



MAINTAINER RESEARCH

Perceptions of their role, tasks, job satisfaction, and more

November 2024

BACKGROUND AND METHOD

GP PRO is always interested in learning more about the industries and people we serve. Insights are meant to inform our innovation, our messaging, and these types of insights can sometimes serve as a resource for our customers.

Knowing maintenance teams are critical in the value stream for what we do as a manufacturer and what we experience as consumers, our teams sought to learn more about the individuals who work in the hands-on maintainer role.

An online survey was conducted in November 2024 and garnered responses from 200 maintainers working across the US, all with at least one year in the industry. The survey was available in both English and Spanish. Our team worked with vendor partner Savanta to procure sample, program and execute the survey, and provide final data for analysis.

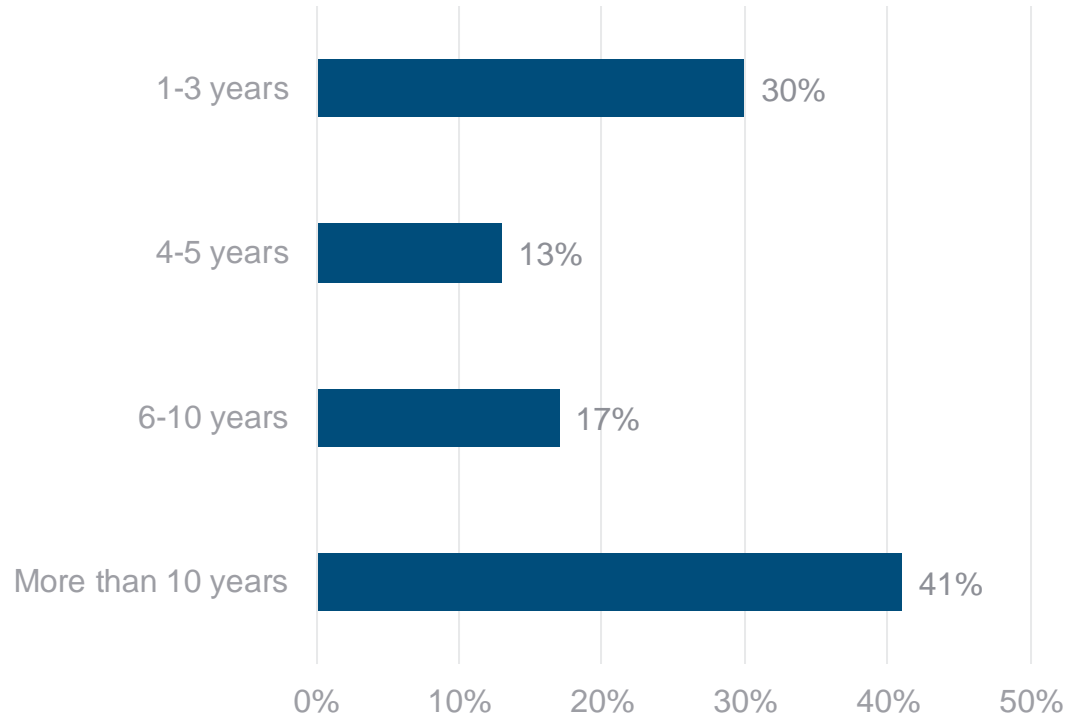
Full data with segment and demographic breakdowns is available for review.

Due to rounding, some data might not sum to 100%.



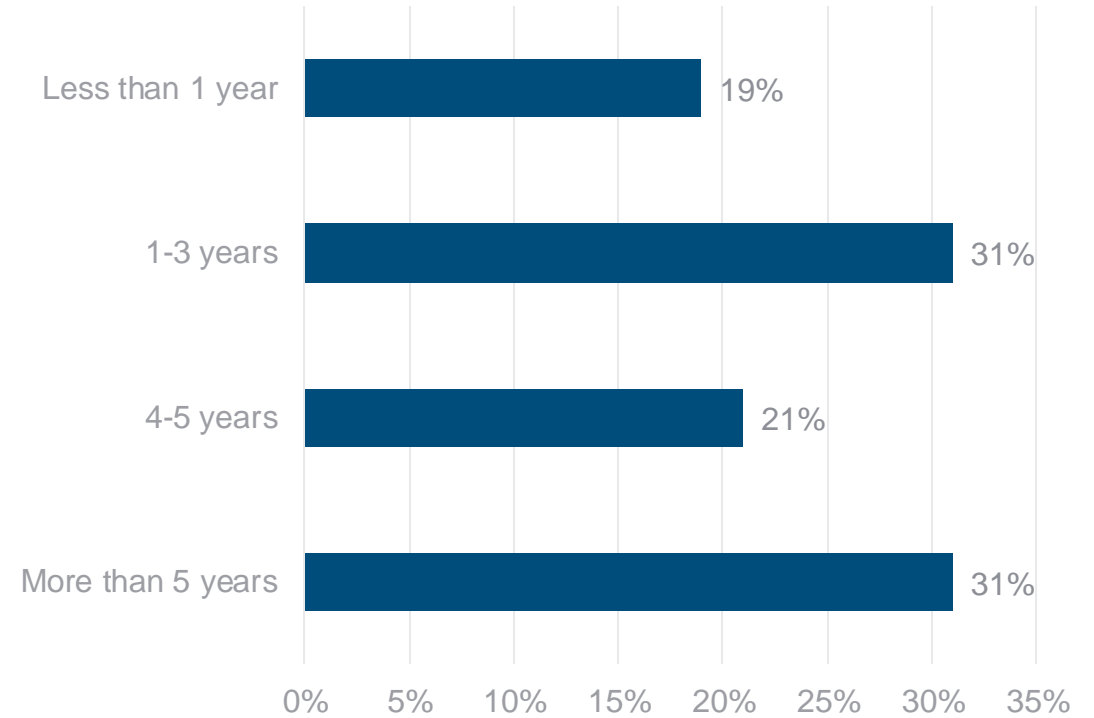
While labor issues and turnover are often cited as challenges, many of these **maintainers appear committed to their role and the industry**, with 41% working in the industry for more than 10 years.

