

### The CFP® Professionals Sentiment Indices — Winter 2026

CFP® professionals report that their clients have a slightly more positive financial outlook than three months ago. Even more notable, CFP® professionals’ own financial outlook improved over the past quarter.

Half of CFP® professionals describe their clients’ financial outlook as positive, up slightly from the Fall 2025 survey but below the level from a year earlier. Two in five CFP® professionals say their clients have a neutral outlook. Moreover, four in five clients’ sentiment has either remained steady (44%) or improved (36%) over the past year.

Nearly two-thirds of CFP® professionals share a positive personal financial outlook, the highest percentage since Fall 2024. Two in five CFP® professionals have a more optimistic personal financial assessment compared to a year earlier, while 16% are more pessimistic about their financial outlook than a year ago.

The optimism about one’s personal financial future endures even as most CFP® professionals do not expect the economy to improve in the coming year. Only 31% of CFP® professionals predict better economic conditions over the next year, with nearly as many expecting a deterioration.

Finally, 69% of CFP® professionals report that their client bases have grown over the past year, and 73% anticipate their client bases expanding over the next 12 months.

### 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
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>20%</b>
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>7%</b>
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>16%</b>
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>28%</b>
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>2%</b>
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
<b>Winter 2026</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>2%</b>
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. They 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 Winter 2026 CPSI results reflect the responses from 677 CFP® professionals collected January 6 – 19, 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:  $(0.75 \times 100) + (0.15 \times 50) + (0.10 \times 0) = 82.5$*