



# HUMAN RESOURCES

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## USER RESEARCH REPORT

NOVEMBER 7, 2016

# EXECUTIVE

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Case Western Reserve University's Human Resources department's website serves as an information gateway for current and prospective faculty and staff of Case Western Reserve University (CWRU).

The University Marketing and Communication (UMC) project team conducted stakeholder interviews with various sections within the Human Resources department as well as tree tests to see how the current and proposed architecture performs.

Based on these tests, our overall recommendations are:

- Move away from departmental-based navigation and replace with a combination of topic- and role-based navigation.
- Create a Work/Life section for current employees that will house information about different types of leaves, life events, retirement and perks of working at CWRU.
- Make the policies and forms searchable by topic so they are easily accessible to users.
- Make sure navigational labels adhere to users' expectations.
- Make content accessible from multiple areas, if user testing showed visitors expected to see it different places.

# RESEARCH GOALS

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Make the human resources website more user-friendly, focusing on content and navigation that allows users to quickly and effectively find desired information.

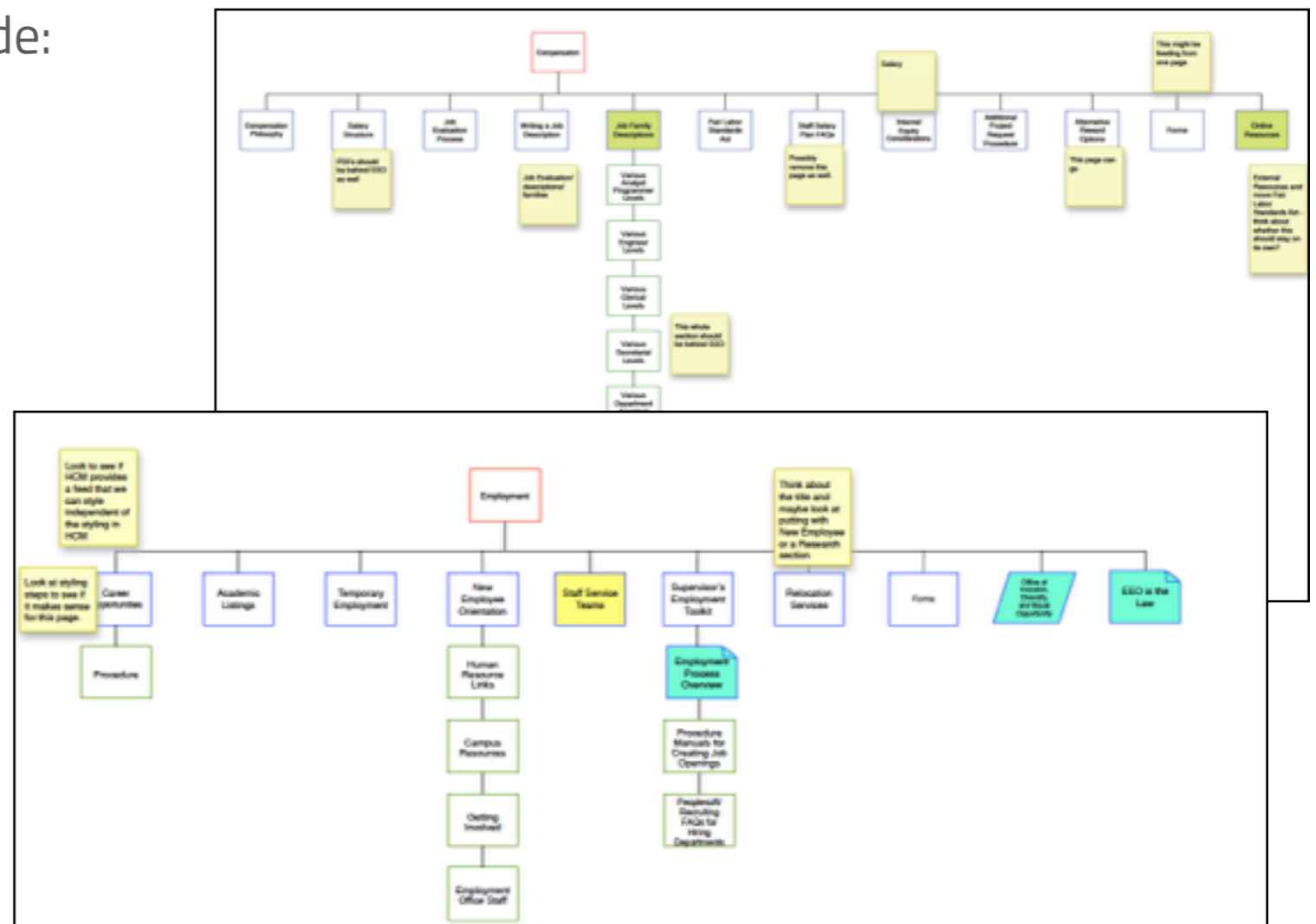
# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

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The University Marketing and Communication (UMC) project team conducted stakeholder interviews with various HR departments. In these interviews we discussed areas of concern for users and content managers; overall goals for departments; and what content needed to remain, change, be created or removed from the website.

The departments we met with include:

- Immigration Services
- Information Systems
- Policies
- Professional Development
- Benefits
- Compensation
- Employee Relations
- Employment
- Customer Service Center



# WHAT'S A TREE TEST AND WHY DO IT?

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A tree test is a research tool that determines if users are able to find content on a website. The tree test removes the visual design of the website and forces users to focus solely on the navigation links to obtain information.

This sort of research allows the research team to answer the following navigation-based questions:

- How effective is the navigation?
- Does the taxonomy match users' mental models?
- Is content placed under the appropriate label?



Example of the tree test with current HR architecture

# PARTICIPANTS

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The University Marketing and Communication (UMC) project team conducted two separate usability tests, one on the current architecture and one on the proposed architecture

Participants were recruited both in person and via email to participate in the research.

The participants were members of the CWRU community such as students, faculty and staff. Care was taken to exclude current HR employees from taking the tree test.

The tests were administered remotely through an emailed link. Participants spent an average of six minutes doing the test.

# RESULTS

The results of a tree test provide quantitative data for the project team to identify issues that the participants encountered during the research.

The data that is collected include the success and failure rates, first-click data and user paths during the research.

