



EUGENE W. STETSON SCHOOL OF
BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Middle Georgia Economic Outlook Survey Mid-Year 2015



Middle Georgia Economic Outlook Survey – Mid-Year 2015

The BB&T Center for Undergraduate Research in Public Policy and Capitalism and the Stetson School of Business and Economics at Mercer University present the results of the 2015 Mid-Year Middle Georgia Economic Outlook Survey. The Middle Georgia Economic Outlook Survey is a semiannual electronic survey of economic sentiment answered by a wide range of businesses in Middle Georgia. The Middle Georgia Economic Outlook Survey was first implemented in December 2014. The present edition will be followed by an end-of-year survey to be distributed at the end of the current year.

Several individuals and organizations contributed significantly to the preparation and distribution of this survey. In particular, we would like to thank Dr. Susan Gilbert, Dean of the Stetson School of Business and Economics, and Mr. Robert Hatcher, Member of the Board of Directors of the Stetson School of Business and Economics, for their support, valuable comments and suggestions. We would also like to thank the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, the Robins Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce, the Milledgeville-Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, the Jones County/Gray Chamber of Commerce, the Roberta-Crawford County Chamber of Commerce, Wilkinson County Chamber of Commerce and the Perry Chamber of Commerce for their help identifying potential respondents and, in some cases, distributing the survey among their members.

Survey Distribution

Invitations to complete the survey were sent to individuals associated with businesses identified by the different chambers of commerce mentioned above. In addition to the e-mails that the BB&T Center for Undergraduate Research in Public Policy and Capitalism sent directly to these individuals, the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, the Robins Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce sent separate e-mails to their members promoting the completion of the survey.

The survey was sent to a total of 2,681 individual e-mail addresses. We received 391 responses resulting in a response rate of 14.6%. Importantly, not all 391 responses included answers for all questions in the survey. Thus, the analysis for individual questions typically reflects responses from a smaller sample. The survey was active from July 29, 2015, through August 12, 2015, and two reminders were sent in addition to the initial invitation.

Methodology

To assess the economic sentiment of respondents with respect to a particular question or subject, we utilized the **Diffusion Index**, which is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents who selected negative answers from the percentage of respondents who selected positive answers. For example, when a question offered the choices “much lower,” “lower,” “about the same,” “higher” and “much higher,” the Diffusion Index was calculated by adding the percentage of respondents who selected “higher” and “much higher” and subtracting from that sum the sum of the percentages of respondents who selected “lower” and “much lower.”

For questions involving rankings, we used the **Intensity Index**, which calculates a weighted average of the number of times a particular answer was ranked No. 1, No. 2 or No. 3 out of all possible answers received. The weight for answers ranked as No. 1 was 1, the weight for answers ranked as No. 2 was 0.75 and the weight for answers ranked as No. 3 was 0.5.

For questions for which the answers were descriptive (text) rather than numeric, we used **word clouds** to capture the relative importance of particular answers or concepts. Specifically, the size of the word or concept in a word cloud is based on the frequency with which the word or concept is used in the responses.

Description of Results

The survey consisted of 22 questions designed to extract information about the businesses’ performance during the first half of 2015 and the businesses’ expectations for the second half of 2015.

In general terms, businesses in Middle Georgia seemed to have wrapped a positive first half of the year, consolidating the momentum gained during 2014, and remain *cautiously* optimistic about the second half of 2015. We qualify the optimism as cautious because, despite the positive outlook for the economy in Middle Georgia, a large number of businesses do not identify

the second half of 2015 as a good time to expand their operations. In addition, respondents continue to identify government regulations and/or red tape, taxes and the quality of labor as the top three obstacles to their business activities.

BUSINESS INDICATORS

The Diffusion Index for **net earnings or income (after taxes)** is 16.27% for the first half of 2015 indicating that 34.92% of the businesses had higher or much higher net earnings, and only 18.65% of the businesses had lower or much lower net earnings, than their expectations at the beginning of the year. The Diffusion Index for expectations of net earnings for the second half of 2015 is much higher at 28.38% indicating strong optimism for this variable for the next six months.

The Diffusion Indices for **sales volume** are 18.87% for the first half of 2015 and 25.91% for expectations for the second half of 2015. The same indices for **average selling prices** are 15.33% and 15% for the first and the second half of 2015, respectively. These results show again a positive outlook for the next half of the year.

As mentioned above, however, the optimism regarding net earnings, sales and selling prices do not fully translate to business expansion. For example, the Diffusion Index for **total number of employees** is only 6.8% for the first half of the year and 9.42% for the second half of the year.

A potential reason for the low expectation of business expansion could be that **average employee compensation** was higher during the first half of 2015 than expected at the beginning of the year and is expected to increase in the second part of the year, as well. The Diffusion Indices for this variable are 24.5% for the first half of the year and 13.89% for the expectations for the second half of the year.

The Diffusion Indices for **inventories** are 4.43% for the first half of the year and 9.09% for expectations for the second half of the year. Low values here should be taken positively in correlation with higher sales volumes as indicated above.

Not surprisingly, given the stability of the monetary policy, businesses in Middle Georgia did not see large differences in their **ability to obtain financing** as compared to their expectations at the beginning of the year. The Diffusion Indices are 7.32% and 1.81% for the first and second halves of the year, respectively. One could speculate that the very low value of the Diffusion Index for the second half of the year reflects that business do not expect interest rates to go up this year.

