

# What AIGAC Research Can Tell You About Outstanding Applicants

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# Plan For Today

- What we did
- What we learned
  - Highlights
  - Deep dive:
    - Influential sources of information
    - Social media
    - Financial aid
- What schools are seeing
- Q+A

# Background

- Why did we conduct this research?
  - Provide a **profile** of prospective MBA students interested in top schools
  - Examine the **motivations, interests and reservations** of prospects that influence their decision to apply
  - Better understand the **sources of information** prospects use in determining where to apply
  - Learn **which schools** they apply to
  - **Track** all of the above over time (3<sup>rd</sup> annual survey)

## Background (cont.)

- How was it done?
  - Online survey of prospective MBA students
  - Conducted in March-April 2011
  - Sponsored by AIGAC
  - Many admissions consultants involved
  - Survey links on MBA resource websites provided a broader sample
  - 1,451 respondents

# Highlights

# Highlights: Demographic Profile

- Average age: 28
- Average years of FT work: 5.3
- Currently working FT: 82%
- 63% Male / 37% Female
- GMAT score 700+: 46%
- Top countries: US (34%), India (24%)
- Top undergraduate majors: Engineering (30%), Business (27%)

# Highlights: Applying to Top Schools

<i>Which graduate business schools have you applied to, or are planning to apply to?</i>	
Harvard (HBS)	33%
Columbia (CBS)	28%
Stanford (GSB)	28%
London Business School	26%
Univ. of Pennsylvania (Wharton)	26%
Northwestern (Kellogg)	24%
Univ. of Chicago (Booth)	23%
Duke (Fuqua)	22%
MIT (Sloan)	21%
Yale (School of Management)	21%

Apply to 5-6 schools

# Highlights: Types of Programs

<i>What types of MBA programs have you considered?</i>	
Full-time MBA, two years or more	74%
Full-time MBA, less than two years	50%
Part-Time MBA	17%
Executive MBA (EMBA)	12%
Flexible MBA (with both full-time and part-time options)	12%
Joint-degree programs that include an MBA	12%
Online/Distance learning MBA	7%



# Highlights: Motivations

- Primary motivators
  - Advance their career
- Secondary motivators
  - Acquire specific knowledge/skills
  - Gain access to a strong professional network
  - Get professional credentials
  - Get a sense of personal satisfaction/achievement

## Highlights: Goals

- Over half want to be in general management or consulting
- 36% expect to run own company
- Top skills they want to acquire:
  - Strategic thinking (56%)
  - Leadership (46%)
  - Management (43%)
- Increase salary on average by 55%
  - 27% expect salary to at least double

# Highlights: Decision Making

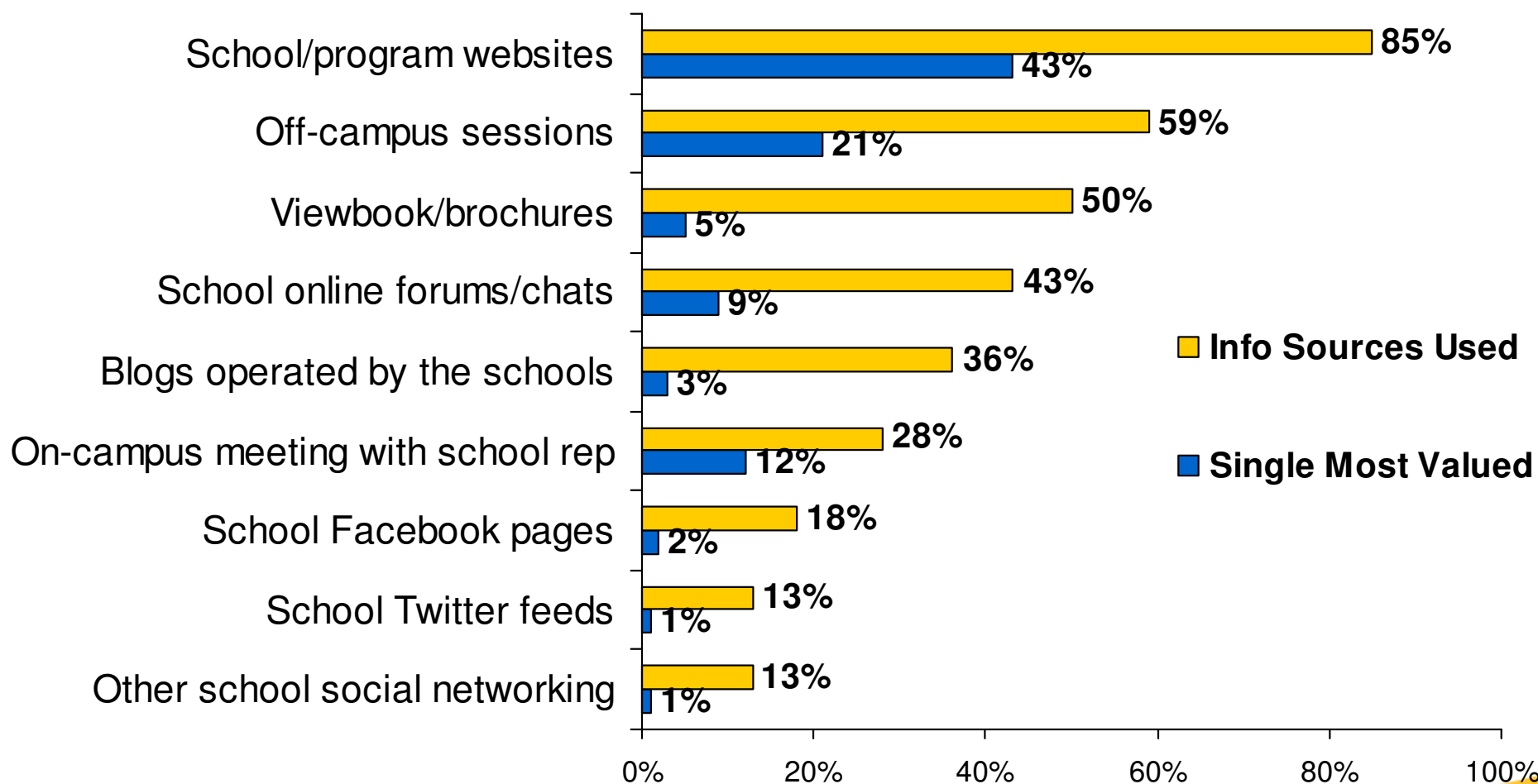
- Primary factors driving where they apply
  - Impact on career
  - School reputation
- Secondary factors are more broad
  - Student experience
  - Faculty
  - Leadership development
  - Alumni network
  - Career services
  - Course curriculum focus

