



PT WORK Force

2022 PT WORK Force Blog Posts

National Mentoring Month: The Value of Mentors

Posted On January 5, 2022

For many in the PT/MC industry, mentorships are invaluable for knowledge transfers. Not only is mentoring used to share industry-specific and tacit knowledge but it can also:

- Teach hard and soft skills amongst team members
- Help with organizational succession planning, onboarding, and training

“Some organizations feel that tacit knowledge, which resides in an expert’s head and surfaces in response to a situation or action, can be exchanged most effectively through one-on-one interactions between mentors and mentees who work side by side for a period of time,” writes Lauren Trees, principal research lead at American Productivity & Quality Center.

Finding Mentors

Jeff Cloud, IBT Industrial Solutions, discusses places to find mentors beyond a single company.

“When I first joined the industrial distribution industry, I did my best to surround myself with as many individuals who had extensive experience and a willingness to teach. There was no better place to achieve this goal than as a participant of PTDA. Just sitting in committee meetings, and asking questions over drinks, is as valuable as any professional setting. Many volunteers at PTDA don’t consider themselves mentors, but those who take time to participate, really engage and selflessly advance our industry demonstrate traits all mentors should strive to emulate.”

The Portrait of a Great Mentor

Who is someone you look up to for inspiration and mentorship?

Are they your first boss? What about your former colleague turned friend?

“When looking to align with a mentor or a professional coach, the most important component is trust. You need to feel comfortable in being able to discuss anything,

which allows an open and honest line of communication. If you find yourself uncomfortable bringing up a specific topic with a mentor, you should probably look for someone different," shares Cloud.

The impact on an individual's career is lasting. Barb Ross, Garlock Sealing Technologies, remembers how she was encouraged and counseled by leaders in the industry and credits those relationships for contributing to her success.

"My advice is to have both male and female mentors. It is also important to find sponsors; people who are willing to step up and sponsor you. Mentors are great, but a sponsor is someone that's going to speak up and promote you," explains Ross.

Adapt and Retain Employees

Posted On January 13, 2022

Like many industries, the distribution world is struggling to fill jobs, so it is more important than ever to retain your best employees. However with distribution centers requiring more skilled employees and the great resignation sweeping through PT/MC companies, it's important to ask: "Why are employees leaving and what can we do to change that?"

"Explorance, a leader in experience management (XM) solutions, recently commissioned a survey of 2,000 U.S. part- and full-time-employed adults to probe the hidden drivers behind the sudden employee exodus. The survey found a majority of employees are eager to share feedback with employers and do so in hopes of driving positive change in their workplace. However, employees— including many executives— feel all too often their feedback goes unheard, resulting in no meaningful change," explains Marcel Schwantes, founder and chief human officer, Leadership from The Core.

Additionally, "Perceived lack of appreciation is a major contributor as to why workers decide to leave," says Greg Connor in *5 Simple Strategies to Attract and Retain Warehouse and Distribution Center Labor*.

Make the Changes

If employees leave companies because they do not feel heard or appreciated, it is critical to continuously check in with them to hear and address their concerns. Here are a few suggestions:

- Implement surveys and acknowledge them through tangible changes
- Conduct "stay" and "exit" interviews
- Champion wellness programs
- Increase pay and/or benefits
- Commit to professional development for all levels
- Host town halls to keep employees informed

- Create appreciation and recognition initiatives
- Encourage a work/life balance

Another key aspect of retaining employees is to support their professional growth. Josh McGill, OTP Industrial Solutions, shares, "As an employee, one of the things I find fulfilling, is my company's commitment to developing its associates and creating a pathway for success. The commitment goes beyond creating a plan but conducting monthly check-ins to ensure employees are staying on course for success."

Just remember, "To retain quality workers, you have to understand their needs. And not every worker will have the same needs," states Brandon Barborka in *Distribution Centers, Recruiting & Retention: 3 Tips for Keeping Quality Workers*.

Go Where Potential Candidates are Found

Posted On January 20, 2022

Hurdles abound when it comes to overcoming image issues in the PT/MC industry. One person may only envision skilled labor while another only automated jobs.

Missy Munte from NORD Drivesystems shares, "People outside of our industry do not realize all of the places and application where industrial power transmission is being used; Amazon facilities, food, beverage, automotive, transportation, etc. So many things that we all use on a daily basis are products of PT."

It's up to PT/MC employers to take back the narrative. When inventing a marketing strategy, look to social media as one way to tell the real story of the ins and outs and opportunities in the PT/MC industry.

Creatively Get the Word Out There

Encouraging employees to try new things can help you build brand awareness and prompt job seekers to look more closely at your company and industry. Younger generations speak the language of the internet and can prove very helpful in promotion even if that's not part of their job. The majority of potential candidates favor the insight of the average employee vs. the CEO.

Nowadays many companies from ice cream parlors, farmers, truck drivers and a variety of small businesses are using their frontline employees to dispel any myths and build hype around their industry. It costs a small amount for what could become a large payout. The short form content found on TikTok and Instagram is rapidly taking over social media and can be one inexpensive promotional opportunity to build awareness about the PT/MC industry.

"Posts shared by workers get 8X more engagement than posts shared by official brand accounts," writes Aaron Agius, co-founder and managing director of Louder Online. One

example is of a trucking employee, [@alexthetruckingguy](#), posting about his everyday experience out on the road. To-date, his content has 251.1 thousand followers and 5 million likes as of January 18, 2022.

Forbes provides these tips to show off your people and company culture:

- Highlight your employees by showcasing different roles in your company from inside sales to purchasing, to making sure the inventory and warehouse run like a well-oiled machine.
- Do you do something special to reward staff? Include it in your social posts.
- Let employees do it for you. Let them show what a day at work looks like.
- Create quick testimonial videos about your company from your employees' perspective and use them in posts and stories while you're promoting open positions.
- Film a company or behind-the-scenes tour of the facilities. To make it even more fun, film it at two or more times faster than normal speed and set it to fun, fast-paced music.
- Create a stellar employee referral program. If there's a good enough incentive, they'll recruit applicants on their own accounts for you.

By promoting your company to the broader social media world, you can reach passive candidates who may be a great fit but are not actively on job boards. It also can help lower costs because social media platforms are free to set up.

How do you encourage your employees to share their experiences?

Building Industry Knowledge with Tacit Knowledge

Posted On January 26, 2022

It is your first day at work in the PT/MC industry. Your new boss shakes your hand, introduces you to your new coworkers and fills you in on the best restaurants in the area. Then training begins. You sit through multiple days of educational meetings, shadows and online classes. You furiously take notes so as not to forget any information.

Whether your role is in sales, marketing or in the warehouse, you may still not feel ready or equipped with enough information to be successful. Why is that, despite having completed all of your company's educational content?

One often overlooked aspect of knowledge management is tacit knowledge, or knowledge that resides in the human brain. "It is the experience, intelligence, and know-how of the people in the organization," [explains IGI Global](#). "Unlike explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge cannot be easily documented or expressed in explicit form,

and hence, it is tough to share tacit knowledge with others. Tacit knowledge could be gathered from observation and experience.”

Chris Gumas, Ruland Manufacturing Co., shared this for those just getting started in the industry: “The majority of my training was not formal, it was informal. You learn the systems; you learn a little bit about the company. How do we help customers? What do our products do? All that functional information you must absorb, but it’s the knowledge in between that becomes homework, so find people in your organization who are willing to talk to you and provide insight.”

When looking to build knowledge and connections in the industry, it is important to approach it from a tacit knowledge perspective. What information do industry veterans rely on, but struggle to put on paper? How do you tap into that knowledge and make it a priority?

“How much you get out of it correlates to the amount of effort you put into it,” says Gumas. “My early days at Ruland were so critical. I had so many great experiences. During my first two years, I spent a lot of time with Bobby Watkins, our VP of sales. Being on the road with him was awesome because we were able to develop a personal relationship. I could ask him anything; he’s so knowledgeable. All of that foundational groundwork really came from listening to Bobby while he communicated with customers and asking him questions.”

Here are some simple ways companies can help build industry knowledge and pass on tacit knowledge:

- Encourage mentorships: Employees need seasoned support to learn more detailed knowledge and strategies to be successful.
- Facilitate longer periods of shadowing: When a new employee spends a significant amount of time shadowing a colleague, they can pick up tips and tricks to navigate their workplace expectations.
- Simplify processes and information: The more streamlined a process is the easier it is for an employee to get on board and understand the smaller aspects that make it work.
- Promote experienced employees showing their work: For example, have experienced employees record their calls. Document the smaller, complex aspects that are often overlooked, like how to successfully engage a customer over the phone.

What do you do to build industry knowledge at your company?

Overcome The Great Resignation: Hire from Within

Posted On February 2, 2022

The Great Resignation prompted by COVID-19 has left many employers in a lurch. The natural tendency might be to look externally for new candidates, yet a dual approach which includes an internal search can often net great results, not to mention save on costs associated with onboarding and training new hires.

“Today’s labor market is rocked by mass resignations: In September 2021, 4.4 million workers quit their jobs in the U.S., according to [the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), and [the New York Times reports](#) that there were approximately 75 unemployed workers for every 100 open jobs in September. For recruiters, this tight labor market underscores the benefits of promoting from within,” writes [Sam Blum, Morning Brew](#). Manufacturing has been hit the hardest, as indicated in the [November 2021 Job Openings and Labor Turnover](#) report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Whenever possible, NTN promotes education and the advancement of employees at all levels of the organization,” says Sylvia Silveira, NTN Bearing Corporation of Canada. “We want employees to be able to progress within their current roles and if the opportunity presents, to take on new ones in order to advance their career within NTN. Therefore, we first post open positions internally and only seek to fill organizational vacancies from outside when specific talent and required skills are unavailable within.”

Invest in Your Employees

Companies save significant costs by investing in training their employees for their current and future positions within the organization.

“The training and recruitment costs of new hires are far more than what it would take to train an existing employee when you factor in the time and money it takes to employ along with the time spent as new employees acclimate to the company. Rehiring costs represent around 12 percent of a company’s expenses with up to 40 percent for businesses that have a high turnover rate,” shares [SHIFT](#).

“NTN invests in our employees by providing internal and external training and professional development opportunities so that employees have the required skills and experiences to move to the next level. We continually challenge our employees and encourage them to challenge themselves. Employees are urged to discuss their career aspirations with their manager and whether they have an interest in progressing to other roles within NTN,” highlights Silveira.

The Road to Retention

By investing in your employees and hiring from within, you can increase your retention and lower your overall costs. "The opportunity for career advancement within NTN is an important retention tool, specifically for those employees who are Millennials or Gen Zers. Promoting employees from within is also of benefit to NTN because employee morale and engagement is increased. The employee feels more valued and that their efforts have been recognized," says Silveira.

How do you grow current employees with the hopes of promotion in the future? Let us know in the comments below!

Making Sense of Alphabet Soup: The Value of a Multi-Generational Workforce

Posted On February 9, 2022

Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z, Millennials: groups steeped in meaning (and more than just letters.) Today's American workforce is unique in that, for the first time in history, four distinct generations are working side by side. The PT/MC industry is not exempt from this shift, especially where generation-owned family companies have nuclear or extended family members working side by side.

