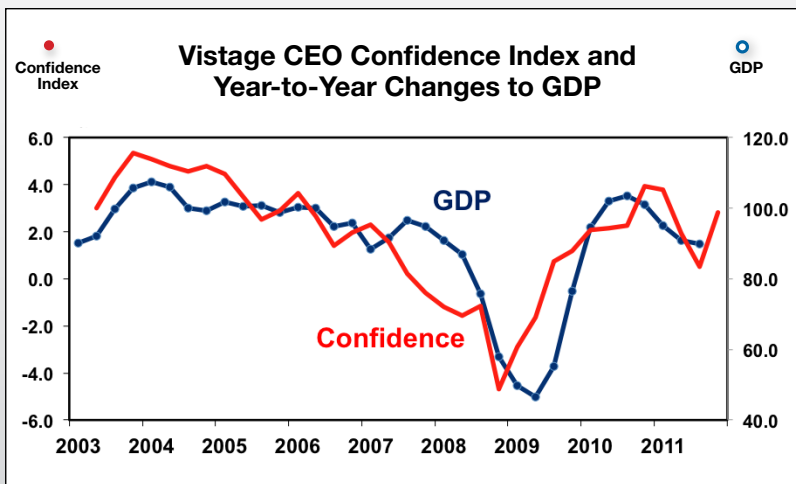


# VISTAGE CEO Confidence Index

Largest Survey of CEOs Since 2003

More than twice as many CEOs thought that the economy had improved in the latest survey compared with one quarter ago. CEOs were not only more optimistic about prospects for the national economy, but also about the outlook for their own firm's performance during the year ahead. The Vistage CEO Confidence Index was 98.8 in the fourth quarter 2011 survey, up from 83.5 in the third quarter and reaching the highest level since the start of 2011 (105.2). The 18% increase from the third quarter to the fourth quarter was the largest quarterly gain since the start of the recovery in 2009, as every component of the confidence index improved.

These expected gains prompted CEOs to plan increases in employment and fixed investments in anticipation of higher revenues and profits during the year ahead. Lingering economic and political uncertainty was still a top concern, mentioned by nearly half of all CEOs. The failure of Congress to address the national debt added to this uncertainty, with two-thirds of CEOs saying that it had negatively affected their business plans.



## Vistage CEO Confidence Index Highlights

**41% of CEOs** recognized improved economic conditions over the previous 12 months, up from just 18% in the Q3 survey.

**Only 12% of CEOs** thought the economy had recently worsened.

**73% of CEOs** expected revenue growth.

**55% of CEOs** said they plan to increase the number of their employees over the next 12 months, compared with 46% in the Q3 survey.

**43% of CEOs** said that the European debt crisis impacts their business.

**24% of CEOs** are finding it easier to obtain credit for their business today compared to 6 months ago.

**49% of CEOs** believe Mitt Romney will emerge as the Republican Presidential Nominee for 2012, while 29% believe it will be Newt Gingrich.



The Vistage CEO Confidence Index was 98.8 in the Q4 2011 survey, up from 83.5 in Q3 and 92.9 in Q2.

Vistage CEO Confidence Index Q4 2011 | Dates 12/12-12/22 | 1,641 Respondents | National Results

Question	Answer	Respondents	
		#	%
1. Compared with a year ago, have overall economic conditions in the U.S. improved, remained the same, or worsened?	Improved	676	41%
	About the same	758	46%
	Worsened	203	12%
	Don't know/No opinion	4	0%
2. During the next 12 months, do you expect the overall economic conditions in the U.S. will be better, about the same, or worse than now?	Better	657	40%
	About the same	799	49%
	Worse	171	10%
	Don't know/No opinion	14	1%

<b>3. Are your firm's total fixed investment expenditures likely to increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?</b>	Increase	697	42%
	About the same	738	45%
	Decrease	196	12%
	Don't know/No opinion	10	1%
<b>4. Do you anticipate that your firm's sales revenues will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?</b>	Increase	1,204	73%
	About the same	338	21%
	Decrease	92	6%
	Don't know/No opinion	7	0%
<b>5. Do you expect your firm's profitability to improve, remain about the same, or worsen during the next 12 months?</b>	Improve	908	55%
	About the same	578	35%
	Worsen	151	9%
	Don't know/No opinion	4	0%
<b>6. Do you expect prices for your product or service to increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?</b>	Increase	649	40%
	About the same	893	54%
	Decrease	94	6%
	Don't know/No opinion	5	0%
<b>7. Do you expect your firm's total number of employees will increase, remain about the same, or decrease during the next 12 months?</b>	Increase	898	55%
	About the same	638	39%
	Decrease	105	6%
<b>8. When do you plan to increase your firm's total number of employees over the next 12 months?</b>	Q1 2012	283	17%
	Q2 2012	221	13%
	Q3 2012	110	7%
	Steadily throughout the next 12 months	422	26%
	I do not plan to increase my total number of employees	605	37%
<b>9. What is the most significant business issue that you are facing currently?</b>	Rising energy costs	15	1%
	Growth (growing too quickly)	60	4%
	Rising healthcare costs	64	4%
	Political uncertainty	190	12%
	Staffing (finding, hiring, retaining, and training)	264	16%
	Growth (growing too slowly)	195	12%
	Economic uncertainty (concern for local and national economy budget deficit, housing market)	537	33%
	Financial issues (finance, cash flow, profitability)	223	14%
	Other	94	6%

