

MAKING BETTER USE OF WORKERS' IDEAS: NEW EVIDENCE ON A NEGLECTED ASPECT OF THE PRODUCTIVITY DEBATE

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Importance

- Productivity is almost everything (Krugman)
- Has a bearing on competitiveness, wages and public borrowing
- But the UK has a long-standing labour productivity gap with its competitors
- This has worsened since the 2008-2009 recession and has not bounced back
- Few studies examine productivity from the workers' perspective – a new feature of SES2017

Indicators of Worker-reported Aspects of Productivity

Five existing sources of productivity growth:

- frequent initiative taking
- high in-built innovation
- high impact problem-solving
- high impact consultation
- high impact suggestion making

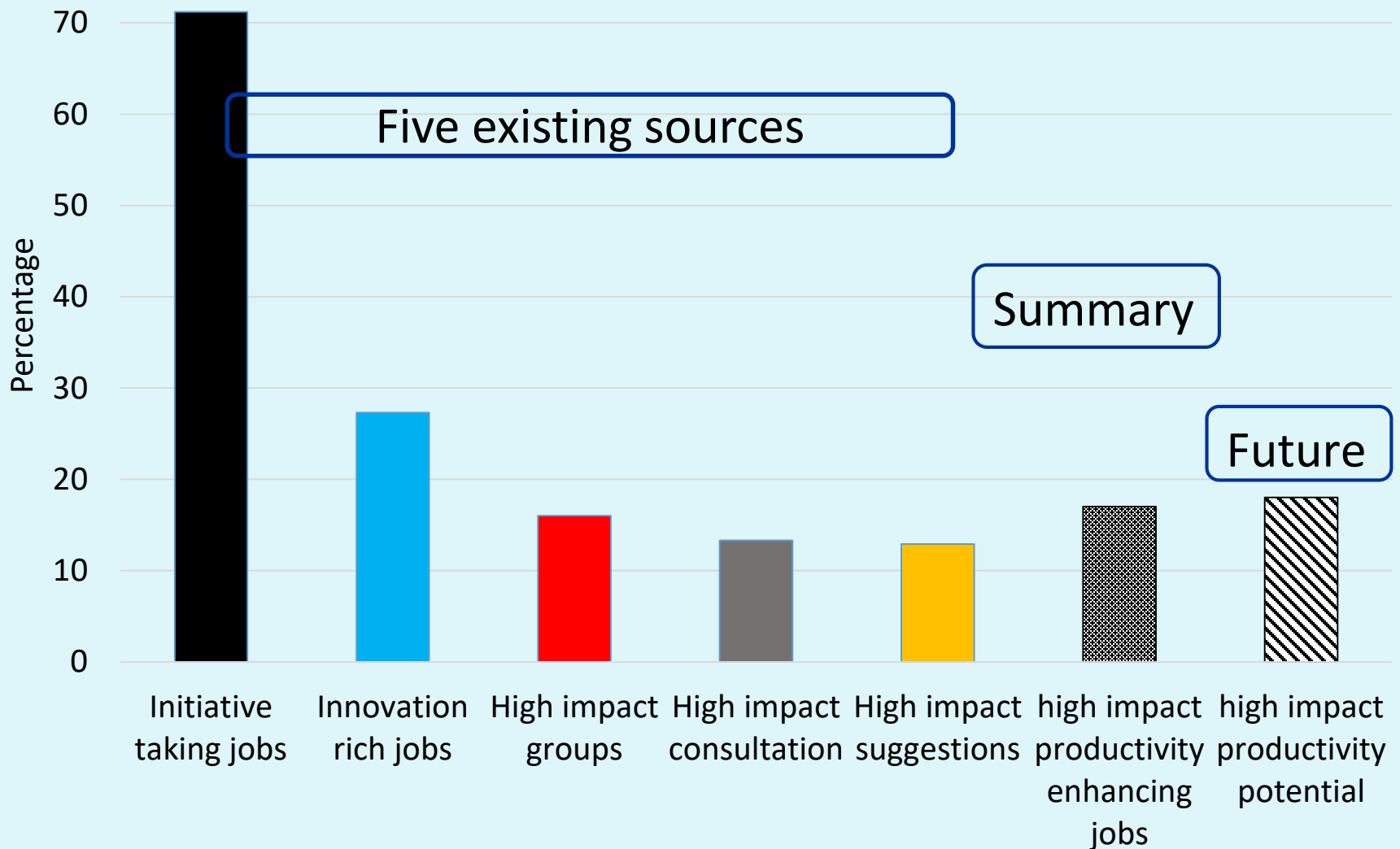
Summarised
'high' if 3 out
of 5 reported

