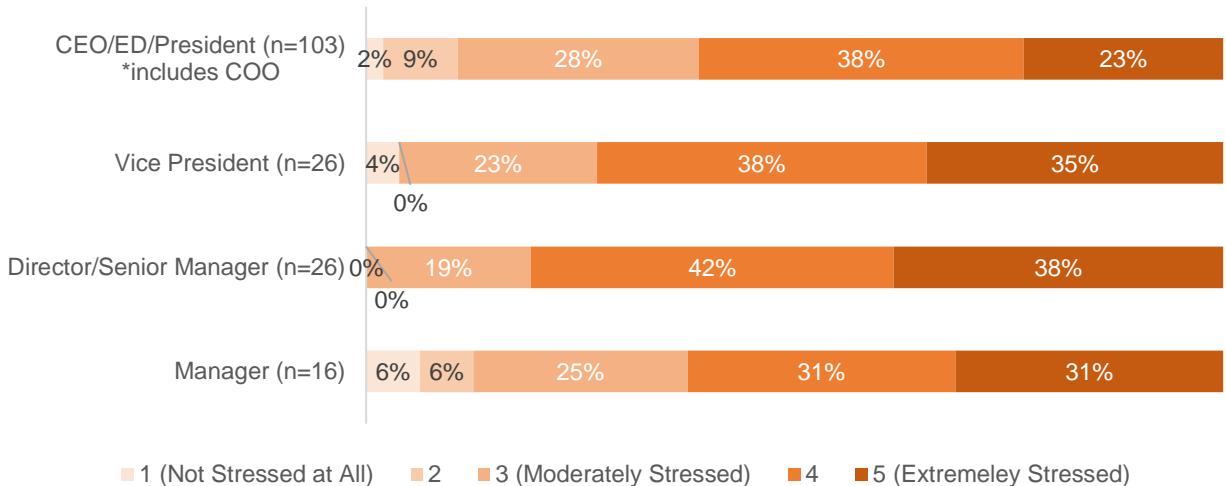


## Burnout Quickpoll Results

October 2021

Includes responses from 183 ACCE members in an open collection period between October 1-11, 2021

### How stressed are you at work?



Vice Presidents and Director/Senior Manager positions report the highest levels of stress at the 4-5 rating (73% and 80%, respectively). No participants in the Director/Senior Manager position report low levels of stress at work.

### How often do you feel stressed or frustrated?



Vice Presidents and Director/Senior Manager positions report the most frequent stress at a few times a week to every day (89% and 87%, respectively).

\* Note: Coordinator/Associate position data was removed from the charts due to low participation.

## What contributes to your feeling of stress at your job? (select all that apply)



n=183

The two most frequently reported contributions to feeling stressed are:

- No end to the work day, “always on” work culture (63%)
- Ongoing COVID challenges (54%)

Nearly 25% of survey participants also wrote in comments indicating additional factors contributing to stress on the job. See the next page for those comments, which include the broad categories of:

- Capacity and staffing
- Community relationships
- Board expectations
- Membership and revenue

## Capacity and Staffing

Having to do more with less.

Expectations to produce with little resources.

Not enough resources to add capacity to team which would allow me to delegate more.

A small team means projects require full responsibility for project start, completion, and success.

Too much work. Not enough time and staff and resources.

A lot of work to maintain the level of achievement we've reached. Be careful what you strive for.

### **Not being able to say “no” to anything.**

Just the constant worry if we are doing too much or too little, and if we are doing it "right" according to the pandemic restrictions.

Too many squirrels (goofy calls and distractions); outside factors (other activities and obligations).

### **Understaffed.**

Pressure to maintain the very high level of achievements I delivered for many years.

Dealing with new employees and having to do everyone's job right now.

Not enough staff, managing a young staff, not in the right seats, training needed.

Staff burnout and how to help them.

Heavy workload, small staff.

Always selling and being positive about community.

**Things have gotten better since when this started, because I used to feel stressed almost every day. Unfortunately, the problems haven't ceased and have changed in some ways I find most disturbing. I wasn't like this before, I used to love sales, but at the moment, I am pretty unhappy.**

Under-staffed due to both funding and small candidate pool when we do hire.

