FP TRANSITIONS®

The FINSERV Foundation

STUDENT SURVEY

PRESENTED BY

ELISE ROGERS

VP of Marketing

FP TRANSITIONS

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Director of Business Development and Senior Consultant

FP TRANSITIONS

CHAMPIONING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT

FP Transitions is deeply committed to investing in the future of the financial services profession. Succession planning and the long-term sustainability of independent advisory firms depends on attracting, developing, and retaining the next generation of advisors.

In partnership with The FinServ Foundation, we conducted our second annual student survey to better understand what future advisors value in an employer, how they view career opportunities, and what firms can do to attract and retain emerging talent.

In 2026, we received 100 responses that are helping inform conversations around succession, leadership development, workplace culture, compensation, AI adoption, and the future of advisory firms.

FP TRANSITIONS®

2025 VS 2026

High Level Perspective

- *Expanded Data*
- *New Insights*
- *Compensation Expectation*
- *AI Outlook*

2025

91 completed responses

43 data points

2026

100 completed responses

85 data points

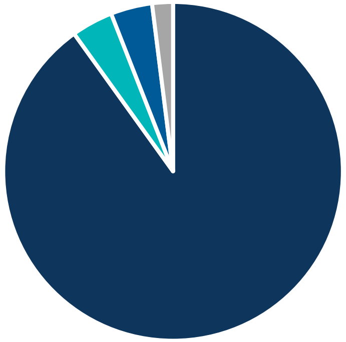
OUR NEXT GENERATION OF ADVISORS

Demographics & Career Aspirations

2026 only

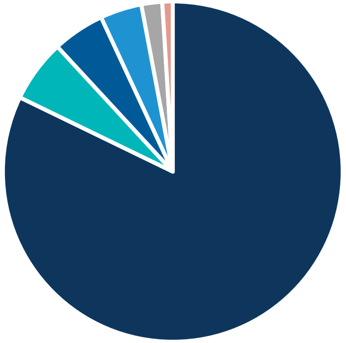
DEMOGRAPHICS OF NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS

Current Education Level



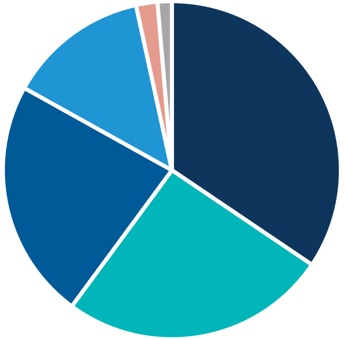
- 91% Undergraduate (Associate or Bachelor's)
- 4% Graduate (Master's, MBA, etc)
- 3% Certificate of Licensing Program (e.g., CFP® Board Regisitered Program)
- 2% Other

Areas of Focus



- 82.18% Financial Planning
- 5.9% Economics
- 5% Business Management/Analytics
- 4% Accounting
- 2% Other
- 1% Marketing

Degrees or Focus of Pursuit



- 50.5% Certified Financial Planner™ (CFP®)
- 37.6% Series 65 / Series 7 License
- 33.7% Securities Industry Essentials (SIE)
- 19.8% None of the above yet
- 3% Certififed Public Accountant (CPA)
- 2% Other

