

This month's "Spotlight" topic:  
*The Rise of Employee Advocacy*

## Job Growth Slows in May to 75,000 Unemployment Maintains Record-Low Level of 3.6%

**JOB GROWTH:** The month of May saw a significant pullback in jobs growth, as the employment market added 75,000 new jobs—the lowest gain since February. This followed revisions in the figures from the two previous months that represented a combined 75,000 fewer new jobs. Based on the revised numbers, job gains per month over the last three months averaged 151,000.

**TOP INDUSTRIES:** The most active sectors in May included professional and business services and healthcare.

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** The unemployment rate remained at 3.6% in May, maintaining a 50-year record low.

**WAGES:** May brought another monthly increase in average wages. Over the year, average hourly earnings have increased by 3.1%.

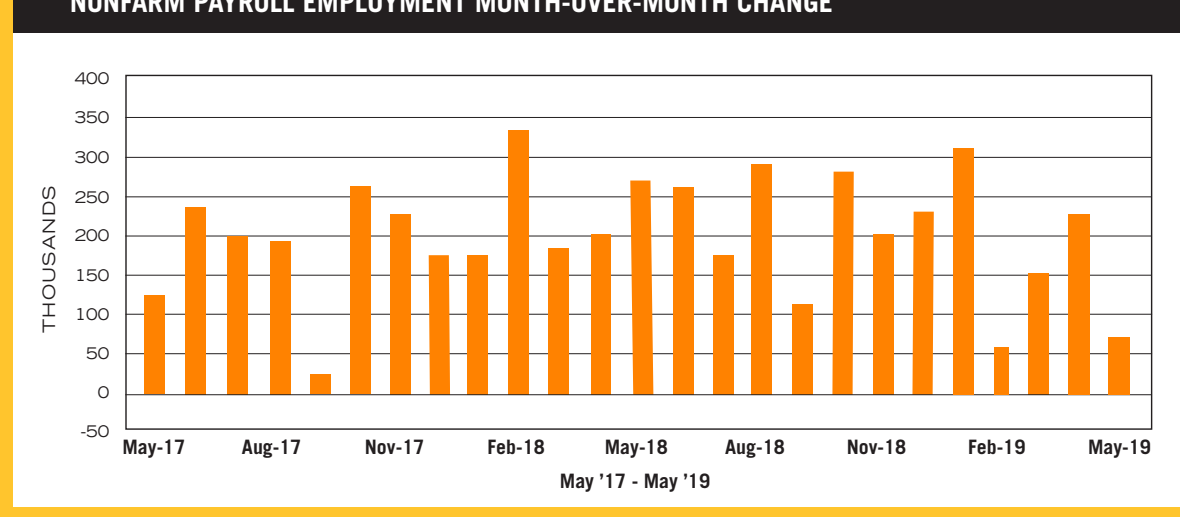
**WORK WEEK:** The average work week was unchanged at 34.4 hours in May.

**TEMPORARY JOB TRENDS:** The temporary help sector added 5,100 jobs in May, fewer than last month but still a positive trend.

**WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?** Worries over tariffs and trade negotiations may have contributed to the slower pace of job growth in May, or it could be a strong signal that the candidate market is too tight to allow for the increased hiring needed for continued growth. Employers seem to be unanimous in their belief that it is becoming more challenging to fill jobs. Some have altered traditional hiring requirements, while others have invested more in retention efforts as well as training and upskilling. Job growth remains positive, however, and wage pressure continues, particularly at the lower end of the pay scale.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Steinberg Employment Research, CNBC, CBS News, Staffing Industry Analysts, The New York Times, USA Today, Forbes, Bloomberg, FOX News, MSNBC, Reuters

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS / SOURCE: BLS

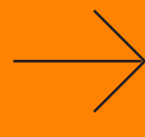


Job growth slowed in May, adding 75,000 jobs.



