

## Recruiting for Manufacturing Part 1

**Recruiting is sales. Recruiting is marketing. In other words, recruiting is storytelling and your employees are your best resource.**



I have been in marketing for over 25 years, and during that time it has morphed from the print-radio-TV choices to more options than I care to count. But one thing is the same — storytelling sells. Since employees are scarce and jobs are plenty, you need to sell your company to prospective candidates. Guess what? It's easier than you think and you already have the resources.

### Posting versus Recruiting

These days, it's very easy to post a job opening online or put up a "help wanted" sign. You just write a job description, list the hours and qualifications and hit the submit button. Then you get a whirlwind of unqualified candidates, people who don't actually understand the job or people who don't understand the company and, if hired may not show up for work.

On the other hand, recruiting includes building your brand — aka your reputation — profiling your employees and establishing a message to reach the right people. So instead of sitting back and hoping the right employee will come to you, go out and get that employee.

### What's Your Brand?

What is your company's brand and what does it mean to the community? Are you that manufacturer around the corner who has a passion for making parts, a clean facility and an enthusiasm for building their employee's careers? Or are you that building down the street that has grumbling employees with a high turnover rate and garbage around the dumpster? You have a brand in the community— whether you developed it intentionally or not.

Branding isn't just for Fortune 500 companies. Your brand says who you are, what you do and how you do it. It may be in your mission statement. It may be unspoken. It may only be known by the owners. Regardless, it needs to be identified and shared with the community because that community is where your future employees live.

### Create a Profile

You need to create a profile for your ideal candidate for the position(s) you need to fill and your best resources are your current, productive employees. Your employees are your target demographic. Ask them why they like working at your company. How they found this position. What are their interests, hobbies, skills — anything that helps you understand what makes them a great employee. Now you know who you are looking for and which employee(s) have a similar profile.

### Get the Stories

Now you need to build the message — which is the storytelling. Who knows your company better than you and your employees? You know your brand, what you value and why your company is the place someone would want to have a career. So share it with the community. There are great stories to tell — origin stories, motivating stories, stories about new technology, company culture and how precision machining makes a difference in everyone's life.

Talk to your employees and ask them for any stories they would like to share. It could be about loving their work, how they learned something new, how there's room for advancement, how their career helped them personally or financially or even a fun story about making friends and enjoying the manufacturing environment. Another way to hear their stories is to have lunch with them and just sit there and listen.

It's important to note that the stories you hear will probably match your current brand. If you want to change your brand, you need to start with the employees and including them in the process — asking them for an idea for a blog, to present at a local school or be in a video. Participating will give them ownership and an understanding of your new brand all while helping you sell your brand to the community. ⚡

Carli Kistler-Miller, MBA has over 25 years of experience with communications, event/meeting planning, marketing, writing and operations. Email: [cmiller@pmpa.org](mailto:cmiller@pmpa.org) Website: [pmpa.org](http://pmpa.org).