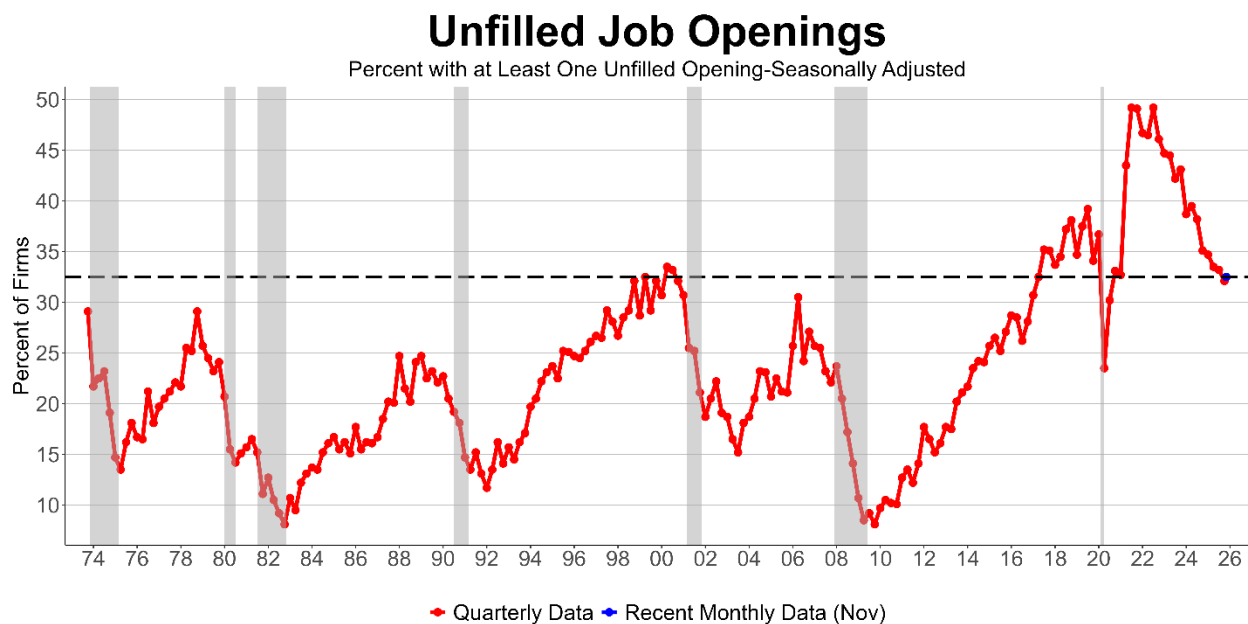


Hiring Plans Rise as Unfilled Job Openings Remain Elevated

Based on 505 respondents to the November survey of a random sample of NFIB's member firms, surveyed through 11/30/2025.

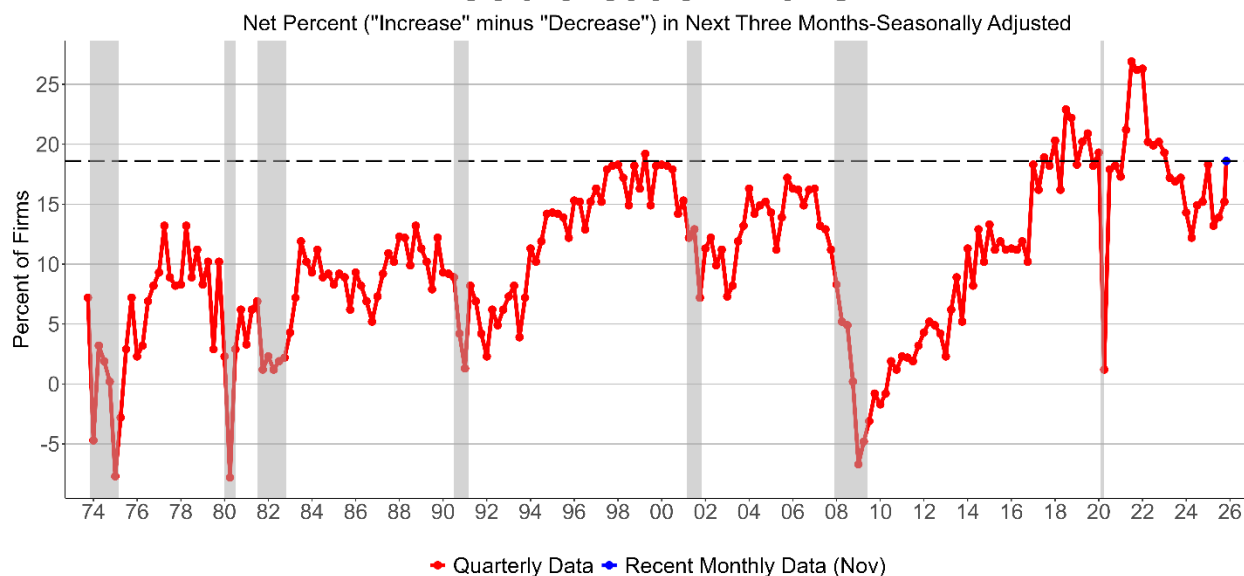
EMBARGO 1 PM THURSDAY

In November, 33% (seasonally adjusted) of all owners reported job openings they could not fill in the current period, up 1 point from October and the first increase since June. Unfilled job openings remain above the historical average of 24%. Twenty-six percent have openings for skilled workers (down 2 points), and 12% have openings for unskilled labor (up 1 point).



