

# Private Equity & VC Compensation Report

## SAMPLE REPORT



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## Introduction

For the past 13 years, we have published this report based on our in-depth surveys with professionals in the private equity and venture capital industry. We identify current compensation trends and job satisfaction factors and report them to you.

In the past, we saw greater swings in our compensation findings. But recently, we have documented greater stability and predictability in industry compensation, even as market and fund performance varies.

This year's report includes data collected from hundreds of partners and employees representing several hundred private equity and venture capital firms. We polled respondents in October and November 2019, and asked questions designed to uncover a variety of factors related to compensation.

The *2020 Private Equity and Venture Capital Compensation Report* summarizes our findings and answers questions such as:

- What are the compensation levels and ranges by title?
- How does fund size and performance affect pay?
- What is the balance between base salaries and bonus payouts?
- How are bonuses calculated and when are they paid out?
- Which titles earn the most and how has their compensation changed?
- Who is sharing in carry and at what levels?
- What are the primary drivers of carry participation?

The report also seeks to understand how private equity and venture capital professionals perceive their work, their pay and their job security. Where possible, we offer insights from the industry and our experience. However the focus of this report is on the data collected *directly* from private equity and venture capital professionals.

Our report is a time-tested compensation benchmark that is affordable, comprehensive, and reliable. We expect you will find it valuable, whether you are negotiating your compensation package, setting goals for your professional development, or establishing targets for your firm's compensation policies.

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## Executive Summary

In this, our thirteenth annual *Private Equity & Venture Capital Compensation Report*, we again identify current industry compensation trends and provide insights into their effect on compensation practices, recruitment and retention.

This year marks the sixth straight year of compensation gains in the private equity and venture capital industry. Those reporting total compensation greater than \$200,000 reached 68 percent of respondents, the highest percentage of professionals reporting this level of annual compensation in the history of this report.

Bonus pay both as a percentage of compensation and in real dollars declined for those in the highest pay band yet again this year. But, most other pay bands saw results consistent with last year. On average, base pay represents 55 percent of compensation and bonus pay totals 45 percent.

Bonus payouts for firms of all sizes are based on individual performance, firm performance, fund performance and a combination of factors. The largest bonuses are paid by the largest firms based on fund performance.

Regardless of size, most firms organize into smaller teams, an industry trend identified in this report as early as 2014. This year, more than 80 percent reported teams of less than 25 employees.

In-house training continues to receive unfavorable reviews, with more than half of respondents reporting non-existent or weak internal training programs. Similar to last year, only 18 percent rate their in-house training as good to excellent despite the benefits firms could gain in recruitment and retention by strengthening this area.

Job seekers will appreciate the section of this report devoted to identifying which positions are in demand, what percentage of firms are hiring, and what percentage are cutting back.

The 2020 *Private Equity and Venture Capital Compensation Report* provides readers insightful, industry-specific information regarding the complex subject of compensation.

Other highlights from this year's report include:

- Compensation by title is up across the board, but the highest paid titles are managing partner and managing director.
- 69 percent of respondents do not receive a bonus guarantee;
- Bonus pay is significantly higher at larger firms with more than 100 employees;
- PE Mid-Cap and PE Small-Cap remain the most common investment strategies;
- More than half of funds were up 10 to 24 percent this year.

## Methodology

We surveyed hundreds of partners, principals and employees during October and November 2019 to benchmark compensation practices. Respondents represented firms from around the globe, with a strong concentration in North America.

Included are some of the largest and most recognized private equity and venture capital firms and the small, boutique firms that make up most of the industry.

**A sample of some of the firms where participants work includes** (listed with participant permission):

.406 Ventures	Fresenius Medical Care Ventures	Octopus Ventures
50 South Capital	GmbH	Pfingsten Partners
Abbott Labs	GE Ventures	Phoenician Ventures
Adams Street Partners	Goldman Sachs	PointGuard Ventures
AIO	Grafton Asset Management	Providence Energy
Alaska Permanent Fund	Greycroft	Quad Partners LLC
AllianzGI	H.I.G. capital	Quilvest Private Equity
Alpha Capital Partners	Hamilton Lane	Riverstone
Apax Partners	Hastings Equity Partners	Route 66 Ventures
Aqua Capital	Hoxton Ventures	Safeguard Scientifics
Aquiline Capital Partners	International Finance	Sandbox Industries
ARA Asset Management	Corporation	Servco Pacific Capital
Ardian	Irving Place Capital	Siparex
Arsenal Growth	Ithmar Capital Partners	Slater Technology Fund
Audax Group	JCR Capital	Spell Capital Partners
Barings	John Hancock	Spring Lane Capital
BDMI	JP Morgan	StepStone Group
Ben Franklin Technology	Lone Star Funds	StoneCreek Capital
Partners	M Ventures	Stonehenge Capital Company
Black Toro Capital	M12	Suntex Marina Investors
Blackford Capital	Macquarie	TeleSoft Partners
Blue Lion Capital	Mangrove Capital Partners	TELUS Ventures
Boathouse Capital	Massachusetts Capital Resource	Texas Pacific Capital
Caixa Capital Risc	Company	The Riverside Company
Castlelake	MedCare Funds	Theorem Capital
Century Equity Partners	Merit Capital Partners	Thrivent Financial
Citco	MG Capital Management	Tree Line Capital
CL Investment Group	Moderne Ventures	Triangle Peak Partners
Clarus Ventures LLC	Monomoy Capital Partners	Trinity Private Equity Group
Clean Energy Ventures	Morpheus Ventures	TriplePoint Capital
Comcast Ventures	Mosaic Capital Partners	TVC Capital
Creation Investments Capital	Naspers	Varde Partners
Management	Neuberger Berman	Venrock
Deerpath Capital	New River Capital Partners	Venture Investors
Deutsche Bank	North Wall Capital	Verdane
Ekuiti Nasional Berhad (Ekuinas)	Northern Trust	Visionary Ventures
Employee Stock Option Fund	Northgate Capital	Wind Point Partners
Encore Capital Management	Northleaf Capital	
EnerTech Capital	Northzone	York Capital Management
FCA Partners	Oak Lane Partners	



## Pay Levels

In the private equity and venture capital industries, bonus payouts are a substantial component of total compensation. This is especially true for those at the higher ranges of industry earnings, where bonuses can comprise upwards of 70 percent of an individual's compensation.