Turnover.

Lack of staff to support the workload and the time to hire the necessary staff. In ability to really concentrate on the important issues, versus doing the administrative work since we lack the staff. Feel like I'm on a hamster wheel.

### **The work never lets up.**

Keeping the team supported. Making sure they aren't burnt out.

No opportunities to advance.

Lack of staff and volunteers.

Managing a staff of 10 and their personalities.

Fear we're not doing enough to retain our young employees. Concerned about my ability to identify burnout in my employees.

There is a Caste system in pay and treatment in the organization I work in, extremely unfair.

Colleagues not being held accountable for their work.

## Community Relationships

No support or respect from local government.

Dissent within every aspect of my community. The in-fighting is intolerable.

Lack of boundaries & being expected to solve every issue in the community.

Lack of support/recognition from greater community at area partners.

### **Increased competition from partners.**

Apathy from the business community. Lack of investment to do the work that needs to be done.

**Social Justice and Multicultural Issues.**

### **Divisiveness in the community.**

The lack of grace/respect from anyone we interact with. Like organizations encroaching on Chamber work because they don't know how to do their jobs -- creating unnecessary competition for dollars.

## Board Expectations

Micromanagement from Chairman for no reason other than they are giving themselves more authority because of their position in the community.

Board meetings - baseless assumptions, misunderstandings, and relational issues demanding attention.

### **Need clarity from Board on strategic vision.**

The vast spectrum of knowledge expected to be what is expected. HR issues are periodically a stress point.

Lack of alignment with leadership (too focused on social justice issues).

Lack of organizational strategic plan/focus.

Leadership creates chaos.

Sporadic Board engagement.

Need more guidance, feel like I'm in the deep end learning to swim .

## Membership & Revenue

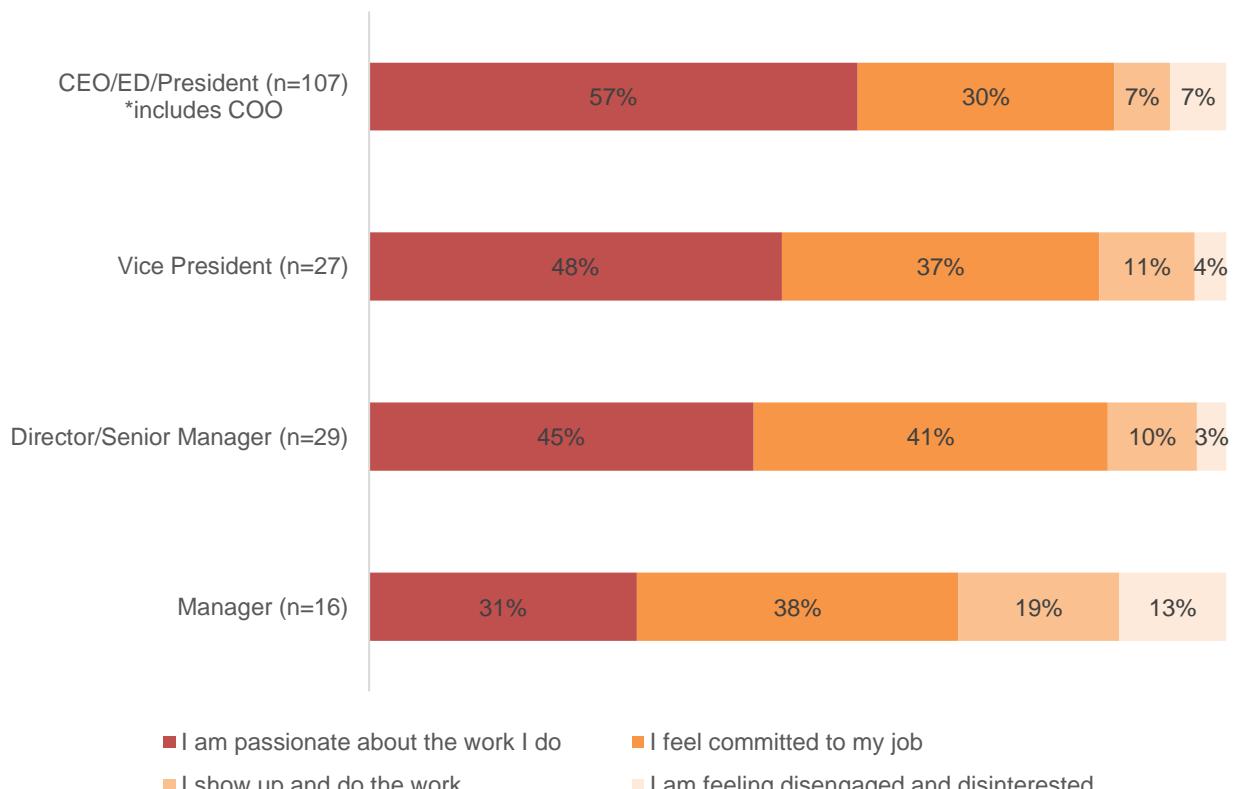
Recruiting & retaining members gets harder each year; members looking for more ROI vs. seeing the big picture

