



## **Manufacturing Roundtable Notes**

**Workforce Snohomish, in collaboration with Snohomish County and Economic Alliance Snohomish County**, has been convening monthly industry-focused employer roundtables to gauge and assess our region's workforce challenges. These roundtable events have identified issues that are industry-specific, as well as those seen across all types and sizes of employers. Each quarter, Workforce Snohomish shares the results with all interested community partners to help align and focus community resources.

**Manufacturing and Aerospace Employers** met on 5/31/17 and identified multiple issues that they are facing within their workforce. The workforce community partners will continue to realign the community resources to address the deeper and more systemic issues facing the pipeline, retention, and development of the retail workforce. While solutions are being developed and implemented, the community of partners would like to make sure that current solutions for many of the issues raised currently exist and can help the engaged businesses.

### **The Following are the takeaways from the Manufacturing and Aerospace Employer Roundtable Meeting on 5/31/17.**

How to Read: underlined are the Different Sections, the red text are the **Gaps / Needs Improvements**, the green text are the **Possible Solutions / Recommendations**, and the black text are the general comments that apply to the section.

#### **1) Question 1: What keeps you up at night?**

- a) Shortage of workers.
  - i. We are growing at a rate of 10-15% per year, and are having difficulty finding skilled labor to work as operators.
  - ii. Unable to find entry-level employees.
    - 1. Tough competing with \$15 per hour that McDonald's offers in the Seattle area.
    - 2. 8 out of 10 managers are in their 60s and there is no one to backfill.
  - iii. A skilled workforce.
    - 1. Unable to find highly qualified professionals coming into the field.
  - iv. The current labor market makes it hard to recruit employees.



1. The market is stretched for both skilled and unskilled workers.
  - v. Lack of qualified employees throughout the industry.
  - vi. Hiring entry-level and qualified staff within the industry is hard.
    1. Hiring and retaining heavy labor and mechanics.
    2. Skilled workers with training.
    3. Real-time training solutions that meet the current industry needs.
    4. Investing in employees is costly and a risk.
    5. Incumbent worker training is costly.
  - vii. Entry-level personnel are hard to find and challenging to keep on board.
    1. Low skill level yet specific understanding of trade.
      - a. Provide good benefits and advancement in company.
      - b. Increase wages with increased skills.
  - viii. Maybe part of the retention issue throughout Snohomish County is the proximity to a tech hub.
    1. The tech environment is very flexible unlike manufacturing.
    2. The tech life style is shown as very desirable in media.
    3. There is a perception that the tech culture could be coming to the manufacturing field. However, people expect the environment to be the same, but manufacturing is clearly a different culture that they are not used to and creates conflicts.
  - ix. Losing experienced General Managers.
  - x. There is a difficult workforce cycle for all involved.
    1. A student gets trained, works for local contractor, then gets poached by Boeing.
    2. But if Boeing workers get laid off, they can't go back to the contractors because of their salary history with Boeing.
      - a. This results in a one way road.
      - b. One company stated that they would prefer not to hire Boeing workers and it sometimes taints their resume.
- b) College related.
- i. Graduates from certain community colleges look good on paper, but are unable to do the job.
  - ii. There is difficulty finding quality and qualified candidates to work machines outbound of attending the two-year colleges.



- iii. There aren't issues with hiring for entry level positions when the training takes place in-house. The skilled positions that require a two-year degree are difficult to fill.
  - iv. It is not entirely the fault of two-year colleges that their students come out unprepared. In order for them to secure program funding, like from the state, they need to pack in what should realistically be four years of material into two years. They end up rushing through some of the important basic materials in order to fit everything in.
- c) Younger Generation.
- i. Millennials are not always reliable and ethical.
    - 1. It is believed that some of this comes from getting lots of assistance in order to get through high school and then they do not know how to work without help once they are on their own.
  - ii. There is a sense of entitlement among today's job seekers.
  - iii. The philosophy has shifted.
    - 1. Older generations "live to work" but younger generations "work to live"
    - 2. Young workers are only motivated to put in the minimum amount of work to cover their expenses.
  - iv. Most youth do not see the manufacturing field as a career path.
- d) High School.
- i. High schools are not offering machining programs that provide skills tied directly to manufacturing jobs.
  - ii. There are great opportunities that businesses believe are not being shared with students.
  - iii. Graduation from high school does not lead to college or skills in the manufacturing field.
  - iv. High school students are pushed to college without seeing other career options, such as machining.
    - 1. College is not the right option for every student.
  - v. There is a negative connotation of "not going to college".
    - 1. We need to give high school kids more options than four years of college.
  - vi. Also there is no encouragement for high school students to do internships or apprenticeships. This makes it difficult to get young people into manufacturing.



