



*EAC Visits:
When Hosting your in-laws for two
weeks looks good...*

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Outline

- Preliminary:
 - One size does not fit all Centers
 - Handout of Washington University EAC visit checklist
 - Survey - 26 centers responded to survey about EAC practices; results are interspersed in this presentation as appropriate; y axis is always % of Centers responding
- Purposes of EACs
- Members
- Visit Planning
- Visit Wrap up
- Last Thoughts



RFA-AG-15-002: Alzheimer's Disease

Research Centers (P50), posted Jan 16, 2014

- Present plans to establish and operate Center advisory panels including: An External Advisory Committee (EAC) to annually evaluate the programs of the ADC, research progress, the effectiveness of communications within the ADC, interactions with NACC, and any other activities for which outside expertise is required or desirable. Prospective EAC members should not be named in the application and should not be contacted for participation in the committee prior to award. A member of the NIA extramural program staff should be invited to attend EAC meetings. A copy of the advisory committee report should be routinely sent to the NIA with the annual Non-Competing Continuation Grant Progress Report and should include a list of committee members after they have been appointed.

Purposes of EACs

- Meet requirements of NIA
- Provide constructive forum for internal review (We don't always routinely look at ourselves...).
 - Progress reports are one time when we take stock
 - But EAC visits get our attention because we are presenting to peers
- Provide (usually) friendly critiques
- Provide opportunity to send message to your institution (more support) or reviewers (“you big dummies”)
- Possible pilot reviewers
- Expert scientific advice
- Advise on difficult choices for Center direction and/or renewal applications (which projects to choose?, etc.)

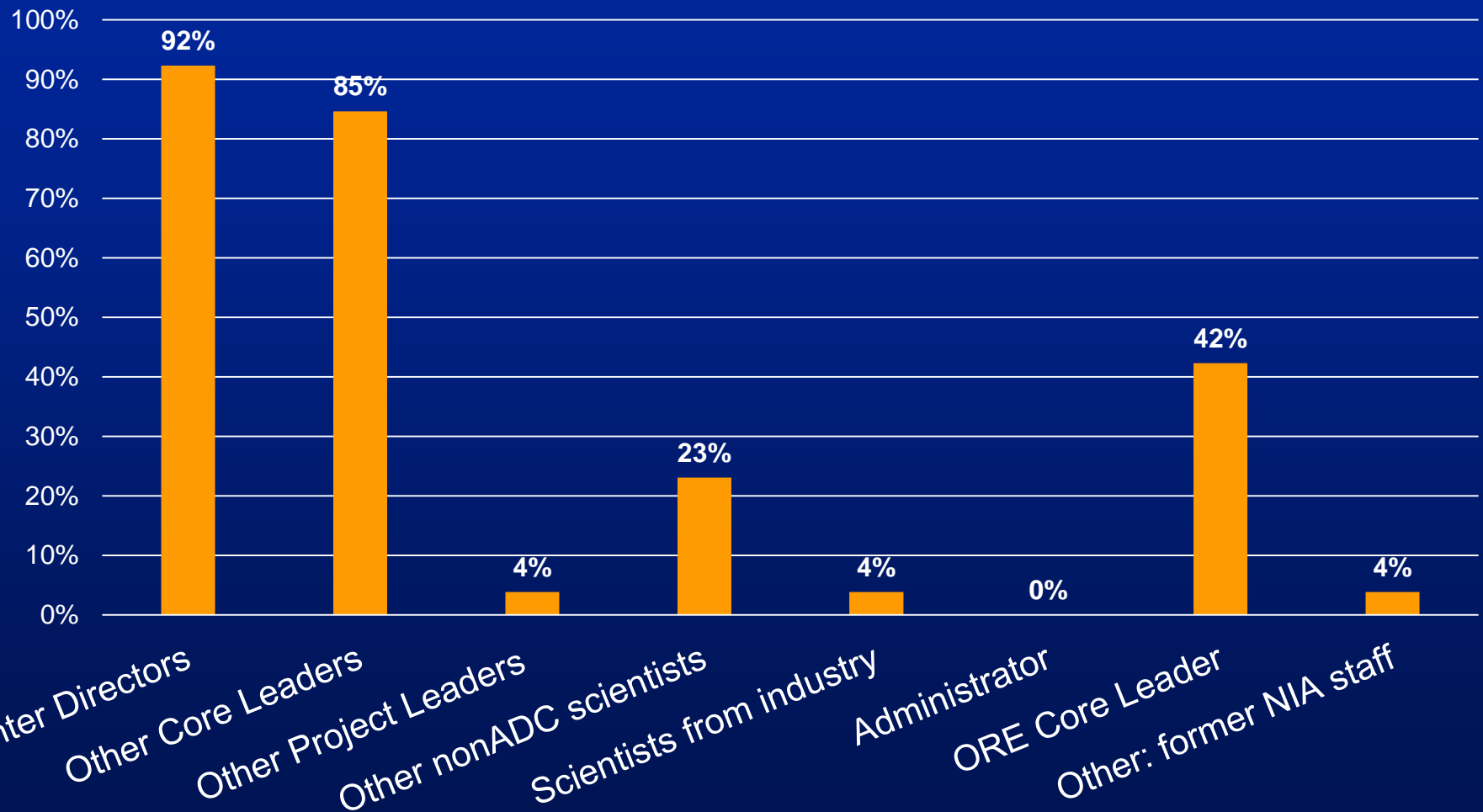
Selection of EAC Members

- If you are applying to be a new ADC the RFA instructs you not to identify EAC members in your application.
- If you are a continuing ADC then you already have an EAC and would identify them in your application.
- When selecting members:
 - Pick experts in areas in which you are weak or in need of depth
 - Don't necessarily pick "friends" (scientific kindred) - diversity of thought is healthy
 - Consider picking "frenemies" with whom you may have scientific disagreements because you may grow scientifically
- Keep in mind: Your EAC members cannot review any of your grants at renewal time



Types of Committee Members

What type of members serve on your EAC?