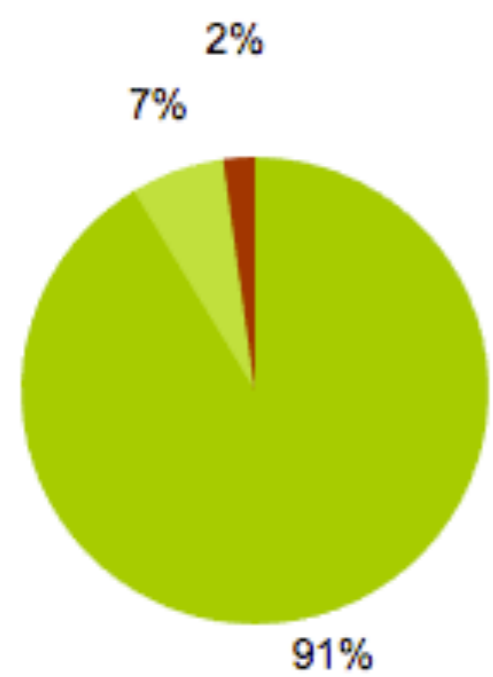


# QUESTION 1

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You're interested in working for Case Western Reserve University. Where would you go to find open positions?

## Results of Original Architecture



## Results of Proposed Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect

While users were able to accurately complete this task with the majority doing with direct successes in the original architecture, the proposed architecture increased the number of direct successes.

## Recommendations

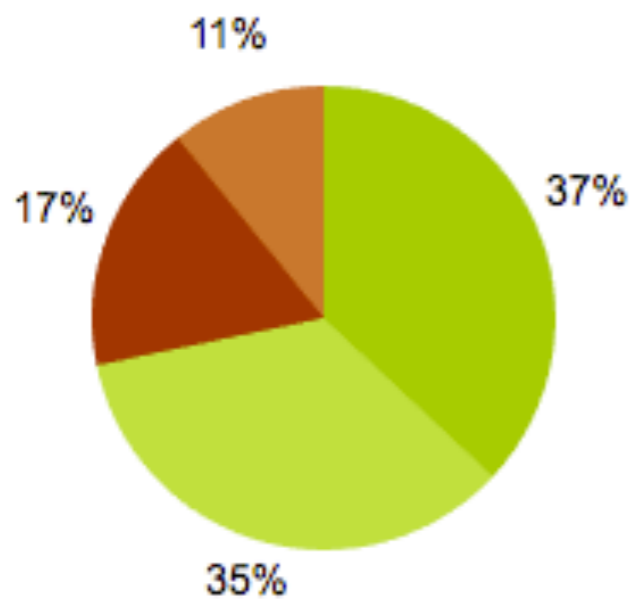
Change the navigation item from Employment to Careers

# QUESTION 2

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You've recently moved to a new house. Where would you go to update your address information with Human Resources?

## Results of Original Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
		Indirect

## Results of Proposed Architecture



While 72% of users were able to find this information on the current structure, almost half found the information through an indirect path. The original architecture can be compared with the new architecture, through which 100% of users completed the task with a direct success.

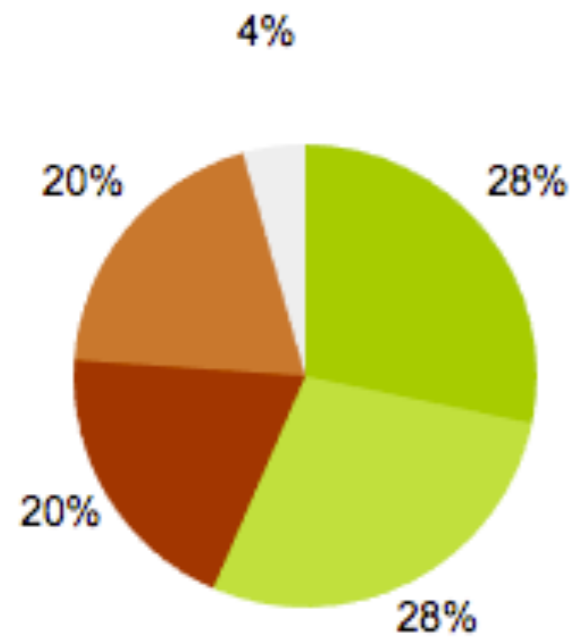
## Recommendations

Move this content under the newly formed Work/Life section and reference in the Employees and Benefits sections.

# QUESTION 3

Throughout the year, the university is scheduled to close for business for a set number of days. Where would you go to find information about what pre-scheduled days the university is closed?

## Results of Original Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect

## Results of Proposed Architecture



There were a large number of indirect successes and failures with this question with the current architecture. In the proposed architecture, a large number were indirect successes, showing that users did have a little difficulty finding the information.

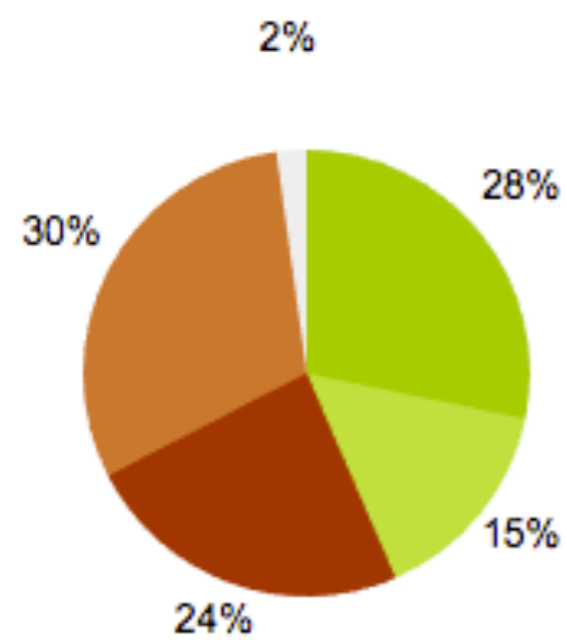
## Recommendations

This information has been relocated to the new Work/Life section, but due to the indirect successes, this information should be referenced in the Policies and Employees sections.

# QUESTION 4

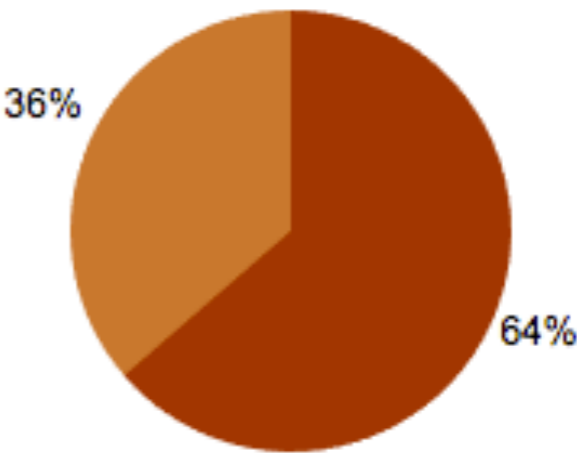
You just had a baby and would like to update your health insurance plan to include him/her as well. Where would you go to find this information?