1. Qualified employees attending apprentice programs is making a difference in skilled labor with new technology and older machines and fabrication.
- vii. Over time, a lot of the learning and teaching of trades has been lost within our K-12 system
- viii. Candidates lack basic skills. People who are looking for work are not even able to read a tape measure. “When I grew up, we were taught basic skills in high school. We learned to read a tape measure. We could read blueprints back in the day.”
  1. “Have schools in Washington just plain stopped teaching these basic skills?”
- ix. Schools no longer teach basic skills.
  1. They skim over the basic skills and do not dedicate enough time on a subject before quickly advancing.
- x. It used to be the case that high school graduates had the skills to be able to enter the workforce, but this no longer seems to be the case.
- xi. “Why don’t we have skill-building classes in the high schools?”
  1. Students graduate and are unable to find meaningful employment.
  2. They work flipping burgers rather than seeking entry level positions in companies that could train them and bring them up in a career.
  3. Shop classes are no longer taught in the high schools.
  4. Graduates lack applicable skills for the workplace.
- xii. One attendee worked in Oregon (in the 1980s) said “I was able to work closely with area high schools to help them develop trades training programs.”
  1. “I do not see this type of opportunity in Washington schools today.”
- xiii. Another attendee worked in Arizona and stated that high schools still offered shop, AutoCAD, and engineering classes.
  1. This does not seem to be the case in Washington today.
- xiv. Kids are not held to a higher standard in school.
  1. They are not pushed enough to be able to succeed in a workplace environment.
- xv. A High School in Snohomish is changing their curriculum and requiring students to select one of two pathways: 1. College-bound or 2. Not college-bound / vocational tech.



1. This model will be launched this year and could provide a great opportunity for students.
- xvi. The skills gap is the “what is”. The system spends a lot of time working on solutions to figure out the “right now”, when they should be working with high schools and grade schools to show that manufacturing is not a bad profession. The system is reactive not proactive.
- e) Language barriers.
    - i. Businesses hire off the street. It is difficult to find a workforce fluent in “vocational” English and is willing to stick around and learn the business.
  - f) Internship.
    - i. Some businesses do not see internships available anymore.
    - ii. Even if a student doesn’t work for you after an internship, they have gained real experience and are better positioned for future success.
    - iii. One employer hired a Sno-Isle Tech Center student for summer work. We planned to hire him if he wanted to work after graduation. He worked for them over the summer and they gave him the real life experience. Sometimes it is difficult to connect with high schools so that the employers can provide students with real life experiences that are not being offered in the standard high school curriculum.
  - g) Loyalty.
    - i. It’s a competitive industry with high turnover. There is not much employee loyalty.
    - ii. One of the primary challenges is to get people to stay and commit to the business.
      1. College students want to learn and are enthusiastic, but do not stay long-term.
      2. “You need to invest in them, train them and give them the opportunity to succeed. If you can get at least two or three years out of a person, they spread knowledge to others on the team, and you can achieve stability.”
    - iii. Attendance is poor and turnover is high.
    - iv. Workers leave before they have enough knowledge to be cross-industry knowledgeable.
    - v. They leave after only a couple months on the job, thinking that they know more than they really know.



- vi. This is not specific to any generation in particular; it is a problem for workers of all ages.
  - vii. The moment a new worker walks in, the employer needs to set expectations.
    - 1. It is difficult to get Gen-X or Gen-Y workers to stay and commit to the workplace.
  - viii. Recruiting and turnover is one of the largest business costs.
    - 1. A lot of resources are put into constantly re-staffing.
  - ix. Have you identified why they leave?
    - 1. 90% of new hires come from staffing agencies.
    - 2. New hires aren't prepared.
      - a. New hires don't know what it really means to work in the field:
        - i. Wear a facemask and lift heavy things.
        - ii. Show up on time.
        - iii. The basics.
    - 3. Over half of new employees leave within 90 days.
    - 4. Entry wages are \$13 - \$15 per hour. But they can advance. Within 5 years they are making \$17-\$18 per hour.
  - x. Retention is big concern.
    - 1. People don't expect coffee manufacturing to be so much hard work. People don't know what to expect.
    - 2. That coffee production is actually very fast paced.
    - 3. Around 40% turnover.
    - 4. Probably because demand and volume are growing so people are getting stressed from hard work.
    - 5. There is much time spent training a new employee, but then they leave.
    - 6. Need strategies to retain both entry level and long-term jobs. They're both different.
      - a. Need both but is hard to have stable retention from entry level positions.
  - xi. People will jump jobs to get couple more dollars an hour.
- h) Expectations.
- i. There is a misconception of the industry. The image of manufacturing is inaccurate since many people find that it is a good career.
  - ii. High turnover is a problem. The workers' mentality is to move from one company to another. "They think that if they graduate from a