Lack of understanding and appreciation for our work from members.

**Stress from ongoing revenue (dues and events) uncertainty.**

**Balancing the readjustment to life at home and demands at work which are, in my opinion, more demanding now than during COVID.**

## How do you feel about your current role?



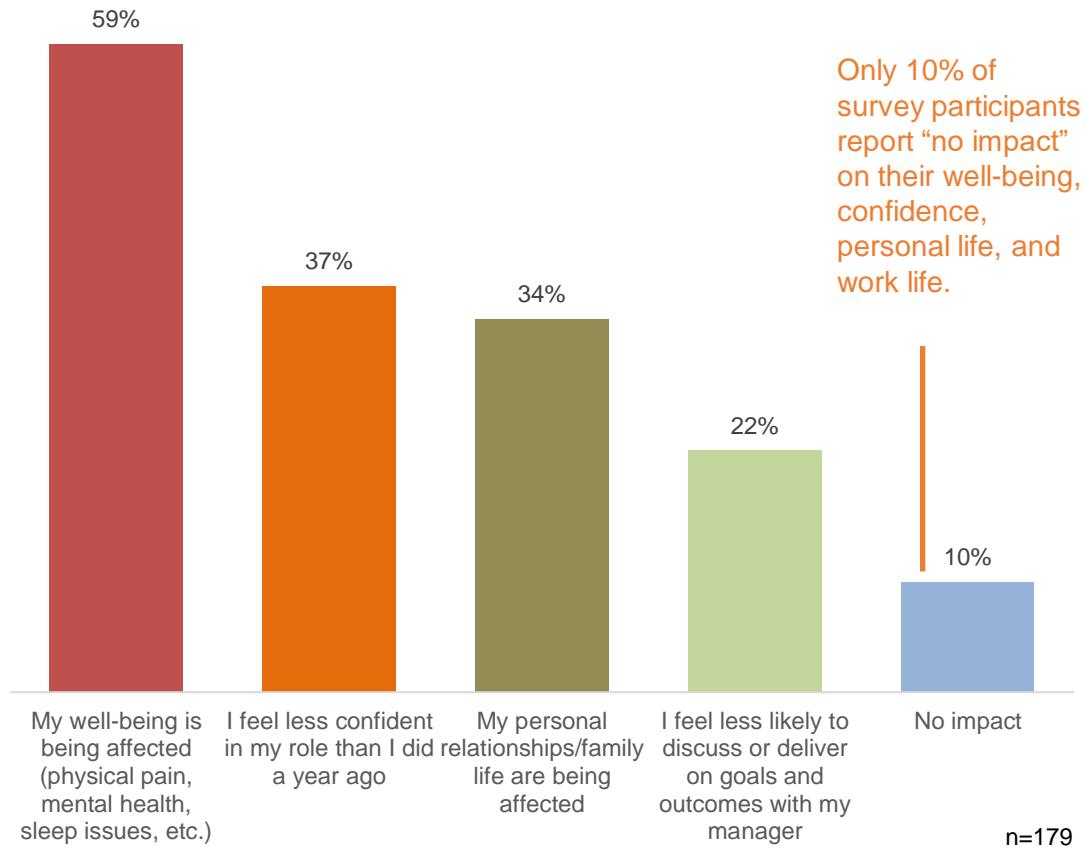
Despite reporting high levels and frequency of stress, chamber professionals also indicate a high level of passion and commitment to their work. Level of position in the organization appears to correlate with higher levels of passion for the work.

