



March 20-24, 2023  
San Francisco, CA

# Lost XP: Why Junior Game Developers Quit and How to Help

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#GDC23

# A paradox?

Increasing  
number of  
graduates

Inability of  
junior developers  
to find work



Labour  
shortages

Recruitment  
and retention  
problems

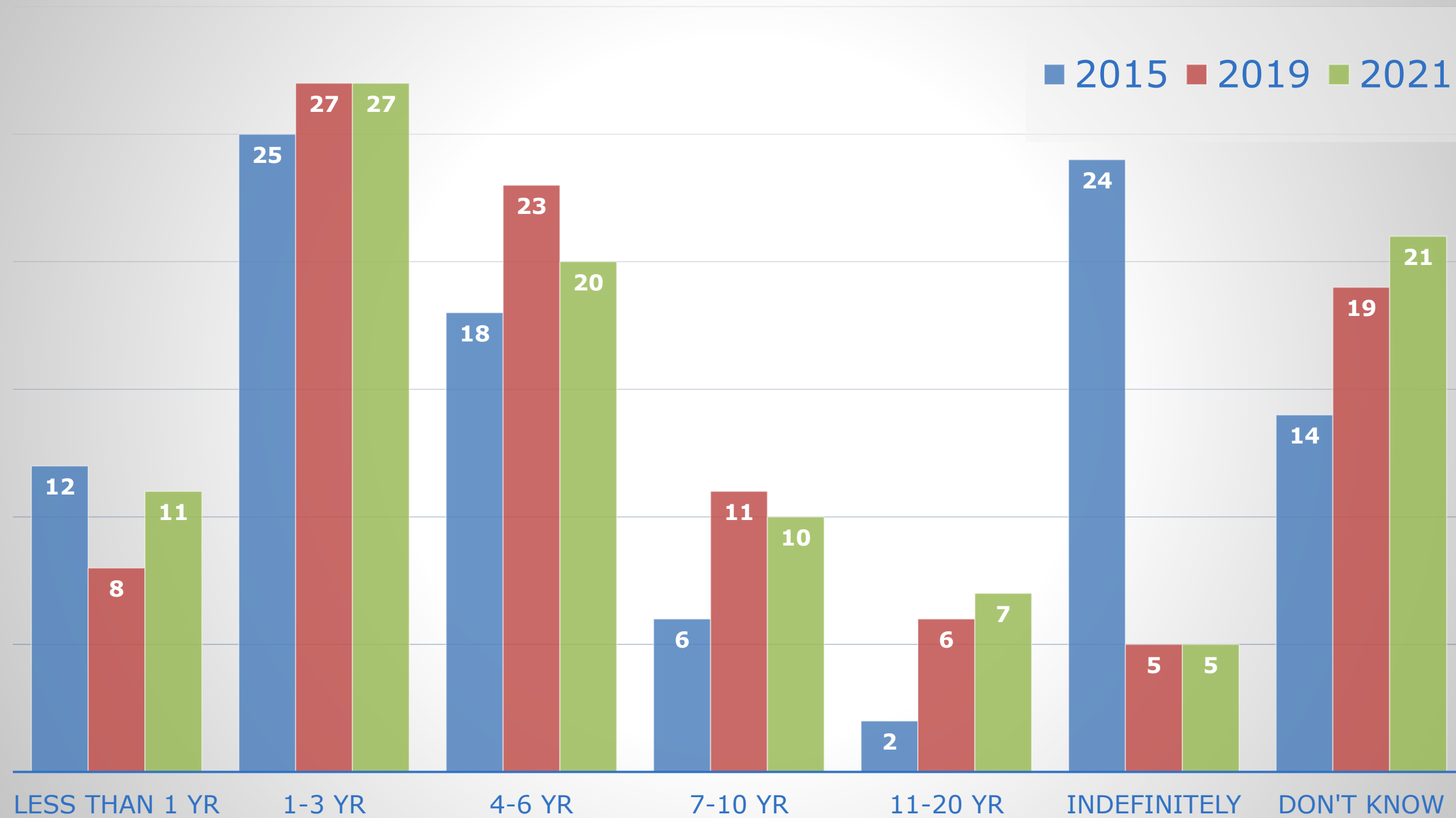
Recruiting now!  
[First3yearsproject.com](https://First3yearsproject.com)  
[@TheFirst3Years](https://twitter.com/TheFirst3Years)

First 3 Years



Developer Satisfaction  
Survey 2023  
[gameqol.org](https://gameqol.org)  
[igda.org/dss](https://igda.org/dss)

