



Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.
The original outplacement company



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Holiday Hiring Expected To Remain Flat

TRENDS AND STRONGER MIDYEAR HIRING MAY DIMINISH DEMAND

CHICAGO, September 15, 2015 -- Low gas prices, steady job gains and bigger paychecks are expected to benefit holiday retail sales this year, but that may not necessarily result in increased seasonal hiring in the sector, according to one forecast.

In its annual retail holiday hiring outlook, global outplacement consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. expects seasonal employment gains to be about the same as a year ago, when retailers added 755,000 to their payrolls from October through December.

Despite a relatively strong economy and high expectations heading into the holiday season, last year's retail employment gains were 4.0 percent lower than the 786,800 retail jobs added in the final three months of 2013. The 2013 holiday hiring total was the highest since 1999, when retailers added nearly 850,000 extra seasonal workers to their payrolls.

"Once again, most analysts are anticipating healthy holiday sales this year. However, there are several factors that may prevent these strong sales expectations from translating into increased hiring. For one, we have seen increased hiring earlier in the year, which may preclude the need for a lot of extra hiring as the holidays approach," said John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas.

Retail employment increased by 449,500 from March through August, according to the latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That was up from 437,000 job gains recorded during the same period a year earlier.

"In addition to steady hiring leading up to the holiday season, changes in the way consumers shop are making it possible for stores to meet increased holiday demand with fewer extra workers. When retailers do add holiday workers, fewer of those jobs are in traditional spots, such as sales clerk or cashier. We are also seeing more jobs holiday jobs added outside of the retail sector," said Challenger.

Last year, UPS and FedEx announced plans to add a combined 145,000 seasonal workers, nearly double the 75,000 planned hires reported in 2013. Additionally, online retailer Amazon.com, announced plans to hire 80,000 holiday workers for its nationwide network of warehouses in 2014, up from 70,000 the previous year.

“Job seekers hoping to take advantage of seasonal hiring should be prepared to look beyond the traditional retail store fronts. Some of the best opportunities could be in the backroom, handling incoming and outgoing shipments. Job seekers should also look for positions at warehouses and shipping facilities associated with retailers and/or transportation companies.

“There are also many seasonal job opportunities that are unrelated to holiday shopping. Restaurants, caterers, movie theaters, and other entertainment and leisure venues tend to see increased business during the holidays. These establishments are also need extra help to handle that increase,” Challenger advised.

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JOBS ADDED IN RETAIL TRADE

October, November, December, 2005-2015

	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	% Change
2005	122,300	392,700	196,600	711,600	0.2%
2006	150,600	427,300	169,000	746,900	5.0%
2007	87,900	465,400	167,600	720,900	-3.5%
2008	38,600	213,600	72,700	324,900	-54.9%
2009	45,100	317,100	133,600	495,800	52.6%
2010	149,800	339,200	158,600	647,600	30.6%
2011	134,200	390,600	154,500	679,300	4.9%
2012	138,700	485,400	99,600	723,700	6.5%
2013	159,600	443,100	184,100	786,800	8.7%
2014	185,700	414,300	155,000	755,000	-4.0%
2015	???	???	???	???	???
AVERAGE	121,250	388,870	149,130	659,250	

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., with data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Announced Seasonal Hiring Plans			
	2013	2014	2015
Target	70,000	70,000	?
Macy's	83,000	86,000	?
Kohl's	53,000	76,970	?
Walmart	55,000	60,000	?
Amazon	70,000	80,000	?
Toys R Us	45,000	45,000	?
JC Penney	35,000	35,000	?
UPS	55,000	95,000	?
FedEx (Transportation)	20,000	50,000	?
GameStop	17,000	25,000	?
Best Buy	N/A	N/A	?
Meijer	9,000	10,000	?
Gap	N/A	63,000	?
Hickory Farms (Food)	6,000	N/A	?
TOTAL	518,000	695,970	0