On the investment side, the Diffusion Index of 13.82% for **capital expenditures for plant and/or physical equipment** indicates that local firms engaged in larger investments in the first half of 2015 than they expected at the beginning of the year. They expect only slightly higher investment levels in the second half of 2015 — the Diffusion Index for the next six months is 7.79%. These results are consistent with the results of the previous question regarding the ability to obtain financing.

Non-labor, non-capital costs were much higher for many firms in the region as indicated by a Diffusion Index of 28.57% for the first half of 2015. A similar trend is expected for the next six months as indicated by a Diffusion Index of 15.97%. This result, together with that of average employee compensation, indicates that overall costs of production were higher than expected at the beginning of the year and businesses expect this trend to continue into the second half of the year. While this could be seen as negative for the businesses responding to our survey, it is an expected trend as the economy continues its mild expansion. Moreover, remember that we saw above that businesses also expect selling prices to increase. When put together, all of these results are consistent with several analyses for the U.S. economy indicating a mild surge in inflationary levels during 2015.

Finally, the number of **accounts payable that are past due** was lower than expected at the beginning of the year as indicated by a Diffusion Index of -5.27%. Firms are even slightly more optimistic about the second half of 2015 as indicated by a Diffusion Index of expectations of -6.39%.

Tables 1 and 2 and Figures 1a and 1b show the detailed breakdown of these results for Middle Georgia. Table 3, in turn, shows the Diffusion Indices by the county in which the respondent's main office is located.¹

OBSTACLES TO BUSINESS

The most significant obstacles to business identified by the respondents for both the first and second halves of 2015, as evidenced by intensity indices, are **government regulations and/or red tape, taxes** and the **quality of labor**. When “other” obstacles are specified, healthcare costs and insurance are the most frequently non-market obstacles mentioned. Tables 4 and 6 and Figures 2, 3, 5 and 6 present this information.

¹ While we sent the survey to businesses in Baldwin, Bibb, Jones, Monroe, Crawford, Peach, Twiggs, Wilkinson, Houston, Pulaski and Putnam counties, we only received sufficiently large number of responses from Baldwin, Bibb, Monroe, Peach and Houston counties.

Trying to further understand the nature of the business obstacle related to government regulations and/or red tape, we asked only those that identified this obstacle as a major concern to specify if this obstacle referred to government regulations and/or red tape at the **federal, state or local** level. The overwhelming majority (67%) responded that they referred to the federal level for the first half of 2015 and they expect that to be the case (72%) in the second half of 2015 as well. Tables 5 and 7 and Figures 4 and 7 present these results.

OUTLOOK FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 2015

Question 7 asks, **“How likely is it that the second half of 2015 will be a good time for your business to expand in Middle Georgia?”** The Diffusion Index is -13%, which shows that, in general, businesses do not expect to expand their operations in the second half of the year. Tables 8 and 9 and Figure 8 show these results for Middle Georgia as well as for individual counties.

Interestingly, respondents are much more optimistic about the Middle Georgia economy during the second half of the year than about expanding their own businesses. The Diffusion Index for the question **“In general, how do you think the overall economy of Middle Georgia will be doing in the second half of 2015?”** is 29%. Tables 10 and 11 and Figure 9 present this information.

EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN CAPITAL

The average business in Middle Georgia had 113 employees and 77% of the business had less than 100 employees during the first half of 2015 (see Tables 12 and 22).

In general, businesses in Middle Georgia indicated that it was not easy to fill vacancies during the first half of the year. The Diffusion Index for the question **“During the first half of 2015, how easy was it for your company to fill vacancies in Middle Georgia?”** was -26% (see Tables 13 and 14 and Figure 10). When asked about the **main obstacles faced when attempting to fill vacancies in Middle Georgia**, some of the most frequently mentioned factors were high salaries, work ethics, experience, proper training and the fact that workers do not want to move to Macon (see Figure 11).

Question 12 asked **what were the labor skills most difficult to find during the first half of 2015**, the answers with the largest percentages were “sales and customer representatives,” “maintenance and repair workers” and “other” (see Tables 15 and 16). Within this last category, engineers, IT technicians, math tutors and drivers were the skills most frequently mentioned (see Figure 12).

Similar results are found for the expectations for the second half of the year. Question 13 asked **“What particular labor skill sets would you be looking for in potential employees during the second half of 2015?”** The answers with the largest percentages were “sales and customer representatives,” “laborers and freight/stock/material movers” and “other” (see Tables 17 and 18). Within this last category, cooks, drivers and faculty were the skills most frequently mentioned (see Figure 13).

As far as hiring plans for the second half of the year, 68% of the respondents answered that they **plan to hire new employees in the second half of 2015** (32% plan to hire part time employees and 36% plan to hire full time employees). Table 19 presents these results. In question 15 we asked respondents in **which county they planned to hire new employees during the second half of 2015**. Businesses planned to hire almost half of the new employees in Bibb County (42.41%). Houston County comes in a distant second with 20% (see Table 20 and Figure 14).

Consistent with the previous results, only 16% of the respondents plan to reduce the number of employees during the second half of 2015. Most of the businesses that plan to reduce the number of employees are located in Bibb County (41.03%), Houston County (12.82%) and Monroe County (10.26%) (see Tables 21 and 22).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The following information can be found in Tables 22 to 26.

