

**PRNews**

**2015 Edition**

# Salary Survey

PR Compensation and Benefits Report



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**Access  
Intelligence**

Published weekly by Access Intelligence, LLC  
4 Choke Cherry Road, Rockville, MD 20850

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# INTRODUCTION

## PR Needs to Plant Better Roots and Reap the Financial Rewards



It's back to the future for PR executives who wish to boost their value. Marketing and communications pros now spend a growing amount of time trying to monetize companies' social channels and distribute messages in ever-thinning digital formats.

Yet amid the rise of online marketing, it turns out that written communications and media relations—two of the more traditional facets of public relations—remain the most important skills to advancing within an organization.

That's one of the major takeaways from PR News' 2015 Salary Survey. The survey, which took the pulse of more than 1,100 PR and marketing executives, also found that strategic marketing and collaboration are considered the key "soft" skills/attributes needed to advance within an organization.

The challenge is to meld the concrete skills of communicators, namely writing and pitching the media, with the "soft" skills needed to excel in an increasingly integrated business environment.

More responsibility for PR execs doesn't necessarily translate into more salary, higher compensation or bigger bonuses, however. For example, many PR execs, regardless of title, commanded salary increases of just 1%-3%, while others (particularly on the corporate side) weren't even eligible for a salary increase, according to the survey. What is more, most PR salaries and compensation packages in 2014 were flat, compared with 2013 results.

Still, having more strategic responsibility is a relatively new piece of business for PR execs. An opportunity lies in PR pros' ability to strengthen that role, sharpen their skill sets and, in time, generate bigger salaries and more overall compensation.

Sincerely,

Matthew Schwartz  
Group Editor, PR News  
Twitter: @mpsjournal

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# Survey Overview and Key Findings

# Communicators' Salaries Up Slightly; Strategic Involvement Gets Healthy Boost

By PR News Editors

PR executives now play an increasingly critical role in strategic marketing and communications, both for traditional channels and new media venues.

Yet PR salaries may not be keeping up with more responsibilities. Although there were isolated bumps in salary depending on job title, most of the increases tended to be small. What's more, a growing number of communicators were ineligible for a boost in salary last year.

While there was some dissatisfaction with their compensation, most PR executives generally are satisfied with their job overall and their pay.

The 2015 Salary Survey highlights include:

- **General Satisfaction With Pay:** Nearly three-fourths of the respondents are either “fully satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their overall compensation package.
- **Bonuses Hard to Come By:** Regardless of the PR title or position, salary increases have been relatively anemic, in keeping with previous years.
- **The Past as Prologue:** Despite the digital onslaught, traditional PR skills, such as writing and crisis communication, are considered the most important assets for advancement within an organization.
- **‘Soft benefits’ morphing:** Maternity leave and flexible work schedules are viewed as the top job benefits (beyond compensation).
- **Pressing the Flesh:** Keep those travel budgets flowing. Attending conferences and seminars remain the significant objectives to grow professionally, in keeping with previous years.

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**Despite the digital onslaught, traditional public relations efforts, such as writing and crisis management, still are considered the most important skills for advancement within an organization.**

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## How We Administered the Survey

The fourth annual PR News Salary Survey was conducted online. It produced a significant number of responses from PR News subscribers, the PR News community and visitors to our website. We used the following methods to invite people to participate:

- PR News subscribers were sent e-mail messages inviting them to participate in the survey.
- Links to the survey were included in various PR News email newsletters.
- Visitors to [www.prnewsonline.com](http://www.prnewsonline.com) were presented with a link inviting them to take the survey (with a frequency cap of one time per user).
- Outreach was sent to the PR News community via social media channels.

The study was fielded for approximately six weeks, ending January 2015. There were a total of 1,133 respondents, representing a wide variety of industries and PR disciplines.

Job titles ranged from president-CEO to account executive, and most every PR title in between.

# Key Survey Findings

## OVERALL

### Salary Increases

More PR pros are getting salary increases, compared with 2013, but the rate of increase is decidedly low.

In 2014, nearly half the respondents (45%) garnered salary increases of 1%-3% (Fig. A). Just around 3% of respondents received salary hikes in the 10%-12% range. About 15% of respondents saw their salary rise 4%-6%. The main trouble spot for salary increases is the percentage of PR pros for which a salary increase in 2014 did not apply (16%). That rate barely budged from the 2013 results of 17%.

Fig. A: Percentage Salary Increase in Latest Review or Promotion

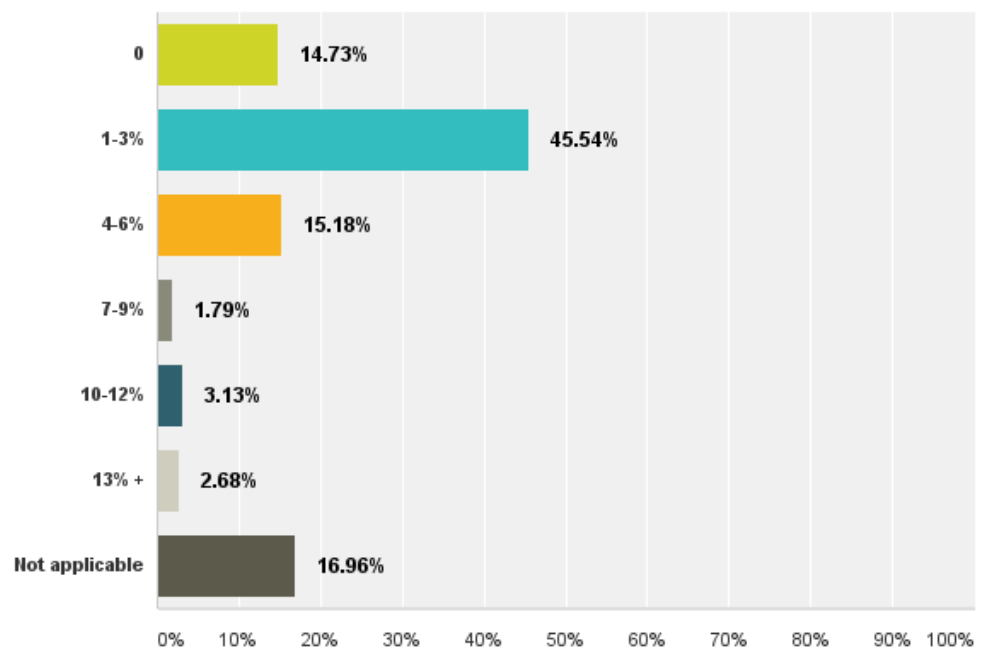
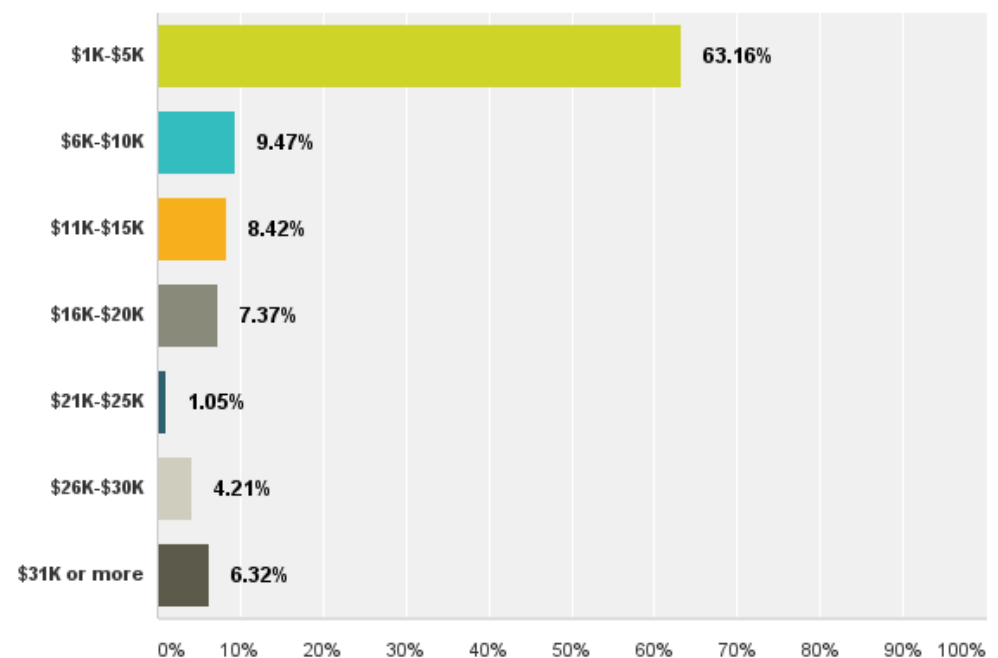


Fig. B: Bonus You Received



### Bonuses

For a majority of PR pros, bonus amounts continue to hover in the \$1K-\$5K range.

Bonus rates generally reflect the results of previous years, with slight declines in certain salary brackets.

For example, 9% of respondents commanded bonuses of \$6K-\$10K (Fig. B), down from nearly 17% in 2013.

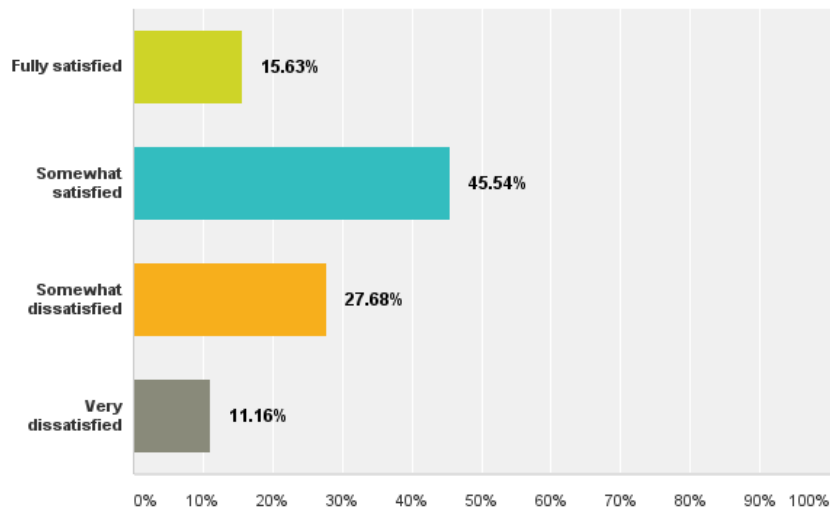
## Compensation Satisfaction

PR execs generally are pleased with their compensation, with a little fewer than one-third of respondents “somewhat satisfied” with their pay.

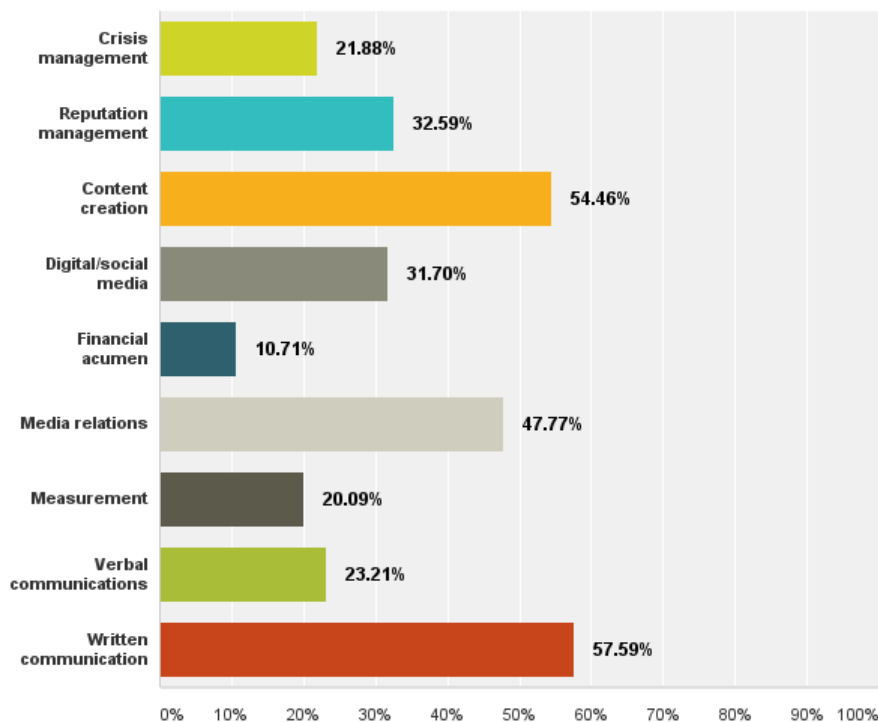
## PR Skills Most Important for Advancement

Traditional PR skills, such as effective writing, still are at the top of the list when it comes to the most important skills for career advancement.

**Fig. C: How satisfied are you with your current compensation?**



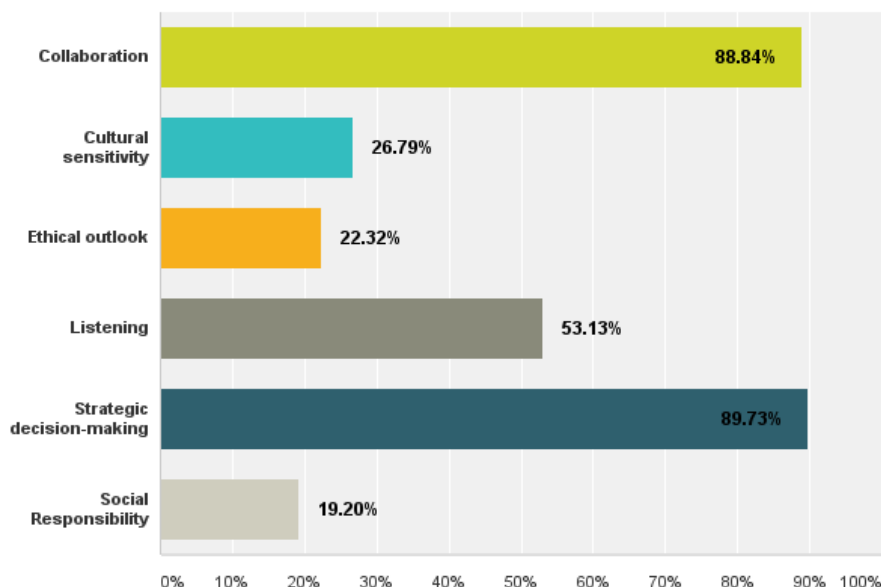
**Fig. D: Which PR skills are most important for advancement within your organization?**



### Key ‘Soft’ Communications Skills/Attributes

In an accelerating trend, strategic decision-making (90%) and collaboration (88%) were considered the top skills for PR pros in 2014. Despite a lot of corporate energy devoted to social responsibility, CSR placed low on the food chain for soft communication skills; having an ethical outlook also scored low.

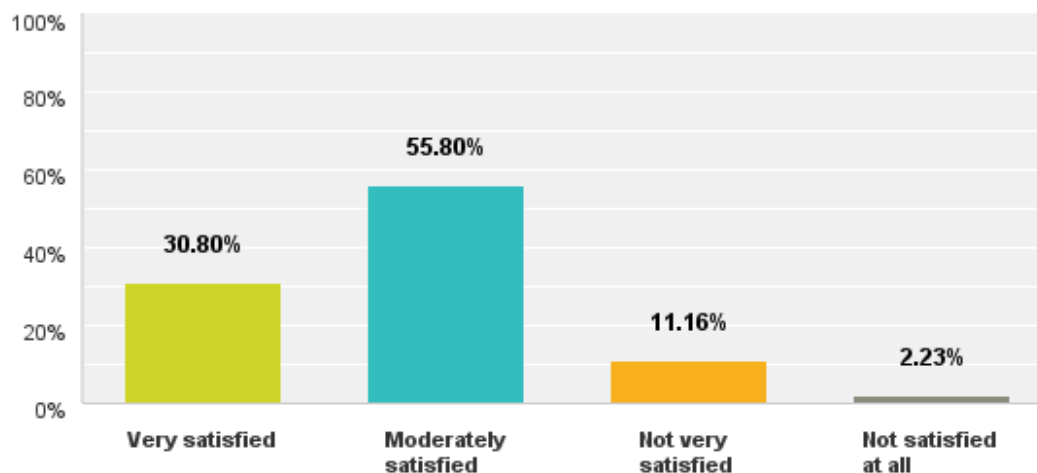
**Fig. E: Which of the following “soft” communications skills/attributes are most important for advancement within your organization?**



### Job Satisfaction

In an encouraging outlook for the PR field as a whole, more than 80% of respondents said they are either “very satisfied” (30%) or “moderately satisfied” (55%) with their job.

**Fig. F: Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?**



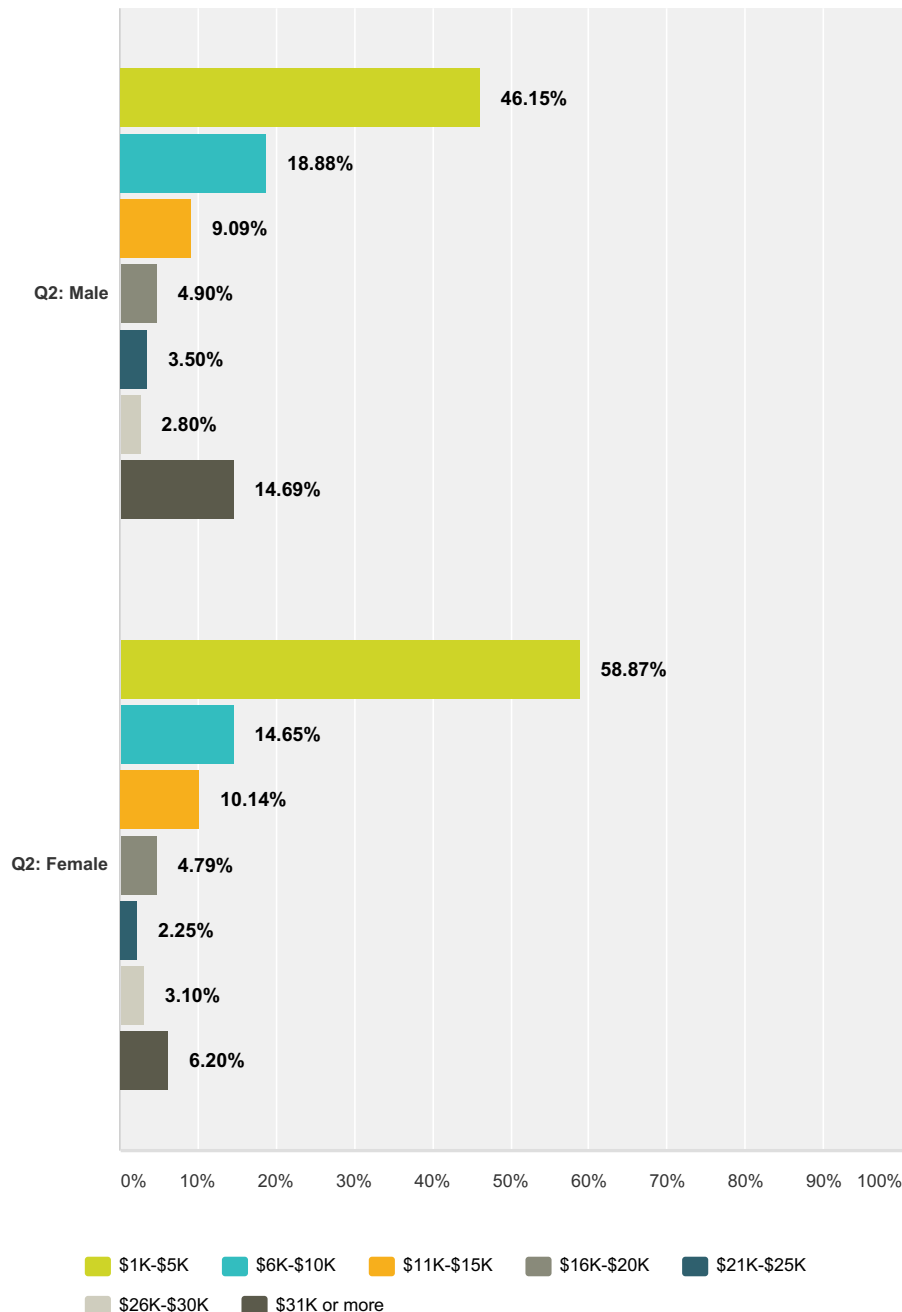
## GENDER

### Bonuses

There are much more women in the PR field yet men, who occupy more places in the C-suite, generally are commanding higher bonuses. For example, while about 6% of females got a bonus in the range of \$31K or more, 14% of males got the

same amount in bonus salary. There was more of an equilibrium in the range of \$16K-\$26K, perhaps reflecting the healthy number of women who are moving into the middle and upper management at of PR at a rapid clip.

**Fig. G: If you received a bonus in 2014, what was the amount?**





## Soft Benefits

A flexible work schedule is viewed as a top benefit.

It's a reflection of a field where women are the clear majority: Maternity leave was offered by nearly 67% of respondents' companies.

Telecommuting and flexible work schedules also rated high with respondents' companies, further indication of an increasingly mobile workforce (Fig. M).

## Professional Development

Attending conferences/seminars remains the most significant objective for professional development.

The more the Web takes charge of our lives the more travel budget brands provide to PR executives to get into the field and press the flesh. Similar to the 2013 salary survey, most respondents are reimbursed for attending industry conferences and seminars. Continuing education is on the upswing also: 70% of respondents were reimbursed for courses outside of the office in 2014 (Fig. N), up from 63% in 2013.

Unfortunately, mentoring and training—areas that leave a lot to be desired throughout PR precincts—are not as high a priority on the professional development list.

Fig. M: What “soft” benefits does your organization offer?

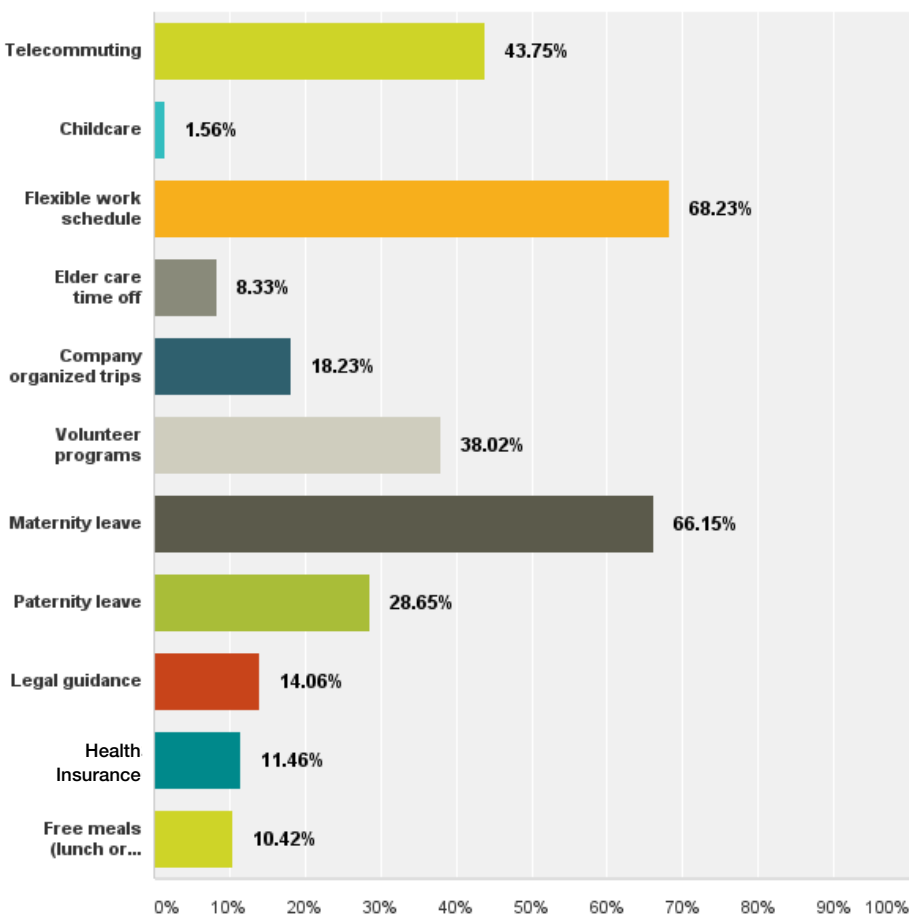
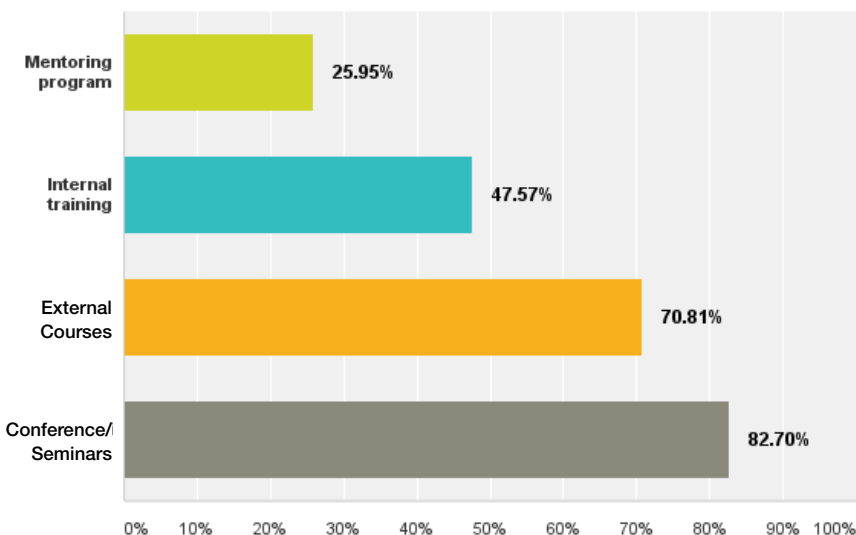


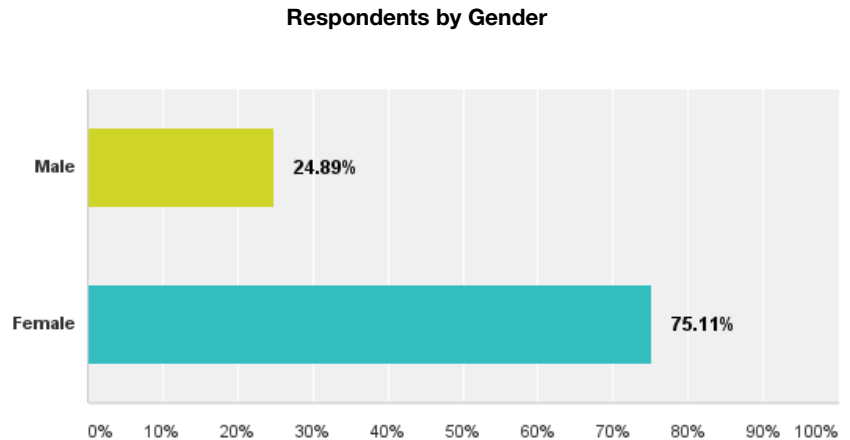
Fig. N: In terms of professional development, I have access to:



# Survey Demographics

## Gender

Nearly two-thirds of respondents were female PR executives. In 2014, 24% of respondents were male, down from roughly 32% in 2013, while 75% of the respondents were female, up from 67% in 2013.



