HRO TODAY

levelUP
HUMAN CAPITAL SOLUTIONS

Q2
2026

Worker Confidence Index

Published by *HRO Today* Magazine
in Cooperation with LevelUP HCS

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 HCS.

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**

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]

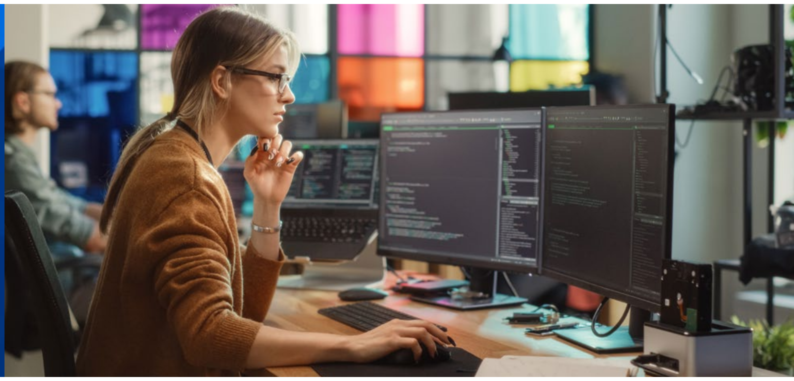
Compensation and career mobility, historically, are an important driver of employee turnover. As the US economy continues to fluctuate, workers seek higher wages, making low pay or lackluster opportunities for advancement main reasons why employees quit their jobs. As inflation and high prices persist,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

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.

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.



Executive Summary

In the second quarter of 2026, American workers felt significantly more optimistic as the WCI increased to 104, its highest level in over a year. The Company Trust index saw the largest increase while Job Security's growth was the most modest.

This quarterly report analyzes attitudes and confidence levels among American workers throughout the second quarter of 2026, including economic downturns, continued geopolitical instability, and workforce trends. *HRO Today* hopes to uncover causes behind the changes in the WCI results and shifts in worker perceptions.

The WCI in the second quarter of 2026:

- **Worker confidence increased significantly.** The WCI reached 104 as all of its indices increased by over 4 points.
- **Trust in company leadership rebounded.** After rising throughout 2025, trust in company leadership fell for the first time in over a year last quarter. Now, the trust index has increased more than any other index within the WCI.
- **Job Security rose for the first time in over a year.** After the index decreased or plateaued for over four consecutive quarters, workers are feeling more secure in their current jobs. Hispanics, on-site workers, and men felt the biggest jump in job security this quarter.

How does the state of the U.S. economy and labor market impact the WCI results?

The US labor market slows down, though layoffs are relatively low.

The US only added 344,000 jobs throughout the second quarter as unemployment averaged at 4.2%.[4] The number of job openings, hires, and total separations continue to be relatively unchanged.[5] Though unemployment levels are relatively low, these low levels can partially be attributed to unemployed people stopping their job search, thus omitting out-of-work adults from the unemployment count. Recent layoff data has indicated a recent slowdown, though layoffs are reasonably low.[6] Healthcare, the sector that drove job creation throughout 2025, saw job growth plummet in June. The leisure and hospitality sector, typically an indicator for consumer spending trends, contracted by 61,000 jobs. Additionally, rising inflation levels surpassed recent wage growth, which could affect worker sentiment.[7] These signs are not indicative of a thriving labor market, especially as first quarter job growth was downwardly revised.

The Federal Reserve keeps rates steady again.

The Federal Reserve opted to keep rates steady for the second consecutive quarter. With economic uncertainty partially caused by the US-Iran conflict, a rate raise later in 2026 is expected. An increase in short-term yields is complicating future action, through long-term growth is essential.[8]

The major stock indices experienced unexpected growth.

After a dull start to the year, the US stock market and its indices saw surprising growth in the second quarter of 2026. The S&P 500 spiked by 15.2% while the Nasdaq 100 grew by 27.7%, both recording their best quarter since Q2'20.[9]

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

The quarterly average of the Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index® increased to 91.8. The CCI increased to 91.2 in June after May's levels were downwardly revised.[10]

The University of Michigan's Consumer Sentiment index, another measurement of American perceptions of personal finances and the US economy, declined, though levels rebounded in June. The second quarter's average Consumer Sentiment index was 48 compared to 55.4 last quarter. However, the index hit 49.5 in June, showing signs of optimism.[11]

Backed by previous trends, the WCI and CCI typically have a predictive relationship. The CCI's change is predicted by the WCI's activity from the previous quarter, which is correct over two-thirds of the time. In the last report, we predicted the CCI would increase in the second quarter of 2026. Considering the WCI's increase in this quarter, the CCI is expected to increase again in the third quarter of 2026. However, this predictive relationship can be derailed by escalated geopolitical tensions, a remarkably stagnate labor market, or a depleting economy, though the optimism of American workers can be surprisingly resilient.

The US economy battles uncertainty.

Amid prolonged economic uncertainty, the US is expected to expand by 2.1% throughout 2026. Originally, growth predictions hovered closer to 2.4%. However, as inflation stays high, the job market is relatively unchanged, and the fallout of the US-Iran conflict continues, these growth predictions are expected to fluctuate.[12] Economists expect average job growth and higher levels of inflation, which could impact consumer spending and overall economic growth.

The University of Michigan's Consumer Sentiment index, another measurement of American perceptions of personal finances and the US economy, declined, though levels rebounded in June.

Overview of the Worker Confidence Index

The WCI, shown in Figure 1, increased by 6 points to 104. Year-over-year, the WCI is up by 7.5 points.

All of the four indices within worker confidence increased. Trust in Company Leadership increased the most, by 8.9 points to 106, after declining last quarter. Job Security had the most modest increase, by 4.1 points to 97.4.

Figure 3A shows worker confidence by gender, where confidence among both increased. Among men, confidence rose by 9.5 points to 113.2. Confidence among women grew by 6.2 points to 96.1. The confidence gap between the genders increased again from 13.9 to 17.2, fueled by the stark jump in confidence among men.

