

CX stories: Customer Experience Barometer


“The Voice of the Customer”

Nationwide Survey Results

A'wave_2026

1st Issue





CX Stories: **The Focus Bari** **Experience Barometer** **2 issues per edition**

Twice a year (Spring & Fall)

we publish two issues of **CX Stories**, capturing Greek consumers' service experiences and their views on Artificial Intelligence in customer service.

1st Issue: The Voice of the Customer

Positive experiences (**WOW CX Stories**) are highlighted as part of the EIEP National Customer Service Week.

Negative experiences (**OUCH CX Stories**) reveal opportunities for improvement and growth.

2^o Issue: AI & Customer Service Trends

Greek consumers' views, expectations, and concerns regarding the role of Artificial Intelligence in the future of customer service.

Research Specifications



This edition (Part A) explores customer service experiences through stories and trends that reflect the Voice of the Customer..”

The next issue (Part B) explores the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in customer service and provides a comprehensive assessment of customer experiences.

Online interviews via the YouGov panel

Structured questionnaire

Population: Men & Women 18+ Nationwide

Representative sample: 1,010 people.

Conducted: May 2026

Focus Bari is YouGov’s Affiliate Partner in Greece (www.yougov.com)

1st Issue

“The Voice of the Customer”



Contents



The Pulse of the market



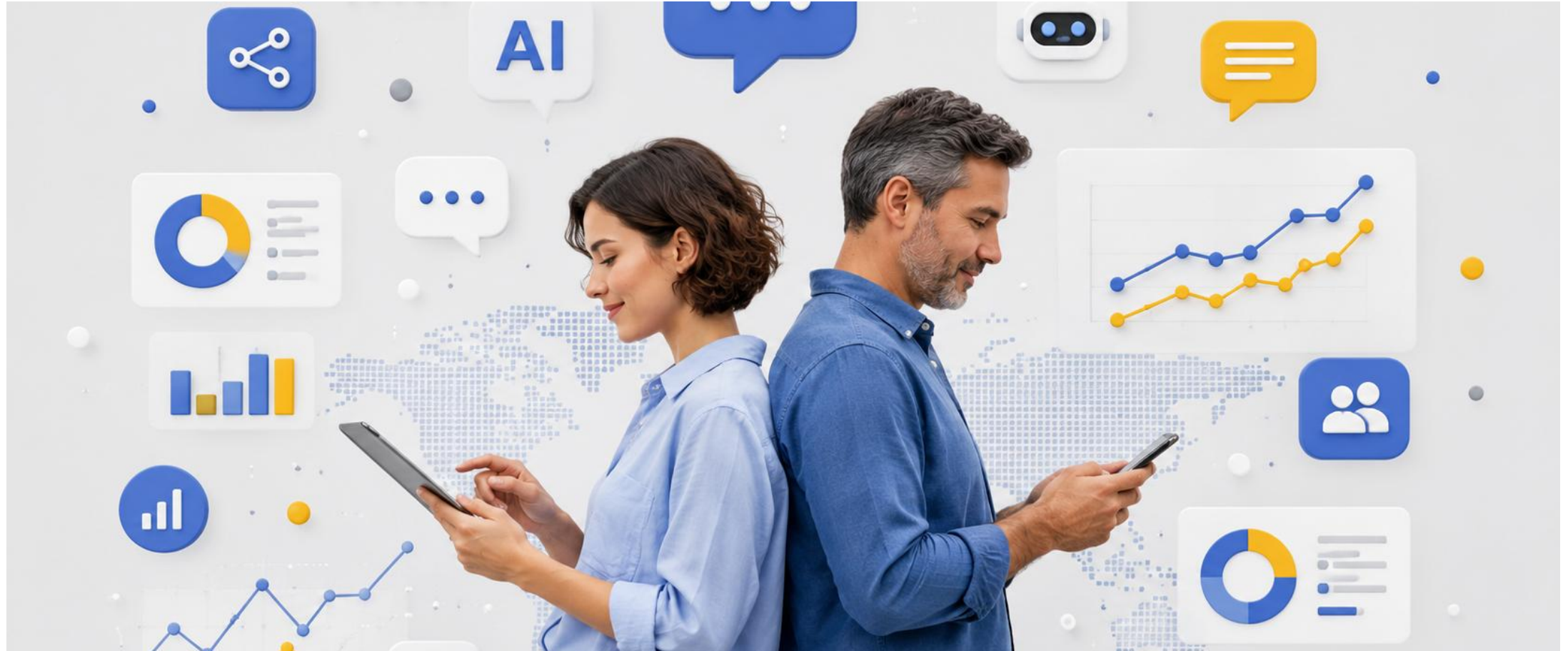
Customer Journey Stories



Customer Service “do’s & dont’s”

SECTION 1:

The Pulse of the Market

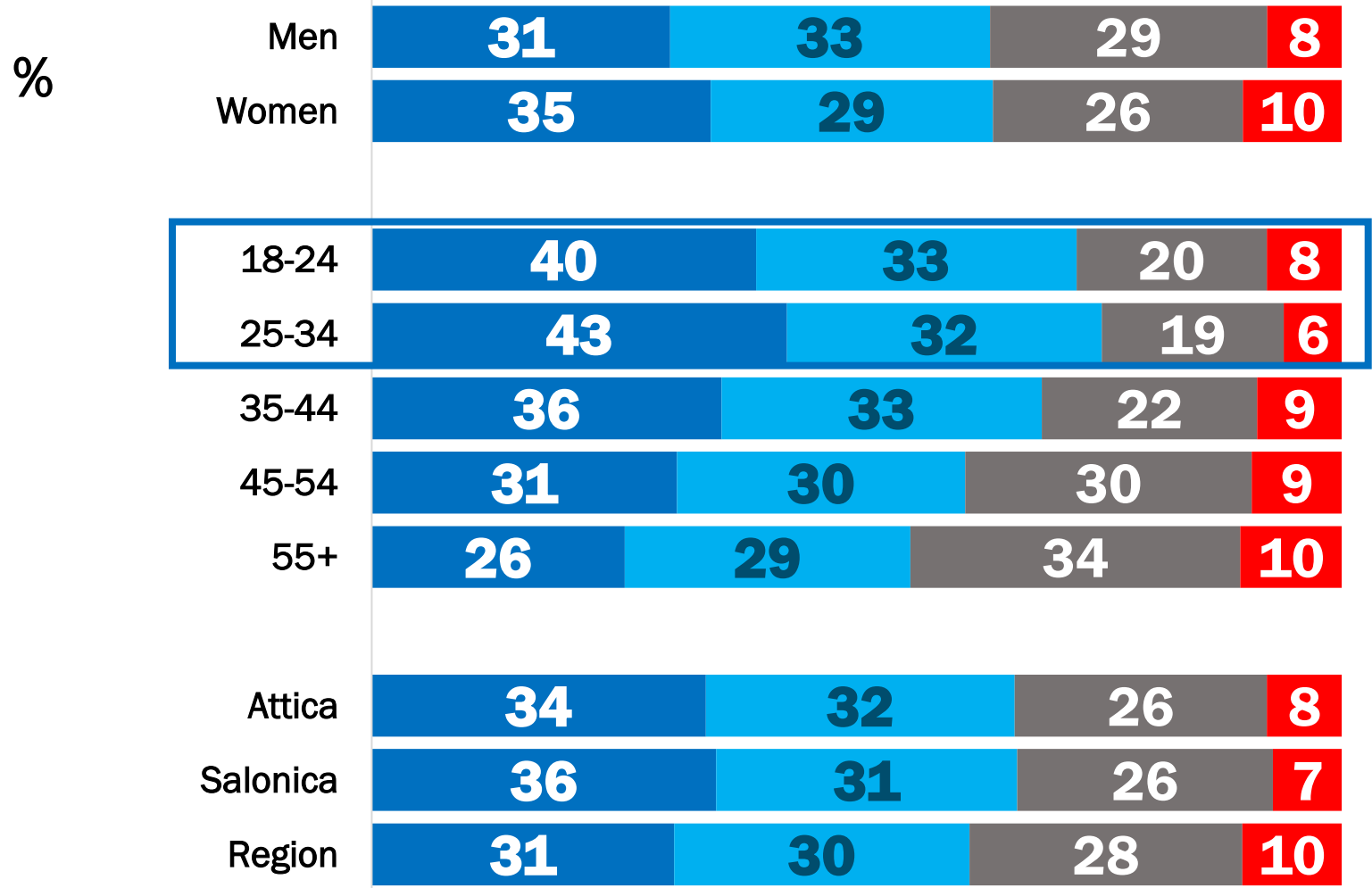
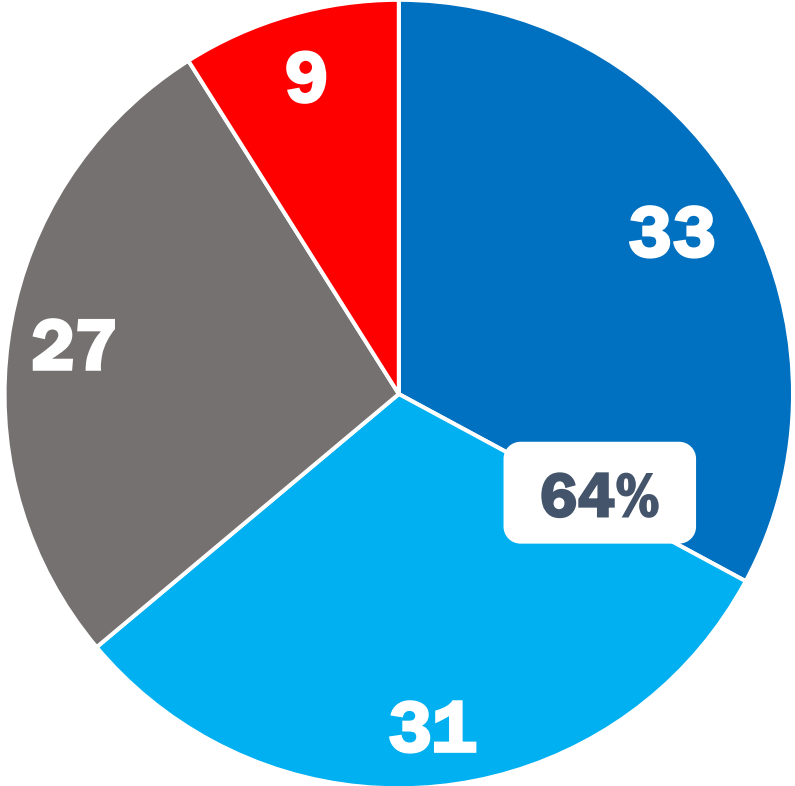


