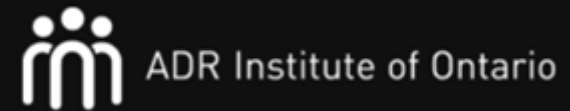


Beyond the Findings: Understanding Post-Investigation Conflict and the ADR Practitioner's Role



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Dispute Resolution at the Speed of Change

Setting the Context: Why Post-Finding Conflict Matters



What Happens After the Investigation?

Findings ≠ Resolution

Investigations establish facts and assess credibility. But clarifying what happened rarely resolves the conflict that led to the complaint.

The Aftermath Is Often Harder

Trust erodes, communication shuts down, and teams fragment — not because the investigation failed, but because it was never designed to heal.

This Is Where ADR Comes In

The post-finding phase is where conflict resolution skills matter most — and where they're most underutilized.



Why this Conversation, Why Now

Organizations Expect Closure

After findings are delivered, organizations often assume the matter is resolved. In practice, tension lingers and new conflicts emerge.

Practitioners Are Navigating Alone

ADR practitioners and investigators report being pulled into post-finding work without clear mandates, resources, or organizational buy-in.

The Field Is Ready

There's growing recognition that procedural resolution and relational resolution are two different things — and both are needed.



Hypothesis: A Structural Gap

Investigation Has Structure

The investigation phase has policies, timelines, standards of proof, and clear roles. Everyone knows their part.

The Post-Finding Phase Does Not

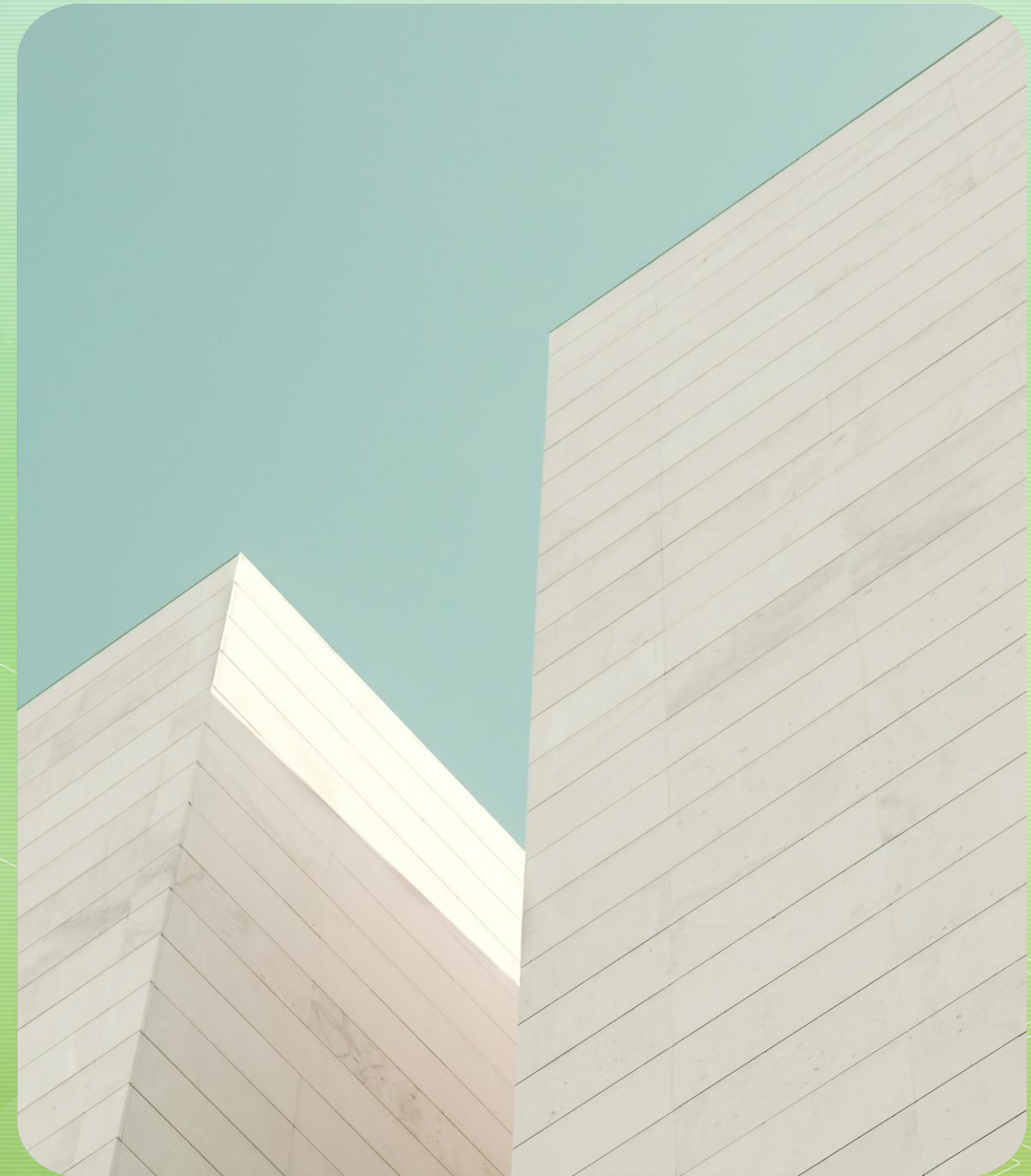
After findings, there's uncertainty about next steps, ownership, and what success looks like. This isn't a failure — it's a design gap.