On average, this year's projected bonuses are reported at \_\_\_ percent of total compensation (down significantly from \_\_\_ percent last year). In terms of projected earnings, those earning over \$\_\_\_\_,000 saw more earnings coming from bonuses than in base salaries. The inverse was true for those earning less than \$\_\_\_\_,000, and the proportion decreased exponentially alongside overall earnings.



Figure 1: Last Year Levels of Earnings

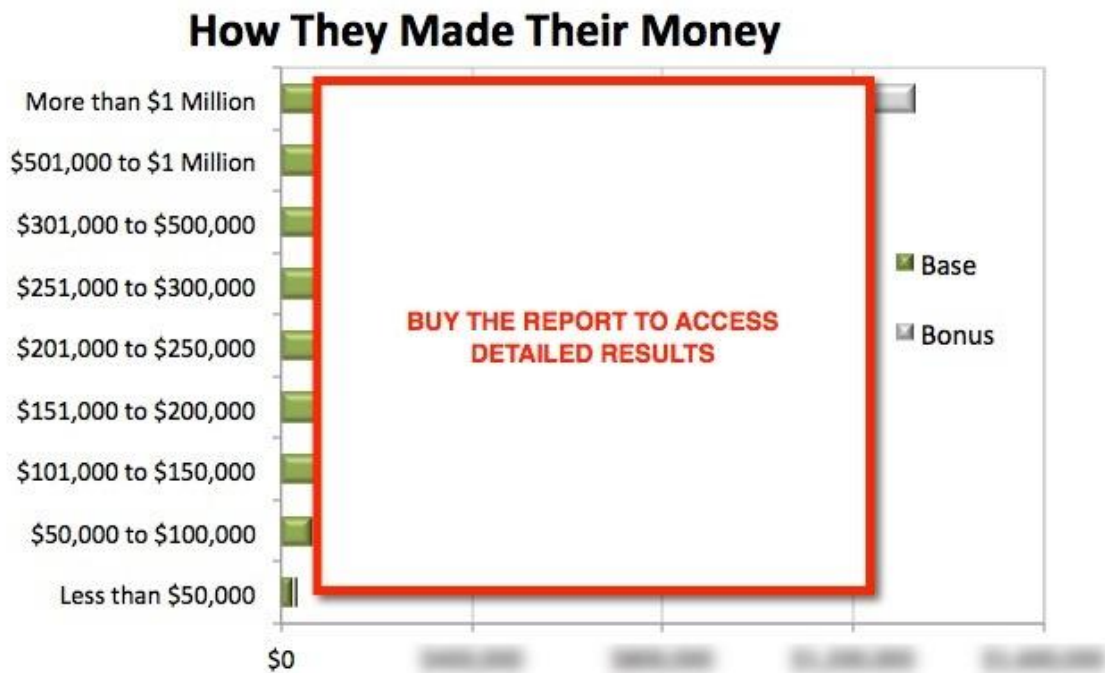


Figure 3: Base vs. Bonus Pay

Optimism regarding the trend in overall cash earnings is up slightly compared to our last survey, but remains largely consistent with longer run trends.

This year, \_\_\_ percent of individuals expected their total cash earnings to remain the same or decline, whereas last year, \_\_\_ percent had a steady or declining outlook on their take home pay. On the other side of the coin, the same number of professionals (\_\_\_ percent) expect an increase of \_\_\_ percent or more in their total compensation.

Again, we are seeing fewer and fewer respondents indicating their compensation will remain unchanged year over year. Three years ago, nearly \_\_\_ percent of those polled expected their pay to be relatively stable. The decline to only \_\_\_ percent this year, down from \_\_\_ percent last year, continues this trend. If bonuses become an increasingly large part of employee compensation, we expect this trend to continue.



Figure 5: Year over Year Change in Cash Earnings

The overall level of confidence in pay increases for the private equity and venture capital industry hasn't changed much from last year. We have seen a slight increase in the number of individuals expecting a \_\_\_\_percent increase, offset by a similar decline in those expecting to earn about the same as last year. This modest increase in optimism is offset by an increase in the number of respondents expecting to have earned less this year than they did last.

In terms of what positions are seeing increases, respondents carrying all titles in the sector reported expecting higher earnings on average. From the \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_, everyone is expecting to have taken home more at the end of this year than they did the year prior. While the previous chart indicates mixed optimism, it seems that, on average, a positive outlook prevails in the industry.

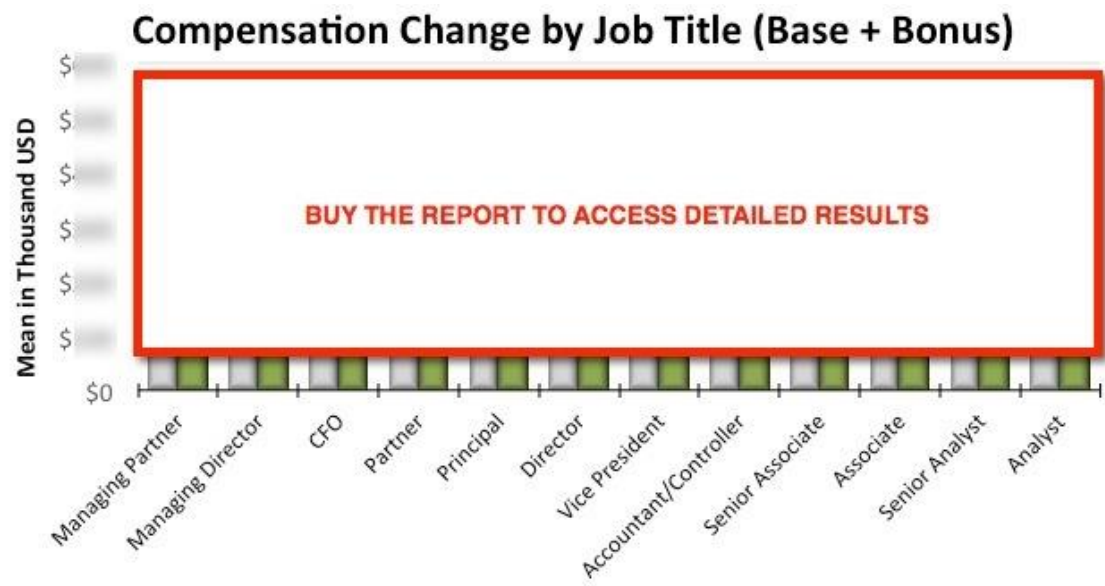


Figure 6: Compensation Change by Title

The survey results surrounding guaranteed bonuses are almost unchanged year over year. We saw the second consecutive year where those receiving no guaranteed bonus increased by \_\_\_ percent. Countering the trend of last year, however, was the \_\_\_ percent decline in those receiving fully guaranteed bonuses, reversing an uptick in last year. Overall, the results paint a very balanced and stable picture when it comes to guaranteed bonus expectations in the industry.

