



**JOHN J. HELDRICH
CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**

WORKTRENDS

AMERICANS' ATTITUDES ABOUT WORK, EMPLOYERS, AND GOVERNMENT

A Glass Half Full or Half Empty? Americans Agree the Economy is Strong, but Worry about the Future

by
Carl Van Horn, Ph.D.
Jessica Starace, MPP

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of Planning and Public Policy

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Background

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey was founded as a research and policy organization devoted to strengthening New Jersey's and the nation's workforce during a time of global economic change. The Heldrich Center researches and puts to work strategies that increase worker skills and employability, strengthen the ability of companies to compete, create jobs where they are needed, and improve the quality and performance of the workforce development system. Since 1997, the Heldrich Center has experienced rapid growth, working with federal and state government partners, Fortune 100 companies, and major foundations. The center embodies its slogan "Solutions at Work" by teaming with partners and clients to translate cutting-edge research and analysis into practices and programs that companies, unions, schools, community-based organizations, and government officials can leverage to strengthen the nation's workforce. The center's projects are grounded in a core set of research priorities:

- Disability Employment
- Evaluation, Management, and Employment
- Industry, Education, and Employment
- Reemployment
- Work Trends and Economic Analysis

Since its inception, the Heldrich Center has sought to inform employers, union leaders, policymakers, community members, the media, and academic communities about critical workforce and education issues that relate to the emerging global economy. To better understand the public's attitudes about work, employers, and the government, and improve workplace practices and policy, the Heldrich Center produces the *Work Trends* surveys on a regular basis (The complete set of reports is available at www.heldrich.rutgers.edu). The surveys poll the general public on critical workforce issues facing Americans and American businesses. The survey findings are promoted widely to the media and national constituencies. The series is co-directed by Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D., Director of the Heldrich Center, and Cliff Zukin, Ph.D., Senior Scholar at the Center.

A Glass Half Full or Half Empty? Americans Agree the Economy is Strong, but Worry about the Future continues to advance the goals of the *Work Trends* series to give American workers a voice in the national economic policy debates, and thereby provides policymakers and employers with reliable insights into how workers across the nation are judging and acting upon the realities of work and the workplace.

The authors of this report were Carl Van Horn, Ph.D. and Jessica Starace, MPP. Cliff Zukin, Ph.D. was instrumental in developing the survey design and analyzing the survey data. Robb C. Sewell edited and formatted the report.

Introduction

With a 4% unemployment rate and hundreds of thousands of jobs added each month, the U.S. economy is growing, and some confidence has returned in 2018. Yet Americans are hesitant to accept that these economic conditions are here to stay, and a slump is out of reach. A new Heldrich Center *Work Trends* survey, *A Glass Half Full or Half Empty? Americans Agree the Economy is Strong, but Worry about the Future*, conducted August 8 to 19, 2018 by GfK Custom Research North America among a nationally representative sample of 827 Americans, including 504 in the labor market, finds that while the public's confidence in the economy may be the strongest it has been since the Great Recession, Americans are worried that good economic conditions will not be sustainable and are leery of what the future may hold for them and their families. The findings from this study echo the Heldrich Center's 2016 *Work Trends* report¹ that cynicism still darkens the attitudes of the American public toward the economy and the role of government in shaping how the economy will grow and who will benefit. Americans in 2018 are feeling vulnerable — they are nervous about what may happen to them, their families, and the U.S. economy. Among some of the major findings of the latest *Work Trends* survey capturing Americans' attitudes and behaviors related to the American economy and work:

- Americans say they are largely content with the current economic situation in America, as are workers with their jobs, but express an unsettling anxiety about the security of their own jobs and the economy in general, in the coming months. **A large majority, or 70% of the public, say they are concerned or worried when it comes to the future economy and their family.**
- The American public is concerned about corporations and the U.S. government, pinpointing both as having a critical, and potentially harmful, impact on the economy and American workers — a finding that can be **explained in part by extreme partisanship, a reality that pervades U.S. discourse today. The U.S. government is ranked by Americans as the #1 threat to workers, compared to a downturn in the economy, competition from other countries, corporate decision-making, illegal immigrants, and technology. Stark differences are apparent among various subgroups of the population on these measures, and in particular, between Democrats and Republicans.**
- As Labor Day approaches, the nation's salute to its workers, public opinion about Labor Day 2018 is far from festive, and in some cases, characterized by discouragement about the well-being of American workers. **Just one-third of employed Americans say Labor Day is meaningful to them, and more than half, 57%, of the general public don't believe the holiday represents much of anything in U.S. culture.**

Economy and Jobs: Glass Half Full or Half Empty?

Attitudes on the National Economy, Jobs, and at Home: Half Full

In August 2016, the Heldrich Center recorded a positive turning point in American attitudes about the economy and jobs after the unprecedented impact of the Great Recession on economic growth, employment, and consumer confidence. The latest findings show that these trends of optimism are continuing. A majority of Americans are not concerned about the unemployment rate or the job market, and report a general uptick in their feelings toward the economy and its impact on their lives.

Table 1 summarizes the good news. Six in 10 (58%) Americans rate the U.S. economy as excellent or good, with a near majority (48%) giving a rating of “good.” Two-thirds (65%) of the public say a year from now, economic conditions will be better or the same as now. A large majority also think economic conditions are ripe for Americans in the labor force to find a quality job — 64% say a good position can be found in today’s labor market.

Table 1. Americans’ Positive Outlook in 2018

	% of Total
A year from now, economic conditions will be better or the same	65%
Good time to find a quality job	64%
Economy is excellent or good	58%

The *Work Trends* series tracks the opinions of Americans on several measures of their attitudes about the economy. The 2018 survey finds that Americans express confidence in the unemployment rate, the job market for those looking for work, and job security for workers, with little variance across age groups and by education — in some cases, these numbers have risen to unprecedented levels since the onslaught of the Great Recession in 2008:

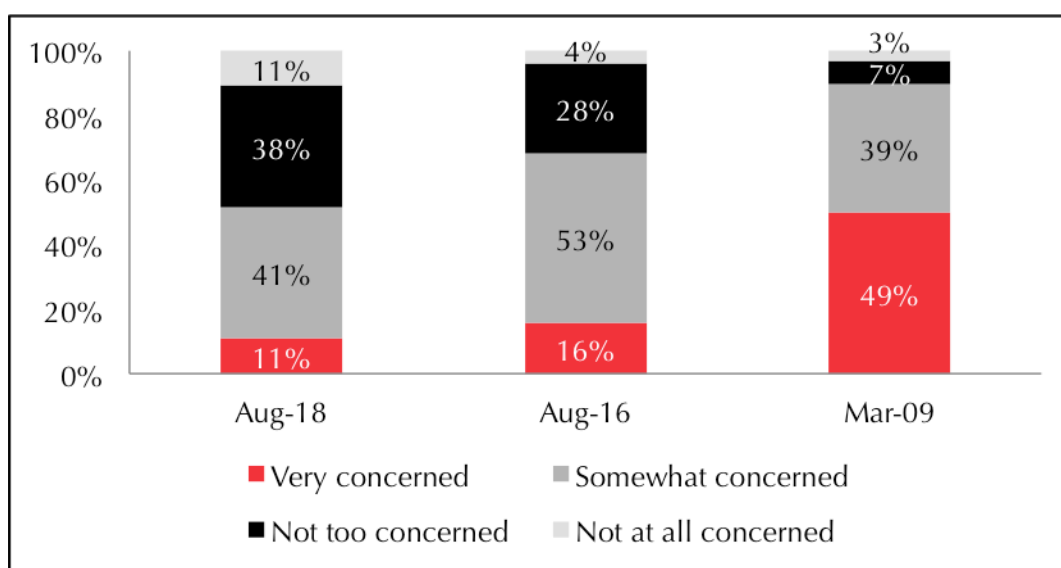
- Concern about the unemployment rate has **steadily declined**. Just 7% of Americans say they are very concerned about the unemployment rate, a near six-fold decrease from January 2013² (43%) and July 2010³ (52%) (see Table 2). For members of the labor force, a rating of very concerned fell from 67% during the Great Recession in March 2009,⁴ to just 5% in August 2018.

