

4-2014

# Division of Research Annual Customer Survey

Division of Research, Florida International University

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# DIVISION OF RESEARCH

## ANNUAL CUSTOMER SURVEY

- The Division of Research (DOR) conducts annual customer service surveys
- Surveys were conducted for fiscal years 2007-08, 2008-09/ 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12. Fiscal year 2012-13 represents the 5<sup>th</sup> annual survey
- The surveys are sent to all faculty who either submitted a grant proposal or had current grants during the year
- The annual survey contains separate sections regarding Pre-Award, Post-Award, Technology Transfer and other general issues
- Both close-ended and open-ended questions are included

# ANNUAL CUSTOMER SURVEY RESPONSE RATES

- Fiscal Year 2007-2008: 54.4% (111 out of 204)
- Fiscal Year 2008-09/09-10: 64.2% (194 out of 302)
- Fiscal Year 2010-2011: 48.4% (152 out of 314)
- Fiscal Year 2011-2012: 55.4% (194 out of 350)
- Fiscal Year 2012-2013: 48.2% (172 out of 357)

# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

## Separately for Pre-Award and Post Award:

1. In preparing grant applications identify areas of support that work best, whether in the College, Department, DOR or anywhere in University
2. Identify major obstacles encountered at FIU in grant submissions

## General Questions:

1. Identify actions taken by DOR staff that have been helpful
2. Identify actions taken by DOR staff that have NOT been helpful

# ANNUAL 2012-2013 SURVEY: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. Results indicate a continued positive trend of satisfaction with Pre and Post-Award services (Figures 1 & 2)
2. While Technology Transfer showed marked improvements in the last survey, for this survey there was regression (Figure 3)
3. Prior trend of new grant accounts being set-up on time stopped, with regression for the past year (Figure 7)
4. There continue to be improvements in the prompt notification of new awards to Principal Investigators (Figure 8)
5. There continue to be improvements in the timely return of phone calls by DOR staff, moving from 47% to 70% of calls returned within 24-hours (Figure, 9, 17 & 18).

# ANNUAL 2012-2013 SURVEY: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

6. Major Pre-Award areas of importance to faculty include (Figure 10 & 11):
  - Assistance from the college
  - Release time to work on grants
  - Assistance with budgets, internal clearance, electronic submissions
  
7. Major Post-Award areas of importance to faculty include (Figure 12):
  - DOR assistance with budgets and PantherSoft
  - College assistance with budgets
  - Assistance with personnel hiring

# ANNUAL 2012-2013 SURVEY: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

8. Major obstacles identified by faculty included (Figures 13 & 14):
- Areas with declining satisfaction:
    - ✓ Purchasing items on grants
    - ✓ Personnel hiring on grants
    - ✓ College assistance with grants and contract management
  
  - Areas with improving satisfaction:
    - ✓ Understanding budgets
    - ✓ General Counsel assistance
    - ✓ IRB and IACUC support

# ANNUAL 2012-2013 SURVEY: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

9. Areas identified by faculty in which there is greater need for DOR to make improvements (Figure 15):
  - Three areas in which the responses from this year's survey indicate increases in the need to make improvements: 1) budget and account set-up for new grants, 2) financial reports from existing grants, and 3) hiring personnel for grants and contracts
10. Areas with continued trend of faculty reporting lesser needs for DOR to make improvements (Figure 15):
  - Assistance with budget reports and PantherSoft
  - Assistance with IRB/IACUC/IBC
11. There were minor differences in levels of satisfaction by length of employment at FIU; with greater satisfaction for those with 6-10 years (Figures 17 & 18)



# COMPARISON OF PRE- AND POST-AWARD SERVICES ACROSS COLLEGES

- In the 2010-2011 survey, statistically significant differences were found in several Pre- and Post-Award areas between the College of Engineering & Computing and three colleges (CAS, HWC CoM & RSCPHSW).
  - In all, the differences related to DOR, scores were lower for Engineering, and most of the differences related to Post-Award (Table 1)
- In the 2011-2012 survey there were fewer differences (Table 2)
- In the 2012-13 survey there were differences in Pre and Post-Award areas; with lower scores reported by Engineering (Tables 3 & 4)

# TABLE 1: 2010-2011 PRE-AWARD & POST-AWARD ITEMS WITH SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ACROSS COLLEGES\*

ITEM	CAS	CEC	PH	CoM	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Pre-A College Assistance	3.2	4.1	4.1	3.8	CAS differs from CEC & PH
Pre-A Skillful	4.0	3.6	4.2	4.2	CEC differs from PH & CoM
Pre-A Assistance	3.8	3.5	4.2	3.8	CEC differs from PH
Post-A Skillful	3.9	2.9	4.1	4.2	CEC differs from ALL
Post-A Service	3.8	2.8	3.8	4.4	CEC differs from ALL
Post-A Satisfied w/ Assistance	3.8	2.8	3.6	4.0	CEC differs from CAS & CoM
Post-A Responds w/in 24-hrs.	3.9	2.9	3.3	4.0	CEC differs from CAS & CoM
Post-A Knowledgeable	3.9	3.2	3.9	4.4	CEC differs from ALL
Post-A Courteous	4.3	3.4	4.2	4.8	CEC differs from ALL
Post-A Account Set-up	3.8	2.6	3.8	4.0	CEC differs from ALL

\* Numbers represent mean values in scale of 1 to 5. Higher values indicate greater satisfaction

## TABLE 2: 2011-2012 PRE-AWARD & POST-AWARD ITEMS WITH SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ACROSS COLLEGES\*

ITEM	CAS	CEC	PH	CoM	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Pre-A College Assistance	3.6	4.2	3.4	4.1	CEC differs from CAS & PH
Pre-A Service	4.1	3.8	4.2	4.2	CEC differs from PH & CoM
Pre-A Assistance	4.0	3.7	3.9	4.6	CEC differs from COM
Post-A Service	4.2	3.5	3.7	3.7	CEC differs from CAS
Post-A Satisfied w/ Assistance	4.2	3.7	3.7	3.8	CEC differs from CAS
Post-A Account Set-up	4.1	3.5	3.2	4.2	CEC & PH differs from CAS * COM

\* Numbers represent mean values in scale of 1 to 5. Higher values indicate greater satisfaction

# TABLE 3: 2012-13 PRE-AWARD ITEMS WITH SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ACROSS COLLEGES<sup>1</sup>

ITEM	CAS	CEC	AHC <sup>2</sup>	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Pre-Award Service	4.1	3.7	4.7	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Pre-Award Assistance	4.1	3.8	4.7	CEC differs from AHC
Pre-Award Responds w/in 24-hours	4.0	3.8	4.9	CEC differs from CAS
Pre-Award Skillful	4.3	3.9	4.7	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Pre-Award is Timely	4.2	4.0	4.9	CEC differs from CAS
Pre-Award Staff Knowledgeable	4.2	3.9	5.0	AHC differs from CEC & CAS
Pre-Award Courteous	4.4	4.2	4.9	CEC differs from AHC
Pre-Award Assistance from College	4.0	3.7	4.6	CEC differs from AHC

<sup>1</sup> Numbers represent mean values in a scale of 1 to 5. Higher values indicate greater satisfaction

<sup>2</sup> AHC represents the colleges of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences, and Public Health & Social Work

# TABLE 4: 2012-13 POST-AWARD ITEMS WITH SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ACROSS COLLEGES<sup>1</sup>

ITEM	CAS	CEC	AHC	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Post-Award Skillful	4.2	3.2	4.0	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award Service	4.1	3.1	4.0	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award Assistance	4.1	3.1	4.2	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award Responds w/in 24-hours	4.1	3.3	4.3	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award is Timely	4.0	3.3	4.3	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award Knowledgeable	4.3	3.3	4.3	CEC differs from CAS & AHC
Post-Award Courteous	4.5	3.8	4.3	CEC differs from CAS
Post-Award Account Set-up	4.0	3.0	4.5	CEC differs from CAS & AHC

<sup>1</sup> Numbers represent mean values in a scale of 1 to 5. Higher values indicate greater satisfaction

<sup>2</sup> AHC represents the colleges of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences, and Public Health & Social Work

# COMPARISON OF PRE- AND POST-AWARD SERVICES BY LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AT FIU

- Comparisons of responses by faculty members with five or fewer years at FIU with those with six to ten years and those with more than 10 years showed minor differences (Figures 19 & 20)
- Generally, faculty with 6-10 years at FIU reported slightly higher levels of satisfaction

# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: PRE-AWARD AREAS THAT WORK BEST

1. General praise of DOR Staff – 53% (was 43% in last survey)
2. Praising support from college – 23% (was 20% last year)
3. Electronic submission (ePRAF) – 12%
4. Assistance with budget preparation – 5% (was 24% last survey)

# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: PRE-AWARD MAJOR OBSTACLES

1. Problems with electronic approval form (ePRAF) - 27%
2. Getting grants on time to DOR, but processed at last minute by DOR - 12% (was 18% last year)
3. Lack of college support - 9%
4. Understanding regulations related to grant - 5%



# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: POST AWARD AREAS THAT WORK BEST

1. DOR Staff – 51% of responses
2. Support from the college/ department – 27% of responses
3. Support with budgets and account set-up – 14% of responses

# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: POST-AWARD AREA MAJOR OBSTACLES

1. Difficulties managing grant budgets was the top obstacle, including difficulties reading financial reports – 32% of all responses
  - ✓ This was identified as an obstacle in last year's survey, but appears to have become a larger problem
2. Hiring personnel on grants was the second major obstacle - 18% of all responses
  - ✓ This was identified as obstacle in last year's survey, but appears to have become a larger problem

# OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: POST-AWARD AREA MAJOR OBSTACLES (CONT.)

3. Poor Post-Award support in college/ department - 17% of all responses
4. Difficulties working with and understanding PantherSoft - 14% of all responses
5. Various difficulties with purchasing, particularly with timeliness - 11% of all responses
6. Too many forms to complete in grant proposal process - 4% of all responses

# OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS: SUGGESTIONS

1. Provide monthly budget updates on grants
2. Greater post-award support in college/  
department
3. Support with budgets
4. Provide statistical consulting services
5. Direct assistance from DOR for hiring  
personnel on grants

# PLANNED ACTIONS TO ADDRESS FOUR KEY AREAS OF PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

## 1. Problem: Difficulties with ePRAF

### 1.1 Actions:

- Increase Pre-Award embedding in colleges and have DOR staff assist with ePRAF

## 2. Problem: Difficulties in hiring personnel and purchasing

### 2.1 Actions:

- Create on-line DOR Hotline to detect, track and solve difficulties early

# PLANNED ACTIONS TO ADDRESS FOUR KEY AREAS OF PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

- 2.1.1** The Hotline will be first launched with the College of Engineering and Computing to test the following approach:
- Hotline checked twice a day by one DOR staff member
  - Within 24 hours, faculty member sending the message will receive acknowledgement that message was received
  - Internal DOR team will review Hotline inquiry and determine whether DOR alone can solve the problem (e.g., assist the faculty member directly) or whether there is a need to work with HR, Purchasing or the College toward a solution
- 2.1.2** DOR will work with HR and/or Purchasing to address identified difficulties as needed
- 2.1.3** VPR will have one weekly meeting to be informed about situations that have not been resolved during the week

