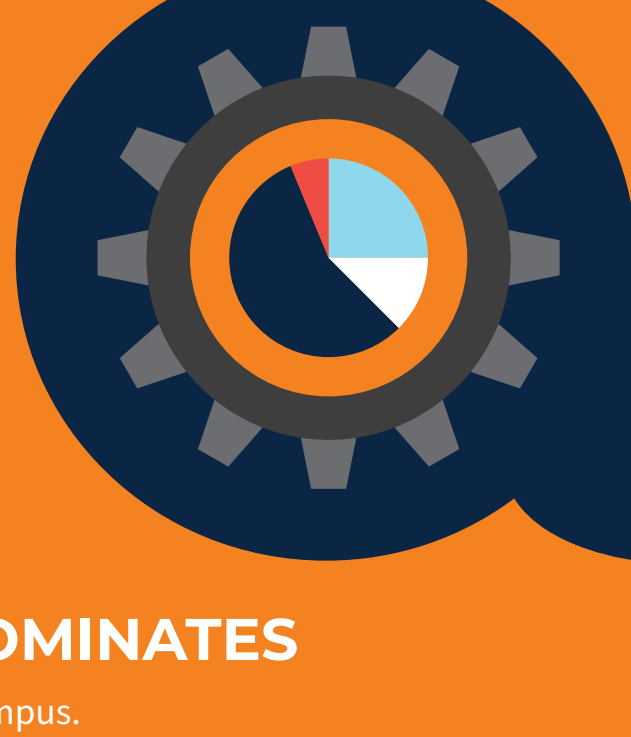


# Network Challenges in Higher Education Right Now

The pandemic catalyzed IT operations, compressing digital transformation efforts from years into weeks. Nowhere has that been more apparent than in higher education, which enabled remote work for staff and faculty and shifted from in-person to online teaching and learning practically overnight. An upshot of all that, as a recent Campus Technology survey discovered, is new appreciation on campus for the IT organization and its effective running of the network. But challenges remain.



## REMOTE WORK STILL DOMINATES

Most people are still working and learning off campus.



