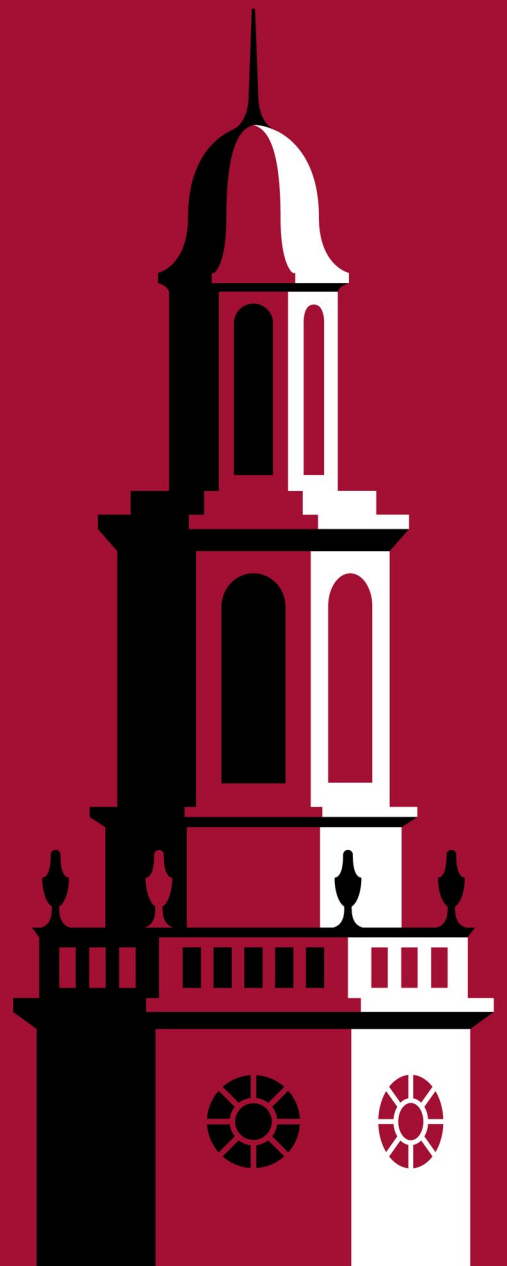
Building From the Bottom Up

Upward mobility survey of employers of low-wage workers (Results by Firm Size)



Harvard Business School

Managing the Future of Work

Notes
Employer Survey – Firm Size

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

Introduction:
This deck represents the results from an online survey of 1,150 U.S. employers of low-wage workers conducted September–November 2020 by the Project on Managing the Future of Work at Harvard Business School. The survey questionnaire is also available on our website. This deck shows the survey results by the size of the company the respondent works at.

Please direct inquiries to:
Manjari Raman, mraman@hbs.edu

Preferred citation:
"Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

General notes:
- Numbers may not sum to 100% due to rounding. All numbers are rounded to the nearest integer. However, the data is recorded to two decimal places – thus some data points labeled "0%" may be nonzero but rounded down.
- For the purposes of this survey, we define low-wage employees as full-time or part-time employees who earn hourly wages that are 200% or below the federal poverty threshold. Depending on which part of the country they work in, these employees typically earn wages around $7 per hour (or approximately $14,000 per year) to $20 per hour (or approximately $40,000 per year).
- Firm size groups: Small (1 – 99 employees): N=537; Medium (100 – 999 employees): N=282; and Large (1,000 or more employees): N=331.

Survey Population
Employment Status

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A1. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, which of the following best described your employment status?

N = 1,150

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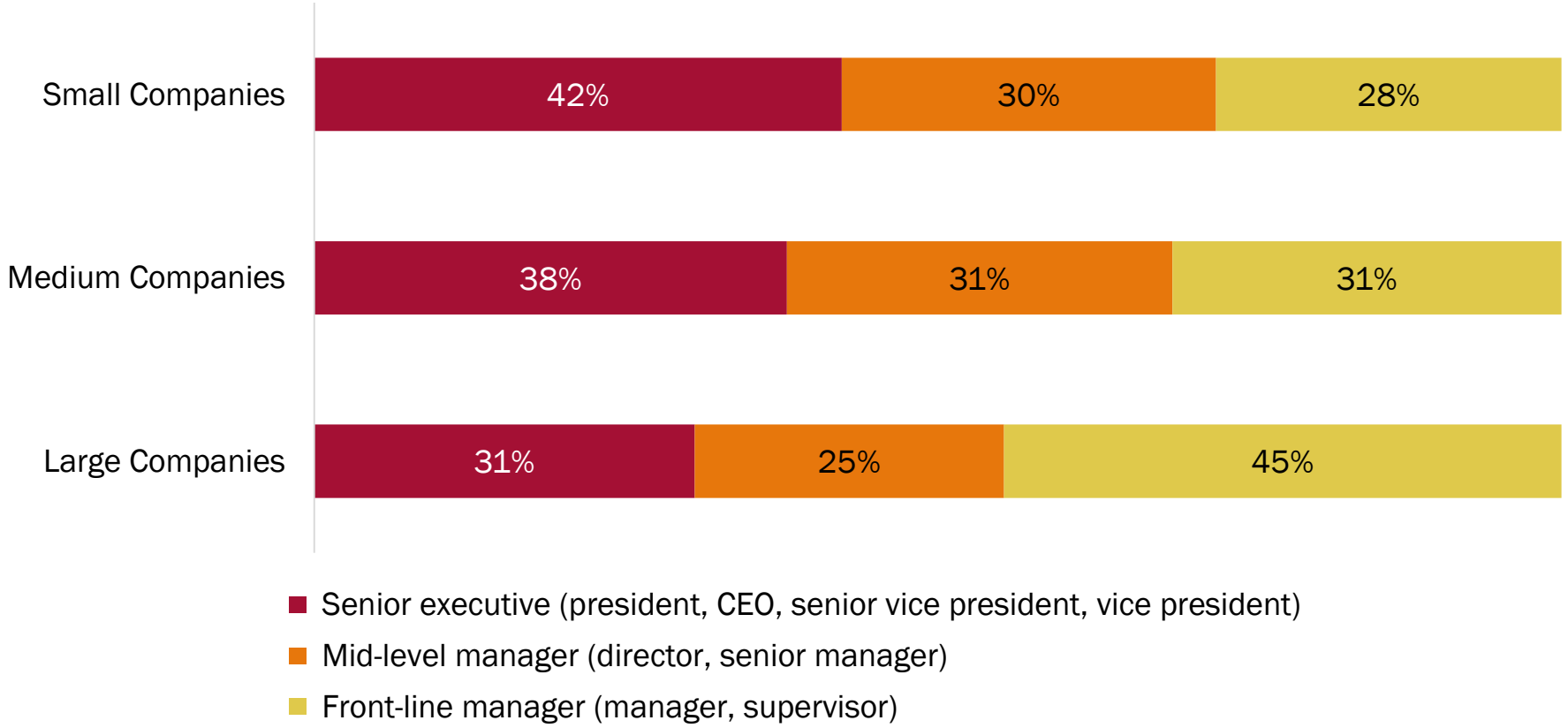
Survey Population

Job Title

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A2. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, what was your job title? (Pick the closest)



N = 1,150

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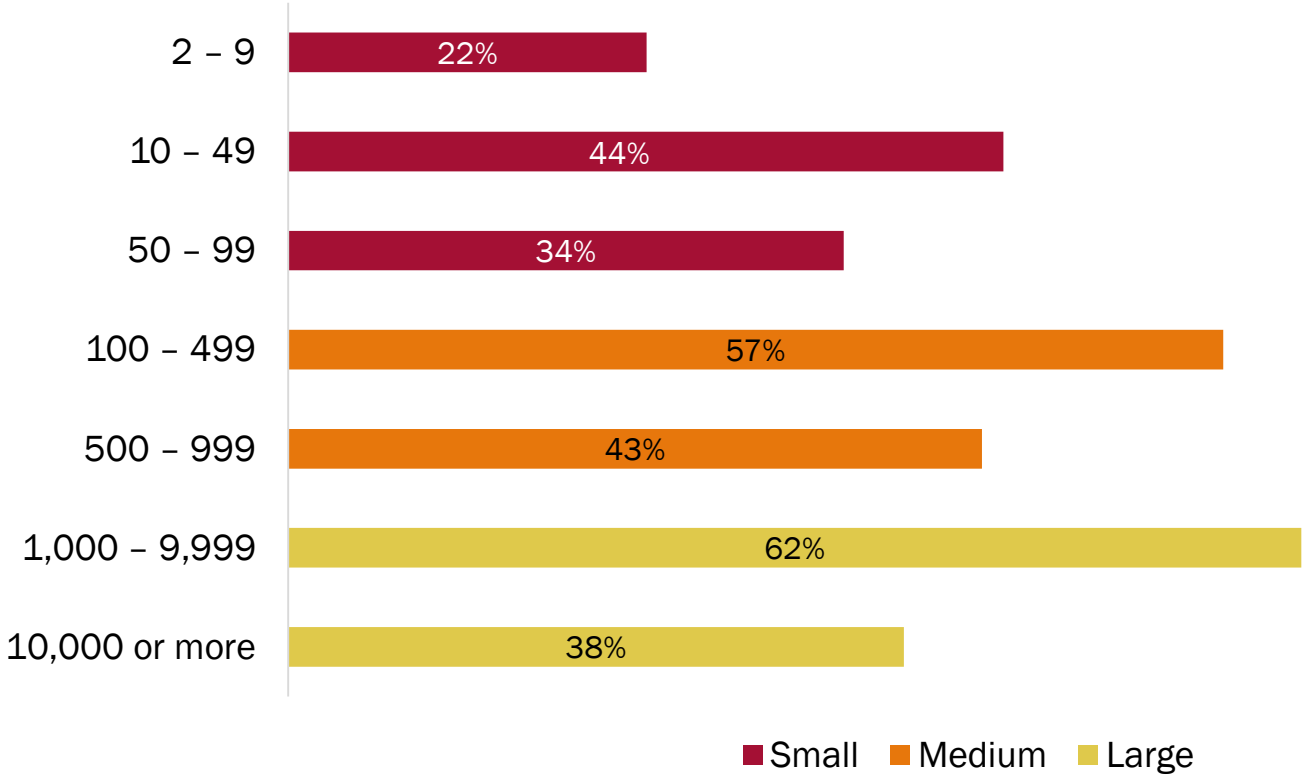
Survey Population
Firm Size

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A3. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, how many employees did your company have? (Including corporate headquarters, subsidiaries, and any company branches)



N = 1,150

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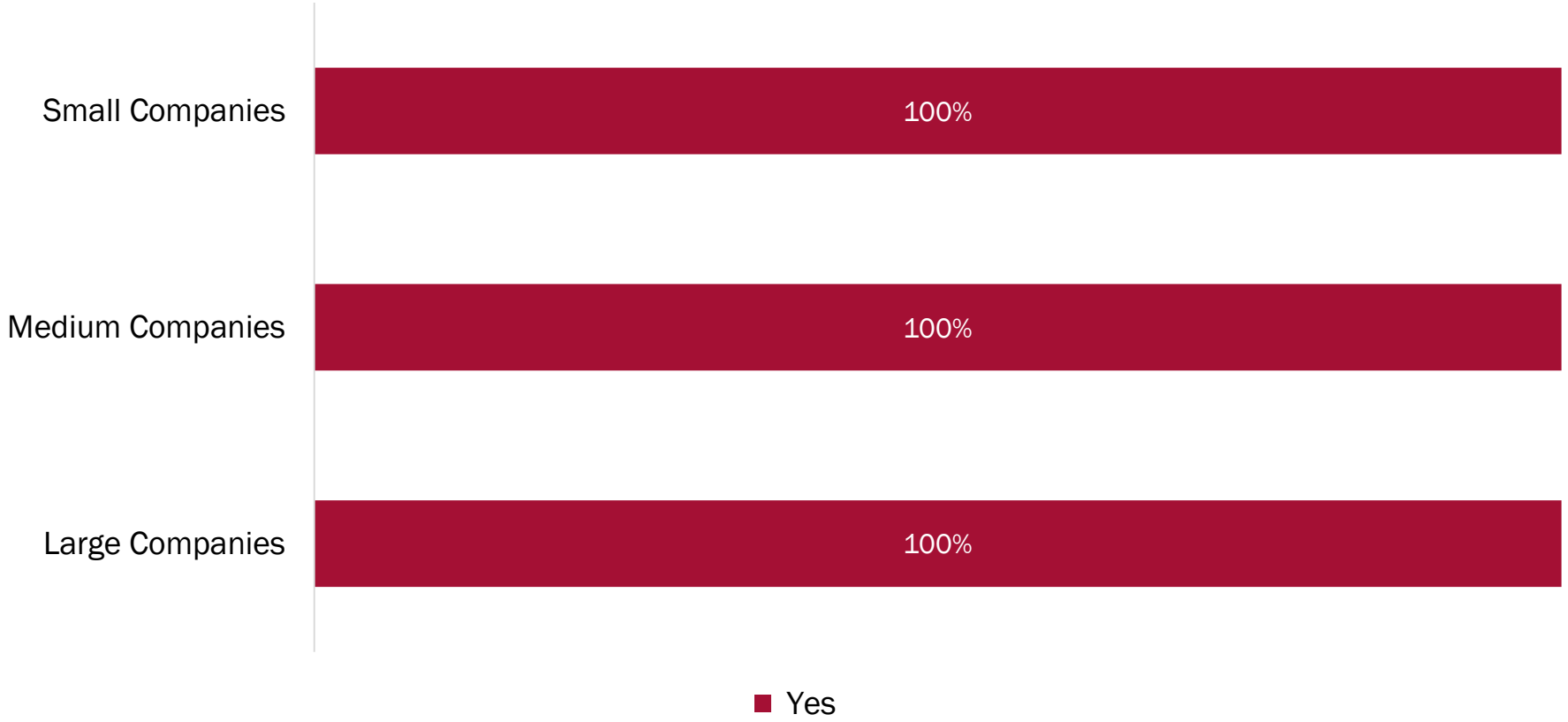
Survey Population
Employee Location

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A4. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, did your company have employees in the United States?



N = 1,150

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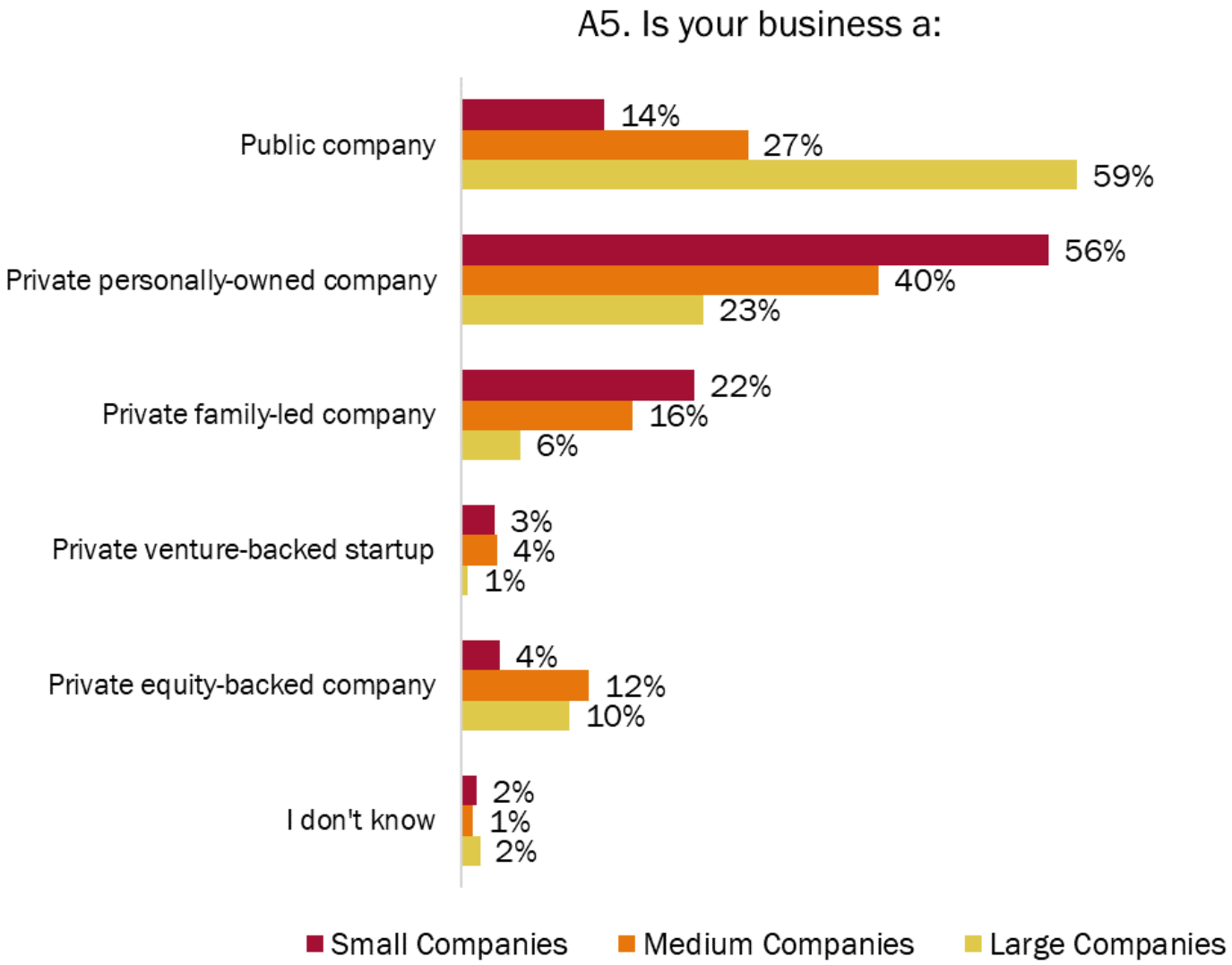
Survey Population
Public/Private

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

Survey Population
Low-Wage Employees

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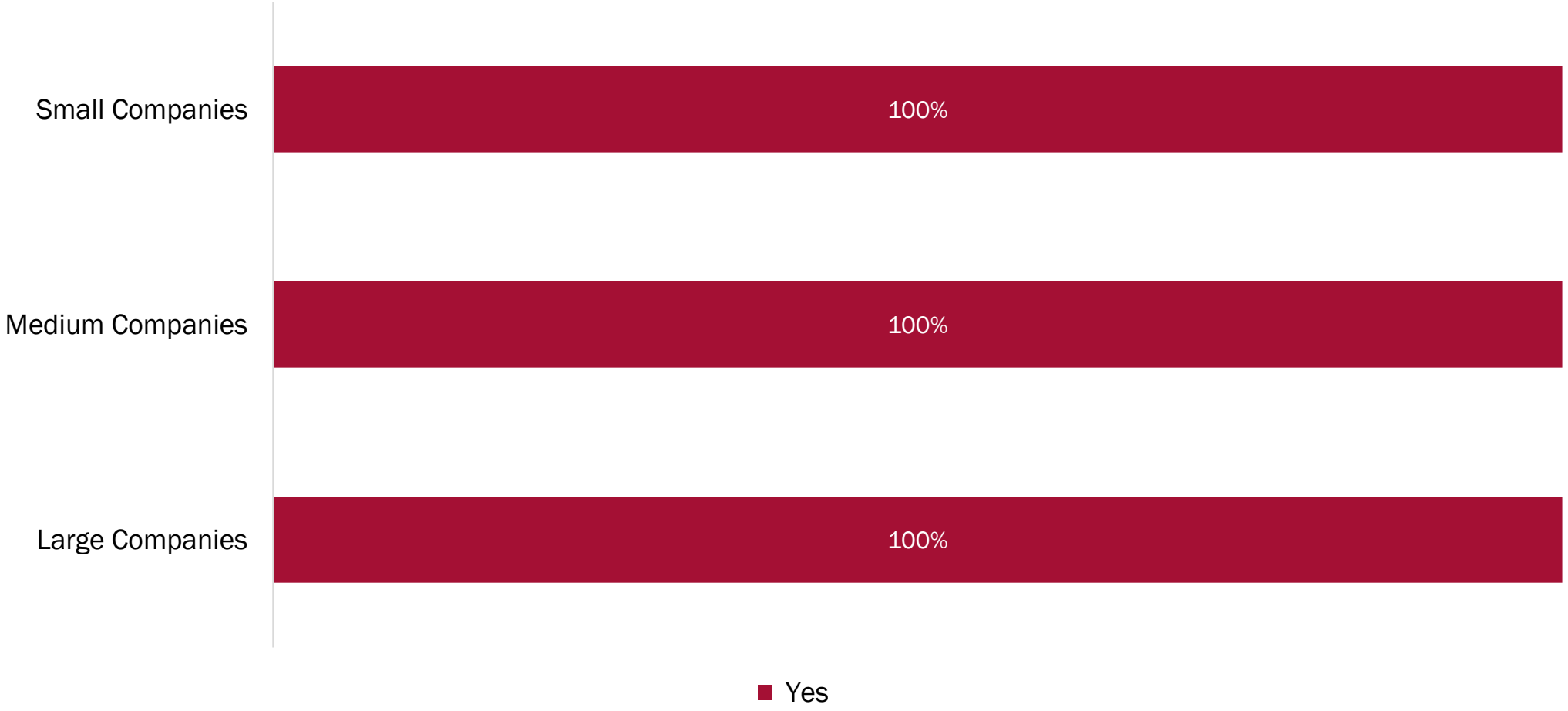
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A6. Using this definition of low-wage employees, did your company have any low-wage employees prior to COVID-19, in January 2020?



N = 1,150

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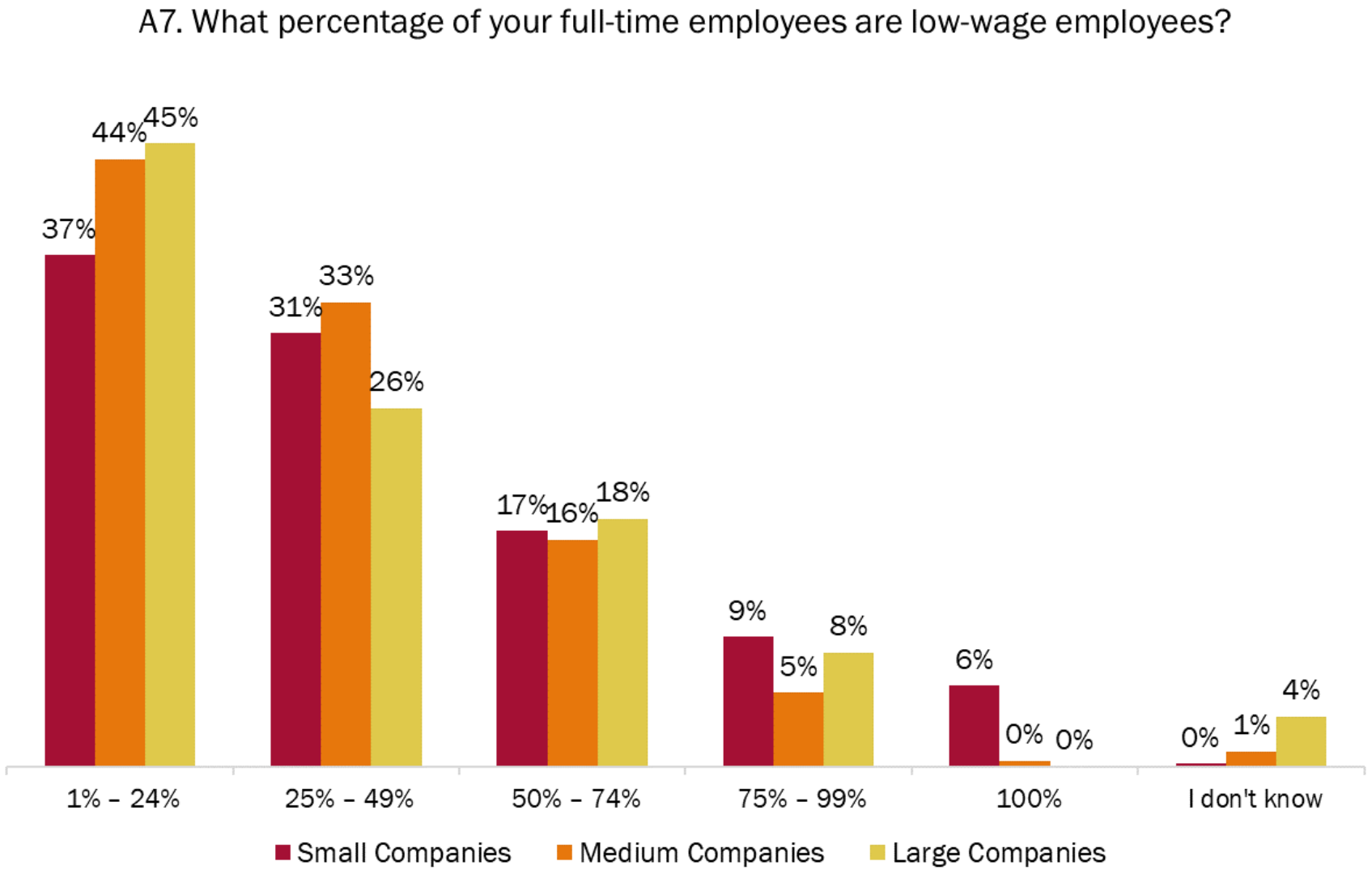
Survey Population

Percent of Full-Time Employees Who Are Low-Wage

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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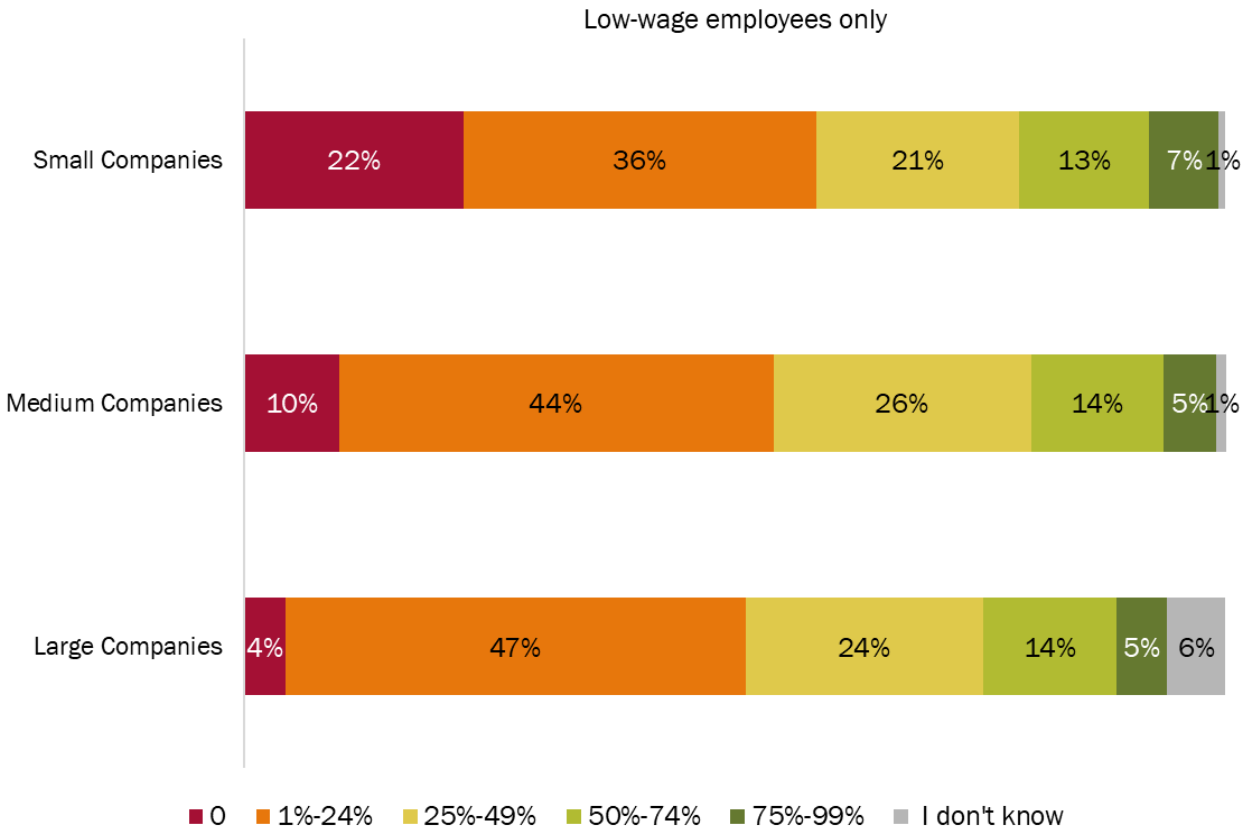
Survey Population

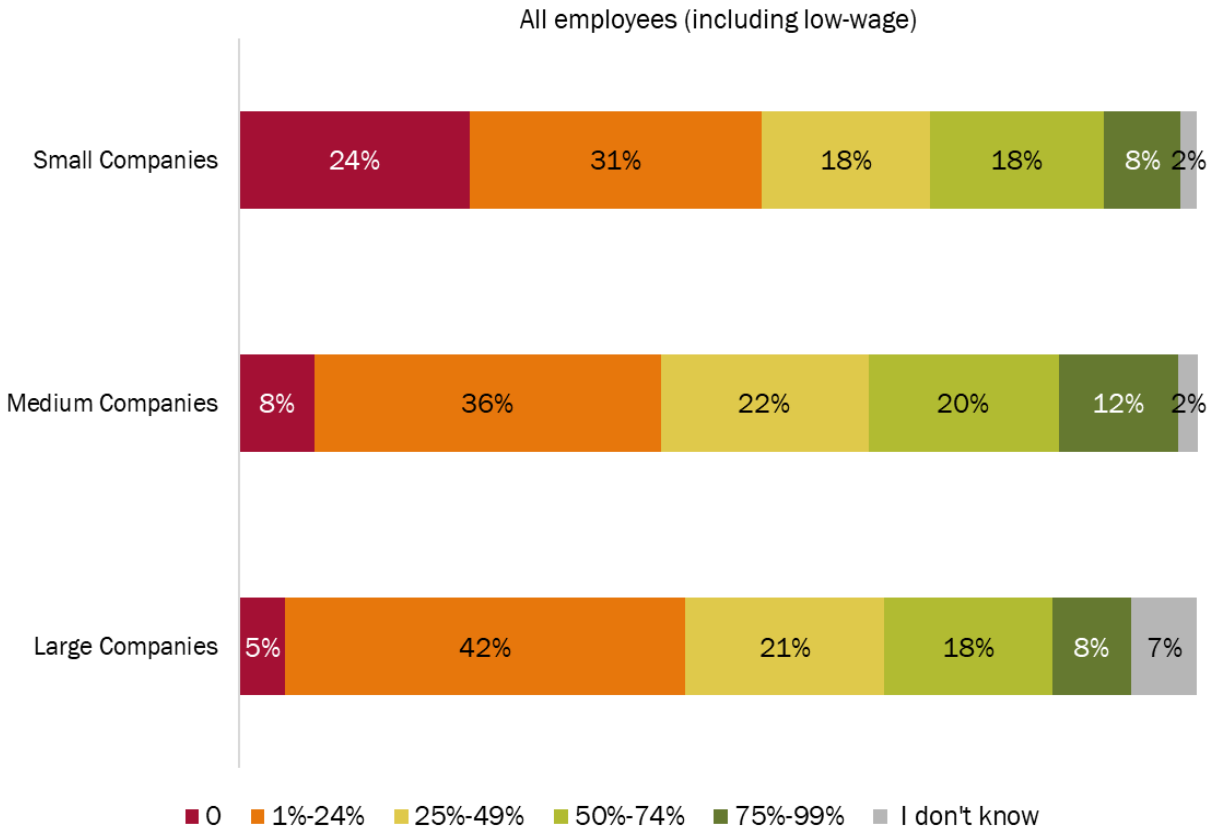
Percent of Employees Who Are Part-Time

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A8. What percentage of your company's low-wage workforce and total workforce consist of part-time employees?



A8. What percentage of your company's low-wage workforce and total workforce consist of part-time employees?



N = 1,150

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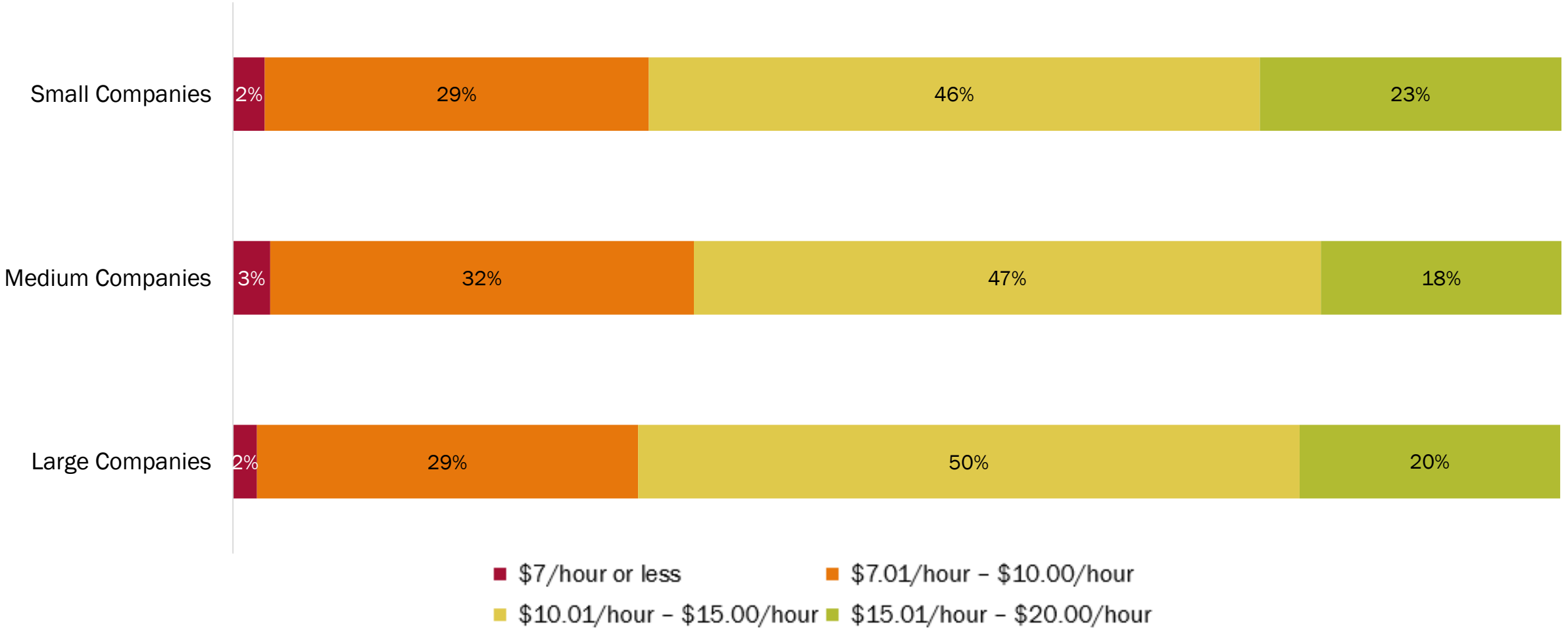
Survey Population
Average Hourly Wage

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A9. What is the average hourly wage of your low-wage employees?



N = 1,150

Survey Population
HR or Not

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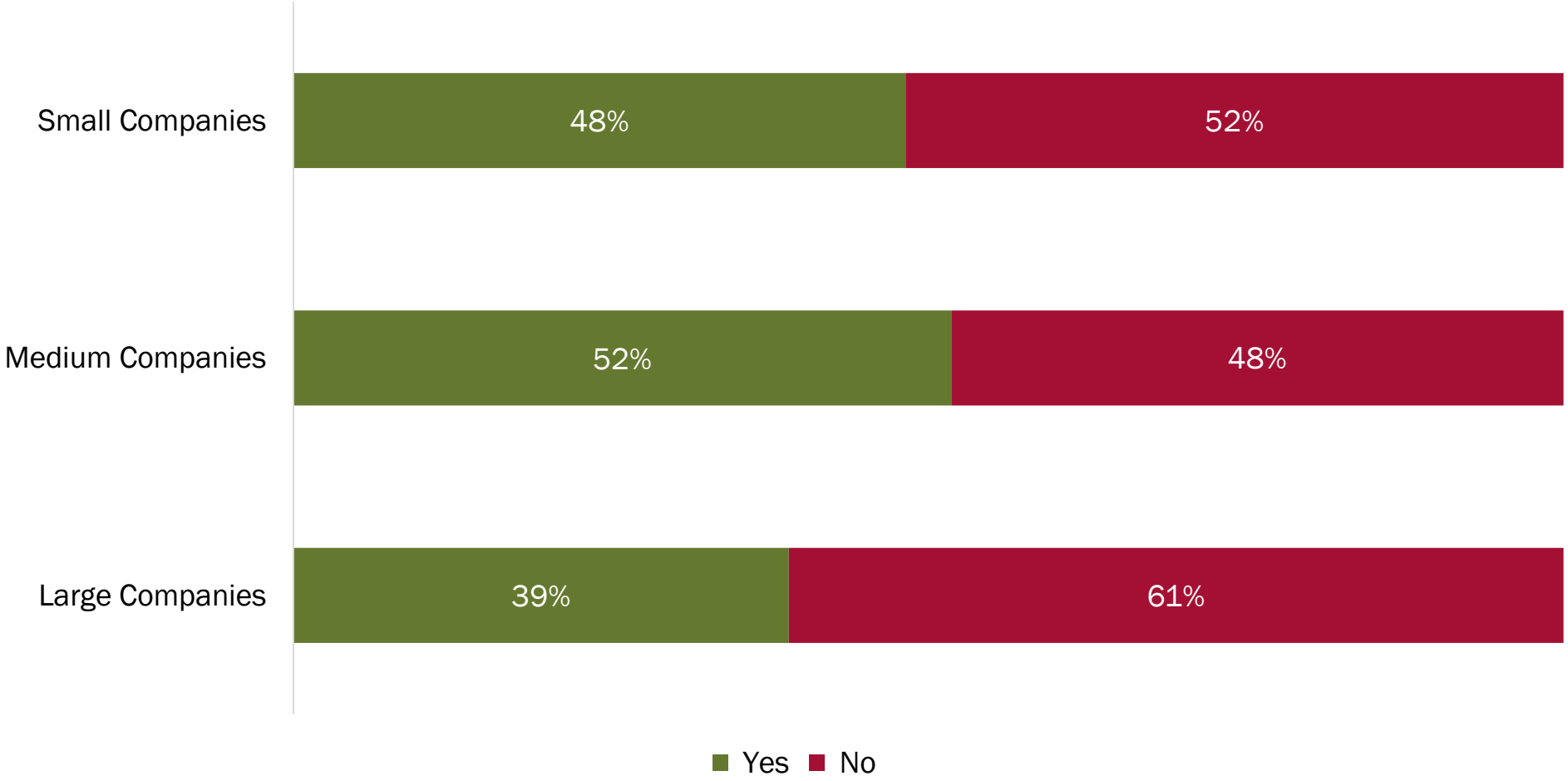
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A10. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, were you primarily employed in a human resources function?



N = 1,150

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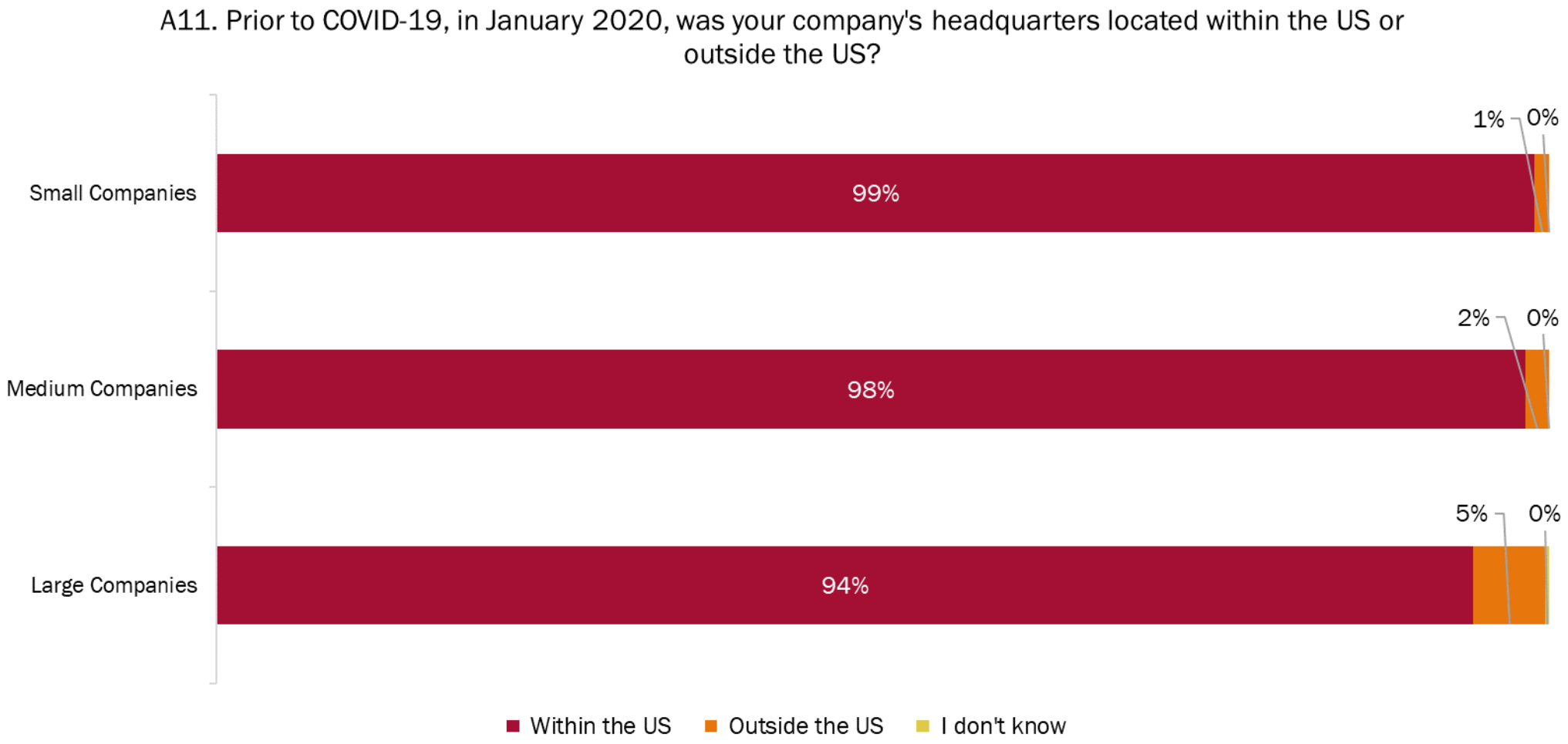
Survey Population
Company Headquarters

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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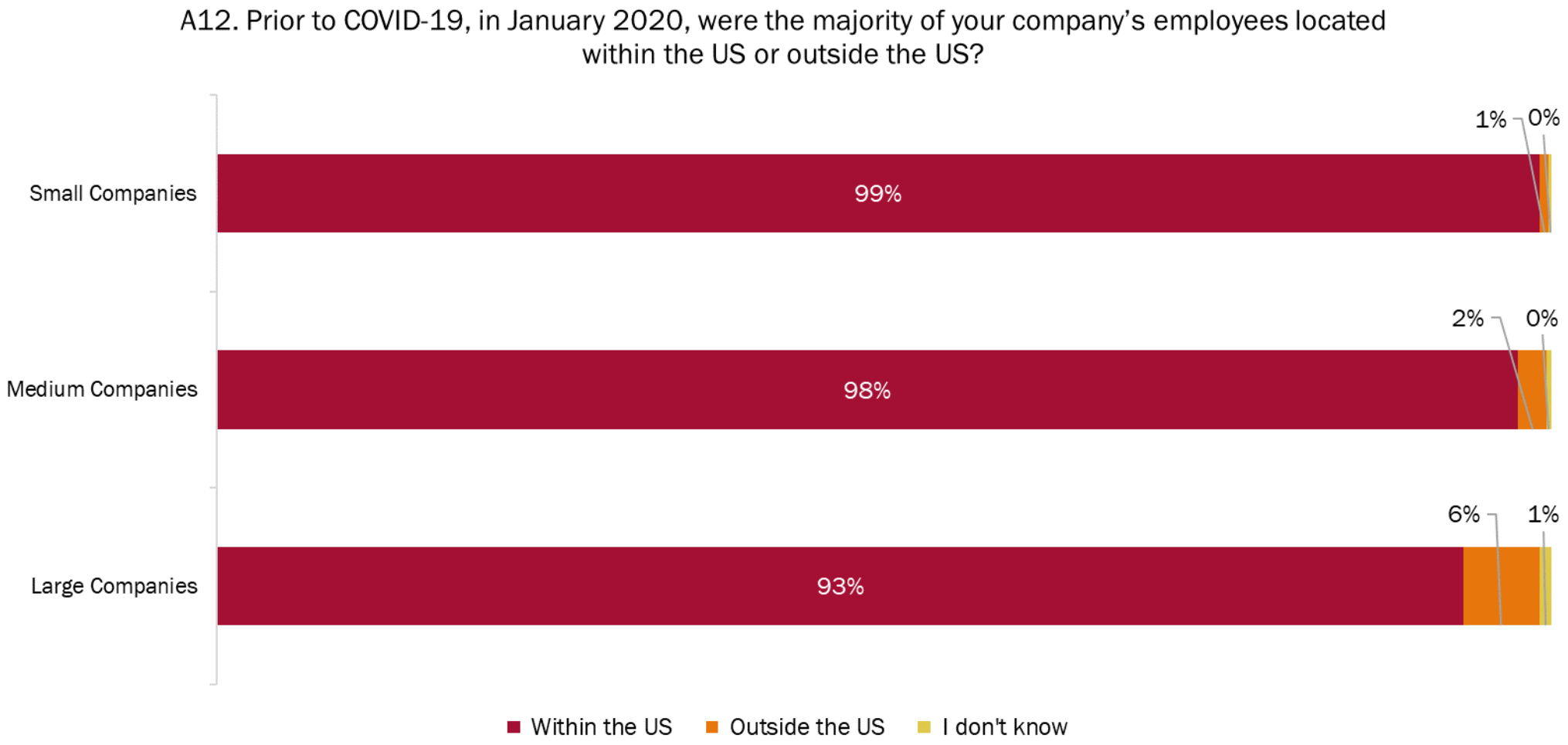
Survey Population
Employee Location

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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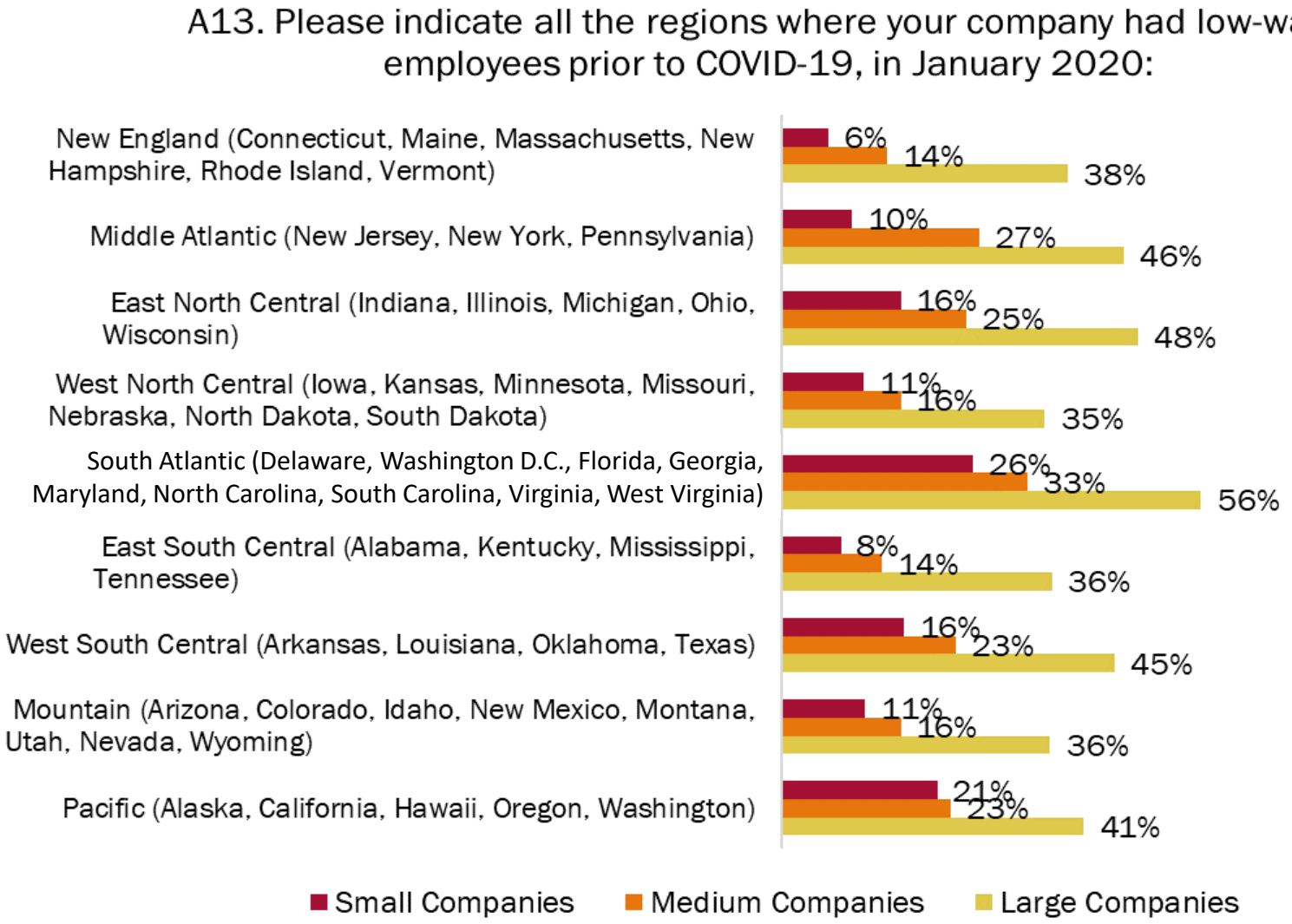
Survey Population

Geography of Low-Wage Employees

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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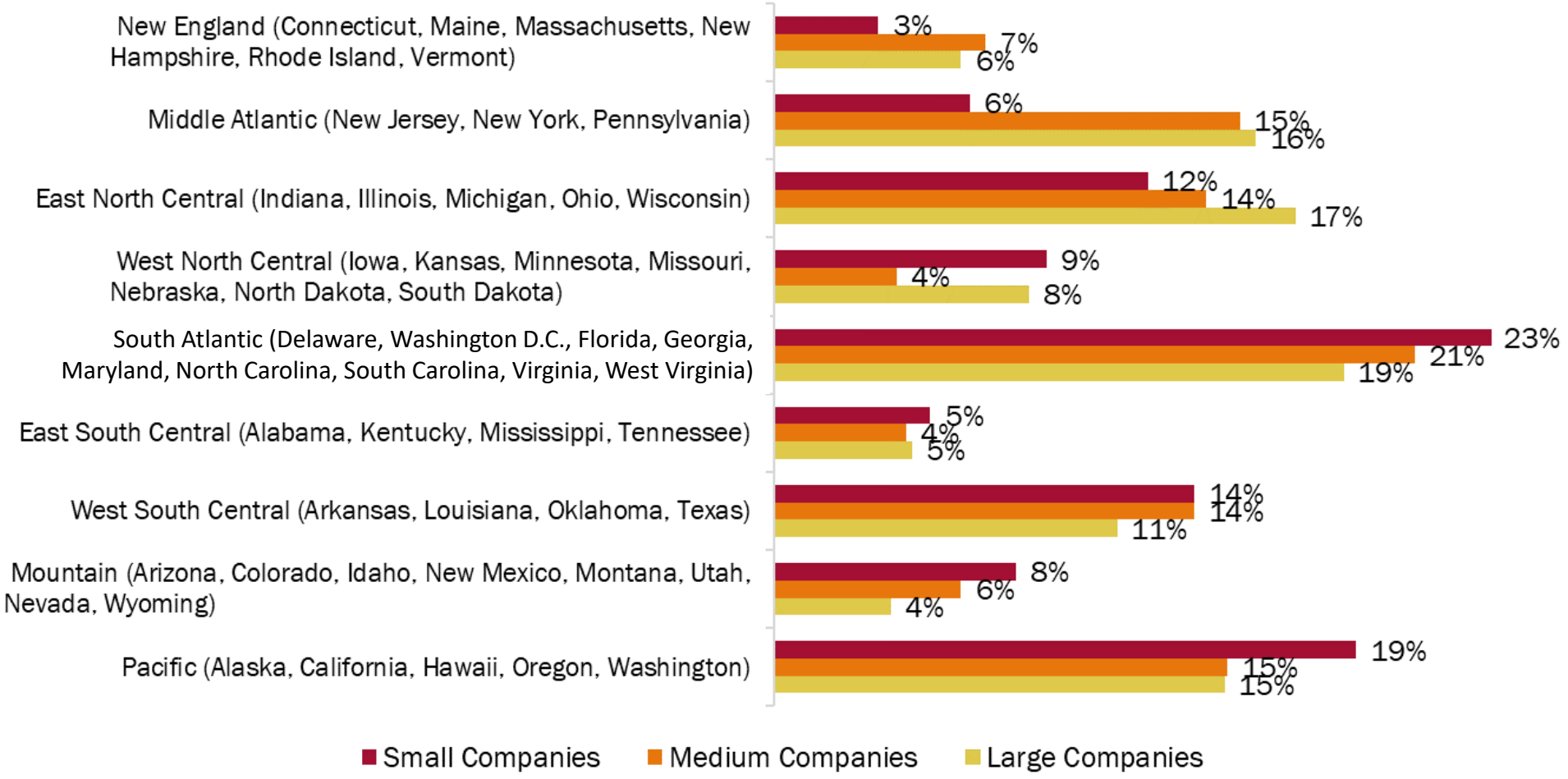
Survey Population
Geography of Company Headquarters

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A14. Please indicate the region where your company was headquartered prior to COVID-19, in January 2020:



N = 1,120 (company is headquartered in the U.S.)

Survey Population
Gender

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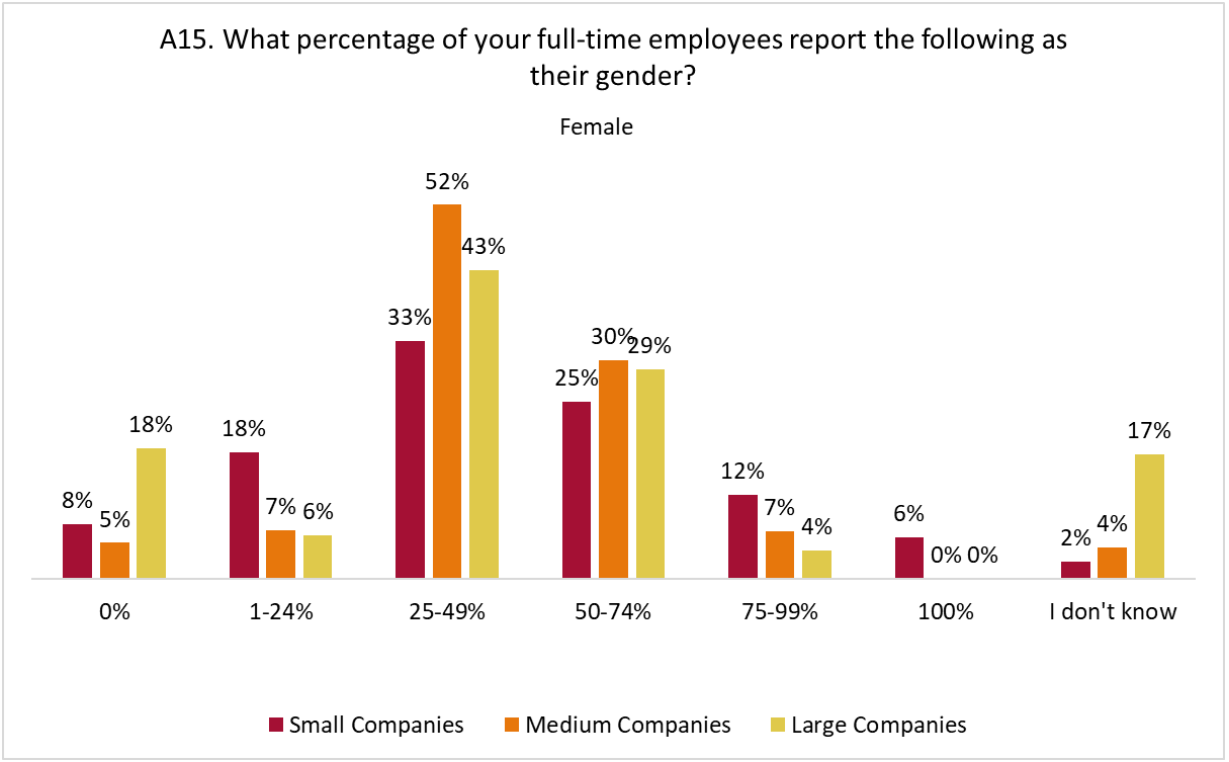
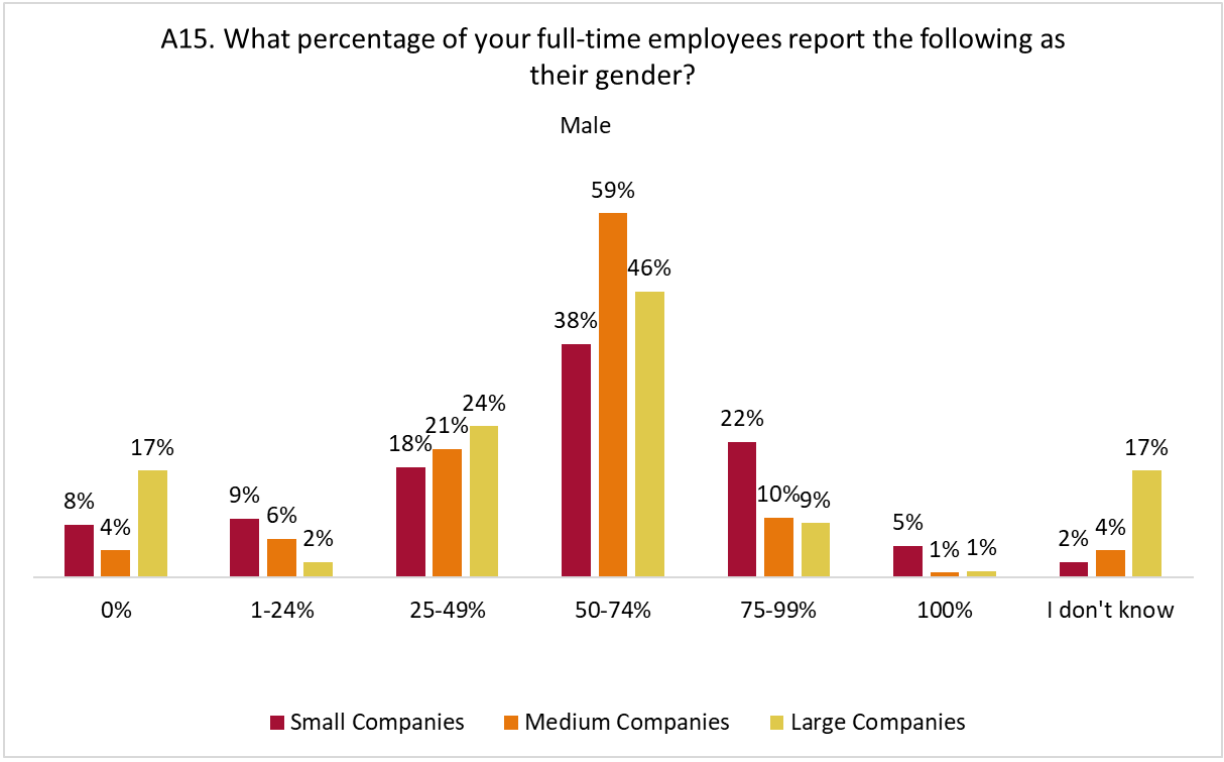
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.





N = 1,150

Survey Population
Race

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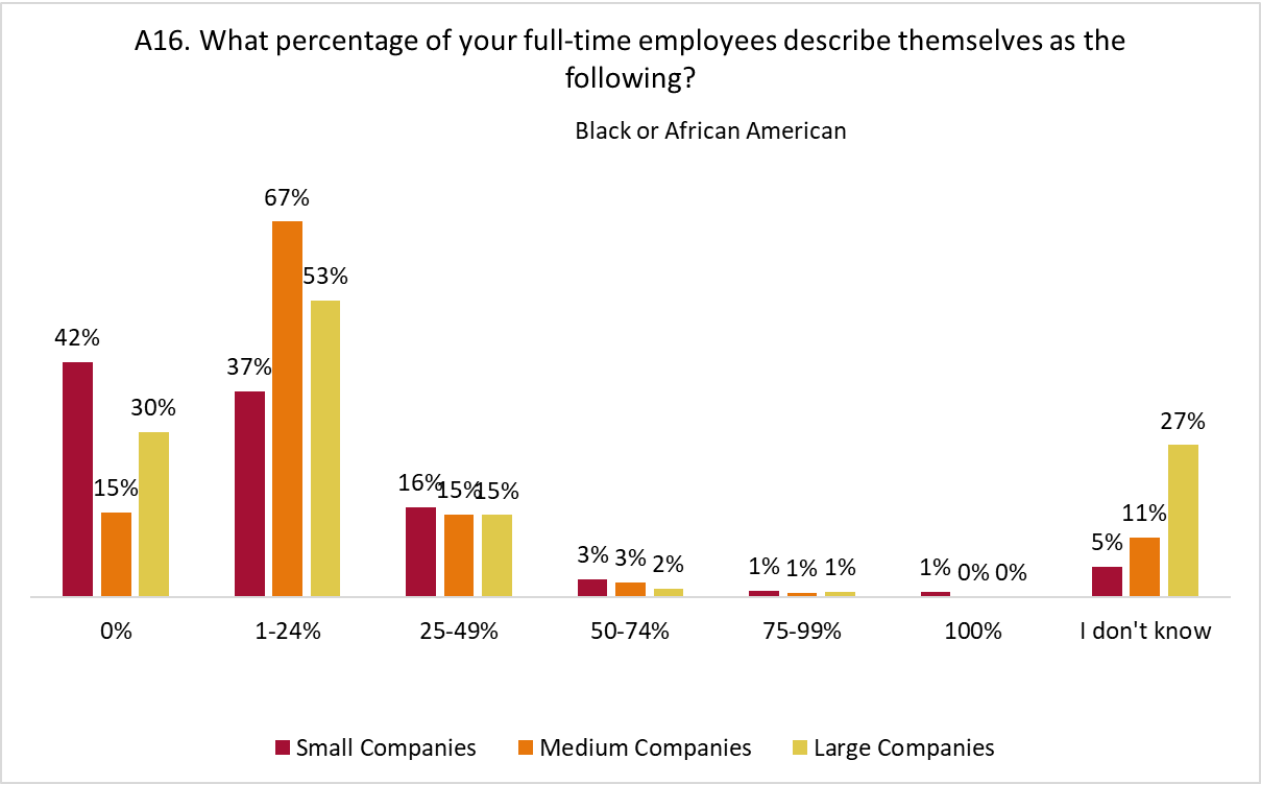
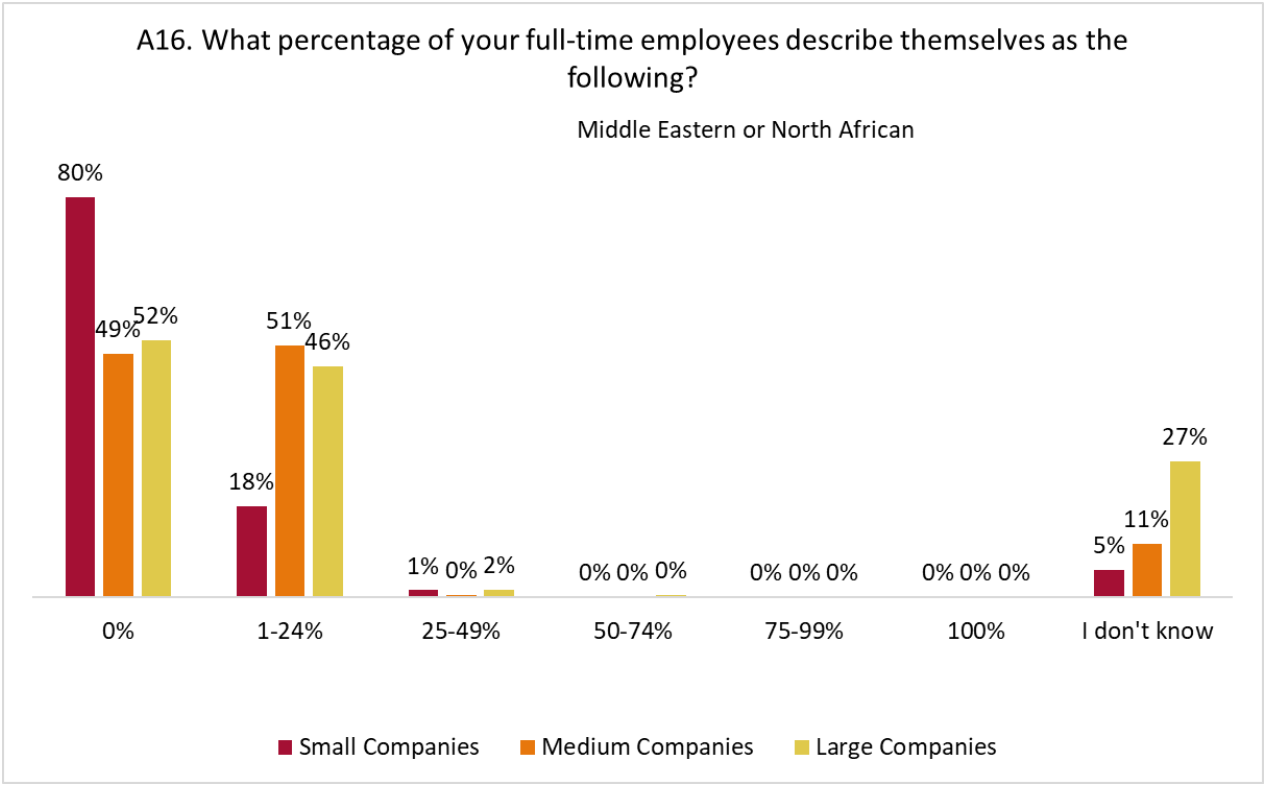
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.





N = 1,150

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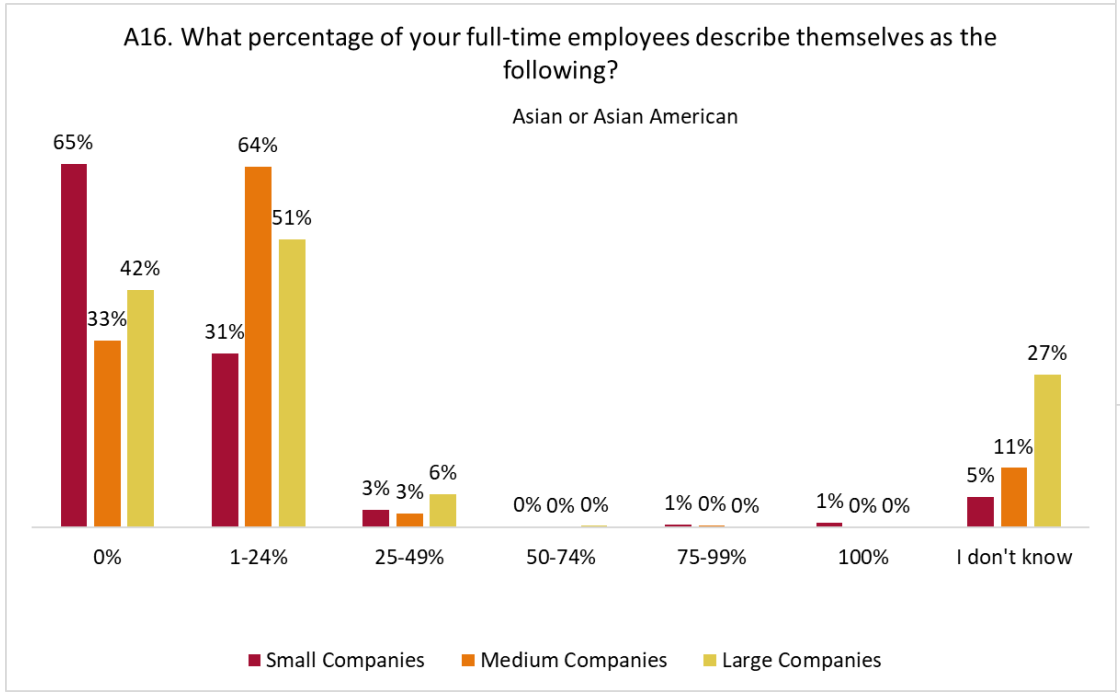
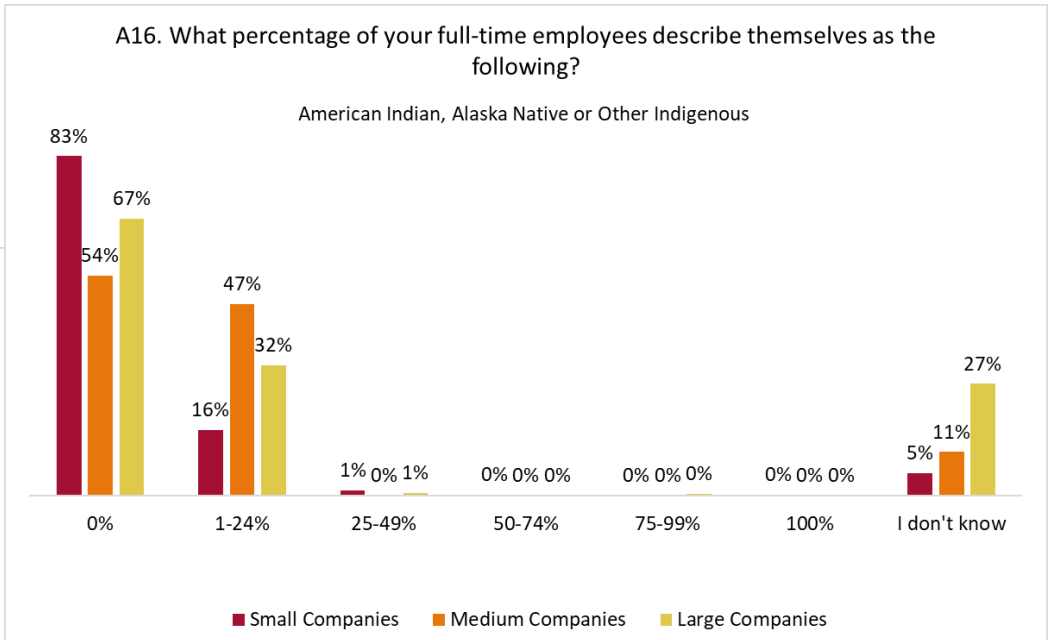
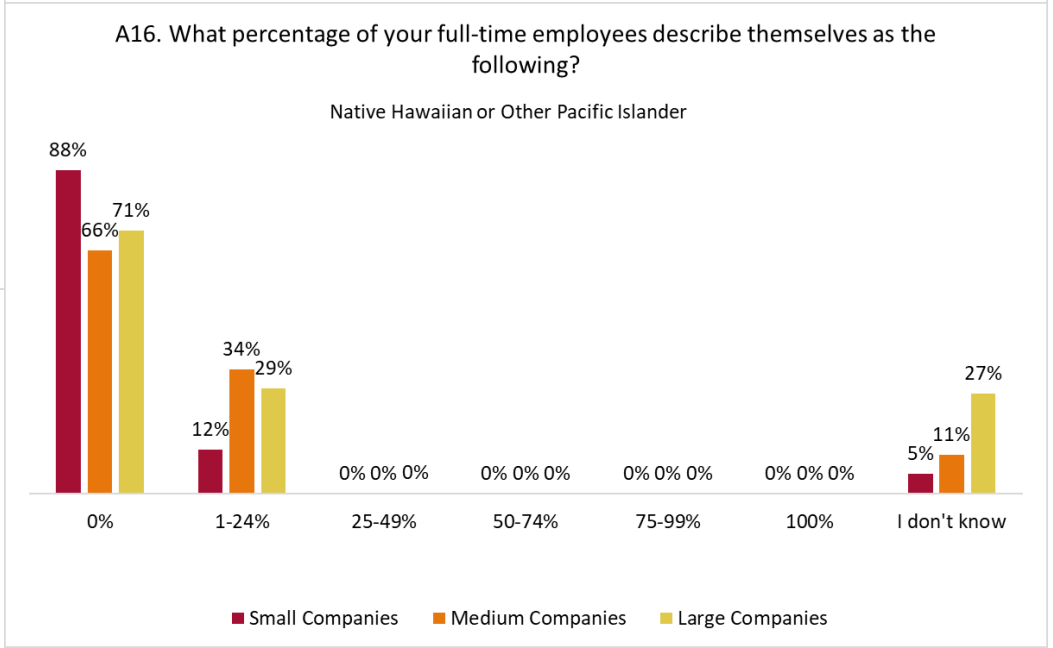
Survey Population
Race cont.

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.







N = 1,150

Survey Population
Race cont.

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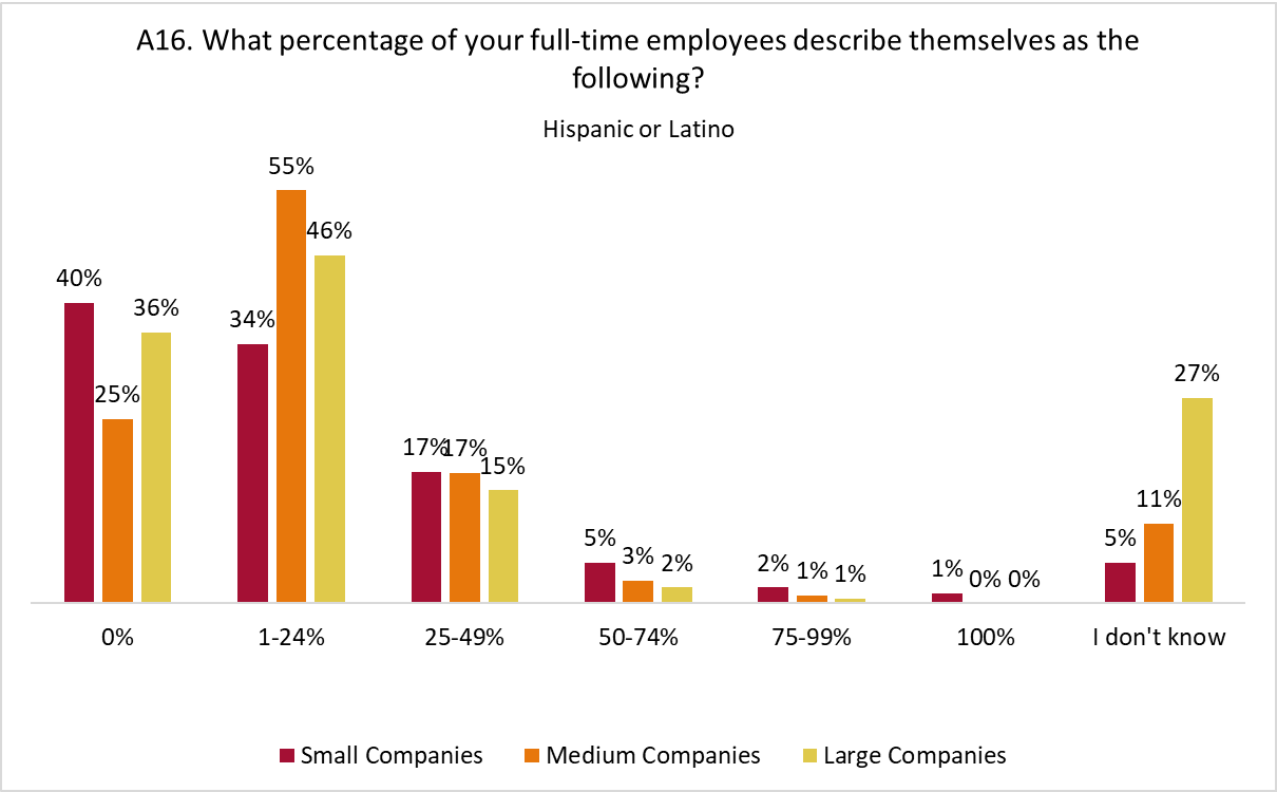
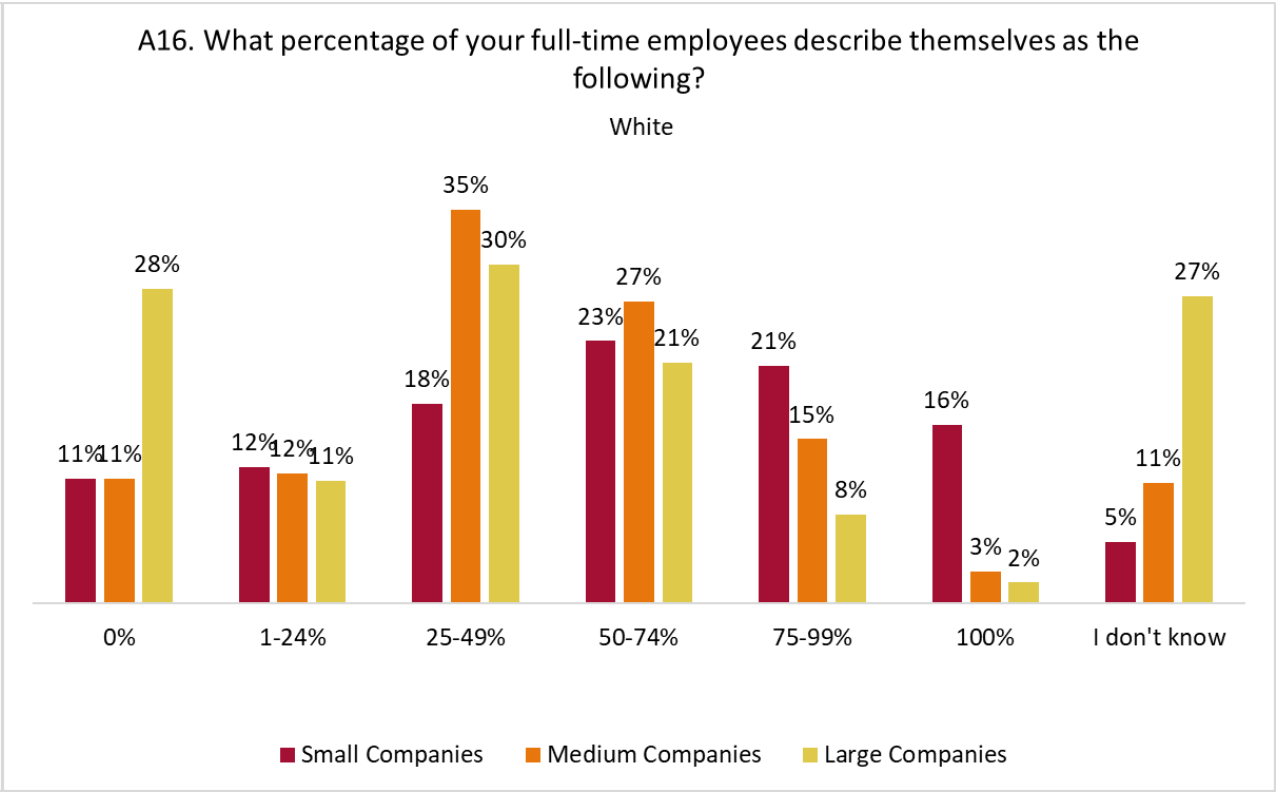
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.





N = 1,150

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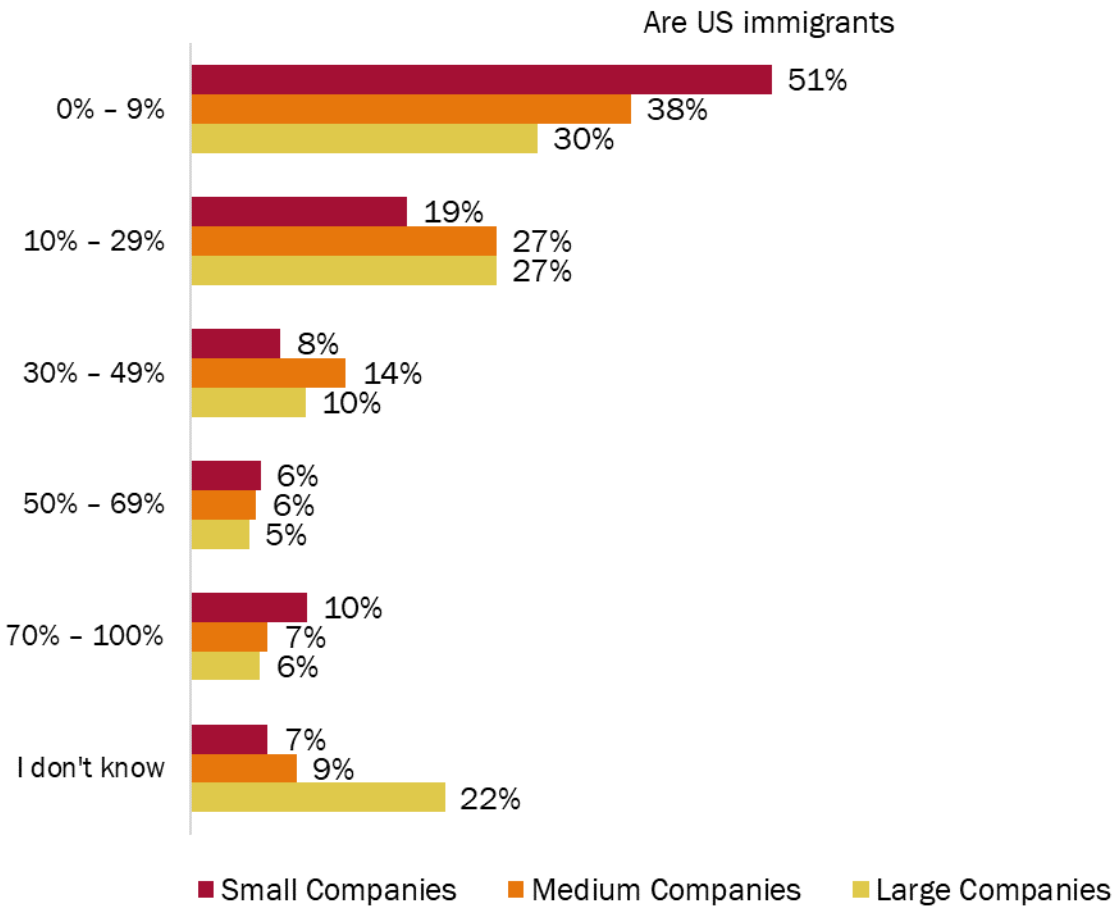
Survey Population
Personal Challenges

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A17. In order to understand the personal challenges low-wage employees face which can inhibit upward mobility, please tell us the percentage of your full-time low-wage employees that you believe:



N = 1,150

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Survey Population
Personal Challenges

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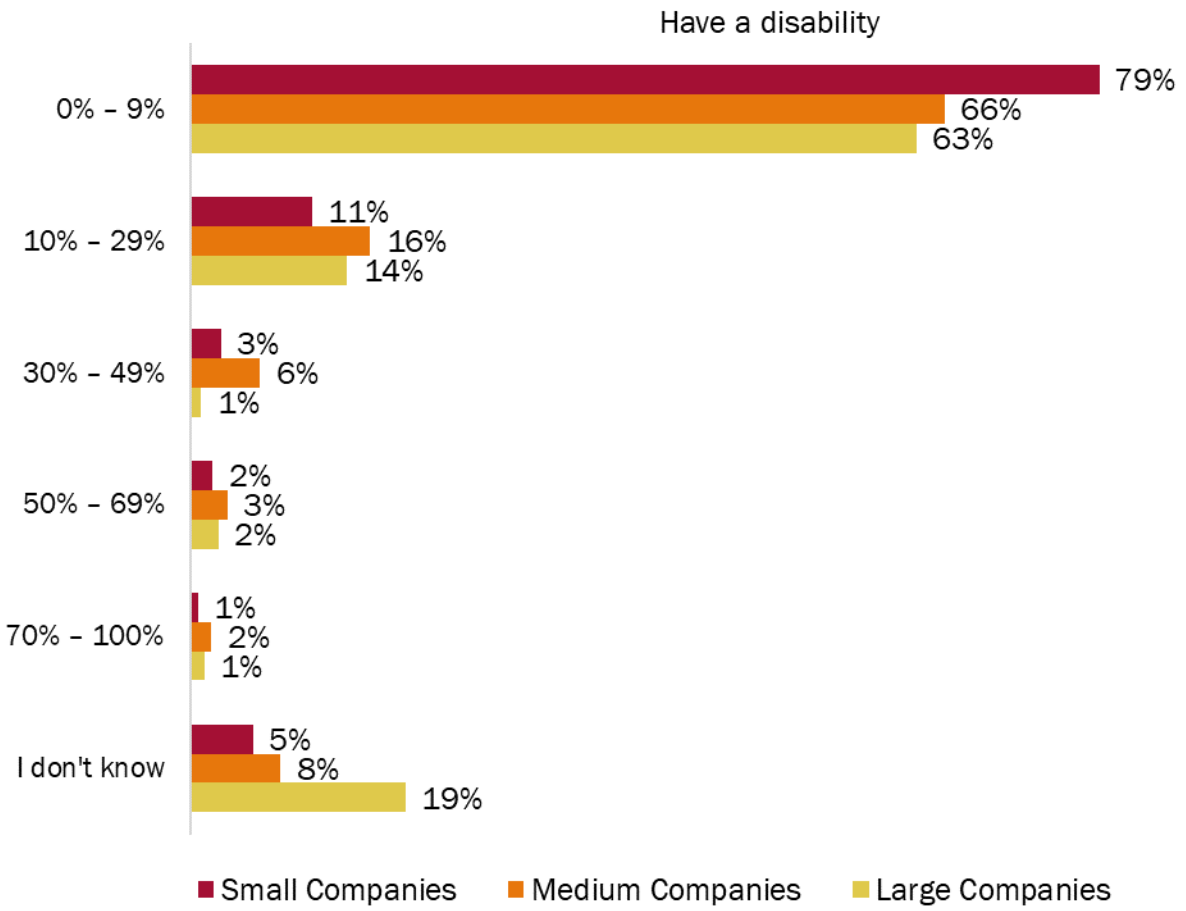

N = 1,150

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Survey Population
Personal Challenges

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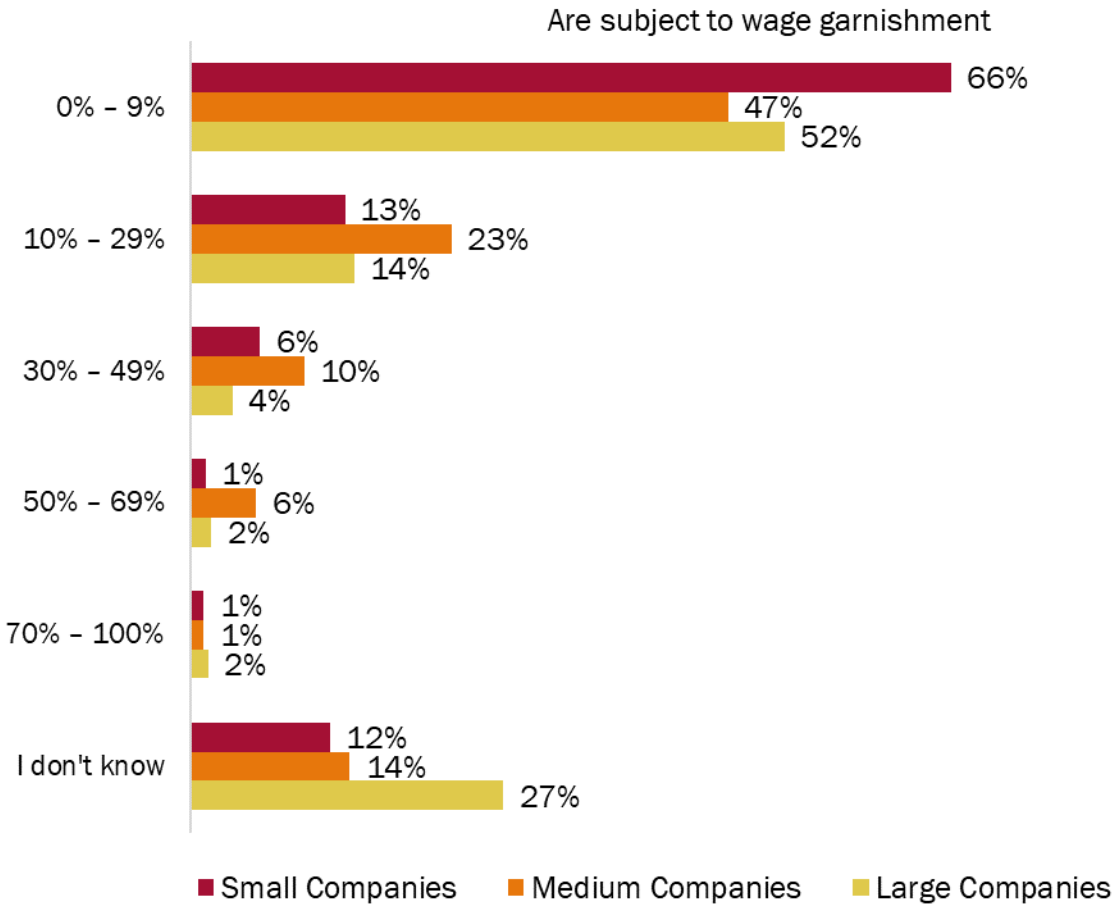

N = 1,150

Survey Population
Personal Challenges

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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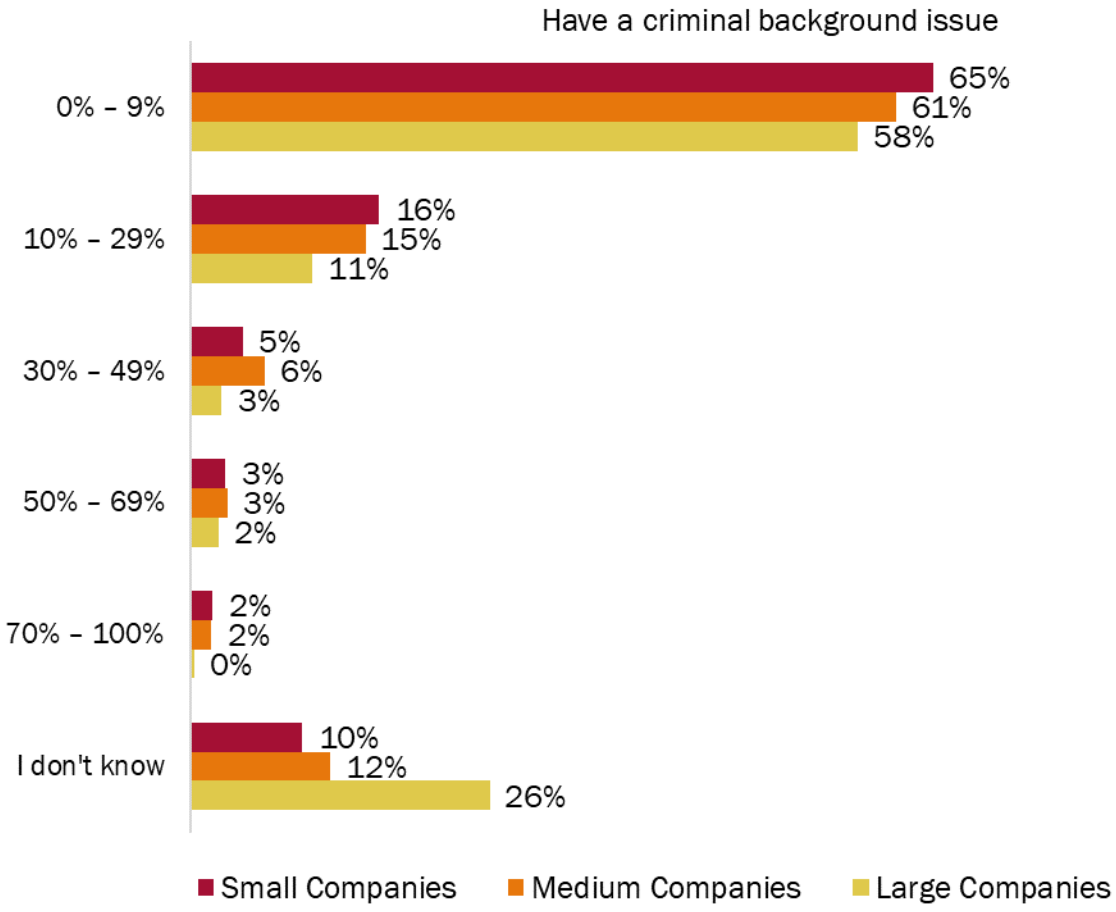

N = 1,150

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Survey Population
Personal Challenges

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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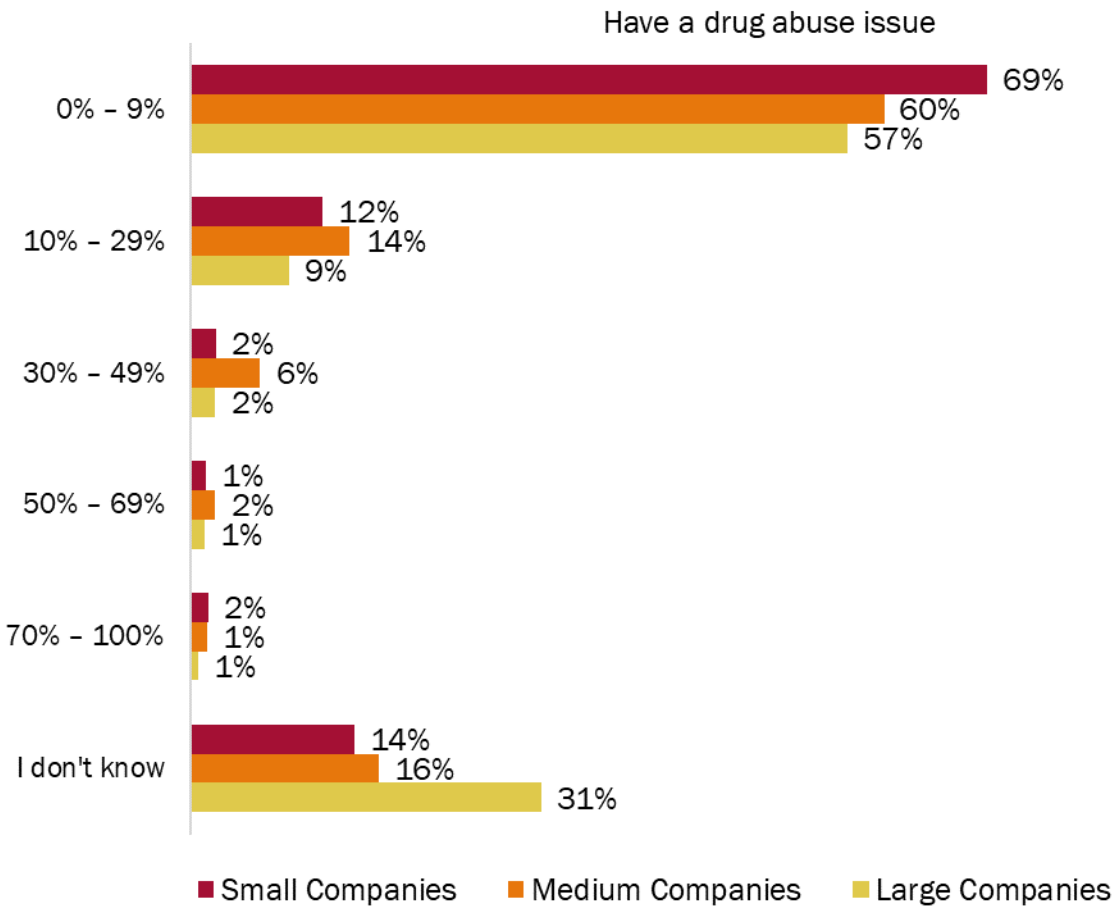

N = 1,150

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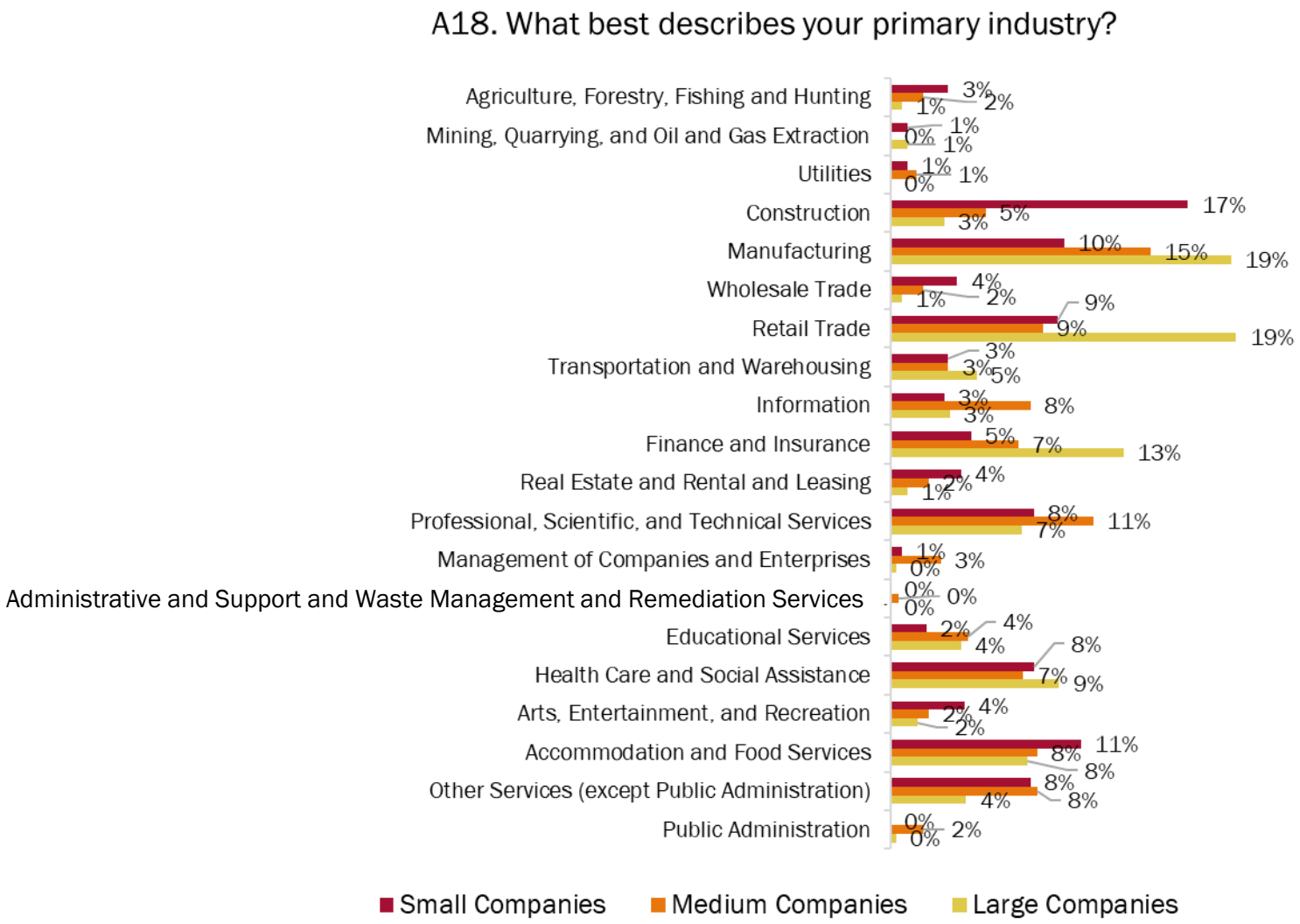
Survey Population
Industry

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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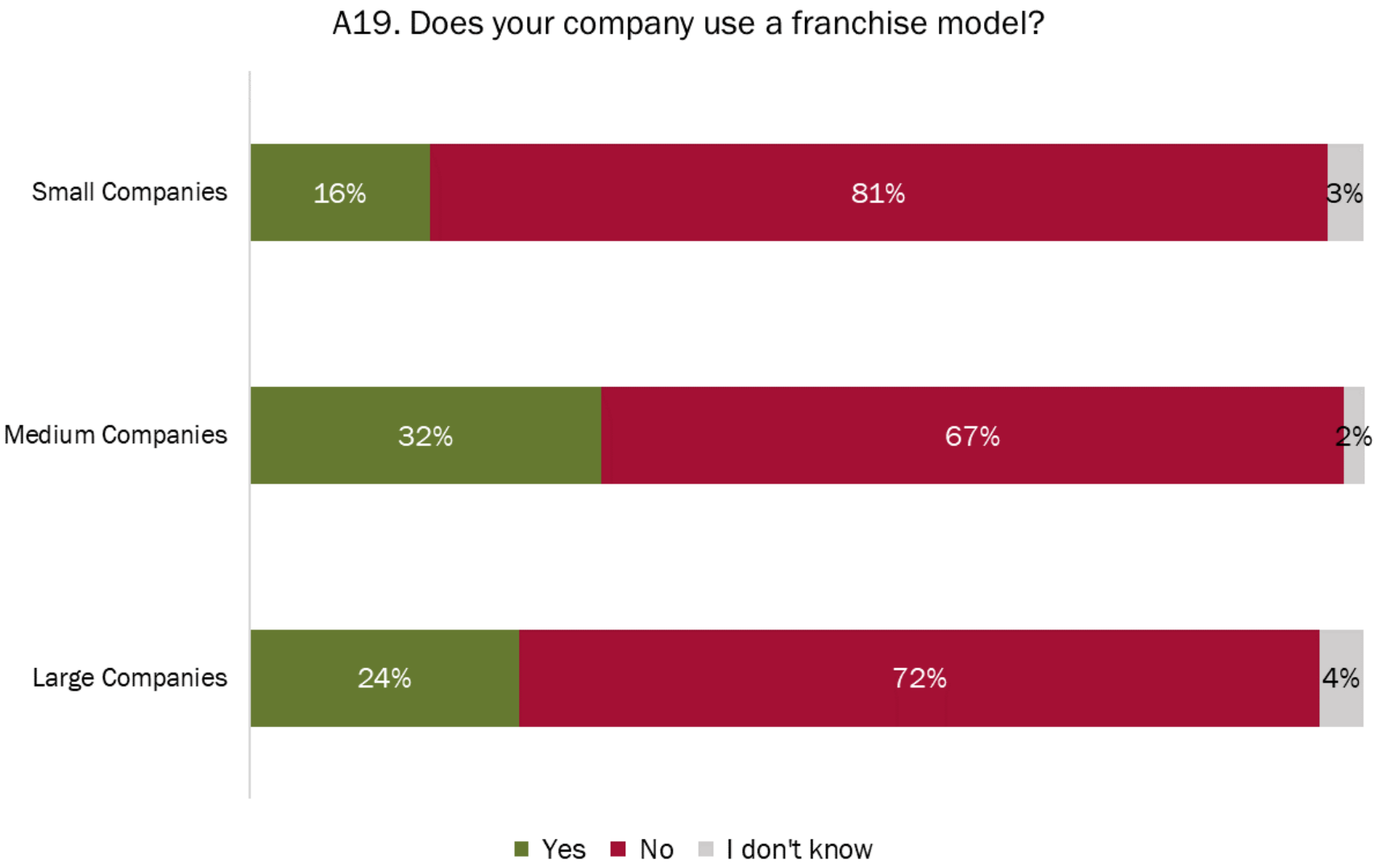
Survey Population
Franchise Model

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

Survey Population
Parent or Franchisee

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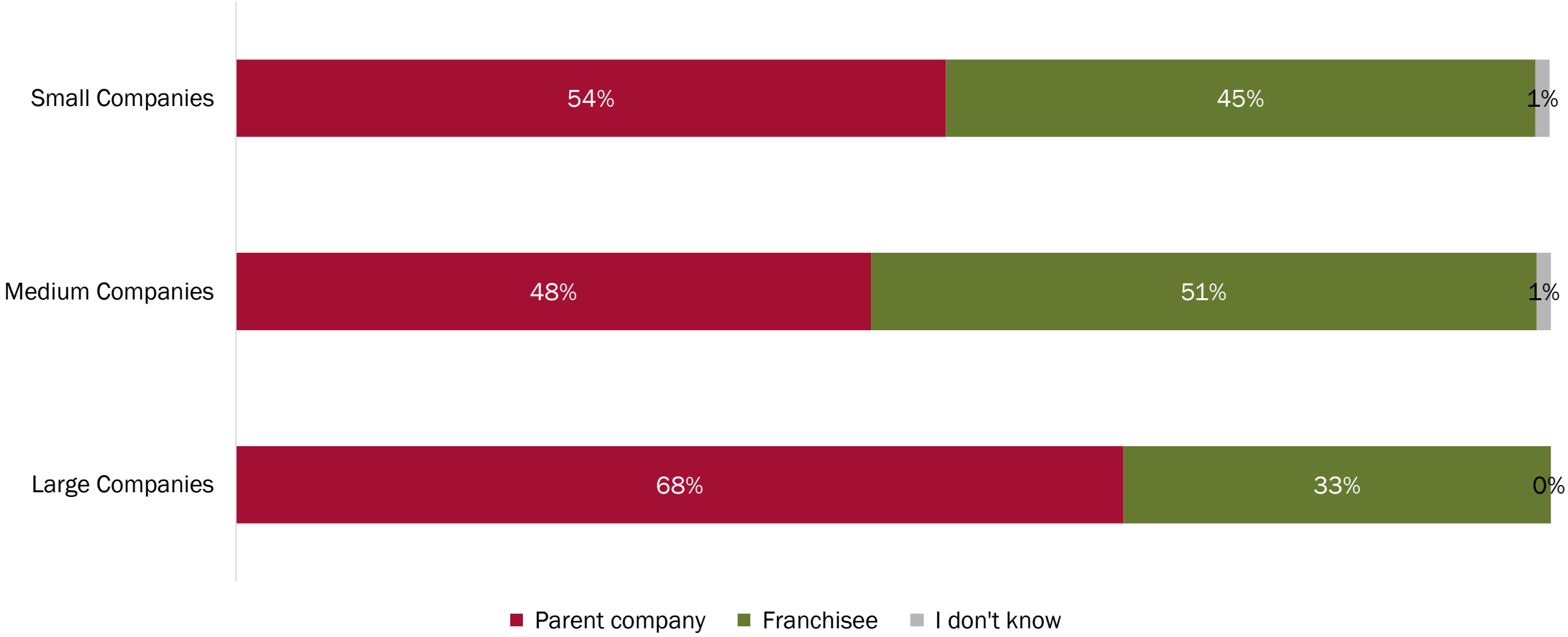
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A20. Is your company the parent company or the franchisee?



N = 256 (company uses a franchise model)

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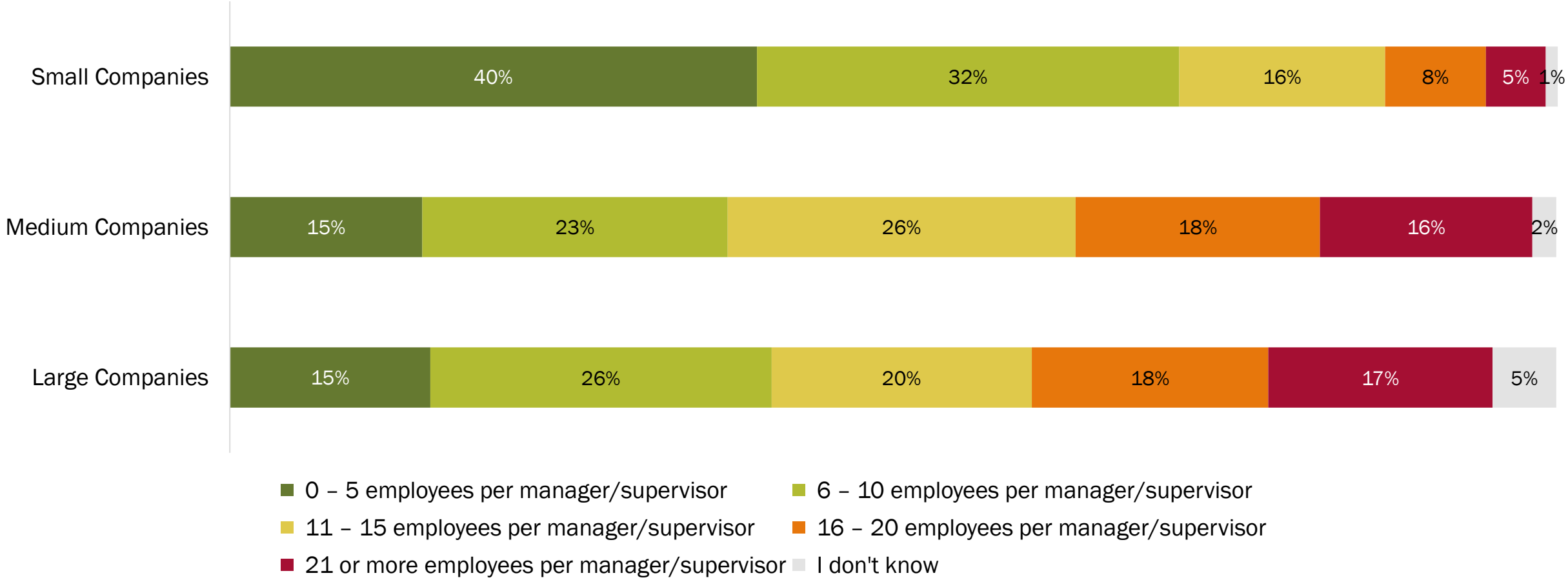
Survey Population
Supervisor/Employee Ratio

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

A21. For managers/supervisors who supervise low-wage employees, what is the average number of low-wage employees that each manager/supervisor supervises?



N = 1,150

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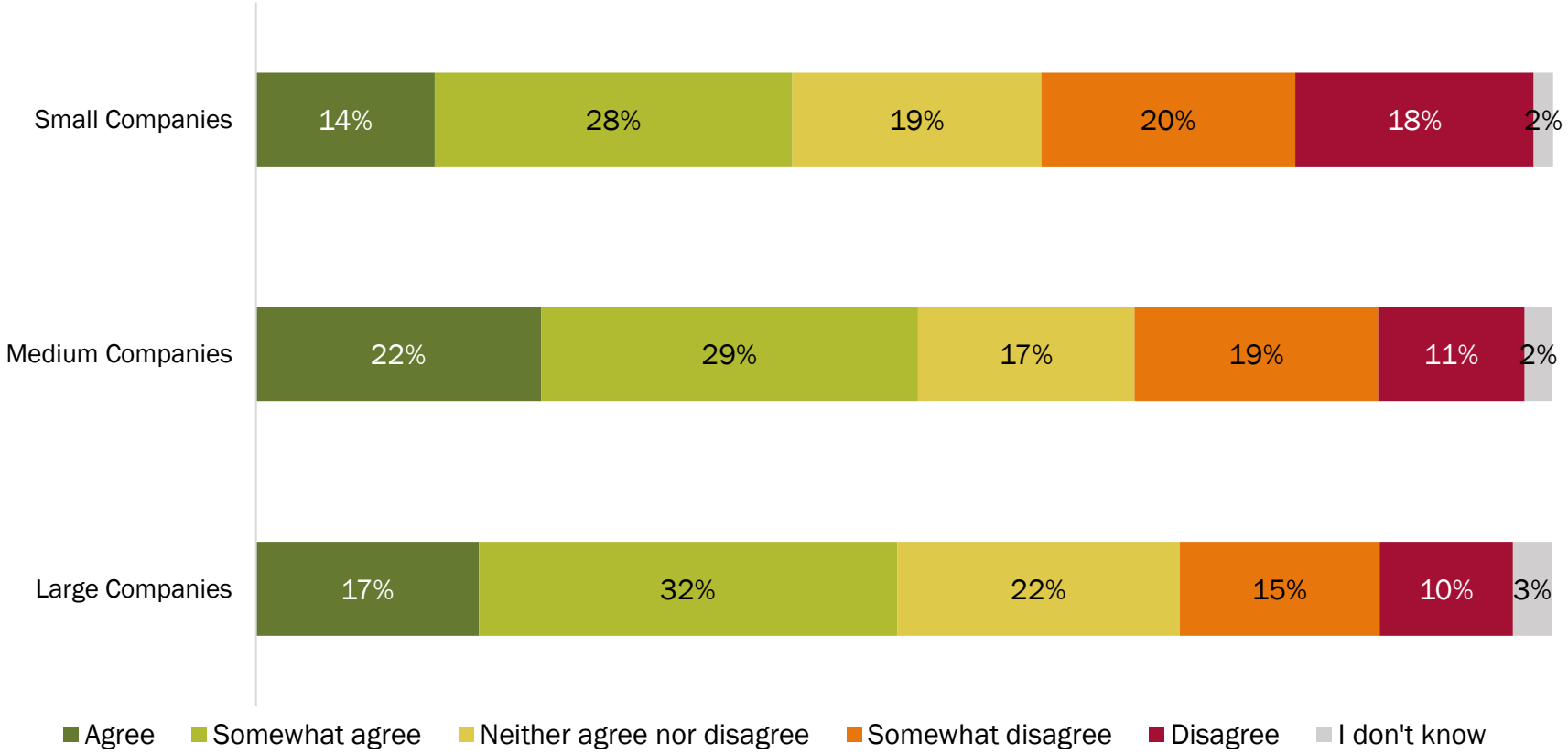
Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B1. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.

B1R1. Low-wage employees don't have reliable transportation to and from work



N = 1,150

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Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

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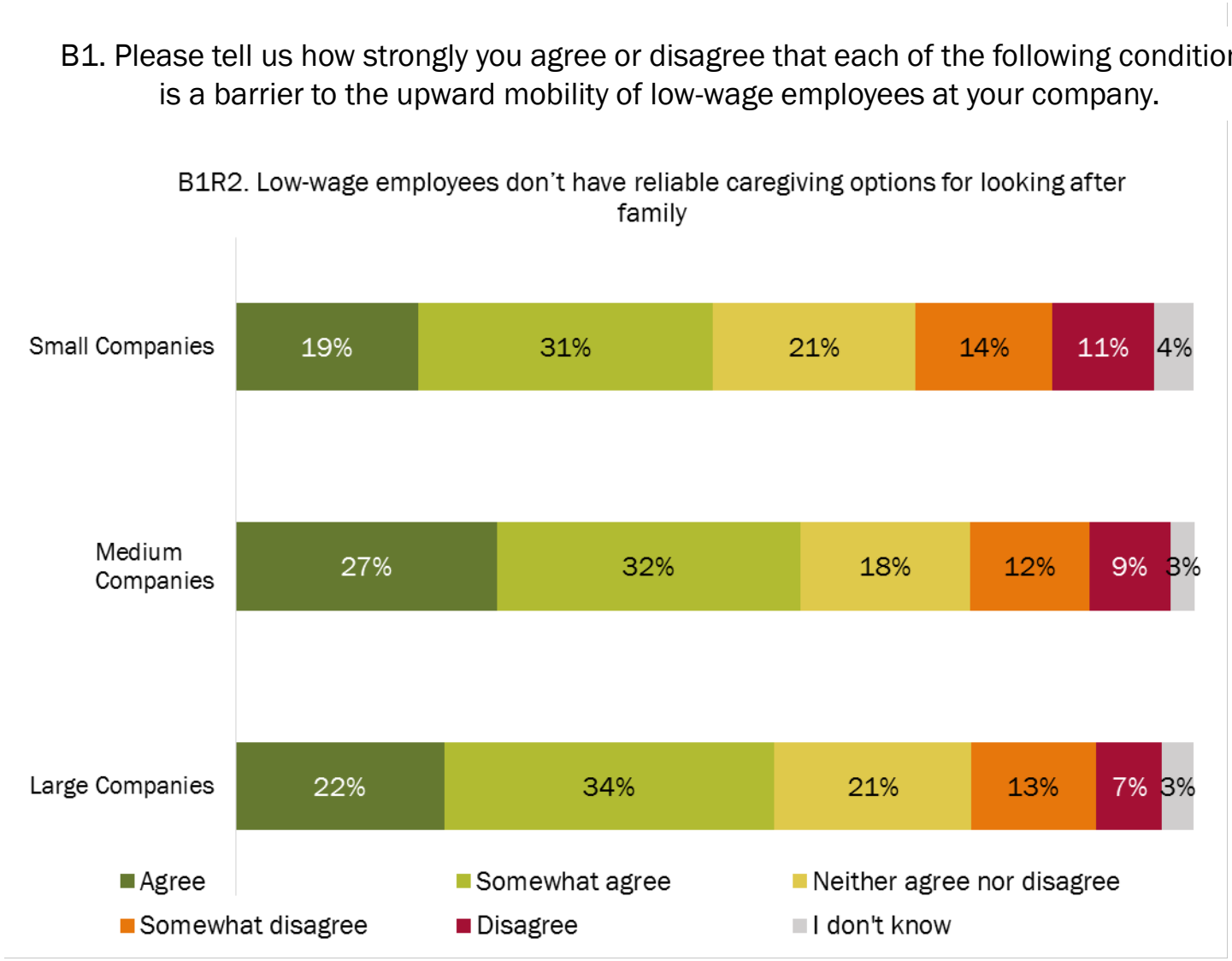

N = 1,150

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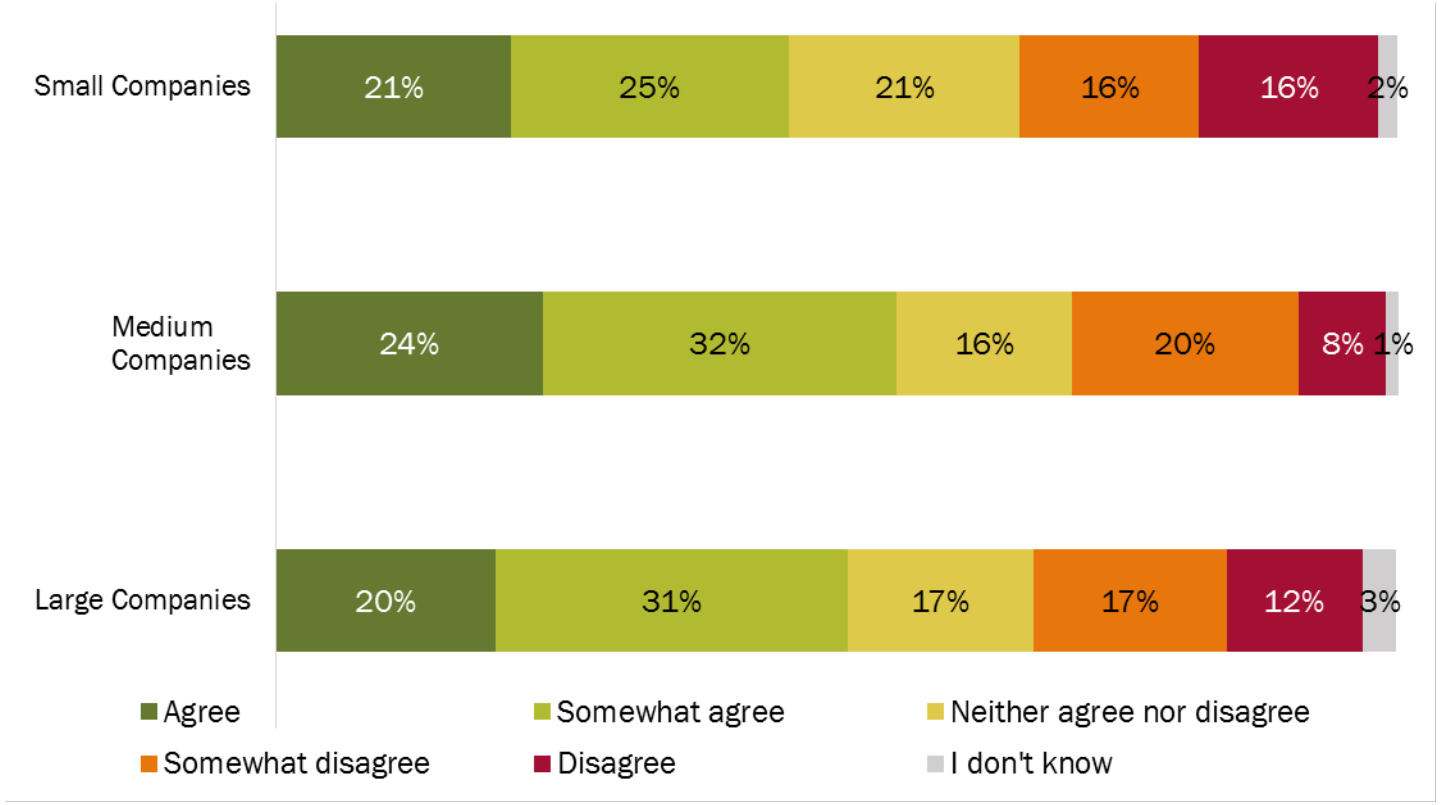
Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B1. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.

