

JOB OUTLOOK FOR 2012 IN SPOKANE



Pick a day on the calendar and it is like flipping a coin when it comes to the economy. One day the economy is picking up, the next day the economy is slumping. There are hundreds of unemployment data graphs and consumer reports that detail the economy. A new piece of research released recently claims that the city of Spokane tops the list for the worst hiring outlook in 2012. The survey released is from a Wisconsin company named ManpowerGroup. The survey says that Spokane can expect one of the weakest employment outlooks in the country for 2012. In Spokane, close to 12 percent of employers are planning to increase their staff numbers in 2012 while 16 percent of employers plan to lower their workforce. Those numbers keep increasing compared to other quarterly surveys released. One year ago, 10 percent of employers planned on decreasing their staff levels. Seventy-five percent of employers in 2010 said that they were going to maintain employment numbers for 2011. For 2012, 68 percent of employers are planning to maintain their employment levels. The net employment outlook for 2011 stayed even at 2 percent, but those numbers have also dropped recently. Spokane's net employment has been estimated at negative four percent for 2012. Spokane fell into a three-way tie for first place in the country. The other two cities were Fresno, California and Dayton, Ohio. Manpower, which is based in Spokane, claims that things are not as bad as they look right now. Christina Gross, from Manpower, said that job growth is usually slow after the holidays anyway. "It is a little bit bleaker than last year at this time, but when you take those seasonal jobs into account we feel like it is staying the same but we are seeing a little bit of hiring." The data released from the survey is acquired specifically for Spokane, even though Manpower collects numbers for over 18,000 employers from the 100 largest metro areas in the country. The interviews took place during the first two weeks of October. Across the country, close to 14 percent of employers are looking to increase their workforce while 9 percent are planning to lower their workforce for the first quarter. Close to 70 percent of employers are expecting to keep their staff levels at the same numbers as 2011. The remaining employers, about 7 percent, do not know what they are going to do with their staff levels in 2012. Manpower has said that people should begin looking for jobs in the construction, manufacturing-durable, manufacturing-nondurable and education & health services fields in 2012. Almost all of those industries are looking to increase their workforce numbers in 2012. There are two new companies coming to Spokane in 2012, with them hiring about 350 jobs. Caterpillar is moving to West Plains, hoping to hire close to 100 employees.

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