Before Making a Purchase...



“How often do you read or consult reviews and ratings from others when deciding to buy a product or service?”

Nearly two out of three Greeks read reviews before making a purchase... Young consumers are even more likely to do so



■ Always/ almost always
 ■ Systematically/ quite often
 ■ Sometimes yes/ sometimes no
 ■ Not so often/ rarely/never

Leaving Reviews ...

*“And how often—or not—do **you** go **out of your way** to leave a **review after an experience** with an organization at any point of contact (online site, social media, by phone, in-store), when that experience **was exceptional (WOW)?**”*

*“And how often—or not—do **you** go **out of your way** to leave a **review after an experience** with an organization at any point of contact (online site, social media, by phone, in-store), when that experience **was disappointing (OUCH)?**”*

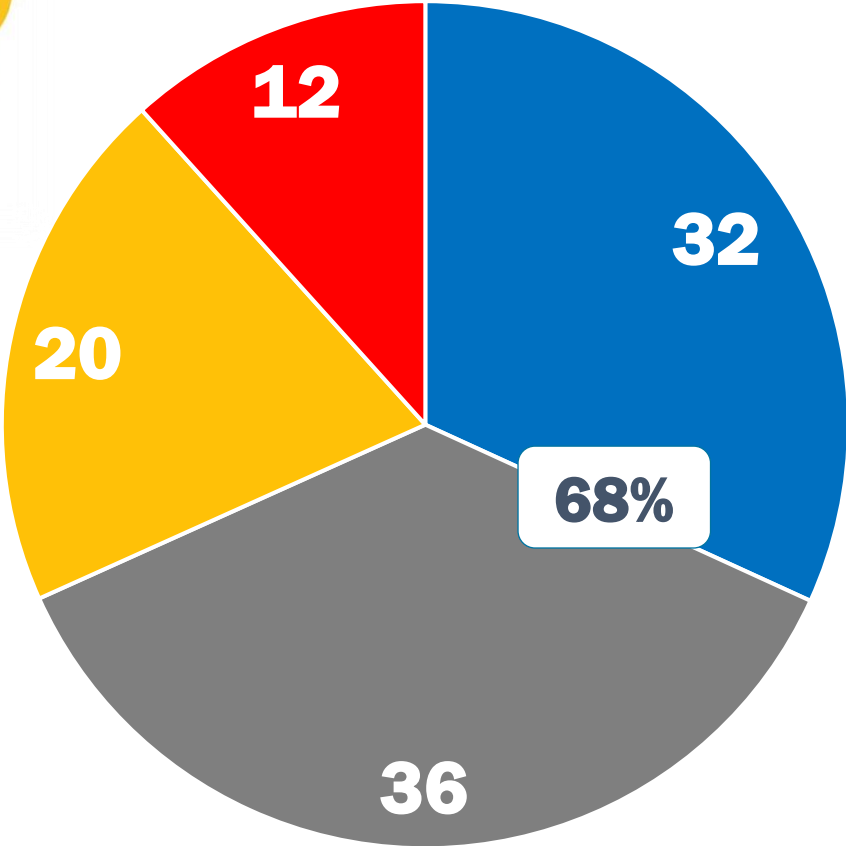


Emotion Drives the Voice of the Customer

Consumers share both positive and negative experiences

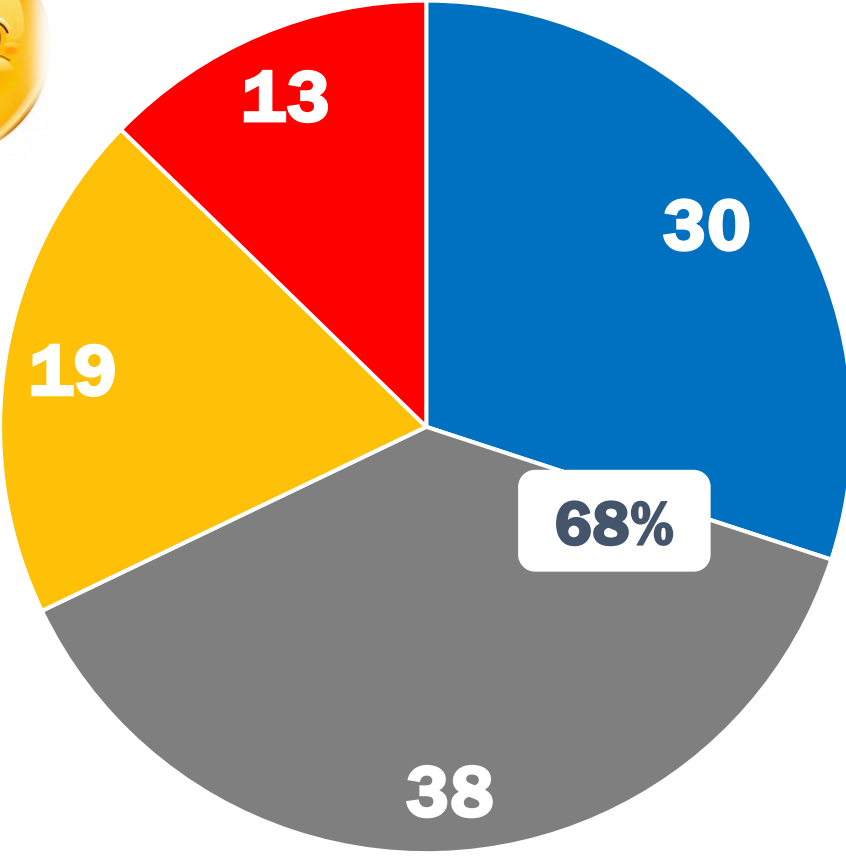


after an exceptional (WOW) experience...



after a disappointing (OUCH) experience...