Table 2. Percent Very Concerned about Unemployment Rate, Total Sample

August 2018	August 2016	January 2013	July 2010
7%	22%	43%	52%

- Americans in 2018 are also slightly more knowledgeable about this economic indicator compared to 2016. Just under half (48%) are correct in guessing that the unemployment rate is at a 4% level or less (the most recent figure by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics⁵ is 3.9% — the unemployment level has vacillated at or below 4% since April 2018). This is compared to 39% of Americans who correctly estimated a number of 5% in August 2016, when the official figure at the time of the survey was 4.9%.
- Grave concern about job security for those currently working has also reached a new low since 2009. As Figure 1 shows, 11% of Americans in the labor force report being very concerned about job security for those in the workforce in 2018, a decrease from 2016 (16%) and a sharp decline from 2009 (49%).

Figure 1. Percent Concerned about Job Security, Labor Force



- Less than one-fifth (15%) of the public say they are very concerned in 2018 about the job market for those looking for work, compared to one-quarter (24%) of the American public in 2016. This number fell from its highest level in 2009, when more than two-thirds (68%) of working Americans reported being very worried about the U.S. job market, shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Percent Very Concerned about Job Market for those Looking for Work, Total Sample

	August 2018
Very concerned	15%
Somewhat concerned	41%
Not too concerned	34%
Not at all concerned	10%
Total	100%

Table 4. Concern about Job Market, Labor Force

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009
Very concerned	15%	23%	68%
Somewhat concerned	40%	51%	25%
Not too concerned	36%	21%	4%
Not at all concerned	9%	5%	2%
Don't know/refused	NA	NA	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

In other good news, Americans with jobs are generally satisfied with their current positions:

- Seven in 10 American workers (75%) say they are at least somewhat satisfied with their work — more than 3 in 10 (32%) are very satisfied — comparable to 2016 ratings, numbers that have remained relatively consistent since July 2010, as shown in Table 5. This includes 67% of workers earning less than \$75K who say they are at least somewhat satisfied, compared to a larger share of workers making more than \$75K — 80% of that group say they are somewhat or very satisfied with their work.

Table 5. Satisfaction with Current Job

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014 ⁶	January 2013	July 2010
Very satisfied	32%	26%	24%	29%	25%
Somewhat satisfied	43%	47%	39%	37%	40%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16%	14%	16%	15%	14%
Somewhat dissatisfied	7%	8%	14%	11%	12%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%	6%	7%	7%
Don't know/refused	NA	2%	2%	1%	3%
Total	101%	100%	101%	100%	101%

- When asked to compare their current situation to how they were feeling one year ago, only 15% of American workers report being less satisfied overall, and 13% report feeling less secure in their job, also parallel to findings from 2016, and largely more positive than in the Great Recession era. Hourly workers are also more likely to report they're not as satisfied with their job security in 2018 compared to salaried workers — 16% versus 8%.

There is also good news to report by American households on their perceptions of the health of their finances. A majority, 58%, of Americans rate their finances as excellent or good, an increase from 2016 (52%) and particularly from 2014 (41%) (Table 6). Given this, predictions about what to expect in the year ahead are consistent with previous *Work Trends* surveys — just 1 in 10 of the American public (11%) say that they think their family's financial situation will worsen as 2019 approaches (Table 7).

Table 6. Personal Financial Situation

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	July 2010
Excellent	12%	9%	7%	7%
Good	46%	43%	34%	37%
Only fair	30%	34%	40%	39%
Poor	12%	14%	19%	16%
Refused	NA	NA	NA	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7. Family Finances Over the Next Year

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014
Get a lot better	10%	9%	9%
Get a little better	37%	33%	31%
Stay the same	42%	44%	42%
Get a little worse	9%	10%	13%
Get a lot worse	2%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	99%

Attitudes on the National Economy, Jobs, and at Home: Half Empty

Despite this growing optimism since 2016, these sanguine opinions about living and working in America have not translated into the belief that the economic conditions of a strengthening economy will continue into the foreseeable future. The 2018 survey findings show that the American public is proceeding with caution, unsure of what the coming months may hold for workers, and for themselves and their families.

One-quarter of Americans (25%) say the state of the national economy has them unconcerned when considering their own families, but a **significant number express concern (55%) or worry (15%) about the economy** in the years ahead. As Figure 2 shows, while there are some Americans who now say they are less worried compared to 2016, a surprising number still report being concerned, worried, or scared, despite their positive ratings of the economy and their own personal financial situations in 2018.

When it comes to this measure of confidence in the economy, interesting differences are apparent between college graduates and those having a high school degree or less: 30% of college graduates say they are unconcerned about the economy, compared to 21% of those who attended or graduated high school; 9% of Americans with a high school degree or less say they are scared, compared to just 2% of college graduates. Americans earning less than \$50K annually are particularly apprehensive about the future, with fully one-quarter (24%) expressing worry, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2. Worry about the Economy

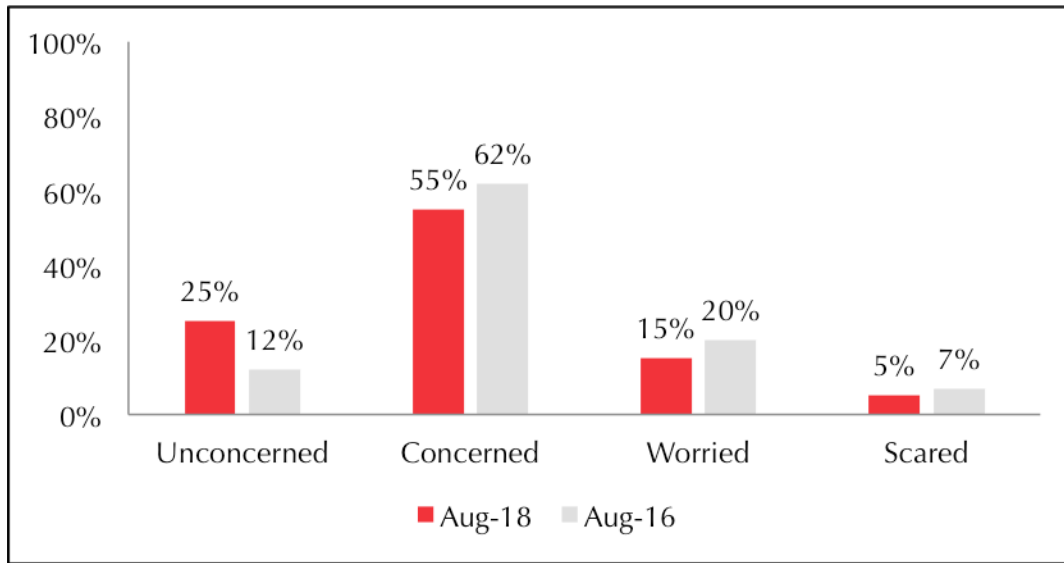
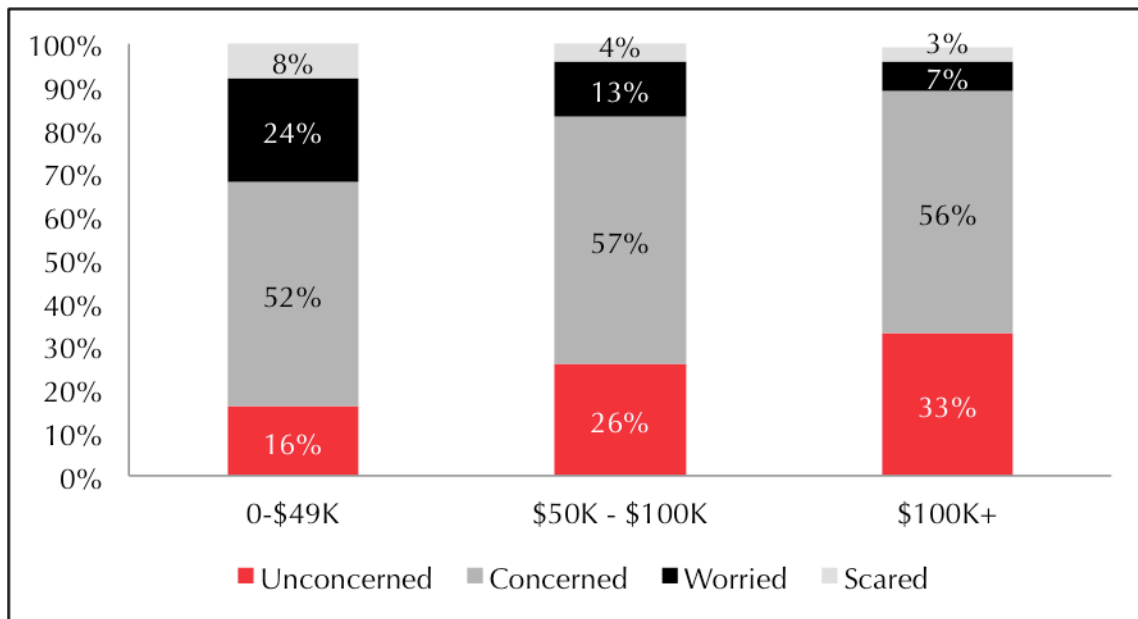