# Deep Dives

- Information sources
- Social media
- Financial aid

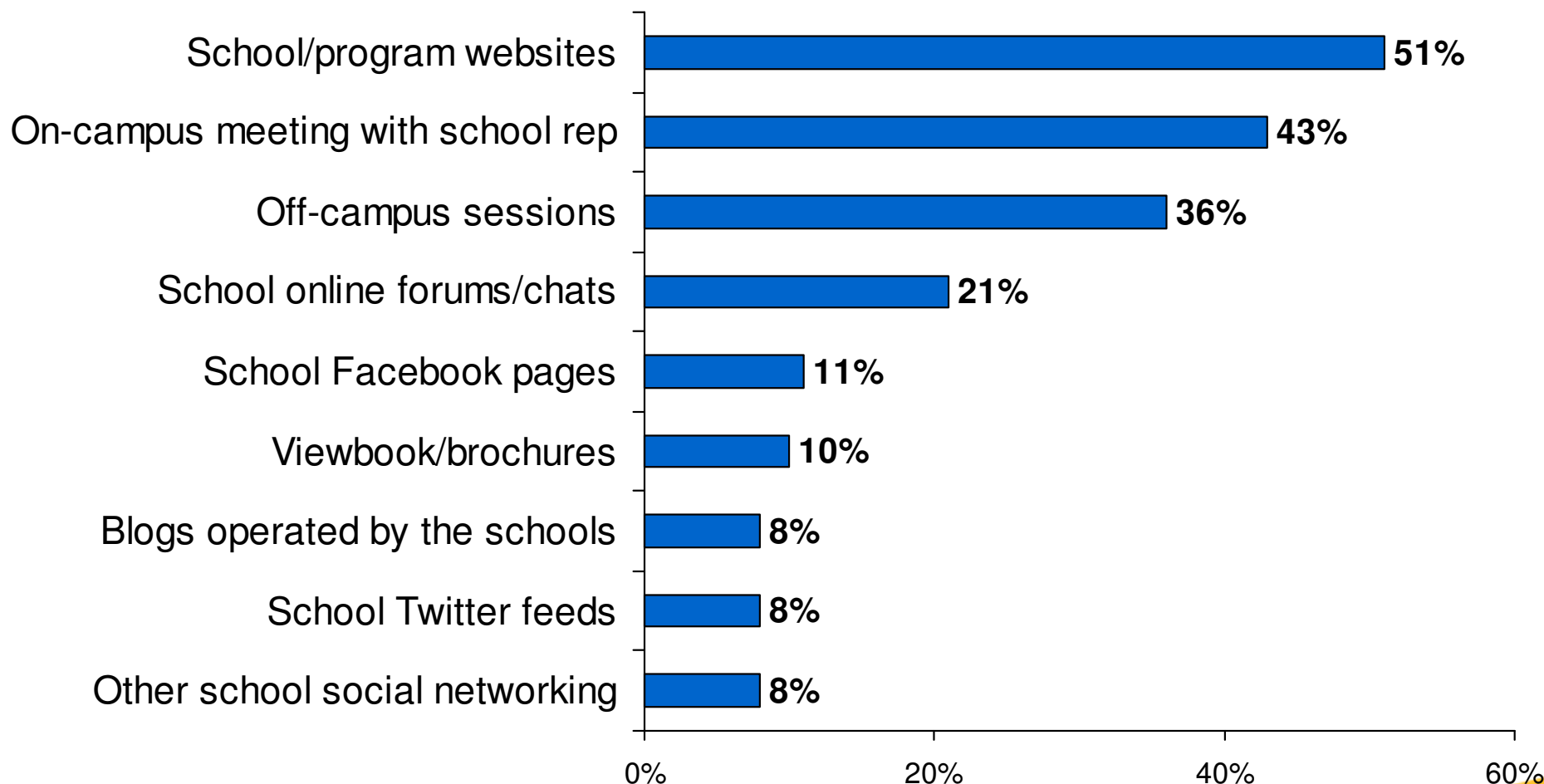
# Deep Dive: School Information Sources

## Information sources from schools



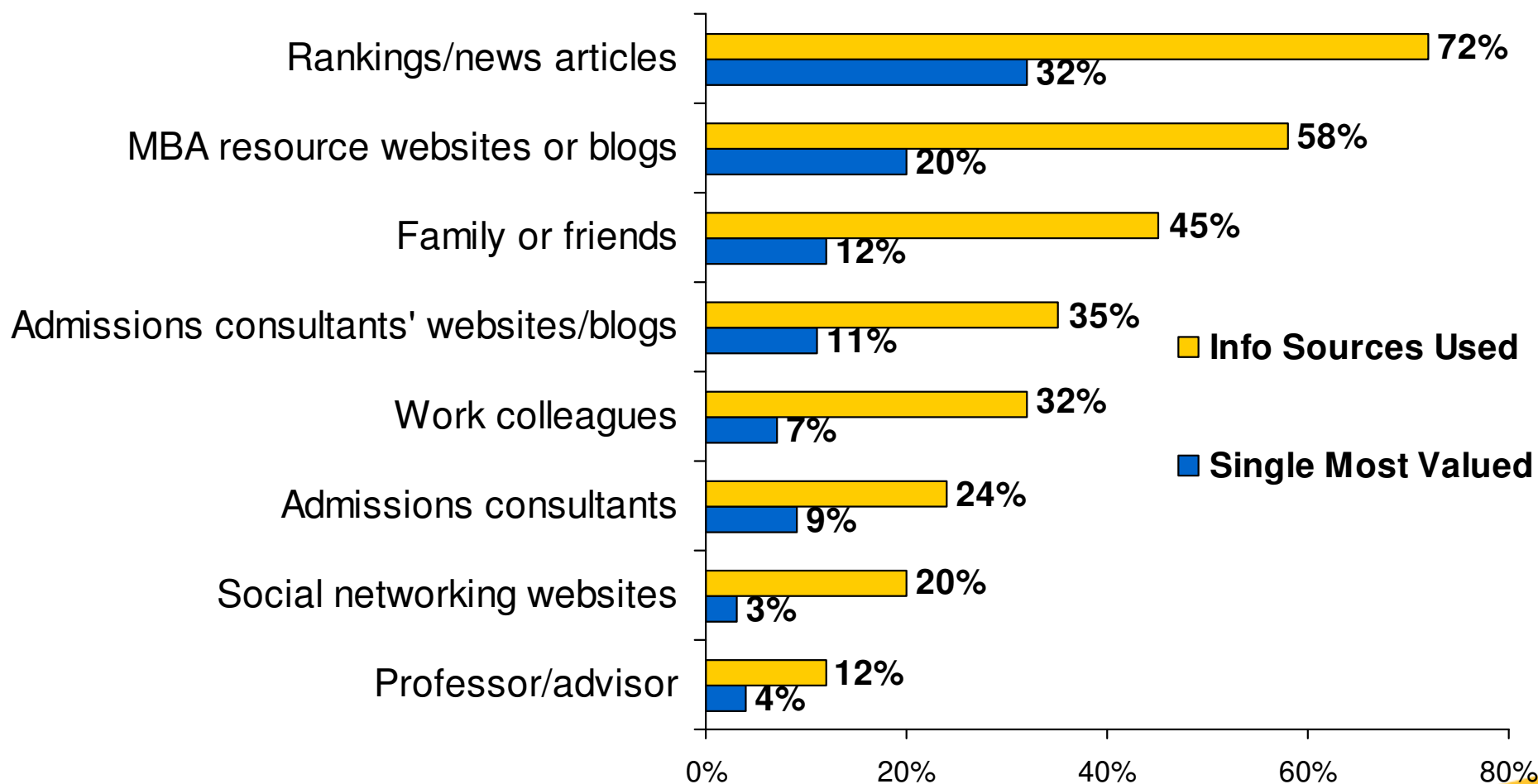