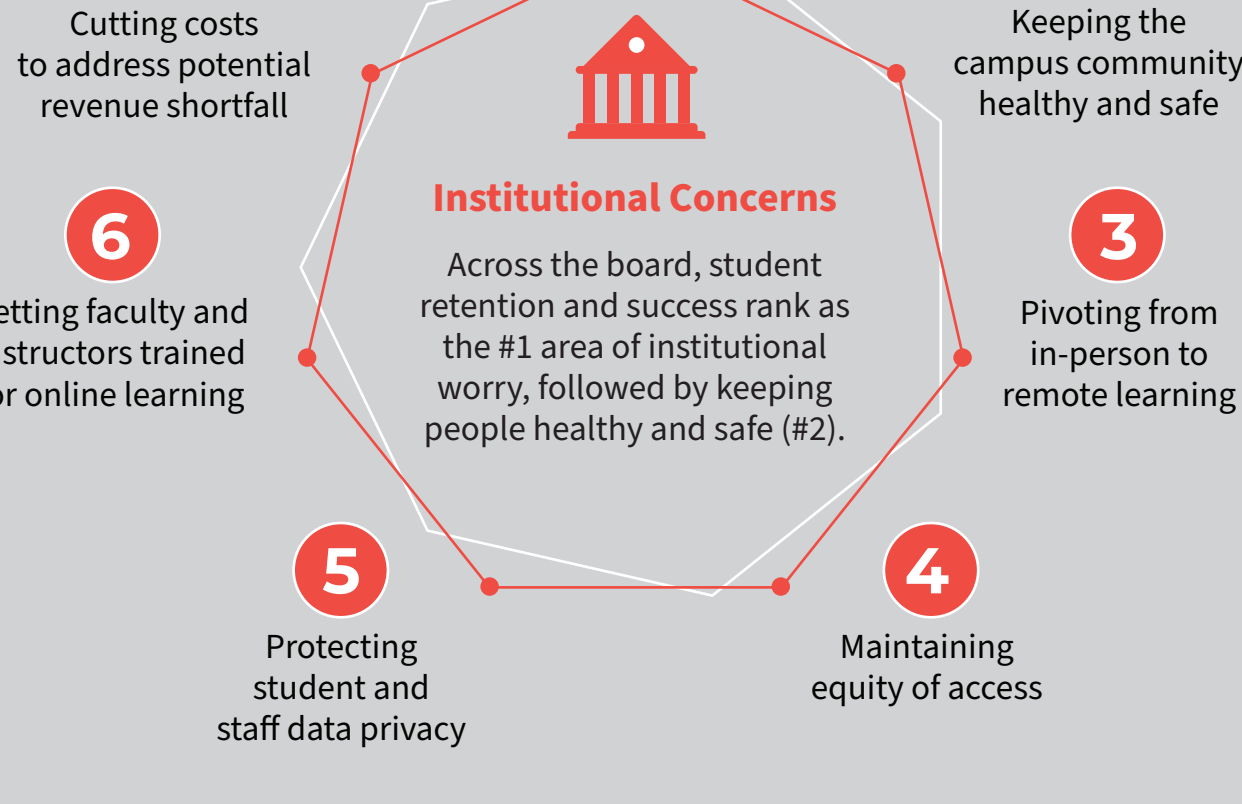
**62%**  
of faculty



**55%**  
of staff

## PRIORITIES

The order of priorities shifts between pivoting versus protecting: While IT Roles are concerned about pivoting from in-person to remote learning, Leadership Roles prioritize protecting student and staff data privacy.

