



NEW
Manufacturing
Alliance

Make it in **NorthEast Wisconsin**

2025

**MANUFACTURING
VITALITY INDEX**



The Alliance's **15th 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 2024 by the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh's Center for Customized Research Services.

- Survey sample drawn from **601** manufacturers in NE Wisconsin (**\$3 million** or more in annual revenue and 25+ employees).
- **76 companies** completed either a telephone or online survey (13% response rate).
- Responses are at a **95%** confidence level.



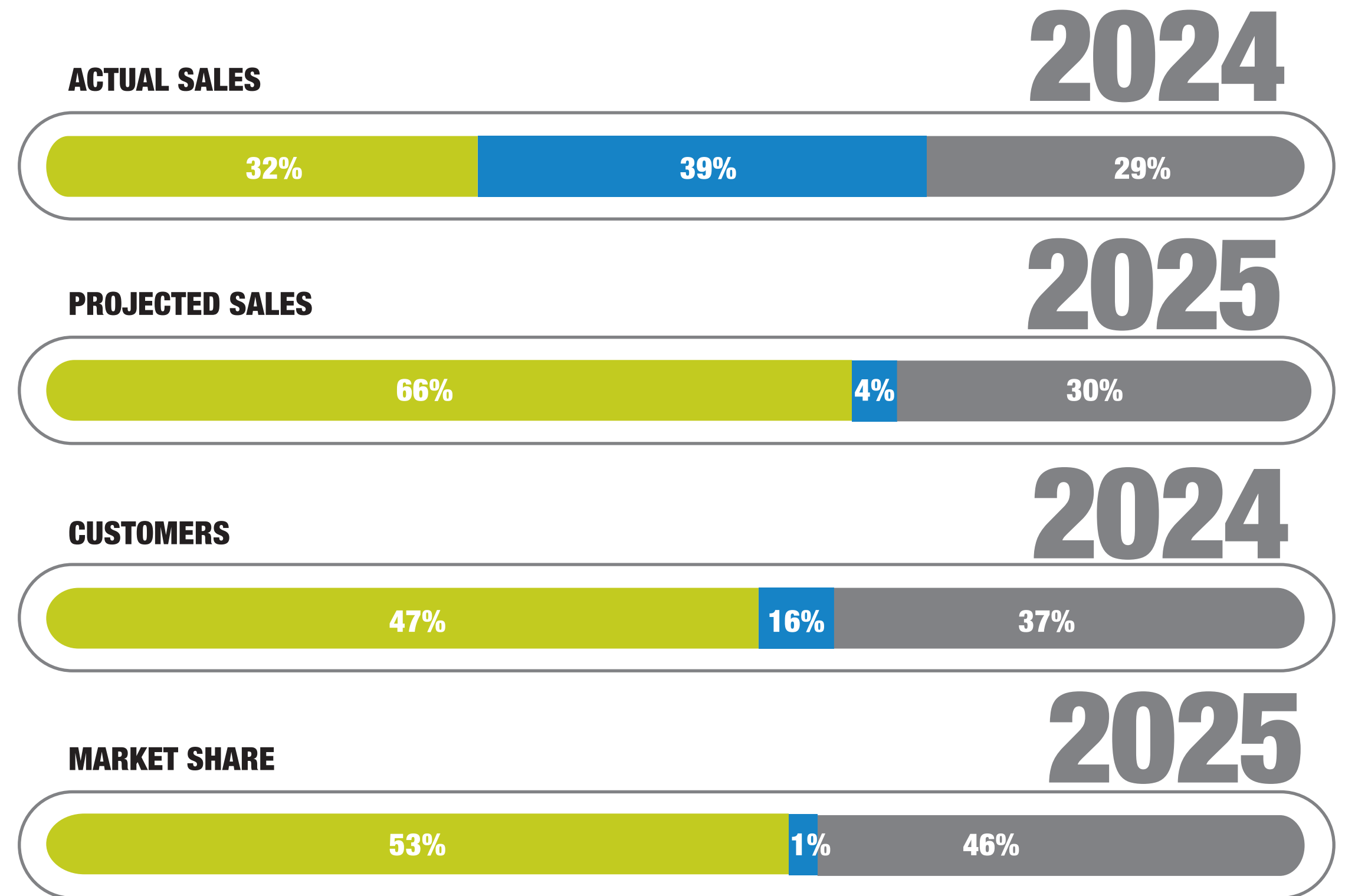
BUSINESS GROWTH

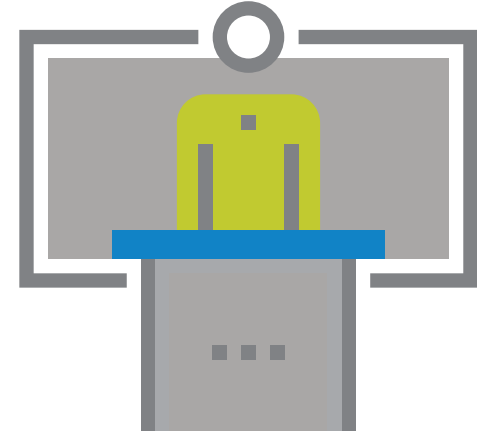
- 93% of respondents said their company was financially healthy.
- 2025 should be a strong year for manufacturers, with **66%** expecting increased sales.

SUPPLY CHAIN CONSTRAINTS

- **47%** respondents reported their supply chain was impacted in 2024. This is significantly lower than **98%** in 2022 and **61%** in 2023.

