CFP BOARD

The CFP® Professionals Sentiment Indices — Fall 2026

Fewer CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professionals report that their clients have an optimistic financial outlook than three months ago. Amid persistent global political instability and affordability concerns, client sentiment has hit a new low for the year (current conditions CPSI at 60) and is at its lowest level since Spring 2025 (44). The current conditions index reading is down 9% from a year ago (66).

Fewer CFP® professionals describe their clients' financial outlook as positive (38%) than as neutral (45%). Seventeen percent report a negative outlook among clients (also the highest since Spring 2025). Further, nearly half of CFP® professionals (46%) say their clients' sentiment has held steady over the past year, while over one-third (36%) say their clients' financial outlooks have worsened over the past 12 months.

Slightly more than half (52%) of CFP® professionals have a positive financial outlook, down from 61% in Q3 and 54% a year ago. Nearly half of CFP® professionals (47%) report that their personal financial outlook has been stable over the past year, with nearly equal percentages saying they have become more optimistic (28%) or more pessimistic (26%) since this time last year. Additionally, fewer CFP® professionals are confident about the U.S. economy's future. Approximately equal proportions predict that economic conditions will remain about the same (38%) or worsen (35%) in the coming year, with the latter at a near-record high for the CPSI's two-year history. Only about one quarter (27%) believe conditions will improve.

Finally, nearly two-thirds of CFP® professionals (64%) report that their client bases have grown over the past year, and nearly three-quarters (73%) expect further growth over the next 12 months.

Comments received from CFP® professionals center on four major themes:

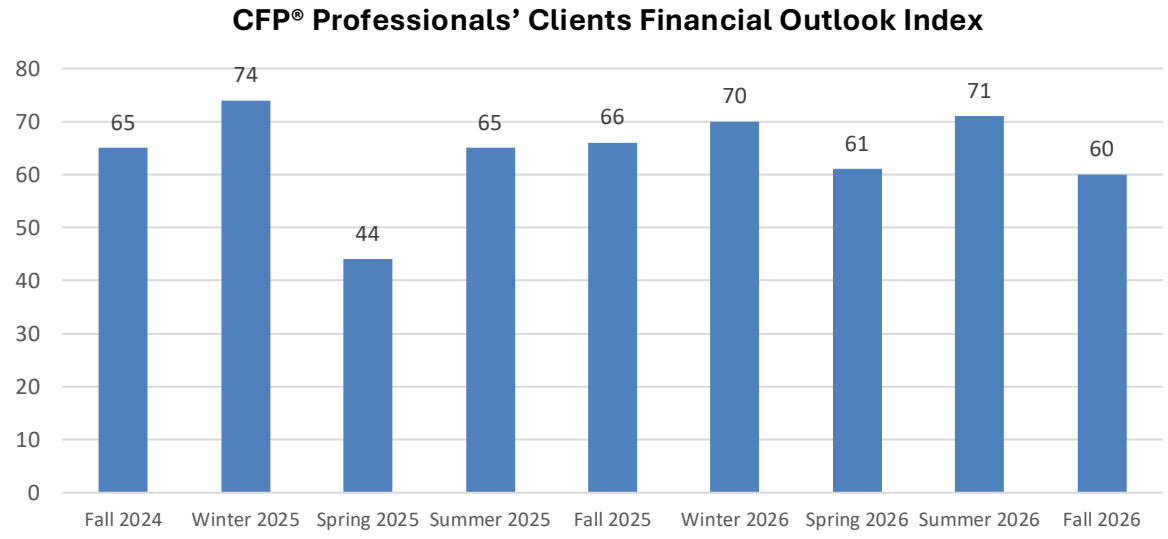
1) **Clients are concerned about inflation and the rising cost of living**
   - Higher prices for groceries, gas and utilities
   - Rising healthcare and insurance costs
   - Housing affordability concerns
   - Perception that wages and retirement income are not keeping pace with expenses

2) **Political dysfunction and geopolitical uncertainty**
   - Upcoming midterm elections
   - Concern about political leadership
   - Tariffs and trade policy
   - International conflicts in places such as Iran and Ukraine