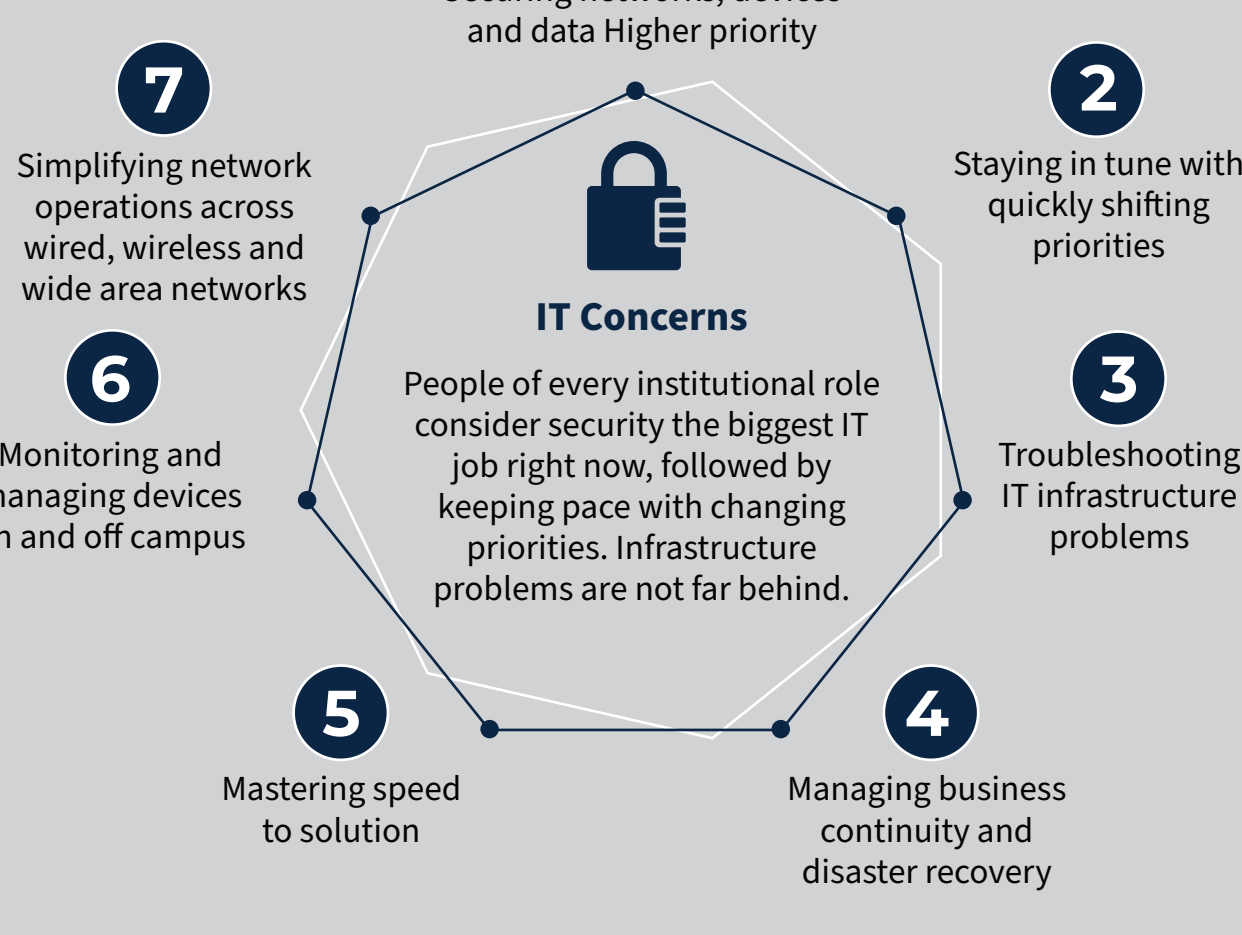


### GOOD NEWS!

IT to-do's—security and agility—dovetail with overall campus priorities.

### BETTER NEWS!

Response by Leadership Roles suggests a belief that IT will stay on top of infrastructure basics—troubleshooting, device management and network operations.

