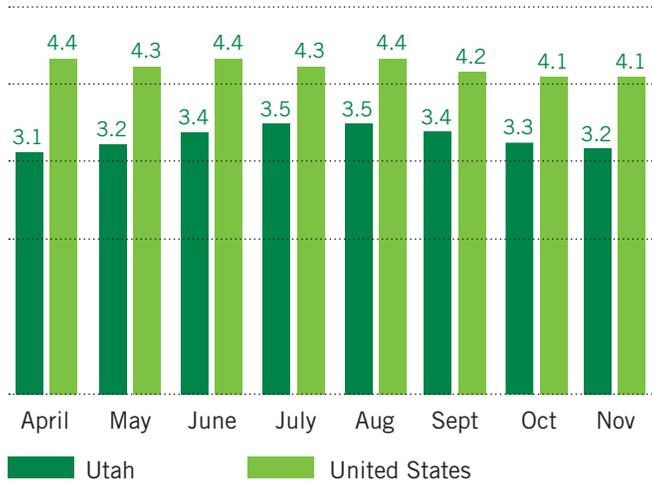




Utah Employment Trends Report

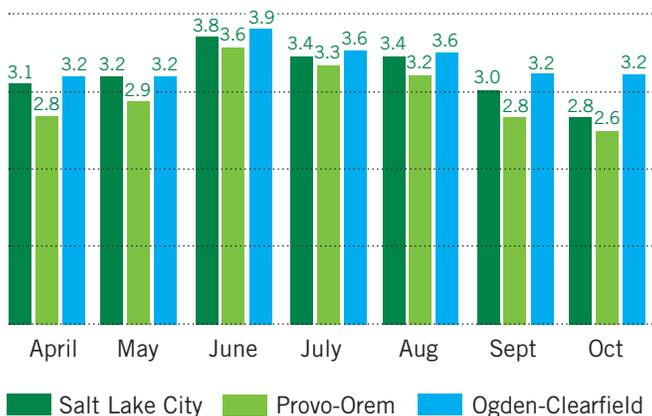
WASATCH FRONT

Unemployment Rate (Utah vs. U.S.)



The unemployment rate in Utah remains consistently well below the U.S. rate. (Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Utah Unemployment Rates



Utah's unemployment rate since April; Provo-Orem continues to have one of the lowest rates in the country (Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

With Unemployment Rates at All-Time Lows and Consumer Attitudes at an All-Time High, Why Are Future Expectations Down?

Utah's job market continues to be one of the best in the country, according to the [Department of Workforce Services](#). It reported nonfarm payroll employment for November 2017 grew by an estimated 2.9 percent over the past 12 months, adding 42,100 jobs to the economy.

The statewide unemployment rate has declined a tenth of a percent over each of the last three months. In certain markets (Salt Lake City, Provo-Orem, and St. George), the rate has dropped a full percentage point since June.

Beyond the employment climate, the Utah Present Situation Index, a measure of confidence in current statewide economic conditions increased to its highest level since its inception six years ago. According to a [press release](#) from Zions Bank, which released the index as part of its overall Utah Consumer Attitude Index (CAI), it signaled strong a positive consumer market perception during the holiday shopping season.

Interestingly though, the same findings from Zions Bank revealed that consumer expectations for the future trajectory of the economy decreased. While the index ratings still remain bullish, the decrease places December 2017 slightly below the December 2016 rating, meaning consumers are slightly less confident this year than last.

Why has consumer confidence decreased? According to the Wasatch Front Consumer Price Index, prices rose 3.3 percent since December 2016. In the most recent CAI survey, nearly a quarter of Utahns stated that they anticipate spending more on holiday gifts this year compared to last year. Another quarter of Utahns stated that they anticipate spending more on winter sports activities this year compared to last year.

Inflation is causing the cost of living statewide to rise. According to the CAI survey, the hope is that "...wages within Utah's robust job market will continue to increase, offsetting many of the negative side-effects associated with inflationary pressures related to economic growth."

What does this mean for employers? Most likely, higher compensation expectations from candidates when recruiting or retaining employees.

Headed into 2018, these trends show no sign of slowing. Employers who may be experiencing increased wage or benefits demands from candidates or employees should consider expert talent supply chain management to address this new reality.

