



Generational change and talent management in global manufacturing

In January 2020, 10 million manufacturing jobs sat empty across the globe – and this was before the coronavirus shutdown. The rising number of openings that cannot be filled had become a huge challenge for the industry – and now, the future looks even more uncertain given current events.

Coronavirus challenges aside, myriad hurdles still confront today's manufacturing firms. The workforce is steadily ageing, but companies are failing to attract younger recruits. As experienced employees retire, they leave behind critical gaps in knowledge and governance.

At the same time, advancements in new and disruptive technologies mean that manufacturers are not only in need of a high volume of employees, but also those with appropriate STEM and management skills.

The COVID-19 pandemic is also set to change manufacturing as we know it, by serving as a catalyst for digital transformation. Trends and innovations that were already underway, such as AI and automation, are happening much faster.

Companies that embrace the digitization of the factory floor can reduce the financial impact of the pandemic, maintain continuity and build resilience in a post-coronavirus landscape. It's an essential shift for survival now, and success later on.

As we move into a new era of human-machine collaboration, manufacturers must equip themselves to attract top tech talent, while upskilling their existing workforce to keep pace with technology. Taking a standards-based approach will help businesses retain, retrain and recruit, and ultimately fill the talent gap.

Start with the basics. ISO 9001 offers a framework for manufacturing firms to implement a quality management system (QMS) which brings clarity to an organization's function and lets employees see how their roles fit with the company's goals, which boosts overall motivation.

The standard also builds a high-performance culture by developing existing talent through training and ensuring that vital skills and



knowledge are decentralized and shared within an organization.

Given the current economic situation, it's also worth considering ISO 22301. This standard sets out requirements for a business continuity management system (BCMS), to inspire confidence in a manufacturing organization's ability to respond to incidents. By protecting employees through a proactive approach to risk, manufacturers can also build loyalty amongst current staff and attract potential new recruits.

From here, there are specific standards that manufacturing firms can use to manage generational change and bridge the skills gap.

Given that recruiting and developing talent may be the most important issue facing the manufacturing sector, good human resource (HR) management is vital. There is huge value in having a diverse workforce, but only if managers can build trust with team members and work to their strengths to improve both collective and individual performance.

BS 76000 helps manufacturers do exactly that. It provides a complete view of how people processes fit into organizational strategy to develop strong working relationships for sustainable success. The standard ensures

employees feel valued at work and encourages development to increase overall job satisfaction.

In addition, BS 76005 on diversity and inclusion, helps organizations build a culture that recognizes and respects all differences. Certification to either standard will position manufacturers as an employer of choice, a place where people are valued and put first.

Furthermore, firms should also address their learning and development (L&D) processes. Manufacturers must ensure such opportunities are available to all staff, and presented in a suitable format, to hone vital skills and support them in responding to emerging tech trends. PD 76006 offers a guide to L&D that will help manufacturers promote a strong learning culture and stay ahead of the curve.

Finally, the next generation of workers have different expectations about what they want from a job. Sustainability and transparency are valued highly. Manufacturing firms with a strong environmental agenda and clear social purpose will be more likely to attract the top talent. Here businesses can use ISO 14001 to improve their environmental performance, and ISO 26000 to assess and address social responsibilities that are relevant and significant to their mission.

The future of manufacturing requires strategic direction, adoption of smart technologies, flexible thinking and innovation. Above all, it needs people to drive successful transformation. Standards can help firms establish multi-generational workplace success, building a highly skilled, engaged workforce for a new era of opportunity.

Summary

- In January 2020, 10 million manufacturing jobs sat empty across the globe – and this was before the coronavirus shutdown.
- The rising number of openings that cannot be filled is a huge challenge for the industry.
- Companies that embrace digitization can reduce the financial impact of COVID-19, maintain continuity and build resilience. Taking a standards-based approach will fill the talent gap.
- ISO 9001 helps manufacturers implement a QMS which brings clarity to an organization's function and lets employees see how their roles fit with the company's goals.
- An ISO 22301-compliant business continuity management system (BCMS) improves both internal and external confidence in an organization's ability to respond to incidents and protects the welfare of employees.
- Good human resource (HR) management practice is vital. BS 76000 provides a complete view of how people processes fit into organizational strategy to develop strong working relationships for sustainable success.

- BS 76005 on diversity and inclusion helps organizations build a culture that recognizes and respects peoples' differences, positioning manufacturers as an employer of choice.
- PD 76006 offers a guide to learning and development that will help manufacturers promote a strong learning culture and stay ahead of the curve.
- The next generation of workers value sustainability and transparency highly. Businesses can use ISO 14001 to improve their environmental performance, and ISO 26000 to assess and address social responsibilities that are significant to their mission.
- The future of manufacturing requires strategic direction, flexible thinking and innovation. Standards can help firms establish multi-generational workplace success, building a highly skilled, engaged workforce.

For more information on our manufacturing standards, visit:
bsigroup.com/manufacturing