

# WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX:

## Fourth Quarter 2021



## Background

*HRO Today* Magazine and Yoh Recruitment Process Outsourcing have been working together since 2014 to produce an index that measures U.S. employment security from the perspective of employees.

There are already multiple indices that examine attitudes about the economy, such as the Consumer Confidence Index, Gallup's Economic Confidence Index, BLS Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS), and the United States Consumer Sentiment.

However, these indices focus on macro metrics, with much less emphasis on attitudinal measures of those employed. In contrast, the Worker Confidence Index (WCI) measures perceived employment security among employees. This is significant because according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), approximately 71 percent of goods produced in the U.S. are for personal consumption. Because the perception of job security greatly impacts purchasing behavior, there is a need to focus on individuals' attitudes about their job outlook.

## Methodology

Each month, *HRO Today* Magazine employs Engine Insight's CARAVAN® Omnibus Surveys to collect data about worker satisfaction. Approximately 1,000 online interviews are conducted monthly among those aged 18+ working full-time in the U.S. Quarterly reports are issued based on 3,000 responses per quarter.

Respondents were asked a series of four questions. Each question uses a Likert-type scale where respondents rate each question on a 1–5 scale, with one being “very poor” and 5 being “very favorable.” The four questions address each of the following areas: possibility of involuntary job loss, likelihood of promotion, anticipation of a raise of at least 3 percent, and trust in company leadership.



## Executive Summary

With COVID-19 cases from the Delta and Omicron variants rising in the end of the fourth quarter, economic indicators varied considerably.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. unemployment rate dropped by 0.9 percentage points from the end of the third quarter to 3.9 percent by the end of the fourth quarter, the lowest since the start of the pandemic. The hardest hit industries, like leisure, hospitality, and professional services, have continued to increase employment since the earliest days of the pandemic. On the other hand, industries like retail, financial services, and health care, showed little to no change.<sup>2</sup> Inflation also remained prevalent in the quarter, accelerating to 7.0 percent in December 2021.<sup>3</sup>

But despite the resurgence in COVID-19 and inflationary fears, in the fourth quarter of 2021, the Worker Confidence Index (WCI) increased by 5.1 points from 3Q 2021 to 107.1, almost 10 percentage points higher than 4Q 2020. Three out of the four indices that make up the Worker Confidence Index increased from last quarter with Likelihood of Promotion increasing the most, up 11.4 points to 125.1. The Trust in Leadership Index was the only index to decrease, though it was down a very slight 0.1 points to 100.1.

**Job security remains weak, despite a slight quarterly increase.** The Job Security Index increased slightly from last quarter, up 0.3 points to 88.4. On a year-over-year basis, the index increased by 3.4 percentage points, but remains below its pre-pandemic levels. Overall, 15.8 percent of workers believe it is likely that they will lose their job in the next 12 months. Concern over job security varied greatly by household income. Job Security among those earning between \$35,000 and \$55,000 annually increased by nearly 4 percentage points while job security among those earning over \$100,000 annually dropped by 6.3 percentage points. Women felt more secure about their jobs than men, consistent with earlier study trends, as concern fell by 0.4 percentage points for women but increased by 1.1 percent for men.

Higher job security likely coincides with the sheer number of open positions, caused in part by the

“Great Resignation.” Employees are leaving the workforce in hordes, opening positions for job seekers, and almost ensuring job security to those remaining in their respective positions. The real reasons behind the phenomenon stem from a complex, overlapping web of factors. Employees are realizing how crucial they are to the workforce, and they are leveraging this for better positions with higher flexibility and benefits.<sup>4</sup> Greater job security also translates into a higher belief in the likelihood of a raise and a promotion.

**The likelihood of promotion index increased the most of any index.** The Likelihood of a Promotion Index increased substantially in the fourth quarter, up 11.4 points to 125.1 in the fourth quarter of 2021, the most of any of the indices. Men remain more confident in receiving a promotion than women, with the gap between them increasing slightly to 7.5 percent.

**Workers feel substantially more confident they will receive a raise.** The Likelihood of a Raise Index increased to 114.9, up by 8.8 points from last quarter, the second largest increase of any of the indices. As educational attainment rises, optimism in receiving a raise follows suit, and the trend continued in the fourth quarter. While optimism among two of the three education groups rose since last quarter, those with a college degree were the most optimistic, as over one-third (39.2 percent) were confident they would receive a raise.

**Younger workers remain more confident in most indices, but less in general.** With the increase in the overall WCI, workers under 35 felt more confident in their likelihood of a promotion, raise, and trust in leadership than their older counterparts. However, younger workers also felt significantly more likely to lose their jobs in the next 12 months with an average of 4 percent decrease in job security. In the last year, younger workers' confidence has fluctuated quarter by quarter, whereas those aged 55–64 saw confidence increase steadily throughout the last 3 quarters. Those industries most negatively impacted by the pandemic, such as hospitality, entertainment, and some retail, have a workforce that skews younger. The worldwide recovery has come in fits and starts, greatly impacted by the discovery of new COVID variants. This uncertainty has likely negatively impacted worker confidence the most for younger workers.

**Employees' trust in company leadership declines slightly.** The Trust in Company Leadership Index decreased by a very small 0.1 points since last quarter to 100.1 and down 1.0 points since last year to the lowest point since the third quarter of 2017. Since the onset of the pandemic, the quarterly index has not yet dipped below 100. Overall, 43.2 percent of individuals trust their company's leadership. In the fourth quarter, trust in leadership increased slightly among women while decreasing for men, up 0.4 percentage points versus down 0.4 percentage points, respectively.

### **Worker Confidence Index by Month**

In October 2021, the Worker Confidence Index increased to 108.7, the highest point in the third quarter of 2021. After a decrease of 3.2 points in November, the index rebounded again in December.

### **US Stock Market Recovery**

The three major stock market indices in the United States noted mixed results after increasing in the first half of the year. The Nasdaq 100 increased the most in the quarter, increasing by 11.3 percent, while the S&P 500 increased 11 percent and the Dow Jones Industrials increased by 7.9 percent.<sup>5</sup>

### **Comparison with other indices**

One of the more widely referenced indices designed to gauge U.S. consumer sentiment about the economy is the Consumer Confidence Index (CCI). There was a decrease of 3.4 points from the third quarter average but since last year, the index is up 18.8 points. The quarterly average currently stands at 113.1.

Typically, there is a correlation between what the WCI predicts will happen to the CCI at the end of the next quarter. A decrease in the WCI in the prior quarter would suggest that the CCI will decrease at the end of next quarter. WCI results from the third quarter of 2021 suggested the CCI average for Q4 2021 would decrease. The CCI did decrease, dropping from a quarterly average of 116.5 in Q3 2021 to 113.1 in Q4 2021. The CCI is forecast to rise during the first quarter of 2022, based upon the WCI findings for the fourth quarter of 2021.