Each generation boasts different work ethics, styles and experiences. Assuming your company workforce can skate by with a one-size-fits-all management approach will only net losses. For a company to succeed, all generations must coexist affably and productively. As younger employees climb the company ranks and assume greater leadership roles, they bring technological savvy, while the older generation brings historical knowledge. Neither of these should be ignored or undervalued.

The key is to remain mindful of differences and flexible in addressing specific needs. Clear communication, setting expectations, reward/recognition and appreciation are all important tools needing to be managed accordingly. When done well, you will maximize the productivity, loyalty and unity of your multigenerational team.

"My younger employees crave exposure to upper management via on-the-spot meetings or check-ins, while my older employees prefer scheduled meetings and discussion that gets straight to the point," shares Rebecca Picano, customer service manager at Climax Metal Products Company. "We've remedied this by implementing monthly team meetings where both the engineering and sales teams have in-depth discussions with customer service reps to better equip and educate them on what they are working on. Everyone understands their voice matters to the overall organization."

The most successful organizations are ones capitalizing on the experience, knowledge and skills of employees from *every* generation—especially in a highly competitive or slow economy—leveraging the combined strengths and potential of the groups. Regardless of

the generational gap, all have one thing in common: they want to feel what they offer is valued and respected.

For more insight, check out these resources from PT WORK Force to help you understand and foster a harmonious and successful multi-generational workplace.

[Communicating in a Multi-Generational Workforce](#)
[Maximize the Power of a Multi-Generational Workforce](#)
[Millennials and the Changing World of Work](#)

In your workplace, how do you see the skillsets and experience of employees from different generations complementing and strengthening your team? Leave a comment below.

Painting the Perfect Job Post

Posted On February 23, 2022

Competition for quality and dedicated job candidates is fierce. Your job posting can no longer include just the basic requirements. Employees want to know their work makes a difference and, as a team member, they're appreciated and rewarded with more than just a competitive salary. Employers are challenged to think beyond the norm and paint a picture that illustrates the range of benefits and opportunities that exist within their company.

Here are some things to consider when writing or reviewing job postings:

- Every member of your team is essential. Explain how a warehouse worker, inventory manager or driver are as critical and supported as those in sales, purchasing or other areas. Consider phrases that help candidates understand the impact of their work.
- Provide vivid descriptions of your building or facility, if possible. What makes your building or warehouse stand out? Is it new or renovated? Is there anything remarkable about the property? This [PT WORK Force blog post](#) describes how [curb appeal](#) can be a big selling point to job candidates.
- Has your company been recognized with any local, national or industry awards? Candidates want to know that others—whether the local community or those in your marketplace—are paying attention to the great things you're doing or have accomplished.
- Unprecedented times created new expectations for work-life-balance. Hybrid is one hot topic these days. Does your company offer [remote or hybrid work](#) for front office, insides sales and other teams? Likewise, health and wellness perks and programs demonstrate you support employees'

wellbeing. List a few examples of how you've made this a priority for your workforce.

- Do you offer mentoring or professional development programs? What opportunities exist for advancement? Many candidates are seeking careers, not just a job. How does your company plan for cultivating employee growth and success? Is there room for the candidate to learn and contribute to other areas of the organization? Chances are that if you're doing a good job in this area, there will be little incentive for employees to leave.
- Are you a family-owned company? How long have you been in business? Many candidates see companies with a long successful history as a place where they too will be treated as a member of a family. Make mention of this distinction and longevity in your posting.

While it's important to include clear descriptions of the job role and expectations, adding just one sentence or comprehensive paragraph about other attractions and benefits can capture the attention of candidates. You can find samples of postings for various PT/MC job postings on the PT WORK Force website.

Building a Culture of Appreciation is Key for Retention

Posted On March 2, 2022

The most successful organizations are those making employee appreciation and recognition routine because they know it boosts morale and fuels engagement. Friday, March 4 is National Employee Appreciation Day. This presents an opportunity to assess and determine where your company can strengthen its recognition efforts. If you already practice employee appreciation, take this time to review its effectiveness.

Employee appreciation and recognition should be a mainstay of your company culture. Research shows nearly 80 percent of employees who quit their jobs claim a lack of appreciation was a major reason for leaving, and 65 percent of Americans claim they weren't recognized even once in the last year, according to research from OC Tanner. Regularly acknowledging employee accomplishments and contributions, a positive or winning attitude and efforts in advancing your organization are essential to fostering a productive workplace and limiting turnover.

According to a Gallup poll, 52 percent of employees who voluntarily leave a job say their manager or organization **could have done something** to prevent them from leaving. What if that "something" is regularly recognizing and celebrating what your team and employees bring to the table or produce? Ask yourself this: Is it more costly to celebrate a current employee, or replace and train a new one?

When employees see that their work matters, they feel fulfilled and become motivated to contribute more to the organization's success. Here are a few gestures to help manifest a greater connection between employee, the team and organization:

- Offer social recognition by sending a group email or offering thanks or praise for a job well done during a team meeting. Did your warehouse team help meet a tight distribution deadline? Share the news with the office!
- Treat or surprise someone with a cup of coffee. If they work remotely, send a gift card to their favorite coffee spot. Did someone put in overtime to complete a project, or step up to assist? This low-cost form of monetary recognition demonstrates you're paying attention to and noticing your employee's dedication.
- Initiate a peer-to-peer recognition program by creating awards where colleagues nominate one another. An easy no-cost idea is to accept nominations for "Employee of the Month" and award the winner with a special parking spot close to the entrance.

Employee recognition must be a key element in your employee engagement and retention strategy. If you need ideas or inspiration, check out this recent [PT WORK® Force blog post](#) in which PTDA Past President, Brian Davis of B & D Industrial shares why and how his company demonstrates its gratitude and appreciation for employees. *Does your company make employee appreciation and recognition a priority? Share your story or ideas in the comments.*

Celebrate Women in Power Transmission and Motion Control on

International Women's Day

Posted On March 8, 2022

By Karlaa V. Gregory, Sumitomo Drive Technologies

March is Women's History Month and today, March 8, we celebrate International Women's Day. The annual celebration is an opportunity to recognize the contributions women have made to the power transmission/motion control (PT/MC) industry and manufacturing over the years.

Women's History Month began as a local celebration in Santa Rosa, California in 1978. The movement spread across the country when other communities began creating their own celebrations. In 1980, the National Women's History Project (National Women's History Alliance), women's groups and historians pushed for national recognition. President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the week of

March 8, 1980, as National Women’s History Week. In 1987, Congress officially designated March as “Women’s History Month.”

Women in the Power Transmission/Motion Control Industry

Today, women play a much more significant role in PT/MC industry than ever before. Women of all ages are changing the face of these operations, from leadership to marketing to accounting to front office roles to machine operators and welders in the plants—there is a place in PT for women, whether creative, analytical or process oriented.

We’re proud to celebrate this month and especially the women who work as machinists, welders, inside & outside sales, engineers, business owners, marketing managers and more.

Women & The Future of our Industry

Thanks to technological advances, the PT industry is experiencing an intensely rapid period of change. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that the coming decade will be the most transformative since the first industrial revolution. The new technologies, processes, products and a renewed focus on domestic manufacturing after the pandemic will create opportunity for our industry.



Sara

Kirkpatrick, Corporate Industry Manager, Aggregate, Cement & Sand, Sumitomo Drive Technologies

As many as 4.6 million manufacturing jobs will open by the end of the decade, according to projections by the National Association of Manufacturers. A 2018 study by Deloitte estimates that as many as half of those positions will go unfilled. For this industry to advance and realize its tremendous potential it must draw more effectively

from all communities, especially women. That is why celebrating Women's History Month is so important for PTDA.

PTDA Honors Women in PT/MC Industry with Annual Award

In honor of the accomplishments of women in the PT/MC industry, including Mrs. Wendy B. McDonald, the PTDA Foundation established the Wendy B. McDonald Woman of the Year Award. Presented during the PTDA Industry Summit, the award recognizes a woman who has established herself as a critical contributor to her company's success and has affected positive change on the PT/MC industry. Nominations are being accepted through **June 10, 2022**, for this prestigious award. Read more about the award and past recipients at ptda.org/WBMcDonaldAward.

On this International Women's Day, let's remember and honor women who, throughout history, have paved the way for others with their contributions to manufacturing and PT/MC industry. Here's a look at a few:

Wendy B. McDonald

In the power transmission/motion control industry, Wendy B. McDonald stands out as a true pioneer. Known as "Mrs. Mac," she served over 60 years as a leader in her family-owned international industrial distribution company and former PTDA member, BC Bearings Engineers Limited (acquired by Motion Industries, Inc.). Mrs. McDonald left many traces of her legacy throughout her lengthy career as a trailblazing entrepreneur. In addition to her charm and grace, she was known for her philanthropy and commitment to giving back to the PT industry and the communities that made her successful.

Stephanie Kwolek

Kevlar took the world by storm in 1965 after Stephanie Kwolek created it by accident. According to *Amazing Women in History*, she was one of the first female chemists at DuPont and volunteered to find a lightweight fiber for tires. Initially, her solution was not as expected, but a new fiber was revealed once it was spun. Kevlar has revolutionized how we make clothing, building materials, airplanes, and so much more. It is known for being used to manufacture bulletproof vests, but it can be used for numerous other purposes. Kevlar has high strength and lightweight properties that no other fiber can match.

Madame C.J. Walker

Sarah Breedlove, better known as Madam C.J. Walker, was an entrepreneur who made her mark on manufacturing by starting her own company and becoming one of the first self-made millionaires in America. She opened her own factory and beauty school in 1908, and the Madame C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company produced a line of cosmetics and hair care products and trained saleswomen. With the improvements she made through her own manufacturing business, she was able to boost profits as well as inspire other women to become business owners and get involved in manufacturing.

Rosie the Riveter

Rosie the Riveter

The iconic figure of Rosie the Riveter symbolizes a strong woman with an unwavering spirit. In 1942, this poster was created to help recruit women for open positions in the industrial sector. Rosie the Riveter's fearless pose and the tagline "We Can Do It" inspired and encouraged women to join the industrial workplace during World War II. Mary Doyle Keefe was the inspiration behind the character, and according to *The Atlantic*, she was unaware that the character was modeled after her until almost 40 years later. Despite Keefe's decision to resign from the industrial workforce, Rosie the Riveter provided women with a new opportunity—one they might not have known existed during that era. Rosie is still a role model and icon for women today. Let us know how your company is celebrating women on International Women's Day.

Learning, Leading, Succeeding

Posted On March 16, 2022

Leader. One word defined by many characteristics. Each of us has a vision of what makes a great leader. While some may say certain qualities are innate, many key leadership qualities can be learned and honed over time. Madeline Hickey, marketing and HR coordinator, Lafert North America, reflects on her expectations of a leader, a memorable encounter with a former colleague and how to foster your own leadership skills.

What are the top characteristics you feel define a strong leader?

Empathy. Being able to understand how other people may interpret or feel toward your actions is a powerful trait to have as a leader. It allows the leader to adapt their communication style to better support their audience and develop a genuine connection.

Self-aware. A leader who is self-aware will often appear more self-confident overall. On the contrary they are also able to identify areas to improve within themselves. Being able to recognize these areas can have many positive benefits such as being able to better manage stress and having stronger critical thinking skills.