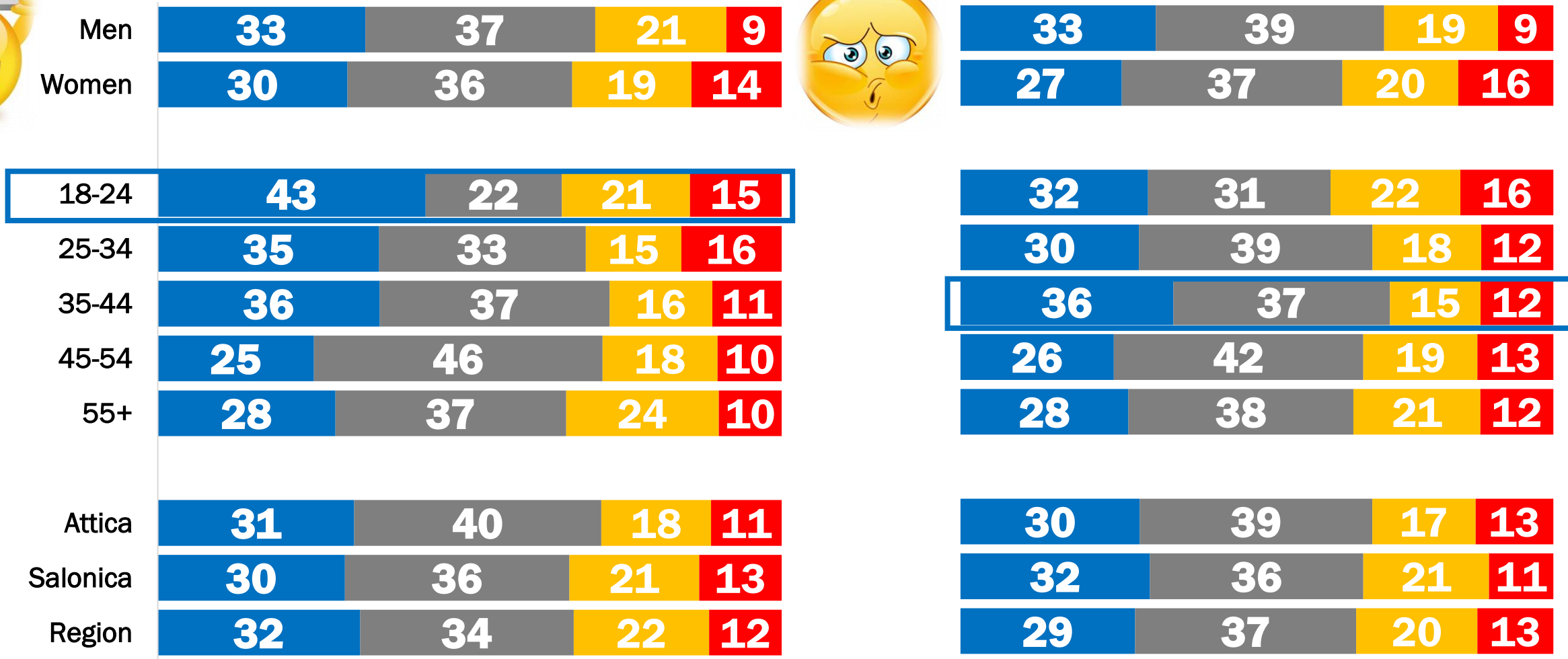
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■ Often/systematically ■ Sometimes yes/ sometimes no ■ Not so often ■ Rarely/never

Different generations, different ways of expressing themselves

18-24 are more likely to give praise, while aged 35-44 are more likely to express dissatisfaction.



■ Often/systematically
 ■ Sometimes yes/ sometimes no
 ■ Not so often
 ■ Rarely/never

Word-of-mouth Recommendations



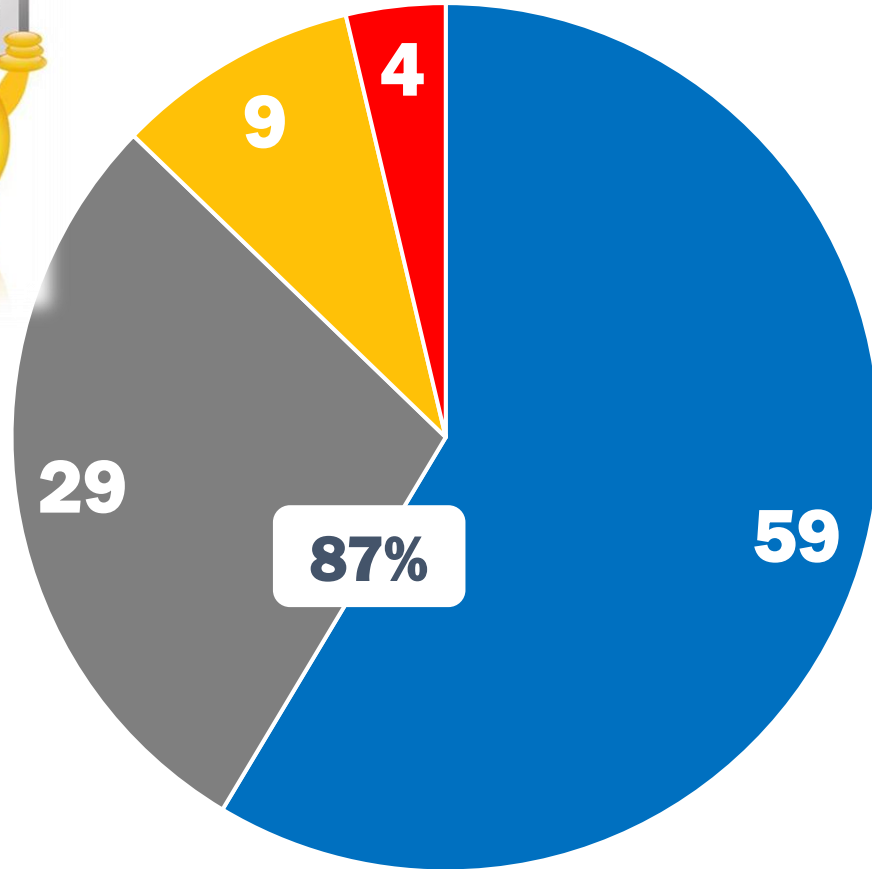
“How often—or not—do you discuss with your friends or acquaintances an experience you had with an organization, when that experience was: exceptional (WOW).”

“How often—or not—do you discuss with friends or acquaintances an experience you had with an organization when that experience was: bad (OUCH).”