Figure 3. Worry about the Economy, by Income level



While the American public is generally knowledgeable about the unemployment rate, and say they're rather unconcerned about this number, more than half (57%) grade the handling of the job situation by the government in Washington, D.C. as only fair, or poor, including two-thirds (67%) of Americans living in households making less than \$50K. One-half (52%) of Americans with a household income of \$50K to \$100K and greater than \$100K (53%) say they'd rate the government's performance on jobs as only fair or poor.

These lower-income households are also more concerned about the job market for those looking for work, and job security for those working. Twenty-two percent of the public making less than \$50K say they are very concerned about what’s out there for job seekers, compared to 16% of \$50K to \$100K earners, and just 7% of households earning \$100K+.

Similarly, when considering concern about workers keeping their jobs in today’s economy, 16% of Americans living in households making less than \$50K say they are very concerned about workers holding onto their jobs in 2018. This is compared to a similar number, 14%, of the public with an income of \$50K to \$100K, but a much smaller share, 7%, of those with a household income of \$100K+. **Overall, 68% of Americans in the \$0 to \$50K income bracket in this survey say they are very or somewhat concerned about job security for the employed; 55% of Americans earning \$50K to \$100K, and less than a majority, or 42%, of Americans with a household income of \$100K+, are very or somewhat concerned.**

The 2018 survey finds that two-thirds (64%) of Americans believe now is a good time for workers to find a “quality” job, but only slightly more than one-third of the public (35%) describe these positions available in the labor market as “good” jobs that offer satisfactory pay and sufficient opportunities to further one’s career. A bigger share (44%) would label jobs these days as “poor” and 21% say they are unsure (Figure 4). A majority of Americans earning less than \$50K annually rate these jobs as poor — that is, offering less than adequate pay or few opportunities to advance professionally, depicted in Table 8.

Figure 4. Jobs Available Today: Good or Bad Jobs?

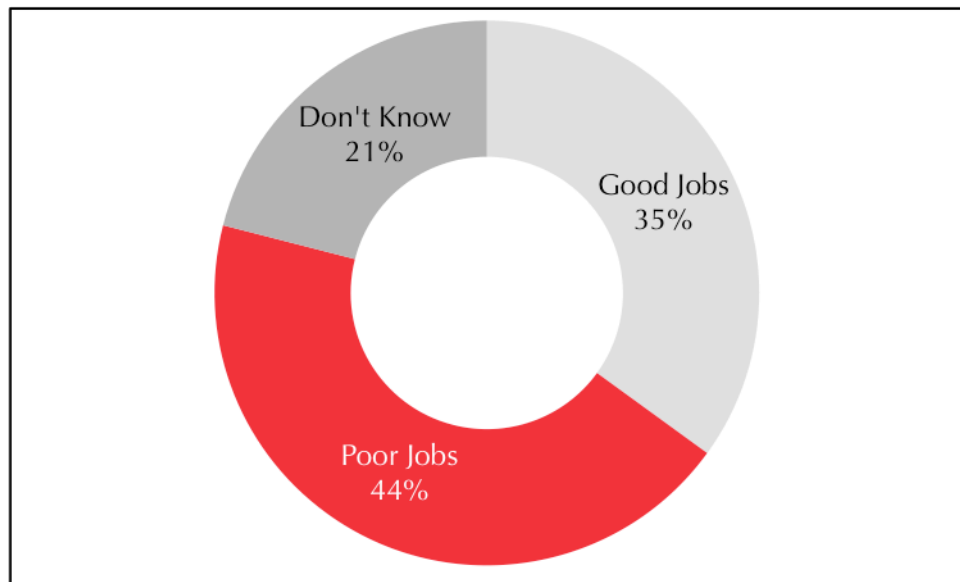


Table 8. Percent Saying Jobs Today are Poor, by Income

\$0 - \$49K	55%
\$50K - \$99K	45%
\$100K+	34%

While about one-third of Americans say they expect the economy next year will improve or stay the same as 2018 (29% and 36%, respectively), there is a suspicious one-third (35%) of the American public who say the U.S. economy in 2019 will actually deteriorate for consumers, workers, and businesses. In 2016, just one in five (21%) Americans said the economy would be worse in the coming year. In fact, the 2018 figures look remarkably similar to those in 2013 when workers and businesses were still suffering from the long-term effects of the Great Recession (Table 9). This finding is consistent among all Americans, regardless of age, education, or household income level. When considering racial/ethnic background, a larger share of Black or Hispanic Americans (45%) think things will, in fact, get worse in 2019, compared to Whites (30%). This may derive from the fact that the Black and Hispanic population is much less likely to say that now is a good time to find a “quality” job (51%) compared to a large majority of Whites (71%) who think today is as good as any to find an adequate job.

Table 9. Economy in the Coming Year

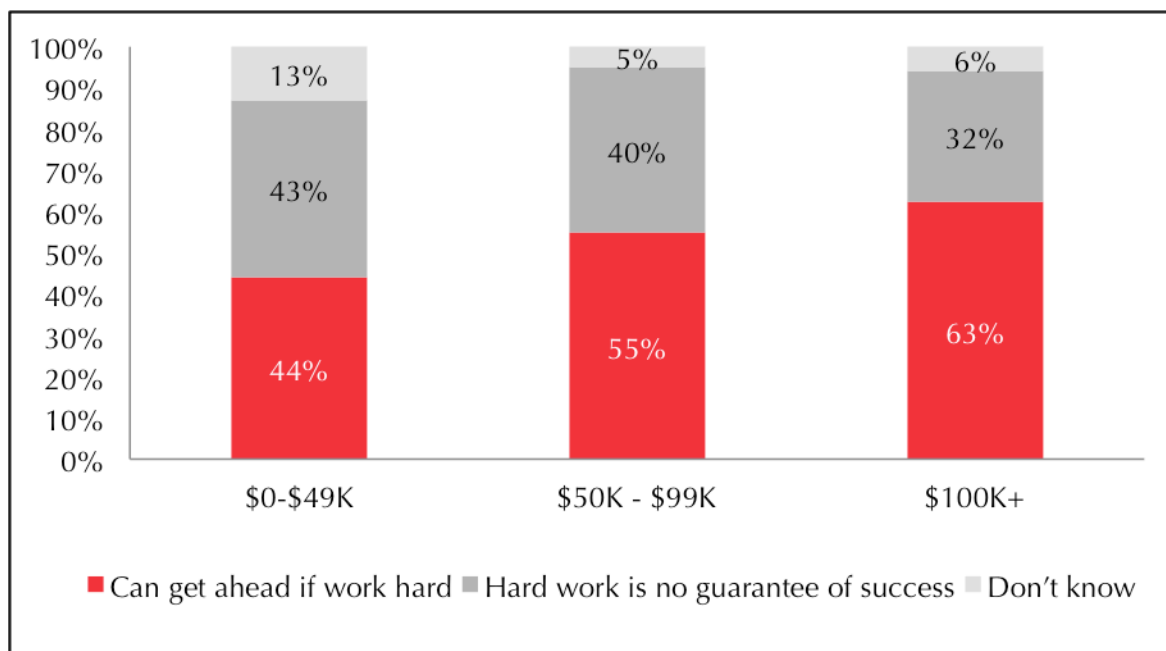
	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	January 2013	July 2010
Better	29%	31%	26%	32%	32%
Worse	35%	21%	27%	32%	27%
Same as now	36%	49%	46%	36%	41%
Total	100%	101%	99%	100%	100%

When asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement that “overall, job, career, and employment opportunities will be better for the next generation than for my generation,” the nation is split. A majority, 52%, say that the future is not brighter for future generations of workers. This includes 59% of college graduates, compared to 50% of Americans who attended some college, and 47% with a high school degree or less. Interestingly, Black and Hispanic Americans do think their descendants will have more promising job prospects (57%) as opposed to White Americans, who think they have it better in 2018 (42%).

Americans also remain concerned, as they have since the Great Recession, about their ability to get ahead in their lives with good old-fashioned hard work. In a 4% unemployment economy, and with few saying they’re very concerned about this indicator, the public is split on whether hard work is enough to achieve success in today’s economy — just 54% think determination is enough, and the remainder say they are not confident or are unsure hard work leads to success. While the 2018 survey does include a small percentage of people who say they “don’t know” whether hard work is enough to get ahead, this attitude is in line with measures that show a clearly discouraged American public.

- Older Americans, ages 50 to 70, are slightly more likely to say hard work is enough (58%) compared to younger Americans (51% of ages 35 to 49 and 49% of ages 18 to 34).
- There is some correlation between household income and thinking hard work is the key to getting ahead. Figure 5 shows a significant difference in opinion when considering income. Six in 10 (63%) \$100K+ earners agree that hard work can guarantee success, an opinion shared by a slightly smaller number, 5 in 10 (55%), of those making \$50K to \$99K, but even fewer, 4 in 10 (44%), Americans with a household income of less than \$50K.

Figure 5. Hard Work’s Impact, by Income



The American Worker and the Future

Attitudes about work are also mixed for Americans who are on the job. While the figures found in this year’s *Work Trends* survey show some general upticks in positivity compared to 2016 and as many as 10 years ago, the employed are hesitant to say that they’re comfortable where they are, but instead feel vulnerable, and are unsure about what the future holds for them in their workplace:

- In 2009, 4 in 10 (43%) workers expressed at least some concern about keeping their own jobs in the midst of the Great Recession. These figures changed little in 2016 (41% reporting at least some concern) and only slightly now in 2018 when 3 in 10 (34%) **still say they’re worried about their job security**, depicted in Table 10.
- This finding is illustrative of both full- and part-time workers. However, those holding an hourly position or earning less than \$75K annually are more likely to say they’re worried about holding onto their jobs compared to salaried American workers and those making more than \$75K a year (Table 11).

Table 10. Workers’ Concerns about their Own Job Security

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009	May 2008 ⁷
Very concerned	9%	11%	19%	13%
Somewhat concerned	25%	30%	24%	22%
Not too concerned	40%	40%	24%	26%
Not at all concerned	27%	19%	33%	38%
Total	101%	100%	100%	99%

Table 11. Percent Very or Somewhat Concerned about Own Job Security, by Income and Hourly vs. Salaried Positions

Earning less than \$75K annually	41%
Earning more than \$75K annually	27%
Hourly workers	38%
Salaried workers	27%

Table 12 presents a time series of how confident American workers feel in their ability to find a new job if necessary. Just 3 in 10 workers (31%) are very or extremely confident that today’s job market positions them to find work they’d consider as good or better as the job they have if they needed to start searching. Improvement from 2009 and 2010 is clear, but not much has changed for working Americans since 2016. Four in 10 workers (42%) are only somewhat confident they could obtain a new position if they lost or left their current job, leaving 3 in 10 (28%) feeling anxious about finding comparable employment to their current job.

Fully one-third (35%) of older workers age 45 to 70 say they are not confident or not at all confident they’d find work, compared to one-fifth (21%) of younger workers age 18 to 44.

Table 12. Confidence in Getting Different Job

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	January 2013	July 2010	November 2009 ⁸	February 1999 ⁹	August 1998 ¹⁰
Extremely confident	10%	10%	4%	8%	7%	7%	33%	28%
Very confident	21%	21%	16%	10%	12%	13%	31%	29%
Somewhat confident	42%	38%	33%	34%	30%	29%	23%	25%
Not too confident	21%	22%	27%	30%	30%	28%	8%	11%
Not at all confident	7%	9%	21%	18%	20%	22%	4%	7%
Don’t know/not sure	NA	NA	NA	NA	1%	1%	*	1%
Total	101%	100%	101%	100%	100%	100%	99%	101%

* = 1% or less reporting.

Many workers believe they need more help to get the skills required to keep up with a rapidly changing economy and jobs. Americans know they’re vulnerable to change in the workplace and will need to obtain some form of education in their work lives to keep up. Only 7% of Americans in the labor force say training and developing their work skills is **not necessary** to stay even with changes that will come in the workplace — the remaining 9 in 10 say doing so is important or “essential.” Half (51%) of workers in the labor force say advancing their own job skills is

absolutely essential to keep from falling behind. Interestingly, Americans do think it’s likely they’ll have the opportunity to get the training they need. A large majority, 7 in 10 American workers (74%), say it’s at least somewhat probable that job training is in their future — a measure that varies across education, age, and household income levels (Table 13).

Table 13. Labor Force - Likely to Get Training, by Subgroup

Education Level	% Very/Somewhat Likely to Get Training
High school or less	67%
Some college	69%
College graduate +	83%
Income	
\$0 to \$49K	70%
\$50K to \$99K	67%
\$100K+	81%
Age	
18 to 44	78%
45 to 70	67%

Members of the labor force say they expect they’ll get the training they need to get ahead in their careers and think it’s not only their responsibility to make it happen, but companies, too. This survey finds that people think employers and workers themselves, rather than the government, are responsible for getting Americans in the labor market the skills and training they need to move forward in their careers. When asked to check off who should be held accountable in seeing this through, employers (53%) and workers (48%) were singled out by half of Americans, and the government slightly more than one-quarter (29%).

A breakdown of how subgroups of the U.S. population react to this question shows interesting, statistically significant variances among these groups as to who holds the **government, employers, or workers** more accountable:

- Age: Younger people are more likely to say that employers and government should be responsible. Older people say it’s the worker’s responsibility:
 - Employers: Marked by 60% of 18- to 34-year-olds, 59% of 35- to 49-year-olds, and 44% of 50- to 70-year-olds.
 - Workers: Checked off by 40% of 18- to 34-year-olds, 47% of 35- to 49-year-olds, and 57% of 50- to 70-year-olds.
 - Government: Denoted by 36% of 18- to 34-year-olds, 28% of 35- to 49-year-olds, and 23% of 50- to 70-year-olds.