# PLANNED ACTIONS TO ADDRESS FOUR KEY AREAS OF PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

## 3. **Problem:** Difficulties with budget reports in PantherSoft

### 3.1 Actions:

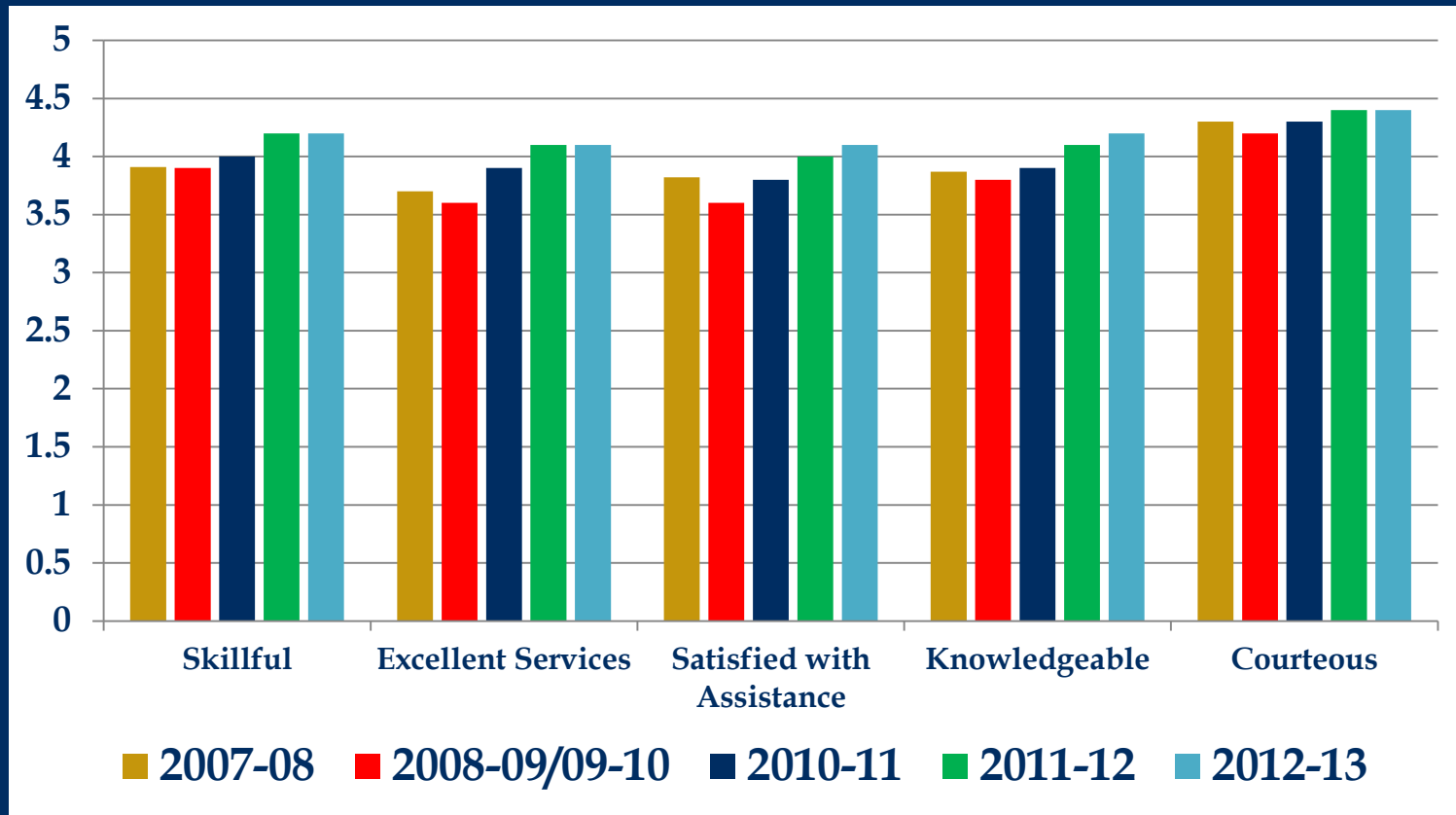
- DOR will provide new monthly reports for PIs
- Reports tested this month with college administrators
- Launch reports to PIs in April 2014

## 4. **Problem:** Lower rating of Technology Transfer

### 4.1 Actions:

- Create standard templates for prompt IP agreements
- Work with Research Foundation Board to establish commercialization fund and better IP vetting process

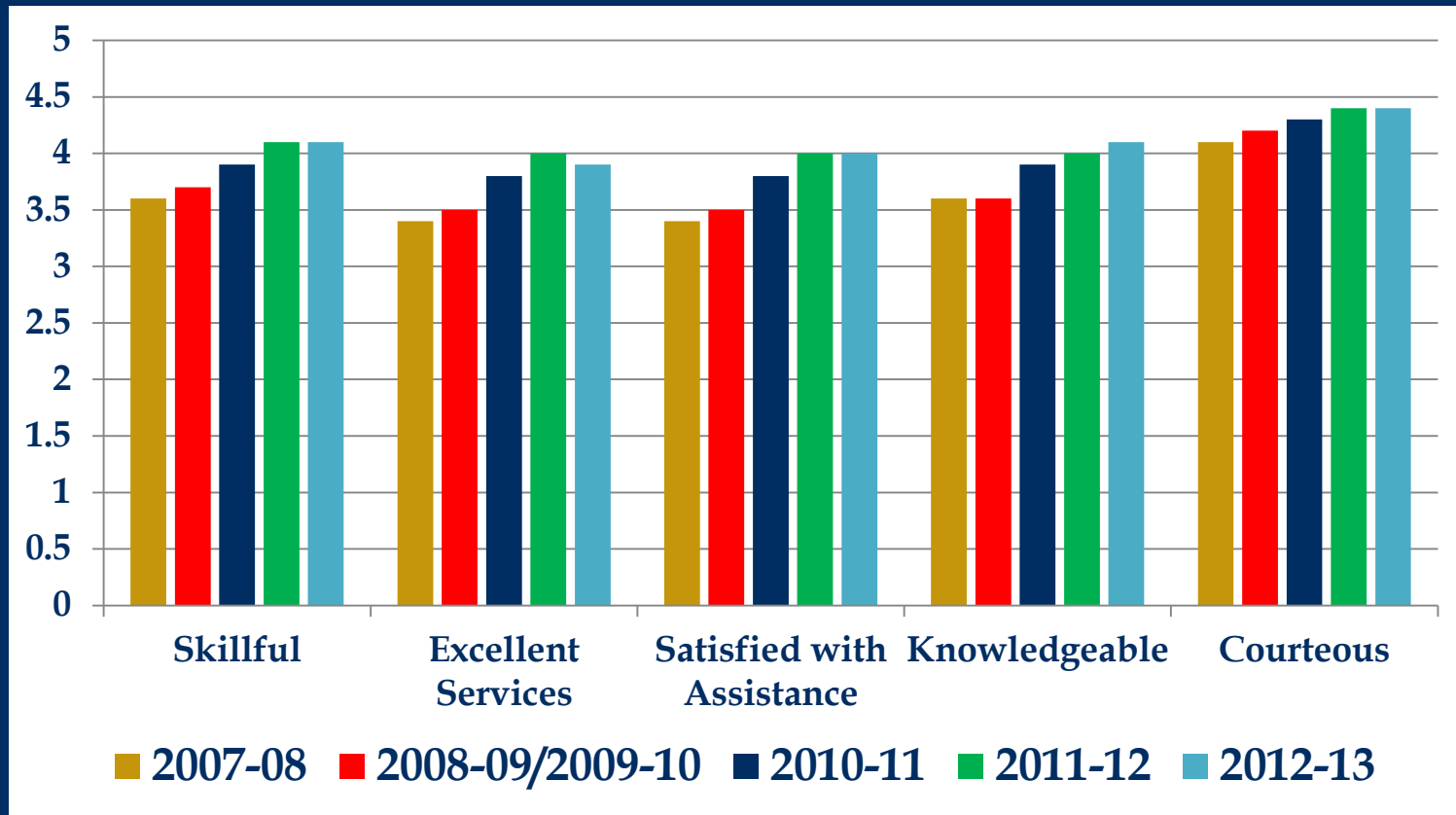
# FIGURE 1: EXPERIENCES WITH PRE-AWARD STAFF\*