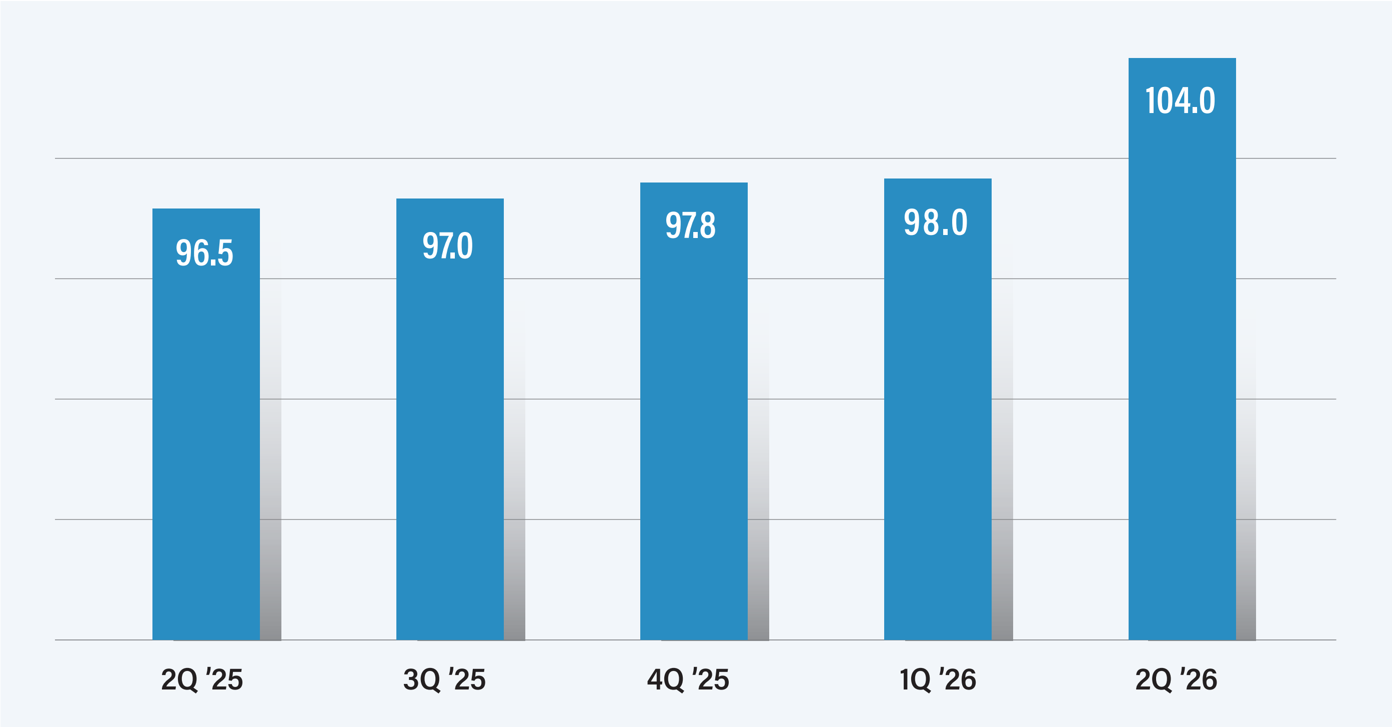
Worker confidence, shown in Figure 3B, shows confidence varying by racial segment. Caucasians felt the biggest increase in confidence, by 9.4 points to 105.6. African Americans felt a jump in confidence by 4.5 points to 108.9. Hispanics felt confidence plateau at 100.3.

Figure 4A shows worker confidence by job location. Following previous trends, hybrid workers hold the highest level of confidence as it grew by 5.5 points to 109.7. On-site and remote workers both felt increases in confidence, by 7.1 and 3.1 points, respectively.

All of the four indices within worker confidence increased. Trust in Company Leadership increased the most, by 8.9 points to 106, after declining last quarter. Job Security had the most modest increase, by 4.1 points to 97.4.

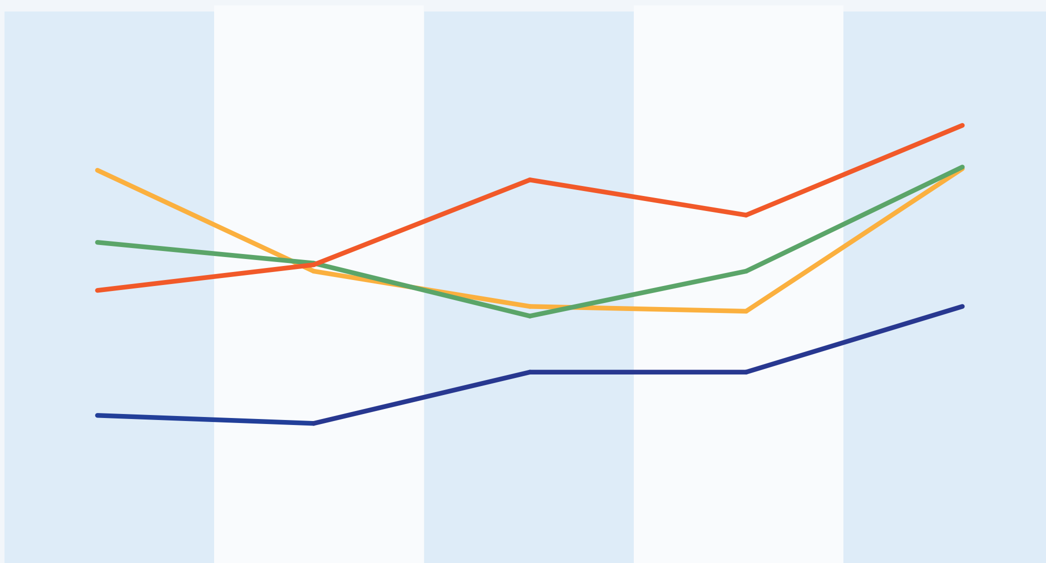
Worker Confidence Index (WCI)

Fig. 1



THE FOUR WCI INDICES — Index Category Detailed Trend Analysis

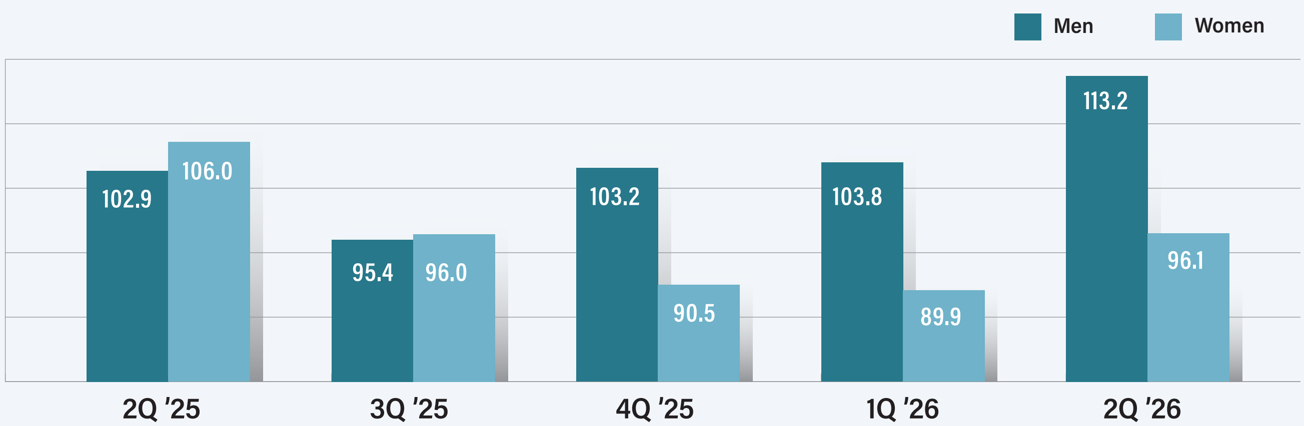
Fig. 2



	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
Job Security	90.6	90.1	93.3	93.3	97.4
Promotion	98.4	100.0	105.3	103.1	108.7
Raise	101.4	100.1	96.8	99.6	106.1
Trust	105.9	99.6	97.4	97.1	106.0

