

Leading from the Front

Beyond the CEO: The power of leadership voices on social media

FTI Consulting's third annual Leading from the Front report in which we share analysis of CEO and business leaders engagement on social media





Introduction



The number of CEOs actively engaging on social media has doubled over the past two years. In fact, over 55% of FTSE 100 CEOs are now posting actively on LinkedIn.

But this is only a part of the story. Beyond the CEO, we are seeing senior business leaders – from CFOs to CMOs, and COOs, take to social media in increasing numbers. In this year’s report, we look at this trend in more detail and uncover which roles and industries are generating the most impact across the FTSE 100.

Of particular note is our finding that far from a very active CEO ‘crowding out’ the rest of their leadership team, having at least four active leaders across the Executive Committee (ExCo) raises the overall impact for the whole team.

It’s clear that leadership communication can play a critical role in building and protecting the overall reputation of a business. At a time when engagement rates for business leader content are more than double those of company channels, we need to look beyond the CEO and think strategically about wider executive engagement on social media. But just as the most impactful company channels are guided by bespoke strategies, business leaders also need a significant level of strategic input to guide their own social media engagement.

Activating a broad bench of senior leadership on social media not only supports corporate communication goals, but it can also be critical in maintaining stakeholder confidence in times of change. It’s perhaps no surprise that former BP CEO, Bernard Looney leads our rankings. His LinkedIn engagement has been prolific since he first became CEO in 2020 and his sudden departure in September 2023 only served to underline the findings in this report. When 92% of professionals say that they are more likely to trust a company whose senior executives are using social media for professional communications, to maintain this trust when individuals depart, companies must ensure that they are building the profile of the full leadership bench – and their potential successors.

For the first time this year, we analysed the LinkedIn presence, reach and resonance of all identifiable ExCo members in the FTSE 100, ultimately categorising almost 1,000 individuals and calculating for each a personalised FTI Digital Impact Score. This score highlights which leaders are delivering the most impact on LinkedIn, and through combining these scores across leadership teams, we have also been able to assess which organisations are collectively delivering the most impact.



Defining impact:

The FTI Digital Impact Score

To help score and rank executives on how effectively they are using their digital voice to drive impact, FTI Consulting developed the proprietary FTI Digital Impact Score model. Using the model to assess an executive's digital profile provides a score out of 100, with individual points given the impact of the executives presence and the reach and resonance of their content. Within our model, reach and resonance are weighted to recognise executives who are building an engaged and powerful follower base by creating regular content, grounded in knowledge and advice, that effectively sparks conversations.

Using our methodology, we have been able to calculate a personalised FTI Digital Impact Score for all identifiable ExCo members of FTSE 100 companies who have a LinkedIn presence. Through analysing this data, we have uncovered insights into how companies and leaders can drive impact through social media engagement.

Focusing on LinkedIn

With a dwindling number of executives actively engaging on X (formerly Twitter), and few using other channels like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Threads in a professional capacity, our focus in this year's report is on LinkedIn – the primary channel for digital leadership communications.

Further details of our methodology can be found on slide 34.



Presence

The extent to which an individual is creating a positive brand image on LinkedIn and how well optimised their profile is for search



Reach

The audience size of each individual



Resonance


How effective an individual is at generating engagement and conversation



The most impactful FTSE 100 executives

Using the FTI Digital Impact Score model, we ranked the top ten FTSE 100 executives to show the business leaders generating the most impact on LinkedIn.











CEOs are leading the way, with success being driven by passion and commitment to creating quality content that drives conversation with their followers.

Rank	Company	Name	Position	Industry	FTI Digital Impact Score
1		Bernard Looney	Chief Executive Officer, BP	Energy	92.5
2		Nitin Paranjpe	Chief People and Transformation Officer, Unilever	Consumer Staples	92.5
3		C.S. Venkatakrisnan	Group Chief Executive, Barclays	Financials	90
4		Noel Quinn	Group Chief Executive, HSBC	Financials	85
5		Bill Winters, CBE	Group Chief Executive, Standard Chartered	Financials	82.5
6		Dame Emma Walmsley	Chief Executive Officer and Board Director, GSK	Healthcare	82.5
7		Wael Sawan	Chief Executive Officer, Shell	Energy	74.5
8		Harmeen Mehta	Chief Digital & Innovation Officer, BT Group	Telecommunications	72
9		Grazia Vittadini	Chief Technology Officer, Rolls-Royce	Industrials	64.5
10		Régis Schultz	Chief Executive Officer, JD Group	Consumer Discretionary	62



Top ten most impactful FTSE 100 ExCo teams by collective FTI Digital Impact Score

Executive voices play an important role in building trust and driving the reputation of a company. Within our analysis we identified the FTSE 100 ExCo teams making the greatest impact on LinkedIn.

FTSE 100 Executive Committee teams who are making the biggest overall digital impact						
Rank	Company	ExCo members with a LinkedIn presence	% of ExCo members actively posting on LinkedIn	Industry	Total FTI Digital Impact Score across the ExCo team	
1	 HSBC	HSBC	17	76%	Financials	608
2	 Unilever	Unilever	13	92%	Consumer Staples	565
3	 DIAGEO	Diageo	14	86%	Consumer Staples	425
4	 HALON	Haleon	14	100%	Healthcare	410
5	 LLOYDS BANKING GROUP	Lloyds Banking Group	14	79%	Financials	362
6	 bp	BP	10	80%	Energy	360
7	 GSK	GSK	12	58%	Healthcare	316
8	 RioTinto	Rio Tinto	12	83%	Basic Materials	308
9	 RR	Rolls-Royce	8	100%	Industrials	305
10	 reckitt	Reckitt	10	90%	Consumer Staples	301

N.B. Our research is based on ExCo members as at Feb 2023. As a result some roles may have changed since this analysis was undertaken.



Key findings

01

LinkedIn is critical for building trust between business leaders and corporate audiences. Stakeholders expect business leaders to use social media to build meaningful relationships with them.

02

Companies activating a broad range of leaders are unlocking the greatest business impact. Real impact on social media is only achieved through a variety of active senior voices.

03

CEOs drive the greatest impact, but they can no longer do it alone. For the first time, the majority of FTSE 100 CEOs are publishing content on LinkedIn. An active CEO paves the way for an active ExCo team to drive greater impact.

04

Sectors prioritising social leadership drive greater impact and engagement with stakeholders. Leaders in the Energy sector, and those newly appointed to the ExCo, are generating the greatest impact on LinkedIn.

05

Greater planning = greater digital impact. Companies with the greatest impact are planning for success with defined strategies and dedicated resources for individual leaders.



01

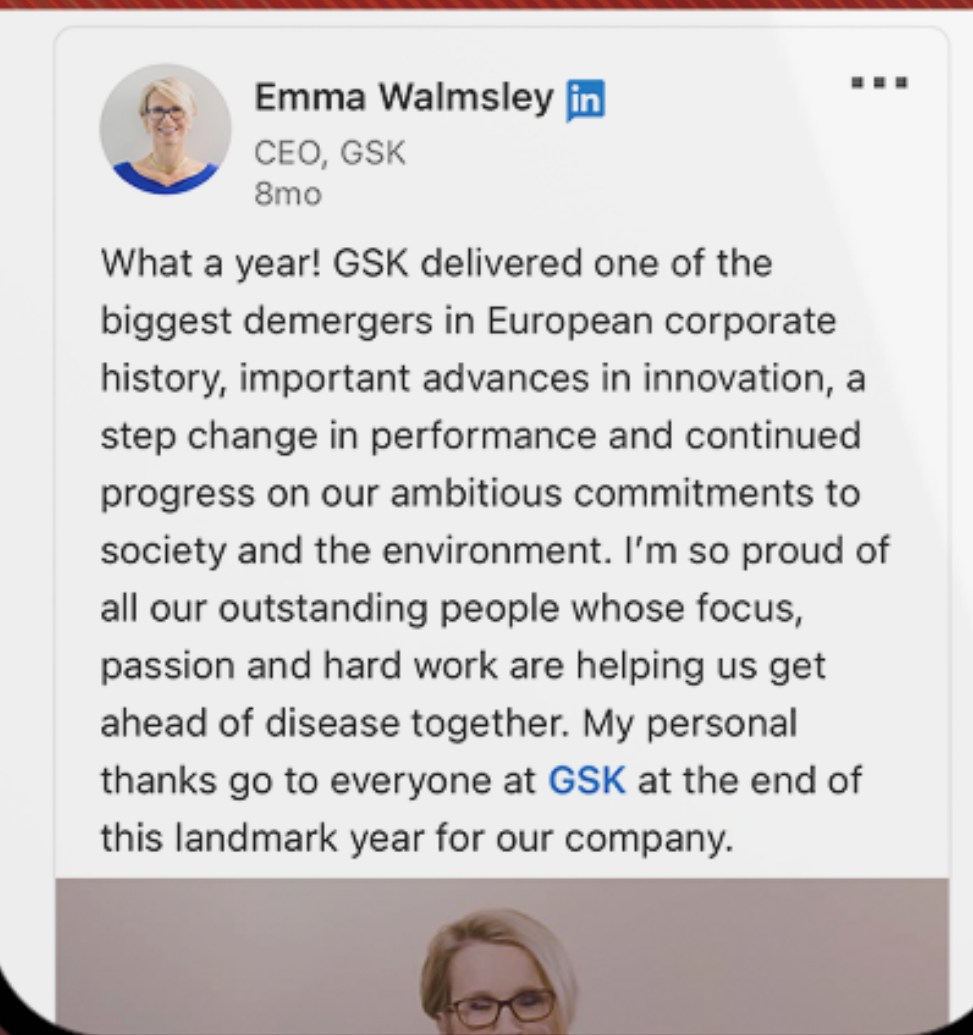
LinkedIn is critical for building trust between business leaders and corporate audiences