3) **Advisors keeping clients grounded in the face of concerns**
   - Clients are reacting to political developments
   - Advisors are seeing strong market performance
   - Confidence in long-term investing and market resiliency
   - Desire to prevent short-term decision-making

4) **AI as an opportunity and a risk**
   - Expectations for productivity and economic growth
   - Concerns about an AI-driven market bubble
   - Uncertainty about AI's impact on jobs, society and security

Fall 2026 CPSI Client Current Financial Outlook



Fall 2026	Summer 2026	Fall 2025	Quarter-to-Quarter Change	Year-to-Year Change
60	71	66	-15.49%	-9.09%

1. In your opinion, which of the following best summarizes <u>your clients'</u> current financial outlook?

(A higher index score indicates clients are more positive.)

	Index	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Fall 2026	**60**	**38%**	**45%**	**17%**
Summer 2026	71	50%	42%	8%
Fall 2025	66	46%	40%	14%
Fall 2024	65	42%	45%	13%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

2. Reflecting on the past, how would you evaluate <u>your clients'</u> current financial outlook compared to 12 months ago?

(A higher index score indicates clients' outlooks are more positive.)

	Index	More Positive	Essentially the Same	More Negative
Fall 2026	**40**	**17%**	**46%**	**36%**
Summer 2026	51	26%	51%	23%
Fall 2025	53	35%	37%	29%
Fall 2024	58	34%	48%	18%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

3. Which of the following best summarizes <u>your own</u> current financial outlook?

(A higher index score indicates CFP® professionals' outlooks are more positive.)

	Index	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Fall 2026	**71**	**52%**	**39%**	**10%**
Summer 2026	76	61%	31%	8%
Fall 2025	71	54%	35%	12%
Fall 2024	80	67%	27%	6%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

4. Reflecting on the past, how would you evaluate <u>your own</u> financial outlook compared to 12 months ago?

(A higher index score indicates CFP® professionals' outlooks are more positive.)

	Index	More Positive	Essentially the Same	More Negative
Fall 2026	**51**	**28%**	**47%**	**26%**
Summer 2026	56	33%	46%	21%
Fall 2025	60	42%	35%	22%
Fall 2024	65	43%	44%	13%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

5. In your opinion, do you think <u>economic</u> conditions 12 months from now will be better, about the same or worse than they are today?

(A higher index score indicates more CFP® professionals expect economic conditions to be better.)

	Index	Better	About the Same	Worse
Fall 2026	**46**	**27%**	**38%**	**35%**
Summer 2026	51	31%	39%	30%
Fall 2025	46	27%	37%	36%
Fall 2024	55	33%	43%	24%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

6. Relative to 12 months ago, has the size of your client base expanded, stayed about the same or shrunk?

(A higher index score indicates that more CFP® professionals report an expanding client base.)

	Index	Expanded	About the Same	Shrunk
Fall 2026	**81**	**64%**	**33%**	**2%**
Summer 2026	84	70%	29%	1%
Fall 2025	81	64%	33%	3%
Fall 2024	84	69%	30%	1%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

7. Over the next 12 months, do you anticipate the size of your client base will expand, stay the same or shrink?

(A higher index score indicates more CFP® professionals expect their client base will expand.)

	Index	Expand	About the Same	Shrink
Fall 2026	**85**	**73%**	**26%**	**2%**
Summer 2026	83	69%	28%	3%
Fall 2025	85	72%	26%	2%
Fall 2024	87	75%	24%	1%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Complete historical information is available in the appendix.

CPSI Research Objectives and Methodology

The CFP® Professionals Sentiment Indices (CPSI) measure the financial and economic outlooks of CFP® professionals and their clients. The indices provide investors, the media and the public with a new set of data that will measure the strength of the economy, leveraging the trusted advisor-client relationship. The CPSI capitalizes on the voices of more than 110,000 CFP® professionals to provide valuable information on economic performance and consumer/investor sentiment.

The CPSI:

- Tracks Americans' and financial planners' financial outlook, serving as a leading indicator of overall economic conditions.
- Provides CFP® professionals with a snapshot of clients' and their peers' views of current conditions.
- Measures Americans' interest in seeking the services of a financial planner.
- Demonstrates the unique relationship between CFP® professionals and their clients built on trust and confidence.