\* Scoring: Scale 1 to 5; 5 indicates highest level of satisfaction or agreement

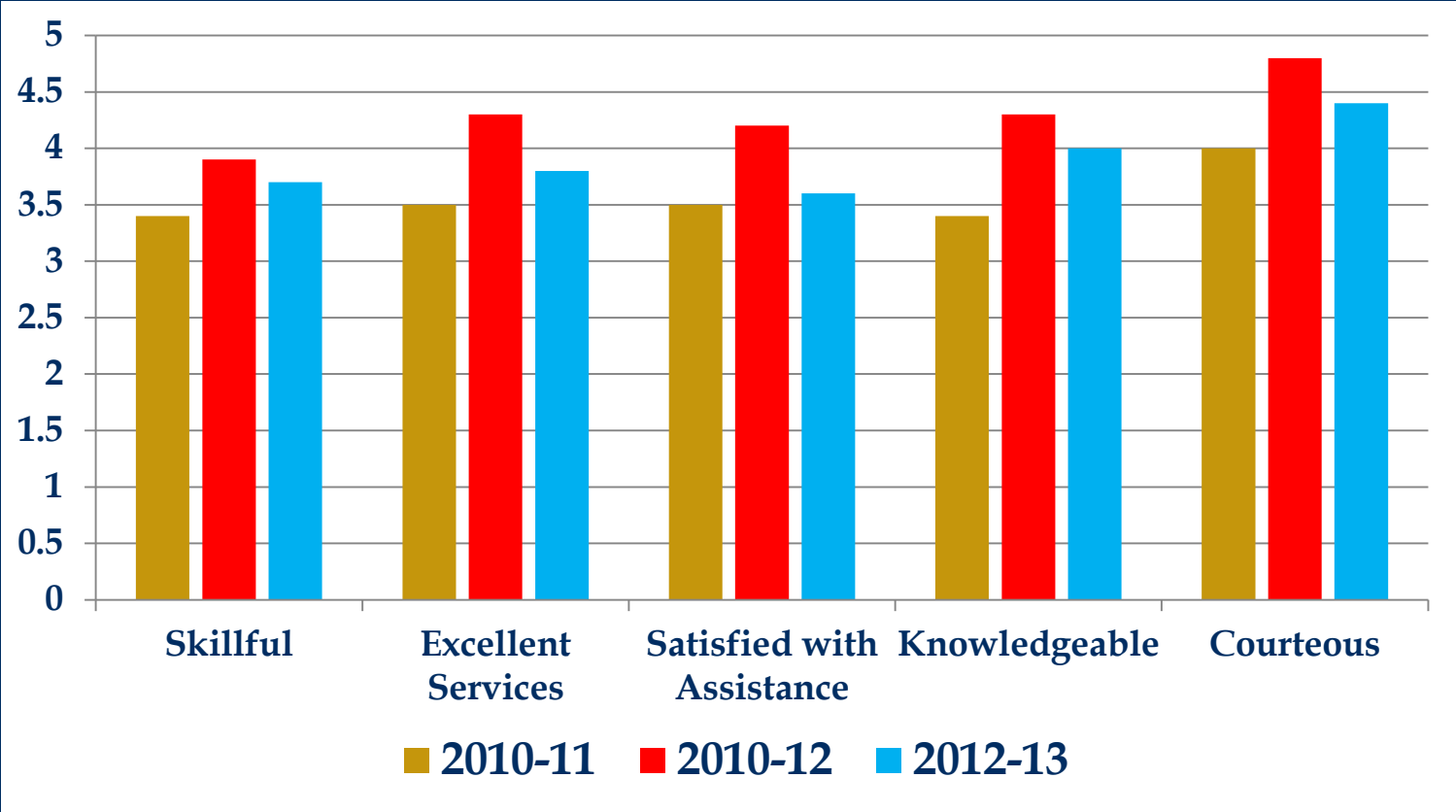


## FIGURE 2: EXPERIENCES WITH POST-AWARD STAFF\*



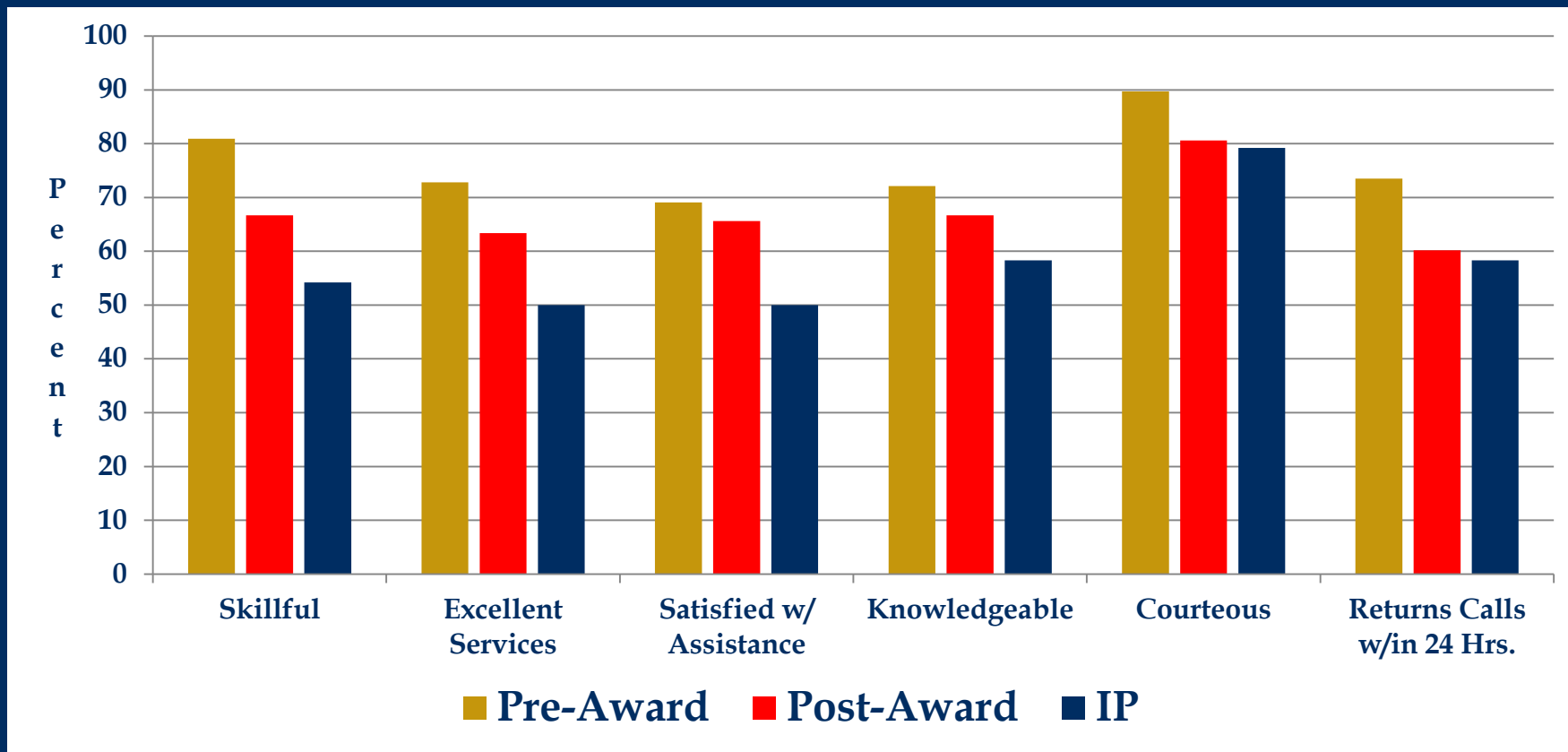
\* Scoring: Scale 1 to 5; 5 indicates highest level of satisfaction or agreement

# FIGURE 3: EXPERIENCES WITH TECH TRANSFER STAFF

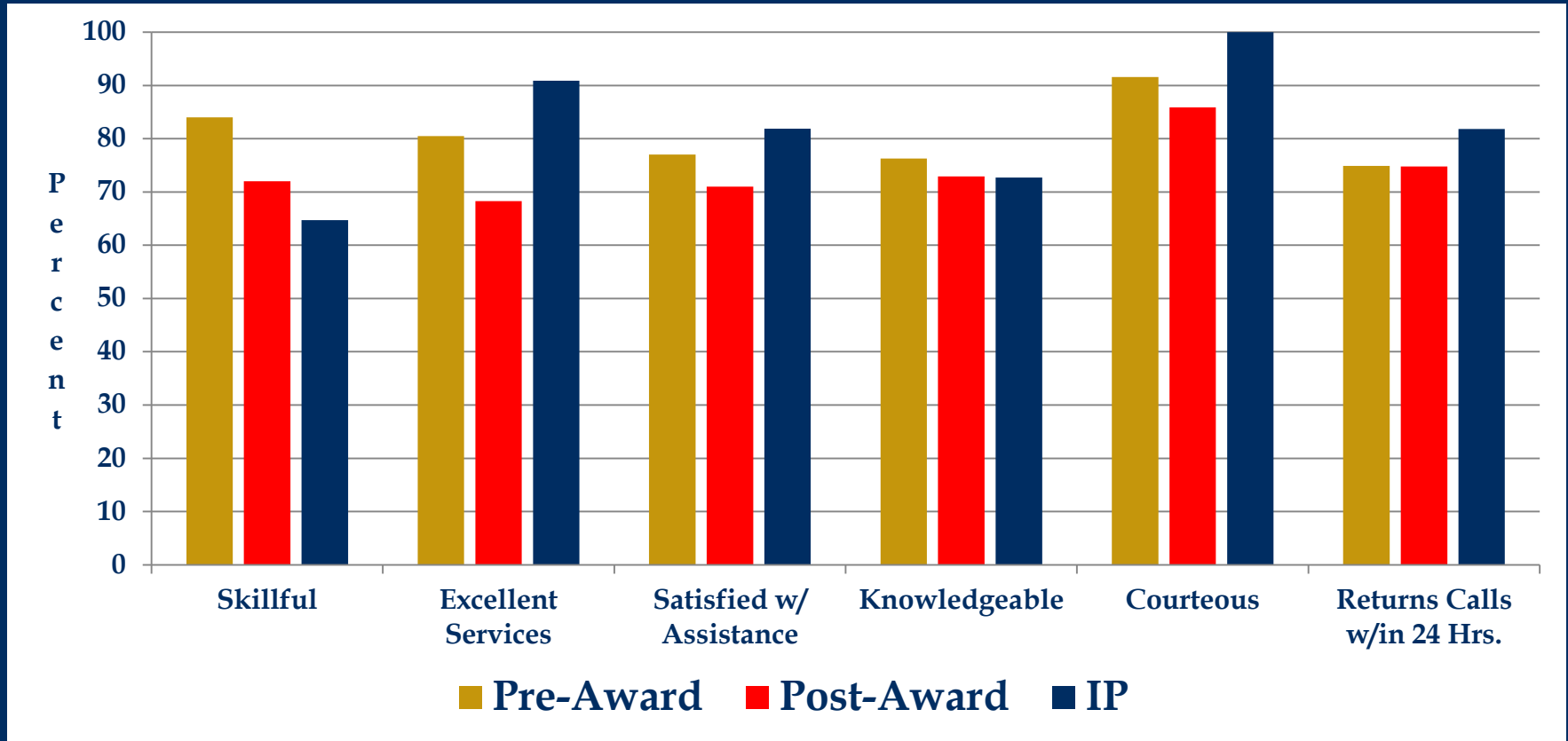


\* Scoring: Scale 1 to 5; 5 indicates highest level of satisfaction or agreement

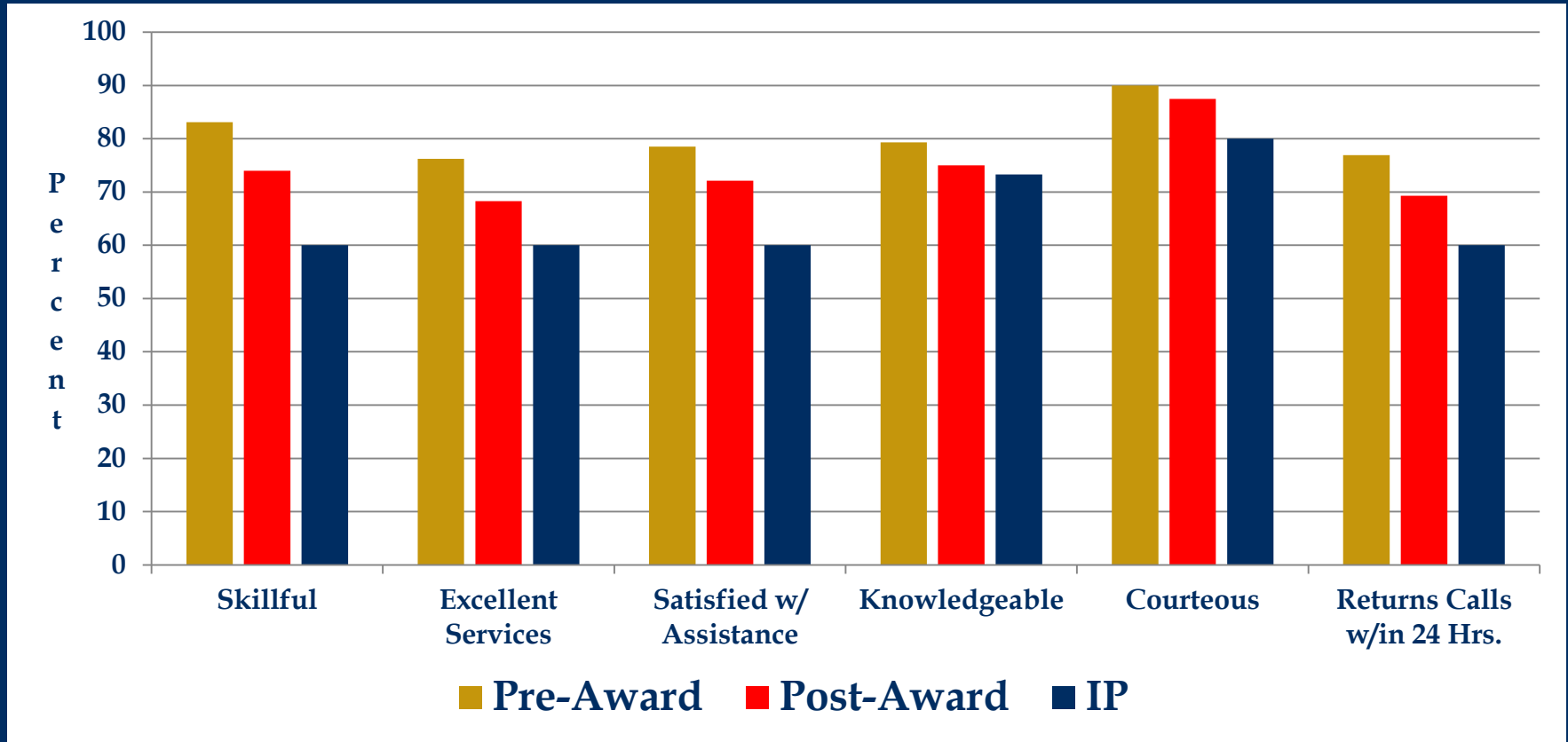
# FIGURE 4: 2010-11 PROPORTION STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE: COMPARISON PRE-AWARD, POST-AWARD, IP



