



MINNESOTA
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

GROWING MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA

2019 BUSINESS BENCHMARKS

Sizing up
Minnesota's
business and
economic climate



Executive Summary



As we travel the state meeting with business leaders and our valued chamber members, we quiz them on what makes their companies tick, and a common theme emerges: Employees are at the heart of their success.

Quiz the same leaders on their biggest challenges today. Another similar thread: Finding enough skilled and qualified workers to fill their vacancies.

Our talented workforce is the secret sauce that drives our economy, but our state's chief advantage is showing signs of stress. The state's labor shortage is expected to hit 239,000 by 2022.

The challenge underscores the importance of strengthening Minnesota's overall business climate, a message that resounds in Minnesota's Business Benchmarks. We're pleased to present our fourth annual report, a compilation of objective data that sizes up Minnesota's economic strengths and weaknesses when measured against other states. The benchmarks identify opportunities to build on our strengths as well as threats to continued economic success.

This year's report offers more than just data. We're telling the story of Minnesota's economy through real business leaders. These voices – whether a nursery or a manufacturer, a high-tech engineer or a job recruiter – are all bullish on Minnesota. They also represent how Minnesota companies are confronting the challenges to grow a better future together.

Among the findings:

- Innovation remains a strength of our homegrown economy.
- Our economy is growing but at a slower pace compared with many other states.
- Minnesota saw a slight improvement in tax rankings, but we still are in the five highest tax rates for both corporate and individual taxes.
- Minnesota continues to make progress in infrastructure improvements – an important factor in our ability to compete in a global marketplace.

The Business Benchmarks is a great tool to frame constructive conversations on how Minnesota can remain competitive in today's ever-changing global economy. It's especially timely as Minnesota elects a new governor. The new administration will lead a state that has tremendous strengths such as a talented and highly educated workforce, high innovation and a diverse economy. We must protect those strengths by addressing public policies essential to growing businesses and the overall state economy.

Working together, we will strengthen the business environment to improve the lives of all Minnesotans. ■



Doug Loon
President, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

Find all sources for this report at mnchamber.com/benchmarks.



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2019 MINNESOTA BUSINESS BENCHMARKS

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Economy

Like most business leaders, Dave Thomas keeps a watchful eye on St. Paul when the Legislature is in session. Legislative decisions directly impact his business, SJE, in Detroit Lakes.

As company CEO, he watches the nation's capital, too. The dynamics of a global economy are very real to SJE and its employees. "About 20 percent of our sales are into countries outside the United States," Thomas says. "We export to 40 countries with substantial activity in Canada and Latin America."

SJE is a global manufacturer of control and monitoring systems. The company produced its first control for cabin owners to know when septic tanks were full. Today, it produces controls for a variety of residential, commercial, municipal, industrial and agricultural applications.

Minnesota experienced an uptick in exports during 2017. Those fortunes, however, have turned for some companies this past year. Tariffs and trade disputes are problematic for SJE as well as pump industries that use its controls. "It does not help us at all," Thomas says. As examples, he cites a 25-percent tariff on almost every product made in China and



"About 20 percent of our sales are into countries outside the United States."

a 10-percent tariff on products sold into Canada. SJE has benefited from aggressive growth and a strong U.S. economy. Sales and profits have improved nicely, resulting in increased shareholder value for employees.

At the same time, it has meant much tighter competition for workers. Wages have increased, and starting salaries have risen dramatically in our market. The worker shortage also has resulted in the company shifting some production to other U.S. facilities. The fact that SJE is able to move around some of its work also has likely insulated it from the slower economic growth in Minnesota compared with the rest of the nation.

The one business cost that is skyrocketing for SJE is health care. "It's stunning," Thomas says, when the company receives its annual notice of premium renewals. "We cover

80 percent of the costs. We have generous benefits so cost increases really hurt us."

Thomas underscores the need to develop a strong pipeline of skilled workers, particularly from post-secondary institutions. "This is an area we are trying to invest in, because trying to pull someone to an outstate location like Detroit Lakes is usually either difficult or expensive." ■

