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# AMERICA'S M

## What to watch

### It's all about jobs reports these days

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The stock market may seem to be cold, hard numbers: Earnings. Dividends. Debt. That's a lot of it.

But behind the numbers is the howling roar of human emotion, and much of that depends on how people are feeling about the economy. When people are confident that their lives will get better, they're more inclined to spend — and invest in the future. When they're not feeling confident, they are more inclined to curb spending and save their money.

Today, the Conference Board releases its Consumer Confidence index, a survey of how people feel about the current economy as well as its future prospects. The index rose to 92.4 in August, a new recovery high.

It wasn't all good news. Consumers' feelings on the current situation improved, but expectations for the future fell modestly. Economists expect a very slight rise in the overall index for September, to 92.5, says Bloomberg.

What's most likely to make you feel confident about your future? Your job, in most cases. If you're pretty sure you won't get laid off — or might even get a raise — then you're more inclined to buy a car or even a house. Otherwise, you make do with what you have.

And that's why Wall Street will be watching Thursday's release of new jobless claims for the week of Sept. 9.

Moody's analytics predicts 300,000 for that week, up from 293,000 the previous week. The other big number is Friday's employment report. Moody's forecasts 210,000 new jobs in September, vs. 142,000 in August.