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Spherion Employee Confidence Index Drops 1.6 Points in December



-1.6

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., January 9, 2009 - The Spherion Employee Confidence Index reached a new survey low in December, decreasing 1.6 points to 40.4. The Index, which measures workers' confidence in their personal employment situation and optimism in the economic environment, reveals that more workers are concerned about the economy, job market, and in their ability to find a new job. In addition, fewer workers are likely to look for a new job in the next year, with 33 percent reporting a likelihood of doing so compared to 35 percent in November.


"The depth of the economic situation became much clearer in December as major unemployment, higher jobless claims and declining consumer confidence made headlines. As a result of the decreases seen in consumer and corporate spending, many employers have been forced to make payroll cuts going into 2009, leading to an understandable drop in employee confidence this month," said Roy Krause, president and CEO of Spherion Corporation. "Uncertainty is to be expected as we enter the New Year, but with the promise of a new administration and proposed stimulus plans on the horizon, the outlook is more encouraging. We continue to hear from employers that they need highly qualified talent to fill critical roles and workers should be reassured that, while not in the same abundance, opportunities still exist. Job seekers need to remain flexible and open to positions in industries that are projected to sustain growth, such as healthcare, education, accounting and green energy."

A Look Inside the Report:


Confidence in Overall Situation: ↓

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Confidence in Macroeconomic Environment: 

- Five percent of workers believe the economy is getting stronger, up one percentage point from November. At the same time, 75 percent believe the economy is getting weaker, compared to 73 percent in November.
- Seventy-eight percent of U.S. adult workers believe there are fewer jobs available, an increase of four percentage points from the previous month.

Confidence in Personal Employment Situation: 

- Sixty-six percent of U.S. adult workers feel confident in the future of their current employer, unchanged from November.
- The percentage of U.S. adult workers confident in their ability to find a new job decreased four percentage points to 39 percent in December.

Job Security: 

- Seventy-two percent of U.S. workers say it is unlikely they will lose their jobs in the next year, down three percentage points from November.

Job Transition: 

- Thirty-three percent of workers are likely to look for a new job in the next year, a decrease of two percentage points from the previous month.

Confidence by Gender:

- The percentage of female workers reporting that the economy is getting weaker remained unchanged at 77 percent, while the percentage of males believing this increased by four percentage points to 73 percent in December.
- Male and female workers' confidence in their ability to find a new job each dropped four percentage points in December to 44 percent and 33 percent respectively.
- Male and female workers report that they are similarly likely to look for a new job in the next 12 months, with 33 percent of both groups reporting a likelihood of doing so, both down from 35 percent in November.

Confidence by Age:

- Workers over 45 years old are the least confident about the strength of the economy, with 78 percent of workers between the ages of 45-54 and 80 percent of workers over 55 years old reporting that the economy is getting weaker.
- Seventy-three percent of workers over 55 years old are confident in the future of their current employer, the highest percentage across all age groups in December. Eighty-two percent of workers in this age bracket also believe that fewer jobs are available.
- Despite a four percentage point drop from November, workers age 18-34 are still the most likely to look for a new job in the next year, with 45 percent reporting that they are likely to do so.

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Confidence by Income:

- Thirty-nine percent of workers earning between \$35K and \$49.9K expressed confidence in their ability to find a new job, compared to 45 percent of workers earning \$75K and over.
- Only 48 percent of workers earning less than \$15K expressed confidence in the future of their current employer, compared to 72 percent of workers earning \$75K and over.
- Fifty-two percent of those with incomes less than \$15K are likely to look for a new job in the next year, compared to 28 percent of those with incomes of \$75K and over.

[View full results for December and ECI Index Archive](#)

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[Methodology](#)

[About Harris Interactive](#)

About Spherion

Spherion Corporation (NYSE: SFN) is a leading recruiting and staffing company that provides integrated solutions to meet the evolving needs of companies and job candidates. As an industry pioneer for more than 60 years, Spherion has sourced, screened and placed millions of individuals in temporary, temp-to-hire and full-time jobs.

With approximately 700 locations in the United States and Canada, Spherion delivers innovative workforce solutions that improve business performance. Spherion provides its services to more than 8,000 customers, from Fortune 500 companies to a wide range of small and mid-size organizations. Employing more than 300,000 people annually through its network, Spherion is one of North America's largest employers. Spherion operates under the following brands: Spherion Staffing Services Group for administrative, clerical and light industrial workers; Technisource for technology professionals and solutions; The Mergis Group for accounting and finance and other professional positions; Today's Office Professionals for specialty administrative personnel; and Spherion Recruitment Process Outsourcing. To learn more, visit www.spherion.com.

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