Results of Original Architecture



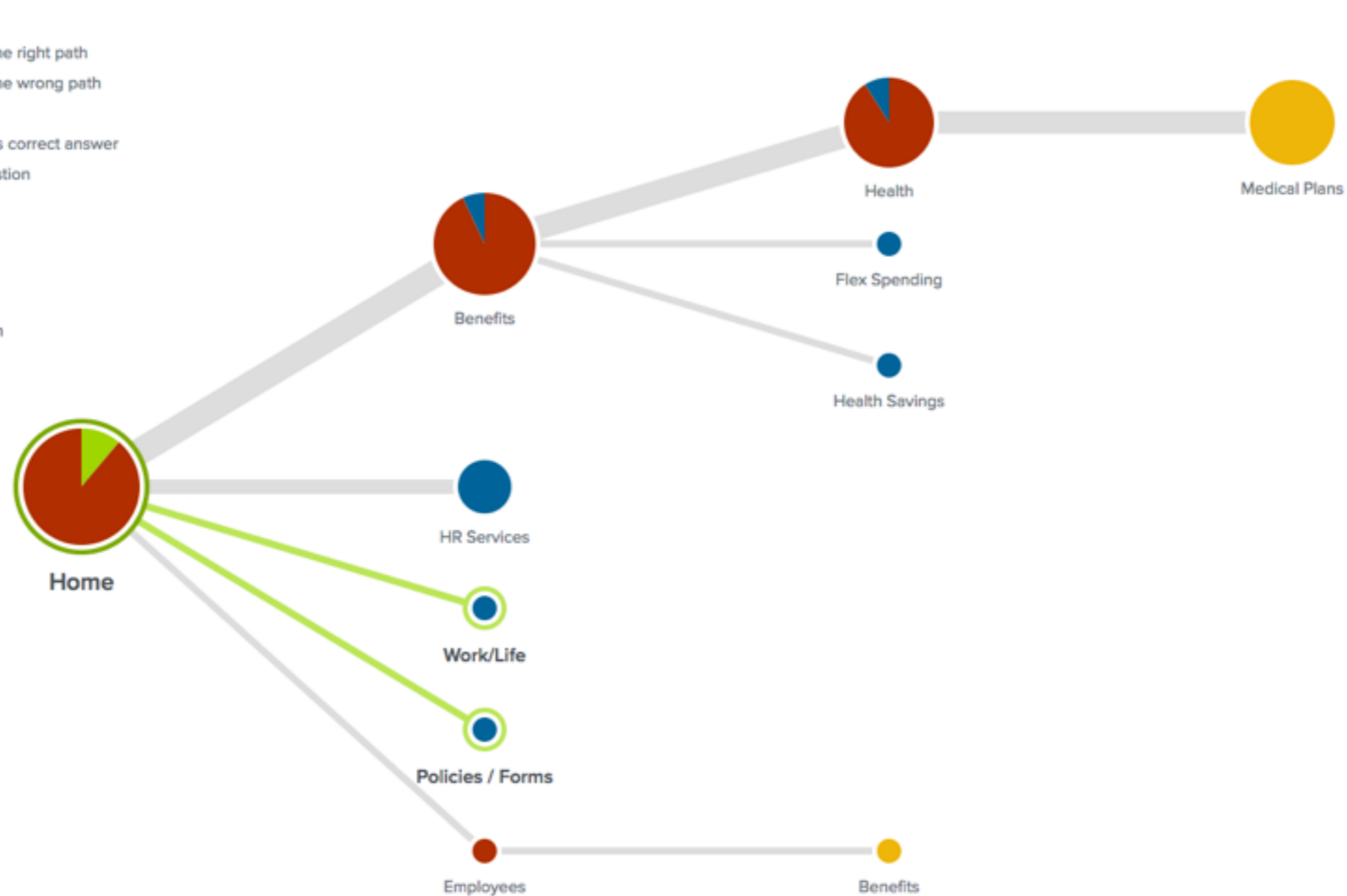
<div></div>	Success	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
		Indirect

Results of Proposed Architecture



With this question, the original architecture worked better than our proposed architecture. Users expected to find this information under the benefits section, specifically the health insurance section.

# QUESTION 4



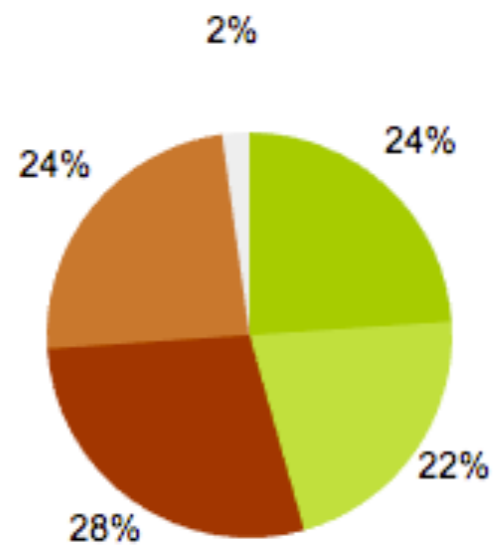
## Recommendations

This material should be moved to the Benefits section but should be referenced from the Work/Life section as well as the Employees section.

# QUESTION 5

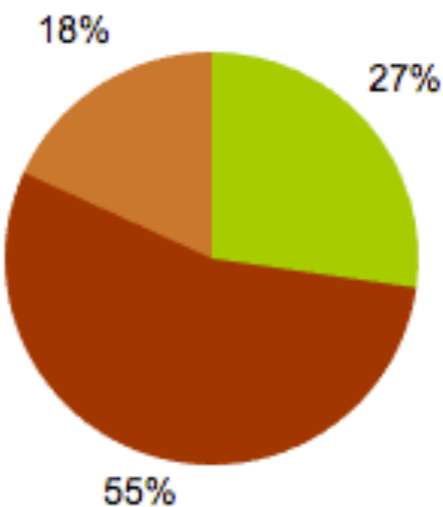
You need to take extended time off to care for an elderly relative. Where would you go to find information on how to officially make this request?

Results of Original Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
		Indirect

Results of Proposed Architecture



With this question, we were trying to see if users knew where to look for leave information, as it’s one of the questions that the Customer Service Center frequently answers. The current architecture was more successful, but people still had trouble finding it. In the proposed architecture, we placed it under the Benefits section, but this didn't match the users' mental model.

