

THE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT AND PROBLEM DRINKING: GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTION

**Genevieve Ames, Ph.D.
Prevention Research Center
School of Public Health
University of California, Berkeley, California**

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. What does research tell us about occupational drinking rates and the costs of alcohol-related problems to the employer?**
- 2. Do we have scientific evidence that characteristics of the work environment are related to drinking patterns of workers?**
- 3. What are the key intervention points in the environmental approach to prevention of workplace alcohol problems?**

QUESTION 1

What does research tell us about occupational drinking rates and the costs of alcohol-related problems to the employer?

Full-Time Workers, Ages 18-49, Reporting Drug Use by Industry Category

<u>Industry Category</u>	<u>Past Year Illicit Drug Use</u>		<u>Heavy Alcohol Use</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Construction	21.2	13.6	14.0	5.2
Manufacturing-Nondurable Goods (food products, textiles, paper, chemicals, coal, & rubber)	17.0	10.9	9.7	2.4
Manufacturing-Durable Goods (Lumber, Metal, & Heavy Machinery)	16.4	10.2	10.1	1.6
Wholesale Trade	16.4	13.0	12.6	3.6
Retail Trade	22.4	16.5	12.6	4.3

National Household Survey – 33,505 Respondents. Heavy alcohol use is defined as drinking five or more occasions during the previous 30 days.

Full-Time Workers, Ages 18-49, Reporting Drug Use by Industry Category

<u>Industry Category</u>	<u>Past Year Illicit Drug Use</u>		<u>Heavy Alcohol Use</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Transportation (Bus, Rail)	12.7	12.2	9.6	1.3
Trucking Services	16.2	3.8	9.1	*
Air Transportation	15.4	5.2	9.7	0.8
Restaurants, Bars, & Drug Stores	33.9	19.8	20.9	8.0

Full-Time Workers, Ages 18-49, Reporting Drug Use by Industry Category

<u>Industry Category</u>	<u>Past Year Illicit Drug Use</u>		<u>Heavy Alcohol Use</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	16.4	13.2	6.9	2.7
Business Repair Services	21.3	16.1	12.3	3.1
Business Management & Consulting, Advertising, Personnel, Computer, & Data Processing	17.4	19.6	13.0	6.1
Other Business Services	24.8	15.7	12.2	0.9

Full-Time Workers, Ages 18-49, Reporting Drug Use by Industry Category

<u>Industry Category</u>	<u>Past Year Illicit Drug Use</u>		<u>Heavy Alcohol Use</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Automotive, Electrical Repair Services & Misc.	22.2	*	12.5	*
Personal Services (hotel, entertainment & recreation)	25.8	15.6	9.8	3.4
Professional & Related Services	13.0	9.2	6.3	1.7

Source: Heffman, Brittingham, Larson. "Drug Use Among U.S. Workers: Prevalence and Trends by Occupation and Industry Categories." National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996.

EMPLOYEE DRINKING AND WORKPLACE PROBLEMS

Work and family-related health and social consequences:

- **On-the job injuries***
- **Traumatic accidents in the context of work***
- **Violence between workers**
- **Low employee morale***
- **Disruption of family life***

*evidence in literature of links of problem to alcohol consumption at work and/or overall.

Mortality Consequences:

- **Higher rates of cirrhosis in certain occupations***
- **Premature deaths from fatal accidents at work***
- **Transport fatal accidents**

*evidence in literature of links of problem to alcohol consumption at work and/or overall.

Legal Consequences:

- **Liability for on-the-job accidents**
- **Liability for company owned vehicle accidents**
- **Liability for accidents caused by employees in transportation industries***
- **Liability for injuries, violence, sexual assault, and accidents following company-sponsored events***

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Economic Consequences:

- **High alcohol-related absenteeism**
- **Higher costs for employee insurance and health***
- **Lower work performance and productivity***

*evidence in literature of links of problem to alcohol consumption at work and/or overall.

Estimates of overall economic costs of alcohol abuse in the U.S.:

- **185 billion annually**
- **134 billion attributed to lost productivity including:**
 - **Losses from alcohol related illnesses - \$87.7 billion**
 - **Premature deaths – \$36.5 billion**
 - **Crime – \$10.1 billion**