- Approximately 77% of the businesses surveyed in Middle Georgia have less than 100 employees.
- Approximately 60% of our respondents indicated that they were the owners of the business.
- Approximately 85% of the businesses indicated that they are headquartered in Middle Georgia.
- Most of the companies surveyed indicated that they are located in Bibb County (56%), Houston County (22%) and Monroe County (11%). The rest (11%) are located in Baldwin, Jones, Crawford, Peach, Twiggs, Wilkinson, Pulaski and Putnam counties.
- The businesses surveyed operate in a wide range of industries. The top-three percentages are “retail trade” (13%), “health care and social assistance” (12%) and “professional and technical services” (12%).

Tables and Figures

BUSINESS INDICATORS

1. Compared to the expectations you had for the first half of 2015 (January through June)
at the beginning of the year, your company's...

Table 1: Business Indicators for the First-Half of 2015								
Question	Much lower	Lower	About the same	Higher	Much higher	Not applicable	Total Responses	Diffusion Index
Net earnings or income (after taxes) are...	3.17%	15.48%	37.30%	32.14%	2.78%	9.13%	252	16.27%
Unit sales volume is...	2.41%	14.46%	27.71%	32.93%	2.81%	19.68%	249	18.87%
Average selling prices are...	1.21%	6.85%	51.21%	21.37%	2.02%	17.34%	248	15.33%
Total number of employees is...	2.40%	12.40%	58.80%	20.40%	1.20%	4.80%	250	6.80%
Average employee compensation is...	1.20%	5.62%	58.63%	30.52%	0.80%	3.21%	249	24.50%
Inventories are...	1.61%	8.47%	38.31%	12.90%	1.61%	37.10%	248	4.43%
Ability to obtain financing is...	2.44%	5.69%	42.68%	12.20%	3.25%	33.74%	246	7.32%
Capital expenditures for plant and/or physical equipment are...	2.03%	7.32%	44.31%	18.29%	4.88%	23.17%	246	13.82%
Non-labor, non-capital costs are...	0.82%	2.04%	50.61%	28.57%	2.86%	15.10%	245	28.57%
Accounts payable that are past due are...	3.24%	10.93%	45.75%	6.88%	2.02%	31.17%	247	-5.27%

2. Looking ahead to the second half of 2015, exclusively for your company, you expect...

Table 2: Business Indicators for the Second-Half of 2015								
Question	Much lower	Lower	About the same	Higher	Much higher	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Diffusion Index
Net earnings or income (after taxes) to be...	2.70%	9.01%	43.24%	36.04%	4.05%	4.95%	222	28.38%
Unit sales volume to be...	1.82%	9.09%	35.91%	33.64%	3.18%	16.36%	220	25.91%
Average selling prices to be...	1.36%	6.82%	51.82%	21.82%	1.36%	16.82%	220	15.00%
Total number of employees to be...	2.24%	8.07%	66.82%	19.73%	0.00%	3.14%	223	9.42%
Average employee compensation to be...	1.35%	3.59%	73.54%	18.83%	0.00%	2.69%	223	13.89%
Ability to obtain financing to be...	2.26%	6.33%	47.51%	9.50%	0.90%	33.48%	221	1.81%
Inventories to be...	1.36%	4.55%	43.18%	13.64%	1.36%	35.91%	220	9.09%
Capital expenditures for plant and/or physical equipment to be...	2.75%	7.80%	49.08%	16.51%	1.83%	22.02%	218	7.79%
Non-capital, non-labor costs to be...	1.37%	3.20%	60.27%	19.63%	0.91%	14.61%	219	15.97%
Accounts payable that are past due to be...	4.11%	5.48%	55.71%	1.83%	1.37%	31.51%	219	-6.39%

