

What Are We Seeing for SEAs in 2026 and Beyond?

Presented by Jordan Jarrett & Al Spada



Our industry is facing a shortage of engineers, and it is going to get worse.



The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a need for about 25,000 new civil engineers each year throughout this decade.

Causes of current shortages:

- Baby - boom generation is retiring
- Subsequent generations did not have as many children
- The Great Recession



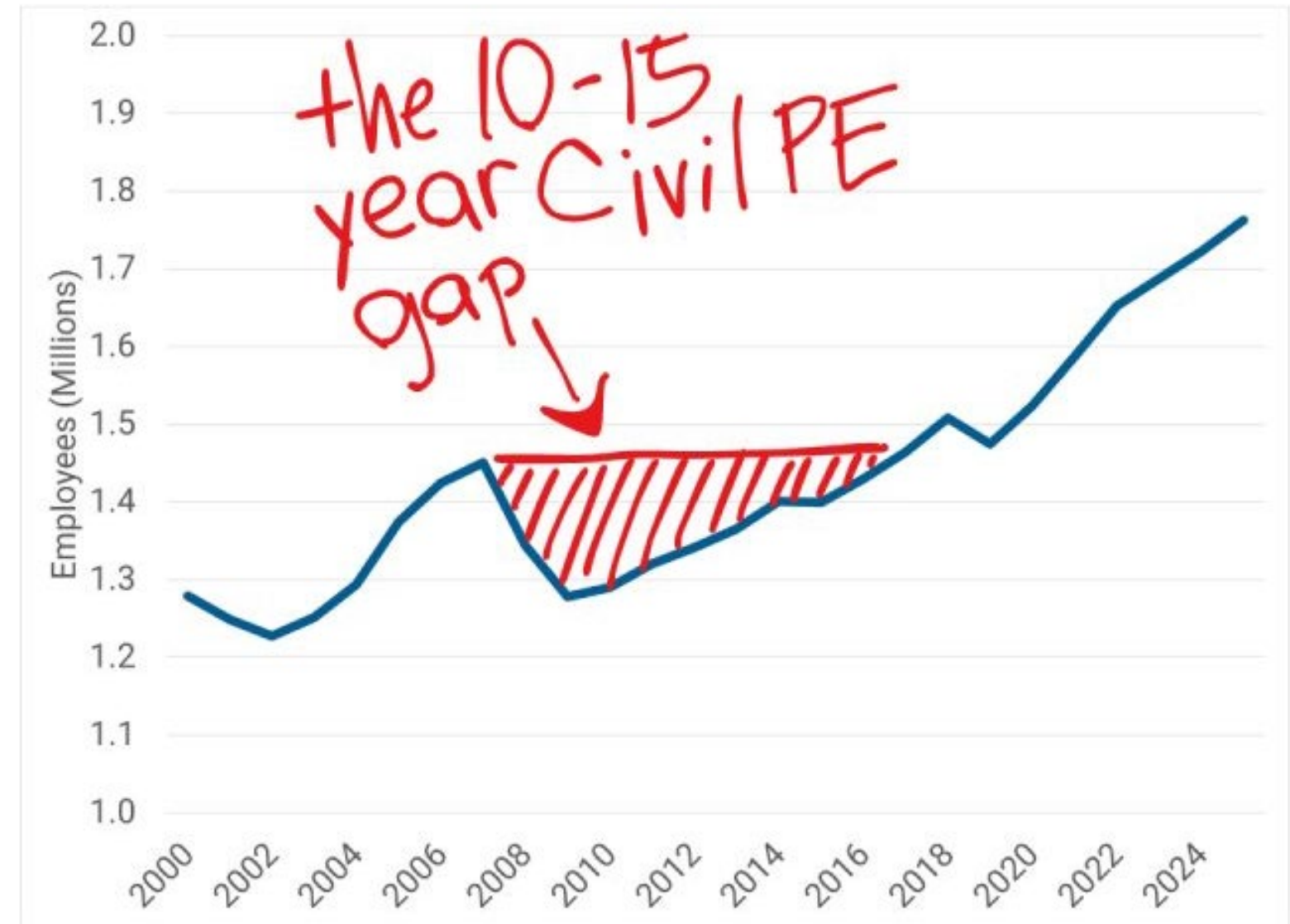
Great Recession

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JOHN TOMAC FOR THE CHRONICLE

