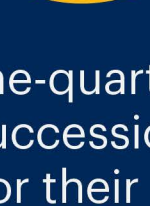


# Have CISOs Identified Potential Successors?

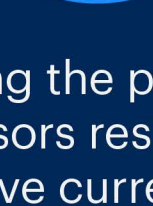
CISO succession planning is crucial to maintain the organization's security posture in times of transition. Have leaders formalized this process and identified viable candidates?



About one-quarter have a formal succession plan in place for their security leadership role



Most formally documented plans address succession for the security leader's direct reports



Among the potential successors respondents have currently identified, the majority are internal candidates

Data collection: Dec 2, 2023 - Jan 8, 2024

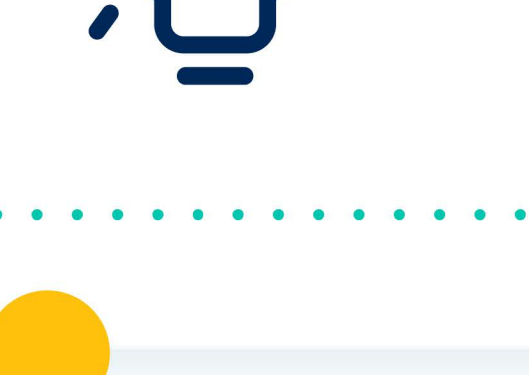
Respondents: 132 information security and IT leaders holding the most senior security leadership position at their organization

## About Gartner Peer Community One-Minute Insights:

Gartner Peer Community is for technology and business leaders to engage in discussions with peers and share knowledge in real time.

Surveys are designed by Gartner Peer Community editors and appear on the Gartner Peer Community platform. Once the respondent threshold is met, survey results are summarized in a One-Minute Insight.

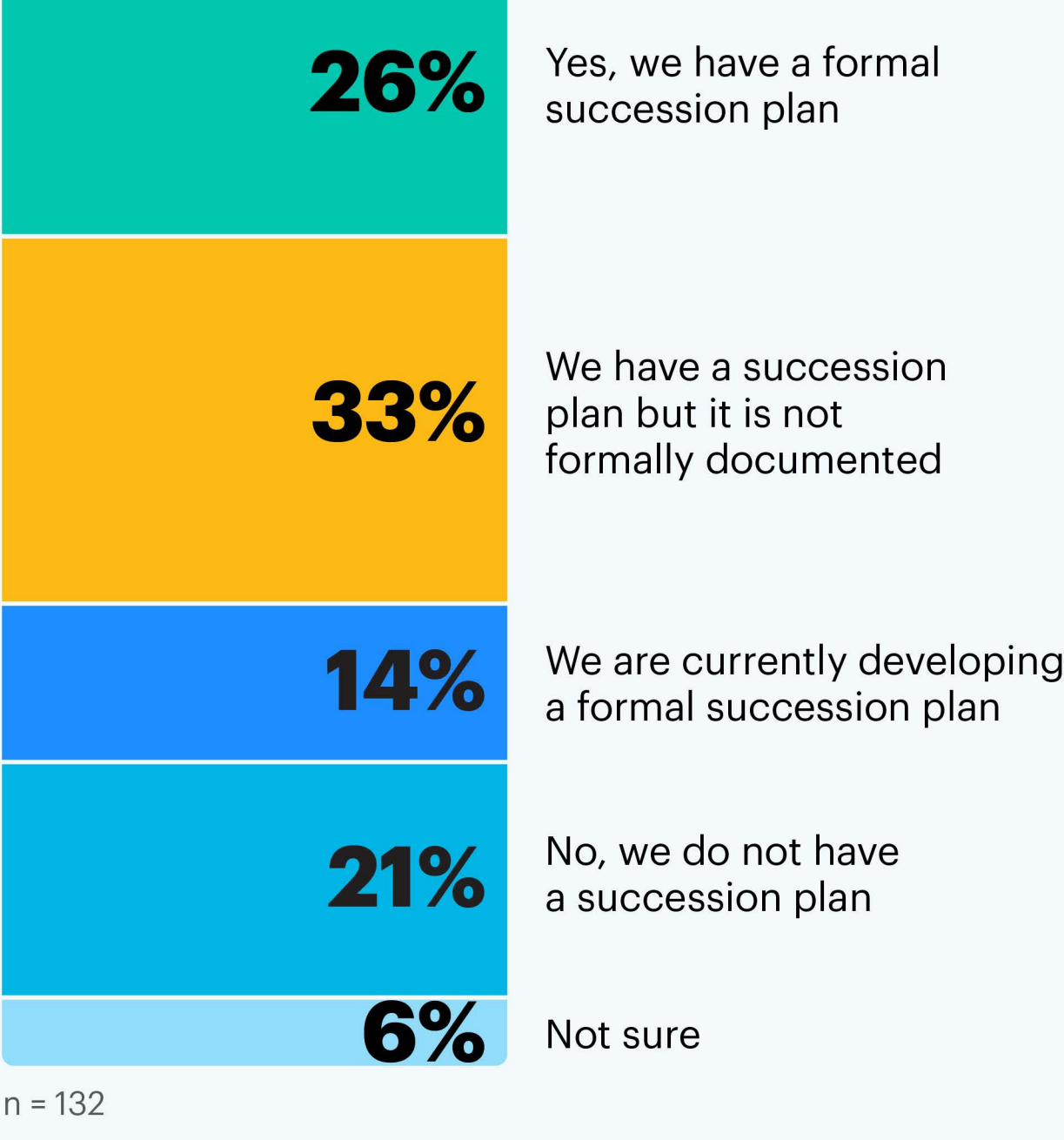
The results of this summary are representative of the respondents that participated in the survey. It is not market representative.