Thomson Reuters stated that earnings in the fourth quarter of 2021 are estimated to increase by 23.7 percent from the fourth quarter of 2020. Of the 64 companies in the S&P 500 that have reported earnings to date for Q4 2021, 76.6% have reported earnings above analyst estimates.<sup>6</sup>

## The Worker Confidence Index

In the fourth quarter of 2021, the WCI increased by 5.1 points to 107.1 from 102.0 in the third quarter of 2021. This was a reversal from the decrease from the second quarter to the third quarter, and the index is now 9.9 points higher on a year-over-year basis.

There are four components that comprise the overall index: Possibility of Involuntary Job Loss, Likelihood of Promotion, Anticipation of a Raise of at Least Three Percent, and Trust in Company Leadership.

Figure 2 illustrates the four indices that comprise the WCI. Three of the four indices that make up the WCI increased in the fourth quarter. The Likelihood of a Promotion Index increased the most of any of the indices, up 11.4 points to 125.1 in the fourth quarter of 2021. The Trust in Leadership Index was essentially flat, down very slightly 0.1 points from last quarter to 100.1. On a year-over-year basis, three of indices increased, except for Trust in Company Leadership, which has been relatively stable throughout the pandemic.

Looking at results by each month (Figure 3), the WCI rose significantly in October, increasing by 8.7 points to 108.7, the highest in the fourth quarter. Even with

a spike in COVID cases and rising inflation, confidence remained steady throughout the fourth quarter.

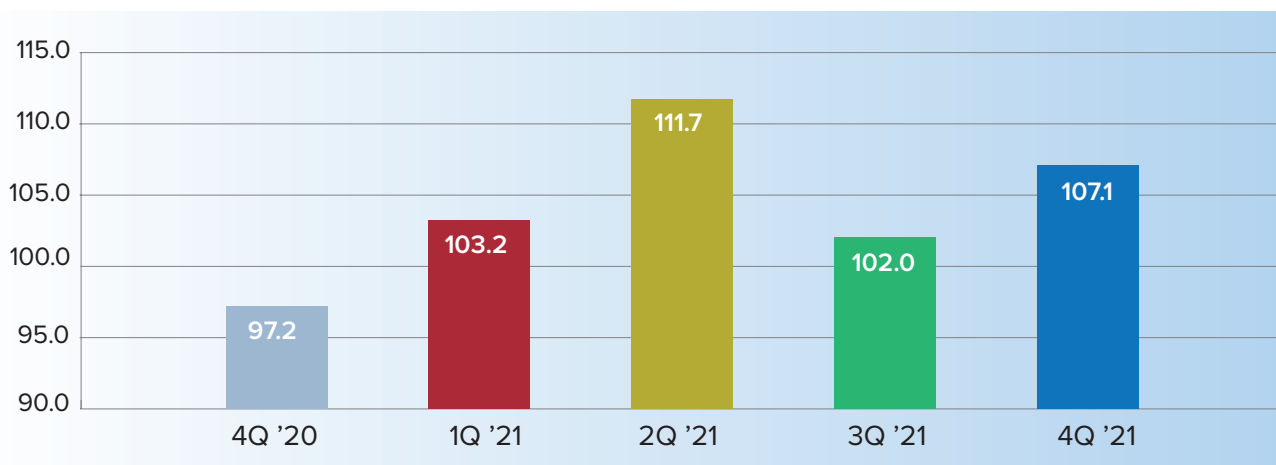
Figure 3A shows worker confidence by gender. It shows increases among both men and women. Confidence among women increased the most from last quarter, up 7.4 points versus a 4.4-point increase for men. Q4 2021 marks the first-time confidence has been higher for women than men.

Figure 3B segments worker confidence by race. Caucasians' confidence was the only one to increase, up 8.9 points to 101.9. Hispanics' confidence decreased the most in Q4 2021, down 5.6 points from last quarter to 117.3, while African Americans' confidence decreased slightly by 0.1 points to 127.2 points.

When examining worker confidence by education level, those with an incomplete college degree remained the least confident in the fourth quarter of 2021, despite dropping the least of each of the education groups. Those with a college degree had the largest increase in confidence since last quarter, up 7.5 points to 116.1. See Figure 4.

### Worker Confidence Index

Fig. 1



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### Index Category Detailed Trend Analysis

Fig. 2

	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
Job Security	85.0	84.2	85.8	88.1	88.4
Promotion	106.6	118.8	133.8	113.7	125.1
Raise	96.2	102.9	117.5	106.0	114.9
Trust	101.1	106.9	109.9	100.2	100.1

### Selected Index Category Detailed Trend Analysis: Rolling 12 Months

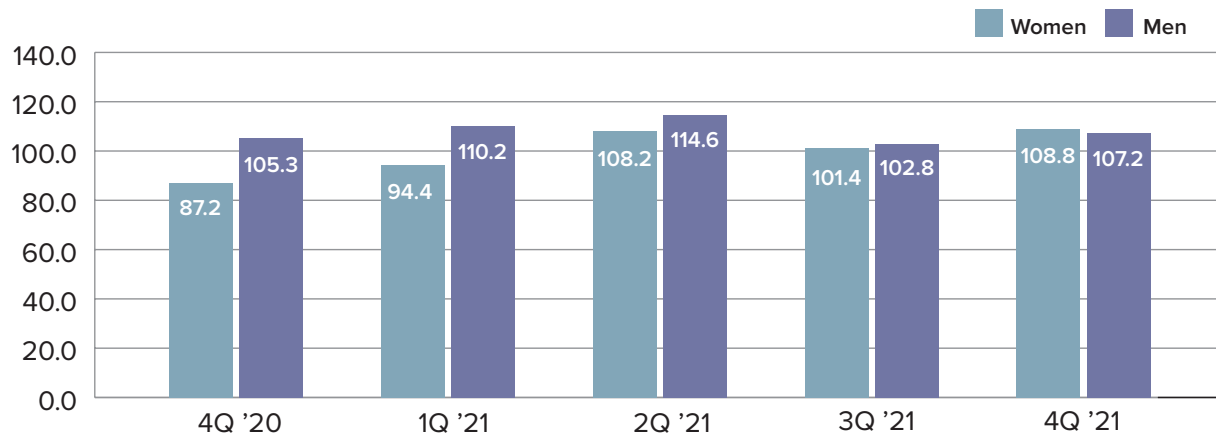
Fig. 3

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Overall	99.2	103.7	106.7	114.7	116.0	104.5	106.9	99.1	100.0	108.7	105.5	107.2
Job Security	74.3	90.9	87.5	88.9	86.4	82.2	87.9	89.7	86.7	88.5	84.4	92.4
Promotion	116.4	108.8	131.2	137.1	139.0	125.1	132.0	100.5	108.7	132.6	119.7	122.6
Raise	103.8	103.9	100.8	121.8	119.9	110.8	111.2	103.6	103.3	110.9	118.2	115.8
Trust	102.2	111.3	107.2	110.9	118.6	100.1	96.5	102.8	101.3	102.9	99.5	98.1