B1R3. Low-wage employees don't feel comfortable asking their manager/supervisor for assistance when they have personal circumstances preventing them from moving up (e.g., cannot afford training costs, cannot make their shift due to sick family member)



N = 1,150

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Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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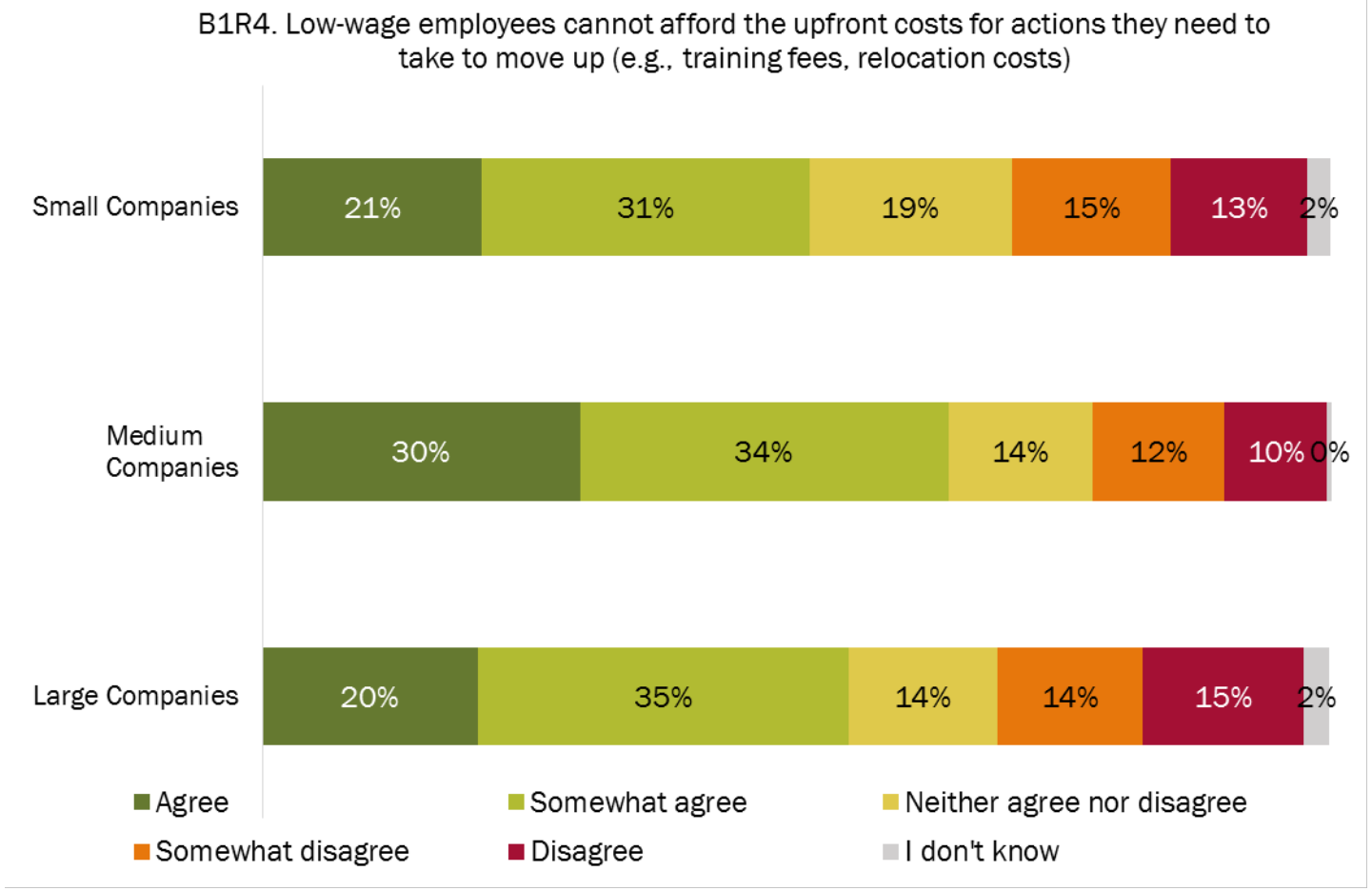

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Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

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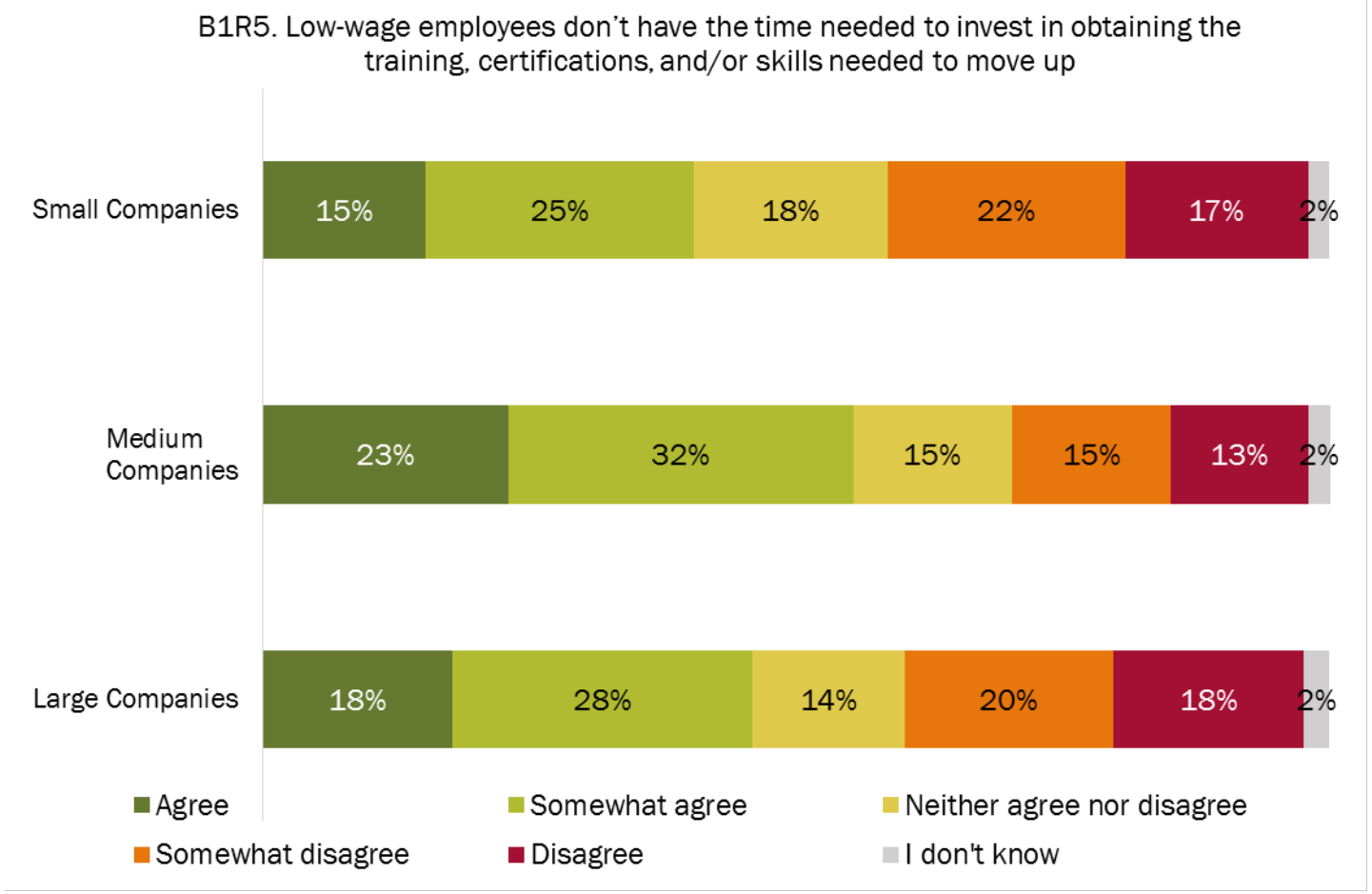

N = 1,150

Awareness and Attitudes
Personal Circumstances

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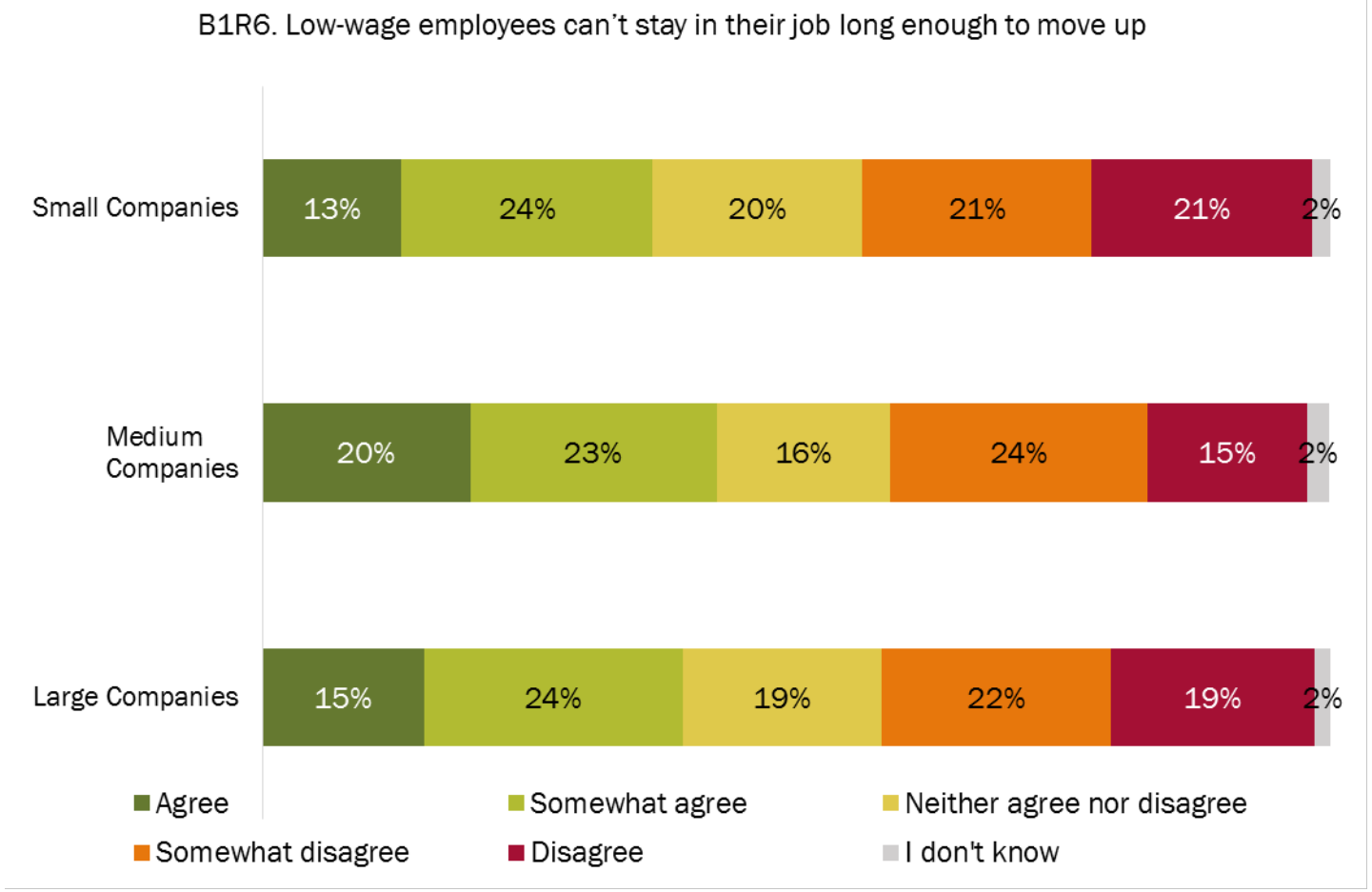

N = 1,150

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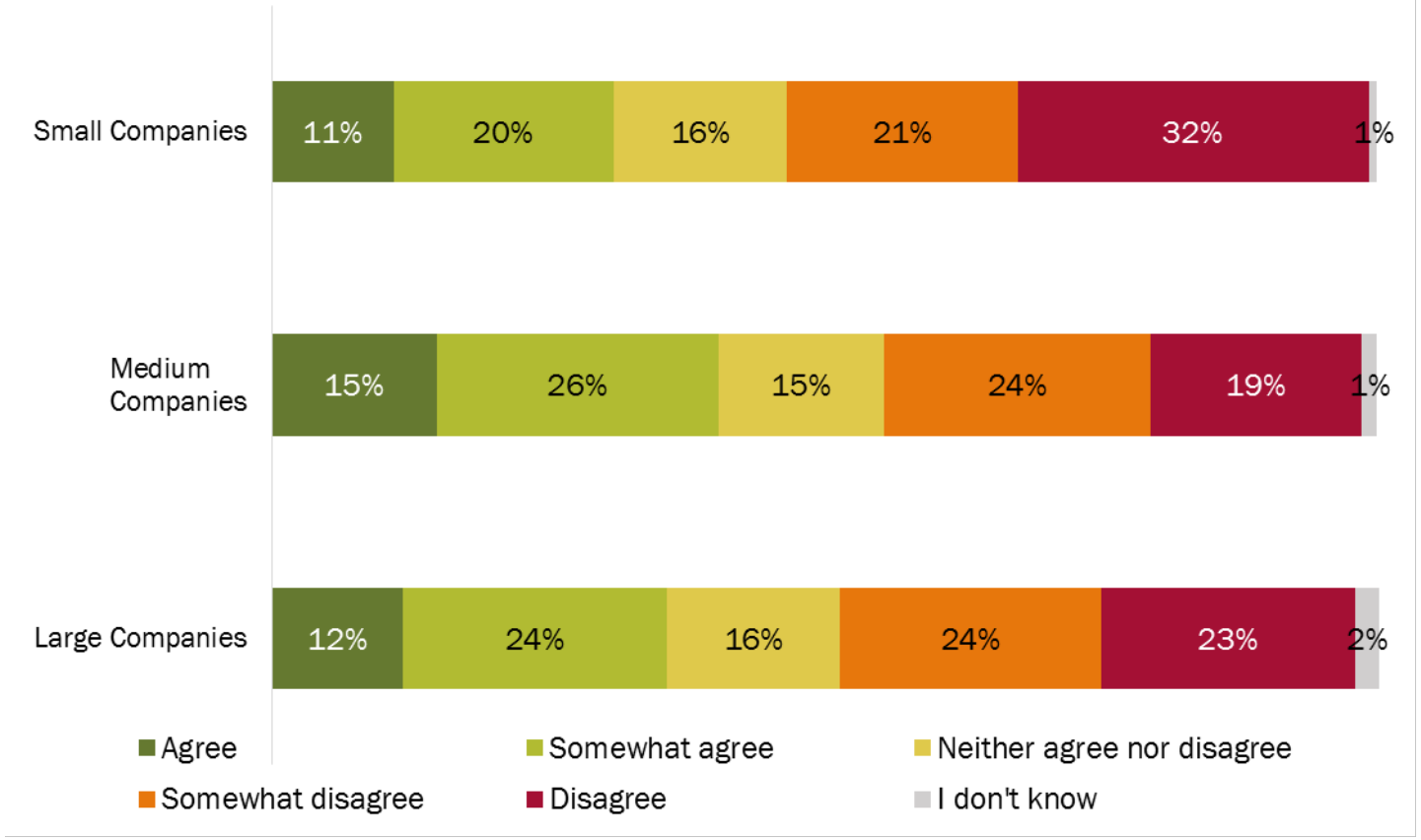
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B2. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.

B2R1. Low-wage employees don't have the English language fluency needed to move up



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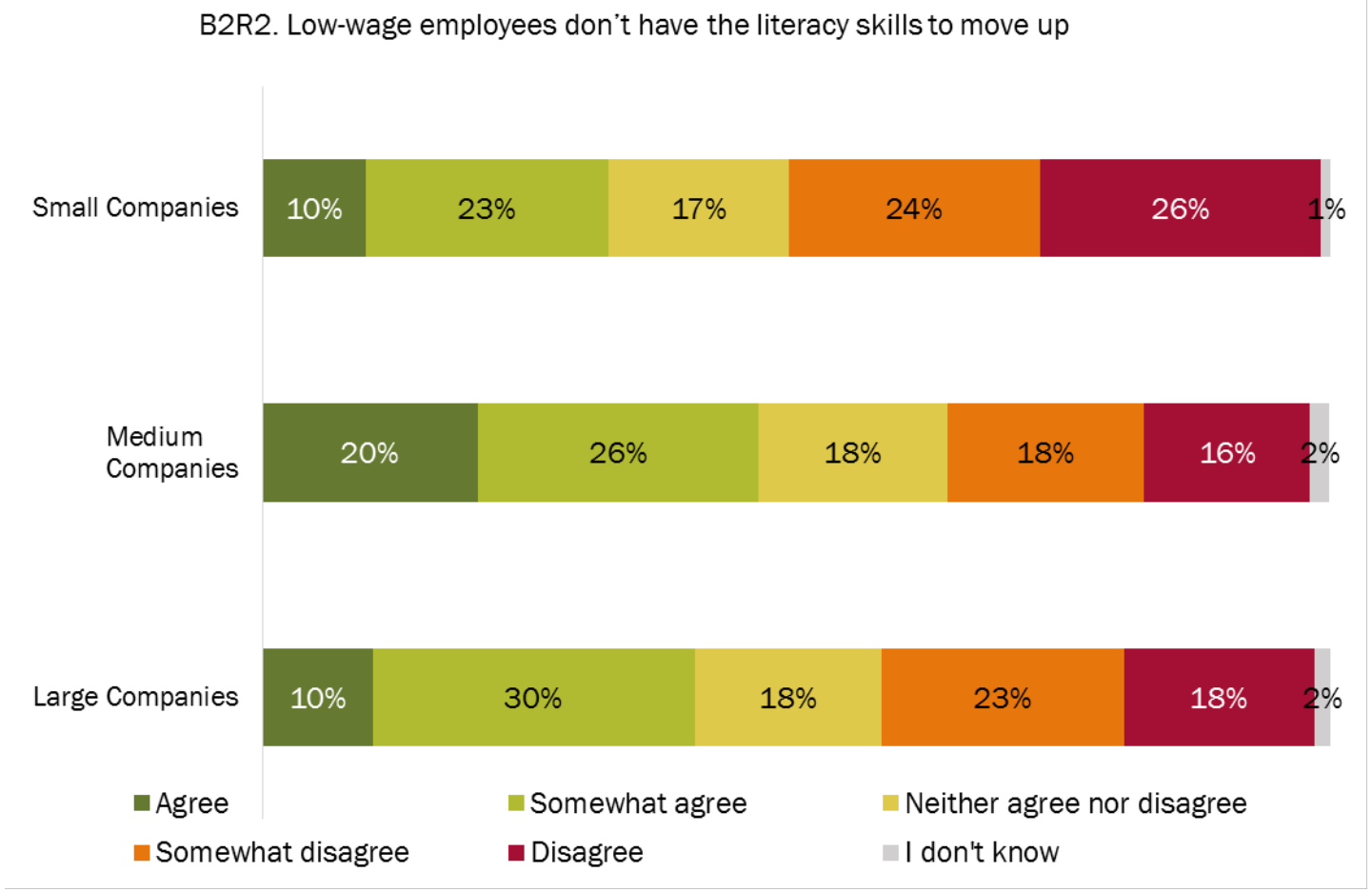
Awareness and Attitudes
Education and Skills

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B2. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



N = 1,150

Awareness and Attitudes
Education and Skills

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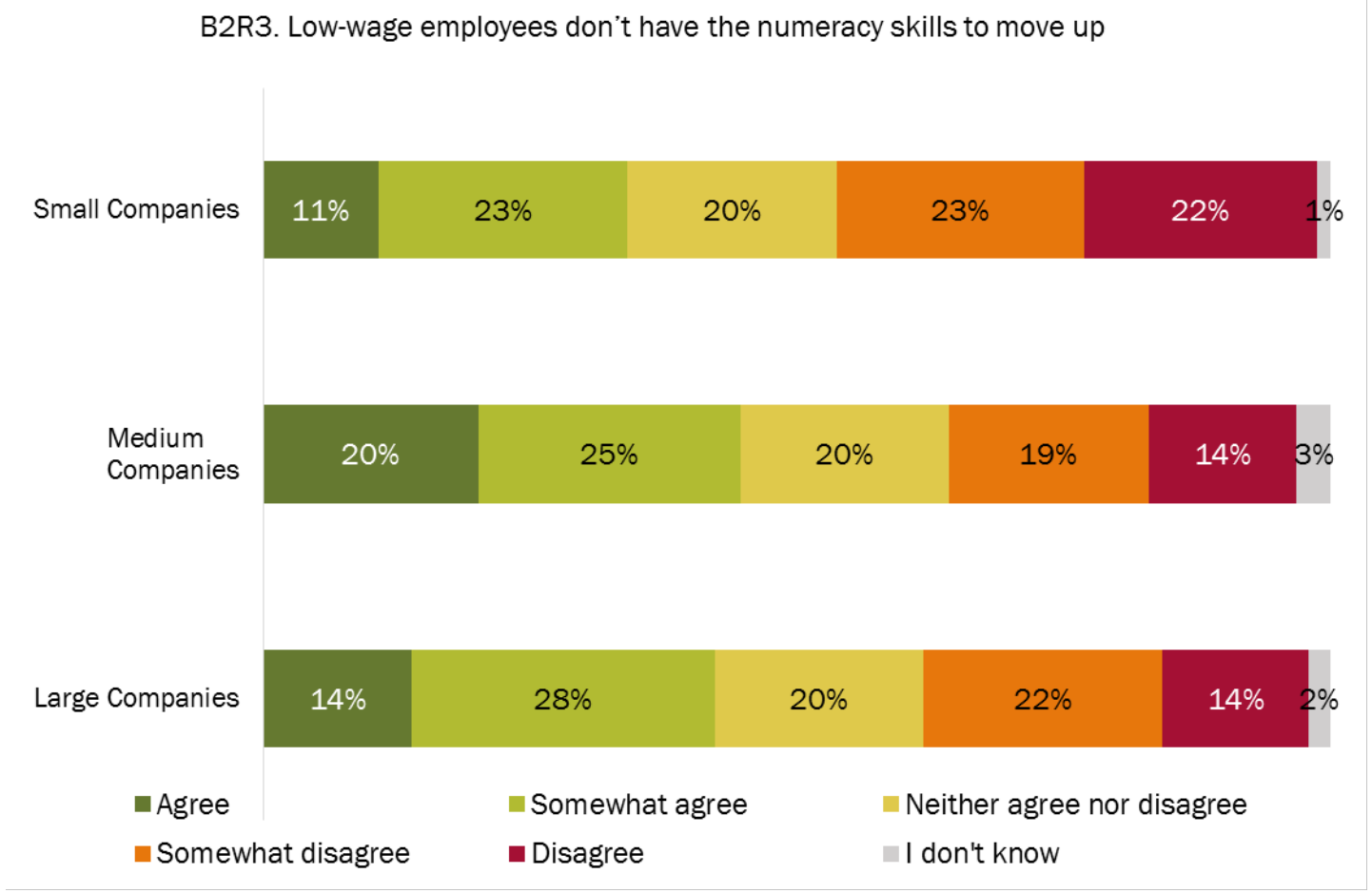

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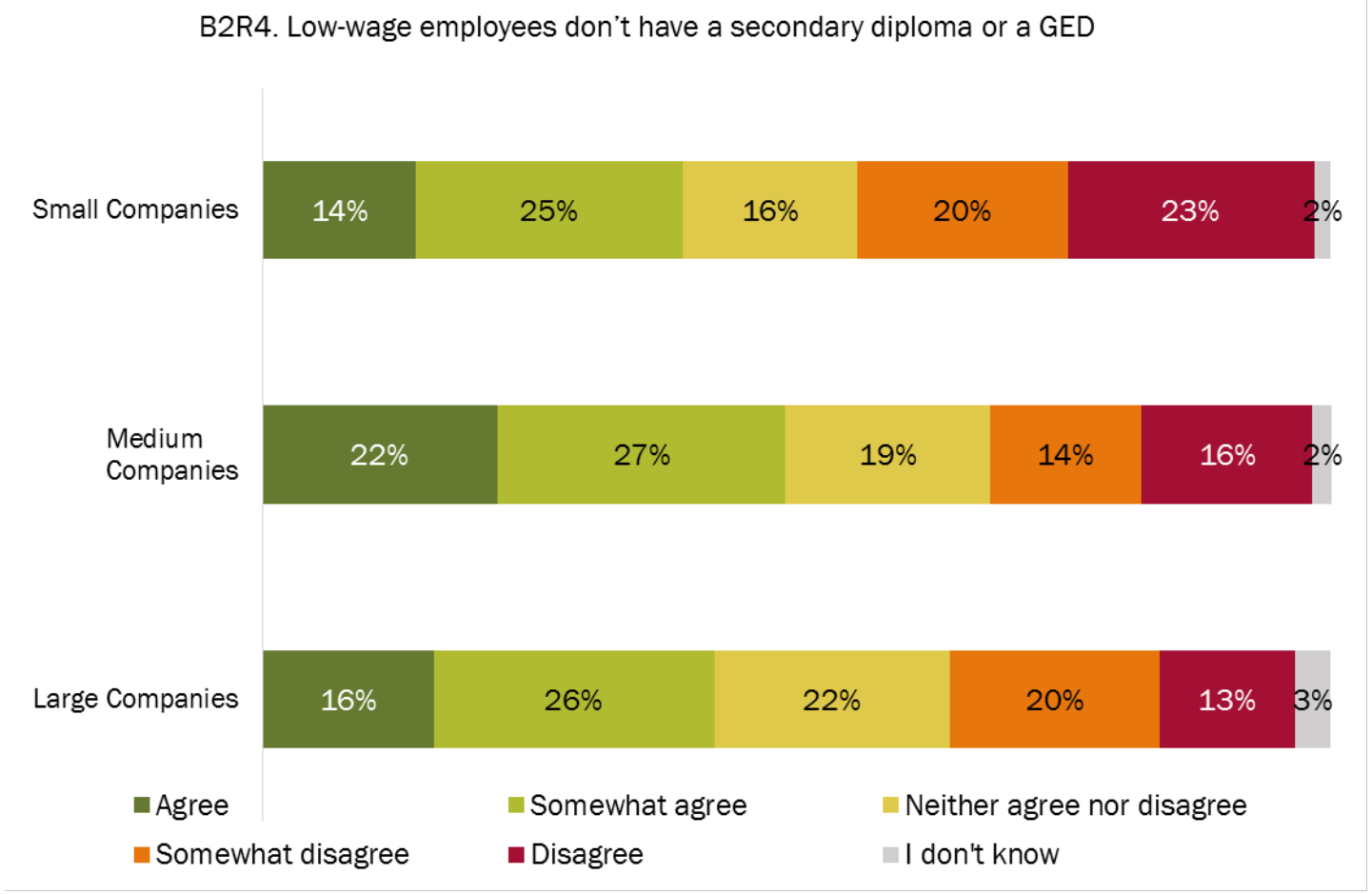

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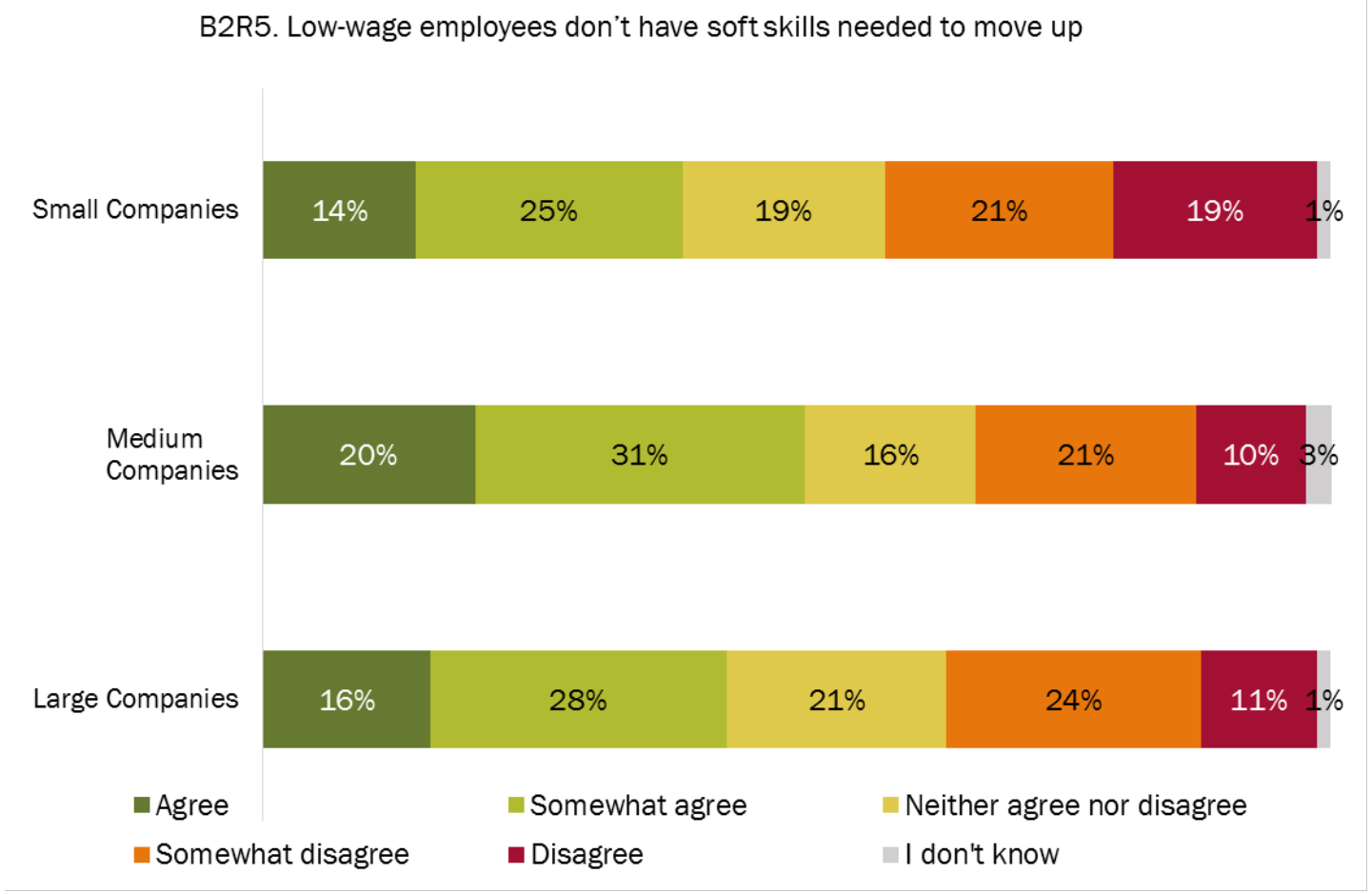

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Awareness and Attitudes
Education and Skills

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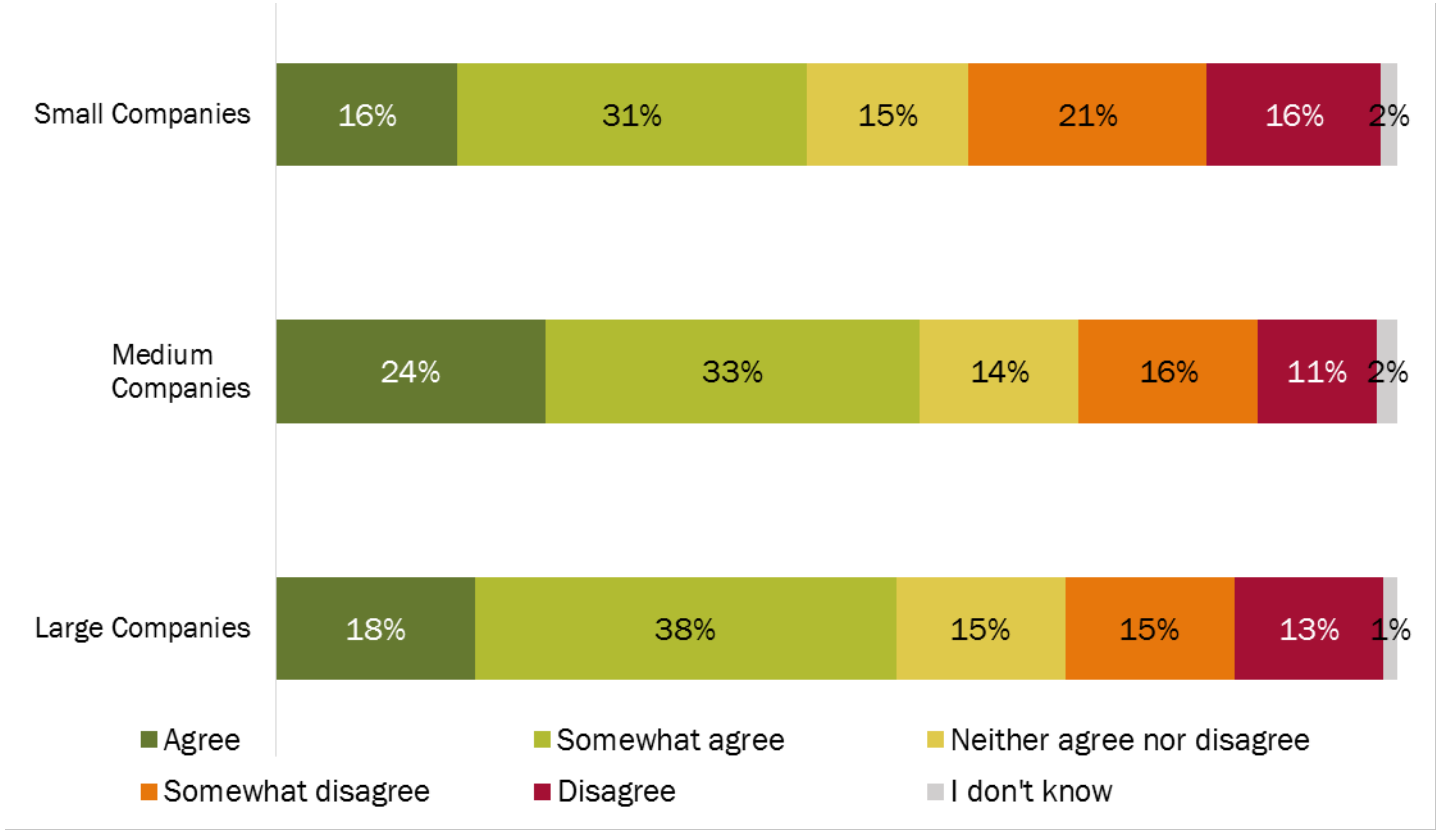
B2. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.

B2R6. Low-wage employees don't have technical skills (e.g., knowledge of certain equipment, systems, or tools) needed to move up



N = 1,150

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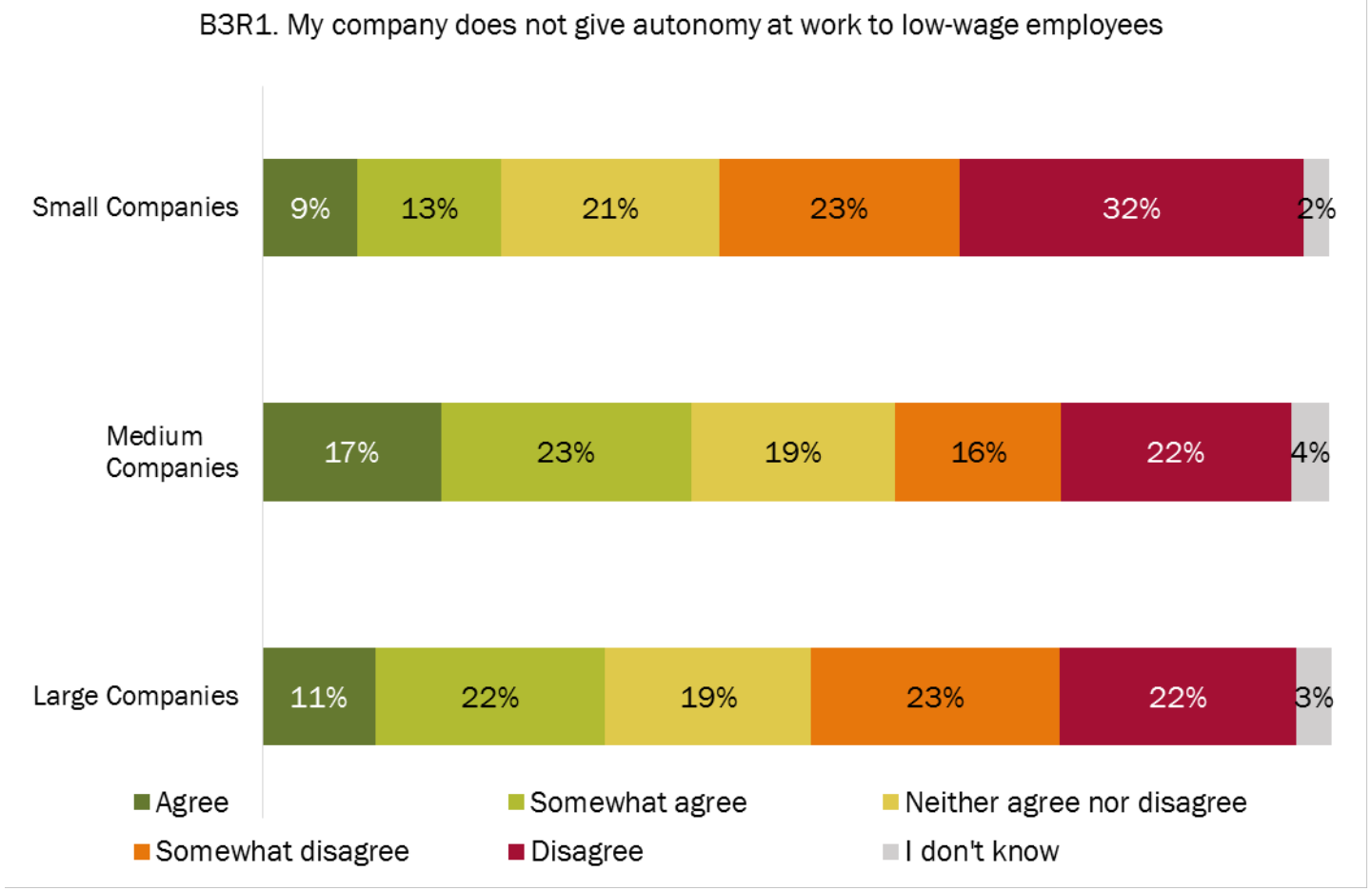
Awareness and Attitudes
Job Structure

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B3. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



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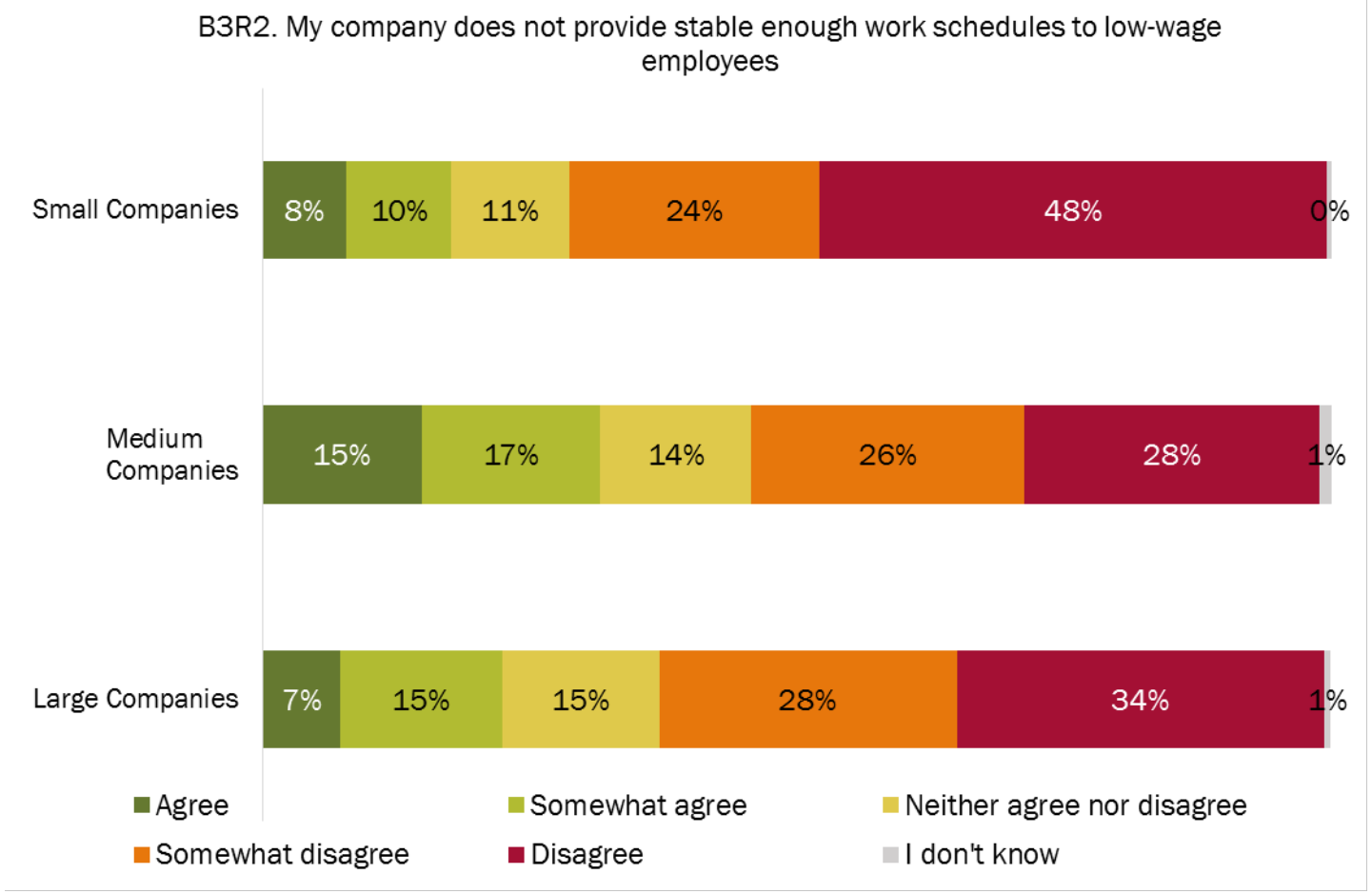

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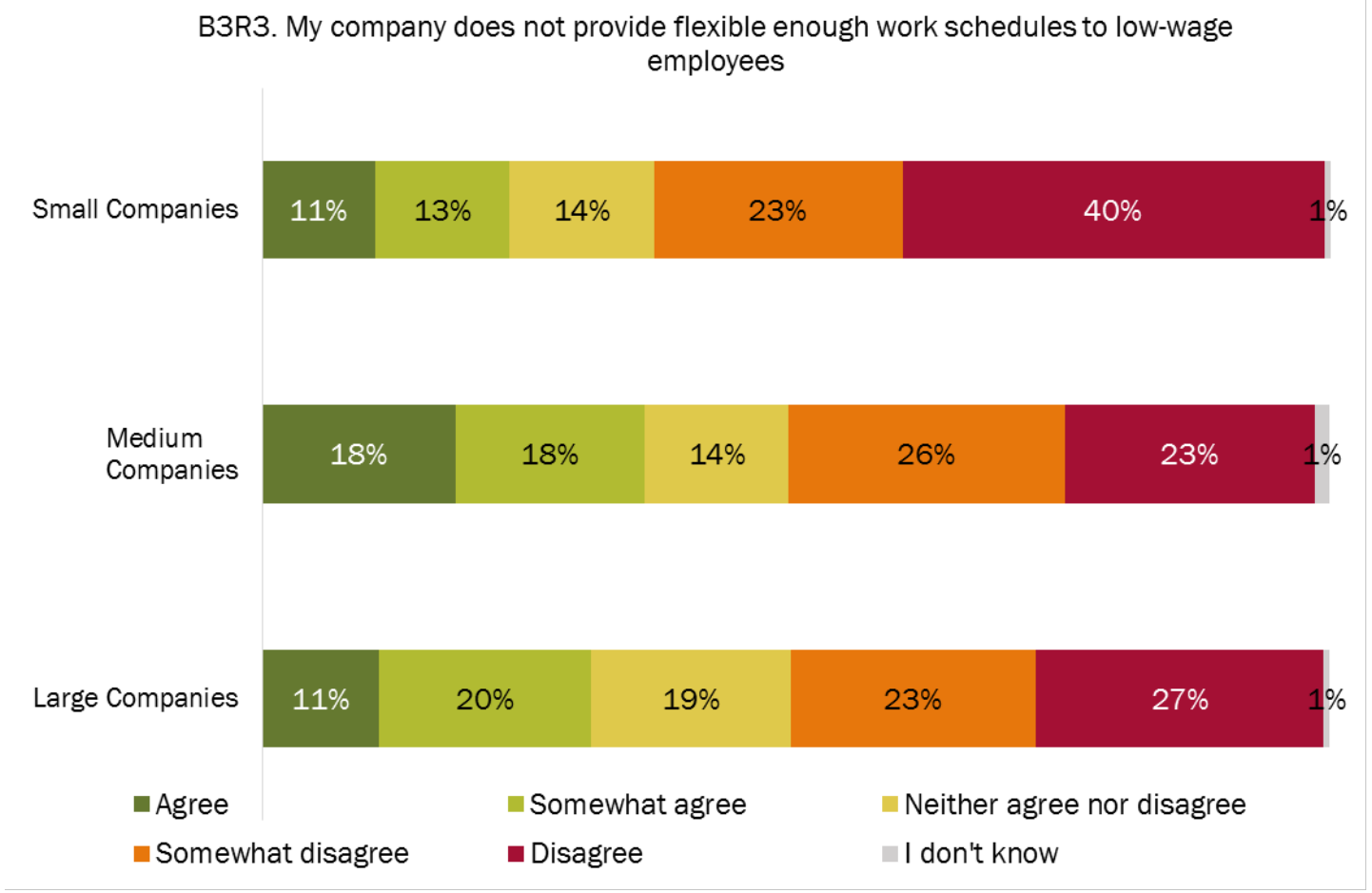

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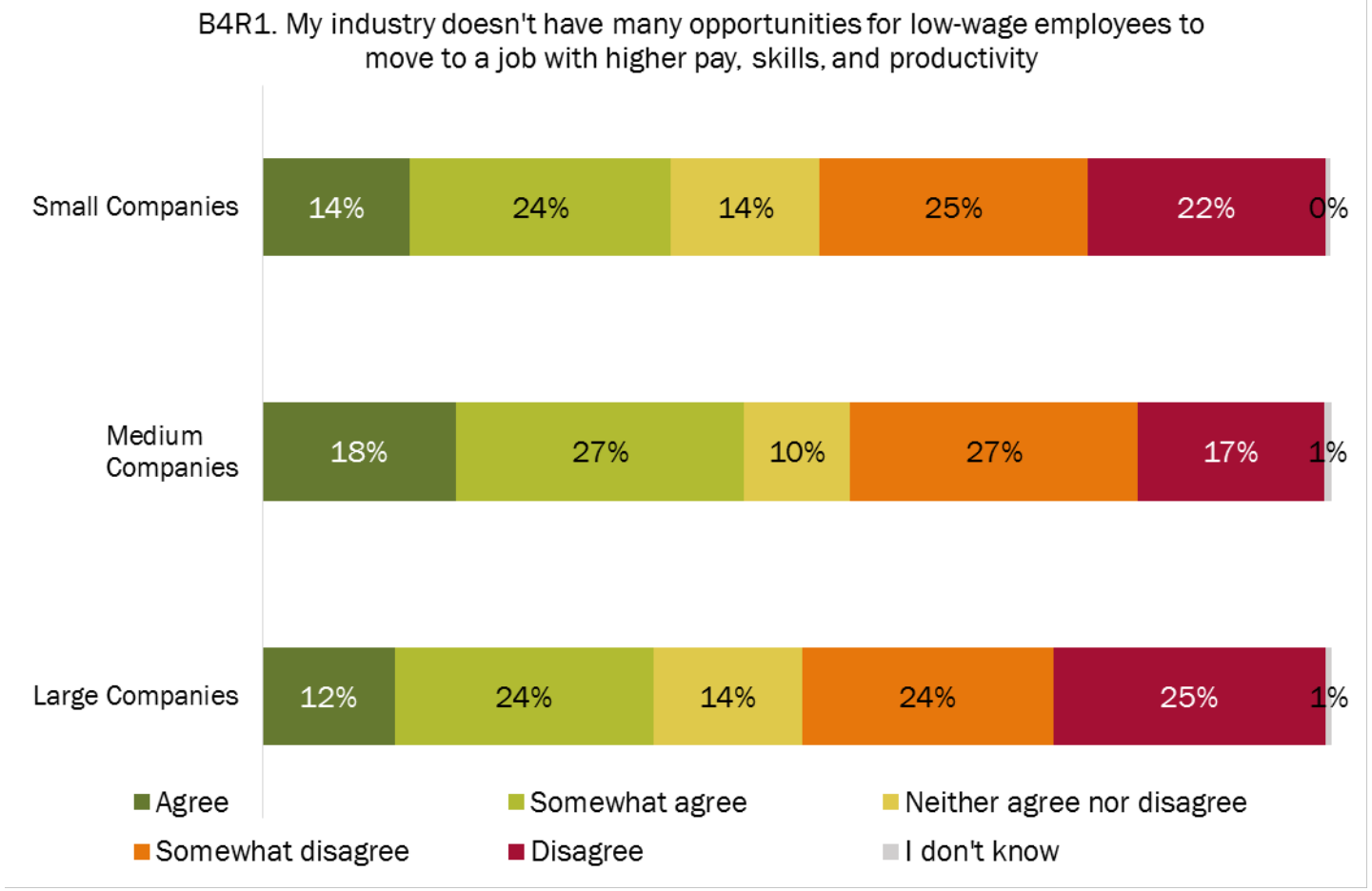
Awareness and Attitudes
Company and Industry Opportunities

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B4. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



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Awareness and Attitudes
Company and Industry Opportunities

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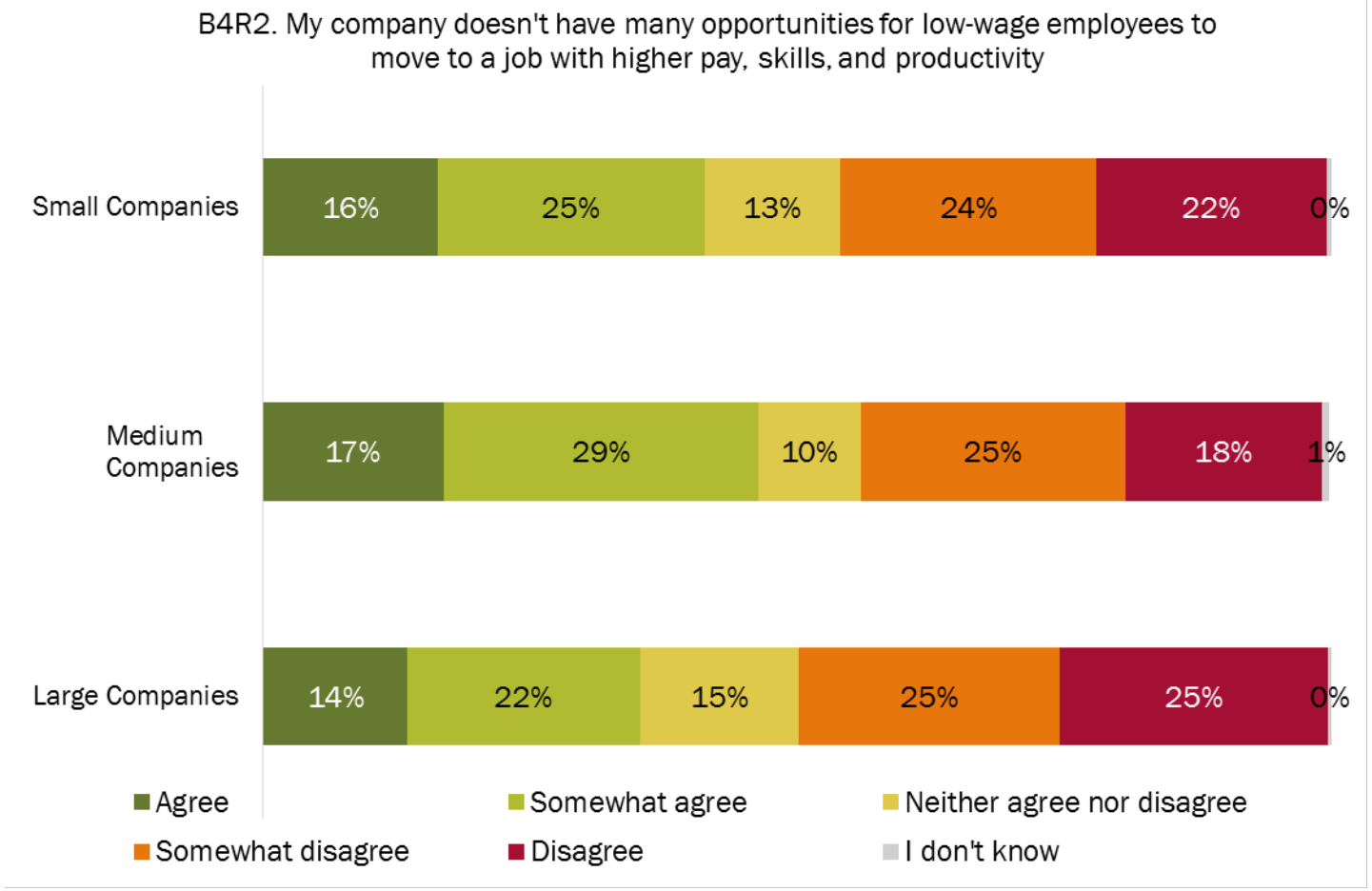

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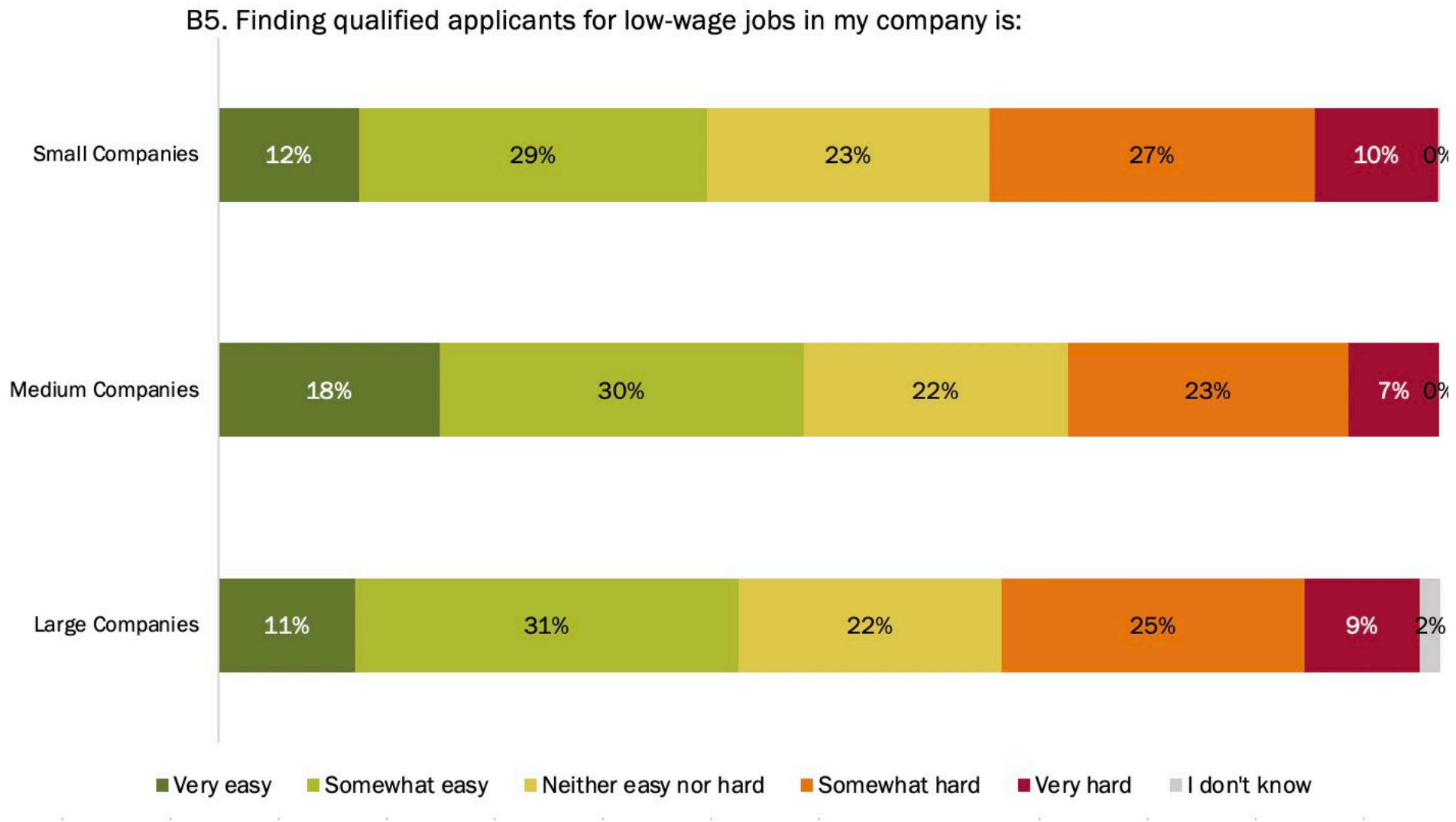
Awareness and Attitudes

Ease of Finding Low-Wage Applicants

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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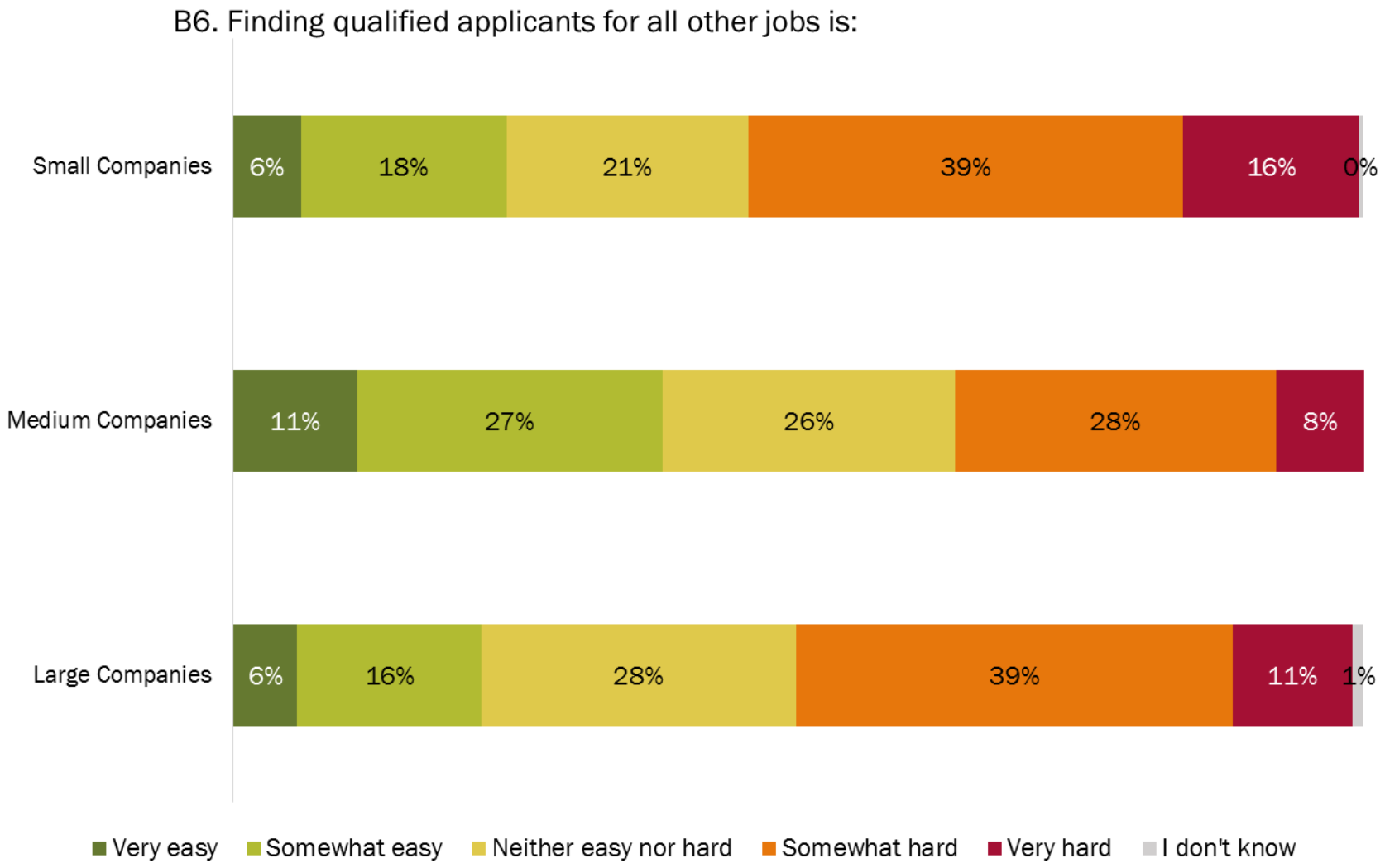
Awareness and Attitudes

Ease of Finding All Applicants

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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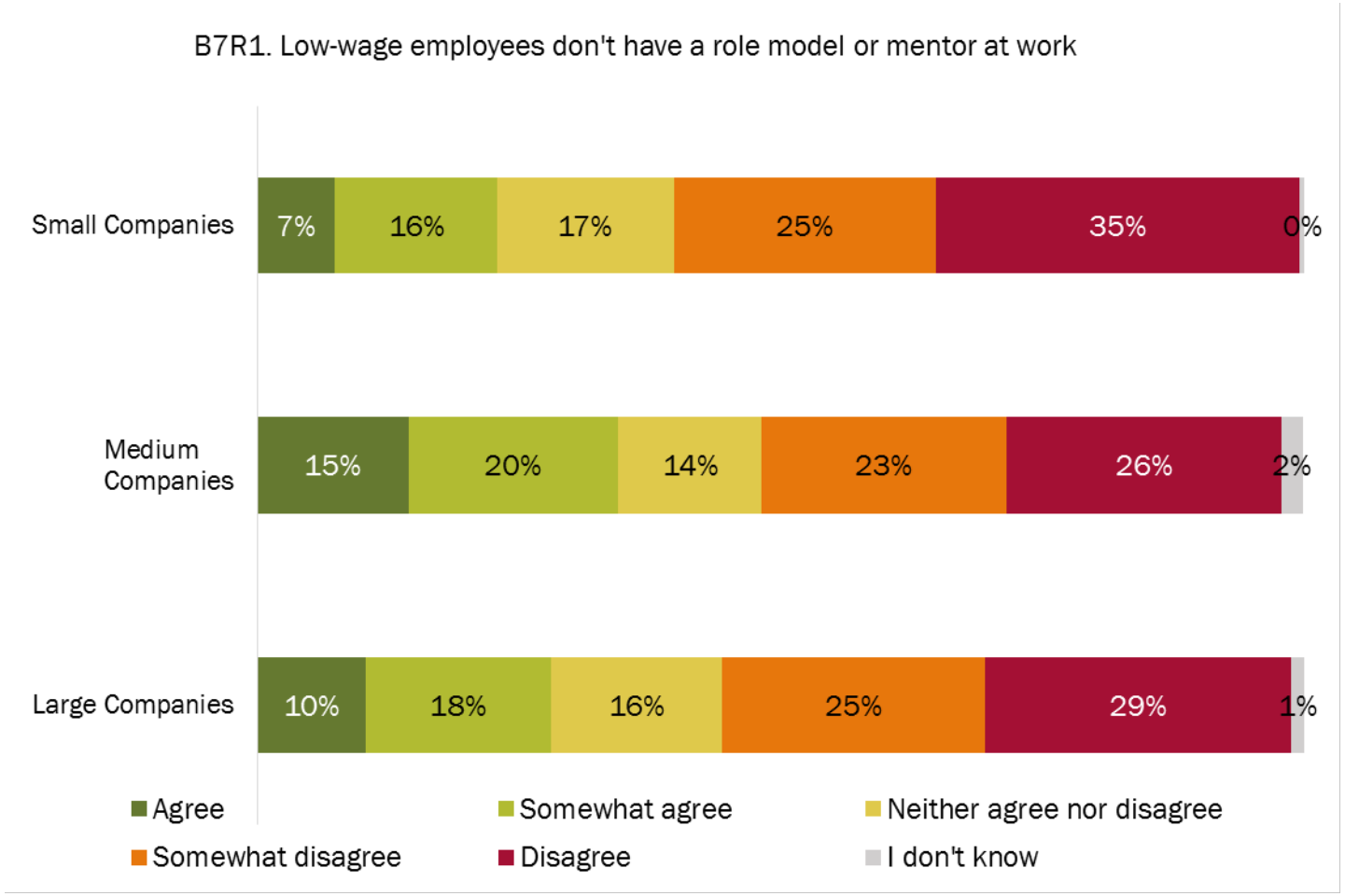
Awareness and Attitudes
Mentorship

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B7. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



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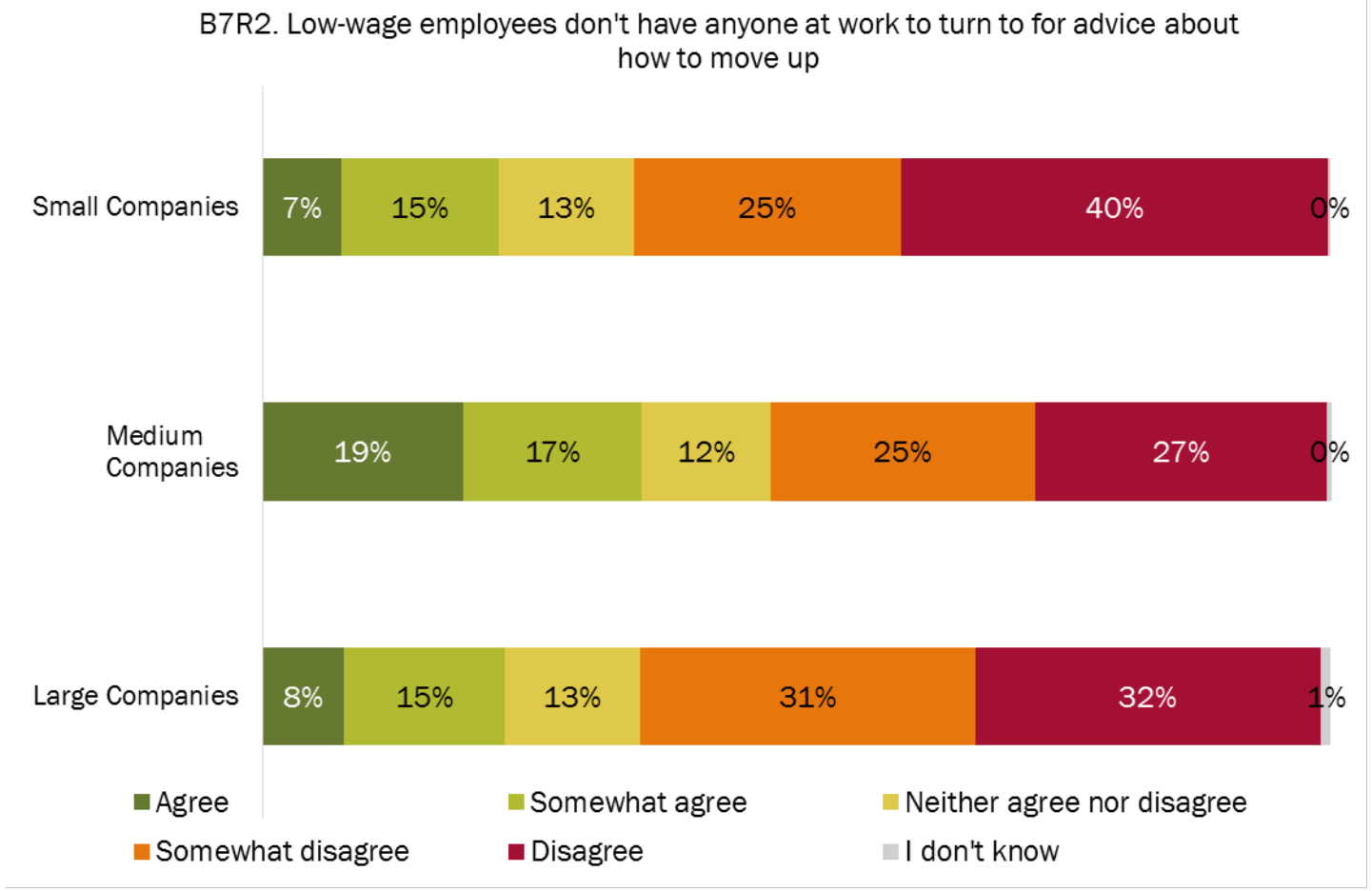

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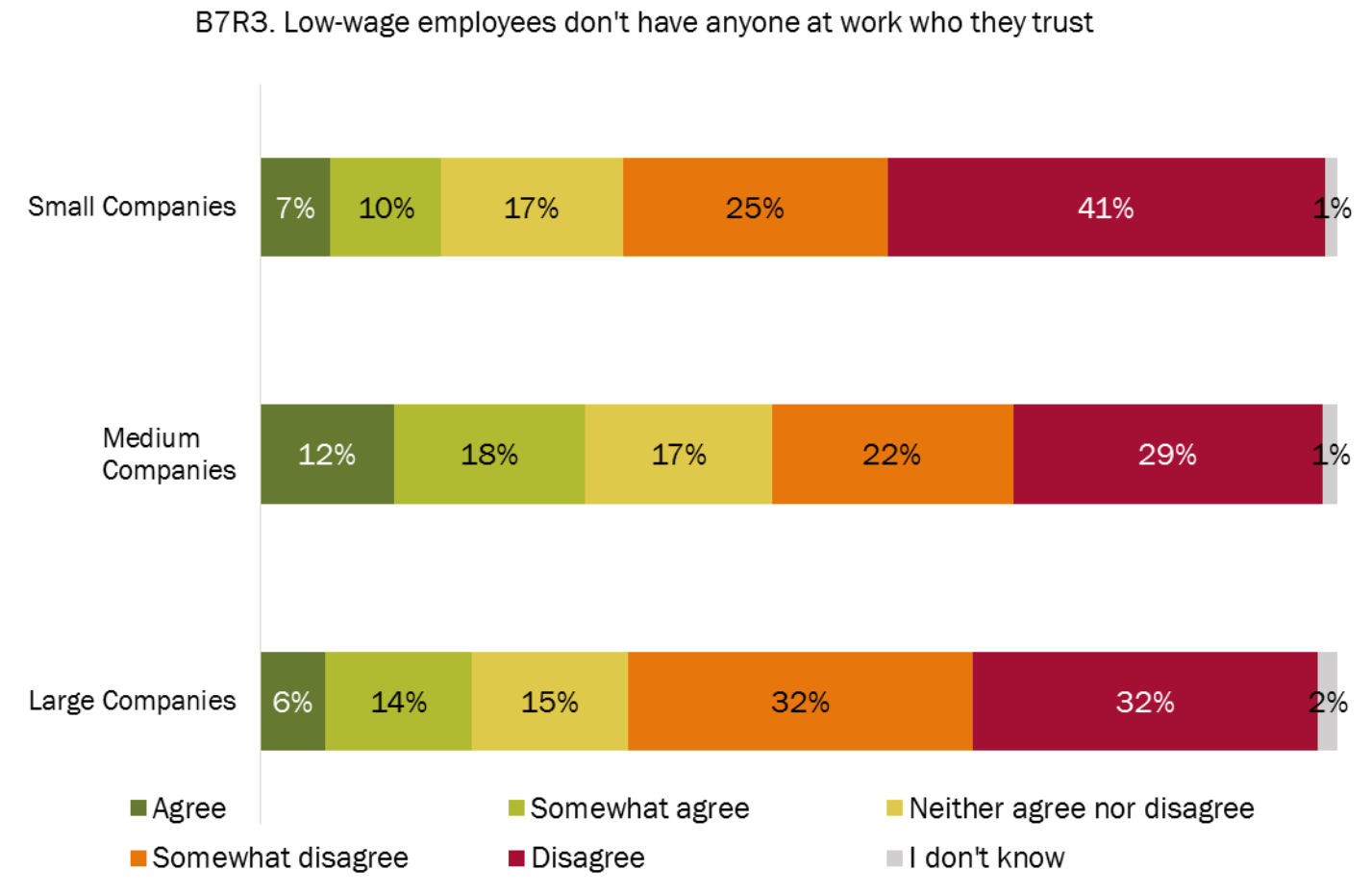

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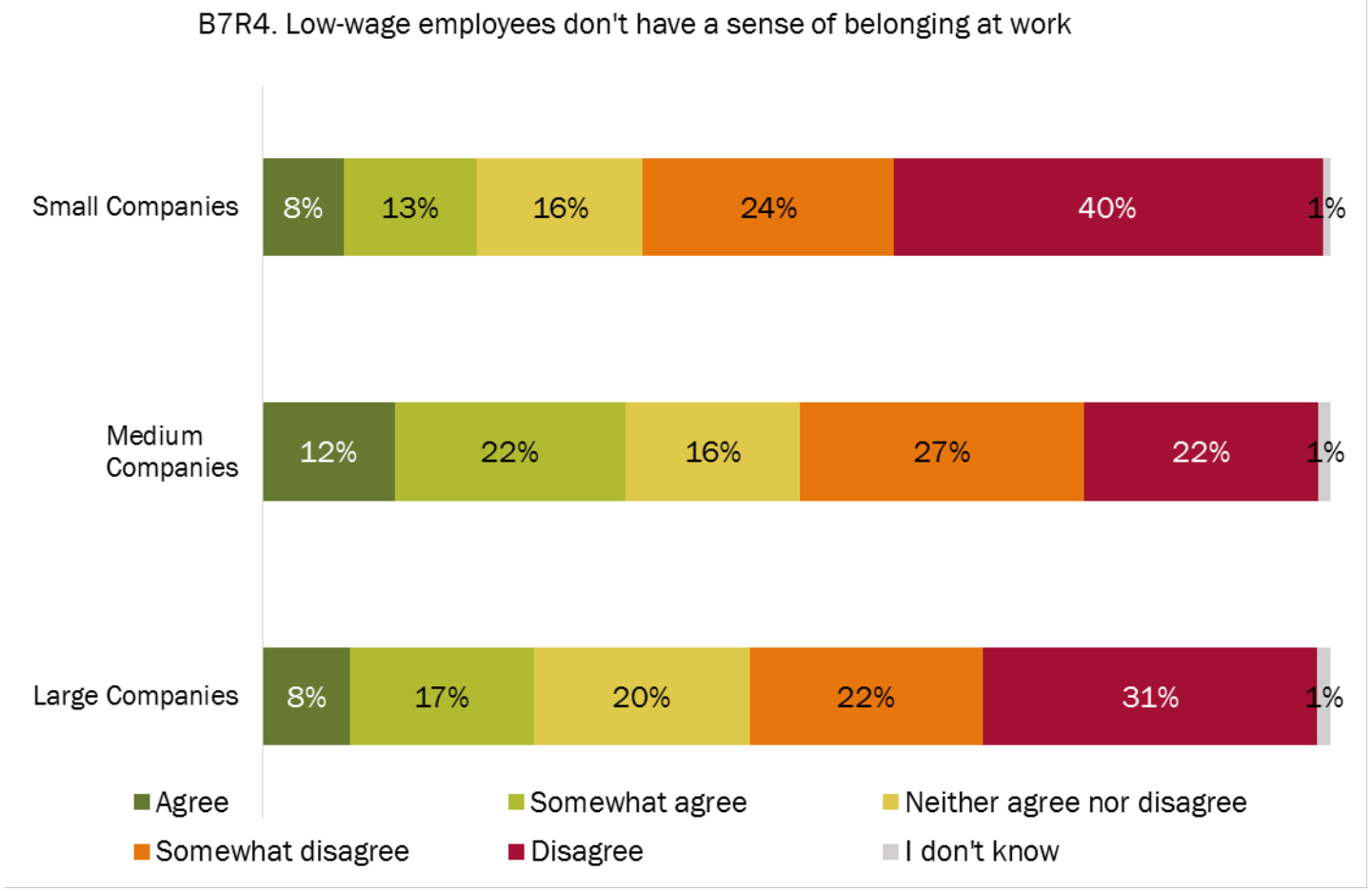

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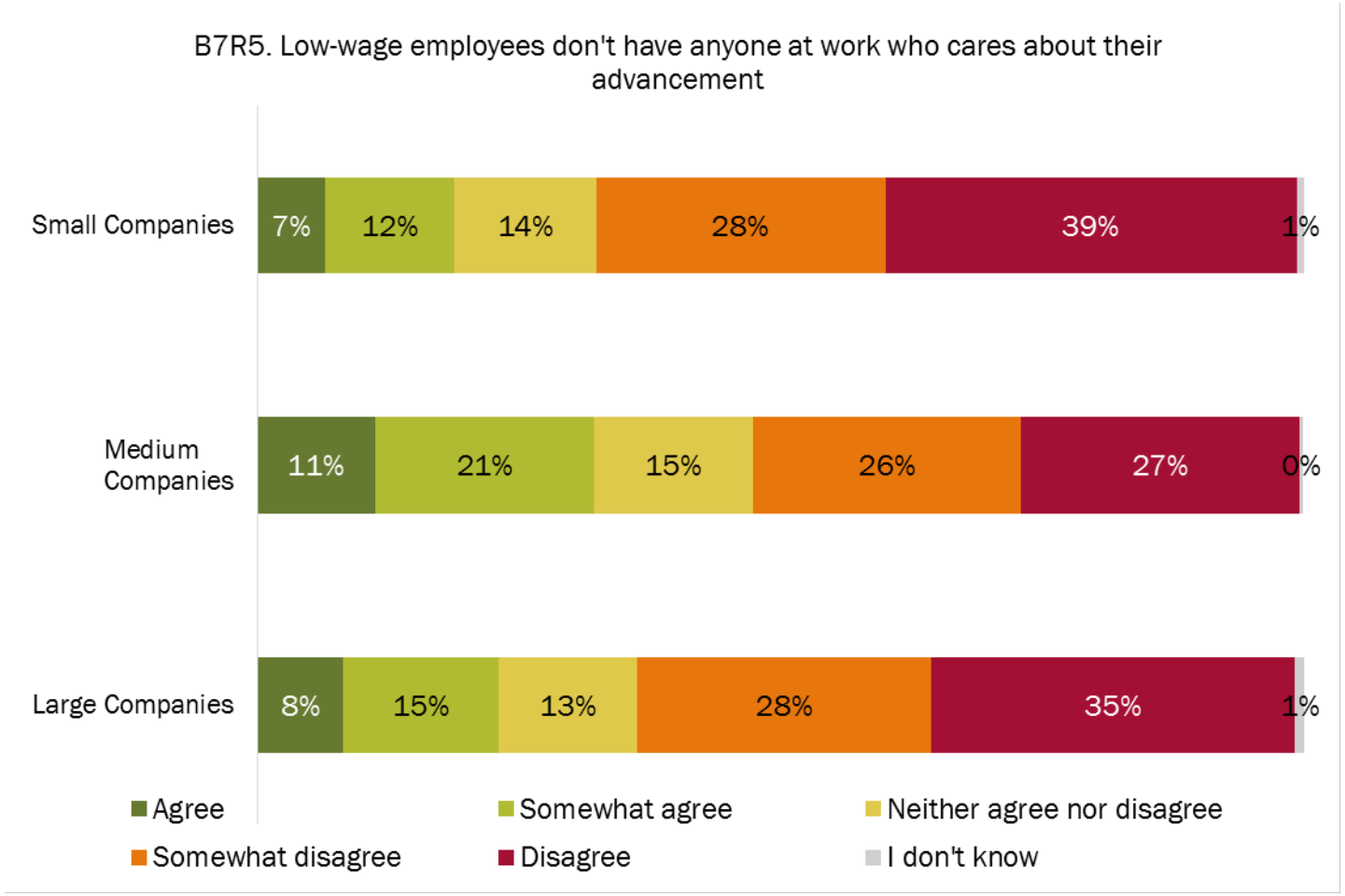

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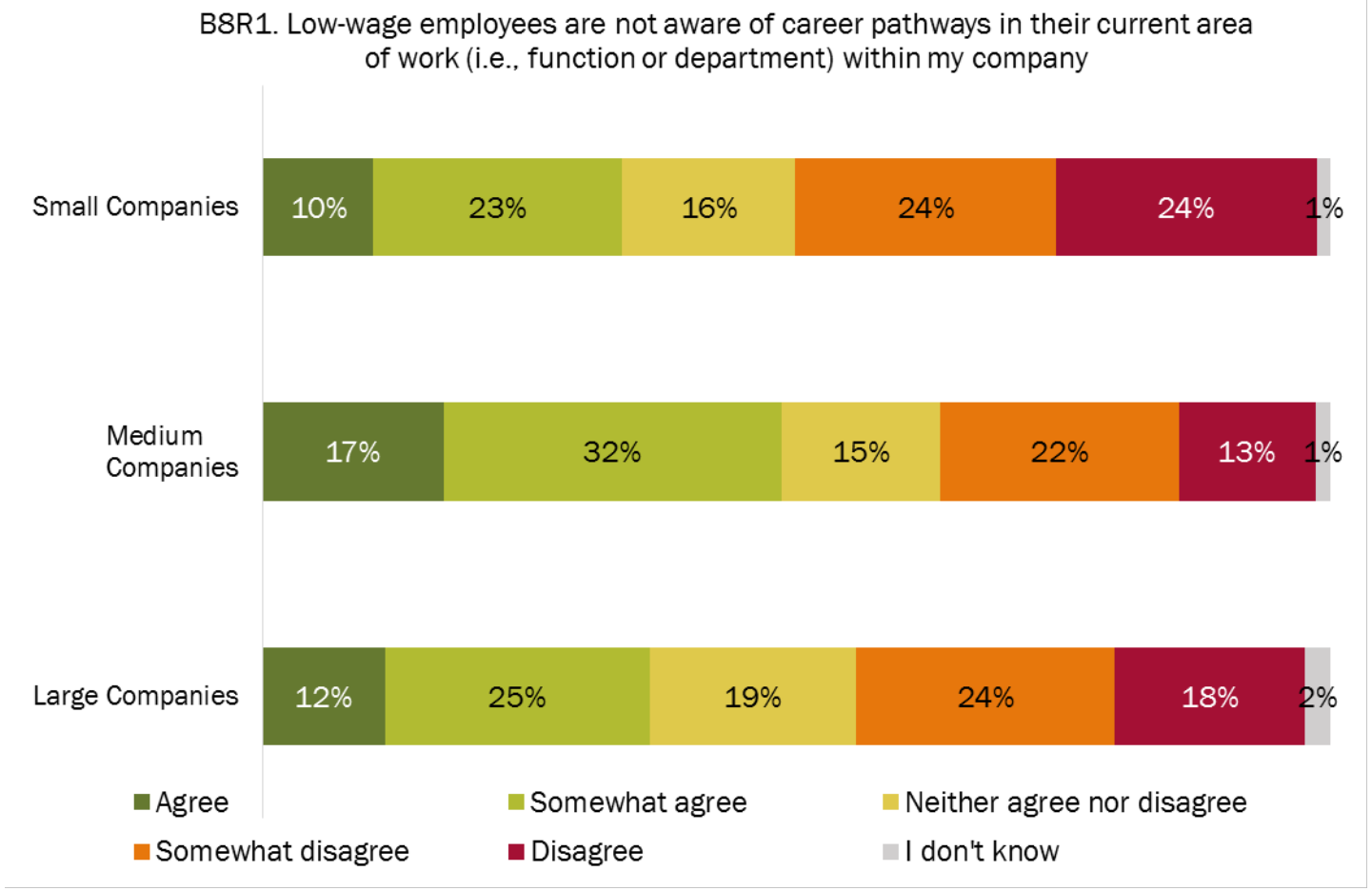
Awareness and Attitudes

Employee Awareness About Career Pathways

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B8. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



N = 1,150

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Awareness and Attitudes

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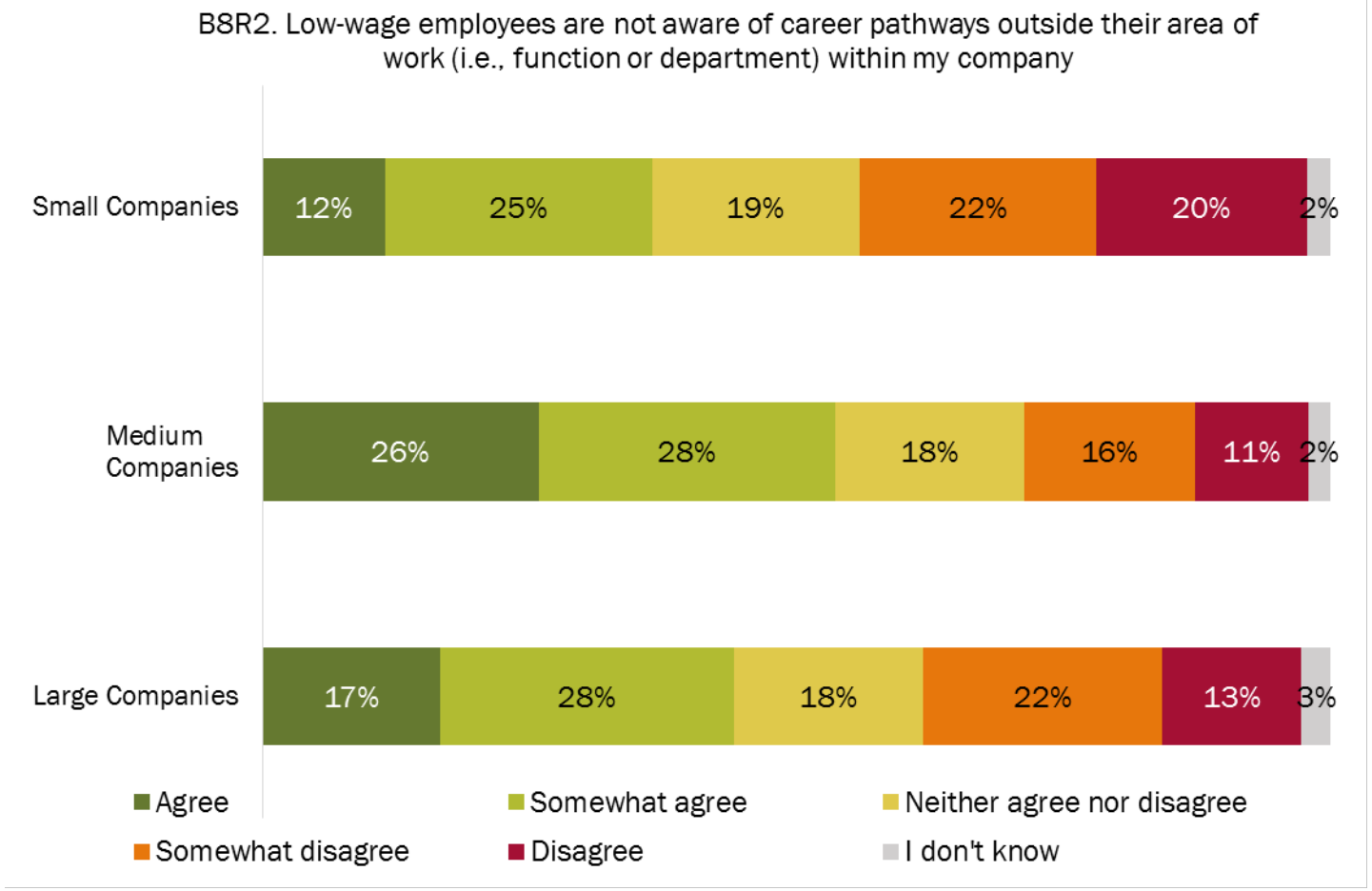

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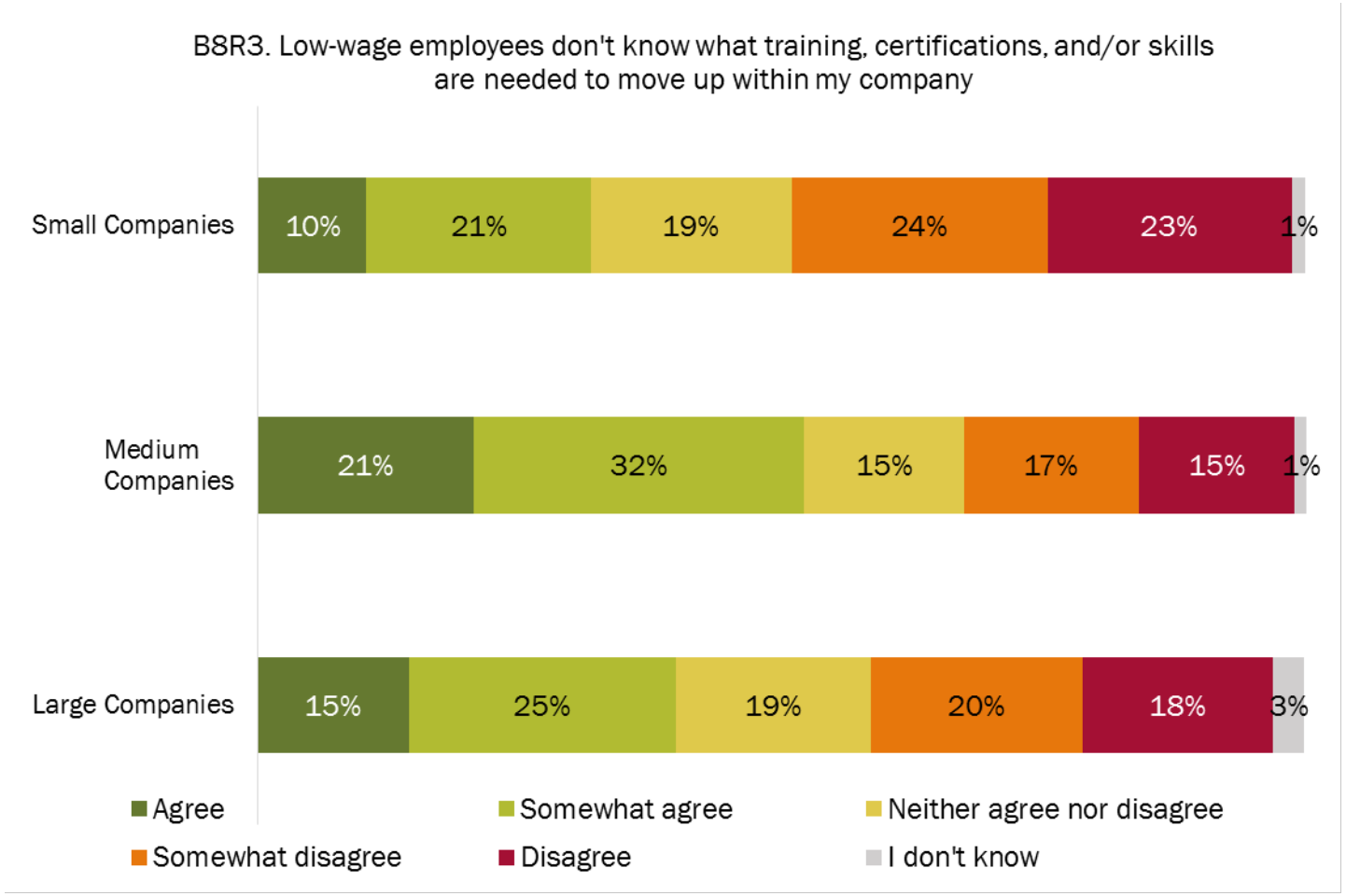

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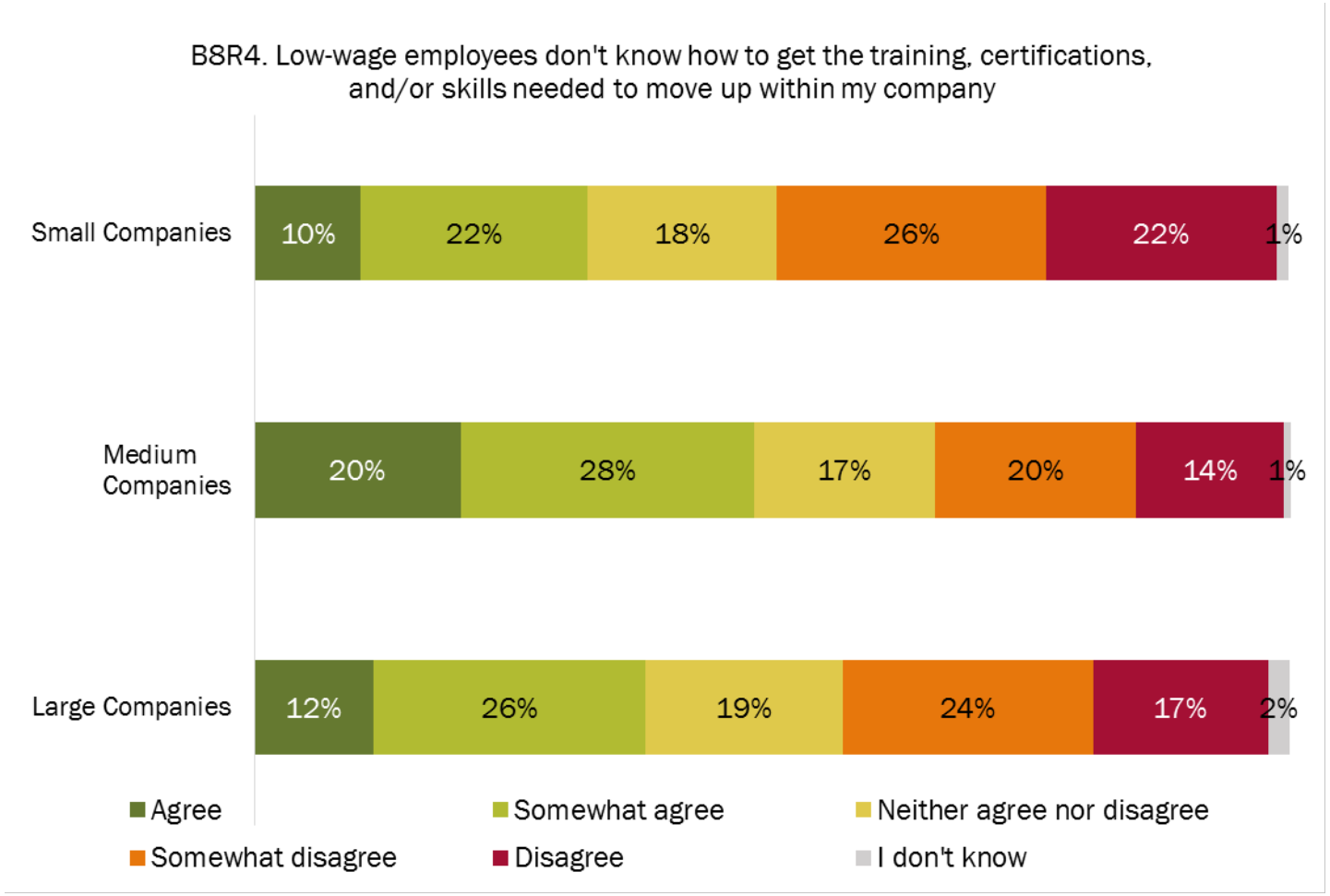

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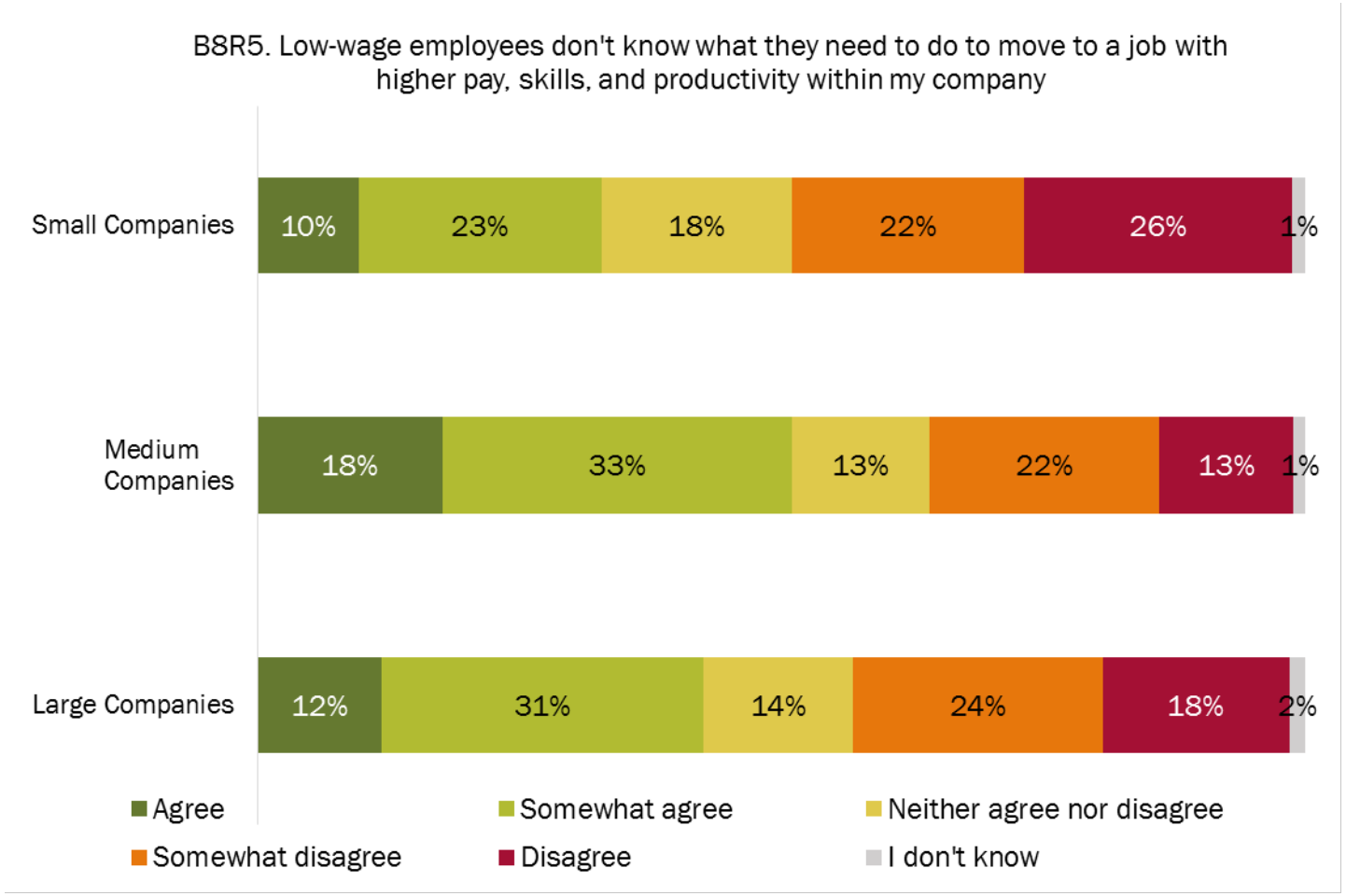

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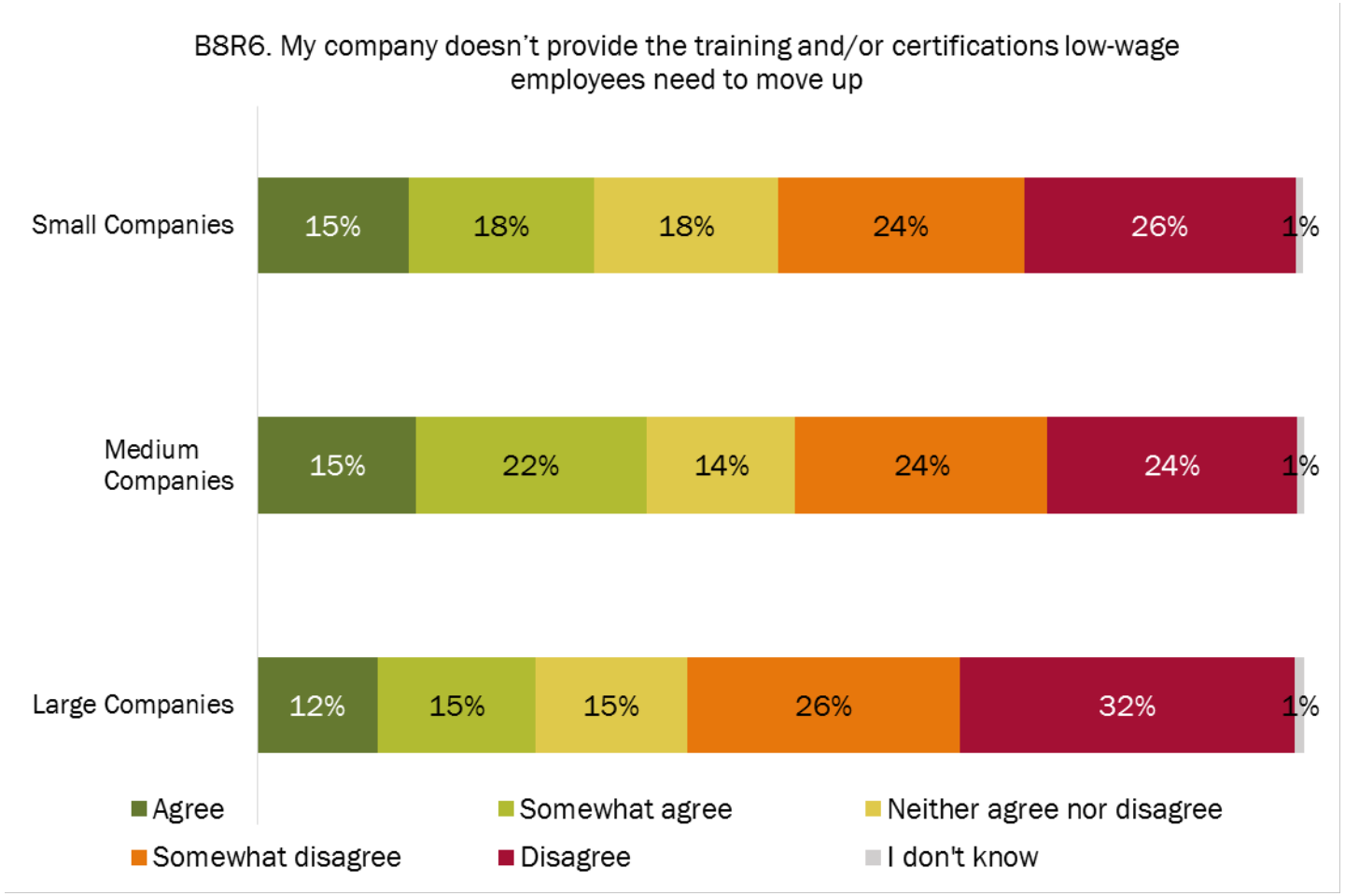

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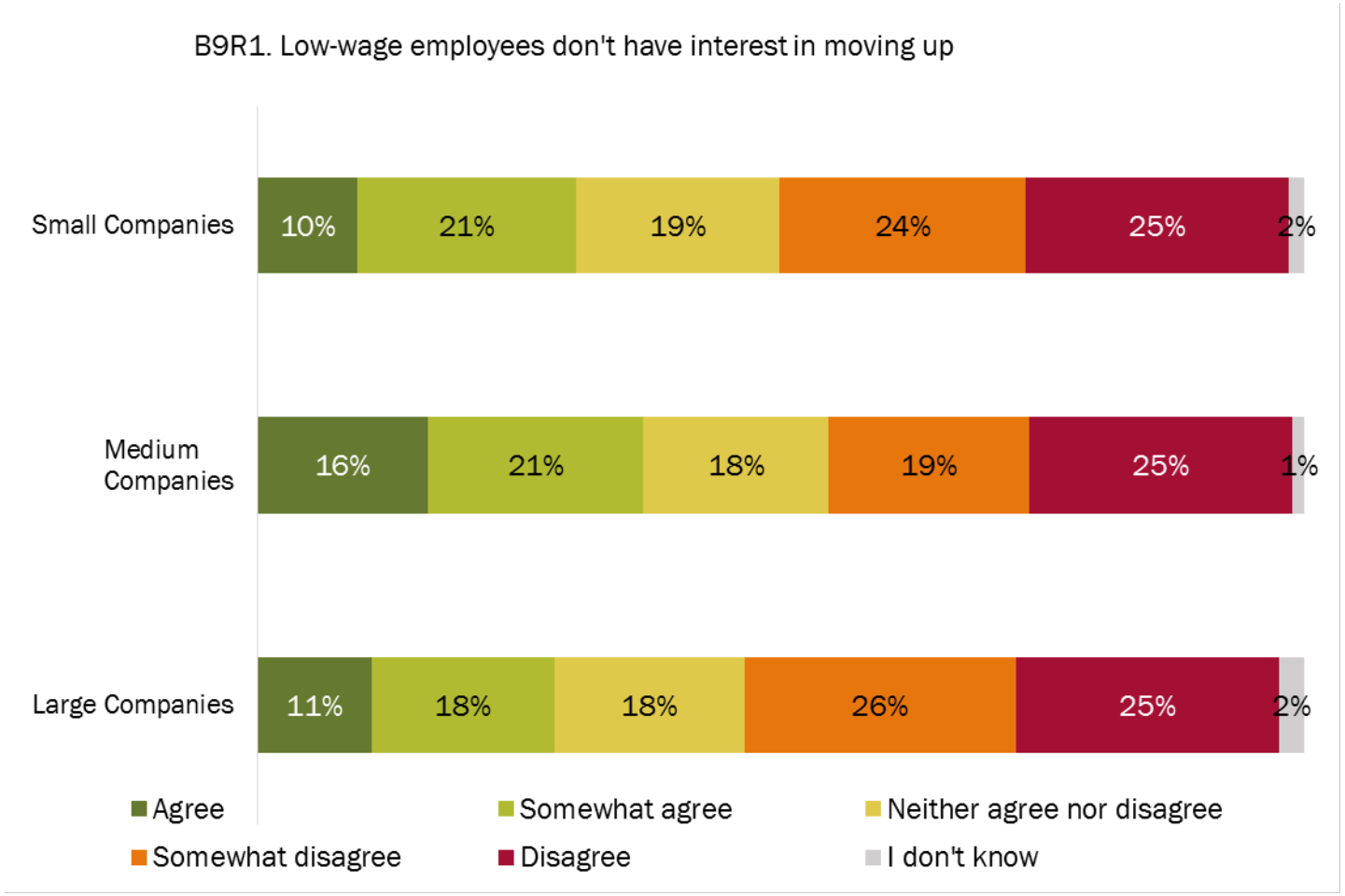
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B9. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.