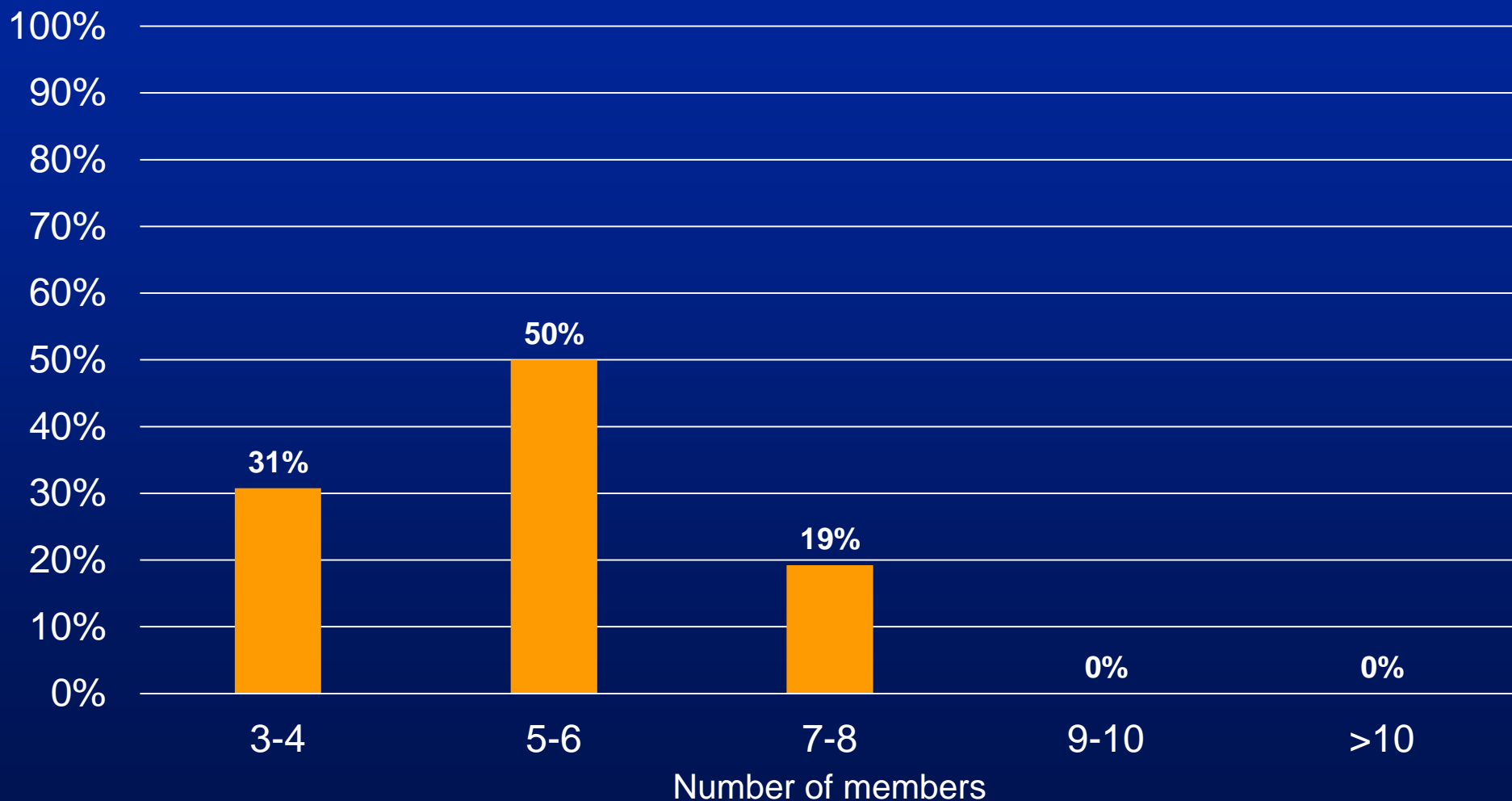


Number/Type of EAC members

- Total number
 - Too few: you may not get the coverage of multiple areas you need
 - Too many:
 - » Difficulty scheduling a time when all can visit/meet
 - » More expensive for travel, honorarium, etc.
- Type of commitment
 - Continuing members – members who serve on an ongoing basis (decades even) provide continuity
 - Temporary members – serve on a temporary basis to fill a short term need, e.g. starting up a new technology or addressing a specific limited problem, etc.

How many members?

How many members serve on your ADC EAC?



Visit Planning

- Visits usually happen annually
- What time of the year should a visit happen?

Best time:

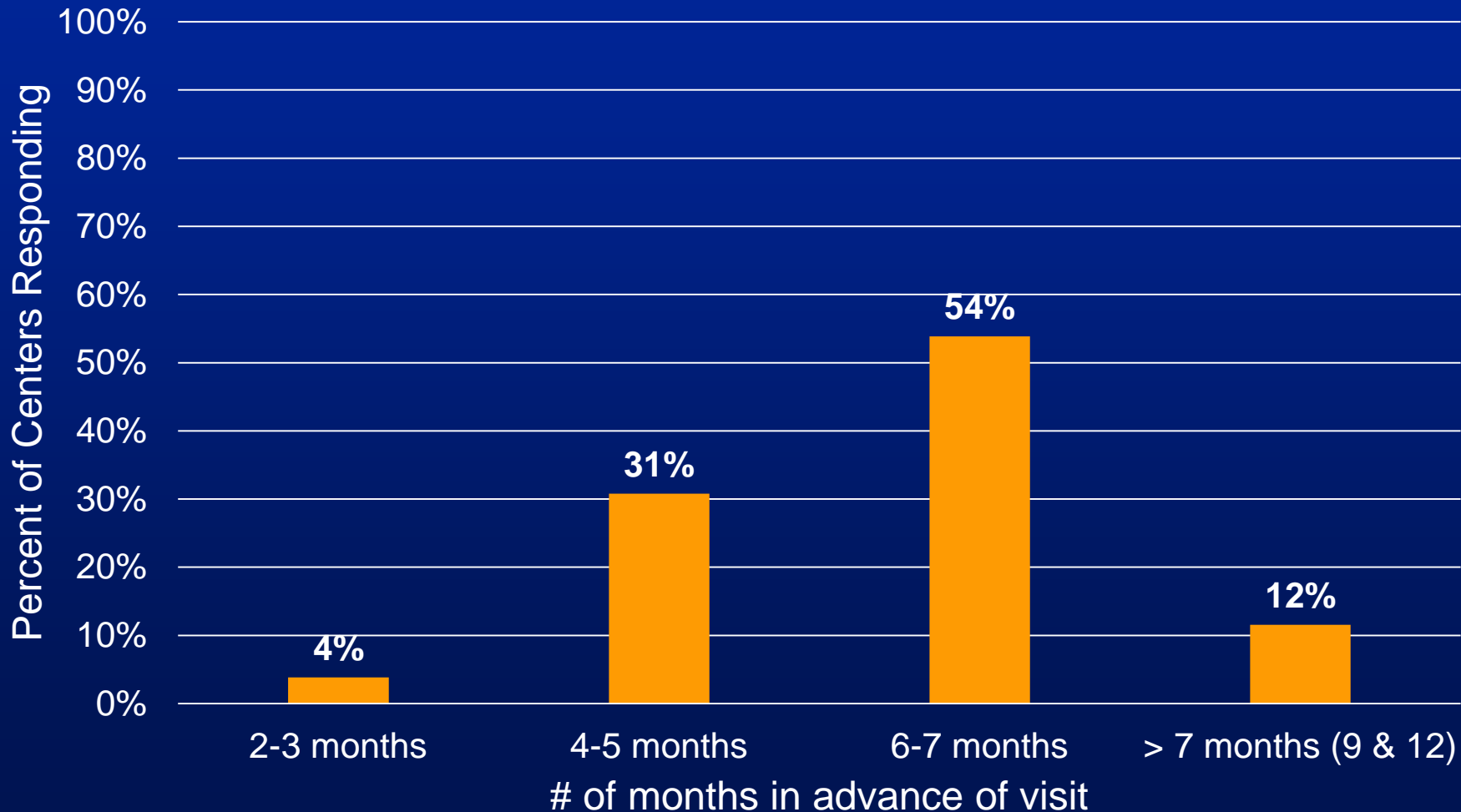
- JUST **AFTER** YOUR PROGRESS REPORT IS SUBMITTED!

Next best time:

- JUST **BEFORE** YOUR PROGRESS REPORT IS SUBMITTED.

- Occasionally at the end of cycle when waiting for funding news, you might skip one with NIA permission

How far in advance do you start scheduling the visit?



