



Proactive Technologies News

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Have a wonderful and safe holiday!



- Classes alone will not train workers to perform your tasks...
- Quality Control policies and Process Documents are not a substitute for task training...
- Wishing and hoping won't develop the skilled workers you need...

The cost of one malperformance due to lack of proper training can more than justify the investment to train all your workers properly!

Ask your [Proactive Technologies, Inc. representative](#) about

"The Proof is in the Pudding" Pilot Program and Discount Offer!

Evaluate the viability of a project with a FREE, no obligation session to prove this approach is right for your firm - before you commit resources! THEN:

- Select a project of any size (which includes 12 months of technical implementation support) between **September 1 - November 30, 2017**, and you will receive deep discounts as an incentive to try this approach;
- Plus, to take any risk out of being an innovator at your business operation, you will be allowed to cancel the project at any time, for any reason.

Proactive Technologies feels that there should be no need to stay locked in a project if it isn't giving you the results you expected. We are confident you will know this approach's potential in the first few days.

No additional staff needed! We will setup your programs and provide technical implementation support so you can focus on your business.

Discover how the PROTECH© system of managed human resource development will cut your internal costs of training while increasing worker capacity, work quality, work quantity and compliance (e.g. ISO/TS/AS, processes and safety).

Combat skilled worker shortages! Grow your own experts...every time! Maximize the return on each worker investment like you know you should! Experience the accelerated transfer of expertise™

Proactive Technologies, Inc. has successfully found grants for clients to defray most, if not all, of the client's initial investment!

Proactive Technologies' Publications Archive

Download a .pdf version of this issue at the bottom of this month's post on our website's [News & Publications](#) page. While there, check out past newsletters, articles and more.

Helping employers to unlock worker value since 1986!



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In This Issue

[Proactive Technologies' Workforce Development News](#)

[Industry News](#)

[Financial News](#)

[International News](#)

[International Trade News](#)

[Education and Workforce Development News](#)

[Training and Organizational Development News](#)

[Quality News](#)

[Cyber Security and IT News](#)

[Human Resource Management News](#)

[Environmental, Health & Safety News](#)

Free - Live Online Presentation Schedule

If interested in attending one of the presentations below, click on the title, then select a date/time and press "Send." An online presentation invitation and link will be sent to you. On the date and time of the event, just click on link in email invitation and it will connect you to the presentation. **No special equipment required.**

[Click here](#) for descriptions of all of the available presentations. Click on a specific title for that specific description and schedule or to schedule a date and time that works for you.

APPLIES TO ANY ORGANIZATION (Recorded - Available Any Time):

[PT1promo - A Preview of an Upcoming Presentation](#)
(13 minutes)

FOR FORMER EMPLOYER CLIENTS:

[PT11001 - MA, OH, PA and SC Former Client Employers - Restart Your Organization's PROTECH® Training Infrastructure](#)
(45 minutes)

FOR ANY EMPLOYER:

[PT11002 - Building an Effective Worker Training/Apprenticeship System - Registered or Not](#)
(45 minutes)

Understanding the Resistance to Training: Part 2, Meeting the Challenge

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.



In part 1 of this series entitled, "[Understanding the Resistance to Training: The Challenge](#)," I started the discussion of how an organization that is based on systems has difficulty in, and an entrenched aversion to, conceptualizing the need for a systematic approach to worker development. It is a pervasive problem and it lies at the root of the seemingly insurmountable "skills gap" that has flourished over 30 years and seems unique to U.S. employers. Other developed economies, such as those in Europe, seem to have no trouble developing the workers they need. In fact, many of those trained for technically skilled job classifications in Europe wind up working or training others in developing or developed countries around the world.

Training sounds so simple. Put two people together and have one train the other to do what they do...as fast and as good as the trainer. But we all know, from our own experiences, this is a crap shoot. The trainer may not want to share what they have learned for any number of reasons. Even if they do, they have repressed the nuances of learning the proper task procedure and are now operating on "automatic" - what the employer wants. This manifests itself as displaying shortcuts that only they understand and may not be acceptable, demonstrating incomplete procedures and omission of critical safety and engineering specifications. This is true for each subject matter expert on each shift, who might even be training in conflicting ways.

The trainee doesn't know what they are not learning, and are totally dependent on what the trainer demonstrates, what they think they see and what they hear. They wouldn't know if anything was left out or taught incorrectly, and may be afraid to ask for fear of being judged. They may not be a "self-starter," but could be an excellent worker with proper instruction. Especially for employers who have depressed wages for technical skills, a lower offered wage attracts more workers who need extra help in mastering the tasks, or live with the consequences.

Training program development is a technical field that is seldom even touched upon in accounting or engineering or even management studies. Ultimately, the responsibility is pushed to the Human Resources department since, after all, we are talking about human resources here. Yet, even within human resource management college studies, the methodology for training program development and implementation may not be included or included as an overview, not a practice. For companies that opted for "HR Generalists," there should be no expectation that worker development is an area of competency since it is not emphasized..

While education is traditionally "informative," true "training," by definition, is meant to be impactful and should focus primarily on developing and supporting operational capacity, goals and outcomes - one input at a time. In the absence of legitimate, structured on-the-job training, waiting critics are obliged to attack well-intentioned (but predictively off-based) efforts a frustrated and concerned manager might have put together from their discrete point of view, personal biases and limited understanding of training that works. These good employees have no idea of the inadequacies of their strategy, and do not set out to promote confrontation, but that is often the outcome. [Read More](#)

The High Cost of Employee Turnover

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.



Most companies are dealing with uncomfortably high levels of turnover. When one separates out those employers that facilitated high turnovers to lower labor costs, there are many reasons for

[PTI1004 - If You Can't Find Skilled Workers, Develop Your Own](#)
(45 minutes)

[PTI1007 - Structured On-the-Job Training Supports ISO/AS/TS Process Training Requirement Compliance](#)
(45 minutes)

[PTI1008 - Preparing your Workers for Growth: Using Lulls Before Growth to Increase Your Worker's Capacity](#)
(45 minutes)

FOR EDUCATION, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

[PTI1003 - Adding Employer-Specific Structured OJT to Your Training Support Strategy](#)(45 minutes)

[PTI1005 - Adding Structured On-the-Job Training to Your Apprenticeships](#)
(45 minutes)

[PTI1006 - Building a Regional Workforce Development Infrastructure: Employer-Specific for Maximum Effectiveness and Lowest Investment](#)
(45 minutes)

If you would like more information or would like to discuss these presentations or anything else, click [here](#) and fill in the "Contact Us" with your request including information specifying an alternative date/time you prefer and how many will be attending. An invitation and link will be sent to you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Onsite and group presentations

are being scheduled for the following states in the month of:

October, 2017
Colorado (Eastern Slope)

Indiana (I70 Corridor)

Kansas (Kansas City, Topeka and I70 Corridor)

Kentucky (North and Eastern)

Missouri (Kansas City, St. Louis)

North Carolina (Asheville and Western Area, Charlotte, I77 Corridor)

Ohio (North-Central, Northeast and Southeast Area)

this. However, there is no denying the many costs associated with this that exist and the effects that often compound. These costs are often unknown and unmeasured, but all employers should keep an eye on this challenge and explore its full impact on the organization.