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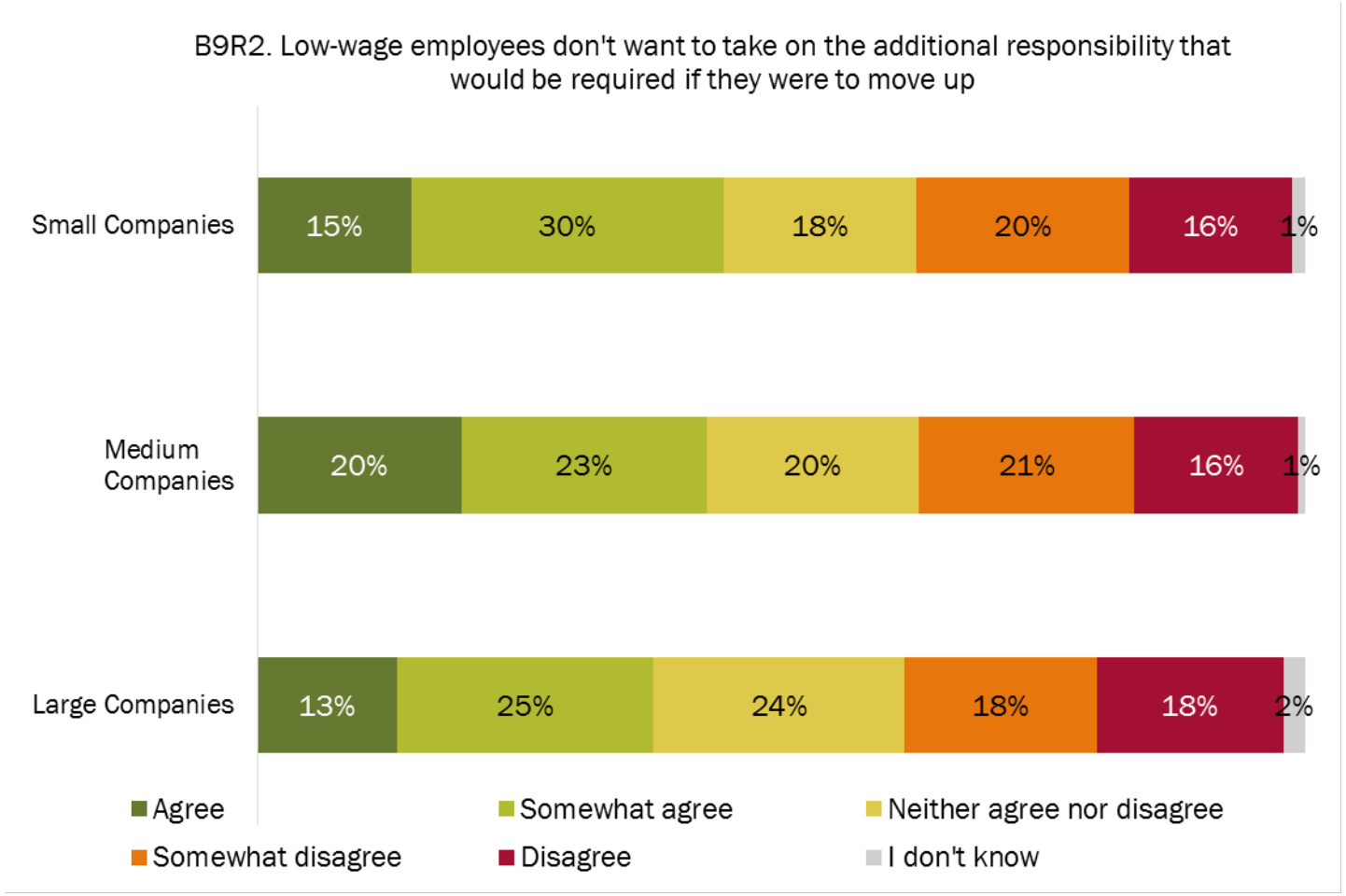

N = 1,150

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Awareness and Attitudes

Employee Attitudes to Upward Mobility

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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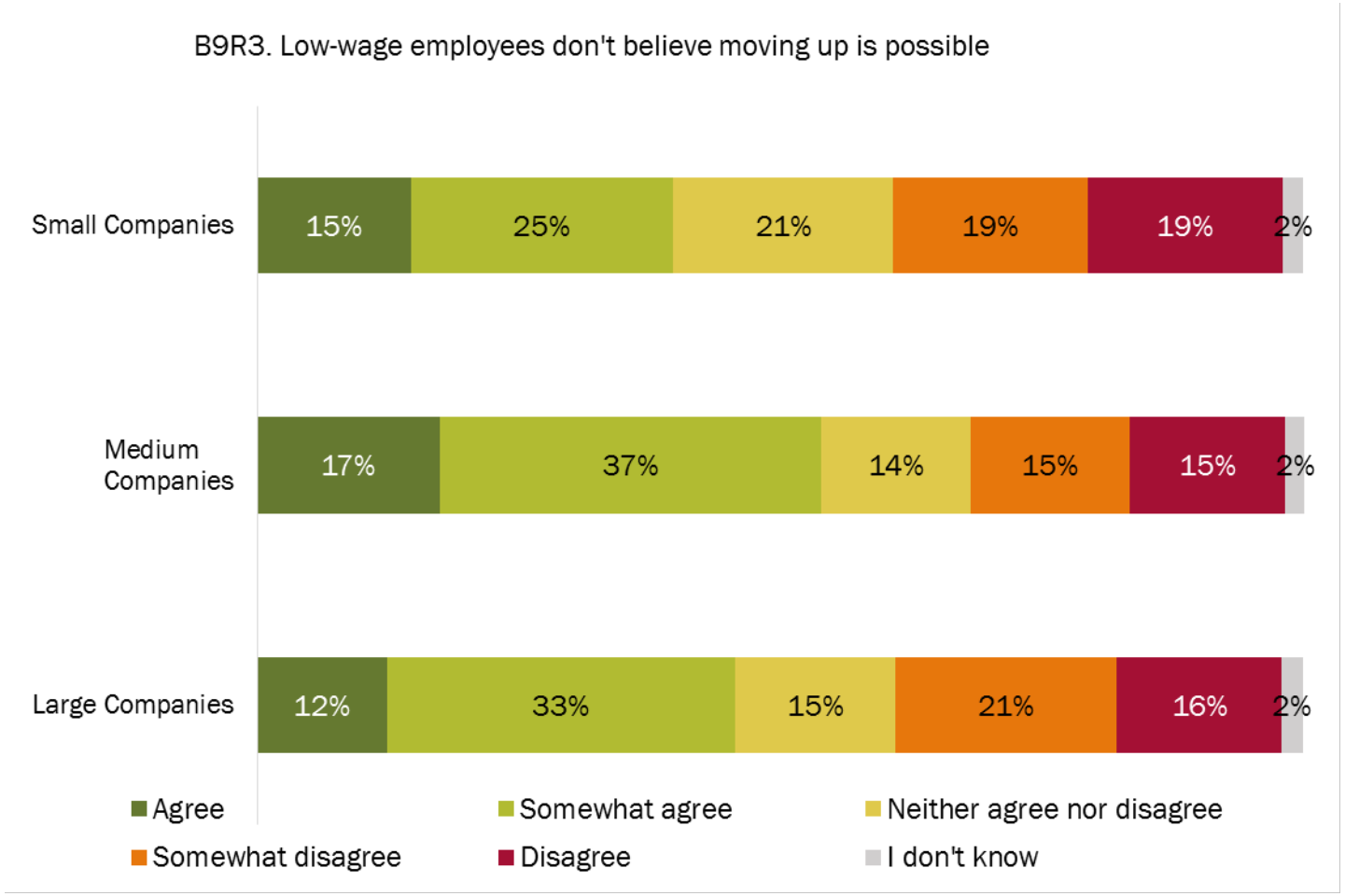

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Awareness and Attitudes

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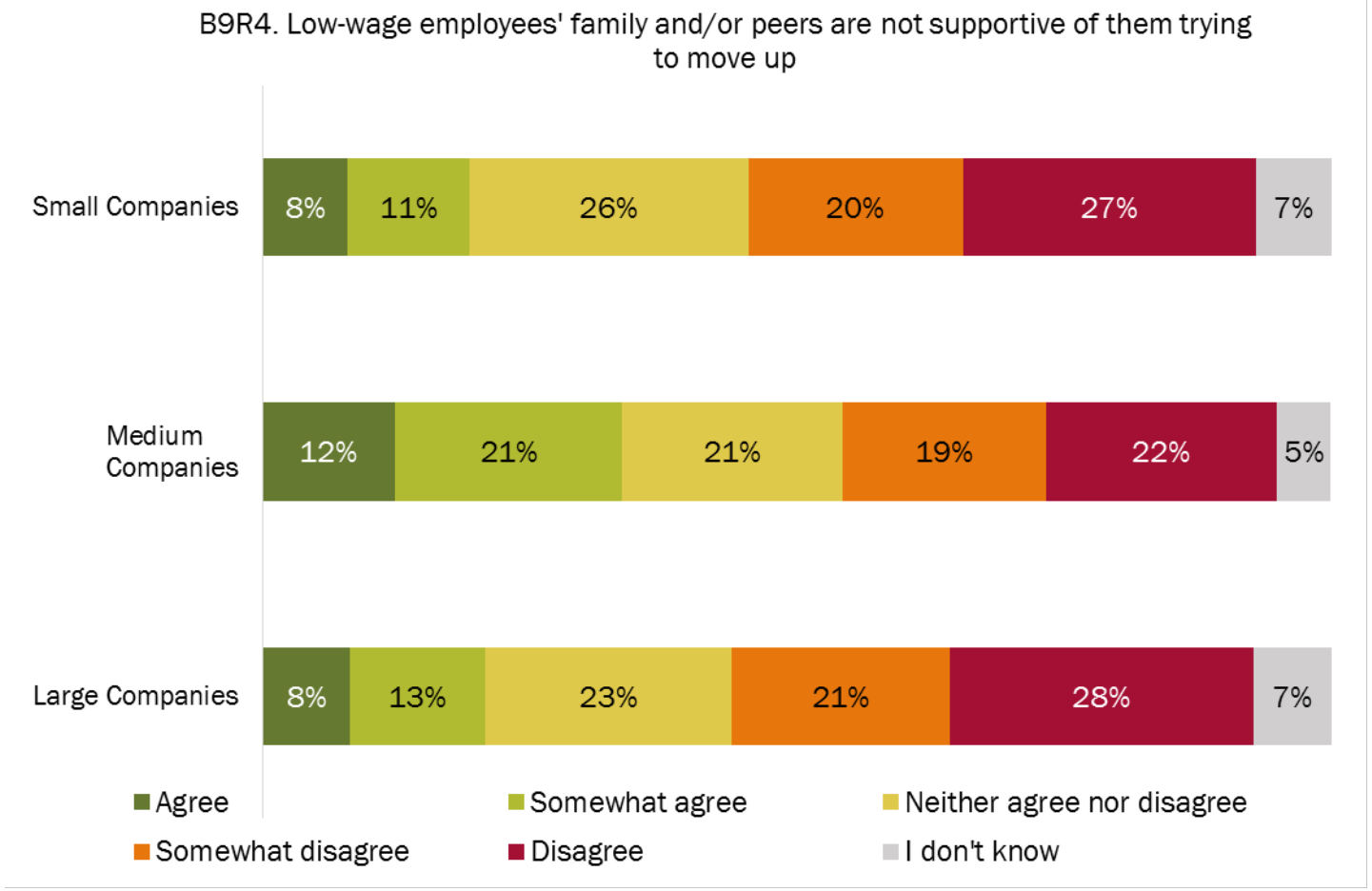

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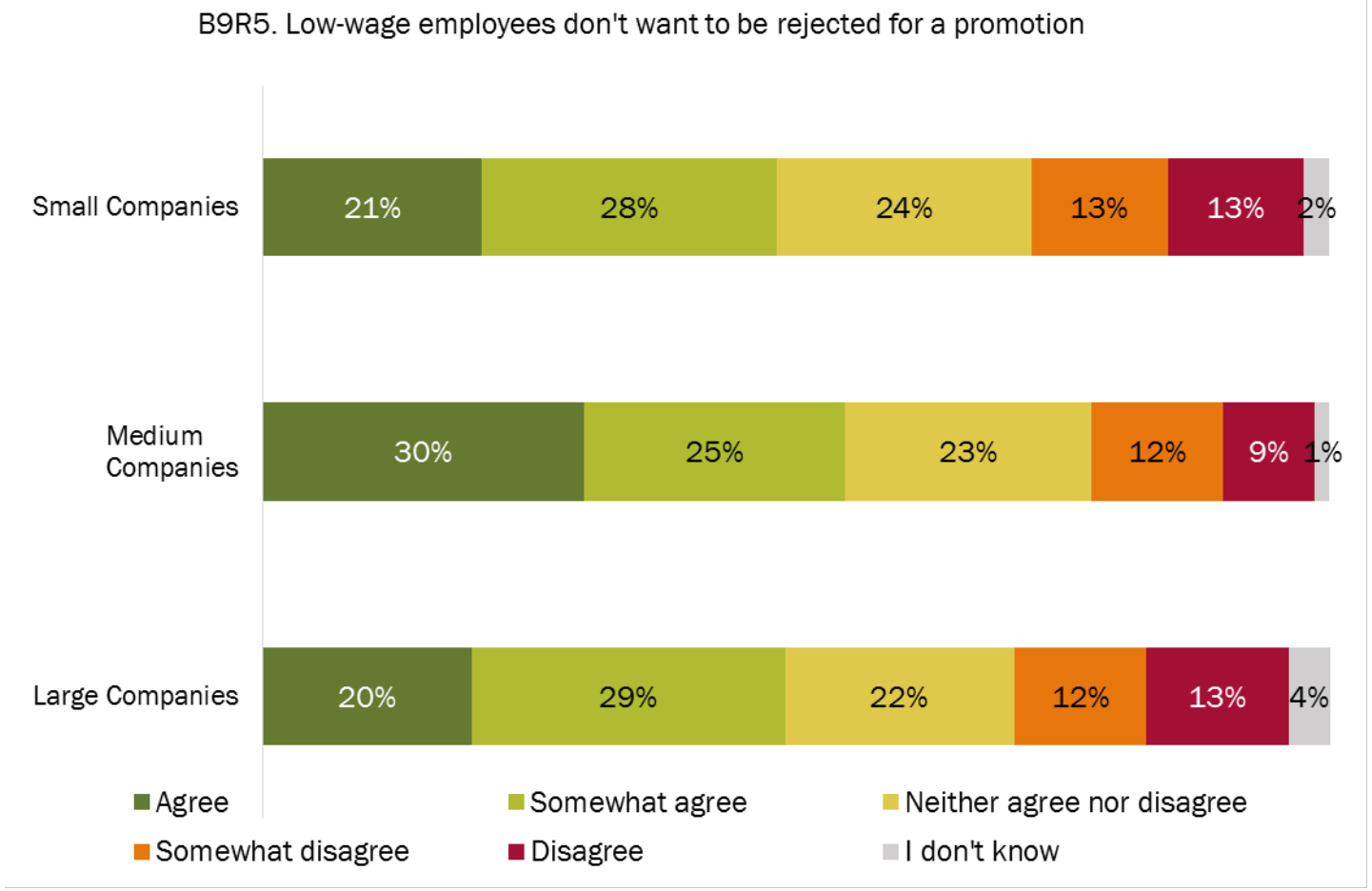

N = 1,150

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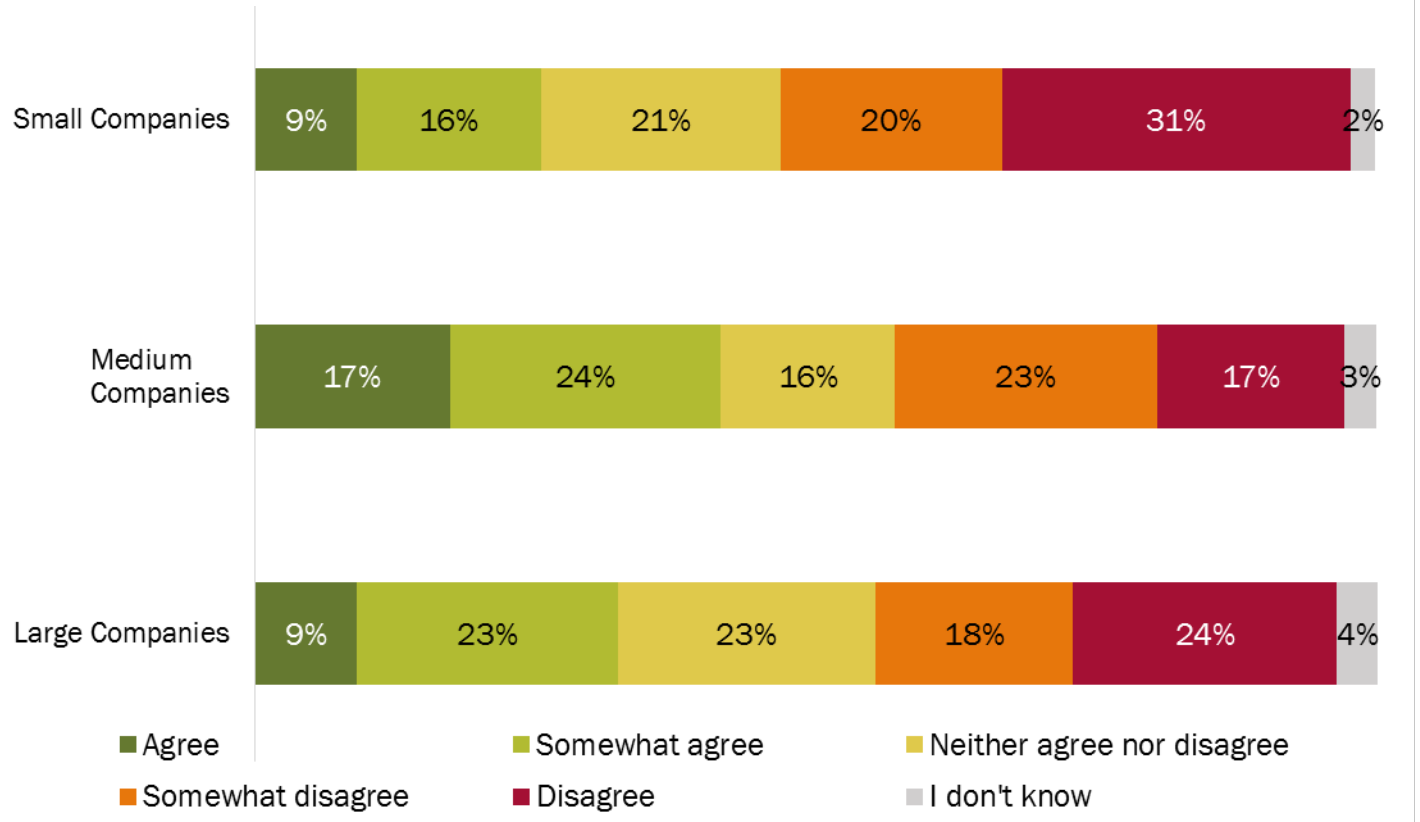
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B9. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree that each of the following conditions is a barrier to the upward mobility of low-wage employees at your company.

B9R6. Low-wage employees worry if they apply to a higher-level job and their application is not accepted there will be negative consequences for their job



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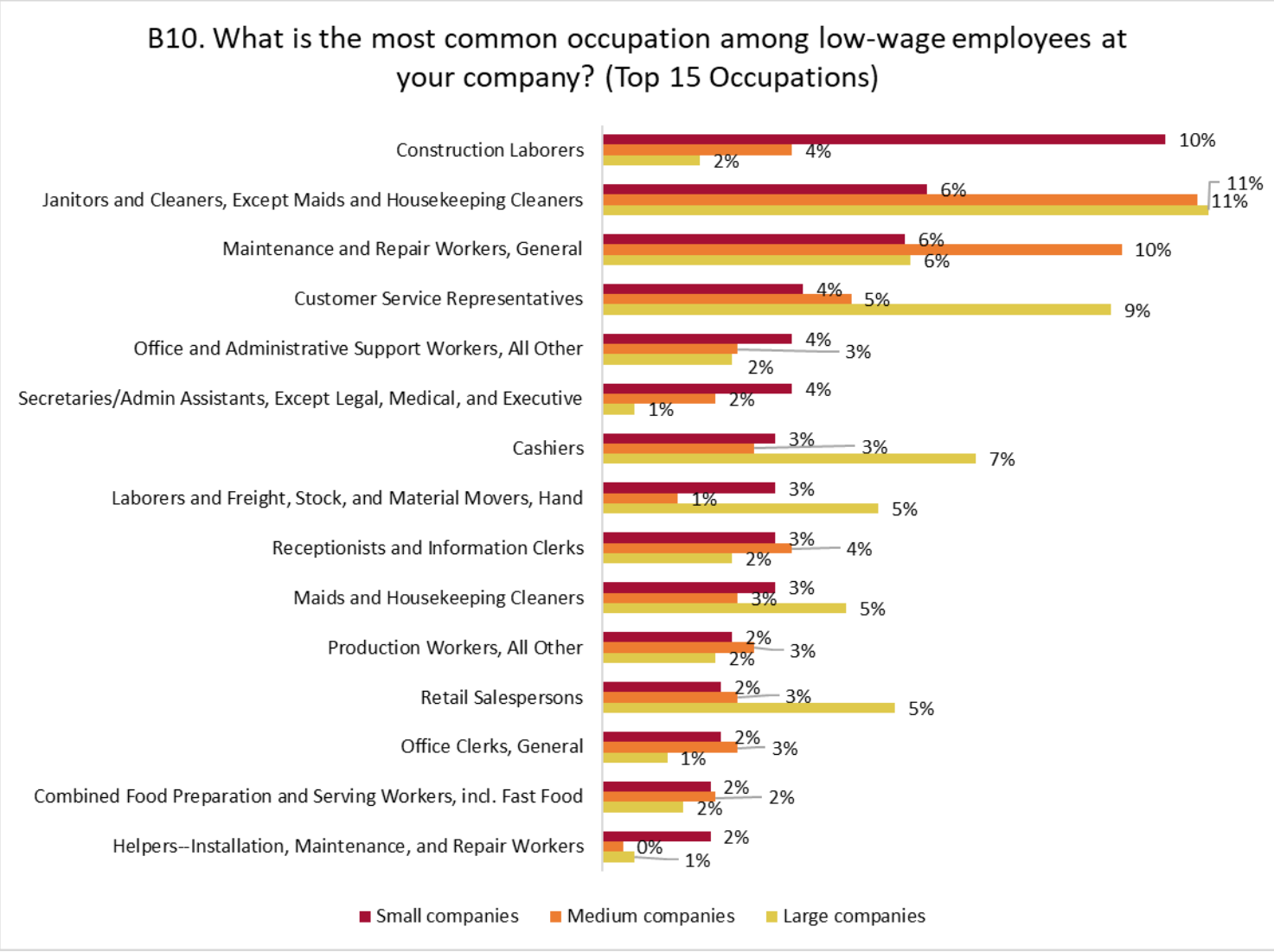
Awareness and Attitudes

Occupation at Company

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



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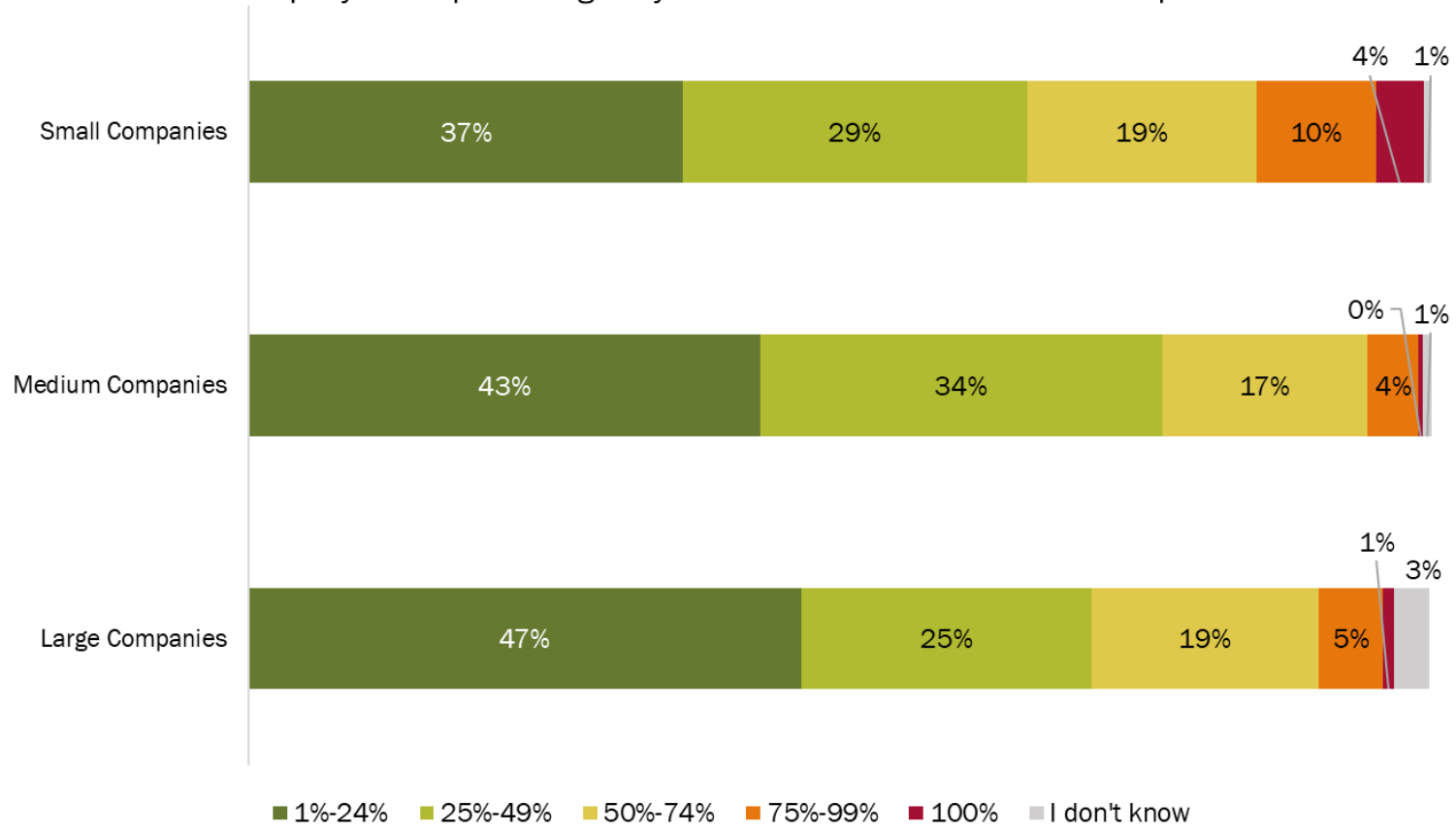
Awareness and Attitudes
Low-Wage Employees

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B11. You selected [pipe: B10] as the most common low-wage occupation in your company. What percentage of your overall workforce is in this occupation?



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Awareness and Attitudes
Upward Mobility

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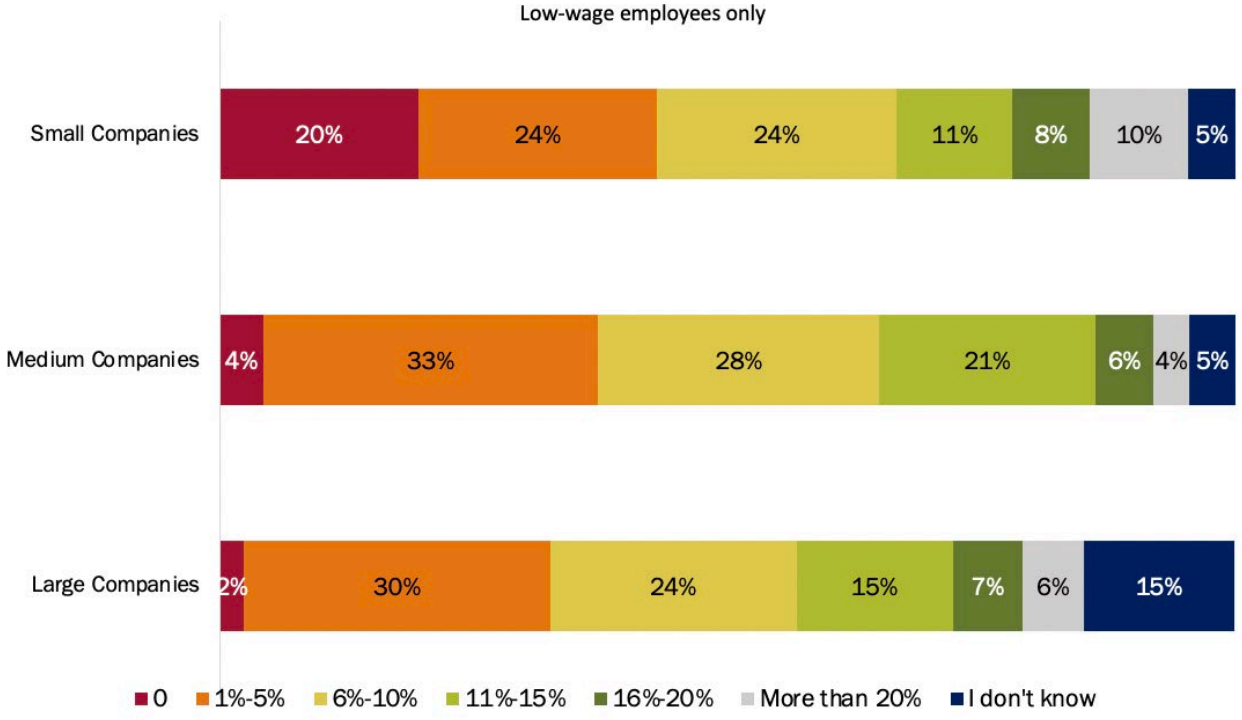
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

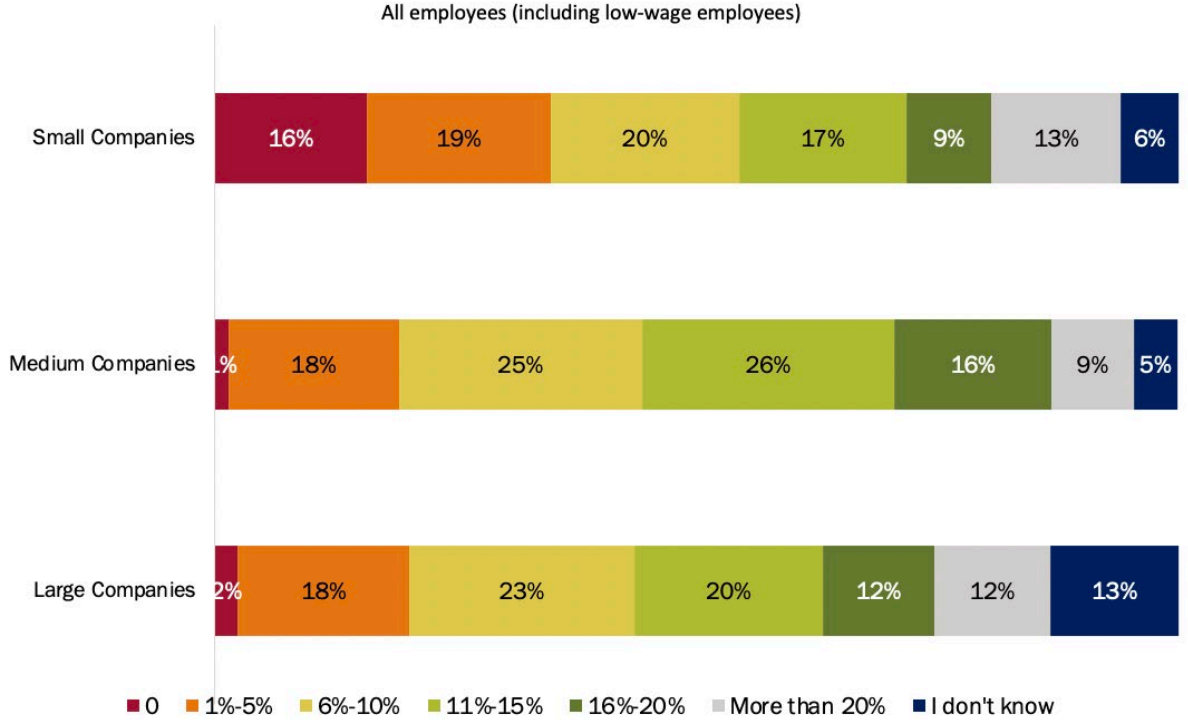
B12. From January 2019 to January 2020 (the year prior to COVID-19), what percentage of your company's low-wage workforce and total workforce experienced upward mobility?

Low-wage employees only



B12. From January 2019 to January 2020 (the year prior to COVID-19), what percentage of your company's low-wage workforce and total workforce experienced upward mobility?

All employees (including low-wage employees)



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Awareness and Attitudes
Turnover Rates

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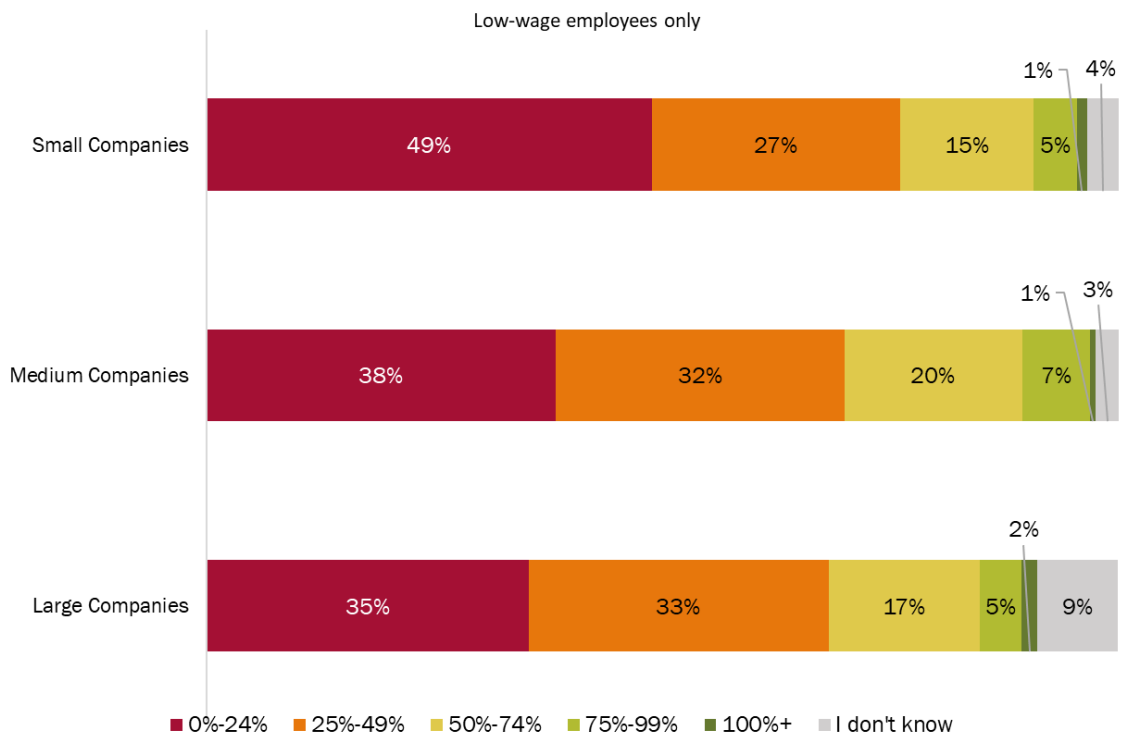
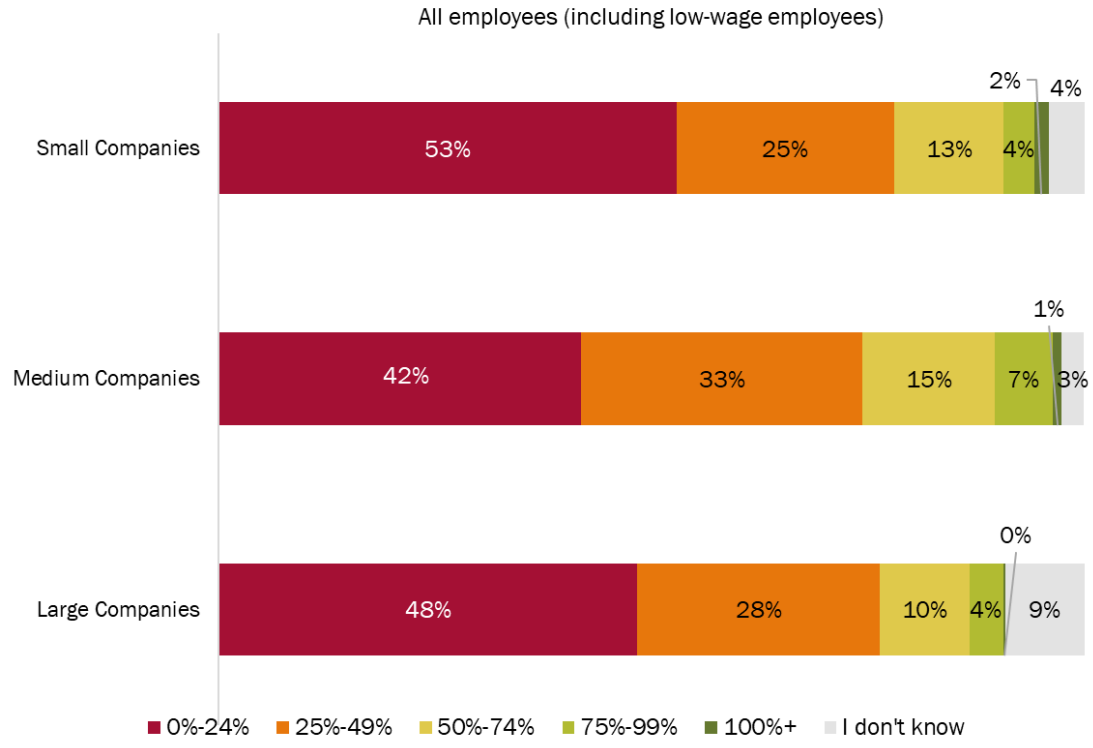
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B13. From January 2019 to January 2020 (the year prior to COVID-19), in your company, what would you estimate were the turnover rates of:



B13. From January 2019 to January 2020 (the year prior to COVID-19), in your company, what would you estimate were the turnover rates of:



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Awareness and Attitudes
Tenure

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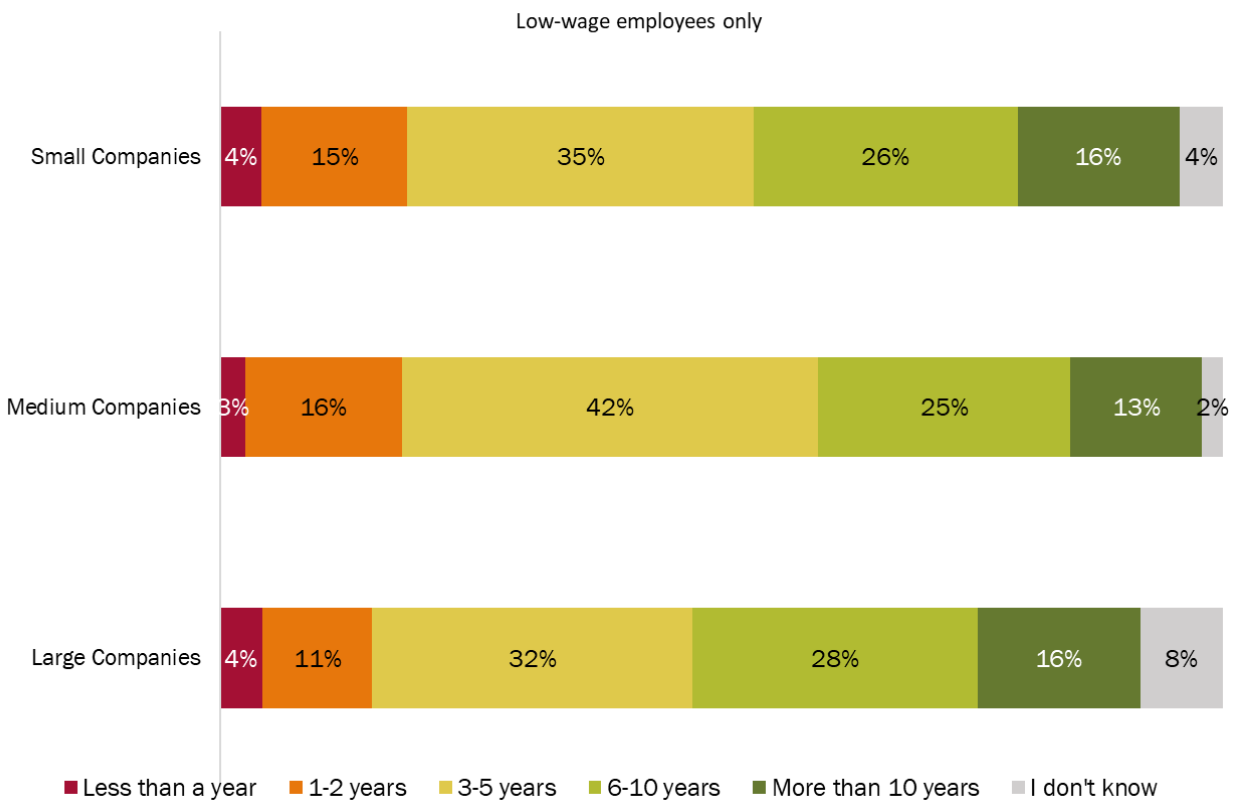
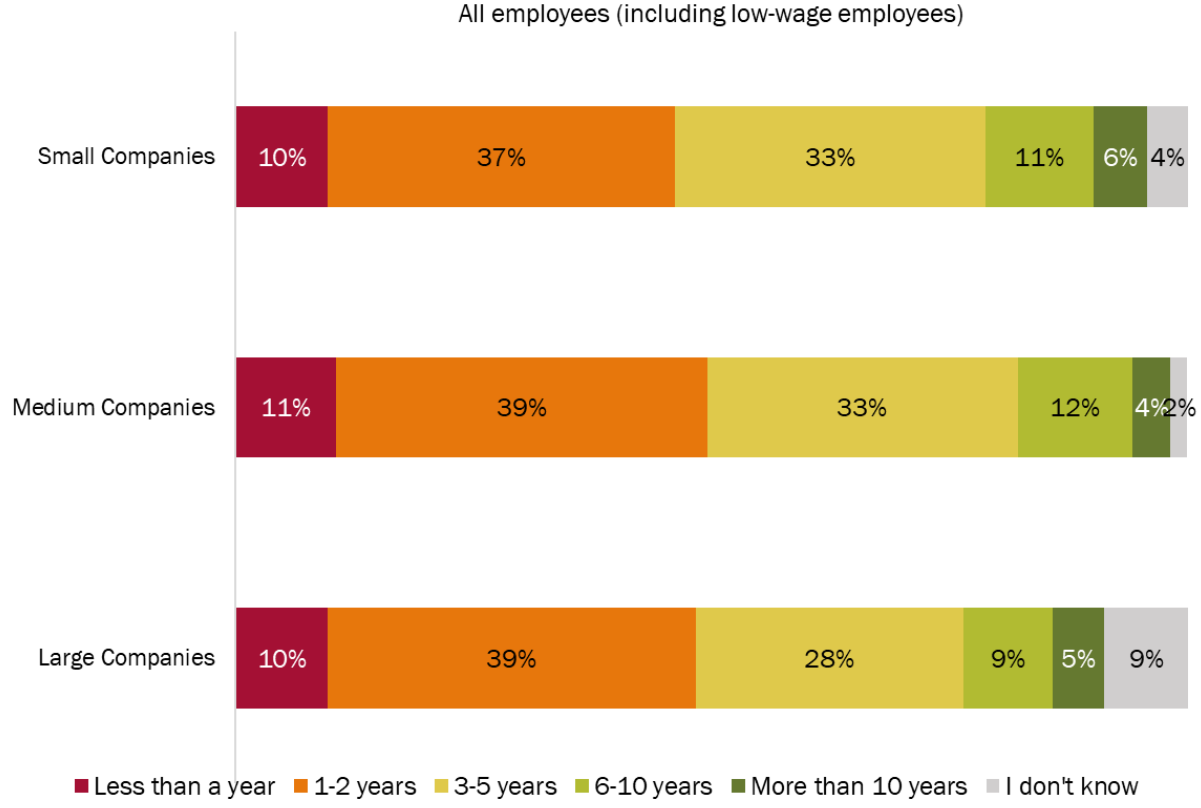
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

B14. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, what would you estimate was the average tenure employed at your company of:



B14. Prior to COVID-19, in January 2020, what would you estimate was the average tenure employed at your company of:



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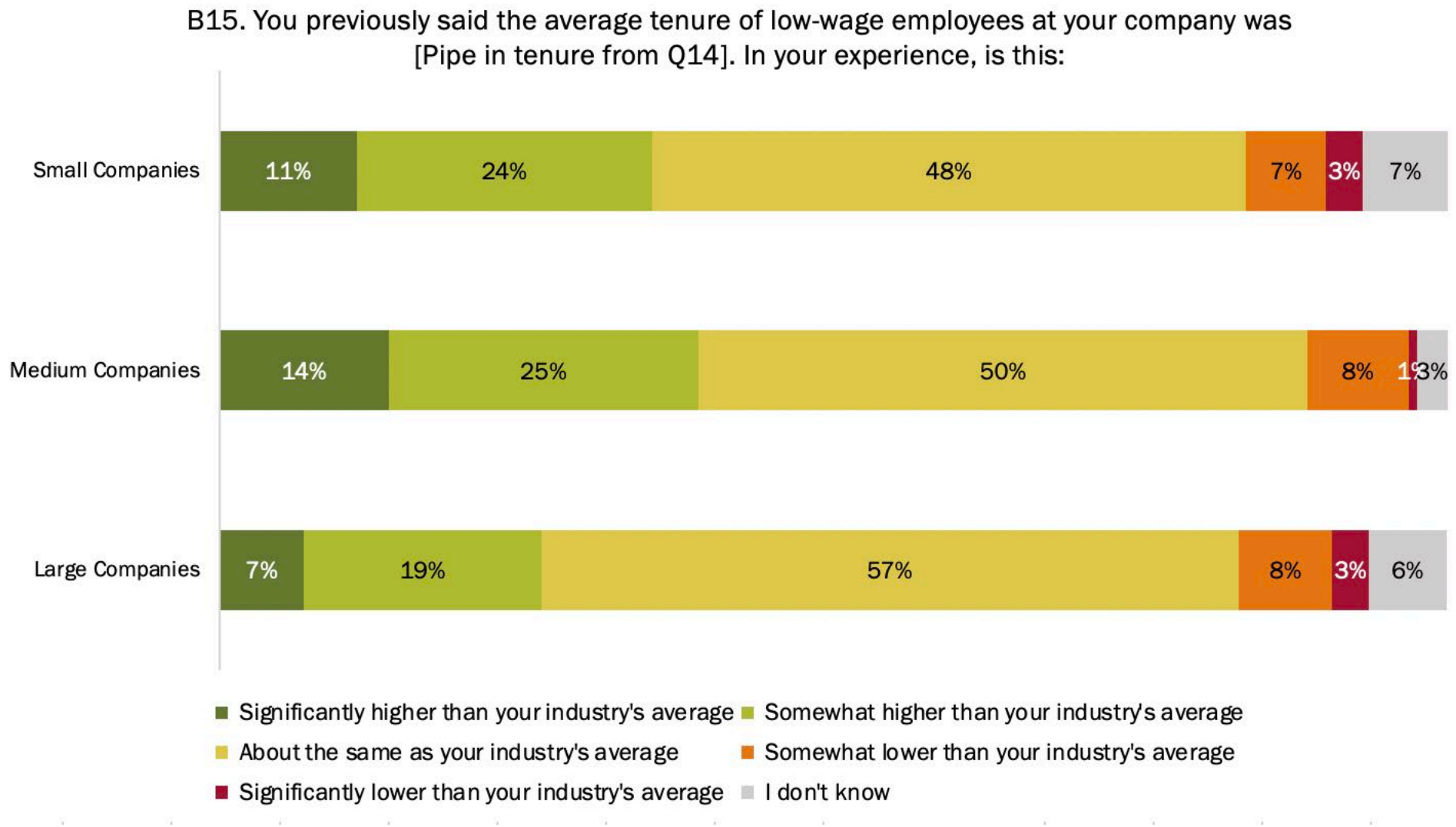
Awareness and Attitudes

Tenure Comparison

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

Actions
Company Values

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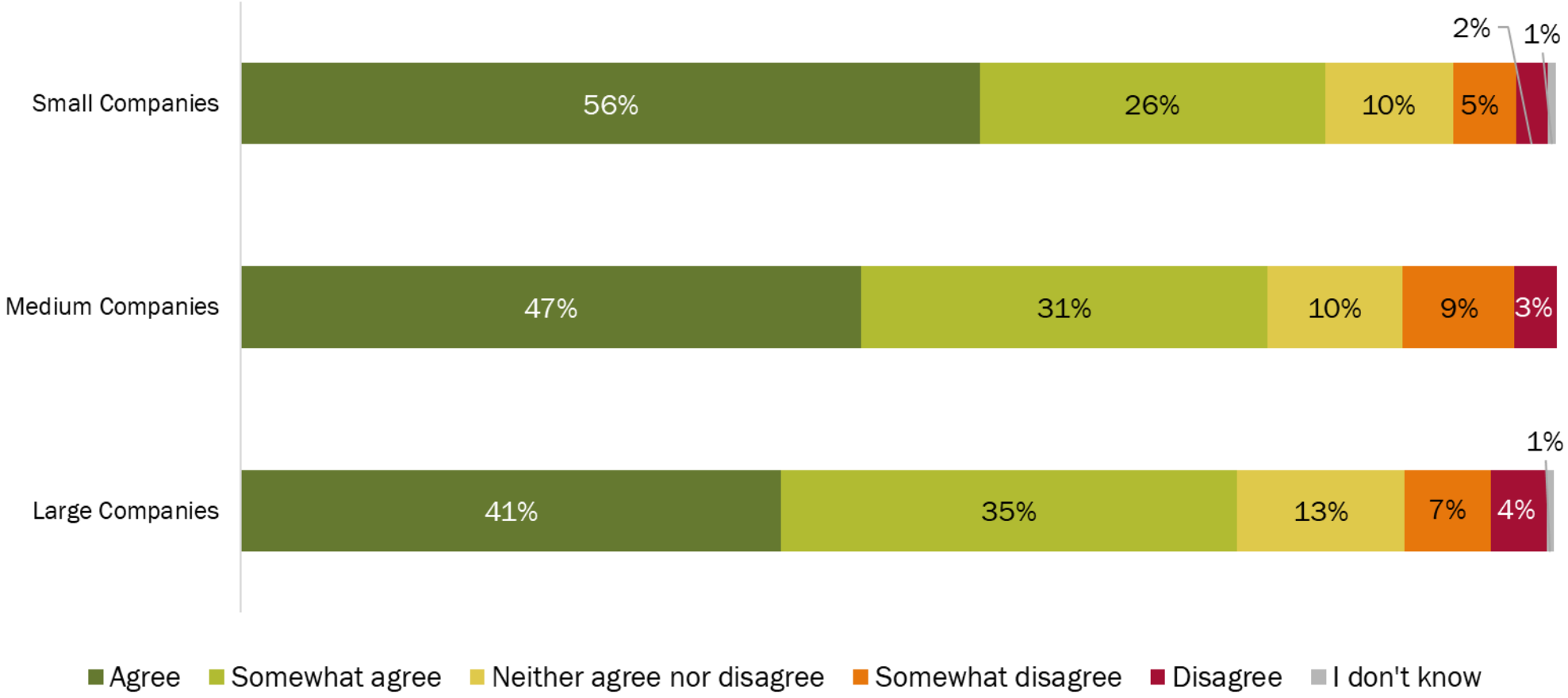
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R1. My company values low-wage employees



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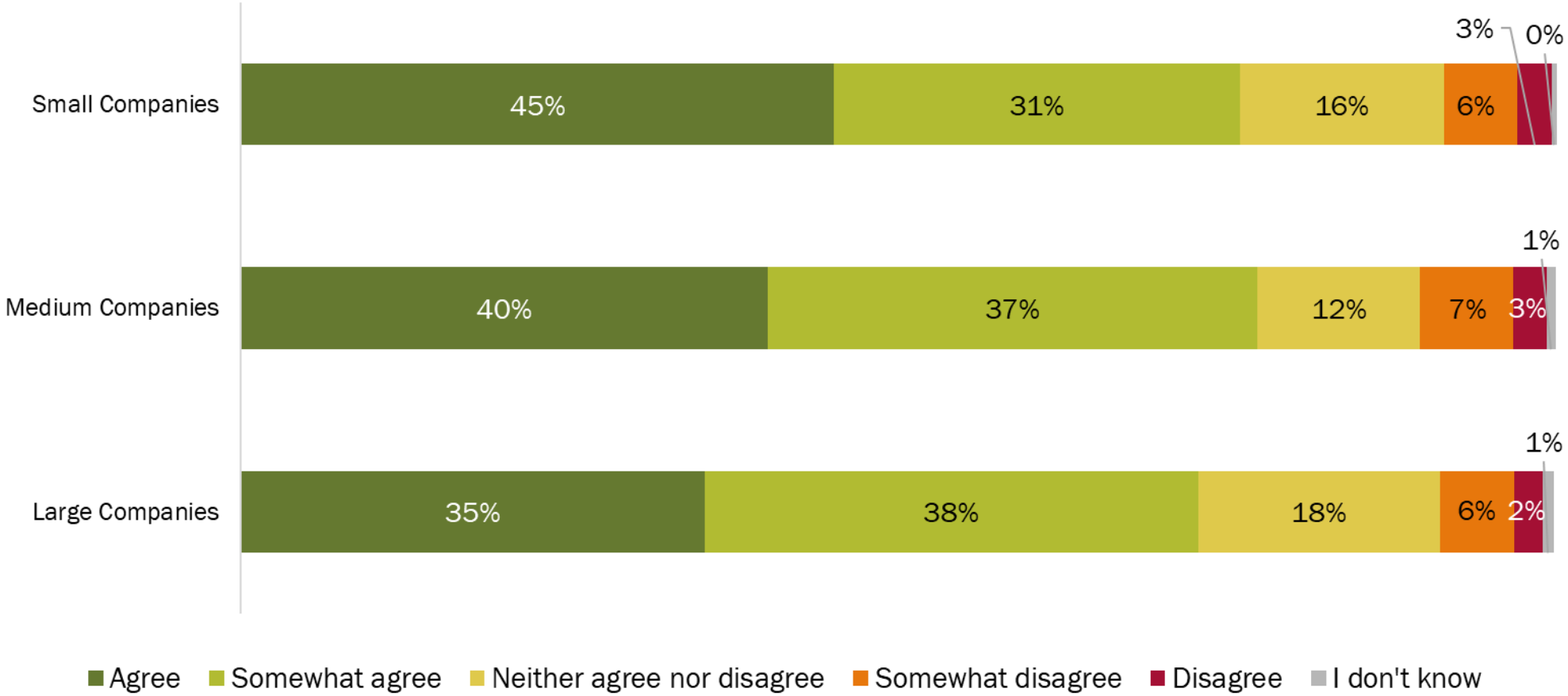
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R2. My company is a great place to work for low-wage employees



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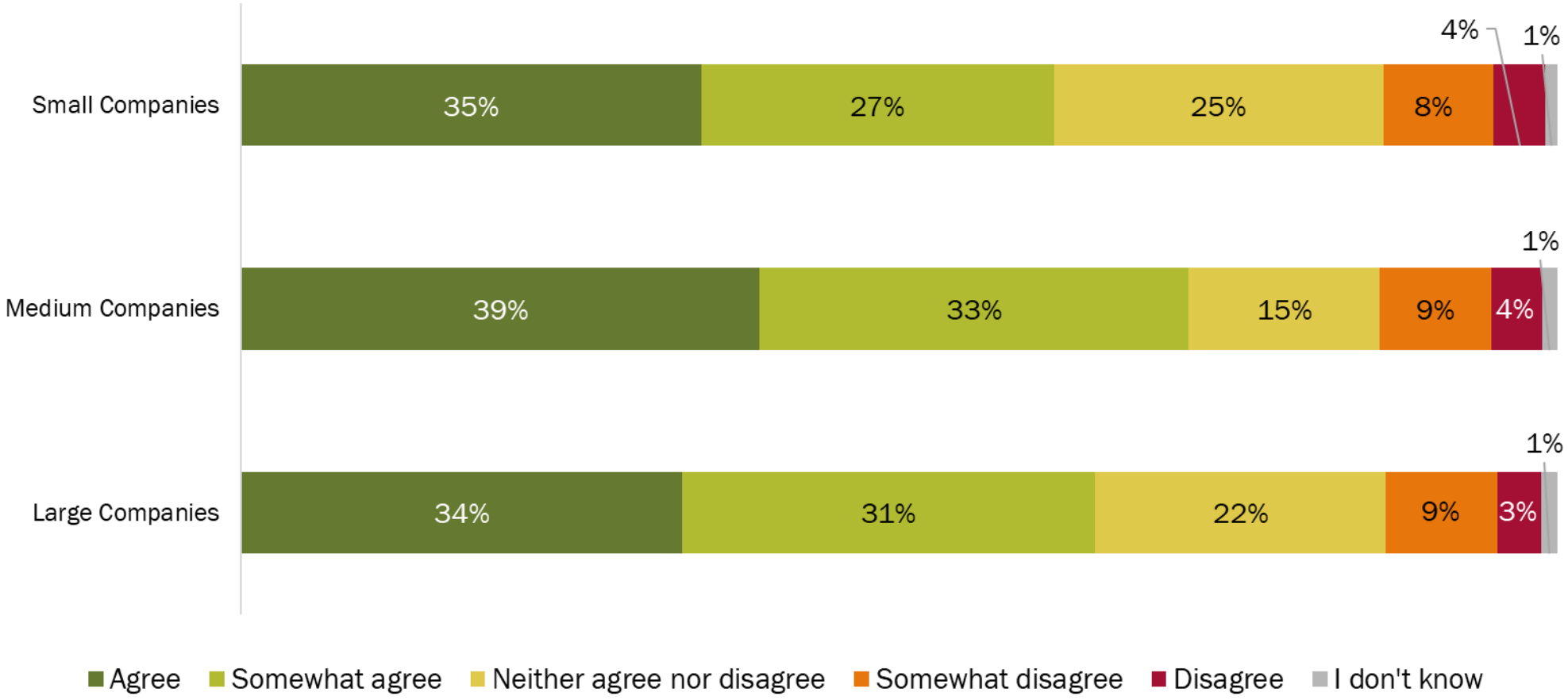
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R3. My company's culture inspires low-wage employees to try to move up



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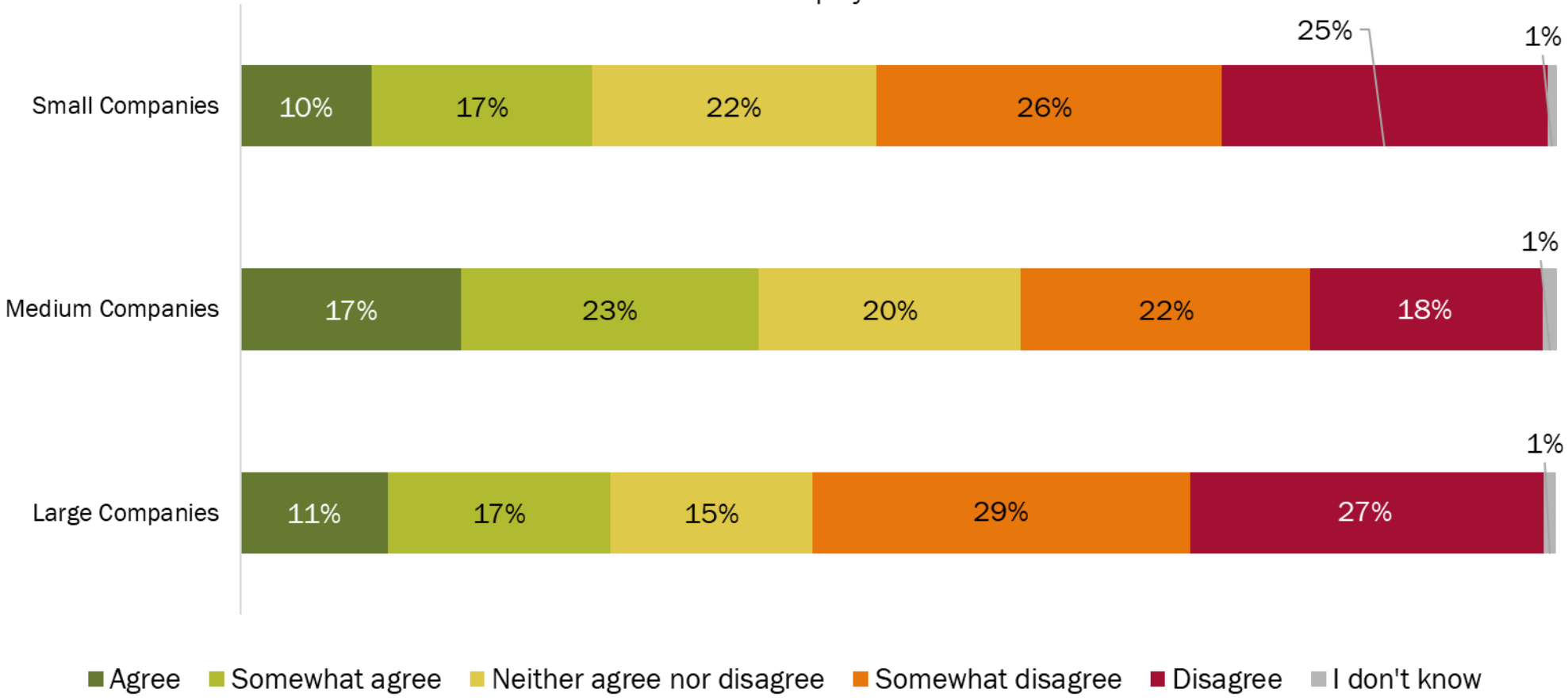
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R4. I am skeptical of the benefits of investing in the upward mobility of low-wage employees



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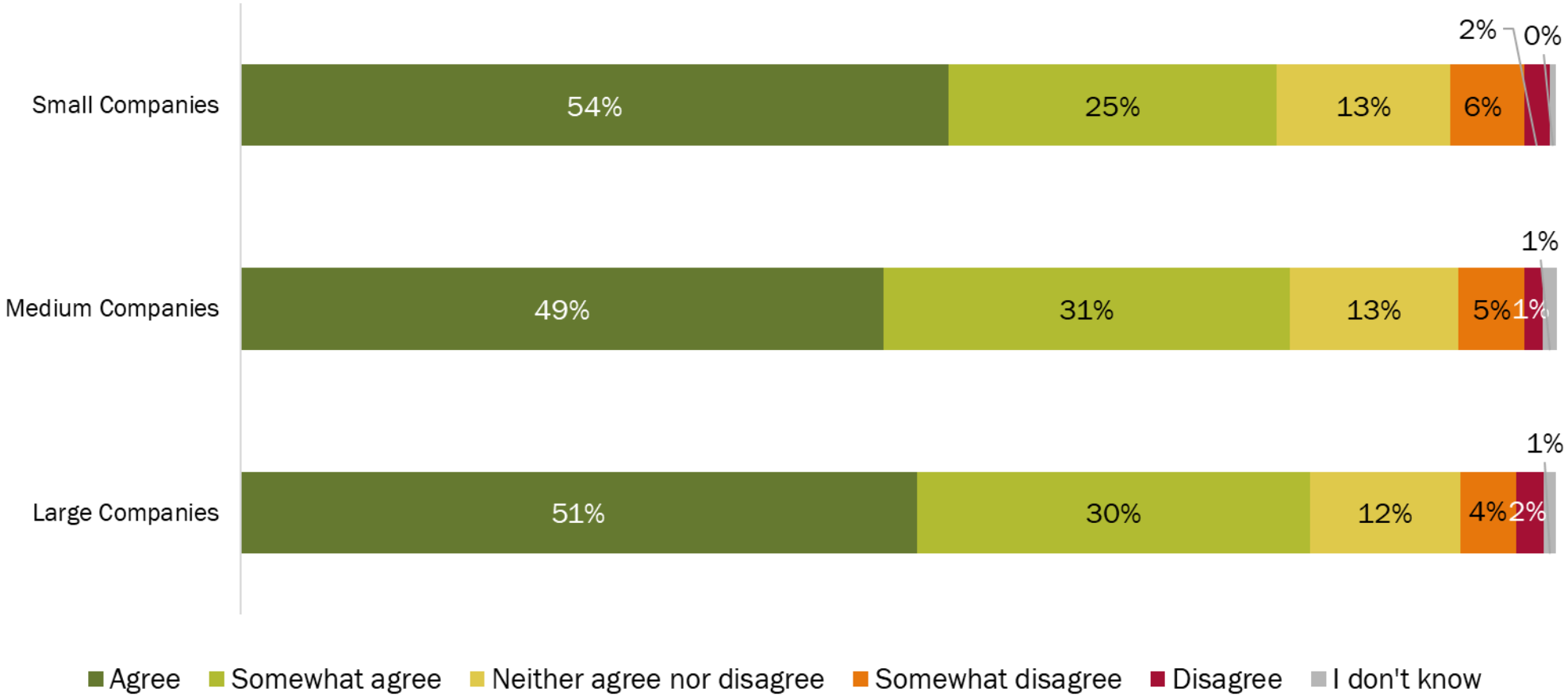
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R5. Low-wage employees are crucial to my company's success



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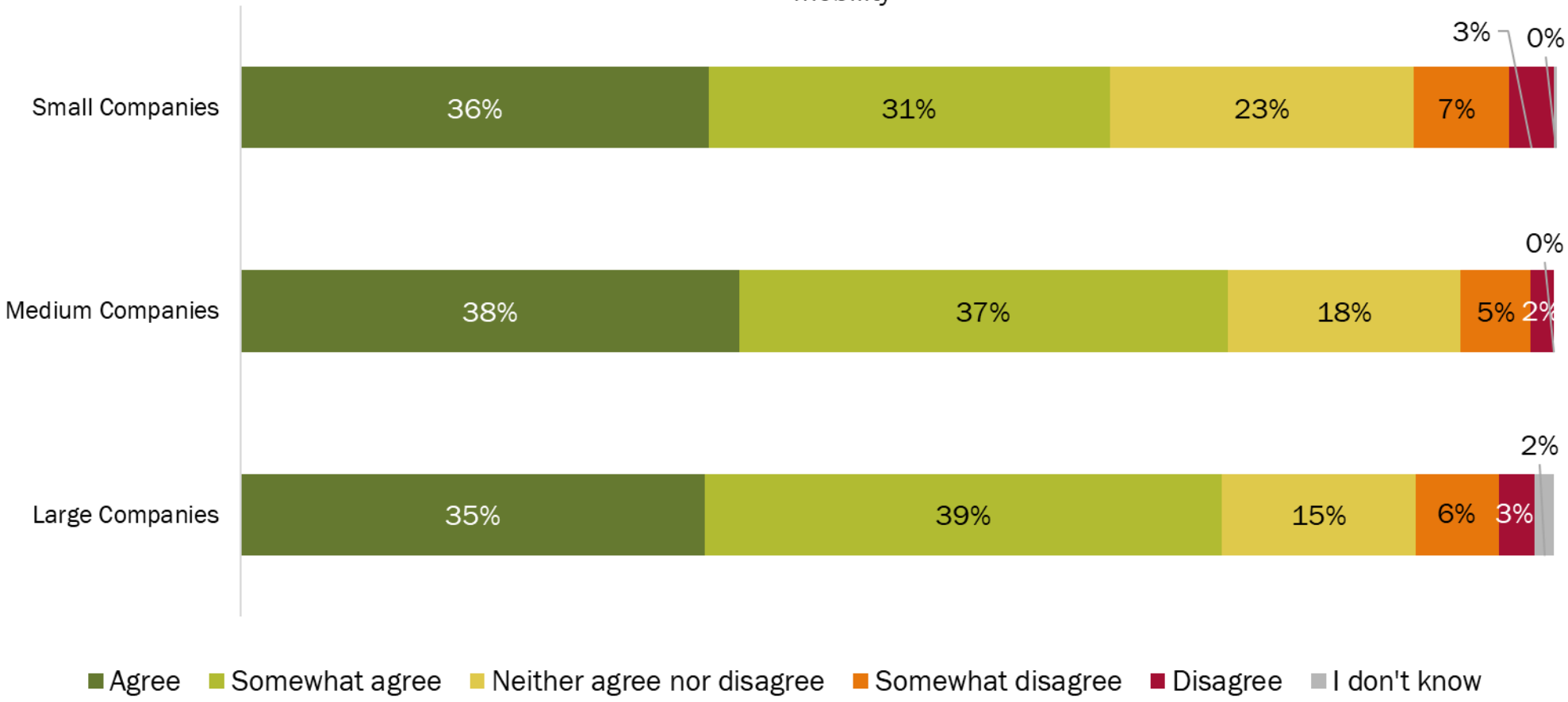
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R6. It is essential to my company's success for low-wage employees to have upward mobility



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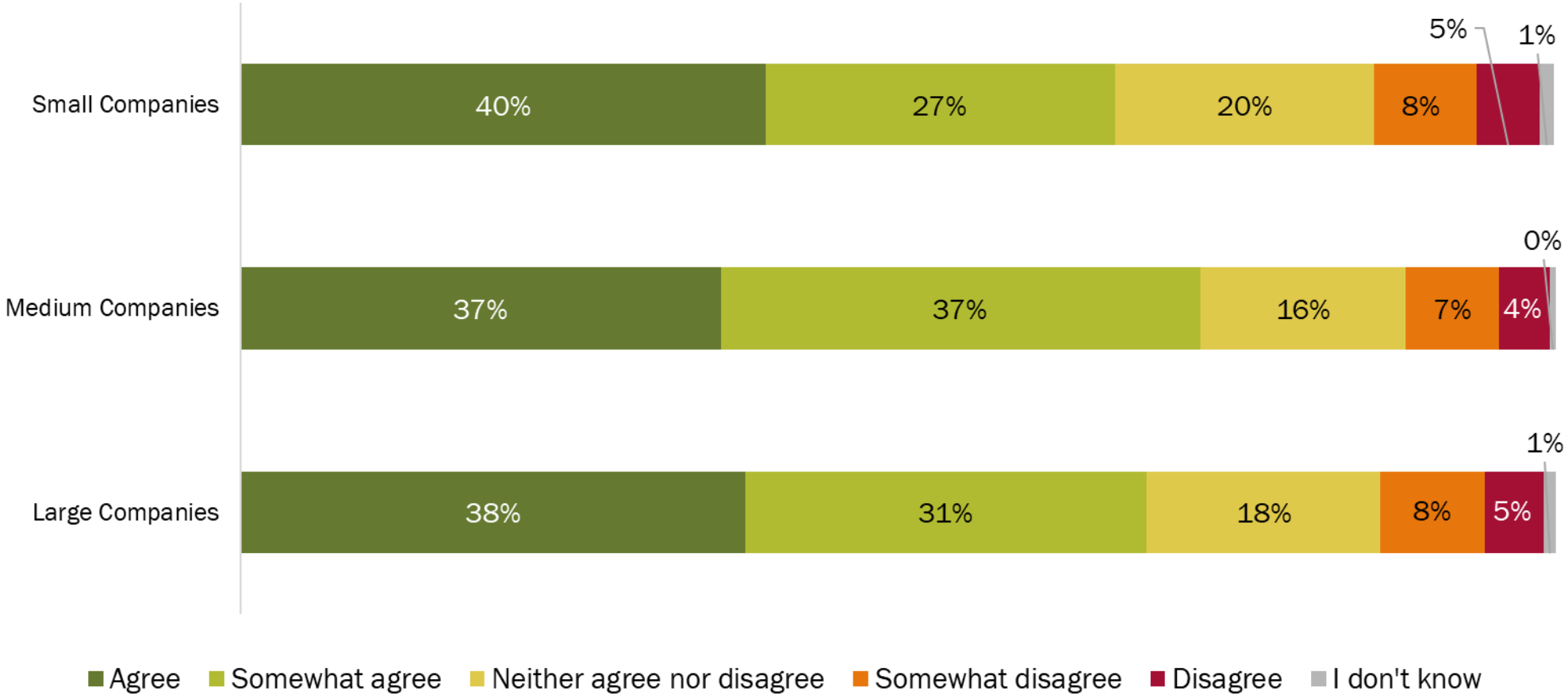
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R7. My company has a culture that prioritizes "hiring from within" over "hiring from outside"



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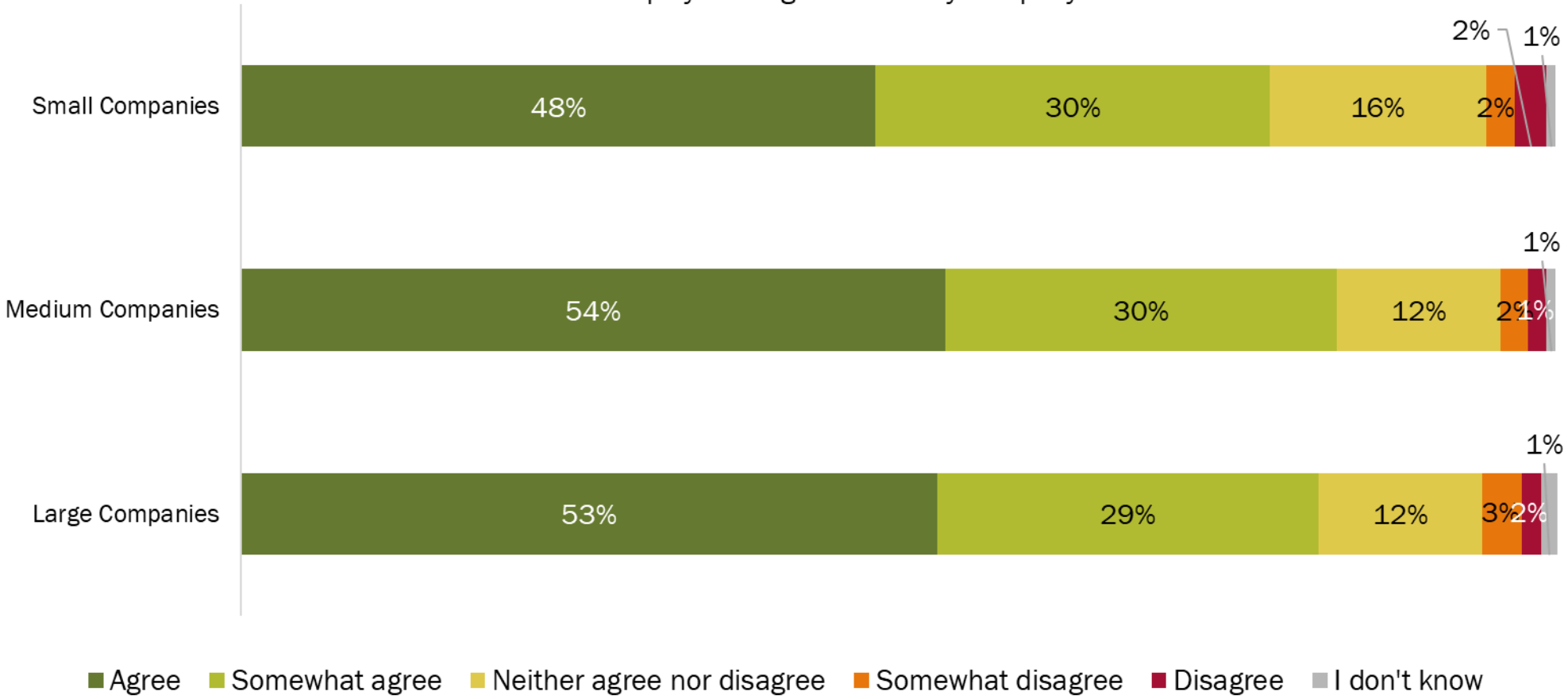
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R8. I am open to learning about how increasing the upward mobility of low-wage employees might benefit my company



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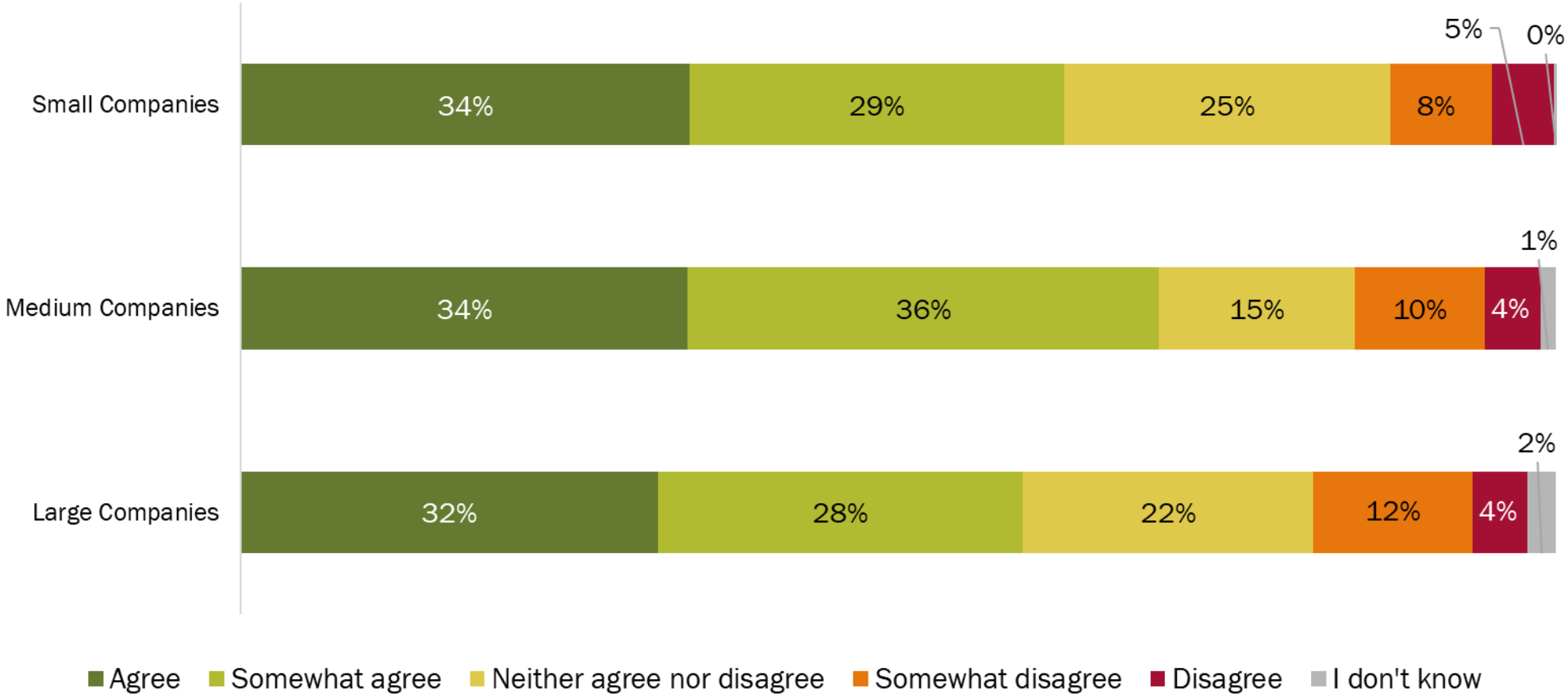
C1: For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC1R9. I am proud of how my company invests in the upward mobility of low-wage employees



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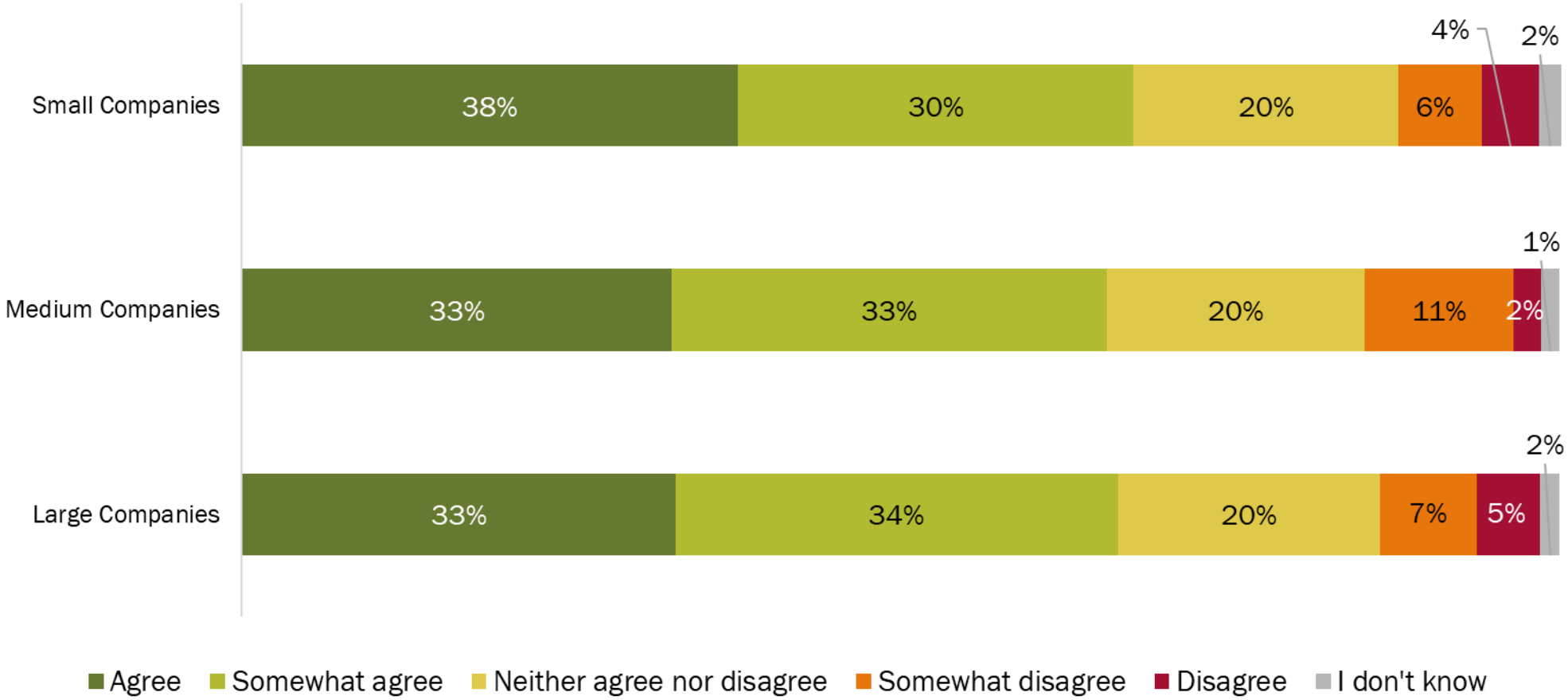
C2. For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

QC2R1. My company works to maintain headcount through economic downturns



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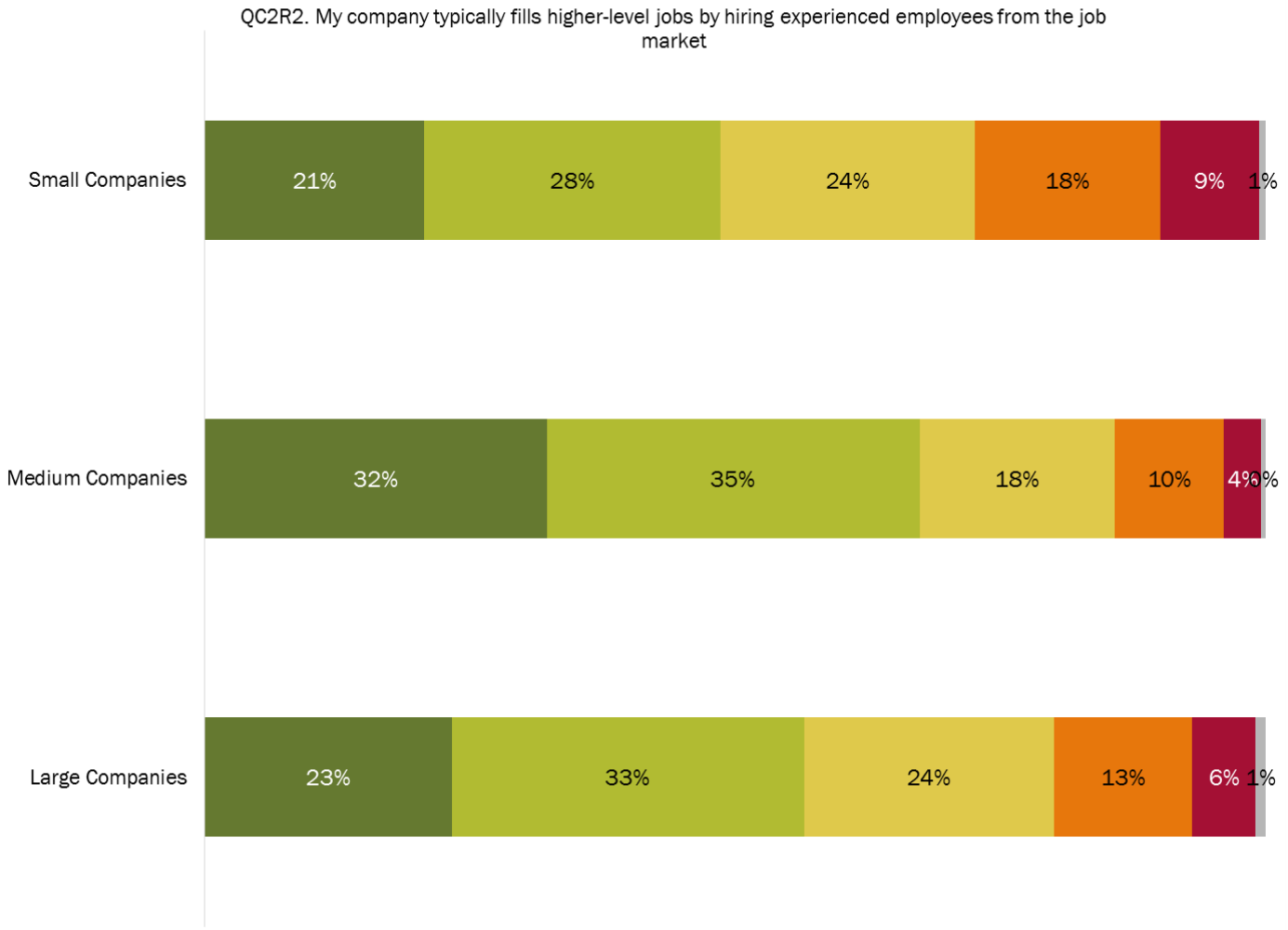
C2. For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.



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C2. For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.

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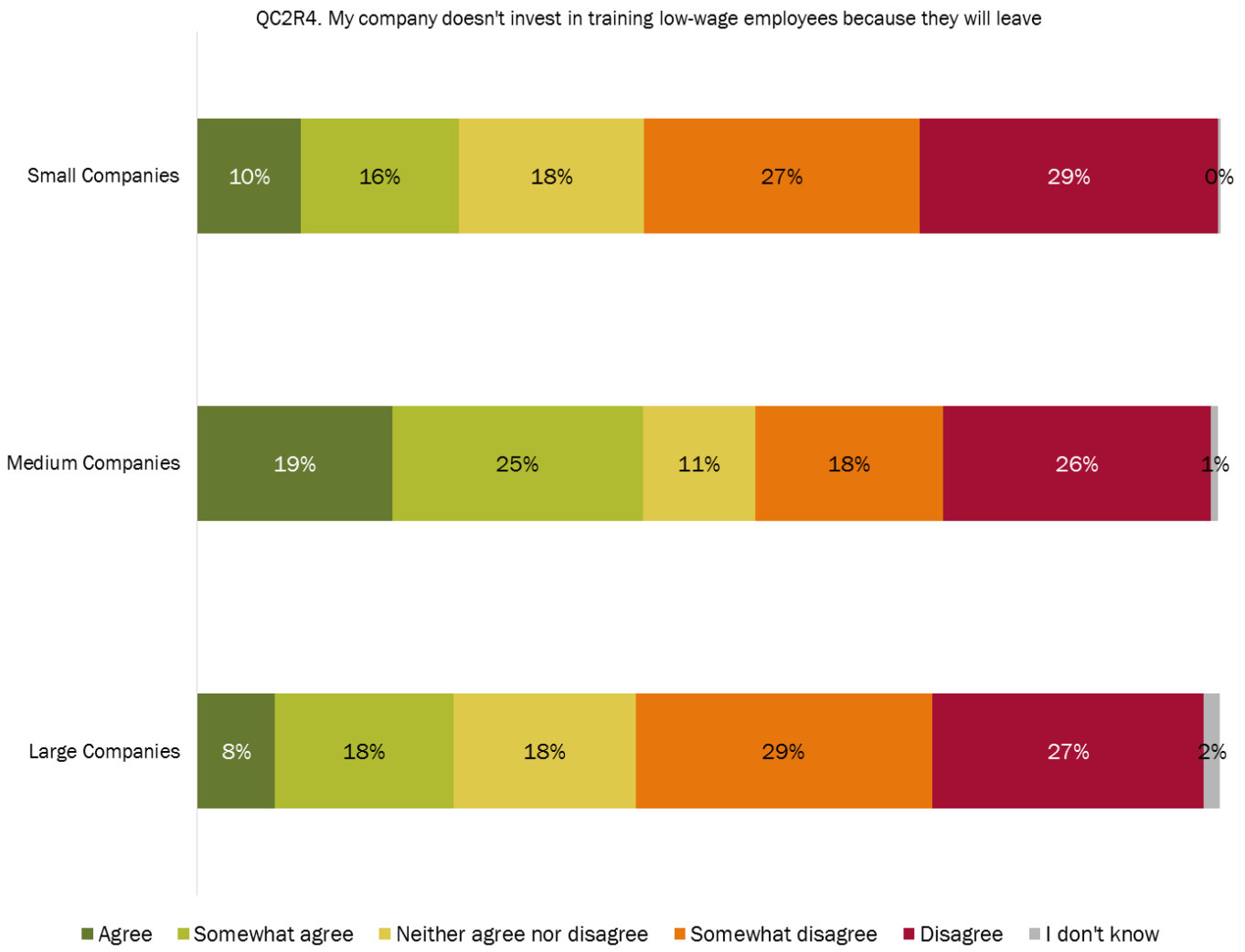
C2. For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.



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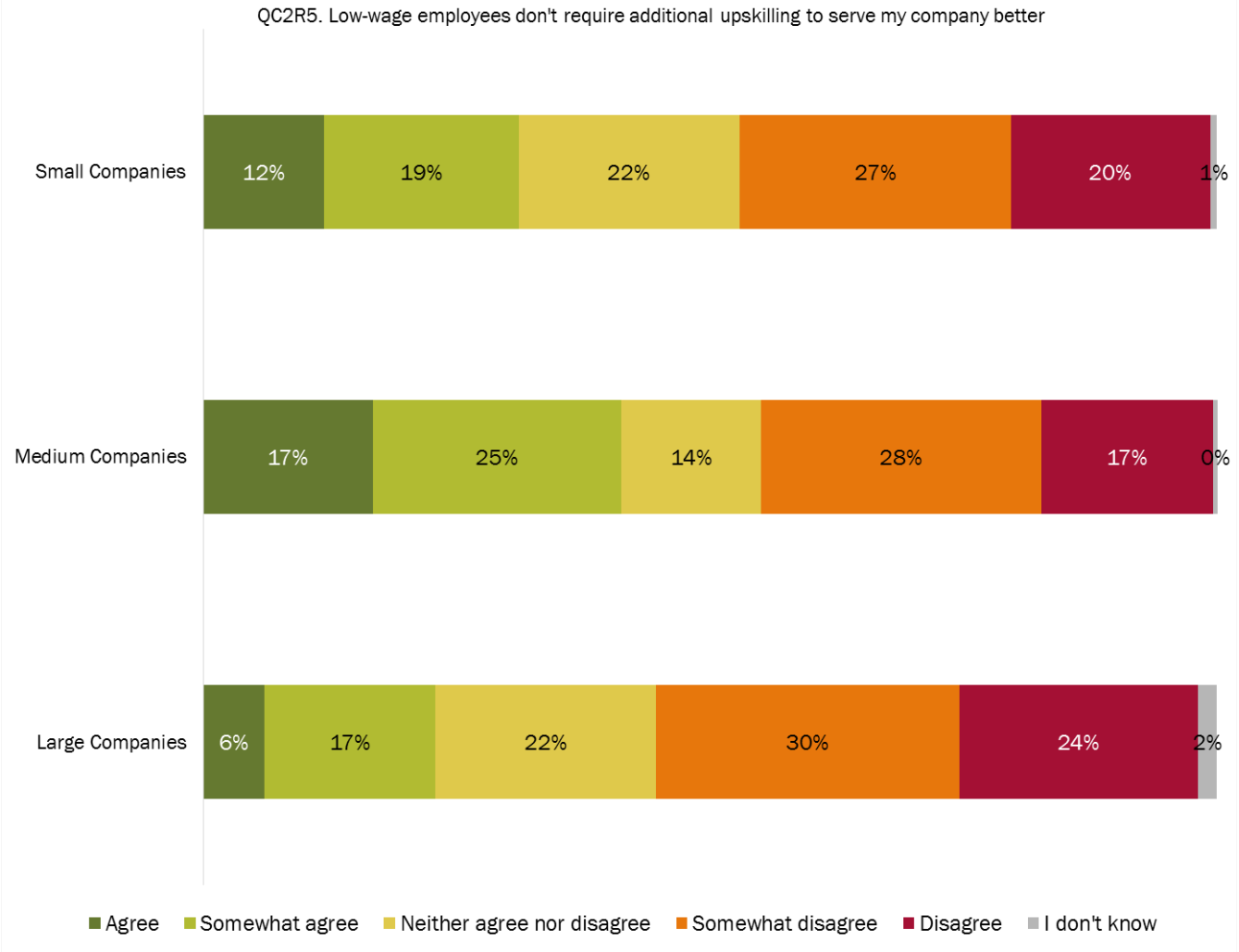
C2. For the following questions, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following set of statements.



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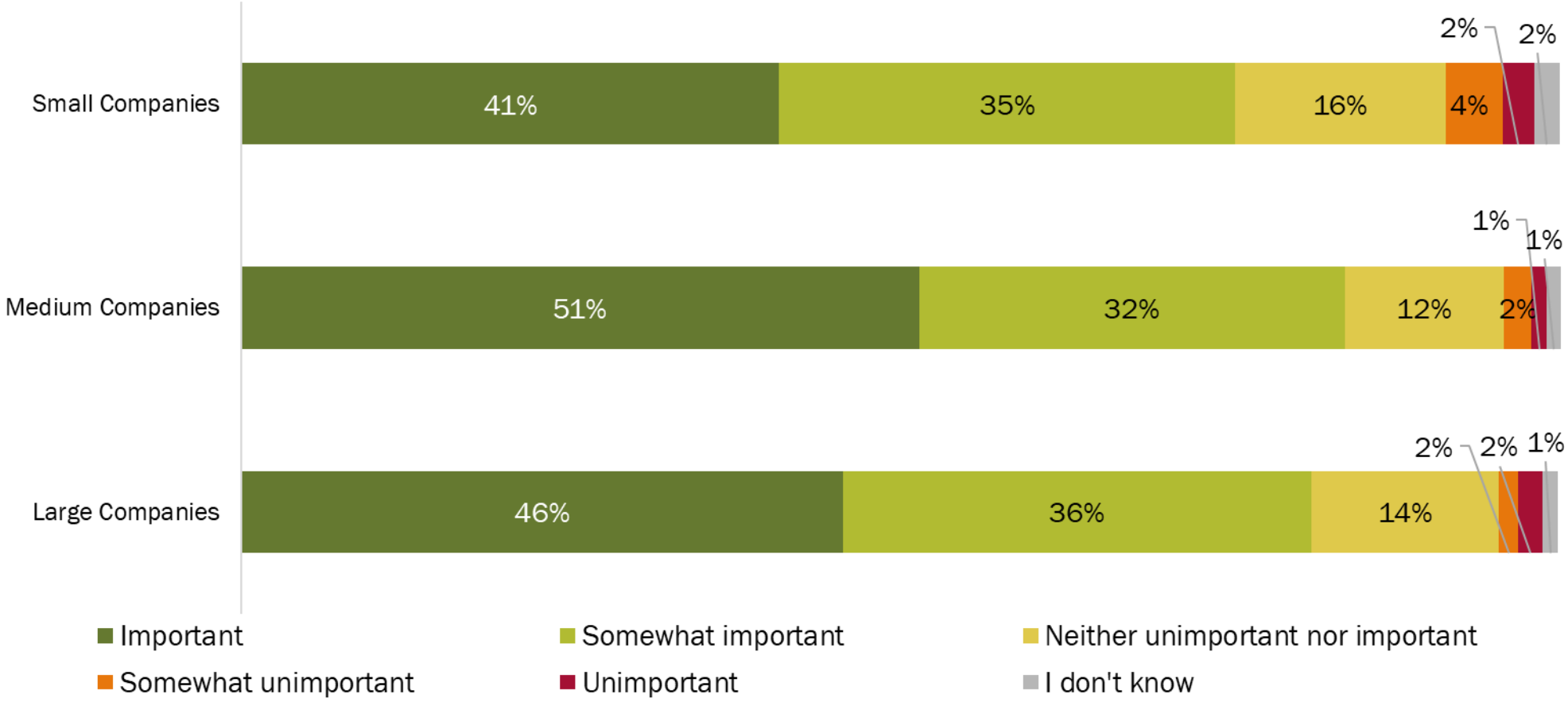
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R1. Location



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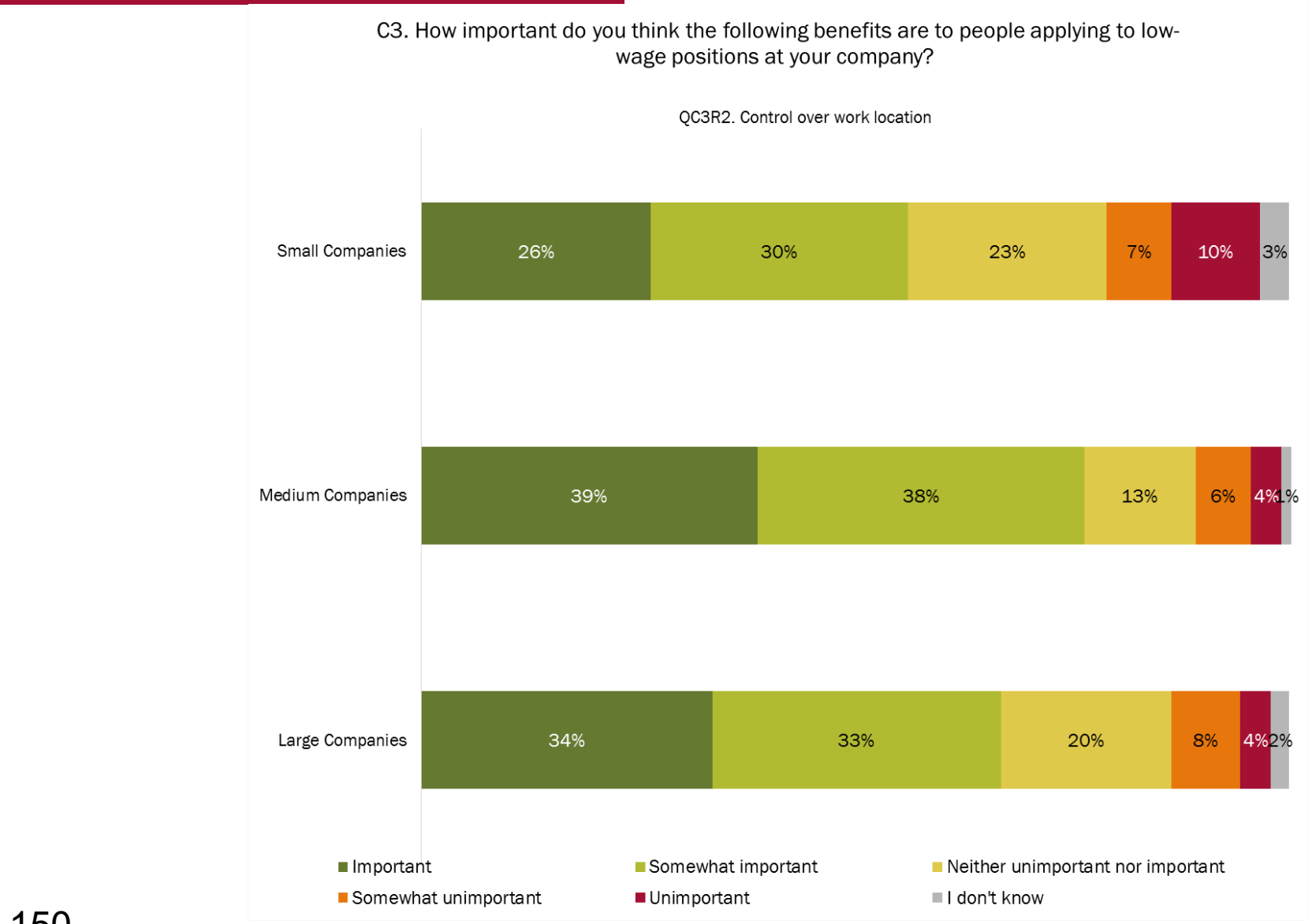

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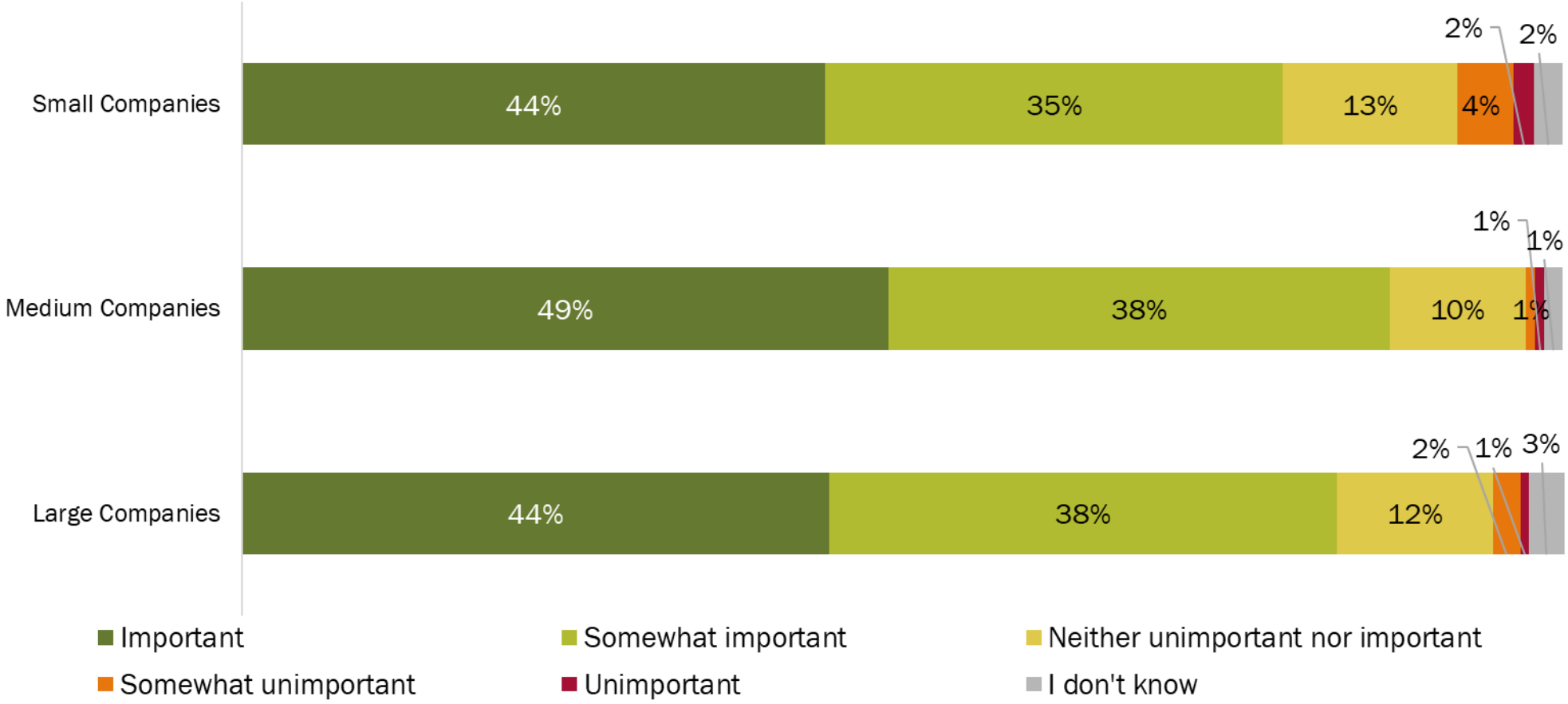
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R3. Convenient to get to work location



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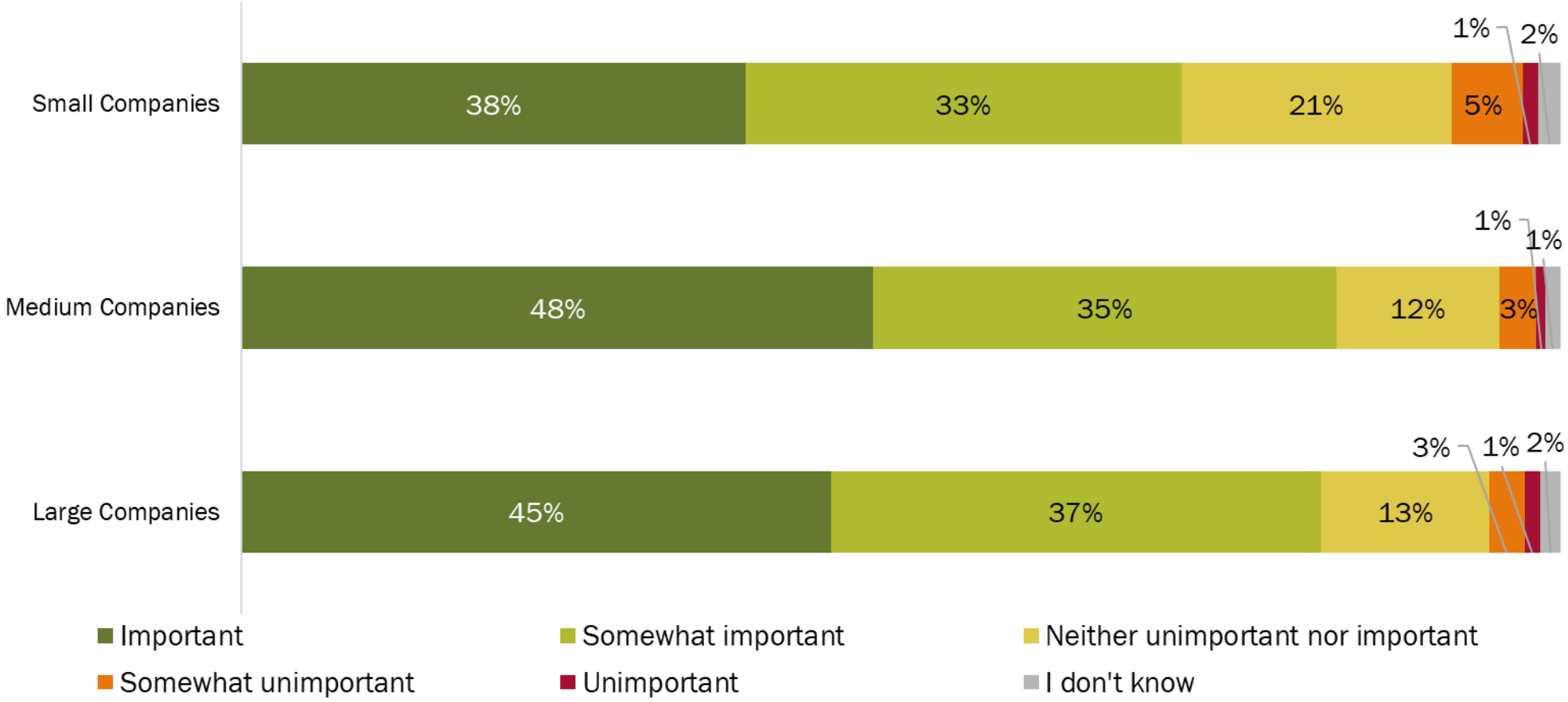
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R4. Opportunities for upward mobility



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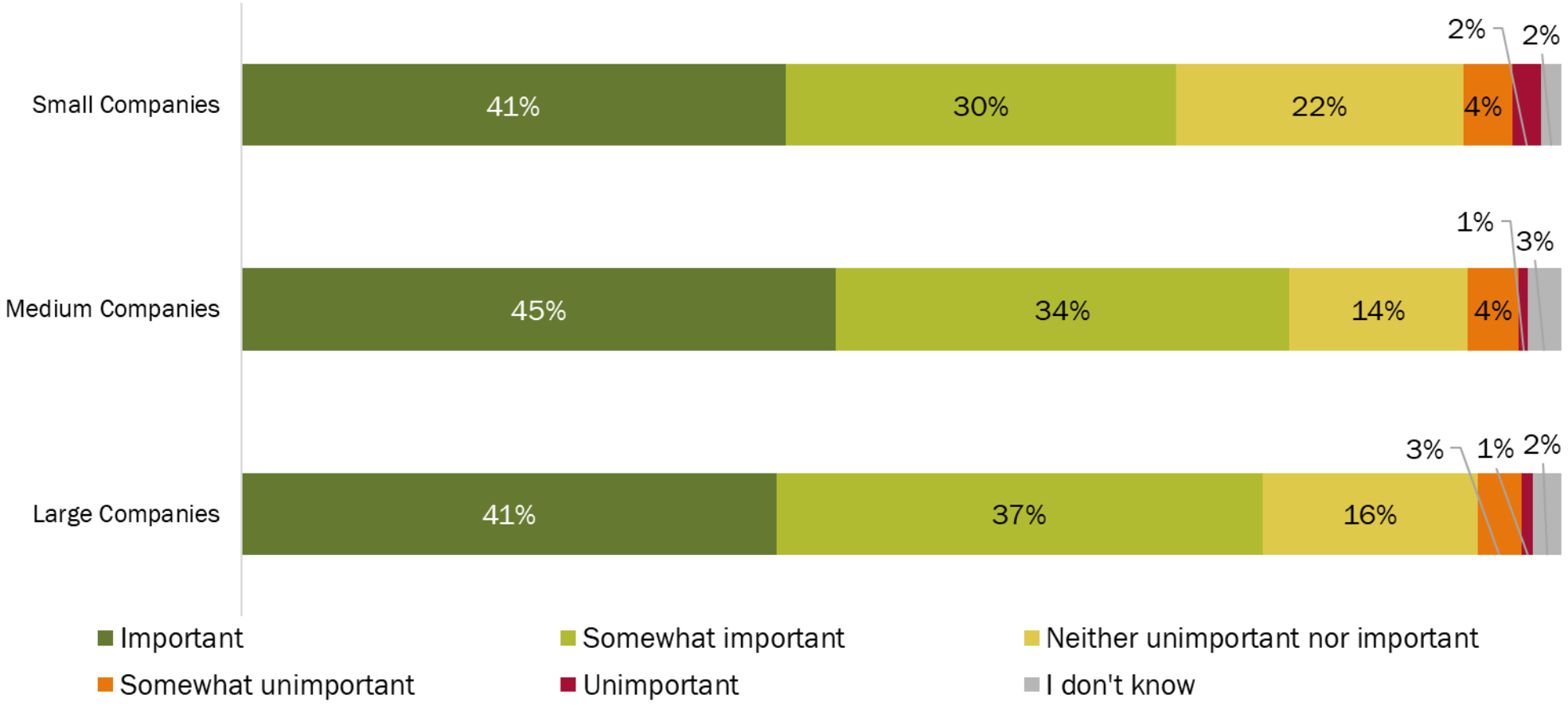
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R5. Clear communication about opportunities for upward mobility



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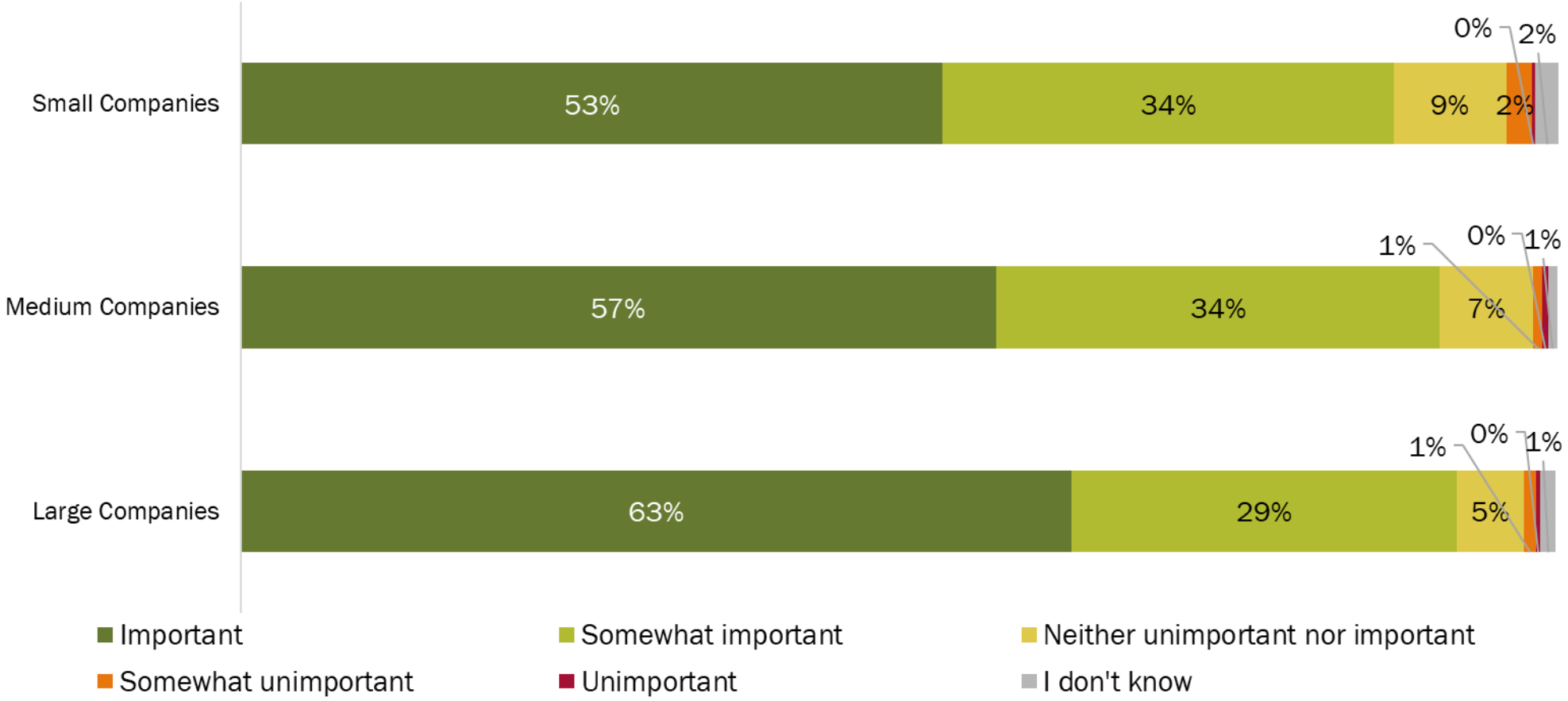
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R6. Level of pay



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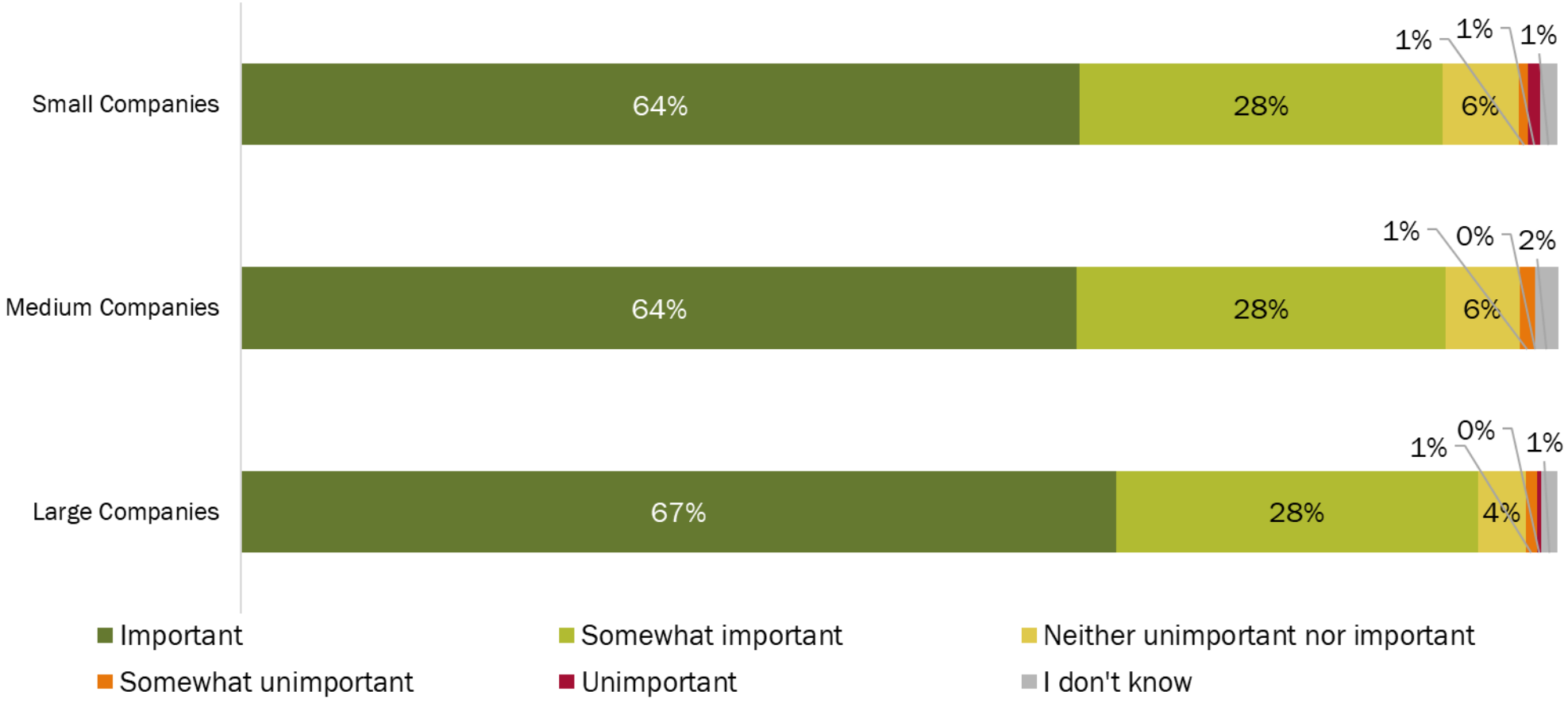
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R7. Stable and predictable pay



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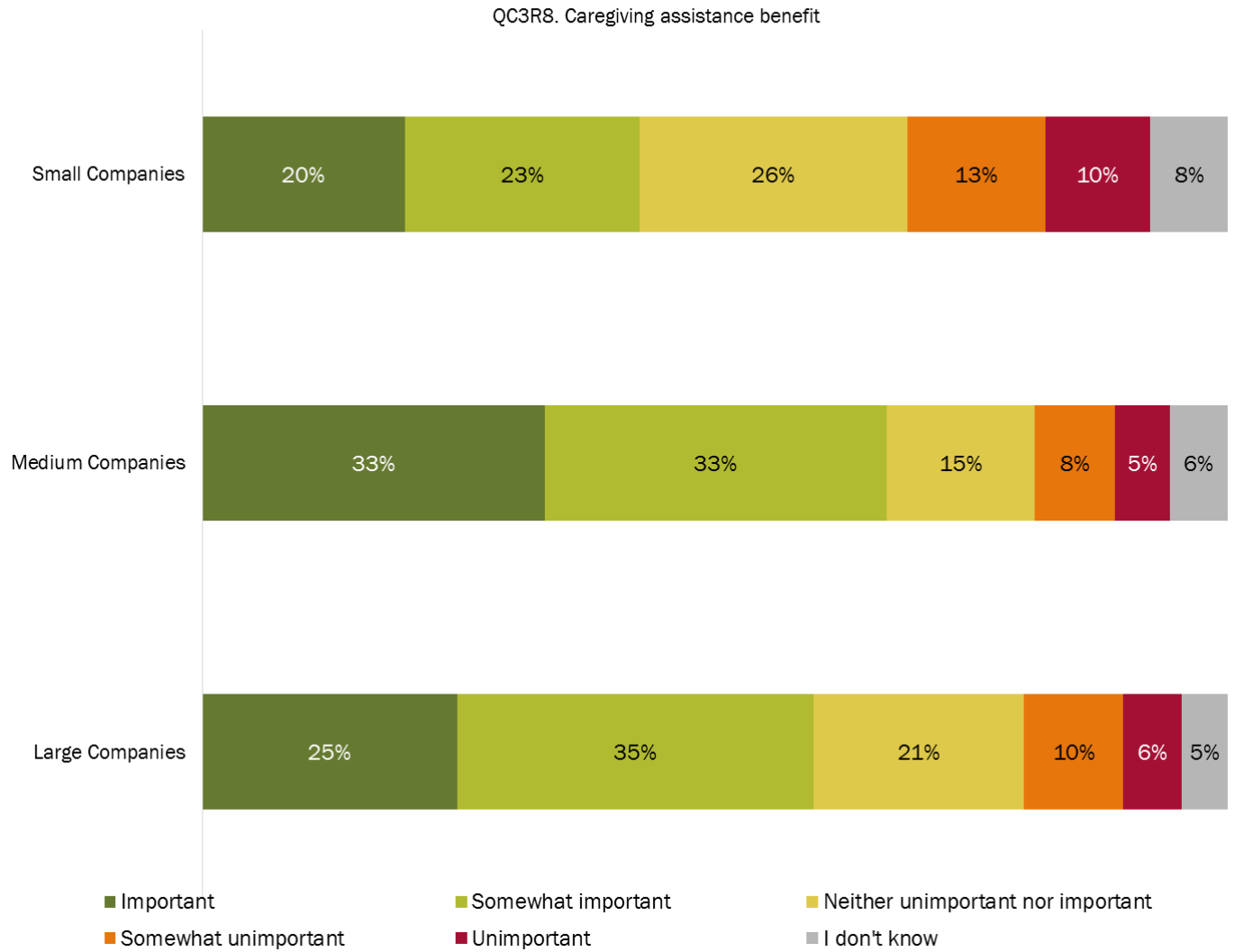
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?



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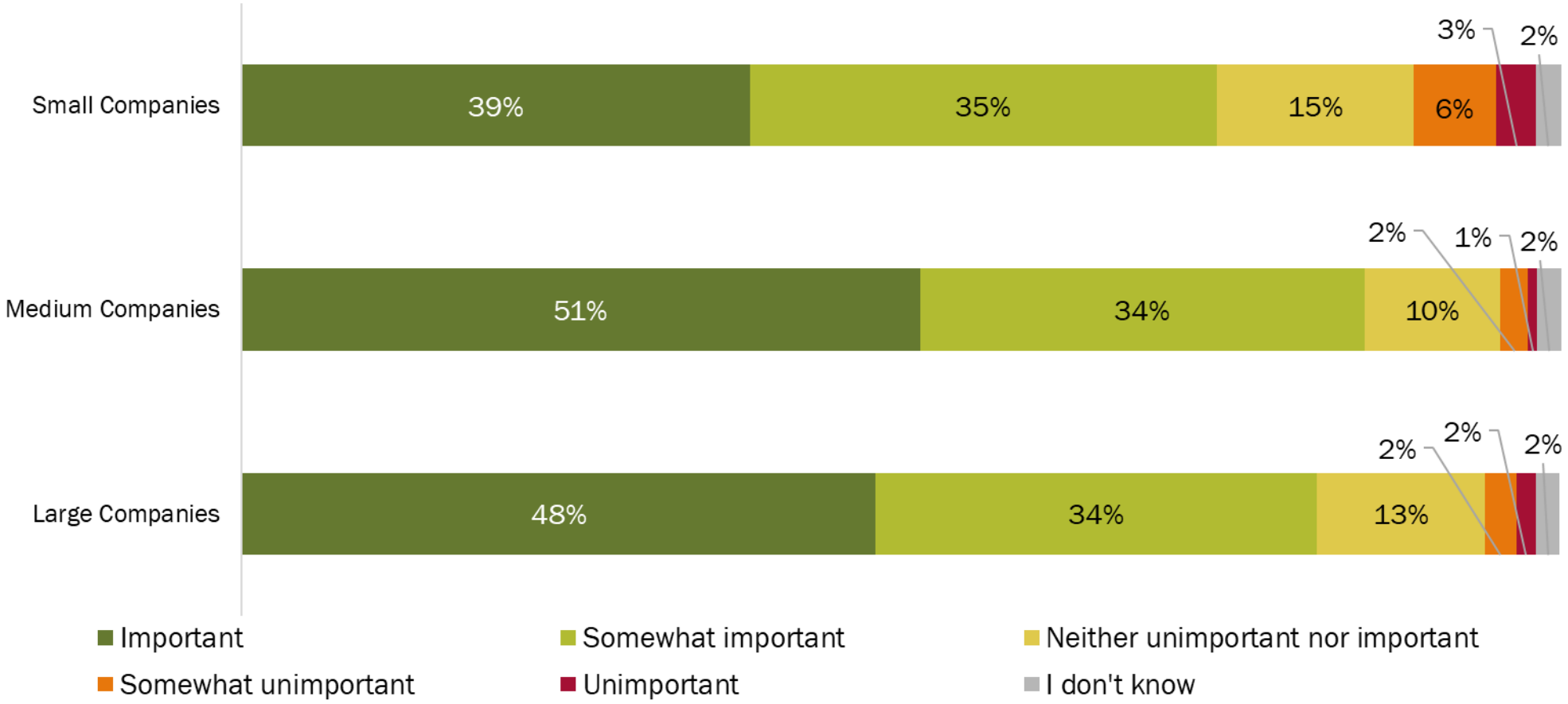
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?