## Majority of leaders currently have succession plans in place

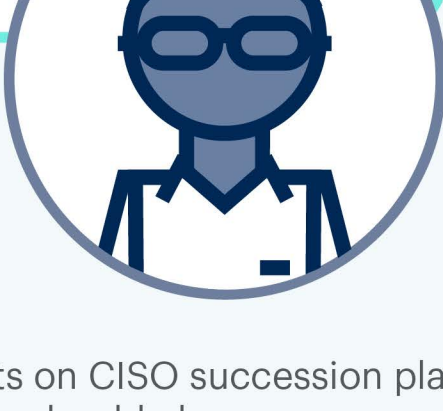
Over half (59%) of all respondents report there is a succession plan for their security leadership role, but **33% note this plan is not formally documented.**

Does your organization have a formal succession plan in place for your current security leadership role?¹



“The CISO role is critical for organizational and technological resilience but is often not sufficiently planned for.”

C-suite, educational services industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees



“We are not giving this a lot of thought just yet, which may be a big mistake.”

Director, construction industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees



Question: Please share any final thoughts on CISO succession planning. Feel free to elaborate on how you think succession planning processes should change.



## Formal plans cover succession for security leader's direct reports

Among those who have formal succession plans in place for their role (n = 34), **53% say it also addresses backfilling** roles that directly report to them.

Does the current succession plan for your security leadership role also address succession for any of the roles that directly report to you?²

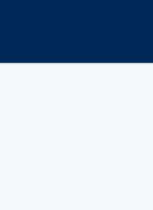


“I think the plan should be reviewed more regularly and it should not only be for the most senior roles.”

Director, finance industry, 10,000+ employees



Question: Please share any final thoughts on CISO succession planning. Feel free to elaborate on how you think succession planning processes should change.