Future potential productivity gains

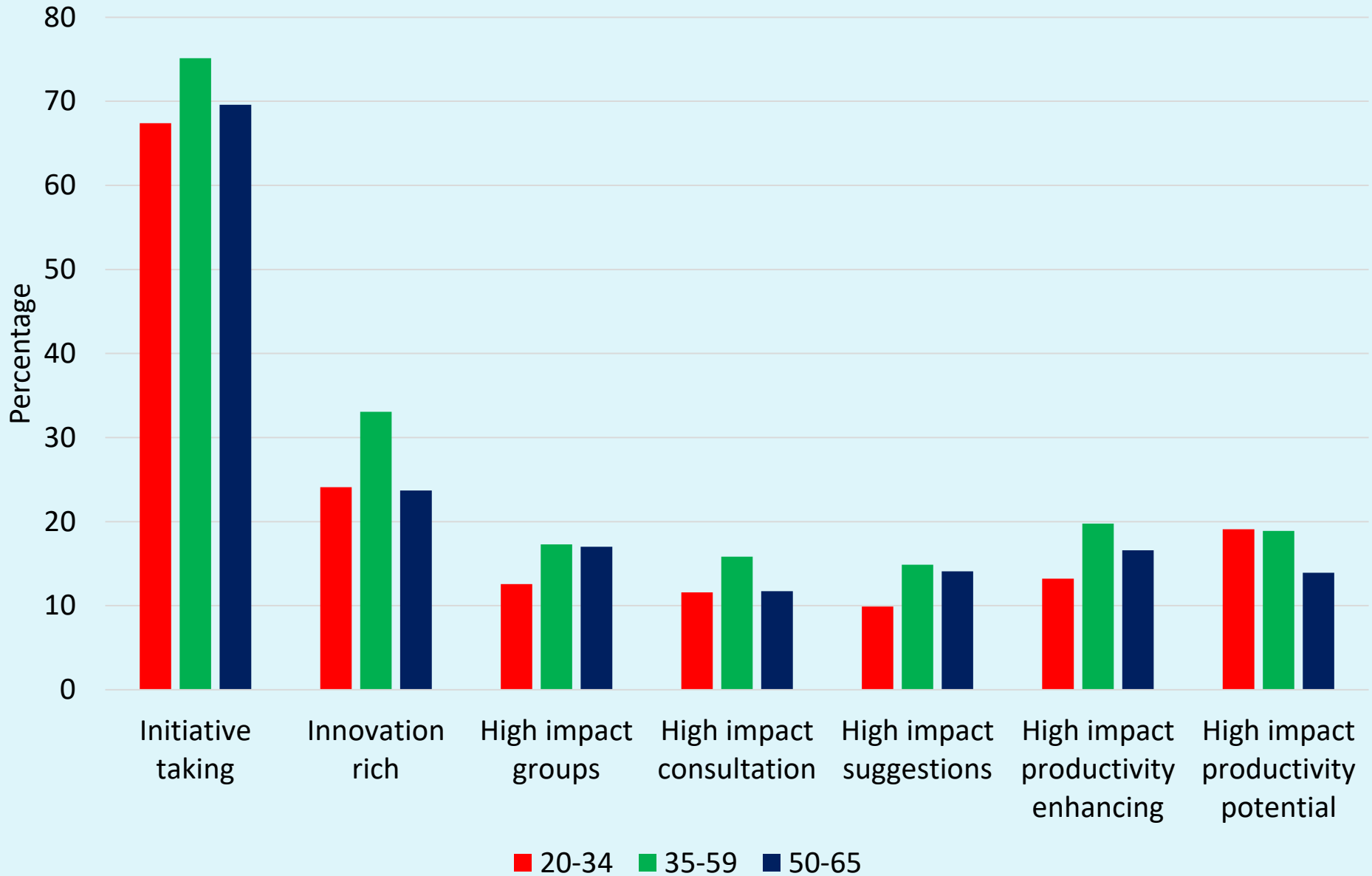
- what changes could be made
- what their impact might be