# QUESTION 5

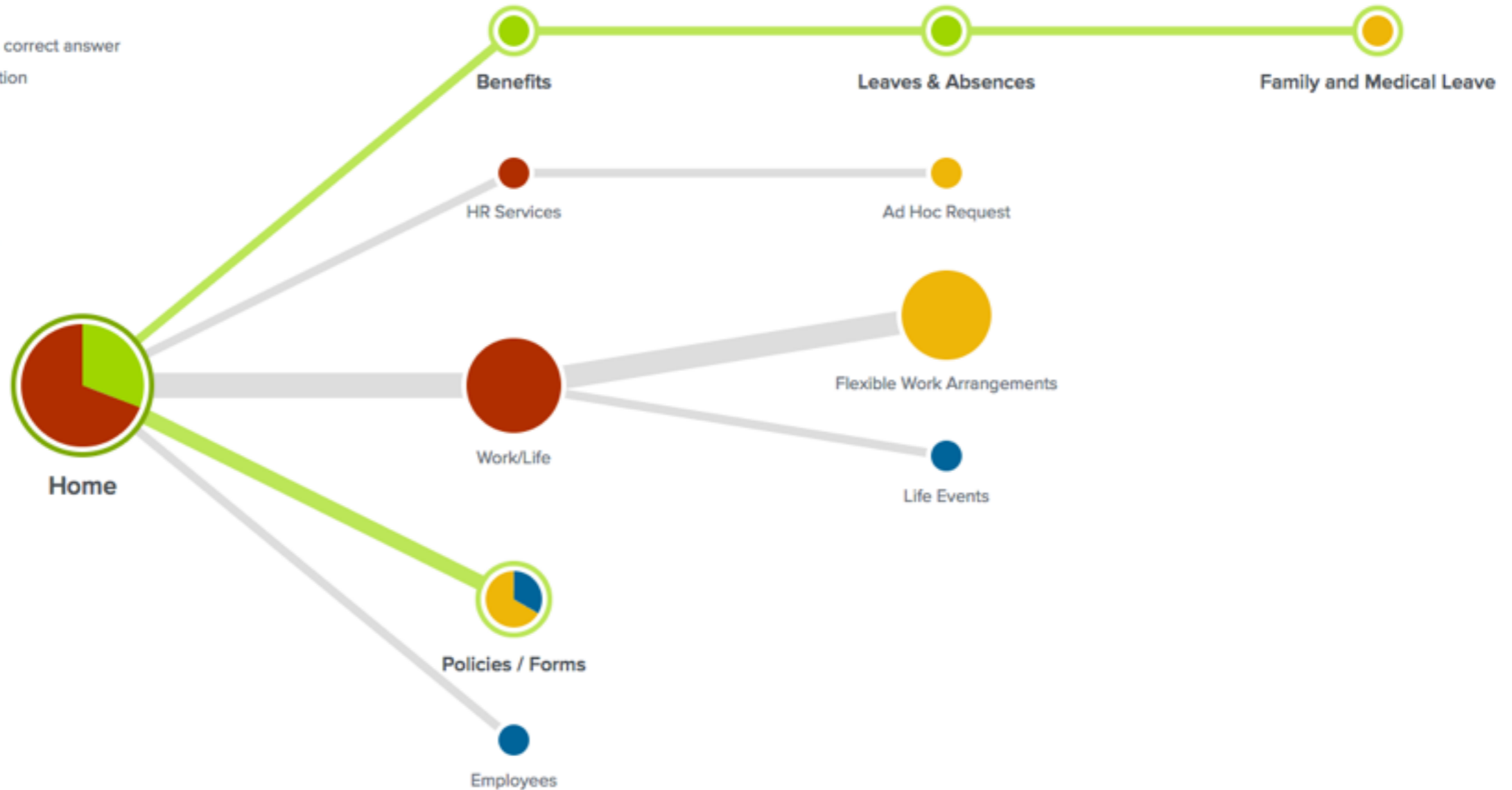
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## Pies

- Went down the right path
- Went down the wrong path
- Went back
- Nominated as correct answer
- Skipped question

## Lines

- Root node
- Correct path
- Incorrect path



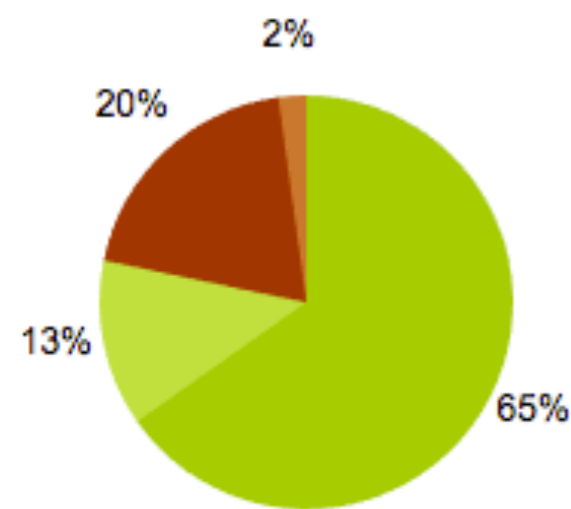
## Recommendations

This material should be moved from the Benefits section to the Work/Life area. References to this section can be reference from the appropriate Benefits pages and the Employee section.

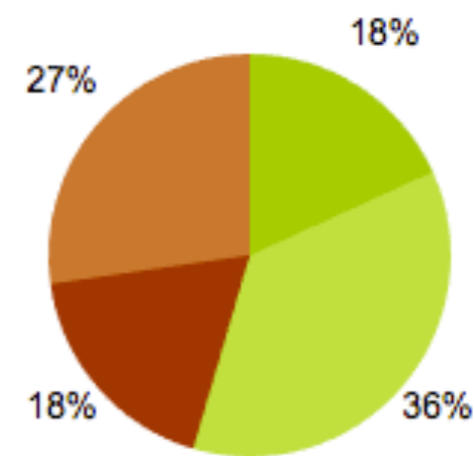
# QUESTION 6

You heard the university works with retail partners to provide services to employees at reduced rates. Where would you go to see what is offered?