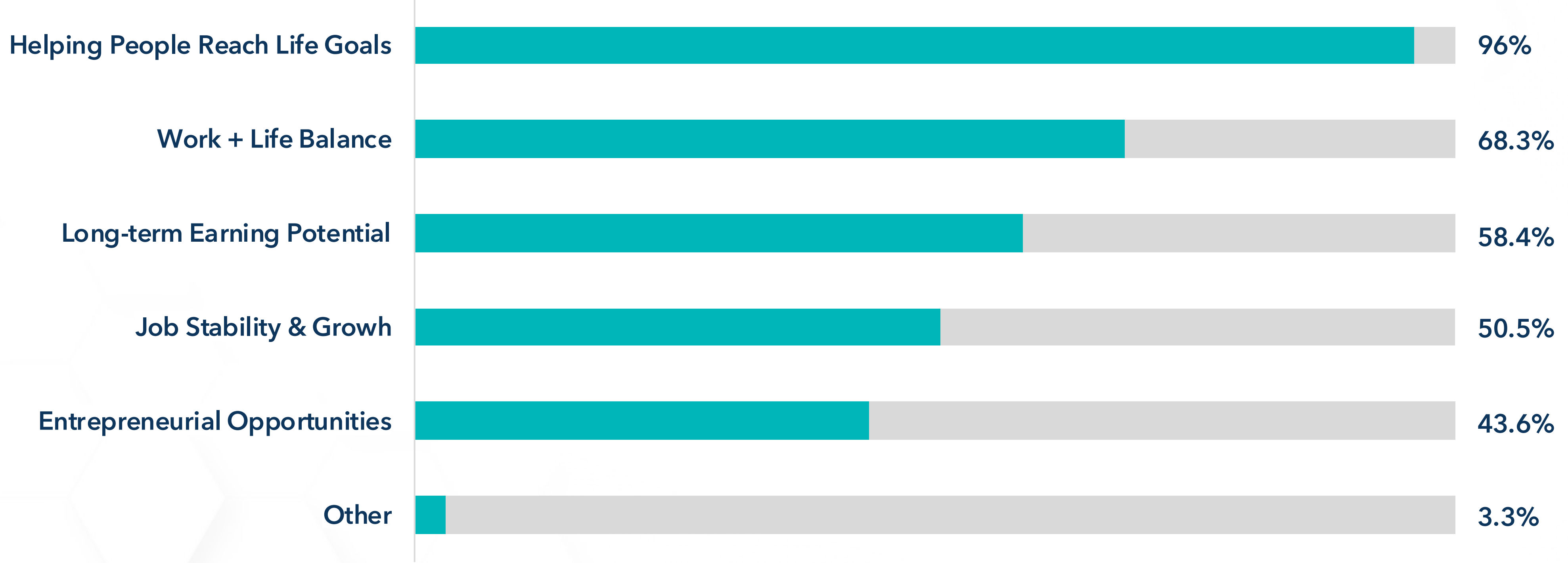
WHAT ATTRACTS THE NEXT GENERATION?

Motivations & Expectations for Employers

2026 only

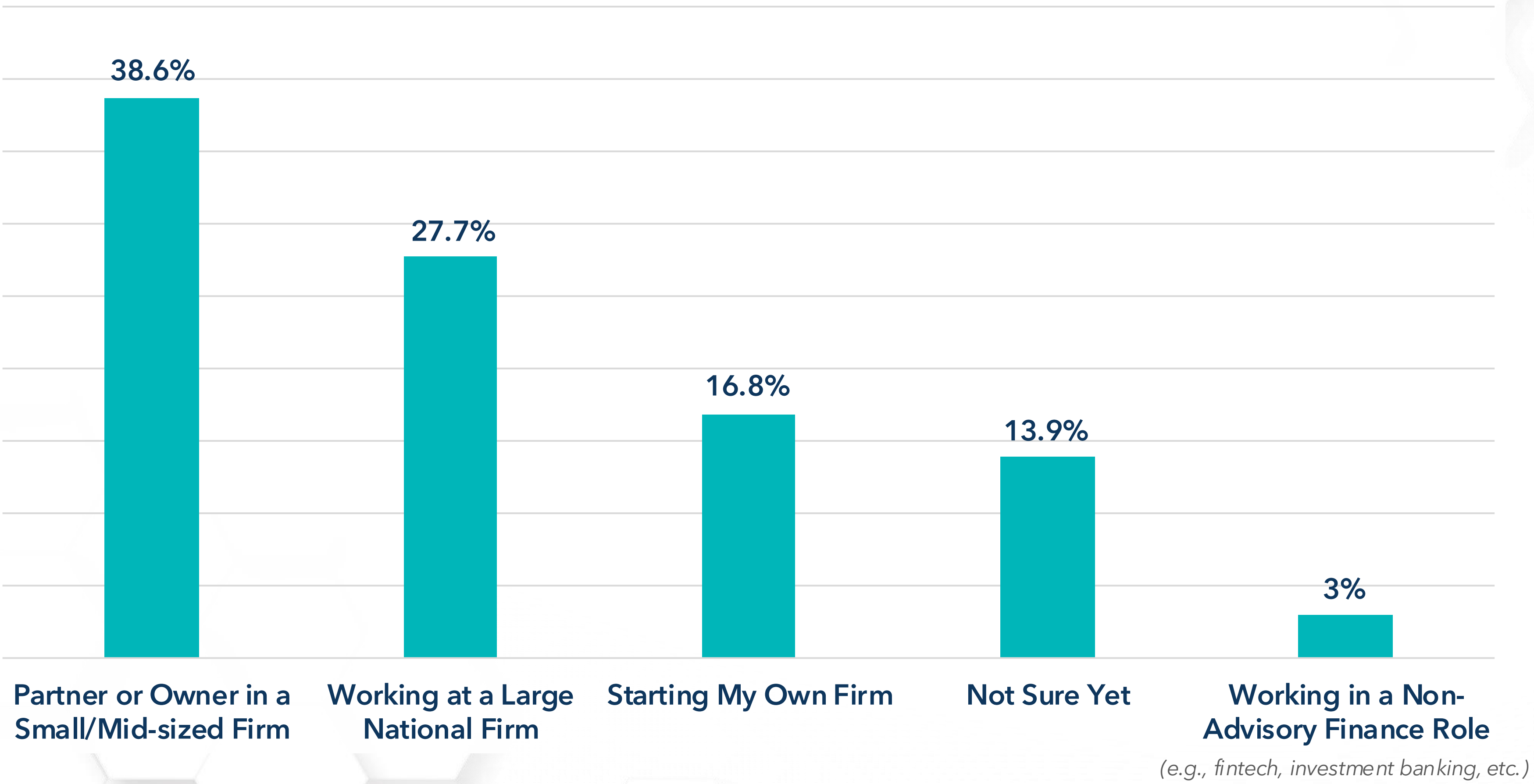
WHAT INSPIRES NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS

"Why are you interested in a career in financial services or planning?"

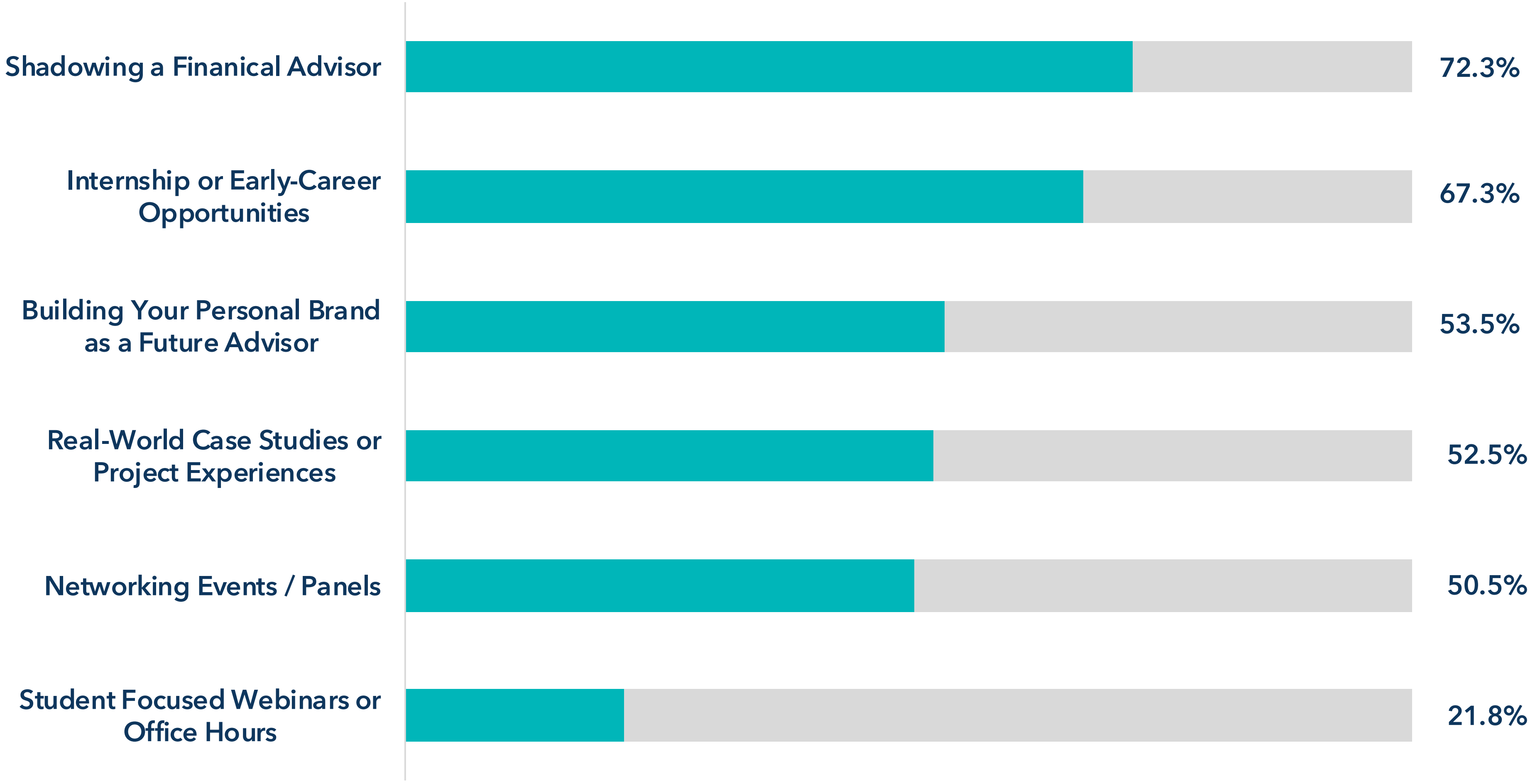


CAREER GOALS OF NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS

"Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?"



WHAT ARE NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT?



WHAT KEEPS THE NEXT GENERATION ENGAGED?

Culture, Leadership, and Development

2026 only

KEY FACTORS THAT DEFINE THE RIGHT ROLE

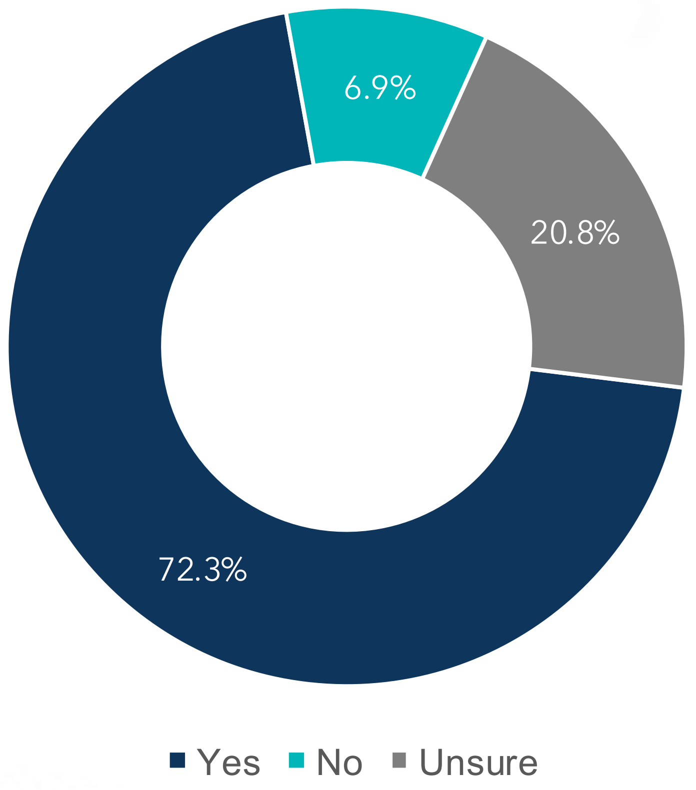
"Tell us what you are looking for in a career?"

	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	ESSENTIAL
MENTORSHIP & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	2%	5%	44.6%	<u>48.5%</u>
MISSION & PURPOSE DRIVEN CULTURE	1%	14.9%	<u>42.6%</u>	41.6%
WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CLIENTS	1%	14%	<u>44%</u>	41%
COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION & BENEFITS	0%	16.8%	<u>57.4%</u>	25.7%
LEADERSHIP TEAM THAT REPRESENTS PEOPLE LIKE YOU	5.9%	30.7%	<u>38.6%</u>	24.8%
TRANSPARENT CAREER PATH	2%	16.8%	<u>56.4%</u>	24.8%
A FIRM THAT DEMONSTRATES INCLUSIVITY	3%	25.7%	<u>50.5%</u>	20.8%
FLEXIBILITY & REMOTE WORK OPTIONS	6.9%	<u>43.6%</u>	34.7%	14.9%

**Underlined percentages indicates majority*

PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVITY IN THE INDUSTRY

"Do you feel the financial services industry is welcoming to new, diverse voices?"