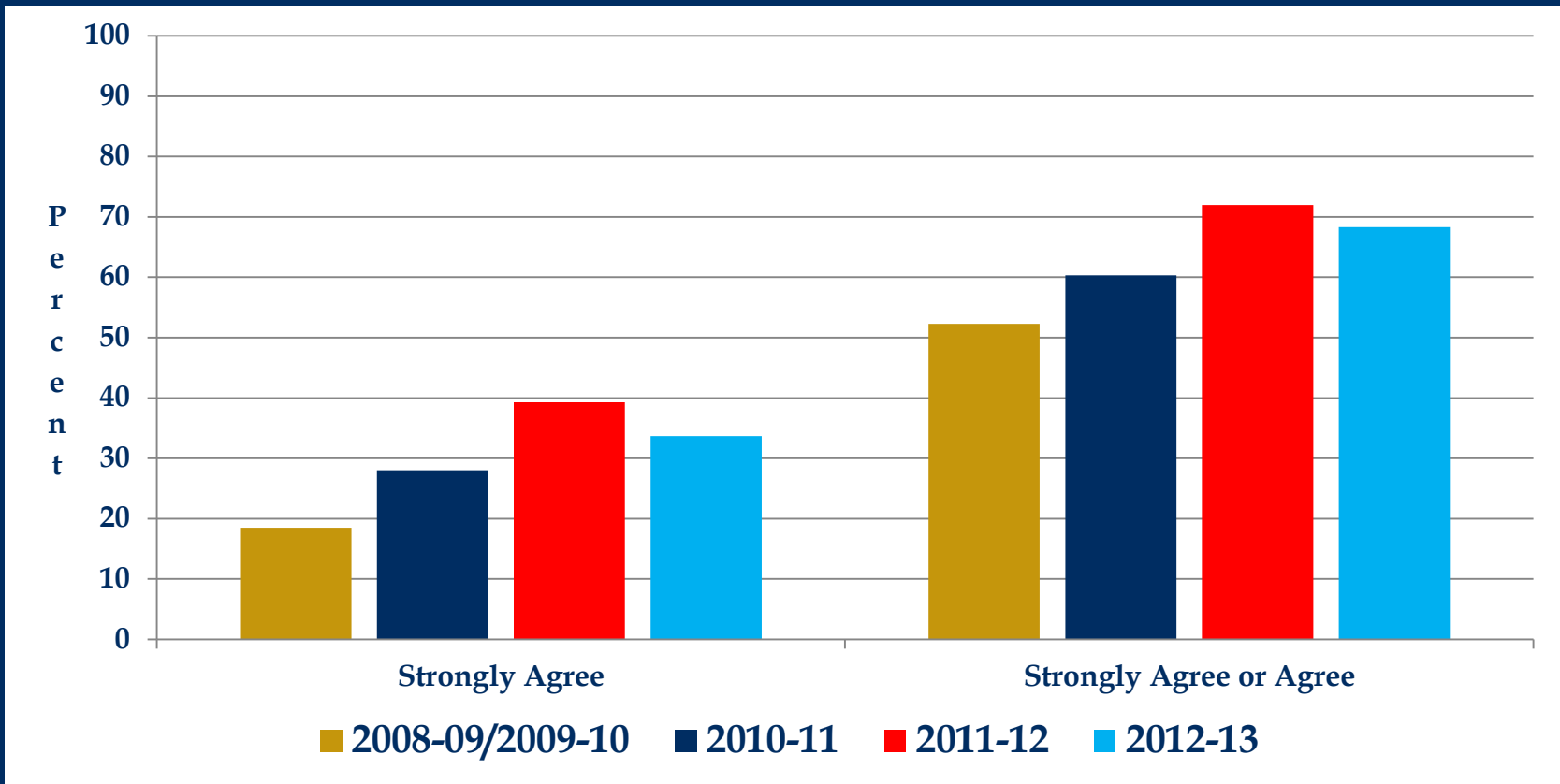
# FIGURE 5: 2011-12 PROPORTION STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE: COMPARISON PRE-AWARD, POST-AWARD, IP



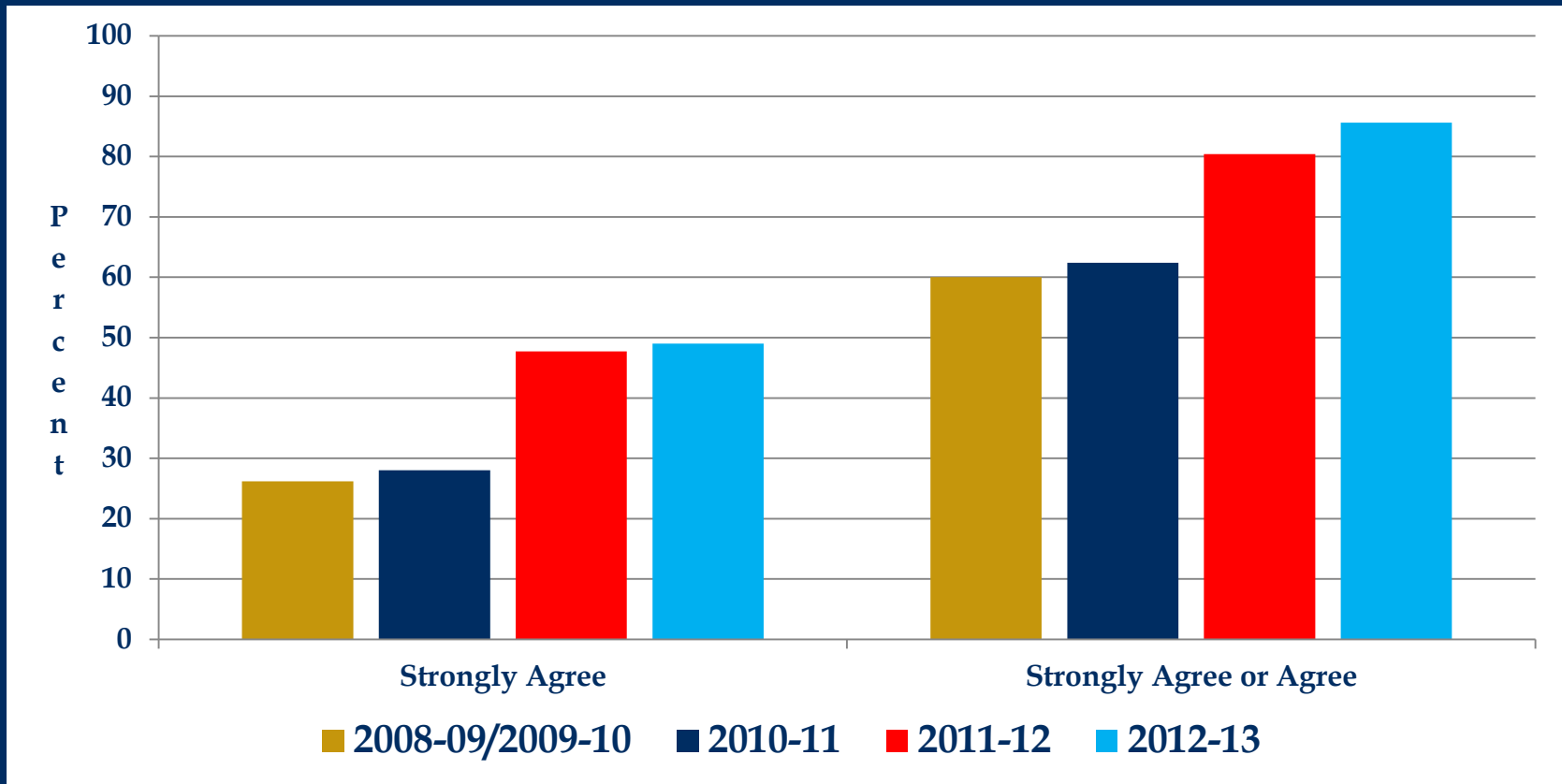
# FIGURE 6: 2012-13 PROPORTION STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE: COMPARISON PRE-AWARD, POST-AWARD, IP



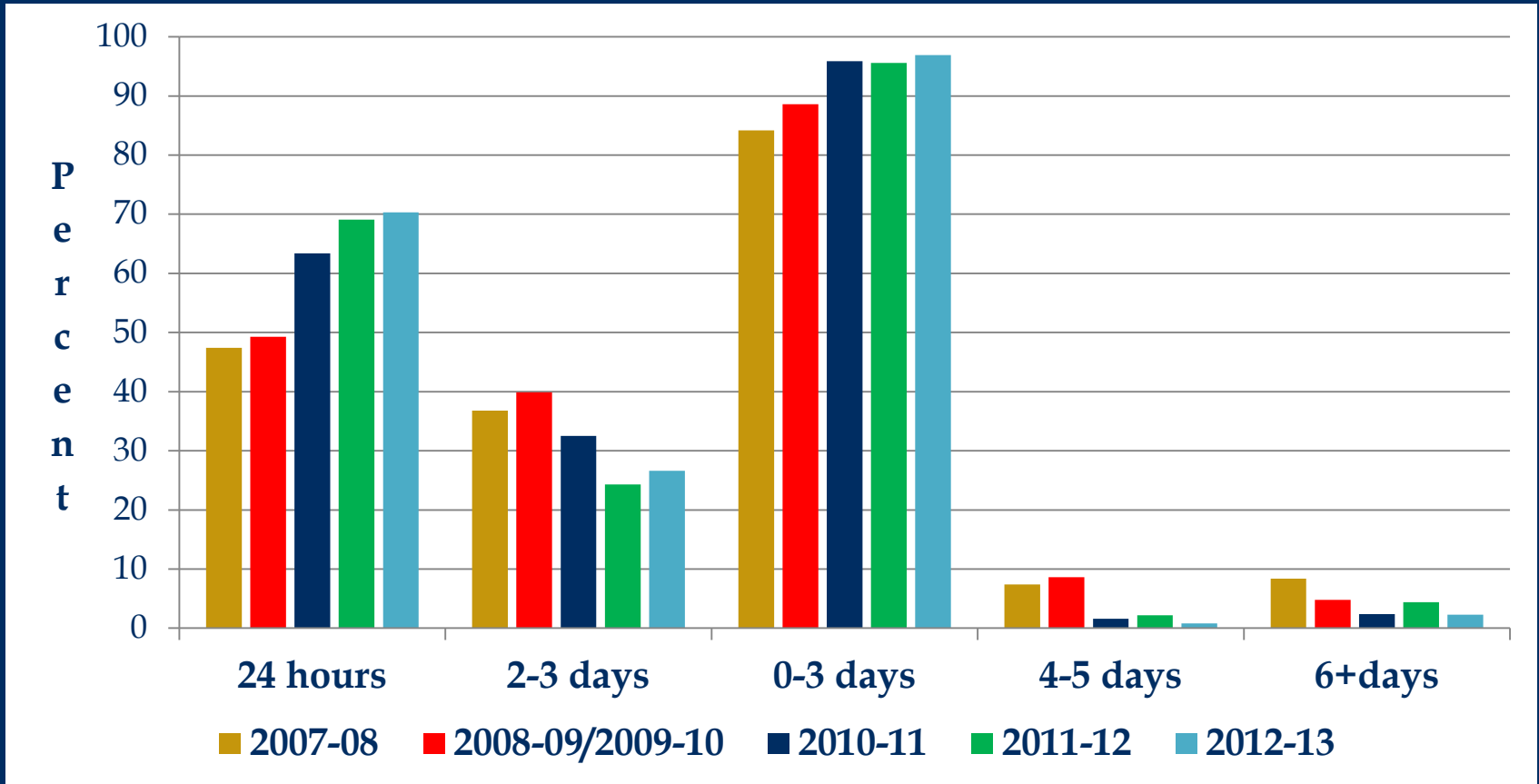
# FIGURE 7: NEW GRANT ACCOUNTS ARE SET-UP TIMELY