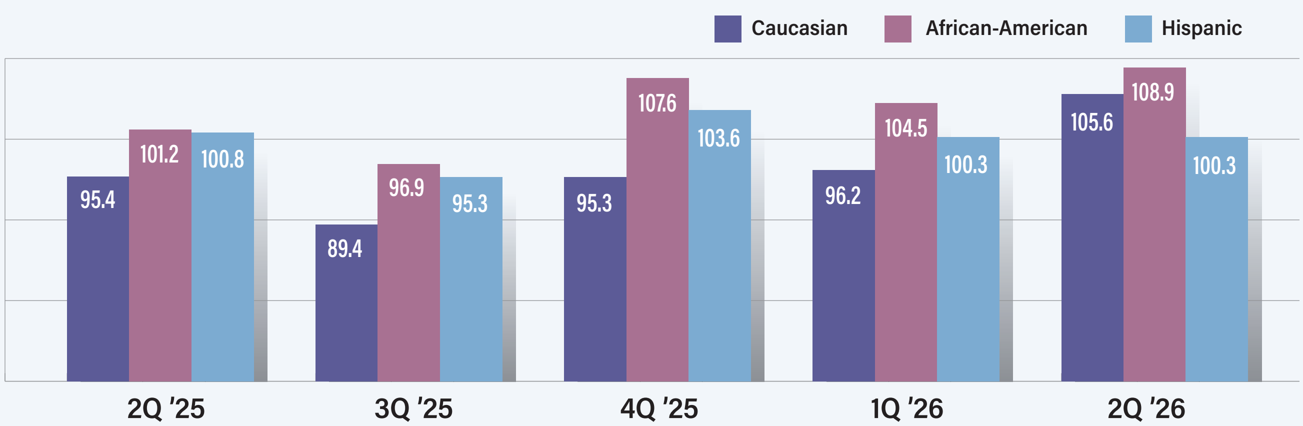
WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX BY GENDER

Fig. 3A



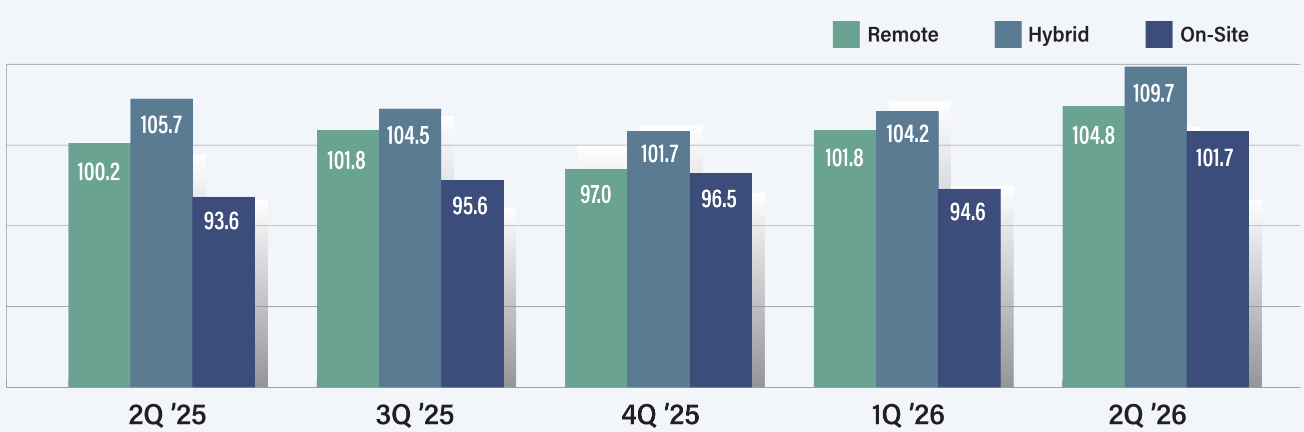
WORKER CONFIDENCE INDEX BY RACE

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 increased by 4.1 points to 97.3, the highest level of job security this year. However, 17.5% of workers fear involuntarily losing their jobs, up by 1.6 percentage points from last quarter. Though more workers feel confident in their jobs, more workers also fear job loss, showing polarity and stronger stances than previously seen. In a historically tight labor market, workers cannot afford neutrality, feeling either secure or easily replaceable in their jobs.

By gender, job security fluctuated. Among women, fear of job loss grew by 1.4 percentage points to 13.9%. Interestingly, fear of job loss among men fell by 4.5 percentage points to 13.9%. Job security is rarely equal among the genders as the difference is typically over 5 percentage points, where men hold more job security. This marks the third consecutive quarterly rise in job security among men.

Job security fluctuated by age group, though most feel less secure in their jobs. Workers aged 35 to 44 felt the largest drop in job security as 19.5% fear job loss, up by 4.5 percentage points. The youngest workers, ranging from 18 to 24, hold the least job security as 28.6% fear job loss, up by 1.6 percentage points. Spanning two age groups, workers 45 to 64 felt the only increase in job security by 0.5 and 0.2 percentage points, respectively. The job security gap between the youngest and eldest age groups widened to 21.3%, one of its highest recorded levels.

Feelings of job security varied by income level. The lowest earning group, $35,000 and less, felt a slight decrease in fear of job loss, by 0.5 percentage points to 23.5%. Workers earning between $75,000 and $100,000 felt the only other decrease in fear of job loss, by 2.5 percentage points to 15.9%. The other income segments, including the highest earners, felt less secure in their jobs.

By race, fear of job loss grew. African Americans hold the lowest level of job security as 26.7% fear job loss, up by 5.5 percentage points. Caucasians are more fearful of job loss by 1.7 percentage points to 16.4%. Hispanics, the only race segment examined to see an increase in job security and the most secure racial segment overall, felt fear of job loss fall by 3 percentage points to 14.3%, the lowest level since 2Q'25.

Fear of job loss varied by education level. Workers with a high school diploma or less felt job security grow by 1.1 percentage points to 15.8%, the most secure educational segment. Among workers with an incomplete college degree, fear of job loss grew by 3.7 percentage points to 15.9%. College graduates are also more fearful of job loss, by 2.1 percentage points to 19.2%.

When examined by job location, fear of job loss fluctuated. On-site workers hold the highest level of job security as only 8% fear job loss, down 2.4 percentage points. Nearly one-fourth (23.9%) of hybrid workers fear job loss, up by 4.7 percentage points. Remote workers, who are the most susceptible to low levels of job security, felt fear of job loss grow by 9.6 percentage points to 39.6%, its highest record level.

