

PULSE ON AMERICA

Americans want business to find common ground on big issues, but avoid politics

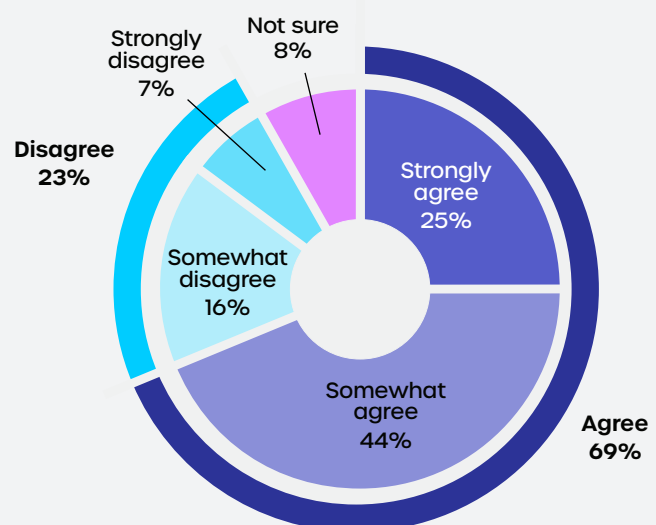
As the 2024 campaigns accelerate in the U.S. elections, The Weber Shandwick Collective—Weber Shandwick, Powell Tate and United Minds in partnership with KRC Research—surveyed American consumers and employees on the role of business in national elections. The findings shine a light on the shifting landscape of public opinion at the intersection of business and politics.

Most Americans—both consumers and employees—expect businesses to speak up about and act on critical societal issues, help bridge societal divisions and stand up for democratic principles. Yet they also expect businesses—including their employers—to maintain political neutrality in the workplace.

Seven out of 10 Americans see businesses as a constructive force for positive change. This is true across generations. More than other generations, Baby Boomers are more confident businesses are playing a positive role to solve challenges.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *Businesses are a constructive force for positive change.*

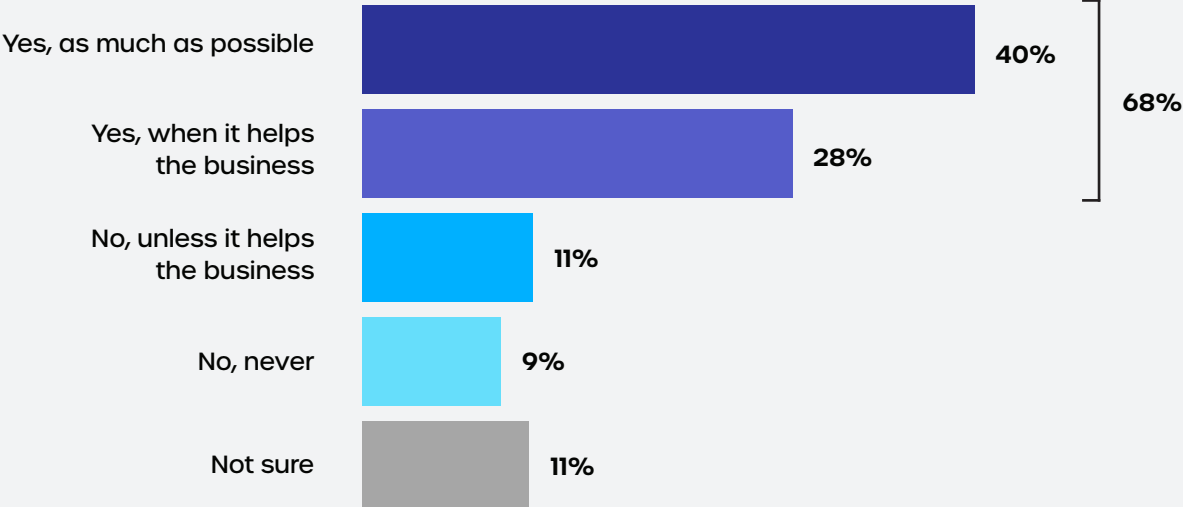
(Among U.S. adults)



Most consumers (68%) and employees (75% in general, 85% at the leadership level) think business should help find common ground to bridge societal divisions. Younger generations, in greater proportions than Gen X and Baby Boomers, want businesses to play a consensus role.

