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New York, NY – As the unemployment rate continues to rise due to economic recession, a new Ipsos Public Affairs poll conducted on behalf of SnagAJob.com has revealed that summer jobs for students might be hard to come by this year as nearly one half (46%) of hourly hiring managers with responsibility to recruit summer employees indicate that they will not be hiring this summer.

Among those who won't be hiring, the most common reasons include that their existing staff will take on the additional hours instead (37%), that their business levels have been down (27%), that they do not have the budget for it (25%), that the company is under a hiring freeze (14%), that they anticipate their business levels to decrease by the summer (12%), or that their business has already laid off workers (9%).

Further, nearly one quarter of hiring managers (23%) say they will be hiring fewer seasonal employees this summer, while one quarter (25%) will hire the same number of employees. Just 6% will expand their seasonal workforce this year over last.

Among those hiring managers who intend to reduce the number of seasonal hires this year, 37% intend to cut it by 1-10%, while 27% will cut their hiring by 10-25%, and 21% will cut their hiring by 25-50% over last year. Two in ten (16%) will reduce their seasonal hiring by more than 50% compared to last year.

So while there will likely be fewer openings for summer jobs this year, three quarters (73%) of hiring managers expect there will be more applicants than last year, compared to 23% who believe the proportion will be the same and 4% who think there will be fewer applicants this year than last.

In terms of which group represents the biggest competition for students trying to get an entry-level job this summer, most (54%). believe that this competition will come from other students. However, three in ten (29%) believe this competition will come from workers who have recently entered the workforce because of economic pressures, up 9 points from last year. And for those who are looking for a summer job for the first time, they will be competing against those with more experience, as managers estimate that 65% of their seasonal staff will be returning from a previous season.

And what are hiring managers looking for in their seasonal employees? Four in ten (39%) most want a positive attitude and eagerness to have the job (39%), while three in ten (27%) are most looking for someone who has the ability to work the daily schedule they need. Others are looking for previous experience in the industry, with the company or that particular location (25%), while 12% most want the commitment to work for the entire summer and not to quit early.

Survey results suggest that the time has come to start the job hunt as most managers who plan to hire say they will be doing so in the coming months of April (24%) and May (31%). Others have started in March (7%) or report that those positions are already filled (12%). Some will wait until June (13%) or even July (2%), and 11% will continue hiring throughout the summer because they need to account for turnover. Hiring managers also expect to pay these workers on average $10.20, up 40 cents from the average amount reported in last year's survey.

Survey of Americans Aged 16-22 Finds that Half (53%) Will Be Looking for Summer Job …

In a separate survey of more than 500 Americans aged 16-22, a majority (53%) of youth say they plan on looking for a job this summer. One in ten (11%) say they will not, while a similar proportion (10%) plan to wait closer to the summer to make a decision. One quarter (26%) say they already have a job, and so they won't be hunting.

Most (72%) believe their biggest competition will be from other high school or college students who are also looking for a job, but two in ten (20%) believe that the biggest challenge will come from workers who have recently entered the workforce because of economic pressures (20%), or from immigrants who have recently entered the workforce (8%).

These are some of the findings of two Ipsos polls:

The hiring manager survey was conducted online from February 20-25, 2009. For the survey, a national sample of 1,043 hiring managers were interviewed, among whom 564 said they would be hiring seasonal staff this summer.

The youth survey was conducted online from February 25 – March 2, 2009. For the survey, a nationally representative sample of 505 youths between the ages of 16 and 22 inclusive were interviewed. The results of this poll are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual American population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls, however, an unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had the entire population aged 16-22 in America been polled.

The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/gender composition reflects that of the actual U.S. population according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

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