Results of Original Architecture



Results of Proposed Architecture

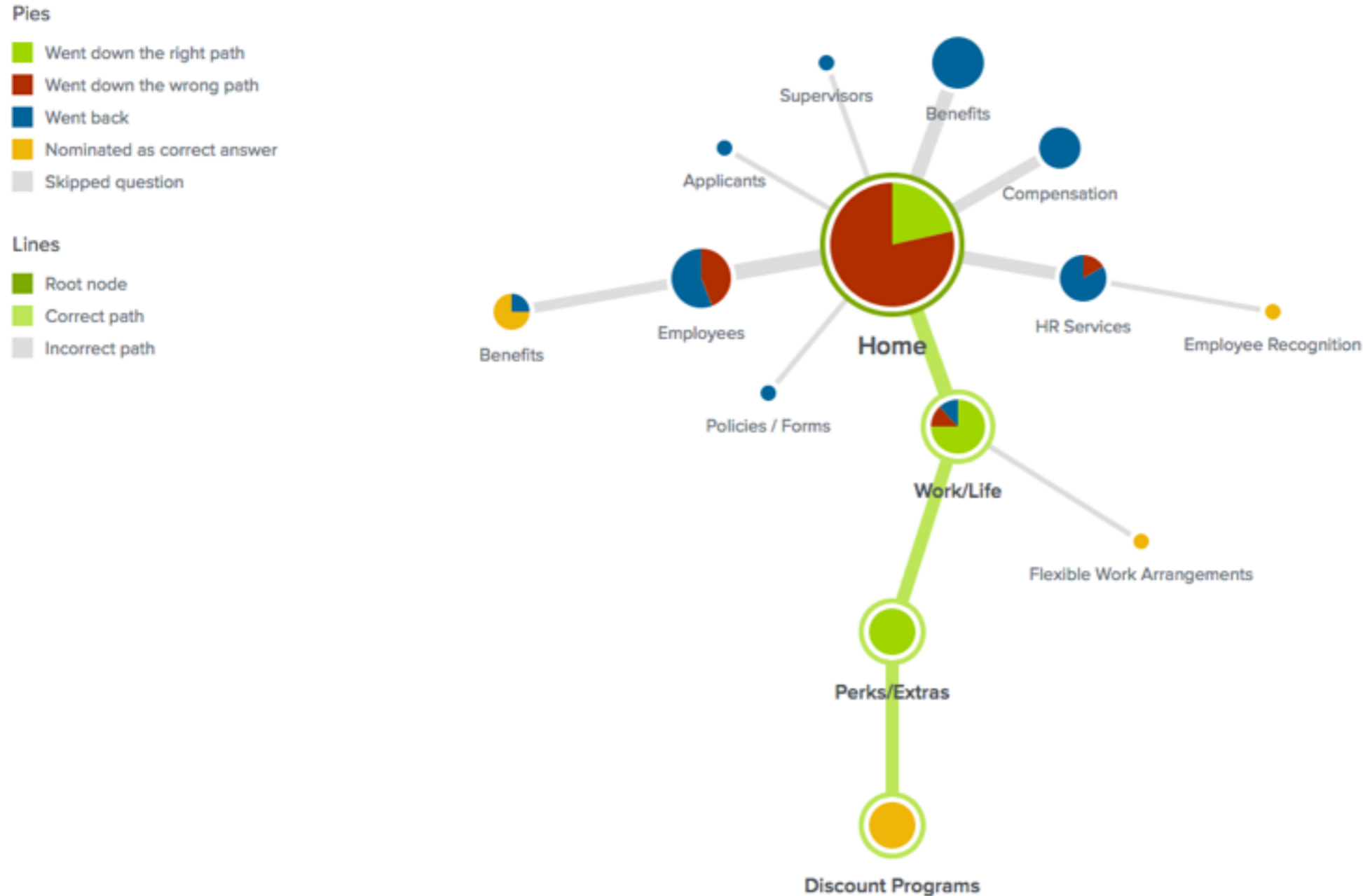


<div></div>	Success	Direct	Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct	Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct	Indirect

In the current architecture there were a couple of different paths to find this information. In the proposed architecture it was only listed in Work/Life section. There could be confusion with the Perks/Extra label.

# QUESTION 6

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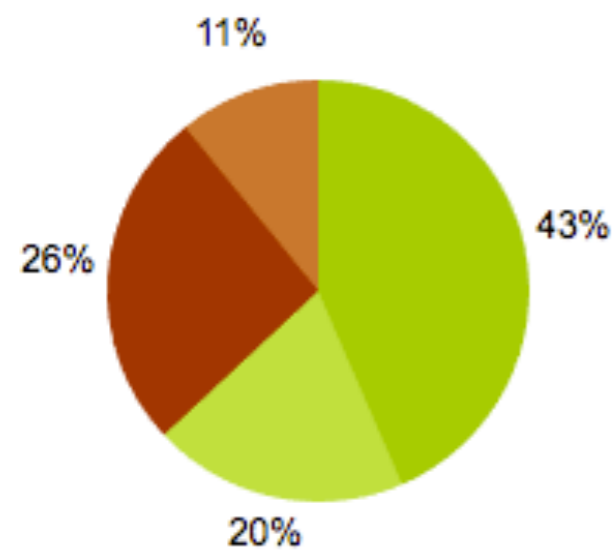
## Recommendations

Look at changing the label for this section, and it could stay in the Work/Life section, but should also be referenced in the Employees and Benefits sections.

# QUESTION 7

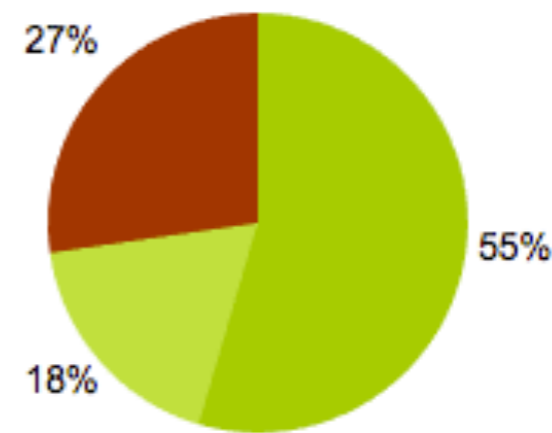
You are a manager who needs to fill a position in your department. Where would you go to learn more about creating the posting for the job?