Stakeholders expect business leaders to use social media to build meaningful relationships with them.



Business leaders who use social media well, build the most trusted relationships

Emma Walmsley has built a strong thought leadership platform and voice in healthcare. Her social content drives trust through being relatable, authentic and showcasing GSK's commitment to making an impact.



FTI Digital Impact Score: **82.5**



Dame Emma Walmsley
Chief Executive Officer and Board Director, GSK

92%

of professionals say they are more likely to trust a company whose senior executives are using social media



Leaders engaging with stakeholders on social media benefits the overall company reputation

Data source: 2022 FTI Consulting, Leading from the Front – The Social CEO Goes Mainstream

85%

of business leaders say their stakeholder relationships are improved by actively engaging on social media

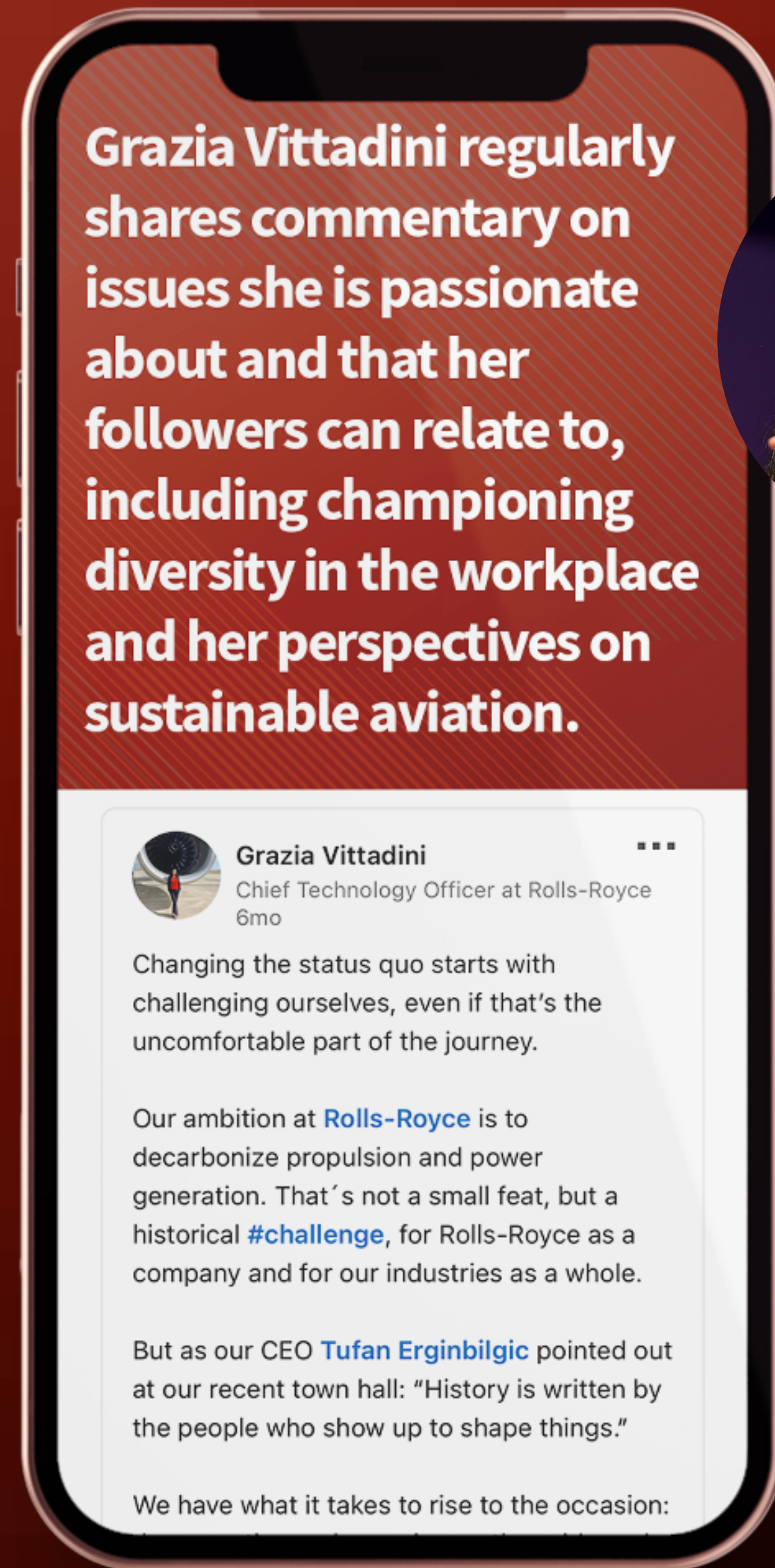
82%

of business leaders agree there is a wider reward for the company if their leadership are active on social media



Leaders are expected to shape the conversation and drive change on big issues

Now more than ever before, people are looking to business leaders to lead the conversation on the big issues shaping society - from climate to social equality to public health. How they respond to these issues plays a critical role in shaping the reputation of their company.



Grazia Vittadini regularly shares commentary on issues she is passionate about and that her followers can relate to, including championing diversity in the workplace and her perspectives on sustainable aviation.



FTI Digital Impact Score: **64.5**

Grazia Vittadini
Chief Technology Officer,
Rolls-Royce

75%

of professionals and 82% of investors expect business leaders to take a stand on issues of importance for businesses and society at large



02

Companies activating a broad range of leaders are unlocking the greatest business impact

Real impact on social media is only achieved through a variety of active senior voices.



Executive voices are more powerful than company pages

FTSE 100 senior leaders are more effective at driving meaningful engagement than companies.

