

Glimmer of Hope for Small Business Employment?

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CBIZ Small Business Employment Index Turns Positive for First Time in Four Months

CLEVELAND, Nov 04, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

The U.S. Dept. of Labor tells us that small businesses pay 44 percent of total U.S. private payroll and have generated 65 percent of net new jobs over the past 17 years. Thus, the small business has long been touted as the job creation engine of our country.

The October CBIZ Small Business Employment Index, designed to serve as a barometer for hiring trends among companies with 300 or fewer employees, offers a glimmer of hope for the job market as the index has turned positive for the first time in four months. October data showed a swing of 1.75 percent, with employee headcount growth of 0.73 percent, after posting declines of 1.02 percent and 1.01 percent in the two previous months.

Philip Noftinger, business unit president for CBIZ Payroll Services offers, "Job growth is still too modest to offer real, clear visibility for us to project future increases in hiring. Nonetheless it is a small sign of hope with the economy. It remains to be seen how the election's results will impact small business owners' confidence in adding to payroll in the future."

Additional take-away points from the October data include:

- **Hiring is picking up, but barely:** In October, 25.3 percent of the 3,082 firms surveyed indicated that they added to payroll versus 23.4 percent that did so in the month prior.
- **More companies choosing to sit tight:** Of the 3,082 companies included in the survey in October, 50.6 percent made no changes to their employee headcount up modestly from the 49.5 percent that held steady in September. Anticipating potential changes in economic and tax policy after this week's elections may have restrained hiring despite improving business conditions.
- **What to watch:** The aftermath of the election and how the newly minted Congressional representatives and senators approach economic and tax policy could sway future hiring decisions by these smaller businesses.

Noftinger adds, "Small businesses are a microcosm for our larger economy and problems and solutions are often first discovered within this Petri dish. Despite the glimmers of hope we see, systemic economic structural challenges still need to be overcome. With limited credit available, weak consumer demand and healthcare costs conspiring to undermine the confidence of the small business owner, it's no wonder our employment survey has reflected limited hiring activity."

Currently, CBIZ Payroll Services manages payrolls for more than 3,000 businesses that employ fewer than 300 people. The sample reflects a broad array of industries and geographies corresponding to the markets across the United States where CBIZ provides services.

Noftinger is available for media interviews to discuss small to mid-market employment trends and other payroll matters impacting the American business environment.

(Editor's Note: The United States Department of Labor's "Employment Situation for October 2010" numbers are announced on November 5, 2010, at 8:30 a.m. ET. Also, a chart illustrating the trend lines is available for interested editorial outlets.)

About [CBIZ, Inc.](#) (NYSE:CBZ)

CBIZ, Inc. provides professional business services that help clients better manage their finances and employees. CBIZ provides its clients with financial services including accounting and tax, internal audit, merger and acquisition advisory, and valuation services. Employee services include group benefits, property and casualty insurance, retirement planning, payroll, HR consulting and wealth management. CBIZ also provides outsourced technology staffing support services, healthcare consulting and medical practice management. As one of the largest benefits specialists and one of the largest accounting, valuation and medical practice management companies in the United States, the Company's services are provided through more than 150 Company offices in 36 states.



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