This Gap Is Testable

We surveyed practitioners across ADR, investigation, and HR to find out: Is this gap real? What does it look like? And what can we do about it?

A Note on “Resolution”

In this presentation, “resolution” means addressing the relational, emotional, and systemic dimensions of a dispute — not just procedural or legal closure.



Survey Approach and What the Data Represents



A Practitioner-Grounded Approach to Inquiry



Inquiry-Based Practitioner Focus

The approach centers on practitioner experience rather than predefined best practices, valuing real-world insights.



Survey to Capture Real Patterns

Survey questions reveal common conflict dynamics and practitioner roles post-investigation across diverse organizations.



Collaborative Learning Environment

Shared data fosters reflection and dialogue among peers, encouraging testing assumptions and envisioning new solutions.

Who Responded

Diverse Respondent Roles

Survey responses come from ADR practitioners, investigators, and HR professionals in internal and external roles.

Common Post-Finding Challenges

Respondents agree that investigations often fail to resolve deeper conflicts and closure expectations go unmet.

Broader Systemic Patterns

Issues reflect systemic organizational patterns in managing conflict beyond specific sectors or roles.

Credibility and Nuanced Insight

Acknowledging respondent diversity enhances insight credibility and encourages nuanced interpretation of findings.



What the Data Reveals About Post-Finding Reality



What Actually Happens After Findings Are Delivered

Post-Findings Closure

Most issues are considered closed administratively with little ongoing follow-up or resolution of underlying conflicts.

Emergence of New Conflicts

New or different conflicts often arise after findings, indicating unresolved systemic and relational issues remain active.

Declining Trust and Guarded Communication

Trust in leadership decreases and communication becomes more guarded, complicating workplace relationships post-investigation.

Need for Relational Interventions

Mediation, facilitation, and coaching are often necessary to address trust, identity, power, and meaning beyond factual disputes.



Do Investigations Resolve Underlying Conflict?



Survey Findings on Conflict Resolution

Most respondents agree investigations rarely resolve the underlying conflict in workplace disputes.



Role of Investigations

Investigations clarify events and assess policy compliance but do not repair relationships or rebuild trust.



Setting Realistic Expectations

Understanding investigations' limits helps set appropriate expectations and encourages complementary conflict interventions.

When Findings Make Things Worse

Unintended Negative Outcomes

Findings can worsen conflicts when follow-up lacks context and sensitivity, triggering unintended negative impacts.

Emotional and Relational Impact

Stakeholders may feel invalidated, stigmatized, or abandoned, increasing emotional distress and relational harm.

Need for Thoughtful Follow-Up

Effective post-finding interventions require sensitivity to emotional and systemic factors beyond the investigation itself.

