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Our 2010 Small Biz Award Applicants Had Positive Sales-Per-Employee Growth in 2009

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On Friday Reuters' small business site cited data from Sageworks, which compiles financial information on privately held companies, in reporting that GDP numbers are "not so rosy for small business" (compared to the reported 5.6% GDP growth of all U.S. business in the fourth quarter of 2009).

If you check out Sageworks' full report that Reuters links to – which surveys up to several hundred thousand privately held firms with \$10 million or less in annual revenue – the news is not good. From 2008 to 2009:

- Sales fell 8%, to -6.4% at year end.
- Sales per employee fell 2%.

Naturally I wanted to see how applicants for Winning Workplaces' Top Small Workplace award fell in comparison to these two important statistics – to compare apples to apples, those with \$10 million or less in annual revenue. Here's a table that shows the average sales of each year's applicants, going back to 2007 (representing sales years of 2006-2009), sales growth vs. the prior year's applicants, average sales per employee, and the growth in sales per employee:

Applicants - <\$10M annual sales	Avg Sales	Sales Year	Sales Growth	Avg Sales/ Employee	Sales/ Employee Growth
2010 (N=241)	4,516,356	2009	-8%	\$127,730	9%
2009 (N=140)	4,908,428	2008	7%	\$116,867	-3%
2008 (N=187)	\$4,587,541	2007	41%	\$121,058	103%
2007 (N=210)	\$3,255,000	2006	n/a	\$59,725	n/a

I highlighted the stats that match the first two metrics in the Sageworks report: sales % change and sales per employee. Notably, while our survey sample shows the same negative sales growth rate as the Sageworks sample – -8% in 2009 compared to 2008 – **sales per employee growth was positive at 9%**. In the Sageworks survey sample, this *fell* by 2%.

Does this difference underscore the payoff of employee engagement, team building strategies, and generally progressive people practices? I think so. For one thing, as I wrote about here, our 2010 applicants have an average employee tenure of 4 years. That's a solid foundation for both innovation and customer satisfaction, which both lead to stronger sales.

What's your take on this finding? How [Buy Cialis](#) did your 2009 per-employee sales do by comparison?

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