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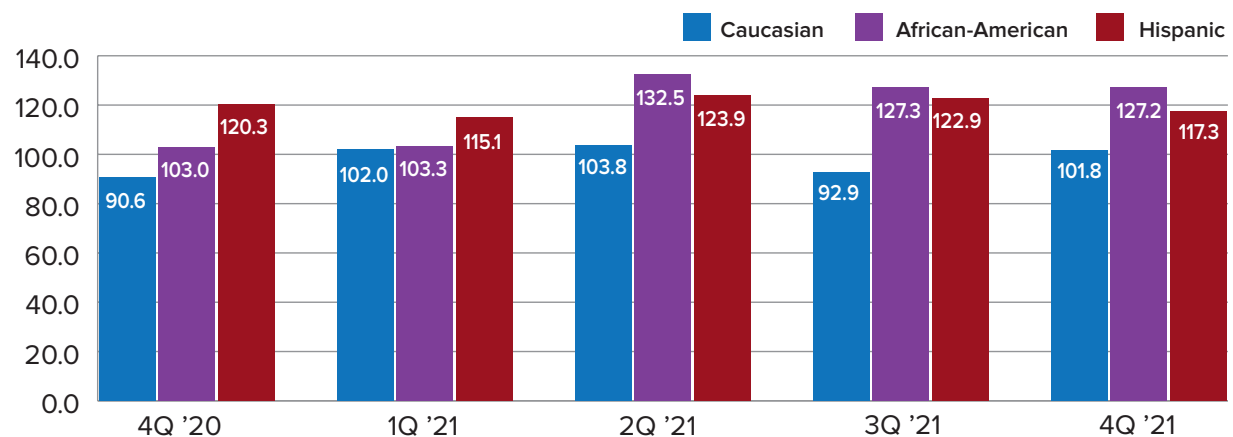
**Worker Confidence Index: GENDER**

Fig. 3A



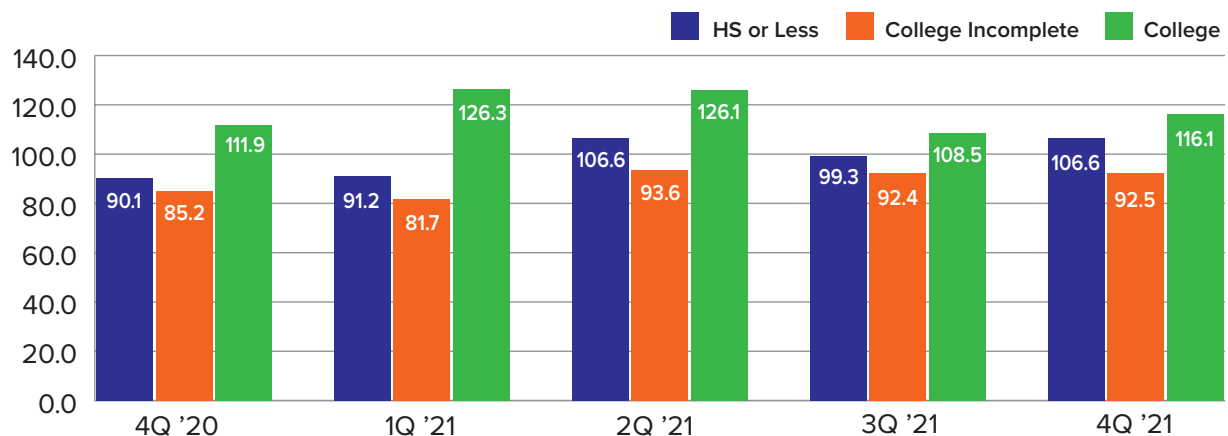
**Worker Confidence Index: Race**

Fig. 3B



**Worker Confidence Index: Education**

Fig. 4



## WHAT'S DRIVING THE WORKER CONFIDENCE RESULTS?

### Job Security

*Do you feel it likely that you will involuntarily lose your job or that your job will be eliminated in the next 12 months?*

The Job Security Index increased slightly from the last quarter, up 0.3 points to 88.4, the highest in almost two years. The Job Security Index has generally risen the last six quarters. Overall, 15.8 percent of respondents indicated they felt that they were likely to lose their jobs, slightly higher than in the third quarter of 2021, while the percentage of those indicating it was unlikely they would lose their jobs was also slightly higher. The percentage of those not sure fell for the quarter.

Concern over job security increased more for men than women since last quarter and last year. While men's concern decreased by 2.0 percentage points to 19.8 percent from last year, it increased by 1.1 percent from the third quarter to the fourth quarter. Women's concern decreased by 3.1 percentage points to 12.0 percent from last year and 0.4 percent for the quarter. Women's concern decreased more than men's on a year-over-year basis, resulting with a higher gap between genders, now at 7.8 percentage points.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, results continue to illustrate the inverse linear relationship that exists between age and job security. Younger workers are much more inclined to fear a job loss than older workers. Workers aged 55+ had less concern about job loss than in the prior quarter, while those younger had more concern. Year-over-year, a greater proportion of the youngest workers (aged 34 or below) felt job loss was likely while fewer of those 35 or older felt it was likely.

Those making \$100,000+ felt the most concern of losing their job of any income group at 21.7 percent in the fourth quarter, up 6.3 percentage points from

the prior quarter. Those making \$35,000–\$50,000 had the largest decrease in concern of losing their job since last quarter, down 3.8 percentage points to 13.3 percent. This goes back to the general trend of those earning over \$100,000 having the most concern of any income group.

In 4Q 2021, concern over job security varied by race. Hispanics' concern increased the most of any race, up 2.3 percentage points from last quarter to 23.0 percent. Concern among Caucasians increased by 0.8 percent points to 13.0 percent. Concern among African Americans decreased by 2.0 percentage points to 22.9 percent. Since last year, all 3 racial groups had a decrease in concern in losing their job.