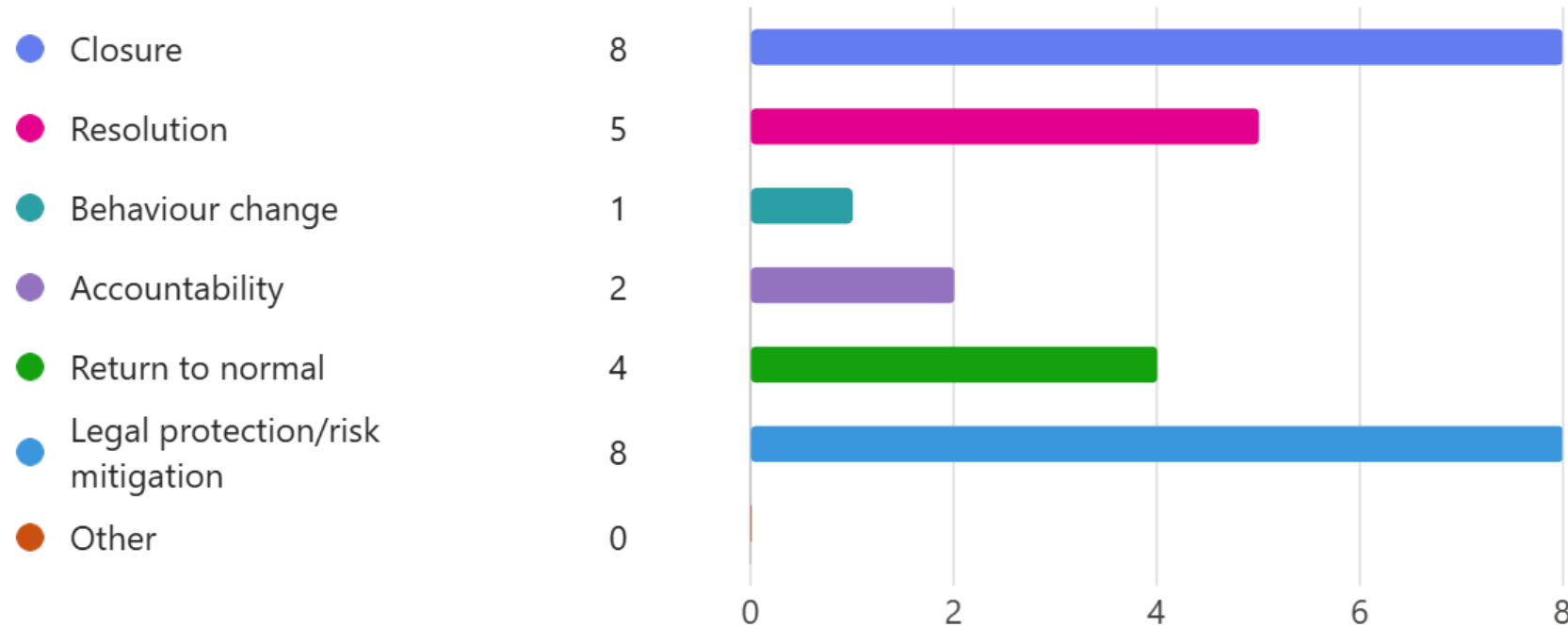


Patterns, Tensions, and Practitioner Experience



What do Organizations Expect after Findings?

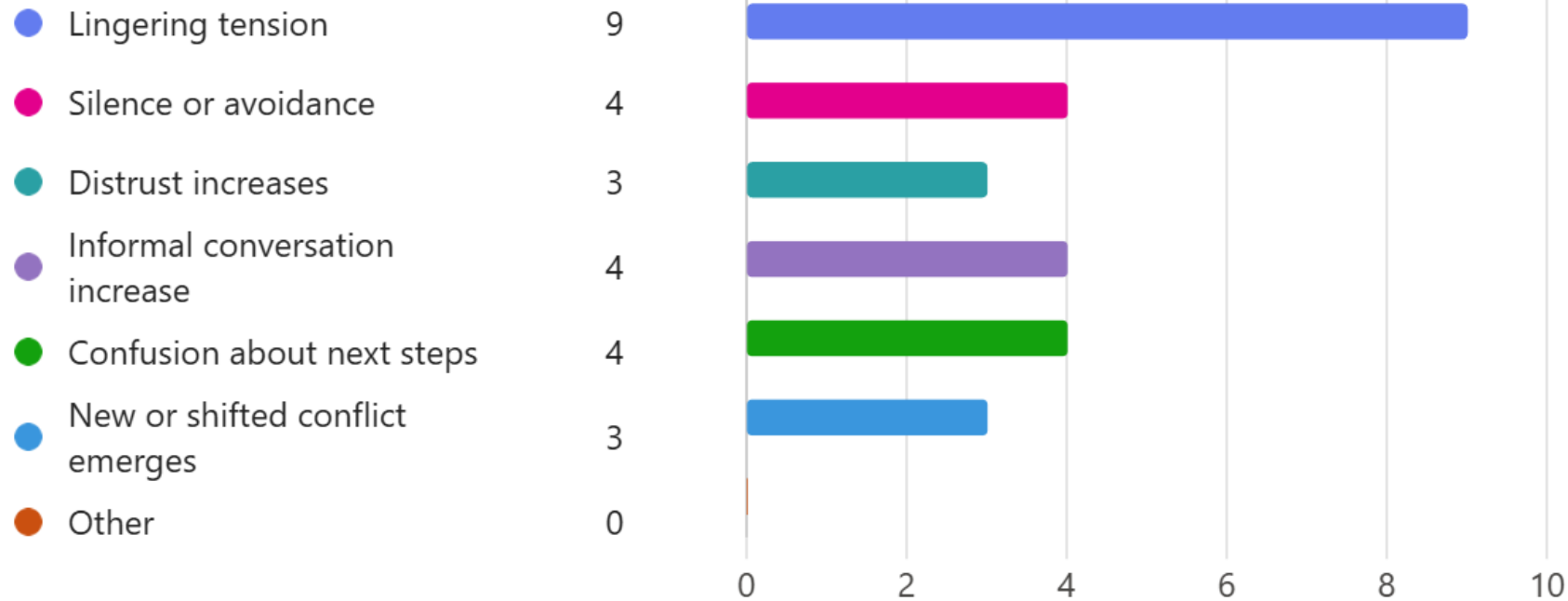
10. In your experience, what do organizations EXPECT after findings? (Select up to 3) [More details](#)



What Tends to Happen Instead?