## How many years do you expect to remain with your current employer?



Source:  
IGDA  
Developer  
Satisfaction  
Survey



# First Three Years Data

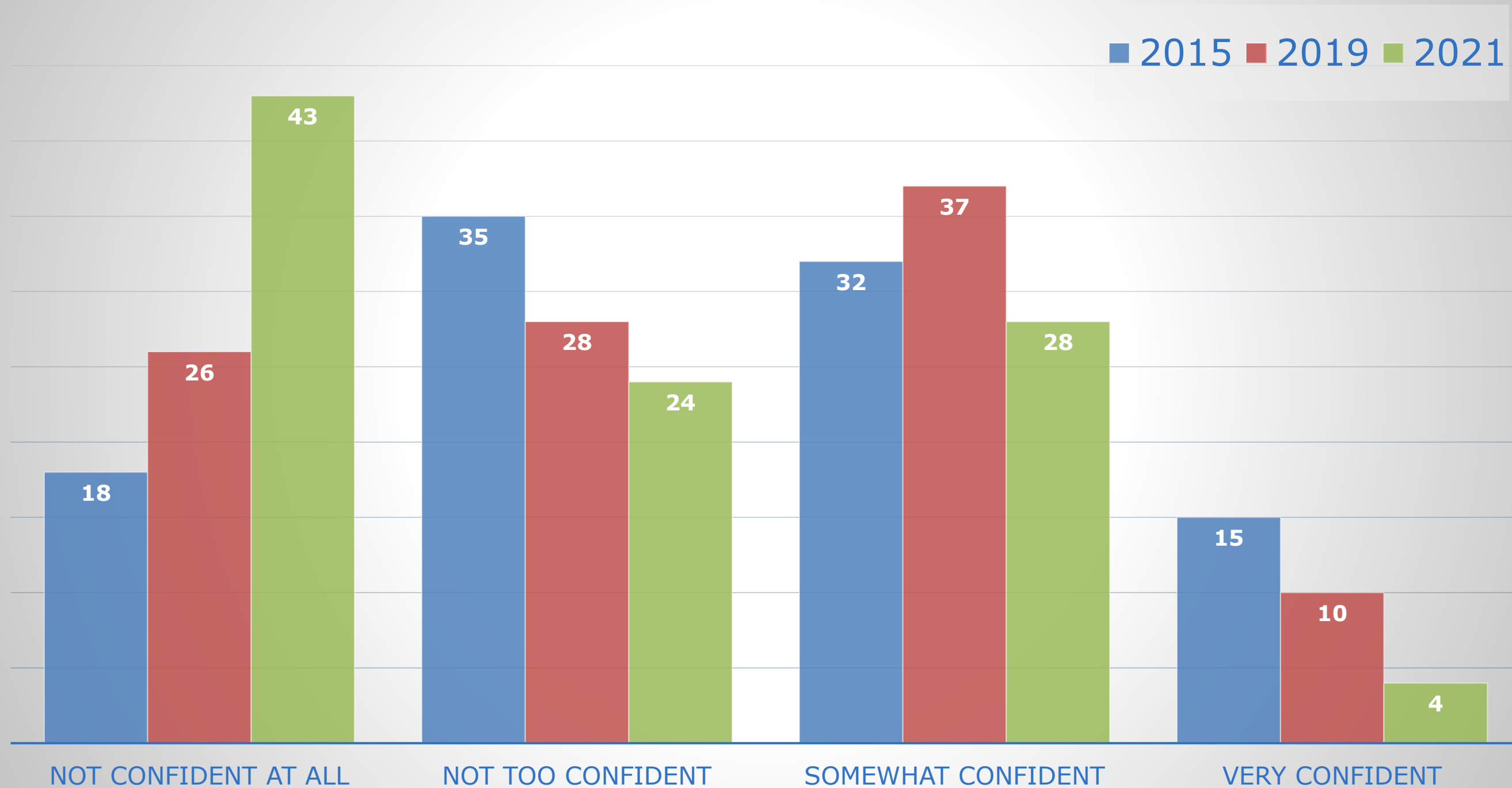
What would make you leave a job in the game industry?

- Toxic culture
- Lack of respect
- No work-life balance

What would make you leave the industry altogether?

- Systemic issues
- No work-life balance
- Opportunities in adjacent fields

## How confident are you in your ability to find a first job in the game industry within 6 months?



Source:  
IGDA  
Developer  
Satisfaction  
Survey

# First Three Years Data

Are junior devs ready to hit the ground running?

Do students have a realistic job preview?

- Few classes or courses about working conditions or workplace culture
- Mixed bag in terms of 'professionalization' experiences
- 50% have had work experience
- Many have made games of some form

# Motivations for employment

## QUESTIONS:

What are the career expectations and desires of early career developers?

What are juniors looking for in a studio and in a job?

What supports do they want?

What environments will attract them?



# Responsibility for employment

## QUESTIONS:

What responsibility does a studio have regarding hiring graduates?

What about hiring for diversity?

What are the responsibilities of educational programs?

What are the job experiences like? Are there forced choices?

# Takeaways

## QUESTIONS:

Why is this topic so important?

What now?

What do you want the audience to leave with?

# Q&A