Tenure in the Industry



Q8. How long have you worked, in total, in roles that included janitorial duties?
n=200, all of whom reported working in the industry at least one year as screening criteria

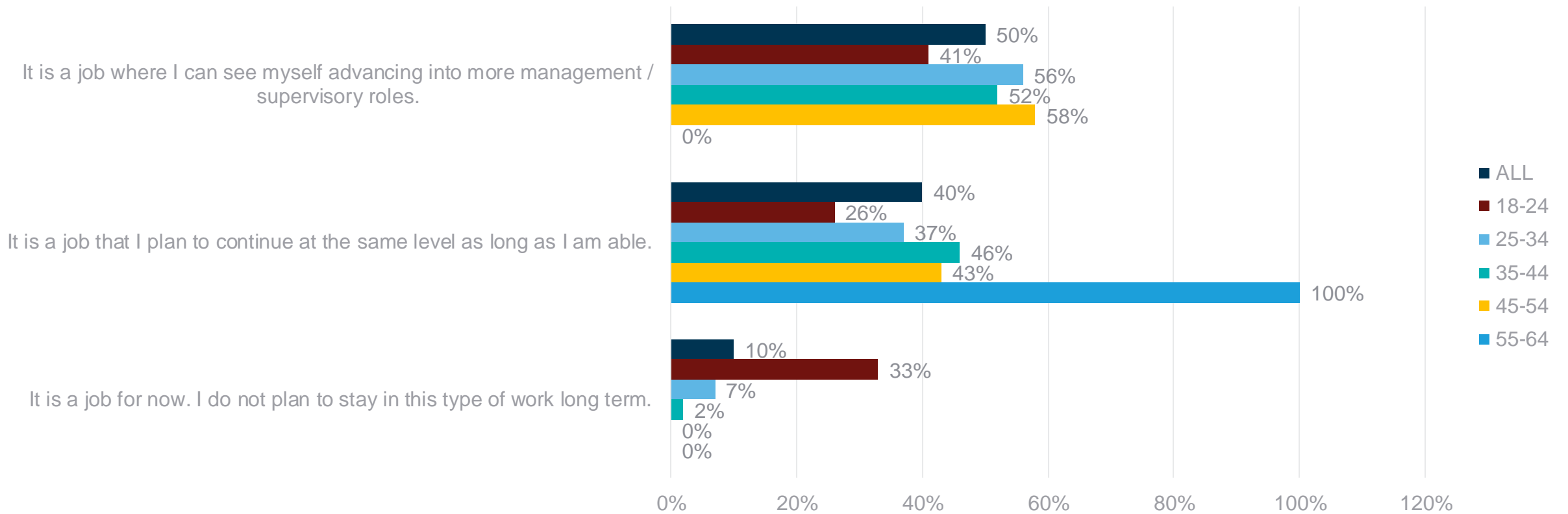
Tenure in Role with Current Employer



Q7. How long have you worked in your current role with your current employer?
n=200

While a third of the youngest workers see their role as “a job for now,” more in all age brackets indicate a desire to stay in their role or advance within the industry.

Perception of Current Role Looking Toward the Future



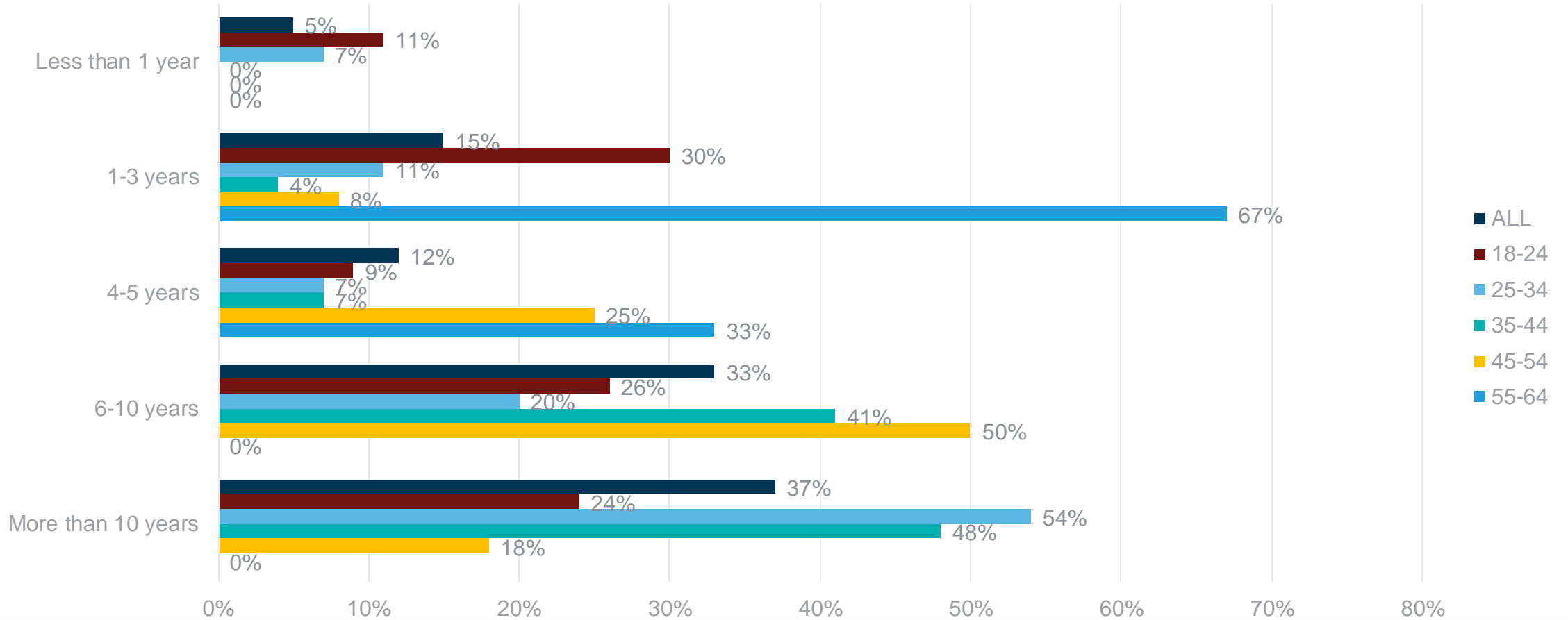
Q18. Overall, how do you see your current role as you think about the future?