11. What tends to happen instead? (Select up to 3)

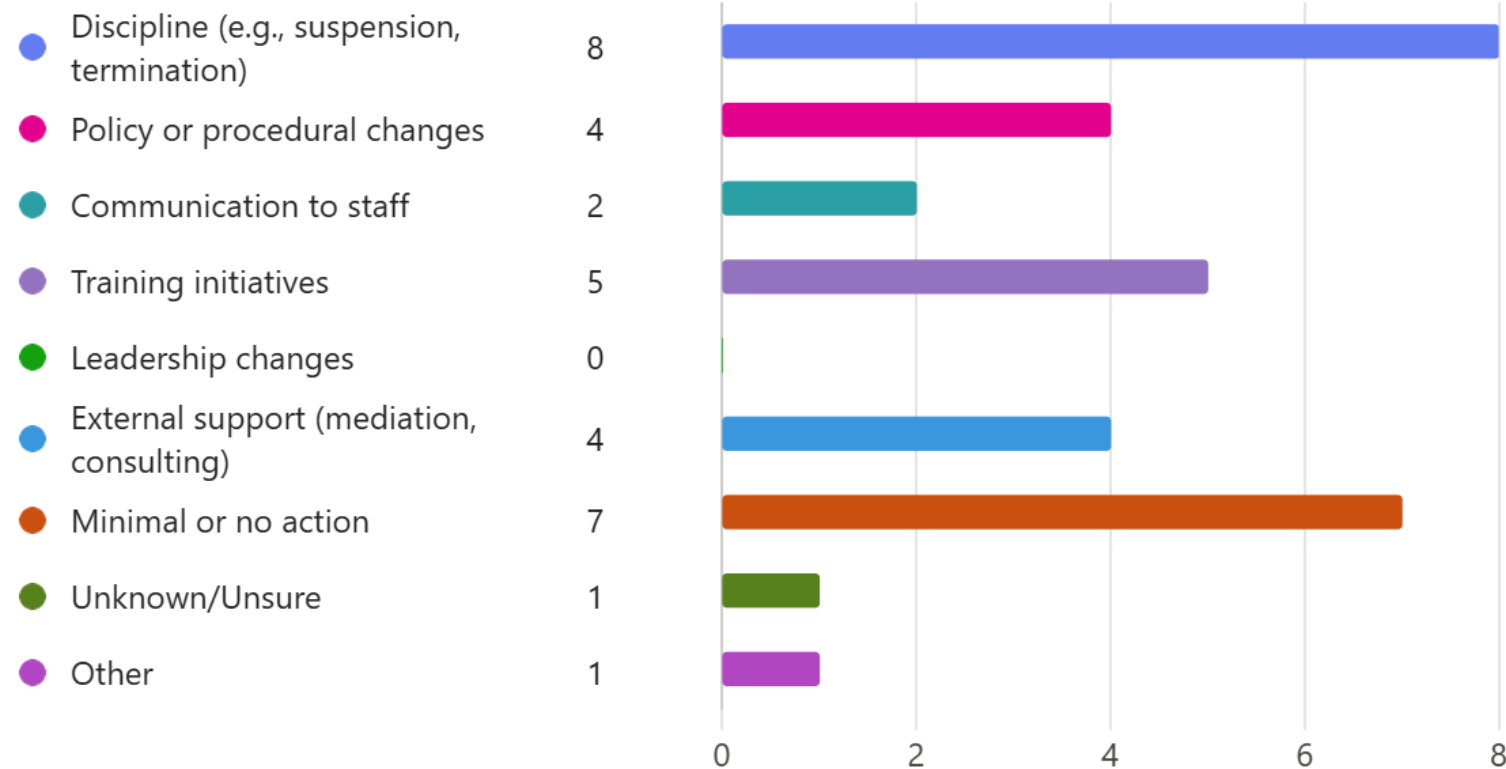
[More details](#)



What Actions do Organizations Take?

12. After findings, what actions do organizations most commonly take? (Select all that apply)

[More details](#)



Expectation Versus Reality in Organizations

Expectation vs Reality Gap

Organizations expect closure and normalcy, but actual outcomes often include tension, silence, and distrust.

Impact on Stakeholders

Leaders feel obligations are met, employees feel outcomes are incomplete, and practitioners struggle to reconcile narratives.

