



THE INDUSTRIAL CAREERS PATHWAY®

A Pathway to...

GoodCareers
GoodPeople
GoodBusiness

ICP: Collaboration and Shared Purpose Required

It doesn't matter if you are a distributor of power transmission parts, plastics, fasteners, electrical products or pipe—information from a variety of sources says that staffing is one of the greatest challenges facing every type of distributor and manufacturer in every region across North America.

Those sources also say that the industrial distribution employment problem will become more severe over time. The demographics of our sector include an aging workforce in key positions that require experience, established relationships and industry knowledge. This coupled with a shrinking candidate pool from which to draw tomorrow's leaders means that industrial distributors and manufacturers face a growing challenge.

To be successful in supporting the industrial distribution sector, we need to connect with and prepare today's workforce and tomorrow's leaders. To be effective, we must realize our common purpose. Ours is a workforce challenge that no single industrial distribution sector and no single community can solve on its own, but working together through the Industrial Careers Pathway® (ICP), we can:

- Build awareness of the size and importance of the distribution sector.
- Reach out and connect with younger adults who don't know about distribution.
- Build college education and training programs to prepare potential employees.
- Sustain relationships and efforts directed to industrial distribution workforce development.
- Attract necessary resources and attention.

The ICP alliance of national associations, local advisory committees of distribution and manufacturing businesses and educators, and an array of partners interested in workforce and economic development across North America is building the framework and defining the common ground to prepare and attract tomorrow's workforce. Our need is a sector need; the solutions must be sector solutions.

ICP's success requires:

- Common goals, teamwork, shared decision-making and a stake in the outcome.
- A North American network of interested partners including community-based, national and regional organizations, association members and educators.
- The best thinking about strategies and tactics from across the network.
- Investment of time, talent and resources from all partners.

Many partners—alliance and community partners, educators, distributors and manufacturers—have stepped up to participate in ICP. The PTDA Foundation's commitment to meeting workforce challenges remains firm, and our investment is substantial. We are renewing our commitment to ICP's collaborative effort. Working with our partners, we are creating multiple ways for you to become involved locally or as part of the broader initiative. ICP needs the support and active engagement of the entire industry to find the best answers, build the right relationships and develop the necessary resources for our collective future. We invite you to join us as leaders in building tomorrow's workforce.

Step up, play a role, have a voice, make a difference.

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Nine Best Practices for Recruiting Generation Y

By Ryan Estis, NAS Recruitment Communications

As Boomers approach retirement and employers confront the resulting talent exodus, many will find it necessary to adjust to the nuances of the new workforce in an effort to attract, engage and retain the next generation.

This educated, increasingly diverse generation (one in three is a minority) is anticipated to be both quick to contribute and deeply coveted in a job market that includes a projected talent shortage between four and 10 million by 2010.

As your organization competes to attract the very best among Generation Y—people born between 1977 and 2002—these nine best practices can help you acquire and retain the new talent you need to accomplish key business objectives into the future.

Relationship recruiting. While technology has improved recruitment process and efficiency, recruiting is still a people business. Over-reliance on automation can be a clear sign to candidates they may not be valued at the onset. This generation expects interface, contact, respect, consideration and prompt response. The most talented among them will have options and need to be sold on the benefit of one opportunity in direct comparison to multiple options.

Employment branding. Critical to supporting a quality recruiting function, the employment brand should extend to candidates the unique opportunity and express benefit of employment with your organization. Gen Ys are image-oriented and expect to be associated with the best. They also want to clearly understand what they will be doing on a day-to-day basis specific to their job. A quality employment brand should demonstrate your compelling employment value proposition and give candidates an opportunity to self-select based on the notion that their skill-set, education and experience are the right fit for your organization.

Candidate experience. Make the initial interaction and touch points with your organization a great experience for the candidate. Quality website? Simple application mechanism? Immediate recruiter interface? This tech-savvy generation can be instantly impressed with a great initial experience with your organization or can quickly move on to the next opportunity if the process is frustrating or inadequate.

Offer. The employment offer should be competitive and compelling. And with this group it isn't just about the compensation. They value work-life balance and do expect some time away. They're also financially astute and will be interested in the benefit package that includes a sound 401(k) and/or profit-sharing plan. Moreover, they want to contribute. Make the offer and opportunity to do meaningful work part of the equation.

Onboarding. With a group that is quick to change, the assimilation into the organization during the first 12 months

is critical to ensure engagement and retention. Make sure there is a program that extends beyond orientation and includes relevant training, multiple touch points, consistent communication and the opportunity to offer opinions about what could be improved upon. Make new employees feel welcome and like part of the team before they even start.

Mentoring. As an extension of onboarding, offer a mentoring program. New employees should be paired with someone who has an express interest in their success. Pairing candidates from different generations or across segments of the business is a great way to bridge gaps and build understanding throughout the workplace.

Feedback. The annual review will no longer suffice. This generation expects feedback and validation more often. This may involve some manager training to help bring about the appropriate level of performance review criteria and recognition to keep the new workforce motivated to achieve. Although a recognized virtue, patience is not noted among the group's core character traits.