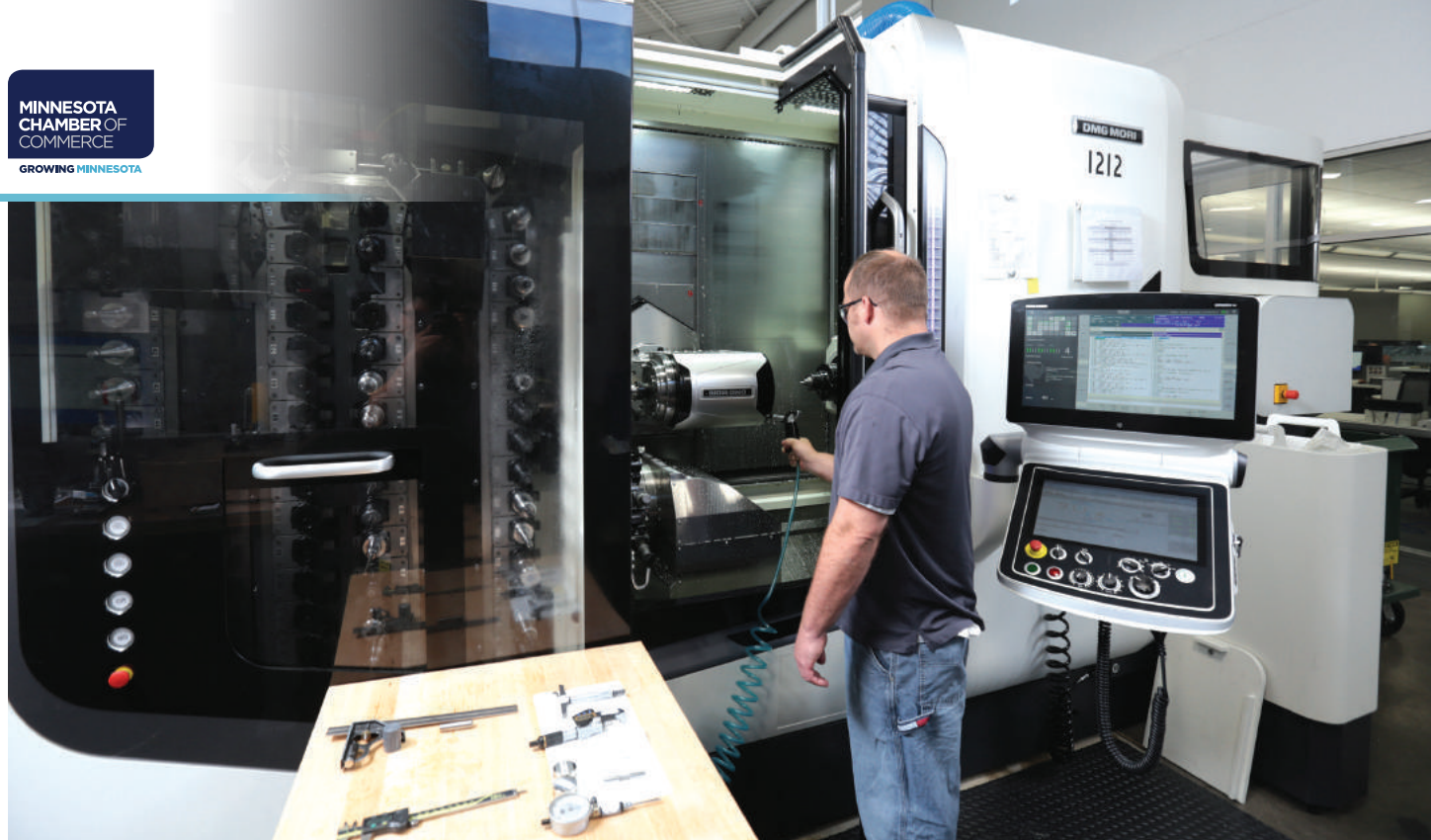
Minnesota's Economy: Expanding

Still lagging behind other states in some key indicators

As the nation experiences historic economic expansion, so does Minnesota. This good news, coupled with a turnaround in exports, means more jobs, increased wages for workers and more trade opportunities. Some of Minnesota's industries saw GDP growth slower than the national average between 2016 and 2017, including mining, quarrying and natural gas extraction, and information services. Others, including education, health care and social services, and wholesale trade, saw larger than average gains. But data show that Minnesota's growth has been slower than other states and lags in some key indicators, likely due to factors within the state's control – high taxes, the cost of doing business and a tight labor market. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS BEST

GROWTH IN STATE GDP	2017 Ranked 23rd 1.9% growth National Average: 2.1%	WORSE 15 SPOTS FROM 2016 
ANNUAL EXPORTS	2017 Ranked 29th 7.5% National Average: 6.6%	SAME RANKING AS 2016 
ANNUAL JOB GROWTH	2018 Ranked 27th 1.7% National Average: 1.76%	WORSE 12 SPOTS FROM 2017 
PERSONAL INCOME GROWTH	2017 Ranked 19th 2.5% growth National Average: 2.5%	WORSE 3 SPOTS FROM 2016 
OUTPUT PER WORKING ADULT	2016 Ranked 13th \$83,672 National Average: \$78,304	WORSE 2 SPOTS FROM 2015 
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	2018 Ranked 8th 2.9% U.S. Unemployment Rate: 3.9%	BETTER 7 SPOTS FROM 2017 



Taxes

Eric Gibson, president of UMC, Inc., a precision manufacturer in Monticello, readily admits: “I manage conservatively. Two hundred lives depend on my decisions.”