Summarised
'high' if great
deal more
productive

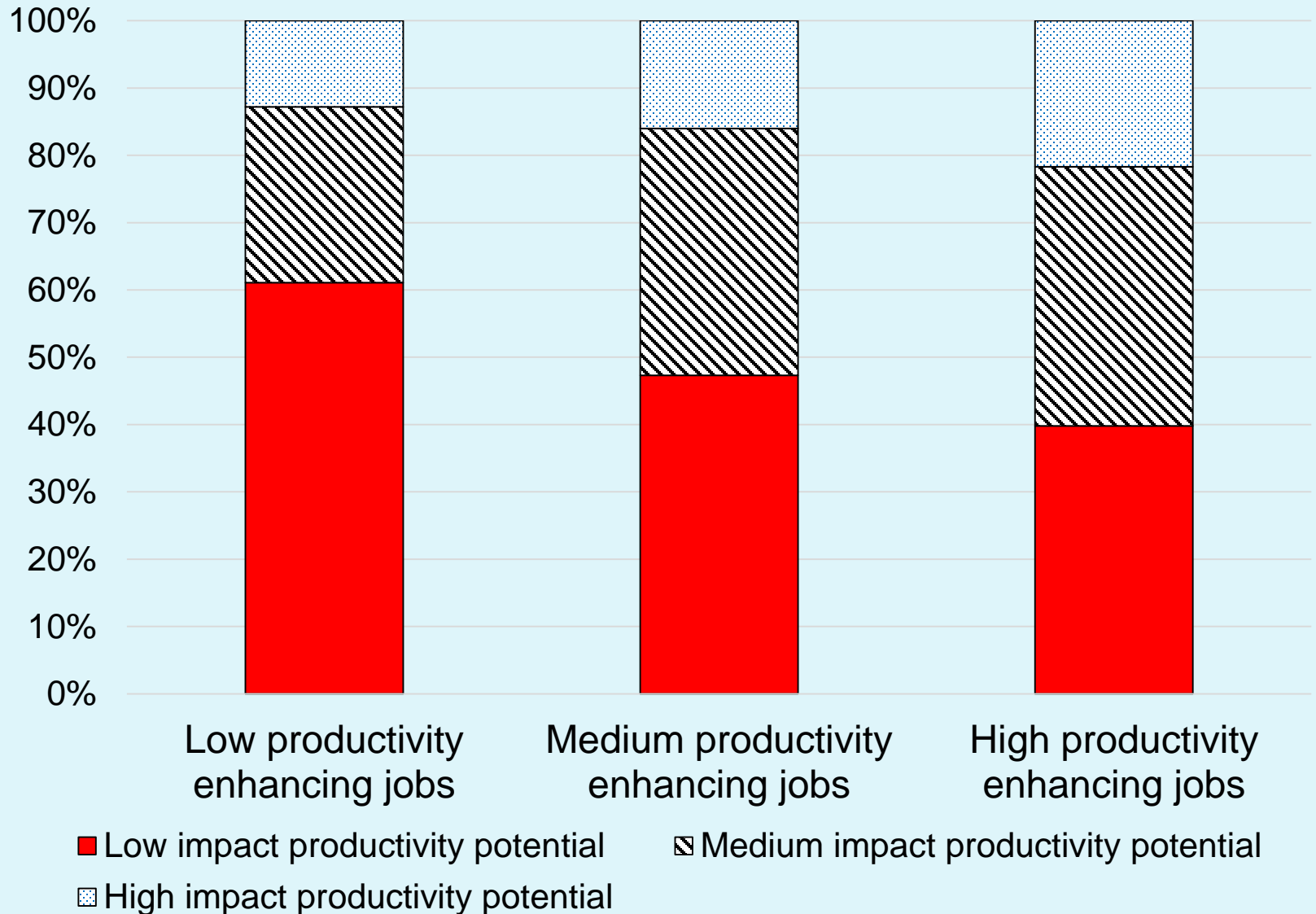
Sources of Productivity Growth and Potential Gains