It seems counter-intuitive, but there are some who even recently promoted a business strategy that encouraged employee turnover. In a July 21, 2015 Forbes article entitled "Rethinking Employee Turnover," author Edward E. Lawler III, "Indeed, the turnover of some employees may end up saving an organization more money than it would cost to replace that employee. The obvious point is that not all turnover should be avoided-some should be sought." The question is how to determine which ones to keep and which to encourage to leave. Without accurate measures of costs and values of a worker, good employees may be pushed out along with the "bad" and then the true costs of this action realized by the employer after it is too late.

Last year, Christina Merhar of ZaneBenefits wrote in her blog entitled "Employee Retention - The Real Cost of Losing an Employee," "Happy employees help businesses thrive. Frequent voluntary turnover has a negative impact on employee morale, productivity, and company revenue. Recruiting and training a new employee requires staff time and money. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, turnover is highest in industries such as trade and utilities, construction, retail, customer service, hospitality, and service."

"For the costs associated with the loss of 1 or 2 employees, the company can establish a holistic approach to worker selection, development and retention that will significantly lower both turnover rates and turnover costs, AND increase the value of all employees in that job classification."

"Studies on the cost of employee turnover are all over the board. Some studies (such as SHRM) predict that every time a business replaces a salaried employee, it costs 6 to 9 months' salary on average. For a manager making \$40,000 a year, that's \$20,000 to \$30,000 in recruiting and training expenses.

But others predict the cost is even more - that losing a salaried employee can cost as much as 2x their annual salary, especially for a high-earner or executive level employee.

Turnover seems to vary by wage and role of employee. For example, a CAP study found average costs to replace an employee are:

- 16% of annual salary for high-turnover, low-paying jobs (earning under \$30,000 a year). For example, the cost to replace a \$10/hour retail employee would be \$3,328.
- 20% of annual salary for mid-range positions (earning \$30,000 to \$50,000 a year). For example, the cost to replace a \$40k manager would be \$8,000.
- Up to 213% of annual salary for highly educated executive positions. For example, the cost to replace a \$100k CEO is \$213,000.

What makes it so hard to predict the true cost of employee turnover is there are many intangible, and often untracked, costs associated with employee turnover." [Read More](#)

The Employers Have the Most Advanced Equipment Available for Training

by Frank Gibson, Special Projects Coordinator -
The Ohio State University - Alber Enterprise Center



Community and technical colleges, career centers and joint vocational schools have always struggled with how to make a positive difference in workforce training. They often bear the brunt of criticism for the "skills gap" employers report when, in reality, employers share equally in the responsibility. Educational institutions have only the resources and capacity to provide core skill training upon

Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh and Western Area)

South Carolina (UpState, Columbia and Charleston Area)

Tennessee (Eastern)

West Virginia (North-Central, South Central)

[Contact Us](#) to express your interest in an onsite or group presentation.



Classes alone will not close the "skills gap," but structured on-the-job training can...every time!

Under-capacity of workers is an enormous source of untapped value and unrealized return on worker investment. In addition, standardizing expert task performance - between workers and shifts - can add to worker ROI through lower scrap and rework.

Experience the power of the **PROTECH© system of managed human resource development!**



- **Accelerated Transfer of Expertise™;**
- Increased worker capacity, productivity, work quantity, work quality and compliance (specifications, ISO/AS/TS programs and safety mandates);
- Decreased internal costs of training;
- **Higher return on worker investment!**

You would be surprised how small of an investment is needed to

which only employers can then provide on-the-job training to drive trainees to the job mastery needed.

Educational institutions are often tempted to assume more of the employer's role in worker development but run into budget, feasibility and practicality limitations. This distracts them from their very important role of maintaining perpetually relevant core skill and related technical instruction that a high-quality technical education requires. Trying to provide all things to all employers never was the role of educational institutions so they should not take it too personally when well-intention efforts do not reach the expectations for them.

These institutions are often encouraged to use their limited resources to buy equipment or build facilities in order to support "customized, hands-on training." The employer already has the facility and the latest technology in that community. The hard part has been convincing the employer that the school has a viable strategy that makes the employer want to imbed structured on-the-job training into the onsite natural order of learning the job. It would be even harder to convince them a training program, targeting a specific job of theirs, can be more effective offsite at a training facility than onsite.

Technology shifts so fast these days, and the focus of workforce training is so volatile, that it makes little sense for educational institutions to purchase equipment for training when only a few employers have similar equipment and the equipment may be obsolete before the school gets through the purchasing, installation and instructor training stages let alone before someone completes a 2-year training program. In addition, the company or companies that were targeted for this training might be acquired, closed or moved - leaving before any return on the investment of time, money and facilities are realized.

The Ohio State University - Alber Enterprise Center has partnered with **Proactive Technologies, Inc.** on job-specific worker training projects since 1996. Over the years, the "hybrid model" at the center of these projects focused resources very efficiently and effectively to provide the proper blend of structured on-the-job training and related technical instruction. Our Center provides a selection of remedial and related technical instruction (through our courses and those provided by our network of training providers) - selected from the thorough job/task analysis data collected and used by Proactive Technologies to set-up the onsite employer-specific structured on-the-job training programs. This helps us to provide the client- employer's workers with core skill instruction that is "content relevant." [Read More](#)

Quality Policies and Process Sheets Do Not Equal Training

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

A very common fallacy in business operations is that a description of what should be done listed in a quality policy, such as a quality control policy or a quality assurance plan, that seems to be sufficient for the training component of ISO/TS/AS certification meets, therefore, the company's training requirement in general. Perhaps this false equivalency is wrongly supported by the additional fallacy that the existence of standard work instructions is the equivalent of on-the-job training plans. Too often this is used to defend the belief that this replaces formal task-based training.