# Deep Dive: School Information Sources

Of those who use each, % rating it their most valued source



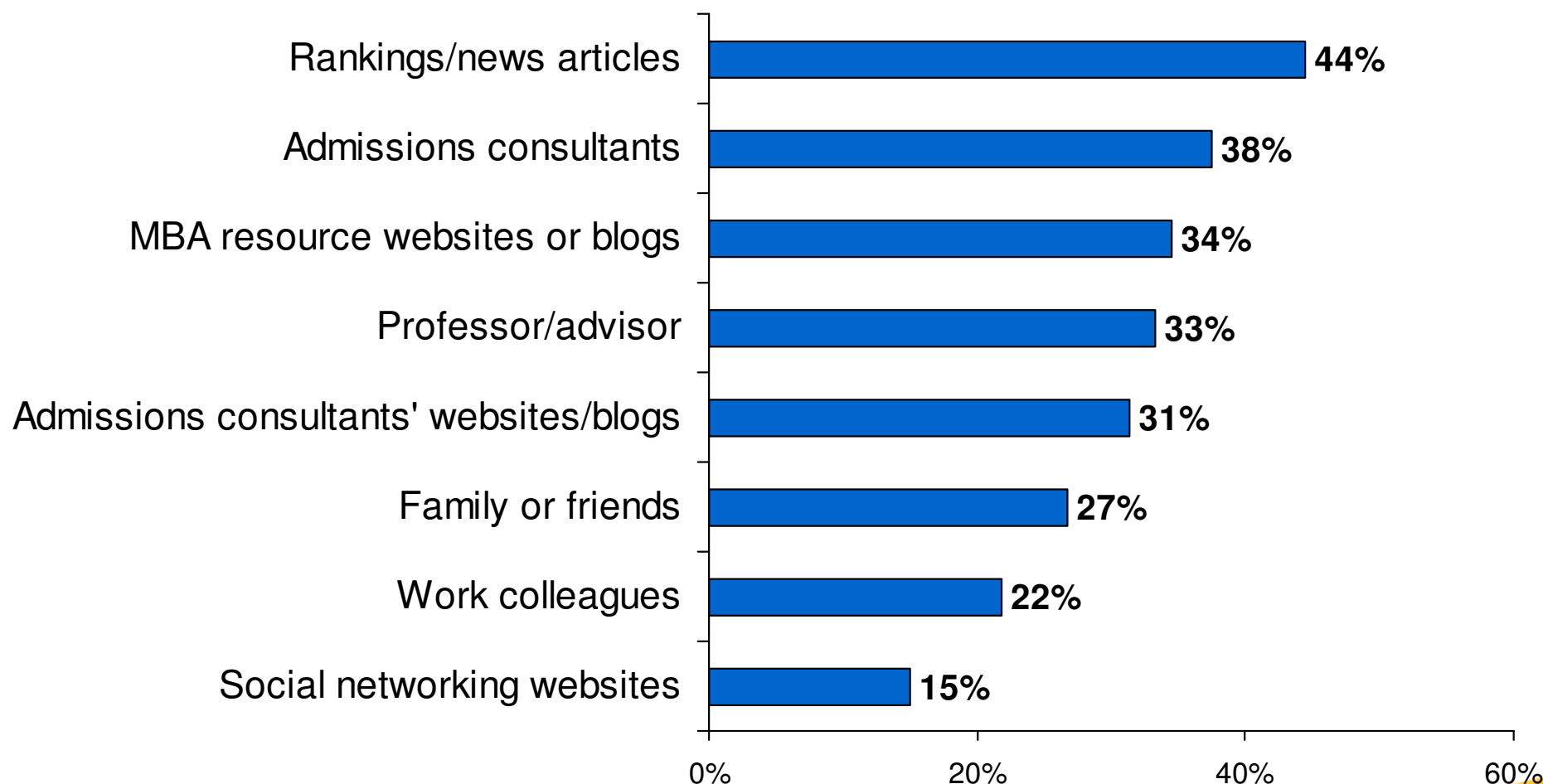
# Deep Dive: Independent Information Sources