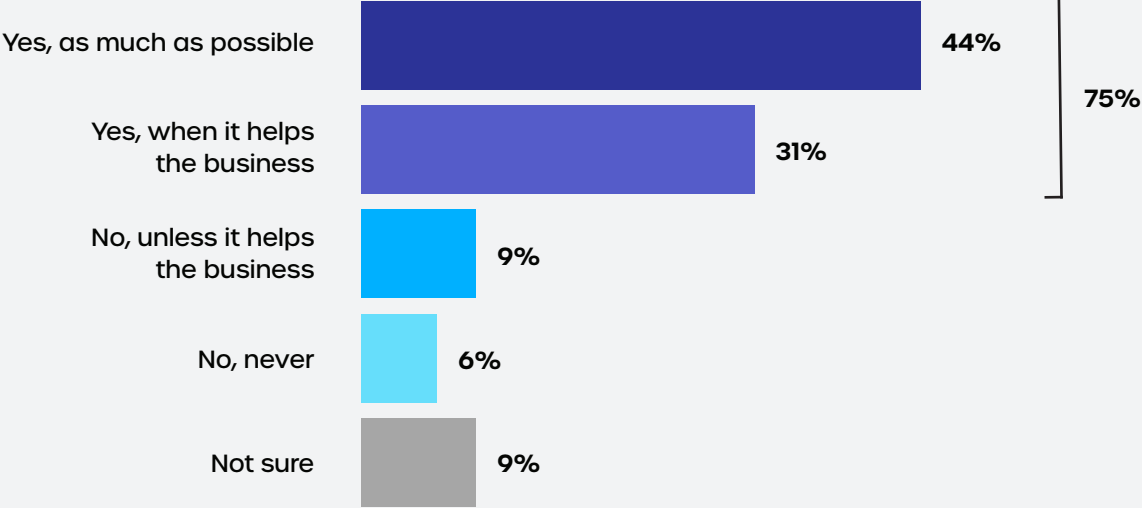
Should businesses help find common ground to bridge societal divisions?

(Consumers)



Should businesses help find common ground to bridge societal divisions?

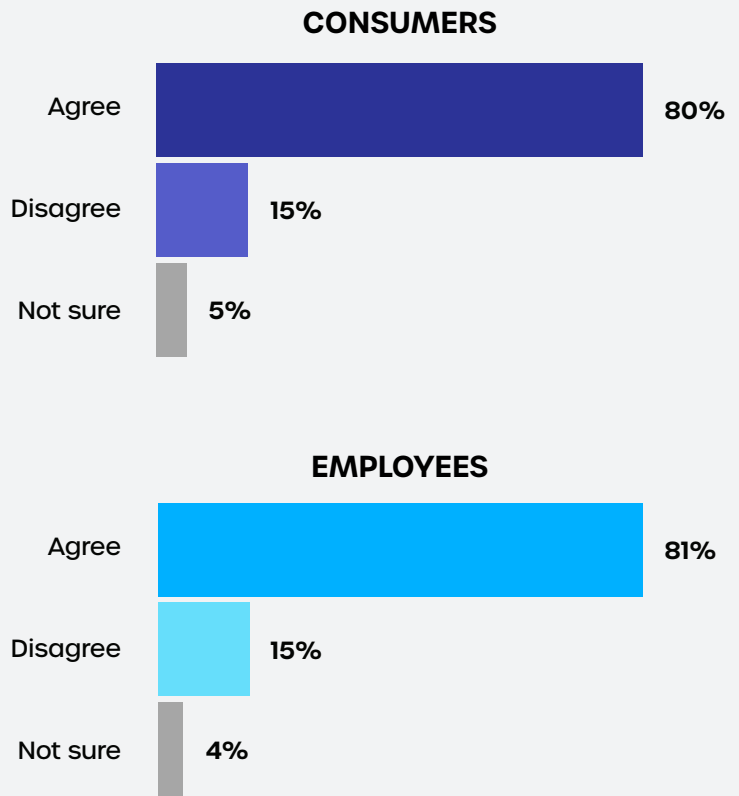
(Employees)



An overwhelming majority of Americans (71% of employees, 72% of consumers) think employers should keep the workplace politically neutral during this presidential election year.

Among employees, 81% agree that businesses should encourage a free and fair election - including voting integrity, voting rights, and a peaceful transfer of power.

Agree/disagree: American businesses should encourage a free and fair election, including voting integrity, voting rights, and a peaceful transfer of power.



Employees and consumers are supportive of business and workplace activities that encourage democratic participation. However, an overwhelming majority do not support employer engagement in explicitly political activities such as endorsing individual candidates or political parties.

Employers should... (most to least support)	Consumers %	Employees %
Keep the workplace politically neutral	72%	71%
Respect and welcome different employee political affiliations	70%	68%
Implement policies and guidelines for a civil workplace free from political tension and strife	69%	64%
Provide paid time off from work to vote	64%	63%
Avoid politics or the appearance of politics in the workplace	58%	56%
Encourage employees to be informed and participate in the election	56%	54%
Advocate for specific issues that affect the business	55%	56%
Provide voting resources, such as key dates	51%	53%
Provide PTO for employees to volunteer (for a campaign, to register voters, got out the vote, work the polls)	48%	51%
Partner with non-profit groups to promote civic engagement	46%	49%
Provide objective non-partisan information about issues	46%	47%
Provide guidelines about sharing candidate information and discussing the election at work	43%	42%
Lobby elected officials on issues that can help the business and organization	38%	40%
Provide guidelines for sharing political views in social media like LinkedIn	35%	40%
Host candidates in events to share their perspectives	29%	34%
Host election-related events, like town halls and debates	29%	28%
Make financial and in-kind donations to candidates	27%	33%
Sponsor events at the Democratic and Republican conventions	23%	26%
Endorse candidates	23%	25%

Method: KRC Research conducted a survey among 1,009 U.S. adults, 18 years of age and over, from February 9 to 12, 2024. The survey, conducted online, is demographically representative of the U.S. adult population. Approximately half the sample (532) are employed. The national survey is the 15th installment since March 2020.