3x

Leadership content generates three times more comments than Company LinkedIn pages

2x

Leadership content generates double the number of engagements compared to company LinkedIn pages



But while most leaders have a social presence, many are still not active

87%

of FTSE 100 executive committee members have a LinkedIn presence

1/2

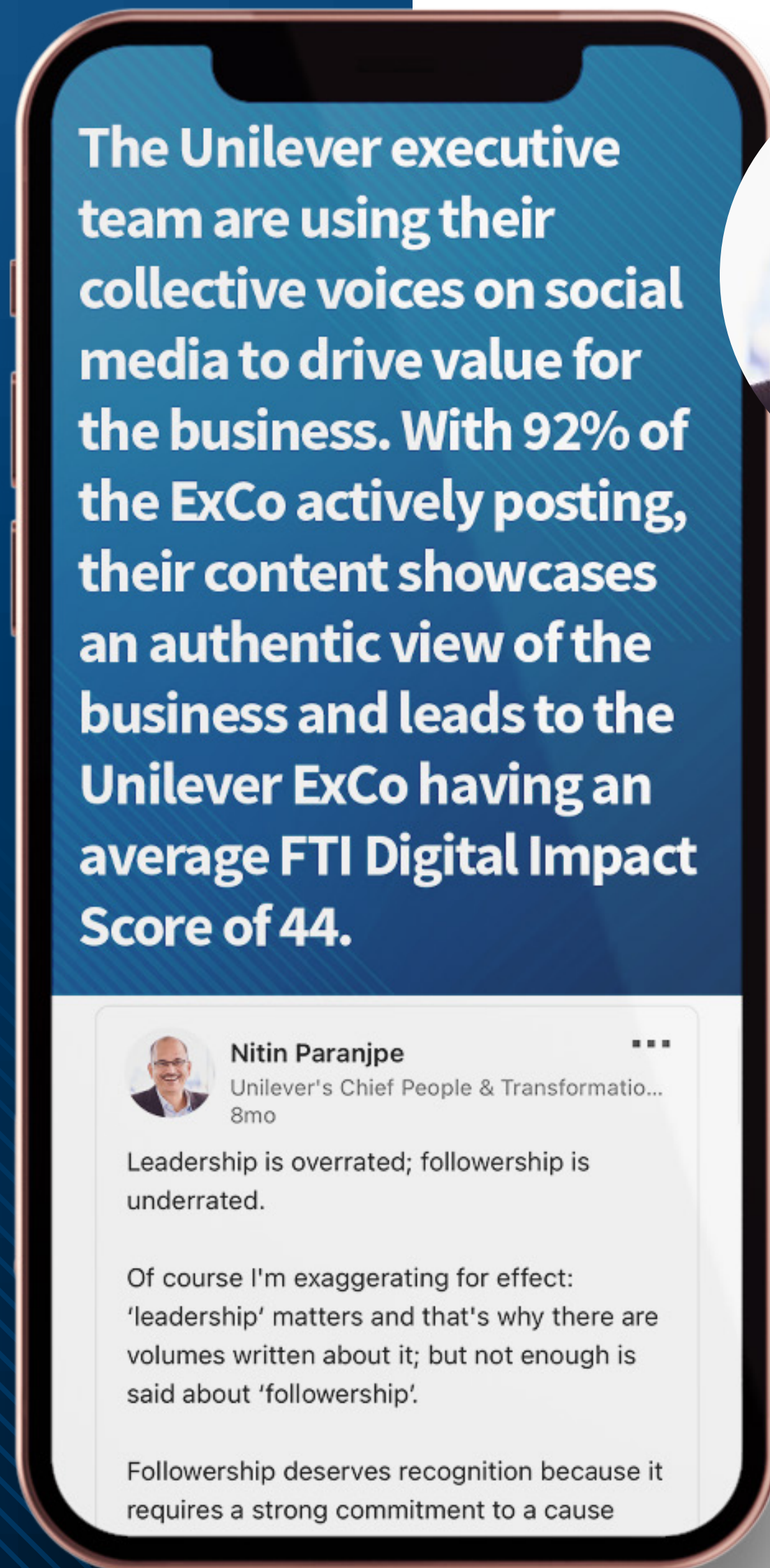
but just over half of these (54%) are actively posting



Companies activating a wide range of leaders have the greatest digital impact

380%

Increase in the FTI Digital Impact Score for companies with 4+ active leaders

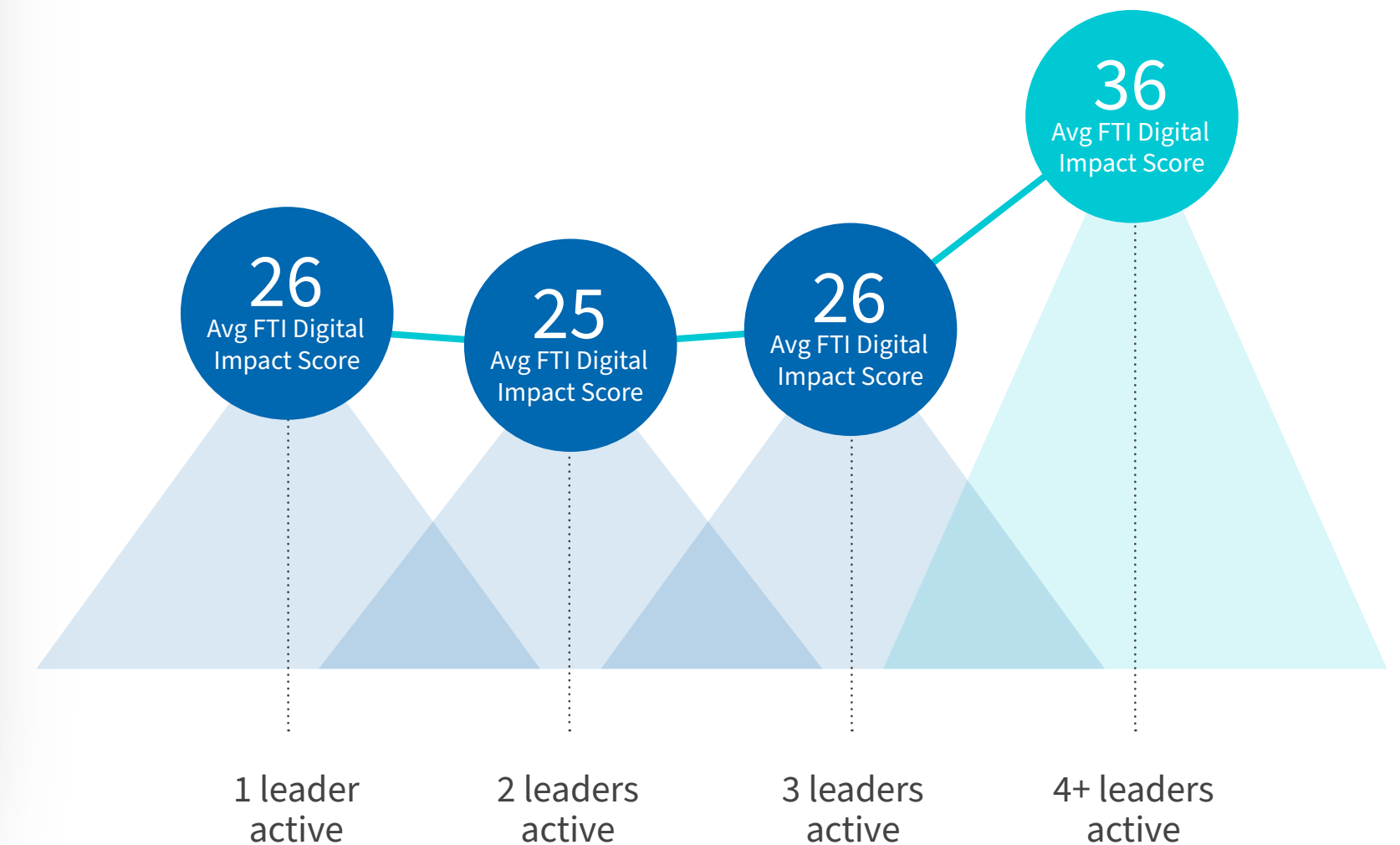


FTI Digital Impact Score: **92.5**



Nitin Paranjpe
Chief People and Transformation Officer, Unilever

Average FTI Digital Impact Score per number of leaders active in a company





And are more successful at starting conversations and building their thought leadership platforms

5x

Companies with 4 or more active leaders generate 5 times more engagement per post than companies with 1-3 active leaders

4x

Companies with four or more active leaders generate 4 times more reshares than companies with 1-3 active leaders



"Long gone are the days where social media impact could be achieved by company channels alone. While these channels remain a critical corporate communications and stakeholder engagement tool, it's clear that business leader engagement online can further broaden and deepen reach and impact. Success for companies and leaders alike, requires tailored and cohesive strategies, significant resource and a critical mass of engagement."

Andrew Williams

Senior Managing Director,
FTI Consulting





03

CEOs drive the greatest impact, but they can no longer do it alone

For the first time, the majority of FTSE 100 CEOs are publishing content on LinkedIn. An active CEO paves the way for an active ExCo team to drive greater impact.



