



Why your participation matters

You are part of the ongoing Confidence in Action: Tracking the Workforce Perspective survey.

This project establishes a continuous measure of worker confidence in the U.S. workforce. With each new wave, we compare results to see:

- Where confidence is growing or falling
- How trust in institutions shifts
- Whether career mobility is increasing or slowing
- What new challenges are emerging

Your insights help create a clearer, data-driven picture of the workforce; insights that can guide businesses, industry leaders, and policymakers.

Wave 2 Results: August 1 to 31, 2025

70% CONFIDENT IN THEIR INDUSTRY — BUT TOP CONCERNS NOW INCLUDE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN, POLICY UNCERTAINTY, AND RISING LABOR SHORTAGES.

INSIDE THE RESULTS

See what's keeping professionals up at night, from staffing shortages to rising costs.

WORKPLACE SNAPSHOT

Leadership confidence remains steady and just over half (53%) feel secure in their roles.

TRUST CHECK

Company leaders and trade associations remain most trusted — federal government remains lowest

Looking ahead:

If you receive another invitation in the future, we hope you'll take part again. By continuing to share your views, you'll help us monitor these trends over time, and you'll always receive some results so you can see how things are evolving.

In Brief: Key Insights



Survey Scope: Wave 2 results reflect input from 788 U.S. professionals across 20+ industries (August 1–31, 2025). The majority were in leadership roles, consistent with the baseline wave, in fields such as construction, manufacturing, technology, healthcare, and logistics.

Institutional Trust: Trust remains highest in company leadership and trade associations, while the federal government continues to rank lowest. Compared with June–July, confidence in leadership and associations ticked up slightly, while federal trust slipped further.

Workplace Confidence:

57% express strong confidence in executive leadership (↑ 2 pp)

56% in department/team leadership (flat)

58% in direct managers (↓ 2 pp)

53% feel Very/Completely secure in their current role (↑ 1 pp)

Personal Outlook:

45% very/extremely confident in personal finances (↑ 2 pp)

30% considering a job change within the year (↓ 3 pp)

53% plan to stay in their current job (↑ 2 pp)



Top threats: Economic slowdown and policy uncertainty remain the leading concerns.

Rising costs and labor shortages climbed this wave, while supply chain disruptions and tech disruption eased.

Industry Confidence: 70% are at least somewhat confident in their industry's 12-month outlook (↓ 3 pp from Wave 1).

Top threats: Economic slowdown, government policy uncertainty, inflation, supply chain issues, labor shortages, and tech disruption.

Media Trust: Overall trust in general media is low.

Local news: **38%** (↓ 3 pp)

Cable news: **18%** (↓ 3 pp)



Top Concerns

- Labor shortages and staffing challenges (↑)
- Rising costs/inflation (↑)
- Policy/tariff uncertainty (steady)
- Tech disruption/AI (↓ compared to Wave 1)

Who Took Part

Between August 1 and August 31, 2025, 788 professionals from over 20 industries across the U.S. took part in the second wave of the *Confidence in Action: Tracking the Workforce Perspective* survey.

Respondents represented a broad cross-section of the economy — including architecture, engineering, construction, and mechanical systems; manufacturing and food & beverage processing; healthcare and life sciences; technology and IT services; professional services; logistics and transportation; retail and consumer goods; and the public sector. Voices were also included from energy and utilities, safety and security, agriculture, environmental services, and other specialized sectors.

As with Wave 1 (June 2 through July 31, 2025), the majority of participants hold leadership or management positions, from owners and senior executives to department heads and team leads. Additional perspectives came from technical and skilled trades professionals, sales and business development staff, and administrative roles, ensuring a well-rounded view of the workforce.



