

*“Stay Ah, Just a Little Bit Longer,”  
CEO Longevity*

**Brice W. Harris**

*Chancellor Emeritus Los Rios & California Community Colleges*

*“Oh won't you stay,  
just a little bit longer,  
please let me hear you say  
that you will...”*

**Maurice Williams & the Zodiacs**

**August 1960**

# **1. Tough Job if You Can Keep It**

# **2. Talk to Me: What CCC Trustees Want From Their CEOs**

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**Susanna Cooper**

**Managing Director**

**Wheelhouse: The Center for Community College  
Leadership and Research**



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

# **3. CEO Tenure & Retention Study – 8<sup>th</sup> Update**

**Lizette Navarette, Vice President**

**Larry Galizio, CEO**

**Community College League of California**

**Brent Johnson, Analytica Consulting**



# Stability at the top

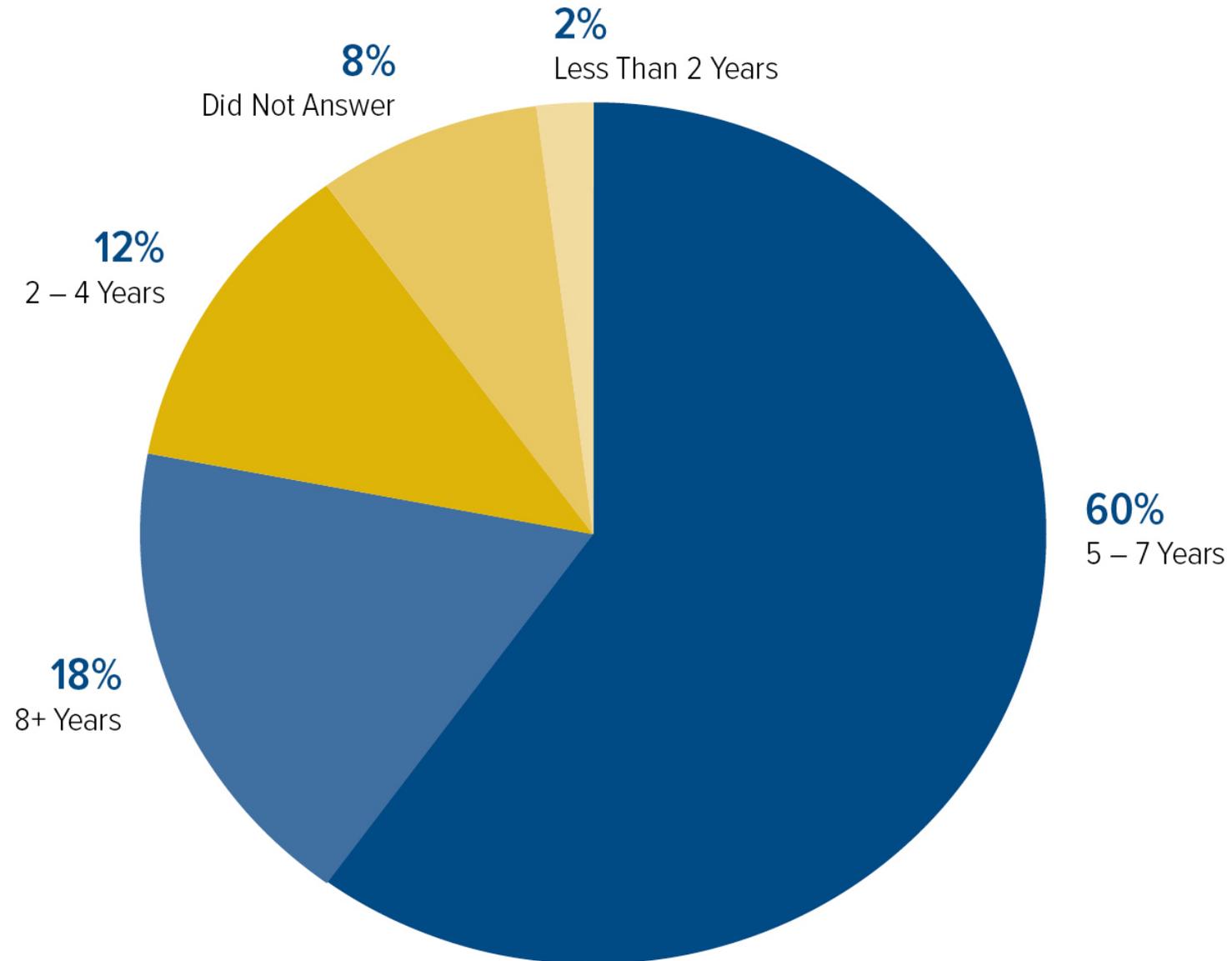
## California community college CEO tenure:

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- Average tenure of Multi-college CEO: 6.3 years
- Overall tenure for CEOs reporting to boards of trustees: 7.7 years
- Overall tenure for CA Chancellors and Presidents is 7.1 years
- Mean tenure length in last 10 years is 5.2 years down from 7.2 in the previous 10 year period

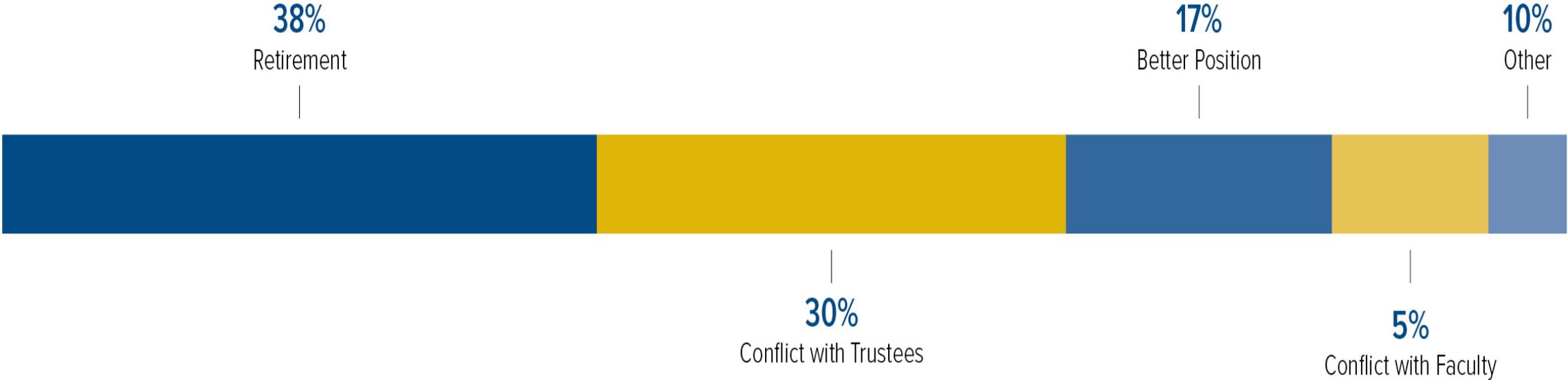
(Source: CCLC, CEO Tenure and Retention Study 2018)

# Trustee: Minimum Desired Tenure for Effective CEO?



# Trustees Perspective: Why Do CEOs Leave Their Jobs?

In Your Opinion, Why Did Departing CEO(s) Leave? (N=75)



Percentages do not add up to 100 because 5% of respondents did not answer this question

# CEO Perspective: Why Do CEOs Leave Their Jobs?

Select the three most common reasons CEOs leave their posts, in your opinion.



**Nearly a fifth of California CEOs  
were released from their  
positions over the past decade!**

(Source: CCLC, CEO Tenure and Retention Study 2018)

**High turnover is hard on a  
college and/or district as well as  
the people involved**

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- **Expense**
- **Organizational stability**
- **Trustee effectiveness**
- **Personal reputations and careers**