Sometimes this leads to the rationalization that if the company keeps it simple and barely meets what an ISO/TS/AS auditor might accept for their certification purposes, the training requirement is covered. But an

Quality Control/Quality Assurance Policies and Process Descriptions ≠ Training or Cover Training Requirement Compliance

- ISO/TS/AS Training Requirement:
 - Standardized Work (Task) Processes (e.g. SOPs, SWPs)
 - Effort to train worker to standardized process
 - A record that worker "mastered" standardized task
 - Mechanism to update worker when task changes
- Classes no guarantee that content helped worker master task it relates to
- Policy statements and process documents alone may appease internal auditor or certification auditor, but...
 - incident that prompts more digging by auditor or customer may lead to questions about all worker capabilities:
 - May threaten certification
 - May jeopardize contract or market share
 - May weaken reputation and brand

Having a policy but no training delivery method is slightly better than "hoping for the best."

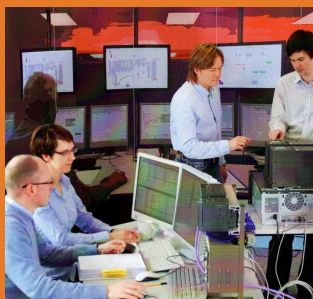
- Skill, Knowledge and Behavioral Assessments
- Intro and Advanced Blueprint Reading Courses
- Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing Courses
- Front Line Supervisor Training
- Training Materials and Online Courses



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- SAR Offers Other Specialty Courses for Manufacturing

many buildings and killed many people - the total number yet to be known. They will need everyone's help during the coming months and years.

If you want to help but don't know how to reach organizations who are there right now lending a hand, here are a few links to some who can help make sure your donation, whatever you are able to contribute, reach those who need it the most.



[Hand In Hand 2017](#)



American Red Cross

[American Red Cross](#)



[The Salvation Army](#)



[The International Salvation Army](#)



[Direct Relief](#)

Remember, the flood waters will recede and the aftershocks will subside, but it will take many months, perhaps years, for those affected to find some sense of normal life. If you are able, please help in any way you can.

DOMESTIC ECONOMIC DATA

Gross Domestic Product

US Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis



Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 3.1 percent in the second quarter of 2017, according to today's third estimate. In the first quarter of 2017, real GDP increased 1.2 percent. [Read Report](#)

Personal Income

US Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis



Personal income in August 2017 increased by 0.2 percent. Nominal personal consumption expenditures (PCE) rose by 0.1 percent, while real PCE decreased 0.1 percent. Nominal disposable income (DPI) rose 0.1 percent while real DPI decreased 0.1 percent. The personal saving rate as a percentage of DPI was 3.6 percent in August. The PCE price index rose 1.4 percent from August 2016. The core PCE price index (excluding food and energy) was up 1.3 percent over the same period. [Read Report](#)

Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders

US Census Bureau

New orders for manufactured goods in August increased \$5.4 billion or 1.2 percent to \$471.7 billion. [Read Report](#)



Pharmaceutical Labeling Improves Efficiencies in a Highly Complex Supply Chain

Material Handling & Logistics - Laura Johnson

Pharmaceutical companies continue to adapt to regulations like the



SAR Group

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MEMORABLE QUOTES

"If you want something new, you have to stop something old."

Peter Drucker

"The world we have created is a product of our thinking; it cannot be changed without changing our thinking."

Albert Einstein

Recent Proactive Technologies News Article Quicklinks

October:

[Understanding the Resistance to Training: Part 1, The Challenge](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Put Yourself in a Trainee's Shoes](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Some Community Colleges Moving Back Toward 70's Approach to Vocational Programs; Why Did it Take So Long?](#)

Dr. Dave Just, formally Dean of Corporate and Continuing Education at Community Colleges in MA, OH, PA, SC. Currently President of K&D Consulting

[Appreciating the Value of Labor](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

September:

[Confusion Over What Constitutes "Training" Stumbling Block to Effective Strategies](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Cross-Training Workers After Lean Efforts Builds Capacity Using](#)

FDA's Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) and 21 CFR Part 11. At the same time, their supply chains need to operate more efficiently to compete in a growing marketplace. That's why manufacturers are looking at labeling to provide an edge in the face of these challenges.



The pharmaceutical supply chain is highly complex, with many steps, as ingredients are often shipped in bulk, repackaged and reshipped, before they find their way to the manufacturer producing the branded end-products. Multiple tiers of suppliers and wholesalers are often involved. Oftentimes, borders are crossed. Labeling is essential to smooth the flow of the pharmaceutical supply chain, where problems can arise at any juncture in the chain, or may "wait" to become manifest only in a finished product.

[Read Article](#)

Manufacturers Having Trouble Finding Cheap, Clean Renewable Energy

Material Handling & Logistics - Staff

Over the last decade, manufacturers such as General Motors, Dow Chemical, Anheuser-Busch InBev, Owens Corning, P&G, and Mars have significantly increased their purchasing of renewable energy as a means to power their facilities across the U.S. Yet many of these manufacturers now face a challenge in accessing the clean energy they want and need, due to state policies that limit corporate renewable energy procurement.



A new report, "The Growing Demand for Renewable Energy Among Major U.S. and Global Manufacturers," by David Gardiner and Associates finds that 83% of the 160 manufacturers have established greenhouse gas reduction targets and 25% have established renewable energy targets. [Read Article](#)

Fronts with Threats to Trains, Planes

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Bombardier Inc.'s turnaround plan is coming under threat from stepped-up challenges to the company's rail business and its cutting-edge jetliner.



The Canadian manufacturer risks being jilted by Germany's Siemens AG, which is now exploring a rail-equipment deal with Alstom SA of France after months of talks with Bombardier. Separately, the U.S. government is set to decide this week whether tariffs should be imposed on Bombardier's C Series aircraft after a complaint by Boeing Co. [Read Article](#)

Three Lessons From the Rust Belt on Growing a Healthy City

Area Development - Armando Carbonell and Torey Hollingsworth

From the banks of the Connecticut and Delaware rivers, inland across the Appalachian Mountains and midwestern flatlands to the shores of Lake Michigan, dozens of cities once rose together to make the United States an industrial superpower. Among them are not only big cities like Detroit and Philadelphia, but also many smaller ones whose size belies their massive contribution to our economy and culture.



They include Lowell, Massachusetts, cradle of the American Industrial Revolution, Dayton, Ohio, home of the Wright Brothers, and Gary, Indiana, birthplace of the Jackson 5, to name just a few.