Broad cross-section of the U.S. economy:

- Built environment: architecture, engineering, construction, mechanical systems
- Manufacturing: general industrial and food & beverage processing
- Technology & IT services
- Healthcare & life sciences
- Professional services

Specialized trades & other sectors:

- Roofing & building envelope specialists
- Energy, utilities, safety/security
- Logistics & transportation
- Financial services, retail & consumer goods
- Education, research institutions, government & public sector
- Agriculture, environmental services, niche sectors

Roles represented:

- Leadership & management: owners, executives, department heads, team leads
- Technical & skilled trades
- Sales & business development
- Administrative staff

Looking ahead:

We'll continue to track these perspectives in future waves — watching for shifts in who's taking part and what they have to say. ***If you're invited to participate, we hope you'll add your voice to the conversation.***

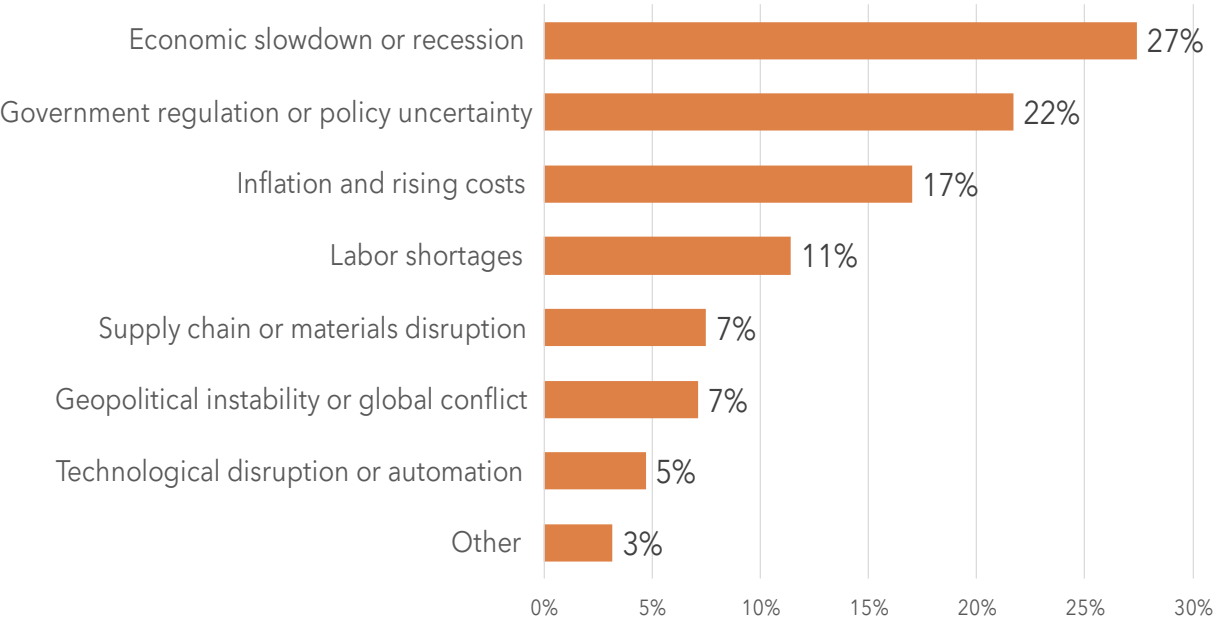
Industry & Economic Outlook

When asked, “Considering your specific industry sector, how confident are you in its overall economic outlook for the next 12 months?” **70%** expressed at least some level of confidence which is ↓ 3 pp from Wave 1.

Yet even among those confident in their industry’s outlook, respondents pointed to several challenges that could threaten growth and stability in the year ahead — with economic slowdown and policy uncertainty leading the list, followed by rising costs and labor shortages.

Thinking about where things stand right now, what do you see as the most significant threat facing your industry?

(n=788)



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What's Worrying Professionals in Their Roles — *Here's What They Said...*

When asked, “*What’s your number-one concern in your current role?*” five recurring themes emerged from participants’ verbatim responses.