Total n=200 / 18-24: n=46 / 25-34: n=54 / 35-44: n=54 / 45-54: n=40 / 55-64: n=6



While overall expected tenure appears positive, **employers will want to examine ways to engage younger, less committed employees to keep the labor pipeline full as older workers age out.**

Time Employees' Expect to Continue Working in the Industry

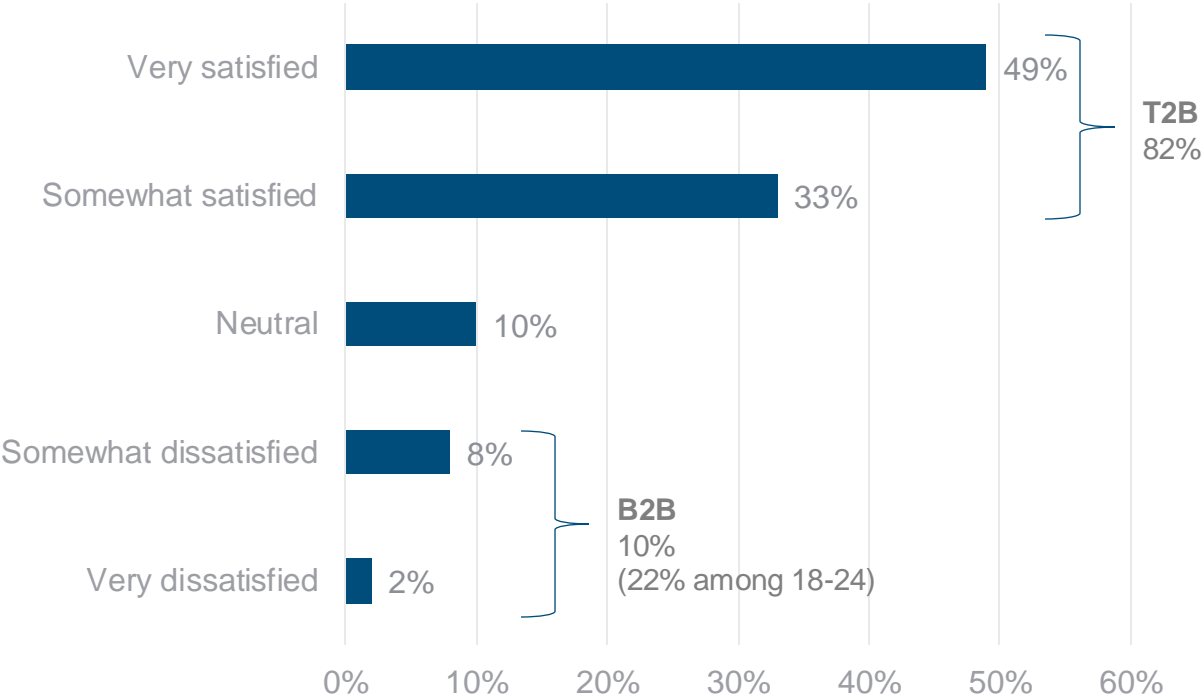


Q19. How long do you plan to continue working in a janitorial role, whether for your current employer or another?
 Total n=200 / 18-24: n=46 / 25-34: n=54 / 35-44: n=54 / 45-54: n=40 / 55-64: n=6



Generally speaking, **job satisfaction is high**. Some generational differences are noted, however, with higher numbers among older workers. 85% of those age 45-54 are very satisfied compared to just 26% of those age 18-24.

Overall Job Satisfaction in Current Role



Q9. How would you describe your overall job satisfaction in your current role?
n=200



Appealing aspects of the job?

Aspect of the job	% finding it enjoyable or fulfilling
Good pay	68%
Good training provided	60%
Good healthcare benefits	59%
Flexible schedule	55%
Working in a comfortable / safe environment	36%
Interactions with co-workers	34%
Interactions with the public	33%
Positive feedback / encouragement from management or leadership	23%
Uniforms provided	19%
Development and training opportunities / career track to management, etc.	12%
Pride in providing a clean and well-stocked restroom for people	8%
Little to no interaction with the public while working	6%



Q10. Thinking about your time, in total, working in a janitorial role, which of the following, if any, are parts of the job you enjoy or find fulfilling?

n=200



Unappealing aspects of the job?

Aspect of the job	% finding it unenjoyable
Messy, dirty work	25%
Low wages	22%
Uniforms required	11%
Not enough training provided	10%
Boredom / not challenged	10%
Difficult schedule (nights, weekends, etc.)	10%
Lack of good healthcare benefits	9%
Tasks involved in cleaning / maintaining the restroom are difficult or unenjoyable	8%
No opportunity for advancement / career track to management roles	6%
Poor treatment from the public	6%
Working in an uncomfortable or unsafe environment	5%

Aspect of the job	% finding it unenjoyable
Shifts cut back / not enough hours	5%
Burn out / too many hours	5%
Not enough workers / asked to do too much	5%
Employees are not valued by management	4%
Poor management or leadership	3%
Physical demands of the job	2%
Little to no interaction with the public or others while working	1%
None of the above	14%

Q11. Which of the following, if any, are parts of the job you do not enjoy?

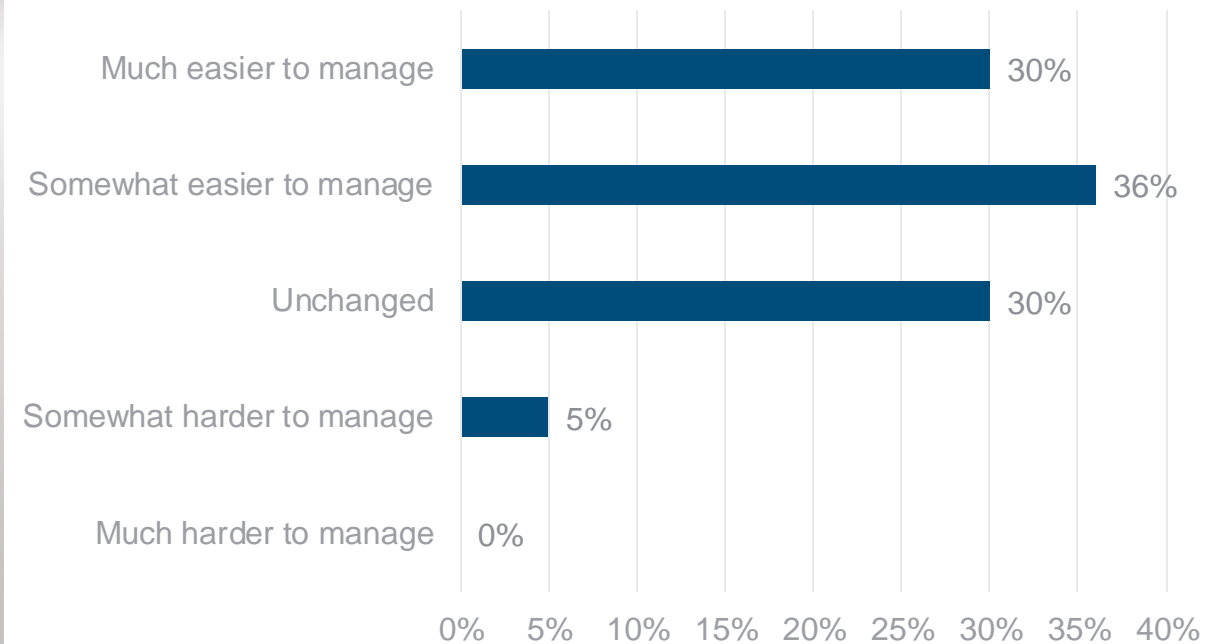
n=200



While at the height of the pandemic these numbers might have looked very different, streamlined processes and automation, some born out of necessity in recent years as expectations for hygiene skyrocketed, could be contributing to **perceptions of the current workload as more easily manageable.**



