

Job Offers on the Up in the UK Financial Services Sector

Powerchex finds that improvement in recruitment activity is sustained into October.

London, November 11th 2009. New figures released by Powerchex, the leading pre-employment screening firm for financial services, show continued improvement in recruitment activity in October.

Compared to the previous month, job offers within the UK financial services sector increased by approximately 4%. This is almost exclusively due to a huge rise in recruitment activity by Stockbrokerage Firms, a month-on-month increase of 94%. Recruitment by Insurance Firms and Hedge Funds in October also demonstrates improvement on the previous month, up 33% and 20% respectively (see figure 1).

The biggest surprise from the October figures came from Investment Management Firms. In September, Powerchex reported a 51% increase in job offers, the highest rate of increase in all of Financial Services at the time. Recruitment activity collapsed in October, decreasing by more than 35%. Investment Banks are also reducing their intake of new people, with recruitment down by approximately 20% in each of the last 2 months.

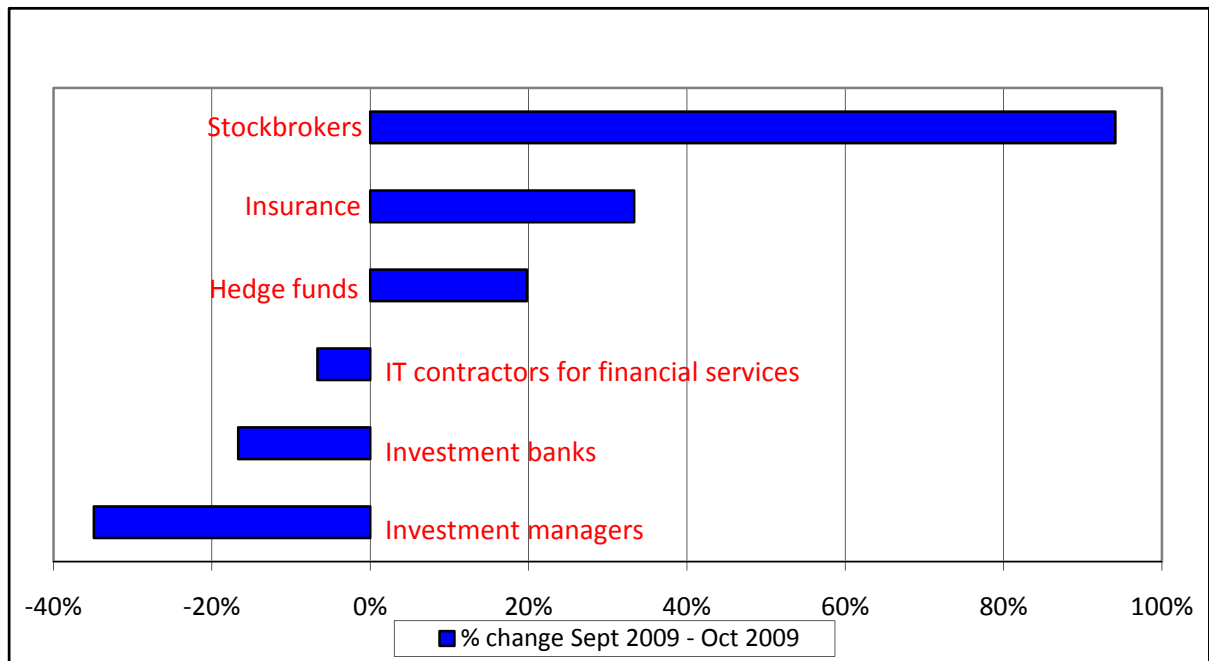
On the whole things do appear to be improving, albeit slowly. After a dreadful Q2 whereby recruitment seemingly all but dried up, Q3 heralded a steady increase in recruitment activity across all industry sectors except Stockbrokerage Firms. Another 4% increase in October, mainly fuelled by Stockbrokerage firms, shows that the improvements are spreading to all areas of Financial Services.

These figures coincide with the announcement that British unemployment rose by its lowest amount in the last 16 months, a sign that the job market may finally be stabilising. Powerchex MD Alexandra Kelly is cautiously inclined to agree; "There have been a couple of positive indicators in the last few months which is very encouraging. The Financial Services Sector is the engine for UK economy, so hopefully we will see a sustained increase in recruitment activity across the board."

However, Kelly still believes that recover may be some way off; "We need to remember that the economy is still extremely fragile. Many economists are wary of a double-dip recession like we that seen in the 1980s, which would push recovery back until the end of 2010 at a minimum."

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Figure 1. % Change in Employment offers in the Financial Services Sector from September 2009 to October 2009



NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Powerchex

Powerchex is the UK's premier pre-employment screening firm for financial institutions. Based in the City of London, Powerchex checks the background, employment history, criminal records and professional qualifications of applicants on behalf of financial institutions. It sets the industry benchmark of 5 days for a background check.

www.powerchex.co.uk.