No factor looms bigger in his day-to-day decisions than Minnesota’s uncompetitive and uncertain business tax climate.

“Uncertainty kills our investment. We tend to sit on the sidelines,” he says. “It is difficult to make plans for future growth and investment. Will Minnesota conform to the new federal tax code? Right now, it’s a total crapshoot.”

Setting aside money for potential tax ramifications reduces the dollars available to invest in people and equipment.

UMC has experienced strong growth during the past decade. Even so, high taxes constraining investment and a shortage of qualified workers have put a damper on growth.

The company’s history and its experienced workforce give UMC an advantage in a very competitive market, Gibson says. Quality systems also ensure its products meet the rigors of customer demands. Its contract manufacturing niche is in hard-to-cut metals with tight tolerances and the need for



“We don’t need to be the lowest, but a move toward the middle would level the playing field.”

documented quality standards to meet regulatory requirements in the medical device and aerospace industries.

Despite those advantages, UMC’s growth is hampered by high taxes. “It’s hard to sustain investment in the business when nearly half of each dollar earned is gobbled up by taxes.”

UMC routinely bids against companies located in other states and countries. Minnesota’s status as a high-tax state took another hit when the Legislature did not conform to federal tax reform; UMC’s competitors fared better. Gibson says their customers report the ability to get better pricing from their competitors in states such as Texas and Florida. “We are able to hold some of that business because of our niche.”

“As we look to expand our business, we look at other options,” he says. They have looked at other states within driving distance but have yet to pull the trigger.







“We need clarity in the tax code. Conformity to the changes enacted at the federal level would be a great start,” Gibson says. “Minnesota is one of the top five highest-taxed states. We don’t need to be the lowest, but a move toward the middle would level the playing field.” ■

Taxes: A persistent challenge

High income and corporate taxes stand in the way of long-term success

Taxes remain a persistent challenge to long-term economic growth in the state. Though Minnesota saw a slight improvement in 2018 rankings, it still is in the top five for highest corporate and individual income tax rates. The rankings will likely worsen unless the rates change, as other states have reduced their rates while conforming to federal tax changes. Studies show that high income and corporate taxes hurt investment, entrepreneurship, economic growth, and talent recruitment and retention – the very items needed for a strong and growing economy. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS HIGHEST COST

SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TAX INDEX	2017 Ranked 4th	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2016	
PASS-THROUGH AND INDIVIDUAL INCOME TOP TAX RATES	2018 Ranked 5th 9.85%	BETTER 2 SPOTS FROM 2017	
STATE AND LOCAL SALES TAX RATES	2018 Ranked 17th 7.42%	SAME RANKING AS 2017	
CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE	2018 Ranked 3rd 9.8%	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2017	
OVERALL STATE AND LOCAL TAXES PER CAPITA	2015 Ranked 9th \$5,954 National Average: \$4,883	WORSE 1 SPOT FROM 2014	
STATE GAS TAX	2018 Ranked 28th 28.6¢ / gallon National Average: 34.09¢/gallon	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2017	



Innovation

The beginnings of many successful businesses can be traced to simple, everyday circumstances. Such is the case with Deepinder Singh, founder and CEO of 75F in Burnsville.

Singh, an engineer, started by creating an automated building control system in his own home. Today, 75F has 64 employees – 22 in Minnesota and the rest in India.

75F represents Minnesota's homegrown economy built on innovation. That creative spirit has resulted in many entrepreneurs creating private-sector businesses that have grown to be Fortune 500 companies.

75F combines the Internet of Things (IoT) technology and cloud computing to make people more productive and comfortable while saving energy. Minnesota is third only behind Tel Aviv and Amsterdam in the concentration of firms that produce IoT technology.

Building control systems is a crowded market, Singh says. However, new IoT technologies have the advantage of eliminating manual configuration and programming. 75F



“People feel the state has decided to invest in innovation. That’s a key message.”

packages its systems so just about anyone can install a sophisticated building control system.

He references the City Hall at International Falls, Minn. The same employee who mows the lawn can install the system, giving the city the advantage of an onsite supervisor. “We can have smart buildings in small cities, too. That building is as wired up as any building in downtown Minneapolis.”

