

**THE ADVANCING EFFECTIVE MINISTRY  
THROUGH COVENANT-BUILDING (AdEMiC)  
PILOT PROJECT**

**FINAL REPORT**  
**Spring/Summer 2013**

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# **Overall Purpose, Findings, and Recommendations**

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

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For over a decade, Dr. Richard P. DeShon (Department of Psychology, Michigan State University) has worked with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church (UMC) to develop an assessment and feedback system for local church pastors. During this time, much information was collected from UMC local church pastors in order to identify the task areas and attributes necessary for effectiveness in this position.

In the Advancing Effective Ministry Through Covenant-building (AdEMiC) pilot project, a team of Organizational Psychologists applied Dr. DeShon's previous work as a framework for assessing the task performance and personal attributes in a sample of UMC pastors from around the United States.

This technical report outlines the procedure and materials used for this pilot project, as well as the information gleaned from its participants.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Purpose and Background

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) of The United Methodist Church (UMC) has long been interested in assessing and enhancing clergy effectiveness. In response to this need, the GBHEM partnered with Dr. Richard P. DeShon (Professor of Psychology, Michigan State University) to (1) collect data regarding critical task areas and necessary attributes for effectiveness as a UMC local church pastor, and (2) use that data to develop a valid system for assessing and enhancing pastor effectiveness.

### Process: Development and Testing

Beginning in late 2011, our research team began applying the information gained from Dr. DeShon's previous work with The UMC to create the *Advancing Effective Ministry through Covenant-building* (AdEMiC) system. This system was developed to achieve three overarching goals for The UMC local church pastors and their congregations: assessment for awareness, feedback for clarity, and covenant-building for development.

#### 1. SME scientific panel

- a. **Purpose:** To assess AdEMiC's alignment with best practices for performance appraisal, feedback, and development systems.
- b. **Sample:** Subject matter experts (SMEs) in Industrial-Organizational Psychology with expertise in standards and principles for multisource performance appraisal/management systems.
- c. **Procedure:** The SMEs evaluated all components of AdEMiC (e.g., training materials, surveys, reports, etc.) and were asked to share their opinions regarding its quality and rigor.

#### 2. UMC focus groups

- a. **Purpose:** To discover whether members of The UMC would find AdEMiC to be useful and meaningful to The Church.
- b. **Sample:** West Michigan Annual Conference local church pastors, S/P-PRC members, district superintendents, and a bishop.

- c. **Procedure:** Several focus groups were held with participants to review the process in detail and to gather feedback regarding its quality, connectedness, and usefulness for The UMC.

### 3. Full pilot

- a. **Purpose:** To test the entire AdEMiC process with UMC participants and to collect additional feedback.
- b. **Sample:** 459 UMC members from 5 annual conferences (87 local church pastors; 352 S/P-PRC members; 20 district superintendents).
- c. **Procedure:** Participants completed assessments (measuring local church pastor effectiveness), received feedback reports (summarizing survey results), and engaged in covenant-building (using feedback reports and guides during discussions). After completing this process, participants provided suggestions and comments about the process to our research team.

## Results

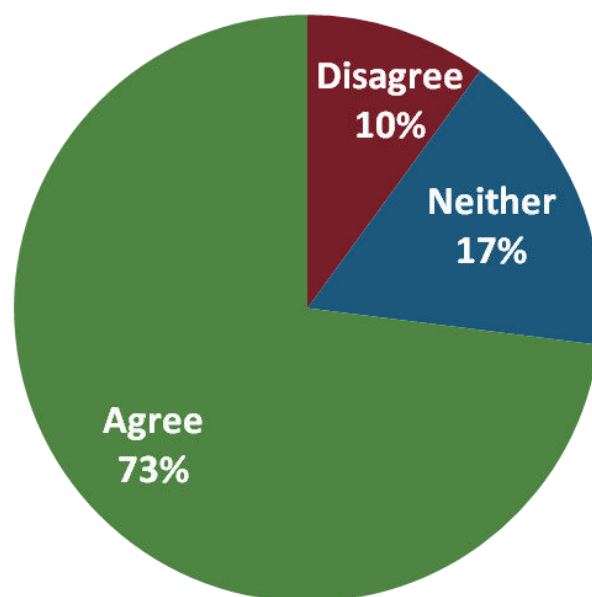
1. **SME scientific panel:** The SMEs confirmed that AdEMiC met or exceeded industry standards, was easy to use, and was thoroughly developed.
2. **UMC focus groups:** Focus group participants reported that AdEMiC would likely be of great value to The Church and that its members would benefit from participating. In particular, they appreciated the opportunities for communication provided by the AdEMiC process, the research supporting its development, and the thorough, systematic evaluation it offers.
3. **Full pilot:** Participants reported generally positive opinions regarding the content and purpose of AdEMiC and emphasized the value of systematic evaluation and cooperative covenant-building. Some participants reported difficulty with using the technology (e.g., the AdEMiC online system), and many participants requested that the survey be shortened to lessen the time required.

## Conclusion

Overall, participants in all three phases of data collection reacted favorably to the content, purpose, and nature of the AdEMiC process (see next page). However, they also provided suggestions to improve the process for future implementation. Through both qualitative and quantitative reactions and suggestions, five key themes emerged:

1. **Covenant-building is impactful and meaningful.** Participants consistently emphasized the importance of covenant-building and its relationship with UMC doctrine.
2. **Standardization in assessment is necessary.** Participants stressed the importance of having consistent assessment over time, across churches, and across conferences.
3. **The assessment should be streamlined.** Participants from the full pilot noted that the assessment was a large time investment and requested that it be shortened for future use.
4. **The technology should be simplified, and paper copies should be made available.** Some participants noted that they were not technologically savvy and requested paper copies for those congregants that are not comfortable with computers.
5. **AdEMiC addresses particular needs of all those involved.** Participants identified varying components of AdEMiC that were especially valuable to them. For example, local church pastors highlighted the opportunity to identify accountability and support for all S/P-PRC members, S/P-PRC members noted the opportunity for open communication, and district superintendents emphasized the criticality of consistent measurement over time.

***"Overall, I think that The UMC members will benefit from participating in this process"***





## RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

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Interactions with and feedback provided by participants throughout the AdEMiC pilot project has prompted us to consider several revisions to the process. We urge The General Board of Higher Education to consider these changes before implementing the AdEMiC process for widespread use within The UMC.

*The first six recommendations listed below were included in the reactions survey so that participants could have the opportunity to provide their reactions to them. In general, participants' comments were positive and supportive, largely indicating agreement with these suggested changes. All participants' comments are included in Appendix I.*

*Additional recommendations emerged from the reactions survey, and are included here in addition (recommendations 7, 8, and 9).*

### **1. Allowing participants to set and maintain their own AdEMiC schedules and deadlines.**

- Instead of requiring all AdEMiC participants to follow the same timeline and deadlines for participation, the online system could be open and available for participants to use *year-round*.
- All AdEMiC materials would be provided to all UMC churches; the clergy within each church would set and maintain its own schedule for participation.
- Participants would be encouraged to participate in the AdEMiC process at approximately the same time every year (at whatever date of their choosing), in order to be able to track their changes/progress from one year to the next.

### **2. Shortening the pastor effectiveness assessment survey.**

- The assessment could be shortened so that it takes less time to complete. The survey should be long enough to gather sufficient information about clergy effectiveness, but not so long that it becomes a burden for participants.
- The number of "personal attributes" rated in the assessment could be substantially reduced by including only the attributes that are especially critical for pastor effectiveness, and/or by including only the attributes that both pastors and S/P-PRC members feel capable rating.

- Taking this feedback into consideration, the MSU team developed a shortened assessment that could be used for all participants. This revised assessment can be seen in Appendix III.
  - The MSU team also developed a shortened assessment feedback report to accompany the shortened assessment. This results report can be seen in Appendix IV.
3. **Providing a paper-version option for staff/pastor-parish relations committee members without e-mail accounts.**
- It may be useful to provide paper versions of the effectiveness assessment surveys for participants (especially S/P-PRC members) who do not have e-mail accounts or computer access.
4. **Assessing participants' familiarity with the pastor being rated, so that their responses can be viewed in light of how well they know him or her.**
- In the pilot project, *district superintendents* were asked to provide one overall rating of how much experience (familiarity) he/she had with a particular local church pastor. In future AdEMiC iterations, district superintendents might be asked to provide a separate familiarity rating for *each* task area individually. It may be that district superintendents are more familiar with some aspects of a pastor's work than others – using separate familiarity ratings will capture those differences in a potentially meaningful way, although this would lengthen their assessment.
  - *S/P-PRC members* may also be asked to rate their familiarity with their pastor. Some S/P-PRC members may be newer or less engaged than others, and being able to take this information into account may aid a pastor in understanding his/her assessment results.
5. **How to include (or not include) pastors who are new to their charges.**
- Newer pastors may not gain as much from the AdEMiC process because their S/P-PRC members may lack the familiarity and understanding required to assess their effectiveness and aid in their development. This will not be an issue if the "year-round" open schedule is used (see recommendation #1 on the previous page).

**6. Structuring the AdEMiC process to include pastors with multiple charges and churches with multiple pastors.**

- While most local church pastors work with only one charge each, *some pastors work with multiple charges* and therefore have multiple S/P-PRCs and multiple congregations, and thus would require multiple covenants.
- Some churches include *more than one pastor* who might want to take part in the AdEMiC process.
- If it is desirable to gather information from pastors with multiple charges or churches with multiple pastors, the AdEMiC process will require slight restructuring – mostly with regard to how participants are linked in the online system.

**7. Changing the rating standard from the “5” point to the “7” point on a 0-10 scale.**

- Participants experienced difficulty providing ratings near “5,” resulting in some confusion regarding the meaning of scores.
- To make the “standard” performance more understandable for respondents, we suggest placing the standard point at “7” on our 0-10 scale rather than “5.” Because the “7” point as an adequate score is more consistent with typical testing (e.g., scores in school), they may feel more comfortable with this scale.

**8. Highlighting leadership as a personal attribute.**

- Participants suggested through the reactions survey and individual communications (e.g., e-mails) that leadership should be identified as a key attribute.

**9. Highlighting innovativeness as a personal attribute.**

- Participants also suggested that innovativeness (e.g., being creative in developing opportunities to reach out to different groups, etc.) should be identified as a key attribute.