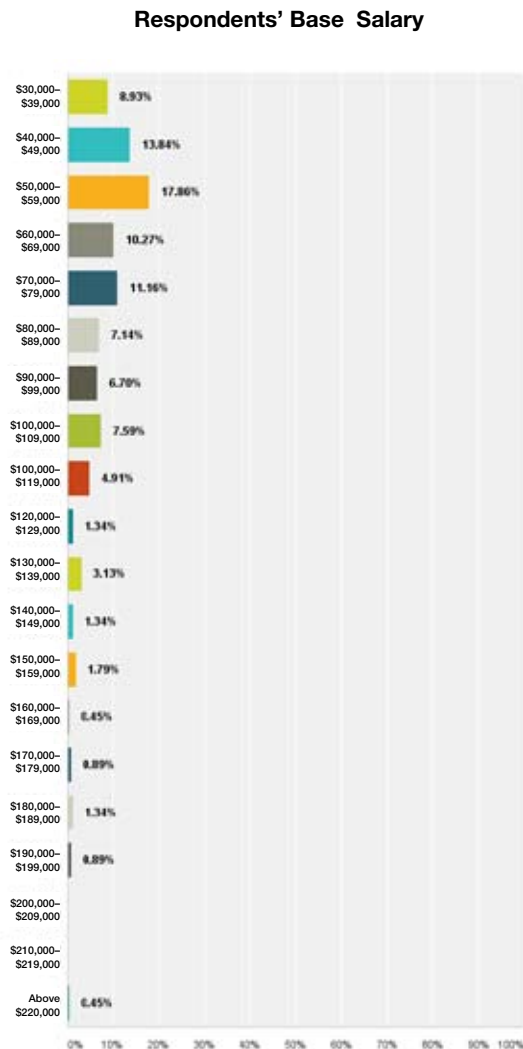
## Base Salary

Along with a growing number of PR disciplines—and more ways to create billable hours—comes a fairly wide disparity in base salaries.

At the high end of the pay scale, roughly 15% of the respondents earned between \$100,000-\$139,000 in 2014. About 5% of the respondents earned between \$140,000-\$199,000, while a fraction of the respondents commanded a base salary above \$220,000.

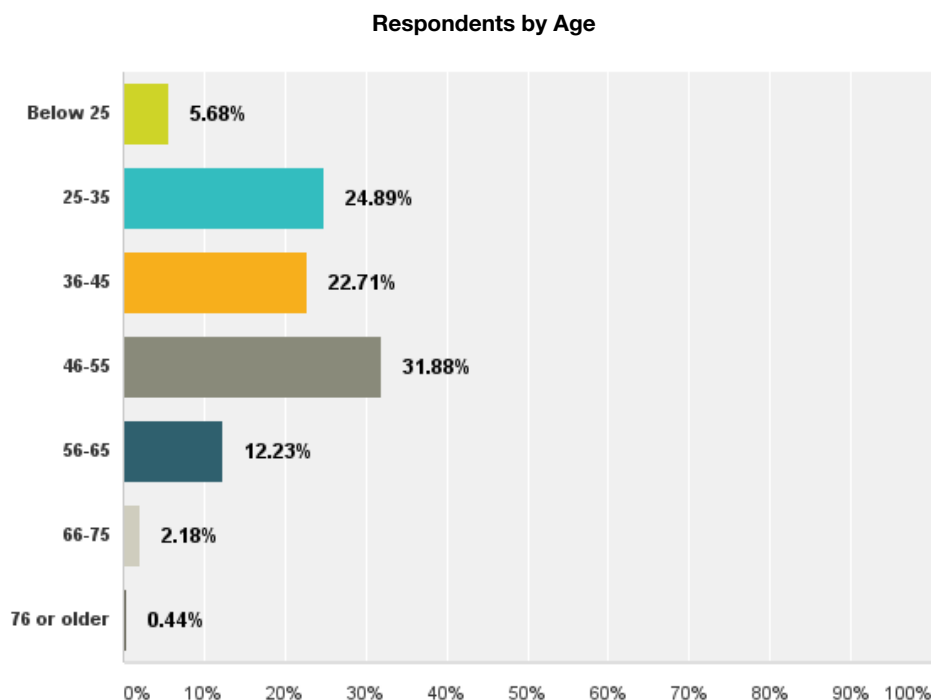
Just 5% of the respondents earning that amount could suggest that the middle management ranks within PR are thinning out.

More than a third of the respondents pulled in a base salary between \$50,000-\$79,000. Another quarter of the respondents earned between \$30,000 and \$49,000.



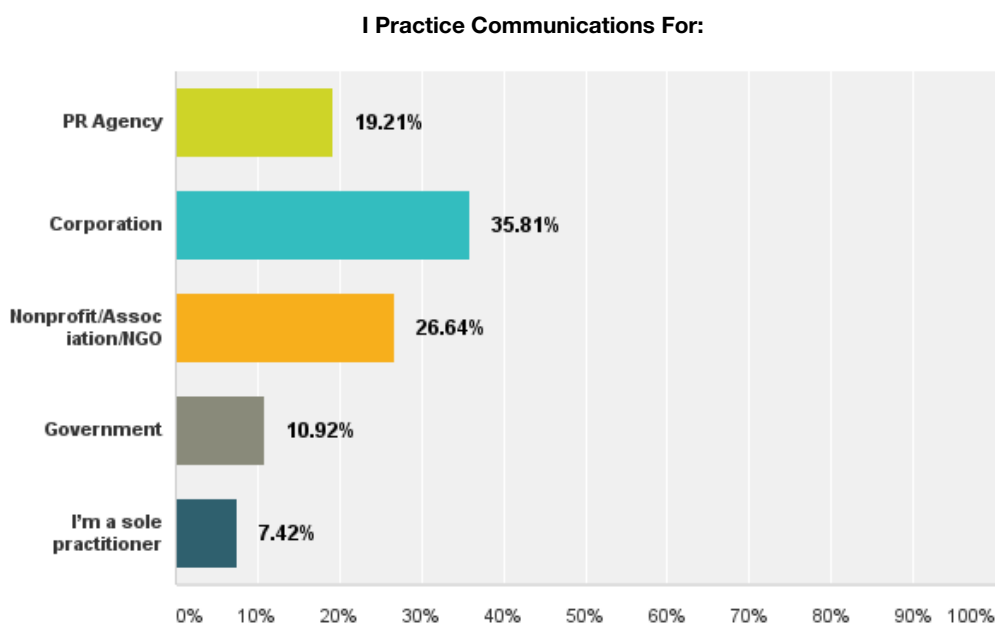
### Age of Respondents

There was a mix of ages represented in the survey, with roughly 65% between 36 and 65 years of age.



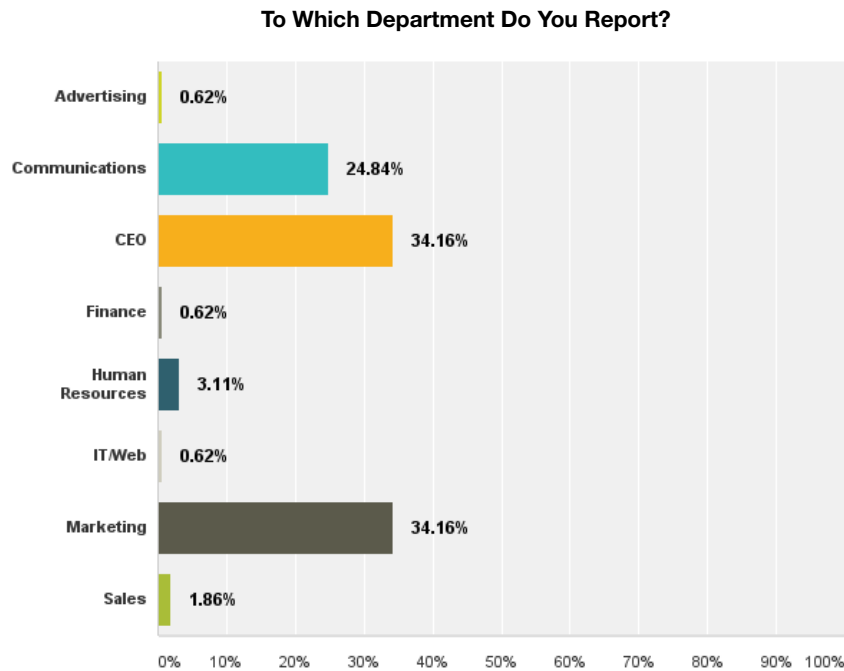
### Corporate, Nonprofit, Government, and Agency Breakdown

The corporate sector was the most widely represented in the survey (35%), followed by nonprofits (26%).



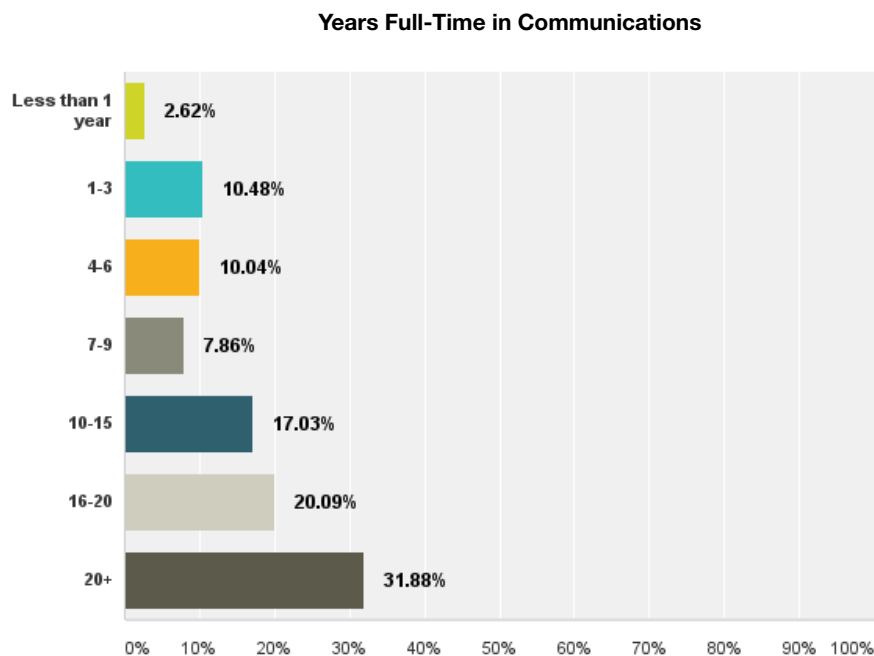
## To Which Department Do You Report?

More than two-thirds of respondents reported to their CEO or marketing director in 2014.



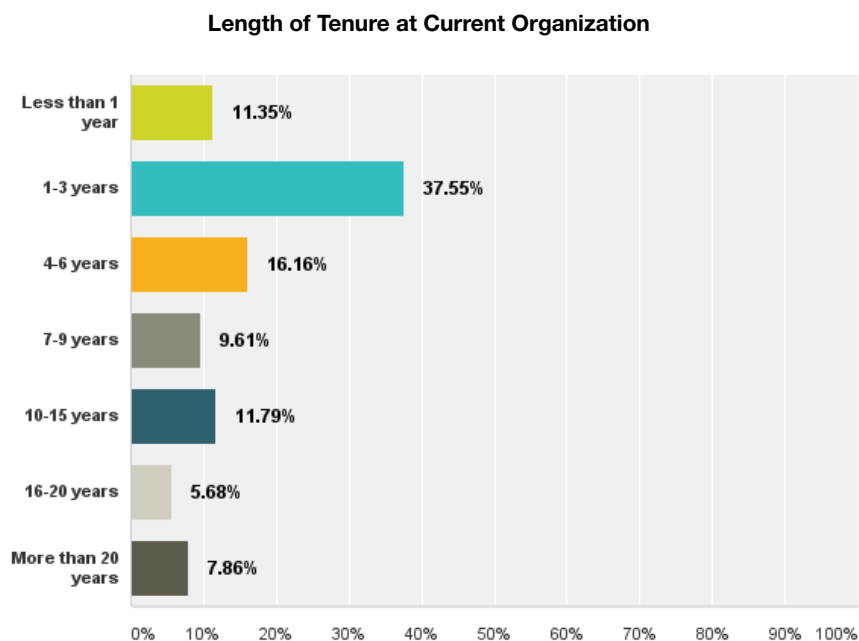
## Communications Experience

Most of the respondents (nearly 70%) have worked in PR between 10 and 20+ years.



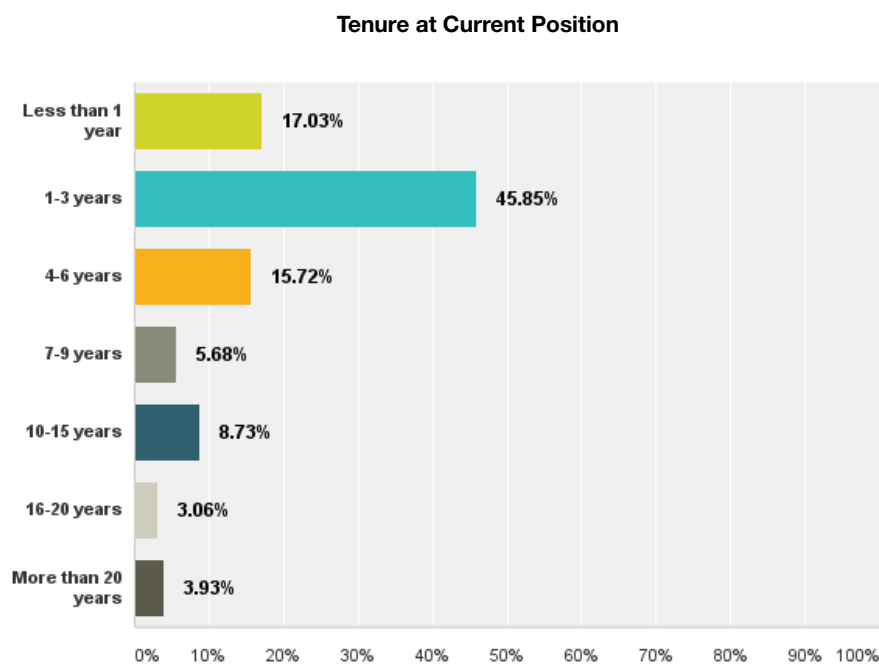
## Tenure at Current Organization

Nearly 25% of the respondents have been with their organization between 10 and 20+ years.



## Tenure at Current Position

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents have held their current PR job 1 to 15 years.





# 2

## Compensation and Benefits Survey Results

# Findings by Position: Corporate

## Chief Communications Officer

It's a cliché, but it applies: It's tough at the top. More than 25% of respondents working in this important position commanded a salary between \$190,000 and \$199,000 (Fig. 1) in 2014. That's up 5% from 2013. At the same time, the percentage of CCOs commanding a salary of \$220,000 or more fell to roughly 12%, from 33% in 2013. Perhaps it's a reflection of a still-sluggish economy. It also could be the old standby: When marketing budgets are cut, PR managers tend to bear the brunt.

More than one-third of respondents received salary increases of 1%-3%, but that uptick eluded 25% of respondents (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Chief Communications Officer

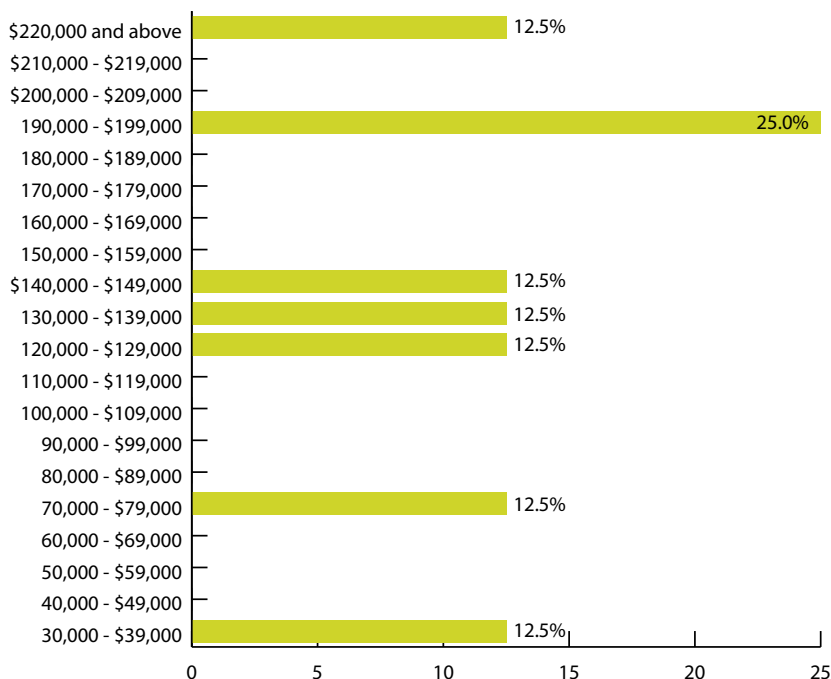


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Chief Communications Officer

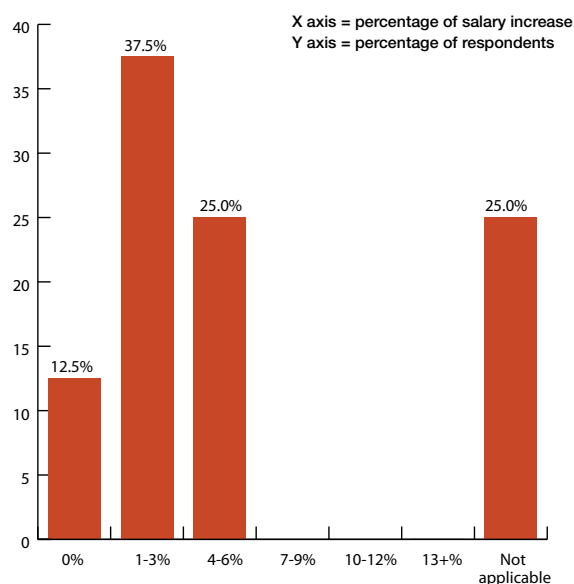
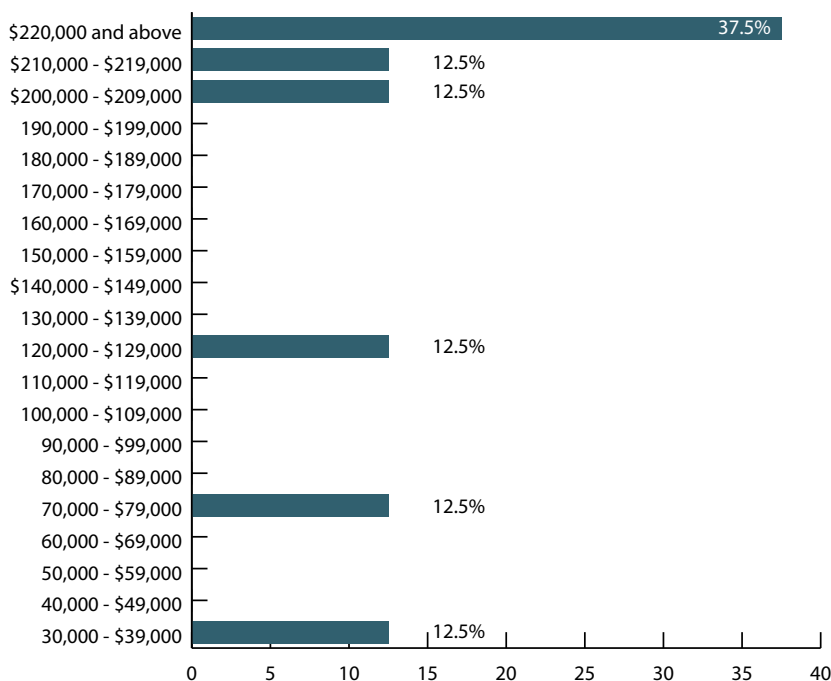


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Chief Communications Officer



## Corporate

## Director of Communications

Base salary for PR directors was spread equitably, similar to results from last year's survey. Nearly half the respondents in this area earned \$30,000-\$90,000, while 11% commanded a base salary of \$140,000-\$149,000 (Fig. 1).

Total compensation was a different story, however, with nearly 6% of PR directors garnering \$220,000 or higher and nearly 10% earning between \$170,000 and \$179,000 (Fig. 2).