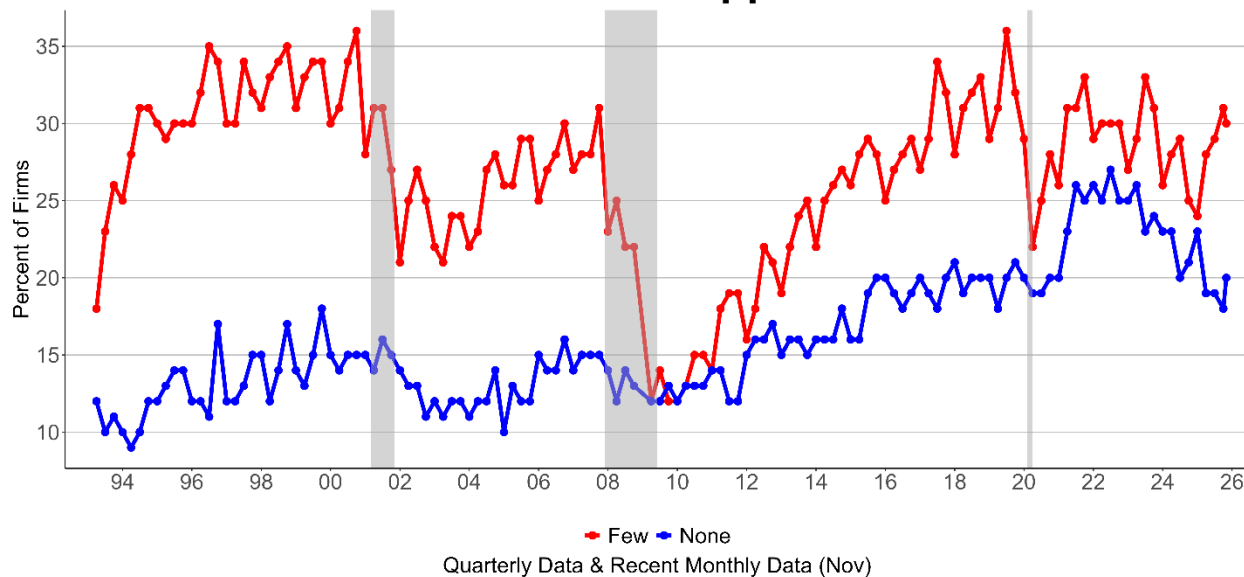
A seasonally adjusted net 19% of owners plan to create new jobs in the next three months, up 4 points from October and the highest reading of the year. The last time hiring plans reached this level was in December 2024. Firms remain interested in hiring but are finding it difficult to fill openings.