## Independent information sources



# Deep Dive: Independent Information Sources

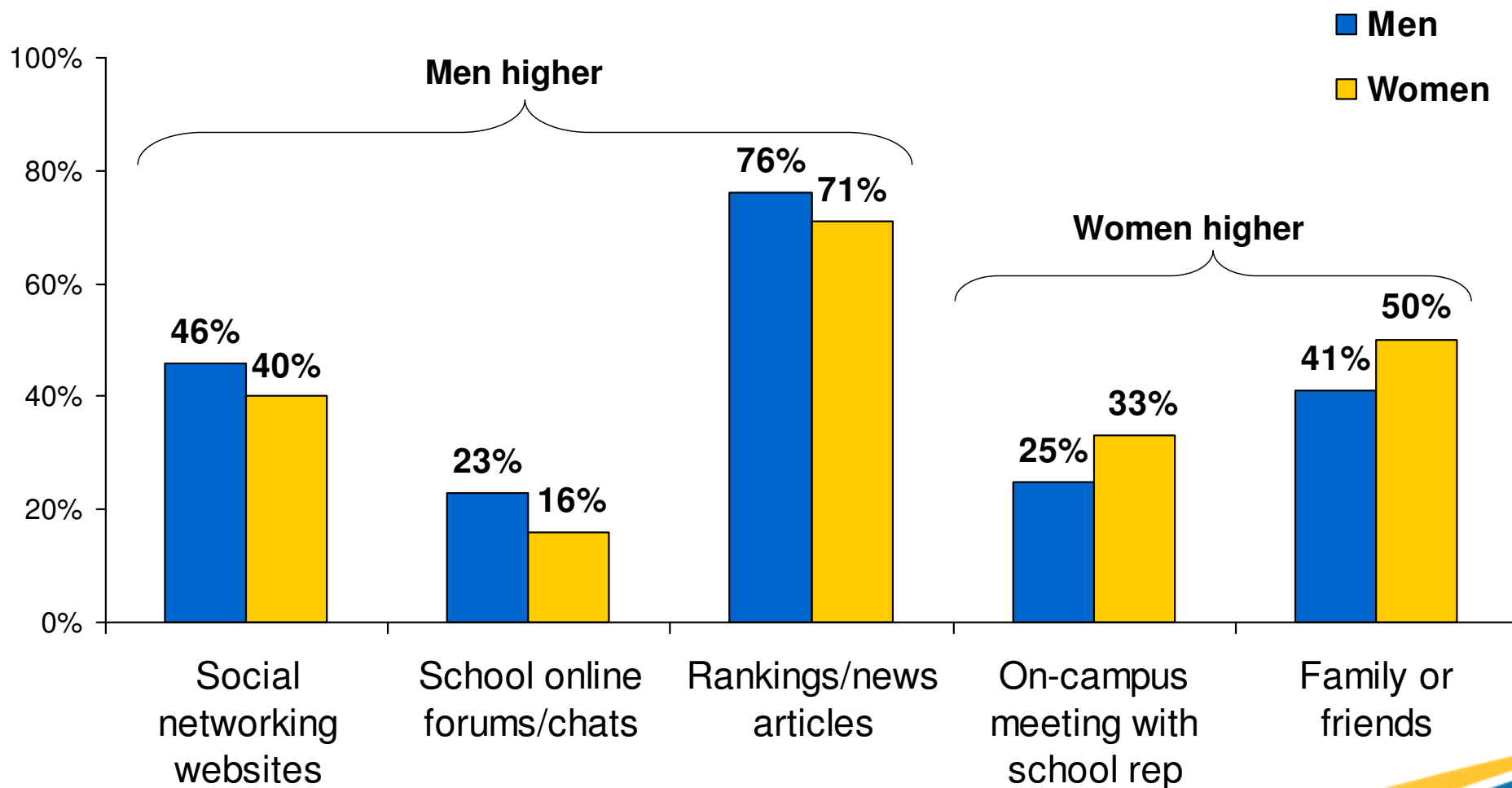
Of those who use each, % rating it their most valued source





# Deep Dive: Information Sources

## Gender differences in information sources



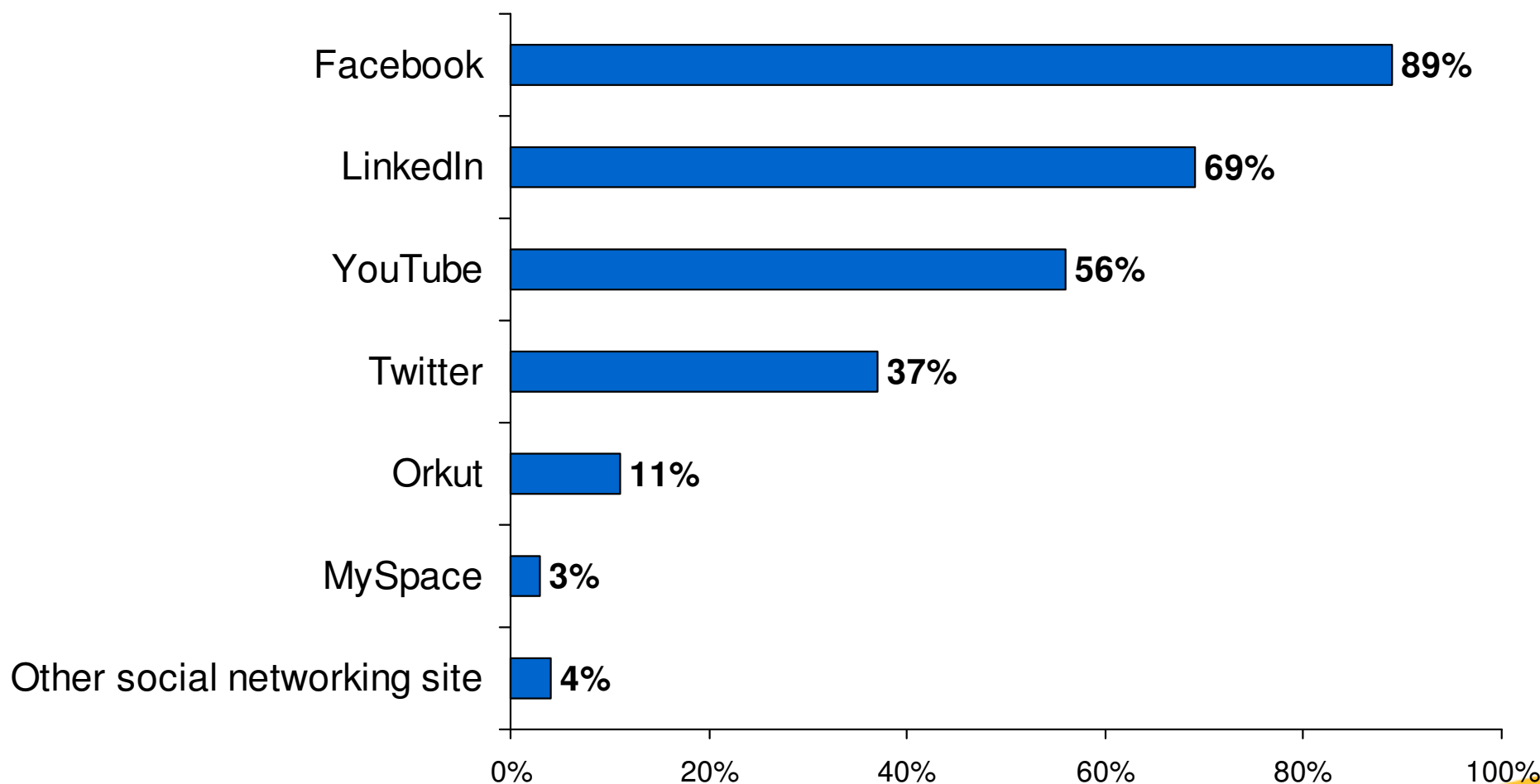
# Interesting Insights About Information Sources

- International applicants...
  - Use more school Facebook pages and independent SM
  - Value school websites and news articles/rankings more
- U.S. applicants use and/or value...
  - On-campus meetings with school reps
  - Family & friends' recommendations
  - Admissions consultants
  - Schools' Twitter feeds
- Online forums, live chats and blogs used more by high than low GMAT scorers