Despite its high marks for innovation, statistics show some concern over Minnesota's rate of business start-ups.

Singh credits Minnesota's employee base that he says is relatively more stable than on either coast where workers move from job to job.

At the same time, he cites the challenges of Midwest culture. It can be hard to find customers willing to adopt new technology and find investors willing to risk capital in what he describes as

“disruptive technology.”

Public policy could help in encouraging investment in technology. “We should reward investment,” he says. “People feel the state has decided to invest in innovation. That’s a key message.” ■

Innovation: Continuing to shine

Encouraging entrepreneurship will guarantee future success

Minnesota continues to shine as an innovative state. Combine this with a highly-skilled workforce, and the results are a tremendous and diverse industry base. Minnesota is home to local businesses that have grown into national Fortune 500 leaders, while providing a strong quality of life for their employees in communities throughout the state. Supporting innovation and improving the business climate will help encourage further entrepreneurship, continuing to grow the economy for decades to come. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS BEST

TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE WORKFORCE INDEX	2016 Ranked 4th 88.00	BETTER 3 SPOTS FROM 2014	
VENTURE CAPITAL PER CAPITA	2017 Ranked 17th \$88.48 National Average: \$258	WORSE 5 SPOTS FROM 2016	
BUSINESS 5-YEAR SURVIVAL	2012-2017 Ranked 1st 57.4% National Average: 50.2%	BETTER 9 SPOTS FROM 2011-2016	
ENTREPRENEURSHIP START-UP ACTIVITY	2017 Ranked 16th Out of 25 largest states	BETTER 5 SPOTS FROM 2016	
PATENTS PER CAPITA	2015 Ranked 4th 88.39	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2014	



Infrastructure

Shelly Peterson is an unabashed champion for growing the economy. “I am passionate about business, in our state and in our nation,” she says.

Peterson is doing her best to boost that growth as executive vice president and general manager for Minnesota operations of The Boldt Company in Cloquet.

The family-owned contractor was founded in 1889. It is headquartered in Appleton, Wis., with offices nationwide. In Minnesota, the Cloquet headquarters is supported by offices in Rochester and Grand Rapids.

The company’s motto: “We have the perks of a Fortune 500 company with family values where everyone knows each other.”

Strong infrastructure is critical to Boldt’s success. The company’s crews regularly travel across Minnesota and other states. “Infrastructure is hugely important to us,” Peterson says, especially when working in rural communities.

That escalates the importance of a solid network of roads and bridges for moving people and raw materials effectively



“I am passionate about business, in our state and in our nation.”

and efficiently. Peterson is pleased to see progress in this area in recent years, but sees room for improvement. “Sometimes we feel we’re back in the pioneer days with dirt roads.”

Broadband is equally key to the success of the company and the state’s overall growth.

“We are a technologically advanced state,” Peterson says. “We need access to broadband and technology in every corner of the state – from little communities to the metro and every one in between. It’s difficult to grow communities without access to broadband.”

Peterson credits a shared vision – and strong lobbying – among business and political leaders for helping to grow rural Minnesota.

Quality infrastructure looms even more important when combined with other competitive disadvantages facing Minnesota

companies. Taxes and workers’ compensation rates frequently surface when Peterson deals with customers deciding whether to build in Minnesota or Wisconsin. They also point to how long it takes to get something approved by the Legislature.

“Minnesota is not known to be business friendly,” Peterson says. “We need to find a way to figure that out.” ■

Infrastructure: Moving business forward

Needed to compete in a global marketplace

The ability of business to move goods, services and people is a critical factor to being competitive within Minnesota's borders and around the world. The state continues to make progress on overall highway performance and cost-effectiveness. But Minnesota's location at the center of North America could present a competitive disadvantage for many sectors of the economy without its ports, railways and road systems, and telecommunications infrastructure. Continued commitment to improvements will ensure that businesses can succeed. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS BEST

ACCESS TO HIGH-SPEED INTERNET	2016 Ranked 27th 80% National Average: 82%	WORSE 3 SPOTS FROM 2015
TOTAL SCHEDULED FLIGHTS	2018 Ranked 11th 176,524 flights	WORSE 2 SPOTS FROM 2017
TOTAL FREIGHT RAIL MILES	2016 Ranked 8th 4,292 freight rail miles	SAME RANKING AS 2012
COMMUTE TIMES	2016 Ranked 17th 23.2 minutes National Average: 26.1 minutes	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2015
OVERALL HIGHWAY PERFORMANCE	2015 Ranked 25th	BETTER 2 SPOTS FROM 2013



Workforce

No one has to tell Joe Bailey there's a workforce shortage. It is top of mind as human resources director for Bailey Nurseries, Inc. It's increasingly difficult to find workers, especially seasonal employees.