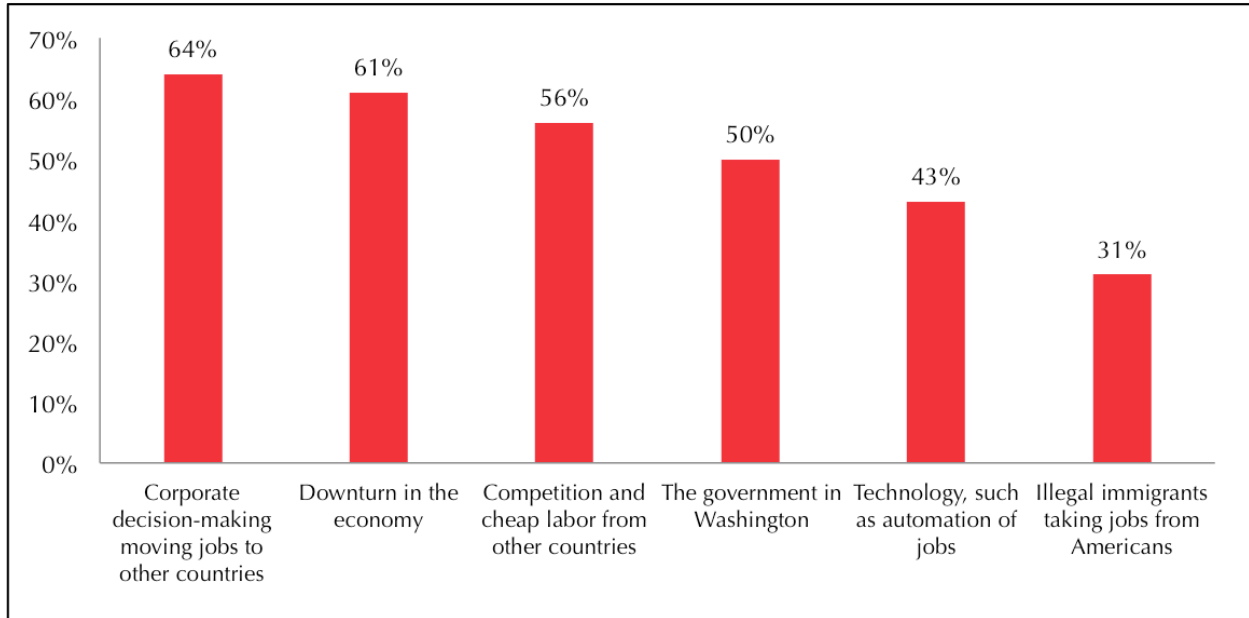
- Income: Americans in lower-income households say they hold government responsible more so than Americans in higher-income households, while the highest income earners say it's the responsibility of workers, a sentiment that is not shared by the lowest income earners:
 - Workers: Marked by 57% of \$100K+ earners, 52% of \$50K to \$99K earners, and 36% making less than \$50K.
 - Government: Checked off by 24% of \$100K+ earners, 25% of \$50K to \$99K earners, and 38% making less than \$50K.
- Education: A majority of college graduates put the onus on workers, compared to high school graduates.
 - Workers: Selected by 41% of high school attendees/graduates, 50% of college attendees, and 56% of college graduates.
- Pay: Hourly workers are slightly more likely than salaried workers (59% vs. 48%) to say they hold **employers** responsible for training.

What's Dividing the Country: Americans See the U.S. Government and Private Corporations as a Threat to Workers/Party Identification

With a clear pattern of uncertainty and cynicism about what's to come for the U.S. economy in the coming months, Americans were asked to assess what they see as the greatest threats to the economy, specifically, American workers. As shown in Figure 6, two-thirds of the public (64%) say corporations sending American jobs to other countries is a major threat, followed by a downturn in the economy (61%), competition and cheap labor from other countries (56%), and the government in Washington, D.C. (50%). The public on the whole is much less concerned about the impact of technology on jobs (43%) and illegal immigrants taking their jobs (31%).

When Americans were asked to rank those dangers identified as "major," their biggest concern, overall, is the government in Washington D.C. Of the public who named the U.S. government as a "major threat," half (48%) selected it as the biggest threat, ranked higher than a downturn in the economy (40% who chose this as a major threat ranked it #1), and corporations sending jobs to other countries (28%).

Figure 6. Major Threats to American Workers



Illegal Immigrants and the Economy

During the past two years, there has been a great deal of political commentary about the impact of illegal immigrants on American jobs and American workers. Overall, illegal immigrants are seen as a major threat by less than one-third of the American public (31%), and this survey finds that people are more likely to say that immigrants born outside of the United States benefit this nation because of their contributions to society (50%) rather than hurt the country (32%). Opinions about immigrants vary across education and income levels:

- Americans having at least a college degree are much more likely to say that immigrants are valuable to the United States (67%) compared to people who attended some college (46%) or whose highest level of education attended is high school (38%). Just 21% of college graduates say illegal immigrants are a major threat to American jobs, compared to 28% of the public having attended some college, and 41% of Americans with a high school degree or less.
- Four in 10 Americans making less than \$50K annually mark illegal immigrants as a major threat to workers (37%), compared to 3 in 10 Americans with household incomes of between \$50K and \$100K (29%) and making more than \$100K per year (26%). Six in 10 (57%) of the nation’s highest income earners say immigrants benefit the United States, an opinion shared by 5 in 10 (49%) making \$50K to \$100K, and just 4 in 10 (43%) of the nation’s lowest income earners.

The Parties and Opinions on American Jobs

Democrats are the least likely to say that illegal immigrants are a major threat to American jobs (18%) compared to the other scenarios posed in the survey; almost half of Republicans (48%) rate it just as concerning for American workers as a downturn in the economy (52%). One in three Republicans (33%) believe immigrants strengthen the United States, compared to two in three Democrats (65%). Table 14 shows a breakdown of perceived major threats to American jobs by party identification. Of interest is that one-third of Republicans (37%) say that the government in Washington is a major threat to American jobs, and members of both parties seem to agree that workers should be concerned about the threat of competition and cheap labor from other countries.

Table 14. Percent who Say Major Threat

	Republican	Democrat
Downturn in the economy	52%	71%
Illegal immigrants taking jobs	48%	18%
Competition and cheap labor from other countries	56%	56%
Corporate decision-making moving jobs to other countries	57%	70%
Technology	37%	49%
Government in Washington	37%	62%

Opinions about immigrants and threats to American jobs are among many of the attitudes measured in this survey that split on party lines. Party identification is the usual suspect in predicting attitudes about the economy and government, with Democrats much more likely to reject the idea that positive economic times are here, and here to stay, as summarized in Table 15.

- Democrats are almost four times more likely than Republicans (52% versus 14%) to say things will take a turn for the worse in 2019.
- Two in 10 (21%) Democrats say the government is doing at least a “good” job handling the employment situation in today’s economy, compared to almost 7 in 10 Republicans (66%).
- Eight in 10 Republicans (82%) say now is a good time to find a quality job, a sentiment shared by only half of Democrats (49%).
- 57% of Republicans say they consider the jobs in the labor market today are “quality jobs” with opportunities to advance and earn adequate pay, compared to only 17% of Democrats.
- 60% of Democrats say job opportunities for a future generation will be worse compared to the employment opportunities available to those working today, a sentiment shared by 43% of Republicans.

Table 15. Summary of Party Differences on the Economy

	Republican	Democrat
Economy will be worse in 2019	14%	52%
Government is doing a good or excellent job handling the U.S. job situation	66%	21%
Now is a good time to find a quality job	82%	49%
Jobs available today are “good”	57%	17%
Career opportunities for future generations will be worse than now	43%	60%

Labor Day: Far from Festive

In advance of this year’s Labor Day, the federal holiday conceived in 1882 by the labor movement to recognize the impact of the American worker on the economic successes of the United States, this *Work Trends* survey asked Americans a series of questions to gauge their perceptions of the holiday and what they think it stands for, for today’s workforce (Table 16).

Table 16. Attitudes related to Work and Labor Day

	% who Agree
The country is run for the benefit of the rich rather than for workers	68%
Labor unions are good for workers in general	64%
Labor Day doesn’t really stand for anything these days	57%
Labor Day is about an older generation and doesn’t mean much anymore	46%
I will do something special on the Labor Day weekend	43%
Given my job, Labor Day has a special meaning for me	33% (employed)
I will have to work during the Labor Day weekend	27% (employed)

The findings show that a majority of Americans believe:

- Labor Day “doesn’t really stand for anything” in 2018. Fifty-seven percent of the public says this is true, an attitude that is likely founded in the idea that the United States is “run for the benefit of the rich, rather than for workers,” an attitude shared by almost 7 in 10 Americans, or 68%, broken down by age, income level, and race in Table 17.
- Retired Americans are slightly less likely than employed Americans to say they believe the United States is run for the benefit of the rich rather than workers themselves (60% versus 70%).
- Democrats are more likely to say that Labor Day has little meaning today (61%) compared to Republicans (51%), and the country is run for the benefit of the rich (89% for Democrats, 43% for Republicans).