Experiences Get People Talking

Almost everyone shares what impresses or disappoints them

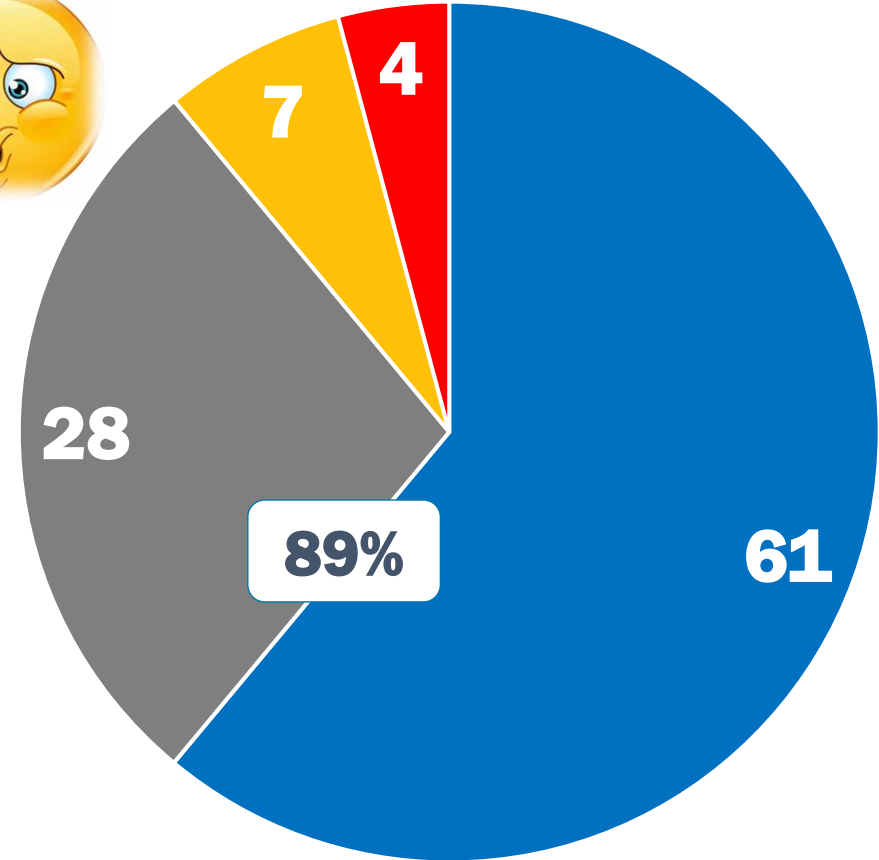
Exceptional (WOW) Experience...



Disappointing (OUCH) Experience...

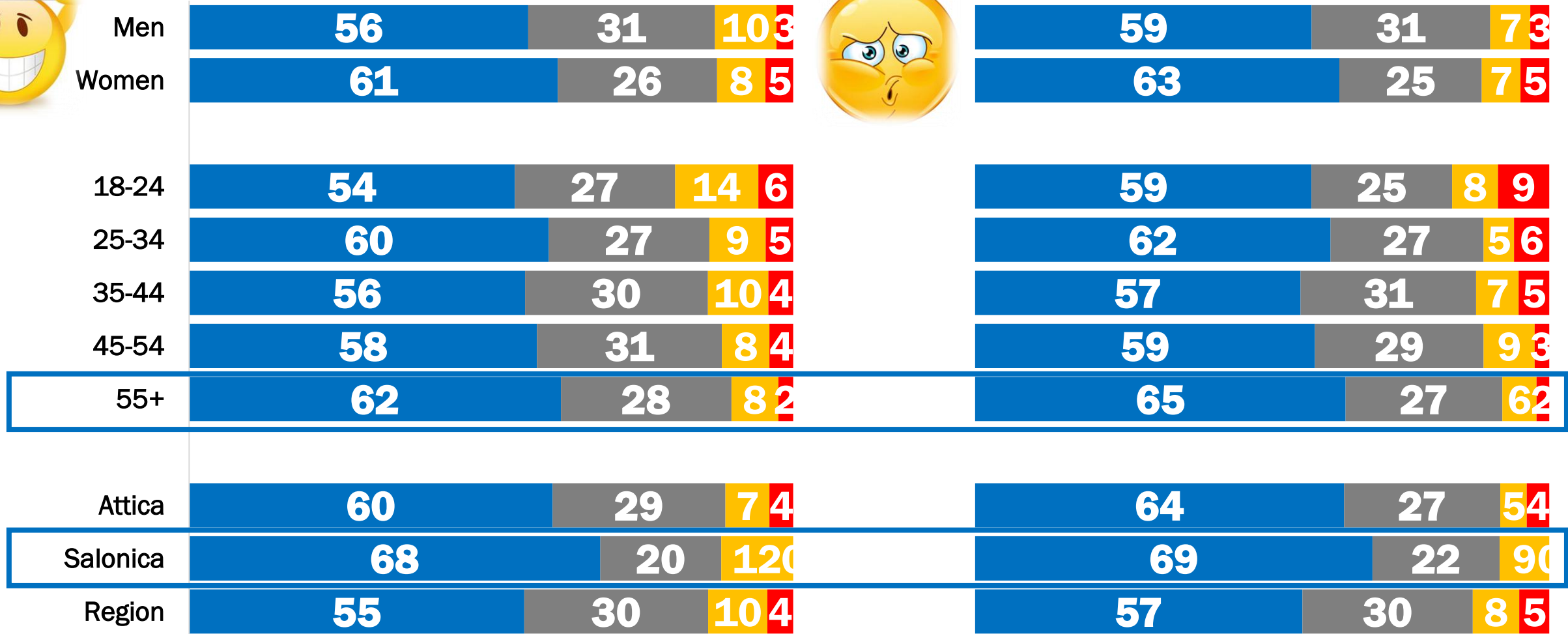


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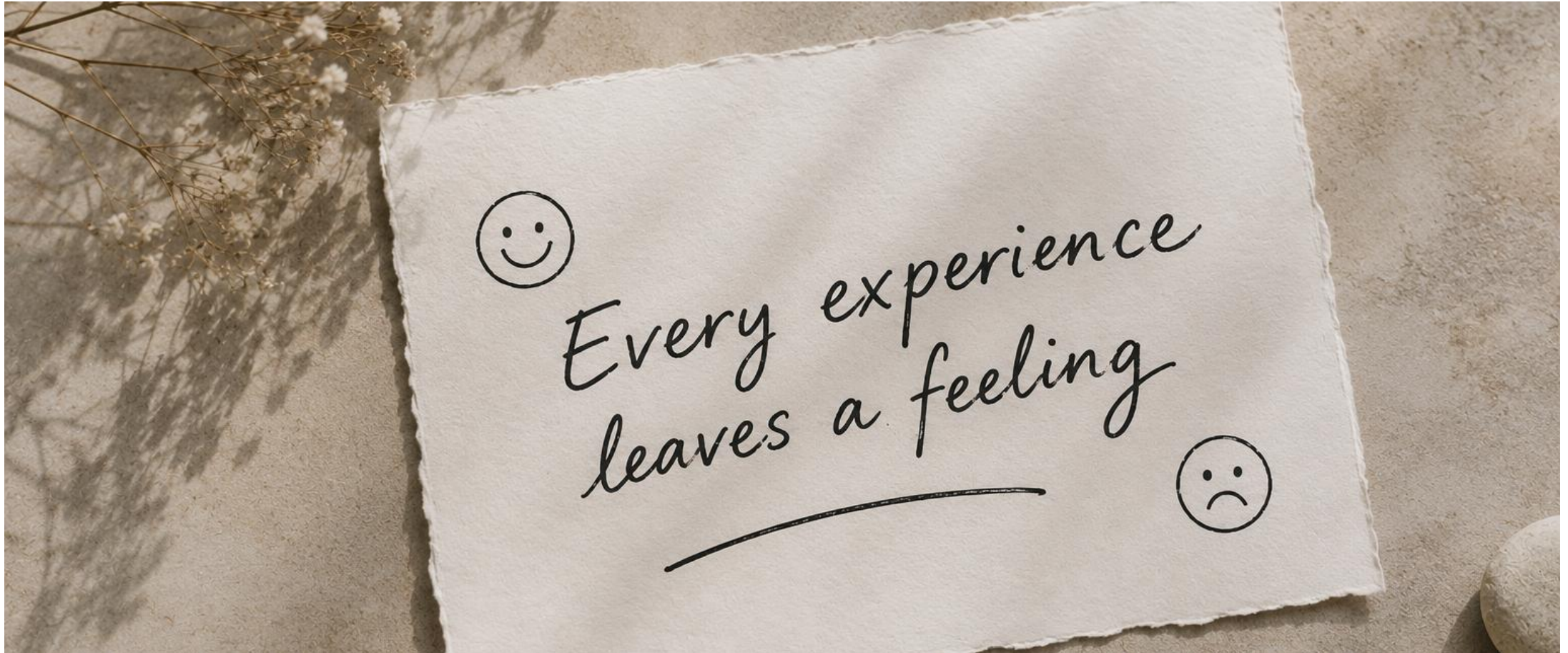
The older the consumer, the more likely they are to share their experiences



■ Often/systematically
 ■ Sometimes yes/ sometimes no
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 ■ Rarely/never