The level of respondents' education revealed mixed results in concern over losing their job. Those with a college and incomplete college degree both noted a slight increase in concern in losing their job by 0.3 percent and 1.7 percent, respectively, while concern among those with a high school degree only decreased by 0.7 percentage points to 15.3 percent.

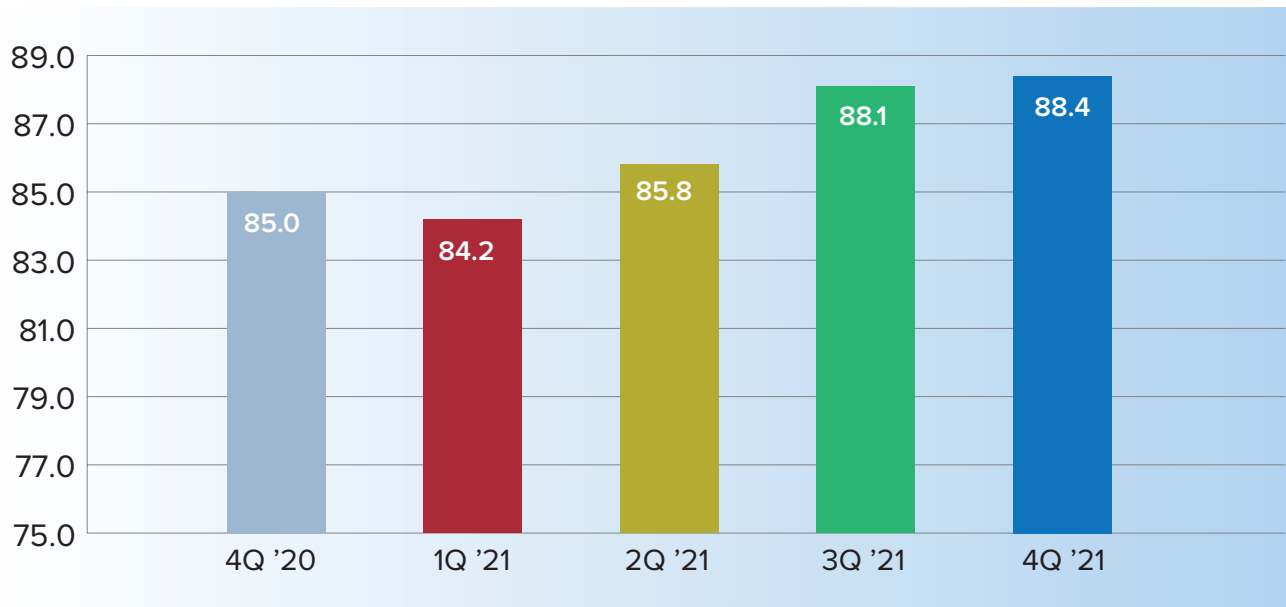
**Concern over job security increased more for men than women since last quarter and last year.**





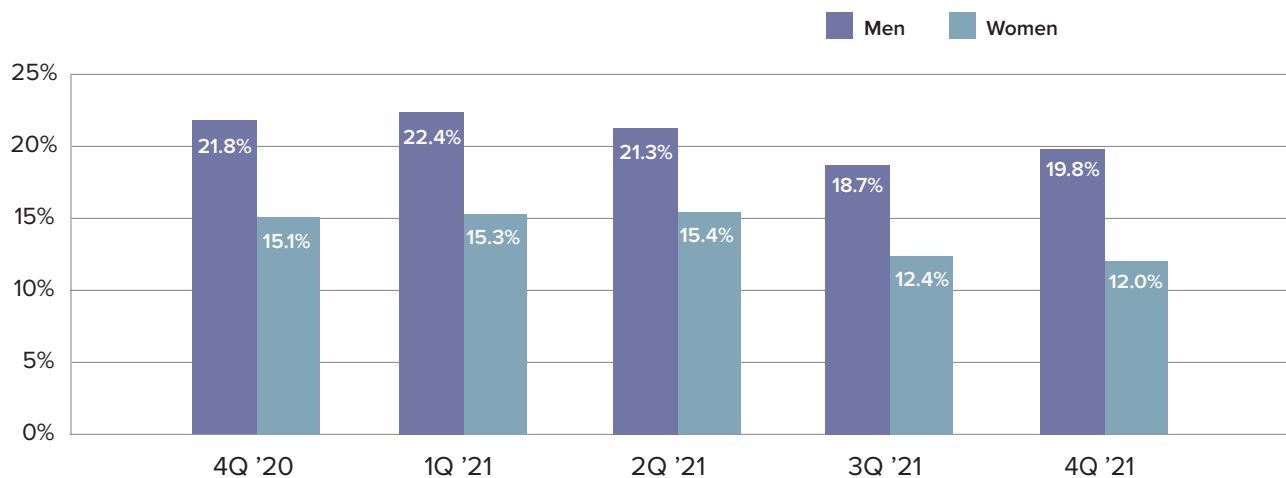
## Job Security Index

Fig. 5



## Likelihood of Job Loss by Gender

Fig. 6



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Fig. 7

Likelihood of Job Loss by <b>Age</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
18–24	24.3%	25.4%	31.9%	27.4%	32.1%
25–34	23.7%	24.0%	30.0%	22.4%	25.9%
35–44	28.8%	24.7%	22.7%	18.2%	20.0%
45–54	18.9%	19.8%	19.2%	13.9%	16.0%
55–64	14.1%	16.8%	9.1%	12.6%	8.1%
65+	5.0%	7.3%	4.6%	4.4%	1.7%

Fig. 8

Likelihood of Job Loss by <b>Household Income</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
< \$35K	18.7%	19.1%	18.6%	16.7%	14.3%
\$35–\$50K	16.9%	16.8%	15.8%	17.1%	13.3%
\$50K–\$75K	15.2%	14.5%	15.2%	12.0%	15.5%
\$75K–\$100K	15.5%	15.8%	14.2%	14.5%	14.5%
\$100K+	22.8%	25.8%	23.8%	15.4%	21.7%

Fig. 9

Likelihood of Job Loss by <b>Race</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
Caucasian Only	16.2%	16.2%	13.5%	12.2%	13.0%
African American Only	24.1%	18.6%	31.7%	24.9%	22.9%
Hispanic	25.4%	27.1%	27.9%	20.7%	23.0%

Fig. 10

Likelihood of Job Loss by <b>Education</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
HS Grad or Less	18.1%	16.4%	15.2%	16.0%	15.3%
College Incomplete	14.6%	15.9%	17.2%	12.3%	14.1%
College Grad	21.7%	23.6%	22.0%	17.2%	17.5%

## Likelihood of a Promotion

*Do you feel you will receive a promotion from your current employer over the next 12 months?*

In 4Q 2021, the Likelihood of a Promotion Index increased the most of any index since last quarter, up 11.4 points to 125.1. Almost one-in-four (24.2 percent) anticipate a promotion in the next 12 months, a 2.2 percentage points increase from the third quarter of 2021, and up 3.6 percentage points since last year.