### Guaranteed Bonus Percentage



Figure 7: Guaranteed Bonus Percentage

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Below is a summary chart of reported median compensation by title. When looking at compensation by title, we suggest focusing more on percentiles vs. averages to get the best overall picture of the range.

Job Title	MEAN			TOTAL COMPENSATION		
	Base	Bonus	Total	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile
Accountant/Controller	\$	<b>BUY THE REPORT TO ACCESS DETAILED RESULTS</b>				
Analyst	\$					
Associate	\$					
CFO	\$					
Director	\$					
Investment Manager	\$					
Managing Director	\$					
Managing Partner	\$					
Partner	\$					
Principal	\$					
Senior Analyst	\$					
Senior Associate	\$					
Vice President	\$					

Note: In thousands of USD. Excludes countries where compensation practices vary significantly from USA, Canada and UK.

Figure 8: Cash Compensation Mean, Median and Ranges by Title

Consistent from previous years, the highest bonuses are obtained by those in executive or top level management positions. This is because, in general, they have more of their pay “at risk.” The higher bonuses are meant to compensate for this increased volatility.

## Differences between Firm Types and Fund Size

In a continuation from a trend that started last year, we see the average group size of our respondents decreasing. Those in groups of five or less are up, offset by declines in the number of respondents in larger groups. The one exception to this trend is those in \_\_\_\_\_ groups, which has increased. Overall, however, we believe that this is a trend towards \_\_\_\_\_, which positions a firm more strongly in reacting to changing conditions.

In terms of the size of the firms beyond the immediate working group, we did not see much change year over year from our respondents. There was a slight uptick in those working for firms in the \_\_\_\_\_ range, offset by some declines in the \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ employee ranges. Overall, the data indicates a steady state in the average size of private equity and venture capital firms in the market.



Figure 9: Size of Group and Firm

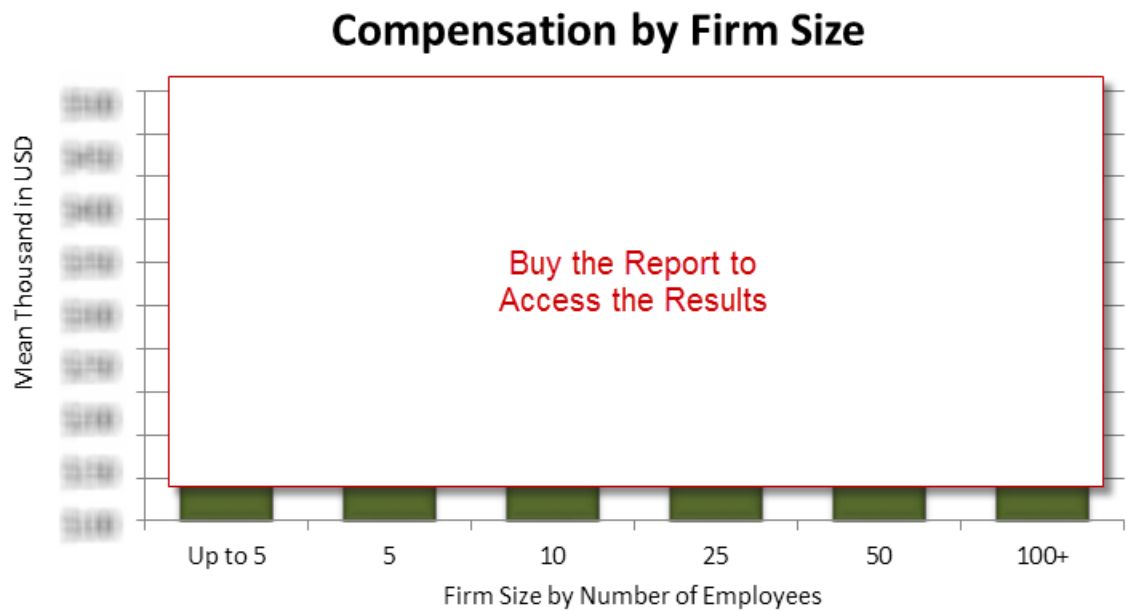


Figure 10: Compensation by Firm Size (Employees)

There has been a pronounced shift in terms of compensation by firm size according to this year’s survey. Last year, compensation was led by \_\_\_\_\_ size firms around 50 employees. This year, we’ve seen a shift towards higher compensation in \_\_\_\_\_ firms. What is even more interesting is that the differential isn’t being driving purely by bonuses, but also by higher base compensation in the \_\_\_\_\_ firms.

We did see that the difference in base compensation remains stable once a firm reaches approximately \_\_\_\_ employees. Bonuses do increase however as firm size grows in the \_\_\_\_\_ range though the \_\_\_\_\_ firms still offer the strongest combined base compensation and bonuses.

## Type of Firm

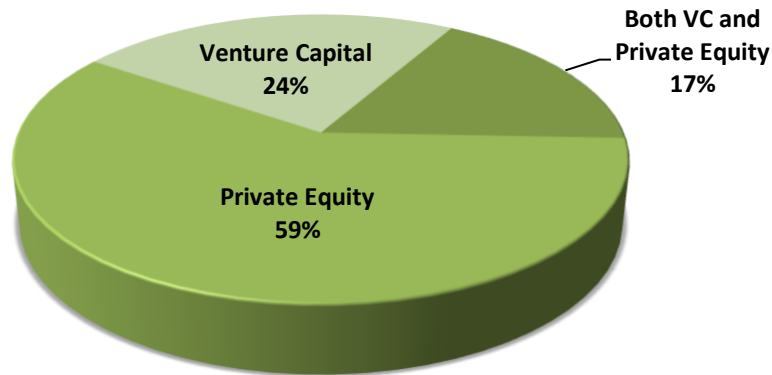


Figure11: Type of Firm

Year over year, we have been seeing a decrease in those working in \_\_\_\_\_ enterprises. The strong demand for private equity funds, coupled with the economies of scale by running combined operations, are likely behind this trend. The total amount of deal flow in venture capital is also decreasing, down xx percent in the first nine months of this year compared to last.