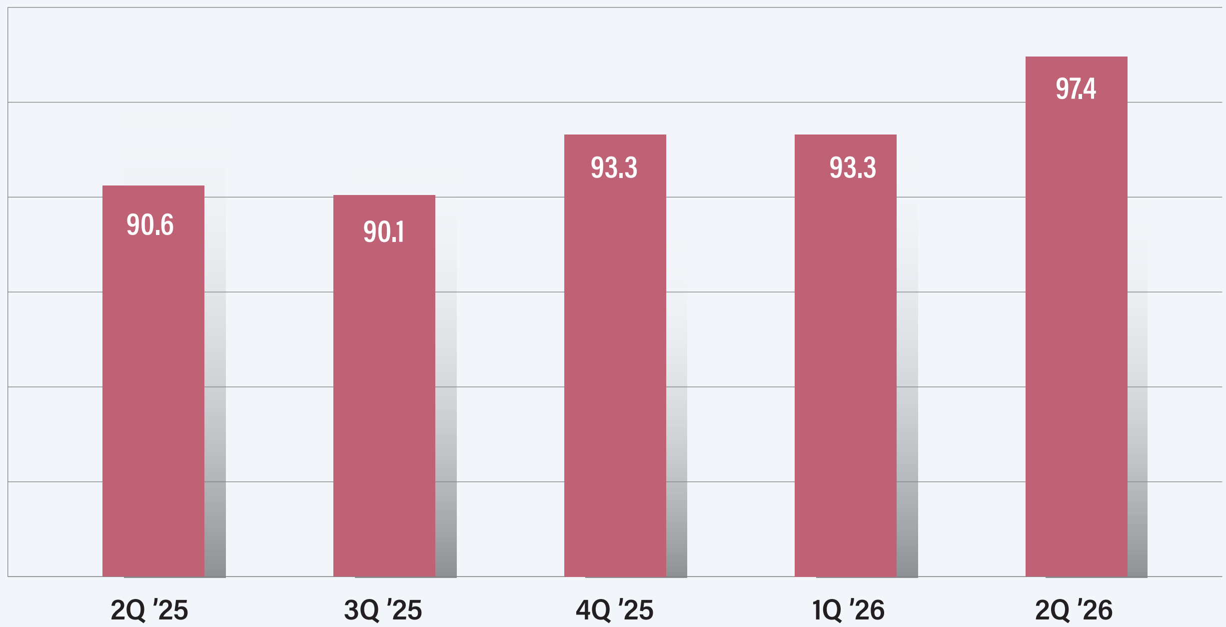
By gender, job security fluctuated. Among women, fear of job loss grew by 1.4 percentage points to 13.9%. Interestingly, fear of job loss among men fell by 4.5 percentage points to 13.9%.

+1.4%

-4.5%

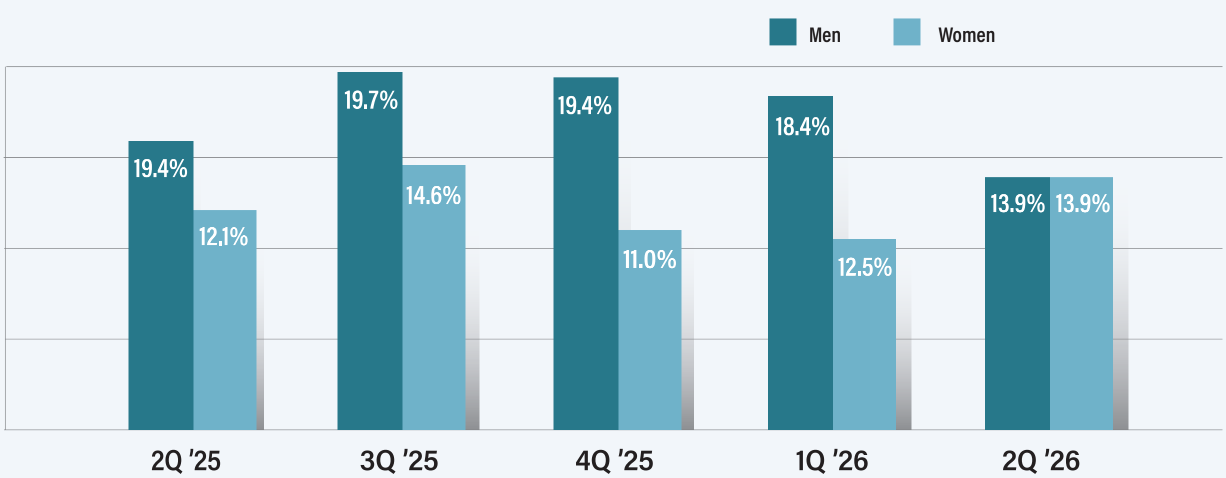
JOB SECURITY INDEX

Fig. 5



LIKELIHOOD OF JOB LOSS BY GENDER

Fig. 6



Likelihood of Job Loss by:

Fig. 7

AGE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
18–24	22.9%	20.6%	17.4%	27.0%	28.6%
25–34	18.8%	22.5%	20.0%	18.5%	19.6%
35–44	18.4%	15.5%	17.0%	15.0%	19.5%
45–54	15.4%	17.4%	14.2%	16.0%	15.6%
55–64	9.0%	15.0%	10.5%	8.5%	8.2%
65+	5.1%	5.1%	4.6%	6.2%	7.3%

Fig. 8

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
< $35K	18.9%	20.9%	21.0%	24.0%	23.5%
$35–$50K	18.6%	16.5%	16.4%	8.2%	13.1%
$50K–$75K	14.3%	21.4%	15.6%	14.3%	17.8%
$75K–$100K	19.6%	18.9%	9.8%	18.4%	15.9%
$100K+	13.9%	13.0%	15.6%	13.9%	16.8%

Fig. 9

RACE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
Caucasian Only	16.4%	15.2%	15.1%	14.6%	16.4%
African American Only	23.3%	28.6%	19.3%	21.2%	26.7%
Hispanic	10.2%	16.9%	16.2%	17.3%	14.3%

Fig. 10

EDUCATION	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
HS Grad or Less	15.7%	18.8%	18.2%	16.9%	15.8%
College Incomplete	13.7%	16.3%	14.7%	12.3%	15.9%
College Grad	17.8%	17.2%	14.7%	17.0%	19.2%

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 increased by 5.7 points to 108.7, its highest level in over a year. Overall, 45.3% of workers anticipate receiving a promotion in the next 12 months. As employers prioritize internal mobility within their retention strategies, worker confidence in a promotion could continue to rise.

Men and women saw confidence in a promotion increase. Among women, confidence rose by 1.4 percentage points to 37.2%. Confidence in a promotion among men grew by 3.1 percentage points to 51.2%. The gap in confidence in a promotion between the genders increased from 12.3% to 14.1%.

