

Q1
2026

Worker Confidence Index

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What is the U.S. Worker Confidence Index?

The U.S. Worker Confidence Index (WCI) gathers feedback from American employees to measure how confident and secure they feel in their jobs. While there are several indices that examine the labor market and attitudes about the economy, they do not address the employee perspective to evaluate their attitude and perceived level of job security. *HRO Today Magazine* has been producing this Index since 2014, now in conjunction with LevelUP.

Each month, approximately 1,000 online interviews are conducted among workers in the U.S. aged 18 and older. Quarterly reports are based on approximately 3,000 responses. Each question uses a five-point scale, with one meaning "strongly disagree" and five meaning "strongly agree."

HRO Today Magazine employs Big Village's CARAVAN® Omnibus Surveys to collect the data. Starting in 2026, *HRO Today* further refined the WCI's methodology and feedback requirements, slightly impacting prior reports.

Respondents are asked about key aspects of employment confidence, including job security (likelihood of job loss), opportunity for advancement through promotion, compensation expectations, and trust in company leadership. These areas create the four sub-indices that produce the overall WCI, and the results of each are examined in this report. Though the sub-indices are all pertinent to employees, they are weighed to reflect their varying levels of importance to overall worker attitudes. These are the four sub-indices:

- Job Security Index
- Likelihood of a Promotion Index
- Likelihood of a Raise of 3% or More Index
- Trust in Company Leadership Index



This report is sponsored by **LevelUP HCS**.

Why is the WCI important?

Over two-thirds of gross domestic product is driven by consumer spending in the US, making household sentiment a critical driver in overall economic performance. Worker confidence can directly influence discretionary spending behavior as workers may fear job loss, anticipate an increase in pay, or prepare to begin searching for new positions. Therefore, tracking the confidence of workers can provide an indicator into worker trends, economic performance, and labor market shifts.

Additionally, worker confidence and its indices within the WCI can positively impact organizational performance and profitability. A worker's job security, or how they feel about if they will lose their job involuntarily, can directly impact the workplace. Workers experiencing high job security can have better mental and physical health while workers with low job security can suffer from heightened stress, fatigue, and workplace anxiety, affecting performance. Happy employees are less likely to use "performance signaling" to seem productive and are more likely to actually deliver substantial organizational results.¹

Compensation and career mobility, historically, are an important driver of employee turnover. As the US economy continues to fluctuate, workers seek higher wages, making low pay or lackluster opportunities for advancement main reasons why employees quit their jobs. As inflation and high prices persist, this may become increasingly important to workers

compared to the other indices. Organizations are more inclined to use pay and promotions as methods of employee retention, though economic uncertainty has introduced cheaper, less effective methods.² Clearly communicated timelines or compensation adjustments are critical to retain employees in today's tight labor market.

Trust in company leadership can be critical to workforce performance. High-trust workplaces are associated with strong employee engagement, innovation, and higher productivity. Low-trust workplaces can lead to reduced morale, weaker collaboration efforts, and diminished productivity, impacting financial performance.³ Employees who trust their company leadership typically stay with their organization longer, reducing turnover and preserving organizational knowledge.

The WCI tracks these performance indicators, which can show the quality of contribution workers will make to companies and the economy.

The Worker Confidence Index

To better reflect the conditions of the current labor market and economy, *HRO Today* has reevaluated and updated the formula behind the Worker Confidence Index. Additionally, the four sub-indices are now weighted to directly reflect shifting employee priorities. This report contains five quarters of WCI data using *HRO Today's* updated methodology.

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Executive Summary

American workers feel slightly more confident in the first quarter of 2026 as the WCI is nearly unchanged at 98, a slight increase from 97.8 in the previous quarter. Overall, worker confidence has been low but steady since 2025. The Likelihood of a Promotion index saw the steepest decrease while Likelihood of a Raise increased by 2.7 points to 99.6, though this index declined year-over-year.

This quarterly report analyzes attitudes and confidence levels among American workers throughout the first quarter of 2026, including workforce trends, economic turbulence, and additional geopolitical turmoil. *HRO Today* aims to understand the changes in the WCI results and shifts in worker perceptions.

The WCI in the first quarter of 2026:

- **Worker confidence was largely unchanged.** The WCI increased slightly, driven by heightened worker confidence in receiving a raise.
- **After rising to historic levels throughout 2025, trust in company leadership fell.** Though company leadership trust is up year-over-year, examining how organizations handle continued economic uncertainty will be essential.
- **Workers are surprisingly confident in receiving a raise.** The Likelihood of a Raise index saw the highest increase to start 2026. Employees may be expecting additional measures of retention, leading to higher levels of confidence and optimism, especially if the timing of end-of-year raises or bonuses shifted due to increased economic uncertainty. Additionally, high levels of inflation could impact worker optimism as the cost-of-living rises.
- **Confidence among hybrid workers rises.** Hybrid workers hold the highest level of overall confidence by job location. Increased levels of confidence come from higher job security, rising levels of trust in company leadership, and greater optimism in receiving a raise.

How do the results of the WCI add context to the U.S. economy and labor market?

The labor market seems to stabilize.

Labor market growth in the US fluctuated in the first quarter of 2026. After adding 130,000 jobs in January, over 92,000 jobs were lost in February while the unemployment rate edged up to 4.4%. However, nearly 170,000 jobs were added in March, though the significance of this has yet to be realized as the labor market shed jobs throughout 2025 via downward revisions.⁴ The labor market is particularly stagnant as the number of monthly job openings added, hires, and separations, were largely unchanged. The number of layoffs continues to increase slightly, hovering at about 1.1 to 1.2% monthly.⁵ Coupled with downward job revisions that are typically reported months later, this could be a negative sign for future job growth as 2026 continues.

The Federal Reserve opts to keep rates steady.

After cutting rates in December, the Federal Reserve is holding rates steady to start 2026. The Federal Reserve is expected to cut rates once in 2026, though the timing and amount will depend on inflation and economic growth levels.⁶ As prices, inflation, and tensions around trade continue rising, the Federal Reserve may change course.

The University of Michigan's Consumer Sentiment index, a measurement of American confidence in their personal finances and the overall economy, recovered slightly from low levels throughout the last quarter of 2025.

The major stock indices are off to a rocky start.

The US stock market and its indices had a dismal start to 2026. Amid high geopolitical tensions and low job growth, the S&P 500 and Nasdaq 100 decreased by 4.33% and 5.82%, respectively.⁷ Interestingly, this marks the worst annual start since 2022, which was defined by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.⁸

The US Consumer Confidence Index® and Consumer Sentiment remain low.