# Panel Discussion on Information Sources

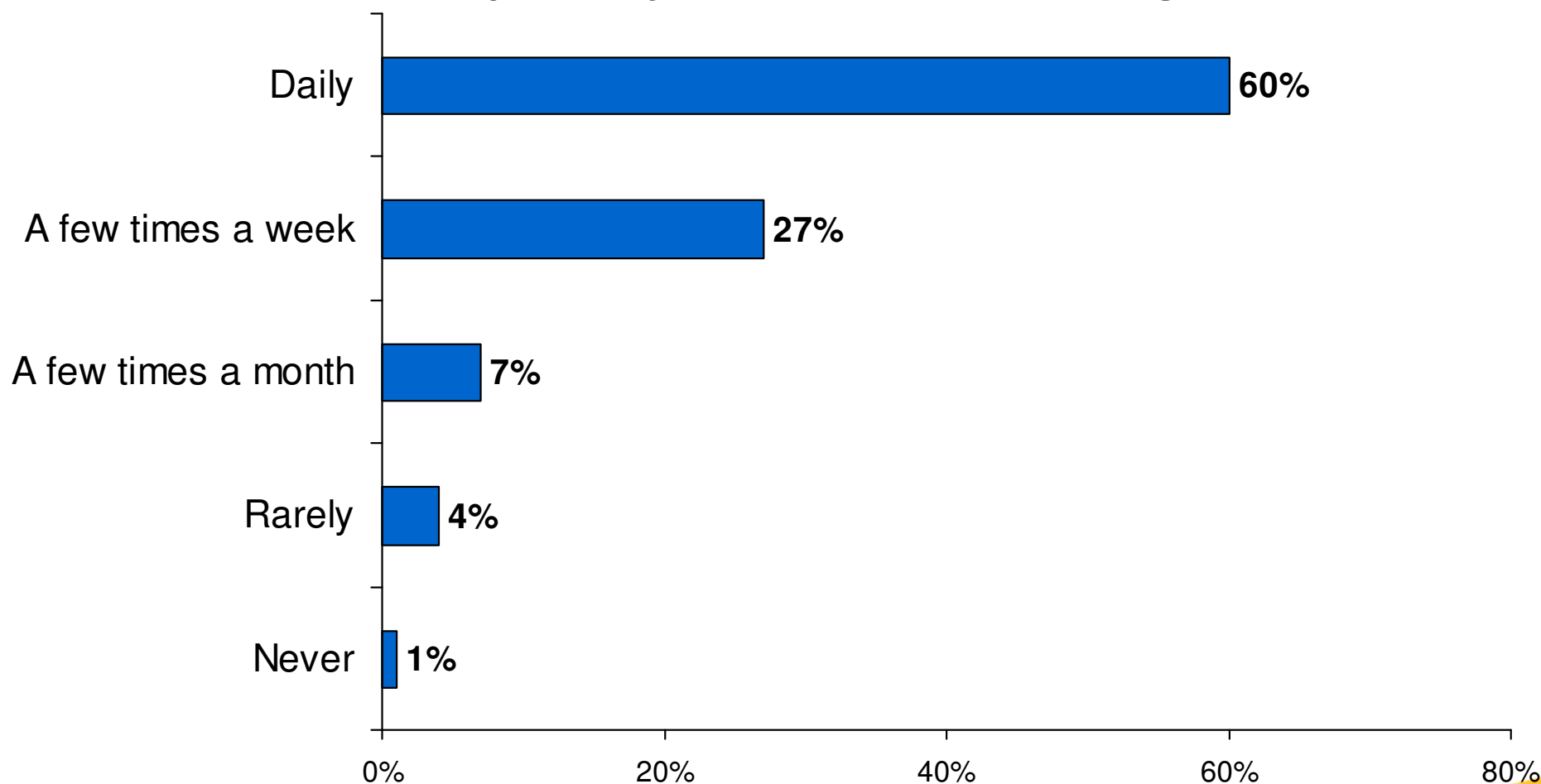
# Deep Dive: Social Media

*Which of the following do you currently use?*



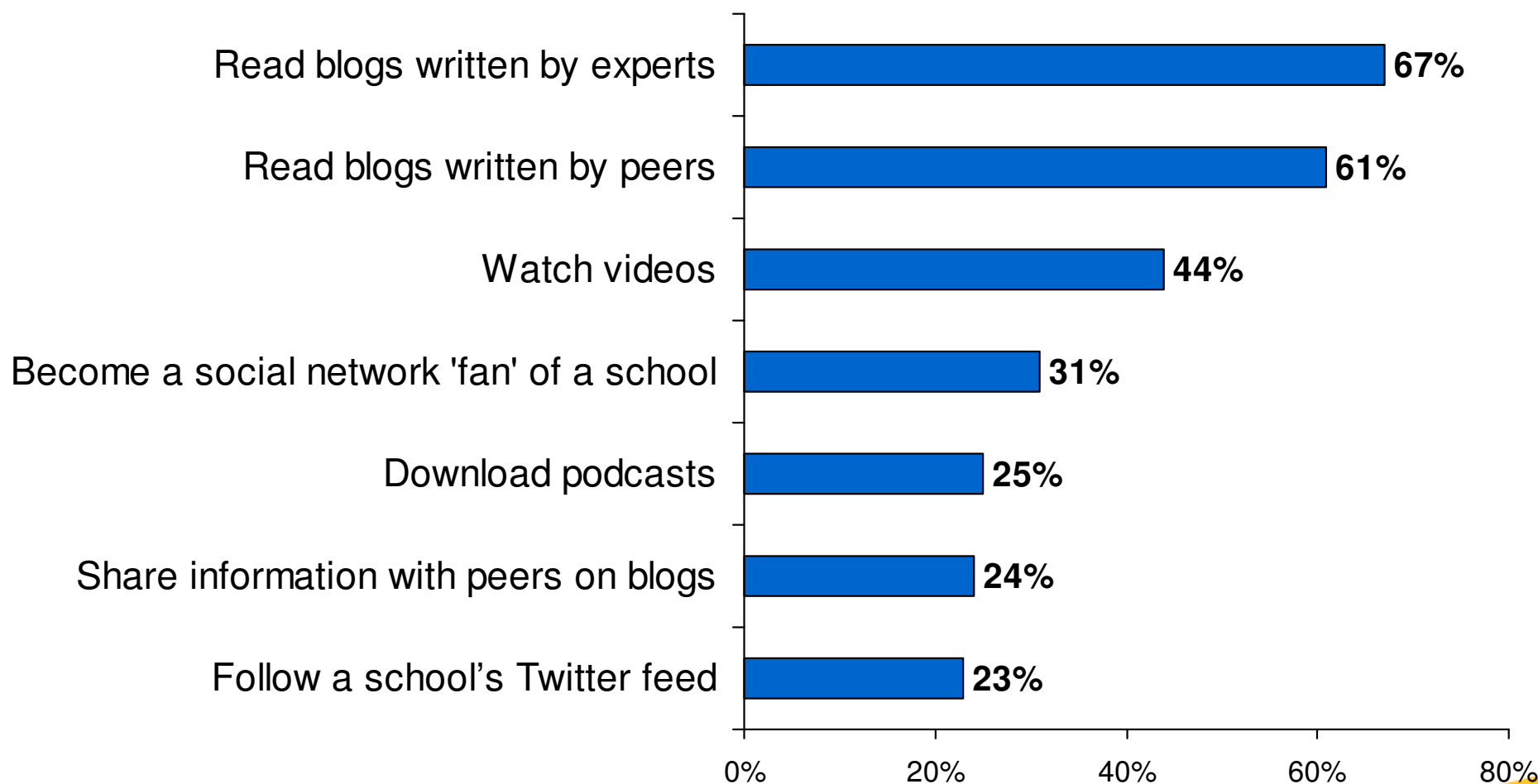
# Deep Dive: Social Media

*How often do you visit social networking sites?*



# Deep Dive: Social Media

*How do you use social media in your MBA search?*



## Deep Dive: Social Media

- Heavy users of Social Media in their search:
  - Are slightly younger (27 vs. 28)
  - Apply to more schools (7 vs. 5)
  - Apply for LESS financial aid and use loans MORE