"We have to find 400 workers every spring," Bailey says. "It's a perennial challenge."

Bailey Nurseries is a fifth-generation, family-owned nursery serving customers worldwide. Headquartered in St. Paul, it has growing operations in Oregon, Washington and Illinois and a breeding facility in Georgia.

The nursery industry, already a crowded market, has grown more competitive with consolidation. The trend is from independent garden centers – the bread-and-butter market for Bailey Nurseries – to garden centers in big-box stores.

The company conducts a broad search for talent including attending job fairs, posting ads, visiting churches and meeting with the refugee community. For the more technical jobs, it recruits from agricultural colleges and universities and has implemented a robust intern program. The scarcity of workers has raised salaries for entry-level positions, putting another cost pressure on the company.

Immigrants are an important source of workers for the nursery,



"We have to find 400 workers every spring. It's a perennial challenge."

and Bailey has seen that pool shrink since the federal administration has drastically reduced the number of refugees allowed into the country.

The entire industry is challenged to find workers. The message was loud and clear at a recent meeting with 20 of his sales representatives from around the country. Nurseries use the H-2A visa program for agricultural workers. Landscape companies, similar to resorts, use the H-2B program for nonagricultural workers.

Bailey identifies priorities in both federal and state public policy. Immigration reform is critical in Washington, D.C. "The business community is super important to immigration reform," he says. "It's an important voice in the debate."

On a positive note, Bailey has seen more people, especially college graduates, moving into Minnesota from Wisconsin and Iowa.

Job retention is also important to the company's success. Bailey says promoting from within builds worker confidence. State public policy can help in that regard, he says – anything that can be done with career and technical training to help the company educate and train its current workforce.

"We dedicate a lot of resources to our seasonal workers," he says. "You can't run an operation without seasonal workers." ■

Workforce: Recruitment and retention challenges

Public and private sectors will grow long-term economic opportunities

It is increasingly difficult for employers across Minnesota to find the right workers for available jobs, especially as job vacancies exceed the number of job-seekers in the state. Although 2017 was the first year since 2001 that Minnesota had more people moving into the state, the impending labor shortage – expected to hit 239,000 by 2022 – makes it more critical that Minnesota keep and attract skilled workers, work to get people back into the labor market and prepare students for jobs of the future. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS BEST

TWO-YEAR DEGREE OR HIGHER (AGE 25 AND OLDER)	2017 Ranked 4th 47.3% National Average: 40.5%	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2016
8TH-GRADE READING SCORES	2017 Ranked 12th 269 average National Average: 265	WORSE 6 SPOTS FROM 2015
ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE	2016 Ranked 35th 82% National Average: 84%	WORSE 3 SPOTS FROM 2015
LABOR PARTICIPATION RATE	2018 Ranked 2nd 70.3% National Average: 62.7%	BETTER 1 SPOT FROM 2017
NET DOMESTIC MIGRATION	2010-2017 Ranked 30th 32,518 net loss	BETTER 7 SPOTS FROM 2005-2009
GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRATION	2010-2016 Ranked 6th 19.5% 74,000 increase	BETTER 15 SPOTS FROM 2000-2010



Cost of Doing Business

Tom Sonderman has good news to report from his vantage point as president of SkyWater Technology Foundry in Bloomington. The 20-month-old company is off to a strong start and looking to grow.

“In general, it’s very easy to do business in Minnesota from a high-tech perspective,” he says. SkyWater tends to have few issues in terms of cost competitiveness, reflecting data that show Minnesota in the middle of the pack in key costs of doing business and costs of living. For his part, he encourages policymakers to continue keeping Minnesota competitive.

SkyWater isn’t without its challenges. The cost of training and maintaining a highly educated workforce is a common thread throughout any conversation. That underscores the importance of keeping Minnesota competitive in everyday business costs.

Sonderman describes SkyWater as a relatively new company with a long heritage. The company started as a part of Control Data Corporation. In the early 1990s, it grew as part of Cypress Semiconductor Corporation. SkyWater Technology Foundry was established in March 2017 with new investors.

“Now we are a Minnesota entity with all our resources in



“In general, it’s very easy to do business in Minnesota from a high-tech perspective.”

Bloomington,” Sonderman says.