Job Creation Plans

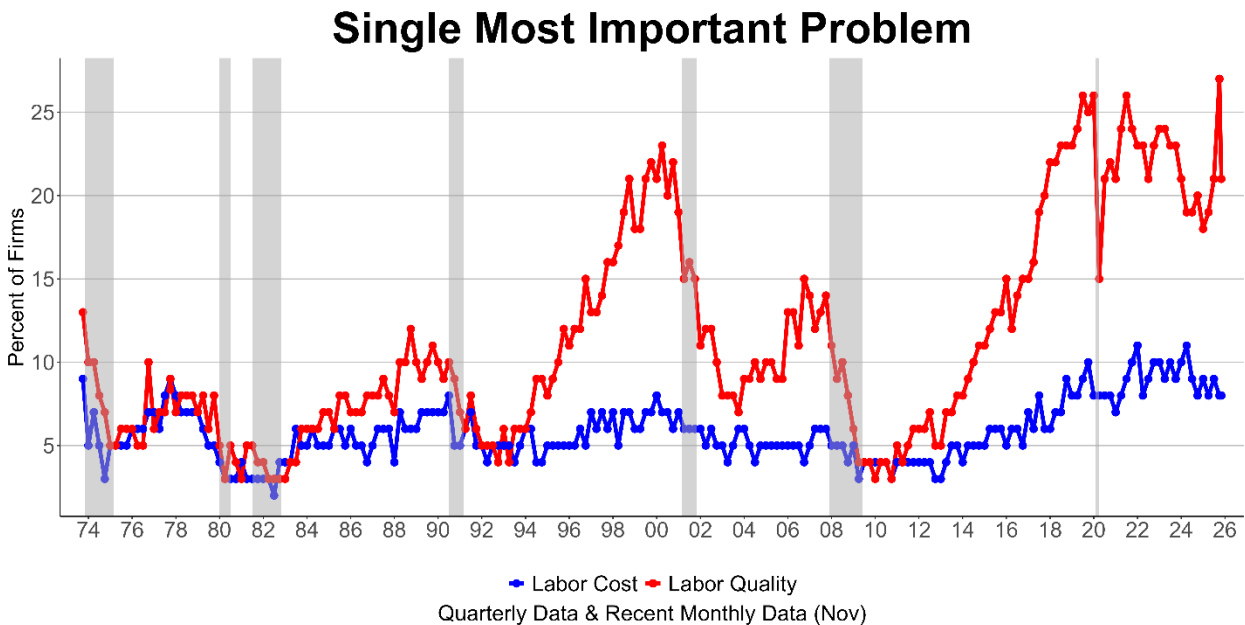


Overall, 56% of owners reported hiring or trying to hire in November, unchanged from October. Fifty percent (89% of those hiring or trying to hire) of owners reported few or no qualified applicants for the positions they were trying to fill (up 1 point). Thirty percent reported few qualified applicants (down 1 point), and 20% reported none (up 2 points). The last 12 months show a clear improvement in the hiring environment, with a growing percent reporting “few” relative to the percent reporting “none.”

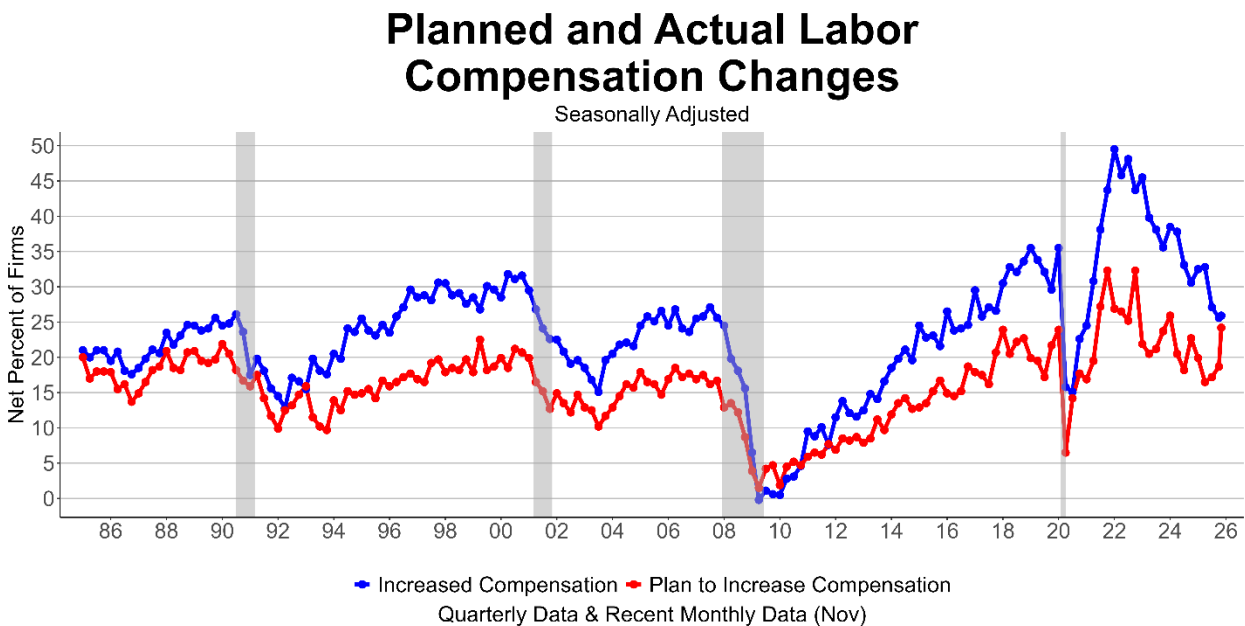
Qualified Job Applicants



In November, 21% of small business owners cited labor quality as their single most important problem, down 6 points erasing most of October's increase. Labor costs, reported as the single most important problem by small business owners, remained at 8%.



In November, a seasonally adjusted net 26% reported raising compensation, unchanged from October. A net 24% (seasonally adjusted) plan to raise compensation in the next three months, up 5 points from October. The last time plans to raise compensation were at this level was in December 2024.



The government shutdown is over, and data collectors are trying to catch up. Delayed compensation for furloughed federal government employees added purchasing power just in time for "Black Friday," as sales were strong. The updated jobs report indicated that the economy has continued to plod along in spite of the shutdown. On Main Street, job growth continued to be constrained by a lack of qualified employees.