

August 2016

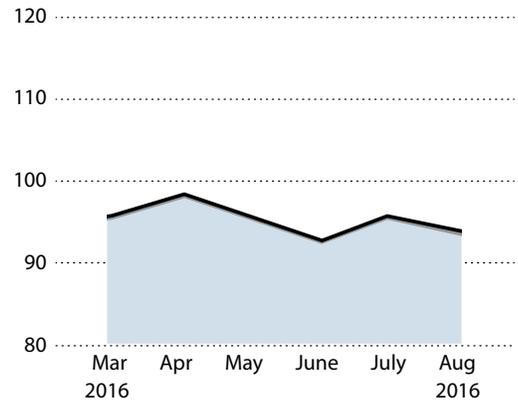
CEO confidence stagnates at low levels

The WSJ/Vistage Small Business CEO Confidence Index was 95.9 in the August 2016 survey, down from 96.3 one month ago and 105.1 this time last year. The August survey marked the thirteenth consecutive year-to-year decline in the Confidence Index. The sharp decline in confidence, which began at the start of the 2nd quarter of 2015, corresponds to the contraction of GDP over the same time period. Moreover, the most recent small decline in overall confidence was due to weakened expectations for continued growth in revenues and profits, a sign that small firms may become more cautious in their investment plans in the second half of 2016.

The impact of heightened uncertainties associated with the presidential election, potential changes in monetary and fiscal policies as well as global economic conditions may have prevented any movement toward more favorable expectations. Overall, small firms now expect a slow and halting pace of economic growth during the year ahead.

Analysis by Dr. Richard Curtin, University of Michigan

WSJ/Vistage Small Business CEO Confidence Index



Visit vistageindex.com to see the interactive tool and view results from previous months.

Question	Answer	Respondents	
1. Compared with a year ago, have overall economic conditions in the United States improved, remained the same, or worsened?	Improved	176	26%
	Remained about the same	363	54%
	Worsened	132	20%
	Don't know/No opinion	2	0%
2. During the next 12 months, do you expect the overall economic conditions in the U.S. will be better, about the same, or worse than now?	Better	148	22%
	About the same	363	54%
	Worse	130	19%
	Don't know/No opinion	32	5%

Question	Answer	Respondents	
		#	%
3. Are your firm's total fixed investment expenditures likely to increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?	Increase	274	41%
	Remain the same	296	44%
	Decrease	94	14%
	Don't know/No opinion	9	1%
4. Do you anticipate that your firm's sales revenues will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?	Increase	451	67%
	Remain the same	157	23%
	Decrease	62	9%
	Don't know/No opinion	3	0%
5. Do you expect your firm's profitability to improve, remain about the same, or worsen during the next 12 months?	Improve	350	52%
	Remain the same	214	32%
	Worsen	106	16%
	Don't know/No opinion	3	0%
6. Do you expect your firm's total number of employees will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?	Increase	354	53%
	Remain the same	261	39%
	Decrease	56	8%
	Don't know/No opinion	2	0%

Question	Answer	Respondents	
		#	%
7. Do you have plans to move your office headquarters in the next year?	Yes	78	12%
	No	545	81%
	Not sure	38	6%
	Other	9	1%
	Skipped	3	0%
8. During your company's last fiscal year, what was its total employment?	1-9 employees	51	8%
	10-19 employees	112	17%
	20-49 employees	255	38%
	50-99 employees	148	22%
	100-499 employees	105	16%
	500-999 employees	2	0%
	10000+ employees	2	0%

WSJ | VISTAGE

Small Business CEO Survey

A monthly survey measuring the sentiment of U.S. small business CEOs and owners about the economy.

Visit vistageindex.com to view an interactive tool with full results from previous months.