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Iowa's Major Employers Report Economy Remains Strong

Iowa Business Council members anticipate increase in sales and capital expenditures but remain concerned about workforce for Q2 of 2019

(DES MOINES) – In the Iowa Business Council (IBC) quarterly economic outlook survey, members express economic optimism but challenges remain in attracting and retaining a quality workforce. This has been a consistent theme throughout the past year for IBC members, with nearly 70 percent of IBC members citing either engineering, IT or healthcare as key job positions they are unable or struggling to fill within the state.

"This survey aligns with our [2019 Competitive Dashboard](#) data which measures Iowa's progress in five categories relative to other states; the lack of available and qualified workforce is threaded throughout every category," IBC Executive Director Georgia Van Gundy said. "As an answer to this challenge, the Iowa Business Council has brought together leaders from both the public and private sectors to identify potential initiatives to attract and retain people to our state."

In addition, as part of IBC's continued effort to provide a forum for communities – large and small – to discuss barriers and best practices, it will hold its first of four "[Vision to Vitality](#)" forums on April 2 from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at Iowa Valley Continuing Education in Marshalltown. This year, the series will focus on the need to increase and diversify our population and will center around the theme, "Growing a strong, diverse community."

IBC members remain optimistic overall about the economy, nearly 80 percent of IBC members anticipate higher sales in the next six months and the majority expect their company's employment to increase.

The survey's overall index number from last quarter remains largely consistent and positive (*up from 64.8 to 65.5*). The overall index number is a numeric measure that gauges business sentiment with any number over 50 indicating a positive perspective of the economy.

The Economic Outlook Survey has been completed by the council members on a quarterly basis since 2004. The survey provides insight regarding the projected trends for the state of Iowa, which can be used for business and economic planning. The reported trends have a state-wide impact, especially when considering that IBC companies have a presence in all 99 counties.

For more information, including charts related to the survey, please visit:
<https://www.iowabusinesscouncil.org/news/eos2019q1/>

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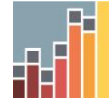
About the Iowa Business Council

The Iowa Business Council (IBC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization whose 23 members are the chief decision makers of major Iowa employers. One in six jobs in Iowa are tied to an IBC company. IBC member companies have invested billions of

IBC Economic Outlook Survey

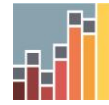
Quarter 1 – 2019

Expanded Results

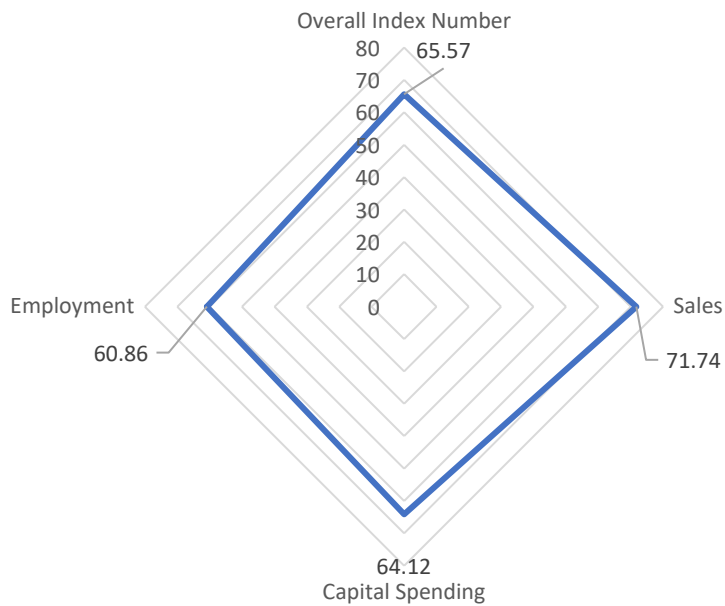


dollars of capital in Iowa's commercial infrastructure; lead the way in technology innovation, R&D, and grants procured; and are often the driving financial and volunteer forces behind philanthropic efforts all over the state.