Systemic Tension and Opportunity

Viewing the issue as systemic encourages constructive dialogue on responsibility and improves communication and leadership alignment.



What Gets Actioned and What Gets Avoided

Common Organizational Responses

Organizations often respond with disciplinary measures, training, or external support, showing a range of follow-up actions.

Avoided Critical Issues

Root causes, systemic factors, leadership behaviors, and psychological safety are frequently neglected despite their importance.

Preference for Visible Actions

Organizations prefer visible, bounded actions that are easier to manage than complex and disruptive changes.

Implications for Practitioners

Recognizing this pattern helps practitioners articulate frustrations and advocate for deeper, sustainable change.

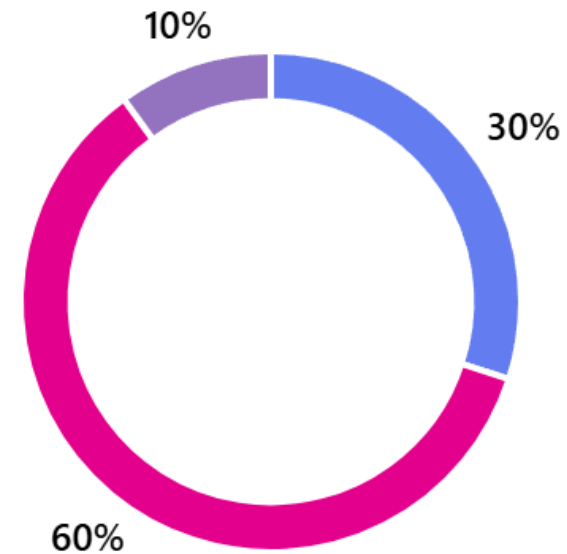


How Clear is Your Role After Findings?

14. How clear do you feel about your role AFTER findings are delivered?

[More details](#)

● Very clear	3
● Somewhat clear	6
● Unclear	0
● Very unclear	1



The Lived Experience of Practitioners

Late Engagement Challenges

Practitioners often join too late and face expectations to fix issues beyond their formal roles, highlighting systemic constraints.

Role Ambiguity and Navigation

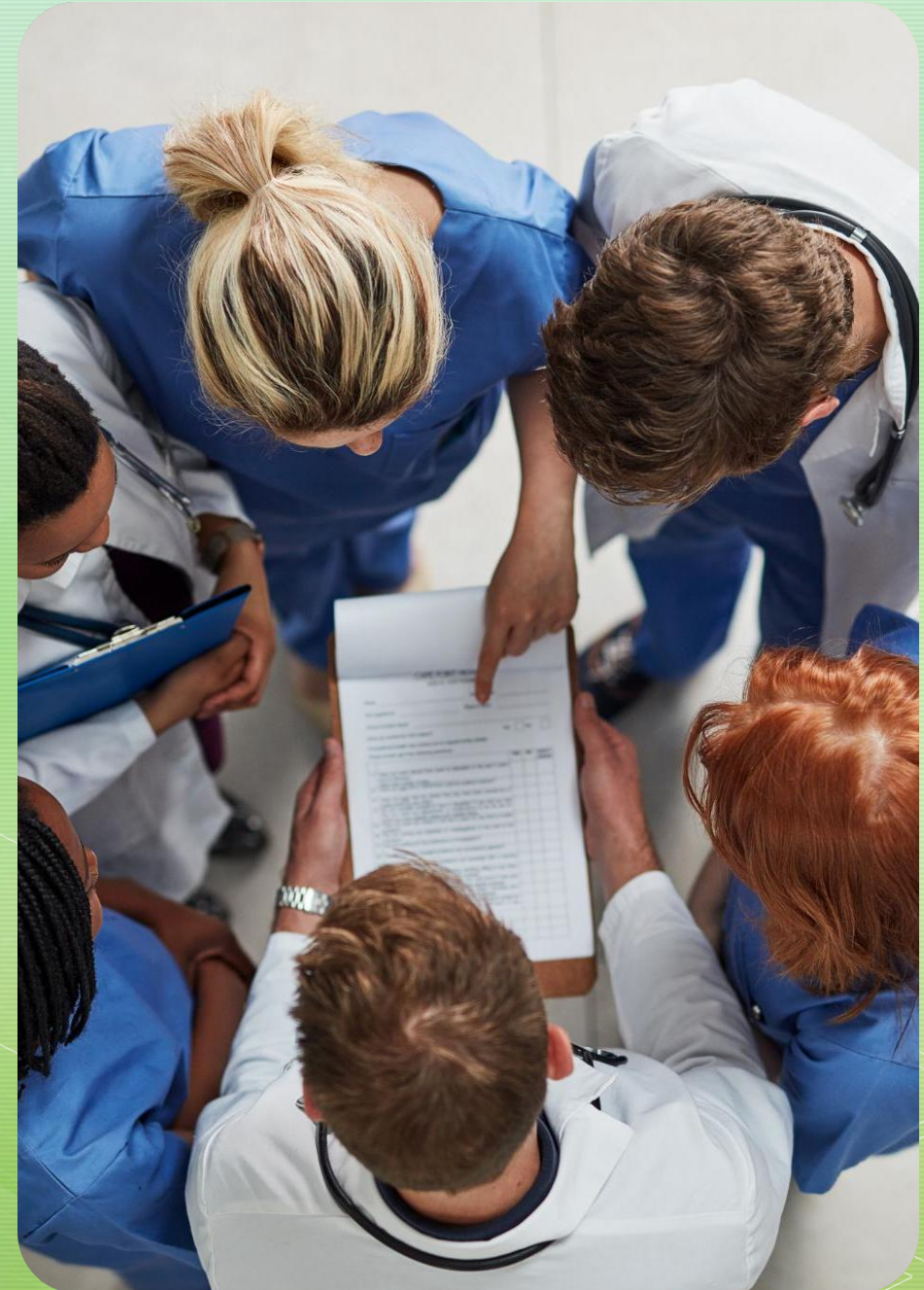
Unclear mandates and shifting expectations force practitioners to navigate complex, ambiguous roles in organizations.