HOW IS THE LANDSCAPE CHANGING?

Compensation, AI, Inclusion, etc.

COMPENSATION FACTORS

That matter most to next-gen respondents

80.2%
Base Salary

53.5%
Retirement Benefits 401(k) Match

39.6%
Flexible Work Options

35.6%
Health Benefits

32.7%
Paid Time Off

24.8%
Annual Performance Review

13.9%
Equity or Stock Compensation

6%
Signing Bonus

2%
Other

FP Transitions

Compensation Benchmarking

800

Firms

7,000

Individuals

30+

Roles

KEY THEMES

TRANSPARENCY IN CAREER PATHS AND GROWTH

Students want a clear understanding of how they can progress from entry-level roles into lead planner, advisor, and ownership positions. Respondents emphasized the importance of transparent expectations, advancement opportunities, and long-term career potential.

MENTORSHIP IS A MAJOR DIFFERENTIATOR

Many respondents identified mentorship, coaching, and professional development as critical factors when evaluating employers. They want firms that invest in training and provide meaningful opportunities to learn from experienced advisors.

GIVE EMERGING TALENT AN OPPORTUNITY

A recurring theme was frustration with firms seeking experienced candidates while offering limited entry-level opportunities. Students encouraged firms to prioritize potential, curiosity, and willingness to learn over years of experience alone.