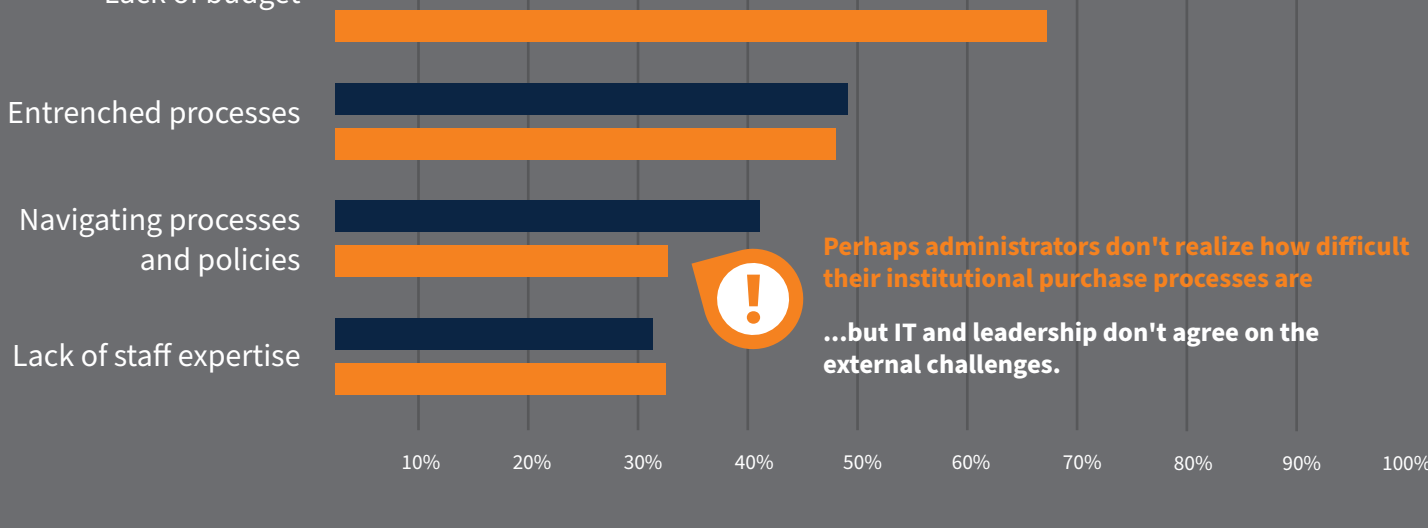


## WHAT HOLDS IT BACK

When choosing a technology solution, IT and campus leaders agree on internal challenges...

### INTERNAL CHALLENGES

IT ROLES LEADERSHIP ROLES



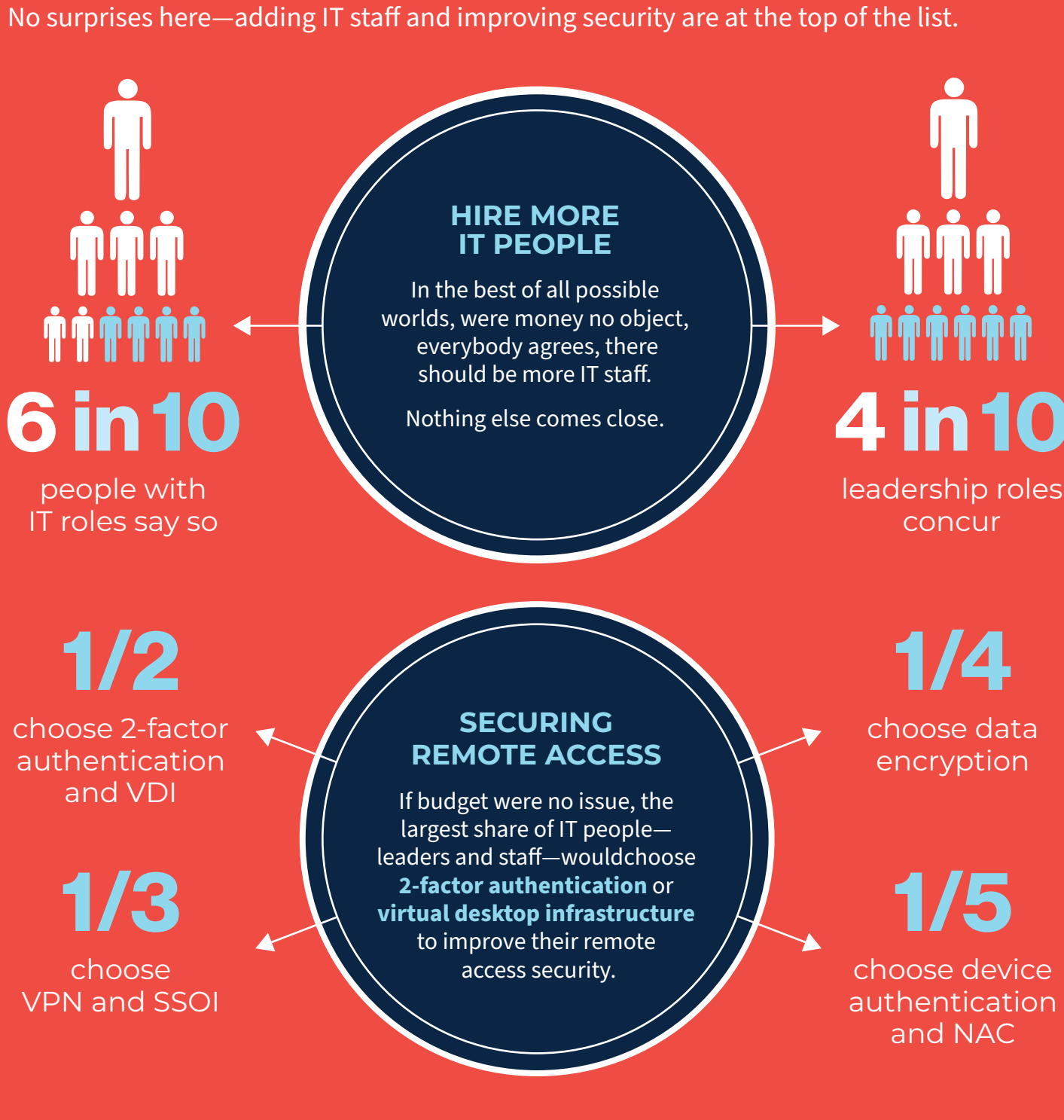
### EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