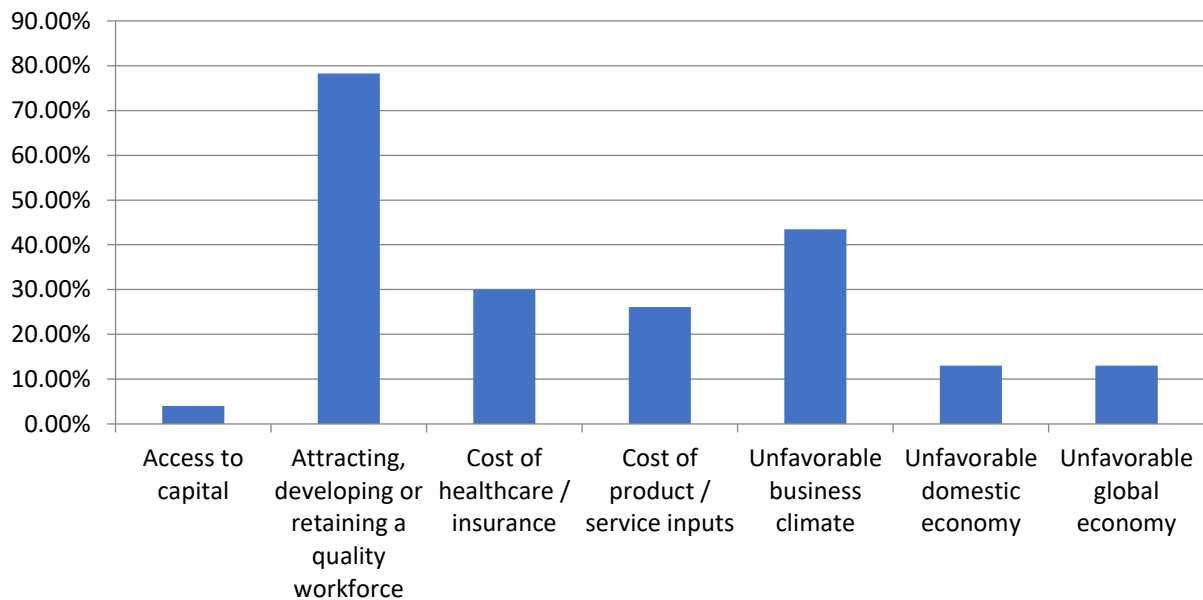
IBC member companies include: Alliant Energy; Casey's General Stores, Inc.; Collins Aerospace; Corteva Agriscience; Deere & Company; Fareway; FBL Financial Group, Inc.; HNI Corporation; Hy-Vee, Inc., Iowa Bankers Association; Kent Corporation; Mercy Health Network; Meredith Corporation; MidAmerican Energy Company; Pella Corporation; Principal; Ruan Transportation Management Systems; The Weitz Company; The University of Iowa Health Care; UnityPoint Health; Vermeer Corporation; Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Iowa; and Wells Enterprises, Inc.