For the first time, the majority of CEOs are active on LinkedIn

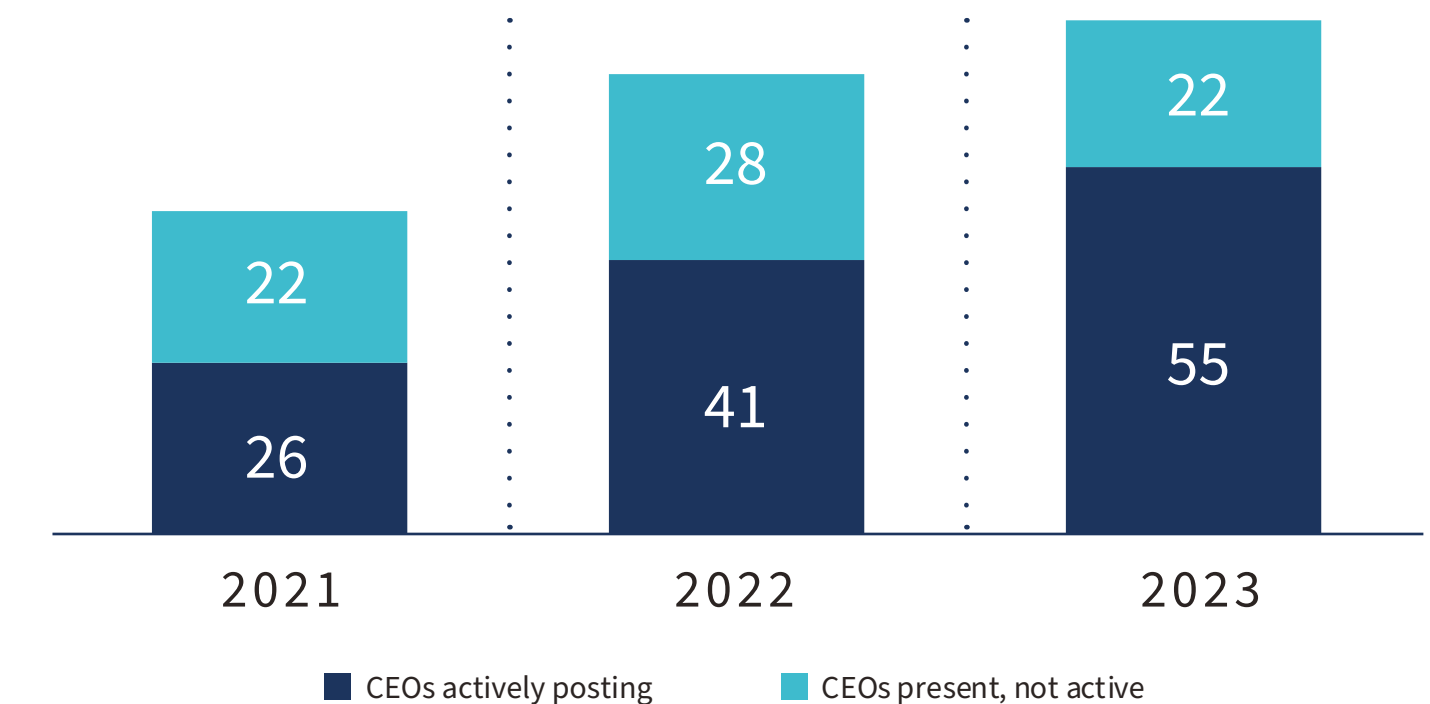
55%

The majority of FTSE 100 CEOs are now actively publishing content on LinkedIn

2x

There are double the number of CEOs engaging than two years ago

Total number of CEOs active or present on LinkedIn



Note: CEOs that have a LinkedIn profile but have not posted are defined as 'present, not active'. However, if a CEO has posted at least once during the periods of data collection in each year, they would be defined as "actively posting"



And CEOs are the most influential voices in the ExCo



Seven of the top ten most impactful ExCo members across the FTSE 100 are CEOs



13 FTSE 100 CEOs have been awarded LinkedIn Top Voice status, recognition that they are one of the most engaged, prolific and thoughtful contributors on the platform



The average number of engagements per post by CEOs is 664, up by a third from 502 in 2022



Sustained engagement leads to above average follower growth

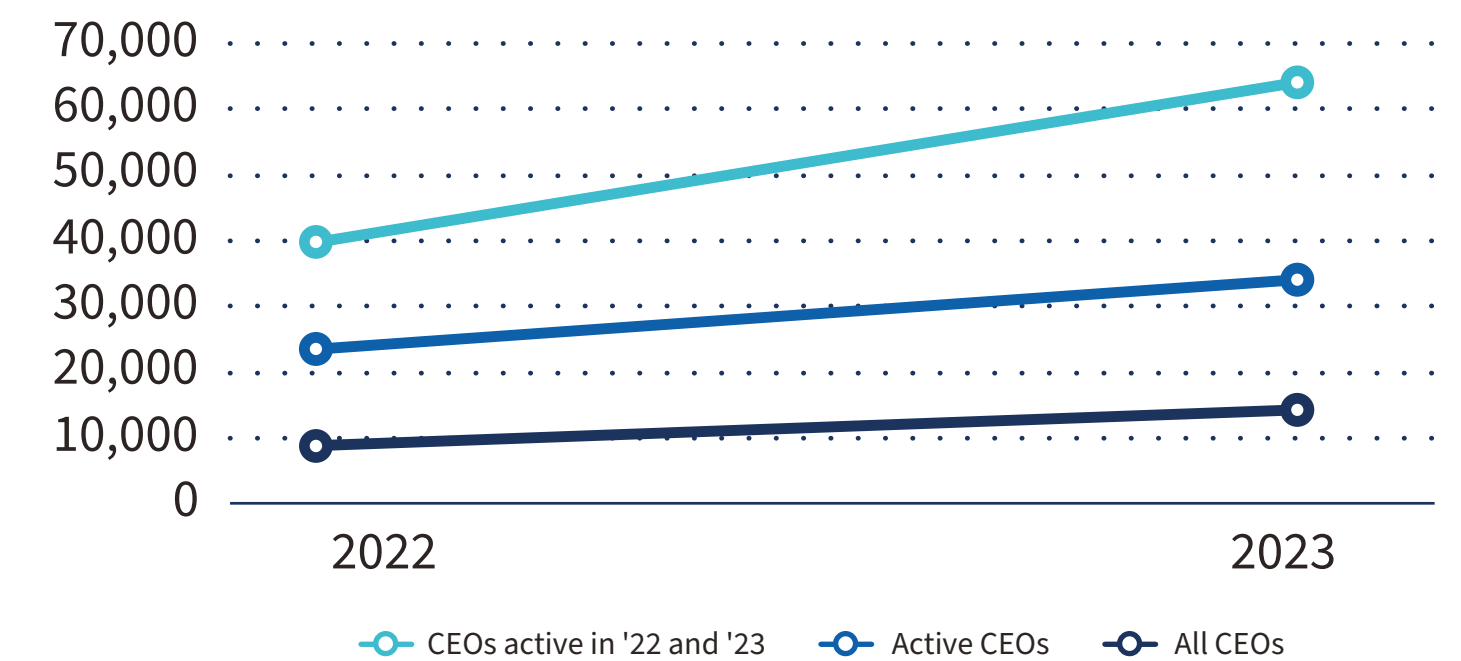
+85%

FTSE 100 CEOs who have been active for at least the last two years have an average of 30,000+ followers, an 85% increase over the past year

5k

Active CEOs have more than 5,000 more followers than those who are present but not active

