WORKFORCEsolutions
S O U T H P L A I N S

Our Mission:

The mission of the South Plains workforce system is to meet the needs of the region's employers for a highly skilled workforce by educating and preparing workers.

September Newsletter

Lubbock MSA and Regional Unemployment

Lubbock's MSA unadjusted unemployment rate for August 2020 is 5.2%, down 1.2% from July's adjusted rate of 6.4%. Amarillo MSA recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 4.2%, followed by College Station-Bryan MSA of 4.7%. Abilene MSA recorded the third lowest at 4.9%. All data impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. All estimates are subject to revision. To

Upcoming Events

- September 23, 2020 -
Workforce Solutions South Plains
Virtual Job Fair
10AM - 3PM

- October 8, 2020 -
8th Grade JOBS Y'ALL Virtual Youth Careers Exploration/Fair
8am - 12pm

- October 20, 2020 -
Date subject to change

access this and more employment data, visit TexasLMI.com.

The TWC Lubbock MSA and South Plains WDA Economic Profiles provide a breakdown of employment by industry. Click on the images to the right to access the profiles.

(Image located on page 3)

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Metro Areas (Seasonally Adjusted)

Metro Areas	Apr 2017	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Annual % Change
Abilene MSA	68,100	100	700	1.0
Amarillo MSA	121,300	-1,100	1,200	1.0
Austin-Round Rock MSA	1,021,900	-400	29,300	3.0
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	164,000	900	-800	-0.5
Brownsville-Harlingen MSA	143,000	100	2,700	1.9
College Station-Bryan MSA	115,900	-400	2,500	2.2
Corpus Christi MSA	192,400	-100	1,400	0.7
Dallas-FW-Arlington MSA	3,582,400	-18,000	99,600	2.9
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,555,000	-15,600	76,600	3.1
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,027,800	-3,200	22,600	2.2
El Paso MSA	317,000	400	9,200	3.0
Houston MSA	3,044,300	13,700	44,000	1.5
Killeen-Temple MSA	146,600	500	3,600	2.5
Laredo MSA	104,000	100	2,300	2.3
Longview MSA	96,700	300	-600	-0.6
Lubbock MSA	146,300	-1,000	800	0.5
McAllen MSA	256,700	600	4,900	1.9
Midland MSA	87,800	-100	100	0.1
Odessa MSA	69,800	100	-200	-0.3
San Angelo MSA	48,600	400	-500	-1.0
San Antonio MSA	1,035,600	3,800	24,800	2.5
Sherman-Denison MSA	47,000	100	1,000	2.2
Texarkana MSA	60,200	-500	-800	-1.3
Tyler MSA	106,200	400	2,300	2.2
Victoria MSA	42,000	200	-300	-0.7
Waco MSA	120,400	600	2,200	1.9
Wichita Falls MSA	58,000	400	-100	-0.2

Highlights
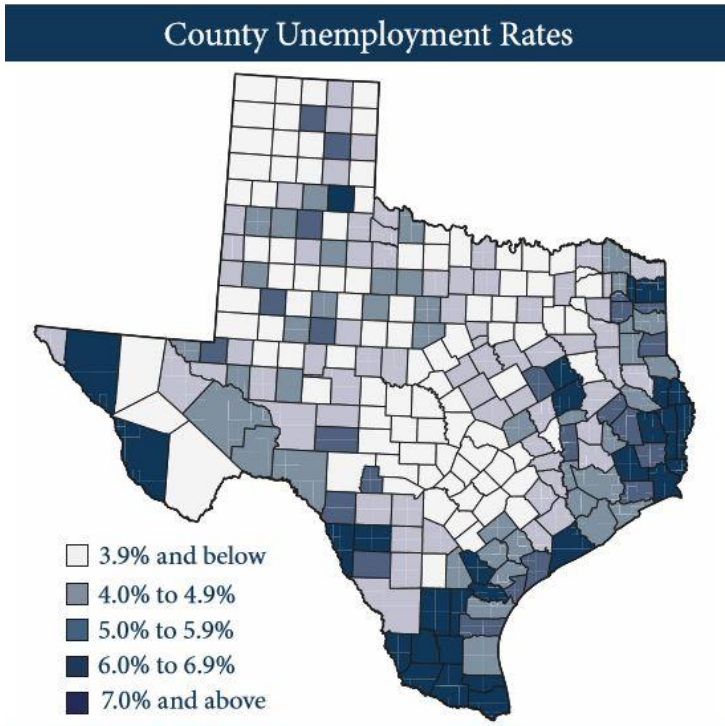(MSA industry data are not seasonally adjusted)

- Seventeen of 26 areas grew in April for a combined increase of 22,700 jobs. Nineteen areas grew over the year, while seven areas contracted.
- The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA accounted for more than half of all area employment gains over the month. The MSA increased its annual growth rate to 1.5 percent.
- The San Angelo MSA grew fastest in percentage terms with a 0.8 percent April expansion. Per not seasonally adjusted industry data, Retail Trade and Other Services each added 200 jobs over the month, while Government was down 200 positions.
- The Dallas-Plano-Irving MD led in actual and percentage job growth annually. Professional and Business Services led all major industries with 21,000 positions gained, followed by Leisure and Hospitality with 10,900 jobs added.
- The Beaumont-PA and the Texarkana MSAs lost the most jobs annually. The loss of 2,100 jobs in Retail was primarily responsible for the contraction in the Beaumont-PA MSA, while employment losses in Texarkana were spread across industries.