U.S. Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services Employment



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED, St. Louis Fed – CES6054130001

[linkedin.com/in/jimriney](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jimriney)

- Enrollment Cliff

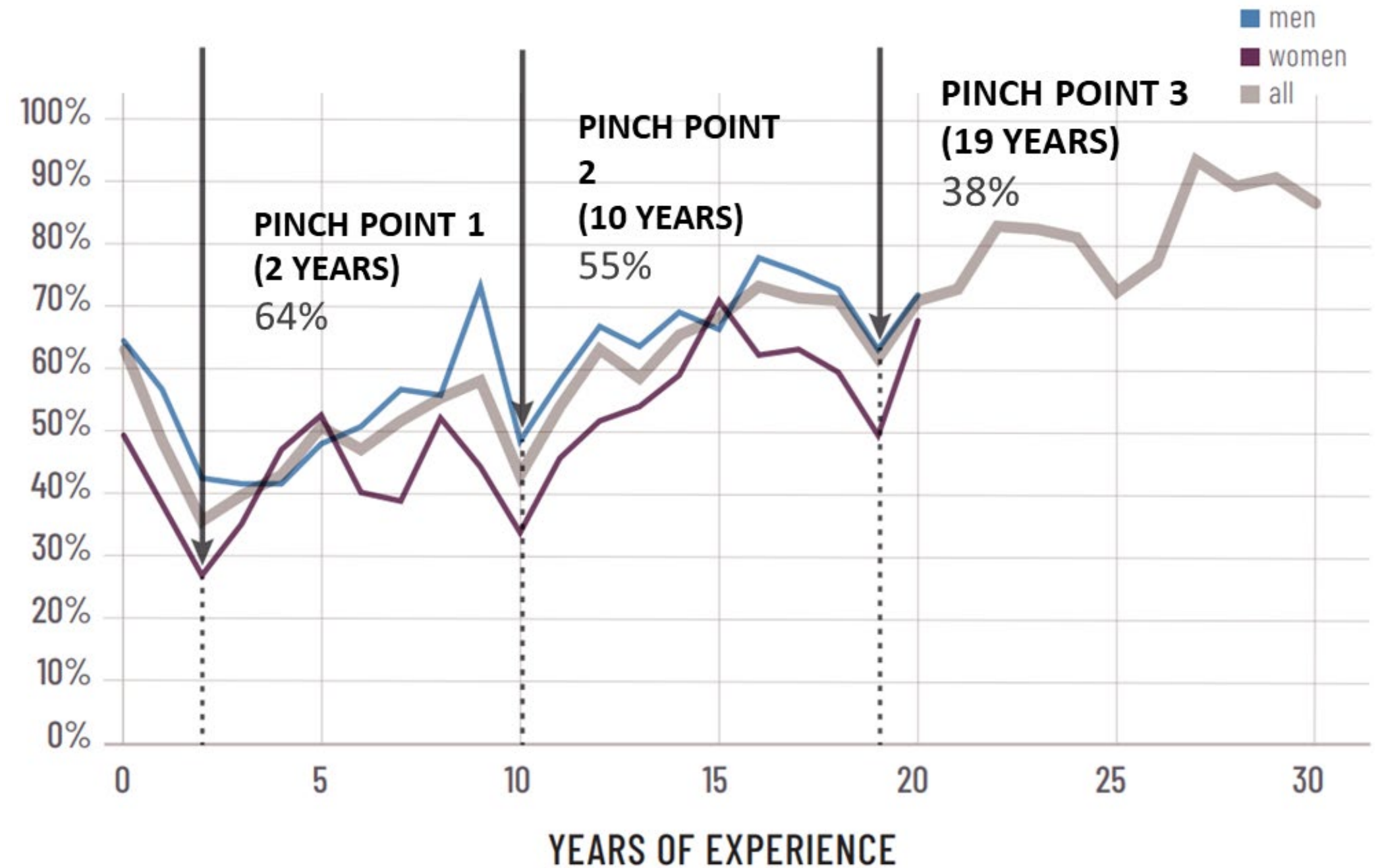


JOHN TOMAC FOR THE CHRONICLE

- Reduction in international engineers
 - US Colleges report 20% drop in international students
 - Increased challenges for H-1B visa applicants