Charismatic. Historically, while not all leaders have been well-liked people, a strong leader is able to attract and inspire others. It is much easier to share the same vision as someone who you respect, enjoy listening to and find an engaging conversationalist. This goes hand in hand with possessing effective communication skills.

What are some strategies that young people can follow to develop or sharpen their leadership skills?

Informational interviews. Identify any great leaders in your life and see if you can steal 20 minutes of their time. Ask questions to understand what strategies they use to lead and what motivates them as a leader. Many people are more than happy to share

their advice for younger generations and your request for a discussion should be received as a compliment to their accomplishments.

Being a leader is not a 9-5 job. Be aware of how you interact with people in your neighborhood, on public transport, at the grocery store, in stressful situations and when something exciting happens. The best leaders carry important characteristics throughout their life and do not step down when they leave the office.

Focus on one skill at a time. Pick one area that you want to develop and find creative ways to practice it in a fun and casual atmosphere. If you are looking to get better at public speaking or act fast under pressure, a PowerPoint party could be a creative way to practice. Create a list of interesting or funny topics with a group of friends and draw one from a hat. Next, set a timer for 10 minutes to create a persuasive presentation and present it to the group.

Share an example of someone you've encountered in your professional career who inspired you with their passion and drive.

I worked with a colleague whose energy and passion for their job was contagious. Every morning, they made an active effort to check in with every team member and could recall the details of each person's evening easily. It just went to show how many people felt comfortable sharing their plans and personal lives with this individual. This person was often seen staying late at the office, not because they had to, but because they genuinely enjoyed the work they were doing. They were constantly looking for more ways to get involved at the company and gather all levels of employees to participate in these projects.

Acknowledge a PT/MC Industry Leader

Help the PTDA Foundation celebrate the future leaders in the PT/MC industry. Nominations for the Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders Award are now open and provide an opportunity to recognize a passionate, tenacious, up-and-coming leader. Consider nominating someone who embodies the qualities Madeline describes and more.

Cultivating a Steady Stream of Talent For Your Company's Future

Posted On March 30, 2022

Guest contributor: Steve Philpott, PTDA Honorary Life Member

As many of you know, I have been an advocate of companies participating in FIRST Robotics in their local areas. I discovered this rapidly growing source of smart and talented students almost 15 years ago. At that time,v

The FIRST program covers all educational age levels. My focus was at the high school level. At this level, the students work with a kit of parts supplied by FIRST to construct a 120-pound robot. Many of our PTDA members supply parts for these kits. Working with an exciting sports model, FIRST announces the game challenge early in January of each year. This year, Boeing developed the challenge. Disney supplied the challenge the previous year. The teams then have six weeks to develop, program and build their robots before the regional competitions begin. In the competition, teams form alliances with other teams to compete. A team may be your partner in one match and then be a competitor in the next match. It's just another aspect of teaching these young people to be able to adapt, problem solve and communicate—the same skills PTDA members need in employees to help grow their businesses. At the end of the competition season in April, the regional champions from around the world meet for the finals being held this year in Houston, Texas. For four long days, 600 teams will compete to see which three teams will succeed as the winning alliance.



Picture of robot built by high school students in 6 weeks using skill sets PTDA members need in their organization.

I understand the need to encourage young people to get as much education as possible and going to college is a pathway for many. But as we are discovering, many young people are choosing not to go into debt to further an education that may ultimately not fit their career choice. This is what I have seen with some of the young people on my robotic teams. They have great skill sets that companies are seeking and want to be challenged to use them in the real world. Plus, they have not gone through a series of meaningless jobs and developed bad ideas that future employers need to correct.

In closing, when I hear that PTDA members are having issues finding the right people to help them grow, maybe they just need to visit their local high school. A starting point

would be to look up firstinspires.org for basic information or [contact me](#). Putting in a little time and effort by you as a leader may solve your hiring problem. Plus, it's a bunch of fun!

What are some novel ways you recruit employees? Let us know in the comments below!

Social Media Strategies to Boost Recruitment (Part One of Three)

Posted On April 8, 2022

This is post one in a three-part series offering insight on ways to integrate social media into your recruitment practices.

Social media is a part of our reality in every way. Digital social connectivity and its ability to communicate across UI and UX channels can be a sure-fire way to entice job candidates to consider working for your company, no matter if you are a distributor with five employees or a large manufacturer with thousands of employees.

Everyone is Social.com authored an article entitled, "Social Recruiting Statistics and the Impact on Hiring Top Talent" which states 79% of job applicants use social media in their job search." Additionally, it shares "Job seekers rank social media and professional networks as the most useful job search resource compared to job boards, job ads, recruiting agencies, and recruiting events." More and more within our industry are learning the power of recruiting via social media, especially with younger talent. If a PT/MC company builds a steady following on social media, will it increase the probability of finding higher-quality candidates?

What is Important Content

Social media is a great place to drop a job posting but consider the impact it can have when you showcase employee appreciation and the highlights of your company culture. Not just to entice but promote your organization cares about the environment it wants to grow. Create an employee appreciation post, highlight promotions or post milestones. Consider these ideas:

- Posts about starting a family, graduating college, earning a master's degree, buying a home, or winning a company or industry award can increase engagement.
- Share a video diary of a warehouse manager or nice picture and a caption of your company lunch welcoming a new employee.
- Promote targeted educational programs used to train your employees to further their advancement within your organization, and your industry.

Deloitte, in its article "[Competing for Talent](#)" stated, "Fifty-eight percent of those surveyed who were familiar with manufacturing responded that manufacturing jobs

have limited career prospects. However, when asked if they would opt for a manufacturing job with customized training and a clearer pathway for career progression, eight out of 10 respondents answered yes." Social sharing should demonstrate a how company cares about its community of employees and a consistent stream of positive news along with how your company invests in educational programs can give a prospective candidate a look into your workplace.

Creating Value with Employee and Company Posts

"There are benefits to using social platforms to connect us with our employees, customers, community and potential job candidates by using expert content and educational training videos," shares Paul Philips, president of Maxi-Lift Inc., which boasts a healthy stream of content on LinkedIn. "It is important that posts promote our brand as a company that values future employees, allowing for transparency by conveying who we are as an organization, our culture and our values," he continues.

Social sharing can be a successful avenue for your company to hire and retain talent. Using a mixture of positive company culture, employee appreciation, and educational posts will communicate how great your company is for perspective job seekers, and attract hiring talent with the skills you require.

"Utilizing LinkedIn to post jobs has been successful for Maxi-Lift and is a great tool for targeting hiring candidates that have specific skill sets that you need, and it reaches a large audience," says Phillips.

What are some of the ways your company uses to recruit on social media? Comment below.

In part two we will highlight creative tactics to build engagement on your social media platform(s).

Social Media Trends to Boost Recruitment (Part Two of Three)

Posted On April 14, 2022

This is post two in a three-part series offering insight on ways to integrate social media into your recruitment practices. This week's installment is focusing on how to have a solid social media presence, stay competitive, and research for improvement.

Stay Competitive, Research

Take a competitive approach and stay on trend. The necessity for PT/MC companies to be competitive within their market space is imperative. Allowing social media to help communicate your standing amongst the others in your market can boost your competitive edge. Social media will give your organization the analytical tools it takes to

measure your successes and failures while trying to recruit. These metrics will allow a deeper dive into where and how you should be targeting your posts.

Is there an algorithm for successful social postings? Yes! While your company website is structured, and professional, social media is where the company's creativity can live. It is like the "casual Friday" of your media mix. Pairing your content with other social media powerhouses like LinkedIn, Instagram, or Tik Tok allows for limitless posting potential and can highlight your organization's fun and creative side!

A Recipe for Successful ROI

To ensure a healthy ROI, invest in researching and developing a robust social following. Utilizing artwork for visual stimulation, up-to-date trending topics and hashtags when posting will help you gain engagement. Highlight special dates or national days Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Random Acts of Kindness Day have the power to connect companies and employees.

Creative Posting

Does it help to be creative when posting job listings on social sharing sites? Bill Shepard Vice President of BDI shares, "Yes, it does. Being unique but professional and sometimes even fun is important. A clever or interesting post is more likely to gain attention and capture someone's interest."

Bill goes on to share why it is important for BDI to highlight their employees on LinkedIn,

"BDI has an ongoing program to highlight the special skill sets, successes, and overall dedication to customer service that our teams possess. Potential new hires also see this as a "what would it be like to work at BDI" viewpoint. Our customers also like to give feedback when they see their local manager or seller spotlighted on social media."

Bill focuses on the importance of BDI to stay on trend within their social media presence,

"BDI is dedicated to quality social media activity and supporting our teams to professionally represent what they do in the marketplace they serve."

Highlighting your employees in a creative way can be a recipe for success while recruiting new talent. Staying on trend while investing in social media can lead to a robust social following that will allow your organization to be competitive within the PT/MC marketplace while retaining new talent.

What are some of the ways your company uses to recruit on social media? Comment below.

In part three we will highlight why companies should care about social media, and how to start to build a social media profile.

Developing Engaging Social Media Content (Part Three of Three)

Posted On April 21, 2022

This is the final post in a three-part series offering insight on ways to integrate social media into your recruitment practices. This week's installment focuses on how research and development of your company's social media sites can increase communication to employees and potential new hires.

According to a [LinkedIn survey](#), 75% of job seekers consider an employer's brand before applying for a position. The same survey shares that 52% of candidates first seek out a company's website and social media channels to learn more before applying. Establishing your organization/brand on LinkedIn creates visibility. Thinking about starting a social site for your company need not be a daunting task.

Where to Start

Begin your research on LinkedIn to help strengthen professional relationships and learn the skills to find top talent and succeed in the industry. Find a company that boasts a LinkedIn profile and:

- View their content. Notice what they post and how often, their number of followers and how much engagement they receive for their efforts.
- Focus on the structure of the content, artwork, photography, and copy.
- Take note of whether they are posting blogs, scheduling events with the calendar feature or hosting webinars that increase follower interest.
- See if you can view their social sights on a mobile user interface. Do they provide meaningful and relevant experiences to users?

It is important not to copy but learn from their process because the more candidates that can connect digitally, the better. Hiring a content creator, social media manager or communication specialist can ensure your digital media will speak across the channels you choose to place your messages. Using a recruiter who uses social media to post their job openings can also be helpful, and do not forget to look within your own company. Find an employee who has a successful LinkedIn account. Allow them to educate you on what it takes to create a robust network. Social media can be a lucrative investment for your company to hire and retain talent. Staying on trend with what is important within your social space will attract promising contenders.

Research and Develop Engaging Social Media Content

Posting multiple times a week can boost viewership by thousands. Why is it important to care about who is in your network? So that you can develop your company's social media and improve communication with employees, potential new hires, and others in the industry. Include companies that manufacture, distribute, sell or use your products.

Begin with, connecting, e.g., "liking" or following other PT/MC organizations. Next, do the same with higher-level educational institutions, particularly schools with industrial distribution programs or similar. This will help drive engagement with employees and students. In return you will help raise awareness about your company and the industry. Pay attention to individuals, companies and groups that are successfully sharing and garnering thousands or millions of followers within our industry; here you will find audiences to engage. Allowing your social posts to reach a broader audience opens the potential for finding not just one but multiple candidates for your job openings.

Navigating Recruitment on Social Media

Once you have your company profile ready, hit the ground running but do not overlook the value of using your personal LinkedIn profile to augment your company efforts. "I have posted openings from my personal account encouraging candidates to apply" shares Sara Zimmerman, vice president of business development at Sumitomo Drive Technologies.