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County Unemployment Rates

Legend:
- 3.9% and below
- 4.0% to 4.9%
- 5.0% to 5.9%
- 6.0% to 6.9%
- 7.0% and above

(Image located on page 6)

**Click image to
view full report:**

Lubbock Metropolitan
Statistical Area (MSA)

**Click image to
view full report:**

South Plains Regional
Workforce Development Area

Click image to

view full report:

Lubbock LAUS
County-by-County
Unemployment Rates

Measure Backward, Not Forward - James Clear

We often measure progress by looking forward. We set goals. We plan milestones for our progress. Basically, we try to predict the future to some degree.

We do this in business, in health, and in life at large.

- Can we increase our quarterly earnings by 20 percent?
- Can I lose 20 pounds in the next 3 months?
- Will I be married by 30?

These are all measurements that face forward. We look into the future and try to guess when we will get somewhere.

There is an opposite and, I think, more useful approach: measure backward, not forward.

Here's what I mean…

Measuring Backward vs. Measuring Forward

Each week, I sit down at my computer and fill out a little spreadsheet to track the essential metrics in my business. Traffic, email subscribers, revenue, expenses, and so on. I have the process down pretty well by now, so it only takes about 15 minutes.

In those 15 minutes, however, I get very clear feedback on whether or not I'm making progress in the areas that matter to me. I can tell which direction things are moving. And, if the numbers in one area are moving the wrong way, I can make adjustments the following week.

Basically, I measure progress backward (*What happened in my business this week?*) and use that backward measurement as a way to guide my actions for the next week.

I use a similar strategy in the gym. I lift every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. When I show up at the gym, I open my notebook and look at the weights I lifted during my last workout or two. Then, I plan my workout by

slightly increasing the sets, reps, or weight from where they were last week. I go for tiny increases, of course. I'm interested in one percent gains.

In the gym, just like in my business, I measure backward and use that measurement to determine my next move. I am constantly looking to improve, but I base my choices on what has recently happened, not on what I hope will happen in the future.

The Chains of Habit

The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.
—Samuel Johnson

When it comes to building good habits and breaking bad habits, one of our greatest struggles is maintaining awareness of what we are actually doing. The more automatic a behavior becomes, the less likely we are to notice it. This helps to explain how the consequences of bad habits can sneak up on us. By the time the repercussions of our actions are noticeable, we have already become hooked on a new pattern of behavior.

However, measuring backward can call attention to these invisible patterns by making you aware of what you are actually doing. Measuring backward forces you to take notice of your recent actions. You can't live in a fairytale world of hopes and dreams. You have to look at the feedback of what has recently happened in your life and then base your decisions and improvements on those pieces of data.

The good news is that you can now base your decisions off of what you're actually doing, not off of what you project your future self to be doing.

The Importance of Short-Term Feedback

The best way to change long-term behavior is with short-term feedback.
—Seth Godin

There is one caveat to this strategy: when you measure backward, your data needs to come from the recent past.

If I used data from two years ago to measure progress and make business decisions, my choices would be off. The same is true for lifting weights or other areas of improvement. I don't want to base my actions on what I achieved a long time ago, but on what I have achieved recently. In other words, I want short-term feedback, not long-term feedback. The shorter, the better.

Measuring for Happiness

There is an additional benefit to this strategy as well. When you measure backward, you get to enjoy the progress you are making right now rather than yearn for a different life in the future.

You don't have to put happiness off until you reach a future milestone or goal. Happiness is no longer a finish line out there in the future. Focusing on how you can immediately improve over your past self is more satisfying that comparing your current state to where you hope you'll be some day.

The Idea in Practice

Nearly every improvement we wish to make in our lives requires some type of behavior change. If you want different results, you have to do something differently.

The tough question to answer is *what* should we do differently to get the results we want?

We often respond by focusing on an outcome and setting a goal for ourselves. Goals are good and having a sense of direction for where you want to go is critical. But when it comes to determining the improvements we can make right now, measuring backward is the way to go. Let recent results drive your future actions.

Weight Loss: Measure your calorie intake. Did you eat 3,500 calories per day last week? Focus on averaging 3,400 per day this week.

Strength Training: Oh, you squatted 250 pounds for 5 sets of 5 reps last week? Give 255 pounds a try this week.

Relationships: How many new people did you meet last week? Zero? Focus on introducing yourself to one new person this week.

Entrepreneurship: You only landed two clients last week while your average is five? It sounds like you should be focused on making more sales calls this week.

Measure backward and then get a little bit better. What did you do last week? How can you improve by just a little bit this week?

FOOTNOTES

1. Short term, long term by Seth Godin

Texas Economy added 106,800 non-farm positions over the Month.

State adjusted unemployment rate is 6.8 percent for August

AUSTIN – In July, Texas' adjusted unemployment rate of 6.8% is below the national rate of 8.4 percent.

Read the full press release.

A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

Workforce Solutions South Plains is an equal opportunity employer/programs.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Relay Texas: 711 (voice); 800-735-2989 (TDD); or Relay Texas Spanish 800-662-4954.