  - Place more importance on most of the decision-making factors in selecting schools, except cost of program

# Interesting Insights About Social Media Usage

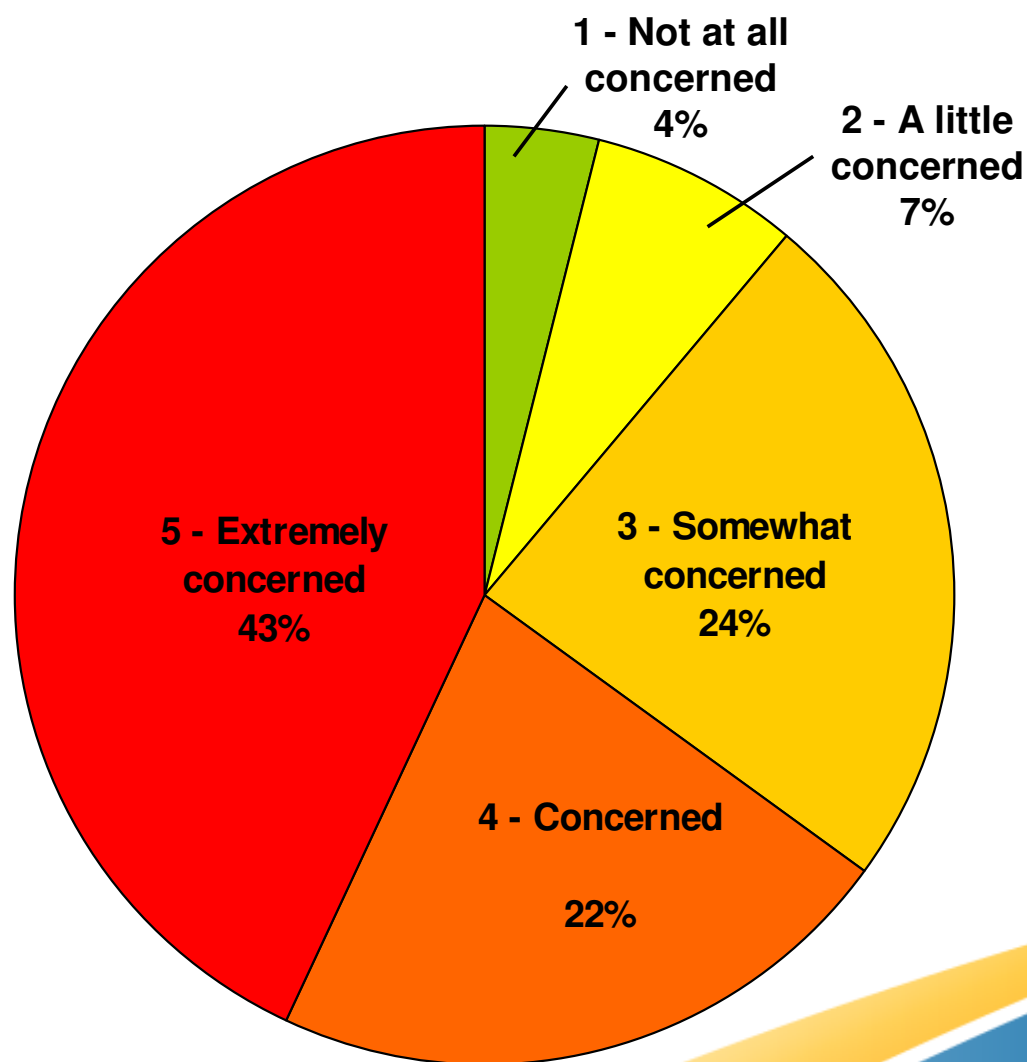
- Those with higher GMAT scores use LinkedIn more
- Internationals share information on MBA blogs more
- Heavy users of Social Media in their search also...
  - Hope to gain more skills in strategic thinking and operations
  - Choose schools more based on:
    - Quality of student experience
    - Leadership development
    - Team-oriented environment
    - Campus community
    - Accessible faculty