QC3R9. Flexible sick time policy



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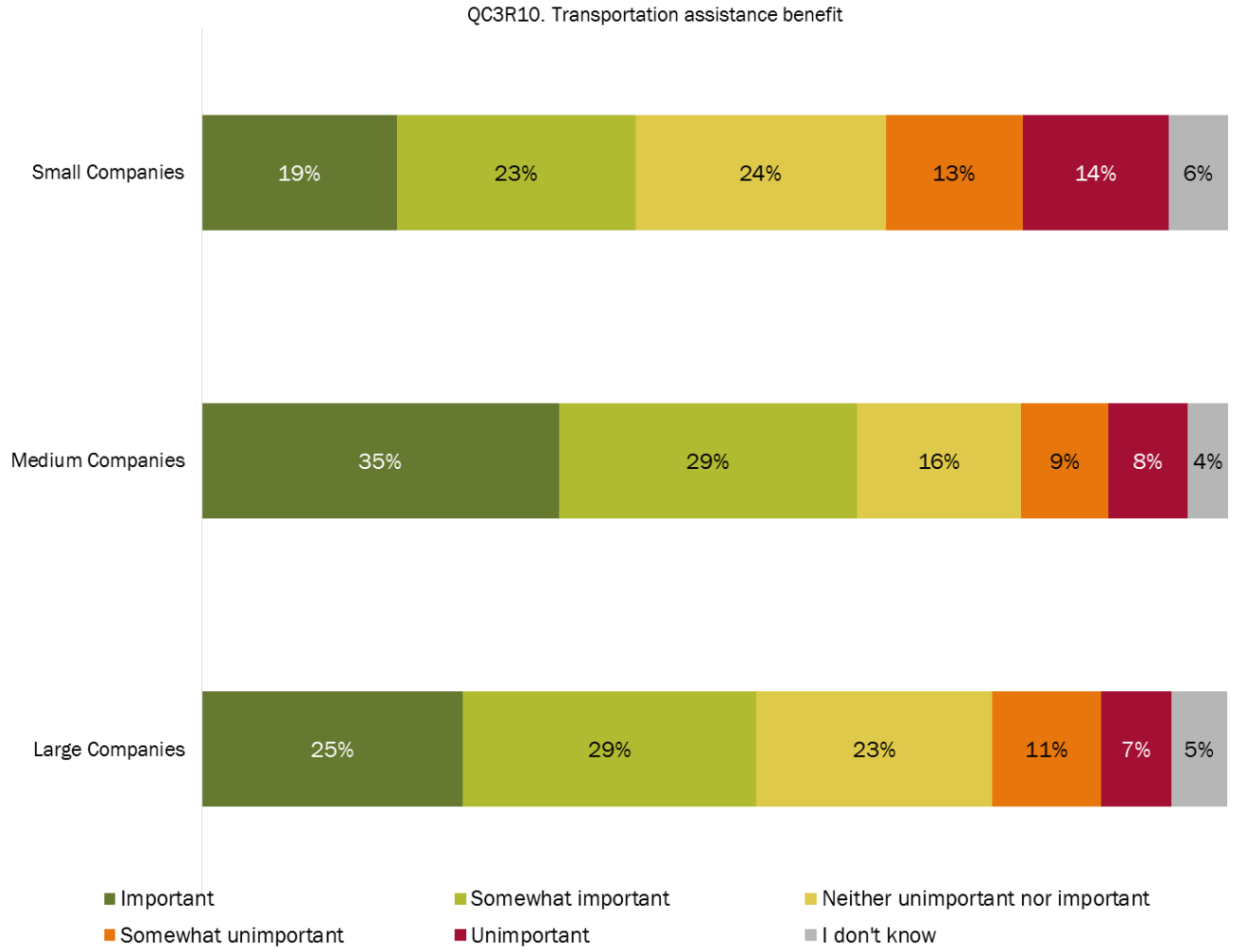
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?



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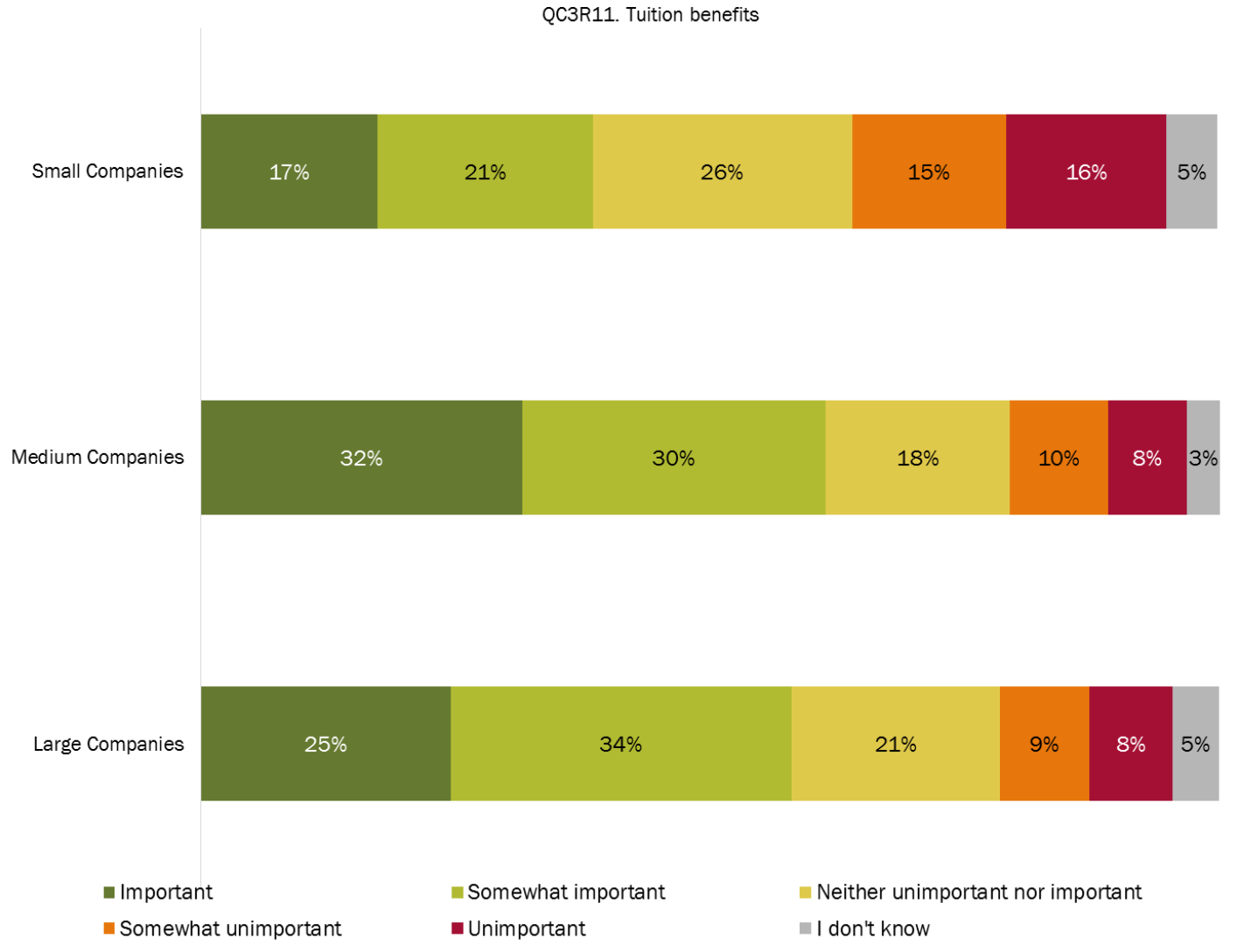
C3. How important do you think the following benefits are to people applying to low-wage positions at your company?



N = 1,150

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Actions
Staffing

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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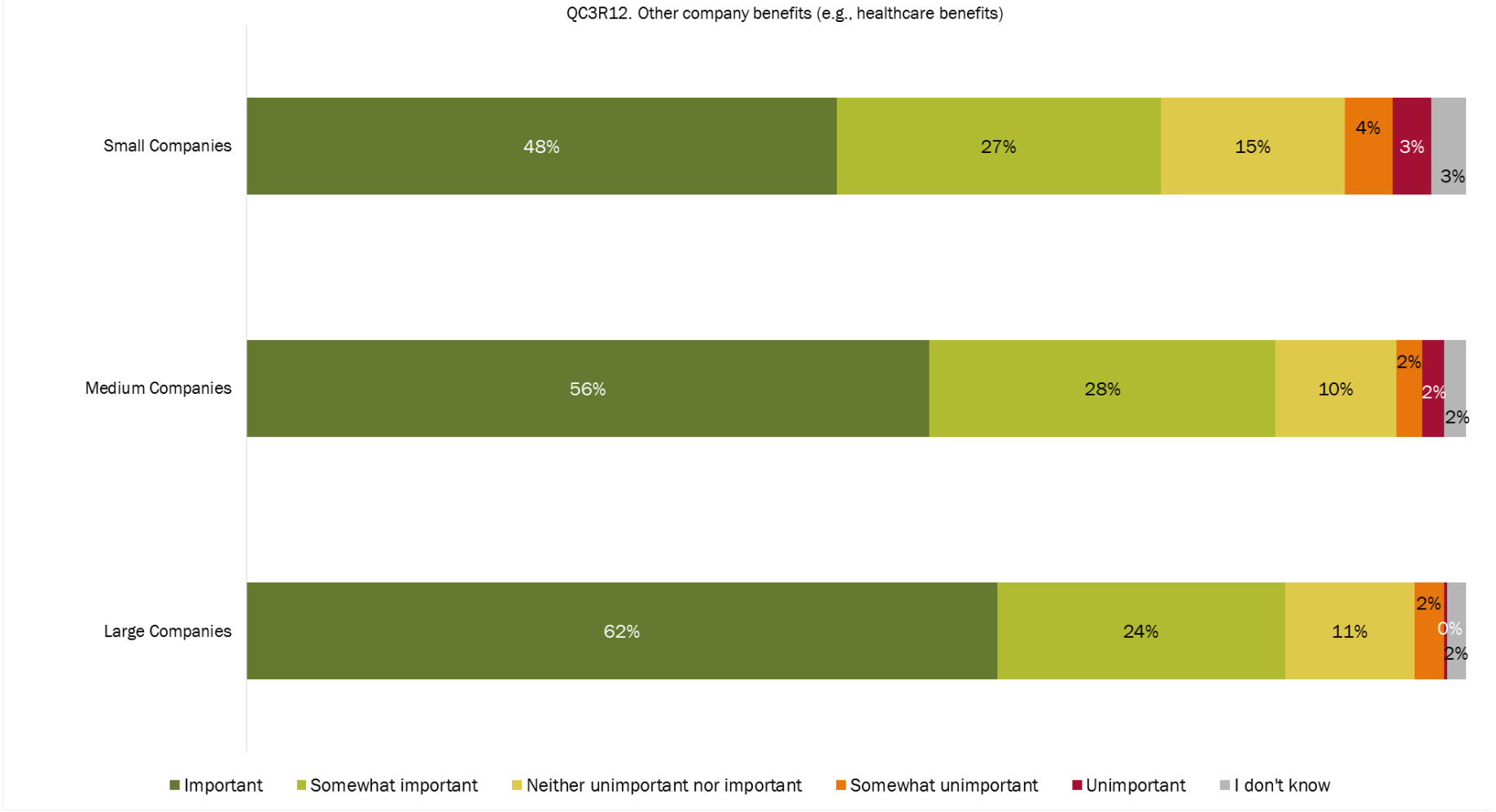

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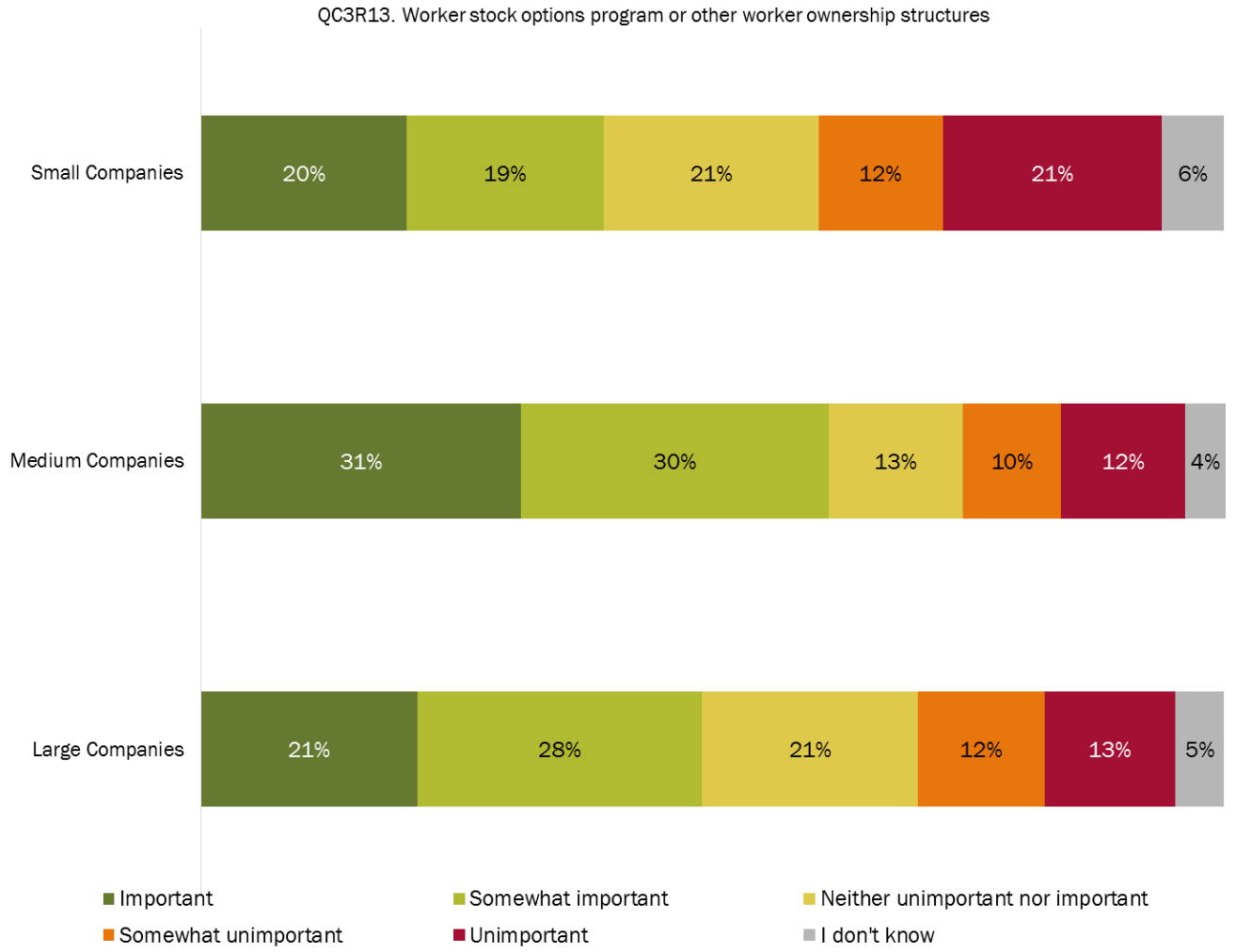

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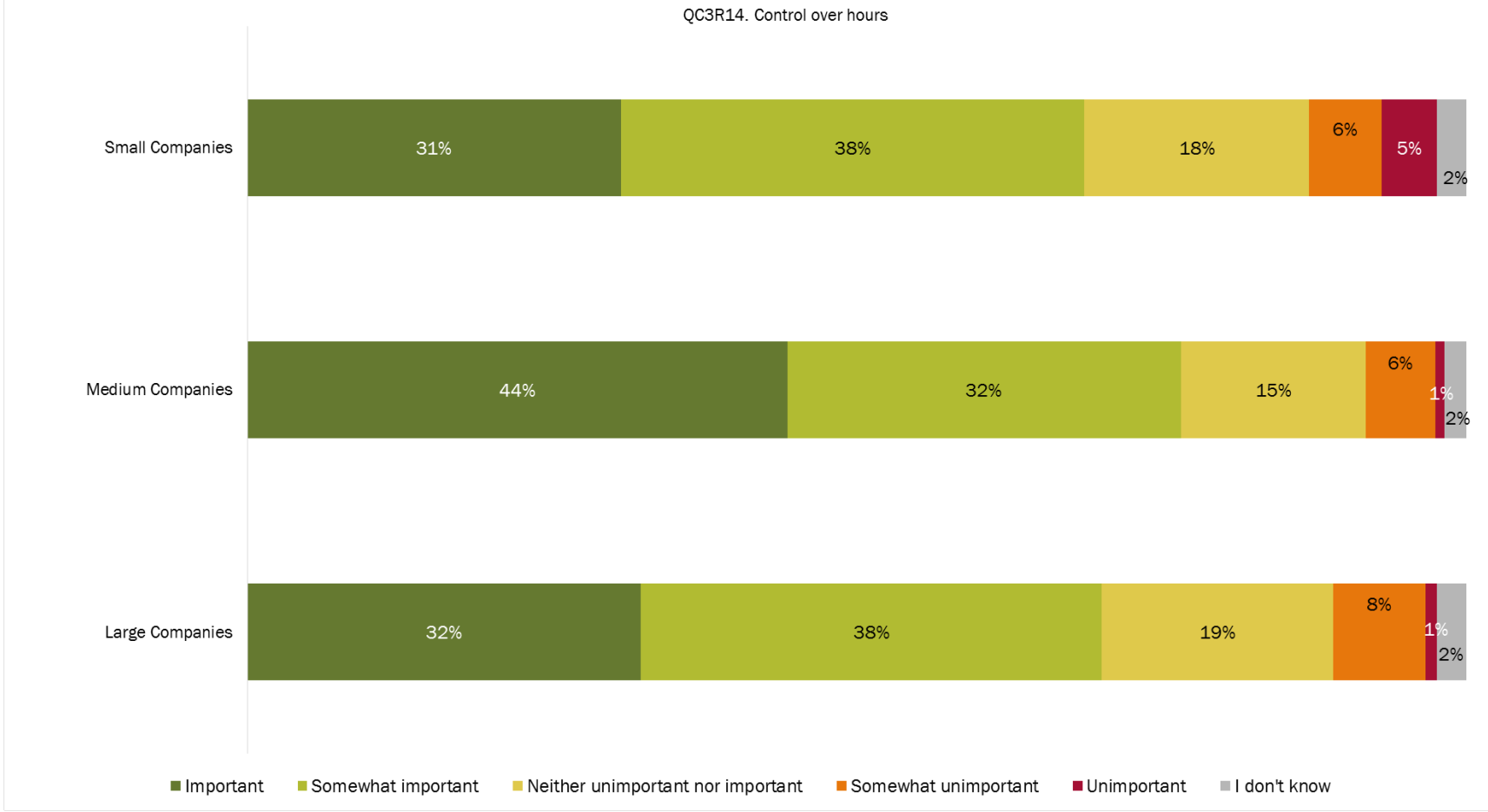

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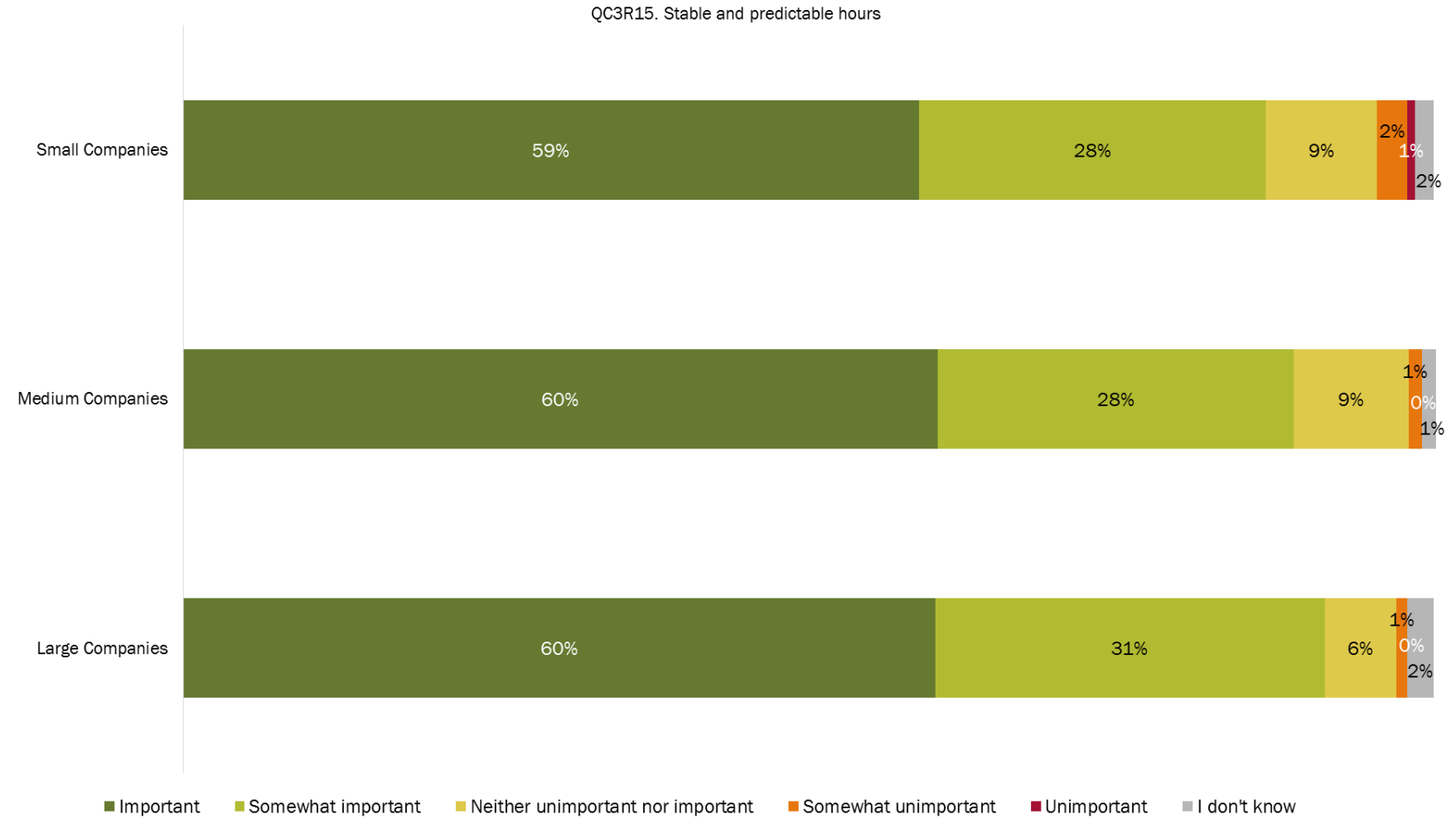

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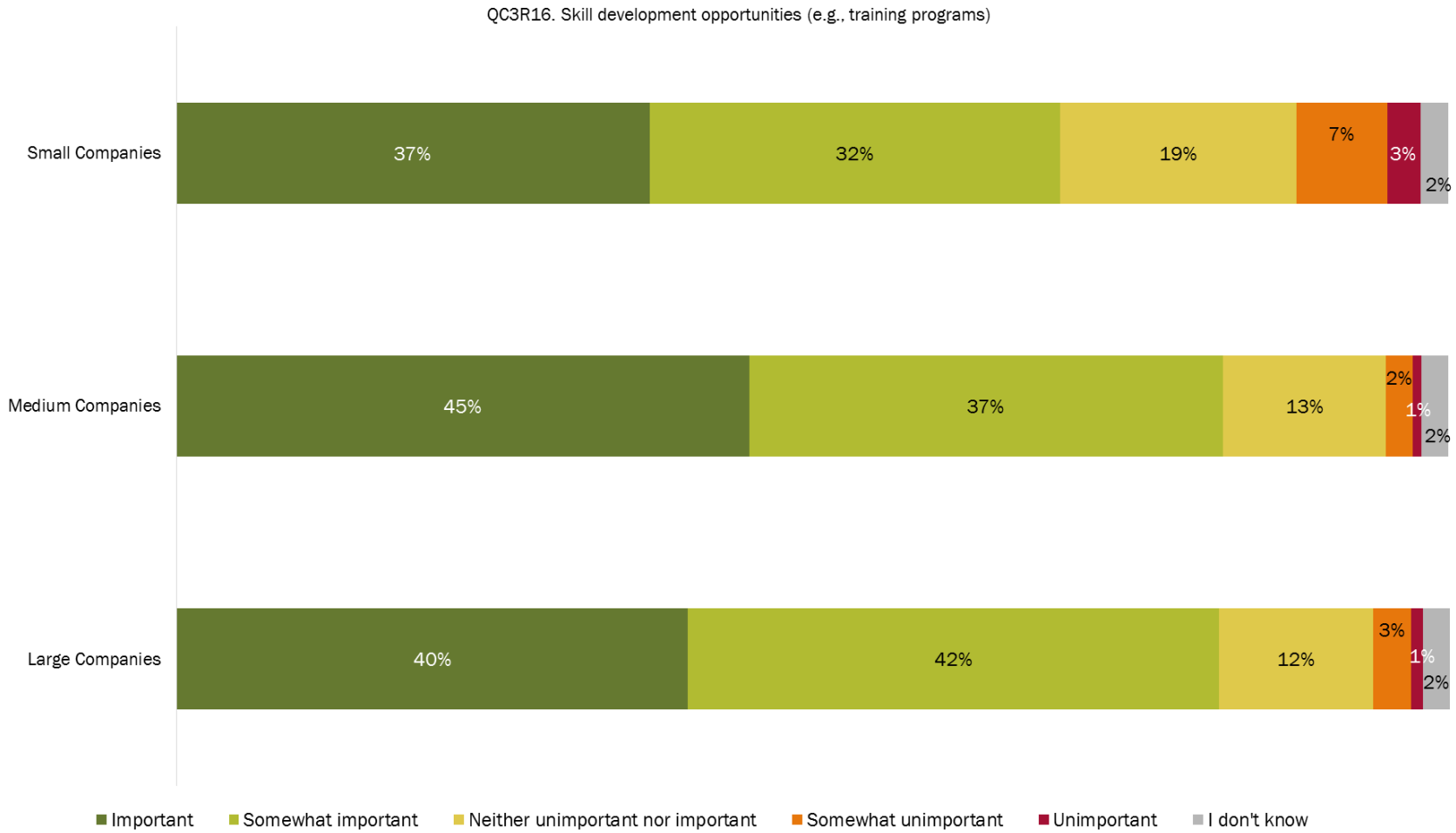

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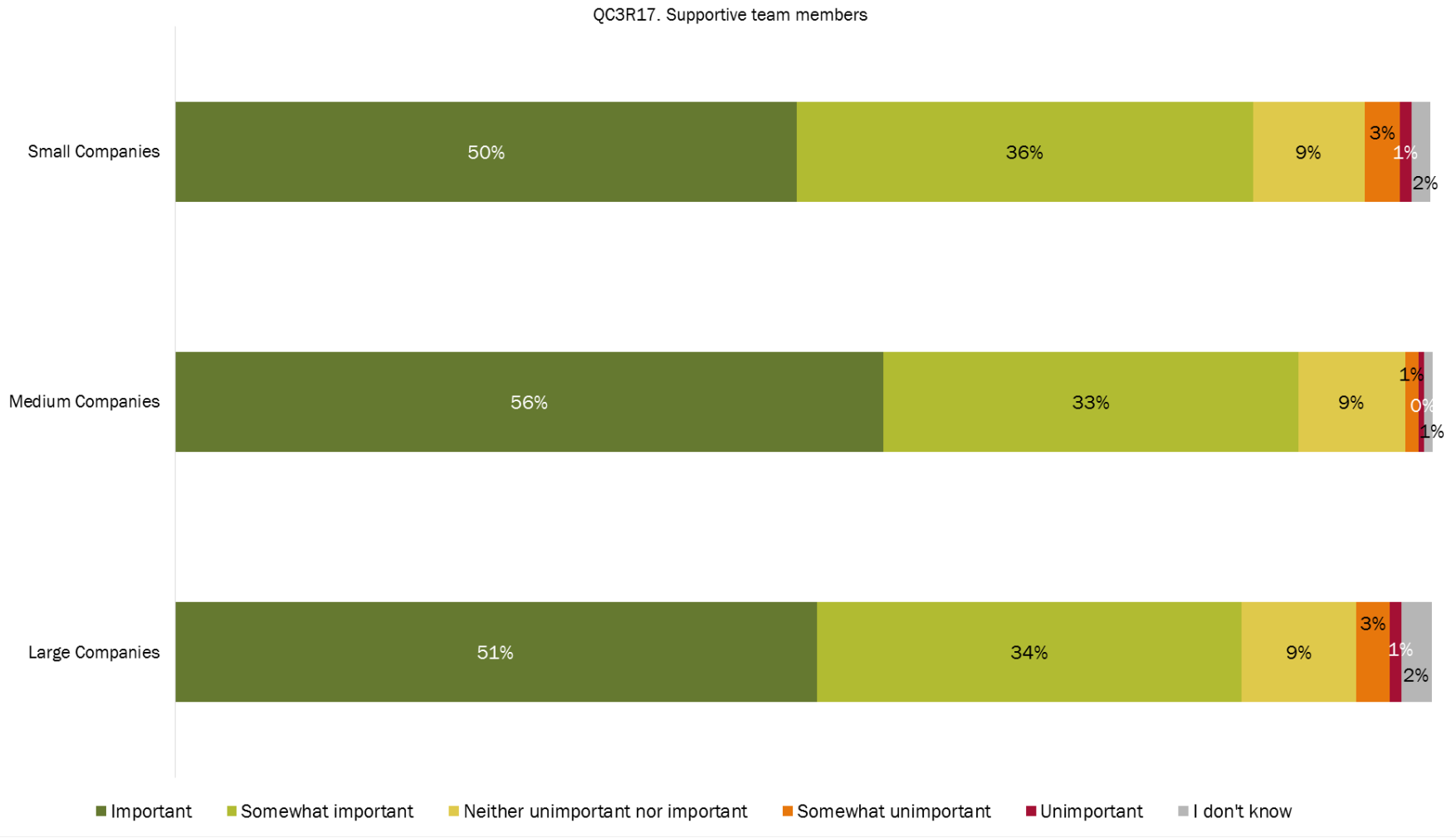

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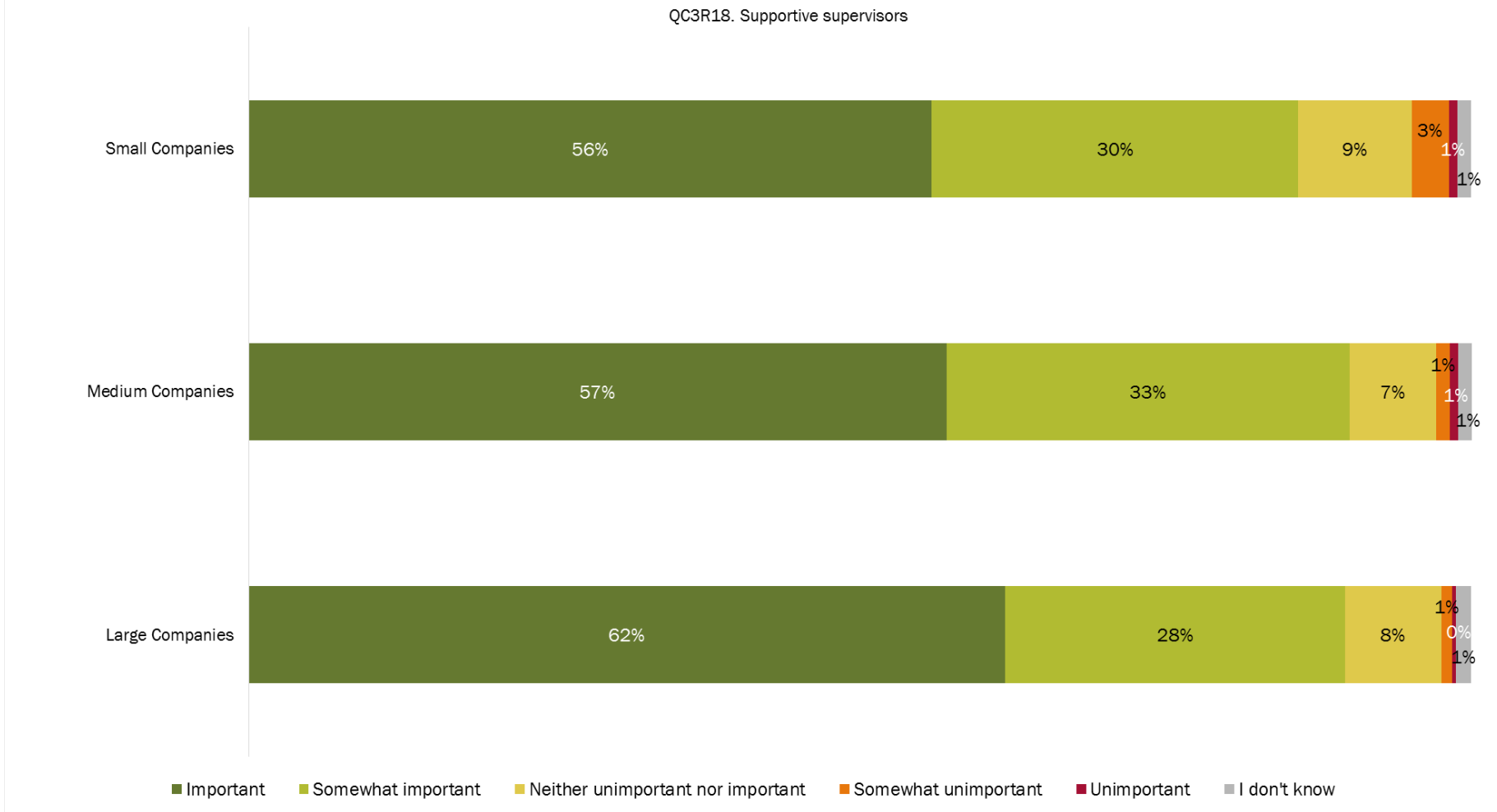

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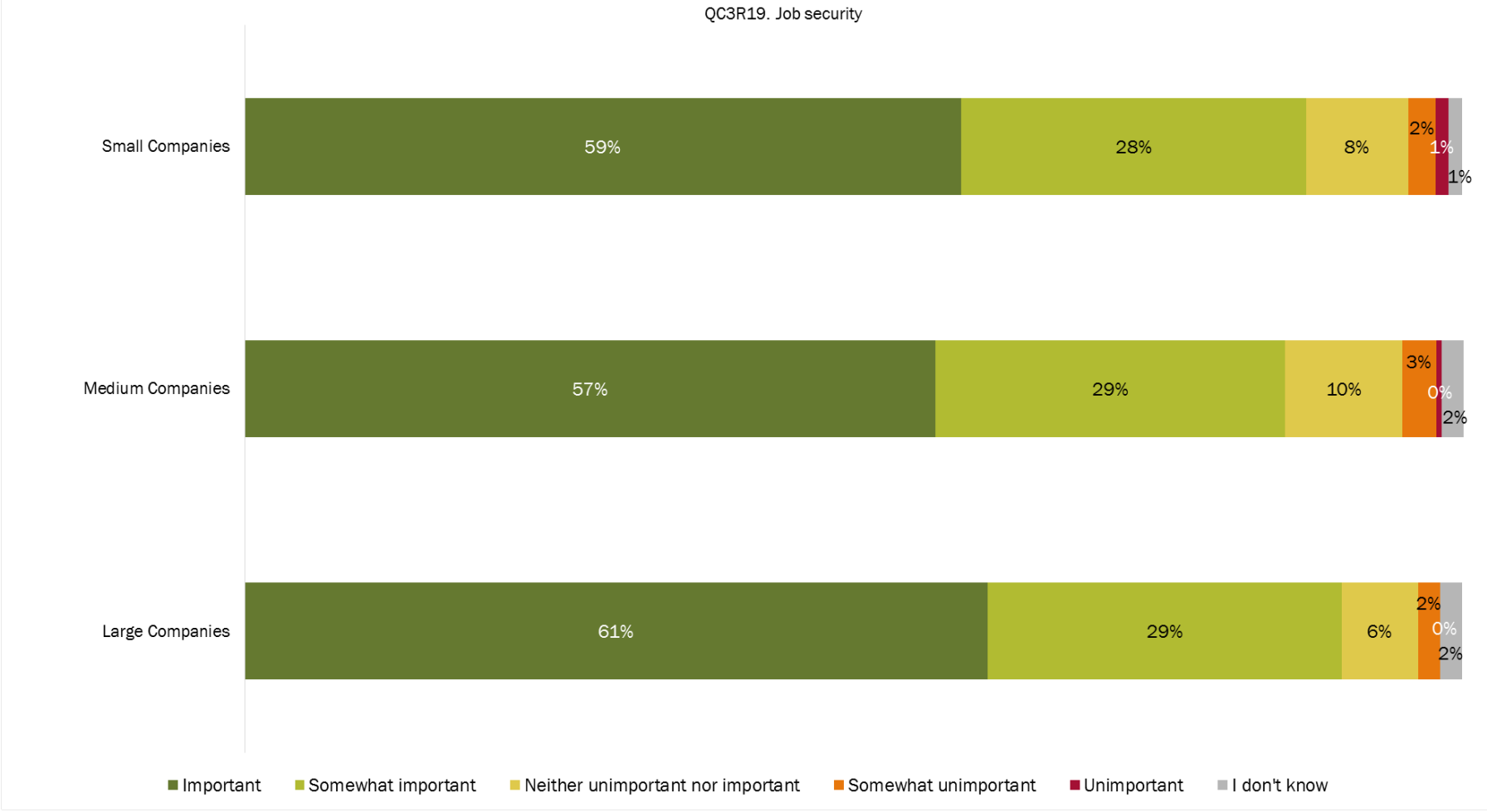

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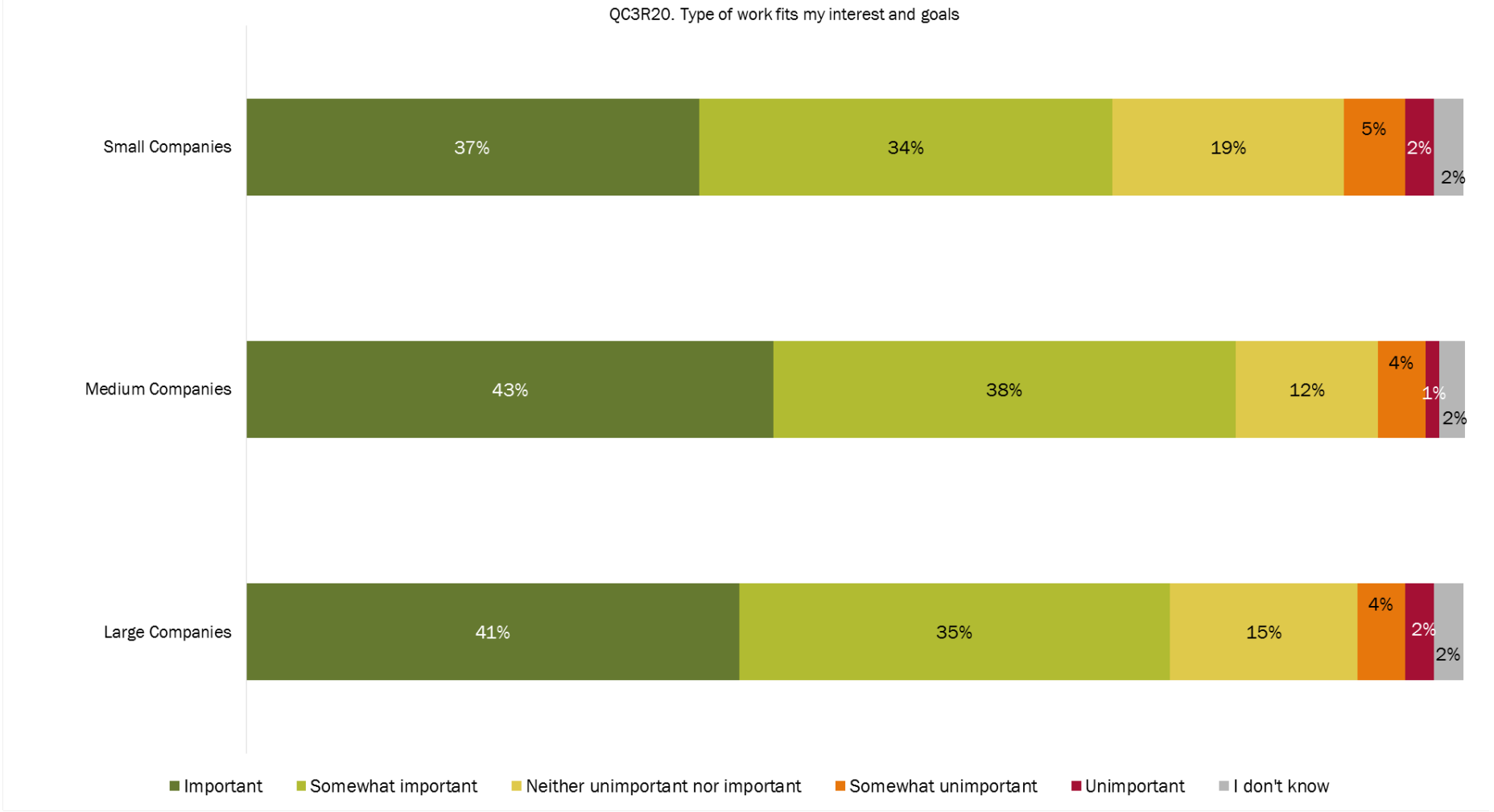

N = 1,150

Actions
Pre-employment

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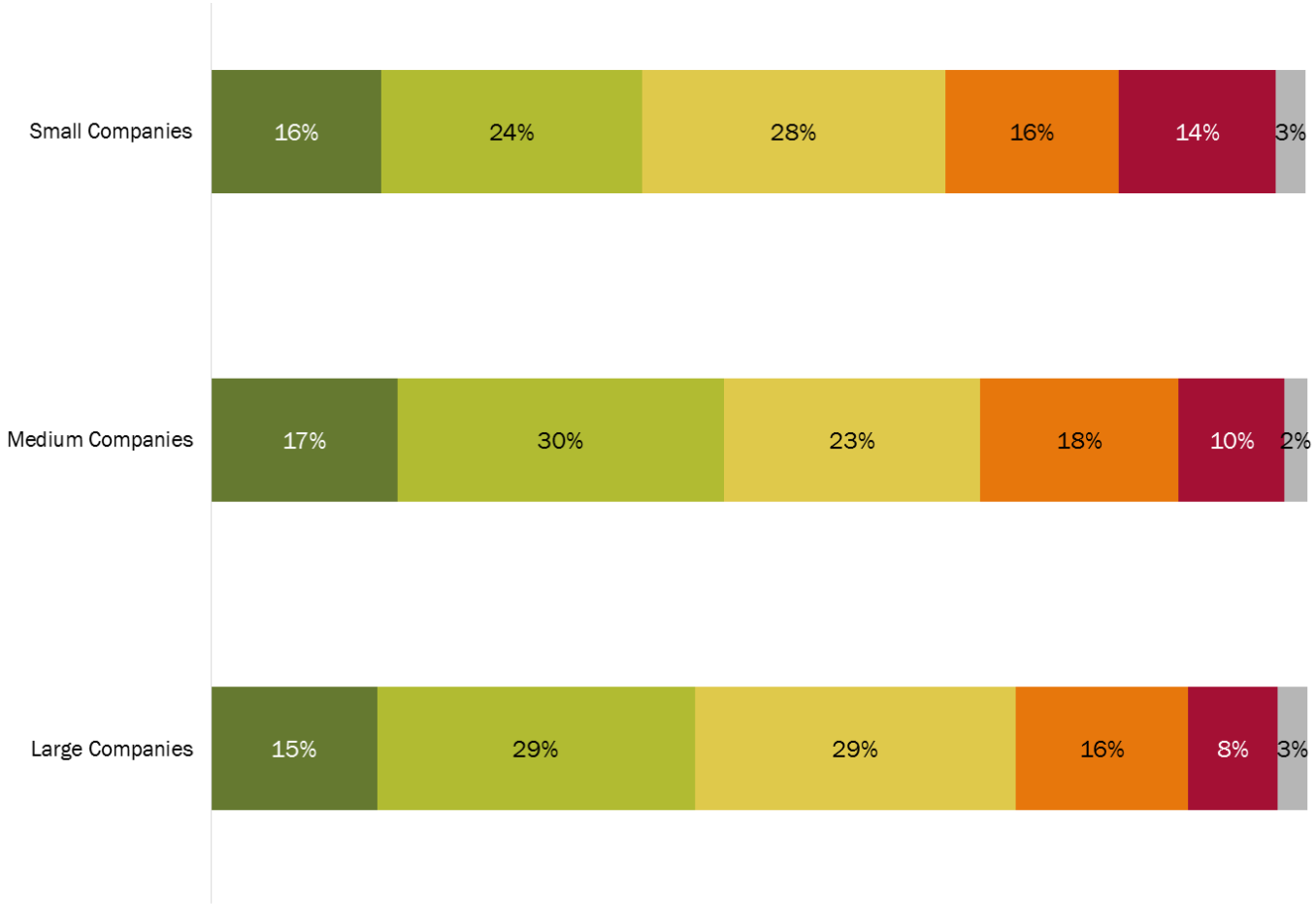
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C4. How often does your company:

Internally communicate success stories of my company's employees who start as low-wage employees and then go on to achieve career progression within the company



N = 1,150

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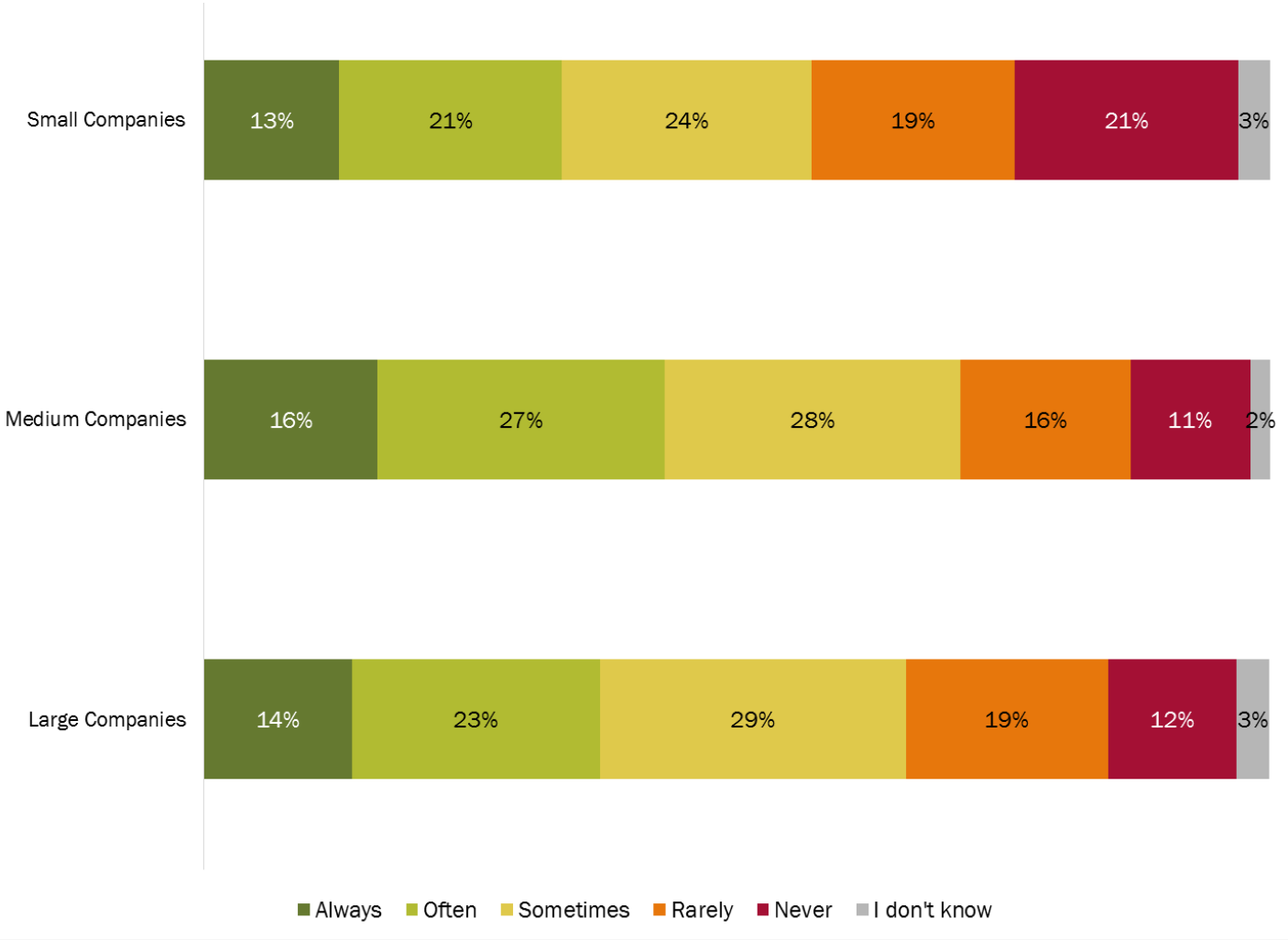
C4. How often does your company:

Externally communicate success stories of my company's employees who start as low-wage employees and then go on to achieve career progression within the company



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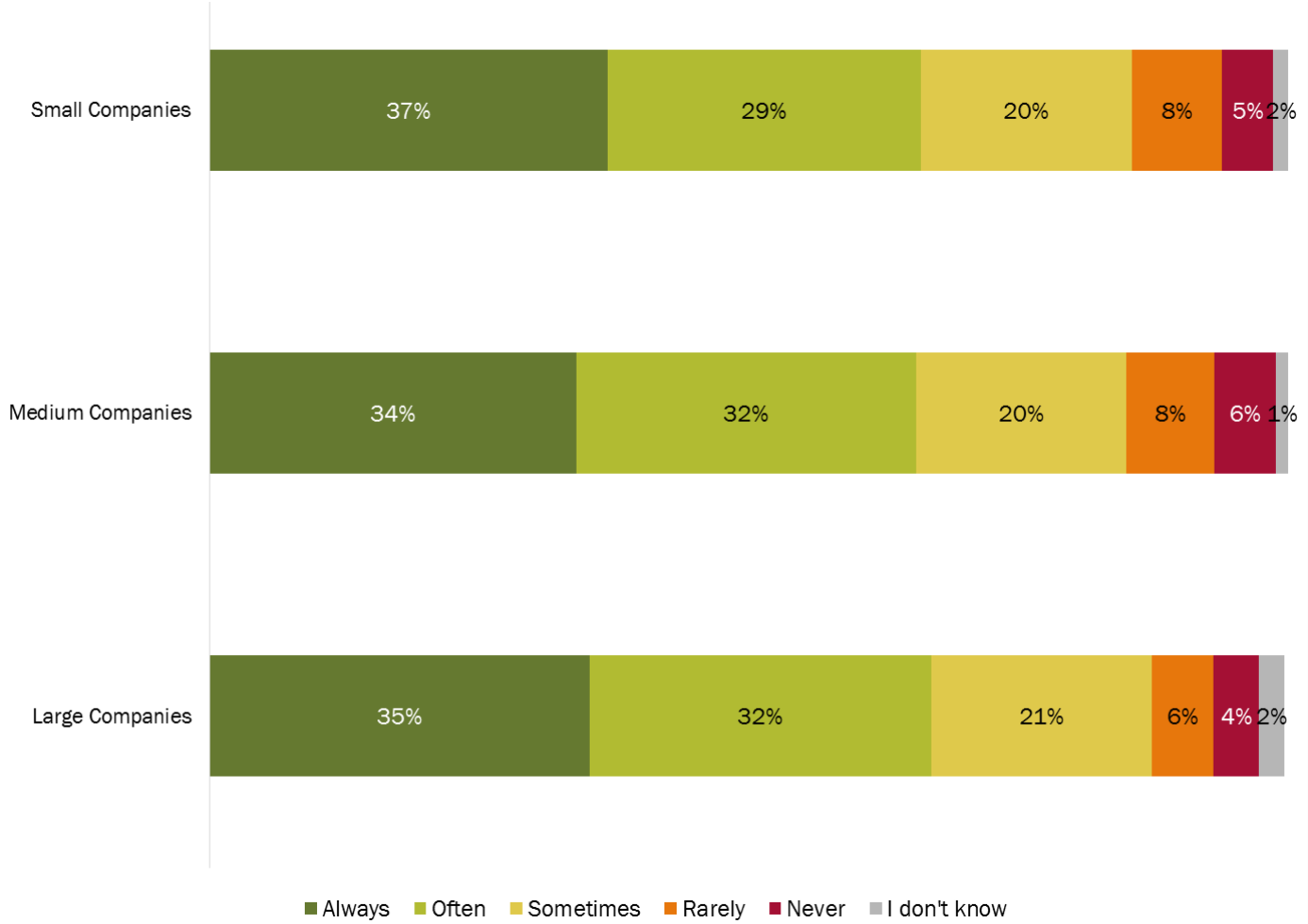
C4. How often does your company:

Describe the job expectations (e.g., daily responsibilities and the expectations beyond that, such as food servers being expected to clean the restrooms) *during the hiring process*



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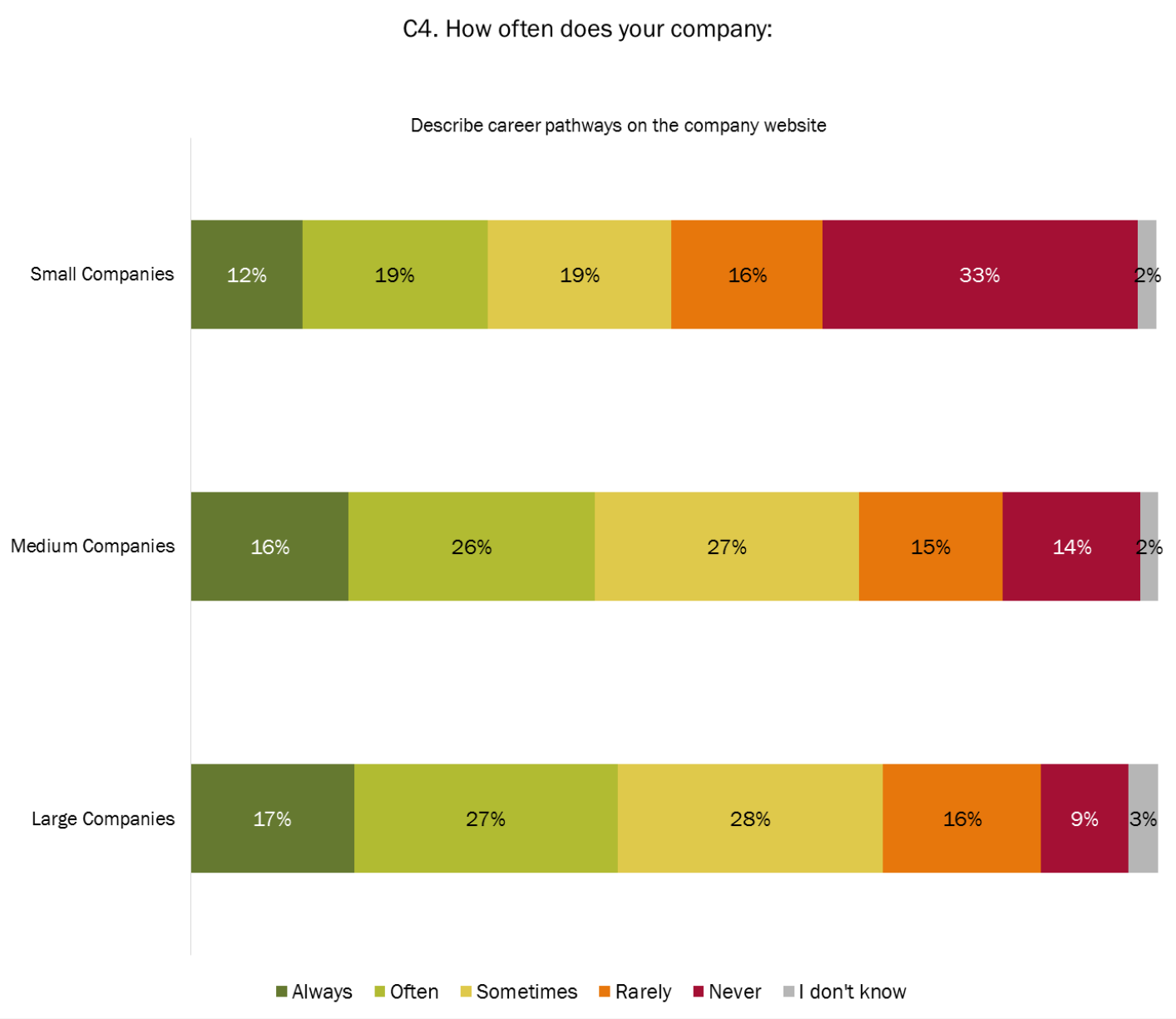

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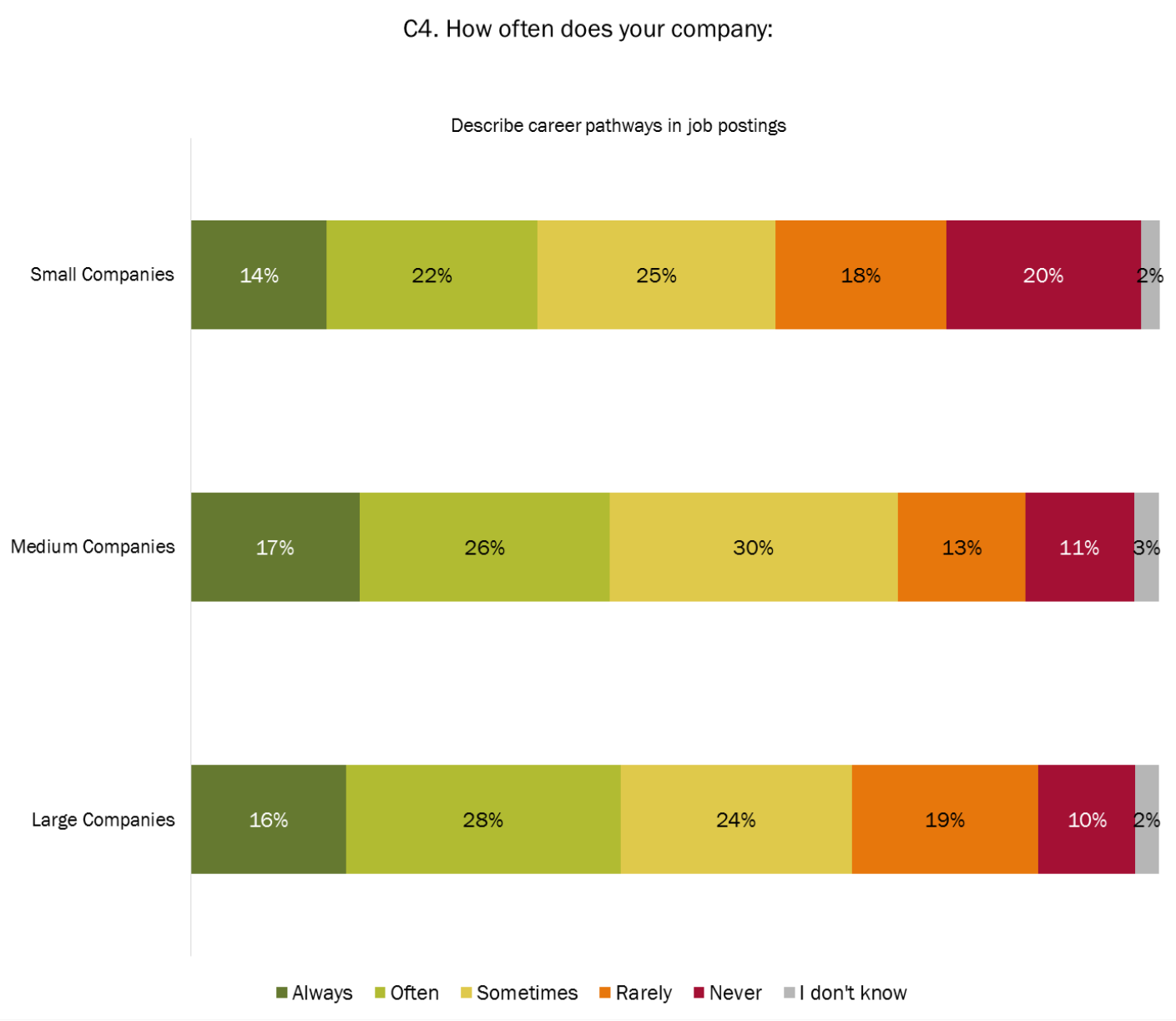

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Actions
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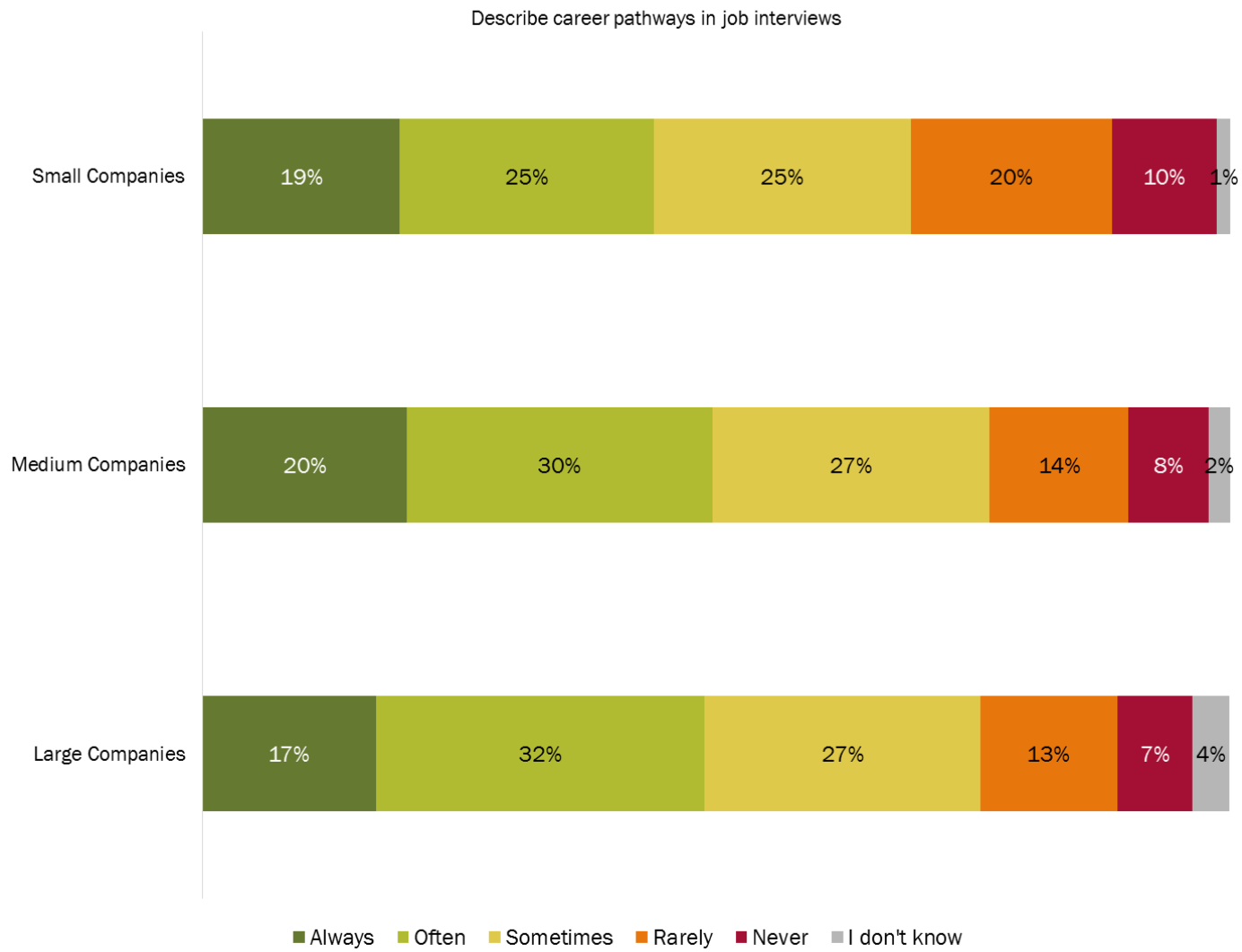

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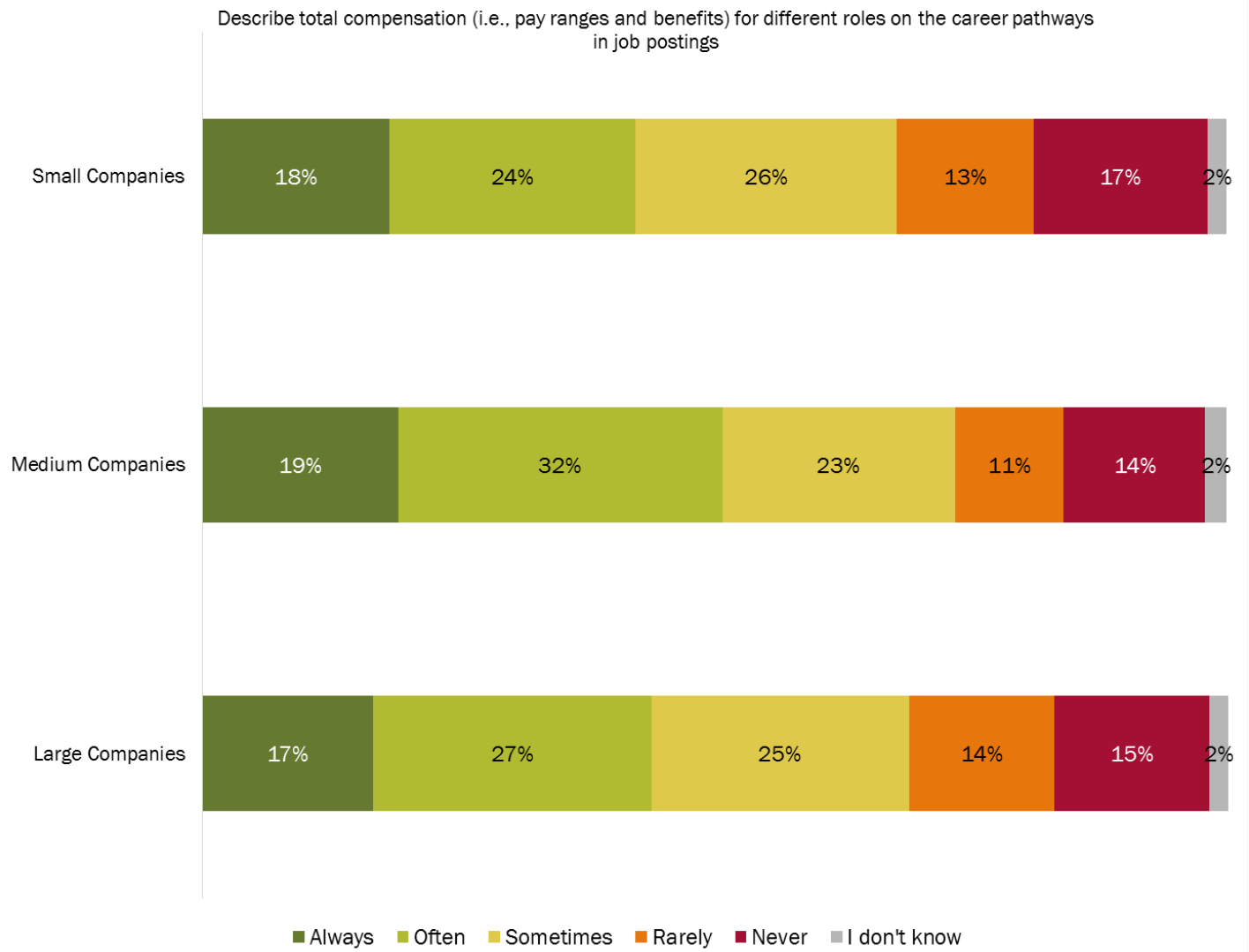

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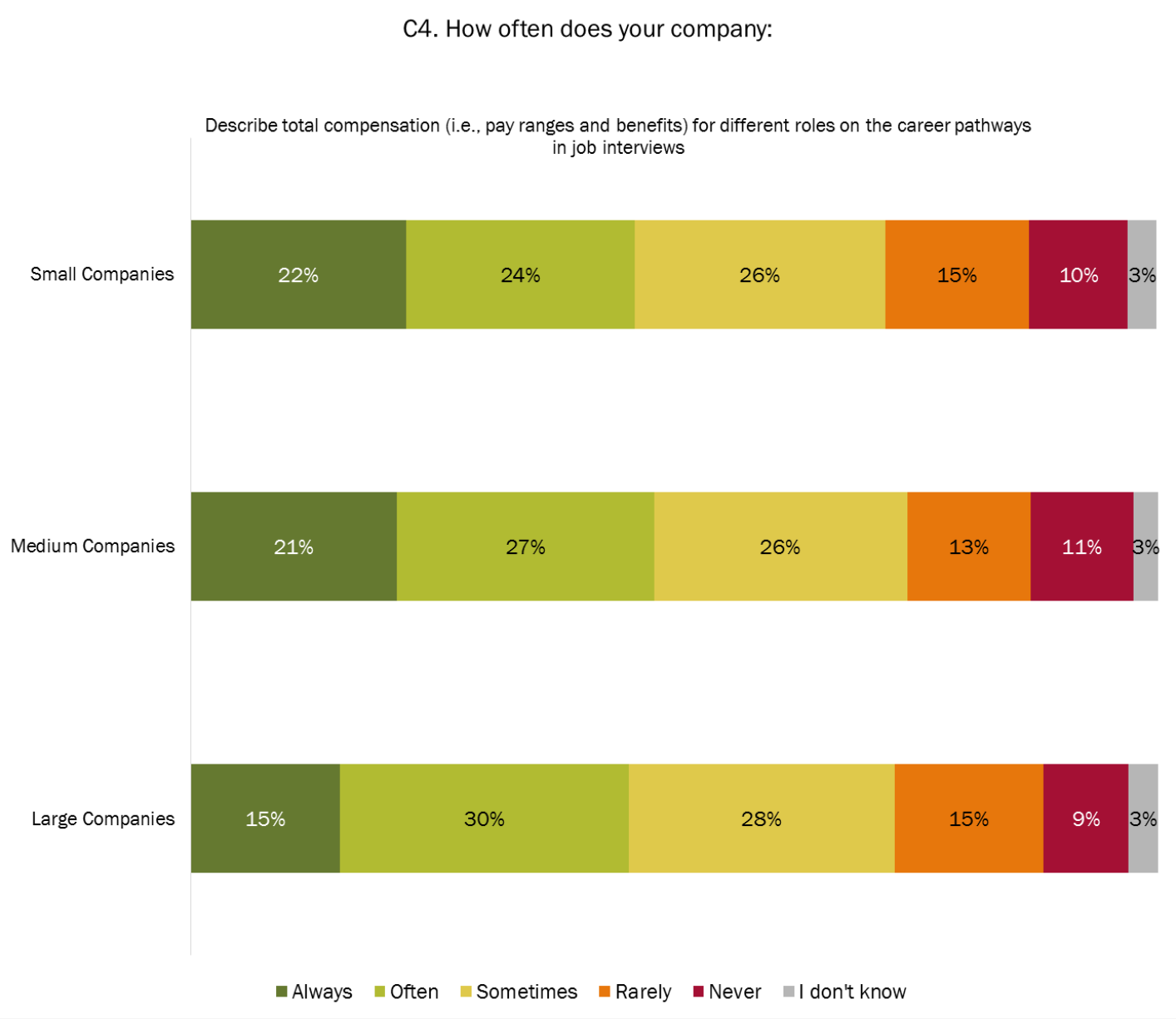
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



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Actions
Pre-employment

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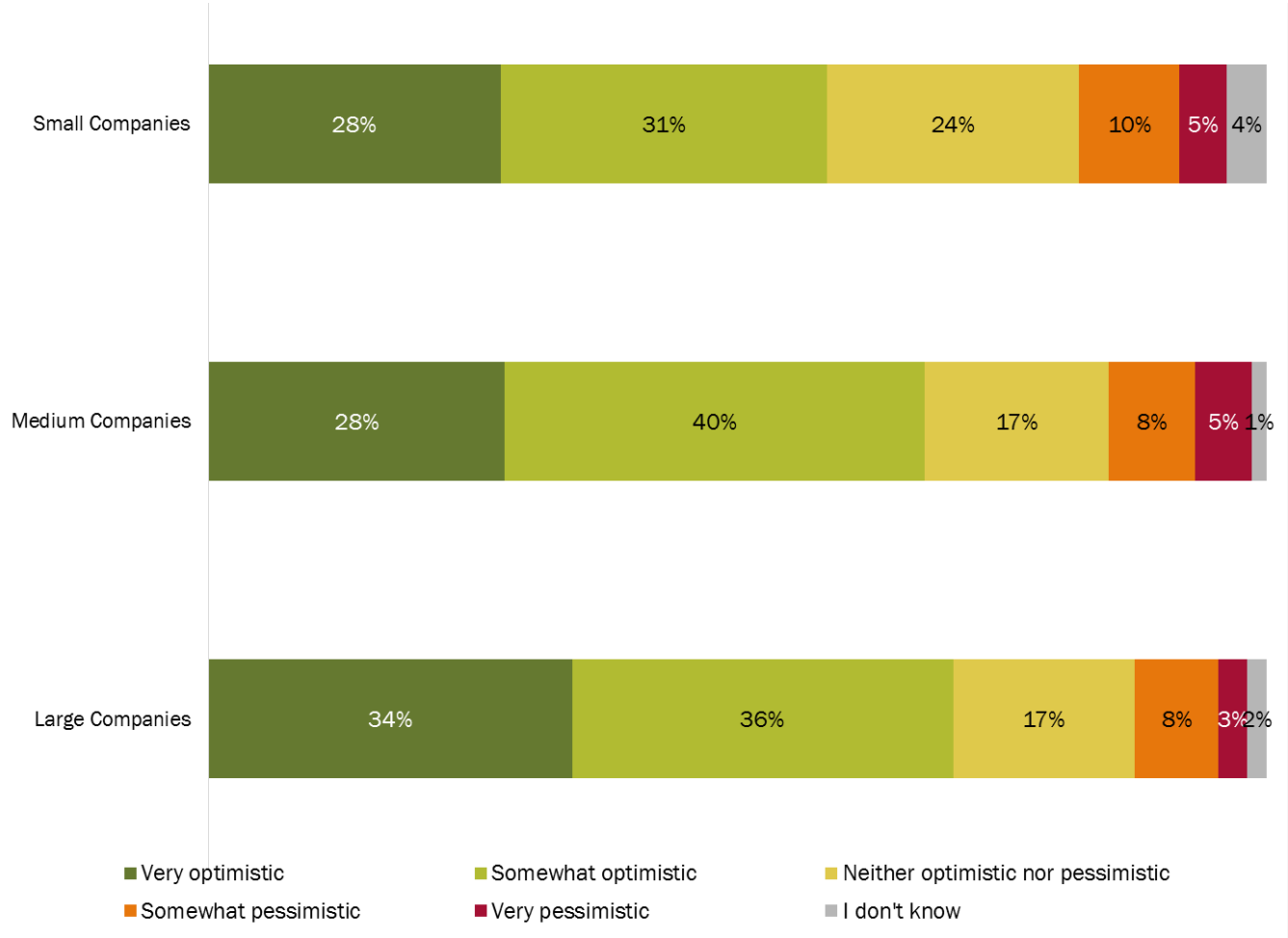
C5. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC5R1. Internally communicate success stories of my company's employees who start as low-wage employees and then go on to achieve career progression within the company



N = 1,150

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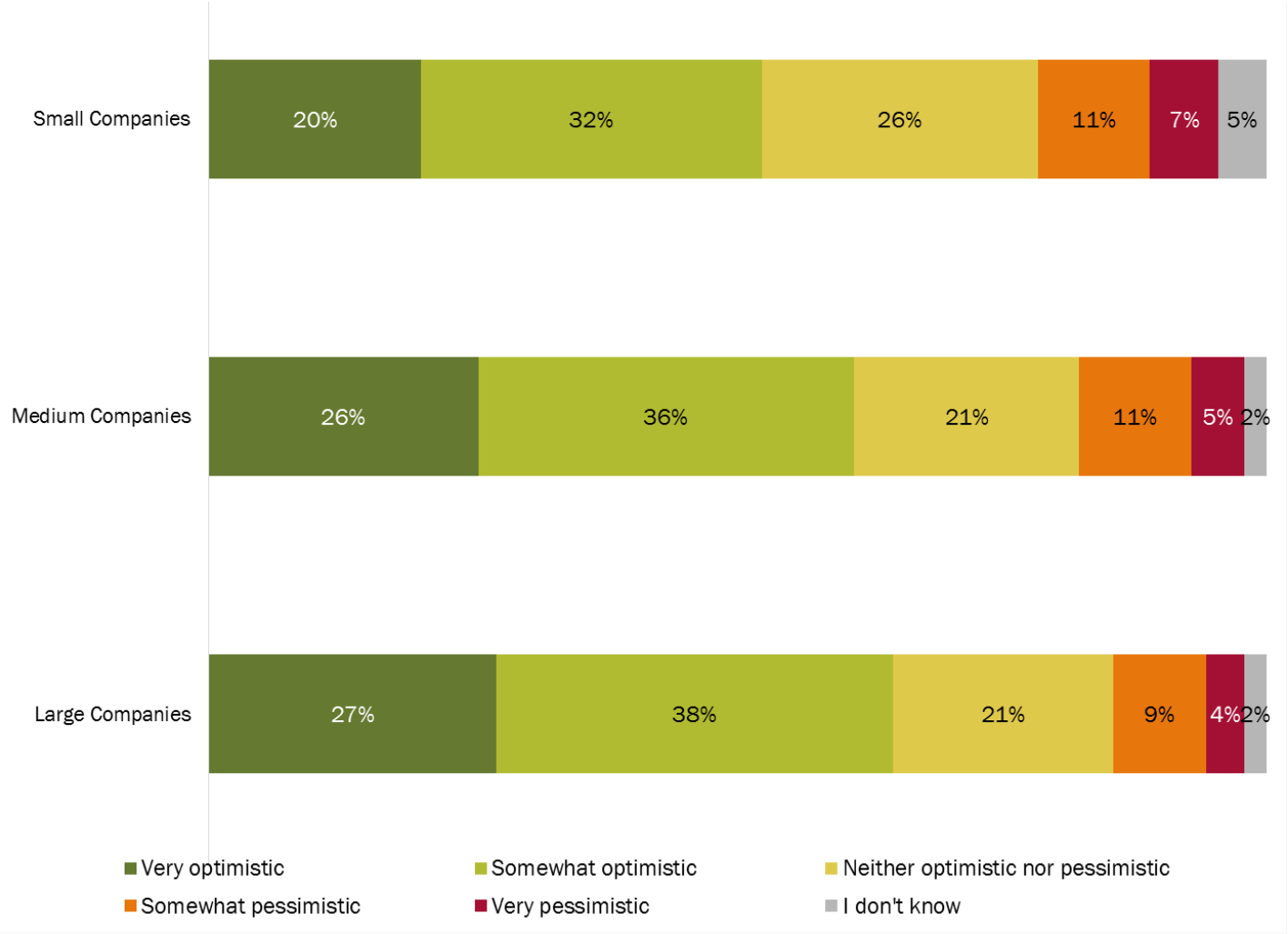
C5. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC5R2. Externally communicate success stories of my company's employees who start as low-wage employees and then go on to achieve career progression within the company



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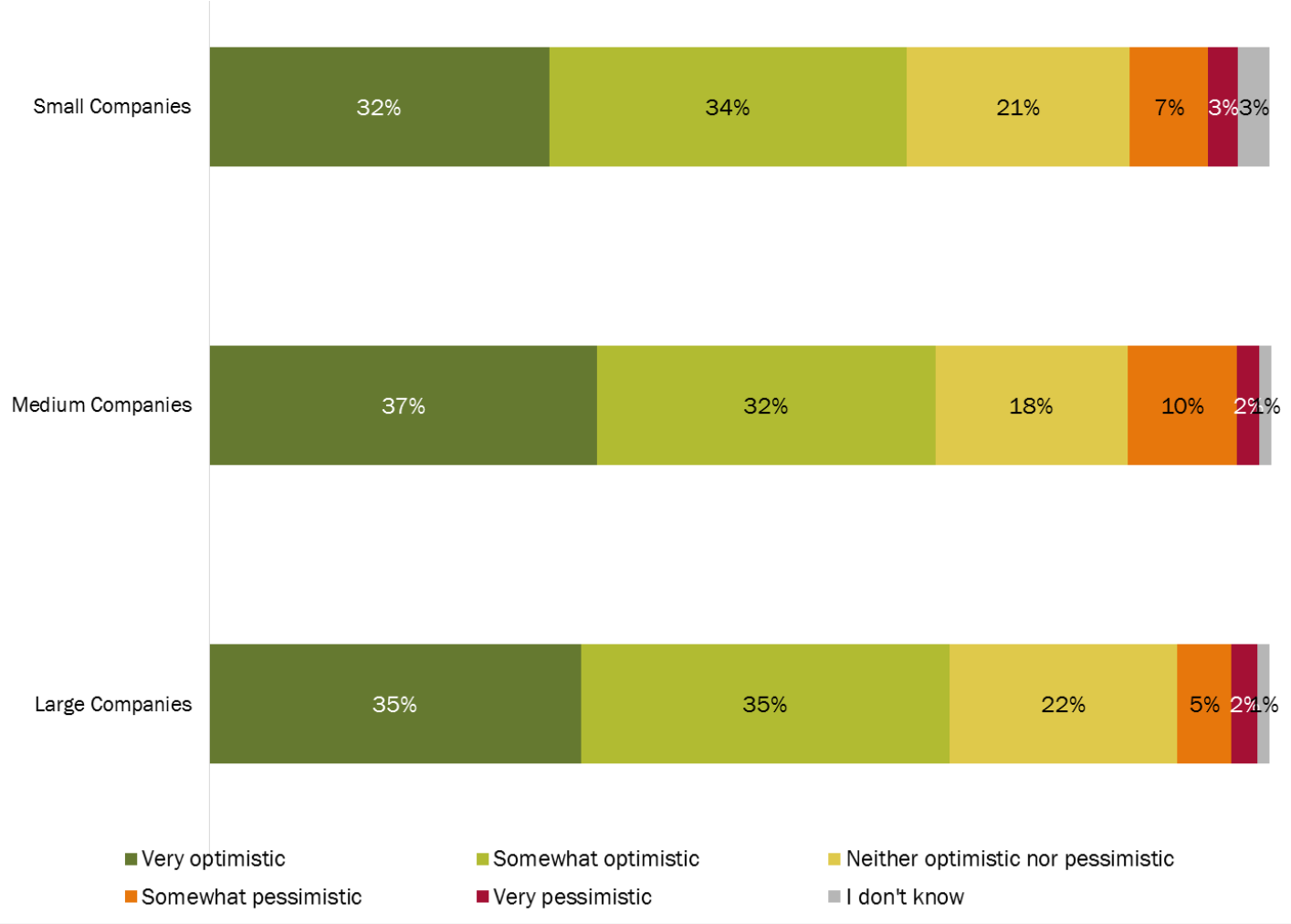
C5. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC5R3. Describe the job expectations (e.g., daily responsibilities and the expectations beyond that, such as food servers may also be expected to clean the restrooms) *during the hiring process*



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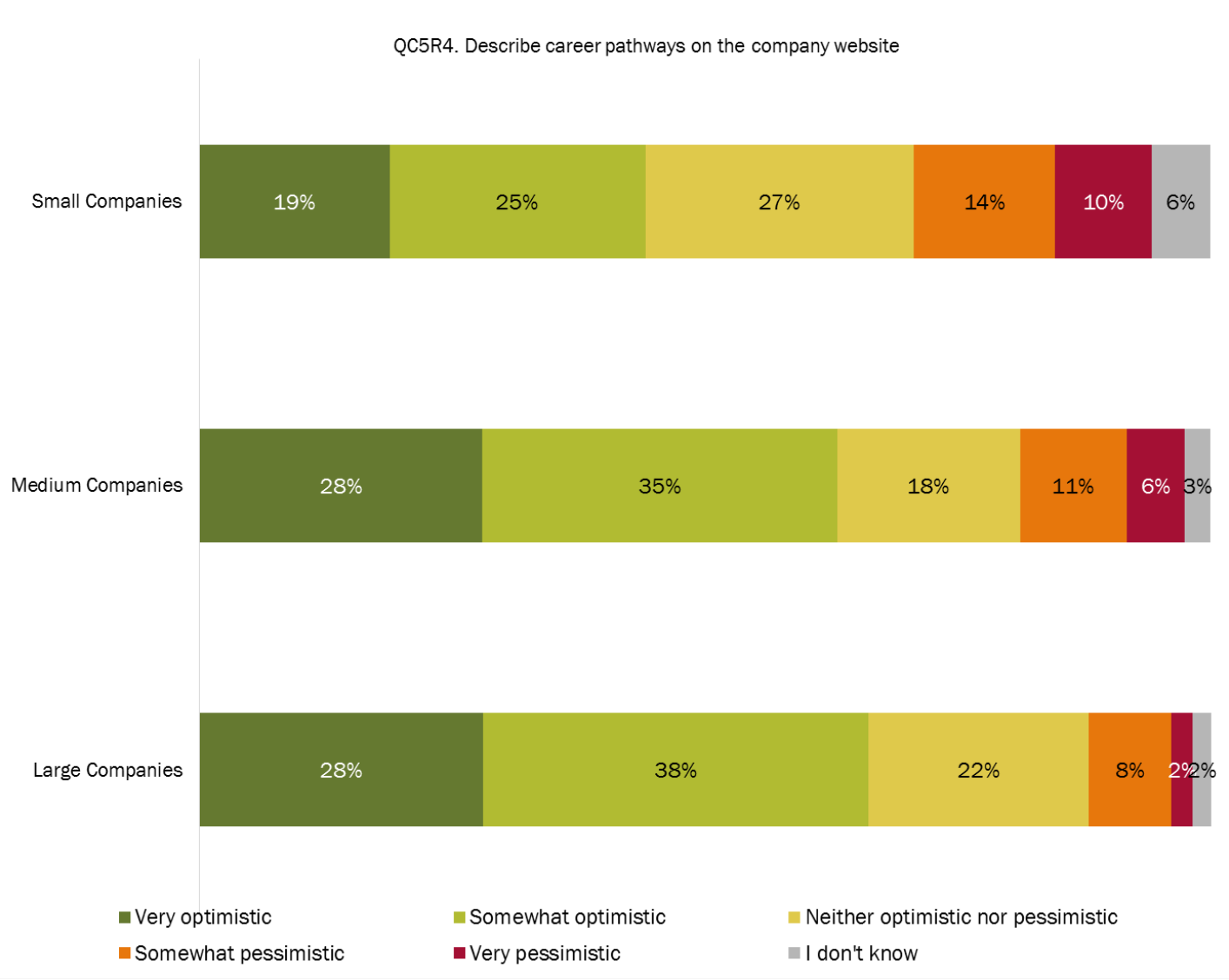

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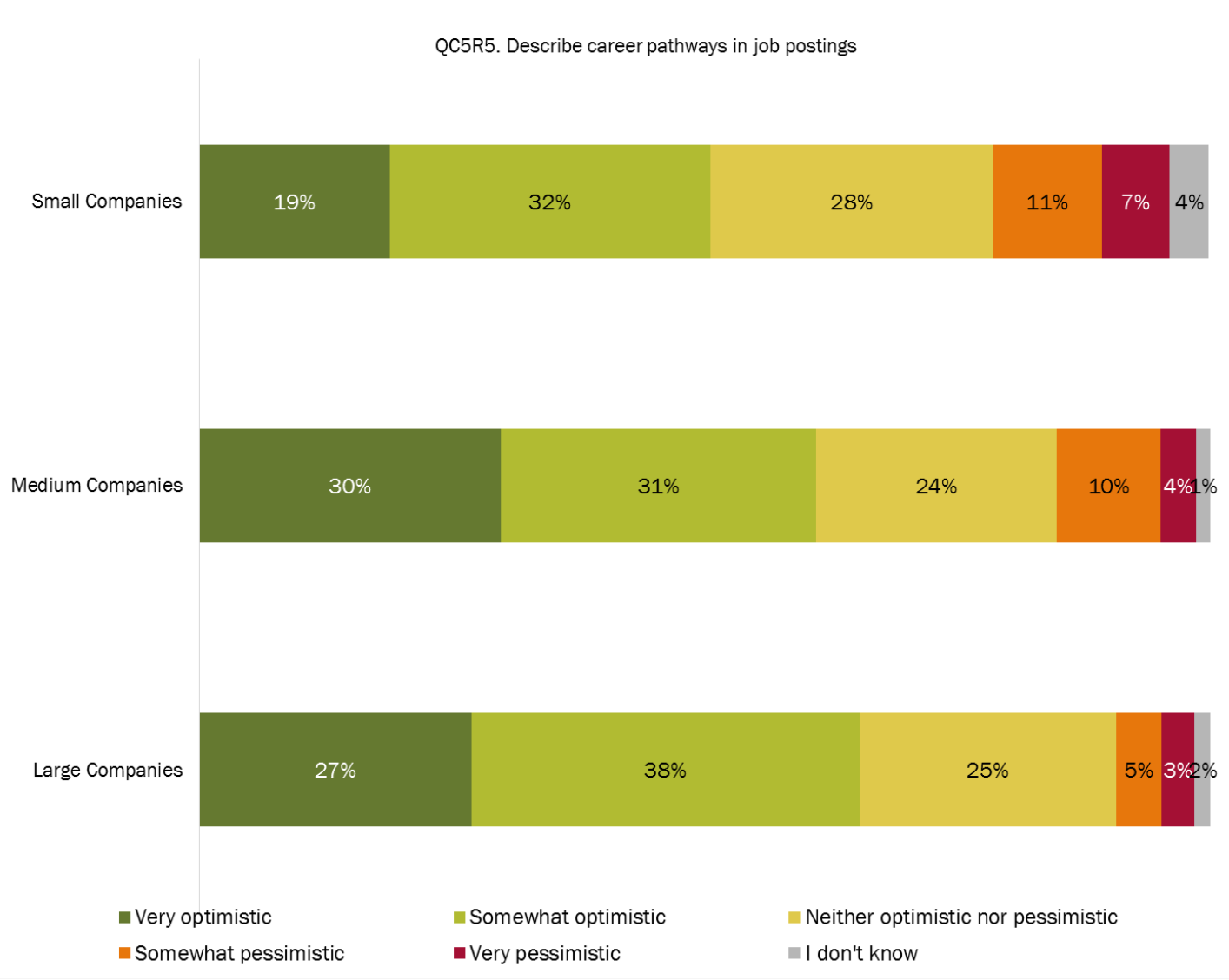

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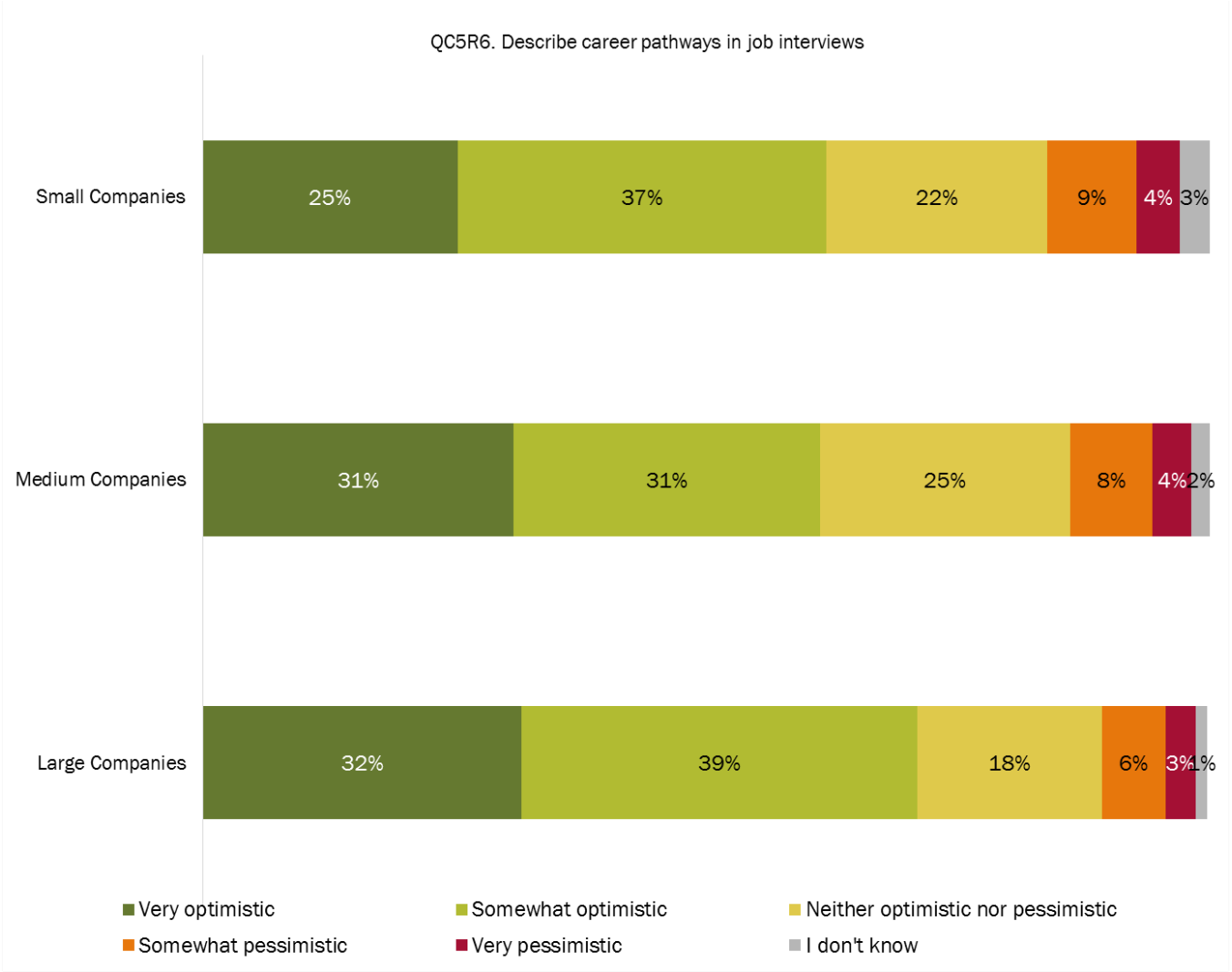

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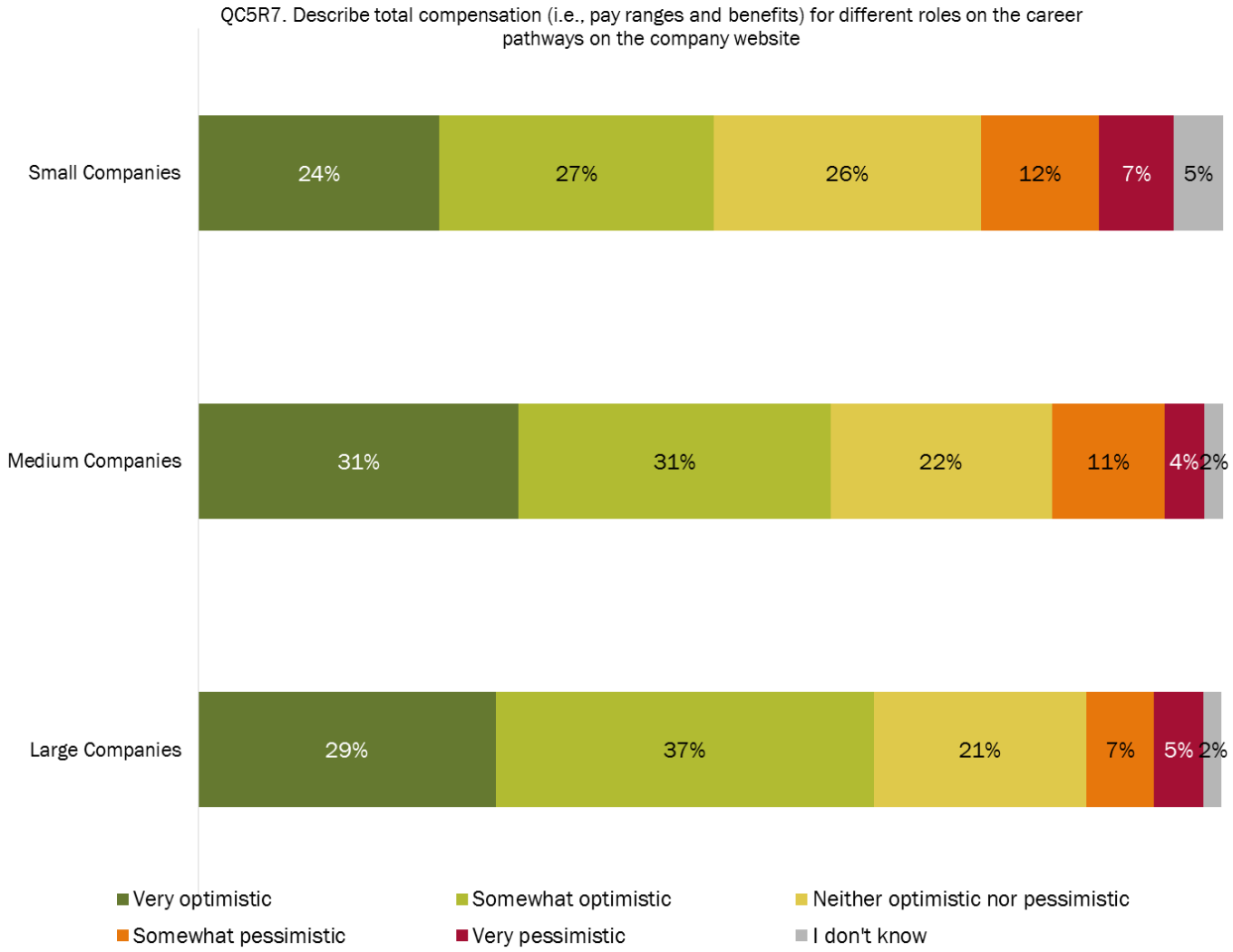

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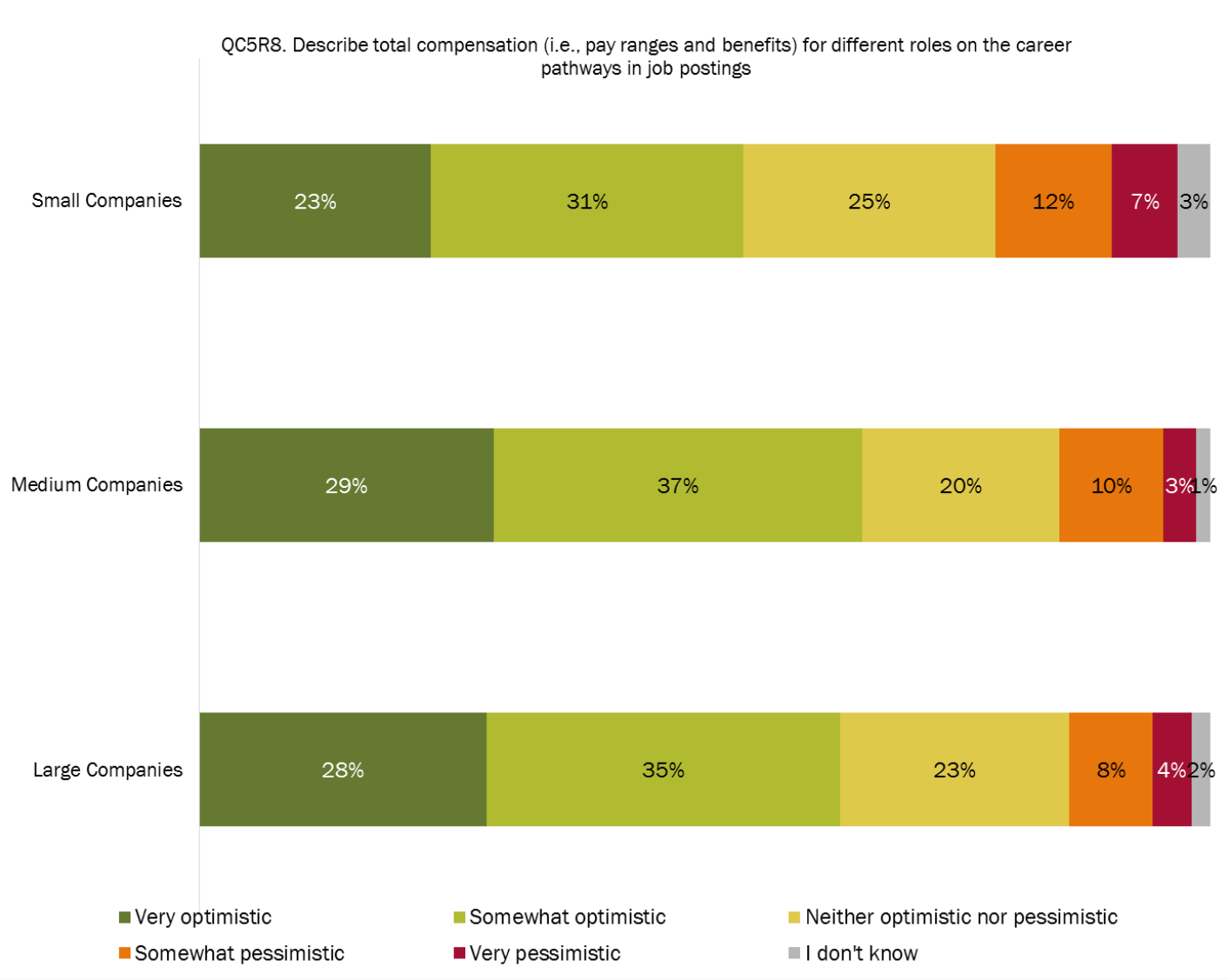

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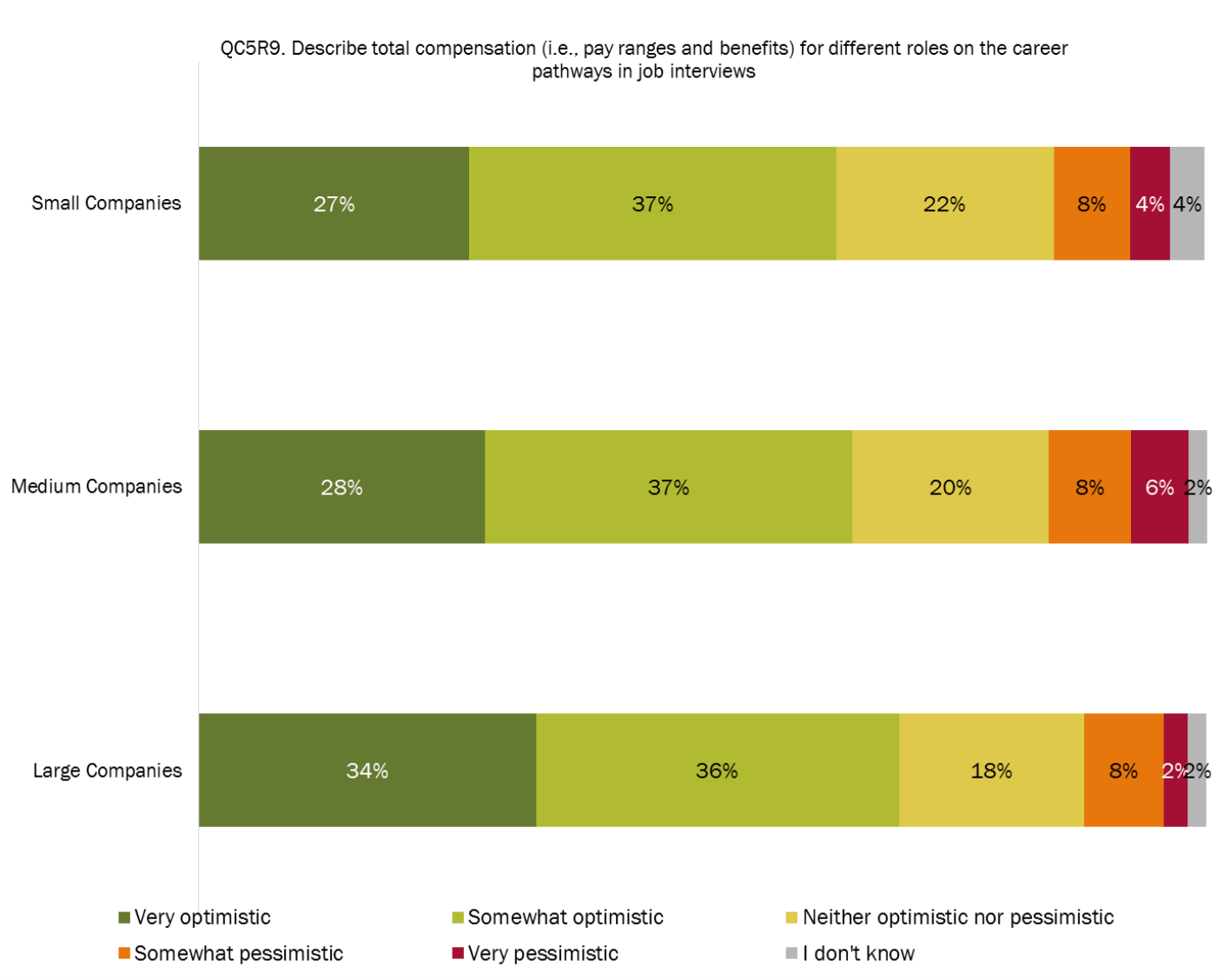

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Actions
Hiring

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C6. How often does your company:

N = 1,150

Actions
Hiring

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Actions
Hiring

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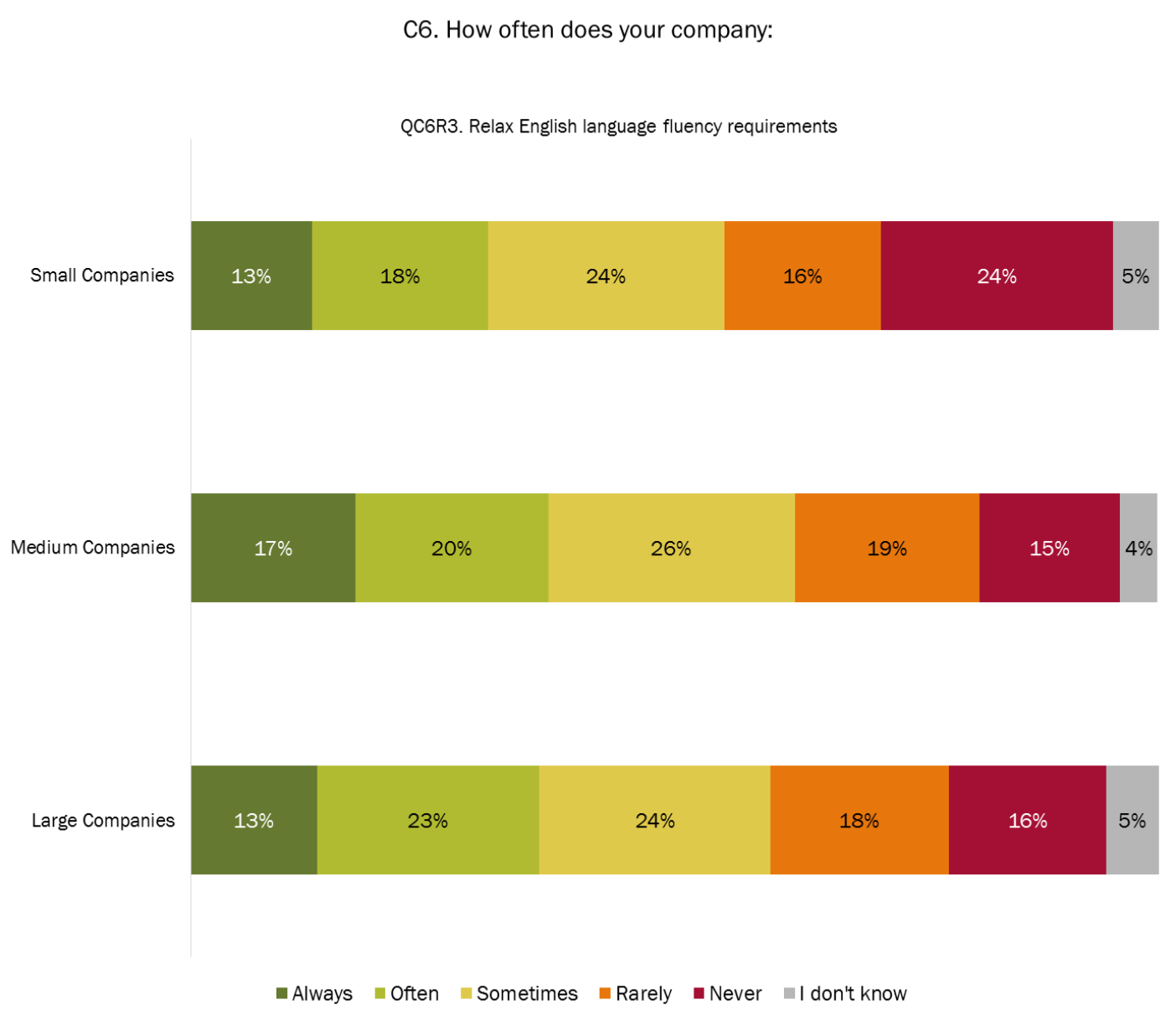

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Actions
Hiring

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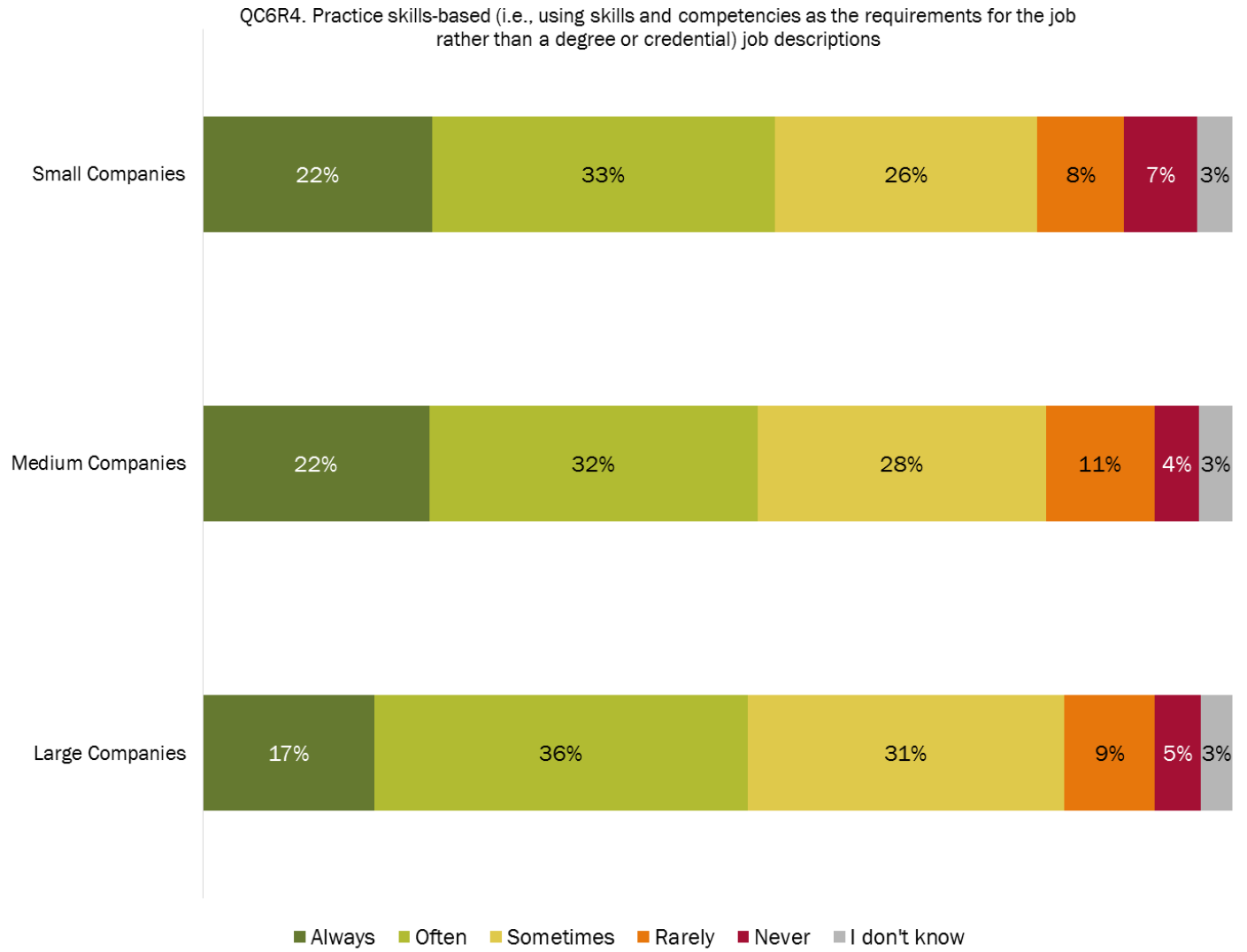

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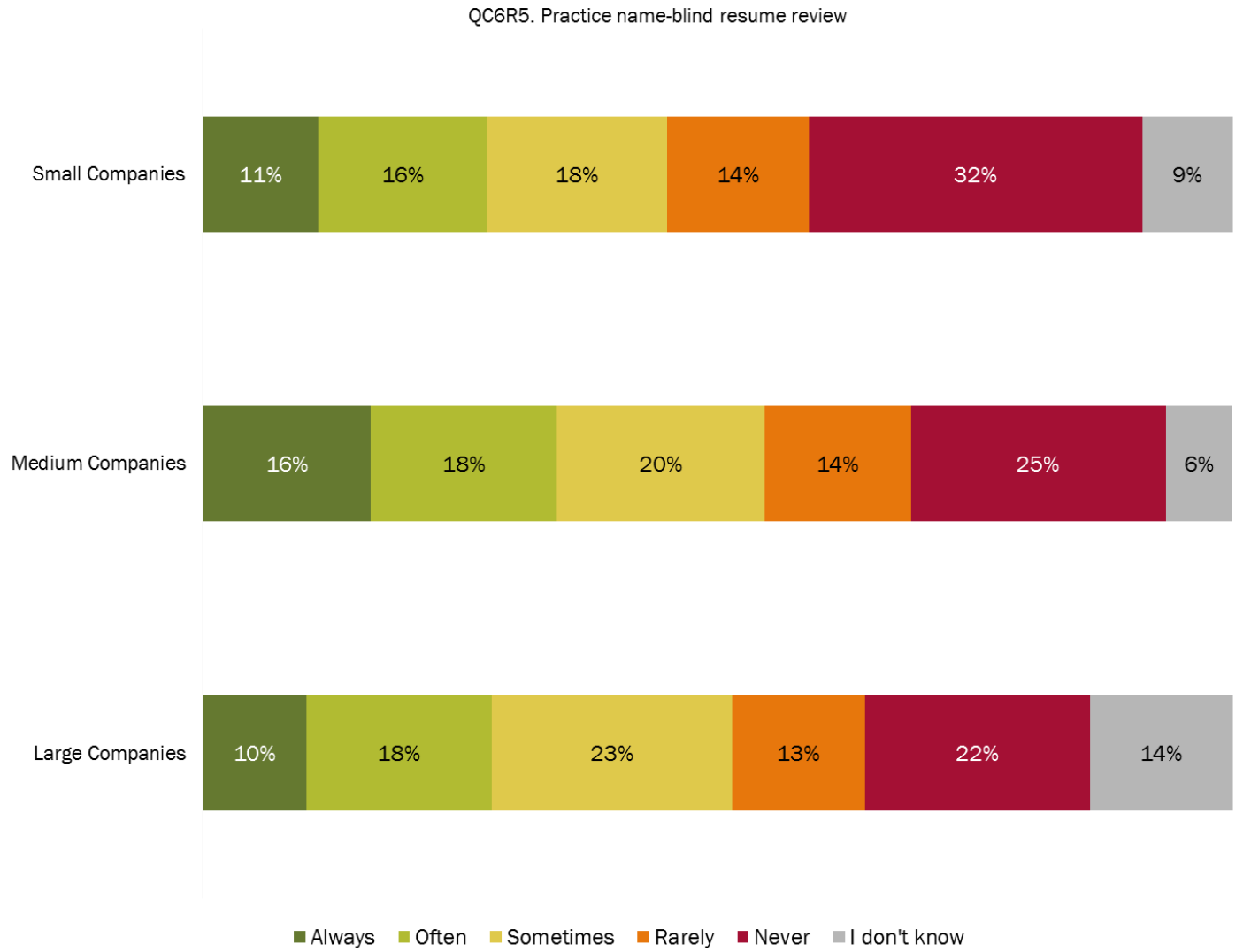