Good news/bad news: More than half the respondents earned a bump in salary, but the rise was just 1%-3% (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Director of Communications

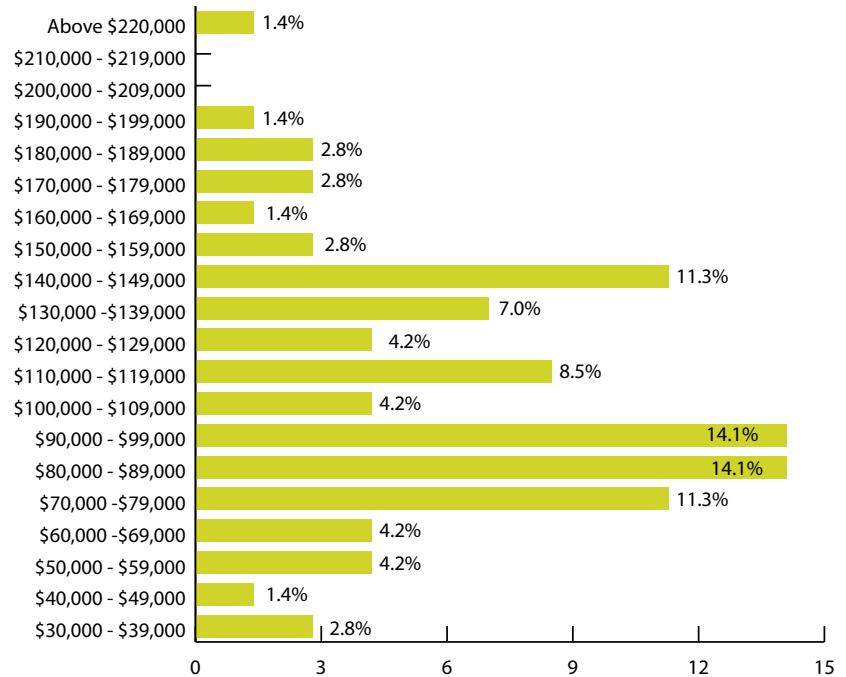


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Director of Communications

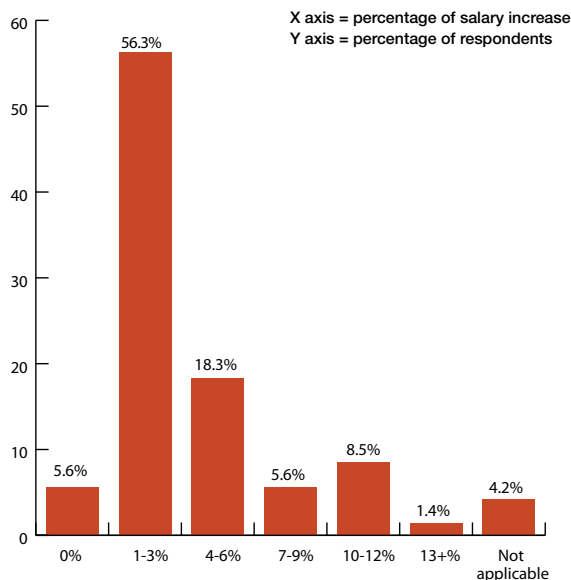
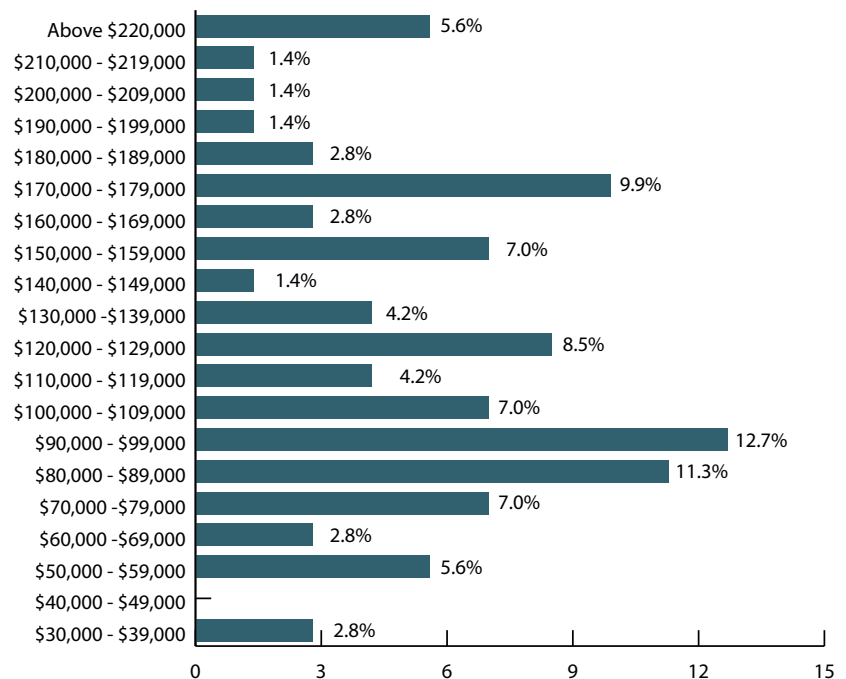


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Director of Communications





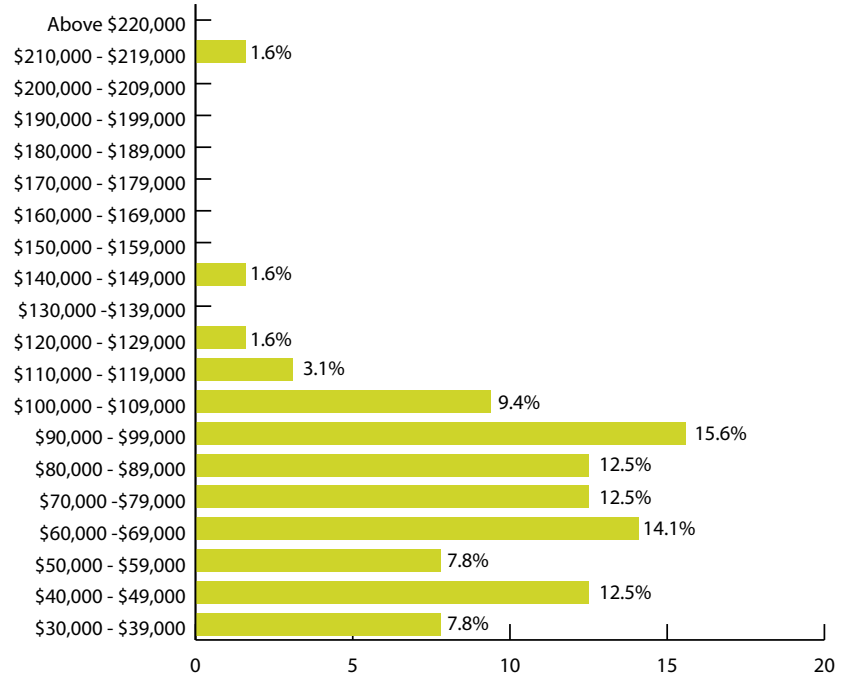
### Corporate

#### Communications Manager

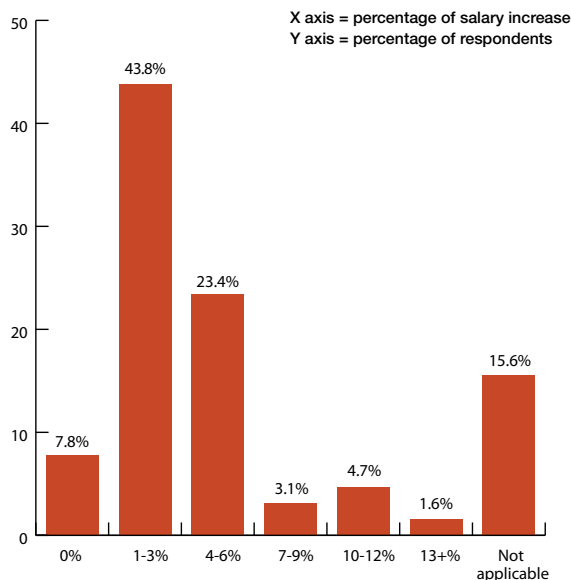
The base salary for most communications managers capped at \$109,000. Just 1% of respondents earned \$210,000-\$219,000, with the highest salary in this group going to PR execs (Fig. 1). It was a similar dynamic for total compensation, except at a slighter higher rate, \$109,000 and above \$220,000, respectively (Fig. 2).

A solid percentage of PR managers were incentivized in 2014, with nearly 5% of respondents commanding salary hikes of 10%-12%. Nearly one-quarter of respondents received a raise of 4%-7%, while nearly half took a smaller increase of 1%-3% (Fig. 3).

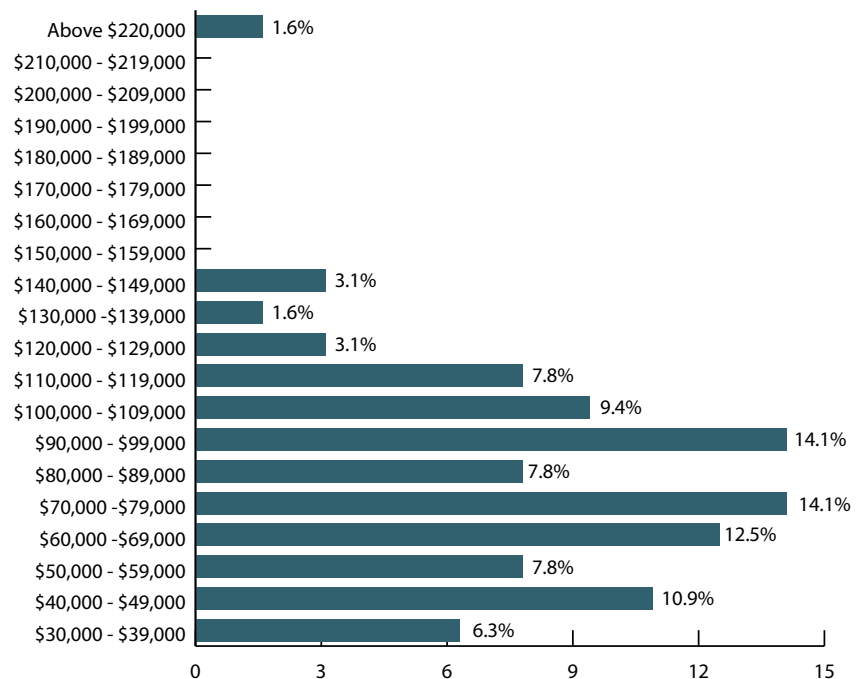
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Manager**



## Corporate

## Communications Specialist

The base salary for communications specialists was fairly stagnant compared with 2013, with few respondents commanding pay of more than \$100,000. A majority of respondents earned \$30,000-\$69,000 (Fig. 1). When factoring in total compensation, salaries were slightly higher. About 5% of respondents earned \$140,000-\$209,000, the highest total compensation for this group of PR executives (Fig. 2). The good news here was that far more communications specialists received salary increases, with 28% taking home an additional 4%-6% (Fig. 3), up from 10% who did in 2013.

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Specialist

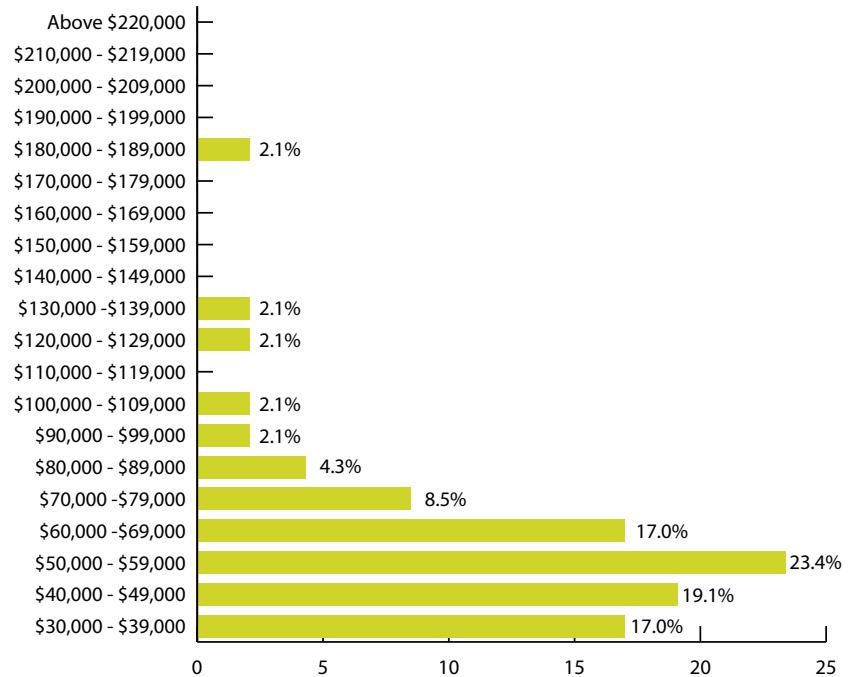


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Specialist

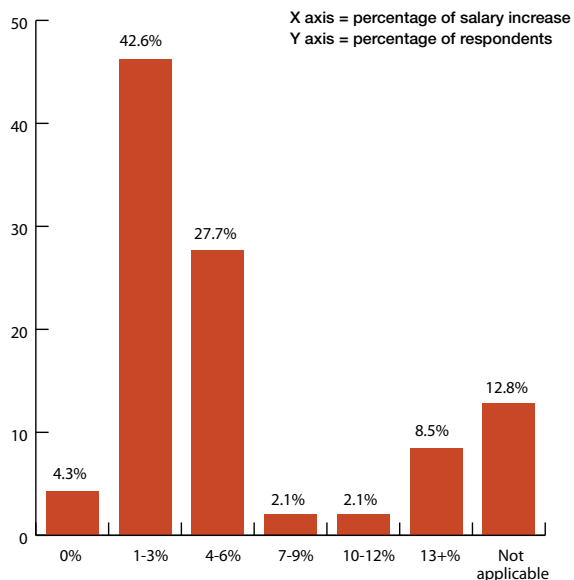
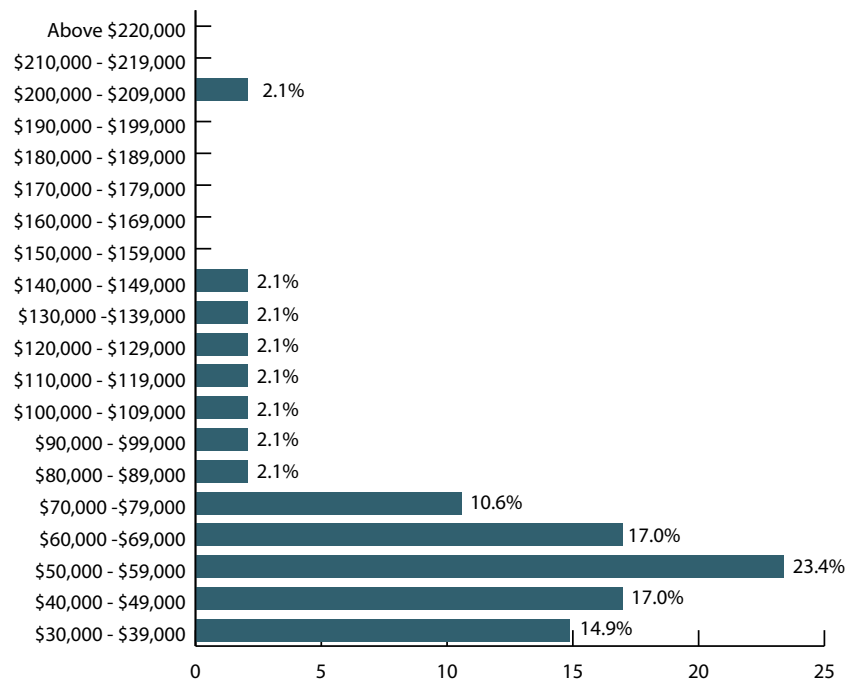


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Specialist



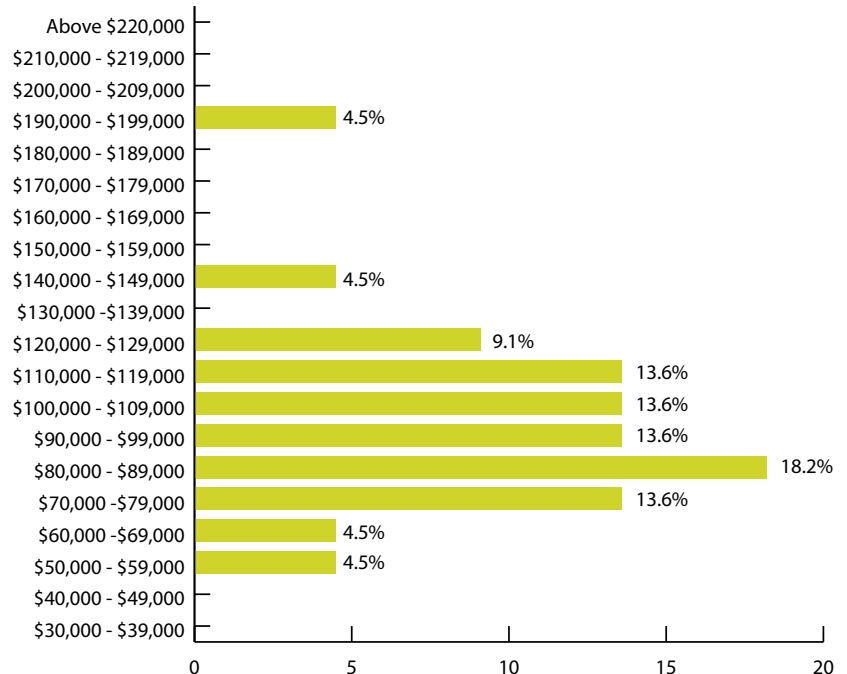
### Corporate

#### Senior Communications Manager

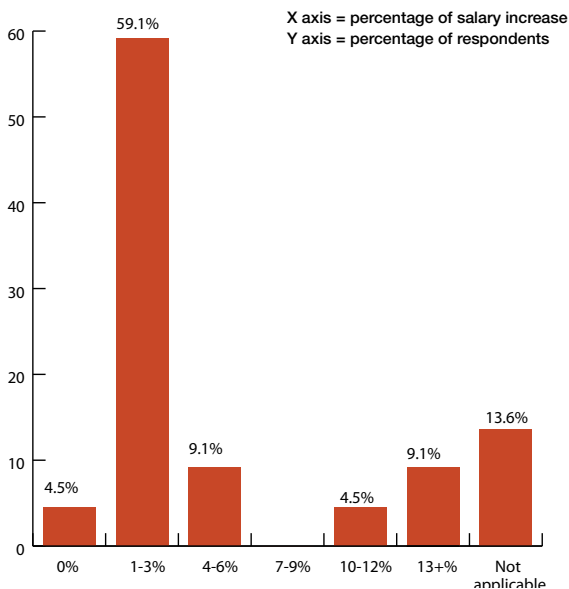
Base salaries were on the upswing for senior communications managers when stacked against 2013. For example, this year nearly 5% of respondents pulled in a base salary of \$190,000-\$199,000, while in 2014 the highest base salary was significantly lower, at \$140,000-\$149,000 (5%) (Fig. 1).

It was a similar outlook for total compensation. This year nearly 5% of senior PR managers garnered total compensation in excess of \$220,000 (Fig. 2); in 2013 the cap on total compensation for most execs was lower, at \$160,000-\$169,000.

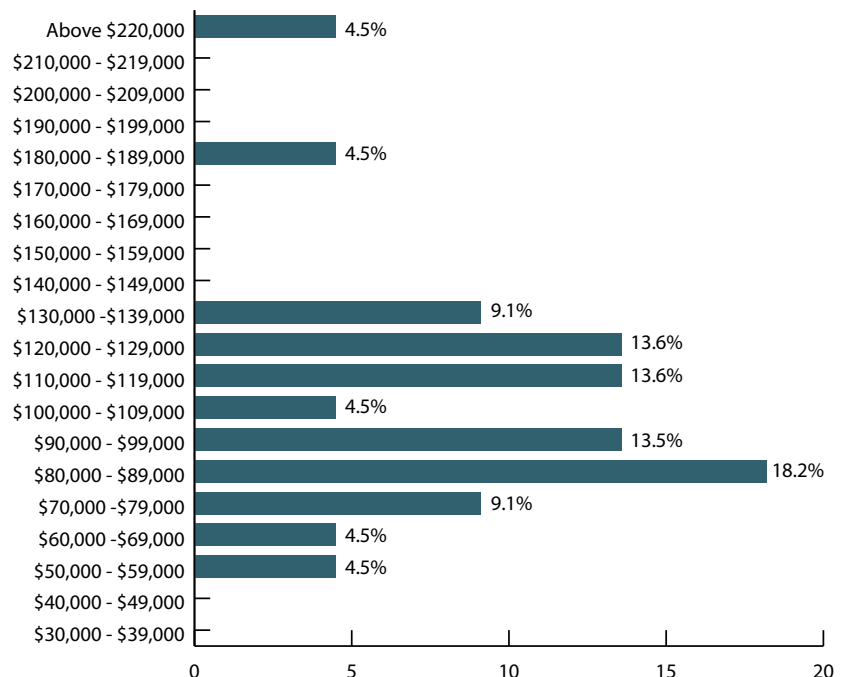
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Senior Communications Manager**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Senior Communications Manager**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Senior Communications Manager**



## Corporate

## Marketing Communications Director

Similar to trend lines for senior PR managers, base salaries are falling for marketing communications directors. In 2013, roughly 20% of directors earned a base salary of \$120,000-\$179,000. But in 2014 the highest base salary was \$150,000-\$159,000 (just 2%) (Fig. 1).

Total comp was fairly steady compared with 2013, with roughly half of respondents earning a total package of \$30,000-\$89,000 (Fig. 2).

A majority of execs in this group received a salary boost in 2014 (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Marketing Communications Director

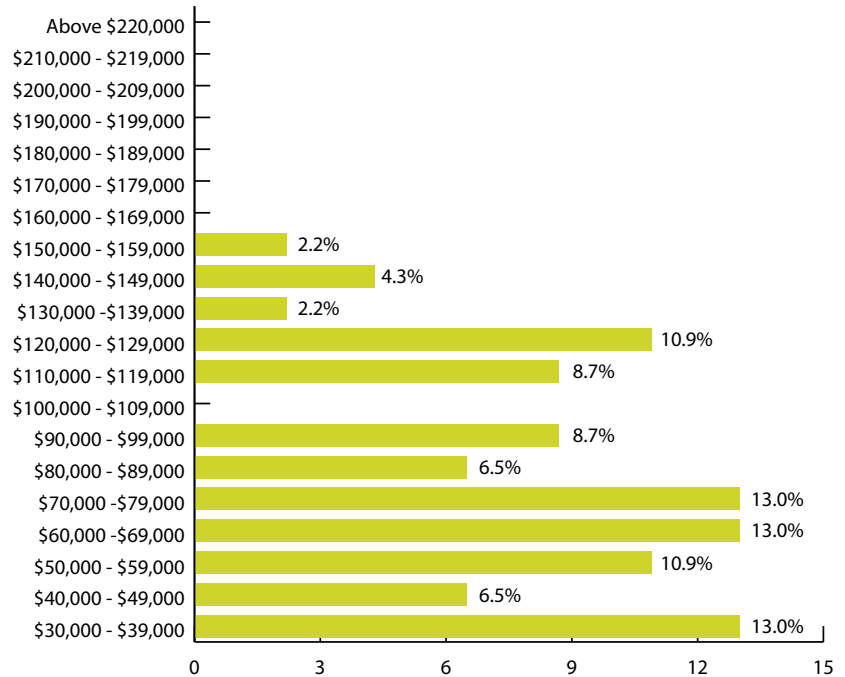


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Marketing Communications Director

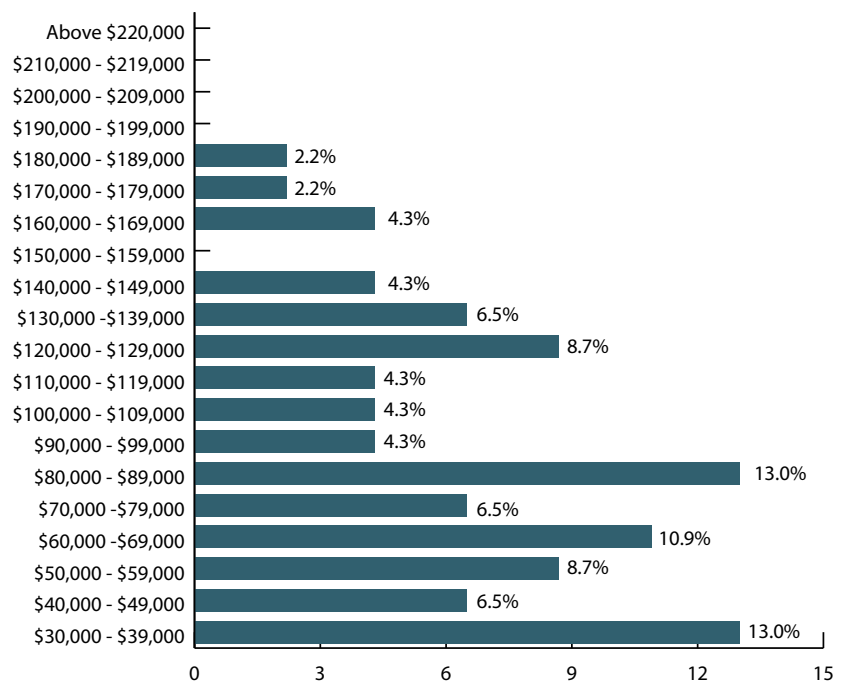
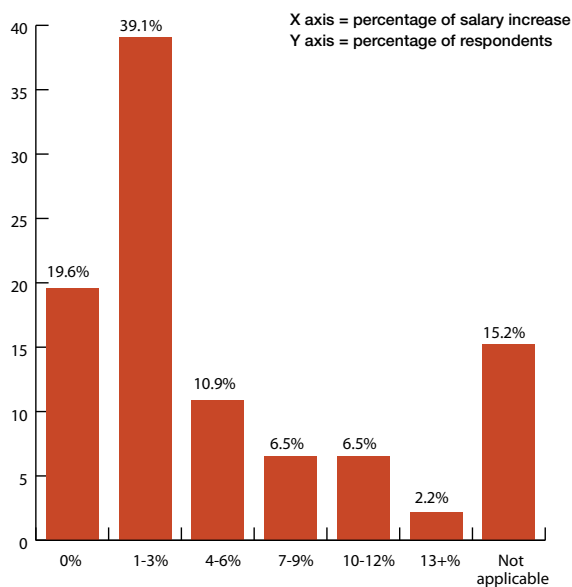


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Marketing Communications Director



### Corporate

#### VP Communications

The VP title is generating higher base salaries in PR precincts. While the percentage of execs earning more than \$220,000 fell to 3% in 2014, from 16% in 2013, there was a larger percentage of VPs bringing in higher wages. For instance, the percentage of VPs who earned \$200,000-\$209,000 more than doubled, to 10%, and nearly 14% of VPs earned \$170,000-\$179,000, up from 8% in 2013 (Fig. 1).