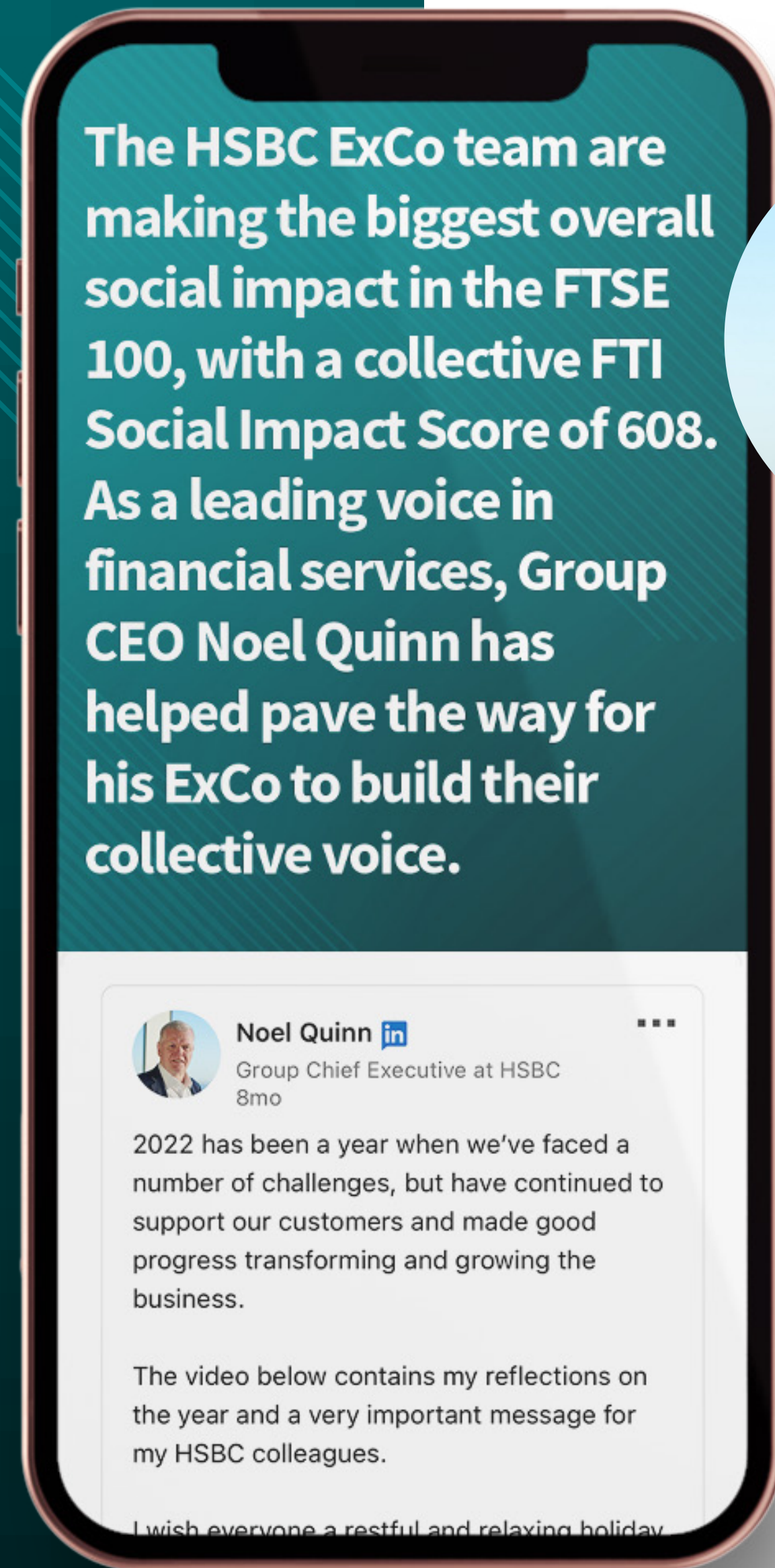
CEO follower growth (active vs. present CEOs)



Note: CEOs that have a LinkedIn profile but have not posted are defined as 'present, not active'. However, if a CEO has posted at least once during the periods of data collection in each year, they would be defined as "actively posting"



An active CEO raises the bar and generates more impact for other ExCo leaders and the wider company



FTI Digital Impact Score: **85**



Noel Quinn
Group Chief Executive, HSBC

Strength in depth: CEOs backed by an active team achieve the greatest impact

+41%

In companies with an active CEO and four or more active ExCo members, the CEO generates a 41% higher digital impact than CEO peers



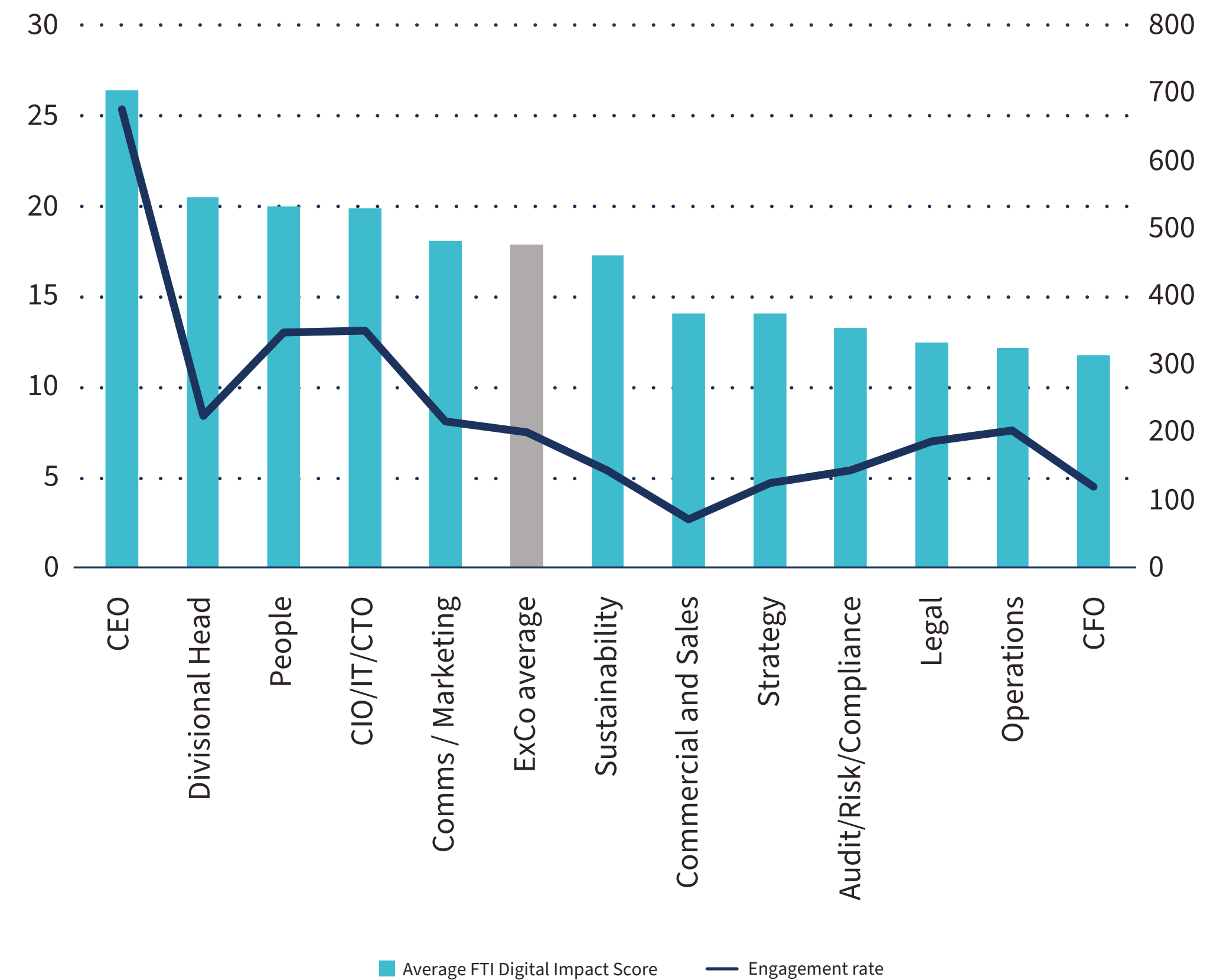
To unlock greater impact, for many companies there is a clear opportunity to activate CFOs and COOs

While CEOs are most likely to be promoted from COO and Divisional Head roles, the percentage of CEOs promoted after being CFO is also significant and has doubled in the last 20 years.*

Developing a digital voice is increasingly important, not just for CEOs, but also for aspiring CEOs who need to 'walk the walk' in advance of promotion. Despite this, collectively COOs and CFOs both score lowly.

* Source: Spencer Stuart 2021: The Last Mile to the Top: Future CEOs Who Beat the Odds

FTI Digital Impact Score by ExCo role





"For companies to unlock the greatest impact on social media, they need to look beyond the CEO and also activate the broader senior leadership team. Developing bespoke and cohesive social media strategies for each member of the leadership team is now a critical component of corporate communications."