# Strategies for Improved Tenure

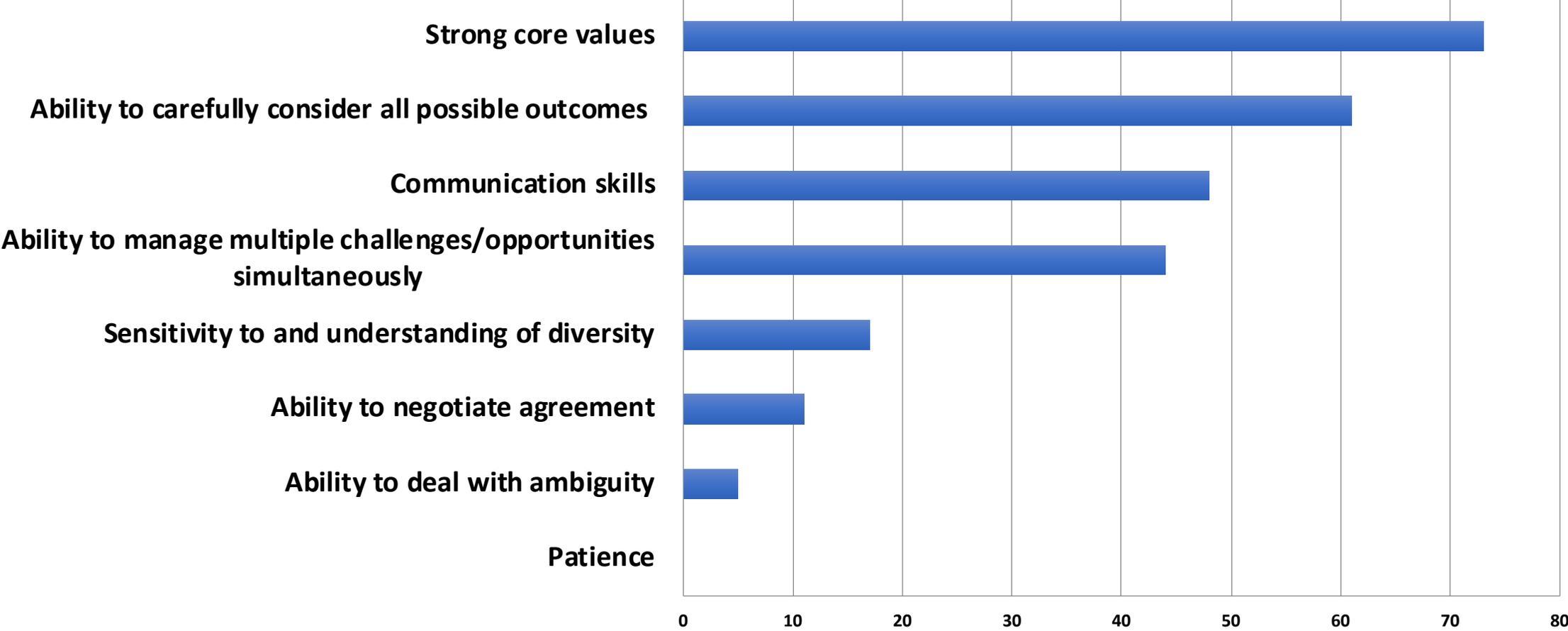
- **Hire the right person in the first place**
- **Evaluate leaders effectively**
- **Communicate and support one another**
- **Use compensation to support tenure**
- **Effectively plan for succession**

# Hiring the right CEO

- **Know what you want**
- **Make sure that matches what you need**
- **Be involved in the process**
- **Involve the organization in the process**
- **Communicate early and often**
- **Own your choice**

# Trustees: What CEO Leadership Attributes Are They Looking For?

Top 3 Leadership Attributes



# Trustees: What Skills Are They Looking For?



# Increasingly diverse California Community College CEOs

- **39% Women**
- **13% African-American**
- **9% Asian/Pacific Islander**
- **13% Latino/Latina**

(Source: CCLC, CEO Tenure and Retention Study 2018)

# CEO Evaluation

- **Early and often**
- **Multiple measures**
- **In the contract or policy**
- **Be consistent**
- **Be fair**

# Communication & Support

- **Onboarding (first 6 – 18 months especially critical)**
- **Clear understanding about Board/CEO protocols**
- **Communication is a two-way street**
- **Board as the catalyst for change**
- **Board stability = CEO stability**

# Compensation and CEO tenure

*“Buy cheap and pay  
to keep”*

Community College Trustee

# Compensation and CEO tenure

All CEO compensation components should be approved in an open session of the Board.

# Sample compensation components

- **Term**
- **Base salary**
- **Fringe Benefits**
- **Evaluation**
- **Termination**
- **Governing Law**

# Other compensation components

- **Automobile expenses**
- **Necessary expenses allowance**
- **Ability to work outside the contract**
- **Performance-based compensation**
- **Deferred compensation**
- **Sabbatical leave**
- **Housing allowance**

# Succession planning

- **Board needs to know about key leadership transitions**
- **College/district needs a blend of internal and external leadership**
- **“Grow-your-own” strategy is important for protection of the culture**
- **Succession planning does not mean pre-determined hiring**



# Trustees and CEOs You are NOT Alone

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*“This is an extremely lonely job and I depend on my Trustees to provide me direction, support and advice”* A Community College CEO

*“Our CEO is our only employee and we depend on that employee to run this organization, provide us solid information, advice and direction”* A Community College Trustee

*“Each board should structure the presidential relationship toward a longer term than now typically exists between the president and the institution. This means giving careful attention particularly to the selection of and to the support for the president, but also to conditions that can enhance longer tenure of positions.”*

**Clark Kerr - 1984**