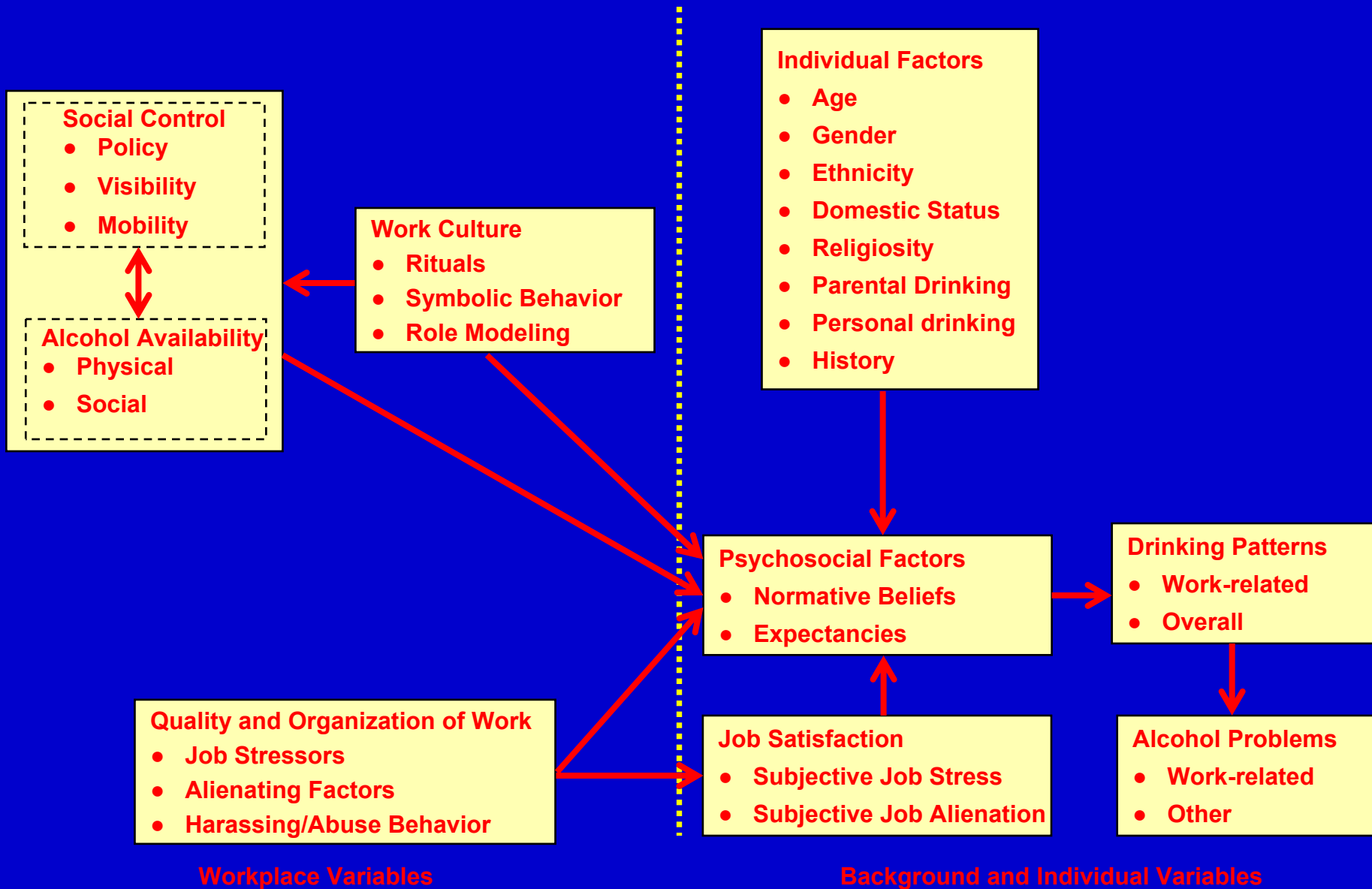
Remaining attributed to:

- **Healthcare expenditures - \$26.3 billion**
- **Treating alcohol abuse and dependence - \$7.5 billion**
- **Adverse medical consequences of alcohol - \$19 billion**
- **Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes - \$15.7 billion**
- **Criminal justice costs of alcohol-related crime - \$6.3 billion**

Question 2

- **If drinking rates vary by occupation, is it reasonable to assume that certain characteristics of a workplace culture and environment contribute to undesirable drinking?**
- **Do we have scientific evidence that characteristics of the work environment are related to drinking patterns of workers?**

Cultural Model of Workplace Drinking



ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND DRINKING BEHAVIOR: A COMPARISON OF U.S. WORKERS IN JAPANESE-AND U.S.-MANAGED PLANTS

Genevieve Ames, Ph.D.

Joel W. Grube, Ph.D.

Roland Moore, Ph.D.