SkyWater manufactures computer chips, devices and other elements for various industries that use those solutions. It has the distinction of being the only U.S.-based and U.S.-owned technology foundry. It also is recognized as a Defense Microelectronics Activity Trusted Foundry, giving it an edge in securing defense contracts for the U.S. government.

“High-tech jobs are fundamental to the economy of the future,” Sonderman says. “We need to enhance apprentice programs engaging students at the high-school level.” He encourages workforce education for high-tech industries – start young and inspire students to enter high-tech companies that exist in Minnesota. As an example, he points to the Rosemount School District,

where his son attends, which offers fab lab and introduction to engineering courses in ninth grade.

Silicon Valley in California is viewed as synonymous with electronics. Minnesota has a similar opportunity to promote itself as a center for the medical devices industry.

“Minnesota is not just a place for a job,” he says. “It’s a place to grow a career.” ■

Cost of Doing Business: Middle of the pack

Must build on strengths to better compete

Minnesota has seen some improvements in business rankings due to legislative changes decades ago. For example, the Minnesota Chamber led the charge to reform workers' compensation in the 1990s, which improved the state's ranking from highest in the nation to 22nd today. Last session, the Chamber supported additional reforms to curtail the cost of workers' compensation. But more must be done to lower the cost of doing business as Minnesota competes in an increasingly global economy and our rankings slip in other areas. ■

MINNESOTA RANKING: 1ST IS HIGHEST COST

ELECTRICITY (AVERAGE PRICE FOR INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMERS)	2018 Ranked 15th 8.18¢/kWh National Average: 7.34¢/kWh	WORSE 2 SPOTS FROM 2017
INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM (EMPLOYER SPONSORED)	2016 Ranked 31st \$6,030 National Average: \$6,101	WORSE 12 SPOTS FROM 2015
WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS	2016 Ranked 22nd 1.91 index rate Above National Average by 4%	BETTER 2 SPOTS FROM 2014
UNEMPLOYMENT TAX RANKING	2018 Ranked 2nd	SAME RANKING AS 2017
COST OF LIVING	2016 Ranked 22nd 97.5 National Average: 100	WORSE 1 SPOT FROM 2015

DISTINGUISHING MINNESOTA AS A LEADER

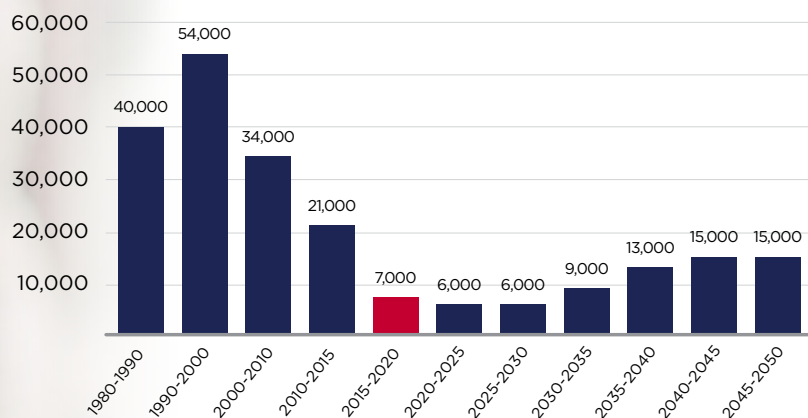
Sixty-nine percent of employers in 2018 – versus 18 percent in 2010 – cited the ability to find workers as a key concern in visits through the Minnesota Chamber’s Grow Minnesota! Partnership. The state demographer predicts a continued slowdown in labor force growth, exacerbating the problem. Minnesota needs to be competitive, and employers need to be creative to recruit and retain talent. The Minnesota Chamber’s Center for Workforce Solutions, launched in 2018, seeks to forge key partnerships and launch private-sector initiatives to accelerate employers’ ability to find employees.

Minnesota business leaders are among the state’s biggest boosters. Promoting Minnesota is part and parcel to growing jobs. Highlighting Minnesota’s attributes is especially front and center for Alissa Henriksen, co-president of Grey Search + Strategy in Mound. “It’s tough to get people to move from the sunny West Coast to the tundra,” she says. “That’s how they look at it.”