IT ROLES LEADERSHIP ROLES



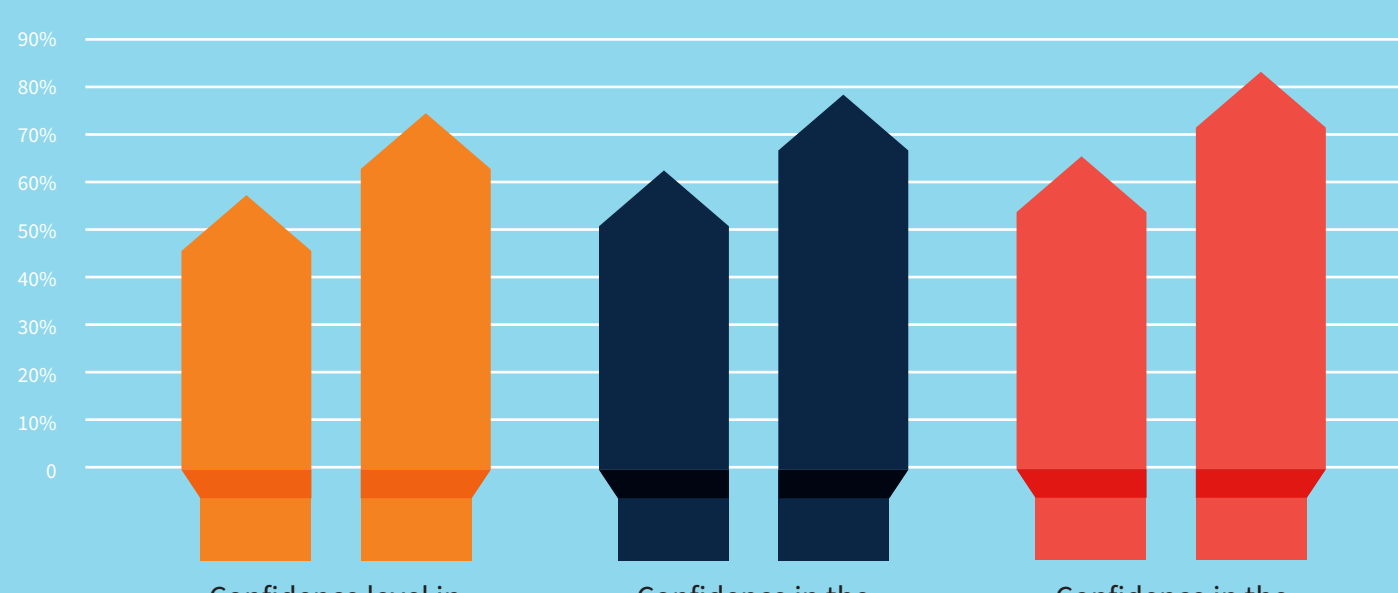
## ON THE WISHLIST

No surprises here—adding IT staff and improving security are at the top of the list.