Table 17. The country is run for the benefit of the rich, rather than for workers – Significant Differences Across Important Subgroups of the Population

Age	% who Agree
18 to 34	74%
35 to 49	72%
50 to 70	62%
18 to 44	75%
45 to 70	63%

Income	% who Agree
\$0 to \$49,999	80%
\$50K to \$99,999	65%
\$100K+	59%

Race	% who Agree
White, non-Hispanic	63%
Black and Hispanic	81%

- Of employed Americans, while three-quarters (73%) say they won't be on the job on Labor Day, only one-third of workers (33%) think that celebrating the holiday is meaningful for their own work. Less than half of all Americans (43%) say they will spend the long weekend doing something special.
- Overall, in 2018, Americans think that labor unions are valuable for workers to participate in. When asked to say whether they agree or disagree with the statement that "labor unions are good for workers in general," a large majority (64%) agree. More than 7 in 10 (74%) younger people age 18 to 34 see value in labor unions, compared to 6 in 10 (59%) age 35 to 49, as well as people age 50 to 70 (59%).
- Most Americans do not know how many workers in the United States participate in labor unions in today's economy. The current U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics¹¹ figure was approximately 10.7% in 2017, a figure that was estimated by less than one-fifth (16%) of Americans when asked for their best guess. An almost equal number (24%) say they aren't able to guess how many American workers are union members.

Conclusion

Time will tell whether the United States can continue to ride the 4% unemployment wave, among other measures of a growing economy, and whether confidence in these economic indicators will carry on into the future. The public, in particular the lowest income earners, is wary of the current economic situation, offers mixed reviews of where the nation is now and where it's headed, and has come up with a grade of "incomplete" on the state of the current economy. It's only prudent to expect that, after living and working through the tumultuous Great Recession and the ensuing slow recovery, accompanied by the political turbulence felt since November 2016, Americans have adopted a "wait and see" approach in their assessment of the U.S. economy.

End Notes

- ¹ C. Van Horn, and C. Zukin. (2016). *Turning Points: Americans' Growing Confidence in the Job Market, Perspectives on the Presidential Election, and Assessments of Foreign and Immigrant Workers*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ² M. Szeltner, C. Van Horn, and C. Zukin. (2013). *Diminished Lives and Futures: A Portrait of America in the Great Recession-Era*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ³ J. Godofsky, C. Van Horn, and C. Zukin. (2010). *American Workers Assess an Economic Disaster*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ⁴ C. Van Horn. (2009). *The Distressed American Worker: Fears of Permanent Job Loss Soar*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *News Release: The Employment Situation, July 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>.
- ⁶ C. Zukin, C. Van Horn, and A. Kopicki (2014). *Unhappy, Worried and Pessimistic: Americans in the Aftermath of the Great Recession*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ⁷ K. Jenkins, A. Kopicki, C. Van Horn, and C. Zukin. (2008). *The Anxious American Worker*. New Brunswick, NJ: John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, Rutgers University.
- ⁸ The Heldrich Center's November 2009 *Work Trends* survey was conducted via telephone from November 5 to 15, 2009 by ABT SRBI of 652 adults in the labor force.
- ⁹ The Heldrich Center's February 1999 *Work Trends* survey was conducted via telephone from February 5 to 22, 1999 by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis of the University of Connecticut of 1,000 adults in the labor force.
- ¹⁰ The Heldrich Center's February 1998 *Work Trends* survey was conducted via telephone from August 5 to 16, 1998 by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis of the University of Connecticut of 1,001 adults in the labor force.
- ¹¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Economic News Release: Union Members Summary, January 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.

Appendix A. Methodology

A Glass Half Full or Half Empty? Americans Agree the Economy is Strong, but Worry about the Future was fielded August 8 to 19, 2018 online with a national probability sample of 827 U.S. residents age 18 or older. The study has been weighted on various demographic categories such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, census region, education, primary language, and household income.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The sampling error for 827 respondents is +/- 3.4 percentage points, at a 95% confidence interval. The sampling error for 504 respondents is +/- 4.4 percentage points, at a 95% confidence interval. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported for potential voters, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or contextual effects.

The survey was calculated using GfK's web-enabled KnowledgePanel®, a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. Initially, participants are chosen scientifically by a random selection of residential addresses. Persons in selected households are then invited by telephone or by mail to participate in the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®. For those who agree to participate but do not already have Internet access, GfK provides at no cost a laptop and ISP connection. People who already have computers and Internet service are permitted to participate using their own equipment. Panelists then receive unique login information for accessing surveys online, and then are sent e-mails throughout each month inviting them to participate in research.

Appendix B. Topline Survey Results

GfK/Knowledge Networks/online

Field dates: August 8 to 19, 2018

N=827 total sample

N=457 currently employed

N=504 labor force

Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

Refused responses are counted as missing data, and are not included in the percentage totals

Mode differences may be apparent when comparing data obtained via telephone interview versus online survey

Where applicable, trend data are noted if base is total sample or labor force

[s] denotes single response question

[m] denotes multiple response question

August 2016 = Total August 2016 sample (N=822) / online

August 2014 = Total August 2014 sample (N=1,153) / online

January 2013 = Total January 2013 sample (N=1,090) / online

July 2010 = Total July 2010 sample (N=818) / online

November 2009 = Total November 2009 sample (N=652 adult labor force) / phone

March 2009 = Total March 2009 sample (N=700 adult labor force) / phone

May 2008 = Total May 2008 sample (N=1,000) / phone

January 2000 = Total January 2000 sample (N=1,005 adult labor force) / phone

February 1999 = Total February 1999 sample (N=1,000 adult labor force) / phone

August 1998 = Total August 1998 sample (N=1,001 adult labor force) / phone

Base: All respondents

QEMPSTATSUM [s]

Which of the following best describes you?

- 1 Employed
- 2 Unemployed and looking for work
- 3 Unemployed and not looking for work
- 4 Retired

	N
Employed	457
Unemployed and looking	47
Unemployed and not looking	94
Retired	225
Refused	4
Total	827

Base: ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1

EMPLOYED [s]

Please mark the following that applies to you:

- 1 Employed full time
- 2 Employed part time
- 3 Self-employed full time
- 4 Self-employed part time
- 5 Military

	N
Employed full time	349
Employed part time	72
Self-employed full time	26
Self-employed part time	7
Refused	3
Total	454

Base: ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=2

UNEMPLOYED_LOOKING [s]

Please mark the following that applies to you:

- 1 Looking for full-time work
- 2 Looking for part-time work (15-20 hours)
- 3 Looking for either part-time or full-time work

	N
Looking for full-time work	18
Looking for part-time work	9
Looking for either part-time or full-time work	20
Total	47

Base: DISPLAY IF QEMPSTATSUM=1 or 2

QPAY [s]

[IF QEMPSTATSUM=1] Thinking about your current job...if you work in multiple jobs, please think about the one you consider your *primary* occupation...

[IF QEMPSTATSUM=2] Thinking about your most recent job...if you worked in multiple jobs, please think about the one you considered your *primary* occupation...

[IF QEMPSTATSUM=1] How are you paid?

[IF QEMPSTATSUM=2] How were you paid?

- 1 Salary
- 2 By the hour
- 3 Self-employed/commission/stipend

	August 2018
Salary	39%
By the hour	54%
Self-employed/commission/stipend	8%
Total	101%

Base: ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1,2

QJOB [s]

Of the following categories, which industry or field describes your **[IF QEMPSTATSUM=1: current/IF QEMPSTATSUM=2: most recent]** job? **[IF QEMPSTATSUM=1:** If you work in multiple jobs, please think about the job you consider your *primary* occupation. **/IF QEMPSTATSUM=2:** If you worked in multiple jobs, please think about the job you considered your *primary* occupation.]