Perception of Workload Compared to Pre-COVID

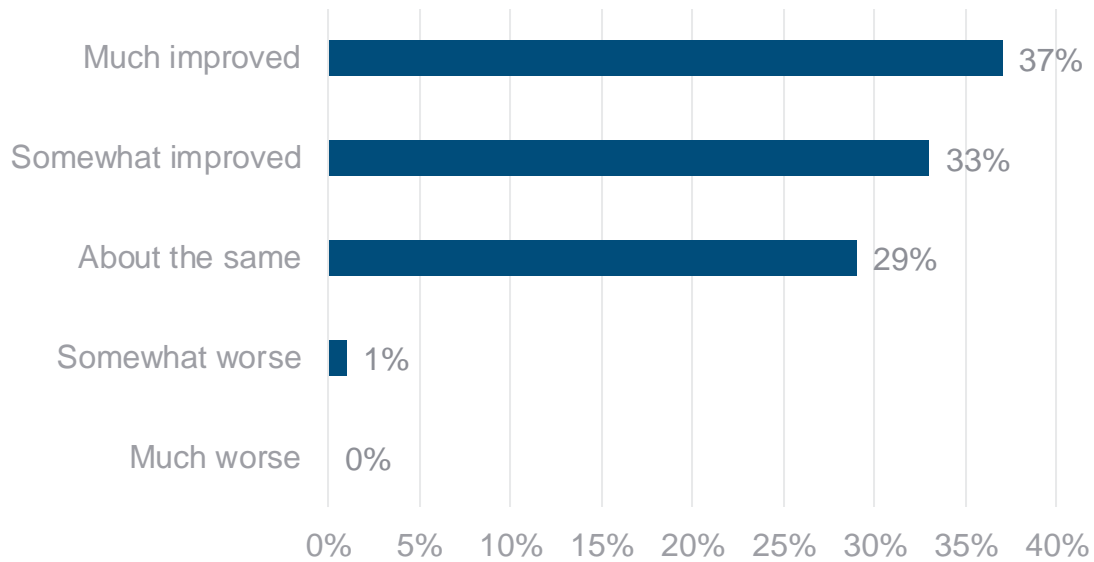


Q12. Based on your experience in janitorial role(s), how would you describe the workload now (hours, number of tasks you are asked to do or areas to cover) compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic?

n=145, those working in the industry prior to the pandemic

As maintainers became frontline workers during the pandemic, some moved from working in the shadows to being spotlighted, and **consumer sentiment regarding the role and the work seems to have improved.**

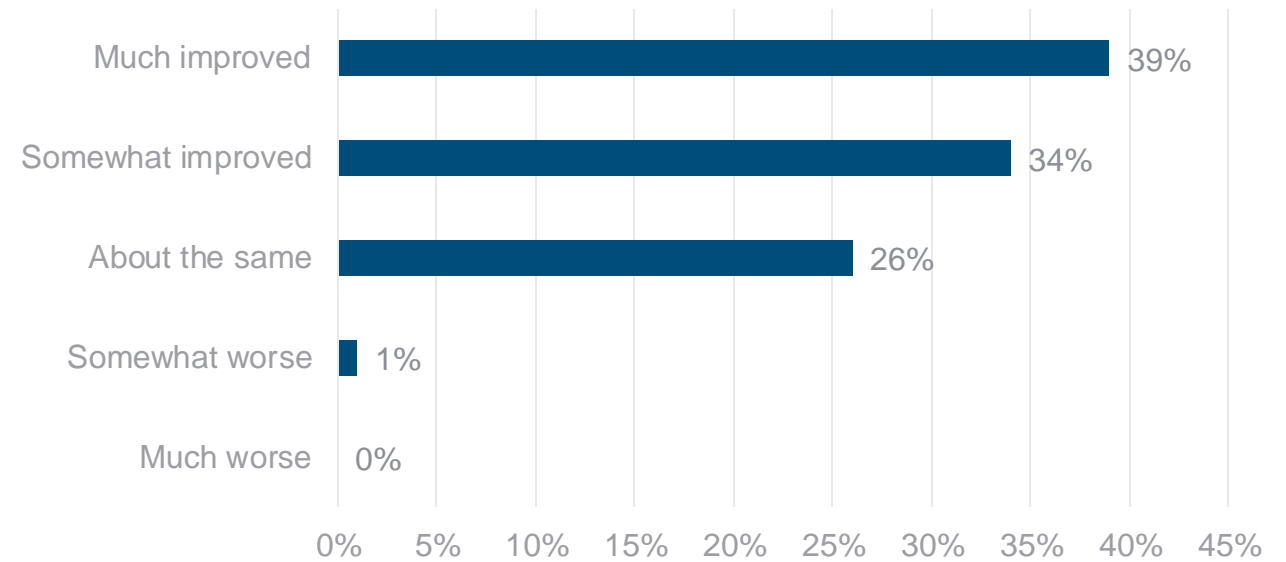
Treatment of Maintainers by the Public Compared to Pre-COVID



Q13. Based on your experience in janitorial role(s), how would you describe the treatment of janitorial workers by the public now compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic?

n=145, those working in the industry prior to the pandemic

Treatment of Public Restrooms by Users Compared to Pre-COVID



Q14. Based on your experience in janitorial role(s), how would you describe the treatment of public restrooms by people now compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the conditions they leave behind?

n=145, those working in the industry prior to the pandemic



Opportunities to improve job satisfaction / reduce turnover?

Opportunity / action	% who feel it could increase job satisfaction and reduce turn-over
Higher wages	23%
Better benefits	20%
Automation of certain tasks / use of robotics	20%
Simplified tasks	16%
Better tools and supplies to get the job done	12%
Better training / onboarding	11%
Reassurance around the importance of the work one does	11%
Manageable schedule / matches worker preferences	10%
Positive feedback from the public	8%
More career development / management opportunities	7%

Opportunity / action	% who feel it could increase job satisfaction and reduce turn-over
More career development / management opportunities	7%
Positive feedback and acknowledgement from management	5%
Improved working conditions (attention to safety, etc.)	5%
Stronger leadership / management	4%
Adequate staffing so not overworked	4%
Reduced physical strain	4%
Team building efforts / activities	3%
Management valuing the employee experience as much as the public's experience	2%
None of the above	14%

Q15. Based on your experience in janitorial service and acknowledging current labor challenges, which of the following could help increase job satisfaction and reduce turn-over in the industry?

n=200



Improvements to speed and simplicity related to restocking restroom dispensers could deliver multiple benefits: to workers through increased job satisfaction and feeling more successful in their role and to the public through improved restroom conditions.

