

**NEW Manufacturing Alliance  
COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES  
Georgia-Pacific – Green Bay, WI  
Wednesday, January 15, 2020 – 8:00 AM**

**ATTENDEES:** Pete Bilski-McClone, Brandon Buchholz-Heartland Label, Tara Brzozowski-Element, Mike Dockum-Element, Jim Golembeski-BAWDB, Patty Hendrickson-CleanPower, Mike Kawleski-Georgia-Pacific, Melissa Kuhn-Optima, Lori O'Connor-Leighton Interactive, Georgia Roeming-The Geo Group, Mike Schlagenhauser-Acuity, Jessica Thiel-Insight, Nate Vosters-Heartland Label, Pam Blazei-NEWMA, Ann Franz-NEWMA, Debbie Thompson-NWTC

**REVIEW 2019 TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES**

- Father/son commercial aired.
- The President's Cup golf outing at Blackwolf Run generated a record high \$39,000 for college scholarships. This increased the scholarship fund to \$50,000 for the current school year.
- The Manufacturing First Expo & Conference had the largest attendance ever, 1,200 attendees, in addition to 500+ high school/college students. All available booths sold out.
- Completed the 12<sup>th</sup> annual All Stars, in partnership with Insight Publications.
- Celebrated the Vitality Study's 10-year anniversary. A press conference was held at UW-Oshkosh to announce this milestone, in addition to the 2020 Vitality Study results.
- Increased Twitter followers to 1,433. Continued Facebook, which has 980 followers while investigating other social media outlets.
- Conducted, in partnership with Element, the Millennial Perceptions Study of adults ages 18-30.
- Partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs to recruit soon-to-be discharged veterans.
- 79 faculty and staff from colleges throughout Wisconsin and Upper Michigan attended an 'Industry 4.0 Faculty Tours & Dialogue' event on 5/22/2019. Attendees toured two different manufacturing facilities and then met at Lambeau Field to learn about the Alliance's Industry 4.0 survey results and the upcoming Internship Draft Day.
- Discussed how to recruit individuals living outside of Wisconsin. One of the work products of this discussion was Ann representing Alliance members at the **Fort Leonard Wood Army Base in Missouri at a transitioning out of the military career fair.**
- Toured Northern Michigan University. NMU staff and faculty learned about Internship Draft Day and regional job opportunities.

**PRESENTATION BY ELEMENT: MILLENNIAL PERCEPTIONS STUDY**

Mike Dockum provided key findings of the Millennial Perceptions Study. 120 NEWMA members, ages 18-30, took the survey, with 500+ people nationally taking it. Overall, millennial perceptions are quite favorable regarding manufacturing. A comprehensive, final report will be provided at the March full membership meeting, focusing on recruitment strategies.

- Majority view manufacturing as a career, rather than a stepping stone.
- More than 80% expect to be working in manufacturing in 5 years.
- 76% believe a manufacturing career provides opportunities for growth.
- More than 70% would recommend manufacturing to a friend.

Perceptions regarding day-to-day work in manufacturing careers were mixed among young Wisconsin manufacturing employees. Participants were split in their characterizations of daily work as repetitive or dynamic. This was in stark contrast to the qualitative data collected during focus group discussions, who strongly felt their daily work was dynamic. This is likely due to the limitation of the small sample size.

Young manufacturing employees are more likely to view someone who works in manufacturing as a critical thinker than a button pusher, but this effect was not as strong as expected.

### **Perceptions of Wisconsin**

- Young WI manufacturing employees had very favorable perceptions of living and working here.
- Young WI manufacturing employees rated their desire to live in NE WI slightly over 8/10 on average.
- Only 21.7% of young WI manufacturing employees would someday like to live and work somewhere other than NE WI.
- 74.2% of young WI manufacturing employees would recommend WI to a friend who was considering a new place to live.

### **Perceptions of Message Strategies**

Young NE WI manufacturing employees favored a different message strategy than the national audience.

- The NEWMA audience strongly felt WI is the ideal home for people who love sports and seasonal outdoor recreation.
- The national audience favored that housing costs in WI are about 15% below the national average.
- Both audiences were most apathetic about the message strategy that promoted, "WI has the most manufacturing jobs per capita of any state in the U.S."

### **Sources of Information When Researching Jobs**

Young NE WI manufacturing employees favor a mix of online and offline resources when looking for a new manufacturing job.

- 'Indeed' was by far the top choice among participants, receiving the most total votes as well as the most #1 overall rankings.
- The second most common response among participants was 'Google search'.
- 'Talk to friends' rounded out the top 3, suggesting interpersonal channels remain important.

### **Researching a Company Before Accepting an Offer**

Digital presence is most important when attempting to win over prospective employees due diligence research.

- Company websites and Google search are most valued.
- Career fairs rated among the least valued resource among young manufacturing employees in NE WI.