- certain school with a certain degree, then they're entitled to high wages. People only work for a few months and then leave to find a higher paying job." After several months and an unsuccessful job search, they return hoping to be hired back. "The workers' salary expectations are set too high while they are in college, and they are disappointed when they earn less than that on their first job."
- iii. College instructors set false expectations for their students. Students leave college expecting a higher pay than what can be offered because they initially lack experience and in-house training.
  - iv. "A new worker needs at least two years of experience and familiarity with the business before they are able to begin working as a programmer. That worker then needs at least seven years of experience (as a programmer) before they are proficient. But recent graduates from college think that they are qualified as soon as they set foot in the door."
  - v. Teachers at two-year colleges give students the impression that they can earn \$30 per hour right out of school and before they have any experience on the job. This is not the case.
  - vi. "The expectation is that the employer "owes" the employees and they should be treated as if in higher roles instead of entry-level, e.g., wages, benefits, respect, non-oversight, etc."
  - vii. Employer tries to set the work expectations accordingly, but the worker can't meet them.
    - 1. Some people can't even take the first 40 days in training without taking two days off.
  - viii. The initial 90-day probation period is very strict.
    - 1. One company has a policy that terminates if an employee has three warning within a 90-day period, no matter how long they've been an employee.
    - 2. Another company is only allows one written excuse within the first 90 days.
    - 3. Most companies gave the advice to try not to call-in late or absent in first 90 days, but it's better to call then to ignore that process.
      - a. First 90 days is very critical.
      - b. After 90 days no formal attendance policy.
  - ix. One big company's policy isn't very strict.
    - 1. A worker can get away with a lot.



2. They don't have to talk to anybody when they call-in.  
There's a new system set-up so that people don't have to talk to a human when they call-in.
- x. One company has a policy that in a 12-month period, three attendance infractions meant termination of the job.
- xi. Need to set realistic expectations. College instructors tell students that they can start at a higher wage than they will earn in the workplace as a starting wage. Workers are impatient and under the impression that they are being underpaid. "They don't know what they don't know."
- xii. Prospective workers lack a sense of commitment, enthusiasm, sense of urgency, and pride.
- i) Soft skills are the biggest thing.
  1. Face-to-face interactions are hard for many people.
  2. Getting people off their cell phones is difficult.
    - a. During breaks, all you see is people on their phones.
  3. Soft skills comes from family at very early age.
- j) Training.
  - i. Complex hiring needs. Trade school is not enough. They need to show aptitude to improve skills. Employees need to show they want to stay with the program.
  - ii. Cross-training is critical to the success of the worker and the business.
  - iii. "I invest in my workforce. If they invest as well, great relationships are possible."
  - iv. Some employers care enough to train (invest in) their employees, but not all employers do this.
  - v. Training costs are incredible because of high turnover; especially with young people.
    1. Training costs are skyrocketing.
    2. Because of the cost, businesses are looking more and more to get basic training out of the high schools, community colleges and tech colleges.
  - vi. Training is expensive because it can take 160-200 hours per employee just to "get them up to speed".
  - vii. We can teach people to run the machines, but teaching people to fix the machines is difficult. Having a machine down would be devastating for small company. The ability to repair machinery is imperative.