Tasks	% who wish it could be easier and faster
Cleaning toilets	67%
Cleaning floors	50%
Emptying trash bins	40%
Cleaning mirrors / counters	29%
Refilling soap / hand sanitizer dispensers	25%
Changing batteries in automated restroom dispensers	24%
Refilling toilet paper dispensers	22%
Refilling paper towel dispensers	21%

Q16. Which of the following typical restroom maintenance tasks do you wish could be easier and faster?

n=200

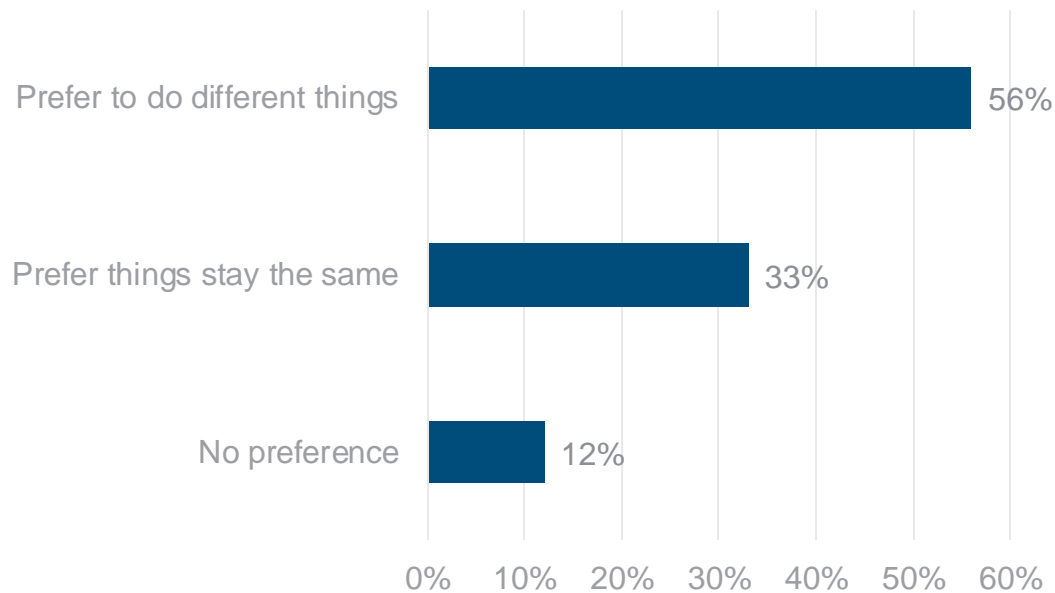
Potential benefits if restocking restroom supplies like paper towels, soap and tissue could be simplified	% who said this is a benefit one might experience
Improved job satisfaction	61%
Improved restroom conditions for the public	42%
Ability to devote more time to other tasks	37%
Feeling more confident and successful in your role	30%
More likely to continue working in janitorial service	18%
None of the above	1%

Q17. If required tasks like restocking restroom supplies such as paper towels, tissue and soap, could be simplified (fewer, easier steps that require less training), which of the following is a benefit you might experience?

n=200

Overall, half **prefer some variety** in their day. As one might expect, **there is a stronger preference among workers under age 45 for variety in their day-to-day work**, perhaps highlighting an avenue for employers to better engage them. As for introducing new equipment, maintainer response is positive.

Preference for Day-to-Day Tasks / Work Areas



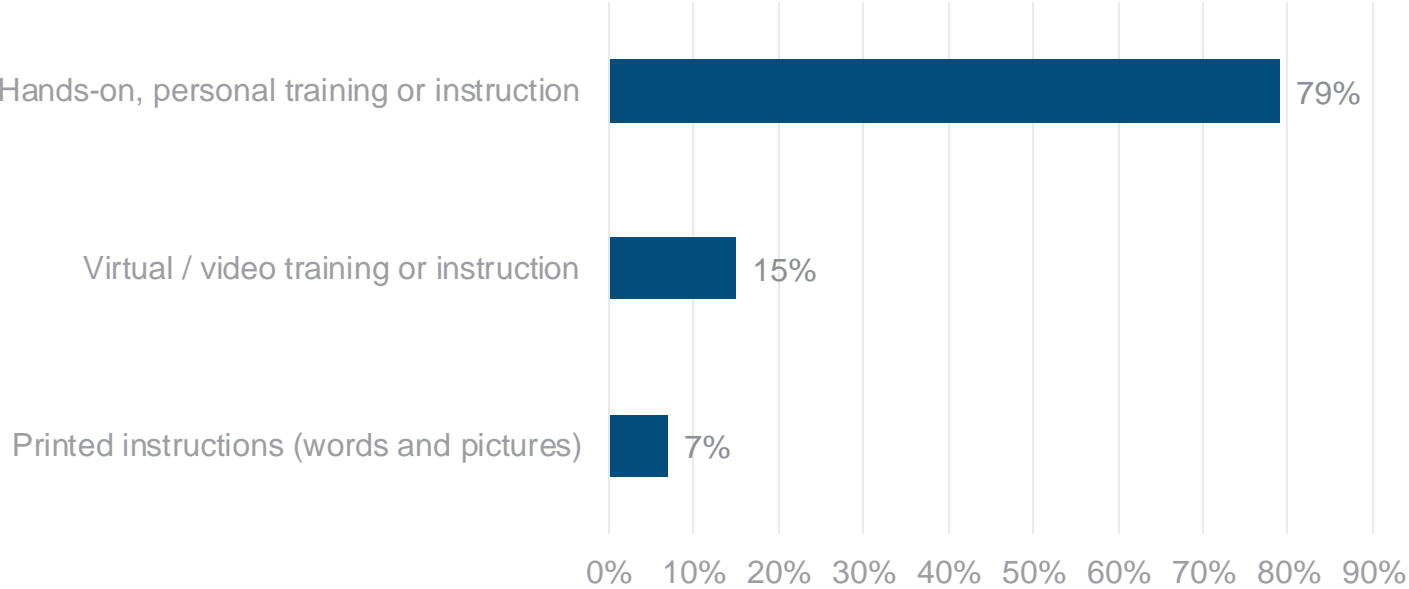
Q20. Thinking about your day-to-day tasks, do you prefer to do the same things each day/shift and work in the same area, or do you prefer to do different things or work in different areas sometimes?
n=200

Reaction when asked to work with new equipment such as new dispensers	% feeling this way
Happy	46%
Accepting	45%
Excited	44%
Neutral / Indifferent	24%
Challenged	9%
Nervous	3%
Annoyed	0%

Q21. When you are asked to work with new equipment, such as new paper towel or soap dispensers, how do you feel about that?
n=200

Preferred training methods?