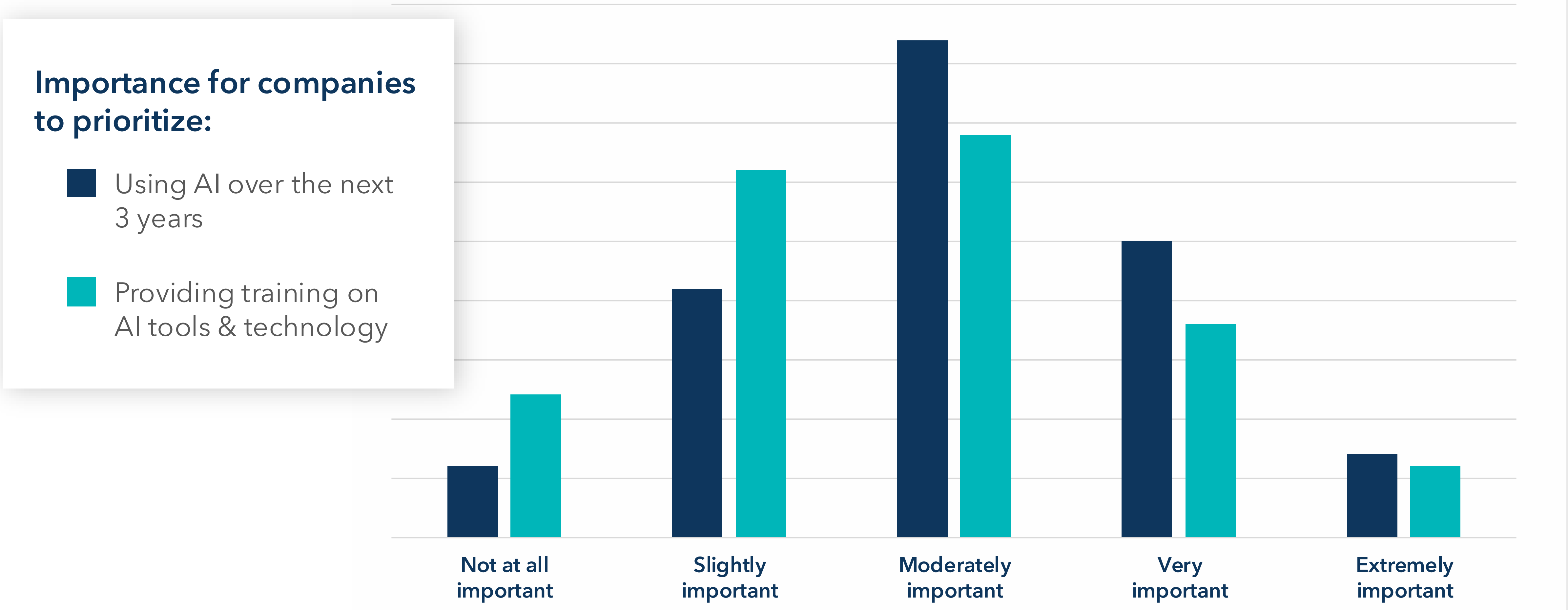
ENGAGE STUDENTS EARLY AND OFTEN

Respondents encouraged firms to build stronger relationships with universities through internships, career fairs, networking events, and classroom engagement. Early exposure helps students better understand career opportunities within the profession.

CULTURE, PURPOSE, AND BELONGING MATTER

The next generation is looking for firms where they can contribute, grow, and be themselves. Respondents highlighted the importance of inclusive cultures, meaningful work, and firms that clearly communicate their purpose and vision for the future.

HOW NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS DEFINE AI-READY EMPLOYERS



Multi-select

TOP CONCERNS ABOUT LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF AI USE IN WEALTH MANAGEMENT

Multi-select

