

ATS Research Webinar on Executive Leaders



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The Study

Conducted 2020-21 – survey to all executive leaders plus 30 interviews

Purposes

Status of the Role—changes? nature of work? satisfaction and longevity? effectiveness?

Needed Changes in ATS Programming

Sample size of 127, 47% response rate

Good representation by **type of school**

Ecclesial family—slightly overrepresented by mainline/
slightly underrepresented by catholic/orthodox

Size—slightly overrepresented by mid-sized (HC 76-150)/
slightly underrepresented by large (HC 151-300)

Very good representation by **individual demographics**





Status of the Role



Who are the Leaders?

- Avg 5.9 years service in role
- Prior experience—Avg 3.9 years as a CEO elsewhere
- 73% PhD + 19% Other doctorate; 51% MDiv
- Previous work
 - ✓ Congregational work (76%)
 - ✓ UG higher education, Grad higher education, Nonprofit (28-33%)
- Just prior
 - ✓ Grad TE (44%), Congregational ministry (16%), Non-theo HE (12%)
 - ✓ **Women CEOs:** Grad TE (**57%**), Congregational ministry (19%), Non-theo HE (**0%**), Denominational leadership (**10%**)



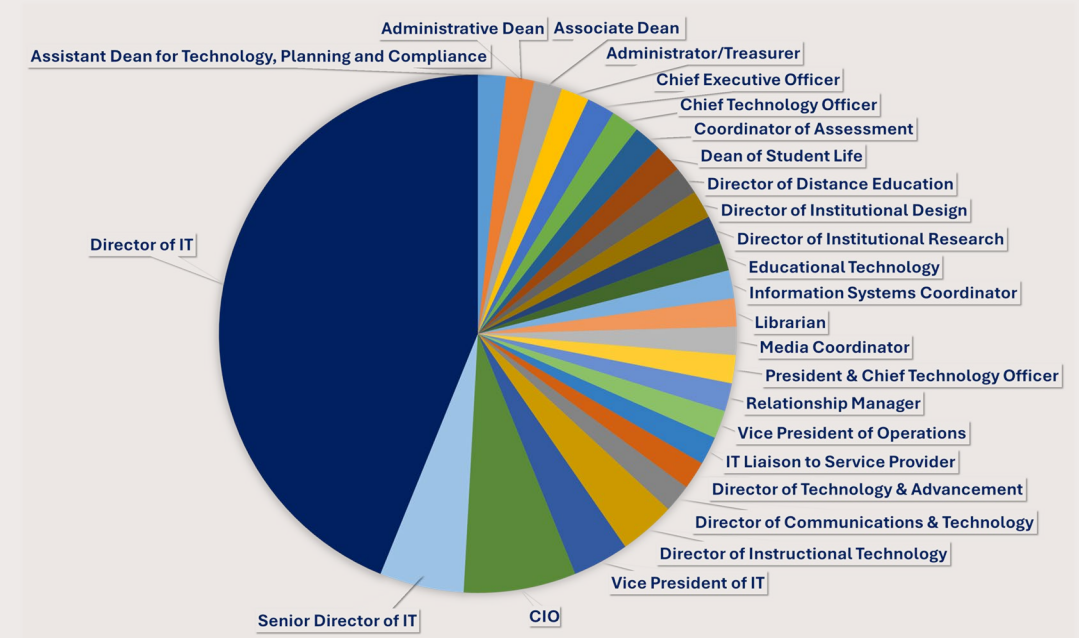
Roles & Responsibilities

Executive (CEO) Roles

President/Rector/Dean/Chancellor
Faculty

Director (various programs)
CFO
Vice President

Senior IT

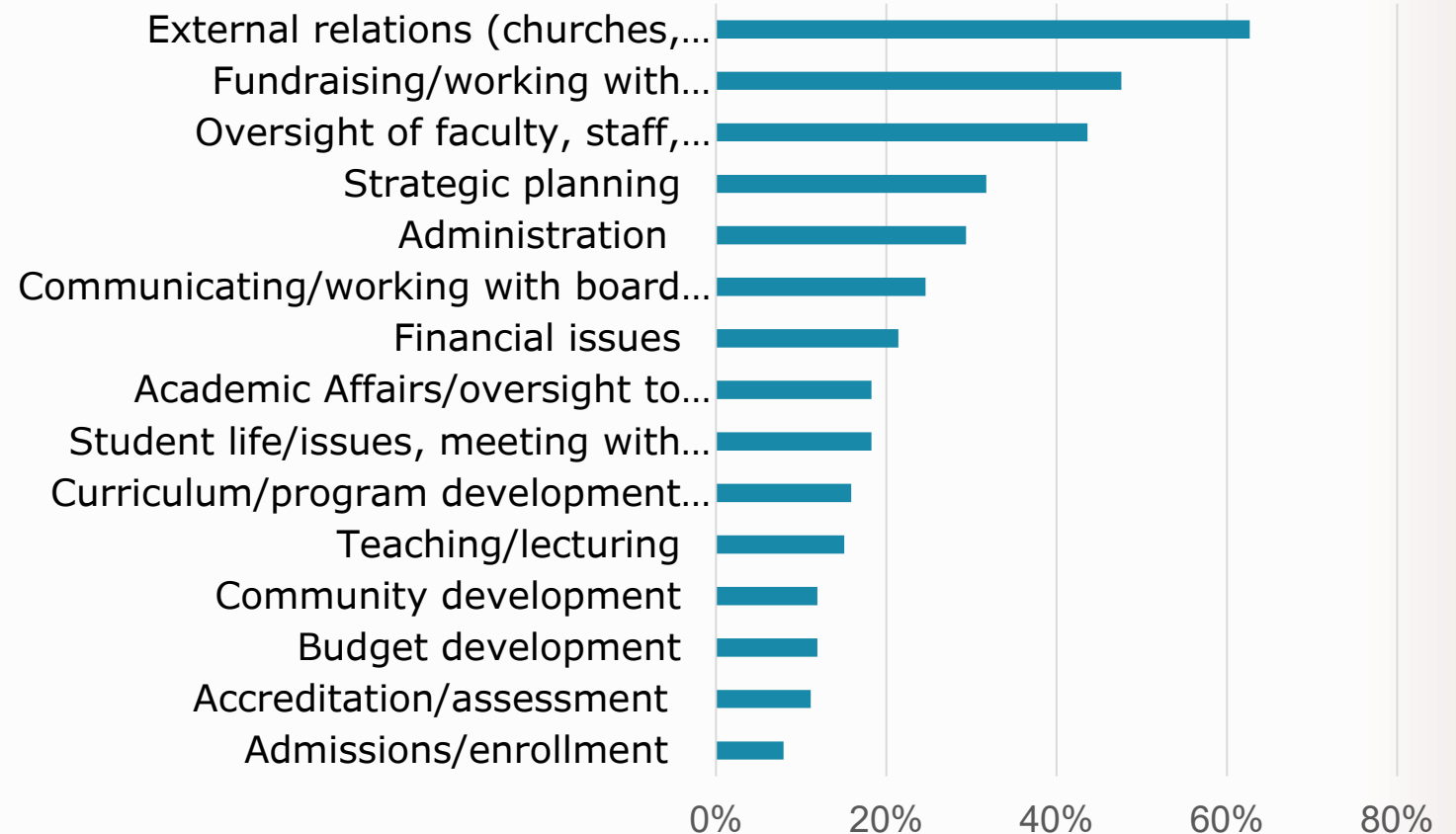


Roles & Responsibilities

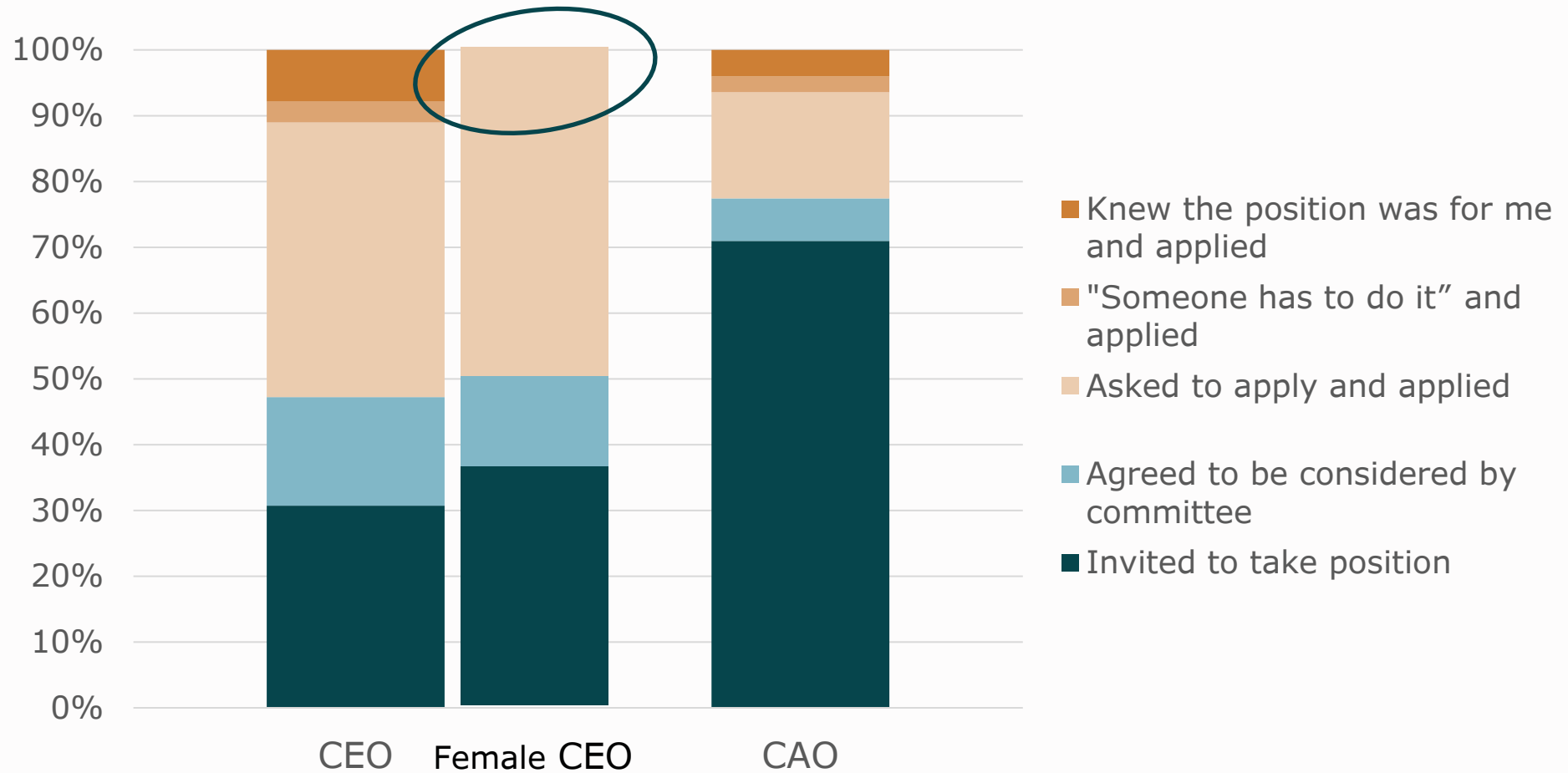
Executive (CEO) Roles

President/Rector/Dean/Chancellor
Faculty
Director (various programs)
CFO
Vice President

CEO Primary Responsibilities



Paths to the Role



Longevity in the Role

Satisfaction in the Role?

Overall satisfied, highest of all senior roles (Academic Dean, CFO, Development, IT, Student Services)

Most satisfied with (of 11 work features):

- Work they do
- Relationships with coworkers
- Relationship with board

Least satisfied with:

- Relationship with faculty
- Professional development opportunities

Largest gaps between importance and satisfaction:

- Relationship with faculty
- Functioning of work team

Differences by School Type:

- Actively looking
 - ↓ Largest (HC over 300)
 - ↑ Small (1-75) and Large (151-300)

Differences by Individual:

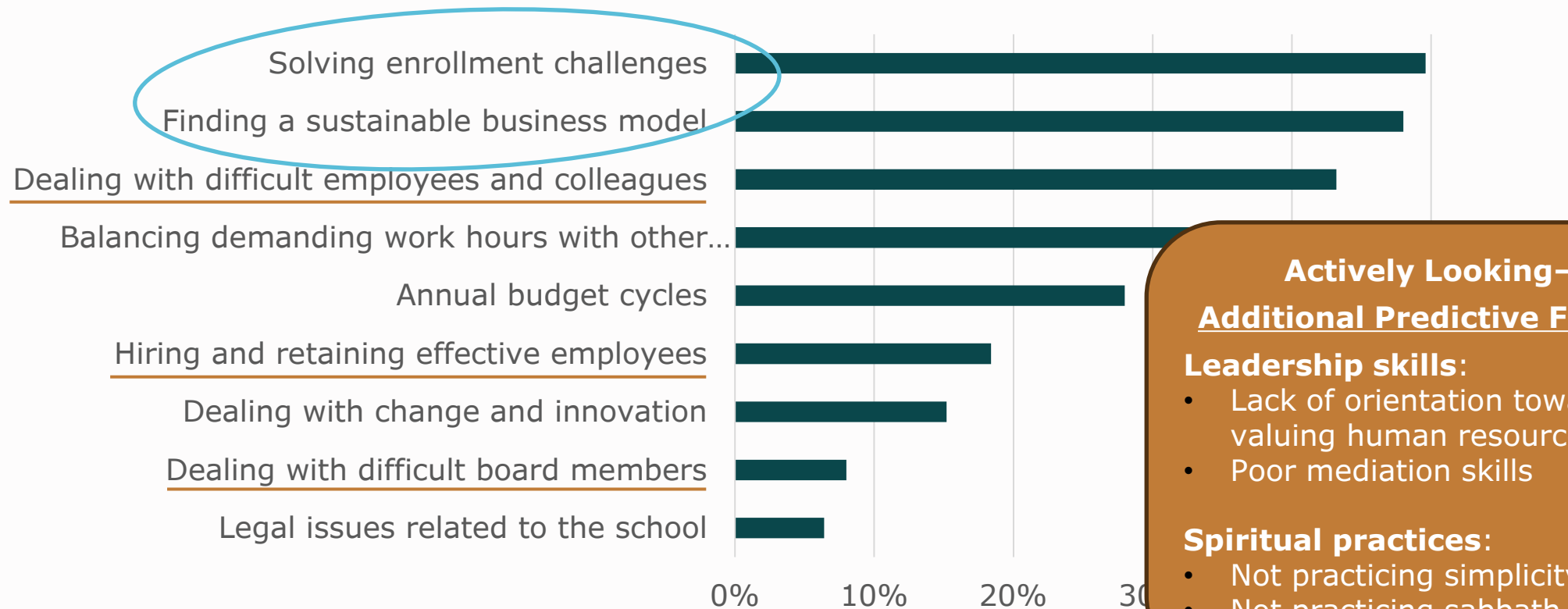
Fewer years as CEO → actively looking
Greater years as CEO → retiring

Intentions to leave?

- 14% said they intended to leave their position in next 12 months (+10% not sure)
- Retire from current job—among most likely of senior leaders
- Actively looking for other jobs—mostly not looking but almost half have thought about leaving

Longevity in the Role

Greatest Causes of Work-Related Stress



Actively Looking— Additional Predictive Factors

Leadership skills:

- Lack of orientation toward valuing human resources
- Poor mediation skills

Spiritual practices:

- Not practicing simplicity
- Not practicing sabbath

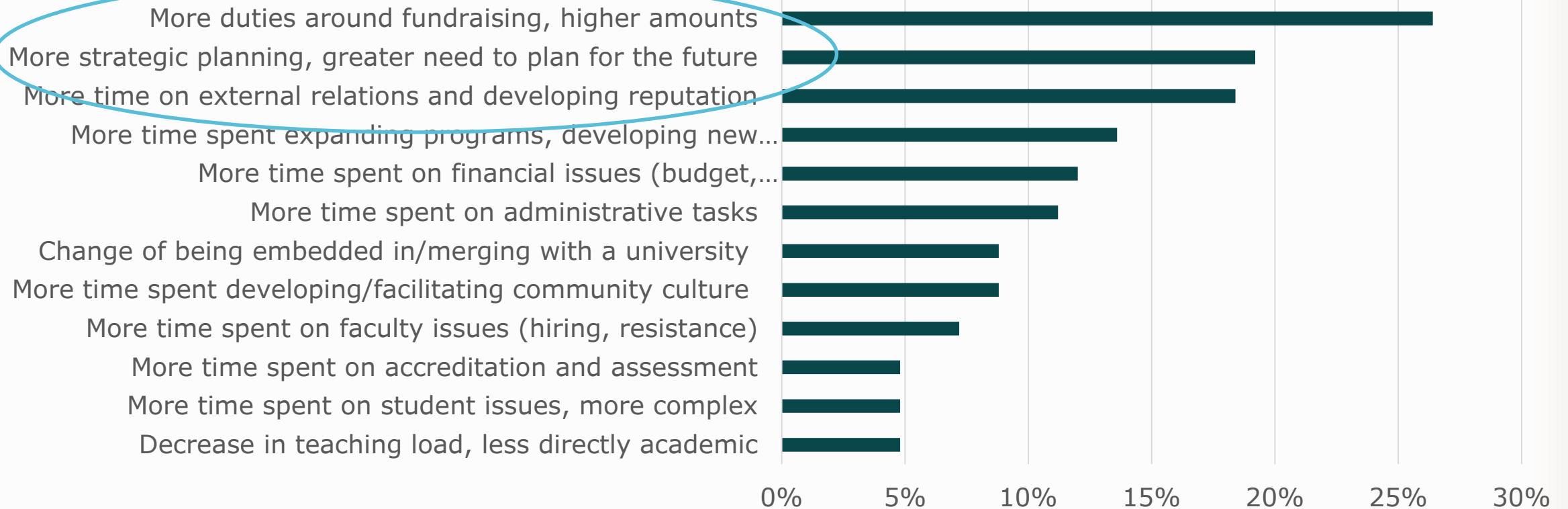


Nature of the Work

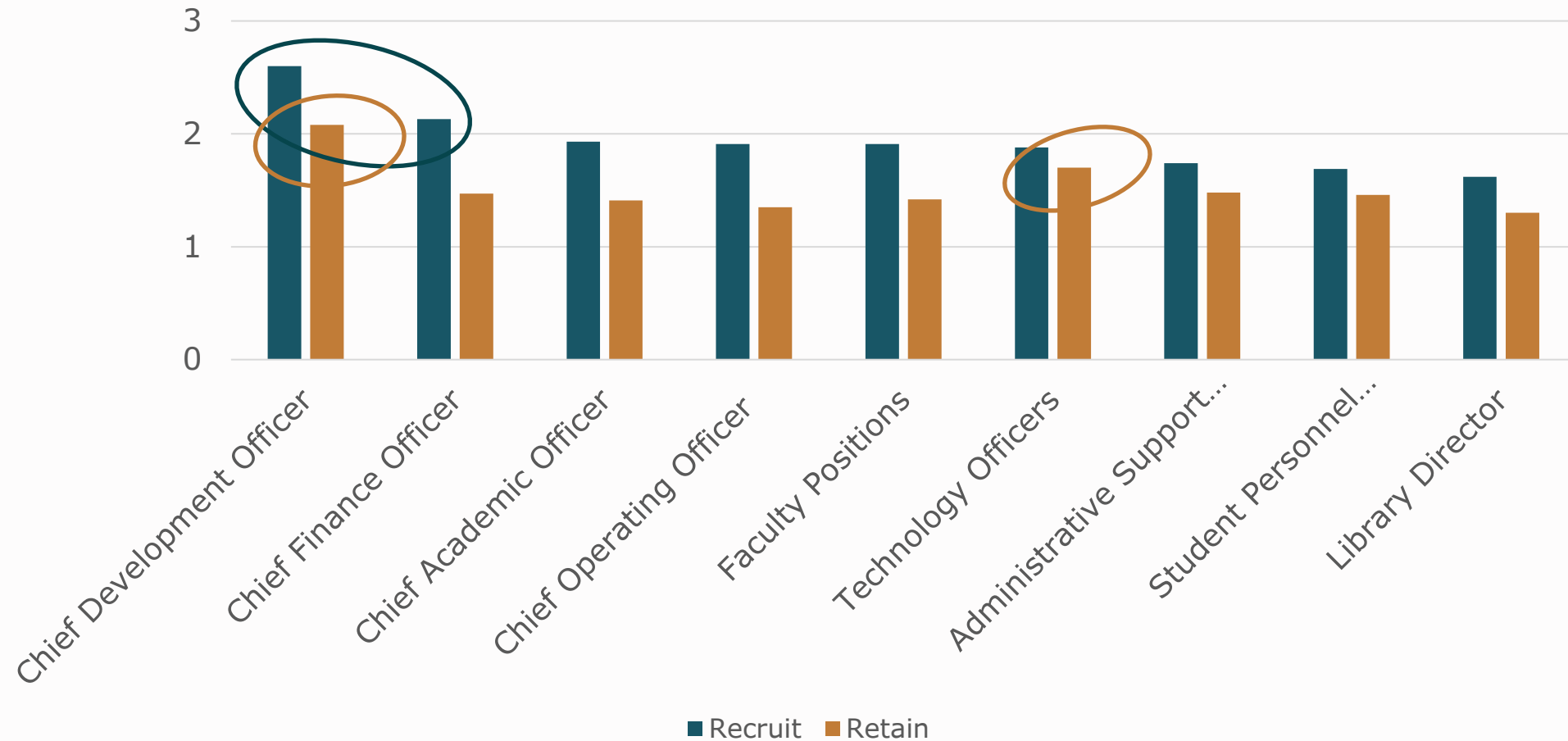


Changed Nature of Work

Compared to predecessor, how has your work changed?