# Panel Discussion on Social Media

# Deep Dive: Financial Aid

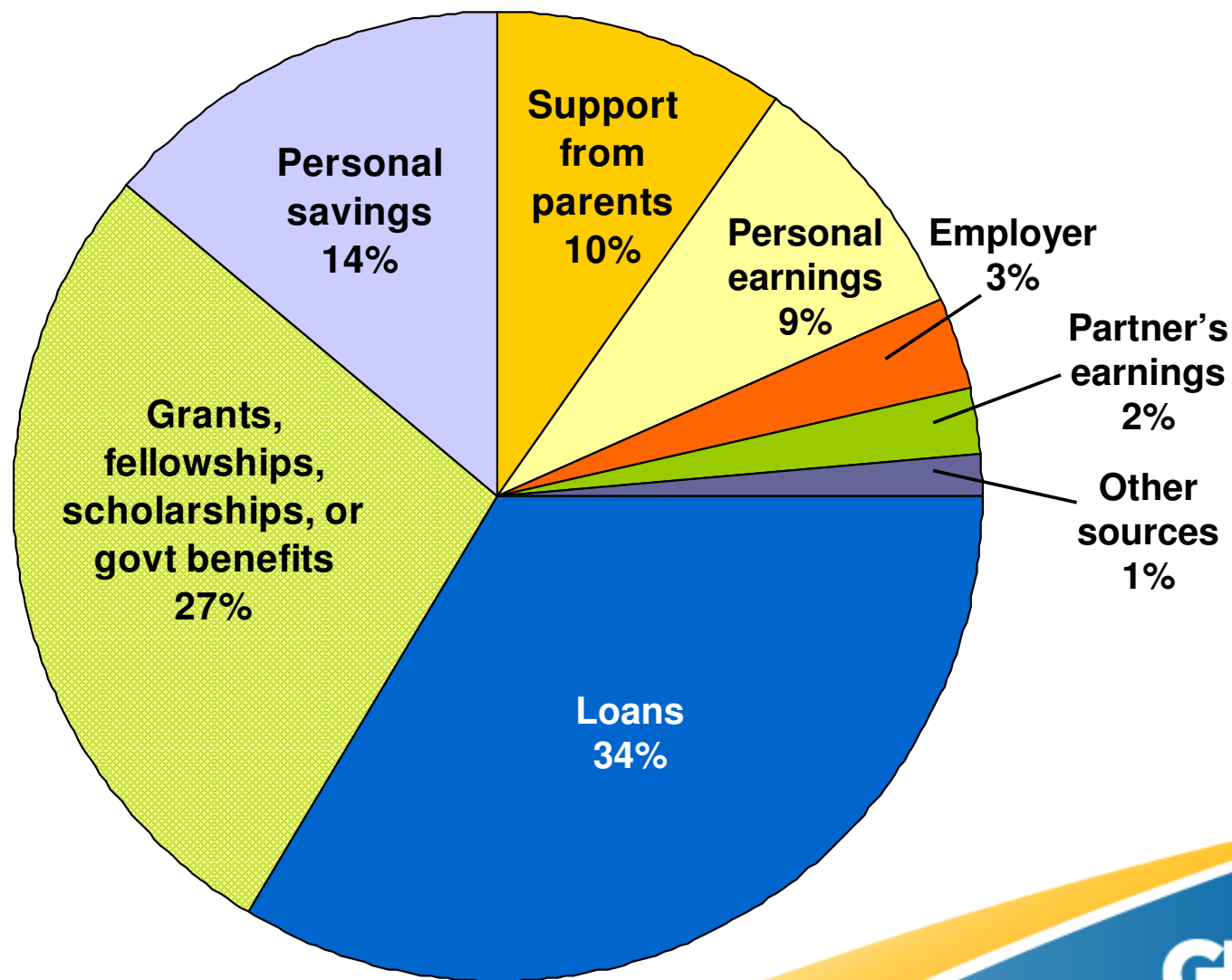
*How concerned are you about financing your graduate business education?  
(Scale of 1 to 5)*



# Deep Dive: Financial Aid

75% request financial aid

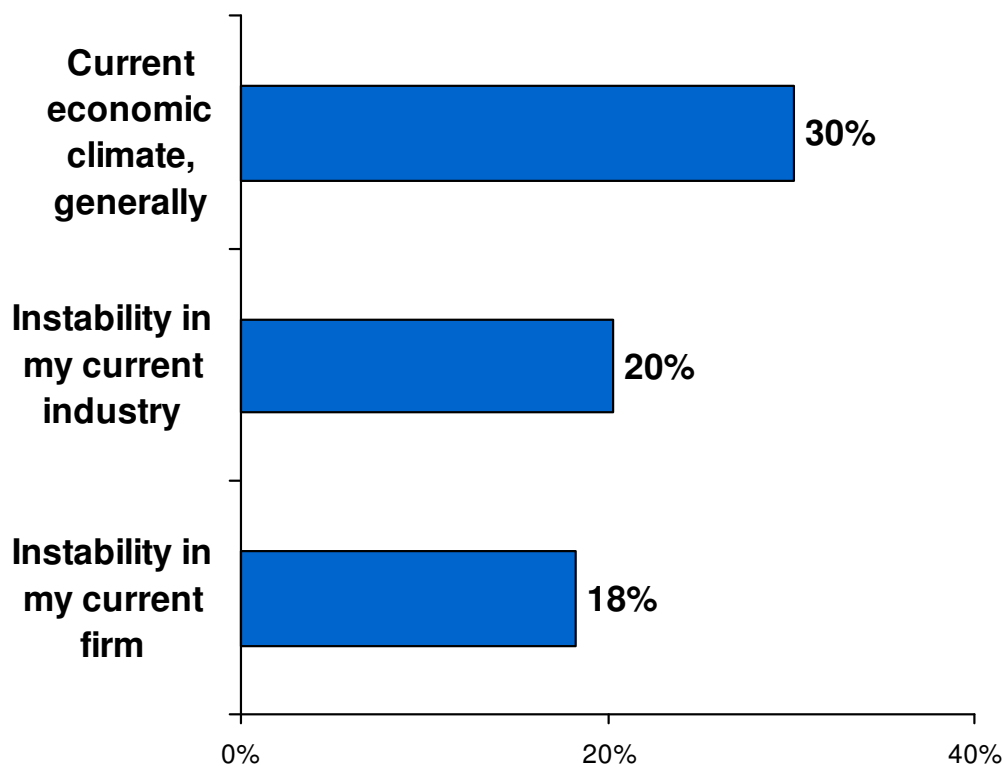
Sources of financing



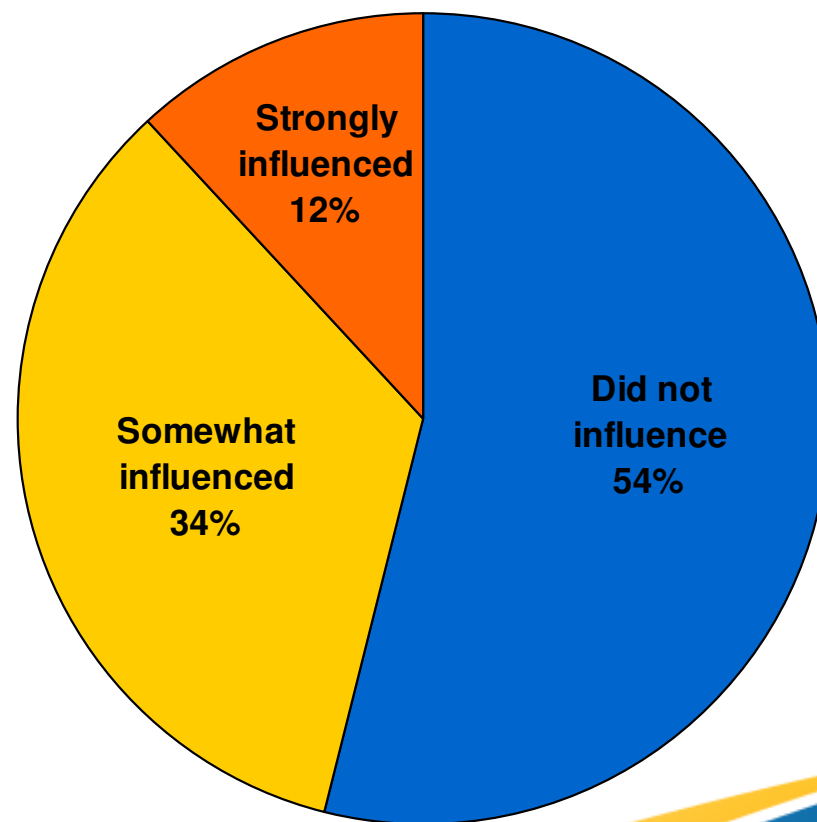
# Deep Dive: Financial Aid

*How important to you was each of the following factors in your decision to apply to MBA programs this year?*