Sara reflects on the importance of providing meaningful and relevant experiences for employees and potential new hires/candidates. She shares, "Through my personal account I try to show Sumitomo's company culture, educate on what manufacturers do, promote the PT industry and show the diversity of all the different industries for which we provide products. At the beginning of the pandemic, I focused on the fact that we are an essential business. We have long-term employees that retired so I also try to make sure that we celebrate those milestones as well."

Sara also explains how she navigates recruiting on social media versus conventional channels like email or via agencies, stating "I have received feedback or questions from candidates who are interested in the position through LinkedIn messaging. It speeds up communication with the candidates, because they can reach you quickly verses going through our normal HR channels."

Using a mixture of positive company culture, employee appreciation and educational posts will communicate transparency for prospective job seekers and attract new candidates with the skills you seek. Focusing on trends, staying competitive and establishing your organization/brand on LinkedIn creates visibility within the PT/MC industry. Social media will become another tool in your box to locate and hire the right talent for your company.

What are some ways you research social media engagement? Comment below.

Managing Digital Natives

Posted On April 27, 2022

There is a lot of talk about generations in the workplace. Our offices are now a combination of multi-generational groups who make collaboration a technological task. Enter the age of digital natives: a group of workers comprised of millennials, Gen Z (alphas to follow) where technology is inherited at birth.

Born Into Technology

Digital natives are programmed from the start to adapt to the role technology plays in every aspect of their lives. This group has been introduced to computers, cell phones, digital learning, virtual meetings and social sharing across many platforms from an early age. Digital natives prefer to collaborate with others by using technology, virtually or in person. Supporting this generation's necessity to integrate technology into their work helps them to feel supported within the workplace.

Streamline and Accommodate

An article by [Investopedia](#) titled "Digital Natives" explains, "Research shows that those who have all their lives been exposed to the influence of modern information technologies do indeed think, learn and understand the world differently than previous generations." The challenge for companies today is to find a balance for digital natives and digital immigrants to co-exist. The opposites of digital natives are [digital immigrants](#); people who have had to adapt to the new language of technology. Share with prospective digital native job candidates during the interview process what technologies they can anticipate working with when they join your team.

Recruiting and Retaining Digital Natives

There are many ways organizations use technology to recruit digital natives. "Our HR team uses Indeed, Handshake and LinkedIn to post various positions. We have college internship programs during the summer and throughout the school year that include referral bonuses," shares Missy Munte, internal sales supervisor at Nord Drivesystems.

To accommodate digital natives, in the office or virtually, Missy shares, "We have integrated digital tools into our standard processes and daily work. Our team uses OneNote versus paper to take notes while on the phone with customers, in training or other meetings. The paperwork for orders and quotes now gets digitally scanned versus printed out and rescanned. This allows us immediate access to those digitally scanned documents connected to each order and quote."

Missy explains how digital natives benefit others within their organization who are digital immigrants. "We use Kaizen boards on our production floor and in the internal sales department. Our digital natives have great suggestions on improving efficiency by

using technology. The person who puts the idea on the Kaizen board will work with a supervisor on implementing it, which can involve teaching others to use the technology. Encouraging knowledge sharing among the team is key; digital natives have the experience with technology, while digital immigrants have more product and process knowledge.”

Managing hiring and retention within the PT/MC industry can be a pleasant change with the integration of individuals who share the benefit of being born a digital native. Embracing knowledge sharing within your organization will lead to increased productivity and technologically collaborative teams.

Tell us all the ways you support digital natives in your organization and comment below.

Hiring for Culture Fit

Posted On May 12, 2022

Guest contributors: Kasey Davis and Neely Cegelka, Garlock Sealing Technologies

For several years, there has been a fundamental acknowledgement regarding the importance of hiring great talent who brings both the needed technical skills to the position, as well as fit seamlessly into the culture to drive retention and engagement. Hiring someone who fits seamlessly into the current culture can be problematic, driving exclusion and sameness rather than diversity and inclusion. Instead, the next step in the hiring evolution we are making at Garlock is to look for those individuals who move beyond culture fit and are a culture add to our team.

Culture Add

A culture add is someone who aligns with our values, our strategy, and will bring a new and diverse background and ideas, elevating our team to the next level of performance and organizational awareness. These are individuals who expand our worldview through enhancing and enriching our team with a perspective that is currently missing.

Our organization must consider what is missing from the team today that is needed now and in the future. What gaps do we have as a team? What are we not currently great at? What is our next evolution as a team and organization? What experiences have we not yet had? What else might we need that we don't have on our team?

This approach begins before we even post a position and continues through each step in the hiring process. While reviewing resumes, non-traditional backgrounds are considered while assessing prospective candidates. Challenging the long-held belief that someone who has changed jobs more than once, had a break mid-career, or didn't attend a prestigious university without considering the overall experience and potential could create a culture of status-quo thinking.

Personalizing the Interview Process

Rigid or traditional interview processes have proven unsuccessful in being able to bring out a candidate's potential and way of working. We find that incorporating a walk around the facility with the candidate, meeting for coffee in a more relaxed environment, and regular follow-up with the individual to hear what is on their mind tend to explore the person's value beyond their formal achievements and honors. This approach provides great insight into the person's thought and decision-making process.

Once we find our new culture add, creating an individualized onboarding plan focused on building critical relationships with others is a top priority for the new hire. Making the new hire process a community-based approach by involving diverse team players from various functions, specialties, and locations will lend itself to broadening the new hire's perspective and drive a collaborative mindset. The person's leader should work to reinforce the new hire's unique value throughout this process to create inclusivity of new ideas and thoughts. The person's to-do list will fill up quickly, and there is only a short window of time when someone is working from a clean and empty plate. Taking the intentional pause to make space for learning, connection, and inquisitive understanding of the organization is fundamental to the success of the new hire. Those first few weeks will set the expectation for how they are expected to contribute and prioritize. Showing our values in action gives them the springboard to success to do more than just fit right into our culture. Instead, we want each hire to bring something we didn't know we were missing until they added to what we already had, enriching our organization and adding long-term value.

Creating a Pipeline to Technical Schools

Posted On May 18, 2022

Guest contributors: Hank Schilling, Nexen

Skilled Trades are in Serious Demand in the PT/MC Industry

There is scarcity amongst PT/MC industry, a lack of skilled trades people to enter the market. This is coupled with the increasingly challenging task of finding and recruiting said skilled individuals who boast specialized training for the vacant positions. How can you reach skilled people who want to be a part of the PT/MC industry work force?

Where Did All the Baby Boomers Go?

Baby Boomers are leaving a large gap in the PT/MC industry and, unfortunately, there are not enough people ready and waiting to fill the empty positions. According to [Adecco](#), sixty-two percent of firms are struggling to fill important skilled trade positions. Boomers hold a sizable majority of the positions that will need to be filled, with an underwhelming number of students who desire to take their positions. Thirty-two percent of billion-dollar manufacturers estimate they'll lose over one hundred million dollars as Boomers retire over the next five or so years.

Hank Schilling, executive director of corporate strategic relations at Nexen Group, Inc., devotes time to visiting technical trade schools surrounding Minnesota, Wisconsin and Indiana. Hank is leading the effort to recruit young adults for Nexen by educating students on the benefits of careers in manufacturing. Hank spends his time recruiting at schools by attending tradeshow and networking with staff at technical schools.

“Collaborating with high school tech education programs helps expose students to great jobs in manufacturing, distribution and the PT industry. With that exposure, a pathway can be formed with a technical college for further education while those students are getting the on-the-job training.”

“Creating a pipeline for current employees or showing the way to a recruit is crucial to keep people engaged and learning. With every degree, certification or training completed, your organization grows stronger. You never know where your next recruit comes from. With the competition level at an all-time high in universities, technical schools provide more people with the mechanical skills our industry needs.” As for getting a start on building relationships with tech or trade schools, Hank shares this: “The easiest way is to take a tour. This can help you best determine how the technical school can fit into your recruiting/training/higher education strategy. But it becomes even more important to get involved once you start asking those questions. While it is easy to give donations, it becomes more rewarding when you are giving your time to the program.”

Get Out and Make Something Happen

Imagine if your company devoted time to partnerships where educators can team up with manufacturers to establish training for students. Here are some steps you can take:

- Reach out to two-year colleges and trade schools.
- Become a mentor or pair an individual student with a master skilled trade worker.
- Award apprenticeships for students working onsite at your company alongside master level skilled trades people.

Companies who take the time to invest into building a pipeline with technical schools will have a connection to the future of skilled trades in the PT/MC industry.

Improve Your Recruitment Average with Assessment Tool

Posted On May 24, 2022

Guest Contributor: John Masek, Bearing Service Inc.

The Perfect Candidate

Did you find out the new employee you hired is nothing like the person they portrayed during their interview? How many times have you thought you found the “perfect” candidate, only to have their manager come back and tell you a month later they are a poor fit for the job or they don’t fit your culture? If you hire people for a living you know that finding qualified candidates in this market is so difficult. When you do hire someone and they don’t work out it is very costly in terms of lost training expense, lost revenue, and having to start the process over again.

Assessment Tool

So, what if you had a tool that could improve your batting average by 100 or 200 points, so that your “hit rate” on new candidates far outpaced your competitors? A question for you – are you currently using assessment tools as part of your recruiting process? If you are, you already know their value – these tools help to confirm that the candidate you think you are hiring really is a great match for the job. They help ensure when you have a great “gut feeling” about a candidate during an interview, that they truly possess the traits you are looking for and actually have the traits they told you they possess.

PXT Select™

If you are not using an assessment tool, consider adding this resource to your recruiting process. Take my company for example – when we are close to making an offer, we have the candidate(s) we feel are best suited for the job take a 45-minute online assessment. We use the PXT Select™ assessment, a Wiley product, which has been scientifically validated over many years. Our jobs have been benchmarked by Wiley, so that a known profile of the ideal candidate is determined, for each key job position. When the candidate finishes the assessment, their results are sent to you instantly. And, along with your interview results, you will now have a more reliable idea of the “fit” of that candidate to your organization. Easy- peasy!

Improve Your Average

So, if you are looking to make better hires, ones that possess the skills and behavioral traits that are needed for a specific job, consider using the [PXT Select™ assessment](#) to bolster your hiring batting average. Profiles International is offering a great deal for PT/MC companies right now. Even if you already use assessment tools, take advantage of the discounted rate of \$130 (\$295 value) and compare it with the tool you currently use to lock in those right-fit candidates.

Chris Gumas Shares the Value of Winning PTDA Awards

Posted On June 1, 2022

In special consideration of the Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders Award and the Wendy B. McDonald Woman of the Year Award nomination deadline of June 10, 2022, guest

contributor Chris Gumas, Ruland Manufacturing Co. shares his experiences as the first recipient of the Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders award and the impact it had on him.

Opportunity

Rewarding employees leads to employee engagement, which increases retention. Recognizing employees creates a more positive overall workplace. "For me, this is a great internal recruiting tool as it shows we can develop leaders and have long-term management stability," says Chris. "Ruland is a small company and not many of us have the opportunity to win an award. We did an internal promotion which was nice for the current employees. Most of our workers are in the factory and do not have as direct a connection with PTDA as I do. They were interested to know why we belong to PTDA and specifics about the award."