Overall, 51% of survey respondents across positions feel passionate about the work they do. An additional 33% feel committed to their jobs.

Overall results indicate that 9% of respondents at least show up to do their jobs and only 7% report feeling disengaged or disinterested.

\* Note: Coordinator/Associate position data was removed from the chart due to low participation.

## How has feeling burned out affected you? (select all that apply)



Survey respondents overwhelmingly report the effect on their well-being (59%).  
Comments submitted reinforce the effect on work life and relationships.

Forgetful, takes me longer sometimes to complete tasks, difficult at times to stay focused/on task. Everything seems to take more effort to achieve goals.

Less job satisfaction.

I am less creative and more likely to settle for good enough. (Totally out of character for me.)

**I am questioning if this role/career is for me. Asking myself if I am the right fit? Second guessing my capabilities.**

Consistent fatigue and less able to take things in stride.

I'm sure my passion level has decreased which shows in my sales discussions.

**I am feeling less motivated to do my job - I am counting the months to my retirement.**

My staff, board and membership engagement and development is not at par to what it has, can and should be.

Frustrated more easily. Large scale projects seem overwhelming.

**Service to our members is affected.**

Do I have the energy to deliver and work on a new strategic plan - a 3-4 year commitment....versus just retire?

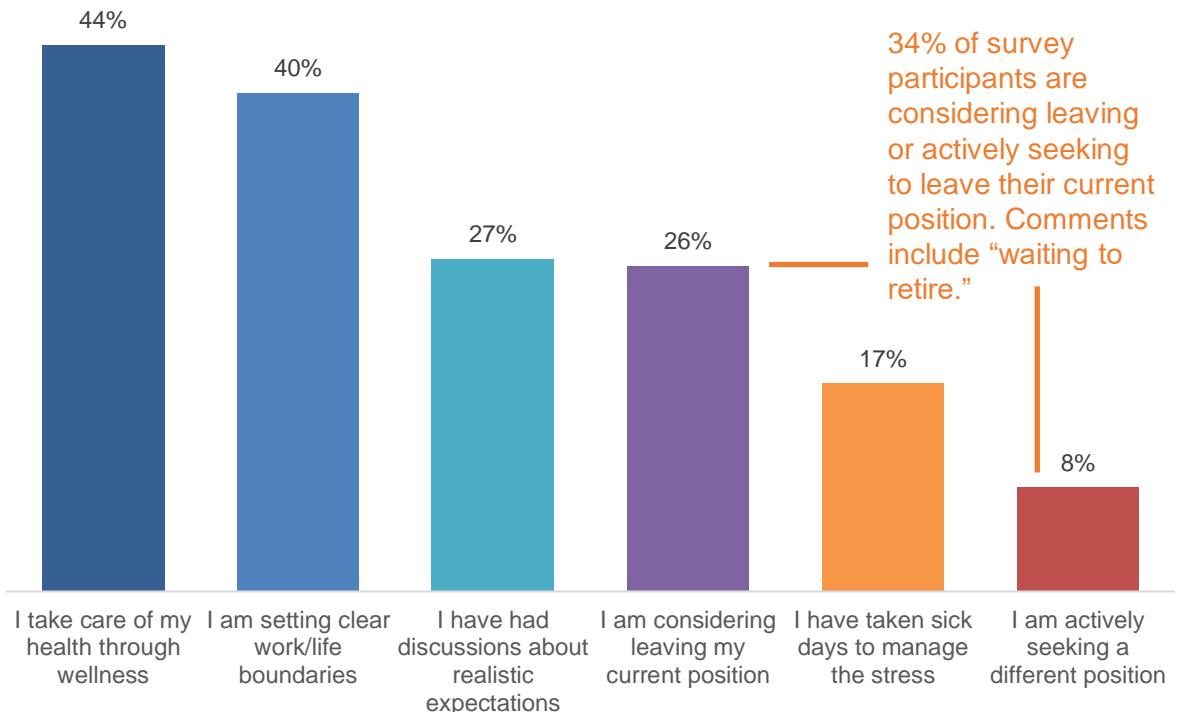
**I'm always strategizing how to accomplish great results with the least amount of resource drain on staff.**

Now only giving 110% vs. prior 150%.

