

WORKFORCE PIPELINE

A MONTHLY FEATURE ABOUT TRAINING, EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Taking Charge of Talent: How Manufacturing's Future Relies on You

Most manufacturers are proud of what they do. They take pride in working with their hands and utilizing new technology. There's a spark of creativity within them and they strive to be innovative and unique. There's a magic to manufacturing. That is manufacturing's reality.

Why, then, are less than a third of parents willing to push their son or daughter toward manufacturing? Why is it viewed as dark and dirty and dangerous—a job of last resort, rather than a career of limitless opportunity?

The image of manufacturing is in jeopardy. By now, manufacturers should not have to be reminded that fixing it relies on them. Nobody outside the industry will work to change it unless manufacturing leaders are willing to step up and do their part to lead the discussion and locate potential partnerships.

Over the next few months, manufacturers will have three opportunities to change the conversation and showcase the excitement of what they do in their local community.

Taking on Talent, One Community at a Time

The Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA) has partnered with the SME Education Foundation's Partnership Response in Manufacturing Education (PRIME) program and the Manufacturing Institute's Dream It. Do It. program to provide tailored manufacturing education in Michigan communities. Beginning this summer, MMA and its partners will push for employer-driven talent solutions. As the customers of the education system, manufacturers must customize the initial development of talent so it meets the needs of the industry today and in the fu-

ture. The MMA looks forward to using its extensive statewide resources to bring business leaders together with others from local communities to begin implementing clear solutions.

The interest among business leaders in Michigan for regional, employer-driven talent solutions is at an all-time high. SME's "boots on the ground" strategy delivers customized solutions. The PRIME program recognizes there is not a one-size-fits-all solution to the talent challenge—what works in Detroit or Grand Rapids may not be successful in Madison Heights; and



Brian Glowiak, director of SME Foundation speaks to manufacturers in partnership with MMA to help develop a new career technology center at a middle school in Madison Heights, MI.

a strategy that is easy for a large company to implement could be impossible for a small, family-owned manufacturer. By connecting directly with community employers, a viable talent strategy can be developed in each region of the state.

Tangible resources are important but so is a good communication strategy. Implementing the Manufacturing Institute's Dream It. Do It. program's proven messaging will create avenues for employers to connect with students, teachers

and counselors at their level and in their schools to showcase the passion that fuels today's advanced manufacturer.

MMA, SME and the Manufacturing Institute are excited to see how these partnerships grow and develop over the next few years. These are true partnerships; no longer relying on employers to do all the heavy lifting or for educators to unilaterally decide what the customers of the education system need. By working together, these strategies can create a sustainable pipeline of talent in Michigan.

Talent Collaboration Across Every Region

"Even as regional partnerships are developed, a statewide talent strategy is still needed to ensure all Michigan manufacturers are receiving the tools and resources to prepare themselves for the industry of tomorrow," said Elyse Kopietz, MMA director of communications, marketing and events. "For the fifth year, MMA's MFG Talent Summit will be the catalyst for new ideas, new partnerships and the sharing of current best practices for manufacturers of all sizes."

Attendees will receive a crash course in talent attraction, retention and onboarding while having networking time to focus on each company's needs.

The MFG Talent Summit on October 20 in Battle Creek will connect manufacturers with educators, local and state leaders and economic developers to plan a viable, sustainable future for the industry. In addition to the planned panel on the MMA/SME training partnership, attendees will receive a crash course in talent attraction, retention and onboarding while utilizing substantial networking time to dive deeper into strategies unique to each company's needs.

The Summit also gives all of Michigan's manufacturing leaders the chance to honor an industry partner for their effort to create talent development programs while promoting manufacturing in a positive light. Past recipients include leaders of regional manufacturing associations and educators focused on providing the next generation with real career paths.

Celebrating the Nation's Most Vital Industry

What do you call thousands of manufacturing businesses opening their doors to the community and tens of thousands

of students, parents, teachers, counselors and local leaders learning the true story of manufacturing careers? It's called National MFG Day and its happening October 7!

"MFG Day is a perfect day to reach out to your community"

"MFG Day 2016 promises to be one of the biggest national manufacturing celebrations ever," said Brett Gerrish, MMA communications specialist and lead coordinator of the association's MFG Day efforts. "Every year the number of participating companies gets larger and each year more and more students are exposed to the incredible career opportunities that exist in an industry they may never have considered. MFG Day is a perfect day to reach out to your community."

Michigan manufacturers are encouraged to connect directly with MMA as the association works to coordinate open houses across the state. Meanwhile, facilities in all fifty states and Canada can go to www.mfgday.com and register their event as part of a growing map of MFG Day events.

Talent Solution Requires Proactive Manufacturers

The talent challenges of today directly impact manufacturing's future. It is no longer enough to talk about talent from the sidelines. Manufacturers must be proactive community leaders in the development of new strategies, new talent initiatives and policy changes to promote the industry as what it is: exciting, high-paying, high-tech hubs for creativity and innovation. ➔

The Michigan Manufacturers Association represents the interests of manufacturers through advocacy, education and business services. Founded in 1902, MMA membership includes many of the world's largest, most well-known corporations as well as small and mid-sized, family-owned businesses rooted in local communities across the state. For more information on MMA and its efforts to drive the talent discussion forward, please go to www.mimfg.org.



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