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U.S. Employers Foresee Subdued Hiring Activity in Q2 2009, According to Manpower Employment Outlook Survey

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MILWAUKEE, March 10, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- U.S. employers are projecting a considerably slower hiring pace for Quarter 2 2009, according to the seasonally adjusted results of the latest Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, conducted quarterly by Manpower Inc.

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

"A significant number of employers surveyed anticipate 'no change' in their employment intentions for the upcoming quarter," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman and CEO of Manpower Inc. "This tells us that in this difficult economic environment, employers are attempting to manage the tension between generating a profit and maintaining their workforce infrastructure."

Of the 31,800 employers surveyed, 15 percent anticipate an increase in their staff levels during Quarter 2 2009, while 14 percent expect a decrease in their payrolls. Sixty-seven percent of employers surveyed expect no change in their April - June hiring plans. Another 4 percent are undecided about their hiring intentions for Quarter 2 2009.

"We know that companies are having great difficulty forecasting consumer demand right now and that's a key impediment to hiring," said Jonas Prising, Manpower president, the Americas. "It's like trying to make out the image in a stained glass window with no light behind it - it's tough - so employers anticipate running lean until there's more light."

The national survey data shows employers in a majority of the industry sectors surveyed anticipate decreasing their payrolls compared to three months ago. Employers in Mining, Durable and Nondurable Goods Manufacturing, Wholesale & Retail Trade, Information, Financial Activities, Professional & Business Services, Education & Health Services, Other Services and Government anticipate a decline in hiring, while Transportation & Utilities employers plan to keep hiring levels relatively stable for the second quarter. Construction and Leisure & Hospitality employers anticipate increased hiring activity as compared to the first quarter. Though, despite the increase in Construction, employers in this industry sector still report a negative Net Employment Outlook.

Each of the four U.S. regions surveyed expects weaker employment Outlooks compared to last quarter and last year, according to the seasonally adjusted data. Hiring in the Northeast is expected to be the strongest, while employers in the Midwest and West are less optimistic. Employers in the South, who reported the strongest hiring Outlook in Quarter 1 2009, anticipate the weakest hiring pace in Quarter 2 2009.

New survey methodology

Effective with the Quarter 1 2009 results released in December, an adjustment was made in the methodology of the 46-year-old survey to make it more representative of the U.S. economy. The research is 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) Supersectors, with Durable and Nondurable Goods Manufacturing reported separately. Finally, the sample size was increased to 31,800 employers from a previously collected 14,000.

Note to Readers

The complete results and visuals from the U.S. National Manpower Employment Outlook Survey are available for viewing and downloading 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. The national survey carries a margin of error of +/- 0.55%. Visit <http://www.us.manpower.com/meos>.

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