The National Study of Workplace Equity

WorkRise

BOSTON COLLEGE
School of Social Work

WORK EQUITY

SHRM
BETTER WORKPLACES
BETTER WORLD™

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Work Equity: 3 Steps Toward A New Approach

Step 1: Listen to U.S. Workplace Leaders

Step 3: Use Data to Identify Action Steps to Advance Workplace Equity

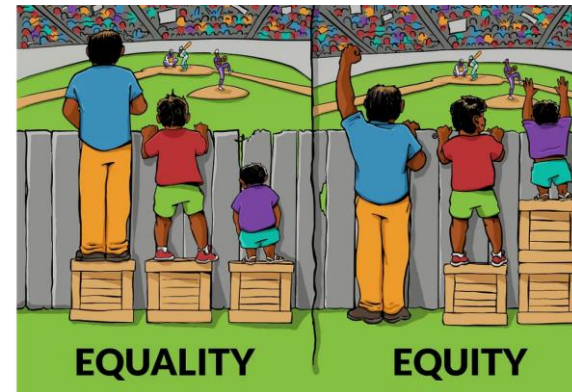**Step 2: Gather Data on Workplace Equity**

Step 1: Listen To Workplace Leaders

What We Heard

- **Equity both a business concern and a moral imperative.**
- **Uncertainty about what questions to ask to understand better today's equity challenges.**
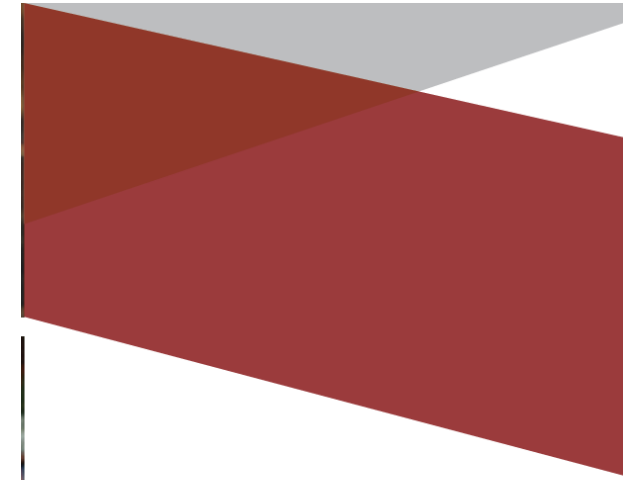- **Lack of clarity about innovative options that will be effective.**

Workplace equity refers to:
The fairness of organizational **systems** and the absence of **systematic** and persistent disparities in the opportunities and resources available to employees, regardless of their demographic and social identities.

Step 2: Gather Data on the Equity of Employment Systems

- **Goal of Study**: In the context of disruptions at the workplace (Covid-19 and shocks of in-equity in the *U.S.), evaluate the state of equity embedded in employment systems & improve equity practices*.

- **Process**: Gather survey data from a *nationally representative sample* of U.S. organizations (n = 1,062).

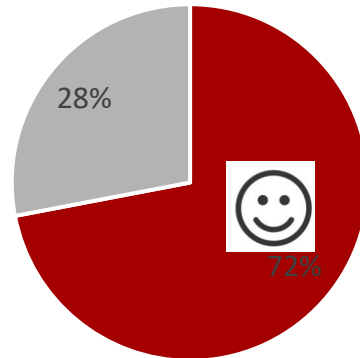The National Study
of Workplace Equity

December 2022

https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/ssw/sites/center-for-social-innovation/projects/the-national-study-of-workplace-equity.html
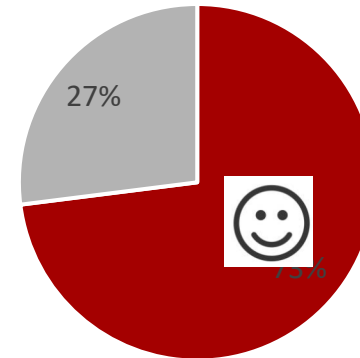
Good News?

3 in 4 organizations say their employees have **not** experienced different types bias over the the past two years.
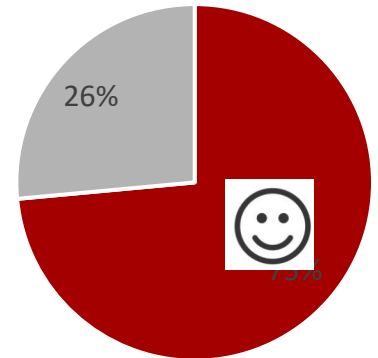
Bias: Gender