Total comp grew at the high end of the salary range (\$180,000 or greater), while about one-third of respondents earned \$220,000 or more (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — VP Communications

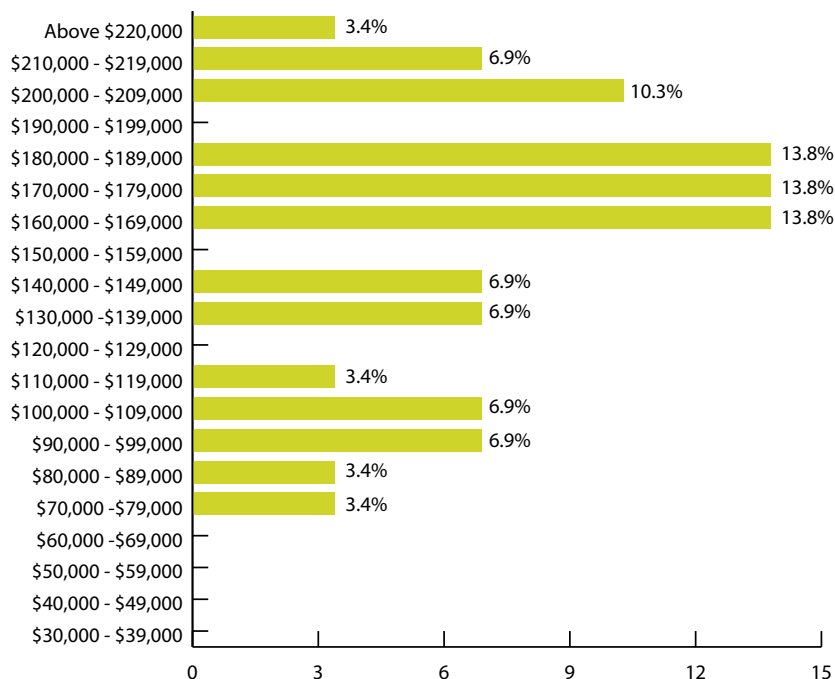


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — VP Communications

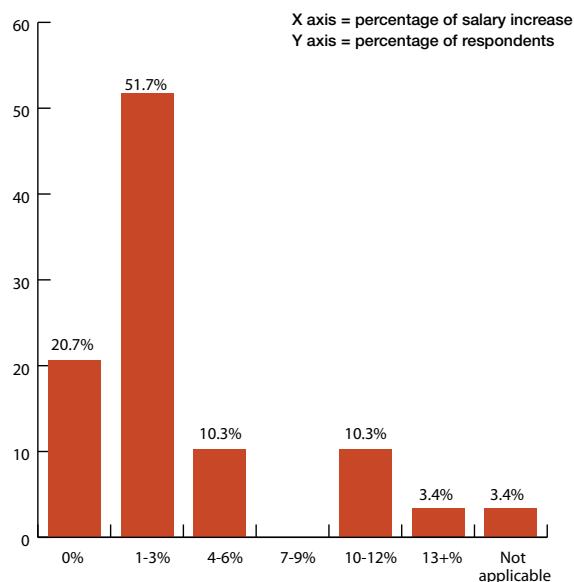
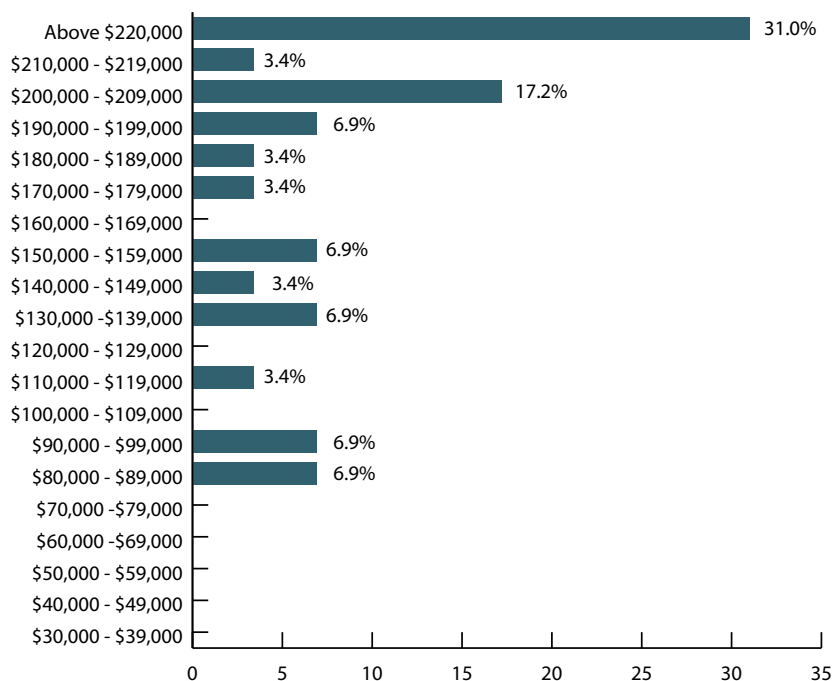


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — VP Communications



## Corporate

## Public Affairs Manager/Director

Most public affairs managers/directors earned \$30,000 at the low end and \$109,000 at the top end, similar to the results from the 2013 salary survey (Fig. 1).

Total compensation grew across the board. Some 10% of execs earned \$220,00 or more, compared with 0% in 2014, the largest salary in this category. At the opposite end, the number earning total comp of \$30,000-\$39,000 grew to 20% this year, from 7% in 2013 (Fig. 2).

More than half the respondents received salary increases of 1%-3%, while 10% were not eligible (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Public Affairs Manager/Director

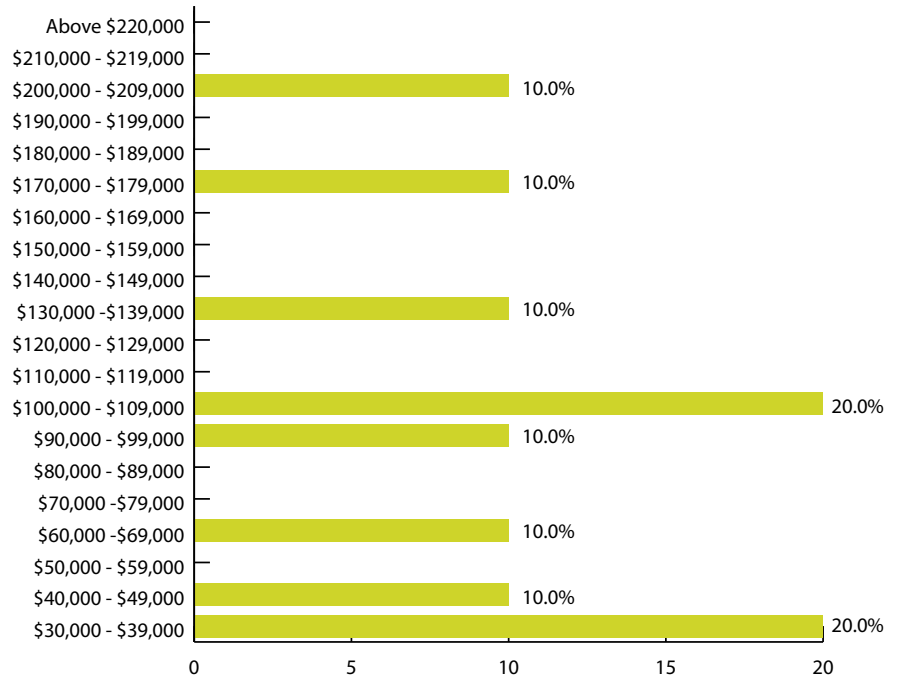


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Public Affairs Manager/Director

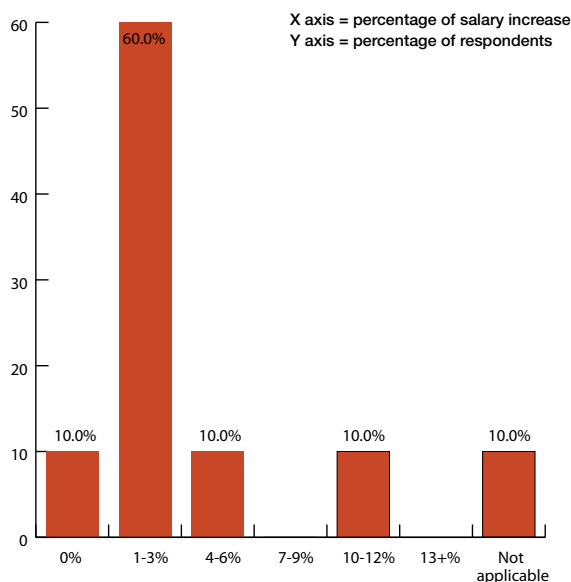
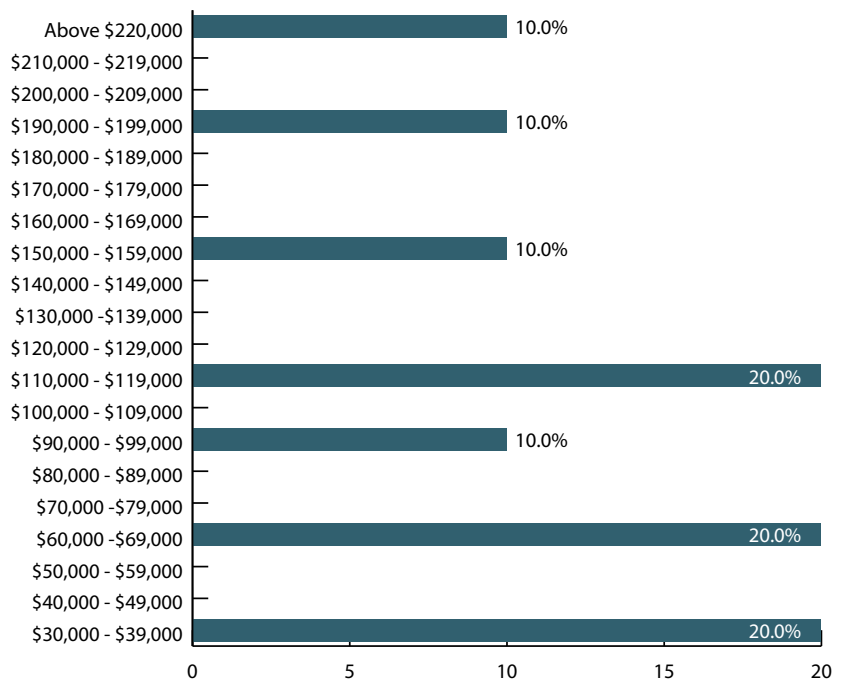


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Public Affairs Manager/Director



# Findings by Position: Nonprofit/Association/NGO

## Chief Communications Officer

There was a wide range of salaries and total compensation for CCOs in these areas. About 30% of PR execs working in this area earned a base salary of \$30,000-\$69,000. Another 35% of respondents earned \$90,000-\$129,000 (Fig. 1).

There were percentage declines for a wide range of salaries, however.

In 2014, for example, some 9% of CCOs working for nonprofits/associations or NGOs earned \$100,000-\$109,000, compared with nearly 27% in 2013.

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Chief Communications Officer

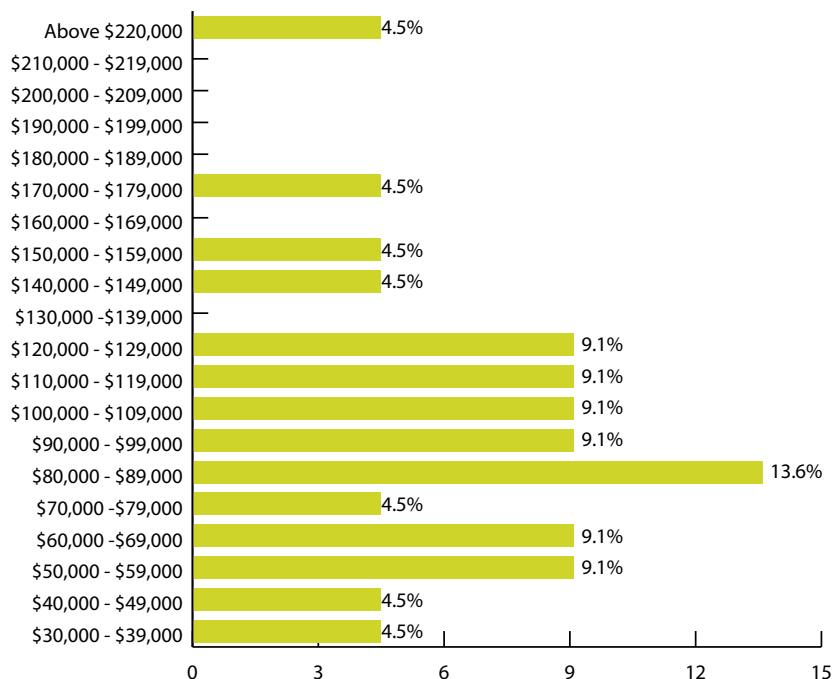


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Chief Communications Officer

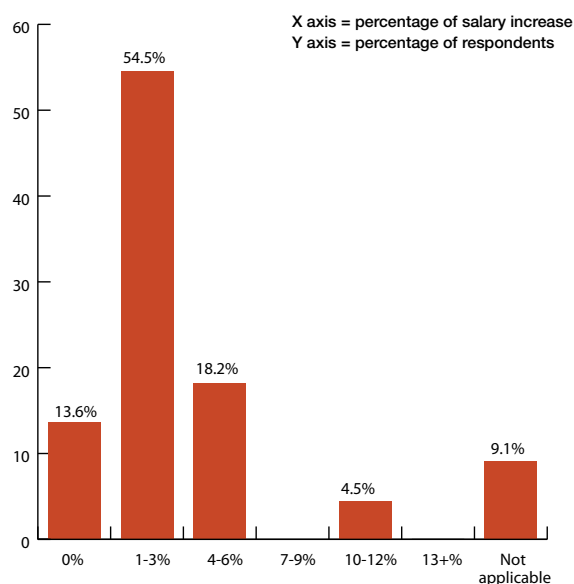
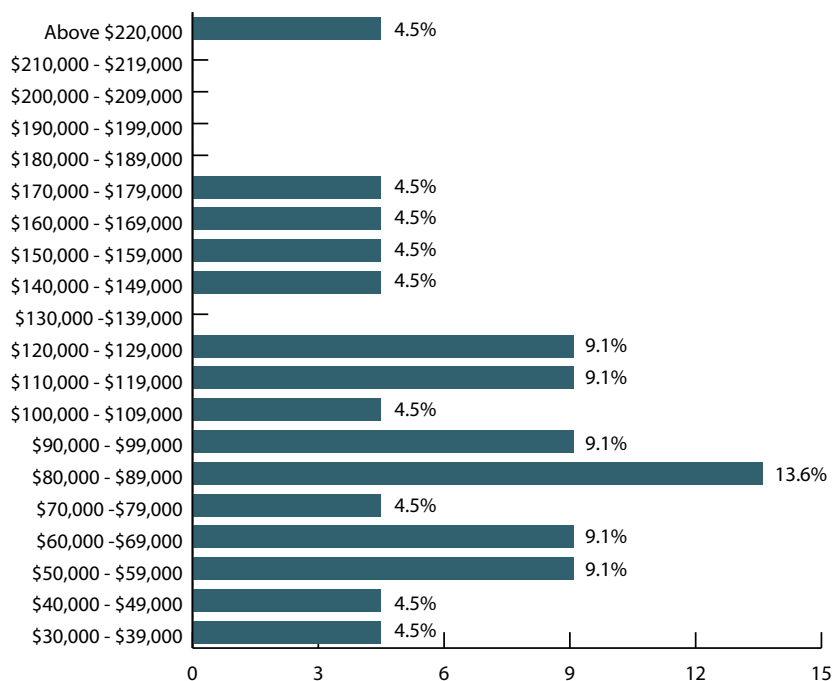


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Chief Communications Officer



## Nonprofit/Association/NGO

## Marketing Communications Director

Most marketing communications directors are facing a Catch-22 salary-wise. For nearly half of the PR execs in this group, the base salary remains in the \$50,000-\$79,000 range, compared to the numbers from 2013. Just 2% earned \$150,000-\$159,000, the highest salary in this category (Fig. 1).

Unlike many other PR positions, most marketing communications directors earned a salary increase in 2014, with 65% of respondents getting a jump of 1%-6% (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary —  
Marketing Communications Director

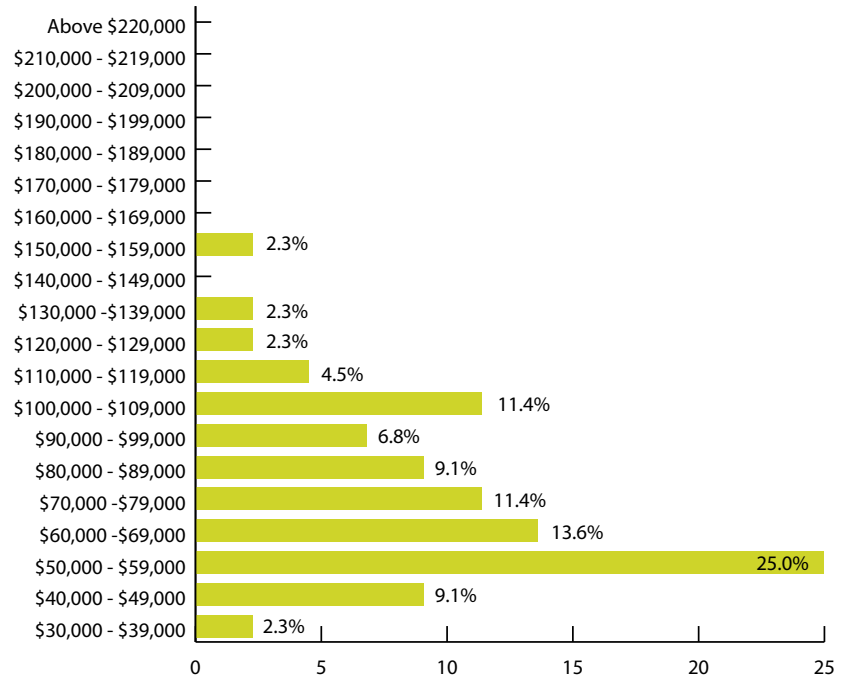


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase —  
Marketing Communications Director

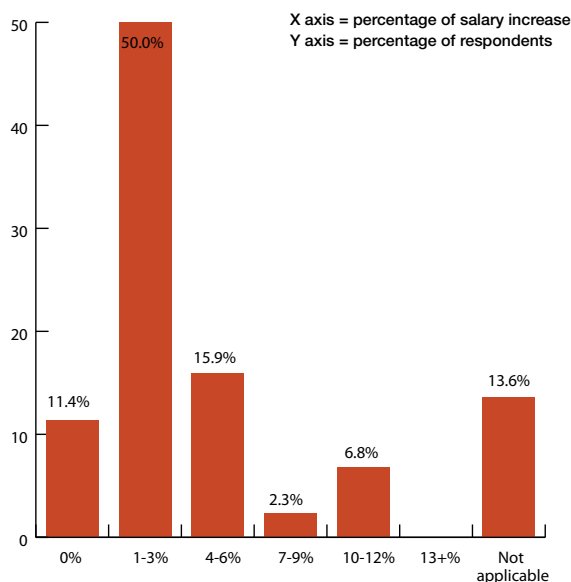
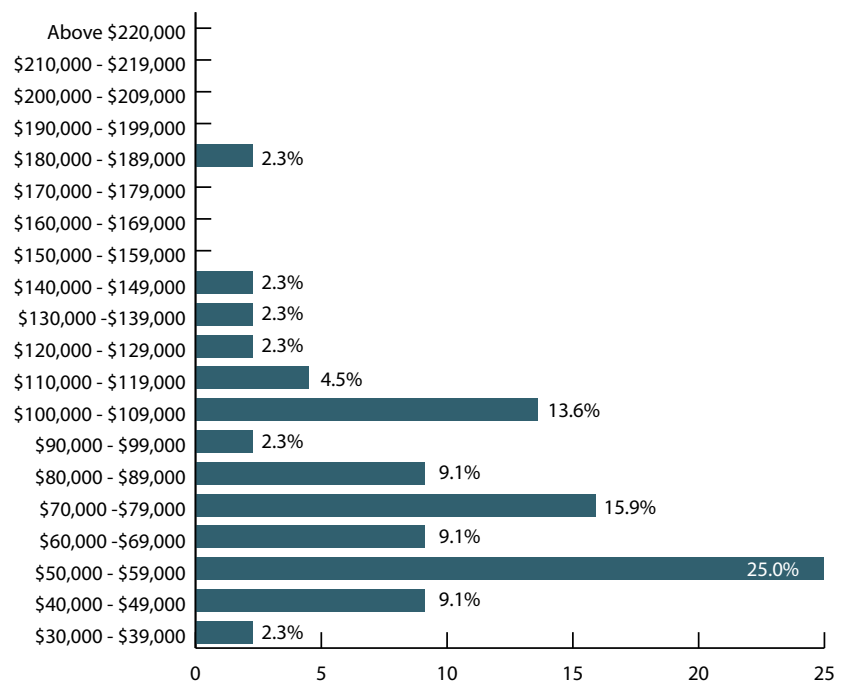


Fig. 2: Total Compensation —  
Marketing Communications Director





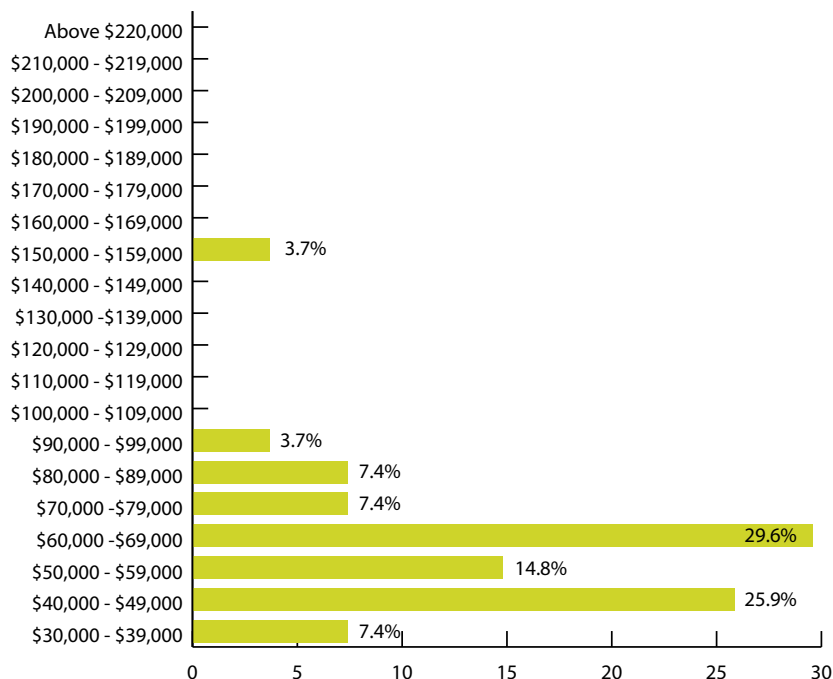
### Nonprofit/Association/NGO

#### Communications Manager

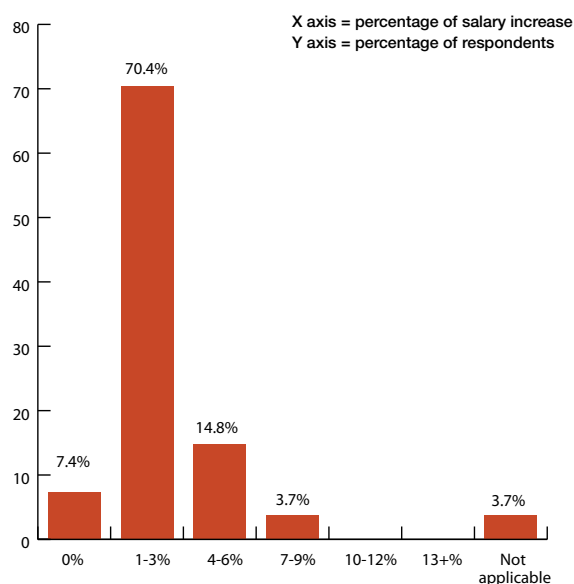
Many PR managers in the nonprofit/association/NGO arena earned higher incomes this year. Nearly 30% of respondents earned a base salary between \$60,000 and \$69,000 (Fig. 1), compared with 25% in 2013. At the higher end of the spectrum, nearly 4% of PR managers earned a base salary between \$150,000 and \$159,000, compared with 3% in 2013.