## Organizational Structure of the Firm

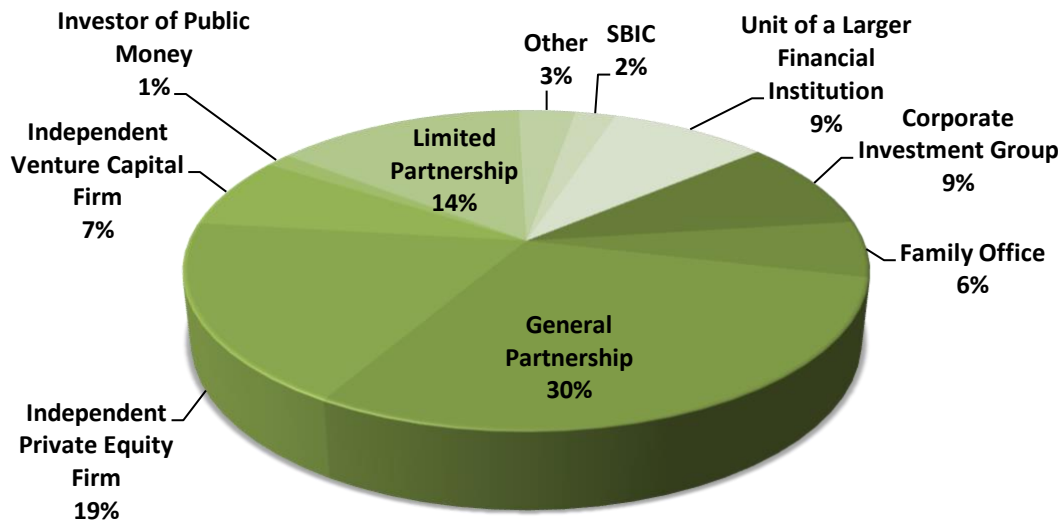


Figure 12: Organizational Structure of the Firm





Figure 13: Compensation Differences between Firm Types

An ongoing trend from previous years, we are seeing considerable differences in compensation between respondents, depending on their firm’s focus. While at the Associate level compensation is fairly consistent between firm types, as you move up the ranks, things become more variable. In nearly all cases, those working for pure play venture capital firms earn \_\_\_\_\_.



Figure 14: Change in Pay by Firm Type

Respondents are quite a bit more optimistic on their fund performance. We found that \_\_\_\_ percent of respondents expected returns of over \_\_\_\_ percent this year, up from \_\_\_\_ percent the year prior. We also found gains in the “up 10 to 24 percent” and “up 1 to 9 percent” categories, offset by declines in the number of respondents reporting \_\_\_\_\_ performance.

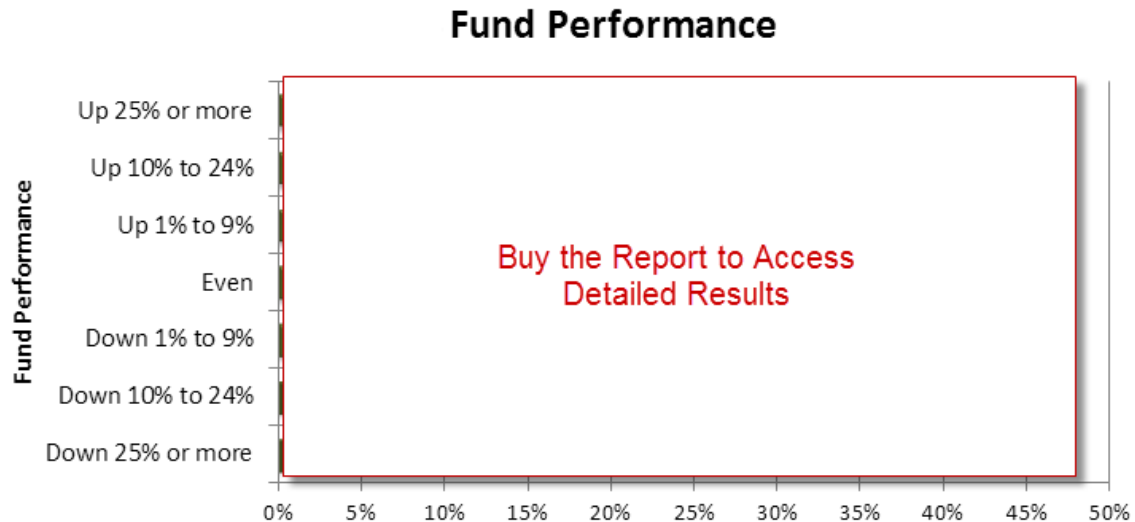


Figure 15: Fund Performance Ranges

The expected bonus level data shows a considerable change from last year.

Expected bonuses for firms with \_\_\_\_\_ for the year have considerably dropped off in comparison to last year's data, while those employed by \_\_\_\_\_ funds have higher expectations of bonuses this year.

While in last year's survey we saw a clear correlation between bonus payouts and fund performance, this is certainly not the case this year. Those with funds expected to \_\_\_\_ percent or greater this year still expected a \$\_\_\_\_\_ thousand bonus on average. This is, however, a return to years prior, where we did find less correlation than anticipated in bonuses by fund performance level.

Every year, to better understand how respondents are managing their funds, we ask in which investment strategies their firms are most involved. PE Mid-Cap led the way in responses, unchanged from our last two surveys. Firms focused on early stage venture capital funds declined to the point where they dropped out of the top 3 strategies, while leveraged buyout (LBO)-focused funds took second place, despite merely holding steady. Funds focusing on real estate increased substantially year over year, growing nearly 5 percent, making it the fastest growing strategy as investors seek alternative asset classes amid market volatility.