## **Pilot Details and Results**

## PROJECT GOALS

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In the current project, the AdEMiC team used the findings gained from Dr. DeShon's prior work with The UMC to pursue three important goals of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry:

1. **Assessment for awareness:** Assessment involves local church pastors, Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (S/P-PRC) members, and district superintendents providing ratings of each pastor's effectiveness over the previous year in a variety of task areas. Local church pastors and S/P-PRC members also report the extent to which each local church pastor demonstrates a number of personal attributes (e.g., effective decision-making, communication skills, leadership skills).
  - a. The assessment is conducted via an online survey and reporting system.
  - b. The assessment phase captures current levels of pastor effectiveness within The United Methodist Church, and allows participants to identify areas of excellence and areas in need of further development.
  - c. The content of the assessment aligns directly with the research Dr. DeShon has conducted to identify the indicators associated with UMC pastor effectiveness.
2. **Feedback for clarity:** Once the assessment is complete (i.e., all participants' responses have been collected), results reports are created and shared with all participants via the online survey and reporting system.
  - a. These reports - which are built and delivered using best practices and extensive research from psychological science - summarize assessment results for each pastor.
  - b. Providing reports helps pastors achieve greater awareness of their own effectiveness and provides a basis from which to consider ways in which they can further improve.
  - c. Results reports are also available to participating S/P-PRC members, district superintendents, and bishops.
3. **Covenant-building for development:** Finally, each pastor meets with his or her S/P-PPRC to review the feedback reports and establish goals and strategies for improvement in the coming year.

- a. In preparation for this meeting, participants receive and read a complimentary copy of the Rev. Gwen Purushotham's book on covenant-building and assessment, *Watching Over One Another in Love: A Wesleyan Model for Ministry Assessment*. Pastors and S/P-PRC members also complete a training module in which they learn about scientifically-supported techniques for effective group discussion and goal-setting.
- b. Participants are given a guide to use during the meeting and their covenant-building session. Goals made during the covenant-building session are entered into the online survey and reporting system and then reviewed by the district superintendent, who adds additional comments. A report is then available to all participants summarizing the covenant-building meeting information and comments.

The AdEMiC process is intended to be used as a means for pastors, staff/pastor-parish relations committee members, and district superintendents to engage in a long-term effort toward enhanced effectiveness. By appropriately assessing a pastor's performance, reviewing feedback based on that assessment, and striving toward fulfilling a mutually-determined covenant aimed at further development, it will be possible not only to measure a pastor's standing at one point in time but also to gauge how he or she changes and grows from year-to-year.

## PARTICIPANTS AND DATA COLLECTION

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829 members of The UMC were originally invited to participate in the AdEMiC pilot project (98 local church pastors; 707 S/P-PRC members; 24 district superintendents). Of these, 459 UMC members participated – either fully or partially – in the pastor effectiveness assessment (87 local church pastors; 352 S/P-PRC members; 20 district superintendents).

While transitioning from the assessment phase to the covenant-building phase of the pilot project, some pastors (and their accompanying S/P-PRC members) were removed from the process. Some of these removals occurred because the pastors (or S/P-PRC members) were no longer interested in participating; other removals occurred because pastors could not complete the covenant-building phase of the project if they had not filled out a self-evaluation or if they did not receive evaluations from two or more members of their S/P-PRC. After removing these pastors (and their accompanying S/P-PRC members), the final sample included 610 participants (67 local church pastors; 519 S/P-PRC members; 24 district superintendents)..

AdEMiC pilot participants completed the following steps:

1. **LCPs, S/P-PRCs, and DSs** used the online system to **complete pastor effectiveness assessments** (training modules were provided to help participants learn how to use the online system). These assessments asked...
  - LCPs and S/P-PRCs to provide **church information**
  - DSs to rate **their familiarity with each local church pastor**, as well as how “healthy” the church was with regard to **apportionments** and **member attendance**
  - LCPs, S/P-PRCs, and DSs to rate **how the local church pastor performed in a variety of task areas** – or the key functions carried out by UMC LCPs – over the past year
    - LCPs and S/PPRCs also provided qualitative information to support their ratings
  - LCPs and S/PPRCs to rate **where the local church pastor stands on a variety of personal attributes** – or the knowledge and skills that help him/her to perform well
2. **LCPs, S/P-PRCs, and DSs** logged into the online system to **view reports**

summarizing assessment results. These reports provided summary information to all participants:

- **Each LCP could see:** Summaries of survey responses regarding only ratings about himself/herself
- **Each S/P-PRC member could see:** The same summaries seen by his/her LCP
- **Each DS could see:** Reports for each LCP in his/her district as well as averaged district-wide results (e.g., average ratings for “care-giving” performance across all pastors within the district)

3. **LCPs and S/PPRCs met to review the results reports and to build a development-oriented covenant for the upcoming year.** A training module was also provided to help participants prepare for their covenant-building meeting, and a meeting guide was given for participants to print and use during the meeting itself.
  - The training module involved a short presentation with information about effective covenant-building as well as tips and techniques for group discussion
  - The meeting guide included reminders and prompts from the training module to help participants structure their covenant-building conversations
  - AdEMiC participants also received complementary copies of Gwen Purushotham’s book, *“Watching Over One Another in Love: A Wesleyan Model for Ministry Assessment,”* on which the covenant-building aspects of this training package are based
4. **LCPs uploaded decisions made** during the covenant-building meeting into the online system. The information entered into the online system included:
  - Task areas in which performance is already favorable
  - Task areas that could be further developed
  - Information about the covenant, or *participants’ mutual commitment toward improved effectiveness in certain task areas* (goals)
  - Behaviors to be enacted by the LCP to support the covenant
  - Behaviors to be enacted by the S/PPRC members to support the covenant
5. **DSs** logged into the online system to **view the covenant-building meeting decisions**, and **uploaded ways in which he/she will support the covenant** in the upcoming year.



6. **LCPs, S/P-PRCs, and DSs** received access to **online reports summarizing the covenant** (as entered by LCPs and DSs).
7. **LCPs, S/PPRCs, and DSs completed reactions surveys** to gather feedback about AdEMiC and to record suggestions for further improving the process.

# **Pilot Process Development**

## **JOB ANALYSIS**

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The AdEMiC process is intended for use in assessing and developing pastor effectiveness with regard to a specific set of task areas and personal attributes. The included task areas and personal attributes were identified via job analysis focus groups carried out by Dr. DeShon in 2003, 2007, and 2010.

Focus groups were composed of UMC pastors who provided qualitative (open discussion) and quantitative (numerical survey) information about the critical aspects of a UMC pastor's work, as well as the personal characteristics that aid the pastor in performing that work effectively.

The results of these studies can be found at:

[http://www.gbhem.org/sites/default/files/bom\\_clergyeffectivenessdeshon.pdf](http://www.gbhem.org/sites/default/files/bom_clergyeffectivenessdeshon.pdf).

This information was used as the foundation of the AdEMiC process – the task areas and personal attributes to be assessed for each local church pastor.

## **SYSTEM PREPARATION**

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When the content for the AdEMiC process was finalized (as described above), our next step was putting the entire system online so it could be accessed by pilot participants.

Although there are a number of online 360-degree feedback platforms available, we chose to use the Qualtrics360 tool, which allows the user to create surveys, link responses from associated parties (i.e., pastors, district superintendents, staff/pastor-parish relations committee members), and view reports summarizing data for participants.

In order to help participants learn how to use the Qualtrics360 tool for the AdEMiC process, we developed and provided access to brief video tutorials targeted toward each type of participant (i.e., one for pastors; one for staff/pastor-parish relations committee members; one for district superintendents).

## SCIENTIFIC PANEL

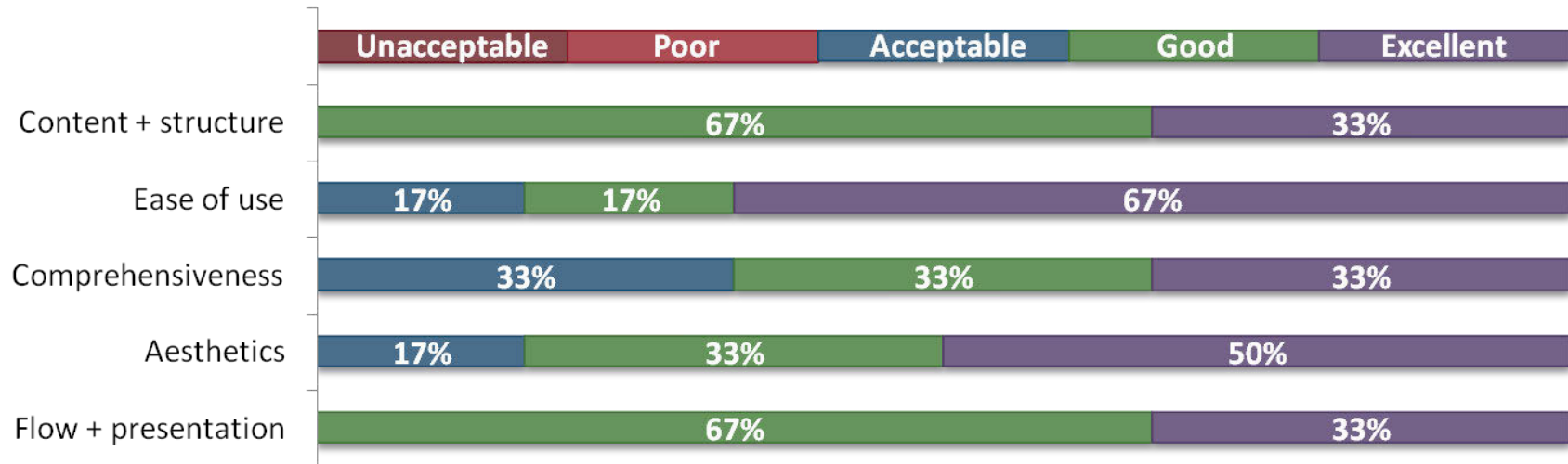
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6 subject matter experts (SMEs) from Industrial-Organizational Psychology were asked to review the AdEMiC process and provide feedback about its quality via short surveys.

SMEs were chosen who (1) held substantial knowledge about standards and principles for multisource performance appraisal/management systems like the AdEMiC process, and (2) had personal experience working with systems like the AdEMiC process in real-world organizations.