The Conference Board *Consumer Confidence Index*® decreased entering 2026, to 84.5, but rose throughout the first quarter, peaking at 91.8 in March.⁹

The University of Michigan's Consumer Sentiment index, a measurement of American confidence in their personal finances and the overall economy, recovered slightly from low levels throughout the last quarter of 2025.¹⁰ In the first quarter of 2026, the average Consumer Sentiment index was 55.4. Though January and February had similar levels of consumer sentiment, the index fell by 3.3 points in March.

Historically, the WCI and CCI have a predictive relationship. The CCI will mirror the WCI's activity from the previous quarter about two-thirds of the time. In our last report, we predicted the CCI would rise in the first quarter of 2026. Since the WCI increased in this quarter, the CCI is predicted to increase in the second quarter of 2026.

The US economy falters.

The US economy is currently marked by rising inflation, higher consumer prices, and volatility in trade markets. Though the economy is expected to expand throughout 2026, by 2.4%, the path will not be easy. Tariffs and higher prices have affected consumer spending, which is predicted to fall to 2.1% in 2026 compared to 2.7% through 2025. Energy and oil prices are expected to rise, impacting overall inflation. Conversely, real GDP is predicted to expand exponentially through 2026.¹¹ As geopolitical tensions rise, the US economy may begin to crack after displaying prolonged resiliency.

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Overview of the Worker Confidence Index

The WCI, shown in Figure 1, increased slightly, by 0.2 points to 98. Year-over-year, the WCI is up by 0.5 points.

Two of the four indices within worker confidence increased. Likelihood of a Raise increased the most, by 2.8 points to 99.6, though the index is down year-over-year. Likelihood of a Promotion saw the sharpest decrease, by 2.2 points to 103.1, though this index is up year-over-year. Job Security was unchanged while Trust in Company Leadership declined, by 0.3 points to 97.1.

Figure 3A shows worker confidence by gender, which varied. Confidence among men increased slightly while confidence among women decreased comparably. The confidence gap between the genders increased from 12.7 to 13.9 points.

Worker confidence, shown in Figure 3B, mostly declined by racial segment. Caucasians felt the only increase in confidence, by 0.9 points to 96.2. African Americans and Hispanics saw similar decreases in confidence, by 3.1 and 3.2 points to 104.5

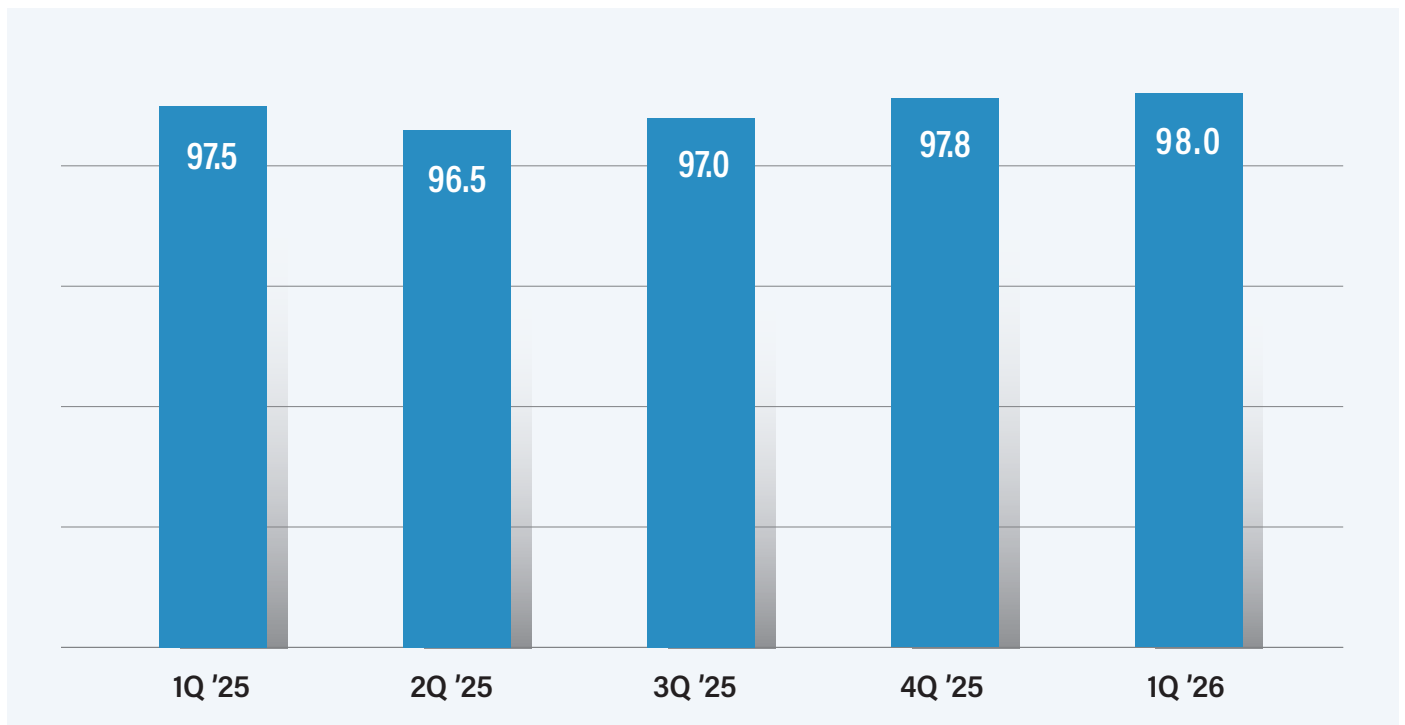
and 100.3, respectively. Due to these decreases, the gap between the most and least confident racial segments decreased from 12.3 points to 8.3.

Figure 4A shows worker confidence by job location as hybrid workers, again, hold the highest level of confidence following a 2.6-point increase. Confidence among remote workers increased the most, by 4.8 points to 101.8. On-site workers felt the only decrease in confidence, by 1.3 points to 94.6.