■ Increase ■ Decrease ■ Same

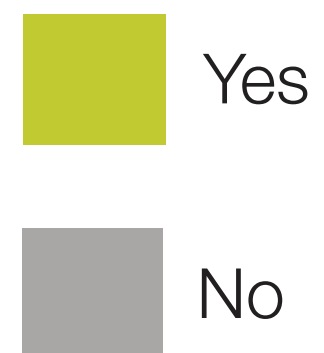




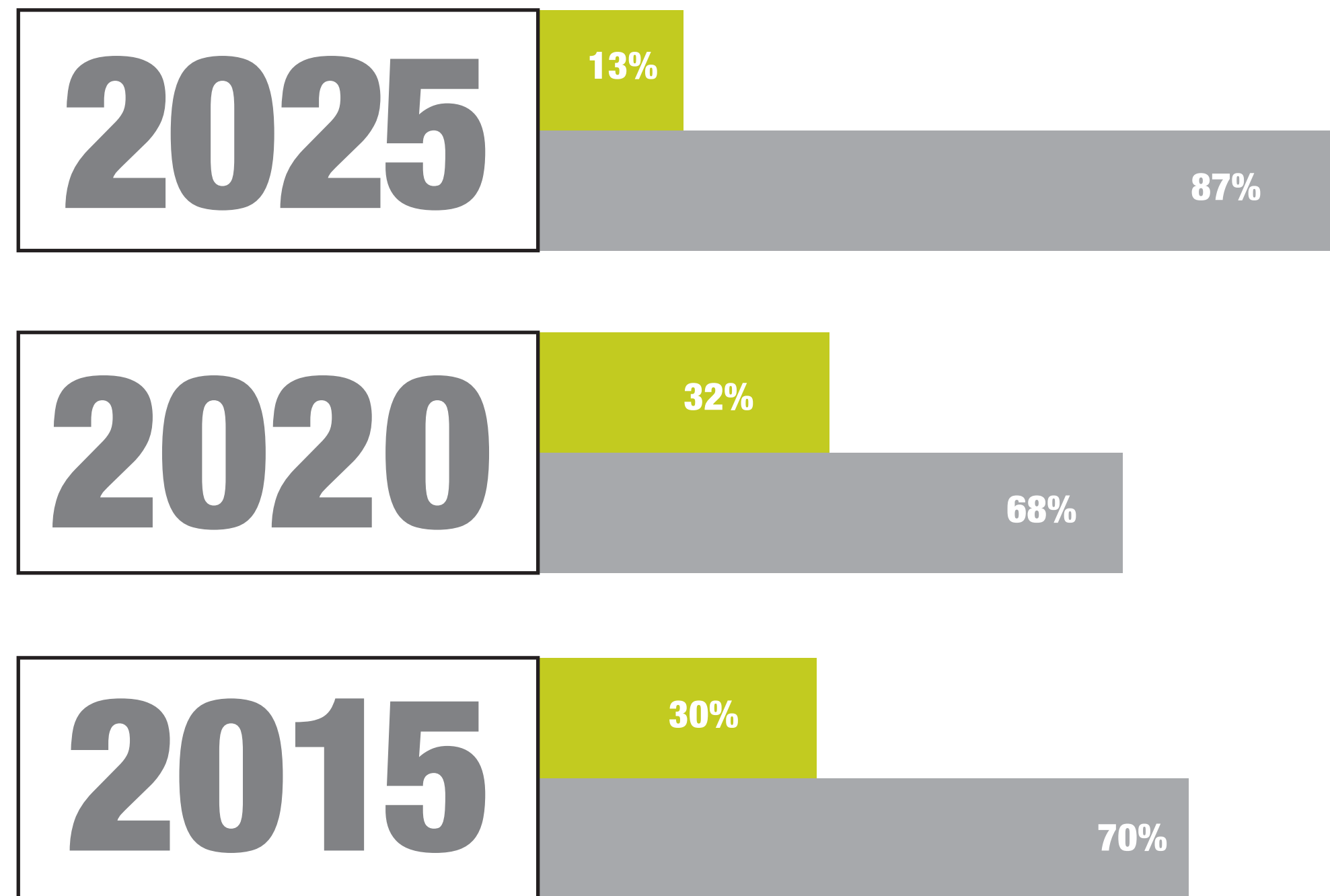
EXPANSION & PLANT MODERNIZATION