Innovation and Resilience

Despite challenges, practitioners innovate through mediation, coaching, and phased interventions to meet needs effectively.

Need for Clearer Roles

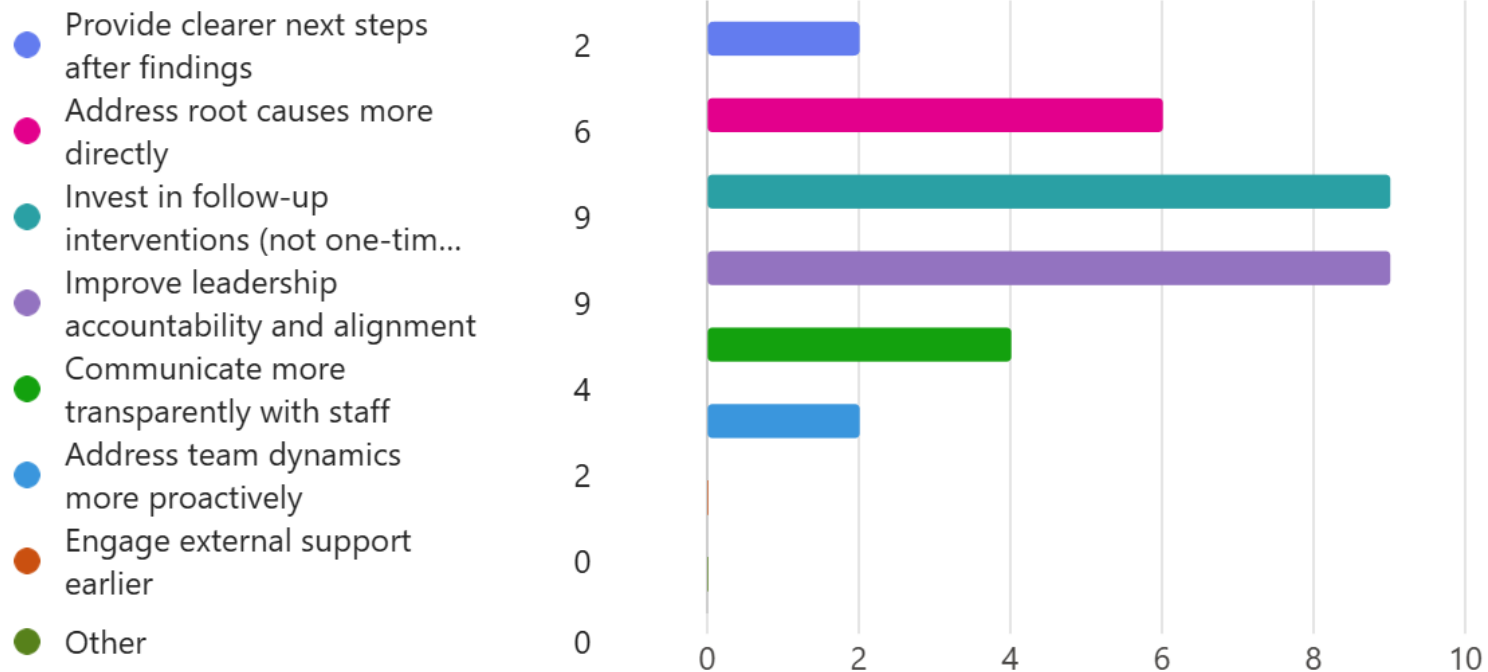
Clear role definitions, earlier involvement, and stronger organizational commitment are crucial for effective post-finding work.



