

The CLEAR Report. It's a thoughtful look at employment in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, showing how our region is faring compared to the rest of the country.

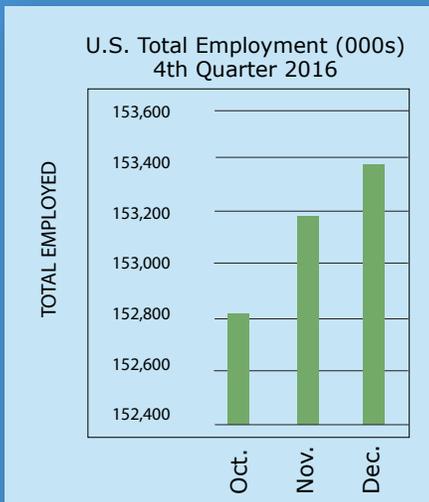


Figure 1

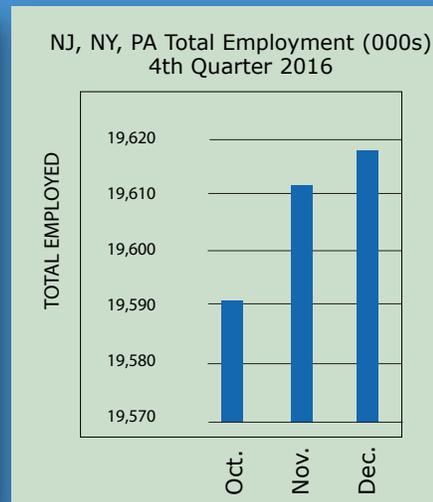


Figure 2

Total employment steadily increased in each of the three months of the fourth quarter of 2016 nationwide as well as in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Total people in the U.S. workforce hit 153,376,402 in December, an increase of 948,080 since the end of the third quarter. The rate of employment increases in the region mirrored the national picture, with the largest increases in October and November. Regionally, employment was 19,617,261 in December, an increase of 47,835 jobs.

These numbers are consistent with an annual trend: employment increases in the fourth quarter that mirror consumer demand for goods and services.

## Dealing with Seasonal Staffing

For business owners, particularly those affected by seasonal demand, this raises an important question. How can you expand and contract your labor force while maintaining the quality of your products and services? The answer is SOPs, or Standard Operating Procedures.



### Tips for Creating Standard Operating Procedures.

SOPs are step-by-step instructions that help workers perform consistently and according to company standards. New employees get up to speed quickly and feel productive, supervisors have less training to do and everyone has motivation to do things right.

SOPs also reduce miscommunication and help ensure compliance with industry regulations.

But where do you find the time to create them? It may be easier than you think. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

# 1.

#### Staff meetings:

Discuss the 'how' of one procedure at each staff meeting. Have someone tape the meeting, write up the instructions and review them at the next meeting.

# 2.

#### Brainstorm:

Ask your team to develop a list of company acronyms and their definitions.

# 3.

#### Interns:

Creating SOPs gives interns a long-term project and exposes them to how things are done in your company.

### What to include in SOPs?

In addition to instructions, include:

- **The goal:** Explain why the process is needed so everyone understands the importance of what they're doing.
- **Who:** Debunk or clarify 'this is not my job' by detailing each individual's scope of responsibility for each procedure.
- **Visuals:** A chart, screen shot or other visual will clarify what the process should look like.