■ Over half of manufacturers expect to invest in plant modernization.

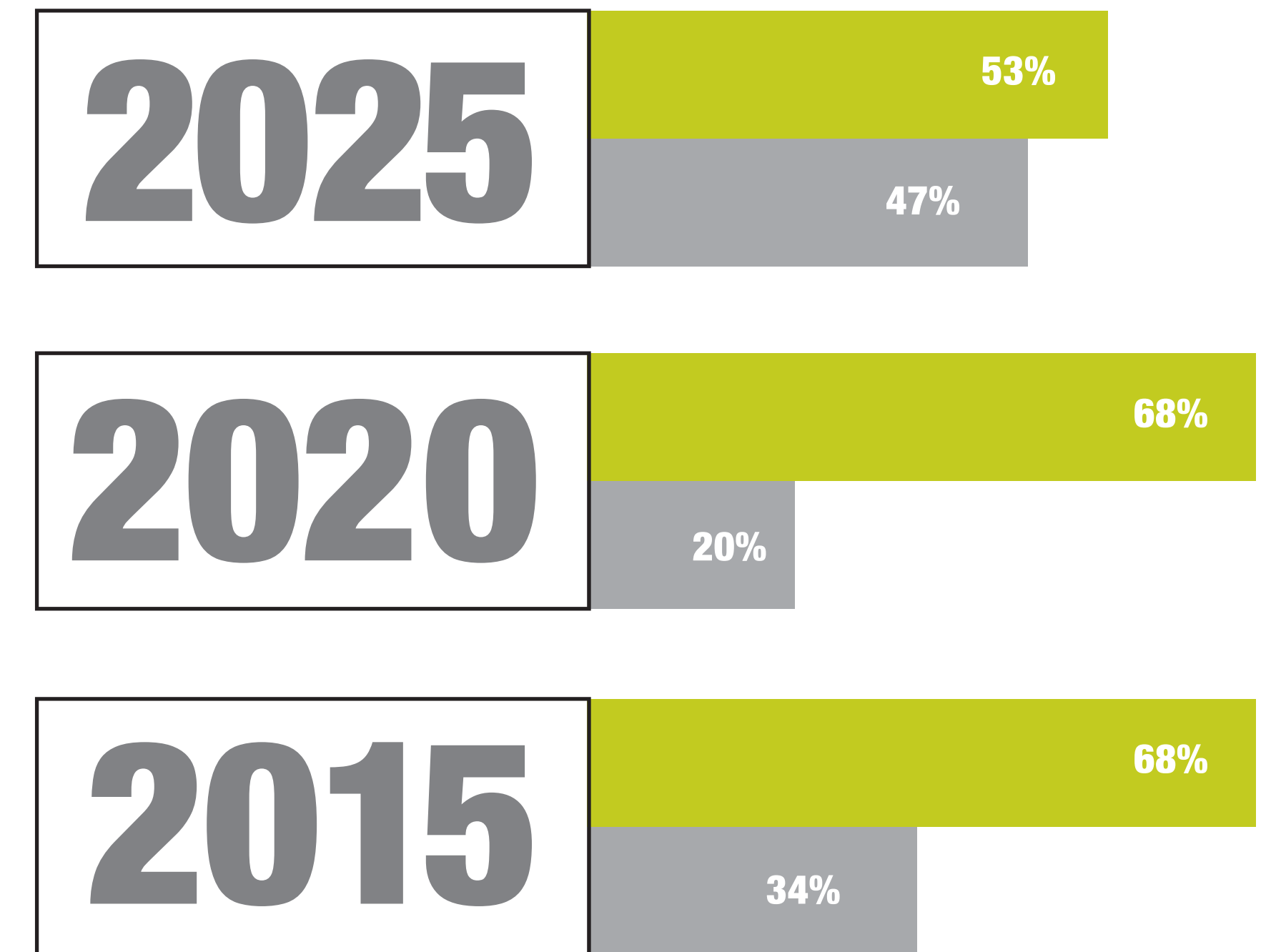
Plant Expansion & Modernization
Planned in 12-24 mos.