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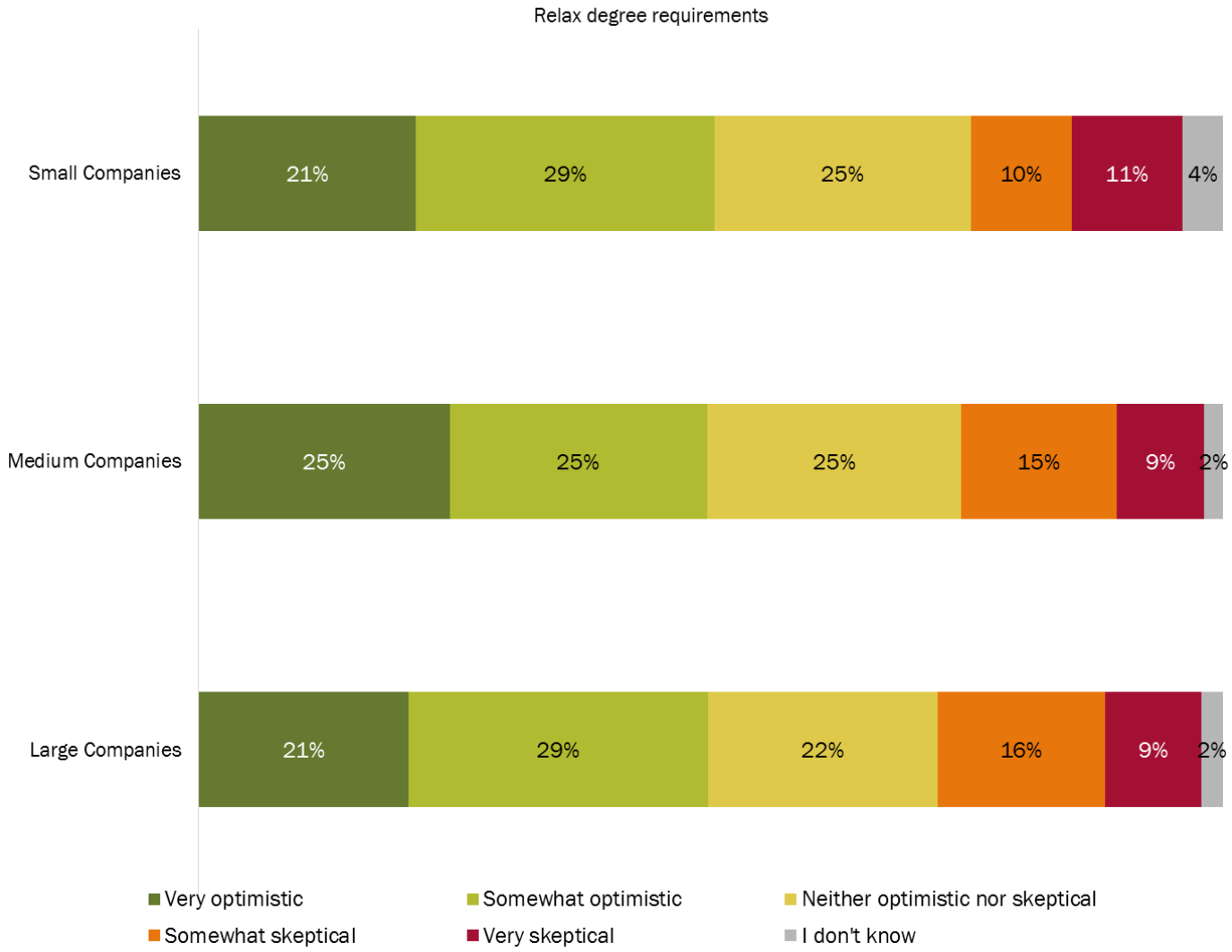
C7. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



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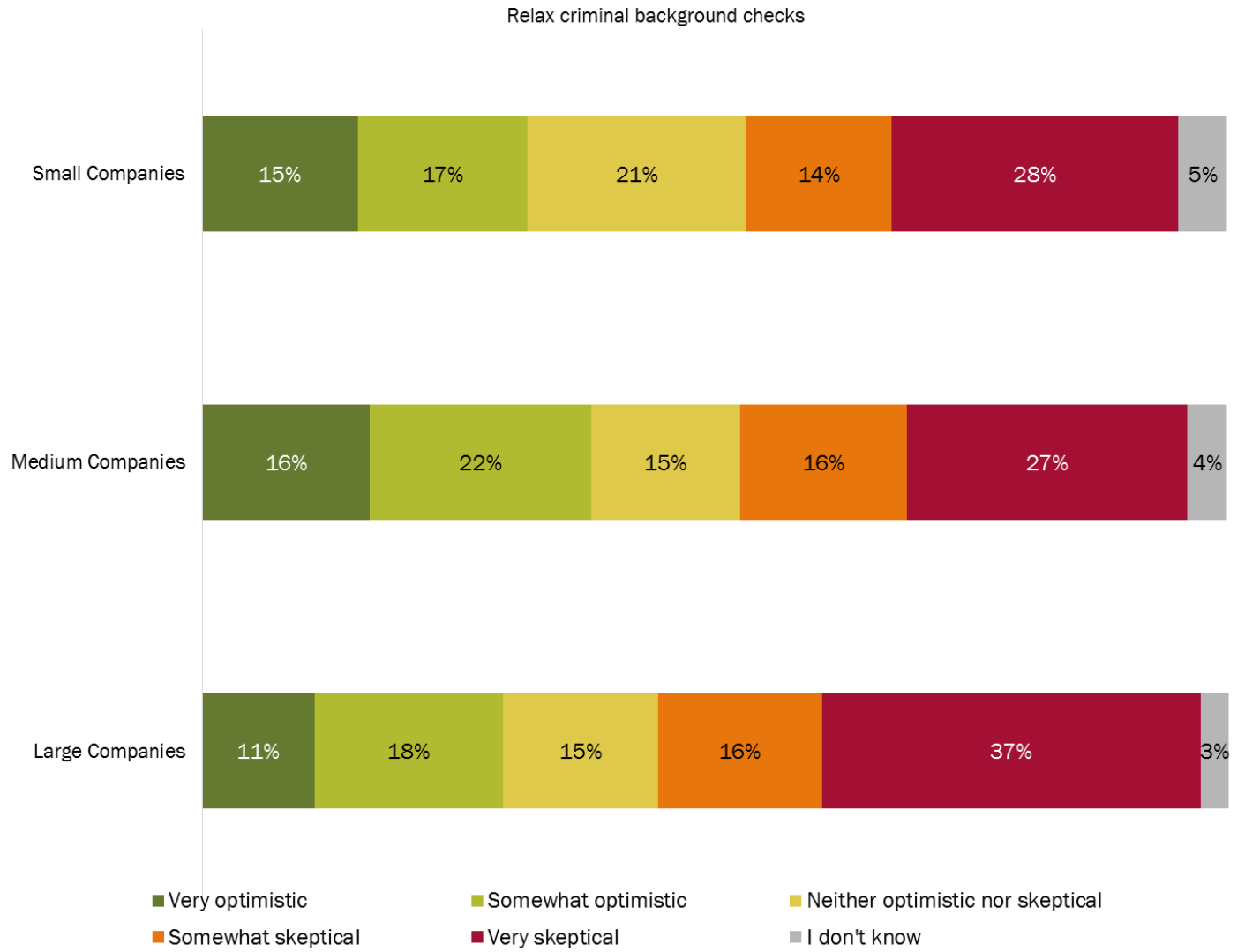

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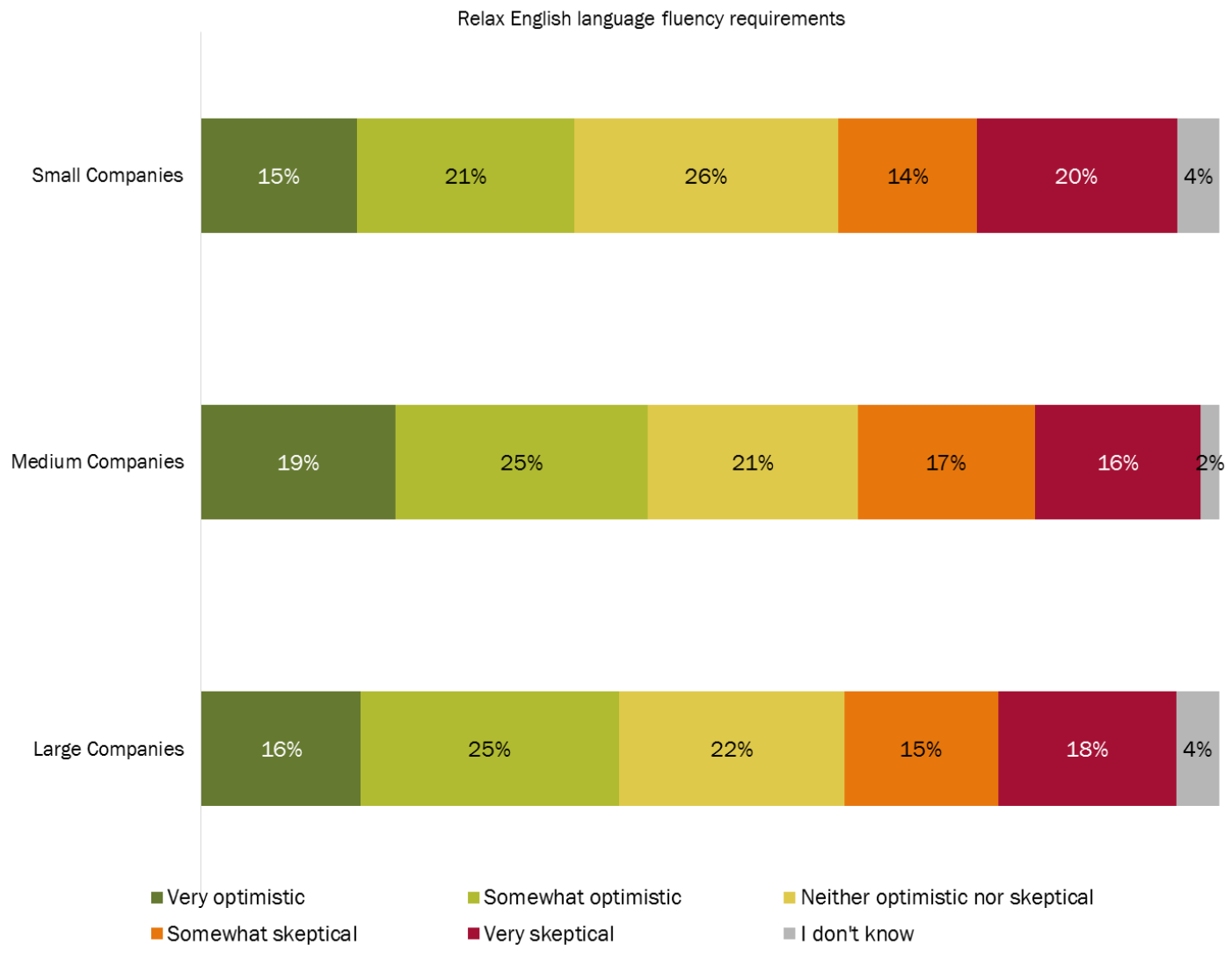

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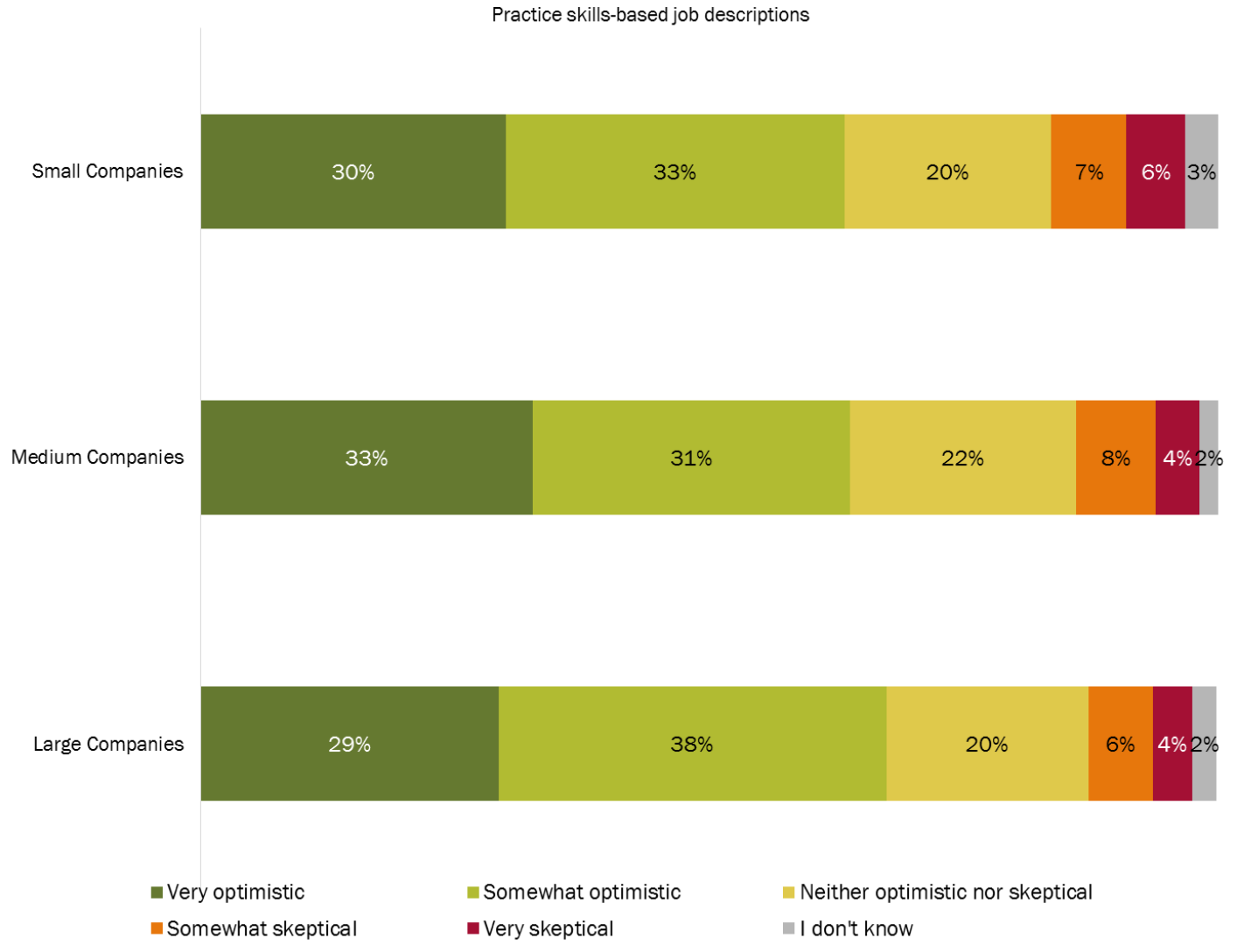

N = 1,150

Actions
Hiring

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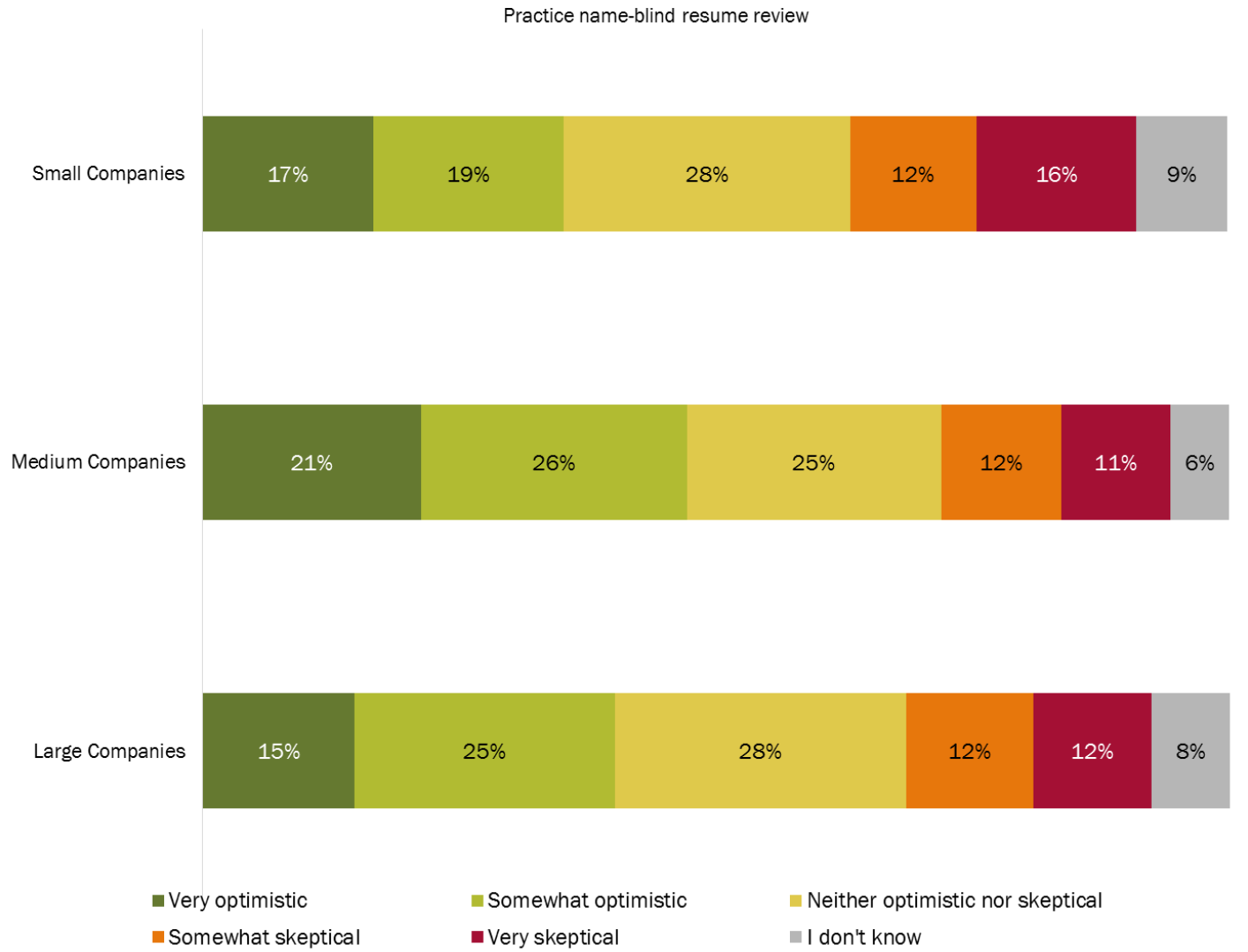
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C7. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

Actions
Hiring

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

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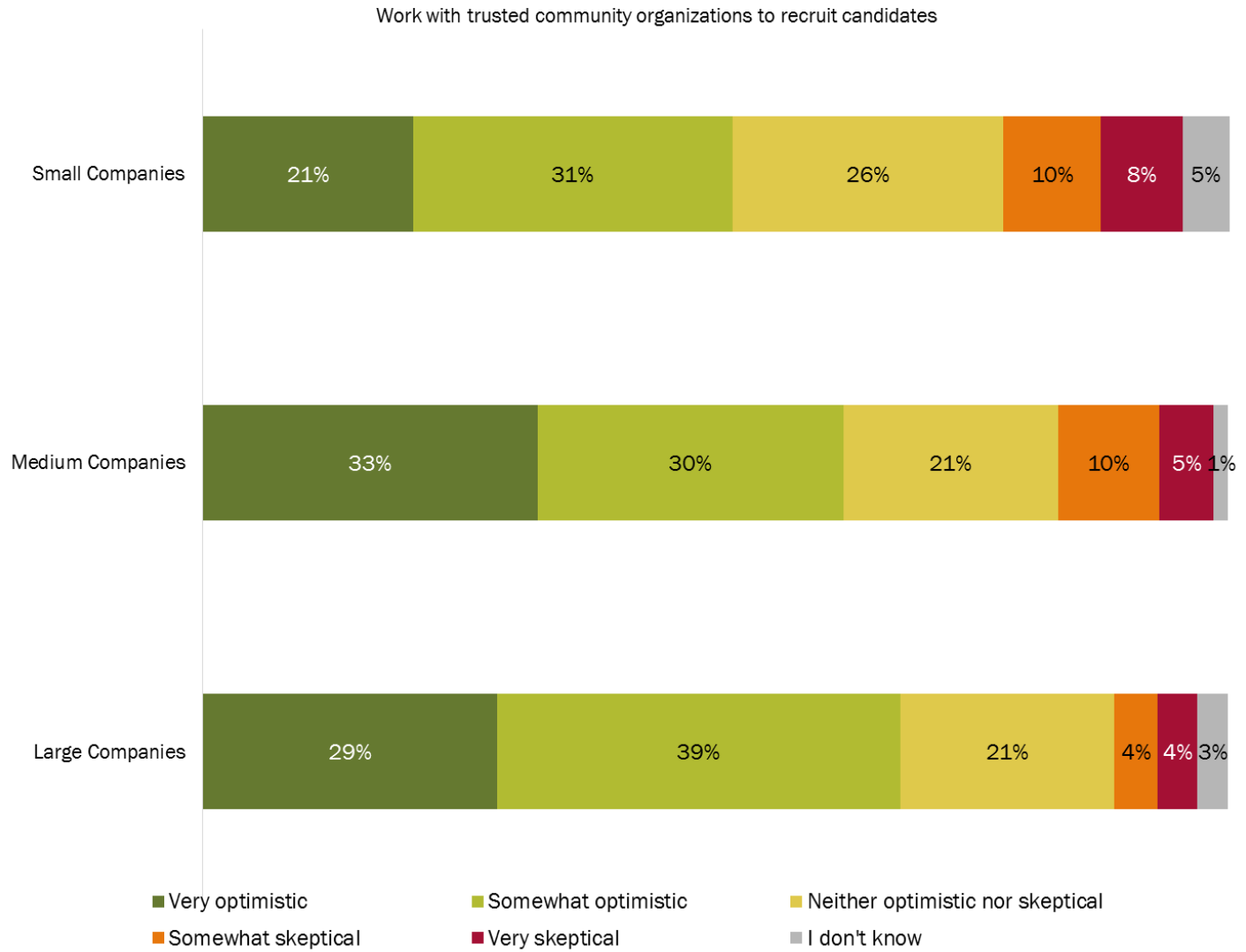

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Actions
Onboarding

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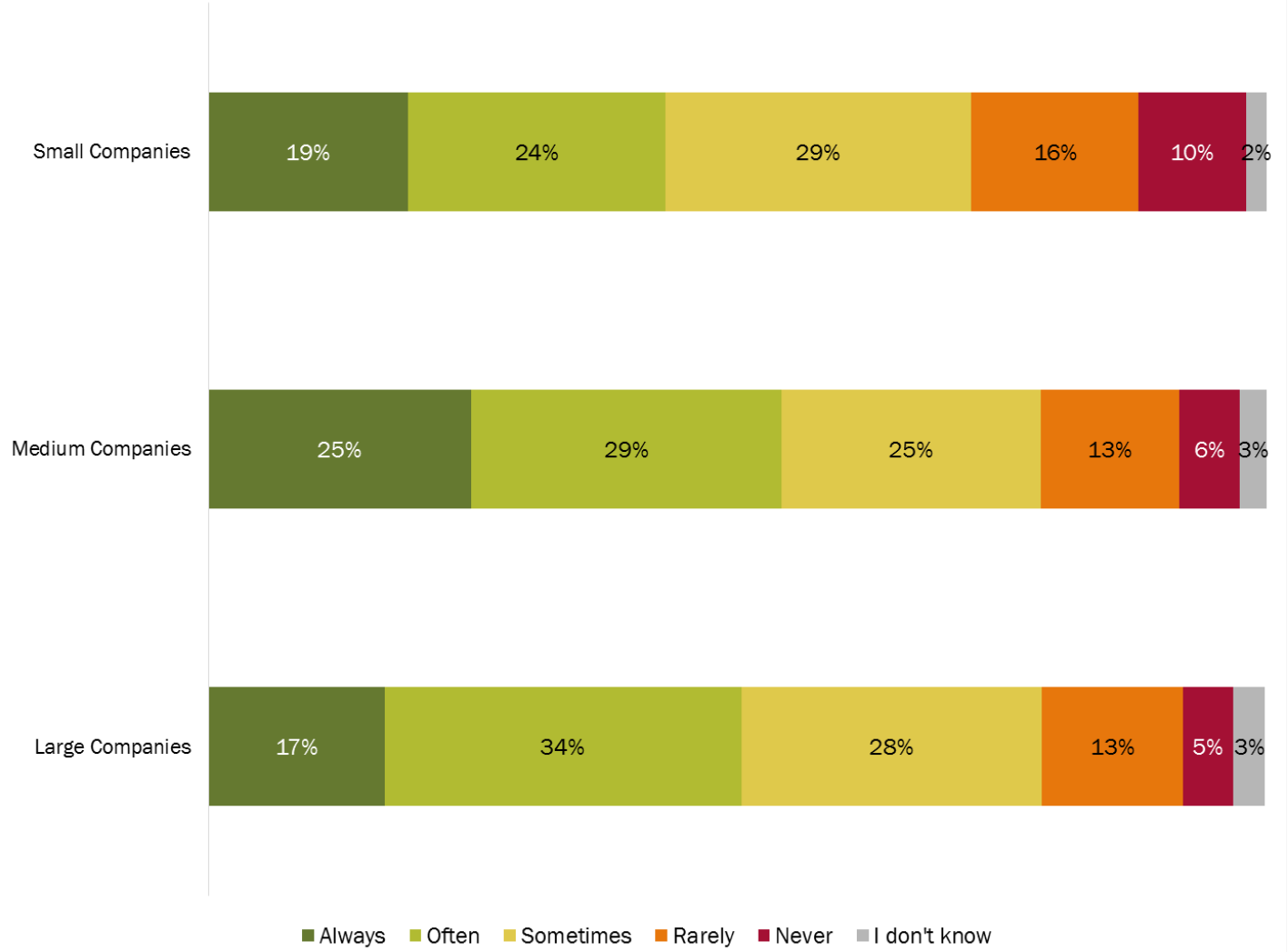
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C8. How often does your company:

QC8R1. Communicate upward mobility opportunities and pathways during onboarding



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Actions
Onboarding

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C8. How often does your company:

N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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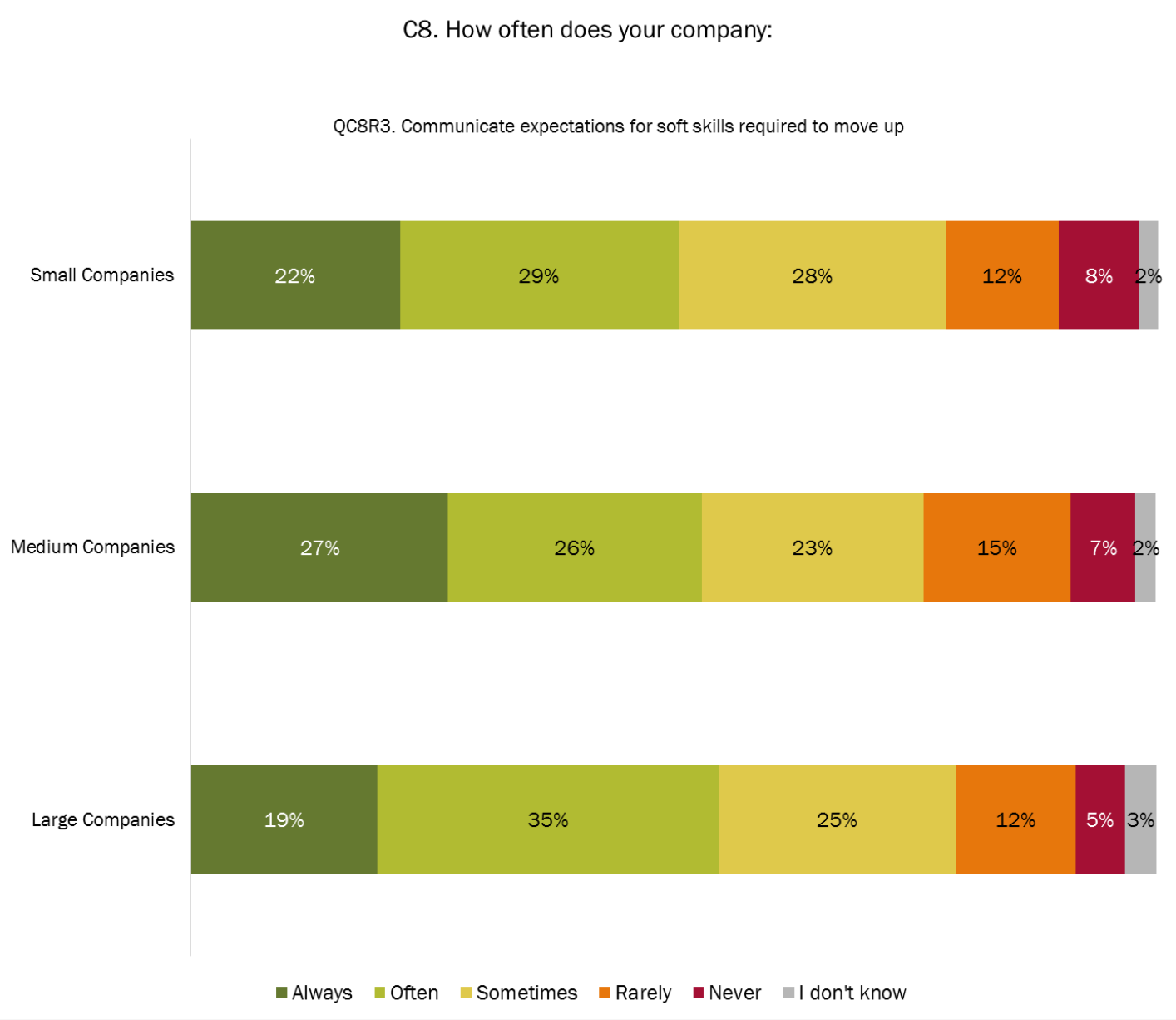
C8. How often does your company:



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Actions
Onboarding

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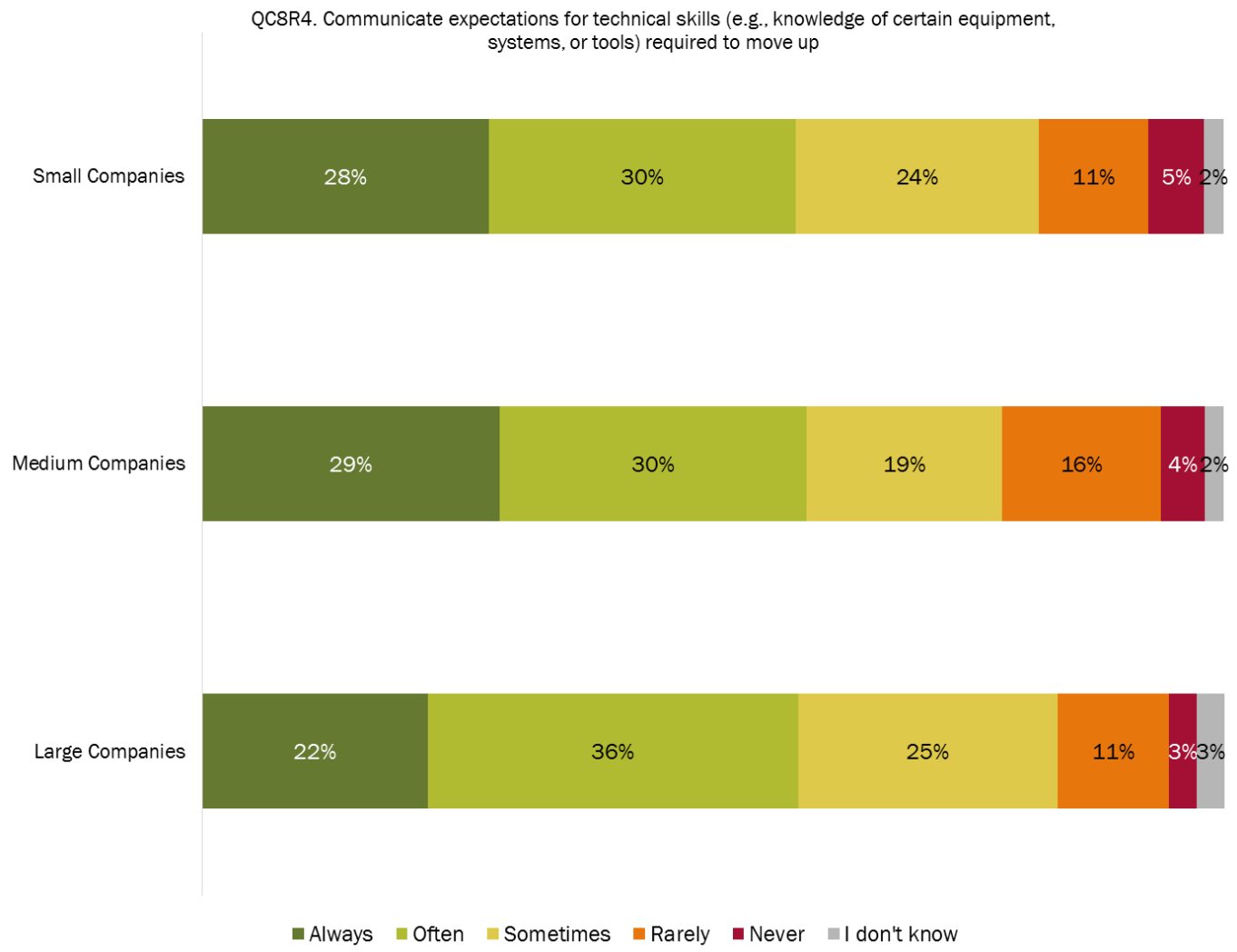
C8. How often does your company:



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Actions
Onboarding

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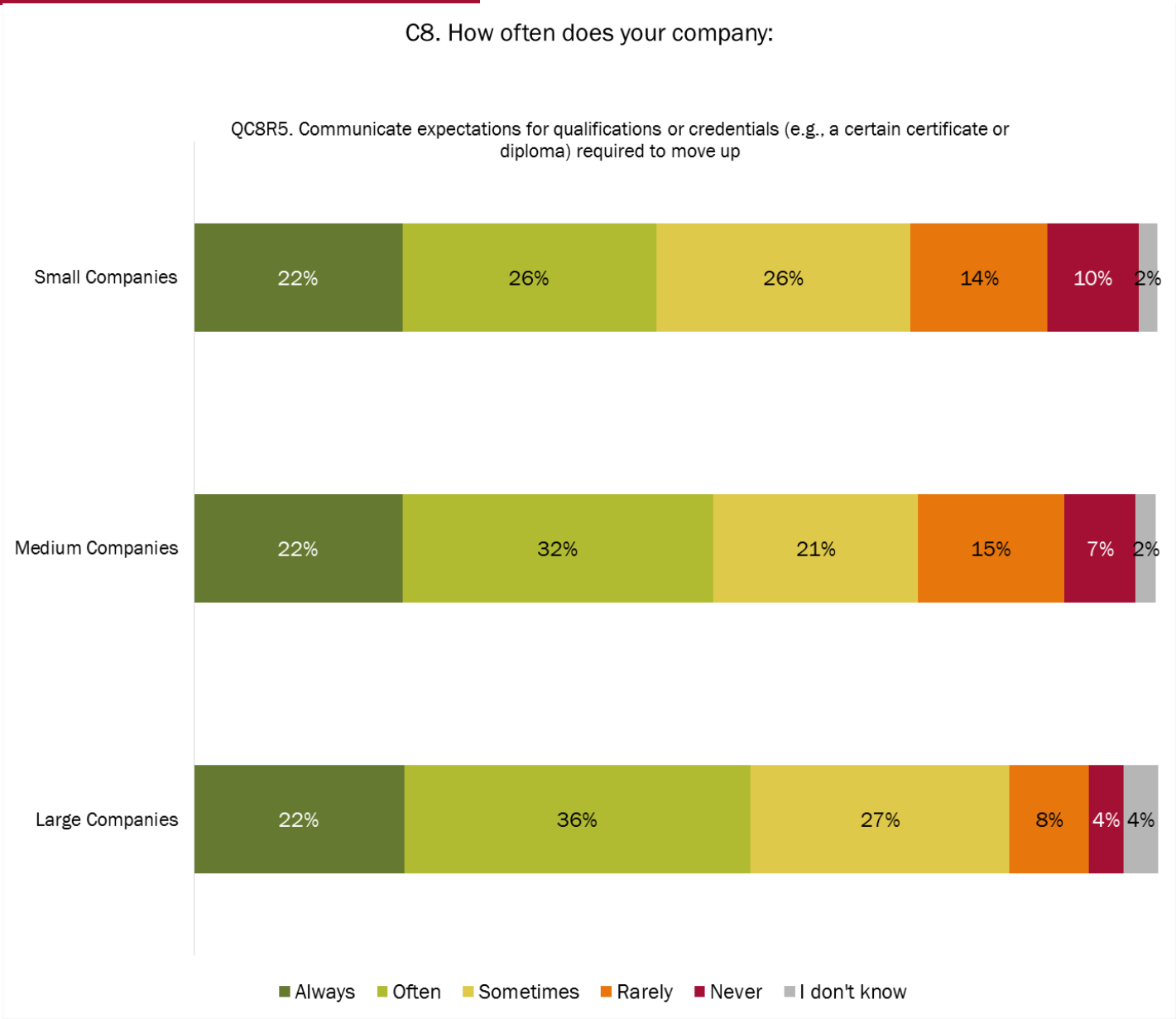
C8. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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Actions
Onboarding

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C8. How often does your company:

N = 1,150

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Actions
Onboarding

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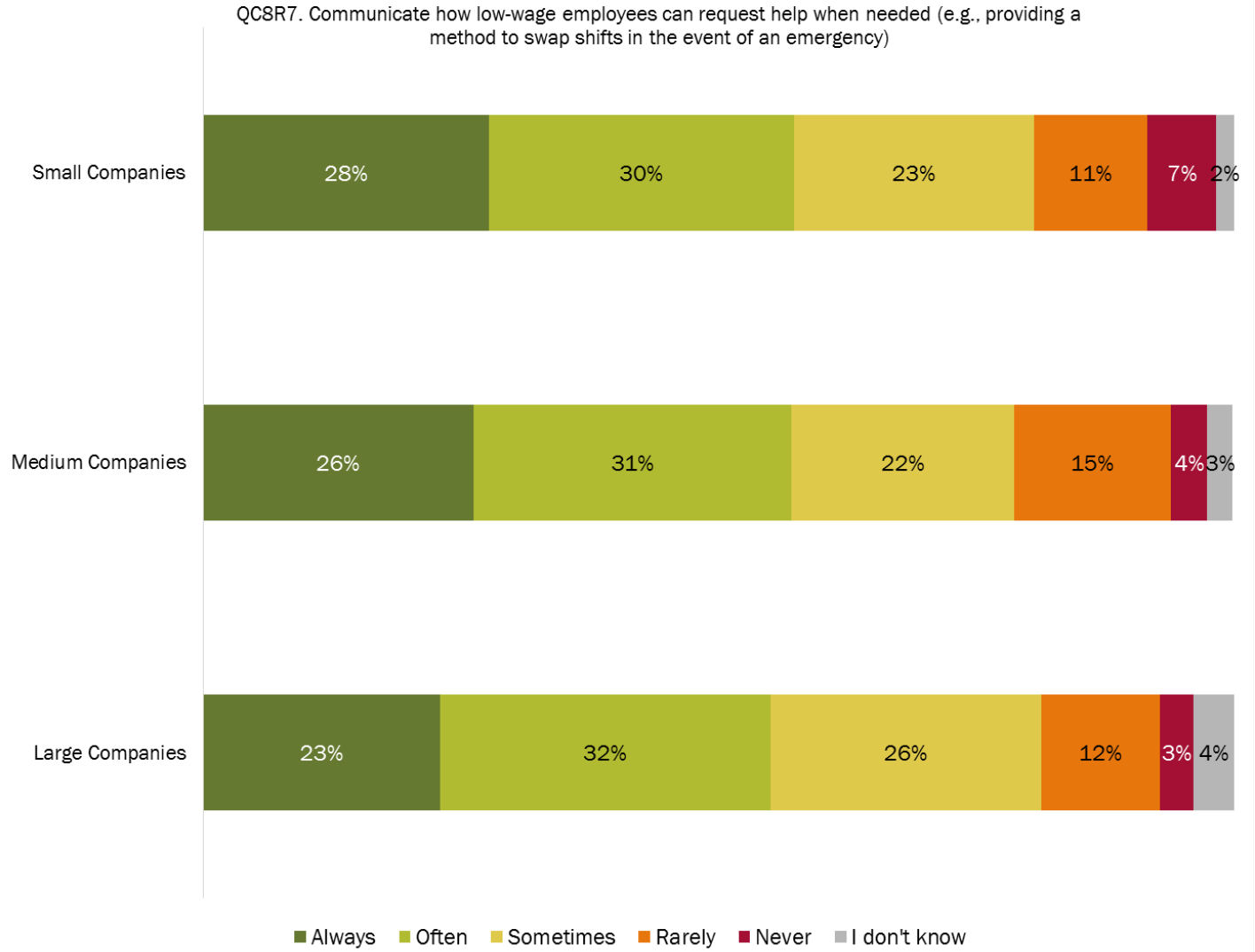
C8. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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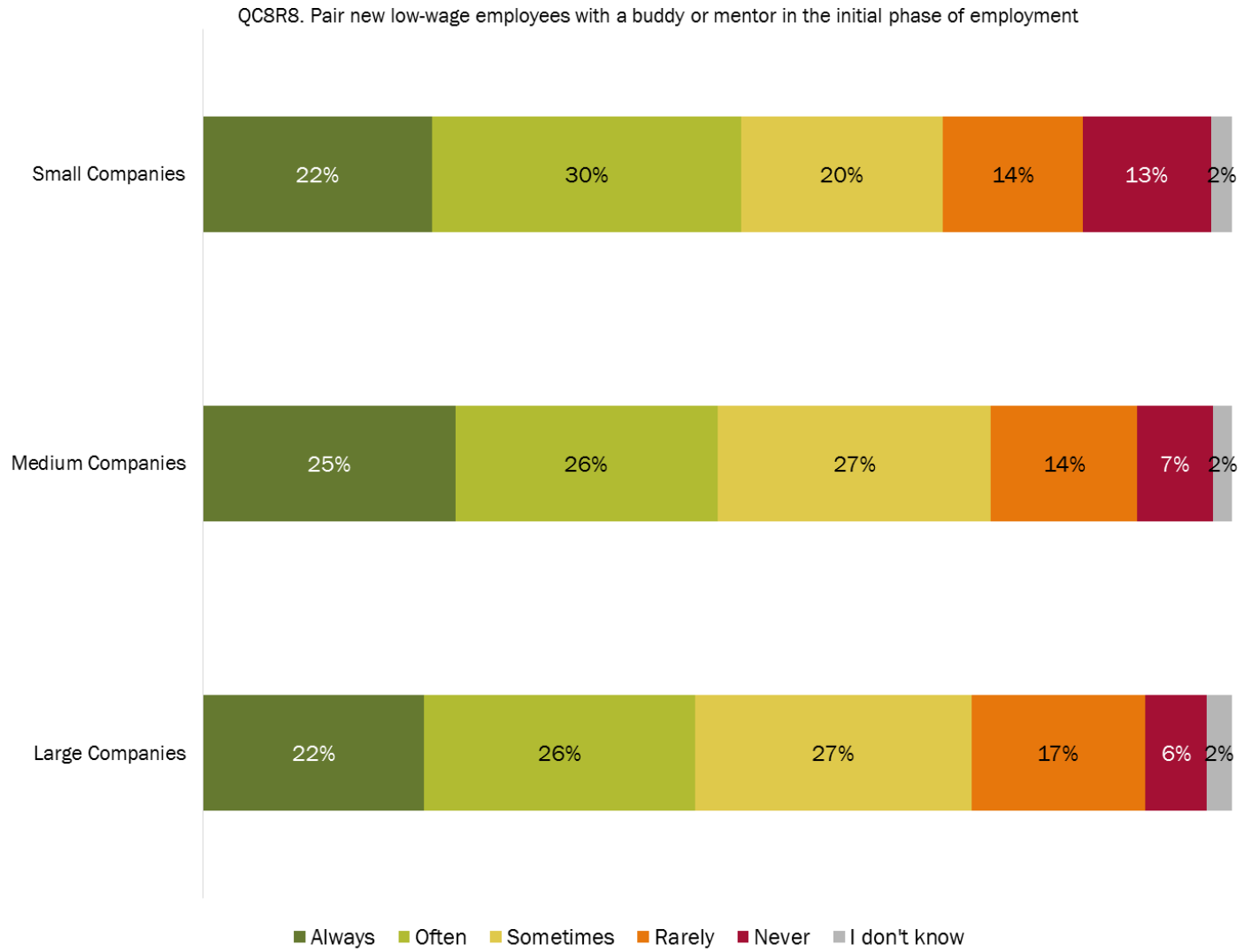

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Actions
Onboarding

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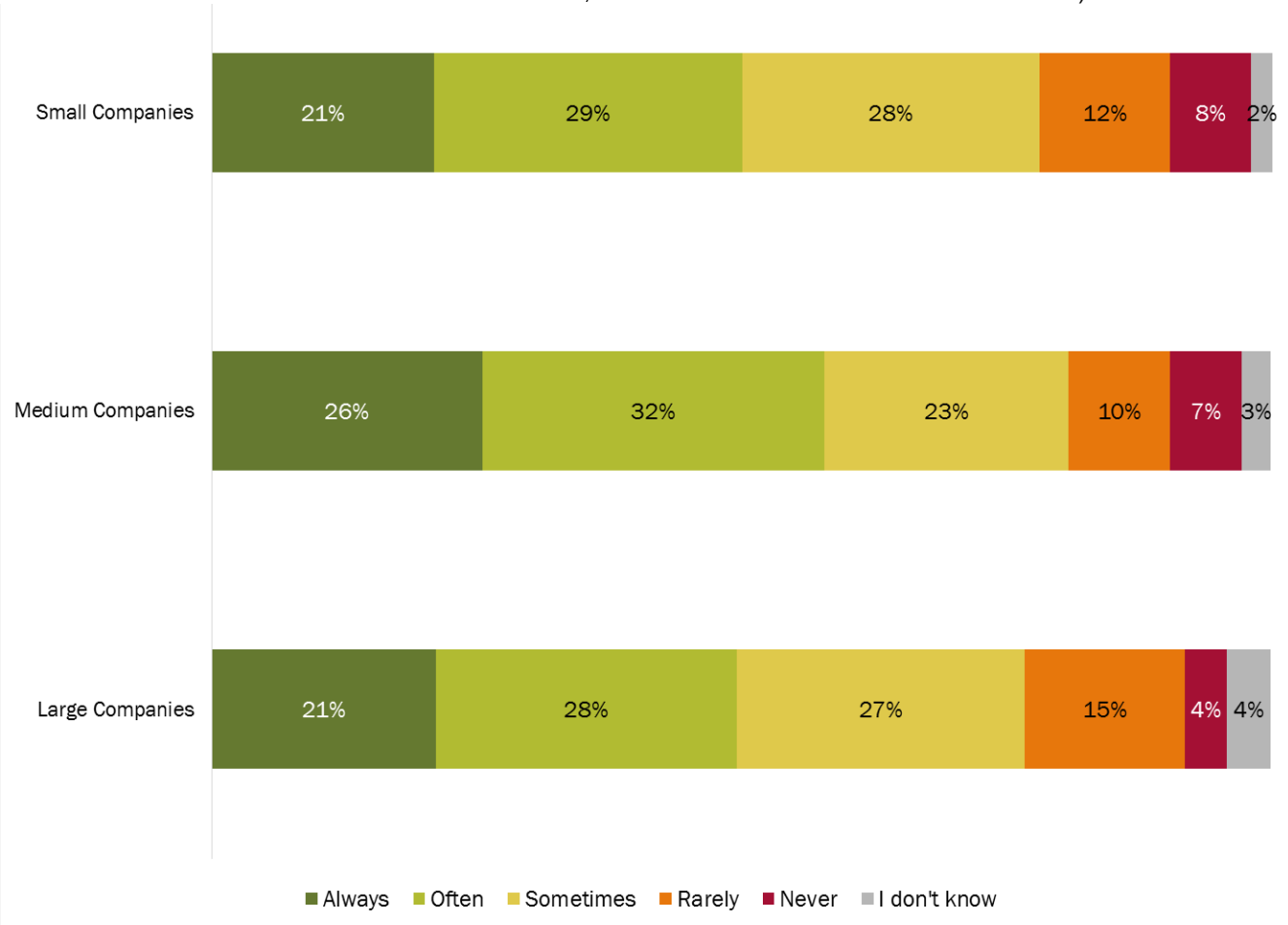
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C8. How often does your company:

QC8R9. Speak with new low-wage employees to understand what personal circumstances might affect the employee's ability to perform as required for success at work (e.g., reliable transportation to work, reliable childcare, household's financial circumstances)



N = 1,150

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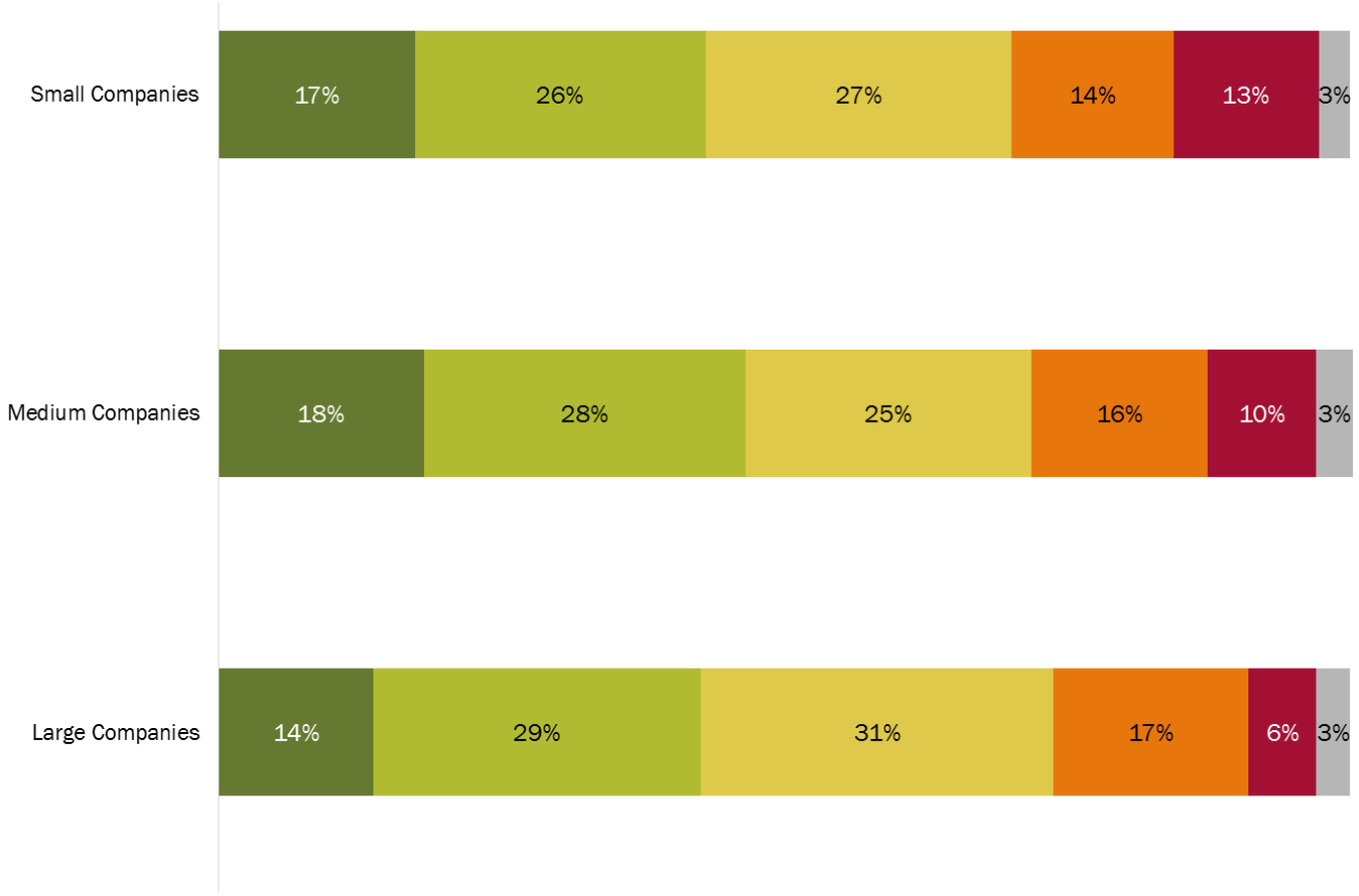
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C8. How often does your company:

QC8R10. Discuss challenges that low-wage employees may have in moving up (e.g., skill deficiencies, care responsibilities, transportation needs, schedule concerns)



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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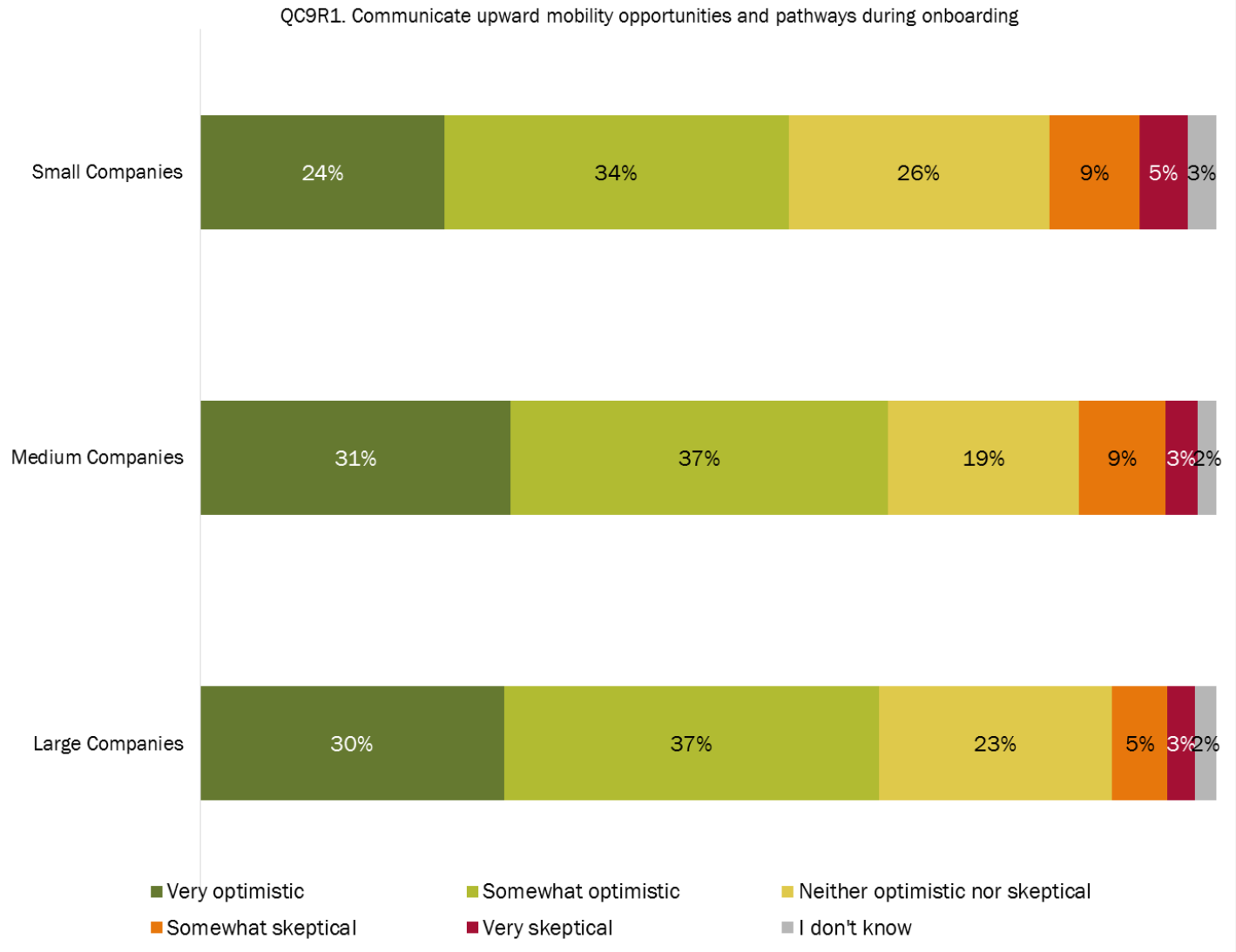
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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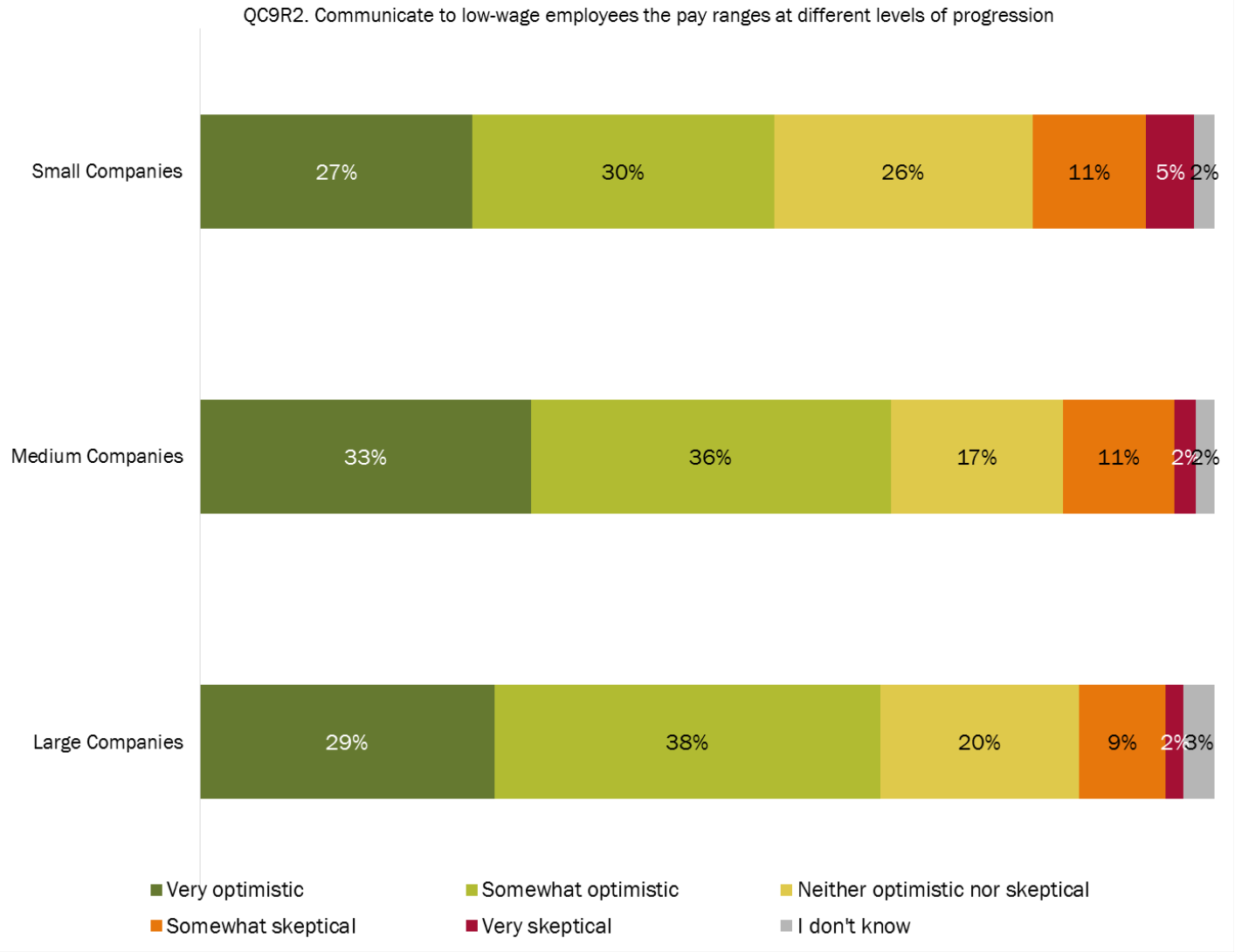

N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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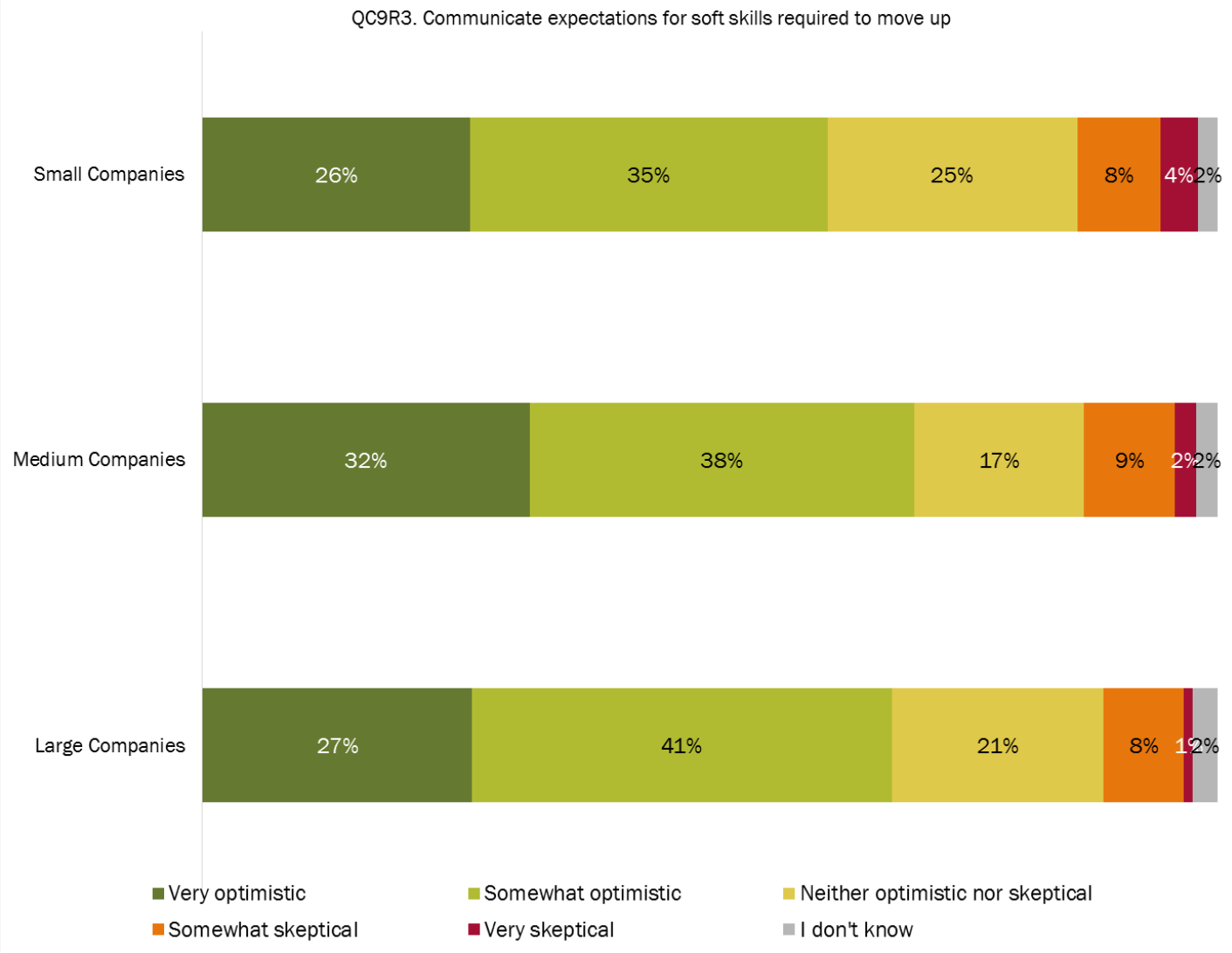

N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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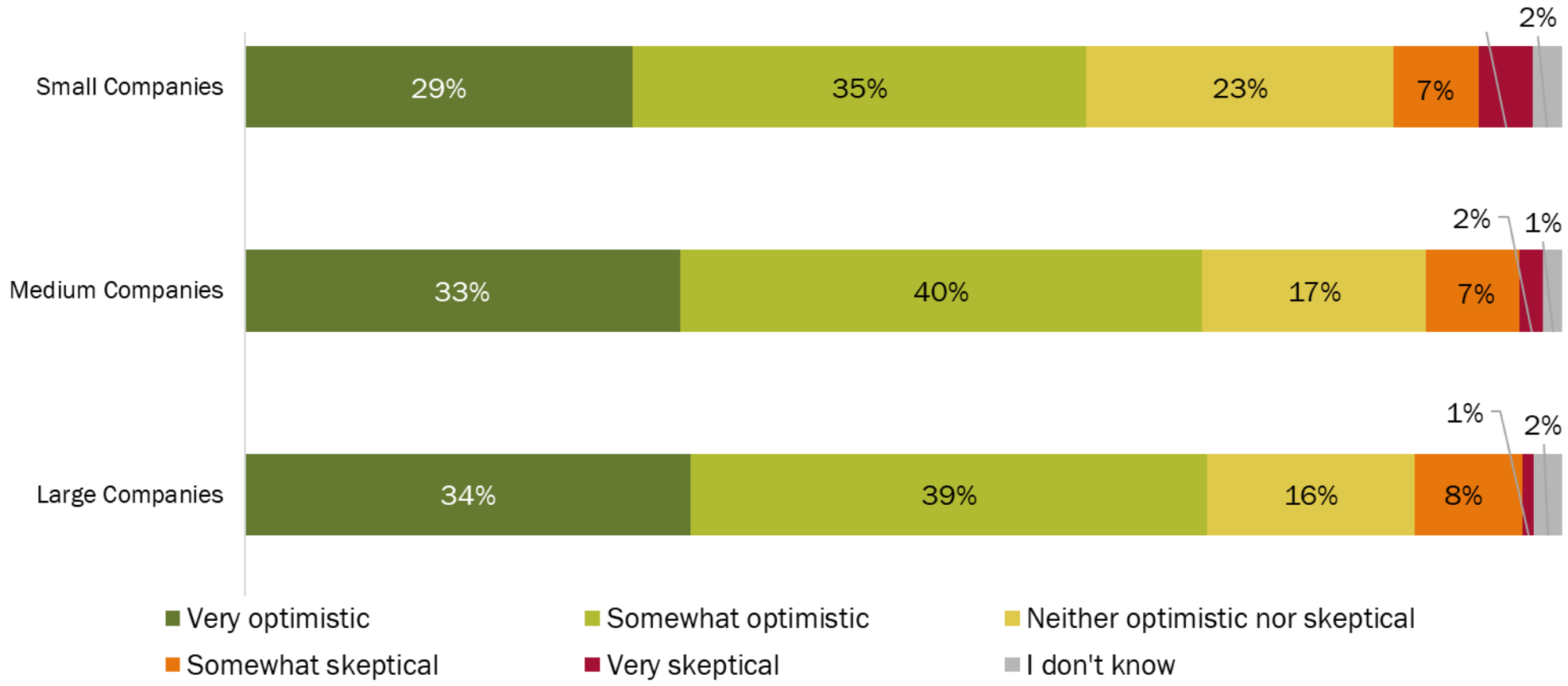
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R4. Communicate expectations for technical skills (e.g., knowledge of certain equipment, systems, or tools) required to move up



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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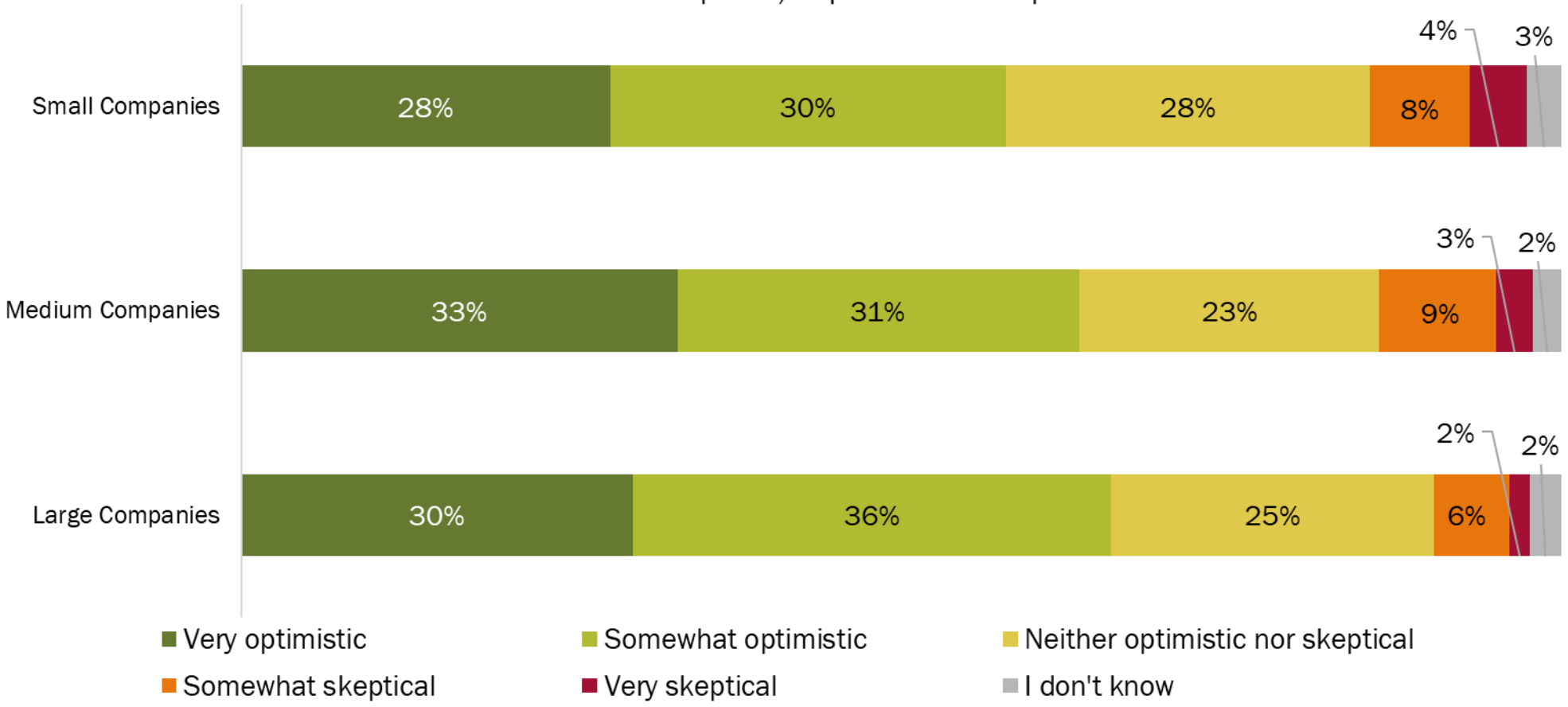
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R5. Communicate expectations for qualifications or credentials (e.g., a certain certificate or diploma) required to move up



N = 1,150

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Onboarding

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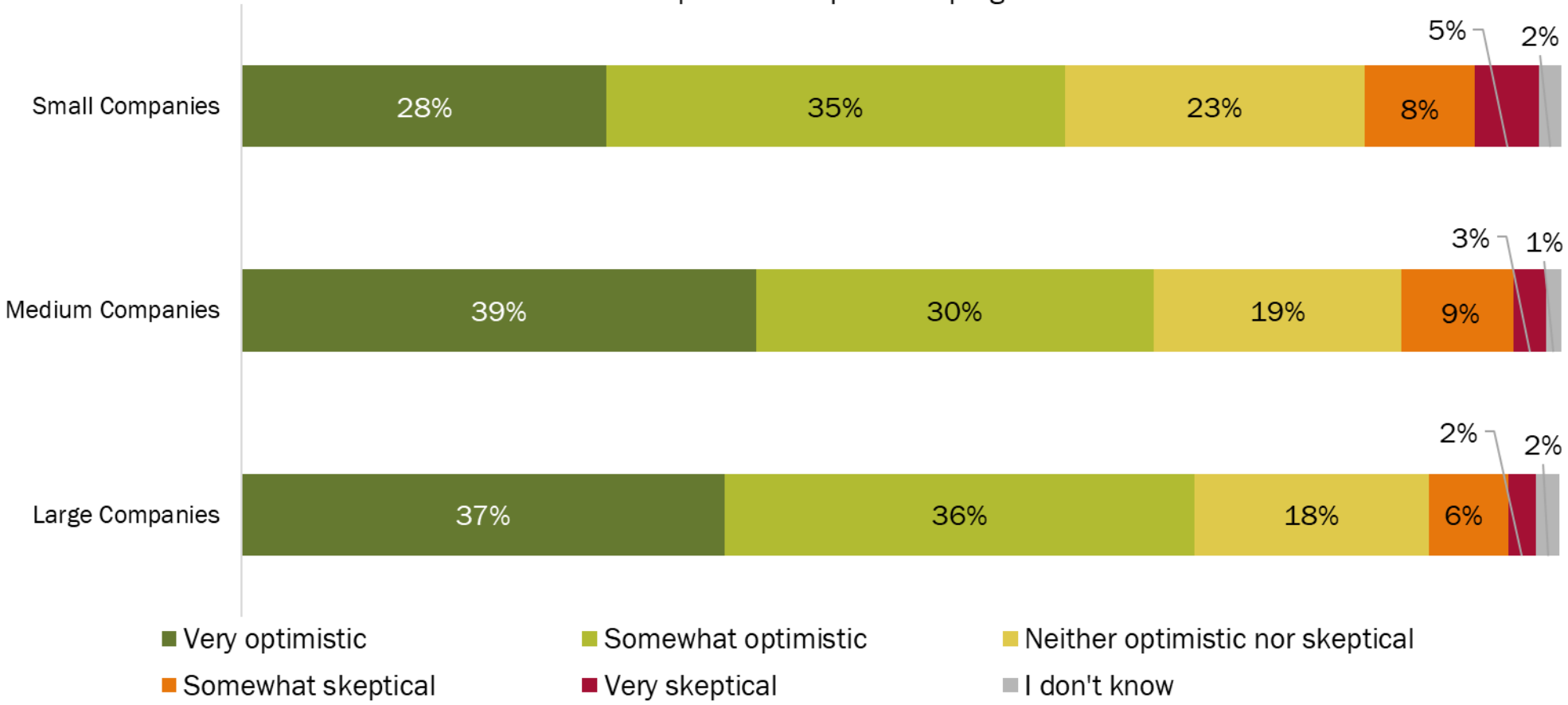
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R6. Communicate how low-wage employees can obtain the skills, training, certifications, and experience required for progression



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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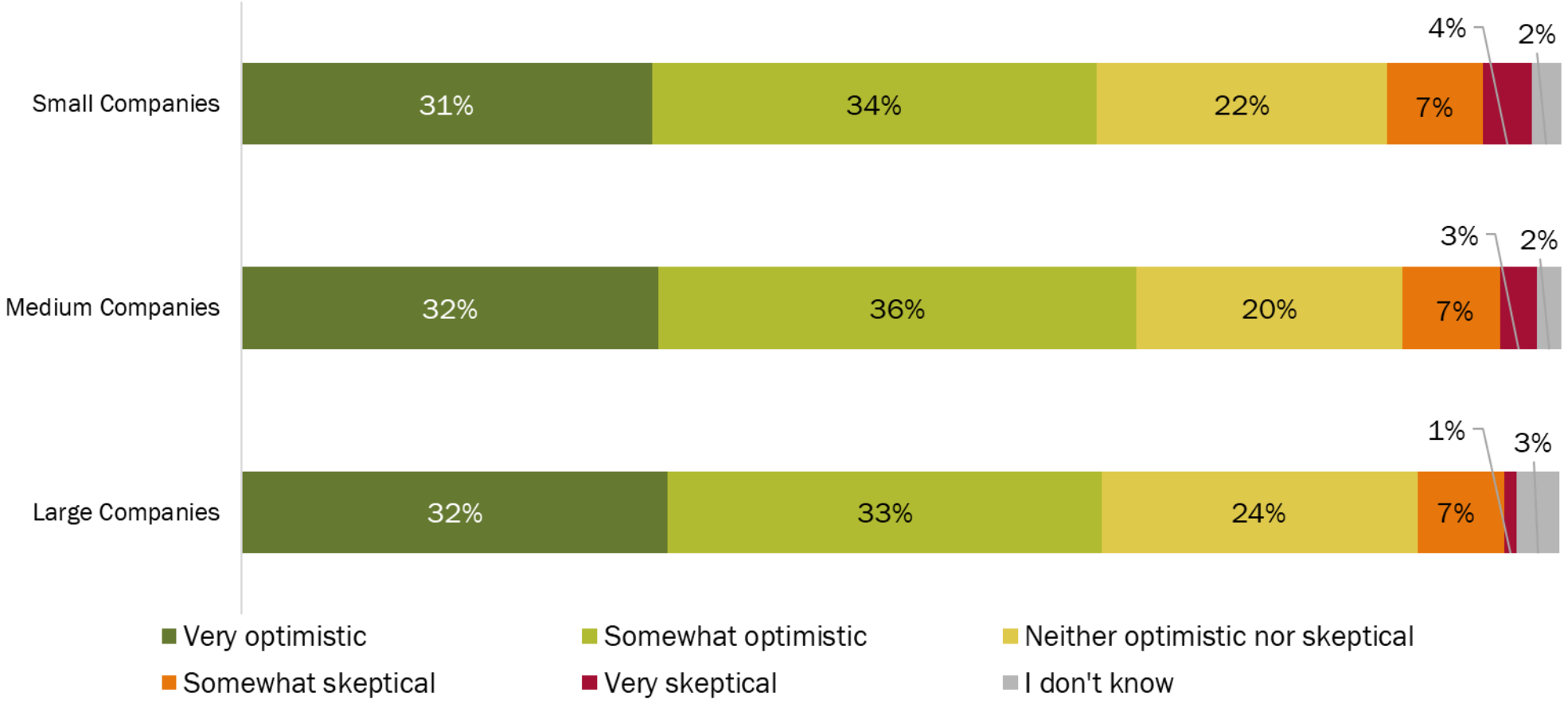
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R7. Communicate how low-wage employees can request help when needed (e.g., providing a method to swap shifts in the event of an emergency)



N = 1,150

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Onboarding

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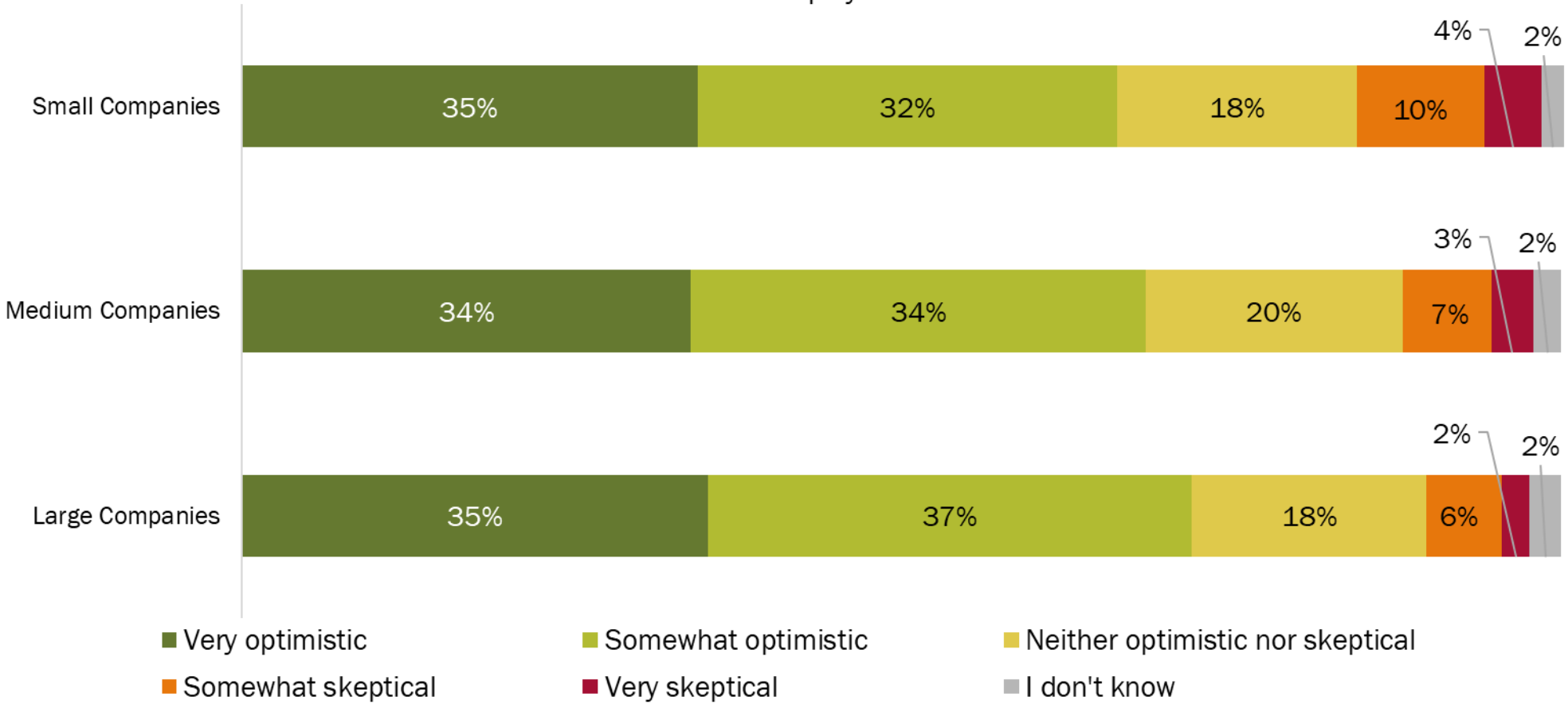
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R8. Pair new low-wage employees with a buddy or mentor in the initial phase of employment



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Actions
Onboarding

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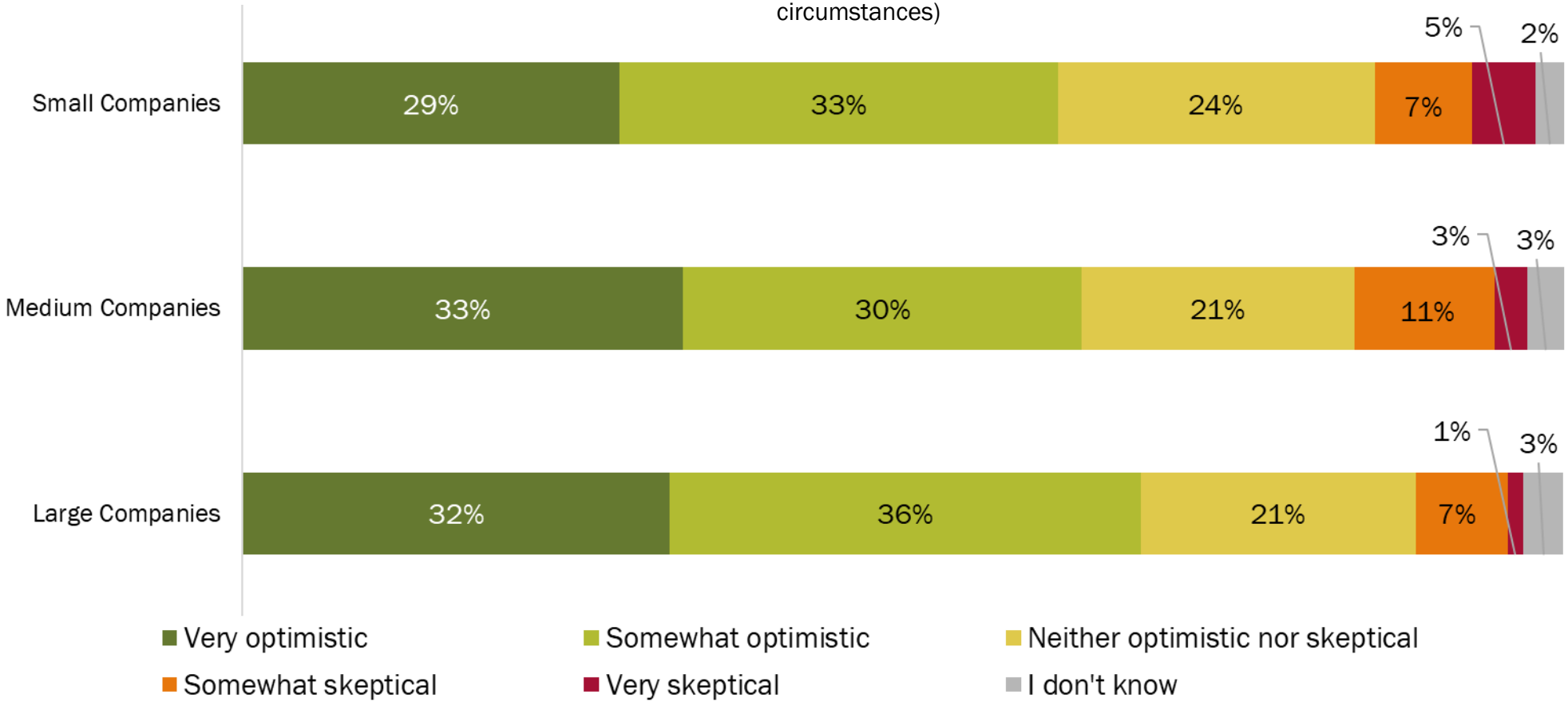
QC9R9. Speak with new low-wage employees to understand what personal circumstances might affect the employee's ability to perform as required for success at work (e.g., reliable transportation to work, reliable childcare, household's financial circumstances)



N = 1,150

Actions
Onboarding

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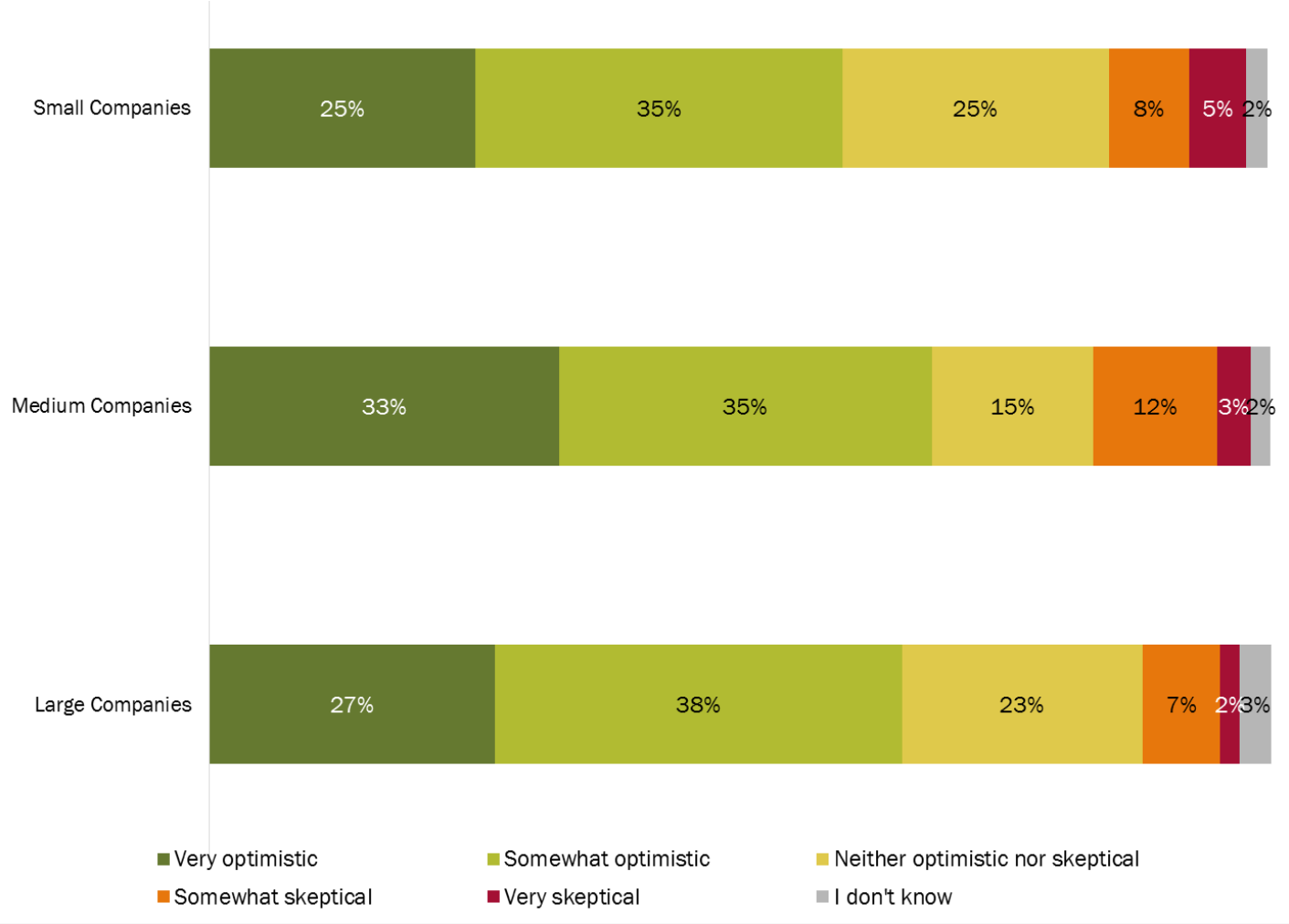
C9. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC9R10. Discuss challenges that low-wage employees may have in moving up (e.g., skill deficiencies, care responsibilities, transportation needs, schedule concerns)



N = 1,150

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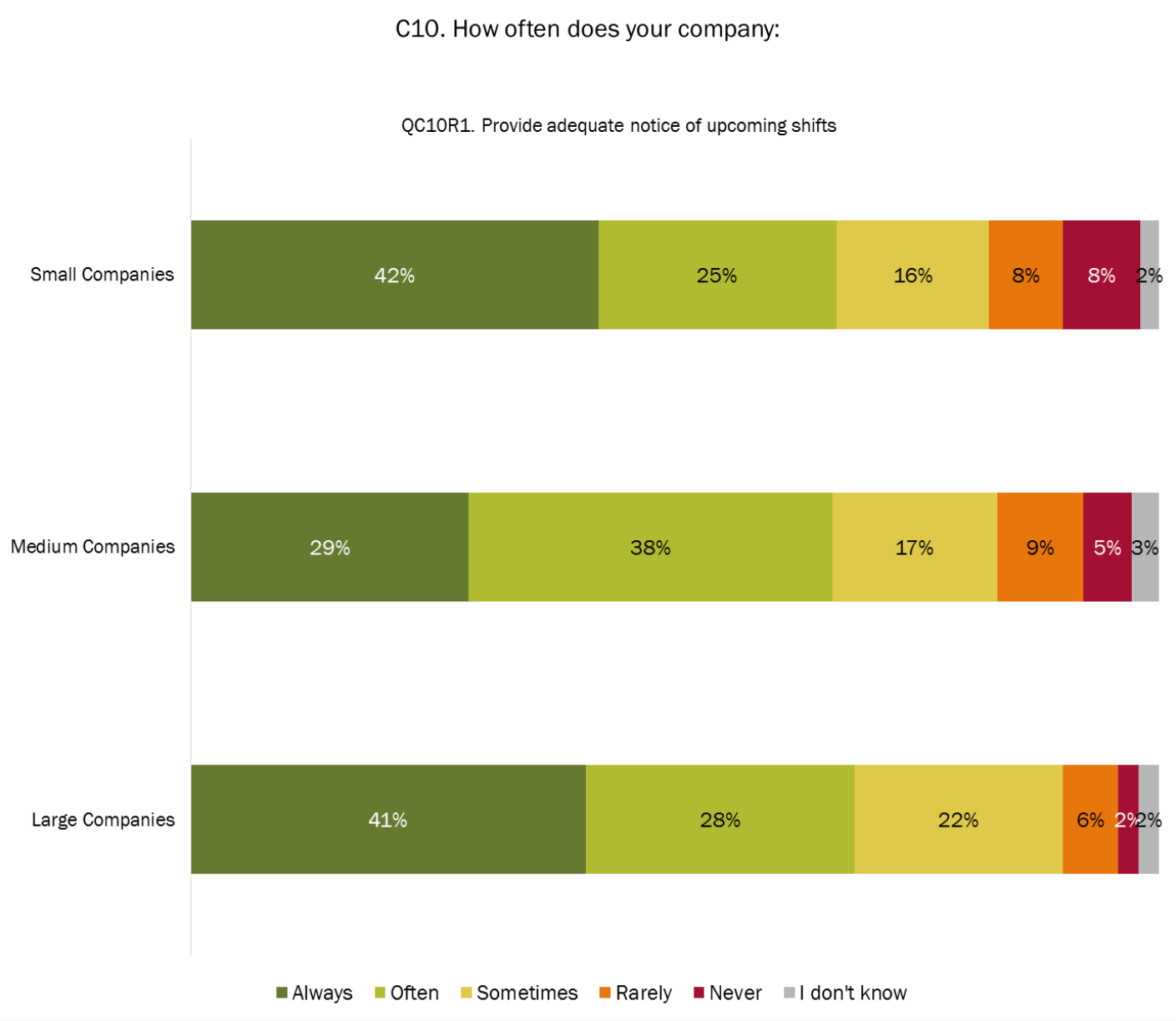
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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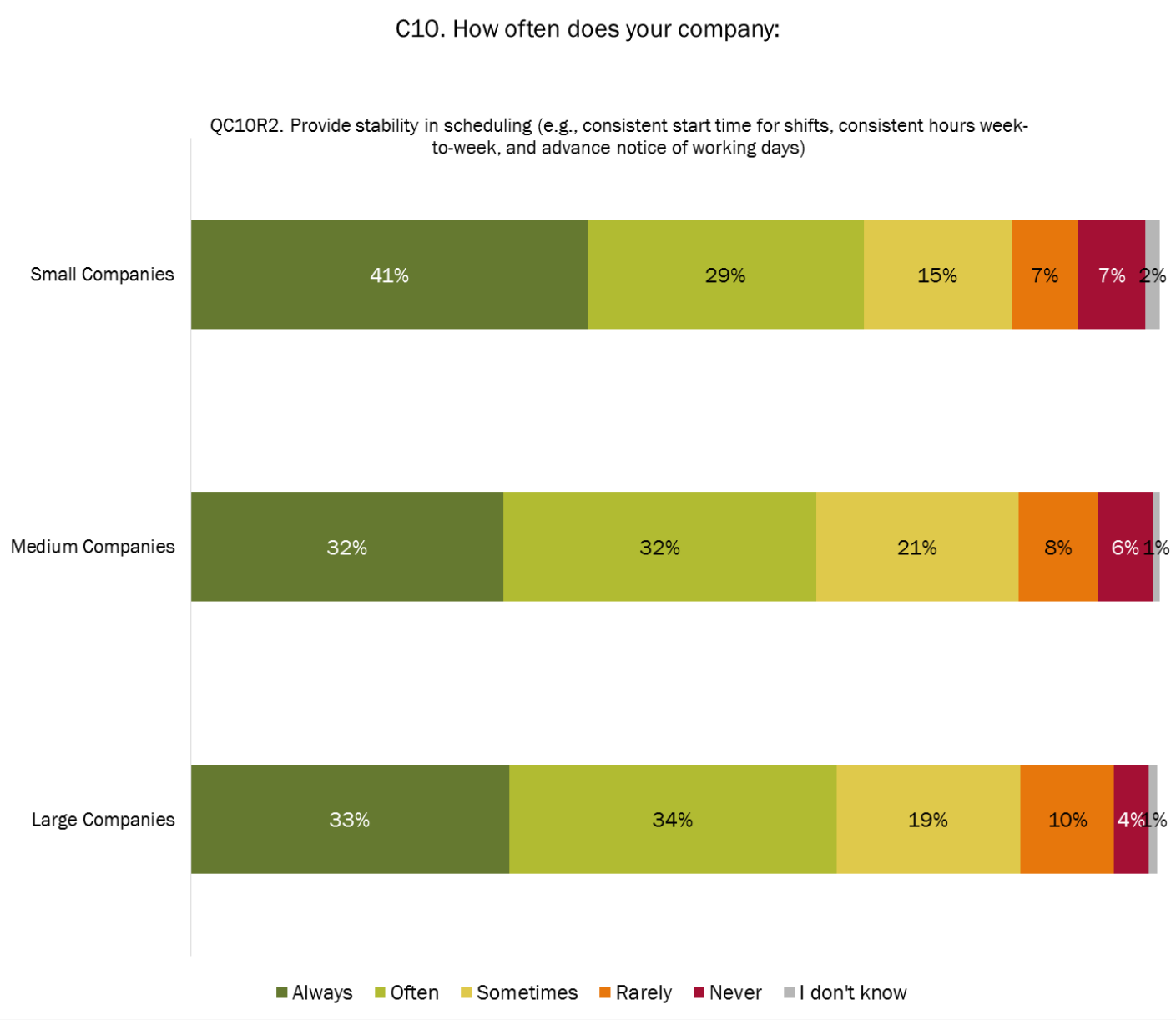
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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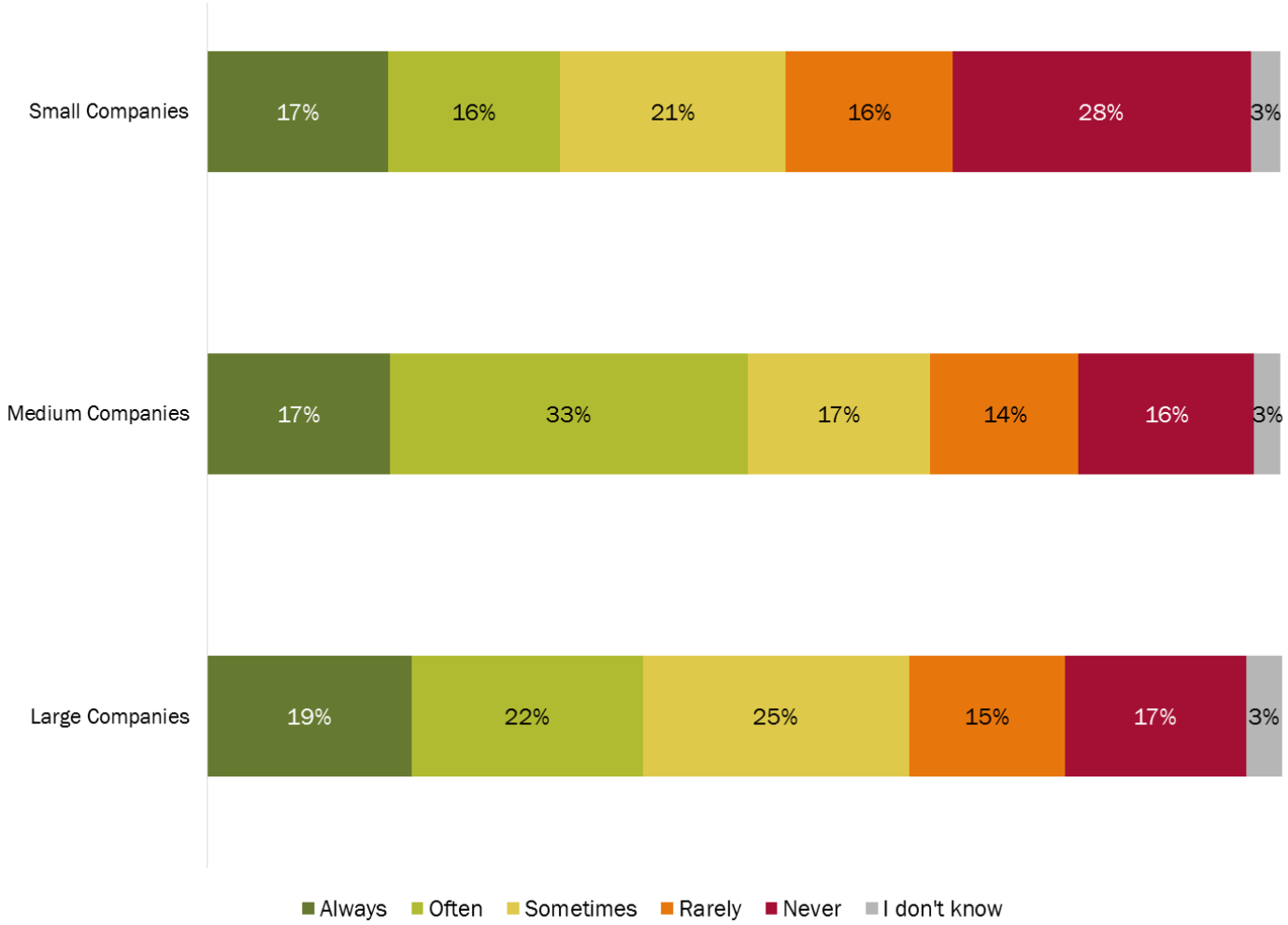
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C10. How often does your company:

QC10R3. Provide caregiving assistance (e.g., time off for appointments, Employee Assistance Program or care concierge access) to low-wage employees for looking after family



N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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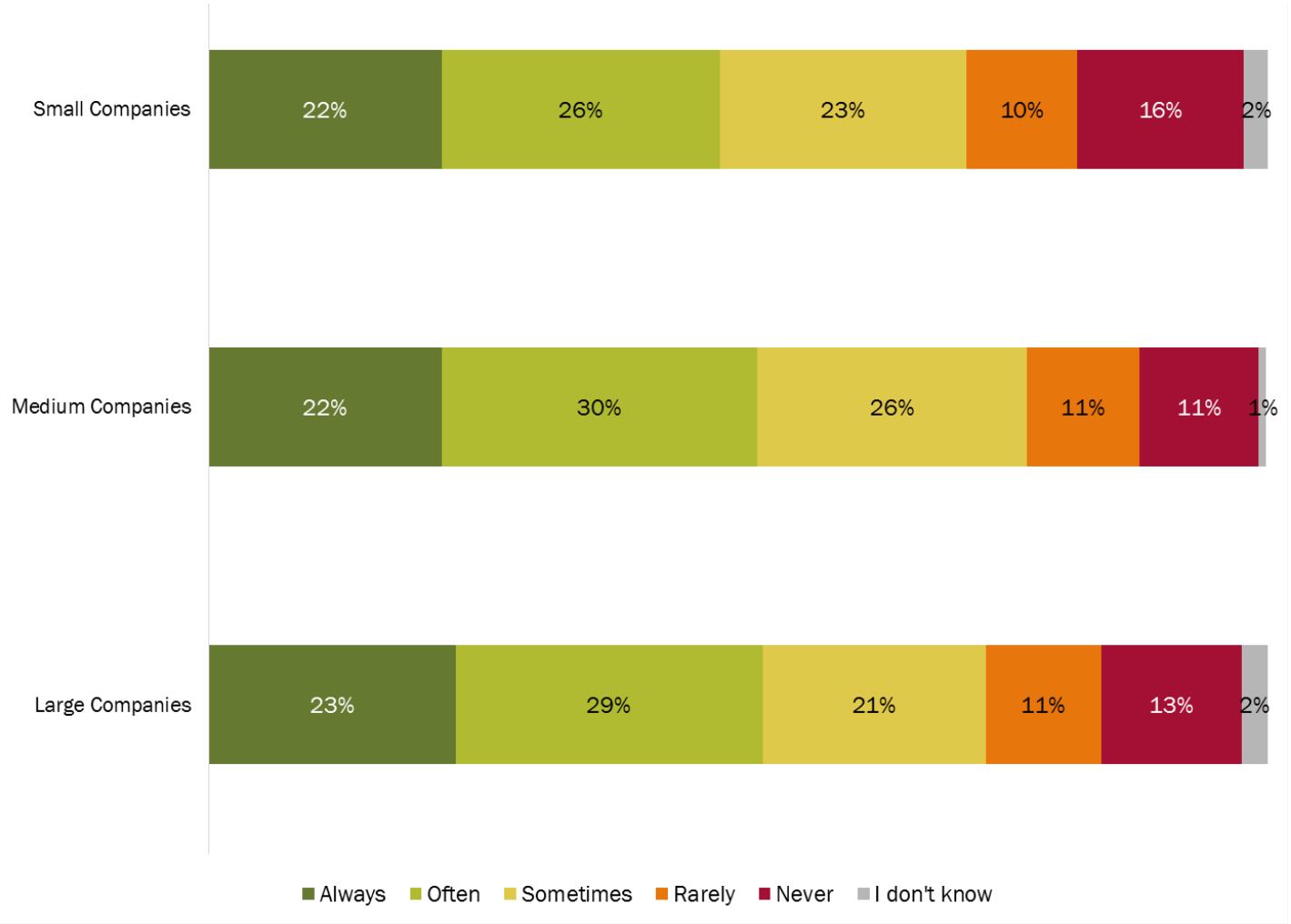
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C10. How often does your company:

QC10R4. Provide a flexible sick time policy for personal sick time (e.g., low-wage employees allowed to take advances on sick leave that would be accrued in later months)



N = 1,150

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Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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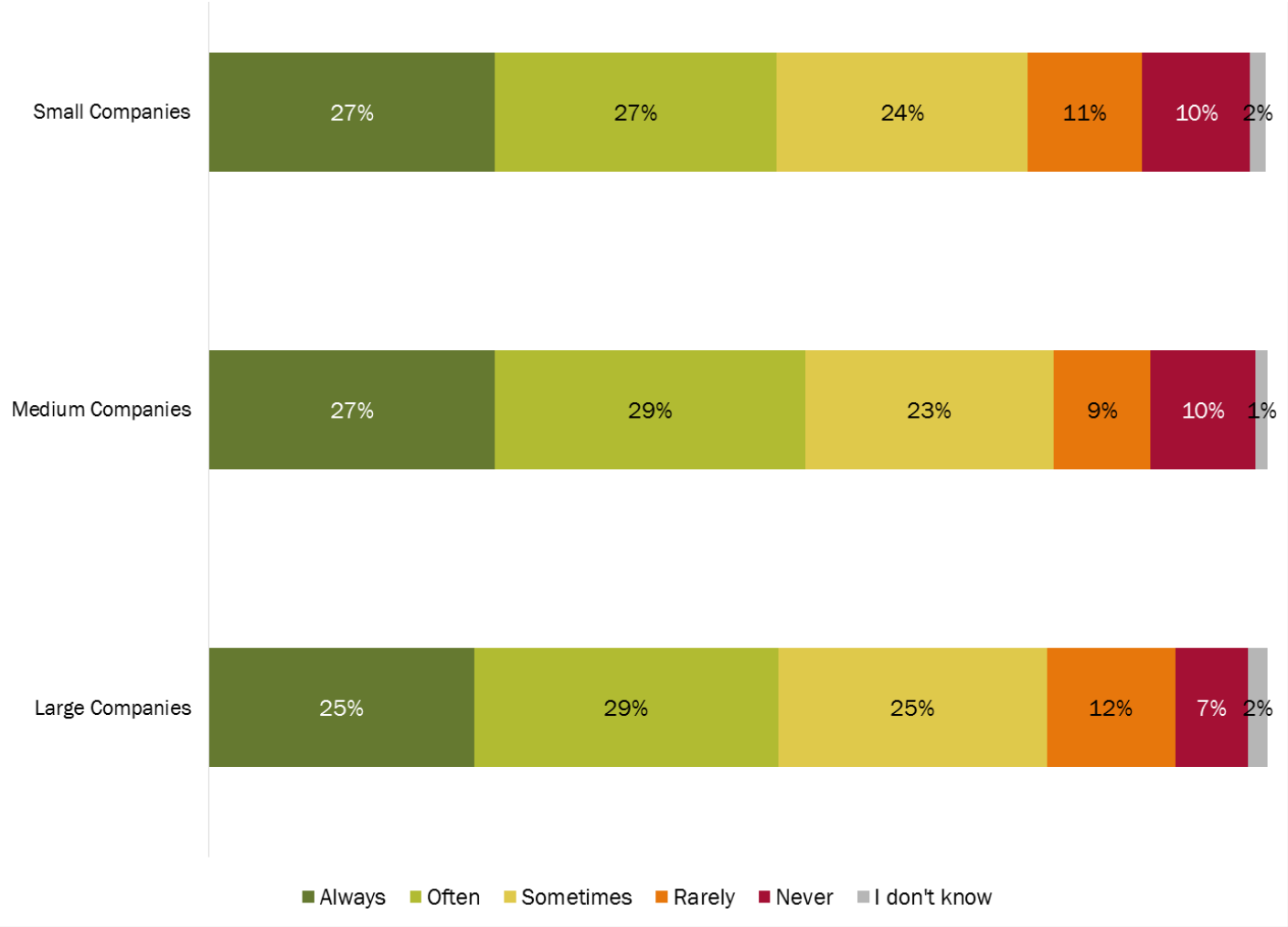
C10. How often does your company:

QC10R5. Provide a flexible sick time policy for caring for a sick family member (e.g., low-wage employees permitted to stay home to take care of sick family member)



N = 1,150

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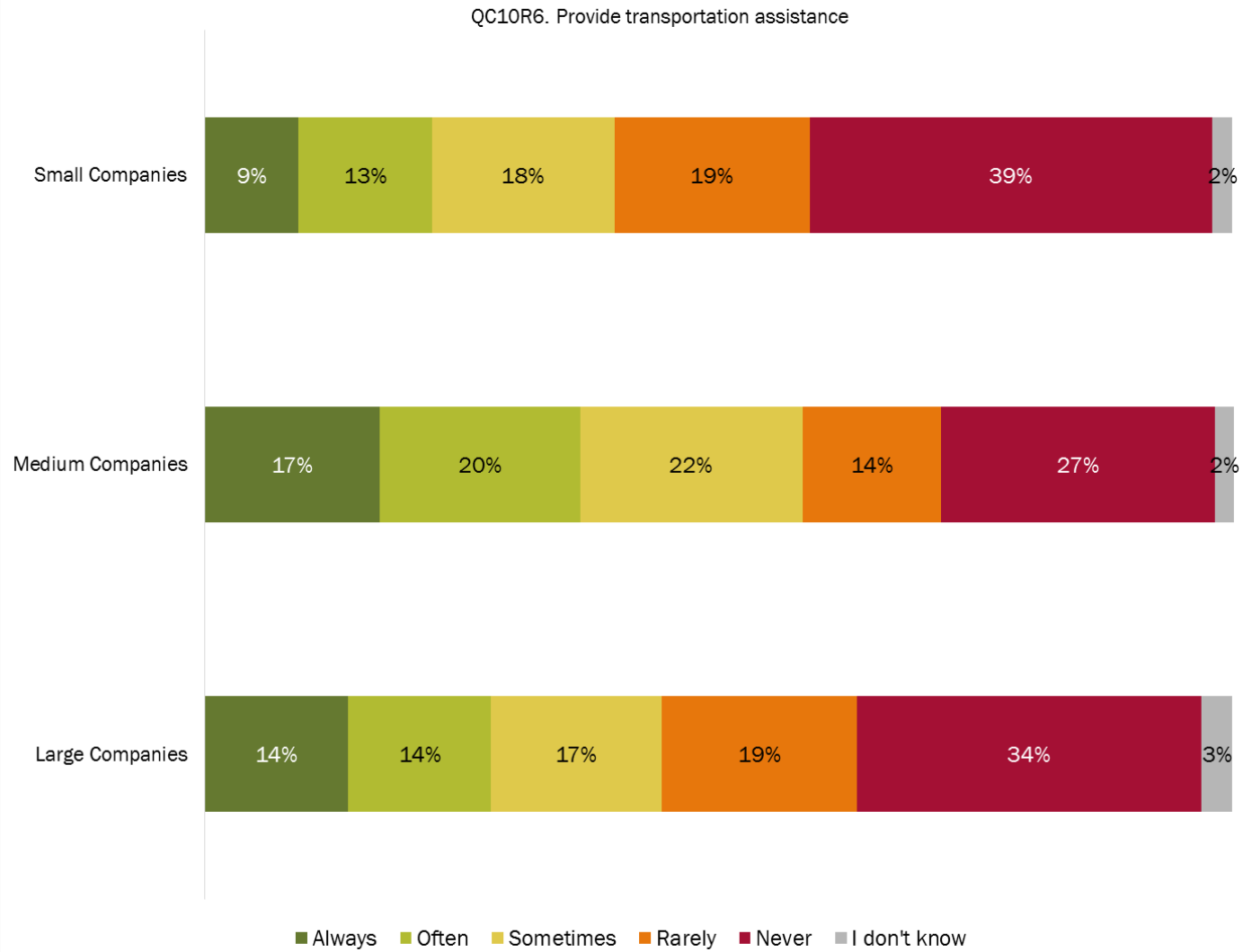
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C10. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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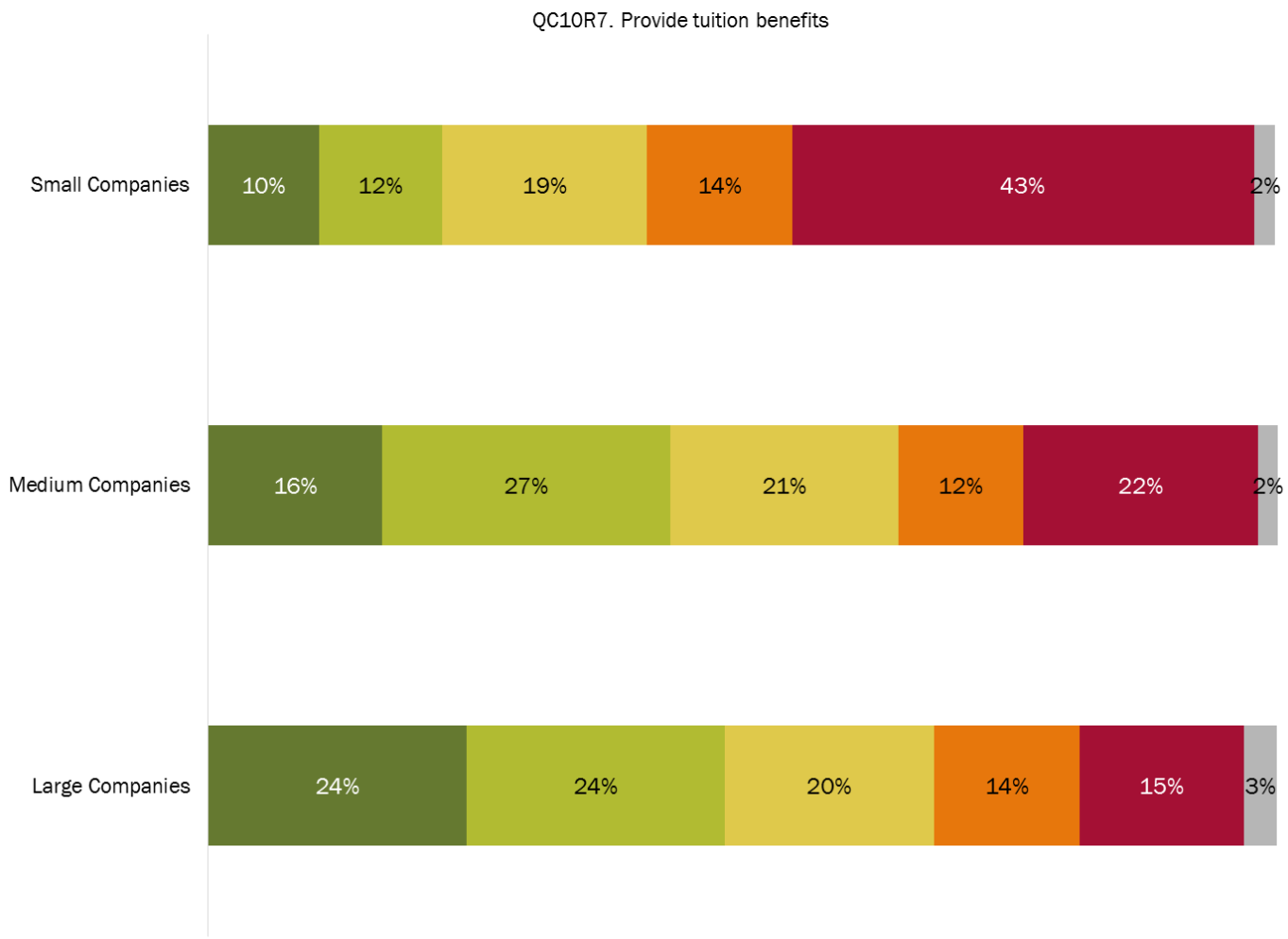

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Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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C10. How often does your company:

N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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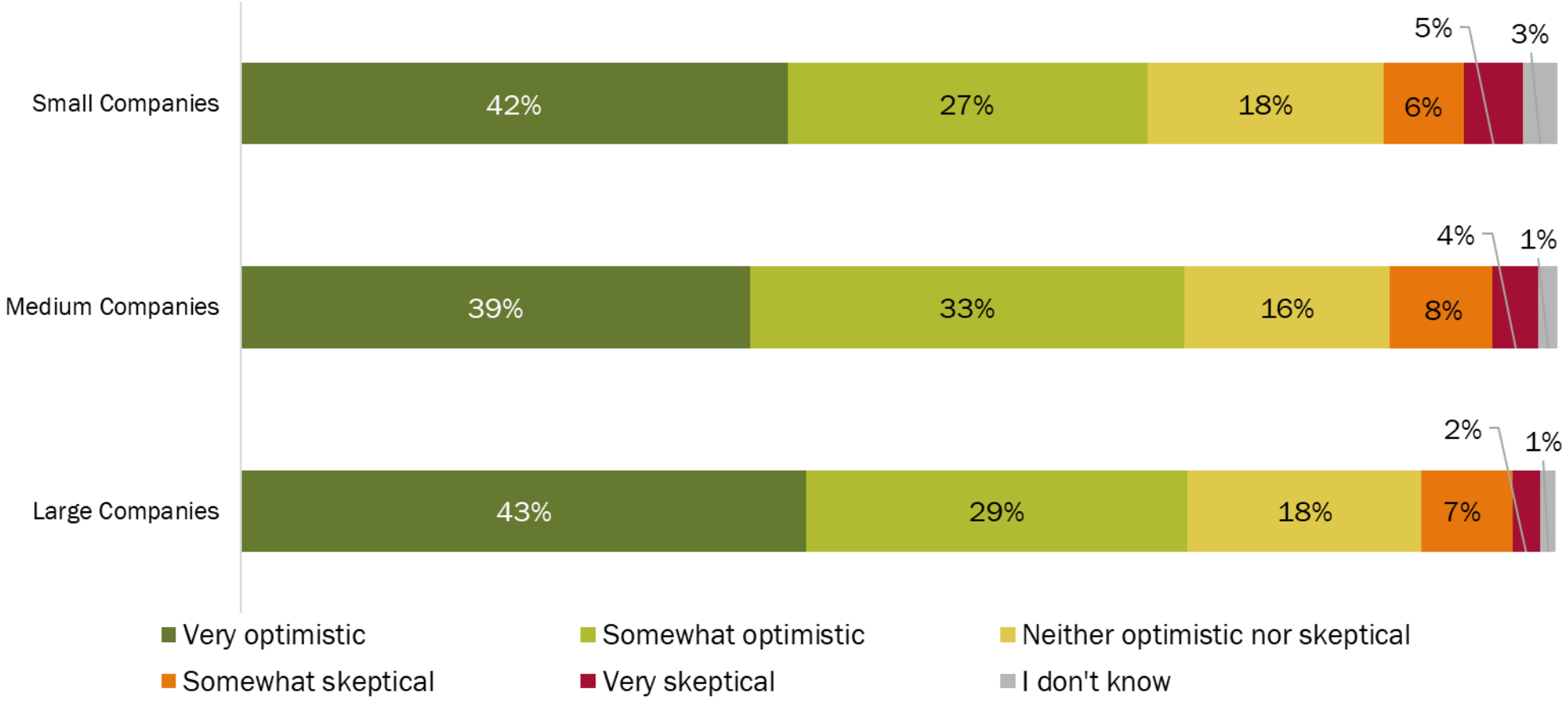
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC11R1. Provide adequate notice of upcoming shifts



N = 1,150

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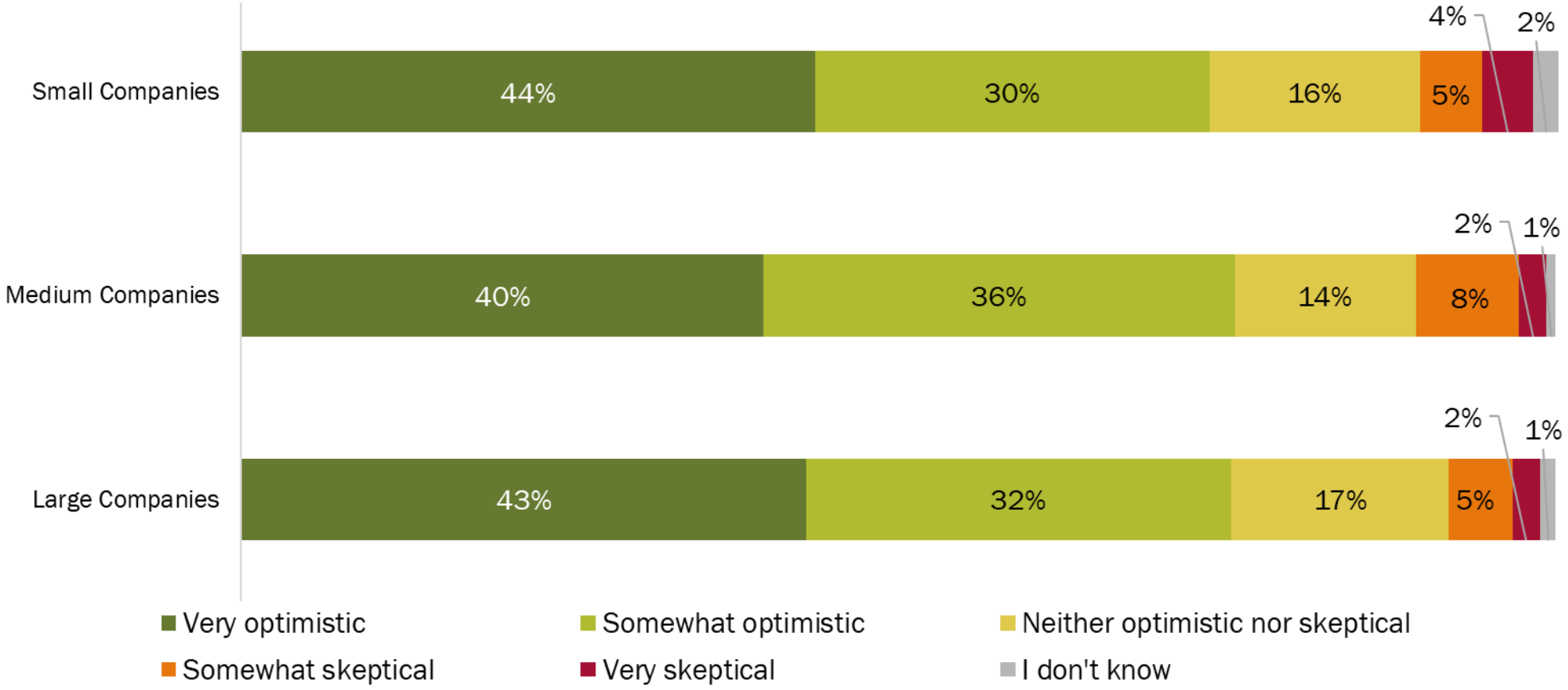
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC11R2. Provide stability in scheduling (e.g., consistent start time for shifts, consistent hours week-to-week, and advance notice of working days)



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Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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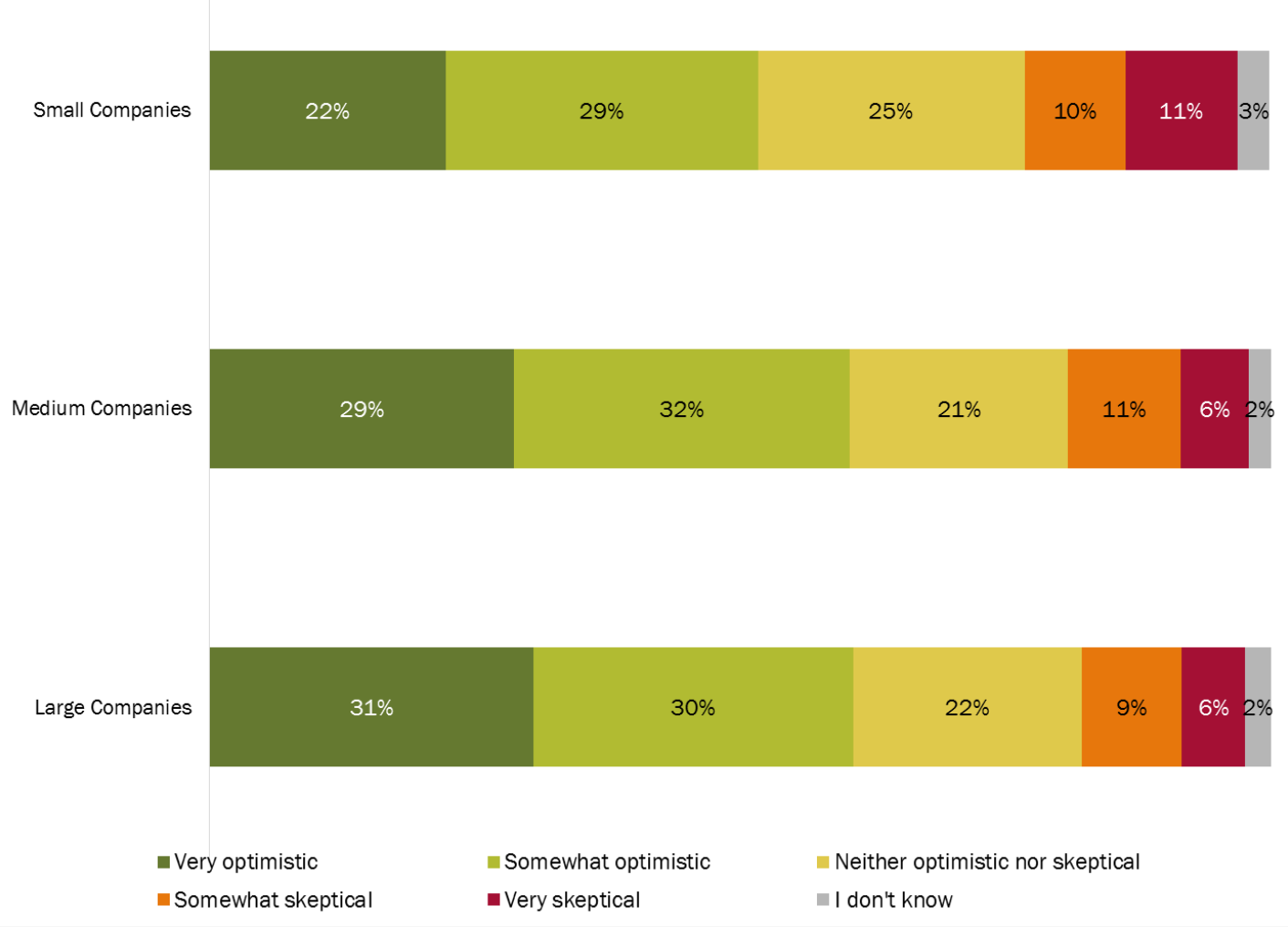
C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC11R3. Provide caregiving assistance (e.g., time off for appointments, Employee Assistance Program or care concierge access) to low-wage employees for looking after family



N = 1,150

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Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

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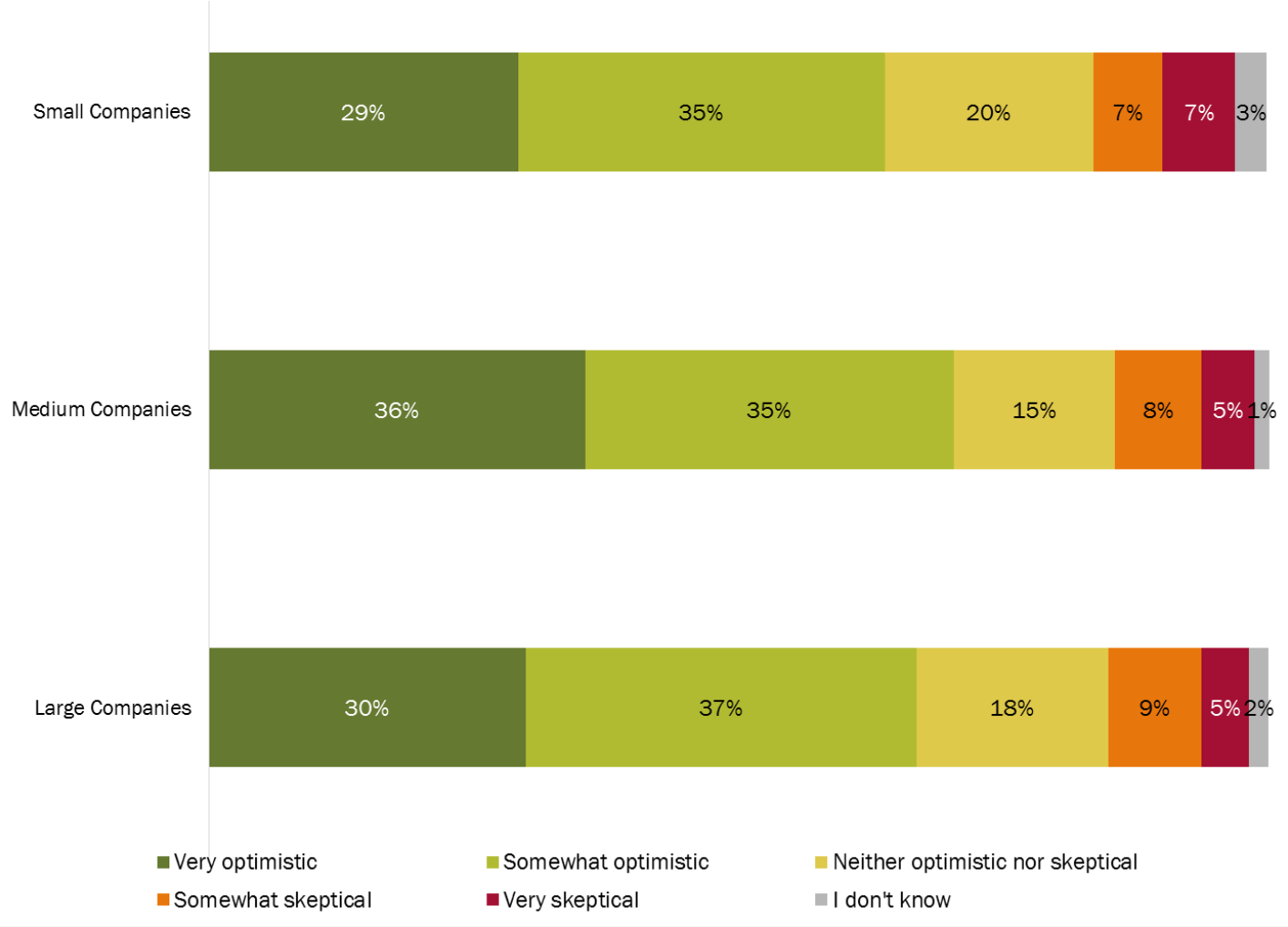
C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC11R4. Provide a flexible sick time policy for personal sick time (e.g., low-wage employees allowed to take advances on sick leave that would be accrued in later months)



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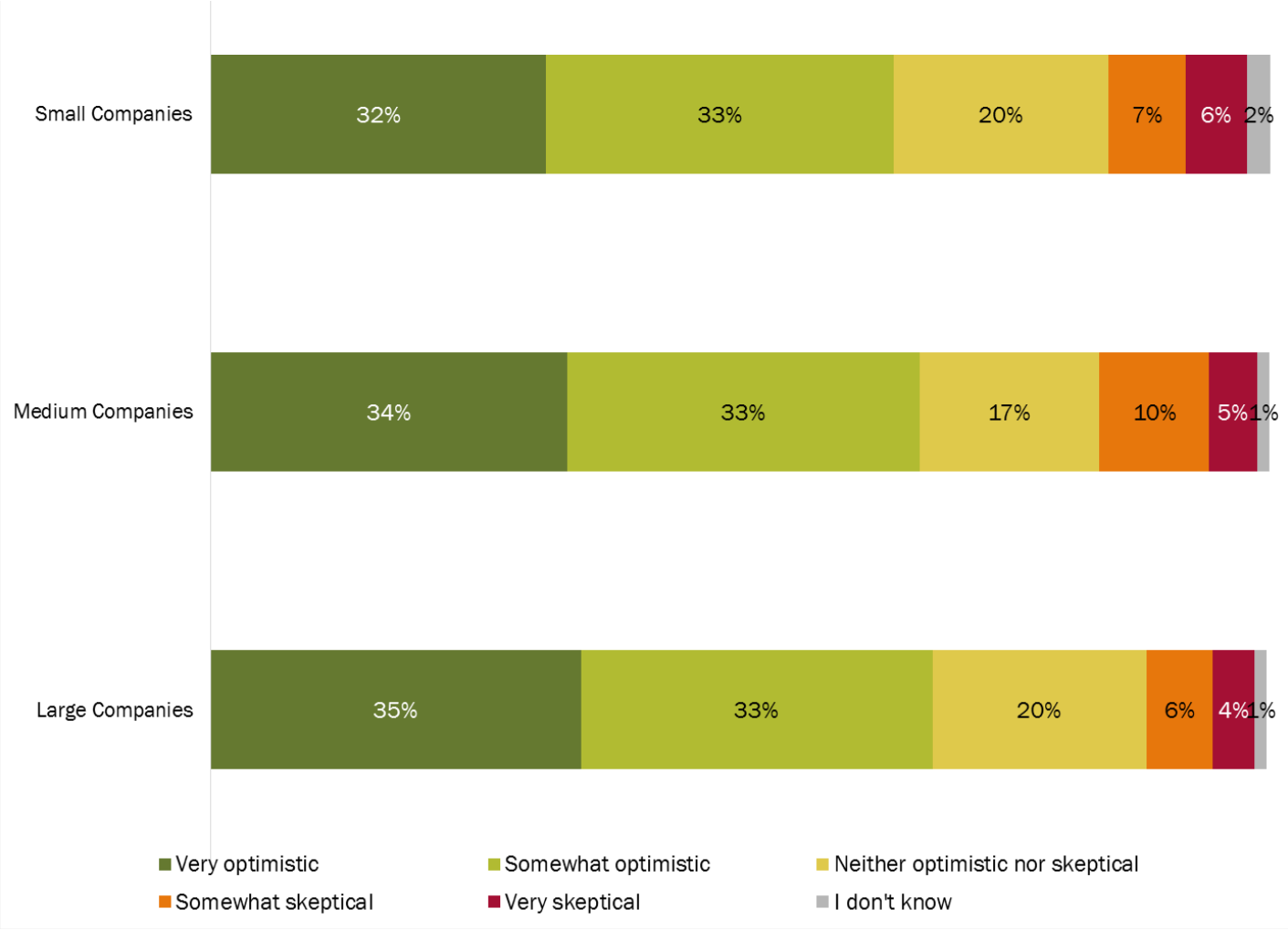
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC11R5. Provide a flexible sick time policy for caring for a sick family member (e.g., low-wage employees permitted to stay home to take care of sick family member)



N = 1,150

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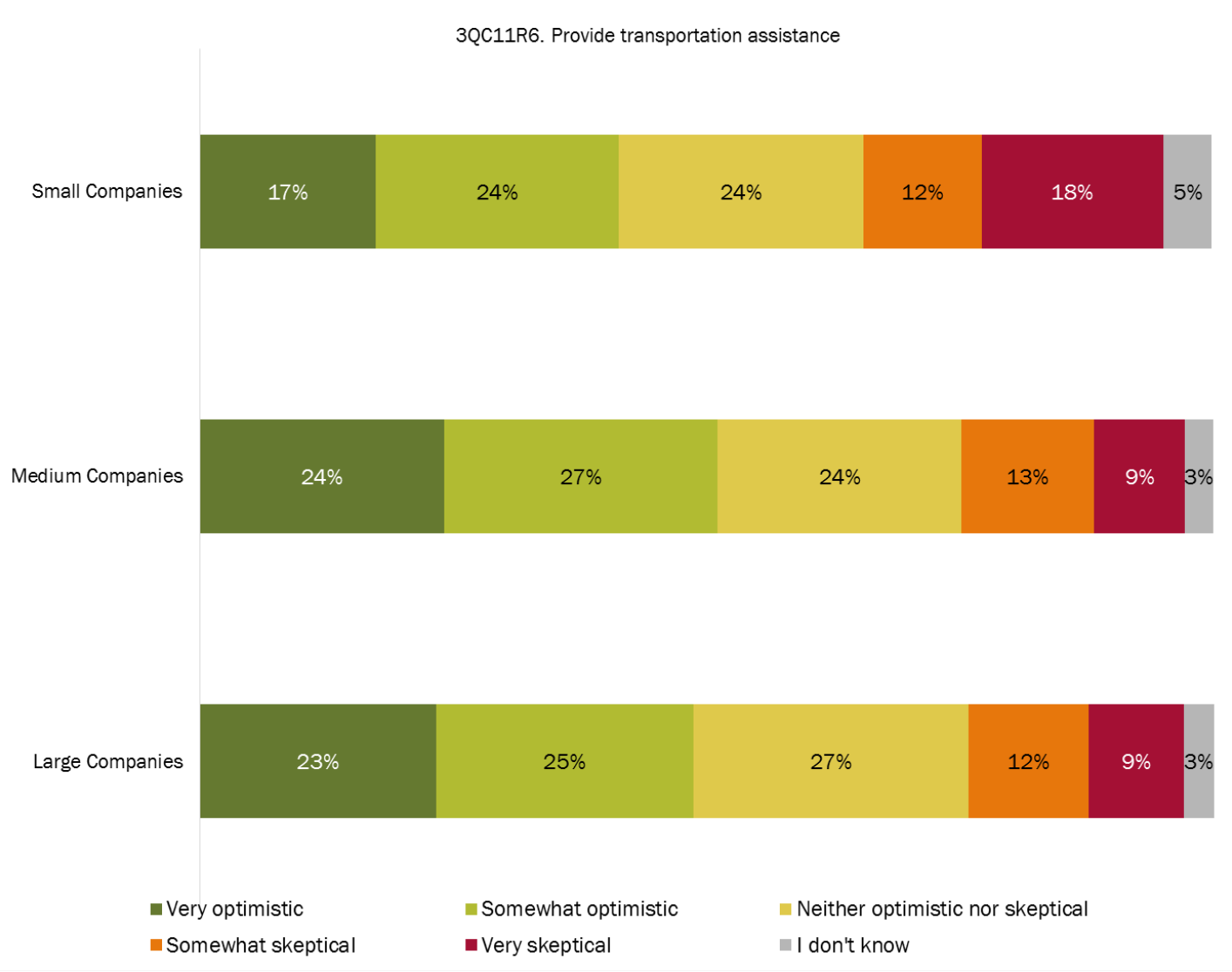
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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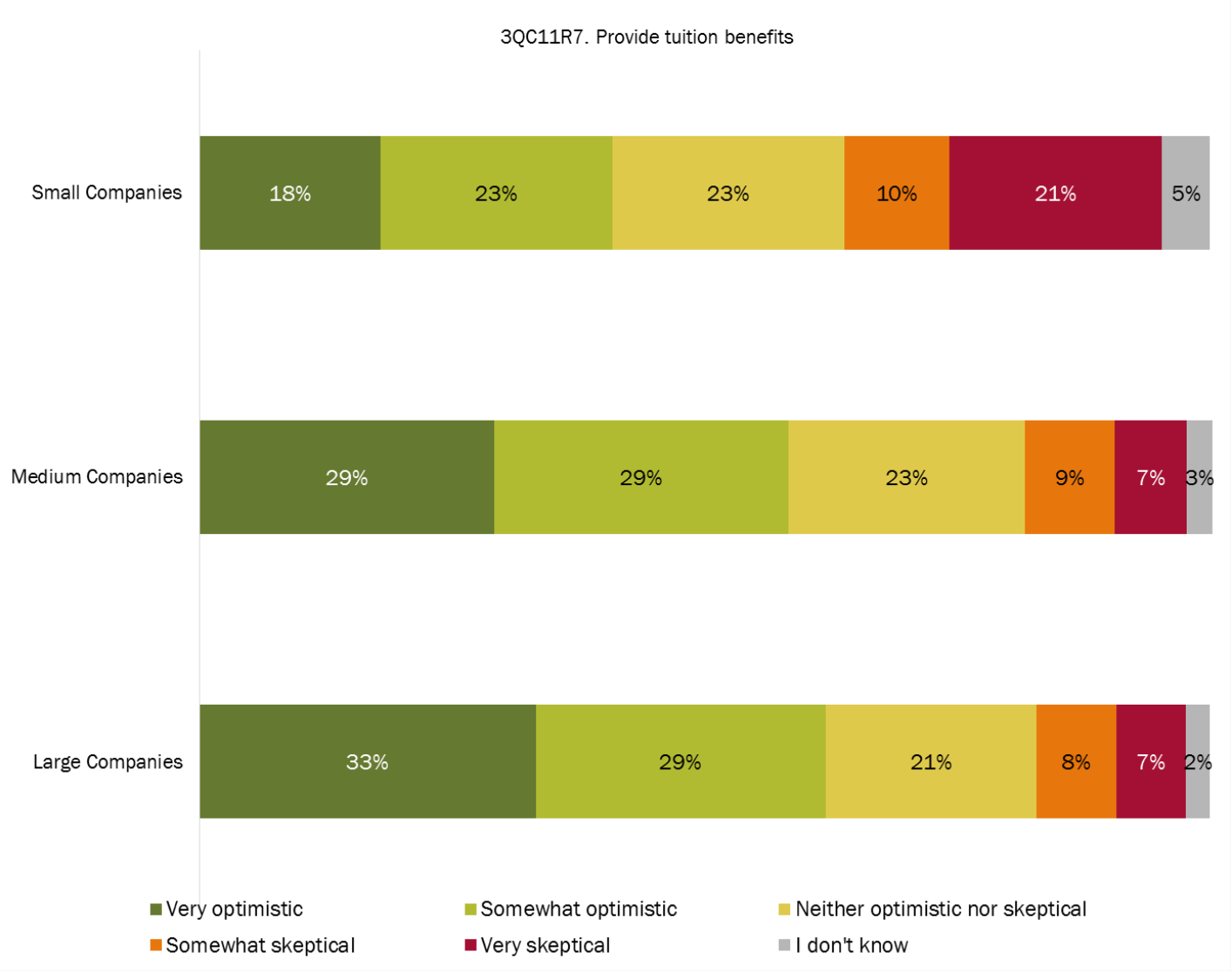
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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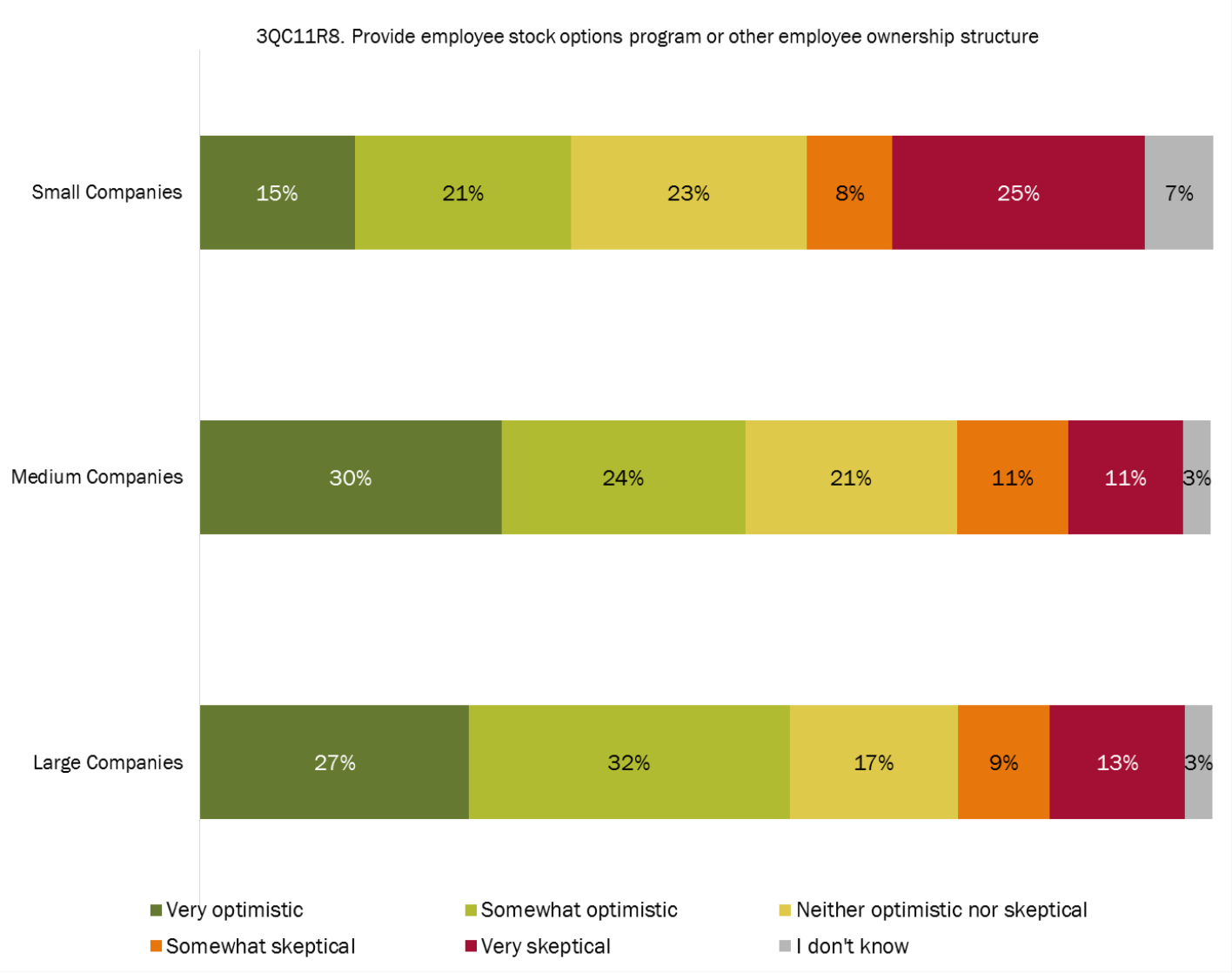
Actions
On-the-job Support: Benefits

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C11. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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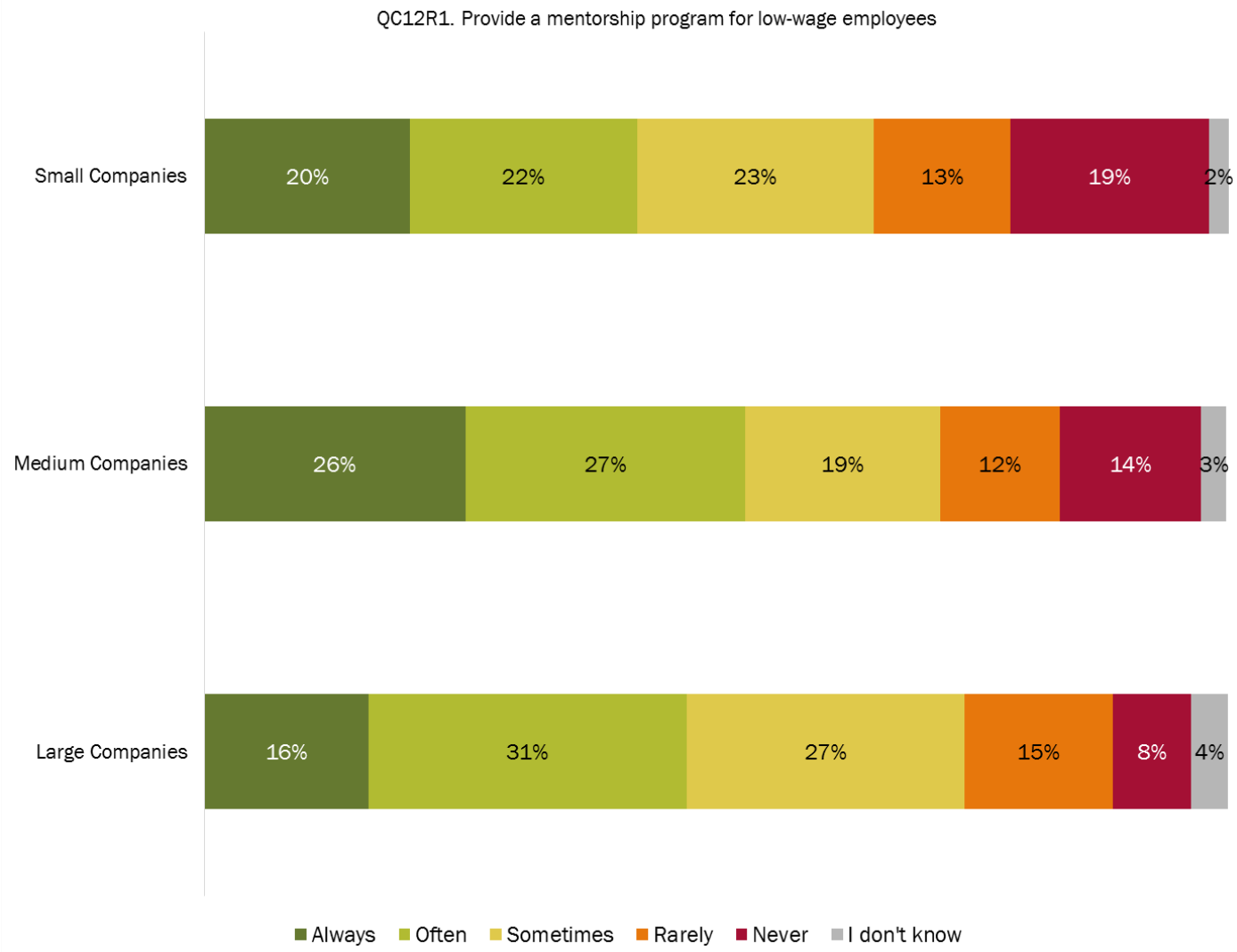
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C12. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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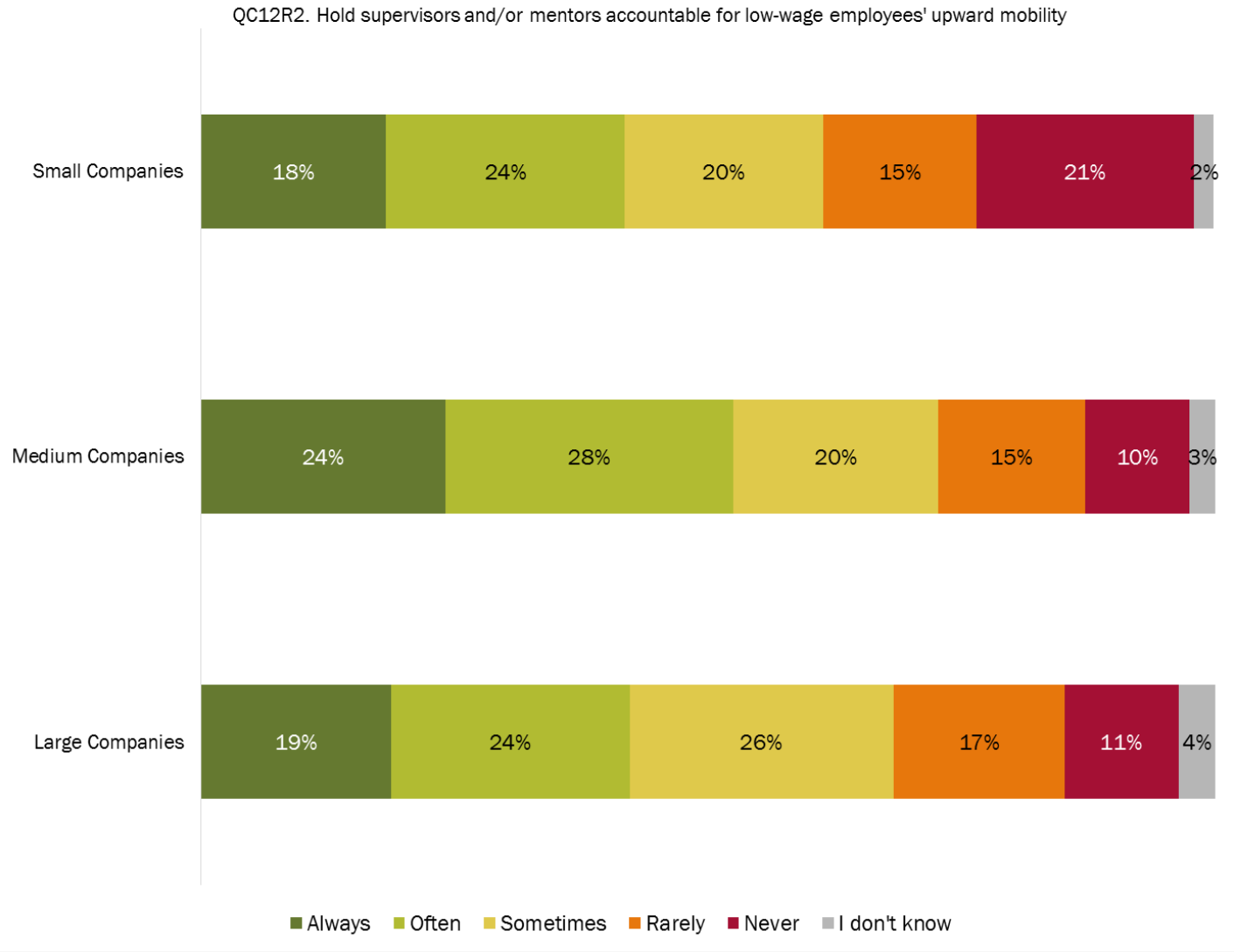
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C12. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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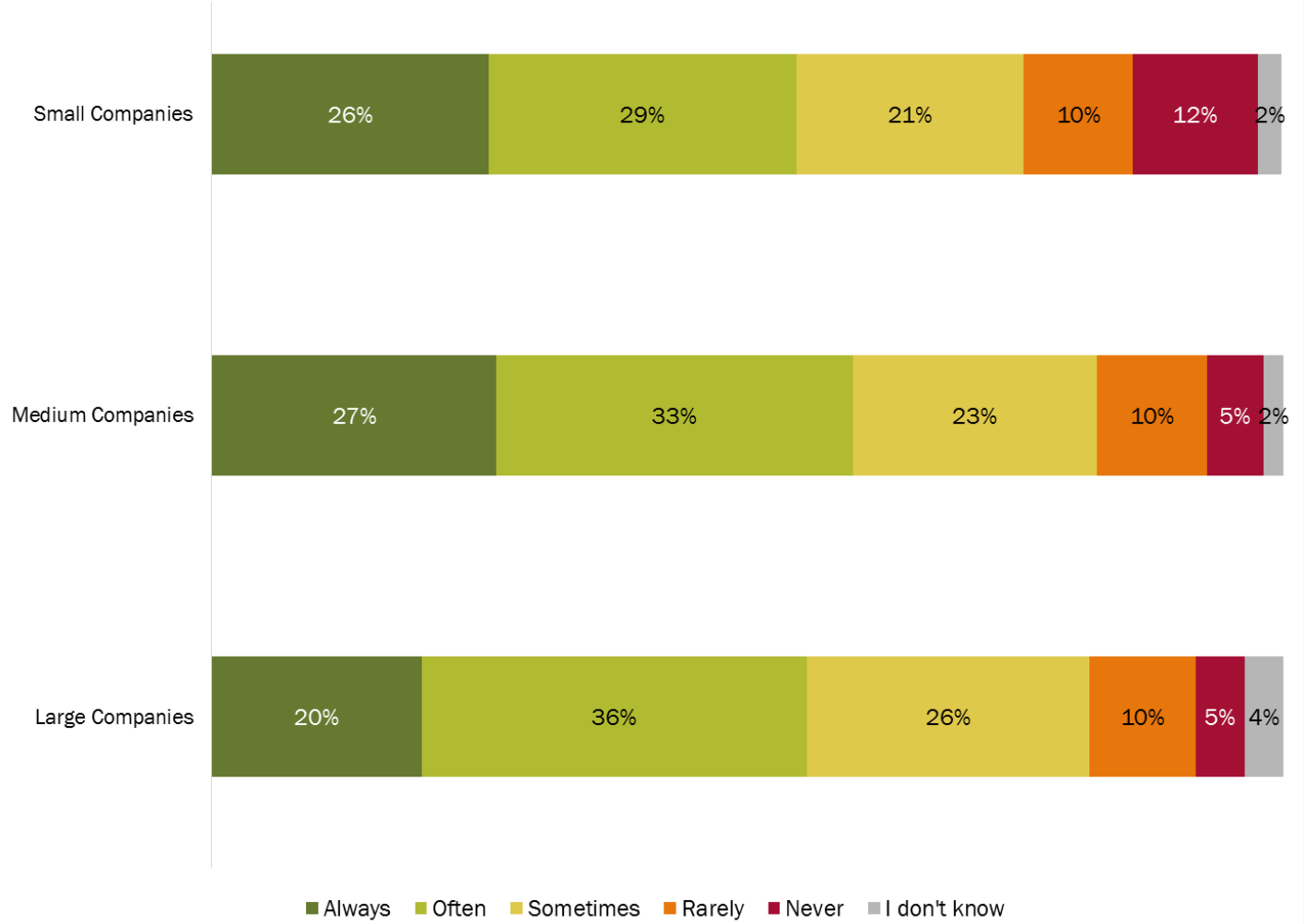
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C12. How often does your company:

QC12R3. Empower supervisors or mentors to make judgment calls to help low-wage employees balance life demands outside of work (e.g., giving the afternoon off for a care appointment)



N = 1,150

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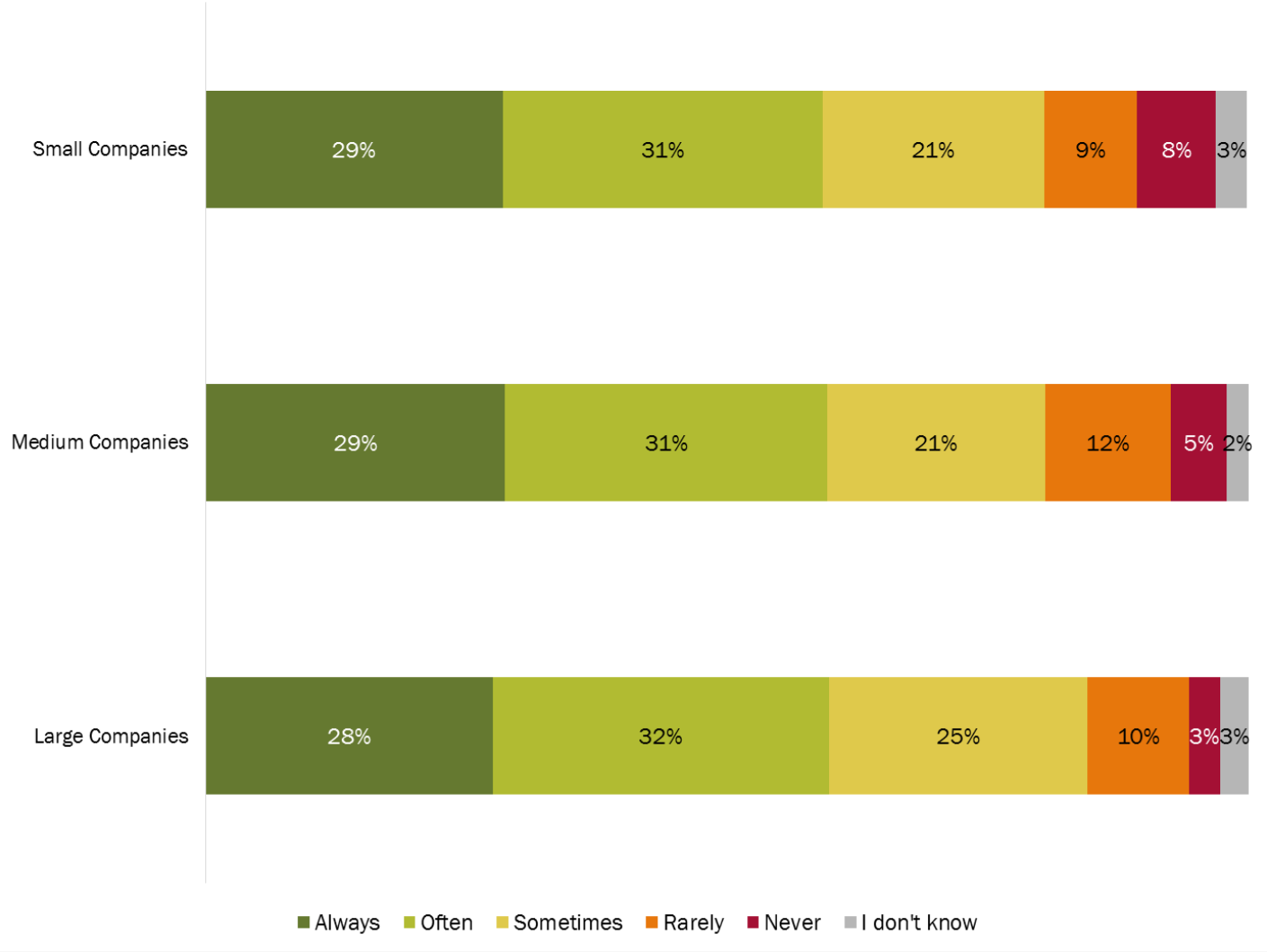
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C13. How often do supervisors and/or mentors at your company:

QC13R1. Communicate the impact of low-wage employees' work on the company's success



N = 1,150

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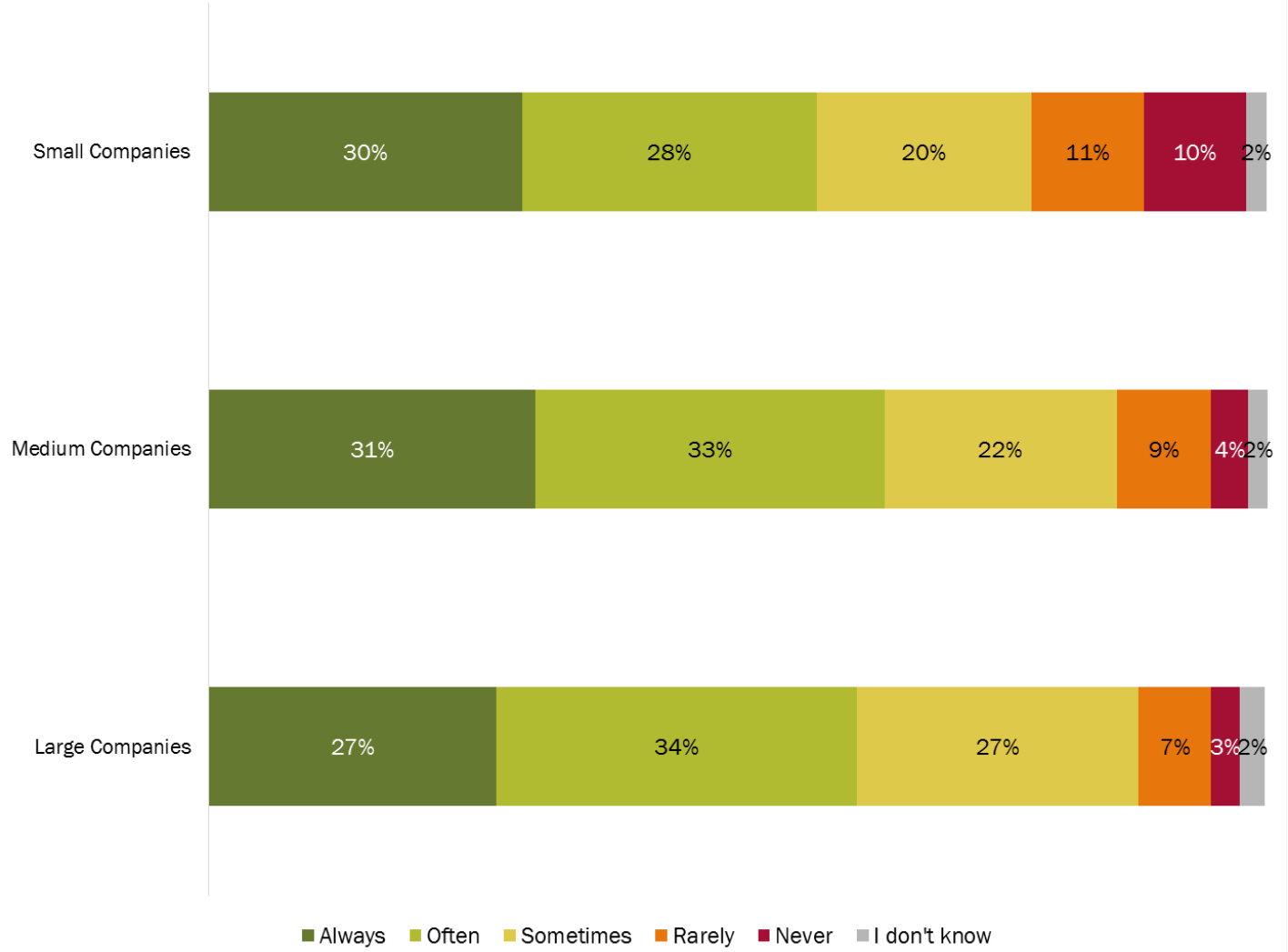
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C13. How often do supervisors and/or mentors at your company:

QC13R2. Communicate benefits and how low-wage employees can access them



N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

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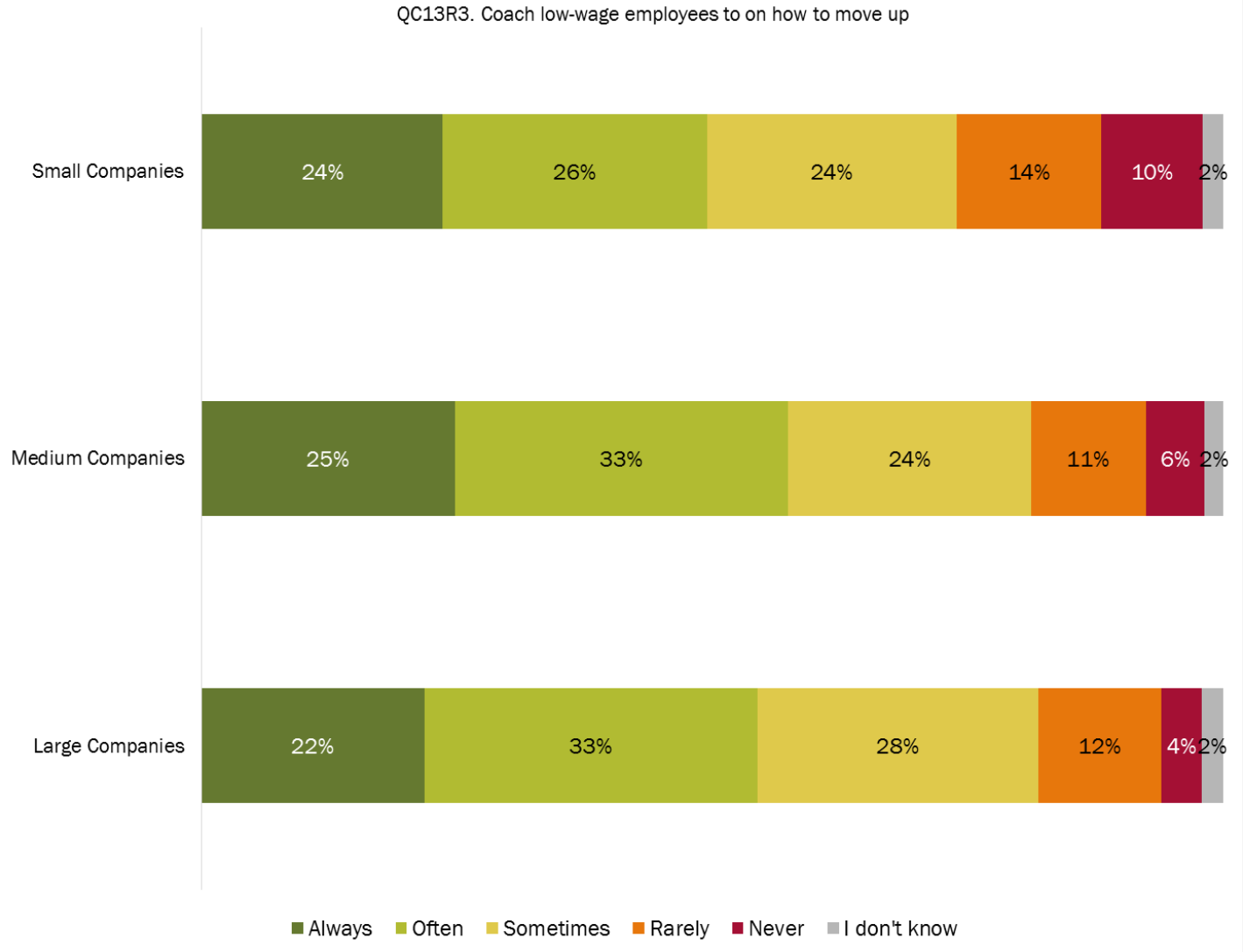
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C13. How often do supervisors and/or mentors at your company:



N = 1,150

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Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C13. How often do supervisors and/or mentors at your company:

N = 1,150

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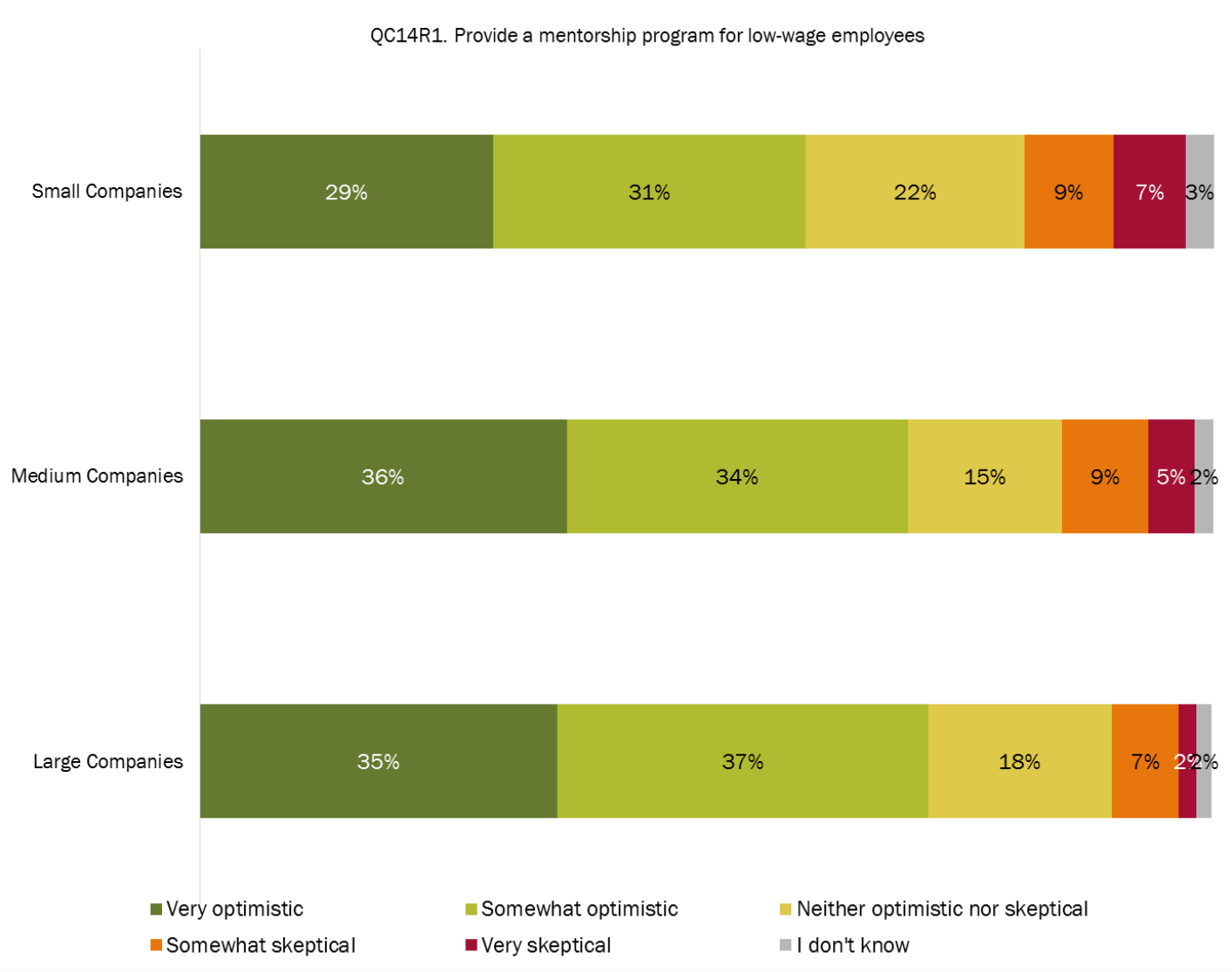
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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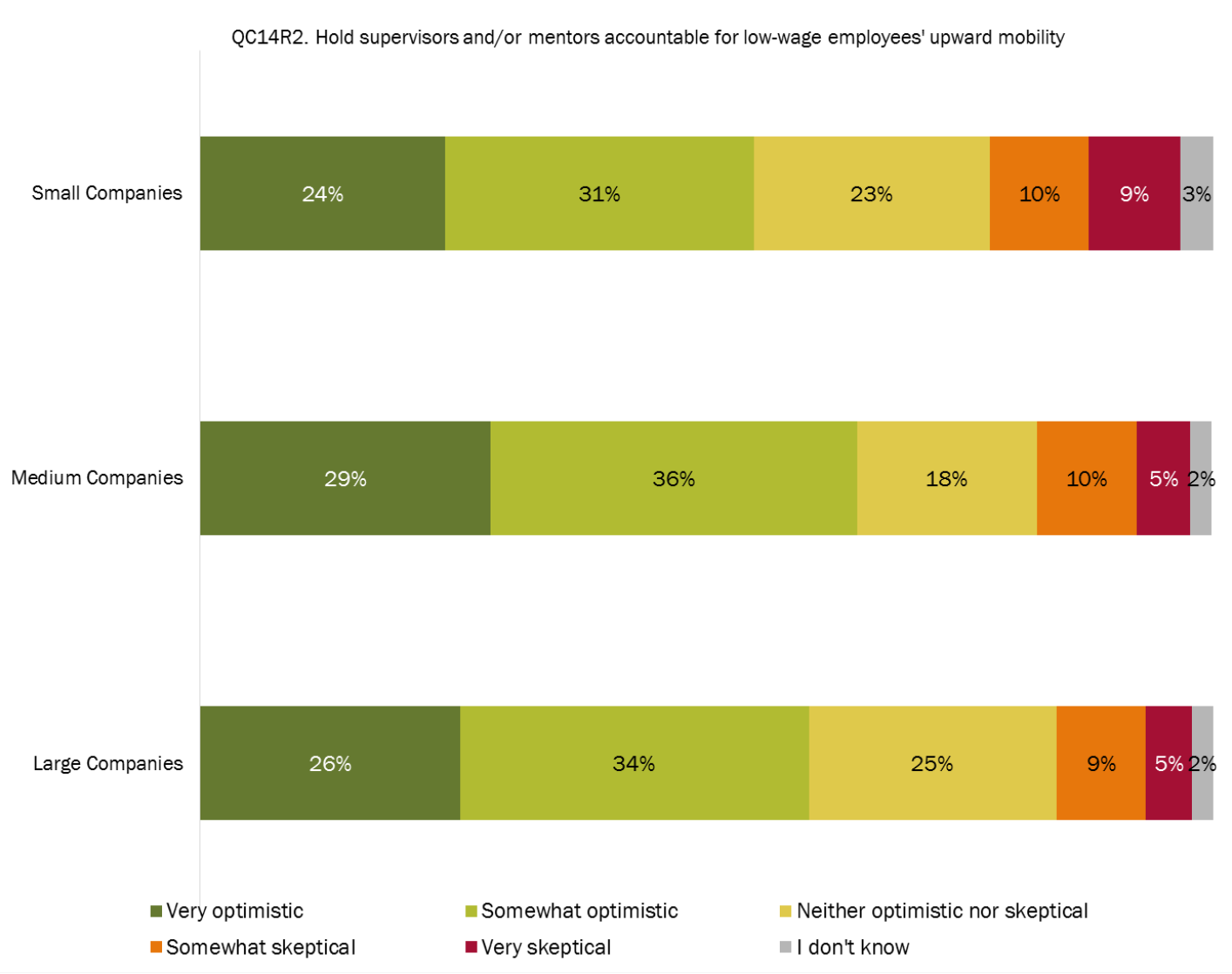
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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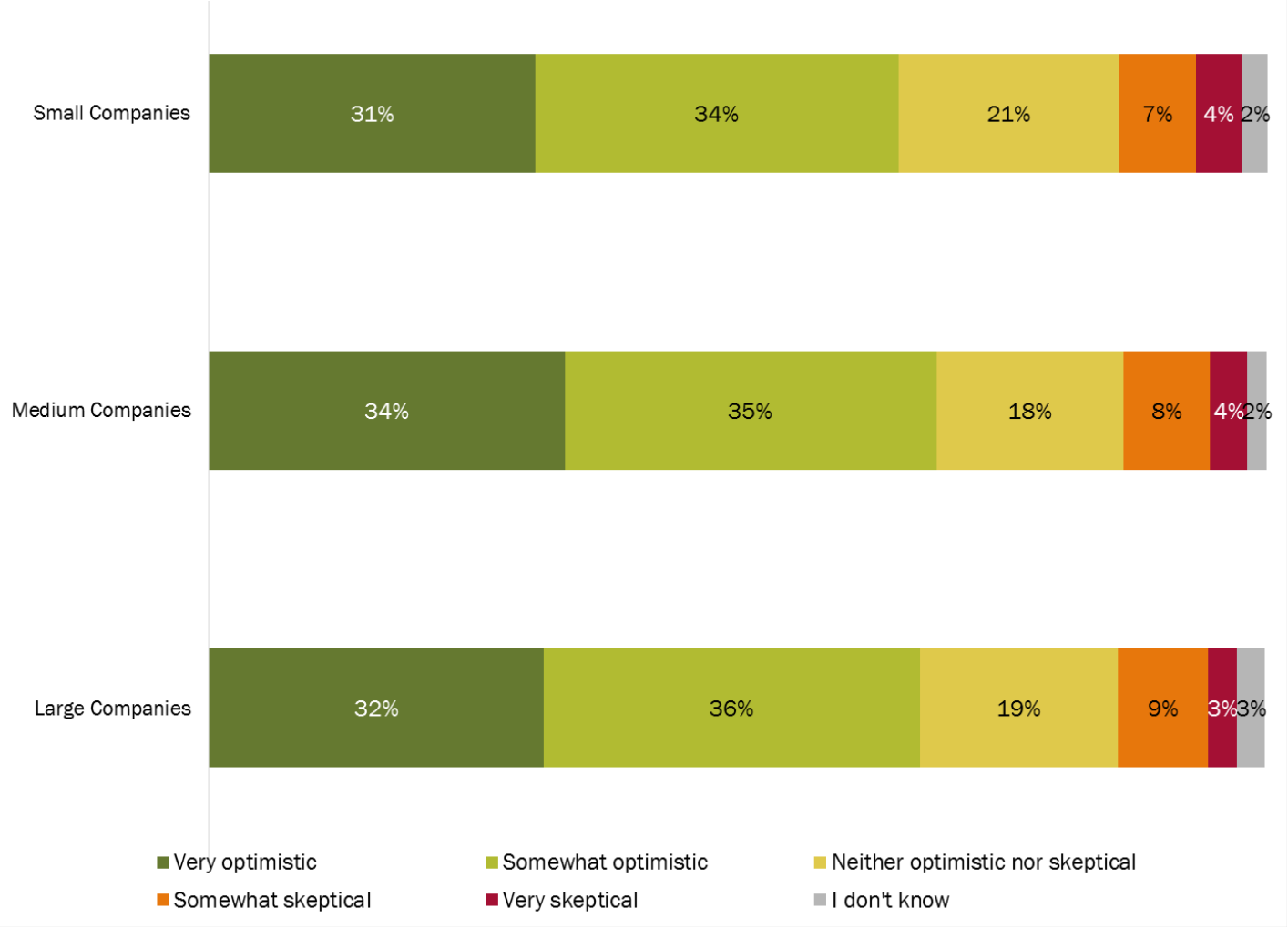
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC14R3. Empower supervisors or mentors to make judgment calls to help low-wage employees balance life demands outside of work (e.g., giving the afternoon off for a care appointment)



N = 1,150

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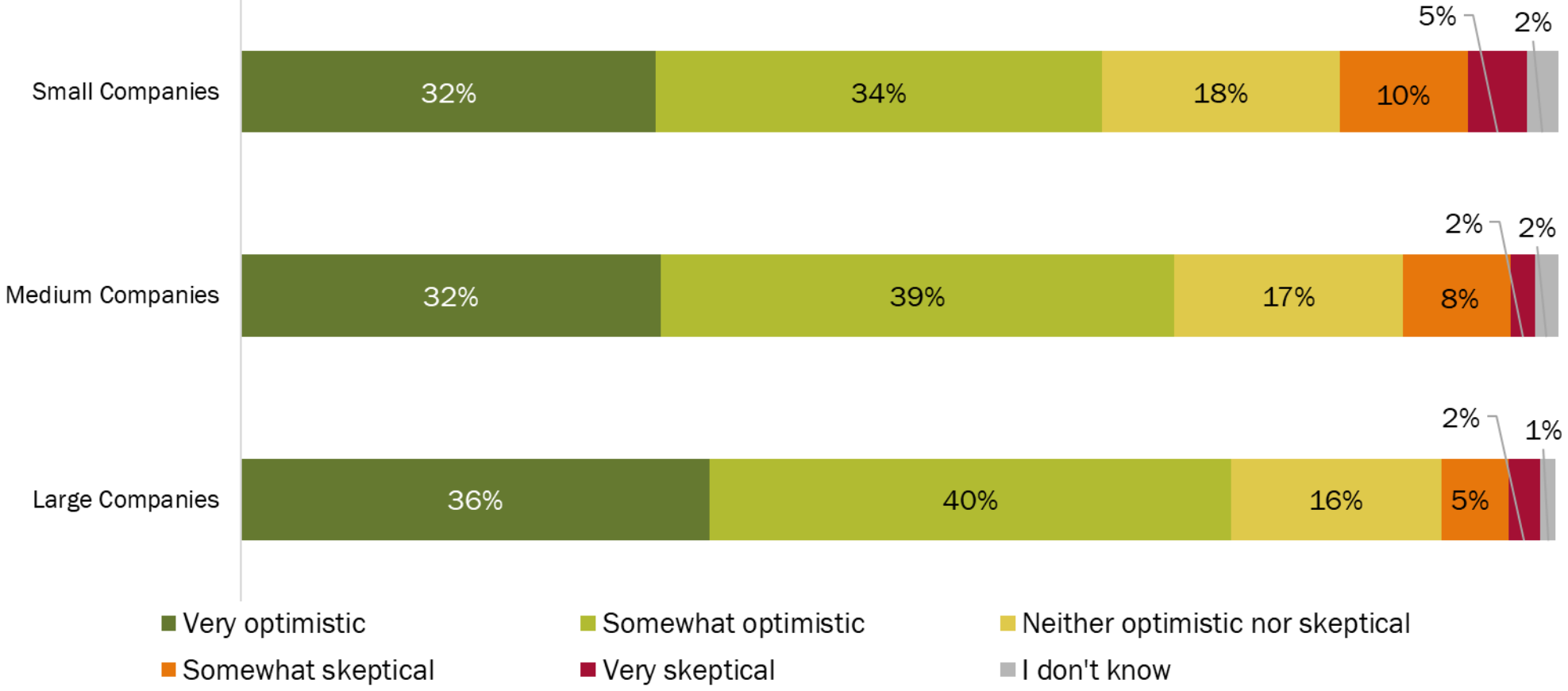
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC14R4. Supervisors and/or mentors communicate the impact of low-wage employees' work on the company's success



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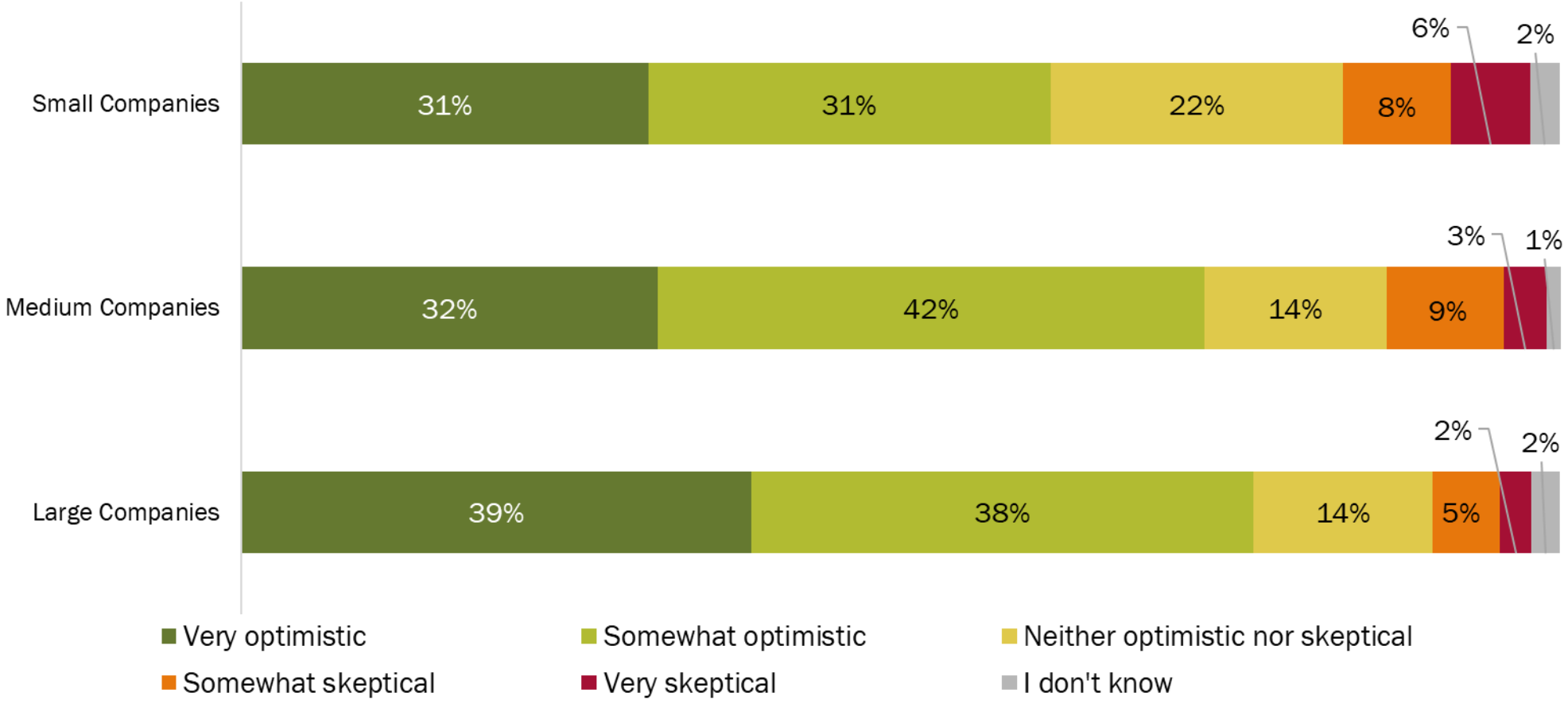
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC14R5. Supervisors and/or mentors communicate benefits and how low-wage employees can access them



N = 1,150

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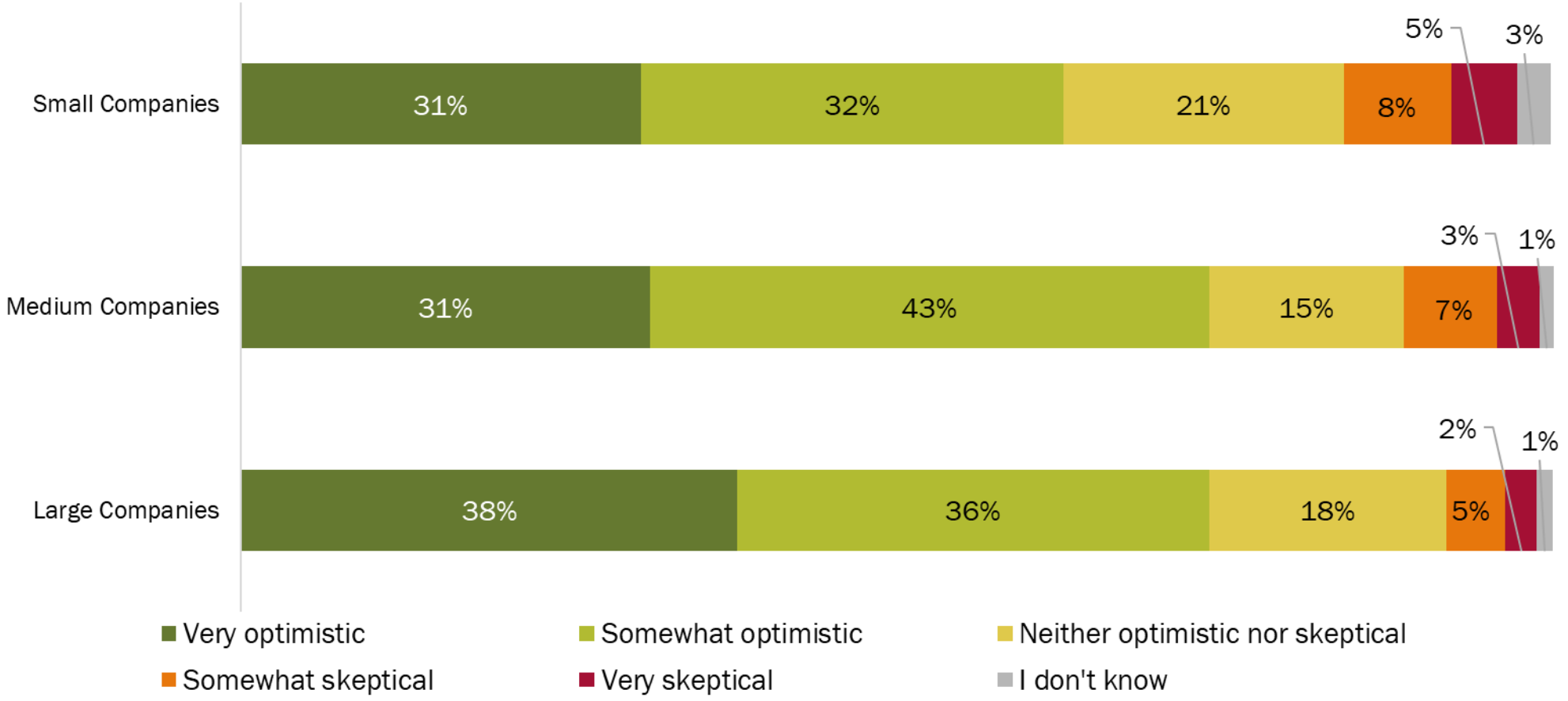
Actions

On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC14R6. Supervisors and/or mentors coach low-wage employees to on how to move up



N = 1,150

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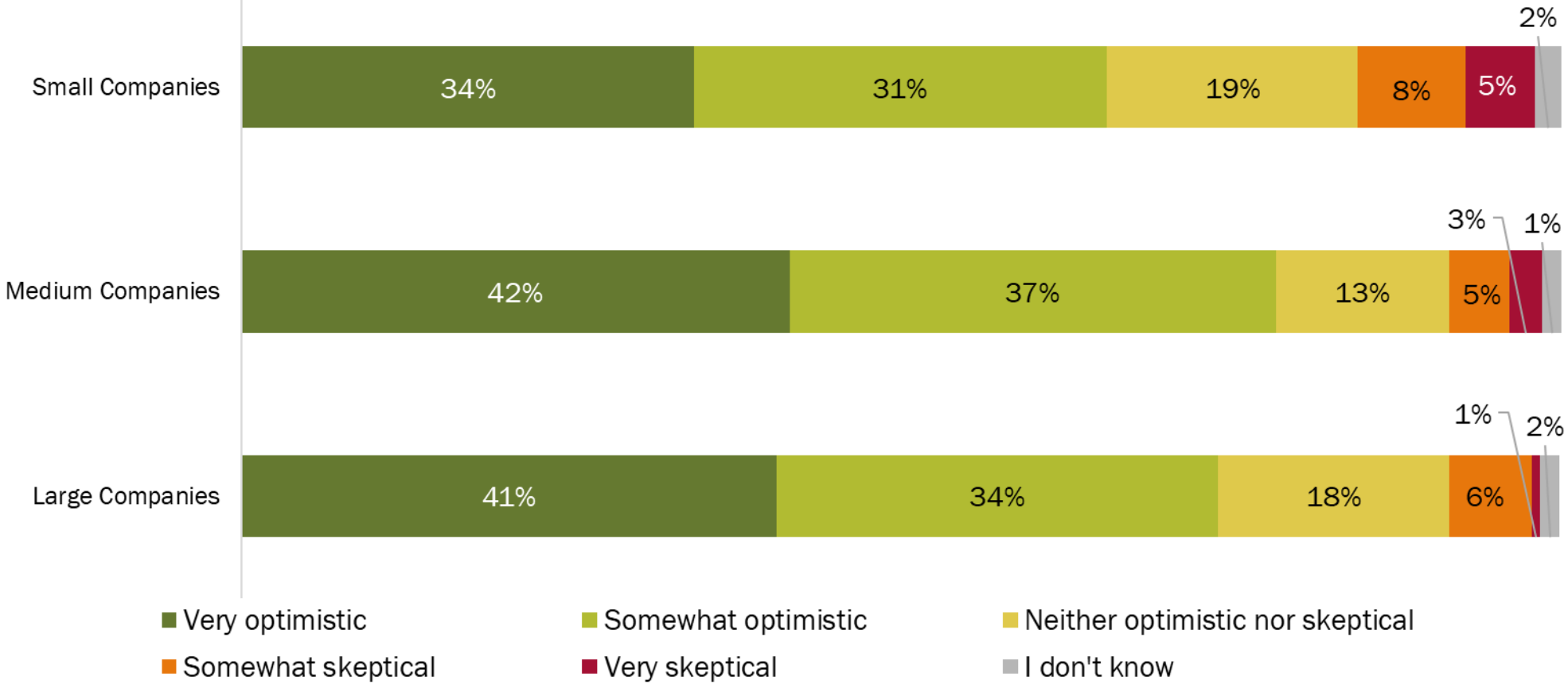
On-the-job Support: Mentor and Supervisor Support

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C14. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC14R7. Supervisors and/or mentors hold performance review conversations with low-wage employees at regular intervals



N = 1,150

Actions
On-the-job Support: Learning and Development

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Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C15. How often does your company:

N = 1,150

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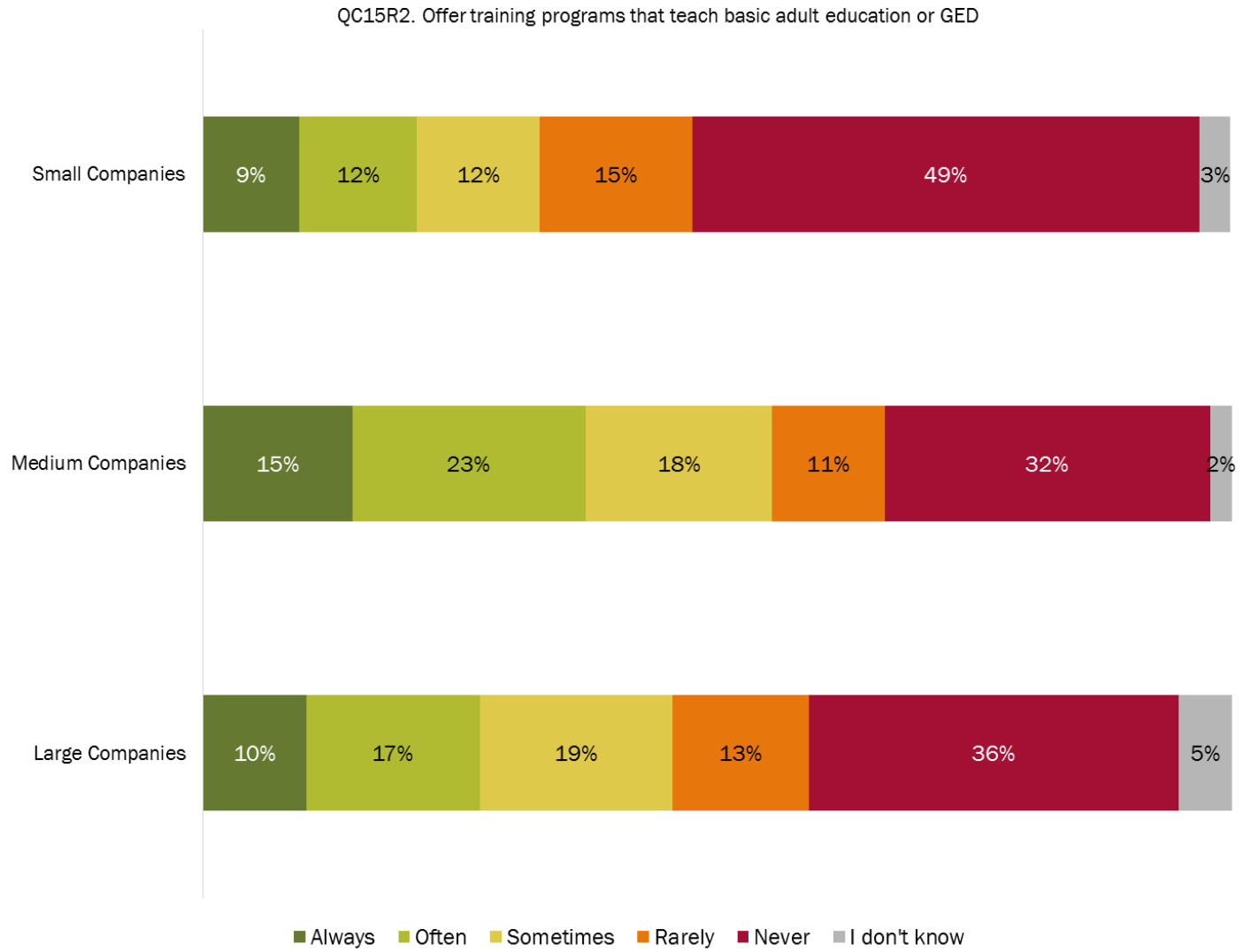
On-the-job Support: Learning and Development

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C15. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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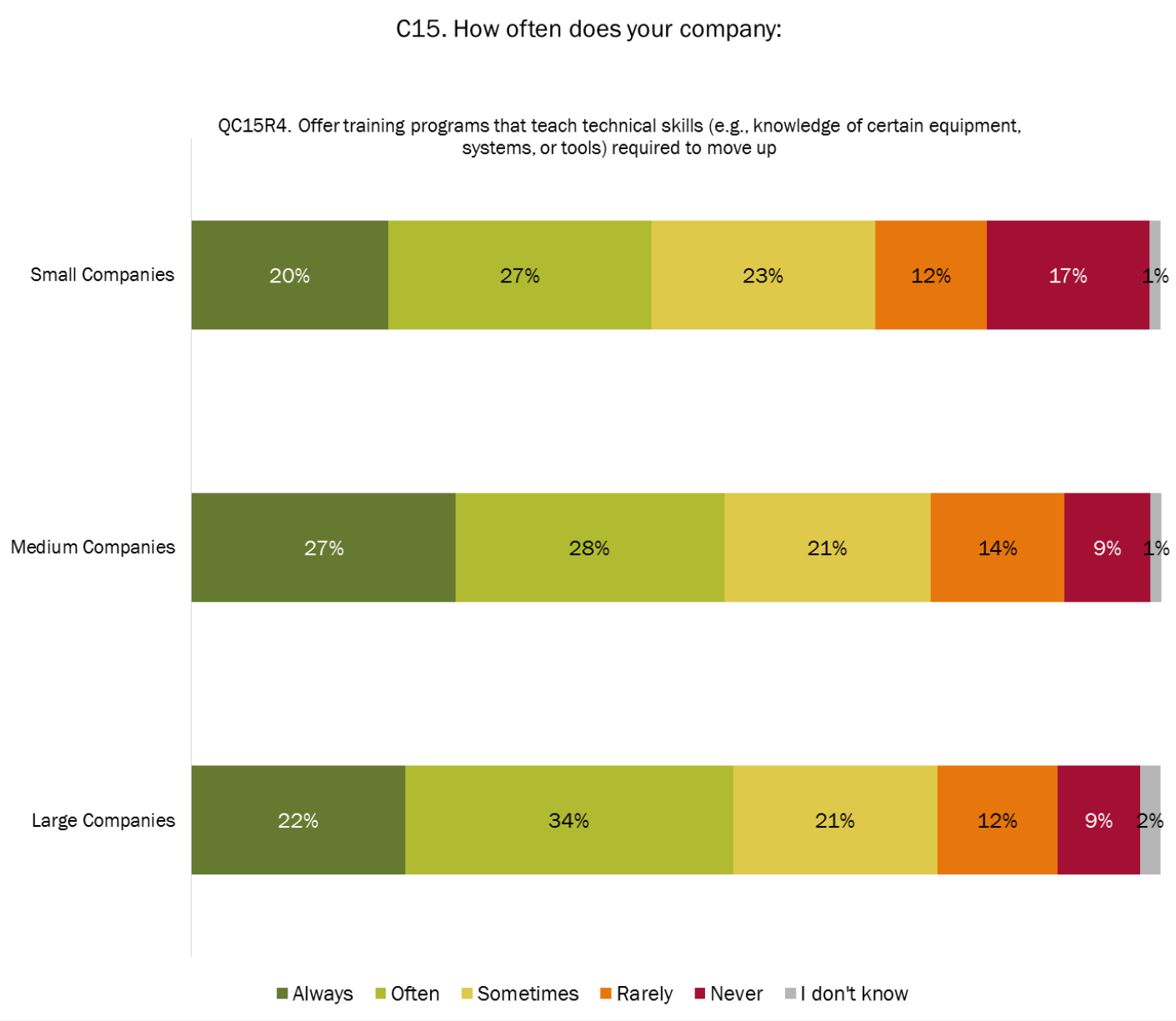

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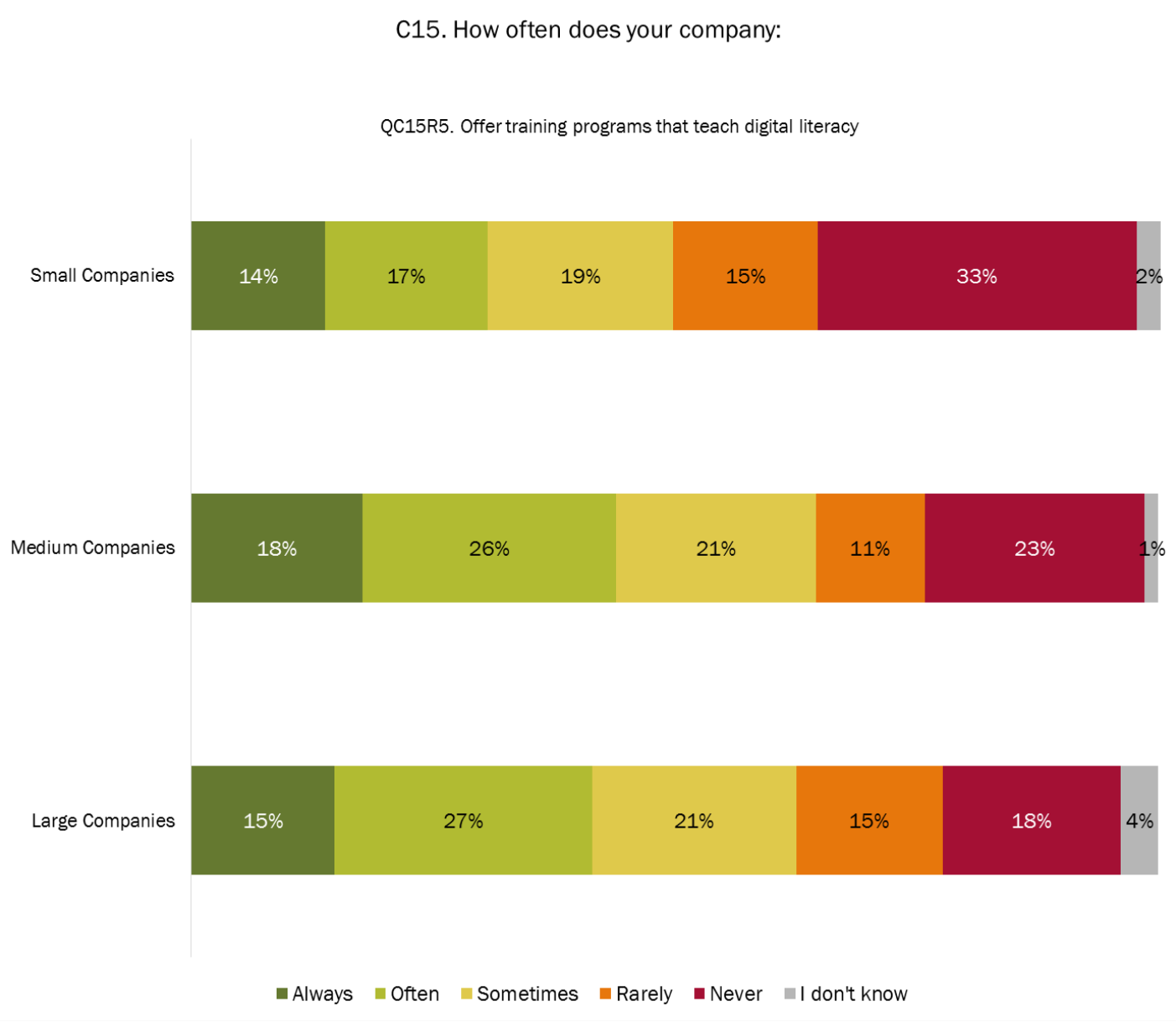

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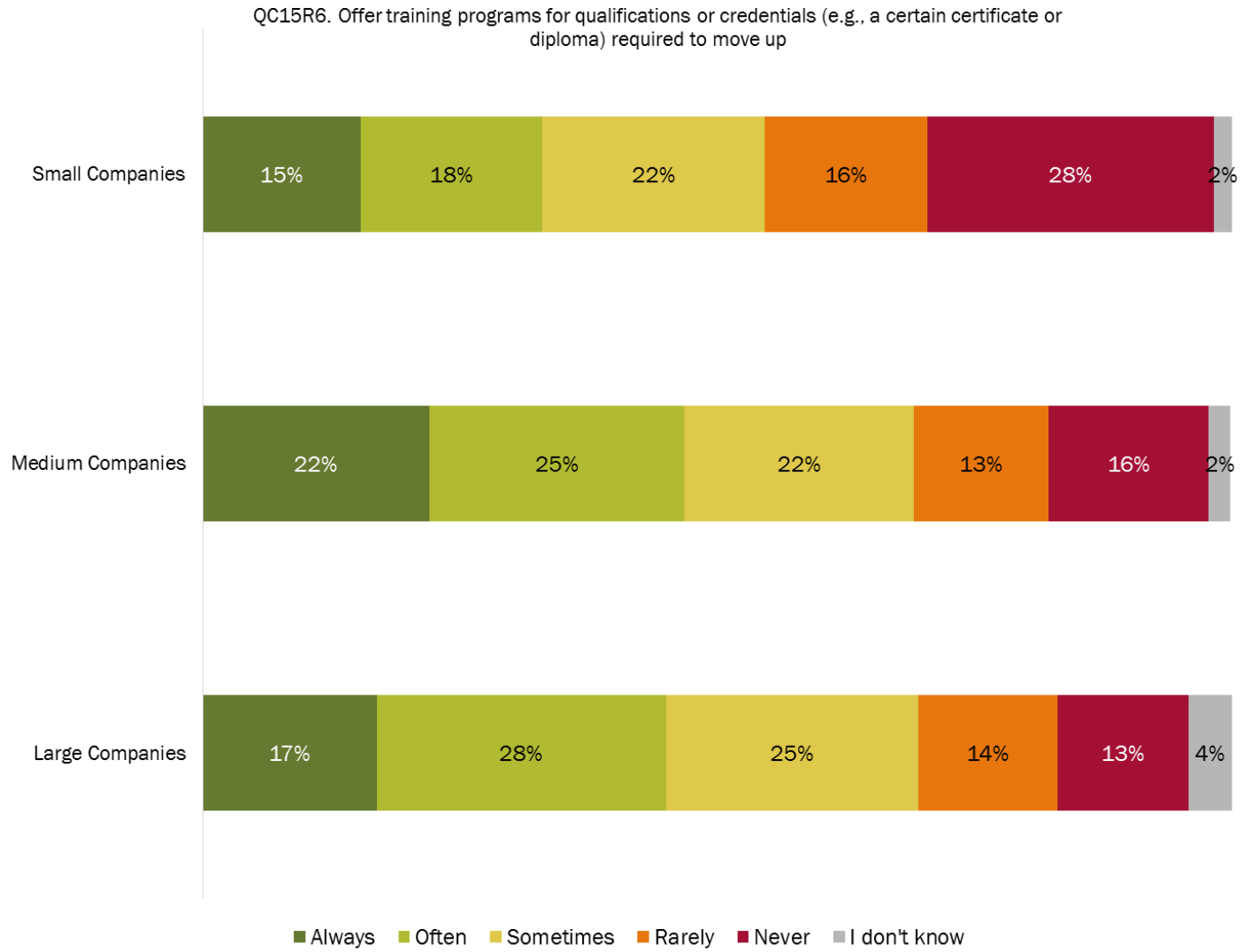

N = 1,150

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On-the-job Support: Learning and Development

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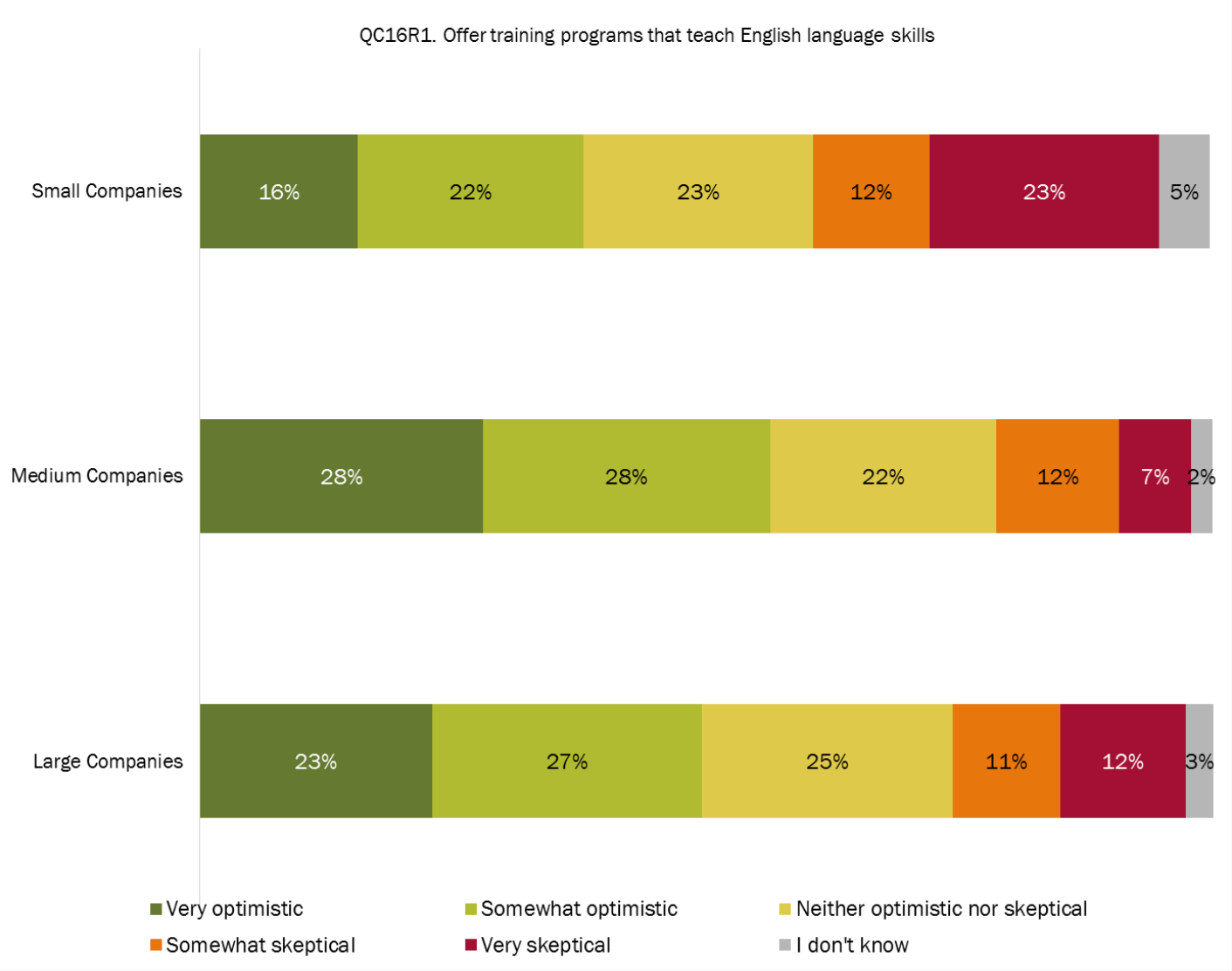
C16. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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On-the-job Support: Learning and Development

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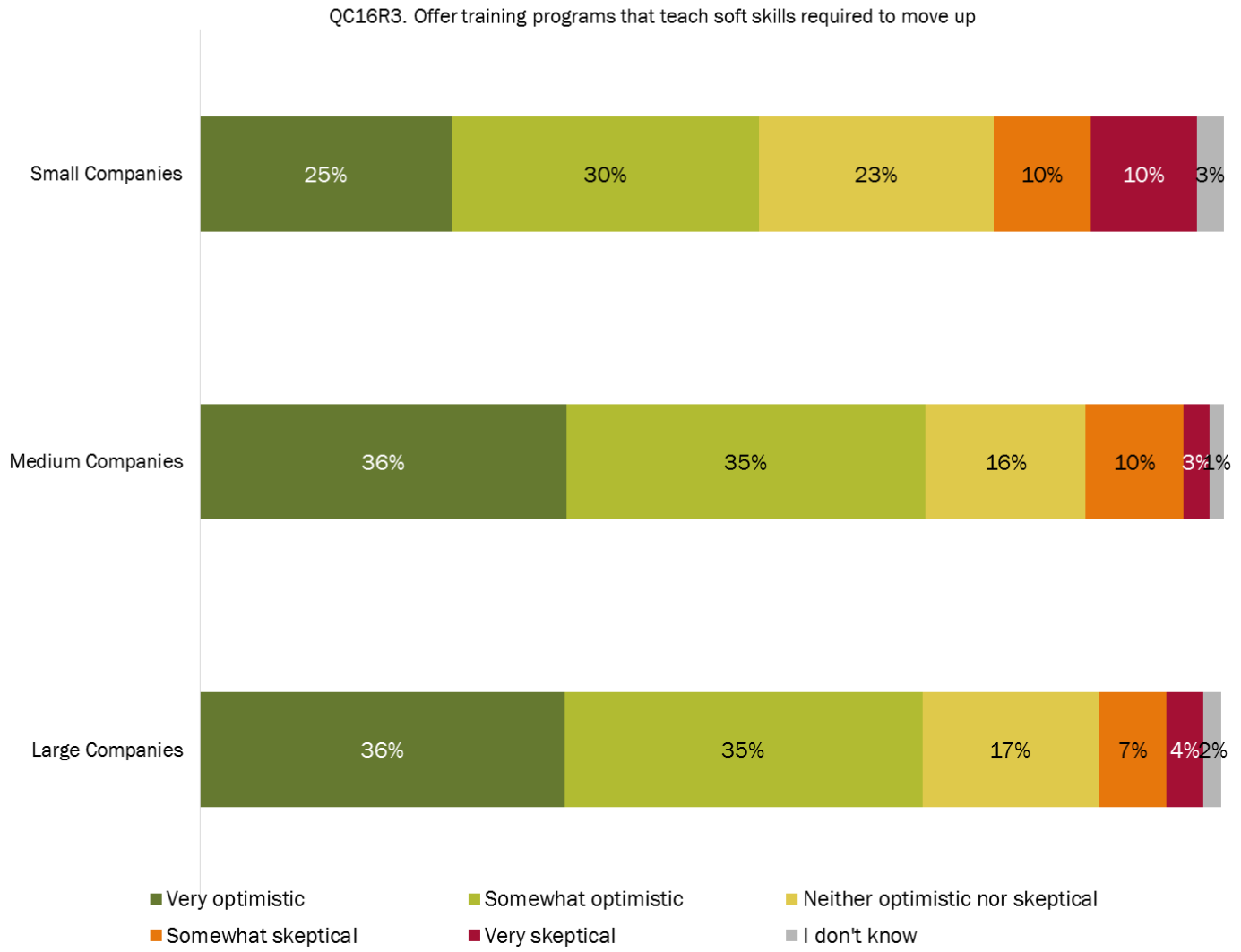

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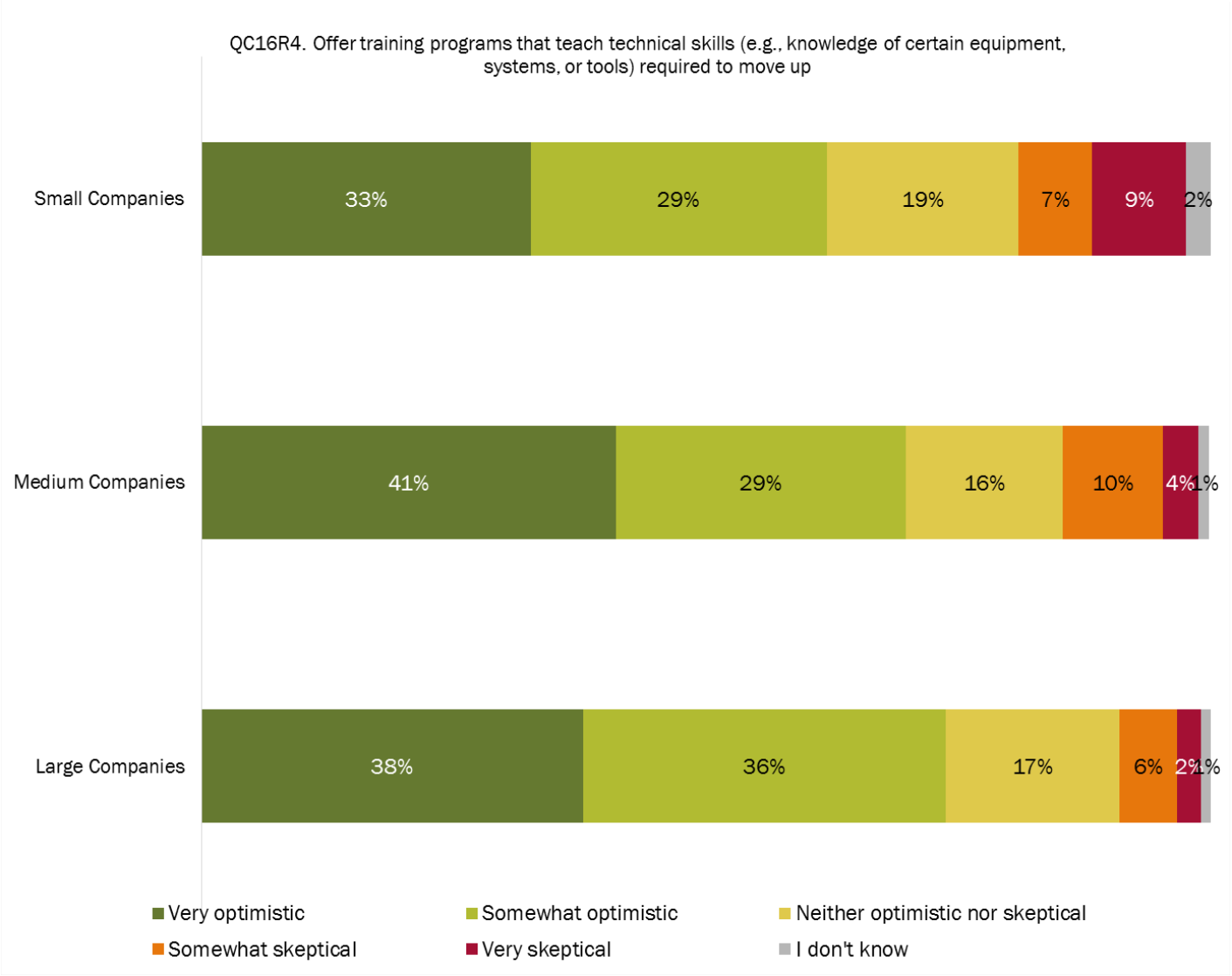

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Actions

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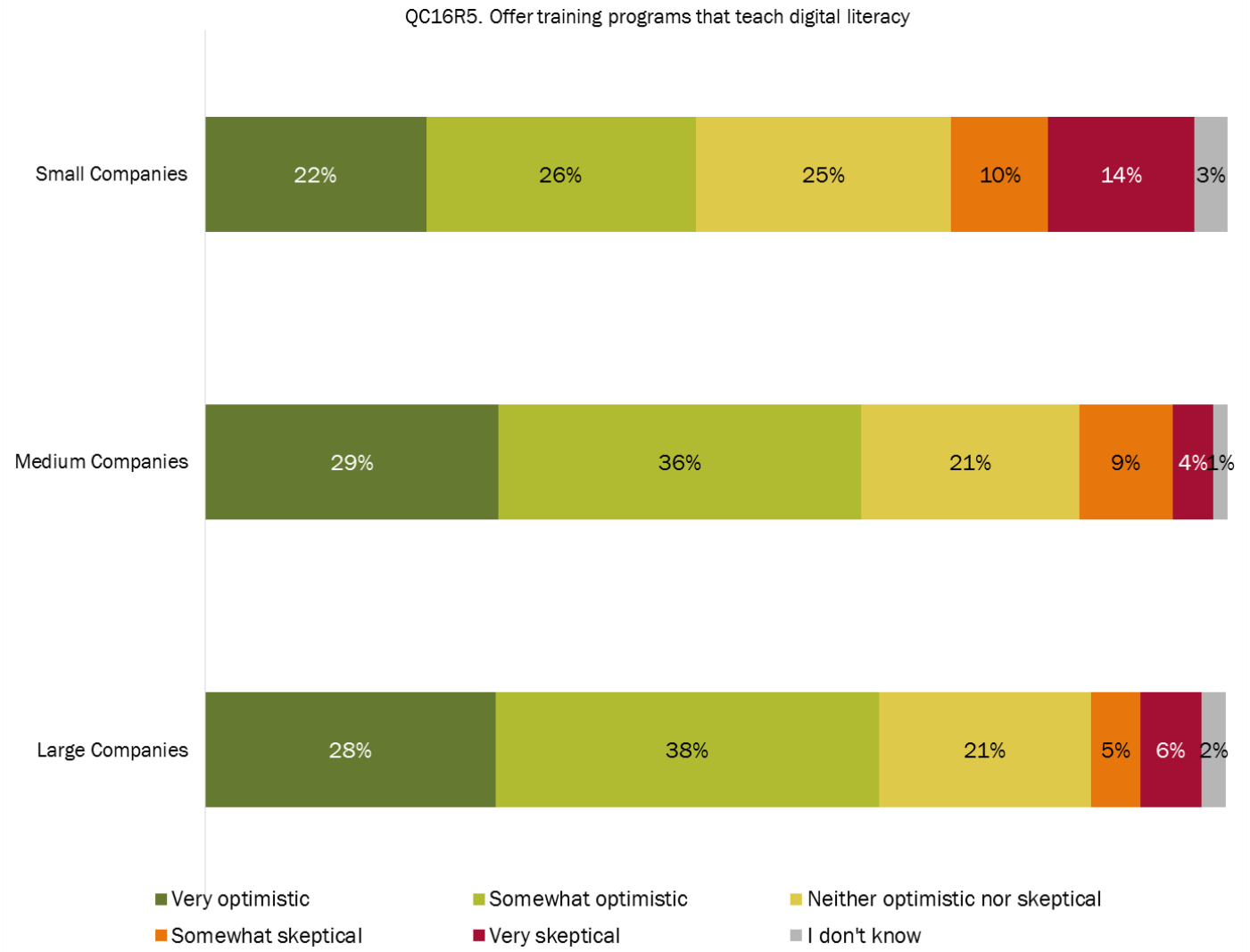

N = 1,150

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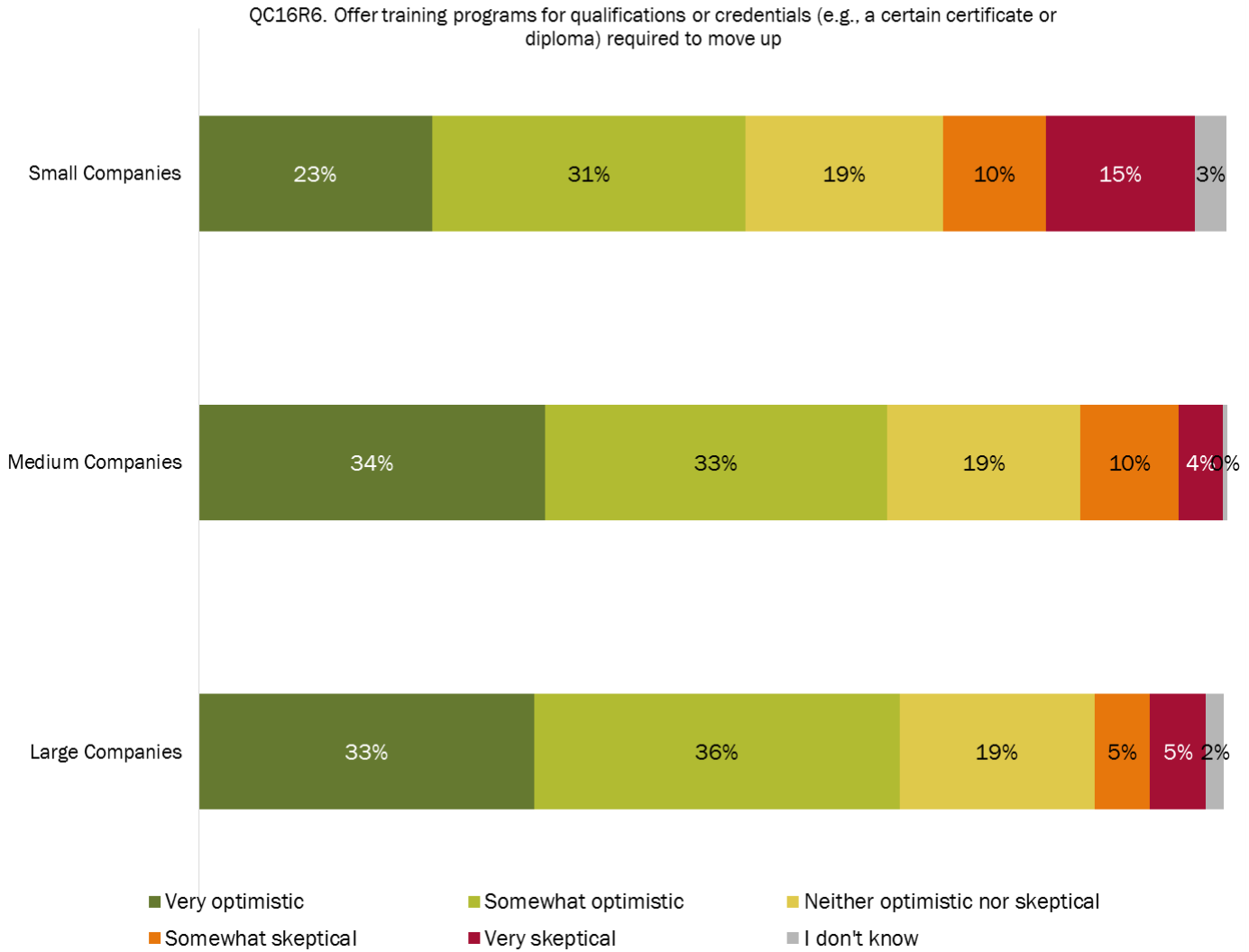

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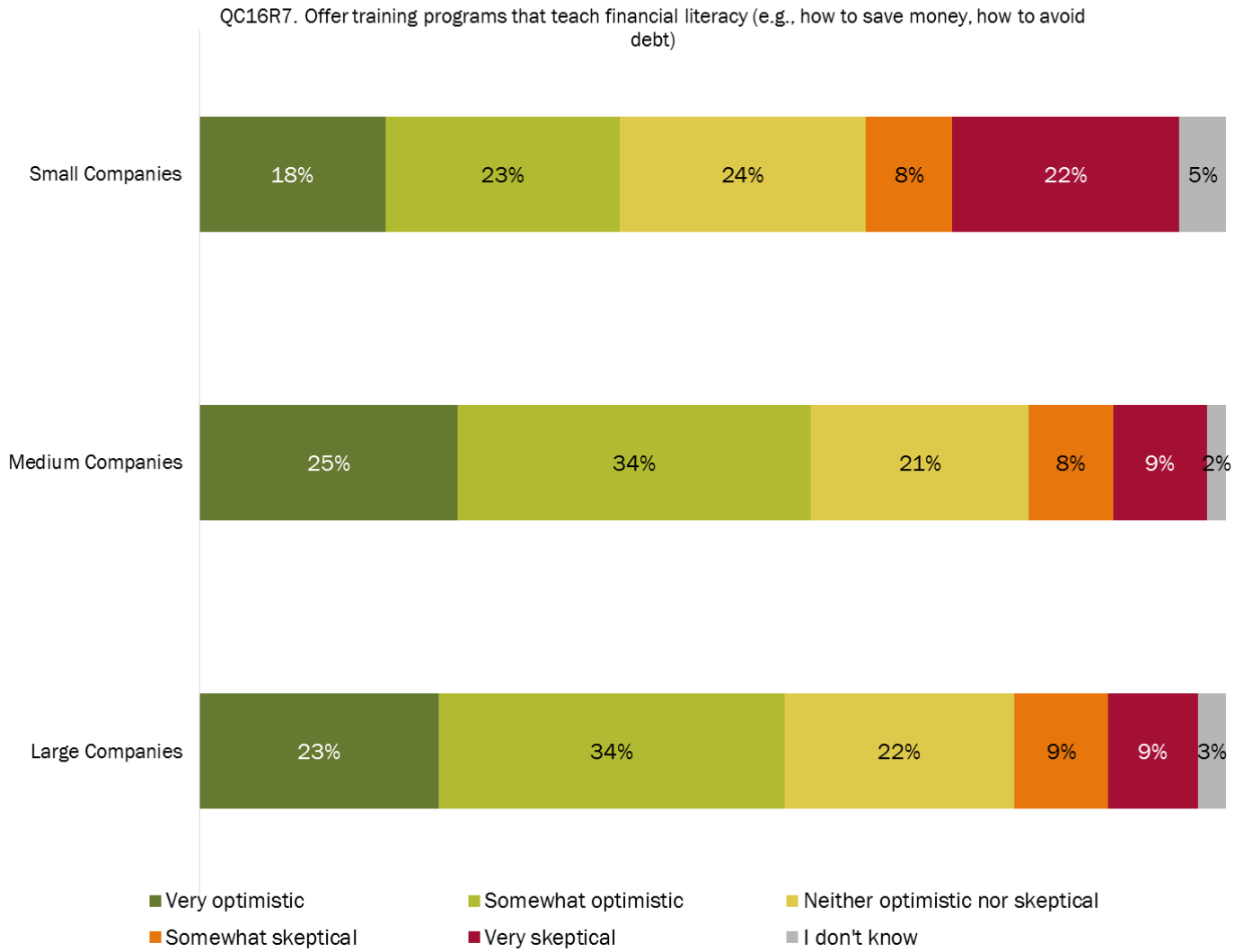

N = 1,150

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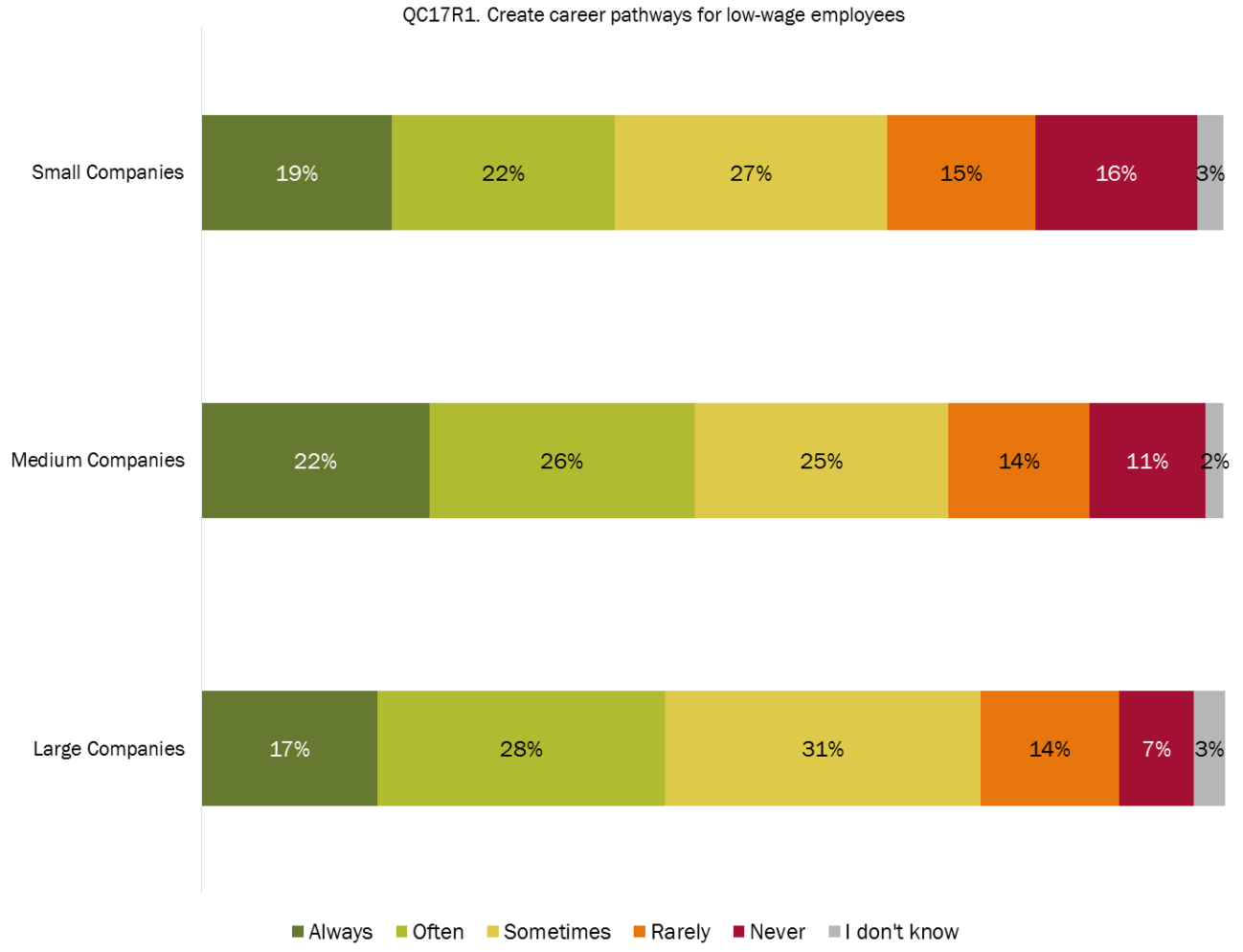
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C17. How often does your company:



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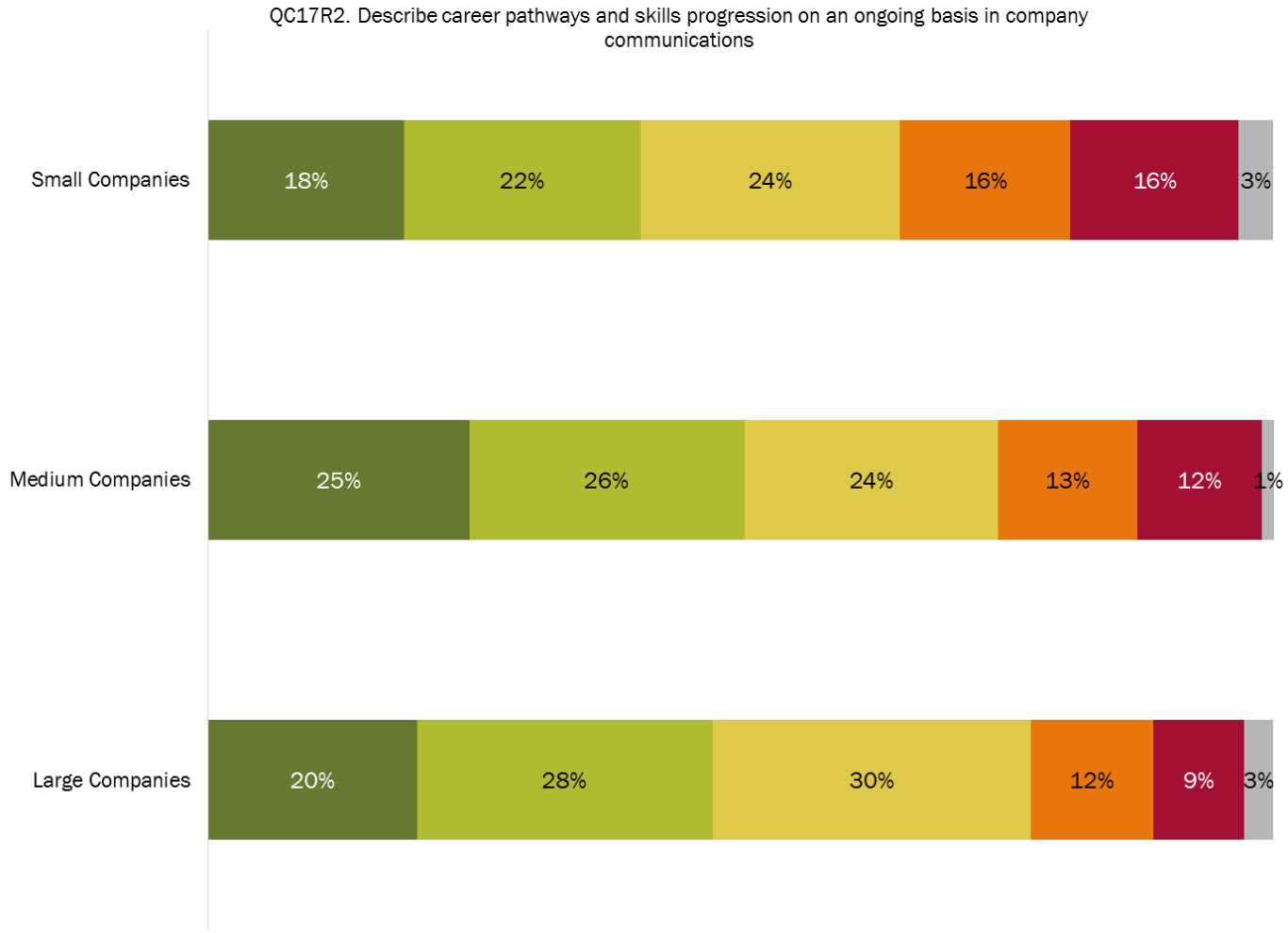
C17. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

Actions
Pathways for Advancement

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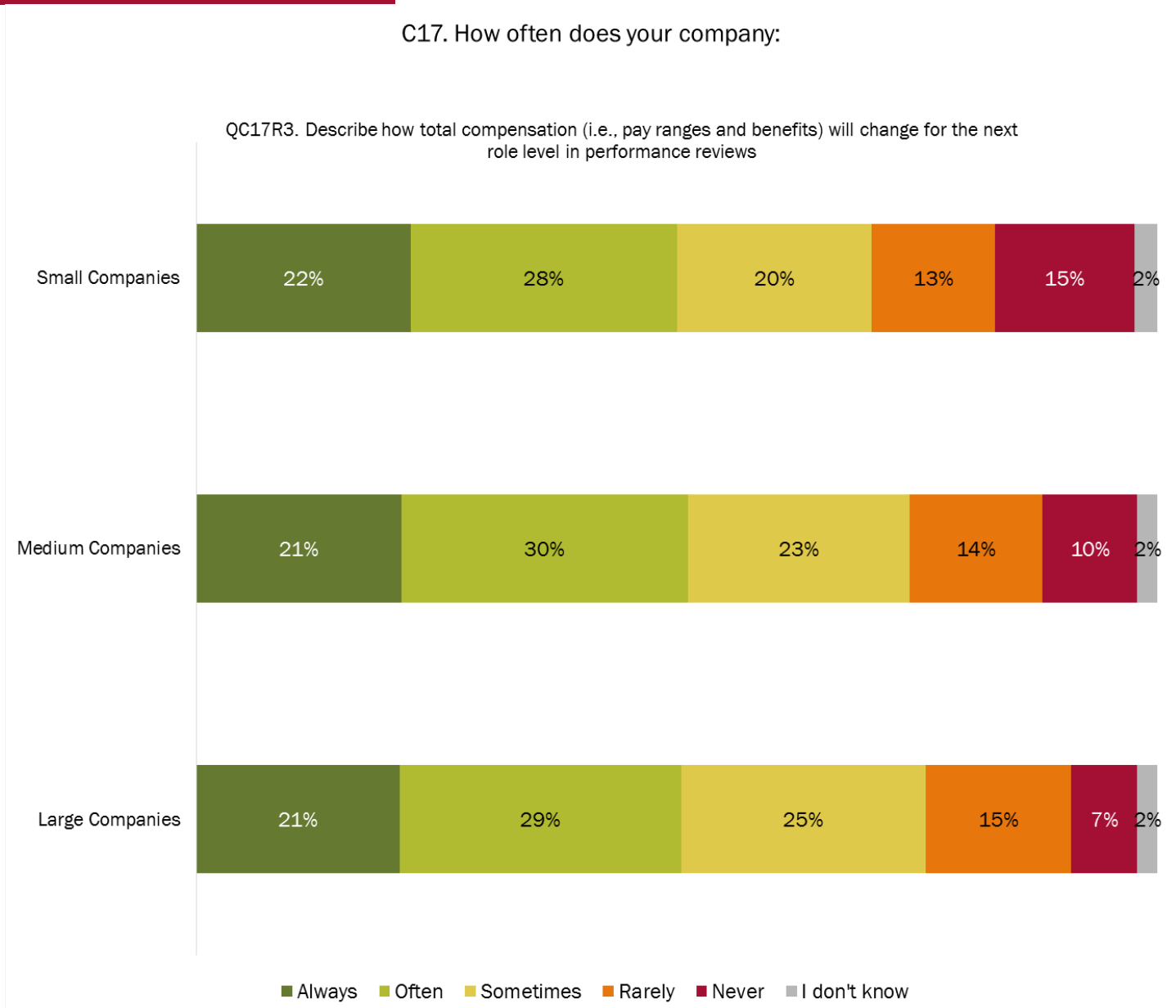
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

Actions
Pathways for Advancement

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N = 1,150

Actions
Pathways for Advancement

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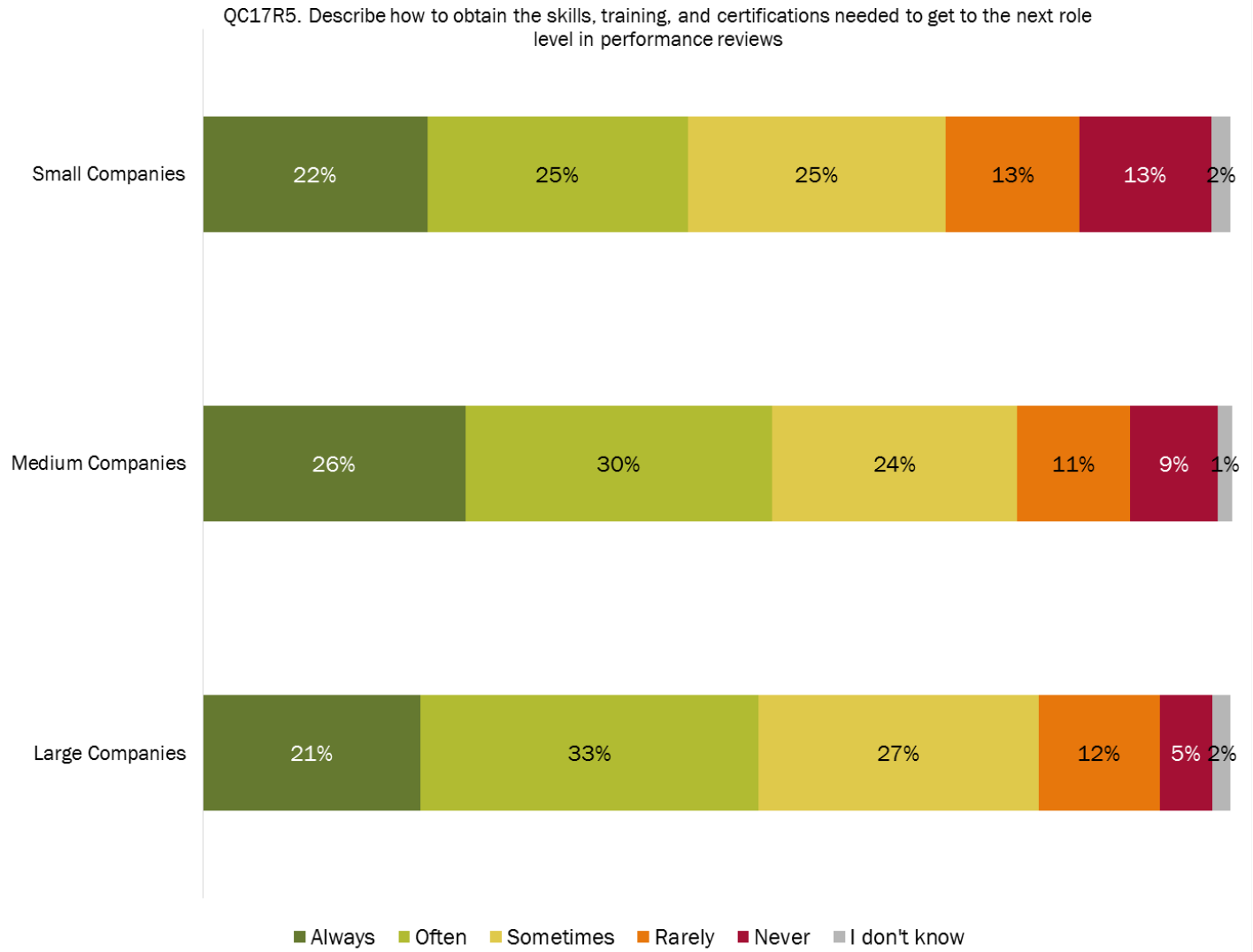
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C17. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

Actions
Pathways for Advancement

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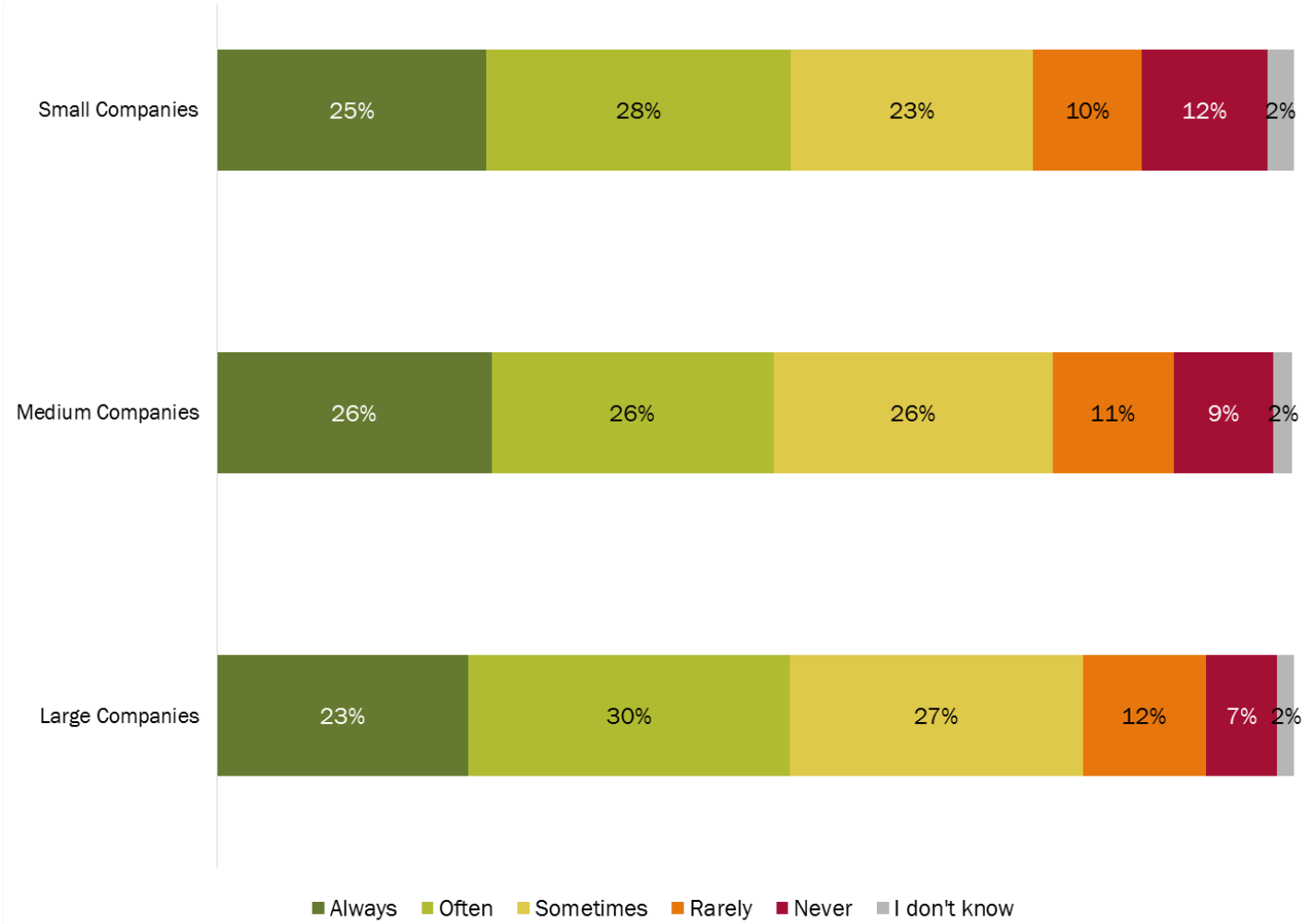
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C17. How often does your company:

QC17R6. Reward (i.e., increase wages of, change job title of, or offer a bonus to) low-wage employees for reaching milestones of skills, training, credentials, or experience



N = 1,150

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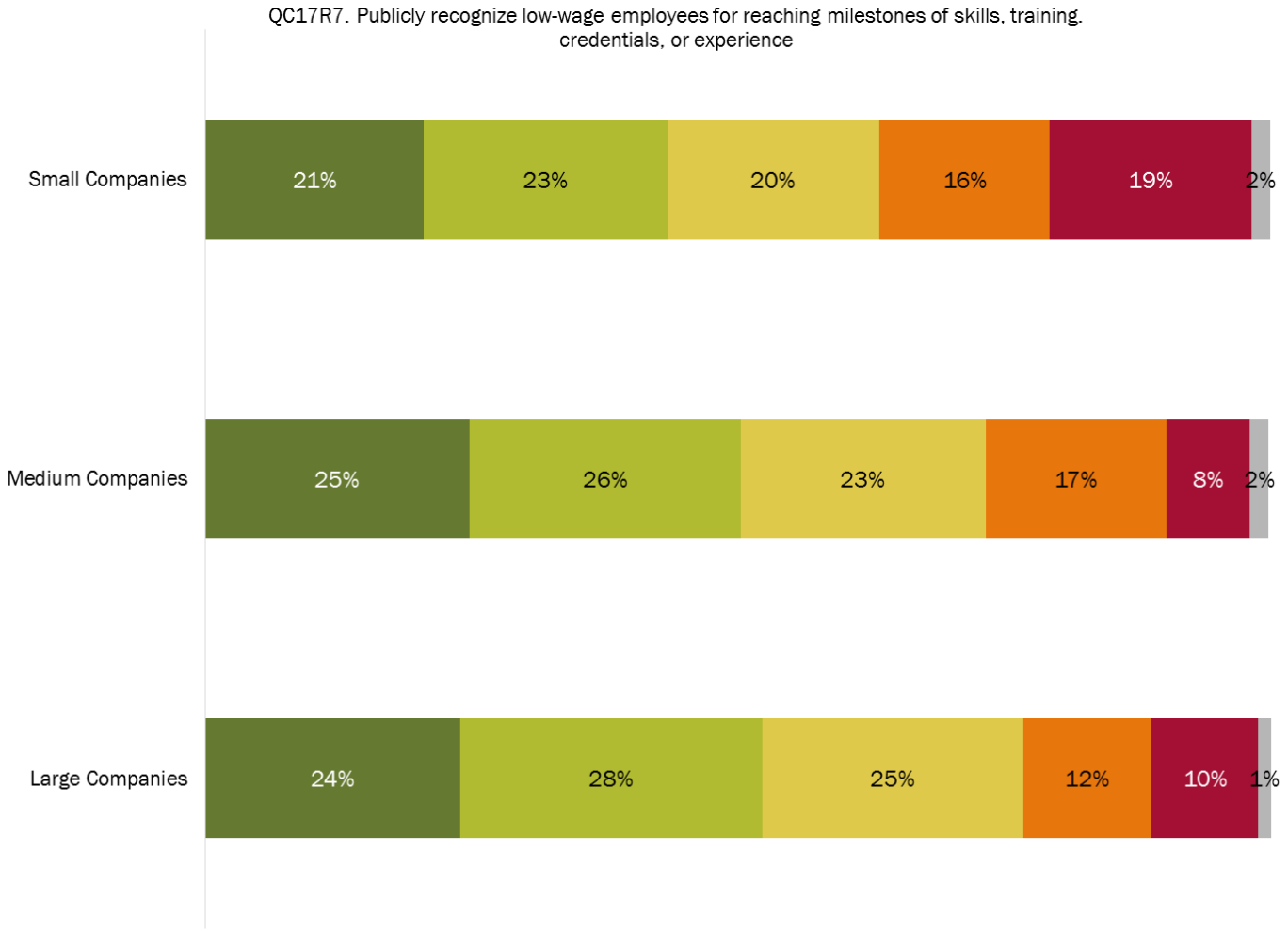
C17. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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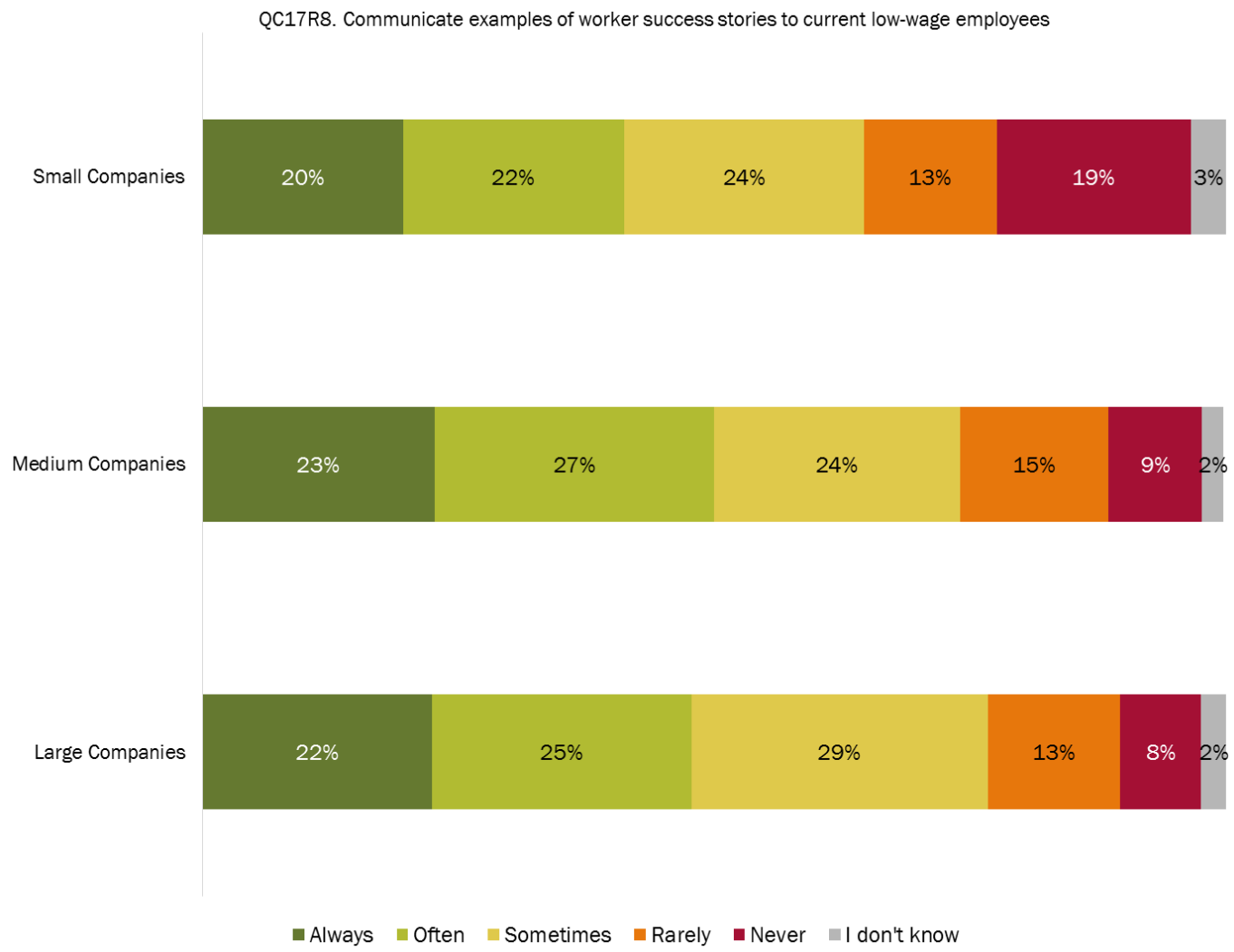

N = 1,150

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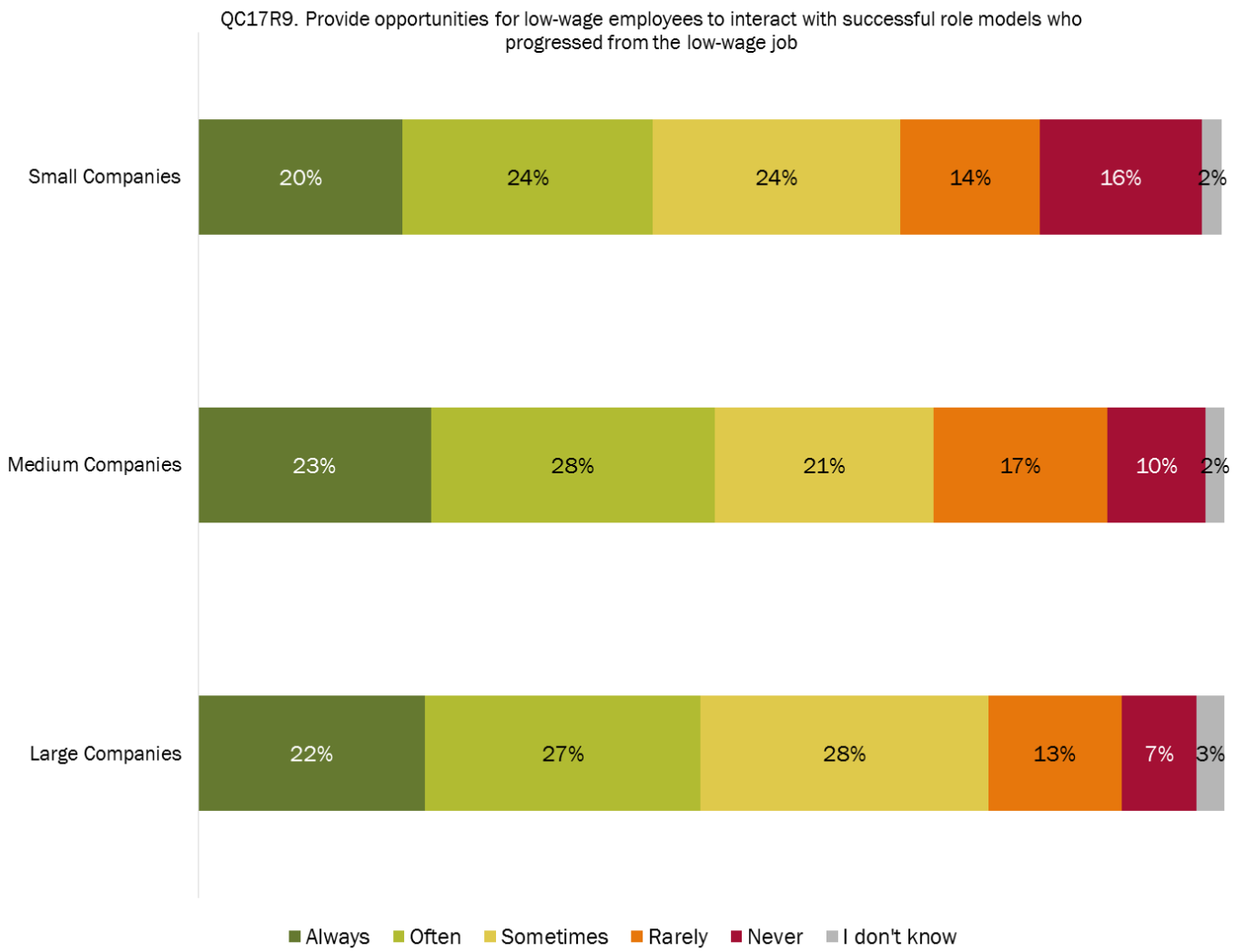
C17. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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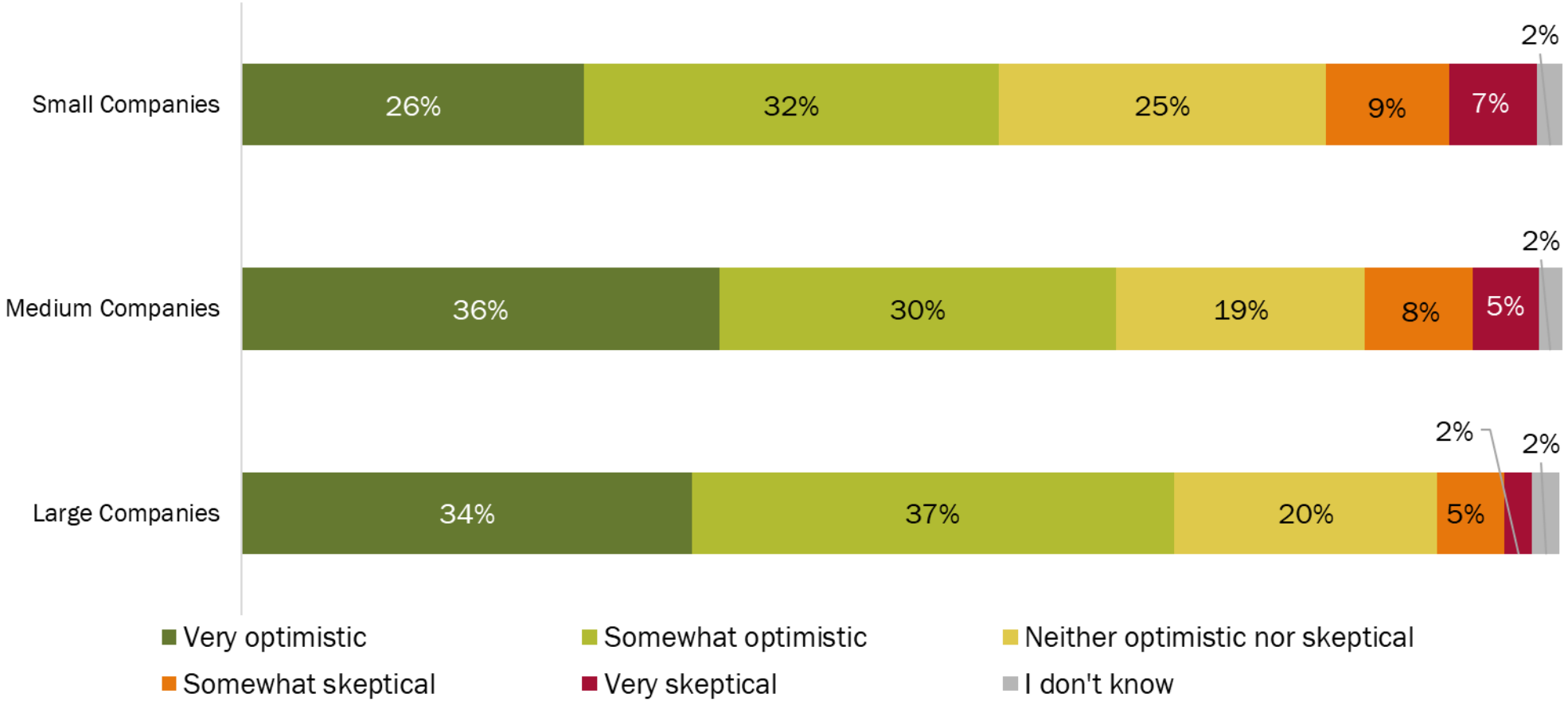
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R1. Create career pathways for low-wage employees



N = 1,150

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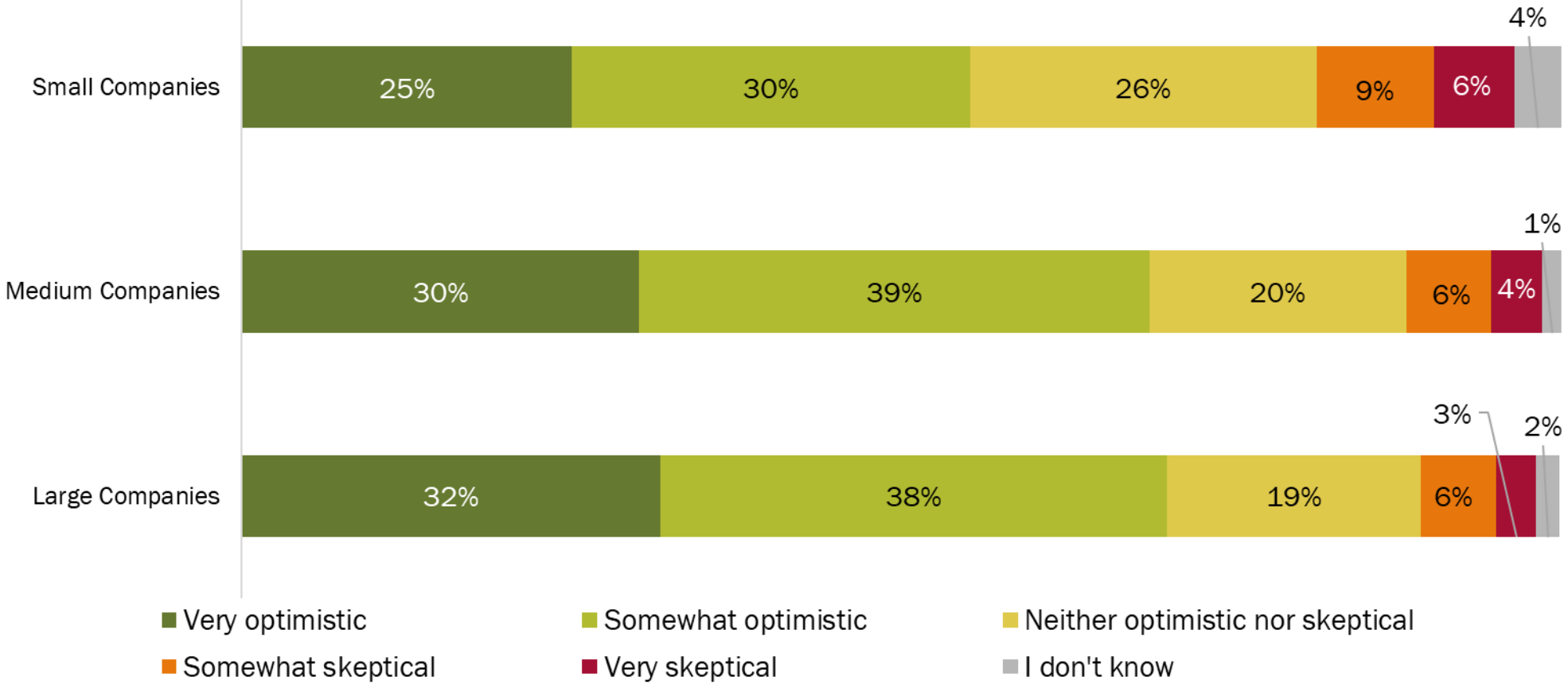
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R2. Describe career pathways and skills progression on an ongoing basis in company communications



N = 1,150

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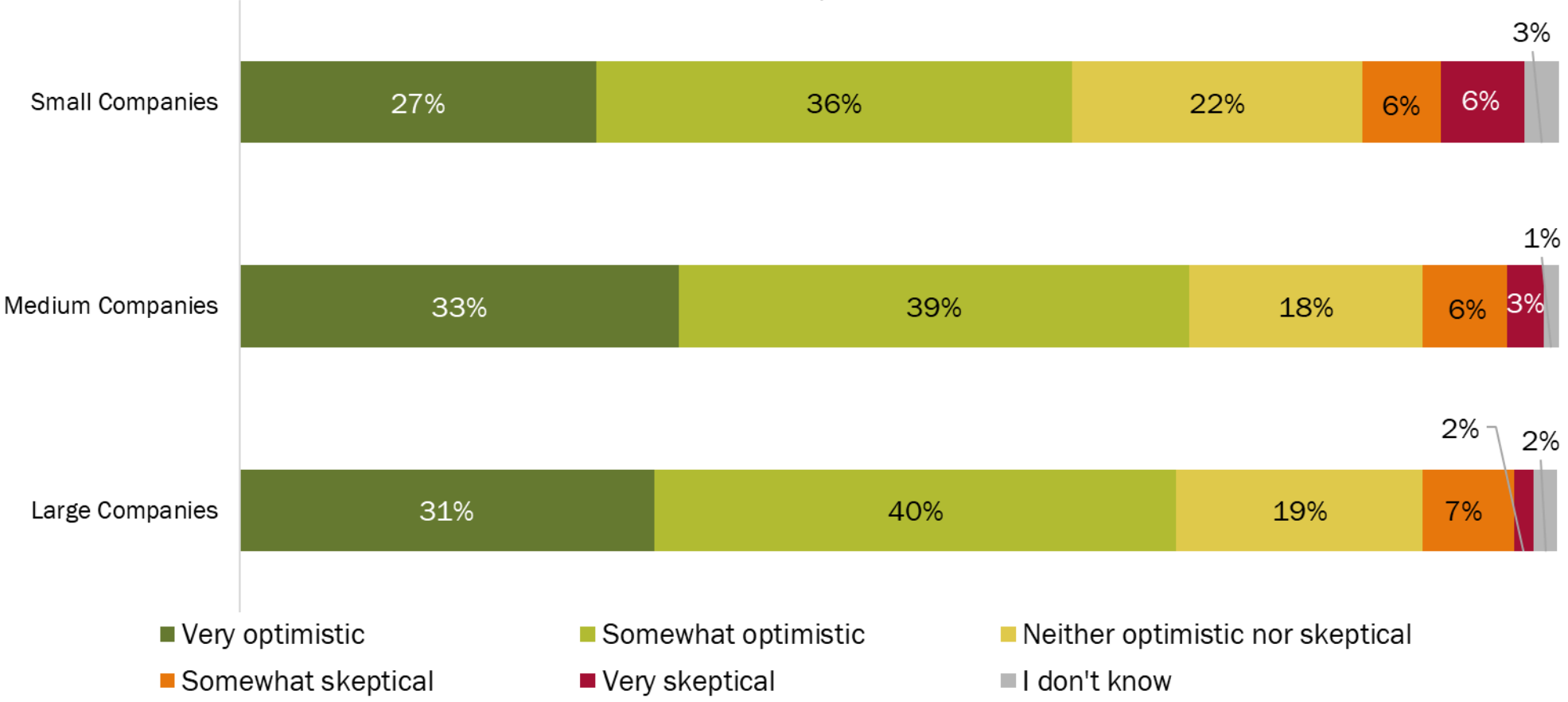
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R3. Describe how total compensation (i.e., pay ranges and benefits) will change for the next role level in performance reviews



N = 1,150

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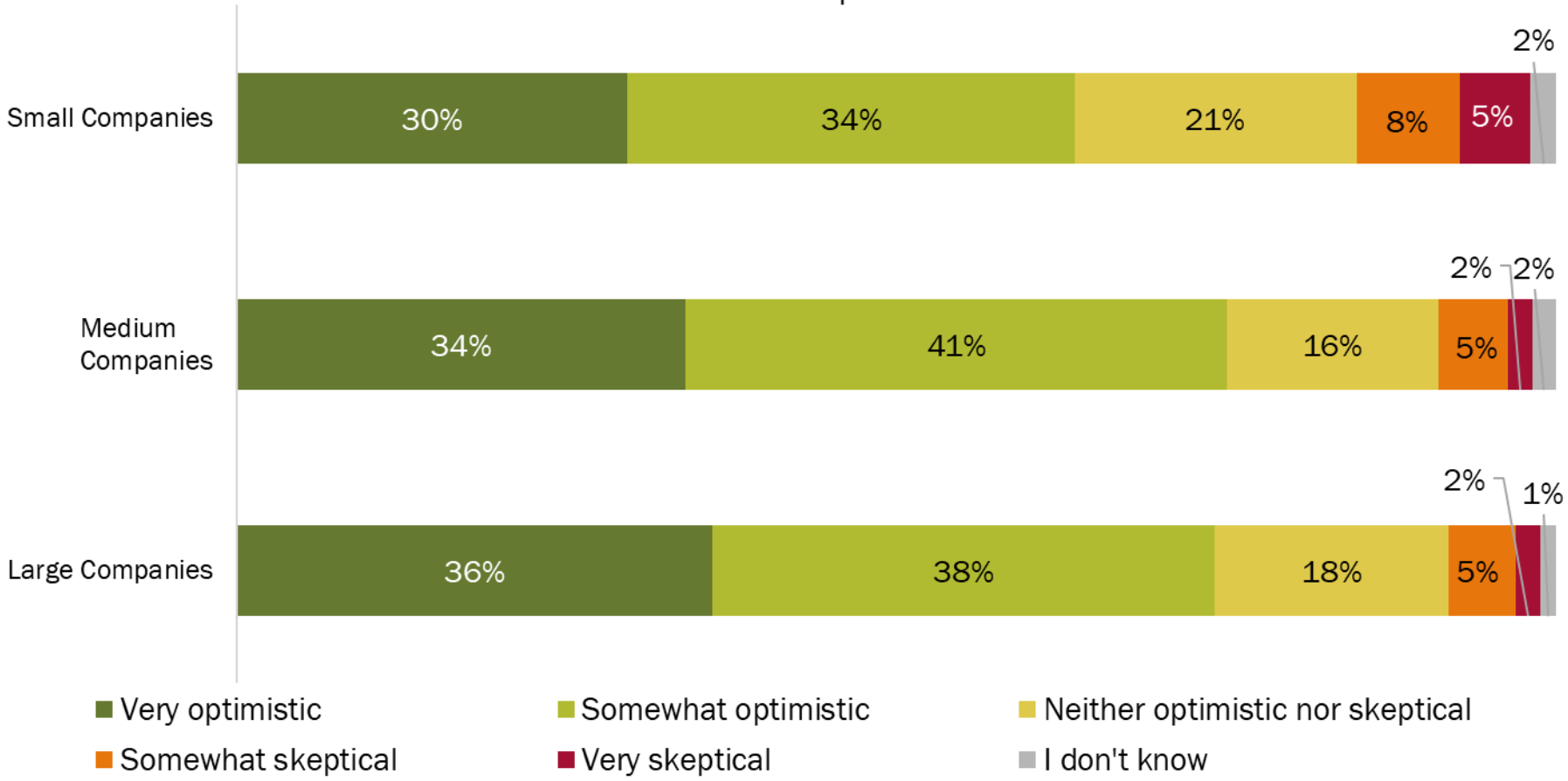
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R4. Describe the skills, training, certifications, and experience needed to get to the next role level in performance reviews



N = 1,150

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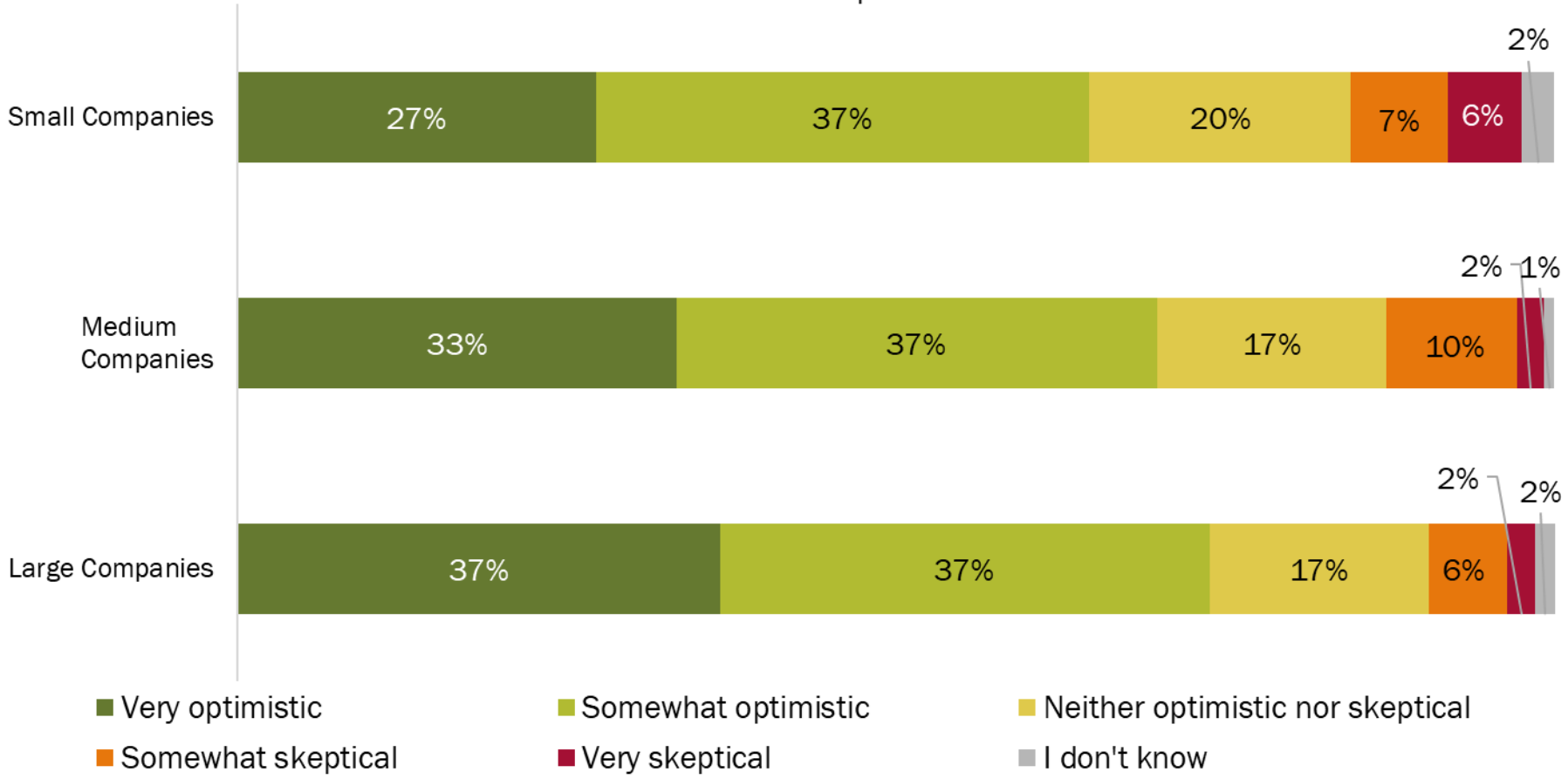
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R5. Describe how to obtain the skills, training, and certifications needed to get to the next role level in performance reviews



N = 1,150

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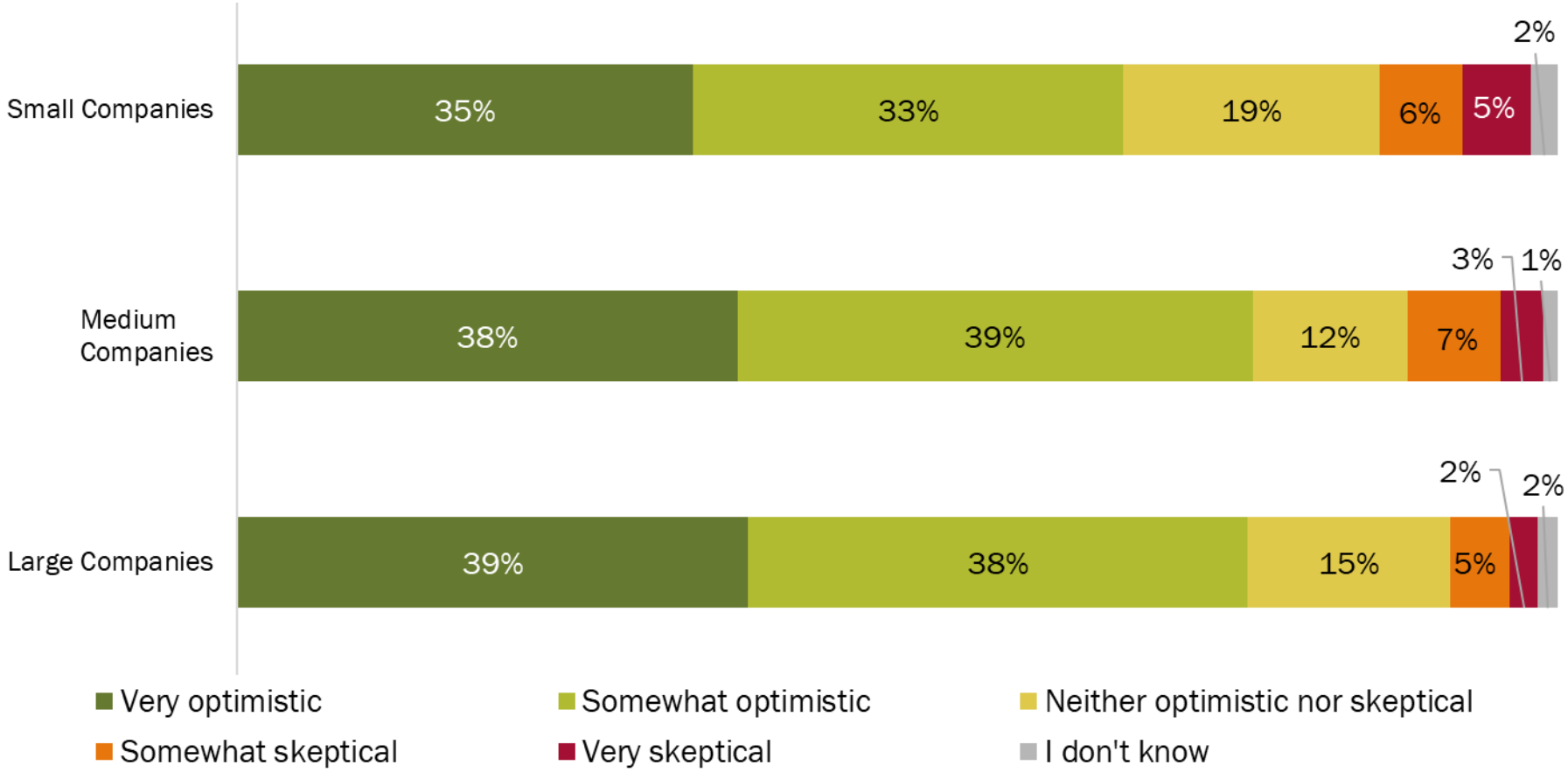
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R6. Reward (i.e., increase wages of, change job title of, or offer a bonus to) low-wage employees for reaching milestones of skills, training, credentials, or experience



N = 1,150

Actions
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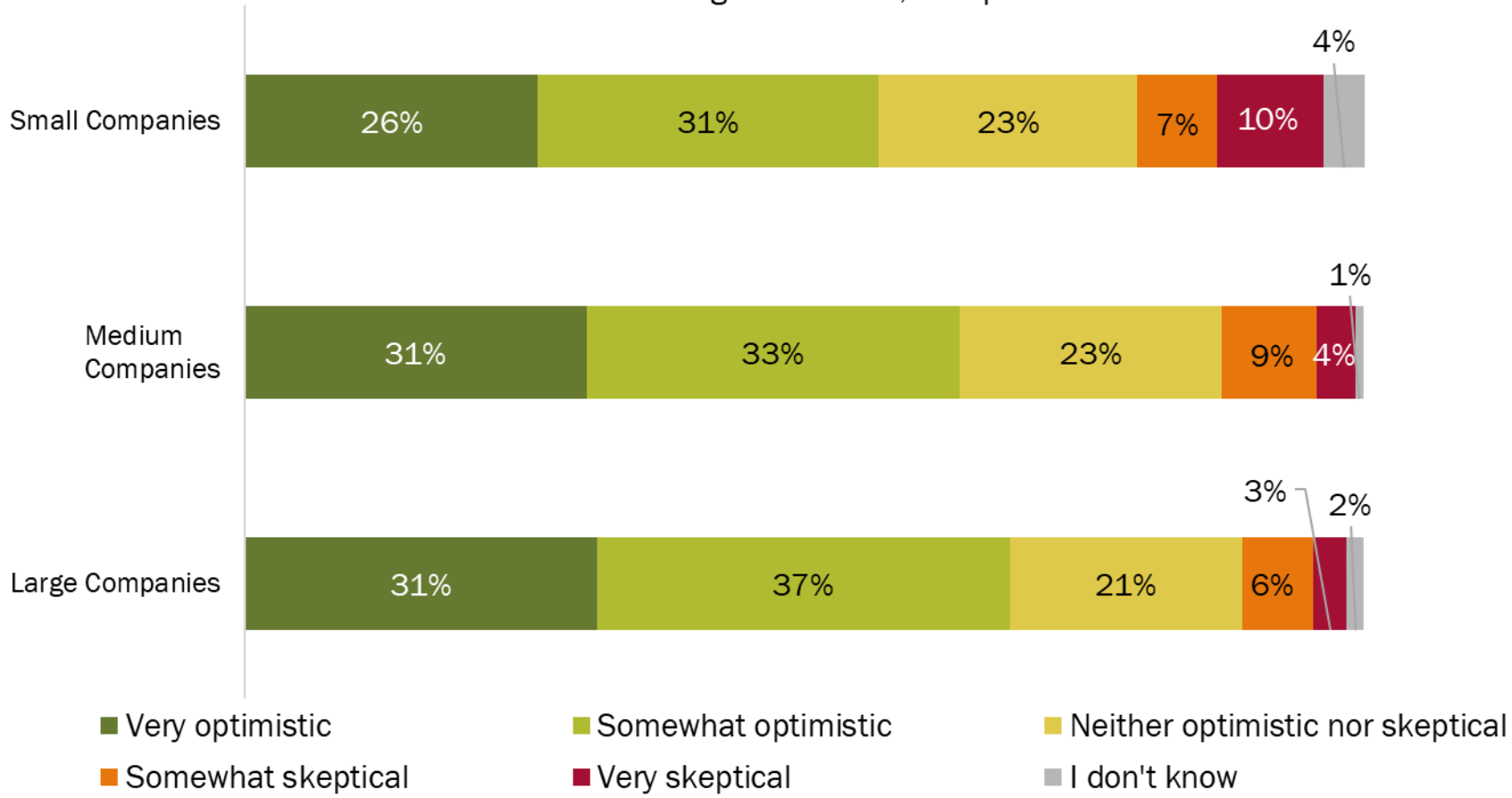
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC18R7. Publicly recognize low-wage employees for reaching milestones of skills, training. credentials, or experience



N = 1,150

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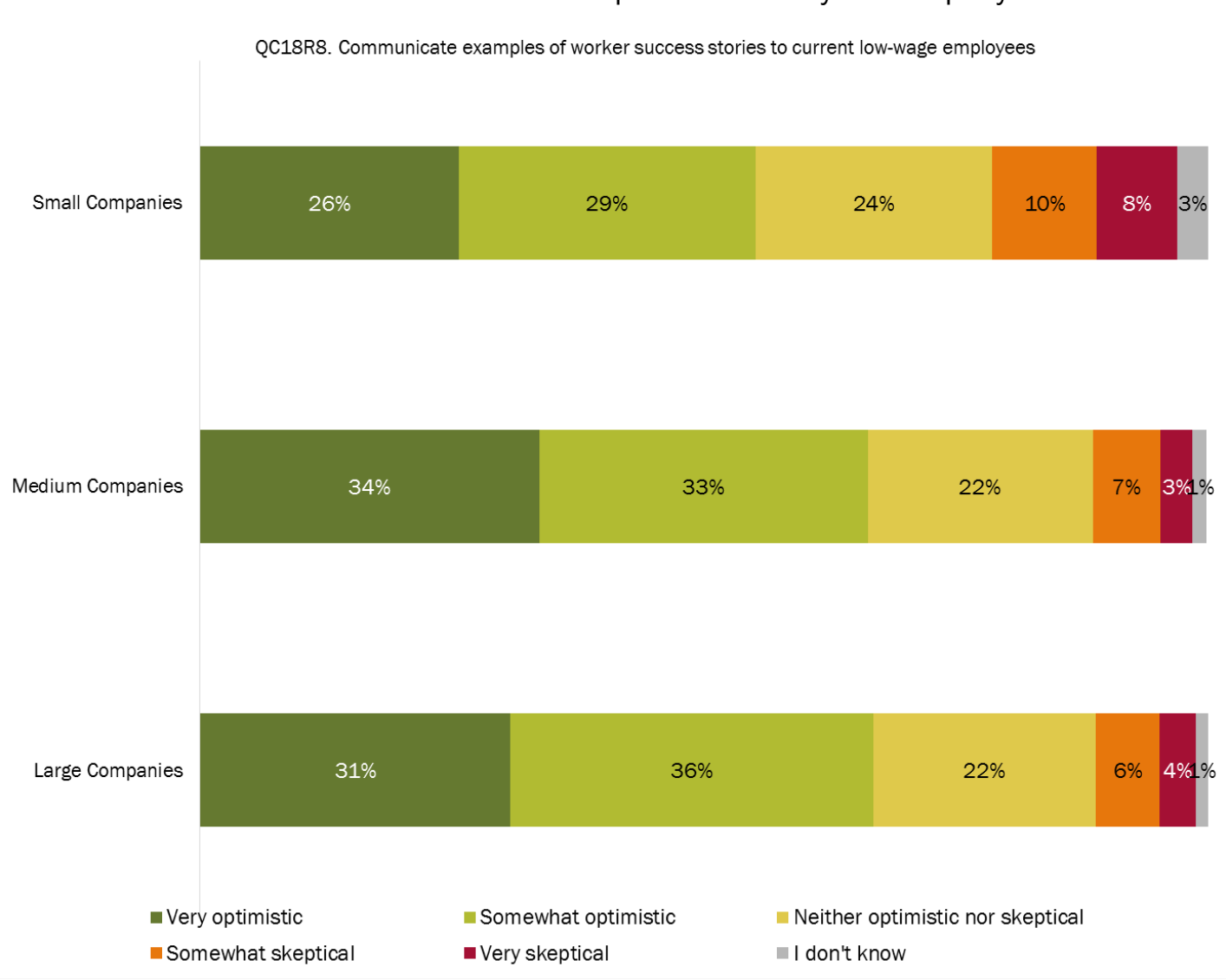
C18. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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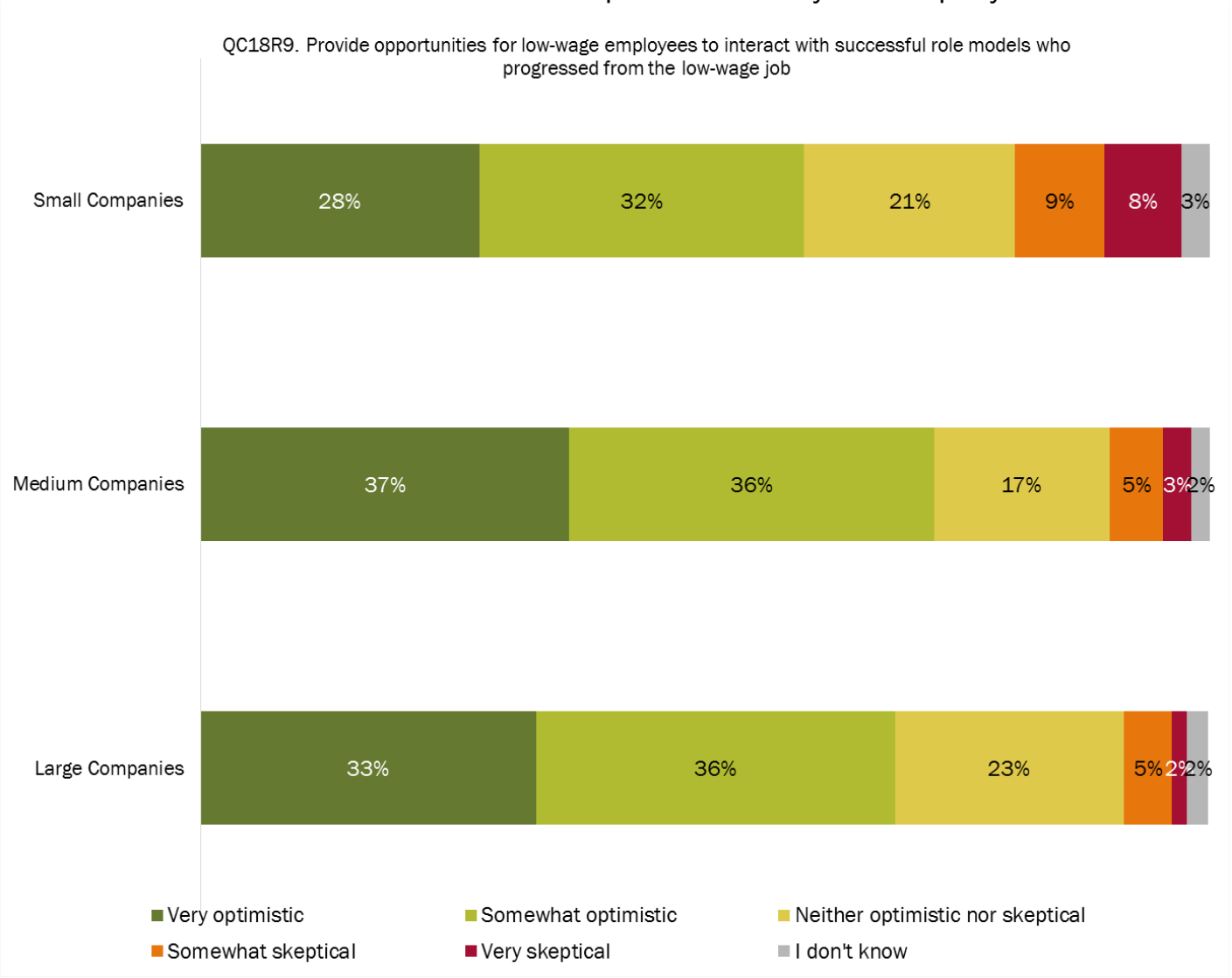

N = 1,150

Actions
Offboarding and Post-Exit

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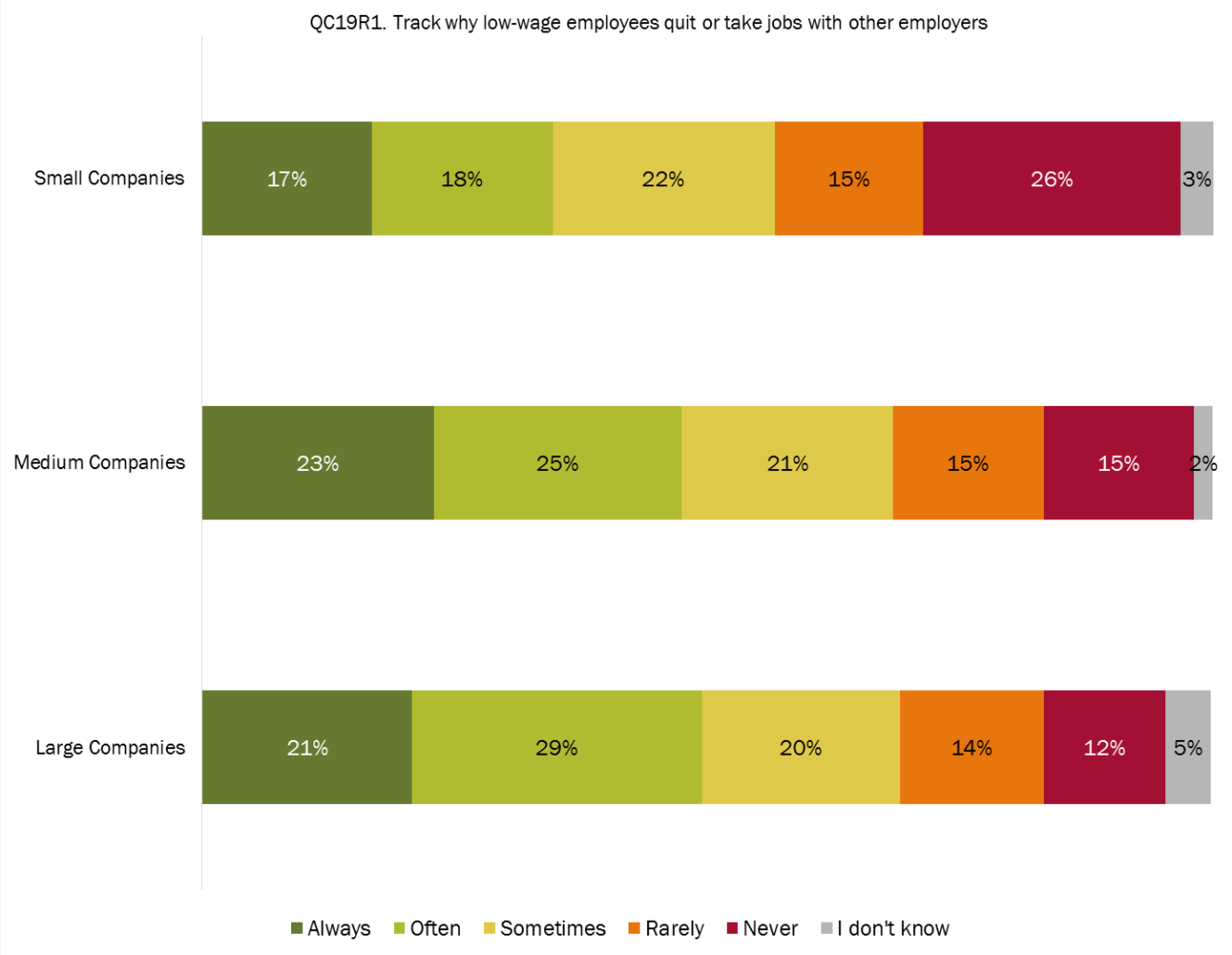
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C19. How often does your company:



N = 1,150

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Offboarding and Post-Exit

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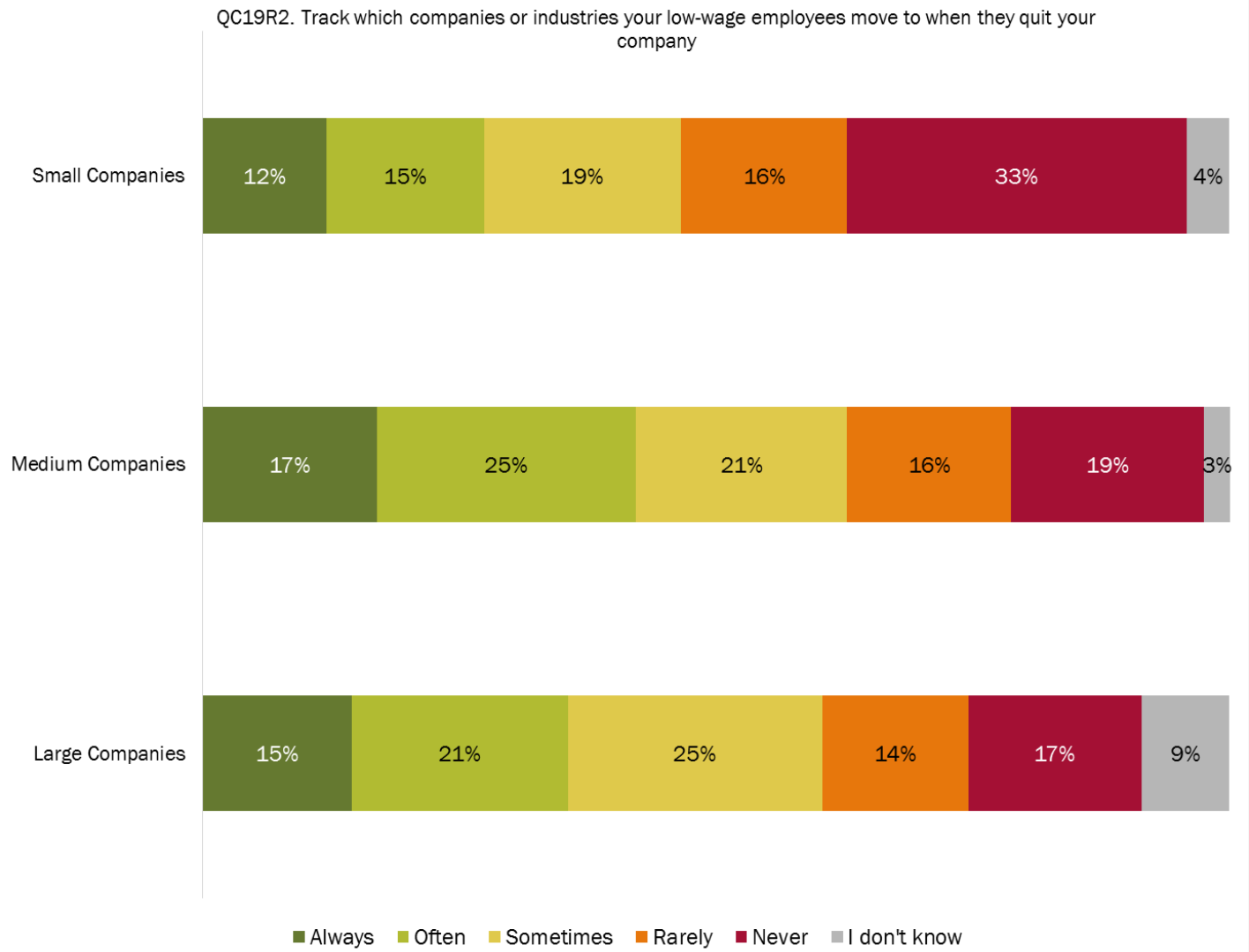

N = 1,150

Actions
Offboarding and Post-Exit

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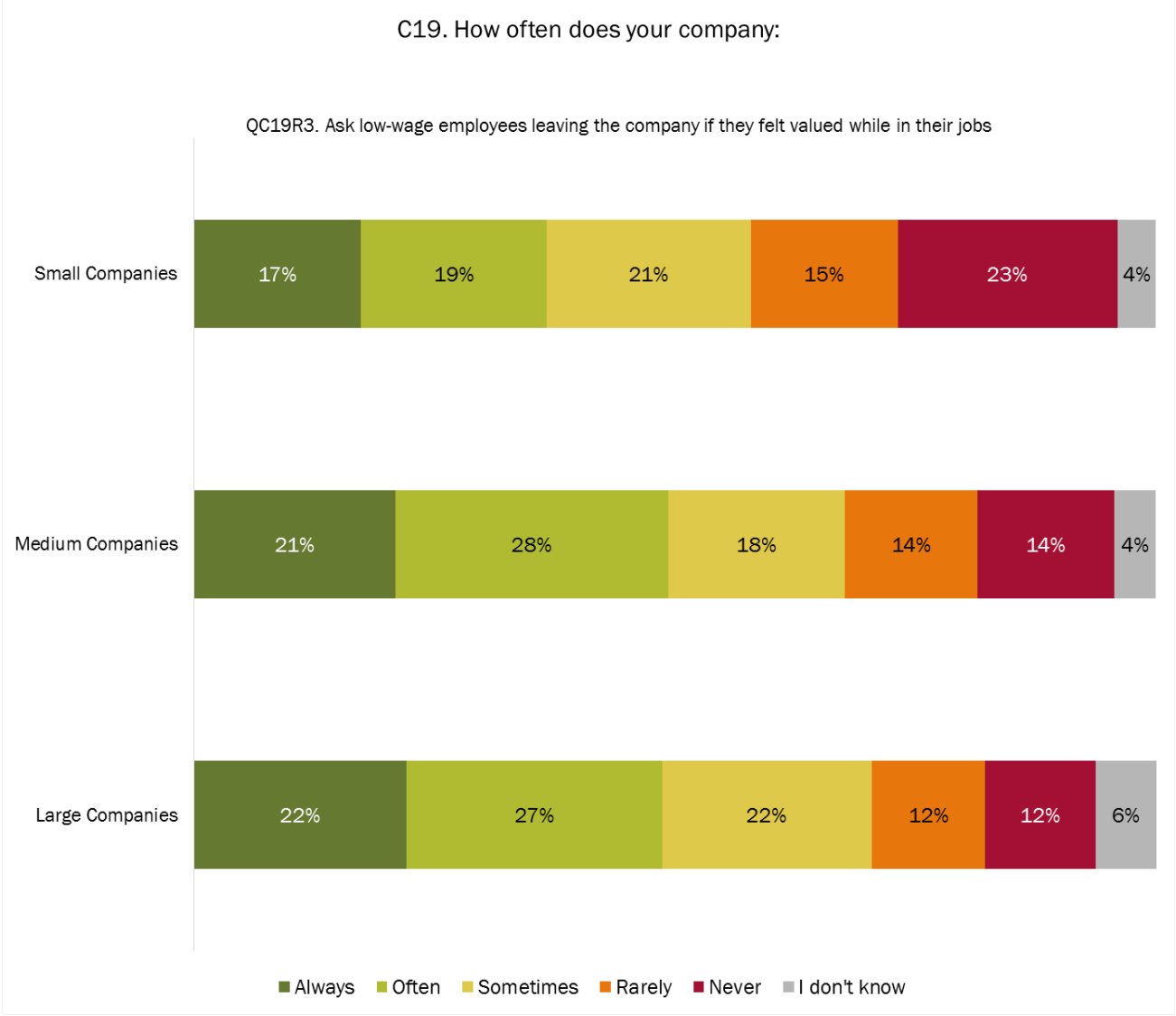

N = 1,150

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Offboarding and Post-Exit

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Actions
Offboarding and Post-Exit

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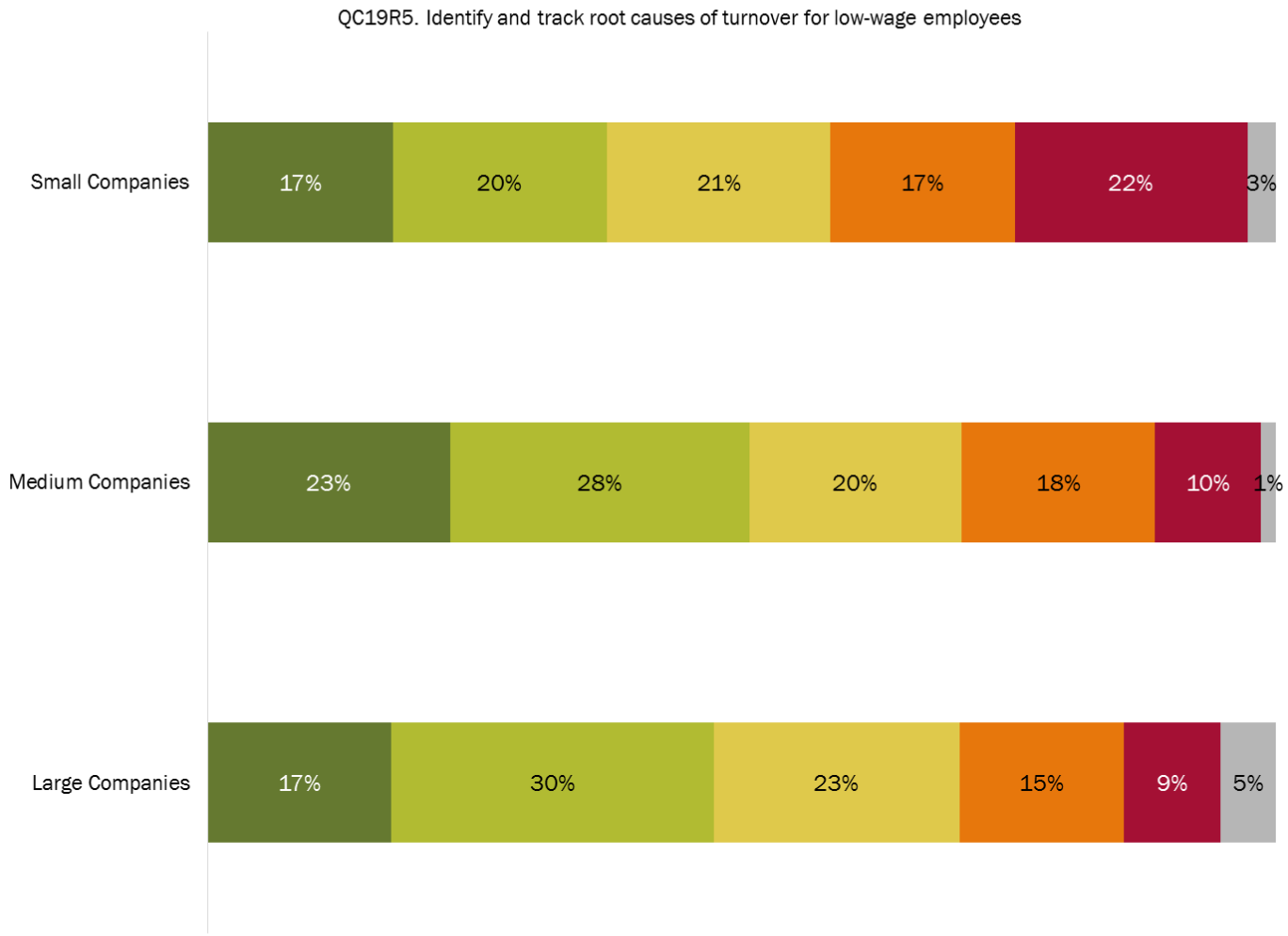

N = 1,150

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Offboarding and Post-Exit

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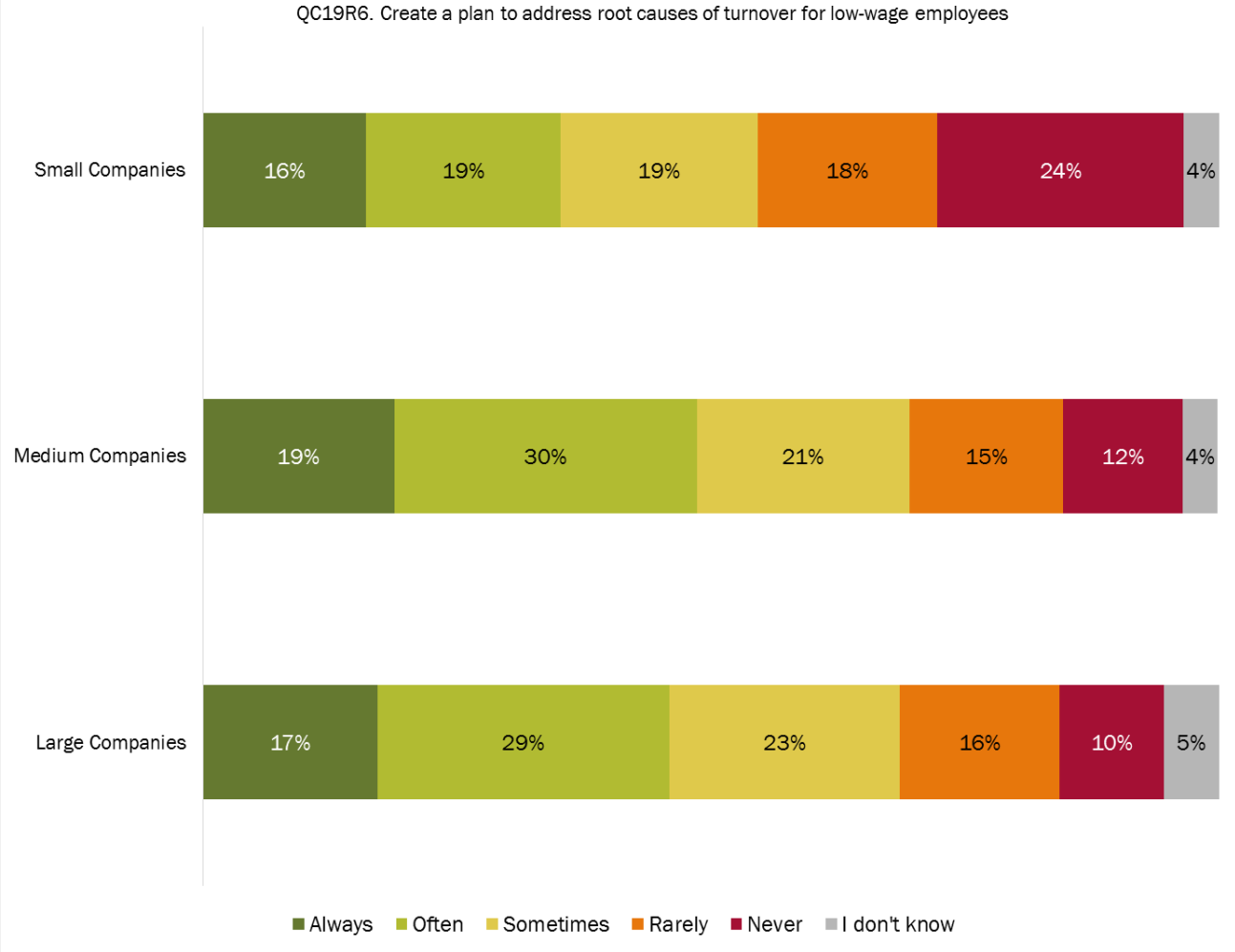

N = 1,150

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Offboarding and Post-Exit

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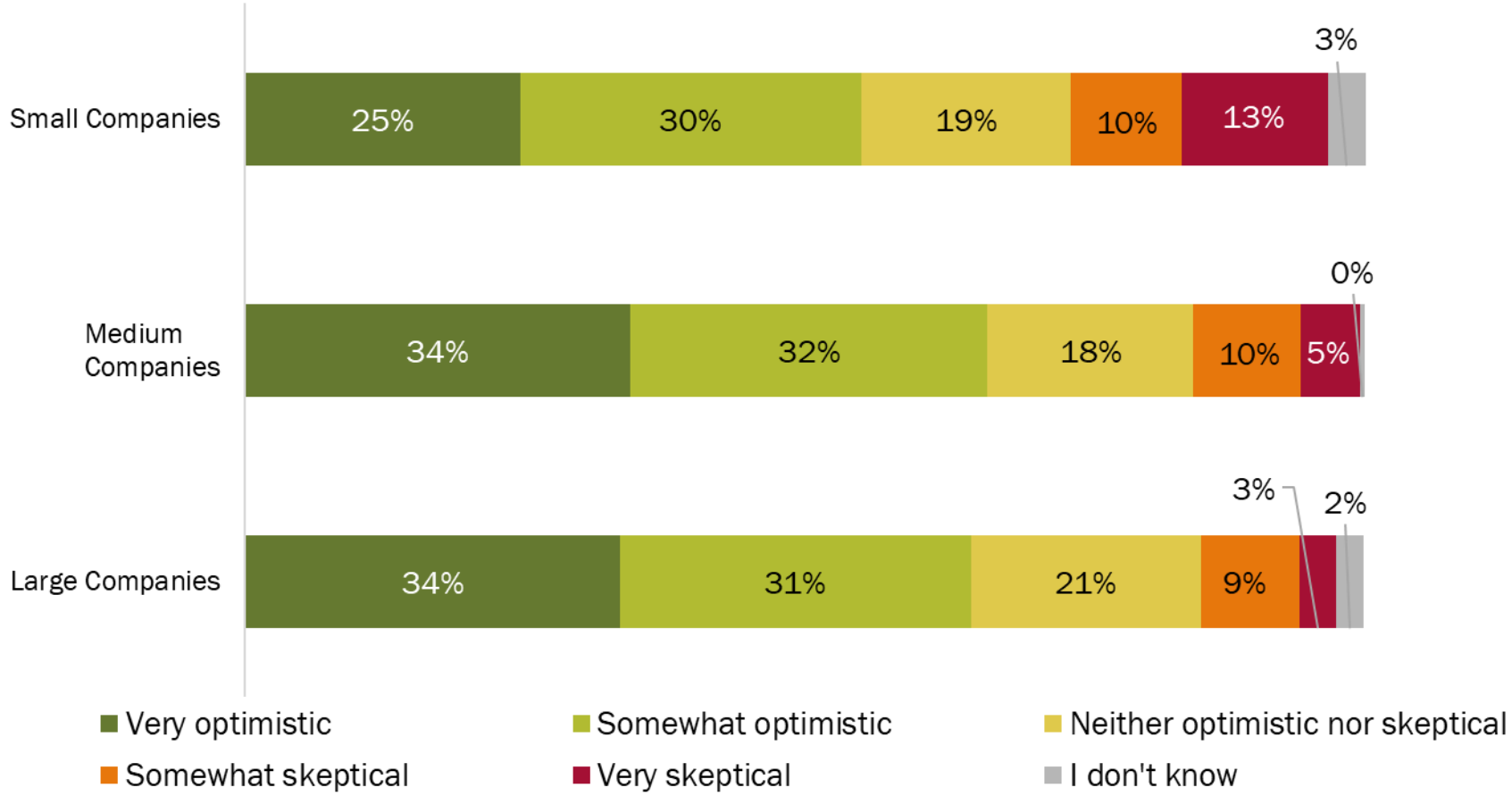
C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC20R1. Track why low-wage employees quit or take jobs with other employers



N = 1,150

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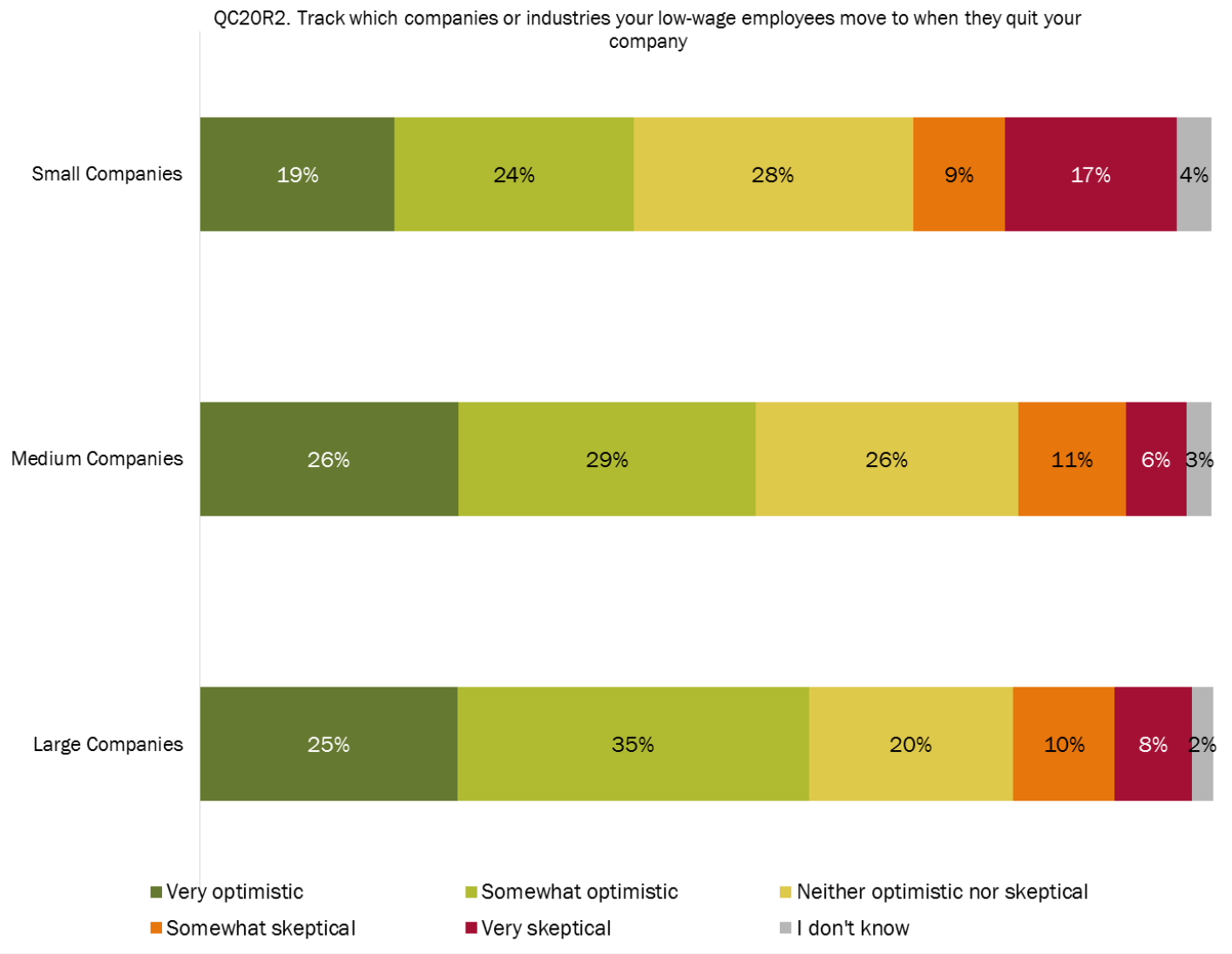
C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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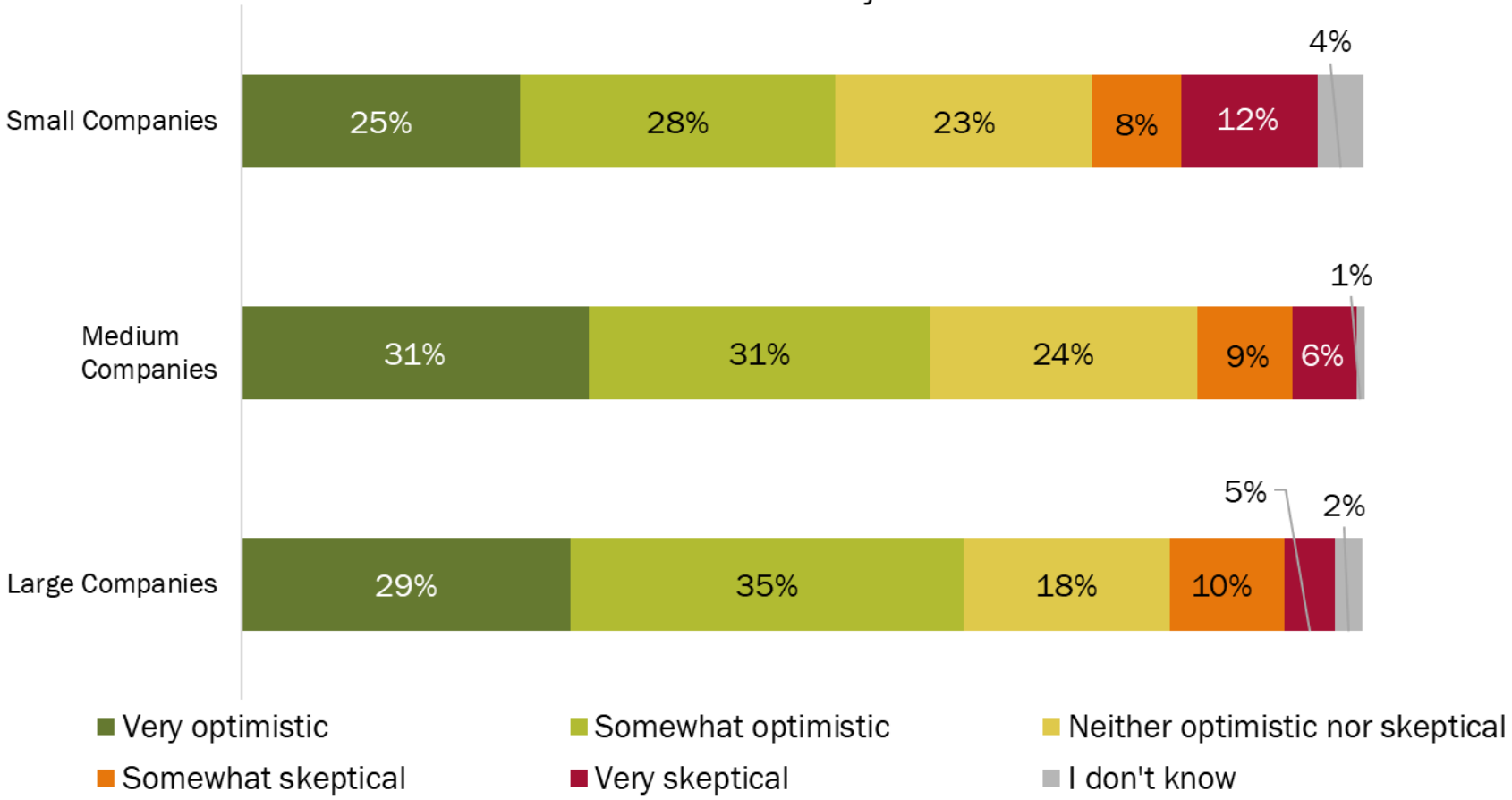
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC20R3. Ask low-wage employees leaving the company if they felt valued while in their jobs



N = 1,150

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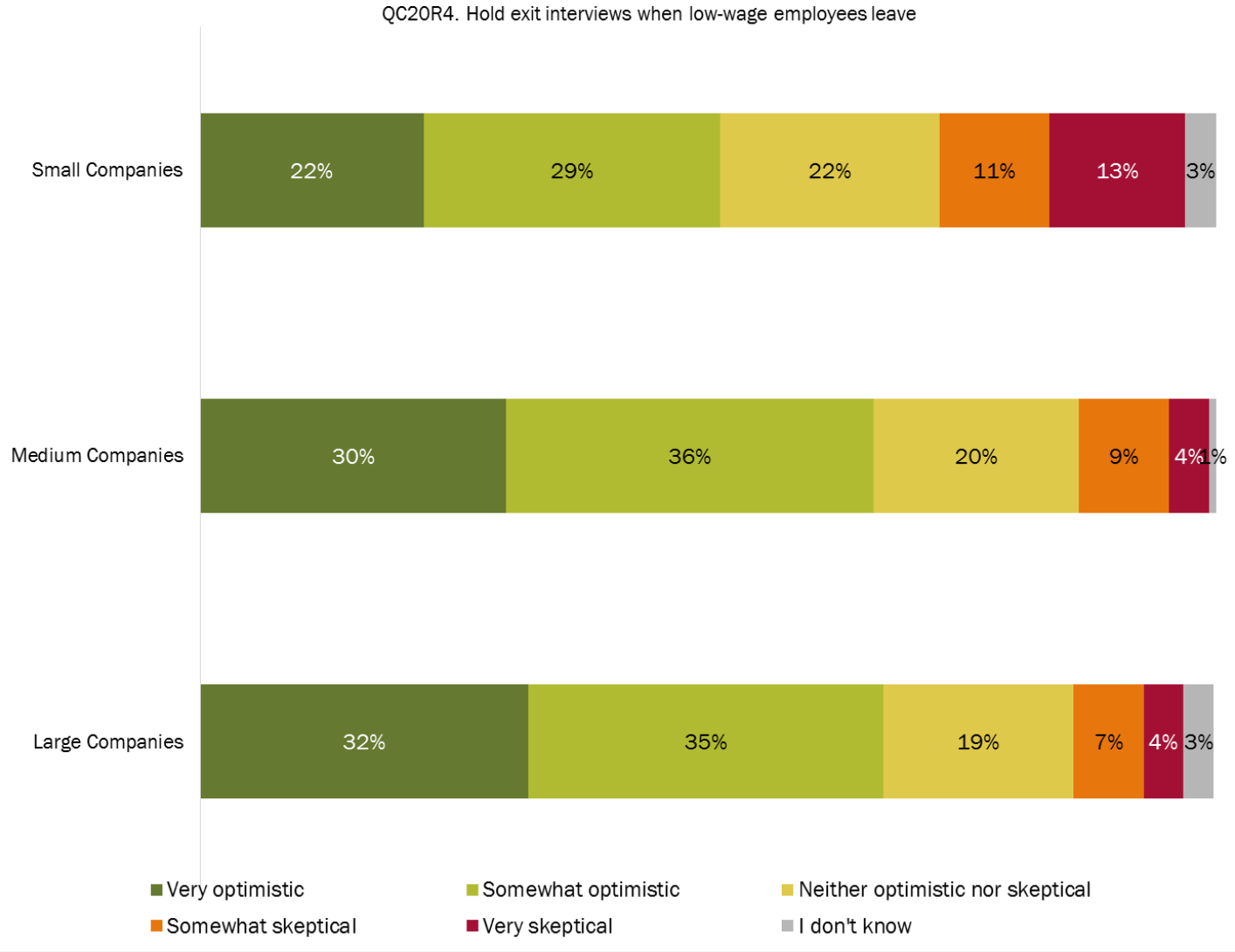
C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.



N = 1,150

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Offboarding and Post-Exit

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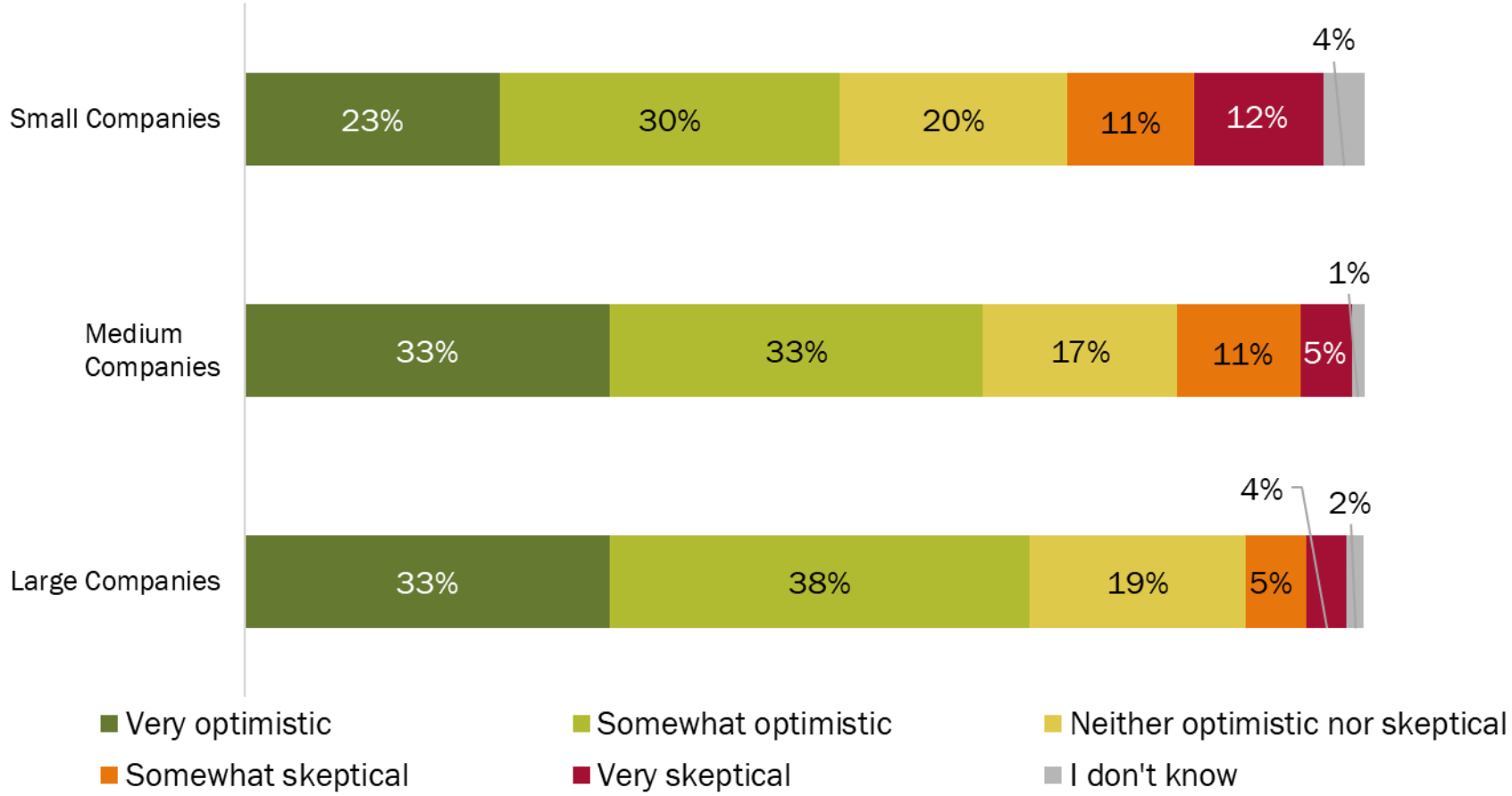
C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC20R5. Identify and track root causes of turnover for low-wage employees



N = 1,150

Actions
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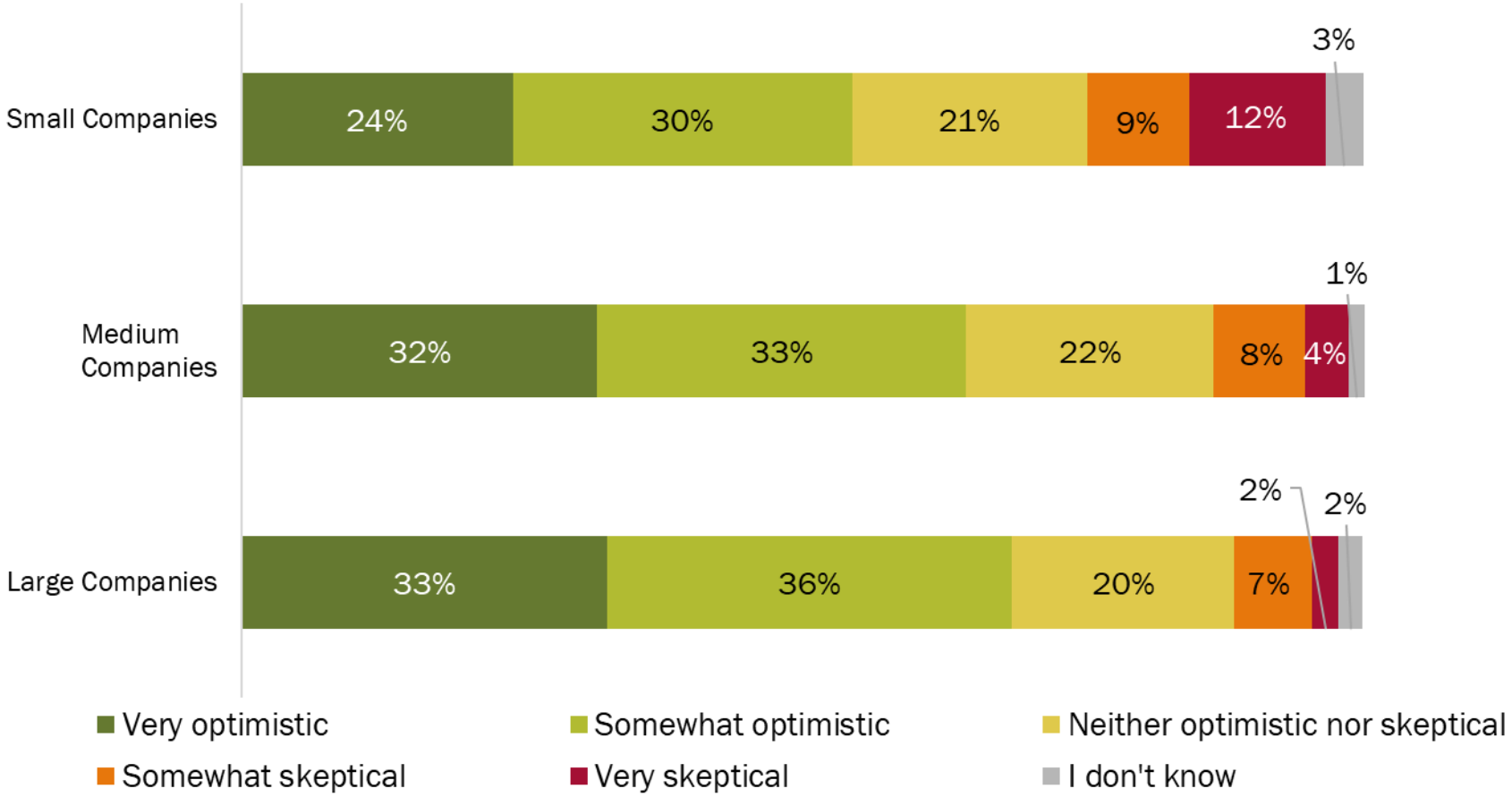
C20. Please rate how you feel about the value each of the following actions has to the competitiveness of your company.

QC20R6. Create a plan to address root causes of turnover for low-wage employees



N = 1,150

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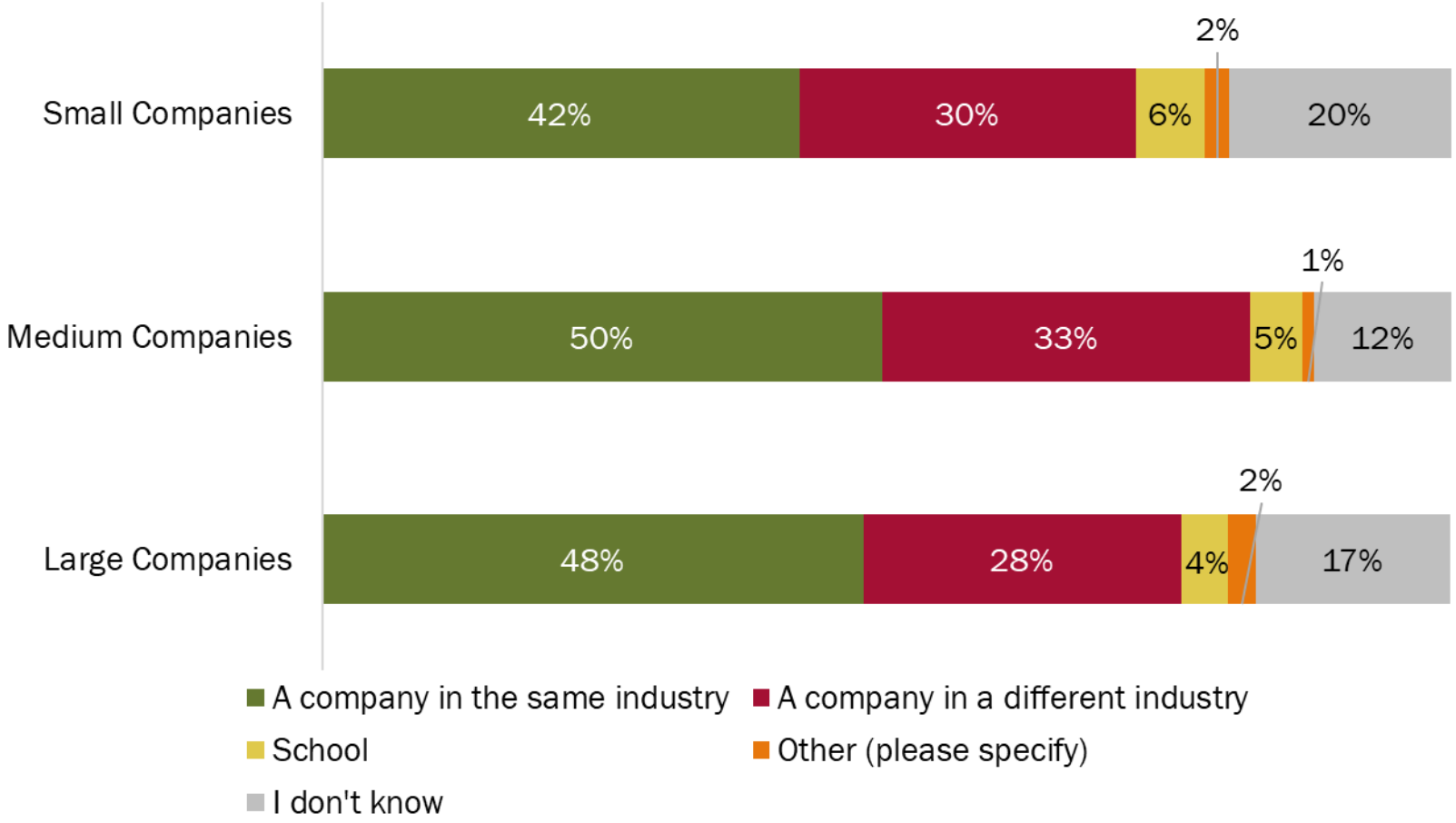
C21. Typically, when a low-wage employees leaves your company, where do they go?



N = 1,150

Final Thoughts

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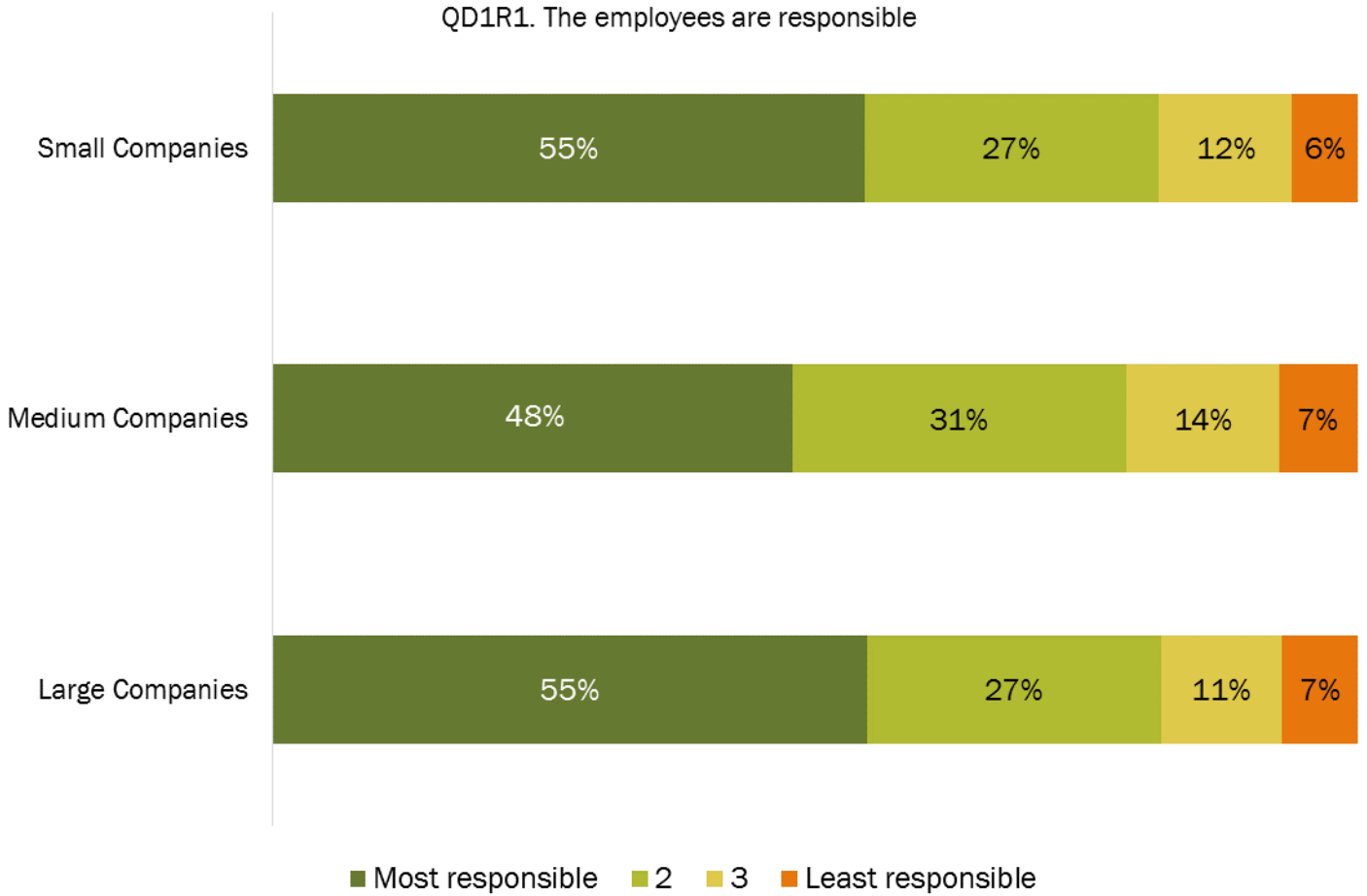
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

D1. Who is responsible for the overall upward mobility of low-wage employees? Please rank the following options from most responsible to least responsible:



N = 1,115 (35 respondents responded "I don't know")

Final Thoughts

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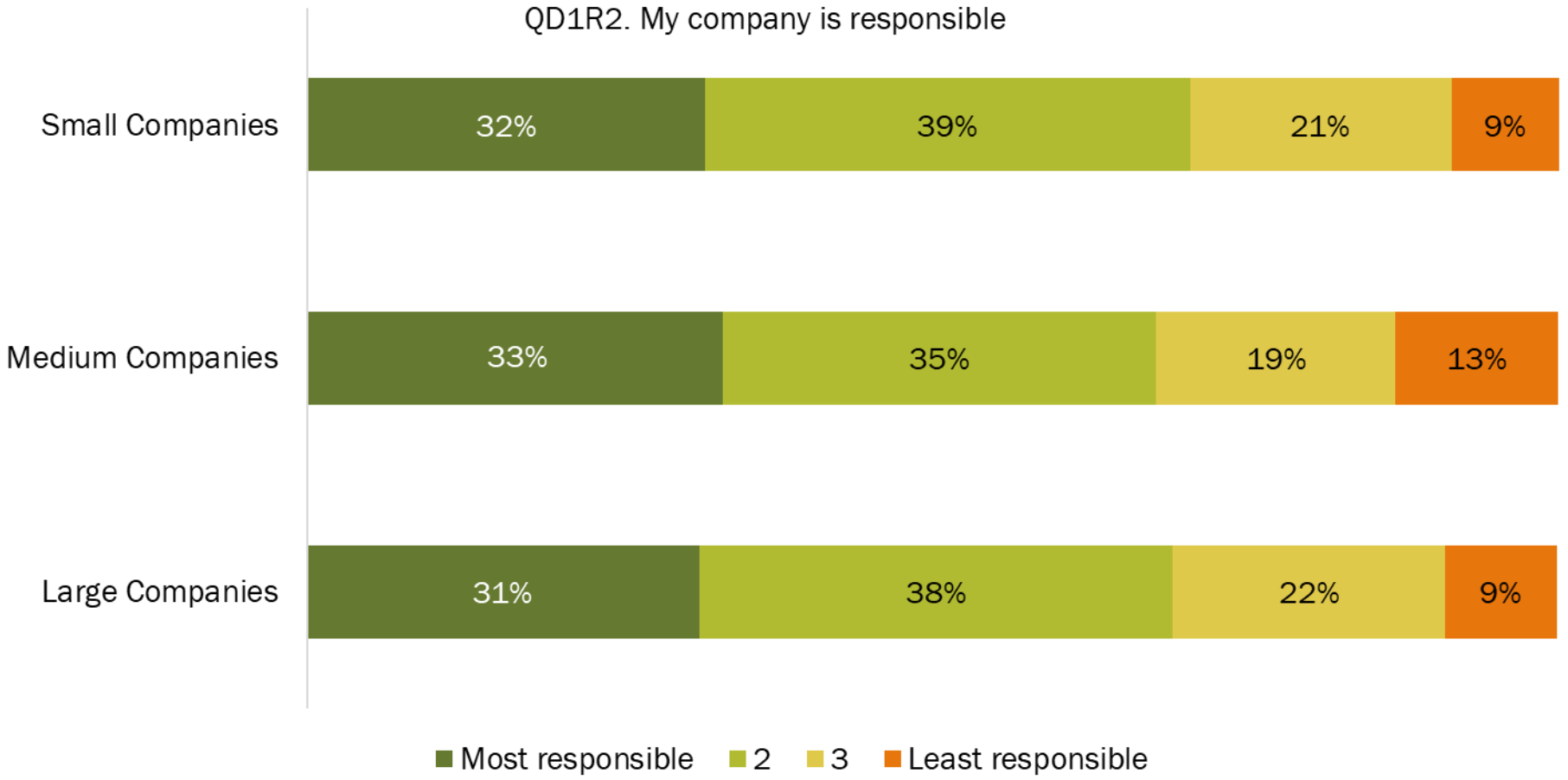

N = 1,115 (35 respondents responded "I don't know")

Final Thoughts

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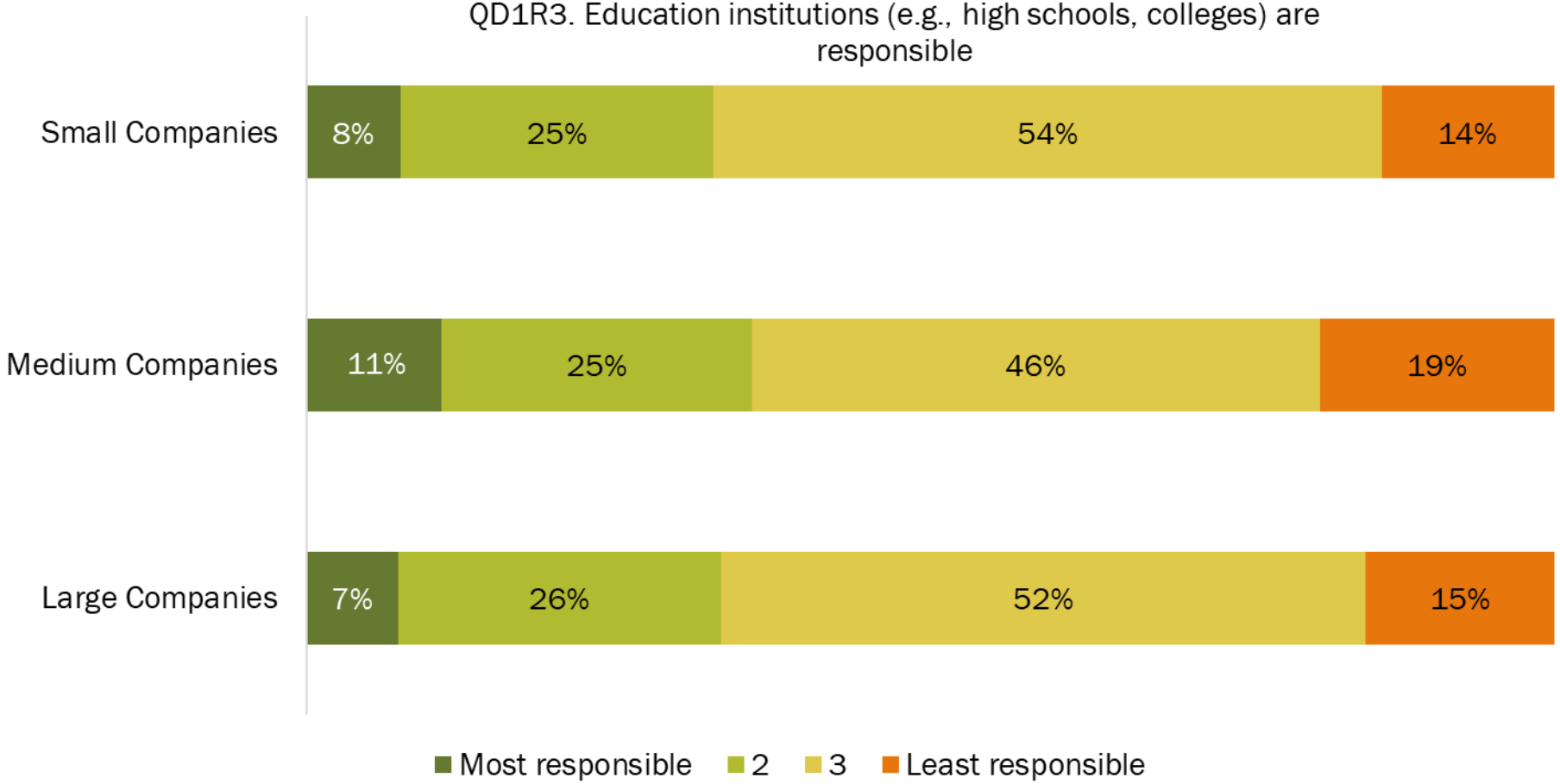
D1. Who is responsible for the overall upward mobility of low-wage employees? Please rank the following options from most responsible to least responsible:

QD1R3. Education institutions (e.g., high schools, colleges) are responsible



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Final Thoughts

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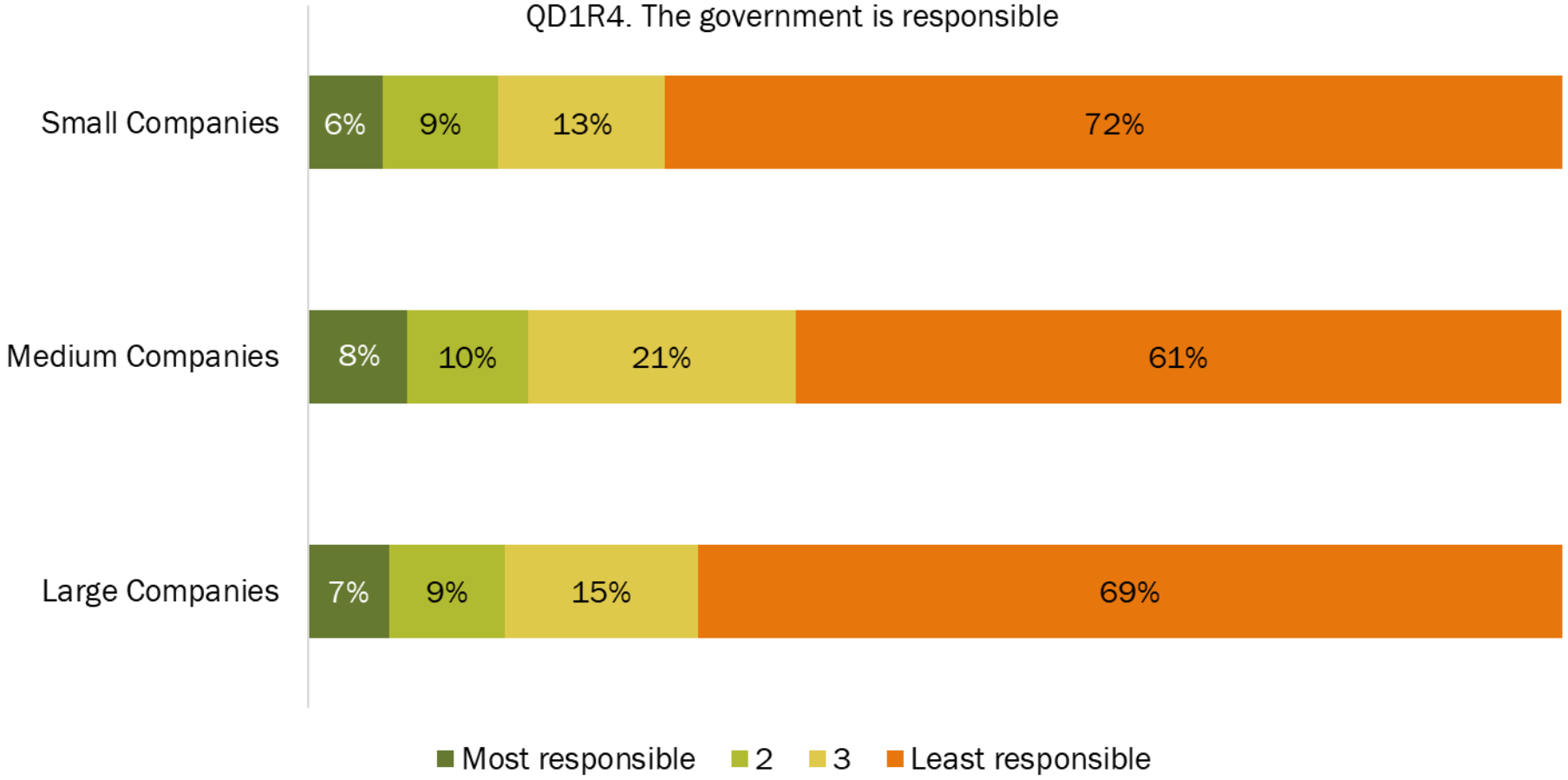
D1. Who is responsible for the overall upward mobility of low-wage employees? Please rank the following options from most responsible to least responsible:



N = 1,115 (35 respondents responded "I don't know")

Final Thoughts

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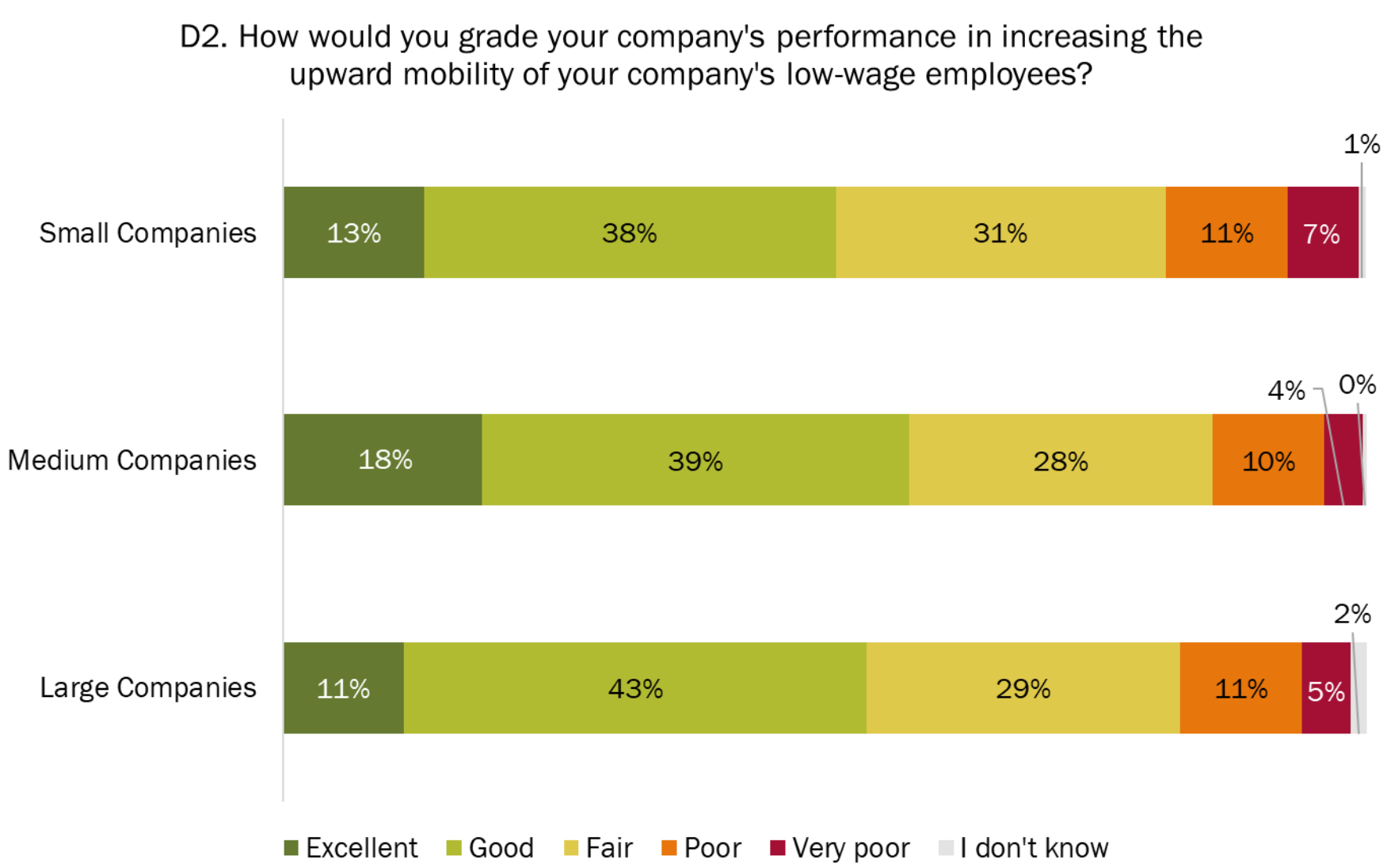
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.