Today, these smaller "legacy cities" represent both promise and peril. They are places of innovation, grit, and civic spirit - beacons for immigrants seeking a better life. But they are grappling with some of the biggest challenges facing the country at large, from lost productivity to deepening inequality. In the face of sweeping economic transformation, the path we chart for these cities will say much about our nation's character - and future. [Read Article](#)

Existing Staff

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[The Right Assessment is a Good Predictor if Candidate is Able to Learn and Master The Job Classification - Job Relevance is Critical to Legal Compliance and Success - Part 2](#)

by Jim Poole, President of Lifetime Learning, LLC

[Replicating Your Best Performers](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Worker "Prior Learning Assessment" - Documenting Cumulative Work Skills and Knowledge Acquisition](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

August:

[Supervisors and First Line Management Need Structured On-The-Job Training, Too](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Realistic Job Previews Can be a Useful Tool for Measuring a Prospective Employee's Transferable Task-based Skills](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Developing the Maintenance and Other Technically Skilled Workers That You Need; To Specification, With Minimal Investment](#)

by Dr. Dave Just, former Dean of Corporate and Continuing Education at Community Colleges in MA, OH, PA, SC. Currently President of L&D Consulting

[Can't Find The Right Workers? Why Not Train Workers To Your Own To Specification?](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Some Common, But Unfortunate, Reasons Used to Avoid Structured On-The-Job Training](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

July:

[Economic Development Opportunities - An Important Incentive in Attracting Companies to Your Region](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Increasing Worker Capacity - An Alternative to Cutting Workers for Short-term Cost Savings](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Is an Apprenticeship Without Structured On-The-Job Training an Apprenticeship?](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of

Germany Has Way More Industrial Robots Than the US, But They Haven't Caused Job Losses

Area Development - Quartz

The rise of the robots, coming first for our jobs, then maybe our lives, is a growing concern in today's increasingly automated world. Just today (Oct. 10), the World Bank chief said the world is on a "crash course" to automate millions of jobs. But a recent report from Germany paints a less dramatic picture: Europe's strongest economy and manufacturing powerhouse has quadrupled the amount of industrial robots it has installed in the last 20 years, without causing human redundancies.



In 1994, Germany installed almost two industrial robots per thousand workers, four times as many as in the US. By 2014, there were 7.6 robots per thousand German workers, compared to 1.6 in the US. In the country's thriving auto industry, 60-100 additional robots were installed per thousand workers in 2014, compared to 1994. [Read Article](#)

GM Ends Canada Plant Strike after Workers Cave on Mexico Demands

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Workers at a General Motors Co. factory in Canada ended a month-long strike by approving a new agreement despite their union's inability to secure a key protection against work being moved to Mexico.

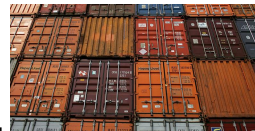


Members of the Unifor union local at GM's assembly plant in Ingersoll, Ontario, voted 86% in favor of a deal reached late week. The automaker refused to designate the plant its lead producer of the Chevrolet Equinox sport utility vehicle, which would have dictated preferential treatment over the two facilities building the key model in Mexico. [Read Article](#)

Manufacturing in US Expands at Fastest Pace in 13 Years

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Powered by robust order growth and healthy production, American manufacturing expanded last month at the fastest pace in 13 years, figures from the Institute for Supply Management showed on Oct. 2. Factory index climbed to 60.8 (est. 58.1), the highest since May 2004, from 58.8; readings above 50 indicate expansion



Measure of new orders increased to 64.6, the strongest since February, from 60.3 Employment gauge rose to 60.3, the best reading in more than six years, from 59.9 Index of prices paid advanced to 71.5, the highest since May 2011, from 62. [Read Article](#)

Forty Percent Increase in U.S. Manufacturing is Achievable

IndustryWeek - Harry Moser, Founder & President, Reshoring Initiative

The future state of U.S. manufacturing depends substantially on our success in reducing, rather than further increasing, our approximately \$700 billion goods trade deficit, excluding petroleum. That deficit, after adjustment for price differences, equals about 40% of actual U.S. manufacturing output, about five million mfg. jobs at current U.S. productivity levels. Success will depend on government actions that increase the price competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and on corporations implementing more rapid automation and skilled workforce training and greater use of TCO (Total Cost of Ownership) for sourcing and siting decisions. The resulting reshoring and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) will provide the high capacity utilization that will fund and motivate the needed automation and workforce recruitment.



Manufacturing job flow to and from offshore has gone from net annual U.S. losses of about 220,000 (2000 to 2003) to a 25,000 net gain (2016). [Read Article](#)

[Changes in ISO 9001: 2015 and Any Effects on Worker Training](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc

[What Makes Proactive Technologies's Accelerated Transfer of Expertise™ So Effective](#)

by Proactive Technologies, Inc. Staff

June:

["Full Job Mastery" means "Maximum Worker Capacity" - A Verifiable Model for Measuring and Improving Worker Value While Transferring Valuable Expertise](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Retiring Workers and the Tragic Loss of Intellectual Property and Value](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern U.S. - Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[The Right Assessment is a Good Predictor if Candidate is Able to Learn and Master The Job Classification - Job Relevance is Critical to Legal Compliance and Success](#)

by Jim Poole, President of Lifetime Learning, LLC

[Classes Alone Will Not Close the "Skills Gap," But Structured On-the-Job Training Can...Every Time!](#)

by Proactive Technologies, Inc. Staff

May:

[A Simple, Low-Investment Solution to Closing Skill Gaps; New-hires and Incumbents](#)

by Dean Prigelmeier, President of Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[Reacting to the Proposed Reversal of Regulations Affecting Human Resources and Safety Can Be Tricky](#)

by Stacey Lett, Regional Manager - Eastern United States, Proactive Technologies, Inc.

[The Employers Have the Most Advanced Equipment Available for Training](#)

by Frank Gibson, Special Projects Coordinator -The Ohio State University - Alber Enterprise Center

[Proactive Technologies Discount Program Ends, But..."Low-Risk" Pilot Approach Option Remains in Effect](#)

by Proactive Technologies, Inc. Staff

Click here for the Proactive Technologies Website "[News and Publications](#)" for Past Newsletters and Archived Articles

What America Is Losing as Its Small

Towns Shrink

The Atlantic - Brian Alexander

Seventy-five years ago, The Atlantic published an essay by a man named Arthur Morgan. The essay, "The Community-The Seed Bed of Society," appeared in the February 1942 issue, and was later expanded into a book called The Small Community: Foundation of Democratic Life. Both the essay and the book were arguments on behalf of communities, especially small towns, which Morgan believed had been abandoned by modernity to become "an orphan in an unfriendly world ... despised, neglected, exploited, and robbed."