Each quarter, CFP Board sends an eight-question survey to 15,000 randomly selected CFP® professionals. The Fall 2026 CPSI results reflect the responses from 449 CFP® professionals collected October 6-19, 2026.

CFP Board develops the individual indices from data collected from questions 1-7 using the following formula:

- Answer A = 100 points
- Answer B = 50 points
- Answer C = 0 points

Example using hypothetical results for Question 1:

- *75% positive*
- *15% neutral*
- *10% negative*

*Leads to an index reading of: (0.75*100) + (0.15*50) + (0.10 * 0) = 82.5*

Appendix: Historical Data

1. *In your opinion, which of the following best summarizes your clients' current financial outlook?*

(A higher index score indicates clients are more positive.)

	Index	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Fall 2026	**60**	**38%**	**45%**	**17%**
Summer 2026	71	50%	42%	8%
Spring 2026	61	36%	49%	15%
Winter 2026	70	50%	41%	9%
Fall 2025	66	46%	40%	14%
Summer 2025	65	47%	37%	16%
Spring 2025	44	23%	41%	36%
Winter 2025	74	54%	39%	7%
Fall 2024	65	42%	45%	13%

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2. *Reflecting on the past, how would you evaluate your clients' current financial outlook compared to 12 months ago?*

(A higher index score indicates clients' outlooks are more positive.)

	Index	More Positive	Essentially the Same	More Negative
Fall 2026	**40**	**17%**	**46%**	**36%**
Summer 2026	51	26%	51%	23%
Spring 2026	37	17%	41%	43%
Winter 2026	58	36%	44%	20%
Fall 2025	53	35%	37%	29%
Summer 2025	53	36%	34%	30%
Spring 2025	26	14%	22%	63%
Winter 2025	68	50%	35%	15%
Fall 2024	58	34%	48%	18%

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3. Which of the following best summarizes <u>your own</u> current financial outlook?

(A higher index score indicates CFP® professionals' outlooks are more positive.)

	Index	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Fall 2026	**71**	**52%**	**39%**	**10%**
Summer 2026	76	61%	31%	8%
Spring 2026	72	54%	35%	11%
Winter 2026	78	64%	29%	7%
Fall 2025	71	54%	35%	12%
Summer 2025	75	59%	32%	9%
Spring 2025	61	43%	36%	21%
Winter 2025	76	59%	35%	7%
Fall 2024	80	67%	27%	6%

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4. Reflecting on the past, how would you evaluate <u>your own</u> financial outlook compared to 12 months ago?

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Fall 2026	**51**	**28%**	**47%**	**26%**
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Spring 2026	50	25%	49%	26%
Winter 2026	62	40%	44%	16%
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Summer 2025	58	41%	35%	24%
Spring 2025	42	26%	32%	42%
Winter 2025	65	46%	39%	15%
Fall 2024	65	43%	44%	13%

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5. In your opinion, do you think economic conditions 12 months from now will be better, about the same or worse than they are today?

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Spring 2026	57	40%	34%	27%
Winter 2026	51	31%	40%	28%
Fall 2025	46	27%	37%	36%
Summer 2025	53	37%	33%	30%
Spring 2025	58	48%	20%	32%
Winter 2025	55	38%	35%	28%
Fall 2024	55	33%	43%	24%

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6. Relative to 12 months ago, has the size of your client base expanded, stayed about the same or shrunk?

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Summer 2026	84	70%	29%	1%
Spring 2026	82	67%	31%	2%
Winter 2026	84	69%	29%	2%
Fall 2025	81	64%	33%	3%
Summer 2025	80	63%	34%	3%
Spring 2025	74	52%	44%	4%
Winter 2025	82	67%	32%	2%
Fall 2024	84	69%	30%	1%

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7. Over the next 12 months, do you anticipate the size of your client base will expand, stay the same or shrink?

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Winter 2026	86	73%	26%	2%
Fall 2025	85	72%	26%	2%
Summer 2025	86	73%	25%	2%
Spring 2025	81	63%	35%	2%
Winter 2025	86	74%	25%	1%
Fall 2024	87	75%	24%	1%

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