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AIMS OF THE STUDY

- **To investigate if and how measures of social control in the workplace influence workplace drinking norms and drinking patterns; and**
- **To compare two separate United States work environments in the same industry**
 - **One with traditional American management culture**
 - **One with transplant Japanese management culture**

AIMS OF THE STUDY

Formal Social Control defined as:

Rules/policies for monitoring drinking behavior

Procedures for enforcing disciplinary or treatment action

Workplace Drinking Norms defined as:

What others do with regard to drinking behaviors

What is or is not appropriate with regard to alcohol consumption

METHODS FOR SURVEY

- **Random Sample drawn from 10,000 employees across the two plants**
- **In-home, confidential questionnaire administered by independent survey organization.**

METHODS FOR ETHNOGRAPHY

- **200 hours of observations and 100 face to face interviews inside the two plants over three years.**
- **Unions leaders, managers, and hourly employees**
- **Over 200 hours of observations in selected areas**
- **Work conducted by staff anthropologists**

KEY DIFFERENCES IN TWO WORK SETTINGS

	Traditional	Transplant
Union/Management Relations	Adversarial	Cooperative
Management	Hierarchical	Participatory
Teams	Underdeveloped; not structurally integrated	Cohesive and integrated
	Individual accountability for behavior	Peer accountability for behavior

Traditional

Transplant

ROLES

**First Line
Supervisor**

Dictatorial Management

**Foreman -
Team Leader
management**

**Role not yet integrated
with team**

Role integrated

**Full accountability for
quality and productivity**

**Shares
accountability**

**Union Shop
Steward**

**Against alcohol
disciplinary action**

**Accept alcohol
disciplinary
action**

**Pro-treatment/EAP in
place of discipline**

**Pro-discipline
and treatment
approach**

	Traditional	Transplant
Alcohol Policies	Medical/EAP primary	Medical/EAP and discipline primary
	Ambivalent language	Strong, clear language
	Ambivalent enforcement	Consistent enforcement
	Politicized by Union and Management	Less political interference
Drug Testing	Not possible, Union objection	Possible, Union sanctioned

	Traditional	Transplant
Lunch Policies	No policy/rules	Paid if eat in plant
Attendance Policies	Well developed Supervisor regulated	Well developed Supervisor, team peer regulated

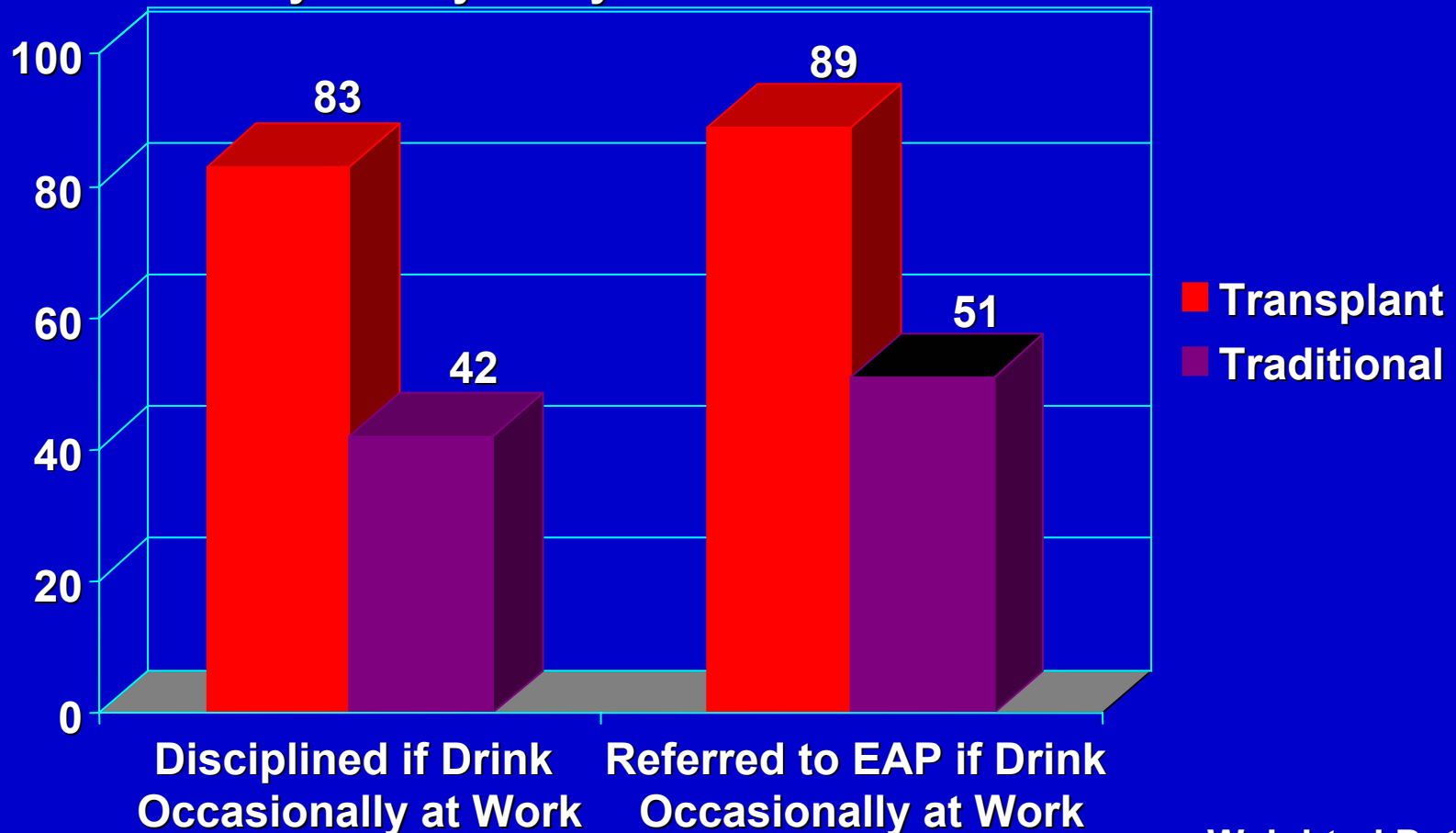
PERCEIVED SOCIAL CONTROL: POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Percent Likely or Very Likely to Get Caught:



PERCEIVED SOCIAL CONTROL: DISCIPLINE AND EAP

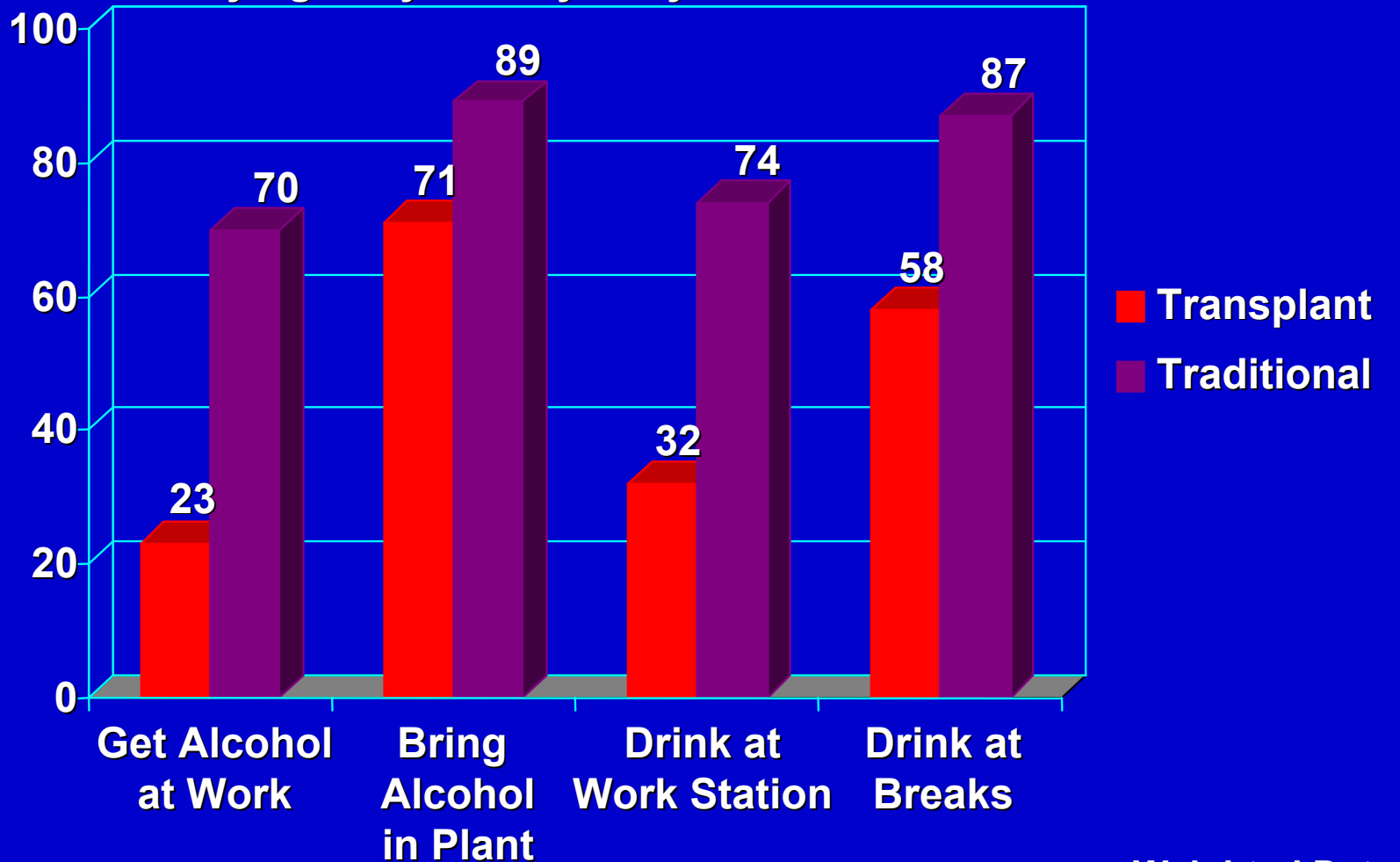
Percent Likely or Very Likely to be:



Weighted Data

SUBJECTIVE ALCOHOL AVAILABILITY

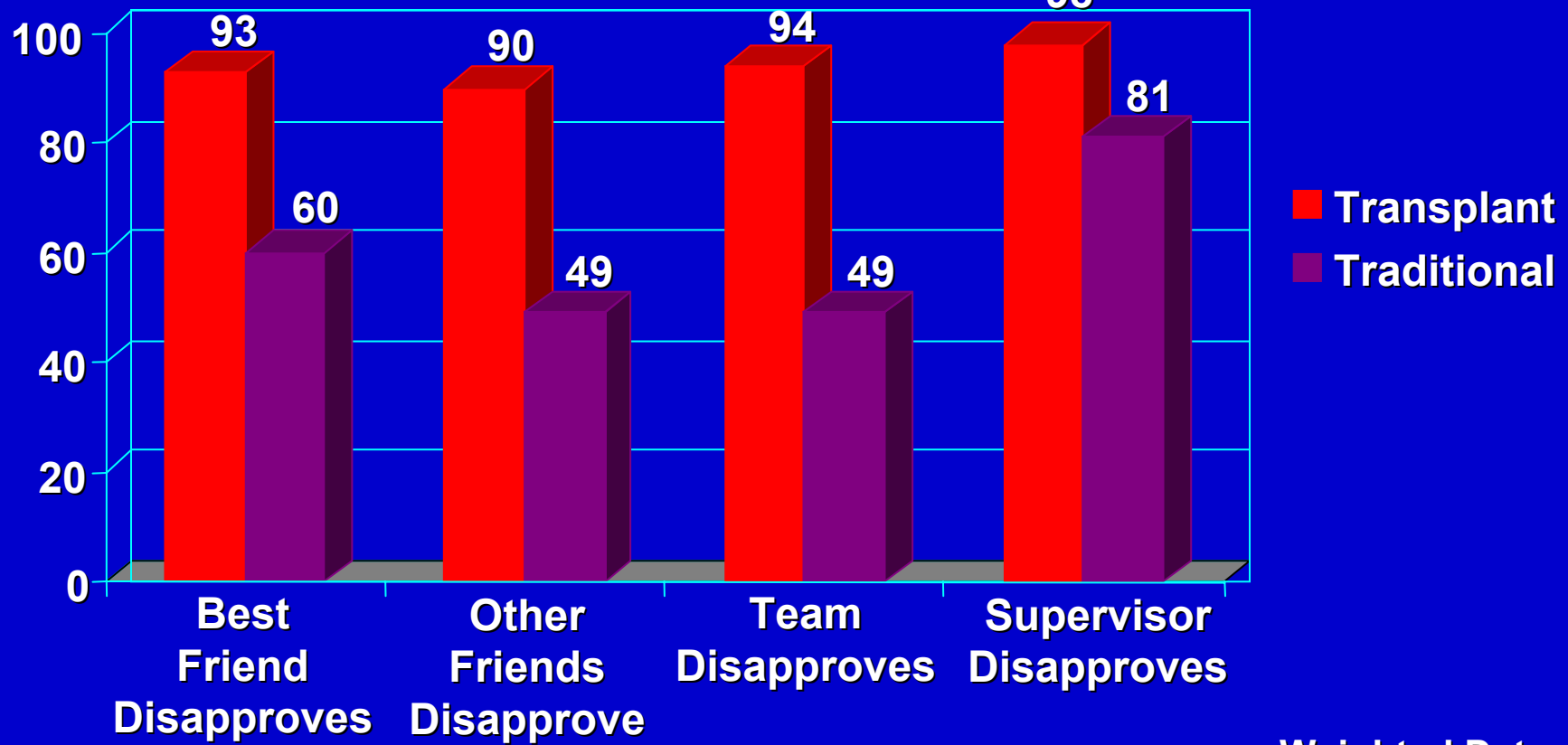
Percent Saying Easy or Very Easy



Weighted Data

PERCEIVED DRINKING NORMS APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL OF DRINKING DURING WORK HOURS

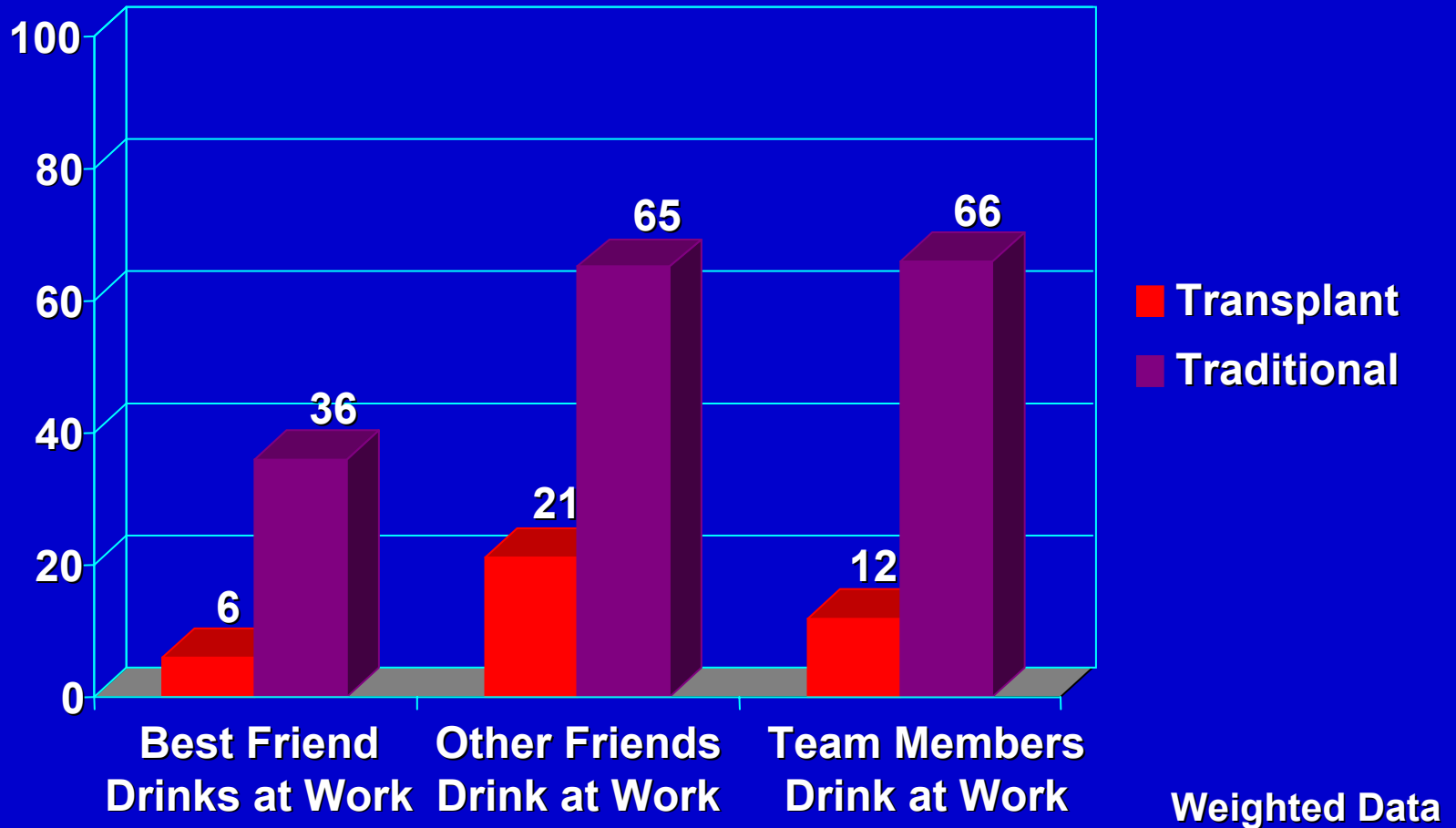
Percent Saying Yes



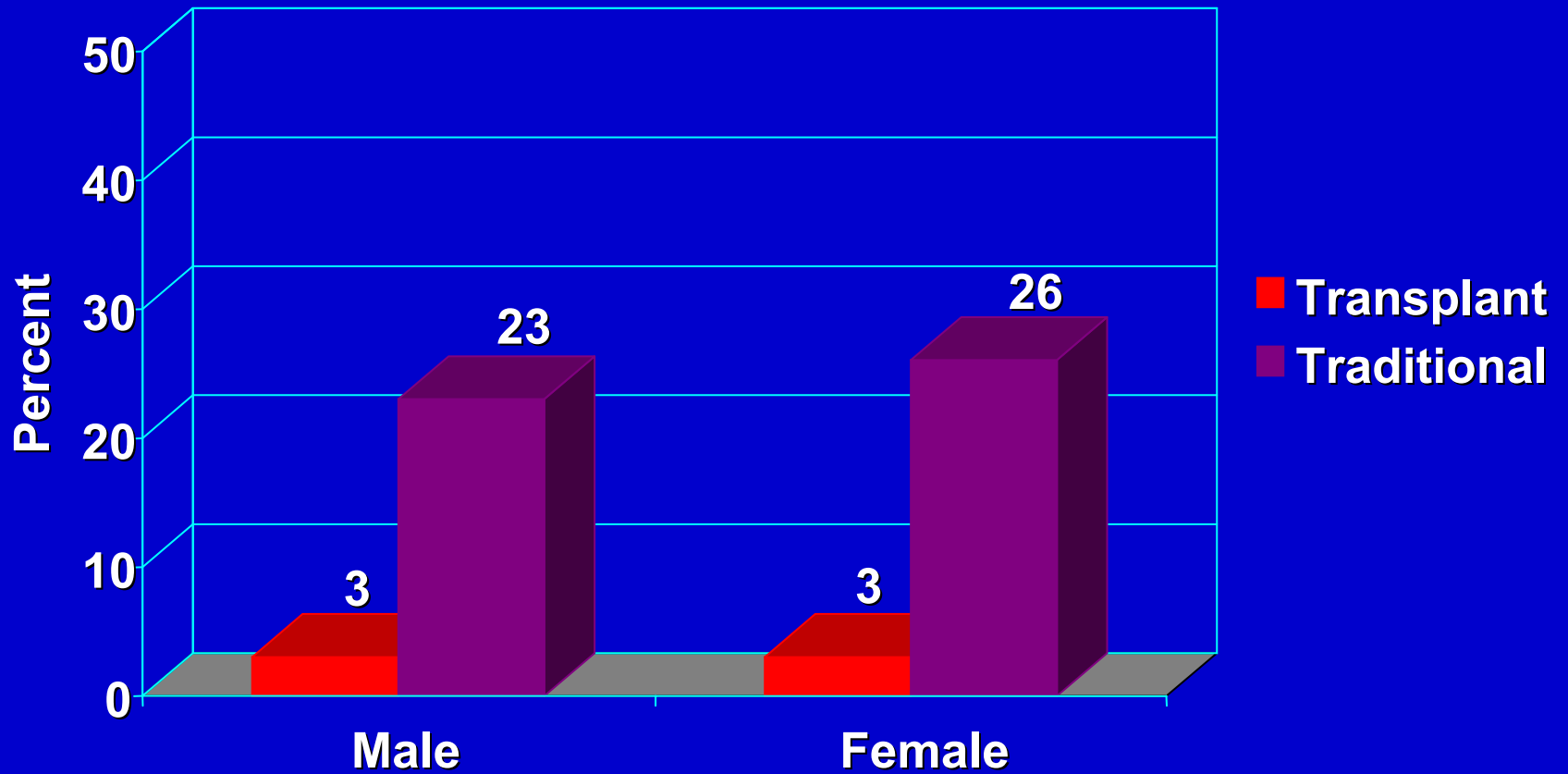
Weighted Data

PERCEIVED DRINKING NORMS ESTIMATE OF FRIENDS/PEERS DRINKING AT WORK

Percent Saying Yes

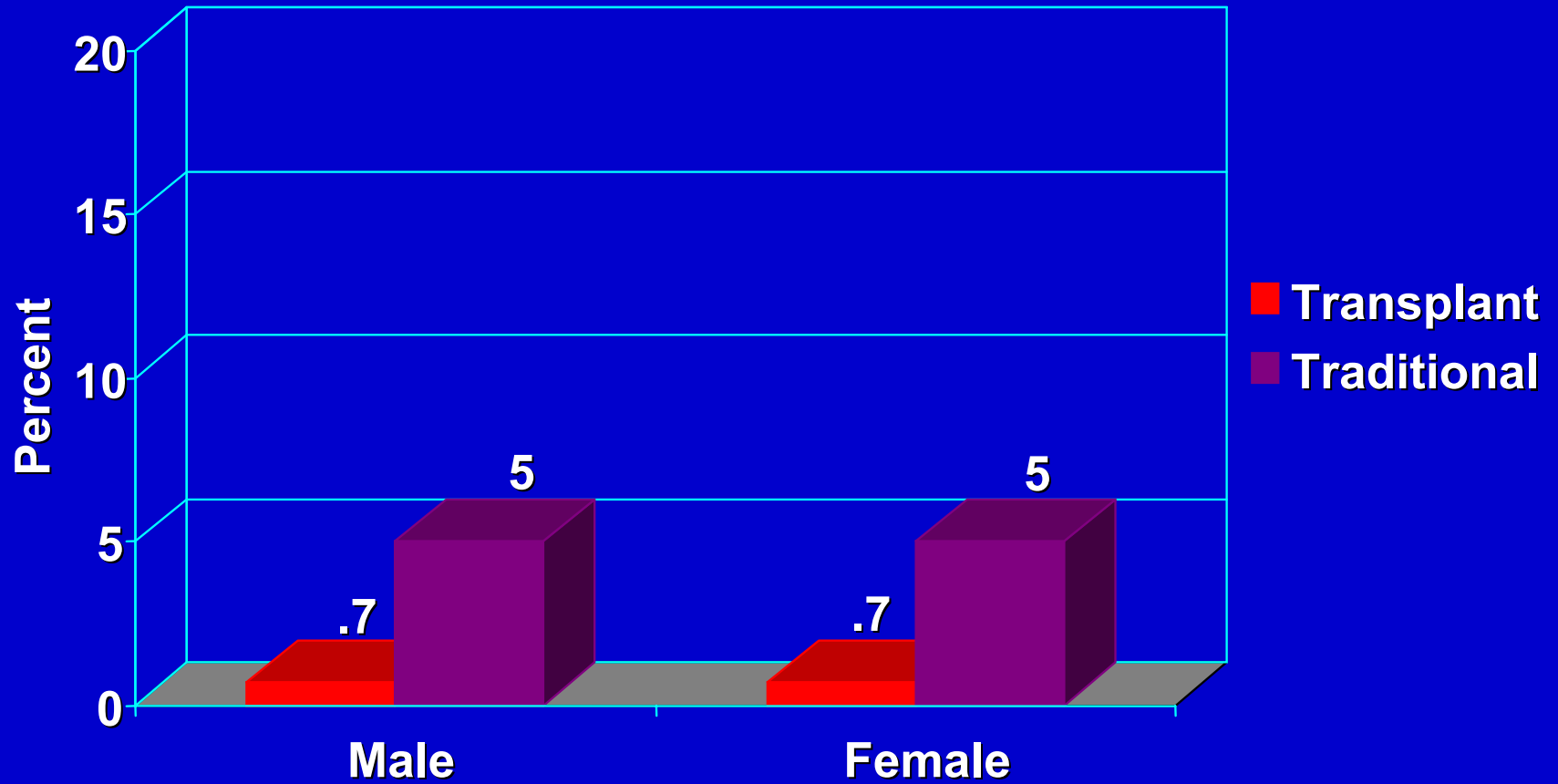


DRINKING DURING WORK HOURS



Weighted Data

DRANK 4+ DRINKS BEFORE WORK



Weighted Data

QUESTION 3

What are the key intervention points in the environmental approach to prevention of workplace alcohol problems?

ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO PREVENTION

Goal: To change elements of a work environment that support, allow, or maintain undesirable drinking behavior in work-related context.

ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO PREVENTION: POINTS OF INTERVENTION

- **Clearly stated alcohol policy***
- **Agreements among management, union and workers that policy will be enforced**
- **Mandated alcohol testing for certain occupations (e.g., transportation workers)**
- **Drug and attendance policies that are enforceable**
- **Control physical and social availability of alcohol at work***
- **Discourage activities that support workplace drinking subcultures***

*evidence in literature of links of problem to alcohol consumption at work and/or overall.

ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO PREVENTION: POINTS OF INTERVENTION

- **Reduce physical and mental stress related to work environment***
- **Be aware of alienating factors of job or work setting***
- **Rewards for attendance, performance, and efforts to increase productivity**
- **Change workplace drinking norms***

*evidence in literature of links of problem to alcohol consumption at work and/or overall.

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO PREVENTION

- **Requires some up-front research to identify risk factors and thereby intervention points**
- **Full cooperation of management and union**
- **Scope and cost of program**

STRENGTHS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO PREVENTION

- **Intervention reaches all employees, not just those who are alcohol problem drinkers**
- **Has potential for more long-term lasting effect – does not need constant re-enforcement**
- **Intervention involves input and cooperation of personnel at all levels, including union leaders**
- **When integrated with educational and treatment programs, has the greatest potential for having an effect on the greatest number of employees.**