The social good of such places, Morgan insisted, was being "dissolved, diluted, and submerged by modern technology, commercialism, mass production, propaganda, and centralized government." While many big-city residents might not worry about the fate of small towns, Morgan believed they should because the "controlling factors of civilization are not art, business, science, government. These are its fruits. The roots of civilization are elemental traits-good will, neighborliness, fair play, courage, tolerance, open-minded inquiry, patience." These traits are best transmitted from one generation to the next in small communities, he argued, from where they are then spread throughout entire societies. To erode small-town culture was to erode the culture of the nation. [Read Article](#)

Financial News

Companies Collect Faster, Pay Slower and Hold a lot Less Inventory

Material Handling & Logistics Staff

Companies are improving in the area of working capital. Top companies now collect from customers over two weeks faster, pay suppliers nearly three weeks slower, and maintain less than half the inventory of typical companies in their industry, according to new working capital research from The Hackett Group Inc.



Overall, top performers are nearly 3 times faster at converting working capital into cash, with a cash conversion cycle (CCC) of only 17 days, nearly 30 days faster than typical companies.

[Read Article](#)

New IRS Rules Could Give Headaches to Partnerships

CFO.com - Heléna M. Klumpp

New rules poised to take effect next year will significantly alter the way the IRS audits partnerships and other "pass-through" entities. The rules could have widespread effects, since many large companies are formed as partnerships and other types of pass-throughs, and even more invest in them via third parties. In fact the vast majority of U.S. businesses are already pass-through entities.



In fact, the explosive growth in the number of such entities in recent years precipitated the new regime, as the IRS begged for an approach to help them run such audits more efficiently. The proposed rules, known as the centralized partnership audit regime, represent Congress's attempt to make these audit exams easier for IRS auditors. [Read Article](#)

Research Refutes Sarbanes-Oxley Critics

CFO.com - David McCann

Since its passage in 2002 in response to financial scandals that shook the corporate world, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, or SOX, has steadily been a target for critics. No provision of the law has provoked more complaints than Section 404(b), which requires companies to have external auditors assess the adequacy of their internal controls over financial reporting.



Indeed, the criticism shows no sign of letting up. Testifying before a Congressional panel in July of this year, New York Stock Exchange

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president Thomas Farley claimed that 404(b) deserved much of the blame for the dwindling number of public corporations in the United States. He lamented that the provision has saddled companies with "significant cost" but "doesn't show clearly that we've reduced fraud and [hasn't] greatly inspired confidence." [Read Article](#)

How Badly Did Americans Suffer Due to the Wall Street Caused Financial Crisis? So Bad That Food Stamp Usage Reached an All-Time High, Just a Few Short Years Ago

Better Markets

It was recently reported that food stamp usage "spiked" after the 2008 financial crash "when many Americans couldn't find jobs and struggled to eat. Nearly 48 million people relied on [food stamps] in 2013, an all-time high." It was less than 30 million Americans before the crash, which caused a 60% jump in food stamp usage.

That shouldn't be a surprise given the real unemployment rate hit 17% in October 2009, just 13 months after the failure of the Lehman Brothers investment bank almost exactly nine years ago. That real unemployment rate, which affected about 50 million Americans, stayed at 17% for five out of the following seven months and remained abnormally high for years. More than 16 million foreclosures were filed on American's homes and more than 40% of the rest lost so much value that they were underwater (meaning the mortgage was higher than the amount the home could sell for, sometimes referred to as "negative equity"). Altogether the crash and economic wreckage is going to cost the U.S. more than \$20 trillion in lost GDP or more than \$170,000 for every living woman, man and child in the country. [Read Article](#)

CFOs Should Help Lead Workforce Transformation

CFO.com - Sandy Cockrell III and Erica Volini, Contributors

A host of trends are pressuring many organizations to rethink their workforce models - and not just function by function or business by business, but enterprise-wide. Such trends include competition for digital and analytical skills, millennials' expectations for progression and development, workforce trends such as the gig economy, and the adoption of robotic process automation (RPA) and other technologies.

Ebusiness Concept 3A classic problem for HR to manage? Not entirely. While HR and a companies' businesses have key roles to play, because of the need to look across the enterprise to understand and plan for the broad financial and operational impacts of workforce transformation, there is a gap for CFOs to help fill.

Clearly, CFOs don't need another responsibility. Yet, the interplay between corporate strategy, which CFOs are increasingly tasked to shape and execute, and the workforce of the future may call for CFOs to play a major part, and beyond capital-allocation decisions. [Read Article](#)

CFO

International News

Record Surge in Atmospheric CO2 Seen in 2016

BBC - Matt McGrath

Emissions from human activities have levelled off but concentrations in the atmosphere continue to grow

Concentrations of CO2 in the Earth's atmosphere surged to a record high in 2016, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).



Last year's increase was 50% higher than the average of the past 10 years.

Researchers say a combination of human activities and the El Niño weather phenomenon drove CO2 to a level not seen in 800,000 years.

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Scientists say this risks making global temperature targets largely unattainable. [Read Article](#)

Madrid Prosecutor Calls for Sedition Charges Against Catalan Separatist Leaders

DeutscheWelle

Spain's state prosecutor has called for rebellion, sedition and misuse of public funds charges to be brought against Catalan's separatist leaders. Madrid took direct control over Catalonia on Monday.



Attorney-General Jose Manuel Maza called on Monday on the leaders of the Catalan independence movement to be called to testify in court.

Under Spain's legal system, the request goes to a judge for consideration.

Rebellion, sedition and misuse of public funds can carry punishments, respectively, of up to 30, 15 and six years in prison under Spanish laws. [Read Article](#)

Global Steel Tonnage Increasing Steadily

IndustryWeek - Robert Brooks

Global raw steel production totaled 143.6 million metric tons during August, down just slightly (-0.1%) from the July total and yet 6.26% higher than the August 2016 result. Through eight months of 2017, steelmakers across 67 nations tracked by the World Steel Assn. have produced 1.12 billion metric tons of raw steel, 4.76% more than the January-August 2016 total.