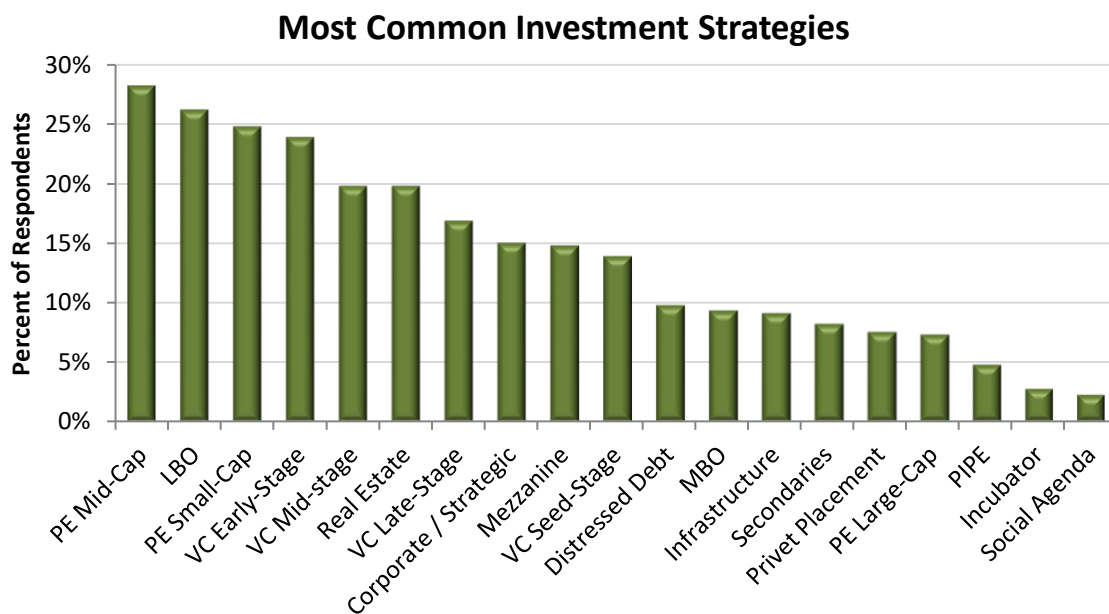


Figure17: Most Common Investment Strategies

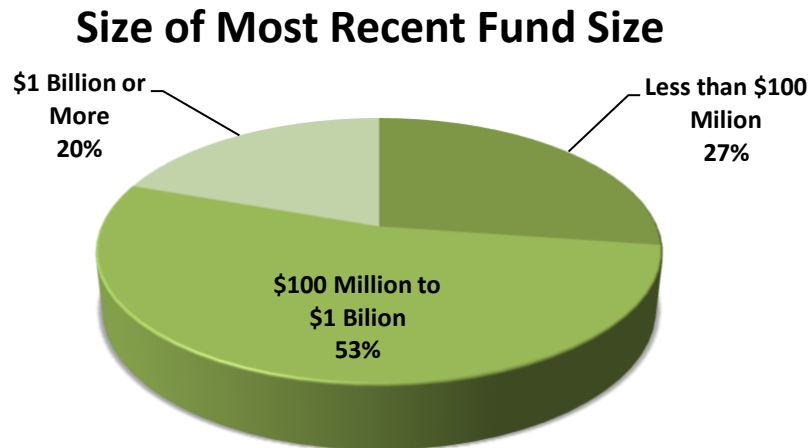


Figure18: Size of Most Recent Fund

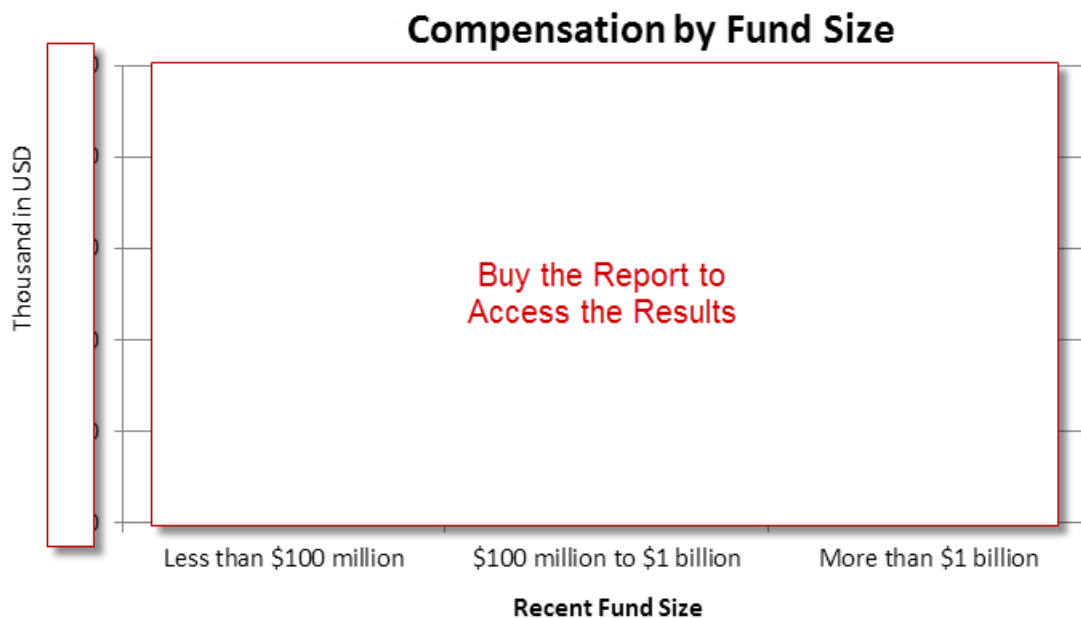


Figure 19: Average Compensation by Fund Size

In contrast to compensation by team size discussed earlier, respondents indicated substantially higher compensation if working for a firm that's most recent fund size was over \$\_\_\_\_\_. The gap between \_\_\_\_\_ funds and \_\_\_\_\_ funds in terms of compensation increased considerably, from \_\_\_ percent the year before to \_\_\_ percent this year. Keep in mind, this segment represents \_\_\_\_\_ percent of respondents.