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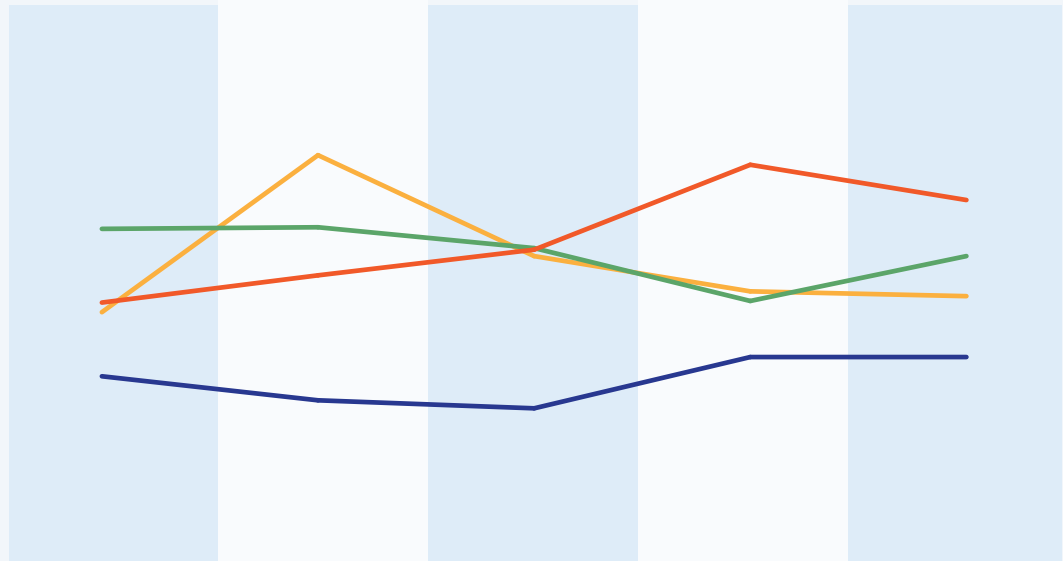
Worker Confidence Index (WCI)

Fig. 1



THE FOUR WCI INDICES – Index Category Detailed Trend Analysis

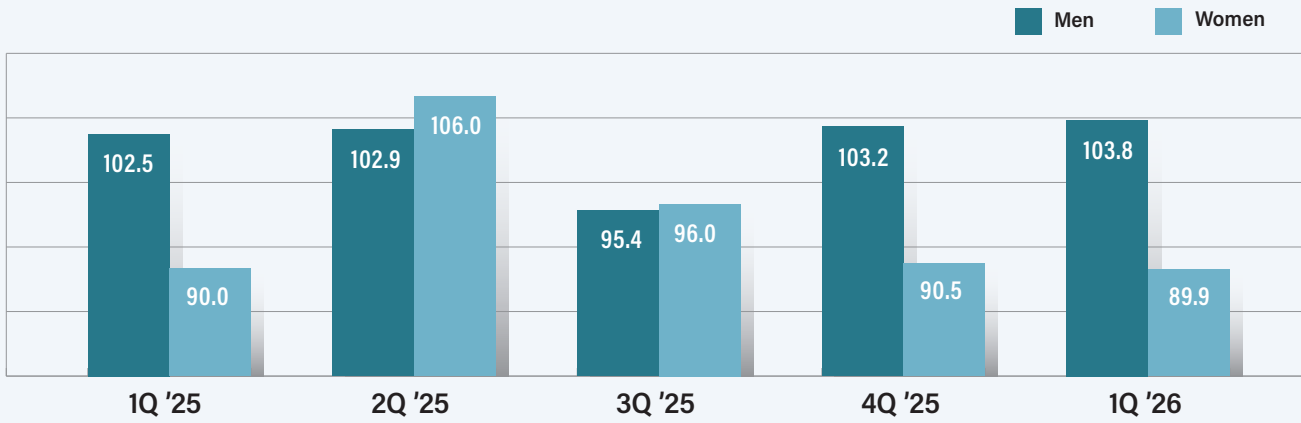
Fig. 2



		1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
Job Security	—	92.1	90.6	90.1	93.3	93.3
Promotion	—	96.7	98.4	100.0	105.3	103.1
Raise	—	101.3	101.4	100.1	96.8	99.6
Trust	—	96.1	105.9	99.6	97.4	97.1

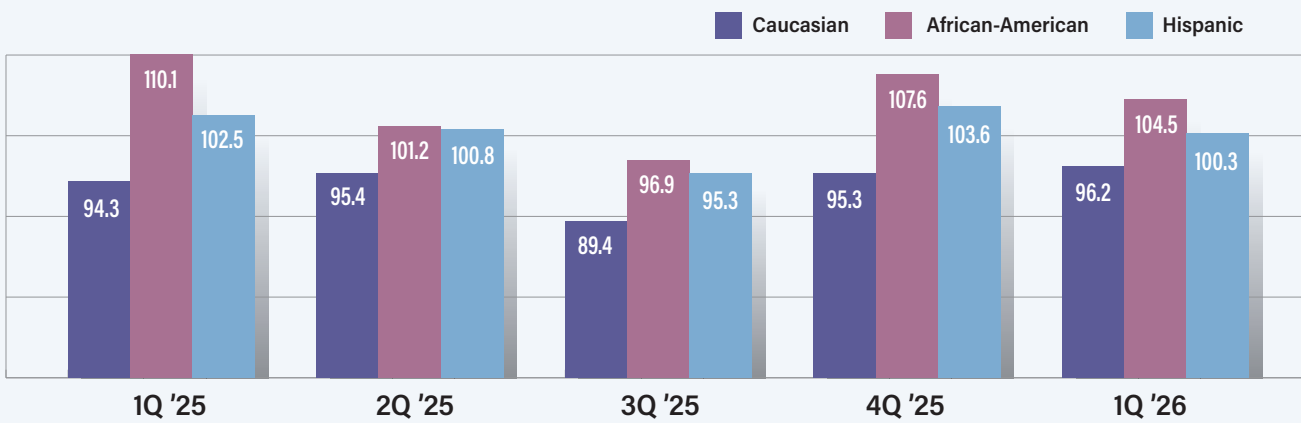
WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX BY GENDER

Fig. 3A



WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX BY RACE

Fig. 3B



WCI INDICES BY JOB LOCATION, 2025

Fig. 4



THE FOUR SUB-INDICES THAT CREATE THE WCI

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 was unchanged from last quarter at 93.3. Overall, 15.9% of workers fear involuntarily losing their job, nearly unchanged from 15.8% last quarter. Year-over-year, fear of job loss is up by 1.2 points. As layoffs continue steadily throughout the US, workers may continue feeling less secure in their jobs.

Job security varied by gender. Among women, fear of job loss increased by 1.6 percentage points to 12.5%. Though men feel less secure in their jobs overall as 18.4% fear job loss, this fell by 1.1 percentage points. Year-over-year, both genders feel more secure in their jobs.

By age group, fear of job loss fluctuated. The youngest age group, those 18 to 24, saw a significant decrease in job security as 27% fear job loss, up by 9.6 percentage points. This increase could be caused by terminations of seasonal jobs, which are common among this age group. Workers 45 to 54 and 65+ were the other age segments to feel an increase in fear of job loss, by 1.8 and 1.6 percentage points, respectively. The gap in job security between the youngest age group and the eldest widened from 12.8% to 20.8%, showing additional volatility in fear over job loss depending on experience.

