

# BUSINESS CONFIDENCE REPORT

WINTER 2016



## In the *past 6 months*:

- **69%** of respondents reported **increased production**
- **65%** reported increased **new customer orders**
- **48% increased employees**, with only 6% decreasing their employees

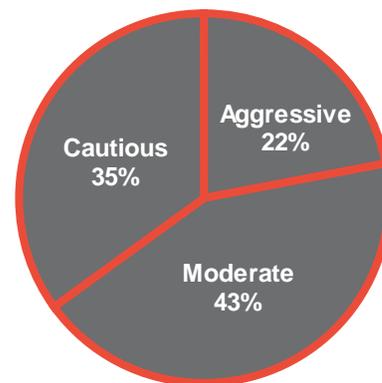
## In the *next 6 months*:

- **44%** of respondents expect to **hire more employees**, with only 4% predicting a decrease
- **55%** expect an **increase in profits**, with only 13% predicting a decrease
- **50%** expect to **increase investments in locations and equipment**, with only 6% expecting a decrease

## Capital Expenditures

### Local executives mindful of global trends

The majority of CEOs took a moderate or cautious stance towards capital expenditures, which are important for the continued growth of infrastructure and productivity. Uncertainty regarding global players such as China may postpone expenditures due to concerns about the return on investments. The chart to the right illustrates respondents attitudes toward capital expenditures in Winter 2016.



# Businesses Report

## Top Impediments to Growth

Permits and Regulations  
Shortage of Skilled Labor  
Cost of Labor

CEOs cited Shortage of Skilled Labor, Permits & Regulations, and Cost of Labor as the top impediments to growth, followed by Competition and Lack of Demand. Sonoma County agencies are dedicated to helping address these impediments to growth. Some examples of this work are described below.

### Sonoma County Agencies Alleviating Growth Impediments



#### Sonoma County PRMD

Sonoma County Permits and Resource Management Department is now offering an online permit manager to streamline the permit process. View the PRMD Website for more information.



#### Economic Development Board & Sonoma County Job Link

The EDB's Business Services Program, in partnership with Sonoma County Job Link, provides services to job seekers and specializes in helping companies fill vacant positions by connecting businesses with a diversity of skilled job seekers.



#### Free business support services:

- Screening candidates
- Coordinating hiring fairs, and;
- Connecting businesses to hiring subsidies and tax credits.

### Survey Metrics

111 Sonoma County businesses representing 12,464 employees participated in the Winter 2016 Business Confidence Survey. These businesses represent a variety of industries and responded with their forecasts on business conditions and key concerns for future success. Here's how the businesses breakdown by size:

Business Size	Number Responded
500+ employees	3
101-500 employees	19
51-100 employees	17
26-50 employees	25
11-25 employees	21
1-10 employees	26

Please direct any questions regarding this information to Economic Research Coordinator Brian Marland at [brian.marland@sonoma-county.org](mailto:brian.marland@sonoma-county.org).