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Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Projects Continued Momentum in U.S. Hiring Intentions

Employers Maintain Upward Trend in Hiring Confidence with Q1 2013 Survey Results

MILWAUKEE (December 11, 2012) – Optimism among U.S. hiring decision makers continues to improve as a slightly increased hiring pace is expected for Quarter 1 2013, according to the latest [Manpower Employment Outlook Survey](#) released today by ManpowerGroup. When seasonal variations are removed from the data, the Net Employment Outlook for Quarter 1 2013 is +12%, a 1 percentage point increase from Quarter 4 2012 and slightly elevated from +9% during the same period last year.

This quarter's research concludes:

- **Strongest First Quarter Outlook in Five Years:** The Quarter 1 2013 Net Employment Outlook is the strongest first quarter data collected since 2008, and is significantly stronger than the weakest first quarter Outlook in the history of the survey, reported in 2010.
- **Improvement in Retail Sector:** Nationally, the Wholesale & Retail Trade industry sector anticipates an increase in hiring in Quarter 1 2013. Typically, there is a decline in hiring plans at the start of a new year.
- **Positive Trend in Northeast and West:** Employers in the Northeast and West anticipate increases in hiring in Quarter 1 2013. Compared to this time last year, employers in the Northeast indicate a 4 percentage point increase, while employers in the West expect to increase hiring by 7 percentage points.

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To complement the Quarter 1 2013 survey results, an infographic is available for download at <http://press.manpower.com/>. "Where the Jobs Are" offers a snapshot of data and trends from the survey, including key state and metro area-specific Outlooks along with an industry forecast.

"The Outlook has shown no setbacks over the last 15 quarters, which reflects an ongoing state of rebuilding as employers learn to function within a state of volatility," said Jonas Prising, ManpowerGroup president. "Over the past few years, we have seen continued incremental growth in hiring projections, which reinforces this job growth is slow but sustained."

Of the more than 18,000 employers surveyed, 17 percent expect to add to their workforces in Quarter 1 2013, while 8 percent expect a decrease in payrolls, resulting in a Net Employment Outlook of +9%. When seasonally adjusted, the Net Employment Outlook becomes +12%. Seventy-two percent of employers expect no change in their hiring plans. The final 3 percent of employers indicate they are undecided about their hiring intentions.

"Historically, the trend has been for Wholesale & Retail Trade employers to tighten up staff counts after the holiday rush," said Prising. "This quarter, we're actually seeing plans to increase hiring, which is notable and reflects a boost in consumer confidence."

Hiring Outlooks for Industry Sectors and Regions

For Quarter 1 2013, employers have a positive Outlook in 12 of the 13 industry sectors included in the survey: Wholesale & Retail Trade (+17%), Leisure & Hospitality (+14%), Professional & Business Services (+13%), Information (+12%), Financial Activities (+11%), Education & Health Services (+8%), Government (+8%), Mining (+7%), Other Services (+7%), Durable Goods Manufacturing (+5%), Nondurable Goods Manufacturing (+5%) and Transportation & Utilities (+4%). Employers in one industry sector have a negative Outlook: Construction (-2%). When the industry sector data is compared quarter-over-quarter, employers in the Information, Other Services and Government sectors anticipate a slight hiring increase. Staff levels are expected to remain relatively stable among employers in seven industry sectors: Nondurable Goods Manufacturing, Transportation & Utilities, Wholesale & Retail Trade, Financial Activities, Professional & Business Services, Education & Health Services and Leisure & Hospitality. The Mining, Construction and Durable Goods Manufacturing sectors anticipate a slight decrease in the hiring pace.

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A positive Net Employment Outlook is reported in all four U.S. regions. When seasonal variations are removed from the data, quarter-over-quarter plans to add employees remain essentially unchanged among employers in the Midwest and South, while employers in the Northeast and West expect hiring to slightly increase. Compared to one year ago at this time, employers in the Midwest expect a relatively stable hiring environment, employers in the Northeast and South project a slight increase in hiring and employers in the West expect a moderate increase in the hiring pace for Quarter 1 2013.

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on March 12, 2013, to report hiring expectations for the second quarter of 2013. To receive e-mail notification when the survey is available each quarter, visit <http://press.manpower.com/signup>.

Editors Notes

Hurricane Sandy: The Quarter 1 2013 Manpower Employment Outlook Survey was conducted prior to Hurricane Sandy. Therefore, the data does not reflect the storm's impact on anticipated hiring decisions.

Net Employment Outlook: The Net Employment Outlook, often shortened to simply Outlook or NEO, is derived by taking the percentage of employers anticipating an increase in hiring activity and subtracting from this the percentage of employers expecting a decrease in hiring activity.

About the Survey

ManpowerGroup's quarterly Manpower Employment Outlook Survey measures 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 is conducted using a validated methodology in accordance with the highest standards in market research. In the U.S., the survey is conducted by an independent, third-party research firm and includes a select sample of more than 18,000 U.S. employers. This sample represents the top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas based on business establishment count and all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The mix of industries within the survey follows the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Supersectors and is structured to be representative of the U.S. economy. With this number of interviews, the overall U.S. survey carries a margin of error of +/-0.61%, with a 90% confidence index.

The complete results from the U.S. national Manpower Employment Outlook Survey are available for download at press.manpower.com, where you will also find the survey results for the 100 MSAs, 50 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico.

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