Figure 1a Business Indicators

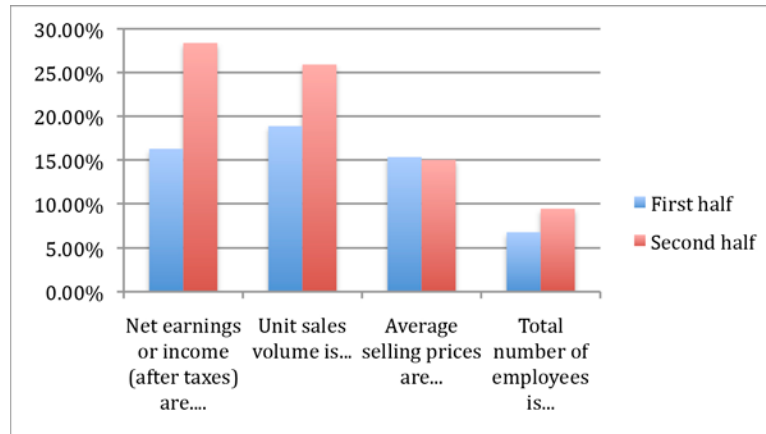


Figure 1b Business Indicators

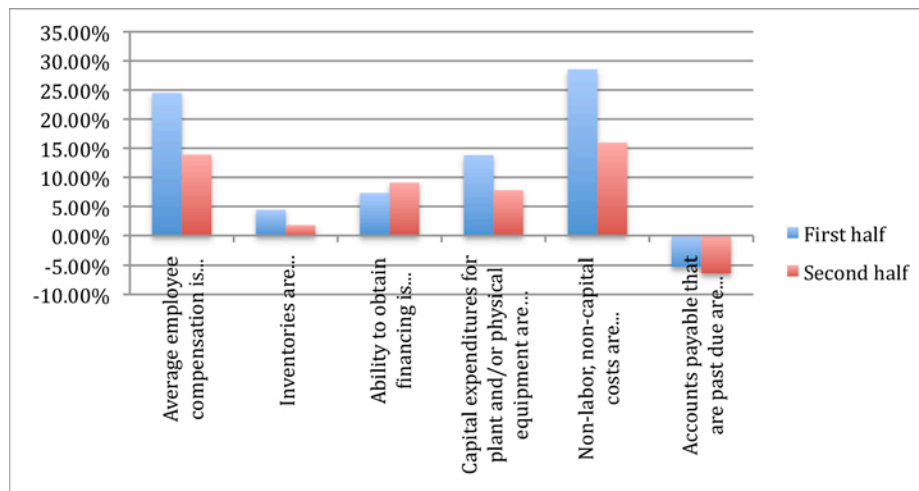


Table 3: Business Indicators Diffusion Indices at the County Level

		Net earnings or income (after taxes) are...	Unit sales volume is...	Average selling prices are...	Total number of employees is...	Average employee compensation is...	Inventories are...	Ability to obtain financing is...	Capital expenditures for plant and/or physical equipment are...	Non-labor, non-capital costs are...	Accounts payable that are past due are...
Middle Georgia	First half	16.27%	18.87%	15.33%	6.80%	24.50%	4.43%	7.32%	13.82%	28.57%	-5.27%
	Second half	28.38%	25.91%	15.00%	9.42%	13.89%	1.81%	9.09%	7.79%	15.97%	-6.39%
Baldwin	First half	55.56%	55.56%	66.67%	11.11%	22.22%	11.11%	44.44%	11.11%	22.22%	-33.33%
	Second half	55.56%	44.44%	44.44%	22.22%	11.11%	33.33%	22.22%	-12.50%	25.00%	-33.33%
Bibb	First half	17.17%	28.57%	18.37%	13.13%	28.28%	3.06%	16.49%	23.47%	23.71%	-5.10%
	Second half	39.39%	35.05%	17.71%	15.15%	18.18%	9.28%	11.34%	15.63%	19.39%	-4.08%
Monroe	First half	15.79%	26.32%	10.53%	-15.79%	5.26%	15.79%	-5.26%	22.22%	31.58%	31.58%
	Second half	23.53%	29.41%	17.65%	-11.76%	-11.76%	-23.53%	17.65%	-5.88%	-11.76%	0.00%
Peach	First half	50.00%	50.00%	33.33%	0.00%	16.67%	66.67%	0.00%	16.67%	16.67%	-16.67%
	Second half	83.33%	83.33%	0.00%	33.33%	16.67%	-16.67%	66.67%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%
Houston	First half	2.56%	-7.69%	12.82%	0.00%	23.68%	7.69%	-7.89%	-2.63%	34.21%	-17.95%
	Second half	12.82%	15.38%	20.00%	-5.00%	10.00%	-7.50%	2.50%	7.50%	20.51%	-7.69%

OBSTACLES TO BUSINESS

3. Please rank the three most significant obstacles that applied to your business during the first half of 2015. Enter 1 next to the most important, 2 next to second most important and 3 next to third most important.

Answer	1	2	3	Other rankings	Total Responses	Intensity Index
Taxes	38	30	39	2	109	11.76%
Inflation	8	19	14	3	44	4.30%
Poor sales	33	25	14	6	78	8.64%
Access to financing	13	14	13	8	48	4.41%
Interest rates	3	11	6	7	27	2.10%
Cost of labor	20	36	34	3	93	9.41%
Quality of labor	36	28	34	3	101	10.88%
Government regulations and/or red tape	51	46	28	4	130	14.63%
Other (please specify)	21	12	17	1	51	5.66%

