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Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Reveals Majority of U.S. Employers Holding Staff Steady for Q1 2009

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U.S. employers are proceeding with caution when considering hiring for Quarter 1 2009, according to the results of the latest Manpower Employment Outlook Survey conducted quarterly by Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN).

(Logo: NewsCom: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20060221/CGTU012LOGO>)

"A significant percentage -- 67% -- of employers plan to hold staff levels steady for the first quarter of 2009," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of Manpower Inc. "This may suggest that a majority of employers are carefully monitoring the uncertain economic environment prior to making any additional employment decisions."

Of the 31,800 employers surveyed, 16% anticipate an increase in their staff levels during Quarter 1 2009, while 13% expect a reduction in their payrolls, resulting in a Net Employment Outlook of 3%. Sixty-seven percent of employers surveyed expect no change and 5% are undecided about their January - March hiring plans. The percentage totals exceed 100% due to rounding.

"The large number of employers that plan to sit on the sidelines in terms of hiring suggests that while they may not be adding a lot of workers, they recognize that having available talent is critical to business success," said Jonas Prising, president of Manpower North America. "Employers who are smart are preparing now to be ready when the economy recovers."

New survey methodology

Effective with the Quarter 1 2009 results, an adjustment has been made in the methodology in the 46-year-old survey to make it more representative of the U.S. economy. The research was drawn from employers located in 200 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the U.S. and one MSA in Puerto Rico. The 13 industries in the survey follow the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), with Durable and Nondurable Goods Manufacturing reported separately. The national survey carries a margin of error of +/- 0.55%.

Most sectors show increased activity

The national survey data shows employers in eight of the 13 industry sectors surveyed will increase staff levels compared to three months ago. Employers in four sectors anticipate a decrease in hiring and those in one sector expect hiring to remain relatively stable.

Mining, Professional & Business Services, Wholesale & Retail Trade, Financial Activities, Education & Health Services, Leisure & Hospitality, Other Services and Government employers all anticipate increased hiring activity during the upcoming quarter. Employers in Construction, Durable and Nondurable Goods Manufacturing and Transportation & Utilities anticipate a decline in hiring, and Information employers will keep hiring levels relatively stable for the first quarter.

Employers in the Midwest and South anticipate the strongest hiring outlook, while the Northeast is slightly less optimistic. Employers in the West are the least optimistic about hiring plans for the upcoming quarter.

Note to Readers

The complete results and visuals from the U.S. Manpower Employment Outlook Survey are available for viewing and download at <http://www.us.manpower.com/meos>. There you will also find the survey results for the 201 MSAs.

About the Survey

Employment services company Manpower Inc. releases the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey quarterly to measure employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the only forward-looking survey of its kind, unparalleled in size, scope, longevity and area of focus.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey's United States results are based on interviews with 31,800 employers located within 200 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), as defined by the federal government, and one MSA in Puerto Rico. The mix of U.S. industries within the survey follows the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Supersectors and is structured to be representative of the U.S. economy. Visit <http://www.us.manpower.com/meos>.

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