Confidence in receiving a promotion fluctuated by age segment. The youngest age group, 18 to 24, felt the largest decrease in confidence by 8.3 percentage points to 52.6%, following a stark jump last quarter. Workers aged 55 to 64 felt the only other decrease in confidence, by 2.2 percentage points to 19.7%, the least confident age segment. The eldest age group, those 65+, felt the most dramatic increase in confidence in a promotion, by 12.7 percentage points, similar to levels from 3Q'25. Workers aged 35 to 44, who felt an increase in confidence of 6.1 percentage points, are the most confident in receiving a promotion at 57.6%.

When examined by income group, confidence in a promotion mostly increased. Workers earning $35,000 or less felt the only decline in confidence, by 1 percentage point as 47.2% anticipate a promotion. The most confident segment, the highest earners at $100,000+, felt confidence in a promotion jump 4.4 percentage points to 48.2%.

By racial segment, confidence in a promotion varied. African Americans felt the largest increase in confidence, by 4.8 percentage points to 59.2%, the most confident racial segment surveyed. Caucasians felt a modest jump in confidence by 3.1 percentage points as 42.9% anticipate a promotion. Hispanics felt the sole decrease in confidence, by 3.6 percentage points to 44.1%.

Confidence in a promotion was especially erratic by education segment. Workers with an incomplete high school education and those with a college degree both felt an increase in confidence, by 6.3 and 3.4 percentage points, respectively. Confidence among workers with an incomplete college education fell by 4.9 percentage points to 39.6%.

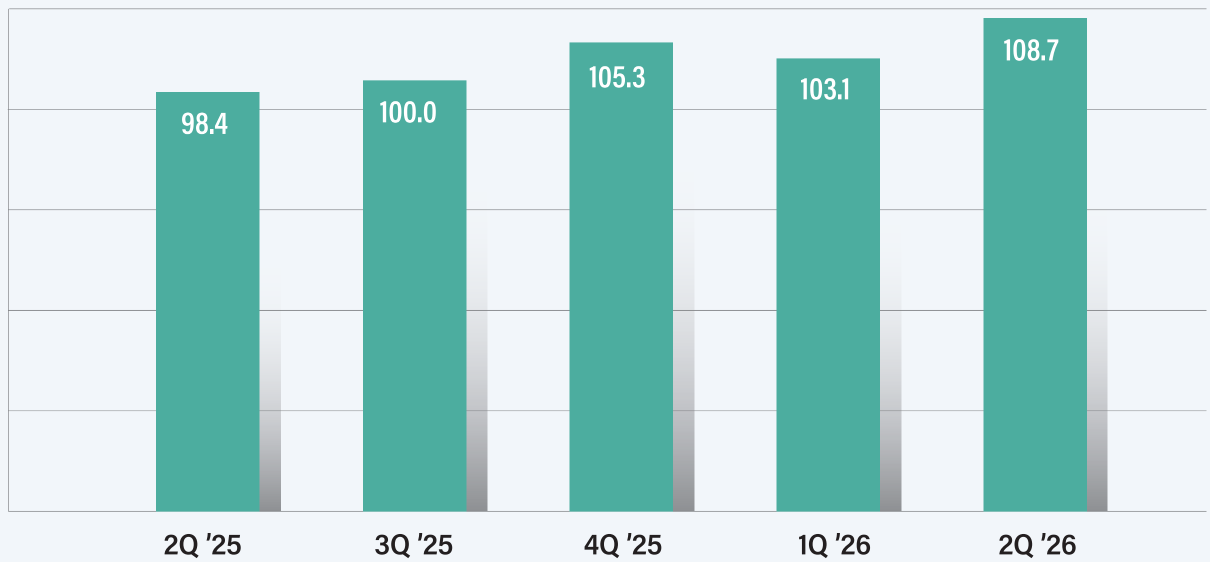
By job location, confidence in promotion grew or plateaued. For the second consecutive quarter, remote workers felt the largest increase in confidence, by 6.3 percentage points to 56.2%. Among hybrid workers, confidence in a promotion increased by 4.2 percentage points to 56.1%. Interestingly, on-site workers' confidence plateaued at 37.7%, making this group the least confident in receiving a promotion.

Confidence in receiving a promotion fluctuated by age segment. The youngest age group, 18 to 24, felt the largest decrease in confidence by 8.3 percentage points to 52.6%, following a stark jump last quarter.

-8.3%

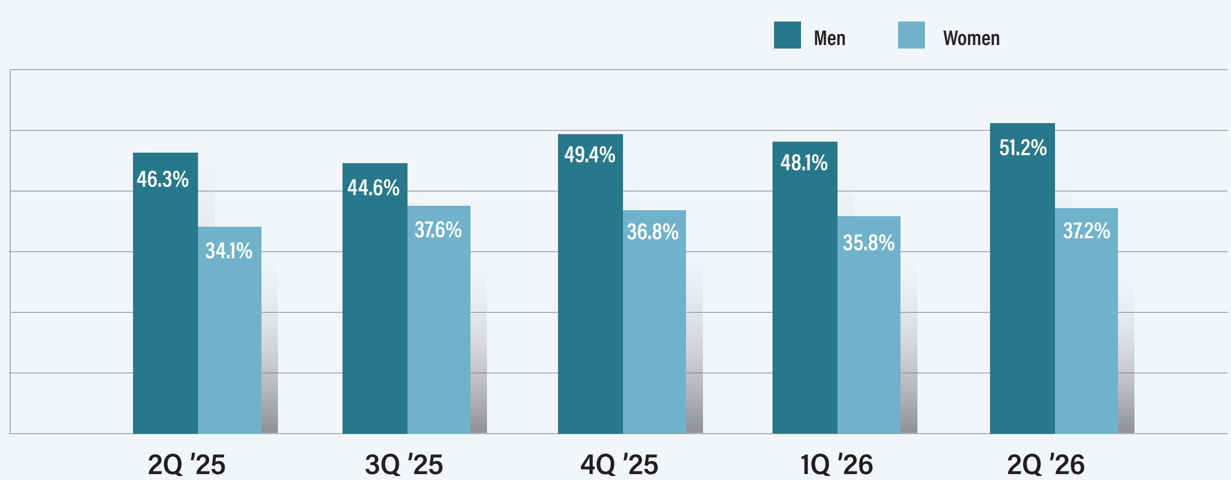
LIKELIHOOD OF A PROMOTION INDEX

Fig. 11



LIKELIHOOD OF A PROMOTION BY GENDER

Fig. 12



Likelihood of a Promotion by:

Fig. 13

AGE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
18-24	49.4%	46.1%	47.4%	60.9%	52.6%
25-34	47.7%	52.0%	53.2%	53.5%	56.9%
35-44	47.7%	49.2%	47.5%	51.4%	57.6%
45-54	37.9%	35.0%	42.0%	33.5%	35.0%
55-64	23.7%	22.5%	29.0%	21.9%	19.7%
65+	23.9%	29.1%	16.3%	16.1%	28.9%

Fig. 14

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
< $35K	44.5%	39.6%	42.9%	48.1%	47.2%
$35-$50K	36.3%	34.9%	45.5%	34.7%	36.6%
$50K-$75K	37.7%	43.0%	40.6%	40.0%	43.8%
$75K-$100K	36.7%	36.1%	49.5%	44.6%	44.6%
$100K+	44.4%	46.8%	43.7%	43.8%	48.2%

Fig. 15

RACE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
Caucasian Only	37.0%	37.9%	38.9%	39.8%	42.9%
African American Only	49.3%	52.1%	57.3%	54.4%	59.2%
Hispanic	43.6%	44.4%	52.7%	47.8%	44.1%

Fig. 16

EDUCATION	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
HS Grad or Less	38.5%	40.4%	45.6%	40.7%	47.0%
College Incomplete	36.8%	38.1%	43.4%	44.5%	39.6%
College Grad	44.6%	44.1%	43.0%	43.6%	47.0%

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 6.5 points to 106.1, its highest level in over a year. Overall, 57.3% of workers anticipate receiving raise, up by 3.5 percentage points.

