

Why Aren't You Training the Next Generation?



Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Michael Goldstein

Last issue, when I went over the results from our annual State of the Gear Industry survey, I was being too nice. Sure, there's still a lot of optimism about the business climate. Gear manufacturers are mostly busy. For most, 2018 looks like it will be at least a little better than 2017. But there are dark clouds ahead, and they've been building for some time.

I'm talking about the skilled workforce crisis.

This is a problem that isn't going away. If anything, the rumblings keep getting louder and louder. By far, the single most important issue our survey highlighted was the gear industry's overwhelming need for trained workers.

Every year, the gripe is the same: we need skilled labor.

But the surprising thing is how few of you are actually doing something about it. According to our survey, more than half of you work at companies that don't take advantage of the gear-related training that's available.

More than half? Can this be true? Something doesn't add up. You're all suffering from the same problem. There aren't enough qualified people to do the work you need. But if there aren't enough people with the right skills, don't you need to figure out a way to train them?

The alternative is for your companies to slowly die.

There are a lot of options out there. The AGMA continues to expand its educational mission, offering more types of training and more ways to take advantage of it. They've added two new courses this year and have plans to add more next year, so no matter what type of training you need, chances are, they have it. Recently, they've also announced that AGMA's education programs are now accredited with the IACET – meaning that all AGMA classes now offer continuing education credits that count toward professional engineer and other certification programs. Please visit www.agma.org to see what's available.

Last issue, I also mentioned the seminars being offered by Arvin Global Solutions. Most of you feel that practical, hands-on manufacturing training is what you need most. Well, that's the whole idea behind what AGS is doing. Their seminars focus on process engineering and manufacturing best practices. Their instructors have decades of industry experience, and their goal is to transfer some of that well-earned experience to your employees. If you want your employees to understand the decision making processes that take place on a gear manufacturing plant floor, then take a look at the AGS ad on page 3 for a schedule of upcoming seminars and a roster of their experts.

As the publisher of the industry's leading trade publication, I feel an obligation to find out why you're not taking advantage of these services.

Are they too expensive? Is it because you don't want to travel? Are the options being offered not what you need? Are you unwilling to invest in an employee who might take that training and go somewhere else? Do you simply not have employees with enough promise to invest in?

I'm done being nice. I want answers to those questions. Please send them to publisher@geartechnology.com. It's time for all of us to stop moaning and do something about the problem.

Oh, and there's one other thing you can do. Make sure your employees are signed up to receive *Gear Technology* magazine. It's a free subscription, and we provide education every issue. There's really no excuse not to.

www.geartechnology.com/subscribe.htm

Michael Goldstein,
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P.S.: Our technical editor and resident blogger, Chuck Schultz, has been writing a lot about gear basics lately. If you want to get someone started just learning about gears, gear design and gear manufacturing, it's not a bad place to start: www.geartechnology.com/blog/.