

VETERAN MACHINISTS & THE MILLENNIUM OUTLOOK

The Millenium Outlook article in the January/February 2000 issue of Gear Technology explored the prevailing attitudes of the gear industry as it stands on the brink of the new millenium through the thoughts and words of some of the industry's leaders. The article also placed the gear industry within the framework of 20th Century history. Joe Arvin, President of Arrow Gear, was interviewed for this article and requested an opportunity to elaborate on his published comments.

I wish to provide further explanation regarding some of my statements, which appeared as part of the January/February 2000 Gear Technology Millenium Outlook, in order to provide clarification regarding the skills of our industry's workforce.

My comments regarding veteran machinists, such as myself, leaving the workforce, and their old-world craftsmanship not being essential for operating modern machine tools, should in no way suggest that the value of traditional machinist skills is diminishing. The reality, however, is that as the older machinists leave the workforce, they take with them the hands-on expertise that plays a valuable and essential role in the gear manufacturing environment.

This is not to imply that younger machinists are not highly skilled in their own right. While operating modern machine tools is somewhat less dependent on traditional machining concepts, today's machinist must possess a high degree of specialized expertise and computer knowledge.

The decline of old-world machining expertise does, however, present a real training challenge and should be considered carefully as the gear industry evolves and evaluates its future training initiatives.



Joseph L. Arvin
President, Arrow Gear Co.

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If you would like to respond to this or any other article in this edition of Gear Technology, please fax your response to the attention of Charles Cooper, senior editor, at 847-437-6618 or send e-mail messages to Charles@geartechnology.com.

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