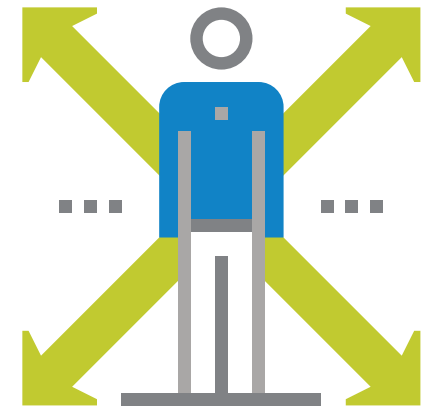


EXPANSION



MODERNIZATION





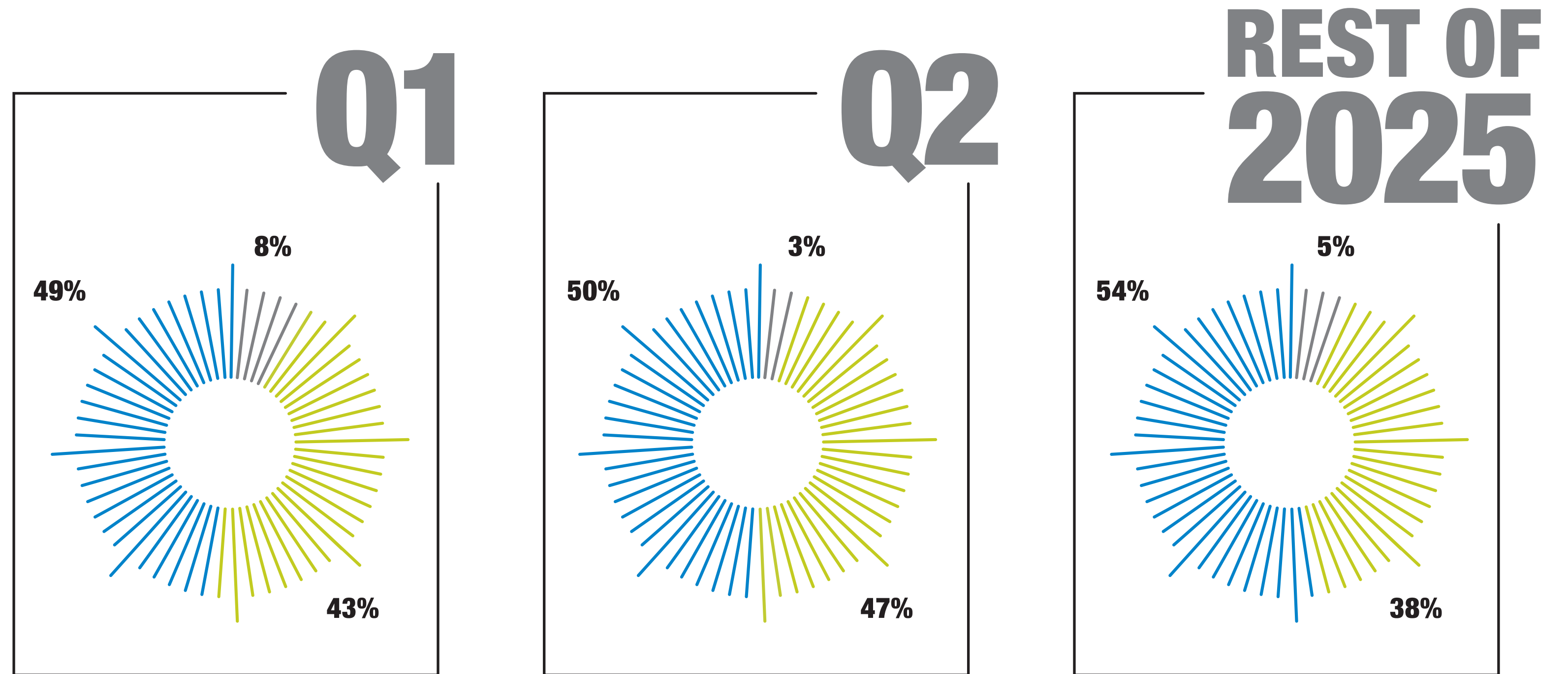
WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT

- Over **40%** of respondents plan on hiring in the 1st and 2nd quarter in 2025.
- Nearly **40%** of manufacturers plan on hiring during the last quarter of 2025.

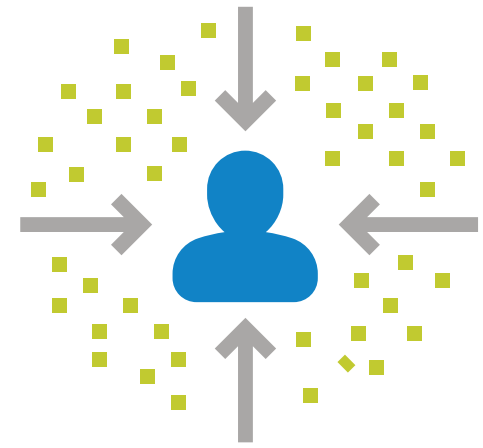
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST SUCCESSFUL TALENT RECRUITMENT TACTIC OVER THE PAST YEAR?

- Employee Referrals
- External Job Sites Like Indeed

■ Increase
 ■ Decrease
 ■ Same



Manufacturing Workforce Hiring Needs (Data for 2025 Quarters)



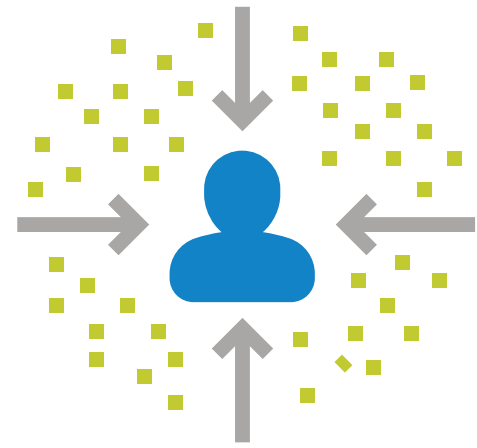
SKILLS SHORTAGE

DIFFICULTY FINDING TALENT

- **58%** of companies are anticipating difficulty locating and acquiring talent. This is significantly higher than the first year of the study in 2011 that had **29%** of companies expressing concern in finding talent.
- The talent shortage still is a concern for manufacturers; however, this is a decrease from the historic **91%** reported from the years after the pandemic.