28%

72%

72% not at all

Bias: Racial

27%

73% not at all

Bias: Age

26%

74% not at all

Not Such Good News?
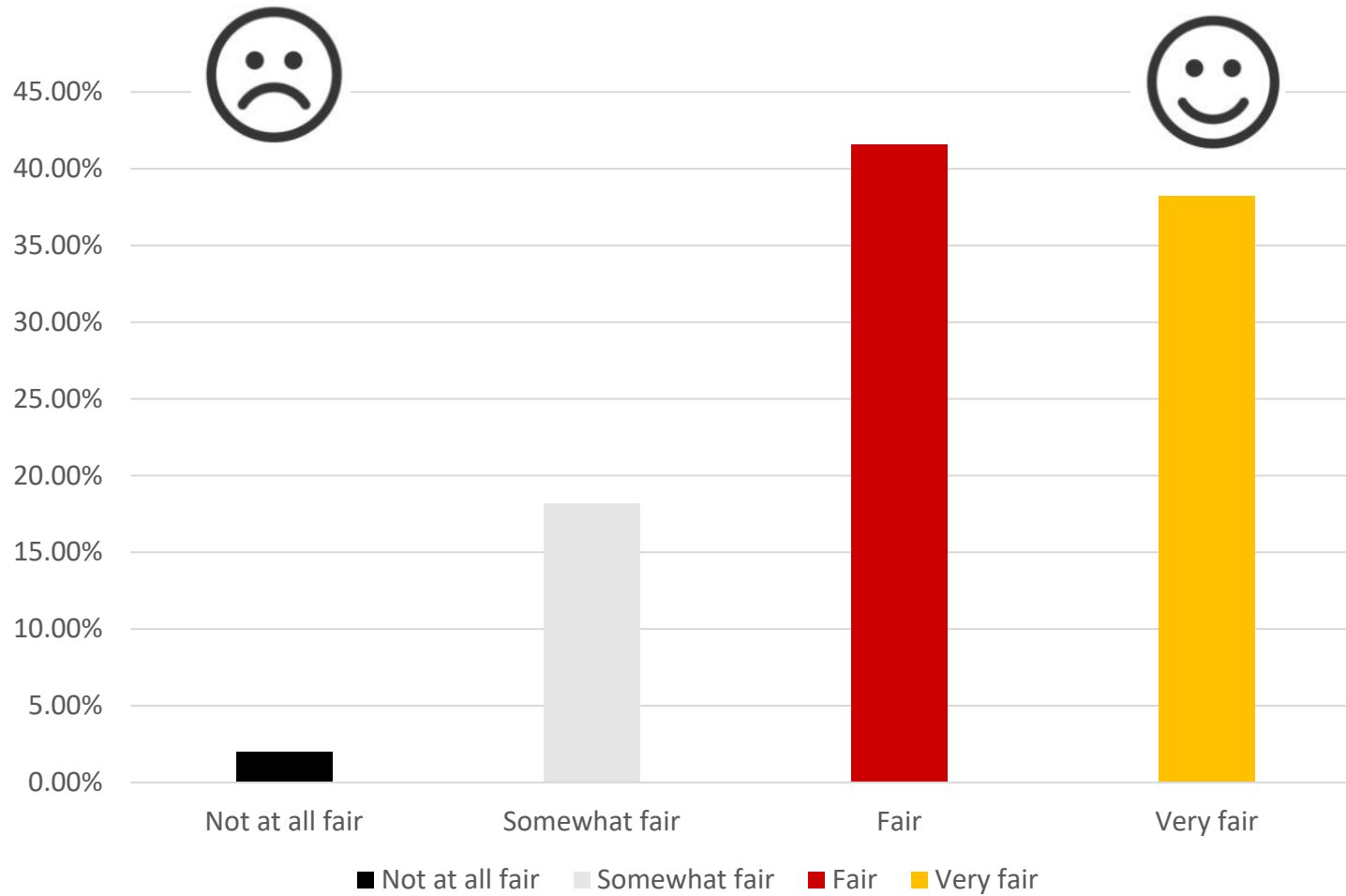
2 in 5 say policies and practices are "very fair" overall

Paradox - Espoused Versus Actual Values re DEI

- **65%** of organizations say DEI is **important/very important**
- Yet **63%** have allocated **little/to no** resources to DEI.

The Importance of DEI to Organizations

8%	28%	31%	34%
Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
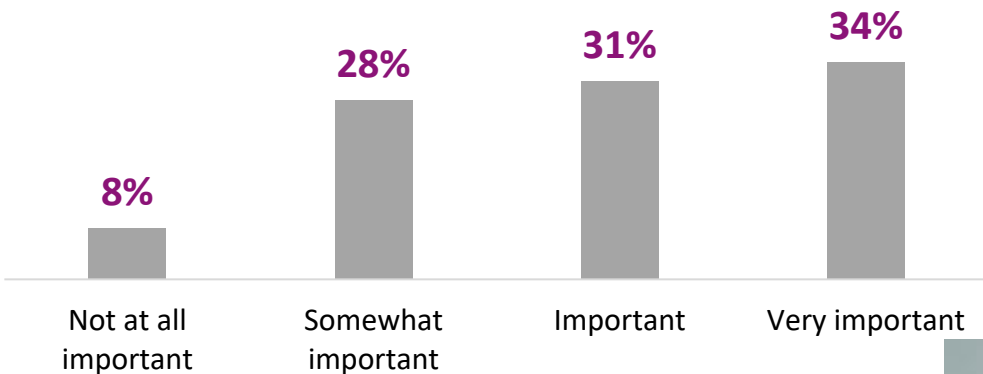
Resources Devoted to DEI

23%	40%	36%	2%
Almost no resources have been allocated	A limited number of resources have been alllocated but it is too little	Just the right number of resources have been allocated	An excessive number of resources have been allocated

A New Framework for Assessing Equity: A Deep Dive into the Equity of 10 Employment Systems

Employment Systems

- Job Structures
- Training and Career Development
- Recruitment and Hiring
- Performance Assessment and Feedback
- Compensation and Benefits
- Resources and Supports
- Orientation and Onboarding
- Promotion
- Supervision and Mentoring
- Separation