What Would You Change?

20. If you could change one thing about how organizations handle the post-finding phase, what would it be? (Select up to 3)

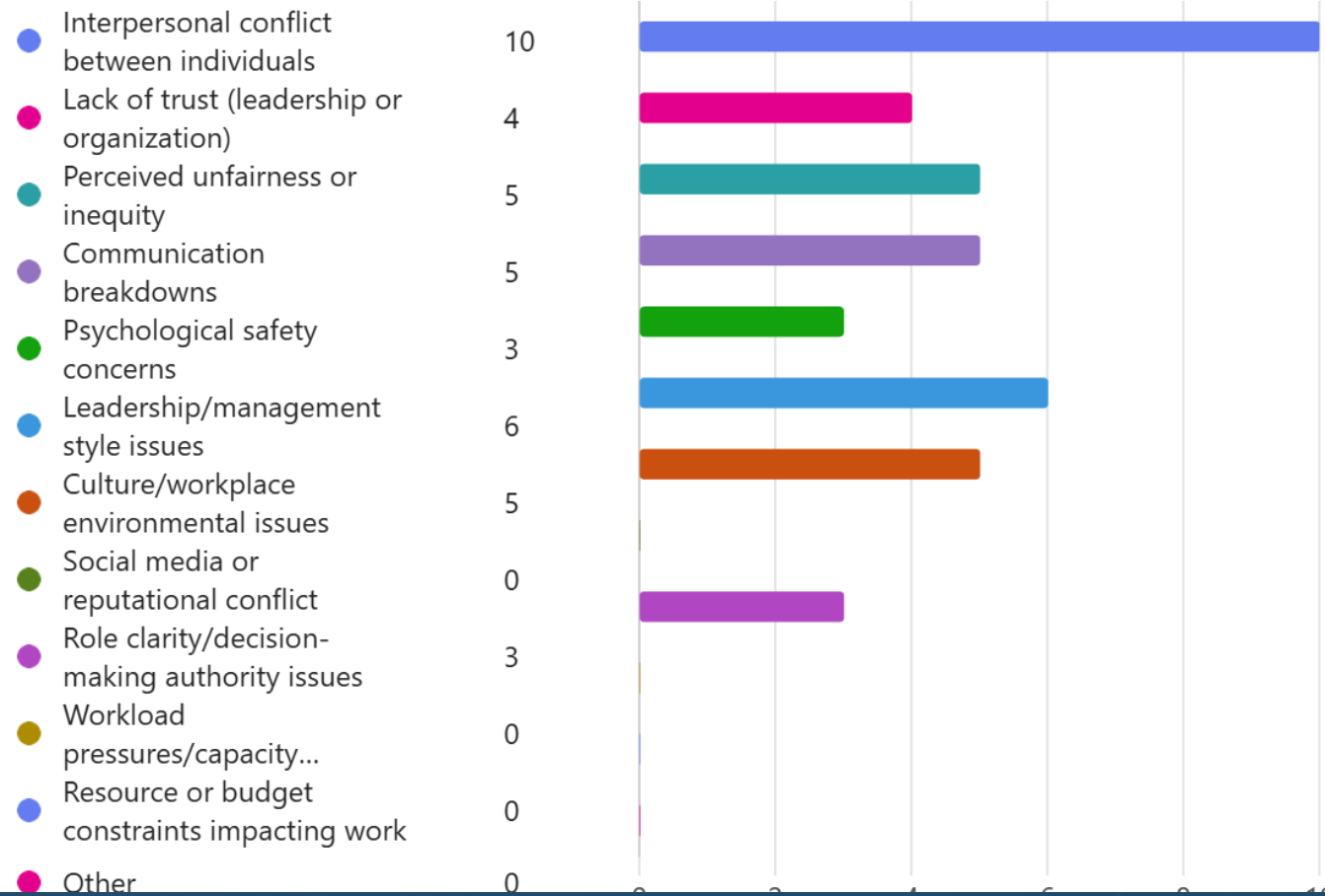
[More details](#)



What Types of Conflict are You Seeing?