Retention

2020 NCSEA SE3 Survey:
How long to individuals plan
to stay in the profession?



Retention

Young Engineers

- Mentorship
- Thoughtful opportunities
- Sufficient guidance (especially in an AI world)
- Focus on reducing burnout

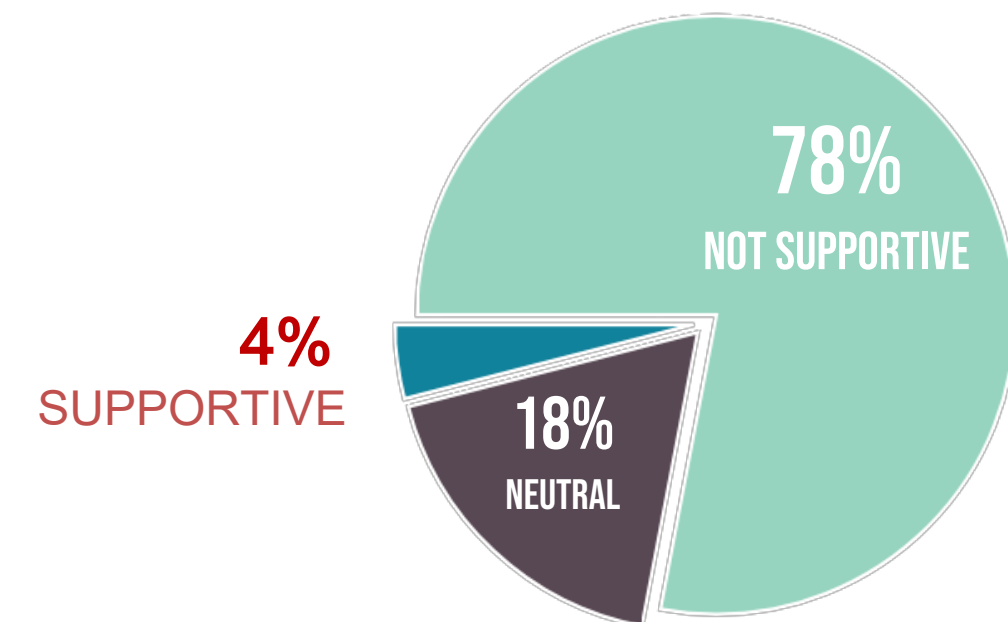




Mid -level Engineers

- Already a shortage
- Insufficient training for managers
- Licensure expectations
- Family obligations