Accomplishment

The simple act of acknowledging achievement is a major boost for employee morale and performance. Chris sees great value when colleagues recognize the achievements of another with whom they work, "In my conversation with peers many of us struggle to tell someone else they are doing well and hear that we are doing well," shares Chris "It must be human programming to focus on the negative. When you win an award, it is hard to deny that others do not recognize the job you are doing. I received thoughtful congratulatory notes from many people within the industry that I did not know were paying attention to what I was doing. This gave me a sense of accomplishment."

Growth

Awards can make us feel proud, happy and delighted. Awards give validation and boost confidence. "I have been and remain bullish on leadership prospects for people under 40 in the industry," says Chris "The leadership teams in many member companies are starting to turn over and us old' millennials are stepping into those roles. As we are ascending, the competitive, operating and employment landscapes of the industry are changing rapidly coming out of the pandemic. This presents an opportunity to make significant changes to how our companies do business and interact with customers. What could be more exciting than getting a chance to shape what your industry will look like for decades!"

Reward

Being a leader can be challenging, but it also comes with a reward when the individual(s) you lead earns recognition. Chris explains the most important aspect of being rewarded for his ability to lead: "It is a future leader award which implies a capacity to lead as opposed to a demonstrated ability. I am still early in my leadership career. Receiving the award helps to validate that I am going down the right path in pursuing a leadership career track."

Nominate a Colleague

Awards bring value. They are an acknowledgement of the good that an employee is doing. To win an award your company gives you can bring a profound sense of pride. Winning an industry award like the Wendy B. McDonald Woman of the Year Award or the Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders Award is a trusted way to position yourself as a leader within your company and the PT/MC industry.

*The PTDA Foundation is accepting nominations for the Wendy B. McDonald Woman of the Year Award and the Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders Award for those who are making a positive impact on the PT/MC industry. Nominations are being accepted through **June 10, 2022**, for both awards. Award recipients receive a generous stipend toward the PTDA 2022 Industry Summit and/or continuing education. Visit PTDA.org/foundation to nominate a colleague.*
Wendy B. McDonald Woman of the Year Award
Robert K. Callahan Future Leaders Award

Thinking Bigger and Better About DEI

Posted On June 8, 2022

Fully embracing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at your organization requires more than just hiring people from a variety of backgrounds. A comprehensive commitment to DEI spans every part of the employee lifecycle and is a crucial aspect to any organization striving to gain a full spectrum of employee perspectives and backgrounds that contribute to creative problem solving, demonstrate adaptability and fuel innovative ideas.

PT WORK Force® strives to assist companies in thinking bigger and better about DEI, to make a true impact on their employees and in the workplace. Below are recent and upcoming PT WORK Force® resources designed to help employers integrate broader viewpoints and dynamic talent into their efforts. In doing so, companies can create a culture of respect, understanding, innovation and success.

- In a recent PT WORK Force® blog: [Finding Diverse Talent](#) discusses developing a diverse employee base by examining your recruitment and hiring practices through a sharper lens. Find ways to improve your recruitment strategies while increasing applications from a diverse pool of candidates to improve the company culture.
- Last month, the webinar Inclusion in Action: Recruiting and Onboarding Diverse Talent addressed myths about diversity, ways to model behavior that embraces diversity and how to involve all workers in making diversity and inclusion a priority. View the recording and read the recap at ptda.org/ptwf-inclusion.
- During the PTDA 2022 Industry Summit this October, presenter Risha Grant will share how unconscious bias can sidetrack companies. Highlighting unconventional methods and marketing techniques, Grant will share how best to tap into a rich market of dynamic and diverse candidates to create

an energized workforce-focused program and environment where understanding and acceptance thrives. Learn more at ptda.org/ISpresentations.

Internships Create a Future for the PT/MC Industry

Posted On June 22, 2022

By Guest Contributor: Tejash Patel, AMI Bearings, Inc.

Recruiting New Hires Post Pandemic

A few years back I wrote for the June 2020 blog post "*Tap Into Your Personal Story to Recruit New Hires*." In that article I described one of the major challenges in the PT/MC industry, an aging workforce, which is still a key issue to this day and becoming more noticeable with each passing year on all levels of our industry—from manufacturers to distributors to end user customers. In that same blog post I described what our company was doing to combat this issue and shared my personal experience. Managers in different departments such as sales, engineering, accounting, and even warehouse managers must think outside of the box and research new ways of hiring and retaining young talented individuals in our industry.

Consider Creative Hiring Methods

The market for hiring new young applicants through third party recruiters, LinkedIn, or from other alternative websites or local ads is a tapped-out resource, as most companies hire using one of these methods. The young applicants that do start their career in our industry may stay for a year or two but often will switch jobs or careers mainly because they simply were not enthusiastic about their job responsibilities, or they lost interest. This is happening more frequently as the job market is at a record high given the current demand for workers and based on the present economic situation. There have been rumors regarding a slowdown in hiring due to inflation concerns, but this is hard to determine as unemployment rates are still considered at a record low.

Investigate Hiring Techniques Beyond LinkedIn, Colleges or Universities

For those of you who read my previous blog, and for those who did not, what my current employer did a few years back is start an internship program with the local high schools. It began with me presenting at one of the high school district open houses. As of today, we consider this program as a success story, and we encourage other companies in the PT/MC industry to investigate hiring techniques beyond LinkedIn, colleges or universities. We currently have local high school students working in different departments from engineering, accounting, and even warehouse staff. The students were able to gain experience and industry knowledge to help better themselves in their future careers. I personally had the pleasure of working and

managing a young, talented student who was pursuing a career in the manufacturing industry. I had this student team up with a current employee in the engineering department and noticed they worked well together, had good balance and fit our specific work culture environment. Toward the end of his internship term, I sat down with this individual and conducted a brief survey to get a better understanding of what drives the younger generation and what they might be seeking as far as a career in the PT/MC industry. The questions I asked during the survey and the students corresponding answers are below:

What are one or two unexpected things you learned about the PT/MC industry during your internship?

“During my internship with AMI Bearings, I learned other techniques and developed skill sets on how to create more advanced drawings with the specific CAD software, whereas my high school classes were basic learning. During my time I had opportunities to gain experience about bearing analysis and to interact with live customers within the PT/MC industry, which further helped me gain a better understanding of the supply chain and collaborating with customers in industrial distribution. I did not expect to get this much exposure with actual customers, but it helped me learn more about manufacturing and distribution channels in the PT/MC industry. I am forever grateful for having the opportunity to gain this experience.”

What can we do better to help attract recent graduates and Generation “Z” on the terrific opportunity a career in the PT/MC industry provides?

“From my perspective to sell recent high school or college graduates on the opportunities in the PT/MC industry you must offer them flexibility to do something different on a regular basis, whether it be project based or different tasks that are not the same daily routine. Our generation likes to stay involved, be challenged, feel valued and mentored all at the same time. High school students like the idea of having the ability to design something and build it themselves regardless of specific career or industry choice for an employer or even if it is entrepreneurship or an individual brand startup business.”

In your mind as a student or future employee, what are the characteristics of a manager or supervisor you look for and consider essential to a great leader?

“Someone who is easy to approach, knows what they are doing, always motivates people to do better and never lets their employees fail. A great leader always puts themselves last and never lets anyone fail.”

Why College?

He had a great deal of interest drawing and building his designs and for that reason, he is pursuing a mechanical engineering degree. College is not necessarily for everyone, however he felt that it would give him more career opportunities. My student intern mentioned some of his friends and high school peers choose not to go to college

because they feel they do not need a degree for certain career opportunities as they are simply satisfied with just having specific certifications or apprenticeships. "Every student may have a different personal situation or goal," he stated.

Happy Interns

We feel that our student interns are happy with their time here at AMI Bearings, Inc. because we do our best in offering and practicing an excellent work culture environment. We pride ourselves on doing our best as a company to find the right people to fit in our work culture and we establish great leadership management within any given department.

I hope this blog can further help other companies in our PT/MC industry by serving as an example and successful method of attracting and retaining enthusiastic, young, talented employees for the future of our industry.

Incentivizing with Perks/Non-Compensatory Benefits

Posted On June 29, 2022

Recent events have thrown the work force a few curve balls. Increased inflation, gas prices at all-time highs, interest rates steadily climbing along with the inflated cost of groceries/necessities brings new challenges for employees to stretch their salaries and navigate escalating expenses, often without an increase in pay. For employers it means both long tenured, and short tenured employees, are job hopping seeking better compensation and benefits. How does an employer demonstrate to employees their value through means other than monetary compensation?

According to the *2022 Cross-Industry Compensation & Benefits Survey* PTDA firms use more than salaries to compensate their employees with benefits like incentive compensation, added medical benefits, added vacation days/PTO or profit sharing. Carin Sampson, VP, human resources & marketing, IBT Industrial Solutions shares how their team navigates these challenges and the creative ways they keep their employees productive and happy.

What are some benefits and compensation ideas that a company can provide to an employee, other than insurance plans? For instance, company discounts, tuition reimbursement, free food/cafeteria, unlimited PTO, or paid parental leave?

"The perks that have been most popular with our team are identity theft insurance, gym memberships/discounts, tuition reimbursement and professional development courses. We recently implemented 28-days of parental leave and changed our sick time to 'wellness time' and gave additional time and expanded reasons to use it to care for aging parents or other loved ones, or as mental health days."

While dealing with a wide range of generational employees from Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, Millennials, and Gen Z, how do you devise perks or rewards that everyone can benefit from? What do those perks look like and have you received positive feedback from your employees?

“The average age of our current workforce is 49, but we know that we will need to attract and retain more employees, therefore we look for programs that cater to all who are in different life cycles. For example, we are implementing a financial wellness program that provides one-on-one coaching on how to establish a budget and build an emergency fund, helps people make plans to transition into retirement, and everything in between. Parental leave and tuition reimbursement are benefits that are more attractive to young employees where time off to care for aging parents is more attractive to Gen X and Baby Boomers. We are careful to listen to the questions our HR team receives from employees and we proactively ask for feedback in quarterly surveys. After combining our perks and benefits, promoted through great leadership and communication, our employee engagement is currently the highest it’s ever been.”

Are non-compensatory perks incentive enough to bring in new talent and keep the existing employees happy and feeling valued?

“Perks are helpful, but they aren’t the most important part of the equation. We need to have a good foundation in place by paying people competitively, training our leaders to create a great team environment and culture and we have to walk the talk at the executive level. Perks can help enhance a solid foundation, but if the foundation isn’t there, it’s just useless window dressing.”

Build a Comprehensive Workforce with PT WORK Force® Resources

Posted On July 6, 2022

Emotional intelligence and soft skills continue to be top of mind for companies and hiring managers looking to build a comprehensive workforce. PT WORK Force® strives to make a true impact on assisting companies to consider emotional intelligence (EI) an essential skill that aligns with creativity, persuasion, collaboration and adaptability. Below are recent PT WORK Force® resources designed to help employers educate themselves on what EI trends are applicable to their hiring needs. In doing so, companies can create a culture of skilled employees that have the emotional aptitude to be innovative and successful. Check out these previous PT WORK Force® resources, including webinars, blogs, and [the PXT Select™](#) assessment tool for insight into how to incorporate screening during the interview process.