Feelings of job security varied considerably by income level. The lowest earning group, \$35,000 and less, felt an increase in

fear of job loss, by 3 percentage points, as nearly one-fourth (24%) fear job loss. Workers earning \$75,000 to \$100,000 felt the largest drop in job security as 18.4% fear job loss, up by 8.6 percentage points. Among workers earning \$35,000 to \$50,000, fear of job loss fell by 8.3 percentage points to 8.2%.

Among African Americans and Hispanics, fear of job loss increased by 1.9 and 1.1 percentage points, respectively. Caucasians felt more confident in their jobs as fear of job loss fell by 0.5 percentage points to 14.6%.

Fear of job loss fell, by 1.3 percentage points to 16.9%, among workers with a high school diploma or less. Workers with an incomplete college education felt the starkest decrease in fear of job loss, by 2.4 percentage points to 12.3%. College graduates were the only education segment to feel less secure in their position as fear of job loss increased by 2.4 percentage points to 17%.

When examining job security by job location, remote and hybrid workers feel greater job security, by 1.7 and 5.5 percentage points. However, remote workers hold the least amount of job security as 30% fear job loss. On-site workers, the most secure segment, felt the sole increase in fear of job loss, by 2.6 percentage points to 10.4%.

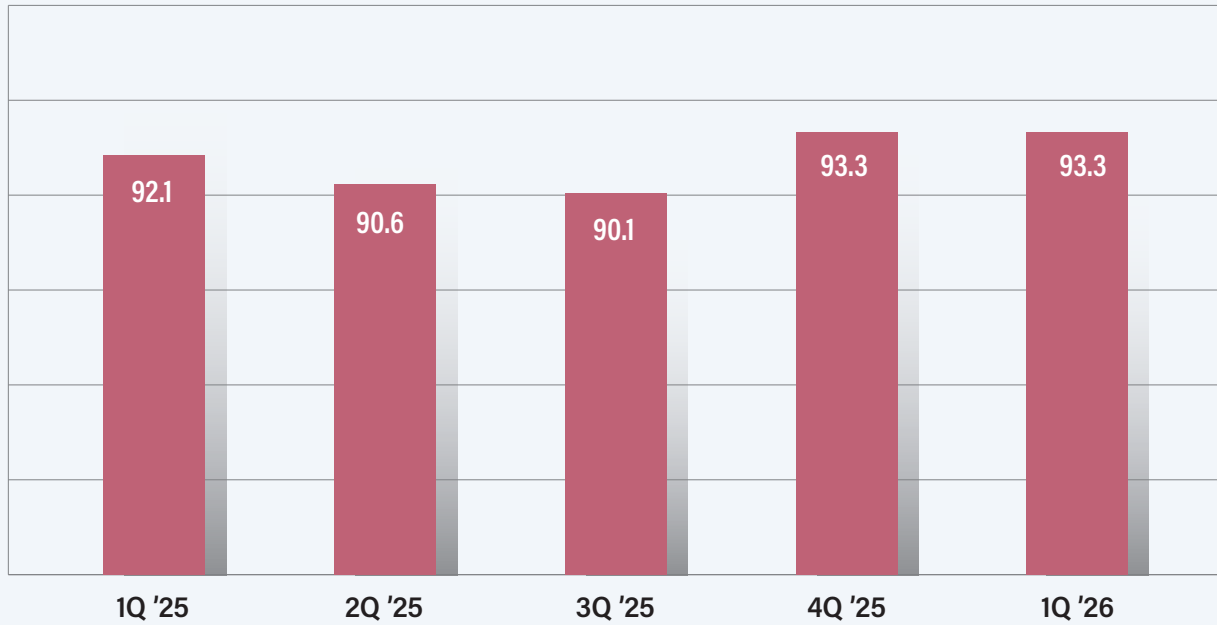
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+9.6%

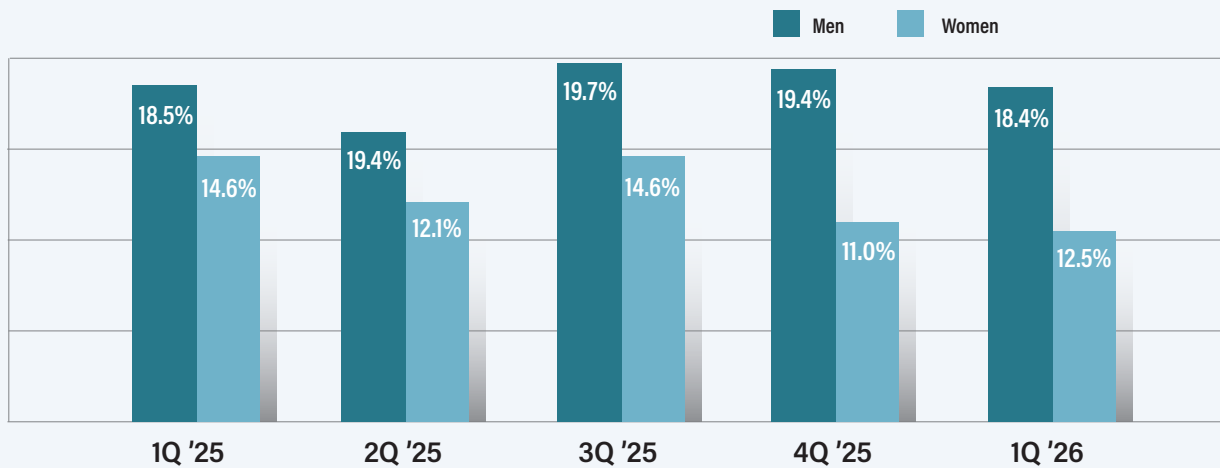
JOB SECURITY INDEX

Fig. 5



LIKELIHOOD OF JOB LOSS BY GENDER

Fig. 6



Likelihood of Job Loss by:

Fig. 7

AGE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
18-24	21.0%	22.9%	20.6%	17.4%	27.0%
25-34	20.8%	18.8%	22.5%	20.0%	18.5%
35-44	21.7%	18.4%	15.5%	17.0%	15.0%
45-54	12.2%	15.4%	17.4%	14.2%	16.0%
55-64	8.5%	9.0%	15.0%	10.5%	8.5%
65+	8.6%	5.1%	5.1%	4.6%	6.2%

Fig. 8

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
< \$35K	22.0%	18.9%	20.9%	21.0%	24.0%
\$35-\$50K	14.1%	18.6%	16.5%	16.4%	8.2%
\$50K-\$75K	16.2%	14.3%	21.4%	15.6%	14.3%
\$75K-\$100K	14.8%	19.6%	18.9%	9.8%	18.4%
\$100K+	16.8%	13.9%	13.0%	15.6%	13.9%

Fig. 9

RACE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
Caucasian Only	16.0%	16.4%	15.2%	15.1%	14.6%
African American Only	23.1%	23.3%	28.6%	19.3%	21.2%
Hispanic	15.6%	10.2%	16.9%	16.2%	17.3%

Fig. 10

EDUCATION	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
HS Grad or Less	19.1%	15.7%	18.8%	18.2%	16.9%
College Incomplete	13.8%	13.7%	16.3%	14.7%	12.3%
College Grad	16.9%	17.8%	17.2%	14.7%	17.0%

Likelihood of a Promotion

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

The Likelihood of a Promotion index decreased, by 2.2 points to 103.1, after seeing an increase in the fourth quarter of 2026. Typically, the index rises towards the end of the year and drops as a new year begins, likely as employees receive promotions towards the end of the year. During prolonged periods of economic uncertainty, promotions may be more likely in lieu of raises or bonuses.