## Many have identified potential successors; most candidates are internal

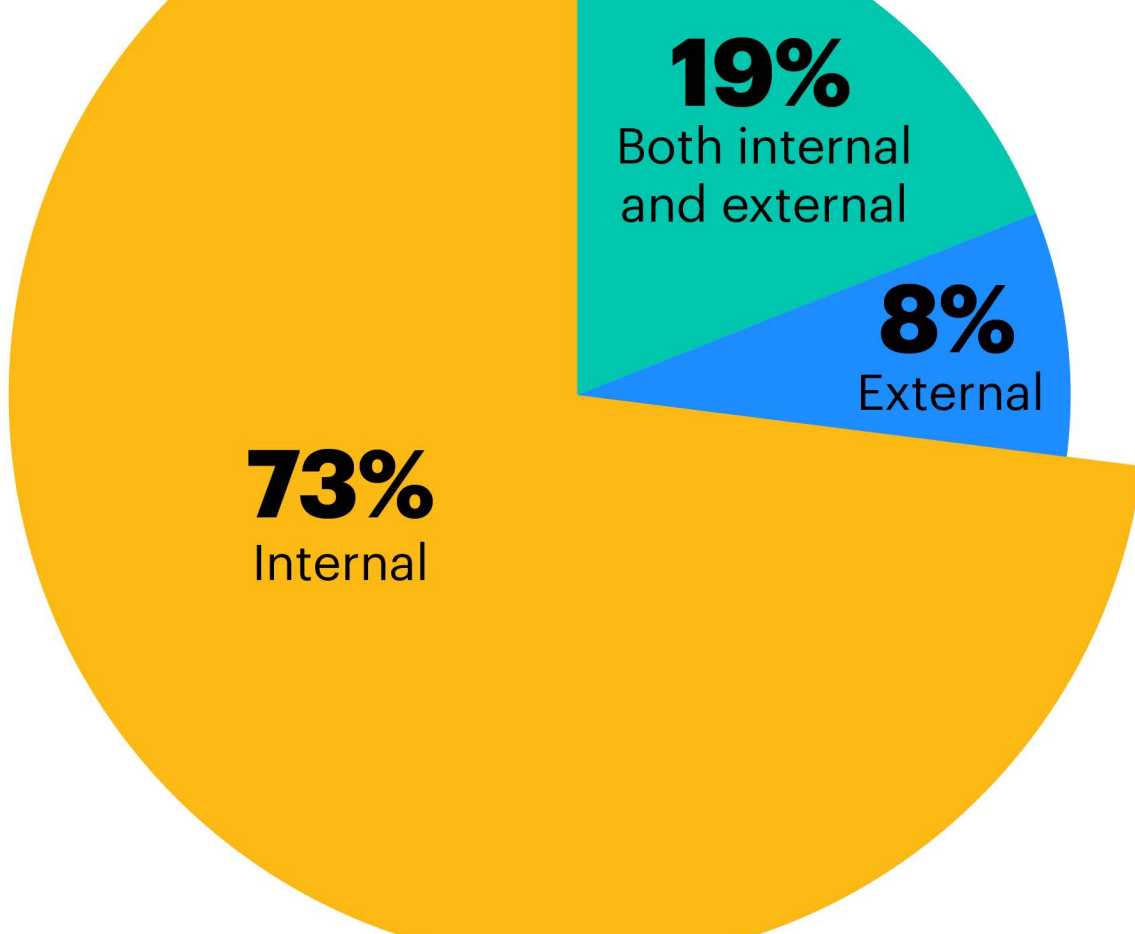
Nearly three-quarters (72%) of all surveyed leaders (n = 132) have identified at least one candidate who could be their successor.

Have you identified candidates who could potentially be your successor?³



Among respondents who have identified potential successors (n = 95), **73% say these candidates are current employees.**

Are the candidates you've identified as potential successors for your security leadership role internal (i.e., existing employees) or external candidates (i.e., potential new hires)?³



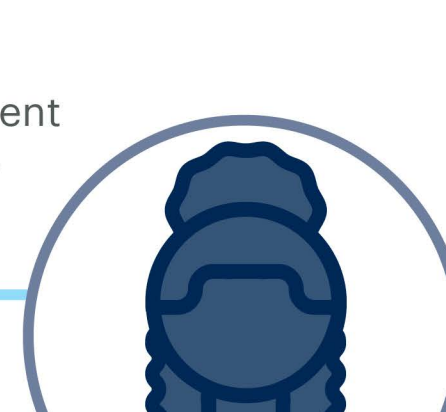
“I use the successor in [an] acting role when I take time off.”