Both men and women felt more confident that they would receive a promotion compared to last quarter. Confidence among men rose by 2.4 percentage points to 28.1 percent while for women it rose 2.0 percentage points to 20.6 percent. The gap between the genders rose slightly but is still far below the record level of 12.9 percent in 4Q 2020.

Those study respondents under the age of 45 were again the most inclined to anticipate a promotion. After a slight dip last quarter, respondents aged 25 to 34 indicated the largest increase in anticipation of a promotion on a quarter-over-quarter basis of any age group, increasing 7.8 percentage points to 45.1 percent. Overall, the strong inverse relationship between the likelihood of a promotion and age remained largely present in the fourth quarter, meaning that the older someone gets, the less likely they are to feel that they will get a promotion. The youngest age segment felt nearly 15 times more likely to get a promotion than the oldest age segment.

Those making between \$35,000 and \$50,000 were the only group to feel less inclined to anticipate a promotion, down 1.4 percentage points to 23.2 percent. The second highest income group, those making between \$75,000 and \$100,000, had the largest increase in optimism of any income group, up 7.8 percentage points to 30.2 percent, the highest recorded for this segment in study history.

Minorities within the study are generally more optimistic than Caucasians about receiving a promotion, and while that trend wavered slightly, it ultimately held in 4Q 2021. Confidence in receiving a promotion among African Americans and Hispanics dropped since last quarter, to 33.4 percent and 29.5 percent, respectively. Confidence among Caucasians increased from last quarter by 3.6 percentage points to 21.1 percent.

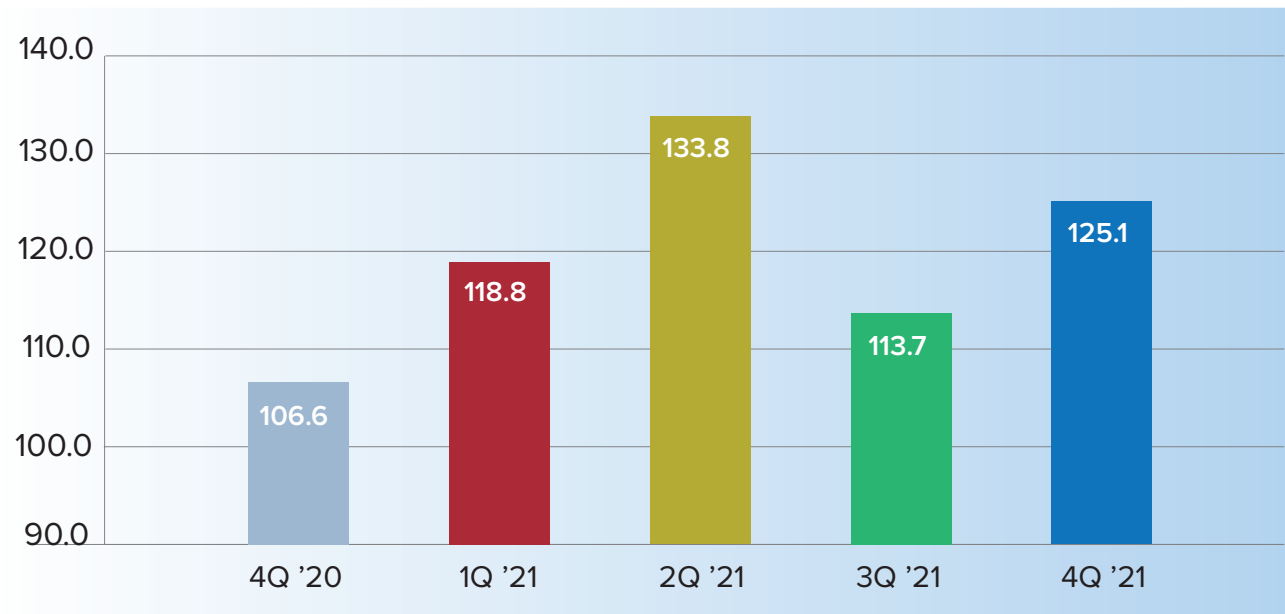
Respondents with a college degree remained much more confident in receiving a promotion than other education segments, consistent with the historic norm. Almost one-third (30.7 percent) of individuals with a college degree felt they would receive a promotion, a 3.3 percent increase from last quarter. Confidence among those with an incomplete college degree increased the least, up 0.7 percentage points to 20.2 percent while confidence among those with a high school diploma only increased by 2.3 percentage points to 20.9 percent.

**The youngest age segment felt nearly 15 times more likely to get a promotion than the oldest age segment.**



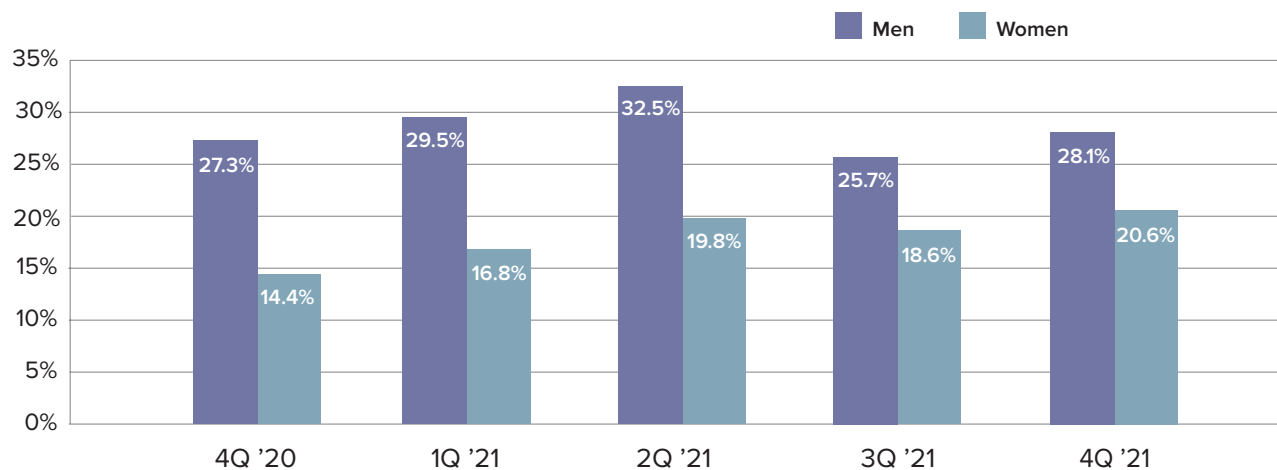
## Likelihood of a Promotion Index

Fig. 11



## Likelihood of a Promotion by Gender

Fig. 12



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Fig. 13

Likelihood of Promotion by <b>Age</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
18–24	34.2%	30.3%	39.4%	35.7%	41.5%
25–34	33.8%	41.5%	50.3%	37.3%	45.1%
35–44	31.3%	39.7%	38.7%	34.0%	35.5%
45–54	21.1%	23.8%	24.7%	20.4%	20.6%
55–64	8.1%	6.7%	7.9%	9.7%	9.8%
65+	2.8%	3.1%	3.7%	3.8%	2.9%