2020 NCSEA SE3 Survey: Is your employer supportive of employees with dependents?

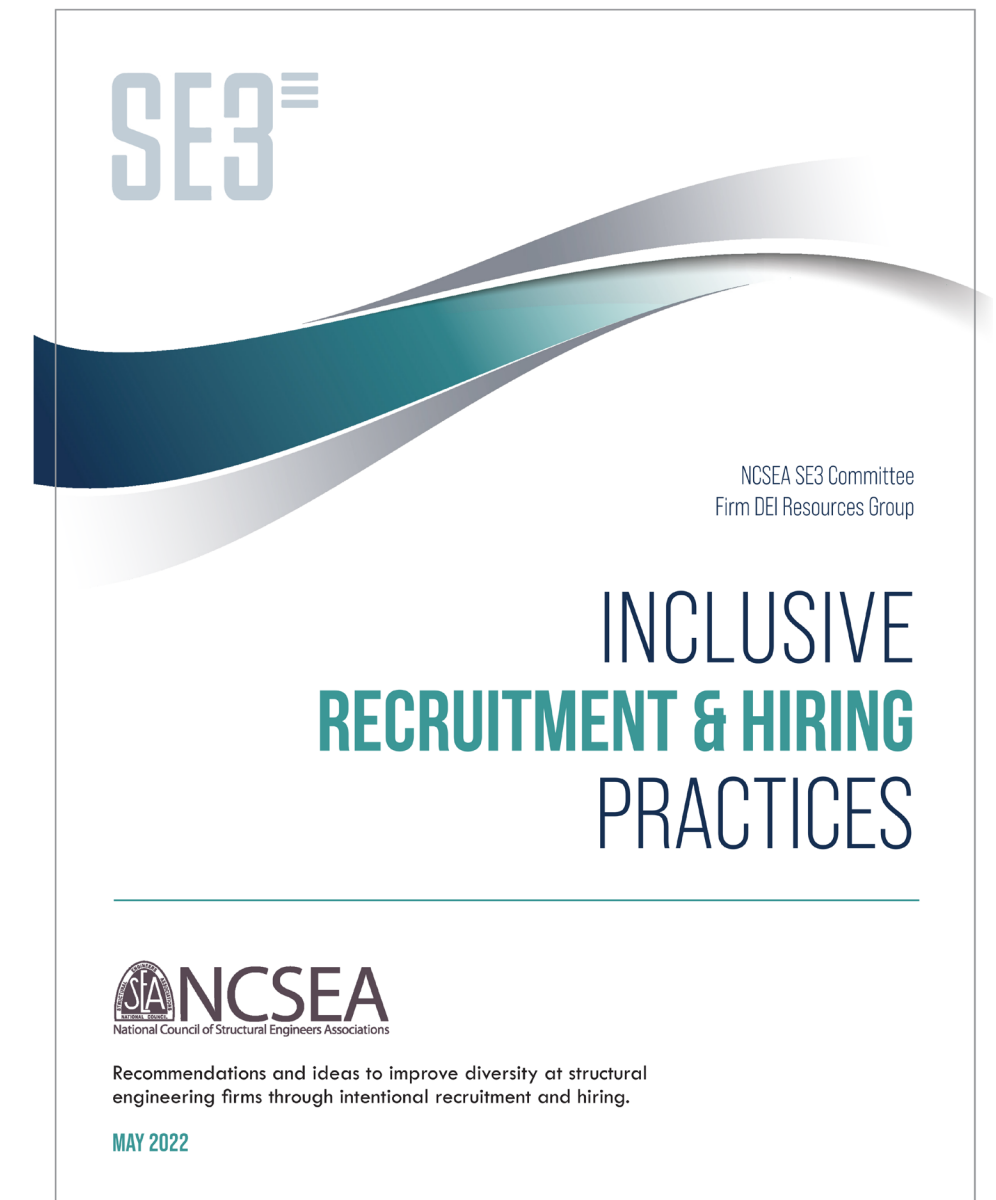


Our industry is facing a shortage of engineers, and it is going to get worse.

- How can our industry better attract future engineers?
- How can our industry better retain current engineers?



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- K- 12 Outreach
- College partnership
- Thoughtful internships
- Inclusive recruitment and hiring practices



- How can our industry better retain current engineers?
 - Sufficient training and mentoring
 - Flexible policies and procedures
 - Psychological safety
 - Focus on reducing stress and burnout
 - Increase engagement in the work



2026 STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING SUMMIT

OCTOBER 27-30, 2026

HILTON UNION SQUARE

SAN FRANCISCO, CA



- SE3 and YMSC presentations:
 - Retention of Early - Career Professionals: Insights from the 2025 SE3 Survey
 - Retention of Mid - Career Professionals: A Data Driven Discussion

What Are Your Yearly Dues for an Individual Member?

\$100

Most Common
Dues Amount

\$50–\$326

Full Range
Across SEAs

~\$120

Approximate
Average

Common price points reported by SEAs:

Under \$80

4 SEAs

\$80–\$110

9 SEAs

\$111–\$160

7 SEAs

\$161–\$250

5 SEAs

\$251 and up

3 SEAs

Note: Some SEAs use firm-based membership models; individual dues may not apply.

What Does This Mean For You?

You must increase your dues

Does Your SEA Have an Awards Programs?

16

SEAs said YES
(55%)

vs.

13

SEAs said NO
(45%)

What Does This Mean For You?

- Recognition is key
- Building a community is vital to your success
- Awards can raise dues
- Diversifies your community

Does Your SEA Support Local Student Chapters at Colleges/Universities?

16

SEAs said YES
(55%)

vs.