*Responses from scientific panel surveys are summarized on the following pages.*

### ***Results Regarding the Quality of AdEMiC Training Modules***



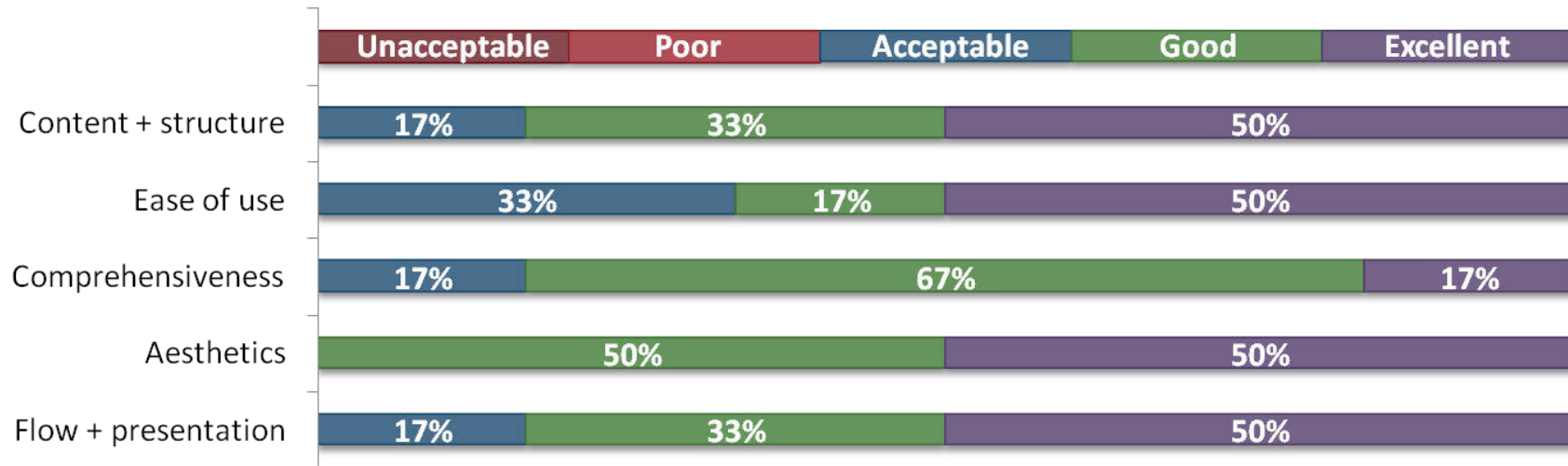
#### **In addition, all panel participants agreed that:**

- The training modules are consistent with the field's standards for participant instruction.
- The training modules provide information and techniques (e.g., discussion facilitation tools) that are well-supported in our field.

#### **Representative quotations from panel participants:**

- "...the training modules were informative and well put together..."
- "...the training modules were engaging and educational..."
- "...you did a very nice job taking the Industrial-Organizational Psychology literature on training and communication and building it into a user-friendly and easy-to-understand process."

### ***Results Regarding the Quality of AdEMiC Surveys***



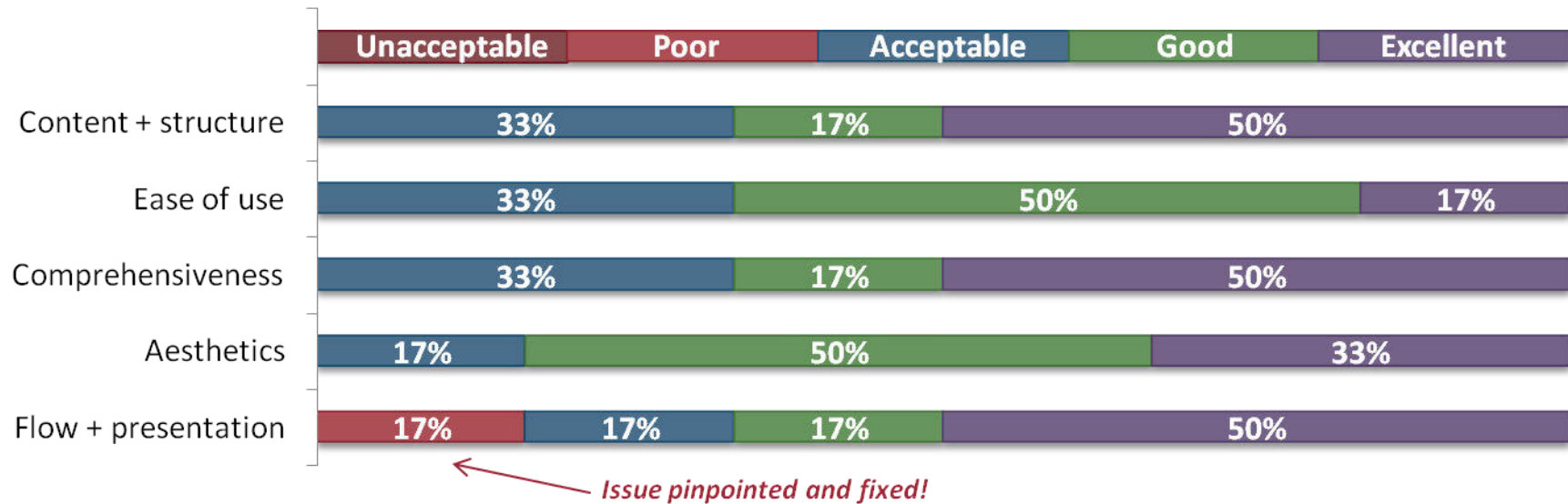
#### **In addition, all panel participants agreed that:**

- The surveys are consistent with the field's standards for item development and clarity.
- The surveys are consistent with the field's standards for collecting information from participants.

#### **Representative quotations from panel participants:**

- "Well-designed and looks great! I thought the definitions you provided throughout were very clear..."
- "...well done."
- "...very good – I really liked the definitions provided for all relevant questions..."

### ***Results Regarding the Quality of the AdEMiC Results Report***



#### **In addition, all panel participants agreed that:**

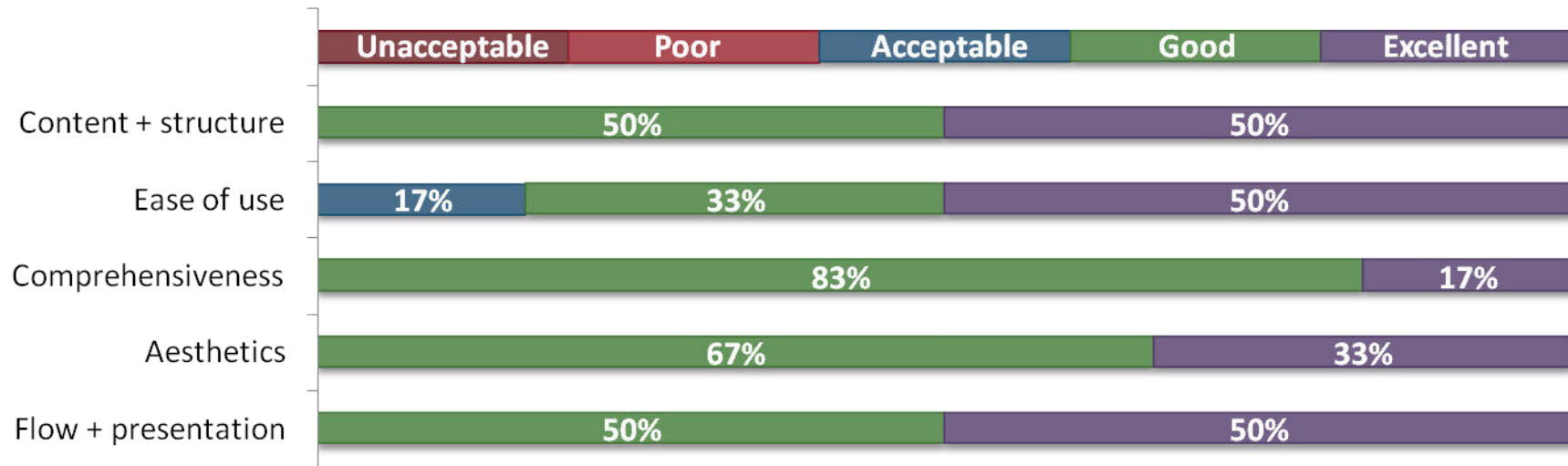
- The report is consistent with the field's standards for feedback.
- The report is consistent with the field's standards for presenting data to participants.

#### **Representative quotations from panel participants:**

- "I like it; to the point, graphs are easy to quickly see discrepancies, and a minimal amount of numbers. Well done."
- "...very nice!"



### ***Results Regarding the Quality of the AdEMiC Overall System***



#### **In addition, all panel participants agreed that:**

- The overall system is consistent with the field's standards for performance appraisal/management.
- The overall system is consistent with the field's standards for job analyses and 360-degree feedback.

#### **Representative quotations from panel participants:**

- "I think the system is quite good – it could be delivered as is and... would be successful."
- "I found everything very logical... a nice blend of job-specific characteristics with I-O principles. Great job!"
- "...overall, it's a well-designed system."
- "...seems comprehensive."
- "...I think attention was paid to constructing the program in an appropriate manner."

## FOCUS GROUPS

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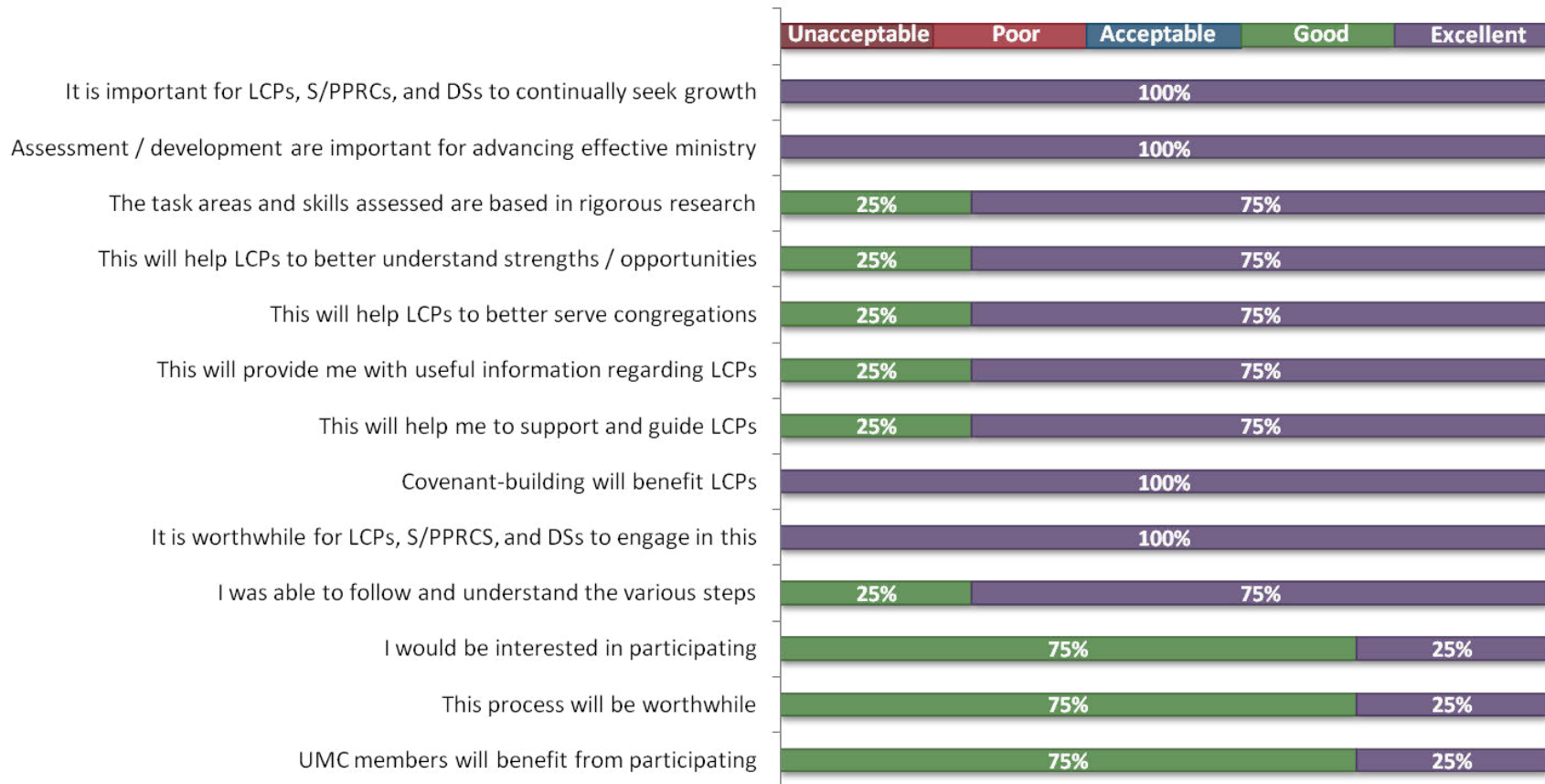
In order to learn whether members of The UMC would find the AdEMiC process to be helpful and of high quality, the AdEMiC team held focus groups with (3) local church pastors, (6) S/P-PRC members, and (3) district superintendents. One bishop also served as a focus group participant (responses from this bishop are included in the district superintendent results summary that follows).