TOP CONCERNS ABOUT LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF AI USE IN WEALTH MANAGEMENT

64% Over-reliance on automation & loss of human interaction

63% Accuracy of AI outputs

57% Data privacy risks

52% Ethical impacts

47% Job displacement

40% Bias in decision-making

39% Loss of creative thinking

34% Environmental impact

27% Security risks

25% Lack of transparency in how AI makes decisions

NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON HOW AI IMPACTS THEIR EARLY CAREERS

Expresses Concern About Fewer Entry-level Roles

"I fear that [AI] will be a tool people choose to utilize instead of paying a younger and less experienced advisor."

Emphasizes the Importance of Human Connection

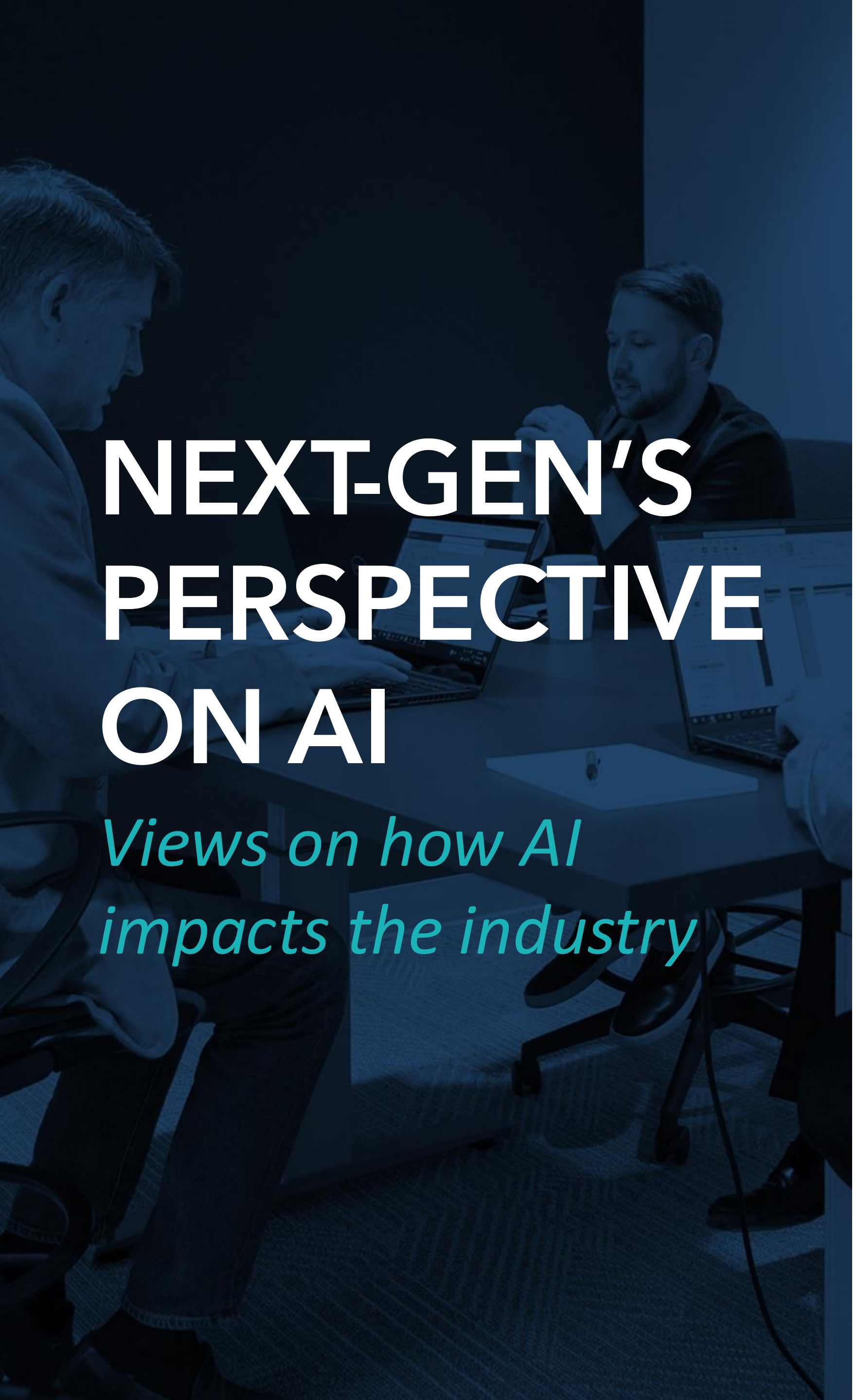
"[AI] still misses the personal touch and emotional intelligence needed for Financial Planning."

