



5 Strategies for Breaking Through the Manufacturing Labor Shortage and Scoring a Big Win



This isn't practice. There aren't any time outs.

We're into the third-quarter and, let's face it, our team looks like Swiss cheese out there.



So what happened? Why is the manufacturing industry facing a hard reality, that more frontline employees aren't on their way to American factories—and, more importantly, what can you do to hit the end zone running?

To remain operational for the foreseeable future, manufacturers must upskill and retain their existing talent for long, productive careers, while also attracting new talent who are in it for the long haul. Whether you're scouting for new recruits or just trying to make sure your top players won't transfer to another team, we have a step-by-step guide to help you create a strong talent pipeline at each stage along the employee lifecycle.

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Hit pay dirt: go beyond the bonus.

Plants, warehouses, and service industries have begun amping up salaries and bonuses to compete for workers. But staying 90 days to collect a windfall has become an unfortunate new normal, with workers increasingly hopping between jobs. Young workers are especially prone to throwing in the towel: in fact, [25% of Gen Z workers plan to leave](#) their current positions in the next six months.

But that willingness to change positions can be the launchpad for

a new career in manufacturing. It extends across industries, with [75% of gen Z willing to switch career paths](#). That's good news for plants looking to attract new workers as destination employers in their cities, not just 90-day stopovers.

To increase attraction, advertise long-term benefits like advancement and learning opportunities, rather than instituting short-term perks like bonuses.



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Make way for Rookie of the Year: inspire millennials to see the factory in their image.

Is manufacturing state-of-the-art? You know it is, but surveys show that millennials and gen Z workers aren't excited about replacing baby boomers on the frontline. [More than a quarter of the current manufacturing workforce](#) is the baby boomer generation, which makes those jobs seem antiquated.

Modern, cloud-based training and software can convince new workers that there's a future in the tech-forward manufacturing sector. Show interviewees there's an opportunity to be successful according to their generational standards, using the technology digital natives already know—but is rarely found on the factory floor.



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Get off to a fast start: make sure your onboarding is top-notch.

Don't greet newcomers with an overwhelming number of new processes and faces. Instead, give employees digital buddies, welcome videos, and learning packs. It'll reduce time to competence and let employees feel confident they can learn and grow.

Onboarding is a core component in helping grow a dedicated talent pipeline. In a [BambooHR survey](#),

33% of workers had left positions within six months of starting, and nearly a quarter of those said that clear guidelines about responsibilities would have helped them stay longer. Yet more employees left jobs where there was minimal onboarding overall. The better your onboarding, the more likely you won't suffer the costs of failed hires.



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Take a play from an innovative playbook: give employees the tools they need to succeed.

So many workplaces are focused on managers talking to their employees, but not on listening to them. In this environment, workers don't feel they can contribute and bosses are often only a voice of discipline, not encouragement. Do something better. Make sure every employee can communicate, in their language, to everyone else in the plant and become a valued part of a community.

Prioritize worker communication norms like transparency. Ensure employees don't need to search for answers, they just need to know where to find them. Make sure good ideas are implemented no matter where they come from. Send high fives, good catches, and @mentions across the organization to motivate and engage.

With 74% of unengaged workers actively seeking new jobs, it's essential to use collaborative tools to prevent employees from tuning out.



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Be an all-star coach: offer learning in multiple forms.

The labor shortage is largely a skilled labor shortage, with plants increasingly reliant on employees who can carry out certified manufacturing work with specialized skills and processing equipment.

Jobs for people who can work with manufacturing technologies have increased and go increasingly unfilled. Instead, cultivate talent from the inside. Deliver comprehensive skill and behavior coaching, frontline collaboration,

and education to grow skills and develop knowledgeable, valuable frontline team members.

While 38% of executives feel attracting new talent is their top priority, record workplace turnover (we surveyed customers and found they're reporting up to 44% turnover) has shown that the talent drain continues even after attracting and hiring new workers. While the pool of candidates grows ever smaller, retaining talent is the logical solution.



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Don't drop the ball. Rise above the labor shortage with Redzone.

So what's your game plan?

You know the score: hiring new workers alone can't make up for changing manufacturing demographics. There aren't enough people, and when hired, employee turnover remains high. That all adds up

to needless expense and continuing labor troubles.

The recruitment process shouldn't be one Hail Mary after another. Get above the fray. These steps take you through the employee lifecycle from the very beginning so you can make the most of Redzone's software to triumph in manufacturing — even in a global labor crisis.

Get the ball rolling with a free consultation to see how Redzone can help you overcome the labor crisis and create a talent pipeline for your plant.



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