

One-in-Five Employers to Hire Full-time, Permanent Staff in the Fourth Quarter, CareerBuilder and USA TODAY Survey Finds

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CHICAGO, Oct. 7 /PRNewswire/ -- Twenty-one percent of employers expect to add full-time, permanent employees in the fourth quarter, according to the latest survey from CareerBuilder and USA TODAY. The October to December period is the fourth consecutive quarter where at least one-in-five employers planned to increase headcount. The survey, which was conducted by Harris Interactive© from August 17 to September 2, 2010, included more than 2,400 hiring managers and human resource professionals and more than 3,100 workers across industries and company sizes.

Actual hiring consistently beat projected hiring for the last six quarters in the survey. Looking at 2010, 24 percent of employers reported adding full-time, permanent headcount in each quarter from January through September. Original projections for that period averaged 21 percent. If trends persist, the actual number of hires for the fourth quarter may prove to exceed projections.

"We have seen positive job creation trends throughout the year, where positions are opening across industries each month," said Matt Ferguson, CEO of CareerBuilder. "The return to pre-recession employment levels will take some time. Although the recession officially ended a year ago, we still have an economy burdened by debt. Employers are watchful and gradually augmenting their staffs with permanent and temporary hiring."

Hiring in Q3 2010

One-in-four employers (25 percent) reported they added full-time, permanent employees in the third quarter, up from 18 percent in the same period last year. This signifies three consecutive quarters of both sequential and year over year improvements in 2010. Twelve percent decreased headcount, down from 15 percent last year. Sixty-two percent reported no change in their number of full-time, permanent employees while one percent were undecided.

Hiring in Q4 2010

Twenty-one percent of employers plan to increase their full-time, permanent headcount in the fourth quarter while 10 percent expect to downsize staffs. Sixty-five percent anticipate no change while 4 percent are undecided. Looking at actual hiring for the fourth quarter in 2009, 20 percent of employers reported they had hired full-time, permanent staff while 13 percent decreased headcount.

Temporary Hiring

Hesitant to accelerate hiring to full capacity, employers are turning to interim solutions to support business needs. Thirty percent of employers reported they hired contract or temporary workers in the third quarter. Twenty-seven percent plan to do so in the fourth quarter. Nearly one-in-four hiring managers (24 percent) said they are planning to transition some contract or temporary staff into permanent employees.

The positions for which employers are most likely to hire contract or temporary staff in the last three months of 2010 include:

- IT - 27 percent
- Administrative - 25 percent
- Engineering - 12 percent
- Finance and Accounting - 12 percent
- Sales and Marketing - 10 percent
- Creative and Design - 9 percent

Hiring By Region

Similar to trends seen in the first half of the year, the Northeast and West are tracking above the national average for employers expecting to hire in the fourth quarter. Twenty-four percent of employers in the Northeast and 22 percent in the West plan to add full-time, permanent workers compared to 21 percent in the Midwest and 20 percent in the South.

In terms of staff reductions, the Northeast and Midwest tied for having the highest number of employers (10 percent) anticipating a decrease in headcount in the fourth quarter. The South and West came in slightly below at 9 percent.

Hiring By Company Size

Although small businesses continue to struggle with accessing credit needed to run and expand their operations, companies of all sizes plan to add staff by the end of the year. Twenty-six percent of employers with more than 250 employees plan to increase headcount in the fourth quarter followed by 24 percent of employers with 51 to 250 employees and 13 percent of employers with 50 or less employees.

Seven percent of employers with 1 to 50 employees plan to reduce their workforce in the fourth quarter compared to 8 percent of businesses with 51 to 250 employees and 12 percent with more than 250 employees.

Compensation in Q4 2010

Forty-one percent of employers anticipate no change in salary levels in the fourth quarter compared to the same period last year. Thirty-five percent expect there will be an average increase of 3 percent or less. Fourteen percent expect their average changes will be between 4 and 10 percent and 1 percent predict an increase of 11 percent or more. Five percent anticipate a decrease in salaries.

The Worker's Perspective

Looking back over 2010, half of full-time, employed workers said they are happier with their employment situation today than they were one year ago. The other half are not.

Contributing to the lack in job satisfaction that some workers are feeling is the inability to contribute at desired levels. Nearly three-in-ten workers (29 percent) reported feeling underemployed. Of these workers, 71 percent stated their skills and experience aren't being utilized to their full potential, 45 percent don't feel challenged and 30 percent stated they don't feel a sense of autonomy in their positions. Nineteen percent said they feel underemployed because they took a job during the recession that was lower than their previous position.

Twenty-seven percent of all workers reported they don't feel loyal to their current employer.

Note: Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by Harris Interactive© on behalf of CareerBuilder among 2,457 U.S. hiring managers and 3,125 U.S. workers (employed full-time; not self-employed; non-government) ages 18 and over between August 17 and September 2, 2010 (percentages for some questions are based on a subset, based on their responses to certain questions). With pure probability samples of 2,457 and 3,125 one could say with a 95 percent probability that the overall results have a sampling error of +/- 1.98 and +/-1.75 percentage points, respectively. Sampling error for data from sub-samples is higher and varies.

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