Figure 2

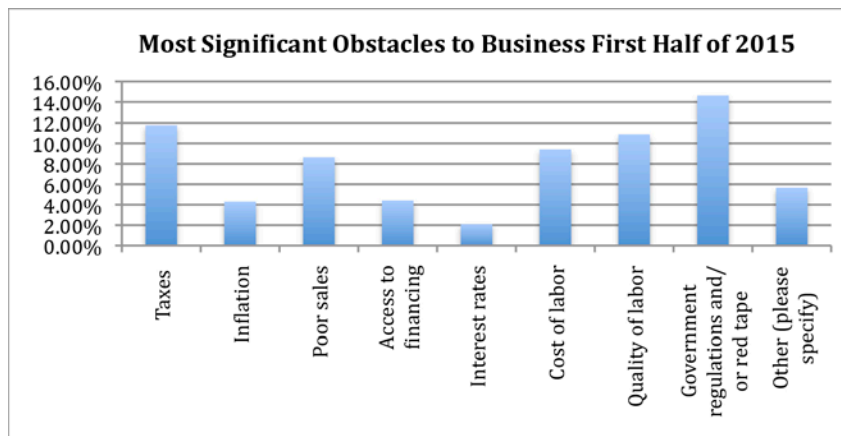


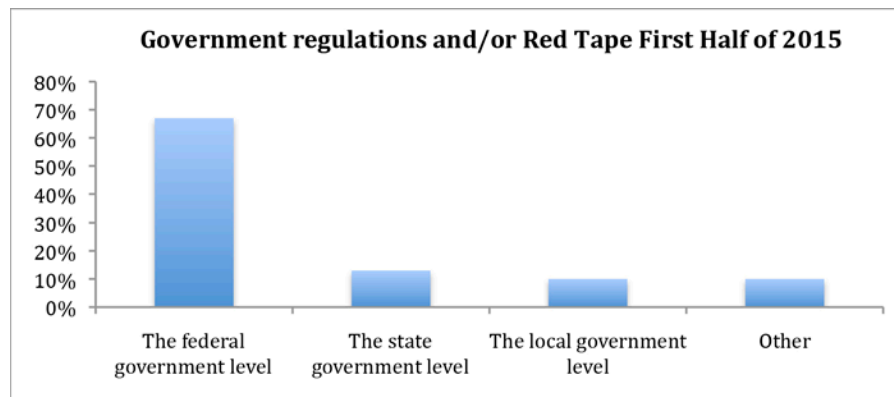
Figure 3: Most Significant Obstacles to Business First Half of 2015 — Other (please specify)



4. You indicated that one of the three most significant obstacles that applied to your business during the first half of 2015 was “government regulations and/or red tape.” Could you identify if such regulations and/or red tape were at...

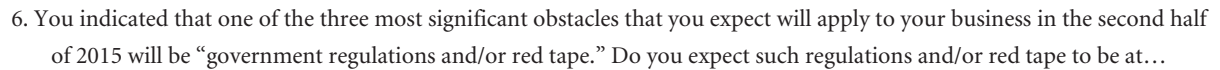
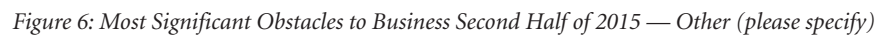
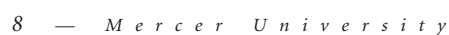
Table 5: Regulations and/or Red Tape First Half of 2015		
Answer	Response	Percentage
The federal government level	85	67%
The state government level	16	13%
The local government level	12	10%
Other	13	10%
Total	126	100%

Figure 4



5. Please rank the three most significant obstacles that you expect will apply to your business in the second half of 2015. Enter 1 next to the most important, 2 next to the second most important and 3 next to the third most important.

Table 6: Most Significant Obstacles to Business Second Half of 2015						
Answer	1	2	3	Other rankings	Total Responses	Intensity Index
Taxes	38	26	33	2	99	12.01%
Inflation	7	11	15	5	38	3.69%
Poor sales	28	21	15	3	67	8.32%
Access to financing	12	13	9	6	40	4.26%
Interest rates	6	4	10	3	23	2.27%
Cost of labor	17	47	27	1	92	10.67%
Quality of labor	38	26	33	2	99	12.01%
Government regulations and/or red tape	53	38	27	1	119	15.42%
Other (please specify)	19	7	12	1	39	4.91%

Figure 7

OUTLOOK FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 2015

7. How likely is it that the second half of 2015 will be a good time for your business to expand in Middle Georgia?

Table 8: Likelihood of Business Expansion in the Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Very Unlikely	24	11%
Unlikely	72	33%
Undecided	53	24%
Likely	58	26%
Very Likely	12	5%
Total	219	100%
Diffusion Index		-13.00%

Figure 8

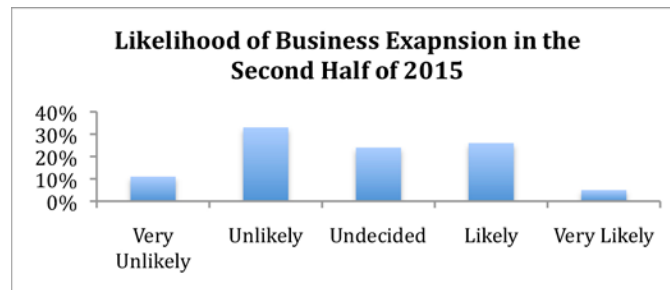


Table 9: Likelihood of Business Expansion in the Second Half of 2015 at the County Level						
Answer	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Very Unlikely	11%	11.11%	4.26%	16.67%	0.00%	25.00%
Unlikely	33%	44.44%	34.04%	33.33%	33.33%	27.50%
Undecided	24%	33.33%	28.72%	27.78%	33.33%	15.00%
Likely	26%	0.00%	32.98%	16.67%	0.00%	27.50%
Very Likely	5%	11.11%	0.00%	5.56%	33.33%	5.00%
Responses	219	9	94	18	6	40
Diffusion Index	-13.00%	-44.44%	-5.32%	-27.78%	0.00%	-20.00%

8. In general, how do you think the overall economy of Middle Georgia will be doing in the second half of 2015?

Table 10: Outlook of the Middle Georgia Economy for the Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Much Worse	1	0%
Worse	13	6%
About the Same	125	58%
Better	73	34%
Much Better	3	1%
Total	215	100%
Diffusion Index		29.00%

