

## Trends in Talent Acquisition in Manufacturing in 2025...and Beyond

### Slide 1: Increased Focus on Skills-Based Hiring

#### Trend:

As we all know, there is a **shift from qualifications-based hiring** (degrees, formal education) to **skills-based hiring due to labor shortages** and the complexity of modern manufacturing processes driven by automation, AI, and robotics.

#### Problem:

The manufacturing sector needs people with **practical, hands-on skills** rather than academic credentials.

#### Solution:

1. **Technical Assessments:** Implement skills tests to evaluate a candidate's ability to work with machinery, programming automation equipment, and using industry-specific software.
2. **Upskilling and Reskilling:** Invest in continuous training programs and certifications for current employees and new hires, focusing on practical skills like robotics, CNC machines, and IoT.
3. **Partnerships with Educational Institutions:** Collaborate with technical schools and universities to ensure new graduates are equipped with the right skills and attract talent through co-op placements or apprentices or even sponsor a scholarship.

Target students studying the trades, manufacturing, automation, or engineering - this will help build long-term relationships with potential employees.

**Hire co-op students!** They also help your full time employees with admin related tasks. Once they graduate, they can move into a FT Coordinator role.

**Hire out of the industry or field:** be creative with what other trades can do the job you are looking to fill

## Slide 2: Technological Proficiency and Digital Skills and

## Slide 3: Automation and the Changing Workforce

### Trend:

The rise of **Industry 4.0**, automation, and technologies like IoT, AI, and data analytics is transforming manufacturing.

CNC machines, robotic process automation, AI-driven systems, and predictive analytics are now commonplace on production floors.

This requires a new breed of worker—one who can interpret data, work with programmable machines, and understand the integration of physical and digital systems.

### Solutions:

#### Focus on Technical and Digital Skills:

Prioritize candidates with digital literacy, particularly in automation, AI, and IoT applications.

Be proactive in your recruitment and organizational development efforts.

Start looking for people in these areas now even if you don't need them at the moment.

If you are in HR, connect with Operations Leaders to discuss organizational development, who can be sent for new training, and what colleges / universities offer programs that are producing recent graduates.

Offer training programs that reskill existing employees in automation, AI, and data analytics to meet the evolving demands of the manufacturing workforce.

Add this training to your budget for your next fiscal year.

#### New roles in Manufacturing include:

1. **Automation Technicians and Engineers:** Expertise in setting up, maintaining, and optimizing automated systems.
2. **Data Analysts and AI Specialists:** Ability to work with data-driven insights and predictive analytics to improve efficiency and reduce downtime.

3. **IoT Specialists:** Understanding of how to implement and maintain smart factory systems, including sensors, cloud platforms, and machine-to-machine communication.
4. **Cybersecurity Experts:** As manufacturing systems become more interconnected, cybersecurity will be critical to protect against potential threats.
5. **Mechatronics and Robotics Engineers:** Skilled in the design, implementation, and maintenance of robotic systems used in manufacturing.

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#### **Slide 4: Challenges with Labor Shortages and Aging Workforce**

##### **Trend:**

The manufacturing industry faces a dual challenge of labor shortages and an aging workforce, with a significant portion of workers nearing retirement and not enough younger workers entering the industry.

##### **Key Factors to Consider:**

Baby Boomers are born from 1946-1964

Current Estimate of in Manufacturing in Canada are around **350,000 people**

Estimated Retirements: Based on typical retirement rates, 50-60% of these workers could retire by 2025.

Retirement Estimate: **175,000 to 210,000 of** Baby Boomers are expected to retire from the manufacturing industry in Canada by 2025.

##### **Solutions:**

**Rebrand the Industry:** Position manufacturing as a tech-driven, forward-looking industry through digital outreach and social media campaigns to attract younger talent. You are going to need your Marketing team for that. This may require some advocacy or sponsorship from the top.

**Outreach and Mentorship:** Build partnerships with schools and colleges, offering internships, mentorships, and scholarships to engage the next generation early on and pipeline future talent.



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**Flexible Work and Benefits:** Provide flexible work options and enhance health and safety standards, benefits packages, and collaborative work environments to appeal to younger workers.

**Start early:** Get Gen A interested in jobs in manufacturing at the high school level by partnering with school boards, offering tours of facilities

**Advocacy Groups:** Work with chambers of commerce and industry non profits to address these labour concerns to provide advocacy for the industry.