Fig. 14

Likelihood of Promotion by <b>Household Income</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
< \$35K	16.0%	14.9%	21.1%	17.6%	17.6%
\$35–\$50K	15.5%	18.1%	17.1%	24.6%	23.2%
\$50K–\$75K	18.0%	17.0%	22.6%	17.5%	20.2%
\$75K–\$100K	20.9%	28.4%	26.5%	22.4%	30.2%
\$100K+	37.0%	43.1%	43.3%	30.8%	36.2%

Fig. 15

Likelihood of Promotion by <b>Race</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
Caucasian Only	17.5%	21.7%	21.7%	17.5%	21.1%
African American Only	23.8%	25.8%	37.8%	33.8%	33.4%
Hispanic	31.1%	29.3%	31.9%	31.8%	29.5%

Fig. 16

Likelihood of Promotion by <b>Education</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
HS Grad or Less	16.1%	16.7%	20.7%	18.6%	20.9%
College Incomplete	15.7%	15.1%	20.1%	19.5%	20.2%
College Grad	29.8%	35.6%	35.6%	27.3%	30.7%

## Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent

### *Do you feel you will receive a raise of three percent or more after your next review?*

The Likelihood of a Raise Index increased by a substantial 8.9 points from the third quarter of 2021 to 114.9. (Figure 17). Overall, nearly one-third (31.4 percent) of survey respondents indicated that they anticipated a raise of 3.0 percent or more at their next review, an increase of 2.4 percentage points since Q3 2021.

While both genders felt more likely to get a raise since last quarter, women's confidence increased at a slightly slower rate than men, up by 1.9 percentage points versus 2.9 percentage points, respectively. Men remained more likely to believe that they will receive a raise than women as the gap between the two genders rose to 9.3 percentage points, a one percent increase from last quarter, but still below the two-year average.

Typically, those in the first half of their careers (age 44 or younger) are the most inclined to feel that they will get a raise of at least three percent in the next 12 months. That trend continued as nearly 45 percent of those 44 or younger felt optimistic in receiving a raise compared to an average of 20 percent or less for those aged 45 or higher. However, since last quarter, those aged 45–64, which is group regarded as at the peak of their earning power, felt more optimistic in receiving a raise. Those aged 65 and higher felt the least optimistic in receiving a raise, keeping up with the historical trend, but there was a modest increase of 1.2 percent, bringing it to 9.7 percent.

Generally, as income increases, so does the belief in the likelihood of a raise. Over twice as many of those with household incomes above \$100,000 felt they were likely to get a raise, twice the percentage of those with incomes below \$35,000, 47.0 versus 23.2 percent, respectively. Every income group felt

more optimistic in receiving a raise since last quarter, except for those that make between \$35,000 and \$50,000 whose optimism decreased 3.3 percentage points to 25.5 percent.

Each racial group examined felt more optimistic in receiving a raise since last quarter. Caucasians' optimism rose the most, up by 3.4 percentage points, while African Americans' and Hispanics' confidence rose by about one percentage point. While each racial groups' confidence has increased year-over-year, Hispanics has risen the least, up only two percentage points. But overall, minorities remain more optimistic they will receive a raise than Caucasians.

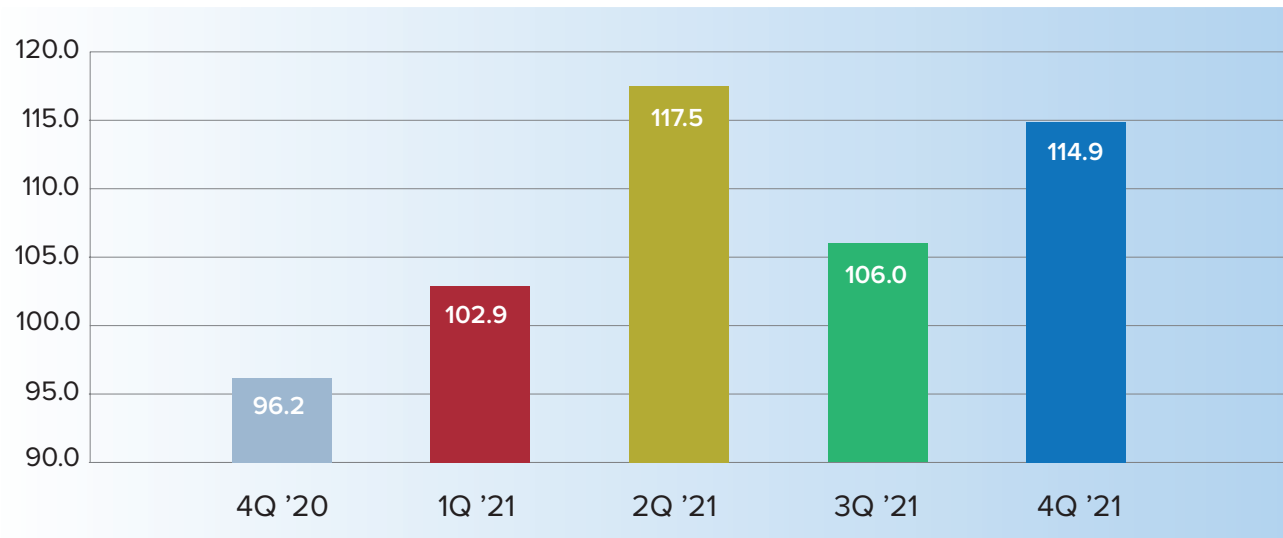
The education segment consistently shows differentiating attitudes in the likelihood of a raise. Belief in a raise was again higher for college graduates than any other segment, as 39.2 percent of college graduates felt that they would get a raise, up 3.9 percentage points from last quarter. Optimism among those with an incomplete college degree decreased by 0.3 percent points to 27.8 percent. Those with a high school diploma only saw increased optimism by 3.3 percentage points from last quarter to 26.8 percent.