Following previous trends, men are more confident in receiving a promotion, though the index fell for both genders. Nearly half (48.1%) of men expect a promotion compared to 35.8% of women. Year-over-year, confidence in a promotion increased for both genders, by 2.9 percentage points for men and 2.6 percentage points for women.

Confidence in receiving a promotion varied by age segment. The youngest age group, those 18 to 24, felt a stark jump in confidence, by 13.5 percentage points to 60.9%. Workers in the age segments 25 to 44 felt slight increases in confidence, by 0.4 and 4 percentage points, respectively. Interestingly, the three eldest age groups all felt a decrease in confidence in a promotion. Though it's typical that workers closer to retirement may not expect promotions, decreases across the three groups throughout one quarter is notable. Workers aged 45 to 54 felt the starkest decrease in confidence in a promotion, by 8.6 percentage points to 33.5%, mirroring levels from Q1'25. Interestingly, these age segments typically have higher incomes, a section examined later. Year-over-year, confidence in a promotion increased or was unchanged for all age segments.

By income segment, confidence in promotion was especially volatile. Among workers earning \$35,000 or less, confidence

increased the most, by 5.2 percentage points to 48.1%. Workers earning \$35,000 to \$50,000 felt a dramatic drop in confidence, by 10.8 percentage points to 34.7%, which may be caused by high promotion levels at the end of the year. The highest earning group was the only other income segment that did not feel a decrease in confidence, as it was nearly unchanged at 43.8%. Year-over-year, confidence among the two highest earning income groups increased.

Caucasian workers saw the only increase in confidence, by 0.9 percentage points to 39.8%. African Americans and Hispanics both felt decreases in confidence in receiving a promotion, by 2.9 and 5 percentage points, respectively. Confidence year-over-year only increased among Caucasians, reducing the gap between the most and least confident racial segments (African Americans and Caucasians) from 18.4% to 14.6%.

By education segment, confidence in receiving a promotion varied. Workers with a high school diploma or less felt the only decrease in confidence, by 4.9 percentage points to 40.7%. Again, workers with an incomplete college education hold the highest level of confidence in a promotion as confidence increased by 1.1 percentage points to 44.5%. College graduates are slightly more confident in a promotion, by 0.6 percentage points to 43.6%.

Confidence in receiving a promotion declined for two of three job locations. Remote workers felt the sole increase in confidence, by 2.2 percentage points to 49.8%. Hybrid and on-site workers both feel less confident in a promotion, by 2.7 and 1.2 percentage points, respectively.

Following previous trends, men are more confident in receiving a promotion, though the index fell for both genders. Nearly half (48.1%) of men expect a promotion compared to 35.8% of women.



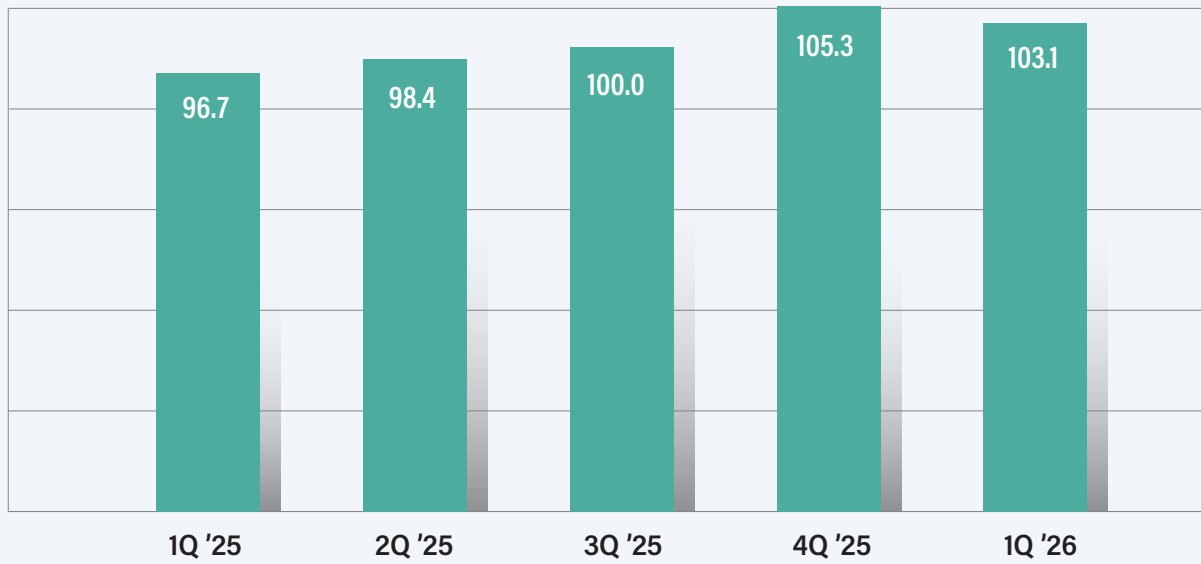
35.8%



48.1%

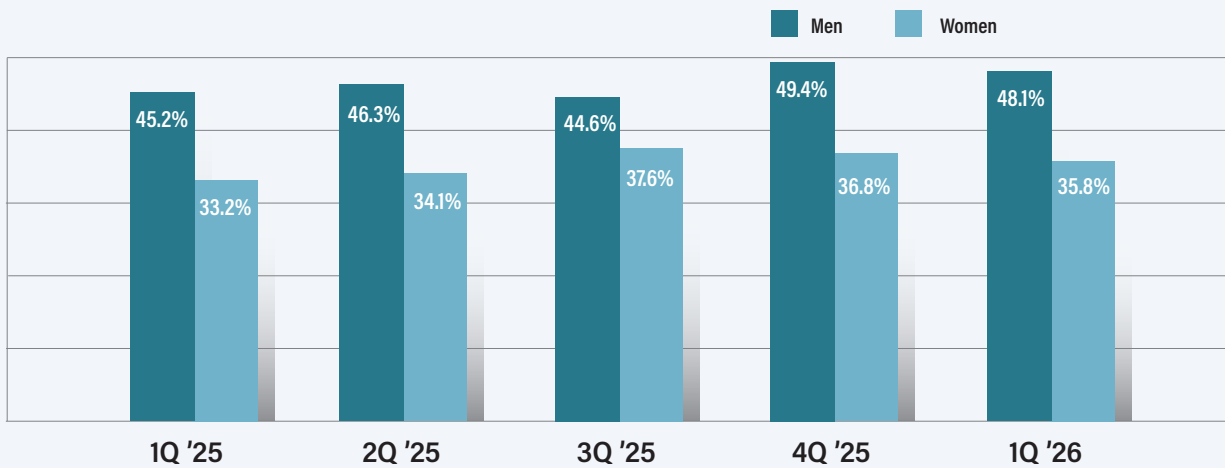
LIKELIHOOD OF A PROMOTION INDEX

Fig. 11



LIKELIHOOD OF A PROMOTION BY GENDER

Fig. 12



Likelihood of a Promotion by:

Fig. 13

AGE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
18-24	53.8%	49.4%	46.1%	47.4%	60.9%
25-34	51.9%	47.7%	52.0%	53.2%	53.5%
35-44	50.2%	47.7%	49.2%	47.5%	51.4%
45-54	33.5%	37.9%	35.0%	42.0%	33.5%
55-64	13.4%	23.7%	22.5%	29.0%	21.9%
65+	13.8%	23.9%	29.1%	16.3%	16.1%

Fig. 14

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
< \$35K	44.7%	44.5%	39.6%	42.9%	48.1%
\$35-\$50K	40.7%	36.3%	34.9%	45.5%	34.7%
\$50K-\$75K	41.0%	37.7%	43.0%	40.6%	40.0%
\$75K-\$100K	40.2%	36.7%	36.1%	49.5%	44.6%
\$100K+	37.6%	44.4%	46.8%	43.7%	43.8%

Fig. 15

RACE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
Caucasian Only	34.9%	37.0%	37.9%	38.9%	39.8%
African American Only	55.6%	49.3%	52.1%	57.3%	54.4%
Hispanic	48.2%	43.6%	44.4%	52.7%	47.8%

Fig. 16

EDUCATION	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
HS Grad or Less	44.8%	38.5%	40.4%	45.6%	40.7%
College Incomplete	37.7%	36.8%	38.1%	43.4%	44.5%
College Grad	38.7%	44.6%	44.1%	43.0%	43.6%

Likelihood of a Raise of Three Percent or More

Do you feel you'll receive a raise of 3% or more after your next review?

The Likelihood of a Raise index increased by 2.7 points to 99.6. Over half of workers (53.8%) anticipate receiving a raise of 3% or more, up slightly from last quarter.

Following previous trends, men are more confident in receiving a raise than women. Confidence among men increased by 2 percentage points as 59.3% anticipate raises. Among women, confidence grew slightly, by 0.3 percentage points to 45.4%. Interestingly, the confidence gap between the genders expanded by 0.8 percentage points to 14.4%.

Confidence in a raise increased across most age segments. Workers aged 65 and over felt the starkest increase in confidence as anticipation of a raise grew by 10.8 percentage points to 37.3%. Those aged 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 felt the only decreases in confidence, by 1.9 and 1.8 percentage points, respectively. Year-over-year, confidence in a raise was unchanged or down for five out of the six age groups.

By income group, confidence in a raise varied. The two lowest earning groups, less than \$35,000 and \$35,000 to \$50,000, felt the starkest declines in confidence, by 6.4 and 4.6 percentage points, respectively. Workers earning \$50,000 to \$75,000 and \$100,000+ feel more confident, by 5.8 and 4.2 percentage points as 52% and 66% anticipate a raise, respectively.

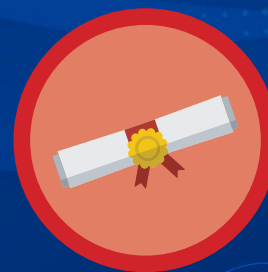
Year-over-year, only the highest earning income group is more confident in a raise.

When examined by education level, confidence in receiving a raise mostly increased. Workers with a high school diploma or less felt the only decline in confidence in a raise, by 4.2 percentage points to 43.7%. Workers with an incomplete college education and college graduates both feel more confident in a raise, by 4.2 and 3.1 percentage points. The gap in confidence between the most and least educated segments nearly doubled to 16.8%.

By racial segment, only Caucasians felt an increase in confidence in a raise. Confidence among Caucasian workers increased by 2.6 percentage points as 53.2% anticipate a raise. Among African Americans and Hispanics, confidence fell by 2.3 and 4.4 percentage points, respectively. Year-over-year, confidence in receiving a raise decreased among all racial groups surveyed.

Confidence in receiving a raise increased across all job location segments, though confidence decreased year-over-year for all except on-site workers. All segments felt similar increases in confidence, between 1.3 and 2 percentage points, as remote workers hold the highest level of confidence in a raise.

When examined by education level, confidence in receiving a raise mostly increased. Workers with a high school diploma or less felt the only decline in confidence in a raise, by 4.2 percentage points to 43.7%. Workers with an incomplete college education and college graduates both feel more confident in a raise, by 4.2 and 3.1 percentage points.