All focus group participants were associated with the West Michigan Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

During focus groups, the AdEMiC team explained the process in detail and sought feedback about its potential value for The UMC. At the end of each focus group meeting, participants were asked to complete short surveys summarizing their opinions and suggestions.

*Results from focus group surveys are summarized on the following pages.*

### ***Results from District Superintendent Focus Group Participants***

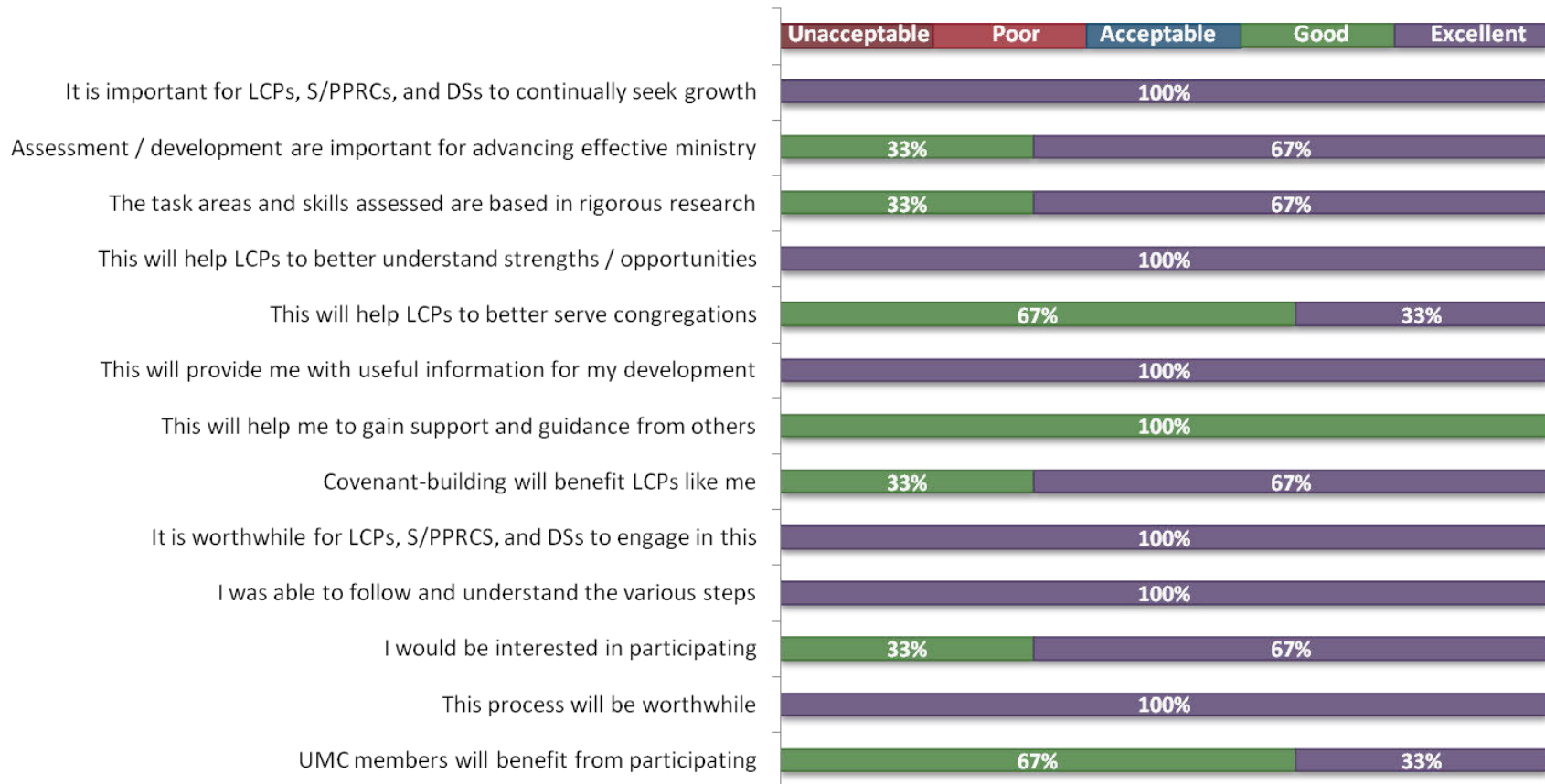


#### **Representative quotations from focus group participants:**

- “...it will help Pastors, S/PPRs, and DSs to work together to encourage, equip, and sustain effective clergy. With clear direction we can hold each other accountable to the ministry at hand.”
- “It is by far the most effectively researched process I have seen.”

- “It is a means to streamline what we are looking for and thus all be working towards the same end result...”
- “I would hope it would encourage pastors and SPRC to work together toward specific goals, develop measurable steps for growth and enable appropriate and accurate evaluation...”
- “It is imperative that we find objective ways of measuring effectiveness in ministry even as we recognize not all aspects of ministry can be reduced to set metrics. Making ‘covenant keeping’ a key part of the overall process is highly valuable and important.”
- “My hope is this would become a part of our yearly conversations and not ‘one more thing’ that we are asking clergy and churches to be a part of...”
- “Thank you for the significant work in research and testing of models, assumptions, etc. I look forward to the final “product” recognizing that it will continue to evolve over time as further use brings in more data and feedback.”

### ***Results from Local Church Pastor Focus Group Participants***

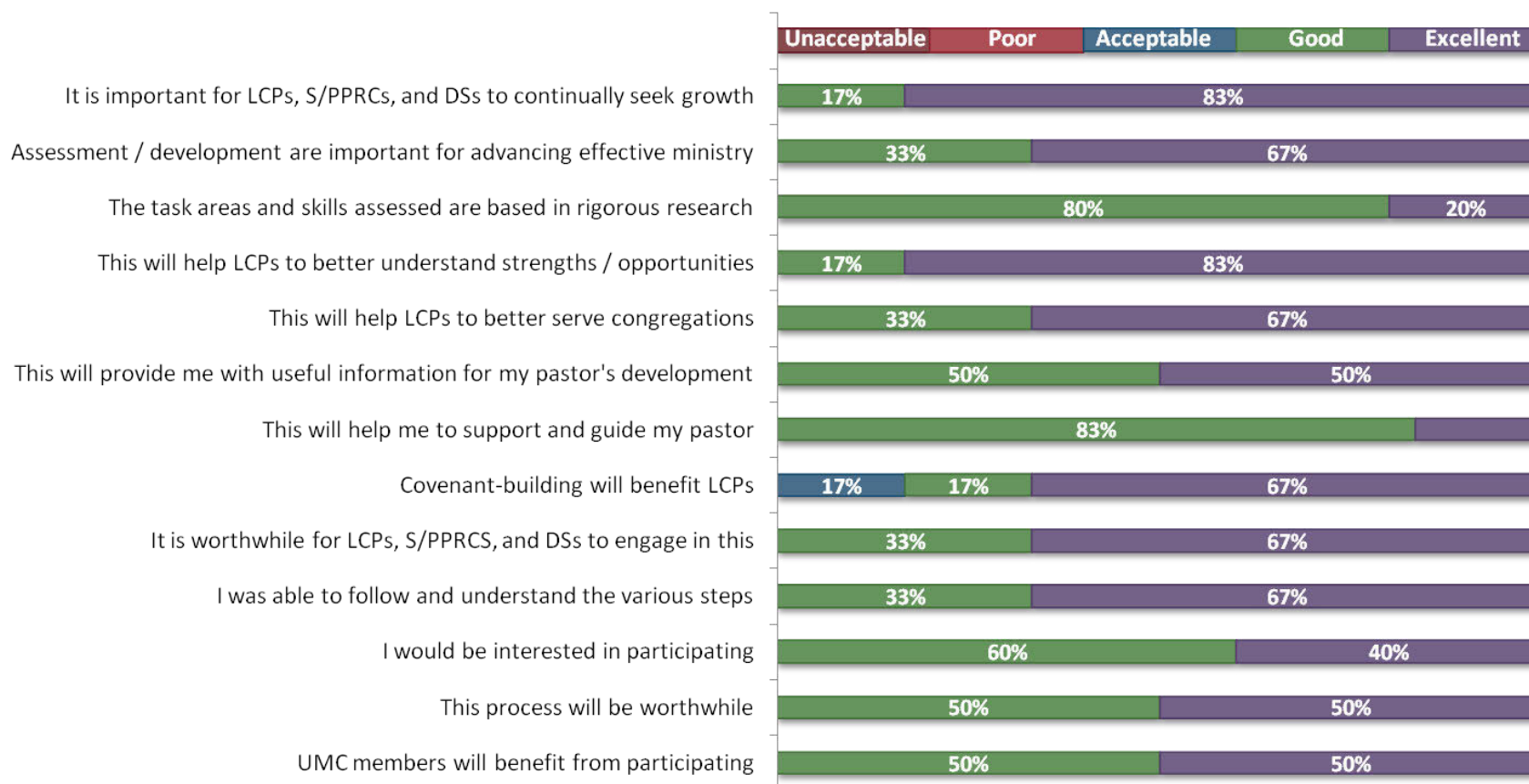


#### **Representative quotations from focus group participants:**

- “It will be a big improvement over the present evaluation process. It may help some congregations and pastors understand covenant-building and maybe even improve communication within the congregation and between the congregation and pastor.”