Results of Original Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct	Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct	Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct	Indirect

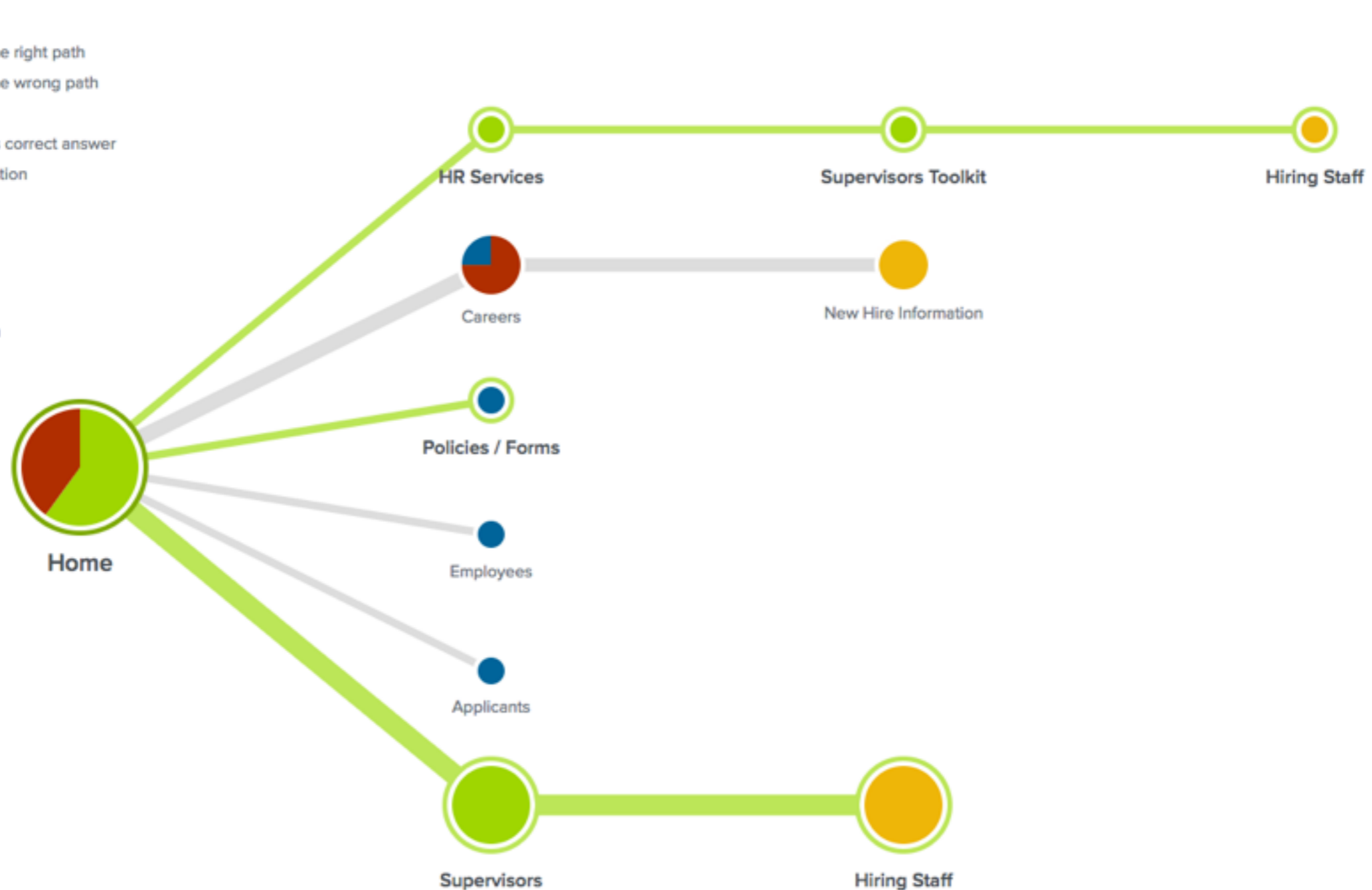
Results of Proposed Architecture



Users were having a hard time finding the Supervisor’s toolkit which houses this content. While we were able to improve it some with the proposed architecture, users were still looking for this material under careers -> new hire information.

# QUESTION 7

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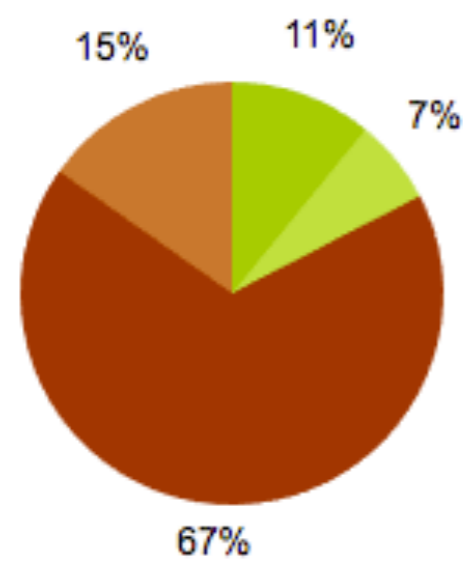
## Recommendations

The label for New Hire Information is confusing to users who expect to find how to create a job posting in this section. Think of relabeling this information to better reflect what that section is. There should also be a reference to the Supervisor's toolkit from the Careers page.

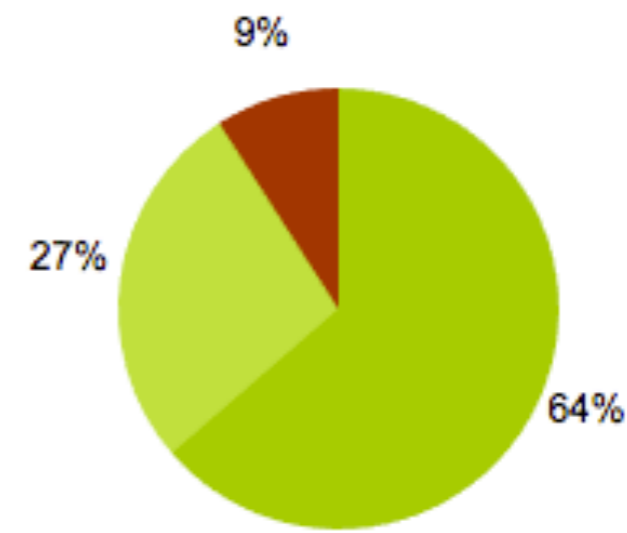
# QUESTION 8

You are a manager and one of your employees has arrived 15 minutes late for work for the third time. Where would you find information about how to handle this?

## Results of Original Architecture



## Results of Proposed Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect

In the current architecture users were looking for this information in the policy and employee handbook sections. This suggests that the sections of the policy manual aren't labeled clearly enough for users to easily scan. In the proposed architecture, this was improved by placing this information under the supervisor's section and HR services.