Claire Twohill

Managing Director, FTI Consulting





04

Sectors prioritising social leadership drive greater impact and engagement with stakeholders

Leaders in the Energy sector, and those newly appointed to the ExCo, are generating the greatest impact on LinkedIn.

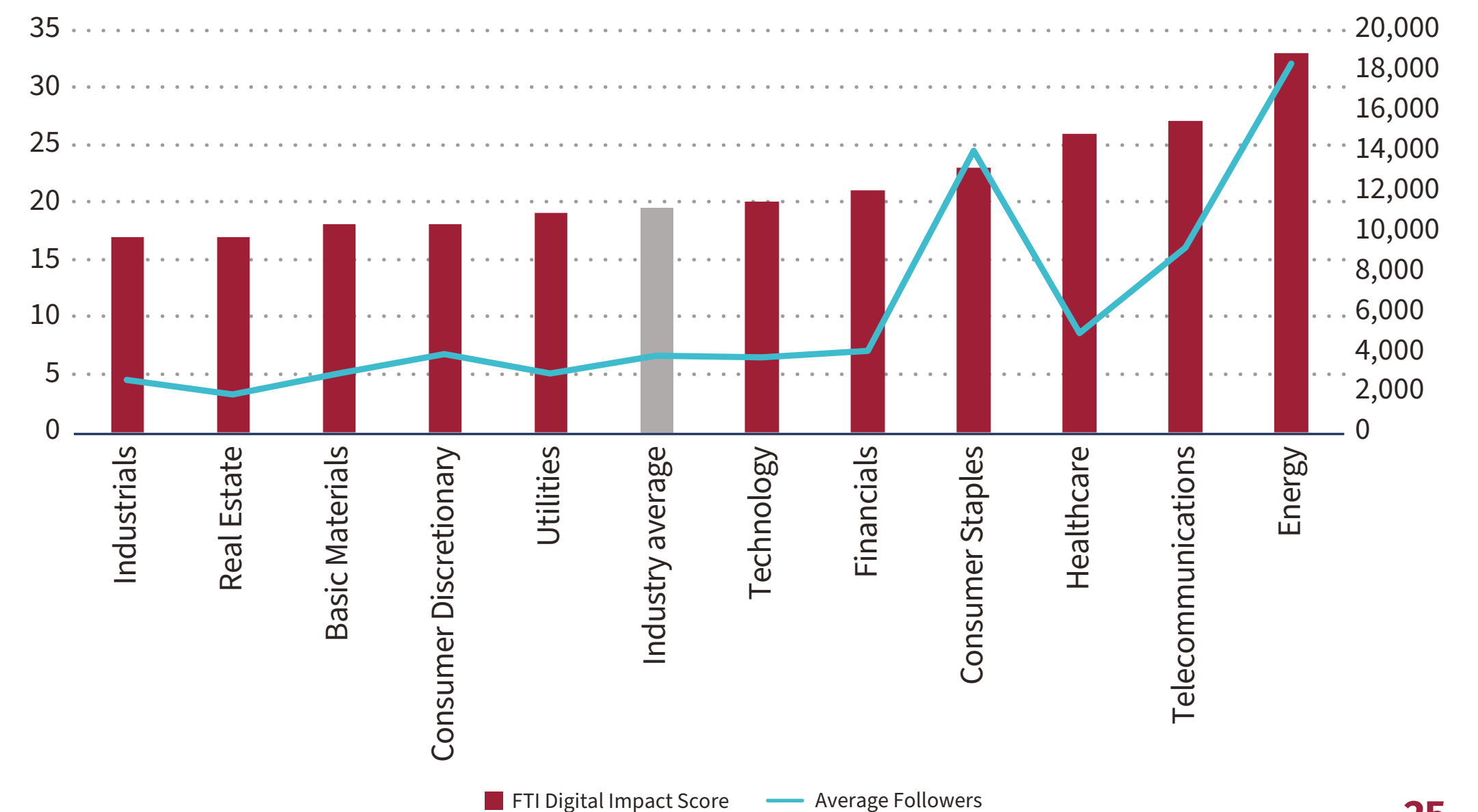


78%

of ExCo leaders across the Energy sector are actively posting on LinkedIn, the highest of any sector

Leaders in the Energy sector are leading the way

FTI Digital Impact Score by FTSE 100 sector



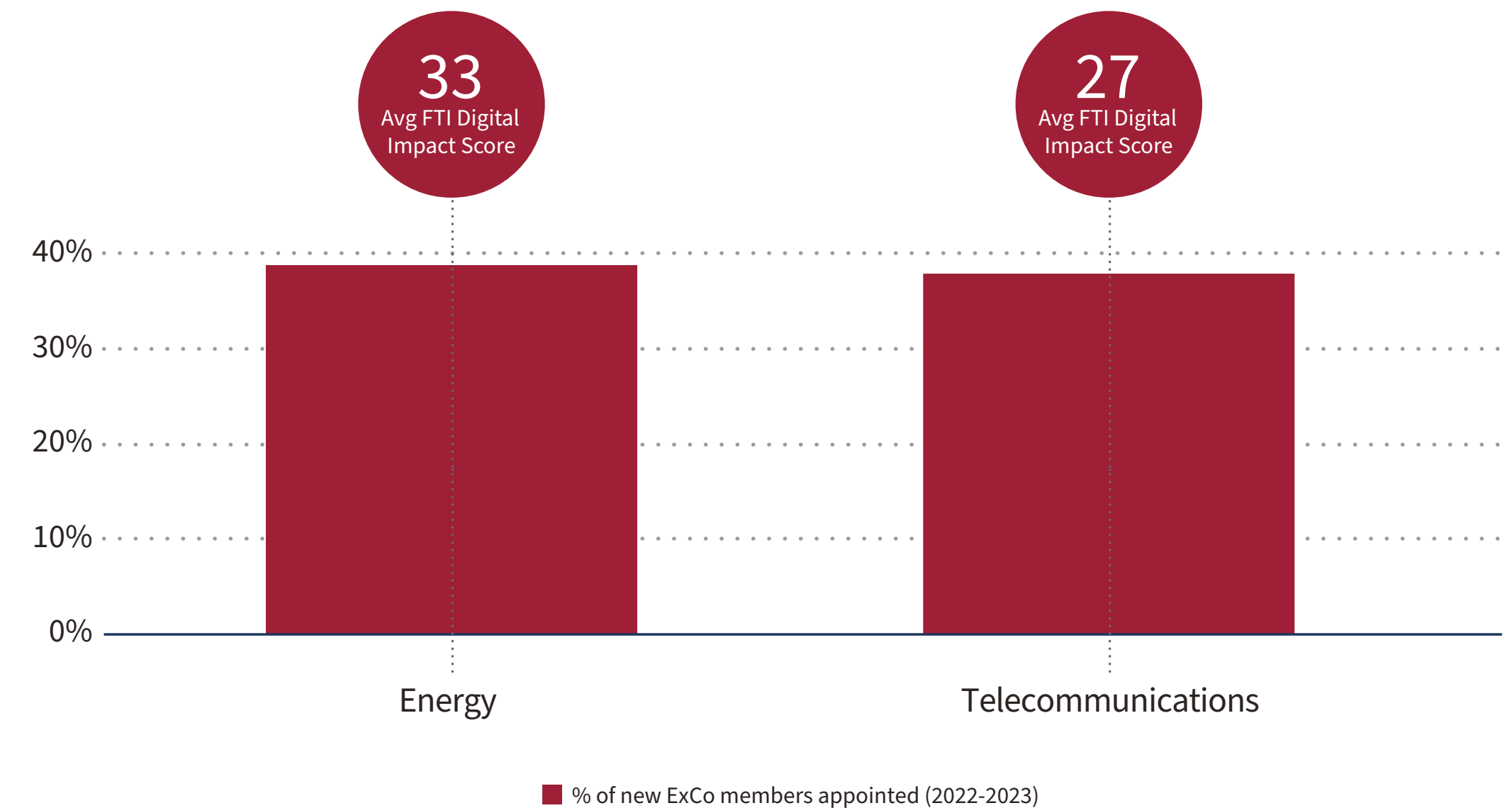


1/3

Companies generating the greatest collective impact have appointed at least a 1/3 of their ExCo team since 2022

Newer teams are generating the greatest impact

The Energy and Telecommunications sectors have the freshest ExCo teams and also the highest average FTI Digital Impact Scores





“Whether long-standing or newly appointed, there is no time like the present for all business leaders to evaluate their approach to social media. Sustained engagement over time builds better, more trusted relationships with stakeholders and the only way to achieve this is to constantly review and refresh your approach to social to stay relevant with your audiences.”