Total compensation for most PR managers in this group hovered in the \$40,000-\$69,000 range. About 4% of respondents earned between \$150,000 and \$159,000 (Fig. 2).

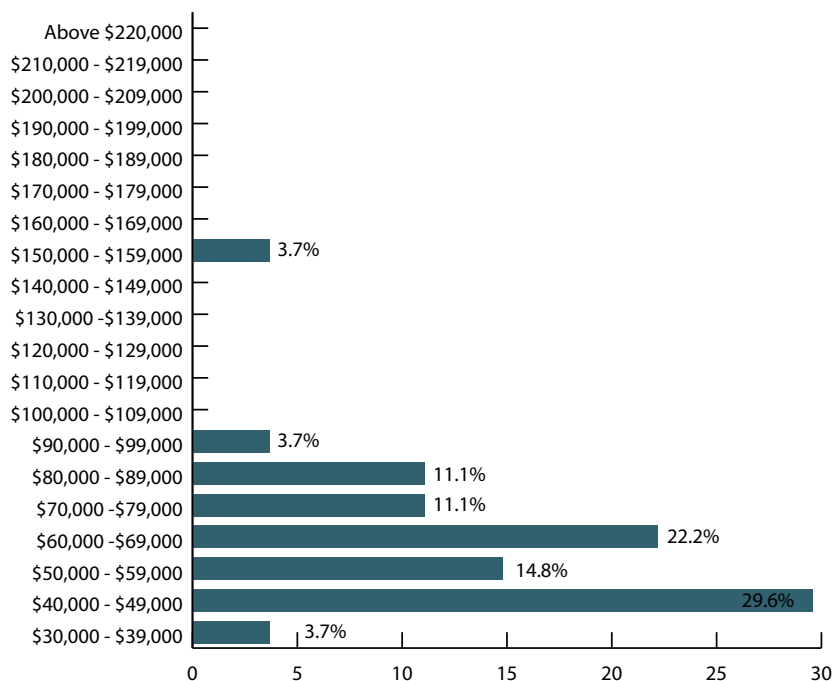
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Manager**



## Nonprofit/Association/NGO

## Communications Specialist

The salary range for communications specialists remained concentrated in the \$30,000-\$69,000 range (Fig. 1), compared with 2013. About one-quarter of respondents earned \$40,000-\$49,000, compared with 13% in 2013. One of the biggest changes was on the low end of the salary scale: 7% of respondents earned a base salary of \$30,000-\$39,000 in 2014, compared with 43% of respondents in 2013.

It was a similar dynamic when factoring total compensation (Fig. 2). About half the respondents earned total comp of \$40,000-\$69,000.

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Specialist

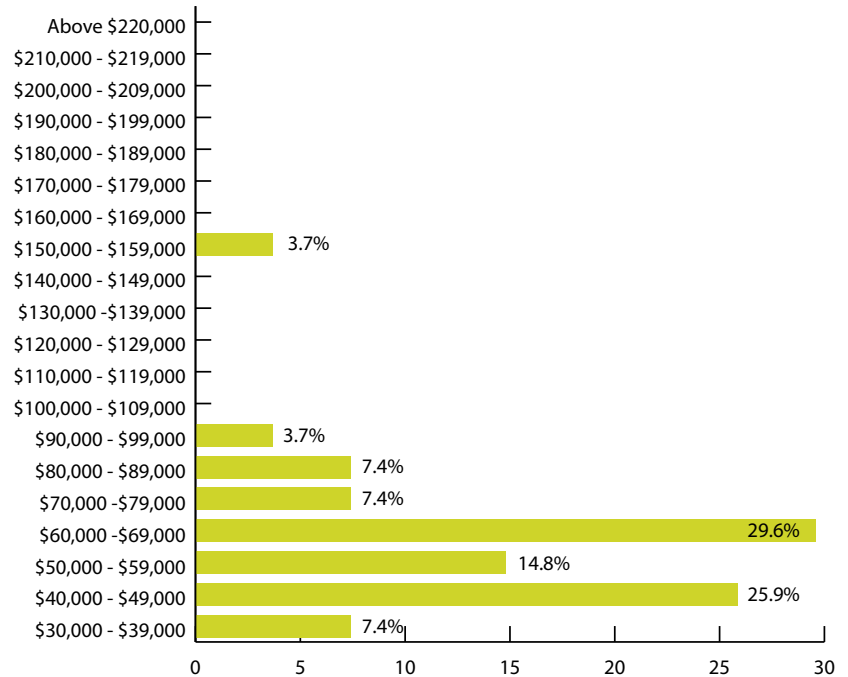


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Specialist

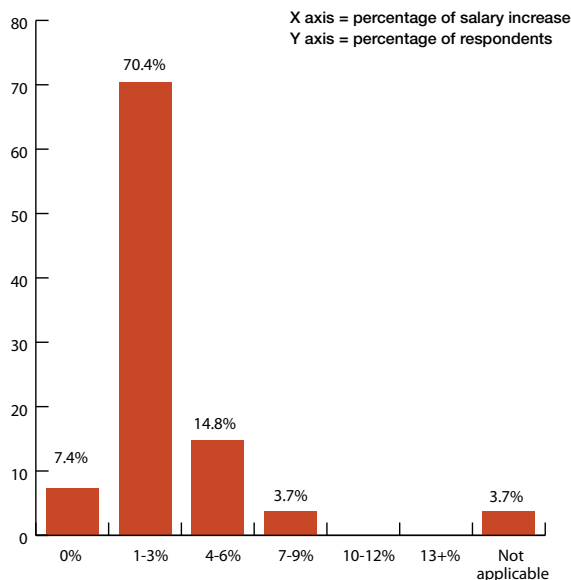
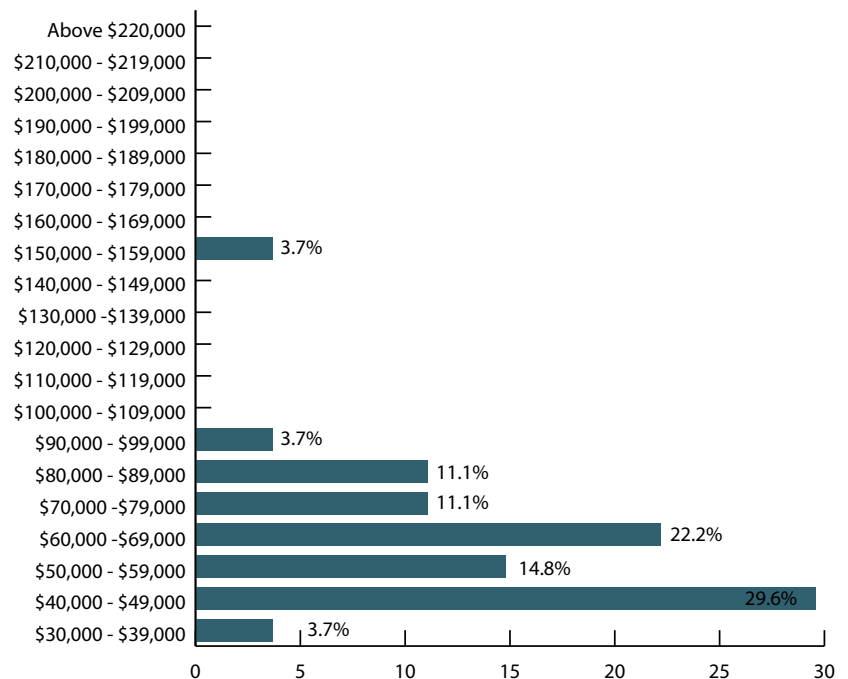


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Specialist



# Findings by Position: Government

## Chief Communications Officer

For CCOs working in government, base salary is on a serious upswing. In 2014, 21% of respondents earned a salary \$130,000-\$139,000 (Fig. 1), compared with 5% in 2013. A higher percentage of CCOs also are earning a higher base salary: About 40% of respondents earned \$140,000-\$209,000, the highest salary, in 2014. That's a boost from 2013, when 40% of respondents earned \$100,000-\$169,000.

Nearly 30% of respondents received a salary increase of 4%-6% and 10%-12%, respectively (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Chief Communications Officer

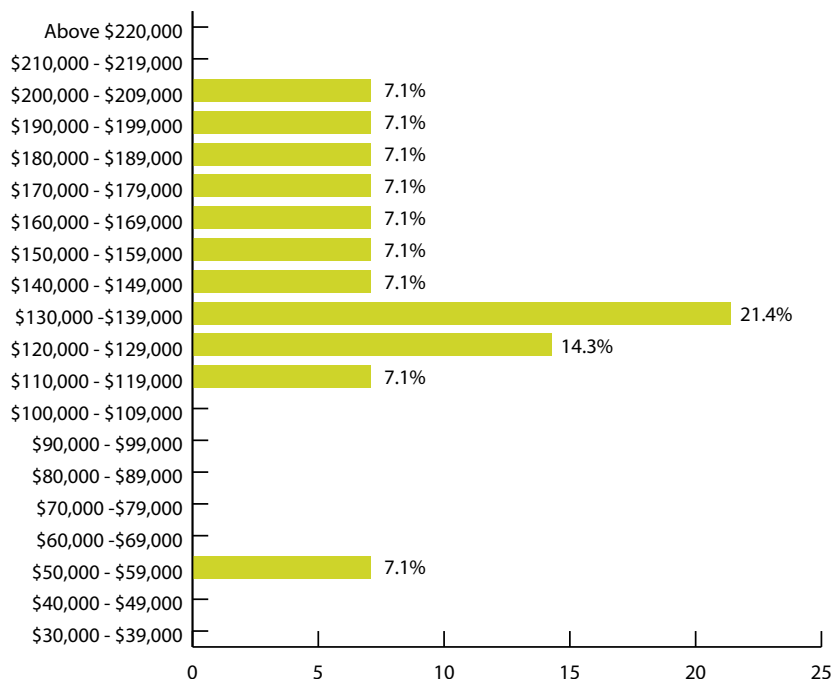


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Chief Communications Officer

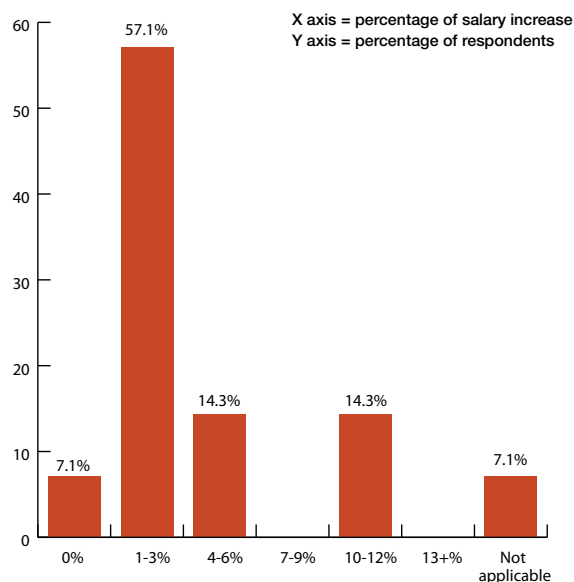
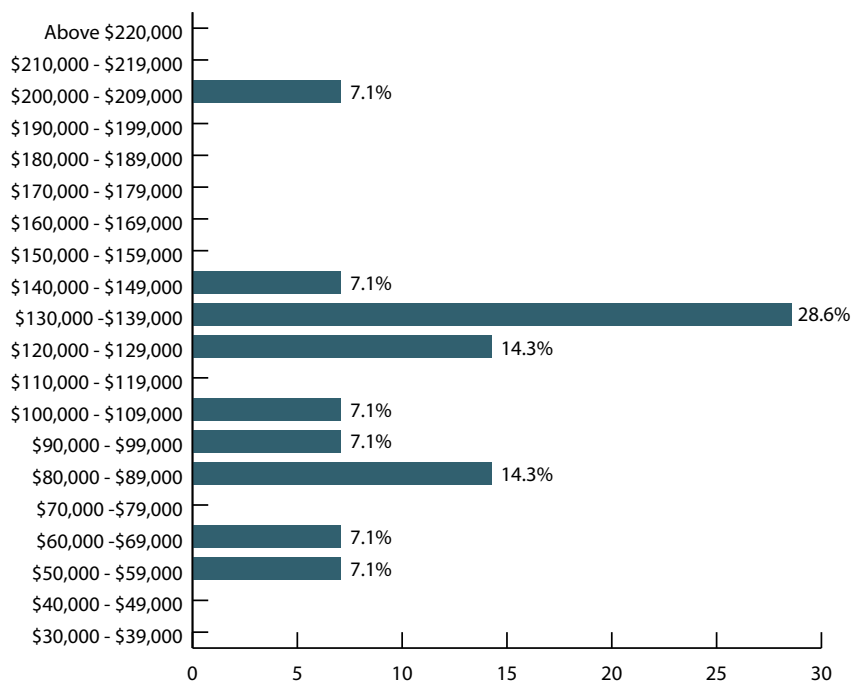


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Chief Communications Officer



## Government

### Communications Director

The base salaries for communication directors working in government also experienced some growth, but only in certain pockets. For instance, in 2014 one-quarter of respondents had a base salary between \$90,000 and \$99,000 (Fig. 1), up from 12% in 2013. Most PR execs working in this area earned \$60,000-\$129,000.

It was a slightly different pattern when factoring in total compensation (Fig. 2), with about 25% of respondents earning \$50,000-\$89,000 and 20% of earning between \$110,000 and \$139,000.

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Director

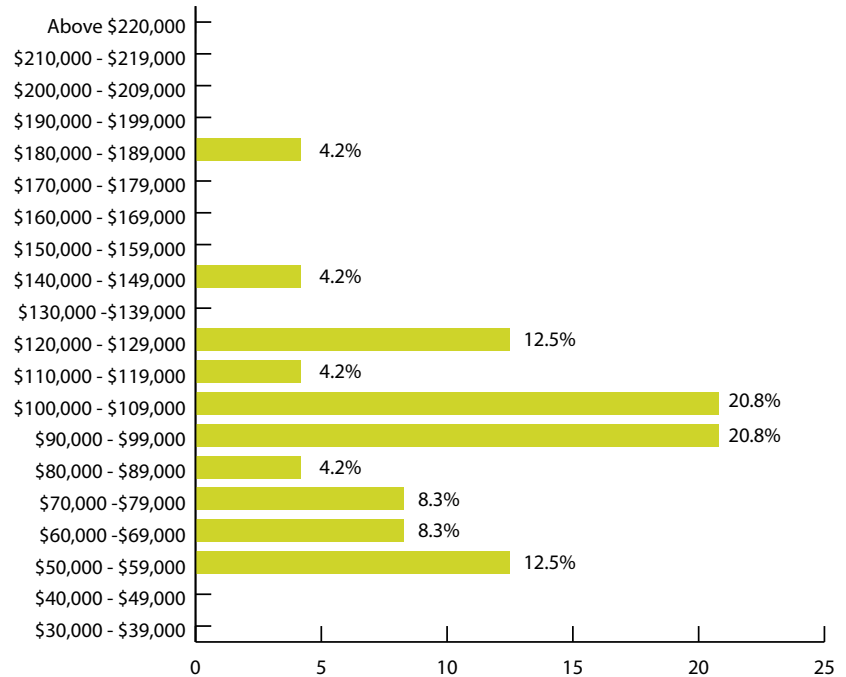


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Director

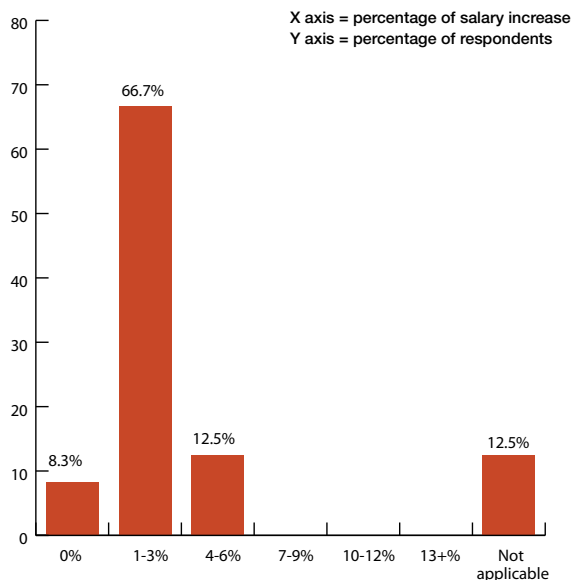
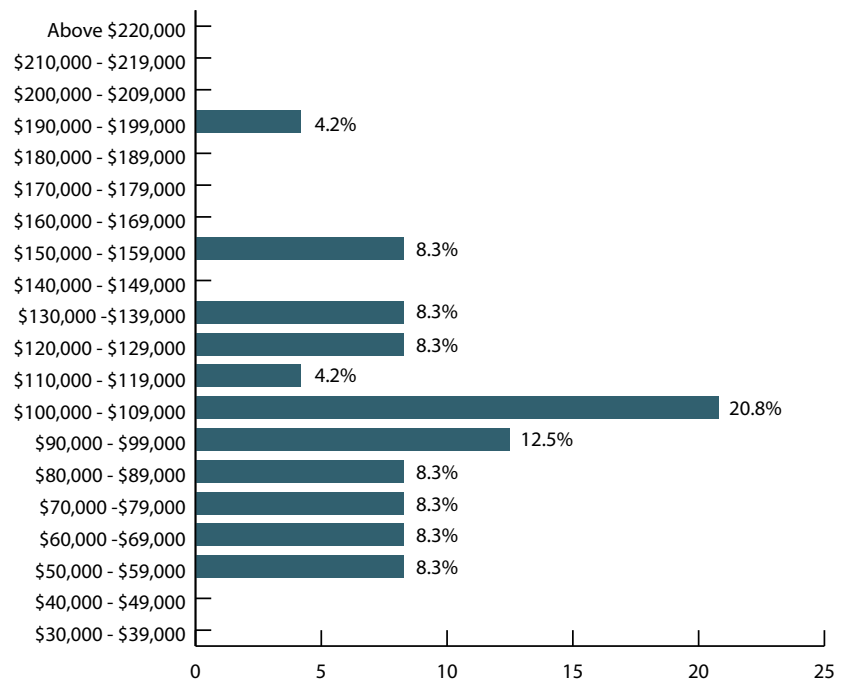


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Director



### Government

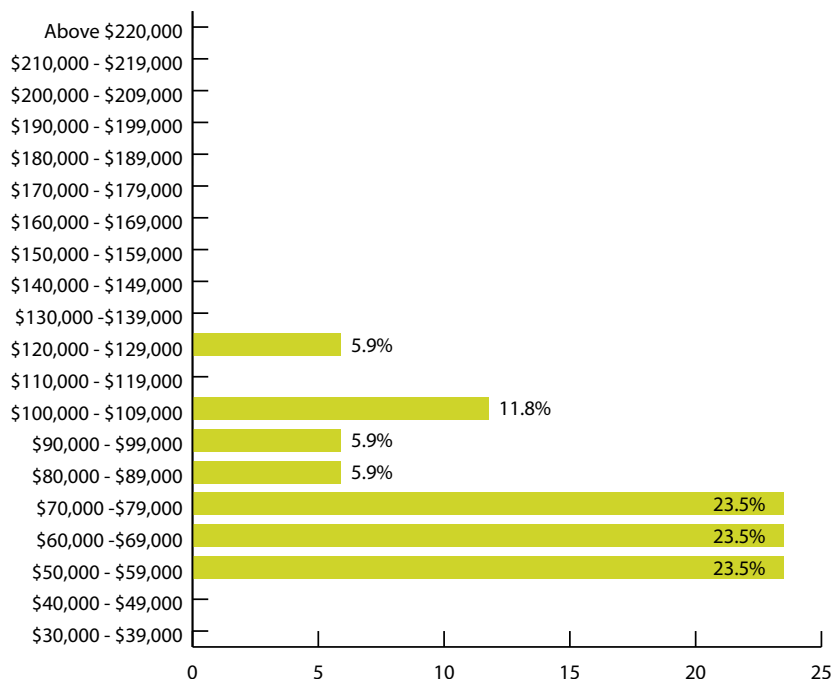
#### Marketing Communications Director

In contrast to communications directors—whose base salaries were more widely distributed—the base salaries for marketing communications directors working in government were fairly concentrated. More than two-thirds of respondents earned \$50,000-\$79,000 (Fig. 1).

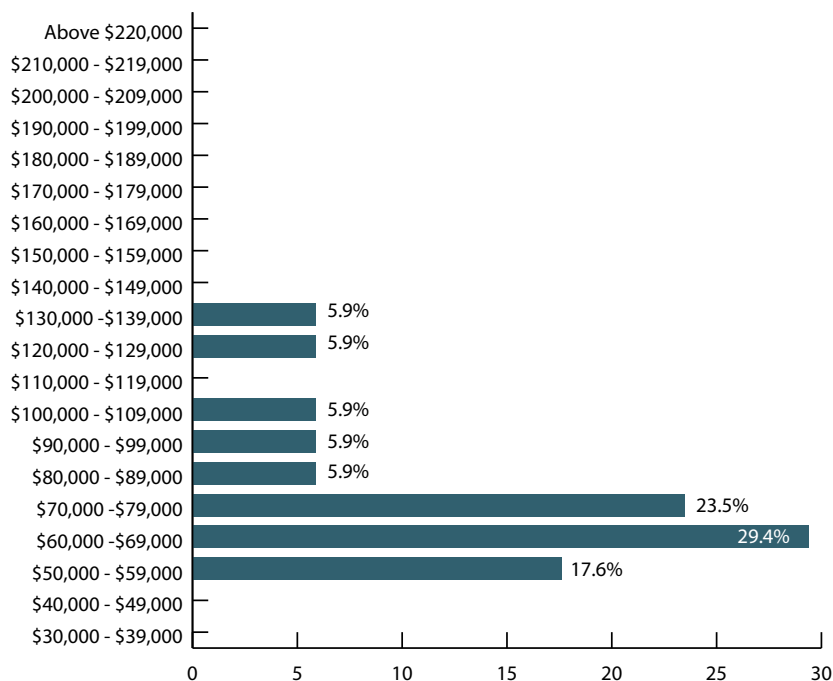
It's a similar picture when factoring in total compensation, with nearly 30% of respondents earning \$60,000-\$69,000 (Fig. 2).

And while nearly two-thirds of the respondents enjoyed a salary increase, the rise was just 1%-3%. (Fig. 3).