- “We need to move from subjective, anecdotal evaluation to data-driven, quantitative evaluation. I believe this tool is a step in the right direction.”
- “...I see a lot of potential in this.”
- “I like it, particularly because of the covenant-building opportunities and the balance between quantitative and qualitative feedback.”
- “I see two major benefits... ability for bishops and DSs to have a clearer understanding of pastors... SPRC will be more engaged in a process that includes feedback and accountability...”
- “I think the benefits are many and possess tangible and intangible properties...”
- “Covenant-building... is a concept we get, but struggle to realize. Including action steps from all parties and having a built-in level of accountability will bolster the pastors' ability to change/move towards ‘successful ministry.’ ”
- “This seems to provide a means to take positive steps toward consistent improvement and growth.”

### ***Results from Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Focus Group Participants***



#### **Representative quotations from focus group participants:**

- “[AdEMiC] appears to be a well thought-out and researched process that will get a measurable outcome that can be used to further pastoral growth and SPRC members' growth and understanding of the church and its pastor.”

- “I feel that this will become a very useful tool for members of PPRC to use in the evaluation process of both their effectiveness as well as that of their pastor.”
- “I am looking forward to utilizing this in the future.”
- “Our performance assessment process has been flawed for a long time, so that many mock it and fail to take it seriously. It has lacked an accountability feature. This new process, with its covenant process, will address that...”
- “[AdEMiC] will help get the pastors to understand, to a greater extent, what their congregation and DS wants from them so they can more effectively lead and teach their congregation members.”
- “...I think that the assessment process [which is completed alone] will be most beneficial. It is often times difficult to be honest and truthful in a group setting that could become highly agitated or disagreeable.”
- “Seems well thought out and very inclusive. I would hope that you will include aids in the process of covenanting that will give SPRCs ' ideas for how to develop certain (specific) competencies (KSAPs)...”



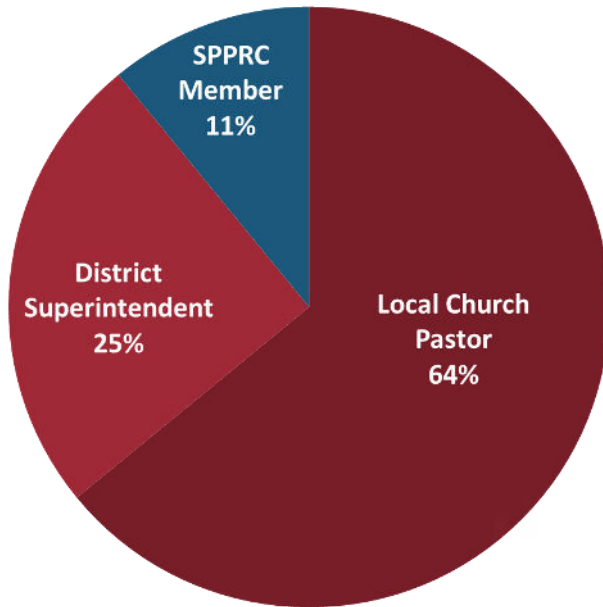
# **Pilot Participant Feedback**

## REACTIONS SURVEY RESULTS

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### Sample

104 participants completed the reactions survey. The breakdown of respondents by role aligns approximately with the overall sample of the AdEMiC pilot project.

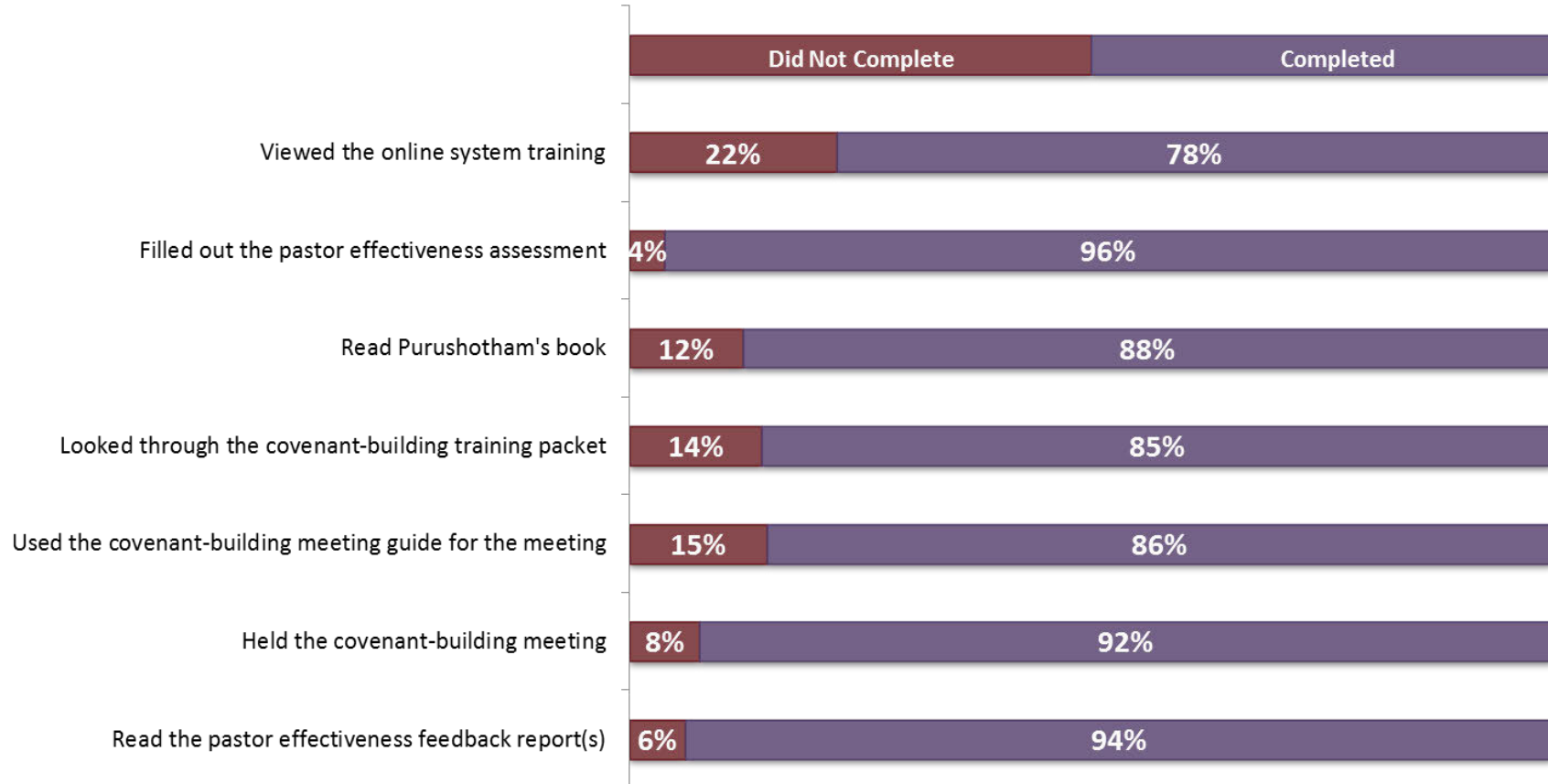


### Reactions to Potential Changes to the AdEMiC Process

We first asked participants to review and comment on a list of proposed changes (recommendations 1-6 listed on pages 9-11 of this report). *Please see Appendix I to read their reactions to these recommendations.*

## Completion Rates

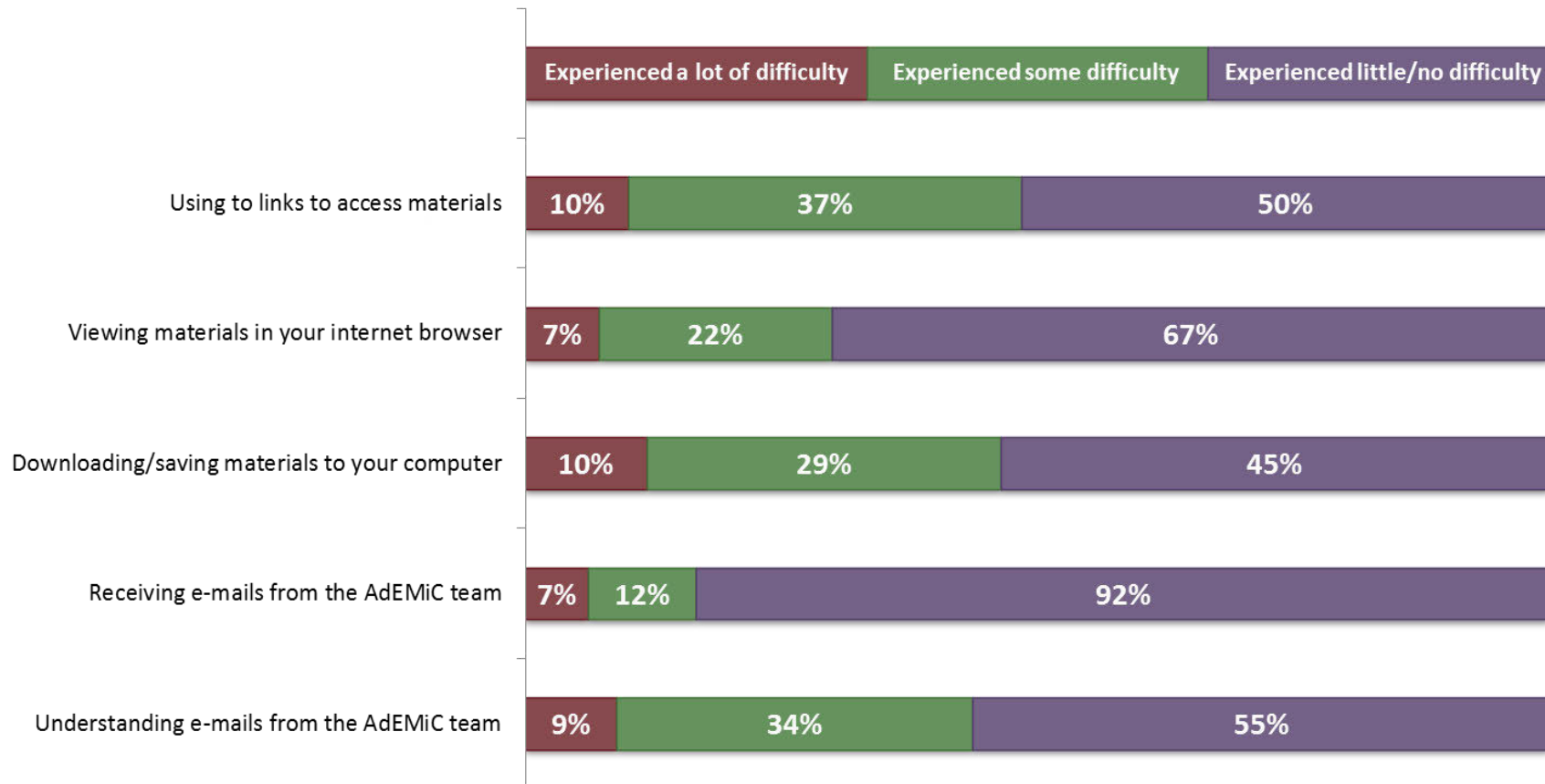
Of those who completed the reactions survey, most had participated in all portions of the AdEMiC Process.



