

GOOD NEWS ON JOB GROWTH FOR EARLY 2012



Everyone once and a while we get the chance to report some good news about the job in the current market. This Friday information provided by the federal government has shows that, at least for the time being, the worst is over for the American worker. Data shows that the pace of layoffs is slowing down. At least the layoffs that are related to the long-term economic downturn we have been experiencing. So the bottom line is that while people are being laid off still it is now officially less likely to be due to the recession. That is not to say that finding a job will be a walk in the park, but it will at least reduce the number of the people who are out in search of a job and hopefully ease some of the pressure on throngs of job seekers applying for each and every position. The statistics release by the US Department of Labor's offices show that the growth of new jobs was about 227,000 workers on the whole, which is good news since they are no longer collecting unemployment insurance. In addition there was also good news for the unemployment rate. The rate held steady at about 8.3 percent. While 8.3 percent may not sound good, it is actually a three-year low for the economy. The report is also a little bit of a landmark. For the first time in months, the early months of 2011 actually, the number of workers returning to the workforce has actually grown by more than 200,000 for the last three-month in a row. As a matter of fact when you look at the combined numbers for January and December last you will see that a grand total of 61,000 new jobs were added to the economy. Of course, all of the experts are weighing in on those numbers and what they will really mean for the average worker in the US. A [reporter over at MSNBC's Economy Watch](#) talked to two different workers and got two very different thoughts on the matter. The first was Mark Zandi, who is the chief economist at Moody's Analytics, he has an optimistic take on the numbers, "All the good numbers that we're getting are largely because of a reduction in the number of layoffs. We really have not yet seen a significant pick-up in hiring; the level of hiring is still very, very low. As soon as businesses starts to engage in hiring in a more normal way, I really think we can start getting monthly job numbers of 300,000 or 350,000." A more pessimistic view of the numbers was expressed to [the same reporter](#) by Alan Levenson, the chief economist at T. Rowe Price, "Maybe we're starting a new trend, but I've seen this movie before. Just a year ago we had some strong employment gains at the turn of the year, then a pullback in the spring. It's tempting to lean toward the notion we're ramping up to faster job growth and staying there. But again, just look at a chart of job growth in the second half of 2010 and into the early months of last year, and then see how we dropped off very sharply in the spring." Who will be right? Only time will tell.