

Employer Perspectives on Southeast Labor Market Conditions

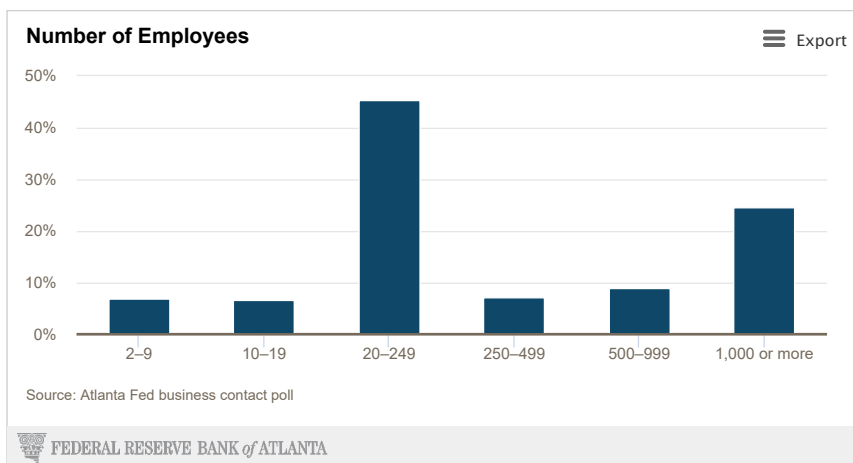
February 9, 2017



For some time now, employers across the Southeast have been reporting that they plan to increase staffing levels. However, they have said they continue to experience difficulties finding workers with the necessary skills. Businesses have also indicated that wage growth remains modest.

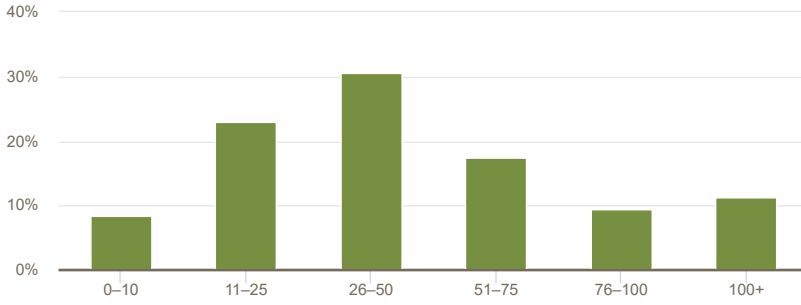
To better understand what is happening in our labor market, the Atlanta Fed conducted a poll of its business contacts from November 9 through November 16, asking firms across the Sixth District about their hiring plans, wage trends, and outlook for growth. We received more than 275 responses, representing a wide variety of firm types and sizes.

November 2016 Survey Participant Characteristics (click to view)



Age of Firm in Years

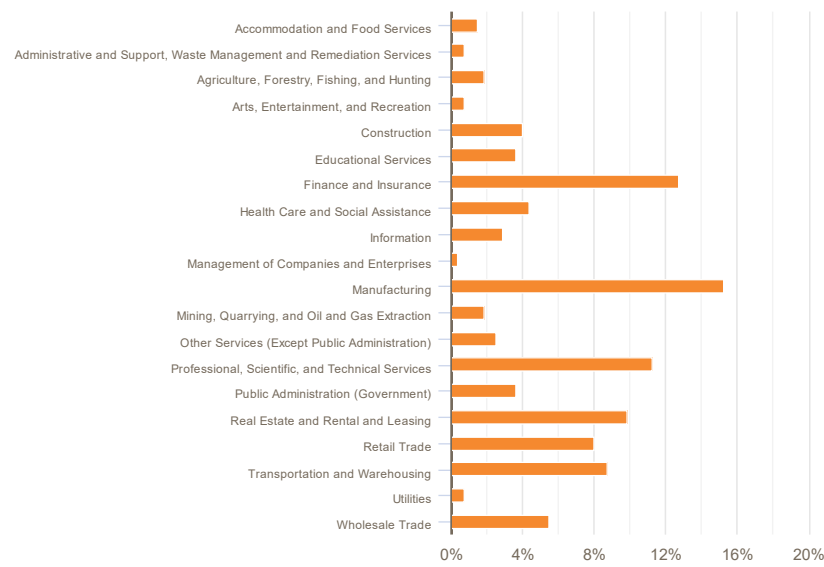
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Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll

Industry Breakdown

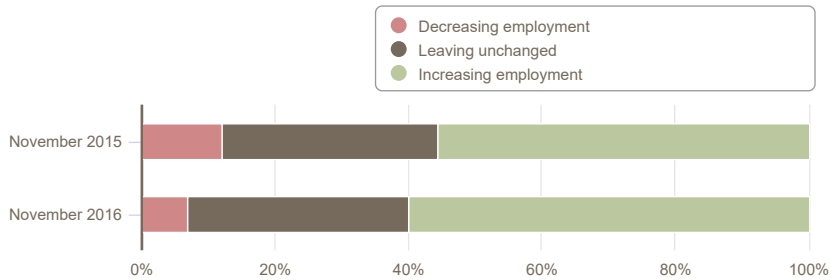
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Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll

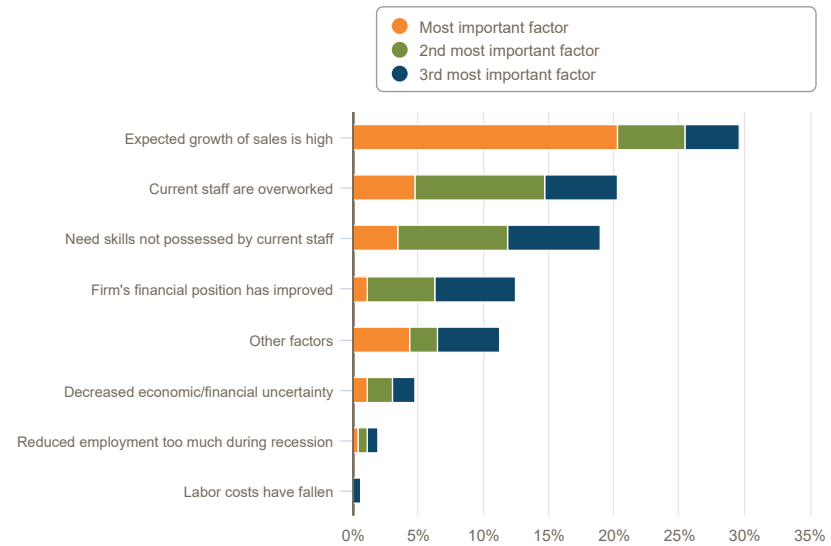
1. Nearly two-thirds of firms plan to increase employment levels, a bit stronger than last year.

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Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll

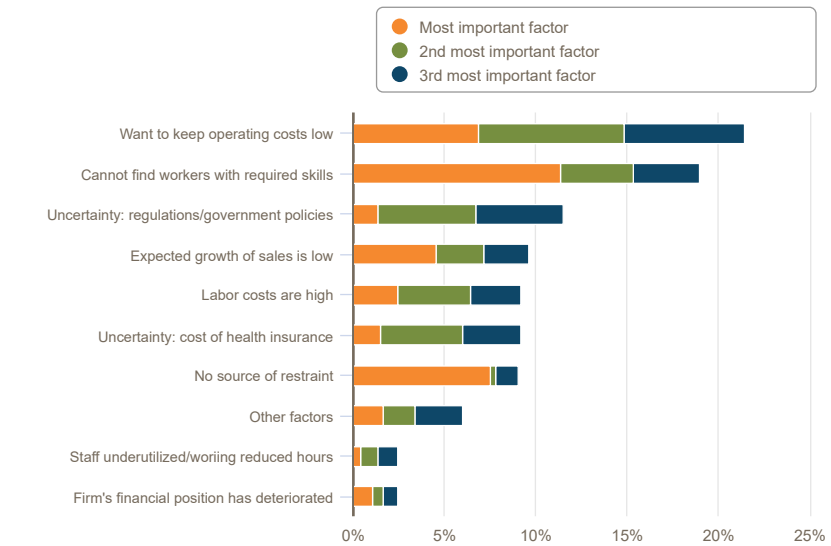
2. Among firms increasing employment, most indicated they were doing so because of strong sales expectations. ☰ Export



Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll



3. Firms indicated that their desire to keep operating costs low and the inability to find workers with required skills were restraints to hiring. ☰ Export

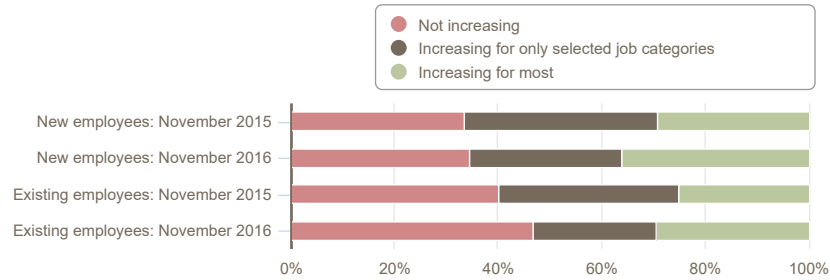


Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll



Several participants at our November [Human Capital Advisory Council](#) meeting said that it remains challenging to attract employees to the construction and energy sectors and also peak demand in the retail sector.

4. Increases in wages are a bit less prevalent than last year but more broad-based across the workforce. Export

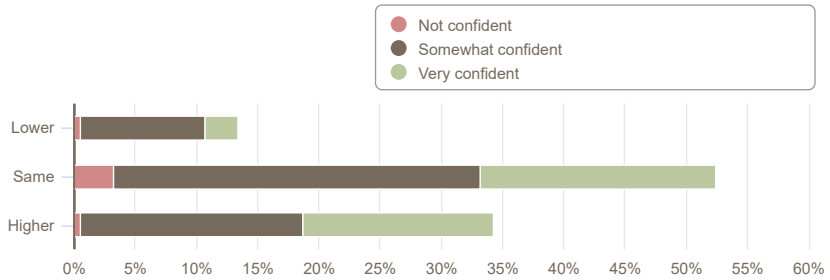


Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll



Interestingly, participants at our November [Human Capital Advisory Council](#) meeting noted that firms have become more competitive in an effort to retain and attract employees but quality of life and work environment, rather than compensation, seem to be the driving factor for many when making a decision.

5. Relatively few firms anticipate a near-term slowdown in their performance, and most are reasonably confident in their outlooks. Export



Source: Atlanta Fed business contact poll



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