## Reported Difficulties

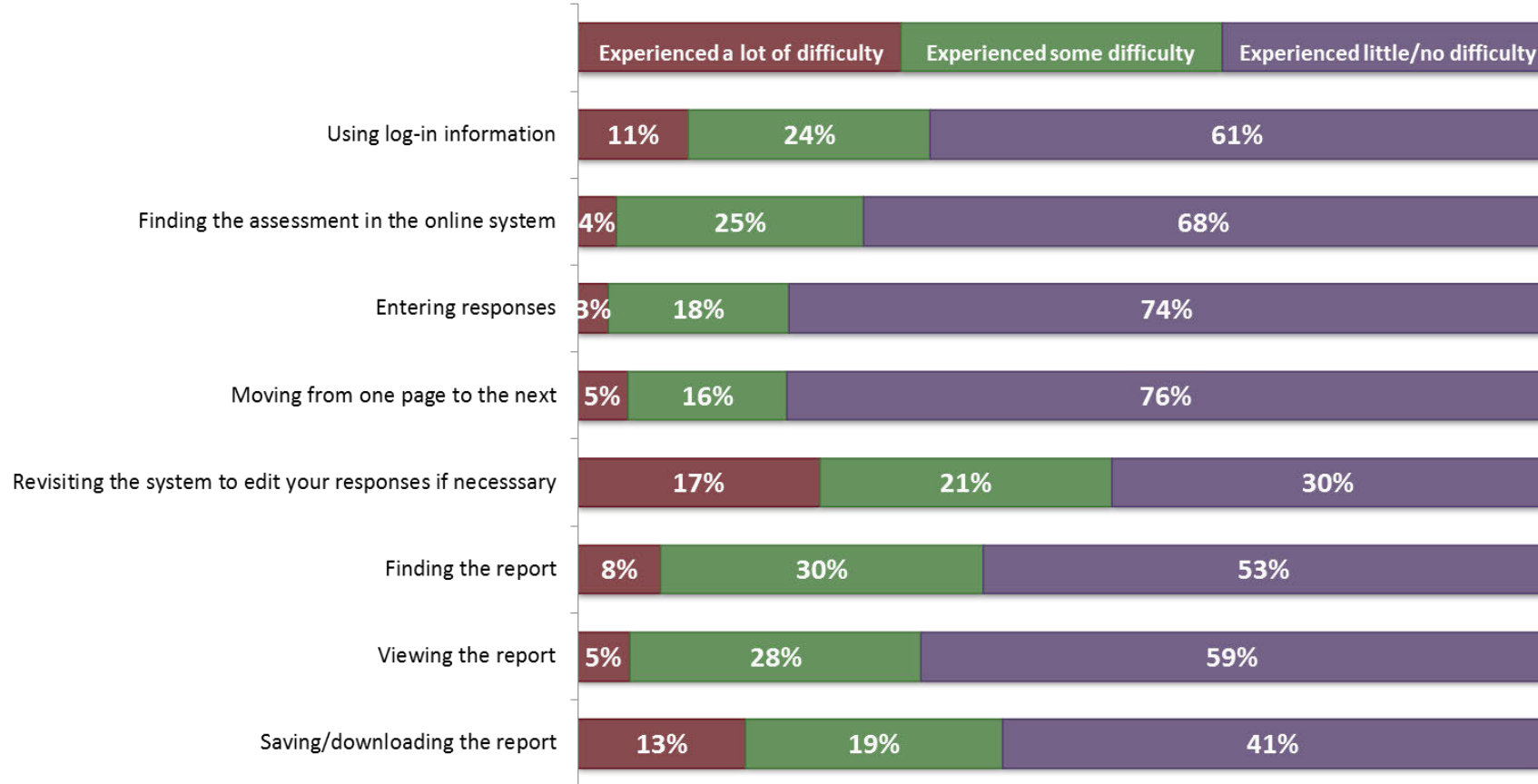
Participants responded to a series of questions regarding what aspects of the process were easy or difficult. *For the qualitative comments on this topic, please see Appendix I.*

### Reported difficulties in using technology related to handling training materials:



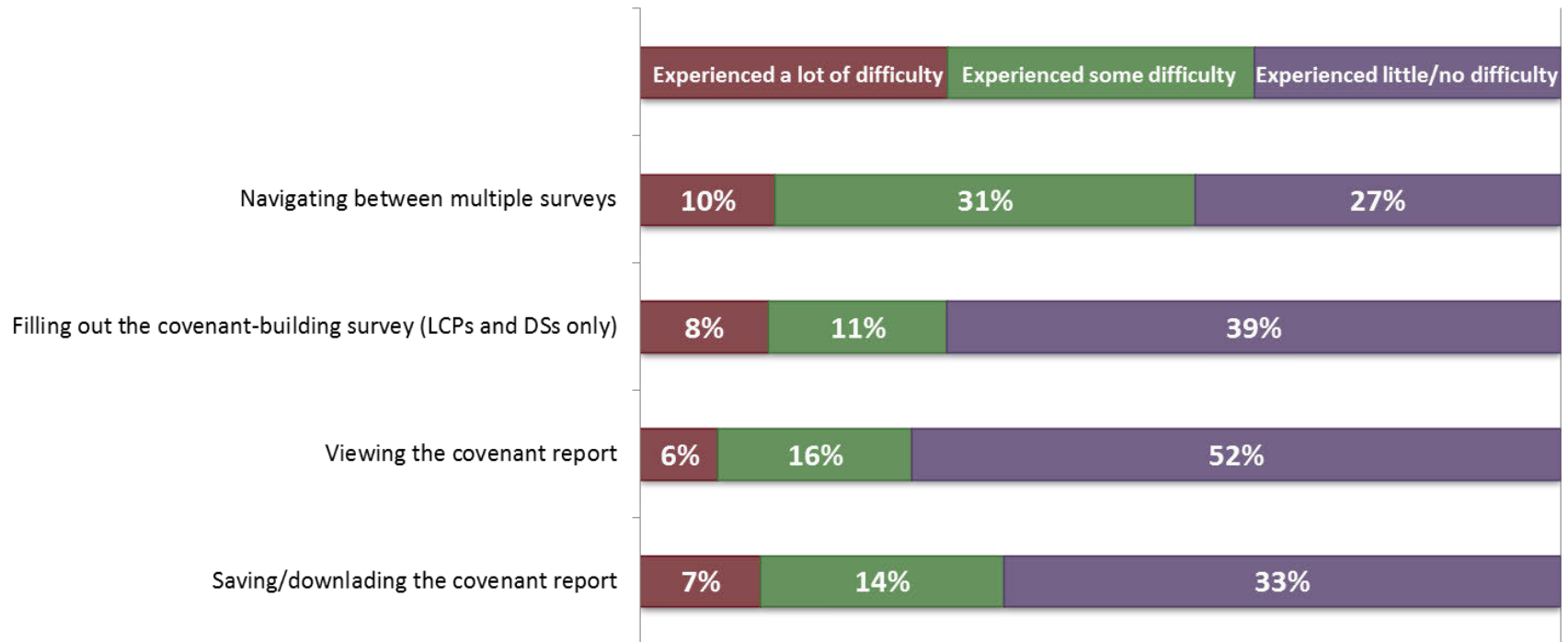
## Reported Difficulties (cont.)

Reported difficulties in using technology related to assessments and reports:



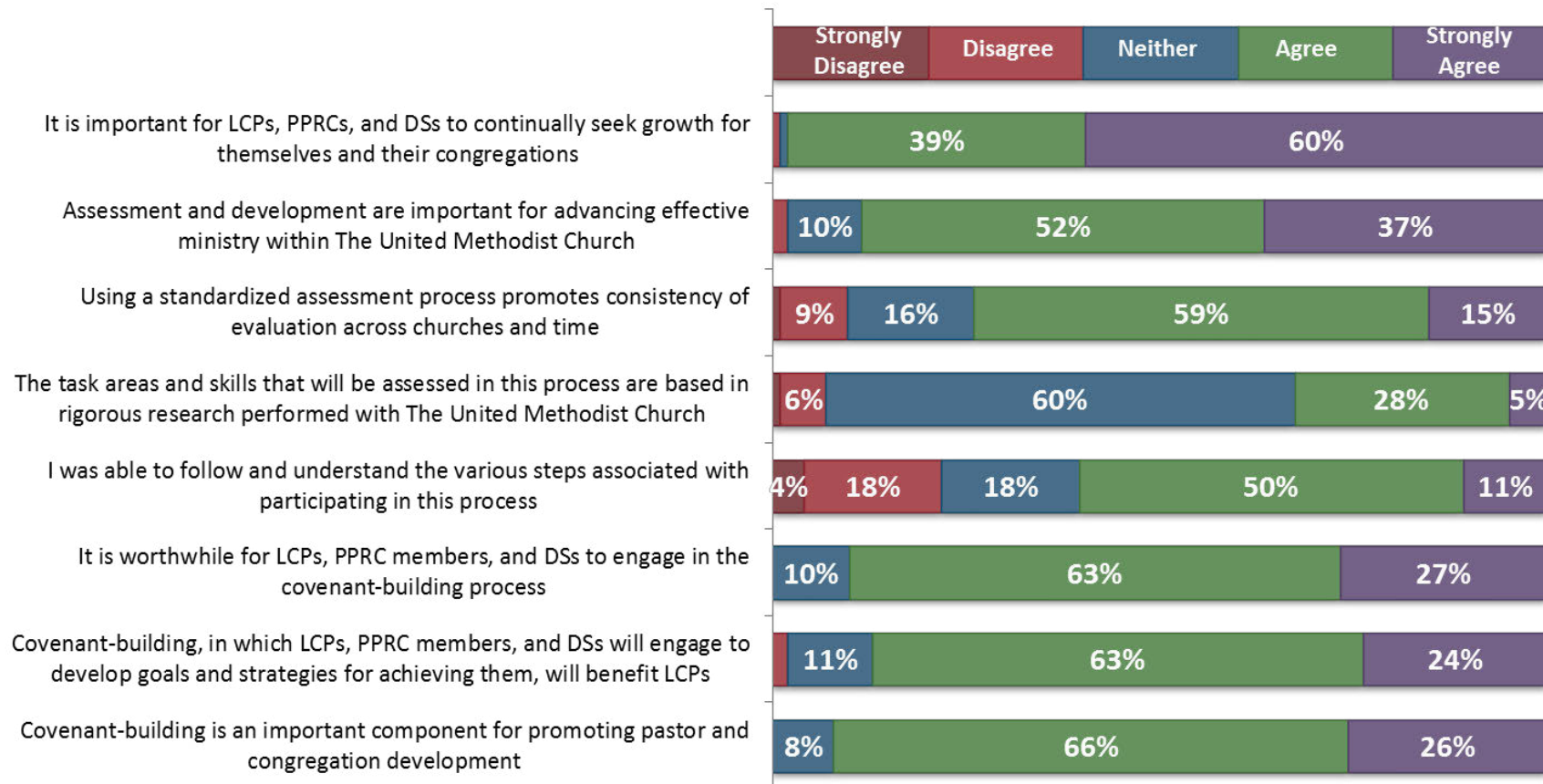
## Reported Difficulties (cont.)