13

SEAs said NO
(45%)

Does Your SEA Have a Scholarship Program?

18

SEAs said YES
(62%)

vs.

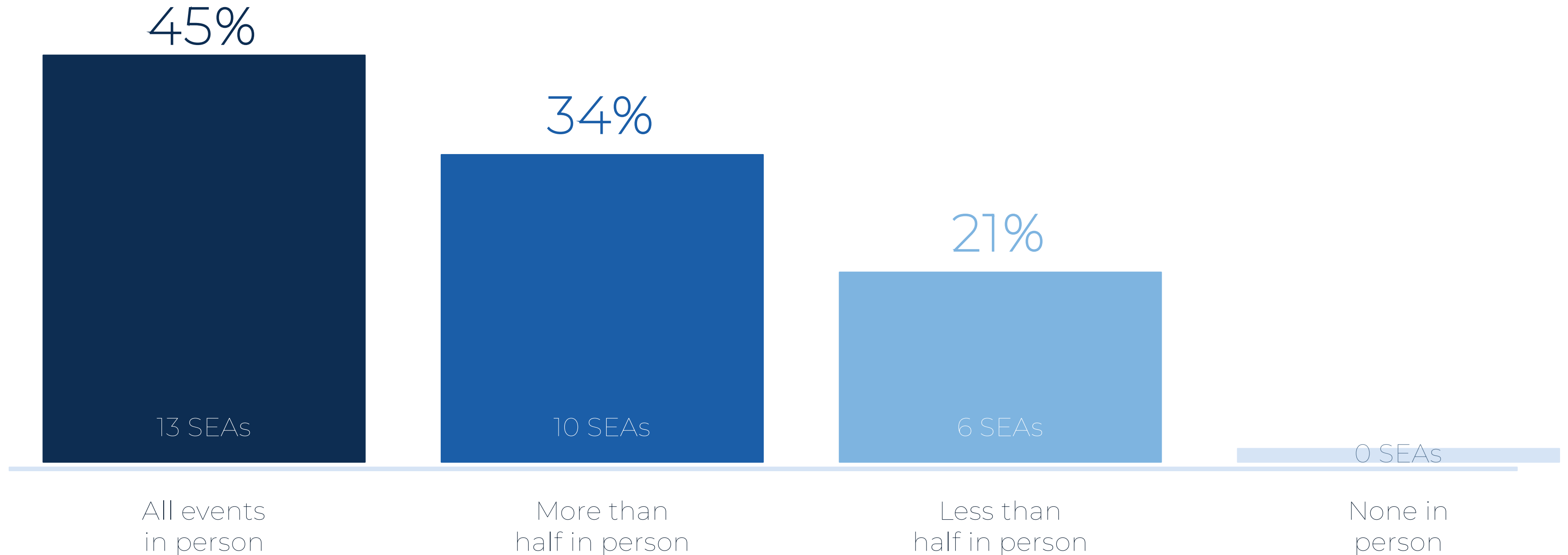
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SEAs said NO
(38%)

What Does This Mean For You?

- Building a community
- New blood for the SEA
- Understanding of future needs
- Passion project for many of your members... Giving back

Approximately What Percent of Your SEA's Events Were In-Person in the Past 12 Months?



What Events Does Your SEA Offer?



Breakfast &
Dinner Meetings



Lunch &
Learn



Full Day / Half Day
Seminar



Webinar



Annual
Conference



Networking &
Social Gatherings

Nearly all SEAs reported offering multiple event formats. Annual conferences and networking/social events were among the most common across respondents.

What Does This Mean For You?

- Deliver a mixture of ways for your members to engage... not all needs are the same.
- Deliver a mixture of content to appeal to as broad a base as possible... young engineers, execs, traditional members.
- Provide potential attendees easy access points. No barriers to entry
- Have a plan of how to welcome new participants. Embrace them. Show them love.

