



The ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey

The **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey** is a nationally representative quarterly survey of U.S. job seekers that measures how optimistic or pessimistic they are about their ability to land their preferred jobs. Increased confidence is typically an indicator of future increases in employee turnover, wage growth, and labor force participation.

Data Spotlight

Latest Release
2023 Q1

↑ **0.3%**
**Expectations
Index**

Job seeker optimism about the medium-term labor market outlook was largely unchanged in the first quarter of 2023.

↑ **4.0%**
**Preparedness
Index**

Job seekers' self-confidence in their readiness for the job search process improved in the first quarter of 2023.

↑ **4.0%**
**Financial
Wellbeing
Index**

Job seekers reported experiencing less financial pressure and greater confidence that they would be able to find better-paying jobs.

↑ **4.4%**
**Present
Situation Index**

Job seekers' perceptions of current job market conditions improved significantly in the first quarter of 2023.

U.S. Job Seeker Confidence

The **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Index** increased 4.0% in 2023 Q1 from the prior quarter. With inflation easing somewhat in recent months and job openings remaining elevated, job seeker confidence has partially rebounded, but it remains 2.1% lower than a year ago.

3 Trends Reshaping the Labor Market

- 1. ChatGPT and artificial intelligence:** 62% of job seekers say they are concerned that ChatGPT and artificial intelligence could replace their jobs. Concern is highest among the youngest job seekers and those with the least education, but falls steadily with age and education. The share of job seekers worried about losing their jobs to ChatGPT rises from 41% among boomers to 76% among Gen Z, and from 52% among those with graduate or professional degrees to 72% of those without high school diplomas.
- 2. Pay transparency:** 41% of job seekers report that they are less inclined to apply for jobs when postings exclude pay information. When pay is listed, the width of the pay range specified can have mixed effects. 19% of job seekers say they are less likely to apply for a job when the posted pay range is wide (presumably because they find wide ranges less informative), whereas 21% say they are more likely to apply (presumably because they interpret wide ranges as signaling greater wage growth potential).
- 3. Pay equity:** 78% of men say they believe that men and women receive about the same pay at the organization where they currently work or most recently worked, but only 61% of women share that view. Similar shares of men and women (66% and 64%, respectively) believe that new pay transparency laws requiring employers to post salary information will help close remaining gender pay gaps.

Key Job Seeker Statistics for 2023 Q1

Layoff announcements may be dominating news headlines, but the labor market has not been flooded with laid-off job seekers, according to ZipRecruiter's quarterly Job Seeker Confidence survey. The share of job seekers who report being unemployed because they were laid off or fired has decreased to 16% in 2023 Q1 from 19% a year earlier, while the share who are searching while employed has increased to 52% from 45% over the year. This is significant because employed job seekers tend to face less financial pressure and have more bargaining power.

Nonetheless, job seekers express heightened concern about the risk of layoffs and hiring freezes, and that concern is affecting their labor market decisions in the following ways:

- 1. Job seekers are prioritizing job security over schedule flexibility and career advancement.** The share of job seekers who rank job security among the top three characteristics they are looking for in their next job increased to 36% in 2023 Q1, from 32% a year ago.
- 2. Job seekers increasingly want permanent, full-time opportunities.** The share of job seekers who report that they would prefer a full-time job increased to 66% in 2023 Q1 from 61% the same time last year.
- 3. Job search has become a permanent state of being.** Given uncertainty about the macroeconomic outlook, employed job seekers estimate that there is a 22% chance that they could be laid off in the next 6 months. Against that backdrop, 7 in 10 job seekers say they will continue to look for jobs even after they accept a new role, to keep their options open.

“Amid economic uncertainty, job seekers are playing it safe, increasingly prioritizing job security over career growth and cultivating fallback options, according to @ZipRecruiter's latest Job Seeker Confidence Survey.”

— Julia Pollak, ZipRecruiter Chief Economist

What Job Seekers Want

Top 5 Things Job Seekers Want in Their Next Job

- Better pay (52%)
- Job security (36%)
- Less stress (35%)
- Opportunities to learn new things (24%)
- Control over their schedules/flexibility (23%)

Top 5 Reasons Job Seekers Provide for Quitting Their Last Job

- Too much stress (41%)
- Not enough pay (34%)
- Wanting time for other things than work (18%)
- Inconvenient location (18%)
- Not getting along with colleagues (17%)

Top 5 Job Search Challenges

- Not finding relevant opportunities (41%)
- Never hearing back from employers (30%)
- Not getting interviews (29%)
- Being discouraged by time-consuming application processes (20%)
- Not knowing what I want (19%)

Top 5 Employment Barriers

- Being perceived as too old (26%)
- Lacking the right work experience (20%)
- Lacking the right education (19%)
- Being perceived as overqualified (18%)
- Lacking transportation (17%)

“While job seeker confidence remains elevated, the ground may be shifting beneath workers’ feet. After two years of record-setting hiring fueled by the post-Covid economic reopening, the demand for new hires shows signs of slowing. Job seekers in search of more job security and higher pay may find they need to broaden their job search and spend more time looking than was required a few months ago.”

— Ian Siegel, ZipRecruiter CEO

The Survey

The quarterly **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey** is based on an online sample and conducted for ZipRecruiter by Qualtrics. It is administered to 2,000+ job seekers between the 10th and 16th of the second month of each quarter and weighted to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Respondents may be employed, unemployed, or not currently in the labor force, but they must reside in the United States and plan to find a new job "in the next six months" in order to be included in the sample.

The ZipRecruiter Index

The overall **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Index** comprises four subindices:

- The **Preparedness Index** measures how confident job seekers feel about their job skills, education, and training, as well as about their job search skills—that is, their ability to find relevant positions, develop application materials, and interview effectively.
- The **Financial Wellbeing Index** measures job seekers' financial security—that is, whether they have peace of mind about their ability to meet their financial needs, or whether they are searching for work and negotiating job offers under financial pressure.
- The **Expectations Index** captures job seekers' short-term outlook for labor market conditions. It is based on questions about whether job seekers expect the number of available jobs to increase or decrease.
- The **Present Situation Index** is based on job seekers' assessment of current labor market conditions. It is based on questions about whether they expect to get interviews, find a job easily, and get the job they want, and how satisfied they are with their job search.

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