- The webinar [Using Emotional Intelligence and Skills Assessments to Screen Candidates](#) shared insights and tools to help employers integrate Emotional Intelligence (EI) formerly known as *soft skills* into hiring practices. EI skills in the workplace influence productivity and professional development and this webinar shares key EI attributes employers should assess in job candidates.

- In a recent PT WORK Force® Blog: [IQ or EQ- Which is More Important?](#) guest contributor John Masek, Bearing Service Inc, discusses EI as the ability to understand, use and manage your own emotions in positive ways to communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict on the job. Read the blog and establish that emotional intelligence is a priority when determining if a skilled candidate will be able to positively contribute to your organization.
- Assess and measure how a candidate's EI, cognitive ability, behavioral traits and Interests will add to your company culture with a comprehensive, "full person" assessment. [The PXT Select™](#) measures how well an individual fits within an organization, evaluates an individual relative to the qualities required to perform a job successfully, identifies talent gaps and focuses on leveraging employee strengths to avoid costly hiring mistakes. For everything you need to know about the PXT Select™ [read here](#) and receive the discounted rate of US\$130 per assessment.

Professional Association Engagement and Employee Flight Risk Management

Posted On July 13, 2022

This week's blog is authored by Bill Shepard, vice president, BDI. You can contact him at bshepard@bdi-usa.com

Active participation in professional industry associations can be extremely rewarding to individuals and provide valuable insights into company leadership and management. Many manufacturers and distributors realize the developmental value of having their top talent engaged with their peers and their competitors' top talent in leadership roles, solving industry issues and collaborating on common programs or projects.

Personally, I have thoroughly enjoyed my interactions over the years by actively working with manufacturers and other distributors on a wide range of issues and projects. The experience has been priceless and the personal growth extremely rewarding.

Recently, I was speaking with a colleague who was reluctant to send any of their top talent to a major industry event or even nominate them for a special recognition over fear that they would be "poached" or targeted for recruitment from one of their competitors or even one of their supplier manufacturers.

The concern was not unjustified as we have all had experiences of losing employees in these situations. The question is whether the return on the investment of active participation is worth the risk of losing top talent. This is a challenge for all owners, leaders and managers of both manufacturers and distributors. It is even more intensified with the labor market in its current form.

Several manufacturers and distributors have implemented non-compete agreements that are intended to reduce the risk and protect their investment in developing their top talent. This is always a debated topic as many agree with the practice and many disagree with having a contractual restriction on an individual's ability to earn a living in the industry, in which they are proficient.

Another consideration is each company's ability to create a work environment where the top talent is so actively engaged in the business and guiding the direction and future growth, they aren't opened to considering other opportunities based on loyalty and internal advancement opportunities. This is more challenging for smaller firms with limited advancement options.

As a leader who might be considering whether to have top talent engaged in professional industry associations, my recommendation is to engage, drive active participation, encourage volunteerism, seek leadership roles and your company will benefit from the personal and professional development of the top talent. Yes, there are some inherent risks however, the return is well worth the risk. Your people will become better leaders, communicators and industry stewards with the experience of actively participating in professional industry associations.

Unlimited PTO, the Obtainable Paradox

Posted On July 20, 2022

Barbara Goree, human resources manager at B & D Industrial gives her professional insight on the potential of unlimited PTO.

Imagine you can take time off whenever you want, no questions asked! Think again, there are rules to unlimited PTO, the hot perk many now offer. Companies are taking the lead to ensure their employees feel respected and enjoy some respite through unlimited PTO plans. The question at hand: Is unlimited PTO a short-lived fad when it comes to incentivizing employees or a lasting and prosperous trend?

Traditional or Contemporary PTO?

The traditional ways of introducing employee incentives are changing drastically. Companies are investing in employees while still ensuring that resources, time and training provide a healthy ROI. Employees perform better when they feel supported in taking time off. In a [2022 Harris poll for *Fortune*](#), more than 70 percent of Gen Z and Millennial workers said an unlimited PTO policy is an important benefit. This means that companies are going to have to consider employees need more than the minimal amount of PTO days they started with, no accruing necessary. Some companies provide employees with a large bank of PTO days right from the start, coupled with flexible work structures that allow them to take time as needed—so long as it doesn't interrupt with their ability to meet deadlines and finish tasks.

Communicate the Policy Clearly to Build a Culture of Trust

Setting a clear set of rules on how to navigate unlimited PTO is imperative. This will set your PTO program and its participants up for success immediately. An unlimited PTO policy doesn't place a hard cap on how many paid vacation days an employee can take a year. Barbara Goree, human resources manager at B & D Industrial explains, "If the company culture is one of mutual trust, unlimited PTO would foster that trust and build on it. It could save the company money by not paying out unused PTO and would be a great recruiting and retention tool. Happier employees are higher producers who mimic the company's reputation and decrease turnover."

Grow a Strong PTO Program

With any perk comes the possibility of abuse. What does "unlimited" mean for you in the workplace? Unlimited comes with rules. It does not mean that you jet off from work for three weeks of vacation during important deadlines or spontaneously during a colleague's scheduled PTO. It means traditional ways of accruing PTO are changing. Establishing a hierarchy of monitoring to avoid policy abuse.

"Like any benefit, there will be abusers that can ruin it for everyone," says Goree. "This would shift the responsibility of tracking PTO from HR onto the managers to ensure the benefit wasn't being misused and they would need to determine if employees are keeping up with their Accrual of PTO would no longer be a tiered benefit offered based on tenure."

Create a Plan that Works for Your Company

The great part about unlimited PTO is that it can be beneficial to both employees and the company. Devising a plan to reward your employees and replenish their energy reserves, while supporting the needs of the business, can be accomplished with PTO benefits that make sense for both parties. According to Grokker.com, flexibility can be profitable. Employees with unlimited PTO structures are happier and more satisfied with their work, which leads to improved company culture, performance and retention rates. Additionally, workers are more efficient. They are less likely to slack off during busy weeks or seasons.

Barbara shares this advice on ways to strategize a prosperous PTO plan, "Perhaps a hybrid of plans would fit best, vs. a totally unlimited PTO policy. Consider combining all paid leave into one bucket and removing the categories, e.g., bereavement, sick time or personal leave and accountability. Permitted you have the time available, mandate it can be used for any reason. The success of this benefit depends on the culture of your company."

One PT WORK Force® Resource to Help Reduce Employee Turnover

Posted On July 27, 2022

John Masek, Bearing Service Inc, discusses how he found great success using the PXT Select Assessment Tool.

Communication is Key

Employee turnover has not yet begun to slow down. [Gartner](#) states U.S. employee annual voluntary turnover is likely to jump to 20 percent this year, from a pre-pandemic annual average of 31.9 million to 37.4 million quitting in 2022. A previous PT WORK Force® blog post, ["Five Quick Ideas to Reduce Employee Turnover"](#) discusses the potential of offering your employees more resources to communicate with them including:

- Surveying employees on the types of benefits they expect from your company.
- Offering opportunities for your employees to grow.
- Offering competitive salaries. Check salary surveys.
- Incorporating mental health and other wellness benefits.
- Providing flexible and remote work options when possible and built around individual employee needs.

Ensure Candidates are a Right Fit

There are other ways to solidify employee satisfaction rates, and ensuring you have the right fit prior to hiring a candidate will help reduce the likelihood of employee turnover. According to [Talkpush](#), companies that use assessments consistently are objectively working with a better pool of candidates that lead to an 82% increase in hire quality with a 62% reduction in churn. PT WORK Force®, through sanctioned programs with Profiles International, a subsidiary of Wiley, offers [The PXT Select™ Assessment Tool](#), a comprehensive, "full person" assessment measuring how well an individual fits specific jobs in an organization by assessing their cognitive ability, behavioral traits, and Interests. The job-matching feature of the PXT Select™ enables organizations to evaluate an individual relative to the qualities required to perform a job successfully and helps to:

- Establish an efficient hiring and selection process
- Avoid costly hiring mistakes
- Improve employee satisfaction, performance, and retention
- Assist managers with employee coaching and onboarding
- Identify talent gaps and focus on leveraging employee strengths

John Masek, Bearing Service Inc. has found great success using the PXT Select Assessment Tool. "If you are not using an assessment tool, consider adding this resource to your recruiting process. Take my company for example—when we are close to making an offer, we have the candidate(s) we feel are best suited for the job take a 45-minute online assessment. We use the PXT Select™ assessment, a Wiley product,

which has been scientifically validated over many years. Our jobs have been benchmarked by Wiley, so that a known profile of the ideal candidate is determined for each key job position. When the candidate finishes the assessment, their results are sent to you instantly. And, along with your interview results, you will now have a more reliable idea of the 'fit' of that candidate to your organization."

Panel Discussions Offer Tips on Tapping Into Fresh Talent

Posted On August 3, 2022

When it comes to recruiting, hiring and retaining young skilled talent, have you considered going to the source? What if you had the chance to ask incoming educated skilled candidates what they want out of a career in the PT/MC industry?

The *Transmissions* article "What Do Young Employees REALLY Want?" (Vol. 4, 2019) recaps a PT WORK Force® sponsored panel discussion at the PTDA 2019 Industry Summit. Featuring six students from Texas A&M University's Industrial Distribution program, the presentation gave companies the opportunity to pose questions to the students. Employers could use the information in their own efforts to recruit and retain skilled candidates and strengthen and develop their talent pipeline. Even in more recent years, and with a pandemic thrown into the mix, the topics broached during the panel remain relevant.

Key Takeaways

There are ways that you can effectively communicate with students entering the PT/MC industry. Mentorship is important. Anyone who has been in the industry for a longer period can position themselves as a mentor:

- Share how you incorporate both your technical knowledge and your customer-interaction skills into your job.
- Show how to develop a professional development plan and career path.
- Assign younger hires to a veteran team; this will help them establish themselves within the company.
- Be an example of the company's culture, share stories about how the company has helped you to grow.
- Connect the dots for all your employees but especially with the younger ones. They might not understand how even the smallest task impacts a project or the company.

Educational institutions are an ideal place to cultivate relationships and engage students and soon-to-be graduates before they hit the job market.

“Companies seeking to establish a talent pipeline with local colleges and universities should first seek to build relationships with career services and faculty,” says Nicole Hubbs, director, Welcome Center and Career Services, Nashville State Community College. “This is vital in recruiting because these people better can communicate all the great things about your company to students. Also, making time to visit campus multiple times to build brand recognition with students is a great way to connect and establish a presence on campus.”

For more insights from Hubbs on ways to tap into young talent, register for the PTDA 2022 Industry Summit. The PT WORK Force® Panel Session, *Build Your Talent Pipeline* takes place on Saturday, October 29 at 12:45 p.m.–1:45 p.m. Hubbs will join other career service directors from technical and industrial programs at colleges and universities to share best practices for engaging your future workforce.