- viii. It's expensive to have workers trained at community colleges.  
There isn't affordable training.
- ix. Companies could donate equipment to the community colleges to help keep training costs down.
- k) Cost of Insurance.
  - i. Increases in health care costs is crippling for the businesses.
  - ii. One small company claims that an insurance carrier is going to drop a worker due to the new regulations. . The business is focusing strategies on how to pay the employees well, while facing the extra burden of the insurance costs and regulations. The business must be able to offer the benefits in order to grow.
- l) Lack of interpersonal skills.
  - i. Employees struggle to get along with each other.
  - ii. Personal issues follow employees to work.
- m) Other.
  - i. Need more facilities available to test products in order to grow.
  - ii. Bricks and mortar/Infrastructure – building permits, rules, and regulations.
    - 1. For example, there is a building height limitation of 50 feet in one City. It makes it difficult for growth and expansion in this area.
  - iii. People are lazy (across the board, not generation-specific).
    - 1. They want to put forth only the minimal amount of effort.
  - iv. Most people who are interested in working are already employed.
    - 1. Most people who are looking for work don't actually want to work. They are just applying for job after job without any real intention of working.
      - a. They lack a work ethic.
      - b. The younger generation is receiving this mixed message.
  - v. An employer attended a career day that focused on manufacturing in aerospace.
    - 1. One problem was that nobody wanted to work with the company. All the job seekers were interested in was getting a job at Boeing.
    - 2. This is hard as a supplier because all new workers care about is getting a job at Boeing.
    - 3. One employer sees that that that has slowed down.



- a. Boeing wages start at \$15 per hour. The supplier can offer more, however, working for a supplier is still seen as a stepping stone into Boeing.
- vi. Taco bell pays \$15 per hour. It's hard to compete with that because manufacturing is hard work.
  - 1. Most people can flip burgers for that amount.
  - 2. Need to get back to what a career path looks like.
- vii. The problem is, there are a lot of what's perceived as undesirable jobs in manufacturing.
  - 1. It isn't easy work.
  - 2. There are a lot of jobs that some people just can't do.
- viii. Approximately 10k baby boomers turn 65 every day.
  - 1. What population of your workers are over 58 years old?
    - a. It's typically about 20%.
    - b. There's a very high retirement age population in manufacturing.
    - c. That's why they are offering early retirement.
      - i. They are trying to help the age gap.
      - ii. Being a union shop can make this difficult.
- ix. A 78 year-old owner is looking to sell his business. He makes 'simple little parts' and looking at 'additive manufacturing'.
- x. It is difficult to predict staffing needs to 2020.
  - 1. There is pressure from Boeing to meet their demands without predictions.
  - 2. Technology. What's going to be automated?
- xi. There is salary competition with other manufacturers within the industry and region.
- xii. Drug screening.
- xiii. We need workers to not be at work trying to find personal dates.
- xiv. No felons.
  - 1. One employer requires a clean record for last seven years.
- xv. Heavy fabrication is being sent out of state, which is causing dips in local production.
  - 1. Why use out of state supply chain versus using local options?
- xvi. Working with large companies requires them to reduce costs.
  - 1. A small R&D company can experience cash flow challenges working with AirBus and Boeing.



2. Experience with veterans is that they are not educated enough or the entry-level wage is not high enough.
  3. Some employers have had luck with on-the-job-training (OJT's) for new graduates.
  4. Employers find younger employees have challenges with commitment.
  5. Senior level staff is hard to find.
- xvii. Losing employees to Amazon.
- xviii. One employer stated the importance of having the ability to recover from disasters.
1. This comes up because of the recent plane crash in Mukilteo.
  2. Likely to be a greater concern as there will be an increase in airport traffic to Paine Field.
  3. We are in an Earthquake zone.
  4. We are in a Tsunami area.
  5. It is a tough challenge to be up and running within six weeks with these types of potential disasters. Any longer and an entire operation will likely need to be shut down and moved out of the area.
- xix. The employers should not have to wake up workers to get them to work on time.
- xx. The interview and screening process is lengthy and expensive. Then, once they are hired, workers don't show up.
- xxi. Immigrants (often older) are willing to do just about anything.
- xxii. One individual sometimes reviews over 500 resumes of one position.
- xxiii. Often new hires request accommodations to their work environment that either cannot be done or is too expensive.
- xxiv. The fluctuation of the aerospace industry is difficult.
1. Sometimes there is only a need for 50 employees, but then the business gets a new contract that requires 200 employees.
  2. It is hard to keep an employee with one company with the continuous ups and downs within the economic manufacturing production industry.
  3. At this time, a couple of companies cannot meet the demand "spikes".