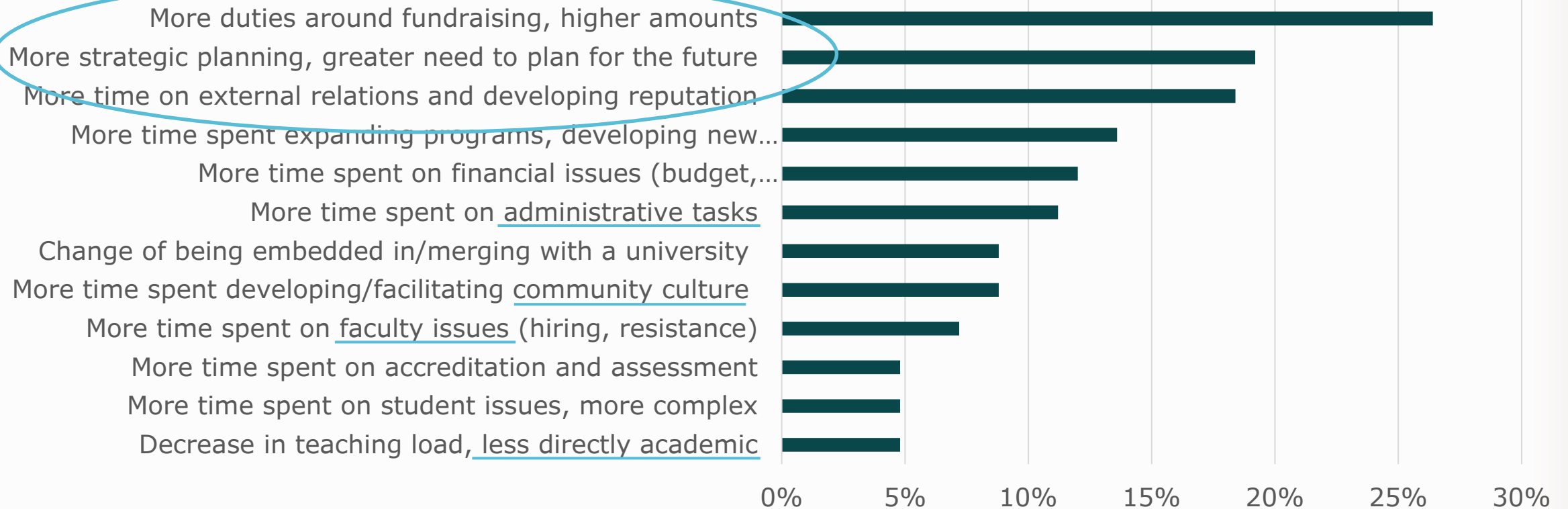


Recruiting/Retaining Employees

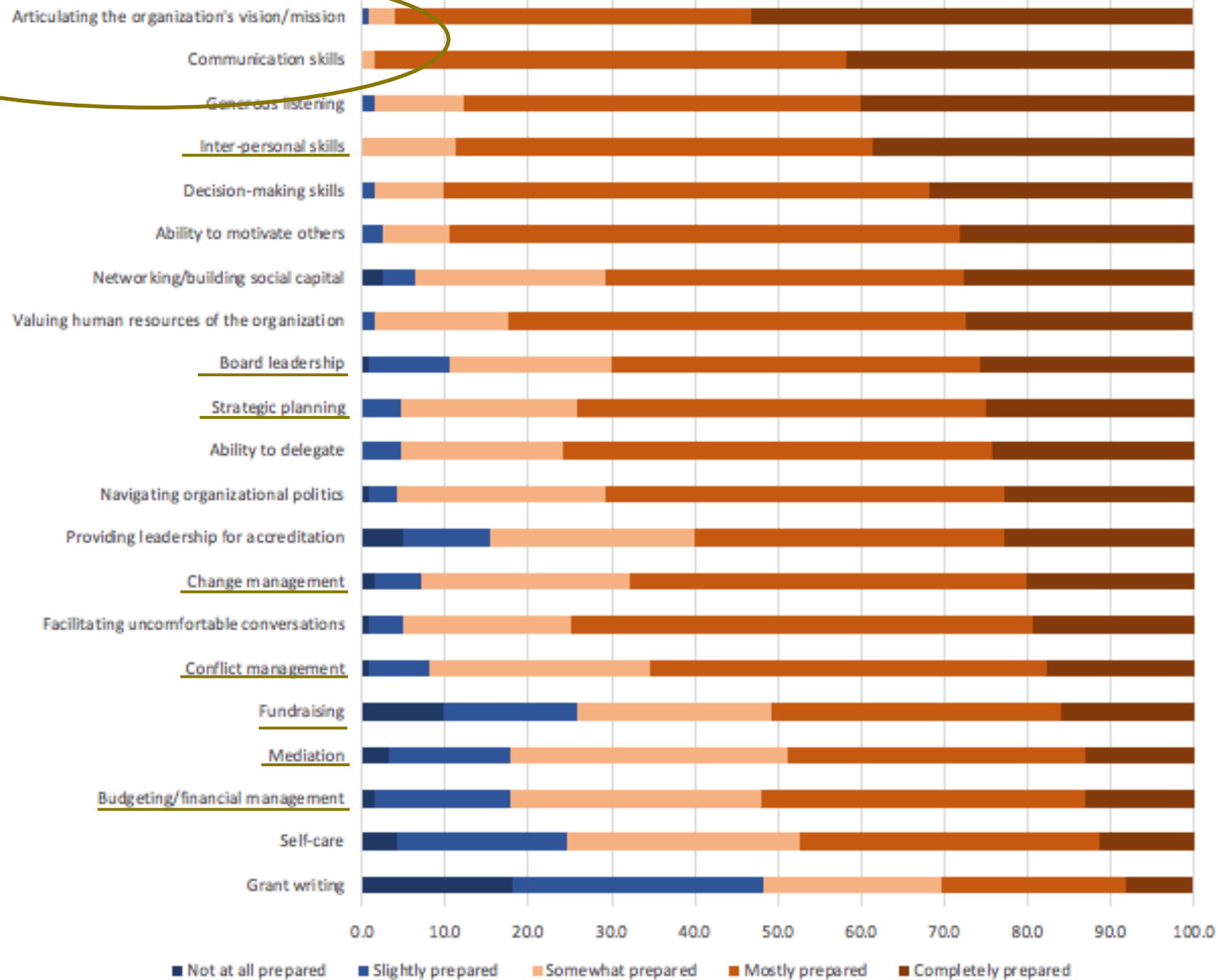


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Compared to predecessor, how has your work changed?



Leadership Preparation Gaps





Future Outlooks



Program Interest



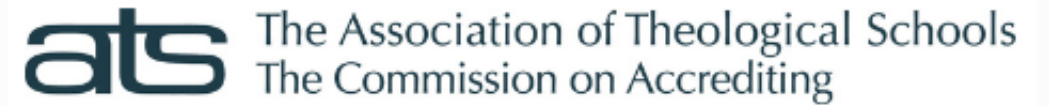
Future Outlooks

FROM ATS:

- Cohorts of similar schools
- Presenters from schools like my own
- Fewer than 3 days for event
- Experts from outside theological education
- Conflict management
- Sustainable business models
- Presidential transition and succession planning
- Working with foundations

FROM PARTNERS:

- Webinar series: Part 2
- Auburn Theological Seminary, April 28, 1-2pm Eastern
- In Trust Center – Research Study of Boards





Questions



ATS Research Webinar on Executive Leaders, Part I



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ats The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