The company, owned and operated by Henriksen and her husband, provides customized, strategic search and recruiting services for local, national and global companies across a range of industries. Entrepreneurship is in her blood. “I wanted to be a business owner at a young age. I

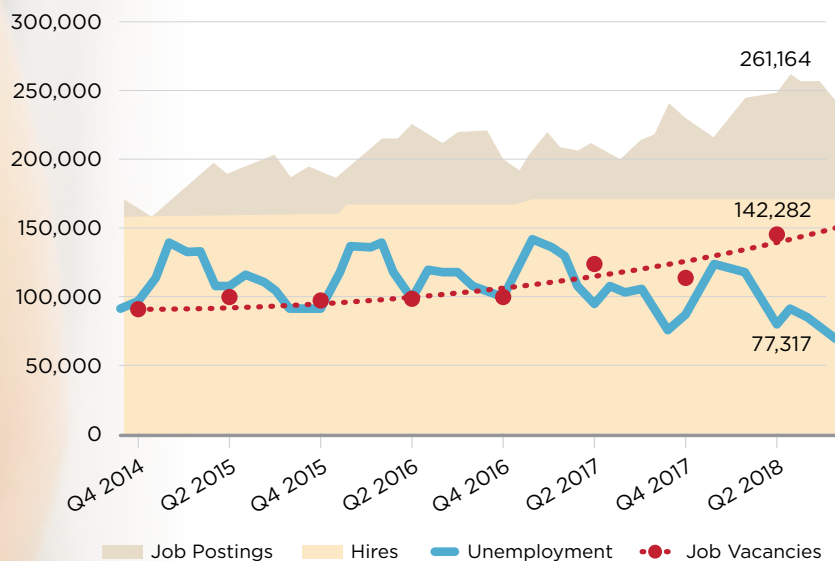


Minnesota's labor force growth has begun to slow and will slow over the next 10 years



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980-2015) and Minnesota State Demographic Center Projections (2015-2045)

Unemployment, Job Vacancies, Hires, and Job Postings in Minnesota



Source: RealTime Talent analysis of TNR direct employer job posting data, EMSI QW1 hire data, DEED JVS and DEED LAUS.

Alissa Henriksen

Principal and Owner Grey Search + Strategy

wrote my first business plan at age 15.”

Henriksen describes her company as a full-service talent recruiting agency. Her team asks a lot of questions and develops a relationship – “creating a playbook so they understand what they are up against.” Her clients range from medium-sized to multibillion-dollar organizations.

Everyday circumstances facing employers and employees are constantly on Henriksen’s radar.

Recruiting talent goes both ways, she underscores. She encourages employers to think differently and to pay attention to first impressions, such as the cleanliness of a lobby and front office. People are getting a 15- to 20-percent increase to make a move. Not all employers have that mind-set.

High cost of living is always a challenge, she says. She does a lot of recruiting for companies in remote locations where cost of living is admittedly lower. Countering that, however, employers often are unable to offer “market compensation” packages.

Potential employees also pay attention to education systems, especially if they have children with special needs. Local schools in remote areas don’t always have those programs.

Employees look beyond the straight salary, she says, placing more importance on health care and other fringe benefits. Training and development are key to investing in your employees, Henriksen says.

Workforce housing and transportation round out Henriksen’s list of challenges in employee recruitment. She sees it firsthand in her hometown of Mound.

Henriksen identifies child care and education as top legislative priorities to help businesses and the overall state grow. “We need to do so many things to strengthen opportunities for businesses and individuals.” Her formula is straightforward: “Grow these kids, let them know they are supported and have opportunity in the workforce.” ■

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Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce

Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce

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of Commerce

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TwinWest Chamber of Commerce

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Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce

White Bear Area Chamber of Commerce

Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

Woodbury Area Chamber of Commerce

Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce

Each year, 40 or more local chambers join with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce to unify around a common advocacy agenda for Minnesota businesses statewide. This collective voice, representing tens of thousands of businesses across the state, amplifies our members' priorities with state policy leaders.

100+YEARS OF GROWING MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Chamber's organizational vision is to strengthen the state's business environment to improve the lives of all Minnesotans. Yes, we speak for employers, but the good work that we do – and more importantly, that our members do – helps maintain our cherished quality of life in Minnesota.

For the last 110 years, the Chamber has provided the business community a collective voice, and has successfully shaped Minnesota's environment to help businesses thrive and grow within our borders.

We are a statewide organization representing more than 2,300 businesses – and more than half a million employees – throughout Minnesota. The chamber builds on its 110-year legacy as the voice of business by advancing public policy that



grows jobs and the economy, and providing valuable services to members so they stay and grow in Minnesota. A business climate that allows for innovation and forward-thinking leadership will help grow the strength of Minnesota's economy for generations to come. ■

Your Voice at the Capitol

We provide one voice – a collective voice – for employers, employees and the broader business community to ensure that public policies support long-term economic growth in Minnesota.

Your Connection to the Business Community

We give you access to a statewide network of business peers – opportunities to meet each other and stay at the forefront of business trends through events, sponsorships and leadership programs.