# FIGURE 8: THERE IS PROMPT NOTIFICATION OF NEW AWARDS



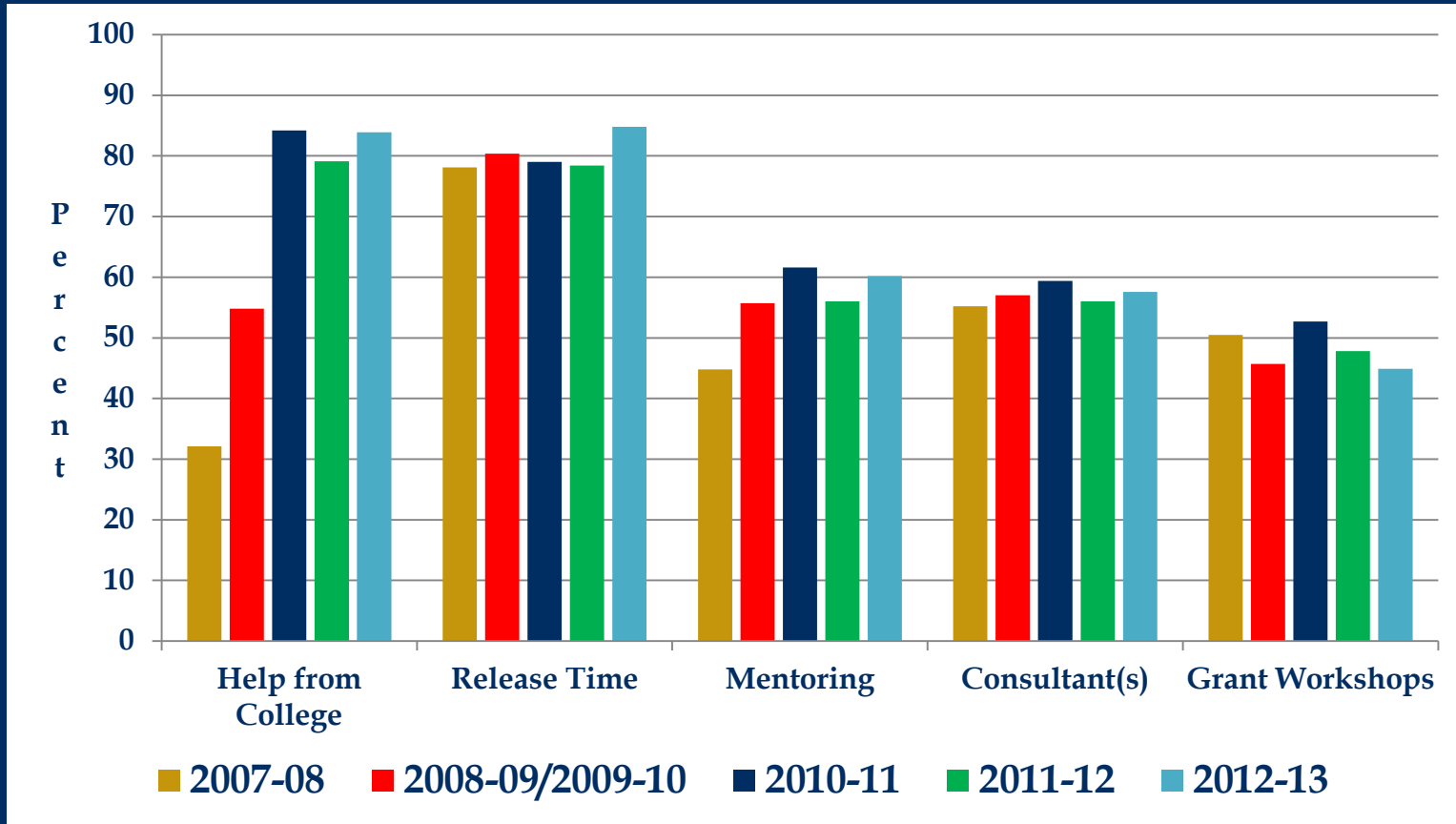
# FIGURE 9: LENGTH OF TIME FOR DOR TO RETURN PHONE CALLS





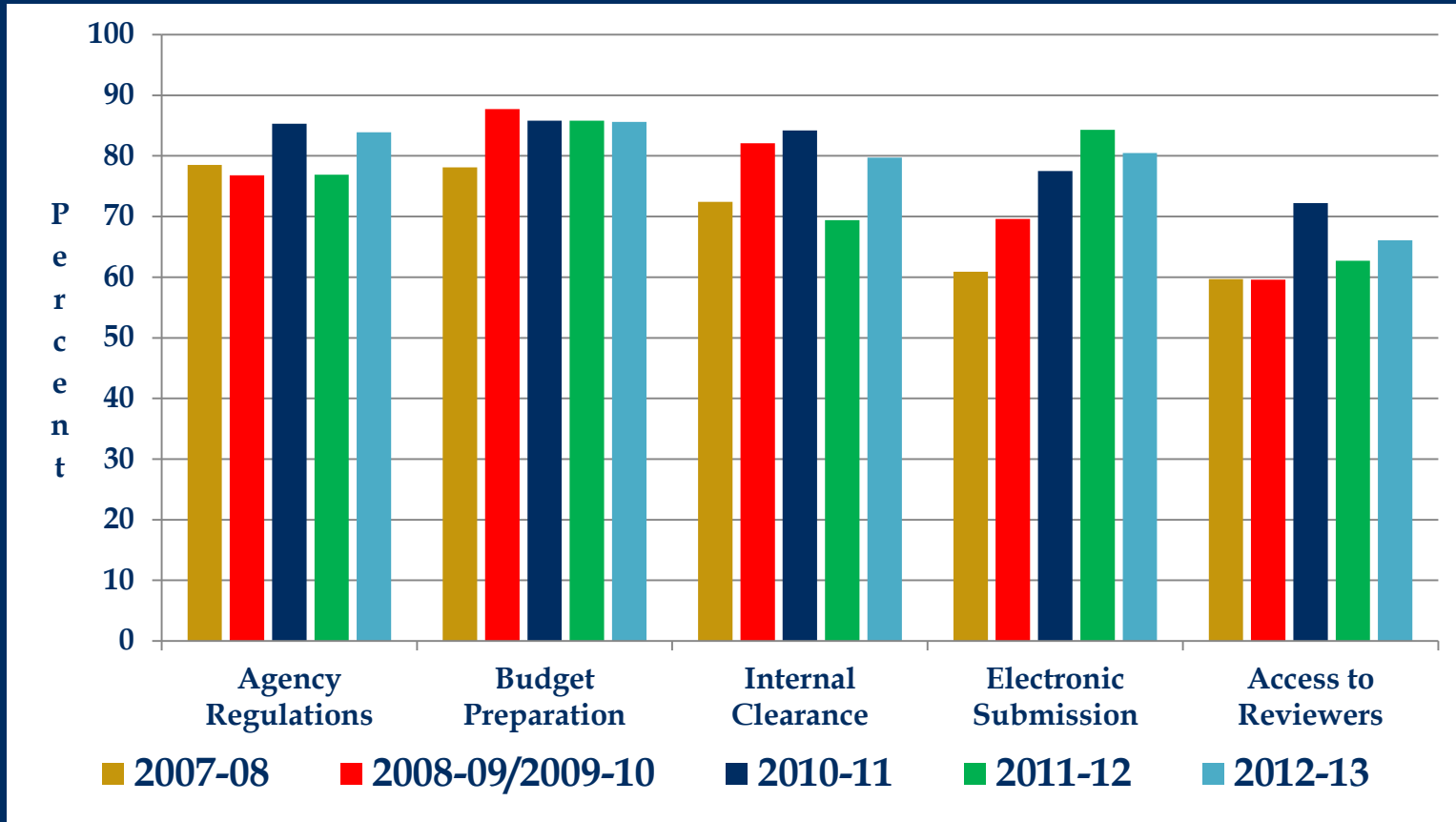
# FIGURE 10: LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PRE-AWARD AREAS OF SUPPORT FOR PI

(% "VERY IMPORTANT" & "IMPORTANT")



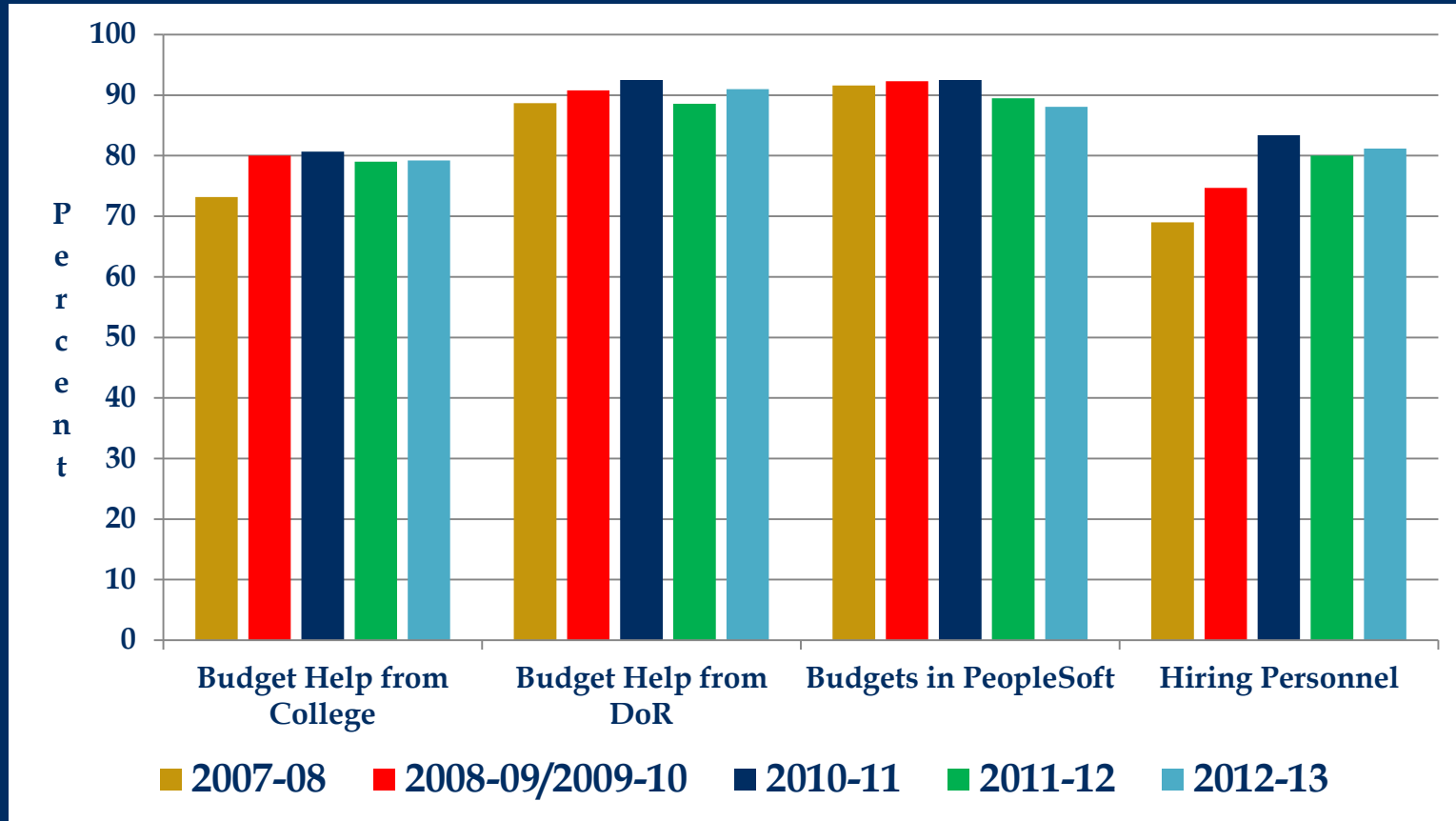
# FIGURE 11: LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR PRE-AWARD AREAS OF SUPPORT FOR PI

(% "VERY IMPORTANT" & "IMPORTANT") - CONT.

