

Office for National Statistics - UK Unemployment 3 mths to Aug '09

The employment rate and the number of people in employment have fallen. The number of vacancies is unchanged. The number of unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the claimant count have increased. The number of inactive people of working age and the inactivity rate have increased. Growth in average earnings, both excluding and including bonuses, has fallen.

The employment rate for people of working age was 72.6 per cent for the three months to August 2009. It is down 0.3 from the previous quarter and down 1.8 over the year. The total number of people in employment for the three months to August 2009 was 28.95 million, down 45,000 over the quarter and down 467,000 over the year.

The unemployment rate was 7.9 per cent for the three months to August 2009. It is up 0.3 over the previous quarter and up 2.1 over the year. The number of unemployed people increased by 88,000 over the quarter and by 677,000 over the year, to reach 2.47 million. Short-term (up to six months duration) unemployment has fallen by 57,000 over the quarter to reach 1.36 million. This is the first quarterly fall in this series since the three months to March 2008.

The claimant count, which measures the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, reached 1.63 million in September 2009. It has not been higher since April 1997. While the total number of claimants increased by 20,800 over the previous month, the number of claimants of up to six months duration fell by 2,500.

The number of redundancies in the three months to August 2009 was 233,000, down 68,000 over the quarter but up 85,000 over the year.

There were 434,000 job vacancies in the three months to September 2009, unchanged over the previous quarter but down 163,000 over the year.

The inactivity rate for people of working age was 21.0 per cent for the three months to August 2009, up 0.1 both over the previous quarter and over the year. The number of economically inactive people of working age rose by 50,000 over the quarter and by 80,000 over the year to reach 7.97 million.

Average earnings, excluding bonuses, increased by 1.9 per cent in the three months to August 2009 compared with the previous year. This is the lowest annual growth rate since comparable records began in 2001. Average earnings, including bonuses, increased by 1.6 per cent in the three months to August 2009.

Steve Royston, until recently a resident of Riyadh and still an RGBB member has written in to the RGBB News with some observations and advice which may prove 'interesting' to many of us during these 'interesting' times.

Unemployment in the UK is topping 2.5 million and rising. Even at the top of the tree, people who would move effortlessly from one highly-rewarded job to another every few years are looking over their shoulders anxiously. Careers on the upward plane are stalling. Personal networks don't work as they used to because people are focused on retaining their own positions on the ladder rather than helping their friends. New members are flocking to LinkedIn to try and find "new friends". For goodness sake, Sven-Goran Eriksson is working at Notts County. But more about football later.

More than most, expatriate managers and executives in the Middle East know a thing or two about the simple twists of fate. Has there ever been job security in Dubai, in Riyadh, in Bahrain? Back in the UK, many of today's high-flyers were at school or University last time a serious recession bit. Not for nothing do economists describe events like the Saudi oil embargo of 1973 and the meltdown of the banking system in 2008 as "shocks". And on a personal level it's shocking to find the stable foundation of a lifestyle or a career shaken.



Interesting times demand interesting solutions. Michael Owen, scorer of 43 goals for England, found himself in a personal recession of the mind and body. He was becalmed at Newcastle in a losing team, and struggling to resurrect his career after string of serious injuries. His advisors came up with a bright idea. Why not produce a 16-page glossy brochure extolling Michael's skills, his track record and his newly-restored fitness, and send it to all the top clubs in England and the Continent? So they did. The result was increased press coverage and an expectation among managers that there would be competition for Michael's services. Is that what caused Sir Alex Ferguson to sign him to Manchester United? Probably not. But what created a stir was the fact that a high-profile player like Owen was packaged and marketed like a product or a company – features, benefits and all.

The Business Within



“I am the best. I do not need to advertise myself. People know my track record. People come running after me.” Except now.

We in Career Advantage think that it’s an approach worth considering. In the UK there has for decades been a flourishing market for freelance consultants, interim managers and technical specialists who operate through personal service companies. They may be one-man businesses, but they market themselves as businesses, not as people. The successful ones know what they are good at, they know what markets they are in, and they are experienced at presenting their features and benefits in front of their clients. Should people who hold down senior positions within their organizations be any different? For all the reasons we discussed earlier – economic uncertainty, corporate volatility, increased competition for fewer opportunities – we suggest that everyone on the corporate ladder should recognize that they are involved in two businesses: the organization that employs them and the organization that provides the services – themselves. And each should receive the fullest attention.

Is this stating the obvious? Perhaps, but our experience suggests that many people in senior corporate roles put their hearts and souls into the cause that employs them, but neglect their own cause. When the time comes for a move they find themselves woefully underprepared to launch their personal product on the job market. So they dredge up the CV that got them their last job ten year ago and add a couple of paragraphs to bring it up to date, instead of thinking “what do I have to offer an employer now?”, “which of my skills are valuable today and in the future?”, and “who is likely to want to employ me?”. They forget that an interview is a multimedia experience – interactivity, tone, body language, learning, listening, questioning. That takes practice and preparation. And what about research? Finding out about the potential employer – their business, their culture, their finances and their challenges?

The time and effort needed to manage a career is

often the reason why very capable and experienced executives find themselves in a rut, or worse still, in a hole. Career Advantage provides a solution.

We don’t find people jobs. There are thousands of companies in that business. What we do is act as personal marketing team for people who don’t have the time to attend to their personal proposition. We help our clients to hone their marketing collateral (more often a carefully prepared CV than a 16-page glossy brochure), prepare themselves for interviews by coaching and practice, research the market for their services, provide profiles of companies who are interested in them, and for people who are looking to work in the Middle East for the first time, we provide personal introductions to people who are already living and working here.

Career Advantage is not just a resource for expatriates. Saudis, Emiratis and Bahrainis are just as concerned about their careers as everyone else working in the Middle East. They have additional challenges: the need to market themselves in two languages; the need to show that they are ready step into roles with increasing responsibility in a market that sometimes values qualifications over capability.

With the CEO of HSBC warning of a double-dip recession in the UK (hang on, we haven’t emerged from the first one yet!), and other sages warning of increased political and social volatility likely to spill over into the Middle East, it’s easy to retreat into gloom. But we would suggest that there is no better time for executives to make sure that they are fit, ready and focused on their personal propositions if the worst should occur, or indeed to take advantage of the upside when it arrives.

And that means attending to the Business Within.

Steve can be contacted via the website www.careeradvantage-uk.com or by email: steve.royston@careeradvantage-uk.com

Personal Ads

We’ve been asked to consider the inclusion of smaller advert spaces in next years RGBB magazines.

As examples, a Box this size would be charged at SR300 and a box like the one to the left would be charged at SR450.

For more information contact Andrew Mead on andrew@sbtd.co.uk

Oh and by the way
The Ad on the left is a REAL one!