

Employment Outlook Quarter 4, 2013

By Ronald Lee, Managing Director
PrimeStaff Management Services Pte Ltd

Published: 30 September 2013



Winner, Singapore Prestige Brand Award – Established Brands 2012
An ASME-Lianhe Zaobao Award
Top Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2012
A Rotary-ASME Award
Leading HR and Management Consultancy Services Provider Award
Singapore HR Awards 2012
Leading HR Entrepreneur Award
Singapore HR Awards 2012
Best Small Recruitment Business Award 2012
The Global Recruiter Asia Pacific Industry Awards

OVERALL VIEW OF EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK FOR Q4 2013



By Ronald Lee
Managing Director
PrimeStaff Management Services
Pte Ltd

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The US Federal Reserve's recent decision to refrain from tapering its Quantitative Easing (QE) programme was welcomed by the markets as it signals a continued low interest rate environment, effectively delaying costlier borrowing of funds. This is positive for businesses and the general economy so we expect good economic progress to continue in Singapore in Q4, barring any major political conflict or natural disaster.

GENERAL EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

In view of the above, the employment outlook for Q4 should remain fairly healthy with hiring activities expected to remain buoyant, and even escalate for some industries.

Due to the tighter foreign labour policies, employers in Singapore are turning to locals and PRs to fill up vacancies. This has resulted in a greater demand for Singaporean and PR workers, resulting in many businesses facing a manpower crunch, particularly for blue-collar and retail service roles.

INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

There will be a surge in manpower needs for the **Hospitality, Retail and Food & Beverage** industries in Q4, due to seasonal hiring for the coming Christmas and Chinese New Year festive periods in December and January, respectively.

Strong hiring prospects are also expected in the following sectors, as these industries form the backbone of the Singapore economy:

1. Public Administration
2. Education
3. Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
4. Construction
5. Wholesale and Retail Trade
6. Services
7. Health and Allied Healthcare

The sectors that may experience slowing employment or even a mild contraction include:

1. Electronics
2. Manufacturing

*"A surge in hiring in the **Hospitality, Retail and Food & Beverage** industries is expected in Q4 due to the increased manpower needs in these sectors during the festive season.*

RECRUITMENT & HUMAN RESOURCE TRENDS

1. **Greater Demand for Singaporeans and PRs:** Singaporean and Permanent Resident workers will be in greater demand by employers as the number of foreign hires continue to decline as work passes do not get renewed or extended due to the clampdown on the hiring of foreigners by the authorities.
2. **Higher Wages for Skilled Local Talents:** As a consequence of Point 1, employers can expect wages for skilled local talents to creep upwards – both in acquiring and retaining these talents.

3. **Leaner Operational Workforce:** Employers will be looking into optimising talent to drive innovation and productivity in an increasingly tight local labour market. “Operational Lean” will be the new buzzword.
4. **Greater Move Towards Business Process Outsourcing (BPO):** In line with a leaner workforce, organisations will be outsourcing more business support functions such as human resource activities.
5. **Scalable and Competency-driven Skills Wanted:** Employers will want to hire candidates who are adaptive and agile to respond to a business environment that is constantly changing. Candidates with great soft and hard skills that are scalable and more competency-driven will be in higher demand.
6. **Focus on Employee Retention:** As the manpower crunch for local workers continues, companies will focus on retention strategies to keep its employees.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECRUITERS & JOB SEEKERS

In view of the above market conditions, here are PrimeStaff’s professional recommendations for both recruiters and job seekers for Q4 2013:

For Recruiters:

1. **Take a More Holistic Approach to C&B:** In this competitive hiring environment, it is the little things that would prompt a candidate to move. When devising compensation & benefits packages, go beyond salary considerations and bolster the package with non-monetary perks such as flexi-work programmes.
2. **Go Big on Employer Branding:** Beef up your employer branding and sell your organisation to potential talents.

3. **Consider Contract Hiring:** If your firm is experiencing a permanent headcount freeze but talent is still needed to get work done, be open to hiring good talent and putting them to work on a contract basis.

For Job Seekers:

1. **Think ASEAN, Act Local:** The winds of fortune have clearly shifted to Asia. Global corporations are setting up a strong footprint for regional expansion, using Singapore as a springboard to the rest of the ASEAN region. Employers will be looking for high-value talent that have a strong regional work orientation and “Think ASEAN, Act Local” will be the new talent mantra. So cultivate an ASEAN-centric mindset when charting your career progression.
2. **Proactively Manage Your Career:** Sharpen your employability skills and learn to add value to your workplace by finding ways to achieve higher productivity gains as this will be highly valued by employers.
3. **Don’t Be Complacent:** Seek to continuously upgrade your skills in order to stay relevant and current. Grab opportunities for professional training and personal development that come your way.
4. **Keep an Open Mind:** Network every chance you get and be willing to explore opportunities outside your own industry.
5. **Adopt a paradigm shift:** Be open to taking on contract or part-time work opportunities as this will help to build your network and might also be a gateway to permanent opportunities.

LET US TAKE CARE OF ALL YOUR HUMAN RESOURCE NEEDS SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS MOST, YOUR BUSINESS.

ABOUT PRIMESTAFF MANAGEMENT SERVICES PTE LTD

Founded in 1994, PrimeStaff Management Services Pte Ltd is an award-winning and leading human resource consultancy based in Singapore with a growing regional reach. It provides a comprehensive suite of recruitment services across a wide range of positions, functions and industries in the Asia Pacific region. Other services include Payroll Processing, Outplacement and HR Consulting. Building upon its passion for people, PrimeStaff has cultivated a reputation in the industry for service excellence, reliability and effectiveness in delivering value added solutions.

Contingency Search / Executive Placements /
Contracts / Temporary Staffing / Outsourcing /
HR Advisory

PrimeStaff Management Services Pte Ltd

4 Battery Road #21-00
Bank of China Building
Singapore 049908

+ 65 6222 3310 tel
+ 65 6227 2310 fax

www.primestaff.com.sg