Recognizes AI's Potential to Improve Efficiency

"I don't have significant concerns about AI impacting my career in financial planning. If anything, I see it as an opportunity."

Feels Pressure to Keep Pace with Evolving Technologies

"I would feel overwhelmed if I stopped keeping up with how fast [AI] is moving."



NEXT-GEN'S PERSPECTIVE ON AI

Views on how AI impacts the industry

SHAPING THE FUTURE

NEXT-GEN RESPONDENTS VIEW INNOVATION POSITIVELY

- Nearly **40% of respondents** said evolving technology makes the profession more appealing.
- Students increasingly associate financial planning with innovation, adaptability, and long-term growth potential.
- Modern tools are viewed as a way to enhance efficiency while strengthening the client experience.

HUMAN CONNECTION CONTINUES TO DRIVE VALUE

- Approximately **33% indicated** technology will not significantly influence their interest in the profession.
- Only **8.9% expressed hesitation**, reinforcing the continued value of relationship-driven advising.

CLARITY CREATES OPPORTUNITY

- Nearly **1 in 5 respondents (18.8%)** remain uncertain about how emerging technologies will shape their careers.
- Firms that clearly communicate how technology enhances advisor capabilities will be better positioned to attract next-generation talent.

IN SUMMARY

High Level Perspective

AI and the Industry

Next-Gen Perspective

TOP-LEVEL THEMES & INSIGHTS

AI IS A SKILL STUDENTS MUST LEARN

- 73% Students rate AI in firms of choice as moderate to extremely important and AI related training by their employer matters at the same level
- Firms are going to be expected to have an AI strategy and training path

AI USAGE IS MAINSTREAM

- Students are on average using about 5 hours a week and less than 9% are using it an hour or less a week

TALENT PIPELINE

- If you chose to automate junior work to cut costs, you are eroding the development track of the next generation of advisors.
- The 2025 survey echoed difficulty gaining a good role out of school, this will grow that gap

IS YOUR FIRM READY?

The next generation of advisors is eager to enter the financial services profession – and they're bringing clear expectations about what they want in an employer.

They're looking for firms that offer purpose, growth opportunities, mentorship, and a strong commitment to diversity, innovation, and client impact.

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THANK YOU FOR JOINING

Scan the code or visit
fptransitions.com/edge2026
to get a sneak peek of the Compensation Survey data