Reported difficulties in using technology related to covenant-building:

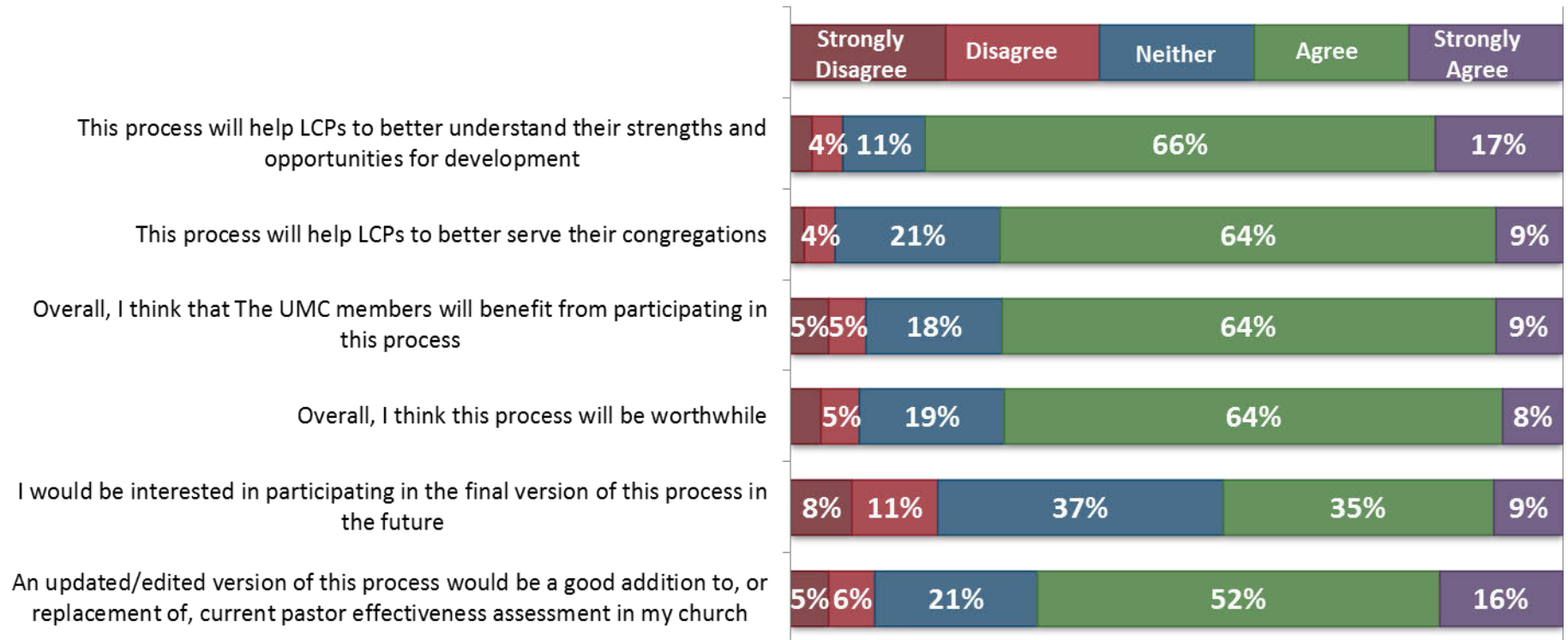


## General Questions

We also asked respondents to answer some general questions about effectiveness, the purpose of evaluation, and the AdEMiC process overall.



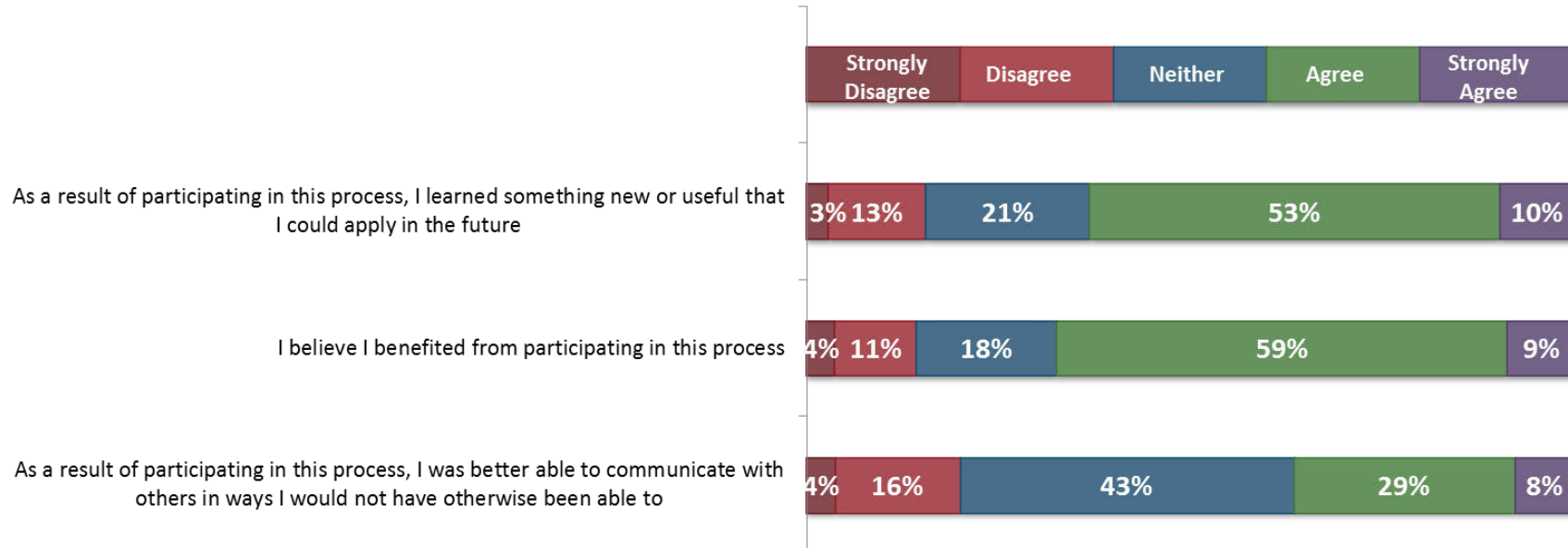
## General Questions (cont.)





## Personal Reward

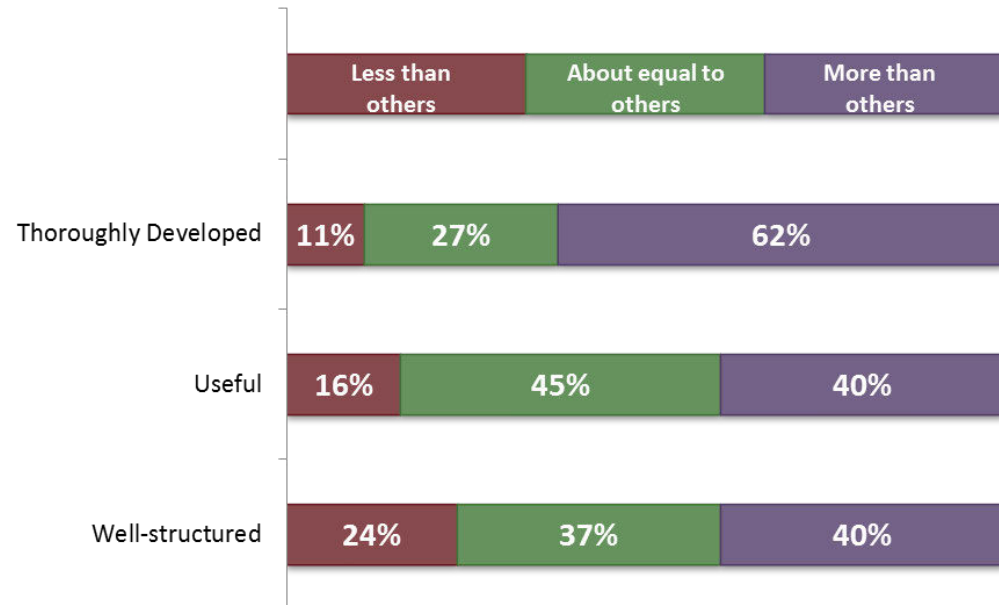
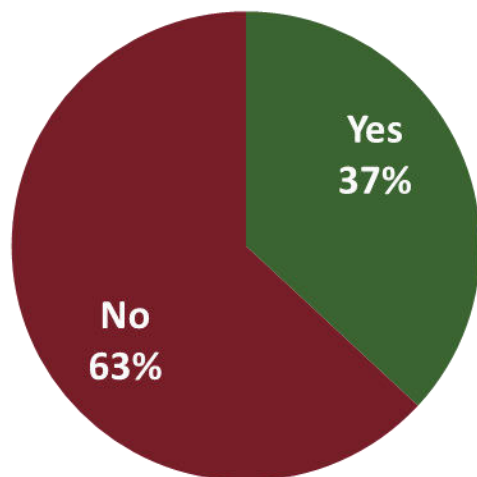
Next, we specifically assessed whether participants felt that they had gained something personally from the process as well.



## Comparison to Other Systems

Finally, we asked participants to rate the AdEMiC system *in comparison* with other systems they had seen in the past. Notably, only 37% reported having previously seen or completed any other pastor effectiveness surveys.

***“Have you seen or filled out any other pastor effectiveness surveys in the past?”***



## Other Feedback

*Please see Appendix I for all qualitative responses. In general, many of the comments were quite positive.*

Common themes in the positive statements were the importance of standardization, accountability, support, goal-setting, and communication.

Common themes in the negative statements regarded the length of the assessment, the timeline of the process, the difficulty of the technology, and confusion regarding how to complete the process.

