The jobs are here, but where are the people?
Addressing the manufacturing skills gap and influencing a positive future of work

Our studies indicate that the skills shortage is expanding . . .

The skills gap may leave an estimated 2.4 million positions unfilled and put $2.5 trillion in manufacturing GDP at risk over the next decade.

What’s causing the shortage?
- Shifting skillsets due to the introduction of advanced technologies and automation
- Misperceptions of manufacturing jobs
- Retirement of baby boomers

What skills are necessary for future success?
- Digital skills must marry human skills. 50% of manufacturers said they have already adopted automation, and the top skills that must accompany technology are critical thinking, programming, and digital.

What can manufacturers positively influence the future of work?
- Tapping into the resources from the retiring generation of baby boomers
- Developing in-house training that engages a multigeneration workforce
- Building human-machine collaboration to supplement jobs across the organization
- Creating public-private partnerships
- Bolstering apprenticeship programs

Skilled positions take months to fill . . .

It takes more than 2 months to fill positions for skilled production workers, and more than 4 months for engineers, researchers, and scientists.

Hiring begins
- Month 1
- Month 2
- Month 3
- Month 4
- Month 5

Week 8 Low-skilled production
Week 11 Other workforce areas
Week 13 Skilled production
Week 14 Digital talent
Week 15 Software engineers
Week 17 Engineers, researchers, and scientists

How can manufacturers positively influence the future of work?

- Technology and computer skills
- Critical thinking
- Digital skills
- Programming skills for robots and automation

Key skills in the future manufacturing workplace

■ Working with tools & techniques
■ Critical thinking
■ Programming skills for robots and automation
■ Digital skills
■ Technology and computer skills

Digital talent

2025 2.0M 2028 2.4M

2,025-2,400

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