



ManpowerGroup™

June 15, 2004

## **Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Reveals Continued Optimism in U.S. Hiring Through 3rd Quarter, Marking Vast Improvement in Employer Confidence From a Year Ago**

MILWAUKEE, Jun 15, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- U.S. employers continue to show optimism in their hiring plans moving into the third quarter, according to the latest Manpower Employment Outlook Survey, conducted quarterly by Manpower Inc.

Of the 16,000 U.S. employers that were surveyed, 30% expect to add to their payrolls in the third quarter, while 6% predict a decline in staff levels. Fifty-nine percent of employers surveyed foresee no change in job prospects, and 5% are unsure of their hiring expectations. Without seasonal adjustments, the third quarter outlook is slightly more positive than the April - June period. With seasonal variations removed from the survey results, the employment outlook for the coming quarter is identical to second quarter and represents one of the largest year-over-year increases in the survey history.

"In our second quarter survey, U.S. employers reported the strongest employment outlook since early 2001. The fact that employers expect to hire at the same pace in the third quarter suggests that they continue to feel confident about the sustainability of demand for their products and services. This is good news for job seekers across the country," said Jeffrey A. Joerres, Chairman & CEO of Manpower Inc.

Those looking for a job are likely to find strong job prospects across the majority of industry sectors surveyed, including Construction, Durable and Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing, Mining, Services and Wholesale/Retail Trade.

"Employer confidence within the Manufacturing sector has steadily improved for the past four quarters of our survey," said Joerres. "The beginning of 2001 was the last time Manufacturers were this willing to envision help wanted signs in their windows."

Job prospects in three of the four U.S. regions, including the Northeast, Midwest and South, are similar to those reported in the second quarter survey. The West is the only region where employers are more optimistic in their hiring plans than they were from April to June. Employers across the regions are unanimous in predicting a much healthier hiring pace than a year ago.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted in a total of 19 countries and territories, including interviews with more than 35,000 employers. Hiring activity for the third quarter is expected to increase in the majority of the world's labor markets compared to last year at this time. Employers in five countries -- Belgium, Hong Kong, Netherlands, Singapore and Spain -- reported their most optimistic hiring intentions since Manpower began surveying these countries a year ago.

"The third quarter survey data shows the strongest employment expectations in the United States, Canada, Hong Kong and New Zealand," said Joerres. "Employers in many countries are echoing their intentions to hire just as optimistically as they did in our second quarter survey. This is a good sign. Compared with a year ago, hiring intentions have improved in 16 of 19 countries."

The next Manpower Employment Outlook Survey will be released on September 14, 2004 to report hiring expectations for the fourth quarter of 2004.

### About the Survey

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is conducted quarterly to measure employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforce during the next quarter. It is the only forward-looking survey of its kind, unparalleled in its size, scope, longevity and area of focus. The survey has been running for more than 40 years and is one of the most trusted surveys of employment activity in the world. The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is based on interviews with more than 35,000 public and private employers worldwide and is considered a highly respected economic indicator.

The Manpower Employment Outlook Survey is currently available for 19 countries and territories: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. The program began in the United States and Canada in 1962, and the

United Kingdom was added in 1966. Mexico and Ireland launched the survey in 2002, and 13 additional countries have been added to the program in 2003. New Zealand joined the program in 2004. For more information, visit the Manpower Inc. Web site at <http://www.manpower.com> and enter the Press Room.

About Manpower Inc.

Manpower Inc. (NYSE: MAN) is a world leader in the employment services industry, offering customers a continuum of services to meet their needs throughout the employment and business cycle. The company specializes in permanent, temporary and contract recruitment; employee assessment; training; career transition and organizational consulting services. Manpower's worldwide network of 4,300 offices in 67 countries and territories enables the company to meet the needs of its 400,000 customers per year, including small and medium size enterprises in all industry sectors, as well as the world's largest multinational corporations. The focus of Manpower's work is on raising productivity through improved quality, efficiency and cost-reduction, enabling customers to concentrate on their core business activities. In addition to the Manpower brand, the company operates under the brand names of Right Management Consultants, Jefferson Wells, Elan and Brook Street. More information on Manpower Inc. is available at <http://www.manpower.com>.

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