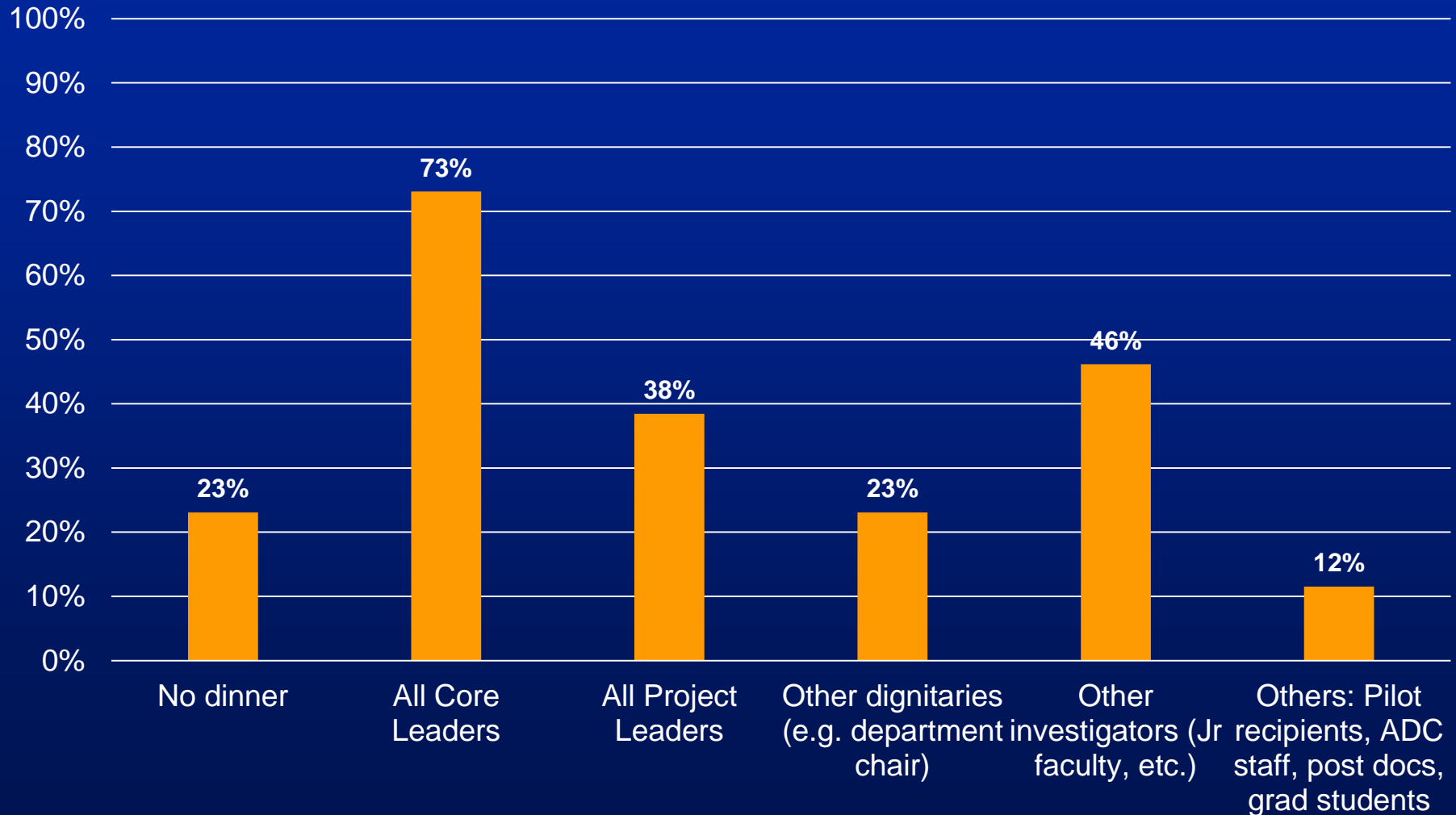
6+ months before

- Recommendation: Begin scheduling at least 6-7 months prior to your desired time, particularly if you have many members.
- First contact include core and project leaders in date selection process. If someone cannot make the date that the EAC and Director can make, they have plenty of time to identify a proxy to present for them.
- Once you and get contact and Director can make, they have plenty of time to identify a proxy to present for them.
- Notify NIA present ph
- Reserve your meeting room and hotel rooms for EAC
- Now relax for a few months...

1 month before

- Firm up EAC's travel plans
 - They should arrive in time for dinner and depart after EAC deliberation
- Make dinner plans
 - Preferably within walking distance or easy travel
 - Preferably someplace with a private dinning room to be easier for conversations
 - Or go for interesting places (Blueberry Hill and Chuck Berry)
 - If group is relatively small, restaurants are usually best
 - If groups is larger than 15, consider catering on campus
 - Other benefits of dinner interaction:
 - » Sensitive topics may be discussed if needed
 - » Promote interaction between EAC and your team
 - » Promote interaction between EAC and your junior investigators

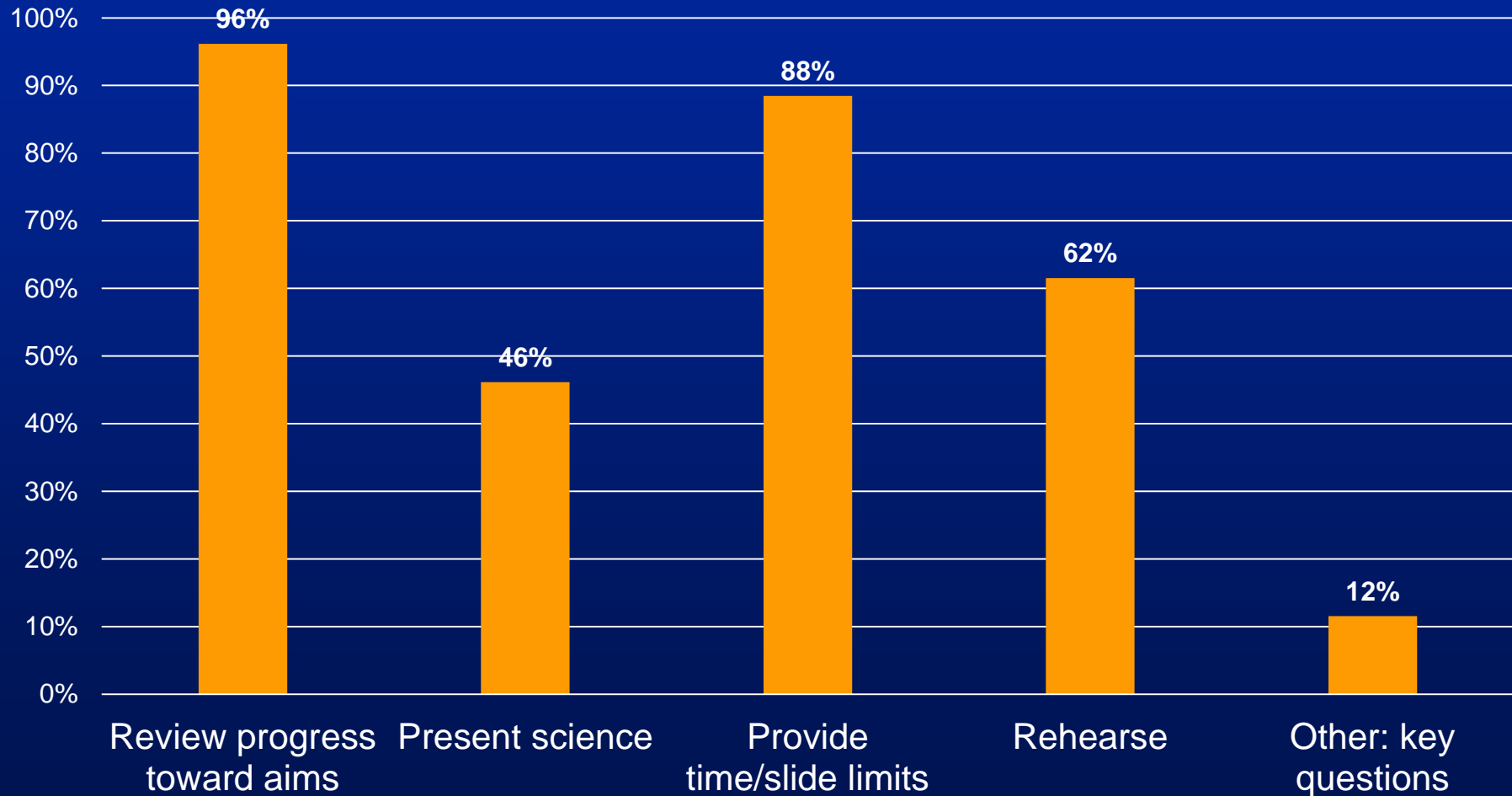
EAC Dinner – Who Else Attends?