- **Inequities Can Be Baked into the 10 Systems**
- **Equity Levels Can Vary Across Systems**
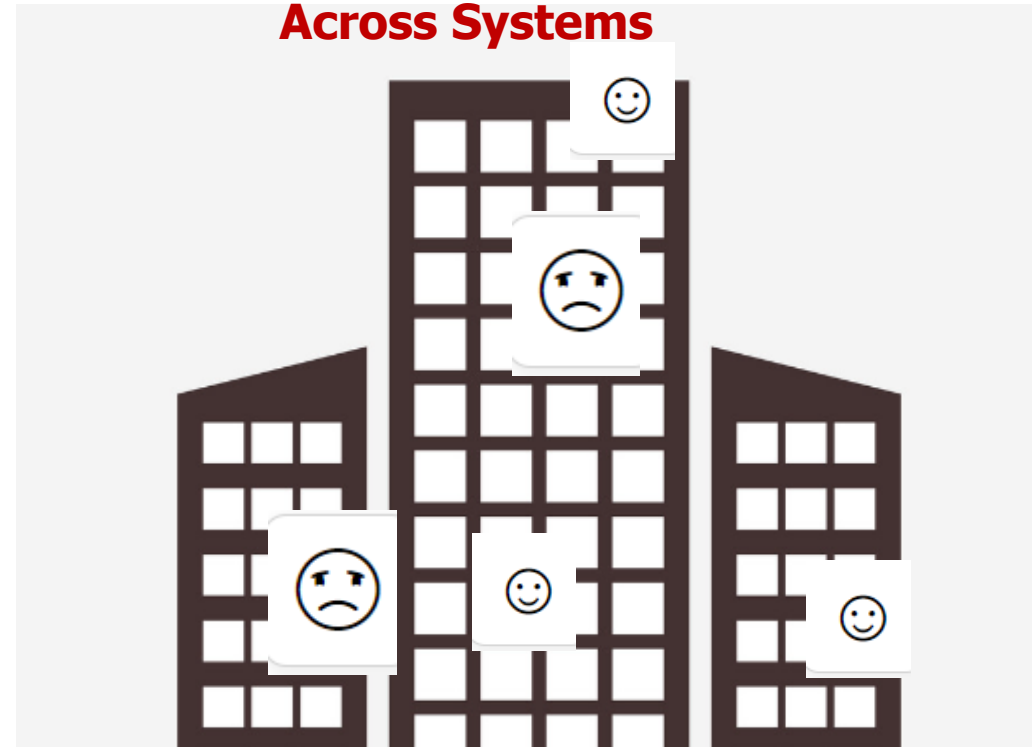
Survey Questions about Equity in Employment Systems: Levers for Change