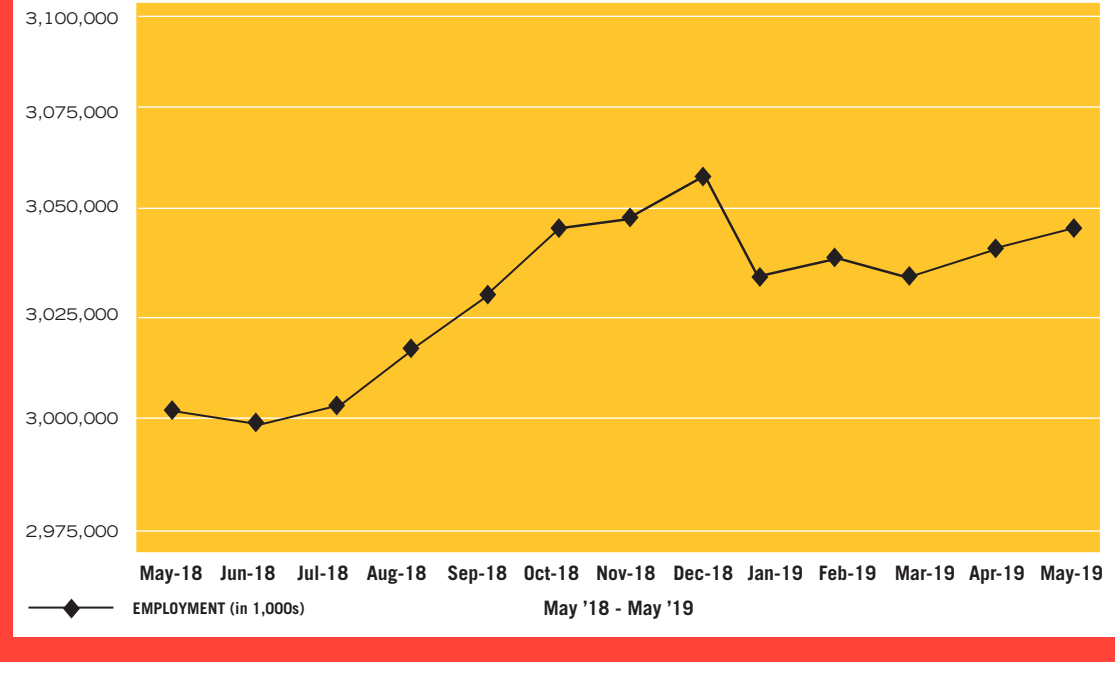
CHART 2: TOP INDUSTRIES / SOURCE: BLS

The slower pace of job growth in May yielded 75,000 new jobs.



SECTOR GAINS	JOB INCREASE
Professional & Business Services	+33,000
Leisure & Hospitality	+26,000
Healthcare & Social Assistance	+24,000
Manufacturing	+3,000
Transportation & Warehousing	+200
SECTOR DECLINES	JOB DECREASE
Retail Trade	-7,600

CHART 3: TEMPORARY WORKFORCE / SOURCE: BLS & STEINBERG EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



Continuing a positive trend, 5,100 new temporary jobs were added in May.



## The Rise of Employee Advocacy

There was a time when employees focused on the job at hand more than the outside world. They kept their heads down and their opinions to themselves. Other than union leaders, most employees towed the corporate line. Times have changed, however. Employees, especially younger workers, are increasingly taking a stand on issues they are passionate about, regardless of what their employers have to say. In fact, they are speaking out—and sometimes walking out—in a bid to influence corporate policies, practices and even strategy when it strays into areas they oppose.

Social issues that can potentially impact corporate fortunes run the gamut from ethical sourcing, the environment and opposition to government policies to diversity and inclusion—the last finding a platform in the Me Too movement.

The 2019 Emerging Workforce® Study, commissioned by Spherion, found 42% of U.S. companies reporting an increase in the number of HR complaints around sexual harassment and/or inappropriate behavior from bosses or co-workers since the Me Too movement began. In the past two years, nearly half of all companies (47%) also saw an increase in the number of complaints from employees about equal pay and/or career advancement opportunities.

More than half of all employees surveyed, across every generation, said they would participate in a walkout if their employer did anything they deemed unethical or unlawful. In fact, 41% of Millennials surveyed said they have already participated in a protest of some form against their employer.

In many cases, employees value advocacy over job security. Among those surveyed, 42% of all employees and 59% of Millennials said they would risk job security to speak out against their employer on an issue they are passionate about, even if speaking out meant they could be fired.

Employers are paying attention: 50% of companies surveyed said issues stemming from the Me Too movement led them to make policy and/or process changes. If the end result is a more engaged and loyal workforce, then employee advocacy has the potential to fuel higher performance and accelerated growth.

CHART 4: PROTEST POTENTIAL / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY



CHART 5: PROTEST PARTICIPATION / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY

## I have participated in a form of protest against an employer, such as a walkout, speaking out publicly against something my employer did, etc.

41% MILLENNIALS  
21% OVERALL



CHART 6: PAYCHECK VS. PRINCIPLES / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY

## I would risk my job security to speak out against my employer on an issue I am passionate about—even if it meant I could get fired.

59% MILLENNIALS  
42% OVERALL