Also 1 Month Before

- Send explicit, detailed instructions to Core and Project Leaders regarding:
 - Topics to address
 - Dates of the reporting period for all components
 - Maximum number of slides (and animations...)
 - Due date for final slides to be received by you
- Presentations do not need to be the same year to year – they should change to meet the needs of the Center

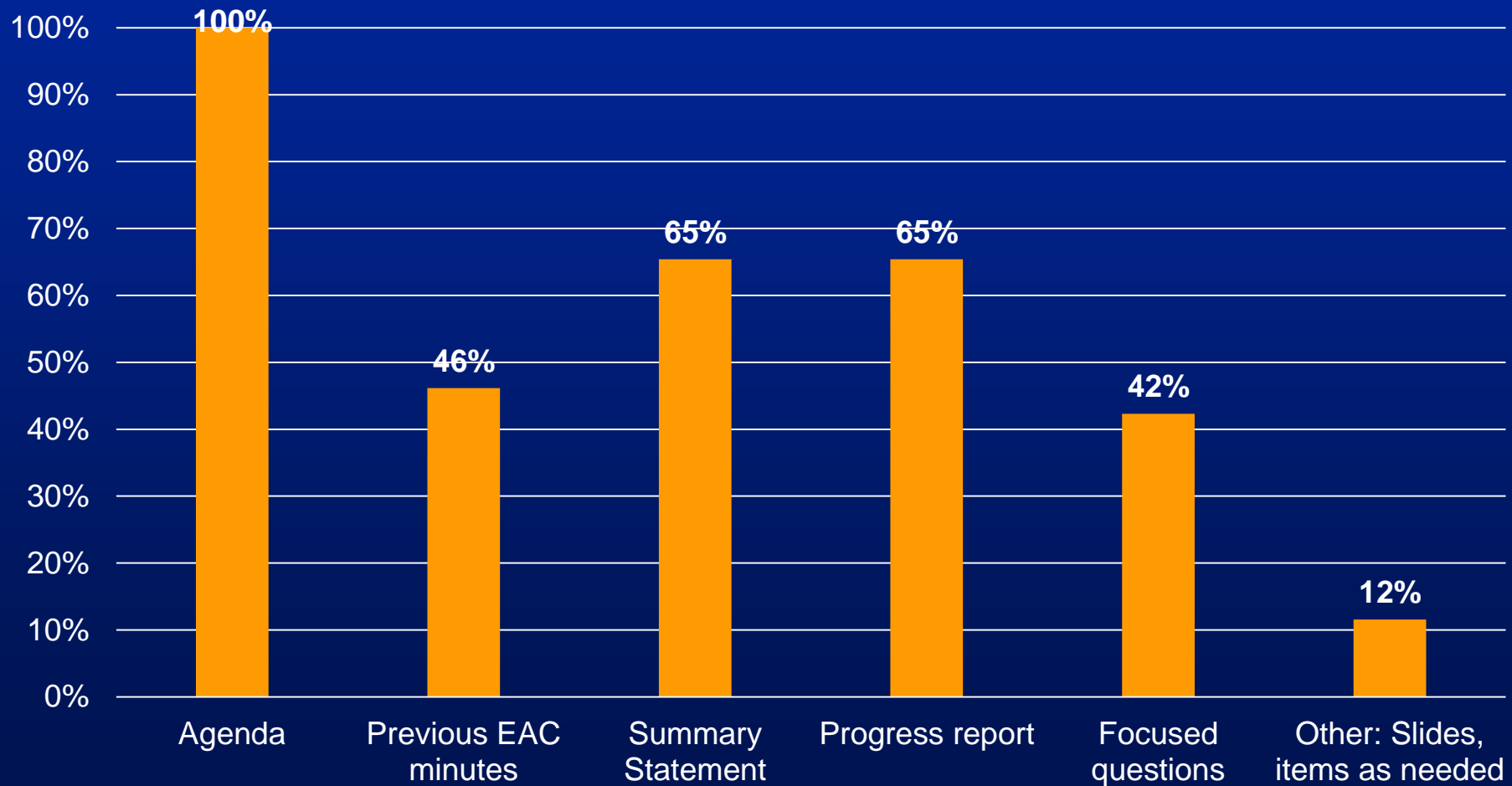
How do you prepare/direct your core and project leaders for their presentations?



~1 Week Before

- Consider sending EAC and NIA:
 - Agenda for meeting
 - Minutes from previous visit
 - Last/current progress report
 - Last summary statement if just funded or renewed
 - Specific questions to be addressed during their visit
 - Slides (of course this assumes that you have received the final slides from your components...)
 - If asking EAC input on project selection for renewal, send project research strategies
 - Directions to dial in if joining EAC visit by phone
- Communicate to EAC:
 - Directions to the hotel
 - Instructions on where to meet for dinner
 - Your cell phone number (and your Director's) in case of travel delay
 - Take lunch orders for EAC for delivery to your meeting room

What materials do you send to EAC in advance of the visit?



 *~1 day before*

Prepare handouts for EAC members:

- Definitely:
 - Agenda
 - Slides
 - Specific questions
- Possibly:
 - Progress reports
 - Publications or publication lists
 - Summary statement
 - Component specific aims
 - Cohort description
- Send electronic copies to anyone attending by phone (Numbering slides is a good idea).