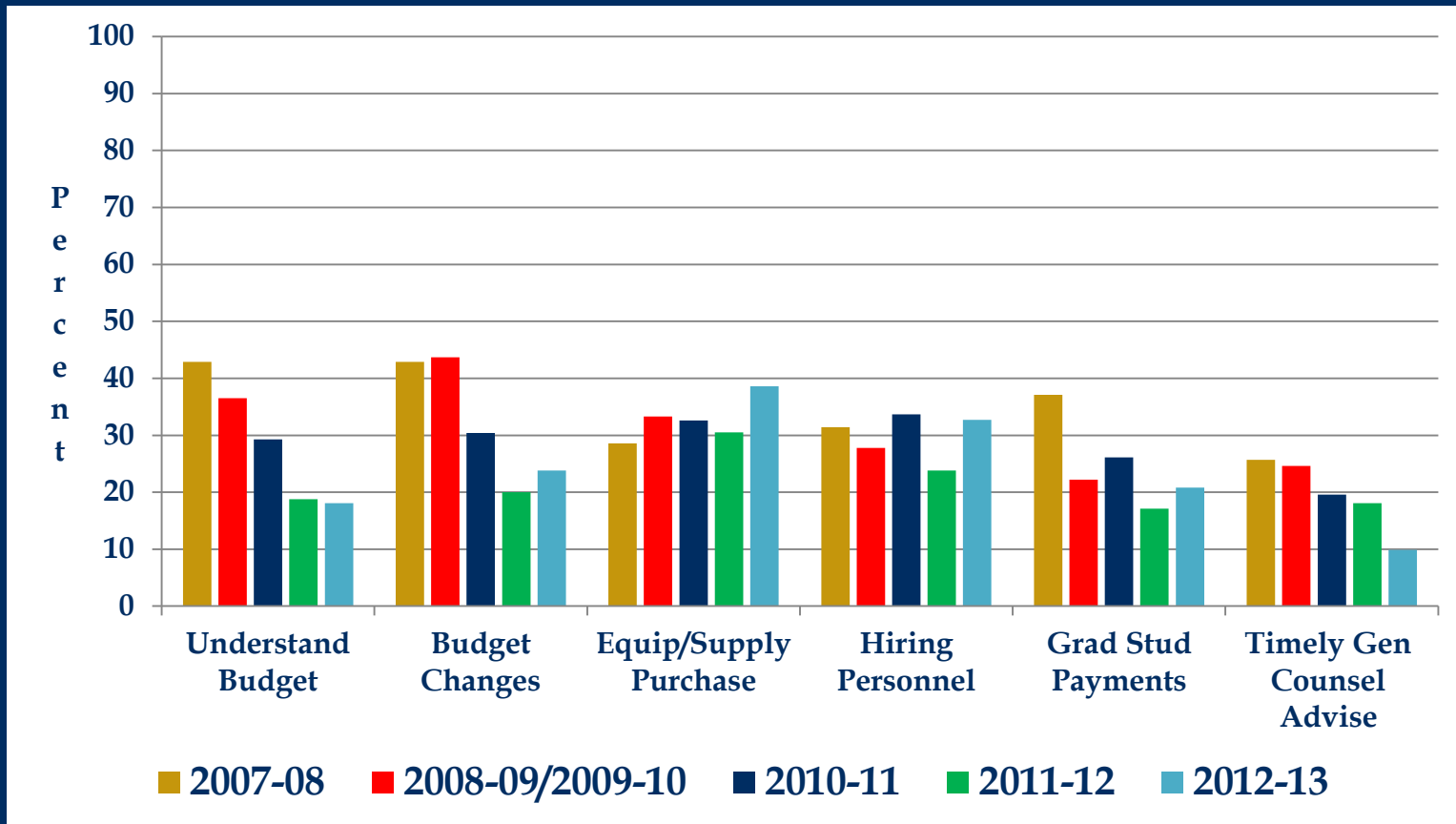


# FIGURE 12: LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE FOR POST-AWARD AREAS OF SUPPORT FOR PI

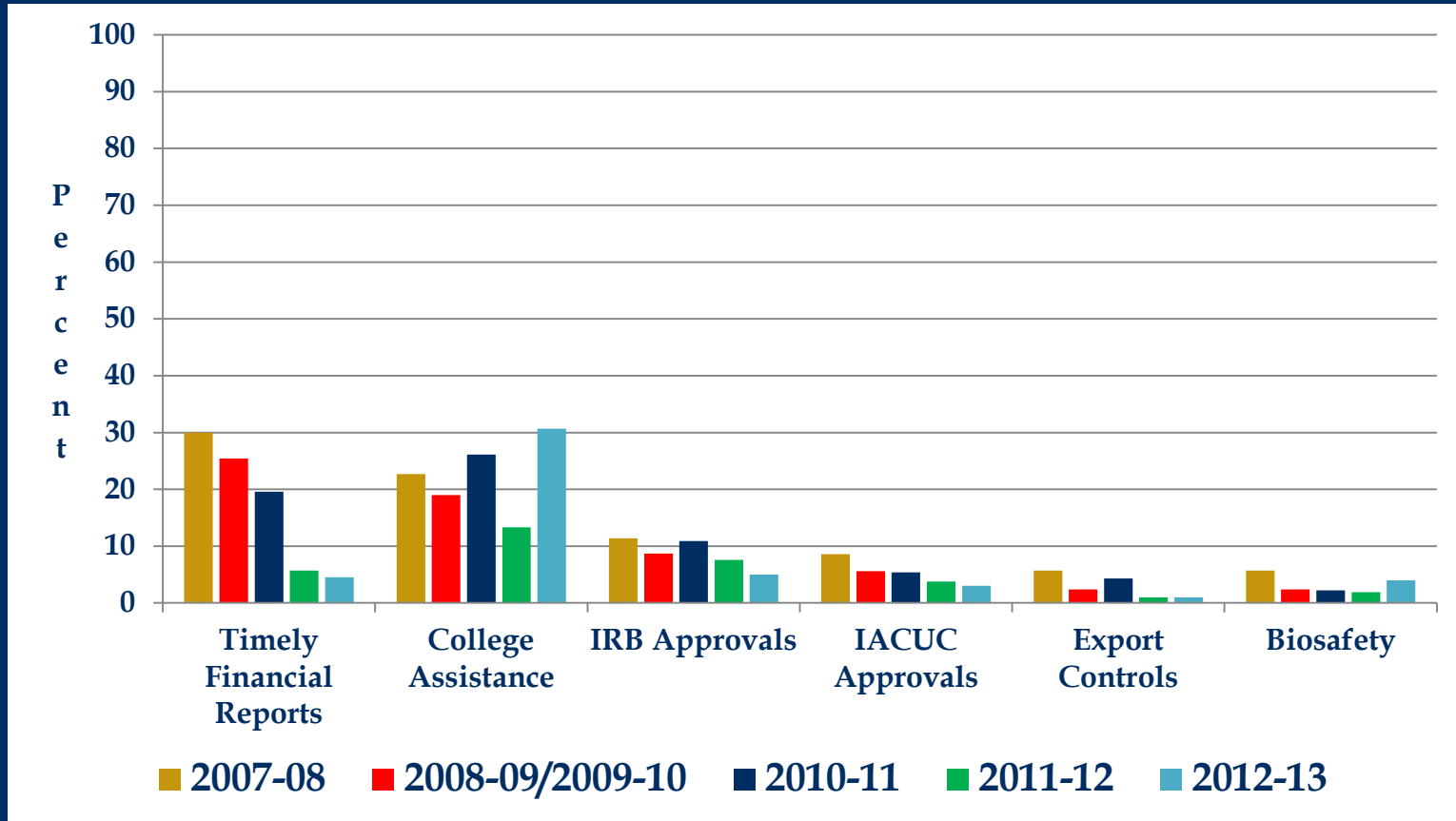
(% "VERY IMPORTANT" & "IMPORTANT")



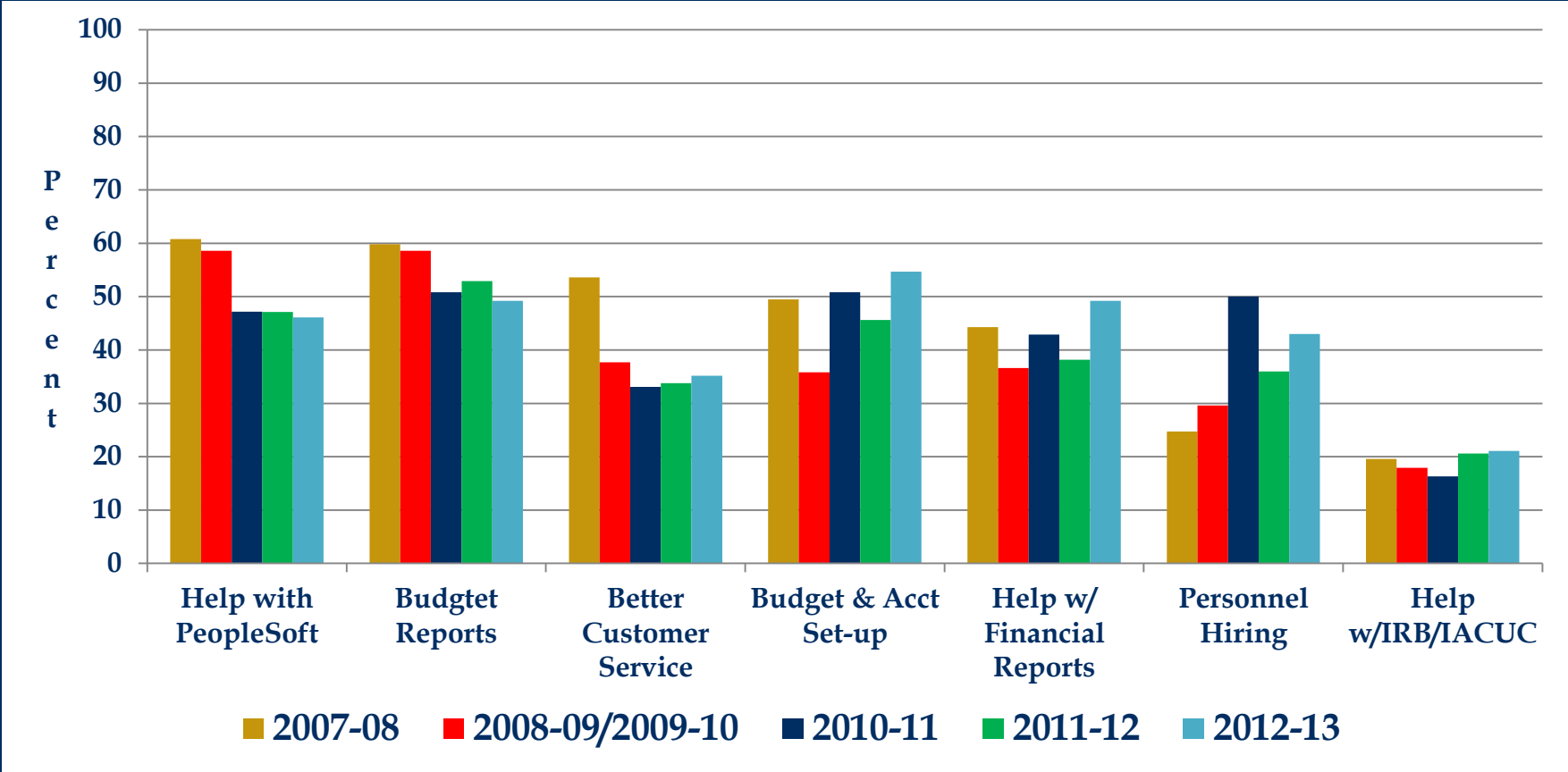
# FIGURE 13: MAJOR OBSTACLES IN MANAGING EXISTING GRANTS: PROPORTION REPORTING “FREQUENTLY”