1 Policies

2 Practices

3 Planning and Evaluation (Audits and Data Collection)

4 Assignment of Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountabilities

5 Workplace Culture

6 Climate of Inclusion at the Workplace

7 Communication

Policies

Communication

Practices
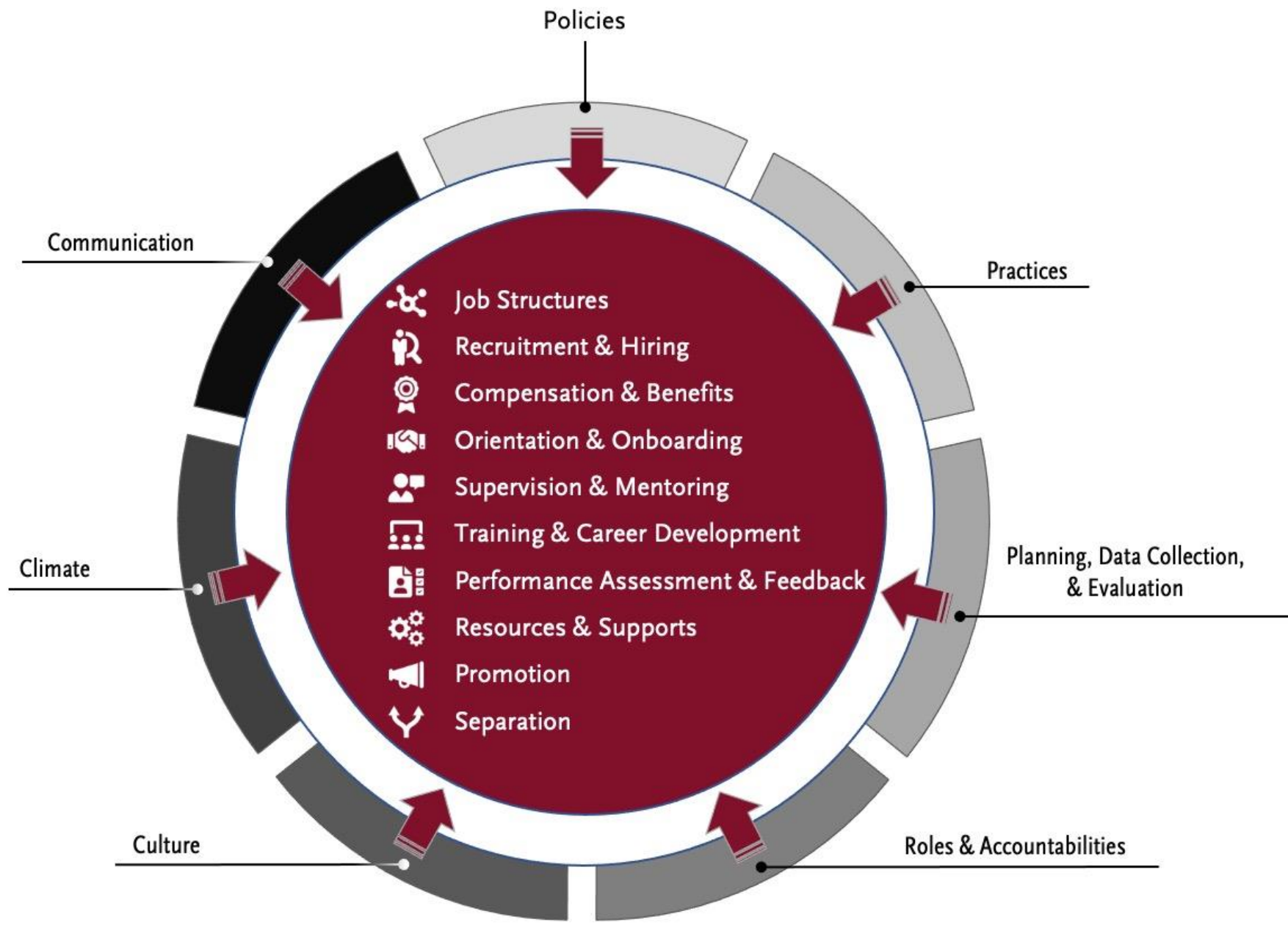
Climate

Planning, Data Collection, & Evaluation

Culture

Roles & Accountabilities

Job Structures

Recruitment & Hiring

Compensation & Benefits

Orientation & Onboarding

Supervision & Mentoring

Training & Career Development

Performance Assessment & Feedback

Resources & Supports

Promotion

Separation

Distribution of Overall Equity
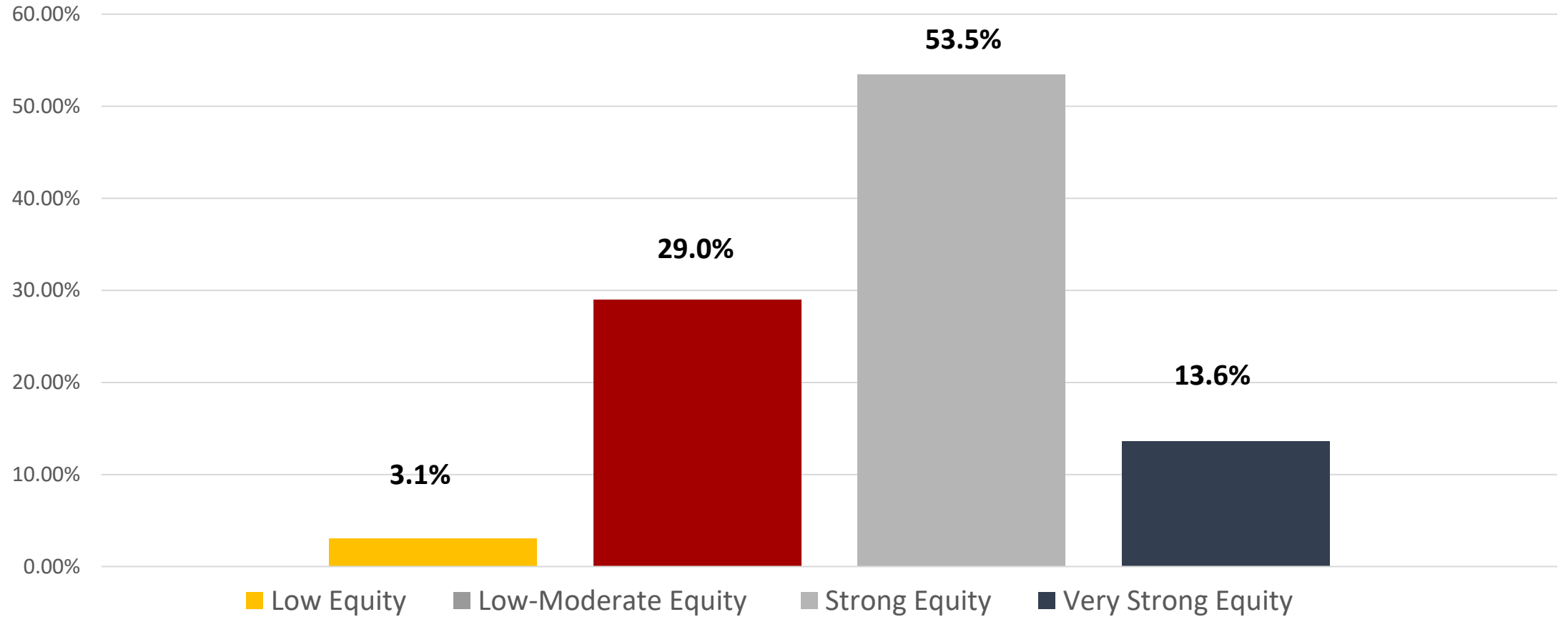
Variation in the Equity of Employment Systems

MEAN SCORE	Resources & Supports	Job Structures	Supervision & Mentoring	Training & Development	Promotion	Separation	Performance Assessment & Feedback	Orientation & Onboarding	Compensation & Benefits	Recruitment & Hiring
	2.46	2.55	2.59	2.63	2.64	2.83	2.93	3.00	3.02	3.03