**Belief in a raise was again higher for college graduates than any other segment.**



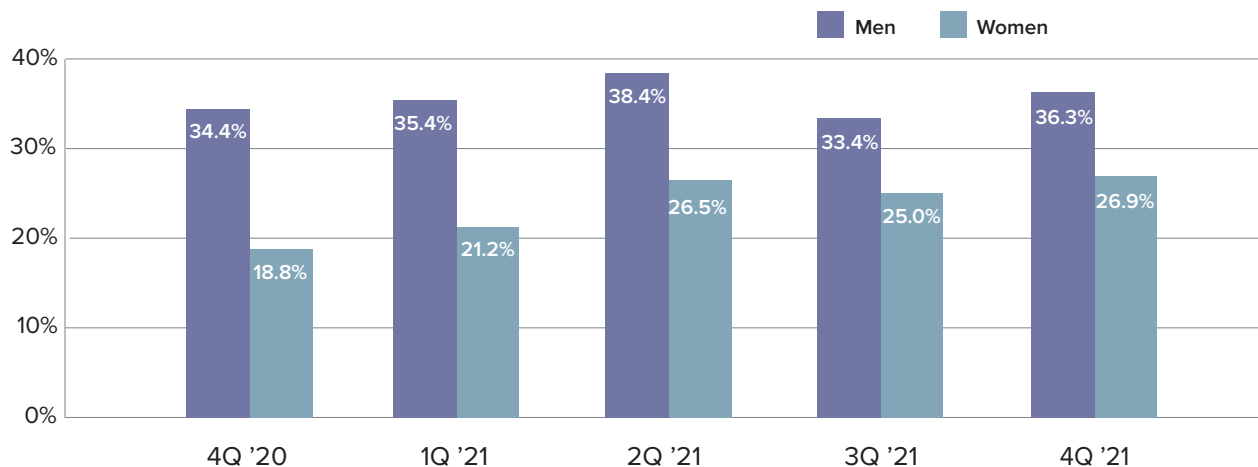
## Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent Index

Fig. 17



## Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent by Gender

Fig. 18



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Fig. 19

Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent by <b>Age</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
18–24	35.9%	30.6%	43.2%	37.5%	41.3%
25–34	38.2%	45.4%	54.4%	42.1%	48.4%
35–44	39.9%	45.7%	43.7%	41.9%	42.7%
45–54	26.0%	31.0%	38.6%	31.4%	33.0%
55–64	19.2%	15.6%	16.5%	20.8%	22.4%
65+	5.7%	6.7%	6.7%	8.5%	9.7%

Fig. 20

Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent by <b>Household Income</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
< \$35K	19.5%	17.5%	23.9%	22.2%	23.2%
\$35–\$50K	23.2%	19.0%	22.9%	28.8%	25.5%
\$50K–\$75K	24.6%	25.3%	30.8%	25.2%	30.2%
\$75K–\$100K	28.5%	38.0%	36.3%	34.5%	38.1%
\$100K+	43.0%	50.5%	52.2%	41.4%	47.0%

Fig. 21

Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent by <b>Race</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
Caucasian Only	23.6%	26.6%	28.4%	25.5%	28.9%
African American Only	32.8%	29.4%	42.2%	39.3%	40.3%
Hispanic	34.2%	35.1%	37.1%	35.4%	36.2%

Fig. 22

Likelihood of a Raise of More than Three Percent by <b>Education</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
HS Grad or Less	21.4%	19.5%	24.9%	23.5%	26.8%
College Incomplete	23.5%	23.0%	29.4%	28.0%	27.8%
College Grad	34.3%	41.2%	41.8%	35.3%	39.2%



## Trust in Company Leadership

### *Do you trust your company's leadership to make sound decisions for the company and its employees?*

The Trust in Company Leadership Index in the fourth quarter of 2021 essentially held steady, declining by an insignificant 0.1 points to 100.1. However, this is the lowest level since the third quarter of 2017. Overall, 43.2 percent of respondents reported they trusted company leadership, a 0.1-percentage point decrease from 43.3 percent in the prior quarter.

Men's trust in company leadership fell the most, down 0.4 percentage points to 48.9 percent. Conversely, women's trust in leadership increased by 0.4 percentage points to 38.3 percent. Overall, men continue to remain far more likely to trust their company leadership than women.

Over one-half of the respondents aged 44 or younger trust their company's leadership, contrasting sharply with those over the age of 45, whose trust declines steadily as respondents age. Those aged between 25 to 34 had the largest increase in trust since last quarter, up 5.7 percentage points, to 58.0 percent. Those aged between 35 and 44 had the largest decrease in trust, 3.7 percentage points, to 54.2 percent. Those aged 65 and over are by far the least trusting segment.

There is also usually a relationship between trust in company leadership and income. As income increases, trust follows. This is not surprising, given that the most highly compensated employees often tend to be a part of a company's leadership team. Trust among the two highest income groups, those making between \$75,000–\$100,000 and \$100,000 or more, rose 6.9 and 4.5 percentage points, respectively, while those with income segments \$50,000 and below had fewer reporting they trusted their companies' leadership on a quarter-over-quarter basis. Only those

within the income range of \$50,000–\$75,000 had a higher percentage reporting increased trust on a year-over-year basis.

In the fourth quarter, minorities trust in company leadership remained higher than that of Caucasians, continuing the historic norms. However, Caucasians were the only racial group where trust in company leadership increased since last quarter, up 2.5 percentage points to 42.3 percent. Trust among African Americans and Hispanics dropped by 4.8 and 7.3 percentage points, respectively, to 46.7 and 45.0 percent.