VP, consumer goods industry, 10,000+ employees

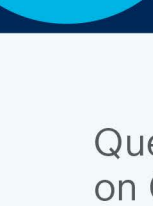


“It's vital to ensure people have a clear career path and understand their future opportunities; a good succession plan is part of that.”

Director, arts and entertainment industry, 10,000+ employees



Question: Please share any final thoughts on CISO succession planning. Feel free to elaborate on how you think succession planning processes should change.



## In their own words...

Question: Please share any final thoughts on CISO succession planning. Feel free to elaborate on how you think succession planning processes should change.

“We have been trying to groom candidates for replacement positions for several years.”

- VP, consumer goods industry, 5,000 - 10,000 employees

“When it comes to succession planning, organizations tend to ignore the fact that loss of senior leadership causes serious issues. Every critical position in an organization should have a plan to replace the skill set in the event the person leaves.”

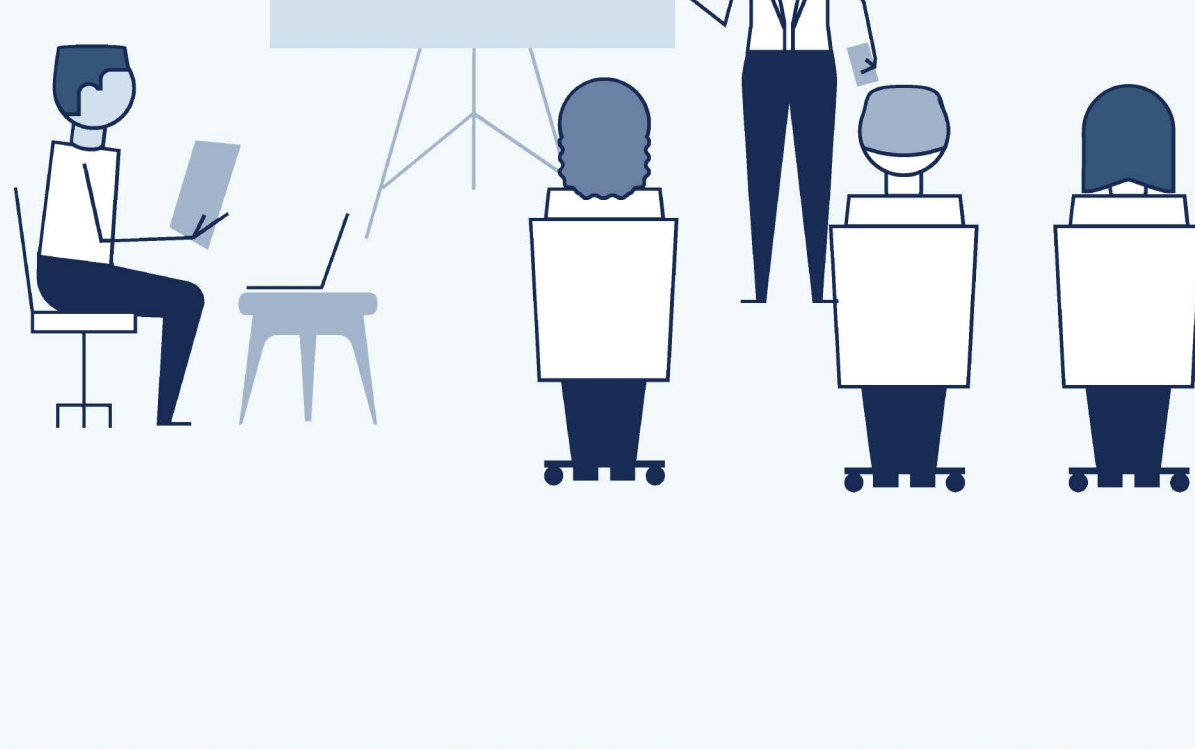
- Director, educational services industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees

“Finding a perfect match internally is generally difficult. There are often individuals who could fill the role if they desired to shift their career into a hands-off, leadership role. Most likely, the internal candidate will serve as an interim role until a full-time external candidate can be found.”