Your Opportunity to Grow

We hope to better understand your business challenges and offer solutions through collaboration, business products, programs and one-on-one business services.

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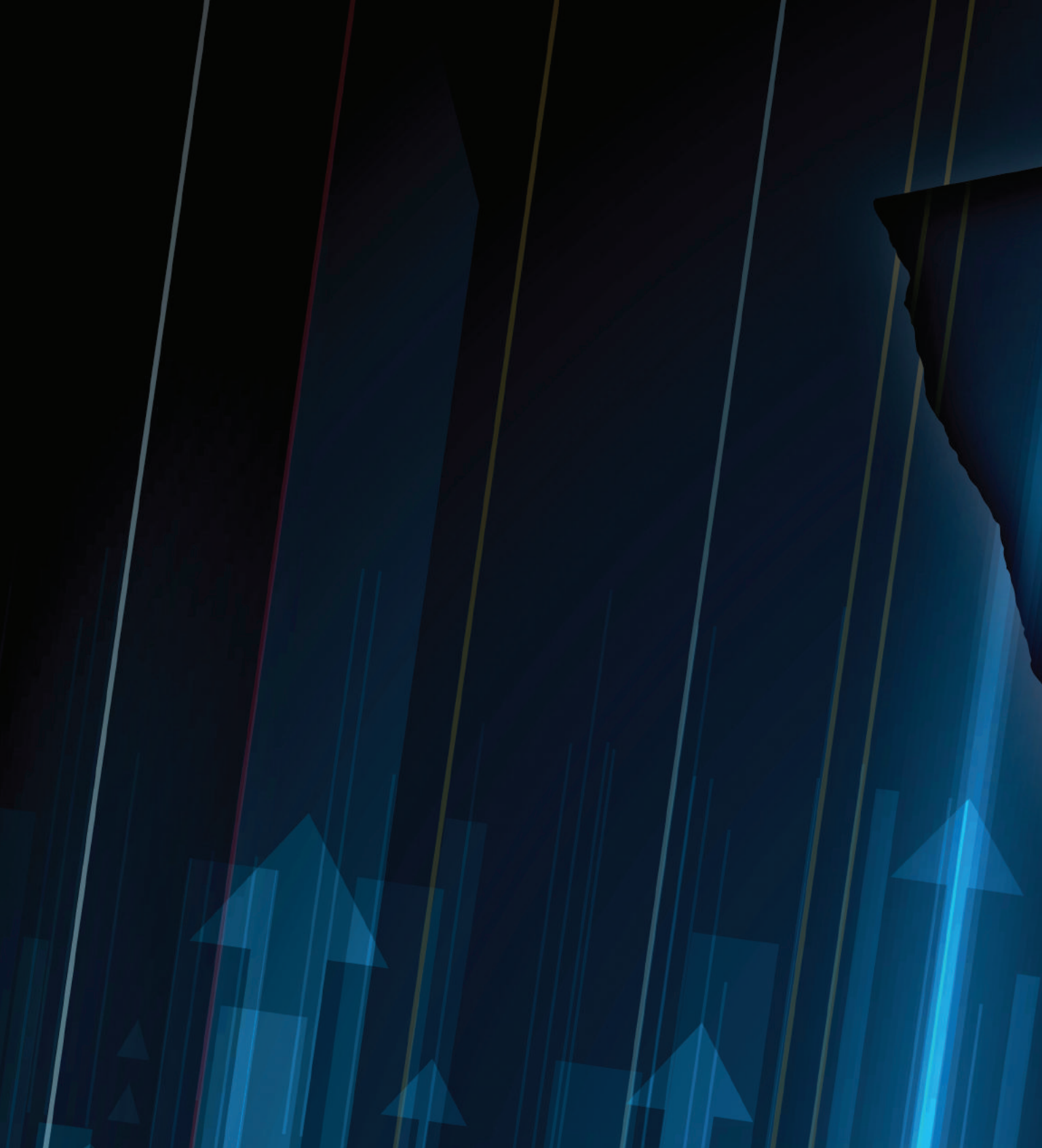
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“Graco has been a proud member of the Minnesota Chamber since 1985. We remain committed to our shared goals of safeguarding employers’ approaches to retaining and attracting talent, and fostering a business climate that will grow the strength of Minnesota’s economy for generations to come.”

David Ahlers
Executive Vice President, Human Resources and Corporate Communications, Graco
Chair, Minnesota Chamber Board of Directors



Interested in becoming a member? Visit [mnchamber.com/join](https://www.mnchamber.com/join).



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