Most Helpful Format for Learning New Equipment Such As Dispensers



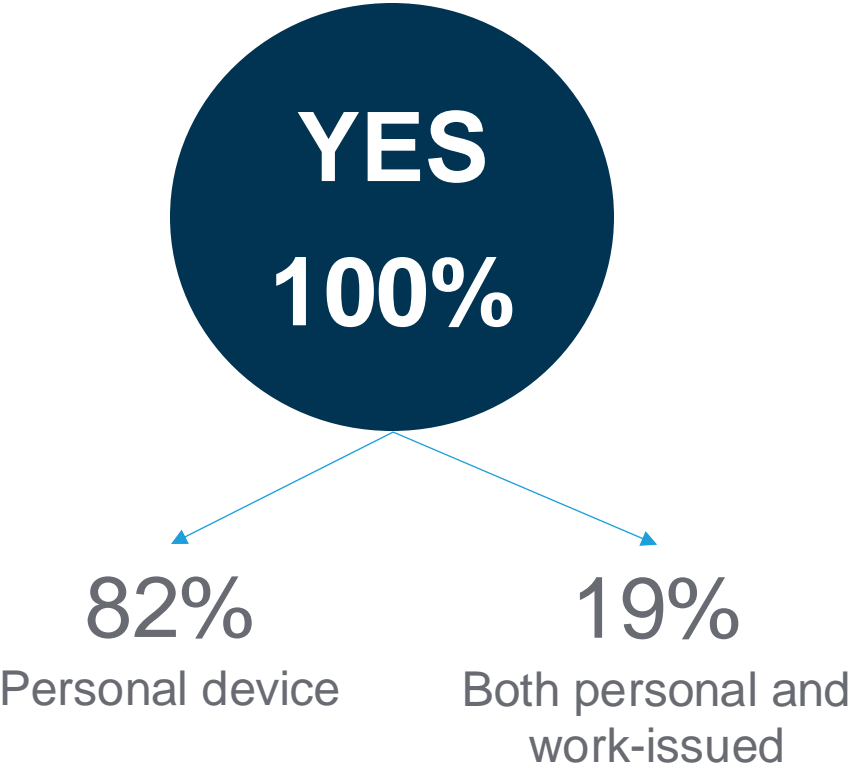
Overwhelmingly, maintainers **prefer hands-on, personal instruction** when learning how to work with new dispensers, but training teams can be an arduous and time-consuming task when staff need to hit the ground running. This affirms the importance of simple and intuitive design.

Q22. When you are asked to work with new equipment, such as new paper towel or soap dispensers, which is most helpful to you in learning how to maintain and refill them?

n=200

Maintainers generally have access to a mobile device and most appear **open to using it for a work-related tasks such as scanning a QR code** for necessary information.

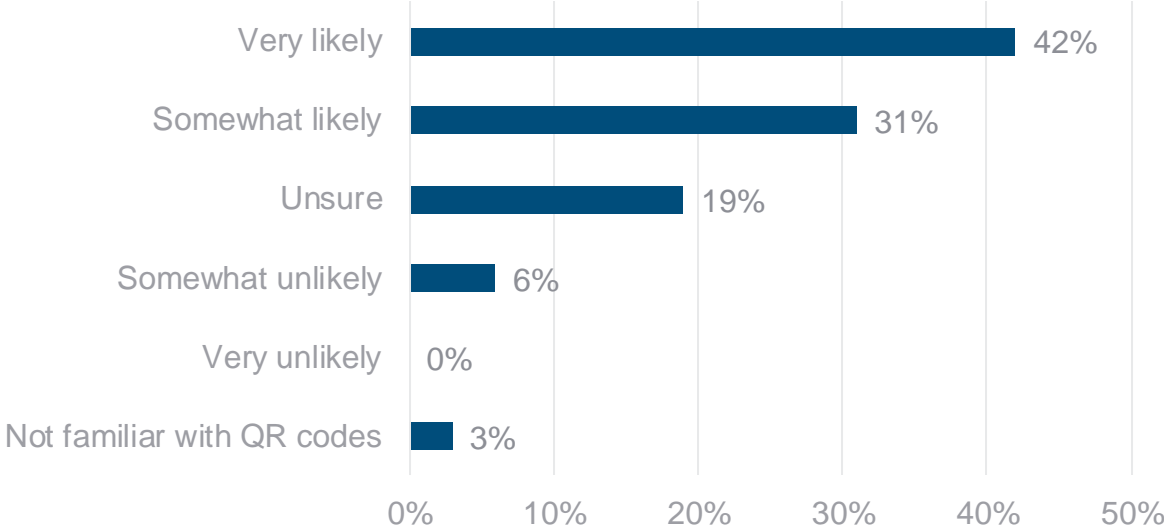
Do you carry a mobile device / cell phone with you as your work?



Q32. Do you carry a mobile device / cell phone with you as you work?
Q33. Is the mobile device / cell phone you carry as you work a ...?