- 1 Private, for-profit business
- 2 Government/military
- 3 Nonprofit/academic
- 4 Self-employed
- 5 Other

	August 2018
Private, for-profit	55%
Government/military	12%
Nonprofit/academic	13%
Self-employed	8%
Other	11%
Total	99%

Base: ASK ALL

ECON [s]

How would you rate the current state of the national economy?

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 3 Only fair
- 4 Poor

	August 2018
Excellent	10%
Good	48%
Only fair	33%
Poor	9%
Total	100%

Base: ASK ALL

Scripter: randomly assign half respondents to DOV_NEW1=1 and another half to DOV_NEW1=2

NEW1 [s]

[IF DOV_NEW1=1: Compared to a year ago / IF DOV_NEW1=2: Compared to five years ago], do you think the economy has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

- 1 Gotten better
- 2 Gotten worse
- 3 Stayed the same

	August 2018
Gotten better	44%
Gotten worse	27%
Stayed the same	29%
Total	100%

Compared to a year ago (N=414)

	August 2018
Gotten better	38%
Gotten worse	26%
Stayed the same	36%
Total	100%

Compared to five years ago (N=413)

	August 2018
Gotten better	50%
Gotten worse	29%
Stayed the same	21%
Total	100%

Base: ASK ALL

R5 [s]

A year from now, do you expect economic conditions in the country as a whole will be better, worse, or the same as now?

- 1 Better
- 2 Worse
- 3 Same as now

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	January 2013	July 2010
Better	29%	31%	26%	32%	32%
Worse	35%	21%	27%	32%	27%
Same as now	36%	49%	46%	36%	41%
Total	100%	101%	99%	100%	100%

Base: ASK ALL

GOVTJOB [s]

How good a job do you think the government in Washington is doing in handling the job situation in America?

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 3 Only fair
- 4 Poor

	August 2018
Excellent	10%
Good	32%
Only fair	32%
Poor	25%
Total	99%

Base: ASK ALL

R1 [s]

Thinking about the job situation in America today, would you say that now is a good time or bad time to find a quality job?

- 1 Good time
- 2 Bad time

	August 2018
Good	64%
Bad	36%
Total	100%

Base: ASK ALL

Randomize items a-g and record the order
One item per screen, repeat the question text each time.

LBR1 [s]

Labor Day is just around the corner. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- a. Labor unions are good for workers in general.

- 1. Agree
- 2. Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	64%
Disagree	36%
Total	100%

- b. Labor Day doesn't really stand for anything these days.

- 1. Agree
- 2. Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	57%
Disagree	43%
Total	100%

c. The country is run for the benefit of the rich rather than for workers.

1. Agree
2. Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	68%
Disagree	32%
Total	100%

d. [ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1] Given my job, Labor Day has a special meaning for me.

1. Agree
2. Disagree

N=457

	August 2018
Agree	33%
Disagree	67%
Total	100%

e. [ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1] I will have to work during the Labor Day weekend.

1. Agree
2. Disagree

N=457

	August 2018
Agree	27%
Disagree	73%
Total	100%

f. Labor Day is about an older generation and doesn't mean much anymore.

1. Agree
2. Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	46%
Disagree	54%
Total	100%

g. I will do something special on the Labor Day weekend.

- 1. Agree
- 2. Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	43%
Disagree	57%
Total	100%

Base: ASK ALL

LBR2 [s]

What percent of American workers belong to a labor union these days? Just your best guess.

- 1 10%
- 2 20%
- 3 30%
- 4 40%
- 9 Don't know

	August 2018	August 2016
10%	16%	23%
20%	27%	37%
30%	24%	28%
40%	10%	13%
Don't know	24%	Not asked
Total	101%	101%

Base: ASK ALL
[display1]

Thinking about you and your family...

FS1 [s]

How would you rate your own personal financial situation?

- 1 Excellent shape
- 2 Good shape
- 3 Only fair shape
- 4 Poor shape

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	July 2010
Excellent	12%	9%	7%	7%
Good	46%	43%	34%	37%
Only fair	30%	34%	40%	39%
Poor	12%	14%	19%	16%
Refused	NA	NA	NA	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Base: ASK ALL

FS2 [s]

Over the next year, do you think your family's finances will:

- 1 Get a lot better
- 2 Get a little better
- 3 Stay the same
- 4 Get a little worse
- 5 Get a lot worse

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014
Get a lot better	10%	9%	9%
Get a little better	37%	33%	31%
Stay the same	42%	44%	42%
Get a little worse	9%	10%	13%
Get a lot worse	2%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	99%

Base: ASK ALL

PS10 [s]

Thinking about you and your family and the national economy, would you describe yourself as:

- 1 Unconcerned
- 2 Concerned
- 3 Worried
- 4 Scared

Total Sample

	August 2018	August 2016
Unconcerned*	25%	12%
Concerned	55%	62%
Worried	15%	20%
Scared	5%	7%
Don't know/other	NA	NA
Total	100%	101%

Labor Force

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009
Unconcerned*	26%	12%	Not asked
Concerned	54%	63%	53%
Worried	16%	19%	25%
Scared	4%	6%	9%
Don't know/other	NA	NA	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%
	N=504 labor force	N=547 labor force	N=700 labor force

* Answer category added in August 2016 to capture those who are no longer concerned about the economy.

Base: ASK ALL

SM1 [s]

How much are you and your family's financial situation personally affected by what happens on Wall Street and in the stock market?

- 1 A lot
- 2 A little
- 3 Not at all

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014
A lot	15%	15%	14%
A little	55%	45%	47%
Not at all	30%	27%	24%
Don't know	NA	13%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Base: ASK ALL

EMP8a [s]

Thinking about the current unemployment rate, are you:

- 1 Very concerned
- 2 Somewhat concerned
- 3 Not too concerned
- 4 Not at all concerned

Total Sample

% very concerned	August 2018	August 2016	January 2013	July 2010
	7%	22%	43%	52%

	August 2018
Very concerned	7%
Somewhat concerned	37%
Not too concerned	38%
Not at all concerned	19%
Total	101%

Labor Force

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009
Very concerned	5%	20%	67%
Somewhat concerned	39%	42%	24%
Not too concerned	39%	32%	6%
Not at all concerned	17%	6%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Note: Numbers reported for these questions are shown for both the total sample and labor force in order to make comparisons to the March 2009 survey, which sampled the adult labor force.

Base: ASK ALL

K1 [s]

Which figure is closest to the official government unemployment rate? Just your best guess.

- 1 4% or less
- 2 7%
- 3 10% or more
- 9 Don't know

	August 2018
4% or less	48%
7%	24%
10% or more	13%
Don't know	16%
Total	101%

	August 2016
3% or less	5%
5%	39%
7%	28%
9%	14%
11% or more	15%
Total	101%

Base: ASK ALL

EMP8b [s]

How concerned are you about job security for those currently working?

- 1 Very concerned
- 2 Somewhat concerned
- 3 Not too concerned
- 4 Not at all concerned

Total Sample

% very concerned	August 2018	August 2016	January 2013	July 2010
	12%	19%	43%	49%

	August 2018
Very concerned	12%
Somewhat concerned	43%
Not too concerned	35%
Not at all concerned	10%
Total	100%

Labor Force

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009
Very concerned	11%	16%	49%
Somewhat concerned	41%	53%	39%
Not too concerned	38%	28%	7%
Not at all concerned	11%	4%	3%
Don't know/refused	NA	NA	1%
Total	101%	101%	99%

Base: ASK ALL

EMP8c [s]

Please mark how concerned you are about the job market for those looking for work.