Figure 9

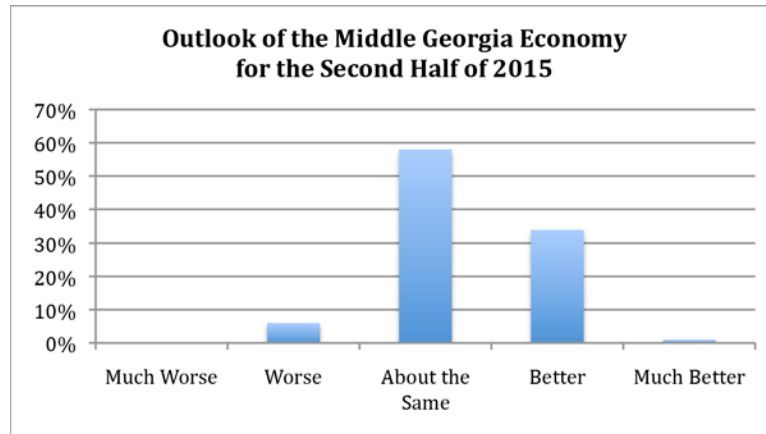


Table 11: Outlook of the Middle Georgia Economy for the Second Half of 2015 at the County Level						
Answer	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Much Worse	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.50%
Worse	6.00%	12.50%	3.03%	0.00%	16.67%	10.00%
About the Same	58.00%	50.00%	57.58%	66.67%	16.67%	52.50%
Better	34.00%	37.50%	38.38%	33.33%	66.67%	32.50%
Much Better	1.00%	0.00%	1.01%	0.00%	0.00%	2.50%
Responses	215	8	99	18	6	40
Diffusion Index	29.00%	25.00%	36.36%	33.33%	50.00%	22.50%

EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN CAPITAL

9. Approximately, how many employees do you currently have, full- and part-time, in the Middle Georgia area?

Table 12: Number of Employees						
	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Average	112.90	71.89	79.37	15.53	212.00	14.63
Standard Deviation	272.20	162.06	257.45	33.68	260.87	24.32
Total responses	211	9	100	19	6	40

10. During the first half of 2015, how easy was it for your company to fill vacancies in Middle Georgia?

Table 13: Easiness of Filling Vacancies		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Very Difficult	8	4%
Difficult	87	40%
Neutral	81	38%
Easy	33	15%
Very Easy	6	3%
Total	215	100%
Diffusion Index		-26%

Figure 10

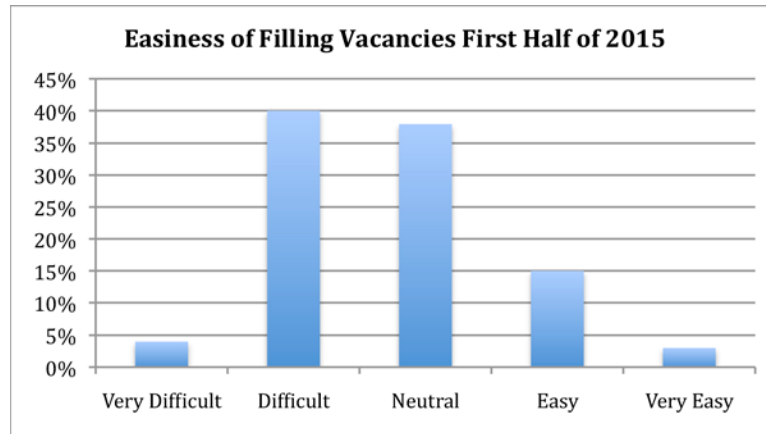
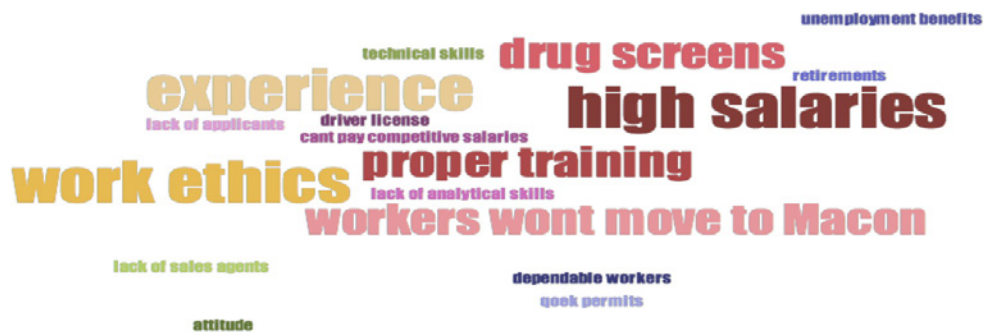


Table 14: Easiness of Filling Vacancies at the County Level						
Answer	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Very Difficult	4.00%	0.00%	5.00%	5.56%	0.00%	5.13%
Difficult	40.00%	66.67%	37.00%	50.00%	33.33%	35.90%
Neutral	38.00%	22.22%	41.00%	16.67%	33.33%	43.59%
Easy	15.00%	11.11%	15.00%	16.67%	16.67%	12.82%
Very Easy	3.00%	0.00%	2.00%	11.11%	16.67%	2.56%
Responses	215	9	100	18	6	39
Diffusion Index	-26.00%	-55.56%	-25.00%	-27.78%	0.00%	-25.64%

11. What was the main obstacle that you faced during the first half of 2015 when attempting to fill vacancies in Middle Georgia?