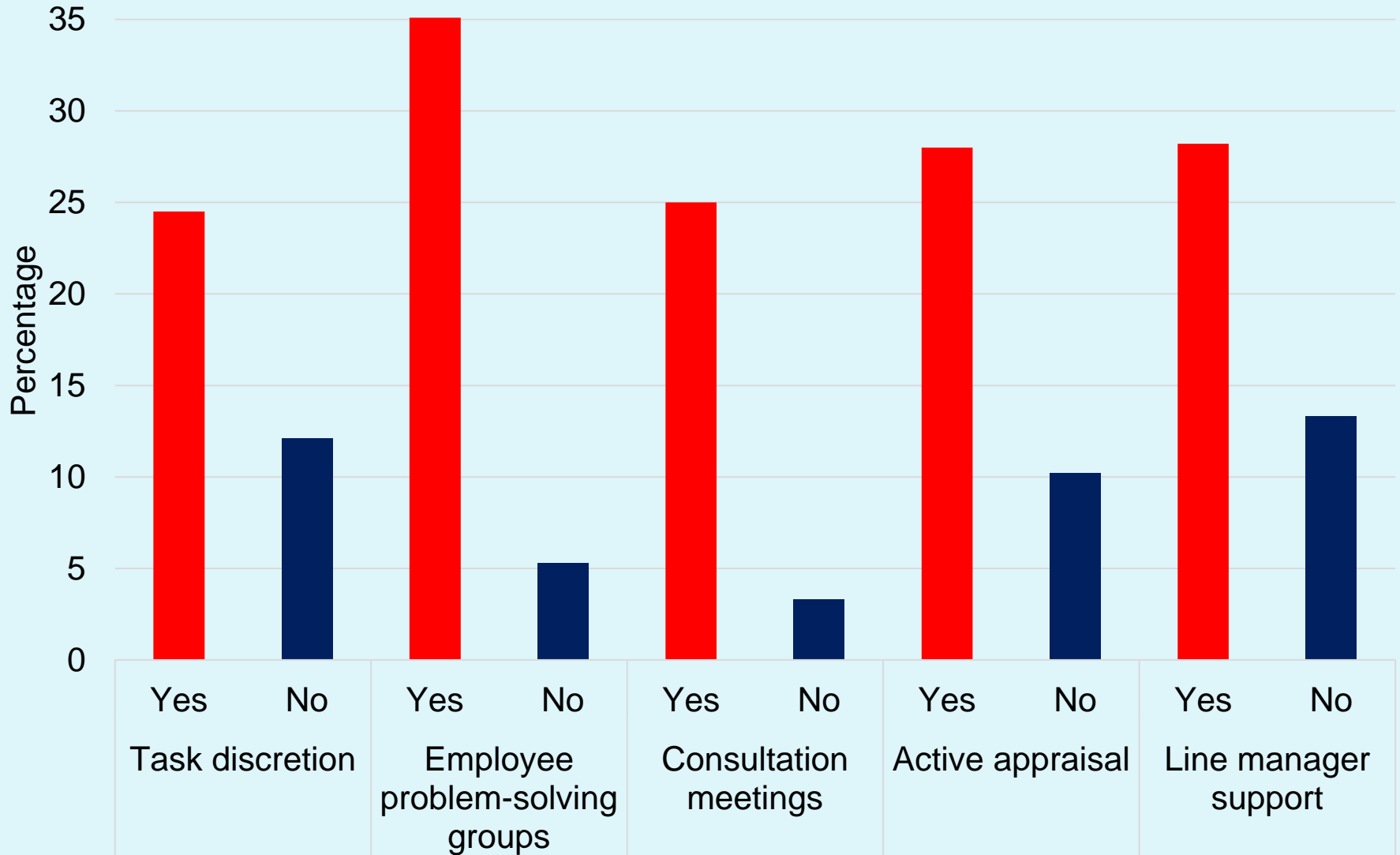
Patterns by Age



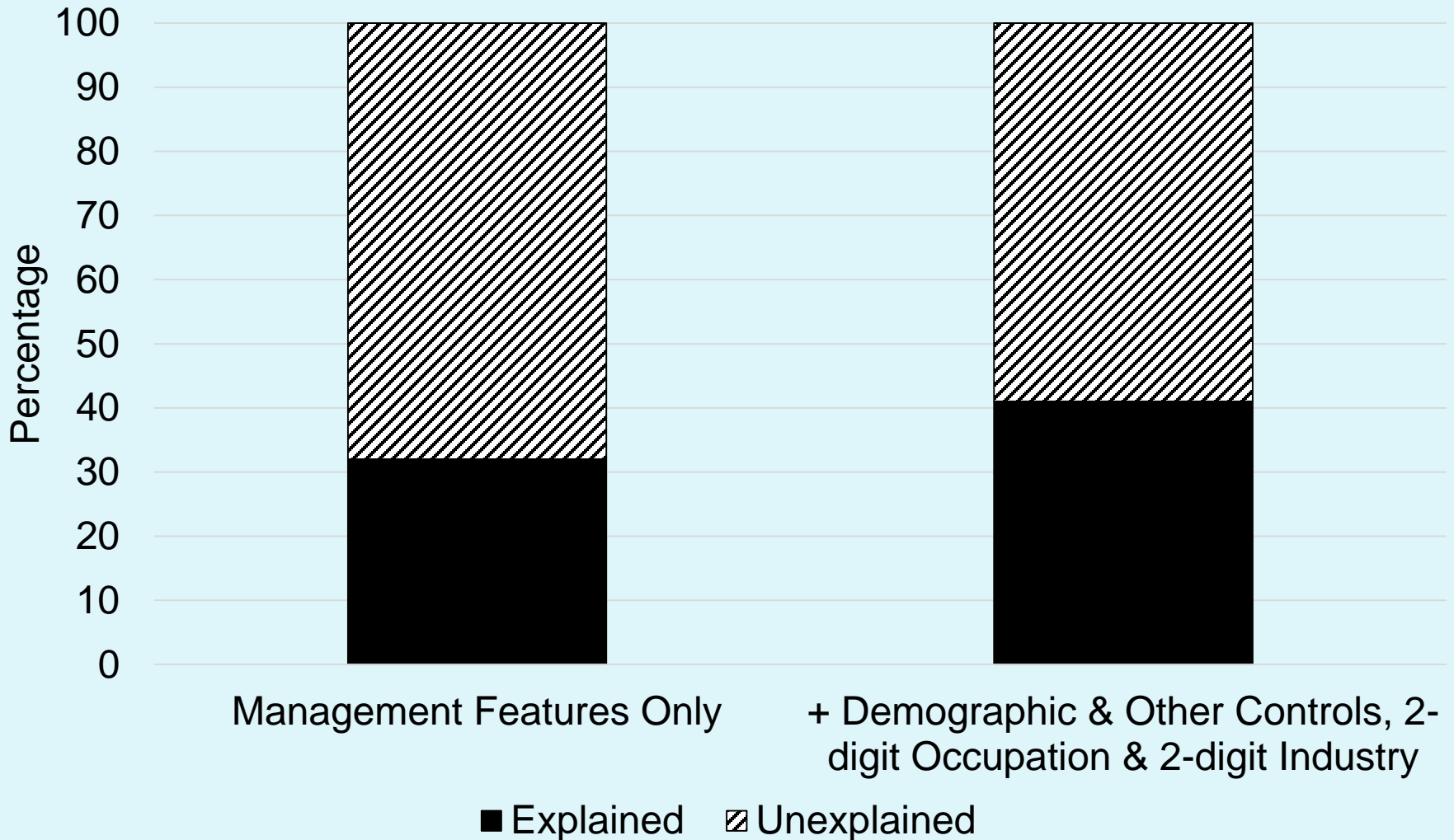
Productivity Enhancing Jobs and Potential Productivity Gains