- xxv. Businesses are constantly fighting battles to avoid big company contracts going out of the area, e.g., Canada, Mexico, Utah, and right to work states).
- xxvi. What is the tax break rule about jobs staying in the area?
- n) Veterans.
  - i. Need to tap into veterans.
  - ii. Vets have not previously been attracted to their starting wage.
  - iii. Hard to find qualified veterans.
  - iv. The culture is not attractive to vets.
  - v. Vets can suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

## 2) Question: What keeps your business from growing?

- a) The customer base is not growing. There is a need for more support with growth. Also finding time for management to meet potential candidates.
- b) The business is seasonal. There is not a full-time demand for products. Continuously trying to increase the customer base.
- c) There's a lack of funding to test ideas and seed money from venture capitalists.
- d) Customers drive business productivity and the economy increases expansion.
- e) No sales people.
- f) Retention.
  - i. With millennials, this is a struggle. Millennials like to "job hop". They are always looking for something better. They are very conscious of their financial future.
  - ii. One employer was looking at offering a 401K option to temporary employees.
  - iii. There is no loyalty factor. This dynamic creates a constant struggle for employers to stay ahead of departures in order to maintain a workforce.
  - iv. Most companies try to be competitive with wages in order to avoid losing employees. However, if a large contract is awarded and they need 200 new staff, they will raise wages to pull employees from their competitors. This could be a short contract for six months to one year.
  - v. One of the first questions applicants ask is "How much do you pay and how much overtime will I get?" A majority of applicants put their minimum starting wage at \$15 per hour.



- vi. The Spanish and Asian populations tend to be more grateful to have a jobs.
- vii. Major issue is the need to diversify our business and not be so reliant on Boeing.
- g) Issues with Snohomish County.
  - i. Public Transportation.
  - ii. Infrastructure.
  - iii. Traffic.
  - iv. Infrastructure has not changed with the rapid growth.
  - v. It takes two hours to drive from Everett to Bellevue.
  - vi. Money for infrastructure tends to go to the counties south of Snohomish.
  - vii. Millennials do not want to drive cars, but we do not have a public transit system that supports this desire.
  - viii. We are all competing with Amazon and Microsoft.
  - ix. One of the first questions one employer asks in an interview is ‘Do you have reliable transportation?’
  - x. There is no transit at all for late shifts.
  - xi. There is no transit in the more rural areas.
- h) Small Businesses.
  - i. Key positions (leadership positions) are difficult to fill with quality people.
    - 1. The inability to hire quality people for these key positions hampers the business.
    - 2. One of the reasons that these positions are difficult to fill is that individuals go from small business to small business until eventually they are hired at Boeing.
    - 3. Small businesses do not have sufficient resources to pay quality professionals competitively with Boeing and are therefore unable to retain them.
  - ii. When Boeing hires, small businesses lose all their quality employees.
    - 1. One employer stated that when Boeing lays off workers, some businesses don't want to hire them.
      - a. There is a common experience of having a lack of a sense of urgency and work ethic.
      - b. Time is important (time is money) for small businesses.
  - iii. Small businesses have small margins.



- i) Location.
  - i. A business is growing, but one of their biggest challenges at our facility in Sultan is retention.
    - 1. People are willing to earn \$3 less per hour at a job at WalMart because they don't want to work as hard as they are required in a general labor position at our facility.
      - a. This is not generation-specific.
- j) Skills.
  - i. Hiring up is difficult. Especially maintenance professionals.
  - ii. It is difficult to pull qualified maintenance techs out of the labor culture.
  - iii. What is the dollar amount that motivates people to leave and work elsewhere?
    - 1. A couple dollars (hourly) is all it takes, sometimes it is only a matter of a few cents.
  - iv. Workers leave to earn only a few cents more per hour.
    - 1. In making that decision, they fail to consider other factors, such as the additional amount of time they will spend in traffic, family time, and other quality of life issues that will be negatively impacted for only a few cents more per hour.

### 3) What do you do to keep a “rockstar”?

- a) One employer is employee-owned.
  - i. After 10 years, there is partial ownership and a career.
    - 1. If they decide to go somewhere else, then they will most likely only remain as an operator and may get replaced by automation.
- b) One employer treats all employees like family.
  - i. Family comes first.
  - ii. “We know that the reason our employees work for us is to care for their family. We provide flexibility (e.g. flexibility for doctor’s appointments, etc.)”
  - iii. Encourage family culture, including company BBQ picnics and offer employee bonuses when possible.
  - iv. Hiring is difficult for our business because we need to make sure that new staff fit in and contribute to the relationship-focused environment.