- 1 Very concerned
- 2 Somewhat concerned
- 3 Not too concerned
- 4 Not at all concerned

Total Sample

% very concerned	August 2018	August 2016	January 2013	July 2010
	15%	24%	54%	61%

	August 2018
Very concerned	15%
Somewhat concerned	41%
Not too concerned	34%
Not at all concerned	10%
Total	100%

Labor Force

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009
Very concerned	15%	23%	68%
Somewhat concerned	40%	51%	25%
Not too concerned	36%	21%	4%
Not at all concerned	9%	5%	2%
Don't know/refused	NA	NA	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1
EMP8d [s]

How concerned are you with your OWN job security?

- 1 Very concerned
- 2 Somewhat concerned
- 3 Not too concerned
- 4 Not at all concerned

N=457

	August 2018	August 2016	March 2009	May 2008
Very concerned	9%	11%	19%	13%
Somewhat concerned	25%	30%	24%	22%
Not too concerned	40%	40%	24%	26%
Not at all concerned	27%	19%	33%	38%
Total	101%	100%	100%	99%

ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1

RI12 [s]

How confident are you that if you lost your job or wanted to leave your current job, you could find another job as good or better?

- 1 Extremely confident
- 2 Very confident
- 3 Somewhat confident
- 4 Not very confident
- 5 Not at all confident

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	January 2013	July 2010	November 2009	February 1999	August 1998
Extremely confident	10%	10%	4%	8%	7%	7%	33%	28%
Very confident	21%	21%	16%	10%	12%	13%	31%	29%
Somewhat confident	42%	38%	33%	34%	30%	29%	23%	25%
Not too confident	21%	22%	27%	30%	30%	28%	8%	11%
Not at all confident	7%	9%	21%	18%	20%	22%	4%	7%
Don't know/not sure	NA	NA	NA	NA	1%	1%	*	1%
Total	101%	100%	101%	100%	100%	100%	99%	101%

* = 1% or less reporting.

Base: ASK ALL

QGPJOB [s]

Which statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- 1 The jobs available to American workers today are good jobs because they offer things that most working people want, such as adequate pay and the opportunity to advance in a career
- 2 The jobs available to American workers today are poor jobs because they don't offer things that most working people want, such as adequate pay and the opportunity to advance in a career
- 9 Don't know

	August 2018
Good jobs	35%
Poor jobs	44%
Don't know	21%
Total	100%

Base: ASK ALL

Q20 [m]

In order to obtain better jobs, many workers need education and training beyond formal schooling. Who should be primarily responsible for this training and education:

- 1 The government
- 2 Employers
- 3 Workers

% who say yes (check all that apply)

	August 2018
Government	29%
Employers	53%
Workers	48%

ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1,2

NEWSKILL [s]

Looking ahead, how important do you think it will be for you to get training and develop new skills throughout your work life in order to keep up with changes in the workplace?

N=504

- 1 Essential
- 2 Important but not essential
- 3 Not important

	August 2018
Essential	51%
Important but not essential	42%
Not important	7%
Total	100%

ASK IF QEMPSTATSUM=1,2

NEWSKILL2 [s]

And how likely is it that you will get training and develop new skills in order to keep up with changes in the workplace?

N=504

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Not very likely
- 4 Not at all likely

	August 2018
Very likely	29%
Somewhat likely	45%
Not too likely	21%
Not at all likely	6%
Total	101%

Base: ASK ALL

TIMESERIES3 [s]

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Overall, job, career, and employment opportunities will be better for the next generation than for my generation.

- 1 Agree
- 2 Disagree

	August 2018
Agree	46%
Disagree	52%
Neither*	2%
Total	100%

* "Neither" answer category removed after pre-test.

Base: ASK ALL

Scripter: randomize items a-f and record the order
One item per screen, repeat the question text

QTHR [s]

Please indicate whether you think each of the following things are a major threat, a minor threat, or not a threat to American workers.

- a. A downturn in the economy
 - 1. Major threat
 - 2. Minor threat
 - 3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	61%
Minor threat	34%
Not a threat	5%
Total	100%

b. Illegal immigrants taking jobs from Americans

1. Major threat
2. Minor threat
3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	31%
Minor threat	38%
Not a threat	32%
Total	101%

c. Competition and cheap labor from other countries

1. Major threat
2. Minor threat
3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	56%
Minor threat	38%
Not a threat	6%
Total	100%

d. Corporate decision-making moving jobs to other countries

1. Major threat
2. Minor threat
3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	64%
Minor threat	30%
Not a threat	6%
Total	100%

e. Technology, such as automation of jobs

1. Major threat
2. Minor threat
3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	43%
Minor threat	46%
Not a threat	11%
Total	100%

- f. The government in Washington
 - 1. Major threat
 - 2. Minor threat
 - 3. Not a threat to American workers

	August 2018
Major threat	50%
Minor threat	35%
Not a threat	15%
Total	100%

Base: IF MORE THAN ONE QTHR a - f =1

QTHR2 [rank, range 1 to # of Major threat selected in QTHR]

Using numbers, please rank these major threats below. Put a 1 by what you think is the biggest threat.

Of respondents who name item as “major threat,” percent that ranked that item as #1 or chose that item as the only “major threat” of the battery.

- 1. [if qthr_a=1] A downturn in the economy ranked #1 - 40%
- 2. [if qthr_b=1] Illegal immigrants taking jobs from Americans ranked #1 - 35%
- 3. [if qthr_c=1] Competition and cheap labor from other countries ranked #1 - 26%
- 4. [if qthr_d=1] Corporate decision-making moving jobs to other countries ranked #1 - 28%
- 5. [if qthr_e=1] Technology, such as automation of jobs ranked #1 - 27%
- 6. [if qthr_f=1] The government in Washington ranked #1 - 48%

Base: ASK ALL

OT2 [s]

On another topic, please indicate which of the following two statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- 1 Most people who want to get ahead can make it if they’re willing to work hard
- 2 Hard work and determination are no guarantee of success for most people
- 9 Don’t know

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014
Can get ahead if work hard	54%	68%	58%
No guarantee of success	38%	33%	42%
Don’t know	8%	Not asked	Not asked
Total	100%	101%	100%

Base: ASK ALL

Im1 [s]

Please indicate which of the following statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- 1 Immigrants today, that is people born in another country, strengthen the United States because of their hard work and talents
- 2 Immigrants today are a burden on the United States because they take our jobs, housing, and health care
- 9 Don't know

	August 2018
Strengthen the United States	50%
Burden on United States	32%
Don't know	19%
Total	101%

Base: IF QEMPSTATSUM=1

CE1 [s]

Thinking about your current job are you:

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 Somewhat dissatisfied
- 5 Very dissatisfied

N=457

	August 2018	August 2016	August 2014	January 2013	July 2010
Very satisfied	32%	26%	24%	29%	25%
Somewhat satisfied	43%	47%	39%	37%	40%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16%	14%	16%	15%	14%
Somewhat dissatisfied	7%	8%	14%	11%	12%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%	6%	7%	7%
Don't know/refused	NA	2%	2%	1%	3%
Total	101%	100%	101%	100%	101%

Base: IF QEMPSTATSUM=1

JS2 [s]

Compared to one year ago, how do you feel about your job situation:

- 1 More satisfied now
- 2 About as satisfied now
- 3 Less satisfied now

	August 2018	August 2016	July 2010	March 2009	May 2008	January 2000	February 1999	August 1998
More satisfied now	28%	27%	19%	23%	30%	39%	46%	44%
About as satisfied now	58%	51%	53%	41%	44%	42%	37%	39%
Less satisfied now	15%	19%	26%	33%	25%	18%	17%	16%
Don't know/ other	NA	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	*
Total	101%	101%	100%	99%	100%	100%	101%	99%

Base: IF QEMPSTATSUM=1

JS3 [s]

Compared to one year ago, how do you feel about your job security:

- 1 More satisfied now
- 2 About as satisfied now
- 3 Less satisfied now

	August 2018	August 2016	July 2010	March 2009	May 2008
More satisfied now	24%	21%	18%	23%	30%
About as satisfied now	64%	59%	52%	41%	44%
Less satisfied now	13%	15%	28%	33%	25%
Don't know/ depends/other	NA	5%	2%	2%	1%
Total	101%	100%	100%	99%	100%