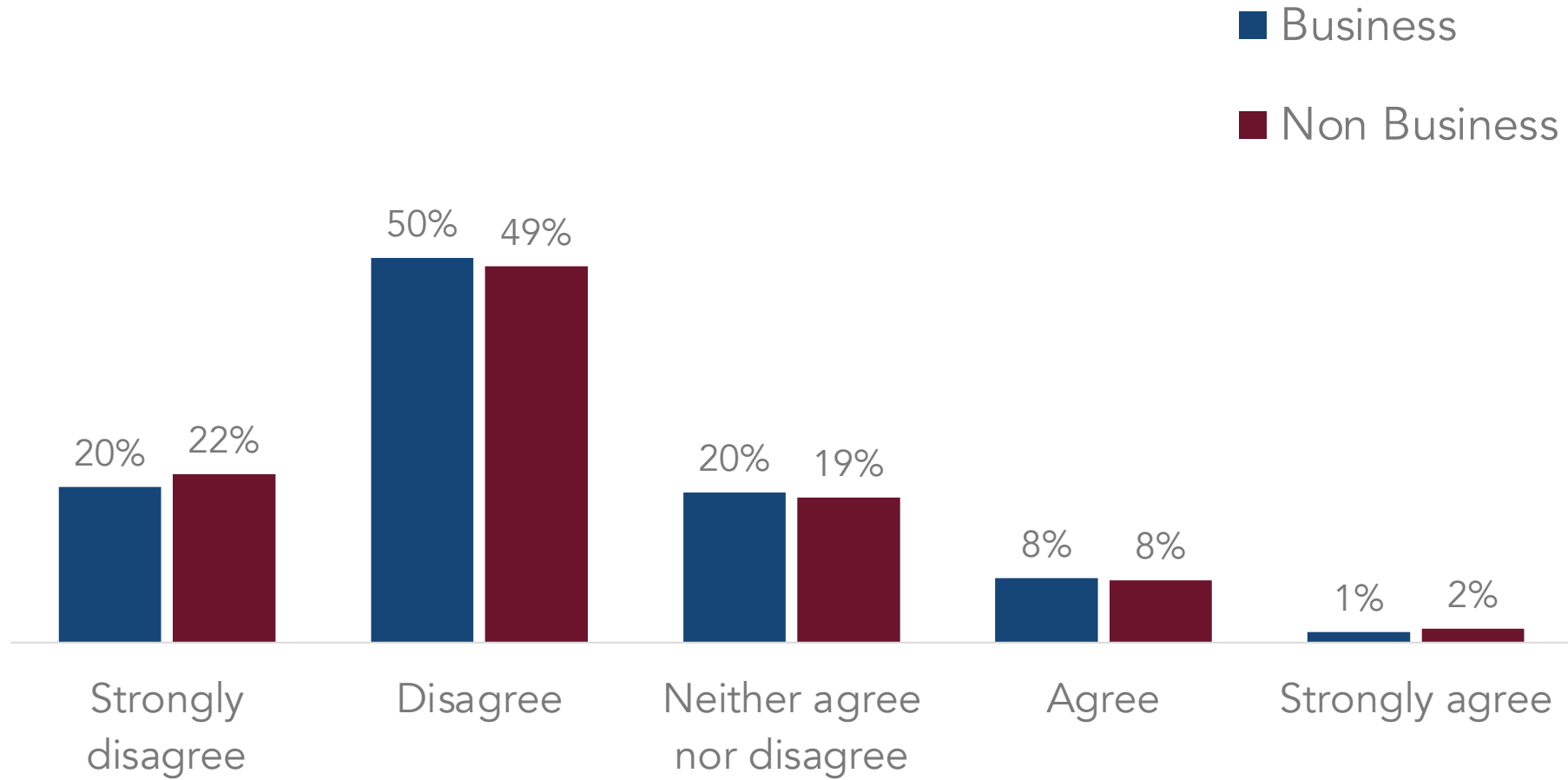
Students' Thoughts and Trends

## #2

Students select “supporting diversity and inclusion in the workplace” as the second most important aspect of employers’ corporate social responsibility.

What do they value?





If my skills are a great match for a job, I don't care about the values of the employer.

What employers think:

1. Stimulation
2. Achievement
3. Self-direction

What students say:

1. Achievement
2. Self-direction
3. Security

What employers do they  
want to work for most?



Canada's

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**Future Workforce**

Top Employers

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2021

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