### **Credibility of Company Research Resources**

Current and past employees are regarded as highly credible, but company websites are also trusted, despite the company-controlled message and content.

- 'Current employee review' was by far the most credible source of information. Employees serve as company ambassadors.
- 'Company website' and 'former employee' comprised a 2nd tier, with the later receiving more total votes while the former received more #1 rankings.
- Online resources like 'Glassdoor' and company social media channels were least credible.

### **Value of Various Benefit Offerings**

Traditional benefits such as healthcare, retirement, and education reimbursement are less important than flexibility, culture, and vacation.

- Compensation is most important.
- Flexibility/work-life balance received only one less ranking than compensation, though it received significantly fewer #1 rankings.
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> place tier emerged, which comprised opportunities for advancement, vacation days, workplace environment, schedule times, and company culture/people.

- Among the bottom were three traditional benefit offerings: healthcare/HAS match, retirement 401K match, and education reimbursement.

### **National Audience vs. NEWMA Audience**

- The national audience was less likely than young WI manufacturing employees to view manufacturing as a career rather than a stepping stone.
- The national audience had significantly less favorable perceptions.

### **CORE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **In WI: Attracting Millennials to NE WI Manufacturing Jobs**

- #1 takeaway is to ‘do an honest look in the mirror on your website.’ Optimize your website content.
- Where do you show up when millennials Google manufacturing jobs? Do you show up?
- Promote presence and postings on Indeed.
- Enhance Google rankings for broad keyword phrases like ‘Manufacturing jobs in WI’.
- Optimize LinkedIn profile/content before Facebook/Instagram.
- Consider divesting resources from job fairs.
- Your employees are your ambassadors.

#### **Companies should audit/optimize their benefit offerings.**

- Promote flexibility, advancement, vacation, and culture.
- Regard traditional benefits (e.g., healthcare) as secondary priorities, at least for younger employees.

#### **Outside WI: Attracting Millennials to NE WI Manufacturing Jobs**

- Focus message strategies around the cost benefits of living and working in WI.
  - Promote favorable housing prices, overall cost of living, etc.
  - Promote relocation benefits, if offered.
- Do not assume efforts will be more fruitful in the Midwest.
  - Participants in IL, MN, IN, IA, MO, and OH did not indicate more favorable ratings of Wisconsin than those in other regions.
- Optimize website content, Google rankings, and Indeed profiles to attract applicants from outside WI.
- Invest in promoting job opportunities at out-of-state job fairs and local job centers.
  - These resources were rated as much more important to participants outside of Wisconsin.

At the next Communications Task Force meeting, members will discuss how they want to use the data to market and promote manufacturing careers.

### **PRESIDENT’S CUP SCHOLARSHIP GOLF OUTING – 6/4/2020 – AT BLACKWOLF RUN – KOHLER, WI**

2019’s President’s Cup raised a record \$39,000 for scholarships, allowing for an increase in scholarships for the current school year from \$45,000 to \$50,000. The BOD met and would like to run the event the same as last year. Ann is contacting the presidents who participated last year and plans to have 2020’s participants finalized by the end of February.

Members will partner with Insight on the program. Sponsor ads and quotes from scholarship winners will be included in the program. Sponsorships will be offered to those who participated last year, followed by soliciting the full membership. Breakfast, luncheon, and networking reception sponsors will be sought.

### **MANUFACTURING FIRST EXPO & CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

The MFEC is scheduled for October 21, 2020 at the KI Convention Center. Organizers will consider eventually hosting the event at a larger venue, possibly the new arena. Ann asked suggestions for keynote speakers or focus areas. Suggestions included Dan Burrus, futurist. Manufacturing president keynote suggestions included; Rockwell Automation, Snap-On

Tools president, Acuity, Marck (Sheboygan Falls), Faith Technologies, Plexus, Werner Electric, and Georgia-Pacific (Christian Fischer). Mike Kawleski will contact Christian Fischer about speaking at the event.

#### **FINALIZE 2020 TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMING**

- President's Cup – 6/4/2020 - Blackwolf Run - Kohler, WI
- 2021 All Stars
- 2021 Vitality Study
- Manufacturing First Expo & Conference
- Recruitment of individuals, especially millennials and veterans, living outside NE WI.
- Welcome packet for new Alliance members

Members reviewed a draft flyer that will become part of the member recruitment materials. The flyer focuses on why people join NEWMA - talent recruitment and industry information. Benefits will be summarized using bullet points and brief text. The flyer will be finalized at the 2/19/2020 meeting.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE/LOCATION/TIME/AGENDA**

The next Communications Task Force meeting is on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at Heartland Label Printers, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. Agenda:

- ✓ Millennial Perceptions Study Results – Recruitment Strategies
- ✓ Finalize Membership Recruitment Flyer
- ✓ President's Cup
- ✓ 2020 Manufacturing First Expo & Conference Speakers
- ✓ Recruitment of Talent Outside of New North
- ✓ Next Meeting Date/Time/Location/Agenda