Solutions to Improve Retention of New Employees

Posted On August 10, 2022

People are quitting their jobs. There is a lot of research and talk on the subject and how employee departures affect the individual and the employer, but what is a solution? A study done by McKinsey & Company, surveying 13,382 employees in several countries, concluded that people are quitting their jobs over the following:

- 41% = career development/advancement
- 36% = inadequate compensation
- 34% = uncaring/uninspiring leaders
- 31% = lack of meaningful work
- 29% = unsustainable work expectations
- 26% = unreliable/unsupportive colleagues
- 26% = lack of workplace flexibility
- 26% = lack of support for health/well-being

A Compassionate Approach

How do you decipher what this survey means in terms of leadership? The recent PT WORK Force® blog, [“Learning, Leading, Succeeding,”](#) discusses the characteristics and

strategies on how to improve or hone your skills as a great leader. There are a few questions you should be asking yourself while reflecting on your leadership skills: Are you empathetic? Self-aware? A great listener? Patient and supportive? A compassionate approach to leadership where communication is key can and will develop a strong relationship with your new employees.

Look out For Warning Signs

Is your new employee disengaged, missing deadlines or is their work suffering? These are signs they aren't happy. Most information/research, like the survey mentioned above, is conducted after an employee leaves. While it is extremely useful, how do you prevent a new employee from becoming a statistic?

For a new employee nothing is worse than realizing that your supervisor/boss isn't approachable. While you might think you are the world's best boss, your employee might be scared to death to approach you with a concern or problem regarding your work relationship. This may prompt an employee to shut down and start the search for a new job.

Is your new employee learning about the industry and company? A lack of training can have a terrible effect on the development of a new employee. If your company doesn't have the strongest training program, then lead by example.

Has the employee made friends with other colleagues? Taking the time to ensure they are being indoctrinated into the company culture is important.

Make the Effort to Change

Be open to receiving feedback; it is a gift even if it isn't as flattering as you hoped. Trust that the person you hired can complete their job to the utmost of their abilities and skills. Micromanagement can dissolve a new relationship between supervisor and employee quickly. In an article by Yahoo!, ["Warning to Managers: Survey Shows Most Workers Will Quit a Bad Boss,"](#)

"82% of workers across 10 industries say they would quit their jobs due to their manager's poor behavior, including not being open/honest, micromanaging and disrespecting personal time." Remember, your way of communicating tasks might be overwhelming your new employee to the point of quitting.

Having a professional and productive relationship with your new employees means trust, communication and collaboration are imperative. That can be the winning combination for your new team. No one said being a leader is easy, it is not. A great leader reflects on their performance every day. Becoming a malleable, caring leader can be the difference between creating a revolving door of new or long-lasting relationships that can benefit the organization for years to come.

Job Descriptions Broaden Your Talent Search to Find the Best Fit Candidates

Posted On August 17, 2022

Are you trying to find a way to entice skilled talent to apply for positions that need to be filled? Are you stuck in the mud and don't know how to begin attracting new applicants to your organization? Look at your job descriptions, they are the first point of contact prospective candidates will have with your company. Finding the best employee to fill a role can be obtainable by utilizing resources like the sample job descriptions provided through [PT WORK Force®](#).

Positions are Plentiful in the PT/MC Industry

PT/MC companies are comprised of many departments that house many different positions/roles helping to manufacture and distribute products that channel the power of industry, including machinery manufacturing, mining & natural resource extraction, food & beverage processing, forestry, agriculture and automotive manufacturing. The PT WORK Force website has sample job descriptions available for these positions and more:

- Sales Marketing
- Operations Finance
- Accounting Human Resources
- Purchasing IT

Enhance Viewability with Job Descriptions

The SHRM article titled, *Why You Should Have Job Descriptions* highlights, "Job descriptions can be useful communication tools to tell employees exactly what tasks you expect them to perform. Job descriptions may also address quality or quantity of performance standards, or even work rules that apply to a particular job." The following are additional ways job descriptions are useful:

- Help identify the right employees for a position
- Help in the interactive process
- Describe legitimate minimum qualifications
- Help justify an employee's exempt status

The hiring process is intricate, with many moving gears. A great job description can open lines of communication between the company and the talent you are trying to find. John Masek, Bearing Service Inc. explains how using PT WORK Force job

descriptions improved his ability to find skilled talent: "From reading PT WORK Force articles, I knew that young workers want to know the job requirements as well as how the job contributes to the overall company. I used the PT WORK Force job description template to add more context to each person's role within our company. Now every employee has a better understanding of how his or her role impacts the success of the company."

Sample job descriptions from PT WORK Force can be customized with specifics for your company and roles, and you can add your logo. Descriptions and postings were created by the industry professionals who know the key attributes needed to hire the best talent for your business and industry.

Technical Schools Build Lifelong Careers in PT/MC Industry

Posted On August 24, 2022

Build connections with career-hungry students and graduates at PTDA Industry Summit October 27-29 in Nashville Tennessee. Asha will be one of four directors participating in the PT WORK Force®-hosted panel discussion, "Build Your Talent Pipeline".

Building a talent pipeline is important to the success of any company no matter what level you are hiring at. We are unable to ignore the current record high needs for skilled trades employees sweeping the nation and it's projected to become worse in the upcoming years. A popular topic of conversation in trades is "The Great Retirement," – resulting in the expeditious vacancy of jobs.

Passion for the Trades

Technical Schools strive to create a funnel to directly aid in the pipeline search for skilled trades. Students who chose to attend a skilled program have a passion for their trade and are investing in their growth and development. This opens the door to opportunities that may not have been available had they not attended a trade school.

Create a Pipeline with School-Sponsored Events

Creating a pipeline to trade schools benefits companies by cutting out middleman practices of hiring a third-party staffing agency—often a costly measure. Trade schools recruit by finding candidates with a passion for the industry and want to build a lifelong career in trades. Building a relationship with the school creates a funnel to directly place students within your organization. School-sponsored hiring events and career fairs pave the way for interviews and direct hires post-graduation.

Why should a company hire an entry-level candidate directly out of a trade school program if they can hire someone else that has been trained by another company?

1. Entry-Level or “green” employees are moldable and trainable. You have a fresh mind to train instead of a mind that has formed habits, whether good or bad, that you have to redirect with training.
2. Trade schools offer students the opportunity to complete certifications while in school, versus completing it as an employee.
3. Trade school graduates have invested in their future and will put forth greater effort to build the career track they’ve chosen and desire.
4. Investing in a non-experienced employee creates a level of loyalty and gratitude that in return provides the company an employee who may be more likely to build a lifelong career with the employer.
5. Having an apprentice to mentor often gives tenured employees a new sense of purpose. Giving back to their trade for the future creates excitement and a feeling of importance many employees need.

Reach out to your local trade school and ask how to partner with them on hiring their graduates today!

Feedback Builds Strong Teams

Posted On August 31, 2022

Randy Disharoon, director of sales, conveying division, Regal Rexnord, shares his experience as a leader on how to give feedback effectively.

Get Growing

Growing a strong team and nourishing your employees with constructive feedback will help to improve performance and create stronger relationships. Feedback is information about reactions to a person’s performance of a task which is used as a basis for improvement. Oak Engage discusses, “Companies who conduct regular feedback experience 14.9% lower turnover rates, the more you praise people, the more motivated they’ll feel. When an employee does a good job, let them know straight away.” The following are ways that feedback can help to improve the working relationships with your team:

- Be specific.
- Keep it private.
- Make the conversation a two-way street.
- Schedule follow up time.

Lead with Transparency

Administering proper dosages of constructive feedback to a highly motivated team can build a culture of trust. Randy Disharoon, director of sales, conveying division, Regal Rexnord shares his experience as a leader on how to give feedback effectively, "Lead with transparency, ask questions and listen with intention. Communicate frequently, celebrate successes and employ teachable moments for continuous improvement."

Accentuate the Positives

Constructive feedback shouldn't be used as a vehicle to reprimand employees but as a fact-based and solutions-oriented means of fixing deficiencies with corrective actions to help improve an employee's performance. "Value the person and accentuate the positives of their work first; use specific vs. generic behavioral examples," says Randy." Express your feelings about the behavior; solicit input from the other person; and talk about expectations going forward."

In the Spirit of Continuous Improvement

If you want your employees to receive your feedback gracefully then consider how you yourself receive feedback from your employees. Are you coming from a place of vulnerability and reflection? Randy shares why is it important to receive feedback from your employees about your performance as a leader: "To gain insights into how you are perceived; to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth; to establish trust and increased confidence in you as one who emulates the spirit of continuous improvement."

Constructive feedback can be used as an effective tool in your leadership arsenal. When used properly it can open the lines of communication and create a prosperous relationship between you and your employees.

The Future of Family Business, Creating a Legacy for the PT/MC Industry

Posted On September 7, 2022

Chris DuComb, president of W.C. DuComb Co., Inc., discusses how the 107-year-old family business has been creating a culture driven around family since 1915.

Join the Family

It takes a lot to run a family business in this industry, let alone keep it viable for over a century. The success of the W.C. DuComb Co., Inc. is a testament to the resiliency of family-run businesses in the PT/MC industry and the recipe they utilize to keep them successful for many years. Chris DuComb, president, shares ways they highlight family values within their company and how the future of businesses can create a culture and legacy built around family in the PT/MC industry.

Building Family Culture Brick by Brick

Sharing important family values, traditions and history are a few ways to build a culture that can survive for over 100 years. Such values can manifest generations of success within a business and its employees. An article by [Conway Center for Family Business](#) discusses, "More than 30 percent of all family-owned businesses make the transition into the second generation. Twelve percent will still be viable into the third generation, with only three percent of all family businesses operating at the fourth-generation level and beyond." Chris hopes to create a legacy for the PT/MC industry by demonstrating how important family is to the success of his company. He reflects, "Our company is in its fourth generation of management and a great deal of our effort and drive for success stems from wanting to make our grandfather, grandmother and our great-grandfather proud. In fact, our great-great-grandfather bought our building in 1915 to help William Crawford DuComb start this business. We hope to create a legacy of hard work and dedication to something you can call your own. As the fifth generation continues to come into the world, a deeply rooted responsibility to create a profitable company with a strong foundation effortlessly blossoms."

Unified Front

Family businesses treat culture a bit differently. More often family-run businesses foster cultures built on values of their founders and kept intact for years to come. While adapting to ever-changing attitudes on what makes a successful family-run company, Chris discusses how working with family creates a positive company culture: "The most precious aspect of working within a family business is the concept of treating each of our employees as a member of the family. The extraordinary accommodations we consider for our staff makes our culture more unified and more intimate as the lines between business and personal are constantly blurred in positive ways."

Plug in the Equation

Family legacies are an equation built on time, reputation and those they recruit to grow and sustain the business for years to come. Working within a large corporate-run business gives skilled employees the support they need to perform for their team too, so why choose to work for the family over the corporation? Chris elaborates on the benefits of working with a family run business in the PT/MC market space and how family-owned businesses help others find their passion within the PT/MC industry,

"There are many benefits and challenges derived from working within a family business in the PT/MC market space. One of the benefits is the knowledge of each other's home lives. In a larger corporation, people will keep their family affairs isolated from the work environment. Our understanding of each other's unique home lives allows us to bend and accommodate needs that arise at home. The support and understanding we can offer one another creates an environment of a healthy work-life balance. In regard to passion, it is widely understood that an owner's passion for a business will almost always outweigh the passion of an employee. When it is yours, there is a sense of

ownership that takes hold in your heart and your soul. When we exhibit this passion while solving a problem or praising positive behaviors and outcomes, it inevitably shows how important the company is to us. The hope is that this level of importance develops in our employees' hearts as well."

There are many ways you can build future success in the PT/MC industry, being a part of a family-owned business with a rich history is one way. The best way is to share your excitement, values, traditions and the desire to learn and grow this industry so that it flourishes for centuries to come.