N = 1,150

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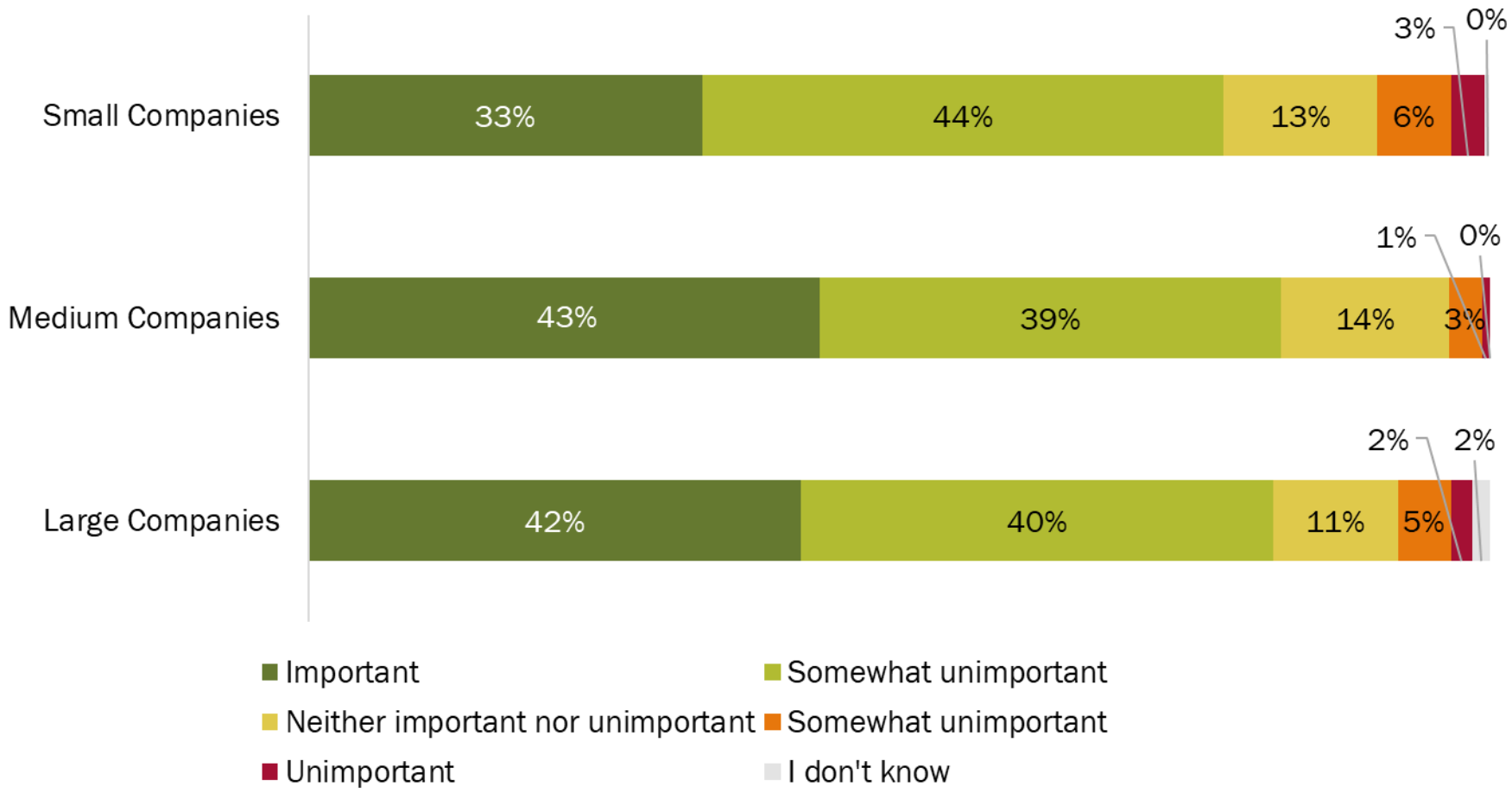
Final Thoughts

Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

D3. How important is it for your company's future success and competitiveness to invest time and effort in the upward mobility of your low-wage employees in the future (e.g., through implementing more actions like those listed above)?



N = 1,150

Final Thoughts

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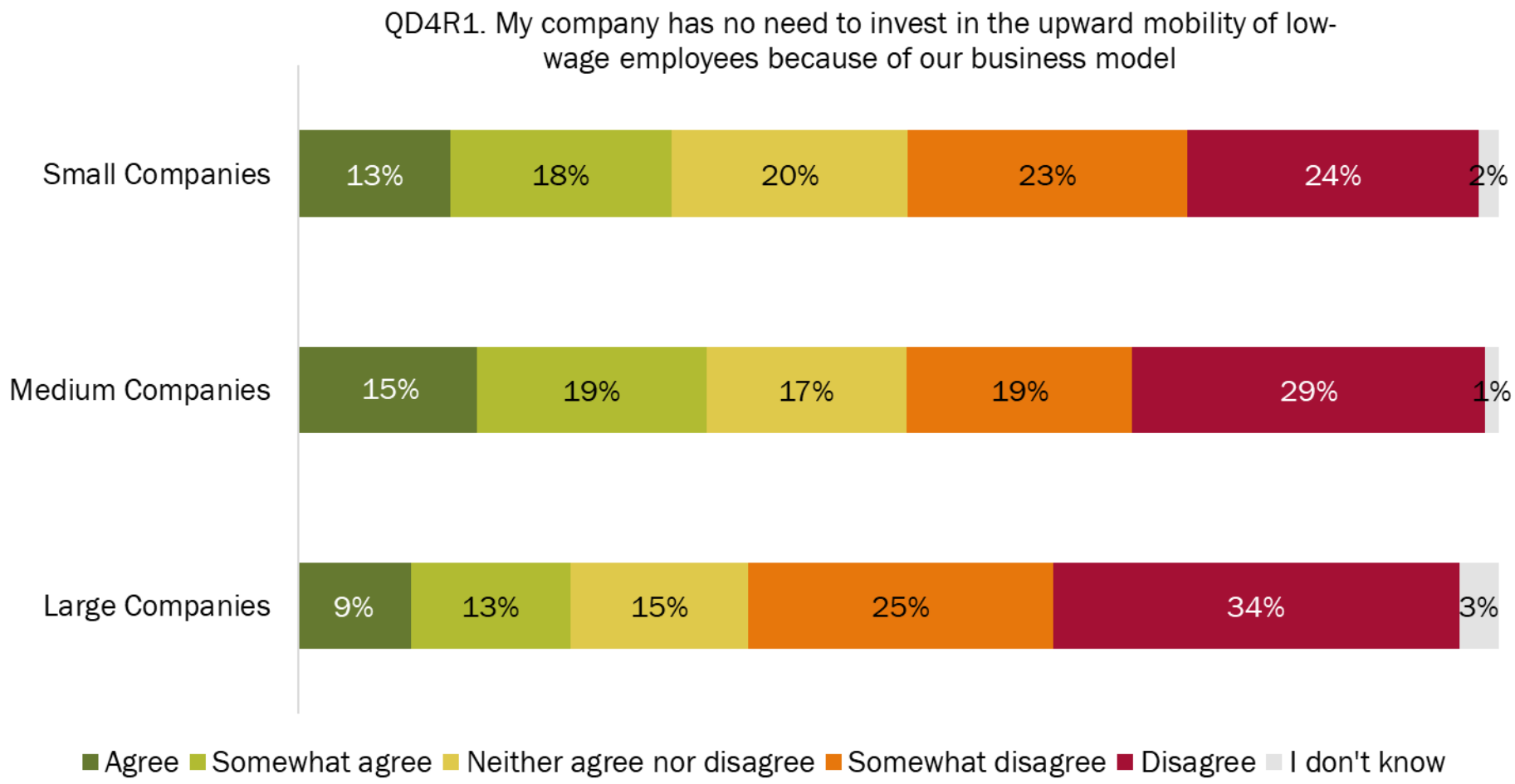
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

D4. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.



N = 1,150

Final Thoughts

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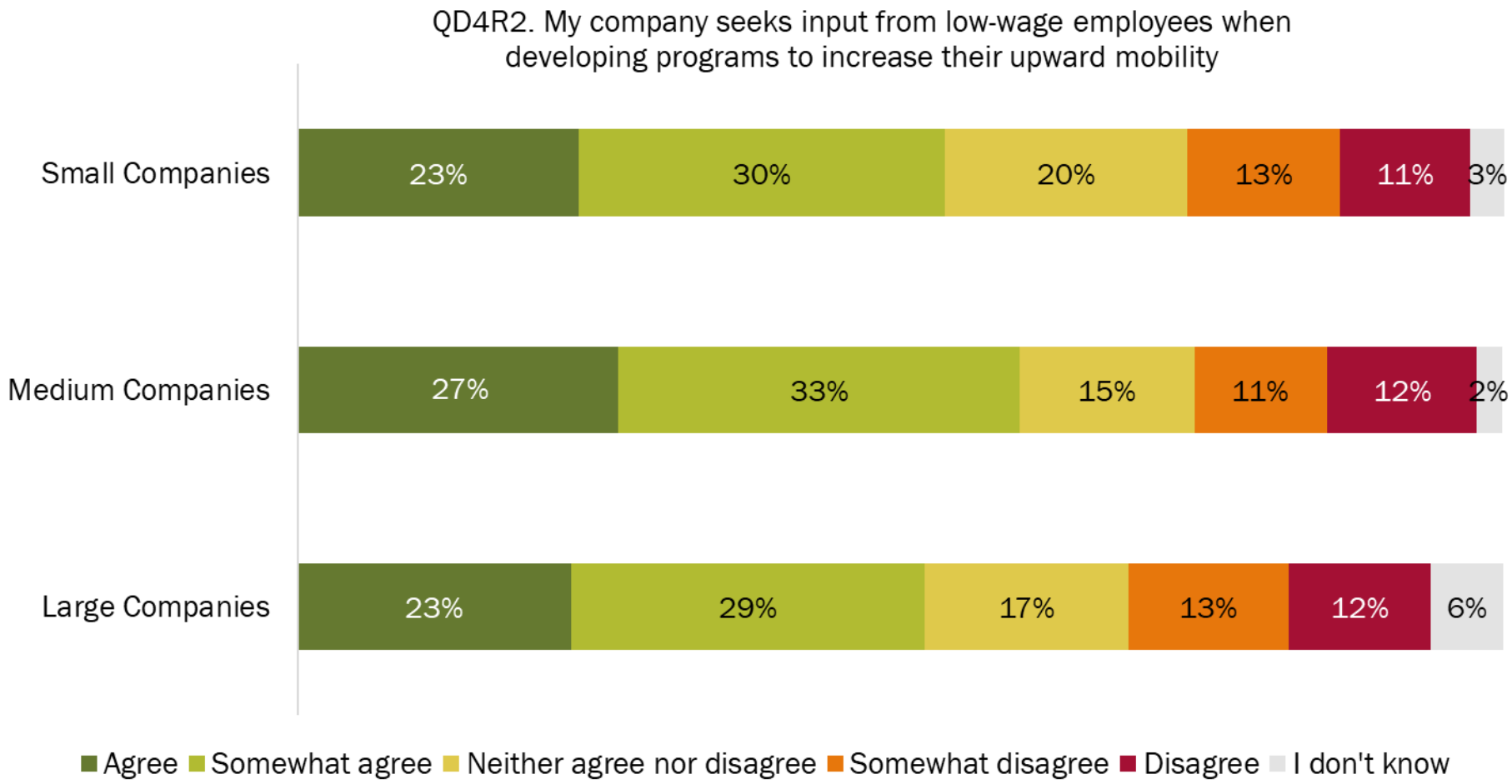
Source: "Upward Mobility Survey of Employers of Low-Wage Workers in the U.S.," September–November 2020, Project on Managing the Future of Work, Harvard Business School.

D4. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.



N = 1,150

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Final Thoughts

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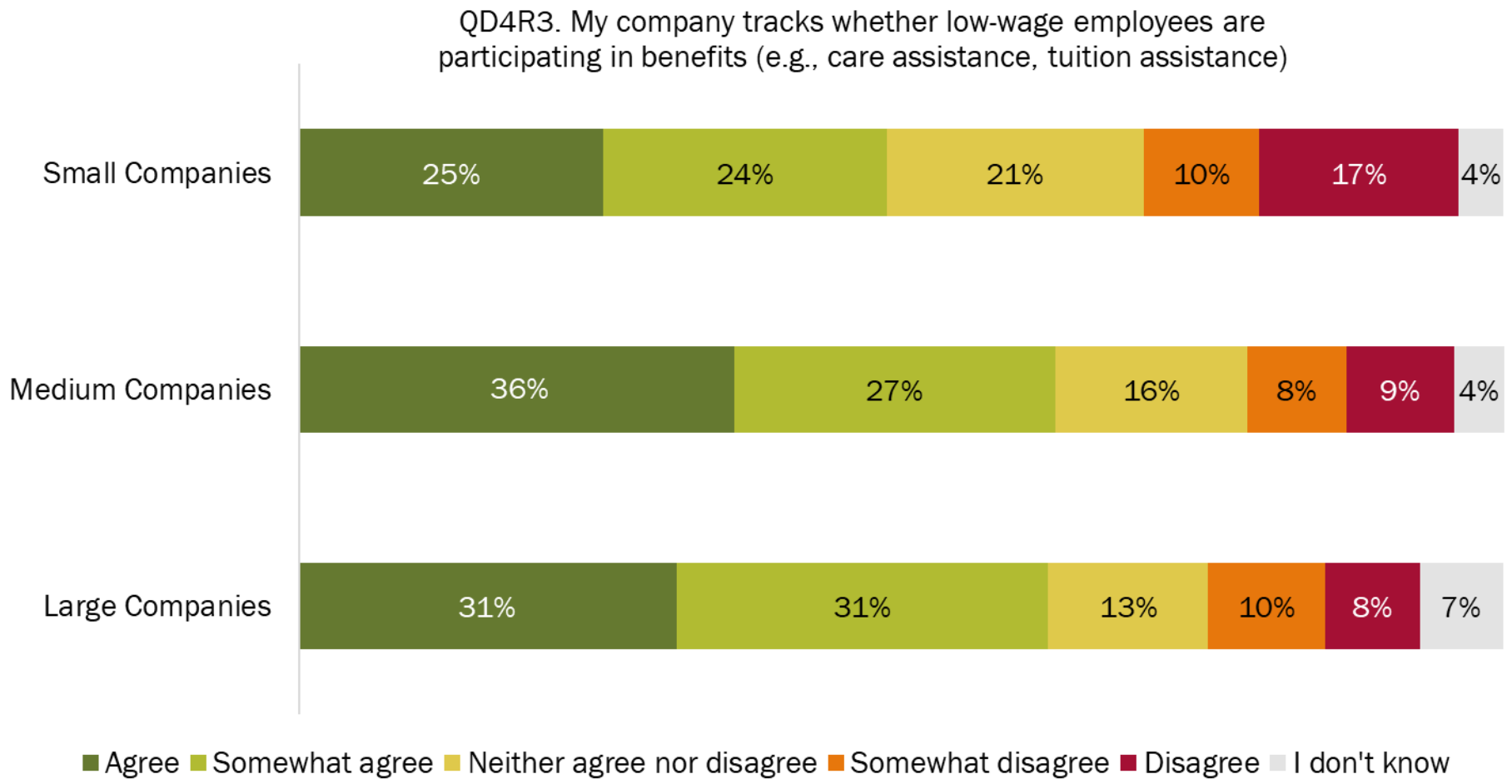
D4. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.



N = 1,150

Final Thoughts

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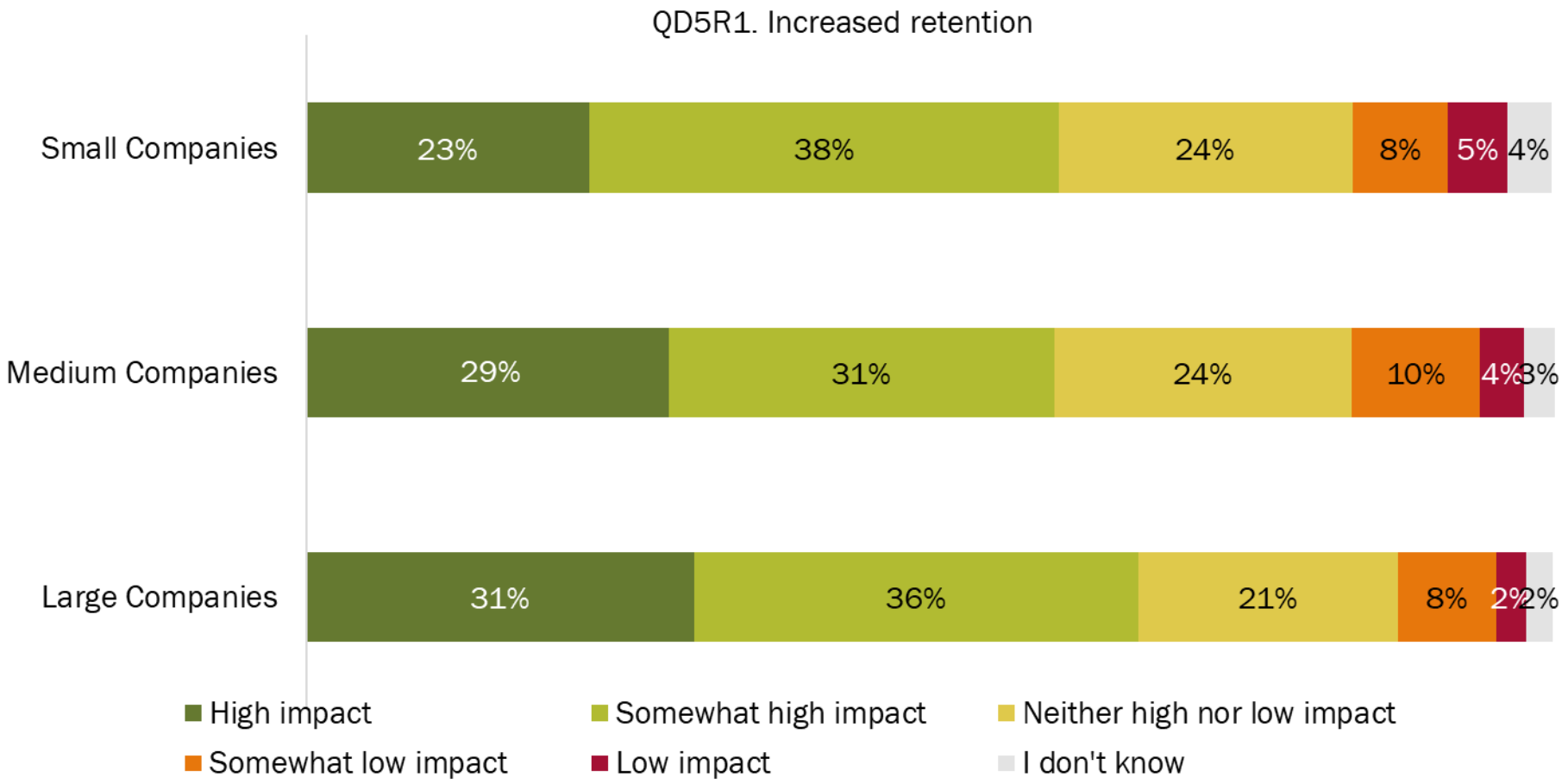
D5. Think about the upward mobility practices your company has already implemented. Rate the impact of these practices on the following contributors to your company's competitiveness:



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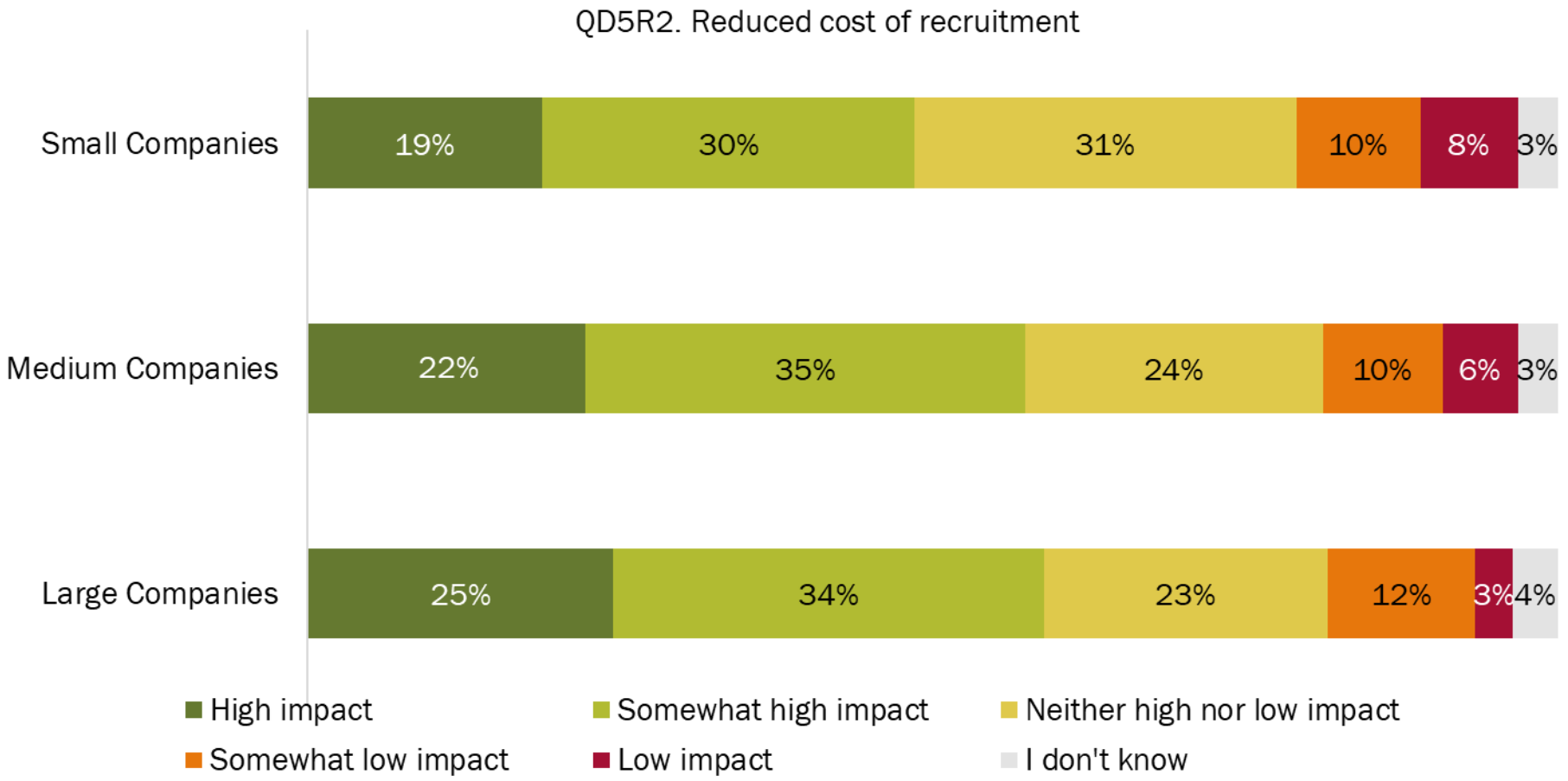

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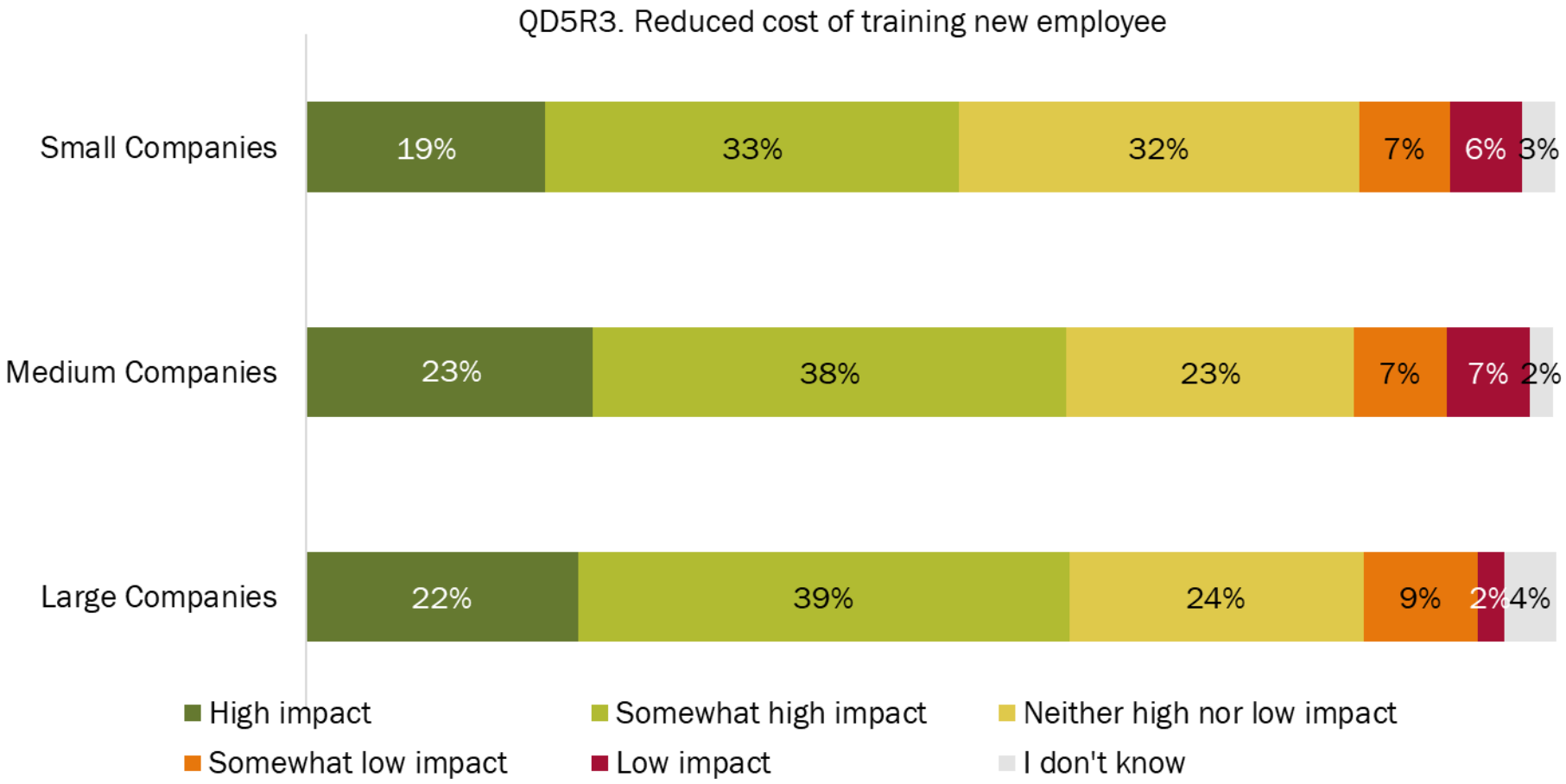

N = 1,150

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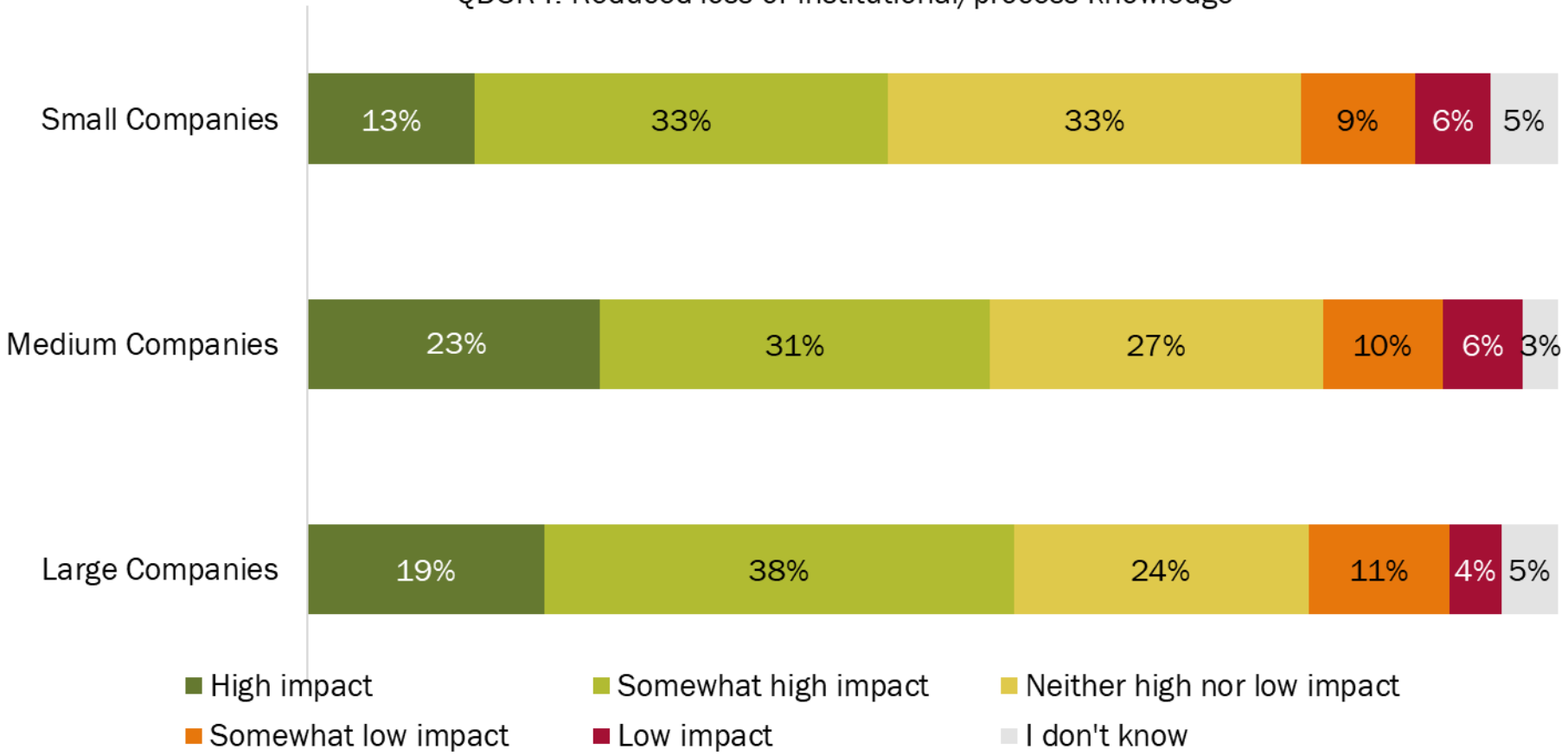
D5. Think about the upward mobility practices your company has already implemented. Rate the impact of these practices on the following contributors to your company's competitiveness:

QD5R4. Reduced loss of institutional/process knowledge



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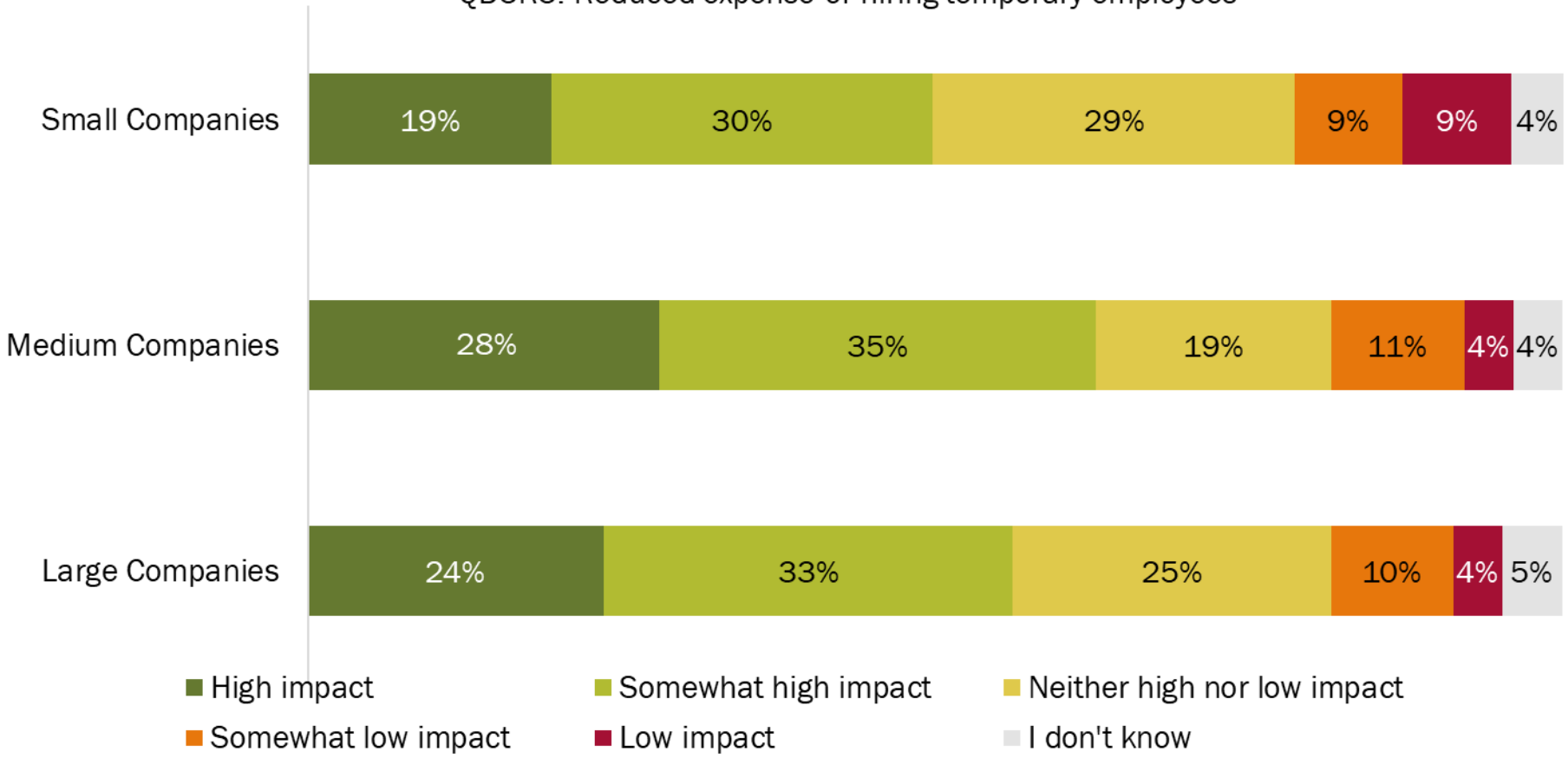

N = 1,150

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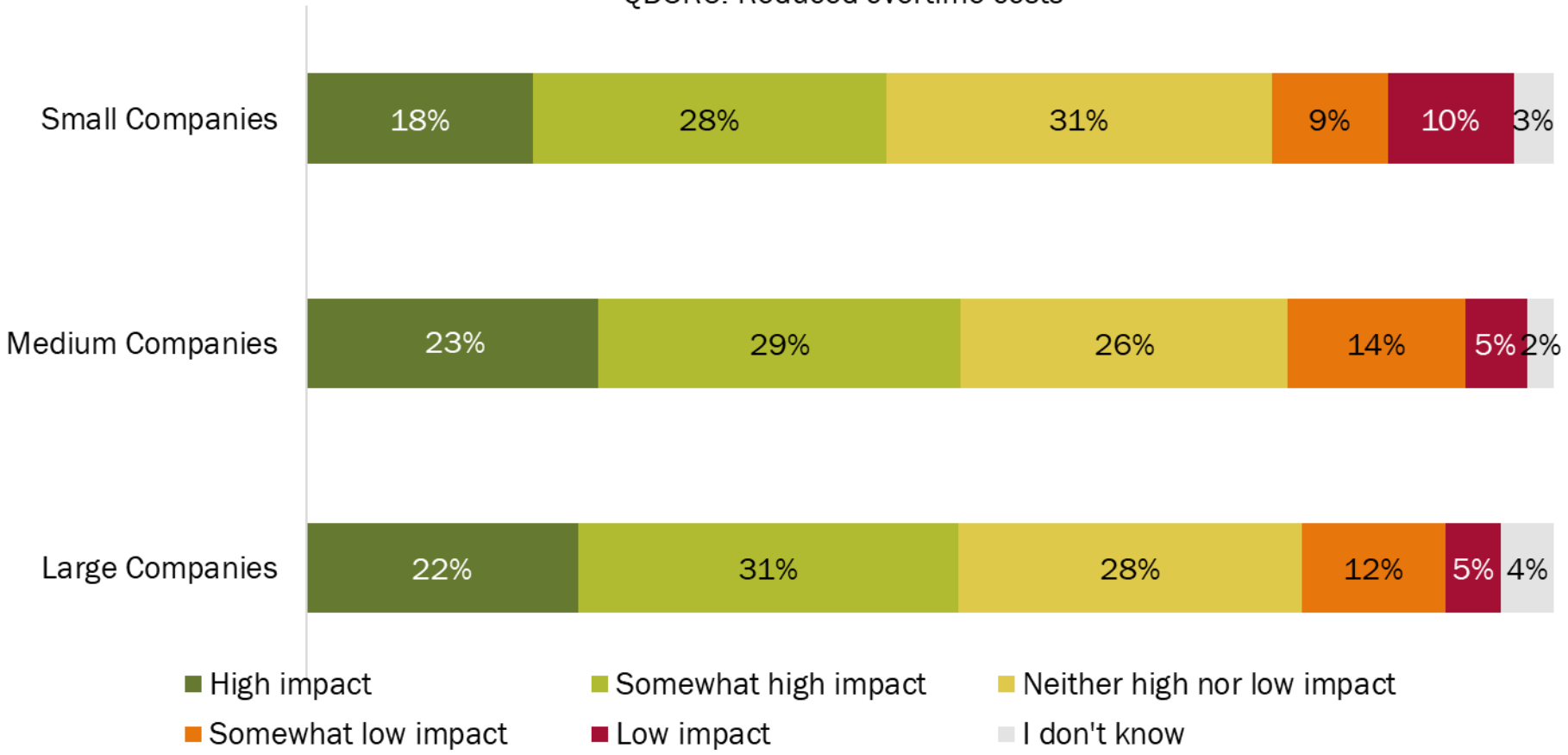
D5. Think about the upward mobility practices your company has already implemented. Rate the impact of these practices on the following contributors to your company's competitiveness:

QD5R6. Reduced overtime costs



N = 1,150

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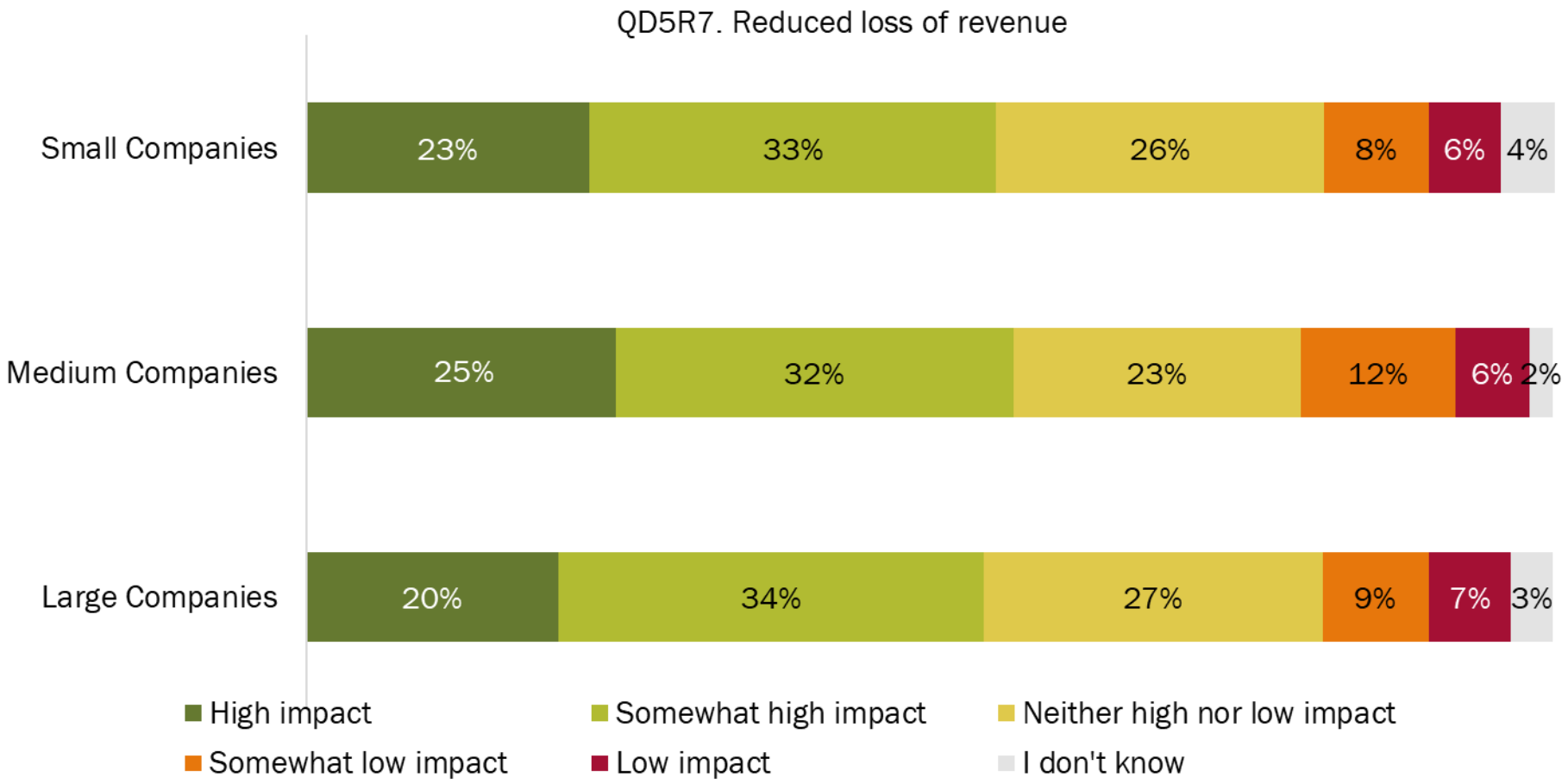
D5. Think about the upward mobility practices your company has already implemented. Rate the impact of these practices on the following contributors to your company's competitiveness:



N = 1,150

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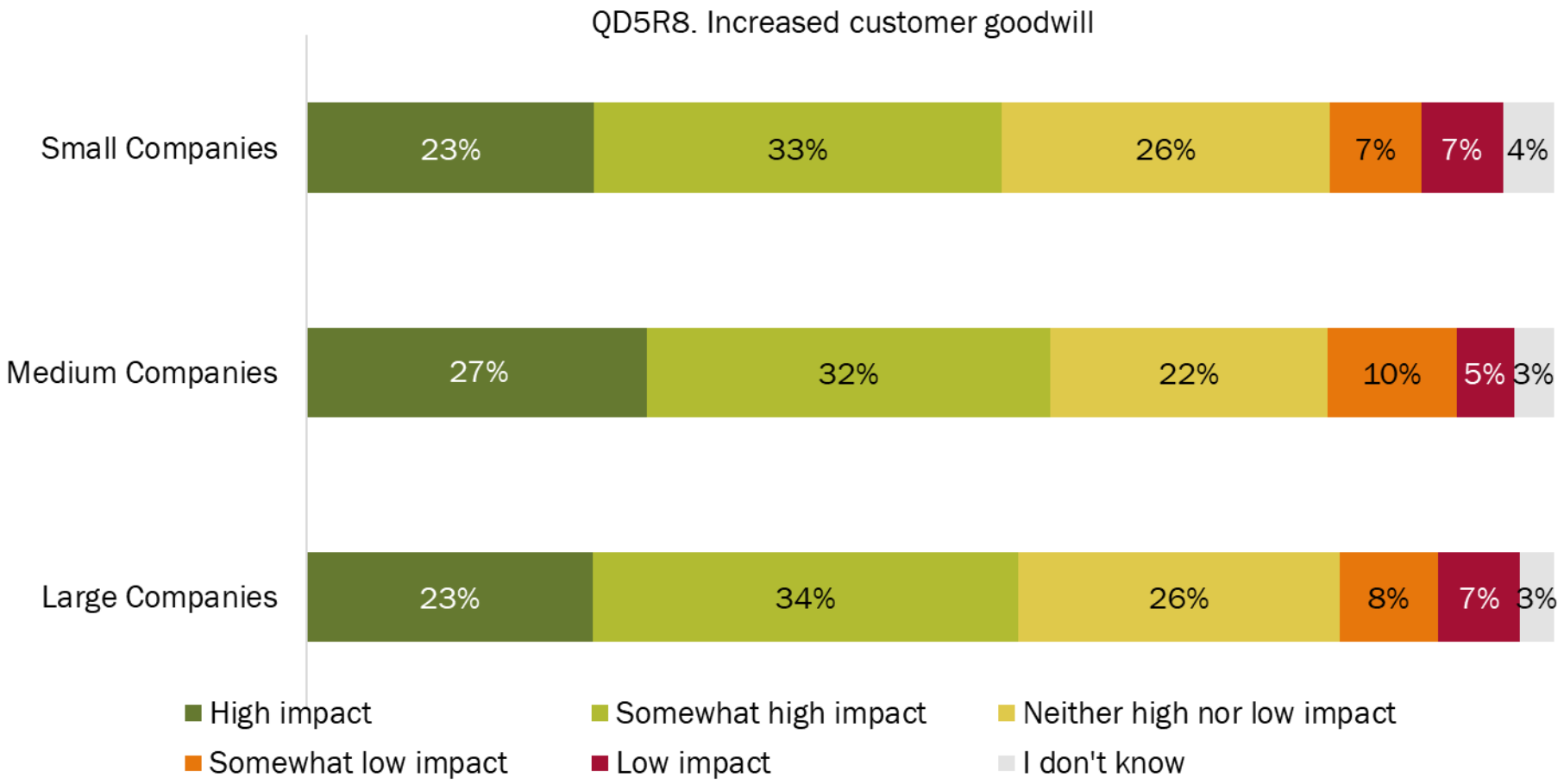

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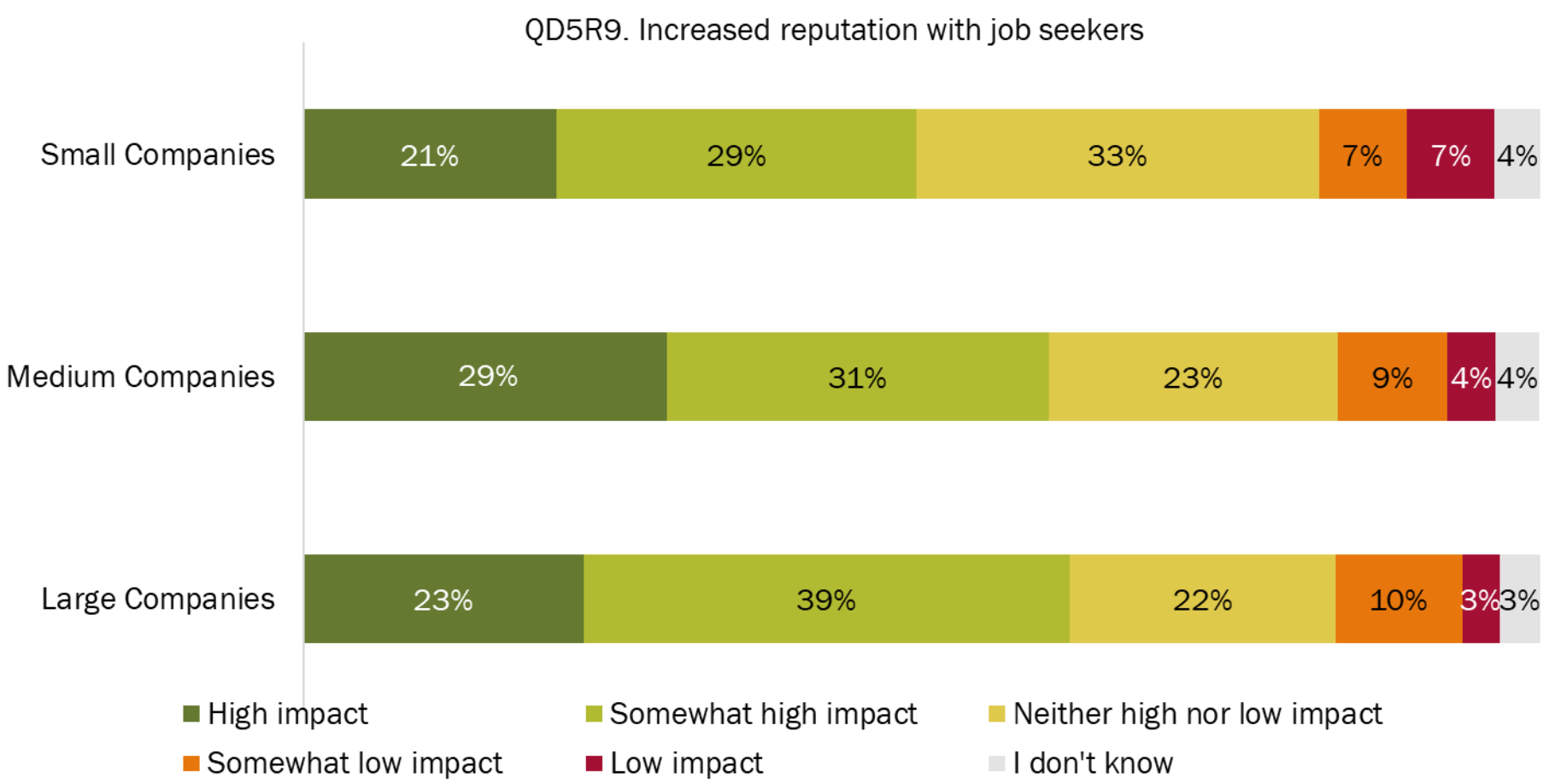

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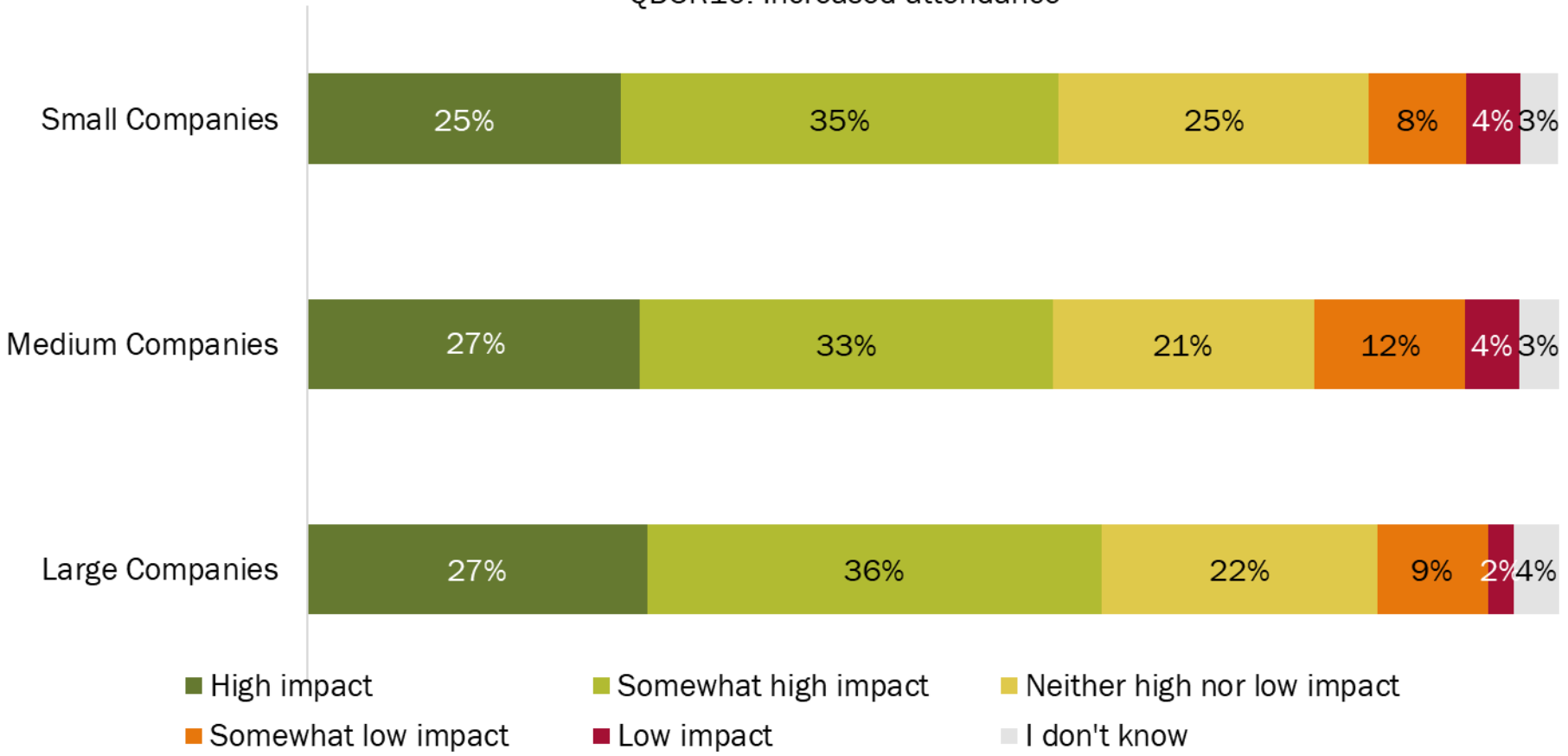
D5. Think about the upward mobility practices your company has already implemented. Rate the impact of these practices on the following contributors to your company's competitiveness:

QD5R10. Increased attendance



N = 1,150

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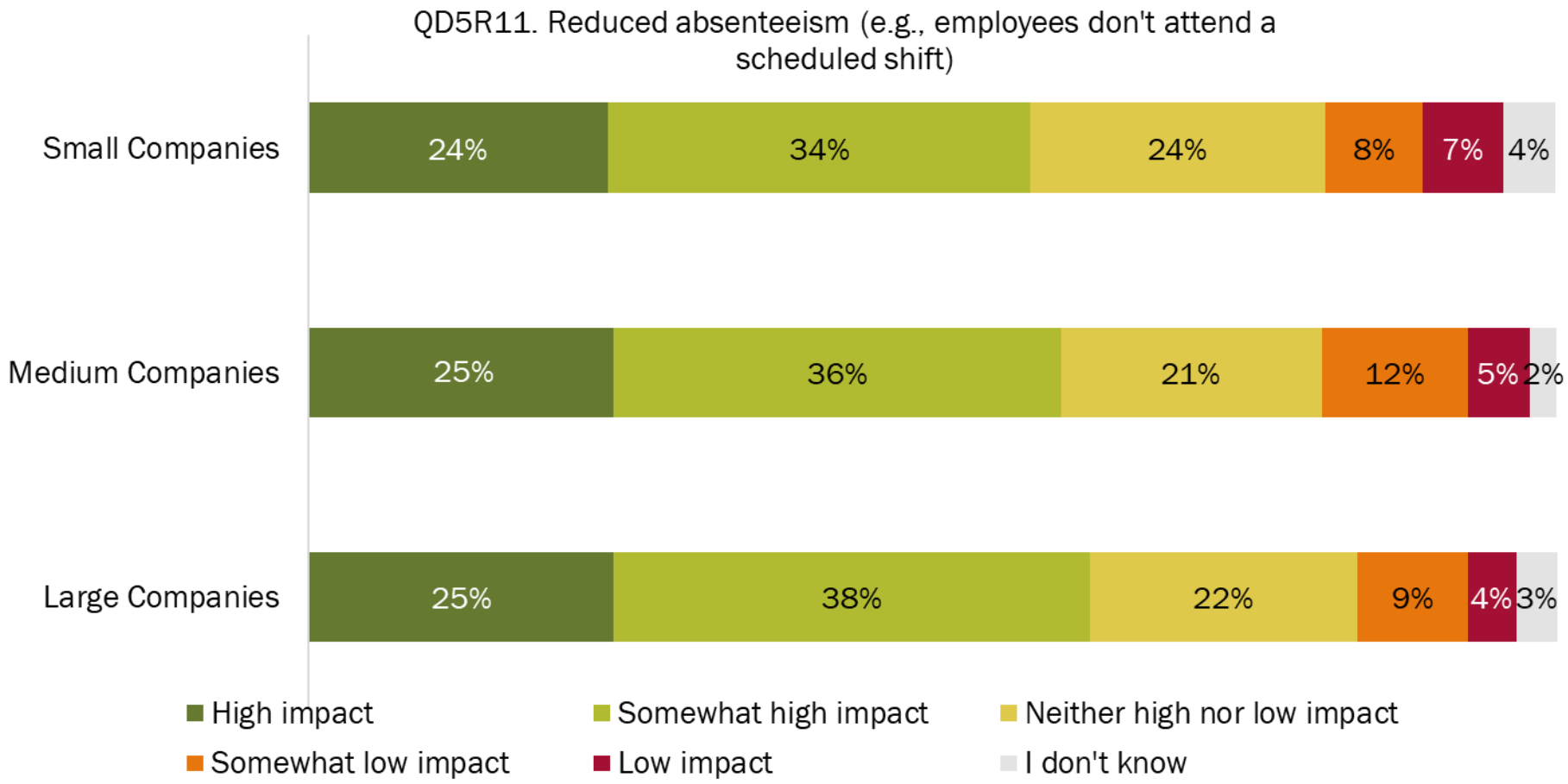

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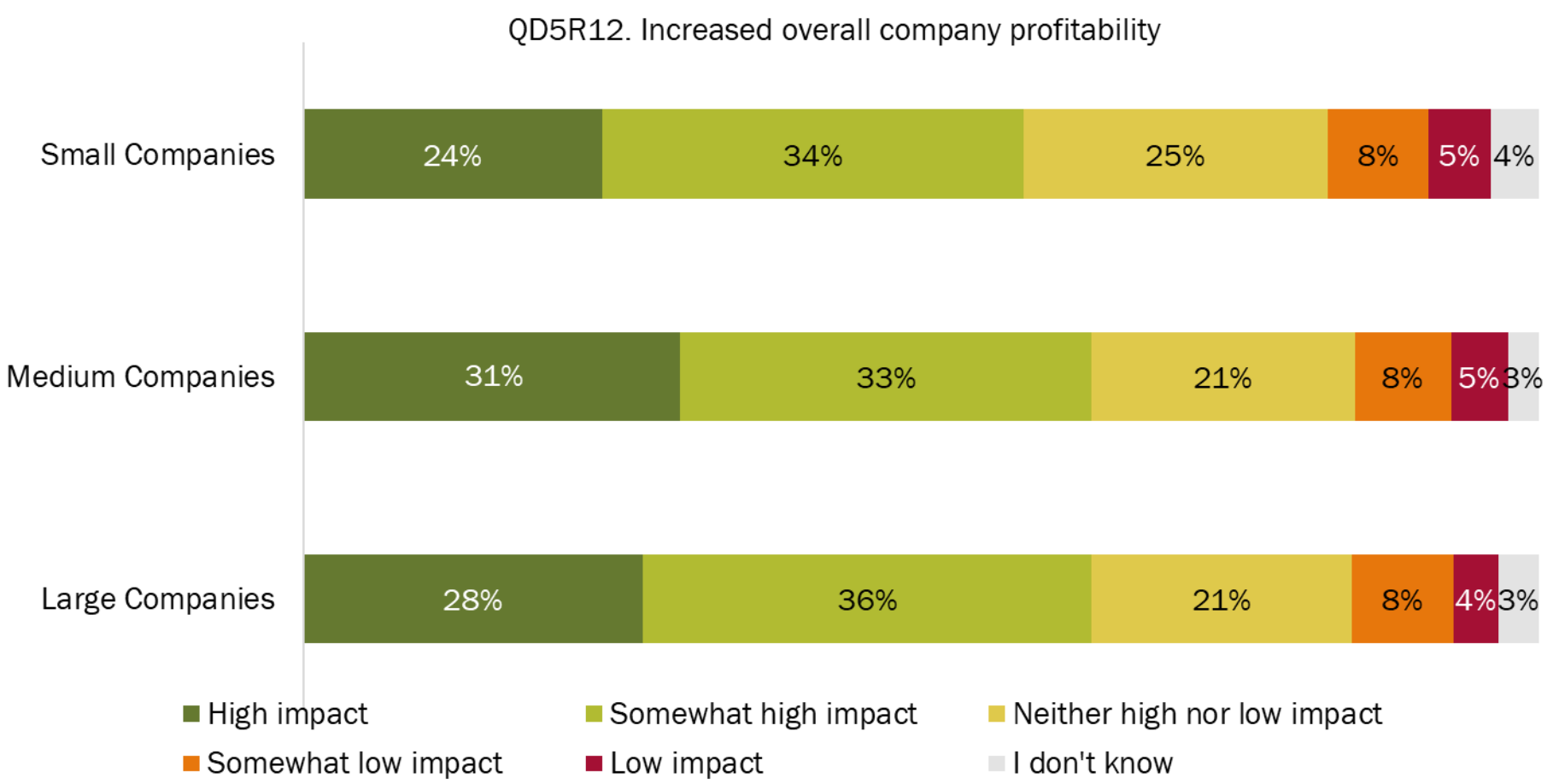

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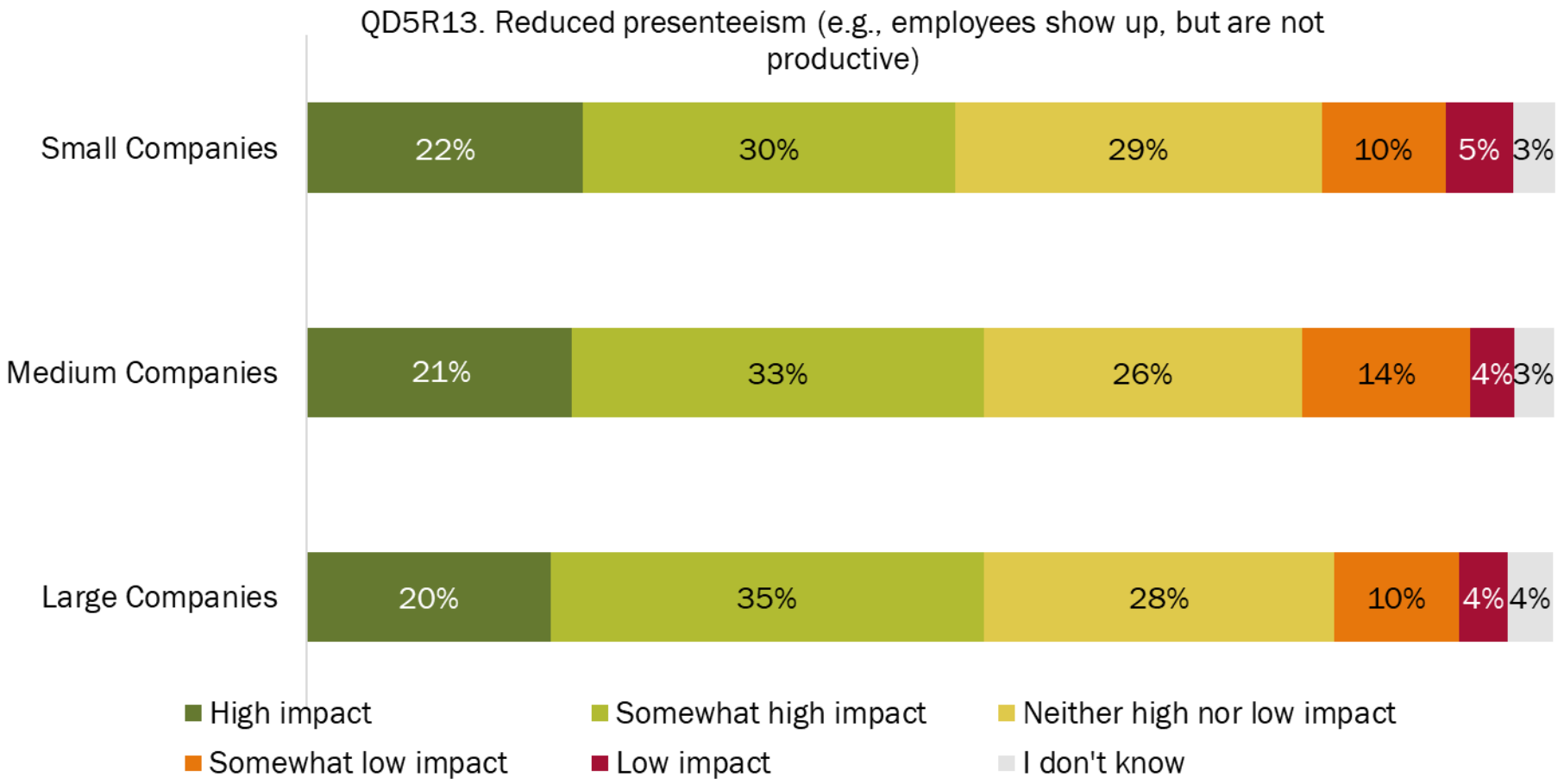

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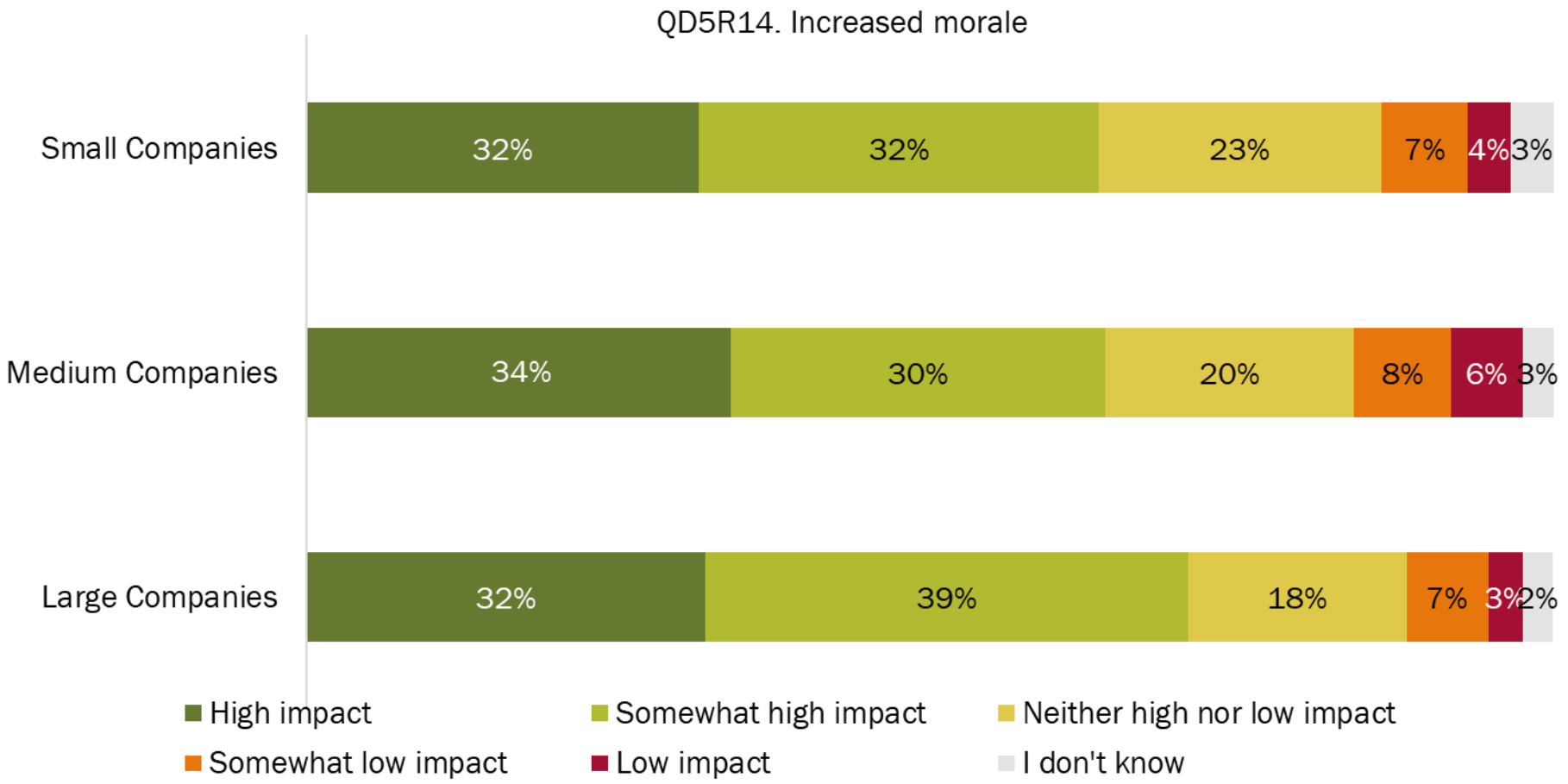

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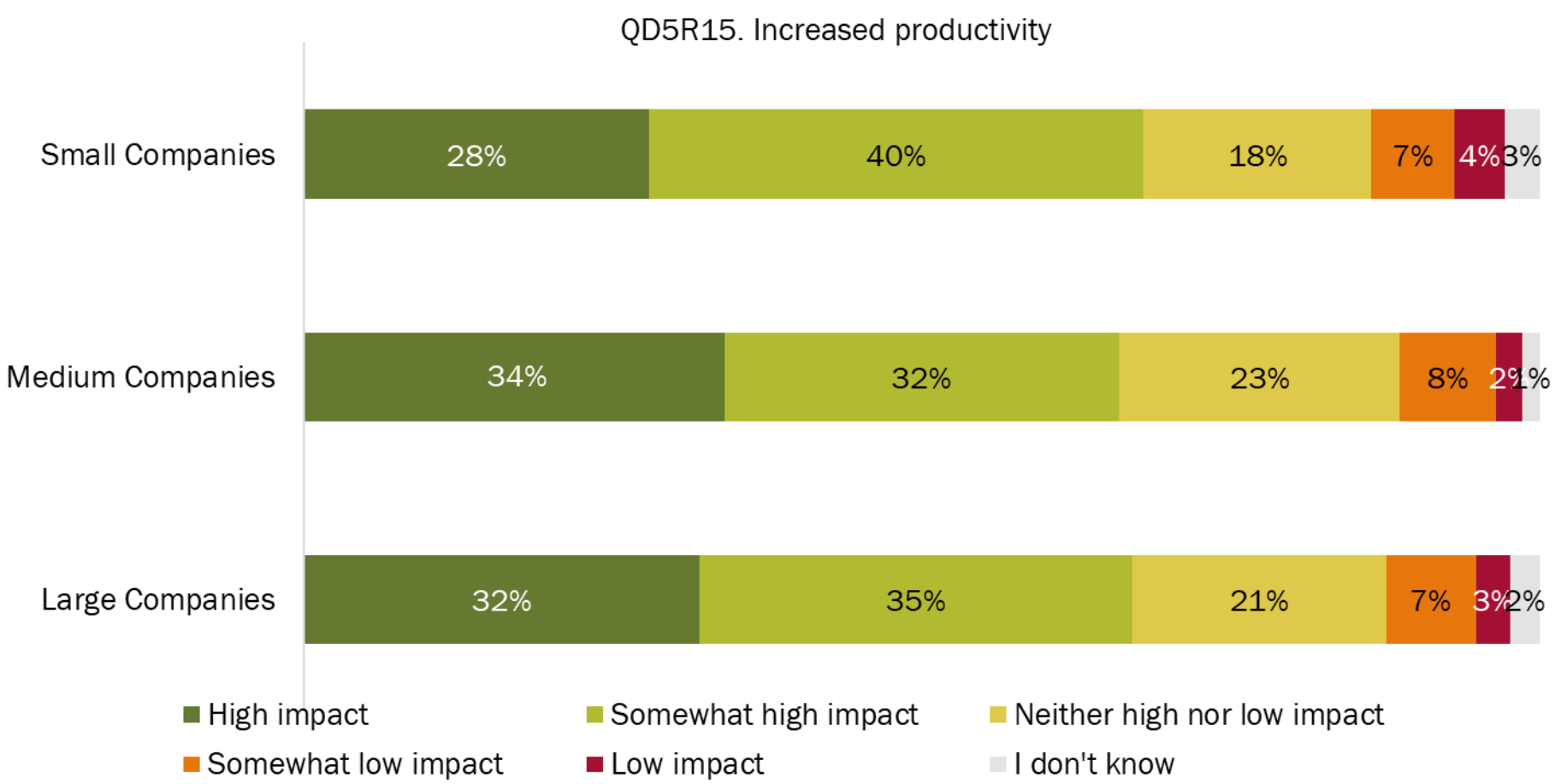

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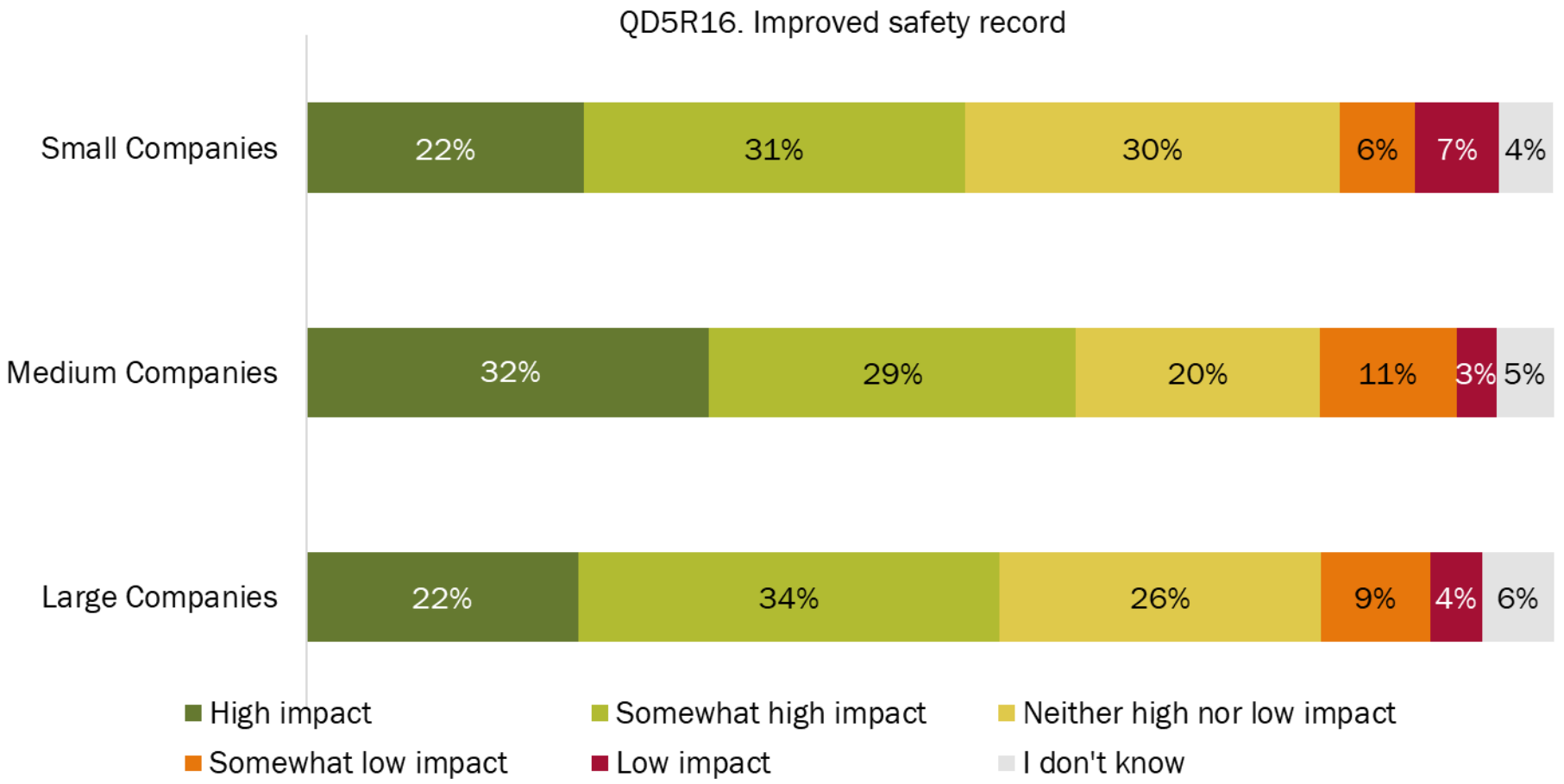

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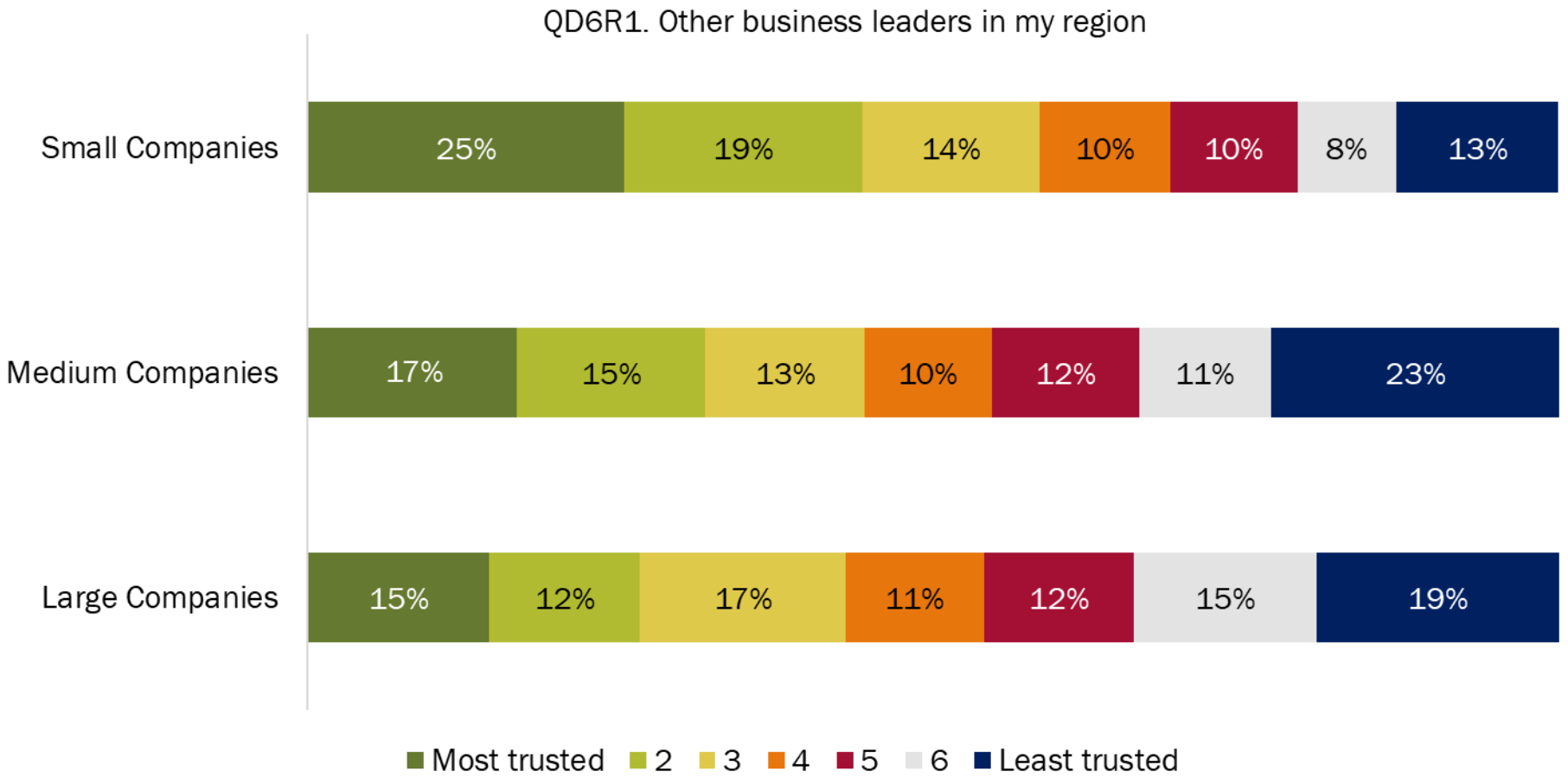
D6. There are many influencers from whom you might learn best practices for upward mobility. Please rank your choices from most trusted to least trusted.



N = 1,063 (87 people responded "None of the above")

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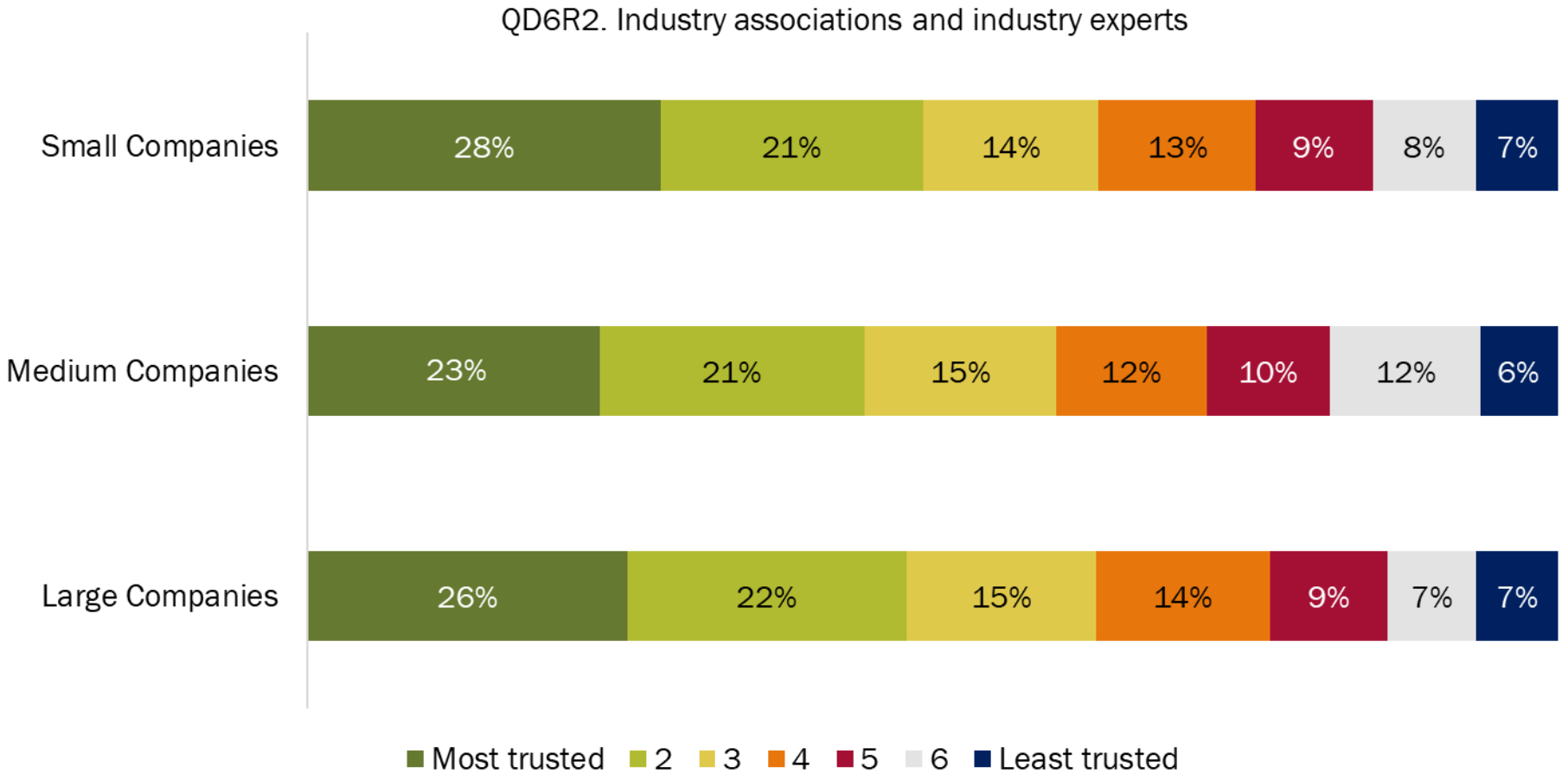

N = 1,063 (87 people responded "None of the above")

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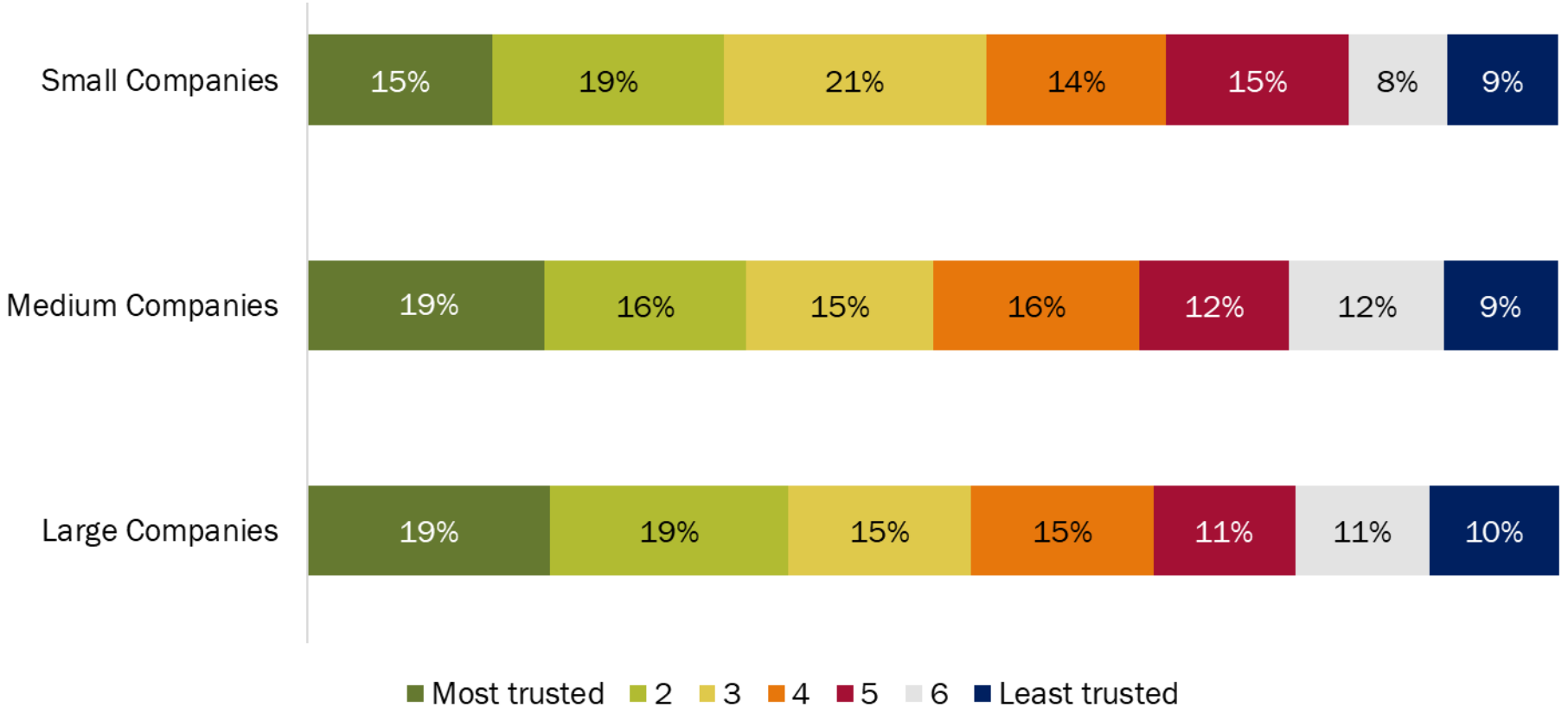
D6. There are many influencers from whom you might learn best practices for upward mobility. Please rank your choices from most trusted to least trusted.

QD6R3. Membership organizations who instruct in best practices (e.g., U.S. Chambers of Commerce, Society for Human Resources Management [SHRM], etc.)



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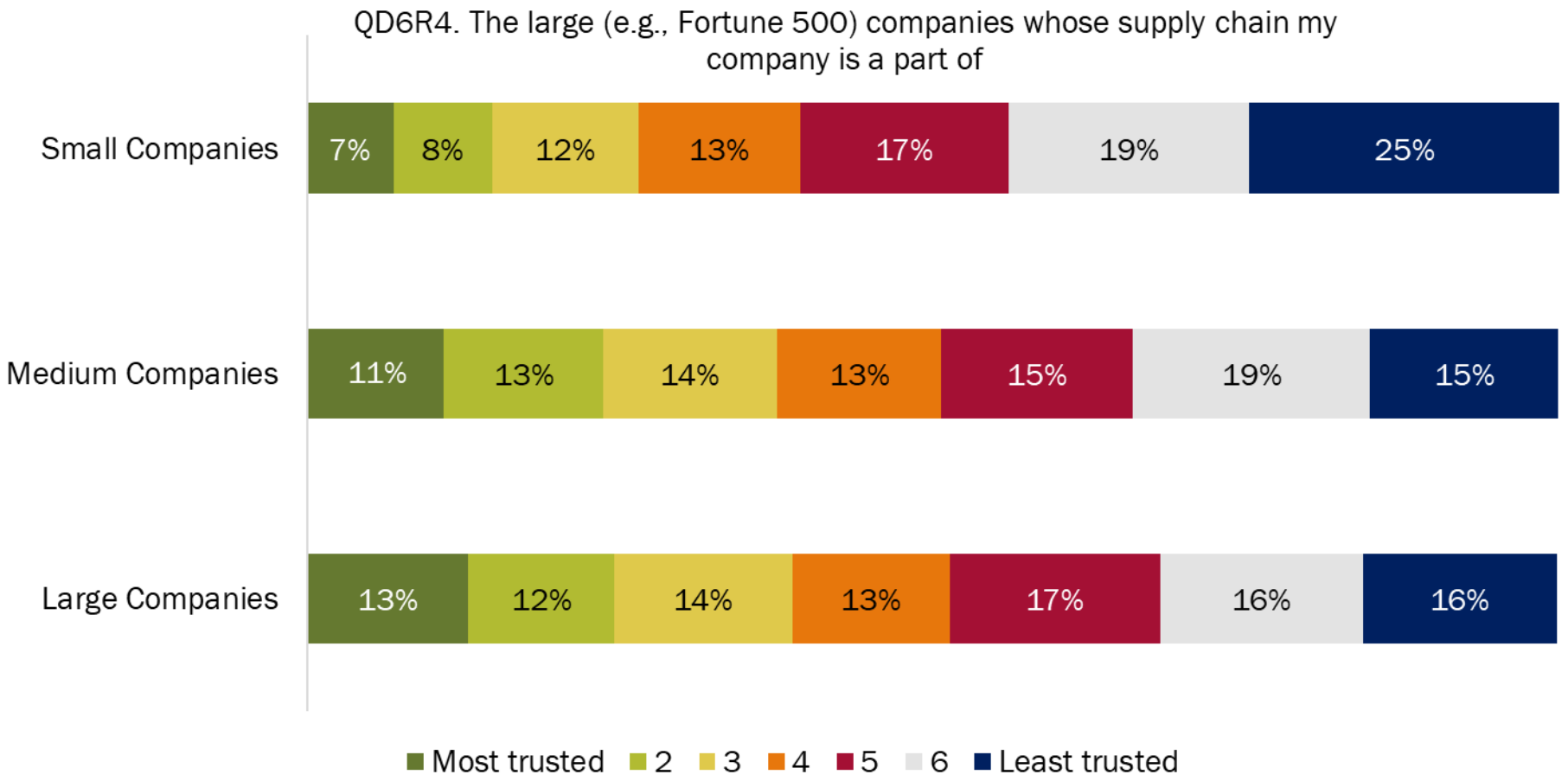

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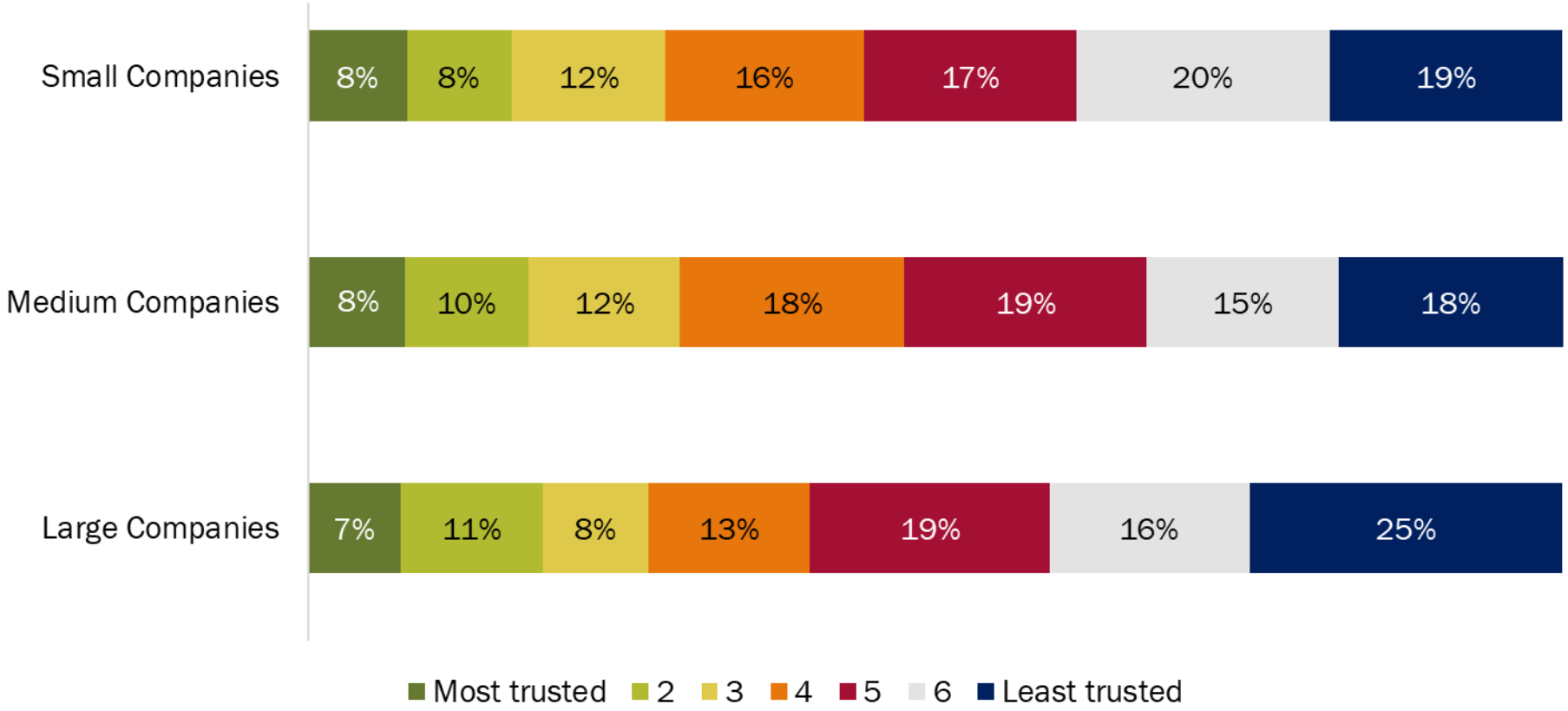
QD6R5. Business journalism (e.g., Wall Street Journal) and business schools (e.g., Harvard Business Review)



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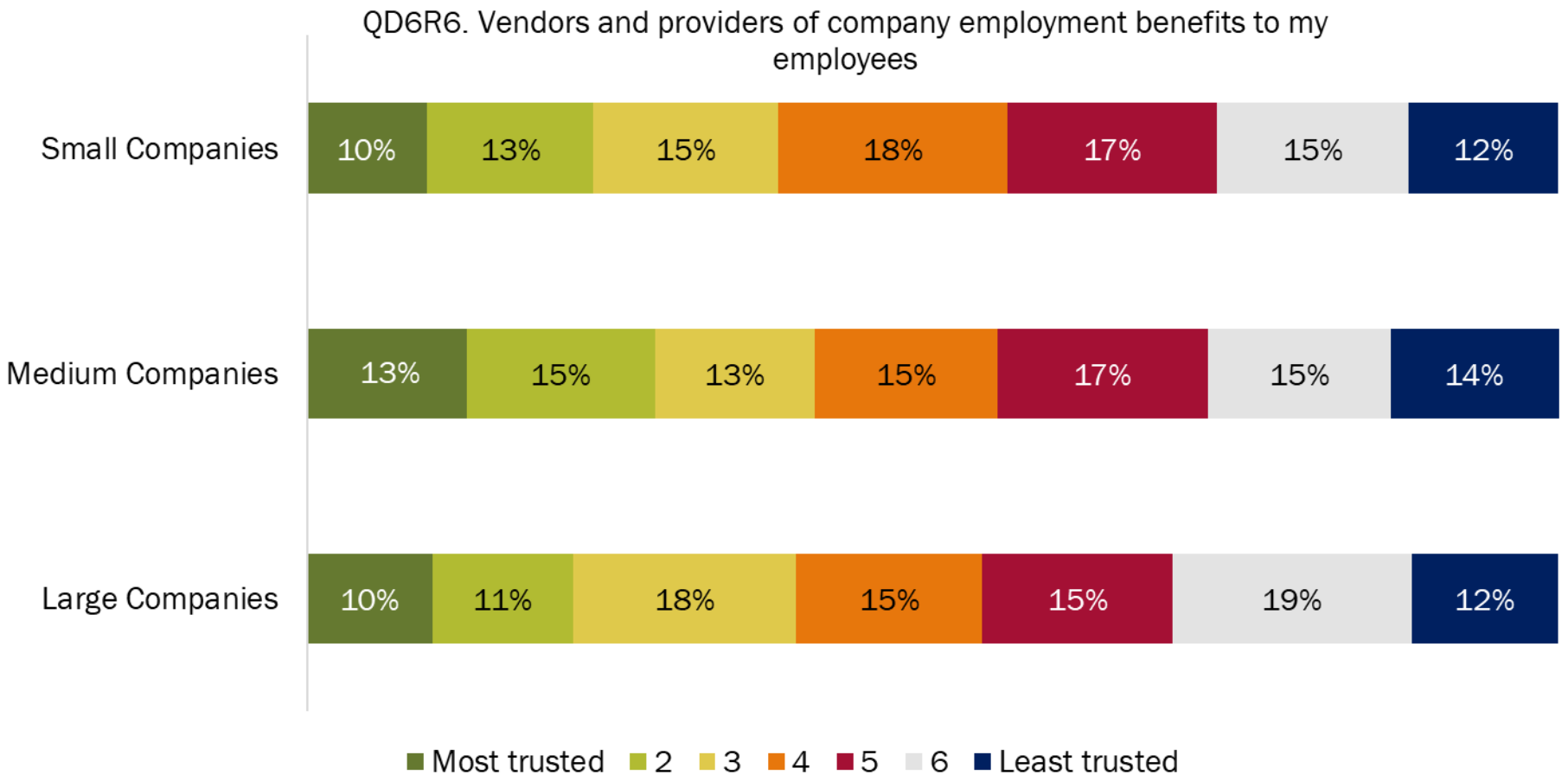

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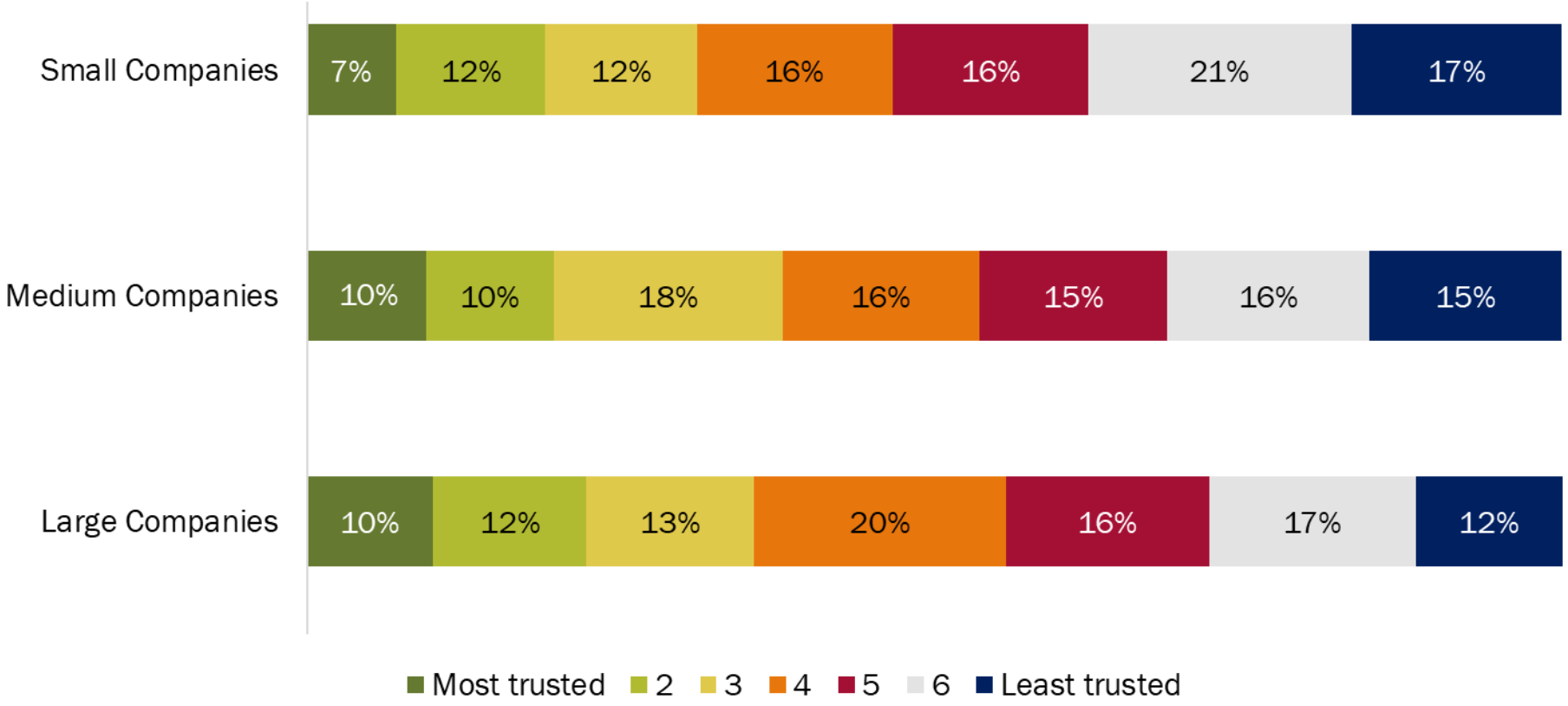
D6. There are many influencers from whom you might learn best practices for upward mobility. Please rank your choices from most trusted to least trusted.

QD6R7. Vendors and providers of IT tools that shape employment (e.g., Applicant Tracking Systems [ATS] like Taleo, Human Capital Management [HCM] like Workday)



N = 1,063 (87 people responded "None of the above")

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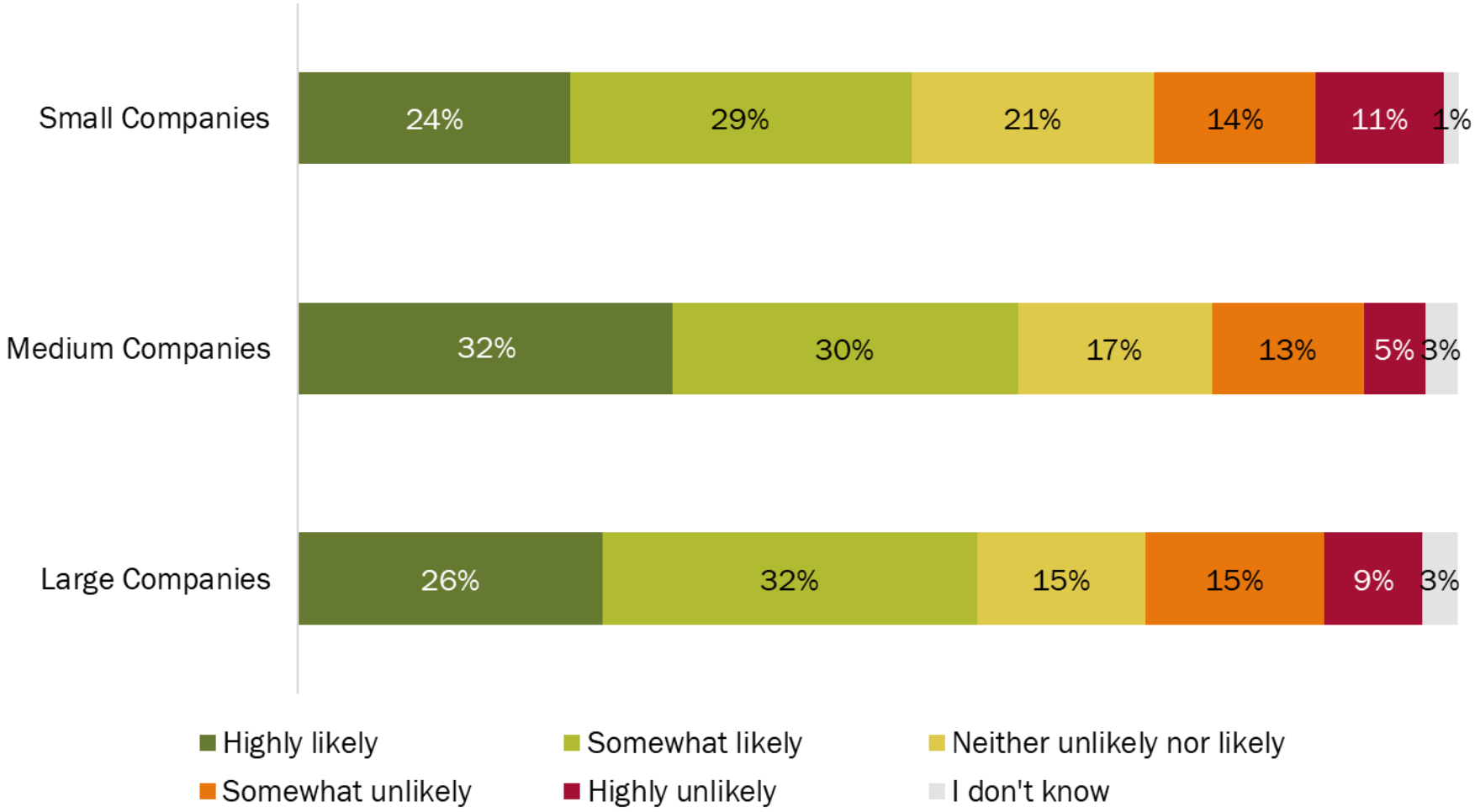
D10. Please rate your company's willingness to implement practices for increased upward mobility.



N = 1,150

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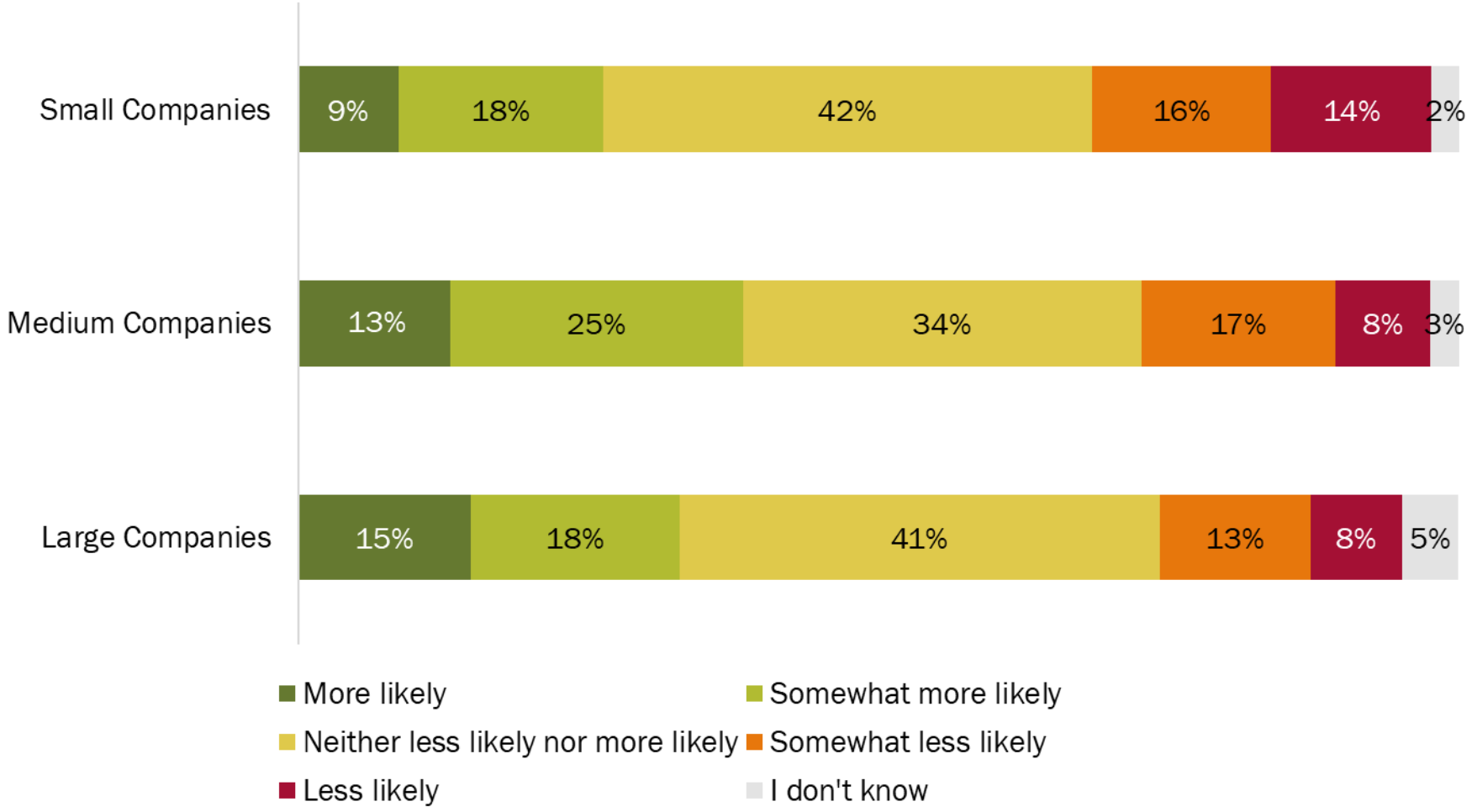
D11. Please rate the effect of COVID-19 on your company's willingness to implement practices for increased upward mobility.



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