



Tackling The Skilled Labor Shortage At The Root Of The Problem

[Editor's note: See the March issue of Canadian Industrial Machinery]

The roots of the problem are the image of manufacturing, the inability of the public to differentiate between skilled and unskilled manufacturing jobs and the misallocation of education/training resources in our society. Few high school graduates think of going into manufacturing. We need to increase our efforts to communicate the positive aspects of income, high computer content and entrepreneurial opportunities. Clearly low skills will no longer assure job security and high pay. On the other hand, high skills are in as short supply as ever.

The NTMA/Charmilles surveys show that U.S. shops would hire 4.7 percent more workers if they could find them. I suspect the same is true in Canada.

The U.S., and I suspect Canada, spends billions of dollars per year providing University degrees in liberal arts fields that lead to dead-end paper pushing jobs. The result is that the liberal arts graduates are underpaid because supply is so high. At the same time, the shortage of skilled technical workers contributes to the off-shoring problem, increasing the trade and budget deficits.

A proper prioritization of resources would provide free training to qualified candidates in technical fields and charge full cost, unsubsidized by government, in the liberal arts fields. Some might say this policy would be unfair to low income students seeking a liberal arts education.

Is it fairer to encourage them to obtain degrees for which there are no jobs?

Harry Moser

President Agie-Charmilles Corp.

Precision Metal Fabricator

I recently signed up for an apprenticeship 'Precision Metal Fabricator'. My intentions are

to study at Durham College's night school program. From what I hear it is the best program around. In fact, from what I gather, it is the ONLY one that trains people in sheet metal fabrication.

Unfortunately the program might not even run because they can't get 15 people to enroll. My guess is that people just don't know about the program and/or are not sure how to go about enrolling or getting information. We need to let people know about the programs that are available to them. I think the future of this industry in Canada, depends on it.

If you (your magazine) could help inform people of the sheet metal fabrication program offered at Durham College, we might be able to get more people enrolled in the program so that it can run. You would make nine eager students very happy.

Regards,

Sandy De Domenico

Fabcrest Metal Products Inc.

Where are the Routers?

First, I enjoy Canadian Industrial Machinery (CIM) very much. Second, I am wondering if it would be possible to do a study or report on router tables for processing Alum plates. So far, I have not seen a report on these machines yet.

These machines are great, but I had lots of difficulties to find or locate these in North America. I discovered that these machines are mostly used in the wood industry, but are also great for Alum.

Thanks,

Harry Betjan

Ty-Crop Mfg Inc. ■

Want to suggest a new topic, make a salient point about an old one or simply vent on an issue affecting our industry. Have your say... it's your industry.
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