- v. Staff are included in the interviewing process and teams find their own team members.
- c) Another employer offers quarterly profit-sharing and annual bonuses that are distributed according to a formula that takes tenure into account.
  - i. “We used to give each employee a turkey before Thanksgiving, but now due to growth, we provide gift cards before Thanksgiving.”
  - ii. “We host company picnics and employee appreciation events.”
- d) Another employer provides catered lunches when team goals are met.
- e) They offer mind and body training (e.g. personal training, eating plans, book studies), because they see them employees holistically.
- f) Another employer shifts employees to other units if and when it makes sense since it would be a better fit for them.

#### 4) Question: Where do you find/ how do you identify “rockstars”?

- a) One employer conducts “disk” assessments (personality tests) for workers in high skill / leadership roles.
- b) At one business they spent a lot of time trying to onboard.
  - i. People who come from some manufacturing background.
  - ii. **The younger ones out of school struggle with the environment a little, especially those in the warehouse.**
- c) What is that thing that excites you on a resume?
  - i. Eagle Scout is a good example. If somebody has on this on their resume, it means they’ve completed a goal.
  - ii. Longevity.
    - 1. Need a candidate that can show they don’t jump from job to job.
    - 2. It used to be preferable to stay at a company for 10 years and not to be a job hopper.
      - a. Now they look for anybody with over a year’s experience at a company.
  - iii. Candidates who have been promoted within an organization.
  - iv. Candidates who have manufacturing-related experience.
    - 1. Running machinery is very technical; any experience in manufacturing transfers.
    - 2. They even hire CNC machinists.
  - v. We look at skills centers and community college programs. Those programs have meaning on the resume.
  - vi. One of the local manufacturing trainings center was complimented.



1. The center is good.
  - a. The program is too condensed.
  - b. People go through that program thinking it's a direct path to Boeing.
- d) The personality type tests help us know whether they will be a good fit for the job

## 5) What solutions would you like to see?

- a) Traffic.
  - i. Boeing must have recently changed their work hours.
    1. Boeing's work schedule impacts regional traffic patterns, and affects small businesses.
    2. If Boeing communicated this information (shift hours) to the community, workers and businesses could adjust their schedules accordingly.
  - ii. There should be an incentive to develop the Monroe area. Currently, the focus is on the I-5 corridor (Everett and Seattle) and I-405.
    1. Monroe offers a less congested opportunity with highway access.
    2. Tax breaks for businesses to develop this area would ease regional traffic flow, would provide more opportunities for the east county workforce, and could bring focus to the SR-2 infrastructure needs.
  - iii. Public transportation needs to be addressed.
    1. Many of our workers rely on public transportation to get to and from work.
    2. The hours do not align with work schedules making it difficult for employees to keep their time commitments.
    3. It is still difficult to find workers in East County.
      - a. More east county business development and / or improved public transportation could help.
  - iv. We need for the state to expand our transportation infrastructure (more lanes).
    1. The 405 toll lane is challenging and should not have been put in place.



- a. The toll lane is good for businesses that can afford to pay tolls, but is too expensive to be a reasonable option for normal people.
- b. In California, they built additional toll lanes, which is fine. In Washington, they took a lane and made people pay for it.
- v. Build more roads.
  - 1. Entry-level workers are coming from the north and skilled workers are coming from the south.
- vi. Improve public transportation.
  - 1. Transportation and accessibility is an issue.
  - 2. Hours that buses run need to be adjusted to align with the needs of businesses and workers. There are areas where transportation is scarce.
- b) Schools.
  - i. High school programs like a High School in Snohomish with two pathways: college vs. workplace track, could be a very good thing since some students do not want to attend college.
    - 1. We should make sure they have viable career prospects.
  - ii. Childrens' books should should display parents who are employed at a variety of jobs (such as being a machinist), not just being a lawyer or doctor.
  - iii. K-12 curriculum should include training in basic skills that can be applied in the workplace.
  - iv. Schools no longer teach home economics (budgeting, basic life skills) or cursive.
    - 1. We need to bring this type of training back.
  - v. One employer would like to see more robust connections between the public schools and employers.
  - vi. One employer has not been invited to a "career day" at school as a business or as a parent.
  - vii. Graduates from the public education system need to have more realistic expectations.
    - 1. The current system does not expose them to the workplace, and they are unprepared.
  - viii. One employer is working with an apprenticeship training provider.
  - ix. Start discussions with kids and teachers earlier.