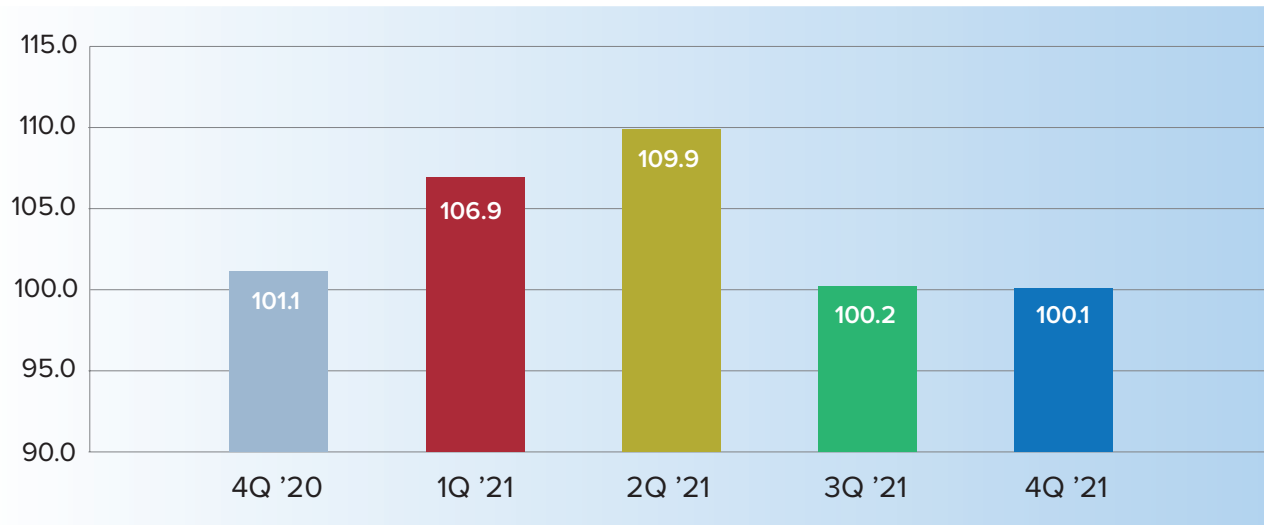
Nearly every quarter of the study has also shown that as educational attainment increases, so does trust in company leadership. In the fourth quarter of 2021, individuals with a college degree again had the most trust in company leadership at 52.2 percent, up 0.7 percentage points from last quarter. Trust among those with an incomplete college degree was the only educational segment to decrease, down 0.9 percentage points to 38.9 percent. Only those with a high school degree increased trust in their company leadership on a year-over-year basis.



**In the fourth quarter, minorities trust in company leadership remained higher than that of Caucasians, continuing the historic norms.**

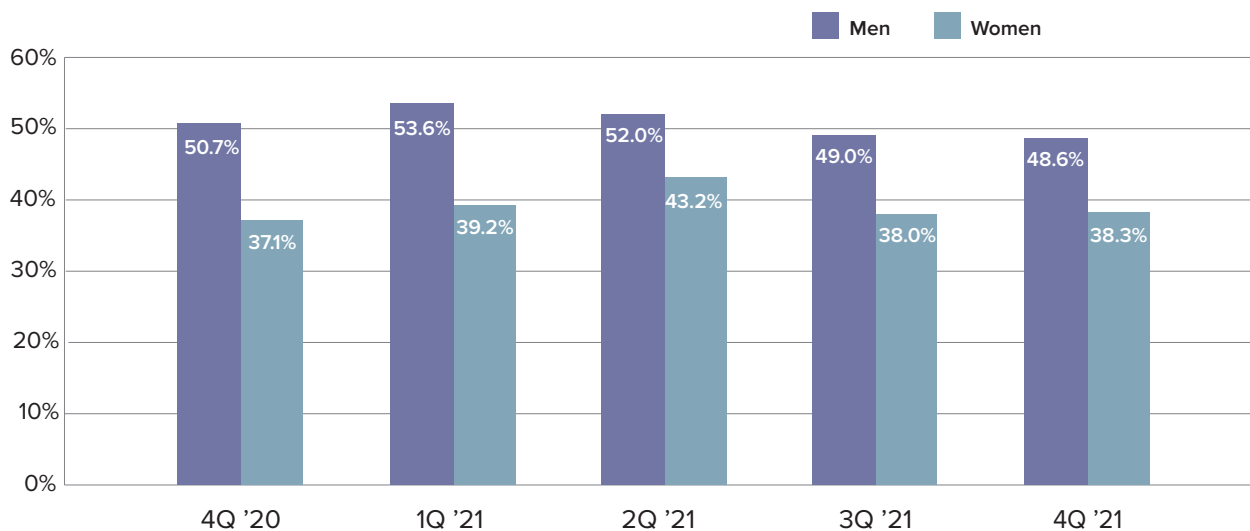
## Trust in Company Leadership Index

Fig. 23



## Trust in Company Leadership by Gender

Fig. 24



## WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX | FOURTH QUARTER 2021

Fig. 25

Trust in Company's Leadership by <b>Age</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
18–24	53.4%	52.9%	55.7%	54.5%	53.6%
25–34	55.5%	64.8%	71.9%	52.3%	58.0%
35–44	53.4%	61.3%	59.5%	57.9%	54.2%
45–54	45.1%	50.8%	50.0%	47.6%	47.9%
55–64	35.3%	31.3%	36.7%	34.8%	33.3%
65+	25.7%	24.1%	20.8%	22.6%	21.7%

Fig. 26

Trust in Company's Leadership by <b>Household Income</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
< \$35K	35.2%	33.6%	37.0%	36.4%	34.0%
\$35–\$50K	41.2%	38.2%	38.3%	42.1%	36.9%
\$50K–\$75K	39.4%	44.3%	46.1%	41.9%	41.5%
\$75K–\$100K	51.6%	56.8%	54.5%	43.1%	50.0%
\$100K+	63.0%	69.6%	70.0%	57.1%	61.5%

Fig. 27

Trust in Company's Leadership by <b>Race</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
Caucasian Only	41.4%	46.3%	45.6%	39.9%	42.3%
African American Only	42.3%	41.4%	50.0%	51.5%	46.7%
Hispanic	50.5%	49.0%	54.1%	52.3%	45.0%

Fig. 28

Trust in Company's Leadership by <b>Education</b>	4Q '20	1Q '21	2Q '21	3Q '21	4Q '21
HS Grad or Less	33.4%	37.4%	39.9%	37.8%	38.0%
College Incomplete	42.8%	40.0%	43.3%	39.9%	38.9%
College Grad	56.4%	60.1%	58.4%	51.4%	52.2%

## WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX | FOURTH QUARTER 2021

Fig. 29

Study Demographics 3Q 2021		Sample Size	Percent
<b>Gender</b>			
Male		1,463	63.6%
Female		836	36.4%
<b>Age</b>			
18–24		349	44.3%
25–34		156	19.8%
35–44		54	6.9%
45–54		102	13.0%
55–64		80	10.2%
65+		46	5.8%
<b>Race</b>			
Caucasian Only		1,901	56.2%
African American Only		1,177	34.8%
Hispanic		305	9.0%
<b>Household Income</b>			
\$35K or Less		1,107	42.4%
\$35K–\$50K		553	21.2%
\$50K–\$75K		144	5.5%
\$75K–\$100K		409	15.7%
\$100K+		395	15.1%
<b>Education</b>			
HS Grad or Less		1,167	38.5%
College Incomplete		796	26.3%
College Graduate		1,066	35.2%

## Notes

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