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Accounting and Finance Workers' Overall Confidence Weakens According to Mergis Group Survey



FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., January 22, 2009 — The Accounting and Finance Employee Confidence Index, a measure of overall confidence among U.S. accounting and finance workers, decreased 5.9 points to 42.6 in the fourth quarter of 2008, reaching an all-time low, according to a recent survey commissioned by The Mergis Group® and conducted by Harris Interactive®. The survey uncovers rising pessimism about the economy among accounting and finance workers, specifically about job availability and the overall stability of the economy.

Results from the Accounting & Finance Employment Report:

- Seventy-six percent of accounting and finance workers believe the economy is getting weaker, an increase of 12 percentage points from the third quarter of 2008.
- In the fourth quarter, nearly three-fourths (74 percent) of accounting and finance workers report that they believe fewer jobs are available, reflecting a 19 percentage point increase.
- More than half (54 percent) of accounting and finance workers surveyed indicate that they are unlikely to look for a new job in the next 12 months, an increase of six percentage points from previous quarter.

“As we close out the books for 2008 and take a moment to let the ink dry, we are all likely to reflect on the financial events of the year as a whole,” stated Brendan Courtney, senior vice president and group executive for The Mergis Group. “Economic uncertainty, ongoing market fluctuation and job security are likely a few of the top concerns of 2008, especially for those within the accounting and finance sector. As expected, these concerns have made an impact on the Accounting & Finance Confidence Index, which now stands at a historic low. However, as we begin to shift gears and focus on the year ahead of us, we remain optimistic about some bright spots within the industry. We are anticipating a spike in demand for interim finance executives, as businesses are actively searching for the right kind of financial expertise to help them navigate through the economic downturn. We are also forecasting activity in 2009 in verticals impacted by Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) and the government bailout initiatives in industries such as financial services, credit collections and legal. Finance and accounting job seekers who look to current areas of opportunity are likely to be in a better position to weather today’s economic environment.”

Full Report: <http://www.spherion.com/pressroom/index.php?s=43&item=711>

(more)

[About the Spherion Employment Report](#)

[Methodology](#)

[About Harris Interactive](#)

About The Mergis Group

The Mergis Group is a leading professional placement firm that specializes in recruiting for positions in finance and accounting, engineering and manufacturing, sales and marketing, legal and human resources. The firm provides recruiting services to Fortune 500 and small and mid-sized companies through its network of 36 offices nationally.

The Mergis Group is a division of Spherion Corporation (NYSE:SFN). For more information, please visit www.mergisgroup.com.

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