Damian Low
Senior Director, FTI Consulting



05

Greater planning = greater digital impact

Companies with the greatest impact are planning for success with defined strategies and dedicated resources for individual leaders.



Achieving impact online requires dedicated support and bespoke strategies

67%

of senior business leaders want support from social media experts to drive their digital impact

1/5

of senior leaders would like all their social content to be written by an expert



Increasing numbers of business leaders are turning to social media to strengthen stakeholder relationships, but some are having more success than others. The individuals and leadership teams that are driving the most impact online have bespoke strategies, ongoing commitment, and significant resource underpinning their engagement.

Considering how powerful leadership social media engagement can be relative to other channels, it's no surprise that companies are increasingly prioritising this area of communications for significant investment.

The benefits of active engagement across the whole leadership team are significant – for the individuals themselves, but also critically for broader corporate reputation.

If the process to devise bespoke leadership strategies for senior business leaders has not already begun, companies should move quickly to ensure that they are Leading from the Front.





Most impactful executives on LinkedIn

The executives who are leading the way in the FTSE 100.





FTSE 100 most impactful executives on LinkedIn

Rank	Name	Position	Industry	FTI Digital Impact Score
1	Bernard Looney	Chief Executive Officer, BP	Energy	92.5
=1	Nitin Paranjpe	Chief People and Transformation Officer, Unilever	Consumer Staples	92.5
3	C.S. Venkatakrisnan	Group Chief Executive, Barclays	Financials	90
4	Noel Quinn	Group Chief Executive, HSBC	Financials	85
5	Bill Winters, CBE	Group Chief Executive, Standard Chartered	Financials	82.5
=5	Dame Emma Walmsley	Chief Executive Officer and Board Director, GSK	Healthcare	82.5
7	Wael Sawan	Chief Executive Officer, Shell	Energy	74.5
8	Harmeen Mehta	Chief Digital & Innovation Officer, BT Group	Telecommunications	72
9	Grazia Vittadini	Chief Technology Officer, Rolls-Royce	Industrials	64.5
10	Régis Schultz	Chief Executive Officer, JD Group	Consumer Discretionary	62
11	Hanneke Faber	Business Group President, Nutrition, Unilever	Consumer Staples	60
12	Tufan Erginbilgic	Chief Executive, Rolls-Royce	Industrials	57

Rank	Name	Position	Industry	FTI Digital Impact Score
13	Charlie Nunn	Executive Director and Group Chief Executive, Lloyds Banking Group	Financials	52.5
=13	David Liao	Co-Chief Executive, Asia-Pacific – The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, HSBC	Financials	52.5
=13	Surendra Rosha	Co-Chief Executive, Asia-Pacific – The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, HSBC	Financials	52.5
=13	Bas Burger	CEO, Business, BT Group	Telecommunications	52.5
=13	Sean Doyle	Chairman and CEO, British Airways, IAG	Consumer Discretionary	52.5
18	Barry O’Byrne	CEO, Global Commercial Banking, HSBC	Financials	50
=18	Al Cook	Chief Executive Officer, De Beers Group, Anglo American	Basic Materials	50
=18	Brian McNamara	Chief Executive Officer, Haleon	Healthcare	50
=18	Dr. Charles Woodburn	Group Chief Executive Officer, BAE Systems	Industrials	50
=18	Marc Allera	CEO, Consumer, BT Group	Telecommunications	50
=18	Michael Murray	Chief Executive Officer, Frasers Group	Consumer Discretionary	50

N.B. Our research is based on ExCo members as at Feb 2023. As a result some roles may have changed since this analysis was undertaken.



Rank	Name	Position	Industry	FTI Digital Impact Score
=18	Tanuj Kapilashrami	Group Head, Human Resources, Standard Chartered	Financials	50
25	Jayne Opperman	CEO, Consumer Relationships, Lloyds Banking Group	Financials	48.5
26	Matt Close	Business Group President, Ice Cream, Unilever	Consumer Staples	47.5
=26	Cristina Diezhandino	Chief Marketing Officer, Diageo	Consumer Staples	47.5
=26	Professor Sir Mene Pangalos	Executive Vice-President, BioPharmaceuticals R&D, AstraZeneca	Healthcare	47.5
=26	Steve Hare	Chief Executive Officer, Sage	Technology	47.5
30	Dayalan Nayager	President, Africa and Chief Commercial Officer, Diageo	Consumer Staples	47
31	Simon Trott	Chief Executive, Iron Ore, Rio Tinto	Basic Materials	45
=31	Ian Stuart	CEO, HSBC UK Bank, HSBC	Financials	45
=31	André Lacroix	Chief Executive Officer, Intertek Group	Industrials	45
=31	Andy Bird	Chief Executive, Pearson	Consumer Discretionary	45
=31	Anil Wadhvani	Chief Executive Officer, Prudential	Financials	45
=31	Caitlin Hayden	Senior Vice President, Communications, BAE Systems	Industrials	45

Rank	Name	Position	Industry	FTI Digital Impact Score
=31	Chris O'Shea	Group Chief Executive, Centrica	Utilities	45
=31	Ian Plummer	Commercial Director, Auto Trader	Technology	45
=31	Jette Nygaard-Andersen	Chief Executive Officer, Entain	Consumer Discretionary	45
=31	Kingsley Wheaton	Chief Growth Officer, BAT	Consumer Staples	45
41	Jakob Stausholm	Chief Executive, Rio Tinto	Basic Materials	44.5
=41	Amanda Blanc	Group CEO, Aviva	Financials	44.5
=41	Fabian Ziegler	Chief Executive Officer, DCC Energy, DCC	Industrials	44.5
=41	Vinod Kumar	CEO, Vodafone Business, Vodafone	Telecommunications	44.5
45	Ian Ferrao	CEO, Airtel Money, Airtel	Telecommunications	43.5
=45	Vim Maru	Global Head of Consumer Banking and Payments, Barclays	Financials	43.5
47	Mark Versey	Chief Executive Officer, Aviva Investors, Aviva	Financials	42.5
=47	Steve Foots	Group Chief Executive, Croda	Basic Materials	42.5
=47	Andy Briggs	Group Chief Executive Officer, Phoenix Group	Financials	42.5
=47	Chris Cholerton	Group President, Rolls-Royce	Industrials	42.5



Research overview

To help organisations understand the power of executives' digital leadership voices, FTI Consulting used its proprietary FTI Digital Impact Score model to analyse how impactful FTSE 100 Executive Committee members are online. With LinkedIn being the channel used most frequently by executives, this was the primary channel of focus.

Analysis dates

1st September 2022 – 28th February 2023 (6 months)

Target focus

FTSE 100 ExCo members in position in February 2023

Data collection

Online, using a manual analysis to understand the existing digital presence of 901 ExCo members across FTSE 100 companies.