<b>10. What is the biggest challenge your business is specifically facing now? (check all that apply)</b>	Paying loans and/or accessing credit	146	7%
	Managing costs	461	23%
	Cash, liquidity, receivables	330	16%
	Customer retention and/or lead generation	502	25%
	Cutting staff	41	2%
	My business is not facing any extraordinary challenges	316	16%
	Skipped	21	1%
	Other	215	11%

<b>11. Are you finding it easier to obtain credit for your business now than you did six months ago?</b>	Yes	395	24%
	No	511	31%
	Not applicable	732	45%
	Skipped	3	0%

<b>12. Who do you believe will emerge as the Republican Presidential Nominee for 2012?</b>	Michele Bachmann	8	0%
	Newt Gingrich	482	29%
	Jon Huntsman	18	1%
	Ron Paul	25	2%
	Rick Perry	10	1%
	Mitt Romney	796	49%
	Rick Santorum	5	0%
	Skipped	6	0%
	Not sure	291	18%

<b>13. Will Congress' failure to address the federal debt and deficit impact your business?</b>	Yes	1,128	69%
	No	182	11%
	Not sure	326	20%
	Skipped	5	0%

<b>14. Do you believe the recent drop in unemployment is just a short-term blip or the start of a longer term trend toward lower unemployment?</b>	Short-term blip	766	47%
	Start of longer term trend	657	40%
	Not sure	209	13%
	Skipped	9	1%

<b>15. To create more jobs in the United States, Congress should:</b>	Provide employers with hiring incentives	263	16%
	Make the current tax cuts permanent	527	32%
	Increase spending on infrastructure	223	14%
	Increase number of visas for skilled workers	64	4%
	Improve trade opportunities by leveling the playing field globally	188	11%
	Skipped	34	2%
	Other	342	21%

<b>16. In three years, which economy do you believe will be the most improved?</b>	United States	804	49%
	Europe	74	5%
	South America	228	14%
	China	278	17%
	India	170	10%
	Asia (not including China or India)	66	4%
	Skipped	21	1%

<b>17. Does the European debt crisis impact your business?</b>	Yes	709	43%
	No	713	43%
	Not applicable	208	13%
	Skipped	11	1%

<b>18. If you have direct business with the euro zone countries, are you reducing your expectations of revenue from those countries in 2012?</b>	Yes, substantially	45	3%
	Yes, only slightly	200	12%
	No	237	14%
	Not applicable	1,144	70%
	Skipped	15	1%

<b>19. Because of the recent uptick in the U.S. economy, do you plan to increase your inventories?</b>	Yes	118	7%
	No	942	57%
	Not applicable	574	35%
	Skipped	7	0%

<b>20. Are you using social media to grow your business?</b>	Yes	990	60%
	No	643	39%
	Skipped	8	0%

<b>21. Which social media platform are you personally most active on?</b>	Facebook	420	26%
	Google +	57	3%
	LinkedIn	669	41%
	Twitter	75	5%
	Other	26	2%
	Not applicable	377	23%
	Skipped	17	1%



THE WORLD'S LEADING CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORGANIZATION

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**The goal is not to bend or change ourselves so we fit the norm; the goal is to find the group in which we are the norm.**

Who do you talk with to grow and explore possibilities? What's the biggest challenge your company faces? With your Vistage "board of advisors," you can find the solution. Vistage Members get unbiased decision-making support from a team of trusted peers along with professional coaching/mentoring face-to-face every month.

Membership in Vistage is by invitation. We are currently seeking high-caliber local CEOs and presidents for a few openings in our Treasure Coast group.

Please contact Tim Kinane if you would like to learn more about Vistage.

**Tim Kinane**

Treasure Coast Vistage Chairman

772-485-1380

Timk@kinane.com



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