Succession Planning in the PT/MC Industry, Create a Strategy from the

Inside Out

Posted On September 14, 2022

Quick Link: <https://www.ptda.org/resources/executive-management-resources/human-resources/ptworkforce/recruitment-resources/webinar-archive-pt-work-force.aspx>

Who Comes Next

What happens when senior people retire from your organization? Typically, the most knowledgeable senior employees are libraries filled with decades of industry knowledge. What's the plan after they leave? Who will fill their seats?

Check the Boxes

Succession planning is all about answering the question: "Who comes next?" If organizations desire to remain viable and become even more successful, then succession planning is a must. According to a survey conducted by [Pew Research center](#),

"In the third quarter of 2020, about 28.6 million Baby Boomers – those born between 1946 and 1964 – reported that they were out of the labor force due to retirement."

Businesses have a better chance at a smoother transition by monitoring the loss of key employees and putting a plan in place to develop existing and new employee's leadership capabilities. The PT WORK Force® webinar, [Leadership Planning Made Easy](#) mapped out a strategy for available talent to grasp the scope of your company's succession plan by identifying what to do next. In order to plan a course of action, create a checklist with the following categories:

- Understand demographic shifts.
- Create talent strategies in the war for talent.

- Respond to changes in important personnel by making a commitment to develop a plan.

Fill Their Seats

Create a plan that looks toward the needs of the organization and what vital seats will need filling in the future. Hire right the first time, using tools like the [2022 Compensation and Benefits Survey](#) and [the PXT Select Assessment Tool](#), available through PT WORK Force and designed to keep you up-to-date on hiring trends and expectations of job seekers. Focus on the development of new talent and support any changes in command. This can be a positive undertaking when the right plan is in place to support employees and the organization they serve. Planning ahead will allow for a smoother transition, especially when trying to immerse and educate new talent on your company culture and expectations.

Creating Business Relationships, The Importance of Networking for New Hires

Posted On September 21, 2022

Summit Ahead

PTDA puts in many man hours to produce major networking events like the [2022 Industry Summit](#) in Nashville that are a vital opportunity for employees and businesses to make face-to-face connections. New hires in the PT/MC space face a mountain of information to absorb no matter their level. Networking is an opportunity to support your new teammates and get them face time with key players in the industry.

According to **Apollo Technical Engineered Talent Solutions:**

“Networking is the most successful way of finding a meaningful job and attaining career success. 80% of professionals find networking essential to their career success, almost 100% believe that face-to-face meetings build stronger long-term relationships, and 41% want to network more often.”

Develop New Relationships

Sending your new employees to networking events like PTDA Industry Summit will help kickstart their career in the PT/MC space, allowing them to establish relationships with new clients and discover ways to keep their networks viable and successful. Sheryl ‘Sam’ Pijor, BDI, shares:

“Attending the PTDA Industry Summit and being face-to-face with so many industry peers helped to solidify existing relationships and initiate more for first timers like me. I found the First Timer and Women in the Industry sessions helpful opportunities to gather in smaller, more intimate groups where you can easily find yourself discussing

common goals with a future business partner. The Summit provides an environment and schedule that fuels networking, motivation, and progress, along with insightful speakers that may help to spark an idea or project to take back to the office.”

Opportunity to Grow

Why is it important to develop a new team member with networking, especially those who are new to the PT/MC industry? Networking allows your new team member to get acquainted with peers and learn the roles others play within the industry. It is an incredible opportunity to gain product and industry knowledge. Don't forget about trade shows. Sending a new hire on a trade show circuit is another way of introducing your team member to customers with whom they wouldn't otherwise have face-to-face interaction. If your new employee is customer facing, an event or trade show is a great place to lay the foundation to build their network. What does networking provide for an industry newbie? How can creating a network advance the success of a new teammate within this industry? A study done by Forbes states the benefits of in-person networking versus via technology:

- Building stronger, more meaningful business relationships **(85%)**
- Better ability to read body language and facial expressions **(77%)**
- Ability to bond with co-workers/clients and more social interaction **(75%)**
- Allows for more complex strategic thinking **(49%)**
- Better environment for tough, timely decision-making **(44%)**
- Less opportunity for unnecessary distractions **(40%)**
- Leads to higher-quality decision making **(39%)**
- Easier to focus **(38%)**
- Fewer disruptions and delays **(23%)**

Pair Newbies with a Veteran Networker

As in-person networking events continue to increase post-Covid, consider sending your new team members to engage with industry colleagues and peers. Set your “green” team members up for success by pairing them with a veteran team member and get them networking in the PT/MC industry. If you haven't already done so, register you and your teammates for the 2022 Industry Summit. Consider this great advice from PTDA Foundation Board member Missy Munte, NORD Drivesystems:

“Definitely attend the First Timer event; it is a great way to kick-off your Industry Summit. You get to meet other first timers, connect with experienced industry attendees and get all of your questions answered, which all set you up for networking success.”

Create PT/MC Industry Connections with LinkedIn

Posted On September 28, 2022

The 2022 PTDA Industry Summit, October 27-29, is quickly approaching in Nashville, Tenn. Come prepared with a LinkedIn profile to ensure you can easily build upon in-person connections you make with other industry professionals.

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network on the internet, an outlet to find the right job or internship, connect and strengthen professional relationships, recruit, hire and learn career skills to help you succeed. LinkedIn benefits employees/employers and candidates/hiring managers alike, helping to connect and grow their companies and markets into successful enterprises.

Why is it important to have a LinkedIn profile in the year 2023?

"LinkedIn is an essential tool in growing my professional knowledge and connections," says Hafeez Hameer, Business Development Manager, Garlock Sealing Technologies.

"Beyond networking with my PT/MC industry peers, I turn to LinkedIn for news and content from my connections and groups, including the PTDA Foundation which continually provides relevant resources and ideas on ways to not only attract, but cultivate new talent who will go the distance in the PT/MC industry."

Socially Acceptable

LinkedIn is the preferred social platform for professionals. Taking a few minutes to set up a profile can link you with over 750 million other professionals and companies. Don't underestimate the power of a LinkedIn profile. If you have no idea how or where to start LinkedIn has many resources to help you. *Forbes* highlights why it is important to have a profile:

"LinkedIn is all about building connections. Whether these are business-to-business (B2B) prospects, potential investors or business partners, LinkedIn is one platform that can help you find the best people to network with."

For those who already have an expert level LinkedIn profile, here are some tips:

- Update your profile picture to ensure it is current and no more than two years old.
- Change your banner periodically to spark new interest in your page.
- Like, share and post content applicable to your interest.
- Help those around you who aren't using LinkedIn get established with a profile.

Be Visible While Networking

Visibility is the number one reason you need an up-to-date LinkedIn profile. When you engage by liking, sharing and/or commenting you instantly become visible. The 2022 PTDA Industry Summit will have you networking with many PT/MC industry peers ranging from manufacturers, distributors, owners, presidents, CEOs and employees in operations, marketing, engineering...the list goes on. LinkedIn provides an easy way to

connect with your new acquaintances. Follow these simple steps to establish a LinkedIn profile:

- Upload a current headshot intended for professional use.
- Create a banner from your current company's logo or a clear representation of your company/industry.
- Complete your work history with dates, not specifics from your position.
- Ensure that your profile is visible to the public.
- Start connecting with industry peers and colleagues.

Create a Community

LinkedIn is the way our community of PT/MC industry professionals speak to each other in a social space. It allows companies and employees to create profiles to help gain employment on both sides of the fence, whether you are an employer looking to hire, or a candidate seeking work. More importantly it is a way to build connections before or after networking events.

Create or update your LinkedIn today and, like Hafeez and other peers, connect with the [PTDA Foundation](#) LinkedIn page to learn about the many resources available to PT/MC companies to assist with recruitment and retention. Attendees at the Industry Summit who follow the PTDA Foundation LinkedIn page can get entered to win a free [PXT Select™ Assessment Tool](#). Stop by the onsite Resource Center at the Omni Nashville during the Industry Summit to learn more.

Recruit Once, Hire Twice

Posted On October 12, 2022

Career service and placement directors are a wealth of knowledge but often an untapped resource for gaining insight into best approaches for bringing new, young talent into the world of PT/MC employment.

"Companies seeking to establish a talent pipeline with local colleges and universities should first seek to build relationships with career services and faculty," says Nicole Hubbs, M.Ed., Director, Welcome Center and Career Services, Nashville State Community College. "This is vital in recruiting because these people can communicate all the remarkable things about your company to students. Also, making time to visit campus multiple times to build brand recognition with students is a terrific way to connect and establish a presence."

During the [PTDA 2022 Industry Summit](#), Carin Sampson, vice president, HR and marketing solutions, IBT Industrial Solutions, will moderate a panel discussion with four

career service directors from technical programs and colleges and universities. They will address what actions employers can take to capitalize on the talent of current students and recent graduates to build a successful employment pipeline.

"A saying I've heard from campus talent colleagues is to 'recruit once and hire twice,'" says Erica Betz, associate director, Employer Relations, Career Center, Vanderbilt University. "You're already spending time and resources to connect with talent at the different institutions you're visiting and prioritizing, so spend the time to train them well for corresponding full-time opportunities."

Training can take the form of an internship which, looked at another way, is an extended job interview. Internships allow employers to evaluate a candidate's knowledge, skills and fit. You also get to see how they respond to real-world problems and present potential solutions. There's no better opportunity than on-the-job training.

"A student's experience at your organization will go a long way in their career trajectory, and with word-of-mouth advertising, you'll gain as they become unofficial ambassadors for your organization," says Betz.

Two Simple Words to Aid Employee Retention

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Leaders can't accomplish all they do, day-in and day-out, without the support of a team. Putting their respective skills and expertise to work, your employees' efforts strengthen your business. It's important to take notice and thanks and compliment your workers on a job well done.

A survey conducted by *Reward Gateway*, an employee engagement platform, revealed 75% of U.S. employees surveyed agreed motivation and company morale would improve if managers simply thanked workers in real-time. The more you can show gratitude to your employees, the better their performance. Being recognized for a job well done, going above and beyond or closing a tough sale motivates employees to continue to churn out great work for you and your clients. Hearing how appreciated they are builds trust and promotes employee engagement.

There are many ways and opportunities to show gratitude as a leader—thank you notes, a small gift, commendation during team meetings, recognition in internal newsletters, etc. According to a survey by Society for Human Resource Management and Globoforce, companies that spend just one percent of their payroll budget on thanking and recognizing their employees "are more likely to perceive greater impacts on retention and financial outcomes." The bottom line: **Happy employees mean happy clients.**

When clients and customers express gratitude, pass the complement on to your team. It reinforces how vital they are to the team and company's success. Begin your team meeting with a "shout out" to everyone for their collaboration. When a team project concludes, celebrate with a congratulatory "toast" with sparkling cider (or champagne, if permitted) or treat everyone to lunch.

It's no surprise workers want to continue in jobs where they feel valued and an integral part of a team and have important outcomes. In fact, in a research survey by the company OGO, 60% of employees say they value recognition as much as money. Job satisfaction soars and turnover lessens, saving you time and money typically spent on replacing an unhappy worker.

When you make gratitude a priority, it will translate into a tremendous lift in employee engagement. The key to success may just boil down to two simple words.