Least Equitable ← → Most Equitable
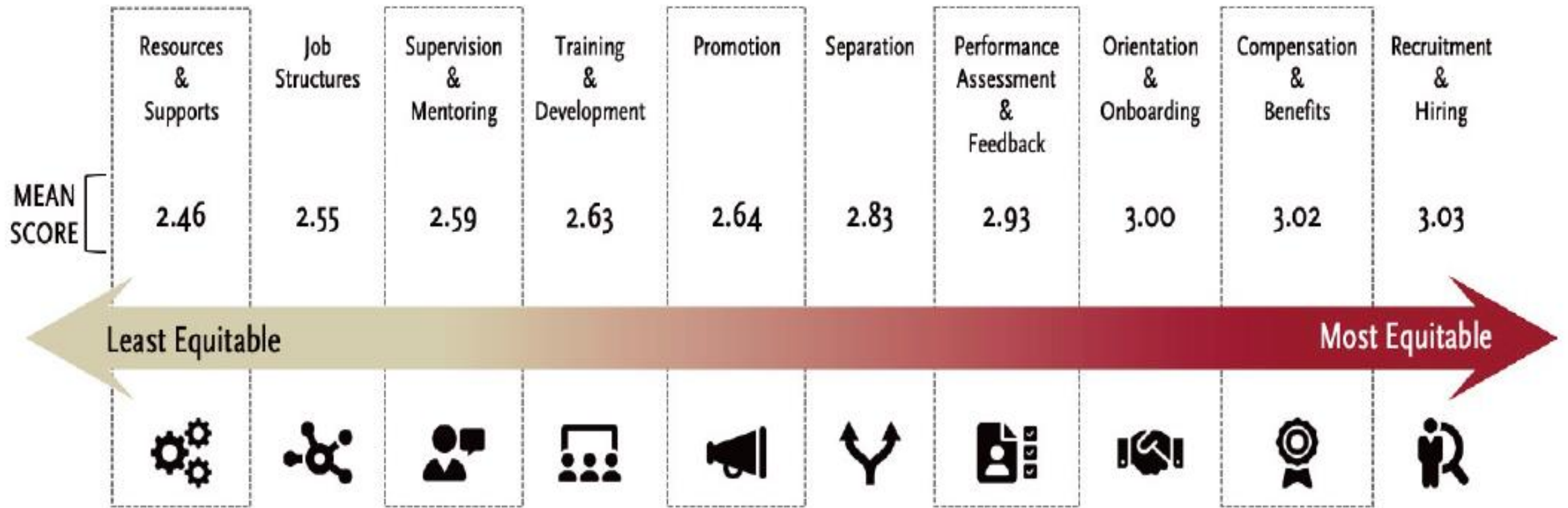
Variation in Strength of "Levers for Change" Across the Employment Systems
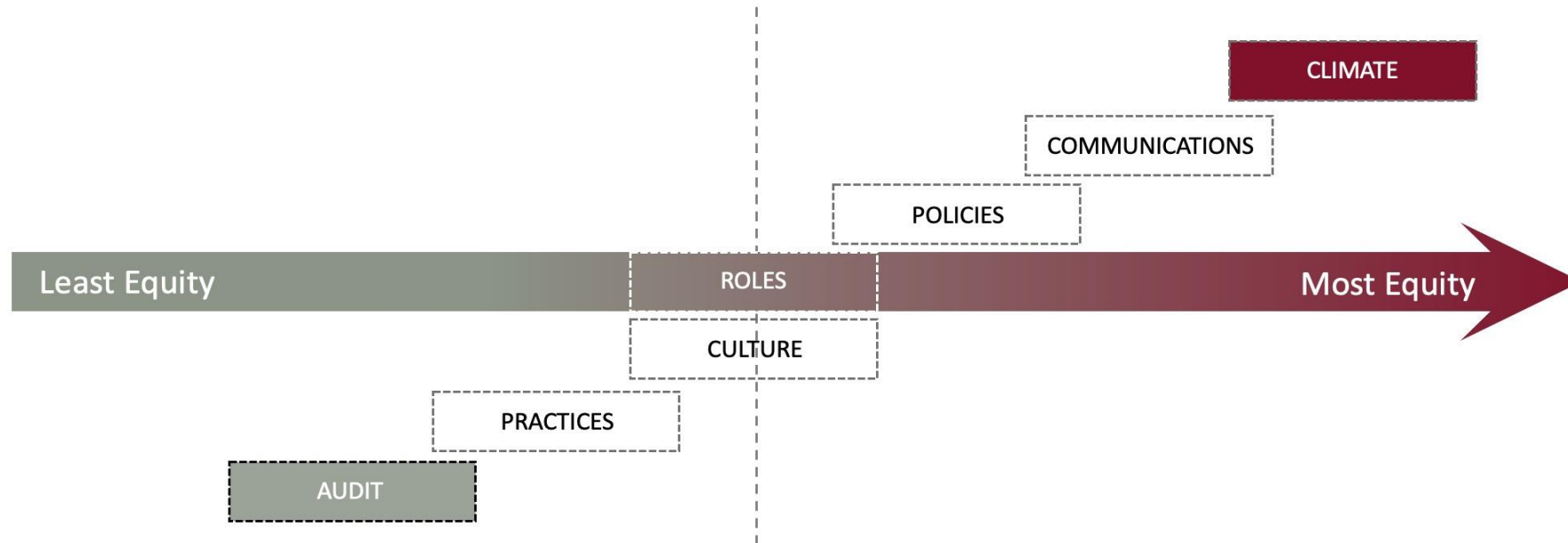
Climate Across Employment Systems

