

Briefs

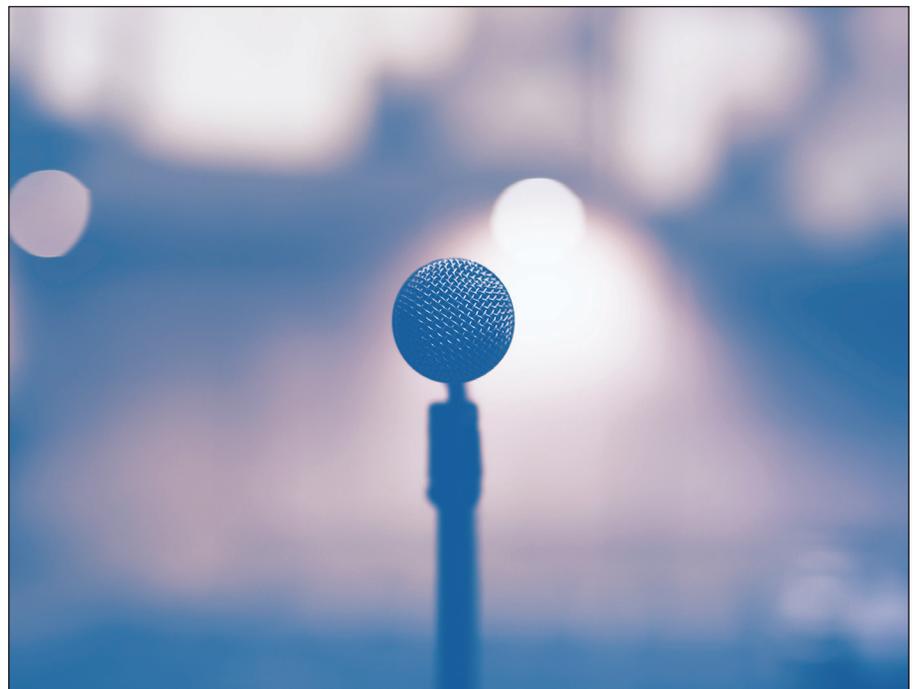
SPEECH ■ LINKEDIN ■ BUSINESS OPTIMISM ■ IN MEMORIAM

Free Speech, to a Degree

When does one group's right to free speech trump another's? Avvo freelance blogger Elizabeth Weiss addressed the University of Wisconsin's potential answer to the above. A recent university policy prohibits students from voicing their opinions if they disrupt someone else's ability to do so. Students who violate this new policy are subject to suspension, or expulsion. Students argue that this policy violates their own right to exercise free speech to shout down speakers "whose ideas they find abhorrent."

Weiss raises the concern that the policy could suppress free speech instead of allowing for it unfettered. The policy does not define "disruptive conduct" and may lead to subjective interpretations. Fear of unknown boundaries may hinder students' willingness to invoke their freedom of expression. Where does the line get drawn?

With so many diverging viewpoints in this country, and most certainly within the University of Wisconsin student body, protecting First



Amendment rights can be a challenge. How would university administrators respond to a hate group's request to demonstrate on campus? As a Vassar student told Weiss, if speech "directly targets and harms" those who have

been marginalized based on things such as race and sexuality, then it is "certainly worth denouncing." So, if demonstrations remain nonviolent, why restrict anyone's right to protest what they think is wrong? ■

Reflect Your Practice in LinkedIn Skills & Endorsements

LinkedIn boasts more than 500 million members in 200 countries. Nancy Myrland, of Myrland Marketing Minute Blog, broke down LinkedIn's "Skills & Endorsements" section for lawyers in the Attorney at Work blog. According to

an Attorney at Work survey, LinkedIn is one of the top social media sites used by lawyers.

LinkedIn has become a goldmine for lawyers to network with potential business clients and other lawyers. This means, according to Myrland, that

your profile needs to be accurate and reinforce what you do and how it can serve potential clients and colleagues. This is where Skills & Endorsements comes in.