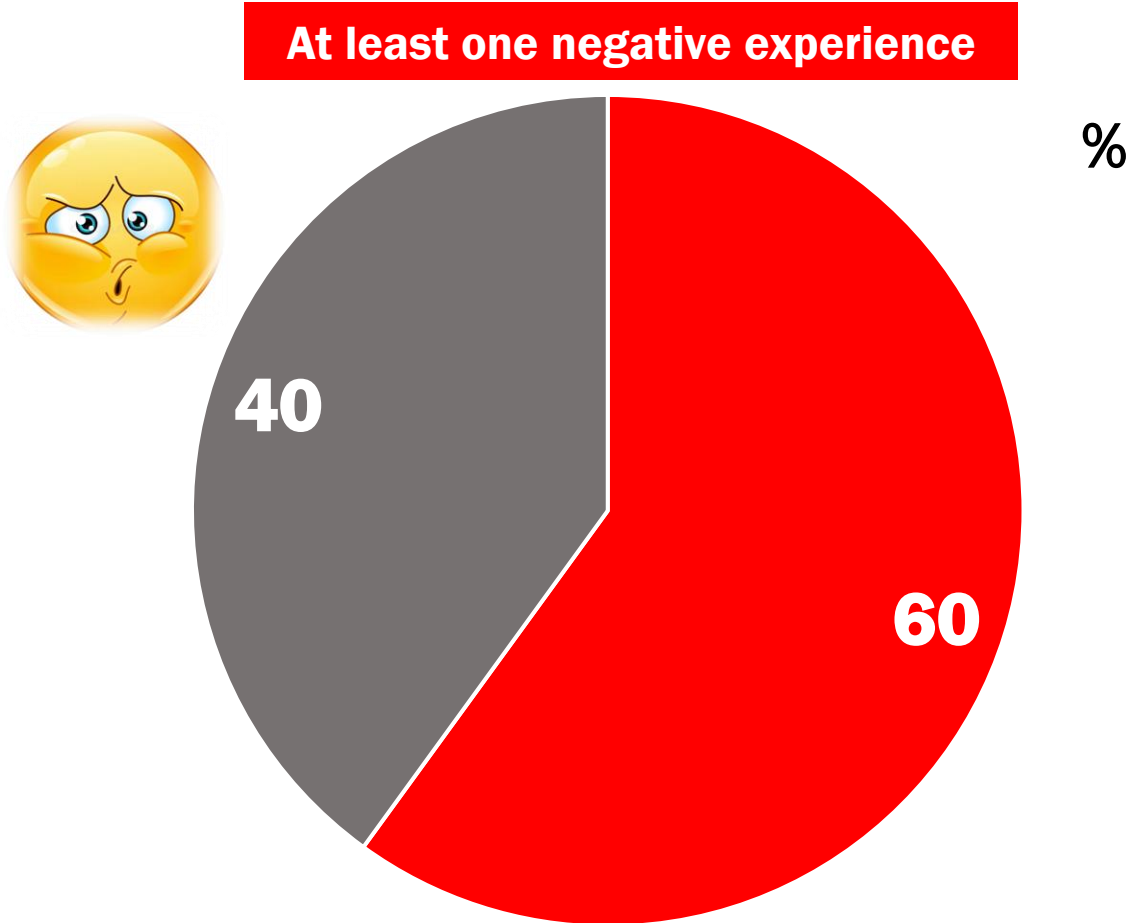
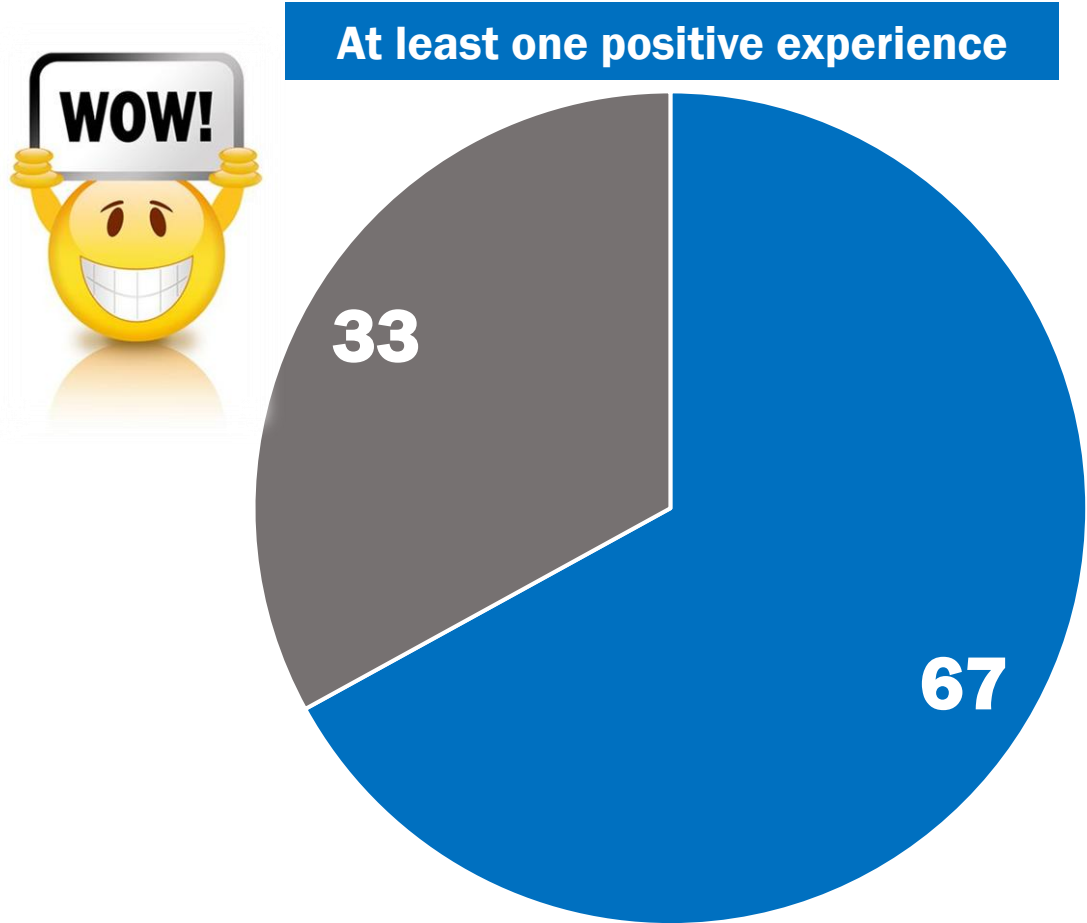
SECTION 2:

Customer Journey Stories



The impact of customer service remains strong

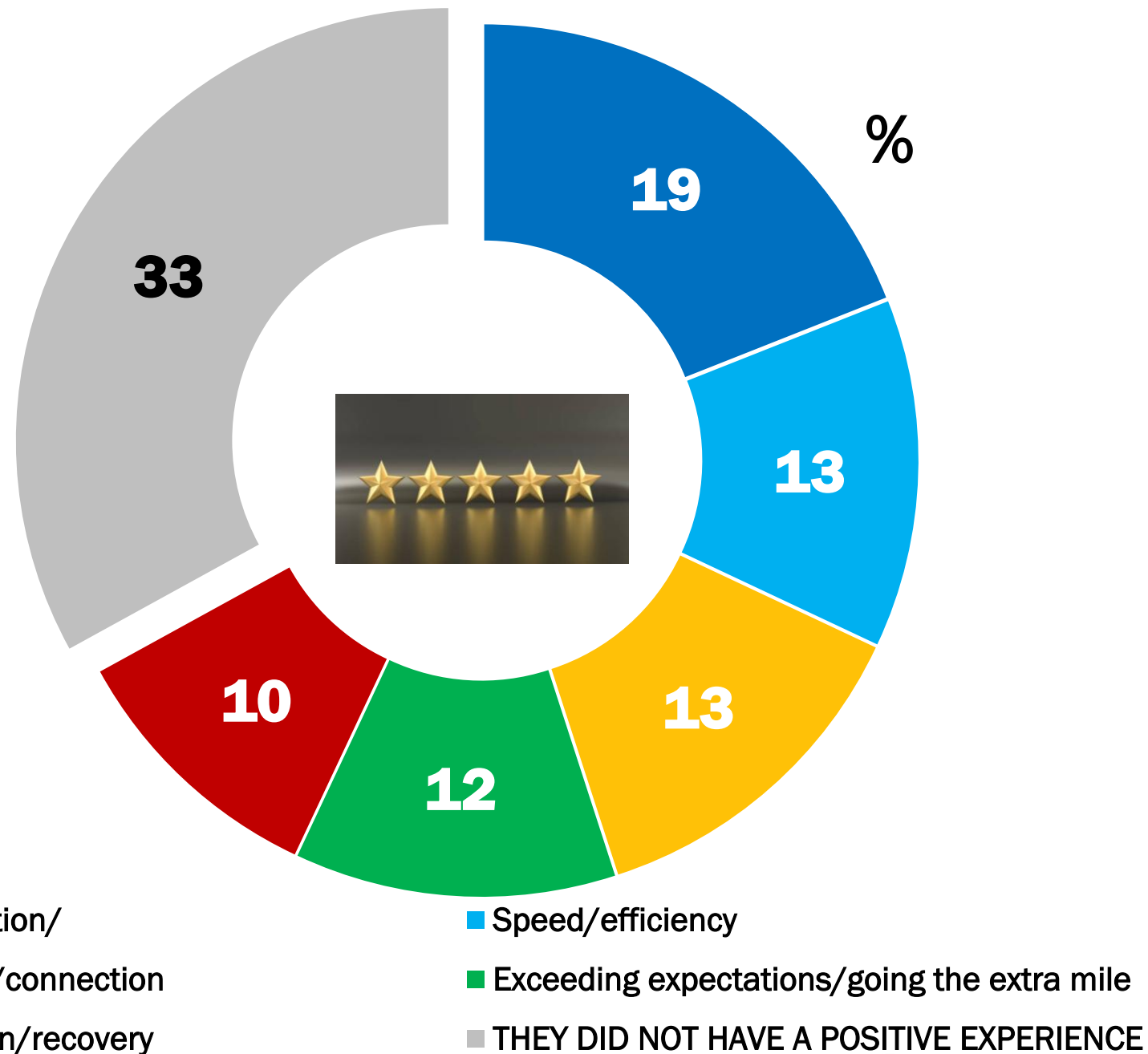
Positive experiences prevail, although negative ones are also common



■ At least 1 Positive ■ None in the last 6 months ■ At least 1 Negative

Positive experiences start with proper execution.

The basic satisfaction, “getting the job done,” is a basic expectation. But the experiences that leave the strongest impression are linked to the human factor, exceeding expectations, and genuine interest in the customer.



Customer Experience Journeys



*The stories behind
best and worst experiences.*

*The following pages present
the most representative ones...*

Positive experiences – “extra mile” in practice

“At the checkout of the Super market... where I’ve been shopping for years, my debit card was declined because there were no funds in my account.

I froze! I didn’t have any cash on me, so I asked to leave the four bags of groceries and come back later.

The cashier, who knew me as a regular customer, turned to me and said:

“Don’t worry! Take your groceries and come back later to pay; we’ve known you for so many years.” I was stunned!

I left feeling moved. It wasn’t just good service; it was an act of trust that made me feel like I was treated as a person and not just as a customer.”

Going the extra mile begins when the rules make room for the person.

Positive experiences – “over and above” in practice

I had scheduled the installation of fiber optic cable by a telecommunications company, and everything seemed to be going smoothly. At the last minute, however, an unforeseen obstacle arose: to run the cable, I needed permission from a neighbor I didn't even know.

I assumed the installation would be delayed indefinitely.

Instead, the person in charge of the process took personal charge of the matter. She located the owner, contacted him, and secured his consent so that the work could be completed without delay.

What impressed me most was not just that a solution was found, but that someone took personal initiative to overcome an obstacle that seemed insurmountable to me.

Going the extra mile is evident when someone takes responsibility until a solution is found.

Positive experiences – “empathy” in practice...

“Last week we visited an Italian restaurant without having made a reservation. The place was packed, and we figured it would be hard to find a table. My daughter was on crutches, and from the very first moment, the staff showed her special attention.

They welcomed us with a smile, helped her sit comfortably, and did everything they could to serve us quickly and without any hassle.

What really impressed me wasn't just the service, but mainly the genuine concern and care they showed us.

Even though we weren't regular customers, they made us feel truly welcome.

Since then, we've been going there often and recommending it to friends and acquaintances.”

Empathy turns a simple service into a connection.

Positive experiences – “extra mile + empathy” in practice

“My trip between two islands in the Dodecanese for my vacation was fraught with great inconvenience and a long delay. When I finally arrived at the hotel, I shared what I had been through with the staff, expecting nothing more than a little understanding.

Their reaction, however, truly left me speechless.

They offered me three extra days of accommodation with a full all-inclusive package for four people, as well as access to activities and spa services.

The most impressive part was that the inconvenience wasn't the hotel's fault.

*Nevertheless, they chose to go above and beyond what anyone would expect, turning a **difficult** experience into a **lasting** memory.*

When care goes beyond the call of duty, a memorable experience is created.

Positive Experiences – “Recovery” in Practice

“I placed a food order through an online platform, but after more than an hour had passed, the order still hadn’t arrived. I was worried that something had gone wrong and contacted the help desk.

*The customer service team **responded immediately**, keeping me updated on the situation. They made sure **my order** was delivered **at no extra charge**. The next day, I also received a **€10 coupon as an apology for the inconvenience**.*

What I appreciated most was not just the compensation, but the fact that they took responsibility and made sure to immediately resolve the unpleasant situation.”

Proper resolution doesn’t just erase the problem; it builds trust.

Positive Experiences – “Speed” in practice

*“I visited a **bank branch** to schedule **an appointment for a personal matter**, assuming I would have to return another day, **as I had been told**.*

*To my surprise, the **receptionist** took the time to understand my request and, instead of scheduling an appointment for another day, **handled it right then and there**.*

Within a short time, my issue was resolved!