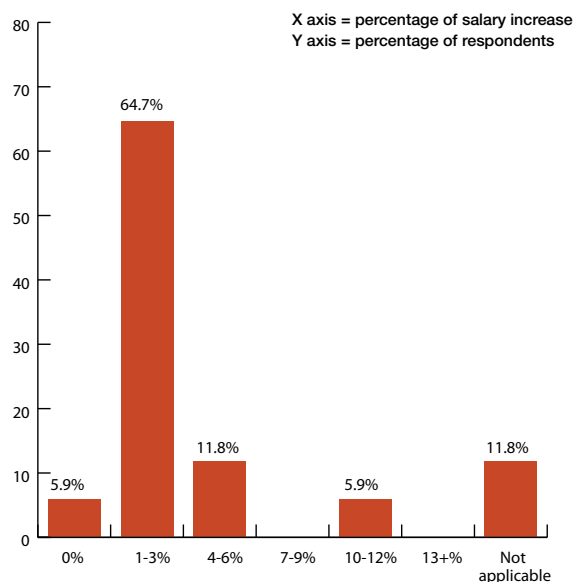
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Marketing Communications Director**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Marketing Communications Director**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Marketing Communications Director**



## Government

## Public Affairs Manager/Director

The base salaries for public affairs managers and directors fell last year. In 2014, nearly half the respondents pulled in base salaries of \$60,000-\$99,000, down from 65% in 2013 (Fig. 1). The salary rates skewed a bit higher when factoring in total compensation, but, overall, those rates were a mixed bag when stacked against the salary rates in 2013.

For instance, in 2014 about 23% of respondents pulled in \$90,000-\$99,000, up from 20% in 2013. Ten percent of respondents earned total comp of \$60,000-\$79,000, down 25% in 2013 (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Public Affairs Manager/Director

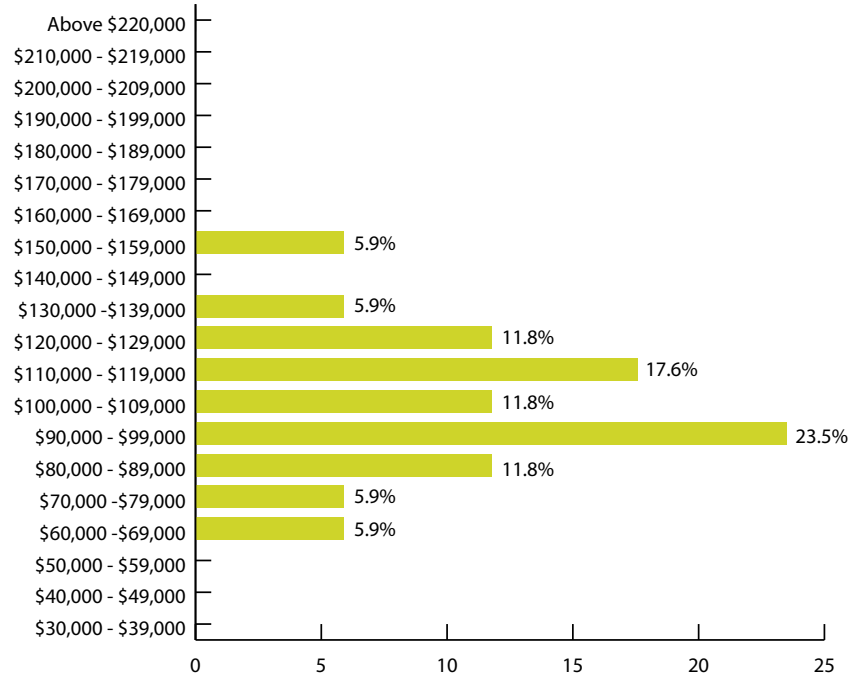


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Public Affairs Manager/Director

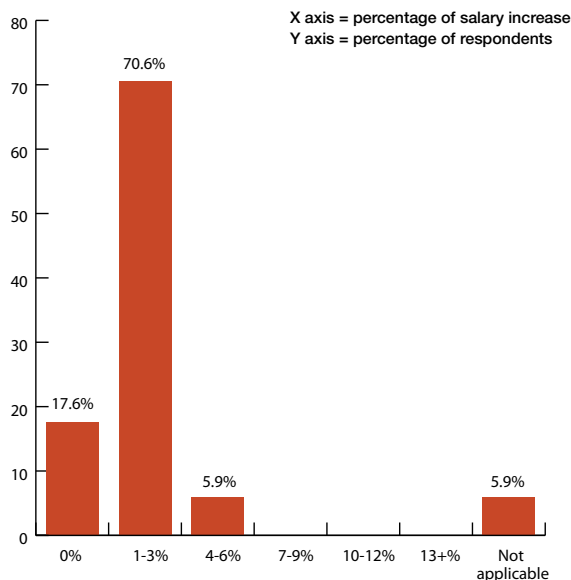
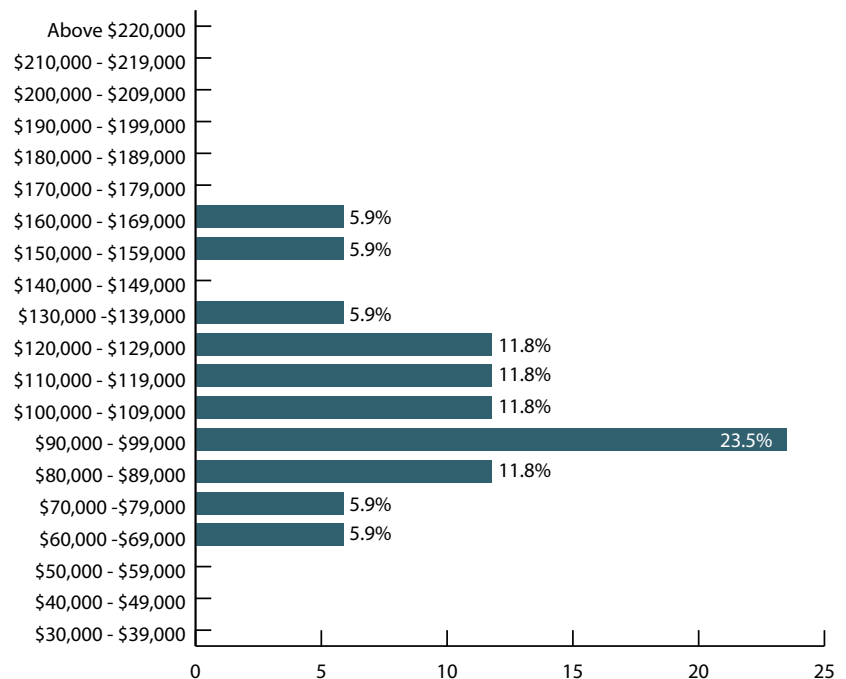


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Public Affairs Manager/Director



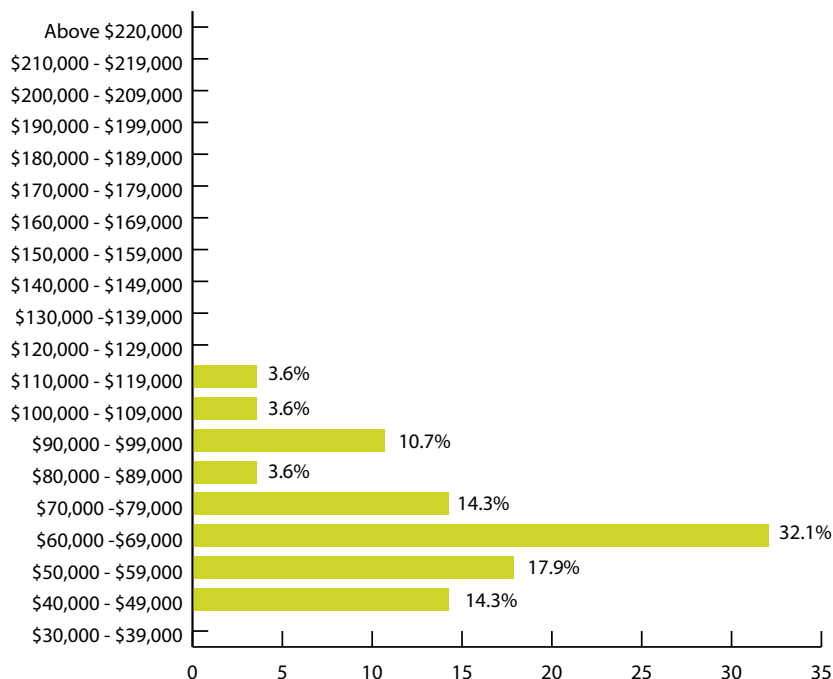
## Government

### Communications Manager

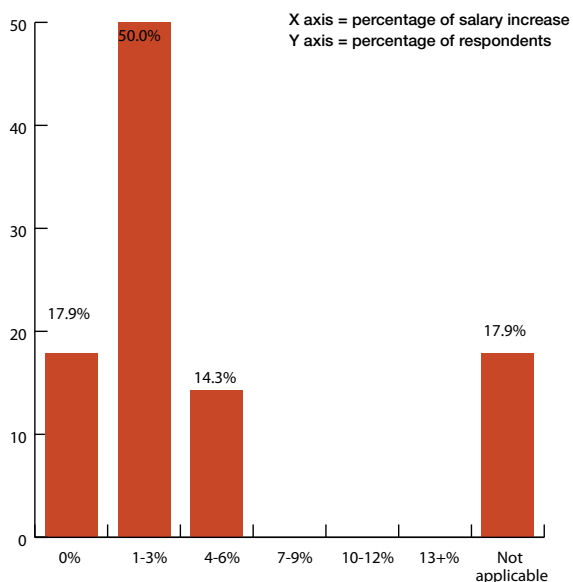
For communications managers in government, base salaries in 2014 were concentrated in the \$40,000-\$69,000 range (Fig. 1). The rates, however, are on a downward trend. In 2013, the highest rates for PR execs in this group were \$150,000-\$159,000 (11%). But, in 2014, the highest rates were \$110,000-\$119,000, with only 3% of PR execs pulling in such salaries.

Things weren't much better when accounting for total comp. In 2014, the highest rate was \$139,000 (Fig. 2), down from \$179,000 in 2013.

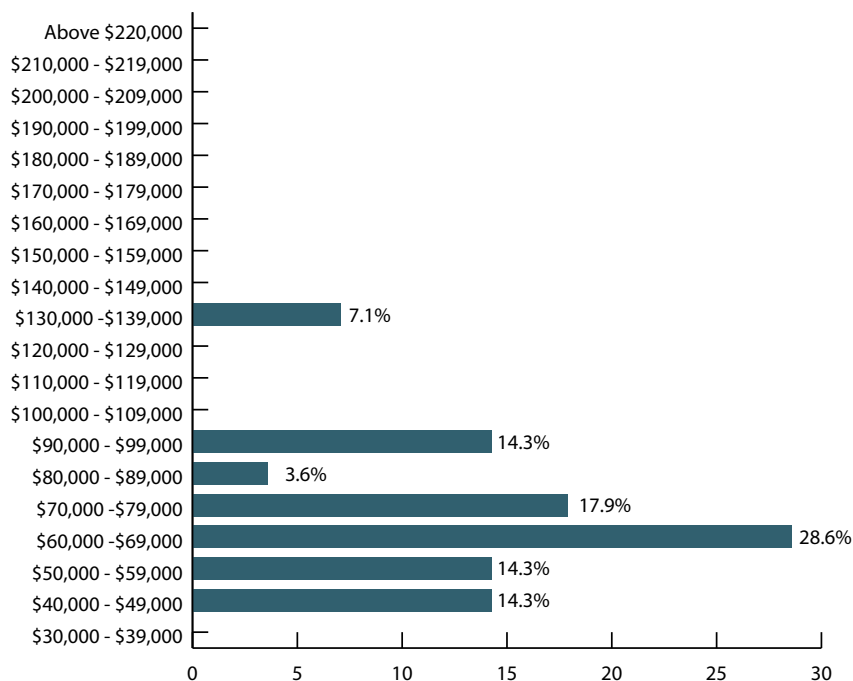
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Manager**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Manager**



## Government

## Communications Specialist

Communications specialists working in government didn't fare much better than their PR colleagues. About 46% of respondents in 2014 earned a base salary of \$30,000-\$49,000 (Fig. 1), down from roughly 38% in 2013.

The year also saw fewer PR execs earning the top salary rates: In 2014, just 3% of respondents pulled in \$100,000-\$109,000. In 2013, nearly 8% commanded those dollar amounts.

Nearly one-third of these PR execs received no increase and about one-quarter of them weren't even eligible (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Communications Specialist

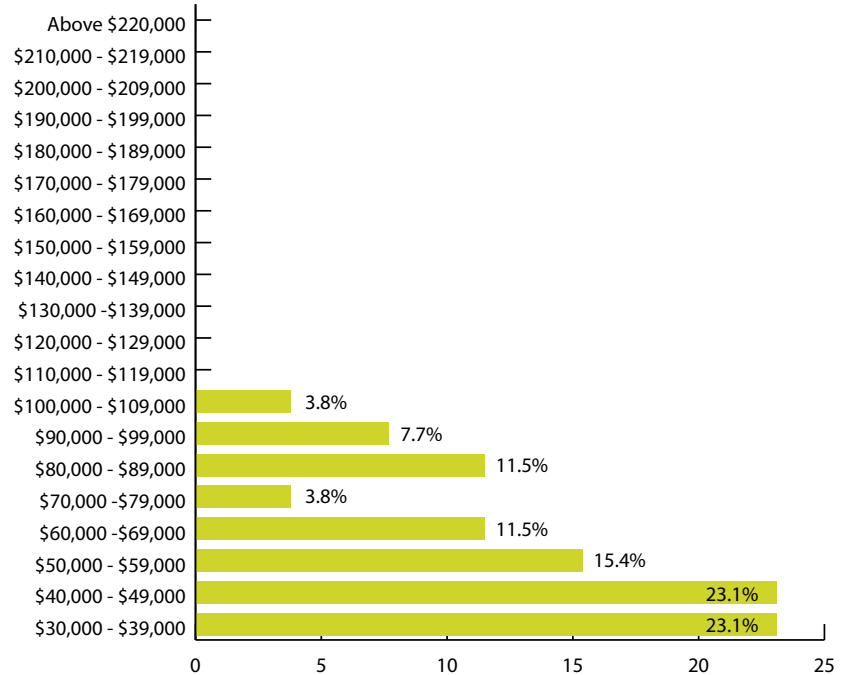


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Communications Specialist

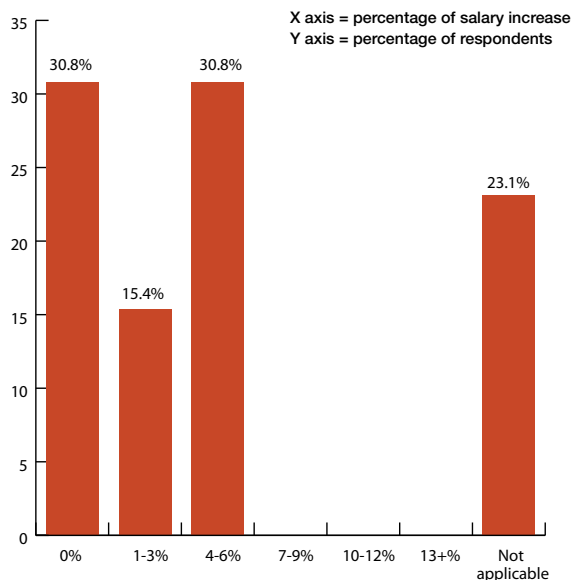
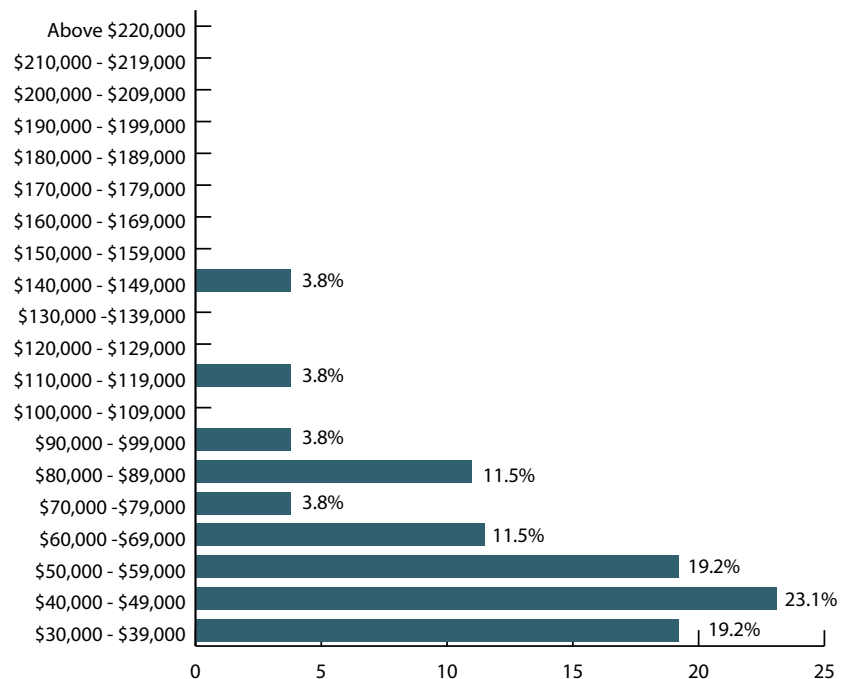


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Communications Specialist





# Findings by Position: Agency

## President/CEO

Base salaries for presidents/CEOs on the agency side were pretty diffuse last year, reflecting a wide array of price points and PR services. About 25% of president/CEOs earned \$100,000-\$129,000 (Fig. 1). The lowest rates were \$30,000-\$39,000 (9%), while the highest was \$220,000 and more (15%). Most salaries for these PR execs were boosted when factoring in total comp. For instance, 9% of respondents earned \$130,000-\$139,000 (Fig. 2), up from 1% in 2013.

Higher salaries came at the expense of few salary increases (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — President/CEO

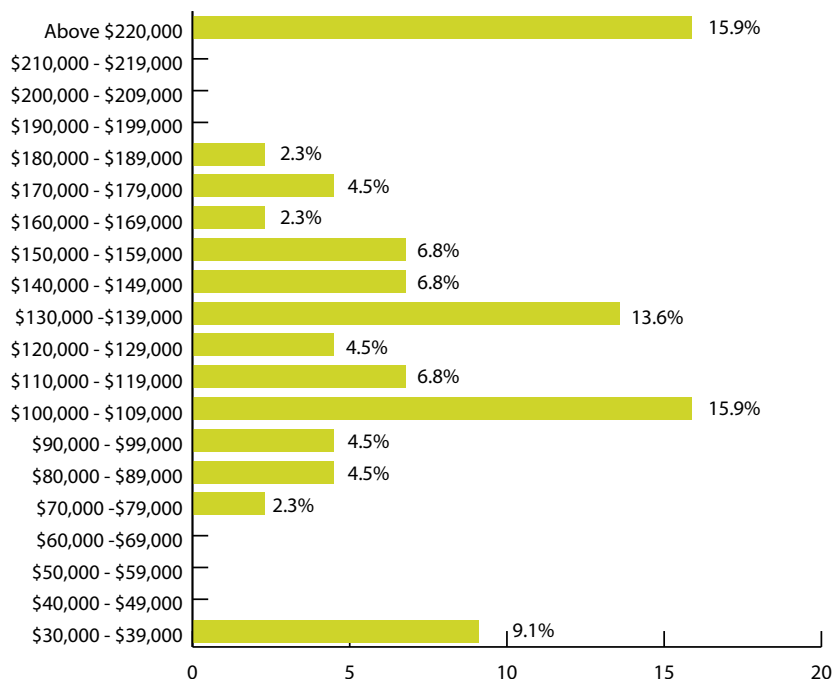


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — President/CEO

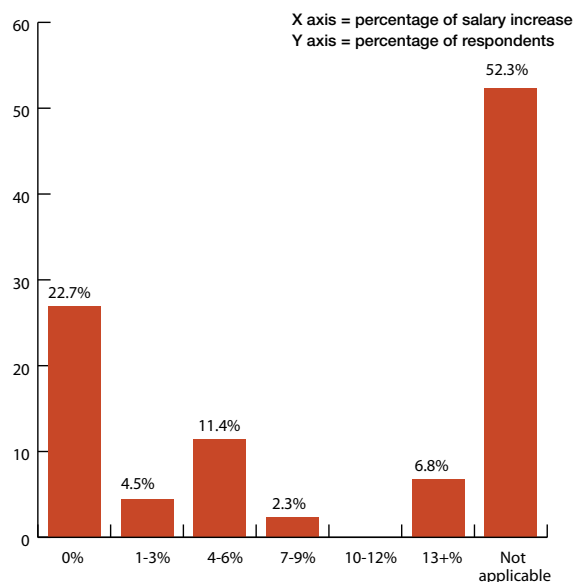
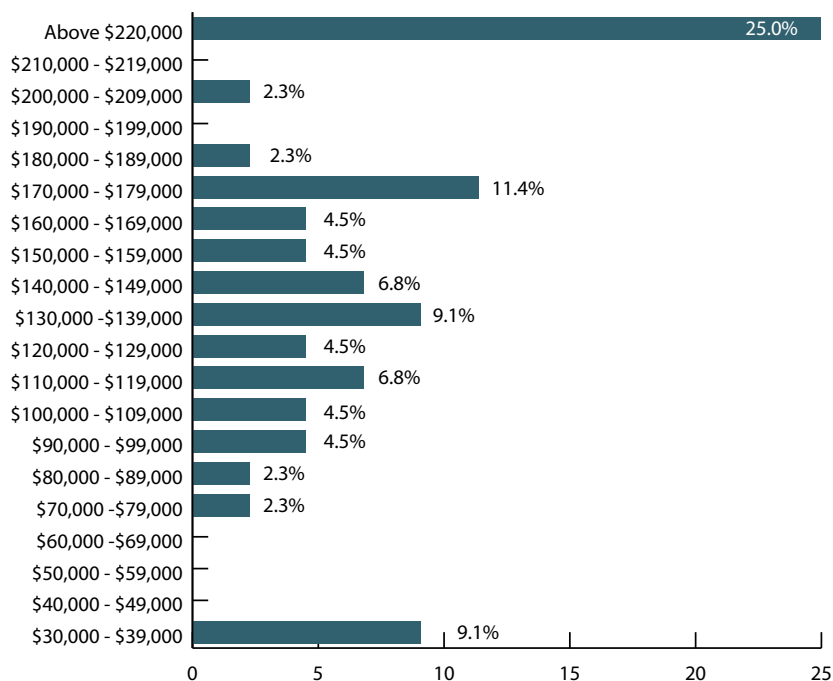


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — President/CEO



## Agency

## Vice President

The VP title remains fairly ubiquitous throughout the PR field, but the base salaries are getting much tighter. To wit, in 2014 a little more than one-fifth of VPs earned \$130,000-\$159,000, the highest rate recorded (Fig. 1). But, in 2013, nearly 7% earned \$200,00-\$209,000 and another 7% earned \$220,000 or more (the highest rate that year).