Weakest — Job Structures · Resources & Supports · Training & Career Development · Supervision & Mentoring · Orientation & Onboarding · Recruitment & Hiring — Strongest
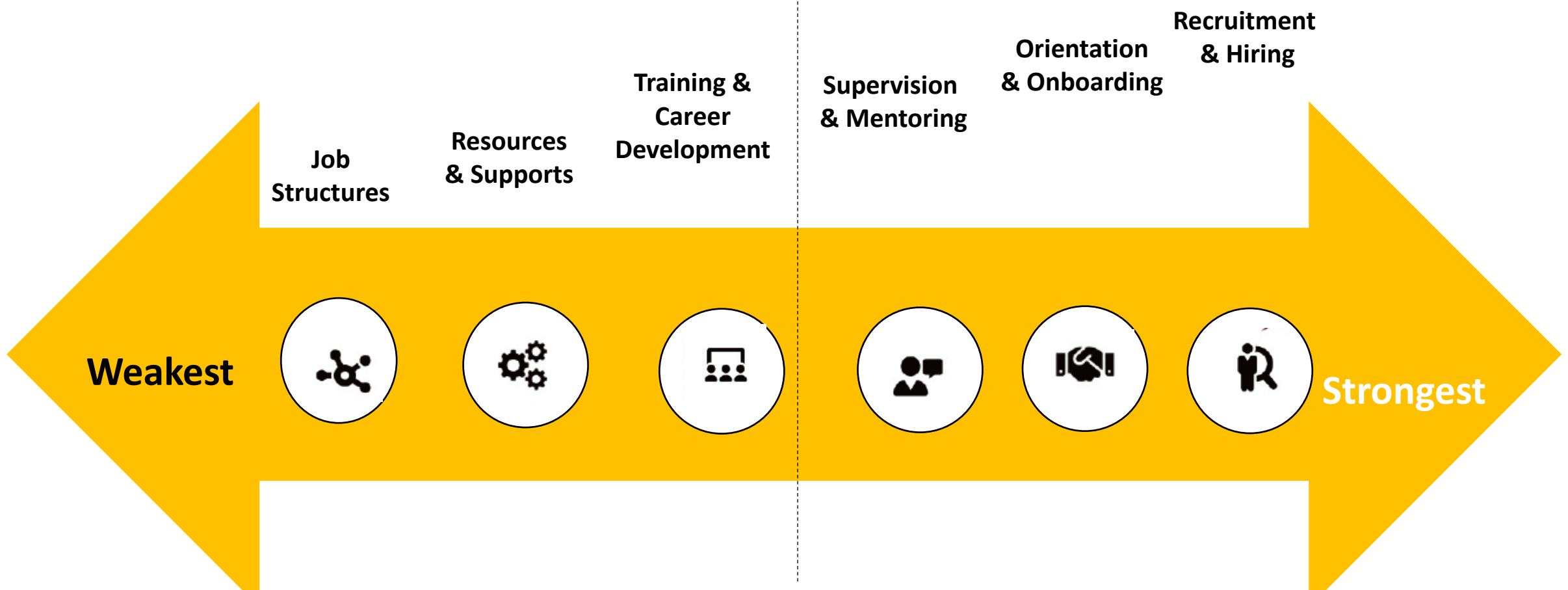
Audits Across Employment Systems
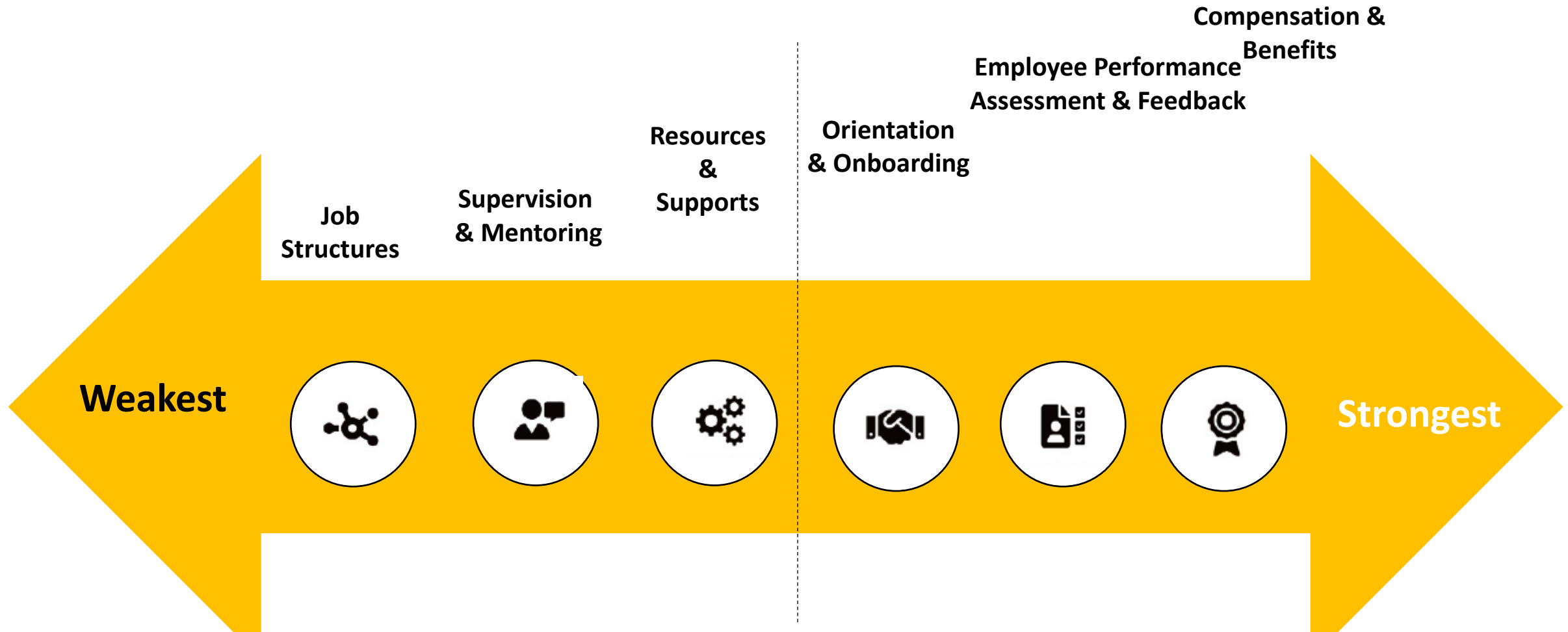
Close Attention to Job Structures System in the Aftermath of Covid-19