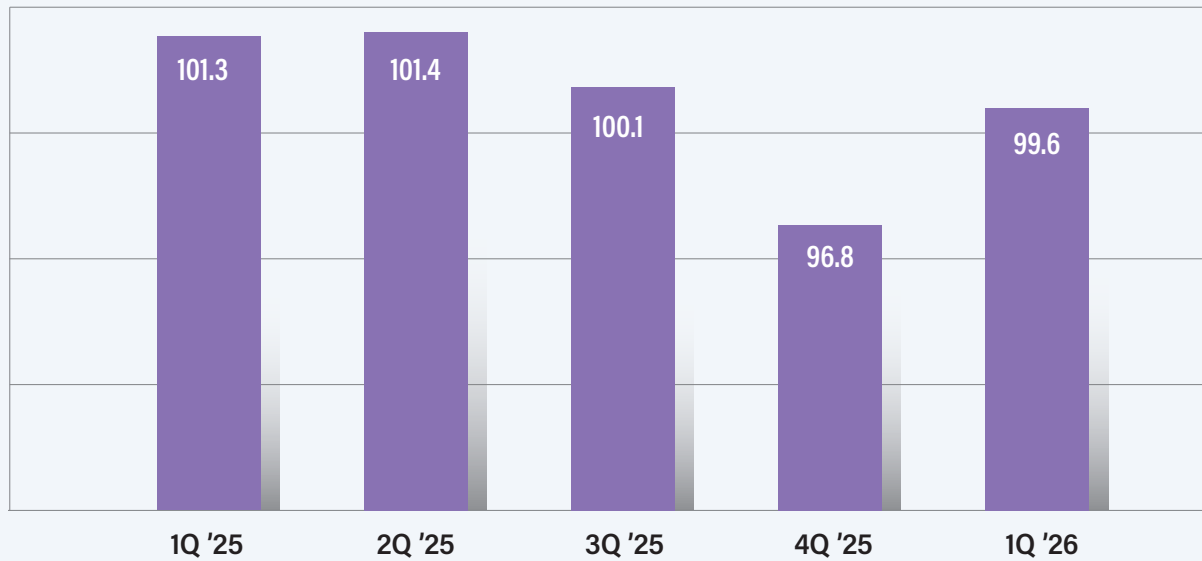
-4.2%



+3.1%

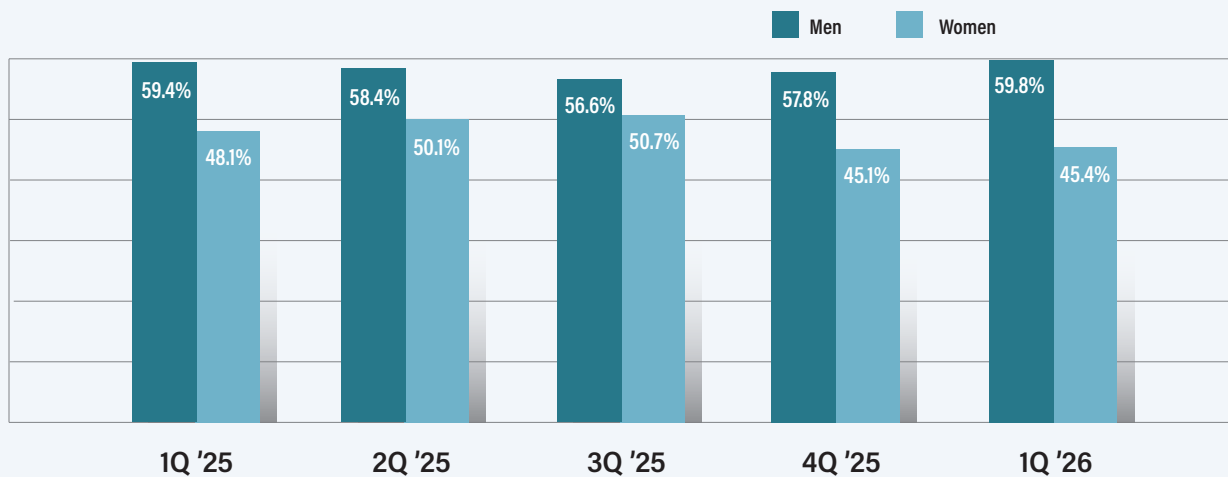
LIKELIHOOD OF A RAISE OF MORE THAN THREE PERCENT INDEX

Fig. 17



LIKELIHOOD OF A RAISE OF MORE THAN THREE PERCENT BY GENDER

Fig. 18



Likelihood of a Raise of Three Percent or More by:

Fig. 19

AGE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
18-24	50.9%	56.4%	51.3%	46.4%	51.0%
25-34	60.9%	57.5%	56.7%	55.0%	59.3%
35-44	61.0%	55.9%	60.3%	58.9%	57.0%
45-54	54.6%	54.7%	52.2%	52.7%	51.0%
55-64	41.5%	48.7%	43.6%	46.1%	51.1%
65+	43.6%	52.6%	55.0%	26.5%	37.3%

Fig. 20

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
< \$35K	47.7%	47.5%	42.0%	48.4%	42.0%
\$35-\$50K	48.3%	52.4%	40.8%	42.0%	37.3%
\$50K-\$75K	52.4%	49.1%	54.4%	46.2%	52.0%
\$75K-\$100K	56.2%	51.9%	54.4%	52.6%	51.7%
\$100K+	61.8%	63.2%	64.3%	61.7%	66.0%

Fig. 21

RACE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
Caucasian Only	53.8%	52.2%	50.7%	50.7%	53.2%
African American Only	68.4%	59.1%	60.1%	58.9%	56.6%
Hispanic	54.4%	57.0%	52.4%	56.9%	52.5%

Fig. 22

EDUCATION	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
HS Grad or Less	48.1%	49.8%	49.4%	47.8%	43.7%
College Incomplete	53.1%	47.4%	52.7%	48.6%	52.7%
College Grad	59.8%	61.8%	57.8%	57.3%	60.4%

Trust in Company Leadership

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

Trust in Company Leadership declined, ending a historic rise in company trust. However, trust is still up year-over-year, by 1 point. Overall, 68% of workers trust their company leadership.

Trust in company leadership among men and women declined or was largely unchanged. Women felt a decline in company leadership trust, by 0.7 percentage points to 63.6%. Among men, 71.2% trust their company leadership, similar to levels from the last quarter of 2025.

Trust in company leadership varied by age group. The youngest age group, 18 to 24, felt the starkest jump in trust, by 12.1 percentage points as over two-thirds (75.9%) trust their company leadership. Workers aged 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 felt the only declines in trust, by 6 and 9.5 percentage points. Now, workers aged 55 to 64 are the least trusting age segment.

By income group, trust in company leadership mostly declined. Workers earning less than \$35,000 and between \$50,000 and \$75,000 felt similar increases in company leadership trust, by 2.1 and 2.2 percentage points to 67% and 69.1%, respectively. Among those earning \$35,000 and \$50,000, trust declined the most, by 4 percentage points to 54.9%. Interestingly, trust is mostly up year-over-year, except

for workers earning \$35,000 to \$50,000, where trust fell dramatically by 9.6 percentage points.

Trust in company leadership declined for two of the three racial segments examined. Hispanics felt the only increase in trust, by 3.9 percentage points to 72.5%. Caucasians and African Americans felt similar declines in company leadership trust, by 2.7 and 2.2 percentage points, respectively. Hispanics are now the most trusting racial group surveyed. Year-over-year, trust in company leadership only declined among Caucasians, by 1.7 percentage points.

By education group, trust declined across two of three segments. College graduates felt the sole increase in company leadership trust, by 0.9 percentage points to 71.5%, as they are still the most trusting education segment. Trust among workers with a high school diploma or less fell by 2.1 percentage points to 65.1%. Among workers with an incomplete college education, trust fell by 0.7 percentage points to 64.2%.

On-site workers felt the only decrease in trust, by 1.7 percentage points to 63.9%. Remote workers felt the highest jump in company leadership trust, by 2.8 percentage points to 75%. Among hybrid workers, trust in company leadership increased by 1.2 percentage points to 73.3%.