Consequently, rates have declined for more and more VPs. In 2014, for example, nearly 12% of respondents earned \$40,000-\$49,000, up from 6% in 2013. It was a similar outlook for total compensation (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Vice President

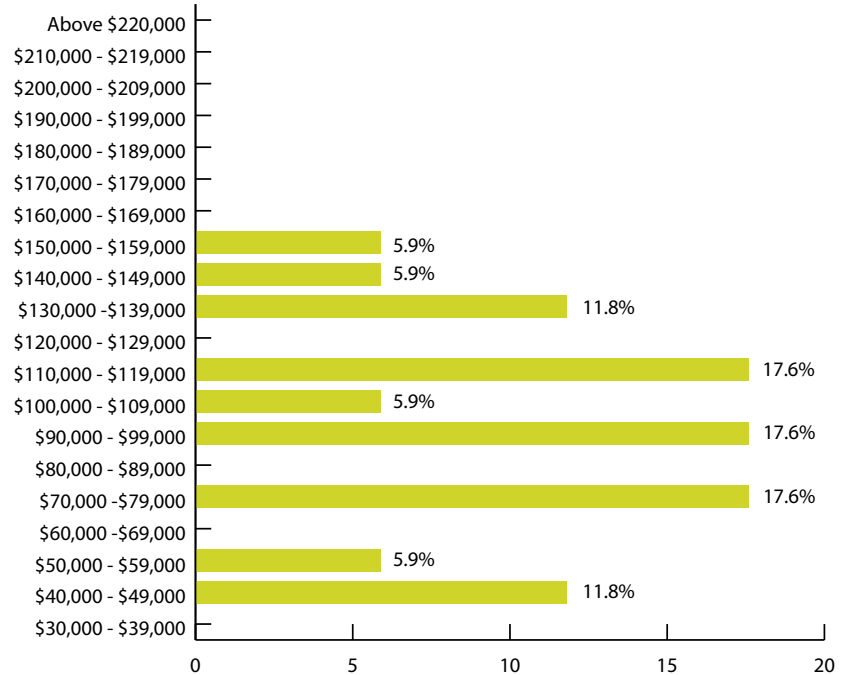


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Vice President

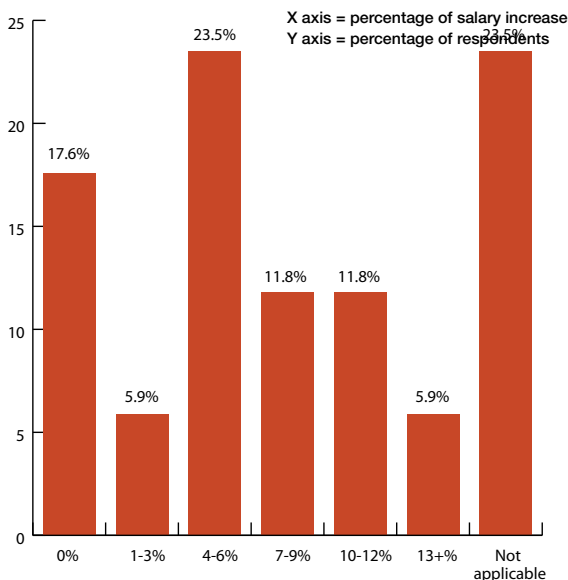
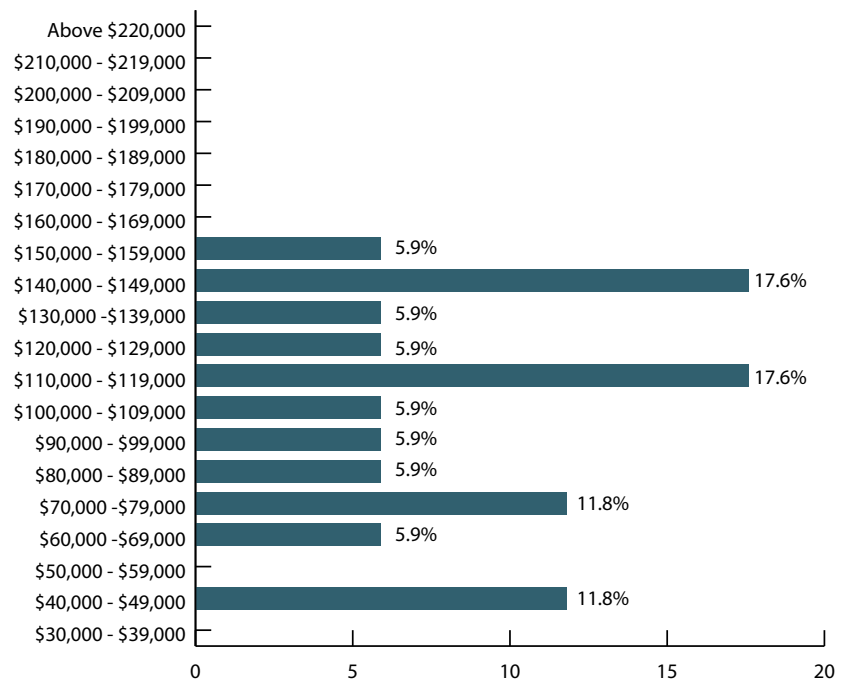


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Vice President



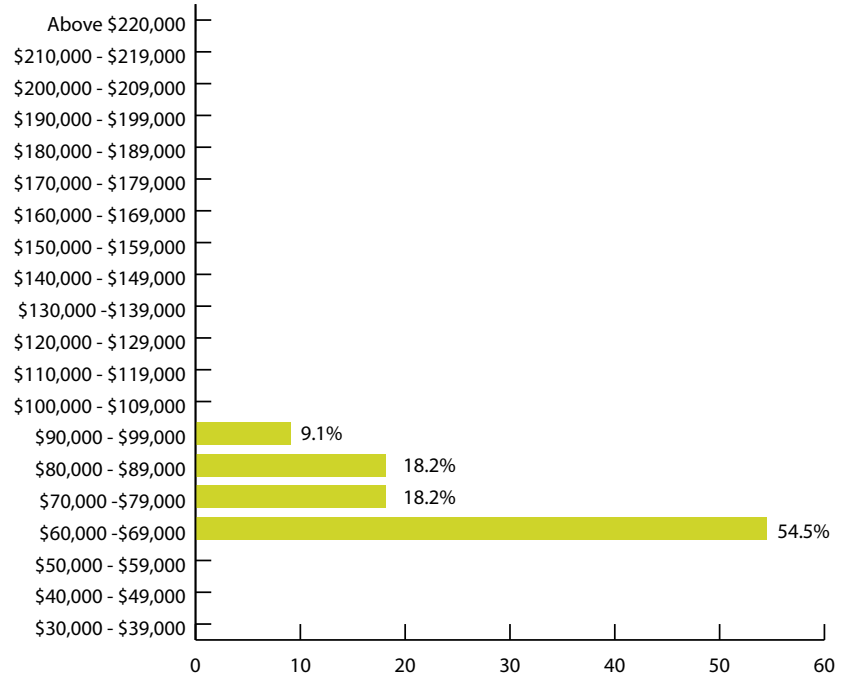
### Agency

#### Account Supervisor

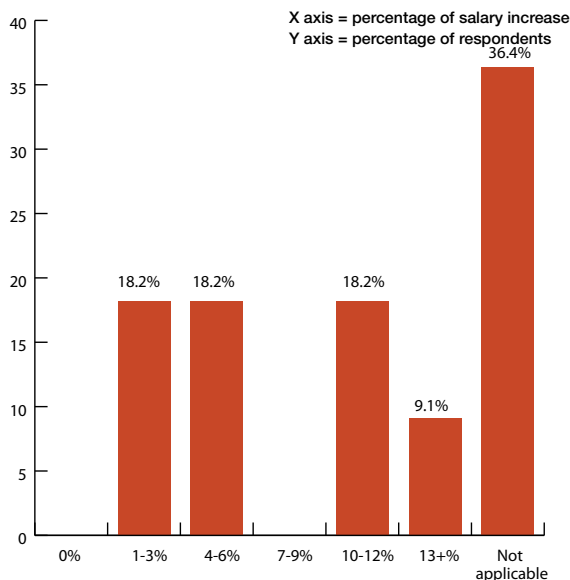
In a reflection of how much more work there is these days in the PR trenches, account supervisors are pulling in higher salaries, according to the survey. For instance, in 2014, more than half of these PR execs earned between \$60,000-\$69,000, up from 8% in 2013. What is more, in 2014 nearly 10% of the respondents garnered between \$90,000-\$99,000, up from about 7% in 2013.

While they're pulling in higher salaries, many account supervisors are not getting salary increases: More than a third were not eligible and nearly 20% got increases between 1%-3% (Fig. 3).

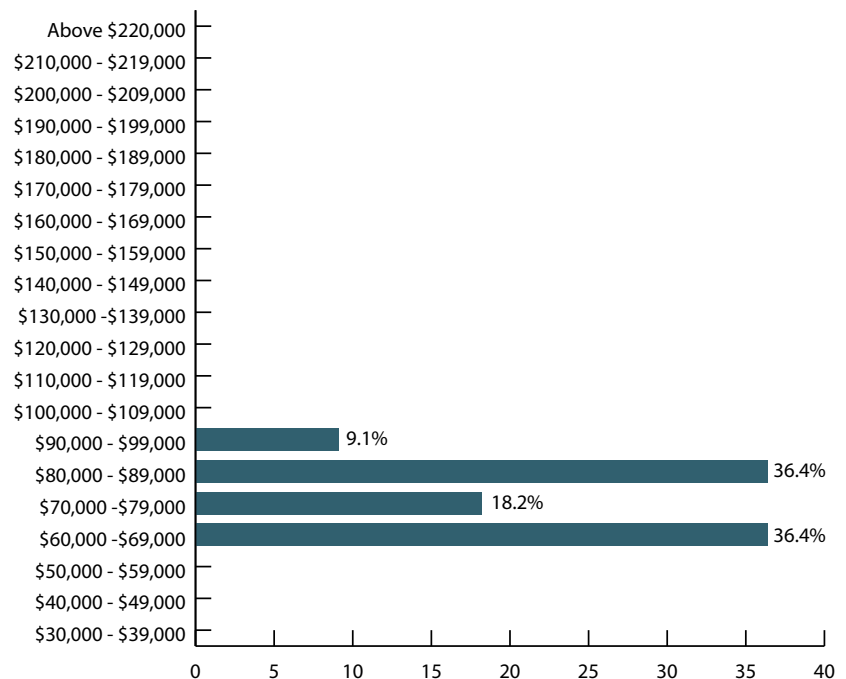
**Fig. 1: Base Salary — Account Supervisor**



**Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Account Supervisor**



**Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Account Supervisor**



## Agency

## Senior Account Executive

Base salaries for senior account executives were slightly more diffuse than those for account supervisors, but most PR execs in this group earned \$40,000-\$79,000 (Fig. 1). Collectively, salary rates are falling. In 2013, about 4% of senior account execs pulled in \$150,000-\$159,000. Another 4% earned \$220,000 or more. But in 2014, the highest base salary was \$109,000.

While base salaries are starting to weaken, a decent percentage of senior account executives are commanding salary increases (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Senior Account Executive

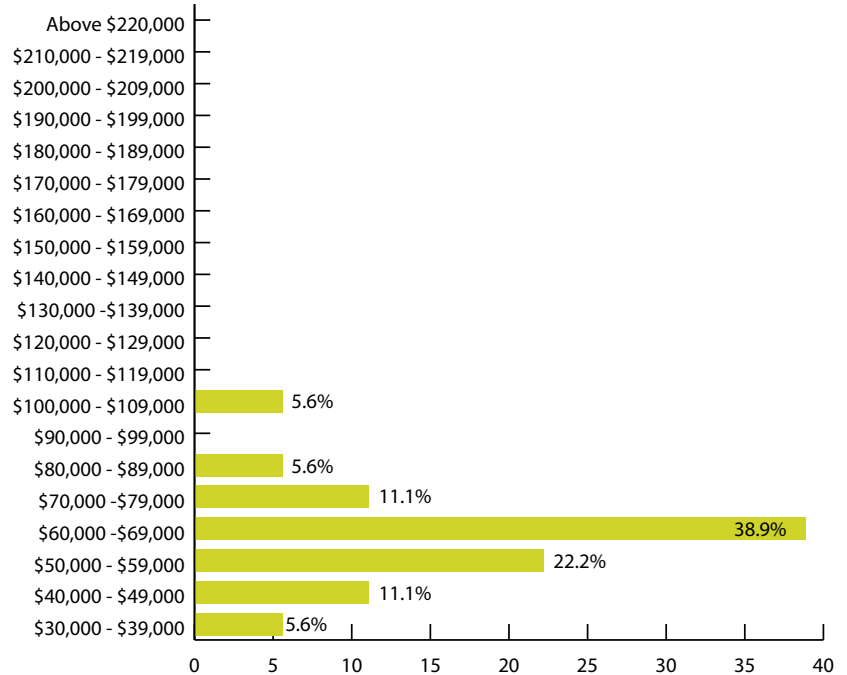


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Senior Account Executive

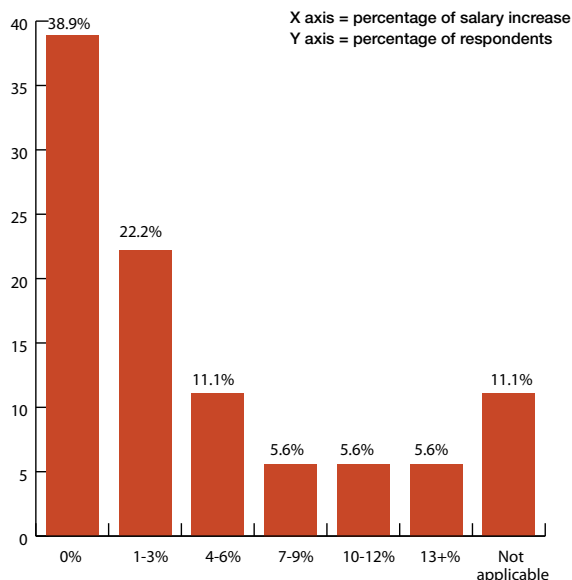
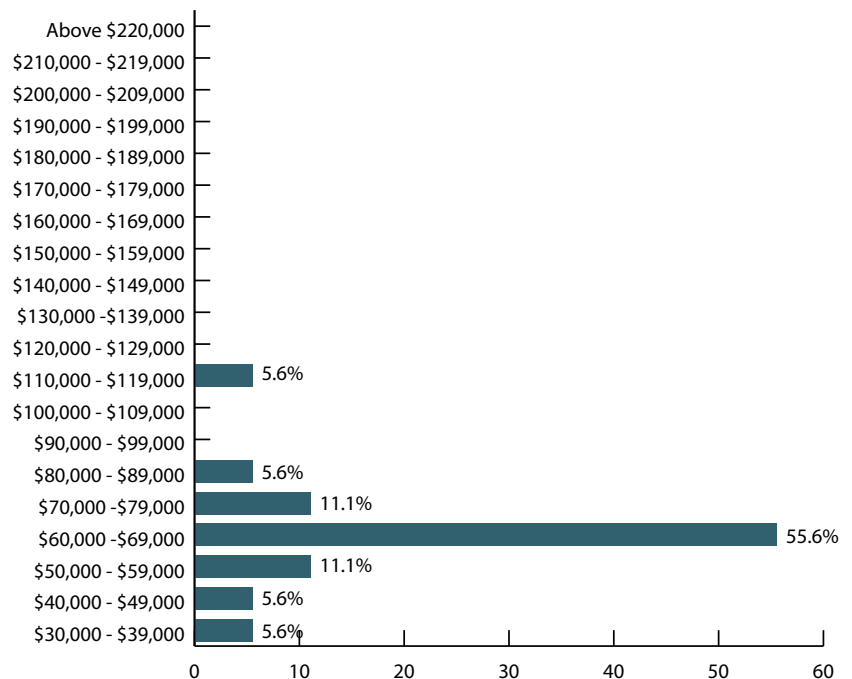


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Senior Account Executive



### Agency

#### Account Executive

Similar to the 2013 salary survey, most PR account executives aren't earning big salaries. That's to be expected, though, as account executive is a junior-level position. The vast majority of account executives earned \$30,000-\$49,000 (Fig. 1).

Salaries were a tad higher when factoring in total compensation: About 16% commanded total comp of \$60,000-\$79,000 and 3% pulled in \$160,000-\$169,000.

Most PR account executives are being incentivized, however; in 2014 about 30% of them received salary increases of 10%-13% (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Account Executive

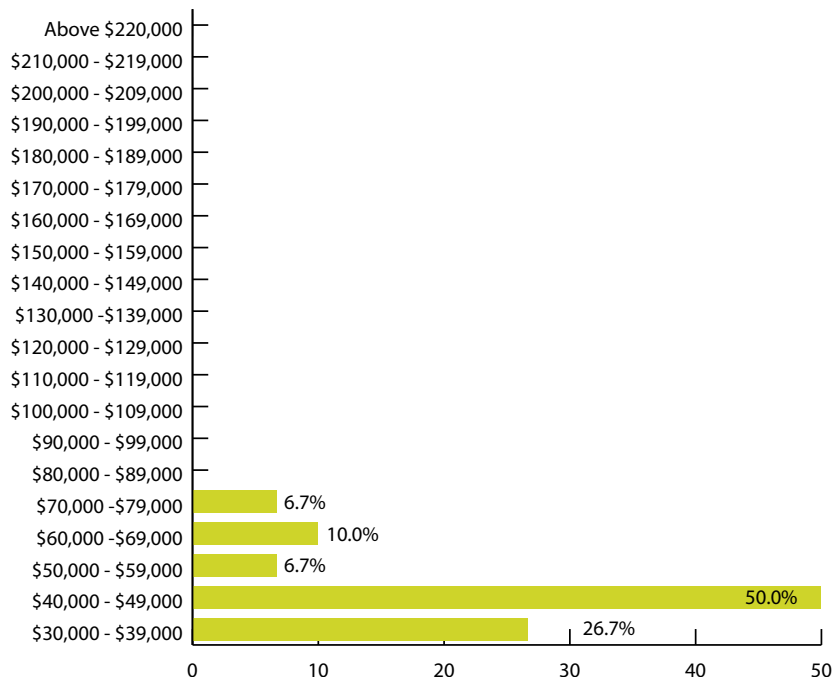


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Account Executive

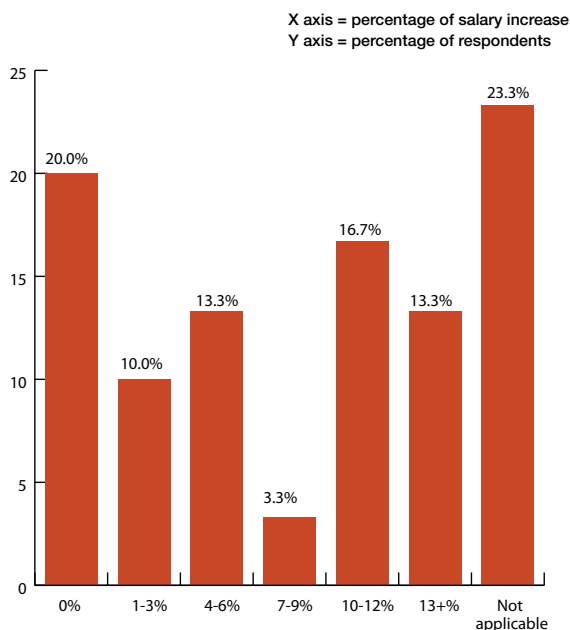
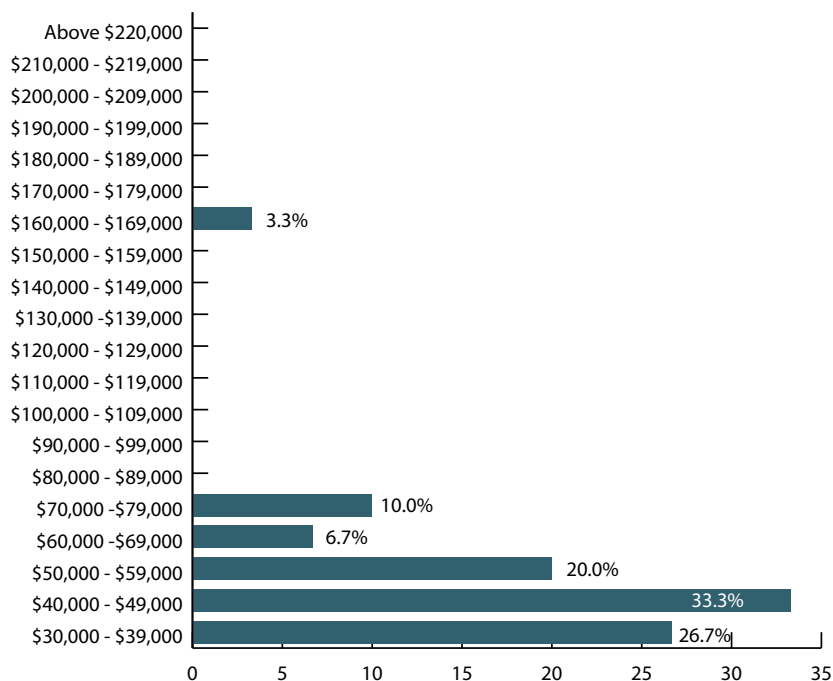


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Account Executive



## Agency

## Account Manager

There wasn't much daylight between account executives and account managers with regard to base salaries. More than one-third of account managers earned \$50,000-\$59,000 (Fig. 1), while about half of account executives earned a base salary of \$40,000-\$49,000.

Account managers also are dealing with decreasing salary rates and smaller distribution of salaries. In 2014, the highest salary range was \$90,000-\$99,000. But in 2013, 5% of account managers pulled in \$180,000-\$189,000 and another 5% earned \$220,000 or more.

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Account Manager

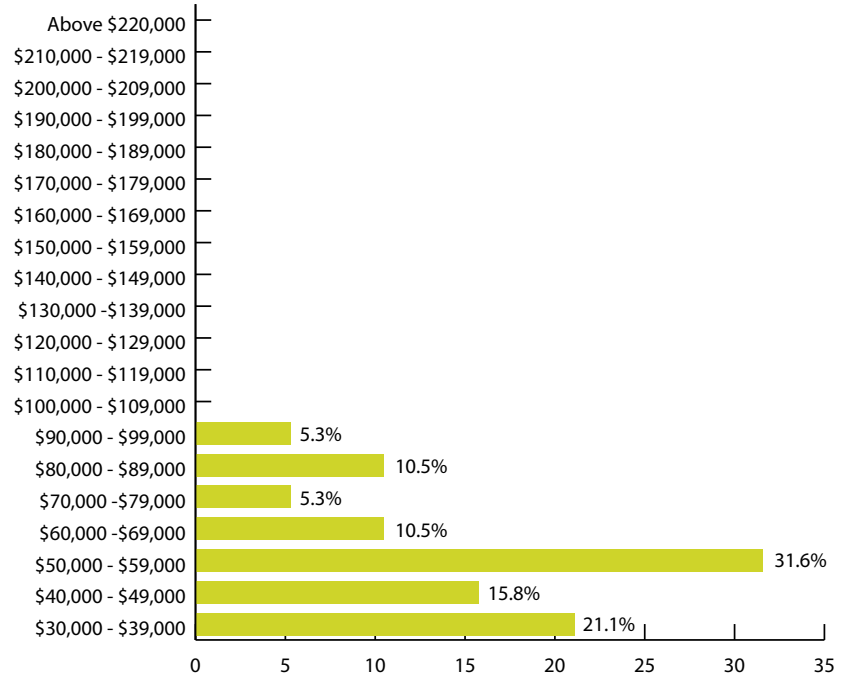


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Account Manager

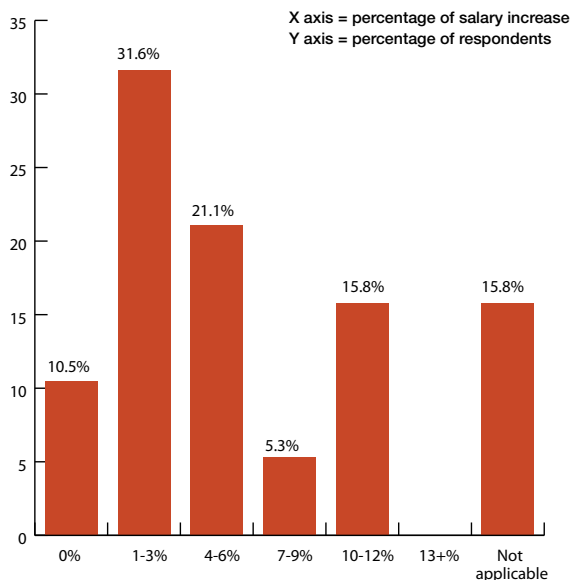
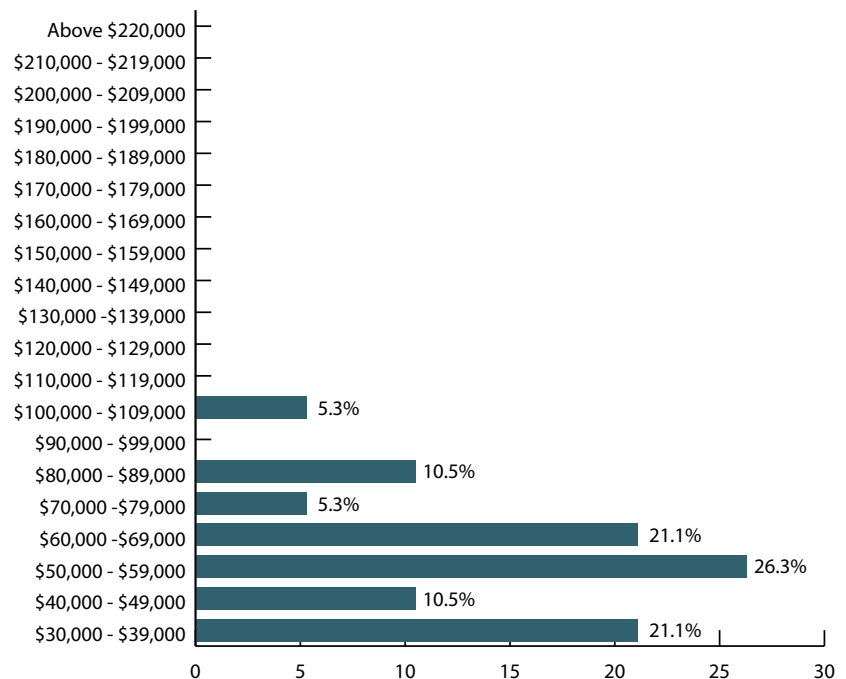


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Account Manager



## Agency

## Associate

In 2014, base salaries grew for PR associates, albeit slightly. Last year, 65% of communication execs in this group earned \$30,000-\$39,000, whereas in 2013 nearly 47% of respondents pulled in \$40,000-\$49,000 (Fig. 1).

