

# **Introduction to Business**

**Version Fall 2025**

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# ECONOMIC INDICATORS LAB

# Learning Objectives

By the end of this lab, you will be able to:

- Identify and explain key economic indicators and their significance
- Research and analyze current economic data from reliable sources
- Understand how economic indicators impact different types of businesses
- Create visual representations of economic trends
- Make informed predictions about business implications

# Lab Overview

Your team will create a comprehensive economic dashboard that tracks key indicators and analyzes their impact on businesses. You'll research current data, identify trends, and present actionable insights for business decision-making.

# Part 1: Team Assignment and Indicator Selection

**Team Size:** 3-4 students

**Time Allocation:** 90 minutes total lab time

**Your Team Information:**

- Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_
- Selected Focus Industry: \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose ONE focus industry for your analysis:**

- Retail/Consumer Goods
- Technology/Software
- Healthcare/Pharmaceuticals
- Real Estate/Construction
- Manufacturing/Automotive
- Financial Services/Banking
- Energy/Utilities
- Food Service/Hospitality

## Part 2: Economic Indicators Research (30 minutes)

**Instructions:** Research current data for each indicator below. Use reliable sources such as:

- Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)
- Federal Reserve Economic Data (fred.stlouisfed.org)
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (bea.gov)
- Yahoo Finance, Bloomberg, or similar financial news sites

### Indicator 1: Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

**Current Data:**

- Most recent quarterly GDP growth rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Year-over-year GDP change: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trend Analysis (last 12 months):**

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile

**Impact on your focus industry:**

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## Indicator 2: Unemployment Rate

### Current Data:

- National unemployment rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Your state unemployment rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_

### Trend Analysis (last 12 months):

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile

### Impact on your focus industry:

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## Indicator 3: Inflation Rate (Consumer Price Index)

### Current Data:

- Annual inflation rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Core inflation rate (excluding food/energy): \_\_\_\_\_%
- Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_

### Trend Analysis (last 12 months):

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile



## Impact on your focus industry:

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### Indicator 4: Interest Rates

**Current Data:**

- Federal funds rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Prime lending rate: \_\_\_\_\_%
- 10-year Treasury yield: \_\_\_\_\_%
- Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trend Analysis (last 12 months):**

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile

## Impact on your focus industry:

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### Indicator 5: Stock Market Performance

**Current Data:**

- Dow Jones Industrial Average: \_\_\_\_\_
  - S&P 500: \_\_\_\_\_
  - NASDAQ: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Your industry-specific index (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_
-

**Trend Analysis (last 12 months):**

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile

**Impact on your focus industry:**

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## Indicator 6: Consumer Confidence Index

**Current Data:**

- Consumer Confidence Index: \_\_\_\_\_
- Consumer Sentiment Index: \_\_\_\_\_
- Data source: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of data: \_\_\_\_\_

**Trend Analysis (last 12 months):**

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- Volatile

**Impact on your focus industry:**

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## Part 3: Dashboard Creation (25 minutes)

**Instructions:** Create a visual dashboard using the template below. Use colors, charts, and symbols to make your data easily interpretable.

**Economic Dashboard for:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Industry**

**Dashboard Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicator	Current Value	Trend	Business Impact	Outlook
GDP Growth				
Unemployment				
Inflation				
Interest Rates				
Stock Market				
Consumer Confidence				

**Legend:** ↑ = Rising, ↓ = Falling, → = Stable, ~ = Volatile

### Overall Economic Health Score

**Rate the current economic environment for your industry (1-10 scale):**

Economic Health Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

## Justification:

