



ManpowerGroup™

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## **Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Finds that U.S. Employers Plan to Stay the Course with Steady Hiring During Final Months of 2006**

MILWAUKEE, Sept 12, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- U.S. employers expect to close out 2006 the same way it began - with steady hiring plans - 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> )

"Eleven quarters of consistent survey results show that the job market in the U.S. is not prone to radical swings at this stage. Even the economic pressures of 2006, such as rising interest rates, energy costs and inflation, were not enough to rattle employer confidence. Employers are also experiencing difficulty in finding skilled people, which is contributing to the moderate hiring plans," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman & CEO of Manpower Inc.

Of the 14,000 U.S. employers surveyed, 28% expect to add to their payrolls during the fourth quarter of 2006, while 8% expect to reduce staff levels. Fifty-eight percent expect no change in the hiring pace, while 6% are undecided about their hiring plans for September - December.

Hiring activity in seven of the 10 industry sectors surveyed is expected to remain relatively consistent with third quarter projections, according to seasonally adjusted data. Those sectors include Construction, Durable and Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing, Transportation/Public Utilities, Wholesale/Retail Trade, Services and Public Administration.

Employment prospects are expected to improve in the Mining sector, with employers regaining confidence after a considerable dip in the third quarter. The hiring pace is edging down in the Finance/Insurance/Real Estate and Education sectors.

"A look at employer confidence levels within the 10 industry sectors surveyed is another indicator that more of the same job market stability is on the horizon. Certain industries are reporting minor shifts in hiring plans, but there are no red flags indicating that dramatic changes will occur in the next three months. Job seekers looking to line up work by year-end aren't likely to encounter any surprises," said Jonas Prising, President of Manpower North America.

The hiring outlook for the four U.S. regions is relatively consistent with what employers reported in the third quarter in the Midwest, South and West. Looking toward year-end, employers in the Northeast are slightly less optimistic about the job market than they were during the third quarter. Those looking for work are likely to find the strongest job prospects in the West, and the weakest hiring market in the Midwest.

In addition to the United States, the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted in 25 other countries and territories. The quarterly report from Manpower Inc. is the most extensive, forward-looking employment survey in the world, gathering data from more than 49,000 employers across the globe each quarter.

Employers in most major labor markets expect to hire in the fourth quarter at a pace equal to, or stronger than, the same period last year, casting a bit of doubt on popular public sentiment of gloomy days ahead.

"U.S. employers are telling us they will continue to hire through year-end at the same solid pace seen over the past 10 quarters, despite the wariness that we are hearing elsewhere about the economy," said Joerres. "We are not seeing the typical softening of the labor markets in Europe that we normally see in the fourth quarter. In Germany and Italy, employers are notably more optimistic about adding employees in the fourth quarter than they have been for quite some time."

Survey findings show the strongest fourth-quarter hiring prospects globally are expected in Peru, India, Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia. Employers in Austria, Australia, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Italy, Germany and Singapore are reporting their most optimistic hiring plans since the survey began in these countries and territories.

Overall, the employment outlook is positive across the Asia Pacific region where the most robust fourth-quarter hiring activity is anticipated in India, Singapore and Hong Kong. Compared to this time last year, job prospects have improved in seven of eight

Asia Pacific countries and territories, with employers in Australia, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore reporting their most optimistic hiring outlooks since the survey began in these countries in 2003.

Of the 13 countries surveyed in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, employment expectations are strongest in South Africa, Ireland, Norway, Austria and Sweden. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2005, the employment picture has improved in nine countries and weakened in just two, Spain and France, with the latter reporting the weakest hiring expectations in the region and globally. Conversely, employers in Austria, Italy and Germany reported their most optimistic hiring plans since the surveys began in these countries in 2003.

In the Americas, employers are reporting strong, stable outlooks with the most optimistic hiring plans found among Peruvian employers, who are likely encouraged by the business-friendly reforms promised by a newly elected government. Canadian employers anticipate the strongest hiring activity in six years and Mexican employer optimism equals that of its northern neighbors.

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on December 12, 2006, to report hiring expectations for the first quarter of 2007.

#### About the Survey

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted 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 its size, scope, longevity and area of focus. The Survey has been running for more than 40 years and is one of the most trusted surveys of employment activity in the world. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on interviews with more than 49,000 public and private employers worldwide and is considered a highly respected economic indicator.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is currently available for 26 countries and territories: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States. The program began in the United States and Canada in 1962, and the United Kingdom was added in 1966. Mexico and Ireland launched the survey in 2002, and 13 additional countries were added to the program in 2003. New Zealand joined the program in 2004, China, India, Switzerland and Taiwan were added in 2005, and Peru Costa Rica and South Africa joined in 2006. For more information, visit the Manpower Inc. Web site at <http://www.manpower.com> and enter the Research Center.

#### About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry; creating and delivering services that enable its clients to win in the changing world of work. The \$16 billion company offers employers a range of services for the entire employment and business cycle including permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee assessment and selection; training; outplacement; outsourcing and consulting. Manpower's worldwide network of 4,400 offices in 72 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of its 400,000 clients per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction across their total workforce, enabling clients to concentrate on their core business activities. Manpower Inc. operates under five brands: Manpower, Manpower Professional, Elan, Jefferson Wells and Right Management. More information on Manpower Inc. is available at <http://www.manpower.com> and <http://www.us.manpower.com>.

#### SOURCE Manpower Inc.

Mary Ann Campbell of Manpower Inc., +1-414-906-7320, or  
[maryann.campbell@na.manpower.com](mailto:maryann.campbell@na.manpower.com)

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