Yes No



SKILLS SHORTAGE

MOST DIFFICULT-TO-FILL OCCUPATIONS

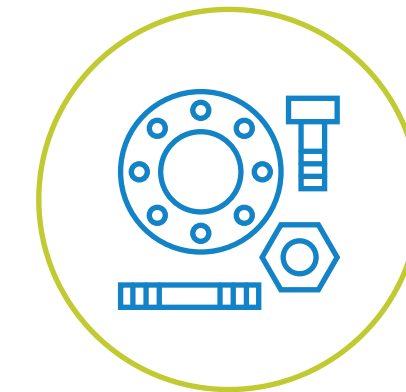
- Companies continue to have difficulty finding Machinists and CNC Machinists, which has been among the most difficult-to-fill position every year the study asked this question.
- Most of the occupations going unfilled require post-secondary education, although most do not require a four-year degree.
- Other skills in high demand include communications, work ethic and attendance.

Machinist/CNC Machinist



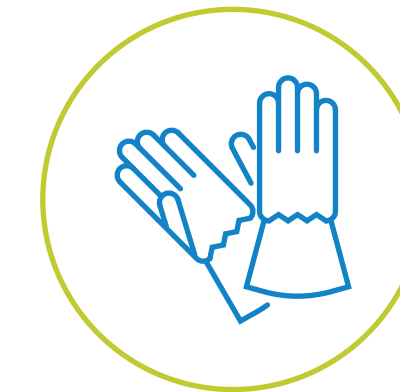
\$26.25

General Labor



\$18.35

Machine Operator



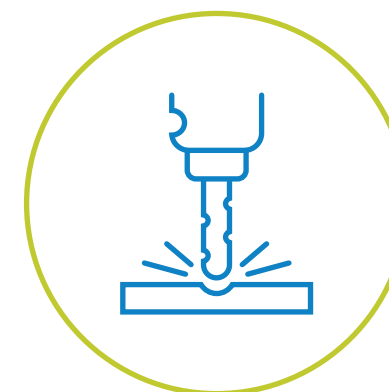
\$22.90

Welder/Fabricator



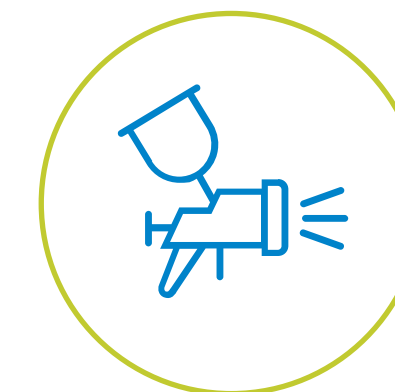
\$25.31

Industrial Maintenance



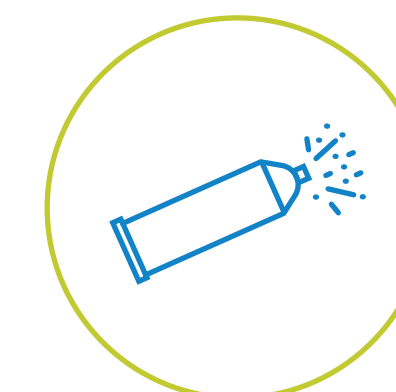
\$30.62

Painting



\$23.31

Skilled Trades



\$29.82

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 15th year of the study was conducted during October and November 2024 in which there was a lot of uncertainty expressed by respondents due to the presidential election. Many responded that depending on the election results they feel their projections for sales and hiring could be increased if one of the candidates won over the other one.

Overall, 2025 is expected to see more hiring and increased sales for northeast Wisconsin manufacturers. There is still strong investment by companies in their plant modernization plans.

The Alliance is one part of the solution, providing a unified voice to advocate for the region's manufacturing needs and communicating its 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.

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) 498-5587 or ann.franz@nwtc.edu.

