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The elusive solution to the workforce shortage.

While the debate over what to do about the growing workforce shortage in manufacturing becomes more urgent, one solution is increasingly obvious: women. They make up half of the general U.S. workforce, yet only comprise a quarter of the manufacturing labor force.¹ Women represent the largest pool of untapped talent in the U.S.¹

Women's roles in manufacturing:

- 24.8 percent of the manufacturing labor force.¹
- 11.1 percent of executive officers.¹
- 14.3 percent of board directors.¹
- 2.0 percent of CEOs.¹

The challenge: Make manufacturing more appealing to women.

Despite the outstanding opportunities and earning potential in manufacturing, women tend to avoid this career path. If we can reverse this trend, a significant solution to the workforce shortage may not be far behind.



WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING 101: How to attract more and why we should.



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It's smart business to attract and advance women:

- 1 They can contribute valuable experiences and insights.¹
- 2 Companies with diverse leadership are more profitable.¹
- 3 Fortune 500 companies with high percentages of women officers had a 35 percent higher return on equity than those with fewer women executives.¹

Manufacturers can do more to attract, retain and advance women:

- **Address gender bias** – The prevailing perception that manufacturing is biased toward men can be reversed through targeted awareness training.¹
- **Create a more flexible work environment** – Leads to significantly higher job satisfaction, engagement, as well as physical and mental health.²
- **Foster sponsorship** – Women don't reap the benefits of sponsorship to the degree that their male counterparts do.³

Manufacturing organizations can do their part:

- Through positive messaging and relevant programs targeting women.
- Provide tools for women, business and the industry to succeed.
- Sponsor organizations that support women, such as Women in Manufacturing.⁴
- Sponsor awards, such as The STEP Awards to honor women in manufacturing.⁴
- Promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) by sponsoring events such as Capitol Hill Days.⁴

Raising our future manufacturing professionals.

- SME Education Foundation's PRIME model supports manufacturing education.
- 83 percent of participating seniors in SME Education Foundation's PRIME high schools pursue education in manufacturing/engineering.⁵
- Shaping our future workforce begins with a strong foundation in math and science.
- Giving children a sense of competency in math and science encourages them to pursue STEM studies.
- Ensure awareness of the many STEM-related career paths.
- Advance manufacturing through partnerships between organizations, businesses and schools.
- Provide additional support to schools with exemplary manufacturing curriculums.

¹ Deloitte Consulting, Untapped resource: How manufacturers can attract, retain, and advance talented women, 2012.

² Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Kerrie Peraino, Laura Sherbin, and Karen Sumberg, The sponsor effect: Breaking through the last glass ceiling, HBR Research Materials, 2011.

³ Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Laura Sherbin, Fabiola Dieudonne, Christina Farnoli, and Catherin Fredman, Athena factor 2.0: Accelerating female talent in science, engineering & technology, 2012.

⁴ SME is a sponsor.
5.smeef.org/prime.