Confidence in receiving a raise increased for men and women. Men still hold higher levels of confidence, up by 3.1 percentage points to 62.9%. Confidence among women increased by 3.8 percentage points to 49.2%. Interestingly, the gap in confidence between the two decreased by 0.7 percentage points to 13.7%.

Across all age segments, confidence in a raise grew. For the second consecutive quarter, workers aged 65 and over felt the largest increase in confidence, by 10 percentage points to 47.3%. However, this age group still holds the least amount of confidence in a raise. Interestingly, workers in the second eldest age group, those 55 to 64, felt the smallest increase in confidence, by 0.7 percentage points to 51.8%.

By income group, confidence in a raise varied. After feeling stark decreases last quarter, the two lowest earning income groups felt the largest increases in confidence in a raise, by 8.6 and 13.9 percentage points, respectively. Workers earning between $50,000 and $75,000 and those earning $100,000+ felt the only decreases in confidence, by 0.5 and 1.5 percentage points, respectively. Even with this decrease, the highest earning income group holds the highest level of confidence in a raise. Additionally, levels of confidence in a raise gradually increased with income level this quarter, a surprisingly uncommon occurrence.

When examined by education level, confidence in receiving a raise fluctuated. Workers with a high school diploma or less felt the starkest increase in confidence, by 9.3 percentage points to 53%. As trade and blue-collar industries continue struggling with staffing and upskilling, we could see additional increases in confidence as retention strategies continue. Those with an incomplete college education felt the sole drop in confidence, by 1 percentage point to 51.7%, making the least confident education level. College graduates felt a slight increase in confidence, by 1.9 percentage points to 62.3%, further cementing themselves as the most confident education level.

By racial segment, confidence in a raise was especially volatile. Only Hispanics felt a decline in confidence, by 2.2 percentage points to 50.2%. Caucasians and African Americans feel more confident in receiving a raise, by 6.4 and 4.9 percentage points, respectively.

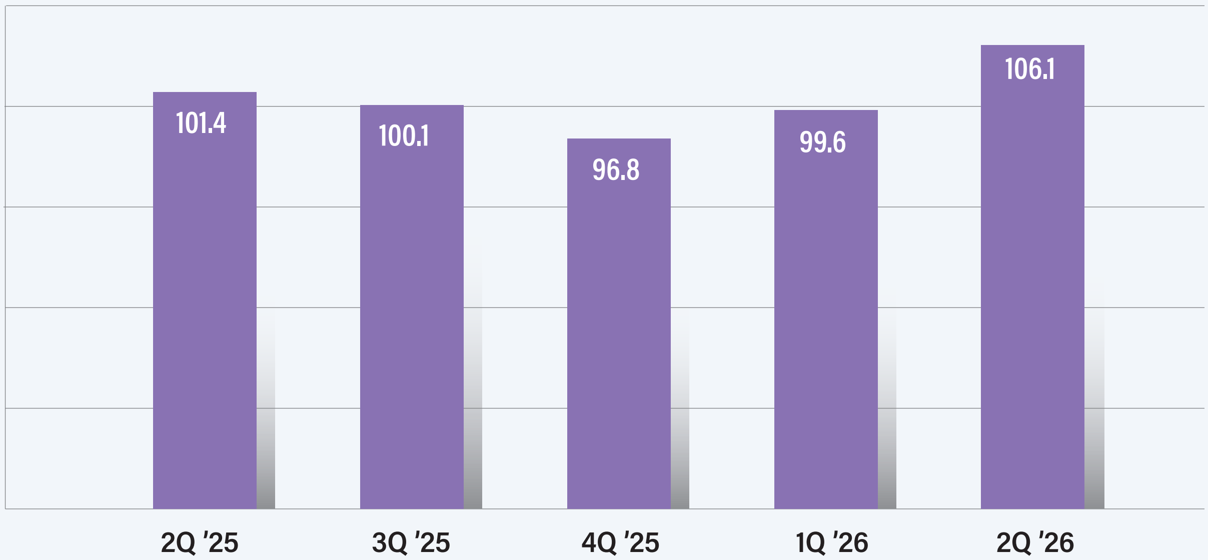
Confidence in receiving a raise increased across all job location segments. On-site and remote workers felt similar increases in confidence, by 4.2 and 4.1 percentage points, respectively. Nearly two-thirds (63.8%) of remote workers anticipate receiving a raise, making them the most confident location segment. Hybrid workers felt a slight increase in confidence, by 1 percentage point to 59.8%.

Workers with a high school diploma or less felt the starkest increase in confidence, by 9.3 percentage points to 53%. As trade and blue-collar industries continue struggling with staffing and upskilling, we could see additional increases in confidence as retention strategies continue.

+9.3%

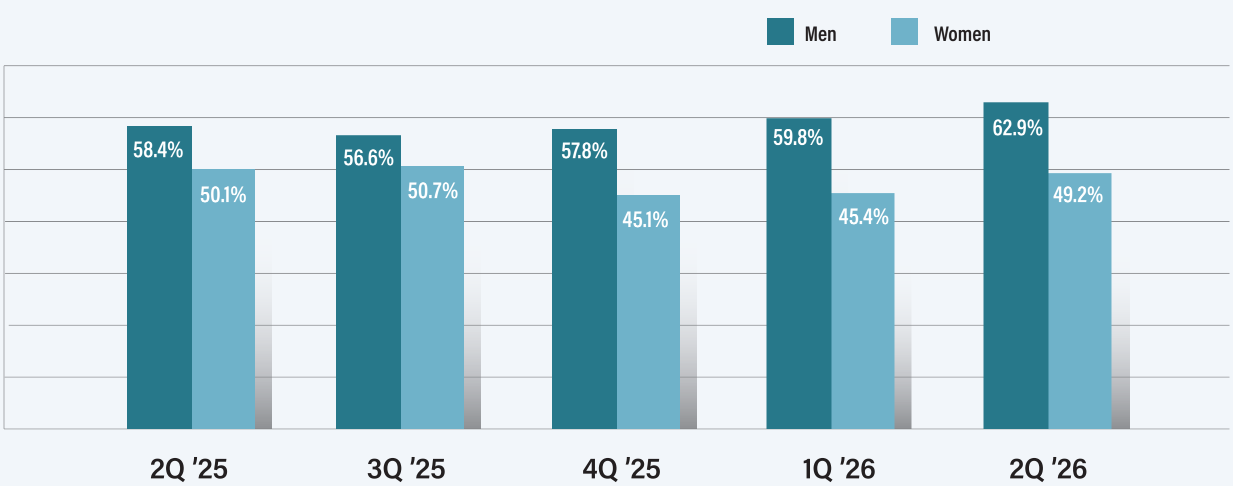
LIKELIHOOD OF A RAISE OF MORE THAN THREE PERCENT INDEX