## Recommendations

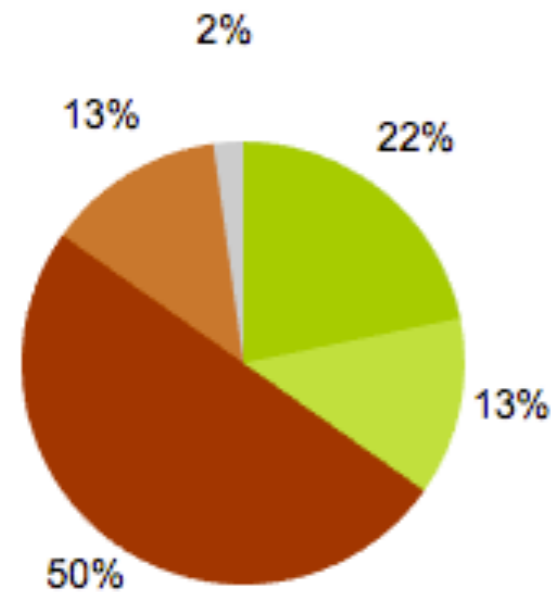
If the policy manual labels can not be changed, make sure that users are able to search for information based on how they would label it, perhaps by topic.

# QUESTION 9

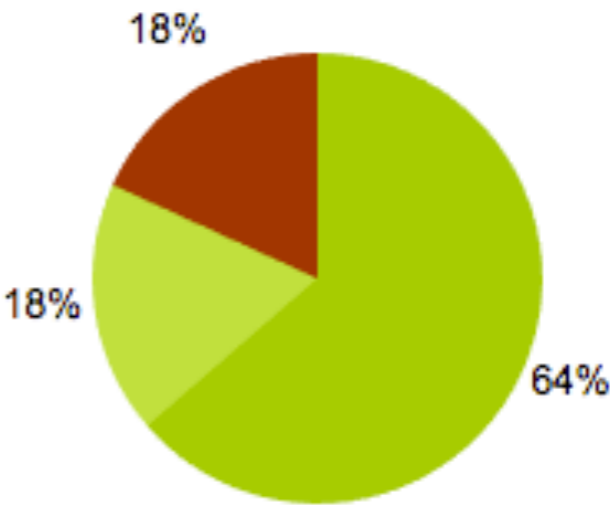
.....

You participate in the Flexible Spending Account program and need to know the deadline to request FSA reimbursements. Where would you go to find this information?

Results of Original Architecture



Results of Proposed Architecture



<div></div>	Success	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect

In the current architecture users were looking for this information in a number of places. While some eventually found the information under the Benelect Guide, they were also looking for this information under Summary of Benefits & Coverage. It wasn't clear to users what Benelect Guide actually means. There are also multiple paths with different labels for Flexible Spending - these should be consistent. The proposed architecture performed better, but users also looked for it under Employees.

# QUESTION 9

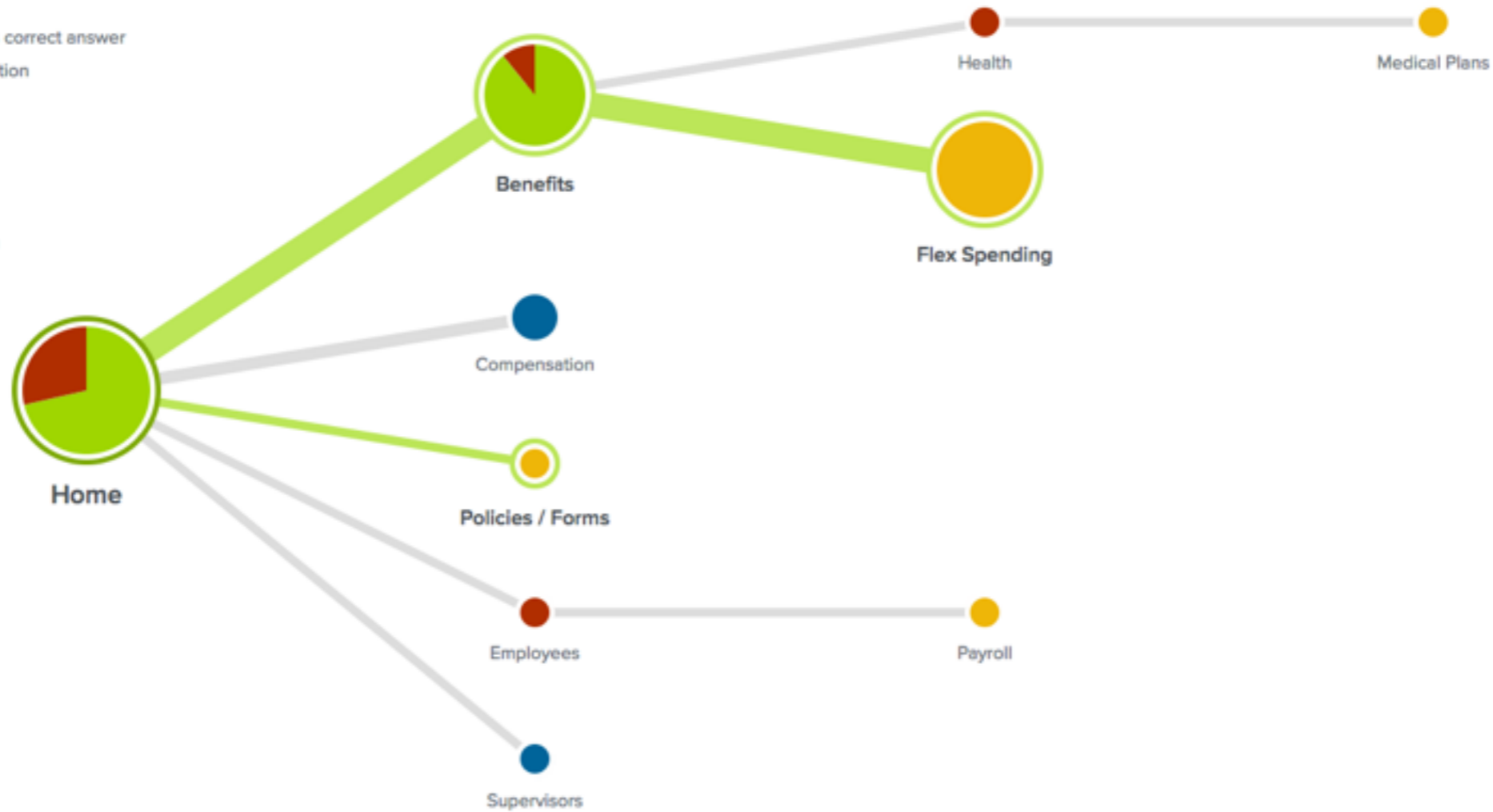
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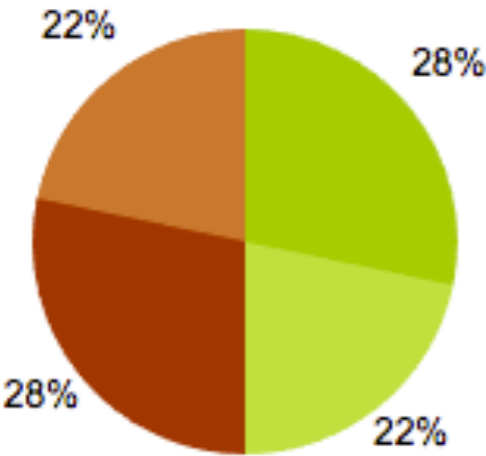
## Recommendations

Remove the Benelect Guide label and use the proposed architecture for this section. The Flexible Spending Account should also be referenced in the Employee section.