Revenue Generation: Ranked Greatest to Least

#1

Membership Dues

#2

Annual Meeting, Conferences & Special Events

#3

Sponsorship, Partnerships & Exhibitor Events

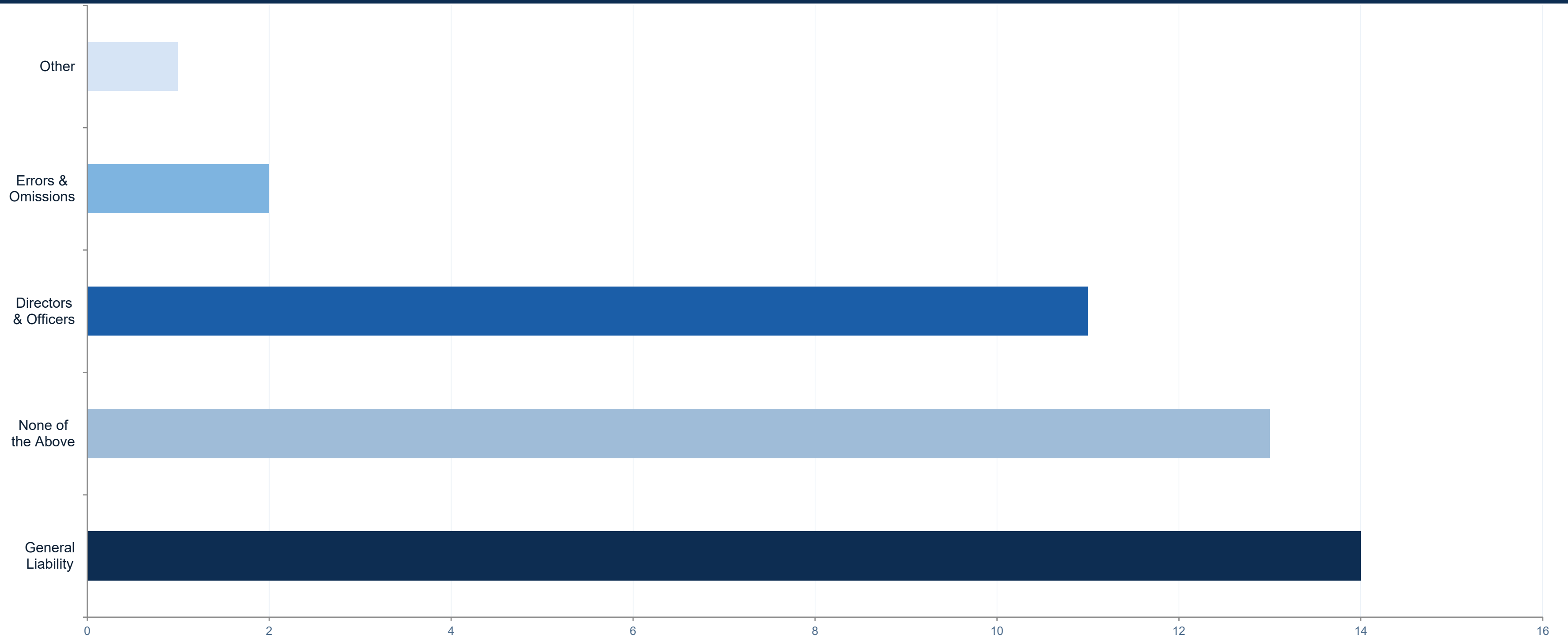
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Education, Technical Webinars & Publications

What Does This Mean For You?

- Dues should only represent 33% of your total revenue. This is industry average.
- Most events should be budgeted to make a profit.
- What value do you provide the supplier base? You have a strong community, a unique audience that is valuable. How are you providing access?

What Types of Insurance Does Your SEA Have?



Notable: 13 of 30 responses indicated no coverage — nearly as many as those with General Liability.

What Does This Mean For You?

- You need insurance. You need to protect your volunteers. Find an insurance partner.

What Is Holding Your SEA Back?

Member Engagement

Most common response. Members aren't volunteering, participating, or stepping into leadership.

Volunteer Burnout

Too few volunteers carrying too much — without systems to transition work or delegate.

Membership Growth

Difficulty attracting new members, especially outside major metro areas.

Funding & Revenue

Limited budget constrains programming, marketing, and staff capacity.

Geographic Spread

Chapters in rural or secondary areas struggle to network with larger, more active chapters.

Staff / Leadership

Need for a dedicated executive director to manage day-to-day operations.