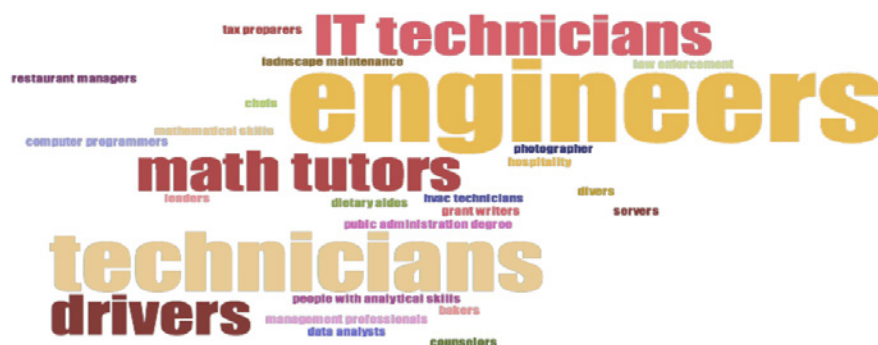
Figure 11: Main Obstacles Faced When Filling Vacancies First Half of 2015



12. Did you have any difficulty finding employees with particular labor skill sets during the first half of 2015? If so, what labor skill sets were the most difficult to find? Please mark all that apply.

Answer	Responses	Percentage
Sales and customer representatives	51	19.69%
Cashiers and clerks	12	4.63%
Office and administration support	23	8.88%
Laborers and freight/stock/material movers	15	5.79%
Machinists, welders, cutters, solderers and brazers	6	2.32%
Maintenance and repair workers	27	10.42%
Industrial production managers	2	0.77%
Marketing professionals	17	6.56%
Finance and accounting professionals	13	5.02%
Lawyers and legal representatives	5	1.93%
Healthcare practitioners	14	5.41%
Agricultural workers	3	1.16%
Other (please specify)	53	20.46%
Construction workers and supervisors	18	6.95%

Figure 12 : Skills Most Difficult to Find First Half of 2015 — Other (please specify)



Answer	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Sales and customer representatives	19.69%	16.67%	17.43%	26.92%	22.22%	14.89%
Cashiers and clerks	4.63%	8.33%	0.92%	7.69%	0.00%	8.51%
Office and administration support	8.88%	16.67%	9.17%	0.00%	0.00%	6.38%
Laborers and freight/stock/material movers	5.79%	8.33%	3.67%	11.54%	11.11%	8.51%
Machinists, welders, cutters, solderers and brazers	2.32%	0.00%	2.75%	3.85%	11.11%	2.13%
Maintenance and repair workers	10.42%	0.00%	9.17%	15.38%	33.33%	8.51%
Industrial production managers	0.77%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.13%
Marketing professionals	6.56%	8.33%	8.26%	3.85%	0.00%	10.64%
Finance and accounting professionals	5.02%	0.00%	8.26%	3.85%	0.00%	4.26%
Lawyers and legal representatives	1.93%	8.33%	2.75%	0.00%	11.11%	0.00%
Healthcare practitioners	5.41%	8.33%	6.42%	0.00%	0.00%	4.26%
Agricultural workers	1.16%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.13%
Other (please specify)	20.46%	16.67%	22.02%	23.08%	0.00%	21.28%
Construction workers and supervisors	6.95%	8.33%	9.17%	3.85%	11.11%	6.38%

13. What particular labor skill sets would you be looking for in potential employees during the second half of 2015?

Table 17: Labor Skills Needed Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Sales and customer representatives	32	22%
Cashiers and clerks	7	5%
Office and administration support	12	8%
Laborers and freight/stock/material movers	16	11%
Construction workers and supervisors	9	6%
Agricultural workers	0	0%
Machinists, welders, cutters, solderers and brazers	1	1%
Maintenance and repair workers	8	6%
Industrial production managers	0	0%
Marketing professionals	10	7%
Finance and accounting professionals	9	6%
Lawyers and legal representatives	2	1%
Healthcare practitioners	9	6%
Other (please specify)	30	21%

Figure 13: Labor Skills Needed Second Half of 2015 - Other (please specify)

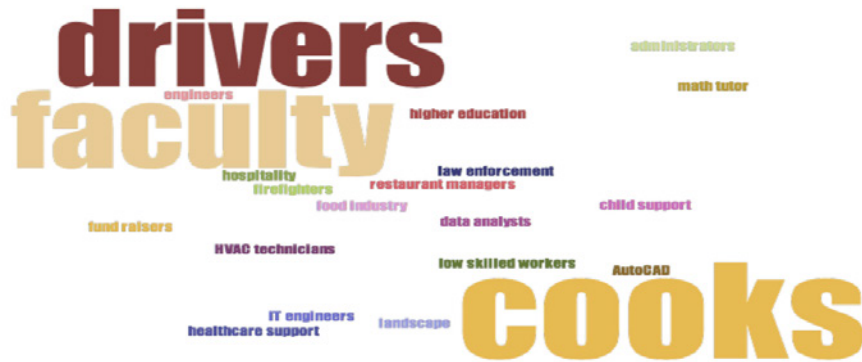


Table 18: Labor Skills Needed Second Half of 2015 at the County Level						
Answer	Middle Georgia	Baldwin	Bibb	Monroe	Peach	Houston
Sales and customer representatives	22%	0.00%	17.9%	30.00%	50.00%	29.17%
Cashiers and clerks	5%	12.50%	1.5%	10.00%	25.00%	4.17%
Office and administration support	8%	0.00%	10.4%	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%
Laborers and freight/stock/material movers	11%	12.50%	9.0%	0.00%	25.00%	8.33%
Construction workers and supervisors	6%	0.00%	10.4%	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%
Agricultural workers	0%	0.00%	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Machinists, welders, cutters, solderers and brazers	1%	0.00%	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%
Maintenance and repair workers	6%	0.00%	4.5%	10.00%	0.00%	8.33%
Industrial production managers	0%	0.00%	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Marketing professionals	7%	12.50%	9.0%	10.00%	0.00%	8.33%
Finance and accounting professionals	6%	0.00%	7.5%	10.00%	0.00%	8.33%
Lawyers and legal representatives	1%	12.50%	1.5%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Healthcare practitioners	6%	12.50%	7.5%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other (please specify)	21%	37.50%	20.9%	30.00%	0.00%	16.67%

