



SURVEY FINDS COMPANY EXPECTATIONS ARE LEVELING OFF BUSINESS OUTLOOK IS SLOWING SLIGHTLY FOR 2018

Dedham, Mass. – January 30, 2018 – Insight Performance, a human resources consulting and employee benefits firm which recently merged with [OneDigital Health and Benefits](#), has issued results from its seventh annual Human Resources Programs & Business Climate survey. The survey, conducted in partnership with the Business Association of New England consists of respondents primarily of New England businesses varying in size. Respondents were asked to identify trends regarding business conditions, hiring and employee benefits and programs.

A snapshot of the results includes the following:

- Status quo prevails in 2018. Fifty percent (50%) of companies are doing better than they were twelve (12) months ago, but that is a decline over last year.
- The biggest challenge facing companies continues to be recruiting at forty-two percent (42%) with retaining employees as the next biggest challenge.
- Fewer companies this year expect 2018 to be a better year than when asked last year about 2017, with sixty-five percent (65%) of companies reporting that they expect a better year. This is down thirteen percent (13%).

“While it seems that company performance is leveling off, recruiting and retention remain top priorities as companies work to find and keep the best talent,” said Mike Ward, Managing Principal, Insight Performance/OneDigital Health and Benefits. “We’re seeing an increase in the use of variable compensation as another way to retain employees.”

Some of the key findings from the HR Programs & Business Climate survey include the following:

Current business conditions: Outlook is leveling off

- 50% of respondents saw an improvement in business conditions in 2017 compared to 56% who reported improvements in 2016.
- 44% of companies report the same business conditions (increase of 9% from last year’s survey).
- 65% expect 2018 to be better than 2017 (decrease of 13% from last year’s survey).

Compensation: Companies are using compensation and variable compensation to retain employees

- 83% of companies plan to give increases to base pay in 2018 compared to 72% last year, while only 17% plan to freeze salaries at current levels compared to 31% last year.
- Of those expecting to provide a base pay increase, 94% of respondents are planning for increases up to 4%, and 6% are planning increases greater than 4% which represents a slight increase in the number of companies paying over 4%.
- 30% of companies do not plan to pay out bonuses in 2018, which is down from last year indicating that more companies are using incentive or variable compensation.

- Of those intending to pay out bonus or incentives, most will do so based on a combination of company and individual performance guidelines.

Employee benefits: Employers continue to put value in their employees' benefits

- The majority of companies offer the following benefits to full-time employees:
 - Medical Insurance
 - Dental Insurance
 - Long-Term and Short-Term Disability Insurance
 - Life Insurance
- The most popular fringe benefits employers are offering are:
 - Bereavement Leave
 - Company Outings
 - Paid Maternity Leave
 - Telecommuting
 - Employee Assistance Programs

“The survey results indicate that a few years of slow and steady growth, company performance is still good, but leveling off a bit. With a focus on attracting and retaining employees, compensation and benefits is becoming even more important to employers,” said Ward. “This year we also asked about performance management and we expect to see a trend in the future towards on-going feedback and separating out merit increases from the performance management program.”

The New England Business Association and Insight Performance’s HR Programs & Business Climate survey was conducted in December 2017, to identify trends regarding business conditions, hiring and employee benefits and programs. The survey primarily targeted smaller businesses in New England and most respondents were from the following industries: Professional Services (23%), Manufacturing (22%), and Non-Profit (16%)

To obtain the entire survey report, please contact Nancy Saperstone at nsaperstone@insightperformance.com.

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About OneDigital Health and Benefits

[OneDigital Health and Benefits](#), the nation’s largest company focused exclusively on employee benefits, combines people and technology to deliver the new generation of health and benefits. OneDigital stands as one with its clients, delivering fresh thinking ahead of the market, strategic consulting and innovative solutions that give clients peace of mind that their health and benefit plan designs are future-proof. Serving companies of all sizes, OneDigital offers employers a sophisticated combination of strategic advisory services, analytics, compliance support, human resources capital management tools and comprehensive insurance offerings. Headquartered in Atlanta, OneDigital has more than 1000+ employees throughout the country, serves 35,000 companies and manages nearly \$4.5 billion in premiums. Formerly known as Digital Insurance and Digital Benefit Advisors, the company has been named to the Inc. 5000 List of America’s fastest-growing companies every year since the honor’s inception in 2007.

About Insight Performance

Insight offers full-service Human Resources and Benefits solutions for small to mid-size companies, bringing a creative approach to managing human resources, gleaned from our involvement with existing clients and combined professional experience. Insight also supports organizations that are pursuing seamlessly integrated employee benefits and compliance solutions. Delivering out-of-the-box concepts on plan design, combined with thoughtful and creative options for employees. Founded in 1995, Insight Performance, Inc. is recognized as a national industry leader in human resources, providing proven and cost-effective HR solutions and employee benefits. Insight's mission is to deliver high quality, cost-effective HR consulting services and benefits brokerage to small to mid-sized employers, ranging from 1 to 1,000 employees.

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