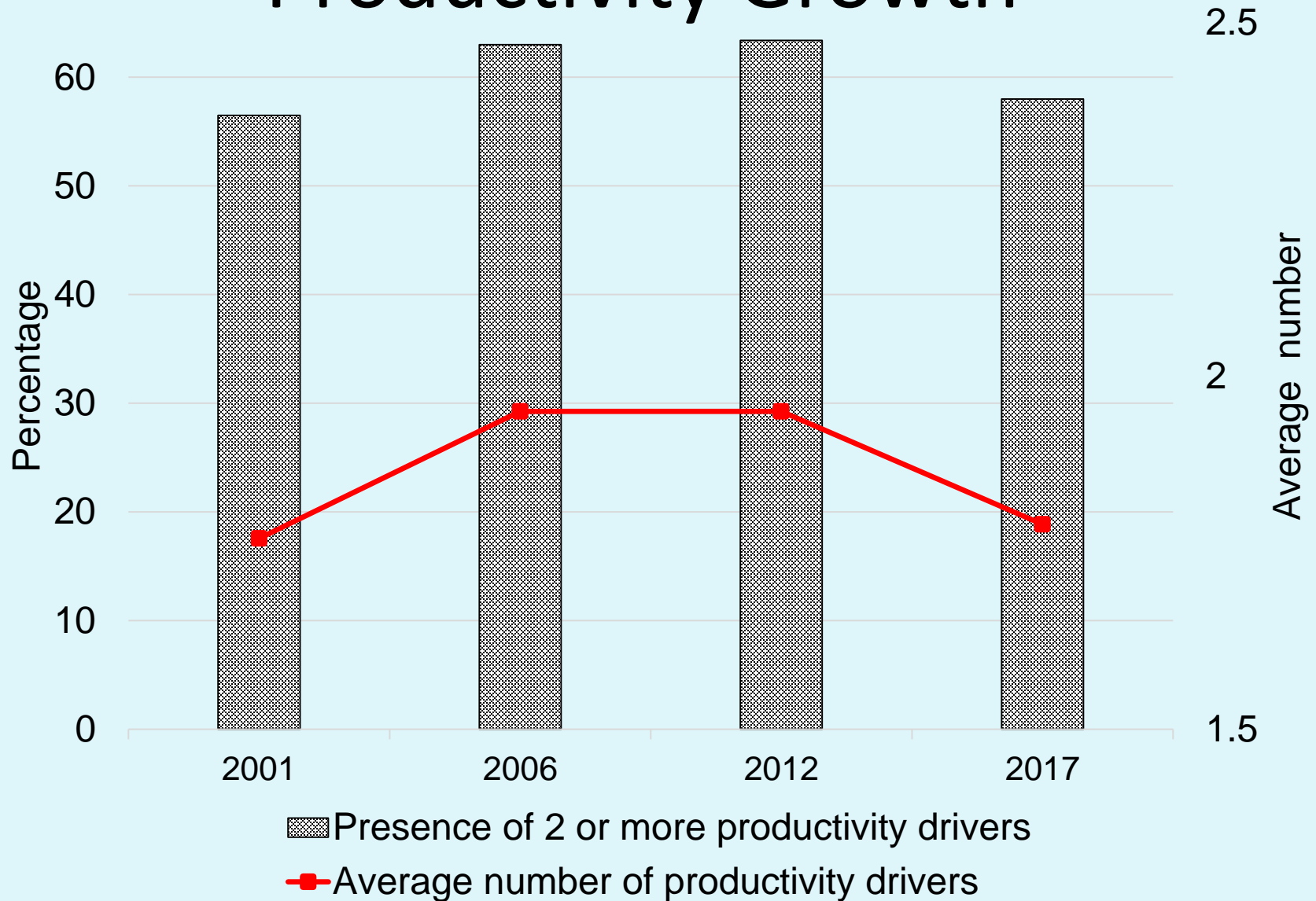
Correlates of High Productivity Enhancing Jobs



Importance of Good Employee Management



Recent Trends in 'Drivers' of Productivity Growth



Summary & Implications

- Workers report that their existing ideas help to improve productivity
- However, not all workers have the opportunity to get involved in this way (e.g. young workers' ideas have less of an impact)
- More needs to be done to tap into these worker-based sources of productivity growth
- Workers also have ideas about how to improve productivity in the future
- For both employers and government there is a business case for greater employee involvement



Job quality quiz: www.howgoodismyjob.com

Promo video: <https://youtu.be/GG-ffEQnDeE>

Project web site: www.cardiff.ac.uk/ses2017

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Skills and Employment Survey 2017

The Skills and Employment Survey (2017) collects data on what people do at work, what skills they use and how they work.

The 2017 survey is the seventh in a series of studies which began in 1986. A total of 3,306 workers took part in the latest survey. These cross-sectional surveys provide the means to chart and explain the changing pattern of job quality and skills over time. The series is a crucial part of social science research infrastructure which has provided the basis for many publications, such as those listed in the [Skills and Employment Survey \(2012\)](#).

Results from the 2017 survey were launched at two events in July and October 2018 and are contained in six short first findings reports. A job quality quiz (www.howgoodismyjob.com) was also launched in July. Find out more about how best to measure job quality and get an insight into the questions asked in the survey by reading our [guide - what are the best measures of good work?](#)



Short reports

- [Productivity in Britain: the Workers' Perspective PDF, 769.58 KB](#)
- [Skills Trends at Work in Britain PDF, 365.56 KB](#)
- [Fairness at Work in Britain PDF, 483.83 KB](#)
- [Work Intensity in Britain PDF, 510.49 KB](#)
- [Participation at Work in Britain PDF, 603.75 KB](#)
- [Insecurity at Work in Britain PDF, 404.47 KB](#)

Technical reports

- [Skills and Employment Survey 2017 - Technical Report](#)

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