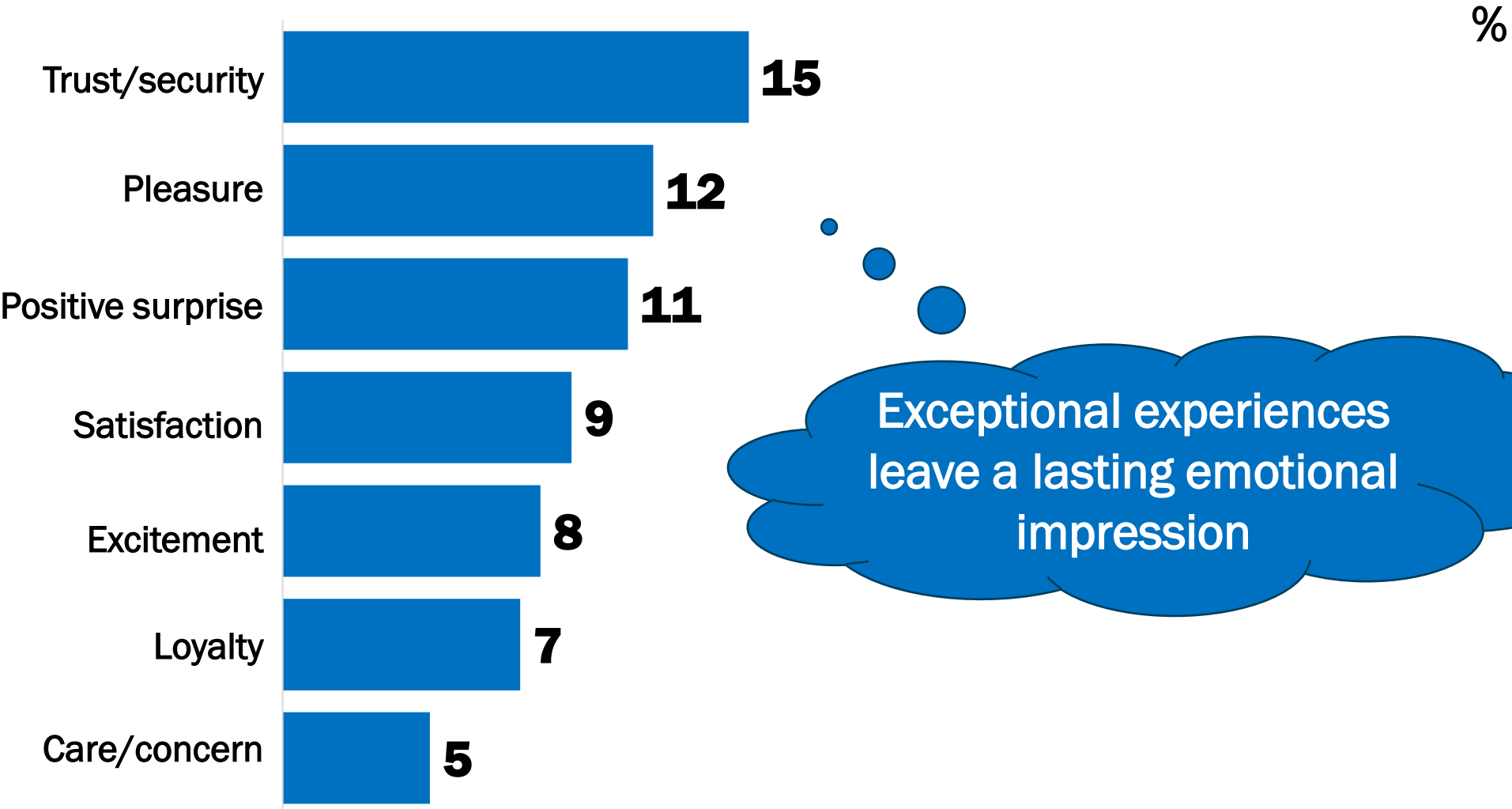
*What particularly impressed me was the **immediate response** and the willingness **to find a solution without unnecessary red tape**, turning what I expected to be a time-consuming into a **quick and pleasant experience**.”*

When the solution comes immediately, the experience becomes unforgettable.

Positive experiences build trust

Safety and enjoyment are the feelings that linger

“What was the *dominant emotion* that stayed with you from this experience?”



Negative experiences

I was shopping with my children at a well-known department store and was waiting in line with my newborn baby in a carrier.

Other customers kindly offered me their place in line, but the cashier told me to wait my turn and remarked that, since I was there and not at home, I could afford to wait.

I left my shopping behind and walked out.

I felt deeply upset.

I never went back.”

When empathy is missing, every other aspect of the experience becomes irrelevant..

Negative experiences

*“We sat in a café and waited almost half an hour to order.
We repeatedly signaled to the staff, but no one responded.
In the end, we left without ordering...
I was irritated!”*

Indifference makes the customer feel invisible.

*“I waited three months for a new debit card to be issued without any clear explanation.
When I contacted the branch, I received neither a solution nor an explanation, and the manager’s attitude was rude. For a long time, I was unable to carry out basic transactions.
I felt anxious.”*

The lack of information undermines consumer trust

Negative experiences

“I was expecting an important package on a specific date.

The courier company’s system showed that the delivery had failed, even though

I was home all day and no one rang the doorbell.

Communicating with the company was difficult; I had to wait on hold for hours over several days, and when I finally reached someone, no one could explain to me what had actually happened.

I received the package several days later.”

**When reality contradicts what the company promises,
trust is lost.**

Negative experiences

“I bought a cell phone, but as soon as I got home, I realized it wouldn’t charge at all. I went right back to the store, thinking the problem would be fixed quickly. Instead, I waited nearly 40 minutes in the service desk.

When I explained the problem, the employee was rude and tried to convince me that I was probably to blame for the malfunction.

What disappointed me the most was that, despite the fact that the device was brand new, they refused to proceed with an immediate replacement and referred me to the dealership.”

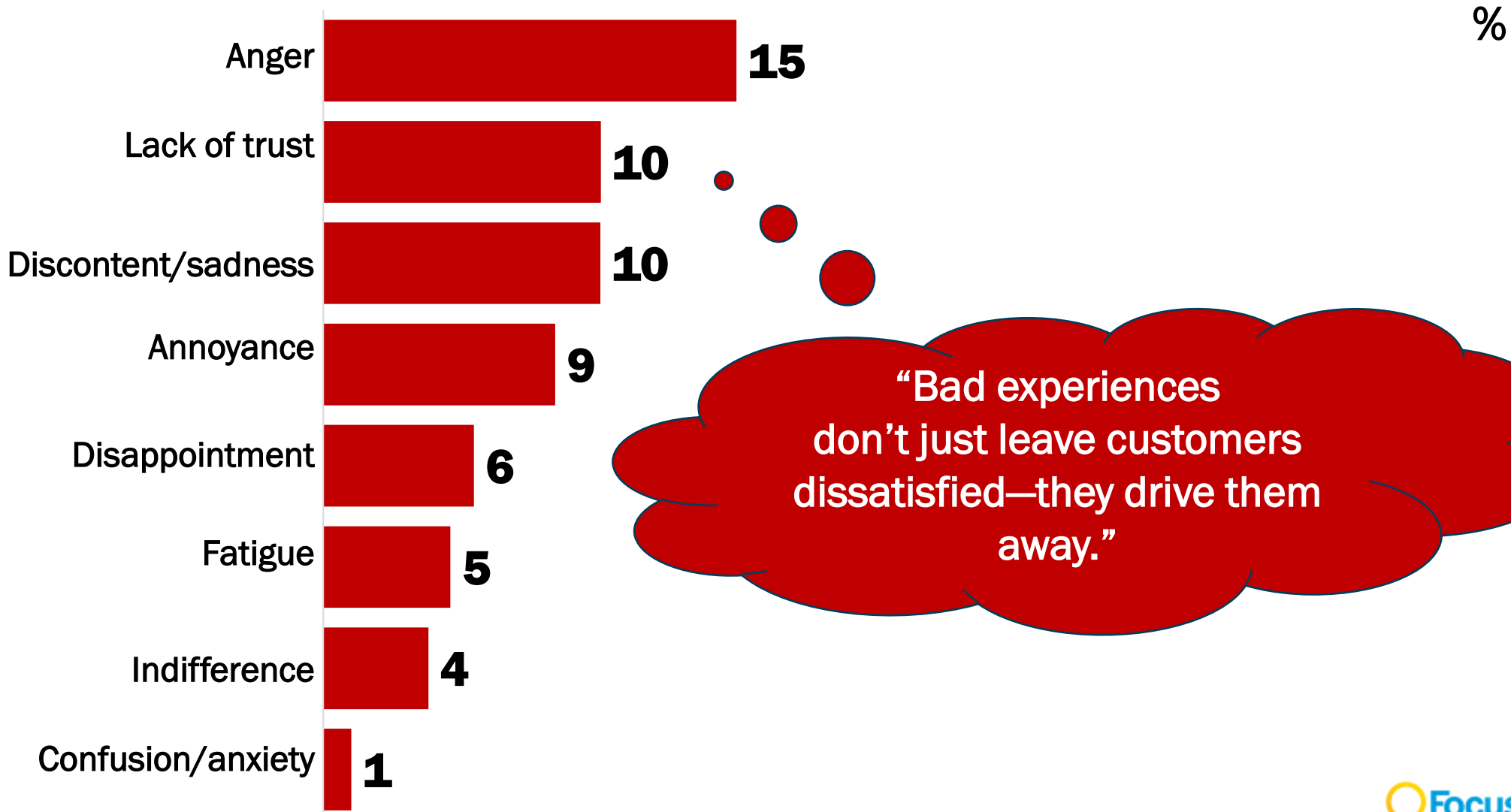
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“Customers expect solutions, not excuses.”

Negative experiences erode trust

Anger and a loss of trust are the emotions that linger

“What was the *dominant emotion* that remained with you from this experience?”