**Relationships in my community are being affected.**

I left the position that burned me out and have found a better balance and organization.

## How are you managing the feeling of burnout? (select all that apply)



n=178

### Comments included:

In order to lessen the stress, I have clear priorities and deadlines. Too many things coming at me at once.

Not actively seeking another job, but I do watch what's out there.

**Trying to take more time off, but it's a challenge.**

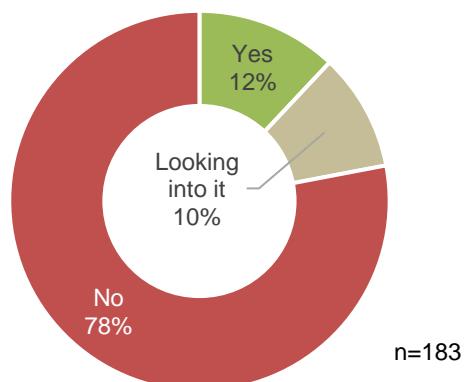
I have had a few discussions with staff & mentors; have considered whether I should look for a different job.

#### **Accepting what I can and cannot change.**

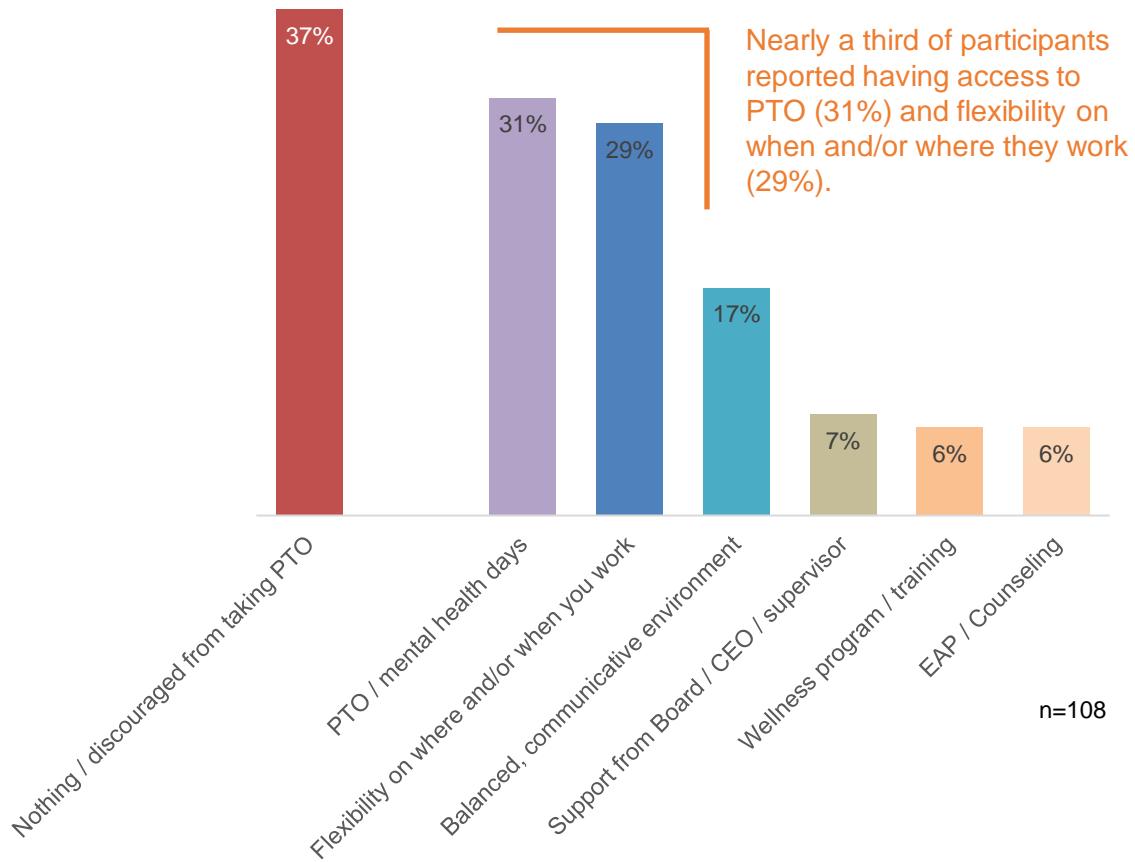
Whenever I find time - even just an afternoon, I take it off. Unplug from phone, internet and read something non-work related.

