

BIG COUNTRY MANUFACTURING ALLIANCE

The West Central Texas Manufacturing Partnership, launched in January 2017, is a diverse group of Manufacturers in 5 counties in West Central Texas who come together to:

- **Jointly create an agenda** that supports the stability and growth of the Manufacturing industry in West Central Texas;
- **Commit to coordinated action** and implementation of shared, high priority areas by public and private sector partners.
- **Create a forum** for the region's manufacturing industry for consistent, high quality connections, networking, information and idea sharing.

2018 ACTION PLAN

COMMITTEE #1: WORKER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Committee Members:

Aaron Joseph, Coca Cola Co., Larry Hillis, Ludlum Measurement LLC; Susan Hughes, Buzzi Unicem; Teresa Howard, Tige Boats

Original Intent (from Partnership Launch in January 2017)

- Get grads to stay here, and target re-filling pending retirement positions: be clear about job opportunities and real expectations (miss-aligned wage expectations)
- Need best practices for retention (what motivates today's workers, how to create the right work environment, how to get them vested in our small communities)

2018 Actions:

1. *Facilitate regular best practice sharing* at Quarterly full Partnership meetings – everyone brings one best practice. Catalogue and share these broadly. Ongoing activity.

<i>Recruitment Best Practices</i>	<i>Retention Best Practices</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher sabbaticals ➤ Partner with lead professors for Project-based learning ➤ Partner with high schools for Senior projects ➤ Get out there – Be at every job fair ➤ Internships with meaningful work: summer interns + longer term interns + at entry level real job level (e.g. drafting) ➤ Co-ops (7-8 month commitment) – they become your best employees, or your best advocate and word of mouth referral ➤ Targeting certain students, pre-assessment of hobbies, interests, desire to be here, etc) ➤ Give and receive accurate references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff mixers ➤ Engagement Groups ➤ Longevity bonuses; strong benefit packages ➤ Community connections/volunteer days ➤ Calculating real ROI of employees, and adjusting their pay grade and level of responsibility appropriately = being more responsive to younger generations' expectations, mitigates exits to other industries ➤ Deliberate shift rotations that accommodate their 1st, 2nd, 3rd shift choices – empower them, be responsive ➤ Monthly All-employee meetings ➤ Supervisor Development: training for working with teams ➤ Watch for hot spots (employees don't leave companies, they leave bosses – be a good one)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Address supervisor trouble spots ➤ Invest in training, be clear about opportunities ➤ Willingness to hire multiple members of a family
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2. Shared understanding of what new generations of workers want, including leveraging a survey by Abilene Chamber of Commerce focused on what millennials want (why they leave or stay, what they want, what they value). Ongoing Activity.
3. No further action taken since October, but reminder to members to re-visit the two dozen promising practices related to worker recruitment and retention embedded in the Action Plan. These are real examples from manufacturers in this Partnership of what works to recruit and retain talent.

COMMITTEE #2: IDENTIFY SPECIFIC TRAINING NEEDS (INCLDUES SOFT SKILLS)

Committee Members:

Larry Ludlum, Ludlum Measurement INC; Susan Hughes, Buzzi Unicem; David Byerly, Bridgestone Bandag; Steve Dye, R E Dye MFG Corporation; Tim Manley, Wind Clean Corp

Original Intent (from Partnership Launch in January 2017)

- Understand hardest-to-fill positions at-scale, and use this info to build demand for education/training programs in our region (we re rural, spread out and need to pool demand)
- Assess the need for specific, existing trainings, like LEAN 6-Sigma, QA & QC, GMP (Good Manufacturing Processes)
- Need an understanding of needed automation-related skill sets (also need post-installation equipment maintenance – no one to do this)
- Job readiness basics plus unique soft skills in manufacturing (more important than a credential)

2018 Actions:

1. The Alliance voted to alien Soft Skills under the Specific Training Needs committee.
 - a. The Soft Skills Standards matrix created by this Partnership last summer is being used! Next University, Workforce Solutions, Goodwill and Region 14 Career & Technical Education (CTE) partnered to create a set of 5 curriculum modules to be tested with students. More effort is needed from manufacturers in this Partnership, including keeping the matrix fresh, partnering with schools to create hands-on modules. Input and leadership is also needed to help get the curriculum into college programs, adult education, and other systems.
 - b. Role playing is very effective way to teach these skills – how and where can we make this happen? During interview processes, during on-the-job training, especially effective for supervisors, what can we do at our facilities now with these soft skill standards?
2. Use these definitions or “standards’ to create hiring assessments that can be used during interview processes by all of us, including scenario-based questions that give manufacturers clearer indication of work-readiness of candidates.
3. Use these “standards’ to also create supervisory/management training (a big part of this has to be teaching/coaching soft skills on-the-job), and offer the standards to existing education/training programs in high schools and colleges so they can overlay into curriculum.

