

Richard Ryman column: CEOs list their top challenges for 2010

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Richard Ryman Text

Northeastern Wisconsin CEOs believe increasing sales and revenue will be the biggest challenge in 2010, according to Nicolet National Bank's quarterly Business Pulse survey. Seventy-four percent of respondents said it was among their top three concerns as we enter the new year in the wake of the just-ended (we are told) recession.

OK, that doesn't sound much like news, since increasing sales and revenue is pretty much what business is about, but survey respondents identified some interesting new challenges, too.

Forty-one percent said that government regulation/taxes was one of their top three concerns, and 28 percent are concerned about bank lending. Six percent said "staying open or surviving" was a concern.

Health insurance, usually one of the top challenges named by CEOs, dropped to the fifth most important challenge in this survey, though, as survey authors point out, CEOs might be thinking of health care when they express concerns about government regulation and taxes, since any final health-care changes are likely to have plenty of each.

Only 8 percent felt like competition was among their chief concerns in the coming year.

The survey was conducted between Nov. 9-16 by IntellectualMarketing LLC, with 137 CEOs responding.