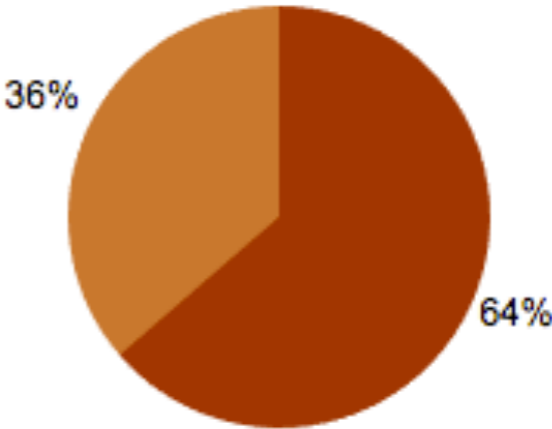
# QUESTION 10

You are a university employee who is ready to retire. Where would you find the information on how to prepare for retirement?

## Results of Original Architecture



## Results of Proposed Architecture

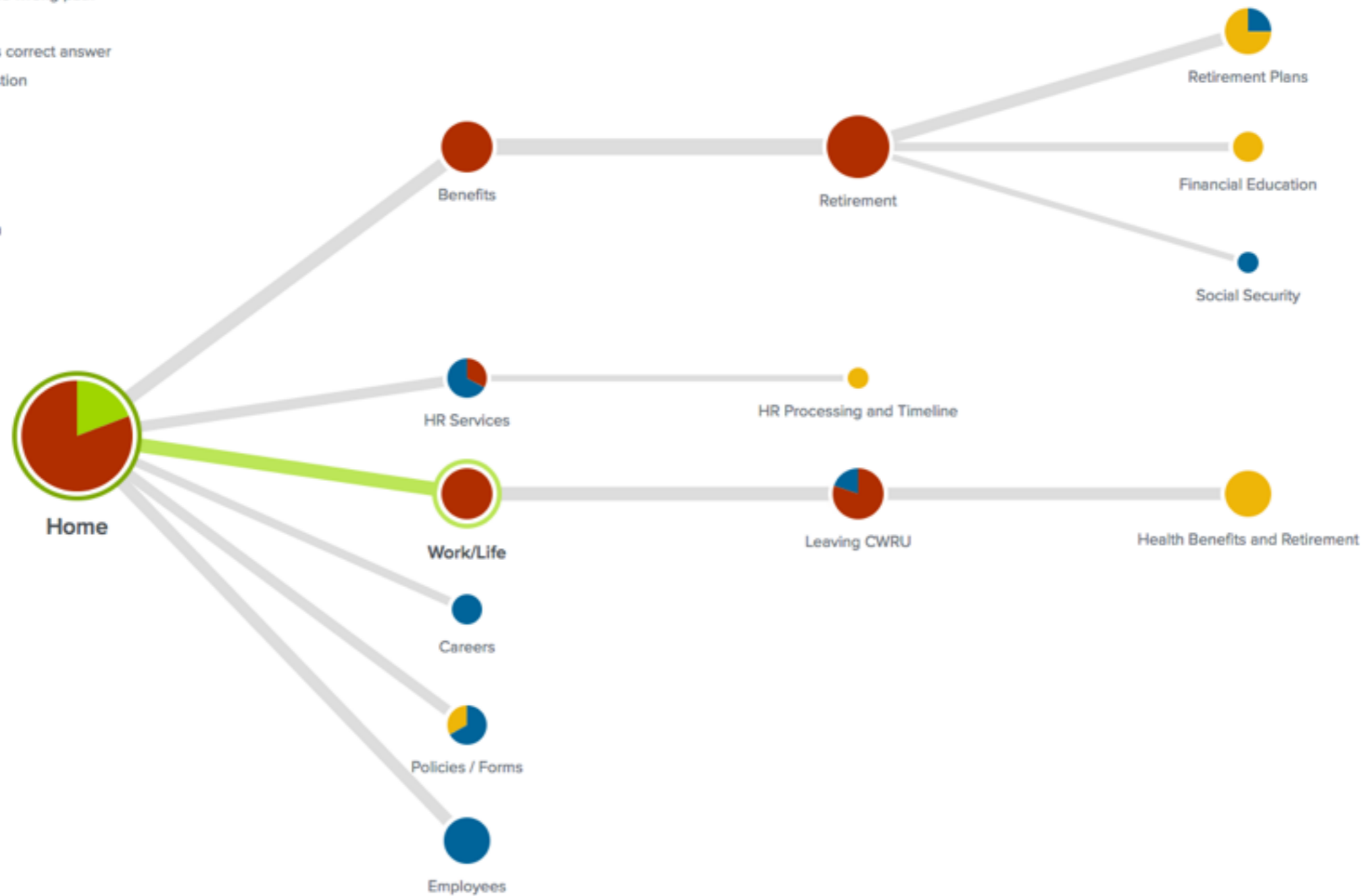
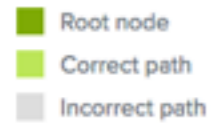


<div></div>	Success	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Fail	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect
<div></div>	Skip	Direct
<div></div>		Indirect

In the current architecture users had no problem finding retirement benefits information, but they had a hard time finding specific answers on how to prepare to retire. In the proposed architecture, this was placed under Work/Life -> Life Events -> Preparing to Retire. While people did navigate to the Work Life section, they went to the Leaving CWRU instead of Life Events.

## Recommendations

Place this content in Benefits Section and then reference the content in Leaving CWRU.



# SUMMARY

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The following recommendations will improve the overall ease of use and address the areas where participants experienced problems or found the interface/information architecture unclear.

- Move away from departmental-based navigation and replace with a combination of topic- and role-based navigation.
- Create a Work/Life section for current employees that will house information about different types of leaves, life events, retirement and perks of working at CWRU.
- Make the policies and forms searchable by topic so they are easily accessible to users.
- Make sure navigational labels adhere to users expectations.
- Make content accessible from multiple areas, if user testing showed visitors expected to see it different places.