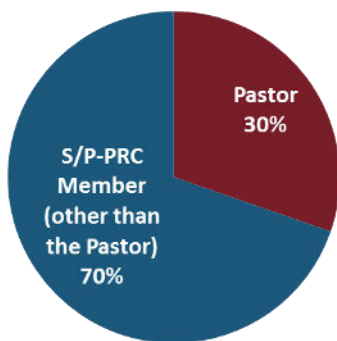
## FOLLOW-UP SURVEY RESULTS

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Approximately 3 months after AdEMiC participants held and submitted information about their covenant-building meeting, we invited them to participate in a brief follow-up survey. This follow-up survey was designed to assess pastors' and staff/pastor-parish relations committee members' progress toward, and feelings about, the covenant they had built.

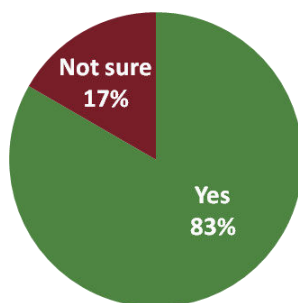
### Sample

66 participants (pastors and S/P-PRC members) completed the follow-up survey.



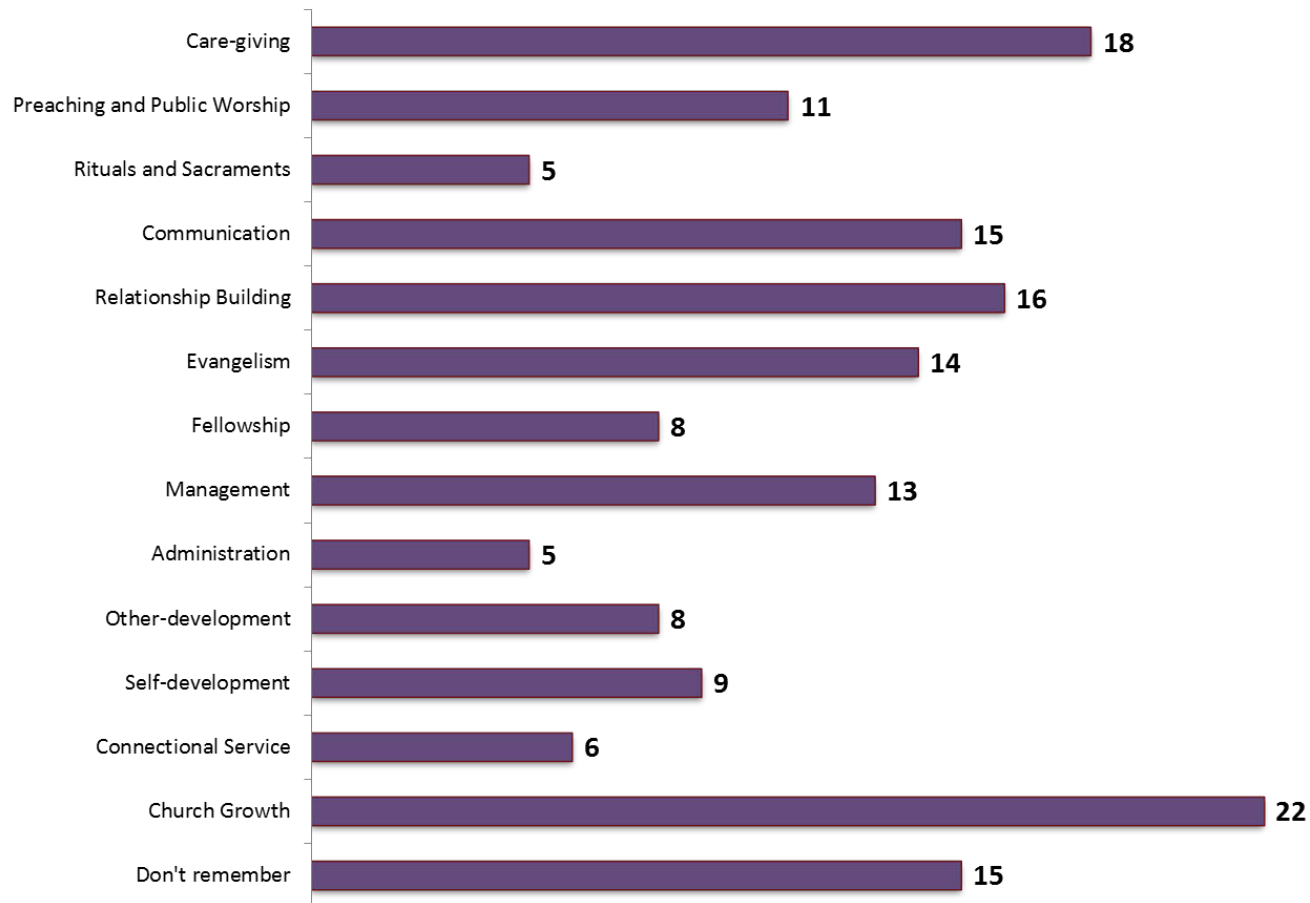
### Checking That Participant Built a Covenant

Before answering our follow-up questions, we asked participants whether their S/P-PRC and pastor met to develop a covenant during the AdEMiC pilot. Only participants who indicated “yes” or “not sure” were allowed to complete this survey; those who answered “no” were removed from the system (because, without having participated in the covenant-building process, they would be unable to answer the questions in our survey).



## Focal Areas of Participant's Covenant

Next, we asked participants to check off which of the 13 task areas their S/P-PRC and pastor decided to focus on for improvement in the upcoming year. The most common task areas were church growth, caregiving, and relationship building. 15 participants noted that they could not remember which areas were of focus in their covenant.



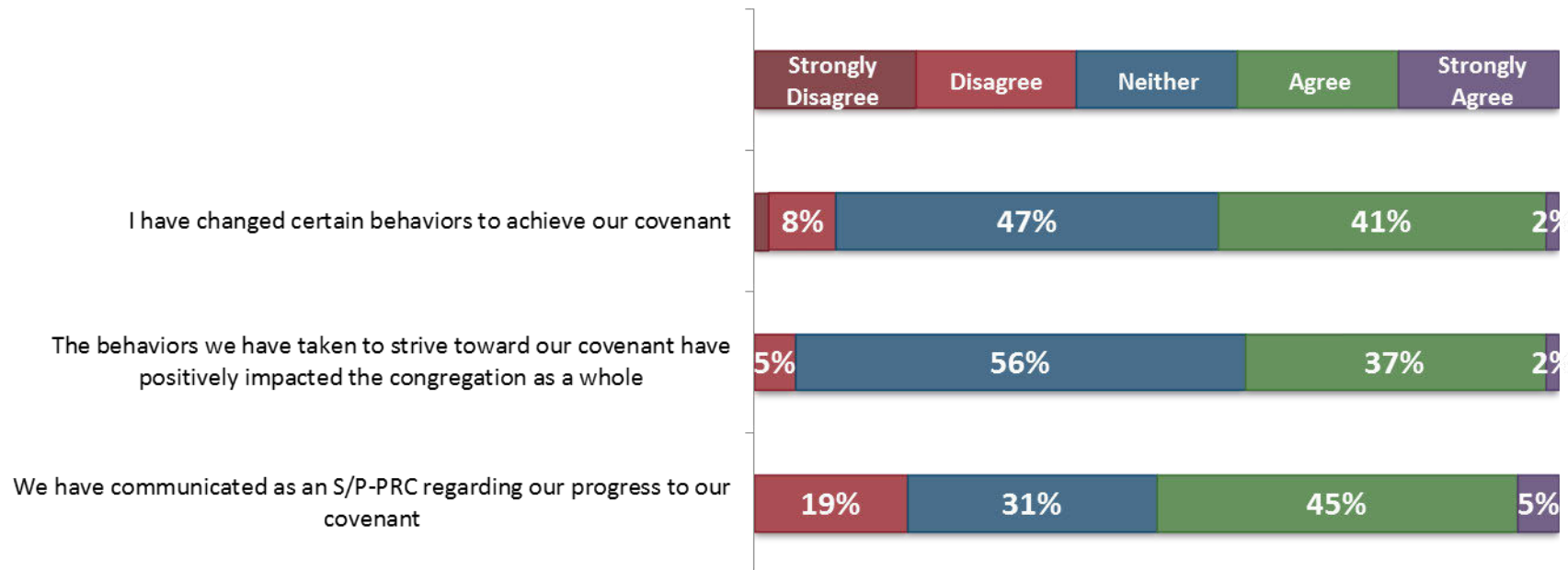
## Progress toward the Covenant

The core of the follow-up survey involved asking participants questions about how they were progressing toward their covenant. Most participants reported that the local church pastor and the S/P-PRC have worked toward the covenant moderately, very much, or extremely in the previous three months.



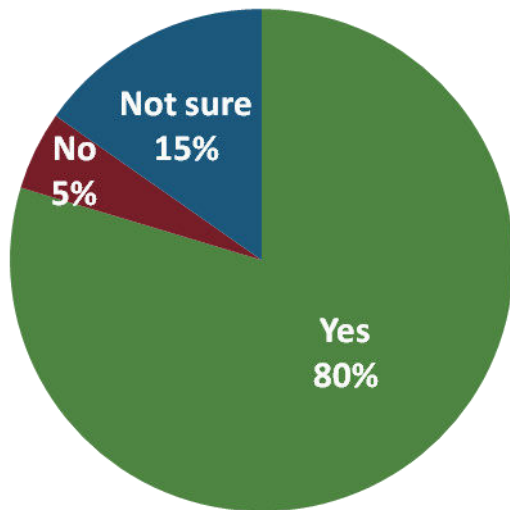
## Progress toward the Covenant (cont.)

Overall, less than half of the follow-up participants reported having changed behaviors to strive toward the covenant and that their new behaviors have impacted the congregation. Half of the follow-up participants reported having communicated with the other people involved in the covenant-building process regarding progress.



## Whether Participant Plans to Continue Striving Toward the Covenant

We also were interested in learning whether participants plan to continue striving toward their covenants, given their satisfaction with the process and their progress to-date. Most participants reported that they plan to continue striving toward the covenant; some reported that they weren't sure whether they would continue; and just a few said they would not continue striving toward the covenant.





## Other Feedback

Finally, we provided open-ended prompts for participants to write comments regarding the following areas: (1) what tools or processes might help the participant better contribute toward the covenant; (2) what specific things have helped -- or would help -- the participant and his/her S/P-PRC track progress toward the covenant; and (3) what other comments or suggestions the participant has to help others best pursue a covenant.

*All qualitative responses to these prompts are provided in Appendix II.*

In response to the first prompt, participants' responses generally fell into the following categories: updates regarding where they stand with regard to covenant fulfillment, notes about what they would like to have to help complete the covenant, and suggestions for improving the AdEMiC materials and procedures.

For the second prompt, participants mentioned the following as things that have helped -- or would help -- them track progress toward their covenant: relying on the pastor, focused meetings to discuss covenant progress, having a standardized way to track steps toward goals.

# **Appendices**

## **LIST OF INCLUDED DOCUMENTS**

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### **Qualitative Feedback from Participants and Revised AdEMiC Tools**

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