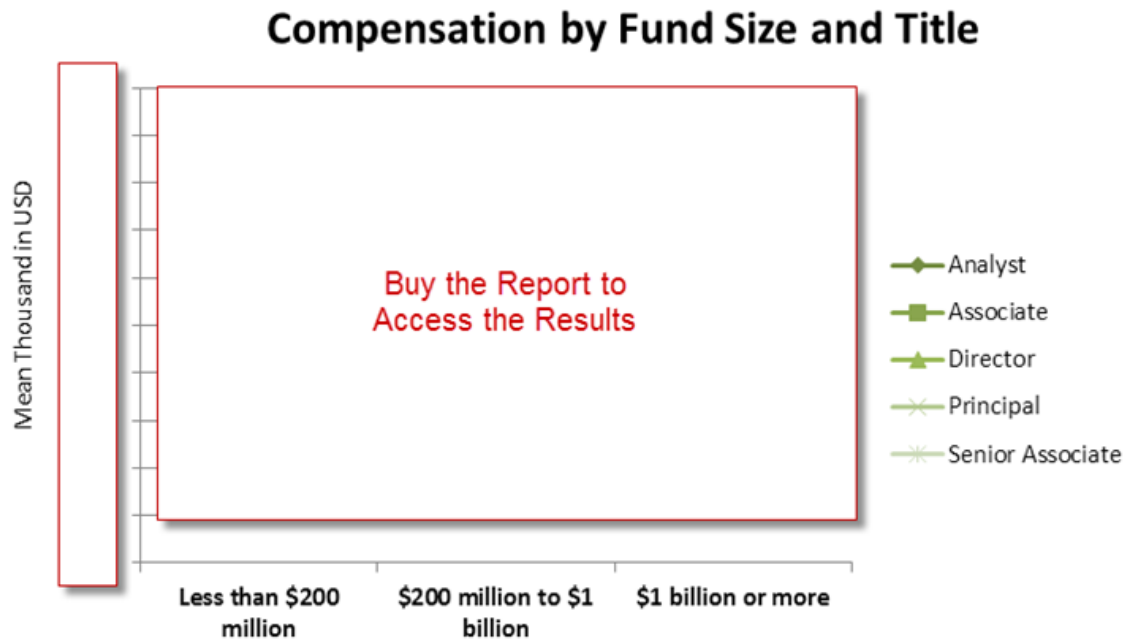


Figure 22: Mean Compensation by Fund Size for Common Roles

In nearly all cases, cash compensation was \_\_\_\_\_ with the size of the fund. The only exceptions to this norm were \_\_\_\_\_, who saw total compensation decline as they moved to funds over \$1 billion. This is a reversal of the results of the last survey where \_\_\_\_\_ earned the biggest premium as they moved up in assets under management.

However, as we indicated in the previous survey, last year's results were heavily influenced by \_\_\_\_\_, and with the moderation of these \_\_\_\_\_ in the current period, we see the trend return to a more typical pattern.

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Below is a summary chart showing base and bonus levels by both firm size (based on AUM) and title.

	Assets Under Management		
Title	Less than \$200 million	\$200 million to \$1 billion	\$1 billion or more
Base Salary			
Analyst	Buy the Report to Access the Results		
Associate			
CFO			
Director			
Investment Manager			
Managing Director			
Managing Partner			
Partner			
Principal			
Senior Associate			
Vice President			
Bonus			
Analyst	Buy the Report to Access the Results		
Associate			
CFO			
Director			
Investment Manager			
Managing Director			
Managing Partner			
Partner			
Principal			
Senior Associate			
Vice President			

Note: Mean cash compensation in thousands of USD. Excludes countries where compensation practices vary significantly from USA, Canada and UK. Also excludes positions where enough data was not available to create an identifiable mean.

Figure 23: Base and Bonus by Firm Size (AUM) and Title

## Job Security and Balance

One of the best leading indicators of the overall health of the private equity and venture capital job market is the feelings of our respondents toward their own job security.

We are now seeing a third year of relative stability after a big jump in confidence in 20xx. While 6 percent of respondents were very concerned about their job security in both last year's and this year's survey, the number that were somewhat concerned declined 4 percentage points year over year.

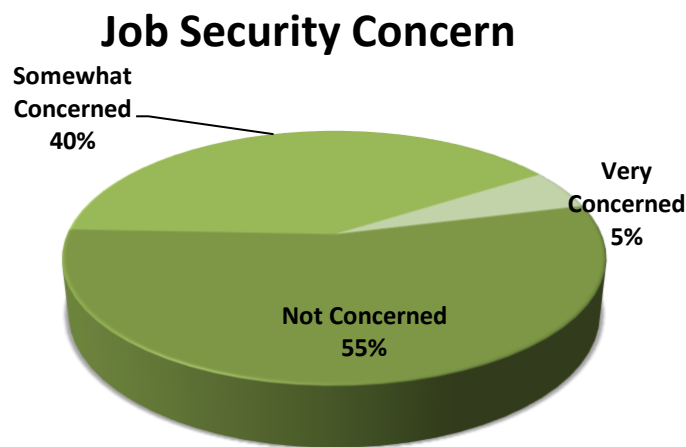


Figure 29: Job Security Concerns

## Why Concerned About Job Security

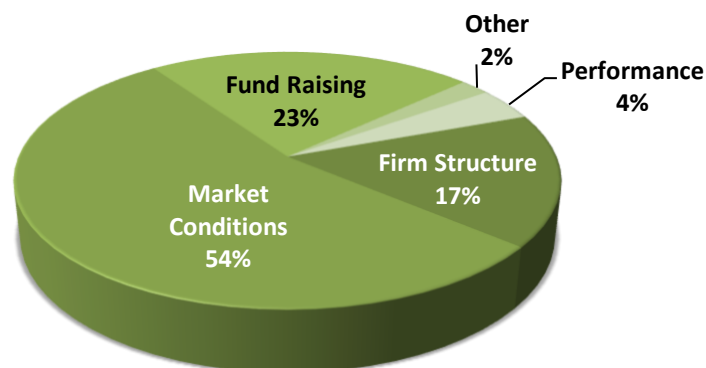


Figure 30: Why Concerned About Job Security

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The fact that fewer professionals were concerned with their job security may be well grounded in fact for 20xx. While not as robust as the results of our 20xx report, we have noticed an uptick in hiring intentions across the board when compared to last year's report. Better yet for the private equity or venture capital professional, fewer firms are considering a reduction in headcount. This comes despite a slight decrease in the number of U.S. private equity deals being closed in the first nine months of the year, compared to 20xx.

Those professionals with an accounting background are seeing demand for their skills increase the most, with \_\_\_\_ percent of firms looking for Accountants in the coming year versus only \_\_\_\_ percent in the year prior. That said, investment professionals lead the way yet again with \_\_\_\_ percent of firms looking to hire new talent in this area versus only \_\_\_\_ percent last year.

	Investment	Accounting	Marketing	Ops & PM	IT	Investor Relations
Hiring	88	88	88	88	88	88
Not Hiring	22	22	22	22	22	22
Reducing Headcount	10	10	10	10	10	10

Figure 31: Which Positions are in the Greatest Demand

Increasingly, we are seeing firms take innovative approaches to compensation beyond simple pay increases and bonuses. In order to acquire top talent, firm's today need to stretch out and offer both strong benefits and an enriching corporate culture.