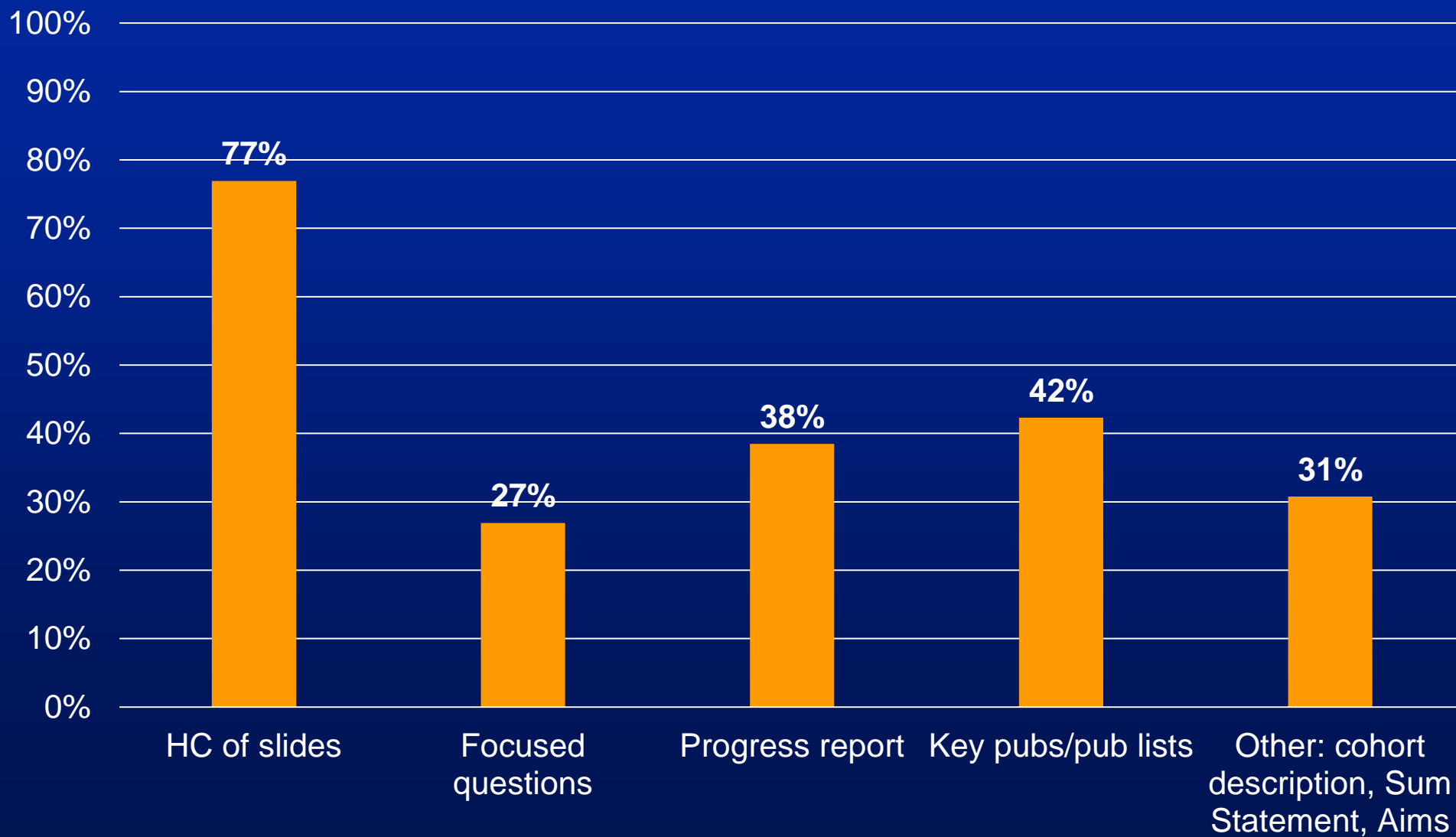


~1 day before – Housekeeping

(depends on the resources you have at your disposal)

- Place breakfast order (to be delivered or picked up)
- Set up meeting room
 - Prepare name plates for each EAC member to be placed on the conference room table during the meeting.
 - Arrange tables, provide note pads and pens
 - Deploy power strips for EAC use
 - Have copy of entire grant present (electronic or hard copy) for reference
- Prepare travel report forms, consulting forms, letter instructing them how to return the travel receipts and a center-addressed stamped envelope.
- Assign someone to check the coffee pots and keep them full during the meeting
- Assign a couple of people to help take notes for later compilation of minutes. You need to focus on what is said.

Handouts for the EAC visit



Night before

- Dinner

- Meet EAC members and escort/transport to dinner location
- At end of dinner, give instructions on:
 - » Checking out of hotel (bring bags to meeting)
 - » How to get to meeting room in the morning (e.g. meet someone to be escorted or provide directions)
- End evening early (no matter how much fun you are having)

During the meeting

- Make sure you have recruited adequate help so that you aren't doing everything
- Your Director ensures adherence to the agenda
- But you're in charge of meeting flow/coordination
- Try not to be too immersed in taking notes
- Be engaged in what is happening