4. Goal is to understand shared critical occupations, and get a sense of #s in order to warrant at-scale responses from education partners. Action: Co-design a survey.
 - Need to be able to answer questions about capacity, equipment, facilities, faculty; need to be okay with tough questions like why people leave (Recent Millennial survey attached for reference and insight)
 - Can't just be names of critical occupations, must be deeper definitions of those occupations
 - Need true sense of #s, not just projected, but grounded in average turnover rates
 - Need a sense of how the jobs have changed, including automation-related skill sets and keeping eye on industry leaders
 - Complete by end of year. Success will require manufacturers to *call and recruit* other manufacturers to respond.

5. Design and distribute a survey focusing - on highest need entry level production and existing worker maintenance-related skill sets and occupations (include automation skills-related questions). **Target Completion date: February 2018**
 - a. **Next Step: Very simple survey to be sent out:** 1) What are your top 3 most critical occupations? Select from drop-down menu of top 25 in-demand manufacturing jobs in our region. 2) Why are they "critical"? 3) Attach or provide a detailed job description for those occupations.

6. Identify/Articulate the Foundational Skills – Existing curriculum (TWI/JI? Boilermakers?)? What else is out there? What can we design for here?

COMMITTEE #3: INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

Committee Members:

Bob Johnson, BWJ Consulting; Mark Colman and David Byerly, Bridgestone Bandag; Thomas Taylor, Ludlum Measurement LLC; John Belton, Roscoe ISD

Original Intent (from Partnership Launch in January 2017)

- Partner with more schools for hands-on experience (internships)
- Need high schools to understand and focus on producing students interested in high level production and technologies; Target middle and high schools, school boards/superintendents, and parents

2018 Actions:

1. Host Manufacturing Facility Tours for students, parents, Superintendents and teachers in the Fall
 - a. Determine which schools to target first: which are more ready to partner (smaller, rural schools vs. AISD)? Target the Career Tech Ed (CTE) kids in each school first? Do broad outreach to ISDs and see who bites?
 - Interest in scaling up student tours at facilities: consider ways to peak interests, build the buzz about end products, find ways to cover liability while onsite, consider pros/cons of off/on hours, consider #s and capacity, consider different ages (10 year olds to grad students); consider insurance/partnership with Boy Scouts for insurance

 - b. Determine how to target teachers? Replicate Teacher Externships but must be more targeted in who participates, who is really interested and ready. How do we make this easy and interesting to them?

- Nepris, a virtual facility tour software that schools can use to partner with manufacturers to give virtual tours and provide virtual teaching from manufacturers to students. Teachers must be licensed to use the software. It is not expensive. Demos of Nepris are available.
 - c. Schedule a phone call with other regions who do this at-scale to learn best approach to logistics (calls with Colorado Springs and Ft. Collins, CO manufacturing partnerships).
 - d. How can we target adult learners (those experienced in life)? Partner with Adult Education Program (125 GED completers)
 - e. Next Committee meeting: Target December 2017
2. Repeat in spring, and incorporate project-based learning (replicate Snyder High Frankenstein opportunities - TBD).

COMMITTEE #5: BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

Committee Members:

Andrew Harmon, Clavel Corporation; Steve Dye, R E Dye MFG Corporation

Original Intent (from Partnership Launch in January 2017)

- Find ways to share best practices on automation technologies and tools *before you buy*
- Get to a point where we can do joint, pooled training of workers, and shared recruitment strategies

2018 Actions:

- 1) Purposeful Networking - use full Partnership meetings to prompt purposeful connections (offer just enough structure, e.g. everyone be ready to share one thing they want to learn, looking for, interested in, etc. as part of introductions, then 45 minutes *happy hour* networking). Ongoing.
- 2) Expand the table - "bring one" campaign. All committee members asked to call one more manufacturer personally to get them to the next meeting. Directory to be continually updated (attached). Ongoing.

QUESTIONS

Any questions can be addressed to (Robert Puls, at Robert.puls@workforcesystem.org or Kathy Turner at Kathy.turner@workforcesystem.org).