6. What types of conflict are you most frequently seeing in your work right now? (Select up to 4)

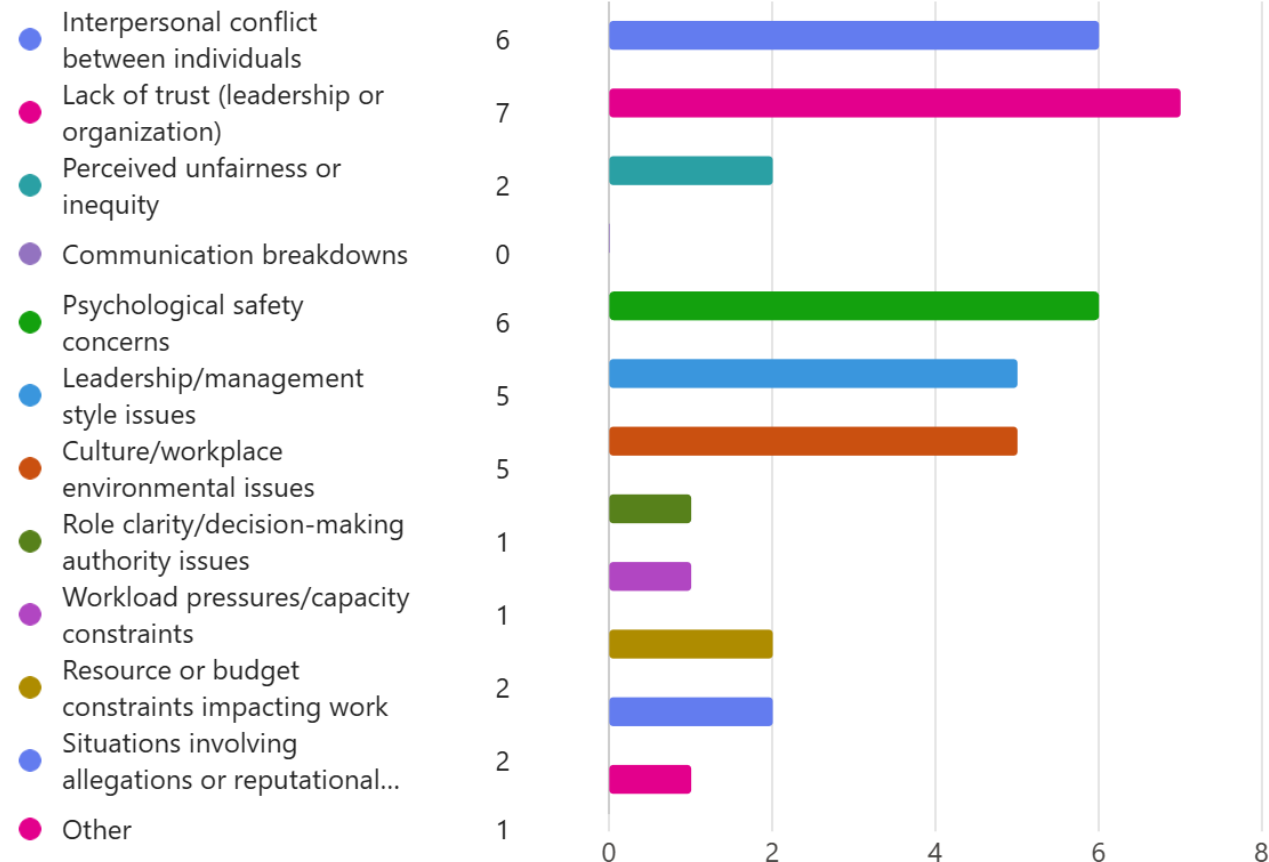
[More details](#)



Which Types of Conflicts are Most Difficult?

8. Which types of conflicts are MOST difficult or intense to address in the post-finding phase? (Select up to 4)

[More details](#)



Implications and the Path Forward



Emerging Practices and What Drives Success

Integrated Post-Finding Practices

Many use combined mediation, leadership coaching, and phased interventions for sustained engagement.

Drivers of Successful Outcomes

Leadership alignment, timely intervention, and ongoing support are crucial for effective results.

Innovation in Post-Finding Phase

Post-finding work is evolving with ADR practitioners leading innovative and growth-oriented approaches.



What This Means for ADR Practitioners

Investigations as Entry Point

Investigations mark a beginning, not an end, signaling need for deeper conflict transformation work.

Role of ADR Practitioners

ADR practitioners guide organizations by designing strategies and advocating for relational and systemic conflict interventions.

Need for Organizational Support

Effective conflict resolution requires clear roles for practitioners and strong organizational backing and resources.

Moving Toward Genuine Resolution

Engaging thoughtfully post-findings shifts organizations from procedural closure to authentic conflict resolution.



Questions & Discussion

We'd love to hear your reflections, experiences, and questions.

Some prompts to consider:

- ▶ What has been your experience navigating post-finding conflict in the workplace?
- ▶ How do organizations in your experience distinguish between procedural closure and relational resolution?
- ▶ What strategies have you found effective in rebuilding trust after an investigation concludes?
- ▶ What role should ADR practitioners play in bridging the gap between investigation and genuine resolution?

Thank You

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