After the meeting - ~ 2 weeks

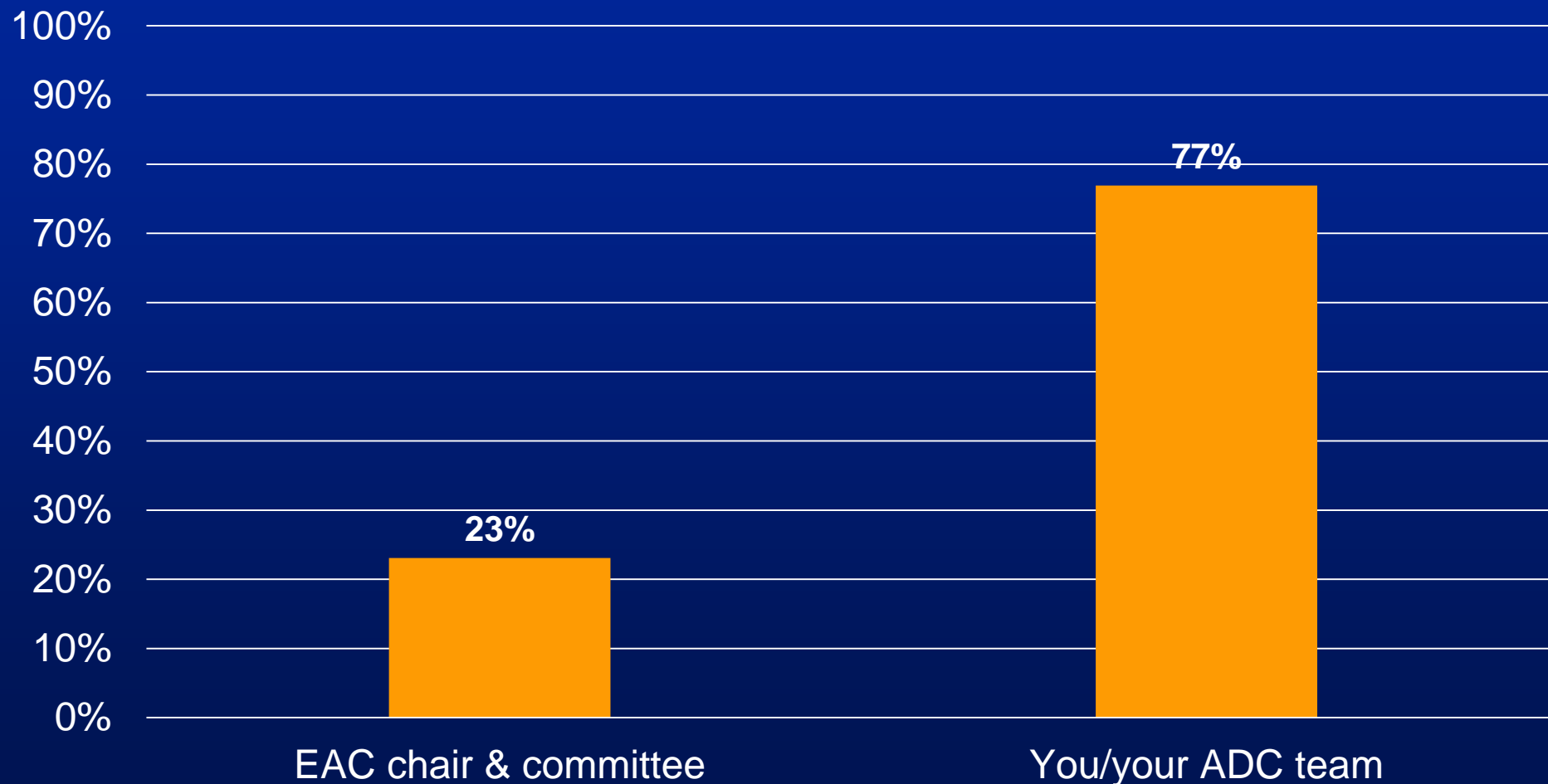
- Compile notes and create first draft of minutes with Director input
- Circulate to EAC asking for corrections/edits (with a time limit to respond, beyond which the assumption is no edits required)
- When all edits have been incorporated, send final minutes to EAC chair for signature

Why should Center write the first draft of the minutes?

- Less burden for EAC members
- More control over timeline of receiving report
- More influence over content
- Directs your attention to EAC comments
- Encourages internalization/operationalization of EAC recommendations



Who prepares the first draft of the minutes for the EAC visit?