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	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
18-24	56.4%	51.3%	46.4%	51.0%	52.9%
25-34	57.5%	56.7%	55.0%	59.3%	61.2%
35-44	55.9%	60.3%	58.9%	57.0%	61.8%
45-54	54.7%	52.2%	52.7%	51.0%	56.2%
55-64	48.7%	43.6%	46.1%	51.1%	51.8%
65+	52.6%	55.0%	26.5%	37.3%	47.3%

Fig. 20

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
< $35K	47.5%	42.0%	48.4%	42.0%	50.5%
$35-$50K	52.4%	40.8%	42.0%	37.3%	51.2%
$50K-$75K	49.1%	54.4%	46.2%	52.0%	51.5%
$75K-$100K	51.9%	54.4%	52.6%	51.7%	58.6%
$100K+	63.2%	64.3%	61.7%	66.0%	64.5%

Fig. 21

RACE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
Caucasian Only	52.2%	50.7%	50.7%	53.2%	59.7%
African American Only	59.1%	60.1%	58.9%	56.6%	61.5%
Hispanic	57.0%	52.4%	56.9%	52.5%	50.2%

Fig. 22

EDUCATION	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
HS Grad or Less	49.8%	49.4%	47.8%	43.7%	53.0%
College Incomplete	47.4%	52.7%	48.6%	52.7%	51.7%
College Grad	61.8%	57.8%	57.3%	60.4%	62.3%

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 rebounded after declining in the two prior quarters. Company leadership trust is up by 6.2 percentage points as nearly three-fourths (74.2%) trust in leadership to make sound decisions. Amid times of international conflict and economic instability, high levels of trust in company leadership is paramount to employee retention.

Among women and men, trust in company leadership grew. Trust grew by 6.9 percentage points among men and by 5.5 percentage points among women. The gap in company trust between the genders increased slightly to 9.1 %.

Trust in company leadership increased among all age groups. Trust grew the most among workers aged 45 to 54 and 55 to 64, by 10.5 and 7.7 percentage points, respectively. The eldest age group, those 65+, felt the slightest increase in trust, by 2.7 percentage points to 71.9%. The most trusting age group, which is also the youngest with those 18 to 24, felt a modest increase in trust by 1.7 percentage points to 77.6%.

By income group, trust in company leadership grew across all segments. Workers earning between $35,000 and $50,000 felt the starkest jump in trust, by 10.5 percentage points to 65.4%. Trust grew modestly among all other income segments.

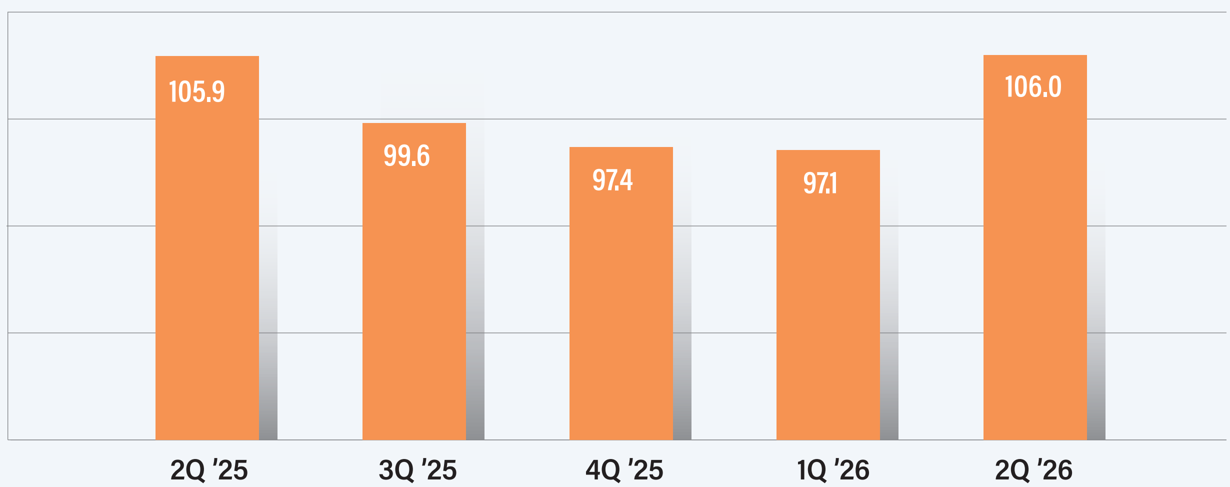
Trust in company leadership increased across all racial segments surveyed. Caucasians and African Americans felt the most dramatic increase in trust, by 9.2 and 4.6 percentage points, respectively. Hispanics felt the slightest increase in company leadership trust, by 2.2 percentage points to 74.7%.

When examined by education group, trust grew. Workers with an incomplete college education felt the slightest increase in trust, by 4.3 percentage point to 68.3%, the least trusting group. Company leadership trust among workers with a high school diploma or less and among college graduates grew the most, by 6.8 and 6.5 percentage points, respectively. College graduates hold the highest level of company leadership trust at 78%.

Across all job location segments, trust in company leadership increased. Hybrid and on-site workers felt similar increases in company leadership trust, by 7.2 percentage points to 80.6% and 71.1%, respectively. Interestingly, these groups hold the highest and lowest levels of company leadership trust. Remote workers felt a slight jump in company leadership trust, by 1.1 percentage points to 76.1%.