1. In Oregon, they used to have a program that taught teachers about natural resources so that they could communicate information to their students.
- x. Some employers have participated on the board of a local community college.
  1. They saw that students were being hired as soon as the class got started.
  2. The program has been a success; the program's curriculum correlates to in-demand jobs, even though the machinery might not be an exact match.
- xi. One thing that we can capitalize on is National Manufacturing Day in October which has been an untapped resource statewide.
  1. A couple of companies stated that we do not do enough to push that in Washington.
  2. CAMPS does a good job going to the schools and doing tours.
    - a. But as a state we don't support it enough.
    - b. If we started a marketing and outreach initiative for the day, it could become a staple event for the state and manufacturing communities likely by the third year.
    - c. People will need to get out of their office to make anything happen.
  3. Some businesses participated last October.
    - a. Doing a manufacturing demonstration on-site was great.
  4. But as a potential employee, it would be good to get out and see the facility.
  5. One school does a great open house three times a year.
  6. Bring in grade school kids.
    - a. They show the kids how to machine their initials on metal legos with the push of a button.
      - i. The kids learn a lot.
    - b. Transportation for tours is a huge burden.
      - i. Companies should sponsor a bus.
      - ii. Schools can't afford for field trips.
      - iii. Be willing to pay for the bus.
        1. That's a big hurdle. Transportation has been very difficult.



2. It would change their candidate pool immensely.
  7. This event was the first time some businesses had heard of TradeUP.
    - a. Manufacturing is a great industry, but we don't put it out there.
    - b. Would put resources into marketing the concept.
  - xii. A lot of things have found their way out of school system that employers wish would come back in.
    1. Soft skills, problem solving, leadership, machining, balancing a budget.
    2. "I'd rather have a student do a soft skills presentation rather than a senior project."
    3. "Why don't we teach soft skills?"
      - a. **There's an awful lot of second chances in school. This does not set kids up for success in work.**
    4. Schools in the '50s and '60s taught how to work.
      - a. They taught how to get ready for work.
      - b. **Everything has now shifted to a four year college focus.**
  - xiii. Add high school shop classes and allow the opportunity for high school students to do internships.
    1. Teach 'life skills'.
  - xiv. Look at going back to more technical/trade schools. A place where an employer can send employees.
  - xv. High school students can get skills and have the option to learn a trade as opposed to college prep classes.
  - xvi. Provide more "Introduction to the Trades" opportunities. Like "College Fairs". Hold Trade Industry Fairs in high schools similar to traditional career fairs. Do more panel discussions with manufacturing businesses.
  - xvii. Let young people know that they may not be able to "follow their parents" in the same career the parents had.
- c) Internal.
- i. In-house apprenticeship programs. Invest a few dollars into a training program within the skilled personnel. But the main push back is that they will invest and lose them to another market after all the training has been completed.



- ii. If you spend more time introducing workers to the company, such as a more thorough walk-through or view versus a fly-by welding demo for a few minutes it, could help set the tone for workers to have a long-term focus.
- iii. Pooling resources as companies.
  - 1. Not everybody will have machines down every day.
  - 2. Maybe having a shared employee from the companies.
  - 3. We share somebody with a few different shops.
- d) Training.
  - i. One company would like to see more workshops.
    - 1. There is not a lot of workshops or training that focus on supervisor training.
    - 2. It would be good to have once a month or once a quarter. There is not a lot of continued support for supervisor skills maintenance.
  - ii. This is a weak spot for organization. They have not invested in upskilling in the past. They would like to have somebody come in to do coaching for the leadership team.
  - iii. There needs to be more resources for that type of leadership coaching.
  - iv. Public buses drops off at 6:20 but the workers start their shift at 6.
  - v. Mentoring.
    - 1. One business does not have a lot of internal leaders.
    - 2. They would want a community leadership program to help mentor leaders.
      - a. A program that would come to the organization and mentor the people in the company on leadership.

## 6) Question: Would you be able to invite kids into your workplace?

- a) Some said no.
  - i. There are too many potential liabilities (safety and sensitive information and processes).
  - ii. They offered to provide some pictures of the organization.
- b) Some said yes.
  - i. We do bring small groups of students in (about 4 – 6 students at a time).