Flexibility. Happy to be held accountable to results, this generation brings some evolved thinking into the workplace with regard to when and how they go about doing their work. They live in a virtual world and respond well to the notion of autonomy around work schedules, telecommuting, home-office arrangements and understanding that they desire true balance in their lives.

Career-pathing. Upward mobility is a hallmark desire among Millennials. They want to not only understand what is expected in their present capacity but even more important, what will be required to move into the next opportunity. They anticipate changing employers to advance their career and are always preparing to do exactly that. The employer that can demonstrate expeditious career-pathing has an advantage and opportunity to retain A-level talent among this group longer.

Generation Y, ready to make a meaningful impact, brings a bevy of unique attributes and talent into the workplace. The organization that is sensitive to their needs will have a distinct advantage and opportunity to capture their contributions in this increasingly competitive marketplace.

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Attracting a Few Good Men and Women

When it comes to recruiting new talent to industrial distribution most employers say it's their number one cause for business concern.

With the labor shortage taking hold and not enough experienced and educated talent to fill the openings, distributors and manufacturers of industrial products are feeling the pressure.

There is no quick solution to the problem—it takes dedicated time and energy to find good people. But knowing what drives young people to the industry may help employers in their recruiting efforts. ICP caught up with some new employees at one industrial distributor and two manufacturers to provide insight on the topic.

Mark Wachtman graduated in May from the University of Toledo with a degree in engineering.



In June he began his career as a technical sales engineer trainee at NSK Corporation based in Ann Arbor, Mich. Wachtman has a family history of engineers—both his brother and his uncle work in the profession—so it seemed like a good fit for him.

Plus, he had industry experience. To graduate, Wachtman was required to complete three co-ops, which offered him real world experience and the opportunity to understand the industry.

Six months before he was to graduate college, Wachtman landed an interview with NSK Corporation through the university's career management center. He remained in contact with the company and visited Ann Arbor for a second interview just before graduation.

"The second interview helped me to decide that NSK was right for me," he said. "I liked what they had to offer—a decent salary, good benefits, the position and ability to move up and work for a larger company. I also liked the flexibility of the programs I am getting in to. It's not just one job that I'm being trained for. I have chances at multiple openings. And when I was here for the interview, I really liked the people," he said.

Megan Trigg, an inventory control specialist with Cleveland-based distributor BDI, also said the people she works with make a difference in her day-to-day. She graduated with a degree in exercise and sports science and needed a job after college.

Her friend, an employee at BDI, referred her to the company where she started her career in November 2006. "My major had nothing to do with what I do now, but I like the company and there's a lot of room for growth. We're expanding and there's opportunity for advancement," she said.

Trigg is one of approximately 16 students in a draft program at BDI that teaches sales and management skills to employees

of all positions. "It's all about growing and taking the next opportunity to learn," said Trigg.

When it comes to learning about industry, Andrew Smith, quality engineer, Drives, Incorporated (Fulton, Ill.) has it figured out. Since age 11, he's been involved in all things mechanical. From go-carts to water jets to testing lasers, every job he's taken has helped him expand his technical skills.

Smith, who started recently at Drives, Incorporated, said he made a good decision by joining the company.

"This position will expand my experience, but it will also allow me to draw upon the skills I already have," he said.

The opportunities are endless, Smith said. "The travel involved will create a new structure for my life. Rather than just work, work, work, the travel [overseas] and to other places locally will break up what I've been used to. I'm going to meet more people and be more involved in an environment that has the potential to lead me to greater things," said Smith.



Matt Erickson, another engineer trainee at NSK Corporation, discussed what attracted him to the position. "I'm interested in traveling and interacting with customers. I'm a people person, and I'm not one to sit at a desk very long," he said.

Like Wachtman, Erickson recently graduated from the University of Toledo with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. With some hands-on training under his belt—he had worked four years at a machine shop during high school and college—continuing his career with an industrial manufacturer was a smart move for him.

What he likes is that he can grow with the company. Not only will he have a variety of job options at NSK, but the company also offers employees money to pursue higher education. "I'm looking forward to getting my MBA in a year or so," said Erickson.

Still, money isn't everything—at least not when it comes to choosing a job. "I had one other interview with another company. After the interview, I realized it wasn't something I wanted to do. Even though I was offered more money, the job wasn't something I would have been happy with," he explained.

While it's true that finding young, bright people to fill the ranks in your company isn't easy, if you offer them a good work environment, education and opportunity for advancement, you may be able to find yourself a few good men and women.

2007 Fund Drive Contributors

The 2007 fund drive shows strong results as of Sept. 18, 2007:

158 individuals, companies and organizations have contributed a total of \$222,000.

21 individuals, companies and organizations have contributed to the fund drive for the first time or after a four-year lapse in support.

100 individuals, companies and organizations have made leadership gifts or pledges, of \$1,000 or more.

For a complete and up-to-date list, visit www.ptda.org/ICP/FundDrive.



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