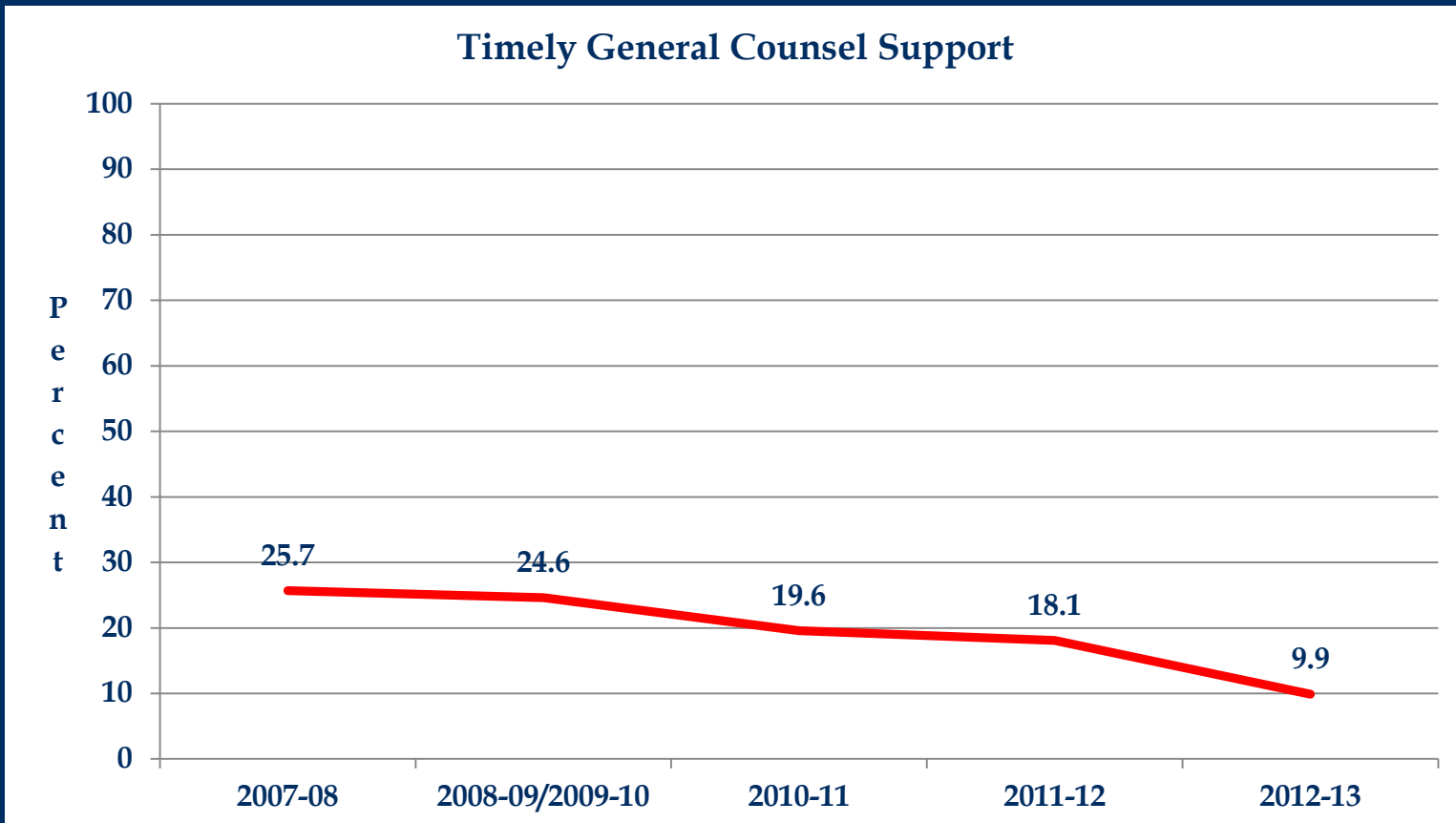
# FIGURE 14: MAJOR OBSTACLES IN MANAGING EXISTING GRANTS: PROPORTION REPORTING “FREQUENTLY” (CONT.)



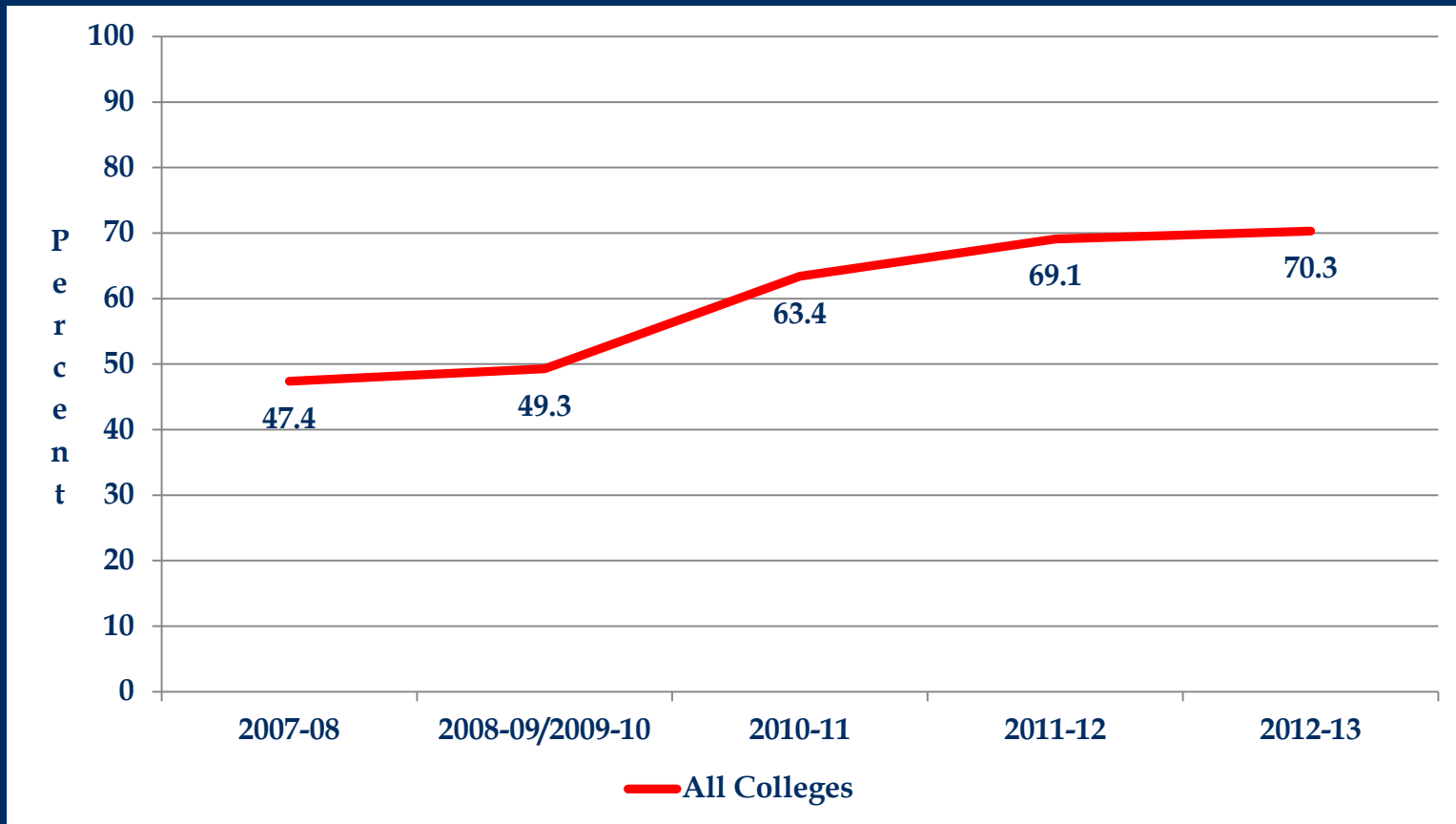
# FIGURE 15: AREAS CONSIDERED “VERY IMPORTANT” FOR DOR TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS



# FIGURE 16: MAJOR OBSTACLES IN MANAGING EXISTING GRANTS: PROPORTION REPORTING “FREQUENTLY”

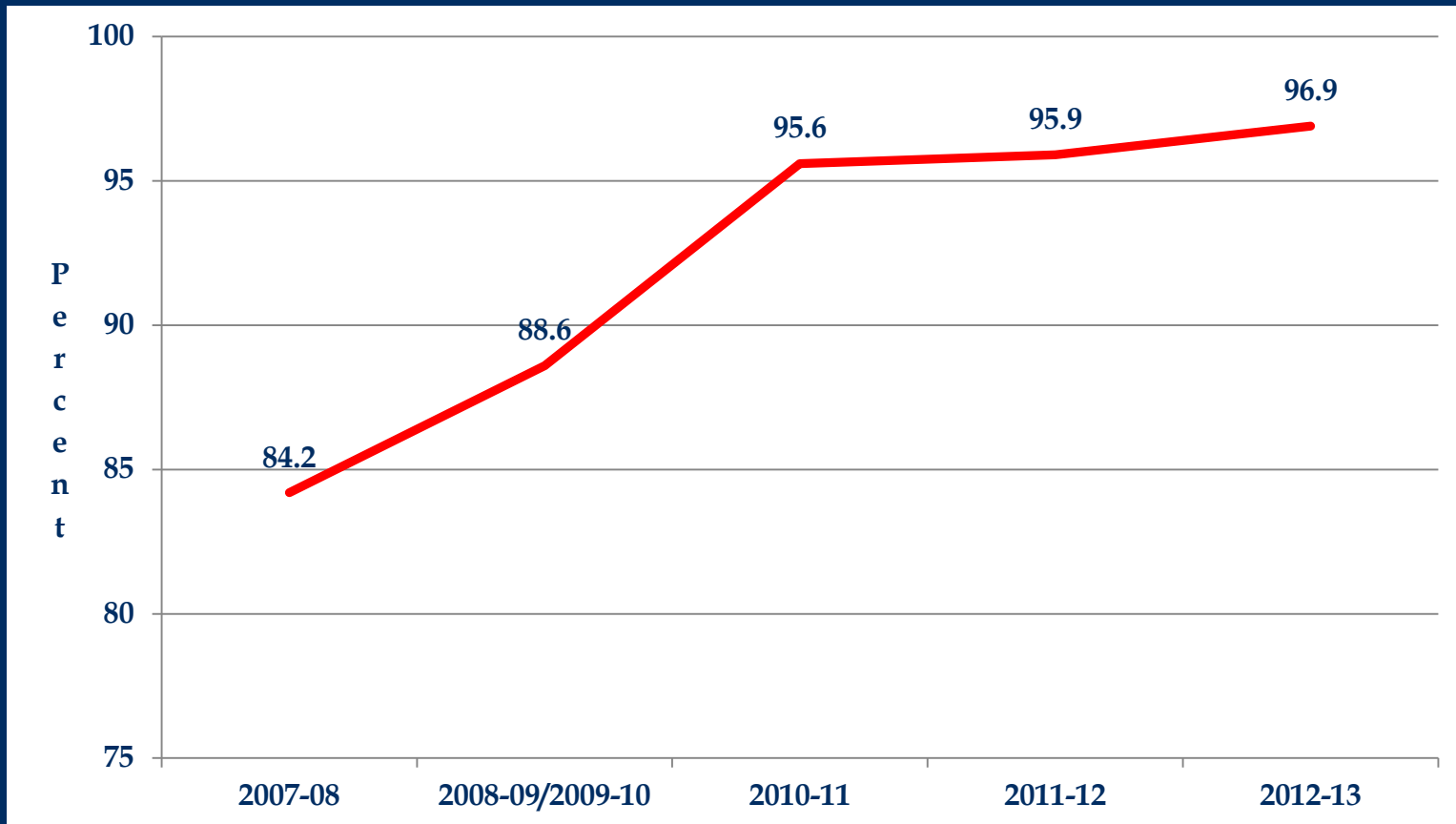


# FIGURE 17: DOR RESPONSES TO PHONE INQUIRIES WITHIN 24-HOURS

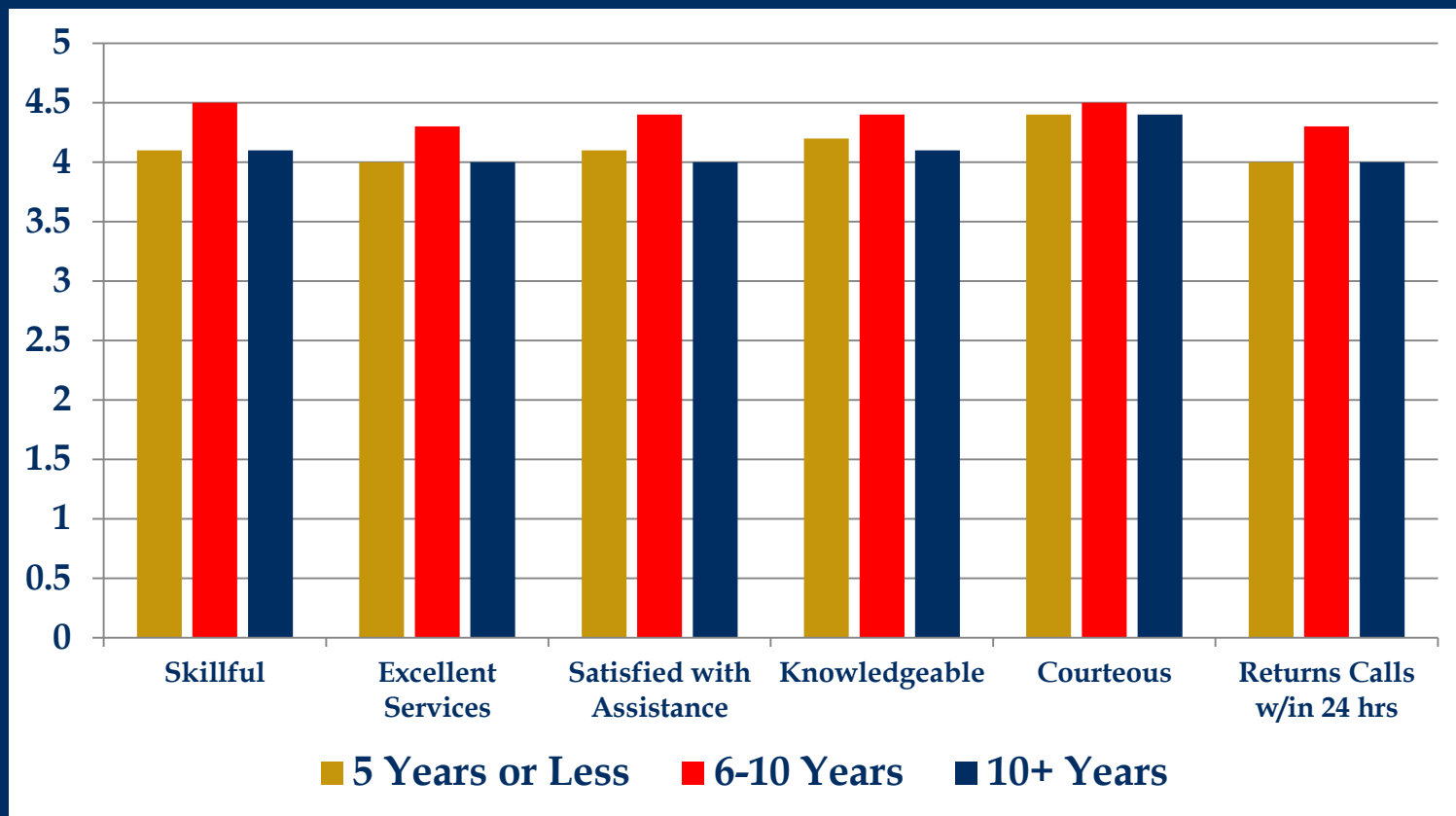




# FIGURE 18: DOR RESPONSES TO PHONE INQUIRIES WITHIN 3 WORKING DAYS

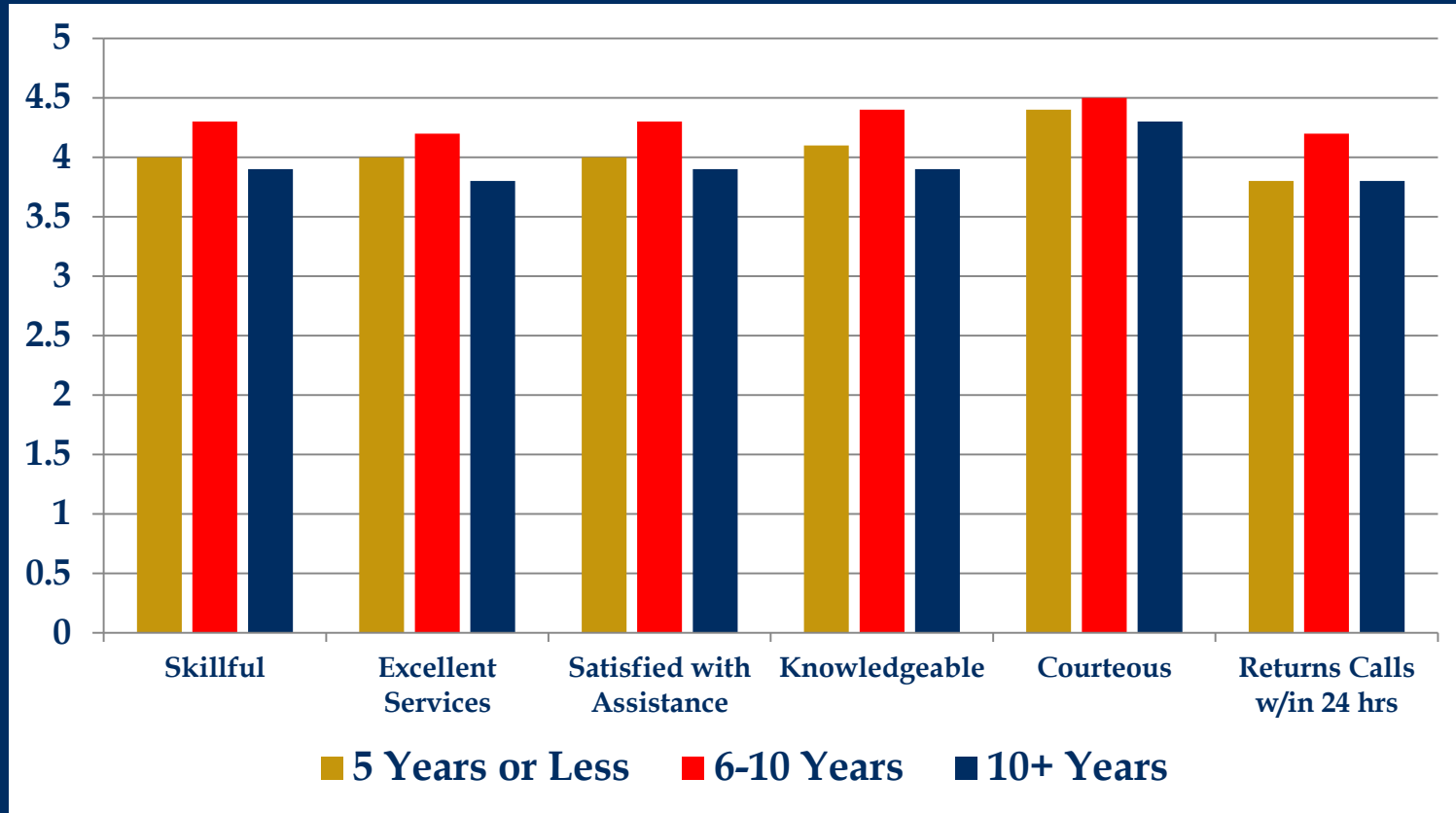


# FIGURE 19: EXPERIENCES WITH PRE-AWARD STAFF BASED ON LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AT FIU\*



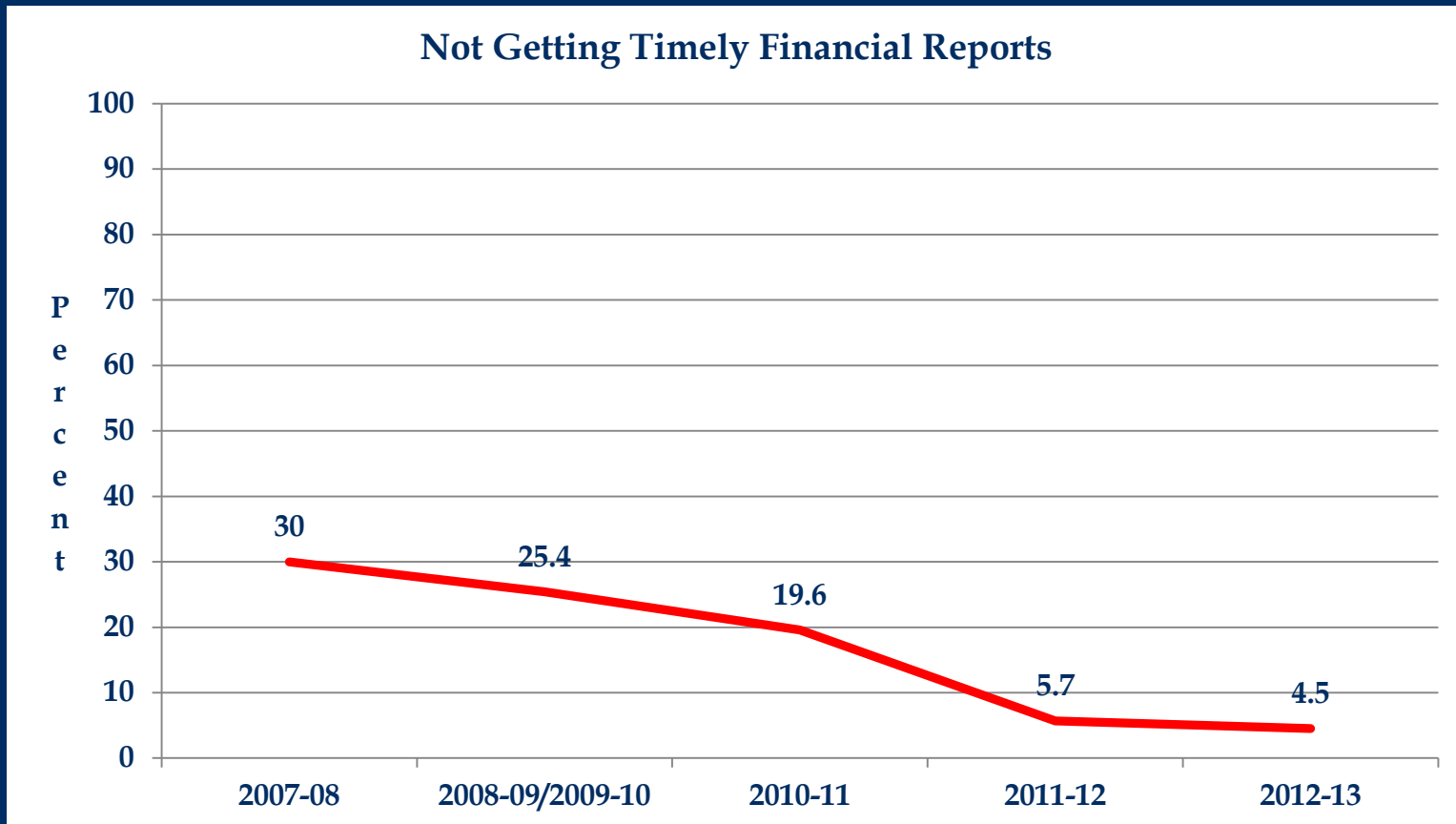
\* Scoring: Scale 1 to 5; 5 indicates highest level of satisfaction or agreement

# FIGURE 20: EXPERIENCES WITH POST-AWARD STAFF BASED ON LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AT FIU\*



\* Scoring: Scale 1 to 5; 5 indicates highest level of satisfaction or agreement

# MAJOR OBSTACLES IN MANAGING EXISTING GRANTS: PROPORTION REPORTING “FREQUENTLY”



# MAJOR OBSTACLES IN MANAGING EXISTING GRANTS: PROPORTION REPORTING "FREQUENTLY"

## Problems Understanding Grant's Budget