The data was precisely the same when factoring in total compensation, not exactly an encouraging sign for what is an entry-level position in PR.

It was a mixed bag for salary increases: About one-quarter of respondents enjoyed a salary boost of 13%, but 40% weren't eligible for a raise. (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: Base Salary — Associate

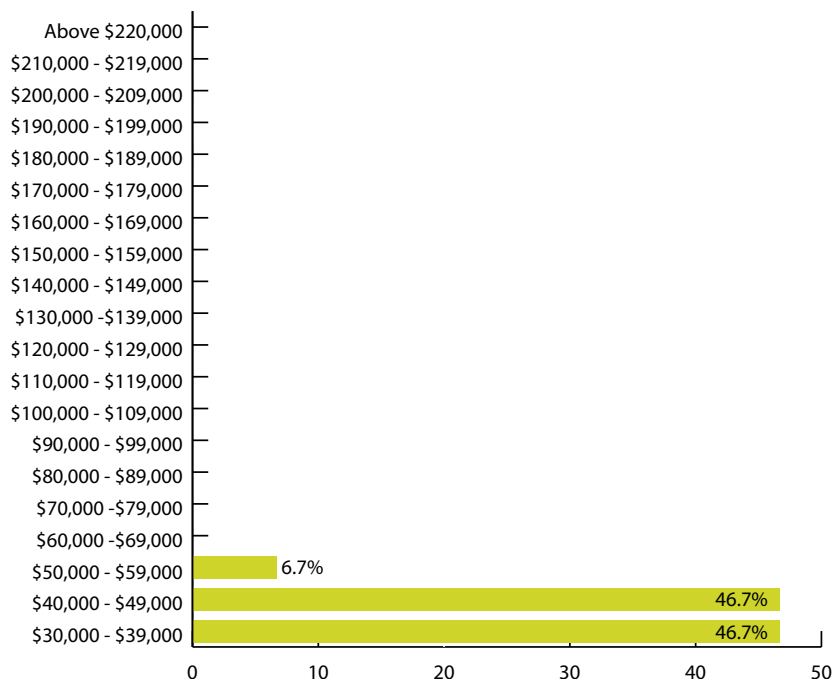


Fig. 3: % Salary Increase — Associate

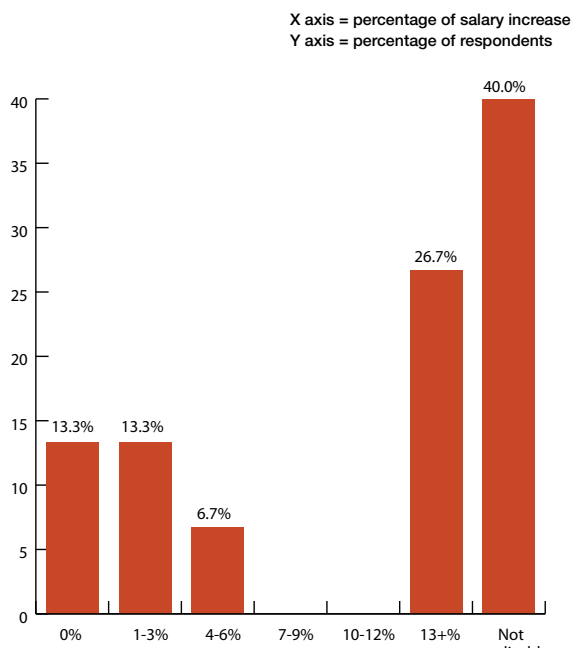
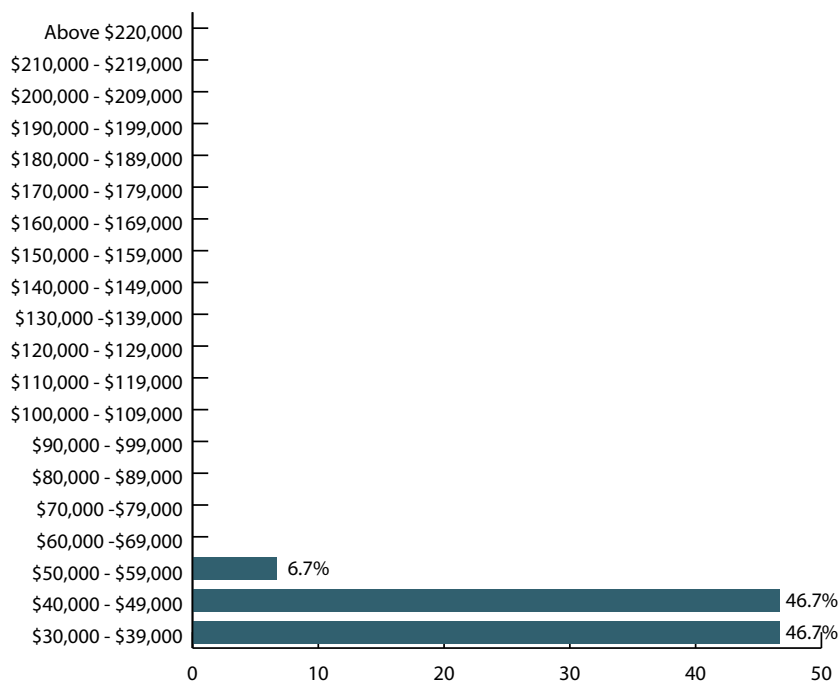


Fig. 2: Total Compensation — Associate





# 3

## Workplace Insights



# Change the Equation for PR Compensation

By Doug Spong

The cold, hard truth is there are two kinds of professionals in the PR world: the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots.' The Haves earn a base salary, annual incentive and long-term incentives that many practitioners cannot even imagine. They rise quickly through the organization and command titles that include director, VP and chief.

While they earn respect and admiration from many of their peers, they may be the target of sarcasm and criticism from those who are comfortable with the status quo.

On the other hand, the Have-nots earn a decent living as well-educated professionals in a growing, demanding field. Their skills as writers and storytellers, among other disciplines, are appreciated. They struggle, however, to enhance their value, reach the rung of director or officer and wonder why they're never invited to take a seat at the adult table next to the CEO. Here are a few tips to change the equation.

- **Follow the money.** The Haves figured out their value proposition long ago. They understand the economic law of supply and demand, and that a limited supply of hard-to-find thinking coupled with finely honed professional skills can satisfy a demand that yields a premium price. Others often describe Haves as keenly insightful, highly strategic, business-minded thinkers, strong problem solvers and inspiring leaders. They have a knack for proposing uncommonly fresh ideas to help their organization fulfill its mission and achieve business goals.

Have-nots are more comfortable with one-size-fits-all tactical thinking. They're so used to the



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**Leaders [in the PR field] know it's not enough to just manage up. They take as much care and effort in managing down to their direct and indirect reports."**

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routine of 'wash, rinse and repeat' that their thinking and planning defaults to asking questions such as who's the spokesperson, what are the key messages, what key influencers can we tap to support our position and when do we disseminate the news release?

Don't get me wrong; media relations is an important discipline in performing our jobs as PR practitioners.

It's just that highly valued professionals are intimate with their organization's sources of revenue, how to supplement them with inventive PR ideas and how to successfully defend said sources through aggressive corporate reputation strategies.

Haves may be equally skilled at media relations, but they understand its role as a tactical execution of a bigger and broader strategy that helps drive revenue, achieve profit targets and protect market value. The seats closest to the C-suite are reserved for those who are most responsible for revenue, profit and market cap.

- **Manage up, down and sideways.** Good

managers know how to manage up. That is, they're good at setting expectations, communicating progress on a timely basis and sharing metrics with supervisors that substantiate their successes. Leaders in public relations know it's not enough to just manage up. They take as much care and effort in managing down to their direct and indirect reports and managing sideways across the organization as they do managing up to the executive floor.

Haves also understand and covet the value of reaching across disciplines, such as human resources, legal, finance, procurement, marketing, sales and production, to collaborate on big-picture problems and business goals. They seek input for better insight. They encourage cooperation instead of competition among departments. And they promote the value of cross-discipline strategies and solutions.

- **Focus on what matters, not what measures.** The very best leaders in public relations seek to tie their personal rewards and recognition to the success or failure of cross-discipline teams. Haves prefer to marry their success or failure as an individual—and the rewards in compensation that accompany success—to the collective achievements of a collaborative team.

While the Have-nots focus on measures including gross impressions, numbers of placements, site traffic, readership surveys and event attendance, the Haves are more concerned with what matters, such as the relationship between employee satisfaction and improved product quality, higher productivity and lower attrition.

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# The PR Role Moves to Center Stage. Here's How to Maintain the Presence

By Linda Rutherford

The evolving world of communications has pushed PR pros from bit players to center stage. Are we ready to be the star? How about our fellow cast members, er, team members? We have made tremendous progress and worked hard to be viewed in a leading role, but there is more to do.

Our wins in this ever-changing plotline include:

- **Mobility.** We tapped into the changing landscape of how stakeholders interact with and consume content. We helped our organizations adapt to what that means in terms of creating and curating content and stakeholder engagement across audiences and multiple platforms.
- **Owned media.** We seized opportunities the Internet provided to become media platform owners. We started to realize we are no longer just courting media gatekeepers; many of us own and operate media platforms and can engage news media, customers, potential customers, regulators and influencers without filters or constraints.
- **The corporate soul.** We helped organizations accept the fact that we are no longer the only ones telling stories. Many voices in the choir weigh in and help create the persona and personality of a company or brand. Communications pros stepped up to recognize they could help fellow senior leaders realize that reputation issues can't be solved with expert marketing and great products alone. A company's actions and narrative play larger roles today, and as communications professionals, many of us are driving that effort.



**“We need to have leaders with the emotional intelligence to successfully provide vision, ensure the right tools are available and clear away obstacles.**

**We need to know our people and recognize when they need (and want) motivation.”**

Those changes have created a larger stage for communications' role in a company or organization's success or failure. A larger stage with a starring role means we're looking for different actors than we might have been seeking even five years ago.

We've all heard about the demand for talent and applied knowledge and skills in social media, data analytics, behavioral science, for example.

Here is what I'm seeking to create tomorrow's world-class communication and outreach function:

- **Trusted advisor.** The communications pro isn't just a skilled writer, adept at media relations. He or she also is becoming a trusted advisor to the business and C-suite. It's about more than the communications function and requires a deep understanding of the business to offer strategic or personal advice. That takes someone with emotional intelligence, interpersonal influence and confidence.

- **Listening skills.** In grade school, I learned a lesson about the importance of listening versus talking. It stuck with me: “A wise old owl lived in an oak. The more he saw, the less he spoke. The less he spoke, the more he heard. Why can’t I be like that old bird?” We sometimes jump too quickly to show off our skills as communicators and we miss crucial nonverbal cues or nuances. Stop. Look. Listen. A good listener ultimately will be a better business counselor.
- **EQ to motivate and inspire.** Sounds simple, right? Easier said than done. It’s takes effort.

Especially for leaders, I believe this is the key role. We need to have leaders with the emotional intelligence to successfully provide vision, ensure the right tools are available and clear obstacles along the way. We need to know our people and recognize when they need (and want) motivation and be ready to offer it at the right time and in the right way.

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# 10 Ways PR Professionals Can Enhance Their Value

*(Whether it is a newly minted chief communications officer or a senior account executive, PR pros of all stripes are working hard to enhance their value in the eyes of C-level executives and clients. With that in mind, here are 10 tips from the corporate and agency sides of the business to boost PR's value.)*

## The Corporate Perspective

By Laura Kane

PR professionals need first, last, and always to find ways to add value. In pursuing this goal, we exercise a growing list of new and old skills: writing, social media, relationship building and optimizing content. While these all are good skills to have, they are really just the entry point for a successful career in public relations. What can you do to increase your value and influence? Here are skills that can shift your contributions from being tactical to being strategic and creative.

- 1. Storytelling.** Stories can change the way we think, act and feel. It's the story in our content, Facebook post or infographic that makes people take notice and want to learn more. A story makes data come alive, provides context and helps build a connection with audiences. Stories have the power to break down barriers, illustrate ideas and inspire us in a way that cold, hard facts do not.

The most successful stories focus audience members on a single important idea. They create compelling narratives that demonstrate and reinforce that idea using a variety of communications vehicles. Those who can build an effective corporate narrative and are skilled in the art of business storytelling are among the most successful professionals in our industry.



**“The most successful stories focus audience members on a single important idea. They create compelling narratives that demonstrate and reinforce that idea using a variety of communications vehicles.”**

- 2. Understanding ‘Big Data.’** Companies now collect more information than ever. Some of these data are irrelevant but some provide insight we need to move our audience to action.

Gauging which data are most relevant is a critical first step.

Beyond that, however, turning data into insight can be a complicated process. You must sort through and organize raw findings into information events, which allow you to see patterns. Those patterns, in turn, help further a greater understanding of what is important and deserves more attention. Focusing on the right data, you will begin to gain insight into what makes your audience tick.

**3. Understanding the science of persuasion.** In today's media environment—where people are bombarded with marketing messages—the ability to craft persuasive messages is critical. There is a huge list of theories regarding persuasion and influence, all of which provide interesting insight about how people, think, behave and change their minds. And while each of the theories has its own take on what techniques are most effective to get people to take action, they all stress the importance of knowing your audience. While studying these theories will not necessarily make you more persuasive, they will help you better understand your audience's thought process.

**4. Provide a vision for the brand or organization.** Open communication is the trick to sharing your vision. Forget buzzwords. Use terms that are easy to understand. Be specific about actions, behaviors or visuals that help articulate your vision. Help your colleagues see what the end product should look like and be sure to let them know that you are invested in the outcome. Inclusive language, such as “we,” “us” and “our,” unifies people and gets them invested in making your vision come to life.

**5. Reporting metrics.** Metrics tell us how messages are performing; they confirm that our campaigns are reaching the right audience and that it is responding to the content we provide. Metrics help us figure out which ideas are taking hold and those that need to be revised. Metrics help us prove that we achieved our goals and give credibility to our profession and individual careers.

Which metrics are most meaningful varies from one company to the next. But what cuts across business sectors is the importance of establishing goals upfront, tracking the difference in key indicators (KPIs) around those goals and weaving the data into a story that will demonstrate to management that PR is a solid investment.

So, whether you are developing messages, curating content, managing media campaigns or creating dashboards, companies reward people who can use traditional and digital communications tools to build lasting relationships with stakeholders.

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# The Agency Perspective

By Adryanna Sutherland

Using measurement and metrics to reinforce the value of services should be second nature to public relations professionals. What doesn't come as naturally, however, is proving one's personal value, especially when it's time for the annual performance review. Demonstrating an individual's worth should not be something that occurs only once each year, it must be done regularly. Moreover, much like a PR campaign, the individual should be working to provide long-term value, not just short-term response.

If you are a PR professional who wants to take more initiative at your company or agency, with the goal of increasing compensation or time off, you should consider the following:

1. **Treat your boss as a client.** Find out what you can do to make your boss's job easier. Have regular, open conversations where you both set goals and expectations. An employer always appreciates someone who is proactive and dependable, and who can identify problems and solve them. Demonstrate your smart and hard-working nature, and your boss just might be willing to act as your advocate.
2. **Demonstrate the value of your discipline.** Those who work with your discipline need to have a thorough understanding of what the PR team does. Communicate both your and your team's value by educating colleagues on what you do for the company, its clients or both. Make sure others know how your work can enhance their effort by creating point-of-view documents or by providing perspective on how an industry trend is beneficial to the company or its clients.



**“Begin to build your name in the industry by developing content that can be shared industry-wide or participating in speaking opportunities or networking at local events sponsored by industry-related organizations.”**

3. **Mix it up.** Become more integrated into other agency or company disciplines. Learn more about what your colleagues do, what they read or whom they follow so that you can learn to speak their language. This knowledge can enable you to be the bridge that helps other disciplines better understand and leverage each other to more effectively collaborate and convey objectives to reach target audiences. Your colleagues on other teams likely will appreciate your effort.
4. **Reach out.** Find someone in your company or a local PR leader to turn to for advice. Then pay it forward by being a mentor to others. Begin to build your name in the industry by developing content that can be shared industry-wide or participating in speaking opportunities or networking at local events sponsored by industry-related organizations.
5. **Go the extra mile.** It's important to demonstrate initiative beyond what's expected, so continually think outside your discipline. With agency life being increasingly integrated

these days, it is easier than ever for PR to embrace the opportunity to drive bigger projects or a campaign itself. Learn how all the pieces fit and be willing to take on a task outside the boundaries of your regular work or find answers to questions from colleagues. And whether managing a large or small proj-

ect, always pay attention to detail—whether you are providing an estimate, article or planned proposal.

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# Mix Life into the Compensation Equation

By Mike McDougall

The PR workforce is struggling with how to maintain some semblance of sanity amidst the chaos. Communication execs are looking to their employers for counsel, guidance and direction—requests that often are met with blank stares or kind words, but little meaningful assistance. The dynamic begs the question: Can organizations factor work-life balance into the compensation and benefits equation as a way to retain and attract the best and brightest?

A prime challenge is determining what work-life balance truly is worth since the concept has wildly different meanings. In a profession where balance is desired, if not absolutely necessary, to avoid staff burnout, there's still no accepted standard. Instead there is a massive range of variables.

"I haven't seen a good formula in practice to quantify work-life balance," says Michael Patino, principal of PR executive search firm Patino Associates. "It takes on different dimensions in different industries. If you leave a regional utility—where you're on call 24/7 to be able to respond to major power outages—and head to a local non-profit instead, it's likely you won't get those middle-of-the-night calls. It will come at the expense of salary. So there's no single answer."

A partial solution, though, might be to provide flexibility, variety and principle.

- **Flexibility.** 'We're all adults here,' is a phrase I've heard too often, only to be followed by explicit instruction geared more toward a preschooler. Be a dad or mom to your kids, not your PR team.

Control is hard to come by for PR pros, so put



**"Adding some flexibility into the compensation equation—with personal responsibility on the employee's part to ensure that performance goals are met—is one path to success."**

some into the mix. Adding considerable operational flexibility into the compensation equation—with personal responsibility on the employee's part to ensure they meet performance goals—is one path to success. Consider formalizing a few components as part of your benefits package:

**Adjust core schedules.** If an employee is trading emails with you at 1 a.m. regularly, why is she expected in the office at 8:30 A.M.? Consider true schedule flexibility; typically a set of core hours when the person is responsive to contact, then considerable discretion about when she's on the clock.

**Creatively adapt.** A team member once told me that it was becoming impossible to complete her primary responsibilities because of the constant interruptions in her office; things that went well beyond the 'Could you just...?' requests we field daily. In effect, she was working around the clock and saw her personal world begin to fall apart. The solution? We created a Tuesday to Saturday work schedule, keeping her out of sight on Monday. The Saturday benefit? Those impromptu office drop-

ins—with few others in the office—dropped off. Consider merit-based vacation. Reports of unlimited vacation policies such as those at Virgin draw oohs and aahs, but may not be practical for every company or employee. Still, take another look at your approach to paid time off. Consider tying PTO to individual profitability; to exceeding personal goals or to small-group performance. Merit-based variable compensation programs can extend beyond cash.

- **Variety.** You're competing for talent, but your compensation packages look the same as every peer in your region or industry. Try shaking up things with an eye toward making lives not just richer, but easier and healthier.

Upgrade tech. With work being done on the train, in the apartment and on the beach, make it easier for your team to get it done. Technology upgrades—mobile hot spots, paying for faster home Internet speed, faster laptops—will reduce stress and let the team accomplish tasks more quickly.

Upgrade the space. I was a fresh-faced, 24-year-old at a new agency, and the office manager handed me \$50. The tradition was for new employees to buy a unique lamp for their desk; a small sign that as you moved about the office, everyone was different. Build workspace customization into the benefits package; a remodeling stipend every couple of years for individuals can go a long way to keeping people happy, and raising spirits.

Rethink wellness. Healthy habits come in all sizes. Not everyone wants to work up a sweat at the building's fitness center. Add other wellness components to your mix, such as complimentary fruits and whole grains in the kitchen, company-paid registration fees for community-oriented 5K walks/runs and even work-life balance coaching.

- **Principle.** What are your expectations for work-life among employees? If you can't articulate them, don't expect your team to understand them either.

Be crystal clear in your principles. For my team, I keep it exceedingly simple: family comes first. Take care of family, then your work responsibilities, then your volunteer commitments. Grey areas are easier to assess when they're bounded by black-and-white beliefs.

There are no simple answers for how to achieve a work-life balance. No silver bullets. By being flexible, getting creative and reframing certain offerings as investments in your employees—versus after-thoughts or even entitlements—you can begin to change the equation.

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# Internal Communications, New Functions Keys to Public Relation's Future

By Keith Burton

Whether it's research led by the Arthur W. Page Society, the Institute for Public Relations, the USC Annenberg School through its Generally Accepted Practices (GAP) studies or researchers acting as futurists, we use experience gained by evaluating history and patterns to project the road ahead in public relations.

What can we expect in 2015? Below are macro trends that should touch communicators.

- 1. Change and driving corporate culture will be more pronounced than ever as companies struggle to escape the gravitational pull of the Great Recession.** Gary Sheffer, GE Corp.'s Chief Communications Officer and Chairman of the Page Society, last December told customers in Crotonville, N.Y., at the company's cutting-edge "Better Together" Summit that CCOs must dedicate greater effort to managing change and culture inside their organizations. M&As and corporate restructuring designed to yield operational and cost efficiencies are expected to surge in 2015. Communicators will be integral to these changes by shaping cultures through the provision of key messages.
- 2. CCOs increasingly will act as integrators, offering solutions to a wide range of problems using the expertise of specialists and bringing together C-suite and functional leaders inside the corporation.** We should expect even more blending of PR, marketing and social media during the year. The GAP VIII Study says that when the PR function is effectively integrated and coordinated it is



**"As the largest generation in American history, Millennials—often labeled as lazy, disloyal, self-entitled, attention-seeking and tech-reliant—are taking their place as leaders in agencies and corporations. What should we do to mentor and guide them?"**

more likely to be valued within organizations.

- 3. New job titles and functions will emerge.** While Golin's G4 transformation is a good example of how a PR firm changed its name, structure, job titles and staffing to serve clients across multiple channels in the digital age, deeper changes loom for our profession.

Clients want critical thinkers and specialists to help solve business problems. Consultancies like Brunswick Group are focused globally on business-critical client needs, and have developed discreet specialties—shareholder activism and employee engagement to name just two—as high-need, high-payoff growth areas to augment core expertise.

Expect to see the emergence of content strategists and brand journalists to tell the corporate brand story across key stakeholder groups; employee-engagement champions to help the C-

suite drive the employer brand as the war for talent returns; challenge team advocates to test and pilot public relations and internal communication strategies on the front lines of companies and specialists in behavioral sciences, forensic analytics and ROI metrics to test the science beneath the art.

**4. Growing generational differences will create an even greater divide in the workplace.** Today, 50 percent of workers are Millennials, people born between the early 1980s and early 2000s. As the largest generation in American history, Millennials—often labeled as lazy, disloyal, self-entitled, attention-seeking and tech-reliant—are taking their place as leaders in agencies and corporations. What should we do to mentor and guide them? How open will we be to accepting reverse mentoring from them? Most important, how do we improve our ability to connect with all four generations of employees to ensure greater diversity and inclusion in our corporate cultures?

**5. Keeping score matters, and success met-**

**rics in public relations will evolve further.**

More than 70 percent of all respondents to the GAP VIII study said they have a need for communications professionals who can interpret data and use them to plan programs. Social metrics continue to ascend while historic ad equivalencies are disappearing, according to the research findings. Our profession, though, must do more to track and measure key performance indicators (KPIs) related to our effectiveness in changing attitudes, beliefs and behaviors inside companies, and providing a real, measurable ROI from public relations expenditures.

While we live in a world of issues, ideas, words and images, the CEOs and C-suite leaders we serve live in a world of processes, numbers and expectations for higher performance. We must connect the two worlds.

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