World Steel reports monthly raw-steel output and capacity utilization for 67 nations. Raw (or crude) steel is produced by basic oxygen furnaces and electric arc furnaces, and cast into semi-finished products, such as slabs, blooms, or billets. World Steel's monthly report covers carbon and carbon alloy steels; data for production of stainless and specialty alloy steels are reported separately. [Read Article](#)

Euro Factories Add Jobs in Struggle to Keep Up With Orders

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Euro-area factories are scrambling to add staff as burgeoning orders stretch capacity.



A Purchasing Managers Index for the region's manufacturing industry rose to 58.1 in September from 57.4 the previous month, according to London-based IHS Markit. That compares with a preliminary reading of 58.2 and is the highest level in more than six and a half years. A gauge for employment rose at the fastest pace since the survey began in 1997. [Read Article](#)

China Shuts Down Tens Of Thousands Of Factories In Unprecedented Pollution Crackdown

NPR Morning Edition - Rob Schmitz

In the gritty industrial town of Yiwu, workers prepare jeans to be dyed in a vivid range of colors.



Two months ago, this factory - and this entire city, located in China's eastern province of Zhejiang - was a much quieter place. Inspection crews from the environmental bureau had shut businesses down, cutting electricity and gas so that they could determine who was following China's environmental laws and who wasn't.

The boss of this factory, who asked that his name not be used for fear of punishment by local officials, says he's never seen anything like it. [Read Article and Hear Podcast](#)

British Safety Council: Mental Health Is 'Issue of our Time'

EHSToday - Sandy Smith

Poor mental health costs employers between £33 billion and £42 billion a year, with an annual cost to the UK economy of between £74 billion and £99 billion. A recent analysis shows that around 15 percent of people at work have symptoms of an existing mental health condition.



Thriving at Work, a review into workplace mental health that was released Oct. 26 and commissioned by British Prime Minister Theresa May in January, was conducted by Paul Farmer and Dennis Stevenson. It offers guidance on what employers can do to better support all employees - including those with mental health problems - to remain in and thrive through work. [Read Article](#)

The Americans Who Can't Read

BBC - Aleem Maqbool

The US has more citizens who are illiterate - some 16 million people - than many of its developed counterparts. Why is that?

Many complain that the system fails those who need extra help and there is a big disparity between rich and poor areas.

Being illiterate prevents people from getting jobs. But it is not only that.



Peggy Fleming, who lives in Kentucky, one of the worst-performing states, said she wanted to set an example for her children by being able to read and write. "I wanted to be a better mum," she says.

[Read Article and See Video](#)

UN Aims to End Forced Labor in the Supply Chain

Material Handling & Logistics - Staff

According to the latest global estimates on modern slavery, approximately 25 million people worldwide are working in situations of forced labor.



Unethical recruitment is a root cause of forced labor, as many migrant workers are subject to high recruitment fees, personal debt, complicated recruitment practices, a lack of transparency about their eventual working conditions, and inadequate legal protections in the countries in which they work. [Read Article](#)

International Trade News

INTERNATIONAL TRADE DATA

U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, August 2017

US Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis



The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, through the Department of Commerce, announced today that the goods and services deficit was \$42.4 billion in August, down \$1.2 billion from \$43.6 billion in July, revised. August exports were \$195.3 billion, \$0.8 billion more than July exports. August imports were \$237.7 billion, \$0.4 billion less than July imports.

[Read Report](#)

Monthly Wholesale Trade

US Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis



August 2017 sales of merchant wholesalers were \$473.4 billion, up 1.7 percent (+/- 0.4 percent) from last month. End-of-month inventories were \$608.1 billion, up 0.9 percent (+/- 0.2 percent) from last month.

August 2017: +0.9 % change in Inventories

July 2017 (r): +0.6 % change in Inventories

[Read Report](#)

Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales

US Census Bureau

U.S. total business end-of-month inventories for August 2017 were \$1,889.0 billion, up 0.7 percent (+/- 0.1 percent) from last month. U.S. total business sales were \$1,369.2 billion, up 0.7 percent (+/- 0.1 percent) from last month. August 2017: +0.7 % change in Inventories
July 2017 (r): +0.3 % change in Inventories

[Read Report](#)



After Winning Trump's Ear, Boeing Notches Win in Trade Spat

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Boeing Co. is making the best of its unlikely rapport with President Donald Trump.



The planemaker's latest victory came this week when the Trump administration slapped far larger duties on a competing Bombardier Inc. jet than Boeing had requested in a trade spat with its Canadian rival. There's also been good news for the company's defense division as the Pentagon acquired the next Air Force One fleet last month and named Boeing a finalist for a \$62 billion missile-defense system. [Read Article](#)

EU Targets China with Tough Rules on Cheap Imports

IndustryWeek- Agence France-Presse

The EU reached a landmark agreement on October 2 on tough new rules against cheap imports in a move that risks embittering already tense relations with Beijing.



The European Commission, EU national governments and MEPs had been in talks since July on new rules to calculate import duties and curb unfair trading practices, especially from China.

"Europe stands for open and fair trade, but we are not naive free traders. Today we strengthened our anti-dumping rules," European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said. [Read Article](#)

German Industrial Orders Jump on Strong Export Demand

IndustryWeek - Agence France-Presse

Industrial orders in Germany, a key indicator of the health of Europe's biggest economy, jumped in August, driven by strong overseas demand for German-made goods, data showed on October 6.



German industrial orders dimmed by 3.6% in August from July, after falling by 0.4% the previous month, the federal statistics authority, Destatis, said.

While domestic demand was robust, with orders from German customers rising by 2.7%, export demand was even stronger, with overseas orders expanding by as much as 4.3 %, Destatis said. [Read Article](#)

Kobe Steel Says It Falsified Data on Some Aluminum, Copper Parts

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Kobe Steel Co. Ltd. said on Sunday that it had falsified data related to strength and durability of some aluminum and copper parts products to make them look as if they met client quality standards.



Japan's third-biggest steelmaker said the products were delivered to more than 200 companies but did not disclose specific customer names. The Nikkei earlier reported online that products using falsified data were delivered to firms including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd.'s regional jet unit and auto makers. [Read Article](#)

Dassault Mulls Manufacturing in India on Modi Push

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Dassault Aviation SA, the French maker of Rafale fighter jets, may build its business aircraft in India, in a boost to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push to encourage local manufacturing.



Building the Falcon 2000 planes in India would cut costs while ensuring quality and execution that meets standards, CEO Eric Trappier said in an interview on the sidelines of the National Business Aviation Association's annual conference in Las Vegas. The move will also give the company a competitive edge, he said, without elaborating.

