
“The Zogby Analytics Difference: we bring four decades of experience in measuring attitudinal behaviors among a wide array of sectors, target audiences and geographic locations all over the world in order to establish meaning and context for your research needs.”

Manufacturing Executives: Attitudes, Operations, Expectations & Opportunities

Operations and Opportunities

Although the data did present negative attitudes from manufacturers regarding the current political, economic, and educational conditions throughout the state, there were some positive responses which can represent a silver lining going forward:

- About half (48%) say their company has invested more in plant and equipment in New York in the past five years than say they have invested less (26%).
- Seven in ten (68%) give a good or fair rating to their company's ability to maintain business operations in New York State.
- The number of manufacturing executives who say their employment levels have increased (30%) is up from 2010 and 2012 levels.
- All three mood indicators: current economic conditions, current state of the manufacturing industry, economic development options available to your company all had slightly higher positive ratings when compared with 2010 and 2012 levels.

Highlights

There is really no appreciable improvement in attitude or outlook since MACNY/Zogby Analytics began this series in 2010.

The general mood indicators remain very low.

- Only one in four feel that the state is headed in the right direction, while three in five feel things are on the wrong track.
- Nine in ten (88%) say current economic conditions are only Fair or Poor.
- Four in five believe that current economic development options are either Fair or Poor.
- Four in five say the current state of manufacturing in New York State is only Fair or Poor.
- 42% believe that the state's political climate has gotten worse in the past few years, around twice as many (23%) who think it has gotten better.
- More (39%) say the economic climate has gotten worse in the past few years, while 22% feel it has gotten better.
- By a factor of five to one, more say that maintaining manufacturing business operation in NYS has gotten worse (53%), while only 10% feel it has gotten better.

The more specific mood indicators are equally bleak.

- Only 16% feel that NYS is a good place to launch or develop a small manufacturing business and only 11% think that the state is a good place for young people to begin and advance a career.
- Even fewer, 9% sense that NYS is a good place for manufacturers from other parts of the country to want to relocate.
- Fewer say that their company's employment levels within New York have increased (30%) than say they have decreased (41%) in the past five years.
- A majority (56%) say their company did not meet its profitability goals in the past year. Two in five (41%) say they did.

Nor are these manufacturing officials particularly sanguine about the future: in the next few years, 35% expect that maintaining manufacturing operations in New York will get worse, while 25% expect it to get better.

Business leaders polled by far identified taxes as the top concern overall in the state (76%). This was followed by the economy and lack of jobs (39%), education and schools (22%), and health care (19%). This sentiment about the state's taxes was expressed in a number of ways in the MACNY/Zogby Analytics poll:

- About half (46%) identified taxes as posing the greatest competitive problems to manufacturers in the state, more so than employee health benefits (37%), worker's compensation (21%), finding skilled employees (16%), and regulations (14%)
- When asked which policies would best help their company's ability to invest in NYS, 69% said reducing property taxes, 66% said reducing corporate taxes, and 61% said reducing personal income taxes. Two in three (64%) cited reducing energy costs and 53% wanted reform of labor regulations.

As mentioned above, education was cited as a major issue statewide. We probed this a bit in the poll. Only 25% feel that high school graduates are prepared sufficiently to be employed at their business, however community colleges fare better in their minds: 48% say community colleges do a good job preparing students for employment at their business, but 46% do not. In general, young people are seen as not measuring up to employment standards for manufacturing; 76% say they do not have the discipline required, 67% feel they lack the technical skills required, 72% believe they do not have the commitment for long term training, and 54% say they do not have the ability to learn a job.

A majority (61%) cites having a difficult time filling technical jobs, 43% have trouble filling middle management jobs, 40% have trouble filling jobs that require an advanced degree in science and engineering, and even 26% say it is tough finding people to fill clerical/administrative jobs.

Methodology

[Hybrid Survey of Manufacturers in New York State] [2/25/2014 thru 3/6/2014]

Zogby Analytics was commissioned by [MACNY] to conduct a hybrid live operator telephone survey and interactive online survey of [114 Manufacturers in New York State]

Telephone samples are randomly drawn from a business database. Up to four calls are made to reach a sampled phone number. Respondents that were not available but qualified to respond were allowed to set appointments to be recalled within the time frame of the field work.

Additionally, for the interactive survey portion, the invitations were sent via secure server to a client supplied list of email addresses. Each invitation is password coded and secure so that one respondent can only access the survey one time.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for [114] is +/- [9.4] percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, the identical survey repeated will have results within the margin of error 95 times out of 100.

Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. As a rule we do not rely on the validity of very small subsets of the data especially sets smaller than 50-75 respondents. At that subset we can make estimations based on the data, but in these cases the data is more qualitative than quantitative.

Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

##

Zogby Analytics conducts a wide variety of surveys internationally and nationally in industries, including banking, IT, medical devices, government agencies, colleges and universities, non-profits, automotive, insurance and NGOs.