

"How's Business?"

Friends and business partners have asked this question occasionally since I started Palmer Group 11 years ago. A year ago this was mostly part of introductions or casual conversation. It's different now. In 2009 I'm asked the same question at least three times more than before. Now when they ask, they look me right in the eye with more "intent". And I get it... Employment has always been a good indicator for how the economy is doing and everyone's interested in that these days!

So...in case I do not see you soon and you happen to be interested, here's what we're seeing in the market today:

- There have been no sizeable "reductions" in Central Iowa in the past month or two. While more announcements may come this fall, there is a definite slow down in large scale job cuts.
- We employ a relatively large number of temporary professionals throughout the market. Overtime hours these people are working have increased steadily over the past month...a sign of increasing demand.
- The number of new positions we are asked to fill has also increased steadily. Nothing dramatic, volumes continue to lag behind last year at this time...but an increase from 2-3 months ago for sure.
- People we're working with are landing new positions. And in more cases recently they are seeing more than one solid option before they make their decision.

In summary, it's beginning to feel to us like the employment market is slowly but surely turning. Nothing significant...but steady. Kind of like a big ship turning in the ocean. If we do meet soon please don't hesitate to ask about our business or the job market. Many of our business partners have learned and adapted to the challenges of the recession. These days "How's Business?" is once again uncovering genuine excitement for the future.