"We really want to do something which is a real industrial cooperation in India," Trappier said. "We are starting a big partnership." [Read Article](#)

Harnessing Africa's External Trade Partnerships

TRALAC Trade Law Centre



In the context of the African Union's 50-year vision, Agenda 2063, this paper provides an analytical account and critical assessment of Africa's strategic trade relations with two of its most important traditional partners, the EU and the US; and with two of its most important emerging partners, China and India. Based on the insights these provide, the paper identifies some emerging global issues which could have an impact on Africa's trading position and its prospects for industrial development. This is followed by indicative policy considerations that could provide strategic guidance to African leaders as well as highlight opportunities and challenges for realising the goals of Agenda 2063. The paper concludes by examining the implications of the changing dynamics of Africa's key trade relations. [Read Report](#)

US Trade Gap Widens as Imports Increase

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

Among the highlighted numbers: outbound shipments of industrial supplies rose 4.8%, while capital goods fell 0.6% and consumer goods dropped 0.4%, and auto exports fell 6% as imports dropped 2%.



The U.S. merchandise-trade deficit widened to a four-month high as imports rose for the first time since April, according to preliminary figures released Thursday by the Commerce Department. The report also showed inventories increased at wholesalers and fell at retailers. [Read Article](#)

Education and Workforce Development News

AACC Asks ED to Ease Overburdensome Regs

Community College Daily News - Matthew Dembicki



While it recognizes that federal regulations are necessary, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has flagged a few of them as particularly overburdensome for its member colleges, which can unduly present compliance issues for them.

At a public hearing Tuesday hosted by the U.S. Education Department's Regulatory Reform Task Force, AACC's David Baime outlined that many community colleges are feeling the weight of certain regulations when it comes to keeping up to date on changes and the paperwork involved. He noted that the Federal Student Aid Handbook is almost 1,400 pages, and there are separate handbooks for Clery Act compliance.

The gainful employment (GE) regulations are "particularly onerous," said Baime, who serves as senior vice president of government relations and policy analysis. [Read Article](#)

Over Half of For-Profit Students Defaulted on Loans

Community College Daily News - Associated Press

Students who attended for-profit colleges were twice as likely or more to default on their loans than students who attended public schools, according to a federal study published Thursday.



The report by the National Center of Education Statistics looks at students who began their undergraduate education in 2003 and defaulted on at least one loan over the next 12 years. Fifty-two percent of the students who attended for-profit schools defaulted on their loan. That's compared to 17 percent for those who attended a four-year public institution and 26 percent at community college.

The report also finds that the for-profit students defaulted on their federal student loans in greater numbers than their predecessors eight years before. [Read Article](#)

Training and Organizational Development News

The Evolving Workforce: The Skills Needed to Propel Manufacturing Forward

IndustryWeek - Mark Humphlett, Senior Director of Industry and Solution Strategy

Manufacturing Day, October 6, shines a much-deserved spotlight on one of the most critical industry in the U.S. - manufacturing. The industry employs 12.3 million hard-working men and women, about 9 percent of the total U.S. workforce. Today's workers are experienced and skilled. They are well-trained, highly valued, and play a vital role in plant productivity. Yet, the topic of jobs in manufacturing draws controversy.



The manufacturing industry lost 5 million jobs since 2000 according to the Economic Policy Institute. Free trade agreements, plants moving overseas, less consumer demand, and automation have received a share of the blame. The subject is often emotionally charged, tangled in political rhetoric, and clouded by distorted facts. But, despite this quagmire, it is important to the industry and the national economy that we understand the state of the modern workforce, skill gaps, and opportunities to improve.

[Read Article](#)

Meeting Hell: When Decision-Makers Can't Decide

IndustryWeek - Andrew R. Thomas

Every working day, most of us spend way too much time in meetings.



And, while I suppose there is some value in getting everyone together, the vast majority of meetings are usually a waste of time.

This is usually due to no one making a decision about what to do next, except to schedule the next meeting.

A few years back, M. David Dealy and I wrote the book *Defining the Really Great Boss*.

Our intention was to benchmark the characteristics a great boss possessed. [Read Article](#)

Harvard Study: Companies Not Reporting 'Human Capital' Metrics Like Occupational Safety

EHSToday - Sandy Smith

Human capital metrics, including occupational safety and health data, frequently are collected by a majority of global companies, yet many of these firms are not publicly reporting the information, according to a study released Oct. 23 by the Harvard Law School Labor and Worklife Program in conjunction with the Center for Safety and Health Sustainability (CSHS).



"Corporate Disclosure of Human Capital Metrics," authored by Aaron Bernstein and Larry Beeferman of the Harvard Law School Pensions and Capital Stewardship Project, notes that human capital metrics are of increasing interest to global investors who understand that a sustainable workforce is critical to a company's success, including its bottom line. [Read Article](#)

Quality News

Why Call It 'Lean Manufacturing'?

*IndustryWeek - Rick Bohan, principal,
Chagrin River Consulting LLC*

Three well-known company improvement initiatives are, in my opinion, very badly named. It's almost as if the developers of each of these initiatives sat down and asked, "What can we call this that will cause the most confusion about the method, not to say, animosity toward it?" The three initiatives are Self-Directed Work Teams, Six Sigma, and Lean Manufacturing.



No one in any organization is truly self-directed, so why do we think that teams of operators suddenly will be? It can lead to the idea that teams can do whatever they want because they're self-directed. [Read Article](#)

Finding Improvement in the Margins

IndustryWeek - Jamie Flinchbaugh

Continuous improvement means that we look for problems and waste under every rock. We spend most of our time, however, looking at the core activities. We look at core process efficiency because if I can get just a little more out of my core activities, then there is great scale in those improvements. Often, however, we neglect all the stuff on the margins around the core activities.

Yet there are often greater gains to be found in the marginal activities, because they have received less attention than core activities. Just by focusing on them a bit, they can improve.

[Read Article](#)



Apple's Supply Chain Struggles Are a Major Threat

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg View

Apple Inc. has lost its supply chain mojo.

While consumers remember the iPhone for its cool design, closed-wall operating system and hefty price tag, industry insiders in Asia turn to the U.S. giant as an example of incredible manufacturing discipline.



First under Tim Cook, and now under current COO Jeff Williams, Apple has shone as a beacon of how to discover and develop unique materials, coerce and cajole suppliers, and churn out millions of units all without owning any factories.