Government & Politics: Uncertainty in federal decision-making is seen as creating instability for planning and investment. Participants cited unclear guidance, shifting policies, and regulatory volatility as headwind:

- *"The federal government does not provide enough clarity or consistency in policy direction."*
- *"Policies are constantly changing and difficult to plan around."*

Economy, Recession & Demand Slowdown: Concerns about a downturn and reduced demand are shaping outlooks. Participants pointed to potential slowdowns in spending and delayed projects as key risks:

- *"Economy trends as they pertain to consumer spending."*
- *"Because of inflation we will be forced to close. Prices go up, business goes down."*

Inflation, Rising Costs & Prices: Persistent cost pressures — from raw materials to operations — are straining budgets and profitability. Rising costs were cited as both a margin challenge and a demand risk:

- *"Persistent cost pressures — from raw materials to operations — are straining budgets and profitability."*
- *"Rising operational costs and constant changes in the industry regulations are making the outlook for the industry hard to predict."*

Labor Shortages & Hiring Talent: Finding and retaining qualified workers remains a major obstacle. Retirements, capability gaps, and wage expectations all play into the challenge:

- *"Finding competent staff willing to do the work."*
- *"Labor shortages... shortage of skilled labor in the trades for many years."*
- *"Approved headcount for the department I lead / staff resources."*

Tariffs & Trade Policy: Tariffs and shifting trade policies are seen as cost drivers and planning risks. Participants noted that import volatility adds uncertainty to pricing and supply:

- *"Tariffs on products we manufacture cause a price increase and longer lead time."*
- *"Rising costs and tariffs will cause a downturn in the construction trades, which then affects us as a supplier and our business falls off also."*

Confidence In Institutions

We asked participants to **rank** which institutions they trust most to act in the best interest of their industry. **Ranked from most trusted to least trusted:**



Your own company's leadership came out on top, followed closely by your industry's trade associations. Business media ranked in the middle, while state and local government were viewed with less trust. At the bottom of the list was the federal government. Compared with Wave 1, trust in leadership and associations inched up, while trust in government slipped further.



Confidence in federal government policy support

Only 30% report a fair amount or great deal of confidence. (↓ ~2.5 pp from 33%)

Views on regulations:

48% disagree that "regulations are based on industry expertise." (unchanged — remains high skepticism)"

55% disagree that the "regulatory process is transparent." (steady at ~55%)

54% disagree that "regulations are applied consistently." (flat at ~54%)"

Only **33%** agree that "regulations support innovation." (flat vs. Wave 1)

Only **35%** agree that "consumer protection is well balanced with business needs." (no real movement)

Only **32%** agree that "government policies enable business growth." (steady, still low)."

Looking ahead:

We'll continue to track these perspectives in future waves — watching for shifts in who's taking part and what they have to say. *If you're invited to participate, we hope you'll add your voice to the conversation*

Workplace Leadership, Job Security & Career Movement



When asked how confident they are in their organization's leadership to make sound decisions in the current economic climate, participants gave similar ratings across all levels:

Executive leadership – **57%** Strong or Complete confidence (↑ from 55%)

Department or team leadership – **56%** Strong or Complete confidence (↓ from 59%)

Direct manager or supervisor – **58%** Strong or Complete confidence (↓ from 59%)

When asked how secure they feel in their current role, **just over half (53%)** said they feel Very or Completely secure (↑ from 52%).

Career plans show greater stability in Wave 2: 30% are actively job hunting, planning to start looking soon, or considering a move within the next year (↓ from 33%). Meanwhile, 53% report no plans to change jobs in the next 12 months (↑ from 51%). This may point to a more settled core workforce — or simply greater caution about making a move in the current environment.



Personal Finances

Looking ahead, 45% of participants say they feel very or extremely confident about their personal financial situation over the next six months (↑ from 43%). A majority, however, remain only somewhat confident or less.

A closer look shows that 33% are only somewhat confident, while nearly 1 in 5 express low confidence — including 15% who are not very confident and 6% who are not at all confident. Just 14% feel extremely confident in their outlook.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to share your perspective.

Your participation helps us track how worker confidence, trust, and career outlooks shift over time and gives you insight into how your views compare with others across industries.

We hope you'll take part in future waves so we can continue building this picture together.