+12.1%



The youngest age group, 18 to 24, felt the starkest jump in trust, by 12.1 percentage points as over two-thirds (75.9%) trust their company leadership. Workers aged 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 felt the only declines in trust, by 6 and 9.5 percentage points.

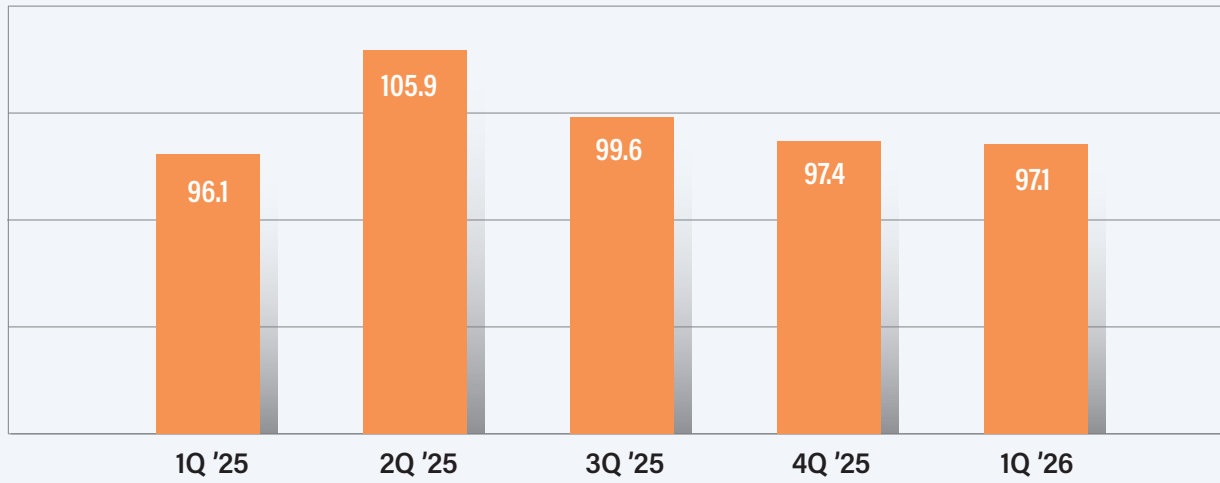


-9.5%



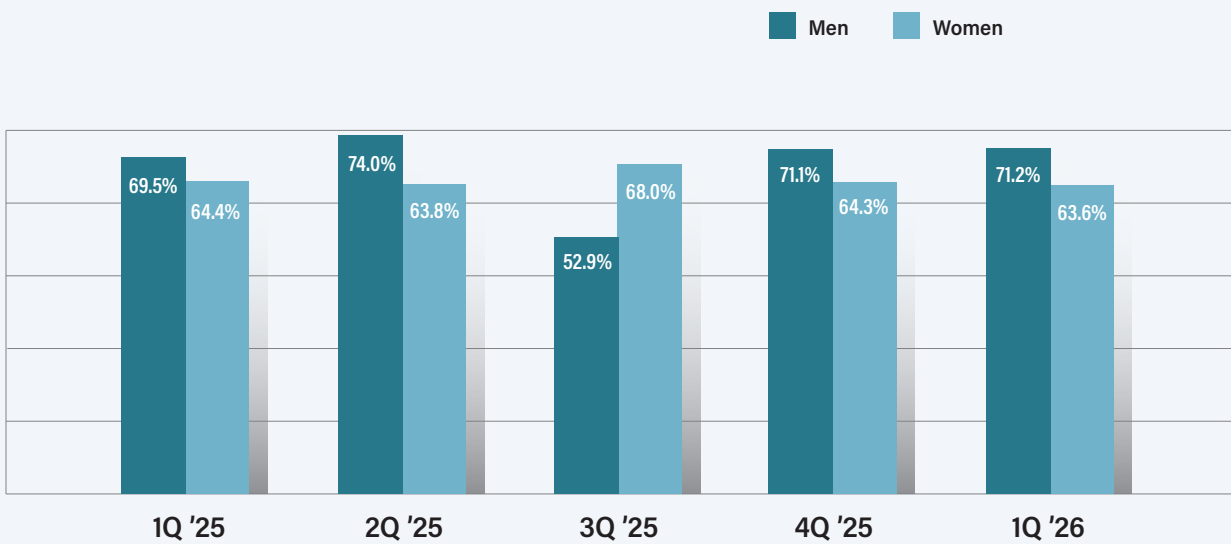
TRUST IN COMPANY LEADERSHIP INDEX

Fig. 23



TRUST IN COMPANY LEADERSHIP BY GENDER

Fig. 24



Trust in Company's Leadership by:

Fig. 25

AGE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
18-24	67.6%	79.8%	72.0%	63.8%	75.9%
25-34	66.1%	71.2%	78.8%	70.5%	72.8%
35-44	75.3%	68.6%	71.7%	68.1%	70.0%
45-54	64.3%	66.4%	62.0%	67.4%	61.3%
55-64	56.4%	62.8%	57.9%	69.6%	60.1%
65+	71.8%	77.5%	77.9%	67.3%	69.2%

Fig. 26

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
< \$35K	61.6%	61.5%	63.5%	64.9%	67.0%
\$35-\$50K	64.5%	63.6%	74.0%	58.9%	54.9%
\$50K-\$75K	66.2%	64.9%	66.0%	67.0%	69.1%
\$75K-\$100K	68.6%	71.9%	67.3%	73.6%	70.6%
\$100K+	71.5%	76.5%	74.9%	71.4%	70.3%

Fig. 27

RACE	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
Caucasian Only	66.9%	70.3%	68.6%	67.9%	65.2%
African American Only	69.5%	70.5%	69.3%	73.9%	71.8%
Hispanic	69.9%	68.5%	72.3%	68.6%	72.5%

Fig. 28

EDUCATION	1Q '25	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26
HS Grad or Less	63.4%	40.0%	44.5%	67.3%	65.1%
College Incomplete	64.6%	44.0%	46.8%	65.0%	64.2%
College Grad	71.1%	52.7%	53.7%	70.6%	71.5%

Fig. 29

STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS Q1 2026	
GENDER	
Male	58.0%
Female	42.0%
AGE	
18-24	10.3%
25-34	24.5%
35-44	24.9%
45-54	20.8%
55-64	14.4%
65+	5.2%
RACE	
White Only	55.3%
Black Only	12.7%
Hispanic	21.4%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
\$35K or Less	17.3%
\$35K-\$50K	9.8%
\$50K-\$75K	21.3%
\$75K-\$100K	15.3%
\$100K+	36.3%
EDUCATION	
HS Grad or Less	28.9%
College Incomplete	23.4%
College Graduate	47.7%
JOB LOCATION	
Remote	17.1%
Hybrid	22.0%
On-Site	61.0%

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