By now, everyone has heard about delays in the supply chain. But analysts have so far forgiven Apple, with full-year sales forecasts swinging by a mere 1.5% in the past six months. [Read Article](#)

Cyber Security and IT News

Equifax Hack Exposes App Patch Vulnerability

CFO.com - Matthew Heller

The massive data breach at Equifax appears to highlight a security vulnerability for many large companies - they do not maintain a proper inventory of their applications.



Equifax confirmed on Wednesday that the hackers exploited a flaw in Apache Struts, a popular open source framework for creating Java apps. The breach, which may have exposed the personal data of as many as 143 million U.S. consumers, occurred in mid-May.

However, a patch for the vulnerability known as Apache Struts CVE-

2017-5638 was made available on March 7, the same day it was announced - raising questions about Equifax's security practices. [Read Article](#)

What You Need to Know About NIST 800-171

IndustryWeek - Matt LaWell

The National Institute of Standards and Technology does not mess around, of course, and when the organization publishes new rules, it's best to just comply and move forward.



NIST ordered some new rules, and the deadline for manufacturers to comply with Special Publication 800-171 is fast approaching - December 31, a little more than 13 weeks away.

If 800-171 affects you - and, for the record, it affects any manufacturer who works with controlled unclassified information (CUI) from certain government agencies, most notably the Department of Defense (DoD), the General Services Administration (GSA) and NASA - you've probably already at least started the process of an assessment and an update. If you haven't, well, time is short, according to Matt Kozloski, vice president of professional services at Kelser, a Connecticut-headquartered IT consulting firm.

[Read Article](#)

Europe Data Regulation Poses Big Opportunity

CFO.com - Emmanuelle Brun Neckebroek

With GDPR compliance less than a year away, some CFOs I speak with have yet to look past the risk of a big fine. If you're one of them, then this article is for you.

Yes, GDPR - the General Data Protection Regulation, a measure intended to strengthen and unify data protection within the European Union, slated to take effect next May 25 - is a costly compliance matter that you absolutely cannot afford to get wrong.



That's especially so because regulators will be looking to make early examples of companies that fall afoul of the new regulations. It casts a big shadow. Who wouldn't lose sleep over potential penalties big enough to cripple or shut down European operations? [Read Article](#)

Human Resource Management News

Warehouse or Boardroom: Benefits Should Still be the Same

Material Handling & Logistics - Adrienne Selko

Why we have chosen to value one set of workers over another has always been a mystery to me. Every job in a company provides value and contributes to the success of the company.



I was at a conference years ago and one of the division presidents at Toyota said that in his opinion the most important person working at the manufacturing plant certainly wasn't him; it was the person installing brakes on the cars.

Some companies embrace this philosophy of worker equality and have tossed out the classic distinction between hourly and salary. And that applies to how benefits are awarded. [Read Article](#)

What Job Candidates Expect From Employers: The Power Shift in a Candidate-Driven Market

Material Handling and Logistics - Cherie Shepard

The job market continues to be candidate-driven, which means job seekers have far more power and latitude to be very selective regarding opportunities and employers. In fact, they probably have a pipeline of



opportunities from which to choose. There's no doubt that employers are feeling the impact of the heightened competition for their attention.

Hiring managers need to step forward and make changes to their recruiting and hiring practices in order to attract and engage in-demand talent. It is important that they sell the candidate on the role and company as well as focus on their career goals, who they are, and what makes them tick. [Read Article](#)

Next-Generation Manufacturing' About People as Much as Technology

IndustryWeek - Stephen Gold

Everyone knows the business of making stuff in America continues to change dramatically.

We're quickly becoming a nation of advanced manufacturers, with myriad innovative technologies improving products and processes. But the transformation goes well beyond the exponential growth of robots, sensors, and artificial intelligence.



As fast as the world of manufacturing is evolving, so is the workforce. When we talk about next-gen manufacturing, we're not just talking about products and processes; we're talking about people. In fact, maintaining our competitive advantage in global manufacturing starts with people. [Read Article](#)

Do Your Employees Know They Are Part of Something Bigger?

IndustryWeek - Karen Field

While many manufacturing companies grapple with how to successfully attract and retain a qualified workforce, Web Industries appears to have found a formula grounded in a simple philosophy:



People need to know that they are part of a greater purpose. The fact that the Marlborough, MA-based company, a provider of flexible material converting and end-product manufacturing services, is 100% employee-owned certainly underscores that point-by way of people's pocketbooks. [Read Article](#)

Environmental, Health & Safety News

Opioid Crisis Spills into the Factory

IndustryWeek - Bloomberg

At Philip Tulkoff's food-processing plant in Baltimore, machines grind tough horseradish roots into puree. "If you put your arm in the wrong place," the owner says, "and you're not paying attention, it's going to pull you in." It's not a good place to be intoxicated.



Drug abuse in the workforce is a growing challenge for American business. While economists have paid more attention to the opioid epidemic's role in keeping people out of work, about two-thirds of those who report misusing pain-relievers are on the payroll. In the factory or office, such employees can be a drag on productivity, one of the U.S. economy's sore spots. In the worst case, they can endanger themselves and their colleagues. [Read Article](#)

Small Companies Must Take the Mental Health of Workers More Seriously

EHS Today - Sandy Smith

Speaking to the British Safety Council, Professor Dame Carol Black, a leading expert and a passionate campaigner promoting good mental health in the workplace, urged small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owners and managers to get on board with the mental health agenda.



"One in four employees in the UK have mental health problems," revealed Black. "Their symptoms include stress, anxiety and depression, which affect their own performance and wellbeing, as well as that of other workers. These are the key reasons why SMEs should start treating mental health issues as a priority." [Read Article](#)

Steep Premiums Challenge People Who Buy Health Insurance Without Subsidies

NPR - Julie Rovner, From Kaiser Health News

Paul Melquist of St. Paul, Minn., has a message for the people who wrote the Affordable Care Act: "Quit wrecking my health care."



Teri Goodrich of Raleigh, N.C., agrees. "We're getting slammed. We didn't budget for this," she says.

Millions of people have gained health insurance because of the federal health law. Millions more have seen their existing coverage improved.

But one slice of the population, which includes Melquist and Goodrich, is unquestionably worse off. They are healthy people who buy their own coverage but earn too much to qualify for help paying their premiums. And the premium hikes that are being announced as enrollment looms for next year - in some states, increases topping 50 percent - will make their situations more miserable. [Read Article](#)

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