While cash compensation continues to climb at small firms, and now even exceeds some mid-sized and large firms, these teams are uniquely positioned to offer additional opportunities especially for young employees. Offering junior team members the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of functions allows them to both grow individually, but also improve their ability to deal with cross functional issues in the future.



Importantly, it offers enrichment to the role which may decrease attrition within a young demographic which often poses a challenge to human resources professionals in terms of retention.

### How Good is Your Firm's Training?

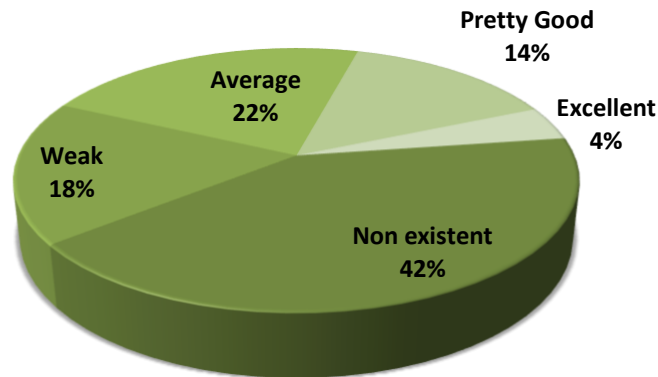


Figure33: Quality of Firm's Training Program

Training is certainly one benefit that firms can offer that provides value to the fund while improving individual's satisfaction. However, firms are struggling to meet the expectations of team members.

Respondents suggesting that their firm's training practices are "weak" or "non-existent" actually increased slightly over last year. This is clearly a missed opportunity for firms to add value.

Training programs can be developed in house or outsourced to firms such as [Breaking Into Wall Street](#), which provides online programs for learning basic and advanced financial modeling.

## Carried Interest

In private equity and venture capital, carried interest allocations are typically around 20 percent of the fund's profit. In select cases, it can be substantially higher. Total carried interest is distributed to fund team members based on their personal carry, or share of the fee.

### Size of the Carry Pool

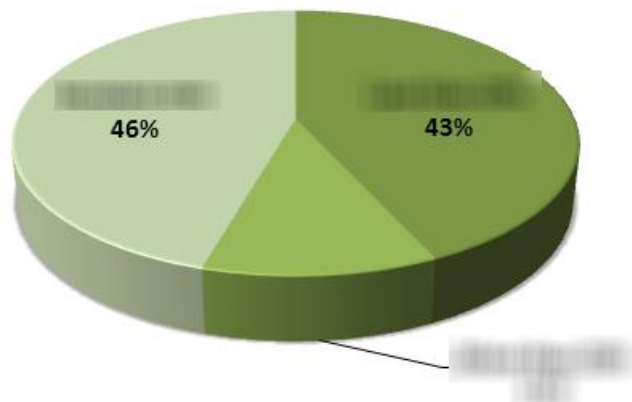


Figure 34: Size of Carried Interest Pool

Compared to last year, the number of firms with a carried interest pool greater than 20 percent increased \_\_\_ percent. Respondents reporting a carry pool below the \_\_\_\_\_ were unchanged year over year.

The two leading factors in determining whether a private equity professional will get carried interest as part of their compensation were \_\_\_\_\_ and their \_\_\_\_\_.

## Your Portion of the Carry Pool

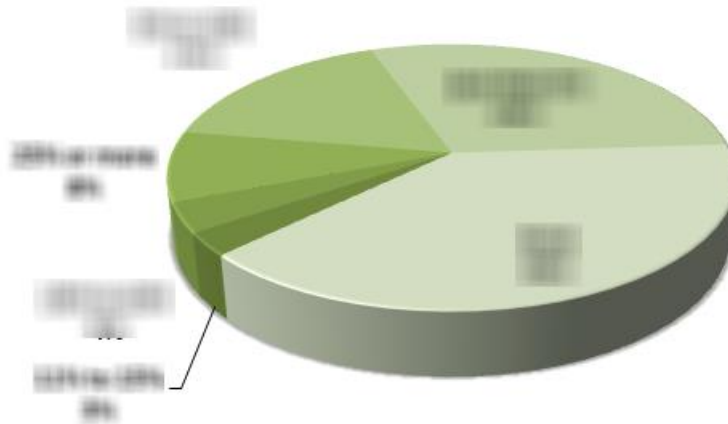


Figure 35: How Carry is Shared

As profits have yet to fully recover from pre-market crash levels, we have yet to see carry payout return to their past levels. However, we do see a slight uptick this year in those receiving some carry. \_\_\_\_ percent of respondents received carried interest allocations of some level this year, while last year only \_\_\_\_ percent of respondents enjoyed this benefit.

For those with carry, they report having an average holding period of \_\_\_\_ years (up from \_\_\_\_ last year) to be fully vested in their carried interest; with a range of Associates at \_\_\_\_ years (up from \_\_\_\_ last year) and Partners at \_\_\_\_ years (down from \_\_\_\_ last year).

At the upper levels of fund management, carry participation has been largely steady, with some modest declines in the number of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ participating in carry pools. This is unlikely to be representative of a trend away from carry participation for these senior professionals, and is more likely related to which individuals with these titles responded this year.

As expected, work experience is highly correlated with position in the firm, and accordingly, is also related to carry percentage. We see two large jumps in participation, in the 6 to 9 year range and then again in the 10 to 15 year range. After that tenure, carry pool participation levels become relatively stable.