- ii. They cannot bring in more than that because there are safety considerations and sensitive information.
  - c) “Kids don’t know what they don’t know.” Promote the idea of showing students in K-12 to what the workplace looks like and how it works.
- 7) Policy.
  - a) Permitting and zoning is a problem. If residential areas grow up around the facility, then there is no way to expand. A business may be grandfathered in, but any expansions or alterations would fall within a residential zone, making local expansion impossible.
    - i. Permitting processes need to be sped up. There was a salmon stream 50 years ago. It has not been there for 50 years, but it took several months to clear the permitting process due to the non-existent stream.
    - ii. The county has too much control over land. It should be opened up and be built up. We need to expand, but the permitting process is too cumbersome.
    - iii. If businesses can’t expand due to permitting limitations, then it will limit growth and prevent businesses from generating revenues. This ultimately keeps costs high versus the ability to lower prices to be competitive.
  - b) There is a need to figure out the insurance and liability of having under 18 years old on premises in certain industries/companies.
  - c) Some of the solutions are about the problem today, but leaders need to figure out how to make changes this down the road.
    - i. Labor shortage isn’t going away for at least 10 years.
  - d) One business is restricted by the fact that they hire 18 and older.
    - i. Can’t offer to show their business for kids prior to graduation age.
    - ii. Offer to hire as an apprentice.
  - e) The regulations should be simplified in order to expedite the changes needed.
  - f) It takes a long time to get something done at the County, e.g. roadwork.
    - i. The County should have awards and penalties for their subcontractors when they complete or not complete work on time, respectively.
- 8) Work Culture.
  - a) A company stated that they are vastly expanding since they changed their culture.
    - i. Partially due to a culture change.
    - ii. It didn’t cost anything.



iii. It just changed the mindset.

1. The big culture change was “servant leadership”. This developed a theme called the “cascade way” which encourages the president and executives to make supporting the people on the floor a priority.
2. Leadership goes to the lines and helps.
3. They talk to people, get feedback, and hear what the employees have to say in terms of ideas and how to put those ideas to work.
4. The business has only been doing it for three months and has already seen production grow 500%.

### **Prioritized Solutions**

The employers were asked to identify the desired solutions to the above concerns. These were grouped and then voted on. Each person was given three votes numbered 1, 2, and 3, these represented their priorities. One's are weighted with 3 points, two's with 2 points and three's with 1 point. The following order is from top priorities to lowest voted priorities. After they vote on priorities, the other identified solutions are listed in no particular order.

1. Increase mentorships and internships. (26= (1)x5, (2)x4, (3)x3)
2. Put shop classes back into school. (24= (1)x4, (2)x4, (3)x4)
3. K-12 and specifically high schools need to teach life skills again, e.g., home economics, balancing a checkbook, and work culture. Specifically to what industry requires and the work expectations, like attitude, enthusiasm, and attendance. (23= (1)x3, (2)x6, (3)x2)
4. Emergency level spending towards public transportation. Even if T3 was done today, it would be 20 years late. Longer hours of bus operations. Vastly increase public transportation. Enormous increase in lane capacity is needed. (19= (1)x3, (2)x4,)
5. Enhanced legislation funding for vocational training in K-12. (15= (1)x3, (2)x3)
6. The building permit process needs to be easier. (11= (1)x2, (2)x2, (3)x1)
7. Large scale connection with students from trade schools and community colleges to companies. (11= (1)x3, (2)x1)



8. Incentivize businesses to use local (rather than out of state) suppliers (10=(2)x2, (1)x6)
9. High schools should not be primarily focused on academic pursuits, and include teaching pipelines into the industries. (8= (1)x2, (3)x2)
10. Cost effective ways to incentivize youth and existing workers. (6= (1)x2)
11. Career exploration days in K-12 (Manufacturing Day), have businesses go out to expose career opportunities to the students. (5= (2)x1, (3)x3)
12. Succession planning - Pass on tribal knowledge within the organization. (5=(2)x2, (3)x1)
13. Create supervisory skills/development training. (3= (2)x1, (3)x1)
14. The state should take over healthcare. (2= (2)x1)
15. Increase trade schools in the area (more WATR center style training). (1= (3)x1)
16. Setting expectations for colleges so they are educating people on the right things (what they teach in skills, starting wages, work culture) (1= (3)x1)
17. Help make small businesses provide a competitive compensation package. (1= (3)x1)
18. The state needs to figure out insurance and liability to hire youth under 18. It is too expensive and limits their job experience.
19. Schools need to help students set up career projections by 9th - 10th grades.

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