- **Of the 10 Systems, Job Structure System is:**
- **Weakest in Climate**
- **Weakest in Communication**
- **Weakest in Equity Audit**
- **Weakest in Accountability**

Diagnosis
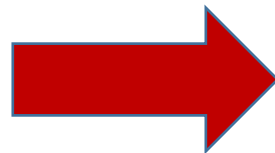
Action

Initial Steps to Advance Equity

Collect Data and Evaluate Patterns: Audit

➢ Assess the equity of one (or more) system.

➢ Select metrics.

➢ Conduct periodic audits.

➢ Foster transparency throughout firm.

Assign Roles for Equity of Each Employment systems: Accountability

➢Encourage leaders of different employment systems to share experiences and best practices.

➢Engage a DEI Team(s) in innovations in the employment system(s).

Step 3: Action Steps - 10 Toolkits: One for Each Employment System
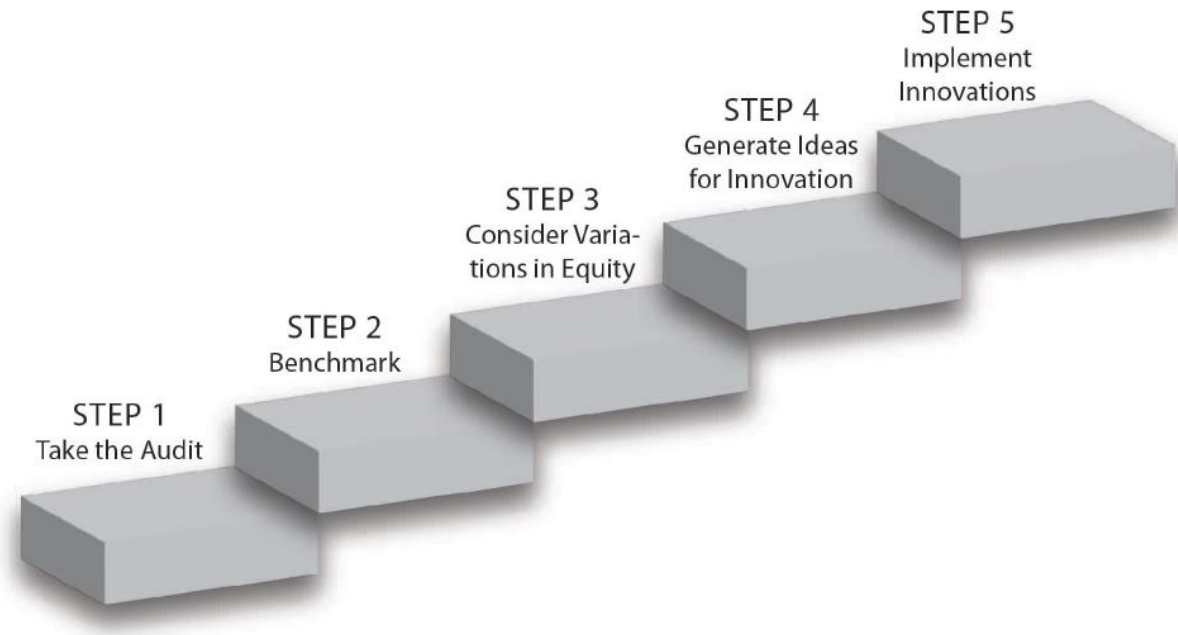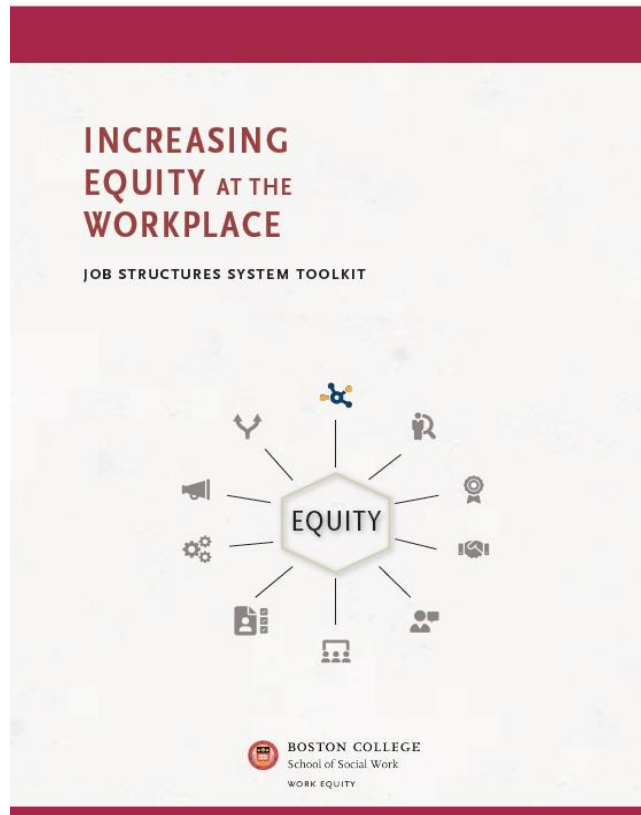
In your opinion...	Employment System
Is it often difficult for employees and their supervisors to agree on employee use of customized job structures?	If **yes**, download the Job Structures Toolkit.
Do some groups of employees have more access to employee benefits than others?	If **yes**, download the Compensation and Benefits Toolkit.
Do recent hires reflect the demographics/ social identities of the population in your geographic area?	If **no**, download the Recruitment and Hiring Toolkit.
Does it take a long time for new employees to feel that they belong at your organization?	If **yes**, download the Orientation and Onboarding Toolkit.
Are most employees able to establish and maintain positive relationships with supervisor and mentors?	If **no**, download the Supervision and Mentoring Toolkit.
Do employees have reasonable opportunities to gain new work competencies that help them with their current work or possible future jobs?	If **no**, download the Training and Career Development Toolkit.
Do most employees from specific demographic and social identity groups have access to formal and informal resources that support their engagement?.	If **no**, download the Employee Resources and Supports Toolkit.
Do most employees seem to feel that their performance assessments are fair?	If **no**, download the Employee Performance Assessment and Feedback Toolkit.
Do most employees seem to feel they are considered for promotions in a fair way?	If **no**, download Employee Promotion Toolkit.
Do most employees who leave the organization seem satisfied with their work experience?	If **yes**, download the Separation Toolkit.

Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #2
Equity Audit Questions for the Job Structures System

Directions:
The Leader(s) of your Equity Initiative should make copies of the Audit questions below and distribute them to all of the "key respondents" who will help your organization assess the equity of the Job Structures System.
Explain to the "key respondents:"
1. the purpose of the equity survey,
2. the process you will use and that you will keep their responses confidential/anonymous, and
3. how the results of the survey will be shared.

1. To what extent does your organization have written policies which ensure that employees' access to different job structures is fair (for example, flexible work schedules)?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

2. To what extent has your organization specified a fair process that supervisors should follow when considering employee requests for different types of job structures?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

3. To what extent does your organization have practices to ensure that employees who work remotely or those who work non-traditional hours have access to technical assistance and advice?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

4. To what extent does your organization routinely audit the fairness of employees' access to different types of job structures?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

5. To what extent does your organization hold one or more employees (e.g., supervisors, Director of DEI, etc.) accountable for monitoring the fairness of employee access to different types of job structures? Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

6. To what extent does your organization encourage employees to discuss work overload with their supervisors?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

7. To what extent do the actions of your organizational leaders indicate that they believe there is a connection between DEI initiatives and equitable access to different job structures?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

8. To what extent has your organization "normalized" and de-stigmatized the use of different types of job structures?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

9. To what extent has your organization adopted practices to ensure that all employees have equitable access to information about the different types of job structures available to them?
Circle your answer.

Not at All		To a Limited Extent		To Some Extent		To a Great Extent
1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4

Jobs Structures System Toolkit Worksheet #5
Compare Your Organization's Average Scores to the National Averages

Bar chart comparing Your Score values (marked with arrows near 3.0–3.25) to organization average scores:

Score	Question
2.62	To what extent does your organization have written policies which ensure that employees' access to different job structures is fair (for example, flexible work schedules)?
2.5	To what extent has your organization specified a fair process that supervisors should follow when considering employee requests for different types of job structures?
2.85	To what extent does your organization have practices to ensure that employees who work remotely or those who work non-traditional hours have access to technical assistance and advice?
2.13	To what extent does your organization routinely audit the fairness of employees' access to different types of job structures?
2.24	To what extent does your organization hold one or more employees (e.g., supervisors; Director of DEI, etc.) accountable for monitoring the fairness of employee access to different types of job structures?
3.12	To what extent does your organization encourage employees to discuss work overload with their supervisors?
2.43	To what extent do the actions of your organizational leaders indicate that they believe there is a connection between DEI initiatives and equitable access to different job structures?
2.46	To what extent has your organization "normalized" and de-stigmatized the use of different types of job structures?
2.63	To what extent has your organization adopted practices to ensure that all employees have equitable access to information about the different types of job structures available to them?

Lever for Change in the Job Structures System: Policies

Are your organization's policies related to job structures fair for...

Employees of different races/ethnicities:

Employees with different gender identities:

Employees with different sexual orientations:

Employees of different ages:

Employees with different religious affiliations:

Employees with different national backgrounds:

Employees with different abilities/disabilities:

Employees in jobs with different classifications (e.g., part-time vs. full-time, exempt vs. non-exempt, contractors vs. employees):

Questions?

Comments?

Suggestions?

THANK YOU!

bc.edu/workequity

Research Methodology

A sample of 1,062 U.S. organizations was surveyed using the SHRM Voice of Work panel. The survey was fielded August 19, 2022, to August 31, 2022. Data were weighted to reflect the population of U.S. organizations. The margin of error is approximately ± 3.76 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.