Although 44% of survey participants report taking care of their health through wellness (diet, exercise, mental health), only 12% of participants report having a wellness plan available to them at their chamber, and only another 10% of chambers are exploring a wellness program or initiative.

### Does your chamber offer a wellness program or initiative to prevent burnout?



## What does your organization offer to help with your work/life balance? (open response)



In an open-ended response question, over a third (37%) of survey participants indicate they are not offered any assistance with work/life balance, are implicitly discouraged from taking PTO, or the expectations are so high that there is no opportunity to take PTO – even if they officially have unlimited PTO.

I've encouraged and authorized mental/personal health days (in addition to PTO) to employees and taken them myself; I'd like to see more discussion from board leadership on this topic and will be proposing it as part of our organizational resiliency goals in this year's strategy session.

**I have lots of PTO to use, no time to use it.**  
Our leadership team says that it is important to have work/life balance, but the amount of work and expectations do not reflect a healthy work/life balance.

We're totally flexible on where you work. The focus is on getting the work done not when it gets done.

We offered a subsidy to upgrade home technology when the office reopened and work-issued items had to return to their workstations.

We are supportive of each other and our President is very understanding about letting us take care of personal lives as long as the work is complete and the office is covered.

We have unlimited PTO - but that does not help when you don't feel comfortable asking to take it.

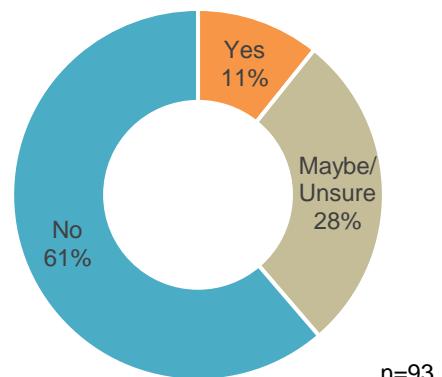
## Do you work remotely?



n=183

With nearly two-thirds of survey participants working in the office again (63%), there does not seem to be a correlation between working remotely and the level of stress being experienced in the chamber community. The overall sentiment among survey participants (61%) is that working remotely does not contribute to feeling stressed. Comments include a preference for the flexibility of working remotely, as well as noting the trade-offs.

### Do you feel that working remotely has contributed to feeling stressed?



n=93

It is less stressful to work from home but the workday tends to last longer and the work/home barrier is harder to maintain.

I work from home if I don't have any meetings, but still come to the office only to "be seen".

**Our hybrid working model has led to some challenges with communication, scheduling meetings, and general office culture. Needing to work through hybrid vs. in person events and programs for members has also added stress.**

Requiring everyone to come back to work is the opposite of equity. Equity is understanding what each individual needs to be their best self and most productive. For some it means coming to work full time and for some it may mean allowing them the flexibility to work from home a limited number of days.

We recently returned to the office. In some ways, working remotely encouraged more connection - we had to actively pursue it. Now that we're mostly back in the office, communication and connection is taken for granted. What's worse is because of indoor mask mandates staff typically work behind closed doors. We're together, but isolated, and there's no active pursuit of connecting with one another.

I am more productive at home because of increased focus and fewer distractions.

The loss of culture by working remotely is tough but I enjoy the flexible schedule.

Love the remote work, I feel it puts all members of the team on an equal footing.