*(Those selecting 4 or 5, where 5 is “very important”)*

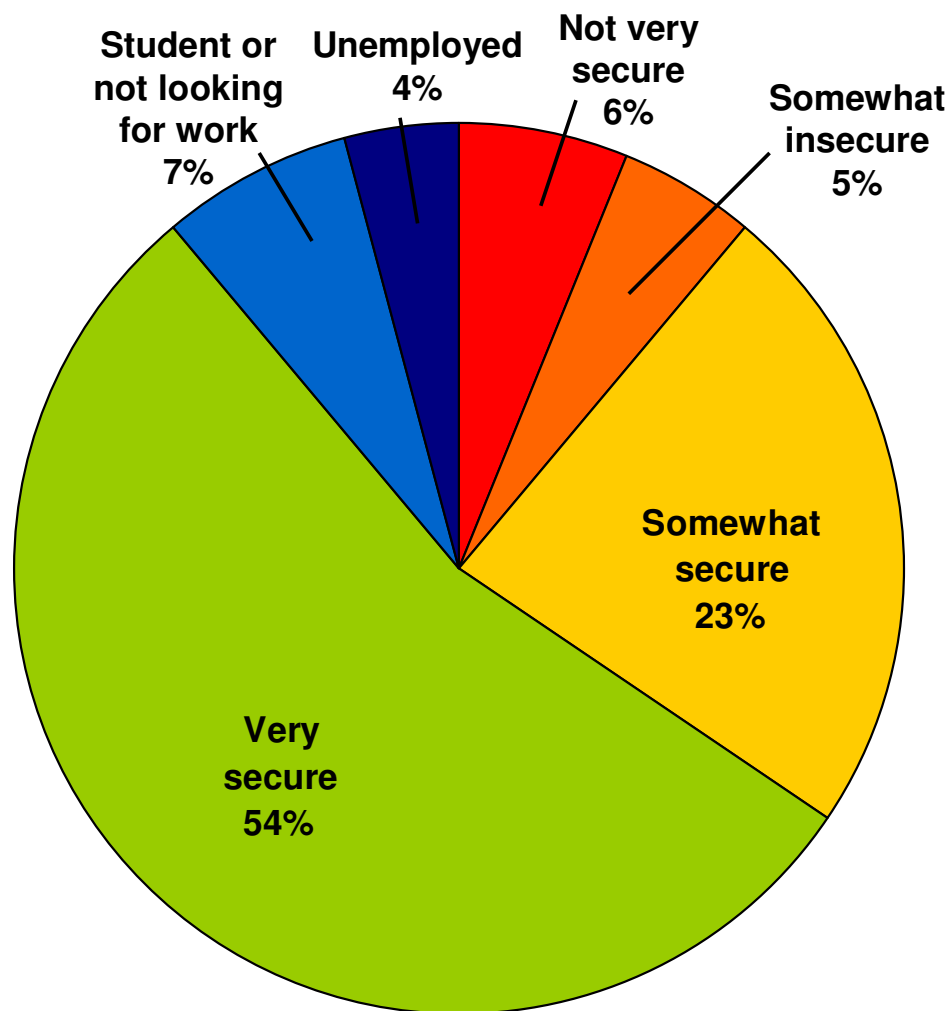


*Overall, how has the current state of the economy influenced your plans to get an MBA?*

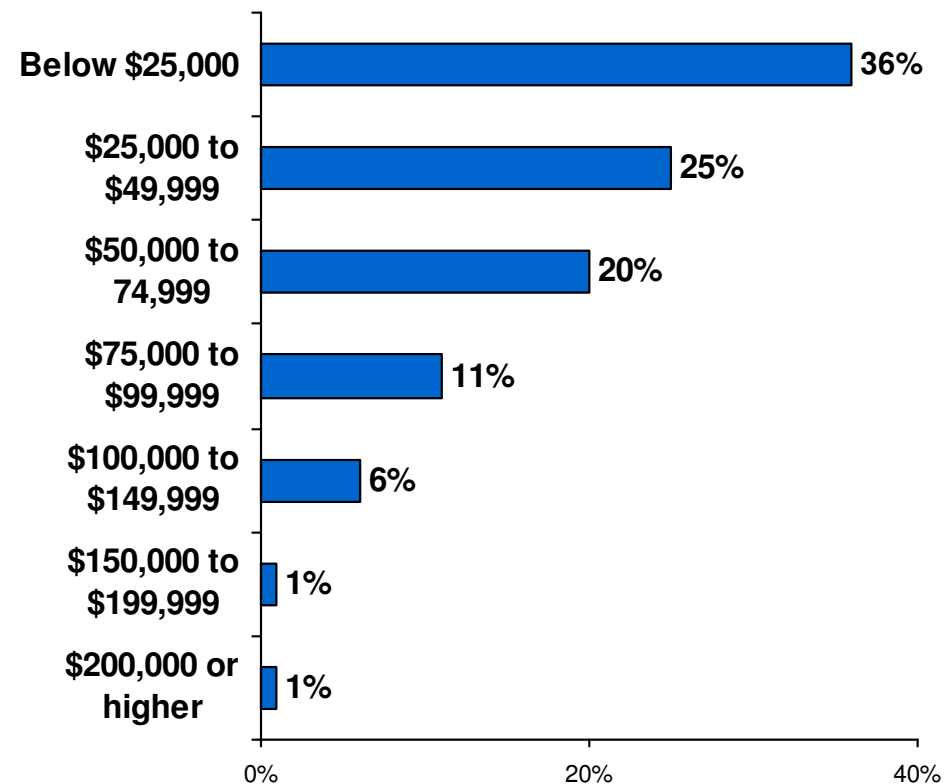


# Deep Dive: Financial Aid

*How secure do you feel in your current job?*



**Current annual professional income**



# Interesting Insights About Financial Aid

- Internationals...
  - Will finance mostly with loans, but plan to rely more on personal earnings and support from parents than U.S. applicants
- Those with lower GMAT scores...
  - Cite instability in their current firm and the state of the economy as bigger reasons to apply to MBA programs
  - Are more concerned about financing their education
  - Are less secure in their current jobs, more often unemployed, and have lower salaries

# Panel Discussion on Financial Aid

Q + A