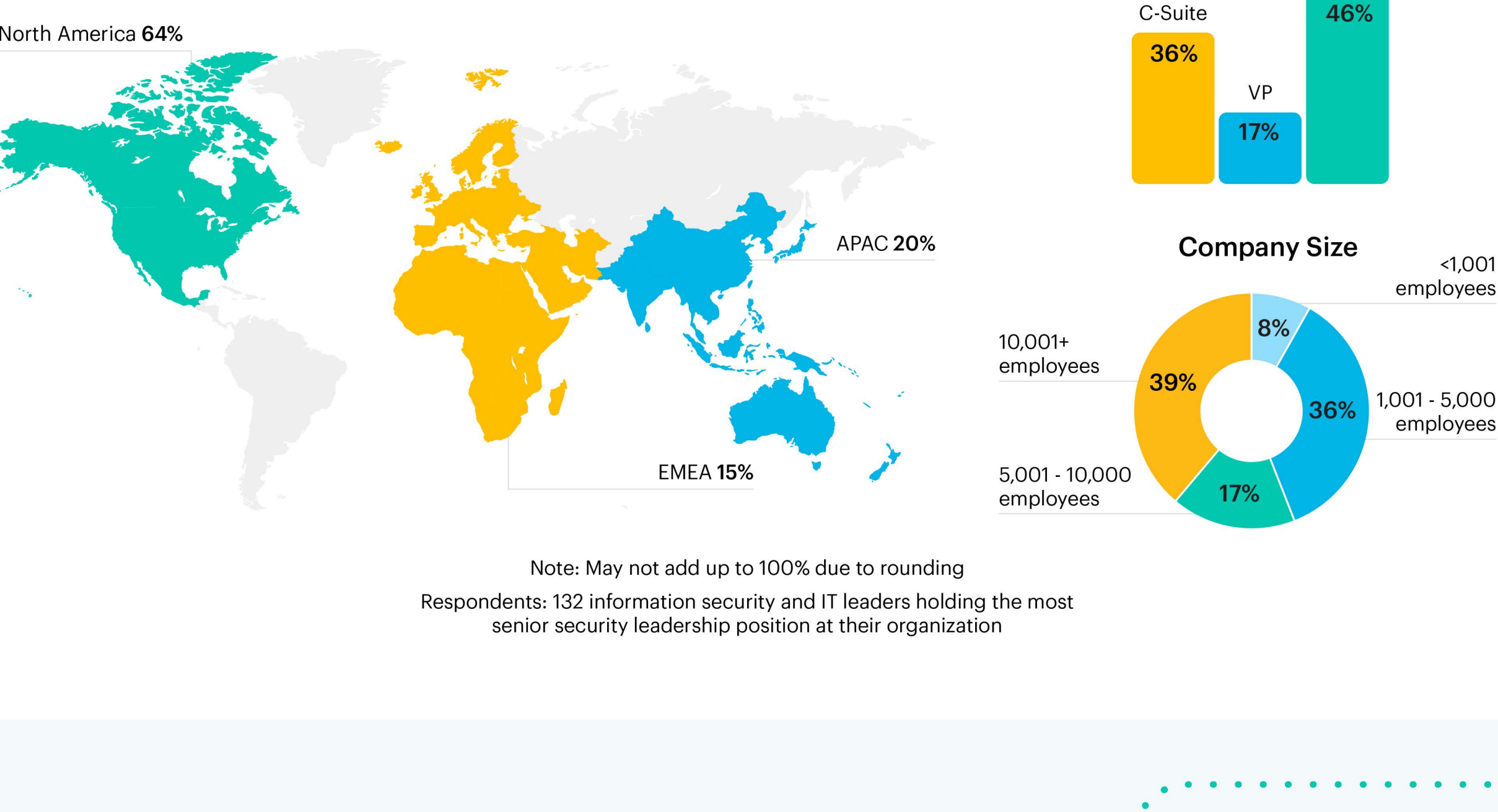
- C-suite, healthcare industry, 10,000+ employees

“We have a mix of internal and external candidates for successors. We also have a program across all colleges to find suitable candidates for our CIO roles (of which I am, in addition to CISO). My successor should be well equipped for both the CIO and CISO role.”