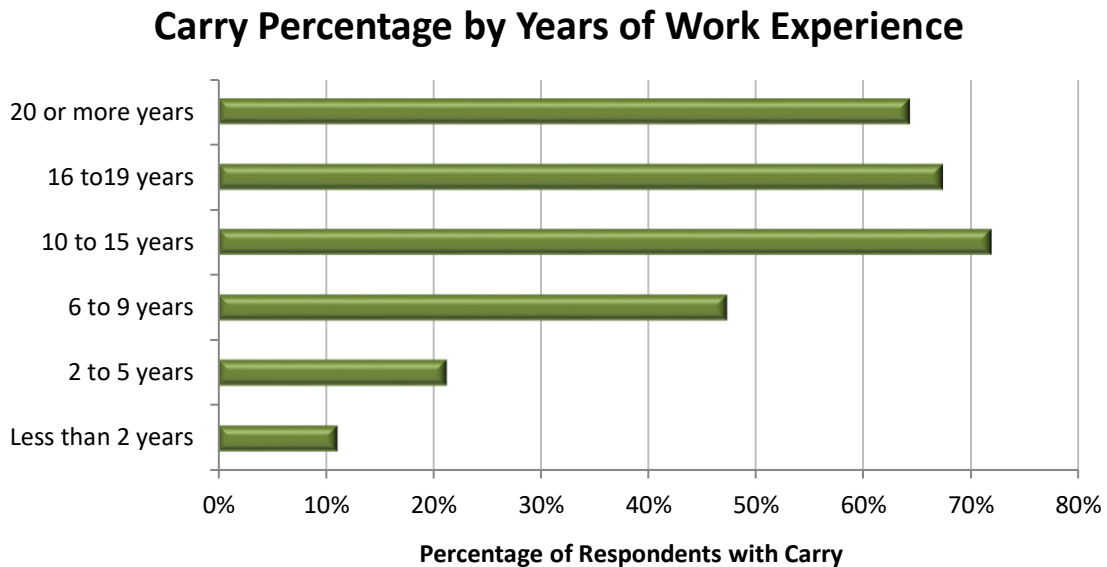


Figure 37: Carry Participation by Years of Work Experience

Below are three separate graphs that show the detail surrounding how carry is typically allocated in our respondent's firms. The data is grouped by level, based on titles, within the firm.

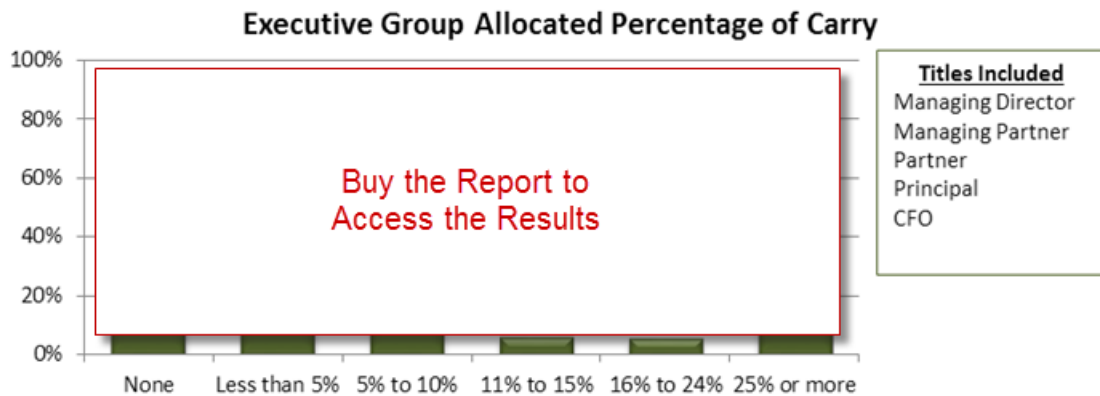


Figure 38: Executive Level Allocated Carry Percentages

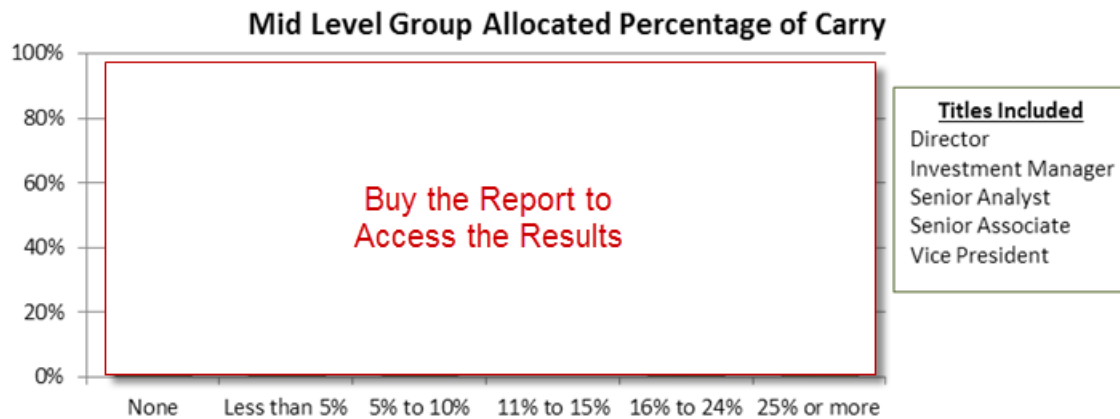


Figure 39: Mid Level Allocated Carry Percentages

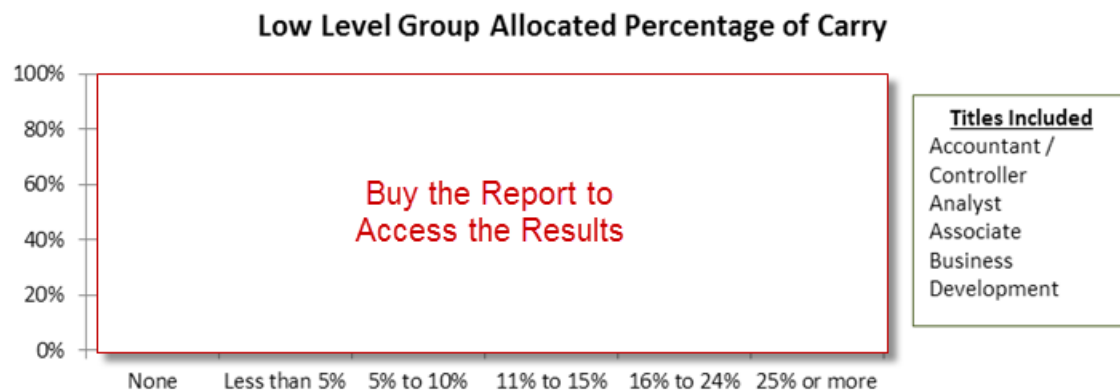


Figure 40: Lower Level Allocated Carry Percentages

## Education and Experience

Compared to last year's results, we have seen a narrowing of the compensation differential between those with an MBA, and those without. In our survey results from last year, a respondent with an MBA earned \_\_\_ percent more than their peers, while this year we see only a \_\_\_ percent premium placed on the graduate business degree.

Much of this gap was closed in base compensation, while the minimal bonus differential remained mostly steady compared to last year.

### Average Compensation (USD)

	MBA	No MBA
Base	Buy the Report to Access Detailed Results	
Bonus		
Total		
Vacation Weeks Earned		

Figure 41: MBA Compensation Comparison

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