

The CFP® Professionals Sentiment Indices — Spring 2026

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professionals report that their clients are more guarded about their financial outlook this Spring than they were three months ago. The decline in sentiment reflects persistent uncertainty and heightened market volatility in recent months, driven by geopolitical events. CFP® professionals' clients have not felt this pessimistic about their financial outlooks since Spring 2025.

Half of CFP® professionals describe their clients' financial outlook as neutral, while 15% say their clients have a negative outlook. Although this is the highest share reporting a neutral outlook, the percentage indicating negative views among their clients is less than half of what it was in Spring 2025. Further, nearly six in seven CFP® professionals indicate that their clients' sentiment has either worsened (43%) or held steady (41%) over the past year.

CFP® professionals are more optimistic, with 54% reporting a positive financial outlook. Half of CFP® professionals report that their personal financial outlook has been stable over the past year, with about a quarter each either growing more optimistic or more pessimistic since the spring of 2025. CFP® professionals are confident that the economy will improve from its current position in the coming year. Two in five CFP® professionals predict better economic conditions over the next year, while only a quarter expect a deterioration.

Finally, two-thirds of CFP® professionals report that their client bases have grown over the past year, and three-quarters expect them to expand over the next 12 months.

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

1) Persistent uncertainty

- Ongoing unpredictability tied to the geopolitical environment, economic conditions, interest rates and policy shifts.
- Difficulty forecasting short-term outcomes.
- A “wait and see” mindset is influencing both advisors and clients.
- Frequent need to reassess assumptions and expectations.

2) Market volatility

- Market swings and day-to-day fluctuations.
- Some clients are reacting emotionally to short-term performance.
- Increased client demand for communication and reassurance.
- Volatility shaping sentiment more than long-term fundamentals.

3) Anxious clients

- Elevated concern among clients nearing retirement or with lower risk tolerance.
- Some clients are expressing hesitation about investing or making financial moves.

4) CFP® professionals emphasizing long-term discipline

- Focus on long-term goals rather than short-term noise.
- Encouragement to avoid emotional or impulsive decisions.
- Financial plans serving as an anchor during uncertainty.

Spring 2026 CPSI Results

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
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

3. Which of the following best summarizes your own current financial outlook?

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

	Index	Positive	Neutral	Negative
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

4. Reflecting on the past, how would you evaluate your own 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
Spring 2026	50	25%	49%	26%
Winter 2026	62	40%	44%	16%
Fall 2025	60	42%	35%	22%
Summer 2025	58	41%	35%	24%
Spring 2025	42	26%	32%	42%
Winter 2025	65	46%	39%	15%
Fall 2024	65	43%	44%	13%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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?

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

	Index	Better	About the Same	Worse
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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
Spring 2026	85	74%	23%	3%
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%

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

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 107,000 CFP® professionals to provide valuable information on economic performance and consumer/investor sentiment.

The CPSI:

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

Each quarter, CFP Board's Research team sends an eight-question survey to 15,000 randomly selected CFP® professionals. The Spring 2026 CPSI results reflect the responses from 504 CFP® professionals collected April 7–17, 2026.

The CFP Board Research team 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: $(0.75*100) + (0.15*50) + (0.10 * 0) = 82.5$*