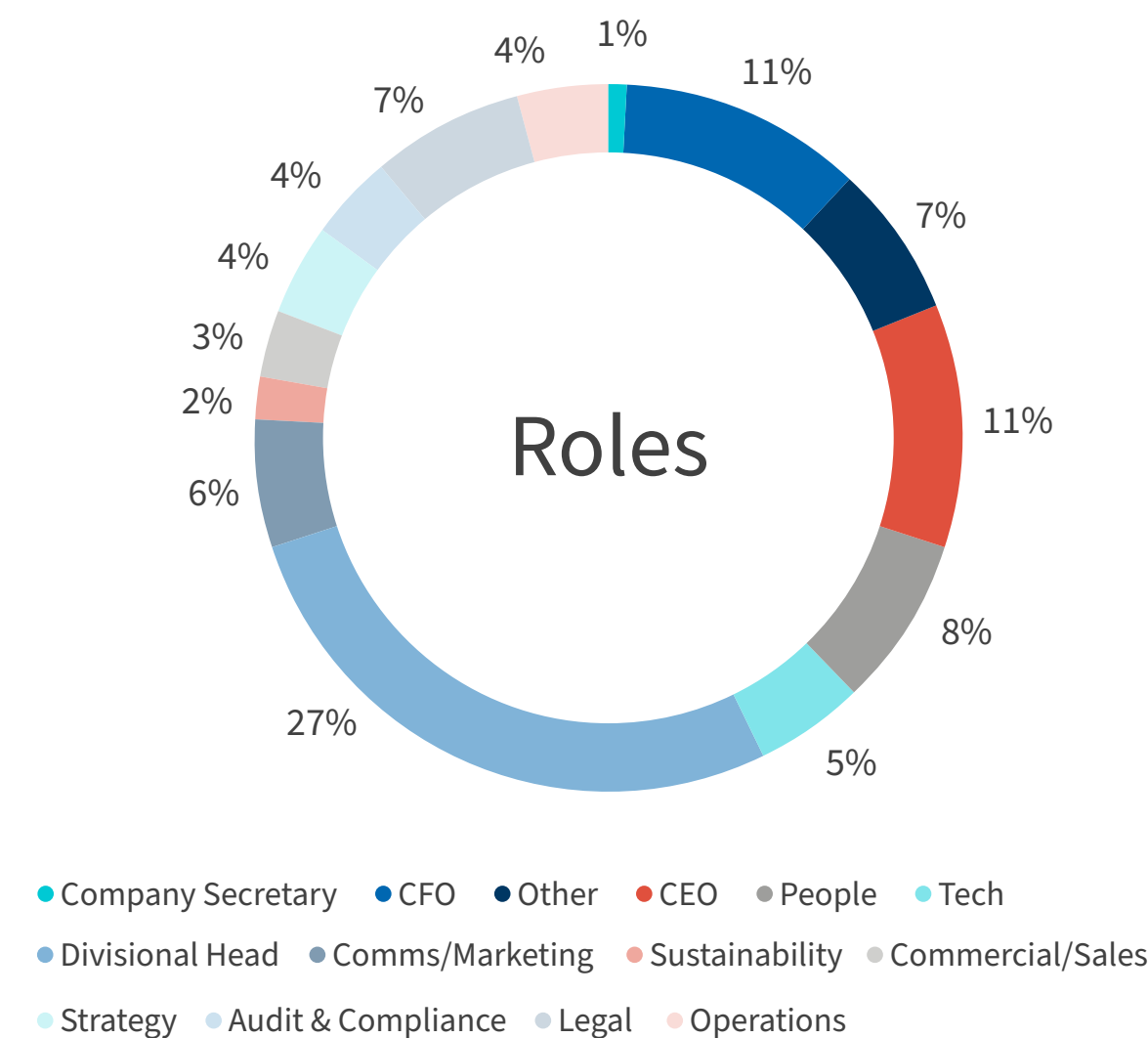
Of the 901 individuals identified, the majority had a LinkedIn channel (n=784) only just over half of these were actively posting (n=429). Within our research

we analysed 3,208 posts published by the identified active ExCo members (n=429) whilst undertaking an analysis of the publicly available data of any ExCo member who had a LinkedIn channel to assess the impact of their presence.

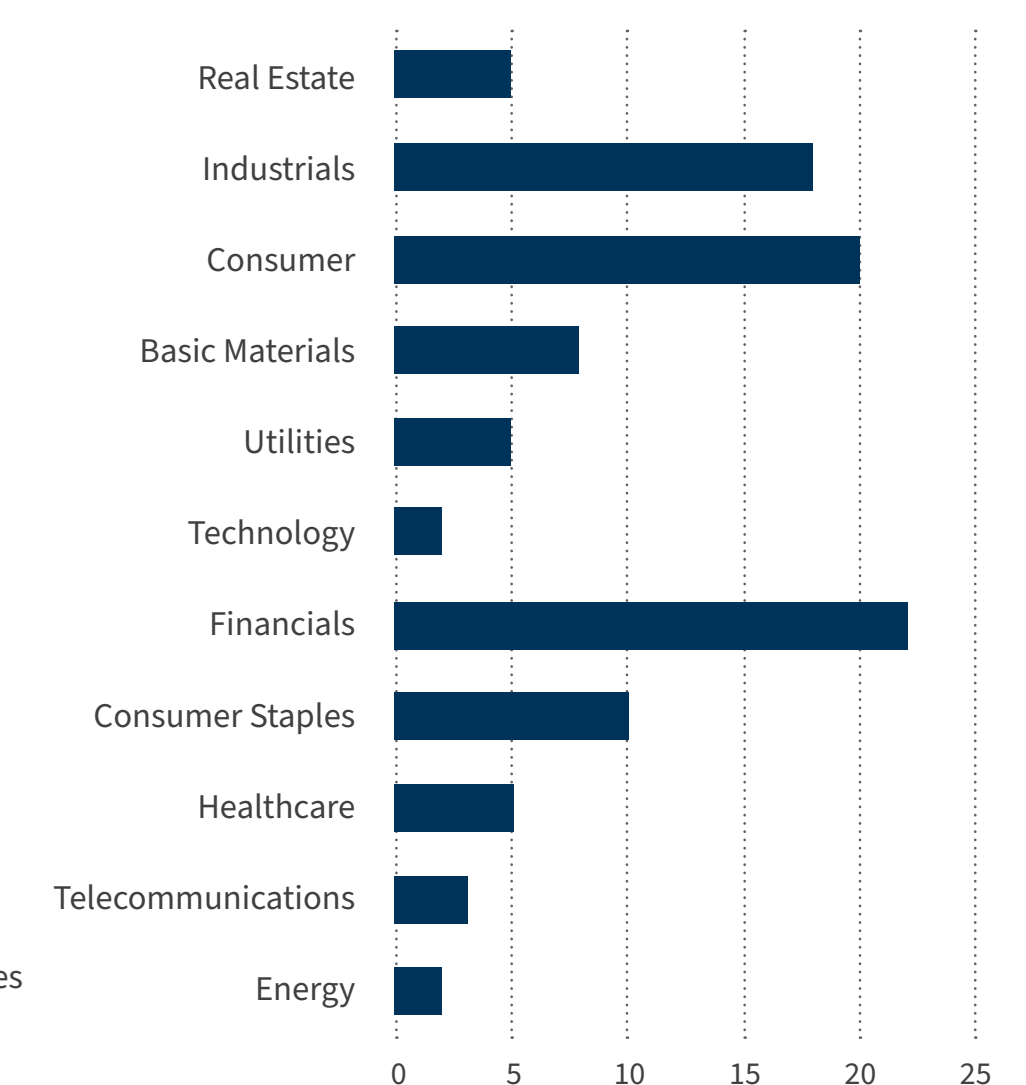
Sector ranking

To classify each company the FTSE 100 Industry Classification Benchmark (ICB) was used. This classifies companies into one of eleven industry sectors (Basic Materials, Consumer Discretionary, Consumer Staples, Energy, Financials, Healthcare, Industrials, Real Estate, Technology, Telecommunications and Utilities).

Executives by role



Executives by sectors





Thanks for taking the time to read this report. For more information please get in touch:

Andrew Williams

Senior Managing Director
FTI Consulting

andrew.williams@fticonsulting.com

Claire Twohill

Managing Director
FTI Consulting

claire.twohill@fticonsulting.com

Damian Low

Senior Director
FTI Consulting

damian.low@fticonsulting.com

About FTI Consulting

FTI Consulting is an independent global business advisory firm dedicated to helping organisations manage change, mitigate risk and resolve disputes: financial, legal, operational, political & regulatory, reputational and transactional. FTI Consulting professionals, located in all major business centres throughout the world, work closely with clients to anticipate, illuminate and overcome complex business challenges and opportunities. For more information, visit www.fticonsulting.com and connect with us on social media.

Our digital leadership expertise

C-suites, boards of directors, and business leaders from around the world come to FTI Consulting with their most complex, business-critical issues that require diverse skill sets and integrated disciplines. As part of our Strategic Communications division, we support dozens of senior executives and high profile individuals with their social media strategies, content, and channel management - helping them mitigate risk and enhance their reputation by combining decades of deep subject matter expertise with functional and disciplinary experience. Put simply, we help our clients to communicate effectively – across any channel – to protect and enhance their interests with key stakeholders.