Although optional, the Skills & Endorsements section showcases words



that describe where your practice and experience are focused. The keywords are universal to all industries, so make sure that you adhere to jurisdictional rules and choose keywords that keep you within lawyer-advertising guidelines. This is especially important when considering keywords that can't be linked to verifiable skills or certifications.

The section highlights three keywords, or skills, as "Featured

Skills & Endorsements." Users must click to view more. Click the pencil icon in the section to reorder the keywords, and make sure that you've ordered them optimally, as they may be the only three that viewers see. Also, LinkedIn will suggest those top three to other users for endorsement. Myrland suggests updating the section every few months, as some keywords may be more relevant as you become more skilled or your responsibilities change. As others search keywords that appear in your Skills & Endorsements, your page may be ranked higher by LinkedIn and other search engines. Feel free to use these same keywords in blogs, presentations and other marketing platforms, but be sure not to over use any of them.

As users endorse you, you might be considering endorsing them. Myrland says no one should feel obligated to reciprocate an endorsement. She says that endorsements should be made wisely and with genuine intentions. Your avatar, or profile photo, is visually linked to each endorsement you make, so only endorse ethically and accurately. ■

Small and Mid-Size Business Leaders Curb Their Enthusiasm Somewhat, But Remain Optimistic About U.S. Economy

Optimism among business owners and leaders remains high, but has shifted significantly to a more moderate level according to the PNC Economic Outlook, a bi-annual telephone survey of small and medium-sized business owners, which began in 2003.

The share of respondents who described their outlook for the U.S. economy as strongly optimistic dropped from 40 percent to 29 percent, balanced by those with a moderately optimistic outlook rising from 48 percent to 58 percent. Just 12 percent of business owners and leaders expressed pessimism, up slightly from an all-time low of 9 percent in the spring.

"Small businesses are a key source of economic activity and employment, and owners' perceptions can be good indicators of what's to come," said Gus Faucher, chief economist of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. "The overall findings from our survey confirm that the U.S. economic expansion, now more than eight years old and the third-longest in U.S. history, will likely continue into 2018."

Further solidifying the anticipation of continued growth, more than half of business owners and leaders anticipate increases in sales (54 percent) and profits (51 percent) during the next six months, an increase over fall 2016, but a slight drop from post-election highs reported in spring 2017.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

Hiring Under Pressure: One in three (34 percent) say it's harder to hire qualified employees than it was six months to a year ago. Specifically, manufacturing and construction sectors most frequently cited hiring difficulties. "Hiring has become more difficult across all skill levels," said Faucher. "Organizations even report that they have turned down business because of a lack of workers."

Wage Watchers: The proportion of employers anticipating to increase employee compensation continues to be relatively high, with 37 percent expecting to do so, a slight dip from 41



IN MEMORIAM

Norman Leibovitz
Sept. 19, 2017, age 80

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to tplmag@philabar.org.

Arthur W. "Terry" Lefco
Oct. 5, 2017, age 71

Hon. Brenda Diane Frazier-Clemons
Oct. 16, 2017, age 78

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percent in the spring, but still well above the 28 percent from fall 2016.

Certainly Uncertain About Policy: Thirty-six percent of respondents expect policy changes from the new administration and Congress to have a positive impact on their business over the next year if they were to go into effect. One in eight (13 percent) anticipate a negative impact (a small increase over 9 percent in spring 2017), while 40 percent are unsure and 11 percent anticipate no effect. ■

Methodology

The PNC Economic Outlook survey was conducted by telephone from July 6 to August 3, 2017, among 500 businesses within the United States with annual revenues of \$100,000 to \$250 million. Sampling error for the national results is +/- 4.4 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. The survey was conducted by Artemis Strategy Group (www.ArtemisSG.com), a communications strategy research firm specializing in brand positioning and policy issues. The firm, headquartered in Washington D.C., provides communications research and consulting to a range of public and private sector clients.

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