n=200

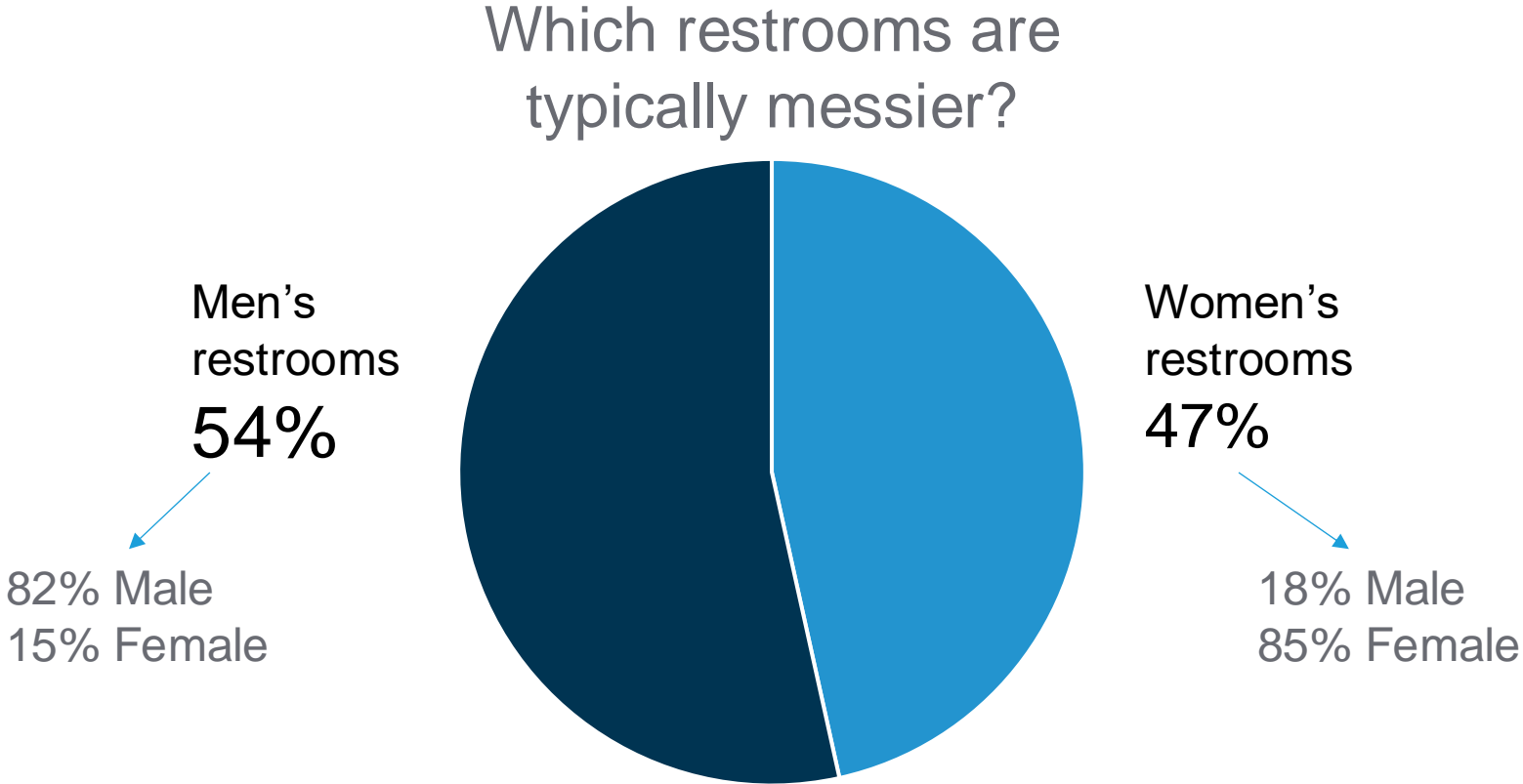
Likelihood to Scan a QR Code for Instructions or Troubleshooting Dispenser Tasks / Issues



Q34. How likely would you be to scan a QR code for instructions or troubleshooting a problem related to maintaining a paper towel or soap dispenser?

n=200

Interestingly, while the **overall response is split**, when segmented by gender, each appears harshest on their own. This could also be influenced by what they see within the gender-specific areas they may work.



Q24. Which restrooms are typically messier, men's or women's?

n=200

What is the best thing someone from the public has said to you about your work?

Key Themes

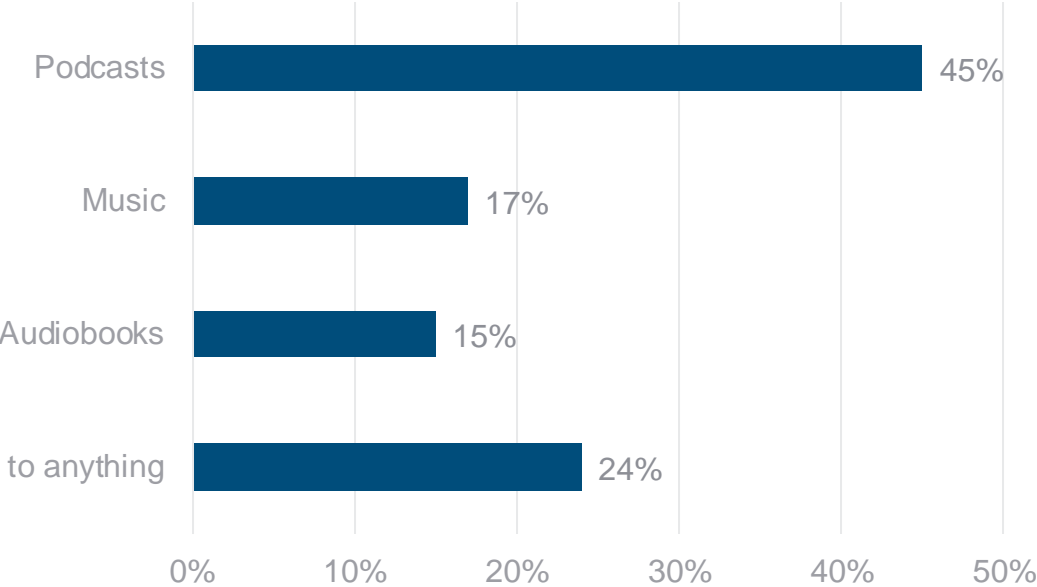
- 46% Appreciation for the work, attention to detail, cleanliness
- 20% Appreciation for personal traits, friendliness, helpful
- 12% Appreciation for the person, saying thank you
- 10% Recognizing contribution to community, ensuring a hygienic space
- 11% No appreciation, not respected, feeling demotivated

Q26. What is the best thing someone from the public has said to you about your work?

n=200, coded responses | verbatims available for review

Podcasts have become more prevalent and popular over the last decade and **interest among maintenance workers is high.**

What Maintainers Listen to Most Often While Working



Q28. What are you listening to most often as you work?

n=200

What advice would you give to someone new in a janitorial role?

Key Themes

Familiarize yourself with the right products and processes, systematic cleaning

Work with discipline, stay calm

Monitor inventory and track your cleaning supplies

Stay positive and helpful, engaged and focused

Evaluate and understand tasks and goals

Strive for effective communication and collaboration with your team

Engage in training and learning from senior employees

Respect and value the work you do

Prioritize time management

Maintain hygiene

Wear proper safety equipment and follow safety practices

Prioritize health

Focus on adaptability, meeting challenges, continuous improvement

Q29. What advice would you give to someone new in a janitorial role?

n=200, coded responses | verbatims available for review



Thinking about the work you do, how do you see yourself in your role?



1%

I don't get a lot of respect – it can be a thankless, dirty job.



11%

I often feel under-appreciated – the job is important, but people don't always see it that way.



31%

I provide a necessary service, nothing more, nothing less – having clean and functional restrooms is an expectation for any business or public space.



46%

I feel important and appreciated – businesses rely on me to provide clean and well-stocked restrooms for people because the image of the business depends on it.