A few include:

<https://safetyalliancebc.ca/>

<https://cme-mec.ca/>

<https://fbc-abc.com/>

<https://emccanada.org/>

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## Slide 5: Focus On Building a Strong Employer Brand to Attract Talent

### Trend:

With rising competition for skilled workers in manufacturing, a strong employer brand is crucial for attracting and retaining top talent. A well-defined brand showcases a company's reputation, values, and work culture.

### Problem:

Why should / would someone want to join your company and apply for that job posted? versus a competitor or another sector?

We have to show them the reasons why they should.

### Solutions:

#### Enhance Your company's Employee Advocacy and Social Media

- Clearly communicate your company's culture, values, and benefits through job ads, social media, and employee testimonials on your website and or LinkedIn / Indeed page.

- Add videos of happy employees to share their career journeys on your website careers page. Or create videos on your company's Instagram if you are targeting Gen Z.
- Ask your company's marketing team to help brand your company on LinkedIn, the careers page on the website and Instagram.
- Leverage platforms like LinkedIn and Instagram to engage with potential talent early. It is free to create a LI company page.
- Post frequently on the LI company page about employee / team events, available open roles, promotions.
- Have hiring managers repost jobs on LinkedIn with comments of how great the team is etc.
- Perhaps even get a Tok Tok corporate careers account to attract the Gen Y and then Generation As.

#### **Enhance Candidate Experience:**

- Ensure a smooth, transparent, and engaging candidate experience at every touchpoint, from job postings to interviews and beyond.
- Make hiring decisions as soon as possible and ensure there is communication throughout the process to all candidates
- Ensure that the application process is smooth and easy especially for the Generation Zs who may have little time for long applications and go to the competition
- Also, you may want to remove candidates include cover letters in the application process

#### **Example of companies who have strong employer brands in Canada are:**

Siemens Canada, Magna International, Bombardier, SNC-Lavalin

#### **Recruiting Remote and Global Talent**

As remote work becomes more accepted in some parts of the manufacturing sector (for technical, engineering, and design roles), you may need to search beyond local talent.

#### **Ways to do this:**

##### **1. Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP)**

- **Overview:** Allows Canadian employers to hire foreign workers to fill labor shortages.
- **Key Steps:** Employers must obtain a **Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA)** to prove hiring a foreign worker won't negatively affect the local market. Skilled roles like machinists and welders are often eligible.

- **Benefit:** Quickly brings in foreign talent for hard-to-fill skilled positions.

## 2. Global Talent Stream (GTS)

- **Overview:** A fast-track immigration option for hiring foreign workers in specialized, high-demand roles.
- **Key Steps:** Companies can hire for advanced manufacturing or tech positions, and applications are processed within **two weeks**.
- **Benefit:** Fast processing and access to highly specialized talent.

## 3. Partner with Immigration and Settlement Agencies

- **Overview:** Collaborate with agencies to help foreign workers with housing, language, and cultural adaptation.
- **Key Steps:** Work with local services to ease the transition for foreign hires.
- **Benefit:** Helps workers adapt quickly, improving retention and integration.

## 4. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

- **Overview:** Allows provinces to nominate foreign workers for permanent residency.
- **Key Steps:** Employers can nominate workers with skills in high-demand manufacturing sectors.
- **Benefit:** A pathway to bring in skilled foreign workers for long-term roles.

## 5. Employer-Sponsored Work Permits

- **Overview:** Employers sponsor foreign workers for job-specific work permits.
- **Key Steps:** Provide employment contracts and comply with immigration regulations for positions like engineers and technicians.
- **Benefit:** Flexibility in hiring international talent while securing their legal work status.

## 6. Invest in Recruitment Partnerships

- **Overview:** Partner with international recruitment agencies to source foreign talent.
- **Key Steps:** Agencies handle visa and paperwork, streamlining the hiring process.
- **Benefit:** Access to a global pool of skilled workers, saving time and resources.



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## Conclusion

The manufacturing sector's talent acquisition landscape is undergoing significant transformation.

Success in 2025 and beyond will depend on embracing digital transformation, fostering adaptability, and creating innovative approaches to attracting and retaining talent.

Organizations that proactively address these trends will be better positioned to build the workforce of the future.

If you would like to discuss your organization's recruitment needs or explore ways to improve your current hiring process, feel free to book a call with Melanie Wilk. She's available to offer guidance and share insights tailored to your business.

[https://calendly.com/melanie\\_discoverycall/60min?month=2024-10](https://calendly.com/melanie_discoverycall/60min?month=2024-10)