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The Alliance’s **12th Annual** Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Vitality Index found the manufacturing sector (23% of the region’s employment base) remained strong over the past year. The survey was administered in October and November 2021 by the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh’s Center for Customized Research Services.

- Survey sample drawn from **601** manufacturers in NE Wisconsin (≥ $3 million in annual revenue and 25+ employees).
- **147 companies** completed either a telephone or online survey (24 percent response rate).
- Responses are at a **95%** confidence level.
Manufacturers’ plans in 2022 for sales growth and capital investments remain strong, positive indicators of the vitality of manufacturing in the New North.

98% of respondents said they expect their company’s financial health in the next 6-12 months to be healthy or quite healthy.
Companies sales are recovering from the pandemic with almost 70% of companies reporting increased sales in 2021 compared to only 40% had increased sales in 2020.

75% of manufacturers expect increased sales in 2022.

Overall a majority of companies recovered from the loss of sales in 2020 and have a bullish perspective of sales in 2022.

**SUPPLY CHAIN CONSTRAINTS**

- Over 96% of respondents reported that their supply chain was impacted in 2021.
Over the past 12 years of the study, a greater percentage plan on investing in expansion and modernization.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
<th>Modernization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Yes 20%</td>
<td>No 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Yes 26%</td>
<td>No 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Yes 35%</td>
<td>No 65%</td>
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Plant Expansion & Modernization Planned in 12-24 mos.
Over half of respondents anticipate hiring new personnel in the first quarter of 2022.

Hiring remains strong after quarter 1 with over half of the respondents expressing the need to hire.

The trend in hiring will increase throughout the year with 65% expressing the need to hire at the end of the year.

Manufacturing Workforce Hiring Needs (Data for 2022 Quarters)
91% of companies are anticipating difficulty locating and acquiring talent. This is the highest percentage of respondents having a concern in finding talent in all of the years of the study.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL TALENT RECRUITMENT TACTIC OVER THE PAST YEAR?

- Employee Referrals
- External Job Sites Like Indeed

Yes  No
Companies are having difficulty finding Machinists and CNC Machinists, which has been among the most difficult-to-fill position every year the study asked this question.

Most of the occupations going unfilled require post-secondary education, although most do not require a four-year degree.

There are many opportunities for entry level positions within a manufacturing company.

Many employers are finding the workforce deficient in “soft skills” – non-technical skills.

Communication skills and attendance accounted for over half of the responses.
For the twelfth year in a row, companies responding to the survey verify the strength of the manufacturing sector in Northeast Wisconsin. Seven out of 10 manufacturers surveyed said they are investing in facilities. However, this financial optimism is tempered by another recurring finding – skilled workers are in high demand, but there are not enough qualified candidates to fill numerous job openings.

The Alliance is one part of the solution, providing a unified voice to advocate for the region’s manufacturing needs and communicating that the industry offers many lucrative careers. However, individual manufacturers can and must contribute to creating and retaining a dynamic, skilled workforce that will sustain and grow the region’s manufacturing base, today and into the future.

Jeffrey Sachse, Director of Research produced the report. The NEW Manufacturing Alliance is a partnership of over 300 manufacturers, educational institutions, workforce development, chambers of commerce, and economic development in the 18-county New North region. For more information, see www.newmfgalliance.org and/or contact Ann Franz at (920) 488-5587 or ann.franz@nwtc.edu.