“Bad experiences don’t just leave customers dissatisfied—they drive them away.”

Key Points From “Customer Journeys”

The experiences that stand out are those that put the customer at the center of the process

Positive

Strong positive experiences were not solely due to perks or discounts, but to **care and initiative**.

Immediate responsiveness and empathy were the key reasons that turned a simple transaction into an unforgettable experience.

Negative

Negative experiences were mainly linked to **rudeness, indifference, and a refusal to take responsibility**

It wasn't always the problem itself that bothered people the most, but the way it was handled.



Nevertheless:

Consumers don't just evaluate the outcome, but mainly how they felt

- ❖ Immediacy, empathy, and personal initiative are now basic expectations rather than surprises.
- ❖ Exceptional service is not a matter of process; it is a matter of initiative and action

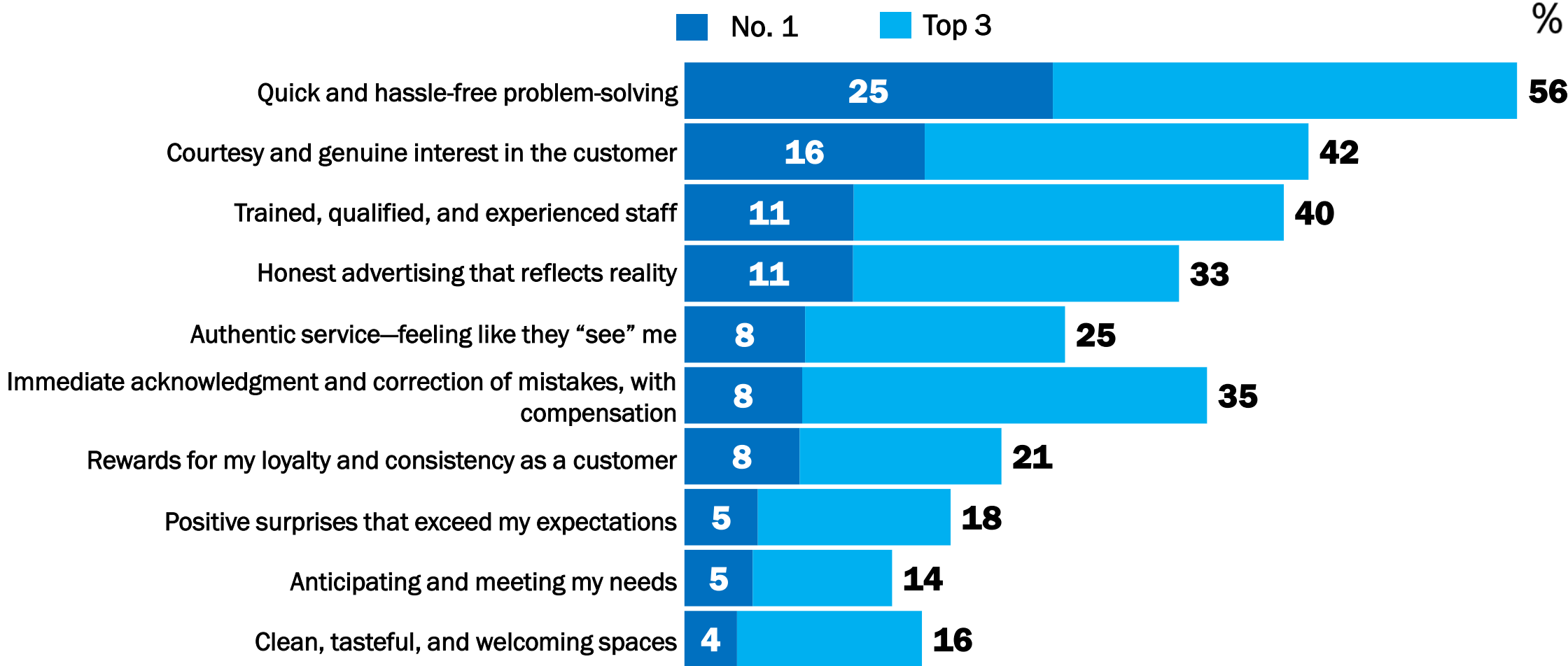
SECTION C:

Customer Service “do’s & dont’s”



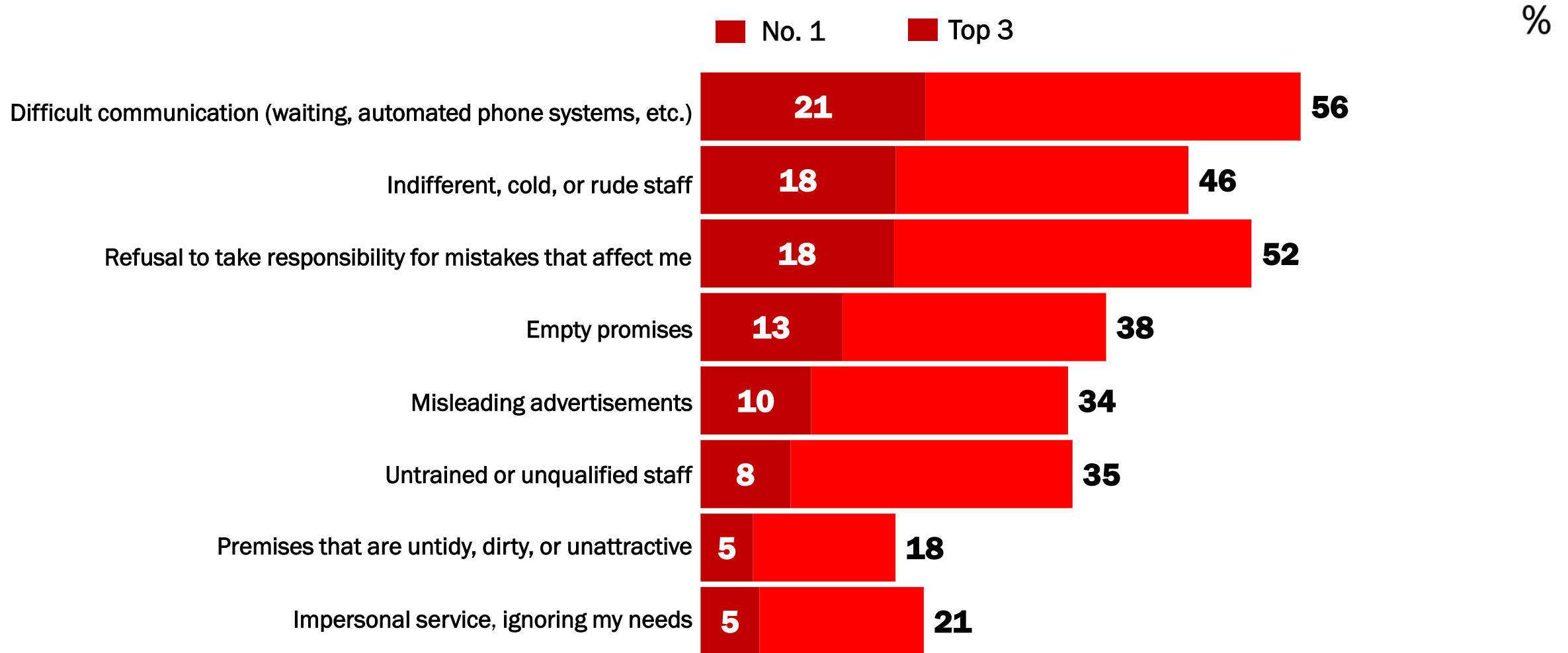
An exceptional experience is a combination of speed, courtesy, professionalism, and attentiveness

“What makes for an *unforgettable* customer experience?”



A negative experience arises when there is a lack of communication, interest, and accountability

“What ruins the customer experience?”



The Big Picture

The customer experience is shaped not only by the outcome, but also by how customers are treated at every stage of their journey.

The organizations that stand out are those that combine speed, professionalism, and genuine care, going the extra mile whenever necessary...

while the organizations that disappoint are those that make customers feel invisible or helpless



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Part: A

Thank you!

Want more info? Ask xenia@focus.gr

