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**For Immediate Release**

Job Seeker Confidence Index

**MOST EMPLOYED JOB SEEKERS SINCE 2018; HIGHEST RATE OF LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED CALLERS SINCE 2014**

**CHICAGO, January 26, 2022** – During its annual Career Help Hotline, global outplacement and business and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. recorded the highest rate of employed job seekers since 2018, adding evidence to the current phenomenon known as The Great Resignation. At the same time, a greater share of those who were unemployed have been out of work for over a year.

Challenger surveyed 250 callers from across the nation looking for expert job search advice on December 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. Of those, nearly 47% reported they are currently employed, up from 31% of callers who were employed in 2020 and 44% in 2019. It is the highest rate since 2018, when 51% of callers were employed. In 2021, 37% of employed callers reported they were underemployed, working in position for which they were overqualified or working part-time, down from 2018, when 59% reported they were underemployed.

While more employed Americans were engaged in a job search in 2021, 39% of unemployed callers had been out of work for more than a year, the highest rate since 2014, when 47% of unemployed callers had been out of work that long. Another 27% reported they had been out of work for 1 to 3 months.

<b>If unemployed, how long have you been out of work?</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
1 – 3 Months	26.53%	22.48%	29.50%	36.4%	47%	29%	53%	25%
4 – 6 Months	18.37%	27.13%	25.90%	27.2%	10%	25%	12%	26%
7 – 9 Months	10.20%	14.73%	10.07%	7.5%	7%	7%	3%	9%
10 – 12 Months	6.12%	8.53%	2.88%	5.2%	3%	5%	3%	7%
More than a year	38.78%	27.13%	31.66%	22.7%	32%	34%	28%	47%

“COVID certainly caused workers to leave the labor force, voluntarily or not, and many of those who lost their positions in 2020 are still looking for work,” said Andrew Challenger, Senior Vice President of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

This trend is reflected in other employment data. According to seasonally adjusted data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 31.9% of the unemployed have been out of work for over 27 weeks as of December 2021, while 31.6% have been out of work for less than 5 weeks. The average duration of unemployment was 28.6 weeks in December, the highest December average since 2014, when the average duration of unemployment was 32.7 weeks.

Meanwhile, the majority of callers reported “finding job openings” was the most difficult part of the job search with 26%, the most since 2018 when 27% of callers had difficulty finding open positions.

<b>Top Most Difficult Part of the Job Search*</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Finding job openings	26.05%	19.40%	19.03%	27.2%	30%
Getting interviews	14.29%	21.55%	23.01%	21.1%	24%
Other	13.09%	12.93%	6.11%	19.5%	5%
Networking	12.61%	21.55%	18.34%	12.5%	14%
Interviewing well	10.08%	10.34%	9.17%	6.7%	14%
Changing jobs	5.10%	0.00%	0	6.5%	N/A
Preparing the resume	7.56%	17.67%	14.85%	6.0%	8%
Ageism	0	4.74%	1.31%	3.2%	N/A
Filling out applications	0	3.88%	3.93%	2.3%	3%
Dealing with rejection	6.12%	5.60%	4.80%	2.1%	4%
Finding full-time work	1.02%	0.00%	0	1.9%	N/A
Getting started	4.08%	N/A	N/A	N/A	

“Employers are having an incredibly difficult time finding workers. One reason for this could very well be that their target workers are not seeing their job postings. While on one hand, the internet has made it easier than ever to post job ads, with all the noise, it can be difficult for the right candidates to connect with employers,” said Challenger.

“‘The Hidden Job Market,’ or those open positions that often go unadvertised, is where most job seekers find their next opportunities, and that is accessed primarily through networking. The pandemic has made networking and forging key in-person connections more difficult than ever,” he added.

Overwhelmingly, callers were not turning down offers. When asked if they had recently turned down positions because they did not fit their needs, just 11% reported they had rejected an offer. Of those who had turned down positions, 50% of callers turned down a position because the pay was too low, while 33% reported it was not a “good fit.” Another 17% said the rejected position was not flexible enough.

The majority (43%) of job seekers believed they were likely to find new positions in the second quarter of 2022, up from 32% who said this in 2020, perhaps attempting to account for the pandemic. Another 37% responded they believed they would find new roles in one to three months. Roughly, the same percentage of callers believed it would take more than a year to find a new position in 2021 as in 2020.

<b>How long do you think it will take to find new position?</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
1 – 3 Months	36.49%	33.11%	34.20%	33.1%
4 – 6 Months	43.24%	31.76%	38.34%	44.9%
7 – 9 Months	6.76%	13.51%	10.88%	12.6%
10 – 12 Months	1.24%	9.46%	8.88%	4.7%
More than a year	12.27%	12.16%	7.77%	4.7%

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. ©



<b>Did you lose work directly due to COVID-19?</b>	<b>2020</b>
Yes	44.24%
No	55.76%

<b>Did you recently reject a job because it didn't meet your needs?</b>	<b>2021</b>
Yes	10.98%
No	89.02%

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Female	57.78%	43.60%	58.30%	60%	58%	52%
Male	42.22%	46.90%	46.27%	40%	42%	48%

<b>Are you employed?</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
No	53.41%	68.90%	56.22%	49%	52%	63%
Yes	46.59%	31.30%	43.78%	51%	48%	37%

<b>If employed, are you underemployed?</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
Yes	37.70%	33.30%	47.22%	59%	65%	38%
No	62.30%	66.70%	52.78%	41%	35%	62%

<b>If unemployed, how long have you been out of work</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>
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7 – 9 Months	6.76%	13.51%	10.88%	12.6%	12%	15%
10 – 12 Months	1.27%	9.46%	8.88%	4.7%	4%	4%
More than a year	12.24%	12.16%	7.77%	4.7%	3%	12%

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