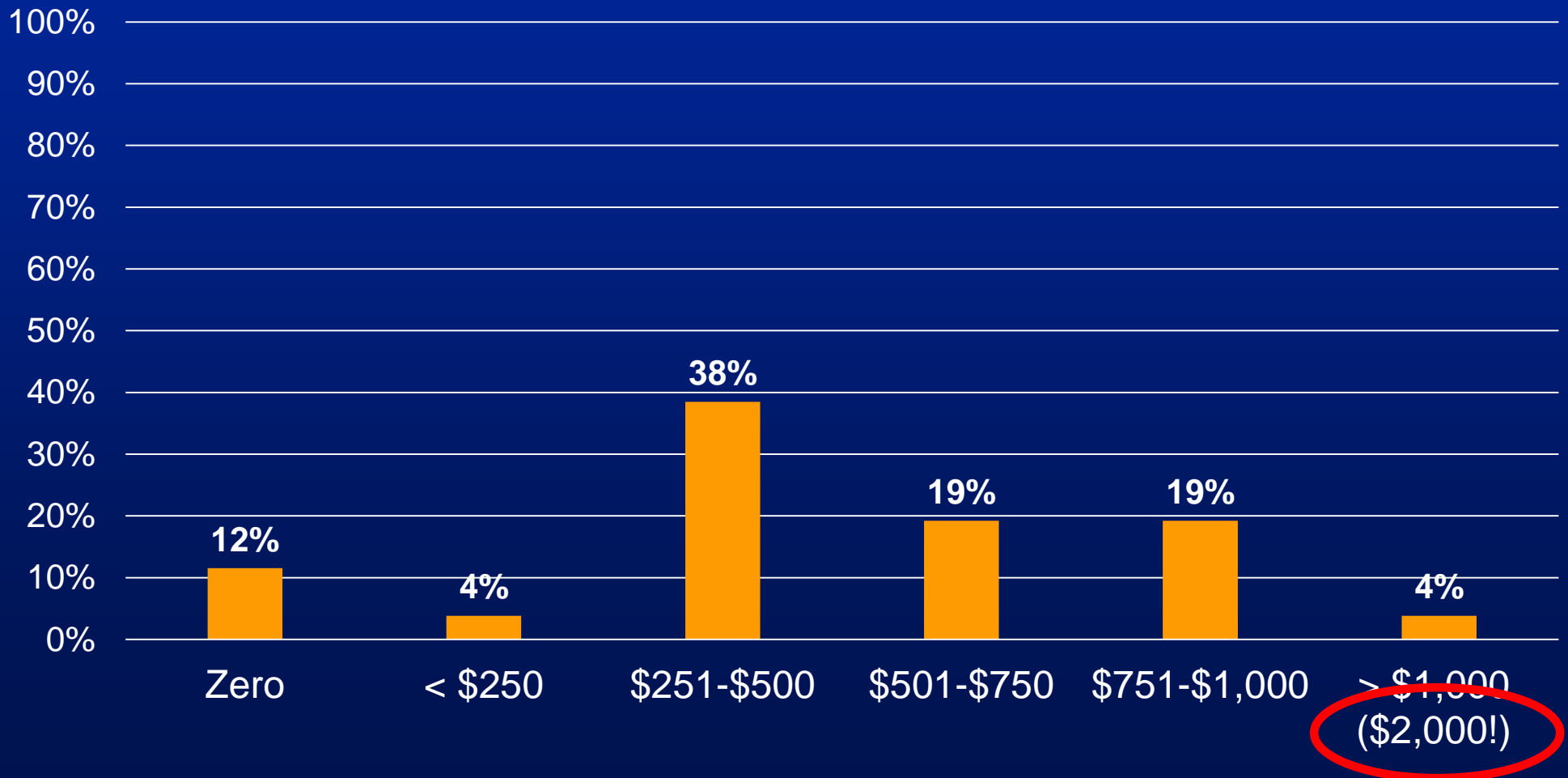
Final Steps

- Fully signed minutes should be sent to:
 - EAC committee members
 - NIA program staff
 - Core and Project leaders (if nothing too sensitive)
 - Stored to include in next progress report
- Reimburse EAC for travel expenses
- Pay honorarium



Most Centers Provide Honoraria around \$500

Honorarium amount for EAC participation?



Last thoughts

- There is always stress when you are being evaluated (hence my title) but like in-laws, your EAC has your best interests at heart
- Enjoy the role of host

Organizing External Advisory Committee visits – Washington University

Time frame	Action
6 months before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the EAC members to find a date that the most can make and that PI can also make. • Admin assistant should make hotel reservations for EAC members • Admin assistant informs EAC members of travel reimbursement restrictions (only coach airfare, only US flag carriers) and encourages early reservations. • Optional: If Admin Assistant has a ProCard, she/he can offer to make plane reservations for EAC.
When you have a date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact core and project leaders to get the date on their calendars. • Inform NIA program officers of the date in case they want to attend, either in person or by conf call. • Reserve conference room from 7:00AM until 2:00PM.
1 month before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send instructions to core and project leaders regarding topics to cover, dates for reporting progress, maximum number of slide • Make reservations for dinner – preferably within walking distance with a private room. Usually a limited menu is best (i.e. choice of 2-3 appetizers, 3-4 entrees, 1-2 desserts, and wine selections in advance). • Admin assistant compiles travel plans so arrival times/flights and departure times/flights are available
1 week before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send EAC members and NIA program staff the agenda, minutes from previous year, specific questions (2-4) for them to ponder, directions to get to hotel from airport, for dinner (meet in Parkway Hotel lobby at x:00PM), your cell phone numbers • If someone will be connecting by phone or webinar, send instructions ahead of time • Adm Assistant contacts EAC members to get their lunch orders, arranges for the lunches to be delivered to the conference room a half hour. Also arranges for water bottles, or other drinks for lunch (soda, tea, etc.) for EAC members
Day before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place breakfast order for pickup from Panera (you must call it in and tell them it is tax-exempt). Usual order: Bagel Pack of assorted breakfast bagels (includes two cream cheeses-we usually get plain and honey walnut; be sure to tell them to slice the bagels); 2 blueberry muffins, 2 cranberry-orange muffins, 2 bear claws, 4 chocolate chip muffies, 4 pumpkin muffies. • Prepare (or locate) name plates for each EAC member to be placed on the conference room table during the meeting. • Prepare handouts for EAC members: copy of agenda, slides, and questions. Maybe progress reports? Send electronic copies to anyone attending by phone. • Groceries: Large bowl of cut, mixed fruit; 6 pack of yogurt; ½ gallon of orange juice; 2 dozen premium cookies for coffee break; plates, small juice cups, and napkins if you need them, small bouquet of cut flowers, table cloth (paper or one from home). • Setup conference room by moving tables to a center formation with one in the back of the room for food and coffee, move chairs to maximize space and seating capacity, deploy power strips for EAC computers, and paper pads and pens • Prepare travel report forms, consulting forms, letter instructing them how to return the travel receipts and a center-addressed stamped envelope. • Assign someone to check the coffee pots and keep them full during the meeting • Assign a couple of people to help take notes for later compilation of minutes.
Night before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take EAC to dinner, give instructions on how they will get to conference room in the morning (most of them know already), to bring their bags with them to the building.
Morning of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick up Panera order, either you or assign to someone. They must have a tax exempt letter or card. • Ask someone to make coffee, both caf and decaf, prepare a pitcher of ice water, deploy coffee, condiments, and breakfast stuff by 7:15AM. • Arrange for taxi back to airport for around 2PMish (Adm Assistant). • Sometimes EAC members need to confirm their flights, Adm Assistant can help with this.
After meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile notes and create minutes, distribute to PI for edits, then distribute to EAC members for their edits (give them 2 weeks to respond or assume they accept the minutes as is). • When minutes are final, ask EAC chair to put on his/her letterhead, sign, scan and return. • Send final minutes to NIA program staff and include in next progress report (usually within 4-6 weeks. • Distribute final minutes to Core and Project leaders. • Review whether action is required based on EAC review/recommendations