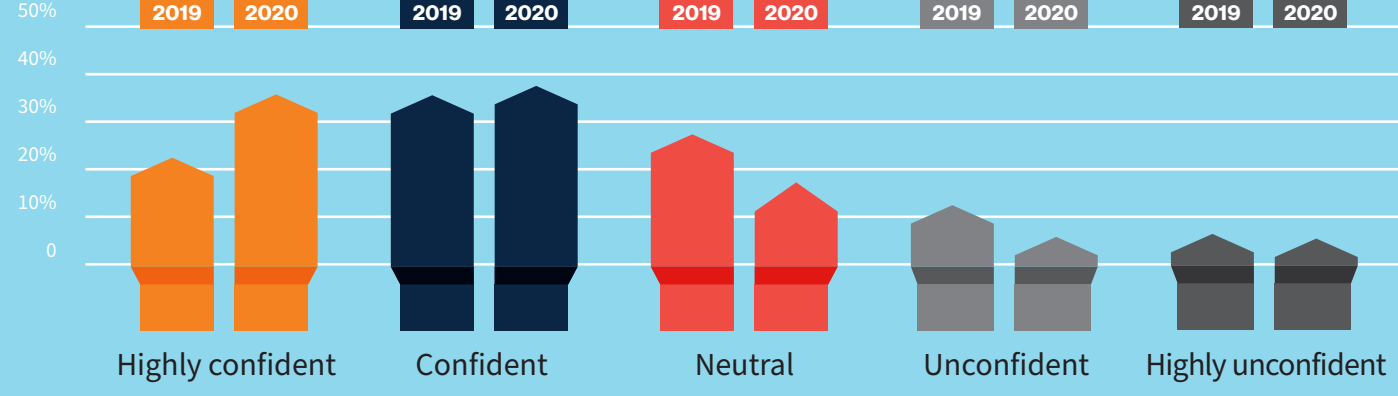


## TRUST IN IT HAS BLOSSOMED

Now that staff, faculty and leadership have seen how the network infrastructure supports remote operations for teaching, learning and other services, they're showing greater confidence in IT across the board.



### HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOUR SCHOOL'S IT INFRASTRUCTURE IS READY FOR REMOTE OPERATIONS?



## SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

While across-the-board pickup of remote access for learning and campus services was the most notable change to arrive on the wings of 2020—mentioned by 1/3 of respondents—it wasn't the only one.

### OTHER MAJOR NETWORK CHANGES INCLUDED THESE:



**More bandwidth, wireless, APs**



**More and broader VPN usage**



**More infrastructure and security**

### WHAT DO YOUR HIGHER ED PEERS SAY ARE THEIR BIGGEST WINS?

**We finished the "upgrade of fiber optics"**

**We got "more training" for faculty**

**We switched to "maximum remote learning"**

**We made the VPN "faster" and "easier"**

**We made computer labs "available off campus"**

**We made "more services available online"**

**We bought more devices**

**We tightened "security for work-from-home"**

**We expanded home network capacity**

## 5 WAYS TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Network management tool choice plays into IT's continued success. Since it's not clear when the turnaround for higher ed employment and hiring will begin again, IT can apply technology to make their job easier:

- 1. IMPROVE ACCESS** by upgrading and unifying wired and wireless infrastructure.
- 2. GAIN BETTER VISIBILITY AND EASIER MANAGEMENT** of the entire network by moving to the cloud.
- 3. REDUCE TCO**—and review network-as-a-service option.
- 4. LEVERAGE AIOPS AND MACHINE LEARNING** to improve security and fix problems before they occur.
- 5. EMBRACE ZERO TRUST SECURITY** by leveraging role-based policies without adding to the complexity of the network—regardless of when or where users connect.



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Notes: Findings are based on a Campus Technology online survey open for invitation-only response in fall 2020. After filtering for appropriateness of affiliation and completeness of answers, survey results represent 112 respondents. Roles included: IT leadership and staff (46%); faculty, instructional and research (38%); and non-IT leadership and staff (17%). Affiliations included: four-year public institutions (38%), private nonprofits (27%), two-year community colleges (19%), private for-profits (7%), graduate schools (6%) and postsecondary vocational schools (3%). Responses may not total 100% due to rounding.