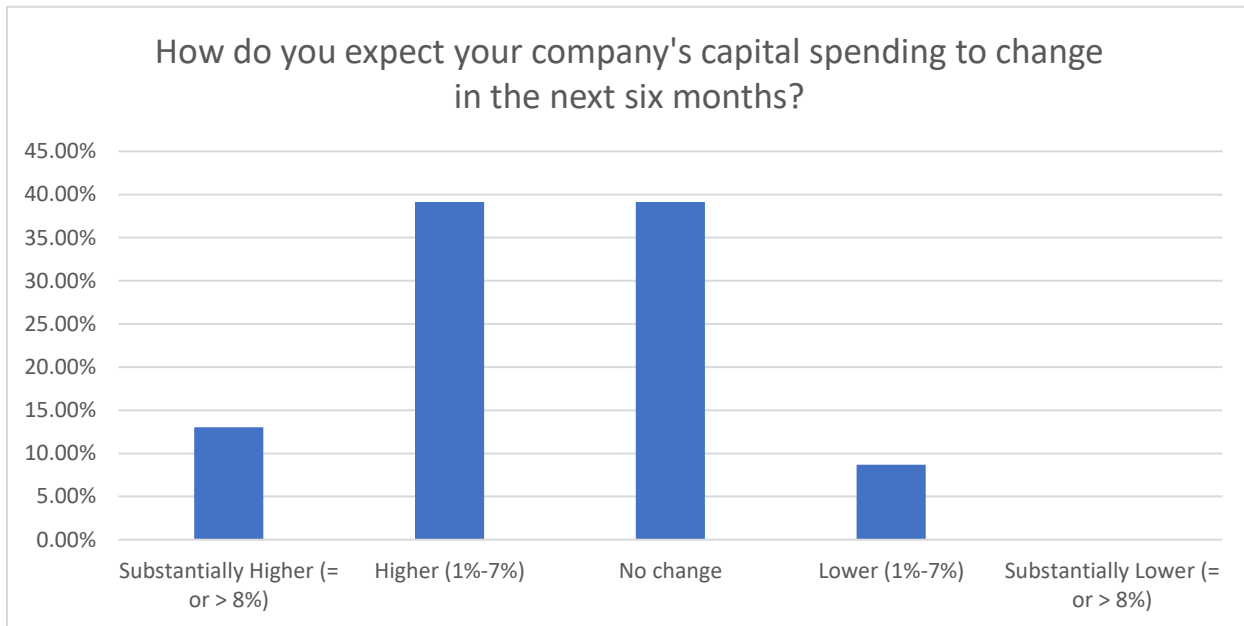
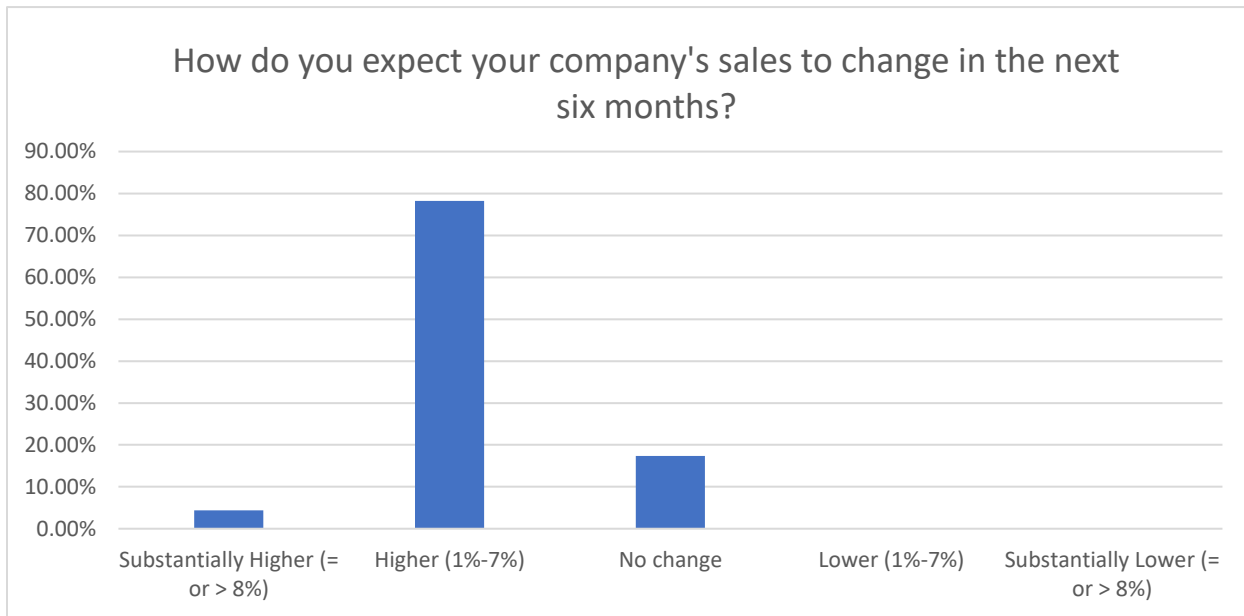
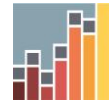


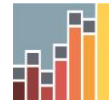
2019 Q1 Economic Outlook Survey Index Numbers



What are your current primary business challenges?







How do you expect your company's employment to change in the next six months?