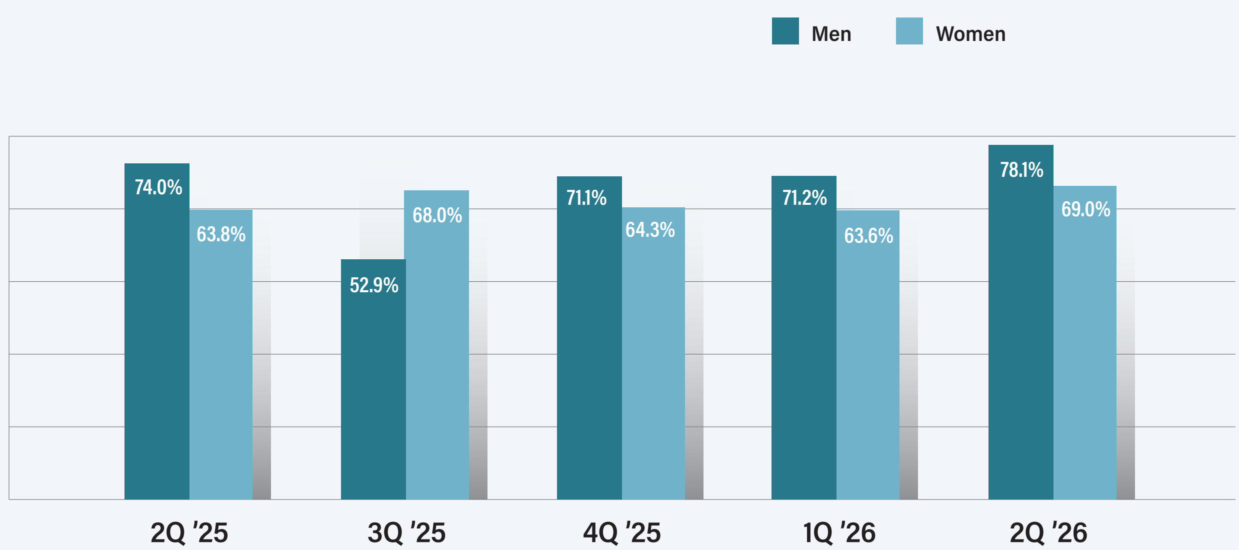
TRUST IN COMPANY LEADERSHIP INDEX

Fig. 23



TRUST IN COMPANY LEADERSHIP BY GENDER

Fig. 24



Trust in Company's Leadership by:

Fig. 25

AGE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
18-24	79.8%	72.0%	63.8%	75.9%	77.6%
25-34	71.2%	78.8%	70.5%	72.8%	76.6%
35-44	68.6%	71.7%	68.1%	70.0%	76.4%
45-54	66.4%	62.0%	67.4%	61.3%	71.8%
55-64	62.8%	57.9%	69.6%	60.1%	67.8%
65+	77.5%	77.9%	67.3%	69.2%	71.9%

Fig. 26

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
< $35K	61.5%	63.5%	64.9%	67.0%	73.1%
$35-$50K	63.6%	74.0%	58.9%	54.9%	65.4%
$50K-$75K	64.9%	66.0%	67.0%	69.1%	72.5%
$75K-$100K	71.9%	67.3%	73.6%	70.6%	72.9%
$100K+	76.5%	74.9%	71.4%	70.3%	78.5%

Fig. 27

RACE	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
Caucasian Only	70.3%	68.6%	67.9%	65.2%	74.4%
African American Only	70.5%	69.3%	73.9%	71.8%	76.3%
Hispanic	68.5%	72.3%	68.6%	72.5%	74.7%

Fig. 28

EDUCATION	2Q '25	3Q '25	4Q '25	1Q '26	2Q '26
HS Grad or Less	40.0%	44.5%	67.3%	65.1%	71.9%
College Incomplete	44.0%	46.8%	65.0%	64.2%	68.6%
College Grad	52.7%	53.7%	70.6%	71.5%	78.0%

Fig. 29

STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS Q2 2026	
GENDER	
Male	58.7%
Female	41.3%
AGE	
18–24	11.7%
25–34	24.3%
35–44	25.1%
45–54	18.2%
55–64	15.6%
65+	5.1%
RACE	
White Only	62.1%
Black Only	14.6%
Hispanic	23.4%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
$35K or Less	15.1%
$35K–$50K	10.9%
$50K–$75K	21.7%
$75K–$100K	13.8%
$100K+	38.4%
EDUCATION	
HS Grad or Less	28.2%
College Incomplete	22.6%
College Graduate	49.3%
JOB LOCATION	
Remote	17.6%
Hybrid	23.9%
On-Site	58.6%

Notes

1. "Majority of U.S. workers say job insecurity has significant impact on their stress." *American Psychological Association,* May 2025, https://www.apa.org/pubs/reports/work-in-america/2025.
2. Fry, Richard, Horowitx, Juliana and Lin, Luona. "Most Americans Feel Good About Their Job Security but Not Their Pay." *Pew Research Center,* December 10, 2024, https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2024/12/10/most-americans-feel-good-about-their-job-security-but-not-their-pay/.
3. "State of the Global Workplace 2026." *Gallup,* Accessed April 2, 2026, https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx.
4. "The Employment Situation—June 2026." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,* July 2, 2026, https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_07022026.htm.
5. "Job Openings and Labor Turnover—May 2026." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, June 30, 2026, https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/jolts_06302026.htm.
6. Ott, Matt. "US unemployment filings fall to 215k as layoffs remain at historically healthy levels." *ABC News,* July 2, 2026, https://www.news10.com/business/ap-business/ap-u-s-filings-for-jobless-aid-fall-to-215000-as-layoffs-remain-at-historically-healthy-levels/.
7. Kopack, Steve. "U.S. adds just 57,000 jobs in June, a worrying sign as wage growth remains low." *NBC News,* July 2, 2026, https://www.nbcnews.com/business/economy/june-jobs-report-stable-hiring-rcna352603.
8. Martin, Collin. "Fed Shifts to Hawkish Tune, But Keeps Rates Steady." *Charles Schwab,* June 17, 2026, https://www.schwab.com/learn/story/fomc-meeting.
9. The Market Intelligence Desk Team. "June, Second Quarter 2026 Review and Outlook." *Nasdaq,* July 1, 2026, https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/june-second-quarter-2026-review-and-outlook.
10. "US Consumer Confidence." *The Conference Board,* June 30, 2026, https://www.conference-board.org/topics/consumer-confidence/.
11. "Final Results for June 2026." *University of Michigan,* July 17, 2026, https://www.sca.isr.umich.edu/.

About *HRO Today* Magazine

HRO Today is the property of SharedXpertise Media and offers the broadest and deepest reach available anywhere into the HR industry. Our magazines, web portals, research, e-newsletters, events, and social networks reach over 180,000 senior-level HR decision-makers globally with rich, objective, and game-changing content. Our No. 1 strength is our reach. HR leaders rely heavily on the *HRO Today*'s Baker's Dozen rankings across six different categories when selecting an HR service provider.

About LevelUP HCS

LevelUP Human Capital Solutions (LevelUP HCS) partners with HR and Talent Acquisition leaders to deliver faster, smarter hiring outcomes. We combine experienced recruiters with AI-enabled technology to streamline the recruiting workflow, from sourcing and engagement through to insight and decision-making. Our solutions span enterprise RPO, embedded recruitment, contingent workforce programs, and executive search, designed to flex with changing business needs. By working within our clients' existing environments, we enhance how hiring gets done, helping teams improve speed, quality, and visibility across the hiring process.