14. If you plan to hire new employees in Middle Georgia during the second half of 2015, will they mostly be...

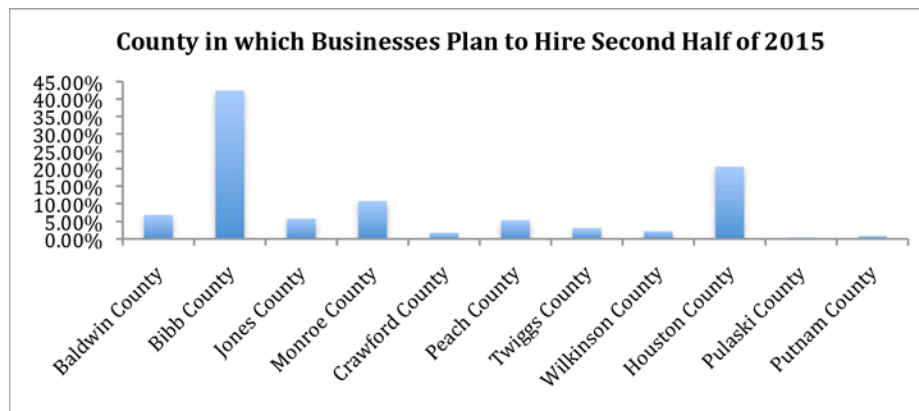
Table 19: Type of Employees that Businesses Plan to Hire Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Part Time	69	32%
Full Time	77	36%
We do not plan to hire new employees	67	31%
Total	213	100%

15. In which Middle Georgia county do you plan to hire new employees during the second half 2015?

Please check all that apply.

Table 20: County in which Businesses Plan to Hire Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Baldwin County	15	6.70%
Bibb County	95	42.41%
Jones County	13	5.80%
Monroe County	24	10.71%
Crawford County	4	1.79%
Peach County	12	5.36%
Twiggs County	7	3.13%
Wilkinson County	5	2.23%
Houston County	46	20.54%
Pulaski County	1	0.45%
Putnam County	2	0.89%

Figure 14



16. If you plan to REDUCE the number of employees in Middle Georgia during the second half of 2015, will those affected mostly be...

Table 21: Type of Employees that Businesses Plan to Reduce Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Part Time	16	8%
Full Time	18	8%
We do not plan to reduce the number of employees	179	84%
Total	213	100%

17. In which Middle Georgia County do you plan to REDUCE the number of employees during the second half of 2015?

Please check all that apply.

Table 22: County in which Businesses Plan to Reduce Employees Second Half of 2015		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Baldwin County	3	7.69%
Bibb County	16	41.03%
Jones County	2	5.13%
Monroe County	4	10.26%
Crawford County	1	2.56%
Peach County	2	5.13%
Twiggs County	2	5.13%
Wilkinson County	3	7.69%
Houston County	5	12.82%
Pulaski County	0	0.00%
Putnam County	1	2.56%

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

18. Approximately, how many employees do you currently have, full- and part-time, in the Middle Georgia area?

Table 23: Number of Employees		
Number of employees	Number of Businesses	Percentage
Under 10	31	31%
10 to 20	12	12%
21 to 50	21	21%
51 to 100	13	13%
101 to 500	18	18%
501 to 1,000	3	3%
1,001 +	2	2%

19. Do you own your business?

Table 24: Business Ownership		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Yes	127	60%
No	85	40%
Total	212	100%

20. Is your company headquartered in Middle Georgia?

Table 25: Company Headquartered in Middle Georgia		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Yes	181	85%
No	31	15%
Total	212	100%

21. In which Middle Georgia County is your principal office located?

Table 26: Principal Office Location		
Answer	Response	Percentage
Baldwin County	9	5%
Bibb County	100	56%
Jones County	3	2%
Monroe County	19	11%
Crawford County	1	1%
Peach County	6	3%
Twiggs County	1	1%
Wilkinson County	0	0%
Houston County	40	22%
Pulaski County	1	1%
Putnam County	0	0%
Total	180	100%

22. Please classify your major business activity using one of the categories below.

Table 27: Business Classification		
Answer	Responses	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1	0%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2	1%
Construction	12	6%
Manufacturing	8	4%
Utilities	1	0%
Wholesale trade	4	2%
Retail trade	27	13%
Transportation and warehousing	3	1%
Information	3	1%
Finance and insurance	23	11%
Real estate and rental and leasing	15	7%
Professional and technical services	26	12%
Management of companies and enterprises	0	0%
Administrative and waste services	1	0%
Educational services	10	5%
Health care and social assistance	26	12%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	7	3%
Accommodation and food services	11	5%
Other services, except public administration	10	5%
Public administration	8	4%
Unclassified	14	7%
Total	212	100%

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