- C-suite, healthcare industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees



## Respondent Breakdown



## Want more insights like this from leaders like yourself?

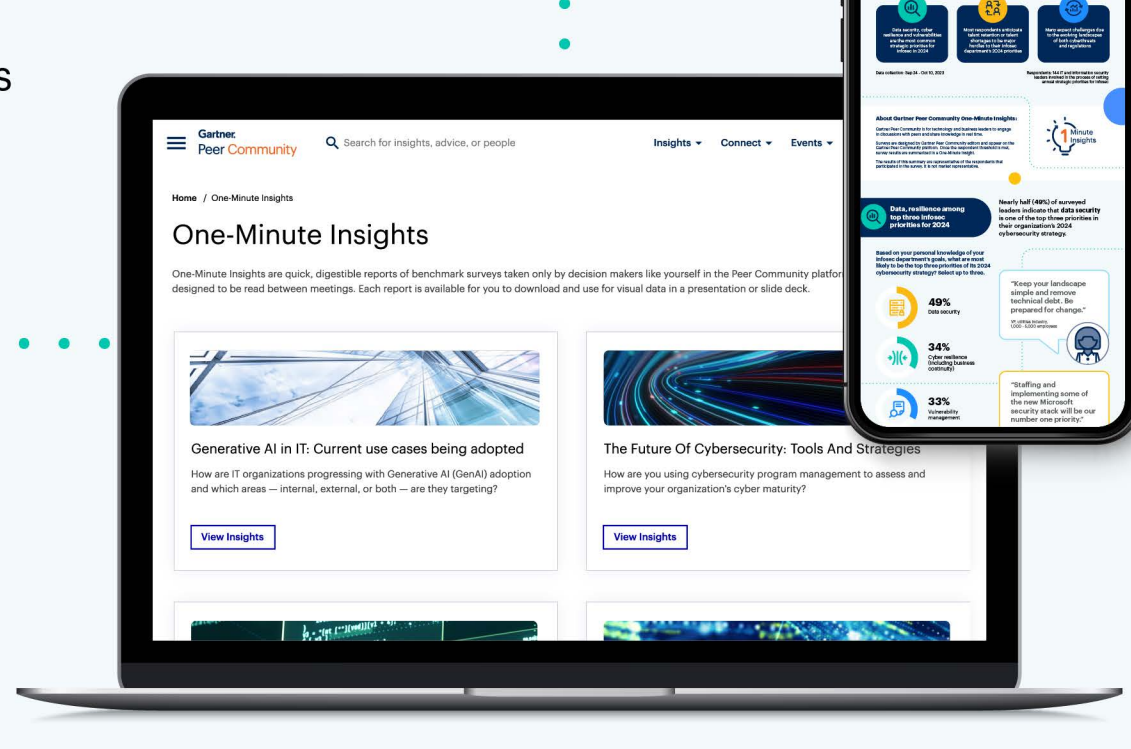
[Click here](#) to explore the revamped, retooled and reimagined Gartner Peer Community. You'll get access to synthesized insights and engaging discussions from a community of your peers.

## Gartner

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Source: Gartner Peer Community, CISO Succession Planning survey

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¹Full question text: “With a formal succession plan being defined as, ‘a documented strategy for identifying and developing potential successors for key roles to ensure minimal business disruption following staff changes,’ does your organization have a formal succession plan in place for your current security leadership role?”

²Question shown only to respondents who answered “Yes, we have a formal succession plan” to “With a formal succession plan being defined as, ‘a documented strategy for identifying and developing potential successors for key roles to ensure minimal business disruption following staff changes,’ does your organization have a formal succession plan in place for your current security leadership role?”

³Question shown only to respondents who answered “Yes, one” or “Yes, multiple” to “Have you identified candidates who could potentially be your successor?”