12%

I'm like a Cleaning Superhero – clean restrooms are critical to keeping people going out and about. Clean, well-stocked restrooms help people feel comfortable and safe. Without me, you would not want to go in there.

Q30. Thinking about the work that you do, how do you see yourself in your role?
n=200



What do you wish more people knew about you and the work you do?

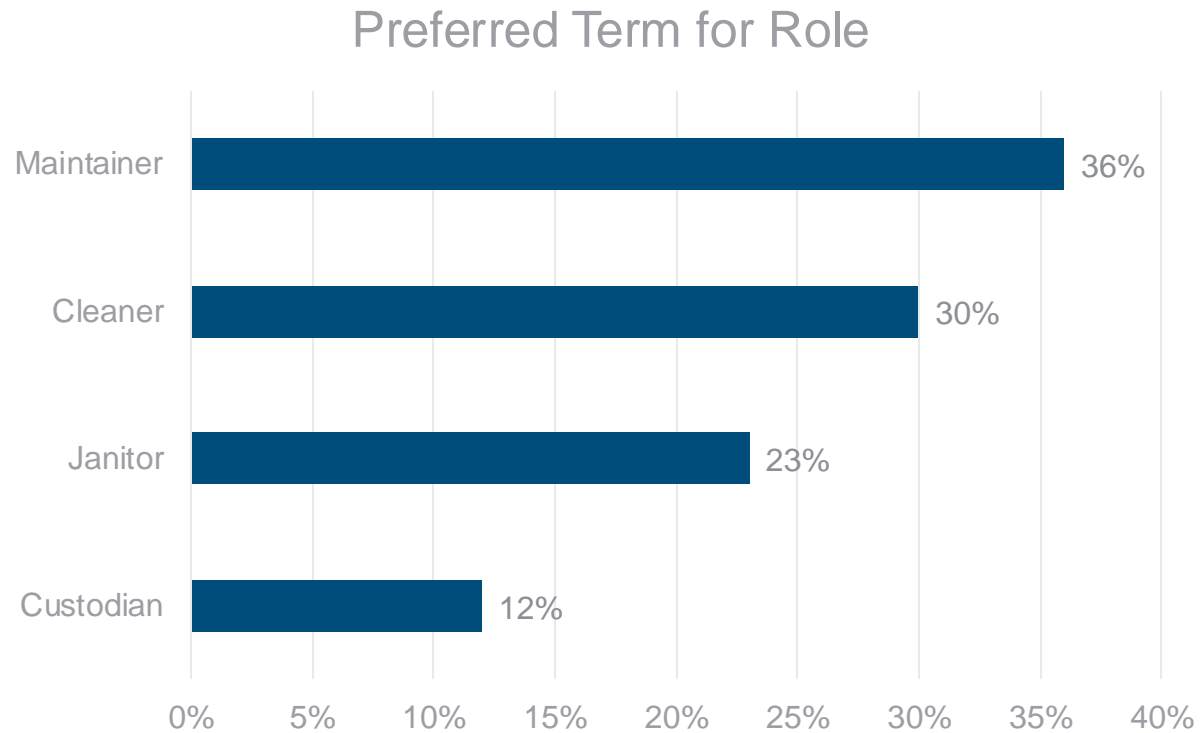
Key themes include a strong sense of pride in the work they do, an awareness of the importance of their work and desire for others to value it as well, a humility that recognizes they often go unnoticed and underappreciated and yet they show up and work hard, and the impact kind words can have on their day.



n=200, responses not coded | more verbatims available for review



And the survey says...

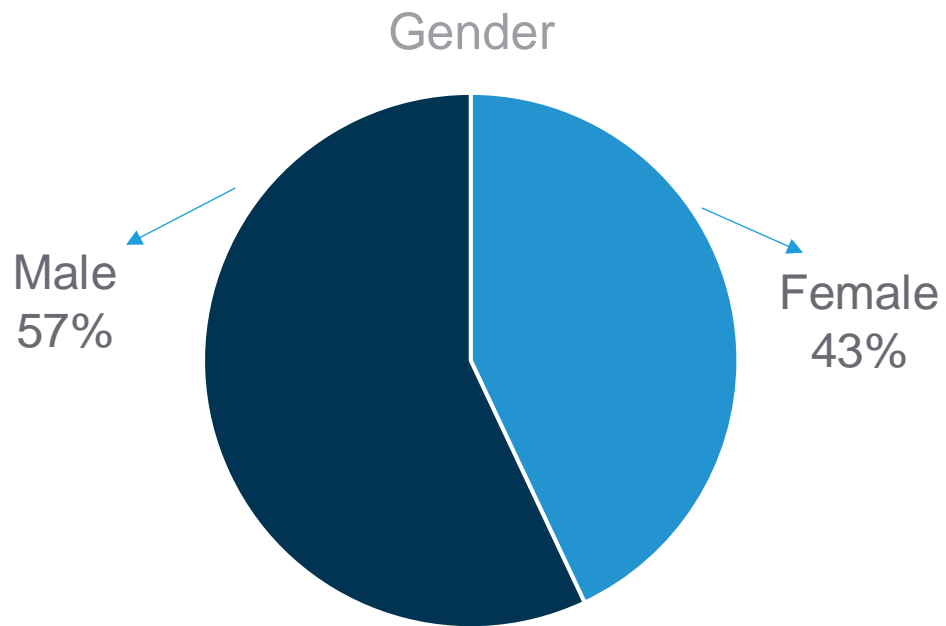


Q31. Finally, while we have used the term 'janitor' throughout this survey, please tell us what term you use/prefer when referring to your role.

n=200

DEMOGRAPHICS

PRO-P-24-1195 | Insights & Knowledge



Age	% this age
18-24 years	23%
25-34 years	27%
35-44 years	27%
45-54 years	20%
55-64 years	3%

Highest level of education	% achieved
Less than high school graduate	36%
High school diploma or equivalent	49%
Some college, no degree	16%
Other advanced or trade/technical school	0%

n=200

Segment	% working in this segment
Retail (includes C-store, gas station)	29%
Office	28%
Healthcare	26%
Education (includes public/private, K-12 and C&U)	15%
Lodging	3%
Foodservice	1%
High Traffic	1%

Region (US)	% working in this region
South	36%
West	30%
Midwest	20%
Northeast	15%

n=200

Ethnicity	% working in this region
White	45%
Hispanic/Latino American	22%
Black or African American	17%
Asian American	10%
White Hispanic	6%

100% working in role full-time – only 1% work a second job

Level of position	% working in this segment
Directly responsible for cleaning and stocking of public restrooms	69%
Supervisor role overseeing the cleaning and stocking of public restrooms	31%

n=200

